Hinduism … The Evolution?

Translated by

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Kallaarkkum Katravarkkum Kalipparulum Kalippe!
YOU are THE JOY amongst the learned as well as the illiterate!
Kaamaarkkum Kandavarkkum Kannalikkum Kanne!
YOU are THE BLISS amongst the seekers and the self realized!
Vallaarkkum Maattaarkkum Veramalikkum Varame!
YOU are THE ENERGY for the valiant as well as for the craven!
Mathiyaarkkum Mathippavarkkum Mathi Kodukkum Mathiye!
YOU are THE WISDOM for the devout as well as for the atheists!
Nallaarkkum Pollaarkkum Naduvil Nindra Naduve!
YOU are THE JUSTICE between the good and the evil!
Nararkalukkum Surarkalukkum Nalam Kodukkum Nalame!
YOU are THE WELLNESS for the earthlings as well as for the angels!
Ellaarkkum Podhuvil Nadamidukindra Sivame!
YOU are THE SOUL that moves everything in the universe!
Ennarase Yaan Pugazhum Isaiyum Anintharule!
YOU are THE RULER and I submit my praises and this music at your feet!

Thiru Arutpaa (In Tamil Language)
Saint Ramalinga Adikal
Translation

of

‘Indhu Madham Enge Pogirathu?’

(Where is the Hindu Religion heading?)

By Agnihothram Ramanuja Thaaththaachariyar
INTRODUCTION

Suruthi Shmiruthi ithikaasa
Puraana miimaamsaathvaaya suthra visaaratha
Vedaarththa rathnaakara Vedhavaachaspathi
Mahobaathyaaya
Mahamahobaathyaaya
Agnihothram
Ramanuja Thaatththaachariyar

My salutations to the world of Tamil knowledge.

The world is celebrating the service of the weekly Tamil Magazine Nakkiran in enlightening the Tamil society. This celebrated magazine Nakkiran, requested me to write in detail about the Hindu religion in their weekly magazine.

Why should they came to me? After my birth in famous religious city of Kumbakonam in Tamil Nadu, and began to start my Vedic lessons (vedhathyayanam) with my great uncle Thiru Pattusami I asked the following question: “What is the meaning for the Veda that you are reciting? I do not understand? After knowing the meaning we can continue with the Vedic Lessons.”

However, my great uncle ……

Said “Don’t head in that direction at present”. However upon my insistence, he took half an hour to brief me about the Vedas and their content. At that time I may be ten or twelve years old.

I was in an English medium elementary school. Whatever he said stuck in my heart. Later on during the days of Vedic lessons I used to read the poetic dramas written in Tamil language.

After finishing the Ganaanthakam, Rakshanaanthan, Yajur vedhaathyayanam we started Shasthram dhayaasam. My father and his older brother used to discuss the meanings of various Vedic verses. They used to explain it to me also.

Once in a year, on a day of Navaraathri celebrations (nine nights of celebrations dedicated to Goddesses), at the Pudukkottai Raja Sabha (Royal Court), usually Vidhvath Sabha (Academy of scholars) will take place. My father and his older brother were usually invited to conduct discourses on Vedhas. Attending several of these discourses my knowledge of Vedhas have enhanced considerably.

While my father and his older brother were interested in Vedic studies, their younger brother Gopala Desikachar, a scholar of various Shastras (religious literatures), was a dominant politician, nationalist and journalist. During my association with him, I was motivated and resolved to get involved in offering religious discourses.

During those days we used to subscribe to “The Hindu”, an English daily newspaper, and to Sudhesamithran, a Tamil daily newspaper. Everyday, I used to read both these newspapers.

Thus, I gained the knowledge of the religious tradition, and was anxious to offer it to the betterment of the society. It was principally due to my family’s environment!

Probably, I guess, that the editor of Nakkiran, requested me to come forward and render this service to the society at large.
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Today’s Hinduism though has incorporates ideas, practices and opinions of several individuals as well as societies and evolved from several shapes, the Brahmins took leadership to safeguard the essence, tradition and practices and paved the way for others to follow. Yet, the religious beliefs of people other than Brahmins, has been prevailing among their society with varied values and beliefs. The Brahminyam (religious beliefs of Brahmins) with all their commonality, yet is incapable of functioning effectively, due to varied concepts, wrongful paths and fragmentation.

This condition is still prevailing. Various classes and numerous casts prevailing in India is world renown fact. The poor classes of Hidhus are living with a religious concept that is completely opposite to the one held by the upper class Hindus. Does the word “Hindu” points to the caste or the religion? Everybody is wondering over this question. There is no caste with the name “Hindu”. This fact is put to rest by the government declarations. Even before the government’s conclusions, we learn this fact from historical accounts.

Under these circumstances, on behalf of the Tamil weekly magazine “Nakkiiran”, they requested me to write about the Hinduism. The magazine dedicated to the welfare of the public-at-large, taking initiative to educate the people about the Hindu religion, is a great service. Everybody is appreciating their effort. The articles of “Nakkiiran” is regarded by general public as very sensible.

The female society, at present, is advancing at a rapid pace. The male society shall realize their greatness and sacrifices. Along the same lines, in our life, we must believe in God and one must not indulge in discriminate among the humanity on the basis of “Varnashrama Dharma” (caste basis). After reading my series of articles people have overwhelmingly glad and conveyed their appreciation. It is only to appreciate the strides of the society in improving the relations among various classes and castes, that I still came forward to help even at my ripe age.

“Let the blowing wind bring only joy and happiness.
Let the daytime bring only joy and happiness.
Let the night time bring only joy and happiness.”

I pray for continued success of the initiatives of “Nakkiiran”.

Agnihothram Ramanuja Thaththaachariyaar
Agnihothram Ramanuja Thaththaachariyaar

(Maha Periyavarin Nanbhar)

Agnihothram Ramanuja Thaththaachariyaar hails from the temple city of Kumbakonam in Tamil Nadu, from a very religiously orthodox Vaishnava hindu family. Since generations of his ancestors were performing a type of sacrificial rites called “Agnihothram” he earned this title. At an early age he started to reciting Vedas and as was growing up, unless like others, he was motivated to learn the meanings and essence of Vedic verses. He realized that the Vedic verses are created not merely for reciting but one must know the essence of its nucleus. Hence, he started his journey towards its research and discovery.

In addition, he believed that this treasure shall not be confined to a select narrow sect of the population. Even at his early age he advocated that everyone is entitled to learn Vedic verses and its meanings. At the religious orthodoxy prevailing, approximately, seventy years back it was not possible. Yet, at an age of twenty five he started a movement to take Vedas to the masses. He was a religious revolutionary at that time. After the independence of India, he met with national independence revolution leaders such as Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. Ambathkar and argued to earn a special status for Hindu religion in the Independent India.

He has earned soulful friendship of “Maha Periyavar” H.H. Chandrashekara Saraswathi, of Kanchi Kamakoti. He delivered innumerable lectures and discourses in the conventions organized by “Maha Periyavar” on Tamil sacred texts “Thiruppaavai” and “Thiruvempaavai”. Organized Association of Mutts for which, “Maha Periyavar” was the president and he was the secretary.

“Samskritha Vidyalaya”, located at Thiruppathi awarded the title “MahaaMahopaathyayya” in honor of his service to the religion. His researches were published in a book titled “Varalaatril Pirantha Vainavam”. Even at his ripe age of nearly 100, this “Vaithiika Ilaingnar” (Vedic Youth), is enthusiastically engaged in conducting classes on Vedas and translating Vedic verses.

Chapter 1

Hinduism .. Where did it came from?
Let us run back four thousand years. Can you? Sit on your imaginary horse and gallop your horse using two whips called imaginations and thoughts. It was a period of dark age when history was not able to exactly predict. A period in which the mother nature with mountains and forests scared the humanity.

Himalayan ranges were shivering in biting ice cold wind storm. What a gut for the Indus river? In spite of the freezing bitter cold, it originates from Lake Manosarover, and dances its way over thousands of miles and descends to the plains. It was Afghanistan in those days. Naked people! Did not know how to eat. They were so ignorant of their existence. As the evening fades and the darkness spreads over the earth, the scared people climbs to the top of the cliffs and descends into their own caverns. Only after the sun lights the world in the morning, everyone came out of their hideouts without fear.

The earth was a great puzzle for them. Who is chasing the wolves? They were afraid! Who is shaking the top of the trees? More scare! Who is pouring the darkness over this world? They were shaking! Among all these scared people, few observed all these scary events without any fear. They looked deep into the sand, the rivers, the trees and the sky. The sun was shining even within their brain cells. The thought process, that is typically attributable only to the humans, was gifted for a select few. With deep convictions they put their thoughts into both their eyes, and drilled deep in understanding this world. The result?

Their ‘Deivam’ (Devine) was invented! It was the same nature or objects that they were afraid of all along. Trees, plants, vines, mountain and the rivers were the ‘Deivam’. The who thought deep into the nature declared that the rays of light that was chasing the darkness was the ‘Deivam’. This Tamil word ‘Deivam' was called by the Europeans as Devine. A sect of the Aryans who propositioned this ‘Deivam’ migrated to Europe. NATURE is the God. The energy that is chasing and shaking is the God. Those who concentrated deep in exploring the fact kept staring into the nature. Staring! Staring! … and kept Staring!. He was called ‘RISHI’ meaning ‘the one looks, looks and will kept on looking deep’.

Those who realized that there is a ‘Shakthi’ (Power) over all of us, devised ways, to live within the laws, of this newfound Devine. Vedas took shape. With the effort of those who realized the fact, a new civilization sprouted. ‘This world is Devine and we must use this world in reverence to maximize our joy’. This is the basics of Vedas. Like the American scientist Mr. Bryce said “Civilization never born But, it is the heritage of humanity”, the civilization continued to develop from then on.

To the humanity that was afraid of the natural happenings, the ‘Rishis’, who studied in depth all those happenings and researched, comforted them by saying “Don’t be afraid. You and I shall live happily and peacefully. For our comfort we shall use these trees. We shall use these rivers prudently. The nature has created everything for our own welfare”. Vedas brought to the society a set of rules to culture the humanity without harming the nature.

This is the Aryan race, as called by the historians and how the Vedic religion had evolved. This common welfare concept has grown and eventually got polished. This culture of social set up shall be preserved and for which a set of rules, regulations and constraints were essential. It shall prevail to protect the nature and humanity. Everyone must learn to live according to the pathway laid out by the Vedas and it shall be taught to everyone. What did they exercise? Group the people into three categories. One to rule themselves and establish law and order “Rulers” and another to exercise what was told to them “Doers”. It did not end there! Yet another to teach the “Rulers” and “Doers”, that pathways laid out by the Vedas and to monitor that there were no deviation from these paths “Authority”.

The “Ruler” was called “Tschathrian”; The “Doer” became “Viashiyan”. The one who held on to the Vedas and taught the Vedic ways as well as kept the society in that pathways was called the “Bramanan”. The “Tschathriyas” so involved in ruling the masses and they could not find time for other activities. So also the “Vaishiyas”, who were less gifted in thinking and exploring, deeply involved in working and earning a living that they were dedicated to sweat their life away. The “Bramanas” saw that these two groups were so much involved in their own duties and were diverging from the Vedas. Hence, they felt that it was their duty to safeguard the meaning, commandments, and karmas outlined in the Vedas. They felt that they must carry this burden of learning and preserving the vedic teachings and thus the Vedas have ended up in the laps of the “Brahmanas”. 

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This entire societal evolution, according to the Vedic era researchers, happened in the present day Afghanistan. Such rivers as “Risaa”, “Kubhaa” and “Kramu” were cited in the Vedas and they are rivers in the Afghan region. Hence, those researchers immersed in Vedas believe that most of the Vedic period covered in the Afghan region. After the Vedas slipped into the hands of the “Brahmanas”, the morality, justice and actions were preserved well and hence, the Vedic religion eventually became the “Brahmana” religion.

The Aryan religion became the Vedic religion which evolved into “Brahmana” religion and stepped in to present boundaries of India, At that period, within Indian boundaries, there were approximately 450 religions were prevailing.

End of Chapter One.
Chapter 2

Of the 450 religions that existed, which was Hindu religion? We shall explore gradually.

A husband and his wife were walking in rain along a road. On their path lies a wild river with muddy flood water in the state of “sakadhi” (thick fluid). The husband leaped over and got to the far side. He looked back and his loyal wife was standing in a sorry state on the other side. She was afraid that she will fall into the mud if she tries to jump the river. “Please extend a hand and I will join you” she said. I am giving this example for your benefit.

The situation was exactly same in those days as the Aryans tries to cross the Himalayan valleys and the Indus river to enter into the present India. How difficult is it to cross the rugged Himalayan mountain valleys as compared to our muddy rain soaked streets? The rivers had no banks in those days due to less erosion and thick forest, steep mountainous paths infested with wild animals and the Aryan ladies had no resolve to cross such hurdles. They begged to drop such wild journeys which was ignored. “Those who has the courage can follow us or else stay in this place itself” was the ultimatum to the ladies. As the Aryan crowd entered India from Afghanistan, the population of the ladies was only miniscule. On historical account, the population of ladies as compared to the men was only miniscule. They only left their ladies behind them. However, they took their “Manu smiruthi” with them.

“Manu”?

Everyone cannot read the Vedas! To understand the deep meanings of Vedic verses, a common man did not posses adequate intelligence. Hence, the intellects came forward to simplify and layout in detail for the masses, the commandments and the actions to be taken according to Vedas. Vedic “Simplicity” was the theme of the “Manu Dharma” or Manu Justice! For the sake of “Simplicity” the “Manu” was born.

The three social divisions advocated in Vedas, based on an individual's capacity to perform tasks, was permanently split by the “Manu” into three separate class groups. In addition, “Manu” added another group below them namely “Shuddhirarkal” and they were simply assigned to manual labors. While “Manu” assigned to the “Bramanan” eleven “Gunas” (characteristics) such as “Thavam”(meditation), “Veda arivu”, (Vedic knowledge), “Gyanam” (knowledge), “Vingyanam”(science) it instructs guidelines to “Shuddhirans” as follows:

“To “Suddhirans”, do not facilitate to get any kind of knowledge. Do not preach to him any kind of religious doctrines. In case of a fight or quarrel between two groups, punish the side of the “Suddhiran”. Kick him if necessary.” These are the kind of instructions advocated by “Manu” against the “Suddhirans”. They declared all the native people of the migrated land (present India) as “Suddhirans”, and they shall be always under the control of the “Brahmins”. The grand plan by the “Brahmins” to control the native population worked “well”. The other two groups, who were already under the control of the “Brahmins” yielded to the mandate to use the “suddhirans” for menial and manual labors only. Manu went beyond Vedas and created four different caste systems.

While, Vedas advocated harmony with nature by saying, “Here child! Here is the milk. You drink this and enjoy. Live happily”, “Manu” twisted the Vedic philosophy to say “This milk shall be taken by only certain class and others are forbidden to taste it. This person shall drink without contacting his saliva and this person shall only graze and tend to the milking cows”. Thus, “Manu” has split the humanity and established a permanent class system to protect the interests of the male “Bramanan”.

Remember, earlier I wrote that the Aryans did not accompany with their female counterparts, as they fled the Afghan region? To justify this statement let us look at a “Slokha”(Verse) from “Manu”:

“Balye pithive vishtethu
Panigrahaa yevvane
Puthraanaam bharththarii prethu
Nabhajeth shthree svanthathraama”
“Girl, you must listen to your father during your childhood. After you are grown up and get married, you must listen to your husband. As you have a baby and when he is matured enough you must listen to your son. This is your fate. You are not entitled to live a free and independent life. You must obey the commands of the male.” This is the freedom granted by the “Manu” to the ladies. Yet another location, the “Manu” gives instructions to the male “Bramanan”, “Ladies are dirty species. The “Manthropadhesha Samskaras” (mantra teachings and rituals) that is granted to you (male) is not to be taught for her. Do not bestow any respect for her”.

All the restrictions imposed on the female sect was accepted as Gospel by people of other “Varnas”. All social restrictions imposed on the other sects and other “Varnas” was based an autocratic manner. “God has dictated these regulations. You must follow these regulations otherwise you will be cursed”. This message was imbedded in the “Mantras” (Sacred verses) and the people were threatens. Several hundred years passed. Just like a criminal law the “Manu” has kept the society under its wraps. Instead of preaching to the society all the social justice actions to be followed, the “Braman” brought all other classes such as “Tschathriyars”, “Vaishiyars”, and “Sudhdhirars” under his control. Everyone became obedient to the “Bramanas”. At this social and religious environment prevailing at that period, a voice emanated from present day Nepal.

“In the name of God, and in the name of ‘Karma’ you are exploiting the innocent people with no imagination capacity to comprehend your hypothesis. Who bestowed these rights upon you? Is it God? If it is where is He? Do not drag Vedas to justify your livelihood! Do not discriminate among the humanity based on the ‘Varnas’. If putting this humanity into constant misery is your wish, then you do not need ‘Vedas’; you do not need ‘Manu’; you do not need God; and you certainly need ‘Karmas’. What you really need is justice towards humanity.” In that exploitive environment, a very, very, very different voice was heard. That was the voice of Budhdha. In these days, we name the testing of atom bombs as “Budhdha’s Laugh”. If Budhdha was exploding imagine the atrocities committed by the “Bramanas” in those days towards other castes!

Earlier we saw that Budhdha raised his voice against various atrocities committed against the innocent people in the name of “Vedas”. After he raised his objections, what were his actions to rectify the societal ills? What effect these actions brought up? Let us look at it now. With royal comfort, younger Budhdha was enjoying his life with his wife Yashodhara. After came in contact with the sufferings by humanity, he resolved and determined to abandon the family life. No more ladies and no more the palatial comforts! He resolved to exit the palace and pursuing exploring the happenings outside the palace. He made up his mind. Suddenly, he left behind his young wife Yashodhara and his infant baby boy Rahul and left the palace.

After he exited the palace, what he had witnessed in the outside world lead Budhdha to the battle ground. Wherever he turned, nonsensical mindless habits among the ignorant people, entire villages and towns were surrounded with smoke from fires. In that smoke neither the people can see through externally with their physical eyes nor they were enlightened through the intuitive internal intellectual eyes. The people were exploring through the smoke! Why the smoke from the fires? The ‘Braman’ answered emphatically, as the smoke had engulfed the countryside, “for the welfare of the villages and for the prosperity of the society, we must raise fire and sacrifice ‘Pasu’ (four legged animals) in that fire. Those of us who has learned the Vedas are conducting these ‘yaagams’ (sacrificial fires). By sponsoring the animals for the ‘yaagam’ and paying our fees for services you will be able to get ‘punniyam’ (blessings) from us”.

(Even in those days, have the ‘Bramanas’ sacrificed ‘Pasu’(cow) during their ‘yaagams’? You may wonder! ‘Pasu’ means in Sanskrit language four legged animal. During later days this word was loosely referred to milking cow. On a lighter note, today the four wheeled vehicle carrying the people (bus), we can colloquially call ‘pasu’).

Among the smoke clouds, as the ‘braman’ reciting ‘manthras’ the masses were listening to them without understanding what they meant. The reason? The people were speaking a language called ‘praakrutha’ while the ‘manthras’ were in Sanskrit. They neither did understand the Sanskrit language nor the meaning of the ‘manthras’. Budhdha assessed the situation. He decided that if he has to wake up the masses, he
must send his messages only in the language that they will understand namely, ‘praakrutha’. During that time Budhdha saw with his own eyes and realized the cruelty and vulgarity of the ‘ashvametha yaagam’. What is this ‘ashvametha yaagam’?

In those days, the kings used to let a male horse loose and they will be driven away by beating and other scare tactics. Wherever the horse ran through, the king’s army will march towards and conquer the extent of those territories. At the conclusion of the conquest, a victory celebration takes place which includes ‘ashvametha yaagam’. The tired male horse, who ran through various territories of various kings will be tied in the barn. A female teasing horse will be let loose around this male horse. As the courting rituals taking place, the penis of the male horse gets erected. At this time the female horse will be retired and ladies of the royalty, especially the queen, shall hold on to the erected penis of the horse with her hands during the entire night. This responsibility is principally assigned to the queen. I am shamed to write this frankly and openly. However, what can I say? Even the ‘slokam’ (verse) that describes the ‘yaagam’ goes like:

“asvashya chathra Cishnanthu
Pathni kraakyam prachakshathe”

Like goes on this ‘slokam’(verse). How the king’s wife queen shall worship the ‘Ashvam’ (horse) is described in this ‘slokam’. During the night, this ceremony continues and the next day they will put that colt in the ‘yaagam’ fire and witness till he turns into ashes. This is ‘asvametha yaagam’.

Just like the citizens, the royal family was also under the control of the ‘manthra yaagam’ performed by the ‘bramanas’. At the conclusion of the ‘yaagam’ the ‘bramanas’ would say ‘Hey king, now that the ‘yaagam’ has been performed well and has been completed. For our efforts you have bestowed us with gold and other materials as ‘dhakshinai’ (donation). In addition, you must donate, according to the rules of the ‘yaagam’, the queen who has participated in the ‘yaagam’ and later on you can take her back”.

After witnessing these atrocities, Budhdha, became extremely furious. He went to the places where these ‘yaagams’ were performed and questioned the ‘bramanas’ “You have burned into ashes the human justice as well as kindness towards the animals by burning them in your ‘yaagam’ fire. How do you justify your actions?”.

The ‘bramanas’ answered “The horse will get liberated (go to heaven) and that this world will become prosperous”.

Budhdha retorted “You are so generous in sending an illiterate horse, ignorant of his upbringing, existence and death, by burning him in the ‘yaagam’ fire. But shouldn’t you ‘bramanas’, who are literate, and knows the Vedas, God and all about liberation as well as everything else in this world, attain ‘moksha’ (liberated)? If we throw all of you ‘bramanas’ conducting these ‘yaagams’ into the same fire pit where the ‘yaagams’ are performed, wouldn’t you also be blessed with liberation that everyone is longing for?”

As Budhdha asked this very question, in ‘praakrutha’ language that every citizen understands, among the masses, the ‘bramans’ were shocked.

Later on ....?

“If the horse, who runs around wild, goes to heaven, shouldn’t you ‘bramanas’ who are very cultured and able to recite Vedas get the same ‘agni kunda moksha’ (fire pit liberation)?” As Budhdha went to the places where these ‘yaagams’ were conducted and put this question, it set a blaze much larger than the fire from ‘yaagams’. Can a crow peck and bring down a banyan tree? Just like a banyan tree, which is rooted and supported through its trunk as well as through its branches, the Vedic controls and ‘Manu’ justice were deep rooted in the soil as well as among the population. Though at first the Budhdha’s doctrines and calls for justice was wobbling, and not heeded by the masses, slowly it started gaining the momentum. As a first task, he determined to save the animals from this cruel destruction. Later on he determined to save the people from the destruction that was gripping the world. He selected few youth who were in sync with his philosophy.

At that time, Budhdha was approximately thirty years old. Well developed muscular body. Bright sharp eyes. Constantly thinking and analyzing. Along with the youth of similar character, he walked through
various highways to reach everyone on the country side. If anywhere he got the wind of a ‘yaagam’ being performed, his youth army will rush to that place. On whose behalf the ‘yaagam’ is being carried out, they approached them and said “You see! What benefit are you going to gain by sacrificing lives of so many animals? Last time, an individual near by, was conducting several ‘yaagams’. While he spent considerable amount of money, he gained nothing. Feed and raise those animals, you have scheduled to sacrifice. You will gain lot more by keeping them alive than sacrificing them. Do not trust these Vedic sacrifices. These are nothing but a cheating game resulting in loss for one individual and livelihood for another.” Thus, the Buddha’s army was sending out messages in ‘prakrutha’ language that peeled away from conventional wisdom. Though those conducting the ‘yaagams’ did not suspend the actions immediately, they promised not to conduct any more ‘yaagams’.

Buddha walked. Walked house after house. Nowadays, during the elections, the candidate’s parties go to each house and worship the house numbers for their votes. Likewise he walked, except he was not looking for any posts, and entered each house and spread the message “Do not conduct ‘yaagams’. Do not throw the innocent animals into fire and inflict death to them. Use your intelligence for a prosperous life” This is the essence of Buddha’s teachings.

Here, I have to point out an important message. Several decades after Buddha, was written the sacred text of Christians the Bible, in which St. Michael writes the following statement : “Don’t pour innocent matters into the fire, God wants your love only”. This message of St. Michael namely don’t throw innocent animals into fire, rather God wants only your love, was spread from house to house, several centuries before Jesus by Buddha and his disciples.

If he had to spread this anti Vedic message in full force, Buddha realized that he has to retain an image that will stick in the minds of the people. What to do? He can shave his head. Minimize his clothing. These are external changes that may distinguish and enhance his image. Just like removing hair from the head and reducing the extent of clothing over his body, he must also get rid of desires from his mind. He realized that he must get rid of two wants namely women and wealth and exit the house. He communicated this message to his associates. Youth heaped up to serve his cause. He abandoned his house and resolved his foremost task is to spread his principles to masses and never to stay in anyone’s house. Where to go?

Buddhist ‘Viharam’(hut), tiny simple huts were taking shape to accommodate Buddhist monks. They are like temples where the Buddhist Bitsus (monks) were staying and called ‘Vihar’. The teachings and broadcasts of all these Buddhist monks were carried out in, ‘prakrutha’, the language of the natives. The number of ‘Vihars’ started mushroom everywhere as more and more volunteered to become monks. Bihar is a constitutional state of India and there exists a historical note that attributes its name to ‘Vihar’ as numerous ‘Vihars” were concentrated in this part of the country. (Translator’s Note (T.N.) : Bihar is the state adjacent to Nepal where Budh Gaya is located and considered as the birth place of Buddhism. In this region substituting ‘B’ for ‘V’ is very common).

After the Buddhist era, as his non-violence, realization, teachings spread and expanding into other regions, the ‘bramanas’ began to reexamine their ‘Karma’ pathway of sacrifices. They decided to reduce the animal sacrifices in their ‘yaagams’. The greatest strength of the ‘bramanas’ is adoption! If they find something good in others way of worship or actions, they will make it as their own. Did they adopt only ‘jiva kaarunyam’ (non-violence)? No! Nowadays everyone talks about ‘Matam’ (Center for conserving religion) and bickering among various executors of these ‘Matam’s over extent of their territories. They learned the concept of ‘Matam’s from Buddhist ‘Vihar’s. Slowly, the Buddhists started to expand from Northern India to Southern India and the ‘bramanas’ were also following them. Then?......

“Budhdham saranam kachchaami
Dharmam saranam kachchaami
Sangam saranam kachchaami”

This soft chanting beginning to fill up the air in ‘Thondai Mandalam’ (North Arcot and South Arcot area of Tamil Nadu). Here the Tamil culture was at its civilization’s zenith. It was encompassing the literatures of ancient academies, nature, worship, love and devotion and ruled by powerful Tamil kings. World over the...
evolution of worship has a common thread and was shaped gradually as the humanity became aware of
the nature and environment. The evolution pattern can be stated as follows:

i) Worshipping stone  Fitish worship
ii) Worshipping animals  Totomism worship
iii) Worshipping humanly figures  Shamnaism worship
iv) Worshipping statues  Idol worship

The evolution of worship patterns basically happened on the basis of cultural and civilization growth.
However, the Tamil civilization was at its peak in their sculptural arts. The Tamil kings even during ancient
days, exemplified their supremacy loud and beyond the future history, by erecting monumental size
temples, with exclusively artistic and fine sculptures, and offered it for worship. These temples were
erected for specific deities and contained their specific statues.

What is Tamil worship? ….

Even though, Tamils had the precision and capacity to turn a stone into attractive piece of sculptures,
they also had their tender side that spilled over their culture. They picked various flowers, offered and
started conducting his worship through it. Next to it will be a ‘Nandha Vizhakkku’ (ever-lit lamp) will be
burning at all times. Using the flowers worshipping in the light of a lamp that was ever-lit was their very first
mode of worship.

Poo (Flower) + Sei (Do) = do with flowers. When joining both together becomes ‘Poosei’, which nowadays
called ‘Poosai’. This is brought out through the research publication by prominent Dravidian language
linguist DR. S.K. Chatterji. Not only in worship but also even in devotion the Tamil culture was in the
forefront. The famous Tamil literature ‘PariPaadal’ (Song of horse) states the grammar for devotion thus :
“The love you have towards your wife, have the same intense love towards God. The love you have
towards your husband, show the same intense of love towards God”. The Tamil culture has also gave to
the world ‘Naayakan Naayaki Bhaavam’ which describes in detail the expression of relationship between
a hero and a heroine. Thus, the Tamil culture had advanced to a point that it had accepted God as their
counterpart, male or female, and painted pictures and described His/Her features in detail.

Under these circumstances, the Buddhism and the Jainism started to spread in Tamil Nadu. Spreading not
just in the Northern boundary. The Jainism extended all the way into Tamil Nadu and touched the largest
town in the Southern part of Tamil Nadu, Thirunelveli. The Buddhism spread and touched the Southern
coastal city of Nagapattinam. Those Vedic ‘bramanans’ challenged by the Buddhism, migrated away
from Northern parts of India, followed the others and touched Southern India. It is believed that one of the
famous king of the ‘Pallava’ dynasty is one of those migrants. Buddhists have integrated into the Tamil
society to an extent that they became ‘in-laws’ and at this stage …. 

The ‘Pallava’ kings have sowed the seeds of Vedas and the Vedic discipline. The Vedic teachings that
was challenged by the Buddhism in the Northern India started to flourish in Tamil Nadu with the efforts of
the migrant ‘bramanas’. When the ‘bramanas' migrated to Tamil Country, the thread that they were
wearing around their chests, i.e., ‘poondiruntha nool’(worn thread) (‘poo nool’). I hope now you
understand the source of the name for the sacred thread, everyone in the Tamil Country wondered about
the thread. When they asked about the significance of the thread, their reply was that “This thread is the
status symbol that declares to the society that they belongs to the highest class of the society”.
Realistically, the sacred thread story is a bizarre.

As a matter of fact, when one performs Vedic rituals, according to Vedic rules, they must wear their top
piece over their left shoulder and across their chest. (T.N.: Basically the men wore two pieces of flat piece
of clothing; one around their hip to cover the lower part of the body; the other over their upper body to
cover their chest. Probably, one needs to avoid loose flowing clothing around the fire pit during
‘yaagams’. Hence, Veda laid out the rule that one must tie this piece for safety.) The ‘bramanas’ were
trying to wear the cloth as per the Vedic rules. However, as they raise their arms up during the
performance of Vedic rituals and as they get up and sit down during the rituals, the piece gets untied and
fell to the floor. They were searching for ways to make it permanent so they need not be concerned about
loosening of the cloth during the rituals. Hence they thought about wearing a thin strip of clothing to
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restrain the top piece in place, just like a belt over their shoulder and chest. They started to wear a strip of thin and narrow strip of clothing (‘vasthram’) permanently crossed over their upper body. Eventually this ‘vasthram’ transformed into just thread … ‘Sacred Thread’.

For the ‘bramanas’ who claimed that wearing the ‘poonool’ (sacred thread) was a status symbol, some of the Jain and Buddhist doctrines were very much in their favor. The average person was having difficulty in pursuing and adhering to their strict principles. According to Jainism, one should not even kill an ant as every life on earth has a soul that needs to be respected. While one is walking, they shall not even hurt the earth. Both these great concepts did not emphasize God and hence, they started to fade away within the society. As these changes were taking place, the Vedic culture found its acceptance and was over flowing among the communities. When the ‘bramanas’ saw the beautiful stone sculptures, they told the people “These are lifeless pieces of sculptures. However, using the sacred mantras they can make them Gods worthy of worshipping”.

“Poo Sei” was changed to “Poojai”. Did they change only the Tamil worship using flowers and ever-glowing lamps? ‘Bramanas’ also brought several cultural changes in the society. What are they? ..... 

Earlier we saw, worshipping with Tamil flowers that was in existence, the ‘poo sei’ (do flowers), how it was changed to ‘poojai’. Not only this! In several ways the worship pattern of the Tamil had changed. The Tamils who had excelled in sculpturing with stones had sculpted several statues of female figures. They distributed these statues to various villages and hamlets and installed them as ‘Guarding Deity’. Standing in front of these statues, in loud voice, they requested “Hey … You mother deity who is guarding our villages … You bless my family with plenty of cows … You also bring plenty of rain to our village”. Why shouting in loud voice? Because the statue has only ‘less sensitive’ stone ears and cannot hear well. Hence, one has to shout so the deity can hear the request. They believed that then only our request will be granted. This type of prayer went on for sometime. Yet another wise guy argued that “if we request in normal voice, like talking among ourselves, would the statue hear that?” Hence, we must request in shaking voice emanating from deep, at the bottom of our stomach, with words such as ‘creem’, ‘threem’ and ‘preem’. These vibrant words will shake up the statue and open up its ears to help hear better.

This form of loud worship was going on, for the non-submissive Tamils, the ‘bramanas’ taught them how to join the palms during prayer. How? With the earlier wave of Aryans, the native people of ‘daase’ tribe were fighting and challenging the new immigrants. The Aryans were much taller and well built than the ‘daase’ tribe. The ‘daase’ tribe was very fierce fighters but did not have the intelligence to strategize the warfare. With the size advantage and strategizing capacity, the Aryans won the fight. Upon defeat, the ‘daase’ tribe bowed in front of the Aryans and joined both of their palms as they were rubbing them and promised not to attack the new immigrants. If you duplicate this gesture, it will appear like the modern-day salutation. It is to be noted that the name ‘daasan’ (slave, follower) was indeed derived from this submissive tribe. The very meaning of slave for the word ‘daasan’ was also derived from this tribe.

Just like the way the ‘daase’ saluted them, the ‘bramanas’ later on taught the masses to join their palms and worship their deities. After teaching them how to join their palms and worship, slowly the ‘bramanas’ crept into the louder worship habits of the Tamil masses that they were used to. “What we talk naturally and normally, if we talk to the deities, would they hear? We will teach you some Sanskrit mantras. Only when you recite them, your idol will get the powers of a deity. Besides, how can you talk in the same language with the deities that you use regularly to converse among your people”. Thus, they made the Tamils to recite the Sanskrit mantras in front of these stone statues. First, the Tamils thought that it was a novelty and started to recite them. Unfortunately, this means of communication with their deities using a language that they do not understand continues till today!

In fact, what was said in the Vedas is that the God has no form (Nirguna). What the ‘Upanishad’ (teachings) teaches is that “God has no form and God of no form is indeed its true form”. Thus, the ‘bramanas’ in Tamil country, went beyond the Vedas and Upanishads, and made the masses to recite Sanskrit mantras in front of stone statues! Along with the Tamil tradition of offering flowers to the deities, for
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the deity to nourish, shouldn’t we offer something edible? Bring fruit for deities! Bring food for the deities! Started the unique tradition of ‘padaiyal’ (offering). Along with traditional Tamil offerings, of ‘Nandha Vizhakkku’ (ever-lit lamp) and flowers to God, joined the fruits and food items. What was shed, was the Tamil language!

Changes in worship were the first act. Next, naturally shall be in social changes. It did happen! First change in social culture happened in the wedding ceremonies. Only if we know the condition and customs prevailing in the Tamil society, before the ‘bramanas’ meddled with the society, we can exactly assess the changes brought into the wedding ceremonies. Ancient Tamil literatures paints the marriage courtship rituals in detail under ‘Kalaviyal’. What is this ‘Kalaviyal’? ....

A virgin girl starts her very first menstrual cycle. All the young girls from the relatives were extremely happy on this occasion and she is surrounded by them. This is a very important day as this is the day to proudly display the female character and motherhood. Hence, all the relatives are joyful and the young girl’s face displays the usual shyness. The young man, next door, witnesses all these happenings and he is overwhelmed with joy. He believes that her beauty is inviting him to ‘come and taste’. He sees the very first signs of shyness in her face after she has attained this stage. He is eager to study the source of her shyness. She was surrounded and guarded by an army of young girls. How can he get to her? Walking like a swan? He was waiting for the opportunity. As the sun sets, the young stud is ready to charge into action! At dimly lit night, he approaches his queen, and the time is of no consequence. In one try, he lifts this matured young, beautiful woman places her in his arms and in few seconds he jets out and disappeared. Matured young women disappeared without a trace. Search party was launched! Searched the entire surroundings! All male relatives of the young women was looking for her in the nooks and corners of every space in sight. At last, they found the place, where the pair were hiding and glowing with joy. The next door stud had tasted her a long while back. After they caught them red handed, do you know what punishment was handed to them?

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Do you know what punishment was doled out by the Tamil community, to the lad from next door, who carried the virgin away? “Look here you young man! You are the very first person who had touched her. Hence, she belongs to her. She must spend rest of her lifetime with you”. With these words they were joined together. This was the punishment.

This is ‘kalaviyal’ (art of pilfering). This was the high light of the Tamil tradition. Let us look at one of the ancient verse from ‘Sangam’ (Academy) (T.N. : There said to be three Tamil Academies at different periods in the ancient times where Tamil poets and writers came together and presented their work. It is claimed that the sea had swiped away all the literatures of that era) era:

“Yaayun gnaayun yaaaraakiyaro
Enthaiyum nunthaiyum emmurai kelir
Yaanum niiyum evvazhi arithum
Sempulap peyal nir pola
Anbudai nenjum thaam kalanthanave ....”

You and I were strangers and did not know each other. We do not know how your father and my father were related to each other. We do not know even now, wherefrom, you and I came from. Yet, without any need for formal introduction, we fell in love with each other... How? Did you know?... As the rain drop comes in contact with the red dirt, it also acquires the red color. just like that both our loving hearts became twined together and they cannot be separated. Thus, even in the love life the Tamil people were in the pinnacle of the civilization. In both areas namely ‘Kalaviyal’ (art of pilfering) and ‘Karpiyal’ (art of faithfulness), the Tamil culture was in the forefront. Their wedding was marked with a necklace called ‘Thaali’. The story and evolution of ‘Thaali’ is in itself is very interesting!
In the Southern part of India such as Thirunelveli district, the ‘Panai’ (Palm) trees are plenty due to dry weather conditions. When a male get married he picks one of the fan of the palm leaf and cuts it into small piece and writes on it ‘This girl is married to this man’. This piece of palm leaf is threaded in a twine and hung around the neck of the bride. ‘Panai’ tree has another name ‘Thaal’. (T.N. : ‘Thaal’ also means any narrow and long leaf. ‘Thaali’ still refers to ‘Panai’ (palm tree) in Malayalam language spoken in Kerala State). Since it was written on a small piece of ‘Panai’ leaf, the name ‘Thaali’ was derived. With the affluence, people started replacing the ‘Thaal’ with gold leaf. However, the name ‘Thaali’ still used for ‘Mangala Suthram’ (Marriage Symbol).

“You are taking so much pain to go through the ‘Kalaviyal’ (art of pilfering) phase. Again you are happy to get married to the girl of your choice. Shouldn’t you be celebrating this event in a grand manner with all the marriage rituals and ceremonies? Only if you celebrate it as a function, you will be enjoying this occasion even better.” With this advise, the ‘braamanaas’, advocated several changes to the Tamil marriage culture. Was it one or two? Several rituals were introduced and I will be narrating them herein.

1.) Before the wedding, there has to be an agreement between the bride’s family and the groom’s family as to the groom and bride as well as the date of the wedding. As a gesture of this agreement, the bride’s family shall handover to the groom’s family certain articles along with ‘paan’ (betal leaves), ‘supaari’(nut of arrack tree) and turmeric paste. This is called ‘Nichchaya Thaamboolam’ (agreement presents).

2.) Now the wedding rituals begin.

First of all ‘Kaashi Yaaththirai’ (pilgrimage to Kaashi to become a monk).

If you have any intentions to become a monk ( one who abdicates family life) .... Son, you better become a monk before your wedding takes place. Once you are wed, you should not even think about abandoning your family and kids and destroy a girl’s dreams… - Thus it is written in our Vedic verses. Hence, before the wedding, we have this ritual of taking a pilgrimage to sacred town of Kaashi to become a monk. The groom holds the stem of an open umbrella and pretends to take a pilgrimage to Kaashi. The bride’s family consoles him by offering their daughter in marriage to him and taking him back to the place of wedding.

3.) Relaxing in a swing

‘Child, when you are enjoying the company of a girl, you must sit together on the plank of a swing and must swing happily’ thus states in the Vedas. What it implies is that marriage means ‘mahas’ (happy occasion). Basically, it is a festival. That is why this swing ceremony.

4.) Exchanging of flower garlands

This is a ceremony, very particular, to the ‘Tschathriyas’(warriers). This ritual signifies that the bride and the groom shall share each others pleasures and pains.

5.) Getting rid of ‘Thirushti’ (evil sights and thoughts)

This ritual is performed by all the friends and relatives, to safeguard the bride and groom, from evil sights and evil thoughts of others. Typically, cooked rice along with turmeric and other additives will be rolled into balls and every relative will take a ball and circumambulate around the heads of bride and groom.

6.) ‘Niiraajanam’ also known as ‘Aaraththi’

In this ceremony, essentials such as betal leaves, turmeric paste and hydrated calcium, will be placed in a plate and this plate will be rotated in circles few times, in front of the couples. The contents of the plate may vary depending on the caste of the couple and local customs.

7.) Next step is very important. Ritual of Sari. Only at this stage the bride and groom are allowed to face each other. While chanting the mantras the bride will be seated on a three legged stool, she
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will be given a bath by slowly pouring water over her head. Later on, the well soaked up bride will be taken inside the room and the groom is asked to dress her up by wearing the blouse and sari on her. The groom will disrobe her soaked blouse and the sari and wipe her of all the water and dress her up. As the groom puts on the new sari gradually, the bride and groom were reminded of their happiness, how it has shaped up gradually just like the sari, which was gradually robed on the bride. In addition, it also symbolizes that our generations to come, shall gradually escalate in the future, just as the sari gradually robed the bride. We will also look into the other rituals and ceremonies and how it has changed with the influence of the ‘bramanas’.

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8.) So far we have seen seven different rituals introduced by the ‘bramanas’ into the Tamil wedding culture. The eighth one is ‘Paani grahanam’. This is the most important of all the wedding rituals. This ritual is performed as stated in one of the poems of Aandaal, one of the Hindu female saint, thus ‘Kaiththalam Patra Kanaak Kanden Thozhi’ and, along the lines of the Western culture in which the bride and groom holding hands together. The holding of hand of the groom by the bride signifies that ‘from now on you only are my support and my parallel. There is nobody else am I depending in my life’. This is the swearing ceremony in which the couple is united together.

9.) After holding the hands together, the bride holds the hand of the groom and follows him through first seven steps together. The significance of these steps is as follows:

   a.) First step : or bounty of harvest and food
   b.) Second step : Consumed food shall be digested
   c.) Third step : For the health of the husband, the wife must undergo ‘vrathams’ (sacrifices)
   d.) Fourth step : The family must flourish in happiness and abundance
   e.) Fifth step : The cows must multiply to provide necessary nutrients and labor force.
   f.) Sixth step : The wealth and affluence must overflow
   g.) Seventh step : All the above must be blessed simultaneously

As we saw in the old Tamil Academy literature ‘Our family, from this moment onwards, is one. Who is your father? Who is my father? We do not know! However, from this day onwards WE ARE ONE!’. Taking the seventh step towards the ritual fire is for the sole purpose of emphasizing the unity found in the Tamil Academy Literatures.

Along with these rituals they also added the traditional Tamil Wedding symbol ‘Thaali’. So the Tamil tradition, that has never been subjected to any ritualistic celebrations, of abducting the would be bride, making love and getting married, finally got married with ‘bramana’ wedding culture that was riddled with rituals. As a result of this, the ‘bramana’ culture of ‘Art of Mantra’ penetrated into the Tamil culture of ‘Art of Surreptitiousness’ and ‘Art of Truthfulness’. Rituals were established. Wedding celebrations were brought under the wrap of Vedic rules.

