Lexicography of Ramanujacharya

(Founder of Visisthavaitam)



T. Rengarajan

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Lexicography of Ramanujacharya [Founder of Visisthavaitam]
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Preface

The book **Lexicography of Ramanujacharya,** based on the life history of Ramanujacharya and his simhasanas Ramanujacharya is one and only religious personality to give important to life of human being, though he is an avatar of Laksmana in Treta yuga and Krisna in Dwarapar yuga during the era of Buddhism, Christianity, Jainism and Mohammedanism were in full force to spread their religion and philosophy in India. Though he was an incarnaton of two great Hindu religious gods, he appeared in the world as Human being with its own human value. He was able to capitalize human value and its culture in the world, though he was born in a very small village, (Sriperumbadur-Tamil Nadu unfortunate demise of Late Rajiv Gandhi Prime minister of India, and after demise the village got some bright colour both political and public circle.). Ramanujacharya who lead simple life, human value potentiality without any religious and philosophical discrimination in the beginning of 9th Century B.C. to spread human valued religion named it as *Visistadavaitam*.

This is first Lexicogaphy of Ramanujacharya in Indian book publishing history and covers the entire life history of Ramanujacharya starting from 917B.C. to 1137B.C. covering 120 completely, 2 Tamil cycle of era. He is a true follower of Thirukkchinambi, Alavandar, Yadvapakseh, Uyyakondar and Yamunacharya.

The book tries to cover all his literary works Ramanujacharya and his simhasanas with meaningful explanation. The book cover entire life history of his simhasanas, their works, of which the following important roles in Ramanujacharya's life, like Alavandar, Uyyakondar, Yadavaprakskesh, Tirukachinambi, Tirukostiyur Nambi, Pillai Lockacharya, Periya Vacchan pillai, Vadakku Tiruveedi Pillai, Nachiyar, Nappinai, Tirumalai Alvan Manavala Mamunigal, Vedanta Desikan, and others. He has nearly 74 Simhasanas of which 3 were female members. Though his simhasanas were belongs to different caste, but true followers of Ramanujacharya's philosophy in philosophical manner and human value adopting system.

He was able to cover entire Vaisnavism temples were Alvars who had song the greatness of Vaisnava gods and goddesses in the temple, as it stated in the (*Nalayirya Divya Prabhadam 4000 Songs-Tamil*) which was

compiled at Nathamunigal. Later on Ramanujacharya who had visited all 106 temples and coined and word *Divya Desam* which were found to be holy place in the middle of all Vaisnava temple and followers. He lived more number of years of his life period at Srirangam and Melkote. His contribution for the development of Vaisnava sampradayam is more lead him to lay the foundation stone to *Visistadavaitam.*

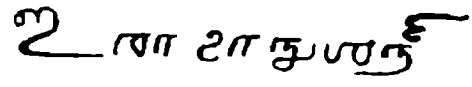
I hope this book will be found helpful. However I will be glad to receive suggestions, if any, for making the book more effective, inclusive and attractive from valuable reader.

I thank the publisher, for his honest attempt to publish the script in the lexicographical form, and it is purely guide for any religious readers and writers to develop their vaisnava knowledge in depth

My great full thank to my parents (Late A.S. Thirumalai & T. Ambujam. Retired Hony. Flying Officer, Indian AIR Force (actively participated in Second World War, India Independence Movement, Indo-Pak War, Indo - Bangladesh, for more than 29 years service) and mother T.Ambujam, house wife, my sisters (Late. S.V.K.S. Srinivasan (brother-in-law), One and only Acharya purusha of Veeravalli family, Tirupathi and Dharmakartha of Sri Manavala mamunigal temple, Tirpathi who died in caradiatic arrest 2006, leaving me as adopted son, under due instruction from the PEDDA Jeeyanagar, Chinna Jeeyangar, Executive Officer, of T.T.D. sister S.V.K.S. Srimathi srinivasan, I am able to carry out the last ritual ceremony for himwith full Thirumala Tirupathi Devastham honours. S.V.K.S.Srimathi Srinivasan (Advocate) and T.Vidhya (Hindi Teacher), who died in a fatal road accident, took place near Tindivanam, Tamil nadu in the year 2006, brings a great mental disequilibrium, let the soul rest in peace by the grace of Lord Venkatasewara, I have to carry out all last ritual ceremony both of them. It took me nearly 2 years, to complete the work on Ramanujacharya, due to mental illness.

Brothers T.Parthasarthy - Co-Operative Audit Officer, Government of Tamil Nadu T.Ramesh-Engineer-UAE, my sisters T. Geetha- Advocate, Mrs. P.Sumathi Sai Priya Advocate Cum Part Time Lecturer Government Law College, Madurai,).

Date : 12-9-2012 **T. Rengarajan**



[Signature of Ramanujacharya in Tamil Version]
Ramanuja Acharya was a 'Vadama' by birth.
His ancestors migrated from Kashmir state to
Tamilnadu during 700-750 (B.C)

Sriman Narayana

Sriman Narayan educated the Vedas to Brahma and Pancharatna Sastras to Sri Lakshmi and others. He took different Avatars himself like Fish, Tortoise, and Boar etc to preserve the Vedas and save his devotees. He also took the role of Guru-Sishya (Teacher-Student) as Nara, Narayana at Badri Kashramam to present role models of an Acharya and Sishya.

Sri Lakshmi

The next acharya is our Srivaishnava Sampradhaya is Sri Lakshmi. She is called Periya Piratti or divine mother. Sri Lakshmi is always in the company of Naryana. Her only concern is the welfare of us. She is full of compassion and ignorant of punishing us for our faults. Without her recommendation, Sriman Naryana won't grant our wishes.

Vishvaksena

He is the Commander-in-Chief of the Lord Sriman Narayana. He wields a whip in his hand, and the entire universe functions in the constant fear of the whip striking them, if they do mistake. He rules over the entire world by his commands. Vishwaksena always removes obstacles in performing our duties. He is third in our acharya parampara.

Sri Nammazhvar

Nammazhvar is an incarnation of Visvaksena and he is born in the month of Vaikasi, on a Pournami day and his birth star is Viskaha. He was born 43 days after Krishna left the World to Vaikunta after his Avatar .He was born in the year 3102 BCE. His father's name is Kari, a farmer of Thirukkurugur on the banks of Tamraparani River and his mother Udaya nang is from Thiruvan paricharam in Kerala.Sri Nammazhvar when he was born did not open his eyes or his mouth to eat and never cried like other newborn baby. Because he was "very different" from other children, his parents named him as "Maran" meaning "different". He was also called as

Shatakopa. His parents prayed to Lord Adhinathan, the Perumal of Thirukkurugur and left the child in a cradle under a tamarind tree. It is believed that the tree is an incarnation of Adishesha, the Serpent on which the Lord Narayan is sleeping in Milky ocean.Nammazhvar stayed in the same state for 16 years. He enjoyed the divine ecstasy of Sri Krishna. He was waiting for a good sishya to do Upadesam.

During that time, in a nearby village called Thirukkolur there was an elderly Brahmin saint called Madhurakavi .He went on a pilgrimage to North India and while he was in Ajodhya, he saw a bright light shining in the far south. He was delighted and followed the light and finally reached where Nammazwar was sitting. Seeing the brilliance of Nammazhvar Madhurakavi prostrated and requested him to accept him as disciple. Although Madhurakavi was very much older than Nammazhvar, he did not hesitate to accept Sri Nammazhvar as his Guru.

Nammazhvar started reciting divine poems and Madhurakavi wrote them on Palm Leaves. The Four Prabhandhams of Nammazhvar are as follows

1. Thiru Viruththam
2. Thiru aasiriyam
3. Peria Thiruvandhaathi
4. Thiruvaaymozhi

Nammazhvar stayed under the tamarind tree for 32 years, reciting the above Prabhandhams .All his Prabhsnadhams explain the essence of Vedas, and hence called "Tamil Vedam". Lord Adhi Natha presented Nammazhvar a garland of Vakula flowers from his own neck. So Nammazhvar is also called Vakulabaranan.His other names are Parangusan, Sataari and Kurugai Piran. Nammazhvar's Prabhandham brim with devotion, love, bhakthi and poetic excellence and many Acharyas and Tamil poet Kamban wrote Tamil and Sanskrit poems in praise of Nammazhvar. He is considered to be our first Acharya in Kaliyuga .Later he gave the entire Dhivya Prabhandham to Nathmuni. We will read more about this in the story of Nathamuni

BIRTH

Asuri Keshavacharya and Bhudevi were infertile for a long time. As a consequence, Keshavacharya determined to carry out an Ayajna for Parthasarathy Perumal of Tiruvellikeni and seek the Lord's blessing for offspring. Pleased with Keshavacharya's sacrament, Parthasarathy Perumal appears before him in a dream and pledged to personified as his son, who would go on to become a great Acharya. Thirumalai Nampi, a well-known

sishyar of Alavandhar was the child's uncle. He predictable that the child is an avtharam of Adhi Seshan; he also renowned that the child is going to become an immense Sri Vaishnavite Acharyan. Hence, Thirumalai Nampi gave the name of Ramanuja to the new born child. These children lived for 120 years on this earth and during its rich life systematize and established on a firm footing the doctrines of Visishtadvaitha, which have been give further details about past by Bodhayana, Dramida and Tanka and elaborated by Nathamuni and Alavandhar. He is the embodiment of Lakshmana. The word *'anuja'* means 'younger brother'. Rama-anuja refers to the younger brother of Lord Rama; therefore, he is Ramanuja. In Kali-yuga, he is the acharya of Sri (Laksmi) sampradaya.

Horoscope

He was born on 14thÀpril, 1037 AC at Noon at **Sriperumpudur (Tamilnadu).**

Birth star : Arudra.

Planetary Position

Pisces	Venus Sun Mercury	Rahu -11-	Moon Jupiter	Pisces	Mars	Rahu	
-8-	Rasi		Lagna	Moon	Nava Amsa		Sun
-7-			Mars				Venus
Saturn	Ketu	Libra	-3-		Ketu Mercury	Lagna Jupiter Saturn	Virgo

His date of birth is placed in your own way by different establishment.As per proceedings, he was born in Kaliyuga year 4119 which corresponds to1017 AD. Fixes even the exact date as 13th April 1017 AD, interims of English Calendar. Though notes the year as 4118 Kali, maintain the year as 1017 AD only and gives additional information that the Rasi was Karkataka and the time of birth was exactly at noon also agree on the year 1017 gives a few more details like the Yogam being Ayushman, Karanam being Bhadra, Gotra being Harita, Saakha being Yajus, Sutra being Apasthambha and Sect being Vadama mention the year as Pingala, month Chitrai and the assemblage Tiruvadirai. Adds that it was a Sukla Paksha Panchami, a Friday. It will be for the Research minded scholars to piece together all these details to arrive at the correct date, time etc. Vriddha Padma Purana presages his embodiment thus:-" Long, long afterwards, the Lord himself will come

down on earth as a Tridanda Sannyasin, to restore the good law. At that time heretics and men of perverted intellects will confuse the minds of the people. Aasuric Saastraas based upon erroneous squabble and various schools of thought, very gorgeous and almost indistinguishable from the Vedanta, will turn away men's' hearts from Vishnu and grounds them to disregard his grandeur.

That notable embodiment will, through the good kismet of the Lord's devotees, come down upon earth, to explain and strengthen the wisdom of the great Sage Badaraayana and the marvelous soloist of the Gita. The holy one would compile a Bhaashya on the Vyaasa Sutras, to save men from the confusion and despair caused by specious canon and lead them to the True faith" While still a boy, he lost his father and was living with his mother at Kanchipuram under the fortification of one 'Tiruk kachi Nambi' This Nambi was whispered to contrary and was on 'speaking terms' with Lord Varadaraja in the Archa form.

He belonged to Harita pedigree and Yajur Veda.Srisaliapurna (Tirumala Nambi), who was the motherly uncle of Ramanuja, stopover his sister shortly after the birth of Ramanuja and was thrilled to see the new born baby. The toddler had numerous celestial traits' which reminded Tirumala Nambi of what Nammazhwar had foretell as the future flag possessor of Vishishtadvaita in the Tirumozhi. As a result, Tirumala Nambi was swayed that the baby was none other than an incarnation of Lakshmana in Kaliyuga. The Brihat Padma Purana and Narada Purana point to the re-embodiment of Adishesha in Kaliyuga.Srimad Andavan Swamigal of Srimad Paundarika-puram magnificently describes the details of Ramanuja's birth in his Upanyasams of Yatiraja Sapthati. Ramanujacharya look like Lakshmana in many compliments. Lakshmana's only ambition was unvarying tune-up to Lord Rama and Sita.

Similarly, Ramanuja's one and only rationale was high-powered fondness and unvarying service to Lord Narayana. When malevolence natured, self styled leaders impassive all traces of Bhakti in the hearts of men, Yatirajan through his bull-dog persistence, unconquerable incidence of mind, unflinching courage and indefatigable will single-handedly established the path of adoration to Lord Narayana and expound the code of belief of Vishistadvaita. Although he encounter abundant obstacle and mammoth difficulty in establish the ceaseless correlation between Lord Narayana and, his hard work were eventually hallowed with sensation. This was completely due to his Maha Vishvasam in Lord Narayana. A great deal has been written very eloquently on this forum by Srimans Sadagopan, Koti Sreekrishna and Anbil Ramaswamy about Ramanuja in the past.

Therefore, shall not focus on the details of an assortment of instance in his life. As an alternative, shall briefly refer to the highlights and enfold up my post with a listing of our Paramacharyan's works. As a young boy, he met Tirukacchi Nambigal who was eminent for his fan service to Varadaraja. Although, Tirukacchi Nambigal was a Sudra by caste, he was exceedingly esteemed for his well-known tune-up service to Lord Varadaraja. Varadaraja Seva was the sole motto in the life of Nambigal. As a result Tirukacchi Nambigal was sanctified with the exceptional dispensation of discuss with the Lord of Hastigiri.

Sadagopan post an outstanding rendition of the Devaraja Ashtakam by Tirukacchi Nambi on the circumstance of Nambigal. When Ramanuja predictable Nambigal's immense and wanted to gesture him, the latter protest that it was not adequate for a Brahmin to thus character a Sudra Tirukacchi Nambigal was flabbergasted by the profoundness of Ramanuja's repudiation (by using the example of Tiruppan Azhwar) of his squabble. Instantaneously, he renowned that Ramanuja was a unique person and took a immense penchant with him.

Ramanuja was connubial to Rakshakambal. Before long after his marriage, Ramanuja's father breathed his last. Anguish incapacitated, Ramanuja, his mother and his wife moved from Sriperumbudur to Kanchipuram. At Kanchipuram, he studied under the backing of Yadhava Prakashar, a prominent Advaita scholar. Ramanuja soon became the most wanted follower of Yadhava Prakasar. During the course of his study, Ramanujacharya came up with an alternate elucidation of the Chandogya Upanishad line "Kapyasam" and the Taittriya Upanishad gesture Satyam, Jnanam, Anantam Brahma. In explaining the latter gesture, Ramanuja without a doubt confirmed that the Brahman has the attribute of truth, understanding and infinitude. However, truth, brain power and infinitude are not the Brahman. He elaborate on this standard by using the resemblance "This body is mine, but I am not this body".

This became the opening point for establish the impression of Saguna Parabrahman. The ramification of respectfully disagreeing with his Guru, the resultant attempt on his life, and Ramanuja's escape from passing away through the grace of the Divya Dampatis are well known and shall not be discussed in this post. Subsequently, Yadhava Prakashar became a disciple of Ramanuja (This was after the former could not cure a Princess of a Brahma Rakshasa affliction).

Avatar Lakshana

Scholars have drawn comparison between Ramanuja and Krishna.

(a) Krishna is the younger brother of Balarama(Also called Rama) and is therefore Ramanuja.

(b) Krishna is the eighth child of Devaki and Vasudeva. Ramanuja is the eight in the line of Acharyas after Vishwaksena, Shatagopa, Nathamuni, Pundareekaksha, Ramamishra, Yamunacharya and Mahapurna

(c) While Krishna annihilated Kamsa Ramanuja vanquished the opponents of Vishistadwaitha.

(d) Krishna was born in Mathura, grew up in Gokul and settled in Dwaraka. Ramanuja was born in Bhoothapuri, grew up in Kanchi and settled in Srirangam.

(e) Krishna liberated Nala-Koobara (Yamularjunabhanga). Ramanuja liberated souls by cutting asunder bondage of Sukha-Dukha and Papa-Punya.

(f) Krishna had established supremacy over the seven worlds (And also the seven underworlds).Ramanuja established supremacy in Shruthi, Smrithi, Purana, Itihasa, Agama, Prabhandham, Acharyasukthi.

(g) Krishna protected Panchapandavas. Ramanuja confined Arthapanchaka and led to Jnanamarga.

THIRUKKACCHI NAMPI AND RAMANUJACHARYA

Thirukkacchi nampi was a key disciple of Alavandhar. He was doing fan service to Lord Varadarajan at Kaanchi and the Lord of Kaanchi broke His archa samadhi (silence) to speak to Thirukkacchi Nampi during those Chamara Kaimkaryam sessions. Ramanuja accepted Thirukkacchi Nampi for his access to the Lord and asked Nampi to get answers from the Lord Himself for questions that were disconcerting him. Nampi established to in attendance those questions to Lord Varadarajan. The Lord's answers to Ramanuja's questions are known as the six statements referred to below:

1. We, the Srimaan, are the supreme One (Parathvam).
2. Our darsanam is Bhedham.
3. Prapatthi is the means for Moksham.
4. Moksham will be gained at the time of shedding of the mortal coils for a Prapannan.
5. Take refuge at the feet of Periya Nampi as Acharyan.
6. Anthima Smruthi (Thoughts on the Lord during the last moments of life) is not essential for the One, who has performed Prapatthi.

Ramanuja was ecstatic to hear the information from the Lord Himself and accelerate to meet Periya Nampi living at Srirangam. Meanwhile, Periya

nampi had a dream in which he was requested by Sri Ranganatha to bring Ramanuja to Srirangam and groom him to become the next great Acharya to spread the darsanam. Periya nampi hasten on his journey towards Kanchi. Both Ramanuja and Periya Nampi met each other half way at Madhuranthakam.

Periya Nampi initiated Ramanuja into Sri Vishnavite fold through Panchasamskaram and manthra upadesams. Ramanuja at this time was a grahastha. Ramanuja's wife however had unswerving three major apacharams to Sri Vaishnava Bhaagavathas during the last few months of Ramanuja as a Grahastha and sishyar of Periya Nampi. Those incidents took a heavy toll on Ramanuja's mind. He concluded that Sanyaasam is better than Grahathasramam for him and declared his intentions to Lord varadaraja, who approved Ramanuja's request to enter into Sanyasasramam .Great Sri Vaishnavas like Nadadur Azhwan, Kooratthazhwan, and Mudali Aandan learnt about the news of Ramanuja becoming a Yathi and chose him as their own Acharyan. Yaadhava Prakasar, who resented Ramanuja earlier understood the greatness of his former supporter and sought the refuge of Ramanuja as his own Acharyan, although he was much older than his own former believer and lived peacefully at the hallowed feet of Ramanuja.

He was advised to seek guidance under Peria Nambi the Vaishnavite truth-seeker, at Srirangam. Peria-Nambi who was at Srirangam wanted to established Ramanuja as his successor, head of the Sri Vasihnava monastery (matha) at Srirangam and thus fulfill the desire of the departed acharya Alavandar, Peria-Nambi sent Tiruvarangaperumal Arayar (Vararanga) to Kanchi for engaging Ramanuja. Arayar was specially sent for this because he could sing his appeal magnificently before Perarulala and who would be moved to grant the beloved boon, namely, sending Ramanuja to Srirangam. Arayar succeeded in his undertaking. Ramanuja accompanied by his companions Mudaliandan and Kurattalvar and Arayar left kanchi and settled down at Srirangam. He then completed his studies under his teachers, namely, Tiruvarangapperumal Arayar and Tirumalai Andan at Srirangam.He also went to Thirukkottiyur and learnt the sacred Tirumandiram from TirukkottiyurNambi.

Thus, Ramanuja had the exceptional break to learning different aspects of the religious lore from Perila Nambi, Thirumalai Nambi, Thirukkottiyur–Nambi, Tirumalai Andan and Tiruvarangaperumal Arayar, who were all the disciples of the great Yamanacharya or Alavandar. After his Panchasamaskaram at Madhurantakam, his guru asked him to visit

Thirukoshtiyur and learn the Asthakshara mantram from Thirukoshtiyur Nambi. Ramanuja went to him and knocked at his door. When Nambi asked him who he was, he said, "I am Ramanuja" Thirukoshtiyur Nambi turned him back and the same thing happen times

The 18thtime, he said "Adiyen dasan Ramanuja," meaning your supporter and only then ThirukoshtiyurÑambi came out and told him that his superciliousness had gone. Ramanuja requested him to teach the Ashtakshara mantram to which Nambi said that he would teach on the circumstance that Ramanuja would not tell it to anyone else. After erudition the mantra

"Om Namo Narayana,"

Ramanuja went to the upper tier of the temple Vimanam and called out to the people in the village to come out and hear the mantra.Thirukoshtiyur Nambi got angry and said that if he exposed the mantra to others, he would go to hell. To this, Ramanuja replied that if he revealed, it all the people audible range and chanting it would go to Vaikuntam and only he would go to hell and he favorite this rather than he alone going to Vaikuntam. Thirukoshtiyur Nambi realizes his mistake and called him Emperumanar, meaning my lord. there are undo sannadhis for Ramanuja and Thirukoshtiyur Nambi in the temple. There is a statue of Ramanuja in the Ashtanga Vimanam at the place from where he preached the Ashtakshara mantram to the people of Thirukoshtiyur

Ramanuja known as Emperumanar

Impressed with Ramanuja's reply, Nambi told him "Nee Emperumanar Aanar (you have become my lord)." Hence Ramanuja here is called Emperumanar Ramanuja and Nambi has a separate sannadhi at this temple. Outside the Nambi Sannadhi is a board that contains the list of 18 Thirumandhiram. On the third tier, on the southern side one can see a marvelously sculpted statue of Ramanuja in a sitting posture to mark the Thirumandhiram pronunciation to the world.

Thirukkottiyoor Nambhi 18 times for getting Thirumanthra upadesam. Each time, it appears Nambhi uttered a announcement to Yatiraja every time visited Nambhi and he finally gave Ramanuja thirumanthra upadesam. Following are those 18 proclamation:

1. For jnanis who are born in this world, he does not get attached to the worldly matters. To attain moksham, one has to get rid of further births;
2. The light, that is born from the fire (or lit), is stable and steady only when there is a gentle breeze. Similarly, once when satvik tendency

crops up in one's mind, Ahankaara, Mamakaarangal will vanish and then only the seed of future births will start getting removed slowly.

3. Unless ahankaara, Mamakaarangal go off, the attachment to the physical body (dEhaabhimaanam) will not go away;
4. Unless Dehaabhimaanam goes off, Athma Jnanam will not be born.
5. Unless Athma Jnanam is born, there will not be any disliking and hatred towards material wealth and sensual desires.
6. Unless there exist a disinterest and hatred towards material wealth and sensual pleasures, Bhagawadh Bhakti will not come.
7. The attachment to five senses will automatically vanish when Bhawadh Bhakti is born.
8. Unless the attachment to five senses and sensual desires go off, Paarathanthriyam will not be born.
9. Paarathanthriyam leads one to stay away from running after money, kaamam, dwEsham, etc...
10. Unblessed Wesham, kaamam go off, Sri VaishNavam will not materialize.
11. Sri Vaishnathvam gets the recognition from other Saatviks.
12. That Saatvik angheekaaram (recognition/acceptance) lead one to Bhagawatha angheekaaram.
13. Bhagawatha angheekaaram lead to Bhagawadh angheekaaram.
14. Unless Bhagawath Angheekaaram is obtained, one will not be able to ask for any other fruits except for Bhagawaan alone.
15. Unless one gets over the desire for other fruits, he will not get the Athma lakshanam of being an eternal servant to Emperumanar.
16. Unless one gets such jnanam that the Athma is the eternal servant to Emperumanar alone, he will not get the jnanam that Bhagawaan alone is the means (upaayam) for attaining His Lotus Feet.
17. Unless one gets such a Jnanam that Bhagawaan is the upaayam, he does not get to become a Vaishnavan at all.
18. And only for such Sri vaishnavan, thirumanthram can yield benefits.

To commemorate this religious event, the most important festival Nambigal – Utsavam is celebrated in the Vaigasi month, on the Rohini the birth star of Thirukoshtiyur Nambi. This festival is celebrated every year for eleven days to honor Thirukoshtiyur Nambi. His bronze sculpture is taken to circumnutated the four streets around the temple for the devotees to offer their prayers.

YAMUNACARYA

In the south of India many great devotees have appeared to spread the glories of the Lord. Of all these devotees, perhaps the most famous is Ramanuja, whose life is the subject of this book. However, just before Ramanuja there lived another great Vaisnava whose life and teachings had a tremendous influence on Ramanuja, although in fact the two of them never met. This was Yamunacarya, also known as Alavandar - "The Conqueror." It is appropriate in considering the life of Ramanuja that we should first look briefly at this great soul, the illustrious writer of the famous Stotra-ratna. Yamunacarya was born around AD 918 in the city of Madurai in south India, which was then the capital of the mighty Pandya kings.

His grandfather was a well-known scholar and devotee known as Nathamuni, who was also famous for his mystic abilities and expertise in the practice of astanga yoga. It was Nathamuni who first compiled the songs of Nammalvara, a famous south Indian aficionado, and had them set to music. Nathamuni's son was a handsome, intelligent young man named Isvaramuni, who married a beautiful young wife. Shortly after the wedding, Isvaramuni traveled with his wife and parents to visit the holy places of pilgrimage in northern India, including Vrndavana, the birthplace of Lord Krsna. Just a few months after their return from this pilgrimage, Isvaramuni's wife gave birth to a baby boy, and, in memory of the sacred river which flows through Vrndavana, Nathamuni named him Yamuna.

However, the joy of the young couple was but short-lived, for just a few years after the birth of the child Svara muni passed from this world, leaving his young wife a widow. Nathamuni was so distressed by the untimely death of his son that he decided to have no more to do with the affairs of this world. He left his wife and relatives to take up the life of a renounced sannyasi, totally dedicating himself to the worship of Lord Vishnu. Thus at a very young age Yamunacarya was left to be brought up by his mother and aged grandmother, living a life of great paucity.

THE CHALLENGE

When he was five years old, Yamunacarya went to study at the school of Bhasyacarya and quickly won his teacher's affection, both for his sweet nature and his ability to learn quickly. He studied hard, and by the time he was twelve years old he was Bhasyacarya's best student.11 In those days in India, great scholars used to challenge one another to see who was the more learned in Vedic scriptures and more skilled in the science of logic While Yamunacarya was studying at the school of Bhasyacarya, there was a great scholar who lived at the court of the Pandya king. His name was Kolahala,

and he was a great favorite of the king because he could defeat any other scholar in a debate. In fact, the king had passed a law decreeing that every scholar who had been defeated by Kolahala must pay a tax to him every year - if anyone refused he would be put to death. Now Yamunacarya's teacher, Bhasyacarya, had also been defeated by Kolahala, and so he too was obliged to pay this tax. However, because he was a very poor man, he had not been able to pay for the past two years.

One day, when Bhasyacarya was away on business and all the other students had gone home, Yamunacarya was left alone in the school. At that time one of Kolahala's disciples came there to collect the overdue tax from Bhasyacarya. "Where is your teacher?" he demanded in imperious tones when he saw that Yamunacarya was alone in the school Might I know, sir, who has sent you here?" replied Yamunacarya in a very gentle voice, anxious not to give any offense. What!" exclaimed the disciple, "do you not know that I am a disciple of the greatest and most erudite scholar in all of India? Kolahala is the terror of all other scholars, and even the great Pandya king is his obedient servant. All those scholars defeated by the great Kolàhala must pay a yearly tax or else forfeit their lives. Has your teacher become insane that he dares to withhold payment for two years? Or is it that he intends to challenge my master again, just as a moth rushes into a blazing fire." amunacarya was by nature very kindhearted, and he hardly ever quarreled with his fellow students. However, he also had great love and respect for his teacher.

Therefore, when he heard Bhasyacarya being spoken of in that contemptuous manner, he felt such pain at heart that he could not restrain himself and replied very strongly to Kolahala's messenger. "How foolish you are and how foolish your teacher is as well, for whom but the greatest fool would train his disciple to possess such monumental pride, instead of removing such qualities from his heart. Why should my noble teacher waste his time debating with such a man? Go and tell your master that the lowest disciple of the great Bhasyacarya challenges him to a debate. If he dares to face me, let him send his reply at once."

PREPARATIONS FOR THE DEBATE

Kolahala's disciple was so astonished and indignant that he could not think of anything to say, but left in a 12furious rage to inform his teacher of this insult. When Kolahala heard what had happened, he could not help but laugh on hearing the age of his rival. The Pandya king decided to send another messenger to the boy to see whether he was insane, and, if he was serious about the debate, to bring him immediately. When the royal

messenger came and told Yamunacarya of the king's command, the boy replied, "I will certainly obey the command of his majesty the king; but if I am to be accepted as a proper opponent of the great Kolahala, then surely a conveyance should be sent to bring me to the palace" After discussing Yamunacarya's reply, the king and his courtiers agreed that the boy's statement was fitting and sent a costly palanquin and one-hundred soldiers to conduct him to the palace.

In the meantime news of these events had spread all over the city of Madurai, and Bhasyacarya heard the whole story as he was returning home. He was very unhappy to learn of the danger his favorite student was facing, for though the king was generous by nature, it was well known that he dealt very severely with anyone who insulted the court pandita. Yamunacarya, however, was not in the least concerned. "There is no reason, revered sir, for you to be alarmed," he consoled his teacher when he returned to the school, "For you can be certain that, by your grace, I will smash the pride of Kolahala." While they were thus talking, the king's men arrived at the school with the palanquin. Yamunacarya worshipped the feet of his guru and calmly climbed into the palanquin, preparing himself for the great debate that was about to take place. A large crowd of people had gathered along the way, for it was unheard of that a twelve-year-old boy should challenge the court pandita and everyone wanted to catch a glimpse of the wonderful child. The Brahmans, many of whom had already been defeated by Kolahala, offered him blessings, saying, "May you defeat this insolent pandita, just as Vishnu in the form of a dwarf Brahman displaced Bali Maharaja, the king of the asuras."

Meanwhile, in the royal court a difference of opinion rose between the king and queen about Yamunacarya. The king said, "Just as a cat plays with a mouse, so will Kolahala defeat and destroy the boy". But the queen was more thoughtful, realizing that Yamunacarya was no ordinary child. "Just as a small spark," she said, "can turn a mountain of cloth to ashes, so will this boy destroy the mountain-like pride of Kolahala." "How can you really believe that this is possible?" exclaimed the king in amazement. "If you truly have faith in the child, then you must make a wager to back your words". "Very well," replied the queen, "I will make a wager. If the boy does not defeat and humble the proud Kolahala, I will become the servant of your maidservant." This is certainly a mighty wager," said the king, "but I will match it.

If the boy defeats Kolahala, as you say, then I will give him half of my kingdom." While the king and queen were thus exchanging wagers, the palanquin arrived and Yamunacarya entered the palace. When Kolahala

saw him, he looked at the queen and smiled sarcastically. "Ala-bandara," he said, meaning, "Is this the boy who will conquer me?" "Yes," replied the queen quietly, "Ala-bandara. This is he who has come to conquer you."

THE CONTEST

When the contestants were seated, Kolahala began the debate by putting simple questions on Sanskrit grammar to Yamunacarya. When, however, he found the boy could answer them with ease, he began to pose really difficult grammatical problems; but still, Yamunacarya replied to them all without difficulty. He then spoke to the great pandita with a playful smile on his lips. "Because I am just a boy, you are insulting me by asking these simple questions. Remember that Astavakra was no older than me when he defeated Bandi at the court of King Janaka. If you judge a person's learning by his size, then surely it follows that the water buffalo will be a greater scholar than yourself."

Although Kolahala winced at these words, he controlled his anger and replied smilingly, "Well answered. Now it is your turn to put questions to me". "Very well," Yamunacarya responded, "I will put three propositions before you, and, if you can refute them, I shall accept defeat." Kolahala agreed and prepared to refute Yamunacarya's statements. "My first proposition is this," Yamunacarya spoke out clearly and boldly, "that your mother is not a barren woman. Refute this if you can." Hearing this, Kolahala remained silent. "Had my mother been barren, my birth would not have been possible," he thought. "How can I refute his statement?"

Seeing Kolahala as silent as a dumb man, all the courtiers were astonished. Although the great pandita tried to conceal his anxiety, he could not prevent a flush from crossing his cheeks. Yamunacarya spoke again, "Sir, if in spite of your all-conquering intelligence you are unable to refute my first proposition, and then please hear my second. It is this, that the Pandya king is supremely righteous. Refute this if you can."

On hearing this Kolahala, was deeply disturbed, sensing his imminent defeat. With the king seated there in front of him, how could he deny the boy's statement? Again he remained silent, the color draining from his face as he was scarcely able to control his anger Ramunacarya spoke again, "Here is my third proposition-which the queen of the Pandya king is as chaste14 and faithful to her husband as was Savitri. Refute this if you can." Seeing how he had once again been trapped by the intelligent boy, Kolahala could no longer restrain his anger. "You rascal," he screamed, "How can any loyal subject say that his king is unrighteous or his queen unfaithful to her

husband? It is true I have not replied to your statements, but that does not mean I am defeated.

First you must refute your own propositions, and, if you cannot, you should be put to death, for the implications of your words are treason against your king and queen." When Kolahala shouted out these words, all his disciples and supporters cheered; but all those who favored Yamunacarya cried, "No, Kolahala is defeated. He is simply letting forth his anger, because he could not refute the statements of Yamunacarya as he promised to do."

Thus an argument broke out in the palace, but in the midst of the contention Yamunacarya quieted them all by saying, "Please stop this argument, for it is unnecessary. I shall refute all my propositions one by one. Please hear me" At this everyone fell silent and turned their attention to Yamunacarya, wondering how he could possibly do this and yet not offend the king and queen. "My first statement," he continued, "was that our great pandita's mother was not a barren woman. However, it is stated in the Manusamhita that a woman who has only one child is to be considered barren. As your mother gave birth to only one son, even though he is a man of such merit as yourself, according to the sastra, she must be considered barren. Secondly, I stated that the king of the Pandyas is a most righteous man.

However, the Manu' samhita states that a king enjoys the benefit of one sixth of the religious acts of his subjects, but also has to bear the burden of one sixth of their sinful deeds. Because in the present age of Kali men are more prone toward sinfulness than piety, it must follow that our king, although flawless in his own character, is bearing a heavy burden of unrighteousness.

And now to my third proposition, which stated that our queen is as chaste and faithful as was Savitri. But again, if we consult the laws of Manu, it is said that the king is the representative of Agni, Vayu, Surya, Candra, Yama, Kuvera, Varuna, and Indra. Therefore, the queen is married not just to one man, but to these eight demigods as well. So how can it be said that she is chaste?" On hearing these wonderful answers, all the people were filled with amazement and the queen joyfully cried out, "Alabandara! Alabandara!- He has conquered! He has conquered!" The king immediately came forward and embraced Yamunacarya. "Just as on the rising of the sun," he said, "all the insignificant stars fade away, so you, O learned Alabandara, have conquered the proud Kolahala by your learning and skill. This fellow just a short while ago was 15 demanding your death, now you may deal with him as you see fit.

I have also promised to give you half my kingdom as a prize for this victory, and that promise I will certainly fulfill." Of course, Yamunacarya forgave Kolahala, and, although he was but a boy of twelve years, he began at once to rule the kingdom he had won. Thus his days of poverty were over.

YAMUNACARYA AS A KING

When Yamunacarya became the ruler of half the kingdom of the Pandyas, some of the neighboring kings saw this as a fine opportunity to invade and plunder his lands. When he learned of this from his spies, the boy king marched against them with a strong army before they were prepared, and they were all forced to surrender to him. In this way he enlarged his domain and began to rule the kingdom. Unfortunately, although he was a shrewd and righteous monarch, he became distracted from his spiritual understanding by political dealings and the sense pleasures that go along with a high position. He forgot that this life is but a temporary stage in our eternal existence and gradually gave up his acts of devotion to Lord Vishnu.

RAMA MISRA'S SCHEME

Meanwhile, Nathamuni, Yamunacarya's grand-father, passed from this world to return to the lotus feet of the Lord. He had always loved Yamunacarya very dearly, and he was filled with sorrow to hear how his grandson had abandoned the path of devotion for the sake of enjoying sensual pleasures. Therefore, when he was on his deathbed, he called for his chief disciple, Rama Misra, and made a last request of him: "My dear grandson, Yamunacarya, who is known as Alabandara, has forgotten the greatness and glory of Lord Vishnu, being attracted by the temporary pleasures of this material world. Now I am preparing to give up my life, and I can do nothing more to deliver him. Therefore my last request to you is that you save my grandson from the darkness of nescience in which he is now sunk.

I leave him to your care." Rama Misra, being a dutiful disciple, never forgot this last instruction of his guru-maharaja. Therefore, several years later when Yamunacarya was thirty-five years old, he went to his palace seeking an interview. However, when he arrived there, he saw that the gateway to the palace was crowded with the chariots and soldiers of different kings.

Even powerful noblemen had to wait for a long time before they were able to gain an audience with the mighty Alabandara. As a poor sannyasi

beggar, Rama Misra realized 16that there was little chance of his ever getting to see Yamunacarya and that he would have to think of a plan by which to accomplish his mission. As well as being a great devotee and preacher, Rama Misra was also learned in the science of Ayur-veda. There is a certain type of spinach, known as tuduvalai, which grows in South India. This tuduvalai is famous for developing the qualities of goodness in a man, making his mind peaceful and serene. Rama Misra found some of these plants growing near the palace. Collecting the green leaves, he brought them to the chief cook in the royal kitchen.

When the cook came to see him, Rama Misra addressed him as follows, "May Lord Narayana bless you. I beg you to lease serve these tuduvalai leaves to the king every day, for it is well known that he is a pious man. By eating this herb he will be able to develop his qualities of goodness and also increase the duration of his life. Every day I will bring some here to you." As it happened the cook was a pious man who knew the value of the tuduvalai plant and he happily agreed to Rama Misra's proposal. Thus, every day for two months Rama Misra brought the green leaves of the tuduvalai plant to the royal kitchen, and every day they were served to Yamunacarya, who very much appreciated them. When Rama Misra heard this, he deliberately stayed away one day; when the king found that the tuduvalai preparation was absent from his plate, he called for the cook.

"Why did you not cook that spinach preparation for me today?" he asked. "Your majesty," the cook replied, "the sadhu who usually brings the spinach did not come today." Who is this sadhu and what price does he ask for his service?" asked Yamunacarya. "My Lord," replied the cook, "I do not know the name or dwelling place of that sadhu. He will accept no payment at all for his service and renders it only out of love and regard for your majesty." On hearing this Alabandara told the cook, "If this man comes again, show him due respect and bring him to me."

The next day Rama Misra again brought tuduvalai leaves to the kitchen door, and the cook at once brought him to Yamunacarya. Seeing that pious Brahman before him, the king was delighted and said, "Holy sage, I am your servant. Please accept my obeisance's at your feet. I have heard that every day you gather and bring tuduvalai for me and will accept no payment for this service. Is there anything that I can do for you?" Hearing its Rama Misra said, "I have something very important to tell you, but it must be in private". When the cook had been dismissed, he went on. "Some years back your grandfather, the renowned Nathamuni, left this world and returned to Vaikuntha. Before he departed, however, he left in my care a great treasure to be given to you at the right time.

Now I am asking you to accept this treasure' Yamunacarya was very pleased to hear these words, for at that time he was preparing a campaign against a rebellious king and was in great need of money. Knowing what a wonderful person his grandfather had been, he readily believed the sadhus words. In great delight he said to Rama Misra, "Sir, you are certainly a most saintly person, being o renounced that you have not kept this treasure for yourself. Now please tell me where it is to be found."

Rama Misra answered, "If you follow me I will take you there. It is kept within seven walls, between two rivers, guarded by a great serpent. Every twelve years a demon from the south goes to inspect the treasure, which is guarded by mantra. Through the power of mantra the treasure will be revealed to you." In fact the treasure that Rama Misra was describing was the beauty of Lord Ranganatha, the Deity who resides within a seven-walled temple on an island in the Kaveri River. The serpent is the bed of Ananta-Sesa, on whom the Lord is reclining. It is said that this Deity was first installed by Vibhisana, the brother of Ravana, and that every twelve years he goes to Rangaksetra to worship the Lord. The powerful mantra is the holy name of the Lord, for by chanting the holy name one is able to gain the transcendental vision by which one can appreciate that the Deity is non-different from the Lord Himself.

YAMUNACARYA'S CONVERSION

However, Alabandara could not understand the real meaning of Rama Misra's words, and, being anxious to acquire the treasure, he said, "I am ready to go there immediately along with four divisions of my army. Please be our guide" "It is better if we go alone," replied Rama Misra, "for it is not advisable for many people to assemble there."

The king accepted this proposal, and, having made arrangements for the management of the kingdom in his absence, he prepared to set out with the sadhu. Leaving the city of Madurai behind them, they traveled in a northerly direction. At noon, while they were resting from the heat of the sun, Rama Misra began to chant the verses of the Bhagavad-gita. It was many years since Yamunacarya had read and studied this great scripture, and while he had ruled as a king the sublime teachings of the Gita had been far from his heart. But now, as he listened to Rama Misra's sweet voice bringing forth the words of Krsna, he began to realize the illusory nature of his position as a king and to see how he was neglecting the real goal of life. When Rama Misra had finished chanting all the eighteen chapters, Yamunacarya fell down at his feet and begged, "Please accept me as your servant, so that I may be able to continually relish the sweet nectar of Sri Krishna's words.

Now, as I hear from you, 18all the pleasures of my worldly lives seem pale and insignificant." At this Rama Misra smiled and said, "If you have the time to spare, then why not stay here for a few days and study the Gita with me." Now that a taste of the real value of life had begun to reawaken in the heart of the king, his concern over material affairs was diminished. "Whatever duties I may have in this world," he replied, "certainly the most important duty for every man is to understand the true meaning of the Bhagavad-gita." Thus, the two of them remained in that solitary place for almost a week, and every day Rama Misra spoke on the sublime teachings of the Gita, while Yamunacarya listened with rapt attention. With every word that the sadhu spoke, the king's attachment for his material opulence was diminished. This is natural, for once one becomes truly aware of the glory and sweetness of the Supreme Lord, Sri Krsna, and the pleasures of this world seem worthless in comparison.

When Rama Misra reached the eighth verse of the twelfth chapter, he sang in a voice choked with tears, mayy eva mana adhatsvamayi buddhim nivesayanivasisyasi mayy evaata urdhvam na samsayah"Just fix your mind upon Me, the Personality of Godhead, and engage all of your intelligence in Me. Thus you will live in Me always without a doubt."

When he heard this wonderful verse, Yamunacarya was filled with remorse and cried out, "Alas! Alas! All these years I have wasted my life, with my mind and intelligence absorbed only in thoughts of lust and wealth. When will that day come when I will be able to remove such useless things from my heart and fix my mind completely on the lotus feet of Sri Krsna?" Hearing this pure sentiment, Rama Misra consoled the king, saying, "Your majesty, your pure mind rests always on the lotus feet of the Lord. Just for a short time it has been captivated by worldly desires, as a small cloud obscures the sun's rays for a short time. Now that cloud has almost gone, and the sun will shine again and dispel the darkness from your heart."w At this point Alabandara decided that he wanted no more to do with material life, and so he told Rama Misra, "Now, all I desire is to become your disciple, and so I have no need of the wealth left by my grandfather." "But I gave my word to Nathamuni," replied Rama Misra, "and so I must deliver the treasure to you to keep my vow intact.

Now let us continue our journey together." After walking for four days, they reached the banks of the Kaveri River and the next day crossed over to the 19island on which stands the sacred temple of Sri Ranganatha. Rama Misra led Yamunacarya through the six outer gates, until they stood before the doors of the temple room itself.

Then Rama Misra said, "In front of us lying on the bed of Ananta-Sesa is the treasure that was your grandfather's only property - Ranganatha, the Lord of Laksmidevi, the most beautiful of all personalities." Hearing these words, Yamunacarya ran forward and fell unconscious at the feet of the Deity. From that day he had no desire to resume his royal position. He took initiation from Rama Misra and spent the rest of his days totally absorbed in service to Sri Ranganatha. Part of his kingdom was returned to the Pandya kings, and a part of it he gave for the service of Lord Ranganatha. He received from his guru the mantra of eight syllables - Om namo narayanaya and by chanting this mantra he attained the topmost platform of loving devotion to the Lord. On the order of Rama Misra he learned the art of mystic yoga and meditation from Kurakanatha, who had been instructed in that science by Nathamuni himself.

After the disappearance of his guru, Alabandara was accepted as the head of the Vaisnava community. Whilst he was the acarya at Sri Rangam, he wrote four books of Vaisnava philosophy, as well as many prayers in glorification of the Supreme Lord. In particular he was devoted to the writings of his ancestor Nammalvara, which he recited constantly and taught to all of his disciples. Eventually the king of the Cholas and his queen were also converted, and they dedicated themselves to the worship of Lord Vishnu. All the devotees in south India adored Yamunacarya for his renunciation, learning, humility, and steadfast devotion.

RAMANUJA'S STUDENT LIFE

One of Yamunacarya's chief sannyasi disciples was Sri Sailapurna. He had two sisters, the elder named Kantimati and the younger named Diptimati. Kantimati was married to a very pious Brahman known as Asuri Kesavacarya. Because of his expertise in the performance of all five kinds of fire sacrifice, he was also known as Sarvakratu.

Years passed by, and the couple lived happily in the village of Bhutapuri, but, because they still had no children, Kesavacarya became disturbed at heart. He decided to perform a fire sacrifice to please the Lord and thus beg Him for the gift of a son. For this purpose he journeyed 20with his wife to the temple of Sri Partha-sarathi on the shores of the ocean, in what is now the city of Madras. There they performed sacrifices together, begging the Lord to be merciful to them and grant them the benediction of a son. Certainly Lord Vishnu was pleased by their prayers, for about one year later Kantimati gave birth to a baby boy, who bore all auspicious marks on his body. This was in the year AD 1017, and it was this child who grew up to be renowned all over the world as Ramanuja the great devotee of Lord

Narayana. At about the same time, Kantimati's younger sister, Diptimati, also gave birth to a son.

On hearing the news of the births of his two nephews, Saila-purna, the intimate disciple of Yamunacarya, came to visit them. He was astonished to see all the auspicious marks on the body of Kantimati's son, and he gave him the name Ramanuja, a name of Laksmana which means the younger brother of Rama. To Diptimati's son he gave the name Govinda.

THE FIVE ACHARYANS OF ACHARYA RAMANUJA

Five great disciples of Alavandhar following the command of their Acharyan instructed Ramanuja on the essentials of Sri Vaishnavam .

Periya Nampi or Maha Poornar performed not only Pancha samskarams for Ramanuja but also taught him the Brahma Soothras, the Bhagavadgita and the esoteric meanings (rahasyArthams) of the Sri Vaishnavite Rahasyams.

Goshti PoorNar or Thirukkottiyur Nampi tested the readiness of Ramanuja many times and finally trained him in the observance of Ari Vaishnavite religious practices as per the three Rahasyas.

Maaladhara or Thirumalai Andan taught Ramanuja Bhagavadh Vishayam or the subtle meanings of Nammazhwar's Thiruvaimozhi Paasurams (Dravida samhitha).

Thiruvarangapperumal or Alavandhar Aazhwan instructed Ramanuja on the comprehensive text of Thiruvaimozhi, the Sri Sookthis of Alavandhar and some auspicious sayings (Subhashithams).

Srisaila Poorna or Thirumalai nampi, the uncle of Ramanuja taught the inner meanings of Srimadh Raamayana Slokams. Since Ramayana is known as the Saranagathi Saasthram, this acquisition of knowledge from a revered elder Acharyan such as Thirumalai Nampi was an important feature of Raman jar's tutelage.

MEETING WITH KANCIPURNA

As Ramanuja grew, the brilliance of his intellect soon became apparent. When he began to attend school, he could easily remember anything he was taught, even after hearing it only once. All the teachers in the school loved the boy, not only because he was a brilliant scholar, but also because of his gentle, courteous nature. At that time there was a famous devotee of the Lord named Kancipurna, who lived in the nearby city of Kancipuram. He was a disciple of Yamunacarya, and, although he was born in a Sudra family, his intense devotion to the Lord was so apparent that even strict

Brahmans would offer him all respect. Every day he would travel from the city of Kanci to the village of Poonamalle to worship the Deity there. As Bhutapuri was midway between the two places, he would daily pass by Ramanuja's house.

One evening as Ramanuja was returning home from school, he met Kancipurna face to face and was immediately attracted by the demeanor of this holy man. With great humility Ramanuja invited Kancipurna to come to his house for a meal, and the great devotee readily agreed, being very much attracted to this gentle Brahman boy. After his guest had finished his meal, Ramanuja began to massage his feet. At this Kancipurna protested, "I am nothing but a low-born Sudra and am thus your servant. It is not proper for a brahmana like you to deal with me in such a way." Ramanuja replied, "If my position as a Brahman prevents me from worshipping a great soul such as you, then I consider my birth to be the most inauspicious. Is it just the wearing of a cheap thread that makes one a Brahman? Only that person who is fully devoted to Lord Vishnu is a real Brahman, no one else." Kancipurna was filled with wonder and delight to hear the boy's firm faith in devotional service.

Long into the night the two of them sat up discussing topics about the Lord and the ways of devotion. That night Kancipurna stayed at Ramanuja's house and proceeded on his journey the next morning. From that day forth both of these great devotees were bound together by the love that each bore for the other.

MOVING TO KANCIPURAM

When Ramanuja was only sixteen years old, his father, Asuri Kesavacarya, wanted to get him married. Accordingly, he selected a beautiful young girl to be his son's bride and made all the arrangements for the wedding celebration. The festivities lasted for an entire week and all the poor people of the neighborhood were satisfied by the distribution of large amounts of prasadam. After the couple had been married for only one month, however, tragedy struck the family - Kesavacarya left this world. Kantimati was afflicted with terrible grief, and for Ramanuja also it was a time of great sorrow. Now that Kesavacarya had left them, Bhutapuri was no longer a happy place for the family, and they decided to move to the city of Kanci. Ramanuja went first to construct a residence for them, and when it was completed they all moved there.

AT THE SCHOOL OF YADAVAPRAKASA

At that time a very learned scholar was living at Kanci. His name was

Yadavaprakasa, and the fame of scholarship had attracted a large group of disciples to him. Being desirous of understanding the Vedic literatures, Ramanuja also became his student, and his pleasant nature and quick intelligence soon endeared him to the great pandita. However, this relationship did not last for very long, for despite his learning and knowledge of the scriptures, Yadavaprakasa was a firm adherent of the mayavada philosophy of absolute oneness. He taught that the all-pervading Brahman was the Absolute Truth and that the personal God, Lord Vishnu, was illusory. Ramanuja was a pure devotee of the Lord, and so he was pained to hear the statements of Yadavaprakasa, that denied the supremacy of his beloved Lord. Out of humility and respect for his guru, Ramanuja would not point out the defects in these impersonality teachings, but the situation gradually became impossible to tolerate

THE FIRST CONFRONTATION

One day when the other students had gone home to take lunch, Yadavaprakasa asked Ramanuja to massage his body with oil. At that time one of the other students returned to the school to discuss with his teacher a passage from the Chandogya Upanishad they had been studying that morning. In particular he inquired about the word kapyasam, which occurs in the first chapter, part six, verse seven. Therein it is stated, kapyasam pundarikam evam aksini. Following Sankaracarya's interpretation, Yadavaprakasa began to explain that kapyasam referred to rear-end of a monkey and that the whole passage meant that the Supreme Lord had eyes like lotuses as red as a monkey's rear-end.

On hearing this horrible explanation of the appearance of his beloved Lord, Ramanuja, who was still massaging his guru, was filled with such intense grief that hot tears immediately began to pour from his eyes. When Yadavaprakasa felt the touch of these tears, he looked up in surprise. Seeing Ramanuja's distress, he asked what was causing him such pain. To this inquiry Ramanuja replied, "O masters, it causes me such suffering to hear this terrible explanation from a great soul like you. How sinful it is to compare the beautiful lotus eyes of the Lord to the posterior of a monkey. I never expected to hear such a thing from my teacher."Yadavaprakasa was angered by this challenge from one of his own students, and he replied sharply, "I also am very aggrieved. Impudent words from an inferior are never praiseworthy. If you have become so proud that you think yourself a better teacher than me, and then let us hear your explanation of the passage."

"By your mercy everything is possible" replied Ramanuja. Yadavaprakasa smiled derisively. "Now we are going to see this boy outdo

the great Sankaracarya," he said. Ramanuja remained peaceful, and when he spoke it was in a very humble way. "Instead of understanding the posterior of a monkey from the word kapyasam, "he said, "another meaning is possible. Ka-pi can be taken as kam jalam pibati, that which drinks up the water, or, in other words, the sun. The word asam also means to blossom, so the whole word kapi-asam can be understood as that which blossoms under the sun, or, in other words, the lotus flower. Thus we can understand the mantra of the Upanishad to mean that the Lord has eyes as beautiful as the lotus flower." Yadavaprakasa was very surprised to hear such a clever explanation from one of his own students and he realized that Ramanuja was a staunch adherent of the devotional philosophy of dualism.

The devotees understand that the perfection of life is to worship Lord Vishnu without any personal desire, and so they never aspire for oneness as the mayavadis do. This philosophy was directly opposed to the teachings of Yadavaprakasa and after this incident his affection for Ramanuja began to wane.

MORE CONFLICTS AT SCHOOL

A few days later when Yadavaprakasa was instructing his students from the Taittiriya Upanishad, he made the statement that the Supreme Brahman is Truth, Knowledge, and Infinity. On hearing this impersonal idea of God, Ramanuja could not contain himself. He immediately objected to his teacher's explanation, saying, "No, this verse means that the Supreme possesses Truth, Knowledge, and Infinity, but still He has His own existence beyond these attributes." Angered by this unexpected interruption, Yadavaprakasa replied, "You presumptuous child, if you won't accept my explanations, then why do you come here? Why not go home and start a school of your own?"

When he had composed himself somewhat, he went on more quietly, "Your explanation is not in accordance with Sankaracarya or any of the previous acaryas, so kindly keep your impertinence to yourself." By nature Ramanuja was humble and meek, and so he tried to avoid such confrontations with his teacher.

However, he was also absolutely devoted to knowledge of the truth: thus, when he heard the misleading monist interpretations being put forward by Yadavaprakasa, he was sometimes unable to contain himself. In the presence of the other students Yadavaprakasa used to make light of these challenges, but in his heart there began to growing fear and hatred for the boy. "As he grows older," he contemplated, "this boy will strongly establish the dualistic philosophy of devotion. This must not be allowed to

happen. I will do whatever is necessary to protect the doctrine of monism, even if it means that I have to kill him."

YADAVAPRAKASA'S PLOT

Actually, Yadavaprakasa was very envious of Ramanuja, seeing in him both a purer heart and a greater intellect than his own. One day, therefore, he called all his other students to a secret meeting. There he addressed them, "My dear children, none of you has ever found fault with my teachings, but this impudent Ramanuja has repeatedly challenged my explanations. He may be an intelligent boy, but all his ideas are based on the false doctrine of dualism, seeing a difference between the self and God. He is a complete heretic who will cause havoc in society through his teachings. We must find some way to be rid of him." "Sir, surely you could just forbid him from coming to the school," suggested one student." But then our master's worst fears would be realized," responded another, "for he would open his own school and go on propagating his falsehoods all the more.

Already he has written a commentary on the mantra: satyam jnanam anantam Brahma, which contradicts everything we have learned from our teacher." This was true, for Ramanuja had effectively refuted Sankara's explanations: and his writing had been widely read and appreciated by Vaisnavas in south India, including Yamunacarya at Rangaksetra.After discussing the matter for some time, they all agreed the only way to stop Ramanuja was to kill him. They then began to consider how this could be done secretly without anyone discovering their crime. Eventually Yadavaprakasa made a proposal, "Let us all go on pilgrimage to bathe in the Ganges. On the way there are many remote areas, where we can put an end to this heretic without anyone knowing anything about it.

By bathing in the sacred Ganges we will free ourselves from the sin of killing a Brahman and when we return we will simply say he felt sick and died on the journey." All the disciples readily accepted their teacher's suggestion and set out to induce Ramanuja to accompany them on their journey.

Ramanuja was delighted at the idea of bathing in the Ganges and happily accepted their invitation. Govinda, Ramanuja's cousin, was living with his aunt in Kancipuram at this time, and he also studied at the school of Yadavaprakasa. When Ramanuja announced that he was going on pilgrimage to North India, Govinda immediately decided to go with his beloved friend and relative.

DANGER IN THE FOREST

Kantimati was unhappy at the prospect of being separated from her son for so many months, but, understanding the meritorious nature of such a venture, she gave him her permission to go. So it was that, at an auspicious moment, the band of disciples, headed by Yadavaprakasa, started out on the pilgrimage. After a few days traveling they came to a desolate region near the Vindhya Hills. Yadavaprakasa considered that this would be a suitable place to put his evil plan into operation, and he told his disciples to prepare themselves. However, while they were discussing the final preparations, Govinda was in the forest nearby, and he heard everything they said. As soon as he had the opportunity, he informed Ramanuja of the great danger he was in.

When he understood the wicked intentions of his teacher and fellow students, Ramanuja left the party and fled into the forest. When his absence was noticed, Yadavaprakasa sent some of the boys into the forest to search for him, but when no one replied to their calls, they concluded that Ramanuja must have been killed by some wild beast. Although secretly very pleased by this apparent turn of events, because of Govinda's presence, they all pretended to be very much aggrieved. Yadavaprakasa spoke to Govinda, instructing him about the temporary nature of the body and bodily relationships, thus revealing his cunning and treacherous nature.

MEETING WITH THE HUNTER

When Ramanuja heard from Govinda of the plot that was threatening his life, he was at first stunned and completely bewildered, it was just half an hour before nightfall: he was a young man of only eighteen years, alone and friendless in a land far from his home. Then suddenly he felt great strength and courage enter his body. "Why should I be afraid?" he considered, "Is Lord Narayana not the protector of His devotees? Therefore what have I to fear from the darkness of the forest?" Thinking like this, he turned his face resolutely towards the south and began walking quickly through the forest. Sometimes he thought he could hear faint voices calling him in the distance, but he never hesitated and continued on his course. He traveled for most of the night, until eventually, exhausted by hunger and fatigue; he rested beneath a large tree.

He awoke the following day, refreshed and vigorous once more. Already it was afternoon, and so he prepared to continue on his journey. While he was considering which direction he should take, he saw a fowler couple approaching him. The hunter's wife said to him, "Is it because you have lost your way that you are sitting here alone in the forest? You look like the

son of a Brahman. Where is your home?" "My home is far from here," replied Ramanuja, "way to the south. Have you heard of a place called Kancipuram?" "How is it that you are as bold as to journey alone through this dense forest, which is infested with robbers and wild animals?" asked the hunter. "I know Kancipuram very well, and, as it happens, we are also going in that direction" Ramanuja was very surprised to hear this, and so he asked, "Where you from and for what reason are you going to Kanci?"

"We are forest dwellers," the reply, "and live in a small village near the Vindhya Mountains. Because we have made our livelihood by catching birds, we are now going on pilgrimage to Ramesvaram and Kancipuram to free ourselves from the reactions to so many sinful activities. It seems that the Supreme Lord, who gives shelter to everyone, has brought you to us for protection."

At first Ramanuja was a little afraid of the tall, dark-skinned stranger, but there was something about the affection in his face and the sweetness of his words that quickly dispelled all the misgivings from the young Brahmans mind. As it was by now almost evening time, the fowler said, "Let us go quickly through this forest region, and then we can camp for the night near an underground river that is not too far from here" They set off at once and about an hour later came to the banks of the river.

The fowler collected some pieces of wood and lit a fire. Then he prepared a camp site, so that they could spend the night there. Just before he fell asleep, Ramanuja heard the fowler's wife say to her husband, "My dear, I am feeling very thirsty. Can you look for some water for me?" "Now the night has come," said the fowler, "and it would be foolish to leave the shelter of the firelight. Tomorrow you will be able to quench your thirst with the cool waters of a well that is just near here."

THE LORD PROTECTS HIS DEVOTEE

Early the next morning they rose and continued on their journey. Soon they came to the well the fowler had spoken of, and Ramanuja went down the steps to collect water for the wife of the fowler. Three times he brought water to her, but still her thirst was not satisfied. When he came back for the fourth time, there was no trace of the couple to be seen. They had completely disappeared. It was only then he realized they were in fact Laksmi and Narayana, who had taken the forms of a fowler and his wife just to protect their devotee and guide him through the dangerous forest. Seeing the towers of temples and a cluster of houses nearby, Ramanuja asked a passerby, "Sir, what is the name of this town?"

The man looked at him in amazement. "Can't you recognize the reputed city of Kancipuram?" he replied. "Why are you speaking like a stranger? I know that you are one of Yadavaprakasa's students, and I have seen you many times in the city." Saying this man continued on his way without waiting for a reply. At first Ramanuja was taken completely by surprise at this unbelievable news, but gradually he began to realize how Laksmidevi and Lord Narayana had bestowed their mercy upon him. Then his heart became filled with the ecstasy of divine love, and with tears rolling down his cheeks he began to offer prayers: namo brahmanya-devayago-brahmana hitaya cajagad-dhitdya krsnayagovindaya namo namah

RAMANUJA'S RETURN

For over an hour Ramanuja remained at the well, rapt in ecstasy, reciting Queen Kunti's prayers from the Srimad Bhagavatam in glorification of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Eventually three women carrying water pitchers approached the well, and, upon seeing them, Ramanuja controlled his emotions and proceeded on towards Kancipuram. Ever since her son had set off on the pilgrimage to northern India, Ramanuja's mother, Kantimati, had been in a state of constant lamentation, shedding tears of separation. Thus, when he suddenly appeared at the doorway of the house, she could not at first believe it was actually him.

Only when he paid obeisances and spoke to her was she fully convinced. Then she was filled with happiness and began to inquire from him, "My dear child, how is it that you have returned so soon? Where is Govinda? I thought that it would be at least six months before you returned from your pilgrimage to the holy Ganges" When the whole story had been related to her, Kantimati was horrified by the evil intentions of Yadavaprakasa, but also delighted to hear of the great mercy the Lord had shown her son. At that moment Ramanuja's aunt, Diptimati, the mother of Govinda, came to the house along with Ramanuja's young wife. They were also overjoyed to see he had returned safely.

They then began to cook offerings for Lord Narayana, and, just as they were serving prasadam, Kancipurna, who had heard of Ramanuja's arrival, came there. The two devotees warmly embraced one another, and Ramanuja invited Kancipurna to take prasadam as their honored guest. That night the feelings of joy in that small house were practically unlimited.

STUDIES RESUMED

Ramanuja continued to study the scriptures at home, and he asked his mother and aunt to tell no one about Yadavaprakasa's treacherous dealings.

Some months later the acarya returned to Kancipuram along with all his disciples except for Govinda. When Diptimati asked Yadavaprakasa about her son, he told her that after Ramanuja's disappearance they had journeyed to Benares, where they took darsana of Lord Visvanatha and bathed in the Ganges. They had stayed there for two weeks. One day whilst taking bath in the river, Govinda had discovered a Siva linga in the water. Seeing this as the will of the Lord, Govinda had immediately begun to worship Lord Siva in this form.

As he continued his worship, day by day his devotion to Lord Siva had become more and more fixed. Thus, when they arrived at Kalahasti on the return journey, he told his teacher and the other students that he no longer wanted to return to Kancipuram. He had decided to stay in that holy shrine of the Saivites and dedicate his life to the worship of Lord Sankara. Diptimati was not an ordinary woman, and, rather than feeling distress at hearing this news, she became completely joyful, considering herself blessed to have such a saintly son. Soon after this she went to Kalahasti to visit Govinda, and, on seeing how he was completely absorbed in worship of Lord Siva and freed from material hankering, her happiness increased many times over.

At first Yadavaprakasa was fearful when he saw that Ramanuja was still living, but he thought the young man must be unaware of the plot he had made to kill him. In the presence of Kantimati he pretended to be overwhelmed with joy at finding her son safe and sound. "You cannot imagine," he told her, "the suffering and anguish all of us underwent when we were unable to find him in the forest." In actuality the teacher was feeling very ashamed of his wickedness now that he saw Ramanuja's humble behavior.

Turning to the young man, he spoke affectionately, "My child, from this day you should come once more to study with me. May the Lord continue to shower His blessings upon you." From that day on Ramanuja resumed his studies with Yadavaprakasa.

YAMUNACARYA'S PRAYERS FOR RAMANUJA

A few days later the venerable Alabandar, accompanied by many disciples, came to Kancipuram to see Lord Varadaraja. While he was returning from the temple, Yamunacarya saw Yadavaprakasa walking with his disciples, his hand resting on Ramanuja's shoulder. Seeing this handsome, effulgent young man, the Vaisnava saint became curious and inquired from his followers as to his identity. When he learned this was the same Ramanuja who had written the wonderful commentary on the

Upanishad mantra, satyamjnanam anantam Brahma, he was very pleased. But at the same time he was disturbed to see him under the guidance of such an ardent mayavadi as Yadavaprakasa.

He then prayed to Lord Varadaraja for Ramanuja's deliverance from such unfortunate association: "I take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, by whose mercy the deaf may hear, the lame may arise and walk, the dumb may speak, the blind may see, and barren women may bring forth children. "O lotus-eyed one, husband of Laksmi, please bestow your full mercy upon Ramanuja, so that he will be able to worship you fully, without any hindrance." Yamunacarya longed to approach Ramanuja and converse with him, but he was unwilling to associate with a no devotee like Yadavaprakasa. At this time Alabandara was over one hundred years old and was the leading acarya among all the Vaisnavas in south India. He realized that, if Krsna desired it, he would one day have the chance to meet with Ramanuja alone. Thinking like this, he returned to SriRangam.

DELIVERANCE OF THE PRINCESS

Apart from his great learning in the science of Vedanta, Yadavaprakasa was also expert in magical arts, particularly in driving out ghosts and evil spirits. Once it so happened that the princess of Kancipuram came to be possessed by a fearful brahma-raksasa ghost. As Yadavaprakasa's expertise in dealing with such situations was widely known, he was at once summoned to the palace. However, despite all his mantras, the ghost that possessed the girl remained completely unmoved. Laughing in a hideous shrill voice, the ghost within the princess called out, "Yadavaprakasa, of what use are all your mantras you are wasting your time. Go back home" Determined not to be defeated, Yadavaprakasa continued with his attempts to exorcise the evil spirit, but to no avail. Again the brahmaraksasa spoke. 'Why do you waste your strength in vain? Your power is much inferior to mine. The only way that you will be able to force me to leave the body of this beautiful princess is by bringing here your youngest disciple, the devoted Ramanuja.

His purity is the only force that can overcome my potency". Yadavaprakasa then sent word for Ramanuja to come to the palace without delay. When that great devotee of Lord Vishnu arrived there and understood the situation, he spoke to the evil spirit, asking it to leave the body of the princess. The brahma-raksasa replied, speaking through the girl, "I will leave this body if you kindly place your lotus feet on my head." Such was the purity of Ramanuja's devotion that even this evil fiend could understand the benefit of taking shelter of such a great soul.

With the permission of his teacher, Ramanuja placed both of his feet on the girl's head, saying, "Now leave this place at once and give us some sign by which we may know in truth that you have departed." The ghost replied, "Look now, I am leaving this beautiful body, and as a sign I shall break the topmost branch of the nearest banyan tree." At once the highest branch of the banyan tree cracked and felt to the ground, while the princess began to look around her in amazement, like one who has just awakened from sleep.

When she was informed by her maidservant of all that had taken place, she hung her head in shame and hurried away to the inner apartments of the palace. When the King of Kanci heard of his daughter's complete recovery, he hurried to worship the lotus feet of Ramanuja and express his gratitude. From that day on Ramanuja's fame spread throughout the kingdom, and his name was on everyone's lips. Yadavaprakasa, however, was not at all pleased by the turn of events, seeing that his position had been minimized by one of his own students. Now everyone was aware that Ramanuja was far greater in spiritual potency than Yadavaprakasa, and this was not at all to the liking of the proud mayavadi. In addition, Ramanuja's intense devotion to Lord Vishnu was completely incompatible with the dry monistic doctrines expounded by his teacher. Therefore, it seemed that conflict between the two was inevitable.

RAMANUJA'S EXPULSION FROM SCHOOL

The final confrontation was not long in coming. Only a few weeks after Ramanuja's deliverance of the princess, all the students were assembled to hear Yadavaprakasa lecture on the mantras, sarvam khalv idam brahma - 'everything is Brahman' and, neha nanasti kincana-'there is nothing else in this world'. He was presenting the impersonality philosophy in such an expert way that all his students were captivated by his explanations of the oneness of the jiva soul and the Supreme Brahman. Only Ramanuja showed any signs of unhappiness at the acaryas statements. At the end of the class he spoke up, saying, "The words sarvam khalv idam Brahma do not mean that the Supreme Absolute Truth is nothing but the sum total of all creation. Rather, it is seen that the universe comes from the Supreme as His energy, is maintained by Him and, in the end it dissolves back into Him.

He maintains His own separate identity, although everything is indeed a part of His expanded energy. The words neha nanasti kincana do not mean that there is no variety at all in this world. Rather, we should understand that all the varieties of creation are held as one, just as separate pearls are held on one thread, although they are still individual entities. Thus, we can see how everything is both one and separate at the same

time." On hearing his teachings nullified by Ramanuja in this way, Yadavaprakasa became very angry and he spoke harshly, "If you do not like my explanations of the scriptures, then do not come to me any more". "As you wish, sir" Ramanuja replied. He then worshipped the feet of his teacher and left the school, never to return again.

KANCIPURNA

The next day as Ramanuja was sitting at home studying the scriptures by him, Kancipurna came to visit him. As we have heard before, Kancipurna was a pure devotee of the Lord, who was respected by the most aristocratic Brahmans, though he himself took birth in a Sudra family. From his very childhood he had absorbed himself in devotional service to the Deity of Sri Varadaraja. On hot summer days he would serve the Lord by providing cooling breezes with fans dipped in water, and he was always anxious to obtain the very best fruits and flowers to offer to the Lord. All the people of Kanci loved him for his simple devotion and gentle behavior. Wherever he went all bad feelings and misunderstandings seemed to vanish. Sometimes he would stop in the middle of the road as if stunned, staring into the distance with an expression of great happiness on his face.

It was said that he conversed with Lord Varadaraja Himself and that the Lord made His intentions known through the words of Kancipurna. Despite his birth in a Sudra family, most of the Brahmans in Kancipuram recognized his exalted devotional qualities and offered him all respects. Only a few, who were very proud of their high birth and knowledge of the scriptures, said he was insane or an imposter. One of these, as you might imagine, was Yadavaprakasa.

INSTRUCTIONS FROM KANCIPURNA

Thus, it was with great happiness that Ramanuja received this wonderful devotee as a guest in his house. Offering him a nice sitting place, he said, "Your coming here is my great good fortune and can only be seen as part of the limitless mercy of Lord Varadaraja, who has sent you here to guide me. You must have heard of my expulsion from the school of Yadavaprakasa. Now I can see that this is not to be regretted, for I will accept you as my guru and teacher." "Ramanuja, this cannot be," replied Kancipurna gently, "for I am a sudra and an ignorant man, with no knowledge of the scriptures. I simply pass my life rendering a little service to Lord Varadaraja. As a Brahman you are my master, and I am your servant". "Sir, you are the wisest man I have ever known," said Ramanuja, "and if knowledge of the scriptures brings only pride instead of devotion, then what is its value?

By your humble service to the Lord, I can see that you know perfectly the conclusions of all the scriptures." On saying this Ramanuja fell down to pay his obeisance's at the feet of the devoted Kancipurna. That saintly person instantly raised Ramanuja to his feet and told him, "I feel blessed to have seen your deep devotion for the Lord. Every day you should bring a jar of water to the temple for the service of Sri Varadaraja. In this way you will quickly receive His mercy, and all of your desires will be fulfilled." Having given this advice to the young devotee, Kancipurna left to go and worship Lord Varadaraja. Ramanuja, accepting his instruction, engaged in the service of the Lord by bringing water to the temple of Lord Varadaraja from the sacred well where he had seen the Lord in the form of a fowler.

YAMUNACARYA'S ILLNESS

Ever since the day he had seen Ramanuja in Kancipuram, the aged Yamunacarya had been thinking of him and praying to Lord Vishnu for his deliverance. He longed for the day on which Ramanuja would give up the association of Yadavaprakasa and take full shelter of the Vaisnavas. It was with this hope in mind that he composed his wonderful prayer known as the Stotra-ratna, which is adored by devotees even to this day.

A few days after the composition of the Stotra-ratna, Yamunacarya fell gravely ill and was unable to rise from his bed. However, even in this precarious position, hovering between life and death, he continued to preach the glories f the Lord. Fearing the imminent departure of their guru, various disciples put questions before him. Tiruvaranga asked, "If Lord Narayana is beyond mind and speech, how is it possible to serve Him?" Yamunacarya replied, "The best way to serve Lord Narayana is to serve His pure devotees. In addition you should serve the Deity form of the Lord, even as the blessed Kancipurna serves Lord Varadaraja.

All problems are resolved by the statement of the Mahabharata, mahajano yena gatah sa panthah -'Just follow the example set by the great devotees'." Looking into the eyes of his dear disciple, Alabandara continued, "For myself, my only refuge now is the lotus feet of Tirumangai, that noble mahatma who served Lord Ranganatha so perfectly in ancient times." On hearing these words from his guru, Tiruvaranga's eyes filled with tears and he spoke again in a voice choked with grief, "Have you decided without doubt to leave this world now?" Alabandara smiled slightly and replied softly, "How is it that such a wise man as yourself is to be seen lamenting for that which is inevitable? Do you not yet understand that everything happens only by the will of Lord Narayana?

Our position is to simply accept whatever mercy He bestows upon us,

giving up the dualities of happiness and distress." At that moment two other disciples decided they would commit suicide as soon as Yamunacarya left this world. These two were Mahapurna and Tirukkotiyurpurna.

Another disciple came forward shedding tears and crying out, "Where will any of us go for shelter after your disappearance? Whose sweet words will inspire us to acts of greater devotion?" Yamunacarya placed his hand on the disciple's head, saying, "My child, there is no need for anxiety, for Lord Ranganatha is there. He has given you shelter in the past, He is giving you shelter now and will continue to protect you in the future. Always go and pray before Lord Ranganatha and sometimes go to see Venkatesa at Tirupati and Varadaraja at Kanci. In this way how will you be without shelter?" When Tiruvaranga asked whether the body should be buried or cremated, Alabandara gave no reply, for his mind was fixed on the lotus feet of Lord Narayana.

LORD RANGANATHA SAVES HIS DEVOTEES

The next day there was a special procession in Rangaksetra, and the Deity of Lord Ranganatha was carried from the temple on a palanquin. Huge crowds of people had gathered from all the surrounding villages to see the Lord as He passed along the road. The disciples of Yamunacarya were also in attendance. Suddenly one of the pujaris serving the Lord seemed to go into a trance, as if possessed. He spoke out, clearly addressing Mahapurna and Tirukkotiyurpurna, "Give up your resolution to commit suicide. It is not approved by me." After this wonderful event, all the disciples quickly returned to the bedside of Yamunacarya to tell him what had happened.

He then gave them further instructions. "To commit suicide is a great sin, and to save you from such an act Lord Ranganatha Himself has spoken to you. Such is His boundless mercy." Alabandara then fell silent, and his eyes closed as he seemed to go deep into meditation. After a while he spoke again. "This is my final instruction to all of you. Offer flowers at the lotus feet of the Lord and always try to follow your guru's order. Destroy all false egos by serving the Vaisnavas". Then he gave all his disciples over to the care of Tiruvaranga and fell silent once more.

MAHAPURNA IS SENT TO KANCI

However, Yamunacarya did not depart from the world at this time, and a few days later, to everyone's surprise, he seemed to recover from his illness. He left his asrama and took darsana of Lord Ranganatha, just as he had done previously. Everyone was inspired to hear him talk again about

the glories of Lord Visnu One day two Brahmans from Kancipuram arrived to see Yamunacarya, having heard of his imminent departure from the world. They were surprised to find the great acarya sitting up and discussing the scriptures, apparently fully recovered from his sickness. When Yamunacarya learned the two Brahmans were from Kancipuram, he immediately inquired from them about the welfare of Ramanuja.

They told him he had now given up hearing from Yadavaprakasa and was studying the scriptures alone. Yamunacarya was very pleased to hear that the young devotee was now freed from the dangers of hearing mayavada philosophy, and there and then he composed eight verses glorifying the mercy of the Lord upon His devotees He then instructed Mahapurna, one of his senior disciples, "Please go to Kanci and bring Ramanuja here, for I long to see him in the midst of our company of Vaisnavas." Mahapurna offered obeisance's at the feet of his guru, and that same day he departed to carry out his order.

DISAPPEARANCE OF YAMUNACARYA

A few days after the departure of Mahapurna, Alabandara's body was afflicted with sickness once more. Despite the intense pain he had to undergo, he still took his bath and went to the temple to see Lord Ranganatha, the Lord of his heart. He took a little maha-prasada and then returned to the asrama, where he called for all of his householder disciples to come to him. First of all, in a mood of great humility, he begged them to forgive any offense that he might have made towards them. He then asked them to take care of the brahmacari and sannyasi disciples who were living at the asrama.

Finally, Yamunacarya gave his last instruction to his householder disciples. "Every day you should rise early and go to the temple to worship Lord Ranganatha, smelling the flowers that have been offered to His lotus feet. In this way your mind and intelligence will become purified, and you will become fixed in your devotion to Lord Narayana. In addition you should always be devoted to your spiritual master and be attentive in serving guests." When the householder disciples had left, Alabandara sat in a lotus position and concentrated his mind on the feet of Lord Hari. The remaining disciples began to chant the holy name of Lord Narayana in congregation, accompanied by the sweet sounds of the flute and other instruments.

As Yamunacarya became even more deeply immersed in thoughts of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, tears of ecstasy ran down his cheeks and his body began to tremble. In this ecstatic state of devotional love the great acarya gave up his body and returned to the lotus feet of the Supreme

Lord, his eternal, beloved master. Immediately the kirtana stopped, and many of the disciples began to cry aloud in lamentation, while others fainted and fell unconscious to the ground. After some time the sannyasis and Yamunacarya's son, Purna, collected themselves and began to make preparations for the funeral ceremony.

The body was washed and dressed in new clothes before being placed on a decorated palanquin. Then, in slow procession, they carried the palanquin down to the banks of the Kaveri River, followed by almost all the inhabitants of Sri Rangam. There, amidst great lamentation, the body of the pure devotee was buried, as is the custom for those who have achieved the perfect ional stage of devotional service.

MEETING WITH MAHAPURNA

Meanwhile, on the order of his guru, Mahapurna journeyed to Kancipuram and arrived there after traveling steadily for four days. He immediately went to the temple to see Lord Varadaraja, and as he was leaving he happened to meet Kancipurna, who invited him to spend the night at his asrama. The two devotees passed the evening in discussing topics about the Lord.

Early the next morning they set out together for the holy well and, as they approached, saw Ramanuja coming with a water jug on his shoulder to perform his daily service for Lord Varadaraja. Kancipurrna said, "I must leave you now to worship the Lord in the temple. Here is Ramanuja; go and tell him of your intentions." Mahapurna was very happy to see the effulgent young devotee coming towards him, appearing so pure and free from the vices of this world. Instinctively he began to chant prayers from Yamunacarya's Stotra-ratna. Hearing these beautiful hymns in praise of Lord Narayana being sung in such a sweet voice, Ramanuja stood silently, listening intently to the verses. Then he approached Mahapurna and inquired, "Sir, who has composed these wonderful verses that so sweetly praise the qualities of the Supreme Lord?

Just by your singing this morning my heart has been uplifted these hymns were composed by my spiritual master, the venerable Yamunacarya," Mahapurna replied .Ramanuja was very pleased to hear the name of the famous devotee, but he inquired in a concerned voice, "I had heard that the great Alabandara was afflicted by illness. Is he now recovered? How long is it since.you were in his presence?" "It is but five days since I left the side of my guru-maharaja," replied Mahapurna, "and at that time he had just recovered from his sickness." Ramanuja was relieved to hear this news, and, being anxious to associate further with the saintly

Mahapurna, he invited him to stay at his house. Then Mahapurna explained the purpose of his coming to Kancipuram. "I have come to this holy city at the request of the great soul Yamunacarya, simply to meet with you and invite you, on his behalf, to come to Rangaksetra, so that we may have your association."

Ramanuja could hardly believe such an exalted devotee was even aware of his existence, let alone being desirous of his association. However, Mahapurna reassured him by saying, "My master wishes to see you, and it is for this purpose alone that I have come here. His health has been much impaired by repeated illness, and, although he now seems a little better, I think that we should start immediately if you wish to fulfill his desire." Ramanuja was so pleased by this unexpected news that he could only ascribe his good fortune to the mercy of Lord Varadaraja. Excitedly he said to Mahapurna, "Please wait here for a short while until I have delivered this water to the temple and taken the Lord's permission to leave."

Saying this he hurried off towards the temple. Just a short time later he returned, all ready to start on the journey. Mahapurna asked, "What about your family? Should you not first inform them of your intentions?" "Obedience to the order of the guru is more important than any considerations of household life," replied Ramanuja. "Let us depart at once, for I am eager to see Sri Yamunacarya."

ARRIVAL TO SRI RANGAM

Thus, they set out on their journey southwards towards the holy city of Sri Rangam. Each evening they would stop for the night at the home of some pious Brahman devotee, and during the day they would travel with all possible haste. In this way they arrived at the banks of the Kaveri River in four days and immediately crossed over to Sri Rangam. They had intended to go straight away to the asrama of Yamunacarya, which was close to the temple of Lord Ranganatha, but they found the road blocked by a large crowd of people. When Mahapurna asked the reason for this great assembly, one man replied, "Sir, what can I say? The earth is now bereft of its most beautiful gem, for Mahatma Alabandara has returned to the abode of the Lord." When he heard these words, Ramanuja immediately fainted and fell to the ground unconscious, while Mahapurna cried aloud in anguish, beating his forehead with the palms of his hands. After some time, Mahapurna composed himself, and, seeing Ramanuja still lying unconscious on the ground, he fetched some water and sprinkled it over the young man's face.

When Ramanuja slowly opened his eyes, he heard these words of

consolation "Do not be overwhelmed by grief, for we can be sure that everything is taking place by the will of Lord Narayana. Now let us go and see that pure form before it is interred."

RAMANUJA'S THREE VOWS

Ramanuja followed Mahapurna to the banks of the Kaveri. When they saw the body of Yamunacarya, Mahapurna fell at his feet, bathing them with tears, while Ramanuja stood still, looking at the great Vaisnava. Although the life air had passed from the body, Alabandara's face was still serene and untouched by the shadow of death. Ramanuja stood there transfixed, just gazing, as if in a trance, at the face of that great devotee. Suddenly the crowds fell silent and turned to look at Ramanuja, for it seemed that somehow he was able to transcend the barrier of death and be fully in the presence of Yamunacarya. After a while Ramanuja said, "I see that three fingers of Alabandara's right hand are folded and clenched tight. Were they like that during his lifetime?" The disciples who were close by replied, "No, his fingers used to remain straight. We cannot guess why they are like this now."

Ramanuja then declared aloud, "Remaining fixed in devotion to Lord Vishnu, I shall free the people from illusion by spreading the glories of the Lord throughout the land" As these words were spoken, one of the fingers relaxed and became straight. Ramanuja spoke again, saying, "To establish that there is no truth beyond Lord Vishnu, I shall write the Sribhasya commentary on the Vedanta-sutra." At this the second of Yamunacarya's fingers became straight. Ramanuja declared again, "In order to show respect to the sage Parasara, who has so wonderfully described the glories of the Lord in the Vishnu Purana, I shall name one learned Vaisnava after him." With this final statement, the last of Alabandara's fingers relaxed and became straight. When they saw this wonderful occurrence, everyone there was filled with amazement.

They could now understand that Yamunacarya's three tightly held fingers represented his three unfulfilled desires, namely, to preach the glories of the Lord all over India, to compile a complete Vaisnava commentary on the Vedanta-sutra, which would nullify the atheistic doctrines of the impersonalizes, and to honor the sage Parasara by naming a disciple after him. Now, Ramanuja's statements confirmed that he would complete the work Alabandara had begun.

RETURN TO KANCI

Before the body was buried in the samadhi tomb on the banks of the

Kaveri, Ramanuja had left Sri Rangam to return to Kancipuram. Yamunacarya's disciples had asked him to take darsan of Lord Ranganatha, but he had refused, saying, "I do not wish to see this cruel form of the Lord, who would not grant my most cherished desire and who has taken away the lord of my heart." Then, he had departed without speaking another word to anyone. From that day on Ramanuja's personality changed and he became much more grave and serious. He was now even more reluctant to spend time in the company of no devotees. Long periods he would remain alone, studying the scriptures, and he found true happiness only in the company of Kancipurna.

SANNYASA

About six months before the disappearance of Yamunacarya, Ramanuja's mother, Kantimati, had left this world. Now, Raksakambal, the wife of Ramanuja, was the mistress of the house. She was as beautiful as an apsara, devoted to her husband and very strict in her cleanliness and observance of ritual. Unfortunately, she had been unable to imbibe her husband's pure love of God and was more attached to the external features of religious ritual. She was unhappy to see her husband becoming more and more absorbed in devotional sentiments after his return from Sri Rangam, though she tried to conceal her inner feelings. Ramanuja now passed a lot of his time in the company of Kancipurna. Ramanuja was generally in a serious mood and still unhappy at heart due to feelings of separation from Yamunacarya. Understanding his mind, Kancipurna told him one day, "You should not be troubled at heart.

Just remain fixed in your devotion to Lord Varadaraja and continue to serve him in every possible way. Alabandara has now returned to the abode of Lord Narayana, and it is your duty to fulfill the promises you made before Him" When he heard these words of instruction, Ramanuja bowed before Kancipurna and said, "Please allow me to be your disciple. Please allow me take shelter of your lotus feet" Immediately, Kancipurna raised Ramanuja, saying, "You are a Brahman and I am Sudra. How can I initiate and receive obeisance's from one who is my master? Just have faith in the Lord, and sooner or later He will surely send someone who is fit to be your guru." Having said this, Kancipurna left to worship Lord Varadaraja. Ramanuja thought to himself, "He is refusing to accept me because he knows how my heart is devoid of all devotional sentiments.

How can birth or caste affect a person who is the intimate associate of Lord Varadaraja? Merely by his merciful glance, Kancipurna can elevate a dog eater to the level of a Brahman. Therefore, if I am able to taste the remnants of his food only once, then I will gain immeasurable benefit."

RAKSAKAMBAL'S FOLLY

Later that day, Ramanuja went to persuade Kancipurna to take lunch at his house the next day. Eventually Kancipurna agreed, saying, "Tomorrow I shall break free from the modes of nature by receiving food at the house of a pure devotee." The next morning, Ramanuja instructed his wife, Raksakambal, that she should cook the very best preparations to honor their exalted guest, Sri Kancipurna. At once she began to cook and before noon had prepared many different types of food. Seeing this Ramanuja was very pleased, and he set out for Kancipurna's asrama to bring him to take prasadam. Kancipurna could understand all Ramanuja's intentions, and so he came by another way to his friend's house.

When he arrived, he said to Raksakambal, "Mother, today I have to go to the temple very quickly. Please serve me with whatever is immediately available, for I cannot stay here for more than a few minutes My husband has gone to your house to bring you here," Raksakambal replied. "If you wait for a short time he will soon return." "I am afraid I cannot wait here for a moment," said Kancipurna. "How can I neglect my service of Lord Varadaraja just for the sake of my stomach?" So Raksakambal arranged a sitting place for Kancipurna and then with great attention served him all the different preparations she had cooked. As soon as he had finished eating, Kancipurna stood up and cleaned the place where he had been eating with water mixed with cow dung. He offered his obeisance's to Raksakambal and then quickly left the house, taking his leaf plate with him to discard at a distant place.

Raksakambal gave away all the remaining prasadam to a Sudra woman and then, after taking a bath, began to cook again for her husband. In the meantime Ramanuja returned home and was very surprised to find his wife still cooking. "Did Kancipurna not come here?" he asked. "Why are you cooking again? Where is all the prasadam that you prepared this morning?"

"Mahatma Kancipurna came here" replied Raksakambal, "but he said that he could not wait for you, as he had service to perform in the temple. Therefore, I served him his lunch and then gave whatever was left to a Sudra woman. How could I serve you with the remnants of a sudras meal?" Ramanuja was very disturbed to hear his wife speak in such a way. "You foolish woman! " he exclaimed. "How can you think of Kancipurna as no more than a sudra? Because of you I am now unable to take the prasada of that pure-hearted devotee, and this is my great misfortune" Having said this, he sat down unhappily with his head in his hands.

KANCIPURNA'S VISIT TO TIRUPATI

Meanwhile, Kancipurna was praying to Lord Varadaraja while fanning Him, "My Lord, what are you trying to do to me? My only desire is to pass my life peacefully in your service and the service of Your devotees, but now You are trying to make me into a famous acarya. Even Your pure devotee, Ramanuja, now bows down before me. I do not want to become an object of worship, so please give me permission to leave Kanci and go to Tirupati, where I can worship you in the form of Balaji." Lord Varadaraja gave His permission, and so Kancipurna went to Tirupati. He stayed there for six months, fully absorbed in the service of Sri Balaji, the form of Lord Vishnu who resides in the temple there. Then one night Lord Varadaraja appeared to him in a dream, saying, "I am suffering from the severe heat here in Kancipuram. Why don't you come back and fan me again?"

LORD VARADARAJA'S INSTRUCTIONS TO RAMANUJA

The next day Kancipurna arose and set off at once to return to Kanci. When Ramanuja heard of his return, he went to visit his friend. The two devotees felt great pleasure in regaining one another's association after such a long period of time. After they had been talking for several hours, Ramanuja fully revealed his mind to Kancipurna. "Since I left the school of Yadavaprakasa" he told him, "I have continued to study the scriptures alone. But there are certain points I cannot understand, and this is causing a great disturbance to my mind. Please beg the Lord to enlighten me, for I know Sri Varadaraja will never deny any request that comes from your lips." Kancipurna agreed to Ramanuja's request.

The next day when the young Brahman came to visit him, he spoke very confidentially, "Last night Lord Varadaraja spoke to me and told me I should reveal the following six truths to you. These are the four verses the Lord spoke to me: ham eva param brahma jagat-karana-karanamksetrajnesvaror bhedah siddha eva mahamatemoksopayo nyasa eva jananam muktim icchatammad-bhaktanam jananam ca nantim asmritir isyatedehavasane bhaktanam dadami paramam padampurnacaryam mahatmanam samasraya gunasrayamiti ramanujarya mayoktam vada satvaram "'Firstly, I am the Supreme Brahman, the cause of material nature, from which this universe has come into being. Second, the separate existence of the jiva souls and the Supreme Lord is an eternal truth. Third, surrendering to the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord is the only true path for those who desire liberation. Fourth, devotees will certainly be liberated even if by chance they fail to remember me at the time of death. Fifth, as soon as my devotees give up their present bodies, I bring them to my supreme abode.

Sixth, you should immediately take shelter of MahatmaMahapurna, the reservoir of all good qualities. These are my instructions for Ramanuja." 'When Ramanuja heard these words, he began to dance in ecstasy. He had not revealed his six doubts even to Kancipurna, but now the Lord had supplied the answers to all of them. Having offered obeisance's to Sri Varadaraja and to Kancipurna, he returned home and prepared to depart for Sri Rangam. There he hoped to find Mahapurna, one of Yamunacarya's disciples, and take initiation from him.

MAHAPURNA SENT TO KANCI AGAIN

After the disappearance of Sri Yamunacarya, none of his disciples was able to discourse on the scriptures in the same wonderful way that he had done. Tiruvaranga was now in charge of the asrama, but he lacked the ability to expound the meaning of the scriptures as his master had done. Everyone admired his devotional qualities and noted the fact that he spent so much of his time worshipping the Lord, but still the atmosphere in the asrama was not what it had been before. At that time both the married and unmarried devotees used to live together in the asrama, while the wives would live in separate quarters outside in the city. Their time was passed for the most part in worship of the Deity and the chanting of bhajans glorifying the Lord. In this way a year passed by uneventfully. On the anniversary of Alabandara's disappearance all his disciples gathered together, and Tiruvaranga addressed the assembly. 'It is now one year', he began, 'since our guru-maharaja, Yamunacarya, left us to return to the abode of Lord Narayana.

While he was with us it was our great fortune that every day we were able to hear his nectarine words. However, since his disappearance no one has been able to describe the glories of the Lord in such an exquisite manner or expound all the subtle points of the scriptures as he was able to do. Although he instructed that I should take over his position at the asrama, I have to admit that I am incapable of properly executing this duty. 'All of you may recall how, just prior to his departure, our master desired to see Ramanuja of Kancipuram and sent Mahapurna there to fetch him. It is that great soul alone, the intimate friend of Kancipurna, who, having been chosen by Sriman Alabandara himself is competent to take on the responsibility as acarya for this asrama. Therefore, let one of us go to Kancipuram and, after initiating him, bring him here ton Sri Rangam. He will spread the teachings of Yamunacarya all over the India, as he promised to do whilst looking at the body of our preceptor.'

All the assembled devotees unanimously accepted Tiruvaranga's

proposal, and Mahapurna was chosen to go to Kancipuram to initiate Ramanuja and bring him to Sri Rangam He was told " If at present he is reluctant to abandon the association of Kancipurna, then do not press the matter. You may remain in Kanci for one year, instructing him in all the bhakti-sastras. He needs not to be told that your purpose is to bring him to Sri Rangam."

RAMANUJA'S INITIATION

Being thus instructed, Mahapurna, along with his wife, set off for Kancipuram. After four days they reached the town of Madurantakam, where there is a Vishnu temple with a lake in front of it. While Mahapurna and his wife were resting beside that lake, Ramanuja suddenly appeared there offering obeisance's at his feet. Mahapurna was both surprised and delighted by this unexpected turn of events, and he immediately rose to embrace Ramanuja. 'This is certainly a surprise," he said. 'Anything can be accomplished by the grace of Lord Narayana. For what reason have you come here?" 'This must certainly be the plan of Lord Narayana," Ramanuja replied," for it was only to find you that I left Kancipuram. Varadaraja Himself has instructed me to accept you as my guru.

Please bestow your mercy upon me by initiating me at once." Mahapurna agreed to this request, saying, 'Let us go to Kancipuram so that the ceremony can be performed before Lord Varadaraja." However, Ramanuja was insistent. 'You know that death makes no distinction between the timely and the untimely," he said. "Do you not recall with what high expectations I went with you to meet Sri Yamunacarya? Providence cheated me then, so why should I trust him now by allowing any delay?

Please give me shelter at your lotus feet right at this very moment" Mahapurna was pleased by Ramanuja's words, and thereon the banks of the lake in the shade of a flowering bakula tree he lit a sacrificial fire. In that fire he placed two metal discs, one bearing the sign of Lord Vishnu's chakra and the other that of His conch. When the two discs were hot, Mahapurna pressed them onto Ramanuja's right and left arms, thus marking them with the signs of Lord Vishnu. Finally, meditating on the lotus feet of Yamunacarya, Mahapurna whispered the Vaisnava mantra into Ramanuja's ear. When the initiation was thus completed, Ramanuja returned to Kancipuram, accompanied by his guru and his guru's wife.

When they arrived, they were welcomed by Kancipurna, who took great pleasure in associating with Mahapurna. At Ramanuja's request, Mahapurna then also initiated Raksakambal. Half the house was given over

to Mahapurna and his wife, and every day Ramanuja would study the Vaisnava scriptures in his association.

RAKSAKAMBAL'S PRIDE

Six months passed by quickly, while Ramanuja felt great satisfaction in hearing all the truths of Vaisnava philosophy from Mahapurna. One day, while both Ramanuja and Mahapurna were away from home, Raksakambal went to the well to get water. It so happen that Mahapurna's wife was drawing water at the same time, and while so doing a few drops from her pitcher felt into that of Raksakambal, who immediately flew into a rage. "Are you blind?" she shouted. "Look what you have done! By your carelessness a whole pitcher of water is wasted. Do you think that you can sit on my shoulders just because you are the guru's wife? Just remember that my father's family is of a superior lineage to yours, so how can I use water that has been touched by you? But why should I blame you, for having fallen into the hands of this husband of mine all my caste and position is lost."

When she heard these harsh words, Mahapurna's wife, who was by nature calm and modest, begged forgiveness from Raksakambal .However, being very disturbed by the woman's anger, she set down her pitcher and began to weep quietly. When Mahapurna returned and found his wife in that distressed condition, he asked her what was the cause of her unhappiness. When he learned of everything that had taken place at the well, Mahapurna became thoughtful. Eventually he said, "It is no longer the will of Lord Narayana that we should remain here, and for this reason he has caused you to hear these unkind words from the mouth of Raksakambal. Do not be sorry over this matter, for whatever the Lord ordains is for our good. Because we have not worshipped the lotus feet of Lord Ranganatha for a long time, He now desires that we go back to Him."

DEPARTURE OF MAHAPURNA

Without waiting for Ramanuja to return, Mahapurna and his wife then collected together their few possessions and departed for Sri Rangam. While Mahapurna was staying with him in Kancipuram, Ramanuja had been very happy, looking upon his guru as the representative of Lord Narayana. During those six months they spent together, Ramanuja had studied about four thousand verses composed by the great Vaisnavas of south India. That morning he had gone out to purchase fruit, flowers, and new cloth with which to make an offering to his guru, but, when he returned to his house, he found Mahapurna's quarters deserted. After searching all over the house, he inquired from a neighbor, who told him that Mahapurna and his wife

had left Kanci to return to Sri Rangam. Anxious to discover what could have caused his guru's abrupt departure, Ramanuja went to speak to Raksakambal.

She told him, "I had a quarrel with the wife of your guru when we went to fetch water from the well this morning. I hardly spoke any harsh words to her at all, but the great man was so enraged that he left here almost immediately. I had heard that a sadhu is supposed to have given up all feelings of anger, but it must be that he is a new sort of sadhu. I offer millions of obeisances at the feet of your sadhu." Ramanuja could hardly believe his ears when he heard his wife speak in such a contemptuous and sarcastic way about Mahapurna, and he could not restrain his feelings. "O sinful women," he cried out, "it is a great sin even to look at your face" Having said this, he left the house and went to the temple to offer the fruits and flowers he had purchased to Lord Varadaraja.

RAMANUJA'S PLAN

A short time later, a lean and hungry Brahman came to Ramanuja's house to beg for something to eat. Raksakambal was still shocked by her husband's words, and, when the Brahman disturbed her, she immediately became angry and shouted at him in a shrill voice, "Get out of here. Go somewhere else. Who do you think will give you rice here?"

Hurt by these harsh words, the Brahman turned away and began to walk slowly towards the temple of Lord Varadaraja. On the way he met Ramanuja, who was returning home, having made his offering to the Lord. Seeing the Brahmans dejected features and undernourished body, Ramanuja felt compassion and said to him, "O Brahman, it seems that you have not eaten today." "I went to your house to ask for a little prasadam, but your wife became angry and turned me away," replied the Brahman. Ramanuja was shocked to hear that a guest had been so badly mistreated at his house. He was thoughtful for a few moments, and then he said, "Please go back to my house. I will give you a letter, and I want you to tell my wife that you have been sent by her father to deliver it to me. When she hears this, you can be certain she will feed you with great attention." Ramanuja then wrote out a letter as follows:–

My Dear Son, My second daughter is to be married soon. Therefore please send Raksakambal to my house with this man. If you have no pressing business at present, I would be very pleased if you could come as well. However, it is very important that Raksakambal comes here as soon as possible, as it will be very difficult for your mother-in-law to cater for all the guests alone. Promising that he would be well rewarded for his services,

Ramanuja sent the Brahman to his house with this letter. When he arrived there, the Brahman told Raksakambal, "Your father sent me here." She was delighted to hear this and received the Brahman with great courtesy, feeding him and offering him water for bathing. In the meantime, Ramanuja returned home. "My father has sent this letter for you," Raksakambal said modestly and gave it to him. Ramanuja read the letter out loud and then said to her, "I have some urgent business to attend to at present, so you must go alone.

If I get finished quickly, then I will try to come later on. Please convey my greetings to your father and mother." Raksakambal accepted his words, and, after preparing herself for the journey, she offered obeisances to her husband and set out for her father's house, escorted by the Brahman.

TAKING SANNYASA

When she had left, Ramanuja walked back to the temple of Lord Varadaraja, praying constantly to the Lord within his mind, "O Lord Narayana, please allow this servant of yours to take full shelter at your lotus feet." When he reached the temple, he bowed down before the Deity and prayed, "My dear Lord, from this day I am yours in every way. Please accept me." Then he obtained saffron-colored cloth and a staff that had been touched by the lotus feet of Sri Varadaraja. He went outside the temple and, after bathing, lit a sacrificial fire on the banks of the lake there. At that time Kancipurna, being inspired by Lord Varadaraja, approached him and gave him the name Yatiraja. Ramanuja then accepted the tridanda of Vaisnava sannyasa, which symbolizes the surrender of thoughts, words, and deeds to the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. When the ceremony was completed, Yatiraja, in his saffron robes, appeared as effulgent as the rising sun.

RAMANUJA BEGINS HIS TEACHING

All the people of Kancipuram were very surprised to hear that Ramanuja had taken sannyasa. He was still a young man, and his wife was extremely beautiful. Some considered him insane, but many others began to compare him to great devotees of the past; from all around people came to see him. The Vaisnavas who stayed at the asrama at Kanci made him their acarya, for his good qualities and understanding of the scriptures were well known. Gradually, by ones and twos, disciples began to gather around him. His first disciple was Dasarathi, his nephew, who was famous for his knowledge of the Vedas. The second was a young man named Kuresa, who had a wonderful memory.

YADAVAPRAKASA BECOMES A VAISNAVA

One day, when the elderly mother of Yadavaprakasa came to the temple to see Lord Varadaraja, she noticed Ramanuja instructing his disciples outside the asrama. Being captivated by his gracefulness and scholarship, she considered that if her son were to become the disciple of such a wonderful personality, then his life would be perfect. Ever since his mistreatment of Ramanuja, Yadavaprakasa had been very disturbed at heart, and his mother knew this. She considered that the best thing for her son would be to take shelter at the feet of this effulgent young sannyasi. When she returned home, she begged her son to go and become a disciple of Ramanuja, but Yadavaprakasa would not hear of surrendering to one who had previously been his own student.

Still, however, his mind remained disturbed. Once he happened to meet with Kancipurna and he inquired from him, "Sir, I am very troubled at heart and can find no peace. As you are well known as the one through whom Lord Varadaraja gives instructions, please tell me what I must do." "Go home now," replied Kancipurna. "Tonight I wilt pray to Lord Varadaraja. If you come to me tomorrow, I will tell you His instructions." When they met the following day, Kancipurna immediately began to describe the greatness of Ramanuja and the benefits one might derive from becoming his disciple. On hearing this, Yadavaprakasa decided he would go to visit Ramanuja at the asrama and discuss the scriptures with him. That night Yadavaprakasa found it hard to sleep. He lay awake for several hours, considering the different points over and over again. Eventually he dozed into a light sleep, and while he slept, he had a wonderful dream.

It seemed that an effulgent person appeared before him and began to give him instructions. Again and again he told Yadavaprakasa that he should become the disciple of Yatiraja. When Yadavaprakasa awoke, the effects of the dream were still with him, and he was struck with wonder. However, he was never a man to act solely on the basis of his emotions, and in his mind there still lingered doubts about Ramanuja's philosophy. That afternoon he went to the asrama and, as soon as he saw Yatiraja, he was struck by the young acaryas purity and effulgence.

Ramanuja received his former teacher with courtesy, offering him an elevated sitting place. After they had exchanged greetings, Yadavaprakasa began to express his doubts about the Vaisnava philosophy that Ramanuja was so expertly presenting. "My child," he said gently, "I am very pleased by your scholarship and humble behavior. I can see from the markings of tilaka and the emblems of the lotus and chakra on your body that you are a

devotee of Lord Vishnu and consider the path of bhakti alone to be proper. But what evidence can be found in the scriptures to support such a point of view?" To this inquiry Yatiraja replied, "Here is Kuresa, who is most learned in all of the revealed scriptures. Place your question before him." Thereupon, as Yadavaprakasa looked towards Kuresa, the young disciple of Ramanuja began to speak.

He cited numerous verses from many different scriptures the Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, etc. Which confirmed that loving devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the perfection of spiritual life? On hearing this torrent of evidence from the scriptures, Yadavaprakasa was dumbfounded and fell silent. Different thoughts passed quickly through his mind - his previous outrageous behavior, the words of his mother, and the advice that had been given to him by Kancipurna.

Suddenly he threw himself down at the feet of his former disciple, crying out, "O Ramanuja, blinded by pride, I could not see your true qualities. Please forgive all my offenses and become my guide to deliver me from the miseries of this material world. I take shelter of you alone." Yatiraja then raised Yadavaprakasa to his feet and embraced him with warm affection. With his mother's blessings, that same day Yadavaprakasa accepted sannyasa from Ramanuja and considered him greatly fortunate. He was given the name Govinda dasa, and from that day on he was like a different person. He now fully embraced the Vaisnava philosophy and gave up all pride in his scholarship.

Tears of humility now decorated his eyes as he engaged in acts of devotion to the Supreme Lord. On hearing of this extraordinary transformation, everyone praised the influence of Ramanuja, and his fame spread far and wide. Seeing the devotional sentiments in his former guru, Yatiraja once addressed him, saying, "Now your mind has become free from all contamination. To remove the sins of the past, you should write a book delineating the duties of a true Vaisnava. By rendering this service you will attain full perfection."

Accordingly Yadavaprakasa wrote a wonderful book called Yati-dharma-samuccaya, which he offered at the feet of his guru. At this time Yadavaprakasa, or Govinda dasa as he was now known, was over eighty years old. A short time after the completion of the book, he passed from this world.

ACARYA AT SRIRANGAM

While all these events were taking place in Kancipuram, the devotees

in Sri Rangam were still feeling the lack of an acaryà to guide them. The ardent desire of all of them was that Ramanuja come there and be their preceptor. Mahapurna had stayed for some time in Kanci with the intention of bringing Ramanuja to Sri Rangam, but, because he had left so abruptly, he was unable to do so. When the news reached Sri Rangam that Ramanuja had taken sannyasa, Mahapurna was very pleased and went into the temple of Lord Ranganatha.

There, before the lotus-eyed Lord who reclines on His bed of Ananta-Sesa, Mahapurna began to offer fervent prayers, begging the Lord to bring Ramanuja to Rangaksetra. Hearing this impassioned plea from His pure devotee, Lord Ranganatha became compassionate and instructed Mahapurna, "My child, you must send Vararanga, the sweetest singer, to Lord Varadaraja in Kancipuram. When Lord Varadaraja is pleased by Vararanga's bhajans and offers him a benediction, then he should ask that Ramanuja be allowed to come here. Without Varadaraja's permission, Ramanuja will never leave His shelter."

DEPARTURE TO SRI RANGAM

Vararanga was the son of Yamunacarya. He was a renowned singer and had set to music the beautiful verses known as the Sahasra-giti. Having received these instructions, Mahapurna sent Vararanga to Kancipuram after instructing him as to how he should accomplish his mission. Every day in the temple of Varadaraja Vararanga would sing bhajans before the Lord in such an exquisite way that anyone who heard him would become struck with wonder and filled with ecstasy. Eventually Lord Varadaraja became so pleased with Vararanga that He offered him a benediction in return for his services.

Of course, Vararanga requested the Lord's permission for Ramanuja to come to Sri Rangam to be the acarya of the Vaisnavas there Ramanuja was sorry to leave Kancipuram, particularly as this meant losing the association of Kancipurna. But, at the same time, he was pleased at the prospect of being with the disciples of Alabandara. Thus it was with mixed feelings that he set off with Vararanga a few days later to make the journey from Kancipuram to Sri Rangam.

All the people of Rangaksetra were delighted when Yatiraja arrived in their city, and the assembly of Vaisnavas immediately installed him as the acarya. Lord Ranganatha was also very pleased to see this pure-hearted devotee in His temple, and He bestowed upon him two mystic powers - the ability to cure the sick and the strength to protect the devotees from illusion. On hearing the news of Ramanuja's coming to Sri Rangam, many

Vaisnavas from the surrounding area came to see him; all were thrilled to hear his wonderful explanations of Vaisnava philosophy.

DELIVERANCE OF GOVINDA

A short time after his coming to Sri Rangam, Ramanuja began to consider the position of his dear cousin, Govinda, who years before had saved him from Yadavaprakasa's murderous plot. He recalled Govinda's simplicity and affection and how he had always been a dear friend to all living entities. While thinking of these things, a desire arose in Ramanuja's heart to bring Govinda to the shelter of Lord Vishnu's lotus feet. As we have heard, ever since the fateful pilgrimage to Varanasi, Govinda had been a devout follower of Lord Siva, residing at the holy place known as Kalahasti, which is a place of pilgrimage for all Saivites. Ramanuja's uncle, Sailapurna, a disciple of Yamunacarya, was now living at Sri Saila, just a short distance from Kalahasti. Therefore, Yatiraja decided to write him a letter, requesting him to somehow or other make Govinda into a devotee of Lord Vishnu. When he received this letter, Sailapurna went to Kalahasti with his disciples and made his camp near a large lake there.

Every morning Govinda would come to that lake to bathe and gather flowers for his worship. When he came one morning and found a venerable Vaisnava acarya seated nearby discussing the scriptures with his disciples, he was intrigued. Being desirous of hearing all that was said, Govinda climbed up a nearby patali tree to pick some flowers. As he listened to Sailapurna's words of devotion, Govinda's mind became more and more attracted to that saintly Vaisnava.

When the discourse was completed and Govinda was walking away to take his bath, Sailapurna called out to him, "O holy man, may I know for whose worship you have picked those flowers." On being told that they were an offering for Lord Siva, he went on, "But how could flowers such as these be desirable for one who has earned the name Vibhuti-Bhusana by smearing himself with the ashes of material desires, which he has burned up knowing them to be the causes of material miseries. Lord Siva dances in the crematorium, being mad for the mercy of Lord Narayana.

These flowers should properly be offered to the Supreme Lord Vishnu, who is the reservoir of all auspicious qualities and from whom this entire universe has come into being. I am surprised to find an intelligent person such as you gathering flowers for the worship of Lord Siva." "Revered sir," replied Govinda, "in one sense I can see that your words are true, for no offering to the Lord ever benefits that Supreme Person, who is already the possessor of all things. What can I do for the great Lord Sankara, who is so

powerful that he saved the entire universe by drinking an ocean of poison? Yet still there is some purpose in making such offerings, for by so doing we are able to express our devotion to the Lord.

It is the devotion that the Lord appreciates, beyond the meager offering itself." "O Mahatma," said Sailapurna, "I am pleased by your devotion and humility. What you have said is true. What can we offer except self-surrender to that Personality, who in the form of a dwarf-Brahman took away all the possessions of the mighty demon king? This complete surrender is the highest form of worship, and by the strength of such surrender Bali Maharaja was able to captivate Lord Vamanadeva. Just try to understand something of the sweetness of the Lord's loving dealings with His devotees, of which you are depriving yourself by abandoning His worship for the sake of Lord Siva." "But why are you making a distinction between Vishnu and Siva?" said Govinda. "Are they not both aspects of the one Godhead?"