“Melorkku yaaththa karanam
Kiiizhoorkku aana kaalamum unde”

Thus says ‘Tholkaappiyam’, the ancient tamil literature. ‘karanam’ means wedding. Literally it means … that the wedding rituals that was devised for upper caste ‘bramanas’ … It also became the standard rituals for the other castes. What it means is that the wedding ceremonies that were conducted continuously for ten days in the ‘bramana’ community was also forced into the ‘Sudhra’ community and Tamil wedding culture. Based on the mantra tradition, there is no place for the Tamil ‘thaali’. However, leaving out the ‘thaali’ from Tamil wedding is against their culture and the ‘bramanas’ realized they were fighting against the current. Hence, they took the ‘thaali’ … the thread tied to the palm leaf … slowly soaked into sacred mantra turmeric and made it a ‘maangalyam’ (symbol of married women that is worn around their neck). It also became the symbol of marriage for ‘bramanas’ too.
The above stated text from ‘Tholkaappium’ we need to look at a section deeply. Tholkaappiyam states: “Melorkku yaaththa karanam Kiizhoorkku aana kaalamum unde”. Out of this, let us concentrate on the second part “Kiizhoorkku aana kaalamum unde”. This statement means that whatever marriage rituals devised for the ‘bramanas’, there was a time in which it was also imposed on the lower cast people.

‘There was a time’ implies that these rituals were later on dropped or changed. However, it was same at one time. Why did it change later on?

First reason: Can the rituals for the upper class ‘bramanas’ and that for the lower cast sudhra’s be same? There must be some distinction that must separate the classes! The ‘bramanas’ wanted to conduct the ceremonies for the lower casts also. Hence, they wanted to modify the rituals somewhat to facilitate further intrusion into the lives of the Tamil people.

Second reason: The wedding rituals devised by the ‘bramanas’ took approximately ten days. While the ‘bramanas’ were principally engaged in performing rituals, the local Tamil people were engaged in farming and other professions. Hence, to drag the rituals on an extended basis and conduct the wedding ceremonies over a period of ten days, the Tamil people neither had the patience nor the desire. After all, per the Tamils ‘Kalaviyal’ (art of abdication) tradition, they used to abduct the bride in a split second, and enjoyed her company… with smiles on their face as mantra … in the tradition of ‘Karpilyal’ (art of honor) they used to conduct their love marriage. Hence, they did not have the patience for the rituals imposed on them. Hence, things had to change! As a result ‘divorce’ happened between the two cultures.

Based on such diverse reasons the ‘bramanas’ kept the lower cast ‘Sudhras’ (Labor class) separate not only in wedding rituals but also in every areas of life they pushed them into lower echelon. What gave them that power to indulge into the Tamil culture? The untarnished sacred ‘Manu Smirthi’ that they brought by the immigrants, was the helpful weapon used against the locals. The ‘bramanas’, who were committing cruelty to the ‘sudhras’, using the ‘Manu’ weapon, were also committing excessive cruelty to another sect of the population. Who were they? ‘Kshathriyas’ (Warriers and Rulers)? … ‘Vaishiyas’ (Merchants and Traders)? … No! No! It is to the ‘Chandaalars’.

What? … ‘Chandaalars’? … Who are they? …

What ‘Manu’ states about ‘Chandaalars’, I am not able to tell you through my writing. What Mahatma Gandhi told me about the ‘Chandaalars’, I am going to relate to you.

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Who are those ‘Chandaalars’?

Normally we brand a ‘Chandaalan’, for those people who commits adultery, womanizers, murderers and those who resorts to treachery, dishonesty and fraudulency. However, do you know who is ‘Chandaalars’ according to ‘Manu’?

They are the group of people pushed below the ‘Sudhras’ (laborers). In all respect they are supposed to be the rejects of the community… In ‘Varnashrama’ (color placement) distinction, they are the lowest of all the castes. They are basically outcastes or untouchables. Thus with resentment and regret what we call nowadays as ‘Dhaliths’ are the one referred in the ‘Manu’, in its directory, as “Panchamars’ (Fifth People) or ‘Chandaalars’. Why were they called as ‘Chandaalars’? … What kind of sins did they commit? …. Answers for these questions only, I wrote earlier, that ‘I am NOT coming forward to answer these questions. Rather I will give you the account as related to me by Great Father of India, Mahatma Gandhi’. First of all, I will tell you in detail the occasion in which I met Mahathma Gandhi.

Before the independence of the Bharath Country (India) … Gandhiji was more involved in reforming the society and correcting the societal ills rather than fighting for independence. For that reasons Gandhiji had come to our town of Kumbhakonam several times to deliver messages on elimination of untouchability. When he came on one of his trips, some ‘bramana’ (Brahmin) kids in the town, including me, got together. We believed that Gandhiji is coming to town just to topple the sanadhana dharma...
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(Hinduism) and we decided to protest against him. We planned to upset his efforts to change the class system that was in effect time immemorial. As soon as the decisions were made to protest, immediately the action plans were taking shape. The foremost of the plans was to wave black flag during Gandhiji’s visit.

As per the plans … when Gandhiji came to my home town of Kumbhakonam town … myself along with few ‘sanadhamna’ (Brahmin) youth joined together and waved the black flag. We were also shouting with slogans ‘Actively involved in the abolition of untouchability … Gandhiji … you return back to your own place. Do not object to the ‘sanadhana varnaashram’ (Hindu caste system)’. Gandhiji came to the stage. To hear his speech, masses of people were waiting. We were shouting our slogans in Tamil language as well as in English and raised our black flags. During that period, if my memory serves right, the Kumbhakonam Congress Party president was Bhandhulu Ayyar. Gandhiji called Bhandhulu Ayyar close to him and enquired the reasons for the agitation. Ayyar explained our feelings against the Gandhiji’s movement and told him ‘They are requesting you not to talk against untouchability. Their protest will last only for a few minutes and thewill disburse; You can proceed with your talk …’. However, Gandhiji did not ignore us as per his advise. He looked towards our crowd and waved his hands and summoned us towards him. We approached him and I was in the front of the pack. He asked us “Why are you demonstrate young men?”. We explained to him our reasons for protest. After that Gandhiji began to answer.

“I am advocating the complete abolition of untouchability. Titling them as ‘Panchamars’ and committing cruelty against them must be stopped. They are also people just like you and me. They also have rights to live in this world. Do not classify them as untouchables and discriminate against them. You must let them also in public places. I came here to broadcast my message over untouchability and asking the community to ‘Let them also worship in your temples’. You youngsters, who is talking about ‘varnaashram’ (caste system), is opposing it. Have you all read the ‘Manu smirthi’ (Manu)? In ‘Manu’ the ‘Panchamars’ are called as ‘Chandaalars’, which incidentally is a filthy word. It also gives an explanation for the word ‘Chandaalas’.

In the days of ‘Manu’, the ‘brahmins’ kept the ‘shudhras’ under their full control. I.e., ‘Shudhras’ were kept at slave status and whatever orders the Brahmins issue must be carried out by the ‘shudhras’, at any cost and at utmost diligence. At this era, some of the Brahmin society ladies sympathized, felt sorry for the cruelty towards them, why … even went to the extent of showing emotions for them. Without the knowledge of other Brahmins in their house the Brahmin ladies were having friendship with the ‘shudhra’ men. They were also having sexual relationships. Why? … Even married ‘shudhra’ men. The Brahmins who were treating the ‘shudhras’ harshly, were terribly ashamed, and could not tolerate some of their own women marrying the ‘shudhra’ men and living with them as husband and wife. They titled the child born to the Brahmin ladies and ‘shudhra’ men as ‘Chandaalas’ and outcasted them. (T.N. : The original Varna system had only four namely ‘Brahmin’, ‘Kshathriyas’, ‘Vaishiyas’ and ‘Shudhras’. The newly added untouchable class is the fifth and hence ‘Panchamars’ (Fifth group)).

As the time progressed, the Brahmin men began to have sexual relationship with ‘shudhra’ women stealthily. The babies born to them and their generations were also called ‘Chandaalas’. This is the very reason, they were kept away from the villages where the first four castes lived together … the sight of you itself a sin … considered as bad omen by the Brahmins. This happened considerably long time back. The generations of people, thus evolved, are the one, at present considered as untouchable and were kept away from the society. Just think, who were their fathers and mothers. All these facts are on the books and I have not fabricated these stories.” Thus he fluently elaborated the evolution of the ‘fifth caste’ in English. I was in the front row, slowly turned back with that realization.

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What? … Several years back, what Gandhiji briefed about the ‘Chandaalas’ … who were they? … How they came into the society? … Rather thrown out of the society … you have read all about it in the past chapter? What you have heard at present … I heard it through Gandhiji’s own mouth many many years back and I was shaken a bit with these facts. While Gandhiji was carrying on with his campaign to abolish
the untouchability, I dipped deep into the ‘Manu Shashtram’. Named them as ‘Chandaalarkal’ about the mixed caste people, what else the ‘Manu’ says about these people was my curiosity. Brahmin women fell in love with ‘shudhra’ men … Right? For the same reason they were removed from the society and were placed in a special group of untouchable class.

Society?

Yes! … Brahmins observed the lower class people, who were compartmentalized and, living in separate groups based on their professional category. ‘In the future generations if their trades change, how would they be called?’ … They deeply analyzed the situation … ‘A stable society’ i.e., if a permanent societal structure had to happen, then it was apparent to them that there must be permanent caste system based on their trades or the profession. Hence, they devised the caste system or trade/profession based on their birth.

A child born to a ‘shudhra’ family, later on even if his profession changes, he remains a ‘shudhra’.

A child born to a ‘vaishya’ family, later on even if he deviates from merchandising trade, he remains a ‘vaishya’.

A child born to a ‘kshathriya’ family, later on even if they stand in the street without a kingdom or administration, they remain a ‘kshathriya’.

This is essentially the rule laid out by the Brahmins to create a ‘Stable Society’. This also keeps the position of Brahmins at the heap forever! Let us get back to the ‘Laws of Manu’ again. The out of caste love affairs not reserved for Brahmin women and ‘shudhra’ men alone.

Between ‘Kshathriya’ women and ‘Shudhra’ men  
Between ‘Vaishya’ women and ‘Shudhra’ men  
In addition ...

Between ‘Shudhra’ women and Brahmin, ‘Kshathriya’ and ‘Vaishya’ men

Thus, the love god shattered all the restrictions placed on the society and lead people to clandestine weddings. If the Love God and the God of Lust became partners and carried on their affairs and played around as they please, how can a ‘Stable Society’, as envisioned by the ‘Manu’, be established? It is not possible! ‘Manu’ thought about this issue in detail during the framing of the laws. That is why, to alleviate this problem, he has prescribed an ‘Alternate Societal Law’.

What was this ‘Alternate Societal Law’? … In violation of established laws … those engaged in activities that tend to cripple the societal laws by marrying inter-caste, ‘Manu’ created two different scales or levels.

One … ‘Anuloma Shnkaram’ … and the second … ‘Prathiloma Shnkaram’. Before we find out about the ‘Anuloma’ and the ‘Prathiloma’, we must understand the meaning of the ‘Sankaram’ as it is applicable in this context. In violation of established societal rules … those relationships, consummated against the ‘Manu Shashtram’ (Book of Manu), that requires condemnation is termed as ‘Sankaram’. Fine! What is ‘Anuloma Sankaram’? As we saw in the earlier pages, ‘Sankara’ (clandestine) relationship existed among people of all established castes. In these relationships …

If the male is from a higher caste and the female is from a lower caste the relationship is termed ‘Anuloma Sankaram’. ‘Manu’ does not consider them as ‘Chandaalars’. It is mainly because, as a rule male is dominant in the society, and the male is from a higher caste and he has relationship with submissive lower caste women. Brahmin caste male … seeing, taking, having relationship, enjoying the females from other castes … building relationship it is termed as ‘Anuloma Sankaram’. As we saw earlier these kinds of relationships existed castes of all levels. In these relationships … If the male is from a higher caste and the female is from a lower caste, it is termed as ‘Anuloma Sankaram’.

According to Vedas ‘What gives peace to the world is the beauty of the women’. However, the ‘Manu’ … only when the lower caste women attract the upper caste men with their beauty it did not pay any attention to it. Whatever the lower caste women does to attract them, according to ‘Manu’ was not considered a sin. ‘Manu’ is very tolerant of these women and does not punish them in any manner. In
addition, it permits the lower caste women to stay in the society of upper caste men and live with them and protects them from torturing of any sorts such as beating, chasing and threatening.

You may have already guessed about ‘Prathiloma Sankaram’ that we are going to talk about. It is ... when an upper caste women is attracted to a lower caste men, taken away from their abode, and had sexual relationships ... In the eyes on ‘Manu’ it is considered as ‘Prathiloma Sankaram’. Hey ... How can a lower caste man can attract a Brahmin women and take her with him? ... What happened to her sense? Let us drive her out of the town. Their sinful feet shall not touch the streets in which we live. In addition, the air they breath shall not touch the air prevailing in our streets. Not only them, who has committed the sin, but also their generations to come are considered as ‘Chandaalars’, by the ‘Manu’ and handed the punishments for them. Based on these reasoning, the flock of ‘Prathiloma Sankaram’ (untouchables), was driven away from towns in which the legal castes were dwelling ... Probably now, do you understand the reason for the untouchables living in separate clusters away from regular villages? However ... ‘Manu’ incorporated the ‘Anuloka Sankara’ group into their own villages ... and let them carry on their life as usual with others in the established castes. Even the great Sanskrit language scholar Panini also said that he is continuing to search for the meaning for ‘Chandaalar’ in Sanskrit language. We will continue to search the history in the meanwhile ...

In the previous chapter we saw hoe, what was created to assure a stable societal structure based on the trade or profession, that may be mutated with the skills of an individual, was cast into permanent caste system by Brahmins based on birth. “Eventhough he forgets his trade profession, he was considered as a ‘Vaishiya’ (merchant) if he was born into a ‘Vaishiya’ caste; If he was born into a family of a ‘Shudhra’, eventhought he was not an active farmer and engaged in merchandising, he was termed a ‘Shudhra’. Born in a family of traditional rulers, even though he is standing in the streets without a kingdom, he was considered a ‘Kshathriya’ ...’” Thus, for the sake of creating a ‘Stable Society’, ‘Manu’ had put a knot on every caste to contain them within their own caste. If that is the case, one may wonder about the flexibility afforded to the Brahmins and according to this system whatever trades they are engaged in, they will be considered a Brahmin. Truthfully, was there any literature that had prescribed a trade or profession for the Brahmins? ... That is a valid question.

Before we explore the answer for this question, I want to bring it to your attention a lesson that was in my first grade book. The lesson was titled ‘Padam Paartha Therinthu Kol’ (Look at the picture and learn). Don’t you think ‘What is this! This guy is trying to tell us what he studied several decades back in his first grade ...’. Well. I have to start the answer to the above question only from that lesson. As soon as I tell you this it will sink into you like ‘a nail driven into a green tree’ and will engulf you like ‘fire engulfing the camphor’. What was taught through those books for the young children? ‘Kshathriyan’ (Picture depicting a king) rules the country, ‘Vaishiyan’ (Adjacent to the picture of a merchant) is a business man, ‘Shudhran’ (Picture of a man plowing land) a farmer cultivating land, ‘Ayyar’ (Picture of a Brahmin man) good man.

Probably, you may have built up your further knowledge with what you have learned in the first grade as the foundation. But what was said as to the profession of a Brahmin in that grade : ‘Good Man’. Why? “‘Brahmaniyan’ (Brahmin Life) has a special status in the society. It has a special purpose. Brahmin is an avatar of Brahman (the Eternal Soul prevailing everywhere). A Brahmin has came to this world to carryon the duties to be performed by the God Himself. He came to this world to spread the message of God and bring the masses close to the God. He will not lie. He will not commit any murder. He lives only for the world peace ... Only through them, the kings to the ‘Shudhras’ are living peacefully and in prosperity”. What the Vedas have elaborated over the functions of a ‘Brahmin’, the textbook gave it in ultra condensed form ... just two words ‘Ayyar – Good person’.

O.K. ... Is being a good person a profession? ... If that is so, is all those other ‘Varna’ (color, band, caste) who is carrying out other professions bad people? You may be posed with such questions. For some people these questions may have been aroused in the first standard itself. At that time if you ask any questions, the teacher would have threatened and forced you to sit in your place. However, the religious literatures were not like that. They in detail elaborate over the responsibilities and the duties of a Brahmin.
Just as in the textbook, here also at first only two words ... yajnam and yaajanam. What does that mean ... ?

Yajanam – Doing, acting

Yaajanam – That what gets done, The product that results from the act. What ? ‘Manthram’ (Mantra), ‘Yaagam’ (Sacrificial ceremonies), ‘Homam’ (Religious sacrifices) etc.

How ... ? Here again I have to take the example of the school children. Just like the school kids use time table to keep all their time organized for each class, for each day at what time the Brahmin has to perform what act, is clearly, according to schedule, specified in the ‘Shashthram’ (Sacred texts). Let us see the daily schedule a Brahmin has to follow :

1.) Early morning between 4:30 a.m. and 6:00 a.m., before sun rise get up from sleep.
2.) As he is going to pass the urine, he must take his ‘Poonool’(Sacred Thread) and wind it around his ears. After he finished with his morning restroom rituals, he must wash his hands and legs he must recite certain mantras,
3.) Later on before taking bath, he must recite certain other mantras.
4.) Another important ritual that must be performed before sunrise is ‘Sandhiya Vanthanam’. This is started to worship the Sun, that is the source of our energy. In this ritual, ‘Praanaayaamam’ (breathing exercise) is also included. Brahmins knew long back that if practiced regularly in the morning as well as in the evenings (twice daily), ‘praanaayaamam’ keeps the body healthy. Even today, it is an important breathing exercise, for healthful living. (Later days … Thre was a belief that the giants have hidden the sun, and to reclaim the sun from the giants everybody was searching for the Brahmins. The Brahmins took little water and chanted mantras and sprinkled the water, all the giants were driven out by the power of the sacred water. After that, the sun raised slowly. This little story was fabricated to stress the importance and benefit of the ‘Sandhiya Vanthanam’.
5.) Next ... Yajanam, Yaajanam. These two are the Brahmin’s principal tasks in those days. They have to perform the necessary ‘Karmas’ (rituals and ceremonies) for their own well being. In addition, they have to perform ‘Karmas’ for others and they should receive ‘Dakshinas’ (money and gifts) from them. Some of the ‘Karmas’ include ‘Agnihothram’ and ‘Aubhashanam’.
6.) When the sun is in the high noon, they must take their lunch and take a brief afternoon nap. After the nap the Brahmins must read religious books ... and in the evening, as the sun sets, again perform the ‘Sandhiya Vanthanam’ rituals ... have supper and go to bed.

This was prescribed as the daily schedule for the Brahmins in the religious texts. Thus, they were carrying on their live while constantly engaged in dividing the masses into various groups. While they were engaged in splitting the community, a split happened in their own caste. What??? ... A Split within the Brahmin community? How can a group, carrying on their services exclusively to protect the world from evil spirits, and who is representing God Himself on this earth, split among themselves?

Before we get to the roots of it, we will explore little bit about the important worship customs prevailing amongst the Tamil population. Earlier we saw that the only population that soaked the devotion in love and lust, was Tamil people. They treated the love and lust as devotion, and imagined the God as male … imagined God as female and themselves as male and worshipped them and created the image of a ‘Hero and Heroine’. This was the worship pattern in Tamil country and several poems and offerings to God were written in this fashion.

Foremost example, for the several idols of the ‘Hero and Heroine’ used in their worship was the ‘Lingam’. Even today the people who sees ‘Lingam’ believe that it is the image of God and have even eyes installed in it. Even if one looks along that path of worship, ‘Lingam’ is not an image. Rather it is a symbol. Indeed ... It depicts the lust as a symbol of devotion and that is the philosophy behind the ‘Lingam’. When a male … and a female making love and enjoying themselves, if we only isolated their sexual organs what results is the ‘Lingam’. For the Tamil people, who worshipped man-women intercourse as the symbol of devotion, in the initial days could not find a place in the temples of worship. Vulgarity ... Obscenity ... and as some believed that one should not worship a symbol that was sexual thoughts provoking ...
‘Lingams’ were installed in isolated places away from the villages under the trees, or on the banks of irrigation tanks or on the banks of rivers and was worshipped in the laps of the nature. (T.N. : Lingam is a symbol of procreation and was principally worshipped by the Yogis. In Tantric tradition, sexuality is considered as divine experience under certain circumstances. Lingam, generally called as ‘Shiva Lingam’ and worshipped by Yogis, as Shiva was considered as the ‘Aadhi Yogi’ who taught the art of yoga to humanity. Yogis basically, preferred quiet place for meditation and that is usually a tree on the banks of a water source) Then and there they used to perform the pooja rituals using fresh flowers. Mainly they used to install these Lingams under the ‘Vilva’ tree. (‘Vilva’ tree is considered as the favorite tree of Lord Shiva.

While the ‘Linga’ worship was carried on in one side … The Brahmins, the descendents of the Vedic tradition, was carrying on ‘Vaishnava’ (worshiping Lord Vishnu) tradition and worshipping Lord Vishnu, who was depicted as the chief deity in the Vedas. In Veda Lord Vishnu is called as ‘Brahmam’ and according to Vedhaantha Dhesikar, the one who worships Vishnu, even if he was a lower cast ‘Shuddra’ he becomes a Brahmin. He further adds that a Brahmin who was not devoted to ‘Vishnu’ becomes a ‘Shuddhra’.

‘nashoothraajaa bhagavadh bhakthaahaa
lipraa bhaagavadhaa …’

In this Sanskrit verse, the devotion to Lord Vishnu was emphasized and given more importance. Thus evolved from Aryan religion to Vedic religion to Brahmin’s religion to ‘Vaishnava’ religion. Thus, when the ‘Vaishnava’ tradition was grown to prominence …

A voice was heard.

That voice belong to Appayya Dikhshithar. He was an Adaiyappulam native, which is located in present district of North Arcot in the state of Tamil Nadu. He proclaimed “The ‘Brahmam’ that is referred in the Vedas does not represent ‘Vishnu’ rather it represents ‘Shiva’”. Appayya Dikhshithar was respectfully called as ‘Shivothkrishtam’, which means that he is a person devoted to Lord Shiva and who always praises only Shiva and worships him always. To establish that Lord Shiva was the central deity in the Vedas, Appayya Dikshithar had written several books including ‘Nilakanda Vijayam’.

‘Dikhshithar’ was also born as Brahmin. However, his conclusions that Lord Shiva was the God referred throughout Veda faced with very stiff opposition from several fronts. ‘Vedhantha Dhesikan’, a ‘Vidhvaan’(Eminent scholar) of ‘Vaishnava’ literatures, was one such individual, who fiercely opposed ‘Dikhshithar’ s assertions.

In Vedas there are two different divisions : 1.) ‘Karma Kaandam’ and 2.) ‘Gnyaana Kaandam’. ‘Karma Kaandam’ deals with procedures and details of how to perform various ‘Karma’s (rituals). One does not get liberated just performing the ‘Karmas’. To attain liberation, one must worship Lord ‘Naaraayanan’. According to ‘Gnyaana Kaandam’ ‘Upanishadh’ (Supplementary Treatise), a part of Veda, only by worshipping Lord ‘Naaraayana’ a soul gets liberated. ‘Vaishnava’ Brahmins, based on few of the ‘Slokas’ (verses) from this ‘Upanishadh’ claimed that the premier deity of Veda was only ‘Naaraayanan’.

‘Naaraayanan mahaagnayam viswaathmaanaam paraayanam
Naaraayana parambramhaa thathvam naaraayanaa parahaa …’

Thus, states ‘Thaithriya Upanishadh’. Meaning of this ‘sloka’ is : The only force that is keeping the world in motion and prosperity is ‘Naaraayanan’. He is the nucleus of the entire universe. Hence, pursue the ‘Naaraayana Principle’, worship constantly and attain liberation’.

‘Motsha michchethu janaarthanaathu …’ this ‘slokam’ also supported this view.

While the ‘Saiva’ (Shiva worshippers) traditionalists adopted the worshipping of the ‘Linga’ … The ‘Vaishnava’(Vishnu worshippers) traditionalists insist only the worshipping of Lord ‘Naaraayanan’ …
With the ‘Saiva’ … ‘Vaishnava’… charges and countercharges, the whole Brahmin community was split permanently.

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Earlier we saw that the ‘Vaishnava’ traditionalists claiming that Lord ‘Vishnu’ is the first and foremost God while the ‘Saiva’ traditionalists countering that Lord ‘Shiva’ is the first and foremost God. Let us leave this debate on the fringes and move on.

Now, let us bow to a new personality. To this date, keeping this personality as the nucleus or focal point, a world of devotion is revolving around it. What did he wrote? … What has he accomplished? … What did he preach? … A world full of devotees, whether they know the answers to these questions or not, without any reservations, consider him as the God and worship him. Even today, there are his disciples, who follows his teachings. These disciples themselves have disciples who is following them. In the religious world, this person as the focal point, not only ‘sthothrams’ (hymns) but also shouting of slogans are taking place.

Who is this personality? …

From Thiruchchoor, located in the Indian state of Kerala, if one travels few miles they can reach Aalwe … From there, if they turn and proceed few more miles, they will reach a small village called Angamaali. From Angamaali if one takes few foot steps, they will reach yet another small village called Kaaladi. At present, the ‘Periyaaru’ river that is creating several issues between the Tamil Nadu Government and Kerala Government, is beautifully meanders through this village. In this naturally very fertile land of Kaaladi …

Lived a Brahmin named ‘Shivaguru’ … He was married to devout lady named ‘Aariyaambhaal’. In this fertile land, a child named ‘Sankaran’ put his infant feet print, with this couple as the parents. The entire village of ‘Kaaladi’ was overwhelmed with joy when they saw this child. ‘Beautiful child … Look at his eyes … It is emitting ‘gyanam’ (wisdom) … And look at his ears … It is opened up widely to listen to the entire world at the same time’ … Thus was the talk of the village among those elders who witnessed his infancy. While the father and mother were very happy over the birth of their precious son … Their happiness did not last permanently. While ‘Sankaran’ was a little baby, his father passed away. The relatives and friends who used to crowd the place, during the days of prosperity, one by one started to stay away from their house. The very sight of a widow was considered as a bad omen according to religious literatures and everyone started their religious path and avoided the sight of widowed mother of ‘Sankaran’ as it was considered a sin. ‘Sankaran’s family fell into destitute. Yet, his mother did not put any obstacles to the child’s quest for knowledge and self realization. Not only she got rid of his hunger by feeding him well, but also she wiped his quest for knowledge by enrolling him with several religious scholars of his time. While he was attending to his studies with local religious masters, his mother has conducted his ‘Upanayanam’ (Ritual to Initiate into school) ceremony.

After the ‘Upanayanam’, ‘Sankaran’ s enthusiasm for leaning and searching for religious documents went into a vigorous phase. One day he said to his mother “Mother … what I have learned from the local Pundits is enough. Mother … on the banks of the river Narmatha, I heard, there are few Pundits. I would like to go there and learn from them …”. With her permission he left the banks of the river ‘Periyaaru’ and started his journey towards the banks of the river ‘Narmatha’. ‘Sankaran’ who came to the ‘Narmatha’ banks to immerse into the river of knowledge, learned from famous ‘Vidhvaan’s such as ‘Govindha Paathar’, ‘Padhma Paathar’, and ‘Gowda Paathar’. He was in residence during his learning period with the ‘Vidhvaans’ and learned various categories of Hindu scriptures. After he grasped the teachings of various ‘Vidhvaans’ his thinking wheels started spinning. For the scriptures that he learned such as Vedas, ‘Bhagavath Geetha’ and ‘Brahma Soothram’ he wrote ‘Bhashyam’ (Translation and commentary). Along with it he started reading the teachings of ‘Budhdha’. After reading the teachings of ‘Budhdha’, he was forced to go back and re-examine the Vedas and ‘Brahma Soothram’. ‘Budhdha’s teachings started to
put lightening roots into ‘Sankaran’. Again he started to read the Hindu scriptures, and finally he got clarified. He proclaimed that he accepts the ‘ngyanam’ (knowledge) as revealed by ‘Budhdha’ and declared that everything else in this world is untruth. This is the ‘ngyanam’ that I gained.

He declared that our birth is ‘Maaya’ (unreal) ... Our life is unreal. In this world there are only two things you can count on : 1.) ngyanam (knowledge) 2.) angyanam (Ignorance). Everything else is ‘Maaya’ (unreal). Just like, we step on a piece of rope and get scared thinking that we stepped on a snake, we are frightened over the life in this world not realizing that it is also a ‘Maaya’. Just like the rope that is an unreal snake ... this world and our life in this world is ‘Maaya’. Our fright is also a ‘Maaya’. “What we eat is also ‘Maaya’”. Thus ‘Sankaran’ started to preach to the world, the ‘Ngyanam’ he gained over the years. Except the God ... what was written in Vedas and all the karmas described in it was also ‘Maaya’. As he started to attack the Vedas and preached against it, opposition against him began to mount, from the Vedic scholars and practitioners group. These were his youthful days. For him ... The male is unreal ... Female is unreal ... As a matter of fact everybody and everything is unreal. Hence, he refused to get married. However his mother requested him to get married, he refused.

In his youthful age he he became a monk and relinquished all forms of worldly possessions. He started to assemble like minded youth who also believed that this world is ‘Maayam’(unreal), and who had faith in his teachings. Initially he had four youth who became his disciples. They were 1.) Aanandhagiri, 2.) Sureshwaran, 3.) Padhmanaabhar, and 4.) Hashthamalakar. While they were following, he travelled from one village to another and spread his message over the unreality of the world and ‘Maya’ nature of everything around us. Hence, he preached to the masses not to get confused over the reality and became a slave to worldly possessions. He preached his philosophy of ‘Adhvaitham’ everywhere he visited. The young monk ‘Sankaran’, who preached ‘Everything is unreal, nothing is truth’, was deeply shaken by an ‘unreal’ incidence.

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What was that incident that jolted ‘Aadhi Sankarar’, who has been claiming and preaching to the world that Vedas as well as the karmas written in the Vedas were ‘Maayai’? At the tender young age ... his mother passed away. Even though he realized that everything around including mother and relationships were ‘Maayai’, the death of his mother was a severe shock and caused him much hurt and suffrage. Brahmins who conducts the last rites came and said “Listen son, you must carryout the rituals associated with your mother’s last rites by yourself. As usual don’t go around telling that this is ‘Maayai’ and that is ‘Maayai’ and make fool of yourself ...”. With their insistence, even though it was in contradiction to what he was preaching, he carried out the last rites of his mother as per Vedic tradition.

After the death of his mother he realized, ‘Now, there is nobody is for me, and none is depending on me ...’, ‘Sankaran’ plunged into the life of a ‘Sanyaasi’ (renounced monk). Again he started to visit various villages and continued his preachings. He also emphasized to the youth, the importance of taking ‘Sanyaasam’ (becoming a monk) with ‘slokas’ (verses) that were graspingly hot. Later on, from his biography we find overwhelming evidences that he ventured beyond the present Indian state of Kerala and to spread the ‘Adhvaitha’ philosophy and the path to become a ‘Sanyaasi’ (Wandering Monk). ‘Sankarar’ drew up very strict rules for living as a ‘Sanyaasi’ and not only enforced it on the disciples who chose the ‘Sanyaasam’(Monk way of life), but also onto himself. Basically, a ‘Sanyaasi’ shall not possess anything for himself. Even if he is in need of food he shall not procure the necessary grocery and cook for himself. Not only a ‘Sanyaasi’ must understand that he has no possession in this world ... he must also understand that his culture requires that he must beg for food and eat only that was offered to him. ‘Sankarar’ said “ A ‘Sanyaasi’ must not approach the fire even if he is need of heat. He must go from house to house by foot and beg and what was offered shall be his food ...” and he himself strictly followed the rules of the ‘Sanyaasa Smiruthi’ (unwritten rules for Sanyaasi).

‘Sanyaasa Smiruthi’ .... What is it? What does it says?
Hinduism … The Evolution?

A ‘Sanyaasi’, who has renounced the world, detached from worldly possessions and who practices abstinence, got rid of desires, how should he carry on with his lives, what not to do are given in the ‘Sanyaasa Smiruthi’.

“Padhathii asov swayam
Biktshahii yasya ethathu
Thvayam bhavethu …”

A ‘Sanyaasi’ even if he touches the money with his hands that is a monumental sin … Further, the ‘Sanyaasa Smiruthi’ emphasizes the simplistic life they must adhere to during the ‘Sanyaasam’ period. Wherever he goes, a ‘Sanyaasi’ must travel only by foot or must travel in a ‘Pallaack’ (A cabin carried by men). The following ‘sloka’ states that except these two means of transportation, a ‘Sanyaasi’ must not engage any other modes of travel.

“Vaaganasththam yathiim thirushtvaa
Sajesa snaana maaserethu …”

Do you know, what is the inner meaning of this ‘sloka’? A ‘Sanyaasi’ shall steadfast to his ideals and principles, no matter what changes take place in the world culture. He shall travel only by foot and spread the message among the masses. For the purpose of traveling, do not search for cart or other means of transportation. For traveling from place to place do not get into any cart or other vehicles and ride in pleasure. There is no worse sin in the world than using vehicles for traveling and spreading the message of God. A true ‘Sanyaasi’ shall not even set his eye on horse drawn carriages or ox drawn carts. Even his sight shall not ride in such carriages (He shall not even take an imaginary ride in a carriage). Then how else he can travel? Under unavoidable situations and unfortunate conditions if he happened to see such vehicles, he must immediately immerse in water, and shall get rid of the sin. Thus, the ‘Sanyaasa Smiruthi’ advises a ‘Sanyaasi’ the evils of riding in carts and other vehicles. ‘Sankarar’ took the ‘Smiruthi’ very seriously and carried on his ‘Sanyaasam’ strictly according to the ‘Sanyaasa Smiruthi’. I would like to narrate another matter that is more appropriate. ‘Maha Periyavar’ (The Extremely Great Soul) Chandrasekara Saraswathi Swamikal (Chief of the Kanchi Sankaraachaarya Math) was very particular in observing the travel rules as dictated by the ‘Sanyaasa Smiruthi’. During his life time he has not traveled in any motorized or animal drawn carriages. He traveled only by foot or in a ‘Pallaakku’ (palanquin).

While strictly living according to the ‘Sanyaasa Smiruthi’ at his young age, he also wrote the scripture called ‘Bhaja Govindham’. ‘Moodamathee …’ i.e., In this composition, ‘Bhaja Govindham’, ‘Aadhi Sankarar’ calls the hearts as ‘Foolish Hearts’ and what he has written in these ‘slokas’ is applicable, even today, it is an advise not only for the ‘Sanyaasis’ but also for every average individuals. It contains intricate knowledge that is important for seekers and guides everyone through the self realization path. What happens if one is engrossed in hoarding money? … What happens to a person constantly seeking pleasures with women? … Thus several hot topics are covered in ‘Bhaja Govindham’ looking through several angles. (‘Bhaja Govindham’ means I am praying and chanting the name of Lord ‘Govindhan’). We shall look into some important ‘slokas’. I wonder whether any of the monks of today, following the contents of this important scripture. Let us open up the widows of this precious document so we can get a glimpse!

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The messages ‘Aadhi Sankarar’ conveyed in ‘Bhaja Govindham’ … Did his followers considered as true ‘Govindham’ and found its way to their ear drums? … Are they following its contents? Basically, if you want to test whether a pot full of rice is cooked, all you need to do is to take one morsel and pinch and test. Like wise let us look at a few ‘slokas’ only.

“Ardhdham Anarththam Bhaavaiya Nidhyam
Naasthi thadhahaa Suka Vee sa haa sathyam …”

This is also a ‘sloka’ emphasizing the evils of ‘Pana Bhakthi’ (Devotion to Money). The meaning of ‘Panam’ (Money) is ‘Nothing’. With ‘Panam’ there is not even an atom of benefit. Do not waste your time running
after money. Money is the destroyer of TRUTH. You only will have several infighting within yourself. It is more difficult to hold on to the money than to earn it. If you become rich, even your friend will become your staunchest enemy. Thus wrote ‘Aadhi Sankarar’ in the following stanza:

“Puthraadhabhi Dhana paajaam Piithihi ....”. What is the nutshell meaning of this stanza?

For a rich man, the danger comes only from his own beloved wife and his dear sons. Constant fear prevails from everyone around him. ‘Aadhi Sankarar’ warns that the root cause for ‘Mannaasai’ (Love for Land), ‘Pennaasai’ (Lust for Women) and several other desires is money and further he emphasizes and shoots a bulls eye over the ‘Pennaasai’ in another ‘sloka’:

“Naariis Thana bhara Naabii Dhesam
Thrishtavaa Maathaa Moohaa Veesam ....”

The essential meaning of this Sanskrit poem, an advise given to the ‘Sanyaasi’, by ‘Sankarar’ is “Do not trust the ladies”. Ladies show off their moves and their body parts and try to seduce you. Don’t get disappointed by getting into her trap of darkness. Don’t become prey to her intoxicating smile, and commit suicide. Most importantly … O sinner … Don’t get stimulated by looking at a girls top portion of her body and become inebriated … Later on you will never be able to become sober. Hence, use extreme caution with women … Everything in this world is ‘Maayai’ (unreal) … Women is also a ‘Maayai’ … Even her motivating body is also a ‘Maayai’. Thus ‘Aadhi Sankarar’ cautioning his followers even in those days. Today, we read in news magazines, usual occurrences of excited youth committing adultery and extra marital affairs as well as several ‘Sanyaasis’ falling prey to the women’s bodies, discarding the caution and advise given by ‘Sankarar’.

While, on one side ‘Sankarar’ was embracing the ‘Sanyaasa’ path and following it with very strict discipline, he was also fierce fully opposing the Vedic rituals. Just to demonstrate … As soon as he became a ‘Sanyaasi’ he completely shaved off his head. Yet, more importantly, he untied his ‘yagnyobhavidham or Poonool’ (Sacred Thread), which is essential for a Brahmin to conduct the Vedic ritual, and threw away. While Veda is ‘Maayai’, and the rituals directed in the Vedas is also a ‘Maayai’, the so called Veda dictated sacred thread that he is wearing around his shoulder, is also a ‘Maayai’ and how can he wear this falsehood. That was the reason for throwing away his sacred thread. These two actions brought severe opposition to him from the Brahmins performing Vedic rituals. Because … At a time when both the ‘kudumi’ (small bunch of tied hair at top of their head), and ‘yagnyobhavidham or Poonool’ (Sacred Thread) are considered to be an essential accessories for Brahmins conducting Vedic rituals … “Sankarar” abruptly shaving his head completely and throwing away the sacred thread to become a ‘Sanyaasi’ was upsetting to other Brahmins.

To add to the upset created by Sankarar’s determination to shave his head and remove the sacred thread, his teachings stirred up more anger among the Brahmin community. As I have pointed out in the earlier parts of this series, the Veda says “Baby … Here is the milk … Drink this and live healthily ,,”. In addition, Vedic discipline states “For your sake, you join hands with a women who has complete trust in you, and carry on with your life happily … If anybody disagrees with this discipline and preaching about ‘Sanyaasam’ (renunciation or celibacy), do not even let them in your society. Chase them away from your settlement’. In addition the ‘Upanishadhs’ (Vedic Teachings) says … “Jaanaathii Icchathii yathathee …”. It means … Our mind will fall in love on whatever we see. When the love for that object overwhelms, then we strive to obtain it at any cost. By striving, if you accomplish or obtain what you were seeking for, that gives you immeasurable joy. This joy is the life. When you fall in love on an object, and strive hard to obtain it, and the joy upon your success in your quest is the real intelligence. … Thus states the ‘Upanishadhs’.

But Sankara’s ‘Adhvaitha’ teachings … were diametrically opposite to this and hence, the Vedic priests and followers were constantly poking holes in his philosophy. In these circumstances, a split opened up among the followers of Sankarar and became two groups. One group clung to the ideology that the world is ‘Maayai’ (unreal) … and other claimed that the world is not ‘Maayai’ and it is our ignorance and began to broadcast their philosophy. Since, Sankarar was spreading his philosophy entirely within the educated class of people, this split did not have much impact in the community. However … to squelch the opposition from the Vedic priests, Sankarar gave a statement contradicting his own teachings.
“Veedhoo nithyamathiya thaam
Thadhuthitham karma svanusetheethaam
Kaamye mathihi …”

That is, if you carry out the rituals dictated in the Vedas, with purified mind one can easily attain liberation … Along these lines his statements began to muddy up the ‘adhvaitha’ pond.

Last paragraph, I wrote, by declaring that, If one carries out the rituals dictated in the Vedas, with purified mind one can easily attain liberation, Sankarar muddied up pond of ‘adhvaitha’ philosophy. Only the ‘adhvaitha’ pond was mixed up. Sankarar who has been soaked in that pond was not confused over this issue. As far as he was concerned he was not deviating from his teachings on “Maayai”. As this issue was on the back burner, the philosophical differences between Sankarar and the ‘Aagama’ ritualists began to explode. ‘Aagama’ ritualists? Who were they? First of all what is ‘Aagamam’? … How to worship God? What are all the customary rituals to be performed for the idols? Rules and regulations for these questions and setting out all the religious rituals that has to be carried out for individuals from their birth to death is ‘Aagamam’. In short, ‘Aagamam’ means the ‘procedure’ for performing religious rituals.

In all, ‘Vaishnava’ (Vishnu Worshippers) tradition has two ‘Aagamam’s and the ‘Saivaith’ (Shiva Worshippers) tradition has sixty three ‘Aagamam’s. ‘Vaishnava’ has ‘Vaigaanasa Aagamam’ and ‘Paancharatha Aagamam’. How to perform ‘Abhishekam’ (Bathe), worship and decorate Lord Vishnu? … How to conduct various religious ceremonies? … How to perform recitations and chant mantras? … Such details were worked out explicitly and presented by ‘Viganasar’ and this procedure was named after him and was called ‘Vaigaanasa Aagamam’. Next … Lord Vishnu himself came down from heaven and gave instructions on … How to decorate him? … How to perform ‘Abhishekam’ to him? … How to worship him? … How to conduct religious rituals? … How to perform recitations and chant mantras? … Thus, there is a belief that Lord Vishnu himself briefed to few devotees during a period extending to five nights. That is why it is called ‘Paancharatha’ (Five night) ‘Aagamam’. ‘Saivaith’ tradition has, as I said before, sixty three ‘Aagamams’ out of which several of them are rarely in use at present times.

O.K. … These are the ‘Aagamams’. I.e., these are the mantras that teaches one how to worship God through the idols. The ‘Aagamams’ besides teaching the customary worship practices, it also dwelled in another controversial subject. ‘Only by offering to the Idols as prescribed per the ‘Aagamams’ and worship strictly according to the directions one can attain ‘Moksham’ (liberate themselves from the cycles of birth and re-birth). This was where ‘Aadhi Sankarar’ intervened … Criticized such notion … and even one may say that he condemned such claims. Only God is real. All the rest were ‘Maayai’, unreal. ‘Aagamams’ are nothing but accumulation of lies compiled to worship ‘The Real’ and demanding the people to worship their way. They are even looking that ‘Real’ only through the unreal shapes of ‘Vigrahams’(Idols). Thus … If one believes in the advise of the ‘Aagama’ ritualists, they will never get liberated from the cycles of birth and death. Besides, they will not even get the blessings of God. Sankarar was debating and claimed that not only the ‘Aagamams’ are fake but also clinging to them is a colossal mistake. If ‘Aagamams’ are not the answer to liberation, ‘What is the pathway to liberation?’ according to Sankarar:

“Sathsangathvee nithsangathvam
Nithsangathvee nirmoogathvam
Nirmoogathvee nithsalachiththam
NithsalaChiththee Jiivan Mukthi …”

What is the underlining meaning that resides in these lines? When you are in the company of ‘Sanyyasis’ (the soul that renounced the world), ‘Saadhus or Rishis’ (all persons who has attained saathvic character), ‘gnyaani’ (enlightened souls) your desire to own worldly material things and indulge in trivial activities that are considered as ‘Maayai’ diminishes. As your desire towards worldly material things diminishes, your heart is devoid of lust. As your lust diminishes, you are gaining an unwavering stable mind. When you
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attain the unwavering stable mind, you will be a liberated soul. Hence, one need not worry about past karma and the worship rituals. Thus, traveling by foot he traveled to several places throughout India, and after preaching about the pathway to joyful living as well as getting liberated from the cycles of birth and death ‘Aadhi Sankarar’ … at an early age of thirty two he was said to have been liberated from the soul. While his birth place was identified with certainty, there is no evidence exists to fix with certainty his place where his soul departed from his body. All we have about his demise is an unreliable belief that he went to the Himalayan mountain and never returned. If the disciples had any information, they would have erected a memorial for him. None such memorials exist. Hence, where ‘Aadhi Sankarar’ attained ‘Moksha’ is not known.

While this guessing game is going on … There are several calculations and conclusions over Sankarar’s period of existence. Jawaharlal Nehru in his authoritative history book ‘Discovery of India’ claims that ‘Aadhi Sankarar’ lived in 8th century A.D. Yet some others … claim that he lived during 4th century A.D. and 6th century A.D. Yet some others, as if they ate raw meat, without hesitation claim that he lived about 2500 years back. Even though there are wide ranging and differing opinions over the period, Sankarar lived either 7th century A.D. or 8th century A.D. If we distill all the historical evidences available we can truly establish that he lived approximately 1200 years back. What is this? He has narrated the Sankarar’s birth to death in detail. If anybody mentions Sankarar, what comes to mind is the ‘Mutts’ (Monastery, Abbey, Religious centers). I can clearly understand your question ‘How come he never mentioned a single line about them?’. All the ‘Sankarar Mutts’ were started only after his life time. Hence, how can we tell about the ‘Mutts’ when we are telling the life story of ‘Sankarar’?

Was it really so …

The ‘Sankarar Mutts’ were not established till Sankarar’s life chapter came to an end? … The prevailing belief that the ‘Mutts’ were established by ‘Sankarar’ himself was not a fact? … Even if we assume that way, then what is the story behind the blossoming of all the ‘Adhvaitha Mutts’? … The answers to these questions can be found only during the first century after his death. ‘Sankarar’ ordered his disciples to travel all over the world, after his death, and spread the ‘Adhvaitha’ philosophy that he had taught them. Sankarar, who got the essence of his version of the ‘Adhvaitha’, from Budhdha … was called by the ‘Vaishnava’ sect of Brahmans as ‘Prasanna Bowdhdar’. What that means was that, he was the individual, who preached the Budhdha’s doctrines indirectly. Similarly, his disciples were also called as ‘Prasanna Bowdhdhars’. After the days of ‘Sankarar’ … These ‘Prasanna Bowdhdhars’, just like their Guru, traveled from village to village and immersed in preaching the ‘Adhvaitha’ philosophy. They were pressing over and over those gathered, ‘Life is ‘Maayai’, Do not trust in any worldly things … Plunge into the life of a ‘Sanyaasi’.

The disciples as they took their ‘Sanyaasam’, they had to take their oath of ‘Sanyaasi’ by affirming ‘Thaneshane … Paaryashane … Puthreshane …’, the meaning of which is ‘I have deserted my desires to own wealth … dumped my desire for marriage and lust for females … discarded my want of a family with sons and daughters …’. By taking this oath of celibacy, the disciples, who set out to spread the philosophy of ‘Sankarar’, wandered all over the country side and came to a conclusion, “Our guru Sankarar, adopted the essence of Budhdha’s teachings ‘Sarvam Shoonyam’ (everything is nothing) and spread this message among the masses by declaring that only the God is Real and the rest is nothing but ‘Maayai’”. To spread this Sankarar’s version of Budhdha’s message, why we cannot adopt the idea employed by Budhdha’s own disciples. What was that idea? … At the beginning of this series, when I was writing about Budhdha, in one of the chapter I have pointed out the broadcasting technique of the disciples of Budhdha. Do you recall? … In the fourth chapter I have noted “Nowadays, as everyone knows, there is considerable debate over establishment of various Sankarar ‘Mutts’(Abbey) … The idea of establishing the ‘Mutts’ was also borrowed from the ‘Vihars’(huts) established by Budhdha’s disciples.” Bring this back to your memory. Adopting this very idea to spread the message of their Guru was debated among the disciples of Sankarar.

At the conclusion, they decided to establish the ‘Mutts’ along the same lines of the Budhdha Vihars and initiated the establishment of various ‘Mutts’. What are these ‘Mutts’? It means the abode of ‘Sanyaasi’.
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They were established at various locations for the sole purpose of sheltering the monks who stays there permanently and spread only the message of ‘Adhvaitham’ relentlessly and in full force. For that purpose they were required to stay in the ‘Mutts’. Hence, Aadhi Sankarar’s ‘Adhvaitha’ disciples … started marching in bunches, along various directions. Those journeyed towards South reached ‘Sirungeri’ and started a ‘Mutt’, for spreading the ‘Adhvaitha’ message, by laying the foundation stone. Those traveled towards the Eastern direction, to spread the message of ‘Maayai’ reached ‘Poori’ and decided to establish a ‘Mutt’ over there. Those traveled towards the West reached ‘Dhwaaragai’ and established a ‘Mutt’ over there. Those traveled towards the North reached ‘Bhadhrinaath’ and established a ‘Mutt’ to spread the message of Sankarar. Thus … Several of the principal disciples of Sankarar, including Sureshwaran, Aanandhagiri, Padhmanaabar, and Hashthamalakar have established all these four ‘Mutts’.

To comply with the teachings of Sankarar … No worship practices or other rituals were entertained in these ‘Mutts’. As per the pathway of knowledge advocated by ‘Adhvaitha’ philosophy … No Idol worships are performed. No pooja (worship ritual) will be performed. No relationship shall exist between the Hindu Temples of worship and ‘Adhvaitha Mutts’. ‘Aagama’ practices are abandoned. Rituals advocated by Vedas shall not be performed. In the ‘Mutts’ established to spread ‘Sankarar’s message, no cooking shall take place. As the ‘Sanyaasis’ are required to eat only that was obtained through begging, why cooking is necessary in the ‘Mutts’? … If there was no cooking … i.e., no food to offer to God (‘Naivedhyam’) … Then how can they have worship services? If there were no pooja services, why install Idols? In plain English, “Shankara Mutts are only for proclamation of Advydam …”. The sole and foremost mission of the Mutts established by the disciples of Sankarar spread the ‘Adhvaitha’ philosophy … Only to broadcast Sankarar’s message world over and for no other purposes. You may wonder ‘Whether the mission of the Mutts still remain the same?’ … In addition, you may ask ‘What evidence we have to substantiate that Sankarar had not established the Mutts himself?’.

The questions raised at the end of last chapter was : 1.) ‘Whether the mission of the Mutts, established by the disciple of Sankarar, still remain to the teachings of Sankarar?’ 2.) ‘What evidence we have to substantiate that Sankarar had not established the Mutts himself?’ First of all, let us look at the answer to the second question. Knowledge is simply, not believing in traditional stories and rumors prevailing in the society overlooking all other facts, putting all available information and performing discriminative analysis using logical reasoning. Along this reasoning, let us look at the question ‘Whether Sankarar established all the Sankara Mutts?’. If we look at the question with the known fact that Sankarar attained ‘Moksha’ at his thirty two years … Without proper roadways and with no clear roadway maps to guide the travelers to their destination, during the days of Sankarar, we need to deeply think over the possibility of a person traveling to four corners of India. Even today, from the main highways there are several side roads taking off to various villages located deep into the country side. On their pathways there are several villages with metal and dirt roads with no directional signage to let the travelers know of their whereabouts. Passing through these narrow pathways into the villages … Even today, with such advancements as Global Positioning Systems (GPS), what a difficult task one faces in reaching their destination? … How much time gets wasted in navigating through these side roads? … If that is so, during the primitive days without the scientific advantage … Sankarar, who lived in those days when the ‘gnyaanam’ (knowledge) reached its zenith, during his span of life wrote treatises to several Vedic literatures and wrote translations and explanations to several religious and philosophical literatures. For writing these treatises, explanations and translations he must have spent considerable portion of his life in learning, analyzing, experiencing and digesting the source books. In all probability, his life span of thirty two years would have consumed for all his literary activities. With these monumental tasks … Traveling by foot to various villages he has spread the ‘Adhvaitha’ philosophy. Traveling through the cold and hot weather seasons, dictated by the Lord of Nature … The expanses of land that we call as India today … By foot, how long would have consumed for Sankarar to travel this vast spread of land? Traveling to various places and immediately establishing mutts was not Sankarar’s priority. It does not seems necessary, that there was a need for establishing a mutt at that location, as soon as he reached a place. In these circumstances … From Sirungeri in the South to Bhadhrinath in the North … Poori in the East to Dhwaaraka in the West … One in each corner of India … at far and distant places to each other … Sankarar who died at an young age of thirty two, traveling by foot,
established these mutts is really questionable just by adding the time it will take for traveling during the primitive days.

Next …

The ‘Sacred Spot’ where Sankarar obtained his ‘Mukthi’(Liberation) is still a mystery and is not concluded with certainty. Suppose we assume that Sankarar himself, during his lifetime, had established these four mutts. If that is so … After Sankarar has obtained his liberation … Just for the devotion for their Guru … And to bestow the utmost respect for him … For paying back for all the benefits received from his teachings … His disciples would have established, in any one of the mutts that he had established, would have built a memorial in his honor. What other honor can surpass this gesture, for the mutt that he had established? O.K. … Suppose we consider that Sankarar himself told his disciples ‘My death is also a Maayai (unreal). Hence do not bury me in one of the mutts that I have established and destroy the purpose for which the mutts were established’. If that is so … Wouldn’t they have established a memorial for Sankarar at the same location where he attained liberation? … Such memorial was not even found after extensive search. Let us set aside all these questions to one side … On the other side, the Gods are themselves witness to the statement that Sankarar did not establish Sankara mutts. What? God as a witness? …

Yes! Couple of chapters back I have given you the verse that was written by Sankarar, that outlined the pathway to liberation. That was … By having a good relationship with monks and through that relationship, forego all desires on worldly pleasures such as land, family, and wealth … Give up lust … and through these sacrifices controlling the wandering mind is the pathway to liberation. Sankarar, who outlined this pathway … As I have mentioned in previous chapters also condemned those insisting on idol worship as the way to liberation. I.e., Only by cleansing the mind one can attain liberation … Other than that by worshipping idol either one way or the other one cannot accomplish liberation was the essence of the teachings of Sankarar. The one who despised the worship of idols … Would he have advocated installing idols in his mutts and conduct ‘Aagama’ worships? That too… In the mutts established by Sankarar, who said ‘Aham Brahmam’ (God Within), let us look at the types of worships practiced at present.

Sirungeri mutt that is located in the South, ‘Shaaradhaa Dhevi’ worship goes on … In the Poori mutt, that is located in the East, Krishna worship is carried on … The Bahdhrinaath mutt, located in the North, Shiva worship is conducted every day … In the Dhwaaraka mutt, situated in the West, Krishna worship goes on. Thus in all four mutts idol worship … That too different idols in each of the four mutts … If Sankarar himself had established these mutts, would he have advocated such worships be carried out in contradiction to his own philosophy and preaching? … Some may answer to such questions by saying ‘Sankarar was the one who established these mutts. Later on his devotees made these changes and introduced idol worships’. Well! The above statement is the answer to the first question … i.e., Are all the mutts functioning as per the doctrine of Sankarar? … The answer is an emphatic ‘NO’. Thus we got the answer to the first question.

Next … Only four mutts? … No mention about the mutt at Kaanchi? … This question is raising. For older generation like ours it is Kumbhakonam mutt.

Kumbhakonam mutt? Kaanchi Mutt? Before we get into these questions … Let us go back five hundred years back and stand in the entrance veranda of the Sirungeri mutt.

From present Bangalore only few hours travel by a motor vehicle. There lies Shimoga. Bountiful natural beauty was flowing up and down the slopes of the Western Ghats of India. If we go further approximately one hundred kilometers, on the wet and fertile banks of the beautiful Thunga river, soaking in that beauty lies Sirungeri. In this Sirungeri, located in the central portion of Karnataka state, situated the Southern regional Sankara mutt. In the front paved yard of the simple structure, resembling a conical hut, then and there one can hear the voice of few Brahmins. The monks of the Sankara order were sitting in the hut … There also were some Brahmins. After roaming through several villages over an extended period, it appears that, ‘Adhvaitha’ monks returned back to the mutt only on that day. That was the reason for the
excitement! At this point, I like to tell you certain special message about the operational procedures of the mutts. The monks of the Sankara mutt ... Shall keep the mutt as the nucleus and spread the message of 'Adhvaithan', by roaming by foot, only in limited areas around the mutt. Similarly, only those people living in the designated territory of the mutt, can visit the mutt and get audience or blessings of the monks. Thus each mutt had its own boundary to provide their services.

Beyond the established borders, neither the chief of the mutt shall venture to go out, nor the devotees residing beyond the borders shall enter into the boundary of the mutt to get blessings. Now you may wonder who becomes the chief of the mutt. The chief executive of the mutt was called 'Mataathipathi' (Chief of Mutt). ‘Athipathi’ means that person in-charge of the mutt. Of all the monks, the senior monk, where the seniority based on the time after he was inducted as a monk, was called as the ‘Athipathi’. The person who succeeds him will be the highest seniority monk of the remaining monks. This was the succession order for ‘Athipathi’. Alternatively ... He was not the one who has accumulated all the statistics about the income and expenses and appointed to manage the mutt. In those days there were several youngsters chose to became disciples in Sankara mutt and became monks. Of all those disciples, the senior most monk after sworn to celibacy becomes the ‘Mataathipathi’. I.e., The Senior Saint becomes the chief. After this simple explanation over the succession issue, let us go back to the front patio of the Sirungeri mutt.

Thus, a senior monk was presiding as the Chief of the Mutt. After prostrating on his feet and getting his blessings and with complete satisfaction some Brahmins were exiting the room. At that time, as some young ladies entered the room of the Chief of the mutt, and wanted to meet the ‘Mataathipathi’ to get his blessings ... “Stop” came voice of one of the executive of the mutt. “You shall not come inside his chamber. Swami will not receive you and he will not eat and enjoy the fruits and sweets that you are carrying with you”. “Why?” ... The ladies carrying the fruits and sweets retorted. “Because you are all ladies. You are not welcomed in this mutt. The apparent ‘pleasure’ that is to be gained by the company of ladies is forbidden. The pleasure of fathering babies ... Such wealth derived as a result of marriage and love is strictly forbidden and that is why he became a monk. Hence, how can he receive you and entertain your company? If you run into some beggars, please donate it to them. Now you can return back to your place ...”. Thus the executive gave a long explanation. Ladies shall not be admitted into the mutt was the rules adopted in the early days of the mutt. The young ladies returned back and as they were returning often they turned back and glanced at the mutt.

For each mutt a boundary had been established. Can you recall that I have already mentioned that within that boundary the devotees as well as Chief of the mutt were required to operate? On that basis, the present Tamil Nadu falls within the boundary of the Sirungery mutt. From the Tamil country, several hundred Brahmin families migrated into Shimoga district of Karnataka and in other places close to Sirungeri. Among them, several Vedic scholars and ‘vidhvaans’ (eminent poets), were rewarded with land grants and deeded villages as gifts for their service and talent by Kings and other barons. Brahmins belonging to such affluent families were the ones who were visiting the mutt in groups. Either observing their affluent behavior or their language some of the operatives of the Sirungery mutt were jealous and not able to digest.

" Aren’t you Brahmins having your ancestry from Tamil Nadu?" ... Asked mutt member.
" Yes ... Is there a problem?" ... Retorted one member of the Tamil devotee group.
" You come from a region that is beyond the Sirungeri mutt. Hence, for you people there is no relief." ... response from the member of the mutt.
" Isn’t entire southern part of India within the boundary of the Sirungeri mutt? ... We also belong to the southern part of India. So why we are not welcomed here? ... Tamil Brahmin delegation.
" We are not bound by the geographic boundary. Set the boundary issue aside. Based on customs of your lineage and the scriptural discipline that you have been following, you are nothing but misfortune for this mutt. You are beyond the auspicious limit of this mutt. Hence, you do not have permission to visit this mutt and get blessings." ... Answers the mutt member.
It is my opinion, that for the first time, ‘people of Tamil origin’ were refused admission to an institution and discriminated in Karnataka for the very first time.

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You may ask, what is the relationship between … not letting the Tamil expatriates inside the Sirungeri mutt … and the argument whether it is Kanchi mutt or Kumbhakonam mutt. Let us go back to the front veranda of the Sirungeri mutt. Personnel of the mutt “Whatever ‘gothram’ (a sub group of a caste) you belong to, or whatever Vedic sect you belong to (Brahmins were sub divided, in addition, into four different Vedic groups namely ‘Rig’, ‘Yajur’, ‘Saama’, and ‘Atharvana’ based on their lineage, which depends on the Vedic tradition their ancestors have been following) you have no privileges to get blessings, or initiate into monkhood or worship the ‘matathipathi’. Hence, you shall not visit this mutt. Because of your visit, you will bring this mutt nothing but misfortune and you will be cursed with sins”. The visitors “We also live within the jurisdictions of this mutt … How come, we cannot come inside the mutt?” The logical reasoning of the visitors and their sacred protest did not yield any success. Along these lines, there is another important point. It shall be noted that, several families that migrated some generations back, from ‘Chola Mandalam’ (present Thiruchirapalli and Tanjavur Districts) and from “Then Mandalam” (Southern Districts) such as Thirunelveli district in and around Sirungeri have been regularly getting blessings from the mutt, and initiated into ‘bhahmachariyam’ (celibacy) and monkhood. Eventually, they were also denied admission to the mutt. Hence, the Tamil citizens settled in Karnataka region were agitated and opened dialogue to find out a solution to this situation.

“We shall not let this atrocity continue. We shall make a forced entry into the mutt, that forbids us entry. We shall take part in all the activities and ceremonies of the mutt.” … Came the angry voice of a youth, as he was knotting his loose long mullet hair. “They are trying to segregate in devotion to God. We shall face this as a challenge and shall enter the mutt with utmost courage.” … Another voice came from the angry crowd. Thus, several forceful voices were raised in that revolting mass. However, one voice that was diametrically opposite. “ We are not average people … We are eminent scholars of Vedas and are soaked in Vedic knowledge. For the scholarship of our eminent scholars and poets, the kings and several landlords have deeded several villages as gifts. We shall establish our own mutt and serve God as well as the destitutes.” … This idea grabbed everybody’s imagination … From that day on they abandoned the Sirungeri mutt and they established a new and equivalently prestigious mutt at Sangameshwaram. They appointed among themselves a ‘matathipathi’ and based on the knowledge and wisdom received from the mutts established by Sankarar, the mutt was carefully managed and served the migrants from Tamil Country.

Devotees from various parts of Tamil Country including ‘Chola Mandalam’ (Tiruchirapalli and Tanjavur Districts) and ‘Thondai Mandalam’ (Arcot Districts) took long pilgrimages to this new mutt. At this same period, in Kanchipuram an important event happened. Kanchipuram was a well known town and was called in various names such as ‘Temple Town’ for its famous temples and ‘Queen City’ for its sculpture and art. It was also a very auspicious town and considered as one of the ‘Shabtha Muththi Sthalam’ (Seven Chief Sacred Places). It was placed among ‘Ayodhya’, ‘Madhura’, ‘Maayaapuri’, ‘Kaashi’, ‘Poori’, ‘Dhwaragai’ as one of the most sacred places. It has the distinction of being the only city in the Southern India. At that stature, in this town the devotion to God was flowing freely without any barrages and irrigated the religious field. Wherever you see, in the streets, there was religious chantings. In the city of sculpture, the devotees who returned from Sangameshwar, established a branch of the mutt. There were no buildings. No vast grounds. A very small hut, with simple appearance was the Kanchi mutt. Based on Sankarar’s teachings, it was established to spread the message of ‘Adhvaithan’ and carry on charitable services to the poor. Its appearance was so simple that many people do not even know its whereabouts.

From the mutt, begging for food and for preaching the adhvaitha philosophy, the monks travel to places where people assemble such as temples and banks of rivers. Gradually, people start recognizing the service provided by the mutt and its reputation started to spread around the countryside. At this period, in Tanjavur, the ruling of the Nayakkar had begun. Nayakkars strongly believed in the teachings of the
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Hindu monks and always longing for their blessings. As a matter of fact, several Hindu monks and celibates served as ministers in their ruling cabinets. As the Nayakkars ruling dynasty founded with Hindu Dharma as the basics, they valued very much the generosity towards the destitute, devotion to God and religious disciplines. In order to unifying all these basic tenants and guide them in a path of Hindu Dharma, they required the assistance of Hindu monks. Eventually, the level of scholarship of the monks of the Sankara mutt at Kanchi, and their teachings has reached the ears of the Nayakkar kings.

A scholarly and reputed Hindu mutt … Why? Let us relocate that mutt within our own kingdom. We shall make all the arrangements for the relocation. Since, Nayakkar kings strongly valued the Hindu Dharma and desired in florishment of generosity and devotion to God, the Government issued an order guaranteeing the relocation and welfare of the mutt. The Kumbhakonam Mutt was established approximately between four and five hundred years back. The mutt from Kanchipuram was displaced to Kumbhakonam and was named ‘Kaamakoti Mutt’. Since, the Government built the entire facility for the mutt and provided for the subsistence, and with the support of the Nayakkar’s government, the mutt was functioning with vigor. New facility. The kings have donated considerable land and property as grants to cover the expenses of the mutt. From that time on, till the middle of the twentieth century it was known as the ‘Kumbhakona Kaamakoti Mutt’. That was the reason, the mutt was called as ‘Kumbhakona Kaamakoti Mutt’ by the old timers. Even though this mutt was established several centuries after the death of Aadhi Sankarar, some people still preaching to the people that this mutt was also established by Aadhi Sankarar. Let us set aside all the rumors and fables and let us continue further and explore the history behind the displacement of the mutt back to Kanchipuram.

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Before we proceeding to find out how the Kumbhakonam Mutt uprooted to Kanchipuram … We shall look into the modes of operations of the Kumbhakonam mutt. Just like the Sirungeri mutt, that did not allow the ladies inside the mutt and strictly observed the service boundaries, Kumbhakonam mutt also functioning under similar rules … Except the Tanjavur district in which the mutt was located … a part of the Thiruchirapalli district … Coastal regions of Ramanathapuram district … and Thondai Mandala region (Arcot districts), the Chief of the Mutt will not travel beyond the boundary. However, a unique feature of this mutt is that the devotees from any part of the country can visit and get blessings. I.e., though the travel boundary of the Chief of the Mutt is limited, there was no boundary restriction, ‘boundary less devotion’, for the devotees. At this point shall we examine a ‘slokam’ (verse) that defines a devotee?

“Paramaathmane Yiir rakthaha
Viraktho aparamaathmanii … “

This ‘sloka’ defines a devotee. Meaning … “Only a person who loves God is ‘Bhakthan’ a devotee. A person who loves any other person or any other objects is not considered as a devotee”. If we expand the meaning … The religious grammar defines the one who has no bodily relationship with females, who has no desire to have off shoots, one who has no intension to get involved either in love life or in family life, shall be considered as a true devotee. In these days, when they print flyers from tiny small temples on the street corner of a village to monumental temples in major cities, they address everyone as ‘Bhaktha Kodikal’. Just think and apply the definition of a ‘Bhakthan’ and you will find that there exits not very many devotees amongst ourselves. Let us come to the point. Whether adhering to the above definition or not, several ‘Bhakthas’ (devotees) were visiting the Kumbhakonam Mutt. However, none among them was belonging to the lowest ‘Shudhra’ caste. Reason? “‘Abrahmanas’ (non-bharmins) shall not become a ‘sanyaashi’(monk) …” is the law devised by ‘smiruthi’ (that orally conveyed). As an corollary to the above law of ‘smiruthi’, people belonging to the ‘shudhra’ caste shall not even visit and get blessings from any monks.

In this climatic conditions, with the support of the ruling kings, the Kumbhakonam mutt was carrying on their services in a grand manner. After a succession of several chiefs of the mutt, Sri Chandrashekara Saraswathi Swamikal, became the Chief monk of the Kumbhakonam Mutt. I became a intimate friend of him and was dealing with him on several issues that was dear to his heart. During that period, ‘Maha Periyavar’ (Sri Sankarachariya of Kumbakonam Mutt), started to travel beyond the traditional boundaries.
of his mutt, to preach about the ‘Adhvaitha’ teachings of Sankarar. It is to be noted that by this time the traditional boundary curfew was loosened up and they were free to travel beyond the boundaries of the mutt. As a result, several important industrialists and civic leaders became his devotees.

During the days of India’s independence fight ... from my recollection ... Mahathma Gandhi has traveled to Kumbhakonam and met with ‘Maha Periyavar’ at least three times. In addition ... several national leaders have visited with him, worshipped him, and got his love as well as blessings. Even during this period, there were several colliding debates between the Sirungeri mutt and the Kumbhakonam mutt over several basic issues and opinions. While the Sirungeri mutt was claiming that they were the ones established by Sankarar, the Kumbhakonam mutt denying that statement and claiming that indeed the Kumbhakonam mutt was the one established by Aadhi Sankarar ... several such disputes, claims and disclaims were aired. While these disputes were going on, on the other side, the propaganda of ‘adhvaitha’ teachings and associated services were regularly carried out. I must point out here that even though there were several disputes and differing opinions between the mutts, all the mutts were wholly and equally engaged in fostering and protecting ‘Varnaasrama Dharmam’ (cast based social culture or justice).

Early part of the last century ... As several political leaders visited the mutt and got blessings from ‘Maha Periyavaal’ and his visits to several cities in his region as well as outside his territory, he has earned good publicity. During that time, the chief of the Eastern regional mutt located at Puri, Sri Sankarachaariyaar, began to visit Madras Presidency and actively participated in religious functions and activities ... gradually began to expand his zone of influence. This news was brought to the ears of ‘Maha Periyavaal’ through his disciples. With disgust, they complained to ‘Maha Periyavaal’ ... ‘The Puri Sankarachaariyaar, From the East Sankara mutt, is coming into our territory and carrying on his propaganda. However, when we go to his region to carry on our mission, they protest against us. They do not even consider us as a Sankara service mutt and give due respect. They consider mutt as a stumbling block. Should they be preaching in our territory?’.’ Maha Periyavaal’ calmed them down. All these happened during the first half of the twentieth century. During those days when ‘Maha Periyavar’ traveled to distant cities (‘Dhesaanthiram’), the newspapers of those days welcomed him with their headlines ‘Visit of Chief of the Kumbhakonam mutt’. Only after such publicities ... Chief of the mutt realized the fact ‘Since we are located in Kumbhakonam, everyone is looking down on us and trying to sideline our efforts. We shall relocate back to our original location Kanchipuram, which is very close to the capital of the Madras presidency’ and decided to move the headquarters to Kanchipuram. Thus the Kumbhakonam mutt displaced to Kanchipuram. Now you know the story of the Kanchipuram mutt.

O.K. Did I mention earlier that I was a close friend of ‘Maha Periyavar’ Chandrashekarenthira Saraswathi? Through that true friendship, I was blessed with unique and memorable experience and I would like to share these with you. Let me reminiscent these memories!

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Before we can reminiscent the experiences through the fortunate friendship of mine with ‘Maha Periyavaal’ ... My own upbringing that deflected me towards his friendship, and my life status in the city is dangling in front of my eyes. After narrating this I shall proceed to touch about the friendship with ‘Maha Periyavaal’ and explore further.

During my childhood days, one among the objects that I touched and played with, was the books on Veda. My father ... Thaththaa Dheshika Thaththaachaariyaar and his older brother Pattu Swamy were two individuals who have mastered, analyzed, distilled, cooked, garnished and swallowed the Vedas. Even when I was a child, chanting of Vedic hymns used to bombard in my tiny ear drums. During those days I can differentiate between neither Veda nor onions. During my growth period ... while I was doing mischief my relatives used to divert my attention by asking me to recite various slokas (religious verses) and stanzas ... and while my father playing and spending time with me he used to recite only mantras from Vedas. Even when I was stubborn, misbehave he used to reveal his anger through reciting those Vedic verses that teaches and directs through the right path. Thus even without my notice, the Veda was entangled in my living environment.
When I attained the school age, my father and his elder brother started to teach me Vedas. As I was practicing my Vedic ‘Athyayanam’ in those days … I was not only his son but also I bloomed as his student. As the Vedic hymns are recited, one hears the sound and simulates that sound through their mouth by twisting and turning the tongue is called ‘Athyayanam’. While others have difficulty in simulation, I not only was able to simulate but also understood the meaning of the hymns, since my father took interest in splitting the sentences and getting to the roots of the words and explained the meaning of the verses. At the age of fifteen, as I started to think for myself over the Vedic verses and its meaning … through out the country, the news about an organization called ‘Aarya Samaajam’, was a hotly debated topic among the Brahmin community. What was this ‘Aarya Samaajam’? I, as an young man, was able to sense that this organization conceived by Dhayaanandha Saraswathi, in Northern India, was spreading fear and turbulence among the Brahmin community. What was he preaching to set off such a commotion among the Brahmins? … “The Brahmins were using the Vedas as a tool of their profession. Hence, the Vedas are embedded into the bookshelves of the Brahmin’s household. They placed a siege of Vedas and as a result neither they learn Vedas themselves nor they facilitate others to learn it. The Vedas shall be learned not only by Brahmins but also by members of other castes as well. Everybody shall understand and feel the inner meaning of these verses. Everybody includes members of other non-Brahmin castes from ‘Kshathriyas’ to ‘Shudhras’.”

Along these lines, what was preached by Dhayaanandha Saraswathi was spread throughout India by his followers through the ‘Aarya Samaajam’. This message also reached the Tamil Nadu. This message was carried widely by newspapers and magazines published in Tamil Nadu. In Sowcaarpettai, a township of Chennai, the public meetings were carried out by the ‘Aarya Samaajam’ to spread the message among the common people. Only at this circumstances, in Kumbhakonam, the lads practicing ‘Sanadhana Dharma’ who have learnt the Vedas including myself, resolved ourselves to protect and defend the Brahmanic Culture. We founded a society called ‘Brahmana Sabha’ (Brahmin’s Society). During the same period, protests were launched by E. V. Ramaswamy Nayakkar from Erode, against the Brahmin community and against the societal ills. Hence, we determined to establish the ‘Brahmana Sabha’ and preach in defense of the ‘Sanadhana Dharma’.

We used to go from city to city and village to village to spread our messages to the masses. If we preach for one day we were paid by the ‘Sabhai’ a remuneration of ten rupees. While going place to place and defending ‘Sanadhana Dharma’ and delivering rebuttal to E.V. Ramaswamy Nayakkar … A funny incidence happened … I had a friend named Paravashthu Raajagopaalaachaari Aiyangaar. He used to take the kind of Vedic verses and Sanskrit ‘slokas’ that were disgracing the people belonging to the ‘Shudhra’ caste and provide them to the operatives of the campaign of E.V. Ramaswamy Nayakkar. This really helped their campaign to launch attacks on us.

Even during this hostile environment, yet another organization named ‘Sanadhana Dharma Sabha’ was established. In those days, prominent Congress Party leaders, who were involved in Independence fight, such as G. Venkataraamayyar, and M. K. Vaidhyaanaatha Aiyar used to regularly visit our organization. During that time, the Sankara Mutt at Kumbhakonam, that was hailing with fame and stood strong, also started and published a magazine called ‘Aariya Dharmam’. My father’s younger brother Agnihothram Gopaala Desikaachaariyaar was an editor for that journal. In addition, he also wrote a book titled ‘Jaathi Thathva Niroopanam’.

While I was giving lectures through the ‘Sabhai’, defending Vedic justice, and writing to magazines and journals … I used to frequently visit the capital city of Chennai. After hearing through the grapevine about my activities in defending the Vedic way of life and delivering lectures to masses, the Chief of the Kumbhakonam Sankara Mutt, Chandhirashekara Saraswathi Swamikal inquired around about myself and my activities. He sent invitation through them to visit the mutt … In my young age, on an early morning, I visited the Kumbhakonam Sankara Mutt, upon his invitation. ‘Thaaththaachaari … Come inside … Please be seated …’ was the receptive words of the Sankaraachaariyaar. He warmly received me and requested me to sit close to him.
“Welcome Thaatthaachaari … Are you doing well? … My disciples were telling me all about your activities … I hear that you kept on preaching to the masses about the Vedic justice … You should also take care of your health …”. Thus for the first time Sankaraachaariyaar was kindly throwing words at me. “For defending the ‘Sanadhana Dharma’, Swami, we must do what we can … That is why I travel tirelessly, to here and there, to preach and defend our system …”. As I replied politely … He (Maha Periyavar) started to inquire, in detail, about the functioning of our ‘Sabhai’ and its activities. I enthusiastically, gave a full account including the ups and downs, of all the places we have visited, the experiences we gained and the encounters during our trips and the preachings. After keenly listening to all my experiences, Maha Periyavar … “You are performing an excellent service to safeguard the Vedic Dharma … Some other day we will get together and discuss this in detail” with that he send me off. After answering to his several questions, I took leave off him.

My meeting with Sankaraachaariyaar, has stirred up controversy among our community members as our family was traditionally Vaishnavaites where as Maha Periyavar was the head of Saivaite Mutt. “What is this … We are pure ‘Aachaarya Purushaal’ (traditionalists people) … But he has visited the Sankara Mutt and met the chief of the Mutt … Is it tolerable? …” Thus people were making noises around Kumbhakonam, that also reached my ears. Before we explore the question ‘Is it tolerable?’ … You may wonder about the ‘Aachaarya Purushaal’. In the Society, especially in those days within the Brahmin community, to teach and conserve the religious principles and philosophy, society used to appoint very thoughtful elders with in-depth knowledge, strict discipline, and extremely conservative values. They were given special status in the society and were elevated to the level of ‘Guru” (teacher). There were only very few individuals, qualified in the religious traditions, to be in the guru status. Society used to select such individuals and bestow upon them all the respect and higher status. Those special individuals selected by the community were called ‘Aachaarya Purushaat’.

Our family has such distinction and has been elevated to the level of ‘Aachaarya Purushaat’ by the Vaishnava Brahmin community in Kumbhakonam. Traditionally, required knowledge and discipline to shoulder this responsibility were passed from generation to generation. Since, I am a descendent, I am also one of the ‘Aachaarya Purushan’. I am expected to conserve the values of Vaishnava tradition and forbidden to have high level meetings with Saivaite leaders. At the same time … Several families carry on this honor, as it was bestowed upon their ancestors for their diligence in holding onto religious values, even though they themselves do not posses required knowledge of religion, discipline and conservative values. Only very few families take this honor seriously and carry on this tradition by acquiring the required religious knowledge and strictly follow the scriptures. For example … In order to preach and explain the meaning of the ‘Bhaashyam’ written by Sri Ramanujam, one of the great saints of Vaishnava tradition, he has appointed during his days itself, certain families and awarded the title ‘Bhaashya Simmaasanaathipathi’ (Bhaashya Chairman). The descendants, just because of their lineage, carried this title through the generations, and added to their names ‘Bhaashya Simmaasaanathaathipathi’. Truthfully, the amount of ‘Bhaashyam’ they knew is zero, they are still ‘Bhaashya Simmaasaanathaathipathikal’.

On the other hand, as I was born into an ‘Aachaarya Purushar’ lineage, I did not slip out of acquiring the religious and Vedic knowledge, religious and worshipping discipline or adhering to the customs and traditions. That was the reason, when I met ‘Maha Periyavar’ who was the chief of the opposing religious order, some of the religious elite in Kumbhakonam raised questions. Wouldn’t it bring extreme shame, for snubbing off an invitation from a well respected dignitary for a meeting, even though he is the chief of different order of Hindu religion? … Hence, I was not bothered by such criticisms.

After that introductory meeting, ‘Maha Periyavar’ used to meet with me once in a while. Thus one occasion when we met … “First of all our community must cleanse our acts! Isn’t it? … Nowadays, several Brahmin families discount the Vedic tradition and they started to journey in the sinful path. First of all we must restore the Vedic tradition in our community. For that we must work together in an organized manner … Give me some ideas … “ said ‘Maha Periyavar’. I told him “We are through the ‘Sabhai’ and through the newspapers and magazines, to our best, preaching and spreading the Vedic message. T.K.Jeganathaachaariyaar (Father of famous Tamil novalist Mr. Saandilyan) is also a Brahmin and he is publishing a magazine called ‘thaarmiiga Hindu’. We converse with him and write in the magazine about our culture’. ‘Maha Periyavar’ continued … “Let these activities continue Thaatthaachaari … Yet, Hasn’t the Brahmin community forgot their obligation to their lineage? … Hence, with a mission in essence of redirecting the path of the Brahmin community … We must establish a ‘Sabhai’ and name it ‘Vedha

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Dharma Shaashthira Paripaalana Sabhai’. You must take the lead in this important mission in redirecting the focus of our community. First of all, Brahmins shall learn Vedas and help spreading the knowledge and make the Vedas to flourish. We collect the necessary funds to maintain the ‘Sabhai’ only from the Brahmin community … This is the only way we can cleanse our own sins”.

This was immediately put into action. Kuliththalai Annaa Aiyangar and Jayaraama Aiyar were nominated as the Secretaries for this organization. They went throughout the then Thanjaavur district, met with all the Brahmin families and, collected whatever donation they can spare for this cause. I traveled with them during this fund raising event. “If the Brahmins change themselves, directing their energy in the right path, they in-turn will help in reforming the Brahmin community …” was the hope of ‘Mahaa Periyavar’. That was the main reason he took initiative to start the ‘Vedha Shaashthira Paripaalana Sabhai’. What was the yield? …

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The ‘Vedha Dharma Shaashthira Paripaalana Sabhai’, which was founded with the blessings of “Maha Periyavar”, in those days, started to function just like us, the energy of young with boundless enthusiasm, and started to expand to farther reaches. “ The number of Brahmins who read the Vedas diligently and follow strictly what was said in those verses is dwindling … We must stoke Vedic spirit in them. Only if we have to do what we must, to bring Vedic awareness in these people, God will do His part to help them. Isn’t it? … As ‘Mahaa Periyavar’ was asking me that question, he continued to instruct me that in each meeting of the ‘Vedha Dharma Shaashthira Paripaalana Sabhai’, perform ‘Aava Handhi Homam’ from Yajur Vedha. While several ‘Homams’ (Fire Worship) are contained in Vedhas … Why this ‘Aava Handhi Homam’ was singled out by ‘Mahaa Periyavar’? … What is the peculiarity of this ‘Homam’?

Each ‘Homam’ is specifically designed and conducted for bringing to fruition certain principal demands. On that basis, ‘Aava Handhi Homam … traditionally conducted for ‘Brahma Thejus’. After installing the Sacred ‘Kalasam’ (pot) … On that ‘Kalasam’, we pray to Viyaasar who has compiled the Vedas … We grow fire in a bed, in front of the ‘Kalasam’, and chant the sacred mantras. This is ‘Aava Handhi Homam’. The most important ingredient used in this ‘Homam’ is plain white rice. That is … We give food … In addition Viyaasar’s Vedic knowledge and increase the ‘Bhahma Thejus’ (strength of God) among the Brahmin community. The most important benefit of ‘Aava Handhi Homam’ is to increase the strength of ‘Brahmaniyam’(Brahmin Way of Life). Now, you may understand why ‘Mahaa Periyavar’ requested that we perform this fire sacrifice. After, we performed this ‘Homam’ … We have to deliver a discourse in which we expound in detail the Vedic verses and its relevance to the Brahmin’s way of life. The discourses will direct the activities of the Brahmin community in the Vedic pathway.

At that time … Kumbhakonam mutt did not possess any meaningful wealth that can be bragged about. We did not raise or contribute any initial capital towards this ‘Sabhai’. Worse yet, we did not even open a bank account. The ‘Sabhai’ neither had a trust nor a governing Board of Trustees. Even though we did not have the any capital and guiding trust … We had the blessings of ‘Mahaa Periyavar’ … added to it our enthusiastic and tireless service … and with these contributions the ‘Vedha Dharma Shaashthira Paripaalana Sabhai’ was functioning on a grand manner. As a result of our efforts, each and every village we visited in Thanjaavur district … Every major cities we visited, the Vedic discourses were taking place in wholesome manner. Several Brahmin families were directing their children towards Vedic schools for their education. Awareness on Vedas and the religious knowledge had increased within the community. Silhaaraamaiyar was principally responsible for the functioning of the ‘Sabhai’. Thus, as the ‘Vedha Dharma Shaashthira Paripaalana Sabhai’ gradually grew and was carrying out the mission as directed by “Mahaa Periyavar’. He was extremely happy to see the results.

While we were conducting Vedic discourses and performing ‘Aava Handhi Homam’ in every meeting, we got invited to come to Bombay and perform discourses. Who sent the invitation? Only from those Brahmins who emigrated from Tamil Nadu! They were very wealthy and living affluently. Even though they were separated from Vedic way of living, they were not disassociated from Veda. Their affinity for acquiring Vedic knowledge was immeasurable. Hence, they invited to come to Bombay at their expense. What started in Bombay … Continued to faraway places in the Northern India, where South Indian Brahmins
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have settled, such as Ahmadhabad, New Delhi, Calcutta, and Nagpur. We went to all these places …
Performed the homam and conducted the Vedic discourses to invoke awareness of Vedic way of life.
Whatever, donations received for our services, we ploughed it back in Tanjaavur district for continued
Vedic discourses and performing ‘Aaava Handhi Homam’.

While we were enthusiastically involved in the service to God … The chief of the atheist, Ramaswamy
Naayakkar was very active in delivering his message, all over Tamil Nadu, despising Vedic philosophy
and Hindu worship practices. We had a common friend named K.K. Nilamekam. Everyday, when I run
into him in the bazaar of Kumbhakonam … He used to tell “Swamii … Have you heard … In the recent
meeting our Ramaswamy Nayakkar has taken you to task”. Whatever argument the Nayakkar had raised
against Brahmins I used to give a rebuttal to Mr. Nilamekam before I returned back from the bazaar. In
this environment, the atheist group not only made fun of Brahmins, but also they assumed additional sinful
task of making fun of the shapes of various Hindu deities. This was not only paining me but also troubling
‘Mahaa Periyavar’. As usual he called me and we were discussing this issue. “Thaaththaachaaril … The
‘Vedha Dharma Shaassthira Paripaalana Sabhai’, that we started earlier is very effective and its mission is
getting fulfilled. Now that they are making fun of the deities that are worshipped by the Hindus … we must
spread among the masses the philosophy and procedure behind our deity worship as well as the ‘Sirpa
agreement Swaamii … Brahmins shall definitely become aware of these facts … In addition, others also
shall be aware of these facts…”, I agreed with him. After discussing for few days on this issue … raised
‘Aagama Sirpa Sathash’. I gave him various ideas.

We were discussing for a long time. To unite these two factions, only God can be the bridge. How can we
unit both factions using God only as the bridge? … Let us look at the language of both factions. It is only
Tamil ‘Vaishnava’ (worshippers of Lord Vishnu) saints, ‘Aalvaars’, composed ‘Paasuram’ (Praise of Lord) in
Tamil. ‘Saivaite’ (Worshippers of Lord Shiva) saits, ‘Nayanmaars’ composed songs in Tamil language. Yet,
can we simply take ‘Thiruppaavai’ (‘Vaishnava’) wake up hymns and ‘Thiruvempaavai’ (‘Saivaite’) wake
up hymns and fuse both factions together? … In the wayside rest house at Thiruvidaimarudhoor, when he
proposed this plan I can feel, along with the glitter of hope in his eyes also his in-depth feelings. “Look
here … We will conduct in every temples ‘Thiruppaavai – Thiruvempaavai’ festival. I believe this will be
received among the masses very warmly and better than any other initiatives we have undertaken
earlier. Why? … What we have undertaken is in Tamil. What we recite also in Tamil. What do you say?”
When ‘Mahaa Periyavar’ asked this question, I can understand the feeling he has for people of different
pathways.