When Sailapurna heard this statement of Govinda's, he realized that the young man was not only engaging in demigod worship, but was also influenced by the philosophy of impersonalizes. Every morning Govinda and Sailapurna would meet by the lake and exchange words in a similar vein. Gradually, by hearing the pure theistic philosophy from such a great saint as Sailapurna, Govinda's heart began to change and the desire arose within him to take shelter of the lotus feet of Lord Narayana. One morning he fell down like a rod in front of Sailapurna and begged him for initiation.

So it was that Govinda gave up his worship of Lord Siva and took to the path of undeviating devotion to the Supreme Lord, Sri Vishnu. After the initiation was performed, Sailapurna instructed Govinda to go to Sri Rangam to reside with his renowned cousin, Ramanuja. However, Govinda's devotion to his guru was so great that he was unable to tolerate the feelings of separation that he was undergoing. Therefore, he soon returned to the city of Sri Saila to render personal service to his spiritual master.

INITIATION FROM GOSTHIPURNA

After coming to Sri Rangam, Ramanuja was very pleased to resume his role as the disciple of Mahapurna: through this relationship he felt relief from the sadness that had afflicted him since the disappearance of Yamunacarya. By his behavior toward Mahapurna, he set the example for all disciples to follow in rendering service to their spiritual master. Under the expert guidance of Mahapurna, he resumed his study of the revealed scriptures. Mahapurna was so impressed by the incomparable genius and Vaisnava qualities of his disciple that he gave his son, Pundarikaksa, to be the disciple of Ramanuja.

One evening, when they had completed their studies for the day, Mahapurna said to Ramanuja, "Not far from here is a prosperous town known as Tirukkotiyur. Living there is a great scholar and devotee, Gosthipurna by name, who was born in the Pandya country. It is no exaggeration to say that there is no other Vaisnava like him in this part of the country. If you desire to fully learn the meaning and significance of the Vedic mantras, then there is none but he who is qualified to teach you. I advise you to go to Tirukkotiyur without delay and receive the mantra from Gosthipurna." Having received this instruction from his guru, Ramanuja went to Tirukkotiyur a few days later to see Gosthipurna. In the presence of that famous devotee, he offered his prostrated obeisance's and begged for the Vaisnava mantra to be bestowed upon him. Gosthipurna, however, was very reluctant to impart the secret of the mantra and replied, "You may come here some other day, and I will consider your request."

Ramanuja felt very dejected at this reply, and with a heavy heart he returned to Sri Rangam. A few days later a big festival was held in honor of Lord Ranganatha, and Gosthipurna came there to take part in the worship. At that time one of the priests in the temple was inspired by Lord Ranganatha, and he spoke as follows to Gosthipurna, "You should bestow the mantra on my devotee, Ramanuja, who is most worthy to receive it." Realizing that the Lord was speaking to him through His servant, Gosthipurna replied, "But my Lord, is it not true that the mantra may only be given to one who has completely purified his mind by long austerities? How can the mantra, which is no different from you, reside in the mind of one who is not pure?" To this the priest replied, "You do not understand the purity of this devotee. He is able to deliver all of humanity."

After this incident, Gosthipurna began to consider the matter deeply, but still he was unwilling to give the mantra to any other person. Time and again Ramanuja approached him, but repeatedly Gosthipurna refused his request. When his appeals had been denied on eighteen separate occasions, Ramanuja began to feel that there must be some great impurity in his heart and that it was for this reason that Gosthipurna would not bestow his mercy upon him. In this state of dejection, Ramanuja began to shed tears of despair.

When some people informed Gosthipurna of Ramanuja's condition, he was moved by pity for the young devotee. Therefore, when Ramanuja came before him again, he spoke to him in a kind way. "Only Lord Vishnu Himself is aware of the glories of this mantra. Now I know that you are worthy to receive it, for you are pure and firmly fixed in devotion to the lotus feet of the Lord. At the present time I can find no one but yourself who is fit to

receive the mantra, for whoever chants it is certain to go to Vaikuntha at the time of death. Because this mantra is so pure and sacred, it must not be touched by the lips of anyone who has material desires.

Therefore, you must not disclose the mantra to any other person" Having thus instructed Ramanuja, Gosthipurna initiated him into the chanting of the mantra of eight syllables. Ramanuja was filled with ecstasy to chant this wonderful vibration, and his face began to glow with spiritual effulgence. He considered himself the most blessed of all beings and bowed again and again at the feet of his guru.

REVEALING THE SECRET MANTRA

Having taken leave of Sri Gosthipurna, Ramanuja, in a joyful mood, began to return to Sri Rangam. But as he was walking, he began to think about the potency of the mantra that had been given to him. While thinking in this way, he became filled with feelings of compassion for the sufferings of all living beings in this material world. Then, as he was walking near the walls of the Vishnu temple in Tirukkotiyur, he began to call out to all the people who were passing by, "Please, all of you, come near to Lord Vishnu's temple, and I will give you a priceless jewel!" Attracted by his pure expression and unusual words, a large crowd of men, women, and children began to follow him. A rumor began to spread all over the town that a prophet had appeared who could fulfill all of one's desires. Within a short time a huge crowd had assembled outside of the temple.

On seeing this mass of humanity, Yatiraja's heart swelled with joy. He embraced the two disciples who had accompanied him, Dasarathi and Kuresa, and then climbed up the tower of the temple. In a loud voice he began to address the gathering: "All of you are dearer to me than my own life. Therefore I have a strong desire to deliver you from the torments and sufferings all of us must undergo in this temporary world. Please recite this mantra which I have obtained for you. Do this, and the Lord's mercy will be upon you." When they heard Ramanuja's words, all the people in the crowd called out, "Please tell us the mantra. Shower the Lord's blessings upon us!" Then Yatiraja called out in a deep resounding voice the mantra he had just received from Gosthipurna; om namo narayanaya. Immediately the crowd responded, everyone calling out the sacred words together, producing a sound like thunder.

Twice more Ramanuja called out the mantra, and twice more the thunderous response resounded from the crowd. Every person became silent and looked at one another with feelings of deep ecstasy in their hearts. At that time it seemed that the earth had become Vaikuntha. The faces of the

men, women and children were flushed with joy and it seemed that all miseries were gone from the earth.

Those who had come running to the temple hoping to receive gold or jewels, immediately forgot their worldly desires, feeling as if they had been given a diamond in place of a piece of broken glass. As the joyful crowd melted away, men and women came and prostrated themselves before Yatiraja, considering them most blessed to have received such a benediction from that great soul. Ramanuja then climbed down from the tower and began walking towards Gosthipurna's residence to worship the feet of his guru.

GOSTHIPURNA'S ANGER

By this time Gosthipurna had come to hear in detail of everything that had taken place outside the temple and was extremely angry, feeling Ramanuja had betrayed his trust. When Ramanuja approached him with his two disciples, the aged acarya addressed him in a voice that trembled with rage. 'Get out of my sight, O lowest of men! I have committed a great sin by entrusting the most precious gem to such an untrustworthily person as yourself. Why have you come here again, forcing me to commit the sin of looking at your face? Surely you are destined to live in hell for countless lifetimes." Without any sign of remorse, Ramanuja replied to his guru in a most humble manner, saying, 'It was only because I am prepared to suffer in hell that I dared to go against your order. You told me that whoever chanted the mantra of eight syllables was certain to be liberated.

Thus, according to your words, so many people are now destined to find shelter at Lord Narayana's lotus feet. If an insignificant person like me has go to hell, it is off no great importance if so many others thereby attain the mercy of Lord Narayana." On hearing these words, which fully revealed the depth of the devotee's compassion, Gosthipurna was completely stunned and filled with great wonder. All his fierce anger disappeared in an instant, like the passing of violent storm, and he embraced Ramanuja with profound affection. Everyone who was able to witness this transformation was filled with joy and astonishment.

Gosthipurna then addressed Ramanuja with folded palms, 'My child, I have never known anyone as magnanimous as yourself. From this day you are my guru, and I am your disciple. There is no doubt that you are a most intimate associate of the Lord, whereas I am nothing but a common man. How can I comprehend your greatness? Please forgive all of my offenses." Ramanuja fell to his knees and clasped the feet of his guru. With his head bowed in humility, he said, 'You are my eternal guru. The perfect mantra

has become even more potent because it has emanated from your lips. Thus today it has burnt to ashes the miseries of so many thousands of people. Although I committed the offense of transgressing the order of my guru, I have become eternally fortunate by receiving your embrace, which is desired even by the gods.

My prayer is that, regarding me as your son and servant, you will eternally bestow your mercy upon me." Being highly pleased by Ramanuja's humility and gentle behavior, Gosthipurna asked him to accept his son, Saumya-narayana, as his disciple. Then, with permission of his spiritual master, Ramanuja returned to Sri Rangam. After this incident Yatiraja's fame expanded even further, and for several weeks it seemed the local people could speak of nothing but this great devotee who had come into their midst.

INSTRUCTIONS TO KURESA

Residing once more in Sri Rangam, Yatiraja began to instruct the growing number of disciples who had taken shelter of him. One day his disciple Kuresa approached him and asked him to reveal the full meaning of the supreme verse of Bhagavad-gita:-sarva-dharman parityajamam ekam saranam vrajaaham tvam sarva-papebhyo moksayisyami ma such"Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto me. I wilt deliver you from all sinful reactions. Do not fear." Ramanuja replied, "A person who gives up all independent desires and serves his guru absolutely for an entire year can fully understand the meaning of this verse, and no one else." "But life is so uncertain," said Kuresa, "how can I know whether or not I will live for another year?

Please bestow your mercy upon me by making the meaning of the verse manifest in my heart even now"Yatiraja considered this request for a while and then replied, "If you live for one month by begging alms from door to door, without knowing where your next meal will come from, then you will begin to realize the meaning of full surrender. At that time I will instruct you on all the meanings of this glorious verse." For one month Kuresa lived as his guru had instructed. When the month had passed, he learned from Yatiraja all about the nature of surrender to Lord Krsna.

DASARATHI'S REQUEST

A title while later, Dasarathi, Ramanuja's second disciple, approached him with the same request as Kuresa. to him Yatiraja replied, "You are my relative, and therefore it is my desire that you understand the verse by hearing from Gosthipurna. Even though there may be some fault in you, I

will tend to overlook it because you are my family member. The duty of the guru is to remove all taints from the heart of the disciple. Therefore it is better that you take instruction from Sri Gosthipurna." Dasarathi was famous as a great scholar and still a little proud of his learning. It was for this reason that Ramanuja directed him to approach Gosthipurna. As instructed by his guru, Dasarathi went to reside in Tirukkotiyur and for six months he sat at the feet of Mahatma Gosthipurna.

However, even at the end of this time, the acarya had still not explained to him the meaning of that sublime verse spoken by Lord Krsna. Eventually, taking pity on the young man, Gosthipurna told Dasarathi, "You are certainly a most brilliant scholar; I know that well. However, you must understand that education, wealth, and birth in an aristocratic family can cause pride to arise in the heart of a small-minded man. In those who are virtuous, great learning brings self-control and thus gives rise to good qualities, not blemishes. Understanding these instructions, now return to your own guru; he will reveal the meaning of the verse as you desire."

DASARATHI'S HUMILITY

Dasarathi then returned to Srirangam and reported to Ramanuja all that had taken place in Tirukkotiyur. At that same time, Attulai, the daughter of Mahapurna, came there, obviously in some distress. When Yatiraja inquired from her as to the cause of her unhappiness, she replied, "Dear brother, my father has sent me to you. I live at the house of my father-in-law and every day, both morning and evening, I have to bring water from a lake which is over two miles from the house. The road there is lonely and difficult to traverse and as a result I have become overwhelmed by fear and physical exertion. When I told my mother-in-law of these difficulties, rather than sympathizing with my plight, she flew into a rage, saying, 'Why did you not bring a cook from your father's house? Can I afford to employ a servant while you sit idly at home?' Being very unhappy at this treatment, I returned to my father's house and he has instructed me to come to you for help with this problem."

To this request Ramanuja immediately responded, "Dear sister, do not worry. Here I have one Brahman whom I will send with you. He will do the work of fetching water from the lake and the cooking as well." So saying he glanced at Dasarathi, as a great scholar. Although working as a servant in the kitchen was an occupation he might have considered unbefitting for a renowned pandit such as himself, Dasarathi understood the desire of his guru and gladly followed Attulai to her father-in law's house. There he began to do all the work in the kitchen with great care and devotion. In this way six months passed.

One day a Vaisnava came to the village and was explaining a verse before an assembly of people. Dasarathi was among the crowd and when he heard the speaker's presentation tinged with impersonality misconceptions, he could not restrain himself from pointing out these errors. At this the man was very irritated and shouted out, "Stop, you fool! Where is a jackal and where is heaven! Whoever heard of a cook explaining the scriptures? Go back to the kitchen and display your talents there." Without showing the least sign of annoyance at these harsh words, Dasarathi calmly went on with his explanation of the verse. His presentation, based on many different scriptures, was made so perfectly that everyone who heard his speech was captivated. Even the original speaker begged pardon from him by touching his feet and asking, "How is it that such a sincere devotee and learned scholar as yourself is engaged in doing menial work in the kitchen?"

To this Dasarathi replied that he was simply acting in accordance with the order of his guru, which was his life and soul. When all the people learned he was Dasarathi, the famous devotee-scholar, they went in a group to Sri Rangam. Before Ramanuja all of them presented their petition, saying, "O Mahatma, it is not proper that your worthy disciple should be engaged as a cook any longer. He has not a trace of pride in his heart and is certainly an exalted paramahamsa.

Please give orders so that in great honor we may bring him to your feet once more." Yatiraja was so pleased to hear the people describing his disciple in such a way that he himself returned with them. When they met, Ramanuja embraced Dasarathi and blessed him. After returning to Sri Rangam he explained to him the full significance of Lord Krishna's final instruction to Arjuna in the Bhagavad-gita, which reveals the essence of a devotee's surrender to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Because Dasarathi had fulfilled his desire by rendering service to the devotees, from that day he was known as Vaisnava dasa.

LEARNING THE SCIENCE OF DHARMA

After completing his study of the Sathari-sukta, Ramanuja next wanted to learn about dharma from Sri Vararanga, the son of Yamunacarya. Every day Vararanga would go before Lord Ranganatha and sing bhajans in a most beautiful voice. Sometimes he would dance in ecstasy, and, when he became fatigued, Ramanuja would bring him relief by massaging his legs and rubbing turmeric powder on his body. Every evening he would prepare condensed milk for Vararanga and bring it to him like a menial servant. For six months this continued, and then Vararanga said to Ramanuja, "I know of your desire to learn from me about dharma and because I am very pleased

by the service that you have rendered to me, I will fully instruct you as far as my intelligence allows.

Everything about dharma is fully understood by one who has realized the meaning of this verse:-gurur eva param brahmagurur eva param-dhanamgurur eva parah kamogurur eva parayanam"That person who sees his spiritual master as the personification of the Lord Himself and who serves his guru perfectly with no other desire, just as you have served me, he is the greatest knower of dharma. This is the limit of my understanding." Ramanuja was very pleased to receive this instruction from his teacher and offered prostrated obeisances at his feet. Sri Vararanga had no children, but he had a younger brother named Chotanambi who was very dear to him.

Now he brought this young man forward to become the disciple of Ramanuja. In this way Ramanuja was instructed by Yamunacarya's five most intimate disciples: Kancipurna, Mahapurna, Gosthipuma, Maladhara, and Vararanga - each of whom embodied a different aspect of the great acarya. Now it appeared that Alabandara was present again on earth in the form of the pure devotee, Ramanuja.

When Yatiraja spoke, explaining the Vaisnava philosophy, everyone became struck with wonder to hear such beautiful descriptions. When he spoke about the glories of the Lord, the unhappiness and material desires of all those who heard him immediately went to a distant place.

THE GREAT DEVOTEE TIRUMANGAI

Of all the temples in India, which of Lord Ranganatha, situated on an island in the Kaveri River, is certainly thelargest? The story of how this temple came to be built is very interesting. About three hundred years before the birth of Ramanuja, which was in AD 1017, there lived in south India a devotee named Tirumangai. His heart was always filled with devotion for Lord Vishnu, and in this mood of pure love he would compose beautiful poetic prayers. From the time of his youth he was in the habit of traveling throughout the country to visit the various holy places of pilgrimage. In the course of his travels four great mystics had become attracted by his exalted nature and had become his disciples.

Each of these disciples had a particular ability that set him apart from ordinary men. The first disciple was named Tola Vazhakkan, and he was famous for his ability to vanquish any opponent in a debate. The second disciple was named Taluduvan, and he had the ability to open any lock without the need of a key. The third and fourth disciples both possessed most unusual talents. The third, Nizhalai Mithippan, could force any man

to remain still simply by stepping on his shadow, while the fourth, Nirmal Nadappan, had developed the laghima siddhi, which enabled him to walk on water.

TIRUMANGAI'S VISIT TO SRI RANGAM

After touring many holy places of pilgrimage, Tirumangai at last came to the temple of Lord Ranganatha. The Deity of Ranganatha had originally been installed by Vibhisana, the brother of Ravana, but at the time of Tirumangai the temple was completely dilapidated and filled with bats. Once a day a priest would come there to offer a few flowers and a little water to the Deity before hurrying away out of fear of the wild animals that dwelt in the surrounding forest. When he saw this unhappy state of affairs, a strong desire arose in the mind of Tirumangai to build a beautiful, opulent temple for Lord Ranganatha.

However, he did not have a penny to his name and no more did any of his disciples. After consulting together they decided to approach every rich man they could find and beg him to give money for the building of a temple. Unfortunately, the effects of Kaliyuga having set in, not one of these rich men would give even a small coin and they frequently blasphemed the devotees by calling them rogues or thieves.

ADOPTING THE WAYS OF ROBBERS

Being a humble devotee, Tirumangai was not disturbed by this treatment, but the thought of the Supreme Lord standing uncared for in a wild forest full of jackals and hyenas caused him great pain. At last he could tolerate the situation no longer and exclaimed in front of his four disciples, "We have wasted enough time trying to persuade these rascals to serve the Lord. They will always remain atheists and unbelievers. Which is better - to beg from these villains while Lord Ranganatha remains in this sorry condition, or to humble them by building a temple for the Lord so magnificent that it will force them to bow down at his feet?"

The disciples answered, "The service of the Lord is our duty, not acting as the servants of these rogues.""Then prepare yourselves," continued Tirumangai, "for from this day we will see to it that the wealth of these greedy men is spent for building a temple. These wealthy landowners, who are cruel by nature, have passed their lives taking from the poor, hard-working people and leaving them without enough to eat. Now then, let us rob these rascals and use their money for building a temple and feeding the poor."

The four disciples readily agreed to this proposal, and each of them

spoke in turn. Tola Vazhakkan said, "No one can defeat me in argument. So, while I engage some rich man and his attendants in a debate, they will forget everything else and you will easily be able to carry off their wealth." Taludhuvan said, "I have the ability to open any lock without a key.

Therefore, no treasury door will ever be closed to us." Nizhalai Mithippan said, "Anyone whose shadow is touched by my feet loses all power of movement. Therefore, it will be easy for us to stop rich travelers along the roads." Nirmal Nadappan said, "The big houses of rich landowners, which are surrounded by moats of water, are always open to me, for I can easily walk over water. Therefore from today, all the treasure of kings is yours"

CONSTRUCTION OF THE RANGANATHA TEMPLE

With the assistance of his four disciples, Tirumangai soon became the leader of a large gang of robbers. Together they accumulated a great hoard of riches that was kept concealed in a secret place on Lord Ranganatha's island. Spending large sums of money, Tirumangai brought the best architects in the land to design a huge temple for the Lord and at an auspicious moment he laid the foundation stone. The inner temple room, encircled by the first ring of walls and crowned with a high tower, was completed in two years. Thousands of builders were engaged to take part in the construction, but even so it took four years to complete the next ring of walls and apartments, six years for the second, eight years for the third, ten years for the fourth, twelve years for the fifth, and eighteen years for the sixth. In all it took sixty years to complete the construction of the temple and by this time Tirumangai was over eighty years old.

After the construction of the inner temple, kings began to send money to Tirumangai of their own accord, convinced now that he was a genuine devotee. Moreover, he was now the leader of a gang of over one thousand robbers and other wealthy landowners gave money liberally to assist with the work, fearing that all of their property would otherwise be plundered.

Despite all this, Tirumangai still lived the simple life of a devotee, eating only once a day prasadam cooked by his own hand and prepared from food he obtained by begging. He would also ensure that all the people in that area never suffered for want of food -only the rich lived in fear of the sage Tirumangai.

THE ROBBERS' ANGER

Now that all seven walls of the temple were completed, Tirumangai generously rewarded all the architects. After making this payment there

was not a penny left in the treasury. At that time the host of robbers, who had been his accomplices, came to him to demand their share of the wealth they had plundered. Tirumangai thought for some time about the robbers' demands, and, finding no way he could pay them, he consulted with his disciple Nirmal Nadappan in a secluded place. In the meantime all the robbers, believing that Tirumangai had cheated them by spending all the money for construction of the temple, made a conspiracy to kill their leader. Just as they were about to put their plans into effect, however, Nirmal Nadappan stepped amongst them, saying, "My dear brothers, somewhere hidden along the northern bank of the Kaveri there is a large amount of treasure belonging to our master.

Look, here is a boat; I will take you to that place where the treasure is hidden, and then we can divide it among ourselves." The robbers happily agreed to this proposal, and all got aboard a large boat that had been used to carry blocks of stone for the temple. It was the rainy season, and the monsoon had swollen the Kaveri into a mighty flow over a mite wide. The day was drawing to a close, and dark clouds began to blot out the light of the setting sun. As Tirumangai and his three other disciples stood on the island of Sri Rangam, they could only faintly discern the outline of the huge boat as it moved slowly towards the distant shore. Suddenly, above the roar of the water and the sound of the wind, they heard a horrible cry of distress that seemed to come from within the Kaveri itself.

Then there was silence, and the boat could be seen no more. In the roaring waves of the Kaveri nothing else was noticed. After a short while one man walking with steady strides over the water came near Tirumangai and bowed down at his feet. This man was none other than Nirmal Nadappan, the fourth disciple. Tirumangai raised him up and said, "Do not feel concerned for these men. After all the service they have rendered, surely Lord Ranganatha will protect them.

Is it not better for them to leave the world at this time than to continue living as robbers? Now let us all pass the remaining days of our lives in the service of Lord Ranganatha, for our purpose in adopting the robbers' lifestyle has been fulfilled." So Tirumangai and his four disciples then absorbed themselves in rendering service to the Deity of Ranganatha. A few years later they passed from this world and returned to the shelter of Lord Vishnu's lotus feet.

THE HIGH PRIEST OF THE TEMPLE

In this way the temple of Lord Ranganatha came to be built and was famous as the largest temple in all of India. At the time of Ramanuja,

however, the high priest of the temple was not at all a devoted or pious man. He had used his position to amass a fortune for himself, and he was willing to remove any person who became an obstacle to his ambition. Ramanujacarya now proved himself to be just such an obstacle. The high priest-observed how people would offer respect and veneration to Yatiraja and that his own position was now being overlooked. That envious person could not tolerate this threat to his prestige and status, and so he immediately began to consider ways by which he might be rid of this dangerous rival.

After formulating a plan, he went to Ramanuja one day and invited him to take alms at his house. Then he quickly returned home and instructed his wife, "Today I have invited Ramanuja to take alms here. This is our opportunity to be rid of the scoundrel once and for all. You know where the poison is to be found. Need I say more?" The priest's wife was a woman of similar disposition to her husband, and she gladly agreed to his proposal.

The high priest then went back to the temple, and at noon Yatiraja arrived at the house to take alms as he had been invited. The wife of the priest received him with great courtesy, washing his feet and offering him a nice sitting place. Although this woman was known to be hard-hearted by nature, when she beheld the transcendental appearance of the great devotee with his pure, guileless expression, feelings of compassion began to arise within her. When she brought the poisoned dish forward, she was unable to restrain herself and, shedding tears, addressed Ramanuja, "My child, if you want to save yourself, and then go elsewhere to take your meal. If you take this food you will die" Yatiraja was shocked to hear these words, and he sat silently for some time wondering what he might have done to bring out such hatred in the priest. Eventually he rose and, leaving the house, walked slowly towards the Kaveri.

Seeing Gosthipurna there by the banks of the river, he ran towards him and fell down at his feet. Gosthipurna raised him up and inquired as to the cause of his distress. Ramanuja narrated to him the whole story and then asked his spiritual master, "I am so unhappy at the thought of his mental condition.

How can he be freed from such a great sin?" "My child," Gosthipurna replied, "when you desire the Lord's mercy for this sinful soul, there is no need to fear for him. Very soon he will give up his evil ways and become a righteous man .When he had left his guru, Ramanuja returned to the asrama, where he found a Brahman waiting with various types of prasadam. He took a little and distributed the rest to his disciples without telling anyone what had befallen him at the house of the high priest. Sitting alone, he

continued to contemplate how the priest's sinful nature might be reformed In the meantime the high priest had returned to his residence and discovered that his plot had been unsuccessful. He was extremely angry, but, considering that a woman's heart is naturally soft, he excused his wife and immediately began to devise another scheme to do away with his imagined rival.

Every evening Yatiraja would visit the temple to see Lord Ranganatha. That evening, when he was standing before the Lord, the high priest came towards him, offering him caranamrta. Ramanuja gratefully accepted and drank the caranamrta, even though he knew that it was mixed with poison. Then he offered prayers to Lord Ranganatha, "O ocean of mercy, how great is your affection for your devotee. I am not worthy to accept such nectar from your lotus feet. Your mercy is causeless and unlimited."

When he had finished offering prayers, Ramanuja left the temple, his body trembling in ecstasy. Seeing these emotions, the high priest mistook them for signs that the poison was taking effect and was very pleased, thinking that his mission was accomplished. He was convinced that the next morning he would see the smoke of Yatiraja's funeral pyre, for he had put in the caranamrta enough poison to kill ten men.

THE PRIEST'S REPENTENCE

However, in this he was to be disappointed. The next morning, as he was going to the temple as usual, he heard the sound of many voices singing joyful songs in praise of Ramanuja. The priest hurried to the place the sound was coming from and saw there that all the people of Sri Rangam were singing and dancing around Yatiraja, offering flowers at his feet. The acarya himself was sitting on a low seat in a trance of ecstasy, his mind fixed on the Supreme Personality of God head.

His pure features were more radiant than ever, with tears of jubilation flowing from his eyes. As he beheld that wonderful sight, even the stone-like heart of that evil priest began to soften. In an instant the high priest realized the folly of his envy towards this great mahatma and rushed through the crowd towards him. Weeping bitterly, he fell down at Ramanuja's feet praying, "You have descended to enact the desires of Lord Vishnu by destroying sinful men like me. Delay no longer, my lord.

Send me at once to the abode of Yamaraja. I am not fit even to touch your feet, so please punish me immediately for all my sins. Only then may I achieve relief from their reactions. Delay no longer! Throw me at once under the feet of an elephant or into a blazing fire. I do not desire to live for

a moment more." Having said this, the priest began to strike his head on the ground so hard that the place became soaked with blood. The people all around tried to restrain him, but he was so agitated that he began to strike his chest until his whole body became covered with blood. Then Yatiraja returned to external consciousness and pacified the priest by placing his hand upon his head and saying, "Do not act in such a terrible way. Lord Ranganatha has certainly forgiven all of your sins."

"How can you look with such kindness on a man as abominable as me!" exclaimed the priest."O saviors of the fallen, this glory of yours will be proclaimed by men for all time to come; Ramanuja then blessed the high priest and bestowed his full mercy upon him. From that day on, the priest was like a different person. He cast far away all the enviousness which had polluted his heart and became a humble servant of the Lord, completely devoted to his savior and guru, Ramanuja.

THE DEBATE WITH YAJNAMURTI

At that time there lived a great scholar and pandita named Yajnamurti, who by dint of his learning and keen intelligence had become unconquerable in debate. Although born in south India, he had traveled throughout the northern regions of the country without finding anyone who could rival his abilities in argument. On returning to south India he heard of the fame of Ramanuja, the renowned Vaisnava who was so expert at refuting impersonality philosophy. Therefore he hastened to Sri Rangam, followed by a cart filled with the books he always took with him. Appearing before Ramanuja, Yajnamurti immediately challenged him to a debate. At this Yatiraja merely smiled, saying, "O Mahatma, what is the value of this mental wrangling? I will accept defeat at your hands, for you are a scholar without second. Victory follows you everywhere." "If you acknowledge your defeat," rejoined Yajnamurti, "then you must accept the flawless doctrine of monism and give up forever the false ideas of the Vaisnavas".

Of course this was something that Ramanuja could never accept, and so he protested, "It is mayavadis such as you who are filled with illusion. According to such speculators all arguments and reasoning's of the mind are simply aspects of maya, so how is your own doctrine free from illusion?"

"Whatever exists in time and space is illusion," said Yajnamurti, "and both of these must be transcended before one can reach the real truth. You accept a form of God as truth, but actually all forms are nothing but illusion." In this way the great debate began and for seventeen days it continued, as neither of the two scholars seemed able to finally defeat the other. At the end of the seventeenth day, when Yatiraja still found it impossible to nullify

all of his opponent's clever arguments and establish the supremacy of Lord Vishnu, he felt very disappointed at heart. Returning to the asrama that evening, he went before the Deity and began to pray with folded hands, "O Lord, the truth that is revealed in all the scriptures has become covered by the cloud of mayavada arguments.

By cleverly juggling words these impersonalists present arguments which are bewildering even to great mahatmas. O Supreme One, for how long will you allow Your children to be thus kept from the shade of Your lotus feet?" When he had finished his prayer, Ramanuja began to shed tears. That night the Lord appeared to him in a dream and told him, "Do not be anxious. Before long the full glory of devotional service will be revealed to the world through you."

YAJNAMURTI'S CONVERSION

The next morning when he arose and recalled the instructions the Lord had given him in the dream, Yatiraja felt great joy. When he had finished all his morning duties, he walked over to the monastery where Yajnamurti was staying. On seeing the blissful effulgence in Ramanuja's face the impersonality was completely amazed, thinking to himself, "Yesterday, Ramanuja returned to his asrama greatly disappointed and on the verge of defeat. But today he returns looking like one of the gods. I can see that he is divinely inspired, and thus it is futile to argue with him any longer.

This man has indeed attained full perfection. Anger and pride never approach him, and his face glows with a transcendent beauty. I shall atone for my sinfulness by becoming his disciple and thus destroy the root of my false pride." Having made this decision, Yajnamurti fell down to offer obeisance's to Ramanuja, who then addressed him, "O Yajnamurti, such behavior is not proper for a great man like yourself.

Why this delay in resuming the debate?""O great souls," replied the scholar, "I am no longer the same wrangler who has tried to overcome you with clever arguments for so many days. I will argue no longer with a pure devotee such as you. I stand before you not as a rival, but as your eternal servant. Please fill up my darkened heart with the light of your purity." Yatiraja was not surprised by the transformation that had taken place in Yajnamurti, for he clearly recalled the words spoken to him by Sri Devaraja, the Deity installed in the asrama.

He realized that it was only through the mercy of the Lord that the proud pandita had gained the jewel of humility. Then, speaking in a gentle voice, Ramanuja said to the scholar, "May the name of Sri Devaraja be ever

glorified, for his grace can melt even the stones. To give up pride in one's learning is all but impossible for any man, but by His mercy it has been made possible. You are supremely fortunate." "When I have been given the chance to meet a pure devotee such as you, then I am indeed fortunate," said Yajnamurti. "Now please instruct me. Show me how to become a devotee of the Lord."

On receiving this surrender from the famous pandita, Yatiraja at once prepared to initiate him into the Vaisnava sampradaya. Yajnamurti anointed his body with tilaka and then accepted the symbols of Lord Vishnu: the conch shell, disc, club and lotus. Because he had been delivered by the mercy of Sri Devaraja, Ramanuja gave Yajnamurti the name Devaraja-muni and instructed him, "Now that your learning has been freed from the contamination of pride, it can shine forth upon the world. You should engage yourself in writing books which perfectly explain the behavior and philosophy of the Vaisnavas." It was in accordance with this order from his guru that Devaraja-muni later wrote two wonderful devotional literatures, Jnana-sara and Prameyasara.

THE HUMILITY OF DEVARAJA-MUNI

A few days later, four intelligent, devoted young men approached Ramanuja and begged for initiation from him. When he had heard their request, Yatiraja considered the matter for a little while and then told them, "Go to Devaraja-muni and become his disciples. He is not only a great pandita, but also a most advanced devotee of Lord Narayana." Accepting this order with great respect, the four young men duly became disciples of Devaraja-muni. That previously arrogant scholar, however, was not at all pleased to find himself in a position where he had to accept worship and veneration from disciples. "What a disturbance this is to me," he thought, "I have been endeavoring with all my strength to rid myself of vanity, but now I am forced to become a guru and listen to my praises being sung."

In bewilderment he approached Ramanuja and humbly submitted, "O master, I am your surrendered servant. Why do you behave so cruelly towards me? By your grace I have endeavored to shake off the demon of false pride, so why do you hurl me once more into the arms of vanity by ordering me to become a guru? I am not detached enough to accept such a position, so please allow me to remain here as your menial servant. For me, to be in such a position would be the supreme perfection." Highly pleased by his disciple's words, Yatiraja embraced Devaraja-muni and said warmly, "I did all this simply to test whether you had truly overcome your pride.

Now that you have passed the test, you should remain here with me

and Lord Devaraja." Devaraja-muni was very satisfied to receive this order from his guru. He passed the remaining years of his life absorbed in rendering service to the lotus feet of his spiritual master and Lord Devaraja.

INSTRUCTIONS TO DISCIPLES

Now that Ramanuja had accepted a number of disciples, he began to give them formal instructions on the Vaisnava scriptures. First he studied with them the Sahasragiti, the thousand hymns praising Lord Vishnu which had been composed by Nammalvar, a famous devotee from south India. All the disciples were entranced to hear the wonderful way that Yatiraja explained these verses, revealing to them the glories of Lord Vishnu. One day they came to a verse which described the holy dhama of Sri Saila, which is also known as Tirupati: "This Sri Saila is like Vaikuntha on earth.

One who spends his life in that holy place does in truth live in Vaikuntha and at the end of his life will attain the lotus feet of Lord Narayana." When they had read that verse, Ramanuja asked his disciples, "Who among you is willing to go to Sri Saila, make a flower garden and serve Lord Srinivasa there until the end of his life?" It was Anantacarya, a very quiet disciple, who replied, "O masters, if you will permit me, I shall go to that sacred hill and there achieve the mercy of the Lord." "You are indeed blessed," said Yatiraja, "and by your devotion you have delivered fourteen generations of your ancestors. I consider myself most fortunate to have a disciple such as you." Then, after worshiping the feet of his guru, Anantacarya departed for Tirupati.

TRAVELLING AND PREACHING

Three times over Ramanuja studied the Sahasra-giti with his disciples. At the conclusion of the third reading a desire arose within his heart to see for himself the holy shrine of Sri Saila. Thus a few days later he set off on the journey from Sri Rangam accompanied by his disciples, all chanting the holy name of Lord Hari together. At the end of the first day of the journey, they stopped for the night in the town of Delhi On the next day they walked as far as the village of Astasa-hasra. Here there lived two of Ramanuja's disciples, Yajnesa and Varadacarya. Intending to pass the night at the house of Yajnesa, who was a wealthy merchant, Yatiraja sent two of his followers ahead to convey the news of his imminent arrival.

When he learned of this from them, Yajnesa was delighted and immediately began to see to all the arrangements necessary for receiving the party of pilgrims. However, so absorbed was he in all these activities that Yajnesa completely neglected to see to the comfort of the two tired

messengers, who were left alone without being offered so much as a glass of water. Becoming unhappy at this mistreatment, they returned to Ramanuja and reported to him everything that had taken place.

Being most displeased to hear how his disciple had failed to show proper respect to Vaisnava guests, Yatiraja decided he would go instead to the house of Varadacarya. This second disciple was an extremely poor man but was noted for his pure heart and great devotion to Lord Vishnu. Every morning he would set out to beg alms, returning at noon to present whatever he had received as an offering to the Lord Thus he passed his life in great contentment along with Laksmi, his chaste and extremely beautiful wife.

LAKSMI'S DILEMMA

When Ramanuja and his party arrived at the house, Varadacarya was still out begging and they were all received with great respect by Laksmi. Paying obeisances at the feet of her guru, she said, "My husband is still out begging alms. All of you please sit here and is merciful to me by accepting this water to wash your feet. Just nearby there is a lake where you may bathe, and in the meantime I will prepare the offering for Lord Narayana?" Having said this she entered the kitchen. However, there was not a single grain of rice in the store. So poor were this couple that they had nothing at all in the house in great anxiety Laksmi began to consider how she could properly serve her guru. In that same village there lived a rich businessman who had become attracted by Laksmi's beauty.

He had tried many times to tempt her through female messengers, offering her money and jewels, but she would never even speak to the rascal. Now, however, she began to consider that this might be the only way that she and her husband would be able to render proper service to their spiritual master.

Eventually she concluded that, as service to one's guru transcends all other principles, she would surrender herself to that man in return for whatever was required to serve her guests. Accordingly, she slipped out the back door of her house and ran quickly to the house of the businessman, which was not far from there. When she came into his presence, she said, "This evening I shall fulfill your desires. My guru and many of his disciples have come to my house as guests. Send to our house without delays all things necessary to receive them properly." The merchant was surprised to hear this, for he had by now resigned himself to the fact that this chaste lady would never be allured by the things he offered.

Greatly pleased by this unexpected turn of events, he quickly arranged

for the most opulent foods to be sent to his neighbor's house. Quickly then Laksmidevi busied herself in preparing offerings for Lord Vishnu from the different things that were brought to her. When everything was completed and the offering made, she invited Ramanuja and his disciples to sit down and take prasadam. They were all most surprised to find such opulent foodstuffs available in a poor man's house and ate with great relish, praising the good lady for her excellent hospitality.

THE POTENCY OF MAHA-PRASADA

When he returned home, Varadacarya was filled with happiness to see his guru actually in his own house. However, when he heard about the wonderful prasadam they had all been offered, he was astonished, knowing only too well the poverty-stricken condition in which they were living. When he inquired from his wife as to how she had been able to serve their guests in a manner so befitting, Laksmidevi bowed her head in shame and narrated to him all the arrangements she had made with the merchant. Far from being angry, however, Varadacarya began to dance with joy when he heard what had happened and he cried out, "0, I am blessed! I am blessed!" Addressing his wife, he said, "Today you have shown the highest degree of chastity. Narayana, who is represented by Sri Guru, is the only purusa and thus he is the enjoyer of prakrti. Only a great soul can fully realize this knowledge of devotional service. How fortunate I am to be married to such a lady who is the embodiment of religious principles."

Taking his wife with him, Varadacarya then went into the presence of Yatiraja and explained to his guru everything that had taken place. By Ramanuja's order they sat down and took prasadam in his presence. When they had finished eating, he told them to go to the businessman's house together and take all the remaining prasadam to offer to him. When they arrived at the large mansion, Varadacarya waited outside while Laksmidevi was admitted to the merchant's rooms. She immediately offered him the prasadam they had brought, and he accepted it with pleasure. Prasadam is not ordinary food, and particularly the remnants left by pure devotees possess great spiritual potency. This prasadam began to affect the merchant at once and by the time he had finished eating he was a changed man.

All the sensual desires having been purged from his heart, he looked upon Laksmi as he would his mother and spoke to her with tears in his eyes, "How sinful I am! My fate would have been the same as that of the hunter who was burned to ashes when he attempted to touch the chaste Damayanti. Only by your great compassion have I been saved. O mothers, please forgive all of my offenses and have mercy upon me by showing me

the feet of your guru. "In great happiness Laksmidevi and Varadacarya returned to their house along with the merchant.

In the presence of Ramanuja all three of them bowed down to the ground to offer their prostrated obeisances. When Yatiraja touched the merchant with his hand, all of the man's miseries were removed and he begged for initiation from that great soul. Desiring to make life easier for the devoted Brahman couple, Ramanuja requested them to accept the large sum of money the merchant had offered. At this Varadacarya spoke to his spiritual master with folded palms, "O master, by your mercy everything that we require is provided for us. Money is the root of all evil, for it distracts the senses and thus drags the mind away from service to the Supreme Lord. Please do not order me to become a wealthy man." Ramanuja was satisfied by these words, and he embraced the pure-hearted devotee, saying, "Today I have become purified by the association of such a great mahatma as you, devoid of all material desires."

YAJNESA'S REPENTANCE

At that moment Yajnesa, Yatiraja's wealthy disciple, entered the house and fell down at the feet of his guru. Having waited expectantly for Ramanuja's arrival, he had eventually learned that the party of pilgrims had gone instead to the house of the poor Brahman, Varadacarya .Thinking that he must have committed some grave offense and displeased his guru, he had gone there feeling depressed at heart. Gently and with affection, Yatiraja raised Yajnesa to his feet and said, "Is this unhappiness due to my not coming to your house? The reason for this was the offense that you made to two exalted Vaisnavas by neglecting them. There is no higher dharma than rendering service to the Vaisnavas, and in this you have failed." Being humbled by this chastisement from his spiritual master, Yajnesa replied in a voice choked with tears, "This thoughtless behavior of mine was not due to the vanity of wealth. Rather it was my exultation and eagerness to serve you that made me so neglectful" .Ramanuja then consoled this repentant and simple-hearted devotee by promising to be his guest when he returned from Sri Saila.

ARRIVAL IN SRI SAILA

Early the next morning Ramanuja and his party left Astasahasra and set off for the city of Kancipuram. At noon they arrived there and went immediately to pay their obeisance's to Lord Varadaraja. They met with the renowned Vaisnava saint, Sri Kancipurna, and joyfully passed three days in his association. They then traveled to the holy place known as Kapila

Tirtha and on the same day arrived at the foot of the sacred hill known as Sri Saila. Yatiraja became filled with ecstasy there, thinking, and "This is the holy place where Sri Hari Himself is residing along with His consort Laksmi.

It would be a great offense for me to touch the Lord's holy abode with my feet; therefore I will remain here at the foot of the hill." Thus he remained with his followers at the foot of Sri Saila, offering constant prayers to Lord Narayana. In the meantime all the sadhus and devotees who lived at Sri Saila came to see Ramanuja. When they heard of his resolution not to climb the hill for fear of committing an offense, they all submitted a petition. "O pure one, if great souls such as yourself are unwilling to walk upon the sacred hill of Sri Saila, then all the common people will act in the same way and even the priests will be afraid to go up to the temple. Therefore please change your decision and agree to climb the hill. The hearts of pure devotees are the real temples of Sri Hari, for He is always present where pure devotion is manifest. The places of pilgrimage become even more sanctified because they are visited by the great devotees."

MEETING WITH SAILAPURNA

Accepting the appeals of these holy men, Yatiraja changed his decision and set off with all his disciples to climb the hill. The ascent is long and steep, and after some time Ramanuja became fatigued due to hunger and thirst. While they were resting by the side of the path, Ramanuja's uncle, the Vaisnava acarya Sailapurna, appeared there, having come to bring mama-prasada and caranamrita from the temple at the top of the hill. Seeing this saintly devotee performing such menial service on his behalf, Ramanuja was a little disturbed and he said, "Why are you behaving in this way? Why should such a learned acarya as you take such trouble for a lowly person like me? Surely a boy could have been engaged to perform this service."

"I was thinking in this way, too," replied Sailapurna, "but after searching for someone suitable I could find no one less respectable than myself. For this reason I have come to you personally." Ramanuja was very satisfied to hear this reply from his uncle, for he could understand that humility is one of the Vaisnava's most essential qualities. He then offered obeisance's at the feet of Sri Sailapurna and happily honored the prasada along with his disciples. Being relieved from their fatigue, the party then continued up the hill until they reached the famous temple of Venkatesvara. Having circumambulated the temple, Ramanuja went before the Deity to offer prayers and obeisances.

On seeing the beauty of the Lord his heart became filled with devotional ecstasy, and tears began to flow down his cheeks. Quickly the symptoms of love of God overwhelmed him, and he passed from external consciousness, falling to the ground in a faint. When he eventually regained his senses, the priests of the temple brought large quantities of maha-prasada both for Yatiraja and all of his disciples.

All the devotees felt great happiness in seeing that holy shrine and remained at the temple for three days. During this time Govinda, Ramanuja's cousin, who was a disciple of Sailapurna, came there to join the party. The two devotees were delighted to see one another again and embraced each other in great happiness. At the request of Sailapurna, Ramanuja remained at Sri Saila for the next year, and every day the aged acarya would recite the Ramayana to him, adding his own inspired explanations to the verses. At the end of one year their study of the Ramayana was complete and Ramanuja considered him highly fortunate to have been able to hear this scripture from such a learned devotee.

GOVINDA'S UNUSUAL BEHAVIOR

While he was staying at Sailapurna's asrama, Yatiraja was astonished by the behavior of his cousin on a number of occasions. One day he saw Govinda preparing his gurus bed, but he was shocked to see his cousin lie down himself upon the same bed. Ramanuja was disturbed to see such apparently disrespectful behavior and went at once to inform Sailapurna, who immediately summoned his disciple to his presence. "Do you know what happens," he asked Govinda, "to one who sees fit to lie down on his guru's bed?" "One who lies down on the bed of his guru is certainly destined for hell," replied Govinda calmly." If you are aware of the consequences, then why do you act in such a way?" Sailapurna then inquired. To this Govinda replied, "Every day I lie down on your bed just to make sure that it is comfortable and that your rest will be undisturbed. If it ensures your comfort, then I am certainly willing to remain eternally in hell." When Yatiraja heard his cousin's humble submission, he felt ashamed of his ignorance in misjudging Govinda and begged his forgiveness.

On another occasion Ramanuja saw his cousin behaving in a manner that was totally bewildering. He saw Govinda holding a snake in his left hand and repeatedly thrusting the finger of his right hand into the creature's mouth, causing it almost to die from pain. After taking his bath, Govinda came to Ramanuja, who inquired from him, "Why were you acting in such a strange way with that snake? It was sheer madness, and only due to good fortune were you not bitten. By acting like a cruel child you not only placed

yourself in great danger, but also caused needless suffering to the poor creature, which is now lying there almost dead."

"But my dear brother," replied Govinda, "while eating something that snake had got a thorn stuck in its throat and was writhing in pain when I found it. I was putting my finger into its mouth only to remove that thorn. Now it appears lifeless only because of exhaustion and will soon be fully recovered." Yatiraja was both surprised and gratified to see Govinda's compassion on his fellow living beings, and after this incident his love for his cousin became even more profound.

RAMANUJA AT TIRUPATI

Thumbiman Kondi after tirumala, Bhagavad rananuja came down the hill and stayed at tirupathi along with his uncle srisaila poorna for one year. Srisaila Poorna gave full discourse on Ramayana to Ramanuja. During his stay at tirupathi, one milk maid thumbimankondi used to give Milk, curd and Ghee. When Ramanuja was returning to Srirangam, he called her to give money. But she appeared like a matured devotee beyond money. Instead she asked for bhagavad anugraham and moksham. Bhagavan was puzzled by her wish and asked her how to give? Thumbimaan was trust Ramanuja, she asked him to give a slip to Lord Srinivas "mentioning about her credentials and give moksham". Any amount of explanations did not satisfy her, but she wanted this slip from Romania. Bhagavan gave a slip to srinivasa Perumal. Thumbiman went up the hills to sannidhi of Lord Srinivasa and showed the slip.

To every one's surprise a divine chariot appeared and took her to Lord's Lotus feet. Acts of bovina bhattar — Srisaila poorna is maternal uncle of Bhagavad Ramanuja. Earlier we noted Govinda Bhattar saved Romania from death trap while on journey to Varanassi. Later Govinda bhattar was initiated to Saivite philosophy and subsequently Srisala Poorna has again brought him back to Vaishnava school. From those days Govinda Bhattar was the Shishyan of Srisaila Poorna and He was so much devoted to do any thing and every thing to his Acharya. This devotion went long way. When Govindan arranged bed for his master, he will sleep on it once to check the comfort.

This surprised Srisala poorna and also Ramanuja. Ramanuja asked him for his intent, as it is high sin to give a used bed to his guru. Govindan replied that he wills risk the sin because his guru will have good sleep, once he checks the comfort of bed arrangement. This stunned bhgavan and he was reminded of his act, when he removed a spine from an ailing snake's tongue to relieve its pain, even risking his life for the benefit of dangerous

poisonous reptile. At the end of one year stay with Srisaila Poorna and learning of Ramayana intricacies, Ramanuja was leaving back to srirangam. Srisala Poorna wanted to give a gift to Ramanuja in addition to his teaching, due to Affection and asked him to make wish. It is a great pleasure to ask a boon from a beloved Acharya. Ramanuja was aware of Govinda Bhattar's acharya bhakthi and devotion to Lord.

He requested Srisaila poorna to give Govinda Bhattar as sishyan. Srilsaila Poorna gave Govinda Bhattar and also his son Pillan to Bhagavada Ramanuja. However Govinda Bhattar could not leave his master. His separation from his Guru made him desperate and he became sick. A few days later Govinda Bhattar asked permission of Ramanuja and left back to Srisaila Poorna. All are happy except the Guru. He said I have given him to Romania. Once we part it is not proper to back track. This whole thing is bhranthi. Srisaila Poorna asked Govinda to leave back to Ramanuja and only worship His Sripadam. He knew this is only for his great future under the leader ship of Ramanuja Back with Ramanuja Govinda Bhattar is happy.

They became ideal Guru Sishyans in course of time. After reaching Srirangam Govinda Bhattar used to give lectures to all devotees. Lord Ranganatha and Thayar are pleased to see Vaishnavism flourish under Ramanuja. All the persons used to praise Bhattar. Normally one will take the praises humbly. Instead Bhattar will take as pride and continued encouraging praise.

He also used to go near a devadasi house to listen the praises for Bhagavad Ramanuja. Misunderstood by his acts, one day Ramanuja called him to discuss the issue. But Bhagavan could see only extreme sense of devotion in Govinda Bhattar; he always like to praise Ramanuja and about His glory and that is the reason why he was going to the devadasi's house also. There are no Limits To acharya bhakti and at time it exceeds bhagavad Bhakti.

RETURNING TO KANCI

After thus passing one year at Sri Saila, hearing the Ramayana from Acarya Sailapurna, Ramanuja decided to return to Sri Rangam. When he came, before Sailapurna to offer his respects before departing, that elderly disciple of Yamunacarya said to him, "My son, having you with me here for this last year has given me great pleasure. Now if there is anything that you desire from me, just ask, and, if it is within my power, I will give it to you." To this Ramanuja replied, "O Mahatma, please give me your disciple Govinda. That is my only request." Sailapurna assented at once, and so it was with great happiness that Yatiraja set off for Sri Rangam in the

association of his beloved cousin. After traveling for several days they came to the city of Kancipuram, where Ramanuja and Govinda had grown up together.

Lord of Kanchi told these six statements

1. Sriman Naryana is the supreme self, unparallel and unsurpassed
2. The lord has all the insentienet and sentient as his body, and He is the soul of everything
3. The way to get salvation is surrendering to the feet of lord
4. There is no need to adopt contemplation of the lord during our final breath
5. After the soul departs from the material body, it gets salvation if he/she adopted the means of surrender
6. One should approach fully qualified vaishnava acharya and get enlightened

SAILAPURNA'S DEALINGS WITH GOVINDA

They first went to see Lord Varadaraja and then on to visit Kancipurna, the great devotee and old friend of Ramanuja. After describing to him Govinda's wonderful devotion to his guru, Ramanuja finally begged Kancipurna, "Please bless my cousin and make him even more devoted to his guru and even more merciful toward all living entities." On hearing this Kancipurna smiled and said, "The Lord always fulfills your desires. No harm can ever befall one who has your blessings." But having observed a disconsolate took on Govinda's face, he added, "Your cousin is suffering greatly due to feelings of separation from his beloved guru.

Why don't you send him back to Sri Saila, so that he can resume his service to Sailapurna, which is the delight of his life?" Ramanuja considered Kancipurna's words for some time then he went over to Govinda and instructed him to leave immediately and return to the shelter of his spiritual master. Govinda was very pleased to receive this instruction and traveled quickly back to Sri Saila by the shortest possible route.

However, when Sailapurna heard of Govinda's return, he did not so much as glance at him or call him to take prasada. Eventually the acaryas wife, a kind-hearted lady, said to her husband, "You may or may not speak to Govinda, but you must at least feed him" It is not my duty to feed a horse that has been sold," replied Sailapurna. "He should take shelter of his new master alone." When he heard these words, Govinda, who was standing at the door, understood his gurus' mind and left at once to rejoin his cousin. On arriving at Kancipuram, he went before Ramanuja and bowed down at

his feet, saying, "From this day on you should never again address me as 'brother', for I have heard from the lips of Sailapurna that you are now my master."

RETURN TO SRI RANGAM

Seeing Govinda's fatigue from his travels, Yatiraja had him bathe and then take prasada. From that time on, Govinda rendered service to his cousin in the same meticulous way he had done for Sailapurna. The party of Vaisnavas remained for three more nights in Kancipuram and then traveled on to Astasahasra. There they stayed for the night with Yajnesa, Yatiraja's wealthy disciple who had previously been so disappointed. The next day they continued on to Sri Rangam and were warmly welcomed by all the inhabitants of that city.

GOVINDA'S SERVICE

Now realizing that his guru's intention had been to entrust him completely to the care of Ramanuja, Govinda served his cousin with a contented heart. Within a few days he had discovered all of his new master's requirements and rendered service to him so perfectly that all the other disciples were struck with wonder. One day, while they were talking with Govinda, some of them elaborately praised the quality of his service. On hearing this, Govinda surprised them by saying, "Yes, my good qualities are certainly worthy of praise."

Shocked at hearing such proud words from a Vaisnava, they reported the incident to Yatiraja, who called Govinda to him, saying, "Although it is true that all the good qualities of a devotee are seen in your person, you should never allow this to make you feel arrogant or conceited." To this Govinda replied, "After many thousands of births, I obtained this human form of life, but even then I was going astray and falling from the path of true perfection. It was your mercy alone that saved me from the darkness of delusion and therefore whatever good qualities others may see in me are due to you alone, for I am by nature fallen and low-minded. Thus whenever anyone offers me words of praise, it is in actuality praise of you. For this reason I fully approve of such statements." On another occasion, when several of Yatiraja's disciples were walking to the asrama, they were shocked to see Govinda, who had not even finished his morning duties, sitting down outside the house of a prostitute.

Again Yatiraja summoned his cousin to ask him about his unusual behavior. "Why were you sitting at the door of a prostitute's house instead of attending to your morning duties," he inquired. "That woman was singing

the tales of the Ramayana in such a sweet voice," the reply, "and I was so captivated by hearing the pastimes of Ramacandra that I could not bring myself to leave. For this reason my morning duties have been neglected" On hearing this, everyone was filled with wonder to understand Govinda's simplicity and natural devotion.

GOVINDA'S SANNYASA

A few days later Govinda's mother, Diptimati, came to Ramanuja. "My child," she said, "Govinda's wife is now grown up and of a suitable age to bear children. Please ask him to perform his duty by perpetuating our family, for he will not listen to me. When I raised the matter with him previously, he told me, 'You may bring my wife to me when I have completed my service to Yatiraja and have some free time.' But up until this day he has never had any free time, being always absorbed in his service." Ramanuja then called for Govinda and instructed him that, as a householder, it was his duty to have children who could be trained as pure devotees. "Purify your mind of the lower modes of nature," he told him, "and then live with your wife and raise a family." Govinda, as always, accepted his cousin's order and went away to carry out his instructions. However, a few days later Ramanuja's aunt came to him again, complaining that Govinda still had not adopted the life of a grhastha.

When he was called to come before Yatiraja, Govinda explained the situation. "O Master, you instructed me to purify my mind of the lower modes of nature and then to live with my wife and beget children. However, I find that when my devotion to the Lord is completely pure, I cannot even think of family life or begetting children. Therefore it has now become very difficult for me to follow your instructions." When he had listened to Govinda's submission, Ramanuja was silent for some time. Then he said, "Govinda, now that I understand the state of your mind, I consider that it is your duty to take sannyasa immediately, for a person must accept the regulations of the status of life that is most suitable or him. This is the injunction of the scriptures.

As you have attained complete mastery over the senses, you are quite fit to be a sannyasi. "Govinda was very pleased to hear his cousin's words and bowed down at his feet. With the permission of Diptimati, Yatiraja began to arrange for the ceremony without delay. In the presence of the sacred fire, Govinda was offered the danda and kamandalu and thus became a Vaisnava sannyasi. With effulgent features and tears of ecstasy in his eyes, his pure appearance attracted the minds of all those present at the ceremony.

Out of great affection, Yatiraja gave his cousin the name Mananatha, meaning the controller of the mind, a name used by his own disciples to address him. Thinking himself unworthy to bear the same name as his preceptor, Govinda refused to accept this name. So Ramanuja translated it into the Tamil equivalent, 'Emperumanar', or Embar for short. Later on when Ramanuja founded an asrama in Jagannatha Puri, he called it the Embar Math in honor of his cousin.

JOURNEY TO KASHMIR

While Ramanuja was teaching his disciples at Sri Rangam, he frequently recalled the promise he had made before the body of Yamunacarya to present an authentic Vaisnava commentary on the Vedanta-sutras, which would nullify the misleading mayavadi interpretations. One day, recalling his vow, he said to the assembly of disciples, "I have made a promise to Yamunacarya that I would write the Sri-bhasya commentary, but until now I have done nothing to keep my vow. Before attempting such a task, it is essential that I study the Bodhayana-vrrti, written by the sage Bodhayana, but this is such a rare book that I have been unable to locate a single copy of it anywhere in this part of the country. However, I have heard that one copy of this work is preserved with great care at Sarada-pitha in Kashmir.

Therefore I am proposing to go there, taking with me only Kuresa, so that I can make a study of Bodhayana's teachings and then present a true explanation of the Vedanta-sutras. Thus it was that a few days later Ramanuja and Kuresa set off for the far north of India. After traveling for three months, they arrived at Sarada-pitha in Kashmir. There Yatiraja held long philosophical discussions with the local panditas, who were amazed by his knowledge of the scriptures and the depth of his wisdom. Thus they treated him as an honored guest. However, when he inquired from them about the Bodhayana-vrtti, they were reluctant to let him see this book.

Being they impersonalizes, they realized that if Yatiraja were able to absorb Bodhayana's philosophical conclusions, he would be in a position to completely destroy their false mayavada doctrines with his forceful Vaisnava presentation. Thinking in this way, they said to him, "It is true that the book you mentioned was here until recently, but unfortunately it has been eaten by worms and is now completely destroyed."

KURESA'S WONDERFUL ABILITY

Ramanuja was dismayed to hear this, thinking all his labor in traveling so far had been for nothing. However, that night as he was lying down the goddess Sarada (Durga) appeared before him with the book, saying, "My

child, take this book and return immediately to your own country." Straight away, having hidden the book amongst their belongings, Ramanuja and Kuresa took leave of the panditas of Sarada-pitha and departed from that place. A few days later the scholars were rearranging the books in their library and checking to see if any were in need of repair. When they discovered that the Bodhayanavrtti was missing, they at once concluded that the two Vaisnavas from south India must be responsible for its disappearance and sent a party of men in pursuit of them to recover the book. After traveling day and night for almost a month, they at last caught up with Ramanuja and Kuresa and learned on inquiring from them that they were indeed in possession of the Bodhayana-vrttii. Without another word they took the book from them and returned with it to their home in Kashmir.

Yatiraja was distressed at the loss, wondering how it would now be possible for him to write the Sri-bhasya. Kuresa, on the other hand, did not seem in the least disturbed and said cheerfully, "O Master, there is no need for you to feel unhappy about what has happened. Every night of our journey, while you were sleeping, I was studying that vrtti, and now I know the whole book by heart. If we stay here for a few days, I will be able to write it all down from memory."

Ramanuja was surprised to learn of his disciple's prodigious powers of memory and also delighted to hear that he would be able to retain a copy of the book he had so eagerly sought. Embracing Kuresa, he said, "From this day I am eternally indebted to you."

WRITING THE SRI BHASYA

When Kuresa had finished transcribing the book, they continued on their way and reached Sri Rangam without further incident. Back at the asrama, Ramanuja called all his disciples together and recounted to them what had befallen himself and Kuresa on their journey. Finally he said, "O devotees, by the strength of your devotion and the wonderful power of Kuresa's memory, the Bodhayana-vrtti has been procured. Now I will be able to refute the foolish ideas of persons who consider that a mere intellectual understanding of the Vedic statements, tat tvam asi and aham brahmasmi can bring one to a state of full perfection.

By falsely staling that the individual souls are themselves God, these scholars have misled the mass of people away from the true goal of life, devotion to Lord Vishnu." Therefore I shall now commence writing the Sribhasya, which will reveal the true verdict of the Vedas, that only through loving devotion to Lord Narayana can one achieve the perfection of life.

Now all of you please pray o the Lord that this may be completed without any impediment.

Kuresa, you must act as my secretary, but if you hear some argument which does not seem proper to you, then you must stop writing and sit quietly. Then I shall reconsider my statements and change them if I find any fault." The next day Yatiraja began to dictate the Sribhasya, with Kuresa writing down everything he said. Only once did Kuresa stop writing and refuse to inscribe one of his guru's statements. This occurred when Ramanuja described that the essential nature of the soul was nitya and jnata, that is, eternal and full of knowledge. When he saw his disciple's behavior, Yatiraja was at first annoyed, saying to him, "Why do you not write the commentary yourself".

But, when he thought deeply about what he had said, he realized that the statement that the soul is eternal and full of knowledge might indicate that the soul is independent. He considered that the statement of the Bhagavad-Gita: mamaivamso jiva-loke jiva-bhutah sanatanah clearly reveals that the jiva is always dependent on the Supreme Lord for his existence.

Therefore the Lord is eternally the master of all jivas. Having reached this conclusion, Yatiraja changed his previous statement to say that the essential nature of the soul is visnu-sesatva and jnatrtva, that is, always completely dependent on Lord Vishnu and existing just to engage in His service. On hearing this, Kuresa continued writing, and in a few months the Sri-bhasya commentary was complete. This wonderful book so nicely explains the supremacy of Lord Vishnu and so expertly refutes the false notions of the mayavadis, that it is still venerated by all Vaisnavas. Ramanuja wrote several other excellent books of Vaisnava philosophy and in this way presented the doctrine of Visistadvaita-vada.

TRAVELS THROUGHOUT INDIA

Having finished the Sri-bhasya, Ramanuja was satisfied in having fulfilled one of the three vows he had taken to complete the work of Yamunacarya. Now he decided he was ready to fulfill the second of his promises by preaching the Vaisnava philosophy he had presented in the Sri-bhasya all over India. Therefore, with seventy-four of his chief disciples and many other followers, he set off to spread the glories of Lord Narayana and refute the false doctrines of the impersonalists. First of all they went to Kancipuram, the capital of the Cholas. Having offered prayers to Lord Varadaraja, Yatiraja then continued on his journey to the city of Kumbakonam.

When he spoke in the temple there, he was challenged by some of the

local scholars, who were followers of Sankaracarya .However, by citing many verses from different scriptures, he completely nullified their arguments. All the panditas of Kumbakonam then surrendered to Ramanuja and became devotees of Lord Narayana. Next, Yatiraja and his followers traveled to Madurai, which in those days was the capital of the Pandya kingdom as well as a center for all types of scholars. Before a great assembly of learned panditas, Ramanuja spoke about the philosophy of devotion.

His presentation was so convincing that at once everyone accepted his teachings and agreed to become devotees of Lord Vishnu. After remaining for a few days in Madurai, the party of Vaisnavas traveled on to the city of Kuranga and from there to Kurakapuri. In both these places Deities of Lord Vishnu were being worshipped, and all the devotees took pleasure in singing devotional songs in the temples. From there they journeyed across to the west coast of India to the city of Trivandrum in Kerala, where they were able to behold the beautiful features of Lord Padmanabha lying on His bed of Ananta-Sesa. Then they traveled all the way up the west coast to Dvaraka, from there across to Mathura and Vrndavana, to Salagrama, Saketa, Naimisaranya, Puskara, and Badarikasrama.

In these holy tirthas Ramanuja preached the philosophy of loving devotion to the Supreme Lord, and all those who heard him were convinced to become devotees. Many times logicians, Buddhists, and the impersonality followers of Sankara came before him to present their own arguments, but in every instance he was able to point out the deficiencies in these different doctrines and establish the supremacy of the Vaisnava philosophy. Eventually they came again to Sarada-pitha in the province of Kashmir, where Yatiraja and Kuresa had previously endeavored to obtain a copy of the Bodhayana-vrtti. The scholars of that place came to try to defeat Ramanuja, but none of them could match his solid arguments. Being overcome in debate, they then resorted to the art of black magic in which they were also adept. They chanted various mantras with the intention of bringing about the death of their opponent.

However, because of Yatiraja's spiritual potency, the spells were unable to affect him and returned to afflict those who had cast them. Thus all the panditas of Sarada-pitha fell sick and were on the point of death. At this time the King of Kashmir heard of what was happening. He hurried to Sarada-pitha and fell at Ramanuja's feet, begging him to forgive those sinful Brahmans. Yatiraja accepted this appeal and cured all of them, after which they became his disciples along with the king.

JAGANNATHA PURI

Having left Sarada-pitha, Ramanuja traveled southwards to Benares, where he remained for several months preaching and inspiring many of those who heard him to become devotees. From Benares he traveled to Jagannatha Puri, where he founded a monastery named the Embar Math. By this time his reputation as a scholar and devotee was widely known throughout the whole of India, and as a result none of the pandits of Jagannatha Puri dared to come and challenge him. Desiring that the priests of the Jagannatha temple adopt the pancaratrki system of worship, as explained by Narada Muni, Ramanuja appealed to the King of Orissa to arrange a debate between them. Being fearful of the outcome of such a confrontation, all the priests prayed to Lord Jagannatha to save them from inevitable defeat. That very night as Yatiraja was sleeping; he was flung three hundred miles by Lord Jagannatha to the holy dhama of Kurma-ksetra. When he awoke, Ramanuja was bewildered to find himself in a completely different place and without any of the disciples who had been accompanying him.

At first he thought that the temple nearby was dedicated to Lord Siva, and so he decided to fast for the day as a penance for his inability to worship Lord Narayana. However, when he inquired from some of the local people, he was informed that the Deity was in fact that of Lord Kurmadeva, one of the incarnations of Lord Vishnu. He then went to the temple and happily engaged in the worship of the Lord.

RETURN TO SRI RANGAM

After residing at Kurma-ksetra for several days, Ramanuja was reunited with his disciples, who were continuing their journey southwards. He went with them to Simhacala and then on to Ahovata, where he established another matha. At Isalinganga they were able to see the Deity of Lord Nrsimhadeva and offer prayers at His lotus feet In this way, traveling southwards down the eastern side of India; they came at last to Tirupati, Sri Saila, where Yatiraja had previously stayed for one year with his uncle, Sailapurna. At that time a great controversy was raging there, for the followers of Lord Siva were challenging the devotees by claiming that Lord Venkatesvara was actually a Deity of Siva.

Ramanuja then explained the history of Venkata Hill, with reference to various scriptures, and established that Venkatesvara was a Deity of Lord Vishnu. Having remained at Tirupati for two weeks, Ramanuja and his followers continued their journey on to Kancipuram, where they were able to worship Lord Varadaraja. From Kancithey passed on through

Madurantaka to Vira-narayana-pura, the birthplace of Nathamuni, Yamunacarya's grandfather and receptor. From there they went on to Sri Rangam and once again took shelter of Lord Ranganatha.

INSTRUCTIONS TO DISCIPLES

Kuresa was one of Ramanuja's most intimate disciples, always absorbed in thought of how he could assist his guru in his preaching work. He came from a wealthy Brahman family of Kuragrahara, a small village near Kancipuram. As he was in fact the landowner of the whole area around the village of Kura, he came to be known as Kuresa, the master of Kura. He married a very qualified girl named Andal, and together they used the immense wealth he had inherited in acts of charity, providing for all the poor people in the area. He had known Ramanuja since his boyhood and had always regarded him as a most elevated personality. When Yatiraja adopted the sannyasa order of life, Kuresa and Andal were among the first to become his disciples. Kuresa was widely renowned as a great scholar, for whatever he heard, even once, he would remember for all time.

It was with his assistance, as we have heard previously, that Yadavaprakasa was defeated and made into a devotee. From early in the morning until midnight, the gates of Kuresa's house would be open and any poor man who went there would receive gifts in charity. Once Laksmidevi, the consort of Lord Varadaraja, on hearing the gates of Kuresa's house closing, inquired from her servant Kancipurna as to where the sound was coming from. At that time Kancipurna explained to Mother Laksmi all about Kuresa's activities. "From early in the morning until midnight, service is rendered to the poor, the lame and the blind," he told Her. "Then the gates of the house are closed until the next morning so that Kuresa and his wife Andal may take a little rest. It was the sound of the gates closing that you have just heard."

After hearing this description from Kancipurna, Laksmidevi became very anxious to see Kuresa and asked him to bring that devotee to her the next morning. When Kancipurna saw Kuresa early the next day, he informed him of the Goddess of Fortune's wishes. At this Kuresa appeared astonished and replied, "Who am I? Nothing but an ungrateful, evil-minded man, while Laksmidevi is the mother of the universe, who is worshipped with great reverence even by Brahma and Siva. It is said that a candala may not enter the temple and I, having been polluted by my wealth, am lower than any candala. Therefore how can I present myself before Mother Laksmi?"

KURESA'S RENUNCIATION

Having spoken in this way, Kuresa returned home and after removing

his costly garments and ornaments, he dressed himself in the garb of a mendicant. Then he approached Kancipurna once more. "O Mahatma," he said, "I cannot disobey the order of the consort of Lord Narayana, but it is not possible for me to go before her at present, polluted as I am by the contaminations of opulence and wealth. Therefore I will take shelter of Yatiraja, my guru, and purify myself by bathing in the water that has washed his feet. Who knows, if I receive the mercy of great souls such as you, then I may be able to see the lotus feet of Mother Laksmi even in this life." So Kuresa set off that same day, walking towards Srirangam, with Andal following behind.

She too had abandoned all trace of opulent life, retaining only one gold cup from which to supply water to her husband when he became thirsty. After traveling for some time, they entered a dark forest and Andal began to be afraid. "My lord," she said to her husband, "is there anything for us to fear in this desolate place?" It is only the rich who have cause to be afraid," replied Kuresa. "If you have no money or wealth with you then there is nothing to fear" On hearing this, Andal immediately threw away the golden cup. The next day they arrived in Sri Rangam. When Ramanuja heard news of this, he sent at once to have them brought to the asrama. Then, when they had rested and taken prasada, he arranged accommodation for them in a nearby house. From that time on Kuresa lived in Sri Rangam and maintained himself and his wife by begging from door to door.

Although he had been accustomed to living in the most opulent circumstances and was now in a poverty-stricken condition, he considered himself most fortunate, for now he could pass his days in chanting the holy name, discussing the scriptures and serving the feet of his guru. Andal was lastly satisfied by the position in which she found herself, never once lamenting the wealth they had abandoned. Whilst staying in Sri Rangam, Kuresa wrote two books, a commentary on the Sahasra-giti and another work entitled Kuresa-vijaya.

THE PURITY OF KURESA'S DEVOTION

Once during the rainy season there was such a torrential storm that Kuresa was unable to go out and beg, and so he and his wife were fasting for the day. Kuresa was completely undisturbed by hunger, but Andal, who was always absorbed in serving her husband, was very unhappy to see him without food. Within her mind she began to pray to Lord Ranganatha that He might provide something for His devotee Kuresa. A short while later there was a knock at the door, and one of the priests from the temple was admitted carrying a plate of maha-prasada that he had brought as a gift for them.

When the priest had left, Kuresa inquired from his wife, "Did you ask Lord Ranganatha to provide for us? Why else would he send such opulent foodstuffs, the taste of which may reawaken our material desires?" After Andal had sorrowfully confessed what she had done, Kuresa instructed her, "It is not our business to make the Lord our servant. What has already been done cannot be helped, but please never do such a thing again." Having said this, he ate a small portion of the maha-prasada and asked his wife to honor the rest.

BIRTH OF KURESA'S SONS

About a year later Andal gave birth to twin sons. Yatiraja was delighted to hear of this and sent Govinda to perform the jata-karma, or birth ceremony. After the ceremony was completed, Govinda whispered two mantras into the ears of both babies - sriman-narayana-caranau saranamprapadye, ' I take shelter at the feet of Lord Narayana' and srimate narayanaya namah, 'I offer my obeisance's to Lord Narayana'. As gifts for the children, Ramanuja had made out of gold the five weapons of Lord Vishnu - the conch, disc, club, sword and bow - so that by wearing them the babies might be protected from ghosts and evil spirits.

After six months Yatiraja performed a name-giving ceremony both for Kuresa's twin sons, whom he named Parasara and Vyasa, and for the son of Govinda's younger brother, whom he named Parankusa-purna When Ramanuja had stood before the body of Yamunacarya, he had made three vows: to write a Vaisnava commentary on the Vedanta-sutras, to preach the philosophy of devotional service all over India, and to name one disciple Parasara, in honor of the speaker of the Vishnu Purana. All three of these vows were fulfilled.

PARASARA AND THE PANDITA

From an early age the child Parasara gave evidence of his genius and extraordinary character. When he was only five years old, a renowned pandita known as Sarvajna Bhatta passed along the road by Kuresa's house, accompanied by many disciples who were beating on drums and proclaiming the glories of the great scholar. One of the disciples announced, "Here is the unrivalled pandita, Sarvajna Bhatta. All those who wish to become his disciples may come to his feet without delay." On hearing this child Parasara approached the pandita, scooping up a handful of dust as he went. Standing before the great scholar, the child addressed him boldly, "Let me see if you can tell how many grains of dust are in my hand. If you are truly Sarvajna then you should know everything."

The pandita was very surprised to hear Parasara's question, but, as he considered the child's words, he began to see clearly the emptiness of his pride and vanity. Taking the young boy on his lap, Sarvajna kissed him on the forehead and said, "My child, you are truly my guru. Your question has revealed how foolish I was to be so proud of the little knowledge I have acquired." Both Parasara and Vyasa grew up to be great devotees of Lord Narayana, dedicating them to the service of Yatiraja. Following Ramanuja's instructions, Parasara later married two daughters from Mahapurna's family.

LORD RANGANATHA'S PROCESSION

In the day of the Festival of Garuda, thousands of people gathered in Sri Rangam to see the Deity. At the temple gate a huge crowd had assembled, for on this day Lord Ranganatha comes out of the temple and rides around the city on a palanquin in the form of His carrier, Garuda. Drums were resounding and flags were flying, as rows of Brahmans chanted hymns from the Vedas to make the occasion doubly auspicious. Suddenly the looks on the faces of the waiting crowd became even more expectant, as the chanters of the Vedas began to move forward and a procession emerged from the inner courtyard. First a brilliant red banner held aloft on two long bamboo poles and emblazoned with the marks of the conch, disc, and Vaisnava tilaka. Behind the Brahmans came several decorated elephants, all wearing tilaka on their foreheads, moving forward with a majestic gait, and waving their trunks from side to side.

Behind the elephants came a procession of bullocks and horses, all gaily decorated and carrying large drums across their backs. Then all the people felt a thrill of delight as a party of devotees emerged, chanting the holy name of Lord Hari and accompanying the chanting with various drums and cymbals immediately behind the kirtana party Lord Ranganatha Himself, riding on the back of Garuda with His eternal consort, Laksmidevi. The palanquin was born aloft by hundreds of devotees, while priests fanned the Lord with many camara whisks and expert singers sang bhajans praising His glorious pastimes.

On seeing the emergence of the Lord from His temple, the throng of people gathered around the gateway let forth a great shout of joy. In front of the gate a pavilion had been constructed, and the Lord rested there a while before continuing on His journey. At this time hundreds of devotees took the opportunity to present their offerings to Him - coconuts, bananas, plantains, and sweet-smelling camphor lamps. After some time the procession moved on once more, and the sound of the Brahmans chanting

the Vedic hymns could be heard in all directions. As the Lord moved through the streets, housewives appeared at the doors and windows along the way to give fruits, flowers, and betel nuts to the priests for offering to His lotus feet. When the offerings had been made the prasada was returned to the women, and they were blessed by having their heads touched by one of the Lord's helmets. As the procession moved on and on, everyone's eyes were fixed on Lord Narayana and Laksmidevi, their hearts filled with devotion.

DHANURDASA'S MEETING WITH RAMANUJA

However, walking amongst the crowd was one man who was behaving in a completely different manner. He was tall and handsome with broad shoulders and seemed to be walking without any particular purpose, just being swept along by the crowd. With his left hand he held aloft a decorated umbrella with which he was shielding a most beautiful young woman from the sun's rays. In his right hand he carried a fan, which he continually flicked back and forth to remove any discomfort she might be feeling from the sun's heat. It seemed that the young man's attention was so completely absorbed in the beauty of his lady friend that he was oblivious to everything else that was going on around him. Though many people whispered and some made joking comments on seeing such a public display of affection, the young man did not notice this at all, so great was his attraction to the lady's good looks. After bathing in the Kaveri and worshipping Lord Ranganatha, Yatiraja was returning to his asrama with his disciples when he noticed the young man walking with his companion on the other side of the road. "Dasarathi," he said to his disciple, "go and ask that man, who is devoid of both shame and hatred, to come to me." Quickly Dasarathi crossed the street and spoke to the man, who was so engrossed in the beauty of the lady that he had to be addressed several times before he became aware of the other's presence.

Slightly disturbed, like a man who has just been roused from deep slumber, he then gave his attention to the Brahman who had accosted him, joining his palms as a mark of respect and saying, "Sir, how may I serve you?" Over there," replied Dasarathi, "is Yatiraja, the great devotee of Lord Narayana, and he wishes to speak with you. Please come with me for a few moments." On hearing the name of the famous acarya, the young man took his leave of the lady and went with Dasarathi across the street to where the devotees were standing. Having bowed down at Yatiraja's feet, he stood in silence before him, wondering why it was that this famous sadhu should want to talk with him.

At last Ramanuja said, "What nectar have you found in that young lady

that - giving up all hatred, shame, and fear - you think nothing of making yourself a laughingstock throughout the whole city of Sri Rangam by acting in such a way?" "O Mahatma," the young man replied, "I have seen many beautiful sights on this earth, but nothing which came even close to matching the entrancing beauty of the bright eyes of that young lady. When I see them, I become so captivated that I cannot look away." "Is she your wife?" Yatiraja inquired." No, she is not married to me," the man replied, "but I am certain that, even though she is not my wife, I will never love any other woman." "What is your name," asked Yatiraja. "I am known as Dhanurdasa," the response, "and I come from the town of Nichulanagara, where I am famous for my ability in wrestling. The lady's name is Hemamba." "Dhanurdasa," said Yatiraja, "if I can show you a pair of eyes even more beautiful than those of your beloved, will you give up this lady and love the other?"

The wrestler replied, "O great souls, if it were possible to discover a pair of eyes filled with a more haunting beauty than those of my Hemamba, then surely I would leave her and worship instead that lady who possessed them." "Then come to me this evening at my asrama," concluded Yatiraja, "and perhaps we can resolve this matter." At your command," was Dhanurdasa's respectful response. He then returned to where the lady was waiting for him and continued walking with her, still holding the umbrella over her head.

DELIVERANCE OF DHANURDASA

That evening Ramanuja left the asrama accompanied only by Dhanurdasa and walked with him the short distance to the outer gate of Lord Ranganatha's temple. Having passed through all of the outer gates, the two of them stood at last before the Deity of the Lord. At that time the arati had just begun, and the priest was offering a fragrant camphor lamp to the Lord and His consort Laksmidevi. Although the inner room of the temple was dark, being enclosed by walls on all sides, as the lamp was presented before Sri Ranganatha; its flaming effulgence lit up his transcendental features and shimmered on His beautiful, golden, lotus-like eyes. When he saw this revelation of the divine form of the Lord, Dhanurdasa stood as though transfixed, looking without blinking at the eyes of Sri Vishnu, who is known as Aravindaksa? All at once tears of love began to roll down his cheeks as he experienced a taste of the real enjoyment that is found only in the spiritual world. In an instant all his attraction to the pale pleasures of this mundane existence began to fade, like the stars at sunrise.

After some time Dhanurdasa regained his composure and turned towards Ramanuja, falling at his feet saying, "By your causeless mercy, you have given to this most lusty of men pleasures that are sought after even by the demigods in heaven. I am your servant forever. Like an owl of the night, I had turned away from the sun and had become infatuated with a glowworm. Now you have opened my eyes, and thus you alone are my master" Ramanuja then raised Dhanurdasa from the ground and firmly embraced him.

From that moment, the young wrestler from Nichulanagara gave up his entanglement in material affairs and became a pure-hearted devotee of Lord Narayana. Hemamba, although a courtesan by profession, had long regarded Dhanurdasa as her husband. Despite her sinful engagement, she was at heart a devotee of the Lord. Therefore, upon hearing of the great transformation that Dhanurdasa had undergone, she was filled with happiness and came also to surrender her life at the feet of the merciful acarya. Yatiraja arranged for them to be properly married as man and wife, and by his pure instructions he removed the contamination of lust from their hearts.

They left Nichulanagara and moved to Rangaksetra, where they rented a house close by Ramanuja's asrama. In this way they were able to associate with their spiritual master and hear the nectarean Vaisnava teachings from his lips.

THE ENVY OF THE BRAHMANA DISCIPLES

Because of his devotion to his guru, his humility, honesty, and gentle speech, all people came to respect Dhanurdasa. In order to show that it is a person's behavior that should be considered and not his birth, Ramanuja would hold Dhanurdasa's arm while returning from the Kaveri, although he would hold the arm of Dasarathi, a Brahman by birth, while walking to the river. When Yatiraja's young Brahman disciples observed their gurus intimate dealings with a person of lower birth, some of them were disturbed and even dared to say that his behavior was not befitting. Understanding the misconceptions in the hearts of his disciples, Ramanuja decided to teach them a lesson that would bring them to a proper understanding of the character of a Vaisnava.

One night while all the others were sleeping, Ramanuja arose and tore a strip off all the dhotis that were hanging up to dry. The next morning when the Brahmans discovered what had happened, a great quarrel arose amongst them with accusations and harsh words flying back and forth. Eventually, Yatiraja himself had to intervene to calm the situation down.

THE BRAHMANAS LEARN A LESSON

That evening Ramanuja called several of his disciples to him and said, "I am sure all of you have observed how my disciple Dhanurdasa is leading the life of an attached householder, while posing as a great devotee. This evening, as usual, he will come to talk with me. While I detain him here, discussing the scriptures, you should go to his house and steal the ornaments with which he is so fond of decorating his wife. Then we will see the extent of his attachments fully manifested" The disciples happily agreed to this proposal and set off to do their gurus bidding as soon as Dhanurdasa arrived at the asrama.

When they reached his house, they saw Hemamba sleeping within. As the door was not locked, they were able to gain entrance without difficulty. Then very quietly and as gently as possible, they began to remove the golden ornaments from the wife of Dhanurdasa. In fact Hemamba was not sleeping and was fully aware of everything that was happening, but she pretended to be in deep slumber, so as not to cause any disturbance to the Brahmans. When all the ornaments had been removed from one side of her body, Hemamba pretended to turn in her sleep so that the Brahmans could take those from the other side as well. However, at that moment the Brahmans became alarmed, fearing that she was about to wake up. They left the house immediately and returned to the asrama. There they reported everything that had happened to Ramanuja, who then called for Dhanurdasa and told him that he should return home now as it was growing late.

When the wrestler had departed, Ramanuja instructed his disciples, "Go now and follow Dhanurdasa back to his house so that you may observe his reaction to the great loss he and his wife have suffered." The young men followed their guru's order, and when Dhanurdasa entered his house, they were all watching and listening from a secluded place nearby. On entering the house Dhanurdasa at once noticed his wife's unusual appearance and inquired, "How is it that you are wearing jewels only on one side? Where are the others? "Some Brahmans came here while you were gone," Hemamba replied. "Due, no doubt, to their extreme poverty, they have been forced to take up the ways of thieves. At that time I was lying awake, repeating the names of the Lord in my mind, but they must have thought that I was sleeping, for they entered the room and took all the ornaments from one side.

When they had done this, I turned over so that they could take the rest of my jewels, but unfortunately they were frightened by my movement and fled from the house." "This was your mistake," exclaimed Dhanurdasa.

"You are still not completely free from illusion, for you were thinking, 'These are my ornaments. I will give them away.' When will you give up this idea and realize that everything is the property of Lord Narayana. If you had remained still then you would have been able to give everything to the Brahmans,"

Hemamba recognized her fault and begged her husband, "Please bless me, so that one day I may become free from this illusion." Having witnessed everything, the young Brahmans returned to the asrama and told Ramanuja all about the behavior of that devoted couple. As it was by that time late at night, he told them to go and rest, but the next day he discussed the matter fully when they assembled before him to study the scriptures. "You are all learned scholars," he said, "and very proud of your position -as Brahmans. So tell me, whose behavior was more befitting a Brahman -yours, yesterday morning when you found your cloth a little shorter, or that of Dhanurdasa and his wife when the jewels were stolen?" The disciples could do nothing but hang their heads in shame and say, "Master, it was Dhanurdasa whose behavior was worthy of a Brahman; ours was abominable."

"Therefore," Yatiraja continued, "you must understand that birth and caste are unimportant. It is a man's qualities and actions that show who is fallen, regardless of social position. Now, giving up all pride in your birth as Brahmans, endeavor to serve Lord Narayana with a pure heart. That alone is the way of perfection."

CRITICISM OF MAHAPURNA

A short time after the incident involving Dhanurdasa and the Brahman disciples, word came to Ramanuja that his own guru, Mahapurna, had performed the cremation ceremony for a sudra and that as a result of this many people were criticizing him for transgressing the rules which govern a Brahmans conduct. On hearing this news, Ramanuja went at once to Mahapurna's house to hear from him the truth behind these allegations. When he arrived at his gurus house, he learned that all of Mahapurna's relatives had abandoned him, considering him fallen, and that he was served now only by his daughter, Attulai, who had come from her father-in-law's house. When Yatiraja inquired from him about his actions, Mahapurna replied, "Yes, it is true that my behavior was improper according to the Dharma Sastras. But what is real dharma? The Mahabharata states, mahajano yena gatah sa panthah - true dharma is to follow the example set for us by great personalities. Now consider the example of Sri Ramacandra, for he performed the funeral ceremony of Jatayu, who was just a bird.

Then again we have King Yudhisthira, who worshipped Vidura, who

was considered a Sudra by birth. Why would they act in such a way? The answer is that a devotee of the Lord, being liberated while still in this world, is transcendental to all consideration of family or caste. For Sri Rama or King Yudhisthira no irreligious act is possible. That devotee, whose body I cremated was a pure hearted servant of the Lord and I consider myself fortunate to have been able to render that service to him." Very pleased at Mahapurna's words, Yatiraja bowed down at his feet and begged forgiveness for his impudence in questioning his gurus' activities.

MAHAPURNA AND RAMANUJA

Once Mahapurna came before Yatiraja and bowed at his feet. Seeing Ramanuja still sitting without embarrassment at his guru's behavior, some of the other devotees questioned him in surprise, "Yatiraja, how could you allow your guru to bow down before you without making any protest?" "My spiritual master acted in that way," replied Ramanuja, "to show how a true disciple should behave before his guru. If Mahapurna has a purpose to fulfill through these activities, it is not my position to interfere with his desires." Later the devotees inquired from Mahapurna about his offering obeisance's to a disciple and he explained to them, "In Yatiraja I see constantly the embodiment of my own guru, Yamunacarya, and therefore it is impossible for me not to bow down before him" On hearing this all of them realized even more profoundly the greatness of Ramanuja.

GOSTHIPURNA'S INSTRUCTION

On another occasion Ramanuja observed Sri Gosthipurna meditating for many hours in a room with closed doors. At the end of the day he inquired, "O masters, on which form of the Lord you have been fixing your mind and what the mantra by which you worship Him is?" "I worship only the lotus feet of Sri Yamunacarya, my guru-maharaja," replied Gosthipurna, "and his holy name is the only mantra I chant, for it brings relief from all suffering" From this statement Ramanuja could understand the importance of worshipping the devotees of the Lord.

EXILE FROM SRI RANGAM

At that time Sri Rangam was a part of the dominions of the Chola king, Koluttunga I, who had made his capital at Kancipuram. Although the Cholas had become devoted to Lord Narayana in the time of Yamunacarya, Koluttunga was a great devotee of Lord Siva and an avowed enemy of all Vaisnavas. It was his desire that all the devotees of the Lord give up their faith and surrender to Lord Siva alone. Lord Siva is the most powerful of the demigods, but still he is not on the level of the Supreme Personality of

Godhead. Thus all the Vaisnavas refused to abandon their worship of Lord Vishnu, which satisfies the conclusion of all Vedic literature. Koluttunga was well aware that Yatiraja was the greatest Vaisnava acarya in India, and he reasoned that if he could induce him to worship Siva, then the other devotees would also abandon their faith. Even if Ramanuja would not agree to give up his worship of Lord Narayana, the king felt that he would still be able to establish the supremacy of the worshippers of Lord Siva by putting him to death.

Accordingly, he sent messengers to Srirangam to invite Ramanuja, along with his guru, Mahapurna, to come to Kancipuram for an audience with the king. Little suspecting Koluttunga's evil intentions, Yatiraja agreed to go with them, and entered the asrama to make his preparations for the journey Kuresa, however, was considering the matter deeply, and after a while he said to Ramanuja, "I feel certain the king wants you to come to Kancipuram simply to put an end to your life. Please do not go there. While you are living and preaching the true religion of devotion to the Lord, the entire earth is benefiting. For fallen souls like me, who are scorched by the miseries of material existence, you are the only refuge.

Let me go in your place. You take these white clothes of the grhastha asrama, while I put on the dress of a sannyasi and go with the king's men. In this way you may still be able to escape from their clutches." Yatiraja considered Kuresa's words for a few moments and then agreed to the proposal. Dressing himself in his disciple's clothes, he left the asrama unseen and made his way quickly to the forest to the west of the city. Govinda and the other devotees also left the city one by one and joined Ramanuja in the forest.

KURESA AT THE COURT OF KING KOLUTTUNGA

In the meantime, Kuresa, adopting the dress and danda of a sannyasi, presented himself along with Mahapurna before the king's men, who then escorted the two Vaisnavas to Kancipuram, completely taken in by the trick. Mahapurna was also fully aware of the danger they faced, but he was now so old that he could not leave Sri Rangam with the other devotees and was perfectly happy to leave this world if that was the will of the Lord. When they arrived at the palace, Kuresa and Mahapurna went before the king, who welcomed them with respect and saw to it that they were properly accommodated. Koluttunga had good reason to respect Ramanuja, for the acarya had delivered his sister from an evil ghost when the king was just a boy of eight years. However, this memory did nothing to alter his intention of either forcing Yatiraja to renounce the Lord or else taking away his life.

After a few days, the king assembled all of his Saivite panditas and called for the two devotees, still believing Kuresa to be Yatiraja. When Kuresa and Mahapurna entered the assembly, Koluttunga addressed them in a respectful way, "O holy men, please be seated. We have invited you to our city just to hear auspicious talks on spiritual topics. All the scholars of my court are assembled here; eager to converse with you, for your reputation has spread far and wide. Now please tell us, what is the duty for men like us?" "O King and panditas," replied Kuresa unflinchingly, "Lord Vishnu, the savior of all the worlds, is the Supreme Lord of all others. Therefore the duty of every man, whatever his position in life, is simply to worship Him with love and devotion. There is nothing more than this."

On hearing these defiant words, King Kotuttunga flew into a rage and spoke angrily to Kuresa, "I had heard that you were a great scholar and holy man. But now I see that you are an imposter, for you worship Vishnu instead of Siva, who is the Lord and destroyer of all the worlds. Now you must give up this foolishness. Hear from these great scholars the real conclusion of all the scriptures and then become a devotee of Lord Siva. If you are obstinate and ignore their pure teachings, then surely neither of you will live to see another dawn." Immediately the court panditas began to present their false conclusions, using fallacious arguments to try to prove that Siva was the Supreme Lord. However, by dint of their vast knowledge of the scriptures, Kuresa and Mahapurna were easily able to refute all their arguments.

Eventually the king became completely exasperated and cried out, "Enough of this wrangling! If you want to save your lives, then acknowledge that there is none greater than Siva" To this Kuresa mockingly replied, "Why even Drona is greater than Siva" This was a play on words, for Siva and Drona were also the names of units of weight - and, of the two, the drona was the heavier. In speaking these words Kuresa knew perfectly well that he was bringing his death inevitably closer, but he considered it his great fortune to be able to sacrifice his life in order to save that of his guru. The devotee of the Lord is known as abhaya, fearless, because he fully takes shelter of Lord Hari. Thus Kuresa was not in the least disturbed by Koluttunga's dreadful threats, but within his mind he began to pray, "O Lord Hari, seeing the mercy that you are now bestowing on me by allowing me to serve Yatiraja in this way, I can partially realize the meaning of Sri Yamunacarya's statement: namo namo 'nanta-dayaika-sindhave -I offer obeisance's unto You, the unlimited ocean of mercy.

Even this mighty king and his proud scholars know nothing of your

unlimited glories, but you have revealed them to such an insignificant person as me just to increase my humility and surrender. What greater good fortune could I ever hope to achieve!"

KING KOLUTTUNGA'S CRUELTY

Seeing that Kuresa's reply was intended to ridicule them, Koluttunga and all his panditas were filled with rage. The king ordered that the two Vaisnavas be arrested and bound. When this had been done, he told his courtiers, "Take these two blasphemers from our presence and put out their eyes. They deserve to die for the words they have spoken in our presence, but because Ramanuja once saved my sister from a ghost, I will spare their lives." Following this cruel order, the king's men took Kuresa and Mahapurna to a secluded place, and, after subjecting them to various tortures, they plucked out their eyes. Despite the intense pain he was forced to undergo, Kuresa was undisturbed at heart, and he prayed to Lord Narayana for the forgiveness of his tormentors.

He rejoiced that he was able accept these great sufferings on behalf of his spiritual master. When the king's men had finished with Kuresa, he stood before them with folded hands and said, "May Lord Narayana bless you for allowing me to serve my guru in this way." On hearing these words and seeing the calm demeanor Kuresa was exhibiting, even those cruel-hearted men were filled with awe. They called to a beggar who was sitting nearby, and, giving him money for expenses, ordered him to lead the two devotees safely to Srirangam

However, the atrocities that Kulottunga's men had committed were too much for the frail body of Mahapurna to bear. Lying down on the road, he rested his head on the lap of Kuresa and said to him, "You must go alone to Sri Rangam, for I can tell that the time has now come for me to leave this world. There is nothing to lament over in this, for my mind is fixed on Sri Yamunacarya and I am longing to be reunited with that great soul. When you meet again with my beloved disciple, Ramanuja, offer millions of obeisances at his feet on my behalf." Having said this, Mahapurna gave up his life, meditating on the feet of his guru. Not long after he began these cruel persecutions, King Koluttunga became afflicted with an incurable disease and died a short time later. For one who causes distress to the Lord's devotees everything is inauspicious.

The son of Koluttunga, who was named Vikrama, then began to rule over the kingdom of the Cholas. Although his father had been such an ardent Saivite, Vikrama Chola later on became an initiated disciple of Ramanuja and learned from him the path of devotion to Lord Vishnu.

YATIRAJA IN THE FOREST

Whilst his disciple was suffering at the hands of Koluttunga, Yatiraja had been able to escape from Sri Rangam undetected. In the forest to the west of the city he met up with Govinda, Dasarathi, Dhanurdasa, and his other followers. Fearing pursuit by the king's officers, they proceeded quickly through the forest in a westerly direction, walking constantly for two days and two nights without food of any kind. Eventually they lay down exhausted at the foot of a hill, their feet blistered and their bodies cut by the forest thorns. In a short time the whole party was asleep. Near to where Ramanuja and his disciples lay was a village inhabited by candalas, men of very lowly birth. When some of the villagers saw a group of Brahmans sleeping near to their homes, they were very anxious to render whatever service they could to these holy men.

Therefore, without disturbing the sleepers, they collected large quantities of different types of fruits from the forest and stacked them all around where the Brahmans lay. Then they lit a fire nearby and stood waiting for the Brahmans to awaken so that they could learn what had brought them to that remote region. Eventually, Yatiraja and the others awoke refreshed from their sleep. When they saw the fruits, the fire, and the forest dwellers standing there ready to serve them, they could understand that Lord Narayana was protecting them from the dangers of the forest. They quickly bathed in a nearby river and then, after offering the fruits to Lord Hari, they satisfied their hunger by feasting on the prasadam. From the words of the villagers Yatiraja came to understand that they had crossed the border of the Chola kingdom and were now safe from the pursuit of Koluttunga's men.

MEETINGS WITH VAISNAVAS

When they were fully rested, Ramanuja blessed the candalas and continued with his party on their westward journey. That afternoon they came to another village and were guided to the house of a Brahman named Rangadasa. When they arrived the husband was still out begging alms, but his pious wife, Celancalamba, considered herself fortunate to get this opportunity to render service to Vaisnavas. She invited them into the house, seated them nicely and then immediately entered the kitchen to begin cooking. A short time later Rangadasa returned home and was also delighted to see so many Vaisnava guests in his house, including the famous Ramanuja. When the cooking was completed, the food was offered to Lord Vishnu, and then the prasadam was distributed to the devotees, who all ate very heartily. For two days they remained in the house of Sri Ranga dasa,

and just before leaving, Yatiraja gave initiation to both husband and wife. When the Vaisnavas continued their journey, Sri Ranga dasa went with them as a guide.

By evening they had reached a place known as Vahnipuskarini, where they remained for two days. Then, taking leave of Sri Ranga dasa, they continued on to the village of Salagrama, where they stayed with a Brahman named Andhrapurna, who was a much renounced devotee. Having seen his good qualities, Ramanuja initiated Andhrapurna, who then became his personal servant. From that time on he always remained with his guru, desiring only to serve his lotus feet. Andhrapurna told Yatiraja of a great devotee named Purna who lived in the village of Bhaktagrama, not far from Salagrama. Passing through Nrsimha-ksetra, they then traveled to Bhaktagrama and remained for some time in the association of Sri Purna.

CONVERSION OF KING VITTHALADEVA

The king of that region was known as Vitthaladeva, and he was a follower of the Jain religion. For several years his daughter had been possessed by a ghost, despite all the efforts of the Jain priests to cast out the evil spirit. When the king heard that a group of Vaisnavas had come from the east and were residing in Bhaktagrama at the house of Purna, he invited them to his palace - hoping that they might be able to do something to help the princess. Ramanuja, as a pure devotee, was always filled with divine potency and thus able to drive out the ghost just by looking at the girl's face. King Vitthaladeva was delighted and amazed to see how easily this devotee of Lord Vishnu had cured his daughter, and at once he became greatly devoted to Yatiraja. Desiring to understand the teachings of the Vaisnavas, he bowed down at the feet of the acarya and begged him to reveal the true conclusion of the Vedas.

As Ramanuja spoke about the glories of devotional service and pure love of God, the heart of the king was moved. He began to regret his adherence to the Jain philosophy, which is completely devoid of the spirit of love of God. He called for all the Jain priests and panditas to come into the assembly so that they might hear from this great devotee and philosopher. When Yatiraja began addressing the Jains, clearly explaining the position of the Personality of Godhead as the Absolute Truth, some of the audience began to jeer and make a disturbance, until they were ejected from the assembly on the order of the king. When Ramanuja had finished speaking, the leader of the Jains arose to attempt to refute the statements that had been presented there. However, being unable to find any way to contradict the flawless logic of the Vaisnava philosophy, the Jain

immediately launched into a blasphemous attack on the followers of sanatana-dharma, ignoring all the points that Ramanuja had put to him. King Vitthaladeva, a man of keen intelligence, was in no way taken in by the Jain's diversionary ploy and he spoke out, "There is nothing as simple as speaking ill of others. You are a great scholar.

Refute if you can, with precise arguments, the doctrine expounded by your opponent. Otherwise you must give up your false teachings and be initiated into Vaisnavism" The Jain could find no words to counteract Ramanuja's presentation and was forced to shamefacedly resume his seat in the assembly. Several other Jain philosophers then attempted to establish their own opinions, but all to no avail. Then the king stood up and addressed the assembly once more. "Today you have all seen the most learned of our Jain scholars utterly defeated by this Vaisnava acarya. What then is our present duty?

To stubbornly adhere to doctrines which have been proven to be faulty or to accept and embrace the sublime teachings of loving devotion that we have heard so wonderfully presented? Any sane man will admit that bliss is preferable to affliction and knowledge to ignorance. Therefore let all of us this day be initiated into the true faith by this great devotee and thus become blessed." All but a few of the Jains accepted this proposal and were initiated as Vaisnavas. The king also accepted Yatiraja as his spiritual master and was given the name Visnuvardhana. From that time on this was the name by which he was always known.

DISCOVERY OF SRI YADAVADRI-PATI

After the conversion of Visnu-vardhana and his priests to Vaisnavism, Yatiraja remained in that city for several months in order to properly instruct his new disciples. Then, accompanied only by the followers who had come with him from Srirangam, he traveled on to the town of Yadavadri. One morning, a few days after their arrival, Ramanuja was walking through a tulasi grove when he saw something unusual sticking out a title way from underneath an anthill. Calling for his followers, he had them dig in that place, and it quickly became apparent that what Yatiraja had discovered was a beautiful Deity of Lord Narayana. The Deity was cleansed and then installed upon an altar. The older inhabitants of the town recalled their fathers speaking of a Deity known as Yadavadri-pati, who had previously been worshipped there. "When a party of fierce Muslims attacked this country," they continued, "all the inhabitants of the town fled in terror. The Brahmans hid the Deity somewhere to prevent the invaders from seizing Him. Since that time nobody has seen Lord Yadavadri-pati. Because of the

greatness of your devotion, it seems the Lord has decided to make Him visible once more"

Ramanuja then confirmed the words of the elders by saying, "This is certainly Lord Yadavadri-pati, and for last night He appeared to me in a dream and requested that His service be reestablished in this place. Now all of you must work together to construct a beautiful temple for the worship of the Lord. Following the order of the acarya, Yatiraja's disciples and all of the townspeople set to work. That same day they constructed a spacious straw cottage in which Lord Yadavadri-pati might be worshipped. In less than one year, by dedicated performance of devotional service, a beautifully decorated stone temple was built in the town of Yadavadri, and with great pomp, the Lord was moved to His new residence.

A nice lake was dug outside the entrance to the temple, and the water was used for the daily bathing of the Lord. Around the shores of the lake the white clay used by Vaisnavas for marking their bodies with tilaka was discovered. Previously they had to bring all of their tilaka clay from the village of Bhaktagrama, and so this discovery saved them considerable inconvenience.

RECOVERY OF SRI RAMA-PRIYA

It is the custom in south India for two Deities to be worshipped in each temple. One Deity is worshipped daily by the temple priests, while the other, generally smaller in size, is carried out of the temple for processions on festival days. This form of the Lord is known as the Utsavavigraha or the Vijaya-vigraha. One night, a short time after the completion of the new temple, Sri Yadavadri-pati appeared to Ramanuja in a dream, saying, "Ramanuja, I am very pleased with your service, but as My Vijaya-vigraha is not present here I am unable to leave the temple to bestow my blessings upon all of my devotees. Therefore, please endeavor to install this Deity, known as Rama-priya, who is at present kept by the Emperor of Delhi, having been carried to the north by the Muslim raiders." Accepting the order of the Lord as his life and soul, Yatiraja departed for Delhi the very next day, accompanied only by a few of his disciples.

After traveling northwards for two months, they finally arrived in that famous city. As Ramanuja's reputation had by this time spread all over India, he was admitted into the presence of the Emperor, who was very pleased by his purity and scholarship and asked him the purpose of his arduous journey. When Ramanuja informed him of his desire to return Sri Rama-priya to south India, the Emperor agreed to his request. The Vaisnavas were then conducted into a large halt where many different Deities were

kept, all of them having been seized by the Muslims on their various raids across India. However, even after a thorough search, Ramanuja saw that Rama-priya was not to be found in that place and returned to the Emperor disappointed.

The Emperor then told them that there was one more Deity in his possession, the most beautiful of all. This form of the Lord was so attractive that the Emperor's daughter was keeping Him in her own apartment. When Yatiraja was shown the Deity he recognized Him at once as Ramapriya and fell down to offer his prostrate obeisances. With the permission of the Emperor, the devotees took possession of the Lord and set off at once for south India. They walked day and night, for Ramanuja was well aware that, if the princess wanted the Deity restored to her, the affectionate father might easily change his mind.

THE PRINCESS'S DISTRESS

In fact, when the princess, whose name was Bibi Lachimar, came to learn that some Brahmans had taken the Deity away, she was overwhelmed with grief, and all her father's efforts to console her were in vain. She refused to eat and grew weaker day by day, until it seemed she would certainly die if something were not done at once to remedy the situation. In great anxiety, the Emperor prepared to dispatch a company of soldiers to pursue the Brahmans and take the Deity from them - by force if necessary. When Bibi Lachimar heard of this, she begged that she be allowed to accompany them, and the doting father readily acceded to her request.

Therefore, in command of the troop of soldiers and surrounded by many servants, the princess mounted a decorated palanquin the next day and departed from the city of Delhi to find the form of the Supreme Lord who had so captivated her. A young man named Kuvera very much desired to marry Bibi Lachimar, and, in hopes of winning the princess's favor, he also went along with the party. In the meantime Ramanuja and his followers had been traveling as swiftly as they were able, and by this time they were far ahead of their pursuers. On this journey they were greatly assisted by the candalas, who carried the Deity and showed them the easiest routes to the south. Aided in this way, the Vaisnavas arrived at Yadavadri still a long way ahead of the pursuing Muslims.

Thinking that there still might be danger, Yatiraja had Sri Rama-priya installed in a concealed room in the temple, where He was worshipped in secret with only a few devotees aware of His presence. Meanwhile the princess continued southwards with her retinue, determined to recover the Deity who was the Lord of her heart. However, when they reached the

borders of her father's domain, she became filled with despair, believing that she would never again set eyes on her worshipful Lord. Overwhelmed by lamentation, she shed many bitter tears, and none of Kuvera's words of consolation could alleviate her suffering.

BIBI LACHIMAR FINDS HER LORD

One night, unknown to anyone, Princess Bibi Lachimar slipped away from her attendants into the darkness of the forest. Only Kuvera noticed her absence, and he also left the party and went with her as she continued on farther towards the south. Thinking only of her beloved Lord, the princess journeyed on, while Kuvera acted as a servant, bringing fruits from the forest to keep her alive. After traveling for several weeks, the couple arrived at the town of Yadavadri. As if by divine inspiration, Bibi Lachimar was certain that their long quest would end at this place. Being guided by the townspeople, she came to "the temple of Sri Yadavadri-pati.

There she fell at the feet of the Vaisnavas and begged them to allow her to see her beloved Rama-priya once more. When Yatiraja came there, he saw at once that the girl's heart was filled with pure devotion. Thus, although she was a Muslim by birth, he ordered that she be admitted to the temple to behold the beautiful form of Sri Rama-priya. From that time on Bibi Lachimar remained at Yadavadri, engaging in the service of the Lord and constantly singing His glories. After a short time she gave up her body. Being immersed in continual thoughts of Sri Rama-priya, she returned to His eternal abode.

THE DEVOTION OF KUVERA

For all this time Kuvera also remained at Yadavadri, rendering service to the princess like a menial servant. When she gave up her life, he was so overcome with sorrow that he could no longer stay there. Abandoning his Muslim ways, he went to Sri Rangam and took shelter of the lotus feet of Lord Ranganatha. Although he was not allowed to enter the temple, Kuvera remained outside singing the praises of Lord Narayana. He lived on whatever alms the visitors to the temple would give him, seeing everything as the mercy of the Lord. Once, while absorbed in meditation on the Lord, he heard a voice speaking to him, saying, "Because you are unable to enter the temple, I cannot bestow My full mercy upon you. Therefore you should go to Nilacala, for Lord Jagannatha is the deliverer of all beings."

Having received this order, Kuvera journeyed to Jagannatha Puri. There he was able to see the transcendental form of Sri Jagannatha as He rode to Gundica in the Rathayatra parade. Constantly glorifying the Supreme Lord, Kuvera passed the remainder of his days at Jagannatha Puri. By his

unalloyed devotional service he became completely pure at heart and liberated from all material attachments. Although Bibi Lachimar and Kuvera were born in Muslim families, they attained the highest perfection of life by the purity of their loving devotion. Devotion to God is always completely spiritual, transcending all barriers of race, caste, and creed. To this day the Deity of Bibi Lachimar, the pure devotee of Rama-priya, is worshipped in several Vaisnava temples in south India.

KURESA'S MERCY

After residing for some time at Sri Rangam, Kuresa, who had been blinded by Koluttunga's men, went with his wife and children to Krsnacala. There he worshipped the Deity known as Sri Sundara-bhuja and composed many beautiful prayers in glorification of Lord Vishnu and Laksmidevi. When he learned that Yatiraja was now staying at Yadavadri, he went there, desiring to take shelter at the lotus feet of his beloved guru once more. Coming before Ramanuja, Kuresa fell at his feet to offer obeisances. Raising him from the ground and embracing him warmly, Yatiraja said, "Today I have been purified by the touch of this great soul. This is an auspicious day for me." Kuresa shed tears of joy and was so overcome by emotion that he could say nothing in reply. A few days later, while Ramanuja was talking with Kuresa, he instructed him to go back to Kancipuram. "Go and take shelter of Lord Varadaraja" he told him, "for He will surely remove your blindness. King Koluttunga is now dead, and so there is nothing to fear" Assisted by his wife and two sons, Kuresa went straight to Kancipuram where he engaged in the worship of Sri Varadaraja.

All day he would remain in the temple, constantly reciting bhajans in praise of the Supreme Lord. Eventually the Lord spoke to him, saying, "Kuresa, what is your desire? Whatever you want I shall give to you." Kuresa then replied, "O Lord, my only prayer is that you bestow Your mercy on Caturgrama and deliver him from material existence" This prayer wonderfully reveals the true nature of a pure devotee, for it was this Caturgrama who had caused all of Kuresa's suffering. Originally one of Kuresa's disciples, he had turned away from his spiritual master and become a minister in the court of King Koluttunga. When the king was endeavoring to get signatures from various Vaisnavas admitting the supremacy of Lord Siva, it was Caturgrama who advised him that the submission of Yatiraja alone would be enough to bring about the conversion of the kingdom.

Thus, although this sinful man had been the cause of so many difficulties for the devotees, still Kuresa prayed that Lord Varadaraja would have mercy upon him The Lord accepted this request and Kuresa continued singing

His glories. Again the Lord spoke to His devotee, offering him a benediction. This time Kuresa said to the Lord, "May King Koluttunga is the object of Your greatest mercy." When Lord Varadaraja agreed to this, Kuresa was filled with ecstasy and without regard for his own well being, he left the temple and returned to his asrama.