While we were taking loud and frequently laughing during the planning of these grand schemes … others
in the rest house at the same time, did not understand any of the contents of our conversation and the
reasons for our laughing. Why? Don’t ask me whether they are deaf. They were not deaf. We were
conversing in pure Sanskrit language. Hence, even most Brahmins do not understand our discussions as
they have no knowledge of Sanskrit. “Why? … Are you discussing any thing secret? … Why not talk in
Tamil?” … Thus some people asked me as ‘Mahaa Periyavar’ left the site. I answered “If you have no
knowledge of Sanskrit, you go and learn it. Just for your sake, how many times he will take shower? … You
understand this and act accordingly …”. Even then, the people who asked the question did not
understand the inner meaning of what I said. How about for you …?

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If we ask you “why you and ‘Mahaa Periyavar’ are carrying on your conversations in Sanskrit? … you are
tying a knot between Sanskrit and shower. What is the relationship between carrying on a conversation
and taking a shower …?”. Some of those in the group did not understand my answer even then, and
asked me the same question again. I answered to them in detail at that time. Before I reveal the answer to
that question … I like to narrate, what I received through ‘Mahaa Periyavar’, how he happened to select
‘Thiruppaavai-Thiruvempaavai’ as the nucleus for our project. In the Tamil calendar, the six months from
‘Aadi’ (4) to ‘Markazhi’ (9) are called ‘Dhatchanaayamam’. During this period, the Sun travels towards
South and thus this period is called by that name. (Ayanam here means pathway). Similarly, the
remaining six months starting from ‘Thai’(10) to ‘Aani’ (3) are called ‘Uththaraayananam’. This means that the
Sun will be traveling towards North during this period. During the ‘Dhatchanaayana’ period the daytime
will gradually shrink and the night time will expand. On the otherhand, during the ‘Uththaraayana’ period, the day time gradually increases and the night time correspondingly gets reduced.

During early morning of the Dhatchanaaayana period, traditionally, the girls along with their friends go to the riverbanks. In the shivering cold morning, they set their soft feet, on the small cold pebbles of the riverbed and dip into the river. With their wet clothing, as they were shivering, they used to sing hymns in praise of their favorite deities. This culture gradually faded with times ... and they started to take bath in the cold mornings so that they can pray for landing a good husband. From this state it evolved ... ‘We are pleading to God, in the early morning, what our requirements. However, just like we woke up early morning in spite of this cold, would God also gotten up from his sleep at this time ... We are not sure! Hence, we have to first wake Him up, before we can plead to Him …’ thinking along these lines, the devotees, after they dipped into the river, they were waking up God before pleading. This culture is ‘reaching God through human ways’. Later on … it grew to the height of marrying to God himself in the state of ‘Naayakan-Naayaki Bhaavam’ (Husband and Wife State). Continuously taking bath in the early morning … to wake up God, one must observe certain discipline … Hence, they devised set of abstinences to follow on these times ant put them into effect. Since only the girls participated in these rituals it was called ‘Paavai Nonbhu’ (Girls Rituals). In the, yet unparalleled Tamil culture, just for the girls, created by girls themselves is this festival called ‘Paavai Nonbhu’.

This pure Tamil culture was embelished in the devotional literatures by the great ‘Saivaites’ saint Maanikka Vaachakar and enlightened female ‘Vaishnavite’ saint Aandaal. They have created, the sweet juice dripping beautiful Tamil verses, just for the young ladies, “Thiruppaavai and Thirupampaavai”. These classical Tamil verses were the ones selected by ‘Maha Periyavar’ for uniting the ‘Saivaites’ and ‘Vaishnavites’ as well as Brahmins and non-Brahmin castes. Using Tamil language and those literatures that evolved from Tamil culture, ‘Maha Periyavar’, in the name of ‘Paavai Manaadu’ inaugurated that festival. Such person, with so much attachment to Tamil language, you may wonder ‘why he was conversing with me in Sanskrit language?’ The very same question was raised by those gathered in the festival. They did not understand my answer about taking shower.

To make them understand about taking shower ... I related an actual incidence that happened in the Mutt itself. That was ... Kumbhakonam Mutt … Sun was gracing his rays on the western side of the sky. His golden rays were shedding on the surface of the earth like loose light beads. A kind of cool blowing wind that was chilling the entire city of Kumbhakonam. For the evening pooja (worship service), of the Mutt, the preparations were progressing. ‘Maha Periyavar’, Sri Sankaraachaariyaar has already taken his shower and was waiting for the pooja. During the evening, even if he had a brief nap, ‘Madi’ (religious sacredness) will go awry. He had to take shower again before going to attend the pooja rituals. Based on this very fact ... ‘Maha Periyavar’ had already completed his shower. While he was waiting for the pooja, some of his devotees were waiting to get his blessing, and they were determined to meet and get his ‘dharshan’ (audience and blessings). Among them was … Mr. Arunachalam, a devotee, from Naattukottai Chettinadu … He was very adamant and stubborn to meet with ‘Maha Periyavar’, and get his blessings before returning.

During that time, as I was also in the Mutt, I told Mr. Arunachalam ... “Look here Mr. Arunachalam, you will not be able to visit with ‘Maha Periyavar’. Why don’t you come back tomorrow …” for which he replied “No Swami, I shall meet him today itself” ... Some of the bystanders, who overheard our conversation, went to ‘Maha Periyavar’ and as they related to him the contents of our conversation, he called for me inside. I went inside. He asked me about the conversation. I briefed him. He told me “See Mr. Thaththaachaari ... I have no problem in meeting with him. However, he will invariably ask me something for which I have to reply him in Tamil. As you are well aware … if I speak in Tamil it is a bad omen. To absolve this sin I have to take a bath again before the pooja. You know the time is too close to pooja ... Hence, please tell him that I am observing ‘Mounam’ (silence) today and send him back ...” Thus he carried on a conversation with me in Sanskrit. I came outside the room. I told Mr. Arunachalam " As I have already told you ... ‘Swamikal’ (Reverent Saint) is observing silence today and hence, he cannot talk to you. Please come back tomorrow …”. He understood and told me “Is that so? I was hoping to meet with God today itself. O.K. I will stay in some ‘chaultry’ (charity house) and return back tomorrow.” Thus he related in his mother tongue Tamil with respect, calling ‘Maha Periyavar’ as God, and with complete satisfaction left the Mutt.
Just like Mr. Arunachalam of Chettinadu, several devotees were pretty adamant in meeting with ‘Mahaa Periyavar’ have arrived to the Mutt. They were returned back without meeting him because of this tradition ...

While this was going on in the Mutt, the ‘Paavai Maanaadu’ was going on brilliantly and in trend. It was received by the public extremely well. “Thaaththaachaarii … We must find a common deity to avoid the squabble between the Saivaites and the Vaishnavaites”, thus ‘Mahaa Periyavar’ related to me his desire. He strongly believed that this ‘Paavai Maanaadu’ will help to bridge the Brahmins and non-Brahmins as well as pave a pathway between the Saivaites and Vaishnavaites to bring an end to their animosities. His belief did not go astray. Just like a political parties great convention, ‘Paavai Maanaadu’ was well received and was attracting extremely large crowds. During the entire Tamil month of ‘Maarkazhi’ … all over ‘Tamil Naadu’ (Tamil Country), this devotional congregation was conducted and we were delivering discourses on ‘Thiruppaavai’ and ‘Thiruvempaavai’. In each city, we selected only common places and erect ‘pandal’ (open shed using woven coconut leaves).

Later on … We erect a special alter over the stage and install the idols of ‘Aandaal’ (Vaishnava Deity) and Manikkavaachakar (Saivaite Deity). As we stand next to this special alter, we used to deliver treatises on the divine messages contained in ‘Thiruppaavai’ and ‘Thiruvempaavai’. Whichever cities we conduct the ‘Paavai Maanaadu’ (unwedded young girls congregation), we used to borrow the idols from the local temples. If the idols are not available, we used the pictures of the deities and placed them in the alter. As the Hindu temples are under the control of the government established Hindu Temple Charitable Trust … How can you remove the idols from the temples? … or else can we actually bring to the special alter, ‘Aandaal’ and ‘Maanikkavaachakar’ in person, holding their hands? … You may raise such questions.

The commissioner of the Hindu Temple Charitable Trust, Mr. Saarangapaani Mudhaliyar … As he came to realize that the ‘Paavai Maanaadu’ was so successful in uniting various factions of the Hindu community, and it is to the liking of everyone … Declared that the government itself will take over this movement and conduct the ‘Paavai Maanaadu’ at various cities. This ‘Maanaadu’ (convention) that was started with the blessings of ‘Mahaa Periyavar’ … Grew to such a magnitude that the government itself took possession of it. Because of this movement, ‘Mahaa Periyavar’ became very influential in the political circles. ‘Paavai Maanaadu?’ … They bring good messages to the masses … With that thought in mind, Brahmins as well as non-Brahmins were congregating in masses to hear the discourse.

Whenever a movement was received very successfully, is it possible to carry on without any resistance? … As we were conducting the convention during the entire month of ‘Maarkazhi’, all over Tamil Nadu, in districts such as Madhurai, Thirunelveli and Thanjaavur, we arrived in Mannaarkudi to conduct the ‘maanaadu’. As usual we constructed a stage in a public street. On this side we placed Deity ‘Aandaal’ … and next to her we placed ‘Maanikkavaachakar’. Some of them from orthodox Hindu families, as they saw the ‘Vaishnava’ Goddess and the ‘Saivaite’ God, their eye were spitting out fire sparks. With no way of containing the anger, Mannaarkudi Rajagopal Dilkshithar ran towards me. As he approached me, he was very agitated, and asked me “Swami … How come you have done this sinful act?” … Thus he started with an open question without any substance. To this I retorted, “What and how I have committed a sin? Please tell me in detail so I can understand” … Again, Rajagopal Dilkshithar “How can you ask as if you do not know what I am talking about? …”, carried on the conversation without any subject matter. I again asked “Hey Dilkshithar … what are saying? … To know what you have in your mind, am I a God or something? …”

Only now Dikshithar opened up his chest and spilled everything stored in it. “You are doing disservice to God himself … Can root of the Saivaite saints ‘Maanikkavaachakar’ be installed next to Goddess ‘Aandaal’? … Is it not a sin against almighty God himself? … If that ‘Sankaraachaariyaar’ says, should you be following him blindly?” … I understood that Dikshithar is not just expressing his own opinion and feeling but he was only stoking out the inferno by blowing through the glowing hot coal like anger in the eyes of some of the conservative Brahmins living in Mannaarkudi. “Just to give me this message, you were dragging all this time? … This ‘Paavai Maanaadu’ is neither conducted by me … Nor it is not conducted
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by ‘Sankaraachaariyaar either ... Now it is sponsored by government itself ... You must go to the government officials and ask them ...” thus I put forth my straight forward answer. The Dikshithar, who was looking for criminal intent, aborted the conversation and without saying another word he departed from that place.

Just like the Dikshithar in Mannaarkudi ... There were several conservative souls in several cities tried to block further congregations and discourses of ‘Paavai Maanaadu’. Their efforts never materialized. The ‘Maanaadu’ was carried on for several more years. While the ‘Maanaadu’ was carried on emphasizing the unity of ‘Saivaites’ – ‘Vaishnavaites’, and Brahmins – nonBrahmins ... The ‘Sudhras’ and ‘Panchamar’s (untouchable fifth caste) were not allowed to enter in the temples and they were even forbidden to look in the direction of the Temples. The caste discrimination was burning like wild inferno with no limits and bounds. Just to obey the order of the ‘Aagama Shashthiram’, the Brahmin community, was following this tradition of not allowing the ‘Shudhra’s and the ‘Panchamar’s (untouchables into the temples. You may wonder what was such an order contained in the ‘Aagamam’? ... “Dhrushtwaa Dhevahaa Bhalaayathe ...” thus states ‘Paanchaaraathra Aagamam’ (Five night Gospel), through which statement it orders ...

“Based on various traditions and in conformance with sacred commandments of great sages, we have captured and installed ‘Bhagawaan’ God him/herself in these deities. Within this consecrated Temple space, if a ‘Sudhra’ or a ‘Panchamar’ set a single foot inside ... the sacredness of this space will be tainted. Because of that ... The God installed in these idols will runaway in an instant. Because of that belief ... If a ‘Sudhra’ or a ‘Panchamar’ set foot ... this idol will become an empty stone statue. The ‘Bhagawaan’ will reside even a fraction of a second. Hence, do not admit these groups inside the temples ... Thus states ‘Aagamam’. If in any case they entered into the temple premises? ... To rectify the sin the antidote is ‘Samprocshanam’ or ‘Kumbhaabhishekam’. That is pouring sacred water over the temple ... Thus the ‘Aagamam’ also dictates the ways to sanctify the space back to its original purity. Even though there is a basis for forbidding the entry into the Temple, the revolt by these groups, to get access to the temple was heating up everywhere. In this environment, one day, ‘Mahaa Periyavar’ called for me. Within minutes of my entry into his room, he burst into weeping ...

Can a saint weep? ... The tear drops that was pouring from the eyes of ‘Sankaraachaariyaar’, who renounced the three basic worldly desires such as ‘Mannaasai’ (land greed), ‘Ponnaasai’ (greed to own treasures) and ‘Pennaaasai’ (women desire), affected my emotional stability and tears was welling in my eyes. I was stunned and mentally frozen and I was simply staring at him. From the eyes of the person who must comfort others during their distress and the one to blesses others for their happiness and prosperity, tears flowing like a stream, how can an average person like me comfort him from his grief ... ? For few minutes, his sacred eyes were springing out the salted water. Later on ... He took his saffron cloth and wiped his tears. As he was saying “Very difficult to swallow”, he became silent. I felt very dreadful for relating the incidence that caused him to dip into that deep sorrow. What was that incidence?

Yes. It was the incidence that happened at Sri Rangam Temple. Protest to gain the right to enter the temples, by the people of lower cast, were taking place at various places like time bombs. Crowds and crowds of people from the lower cast, those that were forbidden to enter the temples, assembled in front of the temples ... demanding their rights to enter the temples and worship the deities. The same pattern, at town of Sri Rangam, people were demanding rights to enter, worship, and circumambulate around the temple and worship the presiding deity God Sri Ranganathar. In addition, the crowd was shouting in unison, claiming that they have all the rights to enter the Temple, that was filling the air waves. Those people, who were lovingly called by Mahatma Gandhi as ‘Harijans’ (God’s people), assembled in front of the temple along with their family.

While they were assembling by the side of the Sri Rangam temple ... There was a congregation of Brahmin men in the ‘agrahaaram’ (Brahmins living community), for exclusive purpose of planning to block the demonstrators from entering the temple. Each and everyone of those assembled were spraying out various means and methods. “All of us will enter into the temple. We will line up in the entrance to the temple. If anyone from the lower caste approaches the entrance, we charge and pound on them to drive
them away from the entrance”, the young Brahmin lads were restless and shouting. In the meanwhile a middle aged man got up ... “Childish ... we shall drive them away without our hands touching them ...”, thus he was throwing his time-honored (Brahmins shall not touch the non-Brahmins especially untouchables) idea. At last, in the assembly, an out-of-the box, resolution was adopted.

“At this time, we do not want very many Brahmin men enter the Temple. We will send all our housewives. They will be approaching the temple as if they are going for worship with plates full of coconut, banana etc. There ... as they approach those who are protesting for the rights to enter the temple, they will take the packet, hidden in the plate, full of ‘hot chili powder’ and spray it among the crowd and make them runaway from the site for remedy”. This was the resolution and it was communicated to each household in the ‘agrahaaram’. As per the resolution, every Brahmin housewife over thirty of them, wearing saris in a ‘madisaa’ (orthodox Brahmin style), started towards the temple with their plates, supposedly, filled with ‘archana’ (Offering) article. However, what they had in the plates was pure hot chili powder. The ladies who were walking towards the sanctum of the Ranganaathar ... suddenly, they turned towards the ‘Harijan’ crowd and sprayed the hot chili powder into the crowd ... Sneezing everywhere, coughing everywhere ... several ‘Harijans’ were scared and they were fleeing the place in a hurry. With hot chili powder in their eyes, they were howling and weeping as they were running away from the site. “Hoping to go inside the temple and see the God Himself. It appears that I became permanently blind and I cannot see anymore ...” thus even at that moment they were lamenting and were running from the site. Knowing what is happening, the police stationed at that place for maintaining peace, saying “Let us drive these ladies out of site ...” they raised their wooden rods and charged towards the Brahmin ladies ... some of the hot chili powder ladies were beaten by the police in the process of evacuating them.

This was the incidence at Sri Rangam! When I related this protest and its outcome, "Oh my God! What a sin!! Did the police, really, beat the Brahmin ladies? ... What a sad era in which we live?” with these words he burst into tears. I have never before witnessed his tears. I was even wondering whether I should not have related this news to him, which would have spared him from this grief. In spite of that ... ‘Mahaa Periyavar’ was keenly interested in knowing about the protests to gain access to the temple, organized by the masses of the lower caste as well all the religion related happenings that is going on in every community. If one asks why, the authorities of the Sirungeri Mutt, in addition to the religious and traditional matters they were also indulging and establishing their authority even in the social events and activities. To counter the activities and influence of the Sirungeri Mutt, it became essential for ‘Mahaa Periyavar’ to get involved in various religious and social initiatives and happenings in the community. Even though this may not be very much of a reason, the most compelling reason for his interest was that he also seriously interested in the social issues confronting people of each and every caste.

In this very environment ... Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, was consulting with his cabinet, about introducing ‘Hindu Code Bill’. According to ‘Smiruthi’ (Written Hindu Scriptures), the women definitely have no rights to the ancestral properties. Please remind yourself that In the early portions of this essay, I have noted that when the Brahmins entered the ‘Bharatha Dhesa’ (India), along with them were only very few ladies. Those Brahmin men who migrated into the new land, even though they married the local women and were raising their family ... they treated their wives equal only to ‘Sudhras’. That was the very reason, they denied any form of religious and traditional rituals to Brahmin ladies. In addition, they wrote, ‘in Smiruthi’ that women are not entitled to any religious education and teachings. A part this very ‘Smiruthi’ is the denial of the rights of women to ancestral properties ... In addition, ‘Smiruthi’ also dictates terrible discipline for women and requires that she must be subservient to the men at all times. While the Brahmin women was in the siege of ‘Smiruthi’ ... Nehruji proclaimed that everyone has the rights to ancestral properties including women. This message reached the ears of ‘Sankaraachaaraiyar Swami’. ‘Sankaraachaaraiyar’ who wept for Brahmin ladies being attacked by police, when he heard that the ladies will be getting the rights to properties ...
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‘Sankaraachaariyaar’ who wept for Brahmin ladies being attacked by police for blocking, the protest by the lower caste people to get entry into the temple, when he heard that the ladies will be getting the rights to inherit ancestral properties must have been extremely happy. But? … The newspaper published the news that in New Delhi Nehru has introduced ‘Hindu Code Bill’ in which property inheritance rights were granted to women. By this time the Mutt has switched its headquarters to Kaanchipuram. I was living in Kumbhakonam and I received a telegram “Immediately start and come to Kaanchipuram”. It was sent by Sankaraachaariyaar of Kaanchipuram Mutt. When I reached Kaanchipuram … I wrote in earlier pages that a lady belonging to Esaiyanoor, a village close to Kaanchipuram, has promised to deed her entire family assets to the Mutt. ‘Mahaa Periyavar’ has gone to Esaiyanoor to review all the assets. “What is it Swami?” I asked. He took the current edition newspaper and as he was showing it to me he said in excitement and agitated manner “Hay! This whole world is going to be doomed! Yo … It is coming to an end …”. He continued, “Have you seen this … They are going to grant rights to inherit ancestral properties to the ladies. If they get a share of the property, do you know what is going to happen? They bound to runaway with anybody, whomever they liked, to live with … Everything will become non-traditional and shameful” … delivering a lecture as he was slapping that newspaper.

Smilingly I replied. “It is good for me Swami … My father-in-law owns considerably large amount of property. In case, if my wife gets a share of my father-in-law’s property it is good for me”. As he heard my reply … “Don’t talk non-sense. If this law is enacted, the ‘Shthree Dharmam’ (Ladies customary duties) will be ruined. The ‘Manu Smiruthi’ dictates that the ladies shall neither own property nor earn income. They shall always be subservient to their husband and that is their rightful duty. Nehru has crushed such ‘shthree dharmam’, the tradition that has been prevailing for centuries by granting the property rights to women. We shall protest against this law that is diametrically opposite to ‘Manu Smiruthi’. To protect the ‘Shthree Dharmam’ we must protest against this bill by organizing the people in various cities. We must gather more women to protest against this bill. …”. Thus, in a hurry ‘Mahaa Periyavar’ was issuing orders.

During the ‘Vedha Dharma Shashthhira Paripaalanal Sabhai’ meetings, we have delivered lectures in detail about the ‘Shthree Dharmam’ (Ladies Rightful Duties as dictated in Manu Shashthiram). Hence, conducting the meetings to protest against the new bill does not seems to be too difficult to me as well as to my colleagues. As per Mahaa Periyavar’s instructions, we left for Kallidaikkurichi, located in Thirunelveli district. There was a lady in that place who has been giving discourses on various Goddesses. We approached her and briefed her about the newly introduced bill. We told her that Sankaraachaariyaar wanted that the law which grants property rights to the women shall be opposed by women themselves. Hence, we are here to organize a meeting of the ladies and get their support to resist the bill. We need your cooperation in bringing the ladies to this meeting. She flatly denied our request. However, we went to each and every household, and with great effort we brought them to the meeting and … We passes a resolution in the meeting, using ladies themselves, which stated “We do not need the right to inherit and own property. As stated in the Manu Smiruthi, the ‘Shthree Dharmam’ (Obligations of Housewives) shall be safeguarded. The government shall drop this bill”.

We made a copy of this resolution and sent it to the government in Delhi. Did we stop at that? Starting from the district of Thirunelveli, in various cities of Tamil Nadu, as per the order of Sankaraachaariyaar, the meeting of the women was organized. Without any knowledge of what the issue was and not knowing why they were there, several ladies took part in these protests and they rejected the right to ancestral property. For the meeting held in Kumbhakonam, we invited Senbhakkaththamaal, sister of then high court judge Thiruvenkaachaari, and brought her to the stage. Along with her joined few more ladies and signed the petition that they are opposed to the new inheritance bill. Almost one month … All over Tamil Nadu we have conducted approximately 100 meetings of the ladies. Along with copies of the passed resolution we were constantly sending out several telegrams to central government insisting that the government shall drop the bill. While these meetings were going on in full swing, Sankaraachaariyaar called for me, again. “It appears that nothing is going to come out as long as we are conducting meetings within Tamil Nadu. We must assemble in Delhi and show our resistance. Hence, you must arrange for your trip to Delhi.” … He told me.

At the Constitution Club, in Delhi, a council was arranged to determine whether the bill dealing with property inheritance rights to the women should be introduced in the parliament. To participate in that council, we have gathered a large number of women delegates and reached there. There, Kamaladevi Chattoupaathyaayaa also, under her leadership, brought several ladies to argue in favor of passing the
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bill. As the ladies who accompanied with us, deserted us even before Nehru came to the club … The whole trip and all our efforts went in vain. Just because of the opposition from Sankaraachaariyaaar, Nehru postponed the introduction of the bill in the parliament for few days … Later on he introduced the bill claiming the rights of women to inherit and own property themselves and passed it. Sankaraachaariyaaar, was saddened by the thought that “Even after protesting up to Delhi, we could not uphold the ‘Shthree Dharmam’ that was enacted in the Manu Smiruthi …”, as he was reading that poisonous news in the newspapers, remarked to me “For them during the wedding her parents are bestowing for her welfare valuable jewelries and material comforts that are necessary for a comfortable life … Then why this right to inherit and own property? The ladies, with the inheritance of wealth and property will evolve to be a brave individuals, and they will runaway with any men they desire, even after marriage”.

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As chief of the mutt, Sankaraachaariyar, was undertaking various initiatives, to demonstrate that everyone can in peace and cooperation while in conformance with the caste system, “Varnaashrama Dharmam”. However, various mutts whose chief goal is to bring unity among the people, themselves were quarrelling among themselves… As if they are feeding to a bonfire, they were fueling to the animosity among themselves. Vaishnava mutts … Saivaite mutts, Brahm in mutts, non-Brahmin mutts, likewise charging among themselves, fighting and clashes were springing up often. Within the religious circles there was very strong opinion that between the Kumbhakonam Mutt and Shiringeri Mutt there exists perennial ‘Pankaali Sandai’ brotherly fights.

As this was the prevailing environment in the South … the chiefs of the mutts in the North India treated the chiefs of the South Indian mutts as bugs and worms. The reason : Their argument is that Tamil Nadu is a ‘Dravidian’ country (The country settled by Dravidian race unlike the North India that was settled by Aryan invaders) and hence it is a ‘Sudra’ country (The country that merely takes orders). In addition … The chiefs of the ‘Sankaramadam’ in North India have been broadcasting to everyone that the Kumbhakonam Mutt is not really a ‘Sankaramadam’ (Mutt not established by Aadhi Sankarar). When ‘Mahaa Periyavar’ Sankaraachaariyar undertook a pilgrimage to Kaashi (Banaras) … They issued order barring him from entering Kaashi saying “he shall not even enter city of Kaashi”. Further, they ordered that no one shall call Sankaraachaariyar as ‘Jagath Guru’ (Universe Teacher). He is not a ‘Jagath Guru’… And yet, I explore further, he is not even a guru. Then how can he become a ‘Jagath Guru’? …Thus, opposition voices were emanating from all over North India.

When inquired Sankaraachaariyar about these statements ‘Mahaa Periyavar’ said “I neither claimed myself as a ‘Jagath Guru’ nor I requested everyone to call me with that title. Do you know the meaning of ‘Jagath Guru’? ‘Jagam’ (universe) is only my ‘Guru’ (teacher). That is, this universe or this world is the ‘Guru’ and I am not a ‘Guru’ …”. Thus, prevailing environment in which, from the local areas … to national level each and every Mutt has been claiming superiority and rolling their sleeves up for a championship bowl … An idea lighted up in the mind of ‘Mahaa Periyavar’, that has not popped up in the minds of chiefs of any other Mutt. “The Mutts themselves are wasting their precious time foolishly fighting among themselves and not dedicating themselves to uplift the level of spirituality among the people. All the Mutts within this nation shall be brought under one institution. Through that institution … religious matters as well as the ‘Manu Dharmam’ can be spread among the people more effectively and in a speedily manner”.

As ‘Mahaa Periyavar’ was telling me this idea, he continued …

Since I was travelling to North India often, for conducting ‘Yaagaham’ (sacrificial rituals) and religious evangelism … he wanted me to travel to North India and carry on conversations with various Mutts located in North India to establish a common organization that will bring unity among them. There are several Mutts located in Ayodhdhi and we proposed this idea to all of them. Besides that … we carried on conversations with various Sankara Mutts located in Poori, Dhwaarakaa, Bhadhrinath. We did not spare even a small Mutt, in our effort to unify all the Mutts. The news that Sankaraachaariyaaar was putting all his efforts to establish a unifying organization for all the Mutts called ‘Association of Mutts’, and all the negotiations are taking place actively, reached the ears of Mr. Gulzaarilaal Nanda, and he determined to cross our path.

Mr. Gulzaarilaal Nanda … was a prominent leader of the Congress Party in North India, he became interim prime minister, twice, after the deaths of Nehruji and Lal Bhahadur Shashtri. Such a great man …
I informed this message to Sankaraachaariyar. "I was hoping to unite all the Mutts in India for greater unity. Are they discriminating between North and South? O.K. We will unite all the Mutts in this area itself and form an organization. We will unite all the Mutts in the South India" as he was concluding ... I put all my efforts to unite all the Mutts in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra and other South Indian states and bring them under one umbrella. In Uduppi itself, there were eight Mutts. We had conversations with them. Whatever initiative that Kanchi Sankaraachaaryaar starts, whatever activities that that he undertakes, of course, the Sirungeri Mutt has to be on the opposite side of the aisle. Leaving them out of the picture, we were canvassing with several other Mutts. However ... they promised several times to join the union and at the end they also backed out. Finally ... Sankaraachaaryaar decided to at least unite all the Mutts located in Tamil Nadu. He had discussions with Madhurai Aadhiinam, Thiruvvaavudhurai, Thiruppananthaal and Dharmapuram and united all the Mutts within Tamil Nadu. What started at the all India level ... was blockaded by powerful politician Mr. Gulzaarilaa Nanda. O.K ... At last 'Mahaa Periyavar' took initiatives to unite all the Mutts in South India ... all his efforts, we surmise, evaporated probably by the deeds of Sirungeri Mutt. Finally Sankaraachaaryaar was successful in uniting only the Mutts in Tamil Nadu under the organization ‘Association of Mutts’. I became the secretary of the association and Sankaraachaaryaar became the president of the new organization.

The organization was registered in the government ledger. It has to be permanently embedded in the minds of the people ... We must act with vigor in spreading the words among the people. We need money to carry out our mission and needed to collect donations. ‘Mahaa Periyavar’, neither has desire over wealth nor to own money. He will not even turn in the direction of wealth or jewelries. I shall give an example. I was also present in the Mutt on that day. Famous industrialist from North India, Mr. Birla, on that day came to the Mutt to visit with ‘Mahaa Periyavar’. The owns and manages several industrial concerns and such a person, would he come without fanfare. At every stage, there was showmanship and it appeared too commercial without the sanctity that is expected in a religious center.

Silver platter full of fresh flowers and on another silver platter several varieties of fresh fruits ... Next, another silver platter in which stacks of several bundles of currency notes ... The entire surface of the third platter was stacked with currency notes. Mr. Birla ... While he was kneeled and prostrating in front of 'Mahaa Periyavar', those who accompanied with him, were bringing all the platters to the front for bestowing in front of the Swamiji. As soon as 'Mahaa Periyavar' saw the platter full of flowers, he smiled. When he saw the platter filled with varieties of fruits smiled even further. As soon as he saw the third platter stacked full of currency, moving towards him ... He summoned Mr. Birla ... in an excited tone he asked "What is this? What is this?" 'Swamiji ...Just for the activities of the Mutt my token of appreciation ..." as Mr. Birla was dragging his words ... Immediately, 'Mahaa Periyavar' looked at the person who was carrying that platter and signaled to him using his hands, to the effect, 'Take it away from me' please. In spite of Mr. Birla was
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insisting for a while to accept that donation for the sake of charity ... "I am a person who renounced worldly possessions ... If I require so much of money for my necessities ... In this world, how much money would be needed for all those who raise families. Please, give to those who are in need of them. Please spend that money for public welfare or for common projects outside of the Mutt" ... thus saying, 'Mahaa Periyavar' gently denied accepting such donations.

I have witnessed on that particular day, how truthfully 'Mahaa Periyavar' has lived according to Aadhi Sankarar's statement 'Ardham Anarththam'. Sakkarachaaryaar, with this renounced life and no attachments to worldly possessions, when he served as the chief of the Mutt, there was not much work for wealth either. And there was not much need for wealth either. Hence, ever since the Association of Mutts project was initiated ... various 'Aadhiinams' (Trusts of the Temples) came forward and offered financial help. Thiruvavaaduthurai 'Aadhiinam has excess amount of properties through which they derive considerable income. Similarly other 'Aadhiinams' also have properties and temples that has considerable sources of income. To take advantage of this income sources and to sustain the activities of the Association of Mutts, we devised a formula. That is ... every mutt from their income, they have to set aside 5%, on yearly basis, towards the operation of the Association and remit it. The Association must function within this resource. Through this income ... we planned to move away from the denominational divide and conduct religious discourses that is common to Hindu religion.

In order to discuss about this proposal ... we have conducted meetings of the Association. In that meeting, 'Mahaa Periyavar' will preside. The representatives of the Chiefs of various other Mutts will participate in it. Every year the meetings were conducted regularly. However ... as per the agreement, the Mutts have not came forward to transmit 5% of their income to the Association. Only the meetings were conducted regularly without any religious activities. Either fifth or sixth meeting ... in that very meeting, 'Periya Aadhiinam' (Great Trust) of Madhurai, raised a fundamental issue. "The temples were financed and built by various kings. Those who have helped in that efforts such as ... Those who have sacrificed their labor ... sacrificed their sweats ... gave their energies ... carried the stones ... carried the mud ... everything was by non-Brahmins. However, why those who perform the worship services within the temple, should be Brahmins? For those people, who carried the stones and mud to erect the temples, why there are restrictions to carry the God's idol and to offer worship services? In North India, those who comes to the temple, especially in Kaashi (Banares) Temple (Most famous of all Shiva Temples) conduct their own pooja (worship rituals) and leave. Likewise, here also, everyone shall have the liberty to conduct their own pooja in the temples. The Association of Mutts shall come forward and take initiatives to implement it. In addition, all offerings and praises (Archanai) to God shall be in Tamil language. This Association must take initiative and help to move it forward" ... Thus, Madhurai Aadhiinam was putting forward very revolutionary concepts.

They not only talked the talk but also walked the talk! In Thanjaavur district, at the Thiruppurambiyam temple located between Kumbhakonam and Swamimalai, they erected outside the sanctum a God Sivan deity that resembles the presiding deity of that temple ... and let everyone offer pooja (worship) and abhishekam (offerings) to that deity. These activities created much turmoil within the Association of Mutts. As such the association was running with no financial support from the member institutions ... 'Mahaa Periyavar' did not accept the revolutionary concepts and activities of the Madhurai Aadhiinam.
"Conducting pooja by Shudhras (Lower caste people), that too in Tamil Language is absolutely not acceptable" ... thus concluded 'Mahaa Periyavar'.

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The rights of everyone to offer pooja that was put forth by the Madhurai 'Periya Aadhiinam' ... and that was rejected by 'Mahaa Periyavar' Sankaraachaaryaar , became a sore point and placed obstacles in the operation of the Association of Mutts. Within few years, the activities of the association started to diminish. The red lotus flower that was plucked from the muddy pond, those activities that was distilled with considerable efforts and energy,to bring unity among various castes and factions of Hindu religion such as 'Vedha Dharma Paripaalana Sabha', 'Aagama Sirpa Sathash', 'Thiruppaavai-Thiruvempaavai Maanaadu', 'Association of Mutts' ... all initiatives and institutions vanished along with him. After him, there
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were none within the Mutt, was concerned over these initiatives and institutions. All those red lotus flowers started to wilt gradually ... now they are dried, shrivered and crumbled.

You have read, in the previous chapters about my experiences and observations, with a great man called 'Mahaa Periyavar'. Starting from 'Aadhi Sankarar' (Root Sankaraachaariyaar), I have shared with you my experiences with 'Mahaa Periyavar'. I shall share with you some of my experiences with the sitting Sankaraachaariyaar, at the appropriate time. Next ...? Next, I am going to introduce to you another saint who pitched a piercing vedhaanthic (After Veda) weapon into the 'Adhvaitha' philosophy of Aadhi Sankarar! Who was that? But before that ...

King Rajendhira Cholan son of great Chola King Rajaraja Chola ... was not only stunned over the conquests and other accomplishments of his father ... but also resolved to conquer more territories just like father and everyone shall bestow upon him songs of eternal praises. He also set a goal, that eventually became a passion within his chest and was burning with leaps and bounds, to build a temple that is comparable to the one which his father built at Thanjaavur. The result ? He prepared his army for an expedition. With a goal to conquer the lands that is spread in all eight directions, he started towards Northern India. After travelling several days ... his army reached the banks of Ganges River. He got the title 'Gangai Konda Cholan' (The Chola who conquered the Ganges banks). On the banks he met with a Vedic Saint. After Rajendhira Cholan had heard the discourses offered by this saint on various Vedic literatures and his intellectually stimulating thoughts ... he came to the conclusion that his victory is not complete unless he takes this 'Vidhvaan' (learned Person) along with him to his capital city. His name was 'Naadha Muni'. Even today, in Gorakpur located in the state of Uthra Pradesh, a sect called 'Naadha Bhandhu' is living following his teachings.

Rajendhira Cholan, who escorted Naadha Muni with utmost respect to Southern India, not only established Gangai Konda Cholapuram (City of the Chola King Who conquered the banks of Ganges) ... but also appointed him as the counsel to the king and worshipped him as person who enlightens him. In addition to offering teachings to the Chola King ... Naadha Muni had indepth knowledge of several Vedhas and Upanishadhs (treatises on Vedha) and one may call him as 'Vedha Muni'. He has composed several 'Slokas' (Praises on God) and his grandson was Aalavandhaar. The relationship between the dynasty of Naadha Muni and the dynasty of Chola king has continued beyond their own generation. Aalavandhaar also in his generation was appointed as the royal counsel to advise on matters of army and tactical warfare. Aalavandhaar, who was in a very important position, to render advise on matters of the kings elephant army, horse army, infantry and royal navy ... was invited by his grandfather Naadha Muni, on several occasions, to acquire knowledge on religious and cultural matters. Even after the insistence by several messengers such as Pundariikaakshar, Murugai Kaavalappan, Aalavandhaar refused to hear the teachings of Naadha Muni on religious and cultural matters.

Born to the granddaughter of Aalavandhaar of above detailed characteristics ... that granddaughter Bhoomipiraatti, who was the sister of grandson of Aalavandhaar, Thirumalai Nambi. The saint who established 'Visishtaathvaitham', Sri Raamaanujar, was the son of Bhoomipiraatti. Just to introduce you about Raamaanujar, there is a poem in Sanskrit, that is packed full of details about him :

"Baashanta dhrumahanta dhavathakanaahaa  
Saarvaaka sailaahanihi  
Bowththa dhvaanththa niraasa vaasarapathihi  
Jainebha kantiiraa vahaa  
Maayaaaththi bhujanka bhanka karudahaa  
Dhraividhya soodaamanihi ... "

Thus states the poem. And do you know the meaning of it?

In those days, a scary worshipping method was prevailing in Southern India, in which people sit in a graveyard, collecting all the skulls and worship with certain rituals. He was born as a wild forest fire to burn out the skull worship. There were athiests who believed in the teachings of 'Saarvaakan' ... "There was nothing like God. Everything about God is nothing but the fool's imagination. Humanity was created for living happily. Do not waste your lifetime worshipping this imaginary God" ... He was born as a thunder, to squeeze these athiests, who were as stobborn as mountain in their belief. Bowththam (Buddhism) ...
Buddha challenged the Vedhas and he spread nothing but darkness over the humanity. He was born as a rising sun just to destroy this darkness and spread the Vedic light. Just to tame the elephant sized Jainism (At that era Jainism was predominant in the Southern part of India) he was born and charged like a lion. He incarnated in this world as a Vaishnava eagle to pick on and murder the cruel python 'Maayaavaatham' (Adhvaitha teachings of Aadhi Sankarar) that has been giving trouble to humanity ... Thus, Sri Raamaanujar incarnated into this world just to contain and tame the societal illnesses such as the culture of worshipping the skulls, athiest clans, Budhdhist darkness, elephant sized Jainism and the python named 'Maayaavaatham'.

Sri Raamaanujar, who was described as wild forest fire ... thunder ... rising sun ... lion ... eagle ... What did he say? What did he do? At his early age itself, he memorized the religious texts such as the Vedhas and the Upanishadhs and got involved in discussions and debates.Even though there is wide spread belief that he was born in Sriperumpudur, he neither mentioned in any of his writings about his birth place nor he wrote any details about the presiding deity Vishnu Perumal at Sriperumpudur. Yet another news ... He never wrote any 'grantham' (sacred texts) in Tamil language. In addition to the Vedhas and Upanishadhs, he learned in detail about his ancesters Naadha Muni and Aalavandhaar. Aalavandhaar composed a verse about his grandfather Naadha Muni and it is given below :

"Janidhvaa vamse maadhikyaa kesathaam
Susiinaam sudhhaamaanam
Chithsuthithu Eeshwara thathva vishathaam..."

At birth itself, Naadha Muni hailed from very famous and intellectually prosperous dynasty claimed that "'Chith' that is 'Jiivaathmaa' (living soul), 'Achith' which is soulless material world, 'Eeshwaran' that is the Brammam, all three entities are real. This is statement is diametrically opposite to the 'Maayaavaatham' that was advocated by Aadhi Sankarar ..." thus, Aalavandhaar in that verse revealed the philosophy of Naadha Muni. Raamaanujar after learning this doctrine ... he soaked himself in the Upanishadhs.

"Nasanthriisee dhshthadii ruupamashhya
nasak guhaa bathayiil
kashyanayeenam hruthaa manishaa
manasaa abhikirupthaahaa yayeenam vidhuhii
amirttha sthee bhavanththii ..."

What this Upanishadh sloka says is ... "'Bhagawaan' (God) has no shape and he is 'aruupan' (No shape or form). If you cannot accept this fact, you may in your own mind, assume that he has shape and visualize a shape for him. You meditate on that mental vision ...". This is the essence of it. He contemplated on the words of Naadha Muni and that was found in the Upanishadhs ... sowed these seeds in the fertile soil of Vedhanthic knowledge, and concentrated intensely on these facts, and sprouted the new philosophy of Visishtaadhvaitham. What does this say? "It is wrong to state that everything In this world is 'Maayai' (unreal). God has a shape. He resides in Vaikuntham. He only created the Jiivaathmaa (living soul) i.e., us living beings and this world. The shape and form of God is not an imagination of your mind. He has his own real shape and form. He also has a consort with him in Vaikuntham ... We must pray to the God who resides in Vaikuntham" ... This in a nutshell is the teachings of Raamaanujar.

Thus ... Raamaanujar who postulated the new philosophy, to establish this principle and to spread this among the population, undertook several pilgrimage around the country. 'BrammaSooththiram', distilled from the Upanishadhs, is an important Vedhaanthic (Those literatures sprouted after the Vedic period) literature. (Sooththiram or in Sanskrit Sutra literally means a line, thread or formula. In the olden days, when and pen and pencils were not invented, everything was written on palm leaves using sharp nails. Writing was strenuous and time consuming. Hence, everything was condensed and only the essential points were put in writing as a string. Only those who have mastered the art or subject is capable of writing detailed treatises for them.) The expounded volume of a 'sooththiram' is called a 'Bhaashyam'. After reading the 'Bramma Sooththiram' and writing a detailed explanation is extremely difficult and only accomplished Sanskrit scholars who are themselves self realized souls are capable of interpreting and illuminating upon it.
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Aadhi Sankarar, the great saint himself, wrote detailed explanation of ‘Bramma Sooththiram’ and it was called Sankara Bhaashyam. Another great saint Madhvaachaariyaaar also expounded upon the ‘Bramma Sooththiram’ and that was called Madhva Bhaashyam. For the same ‘Bramma Sooththiram’, Raamaanujar also wrote a treatise. However ... That was not called like other Bhaashyams. Raamaanuja Bhaashyam. Rather it was called with extremely respectfully 'Sri Bhaashyam'. In order to create the Bhaashyam, Raamaanujar needed the original 'Bramma Sooththiram'. He travelled all the way to Kashmir and there he met another elderly saint Boodhaayanar from whom he obtained a copy. Even under present weather conditions Kashmir is very cold and freezing that make everyone shivering ... one can imagine how much solid ice deposits, laying on the ground, several centuries back. In spite of all these obstacles, he travelled to Kashmir, met with Boodhaayanar and obtained the 'Bramma Sooththiram'. Why did he travelled all the way to the Himalayas to obtain a copy? He could not find one close by? If Raamaanujar wrote a Bhaashyam for 'Bramma Sooththiram', the Adhvaithiis (Followers of Aadhi Sankarar) feared, that he will indiscriminately attack Sankara Bhaashyam written by Aadhi Sankarar. Hence, some devotees of Aadhi Sankara not only blockaded him from obtaining a copy from local sources but also exerted their influence up to Kashmir. If you hide the comb would the wedding come to a stand still? With much difficulty, Sri Raamaanujar obtained the 'Bramma Sooththiram' from the Kashmiri intellectual called Bhoodhaayana Vruththi, and wrote the treatise.