KURESA AND LORD VARADARAJA

When Ramanuja, who was still residing in Yadavadri, came to hear about these wonderful benedictions that Kuresa had begged from Lord Varadaraja, he sent a message to his disciple in Kancipuram. In this he said, "My dear Kuresa, I am very glad to hear of the ecstasy you are feeling from delivering those who have wronged you. However, in this you have shown great selfishness by keeping the happiness to yourself. Now you must make me happy as well by begging the Lord for the return of your sight. Do you not know that your body and mind are my property? Thus it is your duty to maintain them on my behalf." When Kuresa received this message, he felt jubilant at heart, thinking that now Ramanuja had accepted him as a fully surrendered servant. Immediately he hastened to the temple and stood before Lord Varadaraja with folded hands After singing the praises of the Lord for some time, Kuresa heard Lord Varadaraja speak to him once more, saying,

"My dear devotee, what is your desire? Tell Me and I shall fulfill your prayer." "O most merciful Lord," Kuresa answered, "some time ago I lost two valuable possessions belonging to my master. By your grace I would like to recover them this day" Certainly two new eyes will now adorn your body," the Lord said, "and may they bring unlimited pleasure to your master. Just as my devotees desire only to serve me, so I take great pleasure in supplying everything to my devotees. In this way our exchanges of love become sweeter and sweeter." On hearing these words, Kuresa was overwhelmed by ecstasy and fell to the ground unconscious. On awakening he realized that his vision was restored and that he was able to see as before. Bowing down before the Deity, he prayed, "O Lord, it was You who gave me sight in the beginning of my life, it was You who took it away and now it is You alone who have restored it to me.

Who can understand your inconceivable pastimes? Your nature is pure transcendental bliss, and anybody who comes in contact with you will experience this bliss. I used to think of this world as a place of misery, but, now that you have revealed Yourself, I see only happiness in all directions. How great is my good fortune. How great is your mercy."

When people came to learn of this miraculous cure by which Kuresa

had regained his sight, they were all astonished. Wherever the news spread, it led to an increase in the reverence that was shown for Lord Vishnu and the Vaisnava devotees. All the people of south India thus came to have great faith in the teachings of Ramanuja and his followers.

FINAL DAYS IN SRI RANGAM

Not long after Kuresa regained his sight, Ramanuja decided to leave Yadavadri and return to his previous residence at Sri Rangam. On the way, he stopped for some time at Vrsabhacala, near Madurai, to worship Lord Sundarabahu in the temple there. In previous times the great female devotee, Andal, had composed a prayer which said, "O Lord Hari, if you will accept me, I wilt offer you a hundred pots of sweet rice and a hundred pots of butter." Shortly after composing this prayer, Andal left this world and returned to the abode of the Lord. Now, Ramanuja fulfilled her prayer by offering Lord Sundara-bahu the hundred pots of sweet rice and the hundred pots of butter she had promised Him. For this act Yatiraja became known as the elder brother of Andal. From Vrsabhacala Ramanuja and his disciples went on to Sri Villiputur, the birthplace of Andal.

There he saw the Deity of Sesasayi Narayana and offered prayers to Andal in the temple dedicated to her. Continuing on their journey, the Vaisnavas passed through Alvar Tirunagiri, Sri Vaikuntha, and other holy places, before finally arriving back at Sri Rangam. Immediately, all the devotees ran to see Lord Ranganatha, their Lord and master. When the people of the town heard that Yatiraja and his followers had returned, they felt as if they had regained their lives. At that time Kuresa was also reunited with his spiritual master, falling at Yatiraja's feet with tears of ecstasy in his eyes. When Ramanuja was about to leave for Srirangam, the Bhaktasin Yadavadri (Thirunarayana Puram or Melkote, near Mysore) were sorely afflicted by the thought of the separation which was to follow.

At this, Ramanuja got a stone image of himself made, and after transmitting his own powers into it, handed it over to the devotees of the place and said, My dearest ones, know this image of this mine to be my very self. When you feel the desire to seemed, you will get peace of mind by looking at this image. With these words, he took leave of His Devotees. A short time after this, the Bhaktas of Sriperumbudur, Ramanuja's birth-place, made an image of Ramanuja and having invoked life in it according to the Vedic rites, and installed the Mangala Vigraham inside a huge temple. While this event was going on in Sriperumbudur, Ramanuja was seated in his Ashram at Srirangam in the middle of a discourse to his Shishyas.

All on a sudden, he became silent and indrawn; his entire body was still, like an inert thing. And two drops of blood trickleddown the corners of his eyes. After a time when he regained his consciousness, being questioned by the astonished disciples, Ramanuja said: Today the people of Sriperumbudur have made me adaptive of their love. After infusing life into the stone image, they have now finished the rite of opening the eyes of the image. Hearing this, the Shishyas, who had their beloved Guru in person with them, deemed themselves more fortunate than others.

DISAPPEARANCE OF KURESA

For the next two years all the Vaisnavas passed their days in Sri Rangam just as they had done previously, singing bhajans in praise of Lord Hari and hearing Ramanuja's wonderful discourses on the revealed scriptures. By this time Kuresa was a very old man and was unable to rise from his bed. Therefore Yatiraja and the other devotees would come to him every day to chant the holy name and discuss the pastimes of the Lord. One day, while all the Vaisnavas were holding joyful kirtana, Kuresa began to shed tears of ecstasy. Taking hold of his guru's lotus feet, he pressed them to his heart. In this position he gave up his life. On witnessing the departure of this exalted Vaisnava from their midst, all the devotees were grief-stricken, and Ramanuja himself was seen to shed tears. After a short while the acarya controlled his intense feelings of separation and spoke to the others, comforting them and reminding them that Kuresa was now undoubtedly in the direct association of the Lord.

Then he said, "Parasara, Kuresa's son, is just like the son of Lord Ranganatha Himself. From today you should accept him as your leader. His devotion is like that of his father, and his wisdom is incomparable. Therefore, he is fully qualified to take the position of acarya." Then he seated Parasara on the vyasasana and put a flower garland around his neck. He embraced the son of Kuresa and bestowed all his blessings on him, empowering him to spread the glories of the Supreme Lord.

Kuresa's body was burned on the banks of the Kaveri, and the devotees passed the rest of the day performing the congregational chanting of the holy names of Lord Hari. In this way all grief was removed from the hearts of the devotees. Every day for the next month a great festival was held in Sri Rangam to celebrate Kuresa's return to the abode of the Lord, and Vaisnavas from all over south India came to take part in the festivities. Many poor people and those who were lame or blind also came there, and all of them were fed sumptuously with prasada from Lord Ranganatha.

ANDHRAPURNA'S DEVOTION TO HIS GURU

Ramanuja was now one hundred years old, and, though he lived for twenty years more, he never again left Sri Rangam. For the remainder of his life Andhrapurna was engaged constantly in his personal service, supplying everything that his guru required. Once when Lord Ranganatha came out of the temple on procession, all the devotees left the asrama to join in the worship. The Lord was gorgeously decorated with jewels and flower garlands as he rode through the streets on a beautiful palanquin. Ramanuja, thus beholding the glory of Lord Narayana, felt himself blessed with divine mercy.

Only one of Yatiraja's disciples was absent from this festival - Andhrapurna, who had remained at the asrama boiling milk for his guru. When Ramanuja asked him why he had neglected this opportunity to worship the Lord, Andhrapurna replied, "If I had gone outside the asrama to worship Lord Ranganatha, then my worship inside would have suffered. How is it possible for me to neglect my devotional duties?"

ANANTACARYA IN SRI SAILA

Another of Yatiraja's disciples was Anantacarya. He had been sent by his guru to Sri Saila, Tirupati, where he lived with his wife, constantly worshipping the Lord. While living in Sri Saila, he saw that the local people underwent great hardships because of a scarcity of water in the area. Therefore he resolved to dig a lake and with only his wife to help him, began the work immediately. By undertaking great labors every day, the couple completed the task, and that lake, which bears the name Ananta-sarovara, is still to be seen in the tirtha of Sri Saila. It is said that once, when Anantacarya's wife was pregnant and too weary to help with the work, the Lord Himself assumed her form to assist His devotee's endeavor.

THE PIOUS BRAHMANA

Once a Brahman came to Ramanuja and said, "I wish to purify myself by serving you, for you are the best of devotees. By such service I shall be freed from the influence of material nature" Yatiraja accepted the request, saying, "What you have said is correct, for one can be liberated only by service. If you wish to serve me, then you must stay here and do whatever I ask of you." The Brahman was very pleased by this reply and said eagerly, "O masters, tell me what is your desire. I will do anything you ask of me"

Seeing the man's sincerity, Ramanuja then told him, "O Brahman, I have resolved to purify myself by taking daily the water which has washed the feet of a pure-hearted Brahman. Now, by the grace of the Lord, you have

come here. My order is that you stay here, and every day gives me the water that has washed your feet. Only if you do this will you be able to render real service to me." Although a very humble person by nature, the Brahman could not refuse this direct order. From that time on, every day when Yatiraja returned from taking his noon bath in the Kaveri, he would take upon his head some of the water that had washed the Brahmans feet. One day Ramanuja was invited to take prasadam at the home of one of his householder disciples and went there directly after bathing in the river. After they had eaten, all the devotees began to discuss the glories of Lord Narayana, putting various questions to Ramanuja and listening intently to the explanations he gave. So sweet were these discussions that the devotees became unaware of the passage of time.

Thus, by the time Yatiraja rose to leave the house, it was very late at night When they arrived back at the asrama; they found that the only person still awake was the pious Brahman. "Why have you waited up so long for me?" asked Yatiraja. "Have you eaten yet?" "How could I think of eating," replied the Brahman, smiling, "when I have not yet rendered my service to you" At this Yatiraja smiled broadly and embraced the man, saying, "You are a wonderful devotee, the perfect servant of the Lord. By being absorbed only in thoughts of service, you have attained perfection" Then he drank the water that had washed the Brahmans feet and offered it to all his other disciples.

INSTALLING DEITIES

When they learned that Ramanuja was going to leave them and return to Sri Rangam, all the devotees in Yadavadri were very unhappy at the prospect of their imminent separation. When they presented their distress before him, Yatiraja gave permission for a stone murti of him to be made. When it was completed, he said to them, "When you are feeling sorrow because of separation from me, all of you come before this murti. By contemplating this form here, your unhappiness will be removed." At about the same time the devotees of Bhuta-puri, Ramanuja's birthplace, also made an image of their guru and installed it in the temple according to the proper Vedic rituals. When he heard about this, Yatiraja shed tears and said, "The people of Bhutapuri have made me their captive by the love and devotion that they unceasingly offer to me."

PREACHING IN SRI RANGAM

However, the most fortunate of all were the devotees of Sri Rangam, for they were able to see Yatiraja constantly and listen every day to his

discourses on the glories of Lord Narayana. From miles around people came to see the great acarya and on his order took up the path of devotional service. For many more years Ramanuja continued to reside in the holy city of Sri Rangam - until he was one hundred and twenty years old. During his life he had established seventy-four centers for the Sri Vaisnavas and had many thousands of followers, including several kings and many wealthy landowners. Apart from the householders, he numbered amongst his followers 700 sannyasis, 12,000 brahmacaris, and 300 ketti ammais, (ladies who had taken vows of renunciation). Eventually, seeing that his mission on earth was now completed, he decided to give up his frail body and return to the abode of the Lord. Seeing their spiritual master becoming fixed in a mood of intense devotion, many of Yatiraja's disciples were overcome and began to lament loudly.Ramanuja Becomes "Yatiraja"

Whenever Ramanuja wanted solutions to any philosophical questions, he would refer them to Kanchipoorna. The latter would often find it difficult to answer the questions, since Ramanuja himself was a profound scholar. On such occasions he stood before deify and appealed for answers. He conveyed back to Ramanuja the response he received from god. Ramanuja was most happy with the answers. These became the basic tenets of Vishishtadvaita.

Ramanuja left for Sriranga to meet his prospective guru Mahapoorna. At the same time Mahapoorna and his wife were on the way to Kanchi to persuade Ramanuja to take up the task left uncompleted by Yamunacharya. Their paths crossed and they both met on the way. Mahapoorna agreed to Ramanuja's guru. Ramanuja was taken to a place near a bakula tree, and after the preliminary rituals he was taught the philosophical intricacies of Vishishtadvaita. Ramanuja took his guru to Kanchi and kept him with him there.

For nearly six months Ramanuja served his master and learnt from him the inner esoteric meaning of the 'Nalayira' (four thousand) Prabandha compositions. He learnt the essence of Vishishtadvaita contained in those hymns.

Mahapoorna was not a Brahmin. One day his wife was drawing water from the well, and inadvertently a few drops were splashed on the pitcher of Ramanuja's wife. The latter became angry that she had been polluted and started a row. Maha- poorna felt deeply hurt by her conduct. He decided to leave the place lest his presence create further estrangement between Ramanuja and his wife, and proceeded to Sriranga. Ramanuja came to know that his guru had left. His anger knew no bounds. How could he continue

to live with such a wife? He cleverly dispatched her to her father's house and took to Sannyasa in the presence of Lord Varadaraja. Ramanuja thus became Yatriraja. His worldly bonds had been severed forever.

FINAL INSTRUCTIONS

On hearing their cries, Ramanuja came out of his trance and said to his disciples, "My dear children, why do you cry out in lamentation like uneducated men? Do you think this body can endure forever? Am I not fixed in your hearts for all time? Therefore, give up this useless wailing and understand the will of the Lord." To this the disciples all replied, "O master, as always your instructions are perfect. Nonetheless, it is impossible for us to bear the pain of separation which must surely overwhelm us if you leave us now. Out of pity for your children, we beg you to remain with us for some time more." In response to this request, Ramanuja agreed to stay with them for three more days. He ordered that all of his disciples should come there, and, when they were assembled, he delivered his final instructions. "Worship all Vaisnavas as you worship your guru," he told them. "Have faith in the previous acaryas and never be controlled by the senses.

Never be satisfied simply by worldly knowledge. Study the 108 scriptures that describe the glories of the Supreme Lord. Transcendental knowledge can overcome the pushing of the mind and senses. Be indifferent to the promptings of the mind. Always relish the chanting of the holy name and qualities of the Lord. The best way to serve the Lord is rendering service to his devotees. Never follow the ways of a Vaisnava for material gain. Always endeavor for purity. "Every day spends some time in contemplating the greatness of the spiritual master, and every day studies the teachings of the Vaisnava acaryas.

Always associate with those who are surrendered to the Lord. Avoid those who teach paths other than devotional service and those interested in sensual pleasures. One who sees the Deity as stone, the guru as an ordinary man, the devotees in terms of caste or bodily designation, caranamrita as ordinary water, the holy name of the Lord as a mundane sound vibration, or the Supreme Lord as one of the demigods, is certainly destined for hellish life" When Yatiraja had finished speaking, the disciples questioned him further, asking how they should conduct themselves while in this world.

Again Ramanuja instructed them, "One who has surrendered to Lord Narayana should not be concerned about his future, depending always on the Lord's mercy. All duties should be performed as acts of devotion to the Lord and never for material gain. "Study the Sri-bhasya and teach it to

others - this service is the most pleasing to the Lord. If this is not possible, then study the teachings of other devotees and then instruct some disciples. If you are unable to do this, then go to a holy place and reside there or go to Yadavadri and serve the Lord there. If you cannot do this, then remain where you are and surrender to your guru and meditate on the Vaisnava mantras. If all of these are impossible, then simply seek out a pure-hearted Vaisnava and associate with him constantly. "Discriminate carefully between friends, enemies, and those who are indifferent. Those who are Vaisnavas will be your friends, the atheists and blasphemers wilt despise and hate you, and the worldly men will be indifferent.

Associate joyfully with the devotees, rigorously avoid the blasphemers, and never be disturbed by the materialistic plans of worldly men. Never flatter princes and worldly men, seeking to earn your livelihood thereby. Remember that the Supreme Lord always takes care of those who are surrendered to Him. Take shelter of Him and have faith in Him alone. If you follow these instructions, then you will never be separated from me. Why should one grieve over the disappearance of the temporary body?"

DISAPPEARANCE OF RAMANUJACARYA

When Ramanuja had finished speaking, Dasarathi, Govinda, Andhrapurna, and some of the other leading disciples came forward and made this presentation to him. "Your body, which is ever engaged in the service of the Lord, can never be material. Our bodies are certainly temporary, but you exist only on the platform of spiritual life. Therefore, our request is that we never be deprived of the sight of your transcendental form." Taking pity upon them, Ramanuja accepted his disciples' request and ordered that expert sculptors be brought there to carve a stone deity in his likeness. After three days the work was complete. Then the deity was bathed with water from the Kaveri and installed upon a newly constructed altar. Yatiraja then came slowly up to the deity and filled it with his potency by breathing into the crown of the head. Turning to the disciples, he said, "This is my second self. When I have cast off this body, you may worship this form instead of me."

Then he lay down with his head on Govinda's lap and his feet on the lap of Andhrapurna. In this position, with his eyes fixed on the wooden shoes of own spiritual master, Ramanuja gave up his body and returned to the abode of Lord Vishnu. It was noontime on the tenth day of the bright moon fortnight in the month of Magha in the year 1059 of the Saka era (1137 A.D.). A few days later, Govinda, Ramanuja's cousin and life long companion, also departed from this world. The other devotees remained

under the leadership of Sri Parasara Bhatta, the son of Kuresa, always endeavoring to follow in their master's footsteps by constantly serving Lord Narayana.

By serious practice of devotional service, they were able to feel Ramanuja's presence within their hearts; thus their intense feelings of separation were mitigated. Parasara continued the mission of Ramanuja by strongly preaching the doctrines of Vaisnavism. In a great debate he overcame Vedanta Madhava dasa, the leader of the impersonality scholars, and made him into a devotee. Years later, after the disappearance of Parasara, this same Madhava dasa became the acarya of the Sri Vaisnavas.

HIS KAIMKARYAM FOR SAMPRAHAYA PRAVARTHAKAM

After his return to Srirangam from Thirunarayanapuram, Acharya Ramanuja as a great administrator established 74 Simhasanadhipathis to grow the Darsanam and gave them each a set of Sankham and Chakram for performing Pancha Samskarams. He handed over copies of Srikosam on Sri Bhaashyam to Thirukkuruhaippiran Pillan, Ndadur Azhwan, Kidampi Aacchan and Mudaliandan and asked them to continue with the pravachanam of Sri Bhaashyam and made them Sri Bhaashya Simhasanathipathis. He singled out Thirukkuruhaippiran Pillan to initiate Bhagavadh Vishaya Kaalakshepam and made this special sishyan (His JnAna Puthran) an Ubhaya Simhasanathipathi.

In addition to the above 74 simhasanathipathis, there were 700 Jeeyars and 12,000 EkAnthis and thousands of Kainkarya-Parals, who sought the sacred feet of Ramanuja for refuge.

Out of his infinite compassion, Ramanuja in his last days gave us a five point guideline to follow (yatha Sakthi) that would assure us the grace of Sriman Naarayana:

(a) Perform Kaalakshepam of Sri Bhaashyam and spread its message to others.

(b) If that is difficult, perform Kaalakshepam of Azhwar's Aruliccheyalkal and spread their messages.

(c) If that proves to be difficult, perform daily Kaimkaryams at Divya Desams through offering Naivedhyam to the Lord, lighting lamps in sannidhis, SamarpaNam of Thulasi and flower garlands to the Dhivya dampathis et al.

(d) If that proves to be not possible, recite the Manthra Rathnam, Dhvayam, and contemplate on its meaning.

(e) If none of the above is beyond one's sakthi, then seek Sri Vaishnava

sathsangam and become the Thiruvadi of BhagavathAs to attain the bliss of Moksham.

RESTORATION OF VISHNU TEMPLES

Ramanuja was instrumental in establishing correct practices in all Vishnu temples, including the famous and the most sacred shrine of Tirupathi. He taught his disciples the correct way of worshipping Lord Narayana through Pancharathra Agama (the worship procedure). He also made sure there were no errors in worshipping Lord Narayana. He made sure that there is a place for Nalayira Divya Prabandham, the works of Alwars, in the day to day worship of Lord Narayana.

He also made sure there was no discrimination against the people of other castes. One great example is a Lord Vishnu's temple in Melkote in Karanataka, where a very special celebration is held once a year called Vairumidi. This celebration goes for almost a week, and one day people of other castes are given an opportunity to celebrate and worship God in their own way. In this way Ramanuja was also a great reformer of social justice. Ramanuja made a point many times that everyone, irrespective of caste, creed and sex, is eligible for Lord Narayana's grace, and it can be received with complete surrender to Him.

HIS ASCENT TO PARAMAPADAM

With his head on the lap of Embar and his feet on the lap of Vaduga Nambi, Ramanuja breathed his last in 1137 AD listening to the recitation of the Divya Prabandam. Born in pingala year, he left for his heavenly abode also in Pingala year that followed 120 years from the year of his Avatar. Thus, he lived two full cycles of Tamil years after his birth places the date in Saka era 1009, Pingala, in the month of Magha, the 10th day of Sukla Paksha under the constellation of Tiruvadirai and at noon (as in the time of his birth). "Saka year 1059, magha month, sukla paksham, dasami thitthi, Thursday, noon" Ramanuja entered his own abode as Adi Sesha.Notes that Lord Ranganatha and Periya Piraatti bathed and purified themselves as relatives do.

Some source says that he died on a Saturday places the date as 4238 Kali yuga which corresponds to 1137 AD, however, states that he lived for 128 years and died in the year Durmati in the month of Vaisaka. is physical body is preserved even today in a sitting posture in the Sannidhi (Sanctum Sanctorum) dedicated to him on the southwest corner on the fifth round within the Srirangam temple as ordered by Lord Ranganatha himself.

FIVE VAISNAVA TEMPLES

Ramanuja traveled eastward and came to Tondanur, the second capital of the Hoysala Empire. Bitti Deva (Vittala Devaraya) was the name of the Hoysala ruler. His daughter was suffering from a mental illness. He cured the illness of the princess, to the delight of the king. He was drawn to Ramanuja's faith and became a Srivaishnava. He then onwards came to be known as Vishnu- vardhana. In memory of this great event, the king built five Vaishnava temples.

1. Channiganarayana temple at Belur
2. Nambinarayana temple at Tondanu
3. Kirtinarayana temple at Talakad
4. Veeranarayana temple at Gadag and
5. Chaluvanarayana temple at Melkote.

These temples are lasting monuments of Karnataka culture and architecture. Ramanuja built many other temples too in Tondanur. He also got constructed a huge reservoir called 'Tirumalasagara'(now called Moti Talab).

THE DIVINE RECOGNITON OF SRI RAMANUJA'S CONTRIBUTIONS

Acharya Ramanuja was recognized for his monumental contributions to Sri Viasishtadvaitha Darsanam in his own life time by the Divya Dampathis of Srirangam, Kaanchi, Thirunarayanapuram, Andal of Srivilliputthur and Devi Sarasvathi through their conferring of the titles of Udayavar, Bhashyakarar and many other honors Ramanuja was also addressed as Ilaya Perumal by his sishyas. Further, Lord Varadaraja initiated Ramanuja into Sanyasaasramam and conferred on him the title of Yathirajan at that time. Lord Varadaraja reluctantly gave Ramanuja later as a gift to Sri Ranganatha. Lord Varadaraja also answered through Thirukkacchi Nampi the questions that were topmost on the mind of Ramanuja. The many incidents relating to the Vaibhavam of Ramanuja are summarized in the special home pages created by Srimans Achyutharaman and Madhavakkannan of Simhapuri and this.

LORD OR BHĀGAVATAS OR ĀCĀRYAS

When a Śrīvaiśnava is coming towards you, go and meet him half way. When he departs, go with him part of the way. Neglecting either constitutes a sin. Take up humble service under a Śrīvaiṣnava. Never cross the shadow of a Śrīvaiṣnava or let your shadow fall upon him. Should you touch a person out of the faith, purify yourself before touching a Śrīvaiṣnavail a

Śrīvaiṣnava salutes you first; do not treat him with disrespect. On the other hand, bend low before him and say, "I am your servant". Should you happen to know the defects of a Śrīvaiṣnava such as inertia, laziness, low birth or intelligence, etc., keep them to yourself. Do not proclaim them. Never, never, imagine yourself to be equal to the Bhāgavatas in any manner; nor extol yourself in their midst.

Remember that the Bhāgavatas you see have assumed their last physical body. Treat them with devotion and serve them with all respect. Let not your mind dwell on their birth or any other detracting element. Consider that it is your good fortune that they are here so that you can serve them and redeem yourself. Devote some portion of your time to think of and speak on the virtues of your spiritual Teacher; also allot some time to extol the Bhāgavatas and serve them to the best of your Know that conversations with holy Śrīvaiṣnava will erase the sin of talking with unbelievers and followers of other faith.

Ever seek the company of Śrīvaiṣnava who have mastered the Dvaya Mantra and who are constantly chanting the Mantra. Always dwell with those who live out the doctrine of surrender, who know the inner meanings of the Three Realities and the Three Secrets. Serving Bhāgavatas is more efficacious than worshipping the Lord Himself. Disrespect to them is more sinful than insult to the Lord.

SCRIPTURES AND TEACHINGS

Have great faith in the scriptures and sayings of all the Teachers of yore. Delight in the study of writings, which glorify the Lord and His works. Keep apart sometime of your day for this purpose. Do not be under the control of senses. Once your spiritual Teacher has opened your eyes to the supreme Light, do not be seduced Do not be addicted to use of sandals, scents and flowers except when they are the Lord's Do not remain content with acquiring secular knowledge. As soon as you awake, recite the names of the glorious spiritual hierarchy. When you see a Temple of the Lord or the Dome, join your hands in profound reverence. But do not gaze wonderstruck at temples of strange Gods, however beautiful they may be. Never take Holy Water of the Temple or Śrīpādatīrtham of the Ācāryas or Bhāgavatas in the presence of the uninitiated (i.e. those who do not know its sacredness and importance).Never takes the Holy Water that had washed the feet of those who do not know the three

REALITIES AND THE THREE SECRETS

Make it a point to procure and partake of Śrīpādatīrtham of Ācāryas

and Bhāgavatas daily or as frequently as possible. Never offer worship to the Lord in the houses of unbelievers or accept the Lord's offerings in such places. But you may accept the Lord's offerings even in the presence of unbelievers, if offered in the Lord's temples, holy monasteries or places sanctified by holy men.Let not your talk or attitude be such as to embarrass anyone however lowly he may be, or put Do not mingle with, or accept anything from, those whose thoughts and actions are centre don themselves only, and those who are ever intent on the pursuit of wealth, power and pleasure; do not also mingle with those who assume the external marks of a Śrīvaiṣnava but speak ill of Bhāgavatas and Ācāryas.

If any Śrīvaiṣnava perchance causes you harm, harbor no evil thoughts against him. Shun those habits and undertakings, which are against the rules of conduct of Bhāgavatas, though they may bring you much profit. Never partake of food, betel leaves, sandal paste, flowers or drink which has not been offered to the Lord. Offer to the Lord only such items as are laid down in the scriptures; not anything that is pleasant to your eyes.

Remember that the following would lead you to hell: regarding the images of the Lord as mere metal or stone, treating the spiritual Teacher as a mere human being, ranking the Bhāgavatas as high or low according to their birth, considering the Śrīpādatīrtham of Bhāgavatas as mere water, considering the sacred mantras as a mere collection of sounds, and regarding the supreme Lord as no higher than other gods.

RAMANUJA'S BRAHMAN—A PERSONAL GOD WITH ATTRIBUTES

According to Ramanuja, whatever is, is Brahman; but, Brahman is not of a homogeneous nature. It contains within itself elements of plurality on account of which It truly manifests Itself in a diversified world. Ramanuja's Brahman is essentially a Personal God, the all-powerful and all-wise Ruler of a real world permeated and animated by His spirit. There is thus no room for the distinction between Param Nirguna and an Aparam Saguna Brahman, between Brahman and Isvara. Ramanuja's Brahman is Savisesha Brahman, i.e., Brahman with attributes.

Ramanuja's Brahman is not the Impersonal Absolute, but He is a Personal God, with the qualities of omnipotence, omniscience and infinite love. God is Saguna. When the Vedic texts declare that He is Nirguna, it means that there are no bases or lower qualities such as sorrow, pain, mortality, change and old age in Him.

The Lord is interpenetrating everything. He is the essence of the soul.

He is the Antaryamin or the Inner Ruler. He is one with the soul. He is all-pervading (Vibhu). He is the Supreme Being. He is full of auspicious attributes. He is of the nature of Satya (Truth), Jnana (Intelligence) and Ananda (Bliss). Matter and soul depend on Him. He is the Adhara or support for this world and all souls. God is the Governor or Controller (Niyanta or Seshin) of the world. Jiva or soul is Niyama or Sesha (one who is being controlled).

The Lord is immanent. He is also transcendent. He is unchanging. The entire universe is latent in Him during Pralaya. The world is projected during creation, but this does not touch His essence. Ramanuja's Brahman has internal difference (Svagata Bheda). It is a synthetic whole, with souls and matter as its modes (Chit-Achit-Visishta). Para, Vyuha, Vibhava, Archa and Antaryamin, i.e., the transcendent, the group, the incarnation, the image and the immanent are the five forms of the Lord.

Ramanuja identifies God with Narayana who dwells in Vaikuntha with His Sakti or consort, Lakshmi. Lakshmi is the Goddess of Prosperity. She is the Divine Mother. She pleads with Her husband on behalf of man. She introduces the devotee to Her Lord and obtains for him salvation. Lakshmi occupies a pre-eminent place in Vaishnavism.

THE WORLD—A REAL PART OF BRAHMAN'S NATURE

The world, with its variety of material forms of existence and individual souls, is not an unreal Maya, but a real part of Brahman's nature. It is the body of the Lord. Matter is real. It is Achit or non-conscious substance. It undergoes a real Parinama or evolution. Matter exists in a subtle state as the Prakara of God during Pralaya. Hence it is eternal, but ever dependent. It is controlled by the will of God. It is neither good nor bad. It becomes a source of pleasure or of pain according to the nature of the Karma of souls. It forms the object of experience for the souls.

Prakriti has three Gunas: Sattva, Rajas and Tamas; but, Suddha-Tattva has only Sattva. It is pure matter. Suddha-Tattva is the substance which constitutes the body of God and is called His Nitya-Vibhuti. The manifested world is His Lila-Vibhuti.

The Soul—A Distinct Individual Entity

The soul is a higher Prakara of God than matter, because it is a conscious entity. It is of the essence of God. According to Ramanuja, God, soul and Nature are three eternal entities. The soul is self-conscious, unchanging, partless and atomic (Anu). The souls are infinite in number. The individual soul of Ramanuja is really individual. It is absolutely real and eternally

distinct from God. It has indeed, sprung from Brahman, and is never outside Brahman; nevertheless, it enjoys a separate personal existence and will remain a personality forever.

Three Classes of Souls

According to Ramanuja, there are three classes of souls, viz., Nitya (eternal), Mukta (free) and Baddha (bound). The eternal souls have never been in bondage. They are eternally free. They live with God in Vaikuntha. The freed souls were once subject to Samsara, but have attained salvation now and live with God. The bound souls are caught up in the meshes of Samsara and are striving to be released. They wander from life to life till they are redeemed.

Man or the individual soul is a particle of which God is the whole. The individual soul is like a spark of that mass of fire. The whole pomegranate fruit represents the Brahman of Ramanuja, each seed corresponding to the individual soul.

The Evolution of the Soul and its Final Emancipation

When the individual soul is immersed in worldliness or Samsara, its knowledge is contracted. It gets its body according to its past Karma, and goes from birth to death and from death to birth, till it attains Moksha or the final emancipation. When it attains Moksha, its knowledge expands. It knows everything. "Every action that contracts the heart of the soul is bad, and every action that expands the heart of the soul is good"—this is the statement of Ramanuja. The soul is marching on in this Samsara, expanding or contracting through its good and evil actions, till it attains the final emancipation through the grace of Lord Narayana. The grace descends on those souls who are pure and struggling for the divine grace.

Emancipation or Passing into Paradise

According to Ramanuja, Moksha means the soul's passing from the troubles of mundane life into a kind of heaven or paradise (Vaikuntha) where it will remain forever in undisturbed personal bliss in the presence of God. The liberated soul attains to the nature of God. It never becomes identical with Him. It lives in fellowship with the Lord, either serving Him or meditating on Him. It never loses its individuality. There is no such thing as Jivanmukti, according to Ramanuja. Salvation comes when the soul leaves the body.

Bhakti—The Means to Emancipation

The final emancipation can be obtained only through Bhakti and the

grace of the Lord. The grace of the Lord comes through devotion and Prapatti or absolute self-surrender. Karma and Jnana are only means to Bhakti.

THE VISISHTADVAITA PHILOSOPHY OF RAMANUJA

Introduction

The Visishtadvaita is so called because it inculcates the Advaita or oneness of God, with Visesha or attributes. It is, therefore, qualified monism. God alone exists. All else that is seen are His manifestations or attributes. God or Lord Narayana of Sri Ramanuja is a complex organic whole—Visishta—though it is one. Hence the name Visishtadvaita.

According to Sri Sankara, all qualities or manifestations are unreal and temporary. They are a result of Avidya or ignorance. According to Sri Ramanuja, the attributes are real and permanent. But, they are subject to the control of the one Brahman. God can be one despite the existence of attributes, because they cannot exist alone; they are not independent entities. They are Prakaras or the modes, Sesha or the accessories, and Niyama or the controlled aspects, of the one Brahman.

Ramanuja's celebrated system of philosophy known as Visishtadvaita or qualified monism is Advaita or non-dualism with a qualification or Visesha. It admits plurality. Ramanuja's Brahman or Lord Narayana subsists in a plurality of forms as souls (Chit) and matter (Achit). Hence it is called Visishtadvaita or qualified non-dualism. Visishtadvaita philosophy is Vaishnavism. The Sampradaya of Ramanuja's cult or creed is known as Sri Sampradaya. His followers are Vaishnavas. Ramanuja systematized the philosophy of Vaishnavism. Ramanuja's religion is called Sri Vaishnavism because 'Sri' or the Goddess Lakshmi is made to have an important function to perform in the salvation of the soul.

Sankara's philosophy is too high, subtle and abstruse for the vast majority of persons. But Ramanuja's philosophy is suitable for those in whom the devotional element preponderates. In Sri Ramanuja's system of philosophy, the Lord (Narayana) has two inseparable Prakaras or modes, viz., the world and the souls. These are related to Him as the body is related to the soul. They have no existence apart from Him. They inhere in Him as attributes in a substance. Matter and souls constitute the body of the Lord. The Lord is their indweller. He is the controlling Reality. Matter and souls are the subordinate elements. They are termed Viseshanas, attributes. God is the Viseshya or that which is qualified.

TEACHING OF RAMANUJACHARYA

very difficulty question, here is a very short introduction. Extensive

reading is required to understand this fully. He explained the Vishta-Advita (Qualified Advaita) philosophy of Hinduism and the "Sri-Vaishnavite" world view. His primary teachings are as below:

1. Ramanuja does not agree with the Advita (Sri Shankara's View) that only the Para Brahman (God) is true and every thing else is Maya. He groups everything into 3 groups Chit (Sentient), A-Chit (Non-Sentient) & Eshwar (Para Brahman). He interprets Advaitic vedic verses such that, Chit & Achit constitute the Body of the Para Brahman. Hence Chit & Achit are not "Maya", but physically exits. Since "Chit & Achit" are the body - they are the "property" of Para Brahman. And this Para Brahman who possesses the whole universe as his property is Advaitic, meaning there is no body to compare to him. He also id not "Nirguna" but has innumerable "Kalya Guna" or superior qualities such as Karunya (pity), etc.
2. The Para Brahman is Sriman Narayana. SriaPathitvam (husband of Sri) is one of the most guna's of the Para Brahman. Sri is the manifestation of the Para Braman's "Ahamtha" (that which singularly identifies Para Brahman"
2. Attaining Moksha is the purpose of any soul. By moksha, he refers the soul physically exist the known universe which is part of the creation-destruction cycle to "Vikunta", where the souls achieve "Samyapathi" with equality with Sriman Narayanam 8 of his gunas. I unfortunately cannot recollect these 8 gunas now.
3. Any soul, in whatever body she might have taken, (man, women, animal, plant etc.,) can achieve moksha. There is no discrimination. 4) He mentioned that in Kali Yuga, there are at best 2 methods of attaining Moksha. Bhakti (love of God) and Prapatti (complete surrender to him). a) Bhakti is still dependent on the effort of the Bhakta, and she has to like the life as prescribed by the Vedas and think about God at the moment the soul leaves the body. Here the soul cannot be assured of Moksha at end of current birth.

b) Prapatti (Saranagathi) is acceptance of our inability to adopt any other method of achieving moksha, and perform complete surrender to him. The most important concept in parpatti is faith.c) Prapatti has to be first to Sri (the mother) and then to Narayana (the father) for it to work. d) Prapatti needs to be performed through a Sri Vaishnava archayar who are a part of the guru parampara (guru-shiya parampara) of the 72 archaya's identified by Ramanuja

RAMANUJA HAS MANY NAMES, WHICH WERE GIVEN AT DIFFERENT POINTS OF TIME

Udayavar was the title given by Periya Perumal of Srirangam while Maran performed Saranagati.

1. Bhashyakar (One who composed SriBhashyam -Title given by Goddess Saraswathi)When he visited Saraswati Peetam, Goddess Saraswati was so impressed with his commentary on Brahma Sutram that she named it "Sri Bhashyam" and conferred on him the title of "Bhashyakaarar". It must be noted that while the other commentaries are known by the names of their authors like 'Sankara Bashyam' written by Aadhi Sankara, the commentary of Ramanuja is always referred to with the venerable honorific 'Sri' denoting its unsurpassed quality and clarity and known as ' SriBashyam'
2. Emperumanar (As referred to by His guru, Gostipurnar) Ramanuja goes to Thirukottiyur for the 18th time to learn the rahsyas (secret wisdom) from the scholar Thirukottiyur Nambi. Nambi reveals the sacred mantras and asks Ramanuja not to reveal it to anyone else lest he should reach hell. Ramanuja climbs the Thirukottiyur temple gopuram (tower) and reveals the secrets to everyone. Nambi summons Ramanujacharya and asks him the reasons for overruling him. Ramanuja replies that by telling the secret to others he alone would go to hell but all those who have heard would reach would be saved (would reach heaven). Nambi gives him the title of Emperumanar (meaning our lord)
3. Koil annan (Called by another guru Srihailapurnar)
4. Godagraja (Elder brother of Goda- Known in Srivilliputtur)
5. Lakshmanamuni(Called by Maladhara)
6. Udaiyavar (One who got Ubhayavibhuthi-Title conferred by Lord Ranganatha) Sri Ramanuja was simply bewitched by the very first sight of Lord Ranganatha. He was declared as the head of the temple administration and also the leader of Vaishnavites. The first step taken by Ramanuja was to regulate the day to day affairs of the temple. He wrote and brought into force a manual called Koil Ozhuku setting out in detail how the daily poojas and utsavams throughout the year should be conducted and how the supporting services should be organized. Till today, after nearly thousand years, this is being strictly observed in Ranganatha temple in Srirangam. This earned him the title and name of Udaiyavar
7. Yathiraja (King among yathis-Title conferred by Lord Varadaraja) When he was about 30 years of age, Ilayalwar took Sannyas with the

name of 'Ramanuja Muni'. He was the king among Sannyasis. Hence, he is called ' Yati Rajar'- an honorific invested by Lord Devaathi Rajan

8. Thiruppavai Jeeyar (One who mastered Thiruppavai- Title given by Srirangam Prabhandha Gosti
9. Sri Ramanuja was given the title of Thiruppavai Jeeyar by his Acharya, Periya Nambi. Ramanuja earned this title because of his intense attachment to the uplifting thoughts enshrined in Thiruppavai Amudanar states that Ramanuja's life was sustained by the grace of Soodikkoduttha NaacchiyAr and Her hymns were Ramanuja's life-breath

Appanukku Sangaazhi Alittha Perumal-Name he received because of settling the dispute regarding whether the main deity at Thirumala is Shiva or Vishnu

Anna(elder brother)-Name given by Andal after Ramanuja presented 100 cupfuls of porridge(Akkaravadisal) to Maaliruncholai Azhagar in Madurai, as per her wishes which were expressed in Nachiyar Thirumozhi

Thiruppavai Jeer- Name given at Srirangam after Ramanuja swooned on seeing Athuzhai, daughter of Mahapurna, mistaking her to be Nappinnai (i.e., since he was so absorbed in the meanings of Thiruppavai)

Bhasyakarar- Name given by Saraswathi at the Sri Bhandaram library in Kashmir because of his authorship of Sri Bhasyam

There is a popular misconception, particularly among those who have just a nodding

RAMANUJAR AND UPANISHADS

Acquaintance with his works, that Ramanuja did not devote as much attention to the Upanishads as he did to the other two texts of the Prasthanatraya viz. the Brahma sutras and the Bhagavad-Gita. The root cause for this misimpression is that, while he wrote the Sribhashya and the Gitabhashya respectively as commentaries on the above mentioned works, he did not do so on the Upanishads, as Sankara had done earlier. But if one were to carefully go through the Vedarthasangraha and the Sribhashya, one would see that Ramanuja had not omitted anything of importance from the Upanishads in propounding his theory of body-soul relationship (sareera-sareeri bhava) which is the cornerstone of the Visishtadvaita philosophy. In fact, the Vedarthasangraha is among Ramanuja's earliest works. It is said that this work is a recording of Ramanuja's lectures at Tirumala during his first ever visit to the holy shrine. Besides this work, Ramanuja has extensively commented upon the Upanishad passages not

only in the Sribhashya, but also in the shorter commentaries, the Vedantasara and Vedantadeepa.

Both Sundarsana Suri and Rangaramanuja, later preceptors, have acknowledged this fact in their respective works and have shown that Ramanuja has not left any major Upanishad text uncommented. The general view is that there are a hundred and eight Upanishads. But, according to some, the number swelled to two hundred in course of time principal Upanishads '. Ten among them have been commented upon by Sankara according to Advaitic thought and subsequently by Upanishad-bhashyakara Rangaramanuja also, justifying the Visishtadvaita point of view. It is seen from the texts that Ramanuja has selected passages from fifteen Upanishads, including the ones reckoned above. Moreover, several Upanishads have a good deal of non-philosophical content and merely describe events or dialogues which lead to a metaphysical conclusion. It was obviously not necessary to dwell upon these non-essentials when the need of the hour was to present a philosophy which was holistic in nature and would take into account the entire gamut of the Upanishads. Given below are select passages which bring home to the reader the aptness of the references selected by Ramanuja to project his philosophy. Isavasyopanishad – This Upanishad contains all the important elements of the Vedantic school of thought in a brief manner.

The very first verse of this Upanishad contains the pregnant phrase "By the supreme Being is all this pervaded (eesaavaasyam idam sarvam). Atone stroke, this statement brings out that the Ruler (eesa) is different and distinct from the rest of the word consisting of souls and matter. It also shows the reality of existence and separateness of the rest of the world (idam sarvam). This corroborates with the Chandogya Upanishad statement "All this has sat as its soul, this fact is real" (6.8.7: aitadaatmyam idamsarvam, tat satyam). Ramanuja quotes this crucial phrase of the Isavasyopanishad while commenting on the Brahma sutra III.4.14 which states that the knower of Brahman is not tainted by his karmas; on the other hand, they glorify his knowledge. He continues this trend of argument by quoting one more passage from the Isavasyopanishad

(2) Which positively urges a person to desire living for (a Vedic span of) a hundred years just by performing actions disinterestedly (kurvanneha karmaani jijeevishet satam samaah)? Sri Ramanuja Quotes two more passages from this Upanishad at other appropriate places in the Sribhashya. Kena Upanishad – This Upanishad states that all souls owe their knowledge to the supreme Brahman from whom they desire their attributes of power

and glory. This Upanishad, which comprises thirty verses in four sections, also brings out the essentials of Vedanta philosophy. Ramanuja selects three passages from this Upanishad, the first to emphasize the unknowability of the Brahman, the second to re-assert that He is beyond the five senses and the mind and the third passage to declare "He is the Life of life" (1.2: praanasya praanah).

This indicates that Brahman is the basis, supporter and controller of all living beings.Katha Upanishad – Consisting of six parts (vallis), this well-known Upanishad contains the episode of Nachiketas, his dialogue with Yama, the god of death and the latter's answer, which covers the entire relationship of the individual soul with the supreme Brahman and the destiny of the soul in the final state of liberation. Ramanuja has almost utilized the entire Upanishad to establish that liberation of the soul is only after death, that the grace of the Lords very much essential in securing liberation and that He alone selects one whom He wishes to liberate (2.23: yamevaisha vrinute tena labhyah).

This sentiment is also repeated, word forward, in the Mundaka Upanishad (3.2.3). It was this categorical declaration that made Ramanuja observe that "to reach Him one must surrender to Him" (Sribhashya 1.4.1: tasyaha vaseekaranam taccharanaagatireva).Prasna Upanishad – The background to this Upanishad is interesting. Six sages approach one acharya, Sage Pippalaada and seek enlightenment. The preceptor asks them to stay with him for one whole year, practicing spiritual austerity and then to ask him questions. He answers all of them and, in the process, describes the Paramatma in very lucid terms. Ramanuja has chosen a verse which clearly establishes that every being in the universe is stablished in the supreme

Being just like birds take shelter in their nests in a tree (4.7: sayathaa somya vayaamsi vaasovriksham samprathishthante, evam ha vai tat sarvam aatmanisampratishthate).Mundaka Upanishad – This is a key Upanishad in understanding Visishtadvaita and lays the foundation for the single unitary Principle, which is behind the multiplicity of the perceived world. Saunaka, a householder asks sage Angiras, "By knowing what, Sir, all this is known?"(1.1.3: kasminnu bhagavo vijnaate sarvamidam vijnaate bhavati). This is similar to the questions of Uddalaka to Svetaketu and Yajnavalkya to Maitreyi, found in other Upanishads. Sage Angiras takes Saunaka, step by step, to the ultimate stage of a soul attaining immortality.

First, Angiras mentions about two types of knowledge, the lower and higher, and goes on to differentiate between the two (verse 1.1.5 refers). Sri Ramanuja explains that the higher knowledge is that which inculcates

devout meditation on the Brahman (bhaktiroopaapannam jnaanam). This Upanishad contains sayings that lend credence to the philosophy of 'dualism' (bheda) as well as the dual-cum-non-dual doctrine (bheda abheda). Ramanuja has adroitly used the famous analogy of two birds on a tree (verse 3.1.1) to explain that the supreme Soul is different from the individual soul and then goes on to printout that the Former can be reached by the latter only if He wishes it (3.2.3: yamevaishavrinute tena labhyah).

It is seen that every phrase of substance in this Upanishad has been used by Ramanuja to develop the doctrine of Visishtadvaita.Mandookya Upanishad – Consisting of only twelve mantras, this Upanishad is shorter than the Isavasyopanishad, and hence is considered the smallest of the Upanishads. But while the latter deals fully with the Vedantic tenets, the Mandookya Upanishad merely glorifies the pranava mantra comprising the three syllables a, u and m and analyses the three states of consciousness, waking, dream and deep sleep.

These three states are identified with the Vyuha Forms Aniruddha, Pradyumna and Sankarshana. Having said that, the Upanishad concludes that the fourth state Vasudeva is represented by the fourth transcendental state, which is the form of 'Omkara'. The three worlds of the earlier three Vyuha Forms are absorbed (prapanchopasamam) in the last form, which is one without a second (advaitam).One who knows this truth realizes the Paramatma with His grace. The contents of this Upanishad conform to Sri Ramanuja's view on the other Upanishads i.e. though the supreme Brahman is beyond the three states, He is immanent in all of them.Aitareya Upanishad–

This Upanishad opens with the statement that the Atman or supreme Being (Paramatma) was above in the beginning and that He willed to create the worlds (1.1.1: aatma vaa idameka eva agra aaseet, naanyet kinchanamishat sa aikshata lokaannusrijaa iti). Ramanuja quotes this passage extensively in his Vedarthasangraha and in commenting in as many as nine sutras in his Sribhashya.

The last passage of the Upanishad declares that the Atman is Brahma, Indra, the celestials, the five elements and all living beings. He represents universal consciousness and any living being that establishes communion with this consciousness attains the highest life.Taittiriya Upanishad – This is a marvelous Upanishad containing certain home-truths on education and full of sonorous utterances in describing the Brahman and the highest form of bliss. The steps leading to this highest bliss are beautifully described. The first part of this Upanishad consists of a sublime code of conduct for a

freshly graduated student in his future life. By itself, it is a subject for intensive study and elaboration. The second and third (final) parts are replete with statements about the supreme Brahman, His nature and qualities, His being the highest bliss and good, how to reach Him and finally the attainment.

Crisp sentences like "The knower of Brahman attains the highest" (2.1.1: brahmavidaapnoti param), "Brahman is Reality, Knowledge and Infinity" (ibid: satyamjnaanam anantam Brahma), "Hence He Himself made Himself into many" (2.7.1:tadaatmaanam svayam aakuruta), "Through fear of Him the wind blows" (2.8.1:bheeshaasmaad vaatah pavate), etc. bring out, in clear, unmistakable terms, the nature of Brahman, His being the material cause of the universe and His immense power. Now, Ramanuja has made extensive use of the terms of this Upanishad in all his four texts mentioned earlier.

A few examples would suffice to substantiate and uphold the Visishtadvaitic view. The sentences "Brahman is Reality, Knowledge and Infinity" and" From which all these are born, in which they live and into which they go when perishing, that is Brahman" (3.1.1: yato vaa imaani bhootaani jaayante, yena jaataani jeevanti, yatprayanti abhisamvisanti) have been explained in great detail by Ramanuja in his expositions. The truth of actual creation which is brought out in several places in the Upanishad, such as "From Him, the ether came", "He willed to be born and created all this"," He Himself made Himself into many" (quoted earlier), has been touched upon in the Vedarthasangraha in several places. The most important fact that the Transcendental Brahman does not lose His perfections by creation of many (2.6.1: satyam cha anritam chasatyam abhavat) has been elaborately explained by Ramanuja.

The term 'Embodied spirit' (sareeraatma) occurring in many places in the Upanishad, lend full credence to the body-soul relationship (sareera-sareeri bhava) brought out by Ramanuja in his darsana.In the various successive levels at which Brahman is identified in this Upanishad viz. food, vital air, mind, knowledge and bliss, it is explained here that knowledge (vijnaana) is a unique characteristic of the individual soul. This exactly corresponds to the Brahmasutra2.3.19, which says "(the soul is) intelligence for that very reason" (jno'te eva). The supreme Brahman is at a higher level and is hence distinct from the soul, on whom He confers bliss on liberation. Indeed, the special purpose of this Upanishad is to declare the blissful nature of the supreme Brahman.

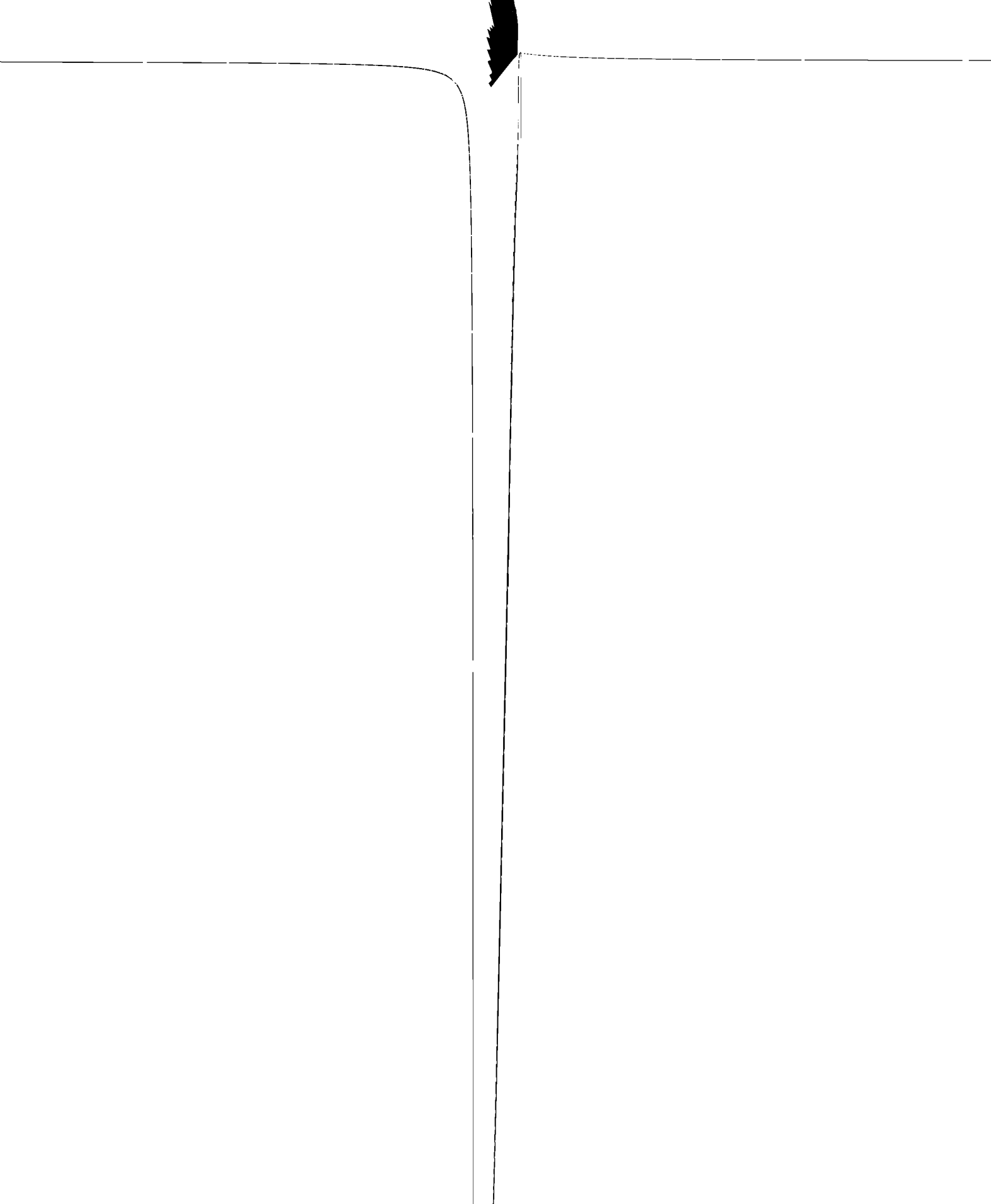
The Upanishad says, "He is bliss. Having obtained this bliss, the soul

becomes blissfulÖ. He Himself grants this bliss" (2.7.1: raso vai sah, rasam hyevaayamlabdhva"nandee bhavatiÖ. esha hi eva aanandayati). This bliss is beyond thought and words2.9.1: yato vaacho nivartante apraapya manasaa sah). But even knowing that such bliss exists releases the soul from any sort of fear (ibid: aanandam brahmano vidvaan, na bibhatikutaschaneti). These explanations of Sri Ramanuja, which substantiate the auspicious tributes of the supreme Brahman, are found interspersed among the details in the Vedarthasangraha and Sribhashya. For example, while dealing with the process of meditation, Ramanuja stresses on continuity and steadfastness.

He interprets the word antara, occurring in section 2.1.1 of the Upanishad, as 'interruption' and goes on to declare that the devotional process should be free flowing and continuous as oil poured from a vessel(Sribhashya 1.1.1: tailadhaaravat avicchinna smriti santaana roopam).Finally it may be placed on record that whatever conclusions are reached in this Upanishad are confirmed more forcefully in the Subala Upanishad and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad which are quoted in Ramanuja's commentaries. Chandogya Upanishad – This is one of the older Upanishads and contains, as was the prevalent practice then, many chants and ritualistic symbolisms. Comprising eight chapters (with fifty-four sections), the main theme of this Upanishad is meditation of different kinds. Scholars confirm that the Brahma sutra closely follows this Upanishad. The short terse sentences of the Brahma sutra are seen closely woven with the logical conclusions derived in this Upanishad.

Ramanuja has, therefore, utilized this Upanishad fully in establishing his stand on the Brahma sutras. His views on the crucial phrases in the Upanishads are given below which will be seen to develop the philosophy of Visishtadvaita. (a) Ramanuja's personal conviction of the phenomenal handsomeness of the supreme Being (16.7) has him expatiate on the subject in the Vedarthasangraha and Sribhashya, more exhaustively in the former. It may be recalled that the phrase 'kapyaasampundareekam evamakshinee' elicited a blasphemous interpretation from Yadavaprakasa, to which Ramanuja, as a young scholar under him, objected emotionally. (b) Contrary to what Sankara felt, Ramanuja has interpreted the term brahmasamstha (occurring in 2.23.1) as indicating 'one who is totally devoted to Brahman.

For Ramanuja's view was that liberation is open to all the people in all four stages of life and not merely to an ascetic (sanyasi). Similarly, the term 'tapas' applies to both the wandering hermit (vanaprastha) and ascetic. Further, Ramanuja has taken note of the fact that surrender to achieve one's



goal is envisaged in the Upanishads as is evidenced in sentences like "I have taken refuge with Prajapati", etc. (2.22). This is further highlighted by the fact that though King Janasruti and the young boy Satyakama Jabali did not belong to the highest caste or stage, they were also entitled to spiritual elevation because of their stead fast devotion and truthfulness. (c) Another contentious phrase between Yadavaprakasa and Ramanuja was "All this is verily Brahman as this is born of, withdrawn into and living in Brahman; remaining calm, meditate upon it" (3.14.1: sarvam khalvidam Brahma tajjalaan iti saantaupaaseeta) – a phrase on which Sri Sankara commented as representing the lower Brahman with attributes. After taking up four types of interpretations of this crucial passage and rejecting all of them, Sri Ramanuja establishes the correct meaning as presence of the infinite in the finite 'establishing the latter in existence and imparting to it the power to exist'.

The immanence of the Brahman is life-giving to the multiplicity of objects in the universe. Hence, one should sit quietly and meditate upon this Brahman. "This Brahman which exists in my heart is extremely subtle, but at the same time exceedingly great", says the Upanishad (3.14.3: esha ma aatmaaantarhridaye aneeyaan... esha ma aatmaa antarhridaye jyaayaan). Such existence by the Brahman is out of sheer compassion and adds to His great qualities. His possesses transcendental perfection. He takes residence in the heart of the body of an individual soul for purposes of the latter's redemption, thus enabling the latter to meditate upon Him and raise himself. "The Brahman's descent into that tiny space is for the sake of the soul's ascent" is what Ramanuja makes out. (d) Ramanuja has interpreted the phrase 'bliss is Brahman, space is Brahman' (4.10.5: kam Brahma, kham Brahma) as jointly meaning 'boundless bliss is Brahman' (aparicchinna sukham Brahma), which is one of the cardinal principles of Visishtadvaita. (e)Ramanuja has brought out a clear picture of the 'bright path' (archiradi marga) and the ways that a soul takes after the fall of a body. This brings into harmony all the passages on this subject in other Upanishads. "That you are" is the most commented sentence in this entire Upanishad. This is the concluding piece of a long dialogue between sage Uddalaka and his son Svetaketu, who returned to meet his father after twelve years of intensive study under a preceptor.

Uddalaka enquired of his son 'whether he had enquired about the Ordained by which the unheard becomes heard, the unsought becomes thought and the unknown becomes known' (6.1.3: tam aadesam apraakshyah yena asrutam srutambhavati, amatam matam, avijnaatam vijnaatam). On Svetaketu replying in the negative and on his request, the

father began a long discourse, uncovering step by step, the identity of the 'Ordained', who is none other that the supreme Brahman. This dialogue is also similar to those between Yajnavalkya and Maitreyi and Angiras and Saunaka. Further, Sri Sankara exalted this phrase 'tat tvam asi' in isolation and propounded the theory of the identity of the individual soul with the supreme Brahman. Ramanuja has devoted considerable space, both in his Sribhashya and the Vedarthasangraha, to bring out the true purport of this sentence. Space constraints prevent a detailed exposition of Ramanuja's views, but a few salient features can be mentioned. First, the result (effect) of a cause is as real as the cause but in a modified state.

Secondly, the original Being, which alone existed in the beginning, willed Himself into several forms, entered them and created further factors. Differentiation of names and forms only means changing the unman fest into clear and several manifestations. Ultimately, all names and forms are those of the Indwelling supreme Brahman. Thirdly, the Supreme Being took up the individual soul as His own Body and entered the material world which embodied the soul. This view conforms to the statement in the Taittiriya Upanishad Fourthly, assumptions of temporary manifestations as bodies do not erode the permanence of the eternal Brahman. Ramanuja cites the sentence in 6.8.4, which says, "All beings have Sat as their cause, they live in Sat, and are withdrawn into Sat" (sanmoolaah somya imaah sarvaah prajaah sadaayatanaah satpratishthaah). Fifthly, the unawareness of the soul about its constituent inner Brahman is explained through the analogy of honey collected from several flowers, rivers flowing into the ocean, deep sleep, etc.

The famous analogy of a blindfolded man let off in a strange country returning to his native land with the help of competent people (acharyas) indicates the soul becoming aware of its true nature. Sixthly, the climax of the whole chapter is founding the sentence "All this has the Brahman for its self. That is real. That is the self. That you are, Svetaketu" (aitadaatmyam idam sarvam, tat satyam, sa aatma, tat tvam asisvetaketo), which is found in as many as nine places therein. This is a weighty sentence and brings out the richness of the term 'sat' which signifies the supreme, primordial Brahman which was 'one without a second before creation', which brought forth the world and sustains it from within several manifested forms. Seventhly and lastly, SriRamanuja explains that the term 'tvam' meaning 'you' cannot be understood as standing for the soul but for the supreme Self ever present in the soul.

As he declares in the opening passages of the Vedarthasangraha, the

Upanishads are meant to bring out the grandeur of the Brahman (tasya vaibhava pratipaadanah srutayah).(g) Ramanuja's main thrust is to establish that unbounded bliss is the nature of Brahman, by which He enables all the souls reaching Him to partake of His compassion and His infinite superiority over the souls, thus declaring His auspicious attributes. He finds substantial arguments for these viewpoints in this Upanishad which contains the all-important dialogue between Narada and Sage Sanatkumara whom the former approaches, in a moment of depression, and seeks enlightenment. Skipping over the details of the dialogue, the sage takes Narada over a hierarchy of successively higher values and then introduces the concept of 'Bhuma', which is not small (alpa), and has the quality of plenteousness. In experiencing the state of Bhuma, one will not see anything else, will not hear anything else, and will not know anything else (7.24.1: yatranaanyat pasyati, naanyacchrinoti, naanyad vijaanaati, sa bhooma).

While Sankara interprets this sentence to mean that, in this state of bliss, the soul knows itself and nothing else, Ramanuja clarifies that actually, and the soul knows that Bhuman is the supreme Brahman from whom the entire universe emerges. Knowing the infinitude of the Brahman, the nature of joy flowing from that knowledge is infinite and there is nothing beyond Him. Further, the soul also realizes that it too is penetrated by the Infinite Brahman, Who is its innermost Self. To explain it briefly, the immanence of the transcendent Brahman in creative involvement with the world of finites is an irreducible fact (7.26.1: aatmatah idam sarvam). The soul who realizes this is beyond all sorrow, affliction and death (7.26.2: na pasyo mrityum pasyati na rogam nota duhkhataam).(h) The main purport of the Upanishads is that the supreme Being also dwells in the tiniest body in the finite world.

This view is forcefully brought out in the last (eighth) chapter of this Upanishad and has been elaborately dealt with in the Sribhashya and the Vedarthasangraha. The human body is called the 'City of the Brahman'. Inside that body is the lotus-like heart, within which there is a subtle space (dahara-aakaasa). This small space is actually as vast as the outer space with all planets, elements and all other objects. It is identified with Brahman, the supreme Atman. When the individual soul approaches this supreme Brahman, he realizes his own nature.

Then the state of perpetual illumination sets in. It is here that the vital difference between Sankara's approach and Ramanuja's approach is noticed. Sankara feels that the Highest Person (uttamah purushah) is the individual self. But Ramanuja explains that self-realization is not an autonomous or concluding process. It is a part of the experience of the supreme Brahman.

The individual self considers itself as highest (uttamah) only in the interim stage relative to the earlier state of identification with prakriti. But the real Highest Being is that on the experience of which the soul has reached his self-realization: Sri Ramanuja clarifies the point further by saying that the Brahman is such that the soul who approaches Him gets conferred with many of the perfections which characterize Him and the fact reflects the bountiful nature of the Brahman (Refer Sribhashya 1.3.19).

Thus, Ramanuja emerges as a faithful interpreter of the Chandogya Upanishad, conjointly with other Upanishads. The brief overview of Ramanuja's comments on all the important conclusions of the Upanishads continues. Nine Upanishads were discussed n the previous issue. Brihadaranyaka Upanishad–Considered the most extensive of all Upanishads, this Upanishad contains the teachings of all of them. (The term 'brihad' means 'big'.) The central teaching attributable to this Upanishad is that the supreme Brahman is the inner Controller (Antaryamin) of all other entities in this universe. This runs through the teachings of Sage Yajnavalkya to Maitreyi, Ushasta, Uddalaka and Kahola, which form the major part of this Upanishad. As done in the case of the Chandogya Upanishad, the crucial expressions of the six sections of the Upanishad are briefly dealt with below, along with Ramanuja's views.

(a) While explaining the phrase 'I am the Brahman' (1.4.10: aham brahmaasmi), Ramanuja links this phrase with an earlier passage (1.4.7) and says that whoever knows the different beings as several independent entities does not know them at all; whereas to see the underlying unity in them is the complete knowledge. When the soul reaches this level of knowledge, he recognizes that he also falls within the range of its contemplation; the soul experiences that he is the Brahman i.e. he sees himself as containing within himself the infinite and supreme Brahman.

(b) The fundamental proposition 'Not this much only, not this much only' (neti neti) is interpreted by Sankara as meaning that 'nothing else other than the Brahman'.

Ramanuja has elucidated this phrase in both Sribhashya and Vedarthasangraha. He clarifies that this statement merely signifies that the forms mentioned earlier (in 2.3.1) viz. gross (moorta) and subtle (amoorta) do not exhaust all Forms of Brahman. The Brahman has infinite Forms which the Vedas cannot describe or measure out. This view also conforms to the earlier statement that the Brahman is the 'Real of all reals' (2.1.20: satyasya satyam). By removing the restriction of the Forms of the Brahman by the

repeated use of the words 'neti neti', the Upanishad conveys the idea that the Brahman has an endless number of Forms. Further, the qualities of mutation, which are found in the attributes of the soul and in the form and attributes of matter, do not exist in the Brahman and are negated by the phrase 'neti neti'. This is Ramanuja's view.

(c) In the discussions between Yajnavalkya and Maitreyi, the former declares that, because of the desire of the atman, objects become dear (2.4.5: aatmanastu kaamaaya sarvampriyam bhavati). Sri Ramanuja clarifies that the atman mentioned here is the supreme Brahman. He elevates the whole level of discussion by declaring that objects become dear to souls not due to attachments to the objects themselves, but due to the devotion of the souls towards the supreme Brahman Who inheres in these objects.' The world becomes a 'mansion of delight' to one who is wholly after the supreme One'

(d) The most important section of this Upanishad is the Antaryami-brahmana (section It is a clear exposition of the inner existence of the supreme Brahman, which even SriSankara admits but relates it to the lower (conditioned) Brahman. In this section, the inner Ruler is stated to exist in each of the five elements, heavens, sun, space, light, darkness, vital airs, speech, eye, mind, skin, soul and genetic force. The beings or objects in which He inheres do not know Him. The Brahman rules every one of the objects that He dwells in.

This inner Ruler has no further antaryamin in relation to Himself (3.7.23: naanyo'to'sti drashtaa naanyo'to'sti srotaa naanyo'to'sti mantaanaanyo'to'sti vijnaataa). These repeated utterances perfectly clarify that the supreme Brahman performs a cosmic role and formulates the concept that the universe is His Body. This Body includes the individual soul. This is the cornerstone of the Visishtadvaita philosophy. (e) In the very same chapter (3) where the concept of Antaryami-brahmana is found, another idea is presented, which is called 'Imperishable Brahman' (Akshara Brahman). Contradicting Sri Sankara who maintained that these two concepts are different, SriRamanuja posits that these two are the same; for, the same conclusion that marks the earlier section is also found in this section. Both are supplementary and complementary to each other. The former section states that the Brahman penetrates every object (antahpravisya) and rules over it (saasati).

This is Ramanuja's clarification. Replying to an inquiry from Janaka as to what constitutes light (jyoti) in a person's life, Sage Yajnavalkya develop his instruction to a very high level and concludes with the statement of the

nature of Brahman and the manner of having direct vision of the supreme Reality. Ramanuja discusses the central thought of this dialogue in both texts, Sribhashya and Vedarthasangraha.

Briefly stated, the individual soul itself is self-luminous (4.3.9: svayam jyotis). After successive stages of waking and dreaming state, the soul enters, occasionally, the state of deep sleep, which is wonderful in many ways. In this state, there is no disappearance of the consciousness of the knowing self. The supreme Brahman is said to take possession of the soul, embracing him, as it were (4.3.21: praajnena aatmanaa samparishvakta) for 'the purposes of rejuvenating him after the trials and tribulations of earthly life'. The Brahman Himself takes the initiative to bring about this union, which is the foretaste of the future joyful state in liberation. For the individual soul in this stage, the Brahman becomes the whole world of values and the supreme End.

The next stage for the aspirant for liberation is leaving off the material body and entering into a deep sleep, never to awaken. The souls only desire (Kama) is for the supreme Brahman, the great unborn Soul (4.4.22: mahaanaja aatmaa). But there is no identity between the soul and the Brahman except that of total immanence to such a stage when one could say, "That you are" (tat tvam asi) and "I am Brahman" (aham brahmaasmi). Ramanuja stresses that all these expressions mean that the Brahman, who is the inner Soul of the universe, is also the inner Soul of the individual soul.

To dispel all lingering doubts, the Upanishad contains the passage that 'He is the Controller, Ruler, Sovereign, Lord of all beings, and Protector of all' (4.4.22: sarvasya vasee, sarvasya eesaanah, sarvasyaadhipatih, sarvesvarah, bhootaadhipatih, bhootapaalah). As mentioned earlier, the Brahman's glories are proclaimed at every stage in the Upanishad to ensure that He is not to be treated on par, or confused, with the individual soul. Lastly, the pathway to attain the Brahman is lucidly explained in the Upanishad, which Ramanuja classifies as the path of action leading successively to paths of knowledge and devotion. Reciting the Vedas, performing sacrifices, giving gifts, observing austerities, restraining the senses, giving up desires, being patient, resorting to meditation, etc. are enjoined on the aspirant.

Here, Ramanuja makes an interesting point (3.4.17 – 26). One need not become an ascetic to renounce all desires and control senses. This spirit of asceticism can be cultivated in all earlier stages of life as well. Acquisition of knowledge occurs in two stages first on hearing and reflection (sravana

and manana) and then through meditation (nididhyaasana). The latter is a steady contemplation of the Brahman, as dwelling in the soul of the mediator.

One should see the supreme Self (Brahman) in oneself (aatmanyeva tu aatmaanamupaaseeta). Here, a pertinent point is thrown up. The individual soul is envisaged as the object of meditation (upaasya koti nikshipta), not by itself, but as a part of the glorious possessions of the supreme Brahman, who is cosmic and possesses all perfections. Inbuilt in this attitude is the supreme love of the soul towards the Brahman as the objector his devotion. The importance of this attitude is evidenced in the opening verse of the Sribhashya, where Ramanuja prays for 'understanding in the form of loving devotion to the supreme Brahman' (bhavatu mama parasmin semushee bhaktiroopaa). Kaushitaki Upanishad – Though this Upanishad is not included among the principal Upanishads, some sections are as weighty as the philosophical truths in the Chandogya and Brihadaranyaka Upanishads.

Ramanuja also devotes much attention to them and offers very substantial interpretations. On being requested by Pratardana to confer a boon on him, Indra asks Pratardana to direct his devotion to himself i.e. to Indra himself. He clarifies this statement gradually. The example of the wheel, spokes and axle is shown here. The outer rim of the wheel is supported by the spokes. Similarly, the material world rests on the individual souls. These souls are called 'subtle intelligence' (prajna matra). These souls are supported by the cosmic principle known as vital airs (prana). This prana is the intelligent Soul, blissful, ageless and immortal (3.8: prajnaatmaa aanandah ajarah amritah). When Indra said, "Meditate on me", what he meant was "Meditate on this cosmic principle".

This philosophy was very supportive of Sri Ramanuja's way of thinking and was also inconsonance with the statements in the other Upanishads. This relationship admirably fits in with the concept of body-soul relationship as explained in the Antaryami-brahmana of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. Further, this illustrates the three types of meditation on the Brahman – (a) as the Indweller of the material objects, (b) as the Indweller of the various souls and (c) in His own Form. Indra's words convey directions for these three ways of meditation (Brahma sutra 1.1.32: upaasaatraividhyaat). Svetasvatara Upanishad – This is an important Upanishad from the Visishtadvaita point of view, in the sense that, Sankara depends heavily on it for his Advaitic pronouncements.

On the other hand, Ramanuja finds this Upanishad congenial to support his arguments. First, the glories of the Brahman are spelt out in great detail

in this Upanishad. Secondly, it distinguishes the soul from the Brahman in several places. Thirdly, matter (prakriti) is said to be real and is identified with maya, over which the Brahman has absolute control. Fourthly, the concept of surrender and high devotion are brought out here (6.18: saranam ahamprapadye, 6.23: paraa bhakti). Finally, the supreme Brahman is variously described as the Enjoyer, Enjoyed and the Impeller (1.12: bhoktaa bhogyam preritaaram cha matvaa) and confirms that all these epithets describe only one Entity i.e. the supreme Brahman (ibid: sarvam proktam trividham brahmametat). Thus, this Upanishad not only negates a non-theistic monism as well as a pluralistic dualism, but also propagates the concept of the Brahman's immanence in the universe of the animate and the inanimate. Mahopanishad – This is a fairly unknown Upanishad, beyond the conventional range, but has caught the attention of Ramanuja.

In this Upanishad, the supreme Brahman is identified with Narayana. All terms such as Sat, Brahman, Atman and Paramatman are declared to represent Narayana. Subala Upanishad – In this another lesser known Upanishad are found passages similar to the Antaryami-brahmana of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, with some crucial additions. It identifies the Antaryami as Narayana, which view is also held by Sri Sankara, as can be seen from his commentary on the Vishnusahasranama. Mahanarayana Upanishad – This Upanishad, which is considered a part of the TaittiriyaAranyaka, signifies that the ultimate Reality, viz. the Brahman, is also referred to as Akshara, Siva, Sambhu, Parabrahman, Paranjyoti, Paratattva, Parayana, etc. This is the main thrust of this Upanishad, which connects itself with the Purushasukta. Ramanuja has made ample use of this Upanishad in his Vedarthasangraha and Sribhashya.

RAMANUJA'S GOLDEN STATEMENTS

On his death bed Ramanuja is said to have articulated 82 statements to his disciples. It is not an exaggeration to present these statements as the essence of Sri Vaishnavam

1. Serve God and God's devotees. Serve all devotees without regard to their status.
2. Have faith in the teachings of Acharyas.
3. Do not succumb to sensual pleasures.

4 & 5. Do not put your conviction on trivial saasthraas, have conviction on the saasthraas that deal with God.

6 - 8. Protect yourself from the five senses.

9 & 10. Praise the name of the Lord and Acharyas.

11. All the knowledge you may have will not protect you if you choose sensual pleasures.
12 & 13. It is not enough to control your sensual desires; you must surrender to the Lord.
14 - 17. Do not be disrespectful of Sri Vaishnavaas for any reason, including age, caste, etc. You must show respect to them all.
18. When you rise from your bed meditate upon your ancestral line of Acharyas.
19. In front of the sanctum of our Lord, amongst Sri Vaishnavaas utter the words of dvayam - mentally (Do not utter loudly, as they are rahaysyams)
20. Praise the auspicious qualities of our Lord and Acharyas.
21 and 22. Welcome sri Vaishnavas with open arms and praise. Do not praise ordinary people for the sake of material gain.
23. Pay respect when you see the gopuram of a temple.
24 - 25. Have undying faith in Lord Vishnu.
26. Do not find fault with praise of the Lord or devotees.
27 - 29. Pay at most respect to sri Vaishnavaas.
30 & 31. Among sri Vaishnavaas do not discriminate between poor and rich.
32. Ignore the faults and praise the virtues of sri Vasihnavaas.
33 - 35. Consume Sri Paadha theertham with respect.
36. Do not consider yourself as equal to other devotees. Think of yourself as their servant.
37 - 39. To purify your sins consume the Sri Paatha theertham of great saints. For this, do not consider the caste of those saints.
40 & 41. Duties of Families. (Not described in the text)
42 - 44. Visiting temples and securing prasaadam is important.
45. Do not boast about your virtues.
46. Do not scorn a devotee.
47. Do not ignore serving devotees.
48. Praise the auspicious qualities of the Lord daily.
49. Recite prabhandams like thiruvaaymozhi daily.
50 - 58. Do not associate with the ones who only pretend to be sri vaihnvaas. Do not associate with the ones who find faults with others. Do not even look upon those who belittle devotees. Associate with those who wish to surrender to the Lord.

59 & 60. Ignore the harsh words of other sri vaishnvaas. Always do well to them.(From this point onwards I am unable to give numerical listing as the original text does not give the numerical ordering.)

Do not think of the deities of the Lord as just stone or wood. (My note: In as much as we give respect to the cloth (the flag of a nation) as the nation itself, we need to consider the Divya mangaLa vigraham as the transcendental form of Emperumanar Sriya:pathih Sriman Narayanan Himself.)

Do not think of your guru (Acharya) as just an ordinary person. Even simply saying out loud the caste of a sri vasihnavaas is a sin.

Do not consider anything related to our Lord as ordinary. There is nothing greater than making our Lord and his devotees happy. Insulting a devotee is a greater sin than not praying to the Lord. Your duty is to surrender to our Lord. Try to live in Thiru naaraayanapuram (Melkote) at least for some time. If you are unable to, where ever you are, live with dvayam in your tongue. If you are unable to do even this, serve other srivaishnavaas.

AVATHARAM AND YOUNG DAYS (VIDHYA GRAHANAM)

1. PingaLa Chitthirai Aadhirai : His AvathAram ——1017 CE
2. PingaLa Thai Punarpoosam —Ember's Avatar—1017 CE
3. Upanayanam for Ramanuja ——1024 (Age : 7)
4. Marriage of elder Sister, Bhumi DEvi——1025 (Age 8)
5. AvathAram of Mudali Aandan —1028 (Age 11)
6. Marriage of Younger sister, Kamalai —1028 (Age 11)
7. Avatharams of Nadathur Aazhvan, Kidampi Aacchan, Pillai Thirumala Nambi, Vaduka Nambi ——1028 (Age 11)
8. AvathAram of Kuruhur Piran Pillan —1032 (Age 15)
9. Marriage to Tanjammal(Rakshambha)—1033 (Age 16)
10. Education with Yaadhava Prakasa, Thirupputkkuzhi—1033 to 1037 (Age16-20)
11. His Father, Kesava Somayaji, passes away—1035 (Age 18)
12. 3rd Son of Periya Thirumalai Nambi is born who is named Ramanujan —1035 (Age 18)
13. Journey to Kaasi for Maaga Snanam with the Ghoshti of Yaadhava Prakasa during Thai, Maasi, Panguni —1038 (Age 21)
14. Continuation of studies with Yaadhava Prakasar —1038-1040 (Age 22, 23)

15. Alavanthar's visit to Kaanchi, Vaikasi 1039 (Age 22)
16. Ramanuja leaving Yaadhava Prakasa and engaging in Kaimkaryam to Lord Varadaraja —1041 (Age 24)
17. Ramanujar arriving at Srirangam with Periya Nambi in response to the invitation of Alavanthar, Latter's ascent to Parama Padham and Ramanuja's 3 vows before the Charama Thirumeni of Alavanthar— Vaikasi 1042(Age 25)
18. The king of Maalava (Jagath Devan) attacking Dhvara Samudhram, Belur and Yadhugiri and taking away Rama Priyar archai —1043(Age 26)
19. Mudaliyandan joining Ramanuja after his return from Srirangam— 1044 (Age 27)
20. Ramanujar's Mother passes away —1045 (Age 28)
21. Marriage of Kuresar with Andal at Kooram —1045(Age 28)
22. Hoysala Bitti Devan becoming King at Belur —1046(Age 29
23. Ramanuja receives the six instructions from the Lord thru Thirukkacchi Nambi, Meeting with Periya Nambi at Madhuranthakam, Pancha SamskAram & return to Kaanchi for 6 Months —1049 (Age 32)
24. Kuresar giving away his wealth and arriving at Kaanchi to become Ramanuja's sishya at the behest of Thirukkacchi Nambi—1049(Age 32)
25. Nadathur Azhwan becoming a disciple —1049(Age 32)
26. Yaahdava Prakasar following his mother's instruction and becoming a sishya of Ramanujar with the name of Govinda Daasar& writing Yathi dharma samucchayam—1049 (Age 32)
27. Message to Thirumalai Nambi to return Embar (Govindha Bhattar) to Vaishnavam from Saivam —1049 (Age 32)
28. Yaadhava Prakasar's passing away —Margazhi 1049 (Age 32)
29. Birth of Vedanta Saaram —1050 (Age 33) Until now Ramanuja was known as Ilayazhwar; from now on He enters the phase of Udayavar.
30. Arrival at Srirangam with Thiruvaranga Perumal Arayar and being blessed with the title of Udayavar —1050 (Age 33)
31. Matam establishment at Srirangam: Thrivikraman Prakaram North Veedhi, Seran Matam (Koilozhku:) appointment of Mudaliyandan for Kaimkaryam to Ranganathar, while retaining Kuresar as the principal help for darsana nirvaham—1050 (Age 33)
32. Learning ThiruvAimozhi with Music from Thiruvaranga Perumal Arayar, one of His five Acharyans —1050 (Age 33)

33. Second Upadesam on Dhvaya mantrartam from Periya Nambi and going for the first time to Thirukkoshtiyur at the behest of Periya Nambi to be blessed with Thirumantira Mantrarta Upadesam by Thirukkoshtiyur nambi —1050 (Age 33)
34.1 Urangavilli comes under the sway of Ramanuja to become Urangavilli Dasar —1051 (Age 34)
34.2 Dis-appointed with the resistance to reforms at the Srirangam Temple, Ramanuja exiles himself to Thiruvellarai—1051-53 (Age 34, 35)
35. Return to Srirangam & the Expansion of the 5 branches of Kaimkaryams at Srirangam to 10 branches ——1053(Age 35).
36. 18th visit to Thirukkoshtiyur to receive Thirumantropadesam from Nambi, who agrees finally to bless Ramanuja after asking him to undertake one month upavAsam —1053(Age 35)
37. Bringing Periya Koil Nambi under His sway and blessing him with the name of Thiruvarangatthu Amudanar. Koil Nirvaham rests completely with Raman jar now —1054 (Age 36)
38. Kidambi Acchan & Pillan become sishyas—1054 (Age 36)
39. Creation of Nithya Grantham —1054(Age 36)
40. Return to Thirukkottiyur for Chrama sloka Upadesam
41. Kuresar fasts for a month to qualify himself to receive Charama sloka Upadesam from Ramanuja —1054 (Age 36)
42. First Female child born to KurEsar —1054(Age 36)
43. Mudaliyandan performing Kaimkaryam for Thirukkoshtiyur Nambi and receives permission to gain upadesam from Acharya Ramanuja——1054 (Age 36)
44. Creation of Gadhya Thrayam & Performance of Saranagathy during Panguni Utthiram day—1054(Age 36)
45. Utthama Nambi's attempt to poison Ramanuja; 3 day Upavasam by Ramanuja; alarmed Thirukkottiyur nambi arrives at Srirangam and appoints Kidambi Acchan for Kitchen Kaimkaryam for Ramanuja. Kidambi Acchan becomes Madapalli Aacchan—Purattasi 1054 (Age 36).
46. Kuresar attends the Yekaham for Thiruvarangatthu Amudanar's Mother and gets the pledge from him to take over Temple nirvaham (Purohitham, Purana Padanam and Brahma Ratham ride) along with the keys to the Temple and hands it over to Ramanuja—Iyppasi 1054 (Age 36)
47. Kaasi Vaasi from Tamilnadu, Adhvaithi Yajña moorthy looses in debate

with Ramanuja; after 18 days of debate, he admits his defeat and becomes the sishya of Ramanuja with the Dasya namam of Arulala Perumal Emperumanar and stays at a separate Matam created for him by Ramanuja —1055 (Age 37)

48. Reacting to this, Thirukkottiyur Nambi, Thirumalai Andan send their children to become sishyas of Ramanuja—1055(Age 37)
49. Rejection of the Prabhandhams brought by Amudanar and instructing him to compose on Kuresar, Azhwars and dhivya desams and demonstrating how to compose it. Ramanuja Noorandhathi is born — 1055 (Age 37)
50. Visiting Thiruvaranga Perumal Arayar to beg for the rights to recite Iyarppaa and handing over that right to Amudanar and instructing him to recite Ramanuja Nooranthadhi with iyarppaa—Karthikai 1055 (Age 37)
51. Arulala Perumal Emperumanar creating JnAna Saaram and Prameya Saaram; Nallan Chakravarthy becoming a sishya—1055(Age 37).
52. Wife of Bitti Devan arrives at Srirangam to receive Ramanuja's blessings and to visit Thondanur Nambi; she returns home to Belur and presses her husband to become a Vaishnavan —Marghazhi 1055 (Age 37).
53. Ananthazhwan goes to Thiruppathi to create a Nandavanam named Ramanuja and serves Lord Srinivasan —Avani 1056(Age 38)
54. Bitti Devan consecrates Vijaya Naarayanan at Belur—Hevilambi Chiittirai, 1055 (Age 37).
55. Thiruvaranga Perumal Arayar, one of the five Acharyans of Ramanuja ascends to Sri Vaikuntam—1057 (Age 39)
56. The birth of a second female child to Kuresar —1057 (Age 39)
57. Visit of Ramanuja to Thiruppathy —1057 (Age 39)
58. On the way stays at Parutthikkollai Ammal 's(Varadachar's) house — 1057 (Age 39)
59. Impressed there by Varadacchar's wife Lakshmi's Acharya Nishtai
60. Keezha Thiruppathi: Yaadhavakatti Devarayan prostrates and cedes Vila Mandiyam village to Acharyan; Ramanuja populates that village with 30 Vaishnavas—1057 (Age 39)
61. Hesitation to Climb Thirumala; Ananthazhwan, His disciple urges Ramanuja to perform Mangalasasanam there; half way between Thirumala and Thiruppathy, Periya Nambi, his uncle meets Ramanuja. Stays at Tirumala, observes upavAsam for 3 days so he does not need to create any asudhdi at Thirumala—1057 (Age 39).

62. Learning Sookshmarthams of Srimath Ramayana from His uncle (Periya Thirumalai Nambi) for a year at Lower Thiruppathi—Kaarthigai 1057 (Age 39).
63. Creation of Vedartha Sangraham in front of Lord Srinivasa at Thirumala —1057/58 (Age 40).
64. Ramanuja accepts Govindhar (Embar) as dhanam from Periya Thirumalai Nambi and Pillai Thirumalai Nambi as sishya —Purattasi 1058 (Age 40)
65. When resting at Kanchi after visit to Thirumala, Govindhar wants to return to Periya Thirumalai Nambi; Ramanuja sends him back and Periya Thirumalai Nambi rejects him; Govindhar returns and begs to be accepted again as a Sishya by Ramanuja — 1058 (Age 40).
66. Govindhar accepts Sanyasasramam & becomes Embar—1058 (Age 40).
67. Some Sishyas get jealous over the special affection of Ramanuja for Azhwan; Ramanuja sends Azhwan to cut and bring a banana leaf and asks the jealous sishyas to observe Azhwan; Sishyas watch the tears flowing from Azhwan's eyes, when he had to cut the leaf from the Banana plant and recognize Azhwan's greatness —1059 (Age 41)
68. Arulala Perumanar Emperumanar levels the walls of his Matam created by Ramanuja for him and becomes a resident of Ramanuja's Matam to be close to his Acharyan—1059 (Age 41)
69. Ramanuja entrusts the protection of the temple to Urangavilli Daasar, Koil Nirvaham to Mudaliyandan and parivara Nirvaham to Akalanganattazhwan and leaves on a dhig vijayam with Kuresar and a few other sishyas —1059 (Age 41).
70. At Kurungudi, Ramanuja performs Upadesam on dhvayam to Perumal, who came as a sishyan and names his new sishyan as VaishNava Nambi.
71. Visit to Dhwaraka on the way to Kaashmir to defeat adhvaithis in front of saaradha Peeta Saraswathi's sannidhi, declared winner by Her; Gains Bodhayana Vrutthi and on the way adhvaithis attack and take the Vrutthi back; KurEsar says that he has retained the Vruthti by heart for future reference.
72. Poori Jagannath Visit: Establishment of Ramanuja Matam; Resistance from local priests to introduce PaancharAthram—1060(Age 42).
73. Visit to Thiruvenkatam: rejection of the rights claimed by Saivites and asking the Lord to accept the Sanku and chakram that were removed earlier by the Saivites; Composition of Mangala slokma to commence the writing of Sri Bhashyam—1060 (Age 42).

74. Return to Srirangam —1060 (Age 42).
75. The birth of Bhattar and Srirama Pillai for KurEsar and naming of them as Parasara and Vyasa by Ramanuja—1062(Age 44).
76. Completion of Sri Bhashyam—1062(Age 44).
77. Ramanuja performs abhinayam for a Paasuram in a locked room; Pillan sees this thru a key hole and guesses correctly from the signs that his Acharyan was performing abhinayam for Nammazhwar's Paasuram on Thirumalirumcholai. When Ramanuja hears about it, He celebrates Pillan as the descendant of the Naata Muni Vamsam and names him as Kuruhurpiran Pillan and accepts him as his JnAna puthran—1074 (Age 56).
78. Delighted over the blissful reaction of Nammazhwar's Paasuram by Pillan, Ramanuja assigns the task of composing the first commentary on Thiruvaimozhi known as 6000 Padi by Pillan- - -1074 (Age 56).
79. Pillan completes his commentary (6000 Padi) —1076 (Age 58).
80. The fanatic Saiva king writes "Sivath parataram Nasthi " (There is no god greater than Siva) and sends a messenger to get Ramanuja's agreement thru signature on that palm leaf. Naaluran, a sishyan of Kuresar recommends that Ramanuja sign. KurEsar senses danger and requests Ramanuja to leave Srirangam for safety ——1076 (Age 60).
81. Ramanuja rushes off to Karnaataka (Mel Naadu)—1078 (Age 60)
82. KurEsar goes to the Chola king's court in place of Ramanuja and accompanied by Periya Nambi; Kuresar & Periya Nambi disagree with the king and lose their eyes —1078 (Age 60).
83. Ramanuja Ghoshti travels on towards Melkote; Fasting at Yadhu Giri for 7 days—1078 (Age 60).
84. The group of Hunters welcomes Ramanuja and serves Him and the Ghoshti —1078 (Age 60).
85. Ramanuja asks one member of His ghoshti and one of the Hunters to go to Melkote Koil and bring back 45 Sishyas of His —1078 (Age 60).
86. The first batch of hunters entrust Ramanuja to another hunter 6 miles away— 1078(Age 60).
87. The new hunter showers the visitors with all kinds of comforts and brings the ghoshti down to the village at the foot of the hills, Harthana Halli, where Kattalaivari Kongu Piratti dampathis lived—1078 (Age 60).
88. At Harthana Halli, Ramanuja is served by Kongu Piratti and stays fro 4 days at her residence and confers the Daasya Naamam of Thiruvaranga Daasan on Her husband.

89. Ramanujar continues on to the village of Ramanatha Puram on the northern banks of Cauvery river and stays for 3 days—1078 (Age 60).
90. Ramanuja Ghoshti arrives at Mithilapuri and stays at the Yoga Narasimha Temple—1078 (Age 60).
91. The Smartha adhvaithis of Mithilapuri (Kovai) are won in debates and the village is renamed Saalagramam —1079 (Age 61).
92. Vaduga Nambi becomes a sishyan —1079 (Age 61).
93. Thondanur Nambi arrives at Saalaigramam to invite Ramanuja Ghoshti to Thondanur and houses them in the local Yoga Narasimha temple and briefs Ramanuja on the Vaibhavam of Yadhu Giri (Thirunarayana Puram).
94. At Thondanur, Ramanuja defeats the dhigambhara (naked) Jain sanyasis from behind a curtain; the defeated Jain leaders level their matams and build the Thirumalaasagaram Pushkarani from the stones ——1079 (Age 61).
95. KurEsar returns to Thirumalirumcholai with his family and composes Sundara Baahu Sthavam there —1079 (Age 61).
96. King Vishnu Vardhanan (Former Bitti Devan) arrives with his wife to prostrate before Ramanuja at Thondanur— 1079 (Age 61).
97. Grieved over unavailability of the sacred clay,Ramanuja fasts for 3 days and goes to Yadhu Giri and finds Naarayana Perumal at he South western directing of Kalyani Pushkarani— 1079 (Age 61).
98. That night Ramanuja sleeps with worry about the unavailability of the sacred clay; he dreams that the desired clay is on the north western bank of Kalyani Theertham and finds it there —1079 (Age 61).
99. Ramanuja builds the broken down temple of Naarayana and consecrates the Lord (Thirunarayanan) there and renames the village from Dukkha Garudana Halli to Thirunarayana puram—1080(Age 62).
100. Ramanuja Travels north to bring back Raama Priyar (Uthsava Moorthy of Thirunarayana Puram temple), finds Him at Delhi and brings Him back. He names the Lord "Sella Pillai "—1081(Age 63).
101. Ramanujar gives special rights to Harijans (Thirukkualatthar) during the temple festivals at Thirunarayana puram —1083(Age 63)
102. Ramanuja consecrates Lakshmi Naarayana archa at Thondanur — 1085(Age 67).
103. Ramanuja defeats Sengami Maaya Vaadhis and builds Ramanuja Matam at Thirunarayanapuram; He performs Prathishtai for Pancha Naarayana at Belur —1089(Age 71).

104. Visitors from Srirangam brief Ramanuja on the ascent to Parama Padham His Acharyan, Periya Nambi; Ramanuja asks for Srichurna Paripalanam and adhyayana Uthsavam (Iyal Saarrumurai) for His Acharyan; Ramamanuja sends his disciple, Maaruthi Siriyandan to find out about the well being of Kuresar at Thirumalirumcholai —— 1090(Age 72).
105. Siriyandan arrives at Thirumalirumcholai, delivers the greetings to Kuresar. He brings back the invitation from Raja Raja Chozha raaja for Ramanuja's return to Srirangam and gives that request from the king to Ramanuja at the banks of Kalyani theertham —1090 (Age 72).
106. Ramanujar appoints 52 sishyas to stay at Thirunarayanapuram for Temple nirvana and Kaimkaryam. He blesses the Tamar uhantha ThirumEni behind as their raksha and returns to Srirangam—1090 (Age 72).
107. Kuresar returns from Thiurmalirumcholai and prostrates before his Acharyan at Srirangam —1090 (Age 72).
108. Ramanuja bathes in Cauvery, performs His anudshtanams and stops at Kuresar's house and comforts him —1090(Age 72).
109. Raja Raja chozhan hands over Koil Nirvaham to Ramanuja and Acharyan accepts it —1090(Age 72).
110. Ramanuja consecrates new image of Nammazhwar and other Azhwars and restarts the Adhyayana Uthsavam that was interrupted due to the fear from road side robbers between Azhwar Thirunahari and Srirangam—1091 (Age 73).
111. The last rites done by Pillai Thirumalai Nambi at Thirumala. Latter arrives at Srirangam to give the news to Ramanuja, who travels to Thirupathy—1091(Age 73).
112. Ramanuja consecrates the archa of Govindha Raaja at Thiruppathi — 1091 (Age 73).
113. Thirukkacchi Nambi ascends to Parama Padham—1092(Age 74).
114. Ramanujar presses Kuresar to create a Sthuthi (Varadaraja Sthavam). Lord Varada appears in Kuresar's dream. Ramanuja hears it from Kuresa, reads Varadaraja Sthavam to his Acharyan and both arrive at Kaanchi thereafter—1093 (Age 73).
115. Expansion of Sri Bhashyam by 150% —1095 (Age 75).
116. Visit to Thirumalirumcholai with Kuresar to present 100 vessels of Akkara Vadisil and 100 vessels of Vennai according to Andal's

Paasuram (Naaru Narum pzhil) in Naachiyar Thirumozhi—1097 (Age 80).

117. Kuresar ascends to Parama Padham —1107(Age 90).
118. Sathabhishekam (here 100th Thirunakshathram) and receiving the Birudhu of Yathirajar —1117 (Age 100).
119. Thaam Uhantha ThirumEni Prathishtai through a sculptor named Ramanuja Daasan and having it consecrated at Sri Perumbhuthur, His avathara sthalam—1119 (Age 102).
120. Ramanuja ascends to Parama Padham for nithya Kaimkaryam there after entrusting Sampradhayam's growth with Pilan, Kidambi Aacchan, Nadathur Azhwan and Embar —1137 (Age 120).

NUMBER VALUE OF RAMANUJA

One or the Number 1 occupies the superior position among the numbers & in fact denotes the one and only position or uniqueness

(a) Ramanuja is the one and only to be revered with the title "Swamy"
(b) Ramanuja was the only acharya to whom the Lord Ranganatha submitted his Vibuthis (Nithya Vibuthi & Leela Vibuthi) through which the power of granting moksham
(c) Ramanuja was the only acharya whom Nammlwar acknowledged and spoke about in Thiruvaimozhi through the verses "Poliga Poliga....."
(d) Ramanuja was the only acharya, whose vigraham came up as "Bavishyat Acharyan" even before Ramanuja was born, and held by all our poorvacharyas in their Thiruvaradhanam (worship)

(2) The Number 2:–Among many sishyas (that is 700 yathis(sanyasis) and 12,000 bhagavathas, only 2 were considered as Thandam and Pavitram, that is Mudaliyandan was his Thandam and Koorthalwan was his Pavitram.

The Number 3:–Alavandhar wanted to initiate Ramanuja for Darsana Nirvaham, but unfortunately Alavandhar left for parmapadham, without meeting Ramanuja, he had 3 wishes to be fulfilled represented by his 3 folded fingers & wanted Swamy Ramanuja to fulfill the same, they are

(a) To write a commentary for Brahma Sutram by Veda Vyasa according to Bodhaya Vritti from the angle of Visistadwaitha
(b) To propagate Nammalwar's prabandham as Alavandhar had a great desire for Nammalwar
(c) To perpetuates the memory of Veda Vyasa and Parasara and Ramanuja's vows to fulfill all the 3wishes before the charma thirumeni of Alavandhar & fulfills the same in his life time

(4) The Number 4:–The yugas are 4 in number, Adisheshan or Ananthan has taken different avatars in different yugas"Anantah Prathamam Roopam, Threthaya Lakshmanascha Tathah Dwapare Balabadrascha Kalou Kaschit Bavishyathi"The meaning of this shloka

In Krith yuga (1st) it is Aadi Seshan the Snake Bed of the Lord In Treta yuga

(2nd) it was Lakshmana, brother of Lord Rama In Dwapara yuga

(3rd) it was Balarama, brother of Krishna In Kali yuga

(4th) it is Ramanuja,

From the above verses it is clear that Swami Ramanuja is the avatharm of Adiseshan

(5) The Number 5:–Emperumanar had 5 acharyas to his credit, earning him the title Panchacharya Padasrayah". Swamy learnt

Periya Nambi – panchasamskaram, Rahasyarthams & Gitab)

Periya Thirumalai Nambi – Ramayanam Viseshartham)

Thirukoshtiyoor Nambi – Charma slokamd)

Thirumalai Aandaan- Bhagawad Vishyame)

Thiruvaranga Perumal Arayar – Dravida Ganam

(6) The number 6:–In the life story of Ramanuja, swamy requests Thirukkacchi Nambi to clear certain doubts on truths, where in 6 words were uttered by Lord Varadhar of Kanchi to be communicated to Ramanuja by Thirukkachi Nambi, they are:

(a) Ahameva paramtatvam (I am the supreme truth)

(b) Darsanam Bhedha eve acha (Sri Vaishnavam is based on thatva thryam – chit,achit & eeswara)

(c) Upayesu Prapattissyat (By faith & surrender shall men reach me their salvation)

(d) Antima Smriti Varjanam (Thought of me at the time of death is not compulsory)

(e) Dehasvasane Mukthisyaat (Release from bondage follows immediately on death of body)

(f) Poornacharya Samashraya(Choose Mahapurna as your acharya)

(7) The number 7:–Ramanuja and the Lord of 7 hills Thiruvengadamudayan share a unique bondage

(a) It was Swamy Ramanuja who restored the Sangu & Chakra, to the lord

of seven hills @ Tirumala, previously when they are given by the lord to the King Thondaiman Chakravarthy. And people started believing the lord on the hills was Shiva/Skanda/Durga, it is the unmatchable kainkaryam of swamy, that we Sri Vaishnavas have the lord at Tirumala even today. That is why we sing the Kattiyam of Ramanuja as "Appanukku Sanghu Aazhi Allitha Perumal"

(b) To execute the verses of Nammalwar "Sindhu Poo Magizhum Thiruvengadam". Swamy Ramanuja sent one of his sishyas Ananthalwan Pillai to establish a Nanadhavanam at Tirumala, one can even see the Nandhavanam (garden) today there named "Ramanuja Nandhavanam", which also holds in it the Thiruvarasu (brindavanam) of Ananthalwan Pillai.c)It was Swami who laid down the regulations to be followed in executing kainkaryms to Thiruvengadamudayan like Friday thirumanjanam, (recital of Nacchiyar Thirumozhi during the thirumanjanm) ThomalaSevai & appointed Peria Kelvi Appan Jeeyar of Tirumala to supervise the same.d)Even today one can see Ramanuja's vigraham in Tirumala with Upadesa/Gyana Mudra because Swami here is acharyan to Thiruvengadamudayan himself

(8) The number 8:–The mention of number 8, brings to our immediate thought the 8 lettered mantra "Ashtakshari". (which is made up of Pranavam, Namha & Narayana) the inner meanings of these 3 syllables denote "Ananyarha Seshatvam" i.e., subservience to none, but the lord, "Ananya Sharanathvam" i,e there is no upaya to jeevathama other than the lord Sriman Narayana & "Ananya Bhogyathvam" i,e Jeeva's kainkaryamis only for the pleasure of the lord, these are the inner meanings of the "Ashtakshari Mantra"

Manvala Mamunigal in Yatiraja Vimshati prays to the lotus feet of Ramanuja, to grant the devotion towards inner meanings of three syllables of the 8 lettered "Ashtakshari Mantra", not only in knowing them but also to live/practice according to them. Thus we understand, we require Emperumanar grace to understand Emperumanar.

(9) The number 9:–Udayavar blessed us with his great 9 works a)Vedartha Sangraham (the resume of Vedanta)

(b) Shree Bash yam (Commentary on Brahma Sutras)

(c) Vedanta Saara (essence of Vedantha) an appendix to Sri Bashya

(d) Vedantha Deepa (the light of Vedantha) another appendix to Sri Bashya

(e) Git Bashya (his commentary of Bhagavad Geetha)

(f) Nitha Grandham (About day to day activities to be performed by Sri Vaishnavas)

(g) Saranagathi Gadyam (A dialogue between Ramanuja Perumal & Piratti where Swami petitions Sri Lakshmi to recommend to the lord to give him grace, both Perumal & Piratti accept Swami's surrender)

(h) Sri Ranga Gadyam (a Prayer of surrender to the feet of Sri Ranganatha)
(i) Vaikunta Gadyam (describing in detail Sri Vaikutam & recommending meditating it)

The number 10:–Ramanuja traveled wide far through the Bharatha Desam propagating Visisthadwaitha siddantham, out of them, the following can be categorized as places of interest with relative to swami's charitram

(1) Azhwar Thirnagari (Swami appeared here as Bavishyat Acharyan even before his physical birth in this earth)

(2) Thiruvallikeni (The place where the parents of Swamy did penance for his birth, and the Lord Venkata Krishnan/Partha Sarathy himself incarnated as Ramanuja)

(3) Sri Perumbudur (The avathara sthalam of swamy Ramanuja)

(4) Madhuranthakam (Spiritual birth/got panchasamskaram from Periya Nambi)

(5) Kanchipuram (Swamy entered Sanyasa Ashrama)

(6) Sri Rangam (From here Swamy did Sri Vaishnava Darsana Nirvaham)

(7) Thirukoshtiyoor (Walked 18 times from Sri Rangam to here(approximately 120 kms) to get Charmaslokam & other Rahasyarthas from Thirukottiyoor Nambi)

(8) Melkote (Reinstalled Moolavar Thirunarayanan and Utsavar Selva Pillai)

(9) Tirumala (Restored the Sangu & chakra to the lord)

(10) Thirukurrungudi (became acharya to the lord himself & lord earned the title "Vaishnava Nambi")

LIST OF SISHAYS WHO WERE PRESENT FOR RAMANUJACHARYA 'S DAILY LIFE

1. Sri Alavan	Help for writing Sri Bhasyam
2. Sri Andal	
3. Sri Varadaha vishnu ahcayra	
4. Sri Parasura	
5. Sri Vedarajamuniyar	varadrajaperumal Kaiankariyam
6. Sri Vadaka nambi	Cowherd
7. Sri Gomadusiryalavan	Guard for Vessels and Slipper

8. Sri Embar	Laying bed and massage the body
9. Sri Noortdasan	Guard jewels
10. Sri Ullagalavan	Food Server
11. Sri Ullagammal	Fan Server
12. Sri Ammakiammal	Milk provider
13. Sri Maruth undan	providing water for handwash
14. Sri Dyamunivan	providing water for bathing

SACRED MONTH

Panguni Uttaram day, adiyen wishes to share a few thoughts on the Divine Couple of Srirangam. Panguni Uttaram is the Tirunakshatram of Sri Ranganayaki Thayar. The month of Panguni is sacred since the Tirunkshatram of Lord Ranganatha and Sri Ranganayaki Thayar occur during this month. A number of important events transpired on Panguni Uttaram. The marriage of Lord Rama to Sita Piratti was solemnized by sage Vashishta at Mithila on this day. Some accounts of the Ramayana state that Hanuman returned from Lanka on this day and provided the glad tidings of locating Sita to Lord Rama. It is also believed that Lord Rama on this very day offered prayers to his Kula Dhanam (Lord Ranganatha) and began his campaign to destroy Ravana. This is the only day on which the Divya Dampatis of Srirangam are seen together in Utsavam. The Utsavam takes place at the royal court located at the western entrance of the great Temple of Lord Ranganatha. Interestingly, this is the only entrance which does not have a Rajagopuram. Incredibly Ramanuja chose this blessed day for delivering the Gadya Trayam, unambiguously outlining the doctrine of Sharanagati-which is atma Vivaham (wedding of the jivatma to the paramatma).

On the blessed Panguni Uttaram day, Ramanujacharya gathered his disciples and visited the great Temple of Lord Ranganatha. Our Paramacharya was greatly moved by the majestic sight of the Divya Dampatis beautifully decorated in Utsavam at the Royal Court of Lord Ranganatha. As a result of this Anubhavam, Ramanujacharya poured out his heart in an extremely soulful, highly intimate, and deeply intense Sharanagati in the Sharanagati Gadyam and the Sri Ranganatha Gadyam. As a result, he was blessed with an exquisite vision of Sri Vaikuntam, which is brilliantly mirrored in the Sri Vaikunta Gadyam. The Gadya trayam is our Paramacharya's Svanishtai Prapatti at the feet of the Divine couple. The Gadyam form of salutation is a prose-poem eulogy in which long strings of adjectives and epithets are interspersed with shorter strings to provide a

mesmerizing effect on the both the listener and the person rendering it. This form of salutation is unique to the Srivaishnava tradition. Gadyam when recited along traditional lines with carefully selected stopping points creates a lilting effect on the ear.

examples of such salutations are "Tadanubhavajanitanava Dhikatishaya Pritikaritasheshavastochita Sheshasheshataikarati Rupa Nitya Kinkaro Bhavani" of the Sri Ranganatha Gadyam, Tanutara Vishika Vithadana Vighataita Vishararu Shararu Tataka Tatakeya" of the Raghuveera Gadyam, "Sheshachala Garudachala, Vrishabhachala Narayanachala Anjana-chaladrishikari Malakulasya" of the Srinivasa Gadyam and "Bheeshana Bhadra Simha Jaya Simha Roopa Simha, Rana Simha Veera Simha" of the Narasimha Gadyam.the Sharanagati Gadyam and Sri Ranganatha Gadyam are unparalleled in establishing the primordial doctrine of Sharnagati, fundamental to Bhagavad Ramanuja Darshanam. Several references from shruti can be associated with salutations contained in the Gadya Trayam. For example, the salutation "Sthairya" denoting the eternal and permanent nature of the lord is reflective of the Narayana Sooktam RK "Patim Vishvasyatmeshvaragam Shashvatagam Shivamachyutam". The supremacy of Lord Narayana declared in the Gadya Trayam arises from the Narayana Sooktam salutation "Narayana Param Brahma Tatvam Narayana para:" and the Narayana Upanishad salutation "Nishkalo Niranjano Nirvikalpo Nirakyatha: Shuddho Deva eko Narayana: na Dvitiyosti Kaschit". The eulogy "Evam Bhoota Bhumi Neela nayaka" can be related to the Purusha Sooktam RK "Hrischa te Lakshmischa Patnyou" the Shuddha Satva Permeating sri Vaikuntam glorified in the Sri Vaikunta gadyam is reflective of the Purusha Sooktam rk "Tamasa: parastat". The act of unconditional surrender to the lotus feet of the lord is described in the Narayana Upanishad as "Narayana Sayujyamavapnoti Narayana Sayujyamavapnoti".

As a result of attaining the Lotus feet of the Lord one is blessed with the eternal bliss of Bhagavad and Bhagavata Kaimkaryam serving at the pleasure and for the pleasure of the Lord. This is described in the Vishnu Sooktam salutation "TadvishNoh Paramam Padagam Sada Pashyanti Soorayaha" and the Taittriya Upanishad salutation "Sa Yeko Brahmanananda" H.H. Swami Rangapriya Mahadesikan Swami waxes eloquent on the distinction between a servant and a slave as "A servant is one who works for wages. He has a separate existence, separate life, home, and family from his master. He only pleases his master with the view of earning more money and asks Kim Kuru Kim Kuru? However, one who has surrendered to Lord Narayana is eternally bound to the Lord like a

slave. He has no separate existence, home, life or family from his master and most importantly does not desire or receive wages for his Kaimkaryam. He serves exclusively for the pleasure and at the pleasure of the Lord."

One can see this from Ramanuja's desire for eternal Kaimakaryam in the Sri Ranganatha Gadyam salutation Nithya kaimkaryaikaratirupa Nithya dhasyam dhasyatiti vishvasapurvakam Bhagavantham nitya kinkarathAm prarthaye". The most detailed exposition and commentary on the Gadya Trayam was undertaken by Sri Periya Vacchan Pillai in Sanskrit. In this posting adiyen will briefly outline the salient aspects of the three Gadyams. The SharaNagati Gadyam commences with a eulogy of Sri Ranganayaki Thayar. In it our Paramacharya seeks the blessings, support and grace of Thayar for his Svanishtai Prapatti to the Lord of Srirangam. The salutation Akhila Jagan Mataram Asman Mataram is noteworthy because, prior to seeking the favour of his father (Pitasi Lokasya), the Acharya points out that it is imperative to obtain the blessings and support of the Supreme Mother of the Universe. This also points to the exalted role of Mahalakshmi Thayar in the process of granting Prapatti. The process of granting SharaNagati is a Yajna performed by the Lord. In this Yajna, Thayar offers her help and support to the Lord as Vishnu Patni.