Here is where the contradictions originate from Sri Raamaanujar’s writings. In the introduction to the Sri Bhaashyam, Sri Raamaanujar writes ...

"Bhagawath palana dhaanak ruthaam
Visthiiranaam bramma soothra vruththim
Poorvaachaariyaahaa sanchikshaboohi
Thanmadhaanu saareena soothraa akhadaarii
Vyaakyaasyanthee ..."

The meaning of this verse is as follows ... 'The original or earlier 'Aachaariyaas' (the learned masters), those who have composed the 'Bramma Sooththiram', whatever they have intended to say in those verses, I am giving it to you as is. In this treatise, I have not introduced any of my philosophy or my opinion. Whatever they said is also what I am saying'. Thus, while Raamaanujar portrayed himself as a 'YES MAN' ... In one section of Sri Bhaashyam titled 'Abhasoothraadhiharanam' says the following : 'The 'Moksham' (The God’s abode) is reserved only for those who constantly meditate the image of God, and chant mantras on his name. What I am saying is applicable only for Brahmins. If non-Brahmin 'Shudhras' longing to reach the 'Moksham' ... They have spend their life span performing non-Brahmin tasks ... and they must pray to God to grant them Brahmin manhood in the next incarnation. In case, God blesses them Brahmin manhood for them in the next incarnation, they must learn Vedhas and Upanishadhs ... continuously meditate on God to attain the 'Moksham'. Just like that ... Brahmin ladies also classified as 'Shudhras'. Because of that, if only they must reincarnate as Brahmin man in the next birth they will be qualified to dedicate their efforts to attain 'Moksham' ...", thus states Sri Raamaanujar. ('Moksham' is conquering over reincarnations, i.e., not coming back to this world and suffer over and over at each birth, reach the place called 'Vaikundam' where the God has his residence, and live happily under his feet and protection.)

However ... There prevails solid message that Raamaanujar climbed to the top of the temple pyramid at Thirukkoottiyur ... and revealed the 'Sacred Mantra' to thepublic so the masses of every caste, creed and gender attain 'Moksham' in this very life. If this incidence has happened in the life of Raamaanujar, why he has not written about it in any of his writings or in his sacred scriptures? One of his own disciple Koorarthaazhwaan says ... "It is wrong to state that the 'Moksham' is reserved only for Brahmins ... People of every caste is, indeed, laboring in this world. 'Moksham' shall be accessible to everyone irrespective of their caste or gender ...". Why did he say such words?

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We have seen ... according to ‘abhasoothraadhiharanam' presented by Raamaanujar, ‘Moksham' cannot be attained by non-Brahmins or Shudhraas ... In addition, ‘Moksham' can also be not attainable
by Brahmin ladies. We have been mentioning, often, the word ‘Shudhran’ ... What is the meaning of this word? Susam+dhraathi ... The meaning of Susam is the fatigue or difficult situation that is the result of hard labor. Dhraathi means? ... That person who drives that fatigue away. In short, he/she is the person who bears himself/herself, the fatigue that results from hard manual labor ... and drives that fatigue away to protect you (Brahmins) from the fatigue. Simply put, in Sanskrit language, it means he works hard to deliver you comforts in life. With the same reasoning, they also honored the Brahmin ladies respectfully with the cadre ‘Shudhraa’. Should the ladies be in the same status forever? We are compelled to explore this question bit moredeeper and churn this issue further to find an answer.

What was the status of women during prevedic period and their status during the Vedic period? Were they suppressed by the men even during the beginning days? ... or were they respected and worshipped by the masses? ... After the restrictions imposed by society and religion what was the importance of women? What are the answers for all these questions from the time immemorial to this day? Days of primitive culture ... i.e., the initial stages of civilization. Before this time period, consider that there existed no civilization. At this period ... Men and women were roaming around the earth bare naked. He has no idea that he was given birth by her. Neither she has any idea that she is the one giving birth to men. What it means ... Those were the days in which they did not know how to untie the knot that is tied by the nature between men and women. Neither shame nor lust existed between both sexes ... Those were the days in which neither sexes realized that she was the drain for his lust ... or he was the drain for her lust.

In those days, flocks of men were just roaming by themselves. Climbing up the trees ... pluck fruits from the trees ... falling flat on the ground from trees ... Thus, the man who was crawling on the ground over the hills, in the forests and on the high grounds, for the first time he stood straight and gazed over the woman. He looked once over his hands and legs. He gently rubbed over his face and held his nose with his fingers. He put his hand into his mouth. He tossed his ears and slapped his cheeks. Again, he measured himself from his feet to his neck line. He turned towards her, and as he looked her back again, he was shocked to find that she looked just like him. Of course, there were some differences ... She had her chest swelled more than his and stood out. Her hair was flowing, like hair strings, up to her hip. When he saw the pitch black hair hanging around and hiding her face ... the first feeling he had was fear. He prepared a schedule of those elements that he feared most in those days, and shrilled, ‘My God ... demon ... ghost ... beast ...’.

When they heared the high pitched call, those who were close to him ran towards him. They were also scared as they saw her ... and her uncombed hair covered face ... and his scared eyes. They shouted “Oh God, we must charge and drive away this ‘ghost’” and concluded to drive that ghost were fetched sticks, stones, dirt and anything that could be used as weapon and hit the ‘ghost’. Any how, as soon as as they encountered the very first woman, the very first sensation they felt was merely fear. But ... Did that fear lasted for long? Only when she moved her hair, that was flowing over her face, they saw her whole beauty. As the time passed, they started to understand the nature’s law of reproduction. The one who feared at first, when they saw the women ... he began to scare her. He grabbed her hair and pulled it. He beat her severely. Her fear incited him to harm and scare her even more.

During the period of early civilization, the man lived in the plains and river valleys – as he started to plough the land and engaging in agriculture, he created such agricultural implements such as ploughs. In those days he was so much afraid of the animals, as he stayed away from them and did not have the know how to deal with them and domesticate them for useful purposes ... As he was pondering over the question of, what shall he do to drag the plough across the field ... it occurred to him the idea of those primitive women who are scared of the men. He went and dragged the women, who was executing whatever was asked of them because of sheer fear, by their hair ... He tied her long hair to the yoke of the plough and set the yoke on the back of her neck and started to plough the land using the labor of women itself. Was it only this much? No ... No ... He took bamboo stick and was beating them to make them drag the plough much faster. The women were howling because of severe neck pain. In spite of their pain he was unsympathetic and did not leave them alone. As they were weeping of pain, he continued to plough the land. Even then, the women continued to worship the men.

Can you all imagine and picture this scene in your mind? ... If you could not ... you may want to see a scene from the old Tamil movie ‘Pazhani’. (You may wonder ... What is this? Thaaththaachaariyaar is trying to relate a scene in a movie with spiritual subject ... When we want to relate certain facts, shouldn’t
one need to use the media and method that they are familiar with and that they understand easily? ...

Now that scene in the cinema ... Division of property between the siblings, and Shivaji Ganesan got the land that is rough hills that is almost a desert. He was in such dire poverty that he did not have any money to buy bull to cultivate the land. He decided to put women in his family to plough the land. The yoke of the plough was on the back of the women’s necks and Shivaji Ganesan whips the ladies using a whip and carried on ploughing. Thus goes the scene in the cinema. The same imaginary scene, prevailed in reality several thousand years back. The one, who was scared of the wild growth of the women’s hair, used their own hair to tie them in the yoke. Then?

Before the sprouting of civilization, even though he had the brain, he was couped up in a cave of ignorance, not able to think for himself ... we saw the cruelty of him using the women to drag the plough to cultivate the land. After this saga passed ... when the Vedic period was emerging, little bit of the light of civilization, was began to shine on him. However ... the fear he had over the female gender, began to change into a threat. Already, he used to describe the female gender, in cruel manner, as ghost and animal, saw her as she became pregnant. Her lower abdomen started to bulge, and it was vescilating and there, he concluded within himself ‘ O.K. for sure she is a ghost ... Just few days back she was very lean. Now within few days, suddenly, she is bulging out of proportion. Now he neither reached for stone nor reached for a stick ... He started fire and let it burn adjacent to her. Why? ... He concluded that her abdomen is bulging disproportionately because she is haunted by another ghost. The fire was to drive the haunted ghost. He believed that the haunted ghost will run away for the fear of the heat from the fire. That is why he lit the fire. This is described in Vedhas as ‘Jaathakarmaa’ and it evolved as ‘Homam’. At first, he believed that pregnant women is ‘ghost within ghost’ and tried to drive away the ghost with fire and this foolishness was wholly adopted by Vedhas and established the sacrificial ‘Homam’.

What is more? ... Further, this so called ‘Jaathakarmaa’ or the habit of ‘setting fire’ is even practiced today by Brahmins using it for their livelihood ... during the wedding ceremonies they conduct a ‘homa ritual’ (fire ritual) called ‘Jaathakarmaa’. What is the meaning of this ‘Jaathakarmaa’ in the present days? ... No ghost or spirits shall haunt the children that are going to be born to this woman who is seated here as the bride. That is the purpose of this ritual. As a forest dweller in those days, the foolish hope he had of the fire ... even today the civilized man is carrying and practicing in this modern world, you can imagine the power of the siege that Vedhas put on the humanity. The man who portrayed the women as strange living being that prompts fear and anger, gradually started to enjoy her beauty. How does Vedhas relates this gradual change over? ... “For the world to undergo relaxation, the nature and the women are the root elements. Only between them lies, the energy to bring peace to the world, spilling over in the form of beauty ... Hence, ... Hence? ... ‘Puranthir yoshaa jaayathaam ...’

What does that mean? ... ‘God ... please, always you keep the women in eternal beauty. Then only this world and the life in this world will also be beautiful.’” As per Vedhas this is one of the prayers that Brahmins shall perform. That is ... this is called Vedic Prayer. It prays to God for blessings to get those things or characters that are expected.

‘Aashyee ejamaanashya virojaayathaam ...’ (We are praying to give birth to children with excellent characters). ‘sabhaayo yuvaa jaayathaam ...’ (That baby shall grow, well learned and shall be respected by the assembly of thinkers and respectable gentlemen). ‘Nigaame nigaame bharthanyo varrathu ...’ (When we command, the cloud shall descend from the heaven as rain and fall onto the earth). That is, if we request for rain, it shall pour ... Among these prayers, one of the most important prayer was 'The women shall always look pretty. Because of them this world also shall stay beautiful'. O.K. ... What purpose does it serve or what are they going to do, If the ladies retain their beauty, throughout their life? ... If we question the Vedha, it is replying to us through this following 'slokaa' (stanza) ... 'Pathnihii paariinash yasya eese; Pathniyaiva anumadham narvapathi ...'. A women shall be beautiful everyday. No matter, however beautiful she is, she must reside only inside the house. She is the boss of the household. That is, she must attend to, all the duties of the household ... whenever, her husband travels to distant places, to earn
income to support the family, she must give protection to the children living in the house. Without leaving the house, she must stay inside the residence, and safeguard her sacred beauty.

At the same time ... If the husband is going to conduct any 'Yaagam' (ritual of sacrifice) or 'Homam' (offerings into a consecrated fire), at his expense ... he must obtain permission from his wife. The reason being ... all the material used in the sacrifice has to come from the household. Since, she is the manager of the household, her permission is necessary. Thus, this strange custom of 'locking the women inside the house' was stuffed into the Vedham by the man itself ... On one side, the Vedhaas dictates that the women shall be kept inside the house and on the other side of the Vedham ... we can see the vision of modern day ladies ... Where? ... In 'Sthrii Samsaatham' ... What is this 'Sthrii Samsaatham'? ... The assembly of several ladies in one place. Yes! that is Ladies convention ... What? Ladies convention in Vedhaa?

What? Ladies convention? That too in Vedhaas? What are you talking about? I understand your perplexity. Before we enter the 'Sthrii Samsaatham', let us look at what is said in Vedhaas about general convention. The following 'slokaa's are from Rig Vedha:

"Nasaa sabhaayaththa nabhaathu seyha
Nasaa sabhaayaththa vibhaadhu seyha"

That is ... "Whatever it is, every issue shall be discussed in an assembly as to what will be the pluses and minuses before taking an action or any decision, after hearing from very many members, and adopt that action or decision preferred by majority of those assembled." The principle of the parliamentary system that is prevailing today has been proposed by the thinkers of the Rig Vedha era, thousands of years back. O.K. ... What if in an assembly, there is confusion and complexities arise?

"Sanga Sathvam; Sambha Suthvam; Sambo manaamsi jaanathaam"

"Walk in one pathway ; Think alike ; Take an unanimous decision" or in other words (Walk United, Think United, Talk United). Thus, Rig Vedhaa stresses unity and advocates protecting the strength of the assembly. During the Vedic period, 'Sabha' was an assembly established to solve the issues confronting, those civilized people who have been bound under the societal laws. Very knowledgeable thinkers called 'Rishi's were appointed to serve in those 'Sabha'. Various groups of people gather together and render their opinions on various issues brought in front of the assembly. After hearing everyone's viewpoint, the 'Rishi's will decide their rulings and deliver it.

Here you, have not mentioned anything about the women. How are they going to be in the picture? For your question, another 'Sloka' gives the answer. " Thampathiiva grahipitha janesi ...". What this says is that wherever you go ... whomever you are visiting ... why even when you go to visit the God Himself, you take your wife with you. The Vedha that dictated to keep the ladies locked inside the house ... as the time passed, with more understanding, we can conclude that it relaxed the restrictions. (After all the Vedhas are not created all of a sudden in one day and it evolved with time). Based on this statement, each man as they came to the ‘Sabha’, their wives also accompanied them. Thus slowly, the ladies started to attend the 'Sabha'. As they attend, the proceedings and the issues of outer world started to penetrate into their ears. The ears, that were filled with husband's commands, slowly began to absorb social issues confronting the society. From the mouth of the ladies, who have not crossed the threshold of their front door, slowly started to come out their opinions on social matters.

When the men heard, the ladies talking about various social issues, they were stunned. How and where did she learned to talk so well? ... They were wondering.

"Abhipraavanththa samane ivayoshaahatha
Kalyaanyaha smayamaanaahaa agnim ..."

“Place where everyone is assembled, the ladies were seated equal to the men. Did it stop there? There, around the fire that was burning to provide light, the ladies were seated and they were laughing as well as
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carrying on conversations." Upon seeing this … the men who accompanied them were baffled. The Vedhaa is giving an explanation for their puzzle. Take a look …

“sthriinaam dhviganam aahaaram
Bhudhdhiis saabi chathu gunam”

… That means, in the house after the males ate they leave the remainds and they leave the house. Whatever, is leftover the ladies will finish it up. So, she ate at least twice the amount of food more than that consumed by male counterpart. The women who ate twice as much as the men … she would have acquired at least four time the intellect than man. Four times the intellect, is what gives them the energy and boldness for them to speak in the ‘Sabha'. Even today, we read in the newspapers, that in the statewide examinations the higher percentage girls pass the examinations than boys and they secure first ranks. The Vedham provides explanation for the girl’s accomplishments. Thus, the ladies who had four times more intellectual capacity their counterpart, began to compose Vedic Mantras. They also were reciting them every day. This blatant fact is contained in the Vedha itself.

“This means, “The ladies have composed Vedic Mantras. Those mantras, that were composed by ladies, were performed daily ‘Adhyayanam’ (daily recital) by themselves. Especially, those ladies belonging to the ‘Aadhreya Gothram’ (‘Aadhreya sect’) were notable in this accomplishment. Especially, the ladies from ‘Aadhreya Gothram’ excelled themselves in the literary field. ‘Aadhreya Gothram’ means, those ladies are the descendents of the ‘Aadhreyar' ‘Rishi' (extremely learned mystic). What is the meaning of ‘Gothram'? ... It is not have a great meaning. During the Vedic period they used to tie the cows in various herds. Descendents of one 'Rishi' used to ties their cows in one particular place. 'Go' (cow), that is cows were tied in a particular place. The groups divided on the basis of where the cows were tied is called ‘Gothram’. Thus the ladies from ‘Aadhreya Gothram' excelled in their intellectual capacity. These are the ladies who have established ‘Sthrii Samsaatham’, and convened meetings and discussions exclusively for ladies. This was the ladies convention ... In one of these conventions …

“Abhakesma sthriyo; manthra kirutha aasuhii
Praa kalpedhu naariinaam; Bounchchii Bhanthathu ishyare
Athyaabhanantha Vedhaanaam …”

We have seen, in the previous chapter, about the establishment of ‘Sthrii Samsaatham'. The ladies who possessed four times the intellect than men, assembled together, and debated on various issues … and they were very famous, during Vedic period, for their accomplishments. We learned from various sources that notable ladies such as Gaarkki, Vaasaknavi, wife of Yaghnyavalkiyar Maithreyi were participated in these discussions. While we learned that, such intellectually superior ladies have lived during the Vedic period, message that we are going to see next is shocking and about to shatter our amazement! What is that?

Each and every month, the nature confers on the ladies one troubling period ... Pain of Menstruation! Based on the body science, it is the discharging of bloody matter at approximately monthly intervals from the uterus of breeding-age nonpregnant primate females, generally called period. Using this discharge as a reason, during the Vedic period, the ladies were discriminated and became untouchable. "She is 'Thilittu' (unsanitary and hence, keep her at a distance preferably out side living area, she is filthy and nonhygienic" saying such harsh words, they kept the ladies detached during this period and kept them at a distance. Already the ladies suffering from the natural, biological causes are force endure the discrimination imposed by the opposite sex. For the fetus to develop, to clense the uterus ... monthly, expulsion of the waste products is, the process is the menstruation. However ... During the Vedic period, can you guess, what did they compare this process to, and what reasons they invented for this untouchability? Before we get into it …

Again, we travel back to ‘Sthrii Samsaatham' ... The ladies assembled and they are discussing various issues. Their laughing sound waves are gently floating in the air. During that time instantly, there was a booming noise with ultra brightness. Among the brightly lit clouds descends ‘Indhiran' (The king of heaven dwellers). What? Indhiran? Yes! The king of the heaven, who has been enjoying all the joys that heaven
has to offer ... the face of the one who lives every day in pomp and luxury ... that face was gory and unsightly. The one whose headful of hair is like red silky fiber, became dry, teased and projecting in all directions. From his ever smiling mouth came out scary sharp pointed teeth. In the face of Indhiran, who descended with pitch black body, one can see the troubling wrinkles. Not only his eyes were weeping but also his entire body was weeping with sweat. His shivering was written all over his forehead. What happened to the King of heaven?

'Brammahaththi Dhosham'. What is that ? ... 'The cruellest of the cruel crime'. A crime that is punishable to the maximum extent. One may term this as the supreme crime in the Vedic period. Those who committed this crime has no recourse or rejuvenation except go crazy and roam around aimlessly. O.K. ... How does one commits such a horrible crime? Murdering a Brahmin is 'Brammahaththi' crime. (Brammam = Brahmin; Haththi = murder). i.e., the crime of murdering a Brahmin is the 'Brammahaththi'. Indhiran has committed exactly such a crime. Nowadays, recently, within the Kaanchipuram temple, a Brahmin named Sankararaaman, was murdered (Haththi) using such horrible weapons as knives and machete ... Even those people are in front of a Vedic Court committed the same 'Brammahaththi' crime (Dhosam). i.e., they are modern day 'Brammahaththi's.

O.K. ... Let us come back to Indhiran's matter. What did he do to commit such a high crime as 'Brammahaththi'? There was a sage named Kaasyaban. He had two wives named Dhidhi and Adhidhi. Dhidhi was from 'Asura' (demon) caste and hence her children were termed as 'Thaithyar' or 'Asurar' (demons). The other wife, Adhidhi belongs to 'Devar' (angel) caste and hence, her children were classified into 'Devar' caste. One of Adhidhi's twelve children named Thoshta, marries a girl named Rasanaa who belongs to 'Asura' caste. Vishwaroopan was the son of Thoshta from 'Devar' caste and Rasanaa from 'Asura' caste, and he was a 'prohith' (a priest performing rituals) in the kingdom of Indhiran. After he concluded a sacred 'yaagam' (ritual), he was awarded 'havis' (a gift of certain article, for successfully performing the 'yaagam', that is very valuable and will deliver healthful life) and without the knowledge of Indhiran, Vishwaroopan gave it to his asura uncles. When Indhiran came to know about this ... he was so angry and as he was asking "Why did you give the 'havis' to the asuras ?", not waiting for an answer, with that anger he hacked all three heads of Vishwaroopan. Though Vishwaroopan was born in mixed caste ('Devar' and 'Asurar'), he was considered a 'Brahmin' as he was a 'prohith'. The person murdered him was Indhiran. Can he relieved without retribution? 'Brammahaththi' haunted him. He travelled to various sacred places and wept for his sin. Roamed everywhere. Aimlessly wandered all over the universe.

At last, Indhiran, came to a realization and thought of trading his 'Brammahaththi Dhosham' with some one and get relief. At first, Indhiran went and met with ‘Bhoomaadevi’ (Goddess of Earth), and cried on her shoulder. She asked him 'what is the matter?’. He told Bhoomaadevi, “ Devi, this is how I have committed, the supreme crime ‘Brammahaththi Dhosham’... You must absorb my ‘Dhosham’ and bless me”. ‘Bhoomaadevi’ replied “If I absorb all the ‘Dhosham’ myself, how all the living beings in this world, would be happy? Just because you have requested, I will agree to absorb part of the ‘Dhosham’. You handover to me part of it …”. As per the Devi’s acceptance, Indhiran, unloaded small part of the murder charge to ‘Bhoomaadevi’. That part ‘Dhosam’ caused ... portions of the world unsuitable for raising crops, parched land and desert land. As a trade for absorbing part of the ‘Dhosham’, Indhiran granted Goddess of Earth a boon that will join portions of the world, if it ever splits due to natural causes such as earthquake. With satisfaction, and associated happiness as a result of unloading part of his ‘Dhosham’ ... he turned towards ‘Virutcham’ (trees). He begged the trees “Oh trees ... Please absorb my ‘Brammahaththi Dhosham’”. The trees bargained for a boon : “In case any body cut us, we must ooze sap from the cut.” After granting this boon, Indhiran unloaded part of his ‘Brammahaththi Dhosam’ on to the trees.

That is the very reason, wherever we cut the trees, the sap oozes out as gum. Asafetida, is nothing but gum that oozed out from ‘Hing’ tree. That is the reason ... Brahmans during very important ceremonies such as ‘Thavasam’ (memorials to passed elders), they avoid using asafetida. They consider that this gum is, nothing but a symbol of ‘Brammahaththi Dhosam’ of Indhiran, who murdered a Brahmin. Indhiran, yet in possession of part of the ‘Dhosham’, at last in ‘sthrii samsaatham’ ... he appeared in the ladies conference. There? ...

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After shedding part of the 'Brammahaththi Dhosham' that he acquired by beheading a Brahmin, to 'Bhoomaadhevi' (Goddess of Earth) and part to the 'Dhosam' to the 'Virutcham' (trees) ... he was exploring for more places to dump the remainder of the 'Dhosam'. After considerable thought, he appeared in the 'Sthrii Samsaatham'. You may have already read, how and under what shape, he had his entry into the assembly. With his handsomeness evaporated and shedding all his ego ... just like a pauperized very rich man with all the pomp and society, Indhiran appeared in front of the ladies. He also sobbed over their shoulders and laid down his request. "Out of my 'Brammahaththi Dhosham', I am still holding a share. If you are kind enough to shoulder that burden from me, I can once again become the king of the heaven" ... Indhiran kneeled and begged the assembled ladies. "Whatever you demand" ... replied Indhiran. "In that case ... you grant us the boon that will facilitate us to have sexual relationship with our husbands, from the day we become pregnant till we give birth to child" ... the ladies put forth their request. Except the human race, other species of animals ... from the day of pregnancy till the birth of the baby, cub or calf, the male will not close and even smell the female. Only human race is endowed with sexual relationship between man and women during the period of pregnancy. In desperation, Indhiran ... awarded the boon to the ladies that they can have sexual relationship with their counterpart during the term of pregnancy. Along with the boon, he also scrapped the entire, remainder of the 'Brammahaththi Dhosham' and gave it to them. Thus goes this Vedic story.

This is where we must pay attention to the effect of accepting part of the 'Dhosham'. Doesn't Indhiran, completely relinquish his 'Brammahaththi Dhosam' and deed it to the ladies? ... According to Vedha, that very 'Dhosham' is what causes the menstruation period. That is the very reason, in sanskrit, they called those three days as 'Pakishtai'. That is ... 'Pakishkari' ... stay away ... keep a distance is the meaning of this phrase. The Brahmin ladies are holding within them, the crime of killing a Brahmin known as 'Brammahaththi Dhosham'. That is why the Vedhas calls them as people with 'Dhosham'. If you go further ... The Vedhas devised their fate, by tying a knot between what happens in their natural biological cycle, and a fictional story of Indhiran and thereby paved a way to discriminate and keep the women at a distance. On one hand, the Vedha has chased and chased the ladies to create trouble for them ... on the other hand, you will be amazed to find that, it has conducted competition for women to select the most beautiful among them. Just like in modern days we conduct 'Miss World' competition, you may imagine 'Miss Vedha...' in those days. To that extent, the Vedic period, has proposed the ladies as a beauty object and treated them accordingly. How? ... This is how!

"Yadhaashavai yohaahaa; svarnam kraniyam pesalam
Viprathii roopaani aasthi ..."

During the Vedic Period, how the ladies were stepping on the boardwalk? ... Wearing, body full of Gold ornaments and jewelries ... gently moving her very lean soft body ... taking very small steps as if measuring the walkway using each footsteps, she is walking. How is her beauty is radiating to the spectators ... was similar to that of a colorful glittering of a spreading drop of ghee (clarified butter) over the surface water ... just like that, Vedic Sloka describes the girls wearig all the jewelries and the shining as they were walking. Is this the only beauty that counts? ... Is external beauty the most important for ladies? ...

"Supraahaa kanyaahaa yuvadhayahaa
subheshasahaa karmakirudhahaa
sukirdhaahaa viiryaapathihi ..."

"The woman is bright like a lamp. Even if her eye sight falls on an object, that object will shine. She can attract others towards her. She can arouse desire among men of such intensity and force them to want to live with her. She likes to decorate herself excessively. She will always be, restlessly, doing something or other. She always concerned about the future and accordingly she plans the present to cope with the future. Above all, the she only has the strong body and a determined mind." ... Thus this 'sloka' describes about the ladies of the Vedic period.

O.K. ... O.K. ... The Vedha that praises the ladies, starting from the body to the mind ... In the Vedic period, how did it treat the ladies, during the most important ritual 'Yaagam' (Vedic rituals)? ... Let me give you an example. Few years back, a 'yaagam' was conducted in Thiruchchoor. 'Soma Yaagam'. Almost four
thousand educated ladies came to that ‘yaagam’. Everyone was very civilized, modern day ladies. I also participated in that ‘yaagam’. Those who conducts the ‘yaagam’, after seeing so many ladies filled in the ‘yaaga saalai’ (the shed where the yaagam is conducted), were taken back and started to think for a while. Then they announced loudly “Ladies ... all of you, take the end of your saries and cover your ear and face ...”. To obey the call, all ladies took the tip of their saries and covered their ear and face. Why is this covering? ... The mantra that is pronounced during the ‘yaagam’ shall not fall into the ears of the ladies. If it falls into their ears, the full benefit of conducting the ‘yaagam' would not be realized. That is why their ear and face shall be covered. This incidence happened only few years back at Thiruchchoor, in Kerala state. I can also show you examples such as this from the Vedha itself. However ... even today, the ‘yaagam' that is conducted with such restrictions ... I wanted you to let your imagination wander, into the Vedic world, to picture the status of women of that period. We have explored the beauty of the body of the ladies and the treatment of them during ‘yaagam' during Vedic era ... How was the wedding during that time period? ... Who was the very first bride? ...

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Have you realized from previous section, how the ‘Vedham’ (Vedha) has taken a woman’s natural biological cycle, and created imaginary stories and knots to find a way to suppress them in the society? Next ... we will look at the most important event in the life of a woman, which is wedding. Described in Vedham, at few places as ‘Vivaaham' and in other places as ‘Paanigrahanam’, wedding appeared to have been conducted during Vedic period with excess pomp and considerable expense. First of all ... we must understand, what is the meaning of ‘Vivaaham' because, till today, the wedding invitations are called ‘Vivaaha Subhamuorththa Paththiriki’ and printed with that title. ‘Vivaaham’ is derived from tribal (Those people living in hill regions) language that means abducting (grabbing and running away). To justify this meaning, in weddings there is a ritual that was injected in which the relatives carry the bride. (Generally, it is called in Tamil as ‘Ponnu Thookkuthal' or ‘Ponnu Eduththal', which literally means lifting of the bride and traditionally the mother’s brother has the right for this ceremony).

O.K. ... Now we will get back to wedding during Vedic period. How does the initial steps to the wedding starts? First, it sends she broker and directs him "First you go and see the girl and give a feedback", thus :

“Prathak manthaa thiyasaanasya
Varebhi varaaathu kaasupra thiiththaa
Aasmaa kaminthraa upayam jiithoshathii ..."

This vedic mantra gives instructions to the broker the proper protocol for investigating about the bride and her backgrounds. "When you visit with the family, you must wear very luxurious and elaborately ornamented dress, and go with the attitude of a very rich man. If not, the potential bride's family will assume that the groom’s family is beggers and reject the alliance. Thus, 'Vedham' establishes that the broker shall assume the responsibility of representing the groom's family even in appearance. After, the broker had discussions with the bride’s family ... next step is the bride and the groom meet and mutually exchange their sights. Where do they see each other? At the wedding stage! After that they hold their hands together, i.e., ‘Paanigrahanam’. At that time, they instruct the bride :

“Thoshtaas asbhai thuvaampathim
Thoshtaas sahasramaaham shihii
Dhiirgghamaayu kthunaavathaam ..." ... means

"Hey ... girl! this is the person sent for you by the God. From here on, this person is everything for you. He is your husband. Your heaven shall be nothing but obeying his words alone. By the command of God, you shall marry this person. If you ask, to what extent you must live with him ..."

"krupnaa mithe suprajaa asthvayaa
mayaabhatta jaladhasthith yadhaasahaa" ... means

"Even after you become an old lady, he is the only companion for you" ... thus states the 'Vedham'. Generally, this is how the weddings took place during Vedic period. Who was the very first bride in Vedic
age? How did her wedding took place? In the tenth chapter of Rig Vedha is spilled with details about the very first bride.

A girl named Ushas, also known as (a.k.a.) Sooryaa, is in love with Somaraaja (Chandhiran or moon). i.e., she is in love with moon. She wanted to marry only him and nobody else but him. However ... she was struggling, because she doesn't know how to bring this to the attention of her father. In the meanwhile, Sooryaa's father was beginning to arrange for her wedding. How? He has sent invitation to all the kings in the world and requested them to participate in a challenge. The challenge: Whoever wants to marry Sooryaa shall appear in his kingdom at a particular place and time with their chariot. There, everyone shall participate in a chariot race. At an established distance will be finish line and whichever chariot reaches first at the finish line, that king is entitled to get Sooryaa as the bride. In this manner ... every king in the world was invited to participate in the competition. Every one was determined to get Sooryaa as a bride, and they all came to the designated place with their chariots. That place was so colorful. Chariots with their horses, from several countries, were well decorated and were formed in rows. Among them was also the king Somaraajaa, who is in love with Sooryaa, arrived with his chariot. Sooryaa, was shuddering all over. She was very anxiously waiting for the result. Will my hero scurry through the competition and hold her hand in marriage? The competition has started. To bring the chariots to the post line, drums of the king, were beaten. With desire to get Sooryaa as the prize object, the kings were galloping their horses towards finish line.

Among them was also Aswathi Raajaa, who had strong desire to get the beautiful Sooryaa. Are you asking for reasons, why he should not have any desire, for Sooryaa? Basically, what was dragging his chariot? They were not horses but they were donkeys. Among the horse drawn chariots, Aswathi Raajaa was also galloping his donkey drawn chariot. Sooryaa ... was in the balcony of the palace and was intensely watching the race. While she was praying for Soma Rajaa to be ahead of the pack ... with nobody’s expectation ... the chariot race that was conducted to give away Sooryaa as a gift ... pushing behind several horse drawn chariots, with substantial speed, advanced the donkey drawn chariot. Yes! ... by defeating several kings with horse drawn chariots, Aswathi Raajaa reached the finish line first. The race ground was stunned. How could a donkey drawn chariot defeat so many horse drawn chariots and came in first place? Everyone was puzzled. At the sametime ... Sooryaa, who was witnessing the race from the balcony, astonished upon the victory of Aswathi Raaja. Because her lover Somaraajaa was defeated in the race ... she realized, that certainly she cannot hold his hand in marriage.

Minutes after the victory was announced, the arrangements for wedding of Sooryaa with Aswathi Raajaa, was progressing in a rapid pace. Her eyes were welled up with tears as Soma Raajaa, the one she loved most, slipped off of her hand. Even her cheeks swelled up with prolonged weeping. Under these circumstances ... just like the unexpected winning of Aswathi Raajaa in the chariot race, again with noone’s expectation, another strange incidence happened. Aswathi Raaja himself called for Sooryaa. "Devi (Beautiful young lady) ... I am aware of your love affair with Somaraaja. I came only to participate in this race. To my surprise, I became your groom. Even now, nothing has happened. You, as per your wish, marry Somaraajaa himself. I am perfectly in agreement with this decision" ... thus, to noone’s expectation Aswathi Raajaa united the hands of Sooryaa and Somaraajaa.

This is how the very first recorded wedding happened in the Vedic age ... It happened with considerable splendor and extravagance. According to Vedha ... After the wedding, during the sending off to husband’s place, ‘Sithanam’ (wedding gifts) is very important. “From here on, what else are you going to do for her ... Really nothing. Hence, in a lump, give all the necessary gifts for her, that will serve her throughout her life ...” thus states the Vedham. Hence ... for the newly married bride, essentials such as jewelries, silk saries, perfumes and several valuable articles are gathered and the bride’s family send it along with her. Just to get an idea of how much ‘Sithanam’ to be sent, let us look at this sloka from ‘Vedham’.

“Ee ... gantharvaahaa apsarasya Devihi
   Eeshii virushhesu aashathe shivaasthe ...”

“Ee ... angels ... messengers between the gods and humans ... we are sending our daughter after the wedding. We are sending the wedding gifts for her in vehicle after vehicle. All these gifts shall reach her
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place safely. Since, they are very valuable articles, please guard that merchandise so they are not haunted by ghosts and spirits and is not abducted by them as well."

Is ‘Sithanam’ only in the form of material things such as jewelries and perfumaries?...

‘Vedham’ also introduces to us another new form of ‘Sithanam’. It is called ‘Anudheyi’. What is the meaning of ‘Anudheyi’?... What is the use of this?... I understand your anxiety. ‘Anudheyi’ is not a material thing. That is a moving living being. After the wedding, as the bride leaves for the home in which she will be living for the rest of her life, this living being will also follow her. This living being will follow all the instructions of the bride. Are you wondering, what kind of strange ‘Sithanam’ it is?... The meaning of ‘Anudheyi’ is ‘keeps following a person and executes the command of the person’. Here... It is another girl. Yes... giving another girl as the ‘Sithanam’ to the bride. For the very first bride Sooryaa, they gave another girl named ‘Raibhi’ as ‘Sithanam’ and sent her along with the newly wed. She was sent as ‘Thozi’ (companion) for the bride. This ‘Sithana’ girl called ‘Thozi’, must she, continuously live only in the new house of the bride?... Wouldn’t she have her own independent life in the future?... That is, would she ever get married?... If we keep ‘Anudheyi’ in the focus point and raise our apprehensions in the form of questions... The ‘Vedham’ also gives answers. “What to say?... Why are you thinking about her welfare?...”

All of the above were the happenings after the wedding. At this time, I need to tell you, in detail, about some important ritual that happens before the wedding. Before, we get into the details of that ritual, please know about this special mantra:

“Maadhamaamudhraanaam thuhiidhaa pasoonaaam
Svas aadhithyaanaam amirtha syanaabhihi
Pranubosam sidhufe janaayo
Maaka apanaakaam athihu vasishta ...”

“I am saying this for everyone. Why are you taking a sacred event like wedding and spraying blood all over it? They are ignorant and any harm to them is a sin. Why are you killing them and putting into heaps? We must consider them as mothers and worship them in sacred manner. Instead of that should we put a butcher knife on them?... Stop that nonsense!”... Thus, the day before the wedding, during the ritual called ‘Madhuvarkkam’, one of the individual, in a loud voice appealing, to the performers of the ritual. What is the reason for his shouting?... What are they butchering?

“Vivaahe gowhii ... kruhe gowhii ...”

At the house of wedding, they are butchering only the cows.

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What?... In the wedding rituals, are they butchering cows? Yes ... In the wedding that is devised by ‘Vedham’, the most important aspect is the ‘gomaamisam’ (cow meat). The day before wedding, ‘Maappillai Azhaippu’ (welcoming groom) ritual takes place. One of the ritual on this day is ‘Madhuvarkkam’. According to Vedic rule, during this ritual and subsequent rituals during the wedding day, it is quintessential to have Rishis (self realized souls or yoga masters) and the ‘gomaamisam’ (cow meat).

Nearby, in a house (‘giraham’), wedding is taking place. The noise from the ‘yaagam’ and the sounds of mantras are raising from the earth towards the sky like rumble. The smell of the perfumaries are dancing around the nostrils. In this auspicious surroundings, near that house, two boys are having a conversation.

One boy : “Hay! What is that? There I hear crackling noise like ‘Mata Mata’?”
The other : “You do not know? Next door there is a wedding. Several Rishi’s are in attendance. What a sin ... Can the calves escape from the butchering knives? The noise of butchering them is ‘matamataayathe’ (it sounds like ‘mata mata’).

This is a Vedic story. That is, during the Vedic days, for the wedding feast they have butchered calves and made delicate dishes.
However … Even today’s wedding, with or without knowing meaning of it, the ‘vaathyaarkal’ (Prohith’ Brahmin conducting the ritual) they recite the mantra that is applicable for butchering the cows. But … During ‘Madhuvarkkam’, instead of ‘gomaamisam’ they hand over bananas. If that is so, why recite that mantra? If that mantra is to be recited during the butchering of the cows, why recite it when the cows are not butchered? If that mantra is recited, shouldn’t, then butchering of the cows has to take place? If butchering of the cow does not take place, why not discard that mantra? Just like this … reciting ‘Gowhii … Gowhii … ‘ they are conducting another ritual during wedding. On the wedding day … they recite a mantra that is to be recited during the feasting of ‘gomaamisam’. However, eating the ‘gomaamisam’ the bride and groom are made to amuse each other by rolling around coconuts.

Why are these ambiguities? With changing times, the Brahmins who has changed the rituals, why are they very stubbornly holding onto the Vedic mantras? This is not only Brahmin’s weddings … but also in the weddings of other castes, these very contradictory mantras only are recited. What kind of relationship exists between eating beef and rolling around coconuts? We will see in the following pages some more inconsistencies in the rituals and mantras. Thus, the wedding takes place. How the bride shall behave in the husband’s residence?

“Paridhvaagirvango graham
Imaabhavanthu vishwadhahaa
Vruththaayum anivrudhdhayaa
Jiishtaa bhavanthu jiishtaayaa …”

“Girl … In the ‘Siithanam’ that we have presented to you, there are gold thread embedded saries, that can enhance and add to your natural beauty. If you wear them, you may be decorated exquisitely. But … as you know, all these beautiful saries and threads will one day be decomposed … will be decayed … will be disintegrated. However … there is a ‘vasthiram’ (expensive clothing) for you, that will never disintegrate. In the house that you set foot for your future, your husband and other relatives, shall talk highly and have nothing but praises for you. Their admiration and their appreciation is for you, the real ‘vasthiram’ … Hence, in the husband’s house, you must behave to their liking, and wear only the ‘vasthiram’ that is woven with their praise as thread.” The ‘Vedham’ that is handing over plenty of advise to the beride … It also, through a story of Agasthiyar gives advise on, how to treat a bride after wedding, and how not to treat her.

‘Agasthiya Munivar’ (Saint Agasthiyar), was a very short person. At the instant, when he saw an young lady named ‘Lopaa Mudhrai’, he desires climaxed to a level that he determined get her. Agasthiya Muni directly went to her father. “I have seen your daughter, and I am determined to marry only her”… as Agasthiyar said, the father of the girl stared at the Muni for a while and said “Why don’t you talk to my daughter herself, and findout whether she is willing to marry you or not”. If I go as is, in my present form (short with pot belly), would ‘Lopaa Mudhrai’ accept me for what I am? He looked at himself for a moment. He was not happy with his own appearance, and hence, he recited certain mantras and relieved him, of his short and fat figure, to a tall and handsome lad. Agasthiyar went to meet with ‘Lopaa Mudhrai’. He talked with her.  ‘Lopaa Mudhrai’ was mesmerized with Agasthiyar’s youthful build up and his saccharine words and in that intoxicated stage she placed a garland around his neck, symbolizing wedding. She accepted him as her husband. Agasthiyar was overwhelmed with the result. He ran back to Lopaa’s father. With excitement he announced that ‘You see, I am married to Loopaa now’. Only after the wedding, Lopaa has witnessed Agasthiyar’s real physical envelope. Later on …?

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Lopaa Mudhrai, for the first time witnessed, Agasthiyar’s natural physical form, only after their wedding. He was with short midget form, with long beard and mustache covering his entire face like a forest of hair. She was so disappointed, and the thought of her being deceived as a very handsome person, by such an ugly person, infuriated her and she was angry and burst into weeping. However … doing the duties to the husband is the ‘dharma’ (obligation) of a wife. As per that obligation … Lopaa was spending her life span, by serving faithfully her husband ‘Agasthiyar’. As soon as he gets up in the morning, he completes his ablution … Later on, he has been engaged himself in research related to Vedic mantras … and after that have breakfast … again meditation … reciting mantras … later on spending long nights, under the light of lamps, composing various mantras … finally, fall asleep. This was the daily schedule of Agasthiyar. He
neither paid any attention to nor thought of, the women, who he desperately sought and pleaded to get married. Lopaa, as she was diligently carrying on her dharma, patiently waiting and longing for her husband's attention.

As the time was passing by ... mantras, disciples, 'kamandalam' (water jug) ... thus dedicating his life for others, one day a thought came to him ... 'upto this day I never paid any attention to Lopaa... I have been treating her merely as a household servant and took advantage of her ... have not given her any pleasures and attention that a wife expects and deserves from a husband ... I have married a very beautiful lady, but what a pity that I ignored her presence all this time ...' thus, Agasthiyar was haunted by chain of thoughts. Agasthiyar's thoughts about Lopaa Mudhrai's worldly life ... Just like, performing 'Soorya Namaskaaram' (Sun salutations) after one became blind, because each of them crossed their eighties. Lopaa, on whom the beauty was ruling over, now the old age is ruling. On her beautiful face and on her body, the God of Time, wrote his chronicles in the form of wrinkles. What used to be pitch black headful of hair, he applied on her hair white paint. If He has played havoc so harshly on extremely beautiful Lopaa Mudhrai ... would he spare Agasthiyar alone? ... With grey hair he became a frail old man. In this background only, as he thought about 'Lopaa Mudhrai ... Agasthiyar ran towards her.