This is glorified in the neeLa sooktham rk "pruthivya asye Shana jagatho Vishnu Pathni". Thayar's merciful glances filled with Vatsalyam urge the Lord to rush to the succor of the Baddha Jivatma. It is this blessing that Ramanuja seeks of Thayar in the opening salutation of the SharaNagati Gadyam. Having successfully received Thayar's Anugraham (Asthu the salutation from the SharaNagati gadyam), our Acharyan proceeds to glorify the Lord splendidly. Our Acharya extols the Lord's limitless auspicious attributes, various ornaments and jewels which adorn his Tirumeni (Kaustubha, Pitambara, Karna kundala, Muktadamodara). The Divya Ayudhas (Shanka, Chakra, Gada, Saranga, and Nandaka) are exquisitely praised. This is followed by Naichyanusandanam on the part of the Acharya in which he confesses all of his shortcomings and traces it to his inextricable association with Karma on account of being immersed in the endless ocean of Samsara.

He also admits to committing Bhagavad Apacharam, Bhagavata Apacharam and nanavida Apacharam and seeks the Lord's forgiveness for all his sins. Ramanuja then requests the Lord for Para Bhakti, Para Jnana and Parama Bhakti and glorifies the Dvaya Mantram as he formally surrenders to the Lord's Lotus feet. The Acharya's request for Para Bhakti, Para Jnana and Parama Bhakti was granted when the Lord of Srirangam

broke his Archa Samadhi and addressed the Acharya thus "Dvayamarthanusandhanena saha sadaivam vakta Yavatsharira pathamathraiva srirangam sukhamasva" (Remain in Srirangam engaged in constant recitation of the Dvaya Mantram until thy body falls to the earth). The conclusion of the Sharanagati Gadyam contains important salutations from the Ramayana (Ramo Dvirnabhi Bhashate)and Srimad Bhagavad Gita (Charma Shlokam) intended to reinforce Mahavisvasam in all his Shishyas. As a result of this Anubhavam and the Lord's command, our Paramcharya derived supreme bliss.

He then craves for more of the same. Fearful of being disturbed from this ecstatic state, the Acharya seeks a method for continued Bhagavad Anubhavam. He resolves that the best way of continued Anubhavam is by being of exalted service to the Lord at all times in all forms under all circumstances (tadhanubhava janithAnavaDhikAthishaya preetik Arith Ashesh Avast Ochit AsheshAsheshataikarathi rupa). Accordingly, he requests this of the Lord in the Sri Ranganatha Gadyam. The structure of the Sri Ranganatha Gadyam is similar to the SharaNagati Gadyam in that it commences with a eulogy of the Lord and his limitless auspicious attributes, followed by a confession of shortcomings on account of association with Samsara in a mood of intense Naichyanusandanam (the salutations thila thailavat dharu Vanhivath and samasthathma guna viheena: reflect this), as a prelude to the formal Sharanagati to the Lord's Lotus feet at the conclusion of the Gadyam. As a result of this, the Acharya was blessed with a beautiful vision of Sri Vaikuntam which is brilliantly described in the Sri Vaikunta Gadyam.

The Vaikunta Gadyam is a description of Sri Vaikuntam through the eyes of a liberated one (Mukta Jivan). In it is contained the important message that Surrender to Lord Narayana's Lotus feet (Narayana Sayujyam) results in Slokyam (attaining the abode of Lord Narayana), Sarupyam (Shuddha Satvam) and Sameepyam (remaining close to the Lord). These aspects are brought out by our Paramacharyan with consummate effect. The eternal Kaimkaryam performed by Nityasooris like Ananta, Garuda, Vishvaksena and the Dwara Palakas to Sri Vaikuntam is most beautifully glorified and a brief glimpse of the bountiful treasure awaiting a muktha is provided by Ramanuja in the Vaikunta Gadyam. Adiyen wishes to conclude this post reflect with gratitude on the "puna: puna: pranamya" salutation of our Paramacharyan, who most compassionately revealed the margam of prapatti for all his shishyas.

WORKS OF RAMANUJAHCARYA

VEDARTHA SANGRAHA

Ramanuja wrote nine works in Sanskrit on the philosophy of Visishtadvaita. Of these, the Vedartha-sangraha occupies a unique place inasmuch as this work takes the place of a commentary on the Upanishads, though not in a conventional sense or form. The work mirrors a total vision of the Upanishads, discussing all the controversial texts in a relevant, coherent manner. It is in fact an independent exposition of the philosophy of the Upanishads. Prof. M. Hiriyanna describes it as "an independent treatise explaining in a masterly way his philosophic position, and pointing out the basis for it in the Upanishads". Sudarsana Suri, the celebrated commentator on the Sri-bhashya and the Vedartha-sangraha, says that the work was expounded in the form of a lecture before Lord Srinivasa at Tirumalai. Thus it is his testament at the feet of the Lord whom he served throughout his life. Sri Ramanuja refers to this work more than once in his Sri-bhashya.

The Vedartha-sangraha is written in a lucid, vigorous prose without the usual divisions of chapters, but the structure of the thesis is developed in a scientific manner. Sri Ramanuja refers in this work to ancient teachers of theistic tradition, Bodhayana, Tanka, Dramida, Guhadeva, Kapardin and Bharuci, besides his own teacher, Sri Yamunacharya. Tanka and Dramida are quoted profusely to support his interpretation. He takes abundant help from the Brahma-Sutras, the Ramayana, and the Mahabharata, the Vishnu Purana, the Manu Smrti and other genuine smrtis in the exposition of his philosophy.

At the outset Sri Ramanuja states that the Upanishads, which lay down the welfare of the whole world, move around three fundamental notions:

1. A seeker must acquire a true knowledge of the individual self and the Supreme;
2. He must devote himself to meditation, worship and the adoration of the Supreme;
3. This knowledge with discipline leads him to the realization of the Supreme.

To put it briefly, the first affirms the tattva or the nature of the Reality, the second declares the hita or the means, and the third states the purushartha or the ideal of human Endeavour. A chief difficulty in understanding the meaning of the Upanishads arises in determining the relation of Brahman to the individual self on the one hand and to the non-sentient world on the

other. There are some texts which declare that the world is only an appearance in the ultimate analysis. There are other texts which affirm that the world is not an appearance, but real and distinct.

Bhartrprapanca, who was anterior to Sri Sankara, held that the self and the universe are identical with and different from Brahman, the triad constituting a unity in variety. That is to say that the reality is at once one as Brahman and many as the self and the world. For example, an ocean consists of water, foam, waves, etc. As the water is real, so also are the foam, waves, etc. The world, which is a part and parcel of Brahman, is necessarily real. The import of all this is that according to this view the Upanishads teach the eternal difference and identity between Brahman on the one hand, and the self and the world on the other.

Sri Sankara rejects the view of Bhatrprapanca, because mutually contradictory attributes cannot be predicated of one and the same thing. According to Sri Sankara the passages which affirm manifoldness and reality of the world do not embody the essential teaching of the Upanishads. It is a concession made to the empirical view that demands a real world having causal connection with time-space. Since variety is but an appearance having no foundation in the ultimate Reality, the true essential doctrine of the Upanishads, according to him, is only pure unity. The individual self is nothing but Brahman itself appearing as finite due to limiting adjuncts which are superimposed on it.

Sri Ramanuja also attempts to systematize the philosophy of the Upanishads, taking the cue from the ancient theistic philosophers. He recognizes three lines of thought in the Upanishads concerning the relation between Brahman, the self and the world:

1. Passages which declare difference of nature between the world, the self and Brahman. Here the world is the non-sentient matter (acit) which is the object of experience; the self is the experiencing conscious subject (cit), and Brahman, the absolute ruling principle. These may be named analytical texts.
2. Passages which teach that Brahman is the inner self of all entities which constitute his body. For instance, "He who dwells in the earth and within the earth, whom the earth does not know, whose body the earth is, and who rules the earth within, he is thy Self, the ruler within, the immortal" etc. These are called ghataka-srutis or mediating texts.
3. Passages which proclaim the unity of Brahman with the world in its causal as well as effected aspect. The famous text, 'That thou art, O Svetaketu') comes under this category. These may be termed as synthetic

passages. Sri Ramanuja lies down that the interpretation of the various passages must be such that they are not made to contradict each other, and not a single passage should be so interpreted as to be divested of its primary significance.

The first group of texts distinguishes Brahman from the world and the individual selves. In a way it emphasizes the transcendent character of Brahman. The second group of texts declares Brahman to be the inner self of all entities. Neither the individual self nor the world can exist by itself. They are inseparably connected with Brahman as his body, and thus are controlled by him. These texts teach duality in so far aş distinction is made between body and self, and unity in so far as the self, the substantive element, predominates over and controls the body, its attribute. The last group of texts aims at proclaiming the non-dual character of Brahman who alone constitutes the ultimate Reality. The self and the world, though distinct from each other and real, have a different value. They only exist as a mode or attribute of Brahman. They are comprehended in the reality of Brahman. They exist because Brahman exists.

On this principle of interpretation, Sri Ramanuja recognizes that the passages declaring distinction between Brahman, the world and the self, and those affirming Brahman to be the same in the causal as well as effected aspects, do not in any way contradict the mediating passages which declare that the individual selves and the world form the body of Brahman, and they in their causal state do not admit the distinction of names and forms while in the effected state they possess distinct character.

The notion of unity may be illustrated by the example, "A purple robe." Here portliness is quite different from robe. The latter is a substance while the former is an attribute. This integral and essential relation is not found in the case of a man wearing a wrist-watch. If the former relation is inseparable (aprthaksiddhi), the latter is separable and external. A word signifying attribute does not stop after denoting the usual meaning, but extends till it reaches the substantive. This is the true significance of an attribute. The individual selves and the world constitute the body of Brahman who is their inner self. Brahman is the integral principle without whom neither the self, nor the world can exist. Hence all names finally denote him.

The way in which Sri Ramanuja interprets the famous text, 'That thou art' (tat tvam asi) is unique. This is done by means of co-ordinate predication (samanadhikaranya). In a co-ordinate predication the identity of the substantive should not be established through the rejection of the natural

significance of co-ordinate terms. The identical import of terms taken in their natural signification should be brought out. The Mahabhashya of Patanjali defines co-ordinate predication thus: "The signification of an identical entity by several terms which are applied to that entity on different grounds is co-ordinate predication." In such a proposition the attributes not only should be distinct from each other but also different from the substance, though inseparable from it. In the illustration of a "purple robe", the basic substance is one and the same, though "portliness" and "robeness" are different from it as well as from each other. That is how the unity of a "purple robe" is established. In the co-ordinate predication asserting identity between "that" and "thou", Brahman himself with the self as his mode, having the self as his body, is pointed out.

The term "thou" which usually stands for the self here stands for Brahman ("that") who is the indweller of the self and of whom the self is the mode as a constituent of his body. The term "thou" does not mean the physical body or the individual self. Since Brahman has interpenetrated all matter and self, "thou" signifies Brahman in the ultimate analysis. The term "that" signifies Brahman himself as the ground of the universe and the soul of all individual selves. Hence in the identity of "that" and "thou" there is no rejection of the specific connotation of the co-ordinate terms. The upshot of the dictum is that the individual selves and the world, which are distinct and real attributes, are comprehended in Brahman. Brahman as the inner self of the jiva and Brahman as the ground of the universe are one. The central principle is that whatever exists as an attribute of a substance, that being inseparable from the substance is one with that substance.

Thus Sri Ramanuja upholds all the three streams of thoughts in the Upanishads, namely, unity, plurality and both. He himself clinches the argument: We uphold unity because Brahman alone exists with all other entities as his modes. We uphold both unity and plurality, as the one Brahman himself has all the physical and spiritual entities as his modes and thus exists qualified by a plurality. We uphold plurality as the three entities — the individual selves, the world and the supreme Lord — are mutually distinct in their substantive nature and attributes and there is no mutual transposition of their characteristics.

The summum bonum is the vision of the supreme Person, known as Brahman or Sriman-Narayana. The chief obstacle in the path towards perfection is the accumulation of evil tendencies. These can be destroyed only by the cultivation of good tendencies. This is followed by self-surrender which generates an inclination towards life divine. Then one has to acquire

the knowledge of the Reality from the scriptures aided by the holy teachers. Then the practice of virtues like the control of mind and sense, austerity, purity, non-violence, compassion, etc., becomes easy. Nitya and naimittika duties are to be performed, and prohibited actions are to be avoided, the whole conduct being conceived as the worship of God. God, the embodiment of love and compassion, showers his grace on the aspirant, which puts an end to all his obstacles. Finally bhakti rises which is an enjoyment of bliss in itself. Bhakti is but meditations which has assumed the character of the most vivid and direct perception of the Supreme.

Yamunacharya declares that bhakti succeeds the twofold training of the mind by karma and jnana. Karma-yoga is performance of duties of one's station in life [*] with no thought of reaping any personal benefit in the spirit of the Gita's teachings. Karma that is performed in this manner cleanses the heart. Jnana-yoga, which immediately follows the previous discipline, is meditation upon the individual self as distinct from matter like body, mind, etc., with which it is associated. It helps the aspirant to determine the true nature of one's self in relation to the Supreme. He realizes that he is absolutely subservient to God. The discipline does not stop with the knowledge of one's self alone. It is incomplete without the knowledge of God.

Here the word bhakti does not connote the popular sense in which it is understood. Bhakti-yoga is loving meditation upon God. When the meditation attains the form of "firm remembrance" (dhruva-anusmrtih) characterized by intense love, the vision of the Supreme is attained. It must be mentioned here that the final release is attained after the dissolution of the body. One endowed with such bhakti and self-surrender attains the fitness to earn the grace of the Lord. This bhakti itself is upasana or vidya mentioned in the Upanishads. It is same as knowledge spoken of in the srutis: "One who knows Brahman attains the Supreme," "He who knows him becomes immortal here," and "He who knows Brahman becomes Brahman," (As the vision of the Supreme is not possible through ordinary means of perception, he can be seen only through bhakti, which is a unique form of knowledge. This is in consonance with the Gita declaration, "I am attainable only through undivided bhakti"

It was already mentioned that the ideal to be realized is the vision of the Supreme. It is an experience of absolute peace, perfection, bliss and freedom, untouched by the cosmic limitations of space and time. Sri Ramanuja is accused of having given a "picturesque description" of the ideal realm. But a little insight into the spirit of his writings reveals that the

ideal is not such a fairyland as it is made out to be. The domain, he points out, is of the nature of pure immutable sattva. It is transcendent without the taints of the material gunas of sattva, rajas and tamas. Similarly the individual self also, in the state of moksa, gives up its material body and assumes a transcendent form. The substance of suddha sattva is common to God, the self and the realm of the ideal known as nitya-vibhuti. The first chapter of the Kausitaki Upanishad gives a figurative account of the pilgrim's progress till he reaches the feet of God.

The individual self is the essence of knowledge. This knowledge in its attributive aspect (dharma-bhuta-jnana) gets more or less contracted in samsara, but it expands infinitely in the state of moksa. It becomes all-knowing and enjoys perfect bliss and love in divine communion. In short it is an ineffable enjoyment. In this natural state it yields its spirit to the will, glory and adoration of God. Ramanuja characterizes this state as 'ananya-prayojana', having no other end except itself. In this ideal place there is no break in the enjoyment of divine communion.

Ramanuja is not unaware of the criticism that there is subservience to and dependence upon God in his conception of moksa, the critics say that subordination in any form cannot conduce to the joy of self. The divine fetters are not less strong to bind. Further Manu says that servitude is a dog's life. Sri Ramanuja effectively meets this criticism in his characteristic way. He enunciates a principle "that what an individual pursues as a desirable end depends upon what he conceives himself to be." Different people pursue different and mutually conflicting values. Hence the notion that independence is happiness proceeds from the misconception that one is identical with the body, mind, etc. This attachment to the body is a sort of dependence itself. Instead of dependence on God, it is dependence on matter. The metaphysical fact is that he is not the body, and consequently there must be something else with which his self is related. There cannot be relation of the principal entity and the subsidiary (sesin and sesa) between any finite objects. The only object with which such a relation can exist is God. Hence dependence on anything other than God is painful and subservience to God is joy and freedom. Similarly bondage is indeed a dog's life when one serves those who are unworthy of service. The only entity which is worthy of love, adoration and service is God. Sri Ramanuja clinches the issue by quoting a text, "He is to be served by all." The emancipation consists in service of God, and true bondage is independence of God and service of body.

SRIBHASYAM

1. Brahma-Sutra

The text attributed to Badarayana designated Brahma-Sutra or Sariraka-Sutra occupies the foremost position of authority in the system of Vedanta. That there were commentaries on it even before Sri Sankara we learn explicitly from Sri Sankara himself, whose commentary is the earliest available now. Its central status in Vedanta is thus very well established. This is understandable as it explicitly endeavors to formulate, elaborate, and defend the philosophy of the Upanishads in the full-fledged darsana style. The Bhagavad Gita seems to accord to it this pivotal status in the one significant reference we have in it.

All the commentators seem to identify the author Badarayana with Veda Vyasa. The Advaitic tradition handed down both by Vacaspati and Prakasatman is unanimous on the point. The Sutras fall into a magnificent pattern. The first chapter brings out the coherent import of the Upanishads by elucidating the apparently doubtful import of certain pronouncements. The second chapter works out a philosophical defense of the Pedantic standpoint in the context of adverse systems of thought. The third chapter outlines the spiritual pathway to the supreme Goal of life, while the fourth chapter discusses the nature of that goal itself.

2. Pre-Ramanuja Position

In spite of the greatness of the design, the Sutras offer insuperable difficulties. Excepting a few, the Sutras in general do not indicate the theme of discussion or the particular line of thought adopted. They definitely require an interpretative tradition to convey their import. Hence authoritative commentaries utilizing such tradition or traditions were supplied from time to time. Sankara refers to a vrttikara in the context and Ramanuja refers to an extensive vrtti by Bodhayana. Sankara's commentary is the earliest and a very substantial work of elucidation. He propounds a specific school of philosophy as sponsored by the Sutras. Its distinctive features are that it asserts the sole reality of the Absolute Spirit, named Brahman in the Upanishads, regards the external world as only phenomenally real, and identifies the essential Self in man with Brahman. Man's supreme perfection lies in apprehension of this identity through the realization of the import of the fundamental propositions of the Upanishads.

It appears, as is evident in the next significant commentary of Bhaskara, which this formulation of the philosophy of the Sutras was found to be unacceptable to a considerable section of Vedantic philosophers. They seem

to have felt that the Brahma-Sutra, while affirming Brahman, does not negate the reality of the world, nor identify the individual spirit with the absolute so wholly, and the way to blessedness is knowledge that springs from Karma-yoga and matures into upasana or devotional meditation. There was a strong current of the mysticism of love or bhakti, standardized by the greater Puranas, the Bhagavad Gita, the Agamas, and the experience of high-ranking and God-intoxicated saints. Yamunacarya seems to have yearned for a competent and adequate commentary on the Sutras integrating all these doctrinal and spiritual points of view. He was convinced that the truth promulgated by Badarayana lay in this direction but could not he produce the much needed work of interpretation.

3. Sri-Bhashya

The prayers of the saintly Yamuna were to be fulfilled by his grand-disciple, Sri Ramanuja. Providence destined Sri Ramanuja to accomplish the great task of elucidating the Sutras in a theistic style, asserting the metaphysical eminence of Brahman without the supplementary thesis of world-denial and the denial of the individuality of the finite selves, and promulgating knowledge of Brahman as arising from Karma-yoga and maturing in bhakti. Ramanuja has bequeathed three works on the Brahma-Sutra: the Vedanta-Sara, Vedanta-Dipa, and the Sri-Bhashya. The first work merely enunciates the meaning of the Sutras. The second goes beyond this summary of conclusions and indicates the dialectical framework. The third is the fullest and all-sufficient commentary. Pious tradition records that the Goddess Sarasvati was so charmed by it that she blessed it with the prefix 'Sri'.

Ramanuja lived a long and full life. He seems to have spent nearly half of it in equipping himself for the creation of this masterpiece. He did advance his special philosophical point of view in his early work, the Vedarthasangraha in a brilliant and spirited manner. But he acquired devoutly all that Sri Yamuna's tradition could give him on the Sutras, studied ancient documents on the Sutras such as the works of Bodhayana, Tanka, and Dramida, mastered the current schools of philosophy to perfection, soaked himself in the Vedic literature, particularly the Upanishads, acquired an authentic understanding of the commentaries of Sankara, Bhaskara, and Yadava-prakasa, got the core of the Advaitic classics of the masters such as Mandana, Padmapada, Suresvara, Vacaspati-misra, Vimuktatman, and Prakasatman, and shaped his own vision of Vedanta and an appropriate style before he addressed himself to the literary mission of his life.

No wonder the Sri-Bhashya is a stupendous and masterly work, its style

matching its substance. Sri Ramanuja chooses the hard way on every issue, that of thoroughness, and he is massive in the statement of prima facie views and also in his vindication of his own findings. The language of exposition is lucid as well as grand. Vedanta Desika, himself a great master of style, acknowledges that his own style acquired grace through a devout application to the writings of Sri Ramanuja. In the compass of vision, fullness of execution, and splendor of style the Sri-Bhashya reaches heights of excellence.

4. The Sequel

The great commentary evoked a great many sub-commentaries in its turn. It is a pity that Vedanta Desika's Tattva Tika is available only in its introductory portion. His verse condensation of the Sri-Bhashya, the Adhikarana Saravali, is happily available completely. But Vedanta Desika's greatest service to the Sri-Bhashya is his preservation, under hard circumstances, of the Srutaprakasika of Sudarsana Suri, an elder contemporary of his and his propagation of it. This work is a monument of devotion, thorough elucidation and brilliant amplification. As a sub-commentary it set standards unsurpassed in Vedantic literature.

The Ramanuja tradition of Vedanta thus consolidated has influenced all subsequent writings on the Brahma-Sutra, not excluding the commentaries adverse to Ramanuja's school of Vedanta. The Vaisnava schools of Vedanta in general have utilized kindred elements profusely. It is in the fitness of things that Jiva Gosvamin, the celebrated Vedanta of the Caitanya School says of Ramanuja, "Pramita mahimnaam", "as one whose glory is established." The great Appayya-diksita used the Sri-Bhashya considerably in his Sivarka-Mani-dipika and also wrote a condensation of it called Naya-mayukha-malika.

Thus the Sri-Bhashya is a major work in the history of Vedanta, propounding a powerful theistic version of it, and is also great in its subsequent influence.

5. Architectonics of the Work

The Sri-Bhashya expounds the philosophy of Sri Ramanuja in all its essentials. The structure of the work following the structure of the Sutras is laid down well. The first four Sutras concern themselves with four considerations of an introductory character. The rest of the first chapter elucidates the crucial passages of the Upanishads that appear to be ambiguous, and the result is a formulation of the philosophy of the Upanishads in a coherent and decisive manner. The second chapter deals

with the possible exegetical and philosophical objections to the standpoint. It incidentally examines rival philosophical systems. These two chapters present the metaphysics of Vedanta. The third chapter propounds the sadhana or the pathway to the attainment of the supreme Goal of life. The fourth chapter delineates that goal with all its implications. The last two chapters, thus relate to the ideals to be achieved. In traditional language the first two chapters formulate the Tattva or the nature of Reality and the third deals with the Hita or sadhana, and the fourth brings out the Purusartha or the supreme ideal of life.

6. Introductory Matter

The first aphorism of the Brahma-Sutra is very important as it initiates the inquiry into Brahman. It lays down the precondition into the inquiry and also the reason for it. The precondition is the inquiry into the nature, limitations, and value of karma as elucidated in the Karma-Mimamsa of Jaimini.

Inquiry into karma and Brahman constitutes one organic unity of Vedic philosophy. In the earlier inquiry into karma, the purport of the earlier portion of the Vedas centered in religious activity is discussed. Being dissatisfied with the objectives of karma, the inquiry into Brahman is undertaken as the knowledge of Brahman is said to bring about the eternal and infinite good of man in the later portion of the Vedas, namely, the Upanishads.

In this context the Sri-Bhashya discusses elaborately the role of karma, as it leads to minor objectives when performed in an ego-centric way and also as it conduces to the understanding of Brahman when performed in a disinterested spirit of worship and dedication. Such discrimination is the antecedent to the inquiry into Brahman. The reason for the inquiry is the unsatisfactory character of the ends procured by religious life devoid of knowledge. The inquiry is for purposes of gaining knowledge of Brahman; which knowledge is said to bring about the summum bonum. The knowledge that could accomplish such a supreme consummation is no mere intellectual and mediates understanding, but a devout and intense meditation on Brahman. It is, in short, bhakti.

In this context the Sri-Bhashya under takes a complete examination of Advaita in its longest discussion, opposing the concept of nirguna Brahman and the supplementary postulate of Avidya or Maya. Brahman is significantly described: "The term 'Brahman' signifies the supreme Person (Purusottama) who transcends all imperfections and abounds in infinite classes of auspicious qualities of unsurpassed excellence."

The Purva-Mimamsa writers attempted to interpret the whole of the Vedas as just inculcating imperatives and denounced the metaphysical purport of Brahman. That position is rejected after considerable discussion.

The second aphorism offers a definition of Brahman to focus further elucidation and Sri Ramanuja defends the definition as perfectly legitimate. The definition according to him means:

That supreme Person who is the ruler of all; whose nature is antagonistic to all evil; whose purposes come true; who possesses infinite auspicious qualities such as knowledge, bliss and so on; who is omniscient, omnipotent, supremely merciful; from whom the creation, subsistence, and re-absorption of this world—with its manifold wonderful arrangements, not to be comprehended by thought, and comprising within itself the aggregate of souls from Brahma down to blades of grass, all of which experience the fruits (of their previous deeds) in definite points of space and time — proceed is Brahman: such is the meaning of the Sutra.

The third aphorism concerns itself with the source of our knowledge of Brahman. It declares the 'shastra' as our only source of knowledge. This involves the entire epistemology of Visistadvaita. The school recognizes the validity of perception and inference in their respective spheres. It does not subscribe to the thesis that they are infected with an error or nescience at their very root. In the matter of proving the existence of the Supreme Being, it does not accept the efficacy of inference, as was done in the Nyaya-Vaisesika system. It discovers flaws in that theistic argument somewhat on the lines of Purva-Mimamsa writers. But it does not agree with the latter in interpreting the Vedic scriptures as bereft of metaphysical import. Nor does it question the veridical character of the shastra which is our only source of knowledge concerning the transcendent ultimate, Brahman.

The supreme shastra in the context is the concluding portion of the Vedas, the Upanishads. Sri Ramanuja describes Brahman as 'Sruti-Sirasi vidIpte', meaning that, that supreme Reality is specifically and pre-eminently revealed in the Upanishads. In the interpretation of these texts and in the defense of their philosophy, reason is to be fully utilized. Hence Vedanta is no mere cult based on mere faith, but a philosophical inquiry employing methods of logical investigation. Reason is also of value in the examination of schools of thought opposed to the philosophy of the Upanishads. The primary scripture of Vedanta is to be supplemented and augmented by the secondary scriptures such as the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, the Puranas such as the Visnupurana, the Agamas such as the Pancaratra, and Smrti texts such as that of Manu. The principle of this supplementation is stated by Sri Ramanuja clearly:

By this "supplementation" we have to understand the elucidation of the sense of the Vedic texts studied by us through the words of men who had mastered the entire Veda and its contents, and by the strength of their devotion had gained full realization of Vedic truth. This needs to be done, since the import of the entire Veda with all its sakhas cannot be fathomed by one who has studied a small part only, and since with out knowing that purport we cannot arrive at certitude.

It is to be understood that Sri Ramanuja included in the category of secondary scriptures, the body of inspired mystical poetry, collectively named Divya Prabandha, composed and sung by the Alvars, but he does not use this source in the Sri-Bhashya by direct statement for the understandable reason that it was not acknowledged as authoritative by the other schools of Vedanta. This was a case of personal inspiration and not probative evidence.

The fourth aphorism attempts to demonstrate the supreme value of the knowledge of Brahman. The ignorance of Brahman is the very essence of human bondage and to know Brahman even immediately is a source of joy. Impelled by this joy, the seeker pursues further knowledge by way of direct apprehension through the comprehensive discipline of bhakti. In the end his effort is crowned through the grace of God with the joyous triumph of the full attainment.

Thus the four Sutras establish the necessity and possibility of the inquiry into Brahman, the definition of it, the sources of knowledge concerning it, and the supreme value of the pursuit of the knowledge in question. An old verse sums up the work of the four Sutras: The four Sutras eliminate any objection to the commencement of the inquiry into Brahman on four prima facie suppositions:

(a) The Vedic words cannot signify Brahman (an accomplished reality),

(b) The Brahman cannot be defined,

(c) It is revealed by other means of knowledge, and

(d) The inquiry is of no value.

7. Tattva

Brahman is the supreme Tattva or Reality. The function of Vedanta is the discernment of its nature. It does it in hundreds of ways but there is a fundamental concord running through all of them. The Sutras review almost all the central Upanishads and discuss their import. The one persistent misunderstanding they succeed in removing is, that the Upanishads, in their major metaphysical dialogues, raise to intimacy either the category of

Prakrti (nature) or the individual self. They all affirm the transcendent Brahman, of the nature of absoluteness of Being, Consciousness, and Bliss, and that nature and the finite sell come in as its vehicles of self-manifestation.

The Sri-Bhashya regards the Sutras as a single document with no internal stratification in terms of authenticity. There is no lower and higher Brahman, and there is no lower and higher knowledge. It is the same logic of indivisible truth that is discerned in the Upanishads. When Brahman is spoken of as attribute less, the motive is to deny of It imperfections characteristic of the finite existents. When attributes like omniscience are ascribed, they are to be taken in metaphysical seriousness. When Brahman is exhibited as other than matter and finite spirits, the truth of transcendence is being proclaimed. When Brahman is spoken of as one without a second, the significance is that Brahman is the central substantive reality to which the finite realities belong in the relation of predicates or subsidiary associates. The full truth is conveyed without any chance of misconception when Brahman is described as the Atman, and the world of matter and individual selves are said to constitute its 'Body'. This is a monism that does not involve any illusionism.

Sri Ramanuja opposes illusionist monism, the grosser forms of Bheda-abheda and also dualism. He says: Apart from the consideration of Brahman as the Soul of all, the meditation of Brahman as the jiva or the jiva as Brahman cannot be true. On the theory of difference-cum-identity, as the limiting adjuncts condition Brahman itself, all the consequent flaws will contaminate It itself. On the theory of absolute difference between Brahman and the jiva, the teaching of Brahman as the Atman of all would be impossible and thus the entire Vedanta gets rejected.

The external world of insentient existence and the finite selves is real, however much they may be subject to mutation. They have existence in all their states as permeated and sustained by the supreme Spirit.

In this concept of the totality of existences as constituted of Brahman and the realm of finites, we have the justification of the designation of Visistadvaita that has come to be applied to Sri Ramanuja's school of Vedanta. He himself does not use the term but his authoritative commentators, Sudarsana Suri and Vedanta Desika employ it. It signifies that Reality is one, in so far as there the one central substantive principle, Brahman, and the totality of finites characterize it as inseparable qualifications.

8. Hita or Means

The question of sadhana naturally pertains to the individual soul or

jiva. The Sri-Bhashya expounds the nature of the jiva in the course of the second chapter. It is uncreated, is of the nature of a conscious principle, and enjoys powers of free volition conferred by God. The plurality of the individuals is real and eternal. Uniqueness and self-consciousness are fundamental in its nature. The jiva is neither separate from God nor wholly identical with Him. It is an 'Amsa' or part in the sense of forming an adjectival mode.

The third chapter reviews the life of the jiva and comes to the conclusion that in all its mundane states it is infected with evil of the nature of suffering brought about by ignorance and evil-doing. Hence a spirit of renunciation is called for. When it looks to its inward Soul, the Paramatman, it sees in Him infinite perfections in spite of His immanence. Seeking Him is the road to its own perfection. He is its final goal and also the power that could effectuate its final blessedness. The third quarter of the third chapter determines the exact nature of the various types of 'Vidya' or meditation to be practiced in order to win the grace of the Supreme Being. The fourth quarter elucidates the supremacy of know ledge and the pathway to perfection and determines the accessories of this knowledge. This knowledge is of the nature of bhakti or loving meditation, cultivated in ever-increasing intensity.

9. Purusartha

The fourth chapter is devoted to working out the notion of moksha. The Sri-Bhashya states the nature of moksha in the first chapter itself and the final chapter is an elaboration thereof: But those who are established in the Vedanta — holding (as they do) that the supreme Brahman is the sole cause of the entire universe, and of the nature of infinite bliss antagonistic to all evil, an ocean of count less auspicious qualities of natural and unsurpassed excellence, transcending all else and constituting the Self of all; and also that the jiva, of the nature of boundless knowledge, is of the nature of a mode of Brahman, being Its body, and of such a nature that it can get joy in the experience of Brahman, this nature, however, being concealed by beginning less ignorance of the nature of karma — affirm that moksha is the direct experience of Brahman, in accordance with its fundamental nature after the destruction of its ignorance.

The three implications of moksha are that it is a release from all the binding karma of the past, it is a release of the soul into the abundance of its innate nature, and the fulfillment of this nature in the blissful experience of Brahman, its own inmost soul. This unimpeded joy of existence is the eternal destiny of the jiva.

GITA BHASYAM

This is a detailed commentary on the Bhagirathi Gita.

This work of Ramanuja is based on the Githarthasangraha of Yamunachary (Ramanuja's guru).

VEDANTHA DEEPAM

This grantham of Ramanuja is a brief commentary on the Vedanta sutras.

A brief commentary on the purport of each of the Brahma sutras. It is shorter than Sri Bhasyam because it does not include the criticisms of the rival systems.

VEDANTHA SARAM

His grantham of Ramanuja is a brief commentary on the Vedanta sutras. This grantham is for those, who might find Sri Bhaashyam and Vedanta Deepak too terse and tough. It brings out the essence of Brahma sutras and the Adhikaranas. Our Acharya did not want to frighten away those, who might have difficulty scaling the intellectual heights of Sri Bhashyam.

SARANAGATHI GADHYAM

1. Bhagavan Narāyaṇa..... saraṇa maham prapadhyé..

Meaning: Sri Mahalakshmi has got all the attributes, the thirumEni, its specialties, the kalyana Gunas, which the Lord likes always; Not even a second, she gets separated from the Lord; Blemish less; the pattamahishi of devathi devan; the mother for the entire universe; and my mother too; Such a great mother mahalakshmi- I, who has no other shelter or protector, take refuge at her lotus feet. Requesting mahalakshmi to recommend to Lord Sri Ranganatha:

2. pāramārtthika..... asthu me..

Meaning: Parabhakti, Paragnānam and Paramabhakti are the permanent means to hold the Lord's Lotus feet. With that Bhakti, one can get the divine experience and Bhagavadh anubhavam which is the only one to be desired and nothing else; From that Bhagavadh anubhavam, the "nilaiyaana kainkaryam" to the Lord. For getting that sort of attitude and the bhakti, one shall perform saranagathi at the Lotus feet of Namperumal. O Matha, Please bless me to obtain such bent of mind to do saranagathi at all times; with no gap absolutely.

Piratti acknowledges:

3. AsthuthE.....Let it happen as you asked for.
4. Thayaiva sarvam sampathyathe With that saranagathi, you (and your sishyas) ("sarvam") are going to get every sampath.

Emberman's swaroopam:

5. Akila heya.....Swaroopa..

The One, who has embodied unlimited Gnanam, Anandham, and who has housed all kalyana gunas, who has differed from all that is different from Him by nature, who has all qualities that is opposite to those which we hate;

Emperumanar TirumEni azhaghu:

6. Swabhimathanuroopaika....Divya roopa..

The one who has the ThirumEni which is very much liked by Him; which can never be thought and understood about; which is not a combination of various particles and matter; which is a wonder(aRputham); which has no beginning and no end; which is blemish less; which is an unparalleled brightening body; which has azhaghu(beauty), sughandham (Good smell), softness, and youth always;

Emperumanar Gunas:

7. Swabhavika.....maharnava..

the one who has excellent innumerable kalyana gunas (as enumerated by Acharya in "saranagathi Gadhyam" also) namely,Jnanam(true and perfect knowledge), Bhala (ability to support the whole Universe), Aishwarya (incomparable wealth and ruler ship of the Universe), veerya (untiring virility), shakthi (power to act without extraneous help), tejas (unmatched radiance), souseelya(purest character), vatsalya(pure unmitigated love), Maardava (affectionate tenderness towards devotees/ bhagavathaals), Aarjava(Honesty), Souhardha(Thinking of good only), Samya(equanimous one), Karunya(Merciful), Madhurya(sweet even to enemies), Gambheerya (majesty and nobility), Audharya(giving out liberally- vallal thanmai), Chathurya (ability to change even enemies into friends), sthairya (determined to stay on chosen course), dhairya(undaunted courage to bring succor to the bhakthas), sowrya(ability to fight alone), parakrama (winning the battles effortlessly), sathya kama(having Thy will ever fulfilled), sathya sankalpa(Having Thy deeds fully executed), krutithvam (carrying out the duties of Bhagavathaals), kruthangnathai (remembering with gratitude even a little worship offered to Him), and repository and ocean of all such innumerable kalyana gunas; He is parabrahmam and PurushOtthaman. Such qualities are flooded in our Lord!

Bhagawan's alankarangal:

SvOchotha.divya bhooshana:

8. The ones which are exactly matching and are suitable to Him, the ones which are of different, spectacular, kinds, and have no beginning and have no counts; have permanence in themselves; have no blemishes; unlimited fragrance, softness, brightness in them;- such crown (kireetam), choodAvadhamsam (mudi ani), makarakundalam, malai, muthucharangal, bangles, Srivathsam (mole on His chest), Thiruvayirrup pattam, Peethambharam, Araignan, thandai, etc., are His Abharanangal(jewels).

Emperuman's weapons(Ayudhangal):

SwAnuroopAchnthya. divyayudha..

9. The ones which are exactly matching and the ones whose powers can NOT be thought of or understood (by anyone)- such sanghu(conch), chakram(discuss), gadhai, vil, are His weapons which have no blemishes and always do good to others;- O Lord, the one who has such weapons!

His consorts:

Swabhmatha.srivallabha yevamhootha neela nayaka:

10. The one who is always dearest to Him; who is foe ever, matching and suitable, without blemishes, has a suitable ThirumEni azhaghu, attributes, gunas, capabilities, command, qualities precisely identical to the Lord- Sri Mahalakshmi- Her nayaka!, Similarly Bhoomidevi, Neeladevi nayaka!

His parijana, paricharikals:

SwatchAndhAnu.Saranayugala

11. The state, actions and qualities of following emperumanar thiruvullam (mind) at all times, the concentration and determination to perform service to the Lord at all times and with a thought about that only at all times, the Gnanam, actions, command, qualities and attributes and such countless kalyana guans are housed in Adhiseshan, vishvaksenar, Garudan, and other parijanangal and maids who always serve the Lotus feet of our Lord incessantly. O such great two feet!

Bhagawan's place:

Paramayogivaikuntanatha..

12. Even the most greatest yogis can not talk or think or measure His swaroopam, such wonderful swaroopam, swabhavam, such qualities are fully housed in unlimited, beautiful, blemish less, permanent, the one where there is no comparison to any other place- such Sri vaikunta vasi! Akila ulaga Nathan Swasankalpanu vibhavalaya leela

13. The One who has leelas (playful acts) of The creation, the sustenance

and the Destruction of all countless, wonderful enjoyer, the enjoyment and the enjoyed, the one who has housed within Himself as His nature the prakrithi, the purushan and the time(kalam),- Such leela vinodha! Surrender to the Lord Sathyakamaprapadye.

The One who has all that He can think of; who can achieve all that He can attempt; The one who is a parabrahman; uttamapurushan; who rules all unlimited, unbounded beings and non-beings; mahalakshmi nayaka!, Narayana; Sri vaikutanatha;

The one who is an ocean of karunyam, sowseelyam, vatsalyam, Audharyam, Sowndharyam; The one who does not see the level and protects everyone equally; who wipes the sufferings of bhaktals; who removes bhaktals' mistakes; who knows the truths of all matters; movable ones, non movable ones-He commands them at all times; who is the support for the entire Universe; who is a swami for the entire Universe; And also my swami; Who has everything with Him; who can get whatever He thinks; who is different from others (except Him); who is like a karpakatharu for those who beg Him; who is a friend in need; one who never separates Himself from Piratti; Sriman Narayana; one who is the only refuge for those who are in need of support; Such Sri Narayana! I surrender into your two Lotus feet.(Dvaya manthram to be recited here)

Pitharam... gruhani cha..

O Bhagawan! I have left the bonds of bodily relations like father, mother, wife, children, bhandhus(relatives), friends, Gurus, Rathinangal (wealth), danadhAnyangal. Properties, Houses, Dharmangal, and all others, and have surrendered to your feet, Trivikrama!

TvamEvadEva sodum.. Devadhi deva! You are my mother; my father; my relative; my Guru; my knowledge; my matter; my every thing; One who has unparalleled good qualities; One who is a father of all movable and immovable, living and non living beings; You are the only one who can be worshipped; You are the only one who can be a Teacher; Hence, You are the greatest; When there is not even an equal person to match You; How can there someone be greater than You(There can not be).

Hence, I have placed my human body flat on the ground and prostrate at your feet considering You as my Lord, the one who is worship able. Consider me as a son to a father; as a friend to another friend; as a wife to a husband; and bear all my mistakes, blunders which I have committed. Ramanuja thus prostrated to Sriya: pathi and begged to be forgiven by the Lord).

Manovakkayai Kshamasva..

10&11. Through the mind, Language and the body, from time immemorial (for so many births), the mistakes, blunders (Apacharams) have been committed; that too, tremendous, infinite number of Apacharams- doing the ones which should not have been done; not doing the ones which should be done as per shastras; committing Apacharams to the Lord; to the Bhagavathals; committing unforgivable, Unpardonable apacharams; -All of these, O Lord, Please show mercy on me and forgive me for my such mistakes. Out of these Apacharams, some have already started giving me results; some have not yet yielded results; some have been committed in the past; some are being done in the present; and some may even be committed in the future; - Please forgive me for all these Apacharams. With regards to Atman, Worldly things, I have been having a misconception and having a "Vibhareetha Gnanam", for quite a long time (for so many births); All these wrong Gnanams and misconceptions, which I possess, and will possess- Please forgive me them also. Request for removal of "Mayai"

Madheeya-anadhi karma... mam tharaya..

12. The maya, which has been there in me due to my karmas I have been doing for a long time; which has been hiding me from the Supreme Truth (Bhagawan) and has been leading me to a "Vibhareetha Gnanam" of mistaking the Body as Atman (or attaching myself to the Body); a thinking that "Worldly and sensual pleasures are the happiest and are to be sought after; the maya which has been as a body, as sense organs, as bhogyam, as gross and fine matter; as Sattva, Rajas and thamasa Gunas; - Such a Maya of mine(who is saying to You, "I have surrendered to You and am Your servant always")-Please enable me to cross over Thy mula prakriti of the entire Gunas causing beginning less and endless karmas".

Tasha gnanee... sudhurlabha:

13."the Gnani is the one, who is a bhaktha and always thinks of me; hence, he is my dearest. and I am his dearest too." - Please make me such a gnAni!.

Request for Parabhakti

"purushas sa para: Partha:... Kinkaro Bhavani.."

14."Arjuna, which Parama purushan can be attained through unadulterated Ekantha Bhakti only ";" can be attained only with a single pointed Devotion/Bhakti,"; "he gets the Highest Bhakti from Me"- You have mentioned such parama bhakti three times; - Please bless me with such a Paramabhakti.

15. Please make me an embodiment of Para Bhakti, paragnana and Parama Bhakti.

16. With those para bhakti, Paragnanam and Parama bhakti, I will get Bhagavadh Anubhavam and will get "nitya kainkaryam" to You.

BHAGAWAAN REPLIES

Evambhootha mathkainkarya....kinkar O bhavishyasi..

17.Like that, you may not possess or have any means to get Nitya kainkaryam to Me; you may have committed numerous apacharams to Me; and to My bhagavathals; you may have committed unpardonable apacharams; you may have possessed vibhareetha ahankaram and vibhareetha gnAnam and hidden the "Real" swaroopam of Atman; You may have got wrong vibhareetha thoughts for ages (for so many births); you may possess sathva, rajasa, thamasa gunas and also are bound by sukha, dukkangaL(pleasure and sorrows); their causes-the origin of such vibhareetha thoughts;- you are being troubled and disturbed greatly by the above things and obstruct you to get the "paripoorna parabhakti, paragnanam and paramabhakti;" - In spite of all these, even though, you have all the above, just because some way (may be, inadvertently), you have recited dwaya manthram; and Hence, With My Grace and Mercy, you will get rid of all hurdles; worries and troubles coming in the way to obtain para bhakti and para gnanam and parama bhakti; With My Grace, you will be blessed with My Swaroopam, Gunam, Roopam, Perumai, Leelas etc., and you will see Them in person; you will be My servant and you will enjoy Me only; you will realize that realizing Me and Serving Me only gives you happiness and bliss; For ever, permanently, with no other material benefit or desire, you will love to serve Me; Experiencing Me and Great Love and Bhakti, affection arising in you out of that Rich Experience will come to you by my grace; you will always perennially love to serve me and get blessed; you will be keen on That only;

18. This section is an assuring answer by the Lord to a question that Ramanuja has in mind :When do I start such a Kaimkaryam ? You have already started being like that.

19. Keep reciting Dwaya manthram and its meaning and get over even the semblance of all the hurdles; Live like that happily in Srirangam till your body is worn out and will not house you any more;

20.When your body falls down, you will shine bright by my grace and you will see My Darshan and You will be greatly inquisitive to see Me and Reach Me to Serve Me; and you will shed the body like removing the old

cloth; you will get all bhakti for Me Due to My Grace; You will get "Nitya Kainkaryam" for Me; and you will Not desire anything other than the bliss and happiness of performing Nitya Kainkaryam;

21. Have No Doubts about This (mA thE bhoothathra samsaya:)

22. I have never uttered falsehood; Nor will I ever; Rama Never Talks Twice; "Once, whoever surrenders to Me and says "I am Your Servant", I offer "Abhayam" to All such Beings";

23. Sacrifice all fruits of your karma and surrender to my feet; I shall deliver you from all your all sinful reactions. do not fear or lament. (SarvadharmAn... mA sucha:)

24. Athas thwam thava.. Sukhamaswa.. Hence, you, the one who has joined Me, will know Me as I am, will see as I am and will reach Me as I am and shall have no doubts at all about it; Live Happily Till then.

(Dearest Brothers and Sisters–It is Just my free translation and I know with my limited (and no) knowledge, it is beyond my ability and capacity to do full justice to this Gadhyam's rich tathwam; My attempt is a humble one, since great Acharyas have commented on the many deep meanings of this gadhyam that is dear to the world of Sri Vaishnavas. They have commented extensively about Ramanuja's saranagathi Gadhyam serving as an exposition of the Dvaya manthram that has come to us thru acharyas. I place this humble effort of mine at the feet of the divya dampathis of Srirangam and Ramanuja with great humility and in the spirit of service to the Sri Vaishnava community

SRIRANGA GADHYAM

svAdheenatrividhachEtanAchEtana-.....bhavAmi....

"Bhagawaan- the one who has and holds sway over the bhaktha, mukhta and nitya varieties of chetanas (sentiment) and their existence and activities; and achethanas (insentient); the one who is not affected nor influenced by miseries and by sinful and virtuous karmas; the one who has excellent innumerable kalyana gunas (as enumerated by Acharya in "saraNAgathi Gadhyam" also) namely.,Jnanam(true and perfect knowledge), Bhala (ability to support the whole Universe), Aishwarya (incomparable wealth and ruler ship of the Universe), veerya (untiring virility), shakthi (power to act without extraneous help), tEjas(unmatched radiance), souseelya(purest character), vatsalya (pure unmitigated love), Maardava(affectionate tenderness towards devotees/ bhagavathaals), Aarjava(Honesty), Souhardha(Thinking of good only), Samya(equanimous one), Karunya (Merciful), Madhurya(sweet even to enemies), Gambheerya (majesty and nobility), Audharya (giving out

liberally- vallal thanmai), Chathurya(ability to change even enemies into friends), sthairya(determined to stay on chosen course), dhairya(undaunted courage to bring succor to the bhakthas), sowrya(ability to fight alone), parakrama(winning the battles effortlessly), sathya kama(having Thy will ever fulfilled), sathya Sankalpa(Having Thy deeds fully executed), krutithvam (carrying out the duties of Bhagavathaals), Kruthangnathai (remembering with gratitude even a little worship offered to Him), and repository and ocean of all such innumerable kalyana guNAs; He is parabrahmam and Purushotthaman (foremost); He is Sriranga saayi; the one who is reclining on the serpent bed in Srirangam and He is my swami - I am always subject to the command of Him, and have tasted the sweetness of being in service to the Lord forever. I will always consider Him as the subject of my Bhakti and Gnanam and will enjoy Him only as my only aim with no gap or separation at all; with such enjoyment, I will get tremendous happiness and bliss and peranandham and will involve myself at all times and all circumstances, in offering my service to the Lord and will be soaked and immersed in such service."

2. svātma niyāmya....prapadye...

".I, the jivaathma, am always at Your beck and call; always at Your disposal for carrying out service and having a thought of service at all times; having love for enjoyment of limitless kalyana gunas of the Lord; Arising out of that enjoyment, is the Bhakti yoga, karma yoga and Gnana yoga, sAthveekam, Asthikam etc., - But the above all are not in me; On the contrary, I possess vibhareetha gnAnam and karma and am caught in deep waters of inescapable ocean of sins; I am incapable of breaking myself free from this ocean (crossing the ocean of sin) with my knowledge and bhakti since they are covered with ego and are covered by my inevitable association with prakritti. My unavoidable association with trigunas is like oil in the sesame seed (ellil ennai pol) and fire in firewood(aranikkatayil Neruppu pol). I am bound by the rope of karma in the form of virtue and sin accumulated over time immemorial over the ages for so many births of mine out of ignorance; I am incapable of finding the means to overcome this bondage of samsaara; However hard I try, it is not possible; Hence, the only refuge of all beings! O Lord! Sriman Narayana!, the one who is ever associated with Sri Lakshmi!, You are the only means of emancipation. I surrender at Your Lotus feet. I seek Your protection.(Sisters and brothers, Acharya, we all know, does not possess such limitations but is speaking on our behalf and whatever he says are only for us; Let us realize that and get blessed by Acharya and Divine Dampathis!)

3. Eva mavasthi thasyaapi...praarthayE.

"Even though I am in such a helpless state, just because I have begged you, having that alone as the reason, the ever merciful Lord, emperumanar, will grant me the favor of firm single-minded devotion in everlasting service to Him; Oh Lord! Please grant me this boon and I pray for it."

4. Tavaanubhoothi sambhoota...gatimanyatha...

I do not have any other shelter and have no other means. Bhagavaane! Please give me and grant me the service to You from the joy of experiencing and enjoying You. Please enable me to please You with my love for You and grant that out of Your limitless mercy."

(You all may notice that any love, bhakti for Sriman Narayana arising in us is and can come only due to His mercy and nothing else; Our begging Him to grant us that is all the simplest effort we have to take- Simple- let us start begging Him now immediately!)

sarvaavathOchitasEsha....kurushva mAm...

5." SenthAmaraik kanna!..(Red Lotus eyed Lord!) I should always be eager to render all forms and all kinds of service under all conditions. Please bless me to possess this state of mind".

Evambhootha....karaya

6." Even though I have no sincere wish to know the truth nor desire; and I am not fit for Your grace to reach the goal, just because I am doing lip service and am uttering such words (without actually sincerely meaning them),- taking that as my request please grant me the mind to concentrate on what I am going to tell and consider my words as an excuse to fill my deficiencies" (What an excellent reflection about our character and defects in our minds! acharya is narrating in clear categorical terms the state of our minds and their nature)

aparakanunambhthe!...namOsthuthE..

7. "Oh Limitless infinite Ocean of Mercy!, the Ultimate Shelter and Succor of all irrespective of differences!, the One who wipes and removes the distress of all who take refuge in Him!, Great Ocean of Love to Your Devotees!, The One, who knows all truths about all beings that are created !, You who is filled with entirety!, the One, who has His wishes always fulfilled!, The One who can do all that He wishes!, Friend in my distress!, Oh kakustha (Raama!), the One, who is ever associated with Sri!, Sriman Nararyana!, The One, who is the Greatest among all!, Sri Ranganatha!, My Natha!, I prostrate before you!"(Sisters and brothers, Acharya conveys us

the saranagathi tatvam and that the Lord is ever Merciful and showers His grace and mercy on those who surrender to Him. He has used Sri Ram for His mercy on the Bird, the Monkeys, the Old lady (Sabhari), the stone(ahalyaa), the enemy's brother (Vibheeshana), the vedan (Guhan), the asuran (kakasuran) (and all of us!)

VAIKUNTHA GADAYAM

Sri Vaikunta Gadhyam" is the third Gadhyam of our Acharya's Gadhya trayam- (Let us immerse ourselves into this excellent composition and get a darshan of Sriya: Pathih Sriman Narayana's Vaikuntam and is blessed by the Acharya and Divya Dampathis;)

1.svadheena Trividha chetanachetana_.sarana Manuvrajeth..

Emperumanar- Bhagawaan- the One who has and holds sway over the Chethanas (sentient) namely., bhaktha, muktha and Nithya varieties., and their existence and activities; Also over the Achethanas (Non-sentient beings); He is the One who is not affected by nor influenced by miseries, papa and punya (sinful and virtuous) karmas; He is the One who has excellent Greatest innumerable kalyana Gunas namely., jnanam, bhalam, aishvaryam, veeryam, shakti, and is an Ocean of such Most Auspicious attributes; - He is the Foremost among men; I shall consider Him as my Master, Friend, Teacher at all times and I shall render service to His Lotus Feet and only such thought should prevail in my mind always;

To attain that Nitya kaimkaryam, even after wasting the Thousands of ages (births), with a thinking that there are other means but to surrender at the Lotus Feet of Him- who is the Ocean of Mercy for all beings; who has the unbounded nature of being good to anyone; who thrills the minds of devas, human beings and all other beings with His Grand Gunas; who is the Ocean of Love for His bhagavatOttamaaLs; who considers being in the company of His devotees as the Biggest enjoyment; who has the Grandest attributes in Him; Such Sriman NarayaNan's Lotus Feet- I shall think at all times that these Two Feet, which are the only means for salvation for the Athmaa;There are no other means for salvation - With that thinking I shall surrender at His Feet;

2. thathacchaÉanusmarEth..

Thereafter, everyday, I shall continue to think in this manner for the salvation of my Athman;

3. Chathur Dasa Bhuvanaathmaka mandambhagavthe vinedhayath.. srivaikuntam The Universe which consists of fourteen lokas; beyond that, the seven Aavaranangal which are ten times the size of these Universes;

Beyond these Cause and Effect Groups; there exists "parama Aakasam" the One which can not be comprehended /attained even by the minds and speeches of Brahmaa and others- That is Sri Vaikuntam, the Divya lokam. In that lOkam populated by the likes of sanathkumara known for their Jnanam, by the like of Brahma, Rudra et al known for their karma Bhavana, likes of Mahathmas known for their devotion to their (our) Lord, there is one big Thirukkoil (temple) whose Length and Breadth can not be measured at all - which is surrounded by thousands of Gardens full of flowers and Karpaka trees (capable of giving whatever one wishes) - which is surrounded by thousands of beautiful ramparts; In that temple, there is an exquisitely beautiful "asthana Mantapam" (Hall?) which has hundreds of thousands of "Rathna" pillars, floor made of gems, curtains, etc., surrounded by trees which shower most fragrant flowers always, at all times;

There are Halls surrounded by kaRpaka trees yielding Parijatha flowers; These halls always look as if they have just been built; Some of theses halls are meant for Sriman Narayanan's Divya leelas and some others are meant for Alarmel mangai's Divya leelas and others are meant for the enjoyment of Divya Dampathis together; There are hundreds of thousands of gardens where parrots, peacocks, cuckoos etc., add beauty to them.

They are surrounded by Streams of water where crystal clear water flows; they are filled by Divine Birds which are extremely beautiful to look at and whose sweet voices are pleasing to hear; Divine Swans swim in those streams of water which flow at Srivaikuntam; There are beautiful play grounds which stupefy people who see them; In those play grounds there are beds made of flowers at different places; In one of those playgrounds, where there are honey - bees sing merrily and where sandal, camphor, Divya pushpanGaL etc., add sughandha (Good) smell to the place; Amidst such a place, there is a Divine Beautiful Cot on which is seated, Adiseshan - and Above Adhsesha;-

SRI MAHA LAKSHMI

She Illumines the Entire devalokam with Her luster; the One who directs the kaimkaryams for the Lord (that has to be done by sEshan) and VishvaksEnar; She is equal to The Lord in Gunas, Form and the Attributes in all respects- With Such Sri Mahalakshmi, Our Emperumanar adorns the place;

The BEAUTY OF BAGAWAN

Like the just bloomed Red Lotus flower, the Kannazhgan, Blue hued Lord,- who wears the glittering Peethambharam, who enlightens the Whole

world with His Cool, Pure, Thirumeni;- incomprehensible, Divine, Wonderful, Ever permanent, Youthful, Ocean of Beauty; Since His body is so tender, it appears as if due to exertion, there are few droplets of sweat on His forehead and few strands of dark hair falling on His forehead; - The One, who has the Beautiful eyes as if it is just bloomed Lotus flower, who has the eye brows like the creeper, who has the Most beautiful lower lip, who has the sweet, pleasing smile on His lips, who has soft cheeks, sharp, prominent nose, Bright, long, ear studs (kundalangal) that hang down to the shoulders; who has the neck like the Conch, who has the calf muscles (that have been pressed by the dEvis and contain the fallen flowers form Devis' heads)- and the Four long hands extending up to the Calf muscles; who has the Most Beautiful lines in His soles of His Feet, which are red in color like Red Lotuses; who has the Beautiful rings in His fingers; who has the Fresh Red Lotus like Feet;

Ornaments (Aabharanangal)

To touch they are very soft and exude excellent fragrance in them; they are extremely beautiful to look at (because they adorn His Divine Body); these are Kireetam (Crown), makutam, Choodavathamsam, Makara-kuntalam, necklace, haaram, thol valai, Bangles, Sri Vathsam, Kausthupam, Pearl Necklace, araignan, peethambharam, thru Vayirrup pattam, Thiruvadich chilambhu, - such ornaments adorn the Lord; Beautiful Vaijayanthi vanamaali adorns Him; Sanghu, chakra, Divine Sword, Saarngham, - such strong Divine weapons are borne by Him; By delegating and giving the necessary powers to VishvaksEnar who just by thinking can create, sustain and destroy the Entire Universe; - Such Emperumanar sits surrounded by Nitysuris, who by nature do not have the misfortunes that the Samsaaris (like us) are burdened with;

Nityasuris

By nature, they are eternally free souls; none that samsaaris have; they consider the servitude to the Lord as the Only enjoyment- Such Divya sooris (like Garuda) serve Him; -The One, who by just a mere glance can enliven the Universe with Happiness; - His nectar of words that comes from the middle of The Red Lotus-like face; which adorns the Red Lotus; which is adorned by Divine Ghambeeryam, Oudharyam, mAthuryam and such Great kalyana Gunas; which fill the valleys in everyone's minds; - Such Emperumanar- seeing Him in our minds; thinking and realizing Him and His Primordial Nature; -

Longing Desire of Athmaa

Sriman NarayaNan He is the Master of my kulam, the Lord of my kulam,

the Wealth of my kulam; My Enjoyment, My mother, My father, My Everything- Such Sriman Narayanan When will I see Him? When will I get to The Lotus Feet of my Bhagawaan? When will I get the only desire to render service to His Lotus Feet and remove all other desires and all other natures of all kinds of samsaaris and attain His Feet?

When will I get the capacity to render Kaimkaryam to Bhagawaan and consider that alone as the Enjoyment and perform kainkaryam? When will Bhagawaan look at me with His cool eyes and speak to me lovingly, majestically and sweetly and command me to render the kainkaryam? Growing such a desire to render the kaikaryam to the Lord, (which also is growing due to His grace only) approaching the Lord with that desire, I approach Vaikuntanathan, who sits on the lap of Adhiseshan-

Atma nivedhanam

When I approach The One who sits Along with Sri Mahalakshmi, on the lap of adiseshan, The One who can be attained by Garuda et al., - Seeing such Bhagawaan- "Oh Sriman Narayanaa! The One who stays with all His parivaar (entourage)!" addressing the Lord like that from afar, from a long distance, from then on,- continue to prostrate on the Ground towards the Direction where He sits, - with full of fear (due to Great respect), politeness, pay obeisance to the Lord and all others sitting in that Hall, the Commander-in-Chief, The Gate keepers, et al., and be seen and blessed by each of their merciful eyes; - Finally approach the Lord very closely and stay very near to Him and utter the Thiruvashtakshara manthram and beg Him saying " Please grant me the capacity to render Nitya Kainkaryam to you, My Lord, without any interruption and without any other fruit;" With such yachakam (begging), I should surrender myself to the Lord.

4. Thatho Bhagawatha Swayamevae. Bhagavantha Mupaasithee Bhagawaan considers and takes care

Then, Bhagawaan by Himself, for the salvation of athmaa, - looks very lovingly, and very much mercifully at me; I at all times, at all situations, will be enabled to have the necessary capacity to be the Humble servant; and will be permitted to be so; will pay obeisance to the Lord with full of Great fear (due to enormous reverence and respect for Him) and will serve Him with Folded arms and render service to Him.

5. Thathaschaeavalokayan aasitha

6. ThathO Bhagawatho swayamEvaEsukhamaaseetha.

The Athma sukham Granted By Bhagawaan Then, Bhagawaan, by Himself, for the salvation of athmaa, looks at me, very much lovingly,

affectionately, with a gentle smile calls me, and removing all kinds of sorrows, granting the unbounded, unparalleled, enjoyment of keeping his lotus feet on my head- like that meditate on him and let all parts (of the body, mind and the intellect and athmaa?) be immersed in the ocean of nectar and enjoying the greatest bliss for ever and ever; Dearest Bhagavatottamals, Such is the most Excellent composition of our Acharya, Yathiraja, Ramanuja. Be blessed with our Acharya's tremendous enjoyment and bhakti for Sriya: pathih Sriman Narayanan. Please read them especially on Ekadasis and on auspicious days; Let us read the meanings, since we do not know Sanskrit and are not capable of reading Gadhyams.

NITHYA GRANTHAM

A short manual intended to guide the Sri Vaishnava devotees for Nitya karmaas.

Nithya Grantham or Bhagavdh Aaradhana Prayoga: Following the instructions given by Geethacharya in the twelfth chapter of gita, Ramanuja insists on the need for a Vishnu Bhaktha to engage in the religious observances enjoined in the Vedas, Smrithis and Puranas. Through these nine granthas in Sanskrit, Ramanuja built on the foundations laid by his predecessors (natha Muni and Alavanthar) and built the citadel of Sri Vaishnavam. His successors (74 Simhaasanadhipathis) interpreted the above nine granthams and created the Vast Sri Vaishnavite literature that we are blessed to possess as our Kula Dhanams today.

SOURCE OF RAMANUJA'S LIFE HISTORY

1. Divya–suri–charitair–Written by Garudavaha, a counterparty of Ramanuja in Tamil
2. Guru –parapara prabhavam- Written by Pinb-aragiyaperumal jiyar in Manipravala language
3. Ramanujacharya-divya-charitai – Written by Pillai lokacharya in Tamil
4. Periya tiru mudiy –adaiva- Written by Anbilli kandadaiyappan in Tamil
5. Prapannamitra- Written by Anantacharya, a descendant of Andhrapurana

WORKS ON RAMANUJACHARYA
YATHIRAJA SAPTHATHI BY VEDATHA DESIKAN

The name Yathiraja is a Yougika given name (Kaaranappeyar in Tamil). This work uses the names of Yathiraja, Ramanuja, Yathipathi, Lakshmana, et al. Swami Desikan prefaces with a set of ten verses on paying homage and obeisance to the Acharya Paramparai from Sriya: Pathih Sriman

Narayanan down to Yathirajar. These are familiar to all who recite them in their daily japaanushtaanams.

1. I pay obeisance to the First and foremost Acharya, the Consort of Mahalakshmi. He is the Head of the Family, which the whole Universe constitutes. He is a singular Acharya, who is Himself, the first recite of Vedas, and also the author of Pancharathra Saasthra.
2. I now pay obeisance to the Spouse of the Lord, Mahalakshmi, who is never ever separated from the Lord; who is incapable and also unaware of any punitive action / treatment whatsoever and who is the embodiment of gracious benediction, and who always exchanges plans with the Lord for the good of the Universe and beings.
3. I pay my respects to Vishvaksenar, the Consort of Soothravathi. He is the Commander-in-chief of the Lord. At the tip of His disciplining ward (whip) the whole universe stays put in proper place and is rightly led on.
4. We mediate on Sataari, (Nammazhwar) whose garland of Vakula flowers gets its fragrance exuded into the fluent flow of poetry - a work of literature at which the Vedas, having been tired of imparting codes of life, even ineffectively, can safely rest and relax now, since AzhWar's works will suffice and do the same job more effectively!
5. I hold as my Natha (master) the seer Nathamuni, in whose hands the essential crux of the Vedas acquired a clarity of understanding - to call it Hasthamalaka, as one would say with this Natha available for me, I can not be "Anaatha" (forlorn).
6. I obey Pundareekaakshar (Uyyakkondaar), who ever stands on the mental contour described by Nathamuni, our master at all times, and who is of unalloyed Saathvika Character, even like avataars of the Lord.
7. We meditate on Ramamisrar (Manakkaal Nambi), who is forbearing, who is dangerous to unholy persons, who had forsaken taste for lust and anger, - who thus was the fourth Rama (i.e.- unlike: (1) Parasuraama- who was not forbearing, (2) Ramabhadra -who was dangerous to Punyajanas (euphemism for Rakshasaas), and (3) Balaraama, - who was used to drinking liquor.)
8. We shall bathe in the holy waters of Yamuna (Alavandhaar), who has severed all connections with mean passions and attachment, who stood steadfast in safeguarding the Saadhus, and in whom the things emphasized by Krishna were present perfectly. (A second meaning: We shall bathe in the holy waters of Yamuna river, form which poisonous

snake had been removed, which is close to Brindhavanam, and in which Krishna was interested.)

9. I place myself at Mahapoornar (Periya Nambhi) whose extreme daya enslaves him to it (daya) (he becoming an abject servant of Daya quality) who gave us the Great Ramanuja, thereby making the hope of the Prime creator realized.
10. May Ramanuja-muni, accept my humble prostration - he whose works performed the service as the woman- attendant for the Veda- lady (who has captivated the Lord and is His consort), this Veda- lady holding the Lord under her spell, in a dependent manner- so to say.
11. I praise Yathiraja, who shines with a Yajna Upaveetham, on His chest and with the Oordhavapunram who is really the fruit of the Good deeds of all worlds, who has a thridanda, in His hand, and finally has a tuft of hair on the Head. He is the savior of the Vaishnavites, surrendered unto Him, guaranteeing for their salvation.
12. The Lord's five weapons (Chakkra, Sankhu, Gadha, Khadga, and Saarngha) have united taken the incarnation of Ramanuja. He is therefore harsh on the enemies (say of our religion). That Acharya is sure to protect us.
13. Balarama's brother- Krishna- has evidently appeared as Ramanuja (Rama's brother). Krishna suppressed as the variety of Gods (like Siva) about Self-greatness, elevated by own effort the fame of Yaadhavas, and eliminated wrong interpretations piled on Vedas. So also, Ramanuja, quenched the conceit of Sankara, rooted out Yaadhavaprakasa, from his original position and elevated him by his own right, (on his resorting to Ramanuja later), and removed the wrong meanings (say given to Gita and Brahma soothrAs) by hi own works.
14. Ramanuja gave a nest, so to say, of his works as a permanent sanctuary for the birds of Old scriptures like Vedas, lest the birds will be subjected to torture caused by "learned" pandits (who interpret Vedic works wrongly)
15. Real Learned men have a large necklace of choicest gems. The Central pendent of luster greater than that of Sun's luster is Ramanuja. The gems represent the lineage of Acharyas. The pendent (Ramanuja) is central and is also dearest and nearest to the heart of the wearer.
16. Ramanuja is a literal Mainaaka mountain, whose wings have not yet been felled! In his team and a line of disciples (as in the bamboo) the green nests persists and the principle of Hari rules high! All in the line shine pure, with Highest Character; cool and merciful; they are sure to

adorn the world as pearl-necklace with great halo. (Vamsa means lineage as well as bamboo; hari means the Lord and green color as well)

17. Ramanuja is a veritable moon. As the full moon has gained a position in the safe sky, which is the foot of the Lord. The moon, being full of digits (i.e. all 16 kalais), being perfect, being free of flaws, now owing its origin to water resources, and not subject to eclipse; so also Ramanuja has resorted to the secure Vishnu- abode, has complete mastery over all vidhyas, has a disciple in King Akalanka, has been born to a great scholar, is far removed from people given to sensuous pleasures. I pay obeisance to that Ramanuja
18. Great men, spotless, and learned too, rightly discern the merit of resorting to a real metropolis, feet of Yathi- Chakravarthi are. While so settled, they are connoisseurs in the field, being subservient to Bhaktas; they have the mental readiness, with the right spirit, to be bought or sold, as if they were material commodity, by the Bhagawathas.
19. Harshness of the tongue, exaggeration on expression, idle arguments, tale-carrying tendency, - these weaknesses would have dominated my talking manners - but only before I had felt the impact of "kethaka" seed, namely, of Ramanuja's praise. The result is that I now possess perfect pronouncement that ought to be pleasing to sadhus.
20. We adopt Ramanuja's feet as our refuge. Sadhus would treat Ramanuja's feet as ideal, placing even the Lord's feet at a second position only. These feet would secure for the surrendered ones, the three goals, (Dharma, artha, kaama,) as well as moksha. They are potent in correcting tendencies of weaklings.
21. Those who cherish unassailable Bhakti in respect of Ramanuja's feet, delve deep in the ocean of Vedanta Saasthra (to pick pearls of choicest concepts), they defeat, quite effortlessly, the contestants, from other systems, and also guide us in the path of Mukthi.
22. May Ramanuja become my protecting deity, naturally, of His own accord- He- who sits under the large Vedic tree; who holds the Tridhanda staff in His hand; who drives away the heretics rebelling against the Vedic system; and who stands like a royal swan in the "maanasarovar" of the heart of the devotees (of Ramanuja)
23. Ramanuja, who is an adept in potent manthras, and is a veritable snake-charmer –who sees to it that his devotees are not attacked by the venomous vipers which the non-believers are: who also cures us of the poison, namely of sensuous passion, that has spread through the whole body (by contemplation on the Lord on Garuda)

24. Ramanuja sits with his right palm, gesturing, as it were, an advice and instruction. It looks as though the nails with the luster, dispel the inner darkness (nescience) in our hearts, in a preparation to describe a wisdom - informed painting on our hearts, using the two fingers united.
25. We perceive the instruction- Seal in his hand, resembling a blossomed Lotus, which is raised in an effort to lay deep, in the hearts of the dull-witted persons, the meaning, lying concealed in the Upanishads.
26. Ramanuja's literary works "distil" with a high degree of zeal, from the Upanishads. They are also effective, even like mantra chanting, in regard to the tortures we suffer internally and externally and the works prove a sure and safe nutrition against chronic illness and deficiency people suffer in the samsaara world.
27. May he shine victoriously-
    - He- that Ramanuja, who by his cool and kindly impact, behaves as an unusual Agni;
    - He- who is a novel Moon in the matter of removing our darkness (our faults);
    - He- who is a second Sun, so to say, in removing the three kinds of sufferings befalling us;
    - He can thus be described as an assembly of three luminaries in one for conferring salvation on us.
28. Ramanuja shines virtually as :
    - The Himalaya, from which all rivers (like the Ganges) of all lures flow:
    - the all-granting "kalpaka" tree, at the shadow of which, jeevas, tortured by repeated births and deaths, can rest;
    - the dawning Sun that removes the night-darkness dominated by the delusive dialectics of disputants from diverse schools;
    - the full moon arising out of the milk ocean of Vedas.
29. May the literary master-pieces that Ramanuja has given to the world, open up to us and make clearly understandable to us, the inner meaning and implication totally! These works are capable of serving as the staircase to moksham stressing the essentials, praised by great sages too. They are a source of delectation, fortunately available a discerning student. They are sure to expel our sins, lock, stock and barrel. They show on deep study, deeper and deeper ideas of great enjoy ability, literally unfathomable to anybody.
30. Look at the all-round potency of Ramanuja's works. They are-

- Like a river furnishing cool waters to a thirst-tortured traveler traversing a dry desert;
- like a river of milk to holy personages devoted to the study of spiritual works
- like the eyes of the Vedas, so precious and so helpful for interpretation
- like the activator to the vital nerve-chord, to enable anyone experience the Bliss of service to the Lord.

31. What great things the works of Ramanuja achieve for us! If we study them, the nectar flowing from the Lord's Feet will be ever-increasing and will equal moksha Bliss. We realize that the works closely tread the path of the multi-faceted Vedas. They could eliminate the nauseating odor of our sins to the last trace. They produce a prolific array of imaginative thoughts in our hearts as a "kalpaka" tree (that produces rewards asked for). What is more, the works, on reading, free us from the torture of all three types.
32. Who is Ramanuja? The Lord has created many religious systems - which are fighting against one another- almost as a mischievous sport, so to say. His first- beginning less- vyooha form, Vaasudeva. Took a latter-day avatar as a dark-hued Krishna. During Kali yuga, in which people get drunk with hedonistic pleasures, the Lord sent Vishvaksena, who, by His Grace, took birth (as Ramanuja), the wand (the whip) in his hand, becoming the thridandam of Ramanuja. (When Sena pathi Vishvaksenar becomes Yathipathi Ramanuja, the wand becomes Thridandam)
33. Good minds will do well to aim at the study of these works. A "rasika" will relish and his tongue will have very good sport while taking on them. Such a fit subject to talk on and for discussion! The ear would hear them with so much love and whetting that prove virtual medicine of a unique type, that is however sweet; and they are a crystal-mirror that projects the Lord's form and nature to us in a perfect manner. The central messages in Ramanuja's works - some understood and some not- lie like Gems dispersed in a clear ocean, vast and immeasurable.
34. The greatness of followers who have inherited the great wealth called "Ramanuja Sampradayam" - verily a wealth that can not be lost or stolen -possesses certain features. They will not care a copper pie for the prosperity of the highest order, even when it is riches more than ever expected; they would spurn such rewards as mere lecher -drops flowing from the undulating checks of mad elephants, collected here and there, in which bees can thrive.
35. There is this large drum- figuratively speaking- of Ramanuja's

reputation. The discerning pundits, living in Srirangam, (for the mere pleasure and with no other deeper motive) become intellectually excited from a study of Ramanuja's works and they dance with joy, though spontaneously again and again. But they hold this large drum, which is beaten with large sticks, which are bound-components each. The sticks would figuratively stand for the high - quality works of Ramanuja. To this drum beating, the dance is attuned. This would resoundingly herald the advent of Yathiraja, the king of Yathis!

36. Groups of bad dialecticians of recent times, too, will be totally up heaved, their conceit evaporated, and the unfortunate souls which have been subjected to the venom-fire, spit out by the snakes of maayaavaadins are resurrected and revivified- all these are achieved by Ramanuja's works. They also serve as a (female) attendant, nurse, so to say, to attend on the very old lady, called "sruthi", whose disheveled locks of hair (disheveled by wrong and misinterpretations of sruthis by other religions) are re-set by this attendant (Ramanuja and his works). What is more, the works of Ramanuja enhance the quantum of the nectar, unendingly flowing, of the Bliss achieved.
37. Ramanuja is capable of grasping, merely with his clenched fist (to make it all Hasthaamalaka!), the essence of the most terse Vedas, which is rather difficult even for the nectar-drinking Devas. Ramanuja is equally competent in devastatingly defect the crypto- Buddhists (Advaitins), in wordy duels. He thus gladdens our hearts by functioning as the oyster-shells that embed the pearls, namely, of arrays of the Lord's qualities, by expounding that the Lord is a Kalyaana guna saagaram.
38. Victory to Ramanuja- who saved the Para Brahman by giving a hand lift from being caught in the slough of Saiva religion, without getting hooked, also from the net of pure dreamy imagination that the Saankhyaas had cast, avoiding also the entanglement in the contrivance laid by the scheming Chaarvaaka and finally when Brahman was almost about to fall into the trap-mouth of Advaitins, the deceitful misguides.
39. Ramanuja's classics came into the field and work up the conscience of the people just in time, when
    - Kanaadha's Vaiseshika with its symbolism
    - Kapila's imaginative deception that was purely a drama and a hoax
    - Kumaarila Bhatta's lowly language
    - Prabhaakara's knots of words
    - Buddha's variety in fiction and the wasteful pretensions (of the crypto-Buddhists) aligning with the above held the field and churned the world, with a lot of confusion resulting there from.

40. The constant querying non-believers are afflicted with a ghost of misplaced enthusiasm for arguments, which are idle and frivolous, though. They acquire fame too! But tiny Agasthyas are there in the form of Sri vaishnava scholars, who can drink the ocean of bad reputation of these people to dryness. But scholars who have had the privilege of proximate study at the feet of Ramanuja have a mature wisdom, which is their wealth indeed. Such scholars are going to delight the world.
41. I bear on my head, lowered, the lotus feet of the great ones, whose intellect possesses the fragrance of the wisdom of the works of Ramanuja. But at the same time, let me say, let the world see it too. I will dare place my left foot on the heads of those, who with a burning mad craze, contest Ramanuja's system, they trying to defend one or other of the other systems.
42. Oh my mind! Choose the singular clear pathway, of Ramanuja, treading of which would give relief one from the strain of wandering way-wardly in various paths. You will secure the grace of the Lord, which will flood on you fast, to wash off your sins.
43. The world is full of wrong thoughts laid down in misguiding books of vain dialecticians. Anyone, who has a soft corner for them, will, naturally, treat Ramanuja's works as trivial in size and value. However, we are not offended by such an assessment, since the Kousthubha gem of the Lord's Chest would appear only trivial compared to a lofty mountain-chain! What would be the weight, after all? Which one has more value?
44. Ramanuja's works help us in resolving contradictions, whenever they occur, in the Vedic sayings of old. Those who have been influenced by the vile arguments of the logical experts given to bad sense and lost their good sense, may leave off Ramanuja's works, or else, let them study those works. What does it matter? In a city where the noise praising flavor and taste of camphor is quite high, how are traders in common salt to respond with regard to camphor? It is obvious (that they do not know or can not relish!)
45. Among the trinity, the first Brahma bears his wife on his tongue in the faces that recite the Vedas. The whole left half of Sivan is taken by his wife. The Supreme Tatva, in His own way, became subservient to the Gopis. Then, the only ones that do not yield to the love for the feminine sex are only Ramanuja's followers!
46. Ramanuja- who stands like a shade- providing tree, enjoyed by followers of the Vedic pathway; who is treasured as a valuable store-house of

inspiration, for people who have forsaken all desires; who helps fulfillment of the aspirations of different people following his path; who functions like a dawn to the darkness of all three worlds; and who is the Chief of masters of Vedic wisdom, - is there to inculcate in us the correct knowledge regarding Prabrahman.

47. Ramanuja's works shine as
    1. a reliever of the toothache developed as a result of constantly arguing with fool
    2. a treasure store of wisdom
    3. a pigeon house guard at a pole top that wards off poaching on the paddy field of religion
    4. a Vedic fragrance spread all around
    5. a cloud that showers great Bliss
    6. a sure guarantee against our going to yamalokam
48. Ramanuja's works fill our hearts all the time as1. Bright lamps to help us see the Jeeva-swans,
    2. trees, which will grant the fruits- which are close to, and within the reach of, persons who have longed with great appetite, for the knowledge about the One Greatest Lord of most auspicious qualities
    3. Favorable planets that would never fail to confer benefits on us.
49. Ramanuja's words function- like the moonshine to the array of water-lilies of devotion to Mukunda's Feet, like the sunshine cruel to the owls of religious bigots, who merely relish their own system and its darkness, without an openness (that is why they shun the sun-like owls) and they confer on us an unquenchable- insatiable craving for moksham.
50. Ramanuja's works exhibit a faultless arrangements of the Vedanta saasthra, distilling the quality of Bodhaayana's commentary (on Brahma soothra) and of similar ones. The works involve no contradiction. Their ideas are strong, clear and pointed in regard to emphasis. They prove efficient in striking the intellectual nerve chord. And they help blossom out the intellect of scholars.
51. Capricious carping based on fallacious reasoning is the way for some contestants. They tend to cross question everything, pointing out an alternative possibility for every thesis, even if it is unreasonable. By such humbugs, they tend to pollute and confuse the Vedic path. The annoying noise of these wild elephants will die the moment the name of Ramanuja is announced.
52. Wordy logic will end there and will have no room in Ramanuja's works.

In them, the Rig Veda is almost translated perfectly into a different version; the Yajur Veda is fixedly stationed in them; they are the perfectly decorating ornament to Saama Veda. They are the lamp to elucidate tatvaas. They are the reflection, as it were, of Bodhayana's supreme words. May these works of Ramanuja grant us clarity of vision!

53. Ramanuja's works are faultless, pleasing to the heart, and capable of changing even those minds which had previously given themselves to the worship of minor deities like siva, indra, Subramanian, vinayaka, surya, Agni et al. They serve for atonement and single minded devotional discipline with respect to the Lord Supreme.
54. Ramanuja's works claim a victory, since
    1. they possess the actual meaning that appears on the surface; thus integrity is preserved
    2. They act like an ocean of nectar
    3. they are describable as the fruit, as it were, of the penance performed by Vedas
    4. they wipe out the grief of Vedas, which were torn off by idle arguments indulged in by the professional contestant-controversialists of misdirected religious systems. May these works of Ramanuja stay victorious!
55. The Visishtadvaitam is supported by Vedas on their heads (that is the philosophy is based on an accurate meaning and interpretation of Upanishads- which are the "siras" (head) of Vedas). In the various religions, some demoralized minds artificially ascribe false and assumed defects. So what? If a fellow seeks to throw handfuls of mud on the sky and repeatedly so, the net result and the only result are: the thing falls on his head!
56. This world suffers from the darkness of ignorance. Had only Ramanuja, the lamp, (that burns with the oil of love for God), not been there, how would people- intrinsically faultless, avoid, even if they want, the darkness of conceit and the baseless arguments, indulged in by vile speakers of contesting systems, who can be likened, for their effect, to snakes.
57. Oh, you content that the Visishtadvaita of Ramanuja is a recent one. All right. No problem. Let it be so. What if? Then, you perhaps point out that there must have been some religion earlier. What does that establish? That a thing is ancient does not confer any merit on that score of being ancient itself. Anything is modern first and thereafter becomes ancient,

simply by passage of time. Rather letting a false system thrive till now is an error committed by mankind. What I wish to emphasize is that Tankar, Dramidar, Guhadevar, Bodhayanar, and others have nourished this system from early times. Only because there was no opposition then, they did not elaborate and write much. That does not mean that the system is recent or that it suffers a stigma on that score.

58. Ramanuja's works transcend, in their value, even the Vedas. They shower the nectar in the ears of the listeners. This nectar-enjoyment, that is repeated very frequently, makes their minds blossom into high wisdom, so that the nectar of the Lord -experience is made available to them perennially.
59. When I was roaming, like a wild elephant in a large forest, it was the feet of Ramanuja (whose feet are worshipped by Paramikaanthins) that proved to be an effective fetter on my feet to check me from going astray.
60. The Ganga flow that carries pearls, which gets increased due to the water supply from Yamuna and others, can at times flow across high plateaus too. So also the Ganga of Ramanuja's Karuna (daya) that will produce mukthas (delivered souls) is enhanced by the additional benediction from Yamunacharya and others as well, and will remove all our sins, could pass even on a highly-conceited person like me and immerse me with its pure pristine waters.
61. If one has the habit of enjoying the works of Ramanuja comes across other works, he will not take interest in them; Why? These (latter) works emphasize the trifles; while doing so, the words, logic and trend are all tough and they traverse arduous routes. The main theme will be presented in such a manner that the whole exercise will look like a heap of many torn pieces of cloth, knotted together here and there. One would not find anything to relish. After all, Siva bears, on the locks of his head, the pearl-filled Ganga river. But will he ever agree to receive and bear a street-gutter in which frogs flourish?
62. Ramanuja the Ocean of mercy brought and presented to the Lord of Hasthigiri, Varadaraja, pure water from a well. This Varadha is a dark cloud (of mercy again) and what a blessing it is! Even today, that cloud, that Varadaraja is, showers rains in time and beyond our expectations. (This was because of Ramanuja's original kaimkaryam, which is now being returned to us by the Lord, so to say, to Ramanuja's people!)I pay my obeisance to him, the king of ascetics, who is an enemy to the darkness of self-conceit, and who is capable of eliminating enemy-systems by mere literary works.

63. Ramanuja's birth is another avatar of the Lord. The Lord's white garment was got squeezed and rinsed in saffron water to give Ramanuja's garment. And he took the thridanda as the insignia of the ascetic order. That is all. Otherwise, he is merely the Madhusoodhana Moorthy only (for having got the Vedic philosophy in visishtadviatm on track)To us, who have adopted his system by the alluring attraction that his qualities of head and heart exercised over us, an all-round fame of a righteous type is a regular gift, spontaneously coming to us!
64. When Ramanuja walks along on his daily routine, (Madhookara) for receiving food, as a sanyaasi ought to, his feet leave their impression on the Mother Earth, rather deep and clear. Earth now regards herself fortunate and sanctified. I would say even Nithyasooris will cherish this and bear them on their front - head. I long to bear those feet on my head.
65. Many wrongly- directed proponents of parallel systems have gone far away from the area and direction of the system propagated by Ramanuja. Then, they have made by their works, Vyasa, an object of ridicule; they have driven out Vaalmeeki out of their minds; they condemn Sukhar to the state of a mere parrot; they regard Bodhayanar as prattler of worthless things. That is, they have totally ignored our ancient works that ought to have as basis and authority (in order that they could embark on a completely novel system of their own!).
66. Life is the Lord's "maayaa" under which we live and suffer. It is almost a long, very long, night of darkness that mankind had suffered. But to those people, who have drunk deep from the nectar- ocean of Ramanuja's works, which are real curative medicine, this maya-night would not signify a deep slumber of ignorance. That Ramanuja, whose birth in this world had been for banishing all inauspicious and wrong knowledge, has made my heart to go along his path, my thoughts now being meaningful.
67. Abiding by pure Vedic rules, impressed by hundreds of Ramanuja's recorded sayings, banishing all alien connections, developing a loving taste and a dancing enthusiasm, given vent to in a number of ways, for the gracious glance of the Lord who has a perennial proximity to Lakshmi, my mind (like a qualified damsel, so to say) ascends to the top floor of the palace, (namely, of Upanishads) and rejoices!
68. Leave alone the pure intellect of the highest order, sprouting even at birth, seen in the case of Ramanuja's followers. Leave alone, I say, the ever-lasting and mature, magnificent and spontaneously regaling, works

of Ramanuja. What I ask is: Who dares face us, with eyes open, even for a moment, in a war of literary dialectics based on sasthras, for which type of exercise, we are long eager?

69. We have studied Vaisheshika to satisfaction. We have learnt Nyaya. We have got filled with Meemaamasam as well. We have mastered Saankhya and Yoga. However, all this being so, what have we to learn from people who have been roaring aloud in the dense forests of false paths, blinded by the night of nescience, when these systems have been totally demolished by Ramanuja (in his works, like Sri Bhashyam)?
70. Buddha's system fell prostrate; Saankhya philosophy of Kapila hid itself somewhere; Vaisheshika got dried; Systems of Chaarvaka, Siva, et al had no place; Kumaarila Bhatta's (Meemaamskam) died down; Prabhakara's too disappeared.- All this, when Ramanuja's Siddhaantham was placed on a Trivedhi pedestal, to guide us. Then, what is the hope and where is the doubt, regarding the fate of Sankara's and the like?
71. This humble self- Venkatesa - was crowned by great scholars who have drunk deep and delved to depths in the vast ocean, that Ramanuja's works constitute, the ocean that is majestic, whose fame has spread in all directions. I have been able to secure the pleasing accolades of Saadhus, by reason of this work (of Yathiraja Sapthathi), which has the capacity to drive away all contrary talk, even as a strong wind would drive a piece of cotton!
72. This roar, of the Lion - among poets- (Kavi- thaarkika simham) is capable of applying effective fetters on the passions of people (which are verily giant elephants) by tying them to the foot of Yathiraja mountain. (People have now stationed themselves where they ought to be). Let this roar, yathiraja sapthathi, be heard, in the fitness of things, by anyone who may like to meet us in a debate!
73. (Phala sthuthi): This work, yathiraja sapthathi, would serve as respectful harathi to Upanishads, which have been scoffed at and mutilated by bad and wrong interpretations, by many.

    May it bestow, on the reader, the devotional intellect that would be so expansive as to devour even the two vibhUthis of the Lord- Leela Vibhuthi and Nithya Vibhuthi- that is His whole aishwaryam!
74. Those that evince an interest in this work! yathiraja sapthathi, it being of a character and way of life that are apparent and directly discernible (as Hasthaamalaka, as one would say) and being praise worthy, for its words, (even at the hands of the Veda purusha) shall SHINE in the

world, so very lustrously as to make the jealous ones (critics of Yathiraja's system) equivalent to the stars seen in the day time!

YATHIRAJA VIMASATHI – MANVALA MAMUNIGAL

Srimathe Ramanujaya Namah:

Salutations to Sri Manavala mamunigal

Ya: Sthuthim yathipathiprasadaneem
vyajahara Yathiraja Vimsatheem/
Tham Prapanna jana sadhakambhudham
Nowmi Sowmyavara Yogi Pungavam //

Meaning: "I offer my homage to Manavala Maamuni, who blessed us with Yathiraja Vimsathi with the intention of pleasing the heart of Ramanuja. He is the one, who showered Prapannas with the nectar of sakala Saastrarthas, just as the rays of moon fully nourish the Chaathaka birds."

Slokam 1:

Maadhavangri Jalaja dvaya nitya seva prema-
Aavila Aasaya Paraankusa Paadha Bhaktham/
kaamadhi Dhosha Haram Aathma Padhamasrithanam
Ramanuja Yathi Pathim Pranamami moordhna //

(short Meaning) : I salute the emperor of Sanyasis, Ramanuja, who had great vatsalyam for the lotus feet of Nammazhwar and who chased away the blemishes of those, who took refuge at his feet.In this beautiful slokam, MM connects the Acharya paramparai from Sri Ranganatha down to Kuratthazhwan, the dear disciple of Ramanuja. The sound effects of reciting this slokam are beautiful. The poetic skill in Sanskrit of MM is abundantly clear. It is a pity that he elected to write mostly in Tamil.

Slokam 2:

Srirangaraja Charanambhuja Raja hamsam
Srimadh Parankusa Padhambhuja bhungarajam/
Sri Bhattanatha Parakala Mukhabhja mitram
Srivatsa chi (h) nna Charanam (Saranam) Yathirajameede//

(Meaning): I eulogize the emperor of Sanyasis, Ramanuja, who has chosen the lotus feet of Sri Rangaraja as the seat of his permanent residence, just as a king swan would seek a beautiful lotus for its place of rest. I salute Ramanuja, who is resting on the beautiful paadha kamalam of Nammazhwar like a honey-sucking bee sitting on the fragrant lotus flower full of pollen and honey. I offer my homage to Yathiraja, who is like a Sun to the lotus-like faces of Periyazhwar and Thirumangai Azhwar, whose

faces blossom forth at the sight of Ramanuja. I bow before the Bhashyakarar, who is the refuge for Kuresa (or who has Kuresa as his Thiruvadi)

Slokam 3:

Vaacha Yathindra ! Manasaa Vapusha cha
Yushmath Paadharavindha yugalam bhajatham gurunam/
kurooadhinaatha Kurukesa mukha Aadhya punsam
Paadhanuchintana para: sathatham Baveyam //

(Meaning): O Emperor of Sanyasis! May my mind be filled always with the thoughts of the holy feet of those decorating the Acharya Peetams like Kuresa, Thirukkurhai Piran Pillai and others, who are forever offering homage to your lotus feet through their speech, mind and body?

Slokam 4:

Nityam yatheendhra! Divya vapu: smruthou me
Saktham mano bhavathu vaak guna keerthanesou/
Kruthyam dasyakaranam thu kara dvayasya
Vruthantharesthu vimukam karana trayam cha//

(Meaning) : O Emperor of Yathis ! May my mind be blessed to meditate on your beautiful body (divya MangaLa vigraham) !May my speech be engaged always in talking about your auspicious attributes ! May the two hands of mine be always engaged in serving you as your dasa ! May my three karanas (manas, Vaak and Kaayam) be diverted from any other activities !

Slokam 5:

Ashtaksharakya Manuraja Padha Traya Artha Nishtam
Mama athra Vithara Adhya Yathindra Natha: /
Sishtagraganya Jana Sevya Bhavath Padhabhje
Hrushtasthu Nithyam Anubhuya Mama Asya Buddhhi : //

(Meaning) : O Lord of our kulam ! In this samsaric life full of afflictions, I pray to you for the boon of developing taste right now for firmness of mind to follow steadfastly the three doctrines elaborated by the mantra Raajam, Ashtaksharam. May I of limited intellect and achievement be blessed to have the uninterrupted meditation on your holy feet that has been fit for worship by mahans like Kuratthazhwan, Embar, Pillan and others

Slokam 6:

Alpapi Me Na Bhavadheeya Padhabhja Bhakti :
Sabdhathi Bhoga Ruchi: Anvaham Yethate Haa/

Madh Papameva Hii Nidhanam Amushya Nanyath
Tath Vaaraya Aarya Yathiraja Dhayaika Sindho //

(Meaning) : O Ocean of Mercy ! O my Crown Jewel of an Achaarya ! I do not possess deep attachment to your lotus feet. I do not seem to have even a small measure of that bhakthi to your sacred feet. My desire for the worldly pleasures keeps on growing day by day. What a pity ! The fundamental reason for this phenomenon is the underlying paapams of mine. I can not think of any other causative factor for this state. Therefore, I beg you to banish my paapams with your grace.

Slokam 7:

Vrthya pasu: Naravapu: Thvahameedhrusopi
Sruthyathi Siddha Nikhilaathma Gunarayoyam/
Ithyatarena Krithinopi Mitha: Pravakthum
Adhyapi Vanchanaparohitra Yatheendhra Varthe //

(Meaning) : O King of Yathis ! I am an animal edition of human existence. I have the body of a human being (nara Vapu :), but by deeds, I am closer to an animal (Pasu Vrutthi). In spite of this, I mislead others and make them think that I am a model of one shining with aathma Gunas celebrated by the Vedas and Vedangas. I am completely different than the impression I give them. I am a poli Bhagavathan (potkan). What a Pity that I am in this despicable state !

Slokam 8:

Dukkhavaha : Aham Anisam Tava Dushta Cheshta :
Sabdhadhi Bhoga Niratha: Saranagathakya : I
Tvath Paadha Bhaktha Iva Sishta Janowka Madhye
Mithya Charaami Yathiraja Tadhosmi Moorka : /

(Meaning) : O Yathiraja ! What a ruffian and vesha Dhaari (actor) I am ! I carry the title of Prapannan and yet I am engaged in the performance of deeds not permitted by sasthras. I create great sorrow for you with my conduct. I am not fit to be seen in the company of your devout sishyas and yet I pretend that I am one of your very dear disciples and thus practise falsehood. You must take mercy on me and lift me up.

Slokam 9:

Nithyam Thvaham Paribhavami Gurumcha Mantram
Tathdevathamapi Na Kinchith Aho Api Pibhemi !
Ittham Satobhya Satavath Bhavadheeya Sankhe
Dhrushta: Charami Yathiraja Tadhosmi Moorka: /

(Meaning) : O Yathiraja ! Daily I disgrace my Acharya, the manhtram and the Devatha associated with that mantram. I do not seem to be afraid of doing so even a little. What a pity ? I roam boldly among the group of your devout sishyAs like a great one, who reveres Acharyan, mathram and its adhishtAna devatha. I am indeed a ruffian !

Slokam 10 :

Haa Hantha Hantha Mansa Kriyaya Cha Vaacha
Yoham Charaami Sathatham Trividhapacharan/
Soham Tavapriyakara: Priyakruthvadevam
Kaalam Nayami Yathiraja Tadhosmi Moorka : //

(Meaning) : O Yathiraja ! What a tragedy ! I commit three kinds of Apacharams through my mind, speech and body. I continue to do many things that cause you displeasure. Yet I go on acting like I am doing all that you instructed me to do. I am spending my time in this fashion.I am indeed a despicable ruffian

Slokam 11:

Paape Kruthe Yathi Bhavanthi Bhaya Anuthapa lajja:
Puna: Karanam Asya Katham Katetha/
Mohena Me Na Bhavathi Iha Bhayathilesa:
Tasmath puna: Puna: Agham Yathiraja Kurve //

(Meaning) : O Yathiraja ! If one feels fear and repentance over committing sins, how can that person engage in committing the sin once again. As far as I am concerned, I do not seem to experience any sense of shame or repentance over repeated commission of sins. Therefore, I keep on piling up my sins.

Slokam 12:

Anthar bahis Sakalavasthushu Santham eesam
Antha: Puras Sthithamiva Aveekshamana :/
Gandharbha Vasya Hrudhayas Sathatham Bhavami
Hantha Tvadh Agra Gamanasya Yatheendhra ! Naarha : //

(Meaning) : O Yathiraja ! I am not fit to stand before you. I am like a man blind from birth that can not recognize an object in front of him. Similarly, I am unable to see the Lord, who pervades the inside (Antharyami) and outside every object of His creation. I am always under the influence of my desires (Kama Paravasan). What a tragedy! I do not have the qualifications to stand before you.

Slokam 13 :

Taapathrayee janitha Dukkhanipathinopi
Dehasthithou Mama Ruchisthu na Tannivrutthou/
Yethasya Kaaranamaho Mama paapameva Naatha!
Tvameva Hara Tath Yathiraja Seegram //

(Meaning) : O King among Sanyasis ! Even if my body is afflicted by the sorrows caused by the three kinds of Taapas, and I can not bear the sufferings caused by them, I have no deep desire to leave this body. Actually, I nourish this body. My accumulated sins are the reasons behind this attitude of mine. What a pity! O my Paramacharya! Please banish my sins quickly so I can be freed from the sufferings caused by the Taapa Thrayas

Slokam 14:

Vaachaam Agochara Mahaguna Desika agrya
kooradhinaatha kathitha Akhila Naichya Paathram/
Yesha: aham Yeva na Punar Jagadhi Yeedhrusas
Tath Raamanujarya ! Karunaiva thu Madhgathisteh //

(Meaning) : O Arya Ramanuja ! I am indeed the one, who fits in this world the complete description of the person with all the condemnable attributes ! There is no one else, who can answer to that description. That is why, I conclude that your compassion is most suited for me and to lift me up from my morass.

Slokam 15:

Suddha aathma yaamuna grootthama kooranatha
Bhattaakhya desika vara uktha samastha naichyam/
Adhya asthi asankuchitham yeva mayee iha lokhe
Tasmath yatheendhra ! Karunaivathu madhgathis teh //

(Meaning) : O Yathiraja ! All of the sentiments of self-condemnation recorded by the great and pure Acharyas like Alavandhar, Kuresa, and Parasara Bhattar are possessed by me in its entirety. Therefore, O Yathiraja! Your mercy has me as the most appropriate target.

Slokam 16:

Sabdhadhi Bhoga Vishaya Ruchi : Asmadheeya
Nashta Bhavathi iha Bhavadh Dayaya Yatheendhra /
Tvadh Daasadaasa Daasa Gananaa Sarama Avathou
Tatthdasadhaika Rasatha Mama Aviratha Asthu //

(Meaning) : O Yathiraja ! May Thou bless me to be rid of desires to enjoy the transient pleasures associated with the use of my limbs ! May Your Daya banish my taste for such pleasures that only cause misery later!

May You make me an enduring servant of the servant of the servant of your servant and reach the sarama state. I have nothing to offer at your altar. It is only your nirhethuka Karuna that I am looking for as my savior.

Slokam 17:

Sruthyagra Vedhya Nija Divya Gunasvarupa:
Prathyakshataam Upagatha: iha rangaraja :/
Vasya: Sadha Bhavathi teh yathiraja tasmath
Saktha: Svakeeya Jana Paapa Vimochane Tvam //

(Meaning) : O Yathiraja ! Ranganatha is presenting Himself at Srirangam for all to enjoy Him. He has the auspicious attributes (Kalyana Gunas) that can only be understood through the declarations of the Vedas. That Rangantha of matchless power and glory is under your control. Therefore, O Acharya Saarvabhouma ! You are indeed capable of removing my miseries.

Slokam 18:

Kalathrayepi karanathraya nirmithathi
Paapagriyasya Saranam Bhagavadh Kshamaiva/
Sa acha Tvayaiva Kamalaramane Arthitha Yath
Kshemassa yeva hi Yatheendhra ! Bhavathsrithanam //

(Meaning) : O Raamanuja ! For the one, who has committed limitless sins through mind, body and speech, the Lord of Srirangam is the sole refuge in the past, present and future. Our protection is indeed that prayer of yours to the Ranganatha on a Panguni Uttaram day through your Saranagathi. That is our invaluable and only protection.

Slokam 19 :

Srimaan yatheendhara ! Tava divya Padhaabhja sevaam
Srisailanaatha Karuna Parinama Dhatthaam /
Tham anvaham Mama Vivathaya Naatha ! Tasya :
Kaamam Viruddham Akhilam cha Nivarthaya Tvam //

(Meaning) : O My Lord Ramanuja ! Please increase my blessings to have the darsanam of your lotus feet daily. That blessing was conferred first on me by my own Acharya, Thirmali Aazhwar, out of the great compassion that he had for me. Please banish any other desire that stands in the way of the darsana bhaagyam of your lotus feet.The reference here is to the request of Maamunigal's own Achaarya, Thiruvaaimozhi Pillai (Srisaila Naathar) asking his disciple to compose a sthothram on Raamanuja.

Slokam 20:

Vijăpanam Yathithadhya thu Maamakeenam
Ankikurushva yathiraja Dayambhurase/
Ajňa : ayam Aathmagunalesa Vivarjithasccha
Tasmaath Ananyasarano Bhavathi ithi Mathvaa //

(Meaning) : O Yathiraja ! O Ocean of Mercy! Please recognize me as an ignoramus, who does not know much about Tattva, Hitha, and Purusharthams and as a helpless one without any redeeming qualities (Aathma Gunas).Please accept my prayerful request for your grace and protection and bless me.

RAMANUJA NOORTHATHI – THIRUVARANGATTHU AMUDHANAR

1. Sarveshwaran is the One who has Periya Piraatti Mahalakshmi, (seated on Lotus Flower) permanently residing in His Chest. Nammazhwar blessed us with the Divine Thiruvaaymozhi which is an excellent description of most auspicious kalyana gunas of Sarveshwaran Sriya: Pathi Sriman Narayanan. Ramanuja took refuge and immersed himself at the Lotus feet of Sadagopar- Nammazhwar. The great scholars, who have studied and mastered various saashthras, have realized the greatness of Ramanuja (and his philosophy/doctrine) and have surrendered to His feet as the only means for them. Oh mind! In order to enables ourselves and let us also be saved by taking refuge at the Lotus Feet of Ramanuja, come and let us utter the divine names of Ramanuja!
2. My mind never thinks of anything and anyone except the greatest kalyana gunas of Ramanuja- Emperumanar- who never separates himself from the Lotus feet of Thirumangaiazhwar of Thirukkuraiyaloor (who mercifully blessed us with the most divine Prabhandhams), brushing aside and simply ignoring "others" who, though blessed with being born of this birth and being exposed to Veda saashthras (and their greatest esoteric description of Emperumanar Sriya:Pathih and His Kalyana gunas), do not take refuge at the Lotus Feet of Emperumanar, nor do they mediate even once on the Lotus Feet of the Most Beautiful Lord of Thiruvarangam. I, frankly do not know how I got this thinking! It is my Bhagyam! (and ours too!).
3. Oh my great mind! I pay my respects to you. You are so great to have removed me from any connection with those lowly, cruel, persons who are full of "I" and "mine" (ahamkara, mamakarams). You have made me join the Lotus Feet of the Bhagawathas, due to our love and affection towards the Vishyam of Emperumanar Ramanuja, who is full of most

auspicious kalyana gunas, most virtuous, straightforward and is pure. What a great service your have done to me, dear!

4. Emperumanar, made even me, the lowly, unworthy one, as an object of worthiness on this earth. How? He plucked the roots of all my karmic diseases, which have grown huge and tremendous over the ages due to my Jnanam (wrong knowledge or no knowledge); Also, he ordered me utter and praise loudly the greatest kalyana gunas of the Primordial Chief (even during the Cosmic cycle end). Such Greatest Emperumanar Ramanuja places his Lotus Feet on my head permanently. Hence, there is no end for me anymore.
5. If some people (who are not blessed with the mind to appreciate the greatness of Ramanuja) talk low of these verses which declare that Ramanuja is the invaluable wealth for me (and Srivaishnavas), even that adds to his greatness only. Those who know of Ramanuja and his kalyana gunas will not see any flaw or find anything wrong with these verses; and also, will they realize that it is due to my bhakti /devotion towards Ramanuja that has enabled me to compose this.
6. Those who are good at composing verses with deep meanings and rhyming words, due to their immense bhakti towards Ramanuja, sing lovely poems on Ramanuja. I, the lowly self, sinner, devoid of any bhakti, am attempting foolishly to do this work of singing about the limitless, unbounded greatness of Ramanuja. (How will I succeed?)
7. Kooratthazhwar (Ramanuja's prime disciple) has got the indescribable greatness in him; He has got rid of and is able to cross over the three great pitfalls that pushes one down with its strong influence and do great damage to the individual (they are: False pride for being born in the highest caste; for being blessed with the good education and jnanam; for being a strict follower of Vairagyam and Anushtaanam - Azhwan has no pride even though he fulfils and has all three above attributes! What a personality!) I, after taking refuge at his feet, am able to compose on the greatness of Emperumanar Ramanuja, (who enables his disciples get over their karmic bondage and samsaaric afflictions), and am able to go away from the track of being away from the Greatest Bliss. Hence, there is no grievance or regret for me.
8. Without realizing the eternal belongingness / association of the soul (athma) to Emperumanar Sriya:Pathi Sriman Narayanan, human beings worry unnecessarily about the external material objects lying in the outside world. To remove such a worry from humans, what poigaiazhwar did was to sing the great Tamil pasurams describing the

basic Vedic housed in simple Tamil words, "Vaiyam Thagaliyaa" (such that we all can understand) so nicely. Ramanuja, who thinks of such great work of Poigaiazhwar (which is like a lustrous lamp) always in his mind, is always my Master- my Lord.

9. The darkness that prevails in our minds and prevents us from real sing the vision of our Sarva seshi -our eternal Master Sriya pathi Sriman Narayanan, can be overcome by (reading) the great merciful work "jnanac Chudar vilakkerrinen" of Bhuthatthazhwar, who lit the Purest Paripoorna ParaJnAna deepam in his works. Ramanuja always enjoy keeping this Great Azhwar's Lotus feet in heart. Great scholars and Bhagawathas, who always praise the most auspicious kalyana gunas of such Greatest Emperumanar Ramanuja are capable of establishing the Vedic truths and protect the same and not let them get destroyed by other religions
10. After the removal of darkness from human beings due to the first two Azhwars' grace, Peyazhwar described the beauty of Piraatti samEtha Sriya: Pathih Sriman Narayanan as "Thirukkanden; pon meni kanden". Ramanuj always praises the Lotus Feet of Peyazhwar. Those blessed ones- Bhagyasaalis- who place the Feet of Bhagawathas (adorning themselves with their bhatki towards Ramanuja) on their heads like the most fragrant flowers, are always great.
11. The Greatest Thiruppanazhwar sang the lovely pasurams in sweet, simple Tamil language, with the complete essence of all four Vedic truths, housing the Nature and most auspicious (Kalyana gunas) attributes of Sarveshwaran Sriya: Pathi Sriman Narayanan as They are. Ramanuja adorned His Head with the beautiful Lotus Feet of this Azhwar. I can not choose to describe in words the greatness of Bhagawathas (who have held on to the Lotus feet of Ramanuja in this world surrounded by oceans (of sishyas of Ramanuja?)) on their strictest adherence to saasthras and their anushtaanam.
12. Emperumaanaar Ramanujacharya has got the heart always housing the Lotus feet of Thirumazhisai vandha Jothi- Thirumazhisaiazhwar-Bhaktisaarar. Everyone holds the pristine pure Lotus Feet of this Greatest Emperumanar. Always they think and meditate on these Lotus Feet, as the means and are blessed with this great wealth. I am in love with, always indebted and am a servant to such Great jnănis / Bhagawathas and none else.
13. Thondaradippodi Azhwar, is the One who made most fragrant Thulasi garlands lovingly with tremendous bhakti for Sriya: Pathi Ranganayika

sametha Ranganathan of Srirangam; who also composed the sweetest anubhavam filled bhakti laden great garland of Thirumaalai on Lord Sri Ranganathan, the Lord ever associated with the most auspicious Kalyana gunas; who is the epitome and personification of Bhagawtha Seshathvam; who excelled himself calling himself as the dust at the feet of Bhagawthas (devotees) of Sriman Narayanan. The Lotus feet of Emperumanar- Ramanuja (who does not desire for any thing else except the Feet of this Great Thondaradippodi Azhwar) are the only Greatest thing that I need to hold on to.

14. Emperumanar Ramanuja always praises the feet of those who desirously and lovingly sing the pasurams of Kulasekharazhwar, that are laid out in sweet, simple Tamil words, bringing out the meanings of saasthrAs like the nine gems. He, the One who is unparalleled and peerless, especially with regard to his respect for Bhagawathas, will never ever leave me. Hence, I am able to get rid of my sins, aspiring for the Purushaartham, with his grace and thereby avoiding the torturous penance that need to be performed staying on the mountains, or in the midst of the sea, or in the dense forests.
15. Due to his never fading, never ending flood of bhatki for Emperumanar Sriman Narayanan, with the apprehension that even He will be subjected to the evil eyes of people casting on Him, Periyazhwar sang hymns to greet the Lord for many years, singing pallandu, pallandu. This Lord is always permanent. Sarvarakshakan and still Azhwar sang and greeted long life for Him, forgetting himself due to his bhakti. Emperumanar Ramanuja always keeps this great Azhwar in his heart and I shall not join those who do not take refuge at the Feet of Ramanuja and who do not hold on to his Kalyana guans as their only support. After being blessed with such a thought, what am I to grieve for?
16. The One who had the greatness of having placed the fragrant garland of flowers on her head and thereby made them more fragrant and more divine for Sriman Narayanan, was Andal. The recipient of Her natural daya and compassion was Ramanuja, whose breath and life was only the thoughts of Andal. And Her grace. What this Ramanuja - King among Saints did was He took avataar, when the blemish less, faultless, Vedas were wrongly interpreted and misinterpreted and were completely destroyed by "other" religious sects and darkness engulfed the whole world with kalipurushan reigning the whole earth; He established the Vedic truths unambiguously and accurately, not contradicting with any other sruthis/ Vedic statements with his philosophy and protected the Vedas, the world (form the darkness) and thereby mankind. (So, you

too shall take refuge at His Lotus Feet like me; for He has saved you too from the darkness!)

17. Emperumanar- Pattharavi Perumal- the Lord of Thirukkannamangai- the Lord being praised by the Vedas- the unparalleled, huge male elephant like Emperumanar- in the standing posture was sung by Neelan - Thirumangaiazhwar so beautifully to the great satisfaction quenching the thirst of Bhagawathas fully with his pAsurams in Tamil. The loving darling of such Greatest Thiruma Ngaiazhwar is Ramanuj., who is my Master. The greatness of all Bhagawathas who reach Ramanuja as the only refuge is: Whatever sorrows/ unhappy events strike, they never get depressed and worry about them thinking "oh no! I have this problem, etc.."; nor do they jump with joy when there is a flood of happy events in their lives. They are such paramaikaanthins. (Thus, if you have taken refuge at the Lotus Feet of Ramanuja, you too need not feel unduly perturbed by the happy/unhappy events happening in your life!)
18. Nammazhwar blessed the world with His Divine pasurams that are the essence of not-easy-to-understand Vedas, in sweet, simple Tamil words easily understandable by everyone. For other religious people (satars- ajNanis), he stood opposite to them, and was called Satagopar, thus. Madhurakaviazhwar was blessed to have Satagopar always fully in his mind as his Acharyan. Ramanuja- Emperumanar, who gracefully blesses and narrates to all his sishyas always about the greatness of Madhurakaviazhwar, is my only support and refuge.
19. Emperumanar- Ramanuja-stood like a rock declaring the truth about Nammazhwar's Thiruvaaymozhi saying "Thiruvaaymozhi is the limitless, unbounded wealth; always caring, loving Father; Mother who always thinks of our well being and good;" Acharyan (teacher) who mercifully and most compassionately corrects us for our benefits and betterment and Sarveshwaran Sriman Narayanan Himself, whom we desire to serve for, due to Acharyan's Upadesam and grace. Such is the greatness of Thiruvaaymozhi, Tamizh Vedam, of Nammazhwar, which he sang due to the grace of Sriman Narayanan. Such Emperumanar, who declared this greatest truth about Thiruvaaymozhi, is the sweetest insatiable nectar to me and always gives happiness to me limitlessly.
20. Sweetest lovely cool Thiruvaaymzohi came out of the Divine beautiful mouth of Nammazhwar. Nathamuni considers himself belonging to all those who sing the pasurams of Thiruvaaymozhi lovingly and devotedly; he immerses himself in the qualities of Bhagawathas who recite Thiruvaaymozhi. Similar to a very thirsty person dashing into a

pond and hurriedly, continues to drink incessantly, Ramanuja placed Nathamuni in his heart, drank him lovingly and enjoyed greatly. Such great Ramanuja is my indestructible limitless huge wealth.

21. Pristinely pure anushTaanaseelar- (one who strictly adheres to saashthras and anushtanams), the Chief of saints of Srivaishnavas is Yamunacharyar- Alavandhaar. Emperumanar- Ramanuja, who is blessed to be Lotus Feet of Yamunacharyar, saved me. Hence, I shall never ever praise the lowly human beings who are full of ahamkara, mamakarams (I and mine), saying "you are like the rainy cloud to shower us with wealth", etc...
22. Kaarthigeyan–SubrahmaNyan, Gajamukhan- Vinayakan, Sivan, DurgaDevi were all chased away, showing their backs, when they came to support Vaanaasuran, during his battle with Emperumanar Sriman Narayanan. They all praised the greatness of Lord Sriman Narayanan saying "Oh the Cause of all three worlds!" ("Kaarana bhuthane!"), and hence, Lord pardoned the asuran (and left him alive after cutting his shoulders). Emperumanar- Sri Ramanuja, who praises such greatest Lord always, is our invaluable saved wealth for our protection.
23. "Apath rakshakan" - That's how Ramanuja is considered as, by the Bhagawathas and are kept very safely with all precautions in the core of their hearts at all times during day and night, as a treasure lovingly. About such Sri Ramanuja, I, the lowly self, the one who is addressed as "the worst sinner, the likes of whom can not be found in anyone else", have attempted to praise at all times days and nights, with a pretension of sincerity (though not in the mind!) (I have an apprehension that) will it do any harm to His greatest glories? (What humility!)
24. For ages, time immemorial, for so many births, I had been suffering from samsaaric afflictions and karmic diseases, grieving terribly with sorrows and pains right from the fetus stage unto the death bed (in every birth), with tremendous karma bhandhams, that engulf the AthmA like flies sitting on the honey; that never satisfy or get saturated in spite of (bad) experiences; that never ever get purified even when washed umpteen times. Having seen and realized the great daya and grace of Emperumanar, Audharyam of Ramanuja, (who had simply inert the other religions that were talking against Vedic truths with false notions, like that of a lamp killing the small insects) on me, I have become pure and been saved.
25. Oh most merciful Sri Ramanuja! The One who does not the see the level or status of recipient of your mercy and showers it on him like the rainy

clouds raining on all areas! The Ocean of compassion! I, the storehouse of all kinds of sorrows, too was considered as an object of worthiness by you and was saved by DevarIr. Hence, thoughts of your kalyana gunas bring a great blissful Anandham for the soul. In this vast world, surrounded by oceans, which is capable of knowing your auspicious qualities as they are fully! (None; the qualities are so great and unbounded, unlimited!)

26. Ramanuja, after removing all my "Anaadhikaala" Karmic diseases, shines so gleefully, and spans His luster everywhere like the shining bright clouds. And the Bhagawathas who take refuge at the Lotus Feet of such greatest Ramanuja irrespective of their caste, their jnAnam, their birth, their nature, etc., the very thought that they have realized the greatness of Yathirajar and have taken refuge at His Feet, that nature alone of theirs makes me serve them for ever. (Great souls as a sign of modesty claims that they are lowly selves, seelamilla Siroyon, Siriya jnănatthan, etc.., though they are not at all so.)
27. Emperumanar! Ramanuja! You keep granting all that one asks for and continue to grant to the fullest extent; thus, your audhaaryam keeps on increasing multifold. Due to such great nature, you have even chosen to reside in this sinner- paaviyen's heart. My heart is pained to see that such Glorious Devarir (you) are residing in such lowly heart of Adiyen in spite of the disqualification that Adiyen possesses. My heart has an apprehension and is afraid that your glory and greatness will be corrupted by your staying in adiyen's heart and chooses to stay aloof. (What a description by Amudhanaar!)
28. SarvEshwaran Sriya: Pathi Sriman Narayanan, who fought with the cruel kamsan, is precisely opposite to the nature of Kamsan in all respects. He is Nimalan- blemish less- faultless. He is in love with the soft-natured (like that of cotton) Nappinaai Piraatti. Those who do not hold on to the Lotus Feet of Sriman Narayanan can no even go a step towards Ramanuja. Thus, my mouth will keep praising Ramanuja only and none else. How have I been blessed with such a great life! (It is His Grace!)
29. Emperumanar- Ramanuja kept in the core of his heart, with great bhakti, the pasurams of Thiruvaaymozhi, that are considered equal to Vedas, that are considered the essence of Vedas, that are the graceful Arulicheyalgal of Nammazhwar of Thirukkurugoor, that are composed in sweet simple Tamil language. When will I (the lowly self) get His grace for being granted the permanent Bhagyam of being associated with the Bhagawathas and the recipient of the kataaksham from

Bhagawthas who have realized and known the Greatness and qualities of such Ramanuja?

30. Ramanuja, declared assertively and firmly (based on Vedic truths) in Sri Bhashyam that Sarveshwaran is the most wonderful - most Beautiful Lord- Accharya Bhuthan- who is Sarva seshi (for all souls), who is full of samastha Kalyana gunas (most auspicious attributes), who has the whole universe and the beings as part of His Thirumeni (Divine Body) who is always associated with Sri. He did not declare this expecting fame or monetary gain from the same. He declared only and purely for the sake and benefit of the worldly souls (like us). Because of such greatest compassion and grace, He has enslaved me. And now, because of being blessed with the servitude to Emperumanar, what if I am granted the moksham (Bhagawadh anubhavam), or Kaivaylam (Athmanubhavam) or even if I am engulfed by the scorching flames of hell and suffering thereby? I care two hoots now for them.
31. Oh my mind! (who is always with me bonded in this material world!) We have been suffering for ages in the bodies of Devas, humans, plants (or trees), animals, et al. Today, even with no effort from us, our of Ramanuja's grace, do you know what are we blessed with: We are blessed to stand at the Lotus Feet of Ramanuja, who is the darling child of most beautiful strong shouldered, most auspicious -Kalyana gunaganouga mahaarNavan- Atthigiri Perarulalan- Perundevi Piraatti Sametha Varadan. Our Master- sarvaseshi.
32. Emperumanar- Ramanuja, is the One who protected the earth by saving the Vedas and the people due to his Audharyam, who established the Saranagathy tatvam, who offered Himself so mercifully to us completely (for us to take refuge at His Lotus Feet). Those who do take refuge at His Lotus Feet are blessed with (naturally coming to them, even though they do not expect or anticipate- they are parmaikaanthins): Commands good respect from others, Balanced mental frame to view both happiness and sorrows equally, Fame and popularity among the people due to their conquering the influence of cruel, storing senses, Great jnAnam (knowledge) of Tatva, Hitha, Purushaartham, and the Bhakti (towards Sriya:Pathih Sriman Narayanan) arising out of all the same.
33. The Divine Chakrayudham, the Sword, the Mace, The Bow, The Divine Conch, are all the five most Divine Pancha Ayudhams (weapons) of Sriyapathih Sriman Narayanan - Sarveshwaran, who is always with Periya Piraatti Sri Mahalakshmi, seated on the Lotus Flower in his chest, who is the darling master of Sri Mahalakshmi, together rushed to assist

Ramanuja on His endeavors in the Earth. (It is also told that Ramanuja is also an expansion of these Ayudhams, in addition to being an avatar of Adhseshan)

34. It is not comprehensible and measurable mentally the severity and intensity with which Kalipurushan torments the earth and its people. Just like a light lit in the darkness, Emperumanar- Ramanuja appeared to dispel the darkness of Kali. This alone does not speak great about Ramanuja. (What is this?) His complete burning the Huge Book which Yama has written taking the account of all my sins, is what makes Him tick in His Greatness. (WoW! adadaaa...! What a narration!)
35. I shall never ever seek any other (demi)God. I shall never sing or praise others like what other poets sing the lowly human beings as "Oh Merciful clouds! Oh storm! etc.. etc..". I shall never ever forget the Lotus Feet of Ramanuja, that are pristinely pure, that are Parama bhoogyam for those who take refuge at them, and that belong to the Greatest Sri Ramanuja, who simply melts with love and bhakti when he simply utters the Divine Name of Sweet Ranganathan. Thus, how will the karmic diseases trouble me hereafter?
36. Kannapiraan- the Sarveshwaran- the Sarva seshi- the One who has the Most strongest Chakrayudham that can destroy the enemies completely, that day, explained to Arjunan (who was completely confused at to what and what not is to be done?) the rich, deep, esoteric down to earth practical philosophy, in His Gitopadesam. He established the Vedic truths (that are hidden like the most valuable gems at the bottom of Deep Ocean) in simple verses in Gita and explained to Arjunan (as a vyajam) for the benefit of the world. Emperumanar, Ramanuja, later, in order to alleviate the sufferings of the world, established the same truths in an easy-to-consume fashion for the benefit of the world. Such merciful compassion /nature, He has offered Himself to me to take refuge at His Lotus feet. It is His Greatness and nature.
37. Emperumanar Ramanuja always immerses himself in the Great famous epic Ramayana and keeps it with great devotion in his heart. The Bhagawathas, who praise the Kalyana gunas of such Greatest Ramanuja, are the ones who have realized that the Athma of theirs is only to serve and be enslaved by Ramanuja. Thus, they have also given me a re-orientation and showed me Seshathvam of Emperumanar. I did not hold on to his Lotus Feet, on my own. It is because they have shown me the greatness of Emperumaanaar; I could get a glimpse of Yathiraja's greatness.

38. I, the lowly self, who has been under the wrong impression and knowledge for ages that Athma is the Lord, have been enslaved by Ramanuja and enabled me serve his Bhagawathas. Having done so on me, mercifully and gracefully, now, my query is: why at all I was left groping in the dark so long for ages, and so many births? When I can see the depth of compassion of Devarir on adiyen, I am not able to comprehend this inexplicable query. Please tell me.
39. Oh mind! We have been suffering asking and seeking for materials, land, progeny, wife, et al, and are constantly under the pangs of pains. Emperumanar- Ramanuja, blessed us mercifully with the right jnAnam to know of his limitless kalyana gunas only, and removed all our karmic diseases and sufferings. Who else can protect and save us like what Yathirajar did? Can we equate him to anyone else at all? (Absolutely not.)
40. Emperumanar- Ramanuja- whose qualities are only equal to the Lord Vamanan, preached the world with great truthful, Vedic philosophy without their even asking for it. He is so merciful. Moksham, Dharmam, artham, and kaamam, are the four goals of life; so they say. But Yathiraaja, a celibate like Vaamanan, says Kaamam (Desire) for union with Kannan is the only worthy goal; The other three are just to support this divine passion. Dharmam removes the sins that stand as a hurdle for this kaamam. Artham is used for giving alms and thus aids for going towards the goal. Moksham also aggravates the longing (Kaamam) for Kannan. Thus, Kaamam (for kannan) is the Best. (What an enjoyment of Yathirajar's greatness by Amudhanaar!)
41. The world could not realize the greatness and Sarvasesjthvam of Emperumanar Sriya: Pathi Sriman Narayanan, in spite of His taking so many avatars and showing Himself Prathyaksham to the world. But Emperumanar, Ramanuja, who considered the sufferings and sorrows of all those who hold onto His Lotus Feet, as His own, and blessed the world with the great Sri Bhasjyam and other works. Now the world is richly blessed with the correct knowledge (jnănam) and become the servants (seshans) of Sriman Narayanan.
42. I was completely residing in the beautiful bosom of young women (who hide their faults of their bodies with the fragrant flowers, colorful clothing, smearing sandal paste, adorning ornaments, etc,) without an awareness of any other pleasure; I was deeply caught in the muddy waters of lust and was about to be finished. There appeared the Parama dhaarmeegar- Ramanuja and He blessed me with His grace, mercifully

declaring that Sriya: Pathi Ranaganathan,the Lord of Srirangam alone is the Master of all souls, without expecting even an iota of any benefit or prathi upakaaram (paying him back) from adiyen. What a mercy! That's His natural compassion on us. Such a Parama kaaruniko Acharya saarvabhoumar is Yathirajar.

43. Oh People! Bhagyasaalis, (Lucky ones) who are blessed with the avataar of Emperumanar Ramanuja!, (who has surely realized this) am telling this to you who have not yet realized this: Emperumanar chased away the strong Kali purushan's influence on the world destroying all dharmam and virtues. (Kaliyum kedum; Kandu konmin says Nammazhwar). By the simple utterance of the divine name of this Acharya, bhakti and jnanam will automatically grow; just by a mere telling of his name, will intensify the sweetness in your mouth leaving an excellent taste in your mouth. Also, all irremovable sins and sorrows of samsaaric afflictions will run away showing their backs to us, in addition to all these anubhavams.
44. In this vast world, one wishes to know what the ultimate Purushaartham is. Ramanuja studies the art, music, the drama in Tamil, the four Vedas and all limitless innumerable Dharma's and analyzed them individually as well as in toot. He stands like a shining light, establishing the greatest truths reflecting the sruthis and Vedic truths in clear categorical terms, and is praised for His Kalyana gunas by Great scholars with love and devotion. This world (and its people), oh no! are not listening and paying attention to my words. (Are they not sensible?)
45. There is no other enjoyment for me except for Your Lotus Feet. And obtaining this enjoyment too is also by means of taking refuge at Your Lotus feet. You have blessed this knowledge or realization in those Bhagawathas who have this truthful jnanam and also to adiyen who has no such realisation or any jnAnam/qualification. Your mercy and daya on me is without expecting anything in return from adiyen. aiyo! If I attempt to describe this greatness of such greatest compassionate nature, then, words do not come to my rescue. It is better to simply keep quite, only thinking silently of Your Greatest merciful nature.
46. Emperumanar- Ramanuja studied Thiruvaaymozhi of Nammazhwar, which by its rash deep narration o Vedic truths, chased away and destroyed completely the other six religions, (that could survive only by a mere play of words and logic with no examples or proofs, pramaanams and clarifications of their contradictions. What Ramanuja did to me is this: Since I do not have the required jnamam or the capacity

to grasp the same, He simply resided in my heart as the means and the end for me to take refuge at His Lotus feet and be saved. I simply lost to His greatest Kalyana gunas of such merciful Nature of Yathirajar, and hats off to him.

47. Emperumanar–Ramanuja declared that SriRanganathan- the reclining Lord of Srirangam on Adhiseshan- is the One praised by Vedas, One worshipped by everyone including even Nithya sooris and is also Our Lord. He showed the Lord to the world that was filled with adharmam (non virtuous). He simply destroyed my karmic diseases, that can not be overcome by praayacchitthams or experiencing various births (for the sins are so huge and great quantities). Not only did he do that to me, He also resided in my heart at all times in the day and in the night, without leaving me even for a fraction of second. There is no parallel or equal to His mercy of residing in my heart. There is none equal to me, who am blessed with this Bhagyam.
48. There can not be anyone who is so lowly of having the qualities that are not befitting to the Blissful soul and having the qualities of possessing a vibharitha (wrong) knowledge in abundance like me. Such unparalleled I (the aparaadha chakravartthi as claimed by Desikan in daya sathakam), was considered by Ramanuja, taking my lowly qualities alone as the required qualification to save me. So merciful is He and such compassionate nature alone is the shadows that can protect us form the scorching samsaaric afflictions. Since, there is none as bad as I am; it speaks even more of His greatness to save me even. Ramanuja! The One praised even by all those Bhagawathas who are blemish less and faultless! You are the swaroopa laabham for me; and the Guna Laabham for Devas; when such is the case, will we ever go away from you? Never.
49. Emperumanar- Ramanuja, who enjoys placing his head at the Lotus Feet of Lord Ranganatha (of Srirangam, filled with fertile fields, and beautiful ponds of Lotus flowers, where the Lord has His Yoganithra), appeared on this earth and do you know what all happened: The Dharmic way and Vedic lifestyle that were decaying started getting revived; the six religions that are against the Vedic principles and are full of flaws and bluffs- which propagate non Vedic philosophy, were simply finished off; the cruel kali purushan who is the cause of all havoc in this world also was crushed. What a way the world is saved with His avatar!
50. The greatness of the Lotus feet of Emperumanar- Ramanuja (who is the embodiment of all kalyana gunas existing all over the world, who is the

King, Chief among saints) is: They (the Lotus feet) reside in the hearts of Bhagawathas (who know that only Emperumanar Sriman Narayanan is the means as well as the end) like the rising bright sun; They walk in the hearts of those other non Vedic religious people giving them fearsome spine chilling shivers from the roars of Yathirajar's Veda based arguments; They (the Lotus feet) adorn even this lowly self, who is the personification of all sins and is looked down by everyone, as an ornament. How great are They!

51. For the sake of PaaNdavaas, who held on to Kannan as the only support for them, Kannan drove the chariot in the battle field Himself in front of the enemy group of Duryodhanaadhis; He showed Himself to Paandavaas (Arjunan) and also decided to finish the battle with an intent to destroy the Kauravaas completely. Emperumanar appeared as the insatiable nectar and Bhogyam for the Bhagawathas, who are deeply immersed in the most auspicious, limitless attributes of Kannan. Such greatest Emperumanar Ramanuja has appeared in this world only to rule me; Actually thinking of it, there is not any other reason.
52. He saw to it that the non Vedic religions shiver with his roaring arguments and Vedic based philosophy. With his enormous fame and popularity that he had earned he covered the whole earth. He entered into me, on his own, out of his mercy, in spite of my never seeking for the same. He removed all my karmic diseases and joined me with the most beautiful Lotus Feet of Sri Ranganayaki sametha Sri Ranganatha of Srirangam. My Master- Ramanuja performed such wonders.
53. The most merciful Ramanuja, who had come to my place searching for adiyen, only to enslave me; who has got such a glorious nature of stooping down so low to my level (such a sowseelyam, because of which even the learned scholars fall in love with him); who has got such great nature of not seeing the defects or faults of others and moves with them in a fashion suitable and likeable to them., established the Greatest most important truth that the Paraman Sriya:Pathih Sriman Narayanan alone is the SeshI (Master) and all the worlds, the innumerable, countless Athmas (beings) living in them are all seshans (servants). Even when none sought or asked for this; still, Yathirajar mercifully established this truth for our benefit.
54. Because of Sri Ramanuja's such great nature of mixing with all irrespective of their lowly nature (like that of mine) with such sowseelya guna, He had brought the world great things as follows: Similar to the blooming of fresh Lotus flowers when the Sun rises, Vedic truths were

established firmly and all other six non Vedic religions were simply crushed. Vedas that describe the greatness of SarvEshwaran and the manner in which the Aradhana need to be performed to the Sarveshawran, were feelings happy and excited hearing the roars of Sri Ramanuja, against other religions. ("Kalippurrathu is described by Manavaala maamuni as Garvam kondathu"- Vedas felt proud). The sweetest, Thiruvaaymozhi, the Tamil Veda, sung by Nammazhwar with great anubhavam and enjoyment grew greatly by Ramanuja's campaigning and the whole world came to know of the greatness of Thiruvaaymozhi.

55. Emperumanar- Ramanuja established the Vedic truths in his philosophy and thereby the innumerable great Vedic hymns survived in this world due to Ramanuja's grace. He stands so victoriously, so beautifully, so gracefully and mercifully, that Bhagawathas, who serve the Lotus feet of Lord Sri Ranganatha- sesha bhuthars of the Lord- who lose themselves to such greatest merciful nature / personality of his, and praise Ramanuja wholeheartedly. They are the ones capable of ruling our kulam at all times.
56. Emperumanar - Ramanuja praises devotedly Parasuramamuni, who had appeared to destroy the 21 generations of Kshathriya enemies with His sharp plough. He (Ramanuja) has got the best quality to even correct the persons of lowly nature (like me) the dirty minds to become one pure hearts. Parama pavanar; having been blessed so and joined Ramanuja Group, I shall never ever talk anything else except about Ramanuja. My mind shall never ever think of anything else.
57. Uttham Purushar- Srivaishnavas consider only serving the Beuatiful ParamabhOgya Lotus feet of Sri RanganAthan of Sri Rangam, and nothing else. They consider only such like minded Bhagawathas as their relations and companions. They consider only Saranagathy tatvam (doctrine of surrender) as the only dharmam that needs to be followed. Emperumanar- Ramanuja is praised wholeheartedly by such great Srivaishnavas, for his greatest merciful nature and kalyana gunas. I am not so stupid and foolish to think that there is something else that I should have than what I am presently blessed with- the Bhagyam of having Ramanuja with me. That foolishness shall not bloom in me. Not any more.
58. Other religions wrongly provide a distorted interpretation of Vedic statements. They think, understand wrongly and explain with some logic (taking one statement out of context, and ignoring another

statement from sruthis) that Brahma is Jivathma and Jivathma is Brahmam; moksham is merging of jivathma with Sarveshawaran; etc.. Such vociferous, disharmonious noises of wrong, misinterpretations and vibharItha jnanams were completely silenced by the excellent arguments of Ramanujacharya, quoting Vedas (declaring that jivathma (chit) and the prakriti (achit) is also Nithyam and are eternal; They are eternally bonded to Brahamam with a Sarira Sariri bhavam. sriman Narayana, the Lord of Kalyana guans, is the sariri and all chit & achit are His sarira. Sriman Narayanan is the Master (sEshi) and all jivathmas are seshans (servants) and moksham for Jivathma is having an uninterrupted Bhagavad anubhavam and performing eternal kainkaryam to the Lotus feet of Divya Dampati at Srivaikuntam, with great bliss). He stood victorious. It is his mercy on us for his great upakaaram to us (and Vedas too!)

59. When the whole world, surrounded by oceans was engulfed by the darkness of Kalipurushan, Ramanuja appeared and with the shining light of praamaaNams (proofs) from four Vedas, dispelled the darkness immediately. Had he not done that, the world would not have known the truth (of Sarva seshithvam of Sriman Narayanan for all jivathmas).
60. Emperumanar- Ramanuja the One who shines with great Kalyana gunas, who preaches the Athma gunas to everyone with no bias/partiality, (such a Udhaara seelar is he), who is the Chief of our Srivaishnava kulam, - enters the following places with great happiness and joy: where there is a congregation of Scholars or jnănis of Srivaishnavam; where there is a recitation of Thiruvaaymozhi takes place; and where the Saveshwaran Sriya:Pathi Sriman Narayanan, out of His own and free will, stays permanently (along with Periya Piraatti Mahalakshmi residing in His Beautiful Chest forever) in the archAvathaaram in Sri Vaishnava Divya Desams
61. Emperumanar- Ramanuja shines so gracefully that those Bhagawathas, (who always think that Emperumanar Sriman Narayanan alone is everything to them) come to him, take refuge at his Lotus feet and pay obeisance to him. But, Ramanuja, the most merciful One came to me, (the lowly self, who was deeply immersed in the cruel karma bhandhams, and in the world of tremendous sorrows and samsaaric afflictions) and enslaved me. What a Kaarunyam! Not just that. He has gone searching for others (like me) if any one else is left out for being saved. Thus, the whole earth is awe struck with his greatest daya on humanity.

62. Our Master-Ramanuja's Lotus feet give us great happiness, (Anandham), great bhogyam, and are of Parama Poojyam. I am fortunate to have been blessed to hold the feet of Parama Bhagawatha Sri Vaishnavas who are equal to Nithyasooris of SrivaikunTam, and who do not at all have their regards to those who do not desire for Ramanujacharya's Lotus feet. Hence, I stand fearless and have no sorrows /grievances. (Since, there are no karma vaasanaas anymore!)
63. The religions that have been filled with dirt and rots have been taken up by those who are now being chased away with thundering logic and Vedic proof by Ramanuja. He is here in this world to preach and advise against such pitfalls. He wanders everywhere looking for people and act accordingly to let them comprehend his philosophy; Such Great Most compassionate Ramanuja The One with unlimited jnAnam! Please bless me with the mentality and strength to enable me to hold and follow Your Glorious Lotus Feet at all times!
64. Our own possession- Ramanuja is like a huge male elephant; He shines so brightly and gracefully, with beaming Anandham (bliss) of having enjoyed the Tamil Veda Sri Sadagopar's Thiruvaaymozhi. He holds the Divine holy TridhaNdam in his hand. Oh Logicians! All of you can not even stand against Ramanuja. He stands so toweringly pushing you all to the sides with his authoritative authenticated arguments. With the chain of sishyas and their sishyas linked to Sri Ramanuja, you have no chance to survive your wealth. The world will now prosper.
65. The good things that have happened to us (due to our Nathan- Master-Ramanuja's grace and due to the jnanam that He blessed on us gracefully) are: The grass that had grown like great bushes around the paddy fields (other religions that have outgrown the Vedic truths and covered for so many years) are now completely removed and destroyed; The fields now have grown even better and look graceful. The griefs of Vedic Brahmins have gone; The Earth is now blessed really; all doubts on saashtras have been cleared; this is the glory of jnanam that Ramanuja blessed us with.
66. The manner in which Sriya: Pathi Sriman Narayanan grants moksham is: When jnanam blooms, develops and matures into Bhakti and desire/ premam on the Lord, and when one gets an urgent intense desire (tvarai) to see and enjoy the lord and laments every second and every moment as to when he is going to obtain the blissful kaimkaryam at the Feet of the Lord with great satisfaction and devotion; when such a situation arises in him, Ramanuja (- The King among saints - the One who

gracefully removed the ills from this lowly self- adiyen's heart) blesses us him, the Bhagyam of holding the Lotus Feet of his (Ramanuja's) and there by grants them his krupai (grace) as the first dividend and mercy to enable him to be granted moksham by Sriya: Pathi Sriman Narayanan

67. For the sake of Yudhishtirar -Dharma puthrar- The one whose concern was to serve Emperumanar alone and surrendered to Him, Saveshwaran performed most wonderful acts and deeds during Kuruskshethra battle and destroyed excellently the 100 Kauravaas, the personification of ahamkarams. Emperumanar Ramanuja blesses us saying these bodies of ours and Atha are for Him and t is our duty only for performing eternal service to Emperumanar- Sriya: pathi Sriman Narayanan, and nothing else. And had he not advised us (those who were running amuck after other things materialistic) with such a grace, what would have happened to us? Who could have saved our Athma? (None else)
68. When Arjunan, during the Mahabharatha battle, was confused and confounded as to what he needs to do, to fight or not to fight, he placed his bow down and requested the Lord to advise him. Krishna blessed him (and us) with the glorious Divine Gita and Ramanuja blessed us in a much more simple terms the essence of Gita in order to enable us understand clearly the rich esoteric meanings of Gitopadesam of krishna. My mind and Athma long and desire for Kalyana Gunas of those Bhagawthas who hold on to such broad minded, merciful Ramanujacharya.
69. Sarveshwaran Sriya: Pathi Sriman Naryanan, out of His own grace and upakaaram, blesses us (the dormat ones) before the creation, with the requisites (karanañgal) to become the living souls. But He did not grant us the "SaranaNgal" the Lotus feet. But My Father- Ramanuja, Emperumanar- in order to save me from this samsaara saagaram- the Great Pralayam- blessed me today and showed me with the Lotus feet of his (Ramanuja's) as the means. What an upakaaram!
70. Oh Emperumanar Ramanuja! For time immemorial, I, the lowly self, had been immersing myself in sensual pleasures and carnal desires; after you have accepted me, I, who was intertwined with all my karma vaasanaas, bondage, was blessed with your graceful kataaksham. You saw me and you saw my lowly nature too. You have still gracefully considered me as a worthy object for redemption. Is there anything I repeat- any thing good in me for you to take that as a cue for your mercy? And still you have showered your daya on me? What a daya! Is there any benefit for you in your mercy on me? (None) and still you have

blessed m with your grace. What a grace! If you look only for some thing good for one to surrender at Your Feet, who is qualified to do so? None. (Not at least me). And still you have enabled me to surrender to you. How and what can one see Your such limitless, unbounded grace? (An excellent pasuram! This only is my capacity to translate! I advise the readers to read the pasuram please)

71. Oh Emperumanar Ramanuja! The One who does not see the lowly level of the recipient (of your grace) and does not realize the greatness of granting such grace on him! My fickle mind that was so unsteady and vacillating has now got stuck to the shadow of Your Most Blissful Lotus Feet; My love for those Divine Lotus feet has grown to the greatest extent. My action has arisen due to the Greatest merciful guna of Yours and hence, has grown tremendously and immersed itself in praising such gunas only. The apacharams I had committed unknowingly and the ones that I have committed knowingly even which have grown and accumulated as huge mountains over the ages have all now vanished completely; hence, there is no grievance for me.
72. Due to His grace, Ramanuja did the following: He completely conquered those who immersed themselves in non Vedic arguments and religions and confused the world; He blessed, conducted and performed the most truthful Vedic way of Life. Such Greatest Ramanuja, has placed this lowly self- me- among those great scholars and Srivaishnava Bhagawathas,(who took refuge at his Lotus feet out of great bhatkti towards him and praised him) in such a way indicating "he is also one among them". What a mercy1 what a daya! What a grace!
73. Without seeing the greatness of what He teaches us, and our qualification for receiving it (and considering only what great it is going to do to us), He teaches us the esoteric, essence of all saasthras in simple terms. He is so merciful. H can not stand to watch us going down the trench of samsaara saagaram and waste our precious Sri Vaishnava births (lives). He showers coolness to the scorching heat of samsaaram like the cool moon rays. He blesses even those (who are not bothered with the realization of Brahman and jnanam) and teaches them true jnanam about Self and Sarva seshathvam of Self to the Lord. Hence, there is no other thought for me (that befits me) except the thought of Ramanuja, who is so merciful and who has got such gracious mind to save everyone in this world.
74. Emperumanar- Sarveshawran- is the One who destroys those cruel wrong doers, who can not understand and talk ill of the apaurusheya

(that which has no birth) the ever permanent, Vedas and their philosophy / tatvams, with His strongest chakra. While Ramanuja, the most merciful One, conquers the non Vedic and wrong philosophers (of other religions) in his own Most graceful manner.

75. Even if Thiruvaranganathan - Lord Sri Ranganatha of Srirangam, appears in front of me, shows Himself His full beauty with all Divya Ayudhams in His resplendent Hands, and vows " I shall never ever leave you", Oh Ramanuja! Even then, the greatness of Your kalyana gunas surrounds me, drag and engulfs me and I am caught immersing myself in them and praising them only.
76. Oh Ramanuja! The ever famous, ever divine, most popular, the lovely, fertile, endearing to all, Thirumala mountain (Where Lord Thiruvemkatamudaiyaan stays permanently), the Most Divine Sri vaikuntam, The Milky Ocean (Thiruppaarkadal) where the Lord is having His Yoga nithra, with an only thinking of protecting the universe, - in as much as these Divya Desams give you an exquisite unlimited peranandham (great happiness), the same amount of bliss comes to me from devarir's (your) Lotus feet which are Parama bhogyam to me. Hence, Please bless me with those Lotus Feet always.
77. Ramanuja- Emperumanar -He has blessed me with such grace and daya that He had not blessed anyone with so far. The other religions that interpreted the Vedas so wrongly and distortedly that the Vedic truths were simply hidden among there false and wrong arguments. Raman jar, making use of only Vedic statements, argued and chased away those non Vedic religions. He stood so victoriously on this earth, with his glory spreading the whole earth. He chased away all my karmas. What else does He have in His Thiruvullam (mind) now for the benefit of the world? (means: is there anything else to do?)
78. Emperumanar- Ramanuja- after seeing my lowly nature, decided to enter into my heart. There, like a resident first cleans the place of residence first, Yathirajar removed the dirt from my heart. He had such a great greed for correcting me (means: It is impossible. And still he wanted to correct me and tried), that none would have dared. If I come to know of your intentions, I may obstruct and escape from your endeavors, and hence, knowing fully well of that, you have clandestinely operated from within and changed me completely to become the servant /bhaktha of Vallabhan, Sriya: Pathi Sriman Narayanan.. What a daya on me, Ramanuja! Due to Your Parama krupa, Emperumanar! Any other wrong thoughts contradicting to what devardi has taught me, will never ever hereafter enter into my mind.

79. Emperumanar shines so victoriously conquering and chasing away all those non Vedic wrong religions that had distorted Vedic statements with wrong and misinterpretations. He established the Vedic truths on this earth firmly. When he stands awaiting who is coming to learn the Truthful Knowledge based on Vedas and his Visishtadvaita philosophy, the people are under the wrong notion that "he is also a human being like us, what is the big deal?" and does not hold on to his feet. On the other hand, they lament foolishly "which Lord is going to save me from this world?" Alas! What a pity!
80. I, shall always serve, wholeheartedly and uninterruptedly, with no gap, at all times, under all circumstances, with my words, with my actions and with my thoughts, in all situations, those Bhagawathas who always think of the graceful nature of dearest Srivaishnava Bhagawathas who have desired to praise and utter the glorious divine names of Ramanuja at all times.
81. I, who had never thought of service to the Bhagawathas (who always serve your Lotus feet and not think of any other matter), was correctly transformed and advised by Deavarir due to Your grace that "I am the servant of them only; and None else;" And it is Ranganathan's nature to enable and let His devotees join the group of Srivaishnavas (like He has blessed me join this bhakti list); His Lotus Feet are only for Bhagawthas to desire for taking refuge with and serving the same. Such Greatest Lord's ThirumEni is dark hued color; and Devarir (Your) Lotus feet are opposite to that and are of reddish Lotus Like fair complexioned colour. You have blessed me with a constant uninterrupted thought on Your Lotus feet only! Oh Ramanuja! There is no parallel for you and your grace!
82. I,-who was deeply engrossed in the cure karma vaasanaas, who had not even an iota of jnAnam, who was never steady in a particular thing and was having a vacillating mind, - was gently corrected by Ramanuja. What did to me is: Within a fraction of a second, He made me a great recipient and listener of His Esoteric Truths and He stood victoriously on the earth. Thus, the literate, scholars, Vaishnavas, illiterate, and people from all walks of life approach Him and praise Him for His Greatest most auspicious attributes. He possesses such Great kalyana gunas. He is like the rainy dark clouds that rain everywhere without any partiality; He showers His grace to one and all!
83. I have never had any semblance of desire for Parama Purushaartham mokshanubhavam, without seeking the Athmanubhavam (or

Kaivalyam); I never had any premam / Bhakti; I have never had a realization of my inability to perform Bhatki Yoga; I never had realized that I have no other means to surrender and have performed Prapaatti to become a prapannan; I have never been a member of the Prapanna group. Oh Ramanuja! I will attain the moksham of two lotus feet of yours. How? It is only due to your limitless unbounded grace that showers on those who surrender to Your Lotus feet. Do I need to tell you that? You yourself know.

84. Now I have seen my Ramanuja; what a great sight it is! That makes me desire and seek to serve the golden feet of Bhagawathas - his devotees. And here, today I from the midst of all Bhagawathas take just a sip from this ocean of auspicious qualities of Yathiraja and all my past karmaas are destroyed. Alas! There is no end if I start to say more.
85. There is nothing else for my Athma to hold on to, except the Feet of those Bhagawathas who have the nature of praising and paying obeisance to Emperumaanaar Ramanujacharya, who dispelled the a jnanam of all who were wandering aimlessly, following and serving for other trivial materialistic benefits without realizing that the Sarveshawran Lord Sriman Narayanan, the Veda Purushan, is the Chief, as proclaimed in no ambiguities by the Vedas that they learn.

The Golden Words of Rāmānuja

As Rāmānuja prepared to lay down his mortal coils, there was great consternation and grief among his disciples. All of them wept aloud and cried that they cannot live without him. For, he was not only their preceptor, but also like a father, a mother and a constant friend. Indeed, he was a living, moving and speaking God in their midst. Sensing their despondent mood, Bhagavān

Rāmānuja cautioned them against doing anything foolish after his departure. He gave them sound advice as to how to conduct themselves (when he was not around) towards one another, and towards the world. These words have been listed in the Guruparamparā and in several biographies of Rāmānuja. They have been grouped under suitable headings and are given in the Annexure.

These instructions are of eternal relevance. Today, when we are witnessing a gradual erosion of mutual regard, diminishing faith in the sacred teachings, and an increase in pandering to the senses, we should all recall Rāmanuja's ultimate words and be benefited. Even after hearing these sacred directives, the disciples pleaded with Rāmānuja to tell them how they could order their lives till they pass away. Rāmānuja then deigned to

give them 'Ten Short Messages' to be constantly kept in their minds for the rest of their lives. These are given below:

He who has surrendered to God should never think of his future, which is in the hands of the Lord. If he worries about it, his surrender is in vain and is a farce. He should never worry about his present life also, which is the result of his previous karma, which he cannot undo. If he feels anxious about it, he is no better than a skeptic. He should perform his daily duties as an End in itself and as service to the Lord. He should direct his three organs of mind, speech and body to rendering service to the Lord, which is the goal of his existence. These can be in five different ways. He should study the Śrībhāsīya and spread its teachings. If he is unable to do this, he should study the Divyaprabhandhas of Ālòvārs and explain their import to others.

If unable to do this too, he should serve the Lord in the holy temples sanctified by the alvar's through feeding the hungry, by lighting lamps, making garlands for Him, sweeping the temple and supplying daily offerings to the Lord. If this is also not possible, he should remain where he is, meditate on and chant the Dvaya Mantra.

Should even this is not possible, he should seek out a Śrīvaisnava who is well-disposed towards him and who is endowed with wisdom, devotion and dispassion, and serve him dutifully and diligently without any ego. He should treat all Śrīvaisnavas as his friends, those who hate the Lord as his enemies and should be indifferent to those who are neither, just as he would treat a piece of wood or as tone. If there are any among the last category who evince interest in knowing about the Lord, he should instruct them about Him. Make no difference between worship to the spiritual Teacher and to all Śrīvaisnavas.Recite the names and glories of the Ācāryas and Bhāgavatas with the same delight as you would when chanting the Lord's name. None reaches the Lord's domain sooner than one who is devoted to the service of Bhāgavatas. On the other hand, the wisest man perishes when he does not devote himself to the service of the Bhāgavatas. Disrespect to Bhāgavatas or earning their displeasure is sure to bring about spiritual suicide. Never use or exploit a Śrīvaisnava for personal ends or as a means to achieving something.

Never address a Bhāgavata except in the most respectful language. When you see a Śrīvaisnava, salute him first. Never sit or stretch your legs in the presence of the Lord, the spiritual Teacher and the When you see a group of Bhāgavatas, prostrate before them, chanting the Dvaya Mantra. When they are singing the glory of the Lord, do not get up in the middle and go.

This is the worst of sins against them. Do not interrupt or argue with them when they are singing or discussing the glories of Ramanuja

RAMANUJA LITERATURE

AUTHOR	BOOK
Sudarasana suri	Sruta prakasika
Rama misra desika	Sri bhasya vivrti
Viranghavadasa	Bhava prakasika
Sathakopacaraya	Bhasya prakasika dusanoddhara
Vadula srinivasa	Sruta prakasika
Vatsya varada	Sruta prakasika sara samgraha
Apyayadikshita	Naya mukha malika
Venkatada	Tattva tika
Meghanadari	Naya prakasika
Parakayati	Mita prakasika
Campakesa	Sribhasya
Suddhasattva	Laksmanacarya Sribhasya

RAMANUJACHARYA VISIT OF 108 DIVYA DESAMS

Emperumanar, Sriman Narayanan is found in various Thirukkolam. The Thirukkolam in 108 Divyadesams are given below:

Kidantha Thirukkolam (Sleeping Position) - 27 Divyadesams

Veetrirundha Thirukkolam (Sitting Position) - 21 Divyadesams

Nindra Thirukkolam (Standing Position) - 60 Divyadesams

In these 108 Divyadesams, as we have seen that the Perumal is found on various Thirukkolam, he is also facing his Thirumugham on various directions and giving his seva, which are as follows:

Towards East direction - 79 Divyadesams

Towards West direction - 19 Divyadesams

Towards North direction - 3 Divyadesams

Towards South direction - 7 Divyadesams

These 108 Divyadesams are found throughout our Indian country and they are divided into 7 categories. There are as follows.

Thondai Naadu Temples - 22 - Chennai(2), Mahabalipuram(3), Arakkonam Sholingar(1), Thiruvalloor(1) & Kanchipuram(14+1)

Chozha Naadu Temples - 40 - Trichy(7), Kumbakonam(11), Tanjore(1), ayavaram(4), Nagapattinam(3), Chidambaram(1), Seergazhi(13).

Nadu Naadu Temples - 2 - Vizhuppuram, Cuddalore

Pandiya Naadu Temples - 18 - Tirunelveli-Nava Tirupathi(9+1), Virudhu Nagar (2), Madurai (3), Ramanathapuram (1), Pudukkottai (2).

Malayala Naadu Temples - 13 – Kerala

Vadu Naadu Temples - 11 - Tirupathi, Ahobilam-AP(2), Dwaraka-Gujarat(1), North India(7) & Muktinath-Nepal(1)

Vinnulaga Thiruppathigal - 2 - Eternal World Only South can reach.

SIMHASANA OF RAMANUJACHARYA

1. Chottai Nambi, son of Aala Vandaar
2. Pundarika, son of Periya Nambi
3. Yaamuna, son of Thirukkottiyur Nambi
4. Sundara Bahu, son of Thirumaalai Aandaan
5. Ramanuja, son of Thirumalai Nambi
6. Parasara Bhattar, son of Koorath-Azhwan
7. Ramanuja, son of Aandaan
8. Naduvil Azhwan
9. Gomatathu Azhwan
10. TirukKovalur Azhwan
11. Thirumogur Azhwan
12. Pillai azhwan
13. Nadaadhur Azhwan
14. Engal azhwan
15. Milagaazhwan
16. Neyyundaazhwan
17. Setlur Siriyaazhwan
18. Ananthaazhwan
19. Vedaanthi Azhwan
20. Kovil Azhwan
21. Ukk...
22. ...

25. Kaniyanur Siriyaazhwan
26. Ichchambaadi Aachaan
27. Kongil Aachaan
28. Ichchambaadi Jeeyar
29. Thirumalai Nallaan
30. Sattaam Pillai Jeeyar
31. Thiruvellarai Jeeyar
32. Aatkondavilli Jeeyar
33. Thirunagarip Pillai
34. Kaaraanji Somayaaji
35. Alankaara Venkatavar
36. Nambi Karum Devar
37. Devaraaja Bhattar
38. Pillai Urandhai Udaiyaar
39. Thiru-Kurugai Piraan Pillaan
40. Periya Koil Vallalaar
41. Aasoori Perumaal
42. Kannapurathu Aachchaan
43. Muni Perumaal
44. Ammangi Perumaal
45. Maaruthi Aanddan
46. Maaruthi Siriyaandaan
47. Somayaji Aandaan
48. Jeeyar Aandaan
49. Isvaraandaan
50. Iyunni Pillai Aandaan
51. Periyaandaan
52. Siriyaandaan
53. Kurinji Puram Siriyaandaan
54. Ammangi Aandaan
55. Aalavandaar Aandaan
56. Arulaala Perumal Emperumaanaar
57. Thondanoor Nambi
58. Marudhur Nambi
59. Mazhuvur Nambi

60. ThirukKurungudi Nambi
61. Kuruva Nambi
62. Mudumbai Nambi
63. Vaduga Nambi
64. Vankipurathu Nambi
65. Parankusa Nambi
66. Ammangi Ammal
67. ParuthikKollai Ammal
68. Uthkala Ammal
69. Chottai Ammal
70. Mudumbai Ammal
71. Komaandur Pillai
72. Komaandur Ilaiyavilli
73. Kidambi Perumal
74. Aarkaattup Pillaan

ON THIRUNAKSHATRAM DAY, IT IS RECOMMENDED TO RECITE THE FOLLOWING

1. Ramanuja Suprabhatham
2. NityAnusandhAnam
3. Koil Thiruvoimoli
4. Ramanuja Nutrandadi
5. Gadyathrayam
6. Yathirajasapthathi/Yathirajavimshathi
7. Yathirajamangalam
8. Vaali thirunamam

ACAHRYAS AFTER RAMAANUJACHARYA

Ramanuja (1017-1137 ad) 120 yrs.

Kooraththu aazhvaan (1009-1127 ad) 118 yrs.

Mudhali aandaan (1027-1132 ad) 105 yrs.

Embaar (1021-1140 ad) 119 yrs.

Engal aazhvaan (1097-1197 ad) 100 yrs.

Paraasara bhattar (1122-1174 ad) 52 yrs.

Nancheeyar (1113-1208 ad) 95 yrs.

Nam pillai (1147-1252 ad) 105 yrs.

Periya aacchaan pillai (1167-1262 ad) 95 yrs.
Vadakku thiruveedhi pillai (1167-1264 ad) 97 yrs.
Kidaambi appullaan then kalai branch
pillai lokaachaariyaar
(1205-1311 ad) 106 yrs.
Azhagiya manavaalan
(1207-1309 ad) 102 yrs.
Nayanaar aacchaan pillai
(1227-1327 ad) 100 yrs.
Vaadhi kesari azhagiya manavaala jeeyar (1242-1350 ad) 108 yrs.
Koora kuloththama dhaasar
(1265-1365 ad) 100 yrs.
Thiruvaaymozhi pillai
(1290-1410 ad) 120 yrs.
Manavaala maamunigal
(1370-1443 ad) 73 yrs.
Matams existing today
Vaanamaamalai jeer (nanguneri)
Thiruvengada jeeyar (thirupathi)
Kovil kandhaadai annan (sri rangam)
Kovil kandhaadai appan (kanchipuram)
Erumbil appaa (scattered)

Vada Kalai Branch

Vedhaantha dhesikar
(1268-1373 ad) 105 yrs.
Matams existing today
Azhagiya singar ahobila matam
Mukkoor swami 90 yrs.old (44 th)
Villivalloor(?) Swami (45th)
Parakaala matam (karnataka)
Periya parakaala swami author of 24 aayirap padi
Abhinava ramanuja swami (35th), 36th also

Aandavan aashraman (munitrayam)

Kannan swami (famous)

Mysore aandavan

Srimushnam aandavan (now)

A

Aalavandaar Aandaan : No source available

Aarkaattup Pillaan : No source available

Aasoori : Belongs to Sathasrivaisnva community

Aasoori Perumaal : No source available

Aatkondavilli Jeeyar : No source available

Abhirama varadhisa : Second son of Krsnapada

Ahobila Ranganatha yati : Author of Nyasa vivrti, in which the author deals with the topics of nyasa as expounded in Venkatanatha's Nyasa tilaka, lived in the fifteenth century

Akkaialvan : See Yamaunacharaya

Alankaara Venkatavar : Son of Arnlala pervumal Emperumapar on of simhasana of Ramanuja His son was Thaathacharya.

Alarmelmangai : Ananthaazhvaar's daughter was Alarmelmangai (Lakshmi in 'earthly' form). One day, while coming from the thottam early in the morning, Ananthaazhvaar saw them together. He had a 'Manvetti' in his hand. He did not know who the person with Alarmelmangai was. When Srinivasar saw Ananthaazhvaan, he started to go back to his temple.

Ananthaazhvaar threw the Manvetti on the Lord. Later, when Ananthaazhvaar went to the temple to perform his duties, he saw blood oozing from the Lord's chin, which was where the manvetti had hit. He immediately realized what had happened, and applied 'pacchai kalpooram'on His chin. That is the reason why it is still there.

Later, he gave his daughter Alarmelmangai in marriage to him. The thottam is still there behind the temple, and every year during Ananthaazhvaar's nakhshattiram, utsavar goes to the thottam, and does some 'mariyaadhai' to a small stone installed there to represent Ananthaazhvaar's body

Alzhara thirumalai madbhsi : Surname of Parasara bhatter

Ammangi Aandaan : No source available

Ammangi Ammal : See Marenvilla Maruthi siriyandan

Ammi : Mother of Vadakku Thiruveedhi pillai

Amundanar : Amuthanar was born in Srirangam, (father's name Aniarangath Amuthanar), and was known as Moongil kudi Amudhanar as well as Koil Nambi. At a very young age he was well versed in various branches of Vedic study and started as a purohit at the Ranganathar temple. Ramanuja was in charge of the temple activities and Nambi had problems taking directions from him. This troubled Ramanuja and was in confusion as to how to get Nambi into his fold. Under the divine guidance by Perumal, Ramanuja let Nambi to perform the duties as purohit at the temple and requested Koorath aazhvan to gain Nambi's confidence. Koorath aazhvan subsequently got to know Nambi and accepted him as his disciple.

This started a great transformation in Nambi, who was well learned in Tamil and Sanskrit. He gave up his authority at the temple to Ramanuja and started helping him in daily activities at the temple. Impressed by his transformation, Ramanuja gave him the title "Amuthan." Since then he was known as Tiruvarangath Amuthanar, as well as pillai Amuthanar. Not being a purohit at the temple brought great sadness to Amuthanar. Ramanuja, sensing this, requested Pillai Tiruvanrangap perusal arrayal to include Amuthanar as part of daily Sevai at the Sannithi.

As a result Amuthanar being proficient in Tamil subsequently composed the 108 Ramanuja Noorranthathi which became part of daily recital at the temple. Some compare the acharya/sishya relationship (as an example of acharya abhimana) between Ramanuja and Amuthanar to that of St. Nammzhvar and Mathurakaviazhvar. Amuthanar is said to have lived for 128 year.

Anantadikshita : Father of Dasarathi

Anantarya : Disciple of Ramanuja, initiated Vaisnavaism by Yajnamurti

Anantasuri : Surname of Anantacarya, was the pupil of Sailarangesa guru. He reverse also Ramyajamatr-maha–muni

Andal : Mother of Parasarabhattarya, married to Kuresa, had another son Vyasa Bhattar 2. Wife of Pundarikaksa 3.Wife of Namburi varadarya, and had a son named Ramanuja

Andal amma : Wife of koorinalwan.

Andra purna : Surname of Vadgua nimbi

Annayacarya : Disciple of Pillalockacharya and Kalijit and his son was Srisaila srinivasa

Aparyatmamrtacarya : Son of Srivenkataguru and grandson of Paravastuprativadibhayankara Annayacarya

Appachiaranna : (9th Descendant Of Mudaliandan) In the Vadhula race. Appachiaranna is the direct descendant of Mudaliandan and occupies the ninth (9) positions in the order. Appachiaranna was addressed by Manavala Mamunigal as "Nam Appachiarannao". Manavala Mamunigal gave two similar vigrahas of Manavala Mamunigal to Appachiaranna (one for the worship of Appachiaranna himself and the other for Vanamamalai jeer the acharya of Appachiaranna), made from the theerthapathram used by Emperumanar received by Manavala Mamunigal in a damaged condition and later named as 'Ramanujan'. Manavala Mamunigal also gave Appachiaranna the idol of " Teemanam Keduthar", the Vishnu worshipped by Atkondavilli Jeer.

As directed by Manavala Mamunigal, Appachiaranna lived at Kancheepuram in the Thirumaligai of Mudaliandan performing Nithya Thiruvaradhanam to "Sri Azhaithu Vazhivithavar" (the Moorthi given to kandhadai thozzppar by perulala Vishnu himself) one among the shad bheras of kanchi Perarulalan. In the foot steps of Ramanuja, Appachiaranna also spent his life time doing the Salaikinaru Kainkaryam for the Thirumanjanam of Perarulalan and Perundevi Thayar. Such is the Mahatvam of Appachiaranna, the nineth descendant.

Appular : Appillar as his 14th descendent composed a stotram in praise of Appillarknown as "Vaadihamsaambudaacharya stotram". Meaning of Vaadihamsambudacharya - Hamsa means a swan. Just as how a swan is afraid of a dark rain bearing cloud, so were people belonging to other fallacious systems of philosophies scared of Athreya Ramanuja. This is how he popularly came to be known as "Vaadi Hamsambuvahar", the dark cloud to the swans swimming in the ponds of fallacy (other philosophies). The first shlokam is an invocatory verse on Thirukkudanthai Deshikan, the author of this Stotram. Yatindra mahanasika vamsharatnamupasmahe vedanthayugma vihritisthanam Gopaladeshikam Supplicate we at the feet of the great noble man who came as a bright gem in the lineage of Pranatarthihara (who was in charge of the kitchen (mahanasa)of Ramanuja). He is indeed the great Gopala Deshika (Thirukkudanthaideshikan), the blissful realm where the two streams of Veda (Sanskrit and Tamizh) meet each other. Vatsya shrivaradarya Eshikavaratsampraptabhashyashayah tarkshyamshah paravadihamsa jaladacharyassatamagranih.

Beseech we the holy feet of Vaadihamsambuvahar, the incarnation of Garuda,who obtained the sacred knowledge of Sribhashyam from the great Vatsya Varadacharya (Nadadur Ammal) and who always remained in the fore front defending the siddhantham of Ramanuja. chandamshuh Kuhashandivandhasuhrudam vedanthavidyaguruh Napta Shripranatarti Hrutsumanasah pushnatu me sampadam.

Prostrate we at the feet of the grandson of the great Pranatartihara, the acharya with the noblest of virtues and who confers upon the aishwaryam of knowledge to those supplicating at his feet. Jayati sakala Vidyavahini Janmahetuhsakala Shubhagunanam Vasabhumissushilah Yatipari-brudha Uktivratajivatureshashruti-shikharagororyo matulo Lakshmanaryah.

Beseech we the feet of the maternal uncle of the great Vedanthacharya, from whom (Appullar) all the streams of knowledge originate, who indeed is the sanctuary of all virtuousness, who indeed fills in life (chaitanyam) to the gem like elucidations of Udayavar Ramanuja. Athreya gothrambudhi purnachandra shrirangarajarya gurostanujah ramanujaryassakalagamana mavasa bhumirjayatamajasram.

Son of Rangarajacharya is indeed the full moon gracing the ocean of the race of Athreya. May he, who is the knower of all Vedas and Vedanta be victorious in this world for ever. parasharo vatha tadiyasunustadat-majoveti vitarkyamanah shrivedihamsabda

gururbudhanam neta sabhayanmama chittagehe be wondered, if he is the great Parashara or his son vyasa or his son Suka. May the great acharya Vadihamsambuvaha, the prime among virtuous men, stay in the cosmos of my heart forever. vazhi vyakhyamuddirak kai !!!Vedanthasuri charaNau sharanam prapadye

Next Appullar. Thirukkudanthai Deshikan in his vaadihamsambuda-charyastotram addresses Appullar as "Purtimaanya:", which means "The complete one". Now one might be tempted to ask, "Appullar did not have any spiritual epiphany with Perumal to make Deshika, the protector of the sampradayam.

Then why should he be referred to as Purtimaan?"The answer is very simple. One should remind oneself of Deshikan's state-ment"Acharyaadiha daivataam samadhikaam anyaam na manyaa mahe" - "There is noother God greater than or equal to one's acharyan". Athreya Ramanuja Appullar's acharya was none other than Nadadur Ammal. It was indeed Nadadur Ammal's command and wishes that Appullar

should teach all the esoteric to Venkatanatha and makes him the prime preceptor of Srisampradayam. Since Appullar successfully fulfilled the command of his master who is to be held even above Perumal, he is definitely said to have attained purnatvam. In this way Thirukkudanthai Deshikan's addressing of Appullar as "Purtimaanya:" is well justified

Araiyar Sevai : There are certain group of people in three places namely Srirangam, Srivilliputhur and Azhwar Thirunagari, who depict azhwar's Dhivya prabandha pasurams using dance poses. These poses are known as "abhinayam" and the one who gives those poses is known as "Araiyar". They are descendants of the great poorvacharya Nadhamuni, who is known to have reclaimed the 4000 dhivya prabandha pasurams, when it was lost. He got it back after reciting "Kanninum Siruthambu" 12,000 times. Nammazhwar appeared before Nadhamuni after 12,000th time and gave him the 4,000 pasurams that was lost from the time period between Thirumangai azhwar and Nadhamuni. He was very much ecstatic to receive the lost treasure.

Since he was blessed by the azhwar himself, who was in turn blessed by Sriman Narayana, nothing was impossible for him. He had tremendous bhakti for azhwars and their pasurams. He had an extraordinary talent in music as well that he organized the pasurams and even created tunes and dance poses so that people can easily get the purport. This knowledge was passed on from generation to generation that "Araiyar sevai" was one great experience for people watching it. The "Araiyars" perform usually in front of the Moolavar. Today, it happens only in the three aforementioned Dhivya desams but history says that there were more than these 3 Dhivya desams in which it was performed. Melkote is one abhimana sthalam in which it is performed even today.

Aranapurathu Azhwan : No source available

Arulala perumal Emperumanar : One of the descentant of Ramanuja and his son was Alankaara venkatavar

Attutayi : Daughter of Mahapurana, belongs to Bharadvaja gotra

Atkonda Villi Jeeyar : See Kandadain.

Azhakiya Manavala Perumal Nayanar Second son of Vadakku Tiruviti Pillai and the younger brother of Pillai Lokacarya. Born at the end of 13th century, he had learned all the Sastras and rahasyas under his father and brother. He has the following commentaries to his credit: Arayirappati,

A. Commentary on Tiruppavai by Andal

B. Commentary on Amalanatipiran of Tiruppanalvar

C. A commentary on Kanninun ciruttampu of Madurakavi Alvar Acaryahrdayam, an independent work. 2 See Manavala Mamunigal

B

Balagovinda : Son of Thirumalai Nambi, brother of Embar and Sailpurna

Bhaktagrammapurna : Disciple of Ramanuja, initiated Vaisnavaism by Yajnamurti

Bhashyamurutha Pradhanadyas Sanjeevayathi Namapi : He was born in the year Parthiva in the month of chithrai with chithai as his birth star. His father's name was Deavarajan and his grand father was Nadadur Alwan who was the nephew of Bashyakarar. His gothram was Srivathsa gothram. Once when Nadadurammal was young, he wanted to learn Sri Bashyam from his father Nadadur Alvan. Alvan, however, asked Ammal to go to Engal Alvan (also known as Vishnu chiththar) at Tiruvellarai and learn it from him. So, Ammal went from Kanchi to Tiruvellarai and studied grantha chathustya kalakshepam at the holy feet of Engal Alvan He was performing Sampradhaya pravachanam at Kachi voithan Mandam in kanchi varadhan sannidhi to Appullar, Sudharnachar, Vadakku Thiruveedhipillai and other vidwans in kanchi. He had nominated his disciple Sudharnachar to write a Vyakyanam to Sri Bhashyam by name Srutha Prakasika. His son was Devaraja perumal, and his grand son was Gadika satham ammal who was the Acharya for Adhi vann satagopa yatheendra maha Desikan.When Venkatanatha (Desikan) was just five years old, Appullar took him to Sri Bhashya Kalakshepam being rendered by Nadadur Ammal. Nadadur Ammal forgot the context of his discourse when he wanted to resume.

Our five year old Venkatanatha was quick to remind Nadadur Ammal the context of Sri Bashyam. Nadadur Ammal was impressed by this child prodigy and blessed Venkatanatha The works authored by Nadadur Ammal are Tattvasaara, Prapannaparijaata, Prameyamala and Aahnikacuudaman.

Bhattar : Bhattars or Archakas were well versed in the temple prayers and rituals. One used them as intermediaries the idols, offering various archanas, abishekasetc. These have been formalized with tickets sold at the temple offices nowadays. In the old days, one just offered a donation on the plate, that he brought out with the lighted camphor. The there were pundits or embers of the Vedhaghosti, attached to the temples.

They preceded the processions of the Utsavaar or sung the Vedic hymns in front of the deities. There were restrictions on interdining between the Bhattars and other groups.

Brahma Tantra Svathantra Swami : One of the principal sishyar of Desikan was Brahma tanthra Svathantrar, the First Jeeyar of Parakala Matam of Mysore. He was very close to Nainaraachaar, the blesseḍ son of Desikan. Both of them grew the sampradh Ayam together.

Brahma Tanthra Swami's : Principal Sishya is Katikasatham Ammal of Kaanchipuram, the grandson of the famous Nadathur Ammal. Katikasatham Ammal's principal sishyar was Adhi Vann Satakopa Jeeyar, the founder of Ahobila Matam.

When Both Brahma Tanthra Svathantra Swami and Nainaracchar were visiting Thirumalai, Lord Srinivasan appeared in the dream of Brahma Tanthra Svathatrar and told him:" Thirumalai Jeeyar, who was serving us as Srikaryam Swami has ascended parama padham I would like you therefore to accept our Srikaryam Kaimkaryam and stay here engaged in siddhantha Pravachanam". At three same time, Thiruvenkatamudayan appeared in the dreams of His Koil adhikaris and told them:" We have commanded Brahma Tanthra visiting Thirumalai as My Srikaryam From here on follow his direction as my command and give him the keys and the seal for my sannidhi ". At the break of dawn, Brahma Tanthra (Jeeyar) shared this dream with Nainiracharyar, while the Koil adhikaris were knocking on his door to tell him about the Lord's command to them.

With the blessings of Swami Nainarachar, Jeeyar went to the Sannidhi of the Lord after performing Guruparampara pranamams at the Bhali peetam. He accepted the Srikaryam Kaimkaryam through archaka mukham and conducted the daily duties of the Sannidhi with alacrity and efficiency. The Jeeyar built a matam at Thirumalai and had prathishtai of the Vigraham of Desikan there.

C

Chelachalamba : Kongu Bhiratti (chelachalamba) and her husband is Alagesa, believer in Siva lived near sriranagm. She was devoted to Romania, but her husband never objected to her. They went to srirangam for rescue, when they had famine. There kongu bhiratti saw Ramanuja begging for alms. She called and asked him "you are asking for alms. But many kings come to you and beg from you". Ramanuja replied "he had a nidhi, called Thirumanthram, which is more valuable than every thing else." the lady pleaded him to teach her Thirumanthram. In addition she asked him his paadukas for daily worship.

Ramanuja gave them into her kongu (upper portion of sari). Now when Ramanuja was exiled from srirangam, took resort for few days with the couple. Later Ramanuja moved many places mithu sala gramam (kingdom of pashandas andhra poornas) at temple yoga Nrusimha, he also moved to tornado (Join Empire) under rule of vithalaraya. His daughter (princess) was rescued from wild devil. Vithala raya convinced all Jain gurus and took vaishnavism. Many in the Jain Empire took to vaishnavism. Jain gurus numbering 12000+challenged Ramanuja for arguments on mythology. Bhagavan could convince all of them.

Chottai Ammal : No source available.

D

Devamannatha : Surname of Devarat

Devarajamuni : See Arulala perumal Emperumanar

Devarat : Baptized name of Yajnamurthi

Divyattukarasu Nambi : Son of Thirumalai Nambi and grand son of Alavandhar and Maternal Uncle of Ramanuja. He has carried out Theertha Kainkaryam to Lord Srinivasa Perumal. His descendants are the Thozhappachar now receiving "Mudal Theertham" in Srisrinivasa Perumal Temple at Thirumalai as well as carrying out the Theertham Kainkaryam for Perumal even today

Dyutimati : Sister of Yamanuacharya

E

Ecchaandan : Thirumalai Nambi Mappillai Ecchandan was Srinivasa Perumal Purohita carrying out Thirumanjanam and Mathrapushpa Kainkaryam to Srinivasa Perumal and provided Bangaru Vapi (Bavi) and Shenbagaprakaram for Perumal Services Ecchandan taught Nrisimhathaponiya Upanishad and Nrimha Stotram to Ramanuja. He and his Kummarargal Ecchambadi Achaan and Ecchambadi Jeeyar being Vadagalai are associated with the well known Vadagalai Sampradaya Acharyan Thirumalai Nambi Ecchandan with his father-in-law and his Thirukimarargal with their maternal grand father (not with any other Thengalai Acharyas even if they were available!). They became disciples of Ramanuja and members of 74 Simhasana Adhipathis.

Further Ecchaandan, who is one of the 15 disciples of Alavandhar composed a verse comparing river Kaveri to Sarayu, Srirangam to Ayodhya, Lord Ranganatha being worshipped in both the places, Alavandhar (Yamunacharya) to King Dasharadha with four Illustrious

children and Manakkal Nambi (Ramamisra) to Sage Vashishtar. This clearly indicates the family relationship of Ecchandan with Thirumalai Nambi, the son of Divyattukarasu Nambi and grand son of Alavandhar belonging to Vadagalai Sampradayam.

Ecchambadi : See Ecchandan.

Ecchambadi Jeeyar : See Ecchandan.

Embar : He was born nine years later than Ramanuja in the year 1026 A.D at small village near Sri Permputhur. Embar's mother was the sister of Ramanuja's mother. Therefore, Embar was the cousin brother of a Ramanuja. He was named Govindhan by his parents at birth. After a few dramatic twists in Govindhan's life, he became "the shadow and foot rest " of his Acharya, and Ramanuja. He entered into Sanyasasramam and was given the Daaya naamam of

Emperumanar by Udayavar himself. Govindan refused to accept that exalted title and begged his Acharya to give him a new daasya namam befitting his status as the shadow and foot rest of his Acharya. Ramanuja playfully renamed his sishyan, Embar (Emperumaanaar Ilaipparumidam =empar) or the place where Emperumanar (Acharyan) rests.That is the name by which we revere him today in Acharya paramparai.

Ramanuja assigned Empar to become the Acharyan of Parasara bhattar, the son of Kuratthazhwan, one of the prime disciples of a Ramanuja. Parasara Bhattar was raised by Ranganatha and Sri Ranganayaki as their own son. When he was a child, there was a cradle for him near the Thirumana Thunn at Sri Ranganath's sannidhi and the divine couple played with the child and raised him. Parasara Bhattar later became the purohitha for the Divya dampathis and was entrusted with Koil Kaimkaryam by Embar, in the early part of his life; he had gone on a yatra to Kasi. There, as he was bathing in the river Ganges, a Shiva lingam came into his hand. As such he became a devotee of Shiva, He settled in the town of Kalahasti and began maintaining the Shiva temple there.At that time, due to the request of Ramanuja, Periya Thirumalai Nambi engaged Embar, corrected him and returned him to the Srivaishnava fold. Embar then moved to Thirumalai and lived with his acharya Periya Thirumalai Nambi and performed services to him. At that time, Ramanuja was also at Thirumalai learning the inner meanings of Ramayanam from Periya Thirumalai Nambi. Therefore, he got opportunities to observer Embar's characteristics. One of the qualities of a Srivaishnava is feeling empathy for others. This quality was complete in Embar.

One time, Ramanuja noticed that Embar put his hand inside a snake's

mouth, then take a bath and continue his services to his acharya. He asked "O Govinda! What did you do with the snake?" Embar replied "I noticed that the snake was keeping its tongue out and suffering. When I went near it, I saw that a thorn was stuck in its tongue. So, I pulled the thorn out. The snake then ran away". Ramanuja was amazed about his sense of mercy and blessed him.Normally a snake instills fear in most people and they tend to keep away from it. Yet, in this instance Embar did not fear it and was more worried about its suffering. One day Parasara Bhattar asked his Acharyan about Sri Vaishnava lakshanam and Empar revealed to his sishyan the ten definitions that fit the name of a Sri Vishnavan as the distilled essence of Vedas and Divya Prabhandhams that he had learn from his own Acharyan, Ramanuja.

What Embar revealed to Bhattar is known as the ten words(Vaarthaikal) He was a saivite first (enforced on him by Yadavaprakasar during their trip to North India), and was letter changed by Thirumalai Nambhi (as appealed by Ramanuja to bring him back to Srivaishnavam), quoting Nammazhwar's Pasuram. Embar was very much attached to Thirumalai Nambhi (also his uncle) who brought him back on the "right" track i.e. Srivaishnavam, and later became glued to Yathirajar, when he was asked by Ramanuja from Thirumalai Nambhi. He is the Acharya of the greatest Parasara Bhattar. When Ramanuja asked Embar to bring the baby Parasarar (son of Kooratthazhwan) for naming the baby, Embar brought the baby and by way of protection, he was muttering Dvaya Mantram in the sisu's ears.

When Ramanuja enquired as to how the baby showed off an unusual brilliance and the baby smelt Dwaya vaadai, Embar narrated what he did on the way. Since he had done this, Ramanuja asked Embar to be the Acharya for the baby. Rest is History on Paraasara Bhattar's glory Embar's description of Ramanuja's Divinely Beautiful Thirumeni is excellent. parppom Enatthigazh paNkazhal unran pallavame Viralum/ paavanamagiya Painthuvaraadai Pathintha Marunka-zhagum/ Muppuri Noolodu munkail yendhiya mukkolthan Azhagum/ Munnavar Tandhidum Mozhikal Niráindhidu Muruval Nilavazhahum/ karpagame vizhi Karunaì pozhindhidum kamalkkann Azhagum/ kaarisuthan kazhalsoodiya mudiyum kana Narrsihai Mudiyum/ Yeppozhudhum ethiraaJan Vadivazhaghu Yen idhayatthul Ullathaal/ Illai enakku edhir; illai enakku edhir; illai enakku edhire!"Embar's enjoyment of seeing Ramanuja's lotus feet, tender fingers reminding one of the creepers, sacred saffron robe, most auspicious poonool, Thridandam, His enchanting smile laden with dayA, large dark eyes reminiscent of wish

yielding karpaka maram (tree), the kudumi (sikha) formed by abundant tresses is simply beautiful. Embar declares that there is no one equal to him; since yathirajan's Divine Beauty lingers in his heart. Illai enakkedhir; illai enakkedhir - declares Embaar. Illai Namakkedhir, with such great Acharyas like Embar in our sampradayam.

Engal alwan : Born in Tiruvellari in kali yuga 4169 Kilaka varusha, vaikasi masam, wasti nakshtram. He was an incarnation as the amsam of a nitya suri named Sri Vijar. He did sampradya pravachanam in place like srirangam.He composed a commentary named Sri Visnu-chittyam on Visnu purnaam

Eru Tiruvudaiyar : Disciple of Nathamuni

Erudi appa : Disciple of Manavala mamunigal Erumbi Appa.Prativadi Bhayankaram Anna and Erubi Appa have composed a number of poems in praise of their master and these are of high literary as well as educative value

Veyamaala,

Aahnikacuudaamanih

Aaraadhanakramah

Prameyasaarah

Mangalaas'aasanam,

Jnaanasaara

Jyayantidarpanam

Hetiraajastavah

Rahasyasangrahah

Caturlakshanasangrahah

Paratattvanirnayah

Dramidopainishatsangrahah

Sribhaashyasangrahah

F

First jeeyar : There are 4 points of Information regarding the First Jeeyar that would compliment the Article that you posted regarding his Sishya Parampara: 1.The 74 Peetathipad his caring for their disciples became his Sishyas and brought their followers to him in view of the special blessings that he had received from Lord Narasimha. They brought their Araadhya Devatas as well and we see those Vigrahas in worship even today in the assembly of Vigrahas worshipped by the present Jeeyar.

2. Talappakkam Annamacharya was commanded by Lord Narasimha to seek the First Jeeyar as Acharya and that made a transformation in the life of one of the greatest devotees of Thirupathi Perumal. His son has authenticted this incident in the life of his father.

The Veena Mirasu of Talappakkam Annama-charya continues even today the contributions of Annamacharya now serves as an important core of Bhakthi literature, thanks to the light lit by the First Jeeyar.

3.Manavala Muni (1370-1443AD) received his Prekshamantram from the First Jeeyar and entered Sanayasa Asram.

4. The First Jeeyar has (1379-1459 AD) been generally acknowledged as the incarnation of Desikan (1268-1369AD) by the later Jeeyars of Ahobila Mutt. Born 10 years after the passing away of Desikan, the first Jeeyar is said to be a result of the fulfillment of Vedanta Desikan"s desire to enter the Uttama Asramam that was not available to him in his previous birth and life as a Grahasta. Generally termed) referred to as Munitraya, since it is suppose to have been carried forward by his three ascetic disciples.

The tradition is essentially the same as that of Vedanta desika; it marks no departure from the path; nor is it a branch since it was only continuing in the same direction. If it is referred to as the Munitraya tradition or Thirukkudanthai Desikan tradition, it is only for convenience and for conveying the regard that he was held in by a large mass of the religious community. In the context of Indian spiritualism, we find two kinds of leaders; one might be a great author but no great orator; another may be good at discourses or instructions but may not have a flair for writing works for posterity. Gopaladesika combined both faculties in happy harmony. He was a 'water she dacharya' in the genealogy of Vaishnavite preceptors. He inherited Vedanta desika's spiritual legacy totally and from him different streams can be recognized today.

Among these, two are well organized: they are the Srirangam Periasramam Andavan tradition and the Poundarikapuram Andavan tradition. There are a number of others, such as the Kethandapatti tradition, the Annayaryamaha desikan tradition composed of many Tatacharyas (descendants of Nathamuni) and Acharya-Purushas, the Denkanikottaistream and so on. One could make an estimate that some 40 per cent of the Desika sampradaya adherents today would acknowledge Thirukkudanthai Desikan as their patriarch. As an author, his reputation stands simply unassailable: an original work on "Prapatti" ("Nikshepatchintamani"), a commentary nRahasyatrayasara of Vedantadesika, commentaries on two works from Divyapra-bandham,

a commentary on Tattvatika of Vedantadesika, a terse Sahasranama-stotra onVedantadesika; an Anhika work which is a valuable guide on rituals of daily routine for pious men to follow and a unique work called "Sri-Jayantyadi-Nirnaya", where he codifies the criteria for fixing the dates of such holy fests as Sri KrishnaJayanthi. His devotion for the local deity, Aravamudhan, cans be leaned from two short hymns he has composed.

It was he who built the present shrine, with the tower, for Vedantadesika, almost opposite to his hermitage, within the temple premises. He was a model of true humility. He used an unostentatious colophon in his works that read somewhat like this: "written by Gopaladasa, son of Krishnasoori and receiver of Vedanta knowledge from Sakshat Swami". It is said that his grand-uncle Venkatadhwari was so much impressed by his stature, which he sought to become Gopaladesika's disciple. But Gopaladesika wouldn't allow it! He commended the grand old man to his own Acharya, Sakshat Swami. However, he appears to have suffered the misfortune of begetting a misfit son, for whom he could only plead with God.

The son died young. Gopaladesika had a scholarly nephew, Venkatacharya and a grandson, Vedantacharya (of Elayavalli line), who became his sons' by adoption. They did much to perpetuate his glorious memory. At 82, he took sanyasa and died within a couple of days, in the Tamil Plava year (corres-ponding to 1782C.E.), in Karthigai month on a Krishna Shashti. Just before he passed away, his loving admirers made an idol of his in iron, which he approved and blessed with his touch. This deity is now worshipped in the Vedanta desika shrine (in East Uttara Street, Srirangam) which is under the management of the Poundarikapuram SwamiAsramam.

G

Gadikasatam ammal : Born in Kanchipuram, chittri masam, Hasta nakshtram. He was the son of Devaraja peruman, of Sri vatsa gotram. He did sampradayam pravachanam at Kanchipuram. Sri yatiraja vijayam is a notable gratam of his work

Gadya traya : First book written by Ramanujacharya

Gomatathu Azhwan : No source available

Gomathhattut tiruvinnagar appan : Disciple of Ramamisra

GopaladesikaMahadesikan : He was known as Thirukkudanthai Desikan. Let us enjoy this greatest acharya's life history today. (Purattasi / Pooraadam) (1701 - 1783 CE) Gopaladesikan was born in Atreya Gotram. He was the14th generation of Vaadi Hamsambu vaahar, the uncle and

Acharya of Vedanta Desikan. KrishnaSuri, his father had 3 sons. He was born in Royampettai Agraharam near TirukKandiyur on the northern banks of Kaveri. He was born in 1701CE (Vikrama ear) Purattasi month Sukla Paksha Navami, a Monday under the star Pooraadam. Once when Sri Krishna Suri couple had been to the Sravanotsavam at Oppiliappan Koil, the Lord appeared in their dream and gave them some milk to drink saying that Vedanta Desika himself will be born as their son in the constellation of Vishwaksenar. When they returned to Royampettai, the lady became pregnant. On the 12th month, she gave birth to a son who was the very Gantaavataara Desika. Desika himself indicates about this reincarnation when he says in his Rahasya Traya Saram- Bhavati Devat Kaschit Kaschid Vivasritaamaha

The child was named Gopaladesika. The boy learnt, from his father, the Vedas, Divyaprabandha, Sanskrit and Tamil grammar, rhetoric and Sastras. Even when he was in his teens, he was sent to Srirangam to learn the "Grantha-Chatu-shtayam' (Rahasyatraya-saram, Sri Bhashyam, Gita- Bhashyam and Bhagavad-Vishayam) from the great Vedanta acharya, Ramanuja Muni. Young Gopaladesika was advised to settle down in Kumbakonam after he completed his course. He first undertook an extensive pilgrimage to the holy shrines in South India and then settled down in a hermitage in the Aravamuthan temple premises, at Kumbakonam. Gopaladesika lived a simple life, sustained by daily alms. Though such a way of life is not necessary for the householder, one like Vedantadesika or Gopaladesika, who had no need for money or savings or material acquisitions, would naturally, and instinctively, adopt this mode of life.

Three ascetics were attending on him, with implicit reverence, doing his personal chores - a very unusual phenomenon. They had been drawn from and near: one was from Watrap, who was devoted to solitude and meditation; the second was from Seyyanam (in Tirunelveli district), a prototype of Yamunamuni (or Alavandar), who had a few disciples only; the third was from Vazhuthoor near Ayyam-pettai. He was indeed a second Vedanta Ramanuja Muni; whose service helped the school reach a pre-eminent status. The particular ascetic, referred to as Vazhuthoor, Vazhuthoor Andavan, and Srirangam Swami, was the real torch-bearer of Gopaladesika's mission from about 1750 C.E. The reverence Gopaladesika commanded from the society then, is reflected in his being addressed as"Thirukkudanthai Desikan". He is acknow-ledged as the patriarch of the school (or sampradaya, as it is

Goshtipurna : Disciple of Yamanuana born in Pandya kingdom

Govindadasa : Baptized name of Yadavapraksh, as Srivaisnavaite from Savites, and after his conversation, he wrote a book entitled Yati- dharma samuccaya. The Guided as must be distinguished from Govinda, son of the aunt of Ramanuja, who had been converted to Saivism by Yadavaprakasa, and was reconverted to Sriviasinavism by his maternal uncle Srisailapurana, pupil of Yamunacharya. Govnda, had married but became so attached to Ramanuja that he renounced the world

Govinda Dasar Appan : See Paravasu

Gurua parampara : There is a Sloka composed by Srivatsaanka Misra (Kooratthaazhvaan) which pays homage to all the teachers of the tradition, beginning with the Lord down to Sri Srivatsaanka's acharya, Ramanuja.

Guruparapara prabhavam : Written by pillaan the time of Ramanuja's death.

H

Hasthigirinatha Anna : He 10th generation of Mudumbai Nambi (brother-in-law of Ramanuja family, to Ananthacharya on Adi Pushyam of the year Plava 4463 of the Kali Era, corresponding to 1361 A.D. He became an earnest disciple of Nayana Varadacharyar (illustrious son of Vedanta Deshikar) and acquired greater spiritual knowledge. Anna's sensational victory in a debate with the famous and undefeated Advaitin Narasimha Misra, in establishing the supremacy of Vishistadwita Siddhanta earned him the title 'Prathivadi Bhayankaram' from his Guru Nayana Varadacharya. From then on he was called Prathivadi Bhayankaram Anna. Anna became an intimate, trusted and devout disciple of Manayala Mamunigal and was one of the Asta Diggajas (8 invincible Acharyas) to propagate Vishistadwita philosophy. After leading a life of spiritual discipline and dedicated service, he shed his mortal body on Panguni Sukla Navami day in the year Srimukha, Kali abda year 4556, corresponding to 1454 A.D.

Hastyadrinatha : See Meghanadari

I

Ichchambaadi Aachaan : No source available

Ichchambaadi Jeeyar : No source available

Idols of Ramanuja : Emperumanar has 3 most distinguished thirumenis The idol in Srirangam is Thanana thirumeni The idol in Sriperumpudur

is Thanugandha Thirumeni The idol in Thirunarayanapuram is Thamarugandha Thirumeni

(1) Thanana thirumEni :The first one, Thanana Thirumeni, it is the original thirumEni of Emperumanar. One can even see the true nails in His fingers in the sannidhi. This is one of the most distinguished importances of the sannidhi at Srirangam. In Srirangam it is Thanana Thirumeni - he himself is there. Rangam (From here Swamy did Sri Vaishnava Darsana Nirvaham) Ramanuja's "thiru-varasu" (sacred burial shrine) is the Ramanuja shrine ("sannidhi") located inside the Sri Ranganatha swamy temple ("periyakoyil" or simply "koyil") Srirangam, Tamil Nadu within the temple complex, where he attained his Acharyan Thiruvadi (the lotus foot of his Acharya). His mortal remains ("thirumeni") have been interred inside the Sri Ramanuja shrine in "padmasanam" (folded leg posture). Above the shrine, a wax image of the body has been consecrated and it is anointed with "chandan" (sandalwood paste) and saffron ("kungumappoo") twice a year. His shrine is open to the general public for "darshan". His eye balls and right hand thumb nail can be seen clearly in this wax image. Ramanuja is still administrating the Srirangam temple.

(2) Thanugandha thirumEni Sriperumbudur (The avatar sthalam of Ramanuja) In Sriperumpudur, he is called Thanugandha Thirumeni - Ramanuja himself was pleased to install his own idol.

(3) Thamarugandha thirumEni :Melkote (Reinstalled Moolavar Thirunarayanan and Utsavar Selva Pillai) In Thirunarayanapuram, it is Thamarugandha Thirumeni, idol installed to fulfill his devotees desire. Here, he is wearing pavitram with long tuft and saffron robes and holding Tridhandam, we can worship him. Srivaishnava ascetics use tridhandam - three sticks bonded together. It symbolizes chit, achit and Iswara entities. Every Thiruvadirai star, Abhishekam is performed. Ramanuja came to this place when there was danger to him at Srirangam; and lived here for Twelve years. When he was about to return to Srirangam, people here were very much grieved. So, with his blessings the devotees got an idol sculpted and installed here. Today we are enjoying the lucid explanations given by Ramanuja for Bhagavad Gita.

Isvaraandaan : No source available

Isvaramuni : Grandson of Nathamuni and son of Yamunacharya

Iyunni Pillai Aandaan : No source available

J

Jeeyar Aandaan : No source available

K

Kaaraanji Somayaaji : No source available

Kalijit : Surname of Nambillai

Kandadai : The name 'Kand-Adai' genealogically attaches from Andan's son, Kandadai Andan (who installed Ramanuja's "Tamar-ukanda-tirumeni" at Sri-perumpudur and "Tan-Ana-tirumeni" at Srirangam), as the latter was born after Udaiyavar instructed Mudali-Andan to partake of the Lord's food-offering received from the periya sannidhi, in the cloth-wrapping 'Tiru-p-pavadai'; when the child was eventually born, Udaiyavar blessed him for a spiritual career as fragrant as the Tiru-p-pavadai'. ['gandha' meaning fragrant and 'Adai' for the cloth-wrapping; the name, Tamilised as the hybrid 'kandadai', is among the most pedigreed title among Srivaishnava Acharya households.

Kandadain : Mudaliandan did not have children for long time. Once, while discussing with Ramanuja, Andaan regretted about not having a child. At the same, Ramanuja received prasadam from the Temple which was covered with a garment (Kandadai- Gandam + Aadai - a piece of cloth with fragrance) worn on Lord's thirumeni (Lord's Archaamurthy). Ramanuja indicated to Andaan about the auspicious happening and told him he will get a son soon. Soon, a son was born to Andaan. Thus, Andaan vamsam (family) was called Kandadayar family. It is said that a whole street [north Mada Street] in Srivilliputtur bears the name 'Kandadaiyar vIthi', to signify the importance of the family. Kandadai Andaan was born in Kumba (Masi) month punarvasu star as an amsam of Chatrukana azhwar. He was born at Koil (Srirangam) and his acharya was Ramanuja.

He learnt Sri Bashya, Veda, Sastra and Divya Prabandam from his father Mudaliandaan. He learnt rahasyartham from Atkonda Villi Jeeyar. Like Ramanuja, Kandadai Andaan had three acharyas - Ramanuja, Mudalinadaan and Atkonda Villi Jeeyar. Out of deep love and respect for Ramanuja, he requested Ramanuja's permission for installing a statue of Ramanuja at his birth place - Sriperumbudur and Ramanjua also agreed to the same. He immediately called a sculptor and got a statue of Ramanuja done. Ramanuja was impressed with the statue, embraced it and gave his blessings to install the same at Sriperumbudur on Pushya natchatram in the month of Panguni. Andaan after receiving Ramanuja's instructions made arrangements for installing the statue at the appointed

day and time. He also codified performing of festivities for Swami's thirumeni at Sriperumbudur.

The image at Sriperumpudur was installed after Udaiyavar approved of the request of Kandadai andan (also named Ramanuja, and son of Mudali-Andan) to that effect: "Sarva-kalattilum Sarva-Chetanarkkum Sevyamam-Padi..."The image at Srirangam was installed,. with the consent of Namperumal, after Udaiyavar passed away and was interred this also at the initiative of kandadai andan: "Emperumanar ellarum sevittu Ujjivikkumpadi, mILavumavvidattileAvirbhavittap-Pole-Yirukka archavataramaga.. "The noble initiative of Kandadai Andan in installing the images at Sriperumpudur and Srirangam is written into the 'dhanian' of andan: "svavatarasthale (a) rcha-(a)bhut Srirange cha yatisvarah yan-mude tam gunavasam ramanujagurum bhaje." This declares that it was for the spiritual gratification of Andan that Ramanuja's images were installed in the two places. Mudali andan first sishya for Ramanuja and that is why he is called as Mudali - Andan.

Kandadantha : Son of Dasarthi who was known as Ramanujadasa

Kandadi ramanuja ayengar : Kandadai Ramanuja Ayyangar, lived between 1430-1496. He was not from Tirumala but was a desantari i.e., stranger. He enjoyed the confidence of the Raja Vira Narasimha of the Saluva dynasty and there is evidence to show that he took the name of his spiritual preceptor, one Kandadai Annan. Apparently he took the dasya Nama of Kandadai Ramanuja dasa but in time he came to be called Kandadai Ramanuja Ayyangar.

Kaniyanur Siriyaazhwan : No source available

Kannapurathu Aachchaan : No source available

Kantimati : Sister of Yamanucharya, married to Kesava yajvan, whose son was Ramanujacharya

Karpasaa mahalakshmi : Two disciples of Ramanuja, Yagneswara and Varada Charya lived in a village astasahasram. Yagneswara was rich, while Varada charya was poor. Once Ramanuja came here and sent a message to Yagneswara, for athidhyam. Yagneswara was proud that swamy will come to him. But he ignored the messengers. This hurt bhagavan and he decided to visit Varada charya instead. Varada charya was not at home and his wife karpasa mahalakshmi received the swamigal. But she had no money to treat them. But bhagavad Romania is rare. Saakshath Vishnu and to treat him is a blessing. She remembered earlier one merchant in the village, lust her and offered anything she will want.

She knows her husband can not bring alms for that large shishyas. She weighed her chastity of her physical body versus bhagavan's mercy. Karpassa Mahalakshmi was rare. She agreed to the merchant for that day's hosting of Ramanuja in exchange of her see l am. The merchant gladly gave all necessary food and cloths for Swami and sishyas. Later in night she along with her husband (who ratified her deed) took Pada Teertham to the merchant and gave a little before he touched her. Ramanuja has inner conscious to know the sacrifice. The merchant after swallowing first gulp of teertham realized, what he was asking is from a mother.

At once he feel on the feet of her calling as mother for give your child. He also begged pardon from his sin to Ramanuja and also Varada Charya. Karpasa Mahalakshmi became Patthikkoli Nacchiyar. Ramanuja anugraham puts all in the righteous path.

Kasturi rangacarya : Disciple of May jamatr muni, other wise known as Rangasuri lived in the fifteenth century. He wrote two works called Karya dhikaranavada and the Karya dhikarana tattva, in whcih he discussed some of the most important difference of these two schools and let his support to the Tenkalai

Kavitarkikasimha : Surname of Vedanta desikan

Kidambai : There was a vamsam of kainkarya parals at the ancient shrine of Yathokthakari, who incarnated before Lord Varadarajan to protect Brahma's Yajñam at Hasthi Giri.They performed Theertha Kaimkaryam (Thriumanjanam). They gathered sacred water (Thooya neer/appu) in Ghadams (vessels/kudams) and served the Lord there. Therefore they were called Appullar (Appu+Ullar). Ghada Ambhu darals. Hence the name should be Ghadaambi instead of Kidambhi or Kidampi. The name Apullar is some times linked to Garudan (That Garudan) based on the word Pull standing for a bird. The Appu Ullaar sounds more convincing as a derivation for Ghadambi. This is a great acharya Paramparai. Ghadambi Ramanua-acchar was the prime disciple of Madaipalli Aacchan Pranathartiharacchar /Mahanasar). Ghadambi Ramanuja 's sishya was Ghadambi Rangaraja.His sishya was the uncle of Desikan : Ghadambi Appullar.

The other explanation given for the name of Kidambi is associated with a village from Kerala near Paalakkadu.In the old times, there were many who migrated from this village to Thondainaadu. Their gothram is Aathryam. Hence they are also known as Athreya vamsattthal. The Aaathreya Giothra maharishi is Sage Adhri, Anasooya in Raamayanam.

In this Aathreya Vamsam was born Aathreya Acchan or Pranatharthiharacchar, who served Ramanuja.

Kidambhi acchan : He lived from 1057-1157 CE and is a descendant of Atreya Gothra. He was an ardent sishyar of acharya Ramanuja and a great scholar in Visishtadvaithavedantham. Acharya Ramanuja honored his scholarship by conferring on him the title of Vedantodayana. He lived 20 years more after the ascent of Acharya Ramanuja to parama Padham. Desikan refers to him in Srimath Rahasya Thrayasaaram in Chapter 32 and Kumara Varadacchar refers to him in his Adhikarana Chinthamani, a commentary on his father's Adhikarana Saaravali Kidambi Aacchan is the nephew the wife of Thirumalai Nampi. He was at Thirumalai at his Attimbhev (brother-in-law) house, when Pillan was born to Thirumalai Nampi Dampathis. Pillan during his childhood never laughed or cried like other children.Pillan was listening steadfast, whenever the Kaalakshepamon Dhivya Prabhandham took place.

After Pillan's Upanayanam, Thirumalai Nampi entrusted his son to Kidampi Aacchan to become the disciple of acharya Ramanuja, the nephew of Thirumalai Nampi. Acharya Ramanuja accepted Kidampi Aacchan as His sishyan as well and instructed him on all SaasthrArthams. Kidampi Aachhan took great interest in serving his Acharyan.There was a time, when jealous Koil kaimkaryaparals at Srirangam tried to poison Ramanuja. That attempt failed due to the intervention of Ranganathan. Periya Nampi and Thirukkottiyur Nampi were alarmed, when they heard about this incident and rushed to Srirangam. Acharya Ramanuja rushed to meet His Gurus as they crossed the sands of Cauvery river in mid day's heat. Ramanuja fell down at the feet of his Acharyas and kept on offering his prostrations. Kidaampi Aacchan was standing next to prostrating Ramanuja and could not stand the weakening of the body of his Acharyan. He criticized Periya Nampi and Thirukkoshtiur Nampi for not stopping Ramanuja from repeated prostrations and embraced Ramanuja to protract him from the mid-day heat. Thirukkoshtiur Nampi said then to aacchan: "My dear Kidampi Aacchan! We were testing to see if there is anyone, who is dear to Ramanuja. You are the One. We want you to protect Ramanuja from any further danger. We appoint you to prepare Bikshai from now on for Ramanuja and he should not go out to get Bhikshai from here on". Kidampi Aaacchan accepted the niyamanam (Command) of the Acharyans of Ramanuja with pleasure and came to be known as Madapalli Aacchan because of his unique Madapalli Kaimkaryam for Ramanuja. The Samprahdayam is therefore

known as Madapalli Vazhi Vantha Sampradhayam. Pranathaarthiharar an ardent sishya of Ramanuja. When Emperumanar was on his daily bikshai rounds, once, he was offered poisonous food with a plot to kill him. The lady (who was asked to carry out that act by the evil minded husband) fell at Ramanuja's feet and had tears in her eyes that made Ramanuja get suspicious. It was discovered later that poison was mixed. Later, when Thirukkottiyoor Nambhi came to know of this news, he rushed to see Emperumanar.

Hearing that his Acharya is on the way, Ramanuja, ran towards him and met him on the banks of the Kaveri River. He prostrated at his feet by falling flat on the ground. Mid summer-the scorching sun could burn even the heels. Emperumanar fell on the river sands. ThirukkOttoyoor Nambhi said nothing and looked elsewhere. Kidaambhi Acchaan who was nearby standing, lost his temper and said to Nambhi "this is more severe than the poison offered to Emperumanar". Thirukkottiyoor Nambhi smiled and said "Get up! Emperumanar! Now I have found the most apt person to take care of you! Acchaan is here, and he will prepare food for you... He will take greater care of you.

Than any one else as he could not bear even a minute long suffering of yours on this hot sand". Kidaambhi Acchaan thenceforth was called Madappalli Acchaan and learnt all Ramanuja Siddhaantham along with the Thaligai preparations for Yathirajar and his disciples. Kidaambhi Acchaan who was preparing and serving food for Ramanuja had close contact with him and used to get many of his queries answered. What a kaimkaryam from Acchaan! How nice! What a great way to learn Srivaishnava sampradayam from Yathirajar by offering him tasty palatable food! Kidaambhi Acchaan became the preceptor in the hierarchy of Acharyas in the line of Rahasyas and taught all these Rahasyas learnt from Ramanuja, to his sishyas.. Kidaambhi, Yengal Azhwan, Nadaadoor Ammal, Appullar, thereby to Desikan.

Kidambi Appullar : He was the prime disciple of Nadadur ammal, and born in the year, in the month of chithirai with Arudhra as his birth star to Rangaraja pillan in Athreya gothram. He studied Sri Bashyam, Geetha bashyam and Bhagavath vishyam from his guru Nadadur Ammal. He studied Rahasya thraya saram from his father Rangaraja Pillan. He learned in all the Sastras and Siddhantam from his father Rangarajar so well that elders wondered if he was there incarnation of Periya Thiruvadi - the Vedaatma – and asked "Ivar AP Pullaaro?". "Pull" means bird especially Garuda. Hence, his name Appullaar which became very widely known in the entire Srivaishnava community.

His sister was Totaramba who was married to Anantasuri, Son of Pundarika Yajvaa. She was the mother of the great Swami Desika He was adorned with the title "Vadhi hamsambuvAhar"meaning one who wins over his vadhis in establishing sampradha-yasiddhantham.

He had a sister by name Thothathamba, who was later married to Anatha suri (Desikan's father). He was the maternal uncle and Acharya of our illustrious Swami Desikan.

Kidambi Perumal : No source available

Kidambi Ramanuja pillan : Son of Kidambi acchan born in the month of Appasi

Kidambi rangarjar : He was known as Kidambi padmanabchar. Son of Ramanuja pillan and grandson Grandson of Kidaambi Aachaan. He was born in the month Panguni and in the constellation of Rohini. This is exactly the same month and Nakshatram under which our Prakritam Paravaakottai Gopaala Desika Mahaa Desikan Swami of Poundarikapuram Ashramam was born.

Koil Komandur Elayavalli : Poorvigam Kanchipuram, Vaikunta natha perumal sannidhi.

Kollikavaladasar : Grandfather of Manavala mamuni disciple of Pillai Lockacharya

Komaandur Ilaiyavilli : No source available

Komaandur Pillai : No source available

Kongil Aachaan : No source available

Koorakulothama dasa : He was born in Srirangam, in Koundinya gotra, in Ipasi Tiruvadirai. He got panchasamskara from Vadakku Thiruveedi pillai. Tiruvoimozhi with commentaries, Sribhasya, Srutaprakasika were all blessed to him by Pillai lokacharya. Rahasyas were blessed by Azhagia manavala perumal nayanar. During an Islamic invasion, pillai lokacharya and others took Namperumal and fled out of Srirangam. They wandered and reached Jyotishkudi where Pillai lokacharya reached his last days. All the disciples, surrendered in their acharyas feet and requested as to what would be their future - whom do they treat as their Pillai lokacharya could do nothing else than to remember Tiruvoimozhi pillai.

He blessed him to become Darsanapravartaka leaving his duties as a king. Pillai lokacharya also advised Koorakulothama dasa to teach Rahasyas to Tiruvoimozhi pillai, Tirukannangudi pillai and Tiruputkuzhi jeer to preach tiruvoimozhi, Naloorpillai for the rest 3000, Vilanjolai pillai

for saptha kadai. After ordering so, Pillai lokacharya attained swaacharyan tiruvadigal on Jyeshta suddha dvadasi. During those days, the Pandya king died and his son was a minor. Recognizing the intelligence of srisailesa, the ministers made him the representative of the prince. Tiruvoimozhi pillai steered the kingdom in a glorious path. Srisailesa's mother, could not bear the demise of Pillai lokacharya and so she followed him to the abode.

Srisailesa was taken care by his aunt (chiria thayar). Koorakulothama dasa (as per his acharyas order) made up his mind to severe srisailesa from his duties and bring him to sampradaya. One day Koorakulothama dasa went in front of Tiruvoimozhi pillai chanting Alwars Tiruviruttam. Tiruvoimozhi pillai, being a Tamil lover, requested for the meaning. Koorakulothama dasa denied disrespectfully. The rajasevakas tried to punish Koorakulothama. dasa. Tiruvoimozhi pillai stopped it and told this incidence to his aunt. She iterated the connection between Koorakulothama. Dasa and Pillai lokacharya. Tiruvoimozhi pillai was inclined to surrender to Koorakulothama, Dasa and to start learning. However the time was not ripe. On a day, when Tiruvoimozhi pillai was going on an elephant, Koorakulothama. dasa stood on a high raised place and showed his real self. Tiruvoimozhi pillai realized him as Pillai lokacharya himself and surrendered immediately.

Koorakulothama dasa also embraced him and decided to start the teachings as per the wish of their acharya. When Koorakulothama dasa started to preach, Tiruvoimozhi pillai had a request to make. "I am preoccupied with rajyakarya, so kindly render the kalakshepams while I wear my tirumankappu". Koorakulothama dasa also agreed. Rahasya kalakshepa went on. On a day, due to his overburden, Tiruvoimozhi pillai was not hearing to the words of Koorakulothama dasa. Acharya wanted to put an end to this and did not come for some days. Thiruvaimobipillai I pillai could not bear this and went to Koorakulothama dasa tirumaligai. Fell before his feet and asked for pardon. He took the Sripadatheertham and Chesham of Koorakulothama dasa and hence got enlightened. Immediately he became a virakta, entrusted all his affairs to the Rajamahishi and followed Koorakulothamadasa in his thinking, speech and body (mukkarana). Then the rahasya kalakshepa went on without any hindrance and Koorakulothamadasa could satisfy his acharya's wish. This great deed of Koorakulothama dasa is revered by this sloka: Swayamahuya sailesa guravertha-pradanataha Labdha udarabhidham kurakulotama gurum Bhaje lokacharya krupapatram Koundinya kulabhushanam

samatatma gunavasam vande kurakulota-mam. The one who voluntarily gave all the rahasyarthas to Thirvaimoli pillai and thus was called "udara" - my salutations to him. Let my salutations be for the one who is - blessed by Lokacharya, an ornament to Koundinya Kula, the abode of all atma gunas.

Koorathazhvan brought out 5 works - popularly known as Panchastavam. They are:

Sri Sthavam - 10 slokas[on Ranga nachiyar]

Sri Vaikunta Sthavam - 100 slokas [on Paramapada Nathan

AthimAnusha Sthavam - 61 slokas [on Emperumanar] I Sundara

Bahu Sthavam - 132 slokas [on Azhagar] Varadaraja

Sthavam - 102 slokas [on Hastigiri Varadan]

Koorthalvan : Kuresan hailed from the hamlet of "Kura" (or "kooram") near Kanchipuram. He belonged to the clan of the Haritas and to a well-to-do, land-owning and propertied family that lived in peace with its neighbors and friends. Kuresan had a gem of a person in his young and comely wife, Andalamma. They lived a happy and contented life in Kura. They were both known in Kanchi for their unstinting philanthropy and kindness. They were both ardent devotees of Kanchi Varadan, the presiding deity of the holy city.

Meeting Ramanuja : Early in his life, Kuresan came under the spell of Ramanuja who at that time was living in Kanchi. It was the time when Ramanuja was slowly emerging as the propagator of a new school of thought. He was spreading a whole new philosophy quite different from the sterile monism of Advaita which people at that time were growing weary of. Bands of disciples and followers were already growing around Ramanuja. Kuresan quickly became a disciple of Ramanuja.The two took to each other easily and warmly.

Under. Ramanuja's guidance, Kuresa was soon initiated into the rigorous study of the ancient Vedic scripture and more especially the "meemamsa-sutra-s". A strange bond of kinship developed between master and student over the years they spent together in Kanchi. In his mid-life, due to a variety of personal and social reasons, Ramanuja took to "sannyasa" and was called away by the community of Srivaishnavas in Srirangam to rally them all into a cohesive force there against the onslaught of religious bigotry waged by the Saivite State at that time. Thus, in deference to the commandments of his elders in Srirangam like Mahapurna, and Kanchipurna in Kanchi, Ramanuja decided to migrate to Srirangam. He

left Kanchi for good never to return in future except for brief visits. Kuresan's close relationship with Ramanuja thus drew to a close. Seeing off his guru Ramanuja to Srirangam, Kuresan returned to his hamlet of Kura and commenced his living his life as before. But Lord Varadarajan and his Consort Perundevi thayyar had other plans for Kuresan.

Departing to Srirangam : With the departure of his guru Ramanuja to Srirangam, Kuresan and his wife Andalamma returned to their good, uneventful lives in Kura. One evening, after they had completed their daily routine of feeding the poor at dusk, they retired for the day. They clanged the big brass doorway to their home shut. This clanging of the brass door was so loud in the quiet of the night that it was heard some distance away in Kanchi. Lord Varadaraja and Perundevi thayyar too were a little startled by it. Thayyar queried the Lord as to the cause of the gong reverberating through the night air. The Lord turned to his chief priest, Kanchipurna or Tirukacchi-nambi (also one of the several mentors of Ramanuja) and asked," Pray tell us, wherefrom this sound of the night, O Sire?". Kanchipurna replied," Lord, it is the doorway of our dear Kuresan's home being shut for the day after the daily alms-giving."

The Lord and Perundevi-Piratti, very pleased to know of Kuresa and his piety and charity, commanded that Kuresan be brought to their Presence. Kanchipurna hastened to Kura to beckon Kuresan to Kanchi. At Kura, when Kuresan came to know from Kanchipurna the purpose of his visit, he became extremely indignant with himself. "What?! Did the clanging of my doorway disturb the Lord and His Consort in Kanchi?! What a conceited wretch am I that I should let my charity be announced thus to the whole world! What a vain sinner am I!". The incident seemed to rudely awaken Kuresan out of a strange spiritual torpor. He realized that a choice in life had been staring him in his face but which he had been subconsciously avoiding all the while since Ramanuja's departure: Either he could continue to live in Kura and lead a life of pious, vain but ineffectual charity or, he could pursue his guru Ramanuja to Srirangam and serve him in his life's great mission.

Kuresan made his choice instantly! He dispatched Kanchipurna back to Kanchi. He told his wife Andalamma to immediately renounce all their wealth and belongings and to join him in migrating to Srirangam and wedding themselves forever in the service of Ramanuja. It was a turning point in the life of Kuresan. The same night husband and wife walked out of their homes with nothing but the clothes they wore. They set out for SriRangam by foot. Along the way, Kuresan and Andalamma had to

journey through jungle infested with wayside brigands. Andalamma was mortally afraid of nocturnal robbers and made no secret of her fears to her husband. When he heard of his wife's anxieties Kuresan quickly replied," Andal, watching your agitation I suspect that your fears are founded in something you have not fully disclosed to me. I asked you to renounce all our belongings back in our village of Kura. Have you renounced everything? I mean really everything?".

When questioned so intensely by Kuresan, Andalamma had no choice but to confess," My Sire, I did renounce everything save for this little golden goblet which I secreted in the folds of my sari. I thought I would need it during the journey to serve you some beverage and relieve you of weariness". Kuresan looked at the golden goblet that his wife pulled out from her sari-folds and then mildly chided her," My dear woman, when I wanted you to renounce everything I meant this little goblet too!". So saying Kuresan took the vessel from Andalamma's hands and threw it away into the night and deep into the forest shrubbery." There now!", he said turning to his wife, "There now, my dear wife, has been cast away the source of all your fears". Kuresan and Andalamma were received into Srirangam with great joy and fanfare by Ramanuja. He welcomed them as if they were his own children, put them up in his quarters and quickly settled them into the life and society of Srirangam. Kuresan started a new chapter in his life in Srirangam as one of the closest disciples of Ramanuja.

He assisted Ramanuja in all aspects and affairs of his ministry,... the temple of Sriranganatha and the SriVaishnava community. He was Ramanuja's aide in scriptural study, disputations and exegesis. He was at his beck and call. He tended to his minutest needs. He was his factotum.

His amanuensis. His valet. His eyes and ears. His conscience keeper. His alter ego.... Kuresan soon became his Master's faithful shadow.

Helping Ramanuja to write Sri Bhasyam in Srirangam Kuresan soon became his Master, Ramanuja's faithful shadow. Ramanuja was by that time the acknowledged leader of a great movement in the religious and social history of India. His following was large and growing in numbers. His new philosophy, called Visishtadvaita was attracting universal attention and numberless adherents. Yet Ramanuja knew that unless his new philosophy was institutionalized into a system, the newly founded school of thought would soon wither away. To that end, therefore, Ramanuja set about writing down the principles of what later came to be known as "Ramanuja darsanam"... the philosophical system of

Ramanuja. Ramanuja was assisted greatly in the task of systematizing his philosophy by 4 principal disciples who formed the "inner circle". They were Kuresan, Dasarathi, Devar At and Embar.

All 4 were closely involved with their Master in the daily study of scripture, the Vedanta-sutras, the 'tiruvoimozhi' and in the formulation of ideological and polemical attacks on Advaita, Jainism and Buddhism. Master and disciples over many years of deep study and refinement began to slowly build, brick by brick, the architecture of Visishtad-vaita until they were sure that they could proceed with the raising of its superstructure. Ramanuja at last decided to record his commentary on the Brahma-sutras of Vyasa.... the kernel of Truth contained in the vast body of Vedic knowledge. It was Kuresa whom he appointed as his amanuensis. Ramanuja told him," Kuresa, begin writing down my "bhashya" as I dictate it, but should you find anything I say to be at variance with what we have all agreed is the considered position of our new system you should immediately cease writing. By this way I may know where to stop dictating and review our positions." Kuresan agreed. And thus began the stupendous task of writing the great Sri-bhashya of Ramanuja. In the course of dictation one day, Ramanuja stated that the distinguishing attribute of the atomic soul ("jeeva") is its cognitive power.

At this point Kuresa put his writing-quill down and ceased writing. He dumbly looked up at his guru. The guru Ramanuja looked at Kuresan and suddenly flew into a temper. The many years of work done and the strain of many days of hard intellectual labor had taken the toll of the ageing guru and his nerves were frayed. When Kuresan stopped writing indicating thereby that his Master was probably straying from right reasoning, Ramanuja mistook it as an affront and flew off the handle." Sir, if you mean to write the "bhashya" on the "vyasa-Sutras" you may do so", thundered Ramanuja at Kuresan. He then kicked him and stomped out in a fit of rage. Other disciples who had gathered there were shocked. They began to commiserate with Kuresan who however politely told them," My friends, I am but a chattel of my guru. He can do what he wants with me or treat me any way he wishes."

After a while Ramanuja reflected upon the incident. And he realized that Kuresan was right in finding fault with his dictated passage. The definition of the "jeeva" as a cognitive entity was no doubt a good but not valid definition in as much as the most essential characteristic of the soul viz. its allegiance or leadership to God ('seshatva') was a serious omission. Defining the soul as possessing cognition and bliss without

stressing that it was the sole property of God, the Universal Spirit, was like defining light without any reference to the sun. Ramanuja quickly realized that if his original definition of the jeeva had gone unchallenged by Kuresan then the very superstructure of Visishtadvaita's theology would have proceeded to be built on thin air.

Ramanuja grew repentant. He beckoned his Kuresan and told him, "My son, you are absolutely right! Now please write down the true nature of the soul as that which is God's... and let us proceed with the rest of the work". In such manner, did Kuresan and Ramanuja proceed to compose the great standard works of "Sri-Sampradayam" that have come down to posterity—"Sri-Bhashya", "Vedanta-deepa", "Vedanta-sara", "Vedarthasangraha" and "Gita-Bhashya".

Traveling to Kashmir to acquire Brahma sutras In Srirangam, although Ramanuja and Kuresan succeeded in the stupendous task of systematizing an exciting and epoch ally new philosophy, they both knew that the "sri-bhashya" still needed a final coat of brilliant polish.... the polish of irrefutability... before it could go into and earn an unchallenged place in the annals of Vedanta history. Ramanuja knew that in order to lend irrefutable authority to his commentaries on the "Brahma-sutras", he badly needed to consult with ancient texts and treatises that could be actually shown to expressly affirm some of the fundamental postulates and theses of Visishtadvaita. Ramanuja knew he must access an ancient parchment or document called "boddhayana vrutti" — a rare exegetical treatise on Vyasa's "brahma-sutras" incorporating the insights of other great 'bhashyakar-s' of a distant past like Dramida, Guhadeva, Tanka and Bharuchi. The "boddhAyana vrutti",

Ramanuja learnt, was lying somewhere in a musty library in the royal library of the then king of an obscure Kashmiri state. Daunting as the task appeared to him, Ramanuja decided that he must have access to the "vrutti". To that end he, at the advanced age of about 60 odd years, decided that he would undertake a "digvijayam" of the country — an All-India tour by foot — which would not only take him to Kashmir in pursuit of the "vrutti" but also enable him to propagate his message throughout the vast land through establishment of several "Ramanuja-koodam-s" and "mutts"... his pontifical centers. Ramanuja with his disciples thus set out from Srirangam on their formidable expedition. Kuresan was with him.