Agasthiyar said “Deity ... mother ... I am your husband, came to see you” and as he was touching her shoulder ... Lopaa Mudhrai, only now she has opened her mouth for the first time, and started talking to him. “Because of you, my life is ruined. All the beauty, that God has blessed me with, went into the drain. What is the use of you coming back to me now?... How can you justify this?...” thus ‘Lopaa Mudhrai with welling tears, spilled her rage. “Devi (Goddess) ... all the mantras that I have recited and composed is only for you ...” with these words, as Agasthiyar was trying to console her ... “Can I marry the mantras and carry on my married life with Mantra? Is my husband you... or these mantras?” ... retorted Lopaa Mudhrai. Agasthiya Muni was stunned with these words and was frozen. All the students of Agasthiyar were witnessing this scene and only through them, this Vedic story was revealed. The moral of this story is that after marrying a women, if you are not catering to her needs and comfort, that is the greatest sin of all.

O.K. ... Coming back, you may recall in the last chapter, I promised to give you additional examples of contradictory mantras that the prohits recite during wedding ceremonies. Here is another such mantra :

"Thaampooshan sivathamamaam eevayasva
Yassaam Bhiijam manushyaa bhavanththii
Yaana ooru ushati visrayaathai
Yasyaa mushanthahaa prasharepashebham ..."

This is a Vedic mantra. This mantra, in modern day wedding is recited loudly by the prohit (Brahmin), as the bride and groom are seated on the wedding stage. If the meaning of this mantra known ... you may call that prohit simply as 'vaathsaayanar' (The author of naughty book Kama Suthra). To go to that level, what does that mantra says? “I (Groom) will embrace her (Bride). At that time, Angels ... you must assist us, in exactly aligning up and fitting our sexual organs together”. I cannot reveal the meaning of this mantra in any other subtle civilized way. If I describe any further, the respect you have on me and my age will evaporate instantly. That is the nature of this mantra.

One of my friend's daughter was getting married recently. That girl was very intelligent and very proficient in Sanskrit language. While she was sitting on the wedding stage ... As the 'Vaathyaar' (Prohith) loudly reciting this mantra ... "Swaamii ... Stop it right here" ... she shut his mouth up. Further she continued ... "Do you know the meaning of this mantra? ... A bride and groom, what act they carry on in their bedroom without clothes ... you are telling in front of this crowd ..." 'Vaathyaar' did not continue this mantra any farther. If you ask, why am I telling these things is to point out to you that ... priests sometimes, in the name of rituals, without knowing the meaning of the mantras ... reciting several mantras in front of the public.

Just like this another mantra :

"Vishnur Yoni garbbayathu
Thoshta roopaani bilimisathu
Aarinsathu praajaapathi
Dhadha garbbanthaathu ..."
The meaning of this is yet more vulgar! ... This sloka that starts with "Vishnur Yoni garbbayathu ...", what is it's meaning?... "A women's sexual organ is divided into three parts. They are 'Yoni', 'Madhyamam' and 'Upastham' and in each part there is an angel is residing and guarding. These angels are 'Vishnu', 'Thoshtaa' and 'Dhadha' and they are sitting in these three parts respectively and guarding. These angels ... while a man and woman have sexual intercourse, they are monitoring to see that everything is functioning properly. If I go further, even while we have sexual relationship, angels including 'Vishnu', staying closeby, if I go further, at the very same place the actions are taking place, are monitoring our activities very closely. These energies 'Vishnu', 'Thoshtaa' and 'Dhadha', who are monitoring the activities, shall bless the couple pregnancy" ... thus states this mantra. We consider, woman as goddess. But ... this mantra is relaying to us that in the woman's sexual organ itself there are three deities who have divided their territories and guarding it. You may consider it as high esteem for woman. The great modern day Tamil poet Kannadaasan wrote 'Andha' (That) 'Rangan' (Presiding deity at Sri Rangam temple) knows 'Andharangam' (secret place). However, it appears that 'Vedham' has preceded his statement.

Here another important point ... the wedding during the Vedic age was, mostly, called as 'Garbhaadhaanam' ("The rite by the performance of which a woman receives semen scattered (by her husband) is call_Garbhalambhanam or Garbhadhana."). Earlier we have seen that 'Vivaaham' means abducting and 'Paanigrahanam' means holding hands. Why all these?... What else for? Only to perform the 'Garba' (womb) and 'Dhaanaam' (Donation) ... have children and live happily ever after. That is why the 'Vedham' noted the wedding as 'Garbhaadhaanam'. 'Vedham' has recorded a conversation between a groom and a bride as they were seated in the wedding stage to demonstrate this relationship.

Bride says : "My dear husband ... I am very fortunate to get you as my husband. It was 'Punniyam' (good deed) that I became your wife. You must bring all your earnings directly to our house. Similarly, you must also share your sexual pleasures only with me. You shall not be flirting around, with different, different women ... Is that O.K.?"... Groom replies : "Since you are a female, you are very clear in your thoughts. I shall surrender all my earnings in your hands. At the same time ... you must not demand that I shall have sexual pleasures only with you. If you want it that way, then you must always retain, your youthful beauty. If you can safeguard your beauty, there will not be any occasion to drift away from you"... This is given in the following mantra.

"uthudhdharam maarohandhi murththa anam bhathyu raaroha"

"The girl, after getting married ... she must always be seated on the husband's head. i.e., she must be dwelling in his mind and filled in all his thoughts. She must be the one filled in all his brain cells. Then only he will not be drifting away towards other women. Isn't it?"... Thus states the 'Vedham'. If she must fill into each of his brain cells, how should she carry on her responsibilities?

"sthirinaanja pathidevaanaam
Dhashsrueaa anukooolathaa thathbhanduhii
Anumiruthyassa nithyam thathvatha thaaranam
sammaarjana anure paapyaam
graha mandala vardhanaahi aathmaanum pooshhesyathaa"

"From the day you held his hand, he is your God. You shall not go anywhere without him. You boil hot water for his bath ... Massage his leg ... hold onto his hands if he needs help ... If he is sleeping you wave a hand fan to comfort him ... Only by these deeds you can dwell in his mind"... O.K. ... She lives by these rules ... She is firmly seated in every brain cells of her husband. Life goes on happily. One day ... because of aging or health reasons, the husband puts down his head. That is ... He is dead. The whole family is grieving. The children, with their ignorance, are playing over their father. From the young bride's eyes the tears are dropping like a waterfall, with the thought, 'the one who loved her so much is now laid as a corpse, lifeless' ... at this point in time what are her needs? ... Consoling words! "My dear girl, do not grief over his death. His fate has taken him away. Your children are depending upon you. It is very unfortunate... You only has to take care of them and bring them up to be good persons ... Go ahead and weep. After the grieving, you must get back to your children and must live with them happily"... Shoudn't you be consoling her in this manner? Let us see, what kind of advise the 'Vedham' offers for her:
"bhathyou janithvam abhi sambha boova ..."

What is the meaning of the Vedic mantra that starts with these words?... "Your husband is dead. Very unfortunate ... From here on, who is going to take care of you? ... If you stay at your husband's house any longer, wouldn't you be a encumber to his family? ... Aren't you a burden? ... How your husband's family is going to support you?... Hence ...

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"Hence ...? Yes dear ... Should you be living, as a burden to the house you were sent to live ... and with tears wet eyes all your life? Hence, you also go along with your husband. In his stacked heap of funeral pyre, we will stack you also and burn you along with him. Is that O.K.? When she lit the fire, herself, we call it 'Thilikkuliththal' or 'Sathi'('self immolation'). Finally, 'Vedham' sent her to the funeral pyre. For the yound widow, this was THE END. This trickery ('sathi seyyal' = doing tricks) was in short called as ‘Sathi’. Rajaram Mohan Roy, the famous social reformer from Bengal, and other later day reformers were fighting to abolish this rite. Why go that far?... Even few years back in Rajasthan state, a lady named Roopkanwar, was burnt alive after her husband died. This is an example of how the light from the Vedic fire, for centuries has been, throwing its radiation on everyone. We have seen various commentaries, on women's role in the society, based on Vedic rules. We apologize, for all the ladies who were burnt alive, because of these conniving 'Sathi' rituals dictated by the 'Vedham' and we pray for their soul to rest in peace. Even if we think of praying for their peace, in general, another Vedic mantra is placing obstacles.

Today ... we witness, for the dead mothers, the sons regularly and dutifully performing rituals such as ‘Siraarththam’, ‘Thivasam’, ‘Thithi’, on the river banks or at the sea shores. They retain the services of a ‘Vaathyaar’ and pay him for the same ... and through him every year with tears they pay tribute to their departed mother hoping to wholeheartedly get her love and blessings. However, let us look at the mantra recited during this ritual :

“enme maathaa pralulopasarathi
Annav vrathaa thanme rethahaa
Pithaa vrunth thaam aapuranyahaa avabhathyanaama”

"Who fathered me? I do not know who my father was. Only because of other's words I have to believe that I was born to that particular person. But, even today, I really do not know who my father was. Only my mother knows this fact. For that wonderful mother, please take my tribute and hand it over to her. Mantras with such vulgarity, which questions their own mother's faithfulness, is recited by ‘Vaathyaar’ and he requests the sons to repeat the mantras. The sons repeat mantras, such as these, without knowing their own meaning. Those, who understood the meaning of mantras such as these, during the future ‘Thivasam’ for their mothers, would they repeat the mantras again? Those, who knows the meaning of mantras, would they warn the prohiths, not to even open their mouth and pronounce them ever again?

So far in the Vedhas, we have seen every aspect of women's ups, downs, general environment and treatment. During the Vedic era, there were famous ladies who were written up in literatures and of course, there were ladies who were also cursed severely. O.K. ... Next, what was devised by the ‘Vedham’, how did they lived during the age of ‘Manu Smiruthi’, which transformed the Vedic treatment into orders and moral standards? At least, what profile was drawn for them, to guide them the proper way to live? Fist of all, what is 'Manu Smiruthi'? The rules, i.e., obligations of every one in the society, to live by, that was devised by 'Manu' is called 'Manu Smiruthi'. Who was this 'Manu'? There was not one 'Manu' who was responsible for composing these rules. Not even two. There were approximately fifteen 'Manu' were involved in creating these rules. 'Manu' was a common name for those, who were sent by God upon creation, and appointed by Him to protect this world. That is, 'Manu' was sent by God, to plan and write the basic rules that the humanity must adopt and follow. Basically, the linguists are of the opinion that from the word 'Manu' came the word 'Manushan' (Human). O.K. ... Which 'Manu' we are going to see here? In the 'Shasthiram' (Shastram is the Sanskrit word for scriptures,) that he devised, what had he written about the role of the the woman in the society? I am going to paint a scene of the Vedic era and you let your imagination wander over it.
In the front yard of the house, there is a girl of eight years old. She is playing with a wooden figurine. While the child, whose baby language still intact, was playing with the wooden dolls... Suddenly, her father and mother were calling for her... “Baby... please come on... the time is passing by. We shall get prepared in a hurry... look... everyone has arrived. If only, you take bath right now, comb your hair apply the make up, and decorate you with all the jewelries and flowers, we can start the program without delay. come... come...” “Wait mom... I am playing... give me... please... little bit more time for play...”, the baby is asking for little bit more time. However... Manu Smiruthi’s game starts only from here!

Eight year old girl is playing with her wooden doll. I mentioned earlier, that in her life, Manu Smiruthi has started to play... How can ‘Manu’ play in her lie?... Yes. That girl, eight year old playing with her wooden doll, with her life only the ‘Manu’ has played!... What is he talking about?... Is that question pops up in your mind?... Yes... Why did the mother called the child who was playing? For what occasion, they want to shower her and dressing her?... Unlike your mother, who called you and told you "Go and take your shower, comb your hair, and go to school". Is it for that purpose, this eight year old was called?... Not at all... Her parents, are taking that eight year old toddler, to the wedding stage. For what? In modern weddings they decorate little children, take them to the wedding stage and ask her to sit next to the bride so the stage becomes lively. Is it for that purpose she was called?... Absolutely NOT!... This eight year old was the Bride! What?... Eight year old was the bride?... Wedding for a child?... Yes! This is the game of ‘Manu’ in this little child’s life. In front of the commandments of ‘Manu’, these little children were nothing but wooden dolls. The very first war, on women, by the Manu’s army starts right here. Even though, the ‘Vedham’ has restricted the women in so many ways... it has woven such rituals as ‘Madhuvarkkam’ and wedding, that can be performed only after her ‘Ruthu’ (literally season. Here puberty.). However... ‘Manu’ was not that liberal... It puts a positive siege on women even before they reach eight year old. According to ‘Manu’, the common name for women was ‘gruhini’ (house holder). The house only was her world. She must dwell only within the house. As I told you before... the little toddler was playing in the front yard... only upto her wedding, she can play in the yard. Later on, as she gets married and became a ‘Gruhini’, the house was everything for her. The wedding is called in ‘Manu’ as ‘Kannikaadhaanam’ (‘Kannikai’ = Virgin; ‘Dhaanam’ = Donate). Donating the virgin to another was ‘Kannikaadhaanam’.

What is ‘Kannikaa’ or ‘Kannikai’?... According to ‘Manu dharmam’ (Righteous duties per Manu), every girl attaining the age of eight was a ‘Kannikai’. Then... such ‘Kannakai’ shall be wedded to someone. The parent shall handover her to someone else. That is, they must donate her to a suitable person. This was ‘Kannikaadhaanam’. The very first Manu called it thus:

“Ashta varushaa baleth kanya ...”

Yet another point... Only the age limit of eight was set for ‘Kannikai’. Even if she passed this age by a little, she has passed the stage of ‘Kannikai’. Hence... If a union is made after this age, it was not considered as ‘Kannikaadhaanam’. That is, it was not a wedding. So, before she reaches the age of eight handover her to someone else.

Modern wedding has a ritual called ‘Nitchayathaarththtam’. Some call this as ‘Nitchayathaamboolam’. No matter how you call it, it does not matter. However... what is the meaning of it?... How was it conducted earlier?... Shouldn’t we find out about it?... In rural area flea markets (‘Santhai’), when the buyer and seller bargain for the price of either goat, cow or chicken they have a towel around their hand and by touching their fingers, they fix the price of the livestock. This process was called ‘Nitchayathaarththtam’. Another point. During this ceremony only the bride used to participate and there was no place for groom during this ceremony. In addition, this was a social function... therefore, there was no place for neither religious rites nor mantra chanting. But... in modern days, in the name of ‘Nitchayathaarththtam’ they have created a ceremony that is equal to the wedding ceremonies... If you ask the ‘Vaathyaars’ (Prohiths) their reply is “Everything is dictated by religious elders...”. If you ask me, we need to jail (I mean a Vedic Jail) all those ‘Vaathyaars’, who conducts the Vedic rituals during wedding. In that Vedic jail, they must be put through a bootcamp... to teach them the real rituals and customs as it was intended by ‘Vedham’. Teach what is written in ‘Vedham’ and ‘smiruthi’ and explain its meaning. We must train them well and then only we must release them to conduct any Vedic rituals.
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O.K…O.K… What did I say?... Before she reaches eight years of age, give her in-hand to another individual. Is that so… “Lord Manu, I was not able to do that. There was no toddler available who was suitable to wed our baby girl. She is over eight years of age. Now, she became of age and ‘Ruthu’…”. Thus, suppose a poor man is pleading to Lord Manu. Assume, that he is orally pleading (‘manu’) to Lord Manu. For him as well as all other similar fathers, Manu wrote as follows:

“Paanigrahaapa nikaa manthraahaa
Kanyaa sve pradhikshathahaa...
Nakanyaasii…”

This was not a reply. It is a punishment! He did not marry off his daughter before she reaches eight. He is going to conduct the wedding only after she became of age (‘Ruthu’). Do you know what should he go through?

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What happened to the pleadings to Manu, by the fathers who got her married, after eight years of age?...

Today, what happens to the petitions submitted to the ministers and bureaucrats, the same thing happened to their pleadings. Hit the waste basket! If it stopped right at that point, it was not bad... Added to the pain ... Manu demands those unfortunate souls “Why you have not conducted, your daughters marriage, before she reached eight years of age? You have trampled the sacred ‘kannikaadhaanam’ under your feet... Don’t you know that it is a great sin?... Don’t you know, what is the punishment for committing such a sin?...”. Perhaps today’s fathers may not know the punishment for such a crime. Fathers of Manu era very well knew the punishment. They were shaken up by the thought of that punishment. They regret to think, of going through with that punishment, even in their dreams. Most fathers of that era considered committing suicide rather than going through with that punishment. What was the nature of such hated punishment?

“Maasi Maasi rajasthayahaa
Pithaa pipathi gonitham…”

Actually, my pen was refusing, to write this rule of the ‘Manu Smiruthi’. As a matter of fact, to carry such vulgar punishment in itself, even the language is ashamed. I am even afraid, by giving the meaning of this ruling in Tamil, I may be dragging down the high esteem that Tamil language is regarded for. Any how, the meaning is ... “Hey... you incompetent father... you must have wedded her to a person before she reaches eight years of age. You failed miserably. Now, she has reached puberty (‘Ruthu’). After her puberty, if you do not get her married within three years, she can conduct her own ‘Suyamvaram’ (selecting her own groom) and select her own groom. Yet, how can you justify keeping her in your own home, till she attains puberty?... Hence, here is your punishment! After she attains puberty, and till she gets married ... as the father, during your daughter’s menstruation period, you must consume all the discharged blood, without wasting a drop. You must repent for undergoing such punishment. That is why this harsh punishment.”

For his own daughter, have you understood, what the father has to go through, if he does not get her married before she reaches the age of eight?... After I wrote, this vulgar punishment, even my pen was vomiting. Just like breaking the nib of the pen, by stabbing the tip, that wrote capital punishment... I am feeling like discarding this pen and throw it in the garbage can. Damn sinners?... Due to poverty, non matching of astrological signs or curse in the horoscope, physical and economic drawbacks of the girl, how many girls are hanging around their birth home? As a matter of fact, the opinions of the majority of social reformers are that a girl shall get married only after puberty. Going beyond that ... The Manu harshly dictates, that the father must drink, the blood excreted during the daughter’s menstrual period. What a cruelty?

Just like, among the burning fires, which is better... to escape from this punishment ‘Manu’ is offering an alternate punishment. Is that so?... What is that alternate?... “Haven’t I told you that you must consume during your daughter’s mensural period, the entire amount of blood discharged?... If you want to escape from that... then you must donate a cow to a Brahmin for each menstrual period. Donationing the cow is your
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retribution. That is, after the daughter attains puberty, till she gets married, however many menstrual periods lapses, that many cows shall be donated. Now you understand … From where ‘Manu’ went and finally, where he ends up with? Are you wondering, that for the cost of donating that many cows, one can conduct the wedding itself? Cruel punishment!… However, to escape from it ‘income generating’ alternate. O.K… With or without donating the cows, wedding has taken place. Then?...

For the next one year … the bride and groom must perform ‘aubhaasanam’. What is ‘aubhaasanam’?… Fire ritual!… The couple must, grow fire in a pit daily, and perform ‘Homam’ (sacrificial chanting). During this one year period… even if her husband stays at their home… if she is performing riteful duties to her husband… if the couple lay down on one mattress, their bodies shall not touch each other. Only after a year passed, successfully completing the ‘aubhyaana’ requirements, the ‘Shanthi Kalyaanam’ (peaceful uniting) can take place. During this period… to prevent the body contact between the bride and groom as they sleep on one mattress, between them they cut and place ‘Tharbai’ (grass clipping). That grass clipping represents ‘Gantharvan’(singer in the court of Gods). He … is supposed to prevent the couple from uniting. What is funnier is that, even today, some people are carrying on with this custom, conforming to scriptures.

This tradition is very ancient. This is per ‘Gruha Sooththiram’. Even those who devised this rule were not able to follow according this ‘Sooththiram’. What happened?… That one year, shrank to mere six months… Even then, it was difficult to observe. They were not patient enough to go through for six months. What is this?… As it was taking too many days to unite the couple, day by day they were cutting down and brought it to three months. For successive generations, even the three months was too long. They gradually reduced it further to mere fifteen days. That, also worn out to, seven days. This was further shrank to three days … Nowadays, the wedding takes place in the morning and the ‘Shanthi Kalyaanam’ takes place at that night itself. (This separation is dictated for those who got married after the bride has attained the puberty). For our own convenience, just like ‘Kazhuthai theynthu katterumbhu aanaal pol’ (the donkey shrank to a giant ant), we shrank the term of one year to less than one day. O.K… Can you show me someone who got married, per the ‘Manu Smiruthi’, when they were mere children?...

Can you show me a pair who got married, per the ‘Manu Smiruthi’, when the bride was less than eight years of age?… During my days, in front of my eyes, several couples were wedded conforming to ‘Manu Smiruthi’. I knew them. Do you know them?… I do not believe that you have any chance of knowing them. That being so, I need to show you an example of a famous couple, that everyone is familiar with. That too they must have married per ‘Madhu’ rules. That is, shouldn’t that couple have been married when they were just children?… O.K… Here is the example. Don’t you all, know Rama and Sita?… It is them alone. I said, little while back…. A baby girl was playing with wooden doll and her parents were calling her to prepare her for her own wedding. Just like that, the great king Janaka’s daughter Sithadevi was married at the young age as she was playing. At the time of marriage, Raman was only twelve years of age and Siithai was only six. What is he talking about … In the Ramayana written by Kambar, he describes it differently.

“As Raman saw Siithai … Siithai’s body became hot due to her shyness and nervousness. The mattress that she was laying on, was in flames due to excess heat from Siithai’s body. With intolerable body heat, the heat was radiating from her swelled up chest. The threads of the necklaces around her neck, made of black precious stones, burned out due to the excess heat of the body. The black stones were sprayed and they were rolling on the ground. Thus, Raman’s presence had emotionally affected Siithai… He was testing her sweet dreams.” … thus describes Kambar in his Ramayana. If we anazile based on his description, it is reasonable to conclude that at the time of her wedding, she must have attained puberty, to go through such emotions and reactions. Probably, Kambar, based on the prevailing Tamil culture of that period, may not want to portray Siithai as a child at the time of her wedding. However, in the original Ramayana written by Vaalmiiki …

“Dhesanthu dhārakniyaa pathi
Chinthaiyyaa maasa dharmaathmaa
Sobhathyayaaya sabhaanththa vahaa…”
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Thus, he describes. That is, while Raman was a small kid, as he reached the age of twelve, emperor Dhasarathaa was contemplating over the wedding of Raman. When Raman was visiting the palace of king Janaka along with Sage Vishwaamithraa … King Janaka told that he is going to wed Siithaa to that person who breaks the special bow (Dhanush). Raman took that bow and through his power he was able to break the bow by bending. After he broke the bow … he claimed that “I did not break the bow, with no intention to wed Siithai. I just wanted to establish my strength.” Later on, upon the insistence of emperor Dhasaratha, the wedding took place. Let the wedding be carried on in any manner. However… at the time of wedding, as per Vaalmiiki Siithai was only six years of age and that Raman was only twelve years old. During the ‘Vanavaasam’ (exile into forest), Siithaa Devi told Aanjaneyar :

“Ashtaadhasa varushaani mama jenmani kalpadhe…”

That is “I, in my eighteenth year, had to exile to the forest (Vanavaasam)”. From this statement, the wedding of Siithaa Devi took place at the age of six …and we infer that it was in conformance with ‘Manu Smiruthi’. Now, I have given you an example. When we talk about the wedding, the following trade mark mantra comes to everyone’s mind :

“maagalyam thanthu naane navajiivana kethu naam…”

What is the meaning of this mantra?… “Look dear! I am tying this sacred thread around your neck. If only you have this sacred thread around your neck, this village and this world, would believe that you are my wife. Only for that reason, and for no other purpose, I am tying this thread…”. This is the meaning of this mantra. Earlier, several chapters back, I wrote that in the palm leaf, they used to write the name of the girl and that she is a slave of such and such man… and they tied that piece of leaf using a thread around the neck of the girl. Since, it was ‘Panai’ (Palm) ‘Thaal’ (leaf), it was called ‘Thaali’ (‘maangalyam’ or symbol of wedding). Such a symbol was ‘thaali’. Its purpose was to proclaim that you are my wife and that is the very reason I am tying this around your neck. This tradition evolved at a later date. This mantra also added later on in due course.

Those girls who were wedded according to ‘Manu’, and modern unwedded girls are the same. Hence, in general, what opportunities were extended by ‘Manu’, to the girls in the field of education?… We have seen that in the Vedic era, the ladies were performing daily recital of mantras and were conducting ladies conferences. However… Manu states loud stern clear as follows :

"nasthrii soothra vedhamathyathaam...

"The ladies and the Sudhraa’s are one and the same.” The Brahmin lady is also a ‘Sudhra’ woman. Hence.. she is not entitled to learn Vedic literatures. She should not even touch the ‘Vedhaas’. As a matter of fact, her eye sight should not even fall on the ‘Vedhaas’. The Vedic chanting shall not even reach her ear drums. For that reason … for the ladies and ‘Sudhraas’ they have written ‘Puranas’ (disambiguation. Short stories explaining the basics of a religion). Go and hear those stories and don’t come close to ‘Vedhaas’.

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Can you recall, what I have said, in the beginning chapters of this series? I have noted that during the Vedic period, when the Aryans entered India from Afganistan, the number of ladies who accompanied them was very little. As a matter of fact, we can even consider that no ladies have accompanied them. Based on that fact… ‘Manu’ considers that all the ladies married to Brahmins were local non-Brahmins and hence, they are classified as ‘Sudhraas’. Even today, the Brahmin ladies who visits me to get meaning and explanations to Vedic phrases, I tell them that you are a ‘Sudhraa’ lady… your mother is also a ‘Sudhraa’ lady… and your daughter is also a ‘Sudhraa’ lady… When they hear these words, with mild anger and disenchantment, they ask me “How?”’. When I tell them, that is what is said in our ‘Smiruthi’, their response is ‘Is that so?’ and they keep quiet. Hence… according to ‘Manu’ all the ladies belong to the ‘Sudhraa' caste irrespective of whether they are from Brahmin, Kshakthriyaa, Vaishyaa or Sudhaar castes. There is no distinction among ladies based on their birth caste. Hence… just like the ‘Sudhraas' who are destined to work outdoors, all the ladies are ‘Sudhraas’ and they must work inside the house. That is :

“sthriraaantha sudhra jaathinhaam…”  Meaning : “All ladies belong to ‘Sudhraa' caste”
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"nasthrlii sudhra vedhamadhyathaam..." Meaning : Hence... Ladies and 'Sudhraas' shall not recite Vedhaas. They shall not even hear the Vedic chantings. If a 'Yaagam' takes place... in order for them not to hear the Vedic chanting, they must cover their ears with their sari top. There was no opportunity for the ladies to get education. They cannot even get out of their house. Then?

"sthriithaama upayanayanasthaane Vivaaham Manu rapraviith..."

That means, for ladies there were no mantra initiations including 'upanayanam'. People are bluffing by claiming, that 'upanayanam' (sacred thread ceremony in which the 'Poonool' is worn for the first time) is a very important ritual for the Brahmin man, and that the 'Poonool' is the mark of a Brahmin man, based on the thread as the center piece. In fact, during the Vedic and subsequent periods, there was no 'poonool' ceremonies took place. In ancient times, there was a rule which required that, while conducting a 'yaagam' the conductor have to wear the top piece of their outfit, crossed around their upper body. The piece of cloth, when tied around, loosens often and became hazardous around fire. As the cloth was unsuitable during the 'yaagam', they symbolically, shrank to few filaments of cotton threads and was worn during the 'yaagam'. I have covered this earlier in another chapter. There is absolutely no other purpose for the 'poonool' other than the requirement that the conductor of a 'yaagam' shall wear as per Vedic requirement.

Then... How did this 'upanayanam' ritual came into existence? What is the meaning of 'upanayanam'? What is he upto?... As he is talking about the women, don't think why is he drifting away towards men. Both matters are interrelated! When there is an opportunity, we need to clarify certain matters. Since the Manu, restricts women’s entitlements including 'upanayanam'... only if we know what is ‘upanayanam’, we can understand the reasoning behind Manu’s rulings. O.K... What is ‘upanayanam’? Nowadays, they made it a ‘upanayana subhamuhurtham (auspicious union)’. That is, people are treating it as a first wedding for the boy, and celebrating it in a grand manner. In reality, the ‘upanayanam’ is... sending a Brahmin boy to school for the first time. What…? In those days, they did not have schools like what we have now. Hence, they used to send the student to a person, who has mastered the Veda and all the Hindu scriptures ('Aachariyaar), i.e., send the student to the teacher's home to learn the Vedic education.

That Aachariyaar, will handhold the student and lead him to his 'Gurukulam' (A place where teacher and student live and learn together). This handholding of the student by the teacher is called ‘upanayanam’, i.e., the teacher holding the hand of the student and leading him. On that occasion, the child is given a good bath, outfit him with new dress (basically, a dhothi, which is a piece of flat cloth wrapped around his hip) and belt to keep it in place. In olden days, instead of belt, another piece of cloth is wrapped around the hip and tied to keep the dhothi in place. At that time, his father... “Little baby... From now on, you should not come here. Till complete your studies, you should not even think about your home or parents. Without turning back, you go with your teacher ...” with these words he sends him off with his teacher.

That little boy, forgets his home and for his education, holds his teacher’s hand and follows him. This was the original ‘upanayanam’. However, what is happening nowadays? The boy, who is already in his school, they ask him to get permission from the school, bring him home and conduct the ‘upanayanam’. The ‘upanayanam’ means sending him to school with words ‘do not come back home’. But... today’s practice is opposite to the original intent. Reason...? They made this event also a religious ritual, recite few mantras, and carried on elaborately like a wedding festival, only to make money. Now, I am bringing the girls to the forum. What is the ulterior motive behind restricting the entitlement of girls to 'upanayanam' and other mantric (using mantra) rituals? Girls shall not be sent to school. After all, isn’t ‘upanayanam’, only sending the person to school? But... today, boys and girls of every cast are carrying on with their ‘upanayanam’ without much fanfare! Yes... They are attending schools and carrying on with their studies! Next chapter in the life of Manu girls ...

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“No education for you... Even through mantra, you cannot earn the knowledge. You should marry at the age of eight, confine to four walls and raise family”... This is the pathway for a woman, devised by Manu. We have seen the ‘sathi’ ritual that was taking place during Vedic period. If ‘Vedham’ itself insisted on ‘sathi’, would the Manu, leave them alone? Without mincing the words, Manu is very clear about this issue.
“silhaa vaarohanam brammachcharyam…”

“If a women is widowed... place her also on the same funeral pyre and finish her off”... thus commands ‘Manu Smiruthi’. At the same time, there were very young widows, wedded per ‘Manu Smiruthi’, who have escaped the ‘sathi’ ritual. However... Even in their lives the Manu has woven horrible restrictions. Just to prevent the chances, of any other man falling into love with the young widow, immediately her head was shaved. As per ‘Vedham’ the one who lightens up, or beautifies the world is a female. Manu, on the other hand, got pleasure from shaving her beautiful hair and thus making her repulsive, life miserable, and keeping her in tears throughout her life. In addition... that widow shall not talk to any other man. She shall have no friendship with any other man and blindfolded her with copious restrictions. Beyond her control, rulings of her age, overran by the youthful exuberance, it is imperative and nature’s law, that the young widows seek the company of an young man. Today, we call it remarriage! But... during the Manu era, where was the question of remarriage?... After a girl was widowed, for consoling herself and for her economical and social support, if she accepts the company of a male species, Manu claims that was nearly prostitution. There is a punishment for that too. Before I go into that topic, I would like to expand on the punishment of shaving the head of a widow.

"Widows head shall not be shaved"... was the opinion of the 'Vadakalai' Vaishnavas. "No! No! That cannot be. Shaving the had of a widow is a must"... insisted 'Thenkalai' Vaishnavas. At this point, you may wonder about the 'Vadakalai' and 'Thenkalai' divisions of the Vaishnava sect of Hinduism. What are these?... A simple issue mushroomed into a major debate! Does the wife of Vishnu, often called as ‘Piraatti’ or ‘Thaayaar’, is blessed with Brammaththuvam (Godly powers). In that debate... "'Piraatti' is merely a companion to God Vishnu and she has no powers in granting 'moksham' (heaven) to anyone. She has no powers to help anyone to attain 'Moksham'. She can simply recommend to God Vishnu to grant 'Moksham' to anyone"... This is the argument of the 'Thenkalai' Vaishnavas. The traditional name for this is 'Purushakaarathvam' (manly deeds). As they claim that the God’s wife herself have no powers, how are they going to recognize and grant respect to an ordinary women... that too an young widow? They demanded that the widow’s head must be shaved. On the contrary... the 'Vadakalai' Vaishnavas believed that, 'Piraatti' has certain rights in granting 'Moksham' to anyone. Hence, they recognized the importance of women and declared that the head of a widow shall not be shaved.

Not just because on this one issue, but based on approximately twenty four issues, the Vaishnavas divided into two separate groups and called ‘Vadakalai’ and ‘Thenkalai’. Later on, the twenty four escalated to forty different issues that is keeping them apart. Thus, one of the pivotal Vaishnava elder, himself is stating his observations. Let us put this issue aside... After becoming widows, those married per 'Manu Smiruthi', if they wanted to remarry?... This act was considered as "prostitution" by Manu. Character only is important for her. After wedded as wife of a man, should she live with another man?... Get hold of her... Roll her with the bed in which she was sleeping. Set fire to them. The bed in which, she was carrying on prostitution, that was damned by the society... she must be kept in that same bed and shall be burnt. Thus, Manu in his commandments, introduces incineration of live humans.

So far we have explored ... How did the 'Vedham' looked at the women?... How did the Manu looked at the women?... They have treated ordinary women this way. How did they treat the Goddesses?... This is an interesting question. Just a while back we were discussing about the responsibility of Goddess 'Piraatti' in granting 'Moksham' to her devotees. In Vishnu temples, you may have seen ‘Perumal’ (Vishnu). On the right and left sides of 'Perumal', you may have seen other deities such as Goddesses 'SriDevi', 'BooDevi', 'NiilaaDevi' etc. But... 'Piraatti', a.k.a. 'Thaayaar' is a presiding deity of a separate temple. That is, she will have her own chamber and she will reside only in that place. You may have witnessed some of the temple celebrations. ‘Perumal’... will come out of his abode, with various means of transportation around him. He comes out of his 'Garbhagraham' (sanctum) on a swan. Later on he climbs up on an eagle and roams around the city. He gets on a vehicle called 'Sooryaprabhai' and he strolls around the market street. Gets on the snake 'Aadhisesha' and gets out very majestically. Later on, monkey vehicle. He sits on the shoulders of ‘Aanjaneya’ and goes on a procession around the world. He also has an elephant to ride. As he is comfortably resting on 'Ambaari' (decorated palanquin), conducts his inspections around the town. How about the horseback? That too... and finally a 'Ther' (chariot). Using the people of the town as the power, as they are pulling, he travels in gallantly. As the male deity 'Perumal', thus goes around town...
and around the world in various means of transportation o suit the occasion ... What about the Goddess 'Piraattiyaar'?...

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Yes. The male God, 'Perumal'... gets on various modes of transportation and roams around town. Gets on the 'Aadhisesa' and rides around very majestically. Later on, monkey vehicle. He also has an elephant to ride. As he is comfortably resting on 'Ambaari' (decorated palanquin), and enjoying the beats of the drums and music from pipes, conducts his inspections around the town. If that is so for a male God, what about female Goddess 'Piraatti'?... Let us side track a bit and look at the story behind the creation of Goddesses. According to 'Vedham', "God has no shape. If you desire, you can imagine that he has a shape. Just because you imagine a shape, and giving an imaginary figure God cannot be contained in that figure." However... to conform to the humanistic worship that was prevailing in various parts of the world ...the culture of worshiping the God in human form evolved. At first, only male God figures were created and worshiped. Later on ... the creators started to think "Shouldn't this male God have the company of a female Goddess?"... Then only, the female Goddesses were created! As this pattern was shaping up, small, small groups in their territories began to worship female deities called 'Amman'. We will look at this at a later date.

Based on male Gods and female Goddesses, the 'aagama' (those who sets rules of worship) people devised various worship rules. They claimed that God Vishnu's wife Lakshmi is in his chest. Later on... they devised festivals and celebrations to glorify the deity. Let me give an example. This festival is called 'Paarivettai' and it was also called as 'Mattaiadi'. Even today ... in Vaishnava temples located in Thirukkannapuram, SriRangam and Klihzhalyur, this festival is celebrated in pomp and grand scale. What kind of festival it is? Every year, the day after 'Maattuppongal' (Thanksgiving to the bulls), this festival takes place... God 'Perumal' is starting his journey on the horse. The beating of drums and the gongs are filling the air. From the wind pipes ('Naadhaswaram') comes pleasing music. The horse is gently rocking along the street. On the horse, unlike usual seating with one leg on each side of the horseback, the God Vishnu is sitting with both legs on one side of the horse, just like one sits on a bycycle carrier. After travelling a small distance... the beating of the drums halted. The 'Naadhaswaram', was quietly put back inside its cloth cover by the musician. Why? That is the street in which the prostitutes live. As the God visits this area, others shouldn't have any knowledge of it. That is the reason for curtailing all forms of sound. As the procession reaches this place, the God was brought down from the horse. During the night, he takes rest in one of the halls.

These are some of the scenes that takes place in that festival. Why are these scenes? The God 'Perumal' was getting tired of looking and looking as well as having relationship with 'Piraattiyaar' all the time. Hence, what His thoughts were ... 'why not go out for a while, see what is around and return back'. However, 'Piraatti' is concerned 'over her consort, who has gone out and not returned yet'. It is already dark! The whole town became quiet. Why he has not returned to the temple?'... After spending the entire night with prostitutes... next morning, leisurely 'Perumal' is starting his return journey. After these sceneries of the previous day, let me narrate the subsequent scenes. In the morning, he rides on the same horse... and returns to the temple. Riding on the gently rocking horse, in a rush, as He was about to enter the temple... in the door step of the temple, blocking the pathway was 'Piraatti', His consort. She asks... "Where did you go all night and returning only now?". 'Perumal' ignored her query, and again as he was trying to enter into the temple... again 'Piraatti' obstructs His pathway. Both the God and Goddess are directly opposite and stare at each other... Time passes by... At this time, to make peace, an ambassador was sent to mediate the issue. Unsatisfied with the explanation, 'Piraattiyaar' continues... "I observed during campher 'aaradhanai' (welcoming ritual), still wet sandeewood paste stuck on his chest portion... the smell of that sandeewood paste appears to be foreign. Where did He go and now He is returning? I am doubtful of 'aaraadhanai' (welcoming ritual), still wet sandlewood paste stuck on his chest portion... the smell of that..."

As this festival is taking place, everyone is joining their palms together, bow down their head and praying the God. What is there to pray for? However, here I have to remind you about one thing. Remember, I have talked about a sentence in 'Vedham'... 'If you keep yourself, beautiful always, why am I going for someone else?'. 'Perumal' was also just like that... during this festival,
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He is telling ‘Piraattiyaar’ the same statement. What is strange about this festival is that it exemplifies the fused within God’s family and is witnessed by entire family of ordinary people. Another unique aspect of this festival is that the man can go anywhere, but the woman has to suppress her feelings and confine to her house. Even among the Gods and Goddesses, the very same story.

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You have read about the ‘Paarivettai’. The moral of that festival is, that the male God can lave the temple and go anywhere he wants, including prostitutes house. However, the female Goddess shall tolerate her feelings and stay confined to her home. Yes... While ‘Perumal’, using any of the many transportation means, can roam around city to city, street to street ... what is the status of the ‘Thaayaar’, who is reigning over her own sovereign temple? No matter, however grand festival takes place... or functions take place she cannot step outside the temple compound. If ‘Piraatti’ thought for a second... ‘My husband happily rambles around, all over town, why can I not do the same’...“Oh... Yes. You can also go around... You are free to go around your husband only. That itself is like going around the City.” Thus, our male created ‘Sasthiram’(scripture) orders to the Goddess. Hence... even today, Goddess ‘Piraatti’, who is presiding over a sovereign temple, a ‘travel’ means just going around the temple. Beyond that she cannot set foot is the general rule. Yet, as an exception to the rule, in some temples, based on their historical background, they extraordinarily take ‘Piraatti’ outside the temple compound.

So... as you see, among the deities themself, how much restrictions to the female deities. Why all these restrictions? Even with the deities, this is the case. The scriptures have drawn the line for Female Goddesses, beyond which they are not supposed to step outside. If that is so, what is the status of the females among the human righteousness? All these examples are only to vividly bring this point. Let us set this aside... We can also get a lesson from God Himself that ‘a male can take advantage of, and use the female, whenever and whatever means, for his pleasure and at his discretion’. I shall relate a scene that depicts this principle.

Probably, you may have visited the Sri Rangam temple. If you have, you know how are the abodes of each deities... How big they are... and how strong they are. If we go to that temple now, what are the Gods we probably worship? We will worship Ranganathar, the laying down deity. Then we will worship his consort, Ranganayaki. We may also worship Sri Ramanujar. Thus we will visit each abode and and worship its presiding deities. We must pray during the daytime or if in the evenings we must pray before midnight. But... one devotee has come to worship the God at night. It was after midnight and the priests have locked the door and took keys with them. It was a beautiful and peaceful night. At that time, from the chamber of God Ranganathar, a special bright lightening erupted. The devotee was under the impression that God himself is going to appear in front of him and hence, he was not even blinking his eyes. After few moments, from the God Ranganathar’s chamber, some object was shooting out with a noise ‘virrrrr...’ It flew through the sky and entered into the chamber of Goddess Ranganayaki. The devotee witnessed this entrance also. Few more minutes passed... Again, the bright light appeared, now at the Goddesses chamber, and the same object was shooting out, traced back the same trajectory as before, and entered into the chamber of Ranganathar. The object has reached its original position.

O.K... Do you want to know about that object? If you ask that devotee, wouldn’t he brief about that encounter? He was not just telling about that incidence. He put it in writing itself. He was none other than the son of right hand man of Sri Raamaanujar, Kooraththaazhwaan. His name was Paraashara Bhattar. In his book titled ‘Gunarathna Kosam’, he has given full account of this encounter. O.K... What was that flying object? “That was God Ranganathar’s part used for sexual pleasure (aanandha naadi). That was the male part, used during body contacts. Even during the thick of the night, Ranganathar had a desire to have intercourse with ‘Piraatti’. Hence, He sends out His sex organ to Ranganayaki’s chamber and suppresses His lust”... thus Paraashara Bhattar has noted in his book ‘Gunarathna Kosam’.

Why such stories? Even though it looks like a story of Vittalachaachhaariyaa ... Bhattar has taken liberty to stress the point that ‘the women exists for men's pleasure. The man has the right to take advantage of her, at anytime, whatsoever manner’ and used this example as if he has witnessed the secret urges of Rangan and his activities in the ‘Antharangam’ (secret place). You can read this story in Tamil language book called ‘Mummatthasaaram’, written by Perukkaraanai Chakkaravarthy Aachchaariyaar. Chakkaravarthy Aachchaariyaar further questions, how did Sri Paraashara Bhattar accomplished in his
book 'Sri Gunarathna Kosam' that Sri Ranganathar using his 'Aanandha Naadi', he was happily having sexual relationship with his consort Ranganayaki?... After reading this in Tamil, many religious elders were upset. They were further concerned, that whatever was written by Bhattar is now translated into Tamil, that any person can read and understand. When the same was translated into English by Chakkaravarthy Ayyangaar, the general opinion was that if this scene was explicitly described, it may create controversy over the slavery of the female, pictured so offensively and hence, it was omitted. Thus, showing the women as a sex object was not reserved only for Vaishnavas ... the Saivaites are not so gentler either...