The expedition sojourned through vast provinces — Tirupati, then south to the Malabar areas, up north along the western coastal belt of India to

the eastern regions of Puri, Kasi, Naimisharanyam, Varanasi, Salagrama in Nepal, the West to Dwaraka, Pushkaram and to Bhatti (near Lahore) and finally into the Himalayan districts of Kashmir. In the court of the King of Kashmir, Ramanuja was told that before they gave him access to their library he would first have to prove his credentials as a philosopher genuinely propagating a new school of thought. Ramanuja not only put forth his exposition of the new Visihtadvaita but also engaged the royal pundits in debate to show them the inadequacy of their own monism.

The King was pleased and freely gave permission for Ramanuja and Kuresan to access the archives in the royal library. The royal pundits however were none too happy about the King's generosity and played malicious mischief to frustrate Ramanuja. They held that, notwithstanding the royal assent, Ramanuja would not be permitted to take the "vrutti" out of the library precincts. Ramanuja and Kuresa then began to study the "vrutti" within the library premises itself. Then the pundits came up with another plot to frustrate them. They held that Ramanuja would not be allowed to take down any notes from the "vrutti". So Ramanuja and Kuresan proceeded to memories vast portions of the "vrutti".The pundits seeing that Ramanuja and Kuresan were thwarting them at every point finally plotted murder. It was then that Ramanuja decided that enough was enough and decided to leave Kashmir... The expedition slowly wound up and returned south to Srirangam. In spite of the disappointment faced in Kashmir, Ramanuja however, as it turned out, suffered no loss at all! For, back in Srirangam, when Kuresan and he sat down to complete the "Sri-Bhashya" by incorporating authentic references to the "boddhayana vrutti", Kuresan by the sheer power of his prodigious memory was able to instantly and accurately recall vast passages from the "vrutti"— word for word!

The commentary of Ramanuja on vyasa's "Brahma-Sutra-s" — the labor of so many, many years — Quickly progressed to its conclusion. It turned out to be a real miracle of miracles! Ramanuja finished his immortal "sri-Bhashya" with a sense of utter fulfillment thanks to the "vrutti" and even greater thanks to the daring enterprise and phenomenal memory of his chief disciple, Kuresan!

Birth of Parasara Bhattar and Vyasa Bhattar After his great expedition all across India to propagate his fresh Vedantic theology and to also secure the "boddhayana vrutti", Ramanuja settled down in SriRangam once again to consolidate the position of Srivaishnavism. His fame had now spread far and wide over the country. His disciples and followers were

now legion. Srirangam and the temple of Lord Ranganatha became the capital city of SriVaishnavites. Ramanuja, at that point of time in his life, had indeed fulfilled much of his promise to his own guru, Yamunacharya, who had on his death-bed entrusted him with the life-mission of

(1) writing a fresh, new commentary on the "Brahma-Sutra-s" based on the philosophical premises of the "bhakti" tradition handed down from the times of Nammazhwar through Nathamuni and

(2) to propagate the same through the devotional literature of the ancient Azhwars known as the 'Tamil Vedas' or the 4000 verses of the "nalayira divya prabhandam". At that point of time, Ramanuja's most beloved disciple, Kuresan, however was not a fulfilled man. His wife, Andalamma and he still went childless. In Srirangam Kuresan had so thoroughly become involved in the ministry of Ramanuja that he had very little time to devote to family affairs. His wife Andalamma too was a very devout lady and too good a soul to rebel against what had become her hard lot in life.

Kureṣan earned his daily bread by the traditional means prescribed for a Vedic "gradate" (householder) viz. "uncharted" or the practice of going around one's neigh-borhood begging for daily alms and seeking out a living solely by such means. Kuresan begged from day to day. Nothing was accumulated... be it food or clothes...nothing more was collected than what Kuresan considered as sufficient to satisfy the wants of his family in the space of a single day...

One day it rained heavily and the time for going around on his "unchavratti" came and passed. Kuresan and Andalamma went without any food that day except for a sip of the holy water offered to the household deity. They skipped supper too. Kuresan was unmindful of his hunger since he kept reciting the "Tiruvoimozhi" throughout the rainy day, but Andalamma deeply felt the pangs of pain... pain, not of her own hunger, but the pain of watching her husband starve. It was evening then and just at that moment the temple bells of the Srirangam temple gonged. It was the signal to indicate that Lord Ranganatha was being offered his evening "naivEdyam" or worshipful food.

When Andalamma heard the temple gong she bit her lips in tears. She couldn't help silently muttering," O Ranga, when your devotee Kuresan goes starving on a day like this, how is you able to enjoy your feast?". The piercing cry of Andalamma's pain was obviously heard by the Deity, for Ranga that same night appeared in the dream of one of His temple-officials, one. Uttama-nambi whom He commanded:

"Go forth immediately with my food-offerings to the house of my devotee Kuresan for he has eaten nothing this day! Tell him that We send him our meal and our blessings!". Uttamanambi woke up startled and drenched in cold sweat. Gathering himself up and summoning all temple staff including pipers, drummers, stewards and ceremonial carriers, he marched in a great procession in the middle of the night to Kuresan's house, carrying trays of food that had previously offered as "naivEdyam" to Lord Ranganatha.

When the procession reached Kuresan's home Uttama-nambi recounted to him Lord Ranga's commandment in his dream and begged Kuresan to accept the Lord's offering of food. Kuresan was too dumbfounded to react! Andalamma however gently advised her husband to accept the temple offerings. "This food has been sent by our Lord Ranga Himself, and we must accept it and rejoice!", she said. His job accomplished, Uttamanambi returned to his abode, utterly relieved that he had carried out Lord Ranga's express orders without further ado. Back home at Kuresa's place, he suspected that the midnight offer of food by Lord Ranga had something to do with his wife.

So Kuresa queried Andalamma who after much persuasion confessed to what had happened, of how she had shared her anguish with Ranga over the plight of Kuresan going without a morsel of food on that rainy day." My dear woman", chided Kuresan gently," what have you done? What have you done! You have tested Divinity's compassion for a mere morsel of food to fill this sinner's belly!".

All the same that night, Kuresan and Andalamma ate the temple food-offerings of Lord Ranganatha and went to bed happily. That same night, Ranga appeared again in a dream, but this time in Kuresan's sleep and announced," Kuresa, We trust that our offering of food has pleased you. Our offering was not merely to satisfy your pangs of physical hunger but to meet your desire or greater hunger for the love of children! What you and Andalamma have just eaten are the seeds of two little children to be born to you! They will Our Own Children!

They are blessed indeed! Rejoice in them as you would rejoice in Our Own Presence amongst you!". Ranga vanished and Kuresan excitedly woke up Andalamma to tell her all about the dream. A year later, two beautiful boy babies were born to Kuresan and Andalamma! Their hearts burst with joy. The news of the birth of Kuresan's boys reached Ramanuja and he was transported with joy!

The grand old "Acharya" himself performed the "Nama-Karanam" for Kuresan's 2 boys naming them "Vyasa-bhattar" and "Parashara-Bhattar"! The latter boy became later in life one of the tallest "Acharya-s" in the Srivaishnava pantheon of post-Ramanuja stalwarts! Parashara Bhattar came to be acknowledged by posterity as the natural heir to Ramanuja's entire spiritual kingdom! Thus indeed, had Kuresan, through his offspring, Parashara Bhatta, performed yet another great service or "Kainkaryam" to his beloved guru: He gave unto the venerable Ramanuja's arms his fledgling spiritual heir... one who would carry on unbroken the grand tradition of "sri-sampradAyam" for all times to come!

Meeting Kirimikanda Chozhan By the time Ramanuja was a septuagenarian, his stature as a giant of an "Acharya" in the Vedantic galaxy of India became secure. Sri Vaishnavam had reached its pinnacle of development around that time. While the followers of Ramanuja were multiplying by the day, he also began to make a few enemies. The growing influence of SriVaishnavism once again stoked the malevolent fires of religious bigotry in the land. Amongst some sections of the Saivite population which at that time was concentrated around Gangai-konda-sozha-puram... near Chidambaram... hatred of SriVaishnavaism and of Ramanuja began to flare up.

The King of Chozhan at that time was a tyrant who was also a Saivite fanatic. His name was Krimikantha Chola of the clan of the Kollutunga kings. This tyrant was hell-bent on rooting out Vaishnavism in his kingdom and the best way to do that, he thought, was to destroy Ramanuja.

He issued royal summons to Ramanuja to appear in his court for the ostensible purpose of engaging him in scholarly debate with his own royal pundits. The real intention however was to coerce Ramanuja to recant from SriVaishnavism and if he refused... to have him murdered in cold blood. Ramanuja's followers got wind of the king's evil designs and promptly dissuaded Ramanuja from going to Gangai- onda-sozha-puram.

Fearing for their Master's safety, the disciples of Ramanuja persuaded him to flee from the land of the Cholas. Kuresan then volunteered to go as Ramanuja's proxy and respond to the royal summons. With great reluctance Ramanuja thus left Srirangam with a small band of acolytes and fled to the distant but salubrious land of Melkote or Tirunarayanapuram.

Ramanuja lived in exile there for 12 long years... a difficult period in life

for the aged Acharya. In Melkote Ramanuja however once again re-built his pontific from scratch. He consecrated a temple of Lord Sampath-kumaran. He developed a colony of devout Sri Vaishnavas from amongst the local residents. In good time, Melkote became a thriving centre of Sri Vaishnavism second only in glory to Srirangam when Ramanuja had lived there. One day a Vaishnava member who had traveled very far, and for many days, from Srirangam arrived in Melkote and sought audience with Ramanuja.

The "Acharya" rushed to meet the visitor from Srirangam, eager to know tidings from his beloved city of Lord Ranga from where he had been so abruptly and violently uprooted by medieval bigotry. "Pray tell me quickly how fare my beloved SriRangam, my beloved mentors and my dearest disciples?", asked Ramanuja. The visitor replied, "All fare well in the city of Srirangam, Sire, except that you are sorely missed by everyone." After a few more inquiries and a pregnant pause Ramanuja asked," And how is my disciple Kuresan?". It was then that the visitor, in a voice choked with pent-up emotion, began to narrate to Ramanuja details of the grim fate that had befallen Kuresan at the hands of the Chola tyrant, Krimikanta Chozhan.

Loosing his eyes for Lord Ranganatha After a few more polite inquiries about the affairs of Lord Ranganatha's temple, and after a long, pregnant pause Ramanuja asked the Vaishnava visitor from Srirangam,"And how is my disciple Kuresan?". It was then that the visitor, in a voice choked with pent emotion, narrated to Ramanuja details of the grim fate that had befallen Kuresan at the hands of the Chola tyrant, Krimikanta Chozhan.This is what the gentleman related to Ramanuja who began listening with rapt attention:

"Sire, after your departure from Sri Rangam,. Kuresan and Mahapurna were summoned to the royal court at Gangai-konda-sozha-puram. At the court the King thrust a written declaration in their faces which read:" Nothing higher than Siva exists", and commanded them both to affix their signatures to it without protest.

Kuresan refused. He launched into a long and magnificent recital of authoritative texts and sources from the Vedas, Upanishads, Smritis and Puranas that proved that Narayana was the Supreme Principle and none was higher than He and hence He was the only object fit for worship and contemplation. The Chola King was incensed. Thrusting a writing-quill into Kuresan's hands he commanded Kuresan again to forthwith sign the declaration swearing allegiance to Siva. "If you refuse we shall

have your eyes pulled out here and now!". On hearing this Kuresan flew into a greater rage. He grabbed the quill from the King's hands and said, "But let me save you the trouble, you tyrant, for I shall pluck out my eyes by my own hand!

These eyes that have set sights on a sinner such as thee have no further use for me!". So saying Kuresan plunged the sharp writing-quill into his own eyes, and extracting ball from socket threw his eyes on the floor at the King's feet! The sudden and violent act of martyrdom of Kuresan struck terror into the hearts of all assembled there!

The cruel King remained unfazed! He turned next to Mahapurna and commanded him to sign the declaration of apostasy. The elderly Sire too flatly refused, upon which the vengeful King ordered his courtiers to overpower Mahapurna and gouge out the old 'Acharya's' eyes without further ado! And so was it done without much ado! Blood streamed out of the eyeless cavities of Maha-purna and the poignant agony caused may be better imagined than described. Kuresa being younger compared to Mahapurna, and of stronger will, somehow took hold of Mahapurna and both managed to totter out of the palace with blood and gore trailing them.

Bearing their pain with a superhuman effort they trudged some distance to the outskirts of Gangai-konda-hozha-puram where they were met by Mahapurna's daughter, the poor girl, Attulazhaypiratti. The girl had come all the way from Srirangam looking for them. When she saw her father thus, his face now eyeless and disfigured beyond recognition, she screamed her heart out in shock.

Mahapurna being in his declining years, and on meeting his daughter, now collapsed by the roadside. He could proceed no further on the road from the Chola capital to the city of SriRangam. The pain became unendurable. He lay down with his head resting on Kuresan's lap and his feet resting on his daughter's and told them that his mortal end was nearing. Kuresan's heart broke and he began to wail aloud," O Sire, what cruel fate has befallen us and you especially! Your birthplace is Srirangam and your God is Ranga and your disciple is the great Ramanuja himself! And yet to think that your death should be ordained in a wayside field on the outskirts of Gangai-konda-chozha-puram! Does this cause you grief?

The old Mahapurna then told Kuresan,"My dear Kuresa, and my beloved Atullazhay! Have you not heard that wherever a Vaishnavan may chance to die, there God is present with him, even as Rama was present while

Jatayu passed away from this world in the wilderness of a jungle? "And have you not heard, O Kuresa, which the best place to die is on a SriVaishnavan's lap or house? Am I not blessed therefore, O Kuresa, to have you cradle me in your lap as I now breathe my last? Do not grieve! "Also if not dying on the soil of Srirangam is a cause of grief, all posterity would think that death in SriRangam is the only thing in life worthy of attainment! How ridiculous! No!

Our rule is that a good soul which has surrendered or performed "prappati" to God may meet its death anywhere and yet be sure of God beside it! "And besides, where am I dying here now? Is this not the land where my great gurus like Nathamuni and Kurugai-kaval-appan also died? So should I not consider myself fortunate that I die like them? Grieve not!", said the venerable Mahapurna. He then expired, O Sire, with his thoughts firmly fixed on his guru Yamunacharya.Sire, just then a band of SriVaishnavas happened to pass by.

They lent Kuresan a hand and together they solemnly performed for Mahapurna the special last rites, the "brahmamEdha" for the great soul." When Ramanuja heard the above account of the visitor from Srirangam he sobbed uncontrollably. His sadness knew no bounds. Ramanuja remembered that he owed so much to his mentor Mahapurna. It was for Ramanuja's own sake that the old Master had to give his life! Alas, Ramanuja could not be at his side at the time of his death to perform obsequies like the son Mahapurna never had! "In death, as in life, O my dearest Master Mahapurna", thought Ramanuja silently, " I remain eternally in debt to you, Sire!

How shall I ever repay thee?". Ramanuja wept like a child. In sadness there was however a tinge of happiness too for Ramanuja. "At least my Master did not die abandoned!", thought Ramanuja, "At least, he was tended to in his last moments by none other than my own dearest disciple, Kuresan!". Thus did Kuresa perform one more poignant deed of "kainkaryam": Kuresa performed the 'antima-samskAram' for his guru's guru!

Returning back to Srirangam After Mahapurna's cruel death at the palace of the Chola king at Ganga-konda-sozha-puram, and after he had himself been violently blinded for life, Kuresan returned to SriRangam. Life in Srirangam without the benign presence of his "Acharya" Ramanuja soon became unbearable for Kuresan. In the meanwhile, all the stalwarts of the times began to pass away, one by one. Goshtipurna, a great mentor of Ramanuja passed away. Tirumalai-Andan and Tiruvaranga-perumAl-araiyar were next to pass away.

The news came to Kuresan that SriSaila-purna in Tirupati, the maternal uncle of Ramanuja and his mentor too, had expired. And finally the news came from Kanchi that Ramanuja's most beloved mentor, Sri.Kanchipurna too had passed away.

Kuresan had spent many years of his life in the company of Kanchipurna in Kanchi and in his passing away Kuresan felt a deep and painful void. The city of Lord Ranga took on the forlorn and eerie appearance of a ghost town in Kuresan's eyes. Ramanuja was in exile, the leading lights of the SriVaishnava movement were all dying one by one around Kuresan, the Sri Vaishnava movement had suffered a setback, and Vaishnavas everywhere lived in constant fear of the ugly bigotry and fanaticism of those times. Suddenly, Kuresan began to feel extremely lonely and abandoned in life....

One day the blind Kuresan tottered through his way from home to the temple of Ranganatha to have 'darshan' of the Lord there and to unburden his heart in the presence of God of all the untold grief and loneliness that had piled up within it. The temple guards however stopped him at the gates and told him," Blind man, we have instructions from the King to let people in only if they swear that they willingly renounce Ramanuja as their guru.

If you denounce your guru you can enter the temple of Ranganatha. If you won't this holy temple is out of bounds for you!".Kuresan told them, "Sires, please tell your King that Kuresan is prepared to forsake Lord Ranganatha in this world and even in the next. But denounce Ramanuja...he never will!" The blind Kuresan then hobbled back to his home and told his wife, "Andal, call the children and pack up to leave Srirangam. We shall live here no more." Kuresan and his family left the holy city of Srirangam and trudged away to the town of Tirumalirunjolai (near Madurai). They settled down there and lived in exile as complete recluses for many, many sad years

Meeting Ramanuja After living in exile in Melkote for a decade and more, a time came in history when Ramanuja was at last in a position to return to SriRangam.The Chola tyrant, King Krimikantha, died of a deadly tumor that grew inside his neck. After his death, the fanatic fringe of Saivism in the kingdom quickly lost its militant edge and the land of the Cholas again reverted to sanity and its high civilization. Krimikanta Chola's successor was his son who turned out to be a wise king utterly unlike his father.

He discouraged religious bigotry in his kingdom and allowed freedom

of faith and worship amongst all his subjects. Taking leave of his vast following in the Mysore regions of Tirunarayanapuram, and at the ripe old age of around 100, Ramanuja finally decided to return in triumph to his Holy See in SriRangam.

The centenarian's re-entry into Srirangam was a historic moment in the annals of Sri Vaishnavism. A great gathering of Sri Vaishnava laity and orthodoxy lined the streets of SriRangam to welcome their beloved leader as he came in majestic procession with his disciples. Pageantry and fanfare, excite-ment and expectation were rife in the air. Vedic chants and loud "prabandhic" recitation filled the air as Ramanuja's great procession wound its way slowly from the outer ramparts of the Srirangam city into the inner courtyards of the temple of Lord Ranganatha.

It was the grand return of the Hero of SriVaishnavism to reclaim the papal throne that was rightly his! After worshipping inside the temple of Lord Ranganatha, Ramanuja went out again into his beloved city of SriRangam to loud cheers to the population. The street sights and smells, the people and their children, were all familiar to him...

He remembered the glorious days of the past.... A happy and eventful past that had been peopled by so many of his dearest gurus, mentors and disciples....and so many, many wonderful memories... Ramanuja's first stop in Srirangam was to call on the house of his most beloved disciple, the blinded Kuresan.... Having earlier learnt that his guru Ramanuja was returning to SriRangam, Kuresan and his family, exiled in Tirumalirunjolai for several years, had made the greatest haste in themselves returning to their homestead in Srirangam to await their Master's arrival.

Someone rushed ahead of Ramanuja's procession to tell the blind Kuresan that Ramanuja was himself heading straight towards his home after worshipping at the temple. Kuresan's heart leapt with joy. He immediately asked his family to lead him out onto the street outside his home. There he eagerly awaited his guru's arrival. When Ramanuja arrived, the Master and the disciple faced each utterly transfixed...

In each other's presence they suddenly lost themselves in a flood of distant recollections... of their young day's together back in Kanchi, of their times in Srirangam composing the "Sri-bhashya", their travels together across India to Kashmir and back.... and the many battles they had together fought and won against ideological adversaries like Advaitins and "Mayavadins", Jains and Buddhists.... Tears welled up in

the Master's eyes as he looked at Kuresan who, being eyeless, was unable to vent or shed the tears of utter joy that seemed to inundate his breast. Kuresan tottered forward and fell at Ramanuja's feet and clasped them both tightly to his eyeless and scarred face.

He lay there motionless and speechless for several moments. A great hush of silence descended on the large crowd collected there! It stood dumb witness to probably the most poignant moment ever in the entire history of the SriVaishanavite movement. Ramanuja was himself speechless for a while as tears shook his now frail body and rolled down his aged cheeks.

Then the old, wizened "Acharya" bent down and lifting Kuresa to his feet held him to his bosom tightly. "My child, my child," whispered Ramanuja to Kuresan,"what have thee done! What have thee done! You have given your eye... the eye of faith... for the sake of Our faith!". When he heard his Master's familiar voice again for the first time after 12 long years Kuresan became simply overwhelmed.

But with effort, he somewhat composed himself, recovered quickly and finally replied, "My Master, if I had to lose my eyes it was but in atonement perhaps for some sin I may have committed! Perhaps I may have once happened to pass by some good Sri Vaishnavan and may have said to me "How clumsily this man has applied his "urdhvapundhram" on his forehead! Hence, Sire, my punishment is rightly deserved!".

Ramanuja said, "My beloved Kuresa! You and sin?!! Never! Rather, my child, it is all my sin for which you have atoned all these years!" But let the past be bygone, Kuresa, come with me now! You and I have lots of unfinished work yet to do!". So saying Ramanuja proceeded to his own monastery in Srirangam, personally leading his blind but happy Kuresan by hand.....All the crowds gathered there in SriRangam that day watched in wide-eyed fascination as the old Ramanuja led the blind disciple to his papal headquarters....

It was indeed the perfect and most appropriate picture that anybody could have witnessed on that most magnificent occasion —— the picture of "enlightenment" lovingly leading the "blind"....

Remained his Guru's faithful shadow At the age of well over 100 years, after his triumphant return to Srirangam from Melkote, Ramanuja with the help of Kuresan, once again set about resurrecting Sri Vaishnavism and restoring its soaring spirit to former glory. In the 10 odd years of Ramanuja's exile away from Sri Rangam, and under the rule of the bigoted

despot Krimikantan Chola, the temple of Srirangam had fallen upon ill-fated days; many centers of worship belonging to the faith had been vandalized too; Vaishnava associations, libraries, schools and trusts had all been systematically looted and destroyed as well. Corruption, indiscipline and laxity of faith had also set in amongst many SriVaishnavas.

Kuresan ably assisted his guru in setting right all the wrongs of the SriVaishnava faith. Together they worked tirelessly to bring order, vigor and rectitude back to their faith. It was during this time that Ramanuja composed his famous work called "Nithya".... a practical manual to be followed in Srivaishnava "perumal" temples for daily conduct of rituals and a compendium of administrative matters.

The "Nithya" is a very valuable manual in use even today in most "perumal" temples most notably, in the famous temple of Tirupati-Tirumala. Thanks to Ramanuja, Sri Vaishnavism once again began to flourish in the land where once people had been frightened to even utter the holy name of "narayana"! Kuresan despite his great physical handicap shirked no duty or "kainkaryam" that was thrust upon him by his centenarian guru, Ramanuja. Even in those last years of life on earth, as always, he remained his guru's faithful shadow!

In the SriVaishnava tradition, Ramanuja is regarded as an "avatara" of the great Laksh-mana of the 'Ramayana' who's extraordinary life of service and dedication ("kainkaryam" and "shraddhai") to Lord Rama was divine legend. It is said that Rama found no better way of repaying his debt to Lakshmana other than to take 'avatar' again as Kuresan during Ramanuja's time on earth and reverse roles i.e. to do unto Ramanuja the same yeoman service that he had been blessed to receive from Lakshmana in an ancient age of the past!

Such was the celebrated "kainkaryam" Kuresan rendered to his guru that the SriVaishnava faith did not hesitate to confer the sacred hood of Rama's "avatara" upon him!

Going back to Sri Vaikunta to receive his Guru Ramanuja Kuresan worked tirelessly at Srirangam all his life for his guru Ramanuja who was by then more than 110 years old and also for the cause of SriVaishnavaism which had by then become firmly established as a distinctive school of Vedantic thought and practice in India. Kuresan too had aged considerably. His sons, Parashara and Vyasa Bhattar had quickly grown to be stripling lads who showed great promise as future leaders of the Sri Vaishnavism fold. His wife Andalamma too had grown

into an old but graceful lady. One day blind Kuresan went all by himself to visit Lord Ranga in the temple.

After offering worship Kuresa continued to linger behind in the presence of the Lord. The Deity was a little surprised and asked Kuresan," You seem to have something to say to Me, Kuresa?". Kuresan replied," No my Lord! I linger here so that I may sing your praise to my hearts content!". Ranga was pleased and said," Kuresa, you have pleased me today! Ask of me any favor you want!". Kuresan quickly replied," O Ranga, you have bestowed me with every blessing and gift in life! There is nothing that I lack! What can I ask thee further?".

The Deity however pressed Kuresan," No, once more ask, and ask for more, if not for you, then ask for the love that I bear towards my beloved spouse, Ranganayaki, and towards my Ramanuja!". Kuresan then had to ask for something, so he asked that he be released from his mortal body and be merged in the Lord's Feet. The Deity however demurred and said," Ask me anything but that, Kuresan!".

Kuresan said he had nothing else to ask of God. So Ranga finally relented and said," Let it be so then! What you have asked of me, Kuresan, shall be boon for not only thee but also a boon conferred upon everyone that has any sort of kinship with thee!". On receiving the supreme blessing from the Deity of Srirangam, Kuresan walked out of the temple with his head held high in pride! He felt like a crown-prince who was about to be coroneted in the Kingdom of God! He went home with his spirit soaring! Meanwhile news of Kuresan's encounter with Lord Rang Nathan quickly reached Ramanuja who was in his monastery. When the old AchArya heard of the incident he was startled! He stood up immediately, and throwing his upper garment in the air, let out a low whoop!

The old acharya's behavior was so unusual that a disciple who was standing close-by asked him what the matter was. Ramanuja replied," My faithful one, do I also not bear kinship with my Kuresan! My salvation too is now assured by the boon that Ranga has granted my Kuresan!". It was an ironic but wonderful reversal of roles! Usually it is by the guru's intercession that God's grace is fetched for a disciple. But here in the case of Kuresan and Ramanuja, it was the Master who was benefiting from the disciple's stock with the Almighty!

The old pontiff then left his Mutt and made his way to the quarters of Kuresan in the other part of Srirangam. Kuresan was waiting for his guru. When the Master met Kuresan he said," What have you done, Kuresan?! You have gone and done a deed without even consulting me

your guru?". Ramanuja's tone was a bit remonstrative and a bit accusatory too.

So Kuresan kept silent." Why do you not speak, Kuresa? What was your purpose in going to our Lord Ranga and begging Him to let go of thee far in advance of someone like me here who is so far gone in age? Do you wish to be gone ahead of me, my dear Kuresa? Why?". Kuresan spoke in soft tones, "My Master, my most Holy Sire! My sole purpose was to preserve the order of precedence in "paramapadam".... in God's Kingdom.". "Don't speak to me in riddles and conundrums, Kuresa!

I am your Master, speak plainly with me!", gently chided Ramanuja. "Sire, in the "pasuram" "muDiyuDai" it is said that our elders in heaven who preceded us come out of the gates of "paramapadam" to welcome their younger brothers when it is the latter's turn to arrive there.... and then the elders usher the young ones into God's Presence. Sire, but this I consider as being of improper order! It is the younger ones who should always go first and prepare in Heaven to receive and welcome their elders. That is the order of precedence I wish to preserve! Hence, Sire, I go in advance so that I may welcome my Master when he arrives there in good time!".

When Ramanuja heard Kuresan's stirring words his whole body shook with tremors of emotion. His spirit melted. "My most beloved Kuresan, you forget the rule in Heaven that all differences and distinction between elder and young, between wise and ignorant, between saint and sinner simply disappear there! And yet you Kuresan, who has served me here as devotedly as a disciple, wish to perpetuate in Heaven too the same relationship that existed between you and me here on earth! O, my dearest Kuresa, is there anybody to match you in this world! Kuresa, my beloved child!".

The aged Ramanuja could not contain his tears and rushing forward took hold of his disciple and embraced him. "Kuresa, my Kuresa, my dearest son, you are my very soul! How can I part with thee? You say you want to leave this old man behind alone in this world! Can you not be kind-eared to this Master of yours of so many years? Take me too with you, my son, to the Kingdom of God! Why do you want to leave me behind to suffer the pangs of separation?

While I am yet here upon this earth, how can you be so anxious for Heaven, O Kuresa? Tell me, how can you enjoy "paramapadam" without me?". On hearing his old guru's wrenching words, Kuresan heart was torn to shreds by emotion. He was stunned into a poignant silence. After

a moment Kuresan meekly replied, "My Master, my Great Sire, in the depth of my thoughts for the miseries of earthly existence, I completely forgot the point that you have raised! Pray forgive me please, Sire, please pardon for me my thoughtlessness even in the presence of God!".

Ramanuja then said," If Ranga can grant you a boon such as that which you asked him, Kuresa, surely He can grant me one too! So I will go right now to His temple and ask him to stop you here on earth for my sake!". So saying the old and bent Ramanuja turned and walked a few paces towards the temple of Lord Rangantha.... but then after a short distance paused abruptly and reflected aloud: "The Will of God is unalterable! What audacity on my part to go and force Him to change it! No!

Let me submit and be resigned to the Divine Inevitable!". So saying the old guru retraced his steps towards Kuresan. Ramanuja now faced Kuresan and spoke in a clear voice: "Kuresa! When you are gone how shall I live without thee? Alas, God in "paramapadam" has attracted thee, even though our Ranga here has all attractions too! So then yet have you decided to sever yourself from Ranga here! Happy is the God in "paramapadam" and happy His celestials to claim thee as one of their own! Luckless are we all going to be here, yes luckless Ranga too, who will no longer have thee amongst us....".

"But Kuresa, I am an old and fading man now, let me not change your mind and disturb thy plans! Be it all as thou wisest! All Hail to you, my dearest Kuresa! Go now, go now and proceed to the Blessed Kingdom of God and rule there in eternal Peace and Happiness!". So saying Ramanuja gathered the blind Kuresan in his arms and smothered him with love, stroking his head and shoulders as if he were a but mere a child. "Kuresa, in this moment when you have to depart from me, I salute thee now, my son!". It was moment of divine pathos. Kuresan had no words left in him!

Such was his stupefied condition of being that he simply lay motionless in the arms of his great "acharya" who clasped him in his arms as if he were a tiny infant! After a while Kuresan disengaged himself slowly and simply fell at Ramanuja's feet like a log of senseless wood. The old guru then bent down and raised his disciple and wiped away his tears. "Go now, my child, go now quickly to the Lord! Thou hast now my leave to depart!".

So saying the aged and venerable Ramanuja turned and slowly made his way to return to his monastery in the other part of SriRangam. It was

at that moment that a most excellent and poignant prayer ("tanian") in euphonious Sanskrit sprang spontaneously to Kuresan's lips and which even to this day all devout followers of Ramanuja recite in their homes daily and at all times: "yo nityamachutha padambhuja yugmarugma vyamohatas-tadi-tarani trnaya meneasmath guror bhagavatosya daiyaiyaka sindoho ramanujasya charanow sharanam prapadye !". "The Holy Feet of My Master, Ramanuja, are my sole refuge!

For He is an Ocean of Mercy! And for Him all else is dross other than the supreme wealth that is the Feet of God!" Kuresan passed away peacefully after a few hours in the presence of his loving family, Andalamma and their two young sons Vyasa and Parashara Bhattar. All of Srirangam gathered and performed all the due obsequies and honors that one so great a soul as Kuresan richly deserved. Ramanuja had many disciples. But there never was one like. Kuresan. With prayers to Perumdevi Sametha Perarulala Perumal, adiyen starts today on this sacred journey.Lord Varadarajan is Varam Tharum Perumal. He gave as gift Ramanuja, Desikan to Lord Rang Nathan.He responded to the prayers of Alavandhar to bless Rama-nuja to become the magnificent preceptor of Sri Vaishnava samprahdayam.He received from His Thiruvalavatta (Fan) Kaimkaryaparar, Thirukkacchi Nambi, the magnificent Devarajashtakam housing the Kulakam (a string of five great connected slokams). Kaanchi Perumal gave the Maanasika eyes to Kuresar after the atrocities committed by a Chola king.

More about it later. He protected Ramanuja from the evil plans of Yadhava prakasa and safely brought Ramanuja back to Kanchi from the terrible forest of Vindhya mountains. He and His divine consort partook the Saalaik Kinaru Theertham brought to Them by a grateful Ramanuja for their Mahopakaram.He broke His Archa Samadhi to speak with Thirukkacchi Nampi and sent His six point reply through Nampi to Ramanuja's questions. Lord Varadhan was witness to the initiation of Ramanuja into Sanyasasramam. He received from His dear bhakthan, Nadadur Ammal, whom he elevated to the status of His Mother, the Mangalasasana Sthothram eulogizing Him. Glorious indeed are Varadarajan's generous gifts to Sri Vaishnava sampradhayam! As a native of Thuppull, the hamlet near His dhivya desam, Lord Varadarajan received wonder tributes from Sri Venkatesa Ghantavatharan, Desikan, who in turn was inspired by Kuresar's Sri Varadaraja Sthavam.

The many Sri Sookthis of Swamy Desikan about his Ishta Dhaivam, Varadarajan are:

(1) Hasthigiri Mahathmyam
(2) Sri Varadaraja Panchasath
(3) Dhivya Desa Mangalasasanam
(4) Nyasa Dasakam
(5) Aadaikkala Patthu and
(6) Thirucchinnamalai.

After Desikan, Manavala Maamuni had the SamarpaNam of " Deevaraja Mangalam. "Most recently, Vaikunta Vaasi Seva Swamigal had a sacred offering to Lord of Kaanchi known as Varadhabhimana Sahasram. One of the Slokams of this sahasram is a moving one eulogizing the Lord as Prapanna Jana samrakshakan and as the One, who has the Vaibhavam of keeping bright the dheepam of Vaishnava :" Prapanna jana samraksha-Dhikshithaya Nirandharam Vaishnava Sriyotthdhiptha vaibhavayasthu Mangalam The magnificent boon giver's Kshethram is known as Sathya vratham (Mey Viratham) since all the Vrathams observed in His Kshethram will yield immediately and quickly the fruits. His Kshethram is also known as Kaanchipuram(the Waist-belt or Ottiyanam for the world), Hasthigiri and Perumal Koil.

There are many Sthothrams and Samar-panams by Acharyas over the years. The honor of being the first in the series of Acharya Sri Sookthis belongs to Kuresar's Sri Varadaraja sthavam. His saying

1. Always practice love towards brotherhood, compassion and honesty.
2. Live with the realization that Ramauja 's sacred feet lead you to the only right way.
3. Never hurt others either physically or by deeds or by thoughts
4. Stay away from those who wish or do you evil-better still if possible, do them good.
5. Live with the realization that Naryana is the supreme most.
6. Fee god's people.
7. Practices is a virtue, always practice it.
8. Are humble, always. Do not conifer yourself superior in any way be it by birth or material wealth or education.
9. Do what your fore-fathers would do.always stay away from what they would never do.
10. Always mediate upon god's supreme most qualities and always are involved in them

Kovil Azhwan : No source available

Kovil Kandadai : Kovil Kandadai, who's Gothram, is Bhradwaja or Shadamarshana. Is it true that the Kovil Kandadai family were those who followed Ramanuja when he left Sriperumbudur?

Kovil Kandadai Annan : See Mubliondoon.

Koyil Annan : Disaple of Manavala-Ma-Munikal. Both Annan and Srivana-Ma-Malai jeeyar had each received from Mamunikal a pair of own(wooden) paduka (footwear). Known as the "Pon-n-Adiyamsen-Kamala-p-podukal", these are encased in gold and adored in the'tiru-Aradhanam' of both Annan Tiru-Malikai and Vana-ma-Malai matham, and are placed on the devotees' crown at the conclusion Of'divya-Prabandham' recital ('Sattu-murai').annan's adoration of Mamunikal was complete and he dedicated a'kanni-nun siru-t-tambu' panegyric of Ma-Munikal.

Krsna suri : Son of Srikrsnadesika

Krsnamangala : Birthplace of Srikrsna laksminatha

Krsnapada : Son of Manavala mamunigal

Krsnasamahbhaya : Disciple of Namburivaradarya

Kura narayana Jeeyar : Author of Sudarsana Satakam, was a contem-porary of Kurathalwan and was a disciple of Parasara Bhattar. Even today, when someone recites, Sudarsana Satakam, it is always preceeded by tanian praising Parasara Bhattar. Kura-narayana-Jiyar who is the author of the famed 'Sudarsana-Satakam' lived in the period between Parasara Bhattar and Vedanta Desika. This places him in approximately the early part of the 13th century. Kura-Narayana-Jiyar played a major role in Srirangam and was instrumental in the construction of the sudarsana shrine there. Given his time period, he predates the schism between the sub-schools of Ramanuja sampradaya.

It is not sure whether this kura-Narayana is the same as the author of the Upanishad-bhashyas. According to Puttur Krishnaswami Iyengar, Desika's references to a 'Periya Jiyar' in Srimad Rahasya-traya-sAram are ostensibly to this Kura-narayanajiyar. This is a matter of dispute as most scholars of the Vadagalai tradition think Desika's mention of a 'Periya Jiyar' refer to Nanjiya

Kurinji Puram Siriyaandaan : No source available

Kuruhai Kaavalar : Kuruhai Kaavalappan received upadesam from Naatha Muni on Yoga Rahasyam. He was immersed in Yogam and wanted to pass the Yoga Rahasyam to Alavandhaar, who missed the opportunity

due to his inability to return to Thirukkuruhai Kaavalappan 's side before he ascended to Sri Vaikuntam. The secret of Yoga Rahasyam that Naatha Muni received it from Nammazhwar was thus lost to us.

Kurukesvara : Son of Padmanetra and his son was Pundarikaksa

Kuruva Nambi : No source available

L

Lokacharya I : See Parasara Bhattacharya

M

Maara Neri Nampi : One of the disciples of Alavandhar and was born in Aadi Aayilyam at Paandya Desam. He belongs to Thondar kulam He took on himself the cancerous growth on the body of Alavandhar as Acharya Prasad ham due to his matchless Guru Bhakthi. He requested that his body blessed by Alavandhar should not be entrusted to his avaishnava brethren and begged Periya Nampi to perform his last rites. Periya nampi obliged and Ramanuja Questioned his Acharyan, Periya Nampi about the appropriateness of a Brahmin(Periya nampi) performing apara Kriyas (Last rites) for some one of lower caste. Periya nampi cited the instance of Raamachandran performing last rites for a bird (Jataayu) and conceded that he is not loftier than Ramachandran and that Maaraneri Nampi was not lower in glory than Jatayu. Periya Nampi also asked Ramanuja, his dear disciple, to reflect upon the inner meanings of Nammazhwar's Thiruv Aimozhi paasurams Nedumark-kadimai and Payalumsudaroli,celebrating the greatness of the Bhaagavathas.

Maaruthi Aanddan : No source available

Maaruthi Siriyaandaan : No source available

Madhava : Disciple of Namburi varada

Madhuramangalam : It is the avathara sthalam of Embar (Govinda Jeeyar), cousin brother of Ramanuja. Madhuramangalam is also known as Dakshina Madhura (then madhura), Lord Krishna took avatharam in vada madhura, where as Embar, amsam of Garudaalzwan took birth in then madhura. Mutt & Temple is located near Sunguvar Chaththiram, near Perumbhudhur, the birth place of Ramanuja. The majestic temple housing the divine sannidis, for Kamalavalli Thaayar Sametha Sri Vaikunta Perumal and Embar is located next to the holy pushkarini, full of lotus flowers. Currently at Madhuramangalam, the present pontiff of the mutt, His Holiness Yatiraja Narayana Ramanuja Jeeyar, is running a Veda / agama patashala.

Madhya pratoli Bhattarya : Son of Parasarabhattarya, known as Madhya vithi bhattarya

Maladhara : The teachings of Yamunacharya had been distributed among his five disciples, namely Kanchipoorna, Maha poorna, Goshti poorna, Maladhara, and Vararanga. Ramanuja had received instruction at the hands of three of them. He was yet to meet Maladhara and Vararanga. He went to Maladhara to learn the hymn of Nammalwar.Maladhara was also known as Tirumalai Andan. Ramanuja sat at his feet to learn. The Guru explained Nammalwar's 'Tiruvaimoli' in the light of the interpretation he had heard from the lips of Yamunacharya.

But Ramanuja tried to read even richer meaning into those songs. Maladhara got displeased. But Goshti pooma came to know of it, and tried to mollify the feelings of Maladhara. He assured him that Ramanuja was a great genius that had received the grace of his Guru Yamunacharya, and therefore the teacher should continue his lessons unmindful of the incidental irritation. Later Ramanuja received lessons for Vararanga on the Nalayira hymns.

Maladhara : Son of Sowmayanarayana, disciple of Ramauja and his son Sundarabalu disciple of Yamauncharaya

Manakal nambi : In the Chola kingdom, on the banks of the river Kaveri, east of Sri Rangam, there was an Agraharam called Manakkal. In kaliyuga year 4052, in the year of Virodikrut, month of Masi under the Maga nakshatram, Ramamisrar was born. Because of his place of birth, he came to be popularly known as Manakal Nambi. He was the prime disciple of Uyya Kondar. He attended to most of the needs of his Guru while learning the Vedas from him. Eventually when Uyya Kondar's passed, he moved in with his Guru and took care of all the day to day household chores also.Once a group of women in the village decided to frolic in the waters of the Kaveri - to bathe and play for a while.

Uyya Kondar's two daughters wished to participate in the fn as well. He sent Manakal Nambi to carry them. After finishing up their food on the banks of the river, all the women went their separate ways. But Uyya kkondar's daughters to lost along the way and found themselves stranded in front of a stream, not knowing how to cross the waters. Manakkal Nambi sensed their fear when he caught up with them. He immediately lay down in the stream and asked the girls to walk on his back to cross it. They did accordingly. Then he dropped them off close to their house and went to his own house to take a quick bath. Before he could come back, Uyya Kondar sensed all the events that happened and was very

happy. He conveyed his happiness and blessings to his sishya. Manakal Nambi was also very happy and added "Uttren Ugandu pani seidu un padam, pettren, ede yinnam Venduvadendai".

For 12 years, just as Lakshmana was serving Rama, Manakal Nambi served Uyya-k-kondar. Especially after Uyya-kondar's wife passed away, Manakal nambi took care of all the household activities at his house. This included taking care of the two little daughters of Uyya-k-kondar.

Uyya-k-kondar immediately summoned Manakkal Nambi and gently chided him for doing this. He also was so pleased with Manakkal Nambi that he taught the esoteric meaning of one of the most important slokas in our religion (the dvaya mantra) to him again. After Uyya-k-kondar passed away, Manakkal nambi took over the leadership of the devotees, and taught all the esoteric meanings and the holy compositions to his disciples. As predicted by Uyya-k-kondar a son was born to Isvara muni in the month of aadi in the star of uththaradam. Manakkal nambi named the baby as "yamunai-th-thuraivar" (later came to be known as yamunacharya). Yamunai-th-thuraivan was educated in the proper sastras and the various branches of spiritual knowledge (Vedas), and got married at the proper time. Later, he was given half the kingdom (of the place where he was residing), and was given the name "Alavandhar" – the one who came to rule. This incident in his life history will be elaborated upon in the section on Alavandar. He started to rule the kingdom, and generally took little interest in spiritual activities.

Manakkal nambi learned about this, and became sad. Nathamuni, and Uyya-k-kondar had passed on to Manakkal Nambi the great wealth that is the srivaishnava religion, and yamunai-th-thuraivan, though he was the grandson of Nathamuni, was not bothered about this great wealth at all. Manakkal Nambi went to the palace to meet the young king, and was not allowed to go near the king. Undeterred, he inquired the kitchen cooks as to what the most favorite dish of the king was. They mentioned that the king liked a green called Thuduvalai (a local green with medicinal properties). Manakkal Nambi started to bring this green every day, and the cooks cooked them for the king. This happened for a few months, and suddenly Manakkal nambi stopped giving the greens. After four days of food without his favorite green, the king–Yamunai-th-Thuraivan asked the cooks what the matter was. The cooks said that an elderly scholar brought them without fail for the past few months, and suddenly stopped bringing them. The king told that the next time the elderly person

comes, he wanted to see him, and ordered the cooks to bring the elderly person to him if he comes.

After a few days, Manakal Nambi brought the green again. This time, the cook took them to the king. The king asked "Why were you bringing this for a few months? Is there anything you need from me? Manakal Nambi replied – "I do not need a wealth from you. I know about the wealth that was handed over by your forefathers. I know where it is hidden, and would like to give it back to you". Yamunai-th-thuraivan was surprised to hear this, and asked Manakal nambi about the wealth Manakal Nambi replied that he had to teach it to Yamunai-th-Thuraivan over some time. He stayed in the palace, and taught the 18 chapters of Bhagavad Gita to Yamunai-th-Thuraivan along with its meanings. After this, he felt that Yamunai-th-Thuraivan was ready to receive the crown jewel of all the wealth. He took the young king of Srirangam, and showed him the beautiful Lord who resides there. On seeing the Lord, Yamunai-th-Thuraivan was moved to tears, and he cried "I have wasted so many years". He stayed back in srirangam, and learnt the wealth (all that was taught by Nathamuni to his disciples which was passed along to Uyya-k-Kondar and Manakal nambi) from Manakal Nambi. When he was ready to leave this earth for the abode of the Lord, Manakal Nambi told Yamunai-th-Thuraivan (who had, by now taken the path of ascetics, and was widely known as Alavandar) "You, who is related to Nathamuni should follow His teachings, propagate it and do not forsake Srirangam"

After this instruction, he left for the abode of the Lord – srivaikunta. He rendered personal service to his Acharya, Uyyak Kondaar and it is told that he took over also as the cook for his Acharya after the demise of Uyyak Kondaar's wife.

Desika in Sloka 7 of his Yatiraja Saptadhi praises Manakaal Nambi as follows: Anujjitha Kshamaa Yogam Apunya Jana Bhaadakam Asprushta Madha Raagam Thum Raamam Turyam Upaasmahe (meaning) The one who learned through Upadesam all the Sastaraarthas from Uyyakkondaar was Manakaal Nambi. There were only three Ramas before. Here comes the fourth Rama. The defects noticeable in the other 3 Ramas were totally absent in this 4th Rama. Parasurama had no patience. Out of jealousy, he fought with 'Chakravarthi Tirumagan'. With an uncontrollable rage, he embarked on trying the entire Kshatriya race. But, Manakaal Nambi never lost his composure and kept his senses under absolute control. Dasaratha Rama destroyed the Rakshasas, otherwise known as 'Punya Jana'.

But, Manakaal Nambi never harmed anyone but always did all the good he could to Sadhus who are also known as 'Punya Jana' Manakaal Nambi never exhibited any pride or prejudice or any excessive attachment to anything worldly. (like Balarama) So, he is better than for Ramas. (what a verse from Desika!) Let us prostrate before this blemish less 4th Rama, Rama Misrar, and Manakkal Nambhi. Manakkal Nambi settled with his disciples in srirangam.

His premier disciples were Alavandar, Deivaththukkarasu Nambi, Gomadaththu Thiruvinnagarappan and Siruppullooravudaiya Pillaiachchi.

Manavala mamuigal : The earliest known mention of the avatara rahasyam of Manavala Mamunigal happened during Nampillai's time. This incident happened when Vadakkuth Thiruveedhip Pillai had finished transcribing the commentary on thiruvaymozhi of Nampillai (known as eedu 3600ppadi), and Nampillai came to know about the transcription. Nampillai at first was unhappy about the transcription since it was written without his command, but later on listening to the reason for the transcription (for Vadakkuth Thiruveedhip Pillai to remember the commentary and its intricacies without forgetting), and seeing that the commentary was a word by word transcription of his own words, he was very pleased that the Thiruvaymozhi commentary (that waes entirely based on Nanjiyars earlier work, and thena added to by Nampillai) was available for everyone. Nampillai then gave the commentary to his shishya known as Eeyunni Madhavap Perumal for safekeeping, and propagation. Eeyunni Madhavap perumal was hesitant, thinking that he was not qualified to do that job, but Nampillai had confidence in his abilities, and mentioned the following - "Listen - Lord varadaraja has appeared in kandadai Thozhappar's dream (Kandadai thozhappar was a shishya of Nampillai), and told the following to him - jagad Rakshaaparo anantho Janishyadhyaparomuni: Thatha-rasyaas Sadhaachaaraa Saathvikaa: Thathva Darsina.

Anantazhvan, who has a great interest in the saving of the universe, will take Avataram as another saint. Those who will be shishyas of that saint will be filled with sathvaguna and will have the thattvagnyana. Ananta will take another avataram per the words of Lord Varadaraja Himself, and he will spread the holy Thiruvaymozhi and this commentary to the world. So, pass this along your shishya-varga so that it may be available for him." During the life of svami manavala mamuni, there were multiple instances in which he had made known His original form to various

people. The following is one of them that have been recorded in yatIndrap Pravanap Prabha-vam - Manavala mamunigal's original name was Azhagiya Manavala perumal Nayanar. In his earlier stages of life, Svami undertook to visit many holy places, and sriperumbudur and Kanchipuram were among the first few that he visited. In Sriperumbudur, where Nayanar was spending some time, enjoying and wor-shipping Ramanuja, Ramanuja commanded him to proceed to kanchipuram. In that command, in the form of a dream, Ramanuja said "Go and meet kidambi Nayanar and learn from him. After you learn Sribhasya, per my and Thiruvaymozhip pillai's wish, please spread the word Of the Azhvars primarily". Svami went to kanchipuram and started learning Sribhasya under Kidambi nayanar, a descendant of Kidambi Accan. Along with Kidambi nayanar, two other Acharyas, selvanayanr and Aigal Appa taught him sribhasya. (The three were always together and were great friends).

One day, when Kidambi Nayanar was teaching Sribhashya to Azhagiya Manavala Nayanar, Aigal appa mentioned "The complexity with which Sribhasya is being taught is not corresponding to the brilliance of Azhagiya Manavala Nayanar". At that time, Kidambi Nayanar asked Aigal Appa himself to start teaching Azhagiya Manavala Nayanar. Azhagiya Manavala Nayanar started learning Sribhasya and also simultaneously started teaching it to others. Seeing the scholarship, and the additional deep meanings being taught by Azhagiya Manavala Nayanar, Aigal Appa was very happy. Kidambi Nayanar too heard about this, and he came to the place where Azhagiya Manavala Nayanar was giving the discourse. Upon request of his shisyAs, Azhagiya Manavala nayanar gave great discourse on tarka, Mimamsa and it was a source of wonder for everyone concerned, since they were unaware of svami's learning/ knowledge. Kidambi nayanar then requested Azhagiya Manavala Nayanar to give discourses on Azhvar's works, and simultaneously, he taught Azhagiya Manavala Nayanar Sri-bhashya. Kidambi Nayanar was continuously amazed by the scholarship and ability of Azhagiya Manavala Nayanar while he was teaching the Thiruvaymozhi commentary.

One day, when he and Azhagiya Manavala Nayanar were alone, he asked Azhagiya Manavala Nayanar about his true form, telling him "I know certainly that you have an Avatara Visesha, please do not hide that from me, please show me as it is". Azhagiya Manavala Nayanar then said "You are my Acharya, and I will not hide my true form to you, please do not let anyone else know about this rahasya that is due to the Lord's

command", and asked him not to be afraid, and showed his true form as Adisesha. Kidambi nayanar, with some fear, requested Azhagiya Manavala Nayanar to return to his human form, which he did. After this, Kidambi Nayanar started bringing warm milk everyday to Azhagiya Manavala Nayanar, given that milk is the natural food for Adisesha.

Even to this day, for svami Manavala mamunigal, this tradition of offering warm milk is continued. In the temple of Yathokthakari svami, the icon of Manavala Mamunigal is depicted with the "vyakhyana mudra", or the teaching form, the only place where he is depicted such. This is where Svami gave his discourses on Sribhasya. During the time of Manavala Mamuni's birth, Thiruvaymozhip Pillai was conducting the nirvaham of the Emperumanar Darsanam From Azhvar Thirunagari (during svami pillai lokachar's time, immediately preceding the time period in question, due to the Islamic invasion, most of the Srivaishnavas had to leave srirangam, including pillai Lokachariar himself with the Namperumal vigraham; and Vedanta Desikan with the manuscripts of srutaprakasika, the grand Commentary of sri Sudarsana bhattar (a descendant of Kurattazhvan) on srI. Ramanuja's Sribhashyam. Earlier, Thiruvaymozhip pillai was the Raja Mantri of the king of Madurai, and after the death of the king, he was the caretaker of the kingdom. during that time, due to the Krpa of Pillai Lokachar and his shishyas (Kurakuloththuma Dasar, Nalurachchan Pillai, Vilancholaip pillai and others), learnt deeply about the darsanam, and slowly became the darsanap pravarthakar.

During his reign as the caretaker of the Madurai kingdom, Thiruvaymozhip Pillai was instrumental in using his influence to regain the Vigraha (Archa Thirumeni) of Nammazhvar that was stored in a slope in the Kerala hills during the Islamic invasion. At that time, adisesha took avatar am as the son of. Thiruvaveerudaya Piran Thathar Annar, in a place called sikkil Kidaram Manavala Mamunigal was actually born in Azhvar Thirunagari as noted in the following shloka and note in Yatindra Pravana Prabhavam which details the life history of Mamunigal: "Shatharate: pure punaravatarat" - Swami was reborn [Thiruvanandazhvan] in Nammazhvar's place [which is Azhvar Thirunagari]; "thiruvaymozhip Pillaiyinudaiya dhivyakatakshaththirku Vishayamampadiazhagiya Manavala perumal nayanarum *thiruvananthAzvAn Saganthannaithiruththa maruviya kurugur valanagar Vandhu - engirapadiye svamathula gruhamana Sikkil kidaraththilirundhu Thamakku janmabumiyana Thirunagari ERa ezhundharuli" - this shows that Swami grew up in Sikkil Kidaram, his

maternal uncle's place, but was born in Azhvar Thirunagari), in the southern districts of Tamizhnadu.

The year was 4471 years after the birth of Kaliyuga, Aippasi Month, mula Nakshattiram. In the Roman calendar, this corresponds to 1370 AD. This child was named Azhagiya Manavala Perumal nayanar by his parents. At the appropriate times as dictated by the Sastras, upanayanam and other rites were performed by this child, and he learnt vedas and the Divya Prabhanda, and other Sastras at the prescribed age. His marriage also took place, and his father himself taught him the Rahasya granthas and the meanings of the Nalayira divya Prabhanda. At this time, his father attained paramapadam, and svami performed the appropriate rites. At this time, in Azhvar thirunagari, Thiruvaymozhip Pillai was looking for the next teacher for the Ramanuja Sampradaya.. Alagiya manavala nayanar also wanted to learn more about the sampradayam, and he took.

Thiruvaymozhip Pillai as his achAryan and learnt the intricacies of thiruvAymozhi and other sastras from him. Thiruvai molli pillai commanded Amnayanar to do service to Ramanuja. Alagiya manavala Nayanar built a temple for Ramanuja, created a surrounding community called Ramanuja chaturvedi Mangalam around the temple, and spent his time doing service to the great Acharya. It was during this time that Amnayanar composed the beautiful, simple to understand even by less learned folks, Yatiraja Vimsati. So pleased was. Tirvaymolipillai on seeing yatiraja Vimsati, and the devotion of his sishya to Ramanuja that he presented his sishya with his own vigraha of Ramanuja. It is appropriate to write about this specific Vigraha, and its specialty. It is the belief of our elders that when Madhurakaviazhvar yearned to install A Arca Thirumeni of Nammazhvar and prayed to him, Nammazhvar commanded him to boil the water or the river Tamraparani. When Madhurakaviazhvar followed the command, and boiled the water, first he obtained a vigraha that is the current Ramanuja vigraha.

On seeing the vigraha, Madhurakaviazhvar mentioned to Nammazhvar that he wanted his (i.e. Azhvar's) vigraha, and that he had obtained a different vigraha. Azhvar conveyed to him that this icon was that of the universal teacher that was going to take birth (bhavisyathacharyar) as per the message in the thiruv Aymozhi Pasuram "poliga poliga", and that Madhurakaviazhvar needed to boil the water once again to obtain the nammazhvar vigraham. Madhurakaviazhvar did so, and he obtained the nammazhvar vigraham, which we have to this day in Azhvar thirunagari. The above Ramanuja vigraham was buried under the

tamarind tree in Azhvar Thirunagari when the Nammazhvar Vigraham was taken to a safe Place during the Islamic Invasion.

Thiruvaymozhip pillai dug out the vigraha on his return to Azhvar Thirunagari Along with the Nammazhvar vigraham that he helped to regain from Kerala. A son was born to Alagiya manavala Nayanar, and he named the son as "em aiyan Iramanusan". For the next few years, Azhagiya Manavala Alagiya manavala ayanar spent his time performing kainkarya to Thiruvaymozhip pillai, and performing upadEsa to the sishya varga.. Thiruvaymozhip Pillai's last days on this earth arrived- Thiruvaymozhip pillai had a great concern, and that concern was apparent in his face..

Azhagiya Manavala Nayanar enquired about the concern, to which Thiruvaymozhip pillai replied - 'It is the kaliyuga now, and I am very concerned about who has the deepest interest and appreciation of the works of our Azhvars, and who will spread the beautiful message of the Azhvars for the benefit of all the people". Alagiya manavala Nayanar replied - "adiyen will do the same" to which. Thiruvaymozhip pillai countered "just words alone will not suffice" to which. Amnayanar replied "adiyen promises to do so".

Thiruvaymozhip pillai then commanded Azhagiya Manavala Nayanar as follows - "learn and propaget the sribhasya once, and spend most of your time in propagating and preaching the Arulicheyal of the Azhvars that is so dear to Ramanuja and myself. Just as our teachers did, stay at srIrangam and perform Kainkaryam to the Lord there" and he left this world thinking about his Acharya pillai Lokacharya. Azhagiya Manavala Nayanar, true to the command of his Acharya performed upanyAsams of the Arulichcheyal and the Rahasyas. At this time, Azhagiya Varadar became Svamis sishya, and undertook sanyasashrama. The sanyasa name was given as "Ramanuja Jiyar". Thus began the most illustrious jIyar maTam in the Srivaishnava Sampradaya, the Vanamamalai Matam, which continues the great unbroken lineage of our Acharyas to this day. Azhagiya Manavala nayanar took the permission of Svami Nammazhvar, and along with his Sishyas, left for Srirangam. On the way, he spent some time at Srivillipuththur and Thirumalirunchola, and finally reached Srirangam.

When Azhagiya Manavala Nayanar reached srirangam with his Sishyas, he went straight to the house of an acharya called Kotturil Annar. This acharya took Azhagiya Manavala Nayanar to the then Adhipathi of the temple, Thirumaalai Thandha Perumaal Bhattar, who took Azhagiya

Manavala nayanar to the temple escorted by scores of Srivaishnavas to perform Mangalasasanams to Lord Ranganatha. After performing Mangalasasanams to the Lord, nayanar went to the houses where the previous acharyas (Emperumanar, Embar, Bhattar, Nanjiyar, Nampillai etc..) lived and performed obeisances at each place. After that sri Nayanar stayed at srirangam, listening from the elders about the previous acharyas.

One day, when sri. nayanar went to the temple to perform Mangalasasanams to Perumal, the Lord commanded him as follows - "You stay here just as our Ramanuja did, taking care of my work, and spreading the Rahasya granthas till the time you leave your body", which sri. Nayanar took as a great gift and accepted the command readily. After taking permission from Lord Ranganatha, for a short period, Nayanar undertook a pilgrimage of thirupathi, sriperumbudur, Kanchipuram and enrooted, went to Sholingur and Thiruk-kovalur. In Thirumalai, the following is quoted by our elders as a proof of Svami's greatness - it was the first day of the 10 day annual (purattasi) Brahmotsavam in Thirumalai.

The elder Jiyar at Thirumalai (this matam was established by Ramanuja when he visited Thirumalai, with the duty of the jiyar of that Matam being to oversee the affairs of the temple - the name of this pIta in Tamizh is "Periya Kelvi Appan Ramanuja jiyar" - i.e. the jIyar who oversees/ questions the affairs of the temple) had a dream where he saw a glorious, beautiful, resplendent with Tejas srivaishnava in the lying down posture, with his head on the west, legs on the east and facing south. This srivaishnava was the length of the entire Mountain and at his feet was a glowing sanyasi.

In the dream, further, Periya Kelvi Jiyar asked the people around him as to whom those two were, to which they replied that the glorious one who was lying down was sri. Azhagia Manavala Nayanar and the Sanyasi at his feet was Ramanuja Jiyar (Ponnadikkal Jiyar, 1st jiyar of Vanamamalai mutt). Periya Kelvi appan jiyar narrated this dream to thozappangar (descendant of periya Thirumalai nambi, one of the hereditary caretakers of the Thirupathi temple) just before the nalayira divya prabhandam goshti was about to begin for the day. Many other srivaishnavas in the goshti, on listening to this were very pleased and everyone was eagerly hoping that this glorious srivaishnava would come to Thirupathi for the utsavam. Azhagiya Manavala nayanar then reached Thirupathi/Thirumalai, and all the srivaishnavas there received him with full respect and took him to all the Sannadhis where he performed

Mangalasasanams.A mention is made of the Ramanuja Sannadhi inside the temple (along with other Sanandhis - Varadarajar, Azhagi-yasingar.), the only sannadhi for someone other than Perumal on the hill. This sannadhi was established by. Anantazhvar immediately after Ramanuja left this world, and our elders have consciously avoided building sannadhis for any other azhvar/acharya on the hill, since the belief of our acharyas is that the hills themselves are very holy (peria thirumalai nambi used to crawl on the hills to go to the temple, not wanting his feet to touch the holy hills).

After that, Nayanar went to kanchipuram where he performed mangalasasanams to Lord Varadaraja, and the Lord at the other Divya desams in kanchipuram, then he went to sriperumbudur where Ramanuja commanded him to go to Kanchipuram and learn/preach Sribhasya. The first post in the series contained the details about svami's greatness with respect to learning/expounding on Sribhasya. After leaving kanchipuram, Azhagiya Manavala Nayanar went back to srirangam, where he felt that the grhastashrama life was an impediment to perform unimpeded kainkarya to the Lord.

So, he took permission from Lord Ranganatha and took sanyasashramam from Satakopa jIyar, a contemporary of him and a great jiyar of the Ramanuja Sampradaya who was residing in Srirangam then. the Lord had commanded both Sri. Nayanar as well as Satakopa jiyar about His wish to have Nayanar take sanyasashramam. After receiving Sanyasashramam, he went to the sannadhi of the Lord. The Lord gave him His own name - "Azhagiya Manavala mamuni", and gifted him what used to be the Pallavarayan Mantapam.

This mantapam was originally used during Ramanuja's time by Atkondavilli Jiyar as his Matam and his Aradhana moorthy was called "Ennai Theemanam Keduththar" (the one who removed my ignorance - this is a very rough paraphrasing of the phrase, I will get a better version from elders here in the next few days - Varadhan). After him for various reasons, it was in a state of disuse and was used later as a Ramanuja kutam by a srivaishnava called pallavaraya, and then was not used after his time. The Lord gifted this matam and commanded the Archakas and srivaishnavas to lead Manavala Mamuni to the matam, and presented him with all prasadams appropriate for a great sanyasi.

Manavala Mamuni then repaired this Mantapam with the help of his shisyas, built a discourse room called "Thirumalai Azhvar" named after Thirvaymozhi Pillai. It is further mentioned in the book that Manavala

Mamunigal made it a point to bring the sand and material from where Pillai lokachariar used to live and built this matam with that material - i.e. Manavala mamunigal treated this Matam as Pillai lokachariar s house and his stay there as Gurukulavasam. In the thirumalai Azhvar mantapam, Manavala Mamunigal performed upanyasams of sastras, the Nalayira Divya Prabhandham and rahasya granthas. {To this day, one can see this mutt, and the thirumalai azhvar mantapam in srirangam - in the east corner of south uttara street - this Sannadhi and the Mutt is maintained by the descendants of Manavala mamunigal

Manavala Mamuni spent his time, after becoming a sanyasi, in srirangam, teaching his sishyas, living a life that is considered to be the epitome and the highest example of a life that a servant of god can lead. He further ensured that the services to lord ranganatha were happening as per the norms set by Ramanuja. Several Srivaishnavas, many of whom belonged to some acharya Purusha lineage, became sishyas of Manavala Mamuni - Thirumanjanam Appa, Bhattarpiran Jiyar, Kandadai annan, singarayar are a few key names. Manavala Mamuni undertook the permission of the lord of Srirangam, and proceeded to Azhvar Thirunagari to do mangalasasanams to svami nammazhvar.

On the way, svami went to kuntee nagaram (the birthplace of Thiruvaymozhip Pillai) and other divya desams. In Azhvar Thirunagari, he stayed for sometime, giving upadesa to sishyas in that area of the Lord's land. At this time, there was one sutra of a work called acharya hrdayam, which Manavala Mamuni wanted to understand deeper. Acharya Hrdayam is a work by svami Azhagiya Manavala perumal nayanar, the brother of svami Pillai Lokachariar. This work contains the concepts that were expressed by Nammazhvar in Thiruvaymozhi, and is entirely composed in Manipravalam, with words that are part of Thiruvaymozhi.

This is a standard Rahasya Grantha for Srivaishnavas, as it elucidates the inner meanings of Thiruvaymozhi in a concise format. Manavala Mamunigal was looking for an acharya that could elucidate on the meaning of that particular sutra which he wanted to understand deeper. Many elders gave a suggestion that p[illegible]ple in Thirunarayanapuram (melkote) will be able to give him that meaning, and he started towards Thirunarayanapuram. Meanwhile, in Thirunarayanapuram, an Acharya called aay Jananyachar had heard about the prabhavam of the Avatara of adisesha, and wanting to see him, had already started from Thirunarayanapuram to Azhvar Thirunagari. Janayachar was an expert

in acharya hrdayam, and had further written a commentary on Thiruppaavai (3000ppadi).

Both the acharyas met halfway, and after mutual exchanging of respect and affection, returned to Azhvar Thiruganari, where Manavala Mamuni learnt the meanings of acharya hrdaya from aay Jananyachariar svami. Here Yatindra Pravana Prabhavam narrates an incident that shows us the greatness of aay janayachar svami - When svami was in Azhvar Thirunagari, some jealous people in Thirunarayanapuram spread a rumor saying that he had attained Paramapadam, and all of his belongings should be given to the temple. The local people did so.

After some time Aay Jananyachar svami returned to thirunarayanapuram. On hearing the happenings there, svami became ecstatic that the owner of the entire universe had taken his belongings back, and that selvapillai takes the material wealth of someone that He wishes to Grace. He requested Selvapillai to give him the vigraha of gnyanap piran alone, and left all of his remaining wealth with the temple. In azhvar thirunagari, where svami manavala mamuni was staying, some jealous people laid fire to the matam where svami was staying. all the sishyas and the local people were enveloped in sorrow that svami might be hurt, and it is said that svami took his sesha form, shielding the fire from harming him, left the matam and came among his sishyas. The perpetrators were found.

Svami, with his infinite grace, requested the king not to punish the perpetrators, and gracefully allowed them to perform service to srivaishnavas and took them as his sishyas. Svami performed numerous renovations, and built several additions to the temples at Azhvar thirunagari and thiruk kurungudi. All these were accomplished on svamis commanded by the local chieftain of that area. Then, svami returned back to srirangam and continued the administration of the Ramanuja sampradaya. In a village called Erumbi, near Sholingar, there was a great learned person called Appa.

He had heard about Manavala Mamuni's Pravhavam from many people, and wanted to see Svami. His (Erumbiappa's) father also gave him permission to go to srirangam and see svami. He reached srirangam. Manavala Mamuni, knowing about the scholarship of Erumbiappa, gave him the due respect. Erumbiappa was staying at koil kandadai annan's residence. One day, Manavala Mamuni gave to erumbiappa, an Upanyasam on the first pasuram of Thiruvaymozhi- Uyarvu Ara Uyar nalam - it is recorded that Erumbiappa was surprised and remarked about

his hearing only about svamis's knowledge of tamizh, and having heard this upanyasam, he felt the svami was a complete ubhaya Vedanta scholar.

Manavala Mamuni further invited Erumbiappa to have food at the matam. Erumbiappa, at that time was a samanya sastra scholar - as per the Samanya sastra, he did not eat at the matam, and left for Erumbi.There is a sastra vakya that states that one who eats the food of a Sanyasi, or the food sent by a Sanyasi, or the food that is in a vessel of a sanyasi, should undergo penance in the form of chaandrayana vratham].

In Erumbi, Erumbiapps tried to open the doors of his perumal sannadhi to perform thiru Aradhnam, but no matter how he tried, the door would not open. With this, he was very concerned and was worried about why the lord was playing this leela on him. To him, his Lord (ram) then told that the real reason was the He was unhappy that Erumbiappa had committed a sin by not eating at Manavala Mamunis Matam, and that He did not want Thiruaradhanam performed by Erumbiappa till the time he becomes a sishya of Manavala Mamuni and obtains forgiveness for his sin.

Erumbiappa, realizing his mistake, and the greatness of Manavala Mamuni went to srirangam, and became a sishya of svami. After that, he wrote many works on svami manavala mamuni, the most important of those being purva dinacharya, uttara dinacharya and vara vara muni sathakam. After that, more scholars became shishyas of Manavala Mamuni. Appillai, Appillar were the chief among them. This appillai is the Acharya that has written the vazhi thirunamams for all the azhvars and Acharyas. Further revelations were made by the Lord to some Srivaishnavas about Manavala Mamuni being adisesha and Ramanuja He (Uttama Nambi,). At this time, Svami fulfilled one of the commands of his Acharya - he wrote commentaries on the works of Pillai Lokacharya, Azhagiya Manavala perumal nayanar, wrote the nitya grantham of Ramanuja in Tamil, wrote a summary of Thiruvaymozhi in the form of Thiruvaymozhi Noorrandhaadhi and the great songs given details about Azvhara-charyas lives - Upadesa Rattinamalai. The main Rahasya commentaries that svami wrote were on Thattva Trayam, Mumukshuppadi, Srivacana Bhooshanam and Acharya Hrdayam. He also wrote commentaries on the works of Arulaalap Perumal Emperumanar - Gnyaana Saaram and Prameya saram. It is further said that Svami wrote a commentary on Bhagavadgita called tatparya Deepam. Our elders, when they refer to the commentaries and Works

written by Manavala Mamunigal always point out to the Anustanam of svami as a true Srivaishnava.

Svami did not write any work on his own (other than a Mangala Slokam for Varadaraja and a Sthuti for Ramanuja - all others are summaries/ commentaries on Azhvar Acharya works)- he only made the works of our acharyas available and more accessible through his commentaries. This shows svami's strong belief and bhakti in the teachings of his acharya and acharyas before their time period. There are further details about Svami's Vaibhavam that I will skip for the moment - vaibhavams that include prativadi bayankaram Annan becoming a sishya of Svami, Svami establishing the chinna jeeyar matam at Thirumalai, the Avataram of the Venkatesa Suprabhatham due to svami's command, and Svami's establishment of acharyas at Kanchipuram and other divyadesams. Now comes perhaps the most important gesture of Lord Ranganatha towards all the souls - It is very obvious that all the souls need to have the knowledge about the 5 things (nature of soul, nature of the Lord, nature of the means to the goal, nature of the goal and the nature of the obstacles to achieve the goal) to attain nitya kainkarya to the lord in srivaikuntam. And for the vast majority of us, this happens due to contact with an Acharya.

Obviously, the better the acharya, the better the learning for us and the more chances we have of surrendering to the Lord due to our conviction. The Lord had been searching for eons to show the universe the perfect Acharya. Even while the Lord came to the Universe in the form of Rama and Krishna, he had ample amount of teachers that he could have shown to us as the epitome of an acharya. But, the Lord waited for the most perfect Acharya to be present on this earth so that He can show the world who the Jagadacharya was. Manavala Mamunigal was that Acharya. The way in which the perfect acharya was shown to the world is of course through the Lord composing the srisailesa daya patram thaniyan. In this post, I would like to paraphrasea commentary on the Thaniyan, written by Jagadacharya Simhasanadhipathi, Vaikunta Vasi, PB Annangaracharlar Srisailesa Daya patram:

The Lord feels that, in Rama avatara, he surrendered to a person that was a Sailesa daya patran, and that that surrenders was not perfect. Sailam refers to the rishyamooka parvata, the lord of that mountain was mathanga maharishi - the person that was the receptacle of mathanga's grace was Sugreeva - so, Sailesa Daya paatra here refers to sugreeva. Rama ("Sugrivam Saranam athah","Sugreevam Naadham Ichchathi")

surrendered to sugreeva for various purposes, but had to threaten him with destruction as Sugreeva forgot to repay the debt to Rama, before Sugreeva came to help the Lord. To overcome that ("kurai") dissatisfaction, that the He surrendered to an imperfect being in that Avatara, the Lord chooses to become the sishya of the epitome of an Acharya, the one that is the receptacle of the grace of Srisailesar (Thiruvay Mozhip pillai). Dheebhaktyaadhi guna Aarnavam:

In Rama Avatara, the Lord surrendered to an ocean (arnavam)- an ocean of salt - Lavanarnavam - Even here, the samudra raja refused to obey the Lord and the Lord had to threaten destruction before he agreed to help the Lord. In the case of Manavala Mamuni, the Lord surrenders to an ocean of knowledge, wisdom and bhakti. This again addresses His own concern for having surrendered to an imperfect person earlier. Yatindra Pravanam: After listening to Ramanuja Noorrandhaadhi (97th song) - Thannai Urraatcheyyum Thanmayinor, that talks about the greatness of the devotees of Ramanuja, the Lord felt that it is even more special to be the sishya of the greatest devotee of Ramanuja than Ramanuja himself. (There are various instances quoted by our acharyas as to the acharyathvam of Ramanuja vis a vis the Lord - Thiru-k-Kurungudi, the incident in Thirumalai etc..).

Vandhe Ramya Jaamaatharam Munim: In Rama avatara, the Lord's teacher was Viswamithra. We all know about the imperfections of sage Viswamithra. In Krishna avatara, the Lord's teacher was Sandeepani Maharishi. When Lord Krishna asked him what he would like as guru Dakshina (even though he knew that his sishya was the Lord Himself), the rishi asked for reviving the life of his dead son rather than srivaikunta. The Lord was dissatisfied with the completeness of these teachers, and hence chose the epitome of a sanyasi - ramya jaamaatru muni. Thus, this thaniyan expressed by the Lord Himself is not only an instance of the Lord showing the universe who a great Acharya is, but also an expression of his infinite causeless (Nirhethuka) compassion towards the souls in this universe. There were two srivaishnavas that were known to svami.

They were learned in the teachings of azhvar acharyas, but they had not gotten rid of their ego (Ahambavam). One day, they were arguing with each other, and their arguments were filled with ego. Svami happened to pass by that way. Two dogs happened to be barking at each other. Svami, wanted to point out the mistake of the srivaishnavas, but did not desire to confront them directly and give them the lesson. Instead, he turned towards the dogs, and said "Are you two also learned in

srivacanabhooshanam, as these two srivaishnavas, that you are arguing with each other with such ego" - On hearing this, the srivaishnavas understood their mistake, and it is said that they changed their ways. This incident in instructive not just in humility to us, but also instructive of the character and grace of svami - he did not want to hurt even the people that deserve some lessons.

One day, a Vaishnava from the north came to svami and requested him thus - "Please teach me the essence of all the sastras and rahasyas, something that i can follow". svami replied thus - "For the person that knows that the ultimate goal is the kainkaryam towards perumal, just surrendering to the Lord is not the goal; following the sastras and performing aradhana to the Lord is not the goal; just being the complete devotee of the acharya is not enough; being respectful towards other devotes is not enough; what is needed is for the person to be such that all the devotees of the Lord can come to his house without any hesitation, and command him to do whatever service he can do for them, and for this person to be in the state where the devotees of the Lord can even sell him if they desire so" - further, he says "If someone who is so, all the anushtanam and the knowledge of the sastras and the teachings of acharyas and azhvars will come automatically.

For someone who allows him to be a tool of service for other devotees, there is no compulsion for him to know about the sastras and the deep meanings of them" - He adds "Anushtanam and knowledge of the sastras without following the above is like the teaching of pativrata dharma by a prostitute, and will go waste"! Another incident - There was a srivaishnava called bhattar perumal that had the position of an acharya in those days. But many of his sishyas did not prostrate before him, and he was disturbed by it. Feeling that it was disrepect for him, he went to Svami Manavala Mamunigal and told him about his concern. Svami, when he returned to his matam, invited the sishyas of Bhattar Perumal and asked them why they were doing so.

The sishyas replied that they did not have the mind to surrender to Bhattar Perumal, implying that they were not satisfied with their teacher. svami manavala Mamuni told them - "Think that it is perumal and thayar, sitting in the divya Simhasanam before you, and you prostrate before bhattar perumal" - We can see the kindness that svami had even for people that had drawbacks. During the time of Adisesha's reign on earth as svami Manavala Mamuni, there was a great scholar named Hasthigirinadharanna who lived in kanchipuram (hasthigiri =

kanchipuram). He was a great scholar in the Ubhaya Vedanta philosophy, and had defeated scores of scholars in debates regarding Vedanta, and established the srivaishnava sampradayam as the religion propounded by the Vedic seers. Due to his excellence in debates, he was conferred the title of "Prativadi Bayankarar" - the one that stirs fears in the minds of those debating him, and became to be known as prativadi bayankaram anna.

He had 3 children who were scholars in their own right, and his wife is normally held in the same regard as Koorattazhvan's wife Andal. PB Anna slowly developed revulsion for material things, gave all of his material belongings away, and went to thirumalai to perform service to the Lord of the seven hills in the true spirit of what Nammazhvar advocated (Ozhivil Kalamellam udanaay manni), and what Anantazhvan practiced. There, Thozappa Svami (descendant of periya Thirumalai Nambi) gave PB Anna the kainkaryam of fetching water from Akasa Ganga, preparing it with fragrant material like elaichi and submitting it for Perumal's thiruaradhanam everyday. PB Anna did that kainkaryam with great happiness.

One day, a Srivaishnava from srIrangam came to worship the Lord of seven hills. PB anna served the Srivaishnava by taking him to the temple, helping him worship the Lord and by taking him to his home and having him stay there. Everyday, Svami Pbanna used to listen to the Srivaishnava express the happenings at Srirangam - the utsavas, the Srivaishnavas there and the great prabhavam of svami Manavala Mamuni. One day, PB Anna invited the Srivaishnava to accompany him as he was bringing water from akasa Ganga, and the Srivaishnava did so. On the way to and from akasa Ganga, the Srivaishnava was explaining the vaibhavam of Manavala Mamunigal, especially through the purva and uttara dina-charyas (two slokas written by Erumbiappa, which contain details about svami Manavala Mamunigals activities throughout the day). Both the srivaishnava and svami PB Anna were overcome with hearing about Manavala Mamuni, and there was a slight delay in the bringing of the water. As soon as they reached the temple, before the fragrant material like elaichi were added, A Ekangi took away the vessel containing water for Thiruaradhanam for Perumal.

The Archaka used the water as usual for Thiruaradhanam, but svami PB Anna was very dejected and was feeling very sad that there were no fragrant additives in the water for perumal. So, he took a small vattil (small vessel), and took some of the fragrant material in that vattil and

stood near the Archaka so that he can give the material to the Archaka. At that time, the archaka mentioned " The water today is much more fragrant than everyday" to PB Anna.svami Anna realized that the fragrance was because of the listening to Svami Manavala Mamunis Vaibhavam and even the water Became more fragrant listening to the vaibhavam and becomes more attractive for the Lord!. He requested to Srivaishnava to take him to srirangam so that he(anna) can become a Sishya of Manavala Mamunigal.

PB anna went to Srirangam with his family, and stayed at the Sriranga Narayana Jeeyar Matam. He went to the temple to worship Lord Ranganatha and in the temple; he saw svami Manavala Mamuni performing upanyasam of a specific decade (onrum thevum) of Thiruvaymozhi in the Chitra mantapam inside the temple. Manavala mamunigal, on hearing that PB anna had come to the gosthi, stopped the Upanyasam, embraced Svami and then continued with the upanyasam. After the upanyasam, manavala mamuni took PB Anna to the sannadhi and helped him worship the Lord. The Lord, through the archaka, welcomed PB Anna and told anna thus "You have come here, knowing that even the water that was present in a place where Manavala Mamuni's Vaibhavam is being described is very dear to me - I give you the most special relationship now" and showed Manavala Mamuni and entrusted PB Anna in Manavala Mamuni's hands. PB Anna, along with his family took refuge in manavala mamuni and became his sishyas.

He lived the life of a true srivaishnavite performing service to fellow srivaishnavas at srirangam. Here, it is an appropriate to fit in an incident narrated by many elders regarding PB Anna. Once, when PB Anna met a srivaishnava and performed his obeisance's to him, the srivaishnava addressed PB Anna as "Prativadi bayankarare", to which PB Anna replied - "Svami, please do not address me so - I am Prativadi Bayankara in the goshti of non-srivaishnavas; in the goshti of Srivaishnavas, I am their servant" (Para Goshtishu prativadi Bayankarah. Srivaishnavaanaam Goshtishu that dAsa ithi visruthah). That is the reason why most of the descendants of PB Anna to this day have the name "Srivaishnava Dasan" and use "adiyen Srivaishnava dasan" etc. Another important detail about PB Anna, especially relevant in today's context, is that he was a Shishya of Vedanta Desika's descendants. In fact svami Anna's thaniyan mentions him as receiving the grace of Vedanta Desika and Manavala Mamuni.

Anna is a prime example that there were no divisions among the Ramanuja sampradaya followers even during and a little bit after svami

manavala mamuni's time. The lineage that descends from PB Anna is very illustrious. In the Thiru Nangur area, where a branch of that lineage settled, this family has brought in thousands and thousands of people into the Ramanuja sampradaya over the years. They are the hereditary trustees and managers of all the divya desams in the thirunangur area. This geographic branch is known for great Ubhaya Vedanta scholars that are present to this day. Nangur PB Annangaracharlar comes to mind of the scholars in the last century. In the Divya desam known as Annan kovil, now, there is a Prativadi Bayankaram, very learned, one of the kindest acharyas that one can see - he is around 95 years old, and if one goes to pay his/her obeisance's to him, the first word that comes out his mouth (even at this advanced age) is "did you eat? have you eaten? please stay here, eat here and then go".

A branch from here went to north India and settled there. In Kanchipuram, another illustrious branch of the lineage is present. This branch gave us the two most illustrious scholars of the Ramanuja sampradaya of the 20th century - PB Anantachariar and Svami PB Annangaracharlar. Volumes and volumes have been written on these two great acharyas. PB Anantachariar (also known as Gadhi), perhaps illustrates what a true acharya needs to be - He traveled long and far in North India, and brought hundreds of thousands of people into the Ramanuja Sampradayam. Out of his concern that language should not be a barrier, he translated Azhvar Prabhandhams and their meaning and delivered upanyasams in Sanskrit and/or Hindi. He was instrumental in building the famous Panasvadi Srinivasa temple in mumbai. He, perhaps after Ramanuja was the first acharya to have gone deep into north India and spread the universal knowledge of our religion.

There are thousands of sishyas who come to kanchipuram even today from remote parts of north India to the current acharya of this lineage. PB Annangaracharlar needs no introduction. He followed the footsteps of svami Gadhi Anantachar, and became a scholar in his own right. His contributions to Ramanuja sampradaya are uncountable. He spread the Ramanuja sampradaya among many people in andhra pradesh. He, along with Thirukkannapuram pattappa Svami and Gadhi Anantachar svami was among the very few acahryas to have carried the universal message of the Ramanuja sampradaya to all people, irrespective of caste, language or background.

His contribution towards making our acharyas' commentaries accessible to the common man is infinite. The "Divyartha deepikai", an easy to

understand commentary on the naalayiram, based on purvacharyas Vyakhyanams is a treasure. Similarly the simple to understand summaries of the Rahasya granthas. He also published countless books on the Sampradaya (commentaries by acharyas, summaries, and commen-taries in simple colloquial language) in Telugu, Sanskrit and Hindi. Perhaps the greatest contribution of PB Annangaracharya was the debunking of several (even today prevalant) myths about the difference of views among Ramanuja sampradaya acharyas. His treatises establishing the unifying nature of all of our acharyas are a treasure for us. Jiyar wanted to worship the Lords of thirumalai and kanchipuram once again, and after obtaining permission from Lord Ranganatha, left for the yAtra along with numerous sishyas including PB Anna. First, they went to Kanchipuram to worship the Lord that gives and gives to His devotees - Perarulaalan - Lord Vardaraja. svami Manavala mamuni gave us two wonderful slokas in sanskrit and 2 pasurams that describe the temple and the Lord.

I paraphrase the sanskrit temple first - "I fall at the feet of the Lord who is surrounded by Sridevi and Bhudevi under the Punyakoti Vimanam, after worshipping the holy pushkarini that is opposite the Bali Pita, Lord Venugopala, Lord gnyanap Piran, Bhattarpiraan, Satakopa, Kali Kari Thirumangai Azhvar, Thirumazhisaip Piran, Periya Nambi, Emperumanar, the Mudhal Azhvars, the Mudalis that guard the entrance, the abhisheka Mantapam, Perundevith Thayar, Thiru Azhi Azhvan, thiru Anantazhvan, chakkaravarthi Thirumagan, Kariya Manikka Varadar, Thiru Madap Palli, Periya Thiruvadi, Azhagiya Singar, Senai Mudanmaiyar, and the Thiru Aththi Mamalai". This sloka describes the layout of the temple as it was during Manavala Mamuni's time. One can see the most of the same layout even to this day in the temple. Another sloka is as follows - " Immediate on the Lord whose feet are Lotus feet, the one who is Lakshmi vallabha, whose divine body glows with the light generated by the divine ornaments, whose beautiful hands tells us not to worry and has the gadha, sankha and Chakra, and the Lord of Hasthigiri" Then, he also composed devaraja Mangalam - that beautiful Mangala stotra for the Lord, a sloka of which we recite every day - asthi Sristhu Na Kasthuri Vasana vasithorse Hasthigiri nathaya devarajaya Mangalam

After he performed the Mangalasasanam, the kanchipuram Srivaishnavas gave Jiyar a Matam to stay, and requested him to give Upanyasams on thiruvaymozhi and Rahasyas. Jiyar stayed at kanchi for sometime, during

which the annual brahmOtsavam happened. Svami performed Mangalasa-sanams to the Lord during the 10 days of the Utsavam on the Vahanams. During this time, rumba appa came from Sholingar to pay his obeisances to svami. The srivaishnavas at Kanchipuram requested svami to establish a learned person at kanchipuram from whom they can continue their learning the rahasya granthas and the sampradayam. Jiyar commanded vanamamalai jIyar Svami to bring him Appachchiyar Anna.

This svami was a learned scholar and a great Srivishnava that was a descendant of Mudaliyandan. Jiyar commanded him to reside at kanchi and perform the darsana Nirvaham on his behalf from Kanchi. Further, the local people gave this svami a vigraha called "Azhaiththu vazhiviththavar", one of the shat Beras of the Kanchi temple, that is to this day present in the sannadhi of this Thirumaligai.

After this, Jiyar and his Sishyas left kanchipuram and reached Thirumalai after worshipping at Thiru-K-Kadigai (Sholingar). In thirumalai, a sloka has been given to us by elders again, that describes the temple layout as it was during that time - The paraphrasing is as follows - "One should worship the big bali peeta after that the mantapam known as Yamunaith Thuraivar (named after Alavandar by Ananthazhvan svami, who performed pushpa Kainkaryam to the Lord of Thirumalai), then the entrance that is near the shenbaga tree (called Shenbaga vrksha Vasal), sri Garuda, the Thiru Madap Palli, the Thirumamani Mantapam, the Ananda Nilaya Vimanam that is covered with gold, Senai Mudanmaiyar, Ramanuja, the Lord Nrsimha and then Lord Rama. After that, one should worship the Lord of Thiruvengadam, the one who has faultless glory, the one who has beautiful Thirumarbu (chest) that is the abode of lakshmi and whose eyes are like beautiful lotuses". Manavala mamuni has 11 names

1. Namesperiya JIyar,
2. Manavala mamuni,
3. Sowmya jamatru yogindrar,
4. Ramyajamatru Yogindrar,
5. yatindrap pravanar,
6. Azhagiya manavala jiyar,
7. kanthopayantha,
8. Vara Vara Muni,
9. varayogi,

10. Iramanusan Ponnadi,
11. Ruchira jamatru yogindrar.

Manipravala : Literary work of mixture of Tamil and Sanskrit language

Maraner : Birth place of Maraner nimbi located in the Pandya kingdom, Sundra by caste

Maraneri nambi : Alavandar's disciples Maraneri Nambi who was born in a lowar caste. He was the target of Alavandar's grace and another disciple of Alavandar, Periya Nambi who was the acharya of Ramanuja, had great affection for him as well. Because he had understood the true nature of his soul, Maraneri Nambi separated from his relatives who did not understand him, and lived separately. After Alavandar ascended to His divine abode, Maraneri Nambi became physically sick and was struggling alone. Periya Nambi took him under his care without looking at their caste difference, and gave him food from his own home. When Maraneri Nambi was in his final stages of his life, he asked Periya Nambi that his body not be given back to his relatives for final rites.

He told Periya Nambi "Purodasaththai naykkidadhe Nokki Arula venum" - that is, do not give the offering meant for devas to dogs. After Maraneri Nambi left this world, Periya Nambi followed his words and performed all the final rites for him standing in his son's stead. Many Brahmins became very upset that an acharya and Brahmin such as Periya Nambi performed final rites for a low caste person and refused to interact with him. At that time, Ramanuja talked to Periya Nambi and requested to him "When there are many others who could have done these final rites, did you have to do them yourself? Now so many are disrespecting you". Periya Nambi replied "Come O Ramanuja! Am I greater than He who was born in the Ikshvaku family and lived as Dharma itself and is Maraneri Nambi any less than Periya Udaiyar? Am I greater than Dharmaputra and is Maraneri Nambi any less than Vidhura?" Periya Nambi referred to the fact that Sri Rama had performed the final rites for a vulture (Jatayu) and that Yudishtra had performed final rites for a low caste person Vidhura. He added "Do we ask someone else to do our sandhyavandanam?"

This was to answer Ramanuja's question as to why he could not have had someone else do the final rites. He also said "Are the words of Nammazhvar in the pasurams Payilum Sudaroli and Nedumarkkadimai nothing more than noise made by the ocean? Are this something that I have to explain and you having to understand?" These two decades of Thiruvaymozhi speak of the greatness of bhagavatas. Periya Nambi was

asking if Azhvar's words were not to be actually followed in real life and were empty like the noise of the ocean. Guru Paramparai records that Ramanuja immediately acceded to Periya Nambi's words. Thirukkolur Ammal is asking "Did I do great bhagavata service and not treat Azhvar's words like mere noise, like Periya Nambi did?" This episode is also interesting, since Thirukkolur Ammal is reminding Ramanuja of the words spoken by Periya Nambi to Ramanuja himself.

Marenrilla maruthi siriyandan : Ramanuja is disciple called Marenrilla maruthi sirrenandan or Maruthiya nadan or Maruthiya andan,. He called this disciple and told him to visit Srirangam and bring back news about the temple, Koorathalvan. Periya Nambigal and others. Maruthiyandan went to Srirangam and gave the news about Ramanuja to those there. He also heard about Periya Nambigal attaing the lord's lotus feet and Alvan losing his eyes and became very sad. At that time he also head about the king's death. He became happy on hearing this news, as it meant Ramanuja could return to Srirangma and walked very quickly back to Tirunarayanapuram. At Tirunarayanama he met Ramanuja and said "avan ponan' leaning that the Chola king was dead. Hearing that, Ramanuja too became happy that he could now go back to Srirangam and embraced Maruthiyandan and other disciple. Ammangi ammal who had gone with him. However, he too became very sad on hearing about the news about Koorthalvan and Periyanambigal Afterwards he consoled himself and returned to Srirngam

Marudhagrama purna : Disciple of Ramanuja, initiated Vaisnavaism by Yajnamurti

Marudhur Nambi : No source available

Meghanadari : Student of Ramanuja, lived probably in the twelfth and the early thirteenth centuries. He was closely associated with Ramamisra. He wrote a Naya prakasika, a commentary on the Sribhasya, Bhava prabodha, Mumuksu payasamgraha and Naya dyuu mani. Son of Atreyanatha and Adhvara nayika. He had three brothers Hastyadrinatha, Varadarat and Ramamisra

Milagaazhwan : Disciple of Ramanuja who small in physical nature

Mudali andan : Mudali Andan was a shishya of the Ramanuja. His followers are also known as Iyengars. Mudaliandan did not have children for long time. Once, while discussing with Ramanuja, Andaan regretted about not having a child. At the same, Ramanuja received prasadam from the Temple which was covered with a garment (Kandadai- Gandam

+ Aadai – a piece of cloth with fragrance) worn on Lord's thirumeni (Lord's archaamurthy). Ramanuja indicated to Andaan about the auspicious happening and told him he will get a son soon. Soon, a son was born to Andaan. Thus, Andaan vamsam (family) was called Kandadayar family. It is said that a whole street [north Mada Street] in Srivilli-puttur bears the name 'Kandadaiyarvithi', to signify the importance of the family. Kandadai Andaan was born in Kumba (Masi) month punarvasu star as an amsam of Chatrukana azhwar. Mudali andan

He was born at Koil (Srirangam) and his acharya was Ramanuja. He learnt Sri Bashya, Veda, Sastra and Divya Prabandam from his father Mudaliandaan. He learnt rahasyartham from Atkonda Villi Jeeyar. Like Ramanuja, Kandadai Andaan had three acharyas –Ramanuja, Mudalinadaan and Atkonda Villi Jeeyar. Out of deep love and respect for Ramanuja, he requested Ramanuja's permission for installing a statue of Ramanuja at his birth place – Sriperumbudur and Ramanuja also agreed to the same. He immediately called a sculptor and got a statue of Ramanuja done. Ramanuja was impressed with the statue, embraced it and gave his blessings to install the same at Sriperumbudur on Pushya natchatram in the month of Panguni Andaan after receiving Ramanuja's instructions made arrangements for installing the statue at the appointed day and time. He also codified performing of festivities for Swami's thirumeni at Sriperumbudur.

Emperumanar had two very close disciples, Daasarathi and Kurratalvan. Kurrautalvan is quite well known for both being Ramanuja's scribe and a noted scholar in his own right. But, Daasarathy was contented by simply offering kainkarya to Ramanuja and the Lord. Daasarathi and his wife, it seems, were blessed with all of the joys that come from being part of Ramanuja's Community, but for one, a child. So, they approached this compassionate Acharya and sought his mangalasasanas. During their conversation, a devotee arrived with prasadam for Ramanuja from Lord Ranganatha's Temple. The pot of prasadam was covered with a torn piece of cloth that was once part of the Lord's own clothing. Seeing this cherished piece of cloth, Ramanuja immediately bestowed it upon the couple. In due time, Daasarathy and his wife were blessed with a son, whom at birth, was placed in the very same torn piece of cloth, "Kandadai," which had served as a sign of the Lord's Benediction. This boy soon became known as Kovil Kandadai Annan.

His descendants, who belong to the lineage of the 74 Simhasanadhipatis, now proudly proclaim Koil Kandadai, Kandadai, or Kandala as their

family name.Jeear Swami has told us that the Kandadai families have the renown of being one of only three families that receive Acharya Sripada Teertham three times, rather than twice. It is interesting to note that Daasarathi is considered as being an Avathara of the Lord Himself. It seems that the Lord was as pleased with Adiseshan's service to Him as Lakshmana that He wanted to serve him in future Avatharas. As a result, He bestowed the Avathara of Balarama to Adiseshan; and, in Adiseshan's incarnation as Ramanuja, became his Daasan, Daasarathi. Towards melkote. Udaiyavar's exile from Srirangam, and eventual refuge in Melkote-Tirunarayanapuram, constitutes a poignant episode in Srivaishnava history. The occasion once again demonstrated the precious loyalty of Andan and Azhvan to Udaiyavar. Andan simply went with Udaiyavar on the virtually uncharted emergency evacuation from Srirangam, and Azhvan (together with periya nambi) substituted for Udaiyavar to answer the vicious summons of the bigoted chozha ruler; Azhvan won the debate but the eyes of Azhvan and periya-nambi were nevertheless gouged out by the mean loser. The trudging journey of the exiles plotting through woods, rivers and over the hills, must have been very demanding.

Before reaching Melkote, the party had halted at the place known as Saligramam 'Salai-gramam'?)where they were baited and harassed by a cynical group of people. Udaiyavar, it is said, directed Andan just to step into the waters of the local pool and come out. The villagers are said to have unknowingly been converted to gentle ways by imbibing the pool-water sanctified as the washing of Andan's feet (Sripada-tirtham). This was the place where Vaduka-Nambi (Andhra-purna) had met Udaiyavar and been accepted into discipleship. The creative genius that he was, Udaiyavar turned even the adversity into a creative programmed. The conversion of the great Hoysala king Bittideva\vishnu-Vardhana

To Srivaishnavam was providential, but udaiyavar availed of the royal patronage to sponsor the admirable cause of getting him to build five temples. The temples are: Nambinarayana at Tondanur; Tiru-narayana at Melkode \tirunarayanapuram; kirti-narayana at talakadu; vijaya-Narayana at Belur; Vira-narayana at Gadag.The 'Pancha-Narayana-Pratishtha', as it came to be known, was not only the glory of vaishNava religion per se, butte temples figure in the nation's cultural history as so many marvels of architecture and stone-crafting. This comprehensive project was got executed under the supervision of Mudali-Andan and these temples stand, especially, as monuments to Udaiyavar's trust in the skills and integrity of Andan. Andan's modesty andan was

instinctively self-effacing and left no written works as such, and the reason was obvious, that his hands were full in administering the Great Temple and in coordinating and executing the numerous and continuing assignments of Udaiyavar. Andan is remembered through numerous references in our extensive 'vyakhya' (exegetic) litera-ture, and in the temple chronicle 'koyil ozhugu' and hagiological works. The Andan-Azhvan pair was renowned for devotion and great concern for Namperumal. Every time Namperumal returned to the Asthanam (sanctum)after sojourning in the holy streets, the two would, in the spirit of Periazhvar, sigh and hold each other's hands in thanksgiving that the Lord returned to safety after His festive wandering right in the sight of cynical men. On the other hand, Azhvan, if judged by his five grand hymns (pancha-stavam) alone, would rank as an intellectual par excellence in the SrIvaishNava 'Sampradayam'. He was, of course, the companion of Udaiyavar when the latter undertook the arduous journey to the Kashmira-sarada-Pitham (located in a place now included in 'Pak'-occupied Kashmir) in search of 'Bodhayana-vrtti'as source material for writing Sribhashyam. Azhvan's extra-ordinary mnemonic skills and philosophic comprehension were utilized by Udaiyavar in writing his magnum opus, and Azhvan also served as the amanuensis. This joyful and precious activity was interrupted by uDaiyavar's exile to melkote, and eventually Srivishnuchitta Enkalazhvan Of Tiruvellarai took the place of Azhvan to help Udaiyavar complete the work. Azhvan's unique intellectual powers were acknowledged by all, but he himself thought that being one of the many devoted disciples of Udaiyavar was the real thing to cherish.

Accordingly, he once exclaimed that he valued Andan'snatural birth-kinship with Udaiyavar as much more precious than his own works. Andan's pedigree andan is the Mula-Purusha of the Vadhula-Gotra clan renowned as 'Koyil-Kandadai'(a Tamil-Sanskrit hybrid), for being honored with Perumal's fragrant robe. The clan is famous to the extent that a whole street [north Mada street] in Srivilli-puttur bears the Name 'kandadaiyar vIthi', perhaps ever since the name was established in the 'sampra-dayam' itself. The casting of the beautiful life-like icons of svAmi emperumanar and consecration at Sriperumpudur(during his life time), as well as at Srirangam (on his passing away), constitute the signal service of Andan's son, Kandadai Andan, to the Srivaishnavasampradayam.

The proper recognition accorded to Nampur varadacharya in Srirangam for his extraordinary discourses on Tiru-vai-Mozhi (later transcribed as the thirty-six thousand) was the remarkable service rendered by a later

descendant of Andan, namely, kandadai Tozhappar.It was he who lauded Sri-varada as 'Nampillai'. Branches of the family tree

Ramanuja and Mudaliyandan The high affection which Udayavar had on Andan and Azhvan came out in the episode of Sri Ramanuja seeking instruction from Tirukkotiyur Nambi (Nambi) on rahasyartham. Ramanuja visited Triukottiyur Nambi 18 times for upadesam on Thiru mantram, but he could not get the upadesam. Ramanuja once told this to one of nambi's sishyas and Nambi heard that and told Udayavar to come alone to get upadesam with tandam (Sacred staff) and pavithram (pennant). However, Ramanuja took Dasarathi and Kuresa with him. When Nambi asked Ramanuja why he brought Andan and Azhwan in spite of his instruction to come alone, Ramanuja replied that Andaan is his tandam and Azhwan is his pavithram. Nambi took all three of them and instructed them the Thirumantram and asked them not to tell them to anyone else. He also told Ramanuja to come alone later to learn the Charama slokam. Nambi later instructed Ramanuja the Charama slokam.

Ramanuja had a very intimate attachment towards Mudaliandan which was expressed by Ramanuja himself many times. Even at the time when he embraced Sanyasa, Ramanuja renounced everything except Mudaliandan, his priya Bagineyar. While going to kaveri for his daily bath, he used to lean on Dasarathi for support. One day, while on his way to the river, he was asked why, when he donned the robes of a Sannyaasin (a Pontiff) he did not give up Dasarathi, as that order demanded that all kith and kin should be renounced. To this Ramanuja replied that Dasarathi was an exception as he was his triple staff (tritandam) (the same reason he gave to Tirukkottiyur Nambi) and added "Just as a Pontiff cannot do without his triplestaff, I cannot do without Andaan". Thus Andaan is referred to as a Triple staff (Tritandam) which is always found with a pontiff. Andaan had the privilege of having both Bodily relationship (Thega sambandam) and Spiritual relationship (Atma sambandam). Bodily relationship as Ramanuja's Bagineyar and Spiritual relationship as a Servant of Ramanuja.

Vaduga Nambi on Mudaliandan Vaduganambi, like Madura kavigal, did not worship anyone other than his acharya, was once visited by relatives who had not obtained samasrayanam from acharyas. When they left, Nambi threw away all the vessels and cleaned the thirumaligai and brought the left over vessels from Andaan's thirumaligai and felt happy as he firmly believed that vessels used by such a srivaishnava as Andaan are good to use even when they are very old.

Azhvaan on Mudaliandan : Koorathazhvan is known as the Pavithram of Ramanuja had unique intellectual powers. Koorathazhvan, has expressed the greatness of Mudaliandan by saying as, "Padakku Atma Sambandham Irundhalum, Uzhakku Deha Sambandham Illaye", meaning,"Though I have the Atma Sambandham(Spiritual relationship) with Ramanuja, I am not bodily related(Thega sampandam) to him like Mudaliandan is related to Ramanuja". Such was the greatness of Mudaliandan Swami.

Desikan on Mudaliandan : The sampradayam' is in debt to Desikan for having preserved in his 'Rahasya-Traya-Saram', a nugget Sri-sukti (of Andan, as the latter's metaphor for our association with Udaiyavar, as under," When a lion leaps from one hill to another, the little insects on its body are transported with him. Similarly, when Bhashyakara (Ramanuja) leaped over the cycle of birth and death, we were saved because of our connection with him.

Mudumbai nimbi : Belongs to Sathasrivaisnava community

Muni Perumal : No source available

Mute person : In Ramanuja's mutt lived a Srivaishnava who was a mute person. He spent his time in doing whatever services he could provide to Ramanuja. One time, Ramanuja's grace flowed toward him and he took the mute Srivaishnava to a private room. There he closed the door, blessed the Srivaishnava and placed his padhukas on his head. He then signed to the Srivaishnava to take his refuge in those padhukas. At that time, Koorath-thazhvan watched what was happening through a window. He exclaimed to himself "I am ruined because of my knowledge.

If I had been a naive person like this Srivaishnava, I would have become the target of Ramanuja's grace easily". The mute Srivaishnava took his refuge at Ramanuja's divine feet from that day forward and considered that as the sole means of survival ("uyiraya").Thirukkolur Ammal is asking Ramanuja "Did I become the target of your divine grace and receive that which is dearer than life like the mute Srivaishnava did

Naalooran : King Kulotthunga's minister Naalooran. He advised king to eliminate vaihnavism; he has to attack Ramanuja, who has established Vishnavism. This idea was picked by the king and immediately he sent an army to Srirangam to arrest Ramanuja for surrender. At that time Ramanuja went for a bath in Kaveri. Kuresa was keeping ready his daily cores for Nitya Aradhana. The army arrived at Koil. Kuresan sensed the danger. He immediately took the Dandam, wore Kaashayam and posed

as Ramanuja. Told the king's army he is Ramanuja and was arrested. Followed him is periya Nambi, vouching Kuresan as Ramanuja. They risked saving Acharya at any cost. When they arrived Kings Court, king was furious and asked Ramanuja (Kuresa in Ramanuja dress) to prove Vishnu.

Kuresan humbly unfolded facts. Thrivikram when occupied the whole universe, Lord Brahma washed His feet from his Kamandalam. This became Ganjus river which followed to earth at the instance from Bhgiratha. Lord Siva held it in his head. How Siva / Brahma can be superior to Lord Vishnu. This did not satisfy the King. He became more angry and asked Kuresan to sign a declaration - "Sivath para tharam Naasti...". Kuresan smiled at king's ignorance. He added "Drona masthi tathah param" sarcastically and signed. Followed Periya Nambi. King ordered the soldiers to remove the eyes of both vaishnavas. Kuresa was disturbed by king's fury and declared he can not see Ramanuja or Lord Ranganatha with the eyes that saw a sinful person like the king and plucked off his eye with his own bare hands in the open court.

Later the soldier removed eyes of Periya Nambi, without even considering his old age. The scene of the Kulotthunga court was nightmare for all the subjects and spread fast all over the kingdom. at srirangam Ramanuja had to flee far away places

Nachiyaramman : Elder of Emperumanar two sisters. Hence Mudaliyandan is called Ramanuja's Bhagineya (sister's son). Anandanarayana Dheekshidar named the child as Dasarathy. He was born in Vadamal Kulam, vadhoola Gothram, Yajus sakhaai, Apasthamba Soothram in Prabava varusham, Chitra masam, Punarvasu Natchatram.The 'thaniyan' of Andan is Paduke Yati-Rajasya Kathayanti Yad-akhyayatasya dasarathe: paadav Sirasa Dharayaam Yaham". Mudali-Andan is accordingly referred to as the Ramanuja-Paduka or Yatiraja-paduka. The short name is simply 'Andan'.

When Ramanuja took sanyasam, Mudali-andan and Koorathalwan paid respects at his feet and obtained pancha samskarams from him Ramanuja taught Sribashyam and other rahasyartham to Mudaliandan while his father Anandanarayana Dheekshidar taught him Divya prabandam.

Nadhadhur Ammal : Nadadhur Azhwan's grandson, Varadhachar was born by the grace of Lord Varadarajan. He became the Acharyan for Apullar, the uncle of Desikan Vaatsya Varadaguru, also known as Nadadur Ammal, is the grandson of Varadaguru, a nephew of Ramanuja. He is the disciple of Vishnucitta (or Engal Alvan). He lived between 1165 A.D. and 1275 A.D. Nadadur Ammal is the author of about 15 works

Nambikarunakara Dasar : Disciple of Nathamuni

Namburi varadaraja : Successor of Kalijit or Lokacharya I, and his successor Pillai Lokacharaya,all wrote works dealing not so much with the interpretation of Ramanuja's philosophy, as with the interpretation of devotion as dealt with in the Sahasra giti and the Divya prabandhas.

Nampillai : Nampillai was born in the city of Nambur. His original name was Varadarajar. He was born in the star Kartthigai in the month Kartthigai – the same as Thirumangai Azhvar. Since he was born as the amsam of Thirumangai Azhvar, he was also known as Thiru-K-Kalikanri Dasar. He then moved to Srirangam and was one of the many disciples of Nanjeeyar, who was the direct disciple of Sri Parasara Bhattar and to whom Bhattar had handed over the sampradhayam before attaining paramapadham. Through Bhattar's grace, Nanjeeyar had written a vyakhyanam called "9000ppadi" for Nammazhvar's Thiruvaymozhi.

He then decided to have this work written down in silk sheets and was looking for someone who could do a good job of it. He asked his disciples who that person could be and they pointed to Nambur Varadarajar. Nanjeeyar called Varadarajar and asked him to write something down which he did. Nanjeeyar appreciated his writing but was wondering how he could let one not initiated into the sampradhayam write Bhagavad Vishayam. Varadarajar then fell at Jeeyar's divine feet and requested him to initiate him into the sampradhayam. Jeeyar felt kindness in his divine heart and performed pancha samskaram for Varadarajar and taught him the 9000ppadi in full. Then he handed over the 9000ppadi manuscript to him and told him to rewrite them in silk sheets. Varadrajar then took the manuscripts and obtained permission from Nanjeeyar to go back to his home town and rewrite them. On the way back to his home town, he had to cross the Cauvery River and at one place he had to swim across it. So, he put the manuscript in a towel and wrapped it around his head and started to swim. At that time, a wave came and took away the towel and manuscript. Varadarajar got to the other side and became greatly distressed that he had lost the manuscript.

However, he managed to rewrite the whole script again from memory, as Nanjeeyar had taught him the whole work, and being one of great scholarship added additional references and meanings here and there in the work that added to its greatness. He then took the work back to Jeeyar who upon reading it was amazed to see these beautiful additions to it. When he asked about it to Varadarajar, he fell at Jeeyar's feet and him the whole story. At which time Nanjeeyar picked him up and embracing

him called him "Nam Pilhim the whole story. At which time Nanjeeyar picked him up and embracing him called him "Nam Pillai" (Our son) and gave him the name "Thiruk-Kalikanri dasar". From that day onward, Nambur Varadarajar came to be known as nampiLLai. Nampillai then never left Nanjeeyar's divine company and continued to perform all kinds of service to him. When Nanjeeyar completed one hundred Thiruvaymozhi Upanyasams, Nampillai performed sadabishekam ceremony for him. Nampillai continued to learn more and more from Nanjeeyar and his fame began to spread.

During this time, disciples such as Periyavaccan Pillai, Vadakku Thiruveethi Pillai, Pinbazhagiya Perumal Jeeyar, and Eeyunni Madhava Perumal gathered at Nampillai's feet. Seeing this Nanjeeyar was very pleased. Seeing Nampillai's fame and the great number of disciples he had, Kanthadai Thozhappar, the grandson of Mudhaliyandan, felt great jealousy and one day severely reprimanded him in front of Namperumal. Nampillai feeling great sadness left for his home. When Thozhappar returned to his home, his wife who had heard about the student was greatly distressed and did not perform any of her duties. Seeing this, Thozhappar asked her why she was ignoring him and her duties – something she had never done before. She replied that he had insulted Nampillai who is verily the reincarnation of Nammazhvar; and having done that, he is not even regretting the act. So, she wanted no further association with him who had committed a great bhAgavata apacharam.