In Vaishnava tradition it is 'Piraatti'... In Saivaites tradition it is 'Ambhaal'. Except the differing names, the devotional shrewdness of both traditions was to keep their Goddesses as slaves to Gods. We will explore how the 'Salvam' has been sacredly playing with their women. Before that... have you witnessed either Kanchi Kaamaatchi or Madhurai Meenaatchi or any such Goddesses, leaving their temple compound? Today, Kaanchi Sankaraaachaariyaars, who are debating to establish the 'Adhvaitham' (non-duality meaning we are part of God), travel to what places? They tour to such places as, Chennai, Mumbai, Kaashi, Delhi and even went upto the courts. However... you may want to enquire, whether the deity they worship, which is Kaamaatchi Amman, has she ever left the temple compound.

Thus, 'Aagama' (Those establishes worship rules) traditionalists, who established discrimination among the deities based on the gender... they have also created class differences among various deities. What are they?... Deities, including Vishnu and Sivan were devised by the 'Vedham'. All others are classified as village deities. They ... according to them, are inferior deities. (T.C.: This concept is contrary to the basics of Nirguna Brahman which postulates that God is omni present, omni potent and nigua meaning no shape or character. Its power and intensity is same anywhere and everywhere. Shiva statue has same power as the Kaali statue.) Because, those who worship these deities are people engaged in laborious work, 'Sudhraas'. If you ask me, those who call these deities as village deities shall be hard kicked. What is that, you, yourself classifying them as Village(Graama) Deity, Circle Deity and District(Jilaa) Deity?...

"samedha vishvaa vasasaa
Pathintha vibhu yayeha vibhuhii
Adhidhith iananaam sabhooryahaa noodhanam aanavaasakii
Dhim vardhdhanihii
Anu vaavruthe eekaiyith poori."

People living in various parts of the country, to suit their terrain and soil... and to suit their life style have established their deities. Mostly, they happened to be, female deities. Because... as the women stay all the time at home and carefully guarding everything in the household, they believed that by establishing female Goddesses, even though the villagers go outside, the deities will stay put in the village, stay within their territory and guard the village. In their own area, they consecrate their own deities. Hence, the term 'Village Goddess' is wrong. At first, man was scared of light and hence, we saw earlier that he was worshipping light. Similarly, he was also terrified of dark and he started to worship darkness. He also believed that even in the darkness there is God. That was Kaali. He considered black stone as Kaali and began to worship. In fact, Kaali means black. Later on the black stone... evolved into a black figure. Became Kaaliammal and eventually Kaaliaaththa.

Similarly, those who have engaged in agriculture, saw Kaali as green. As the culture developed... according to their life style and habits they have given customized shapes to their deities. Deities evolved organically, through local conceivements such as Kaali and Maari, are not bound by aagama rituals. (T.C.: That is the very reason, the priestly services in Kaali and Maari temples, are traditionally performed by Pandaarams and not by Brahmins) Hence, they do not come under the restrictions, such as, 'they cannot step outside their temple compound'. In addition, they are always installed at the village border... just to guard the village. As the time passed, the Brahmins encroached into the territory of the traditional priests, for economic reasons, and brought them also under aagama rituals. Slowly, the tradition of offering 'Naivedhyam' (food) to God also introduced. That is, as the Brahmins started to perform worship services to non-aagama deities, they made 'Naivedhyam' an obligatory item. Thier resoning... 'God also gets hungry. Only if he suppresses his hunger, he will bless us with food. Hence, we must daily, with good attitude, offer food for Him/Her'. Hre I have to point an important matter... The daily offering to God is
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different than offered during special festival days. During festival days, depending on the festivities, the offerings will be different.

Let me tell you about the food offering (Naivedhyam) to Vishnu temples. The daily worship that takes place in the morning is called 'Kaalasandhi' and for this pooja curd rice (yogurt rice) is offered. High noon, the pooja termed as 'Uchchikaalam' and the offerings are rice, gravy (Kuzhambhu), mixed cooked vegetable (Koottu), sauteed vegetable (Poriyal) and various other sides and it is called 'Alankaara Thalikai'. That is, what we eat during lunch, if God also eats we call it 'Alankaara Thalikai'. Didn't I tell you earlier, that 'Perumal' roams around town in his vehicles and returns back to the temple? At that time, the entire town was presumed to be jealous of the handsomeness of 'Perumal' and caused 'Thirushti' (bad omen). To nullify that 'thirushti', they conduct a special protection called 'Thiruvanthi Kaappu'. During this ritual, milk, fruit, 'Vadai' made of soaked and ground mung beans, 'Dhosai' (crepes) are offered to overcome the 'Thirushti'. During the eleventh lunar day and new moon days the sole 'Neivedhyam' is 'uppuma'. In addition, on Tamil month of ‘Aippasi’, on the star of ‘Moolam’… they offer Snakegoad with milk… that is, snakegoad is soaked in milk and made into a sweet meal. On the Tamil month of ‘Vaikaasi’ on the star of ‘Visaakam’… they offer milk mango. This also prepared just like the above sweet dish. On Natchiyaar Thirumozhi saaththumarai auspicious day, they offer ‘Akkaaravadisil’ a.k.a ‘Sarkarai Pongal’. In addition, during festival days, famous dishes like tamarind rice ‘Puliyodharai’. Unlike in the ‘Perumal’ temple where they place more importance to food, in ‘Sivan’ temples they do not care much about food. Their main dish is ‘Sambha’ rice which, is prepared with powdered black pepper and cumin, mixed with clarified butter and rice. After hearing so much about food, is your mouthwatering? All these are ‘Nirmaalyam’. What?

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Have you seen the food menu of ‘Bhagawaan’ (God)?… Isn’t he lucky to eat every day different types of food such as ‘Uppuma’, ‘Dhosai’… One of the friendly reader of this series was asking me “Doesn’t he like ‘Idly’”? Why He wouldn’t like it?...

Kaanchipuram Varadharaja Perumaal is offered daily His favorite dish ‘idly’. It is not the same common ‘idly’ that we eat every day. It is ‘Kudalai Idly’. What is that?… In every Perumaal temple, for plucking the ‘Thulasi’ they have a basket called ‘Kudalai’, which is in a long cylindrical in shape. Just like this basket, if you make a long vessel, fill it with the ‘idly’ mix and steam it, you get ‘Kudalai Idly’. O.K… I have told you about different types of dishes that are offered to God. Based on the concept of human biological cycles, the general belief is that God also will go hungry, and hence we have been cooking and offering to ‘Perumal’, varieties of dishes. All these dishes offered to the deities, according to ‘aagamam’ is ‘Nirmaalyam’. What is that?… According to ‘Paancharaaathra Aagamam’:

"Soroopaam pirathimaam vishnoho
Prasanna vadhane kshanaam
Kruththuvaa aathmana priithikariim
Sorna rajathaa thipi
Thaamarchhayedhu thaampranamedhu thaame visinthenhu
Vishalii abhaashtha dhoshashthu
Thaameva bramma roopinim..."

After Budhdha has in full force and in an expeditious manner, clobbered the Vedic rituals and the practices... "Listen! I am showing you a new pathway to worship. You adopt 'Vishnu' as your primary deity, and make a miniature idol that you like. It shall not be a stone idol. It shall be made of either gold or silver. you keep it in a separate place and offer pooja..." thus states the aagamam. Later on, they saw the monumental temples and grand idols of the Southern India, and said 'This looks better... We will perform worship rituals for these temples also...'. They came forward to perform the pooja for these temples. Then they also realized that God also will get hungry and they must also feed God. They introduced the feeding ritual... that evolved into an elaborate affair. That is fine! Yet, I have not told you what is ‘Nirmaalyam’?...

For the God, they are making varieties of food items, including sweets, salty dishes and snacks and offering them to Him... Does He consumes them?… They keep it infront of Him and don't they take it back
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within few minutes?... Within that short period of time, would He has tasted and enjoyed them?... After we take it back, what do we do with those dishes? In the name of God, we eat them. Even in these days... in the 'Perumal' temples, during festivities, we get complaints that in tamarind rice they do not have enough hotness, and in 'Uppuma' there is not enough salt. Not just complaints, there were major fights. Why all these fights?... Why should we eat the leftover that was consumed by God?... Isn't that contaminated with God's saliva?... I am not going to eat what is contaminated with God's saliva... Throw it in the garbage... Do not serve it to anyone. This is called 'Nirmaalyam'. That is 'Do not eat someone's leftover'. If you do you will acquire 'Nirmaalya Dhosham'.

Those who have made idols and worshipped, as per the aagamam, when they heard this 'Nirmaalya Dhosham', felt that it was contrary to the roots of their ideology. With all the sweat that went into making all these sweets and snacks in the kitchen of the temple school... should we throw all these dishes in the garbage?... If we keep on throwing in the garbage, how can we sustain our livelihood?... They thought deeply. Finally, they refused to throw them in the garbage. It is contaminated only by God himself. There is nothing wrong in eating it. Leave us alone and with those words they were raising their victory flag. This point was brought out by Vedhaantha Dhesikan in his book titled 'Paancharaathra Ratchai'. "How can we justify throwing so many varieties of snacks and sweets, in the name of 'Nirmaalyam', after we made them with great pain and offered it to God?... That won't work. Hence, he declared that in the 'Perumal' temples this concept of 'Nirmaalyam' is not acceptable. Further he asserted that by eating the leftover from 'Perumal' temples one does not acquire 'Nirmaalya Dhosham'. If you are very particular, let the 'Nirmaalya Dhosham' prevail only in the 'Shivan' temples. We do not want them around here..." thus Vedhaantha Deshika Swami concludes.

What is the inner meaning of this?... Only in 'Perumal' temples several varieties 'naivedhyam' is offered to God. In 'Sivan' temples they do not give much importance to varieties of tasty food. So in 'Sivan' temples, they have only 'sambhaa' rice and if they consider it as 'Echchil Dhosam' (Saliva crime), they can discard all the 'sambhaa' rice. However, the tasty snack and sweet dishes of the 'Perumal' temples... how can we afford to throw away in the name of 'Nirmaalya Dhosham'? Now, do you understand the logic?... O.K.... Why I have brought up this topic? Haven't we exploring the injustice that has been committed against the female Goddesses? I have explained all these, just to stress the point, that this injustice prevails, even in feeding the Goddesses. That is, 'Neivedhyam' that has been offered to the 'Perumal', shall not be offered to 'Piraatti'. That is exclusively for the male God 'Perumal' only. It is intended only for Him to consume and enjoy.

For 'Piraatti', it is separate 'thalikai' (food). Even today, you visit the Thirukkannapuram 'Perumal' temple, and observe. The food prepared for the 'Perumal', will not be even taken in the direction of female Goddess, 'Piraatti'. This is the prevailing standard in all impotent Vishnu temples including the Thirukkannapuram temple. In only those economically deprived 'Perumal' temples, as there is no alternative, the same 'Neivedhyam' is offered to male as well as female deities. In summary... female Goddesses cannot step outside their temple compound... They do have independent authority to grant Moksham to her favorite devotees... She do not even have the privilege to eat the same food consumed by the male Gods. Have you seen enough of the sufferings and injustices committed towards the female deities?...

Are these sufferings, endured by the female deities, reserved only for the Vaishnava tradition? How do they treat in the Saivite sect? To answer to your question, we have to travel Chidhambaram. Probably, everyone knew of heard about the Nataraaja Perumaan, the presiding deity at Chidhambaram. Perhaps some of you may have even visited the temple and worshipped the deity. The specialty of this place itself is the dance footwork of Siva in the form of Nataraaja Perumaan. One day... beautiful day of the ancient age... a dance competition took place. Who were the participants? 'Paramasivan' and 'Thillai Kaali'. Who was this 'Thillai Kaali'? The one came to compete with God Siva, was a very famous and capable dancer. Naturally, the women are more graceful in their dance movements and very sensitive to musical notes than men. The grace and beauty that fills the stage during the performance of a female dancer far exceeds that during the dance performance of a male dancer. This is natures deed. In addition to it ... 'Thillai Kaali' was a trained dancer. Should I say any further?
With the sound of her jingle bells, even the air itself will start to dance. Anybody, who challenges her to a dance competition, they themselves gets shaken up after seeing her talent. Such a talented ‘Thillai Kaali’ was the one came forward to compete with ‘Sivaperumaan’ in a dance competition. The preparations were for the competition was proceeding. Two different stages were built opposite to each other. On those stages only, ‘Sivaperumaan’ and ‘Thillai Kaali’ are to perform. The spectators are assembled in front of the stage. The competition is about to start. Among the spectators, gossip sprang up and the waves were spreading, as to the probable winner of the competition. The competition has started. ‘Kaali’ started the dance with her own sophisticated exuberant moves. The sounds from the jingle bells worn in her feet, and the beat of the music, were confluxed to become one resonant rhythm. Kaali’s fingers were dancing themselves in the air and were painting to facilitate the audience. On the other stage, Sivan started his own exotic dance (Thaandavam). His followers classify his ‘thaandavam’ into five different classes. They are ‘Arputha thaandavam’, ‘Anavaatha thaandavam’, ‘Aanandha thaandavam’, ‘Piralya thaandavam’, and ‘Sankaara thaandavam’. On this stage Sivan was dancing in ‘Aanandha thaandavam’.

Thillai Kaali, who was in the verge of tasting the sweet success, she had to also witness this scene. Suddenly, her ‘narthanam’ came to an abrupt halt. She put her head down. How can a girl continue her task, especially when she sees a man exposing his sex organ in the middle of a competition? Did Kaali’s ‘narthanam’ stopped by design? It was forced to stop. However, Sivaperumaan... was continuing his ‘thaandavam’. Hence... Sivan was declared as the winner! With His right leg firmly rooted on the floor and raising His left leg even higher. Yes... He raised it much higher. Little by little, as He moved his left leg sideways and raised it higher, His plan started to yield the desired results. As He had His right leg firmly on the floor, and kept on raising his left leg... the entire assembly was shocked for a moment. Why?... intentionally, the male sexual organ of Sivan, was exposed to view. Just for this show, Sivan was deliberately designed His movement, and kept on raising His left leg.

Kaali’s dance movements and intricacies of her ‘narthanam’ (dancing with acting) were having anesthetic effect on the audience and they immersed themselves in her dance. Sivan’s ‘thaandavam’ was no match for Kaali’s grace and her intricate movements and he was trailing behind. Sivan understood his impending defeat and the thought of him losing to a woman was unbearable. Sivan was losing to a woman? Her swift foot work during the dance was troubling him. The time for a decision was approaching... “Aahaa... what a wonder... Sivaperumaan was defeated by Thillai Kaali”... such exclamation was about to erupt in the crowd of audience... As Sivan decided, not to let her continue, with her enchanting performance... he raised his left leg little bit. Kaali believed, that this may be a variation in the dance steps, that Sivan is introducing and she was equally compensating her dance movements. Sivan raised His left leg even higher. Yes... He raised it much higher. Little by little, as He moved his left leg sideways and raised it higher, His plan started to yield the desired results. As He had His right leg firmly on the floor, and kept on raising his left leg... the entire assembly was shocked for a moment. Why?... especially when she sees a man exposing his sex organ in the middle of a competition? Did Kaali’s ‘narthanam’ stopped by design? It was forced to stop. However, Sivaperumaan... was continuing his ‘thaandavam’. Hence... Sivan was declared as the winner! With His right leg firmly rooted on the floor and raising His left leg high, thereby exposing His male organs... He claimed His victory. May be, is this the ‘famous secret’ of Chidhambaram? After winning the dance competition only, He was given the name Natarajaan. The meaning of this word is, that He is, the King of Dancing. I did not create this story. It was written up in ‘Nataraja Mahaathmiyam’. So what is the moral of this story? ‘A woman shall not be in competition with a man. If she happens to be in a competition, because of her arrogance or for an ego trip, she shall not claim victory. To defeat a woman, man can employ any trick’... this is the gist.

The one defeated was Kaali. I have already told you that Kaali... does not come under aagama code and she was mainly a security deity installed by village people. Here we need to look little deeper to understand the subtle message. “Siva is a high class God. But Kaali is a low class rural God”. For this reason she was kept out of sight. Where?... Even today, if you go to Chidhambaram Nataraja temple and ask them the whereabouts of Thillai Kaali, they will sign you towards the North direction outside of the temple. Approximately, one kilometer distance away at the border of the city, Kaali is anxiously resting in a small temple. Another point! ‘Woman shall not compete with man. If she does she will be driven away from town, just like what happened to Kaali’... thus Kaali is telling indirectly to us through this Natarajaan episode. To date, those priests conducting worship services, in Chidhambaram temple, does no even look in the direction of Kaali temple. Thus, among the deities, male-female discrimination was fostered in both traditions. In addition, the class discrimination, was also deep rooted within the Hinduism.

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Salvaitre tradition, did not stop right there. It differentiates based on the language also. ‘Murugan’ is a beautiful Tamil language name. The meaning of the word ‘Murugan’ is beauty. The Brahmins took the original, pure Tamil God and made Him ‘Kandhan’. Also made Him ‘Subramanyan’. Not only that... The
Sanskrit scholars even made him a son of Paramasivan and Parvathi. Then, Murugan was not a son of Paramasivan? The Tamil answer is NO. The Sanskrit answer is YES. If you ask how, we can easily answer that question based on the reasoning of the name itself. Murugan means beautiful person. Ancient Tamil literature dating back to ‘Sangam’ (Tamil Academy) age, named ‘Paripaadal’, the name of the Tamil God was given only as ‘Murugan’. How about names such as ‘Saravanabhava’ and ‘Kandhan’?... I will tell the meaning. I told you that, the Tamil answer was that, Murugan was not a son of Paramasivan and Parvathi. If that is so, what is the answer from Sanskrit?... Then why are we calling him also Kandhan and Saravanabhava?... You may question... Unfortunately, I have to read to you only a story from North Indian language.

Paramasivan and Parvathi were in their own world, i.e., where the Gods reside, basking in enjoyment. While they both were talking to each other, Paramasivan’s lust over Parvathi became uncontrollable. Hence, He was closing in on Parvathi. Parvathi was preoccupied with something else in her mind... Politely, she told Sivan “No swami... Not right now. I am not ready for it...”. As He looks at Parvathi, within Him the lust hurricane was swirling around and fueling to His heat. He was ready to hump over Parvathi and subside His lust. However... Shakthi (a.k.a. Parvathi) was not in accord with it. Paramasivan started to chase Paravathi. To escape from the huntsman, she slips away and started to run. All powerful Paramasivan... Would he leave it alone?... He finally grabs Her and He bends Parvathi and brought Her within His bounds. Paramasivan said “Devi... I intend to have enjoyment with you... My thirst to have bodily relationship with you has no bound... Why are you evading me?... What has happened to you?... He rolled Her like a vine and uncontrollable lust Paramasivan is questioning Her. Her reply was still the same “No my Lord... Not at present...”. Even though He was God, He was not able to control His bodily urge. As He completely squeezed and embraced Her against His body, He began to disrobe Her. Goddess Parvathi was begging “Swami ... Lord...Please!”. However, without paying any attention to Her plight, just for His enjoyment, He was getting ready for the war. Paramasivan, even though, had every part of Her body under His control... in spite of it, Shakthi was not yielding. It was unbearable to God Siva. His sexual urge was boiling inside. He leaned on Parvathi and spread over her. But... Parvathi... just in time. She squeezed her body out of Paramasivan’s grip... Alas! The sperm drops (semen) of Paramasivan, did not reach its intended target.

Since, Parvathi slipped away, just at the moment of ejaculation, the semen drops came down from the heaven and fell into the Ganges river. Of course, the drops were the treasure of Sivaperuman... They were travelling swiftly along the Ganges and the drops reached the stagnant bank with reed (‘Naanal’, bamboo weed) groove. With the velocity of water reduced to zero, the semen evolved into a baby. The ‘naanal’ called in Sanskrit as ‘Saram’. The grove was called in Sanskrit as ‘Vanam’. Hence, the baby was called ‘Saravanam’ (reed groove). Just because, He was conceived in the reed groove, the name ‘Saravananan’ was given. According to Sanskrit scholars, this was how baby Saravananan came into existence and this baby was the Murugan. This is how the name ‘Saravananan’ was given to Murugan. Then, What about ‘Kandhan’? Really it is not ‘Kandhan’! The real and correct Sanskrit name is ‘Skandhan’. O.K... What is ‘Skandhan’? You, just now, read the Sanskrit story of the origination of ‘Saravananan’. This ‘Skandhan’ is the root cause of that story. That is... when the semen of a male species, accidentally falls outside, without going into its intended place... it is called as ‘Skandhan’. 

Now, I hope you understand?... First, ‘Skandhan’... and later on ‘Saravananan’... According to Sanskrit literatures, this was how ‘Saravananan’ was ‘born’ to Sivan. But... the Tamil culture is worshipping Him as a hill based God and considers Him as a handsome person. To consider Murugan as ‘Skandhan’ and ‘Saravanan’ Tamil culture will not yield and accept the Sanskrit stories. In addition, the story was based on vulgar logic just to put shame on His worshippers. To add to the injury, to such ‘Skandhan’ and ‘Saravananan’, the Sanskrit christened another name ‘Subramaniyar’. Its meaning is ‘High Society Brahmin’. Now do you understand the purpose?... Just like Murugan was made a son of ‘Sivan’... the Brahmins also made ‘Ganapathy’ also a son of ‘Sivan’. Who is Ganapathy?...

We have seen various worship practices, that gradually evolved, around the world. Isn’t it?... To start with they started to worship stone. Later on, we have seen, that they kept the figures of animals and worshiped it. Do you recall this?... Along the same lines, those who were living in the forest, was very much afraid of the huge figure of the elephant. To escape from the elephants... they raised their hand, joining their palms worshiped them. Later on, they started to worship the figure of the elephant itself. As the idol worship evolved, i.e., started to worship the figure of people, over the man’s figure, those living in the forest,
superimposed the figure of elephant and worshipped the composite figure. This became ‘Ganapathy’... Then what is the meaning of ‘Vinaayakar’? According to Sanskrit literatures, ‘Vinaayakar’ was not a son of ‘Paramasivan’. Sivan only is ‘Vinaayakar’. What kind of nonsense? You wonder, what is he talking about?...

We have already looked into the language and cultural differences between the name Murugan and that of ‘Skandhan’ and ‘Saravanan’. If that is the case, are you asking me, what about the Murugan’s, 'supposed to be', elder brother Vinaayakar or Ganapathy? Elder brother, younger brother, younger sister, older sister, brother-in-law all these interwoven relationship among the deities evolved in the era of humanistic worship and fabricated by human beings. O.K... Let us come back to Ganapathy. There is a widespread notion prevails that Ganapathy is elder brother of Murugan and also He is Siva’s elder son. We are also believing into it. However, the Sanskrit stories blasting these notions. What story?...

One day, Paramasivan’s wife Parvathi, was taking a bath. To the extent, one may wonder whether all these mischief and naughtiness among the human beings, were taught by Gods themselves, there are plenty of examples in the puranic stories about God’s wickedness and bad behavior. O.K... What Sivan is doing here? Parvathi Devi, as the water is poured on her, is minding to her bathing. Sivan had a juvenile desire, and was yearning to find out how His dearest is taking a bath without Her knowledge. That is...there is a unique thrill in men (even though he is her husband) of witnessing the bathing of a woman without her own knowledge. Sivan wanted to have the experience that thrill of witnessing His own wife’s bathing without Her own knowledge. Hence, as Parvathi Devi was pouring water on Her, purportedly without Her own knowledge, hiding at various locations, Paramasivan was having a clear show. Wouldn’t Paraashakthi a.k.a Parvathi, with the power and ability to oversee all the worlds at the same time, not aware of two eyes stealthily staring into her own bathing activities?

She realized! She was shocked to find through her own intuition, that someone was watching her with lust and surreptitiously, while she was taking bath alone. Even though she was a Goddess, yet after all, isn’t She a female?... Immediately, as she trembingly wore Her bra and Her dress, ran outside searching for the person who committed the crime. “Hey! Who is there? Who is that person, dared to peep at me, while I was taking a bath?” ... Parvathi Devi was commanding loudly. Abruptly, Sivan appeared, in front of Her and said “Devi... It was only me! I was playing little mischievous game (Thiruvilaiyaadal)... Just for this why are you so excited and fuming? Calm down... Calm down...”. “Swami... Which is ‘thiruvilaiyaadal’? If you consider a man peeping a woman during her bath surreptitiously, and enjoying it, is your kind of ‘thiruvilaiyaadal’... then let me show you my kind of ‘thiruvilaiyaadal’” with these words She cursed Him, with Her own ‘Thiruvilaiyaadal’. “Without even considering me as your wife, for peeping at me during my bath, You must become a man with elephant head...”. At that very instant, Paramasivan became a man with elephant head. That is... this little story is telling that Vinayakar was none other than Paramasivan. Even today, on the riverbanks and on the lakeshores you may have seen several Vinayakar temples. If ask me why?... Paramasivan is reminding everyone “Hey... The one taking a bath, even if it is your own wife, do not peep at her. If you do, your fate will become, just like mine”. This is a story.

On a historical perspective, I have already told you... Among the worship practices that was prevailing in various parts of the world, second most important practice was totamism worship. That is worshiping animals. Along the same reasoning, one time, those who were living in the forest, was afraid of large animals such as elephants and started to worship them. From this practice, evolved, worshiping the figures with elephant head. Just like we worship elephant head on a human body... in Egypt they used to worship various animals. This in short is the history of evolution of God Ganapathy. As soon as the name Ganapathy is mentioned... ‘He is in Vedham itself. He is the origin of the world’ ... thus, later on everyone was putting knots to weave a fabric. That is bunch of non-sense. In Vedham, the word Ganapathy was mentioned. If you want to know, who that person was?... Let us look at this mantra in Rig Vedham :

“Ganaanathavaa Ganapatihim shavaamahe
Kavikam kavinaam upamas sravasthamam
Dheshtaraajam brammaaam brammanaaspathi”
Hinduism ... The Evolution?

According to Vedham, in Vedic era, the people and saints (Rishis) used to travel in groups. During that time they used select a leader among themselves and follow his instructions. That is... Leader of the group. Ganapathy means the leader of ‘Ganam’ (small group). Those small, small group’s leader was called the Ganapathy. Thus, Vedham, talks about several Ganapathys. The actual meaning of this verse is "Hey... leader... If we follow your lead, we will get everything that we need. Our wealth will multiply...". Thus, this mantra is nothing but appreciation and praises for their leader. This 'Leader of the Group' was later on mis-interpretted and the leader was made into a God. However, according to 'Vedham', Ganapathy was leader of a group and was not a God. We have seen, the decency of our God's treatment of women and because of such treatment, we have also seen, how another God was created. Why I have brought all this to your attention? Basically, I wanted you to realize, that our God, who is to be examplary and guide all of us to be in good character and lead us in the path of truth, how they are portrayed in our scriptures and religious literatures... If you have already realized... Then next...

In the past few chapters, we have seen, in detail, the atrocities our tradition has cursed upon our ladies as well as upon our Goddesses. After reading my previous articles in this series, some of the ladies came to me and poured their awe and asked me whether, was it like this... was it like that... They also asked me a sneaky question. "You have stated that our Goddesses also were mistreated and they also suffered in the hands of Gods as well as men. But... we celebrate, exclusively for our Goddesses the Navaraathri (nine nights) celebrations... I myself, in my home, all nine nights set up an alter and display all Goddesses (Golu)... Isn’t it a great honor for our Goddesses?..." asked an young lady. "O.K... come to my pathway..." I appreciated her and narrated about the 'Navaraathri Golu' (Nine nights of honor), now you can also hear that message.

General belief among the masses is that the 'Navaraathri Golu' is to worship our Goddesses 'Parvathi', 'Lakshmi' and 'Saraswathi' and to exclusively honor them. However, if we look at the 'Rishi Moolam' (Saint origin) through this celebrations 'Nadhi Moolam' (path origin), the matter is different and its purpose is also completely different. Before we get into the origin through the saints... we will look into the fictitious story about the 'Navaraathri'. There was a cruel person called 'Mahishaasuran' with the head of a buffalo. He was committing atrocities against all the dwellers of heaven. The reason : The one boon that he has obtained! That boon was 'If anyone is going to destroy me that shall be only through a women'. The reason behind such a boon was : What can a woman do? Even the women Goddesses were not allowed to step beyond their temples. How can they destroy me? Since, the heavenly dwellers have accepted these norms as the standard, he requested such a boon. The Gods themselves... may be because of the opinion they had of the ladies or for some other reasons ... they have granted such a boon.

Only a woman can destroy me! Which woman has such powers? ... With that arrogance, he started to commit atrocities against the dwellers of the heaven. This has fallen into the ears of the wife of Sivan, Parvathi. All other Goddesses and angels were praying to Parvathi : "Only a woman can destroy him. How is it possible? Can I destroy him?...". Parashakthi was thinking for a while. 'Is it possible by myself?'... Just like ordinary folks, she also consulted with Her neighbors Goddess Lakshmi and Goddess Saraswathi. They plainly told Her : "How are we going to have such strength to destroy him?... We are even deprived of means to grant heaven to dead ardent devotees? How are we going to destroy an evil man?...". Thus the Goddesses themselves deprecating about their own plight. O.K... Now, what shall we do? A streak of light appeared. If we have destroy an evil man, we need to have the strength of men. However, his boon grants him death only through a woman. If that is so, what ca we do? We must acquire the strength of all Gods in heaven and then go after destroying him. Thus, in the caucus of the Goddesses, a resolution was passed. At this place I would like to point out the discrepancy between the statements in the 'Vedham' and the contents in the 'Puranic' stories. What did the 'Vedham' said :

"Sthriinaam dviganam aaahaaram
Bhattiis saabhichathur gunam..."

I believe that I have dealt with this while I was talking about women in the Vedic period. That is ... Ladies eat twice the food that is consumed by man. Hence, they are four times as strong and intelligent as man. This is according to ‘Vedham’. However, what was talked about in the meeting of the Goddesses in the ‘Puranic’ stories? “Only if we are able to get the strength of the men, we can boost our own strength. With
that increased strength only, we can fight ‘Mahisaasuran’…” thus they have concluded. That is whatever strength that ‘Vedham’ has bestowed upon the ladies, the ‘Puranic’ stories undermines it and throws them into weaker sex category. O.K... Anyhow, we will come back to the matter at hand. Parashakthi has determined to acquire the entire physical strengths as well as the fighting skills of every male Gods and male dwellers of the heaven. First she approached the supreme Gods Brammaa, Vishnu, Siva and Indhiran and demanded that they surrender their entire power to Her to fight the evil man. As a woman, I cannot act with my own power. I need your cooperation in this fight and please provide it to me.

What else to do?... They are the one granted him the boon and now they are stuck with it. They extended their full power to Her. After sucking up all the powers of the Gods, She went after Mahisaasuran and destroyed him. At that moment, all the dwellers of the heaven should have celebrated and sing praises of Parvathi for Her heroism. They must have surrendered on her feet for protecting them from a major evil force... However, no such thing happened. That Parashakthi Goddess was not praised by anyone. None appreciated Her... Reason? The Gods have surrendered all their powers and strength to Her to fight... Hence, all the dwellers in the heaven, till that time were without any movement like dolls. Those dolls were the ones displayed on the ‘Navarathri Golu’.

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Now... bring to your memory, all those dolls that we have seen in the previous chapter. That is what is celebrated as ‘Golu’... ‘Golu’.... The justice in a nutshell, behind the Golu and the Navaraathri celebrations is, ‘nothing can be accomplished by women alone. She can live only with the help of a man’. O.K... Was the ‘Golu’ festival emerged, at a later time, after putting several spins to this ‘Puranic’ story?... On this ‘Puranic’ story alone they have established the doll pageant during the ‘Golu’ festival. That is all the Gods and angels, in heaven, became dolls. A tradition was established that instructed us to worship these dolls to bring to light the greatness of Parashakthi. Later on, in this ‘Golu’ tradition, a competition for the share of the fame emerged. For who?... The main issue was, among the ‘Parvathi’, ‘Lakshmi’ and ‘Saraswathi’, who shall be given more importance. That too was resolved by the human beings on the earth by allocating three days for ‘Lakshmi’, three days for ‘Saraswathi’ and three days for ‘Parvathi’. The split among the partners were deemed to be fair.

Later on... They have also established the favorite dishes to offer to the deities. No wonder ... The food, after all, used to be the center piece of the worship. Would they leave it alone?... First day it shall be ‘Ven Pongal’. Second day it shall be tamarind rice. Third day it shall be ‘Sarkarai Pongal’; Fourth day mixed rice which is made with several vegetables and cooked with rice; Fifth day shall have yogurt rice; Sixth day shall be a little different coconut rice; Seventh day lime rice; Eighth day shall be rice pudding (Paayaasam) and finally on the ninth day again serve ‘Sarkarai Pongal’... Thus in the name of nine nights, they have also established nine different ‘naivedhyam’ for each night. One more thing in this... Everyday they have added ‘sundal kadalai’ (Garbanzo beans). I have my own doubts... After eating dishes such as ‘puliyodharai’ (tamarind rice) and ‘thayir saadham’ (yogurt rice) can a person destroy evil giants?... Thus, the nine days of celebration, that occurs every year was called as ‘Golu’.

The fictitious meaning for ‘Golu’ is what I have described to you earlier. However, the Golu’s ‘Nadhi Moolam’ and ‘Rishi Moolam’ are entirely different. The ‘Golu’ that we celebrate has evolved only from our own life style. However, the ‘Puranic’ story writers have addes several twists to decorate this festival from reality and killed the true meaning of this festival. There is no relationship between the ‘Golu’ and Parashakthi. There is absolutely no relationship between Lakshmi and ‘Golu’... So also there is no relationship between Saraswathi and ‘Golu’. If that is so, how did all these flourished into existence?... Fictitiously creating the evil giant (Arakkan)... fabricating the reasons for destroying him... in order make everyone believe, deceptively narrating a story... at last offering ‘naivedhyam’ for nine days is the only profit! If that is so, what is the meaning of ‘Golu’?...

To find an answer to this question, we need to travel back to te days of the kings. In ancient days, before going to a war, Tamil kings used to reflect on various issues. Unlike today, in those days, as soon as they decide they cannot take their tanks, war planes and other war equipment and mobilize for a war. Only based on the weather conditions, the war strategies will be planned. Because, they were paying more respect to the nature and were forced their living to suit the environmental conditions. Especially, rain was the major factor. No matter, however capable the king was, he was very reluctant to go after a war during
rainy season. Because... One can bear the hot sun and carry on a war. However... during a pouring down rain, in those days, the war plan, strategy, offensive intellect such as these can flip upside down. For all these reasons... the kings used to keep safe their fighters, chariots, horses, elephants and their war armor. They were kept in rows and it was very impressive, majestic and beautiful. Since, these were their assets that can earn them a victory... the war general and the commanders... used to repair all the damaged equipment and renovate the equipment as necessary and get ready for the war. They used to salute with valor, to their war equipment, so they can cooperate and bring them the victory. When the rainy season comes to an end... just like a leaping tiger from a bush, they charge against the enemy and claim victory. This is the 'Rishi Moolam', 'Nadhi Moolam' and true origin of 'Golu'. When the Brahmans looked at this display... they realized that this principle was very much appealing and considered to employ the same approach in the name of God to energize the community towards God. 'Navaraathri' was created. After the ninth day... the day of marching for the war, and to claim victory, was suitably named 'Vijaya Dhasami'.

In this... Where did 'Lakshmi' came from?... or where did 'Parvathi' came from... or where from 'Saraswathi' came?... While saying that they are praising the songs of the Goddesses... relaying the latent message that 'without the man a woman cannot survive and they cannot accomplish any task'. This is what the basic philosophy of the 'Golu'. Even executing this 'Golu' philosophy, among ourselves, there are several disagreements. 'How can Siva's wife Parvathi, make God Vishnu a doll? Shall we celebrate this as a holy day?' ... thus among the Vaishnava sect prevails disagreements. Hence, even today, the practice of displaying a 'Golu' is not accepted by the Vaishnava community. 'Golu' consists of so many fictional stories and one important truth. Next?...

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We have seen the philosophy behind 'Golu'. Actually, by now you may have figured out, whether the 'Golu' is to praise and honor the Goddesses? or to downgrade the Goddesses by bringing about their weaknesses? In case... even if we assume that this ritual honors and praises the women... 'Golu' is not displayed in the temples. The tradition is that everyone has to keep it in their own house. May be this ritual has a latent message, that even if you honor and praise the women, you better confine it to your own house... do not let this happen outside. Who knows?... O.K... Haven't we looked at 'Golu', through the 'Rishi Moolam'? The kings used to worship the army and the weaponry on a specific day. From that celebration evolved the belief and a tradition called 'Aayudha Poojai' (weapon worship). Not only the king but also the citizens of that country began to follow the king. For the king waging a war is his occupation. Hence, he was displaying his war arsenal and worshiped it. Like wise... every citizen was exhibiting, those tools that he has been using in his trade, and worshiped it.

In those days, what occupation the Brahmans were pursuing? The answer to this question was dealt with in the eleventh chapter. They are namely 'yajanam' and 'yaajanam'. Brahm's occupation was doing or make others do 'Manthiram' (chanting mantra), 'Homam'(performing fire ritual) and 'Yaagam' (conducting sacrifices). This is it. If that is so, what kind of tools they display and worship during their 'aayudha poojai'? They thought for a while. They transformed the 'aayudha poojai' into 'Saraswathi Poojai' (Saraswathi is the Goddess of knowledge). At this point there is an auxiliary question surfaces. The weapons were essential for the humans only. And still it is! Why the deities themselves require weapons? As the God has every powers that are imaginable, why does He need weapons? From those Gods standing alone like ‘Ayyanaar’ to those Gods surrounded by Goddesses such as ‘Naaraayanan’, all the deities are carrying weapons such as knife, machete, pitch fork (‘soolam’), ‘Vel’, bow and arrow... standing in their alters displaying their rowdism. Do they need weapons? Why do they require it? If we explore, starting from ‘Vedham’, we can find clear answers. In ‘Vedham’ the Rishis have classified them into two different categories :

"Rudhrovaa eeshaha agnihi
Thasyaiithe dhanuvas goraanya
Sivaanya yachchhayathu
Sadha rudhriyanjothi yathevaasthu goraadhanu
Thaanithena samayathii yathvasor thaadhaam dhiyothii
Yaivaasya sivaakanu thaanthena prinaadhii...”
What is this Vedha mantra is relating to us? It is describing the character of God. During the Vedic era, while the Rishi’s preparing to conduct a ‘yaagam’... the roaring noise of the high wind tears down the ear drum. The noise of the wind used to rattle the heart. All the Rishis are terrified and almost dying of the thought of the wind. “Alas!... ‘Rudhran’ will arrive soon... He is the God of destruction... He will destroy everything at sight...”... the Rishis are howling. Immediately... they are thinking of ‘Rudhran’ and...

“Rudhraa un kobhatthukku oru namaskaaram
Rudhraa un Goraththukku oru namaskaaram
Rudhraa un gruraththukku oru namaskaaram”

We are scared of you and that is why we are praising you. Please do not come to this area. Runaway from here ...” Thus just to drive Rudhran away from their area, they are praising him. That Vedic mantra describes only this. That is... Rudhran looks very scary and cruel. His sole assignment is to create trouble for the people. ‘Rudraahas Guruurahas’ says ‘Vedham’. i.e., ‘Rudhran’ is ‘Ayogyan’ (cruel person). In addition, ‘sakasraani sakasrasya rudraani boomyaadu’ which means in this world, there are one thousand thousand (1,000,000) rudraas (cruel persons). Hence...? “Anthadha Eeva Rhdhran niravadhedhe...”. While all the preparations were taking place, to conduct a ‘yaagam’ called ‘sayanam’, ‘Rudhran’, with his hair pointed in all directions, arrives at that place with bow and arrow. This is where we have to pay attention. The only weapon mentioned in the ‘Vedham’ is bow and arrow. This weapon will be in the hands of ‘Rudhran’. Taking this weapon...he will try to muddle the ‘yaagam’. He will bring misery to many lives. In the place, during an auspicious (‘Sath’) occasion, he arrives with his bow and arrow and he is threatening everyone. Before ‘Rudhran’ starts his sadistic dance in this manner, using the mantra praise him and using the same mantra chase him away. The same is given in the ‘Vedham’ thus... “Anthadha Eeva Rhdhran niravadhedhe...”. ‘Rudhran’ described in so many names such as non-trustworthy, thief, evil person and father of hurricane, carries as his weapon only bow and arrow. At the same time, ‘Rudhran’ also described as having a peaceful image. He is also supposed to be a made of love and kind hearted ?...

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‘Rudhran’ has been portrayed as a cruel person, in ‘Vedham’, and I have mentioned that he also has been given another character that is peaceful, kind hearted... Who is he?... Vishnu! ‘Vedham’ called beauty as ‘Adhpudham’. This word later on, in our language Tamil, evolved into ‘Arpudham’. Part of the words of a slokam ‘sadhasathpathi adhpudham...’, portrays Vishnu as the leader of the society. As leader of the society, ‘Vedham’ says in another slokam, you are very beautiful and peaceful...

“Thomhi sathyo adhpudhahaa
Dhaadhaa vaajasya...”

The meaning : ‘You are really a beautiful person’. According to ‘Vedham’, you said, that God has no shape or form... Then, how did these armour and beauty came into existence?... Thus, a suspicion may sprout within yourself. The same ‘Vedham’ tell you... ‘If you want, you can give a figure for God, as your imagination can take you’. O.K.... As per the ‘Vedham’, Rudhran’s arsenals are bow and arrow. If a cruel person like ‘Rudhran’ himself, had only a bow and arrow as his weapon... Vishnu, personified as the kind hearted and peace loving, shouldn’t He have as His possessions, only silk garments and shining jewelries. But... Vishnu, had ‘panchaayutham’ (five weapons), that was more weapons than even the cruel person ‘Rudhran’ had in his possession. Five weapons?... Yes. No shortage of weapons for our Gods. Yes! Vishnu has in his hands five different weapons. They are, ‘Sangu’ (shell), ‘Chakkaram’ (wheel), ‘Gathai’ (maul), ‘Saarangam’ (Bow) and ‘Kadkam’ (knife). Let me explain them one by one.

‘Sangu’ (Shell)... In those days, primitive culture days, traditionally when they go for a war... “We are prepared for war... Let our army battalion march towards the enemy”, thus, it was blown for issuing the marching orders. In addition, It was also blown for warning the enemy “Hey... My battalion has started and we are marching towards your’s”. Similarly, when everything came to an end, they blew the shell and they announced the results. The shell that was used from the beginning to end of a war was the first weapon of the peace loving God Vishnu. Next weapon is ‘Chakkaram’ (wheel)... This wheel’s essence is the fire, that has been given most importance, in the ‘Vedham’. When the wheel is aimed, the fire split out of it will catch on, burn and make the enemy into ash and put him to death. This is the beautiful Vishnu’s
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There is also another special feature for this weapon. I will explain about that feature, after I have given description of the five weapons. The third weapon is ‘Gadhai’ (Gadha). This is also a weapon of the primitive culture days… that is more or less the weapons used by the primitive men of the stoneage. It is nothing but a huge wooden log. In one hit, the person will reach the heaven. That is the nature of this weapon. Even today we read in the head lines of the newspaper that ‘Murdered by hitting with a round wooden log’. Such round wooden log is this weapon. In the village area they are scared of hearing the name ‘sukkumaanthadi’, and that weapon is the ‘Gadhai’. The fourth weapon is ‘Saarangam’ (Bow). This was also the weapon, used by the forest dwellers, for hunting animals. The fifth weapon was the one normally appears in the newspaper headlines ‘By showing the knife to the woman who was traveling alone, the thief grabbed the gold chain’. That knife is the ‘Katkam’.

Thus, the one bears all these five weapons, and portrayed as the peace loving Vishnu, who happened to be the cruel personality ‘Rudhran’.

Haven't I noted earlier that the 'Chakkaram' weapon has some special features? What is that special feature? 'Chakkaram' is the 'sankalpam' (alter ego) of Vishnu. It is called respectfully as 'Sudharsanar'. God Vishnu is keeping this weapon, to accomplish whatever He has in His mind. Whatever God Vishnu thinks, 'Sudharsanar' (Chakkara weapon) completes it. Thus... just for a weapon, our Vaishnava tradition has given such a status. 'Sudharsanar' also has additional fame and respect. What is that?...