At which time, Thozhappar recognized his great error and asked her how he could rectify it. She replied that he should seek Nampillai's pardon. He agreed and asked her to go along with him as he was ashamed to go alone. She agreed and they both came out to go to Nampillai's home. In the meantime, Nampillai who had gone home from the temple sent all his disciples to their homes, did not take any food all day and in the evening covering himself with a blanket went alone to Thozhappar's home and stayed there in his front gate. When Thozhappar and his wife came out they were amazed to see Nampillai in front of their home. Thozhappar then enquired if Nampillai had come there to commit a folly for what happened at the temple. Nampillai fell at his feet and replied that he was there to seek his redemption for having caused such grief in the heart of the grandson of Mudhaliyandan that he had to say these things in the temple.

Upon which Thozhappar picked up Nampillai and embracing him said that he had thought that Nampillai was the acharya to only a few disciples

till that day and that he has now realized that he is the acharya to the whole world. From that day forward, Nampillai came to be said that he should not have written such and extensive work without asking for his acharya's permission and destroyed the manuscript. Nampillai then asked his disciple Periyavaccan Pillai to write a vyakhyanam for Thiruvaymozhi and thus was born 24000ppadi. Later Vadakku Thiruveethi Pillai wrote down Nampillai's discourses on Thiruvaymozhi as a manuscript and showed it to Nampillai. Nampillai saw that it was neither short nor long and was written beautifully in 36000 padi's. He appreciated Vadakku Thiruveethi Pillai's effort but told him that he should not have done it without his permission. Therefore, he took the manuscript and hid them in his home.

Later Eeyunni Madhava Perumal prayed to Namperumal for a long time and asked for the manuscript. Namperumal then asked Nampillai to give the manuscript to Madhava Perumal and Nampillai accepting the divine order did the same Nampillai continued spreading the sampradhayam for many years. After which, laying his head in Naduvil Thiruveethi Pillai Bhattar's lap and his feet in Pinbazhagiya Perumal Jeeyar's lap, he focused his mind on Nanjeeyar's feet and attained His divine abode.

Nambur Varadacharya Swamy - popularly known as Nampillai the author of =Idu 36000 padi. It is said that 24000 padi of Periavachan pillai is on =the same count of Ramayanam. This is elaborating than that. Tirumangai =alwar only incarnated as Nampillai while Lord Krishna incarnated as =Periavachan Pillai (Avani Rohini). This was as per the promise given by =Krishna at Tirukkannamangai to Tirumangai alwar. Due to this, Nampillai =is also known as Karlikanri Dasar. You would all have enjoyed how Idu =descended to us - the guruparampara in the verses of Upadesa Ratina =Malai. The name 'ulagariyan' was coined to Nampillai by Kandadai =Thozhappar. Later on this name came to Pillai Lokacharya the author of =18 Rahasya Granthas. There can be many Perumals but only one Namperumal.

There can be many =pillais but only one Nampillai, there can be many jeers but only one=Namjeeyar. They are all unparalleled. =206000 padi of pillan is as per the count of Sri Vishnu Puranam. 9000 padi =of Namjeeyar (acharyan of Nampillai) is as per Sri Bhasyam. 36000 padi =is as per Srutaprakasika. Nampillais 36000 padi is a live Kalakshepam which was written down word =by word by vadakku tiruveedipillai (father of Pillai Lokacharya and =Azhagiya Manavala Perumal Nayanar.)

Nampillais period is between 1147 AD =to 1252 AD. He was around 27 when Bhattar reached moksham. There are =reference in the commentaries that Nampillai had heard the kalakshepams =of Bhattar.

Works:

1. Eedu 36000ppadi Vyakhyanam for Thiruvaymozhi 2themaruvum
2. sengamalath Thiruththalgal Vazhiye
3. Thiruvaràiyil pattadai Sermarungum Vazhiye
4. thamamani vadamarvum purinUlum vazhiye
5. thamaraikkai yinaiyazhagum Thadampuyamum vazhiye
6. pamaruvun thamizhvedham payilpavalam vazhiye
7. Padiyaththin poruLthannaip Pagarnavum Vazhiye
8. Namanuthal Mathimugamum Thirumudiyum vazhiye
9. Nampillai Vadivazhakum Nadorum Vazhiye
10. Kathaludan Nanjeeyar kazhalthozhuvon vAzhiyE
11. karththigaik karththigai uthiththa kalikanRi vazhiye
12. pothamuda Nazhvar Sorporuluraippon vazhiye
13. puthuran padiyaththaip pugazhumavan vazhiye
14. Mathakaval evvuyirkkum Vazhvaliththan vazhiye
15. Mathilarangar Olakkam valarththittan Vazhiye
16. Nathamuni Alavandhar nalampugazhvOn Vazhiye
17. Nampillai thiruvadigal nadorum Vazhiye

Nanjeeyar : Nanjeeyar was the disciple of Parasara Bhattar, the son of Kurattazhvan and the acharya of Nampillai. He was the first acharya to write commentaries for both Thiruvaymozhi as well as prabandhams of other Azhvars. His commentaries are the earliest ones that have a style of explaining each word and phrase that the AzhvArs use in the Pasurams, and then quoting other teachers in detailing the meanings. Life history: It is believed that Nanjeeyar lived from 1113 CE to 1208 CE (95 years). He was born in the city of Thirunarayanapuram, near Mysore in Karnataka. He grew up in the town of Kankorai.

He was the direct disciple of Parasara Bhattar and it was to him that Bhattar handed over the stewardship of the religion. One of Nanjeeyar's greatest contributions was the identification (and anointment) of Nampillai as the next leader of the sampradayam Nanjeeyar's original name was Madhavacharyar. Since he had outstanding knowledge of the Vedantas, he was generally referred to as "Vedanti. He was renowned as an acharya in the Advaitic tradition initially. Ramanuja, before leaving

this world called Bhattar and told him about Vedanti and asked that Bhattar correct him and being him into the Srivaishnava fold. This shows the greatness of Nanjeeyar. Ramanuja had already done a similar act with the advaitin Yajnamurti, and gave him the name Arulala Perumal Emperumanar. However, due to old age Ramanuja was unable to do the same with Madhavacharyar and therefore gave the task to Bhattar. As Vedanti, Nanjeeyar lived with great fame in Thirunarayanapuram. Once a Brahmin from Srirangam met him and told him about Bhattar's greatness. From that time on, Vedanti was eager to meet Bhattar.

When the Brahmin met Bhattar and told him the incident, Bhattar asked him what he told Vedanti.The Brahmin replied that he told Vedanti that Bhattar knew all sastras. Bhattar then told the Brahmin that he should have told Vedanti that Bhattar also knew Thirunedunthandagam. The next time the Brahmin met Vedanti he repeated that to him. Vedanti was then wondering about this work that he had not come across before. Bhattar then later traveled to Thirunarayanapuram to challenge Vedanti. He went there in a palanquin, surrounded by his disciples, in a procession. Upon seeing that the local people told Bhattar that he would not be able to meet Vedanti if he went like that. They advised him that Madhavacharyar was in the habit of feeding Brahmins each day and if he went as one of those Brahmins, he will able to meet him quickly. Therefore, Bhattar dressed as a poor Brahmin and went to his place. There Bhattar met Madhavacharyar who asked him why he was waiting there. Bhattar replied that he was waiting for some alms. Madhavacharyar asked him why he was not eating with the other Brahmins then. Bhattar replied that he did not come there for food but that he wanted the alms of philosophical debate. Madhavacharyar instantly recognized that it was Bhattar who was thus challenging him. He accepted the challenge and a debate raged for nine days between them. On the tenth day, Vedanti agreed that he had lost and that the interpretation of the Vedas according to Visistadvaitham was the true philosophy.

He surrendered at the divine feet of Bhattar who then performed pancha samskaram to him and returned to Srirangam Madha-vacharyar then continued to live in Thirunarayanapuram with his two wives and all his wealth. Once, a few Brahmins came to his house and his wives sent them away without food. Upon returning to his house and hearing the news, Madhavacharyar grew greatly dejected with his wives in their failure to feed the poor. He therefore divided his wealth into three portions, gave two of the portions to his wives and took one portion to give to Bhattar for service to the Lord. He then renounced this world and took

sanyashrama dharma and left for Srirangam to meet Bhattar. On the way, he was met by Anandahzvan, a disciple of Ramanuja. Anandazhvan told him that if he continued to live as usual by eating when hungry, taking a bath when sweating and surrendered at Bhattar's feet, that he would not be rejected from paramapadham. There was no need to become a sanyasi. Anandazhvan then blessed him saying that having done it he should now be born in Thirumantra and grow in Dvaya and recite nothing but Dvaya. When Vedanti reached Srirangam he fell at the feet of Bhattar. Bhattar then picked him up calling him "nam jeeyar" (Our Jeeyar) and embraced him.

From that day forward, Vedanti came to be known as Nanjeeyar. This event must have occurred around 1137 or 1138 CE. Nanjeeyar then continued to live with Bhattar in Srirangam and became a close disciple to him. There are countless stories in Guru Parampara Prabhavam, Vyakhyanams, Varttha Mala, etc which recount events of interaction between Bhattar and Nanjeeyar. These events bring out the best in the Srivaishnava Sampradhayam. Nanjeeyar would ask very many questions to Bhattar and Bhattar would answer them with amazing dexterity. So much so, it became known in the sampradhayam that there was no one to ask questions like Nanjeeyar and that there was anyone to answer them like Bhattar. These stories also show the immense devotion that Nanjeeyar had for his acharya, Bhattar. After Bhattar attained paramapadham, Nanjeeyar took over the leadership of the sampradhayam in Srirangam. At this time he selected Nambur Varadacharyar, a disciple of his, to write down his works in silk sheets.

He then gave his works in palm leaves to Varadacharyar who then left for his home town of Nambur to write them down. Varadacharyar lost the palm leaves as he tried to swim across the Cauvery River. As he was mooring the great loss, the Lord appeared him his dream and told him to write them again from his memory. When Varadacharyar returned the silk sheets to Nanjeeyar, Nanjeeyar was amazed to see that the sheets contained his words but also additional references that he had made in discourses but had not put down in writing. When he questioned Varadacharyar about the same, Varadacharyar fell at his feet and told him what had happened. Nanjeeyar then picked him up and embraced him and called him "Nam pillai" (Our Son). From that day on, Nambur Varadacharyar was known as Nampillai.

Nampillai would go on to inherit the sampradhaya leadership from Nanjeeyar and become the next great acharya of the tradition. When

Nanjeeyar was old and not well, a person called Petri came to see him and asked him what he wished for. Nanjeeyar replied that he would like to hear Arayar recite the Periya Thirumozhi pasuram "thUviriya-malaruzhakki" and also see the front and behind beauty of Namperumal as He comes in a procession. This was arranged for and Varamtharum Perumal Arayar recited the pasuram. It is said that when Arayar recited the fourth pasuram of the pathigam, Nanjeeyar spoke a few words about its meanings and attained paramapadham. Guru Parampara also records that Nanjeeyar saw Namperumal in a procession as per his wish and then speaking a few words of good advice to his disciples including Nampillai; he reached Nanjeeyar after being taken into the Srivaishnava fold by Parasara Bhattar continued on his gruhasthasrama life with his two wives.

After an episode when his wives did not feed some hungry bhagavatas, Nanjeeyar split his wealth into three parts, gave two parts to his two wives and took the third part to give to Bhattar and live at his feet at Srirangam. He also took up sanyAsam before leaving for Srirangam.On the way to Srirangam, he met Sri Anandazhvar. Srianandazhvar knowing of his wealth and life in the past, said to him: "Had you taken a cool bath when warm and ate when hungry and lived while surrendered at Sri Bhattar's feet, would you have been rejected from Sri Vaikuntam? What was the need to take up sanyasa dharma? In any case, now that you have done it, may you be born in Tirumantram, grow in Dvayam and recite the Dvayam always and earn kainkrya sri from it". The message that Anandazhvar is giving us all is that it is possible to live a normal life in this world, but without developing attachments to it, surrender at an acharya's lotus feet and thence reach Him. One does not have to go through severe austerities or follow other means to achieve this goal.

Later Manavala Mamunigal would express the same in his Upadesarattinamalai:gyanam anuttanam Ivai nanragave Udai,yanana Guruvai adainthakkal - Manilaththeer!,thenar Kamalath Thirumamagal Kozhunan,thane Vaikuntham tharumO people of this world! If you reach (surrender) to an acharya who has the true knowledge and follows the prescribed rituals, He who is the Lord of Sri who stands on a lotus, will give you Vaikunta without you having to do anything further. His abode.

Works: Nanjeeyar was the first acharya after Thirukkurugaippiran Pillan, to write vyakhyanam in Mani Pravalam (a mixture of Tamil and Saskrit) for Azhvars prabandhams. It is interesting to note that while Pillan wrote his work under the order of Ramanuja, Nanjeeyar did his work under

the order of Parasara Bhattar. In upadesa Ratthinamalai, Manavala Mamunigal mentions that Nanjeeyar wrote several vyakhyanams - "nanjeeyar seytha viyakkiyaigal nalirandukku".

His works are:

- Thiruvaymozhi OnbathinAyirappadi Vyakhyanam
- Thiruppavai Irayirappadi Vyakhyanam
- Kanninun Sirutthambu Vyakhyanam
- thiruppallandu Vyakhyanam
- Vyakhyanams for the thiruvanthathis
- Saranagati Gadya Vyakhyanam

these works, only Onbathinayirappadi Vyakhyanam and Kanninun Sirutthambu vyakhyanam are available now. Thendirai-soozh thiruvarangam sezhikkavanthon vazhiye seemathavanennum selvanar vazhiye pandaraimaraith thamizhpporulaip pagaravanthon vazhiye panguniyil uththiranal paruthiththan vazhiye ondodiyal kalavithanai ozhiththittan vazhiye Onbathin Ayirapporulai Othumavan vazhiyeeandisaiyum Endisaiyum Battar inaiyadiyon vazhiye Ezhilperugum Nanjeeyar inidhu oozhi vazhiye

Nappinnai : In the family's practice to name the girls who were born in "pooram" Nakshatram as Nappinnnnai. (Thiruvaadippooraththil chegaththuthuththaal vaazhiye) another anecdote comes to my mind regarding this. Ramanuja that was an ardent devotee or even more than that of Aandal, once was going along the streets of Sriranggam on an early morning Maargazhi Day singing Thiruppaavai. He was crossing Periya Nambi's house and was singing Unndhu Mathagalirrann. when he was singing this particular line," nnanndhagopann marumagale Nappinnnnaai..", Periya Mambi's daughter," Aththuzhaay" (tamil name for Thulasi) came out to draw kolam in front of her house. Ramanuja, who was all the while thinking of Aandal immediately, overcome by the devotion to Aandal, went near Aththuzhaay and fell on her feet. then Periya Nambi came out and realized this and explained.Narayana and Lakshmi Hunter couple. He wondered how he had managed to come all the way here from the Vindhyas and that in a single night. It must be the will of -the Almighty, he thought. He then guessed that the hunter-couple who had accompanied him were none other than Lord Narayana and his consort Lakshmi. He rushed back to the, place where the hunter-couple had stayed. They were no longer there. Ramanuja was profoundly grateful to God. From that day onwards he made it a custom to carry

water from the pond for the worship of God Varadaraja. Ramanuja took upon himself the responsibility of carrying the holy water every day.

Natha muni : It is the Dakshinayana Punya kaalam and the transition to the month of Aadi. It is on this day in the year 824 AD, Sri Naatha Muni (Ranganatha muni) was born in kattu Mannar kovil. He lived for one hundred years (Veda Prayam) on this earth and set the Naalayira Divya Prabhandham to music and talam. He had brought back earlier the Naalayira Divya Prabhandham that had become extinct (luptham) for some time with the blessings of Satakopan. Nammazhwar became the Acharya for Naatha Muni and taught him the Divya Prabhandham of the twelve Azhwars including himself at Azhwar Thirunagari. Nammazhwar was pleased with the tapas of Naatha muni, who recited Madhura Kavi Azhwar's "Kanninun Sirutthampu" twelve thousand times. Satakopan appeared before Naatha Muni and blessed him with the knowledge of the Divya Prabhandham.

Naatha Muni blessed us with two of his own works known as Nyaya Tattva and Yogarahasya. Both these works are no longer available to us. Excerpts from them have been quoted by Swami Desikan in his works. It has been surmised that the Nyaya Tattva contained five chapters dealing with the five subjects, (Viz)., Jñanaa (true knowledge), Pram Eya (Objects of cognition), Pramatru (the cognizer), karma (action) and Nyaya (logic). The second work known as "Yoga rahasyam" is considered as a discourse on the subtleties of upasana of the Lord through dhyAnam with devotion.

Iswara Muni was the son of Naatha Muni; Alavandhar or Yaamuna Muni was the son of Isvara Muni; Alavandhar's son was Sottai Nambi.The line continued with Yennacchan, Pillaiappar and Thozhappar. This is the lineage that is revered as chottai kulam.The aaradhya Murthy of sottai kulam is Krishnan. The descendants of sottai kulamhad the privilege of yogam (immersion /union) with the Lord through the power of the method revealed in Acharya Naatha Muni's " Yoga Rahasyam ". As the " administrator " of the temple of Srirangam, Naatha Muni was instrumental in creating the tradition of Arayar sevai as a service to Lord Ranganatha.

This kaimkaryam spread to few other divya desams later and survives even today at Srirangam, AzhwAr Thirunahari, Srivilli-putthur et al. Naatha Muni is saluted as Bharatha by Desikan for this reason. The word Bharatha is made up of BHA+ra+ tha, standing for Bahavam, Raagam and ThaaLam. Natha Muni set the Divya Prabhandham to tune and taught it to his two nephews and propagated the Arayar sevai

kaimkaryam. Sri Natha Muni's sacred memory is celebrated by us whenever we recite Thiruppallandu, Thiruvaimozhi and Kanninun Sirutthampu at our homes and temples. He gave us moving taniyans (Invocatory poems) on each one of the magnificent prabhandhams, which meant a lot to him in a biographical sense.

The eight disciples of Nathamuni were :

Uyyakkondar,
Kuruhai Kavalappan,
Nambi Karunakara Daasan,
Yeru Thiruvudayar,
Thirukkannamangai Andan,
Vanamadevi Andan,
Urupattur Acchan Pillai,
Sohatthur Azhwan.

Five disciples took refuge at the sacred feet of Uyyakkodar. Prominent among them were

Manakkal Nambi
Thiruvallikkeni Paan
Perumal arayar.

Most prominent among the five, who sought Manakkal nambi's lotus feet was Alavandhar, the grand son of Natha Muni himself. Five among the twelve, who sought refuge under Alavandar's sacred feet, were:

Periya Nambi,

Thirukkottiyur Nambi,

Thirumalaiandan,

Thirumalai nambi,

Alavandar

Azhwar Nambi

Maraner Nambi.

The most prominent disciple of

Maha purnar or Periya nimbi is Ramanuja, who received pancha samskarams from him.

Ramanuja went on to learn Rahasyarthams Thirukkottiur Nambi,

Thiruvaimozhi Thirumaalayandan and Alavandarazhwar Nambi, sthothras and nal Vaakku from

Alavandazhwar nambi and Srimadh Ramayanam

Thirumalai nambi or Saila Purnar.

Ramanuja established the 74 Simhasanathipathis in Acharya peetams to spread Ramanuja siddhantham and the rest is history.

That unbroken chain of Acharya parampara starting from Sriman Naarayana was strengthened by Natha Muni with the blessings of Nammazhwar and continues even today. Such is the glory of Natha Muni and his cardinal role in nourishing the Sri Vaishnava sampradhayam. Desikan in one of His Sri Rahasya Traya Saara slokams summed up the greatness of Guru Parampara and paid tribute to that parampara without which we will be rudderless boats in a stormy ocean: yeenyuir Tanthalitthavarai saranam Pukkiyanadaive avar gurukkal nirai Vanangi-pinnarulal Perumputhur Vantha Vallalperiya nambi Alavandar Manakkal Nambinanneriyai Avarkkuraittha Uyyakkondar Naatha muni Satak Opan Seani Naathan-Innamudha Thirumahal yenrivarai munnittuemperuman Thiruvadigal Adaihinrenealavandhar's reverence for his grandfather was profound. In his sthothra ratnam Alavandhar salutes four times the mahathmyam of his grandfather (Slokams 1,2,3 and 65). This great sthothram has 65 slokams.

Both at the beginning and at the very end, Alavandar salutes his grandfather with choice words: Slokam

1: achinthya adhbhutha aklishta Jňana Vairagya Raasi (The integrated essence of Jňanam and Vaiagyam, which is rare and which is beyond any specific description) Aghatha Bhagavadh bhakthi sindhu (The bottomless ocean of Bhagavath bhakthi Slokam

2: Madhujith Angri saroja Tattva j!Nana Anuraga mahimAtdhisaya antha seemne (the boundary of the true feelings and desire about the Lord's glorious, lotus feet). In this slokam, Alavandar declares that the sacred feet of his grandfather is the refuge for him in this and the other world (Athra Parathra cha api nithyam yadheeya charanou Madheeyam Saranam). slokam

3: Here he salutes once again his grandfather with the salutation, "Yaminam varaya Naatha munayE bhooya: nama: " (once again my salutations are to the pre-eminent among yogis, Sri Natha Muni). He describes the greatness of Natha Muni as an Achaarya in the early part of this third slokam with an exquisite choice of words:" Aparimitha Achyutha bhakthi tattva JNana amruthabdhiparvaha Subhai : Vachopi loke avatheerNa paramartha Samagra Bhakthi Yogaya Yameenam varaya

Naatha munaye Nama : "Here, Alavandar salutes the leader of Yathis, Naatha Muni as the one with limitless Bhagavadh Bhakthi, Tattva Jñanam and the creator of Sri Sookthis with the taste of nectar. He recognizes him as the embodiment of Parama purushartham and a perfect teacher of Bhakthi Yogam.Slokam 65: The last slokam of Sthothra rathnam is a gem of an example of Saranagathi imbued with aakinchanyam (powerlessness).

Here Alavandhar prays to the Lord to come to his rescue at least for the sake of His dear ancestor, Naatha Muni.Alavandar pleads with the Lord to ignore his own unworthiness (math ruttham achinthayithva) and think of his grandfather, Naatha Muni, the boundary of parama bhakthi at the Lord's lotus feet and a true knower of aathma svarUpam as a reason for saving him. Desikan followed the tradition established by Alavandar and saluted Natha Muni in his Yathiraja Sapthathi:Nathena munina tEna bhaveyam nathavanaham iyasya naigamikam tattvam hasth AmalakathAm gatham II(Meaning) : I salute the leader (Naathan) of our Sampradhayam, who made it possible for the profound and abstruse meanings of the Vedas to be clearly perceived and understood by us as the nellikkani on the palm (Ullankai Nellikkai /hasthamalakam).

There are two important matters that we have to think of this day, when we think of Naatha Muni:

(1) His devotion to Mathura kavi as the Acharya to access Satakopa to recover Naalayira Divya Prabhandhams

(2) His and His sishya Paramparai's celebration of the Various divya Prabhandhams thru their taniyans.I will follow up on the Acharya Bhakthi and Bhagavatha Bhakthi aspect exemplified by Mathura Kavi and the Sishya Paramparai's blessings thru taniyans in future postings. Natha Munigal Thiruvadigale Saranam Kattumannar (Naalayirumum kettan) thiruvadigale Saranamoppilaippan kovil Varadachari Sadagopan

Neyyundaazhwan : No source available

Nrsimharya : Son of Srinivasa had a son called Ramanuja

O

Ooru vali guruparamparai : Even though Emperumanar had hundreds of immediate sishyaas, in our 'Oraan vazhi' guruparamparai, Embaar is our next aachaarya.Embaar's sishya was paraasara bhattar. Nanjeear was Bhattar'ssishya - Next come Nampillai, Vadakku Thiruveedhip pillai, Pillailokaachaaryaar. Pillai Lokaachaaryaar's Sishya was Thiruvaay Mozhip Pillai.Manavaala Maamunigal follows Thiruvaaymozhip Pillai in the Oraan vazhiguruparamparai.

P

Padmanabha : Surname of Ramanuja had a son called Ramanuja pillan and a daughter Totaramba, who was married to Anatasuri, the father of Venkatanatha, a disciple of Kidambi Ramanuja pillan.

Padmanabha : Son of Varada, who had a disciple named Ramanujadas

Padmanetra : Son of Kuruesa and his son Kurukesvara

Parakaladasa : Disciple of Krsnapada

Parankusa Nambi : No source available

Parankusa purnarya : Son of Bala govinda, baptized by Ramanuja

Parasara bhattacharaya : Born on 1078 and he died on 1165 succeeded y Vedanti Madhava who succeeded by Namburi Varadaraja or Lokacharya I

Parasara Bhattar : He was one of the twins born to kurattazhvan and Andal. Although it is known that he was born in the month of "Vrishaba", and in the star of anuradha (anusham, in Tamizh), the year of his birth is not accurately known due to conflicting information from various sources. One such year of birth is 1062 A.D. According some other interpretations, it is between 1073 A.D and 1078 A.D. There are various versions on the duration of his lifespan ranging from 30 years to 90 years. Parashara, one of the twins- the other one being Srirama Pillai also known as Vedavyasa Bhattar was named by Ramanuja himself in honor of the great sage who wrote 'Vishnu Purana'. That the birth of the twins is attributed to the divine grace of Lord Sriranganatha is seen in the following story.

Kurattazhvan, foremost among the disciples of Ramanuja, though was very wealthy, came to Srirangam renouncing all his wealth in his native place called Kuram. He and his wife Andal carried on in their daily life by consuming the food they received in alms after offering the same to the Lord. On one particular rainy day, Azhvan could not go out to collect alms (as was the practice of renounced people in those days a practice called "uncha vritti", where a person collected just enough grains to eat for the day from people who were willing to give), and had to go to bed without food.

Andal heard the temple bell ringing announcing the nightly offering of food ('Naivedyam') to Lord Sriranganatha and thought to herself - "Lord! You are enjoying your food when your ardent devotee is kept hungry. Is it right on your part? ". In no time, the priest of the temple knocked on their door with all the temple paraphernalia and prasadam (food that is

offered to the Lord, to be eaten by devotees). Azhvan took just a little bit and gave two morsels to Andal and sent the rest back. Twins were born to them that year reminding one of the births of Sri Rama and his brothers after their mothers consumed the payasam in the Putrakameshti yagna conducted by Dasaratha.

Because of this, Parashara Bhattar is said to be the son of Sriranganatha Himself. It is said that when he was just a baby, he was taken to the temple and put in a cradle there which was rocked by none other than Sriranganayaki Herself. Bhattar himself has mentioned this in Srirangarajastava (shloka 17) as "Srirangaraja kamalapada Lalitatvam". When Ramanuja came to the twins' naming ceremony, Embar brought the babies to show him, reciting 'dvaya' mantra in their ears to ward off evil. Ramanuja asked of Embar, "There is the fragrance of dvaya mantra near these babies, did you do this?" Embar replied "Yes. I have been uttering dvaya in their ears for their safety". Then Ramanuja said "You are their acharya!".

Accordingly, Embar, Govinda Bhattar became their Acharya subsequently. Parashara had the unique privilege of a highly prodigious mind from childhood.When he was just 5 years old, he asked his father why Nammalvar used mutually contradictory adjectives "siru" (small) and "Ma" (big) as in "Siru ma Manishar" (literally, small big human being) for which Azhvan replied that it meant that some, though small in build, could be big in knowledge. Parashara got initiated into the Vedas and divya prabhandham after his upanayanam at the age of eight. He was so fortunate to have been nurtured directly by stalwarts of Srivaishnavism namely Ramanuja himself, Kurattazhvan and Embar. He was married to a girl named Akkacci from Mahapurna's family with the help of Ramanuja's intervention.

Subsequently, he got a son by name Naduvil Tiruvidhi Pillai Ramanuja inspired Bhattar to write the highly scholarly commentary 'bhagavad guna darpana" – (the mirror that shows the divine qualities of the Lord) on Sri Vishnusahasranama. In guruparampara-prabhava (the authoritative, documented history of the life of our Teachers), the following vivid description is given of how Parashara won over an advaita vedantin in Tirunarayanapuram to bring him to the Srivaishnava fold. There was a very learned and well known vedantin in Tirunarayana-puram whose fame Bhattar also came to know and got the strong desire to bring him to the Vishitadvaita school of thought. Towards this end, he took Ramanuja's permission and arrived at Tirunarayanapuram.

The vedantin had also heard of Bhattar and his intellectual accomplishments. When he arrived, the local people told him that it would be impossible to see him without defeating his associates in intellectual discussions and advised that he go attend the daily feast conducted by the vedantin. Bhattar then went to the feast next day and stood next to the vedantin and when asked whether he was Bhatta and what he wanted, he answered in the affirmative and said that he had come seeking intellectual debate with the vedantin. The Vedantin agreed to have a debate. Bhattar defeated him after nine continuous days of intense debate. On the tenth day, Bhattar condemned advaita giving a discourse on Tirunedundandaham. The vedantin was completely taken away by this and became Bhattar's disciple immediately. Subsequently the vedantin gave up worldly possessions and took up sanyasa and went to see Bhattar in Srirangam. Then Bhattar welcomed him by saying "nam (our) Jeeyar has come!" and since then the name 'namjeeyar' or 'Nanjiyar' came to be known.

For some time Bhattar had to leave Srirangam and live in Tirikkottiyur as a protest against a chieftain when he encroached the house of Pillai Azhvan in order to build the outer wall of the temple and retuned to Srirangam only after the chieftain's death. Bhattar is credited with several original interesting elucidations and interpretations of parts of the divya Prabhandhams, which are popularly known as "Bhattar's Nirvahams". Bhattar wrote twelve works – ten in Sanskrit and two in Tamil in addition to a number of individual verses in Sanskrit. The Sanskrit works are:

1. Ashtasloki,
2. Kriyadipa,
3. Bagavadgunadarpana,
4. Srigunaratnakosha,
5. Sriranganatha stotra
6. srirangarjastava
7. Tatvaratnakara
8. Tatvatraya
9. Adhyatmakhandadvaya vivarana
10. LakshmIkalyana nataka.

The Tamil works are Kaisikapurana and commentary on a particular stanza of Tirumangai Alvar's TirunedundAndakam called "Maivannanarungunji".

Brief description of some of the works follows: Ashtashloki: As the very

name indicates, this work is in eight verses. Marked by brevity and clarity, this explains the essence of three important secrets of the Srivaishnava religion namely the ashtAkshara, the dvaya and the charamasloka. The first four verses are devoted to explanation of the ashtAkshara and the next two expound dvaya and the last two, charamasloka. Bagavadgunadarpana: This is the masterly commentary on Visnusahasranama which forms part of the Anusasanaparva of the Mahabharata. In this, Bhattar explains the tattva, hita and purusartha according to the Visitadvaita School and brings out the glory of the Supreme Lord as 'saguna' Bramha.

He also discusses the sarIraatmabhava between the universe and the Lord, the state of release, the supremacy of the Lord and his inseparable relation with Sri Mahalakshmi. Srigunaratnakosha: This hymn is addressed to Sri comprising 61 stanzas. Drawing profusely from the episode of Sita in the Ramayana, Bhattar justifies the motherhood of Lakshmi engaging her Lord in a lively and lovely conversation, pacifying the anger of her Lord. The concept of purushkara between the Lord and the Jiva owes much to the picture of Lakshmi as described by Bhattar in this work. Sriranganatha stotra: This is a beautiful lyric in six verses. Known for its candid and clear style this brings out the pangs experienced by an ardent devotee when separated from the chosen and composed this stotra when he had to go away from Srirangam due to the displeasure he incurred of the Chola chieftain. Srirangarajastava: This is the longest and the most important stotra composed by Bhattar.

It contains 232 verses and is divided into two sections called Purvasataka and Uttarasataka. The first section deals with glory of Ranganatha including description of the temple, the environs, the Kaveri, and the gardens surrounding the temple. The uttarasataka deals with the supremacy of the Lord, claims of other schools of thought regarding purport of upanisadic texts, the nature of mOksa and the like. Commentary on Maivannanarunkunji: This is a highly elaborate commentary on a particular stanza of Tirumangai Alvar's Tirunedundandkam. Bhattar offers a variety of interpretations for this verse in the general context of the entire section which contains 30 stanzas. The interpretations he offers are from different viewpoints taking each decade as a unit closely connected with one another. These standpoints are those of tirumantra, dvaya and the charamashloka.

Parasara Bhattar blessed us with the guru parampara starting from Nanjeeyar and the vyaakhyaana jkarthaas of Thiruvaimozhi. As the son

of Kurathazhvan and Andal, he was very dear to Ramanuja. At this time, when Ramanuja's birthday is two days away, it is appropriate to reflect upon the glory of the Sishya parampara of Ramanuja starting from Embar and continuing with parasara Bhattar, Nanjeeyar, Nampillai and the others in that line. Paraasara Bhatar blessed us with twelve works, ten in Sanskrit and two in Tamil besides his nirvahas on some passages of the Divya Prabhandham. The book by Dr. S.Padmanabhan, the nephew of the 43rd Jeeyar of DevanAr Vilagam Azhagiya Singar on Sri Parasara Bhattar is a scholarly study for those of us, who want to follow up on his works. Those of you, who wish to acquire a copy, can do so by writing to Sri Bahradvaj Jaganath and making a small contribution. The summary on the works of Paraasara Bhattar are:

1. Ashta sloki, 8 terse verses on the three Rahasyams of Sri VaishNavAs. Using long meters, Bhattar hinted at the depth of the subject matter. The metres used by Bhattar are Sikharini, Saardhula Vikridhitham and Sragdharaa. It is interesting to compare Deikan"s usage of these three long metres in his works. Among the total of 862 slokams of Swami Desikan used SikhariNi 28 times, Saardhula vikridhitham 35 times and Sragdharaa 82 times. Metres used by Bhattar in Ashta sloki& Swami Desikan in his works It is fascinating to recognize that the entire Nyaasa Vimsathi is set by Desikan in the long Sragdhara metre.

The subject matter is about the glories of Prapatthi, a topic of great interest to this group. Swami Desikan placed 5 key slokas of the total 32 slOkaas of Nyasa Tilakam in the same Sragdharaa meter. The entire Garuda PanchAsath was set in this meter. As we know, the five aksaras of Garuda Manthram took the form of the five Varnakams of the sthothram on the Veda Maya Purushan, Garudan. He used this metre to conclude his salutation to Acharya Ramanuja in his YathirAja Sapthathi (Slokaas 69, 70& 71).

Desikan chose SikhariNi metre for one of the decades of DayA Sathakam (Slokas 61-70). The subject of course is the SrinivAs aanukampaa flowing like the river of sugar cane juice. Swami placed two of the Hayagreeva sthothram verses and four of the saranagathi verses (Nyaasa Tilakam on Ranganatha) in this sacred meter. Swami used this powerful metre to celebrate the greatness of the Sri Sookthis of Ramanuja (Slokas 49-60) in his Yathiraja Sapthathi. Desikan used Saardhula Vikridhitham for the entire thirteen verses of Dasavathara Sthothram. Yathiraja sapthathi received 8 verses in this metre and fourteen more scattered in Dayaa sathakm (2), Vairagya Panchakam (1), Sri Kaamasikashtakam (1), Bhu

sthuthi (1) and Nyasa Tilakam (9). Bhattar used 45 kinds of metres in all of his sthothrAs containing 337 verses. The top three usages among the 45 metres are: Saardhula vikridhitha (55), Vasanthatilaka (43) and Sikharini (34). In comparison, Desikan used 22 metres in his 862 slokas. His most frequent usages among metres are: Vasantha Tilaka (266), short Aarya (116) and SragdharA (82). That covers over 50% of the total slokas of Swami Desikan.

Bhattar's works: 2Bhagavad Guna Darpana: This is a celebration of the Saguna Brahmam aspect of Sriman Naarayanaa and the important tenets of Sri Vishitadvaitham.

Work # 3: Bhattar's celebrations of Sri Devi (Sri Ranganayaki)The 61 stanzas of this sthuthi celebrate the glory of Mahaa Lakshni. Bhattar dwells at length about Mahaa Lakshmi's pleading for us (Purushakaara aspect) before Her Lord and suggests that the Lord's glory is dependent on Her.

Work # 4: Sri Ranganatha Sthothram. This is said to have been composed, when Bhattar had to leave Srirangam, when he angered the chola king and stayed at Thirukkhoshtiyur. There he used 6 slokas to reflect upon his great loss arising from his inability to have the daily darsanam of Sri Ranganatha.

Work #5: Sri Rangaraajasthavam He followed the tradition of his illustrious father, the author of Pancha sthavAs, and composed this long sthavam with 232 verses. The first half deals with the glories of Srirangam, the supremacy of the Lord there and His Anantha Kalyana Gunams and the beauty of river Cauveri. The second half deals with the subjects that were discussed this week and the last in our forum (Viz): the Upanishad basis for Sri Vaishnavanava Siddhantham, the nature of Moksham et al.

Works #6, 7, 8, 9 and 10Many of Bhattar's work are lost and are available in either fragments or thru the quotation of other Achaaryas. These are Kriya Deepa (Like Nitya Grantha), Tattva Rathnakara (masterly Treatise on Tattva), and Adhyathma khanda dvaya Vivarana, Lakshmi Kalyana. The last work celebrating the marriage of Maha Lakshmi to Sriman Naarayana deals with Saranagathi, the position of Sri Devi in Sri Sampradhayam, the supremacy of Divya Dampathis revered as Lakshmi naraayana, Sridharan and Maadhavan.The other two sanskrit works lost to us or available in shreds are the commentary to Sulabhopanishad, which was elaborated on by Desikan in his Sarvaarthasiddhi and stray verses of Thirumanjana Kattiyangal recited even today at the great temple at Srirangam by the descendants of Parasara Bhattar there.

This starts off as a dialog between the Lords and his devotee and goes onto celebrate the glories of the Lord during His Thriumanjanam. Works 11 and 12 in Tamil The commentary on Kaisikha Puranam earned him the honor of being carried on a palanquin by the Brahmins of Srirangam around the streets of that city of the Lord (Brahma Ratham). The remaining work in Tamil is the celebrated commentary on the 21st paasuram of ThirunedunthAndakam, which converted the Advaitha acharya to Sri Vaishnavism and earned him the title of Nam Jeeyar from Parasara Bhattar. The rest of the Tamil works are the ones known from Thiruvaimozhi commentaries as Bhattar Nirvahams.

The greatness of Bhatar, the beneficiary of Raamanuja's grace Ramanuja had a significant influence on Parasara Bhattar as his teacher. On this day that is two days away from the celebration of the jayanthi of Achaarya Ramanuja, it is appropriate to dwell at length on the works of a great acharya, Bhattar, who followed the footsteps of the illustrious guru of his father and his own, Embaar. Bhattar's philosophical contributions to Sri Sampra-dhayam have been brilliantly summarized by Dr. Padmanabhan and chapter 5 of his monograph deals with this subject.

The role of Karma and the Lord's will in relation to it are covered here. Other topic covered that is pertinent to the recent discussions are: The nature and means of Moksha, the Sesha-Seshi bhavam, the concept of Sri, the concept of Avathaarams, Iconic forms of the Lord et al.

Some passages quoted by the author regarding Bhattar's views on Saranagathi that may be of interest to the current discussions are: 1. Vishnumaayaa can be crossed only when Pṛapatthi is performed.

2. " O Ranganatha! I resort to You, who are my refuge —I am devoid of any knowledge or action or devotion; nor am I aware of any icchaa (desire), the proper eligibility (adhikaarA), the feasibility of such a hope etc. Full of sin and foolishness and with a confused state of mind, I request you to be my savior." of Rangarajasthavam.

3. In the 102nd verse, Bhattar once again performs Saranagathi this way: "I have been made your burden and responsibility (Bhara) by my Acharyas.

I have also orally declared that I seek refuge. Therefore, it behooves You to accept me as your entrusted burden". 4. In his Ashtasloki, the verses 6,7 and 8 deal with Prapatthi. Sixth verse is about the Prapatthi to Sri Devi as the means to the end of resorting to the Lord. In the 7th slokam, he explains the meaning of Carama Slokam. In the 8th verse, he declares

his prapatthi, "where he expresses his inability to implement the Karma, Jnaana and Bhakthi yogas as means of salvation. Even regarding Prapatthi, he is unable to follow it because of his utter helplessness and lack of firm conviction of its implementation. Still the hope of being saved by the Lord, He being the final means, sustains him ". Parasara Bhattar used to go the temple everyday, to have the darshana of Lord Ranganatha. Whenever he visited the Lord, he would wear all the golden Abharanas he had with him.

A yachaka, who was waiting to get some favor from Bhattar, used to follow him everyday to the temple &would praise him heavily. But Bhattar paid no attention to him. He got frustrated one day & when Bhattar stood before the Lord & was reciting this slokam, this yachaka, who was waiting to take a revenge on him starting telling,"badham" i.e. "yes" after every word Bhattar uttered.Bhattar was immensely pleased & took out a ratnaharam he was wearing & handed over to him. The yachaka was confused & asked Bhattar,"Sir, when I was praising you, you ignored me, but when I accused you, you gave me this haram. May I know the reason? For that, Bhattar told " I was angry with you since you were bluffing that I am like that. this... etc all these days. But today I am pleased by the truth you told by telling "yes" & agreeing that I amamaryAda: etc.

Parasarabhattarya : Son of Kuresa and Andal who defeated the Vedantin Madhavadasa and afterwards became the successor of Ramanuja

Parasraa bhattarya : Son of Kurthalvan, baptized by Ramanuja

Paravastu : Orin gal name was "Govinda Dasar Appan". He was the ancestral prime person (vamsha moola purusha) of the Gargya Paravastu Dynasty.Being pleased by his spiritual wisdom and surrender Govinda Dasar's Guru, Manawala Mahamunigal has delivered to Govinda Dasar, the duty of worshipping his personal Thiruvaradhana. Once while returning to Srirangam from Srivilliputtur, after attending the birthday celebrations of Andal, Govinda Dasar brought and offered the holy garland of Goda Devi to his Guru - Manawala Mahamunigal. In that instance his guru blessed and respected Govinda Dasar Appan, with the denunciatory title of "Pattar Piran Jeeyar".

Periya Annan and Alakar, two sons of Alakiya Manawalan, kinsmen of Sudarsanacharya of Yadugir Tiru Nayarana Puram, who were belonged to the same dynasty of Sri Thiruwal Alwan, of Ramanuja's noble disciple and Paravastu Pattar Piran Jeeyar, of Manawala Mahamunigal's one of the eight Asta Diggajas – came to Thirupathi during the year 1490 and

became as a spiritual disciples of Pattar Piran Jeeyar. Alakar has turned into a renouncement with a new name Alakiya Manawala Jeeyar. The elder one, "Periya Annan" (Also known as Venkatacharya) has become as a life long bachelor (brahmachari) to serve his guru Pattar Piran Jeeyar.Due to some unknown reasons, regular conduction of Birthday celebrations of Nammalwar and regular recitation of Dravida Prabhanda Adhya-yanam were being stopped and neglected purposefully in the Thirumala Thirupathi Devastanam Temples.

Then Periya Annan went to the king's court and proved the necessity of conducting Nammalwar Thiru Nakshatram and Dravida Prabhandha Adhyayanam and got suitable orders from the King. In this instance, when Periya Annan was offering his service to Lord Sreenivasa, Lord, through his chief priest "Periya Perumal", entitled Periya Annan as "paravastu". (i.e., God's Thing). Since then his dynasty holds 'Paravastu' as their surname, instead of having father's name as their surnames. Periya Annan, during propagation of Sri Vaishnavism, had spiritualized many people, including the local rulers.

The rulers of Kangundi and Metapalem Jameendars had become his disciples. Ruler of Metapalem, Javvadi Venkatapathi, had gifted "Kollupalli" village to his guru. As per the instructions of his guru, Periya Annan had adopted the grand son of Prativadi Bhayankaram Anna (The fifth of Asta Diggajas of Manawala Mahamunigal and co-disciple of his guru – Paravastu Pattar Piran Jeeyar) as his son and as an instrument for the propagation of Sri Vaishnavism after his life time. His adopted son 'Nainar' was none but the third son of Periya Anna's sister and P.B.Appa. Nainar's great grand children, who came through his first wife, moved northward on their mission and in the due course of time, settled in different places of Andhra Pradesh and Orissa states. Nainar married second time to have a mother to his motherless children of his first wife. She protected and brought up her stepchildren along with her own.

These children of his second wife were settled in Thirupathi near Lord Govindaraja Sannidhi.Srimadrvishachala Annan – great grand son of the 4th generation from Periya Annan, has established a Sree Vaishnava Matam at "Gorivi' neat Parlakimidi in Orissa State. After 5 generations starting from him, his branch of Paravastu Dynasty was stopped due to lack of offspring, even instead of repeated adaptations. Ramanuja, an eminent personality of Andhra branch of Paravastu, great grand son of 7th generation from Periya Anna, has proceeded towards Godavari Lands in Andhra Pradesh with his mission and successfully achieved his goals.

During his mission, the rulers of local land, Brahmins and the people of other castes also had become his disciples. Vatsavai Jagapathis the rules of Peddapuram Samsthanam arranged a permanent settlement to his guru at Puttakonda Village., respecting him with the hereditary titles of "Sthanacharya and Dharmakarta" of swayambuva (self emerged) Laxmi Narasimha Swamy Temple there. Vatsavai Timma Raju has gifted Chintapalli (near Bikkavolu) and Chinamamidada villages, Vatsavai Gopala Raju has gifted Vendra Village, Vatsai Rama Raju has gifted Vedurupaka village, Dantuluri Venkata Krishnama Raju has gifted Illapalli village to their Guru. The member of Puttakonda branch are still offering their services to Lord Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy as Sthanacharya and Dharmakarta.Govindacharya — great grand son of the 9th generation from Periya Annan and son of Ramanuja (puttakonda), still progressed further northward. Jampana Bangarayyammasaheba, mother-in-law of the ruler of Vijiayanagaram,.Pusapati Vijayarama Gajapathi Manne Sultan Bahadur has become his disciple. Her grandson Pusapati Narayana Gajapathi manne Sultan Bahaddur (hero of Padmanabham war against British) has honored the title of Sthanacharya of Pushpagiri Venugopala Swamy Temple near Annamarajupeta of S.Kota Taluk.

He also gifted Tamarapalli Agraharam of S.Kota taluk to his Guru. Govindacharya and Ramanuja(Brothers) great grand sons of 10th generation from Periya Annan and Grand sons of Govindacharya of Pushpagiri moved still to north and settled in Devada Agraharam of S.Kota Taluk. Govindacharya (Elder One) has become the head of Major Family (Pedda Intivaru) of Devada Paravastu from which Appan Govinda Swamy (12th generation from Periya Annan), translator of Srivachana-bhashanam into Telugu – has come. Ramanuja (younger one) and brother of Govindacharya head of the major family has become the head of the minor family (Chinna Intivaru) of Devada Paravastu. Till now, the present members of Devada Paravastu are continuing their mission of propagation of Srivaishnavism in the Kalinga Lands of Srikakulam District with many disciples.

 # Note: There are so many other "Paravastus" as their surnames. Paravastu: This is samavedam paravastu. For example: Arsha Press Paravastu of Vishakhapatnam. Para-vastu of Emperumanar Koil at Visakhapatnam. Paravastu: This is Kanukollu Paravastu of Haritasa Gotram of Krishna Yajur Veda. Paravastu: This is not of our Srivaishnava Tengal. They are Chattadi Vaishnavlu or they are called as Sathani

Vaishnavas Pattarabhiran Paravastu or Paravastu Pattarabhiran: This is of Srivatsa Gotram and actually may be spitted from Prathivadi Bhayankaram Dynasty. Sreemath Paravastu: This is the family surname where in we all belong to.

ParuthikKollai Ammal : No source available

Paruththi Kollai Ammaal : Female disciple of Ramanuja

Periya Koil Vallalaar : No source available

Periya nambi : Periya Thirumalai nambi, otherwise called Srisailapoorna, was an ardent disciple of Yamunacharya born in the month of Vaikasi on a swathi star. He was the maternal uncle of Ramanuja and Govinda bhattar (embar) in their Poorvashrama and also their philosophical mentor (acharya). Srisailapoorna was one of the pancha acharyas (5 mentors) of Ramanuja regarded as the Jagadacharya. Guruparamparai records that while Emperumanar and Embar were born, periyathirumalai nambi did Pushpa-samasrayanam, which was a usual practice those days.

According to the orders of Alavanthar Periyathirumalai nambi was given the task of handing over the Sriramayana to emperu-manar. He was involved in the divine theertha kainkarayam to Thiruvenkatamudaiyan. Everyday he used to carry water from Akasha Ganga for Srinivasa Thiruvaradhanam. It is said that He used to chant the holy periya Thirumozhi of Tirumangai Azhwar while doing so. In the days, when Elaiyazhvar and govinda was having their lessons in samanya sastra under Yadhava prakasa, they undertook a kasiyathra, with the plot of killing Ramanuja, Govinda understood the plot and he rescued Ramanuja, but the group continued the journey.

At Kasi, Govinda happened to get a sivalinga while having a dip in Ganga. Then as per the advice of yadava prakasa govinda become ullan kai konarindha nayanar and a great Siva bhaktha and he remained at kalahasti doing services to Siva. Transformation of Govindaas per the request of Ramanuja, periya Thirumalai nambi, started on a mission to get back govinda to the right track under the divine feet of Srinivasa. Instead of going to Govinda directly and advising Nambi sat himself with his shisyas on the way through which govinda passed to pick flowers for the pooja and started giving lectures to the disciples on Nammazhvar words of wisdom elaborating the appropriateness of submitting flowers and doing pooja only to the divine feet of Sriman Narayana (" poovum poosanaiyum tagumE ").

The lecture was so captivating with various quotes from the sastras that

made Govinda realize his mistake and at once he fell to the feet of Nambi and apologized for going astray and felt bad for losing so many days in a wrong place. For this entire task Nambi had to travel three times from Thirumalai to kalahasthi. During one visit Embar asked nambi that what you are searching here. Nambi replied him; we are looking for a lost calf. Embar indeed was the lost calf. Following was a debate with embar which is indeed described wonderfully in 6000ppadi guruparampara Prabhavam. Transferring the wealth of Ramayana to Ramanuja Alavandaar had left various treasures (of sampradayic knowledge) with various disciples to be handed over to a single successor, Ramanuja.

He had left the treasure of Ramayana with periya Thirumalai Nambi. Nambi was waiting for handing over the treasure to Ramanuja. As per the instructions of Periya Nambi Ramanuja reached the foothills of Thirumalai. Since the whole hill of Thirumala is divine and considered to be the body of Adisesha, Ramanuja though the incarnation of adisesha himself didn't want to step on the divine hill with foot and hence started to walk with his knees. Periya Thirumalai Nambi coming to know of this rushed to the spot and welcomed Ramanuja and said, " Oh! Ramanuja if you show this precedence of climbing the divine hill with the knees then no one will visit the divine place due to the difficulty in climbing. So please climb the hill considering it also to be bhagavat kainkaryam. Adisesha will be more than happy to get the bhagavata sripada sparsam (divine touch of Bhaagavatas divine feet) "

Ramanuja obeyed his uncle and acharya and asked" But for saying this why should you run all the way, why couldn't your holy self send somebody younger with your message? " Nambi replied," Yes I also wanted to do that and searched all around Thirumala and couldn't find anybody smaller than me (not in age but in knowledge-this is due to Nambi's humility (naichyam) and to show the greatness of thirumala) Swami stayed in Thirumalai for three days, but then he ascended down hill and stayed there. Ramayana kalashepam was started. Ramanuja remained in the foot hills and everyday Nambi completed his theertha Kainkaryam on top of the hill and came down to give the divine arthas of Srimad Ramayana to Ramanuja.

There are two Guruparampara Prabhaavams (hence forth, one by Pinpazhagiya Perumaal Jiyar, who lived a century or so after Ramanuja's passing, and one by the 3rd Brahmatantrasvatantra Jiyar of the Parakaala Mutt. The former Prabhaavamis called the 6000, since it has 6000 "padi"s, each padi being a set of 32 grantha characters. The latter is called the

3000.Both are in the Sanskrit zed Tamil style called Manipravaala. The 6000 is the oldest biography of the Alvars and Ramanuja we have, and is reckoned by some as a Thengalai version, though it predates any such split.

The 3000 is more a Vadagalai version, since it includes some information on Vedanta desika and emphasizes some characteristically Vadagalai philosophical positions. Yana Premeya saaraapihi Vakthaaram Varadham Munim!!! Arulala Perumal Emperumanar descendants: Arulala Perumal Emperumanar was one among the 74 Simhaasana-adhipadhis.

He had a son by name "Alankaara Venkatavar" who also caught hold of the lotus feet of Ramanuja who appointed him as one of 74 Simhaasanaadhipadhis. Alankaara Venkatavar's son was " Thaathacharya" who was born in the month of chithra, under the star of "Thiruvonam" – the very same star of Thiruvenkatamudayaan. Thaathacharya's maternal grandfather was "Periya Thirumalai Nambigal" who was one of the acharyas of Ramanuja himself.

Periya Thirumalai Nambi lived in Thiruvenkatam doing kainkaryam to Thiruvenkatamudayan. He used to finish his daily kainkarya duties for Thiruvenkatamudayaan and rush downhill near Thiruchaanoor where Ramauja stayed and conducted discourses on Ramayana. We may wonder why an acharyan would ever do this to a sishyan. The reasons is that Alavadhar, before he left this materialistic world had ordered his sishya " Periya Thirumalai Nambi" to be one of acharyas for Ramanuja and impart the deep meanings impregnated in Ramayana. In order to fulfill his acharyan's order and to get the sambandham of Ramanuja and with the magnanimous thought that all the people in this world should be liberated by Ramanuja's grace, he happily imparted all the knowledge that he had accrued about Ramayana to Ramanuja.

That is the greatness of Ramanuja. Even, his achayan had yearned for his sambandham. Periya Thirumalai Nambi would boast of his connection with Ramanuja. All that we should want is his sambandham (connection) and there is no thought about if it is his acharya or sishya. As a side point, all the great acharyas before the time of Ramanuja are regarded as his "Thirumudi" sambandham and all others after him are his "thiruvadi" sambandham. As years passed by, ""Periya Thirumalai Nambi" grew old but he did not stop his service to his Thiruvenkatamudayan for a single day. Swami Thaathachaaryar (paternal grandson of Aruulala Perumal Emperumanar) learnt all shastras

from his father " Alankaara Venkatavar" and also from his maternal grandfather "Periya Thirumalai Nambi".

One fine day, when Periya Thirumalai Nambi was doing kainkaryam, he had filled his vessel with water to offer the same for Perumal. While he was doing pooja, Thiruvenkatamudayan disguised himself in the form of a small boy. He looked at the vessel from Thirumalai Nambi's behind and drank it fully without any trace. Periya Thirumalai Nambi was astonished to see the vessel empty. When he turned himself, he saw that little boy was running rounds by calling "thaatha, thaatha" and finally went inside the sanctum sanctorum and merged with Perumal. Periya Thirumalai Nambi realized then that his grandson is none other than an avathaaram of Thiruvenkatamudayaan Himself. Since He had called "thaatha, thaatha" (thatha means grandfather in thamizh), he gave the name of "Thaathaacharyan" as the thirunamaam to his grandson and thus the latter was quite famous in the later days. All the descendants came to be known as "Arulaala Perumal Emperu-manar Vamsam: or "Thirumalai Vinjimoor Vamsam" or" Thaathacharyaar paramparai".

Periyaandaan : No source available

Periyavaachaan Pillai : He was also known as Krsnapada was born at Sanganallur near Kumbakonam as the son of Yamuna Desika and Nachiyar Ammal. He is believed to have lived 1167 to 1262 AD. He is an Amsa of Lord Krishna himself. For his lucid explanation of Divyaprabandha, he is known as "Dravidaveda Bhasyakara" and for his commentary on select verses of Ramayana; he is given the title "Abhayapradaraja". Periyavaachaan Pillai was a disciple of Nampillai. Vadikesari Azhagiya Manaval Jeeyar, who wrote the commentary 1200 padi on Thiruvaimozhi, was a prominent disciple of Periyavaachaan Pillai. Periyavaachaan Pillai wanted to take the meaning of Divyaprabandhas to even the most ordinary people, and hence earned the title "Parama Kaarunika" (One who is extremely compassionate). Periyavaachaan Pillai was the celebrated author of 24000 padi. He has the unique reputation of having commented (vyakhyanams) on all the 4000 hymns of the Alwars.

However his commentary on Periyalwar Thirumozhi is available only for the last 60 songs or so. His 24000 padi commentary became so famous that he is known as "Vyakhana Chakaravathy" (emperor among commentators). Maanika Maalai, Sakala Pramaana Taatparaya and Abhayapradaana are some of his other works.Periyavaachaan Pillai always commented in a lucid & compact style, so that the maximum

number of people can understand the Divyaprabandhas. Periyavaachan Pillai never commented without a valid source. To this day Periyavaachaan Pillai's commentaries are considered authentic amongst many other commentaries. Periyavacanpillai was the first acarya to comment on all the pasurams of the azhvars. This earned him the title vyakyana cakravartinor "King of commentators." He had also written a collection of independent works in Manipravalam. Of there, Parantha rahasyam and Manikka malai are considered to be the most important ones

Pillai azhwan : No source available

Pillai lockacharya : Manavala Mamunigal composed a work called Upadesarattinamalai to commemorate the lives and works of Azhwars and Acharyas. In this great composition he has singled out one acharyan, in honor of whom, he devoted several pasurams. This acharyan so revered by Manvala mamunigal is Pillai Lokacharya (also known as Ulagariyan). Pillai lockacharya Pillai lockacharya was born in 1205 AD on the occasion of Aippasi, Thiruvonam. Those were days when Sri Vaishnavam flourished under the able leadership of the august Nampillai.

His disciples included several luminaries; prompting the oft quoted "Nampillai ghosthiy, Namperumal ghostiyo". The most prominent amongst these disciples were Vadakku Thiruveethip Pillai and Periya Vaachaan Pillai who authored the two most authoritative commentaries on Nammazhwar's Thiruvaymozhi, viz. muppattiarayirapadi (36,000) or Edu and the irupattinalayirapadi (24,000) vyakhyanams respectively. Vaddakku tiruvedi pillai, was blessed with two sons. The eldest of the two was Pillai lockacharya and the second was Azhagiya Manavala Perumal) Nayanar. Vaddakku tiruvedi pillai, named his eldest son after his acharya Nampillai who was also known as Lokacharya or Ulagariyan. To gain the quintessence of Emperumanar darsanam very clearly one need to look no further than the works of Periya vacchan pillai,Vaddakku tiruvedi pillai, Pillai lockacharya and Azhagiya Manavala Perumal Both brothers grew up and lived in Srirangam.

They learned from their father as well as from other contemporary acharyas like Sri Nampillai. It is said that when they were young they overheard their father expressing some regrets about gruhastasrama. This incident left an indelible impression on the young minds and as a consequence they remained brahmacharis throughout their lives and rendered magnificent kainkaryams to Namperumal and bhagavathas. Pillai lockacharya would be considered a social revolutionary in that he

was the first acharyan who wrote independent works in the vernacular language that expounded the Vedanta and on account of his views on caste. In the latter instance he was a blazing visionary and pioneer, the likes of which finds no rival in the past or present, saving his younger brother.

He very staunchly held that all that mattered was a bhagavatha's devotion to Perumal and that any consideration of the caste of a bhagavatha constituted a grave apacharam!!! (Pillai lockacharya was a practical acharya who practiced what he preached. Included amongst his disciples was a Harijan by the name of Vilancolaipillai. This mahatma had several Brahmin bhagavatas as disciples. To fully grasp the immensity of Pillai lockacharya s views and actions, they must be evaluated in the timeframe in which they occurred, i.e., almost 800 years ago. Understandably then, several baghavathas in Srirangam took exception to Pillai lockacharya 's position. These objections reached a level of criticality that in turn necessitated Azhagiya Manavala Perumal Nayanar has to formally vindicate his brother. However, Pillai lockacharya never soft peddled these issues!!! He composed several works in which he very directly and explicitly covers these issues. Notable amongst the many works that were composed for the benefit of future generations by this supremely benevolent acharyan are eighteen in Manipravala style, that are called Ashtadasa Rahasyangal, and that leave no aspect of Visistadvaita uncovered. Srirangam was sacked in 1327 by Mohemedan invaders led by Malik Kafur. In what is certainly a clear expression of "Gods will hath no why", some parama bhagavathas like Pillai lockacharya Sudarsana suri and Vedanta Desikan had to suffer extreme hardships. What follows is a description of some the details of the raid and are heart wrenching. In that catastrophe, several (12,000 according to one account) Sri Vaishnavas lost their lives. The leading acharyas like Pillai lockacharya and Desikan (Sudarsana suri was very aged) provided outstanding courage, conviction and leadership. With no thoughts about their own lives or well being, they planned on a course of action the fruits of which we enjoy today.

Pillai lockacharya out of concern for harm to Periya Perumal's and Namperumal's thirumeni, had a brick wall built before Periya Perumal's archa vigraham, thereby deceiving the invaders. He physically carried NamperumalNayanar. And fled Sriranagam, not out of concern for himself but out of extreme concern for Namperumal! The mental image of the advanced fleeing Srirangam, courting countless hardships to avert any harm to Namperumal brings tears to one's eyes. Finally, upon

reaching the village of Jyothiskudi (near Madhurai) and in the secure knowledge that Namperumal was at least momentarily out of harms way, ascended home to Paramapadam. The very aged Sudarsana suri did not survive the attack Desikan undertook to protect Sri Sudarsana suri's sons and the manuscript of Sutraprakasika Suri's commentary on Sri Bhasyam). Thus armed Desikan escaped to Satyamangalam in Karnataka after a very tortuous journey.

His Works Pillai lockacharya was an extremely compassionate acharyan who undertook to write several treatises for the benefit of posterity. Most of the acharyas prior to Pillai lockacharya only commented on the works of their predecessors. However, wrote independent treatises like Tattva Trayam for instance, that expounds Vedanta in the vernacular. Pillai lockacharya fore saw that in generations to come people, under the influence of Kali, would abandon traditional studies in the Sanskrit language. Thus, magnificent works like the Sri Bhasyam would be beyond the ken of most mortals. To remedy the situation, Pillai lockacharaya composed eighteen works that are collectively referred to as Ashtadasa Rahasyangals in Mani-pravalam.

These include: Srivachanabhusanam (SVB) This work is considered as Pillai lockacharya 's magnum opus. As the name implies this work is intended to be an ornament of sayings from purvacharyas. This great work consists of 465 aphorisms that are organized into four 'prakaranas' or chapters. Six key concepts are covered that include: Purusakaravaibhava (Greatness of Intercessor) Sadhanasya Guarava (Greatness of Means) Adhikari Kritya (Duties of Prapanna) Satgurupasevana (Dependence on the Eminent Guru) Ahetuki Haridaya (Spontaneous Grace of the Supreme Lord) Guror Upayata (The Role of the Preceptor) Manvala mamunigal devotes six stanzas in Upadesarattinamalai to SVB. Tattvatrayam This work deals with the three fundamental real entities (tatvas) of the Visistadvaita system of Vedanta. These entities include cit (soul), acit (matter) and Isvara (the Lord). This work is considered to be a mini Sri Bhasyam. Mumukshuppadi The rahasyas that a mumukshu or aspirants for liberation needs to comprehend are covered in this work.

The rahasyas are three (rahasyatrayam) in number and include :

a. Tirumantaram (also known as Mulaman-taram or Astaksara)

b. Dwayam (or Mantra Ratnam)

c. Charamaslokam These mantras contain knowledge about the soul's

essential nature (svarupa), the means (upaya) and the goal (purusartha). In the introduction to Mumukshuppadi, it is said that amongst the works of Pillai lockacharya Sri Pl that deal with the three rahasyas, the Yadrcchikappadi was too short, the Parantappadi was too long, and the Sriyapatippadi though it had neither of the two faults, was full of Sanskrit quotes (making its comprehension difficult for the lay person). Therefore with a desire to compose one more work which would avoid these problems, Pillai lockacharya wrote the Mumukshuppadi after all others. Arthpanchakam This work deals with the five prerequisites for the attainment of any goal or artha. These include the realization of oneself (svasvarupa).

The understanding of the essential form of the Supreme (parasvarupa). The understanding of the essential form of the goals (purushar-thasvarupa). The understanding of the essential form of the means (upayasvarupa). The understanding of the essential nature of the obstructions (virodhisvarupa)

Archiradi This work which consists of four prakarnas or chapters, deals with journey of a muktatma from earth to Sri Vaikuntam. Details of the where the soul stops along the way and its reception in Sri Vaikuntam etc. are provided. Prameya-sekaram This work discusses how the Lord's grace is the basis for all good things in this world as well as in the next world. Prapannaparitranam The necessary qualifications for one who surrenders himself/herself to the Lord are covered in this work. Sarasangraham In this work the author gives a concise definition of the Dwaya mṭram and explains how the entire Tiruvaymozhi of Sri Nammazhwar is an exposition of this mantram. PL relates every word of the Dwayam to the ten chapters of the Tiruvaymozhi and quotes profusely from the latter to document the relevant correlation.

Samsarasamrajyam This work deals with how people, who become completely immersed in worldly pleasures and turn away from the path of God, return to the Lord with the guidance of an Acharyan. Navaratnamalai this work deals with the nine points that a person who surrenders must understand properly: themselves as a whole, their body, their relatives, other people, and gods other than Sriman Narayana, Srivaishnavas, Acharyas, Piratti, and the Lord. Navavidhasambandham This work deals with the nine kinds of relationships that a person has with Sriman Narayana as shown in the Tirumantram. These include: The relationship between father and son.

The relationship between the protector and protected. The relationship

between master and servant. The relationship between husband and wife. The relationship between the person who understands and the object that is understood. The relationship between the owner and his property. The relationship of body and soul. The relationship of the thing that is dependent and the things on which it depends. The relationship between the person who enjoys and the thing enjoyed. Pillai lockacharya says that the understanding of the relationships is essential for salvation. These nine kinds of relationships are interlinked. Yadrccikapadi .

This work is a brief summary of the rahasyatrayam, but the order of the rahsyas has been changed (in comparison to Mummukshupati) to Tirumantram, Charamaslokam and Dwayam. Parantapadi Paranta means widespread or spreading out. This work deals exhaustively with the rahasyatrayam. Sriyapatippadi This is yet another work on the rahasyatrayam. This work contains too many Sanskrit terms for the ordinary vernacular reader. Tattvasekharam This work deals with the tattva trayam. It also presents refutation of the arguments of rival schools in order to establish the Visistadvaita definition of the tattva trayam. Tanidwayam This work deals with the Dwaya mantran. Tanicharamam This work deals with the Charama slokam. Tanipranavam This work deals with the "OM" in the Tirumantram

Pillai Urandhai Udaiyaar : No source available

Pillai Uranga villi Daasar : He is a direct disciple of Ramanuja of Sudra Caste. Ramanuja used to hold his hand for support at his old age during his travel from Cauveri bank to Matam. When some one questioned Ramanuja about this, he answered: For Brahmins, there will be pride and hesitation born out of the pride about performing kaimkaryams after being born in the top kulam. For Soodhras, whose Varnasrama dharmam is to serve others, there is no hesitation whatsoever about kaimkaryams. The hearts of Soodhras are pure. Hence I hold Urangaavallidaasar's hand to remove my Varnasrama Abhimanam and pride. Urangavilli Daasar as in charge of Ramanuja's treasury at the matam and he had two disciples known as Vandar and Sundar, who helped him in this task. Urangaavallidaasar ached over Udayavar during the night and his name comes from his sleepless vigil just as Lakshmana watched over Rama during His forest exile.

Pillan : Author of Guruprabhavam There are two Guruparampara Prabhaavams (henceforth GPP), one by Pinpazhagiya Perumaal Jiyar, who lived a century or so after Ramanuja's passing, and one by the 3rd Brahmatan-trasvatantra Jiyar of the Parakaala Mutt. The former

Prabhaavamis called the 6000, since it has 6000 "padi"-s, each padi being a set of 32 grantha characters. The latter is called the Guruparampara Prabhaavams 3000. Both are in the Sanskrit zed Tamil style called manipravaala. The Guruparampara Prabhaavams 6000 is the oldest biography of the Alvars and Ramanuja we have, and is reckoned by some as a Thengalai version, though it predates any such split. The Guruparampara Prabhaavams 3000 is more a Vadagalai version, since it includes some information on Vedanta desika and emphasizes some characteristically Vadagalai philosophical positions.

Ponnachchiyar : See Parasara bhattar

Poovirundhavalli : Birth place of Tirukkacci Nambi, considered an 'amsa' of Sabari, was born in Poovirundhavalli, also known as Dharmapuri, located in the eastern part of 'PerumaaL Koyil' (Kanchipuram Varadaraja temple) in Thondai Mandalam,

In fact, Nambhigal (Kaanchipoornar) was born to Sri Vaishnava Vaisiya (Chettiar) kula Sri Veeraraghava Chettiar and Kamalai at Poovirundhavalli. Though his parents were quite wealthy and were successful businessmen, Nambhigal had his mind only on Bhagawath, Bhagawatha kaimkaryam.. There are two koils, one for Srinivasan and the other for Varadarajan. Srirangams, Kanchipurams, Tirumalai's, this temple is kind of void of devotees. From a selfish standpoint, it is nice, since one can enjoy the beautiful Varadaraja Perumal for as long a time as possible, but its sad that more often than not, he is all alone, in the absence of his bhakthas. In the main prakaram, The moola perumal is Varadarajar. Adjoining his sannidhi is that of. Thirukaccinambigal. Tirukkachi Nambigal, special blessed privilege of conversing with Varadaraja Perumal Himself. He was blessed with this extraordinary privilege for performing the Thiruvaalavatta (fanning) Kaimkaryam to Perumal with utmost bhakti and involvement.

Pranatartihara pillan : Disciple of Ramanuja belongs to Areya gotra and his son was Ramanuja

Prathivaadi Bhayankaram : Hasthigirinatha Anna was born in 10th generation of Mudumbai Nambi (brother-in-law of Ramanuja) family. to Ananthacharya on Adi Pushyam of the year Plava 4463 of the Kali Era, corresponding to 1361 A.D. He became an earnest disciple of Nayana Varadacharyar (illustrious son of Vedanta Deshikar) and acquired greater spiritual knowledge. Anna's sensational victory in a debate with the famous and undefeated Advaitin Narasimha Misra, in establishing the supremacy of Vishistadwita Siddhanta earned him the title 'prathivadi

bhayankaram' from his Guru Nayana Varadacharya. From then on he was called prathivadi bhayankaram anna. Anna became an intimate, trusted and devote disciple of Manayala Mamunigal and was one of the Asta Diggajas (8 invincible Acharyas) to propagate Vishistadwita philosophy. After leading a life of spiritual discipline and dedicated service, he shed his mortal body on Panguni Sukla Navami day in the year Srimukha, Kali abda year 4556, corresponding to 1454 A.D. at the request of his revered Acharyan, Manavala Maamuni, Anna composed the four Sri Sookthis (Suprabhatham, Sthothram, Prapatthi and Mangalam) for Thiruvenakatamudayan.

Manavala Maamuni, who was very much involved with Kaimkaryam for Lord Srinivasan established the daily recitation of these moving Sri Sookthis in front of Thriuvenkatamudayan. It is interesting to know how Anna got the title of Prathivathi Bhayankaram as a prefix to his name. Anna was a sishyar of Nainiracharyar for some time. At Kaanchi, once an arrogant sanyasi challenged Swamy Nainaracharya for a debate and laid the condition that latter can not do any Siddhartha pravachanam unless he (The sanyasi) was defeated in the debate. Nainarcharyar called his Disciple, Anna and sprinkled his head with the water sanctified through incorporation of Hayagriva man-thram and asked anna to represent him in the debate with the sanyasi. Anna decisively defeated the Sanyasi in the ensuing debate and returned to Nainiracharya's sannidhi. Swamy was so pleased with his sishyan's performance and he hailed him " Prahtivadhi Bhayankaram Anna! please come near ".From then on Anna, one of the eight principal disciples of Manavala Maamunigal was called Prathivadhi Bhayankaram anna.

One of the slokas associated with Prathivadhi Bhayankaram Anna recognizes his sambhandham with Desikan's paramparai as well through these lines:" Vedantha desika Kataksha Vibrudhi Bodham,bhakthya bhajami Paravadhi Bhayankaram ".During his visits to Thirumalai, Prathivadhi Bhayankaram anna used to admire the intensity of the devotion of Ananthazhwan and his Nandavana (Pushpa) Kaimkaryam and other kaimkaryams for the Lord

Punamalli : Birth place of Kanchipurna located at Chennai

Pundarikaksa : Son of Kurukesvara and his son was Srinivasa

Purusottamarya : Son of Srivenkatttacharya belong to Vatsya gotra

R

Rakshambal : Wife of Ramanuja. He had his sacred thread ceremony at

the right time. When Ramanuja was about sixteen years old he married Rakshambal. She was also known as Tanjamma. Unfortunately his father Keshavacharya had his end a little after the marriage. After this Ramanuja came to Kanchipuram and settled with his wife and widowed mother. Govinda his brother followed them to Kanchipuram. It happened that once Ramanuja invited sage Kanchipoorna to a dinner at his house. He wanted to feed him and receive his blessings.

The sage accepted the invitation and dinner was arranged. The sage knew that Ramanuja's wife Rakshamba was a very orthodox woman. So, he went to their house earlier when Ramanuja had started to fetch him. Rakshamba received Kanchi poorna and he dined at Ramanuja's house and returned. But Ramanuja's wife gave away the remaining food to some others; she cleaned the house, bathed and cooked fresh food for the family. Ramanuja came back and realized what had happened. He was angry at the actions of Rakshamba. He felt it as a blessing to take the food after serving Kanchi poorna. She was incapable of understanding the noble feelings of Ramanuja.

Rakshamba tells lie some time after this on an occasion a group of hungry people came to his doors. Ramanuja asked his wife Rakshamba to see if she could find some food in the house for them. She replied that there was no food to offer. Ramanuja became furious when he later came to know that she had told a lie.

Rakshambal getting angry with Mahapoorna's wife One day Maha poorna's wife was drawing water from the well, and inadvertently a few drops were splashed on the pitcher of Ramanuja's wife. She became angry that she had been polluted by Maha poorna's wife and started a row. Maha- poorna felt deeply hurt by her conduct. He decided to leave the place lest his presence create further estrangement between Ramanuja and his wife, and proceeded to Sriranga.

Ramadesika : Son of Kurthalvan, baptized by Ramanuja

Ramamisra : See Meghanadari

Ramanuja : Son of Srinivasa and his two sons were Nrsimharaya and Rangacarya who lived probably in the fifteenth century

Ramanuja : Son of Pranatartihara pillan

Ramanujacaraya II : Son of Padmanabharya belonged to Atri lineage. He was the maternal uncle of Venkatanatha, the famous writer of the Ramanuja School. He wrote the Nyaya kulisa, which has often been referred in Venkata's Sarvartah siddhi

Ramanujadasa : Known as Mahacarya, was the pupil of Badhula srinivasacray. He is not, however to be confused with Ramanujacarya II. The Son of Padmanabharya and the maternal uncle of Vedanta desika, who was also known as Vadihamsa navambuda.He wrote Sadvidya-vijaya, Advaita vijaya and Parikara vijaya

Ramanujarya : Son of Manavala mamuni

Ramanusappilllai : A disciple of Pillai Lokaacchar. He composed a work of ten verses known as "Sri Kaanchi Poorna Dasakam" to pay his tribute to Thirukkacchi Nambi.

Ramyajamatrmuni : Son of Srikrsnadesika and his son was Krsna suri.He lived in fifteenth century, disciple of Vatsya anantarya, Tatayarya and Parakala yati. He wrote a commentary on the Sri Bhasya called Mula bhava prakasika, and one on the Nyayasiddhanjana, called Nyayasiddhanjana vyakhya. He also wrote a Dramidopanad–bhasya, Visya vakya–dipika Ramanuja siddhantasara, a commentary on the Chandogyo panishad. His teacher Paraka yati, otherwise called Kumbhakona tatyara,who inturn wrote Dravida surti-tattvartha–praka-sika, Tiuppalandu vyakhyana, Tiruppalavai vyakhyana, Kanninnum-sirattambu-vya-khyana, Adhikara samgraha vyakhya

Rangacarya : A follower of Sankara named Uma mahes-vara, wrote a work named Virodha varuthini in which he proposed to show one hundred contradictions in Ramanuja's bhasya.He was disciple of Anantarya 2. He was born in Thirunaryanampuram, Siddharthi year, chittrai month, revathi str, famous sisthy of Vadakku Thiru Vedi Pillai

Rangadasa : Son of Srisailadasa, wrote Siddhanta samgraha

Rangaramanuja : Born in Ani Madham with Mrugaseersham as his birth Star in Bharadwaja Gothram. He belonged to Sama Veda and was a native of the Velamur village in the North Arcot district of Tamil Nadu. He studied under Ananta-carya - the 15th head of the Vadakalai Sri Vaisnava community, Sri Bashya parampara counted from Ramanujacarya. Immediately after his studies, he was initiated into Sanyasa directly by the 15th pontiff of the Parakala madam of Mysore. Rangaramanuja was very studious by nature and is said to have composed 60 works in all, as the title 'Shasti-prabandha-nirmata' indicates. All his works, however, have not withstood the ravages of time. He was also very famously known as prabhanda Nirmata and Upanishad Bhashya-karar. Works: Rangaramanuja composed works on the traditional Sanskrit scriptures as well as on the devotional literature of the Sri Vaishnavas (for instance,

commentaries on the Tiruvayamozhi (9000 padi), Tiruppavai, Pallandu etc.

(1) Commentaries on the Upanisads: Kena, Katha, Prasna, Mundaka, Mandukya (together with the Agama Prakarana), Taittiriya, Chhandogya, Brhadaranyaka, Mantrika (Culika), Atharvasikha, Kausitaki, Svetasvatara.

(2) Commentary on Agnirahasya Brahmana:

(3) Mulabhavaprakasika:

(4) Srutha prakasa Bhavaprakasika: This is a commentary on the Srutaprakasika of Sudarasana Suri

(5) Visayavakya Dipika: This lists and comments upon the Upanisadic passages explicitly referred to in the Sri-Bhasya.

(6) Saariraka Saastrathadipika.

(7) Ramanujasiddhanta Sarasamgraha

S

Saila srinivasa : He was the disciple of Kaundinya srinivasa dikstia, the son of Srinivasa tatcarya and the brother of Anvayarya diksita.He was very much influenced by the writings of his elder brother Anvayarya and some of his works are but elaboration of the works of his elder brother who wrote many books

Sailpurna : Son of Thirumalai nambi, brother of Embar and Balagovinda

Saligramam : Birth place of Vaduga Nambi, nearly 80 km west o Mysore, now it is called Mirle Saligramaamn, where paddy grows abundance near Mysore. Sali means paddy.

Sarada matha : Place, where Ramanuja had the book Bodhayanavrtti with help of Kurtuallavan who read the book during the several nights on the way, had remembered its purport and so was able to repeat it. Ramanuja thus dictated his commentary of Sribhasya which was written down by Kursea

Sarvagna Bhattar : See Parasara bhattar

Sathakopa yati : Guru of Paravastuprativadibhayankara annayacarya

Sattaam Pillai Jeeyar : No source available

Sattatha : Parama Ekaanki"(superior ascetic Srivai-shnava of No Brahmin class) according to the A.D 1489 temple inscription of Srirangam. He built Ramanuja Kutams at Srirangam, Kanchipuram and Thirumalai to feed the pilgrims and to provide shelter during their pilgrimage.

He was a trusted friend of the Vijayanagar King of his time known as Saluva Narasimha, who played an equally important part in the transformation of Thirumalai temple from its state as a difficult to access, remote Divya Desam to a temple

Kandadai Ramanuja Iyengar was a disciple of Koil Kanthadai Annan of Srirangam. Latter was himself well known disciple of the famous Srivaishnava Theologian, Manavala Maamuni.Kantadai was the family name of Mutalinatan, the nephew of Acharya Ramanuja. KRI adopted His Acharya"s family name to reveal his association with the prime line of descendants of Acharya Ramanuja. KRI also refers himself as the disciple of Azhagiya Manavala Jeeyar. The Tenkalai -Vadakalai disputes had not arisen at his time. The predilection of the Vadakalai Acharyas for Sanskrit Texts for the defense of Srivaishnava theology and the Tenkalai Acharya's leaning to Alwar's Tamil works for the same was however taking shape during KRI's time.

His Major Contributions to the growth of Srivaishnavism. In the Year A.D 1476, He arranged for a major endowment to initiate Adhyayana Utsavam at Thirumalai in front of the Sannadhi of Ramanuja. He also arranged for the celebration of the Janma Nakshtrams of the Alvars to be celebrated annually along with the recitation of their Pasurams. That tradition continues even today in front of Ramanuja's sannidhi at the temple. He was not only involved with the establishment of grants and supervising the above celebrations related to Alwars, but made sure that the recitation of the Divya Prabhandam was done by people of all castes. Until then, the temple liturgy was dominated by the Brahmin Srivaishnavas. KRI's reform has thus deep social and theological significance. Since the recitation of the 4000 verses has salsify import, the theological significance has a major impact in the style of Ramanuja, who opened up Srivaishnavism to one and all independent of Caste or the accident of birth or scholarship. He established a sannidhi for Kulasekhara Alwar at lower Tirupati. Srirangam records indicate that KRI was a brother of Saluva Narasimhan, the king of Vijayanagar and suggest that KRI's special respect for Kulasekara could have come from latter's heritage as a King of the Royal family of Cheranadu.

He lived during the time of another great devotee of the Lord of Thirumalai, viz., Talapakkam Annamacharya, who's Sankirtanas. Hence the Vijayanagara King (Saluva Narasimha), Annamachar and KRI must have combined their energies to raise the flag of Thiruvenkatam as the most popular pilgrim center for people offal faith sin general and Srivaishnavas in particular.

Saugandhakulya : Birth place of Ramamisra

Setlur Siriyaazhwan : No source available

Siriyaandaan : No source available

Siruppullur udaya pillai : Disciple of Ramamisra

Sogathurazhvan : Disciple of Nathamuni

Somayaji Aandaan : No source available

Sowmayanaryana : Son of Goshipurna disciple of Ramauja and his son Maladhara

Sri rangacharyar : Born in Thiruaryanpuram, Siddharthi year, chittari month, revathi star, sishya of Vadakku Thiruveedi Pillai

Sri Vilanjolai Pillai : He was a principle disciple of Pillai Lokacharya and transmitted many esoteric doctrines (rahasyArtha) to Tiruvaymozhi Pillai, acharya of Manavaala Maamunigal.

Srikrsna desika : Son of Ramyajamatr muni

Srikrsna laksminatha : Disciple of Nathaumani, wrote an extensive work on the doctrine of Prapatti. He was born at a place called Krsnamangala. He was well versed in the Vedas and was a specialist in Vedanta and also a great devotee, who constantly employed himself in chanting the name of Vishnu

Srimadura : Birth place of Goshtipurna

Srinivadasa : Son of Govindarya, pupil of Mahacarya and wrote a commentary on the Sruta prakasika and also the Yatindra mata dipika

Srinivasa : Son of Pundarikaksa, had a son Nrsimharya

Srinivasa diksita : Son of Srisaila Srinivasa Tatayaryaga, grandson of Annayarya, anda pupil of Acarya dikstia, wrote a work called Virodha varuthini pramathini

Srinivasdasa : Son of Devarajacarya and student of Venkanatha, belong to Madhava lineage, wrote Nyaya Sara, a commentary on the Nyayaparisuddhi and also a commentary called Satadusai vyakhya sahasra kirani

Sriperumbudur : The birth place of Ramanuja old name of Sriperumbudur is Bhoodhapuri. It is believed that the doors of heaven will be open for those who die at Sriperumbudur the temple of Adhikesava Perumal in the township of Sriperumbudur, 60 Km to the southwest of Chennai is one of the ancient shrines in the neighborhood of the metropolis. The township is famous as the avatara sthala of Saint Ramanuja, the great

philosopher of Vaishnavism. You can see the newly painted rajagopuram even from the highway which is easily accessed from chennai through the poonamalle High Road. It was the presence of Mahavishnu in the form of Adhikesavaperumal and the beautiful setting of the village which prompted Asuri Kesavacharya, the father of Ramanuja to settle at this spot. Ramanuja reincarnated in the year 1017 AD on the 12th day of the chitrai month under the star Tiruvadirai.

Every year his birth is celebrated with a grand procession including a car procession. In the shrine of the main deity, Adhikesavaperumal of the smiling visage, with his consorts sreedevi and Bhoodevi, bestows abundant grace on his devotees. To the right of the main shrine is the sanctum sanctorum of Ramanuja and to the left is Yatrajanathavallithayar, her namme denoting that she is the consort of the master of the king saints, Yathiraja or Ramanuja. This is a rare instance where Goddess Lakhsmi has a name attributed to a devotee of the Lord and here she s believed to be a varaprasadi or a granter. The temple is in the south Indian style of temple architecture with feature of both chola and vijayanagara periods. It was constructed in the later stages of cholaa and vijayanagara period.

There is an inscription dated 1572, which mention Srirangaraya of the Vijayanagara period. Vijayanagara sources mention that in 1556 during the reign of Ramaraya a gift of 31 villages was made at the request of one sadashiva to maintain this temple. The temple golden vimanam with Ramanuja image etched on it was erected in the year 1912. It is believed to be the first golden vimanam in south India.A copper plate commemorating the event can be seen fixed on the temple floor at a point from where you can look up and see the great devotee looking at the great devotee seated on the vimanam. During the chitrai festival the utsava murthy of Ramanuja is placed in the garden adjacent to the place of his birth. It is said the Ramanuja was so impressed with its likeness to him he hugged it thereby passing on all his powers to it. It is therefore called "than ugandha thirumeni" or the bodies touched by him.Two events support this belief. When the sthapathi (Sculptor opened the eye of the vigraham with the chisel blood came out of the eyes of the teacher then residing at Srirangam.

When the preceptor asked for the reason replied that the idol was he. Secondly when the vigraham was sanctified, Ramanuja gradually became wreaker and shuffled of his mortal coils within a fortnight. This has been interpreted as his prana coming to abide in the vigraham at

Sriperumbudur. Therefore this idol is said to be all powerful and worshipping her is said to confer all benefits including Moksha.In Sriperumbudur, Ramanuja is called as Swamy. On the festival day, the idol is bejeweled dressed in glittering robes and carrying a sword, indicating Ramanuja statue King of Saints. The idol is brought to the garden after the ride in the temple car n the morning. Before the Thirumanjanam (Ritual Bath) the jewels and robes are removed and the idol can see in all its original glory. It is difficult to find words to describe the visage and form of the great saint. His back is shaped like a hooded serpent, flared and vibrant. This is because is he is considered an incarnation of Adi sesha, the 1000 headed serpent on which Lord Vishnu and the pushpa pallakku (Palanquin with flowers) that follows. Devotees from all over the world come to see the lord. The local exude warmth and hospitality even to strangers.

The legend behind the construction of the Adhikesava temple is astounding. In the main forecourt of the Adhikesava perumal shrine four huge pillars support the high roof over 25 feet in circumference with the yalis (a mythical beast carved on the pillars) carved on them. They are so gigantic that one wonders were human effort could have hoisted them without the help of high capacity lifting equipment. Legend has it that the builders of the temple tried to erect the pillars, but owing to the excessive size and weight they failed and gave up the endeavor by nightfall. The next morning to their utter surprise they found the pillars duly installed. The people concluded that only giants or boots could have accomplished this. This is why the place came to be called Sriperumbudur or Town of giants. Little wonder the saint who was born in such a place wrought miracles at various planes of life-physical, temporal and spiritual. It is general opinion.

That the life of the saint is one of peaceful renuncaition. But this calm veneer also hides a ferment of thought and action aimed at realization of truth and performance of good. Few exemplify this more than the saint of Sriperumbudur Ramanuja. Once Brahmarakhshasa possessed the princess of kanchipuram and no amount of exorcism could cure her. Finally it was Ramanuja who cured the princess. When Ramanuja finally asked the demon to go await the fiend said to have requested the saint to keep his feet n his head and bless him. The saint said that he would do so if the demon showed proof of departure. And no sooner has Ramanja placed this feet in the princess head the demon left, breaking the top most branch of the near by tree. Performances of temporal duties for

human good of human beings are ordained responsibility of the pontiff. Ramanuja exemplified this too.

In the course of his life during his stay near Mysore in Thirunarayanapuram (melkote). Ramanuja constructed a huge tank at Thondanur restored the grand temple of Cgelvapillai and sampath-kumara in the hilly abode of melkote. While a potentate is content with merely providing the material well being of the subjects, the saint goes beyond and works for the spiritual salvation as well. The Thirukottiyur puranam can best illustrate this aspect of the saint Ramanuja life. Mahapurna who was the guru of Ramanuja at Srirangam advised him to seek the knowledge of the Vaishnava mantra from goshtipurna a great teacher who was residing in Thirukottiyur.

Ramanuja made 18 trips to Goshtipurna and each time he was turned down by the latter. Ramanuja was so distraught that he wondered whether he was suffering from some impurity which was making Goshtipurna to reject him to hear the great mantra that could save from being from repeated birth and death. Tradition says tat one of he priests of the Ranganatha temple at Srirangam told Goshtipurna at the behest of the lord himself to impart the mantra to Ramanuja. To this he is said to have replied. Oh Lord you have made the law that is never to be spoken to one who is devoid of austerity or devotion, not to one who does not render service not to one who thee. At this the reply came you do not know of Ramanuja purity. He is the savior of humanity. After some time moved by the pity of the grieving saint and relentless quest, Goshtipurna imparted the sacred eight syllable mantra with it mystical meaning ands said none is but Srivishnu is aware of it glory. Whoever hears this will attain liberation and go to vaikunta after death. So do not give it to anyone else. Pone hearing this word

Om namo narayana Ramanuja felt blessed and powerful feeling arose in him to share it with people who are suffering so that they could attain peace and strength. He proceeded forth to gather the people from far and near and when substantial people had gathered he climbed on top of the temple tower at Thirukottiyur and imparted the mantra to the huge congregation. Record of certain writes say that the people were so joyous that Thirukottiyur itself was like vaikunta.When Goshtipurna heard of this he was outraged. And when Ramanuja approached him to worship his feet he called him a heinous sinner ad cursed him that he would rot in hell. A call Ramanuja is said to have said my lord i don't mind rotting in hell when thousands of people can reach vaikunta. His

compassion moved Goshtipurana who at once realized his folly and fell at the feet of Ramanuja.

Ramanuja lived unto the age of 120 and shuffled of his mortal coils at Srirangam. He left being a priceless Legacy of Visishtavaita for countless generations to lead their lives in the path of virtue and goodness. Visishtadvaita which states that is the goal of life for the atman to reach the Brahman gives hope of salvation for every human being.

Srirama pillai : Surname of Vedavyasa Bhattar. See Parasara bhattar

Srirangam : Birth place of Vadakku thiruveedhi pillai

Sriranganayaki : Wife of Namburi varadarya

Srisaila raghavarya : Grandson of Venkatanatha, who wrote a Vedanta kaustubha

Srisaila sirnivasa : Son of Annayacarya also known as Srisailanatha

Sudarana suri : Sudarsana Suri or Sudarsana Bhatta is the renowned commentator of the Sri Bhasya'–Ramanuja's commentary on the Brahmasutras written along the lines of Visistadvaita Vedanta. This commentary is called the 'Srutaprakasika' and therefore, Sudarsana Suri is also referred by the name 'Srutaprakasikacarya' by Vaishnavas. The colophons of his works state that he was born in the *'Haritakula'* (Harita lineage) and that his father's name was Vagvijayi. The lineage of Sudarsana is traced to Kuruttalvan (also called Vatsanka Misra or Kuresa), who was one of the foremost disciples of Ramanuja. He had two sons- Parasara Bhattar, who (along with Thirukkurugai Piran Pillan) became the leader of the Sri Vaishnava community after Ramanuja, and Vedavyas Bhattar. The latter had two sons- Vagvijayi, who was the father of Sudarsana Suri, and Sarvajna Bhatta. Sudarsana Suri was conferred the title 'Vedavyasa' by the teachers at Srirangam temple owing to his profound scholarship. It is by the name 'Vyasaraya', that he is quoted very often by the later teachers of Visistadvaita vedanta.According to traditional accounts, Sudarsana Suri studied under the tutelage of Vatsya Varadarya, a renowned scholar of the Sri Bhasya and descendant of Nadadur Alvan a nephew and disciple of Ramanuja

He was a very quiet and a reserved student and attended classes regularly, taking down the notes of his teacher diligently. The Srutaprakasika was derived from these very oral instructions of the teacher, hence the name, which means 'publication of that which was heard.' Sudarsana Suri lived at Srirangam with his two sons. There, he met Vedanta Desika, who was much younger than him. Tradition accords

him a martyr's death. During the unprovoked invasion of South India by the armies of the bigoted Muslim Emperor Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq in 1323 C.E., led by his son Ulugh Khan 2, it became imminent that the temple of Srirangam too would be attacked and desecrated soon by these armies of Islam.

To possibly prevent and delay the invasion and thus provide enough time for the inmates of the temple to flee with sacred objects used in the worship of the presiding deity (Lord Ranganatha), the residents of Srirangam divided themselves into two groups. One group took the icons in a palanquin and secretly moved southward after raising a wall in front of the doorway. The other party, lead by Vedanta Desika and Sudarsanacarya and several other un-armed, defenseless Hindus walked towards north to form a human wall in front of the approaching Muslim army, only to be massacred at a place called Samayapuram.

Before attaining martyrdom, Sudarsana Suri is said to have handed the manuscripts of his works to his favorite disciple Vedanta Desika, and asked him to preserve them. He also requested Vedanta Desika to somehow save the life of his sons- Vedacharya Bhatta and Parankusa Bhatta. In the ensuing general massacre of Hindus that followed, Vedanta Desika hid himself, the manuscript of Srutaprakasika, and the two sons of Sudarsana Suri among the corpses. As soon as the marauders had left the field, he fled with them to Mysore, thereby fulfilling his pledge to Sudarsana Suri. The supreme sacrifice of Sudarsana Suri for the sake of Hinduism did not go in vain as Vedanta Desika became a scholar par excellence of the Vaisnava sampradamam of Hindus and earned their gratitude for preserving the Srutaprakasika. And the icons of Lord Ranganayaka and Devi Ranganayika were reinstalled in the temple with full ceremonies and processions after the region was freed from Islamic rule in 1371 CE by the newly founded Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagar

Works

1. Srutaprakasika: A massive and a masterly sub commentary on the Sri Bhasya (which itself is a commentary on the Brahmasutras composed by Ramanuja). It is considered the best of all the extant sub commentaries on the Sri Bhasya.
2. When Vedanta Desika fled to Mysore after the sack of the Srirangam temple by the iconoclast Muslim armies, he settled down at a place called Satyamangalam or Satyakalam, where he taught this text to many disciples and kept it from extinction. The Srutaprakasika is an ideal commentary in many different ways. Its explanations are clear

and are neither too elaborate nor too brief. The accessories of each topic of discussion (adhikaranas) are stated clearly and the development of thought is clearly delineated from chapter to chapter, from section to section and from topic to topic. The commentary explains the appropriateness of each sentence and the order in which they occur. It highlights the significance of particular choices of words. At the beginning of each topic, it lists a chain of possible objections and the reply thereto. Again, at the end of each adhikarana, the interpretations of Shankaracharya, Bhaskara Bhatta and Yadava Prakasa are stated and refuted or reviewed. In the beginning sections of the sub commentary, these three predecessors of Ramanuja are normally mentioned by name, but thereafter, they are mentioned as 'pare', 'apare' and 'anye', always in that order.

Therefore, it is possible to determine which of the three commentators is referred to in all cases. The importance of Srutaprakasika here lies in the fact that it is possible to reconstruct the entire commentary of Yadava Prakasa (now lost) on the Brahmasutras from it. Particularly significant is the fact that Yadava Prakasa frequently interprets the Brahmasutras in a manner different from the other traditional commen-taries and seems to impart quasivalidity to the Samkhya and other schools of Vedic philosophy. Secondly, the Srutaprakasika has long quotations from the Sailali Brahman- a lost Vedic text that belonged to the Sailali recession of the Rig-Veda (no longer extant). The interpretations of a certain 'Sri Vatsanka Misra' are also quoted under the comment on the first four aphorisms. It is unclear if these are from the work of Sri Kuruttalvan (the disciple of Sri Ramanuja, and author of a commentary on the Dramida Bhasya) or the Sri Vatsanka referred to by Yamunacharya in his Atmasiddhi (author of a commentary on the Brahmasutras). [Viraraghavacharya 1967] 2. Srutapradipika: This is a condensed version of Srutaprakasika composed by Sudarsanacarya himself. By and large, it omits the review of the commentaries of Shankaracharya, Bhatta Bhaskara and Yadava Prakasa. It also passes over several aphorisms without commenting on the Sri Bhasya thereupon. The work was apparently composed for the benefit of people who did not possess the skills to study and comprehend the much larger Srutaprakasika.

3. Commentary on Apastamba Grhyasutras: Sudarasana Suri wrote a lucid commentary entitled 'Tatyparyadarsana' on the Apastamba Grhyasutras. The author not only explains the meaning of the words

of the sutras, but also introduces topics related to subject under discussion. He often quotes varying interpretations of the sutras (notably those of Haradatta) and refutes them. The commentator seems to be following the interpretation of Kapardiswamin, whom he salutes in the introductory verses as a knower of the meaning and a commentator of the Vedas. Kapardiswamin's commentary on the Apastamba Grhyasutra is no longer extant (although his interpretations of the sutra and points not treated in detail in the sutras are available as a collection of verses called the Kapardi Karikas). In fact, at the end of his commentary on Patala IV of the Sutra, Sudarsana Suri indicates that Kapardi Bhashya was rare even in his own days.

As in his other works, Sudarsana Suri quotes a number of Vedic and other texts in his commentary-

1. Taittiriya Samhita / Brahmana /
2. Aranyaka,
3. Taittiriya Kandanukramani,
4. Taittiriya Pratisakhya,
5. Aitareya Brahmana,
6. Manusmriti,
7. Yajnavalkya Smriti,
8. Baudhayana Grhyasutra,
9. Gautama Dharmasutra, Vasishtha Dharmasutra,
10. Apastamba Paribhasha,
11. Apastamba Srautasuta,
12. Apastamba Dharmasutra,
13. Hiranyakeshin Grhyasutra,
14. Bharadvaja Grhyasutra,
15. Katyayana Srautrasutra,
16. Asvalayana Grhyasutra,
17. Vishnu Smrti,
18. Daksha Smriti,
19. Brhaspati Smrti,
20. Laugakshi Smriti,
21. Vyasa Smriti,
22. Brihatprachetasa Smrti, Nirukta,
23. Ashtadhyayi, Ganapatha,

24. Purva Mimamsa Sutra,
25. Vishnu Purana, Tantravarttika of Bhatta Kumarila,
26. Smrtyarthasara, Bharuchi's Manubhashya.

Kapardi is quoted by name under sutra 1.7 alone and as Bhashykara but it is clear that elsewhere too, Sudarsana Suri is indebted to Kapardi, especially when reviewing alternate interpretations of the sutras.

4. Commentary on Subala Upanisad: The Upanisad is cited for the first time by Ramanuja in his Sri Bhasya to demonstrate the primacy of Narayana over all other deities. The text comprises of 16 sections, but Sri Sudarsana Suri's simple commentary (called Vivarana) covers only the first 5 sections (and ends abruptly there) even though quotations from the last 11 sections are also encountered in the works of Ramanuja. It is possible therefore that Sudarsana Suri was either unable to complete the commentary or that the remaining portion of the work is lost. This Upanisad frequently alludes to the Samkhyan cosmological concepts and Sudarsana Suri cites the Mahabharata, Puranas and other texts to demonstrate that the concept of '8 Prakrtis and 16 Vikrtis' is not alien to the followers of the Vedas, although it might have been described in detail by the followers of Maharshi Kapila.
5. Srutaprakasika on the Saranagati Gadya of Ramanuja: This namesake of the commentary on Sri Bhasya is an eloquent and a lucid explanation of the Saranagati Gadya.
6. Tatparyadipika: This is a commentary on the Vedarthasamgraha of Ramanuja. Sudarsana Suri cites some new quotations from the Vakyagrantha and the Dramida Bhasya, which are not cited in any works of Ramanuja. Therefore, these works were indeed available to him. The commentary is written in the same masterly fashion as the Srutaprakasika. Sudarsana Suri explains each word patiently, specifying the exact prima facie view (of Shankaracharya, Bhaskara and Yadava Prakasa) being considered by Ramanuja, expanding upon the base text with additional scriptural citations, bringing together parallel passages and indulging in extensive discussions on the application of the rules of grammar to scriptural passages. Apparently however, the text of Tatparyadipika has not been preserved very well and numerous variants are found in the manuscripts.
7. 'Saaraavali' on the Vedantasara of Ramanuja: The Vedantasara of Ramanuja work is a short commentary on the Brahmasutras that

avoids logical arguments and rather gives the meaning of each aphorism in a concise form with the relevant scriptural texts. The text is valuable from the perspective of a layman, who cannot read the more detailed Sribhashya on the Sutras. Sudarasana Suri has appended verse(s) at the end of each section of adhikarana of Vedantasara, further summarizing the central purport of the same.

8. Sandhyavandana Bhasya: This is a commentary on the mantras used in the Sandhya ritual..
9. Sukapakshiya: This was a commentary on the Srimad Bhagavata Purana. A manuscript of the work exists in the collection of Trivandrum University and if the tradition regarding its authorship is correct, and then it does indicate, that the Purana was considered a hallowed text even by the early Sri Vaishnavas. Students of the poetry of Alvars- the forerunners of the Sri Vaishnava community have noticed that the themes of the poetry of Alvars are the same as the ones which recur in the Bhagvata Purana. According to scholars of the Sri Vaishnava-sampradaya, the commentary covers only the 10th skandha of the Srimadbhagavatam4.
10. Commentary on the Chhandogya Upanishad: This is listed in the New Catalogus Catalogorum.
11. Commentary on Apastamba Mantrapatha : The Apastamba Mantrapatha in two Prasnas (25 and 26 of the Apastamba Kalpasutra) is a collection of accented mantras used by the followers of the Taittiriya Apastamba Yajurveda Sakha for their domestic rites.

Sudarasana bhattar : Son of Vadivijaya author of Sruta prakasika

Sundarabahu : Son of Maladhara disciple of Ramanuja

Sundardesika : Son of Paravastuprativadibhayankara annayacarya belongs to Vatsya gotra

Swami Annavilappan : (10th Descendant of Mudaliandan)in the Vadhula race. Swami Annavilappan, Thirukumarar of Appachiaranna lived in SingaVishnu koil in the service of Pataladhri Narasimha Vishnu as ordained by Lord Narasimha. The Lord of Singapermal Koil - Pataladhri Narasimhar, appeared in the dream of Annavilappan and ordered him to set right His abode which was covered under sand dunes and establish a place with agraharam and kainkaryaparas and to live ever in his Service. Accordingly, Annavila-ppan followed the divine order and lived his full life time in the service of the Lord of Singa Vishnu Koil. His descendants are now among the Acharyas of the Srivaishnava tradition, and carry

the title of Mudaliyandan.Thilya Kulothanga Chola Raja continued his search Ramanuja in his quest to eliminate vaisnavaism and establish veera saivam.

The process he demolished many visnu temples. There were many artists, sculptures, dancers, musicians and famous poets, name thilya for her divine, beauty, dance and performance. She was a devotee of Ramaanuja. Kuresan. she came to known that kulottunga is planning to invade chidam-baram with his mighty army and destroy all vaisnavas.she ran to the temple premises and asked all the swamis to run away along with the idols, ornaments and Related, literature, because otherwise they will be destroyed by the king's army hilya is determined to hold the king and his army for some length of time by giving dance performance. Thilya had only one purpose is to save swamy as much possible.

She took to dance unto death and hold the king's army. She prayed lord govindaraja for strength. Dressed as celestial dancer she started performance before lord govidaraja Perumal. Hours passed and she is immersed in dance. King and his army invaded chidambaram and entered temples premises. All around her, she found king, his army officers and soldiers, stunned by her beauty and dance performance holding their breath. End of performance kulotthunga enquire her name and business. She humbly replied "I am thilya. I dance for my lord.". King insisted who was her lord. Thilya replied "govindaraja and showed nowhere". All around are surprised for her guts. King asked her to continue dancing all devotees is curious what would be the end. thilya started performance with only motive to hold king and the army, to enable swamis to escape to safety thilya showed best performance like gandharvas, peacocks, koila (spring bird), swan (celestial crane) and entire nature coming to life. She was singing only lord Vishnu, whom the king took as enemy and confined to destroy vasihnavism. After hours and hours thilys succumbed to dance and fell unconscious before lord. The king came to conscious and back to his purposed. He orders to sprinkle water on thilya and search for idols of Vishnu in temple. The idols are missing to safety by srivaishnava devotees.

King ordered full search of town and found no one giving any clue. King understood the trick played by thilya. He realized thilya through her physical beauty, skill of dance performance rescued her lord and devotees but immediately ordered her to rigorous imprisonment. Thily is happy, even she is in prison she could rescue a lord and Ramanuja mission. Kulotthunga chola returned to Kancheepuram after demolishing and

destroying the temples to its roots. With this the chola king is happy, that all major temples of Vishnu are demolished. However Srirangam and Ramanuja are remaining. Only lord ranganatha to help them. The king slept with all thoughts, to invade lord ranganatha of Srirangam. Middle of the night, he was engulfed by terrific fear and was unable to speak. Not able to speak, called his physicians and ministers.

The court physicians studied and discussed the disease with no clue. Eventually the king became sick and bed ridden. Worms of all kinds started appearing in his throat. He became "krimi kanthan", man ith worms in throat. Life is unbearable to him. Ministers postponed war on srirangam koil until king is normal. The king in pain started realizing all evils done to the Vaishnava devotees are coming back to him and showing hell on earth. He recalled how thilya was praying her lord at chidambaram. He immediately ordered for her release. He bowed down to her "oh mothers again please sing for me that melodious song on Lord Govinda Raja". Thilya started singing and krimi kanthan left the world listening to the songs from thilya. He pleaded her to forgive for all his sin s on Ramanuja, Kuresa, Nambi and other devotees.

T

Taivattukkarasu nambi : Disciple of Ramamisra

Tatacarya : Surname of Srisailapurna

Ramanuja maternal uncle, known as Srisailpurna

He was son of Alannara Venkatavar, born in the month of Tiruvonam maternal grand father was Periya Thirumalai nambi.

Grand father of Venkatadhvari, author of the Visvagundarsa and Tatacaryadina carya.He was the maternal uncle of Appaya diksita

Tatarannar : Mother of Manvala mamuni

Thirukachi nimbi : Thirukkacchi Nambi, composed in chaste Sanskrit the first Ashtakam on the Lord of Kanchi and prayed for the wellbeing of Ramanuja and the Sri Sampradhayam that he was going to establish as per the wishes of Alavandaar. One can consider therefore the Devarajaashtakam of Nambi as the trend setter for the other Ashtakams that followed. Thirukkacchi Nambi was also known as Kaanchi Poorna. As one of the early preceptors of Ramanuja, he had a key role to play at different stages of Ramanuja"s ascendancy as the heir to Alavandaar. Thirukkacchi Nambi was born in Poonamalle. He used to go to Kanchi every day to serve Varadaraja. He was born in a family of merchants. His father once gave him a large sum of money and asked him to invest

it and grow it. Nambigal spent it all in the service of the Lord and His devotees.

(4)He was son of Alankara venkatvar, born in the month of the Tiravanam, maternal grand father was Priya Thirumalai Nambi

After a couple of years, his father asked him about the money and where he had invested it. Nambigal said that he had invested it in the divine abode of the Lord. His father became angry with him and so Nambigal left his household and went to Srirangam, where he began to do service at the divine feet of his acharya Swami Alavandar. Later, per his acharya's order, he returned to Kanchi and started doing fan service to Varadaraja Perumal. When the two were alone, Varadaraja would some times talk to him. At that time, Ramanuja who was known as Ilaiyazhvar at that time, was residing in Kanchi as well. He wanted to become Nambigal's disciple but Nambigal did not accept it stating that as a Vaisya he could not accept Ilaiyazhvar who was a Brahmin as his disciple. Ramanuja then asked Nambigal if he could ask Varadaraja about the questions in his mind. Nambigal agreed and that night placed Ramanuja's request to the Lord. Varadaraja gave six answers to Nambigal and told him that those would answer the questions in Ramanuja's mind. The six replies were:

1. Sriman Narayana is supreme.
2. The jIvAtma is different from the paramAtma.
3. Complete surrender is the means to salvation
4. Moksham will be attained by one who has surrendered at the end of his birth
5. For one who has surrendered, remembrance of the Lord at his deathbed is not necessary
6. Ramanuja should take refuge with Maha Purna (Periya Nambigal) and take him as his acharya the summum bonum of Nambi"s life was service to Varadaraja. He performed the Fan service to the Lord of Kanchi. In hot summer days, he used to dip the fan in water and waved the fan in service to the Lord, so that the Archa Murthy could benefit from the cool breeze generated by his devotee. The Lord of Kanchi did some thing exceptional during those hours of kainkaryam. He broke His Archa silence and conversed with Thirukkacchi Nambi. In view of this great devotion and status of Nambi, he was revered by one and all as a Mahatma. Sri Perumbudur is in between Poonamalle and Kanchi. Thirukkacchi Nambi used to walk everyday from his home to kanchi to offer his services to Sri Varadaraja. One day, the young Ramanuja saw

the great devotee of Varadaraja walk though his village. He saluted Thirukkacchi Nambi and invited him to rest for few minutes at his house. Nambi recognized the marks of greatness of a future Acharya in Ramanuja. When latter tried to prostrate before Nambi, he said: "O, Ramanuja! I am a low-born Sudra! you should not prostrate before me. How could you salute your servant?" Ramanuja was saddened by the remarks of Nambi and replied: "O, Great soul! Dearest devotee of Sri Varadaraja!

Is it the wearing of the sacred thread that makes one a Brahmana? He, whose devoted to God, he alone is a genuine Brahmana. You know about the life of ThiruppaNazhwaar, who became the object of worship of the Brahmans and the temple priest of Srirangam." Nambi was very pleased with the utter devotion of Ramanuja and drew close to him. Time went by. Ramanuja became the student of the Advaitin, Yadava Prakasa. Thirukkacchi Nambi kept up his friendship with Ramanuja.Yadava Prakasa was the promulgator of the rigid Advaita School, which would not accept or acknowledge the God with form. Ramanuja was all devotion and cared a great deal for the service to God with a form (Saguna Brahman). Ramanuja served his Acharya well inspite of the fundamental differences in their view points. The anger and jealousy of Yadava Prakasa over Ramanuja"s scholarship and divergence of views led the Acharya to think of doing away with his star pupil. He arranged hastily a Kasi Yatra, during which he wanted to drown Ramanuja in the river Ganga at Kasi.. Tipped off by his cousin Govinda, Ramanuja escaped from the clutches of his plotters halfway during that Yatra and was rescued by the Divya Dampathis of kanchi, who appeared before Ramanuja as a fowler couple. They walked with Ramanuja and received water that he fetched from a well to quench their thirst three times. When Ramanuja returned for the fourth time, the fowler couple had disappeared and Ramanuja found himself at the boundary of Kanchipuram. He understood immediately that it was the Divya Dampathis of Kanchi Temple that had blessed him with service to them.

He returned to his home to the utter joy of his mother. Thirukkachi Nambi came to the house on hearing about Ramanuja"s return from the ill-fated theertha Yatra and was overjoyed to see Ramanuja. Latter fell at the feet of Nambi and asked Nambi to accept him as his disciple. Nambi protested and asked Ramanuja to offer service to Varadaraja by fetching water daily from the very same Well that Ramanuja had used earlier to remove the thirst of the Divya Dampathis and that service will help Ramanuja to gain the proper Guru later. Ramanuja continued that service and during

one of the occasions of such a service, he met MahaPurna, who was sent by Alavandaar to persuade Ramanuja to accept the responsibilities of succeeding him and strengthen Sri Sampradhaayam. Thirukkacchi Nambi"s prediction thus came true. Meanwhile, Ramanuja revered Nambi as his Acharya and once had invited him to come to his home and be his guest.

Ramanuja"s wife was a strict observer of Varnaasrama formalities and she committed an Apachaara to Nambi, when Ramanuja was away. When Ramanuja came home, he learned that Nambi had come earlier, partaken the food, gave the remaining food to a Sudra lady adhesive had cleaned the place, where Nambi had eaten and had taken a bath and was cooking afresh to serve him his meal. Ramanuja was extremely unhappy at his wife for insulting the Mahatma dear to the Lord and began to distance himself from his wife. Before this incident, Ramanuja had a number of doubts on Tattvas and begged Nambi to ask Varadaraja to clarify his doubts. Ramanuja appealed to Nambi and said: " To whom but you hall I tell about the matters that agitate my mind for long?". Kanchi Purna during the night service to the Lord passed on the queries of Ramanuja. The Lord answered Ramanuja"s question and directed Nambi to convey His answers to Ramanuja.

Next morning, Thirukkacchi Nambi met Ramanuja and delivered the message of Sri Varadaraja, which was in six parts. Those parts of the message are:

1. Ahameva Param Brahma Jagat Kaaranakaaranam(I am the Absolute Brahman, the cause of Prakriti, which is the cause of the Universe).
2. kshetragyesvarayhorbheda: siddha yeva mahamateh (o bright one! the distinction between jiva and iswara is axiomatic)
3. mokshopaayo nyasa eva janaanaam muktimicchataam(self-surrender (at my feet) is the only means for liberation for those who seek moksham (final beatitude).
4. madhbhaktaanaam janaanaanaam cha naantimasmrithiirishyateh(the liberation of my devotees,even though they fail to remember me during the last moment of their lives, is sure to take place).
5. dehaavasaaneh bhakthaanaam dadhaami paramam padham(as soon as my devotees give up their bodies, they attain residence at my supreme abode).
6. poornaachaaryam mahaatmaanam samaasraya gunaasrayam(seek refuge in the great soul maha purna, who is endowed with all virtues).iti

ramaanujaaryaaya mayoktham vadha satwaram(Go soon to Ramanuja and tell him, what I have told you).After hearing the Lord"s answers to his questions, Ramanuja went for initiation by Maha Purna at Srirangam. Maha Purna at that time was hurrying towards Kanchi at the command of the Lord to meet Ramanuja.They met half way at Madhuraanthakam.

Ramanuja received the five Pacificator rites (Pancha Samskaaram: Yajna, Ankana, Urdhvapundra,Mantra and Dasyanama) from Mahapurna. He also returned with Maha Purnaand his wife to his home in Kanchipuram. Kanchi Purna met with Maha Purna at Ramanuja"s home and both enjoyed each other's company discussing Bhagavat Vishayam. Rakshambaal, the wife of Ramanuja committed two more grave Apacharas to her Husband's guru Patni and a guest. Ramanuja decided then to take Sanyasa Asrama and tactfully sent his wife to her Parent's home before becoming a Sanyasi.

When Ramanuja took Sanyasam at Kanchi Temple of Varadaraja, Kanchi Purna addressed Ramanuja as Yati Raja for the first time at the behest of Lord Varadaraja. Thus, Thirukkacchi Nambi"s pervasive influence as the messenger of Varadaraja had a central role in shaping the life of Ramanuja at critical moments and set him forth on his journey to strengthen the Sampradaayaeven unto this day. In the next posting, I will comment on the Devarajaashtakam composed by Thirukkacchi Nambi on his Ishta Daivam, the Lord of Kanchi.

Thirukkanamangaiyandan : Disciple of Nathamuni

ThirukKurungudi Nambi : No source available

Thirukurukaippiran pillan : First acharya to write a commentary on any Sri Vaishnava work was Tiru kurukaip piran pillan, also known as pillan or kurukesha. He was born as the second son of Periya Thirumalai Nambi. Year of Birth: Kali 4134 (1161 A.D) in the year of Srimuka He was born in Tirupati about 1062 A.D. Guruparamparaa prabhaavam accounts that, his father, Tirumalainambi, entrusted the boy's education to the care of Ramanuja.

Pillan studies Vedanta, Divya prabhandam and other Sastras under Ramanuja. Pillan wrote the first commentary on Tiruvaymozhi, known as Arayirap padi. This work consists of six thousand granthas, each made of 32 syllables. Though Arayirap padi is the only know work of Pillan to this date, it is possible that he may have written more.

Thirumaalaiyandan : As Thirumaalaiyandan taught Ramanuja the meanings of Thiruvaymozhi per the teachings of his acharya Alavandar,

at some places Ramanuja would propose a different explanation for the pasurams. At one point, Thirumaalaiyandan became upset with the alternate explanations proposed by Ramanuja and told him "These are not the meanings that I have heard from Alavandar. What you are doing is Vishvamitra srushti" and stopped teaching Ramanuja.When Thirukottiyur Nambi heard that the lessons had stopped, he came to Srirangam and enquired with Thirumaalaiyandan as to what happened. When Thirumaalaiyandan told him what happened and the meanings suggested by Ramanuja, Thirukkottiyur Nambi told him "I have heard these additional meanings from Alavandar.

Ramanuja listening to you is similar to Krishna learning from Sandipa. Ramanuja will not think of any meaning that was not in the mind of Alavandar. Do continue the teachings". Hearing that, Thirumaalaiyandan became pleased that he was able to hear the meanings of the pasurams that he had missed hearing from Alavandar. He continued the teachings to Ramanuja. This teaching of Thirumaalaiyandan to Ramanuja as per the wishes of Thirukkottiyur Nambi is referred here as "Surrik Kidaththal' by Thirukkolur Ammal. Thirukkolur Ammal is asking "Did I understand the avatara rahasya of Ramanuja and stay with him like Thirumaalaiyandan did?"

Periya Nambi was the one who performed samashrayanam for Ramanuja and is the first acharya for Ramanuja. By his order, Ramanuja learned the rahasyartthas from Thirukkotiyur Nambi. And, based on the order of Thirukkotiyur Nambi, he taught Bhagavad Vishayam (the meanings of Nammazhvar's Thiruvaymozhi pasurams) from Thirumaalaiyandan.

Thirumalai Nallaan : No source available

Thirumogur Azhwan : No source available

Thirunagarip Pillai : No source available

Thirunaryanapuram : It is also called Yadavadri, Yadushaila, and Melukote. It is located in the present Mysore/Karnataka district. This small town's hub of activity is its temple. Although this holy place had been mentioned in the Puranas at various instances, it really came to formal existence with the coming of our great acharya Ramanuja. This town was the place where Ramanuja resided for 12 years after he and his disciples left SriRangam due to the local fanatical chieftains at that time of all of the places where Ramanuja resided, Melukote was particularly dear to his heart; so much so, that he stated that he would place his very spirit in the processional image that bears an exact likeness to him, and instructed all of his disciples to make an effort to reside here.

In His last message before leaving this earth, he instructed his devotees to live in Melukote for some period of time in their lives, even if it were to be in a small little house. Melukote is a place where people glorify Ramanuja as the King of Ascetics, the King of Philosophers, the King the Vedas awaited, and the Father of the divine child Sampath Kumaran (Chelva Pillai-the dear darling child). Despite its appearance as a sleepy little town, the temple and town is home for many learned Vedic Scholars. Vaishnava tradition with Ramanuja as its central focus and most important acharya explains the important relationship of this Great Soul with his beloved child Sampath Kumaran.

It is understood that Sriman Narayana is the Only Being in this Universe that is Truly Independent, i.e., His Actions and His Will is not limited by the bounds of karma, as it is with every other soul. But, since His Very Nature is Love and Compassion, He is under the sway of those who love him, and to Great Souls like Ramanuja, He becomes like their own child, much in the same way in which He allowed Himself to become Nandagopa's and Yashoda's Beloved Son, Krishna. Ramanuja is the father to Sampath Kumaran, caring for Him, nurturing Him, as well as instructing Him on the merciful attitude He should maintain when He is approached by all souls.

In 1098-99 Ramanuja reached this town at the age of 82 and uncovered Tirunarayana who was hidden/buried in the Yadavadri Hills. This auspicious day of Punarvasu (star) in the solar month of Makara (late January) is celebrated with much enthusiasm here. A temple was built and the Lord worshipped by the pancharatra tradition. The Lord also showed Ramanuja through a vision, the place where the holy white (*tiru-maN*) soil (which his devotees could use for the holy emblems on their fore heads) could be excavated. This soil is being used by millions of devotees even today.

As Ramanuja was in search for a processional deity for the temple festivities, He was instructed by the Lord to go north (Delhi) and bring Him back from the Delhi Sultan's daughter Bibi. This marked a special occasion in his life. Sampath Kumaran is said to have walked and jumped on his lap when he called out to Him. The people who helped Ramanuja carry Sampath Kumaran from Delhi by foot were the local tribes from the forest areas. Ramanuja gave them a special place in the temple activities, and named them Tiru-kulattars (the people who belong to the family of Goddess Maha Lakshmi). Even to this date these people have special privileges in the temple festivities. Melukote was the temple where

Ramanuja began his strong administrative reform. This included assignment of different temple duties to different people/families. He then used this format at all other temples.

The entire temple festivities to this date are carried out by the local dwellers in the same manner as Ramanuja established more than 900 years ago. During his stay at Melukote Ramanuja paid much attention to the social aspect of the human community. He laid great emphasis on bringing quality and happiness to human life.

He made the temple the central focus of all activity. He included people irrespective of caste/ gender/ background/ economical status, etc in temple activities. Local people were given specific tasks with income that was accountable. He set up neighborhoods in and around the temple for all. He also made arrangements to provide water and other resources for them. Small-scale industries that served the local people and temples were set up to make families economically sound. Elaborate festivals were organized and he strongly encouraged the participation of the entire community

Thiruvaimozhippillai : He was born in the year 1301 CE on the ascent of the Visakam star in the Tamil month Vaikasi. It is not a coincidence that Nammazhwar was born on the same day. His birth place is called Kuntinagaram near Madurai. In due course of time, the same town is now called kondhagai. Thiruvaimozhippillai is a descendant of Uyyak-kondar, who is one of the Acharyas in the Srivaishnava Guru Parampara. The name of Thiruvai-mozhippillai's mother is Sathvikai ammayar.

She was an ardent disciple of Pillai Lokachariar. During Thiruvaimozhippillai's youth his mother performed upanayanam and took him to Srirangam where he was initiated into Sri Sampradayam by the great Pillai Lokachariar. It is important to note that Thiruvaimozhippillai was then known as "Thirumalai Azhwar". After returning from Srirangam, Thirumalai AzhwAr learnt all the sastras and became a scholar in both Tamil and Sanskrit. He became the chief priest in the court of the Pandya king in Madurai

2. Attack on South India Srirangam was a part of the Pandya Empire during the 14th century AD. The Mohammedan Army led by Malik Gafur first attacked Srirangam in the year 1311. Although the Pandya king initially lost the battle, he developed an alliance with the kakateeya emperor and defeated the Mohammedans, and thus regained control of what is now Tamilnadu the second attack by the Mohammedans occurred in the year 1319. Again, they were defeated. But, the Mohammedans

regrouped, regained strength and attacked in the year 1323. Their army commanded by ulooq khan conquered the South (including Madurai and Srirangam) and created maximum destruction possible. Sensing danger, Pillai Lokachariar and his disciples left Srirangam with Namperumal and his consorts.

The Pandya king (named Sundara Pandian) was able to defeat the Mohammedans in the year 1326 and regain Madurai (Srirangam was still under the control of the Mohammedans). Unfortunately the king lost his life in war and the throne went to his young son, parakrama pandian who was just 10 years of age. Thirumalai Azhwar, who was then the chief minister, now had the responsibility guiding the young prince in ruling the magnificent Pandya Empire. One could say Thirumalai Azhwar was ruling Madurai by proxy.

3. The departure of Pillai lokachariar was aged around 120 when he left Srirangam and finally arrived at a place named Jyothishkudi. Sensing his old body can no longer handle the physical stress, he decided his time had come to attain paramapadam. When his disciples were distraught with grief and worried about who will be the next Acharyan of the glorious Srivaishnava Sampradayam, he instructed thus: "Thirumalai Azhwar is now the chief minister of the Pandya kingdom in Madurai. He is a very well learned scholar and by experience, he has great administrative abilities.

He came to Srirangam and accepted me as his guru. I pray to Ranganatha to guide Thirumalai Azhwar back to our sampradayam and lead all the Srivaishnavas". He gave the following instructions to his disciples: Koora Kulothama Dasar to bring Thirumalai Azhwar back to the Srivaishnava fold and impart the hidden meanings (Rahasya Arthas) of our Sampradayam to him.

2 Kannangudi Pillai to teach the meanings of Thirvaimozhi to Thirumalai Azhwar

3 Naloorpillai to teach the meanings of the other 3000 of the divyaprabandam to Thirumalai Azhwar.4 Vilanjolaippillai to train Thirumalai Azhwar on Vachana Bhooshanam. pillai lokacharyar attained paramapadam. Sathvika Ammayar, who is the mother of Thirumalai Azhwar couldn't bear the separation from her Acharyan and she soon joined her Acharyan as well: Thirumalai Azhwar's mother was widowed when she was very young. She was an ardent disciple of Pillai lokacharyar and spent most of her life serving her Acharyan and his other disciples. Thirumalai Azhwar was raised by his maternal aunt

4. Thirumalai Azhwar protects Nammazhwar's idol After the departure of pillai lokacharyar, his disciples decided to take Namperumal to Kerala, fearing attacks from the Mohammedan army. Around the same time, Srivaishnavas in Azhwar Thirunagari also decided to move Nammazhwar's idol to Kerala, again hoping for safety from the Mohammedans. They packed Swami Nammazhwar's idol in a box and hung that box in one of the tallest peaks in Kerala, in a very elusive place.

Thozhappar was one of the Srivaishnavas involved in transporting the idol of Nammazhwarswami Thozhappar visited Madurai and met Thirumalai Azhwar, the chief minister. Thirumalai Azhwar drafted a letter addressing the King of Kerala. He offered cash and kind to help Thozhappar and the fellow Srivaishnavas, along with some men for protection: Thozhappar left his body in an accident when trying to retrieve the box carrying Nammazhwar's idol. What a sacrifice!! No words or action can match our gratitude to all these great Bhagavatas in our sampradayam

5. Thirumalai Azhwar returns to the Srivaishnava fold Koora Kulothama Dasar wanted to fulfill his guru instruction to bring Thirumalai alvar back to the Srivaishnava fold. He was not a young person either around 100 years of age. He was not able to have direct audience of Thirumala alvar, the great chief minister. He instead learnt the route of Thirumalai alvar, everyday journey to work. Adorning himself with glorious thiruman, he started reciting Nammalavar's thiruvirutham in a musical style. Intrigued by the beautiful language in those verses, tirumala alvar approached Koora Kulothama Dasar, who vehemently refused to teach him in that unfriendly circumstance in the middle of the road, surrounded by the minister's guards.

Thirumalai Azhwar narrated this incident to his aunt, who reminded the great minister about Pillai Lokacharyar. Thirumalai Azhwar was now becoming interested in approaching Koora Kulothama Dasar and seeking knowledge. The next time when he saw Koora Kulothama Dasar, the minister thought of him as Pillai Lokacharyar himself and fell at his feet. Koora Kulothama dasar then narrated Pillai Lokacharyar's instructions to bring the great minister into the Srivaishnava fold.

Thirumalai Azhwar, did not want to abandon his important duties immediately as he felt the prince was still very young to rule the Pandya kingdom without his guidance. He was still a very busy man. He therefore requested Koora Kulothama Dasar to come to his palace every morning

and teach him during the time he wears Thiruman. The great Koora Kulothama Dasar agreed out of compassion and strong will to fulfill his guru's instructions. And so it happened.

One day, Thirumalai Azhwar was very busy in his royal duties and couldn't meet Koora Kulothama dasar. Koora kulothama dasar then stopped coming to the palace anymore. Missing the daily sessions, Thirumalai Azhwar decided to go to Koora kulothama dasar's house and seek his pardon. Koora kulothama dasar readily welcomed the great minister and served him prasadam. After this, Thirumalai Azhwar decided to renounce all the royal duties and surrender to the great Acharyan fully.

Koora kulothama Dasar gladly accepted Thirumalai Azhwar and took him to a town called Sikkil Kidaram. Thirumalai Azhwar became a Srivaishnava in totality with no materialistic attachments. Just as Pillai lokacharyar desired, Thirumalai Azhwar learnt all the Srivaishnava works from the great Acharya's disciples. Thirumalai Azhwar visited Thiruvananthapuram and learnt Vachana Bhooshanam from Vilanjolai pillai, who attained paramapadam after fulfilling his guru's instructions. Immaterial of Vilanjolai pillai's birth in the lowest of the castes, Thirumalai Azhwar performed the last rites (just like Periya Nambigal performed the last rites of Maraneri Nimbi who was also born in the lower caste)

6. Renovation of Azhwar Thirunagari. After the Mohammedans were defeated for good, Thirumalai alvar desired to get Nammalvar 's idol back to alvar Thirunagari,which was now a dilapidated, desolate place Thirumalai alvar removed the whole town and consecrated Nammalvar. He preached Thiruvaimozhi for the rest of his life and hence earned the name, Thiruvaaimozhi pillai.

7 Alagiyamanavala nayanar, Thiruvaimozhip pillai was now the acharya leading srivaishnvaism. His fame spread for and wide, but he was getting old. When he was worrying who would lead the sampradayam after him, a young Vaishnava name Alagiya Manavala nayanar, became his disciple. He was the son of Thigazhakkadandhan Thiruveeydaiya piran thadharannar, another disciple Pillai lokacharaya,Needless to say, the young vainsava will later became such a great acharya that lord Ranganatha, and himself would become his disciple. As everybody known Alagiya Manavala Nayanaar, became Manavalaamamuigal upon assuming sannyasi

8. The passing of Thiruvaimozhip pillai and his instructions.

Thiruvaimolip pillai lived for 105 years and decided to leave for paramapadam. He instructed everyone that Alagiya Manavala Nayanar would lead srivaisnavism after his departure. The acharya gave the following instructions to his great student Please learn Sribhashyam, but emphasize on Thiruvaimozhi and other Divyaprabandhams as Ramanuja desired" Please move to Srirangam, lead and serve Srivaishnavism". He then instructed all his other disciples to accept Alagiya manavala nayanar as their acharyan. He attained parampadam in the year 1406.

9 Manavala mamaunigal, Alagizya manavala nayanar, fulfilled all the instructions of his acharyan. Thiruvaimozhip pillai, He moved to srirangam. He then took sanyasam from Sadagopa jeeyar, as a disciple of Thiruvaimozhip pillai, he as was also the 7th pontiff of the alvar. Thirunagari emperumanar jeeyar Matram. Manavala mamunikal became one of the greatest Acharyas of Sri Sampradayam, which Lord Sri RanganAtha himself became his disciple and recited the beautiful "Sri Sailesa dayapathram..."

Thiruvellarai Jeeyar : No source available

Thiurmani : Emperumanar has 3 most distinguished thirumEnis The idol in Srirangam is Thanana thirumeni The idol in Sriperumpudur is Thanugandha Thirumeni The idol in Thirunarayanapuram is Thamarugandha Thirumeni

(1) Thanana thirumeni :The first one, Thanana thirumeni, it is the original thirumEni of Emperumanar. One can even see the true nails in His fingers in the sannidhi. This is one of the most distinguished importances of the sannidhi at Srirangam. In Srirangam it is Thanana Thirumeni - he himself is there. **Sri** Rangam

(2) Thanugandha thirumeni :Sri Perumbuduru (The avathara sthalam of Ramanuja)In Sriperumpudur, he is called Thanugandha Thirumeni - Ramanuja himself was pleased to install his own idol.

(3) Thamarugandha thirumeni :Melkote (Reinstalled Moolavar Thirunarayanan and Utsavar Selva Pillai)In Thirunarayanapuram, it is Thamarugandha Thirumeni, idol installed to fulfill his devotees desire. Here, he is wearing pavitram with long tuft and saffron robes and holding Tridhandam, we can worship him. Srivaishnava ascetics use tridhandam - three sticks bonded together. It symbolizes chit, achit and Iswara entities. Every Thiruvadirai star, Abhishekam is performed. It is a sight not to be missed. Ramanuja came to this place

when there was danger to him at Srirangam; and lived here for Twelve years. When he was about to return to Srirangam, people here were very much grieved. So, with his blessings the devotees got an idol sculpted and installed here. Today we are enjoying the lucid explanations given by Ramanuja for Bhagavad Gita.

Thondanoor Nambi : No source available

Thondanur : Thondanur or more familiarly known as 'Kere Thonnur' is a pilgrim centre. Our great Acharya Ramanuja took refuge here in the 11th Century when he fled from the evil King, Krimikanta Raja. It is from here that Yathiraja continued propagating Sri Vishista Advaitha Siddantha. This place is very close to Melkote (Thirunarayanapura), where Lord Sri Thirunarayana (one of the Pancha Narayanas) was reinstalled and worshipped by Ramanuja himself. The other four Narayanas established by Ramanuja are Nambi Narayana at Thondanur, Keerthi Narayana at Talakadu, Vijayanarayana (Chenna Keshava) at Belur and Veera Narayana at Gadag – all in Karnataka. Nambi Narayana is adorning Chakra and Shanka in the left and right hands opposite to the normal right and left hands. This is to show that he is in mudradharana posture to initiate people to the srivaishnava family Thondanur, a small town, about 130/140 km from Bengaluru or about 40/45 km from Mysore, enjoyed a glorious heritage during the reign of King Bitti Devaraya. The King's palace lay just behind the temple and it is said that the king worshipped

Nambi Narayana daily with great devotion and the king's daughter had some health problems. The worried king tried his best to get her cured by the physicians. When they failed to show any result, he sought the help of Jain Monks, who failed too. The king, a staunch Jain, became desperate. He heard about some Vaishnava scholars who had come from the East. He sent people to invite them to the palace, as a true king who encourages and honors all scholars. Ramanuja cured the princess by simply looking at her. The amazed king became a staunch devotee of Sri Yathiraja and started learning the tenets of Vaishnavism. He later embraced this religion and was named by Ramanuja as 'Vishnu-vardhana'. Thus Thondanur has the prestige of being the first place in Karnataka from where Sri Ramanuja expounded his doctrines and helped the growth of Vaishnavism.

In Thondanur there are three temples, namely

(1) Sri Nambinarayana

(2) Sri Parthasarathy

(3) Sri Narasimha / Sri Ramanuja temples.

The oldest of these is the Sri Nambinarayana temple. The beautiful architecture catches the eye of the beholder. The Narasimha temple is built on a small hillock. One has to climb about 20/25 steps to reach the temple. This temple has been recently renovated. The highlight of this temple is an unusual idol of Sri Ramanuja, who is in His Adisheshavathara.

A beautiful idol, which incites curiosity and urge to find out 'why Ramanuja appears thus'. It is said that Ramanuja addressed a gathering of 1000 sarmans (Jain pundits) and answered all their questions simultaneously by taking the form of Adishesha from behind a curtain. The amazed pundits were awe struck by his versatility. This is the Avatar found in the temple as we know Ramanuja, who hurriedly came out of Srirangam in Tamilnadu, settled down in Thondanur for an extended period, about 1000 years ago. From here Ramanuja propagated Vishisthadwaitha Siddhantha in Karnataka. Working from Thondanur, he reinstated Thirunarayana temple at Melukote, which is about 10miles/ 15km away. After a great search for Uthsavamoorthy for Thirunarayanaswamy, Yathiraja found the beautiful moorthy at Delhi with the Badshah's daughter "bibi". It is said that Emperumanar affectionately called the moorthy " selvapillai vaaraai" (Selvapillai please come) and the Uthsavamoorthy started coming closer & closer to Him. This is the moorthy which we have in Melukote today.

During Yathiraja's stay at Thondanur, he answered questions from several other religious heads simultaneously from behind a curtain in the form of adishesha. He is seen in adishesha avatar in Narasimhar temple. While at Thondanur, Yathiraja showed some of his powers in driving away the Evil Spirits from the daughter of King Bitti Devaraya. Impressed by his tejas bearing personality, teachings and powers of Ramanuja, the Hoysala King bitti devaraya, who was a Jain, got blessed by no other than Yatheendra, became a Vaishnava and was given the name of " Vishnu vardhana". Ramanuja installed "thondar" as a high priest of sri nambinarayana temple at Thondanur to take care of the temple. This temple was constructed by the Hoysala dynasty and was built as a prototype to the Belur Chennakesava temple and is over 1000 years old. Large artistic pillars inside the temple resemble the pillars seen in the Belur temple.

Nambinarayana is in Samasrayana position with Shankam in the right

hand (instead of left hand as normal) and Chakram in the left hand (instead of right hand as normal). Yemberumanar is responsible for the beautiful lake at Thondanur. It is said that the water has never dried since it was created. There are small man-made waterfalls and canals, making it a great water sport attraction particularly for the kids. The water is so clear that the king Tippu Sultan called it "moti talab ", as one could see the pearl fallen from his broken necklace in the clear waters. Apart from Nambinarayana temple there is Krishna temple & Narasimha temple.

Three forms of Ramanuja are:

(1) thamar uhanda tirumeni (where he was born) at Sriperumbudur just on the outskirts of Chennai, TN

(2) thaan aana Tirumeni (where he studied and achieved the Doctrine) at Srirangam, TN

(3) thaan uhanda tirumeni (who entered his own moorthy) at Melukote, Karnataka.Thondanur was Ramanuja's – our Acharya's most important place of stay in Karnataka from where he propagated Sri Vaishnava Siddantha.

Therefore, it should be an endeavor of all Vaisnava devotees and in particular srivaishnavas to visit this great Holy Place where our Achaarya had lived and walked on the soil. This place is approximately 125km from Bangalore and 45km from Mysore. The history and the uniqueness of the place make it an important place to visit. It is only about 30 minutes drive from Melkote

Thumbimankodi : Milk maid woman who stayed in Tirumala. When Ramanuja came down from the hill, stayed at Tirupathi along with his uncle Srisaila Poorna for one year. Srisaila poorna gave full discourse on Ramanuja to Ramanuja. During his stay at Tirupathi, this woman used to gave milk, curd and ghee. When Ramanuja was returning to Srirangam, he called her to give money. But she appeared like a matured devotee beyond money. Instead she asked for Bhagavad anagram and moksham. Ramanuja was puzzled by her wish and asked her how to give? Thumbiman was trusting Ramanuja, she asked him to give a slip to Lord Srinivasa, mentioning about her credentials and give moksham. Any amount of explanations did not satisfy her, but she wanted this slip from Ramanuja gave a slip to Srinivas perumal. Thumbiman went up the hills to Sannidhi of Srinivasa and showed the slip. To everyone's surprise a divine chariot appeared and took her too appeared and took her to Lord's lotus feet.

Tikalakkidandantirunavirudaiyapiran Father of Manavala Mamuni

TirukKovalur Azhwan : No source available

Todappa : Surname of Varandrisa, Lokaraya and Lokacarya, son of Ramanuja, who belongs to Vadhula gotra

Totaramba : Sister of Atreya Ramanuja married to Ananta suri and she delivered a male child known by the name Vedanta desikan

Tupple : Birth place of Vedanta desikan located at Kanchipuram

U

Udakpratoli krnsa : Disciple of Namburivaradarya

Udhavvar sannathi : THE first one, Thanana Thirumeni, it is the original thirumeni of Emperumanar. One can even see the true nails in His fingers in the sannidhi. This is one of the most distinguished importances of the sannidhi at Srirangam. This is popular legend but not true. Ramanuja's body was interred in the temple premises and the sannidhi was constructed over it. The image in Srirangam known as 'Tan ana tirumeni' is therefore placed over the remains of Ramanuja and is not the very body of Ramanuja.

Ukkalaazhwan : No source available

Ukkalam Ammaal : Female devotee of Ramanuja

Urangaavilli Dhaasan : While on a trip to Thiruvaali/Thirunagari, Ramanuja and his entourage came across an "untouchable" lady. Ramanuja requested her to move away (odhungu) from the way so that he and his companions can pass. The lady replied, "Ulagam muzhudhum Ulagalandhaan Sannithiyaaga Irukka, Enge Odhunguvadhu?" (The entire world is Thiru Vikraman's shrine, where can I move away?) Holy place Ramanuja immediately apologized to the lady and offered the Vaishnava insignias to her saying," These should be yours, I am undeserving of them." I looked up and did not find this episode in "Guru-parampara Prabhavam","Acharya Vaibhava Manjari" and "Raamaanusa Nootrandhaadhi".Personally I think this is an unlikely episode for the following reasons:

1. As a child in Sriperumbudur, he already played with untouchable children, antagonized the elders of the city.
2. At Melkottai, and on trips moved very much in the company of the tribals.In his rescue from being murdered in Kasi he serves the tribal couple, who turn out to be perumaal and Thaayaar.

3. Later, it is mentioned that he would give Urangaavilli Dhaasan (of fourth/ fifth caste) the honor of helping him out of Kaaveri, after his bath. Such a person and his entourage need not be enlightened once again by an untouchable lady.

Uruppattur Achanpillai : Disciple of Nathamuni

Uthkala Ammal : No source available

Uyyakondar : Pundarikakshar was born in the divya dEsam of Tiruvellarai in the kaliyuga year 3987 in the month of chitra under the Kriththik A star. He was the prime disciple of Nadamuni amongst 7 others: Kurugai Kavalappan, Nambikarunakara Dasar, Eru Tiruvudaiyar, Thirukkanamangaiyandan, Vanamadeviyandan, Uruppattur Achanpillai and Sogathurazhvan. These 8 disciples were imparted the knowledge of mantras, their meaning and also the Divya Prabandam and its importance. Tiruvudai mannan was the king in that period and he once came along with his consorts on hearing about the greatness of Nadamunigal to visit him and get his Blessings. Upon seeing him, Nadamunigal got carried away and stated that seeing the King was like seeing Tirumal himself. He imagined the king to be Lord Vishnu and his consorts to be Gopikas and followed them for a distance.

On seeing this, one of the Sishyas kurugai Kavalappan retorted that it was Bhagavathas and Jivatmas who do Bhagavat kaingaryam who had to be elevated to such a status and that it was not right to go behind the King as such. Nadamunigal graciously accepted the fact and came back to where he left off. On another occasion, Vangipuraththachchi, sent notice that he wished to see his daughter Disciple of Nathamuni Nadamunigal trusted the pure-of-heart Pundarikakshar with the task of accompanying his wife to her father's place. When he reached Achchi's place, he was asked to eat before he embarked on his return journey. Pundarikakshar agreed. Some malicious pope who were present there, suggested that Pundarikakshar should not be fed inside the house, neither should they be forced to eat the remains of what he had eaten, so he should be served day old rice that was customarily stored in water so it wouldn't get spoilt. And that was what was done.

Still, Pundarikakshar enjoyed the food and ate it with great praise, outside the house. He whole heartedly commented that he was very lucky to be receiving such a treatment. When he went back home, Nadamuni sensed his happiness and was able to perceive the entire chain of events as they had occurred through his powers.Pundarikakshar revealed that he was very happy and fortunate to have eaten the remains of the food eaten by

great Bhagavathas. On hearing this, Nadamunigal gave him the title of "Uyya Kondar" meaning one who was one with him completely. Some other disciples questioned that it was considered against the practice to eat day old food. Nadamuni replied "Flowers that have not been strung, old food that has not had oil added to it, water that is not stored in the ground but in a vessel - all these have a dhOsham of being old. This question is only asked by those who do not realize these dharmas. Pundits and orthodox people don't commit such mistakes in their house; so it was okay for Uyya Kondar to consume that food".

On hearing this, Vangipuraththachi felt very bad at his actions. He went and asked Nadamuni and Uyya Kondar for apologies. He brought Aravindappavai back to Nadamuni. Dharmena Brahma vitpAti dashapurvan dashavarankanya Brahmavide Datta dashapurvan dashavaranif there is a person in a kulam who knows the Vedas, all his actions make up for the sins of 10 generations before and after him. Similarly, when one marries a girl off to such a knowledgeable person, she wipes off the sins of generations of her father's family - this is what the shastram says. So narrated Aachchi to Nadamuni. Nadamuni trained Kurugai Kavalan in Yoga Rahasyam and Uyya Kondar was entrusted with the responsibility of imparting the Vedanta Grahams to the rest of the disciples.

According to Acharyan's wishes, Uyya Kondanar shared his knowledge with Manakkal Nambi, TiruvellikkEni Pan Perumalarayar, Setlur Sendalangara Dasar, Pundariga Dasar, Ulaga Peruman and Nangai.

V

Vadakku Thiruveedhi Pillai Father of Pillai Lokacharya and author of the Eedu Vyaakhyaanam, the famed commentary on Nammaazhvaar's Thiruvaaymozhi written at the dictation of his teacher, Nampillai (Lokacharya).He was Srirangam, Vadakku Thiruveedhiyil Thirumaligai. Year of birth: sarvajit year, aani month, Krishashtami, svathi star (1168 A.D). (This information is based on Periya Thirumudi adaivu, attached to 6000 ppadi Guruparampara prabhavam. There is another version mentioning the year as pramaadhi) Vadakku Thiruveedhi Pillai was not interested in conjugal relationships with his wife. His mother was upset and said her worry to Vadakku Thiruveedhi Pillai's acharya, Nambillai. Nambillai later advised Vadakku Thiruveedhi Pillai and only after that he became a normal husband. He is one of the favorite disciples of Nampillai. He maintained celibacy, though married.

One fine day, when Nampillai was taking rest with his disciple Ammi, mother of Vadakkuthiruveedhi pillai, complained to Nampillai that her son is not conducting a married life; rather is afraid of approaching his wife, complaining that he was encountering her as a serpent when she was with her in privacy. She requested Nampillai to bless her son with a ward to the family. Nampillai consoled her and advised her to bring her daughter in law after she has finished a monthly periods. As directed the daughter was brought in the presence of Nampillai and blessed her. Nampillai also advised Vadakku Thiruveedhi pillai to spend the night with his wife and also advised him that he will be doing a righteous duty as a grahasatha.

Vadakku Thiruveedhi pillai complied with the advice of his Acharya. In due course, his wife became pregnant and a son was born in the family. As his wife gave birth to a son through the blessings of Nambillai (Lokacharya), the baby was named Lokacharya Pillai, later transposed to Pillai Lokacharya. A second son, Azhagiya Manavaala Perumaal Naayanaar, was born to the couple at the blessing of Azhagiya Manavaalan, Sri Ranganaatha Perumaal Himself. He is the famous Pillai Lokacharya. Nampillai rendered kalashebham during the day and he had directed Peria vachan pillai to record them. Vadakku Thiruveedhi pillai also recorded them without permission. One day he invited his Acharya Nampillai for dinner.

Nampillai consented and visited his house. He was to do Thiruvaradhanam there. But, he saw the bundle of palm leaves containing his discourses. He enquired about it. Vadakku Thiruveedhi pillai informed that he has rendered his work without any addition or alteration. Nampillai was not satisfied. He said that you do not have my permission to do so and it is not correct for a disciple to behave in this fashion. Vadakku Thiruveedhi pillai apologized and begged his pardon. He represented that he has done so only to remember the discourses. Thereupon, Nampillai directed him to do the Thiruvar-dhanam and he began to study the record. The reading was continued even after dinner. The scrutiny of the record was assisted by Periavachan pillai and Sriyazhvanapillai The recording was very fine and it was admired by all. They exclaimed that it was like a decorated elephant marching. Still, as it was done without permission, it was taken over by Nampillai. Later it was handed over to EEynni Madhavar (Sriyazhvanapillai) by Nampillai. From him it came in to usage in due course. (Though Madhavachariyar got the eedu, it was handed over to his son

Padmanabhan and from him to NaloorPillai. From him it was taught to Thiruvaimozhi Pillai. Upto this position, the preaching was in a restricted manner. When it was taught to Manavala Mamunigal, it began to spread widely. Manavalamamunikal rendered Kalashebam for one year in the Manavalamamunikal rendered Kalashebam for one year in the presence of Lord Renganatha and Periapiratti. It was the desire of the Lord to hear eedu Kalashebam from Manavalamamunkal. Thus he became the Acharya for the Lord and was honored with the thanian "sreesailesa dayapatram. This happened in the year 1371.A.D. There was another incident in the life of Vadakku Thiruveedhi pillai.

He was fortunate to have his recordings spared to be spread for future. But, one Naduvil Thiruveedhi Bhatter in the family of Koorathazhvan also did the recordings of Nampillai without his permission. When it was presented to Nampillai, he was slap on the wrist for his behavior. It is not proper for the disciple to record or write without the prior permission of his master. Further more, Nampillai observed that it was lengthy one. Such practices will set bad example in the relationship of master and disciple. He soaked to the skin it in water and allowed it to be eaten by white ants. The generation of Vadakku Thiruveedhi pillai are Ramanujarya, son of Nampillai Kandhadai Thozhappar Naduvil Thiruveedhi Bhattar Periya vachan pillai Eeyunni Madhavar Pinbhazhzkiya perumal Jeeyar Vanmamalai dasar Vadakku Thiruveedhi Pillai attained Parampadham at an early age, but not before producing a rich book on the teachings of Nammaazhvaar, the Achaarya Hridayam.Vadakku Thiruveedhi Pillai occupies an important place in our Acharya Sampradhya. Though he has not rendered any original work, he was the best exponent of Nampillai's commentary to Thiruvaimozhi.

Disciples: Pillai lokacharyar, Azhzkiya Manavala Perumal Nayanar, Koora-kulothama Dasar.

Works

deedu 36000 to Thiruvaimozhi as narrated by Nampillai.

Vadikalahamsambuvahacarya : Surname of Atreya Ramanuja

Vadikesari : Brother of Pillai Lokcharaya

Vadivijaya : Son of Vedavya bhattar, who wrote Ksama sodasistava, his son was Sudarasa bhattar

Vaduga Nambi : Vadhuanambi, priest of local temple who later became the disciple of Ramanuja. The people of vicinity, on leer that Ramanuja had arrived at the village, gathered round him.. There is a pond that

village and it I kind of memorial to the great man. Even today Sripada tirutha is considered obscured to all sriviasanava. The temple is still in charge of the descendants of the family of Vadhuhannambi. Vaduga Nambi was born in Saligramam which is nearly 80 KM west of Mysore, now called as Mirle-Saligramam, where paddy grows abundance near Mysore. (Sali means Paddy) He was born in the star of Ashwini in the month of Chittirai for the Salagrama Aiyan couples.

His birth name was Andhra Purnar. Once, in Srirangam, Vaduga Nambi was heating the milk to be offered to Ramanuja. Ramanuja called him as, "Vaduga, please come, Namperumal is passing through our place, let us have a glimpse of him". Vaduga replied immediately as, "Swami, if I come out worship Emperumal (Your Lord-Renganatha), who will attend to the milk for Emperumar (My Ramanuja Mattru Onninai Kaana Prabhavam: Ramanuja usually visited Nampermal's Sannathi along with his disciples. Once during such visits, when Ramanuja was enjoying in the beauty of Namperumal Archai Thirumeni, Vaduganambi was enjoying in the beauty of Ramanuja's Divinity. Ramanuja told Vaduganambi, "Vaduga, look at the Namperumal's eyes (Neenda ap peryavaya KanngalÖummai Pethamai Seiyavillaiya). There was a spontaneous reply from Vaduganambi, saying that "The eyes which have seen my 'amudhan' will not see another!-(En amuthani kanda kangal Mattru Onninai Kaanave)". For Vaduga Nambi, Ramanuja is the only one and all in one.

Andaan's Thirumaligai Prabhavam Vadauga Nambi, was once visited by some of his relatives from Mysore. They seem to have not obtained the samasrayanam (sworn to follow the principles of Sri Vaishavism and Acharya) from the acharyas. When they left the place, Vaduga Nambi immediately threw away all the vessels and cleaned the Thirumaligai. He then brought the left over old vessels from Mudaliandaan's (Andaan) Thirumaligai which were kept as unused. He felt happy in doing that and proclaimed that it is better to use such unused old vessels from Sri Vaishanava as Andaan rather than using vessels used for his relatives who left the place.

Thirukurungudi (Vaishnava Nambi Prabhavam): Once, Ramanuja along with Vaduga Nambi traveled to Kerala for the noble cause of spreading Vishistadvaitham. Due to the conspiracy planned by Namboodiri's of Kerala using 'Garuda Manthram', both vaduga Nambi and Ramanuja were separated on either side of the Mahendragiri Hill. (Ramanuja in the Thirukurungudi side and Vaduga Nambi in Kerala Side) When

Ramanuja woke up and called for Vaduga Nambi, Thirukurungudi Perumal went in disguise as Vaduga Nambi. As a usual practice, Ramanuja after adorning the thirumankappu of him applied the remaining in his hands to the lord Himself in the form of Vaduga Nambi, without knowing the prabhavam. After making ready for the daily poojas, the lord disappeared.

Later Ramanuja saw the Thirumankappu he applied for Vaduga Nambi in the forehead of the Lord and came to know all the Perumal vaibhavams. Hence named the Perumal as "Vaishnava Nambi" and taught Rahasyaarthams. These incidences were Ramanuja became the Acharya for the Lord himself. Hence seen in Jnana Mudhirai at Thirukarungudi even now. The fact underlying is that even the lord took the form of Vaduga Nambi to get an Acharya Sampantham.

Acharya Thiruvadi Sampantha Prabhavam: During 1137 A.D, the concluding time of his Avathara vaibhavam, Ramanuja rested his head on Ember's lap and his feet on Vaduga Nambi's lap and amalgamated into Namperumal's Thiruvadi... listening to Divya Prabandam and Upanishads. Vaduga Nambi who said to have lived for 95 years, spent his last days in Saligramam worshipping Lord Narasimha and Ramanuja's Thiruvadi and attained immortality due to his Acharya Abhimanamyatiraja vaibhavam by Vatuka Nambi a most devoted disciple of Udaiyavar. It is a short book of 114 simple stanzas in Sanskrit written shortly the Paramapada prapti of Yatirajar. In it stanzas 58 and 59 narrate this incident. I give below a translation of the two stanzas:" After that, through the 'niyamanam' of Periya Nambi, Ramanuja prostrated before the holy feet of Tirukkottiyur Nambi, received as 'Upadesa' from him the meanings of Tirumantram and Geeta charama Slokam, and preached it to many people Intirukkotttiyur itself.

Thereupon that Tirukkottiyur Nambi also immediately realising the compassion overflowing in Ramanuja's heart praised him terming him "Emperumanar" and greatly pleased said, "Thisdarsana is going to be celebrated in your name as Emperumanar Darsanam." It is for this reason that this known as Ramanuja Darsanam."

Vanamadeviyandan : Disciple of Nathamuni

Vangeepuram : Belongs to Sathasrivaisnava community

Vangipuraththachchi : See Uyyakondar

Vangipurattu Nambi : Emperumanar supporter, he had been asking him to educate him Tiruvaradhanam but some how he had not been able to

find time to-do so. Once, Emperumanar had gone to Tirumalai, and felt like teaching it to Kurattazhvan and Nambi Hanumaddasar. While he was doing so he happened to look up and found Vangipurattu Nambi watching him from behind the door. Emperumanar got a shock and immediately told him:" I had long nursed a doubt regarding Krishna and His being scared when caught stealing butter by Yashoda How could the Lord be scared of a mere subject even if she caught Him in a wrongful position? Now I know the answer. He was really scared, just as I was today when I saw my supporter catch me on the wrong foot. I did two wrongs to you- I didn't teach you when you asked me to; and I didn't even include you also in this group today.

And you caught me at it and I really felt shame and fear- even if you happened to be my Sishya and me your Acharya." Such was our Emperumanar because of whom our Darsanam itself is called Ramanuja Darsanam; even though there were great Acharyas before him like Nathamuni and Alavandar. Periyavachan Pillai in his Periya Tirumozhi gloss quotes Pillan as saying: Just as a necklace gets value added through its central pendant so does our Darsanam through him. Desikan includes this in Hisyatiraja Saptati Sloka 15: yatirajena Nibaddhanayakasreeh Mahati Gurupangtihara-Yashtih Vibudhanamh-rudayan-gama vibhati Manavala Mamunigal in his superb Aarti Prabandhamsays:Is there any one who can commit sins like myself and is there any one who can forgive like yourself! "Enaippol Pizhai-Seyvar Ivvulagil Undo Unaippol Porukka-Vallar undoes?" Of course he is putting himself in our place. The answer is still the same as Kurattazhvan sums it up for us: Na ched Ramanuje-Tyesha chatura Chaturaksharikam-avastham Prapadyante Jantavo Hanta Madrusah!had there been no word like Ramanuja in this world

Vankipurathu Nambi : No source available

Varadaguru : Varadaguru later came to be known as Nadathur Ammal, was the son of Devaraja Mahadesikan. He was born on the full moon day of Chithra month with Chithra nakshatra. (Some researchers have come to the conclusion that he was born during 1165 A.D. the corresponding Tamil year being 'Partipa'.) Varadaguru was well-trained by his erudite father in all faculties, and the father decided to teach Sri Bhashyam to his son. On an auspicious day Devaraja Mahadesikan commenced the teaching with the invocation of the song which began with the words 'Akhila Bhuvana'. The young Varadaguru stopped his father with a question, 'Why should Emperumanar choose the word 'Akhila' instead of words like 'sakala 'nikhila', when all of them denote

the same meaning? The happy and surprised father, however, answered his son that Udayavar's choice of word was to begin his magnum opus with the first alphabet representing Lord Narayana Devaraja, at the same time knew well that he being old did not have enough strength to appease the intellectual hunger of his boy. So he decided to send him to Engal Azhvan of Thiruvellarai.

Engal Azhvan, called so by Ramanuja himself, had helped Nadadoor Azhvan in scribing the work as Koorathazhvan had become blind. Engal Azhvan had a good training under Thirukkurukaippiran Pillan and had retired to Thiruvellarai. Engal to spend his life in solitude. An interesting episode between the master and disciple is illuminating. At Thiruvellarai, Varadaguru found out Engal Azhvan's residence and tapped at the door. The teacher asked "Who is that?" The student replied, "I am Varadan, Kanchi Nadathur Devaraja Mahadesikan's son." The teacher replied," Whoever it is come after "I" die. The perplexed Varadan returned home and asked his father. The father explained that the word "I" denotes ego or ahamkara and the teacher had only asked him to shed off his ego and then approach him. Moreover according to Srivaishnava tradition, there is no "I" or "me", there is only the beautiful word 'adiyen'.

Varadan realized his mistake and prostrated before Engal Azhvan who adopted him not only as disciple but also as his beloved son. Both of them traveled together, worshipped the arca forms in the temples and finally reached a small hamlet Kollagonda, near Srivilliputtur. Engal Azhvan wrote a commentary to Visnu puranam' and in course of time reached his heavenly abode. As an obedient son, Varadasuri performed all funeral rites and at Thiruvellarai installed the arca form of his Acharya. It can be seen in this image form, Varadaguru is seated at the feet of his master. He has also shown his deep Acharya Bhakti in the dhyana sloka of his work Tattva Sara. Varadaguru gave the responsibility of looking after the arca forms at Tiruvellarai to Engal Azhvan's daughter's family. Later they came to be known as 'Ammalacharyas'. Having done his duty to his guru, Varadasuri returned to Kanchipuram.

At Kanchi, Varadaguru began his Sri Bhashya teaching near 'Kachi vaythan Mantapam' the eastern side of the temple sanctum sanctorum. He chose this spot because this was the place where the Lord Himself sowed the seeds of Sri Bhashya, as answers to the six questions postulated by Ramanuja by Thirukachchi Nambigal. The answers are: I, Consort of sri is Brahman

1. Jiva are different from each other, they are different from Me. Hence my philosophy is Bheda' or differentiation.

2. Surrender or Saranagathai is the best and simple means to reach Me.
3. Those who surrender to Me need not necessarily think about Me in the last moments.
4. Liberation or moksha is only possible after shedding the mortal body.
5. Sri Periya Nambigal must be the Guru to Ramanuja. Varadaguru made several pilgrimages and won in a debate with Sivasular, a Saivite at Sethu, Ananda Madhavacharyar at the court of the Chola king and the fanatic Kumbisutan before the king of Kasi. The Kasi king honored him by placing him on the saratha.

   Varadaguru composed 'Hetirajastavam' and saved a possessed Brahmin. After his pilgrimage, he returned to Kanchi and continued his Sri Bhashya Upanyasa. His sweet rendering and excellent discourse attracted many disciples like Appullar alias Atreya Ramanuja, Vadkku thiruveethi pillai, and Sudarasauri, the great grandson of Koorthalvan.

Nadathur Ammal and Tirumala t one time, Nadathur ammal went on a pilgrimage to Thirumalai He was near Thirucchanur and the hot rays of the noon sun was bearing down on him. Ammal rested on the pial of a house and was hungry. At that time, a Sri Vaishnavar appeared and presented dhadhyannam in a golden vessel and mentioned that it was Srinivasa's Niyamanam. Once Ammal and his Sishyals part took the prasAdham, the Sri Vaishnavar and the golden vessel disappeared. Nadathur ammaaL recognized it was the Lord of the seven hills that gave him and his Sishyals His Prasadham.Meanwhile, the sannadhi (sanctum) servants noticed the missing golden vessel and were wondering as to what had happened. The Lord explained to them that He personally took it to serve Ammal and showed them where the vessel was. The Lord also commanded His sannadhi paricharakas to bring Ammal with all honors (maryAdhais) from Tirucchanur to His presence. Nadaathur ammal arrived in front of the Lord and performed Mangalasasanam (verse chanting) to his heart's content and returned thereafter to his native Kaanchi. Such is the relationship of Lord Srinivasan to His Acharyals.

Works of Nadathur Ammal The following nineteen works have been given by Ammal:

1. Tattvasaram
2. Prapanna Parijatam
3. Prameyamalai
4. Annika Choodaman

5. Aradhana kramam
6. Prameya Saram
7. Mangalasasanam
8. Jnana saram
9. Jayanti Nirupanam
10. Hetiraja Stavam
11. Rahasya Sangraham
12. Chaturlakshana Sangraham
13. Paratattva Nirnayam
14. Dramidopanishad Sangraham
15. Sri Bhashya Sangraham
16. Prataranusadeya Slokas
17. Paramartha Slokadvayam
18. Paratvadi Panchakam
19. Yatilinga Samartanam

Ammal and After a long life of one hundred and ten years, Ammal departed to his heavenly home on the Sheila paksha Panchami of the Masi month, Yuva year (1275 A.D.). It is reported that Nadadoor Ammal had four sons, Varadavishnu, Devarajar, Sudarshanar and Hethisar.

The biography of Nadadoor Ammal has been bring together from two works, Varadadesikabhyudayam And Varadadesika vaibhava Prakasika.

The author of these two works, Mimasa Vallabhar says that the former Kavya with eight sargas is an abridged form of Charya dipam of Hemamali Desikar. Both the authors are descendents of Nadadoor Ammal. Mimamsa Vallabhar has nine works on Nadadoor Ammal alone:

1. Varadadesika Suprabhatam.
2. Vara dadesika Dandakam
3. Varadadesika gaddyam
4. Varadadesika Panchashat
5. Varadadesika Ashtotra Shatanama Stotram
6. Varadadesika Vaibhava Prakasika
7. Varadadesika Sambhavanakra mam
8. Varadadesika Prabhava deepam
9. Varadadesikabhyudayam

The birth of Srutaprakasika Varadaguru's students used to listen to his

lectures assiduously and by their relatable questions, now and then got amplification from their erudite master. But Sudarsanasuri alone would remain quiet; he had no questions to ask. His mates redundant (disregarded) him as dud. One day, as usual, the students had assembled in the lecture hall. But the instructor was not enthusiastic to begin the lecture since Sudarsanasuri had not turned up. The other students duty-bound the master to begin the conversation saying that the presence or absence of the stone like Sudarsanar during the discourse was one and the same. The master regretted to hear these words and knowing Sudarsanar's deep scholarship, decided to provide evidence it to the class. During the course of the lecture, the Acharya asked Sudarsanar to explain a simple phrase.

To everyone's surprise Sudarsanar not only gave the literal meaning but also the in depth denotation given by his master in the previous occasion. The teacher himself did not expect this. But Sudarsanar told him that he had a habit of scribing the content of the discourse every night on palm leaves and to be had the script to Varadaguru.

It was 'Srutaprakasika'- the enlightenment of what he had heard, and hence the name, this Srutaprakasika is the commentary to Sri Bhashya. Later Sudarsana Bhattar elaborated and completed it in 36,000 grantas. In its survival, Srutaprakasika saw many vicissitudes in the national scene, including the invasion by Maliq Gaffor. Desikan did a stupendous overhaul to save from harm the script by feigning death and playing dead amongst corpses.

Varadaguru had the deepest Bhakti to Varadraja. One night when he was worshiping the deity in an ecstatic mood, the priest brought very hot milk to the Lord as Nivedana. Varadaguru was deeply distressed that such hot milk would burn the tender tongue of the Lord! He stopped the priest from offering the hot milk and began cooling it down until it was warms enough to be drunk. The Lord himself was moved by the Vatsalya of Varada and called him 'Amma' – my mother!

From then onwards Varadaguru became Nadadoor Ammal. After this episode, in a dream one night, Lord Varadaraja commanded Ammal to erect a Mantapam for His Vasantotsavam. Accordingly Ammal fulfilled the Lord's desire, just as a mother would fulfill the wishes of her son in spite of difficulties.

Once Ammal and his disciples undertake a pilgrimage to Tirumalai hills. Their graceful personality and behavior attracted all. Kandavaran, the leader of the Lada race was annoyed and irritated to see them. He decided

to disturb them. With his mantric power he made the disciples unconscious. Ammal meditated and chanted the Sudarsana mantra and his own composition 'Hetipungavastotram' and broke the spell. The angry Kandavaran called Ammal for a debate and when defeated surrender to the Acharya himself. The compassionate guru not only excused him but also made him a Srivaishnava by offering him Panchasamskaras

With the money offered by Kandavaran, Ammal established a beautiful village and named it 'Ladagraharam'.Then he continued his journey. On the way, the Lord himself came as a young Brahmachari and appeased the hunger of the pilgrims with curd and rice. At the same time, there was a big commotion in the temple as the silver vessel with the naivedyam had suddenly disappeared.

Lord Venkateswara Himself announced to the temple authorities that He Himself fed his dear Ammal and his disciples and that they should receive Ammal with all temple honors. Benediction to Nigamatha Mahadesikan Ammal continued his Sri Bhashya Pravachana at the ripe old age of hundred. Appullar, one of his disciples, had gone to visit his sister Totaramba at Thoopul. When he returned to Kanchi, his five year old nephew, Venkatanathan also accompanied him. As soon as he reached Kanchi, he went to see his gorgeous teacher.

At that jiffy, Ammal was lecturing on Sri Bhashyam referring to the portion there on the importance of Vishnu Puranam. He was explaining the greatness of its author Parasarar, by explicating the opening phrase of a hymn, 'Patayi Parasarasatam'.The teacher stopped his discourse abruptly when Appullar and his nephew prostrated before him. Ammal was attracted by the beauty of the child. On enquiry Appullar told him that the child was born after his sister's pilgrimage to Thirumalai hills, when she dreamt of swallowing the big bell of the temple. No wonder the child had a divine look. Ammal blessed the child and tried to pick up the discourse from where it stopped. He could not get the link, nor could anyone present guide him.

To everyone's bolt from the blue, little Venkatanathan prattled the Prakrit phrase and thus reminded the Acharya. Ammal's joy knew no bounds and he tacit that the child was an incarnation. He hallowed the divine child with all his heart and soul that he would establish the Vedanta creed and be a terror to the religious and their false urging. Since he was very old, he asked his disciple Appullar to be Venkatanathan's guru and teach him Sri Bhashya.

That Ammal's grace alone had made the ordinary Venkatanatha into Vedanta Desika has been repeatedly stated by Desikan himself in his works like Adhikarana Saravali, Tattva mukta kalaapam, Nyaya Sidhdhanjanam and Tatvatika. The same sloka with which Ammal blessed Desikan has been included by Desikan in his Sankalpa Suryodayam. Desikan's son also has recorded in the Mangalasasanam of his father about this benediction of Nadadoor Ammal.

Varada-Narayana-Guru : Descendant of Mudali-Andan.koyil annan as the later-day honorific of Varadanarayana-Guru(1389-1448 AD) who was the eighth generation descendant of Mudali-Andan (= dasarathi, nephew of Ramanuja) Andan's eminent positioning administration of srirangam great temple. Andan was appointed by Ramanuja as the chief administrator of periyakoyil ['Sri-Karyam / senapati-Dhurandhara'] and, down the generations, this precious responsibility devolved upon annan. Accordingly, Annan is among the 'sthalattar' of 'Periya Koyil' and receives the temple honors as 'Vadhula-Desikar'. (The full title and name is ' Koyil Kandadai Vadhula-Desikan annan'.)

Varadarat : See Meghanadari

Varanadirsa : Disciple of Nambilla, known as Pillai Lokacarya

Varanga : Yamanucharya 's son who later on gave coaching to Ramanuja and had his younger brother Sottanambi imitated as a disciple of Ramanuja.He had no son. He had set the Sahasra giti to music form

Vararaga : Son of Maladhara disciple of Ramanuja, and his brother Sottainambi and his grandson Pillariyappan

Vatsya varadaguru : Disciple of Ramanuja known as Varadavisnu

Vazhi vantha sampradhayam : See Kidambi acchan

Vedaanthi Azhwan : No source available

Vedanta desikan : Vedanta Desika, certain oblique biographical reference are available within in his works, for example in the introduction to his Sankalpa Suryodayam. Prathivadi Bhayankaram Annan (1300–1400), a junior contemporary of Desika and a disciple of Kumara Varadhacharya (son of Vedanta Desika) gives some details about Vedanta Desika's descent, instruction etc. in his " Saptati Ratna Maalika".The birth of Vedanta Desika was in the Kali yuga year 4370, which corresponds to 1268 AD in the Tamil Year Vibhava, month Purattaasi, on the Dasami day of Sukla Paksha, a Wednesday, in the assemblage of Sravanam (the same as that of Lord of Tirumalai).He was born in Thooppul, near

Tiruttangaa (Himavanam) adjacent to the temple of Deepa Prakaasar in Kanchipuram, the birthplace of Poigai Alwar.

Early life Swamy Desikan was born in Thoopul, near Kanchipuram, (according to legend, on the order of Lord Srinivasa and Padmavathi Thayaar, the God and Goddess of the the divine bell of Narayana took the incarnation as Swamy), as the son of Ananta Suri and Totaramma. Swamy is also considered to be the incarnation of the 'Lord of Seven hills' known as Tirumala Sri venkateswara himself. It is widely revered as Swamy is the incarnation of Ramanuja to once again reform the Vaishnavism and to give the world about its elaborated Treatises. He was named "Venkatanatha" and belonged to him Vishwamithra gothra (lineage).

He was knowledgeable and qualified by a scholarly maternal uncle of his, Kidambi Appullalar who was a direct adherent of Nadadoor Ammal (Grand Nephew of Ramanuja). Appullalar also initiated Venkatanatha into Brahmacharya Upanayanam (sacred thread ceremony) at the age of seven and then to the SriVaishnavaite school of philosophy through Panchasamskara and made him master the Vedas, Divyaprabandam, Puranas and Sastras. By the age of twenty he was a great scholar without rake in the history of Vaishnavism. He got married at the age of 21 to Tirumangai (also known as "Kanakavalli"). Vedanta Desikan rose to the position of an "Acharya" by the age of 27. Desikan was conferred the title of Sarva Tantra Swatantra (one with the capacity for independent thinking and originality in any field), by Ranganayaki thaayar herself, and Swamy was adorned with the title Vedantacharya by the Lord of Sri Rangam Ranganatha, Himself. After becoming the "Acharya" in the Ramanuja convention, Swami Desikan left for Thiruvahindhipuram (near Cuddalore, Tamil Nadu), as per the orders of his Guru Swamy Kidambi Appullar and spent some years there meditate on Garuda and had the darshan of Lord Hayagriva, from then on, Lakahmi haygriva became his individual deity. Swamy composed numerous works of writing in the languages of Sanskrit, Prakit Tamil and Manipravala.These works of Swamy Desikan live throughout the ages speaking about his mastery of language and excellence in the Traditional Knowledge known as Gyana. With the Divine Mercy upon him, he made pilgrimage to Kanchipuram, Tirupati, Brindavan, Ayodya and Badrinath preaching Ramanuja's philosophy through discourses and literary works. After many years of wandering from place to place (the list of which include Melkote and Satyagala, near Kollegal), Desikan returned to Srirangam and settled

there. Swami Desikan left this material world in the year 1370 after living for 101 years. Before leaving this world, he arranged for the continuance of the "Guru Parampara" by initiating his primary disciple, Brahmatantraswatantra Swami, and his son, Kumara Varada Desikan into the Acharya tradition, the many disciples of whom still continue the Ramanuja tradition through various ashrams and mutts.

Touring India Swami went on a pilgrimage to several Kshetras like Tiruk Kadigai, Tiru Ayodhya, Kaasi, Mathura, Avanti, Badarikasramam, Puri, Brindavan, Dwaraka, Triveni, Gaya, Salagramam, Purushothamam, Srikoormam etc., (as can be seen from his description of these places in Act VI of Sankalpa Suryodayam) before returning to Kanchi, he also visited Tiruvallikkeni, Tiruvallur; Srirangam and allied chola Desam, Thirumalirumcholai, Srivilliputtur, Thiruppulani and allied Pandya desam, Thiruvananthapuram and allied Malayala Desam. Swami propagated the Vishistadvaita of Ramanuja and guided people all along the length and Breadth of the nation. Even though he was a very great intellectual, he remained self-effacing. With humility he marks in one of his works as "Vedanta Desika Padhe Vinivesya Baalam" which gives a meaning "Oh! How the Lord had elevated me a mere boy into a knowledgeable Acharya."

Works

His writings include devotional works on deities and Acharyas, treatises on Vishishtadvaita, commentary on the Bhagavad Gita, secret doctrines of Vaishnavism, innovative Tamil poems, epic poems and symbolic dramas in Sanskrit, dialectical works such as Sataushani directed against rival religious schools, treatises on daily life and several other miscellaneous treatises. His gloss on the meanings of the Vedas, merging the teachings of the Alvars and he Prasthanatrayi twisted narration because it open to the elements the Divya Prabhandham of the Alvars to a much wider listeners and elevated it to a status comparable to that of the Vedas in the eyes of the Tamil Vaishnava populace.

As a critic, he was as searchingly critical as he was sympathetically tolerant. He ennobled his poetry through way of life and inflated his philosophy through his poetry. He preaches only what he experienced and consummate what he preached. He was a saint par excellence though he hangs about a Grihasta throughout. It is easier said than done to find such a pleasant-sounding intermingle - of instruction and Practice, of exalted thinking and Simple living. He synthesized in himself an incomparable moral vehemence and an inspired spiritual insight. His works could be roughly off the record into the subsequent group

Vedanta granthas (philosophical works)s ordered by Udaiyavar (Ramanuja), Swami composed 15 Vedanta Granthas like as following :

- Seswara Mimamsa
- Satadhushani
- Adhikarana Saravali,
- Tattva Tika,
- Nyaya Parisuddhi,
- Nyaya Sidhdanjanam,
- Tattva Mukta Kalapam,
- Nikshepa Raksha,
- Saccharitra Raksha,
- Vaditraya Khandanam,
- Dramidopanishath Tatparya Ratnavali,
- Dramidopanishath
- Saram]Vyakhya Granthas (Treatises)
- Hatussloki Bhashyam,
- Stotra (Ratna) Bhashyam,
- Rahasya Raksha,
- Gitartha Sangraha Raksha,
- Tatparya Chandrika,
- Isavasya-Upanishad Bhashyam,
- Sarvartha Sidhdi,
- Adhikarana Darpanam]Nataka Granthas
- (Plays)Sankalpa Suryodayam
-]Kavya Granthas (Poetry Works)
- Subhashita Nivi,
- Yadavabyudayam, Paduka Sahasram,
- Hamsa Sandesam[Anushthana Granthas
- (Religious Regular Practicals)
- Bhagavath Aaradhana Vidhi,
- Yagnyopavita Pratishta]
- Rahasya Granthas
- (Works On Eternal Secrets)
- Sampradaya Parisudhdi,
- Tattva Padavi,



- Rahasya Padavi,
- Tattva Navanitam,
- Rahasya Navanitam,
- Tattva Matruka,
- Rahasya Matruka,
- Tattva Sandesam,
- Rahasya Sandesam,
- Rahasya Sandesa Vivaranam,
- Tattva Ratnavali,
- Tattva Ratnavali Pratipadya Sangraham,
- Rahasya Ratnavali,
- Rahasya Ratnavali Hrudayam,
- Tattva Traya Chulakam,
- Rahasya Traya Chulakam,
- Abhaya Pradana Saram,
- Rahasya Sikhamani,
- Anjali Vaibhavam, Pradana Satakam,
- Upahara Sangraham,
- Sara Sangraham,
- Muni Vahana Bhogam,
- Madhura Kavi Hrudayam,
- Paramapada Sopanam,
- Paramatha Bhangam,
- Hastigiri Mahatmyam,
- Srimath Rahasya Traya Saram,
- Sara Saram,
- Virodha Pariharam,
- Nigama Parimalam,
- Tirumudi Adaivu
- Tamizh Prabandams (Works In Tamil Language)
- Amruta Ranjani,
- Adhikara Sangraham,
- Amrutaswadini,
- Parama Pada Sopanam,
- Para Matha Bhangam,

- Mei-Virata Manmiyam,
- Adaikalappattu, Aruttapanchakam,
- Sri Vaishnava Dinachari,
- Tirucchinnamalai, Panniru Namam,
- Tiru-Mantra Churukku,
- Dwaya Churukku,
- Charama Sloka Churukku,
- Gitartha Sangraham,
- Mumkani Kovai,
- Nava Mani Malai,
- Pantu Kazhal Ammanai Uusal Eesal Prabanda Saram,
- Aahara Niyamam]Stotra Grantams (works of divine hymns of praise)

During his stay in Kanchipuram, Swami took the occasion to visit several shrines in and near Kanchi and composed lyrics of unsurpassed gorgeousness on the Lords in the various shrines. Swamy personally involves himself in enjoying the divine beauty of the Lord of Kanchipuram known by name a Varadaraja swamy in most of his works. Many of the following hymns are composed by Swamy in Kanchipuram and in Thiruvahindrapuram. prodigy says that when in Srivilliputtur, he unruffled "Godha Sthuthi", the presiding divine being of the town Andal was so pleased that she ordained that the Stotra should be recited during her Utsavam days along with Divya Prabhandams. To this day, this recitation is being followed in Srivilliputtur.

The said "Godha Sthuthi" remains as a Suprabatham for Andal. In glorifying this Aacharya there is a very big shrine dedicated for Vedanta Desika in Srivilliputtur and a separate festival for 10 days is being celebrated till today in the name of "Sri Gotha Sthuthi Uthsavam" in Srivilliputtur.He Hamsa-Sandesha

Hamsa sandesha or the Message of the Swan" is a medieval love poem set in southern India. Lovesick Rama, the epic hero, petitions a swan to carry a message to his beloved Sita, who has been abducted by the demon king, Ravana.

As the swan's route winds through South India, it honors the land which Rama and Sita made sacred, whose gorgeous landscape and peoples it describes in full. The Swan shoots like a projectile across the ocean to the island of lanka and there he sustains the pining and near-suicidal Sita with his message. But more than this, the poet also pays deep reverence

to Kālidāsa's "Cloud Messenger". This work is four things: a fine poem in its own right a redolent retelling of the Ramayana; a pilgrim's guide to the holy sites of South India; and a work that develops the poetics of Kālidāsa's "Meghadŧa" and gives them a devotional and heroic twist.Paaduka Sahasram

Paaduka Sahasram or "1008 Verses on the Sandals of the Lord" is considered to be Desikan's Magnum Opus. The whole work is a monument for superlative devotion and superb poetry, all in one night's intuition, - an overnight marvel of one thousand verses! It was done by him just as a implementation of a competition committed to as a challenge by his supporter. All this was composed by Desika (as he puts it, by the refinement of the paduka of the Divine) in just one neighborhood of the night, truly the third quarter. The earlier two quarters were devoted by him, as soon as he accepted the commitment, to yoga and yoga-nidra (=sleep induced by yoga and resulting in intuition).Paduka Sahasram has 32 "Padhadhi"s. Reading each padhadhi everyday, thereby completing in 32 days. Many believed to have achieved their wishes by completing this exercise. Doing parayana of paduka sahasram helps to manage moksha. Astonishing verbal communication, chitra-padams were used in these slokas. Mainly sung on the padukas of Lord Rama, Lord Renganatha and Lord Krishna, praying for attaining Moksha. Paduka Sahara Parayanam yields miraculous benefits and self-realization.

The Sloka for Moksha : Prathibhayaha Param Thathvam Bribrathi PadmalochanamPachimayam Avasthayam Paduke Muhyatho Mama There are many stunning slokas like full sloka is constructed with word "ya". Likewise one sloka has been constructed with a word "padapa".Practicing / Reciting Paduka Sahasram takes one to Bhakthi Marga Importance in Srivaishnava tradition A poet, philosopher, logician, and a scrupulous Anushtatha he took upon himself the task of upholding the concepts preached by Ramanuja. It is because of him that 'Ramanuja Darsanam' came to be recognized by the world. Vedanta Desika was the brightest star in the firmament of Visishtad-vaita next only to Ramanuja. No writer among the followers of Ramanuja fought for the rightful place for Divya Prabandhams as did desika. His prolific compositions in pure Tamil, pure Sanskrit, Praakrit and Manipravala bear ample testimony to the fact of his genius. Even while young, he used to attend the Kalakshepam discourses of Nadaadur Ammal along with his maternal uncle, Appullaar (Kidambhi Appullaar- descendent of Kidambi Aacchaan- Acharya Ramanuja's direct disciple) who was also his

Acharya. Before the age of 20, he excelled in all that a person ought to learn.

His exposure to Vedas, Divya Prabandhas and Sastras at a very early age provided him with an encyclopedic knowledge and this treasure house of knowledge was matched only by his exemplary modesty and humility- which rarely go together among scholars. The Archa murthi of Hayagriva which was originally worshipped by Goddess Saraswati and handed over by her to Bhagavad Ramanuja was being subsequently worshipped by Pillaan and Pundarikaaksha. This Pundarikaaksha was the son-in-law of Appullaar, and was working as the Rajaguru of the Rayar Samasthaanam in the north. As ordered by the Lord, Pundarikaaksha handed over the murthi to Desika with royal honors.

Justification and recuperation of Srirangam In about 1312 A.D, during the Muslim invasion of Srirangam by Malik Kafur, the General of Allaudin sultan of Delhi and in 1323 A.D during the invasion of Ulugh khan there was a great commotion.[11]Fear gripped the minds of everyone as to what might happen to the temple and the Lords Archa murthis. To inspire his fellows, Vedanta Desika composed the poem "abhIti stava". The Acharyas deliberated under the guidance of the centenarian Master, Sudarsana Bhattar. It was decided that one group under Pillai Lokacharya (who was equally advanced in age) was to take the Utsava Murthi and his consorts covered up in a palanquin to Tirupati. The party under Sudarsana Suri was to stay put at Srirangam, after erecting a stone wall in front of the Sannidhi of Moolavar to cover him from the sight of the marauders.

Swami took Sudarsana Bhattars two sons and the manuscripts of shruta Prakaasika (the elaborate commentary on Sri Bhashyam chronicled by Sudarsana Bhattar during the Kalakshepams of Nadadur Ammaal) to safety at Tiru narayana puram via Satya mangalam. But, before he could do that, the Muslim army attacked them and massacred many of them. Swami hid himself with his wards in the midst of corpses and spent the night. In the morning, they moved towards Satyakalam village in Karnataka en route to Tirunarayana puram. After the sack, his old classmate Vidyaranya visited to assess the situation. Later, Vedanta Desika's mantra-disciple, the Brahmin Gopanarya was among the three generals deployed by the founder of the fledgling Vijayanagara Empire to recover the south from Muslim forces led by the Madurai sultanate. Gopanarya, inspired by a dream involving Vishnu according to legend, vowed to restore Srirangam.

Having first captured Ginger, he temporarily housed the Srirangam idols moved back from Tirupati. Then, having defeated the formidable horse archers of the enemy, he reinstalled the idols in Srirangam, and invited back Vedanta Desika. Vedanta Desika returned with his family, and composed a poem in praise of this accomplishment. This poem was inscribed on the wall of the temple upon its re sanctification.

Salutation A 'Thanian' is a 'laudatory dedication verses' composed on an 'Aacharya' (in simple terms [Guru]) in Sri Vaishnavism by one more great Aacharya who either being the pupil of the former or by a person who was greatly admired by the former. The 'Thanian' of Swamy Desikan are (in Itrans)"ramanuja-daya-patram jñana-vairagya-bhushanamshrimad-venkata-natharyam Vande, vedanta deshikam" This taniyan was composed by Periya Parakala Jeeyar swamy of Parakala Mutt on the day of star of Hastham, the star of Sri Varadharaja Perumal of Kanchipuram in the Tamil month of Avani. This taniyan is recited before starting Divya Prabandham the works of Alwars by Vadakalayars.

The meaning of this taniyan is "I salute the great Venkata Natha also called Vedanta Acharya and Lion among poets and logicians and who was well adorned by both Knowledge and discretion and who well deserved the grace of Athreya Ramanuja who also had the same name." His son Kumara Varadacharya has composed a thaniyan on Desika. This thaniyan is recited before reading Sri Bhasya of Ramanuja and any Sanskrit stotra of swami desikan. In Itrans, it is:" shrImAn venkaTa-natharyah kavitarkika-Kesari Vedantacharya-varyo me sannidhattam sadA hridi "The meaning of this verse is "the great lion of poets and the great preceptor of Vedanta (that Swami Venkatanatha was) should reside in his heart always." It is good to note that, Kumara Varadhacharya was a great scholar and has also composed "Pillai Anthathi" in Tamil and "Sri Desika Managalam" in Sanskrit, on Vedanta Desika.

These two works are chanted in most of the Vadakalai Divya Desam till today. This has a recorded history of past 650 years."Seeronru Tooppul Thiruvenkata Mudaiyanpar onra chonna Pazhamozhiyul- Oronruthane Amaiyadho Dharaniyil Vazhvorkkuvanerap Pomalavum Vazhvu "The meaning of this verse is "For a person who desires to ascend up to the Heavens, even a single statement of the great Acharya, Tooppul Tiuvenkadamudaiyan (Vedanta Desika) uttered by him for the benefit of humanity would be sufficient to lift him up to his desired In fact Deshikan knew eight languages !!! They are :

1. Sanskrita
2. Prakrita
3. Tamizh
4. Mahaaraashtri
5. Maagadhi
6. Shuraseni
7. Laata
8. GaudaSwamy

Vedantacarya : Surname of Vedanta desikan

Venkatanatha : Surname of Vedanta desikan

Vilanjolai Pillai : Principle disciple of Pillai Lokacharya and transmitted many esoteric doctrines (rahasyArtha) to Tiruvaymozhi Pillai, the acharya of Manavaala Maamunigal.

Villipuththur Bagavar : Tiruvayindrapuram there lived a Srivaisnava known as Villipuththur Bagavar. When he went to the river to perform his daily anusha-tanams, he would always go to a different part of the river and not to the place where most others would go. One time the Brahmins who were in their area of the river asked Bagavar, O Swami, why do you not perform your anushatanams in our place? Bagavar replied, we are srivaishnavas that follow Ramanuja. We perform these nityanushtanams only as services to naryana.You are Brahmin that follow Varnashrama dharama. You perform the nityanushtanams as part of your Varna. Therefore, the two of us cannot mix. Bhagavar with a Brahmin who had unspoken the true nature of the soul or was a sanyasi

Vinjamoor : He is one of the 74 Simhasanathipathis fixed by Ramanuja Gothram: Koushikavedam: - Yajur Vedam. If not for Ramanuja, the Vinjamoor ancestry would never have been following all the glorious Sri Vaishnava Sampradhayam. In poorvasramam, Arulala perumal Emperumanar was Yagnyamoorthi, an advatin. He lost a tarkam with Ramanuja and got rehabilitated into Vaishnavite by Ramanuja. His guru bhakti was very great. A small incident venerate his bhakti.

Once a visitor came to Srirangam and asked a bhagavatha as to where be Emperumanar madam. The bhagavatha in turn questioned, "Which Emperumanar madam you want. There are two emperumanar here". When Arulala perumal emperumanar heard this, he felt that this is a great abacharam done to his guru. How can any body equate me to my guru? He the immediately demolished his madam and took a place in emperumanar madam.

Vishnu chithar : Disciple of Thirukurugai piran pillan born in keelagam year in the month of Vaikasi with swathi as the birth star (Kali 4169) at Thiruvallarai. He was also known as Engal Alwan. After Pillan he was doing siddhantha pravachanam to Sri Vaishnavas in Srirangam. He has authored a vyaakyana grantham for Vishnu puraanam which was called Vishnu siddheeyam.

Vishwaksenar : Sena Mudaliyaar is said to be the chief of the army of Lord Sriman Narayanaas Daasarathi ruled the Srirangam Temple Administration like Senai Muthaliyaar (Vishvaksena), Daasarathi was given the name Mudali-Aandaan by Ramanuja. Mudaliandan (Dasarathi, Yathiraja Paduka, Vadhoola Desikan, Vaishnav Siro Bushaa, Aandan,) was a relative, disciple and associate of Ramanuja, the codifier of the philosophy of Srivaishnavism.Daasarathi (Mudaliandan) is amsam of Lord Rama.

Mudaliandan was born in 1027 CE at Pachhai Vaarana Perumal Sannidhi (referred to as "NazarethPettai" today) in Thondai mandalam, in the state of Tamil Nadu in South India. His parents were Vaadhoola Kula Thilaka Sri Anantha Naarayana Dikshithar and Nachiyarammal (Ramanuja's sister). Daasarathi, as he was named, was Ramanuja's Priya Bhagineya in the parlance of the age. Born to his service, and known as "Yathiraaja Paaduka", he enjoyed a special association with Emperumanar (Ramanuja) all his life. Having begun his learning with his father, Daasarathi became a pillar of support to Emperumanar, acclaimed by him as being indistinguishable to his Tridandam - his staff off office as a sanyasi. However, Emperumanar kept him busy in many ways, as he was a capable executive and proprietor. Ramanuja, latter, started to depend on Daasarathi a lot. While going to kaveri for his daily bath. He used to lean on Daasarathi for support. One day, when Ramanuja forfeit everything at the time of taking Sannyaasam (ascetic) he did not give up Daasarathi, as that order stipulate that all kith and kin should be surrender.

To this Ramanuja replied that Daasarathi was an exception as he was his triplestaff (tirudanda) (the same reason he gave to Tirukkottiyur Nambi) and added "If it is possible for me an ascetic to give up my staff only then can Daasarathi leave me. He, though a bodily relation, is yet a kin to my soul." Thus Daasarathi became the first and foremost disciple and thus how he was named as Mudali Andan by Ramanuja

Mudaliandan Dhanian (by Kandadai Aandan)" paduke Yati-rajasya Kathayanti Yad-Akhyayatasya dasarathe: paadav Sirasa dharayaam yaham". Meaning: Yathiraja's paduka (Ramanuja'r Lotus feet) is what

he is known as. Hence we forfeit our respect to Daasarathi's paduka (Daasarathi's Lotus feet).

He was later to be known as "Sriranganaatha Divyaalaya Nirvahana Dhurandhara" - the genius who well thought-out, under Emperumanar tutelage, the administration of the Ranganathaswamy Temple.

He is mentioned in the Koyil Ozhugu, the register of Ranganathaswamy Temple, in glowing terms:

"Muthaliyaandaanum Kurattilirunthu koyil Kariyaththaiyum ulle Karuvulaka Vaasalile-yirunthu thirumeni upachaaraththayum, Sannathiyile Irunthu thiruppavala upchaarangalayum Udayavar niyamanappadi Aaraaynthu Kondu Anaiththazhagum Kandarula Pannik-Kondirunthaar".(Roughly translated as: Mudaliandan administered the following, according to Ramanuja's orders, the many works of the temple, the services to the Lord, and the works of the Shrine.)

Mudaliandaan is most well known for his lapidary saying, here given transliterated Manipraavaalam: "oru Malaiyil Ninru, Oru Malaiyil Thaavum simha share-eraththil janthukkal pole Bhaashyakaarar Samsaara-langanam panna avarOdundaana Kudalthudakkaale naam Dhdheerdara-avuthomenru muthaliya and Aruli-ch-cheytha paasuram". This is roughly translatable as follows:

When a lion soars from a mountain to another, all the human being that lives on his body go with him. Even so, when Udayavar rise above this world, all of us who are coupled with him benefit from this as well.On udayavar's instructions Andaan went to Belur and converted people to Srivaishavism and installed pancha Narayana temples at various locations.The temples are:

Veera Narayana in Belur,

Keerthi Narayana in Talakadnambhi

Narayana in Thondannurvijaya

Narayana in Gadagthirunarayana or Cheluva Narayana in Melkote

Mudaliandan ascend to Sri Vaikuntam which is believed to be by the year 1136.

Visnuchitta : Grands of Manavalamamuni

Vittala deva raya : King and become Vishnu Vardhana. Ramanuja traveled eastward and came to Tondanur, the second capital of the Hoysala Empire. Vittala Devaraya was Hoysala ruler. His daughter was suffering from some psychological poor health. The king sent for Ramanuja who

also became a good physician by the time. Ramanuja cured the illness of the princess, to the delight of the king. He was drawn to Ramanuja's faith and became a Srivaishnava. He then onwards came to be known as Vishnu- vardhana

Yadavapraksh : According to Sri Vaisnava traditions, he was a very renowned scholar of his times and students came to his school at Kancipuram from great distances to be his devotees. He is said to have been a follower of Samkaracarya. The traditional biographiesof Ramanujacarya paint him in very dark colors. Ramanuja is said to have disagreed with his teacher over the numerous Advaitic interpretations of the Scriptures. The final break between the two is recorded as a very emotional event. Yadava Prakasa was expounding the meaning of the phrase 'Kapsyasam pundarikam' in Chandogya Upanisad according to Samkaracarya's interpretation (' red like the buttocks of a monkey'), when tears of suffering fell from Ramanuja's eyes.

When the teacher asked the cause of tears, Ramanuja replied that he was pained at such a lighthearted interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, and proposed a new etymological interpretation ('the Lord whose eyes are red like a lotus blossomed by the Sun'). It has also been speculated that he followed Mandana Misra's school of Advaita Vedanta. His philosophy, in reality, is a form of the Bhedabheda-vada.

Later in his life, he is said to have accepted Ramanuja as his teacher under the influence of his mother, who was a aficionada of Lord Varada. After inititiating him to the Sri Vaisnava order of ascetics, Ramanuja granted him a new title- Govinda Jiyar, and asked him to compose a compendium of rules for Sri Vaisnava ascetics.

This compendium was named 'Yatidharma-samuccaya.' Works of Yadavaprakasa

1. Commentary on the Brahmasutras: This is refuted by Ramanuja at several places. In his Srutaprakasika, Sudarsana Suri reproduce the gist of his elucidation at the end of almost every 'adhikarana'.
2. Commentary on the Bhagavad Gita: This is referred to by Sudarsanacarya in Srutaprakasika, by Venkatanatha in Tatparyadipika and by Vyasaraja in the Tatparyachandrika
3. Vaijayantikosa: This is a lexicon and has been published. Of all the famous Sanskrit lexicons available, this is the longest one.
4. Yatidharmasamuccaya: This is a blue-collar on the duties of ascetics, and is the most widespread text in its class. It is said to have been written upon the wish of Ramanuja, his past aficionada twisted Guru.

5. Annotations on Pingala's Chhanda Sutras: Again, a very scholarly work and explains the chronological progression of the laukika chhandas from Vedic chhandas
6. Taittiriya Sarvanumkramani Citations from works of Yadavaprakasa: Few accurately certifications from his works are found but his views are alluded to in several places. A. Vadaratnavali of Visnu dasacarya: Visnudasacarya is a follower of the Madhva's Dvaita school of Vedanta.

In chapter 5 of this work, the following verse of Yadavaprakasa is cited-

"The Veda is weird, the Buddhist scriptures are dreamlike; the influence of one and the other is out of this world; The knower is unreal; astuteness and its fruit are weird-You and the Buddhists have consum-mate the same result." This doggerel is for all intents and purposes to be found in the Vaijayantikosa of Yadavaprakasa.

B. Vedarthasamgraha of Ramanuja:

"The third school (of vedantins) assume that the personality soul and Brahman are different and non different: It follows that Brahman is identical with soul and that in the same way as Saubhari is different from himself, the Lord is dissimilar from his incarnation, everyone is different from the Lord." According to Sudarsanasuri's annotations on Vedarthasamgraha called Tatparyadipika, this is the judgment of Yadavaprakasa.

C. Sri Bhasya of Ramanuja

D. Sarvartha Siddhi of Venkatanatha or Vedantadesika

At I.69, the following view on the theory of Time (kala) is endorsed to Yadavaprakasa- "Kala is beginningless and endless, but continuously transforms itself through moment by which the divisions of time as hours, days and nights can be spanned, through which again transformation of all changeable objects can be measured. In this view, the conditions are relative from the point of view of each person, who collects the passing time units and forms his own configuration of minutes, hours and days from his own point of reckoning according to his needs."

E. Tattvamukta-kalapa of Venakatanatha or Vedantadeshika

1. Action removes the stumbling block in the way of accomplish the moksa, while knowledge actually leads to moksa. Thus, he subscribes to a modified jnana-karma smuccayavada.
2. At 2.16, a view is attributed to Yadavaprakasa according to which "the individual souls are parts of Brahman which is a pure being. Just as the

atoms in the Universe are many and differ from one another and from Brahman, the individual are also different from one another and from Brahman. in this view, there is no problem in accounting for the difference that exists between the happiness or suffering of different individuals and also their emancipation."

3. Yadavaprakasa defends the theory of Brahmaparinamavada against the objection that the defects inherent in the world would apply to Brahman also by stating that consciousness is present in all things in the Universe. If it is not directly experienced, it is due to the fact that it is latent, in the same way as odour, though present in the gem (being a material object), is not cognized. That consciousness is present everywhere is proved on the strength of the scriptural texts.

The Upanishadic text says: Everything is Brahman. Another text points out that Brahman itself is constituted of the three entities- the Lord, Consciousness and the Insentient. In view of the fact that the whole Universe is Brahman, the Upanishad even speaks of fishermen as Brahman. Thus, Brahman which is capable of undergoing manifold modifications is present in everything in the Universe. That is, the Brahman which is constituted of cit, acit and Isvara in an unmanifest form becomes manifest as cit, acit and Isvara. The example given to explain this is a piece of multicolored cloth. The colors present in the three different threads become manifest in the woven cloth.

Brahman is the material cause only in an indirect sense and Yadavaprakasa admits the concept of sakti as associated with Brahman.

Sarvartha Siddhi I.69:Yadavaprakasa states that kala is beginningless and endless but continuously transforms itself through moments by which the divisions of time as hours, days and nights can be spanned, through which again the transformation of all changeable objects can be measured. In this view, the conditions are relative from the point of view of each person, who collects the passing time units and forms his own conception of minutes, hours and days from his own point of calculation, according to his needs. F. Tatparyacandrika of Vedantadesika:

1. On Gita 2.28: "Avyaktavyaktadisabdanam prakrtyavasthaviseshadi-paratvabhramavyudasaya yadavaPrakasOk tasbrahmadiparatvasya ca prakrtanubyogajnapanayoktam" From this fragment, it appears that Yadava Prakasa connected the terms Ăvyakta' and Vyakta' with states of Brahman while according to Desika, they are states of Prakrti.

This shows that Yadava Prakasa was a pantheist.

2. On Gita 3.10: Here, the reading of Yadava Prakasa is given as 'Sahayajnaah' and rejected.
3. On Gita 3.15: "Yadavaprakasadyuktam Brahmasabdasya sphota diparat vamak sara nam tadvancakatvadikam catattprakriya-dushanadevanirastam." From this it appears that Yadavaprakasa accepted Sphotavada.
4. On Gita 3.36: Here. A textual variant in Yadava's commentary is noticed and dismissed. Curiously, this variant reading is identical to the one occurring in the longer recension of Gita comprising of 745 verses. 5. On Gita 11.37: Here, Desika reads

5 additional verses that occur in the commentary of Yadava Prakasa (1 of Arjuna followed by 4 of Krsna followed by 3 more. He then states that an additional verse is also found after 11.39. Desika declares all these verses as spurious. Incidentally, none of these verses is found in the longer version of Gita100 although some are found in the Kasmirian recension of the text commented upon by Abhinavagupta.

6. On Gita 11.53: Here, the commentary on Gita 6.42 is quoted. The comments state that higher and higher yogins respectively become denizens of Svetadvipa or the planet of Narayana, soldier of Visnu, head soldier, sentry, fan wielding servant of Vishnu, a minister of Visnu and finally he becomes co-existent with Visnu." From this citation, it is clear that Yadava was an ardent Vaisnava.
7. On Gita 13.1: Here, the view of Yadava that 'the last three chapters of Gita are of the nature of Khilas (Appendices) that discuss several topics' is stated and criticized."
8. On Gita 18.66: Yadava is reported to have commented that by 'sarvadharman parityajaya' is meant abandonment of 'virodhi dharmas' (evil actions). G. In Srutaparakasika of Sudarsana Suri (Chatuhssutri portion): 1. In the introduction Sudarsana says that in his Bhasya on Brahmasutra 1.1.1, Yadava raises a doubt regarding the meaning of the word "Brahman" and then concludes that "Knowledge of Brahman alone is enjoined for man- this is the meaning of the sutra. Knowledge of Pradhana and other entities in the systems of Kapila and Sugata etc. are not implied here." Later, Sudarsana (pg. 25) states that according to Yadava, the Brahmasutras were a natural sequel to the Purva Mimamsa Sutras. 2. Meaning of Avidya in Isopanishad 11: Sudarsana Suri quotes Yadava's interpretation of the word as- "Avidya sabda Upeyavirodhinivartakakarmavaciti." i.e. The word 'avidya'



denotes those Karmas that are a hindrance in the efforts to attain salvation, i.e., evil actions and the like. This corresponds to his commentary on Gita). 3.: Sudarsana Suri states that in his commentary on Brahmasutra1.1.1,Yadavastatesthat "Dukhatrayabhighatajnana ntaramta-dupdeshopaye purusa prav rter eva hetoh- Brahmaiva jijnasa, na tu pradhanadini." Thus, Yadava interprets Brahmasutra 1.1.1 according to Samkhya Sutra 1.1 but states that the means of removal of threefold afflictions is not knowledge of Pradhana, as stated in the Samkhya Sastra, but rather a knowledge of Brahman- this is the import of the first sutra.Sudarshana Suri actually reproduces the interpretation of Yadavaprakasha on each adhikarana of Brahmasutras- we have not dealt with it here. Views of Yadavaprakasa:

These can be discerned from the citations above. In short, according to Yadava Prakasa, Brahman is of the nature of pure Universal Being, endowed with 3 distinct powers as consciousness, matter and God, and through these 3 powers it passes through the various phenomenal changes which are held up in it and at the same time, are one with it, just as the one ocean appears in diverse forms as foam, billows and waves.

Yogneswara : See karparasaa Mahalaksmi

Y

Yamunacharya : He is the grand -Acharya (pracharya) of Ramanujacharya (1017 AD to 1137 AD). He established the principles of Visishtadhvaita as an expansion of the doctrines housed in his grandfather's treatises and elaborated on those doctrines with authoritative scriptures such as Sruthis, Bhagavadh Gita, Azhwar's pasurams and Selected Satvikapuranas.He is the one who composed the earliest Stotras of Srivaishnava Sampradayam: He wrote the following works great in content and yet lucid.

(1)Chathusloki

(2)Stotra ratnam

(3)Siddhitrayam consisting of (i) AtmaSiddhi. (ii) Samvitsiddhi and (iii) Iswara Siddhi

(4)Agama Pramanya

(5)Maha Purusha Nirnayam

(6)Gitartha Sangraha

(7)Nityam

(8)Maayaa Vaadha Khandanam

Desikan says in Yathiraja Sapthathi: Vighaahe Yaamunam Theertham Saadhu Brindaavane StithamNirasthaJih Magha Sparse Yatra Krishnah Kritaa Dharah (meaning) Alavandar who learned Vedantha Arthas at the feet of Manakaal Nambi was not only the one residing on the banks of Yamuna (Yamunai Thuraivan) by name but was also like the clear flowing waters of the river Yamuna.

Lord Krishna got rid of the cruel Kaalinga from the river and made its water pure and clear for all to drink. He was most delighted when he played with the Gopis of Brindavanam in the Yamuna waters. Likewise, Alavandar vanquished those who misinterpreted the Vedas and established Vedanta Siddhanta. Just as one can derive supreme pleasure by bathing in the holy waters of Yamuna, one can enjoy supreme Bhagavad Gunanubhava by immersing in the lucid granthas of Yaamuna Once an arrogant Vidwan by name Akkiyalvan was challenging and humiliating learned men. Yamuna (as a 16 year old boy) accepted the challenge and went to the court to argue with him. The queen was so impressed with the boy that she told the king and pursuaded him to give away half the kingdom if he won in the debate and offered herself to be thrown to wild dogs, if the boy failed. Akkiyalvan asked the boy to state three propositions positive or negative which he offered to counter. And, if he could not, the boy would be declared the winner.Yamuna asked (or stated) three statements. He asked Akkialwan to counter.

(i) Your mother is not a barren woman- Naturally he could not counter saying that his mother is a barren woman (he is very much standing in front of Yamunacharya).

(ii) The king is a righteous and powerful ruler - Obviusoly he can not afford to conuter this.and

(iii) The queen is a model of chastity. - oh no! Never can he counter this.Akkialvan accepted defeat and the King now asked Yamuna to disprove his own statements.Yamuna clarified by observing the following:-

(i) The sacred laws say that an only son is no son at all. So,Akkiyalvan's mother was as good as barren in the eyes of the law

(ii) The king cannot be called righteous when he entertained such an arrogant person to be his chaplain and his not dismissing the chaplain showed that the king was indeed powerless.

(iii) According to the Sruti texts, every woman is wedded first to Soma, then Gandharva and then Agni before marrying her earthly partner. The

queen was no exception and therefore cannot be deemed a model of chastity (This is only to drive home a point that logic can not be the solutionfully. One needs to fall back on Saasthras and Sruthi/Smrthis for pramanams.) The King sent Akkiyalvan out of his kingdom and gave Yamuna half his kingdom. The queen hailed the boy as "Alavandhaar"- One who came to save me.Thus, Alavandar has become the king and could not attend to spiritual pursuits further.Meanwhile, Rama Misra (Manakaal Nambhi) was trying to catch Yamunacharya's attention to fulfil his promise to his Guru to install Alavandar as the spiritual successor to Nathamuni..

But, he could not meet Alavandar, being a king now to discuss the matter. He came out with an idea. He came to know that the king relishes thoodhu vaLai keerai (kind of spinach). His supplied that spinach to the royal kitchen daily. After few months, he stopped. The king asked the cook as to why the spinach is not being served. They replied saying "one brahmin used to supply. He does not even nowadys." Alavandhar told them that he would like to meet him, if he comes next. Next day, they met each other.Rama misrar told Alavandhar that his grandfather Nathamuni had passed on the family wealth (kula dhanam) that needs to be handed over to Sri Alavandhar. Alavandhar said, "in that case, give me that." "No. It is not here. Come with me.". He took him all the way to Srirangam Koil.

He showed Alavandhar, the Divya Mangala Vigraham of Sri Ranganathan. Looking at the Lord, in such divine splendour, the divine beauty- and looking (with tears rolling down his cheeks) at those "kariyavaagi, pudai parandhu, miLirndha, sevvariyOdiya, neeNda, ap periya vaaya kaNgaL." (Those dark, well spread, shining, ruddy lined, long, large eyes)- He bursts out:I have nothing to give you. None at all.I have any quailifications. I am not religious.

What a Great person my Grand Father was! What am I! I have no one but You(the embodiment of mercy! Compassion!- daya) as my refuge. He performed Saranagathy at the Lotus Feet of Lord Ranganathan. Na Dharma Nishtosmi na Chaatma Vedi na bhaktimaan tvacchara-naravinde Akinchanoananyagatih Saranya! Tvat Paadamoolam Saranam Prapadye. (Sthothra Rathnam- 22nd sloka)Oh you worthy of being sought as refuge! I am not one established in Dharma, nor am i a knower of the self. I have no fervent devotion to your lotus-feet. Utterly destitute as I am, and having none else for resort, I take refuge under your feet. (Translation by Adidevananda) Rama Misra explained the purpose of his mission

and requested Alavandar to take over the reins of spiritual leadership bequeathed to him by his illustrious grandfather, Nathamuni. Alavandar took to Sannyas and was then known as yamuna muni.

Alavandhar's naichyAnusanthAnam (feeling lowly nature of oneself-the jivathma as compared to the Lord's Greatness, Kalyana gunas) is very beautifully reflected in Sthothra Rathnam (total 65 slokas in this work-reported to be an elaborate refelction of Dwayam). They are more appropriate and applicable to us (and not Alavandhar). He has composed for us only. Aparaaadha-sahasra-bhaajanampatitam bhiima-Bhavaarnav'odare; Agatim saran'aagatam hare! krpayaa kevalam Aatmasaat kuru. Oh SrI Hari! pray, make me your own out of sheer grace - me, who has fallen into the depths of the terrible ocean of worldly existence, and who, being resortless, have sought refuge at your feet. Amaryadha: Kshudra: chalamadhi: asuyaprasavabhu: Ruthagno dhurmani smara paravaso vanchanapara: Nrusamsa: papishta: kathama-hamitho Dukkajaladhe : aparath uttheerna: tava parichareyam charanayo :What a soul stirring sloka! One can not but cry reciting this, (imagining himself as the hero:-(of the sloka)

Alavandhar describes himself as:amaryadha: - one who has crossed the bounds of established ruleskshudra: - engaging in trivial /worldly / material/sensual pursuitschalamadhi:- never steady; (chanchalam), fickle mindasuya prasava bhu : Place where jealousy is bornkruthagana: Ungrateful onedhurmanee:- ill feelings towards fellow human beings;smara paravasa : Fallen into the gamut of desires and sensual Implusesvanchanapara: skillfully deceiving others (at cheating others)nrusamsa: - engaging in violent Actspaapishta: (Incorrigible sinner - maha Paapiswamy Desikan says- Ahamasmi aparadha Chakravartthi. (also meant for us).Swamy desikan also writes in Subashithanivi:I bow with mind, speech and body to that great Lord, who is the best among all persons, who approaches others of His own accord without waiting for them to take the initiative because of His innate goodness and agreeable nature, as also to myself who is chief among the wicked and who harms others without reason, there being one thing in common to us both, viz.,that the good or evil done to us once has the effect of wiping off all the good and or evil done before.

If what God, in His wisdom, thinks is good, though not really good, has been done to Him even once by a person, all the wrongs committed by him earlier is forgiven by Him. Therefore, I bow to Him. In my case, if once what I consider wrong, which may not really be so,is done to me by

someone, all the good done by him to me till then is completely forgotten by me. Fie upon me! Ingratitude-being the basest of vices, it has been mentioned at the very beginning.

What a Naicchiyanusanthanam Alavandhaar's works are the ones which give us crystal clear jnanam about our nparalleled unambiguous Visishtadvaita Srivaishnava philosophy, the presence of which can never take us to the wrong roads. After taking so many countless births, We, (dasars (servants) of Alavandhar), who have been blessed to be born (due to the limitless, unconditional grace of the Lord Sriya: Pathi Sriman Narayanan) as Srivaishnava in this birth, and have realized and taken up the Prapatti Maargam (due to the Nirhethuka Krupa of the Lord), who are bequeathed with such Great acharyan ?

Yamunacharyan, the learning of whose Sri Sukthis enable us to know the tatvatrayam crystal clear and upayam and upeyam (means and goal) perfectly, and keep us reminded of the same always, will never ever read (hereafter) works of those who belong to other religions.? Says Desikan in Adhikaara Sangraham. Neela vandhu inru Vidhivagaiyaal Ninaivonriya naam/ Meelavandhu Innum Vinai Udambu onril Vizhundhu Uzhalaa(dhu) Alavandhaar Ena venru arul thandhu Vilangiya seer/ Alavandhaar adiyom padiyom ini Alvazakke.Yanja moorthy

During the period of Ramanuja, there lived a great "Advaitha" proponent named 'Yagyamurthy' near a place called "Vinjimoor" in the plains of Tirumala hills in the present Andhra Pradesh state of India. He was an extremely knowledgeable scholar who won over many battles over his peers in "Tarkha Vaadham" or "Tarkham". Tarkham refers to the art of debating, making counter points to disprove an already established theory or practice.

A lot of analytical skills are needed to do tarkha vaadam. Yagyamurthy, the great intellect, was highly successful in tarkha vaadam as a result of which he made his oppoents embrace "Advaitha" philosophy. In those days, when an opponent accepts defeat in an argument, he should and he would embrace the philosophy of the winner at once. Yagyamurthy becomes popular: As days progressed, his victories grew by leaps and bounds. Yagyamurthy started to go to different places near and far to win over his contemporaries and bolster the roots of "Advaitha".

But how far could he go and how could he? Just because he went on converting loads of folks to Advaitha, would it mean that "Advaitha" is the right way of interpreting Vedas? The answer is definitely a "No".

Universal and eternal truth is one and that is the one which stands the test of time. Advaitha came into this world to counter the Soonyavaadhis mainly who advocated the concept of "nothing". It was successful in that aspect and just that; it was not comprehensive in any way but was good enough to attack on Vedas by some miscreants to Sanathana dharmam (Hinduism). So we do recognize that Yagyamurthy should be and will be corrected at some point of time.

But during those times, who could have dared to face Yagyamurthy in tarkha vaadam? Who can put an end to this invincible scholar? The simplest answer to the toughest task was obviously our great Jagadaacharyan, Ramanuja who did the task deftly. Tarkham between Yagyamurthy and Ramanuja:

Lord Sriman Narayanan planned for their meet at Srirangam as a part of his leela. As usual, the rules of the debate were laid clearly before it began. Ramanujar was certainly very confident about our Sri Vaishnava Sampradhayam, but is now going to undergo a stern test in the form of Yagyammurthy. The debate started and both these great philosphers started to argue in their stand. Attacks, counter attacks and defenses ensued from both parties. At one point it looked that the battle would never end. Yagyamuthy challenged Ramanuja on a key point for which Swami could not retaliate immediately. The day's battle was regarded as "Over" and was set to continue the following morning. Swami was very worried about how to win and establish Vishitadvaita.

He closed his eyes and prayed to his "Aaradhana Perumal –Varadarajan" (Arulala perumal at Thirukachi also known as Kaanchipuram). He pleaded to Him, "If the great Vishitadvaita sampradhayam which was nurtured and propelled by the likes of Nammazhwar, Naadhamunigal and Aalavandhar would have to come to an end because of an ignorant person like him (Raamanuja), then what a disgrace he had caused to Vishitadvaita philosophy". He felt very bad for himself and believed that his "Perarulalan" would always come to his rescue. And sure he did.

The same night, Arulala perumal came in Swami Ramanujar's dream and pointed out some of the arguments he could use for winning over Yagyamurthy. Specifically, He suggested taking excerpts from "Maayavaandha Kandanam" chapter from Alavandar's Sidhithrayam. Battle continues the next day: Next day Ramanujar looked gleeful right from the beginning. As usual, he finished his bath and had 12 urdhva pundrams.

He was resplendent with "Tejas"and proceeded to the debate with so much confidence that upon just seeing him, Yagya murthy realized that Ramanujar has got some solid arguments prepared to win. So, he prostrated before Swami just on seeing Swami's roopam.

To everyone's delight, Ramanujar won the debate and was happy that Vishitadvaita sampradhayam will flourish no matter what the size and nature of obstacles that come in its way. Yagyamurthy accepted defeat and became an ardent disciple of Ramanujar from then on. Ramanujar gives daasya naamam to Yagyamurthy:

When Peyazhwar conquered Thirumazhisai azhwar who wandered across various philosophies; the latter puts it, "Sakhiyam katrom Samanam Katrom Sangaranaar aaki vaitha Aagama nool Aaraaindhom Paakiyathaaal Sengat Kariyaanai Cherndhom". Translated loosely it means that Thirumazhisai Azhwar was into various religions and philosophies like Jainism, Shaivisim, etc but all those did not answer the one basic question.

The basic question is "What is the One Thing that if we catch hold of will get the answers to everything?. Is there a one Supreme being that is the causeless cause by Itself and IT is the cause for all other things? Thirumazhisai Azhwar was given the answer in Sriman Naarayanan by Peyazhwar. Yagyamuthy felt exactly like how Thirumazhisai azhwar felt when he was corrected. Since Ramanujar had won this debate with the help of Arulala Perumal, he gave Yagya murthy the name 'Arulala Perumal Emberumanar', (by combining Perumal's and his own name).

From that day on, Yagya murthy was known by 'Arulala Perumal Emberumanar'. Con-fusion in names between Emberumanar and Arulala Perumal Emberumanar: Ramanujar also established a separate mutt for Arulala Perumal Emberumanar. Once there were some strangers in Srirangam who wanted to visit Ramanujar's madam. Since they were new to the place, they asked one of the locals "Where is Emberunar's mutt?"

Immediately, the local person replied them, "which Emberumanar mutt are you guys talking about? Is it the one of Ramanujar who is also known as Emberumanar/Ethirajar/Udayavar/Godhagrajan or "Arulala Perumal Emberumanar's mutt"? While this conversation was going along, Arulala Perumal Emberumanar accidentally happened to listen to it.

He wept terribly hearing that his mutt had caused confusion in the minds

of people to an extent that they may believe there is another Swami. In Srivaishanvic parlance, when we say "Swami", it can refer to only one person. He is none other than Ramaujar himself. Just like when we say "kovil" it refers to Srirangam, when we say "Swami", it is our Ramanuja only.

But Arulala Perumal Emberumanar now was very upset that he went ahead and tore down his mutt and came to live in Swami Ramanujar's mutt itself from then. This is why they say "Thesu Poli Matan Thannai Sidhaithittan Vaazhiye" in his Vaazhi Thirunamam.

Such was his devotion.Arulala Perumal Emberumanar's Kainkaryam: Ramanuja gave various kainkaryams to his disciples. Mudaliandan and Swami Koorathazhwan's main duties were to take care of the literary works like Sri Bashyam by disseminating its substance to the masses. Another task was for them to go and take care of "Vaadham" with scholars from other philosophies. Likewise, Kidambi Achan was given the task of "thaligai kainkaryam".

A small story why he was given this task. Kidambi Achan gets the Kainkaryam of making food for Ramanujar: Thirukotiyoor Nambi, was one of the five acharyas of Ramanujar He lived in Thirukoshtiyur divyadesam and he was the one who gave Swami Ramanujar the Thirumanthraartham. Once, a group of people had decided to kill Ramanuja, by poisoning his food. Hearing this, Thirukotiyoor Nambi immediately rushed to Srirangam to protect Ramanuja. Ramanuja along with his sishyas met his acharayan Thirukotiyoor Nambi on the banks of River Cauvery, on a hot afternoon.On seeing his Acharyan, Ramanuja immediately prostrated before him right on the burning hot banks of the river. Thirukotiyoor Nambi wanted to test something there. He did not ask Ramanujar to get up.

He was keeping mum and this continued for sometime. Due to heat, Ramanujar's body turned red in color. Ramanuja being an emodiment of Acharya anushtaanam did not get up and lay there till Thirukotiyoor Nambi asked him to get up. But Thirukotiyoor Nambi continued staying silent. Along with Ramanuja, there were a few sishyas. One sishya by name " Kidambi Achaan" was mad at Thirukotiyoor Nambi and went lifted up Ramanuja and question Tirukkotiyoor Nambi saying "What is it you are doing?

Don't you see that our acharyan's thirumeni has turned red!!? What do you gain from making my guru like this? Thirukotiyoor Nambi was all smiles now and he said "I am happy now. I was searching for a person

like you who could take care of Ramanuja. Since you were the sishya who could not tolerate any wrong happening to your acharyan's body, I want you to take care of Ramanujar's "Thaligai". So from that day on, Kidambi achan was given the kainkaryam of doing "thaligai" to.Kainkaryams of few other sishyas: Anandhaazwan was given the kainkaryam of making Thiruvengadam a nice place to worship by cleansing the area near temple. We all know about "Pillai Urangaa Villi Daasar" story. Ramanuja made Lord Ranganathar to show "Pillai Urangaa Villi Daasar" His divine eyes. Earlier, Pillai Urangaa Villi Daasar" was very much fond of his wife's eyes.

But from that point when he saw Lord Rangantha through Ramanujar, he denounced everything and became a Ramanuja dasan. For him, the kainkaryam that was given was to take care of the procession whenever Namperumal goes for Veedhi purappadu.

Likewise, there was a task assigned to each of his sishya. For Arulala Perumal Emberumanar the kainkaryam given was special. We saw that he had a debate with Ramanuja and at the end of it was victorious. Arulala Perumal Emberumanar became a Srivaishnava. Initially, he was living in his mutt, but later he destroyed and joined Ramanujar's. Ramanujar gave him a very special kainkaryam of doing 'Thiruvaaraadhana" to his Perarulaalan. Arulala Perumal Emberumanar was very delighted and followed his acharyan's orders to his utmost satisfaction. Arulala Perumal Emberumnar serves as acharyan:

When Anandhaazwhan and some other persons caught the lotus feet of Ramanujar for the first time, the latter asked him to go to Arulala Perumal Emberumanar and seek refuge under him. Arulala Perumal Emberumanar could not say no since it was his acharyan's order again. But he told them that "I am doing this because my Swami had asked to do so. Even though you surrender to me, there will be only one acharyan to you, to me and to the whole world. He is Swami Ramanujar.

So, He will take care of you just like he takes care of me".Literary Works and its purport: Arulala Perumal Emberumanar has written two wonderful Tamil granthams called "Gnyana Saaram" and "Prameya Saaram". He is the first acharya to write in Tamil. Manavala Mamunigal has written vyakhyanam for these granthams.

From his granthams it is clear that he was a strong believer that Perumal and thayar is fond of us like how a cow would be towards its calf; that Perumal and thayar would love us even with our many Apachaarams like how a cow would clean its new-born calf with its tongue without

anything else in mind. These granthams are so great, that great acharyas like Nampillai and Periyavachan Pillai also followed these principles.

Yati raja vimsati : First poetical work of Manavala mamuni, in honour of Ramanuja, known by name Yatindrapravana

Yatindrapravanacharya : Surname of Manavala mamuigal

Yuajnesa : Adherent of Ramanuja, initiated Vaisnavaism by Yajnamurti



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