"Yasmin vinyasya paaram vijayanii
jagathaam jangamas thaavaranaam
Lakshmimaarayanaakyom mithunam
Anubhavathii uthiuthaaraan vihaaraan
Aarokyam bhoothimaayusiim
Kruthamiha bhahiinaa..."

This is the very last sloka, in the book titled 'Sudharsana sathakam', and written by Kooranaaraayana Jiiyar. O.K… What does this sloka says? ‘Narayanan has to attend to multiple tasks at the same time. Hence, He was not able to spend quality time with His wife Lakshmi. In spite of it… Vishnu, when He decides to spend leisurely time, alone with His wife Lakshmi, He vests all the responsibilities with His trusted weapon 'Sudharsan'. Yet another specialty of this weapon... in the hands of 'Sudharsanar', it has sixteen other weapons. What?... In the hands of a weapon, more weapons?

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What?... In the hands of a weapon, sixteen weapons?... If that is so, you can estimate the importance of wheel weapon called 'Sudharsanar'. Rather than referring this weapon as that, this or it, it is always called with respect as this person or that person. Yes... It was also named as 'Chakkarathaazhwaar' (All the Vaishnava saints are called 'Aazhwaars'. This weapon was also treated as a Vaishnava saint). For the 'Sudharsanam', even in Sanskrit language they called it with respect as 'Sudharsanar'. The 'Sudharsanar', which is in the hands of Vishnu, has in its hands sixteen weapons. Vishnu Himself has only five weapons. But his own weapon has sixteen weapons. Before we explore about all sixteen weapons of 'Sudharsanar'... we will take look at few of the accomplishments of Vishnu with 'Sudharsanar' in His hand.

King Powndaraka Vaasudhevan was, once upon a time, ruling Kaasi. He was infatuated with his own name. The infatuation, gradually converted him, to arrogance. Slowly this arrogance got to his head, and it was leading him, in a destructive path. What was he thinking… One component of my name is Vaasudhevan. Hence, I am only the Vaasudhevan a.k.a. Vishnu. I am the God Himself. Hence, in front of me, that Vishnu shall not have in His hands all five weapons. He is not the God. I am the one came here to protect this world. Hence…”Hey! Vishnu, you must forego your weapons 'Sangu' and 'Chakkaram'. You must surrender them to me. Because, I am the true Vaasudhevan. I am the true Vishnu”... Thus, his arrogance got to his head and he was giving ultimatum to God Vishnu. Vishnu sized up his arrogance... "Are you asking my 'Sangu' and 'Chakkaram'?... First I will give you my 'Chakkarayudham'. Keep it... Not in your hand... But take it on your neck”... Thus he launched His ‘Chakkaram’. That ‘Chakkarayudham’... descended on the neck of the Powndaraka Vaasudhevan. He gave the ‘Chakkarayudham’, to the one who claimed, that “I am the God. Give me all your weapons”, and took his life. While this incidence related to Vishnu Himself... the next one related to God Krishna (An avathar of Vishnu).
Sisubaalan was king of Sethi Nadu. He has been a perennial enemy of Krishna. Always he has been cursing and criticizing Krishna. Krishna a.k.a. Vishnu, decided to tolerate upto one hundred curses. However, Sisubaalan's cursing incidences exceeded this limit. In the last curse, Sisubaalan exceeded his limit and cursed Him “Podaa idaiappayale” meaning “Hey, You, herdsboy” calling by the caste of Krishna. Krishna, who maintained His patience till that time, “Are you cursing me demeaning my caste?”... with these angry words he launched His ‘Sudharsana Chakkaram’. The ‘Chakkaram’ decapitated the head of Sisubaalan and it fell to the ground. This very same Sisubaalan is one of the gatekeeper boy in Sri Vaikundam. It is said that Vishnu Himself has granted this status. How did that happen?... Vishnu asked Sisubaalan, “Hey! you want to be my friend and get access to ‘Moksham’ on a delayed basis or you want to be my enemy and get to ‘Moksham’ on a fasttrack basis?... Which suits you?...”. He replied, “I would stay as your enemy and get to ‘Moksham’ in a hurry”. Based on this... It appears, through Vishnu’s words, that better than the friends of God, the enemies of God gets to go to heaven faster. This appears in the ‘Bhaagavatham’.

In addition... ‘Even to the Gods, the caste feelings is there... and it is a must’ this discriminatory principle is emphasized in this story. This story also brings to light the power of the ‘Chakkaraayudham’. There is also another note about ‘Chakkaraayudham’. The ‘Vajraayutham’ of God indhiran was made of Thathiika saint’s bone. The weapon, ‘Vajraayutham’ made of human bone, was energized by this very ‘Chakkaraayudham’. O.K... We have explored various stories that brings to light the power and capabilities of ‘Chakkaraayudham’. Earlier, I said sixteen weapons... Are you asking what are they? God Vishnu’s ‘Chakkaraayudham’ has on each side eight arms and each one of the arm has a weapon. About these weapons, Mr. Vedhaantha Dhesikan has composed the ‘Chodasa aayudha sthothram’. That is recitals about the sixteen weapons and its capabilities. What are the weapons described in this ‘aayudha sthothram’?... We will first examine the weapons in the right hand of the ‘Sudharsana Chakkaram’. 1.) ‘Chakkaram (wheel); 2.) ‘Mazhu’ (Mallet); 3.) ‘Kundham’ (Spear); 4.) ‘Dhandam’ (Stick); 5.) ‘Angusam’ (Driving tool); 6.) ‘sadhaamukaagni (A weapon that spits fire from one hundred mouths at a time); 7.) ‘Miskrisam’ (Knife); 8.) ‘Vel’ (Type of Spear). These are the weapons found on the right side of ‘Chakkaram’. On the left side... 1.) ‘Paancha Sanyam (Shell); 2.) ‘Saarangam’ (Bow); 3.) ‘Paasam’ (Rope); 4.) ‘Kalappai’ (Plough); 5.) ‘Vajraayudham’; 6.) ‘Gadhai (Maul); 7.) ‘Ulakkai’ (4” dia. Cylindrical rod); 8.) ‘Thirisoolam’ (Steel fork). On the right side eight plus eight on the left side. Isn’t the total sixteen? When they say ‘Pathinaarum Petru Peru Vazhvu’, may be they are talking about the sixteen weapons of the Vishnu, and probably, He is having a great life with His weapons. Portrayed as a peace loving God in ‘Vedham’, Vishnu, was wrapped around with war arsenals, like a weapon making blacksmith. Why?...

We have learned about the God who has sixteen different weapons and having a happy life... For what reasons, Vishnu, who is claimed to be capable of accomplishing difficult tasks, soaked in love from head to toe... and as per ‘Vedham’ He has peaceful image, he needs so many different weapons? Leave Vishnu alone... If all the other deities are teaching love, why do they need these weapons to accomplish their tasks. Here again, the humanistic worship plays a role. How?... Only when the early man was scared, he believed in God. The very first, fast heart pounding that was excited by the thought that someone may be capable of destroying him, was the reason for creating God. During the prehistoric days... when the man was performing idol worship, he did not just configure the shape of God, with the human figure alone. If he has to protect us... what is the use of Him just sitting empty handed? We need to furnish Him, the same weapons, we use to destroy our enemies. They believed, that by providing these weapons, He will definitely protect us. The ‘Chakkaraayudham’ is described in ‘Vedham’ as Agni (fire). All other weapons such as conch etc., were used by the men of the primitive culture. They are the one furnished all these powerful weapons to God.

In 'puranic' stories, these weapons were elevated to very high esteem. To destroy the evil doers, the God, was using various weapons of mass destruction. I need to tell you, at this point, one more important matter. All these primitive weapons were made of gold and gold alone. Because, in those days, gold was available without any scarcity. In ‘Vedham’ itself, the importance of gold, has been greatly emphasized. When I was talking about the ‘women of Vedic days’ I said that women arrived for festivities with their entire body covered with shining gold ornaments. Do you recollect this fact? Similarly, during the Vedic days, the gold was extensively used for another important purpose. What purpose?... ‘Dhatchanal’ (gift). But before that...
The most important aspect of 'Vedham' is the 'yaagam'. Only Brahmins can perform these 'yaagams'. Brahmins may be termed as 'mantra labors'. 'Vedham' encompasses six parts. The part that deals with pronunciation of the Vedic words is called 'Sikshaa' and this is the first part. The second part deals with linguistics and is called 'vyakaranam'. That part dealing with grammar is called 'Santhasoo'. The part that deals with the origination of words is called 'Niruptham'. That part that predicts the future is called 'Jothisham'. How to conduct each of the 'yaagams', that is described in the 'Vedham' is called 'Kalpam'. All these parts shall be learned before conducting a 'yaagam'. Conducting the 'yaagam' shall be learned, standing infront of fire, and reciting the appropriate mantras. Would anyone go through this endeavor for free? Shouldn't they be compensated? Shouldn't they get a fee for services? They shall be paid a salary. Isn't it? This compensation is called 'Dhatchanai'. The salary paid to conduct 'yaagam' is called 'Dhatchanai'!

I have talked about, in the early chapters of this series, about a particular 'yaagam' called 'asuvamedha yaagam'. In that, the Brahmins conduct this 'yaagam' for the benefit of the Kings... and the Brahmins take with them, as 'Dhatchanai', the queens and princesses of the kings household. The priests spend their nights in 'Raajasukham' (intercourse) with queens and princesses and send them back to the palace. Thus... as, an apropriate 'Dhatchanai' was established for each 'yaagam'... an exceptional 'yaagam' exists, called 'Chaththira yaagam'. What is 'Chaththira yaagam'? This 'yaagam', in which, several people assembled in a place, several days, if not, several years and is conducted for the welfare of the world. For each of the 'yaagam' they will erect an 'Agni Kundam' (fire pit) and sacrifice various substances as prescribed by the Vedic rules. Just like 'Dhatchanai', what are the articles the sponsors of the 'yaagam' (Ejamaanar), should donate?

Housing, a campus for performing the 'yaagam' including cooking and dining facility, living quarters and all other facilities needed to successfully concluding the 'yaagam'. Whatever 'Dhatchanai' to be offered to the priests, shall be devoted, to the use of 'yaagam' itself. Only those facilities dedicated to this 'yaagam' such as houses, 'ashrams' (campus) and the palaces shall be used by everyone attending and conducting the 'yaagam'. Anyone can reside in these facilities. Those facilities donated for 'yaagam' such as houses, 'ashrams' and living quarters are later on called as 'Chaththiram'. Only for the 'Chaththira yaagam', no 'Dhatchanai' will be offered to the priests, as this this 'yaagam' is conducted for everyone's welfare, including the priests.

O.K... You may wonder... he was talking about gold and why is he suddenly changed his course to 'Dhatchanai'. There is relationship. Haven't I talked about the importance of gold in 'Vedham'? The same degree of importance, is also granted in 'Vedham', for those who conducts 'yaagam'. The 'Dhatchanai' for those who conducts 'yaagam' shall be only gold. They shall not be given any other metals. 'Vedham' has drawn up the line, based on the valuableness of gold, that gold is the only suitable metal for 'Dhatchanai'. Even for that there is a reason. When Brammaa created 'Rudhran'... as soon as the baby landed in this world it cried with sound 'ingee'. It was not an ordinary crying. It was very scary howling. 'Rodhanam' means crying. Since he continued his crying, he was named 'Rudhran'. That 'Rudhran's tears ...

I have told you, that ever since 'Rudhran' was born, he continued his crying. The fifth part, in the first section of 'Yajur Vedham' is where the tears of 'Rudhran' is explained in detail. We cannot isolate ourselves as if it does not affect us, whether, 'Rudhran' cries or he laughs. You talked about 'Dhatchanai'. Later on you talked about gold?... Now all of a sudden, why about the tears of 'Rudhran'?...You may ask. The crying of 'Rudhran' was in a way to make the Brahmins laugh. Why?... How?... As 'Rudhran' was crying, doesn't he sheds tear drops?... Those drops were frozen and became a metal. What metal?... It became silver. In essence, the tear drop of 'Rudhran' is the silver. We have already seen, what kind of person 'Rudhran' was. He was cruel, trouble maker and tortures people. Sum total, according to 'Vedham' he was an 'Ayogyan' (brutal individual). Silver is Rudhran's tear drops. Hence, that metal shall not be given as 'Dhatchanai' to the Brahmins who conducts the 'yaagam'. One should not accept silver as 'Dhatchanai' either. Hence, the 'Vedham' advocates that one should accept only gold as the 'Dhatchanai'. Even today, the Brahmins do not accept silver articles as 'Dhatchanai' for homam. Either money or gold only will be accepted. Probably, now you will understand... How the tears of 'Rudhran', made the Brahmins conducting 'yaagam' laughing, all the way to the bank.
The Vedic priests knew that gold is more valuable than silver, and hence, they were holding to gold as the standard for ‘Dhatchanai’ and let the silver go on the wayside. If they ask “Don’t give me silver and give only gold for me”... will any one heed to their request? That is the reason they made ‘Rudhran’ cry. From his eyes they dropped silver tears. ‘Dhatchanai’ has yet another status... ‘Bhaagavatham’ gives an example. If one considers God as the ‘yagnayam’ (yaagam)... then ‘Dhatchanai’ is the God’s wife Goddess. If I expound further... ‘Yaagam’ is taking place. Consider that ‘yaagam’ is the God. Then, the wife of that God is the ‘Dhatchanai’. If we expand yet further... How a God suffers without Goddess... likewise ‘yaagam’ without ‘Dhatchanai’. Using whatever analogies necessary to absolutely get the ‘Dhatchanai’... the ‘Dhatchanai’ was elevated to the status of ‘Bhagawaan’s Paththini’ (God’s wife). This was called by ‘Bramma Sooththirar’... the fee for ‘yaagam’. ‘Dhatchanai’ is offered only after the ‘yaagam’ is performed. However, I have told you about the ‘Dhatchanai’ first before talking about the ‘yaagam’ itself.

What is the importance of ‘yaagam’?... The life long task of Brahmins is nothing but performing ‘yaagam’. They must be walking only within the ‘yaaga saalai’ (shed constructed to perform yaagam). The Brahmins used to perform ‘yaagam’ for all classes of people, from the king of the land to the lowest level caste person, who happened to be a day labor in the agricultural community, and receive ‘Dhatchanai’ for the same. During the ‘yaagam’ even the king himself will be humbly and politely sits infront of a Brahmin. If you ask why...

"Thasmaathu somaraajaanaaha
Braammanaaha,
"

What does that mean?... "You all a king and he is ruling over you. However, he is not king for us. We are not bound by this king from 'Kshathriyaa' caste. We are Brahmins. We are higher than this king. Hence, your king is only below our caste. Our king is 'Somaraaja' only'. This is the meaning of this short mantra. Thus, even if the king is put into a demeaning position by the Brahmins... just think of the fate of the other castes.

What is the expected benefit to be received by conducting ‘yaagam’?... ‘Yaagams’ may be conducted for the general welfare of the society. Some ‘yaagams’ are conducted to gain sons and daughters. The most important benefit of conducting ‘yaagam’... is to get rid of our ‘paavam’ (sin). (Really, I need to tell you so much about ‘paavam’ and I will talk about it next.). The ‘yaagam’ called ‘Agnihothram’ is self performed for their own welfare. ‘Dhatchanai’ for this ‘yaagam’ has to be paid to self. ‘Yaagam’ called ‘Dharshampoornamaasam’ is performed based on full moon and new moon. ‘Dharsham’ is new moon, ‘Poornam’ is full moon. Do you know the ‘Dhatchanai’ for this ‘yaagam’?... ‘Annaahaaryam’. That is, the food served after the ‘yaagam’ itself, is the ‘Dhatchanai’. Likewise, there are many more ‘yaagams’ and of course, many more varieties of ‘Dhatchanais’. One single person, is not able to conduct the ‘yaagam’, by himself. Most of the time, several priests form a group, and the group collectively conducts the ‘yaagam’. Hence, the ‘Dhatchanai’ also given as bulk, to the entire group. Besides the gold, ‘Dhatchanai’ may also be gifted as one hundred cows, one thousand cows, one hundred calves or one thousand calves."Has the ‘yaagam’ concluded?... Give them 1000 ‘nishkam’". ‘Nishkam’ means...
travel comfortably. Even if you travel standing in a bus, that may also constitute a ‘paavam’ as you may have denied the opportunity for someone else to get into this bus and travel. Aren’t you actually standing at a location, where another person, was hoping to be standing and travel?... Thus, there are several categories of ‘paavam’. The energy of ‘paavam’ is kept on thriving around us relentlessly. Hence, to get rid of that ‘paavam’, we must perform ‘yaagam’.

While the Brahmins are conducting it... the ‘paavam’ gets converted to ‘agni’ (fire)... During the performance of ‘yaagam’, all the ‘paavam’ gets attracted towards the Brahmins conducting the ‘yaagam’. In addition, they are also getting ‘Dhatchanai’ for performing the ‘yaagam’ which also brings them additional ‘paavam’. All the ‘paavam’ extracted from the sponsor, plus that of the Brahmin, together gets destroyed while reciting the Vedic mantras. That is why, ‘Vedham’ advocates that, if you want to get rid of your ‘paavam’, then go to a Brahmin and let him conduct, an appropriate ‘yaagam’ for you. Christianity advocates the same retribution. However, several thousand years before Christ, ‘Vedham’ has advocated the forgiveness of sin by the priests. Without knowing this fact from the ‘Vedham’, today’s reigning head of the Kaanchi mutt, ‘Periyavar’ Jayendhirar asked "Christianity what Christianity?... after committing the sin, whatever nature of the sin committed... it claims, that sin can be nullified. If that is so, does it advocates committing sin?".

Can you recall that, earlier when I was talking about the duties of a Brahmin, they perform a daily ritual called ‘Sandhiyaa Vandhanam’?... There is a close relationship between that and the ‘yaagam’. The rule is that a Brahmin shall perform the ‘Sandhiyaa Vandhanam’ ritual, three times a day, during the morning, high noon and evenings. Normally, in today’s schedule, they perform in the morning and then they do it only in the evenings. What happened to the high noon?... They also perform that in the morning itself. Because, during the noon they may be at the office or conducting their work. In this let us look at the mantra called ‘asanam’ that is recited daily in the morning:

*sorryachcha maamanyuchchamanyu
Padhayachcha manyukrudhepya: Paabepyo radchanthaam
yathraaththiyaap paapam aakaarshham manasaav vaasaav
Hasthaapyaam pathapyaam utharena sicnyaav
Raathi ssthathamulpumath yathkinja thurthammayi
Ithamaham maam amruthayanav
Soorye jyothishi juhomi svaaahaa..."

This one, is recited in the early morning, waking up before sun rise and praying to the Sun God. What are they praying for?... "Lord Sun... Please protect me from the sins, that I have committed, by not obeying the country’s laws and regulations, as well as the societal norms. The night has passed... During that time, I may have committed many sins. 'Manasaav' (mind) - Through my mind, if I have thought of harming others that is a sin; 'Vaasaav' (words) - Through my words if I have hurt others feelings, that is a sin; 'Hasthaapyaam' (hands) - If I have physically harmed any one using my hands, that is a sin; 'Pathpyaam' (feet) - If I have harmed any life by inadvertently stepping on them or kicking the elders with my feet, that is a sin; 'Utharena' (stomach) - I may have committed a sin at night, through my belly, by consuming food that has been set aside for others; 'Sicnyaav' (male organ) - I may have committed a sin at night through my male organ, by hurting or giving trouble to ladies through my male organ as well as having illegitimate body contacts. During the last night, I may have committed all these sins. You must get rid of all these sins and protect me from such sins. This is the very first plea of the day, to Sun God, from the Brahmin... in the early morning as soon as he gets up. Next...

We are talking about pardoning of the sins. When he got up in the morning, what did he requested from Sun God?... “Whatever sins committed, during the night using the hand, leg, mouth, heart and male organ, shall vanish like the dew upon your presence”... thus he requested the Sun God. This is the routine for the morning. O.K... Whatever sins committed during the night, this mantra is recited in the morning, to get rid of it. During the ‘Sandhiyaa Vandhanam’ at noon, another ‘asanam’ shall be recited. This is practiced during noon, nowadays, only by very strict orthodox Brahmins. Majority of other Brahmins, recite this also in the morning, along with the ‘asanam’ of the morning, like ‘two in one’. O.K... What does this noon mantra says:

“Aabha punanthu pruthiviim pruthvii
Boothaa punaathumaam punanthu brahmanas

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Pathi brahmabhoothaa punaadhu maam
Yathiiichchishtam abhojyam yathvaan
Thussarilham mama sarvam bunanthumaam
Aabha asathaamsa prathigraham svaaahaa"

What is the meaning of this verse? “Lord... Gods and Goddesses... I (Brahmin) leave my place in the morning and visit several places and houses for the purpose of performing homam. In addition, I also go to conduct ‘yaagam’ for others. During that time... I accept as donation whatever articles the strangers offer. Among them may be articles that are contaminated with others saliva. At times, the donors may not be, sacred persons and are from lower caste. I am aware, that accepting their donations is ‘baapam’ (sin)... Without my knowledge, I may have brought it home. Hence... Please protect me, from the sins that accompanies by accepting those saliva tainted articles and the donations received from non-puritans”... Thus, prays the Brahmin performing ‘asanam’.

That is... he is asking forgiveness, for his sins, twice within a day. Next... Evening... Again he is reciting the same mantra that he has recited in the early morning, with little twist. "The God of Fire ... what I have requested in the morning is what I am requesting now. Since the morning till this time, if I have committed any forms of sin through the use of my hands, legs, stomach, words and my male organ, knowingly or unknowingly, I beg you to relieve me from such sins"... thus he prays. Thus, within a day he recites the mantra thrice, does ‘asanam’ and begs for pardon. Oh... ‘asanam’ is the act of taking small amount of water in his palms... sanctifying it by reciting Vedic mantras... and drinking that water while praying. In addition to begging for pardon thrice a day, for the sins committed... another prayer called 'upasthaanam' shall also be performed. The important 'upasthaanam' during 'sandhiyaa vandhanam' is for God ‘Varunan’ (Rain God). This is a prayer to ‘Varunan’, who controls the rain. What is that?...

"Imamme varuna chrudhihavam
Adhyaasa murduya thvaamavasyu:
Aasage thathvaayaami brahmanaa
Vandhamaanathu thathaasaasthe
Yajamaana! havirbi: ahedaa
Maana: varunehabhodhii
Urusamsamaanaa: Aayu: bramokshii:
Yachchiththide visoyaadhaa pradeva varuna
Vratham miniimasi dhyavidyavi yathkinj
Setham varunadhaviye janapithroham
Manushyaaya: saramaaasi asiththiyathva
Dharmaa yuobhima maanasthaasath
Enaso dhevariirisha: kithavaasa:
yathriibhu nathiivi yadhyaaakaa sathyam
Udhaayan navithma sarvaaththa vishya
Silithreva dheva adhaadhes yaama
Varunap riyaasa:"

"Hey... ‘Varnaa’, I am suffering very much. Like ordinary people I have also committed sins. Youhave drafted certain rules to live by in this world. I have committed excesses and broke those rules. I have committed sins through my senseless acts. I have even indulged in gambling and committed sins through them. I beg you, Vrnaa, please get rid of my sins and protect me from further sins”.. This is the meaning of the above mantra. All these ‘Sandhiyaa vandhana’ mantras are part of the Vedic mantras. During the ‘yaagam’ these mantras shall be recited. Since the Brahmins have curtailed the Vedic rituals considerably to conserve time... they have added it to ‘sandhiyaa vandhanam’ rituals. Hence, there is a belief, that by reciting these mantras, the sins that they have committed will evaporate. This is what ‘Vedham’ says. Since, the forgiving of sins has been mentioned in our own Vedhas, several thousand years back... and if people like Jayendhirar, criticize the Christians for their ‘forgiveness of sins’ ... They do not have in-depth knowledge of the ‘Vedham’.

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We have seen through the treatise on forgiving the sins, that only those, who do not have the knowledge of ‘Vedham’ will criticise other religious practices. While I was writing this, I was focussing my eyes, on the Tamil newspapers and the English newspapers. In both newspapers, in the headline with utmost importance and in bold letters, they featured one article. That message was ... 'Sri Jayendhira Saraswathi
swami, to get rid of his sins, he had visited the Rameswaram temple, and returned back. What is the big difference between 'getting rid of sins' and 'forgiving of sins'? What can you say about a person, who once, criticized the 'forgiving of sins' by the Christian faith, now for his own welfare undertook the pilgrimage to Rameswaram to 'get rid of his sins'. Yet another point... at this time comes to my memory. This is an important line, contained in 'Bramma Sooththiram', written by 'Bramma Sooththirakkaarar'.

"Pahisthu Upayathaabhi
spiu dhehe aachaarasa..."

What does this 'Sooththiram' (gist) says? "If the 'Rishis' (self realized souls), 'Sanyaasis' (renounced individuals), 'Yathis' and 'gyaniis' (learned people) committed sin, there is no relief for them for committing the sins. There are no remedies for them. That sin stays as sin with them. That will not fade away or go away"... thus states 'Bramma Sooththiram'. Basically, the words of elders are like 'amirtham' (heavenly nectar). As it is the case, , criticizing other religions, based on the principle of 'forgiveness of sins', even for 'Vedham' it was not acceptable. Let us look at these verses from 'Atharvana Vedham':

"Sametha vishvaa vachasaa
Pathinthivibu yayeha
Vibhuhii adhithith jananaam
sabooryahaaa noodhanam aanavaasakii
Thimvarththanihi anuvaaavruththe
Ekaiyith poori..."

What is the meaning of this verse?... "People unite together. There is only one God. Whoever invites Him... He visits their home. He is very orthodoxy for the orthodoxes. He is very contemporary for those who are contemporarians. Even though there is only one God, the ways to worship Him in this world are many. Even though there are so many ways to worship Him, they are all right paths... Hence, in His name, no one shall criticize or condemn others..." This is the advise from 'Atharvana Vedham'. Several thousand years back, using the ways of worshipping God as example, 'Vedham' has stressed the unity among the religions. I knew, a retired female from the Indian Administrative Service (I.A.S.), now residing in Kilpauk, a part of Chennai, has etched this unifying Atharvana Vedha mantra, in the front entrance to her house. Only those who do know this mantra, or those who knew but acts as if they do not know, criticize other religions. And they accumulate sins. We have dealt in detail about the 'Paavam'. I will narrate another incidence. From that probably, you can guess the next topic, we will roll onto.

Approximately thirty to forty years back, the Hindu Religious Trust Department has arranged for a meeting at the Naachchiyaar temple located near Kumbhakonam. This was convened on an emergency basis. In those days, all the poojas, mantras and rituals in the temples were exclusively conducted only in Sanskrit language... there were voices advocating use of Tamil in the Temple and the worship services shall be conducted in Tamil also. From my recollection, at that time the commissioner of the Hindu Religious Trust was Mr.K.S. Narasimman. (Even though I have crossed my nineties, I can recall everything from Vedhas. However... those recent happenings I am not able to recall instantly). All important officers were assembled in the Naachchiyaar temple. From the Uppiliappan temple of Kumbhakonam, Sri Ramadesikkaachchaar swami and other priests were also in attendance.I was also present in that meeting. The deputy commissioner was explaining the reason for convening this meeting. "We have decided that the 'Archanal' (reciting 108 names) shall also be conducted in Tamil language. Hence, we want you all to write how various 'Archanas' can be conducted in Tamil and give it to us."... thus he is requesting. As soon as they heard, from the priests side they raised their voice "How can it be... if you ask us, all of a sudden, to conduct 'Archanas' in Tamil? We have tradition to consider and the rituals to consider. We cannot conduct everything in Tamil...". At that time one of the officer in that crowd... "Why Swami... In your house when you are talking to your wife and children, are you talking in Sanskrit? Just like that, talk to God also in Tamil"... interceded. Deputy commissioner inquired me about this topic. That time, I also recommended the use of Tamil 'Archanas'... and gave him a sheet of paper. They started to read that paper.

Haven't I been talking to you about the meeting that was held in the 'Naachchiyaar' temple? I also told you that 'I will relate to you the incidence and you can from that guess the next topic we will go into'. Yes... we are going to look at the status of Tamil in worship services at the temples. Please come back again. We will get back to 'Naachchiyaar' temple to take part in the meeting. As the deputy commissioner was saying that they have decided to conduct 'Archanas' in Tamil and hence, the priests shall perform 'Archanas' in Tamil. "How?... How?... How can we perform 'Archanas' in Tamil?" thus erupted a linguistic war from the side of the priests. However, the officers... "Why? Why you cannot conduct 'Archanas' in Tamil? Has no one, to date, wrote 'Archanas' in Tamil? If that is so you can write your own
'Archanas'. We have announced this before we convened this meeting... Did you all bring your write up?”. Some 'Bhattaachchariyaars' (Priests) handed over what they have brought with them. All their write up was, to prop up their belief, that it was not possible to conduct 'Archanas' in Tamil. This was satisfactory neither for the officers nor to the Tamil language. Remember that I was also in the meeting. They asked me about the Tamil 'archanai'. I handed over, what I have brought with me. It went like this...

"Uyarvura uyar nalam udayayan potri
Mayarvura mathi nalam arulinen potri
Ayarvura amararkal athipathi potri"

Thus, I have handed over, the verses with 108 lines, in praise of Lord Naaraayanan. I did not create these myself. When I thought of Tamil 'archanai', those came to my mind, was ‘Aazhwaars’ (Vaishnava saints). What I have given to them was nothing but... starting from 'Thiruvaai Mozhi' of Nammazhwaa, taking some of the verses and rearranged in the form of a 'Sahasranaamam' suitable for 'archanai'. What is 'Sahasranaamam'?... Even today, in several houses of the Brahmins, as well as Viashnava devotees, the tape recorders plays the 'Sahasranaamam'. Several Brahmins are convinced, that by reciting 'Sahasranaamam', whenever they get time, it adds to their goodwill with God. 'Sahasranaamam' is nothing but reciting the God's name and praising Him in thousand different ways. Thousand names in Sanskrit. That is 'Sahasranaamam'.

"Suklaam bharathanum vishnum...
Visvam vishnum vashatkaaro
Bhootta Bhavya Bhavath prabhuhoo..."

Starting thus, it ends with 'Pala sruthi', which are the praises on ‘Vishnu Sahasranaamam' by other scriptures. This is what is used in 'Vishnu' temples for performing 'archanai'. For this occasion, for the sole purpose of performing 'archanai' and also ‘poojas' in Tamil, I have taken verses from 'Nammazhwaa', the famous and chief of all the ‘Aazhwaars’, who was called as ‘Kaarimaaran’ by literary devotees, and converted it so that it was suitable for performing 'archanai'. The officers, who read the Tamil 'archanai' were so thrilled. They commented, “while we have such sweet, meaningful devotional songs, why would we hang ourselves onto the Sanskrit verses that noone understands.” They suggested, that we can perform all our ‘poojas’ and ‘archanas’ using the pure Tamil language compositions from ‘Naalaayira Dhiyya Pirabhandham’. Everyone agreed and accepted their suggestions. Based on that meeting... the 108 Tamil ‘archanai’ that I have extracted from the Aazhwaar’s work and modified for ‘archanai’... immediately, of course, with the opposition from the priests... was introduced, thirty to forty years back, in the 'Saarangapaani' temple in Kumbhakonam. ‘Saarangapaani Perumaal’ who was getting tired of listening to the ‘Sahasranaamam’ in Sanskrit for generations... only on that day, happened to hear and enjoy His 108 names in sweet Tamil language. One of the officer asked me 'Thaaththaachaariyaar, are you happy now?'. I replied to him "Please ask the Perumal (God) Himself, He will tell you that He is doubly happy". He enjoyed my reply and smiled in return. I was not bringing this incidence for fun. Only to bring it to your attention, how the language has been down played into the worship of God. The Tamil ‘archanai’, that was debuted at the ‘Saarangapaani' temple on that, did that simultaneously adopted in other temples? Even today, if you request the priests to perform ‘archanai’ in Tamil they start to sizing you up. Even though there are so many sweet and meaningful devotional tunes in Tamil... we see in the temples a board announcing ‘We perform archanai in Tamil’... Where did this board came from?...

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‘Naalaayira Dhiyya Prabhandham’. From these words themselves, you can understand how the Tamil language, was suppressed in those days. The ‘Naalaayiram irai paattu’ (Four thousand devotional songs), that was composed by Tamil ‘Aazhwaars’, praised as ‘Aanda Tamil Marai’, Fifth ‘Vedham’, ‘Diraavida Vedham’, containing four thousand devotional songs in Tamil... were even today called ‘Naalaayira Dhiyya Prabhandham’... ‘Dhivym’ (Pure), ‘Prabhandham’ (collections) with two Sanskrit words. ‘Aazhwaarkalin Naalaayira Arulich Cheyal’ is the Tamil name for this sacred book. At least from now on... would everyone call this book by its pure Tamil name? You may understand with this simple example, how Tamil was tied down with Sanskrit rope. In those days... ‘Vedham’ occupied the Tamil country. Wherever you see was ‘Vedham’... In everything was ‘Vedham’. When the Brahmins saw the statues in Tamil Nadu and very intricate sculptures in the temples... they said “Why are you simply putting flowers on these statues?... We can bring into these statues, those angels that are mentioned in the ‘Vedham’. These angels are not visible to the naked eyes. They are residing in these statues only in the form of spirit. If we recite the Vedic mantras loudly so that they can hear it, we can bring within these statues those Vedic
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angels.” As I have mentioned to you in earlier chapters, the Tamil people worshiped in the beginning, only with flowers. I want you to read this verse 2940, from ‘Thiruvaaimozhi’ of Nammaazhwaar:

“Naadaatha malar naadu naalithorum Naaranan…Than Vaadaatha malar… adikkiliz vaikkave vakukkinru… Viidaadi Vithuththal vinai atrathu en seivatho?... Oodaathu pani vaadaai!... Uraiththu irai enathu udale…”

That is… Aazhwaar, to convey his wishes to God… he is requesting various kinds of birds such as storks, swans, coocoo, seagulls, cranes, lined beetles, parakeets, ‘naaganavaa’, one by one to be his messenger… Next, he selects autumn wind (‘Vaadaai’) as his messenger. When the storm blows, he requests the storm to be his messenger. Only the verses are composed by Aazhwaar. The real person sending messages through the birds, beetles and the autumn wind was the heroine (lover of God), who was separated from God. ‘Pani Vaadaai’ (autumn wind)... ‘pani vaadaai’… please come near me. You go to my God, and on my behalf, please convey a message to Him. The way we are at present, Him estranged from me and me separated from Him are not in our best interest. Please communicate this to Him... He only has created all the lives, creatures and human beings in this world. His intentions for creating so many lives, was only to daily pick the several varieties of fresh flowers, that are grown in this world, and bestow them gently, on the fresh lotus feet of Lord Narayanan, and worship Him. How can He justify His aloofness, and leave me all alone here, that I am not able to worship like others?”... You go and tell Him my plight. If He does not accept me... you come back and tear my flesh apart, and break my bones into pieces… ‘Pani Vaadai’, you cut my body into pieces”... thus, ‘Aazhwaar’ writes, as if the devotee, in deep love for God, was sending the ‘Pani Vaadai’ as the messenger. As you can see, what a beautiful piece of literature?...

The same Tamil ‘Pani Vaadai’, is still blowing, even today. Through this verse, what message this ‘Pani Vaadai’, is bringing to us?... “It is telling us that pluck fresh flowers daily and offer it to God (‘Poo’ (flower) + ‘Sel’ (do = ‘Poosei’). Worshipping tradition of Tamil has been ‘Poosei’”. The Brahmins crossed their path with this ancient tradition. At first, they said, “You keep on showering the God with flowers... I will be reciting the ‘Vedham’ simultaneously”... and they stood outside the temple. The reason?... “If you stand close to the God and whatever you say, there is a possibility you may be spitting, unknowingly, on God. Hence, you shower the flowers on God staying close to the idol and I will recite loudly the mantras staying outside.” This was called ‘Adhyayana Bhattar’. After few days, the ‘Adhyayana Bhattar’ slowly stepped inside. Inside means, inside of the sanctum sanctorum (Garbha graham)! “From now on I will take care of the inside. You go outside and take care of the outside maintenance”... with these words, he put the native worshippers, outside the sanctum. Next... The ruling of the ‘aagamakaaralkal’ (Ritual performers)! Since, they were the first and foremost Sanskrit language descendents... the Tamil people were kept outside the sanctum. Sanskrit people entered inside. They showered Tamil flowers and recited Sanskrit ‘archanai’(recital of 108 names of God in Sanskrit).

Thus, as the ‘Sanskrit Government’ was going on in full force... to bring to the forefront, our Tamil devotional literatures, then and there ‘Aazhwaars’ emerged between the periods of fifth and tenth centuries... These ‘Aazhwaars’, with their extreme devotion, in addition to their affinity for Tamil language, with their mastery of the same, praised God Narayanan. At the same time, they grasped the essence of Vedic philosophy, breathed in the puranic stories and created Tamil poems and lyrics in praise of God Vishnu.. These twelve ‘Aazhwaars’, with their songs in praise of very specific God presiding in a particular temple, sanctified these temples through their songs. That is they become purified. In spite of it...

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We have seen that the ‘Aazhwaars’, through their praising of God, using Tamil language, sanctified various temples. However... today, the pity is that even in those temples sanctified with Tamil language, what is resonating in the early mornings, is the ‘Subrapaatham’ in Sanskrit! What is the meaning of ‘Subrapaatham’?... This itself is a sanskrit name. The meaning is, ‘let this time become an auspicious time’. If I want to tell this in modern mode it is ‘Good Morning’. Praying God in the early morning and waking Him up is ‘Subrapaatham’. Can God go to sleep? If a person sleeps, is he qualified to be a God?... These are to be dealt in a different forum! In essence it is “Good Morning to God and wake Him up...”. Today in various temples... during early mornings, in gorgeous crack of dawn... they play 'Subrapaatham' in loud speakers. Its music is very intoxicating. But, do you know the meaning of those verses?... Without knowing what they
are singing... we repeat those verses silently. We put the recording in a tape recorder and let it play. M.S. Subbulatsumi in her own melodious fertile voice...

"Kowsalyaa suprajaa raamaa
Poorvaa santhyaa pravaththadhu..."

With these words she starts. You keep on listening to it, till the day break. Who wrote this?... What is the meaning of it?... In Tamil Nadu, even in the residences of non-Brahmins, this 'Subrapaatham' is played and intoxicates the listeners. Why this 'Subrapaatham' is not available in Tamil language?... The 'Subrapaatham' that was intended to wake up God Venkatesa of Thiruppathi, why is it played even in tiny villages of Tamil Nadu?... You may be wondering with these questions. Many of may not know the reason for it. This 'Subrapaatham', which is a wish of good morning to God, in Sanskrit, was composed by 'Prathivaathi Bhayankaram Annaa'. (If anyone came to argue with Annaa in religious matters... through his intimidating defense tactics, he will defeat them. That was why Annaa earned the reputation as 'Prathivaathi' (defender) 'Bhayankaram' (terrifying)). He was a disciple of 'Manavaala Maamunikal'. This was the same 'Manavaala Maamunikal' who blessed with the words 'Aazhwaarkal Vaazhi Arulich Cheyal Vaazhi'.

The first lines of this 'Subrapaatham'..."Kowsalyaa suprajaa raamaa Poorvaa santhyaa pravaththadhu..."

were extracted from 'Vaalmitiki Raamaayanan'. Sage Viswaamithram was waking up Lord Raaman. "Raamaa... the one born through Kowsalyaa's good deeds... there, in the forest those uncivilized cruel people ('Arakkar') through their rough behavior giving trouble to the learned saints (Meditating Yogi). Please come and get rid of them..." ... thus he was waking Raamaa up. Keeping these as the very first lines, 'Prathivaathi Bhayankaram Annaa' has composed this 'Subrapaatham', said to be during the fourteenth century. But... just like the 'Subrapaatham' composition that we hear today in Sanskrit, along the same pattern, approximately six hundred years before 'Annaa', 'Thondaradip Podi Aazhwaar' has magnificently composed in sweet Tamil. I am going to brief you few verses of this sweet Tamil composition titled 'Thirup Palli Ezhuchchi' (Sacred Wakeup Call) verses 917 through 926, extrated from the book 'Aazhwaarkal Arulich Cheyal Vaazhi'.

'Thondaradip Podi Aazhwaar' has composed these verses, to wake up Aranganaathan, the presiding deity of Thiruvarangam, located on banks of the river Kaaveri.

"Kathiravan gunadhisaiich chikaram vanthu
Anainthaan: Kanai irul akandathu
Kaalai am pozhuthaai
Madhu virinthu ozhukina maamalar ellaam
Vaanavar arasarkal vanthu vanthu eendi
Ethirhisai niranthanean. ivarodum pukuntha
irun kailhu eettumum pidiyodu murasum
Athrithallai ainai kadai pondrivithu engum
Arangaththammaa. palli ezhuntharulaaye..."

This is the very first verse of the 'Thirupalliezzhuchchi' in Tamil. The meaning... "The sun has cracked open the Eastern sky. The darkness of the night has vanished... Those morning flowers have bloomed and their nector is oozing out. The angels from the heaven, the kings and princesses of the earth and your very own devotees are assembled on the Southside plaza to get a glimpse of you. The howling of the herd of elephants they rode on, and the noise from the drums of the elephant army are echoing in every direction! Arangaa... please kindly wake up from your sleep. Let them have a glimpse of your image...", thus 'Thondaradip Podi Aazhwaar' is tapping the Deity of Thiruvarangam in sweet Tamil and begging Him to wake up. Here, in this line 'Arangaththamma Palli Ezhuntharulaaye...', Aazhwaar addresses his God as 'ammaa' (mother). Is there no 'Bhakthi' (devotion) in this verse?... Isn't there any sweetness?... How about literary brilliance?... or You did not understand the meaning?...

Please listen to yet another Tamil 'Thirup Palli Ezhuchchi' :

"Kadi malark kamalangal malanthana, ivalyo
Kathiravan kanai kadai
Mulaitthanan. ivano
Thudilidaiyaar suri kuzhal pizhinthu udhari
Thukil eduththu eerinar. Soozhpunal Arangaa
Thodai othha thulavamum koodiyum pozhinthu
Thondriya thol Thondaradip Podi ennum"
Arangaa... encircled by the river Kaaveri all around you, the sun has risen over the sea... in the ponds, the lotus flowers are smilingly bloomed and their fragrance spread around you. The girls with tiny hips, had their bath in the river Kaaveri... are twisting, shaking and drying their wet hair, to rid of the moisture... wearing their dresses, they are climbing on the banks. Such an early morning, I, known as 'Thondaradip Podi', am waiting with garlands of 'Thulas' and basket full of loose flowers for your grace. Please, take this devotee's offering, bless me and shape me to be an useful person"... What is lacking in this Tamil verse?

Of the ten verses of Thondaradip Podi Aazhwaar’s Tamil ‘Thirup Palli Ezhuchchi’, I have selected the very first and the last verses and explained its beauty to you. What a beautiful, detailed, and colorful descriptions?... What a rhyming words?... How much sweetness is spilling over? Second verse starting with ‘Kozhunkodi mullalayin kozhumalar’... Third verse starting with ‘Chudar oli paranthana soozthisai ellaam’... Fourth verse starting with ‘Metti ila methikal’... Fifth verse starting with ‘Pulambina putkalum pompozhilkalin vaai’... Sixth verse starting with ‘Iraviyar mani nedun therodum’...Seventh verse starting with ‘Antharaththu amararkal koottanga’... Eighth verse starting with ‘Vambavizh vaanavar vaayurai vazhanga’... Ninth verse starting with ‘Eedham il thannumai eekkum matthalli’... Thus, Thondaradip Podi Aazhwaar’s all these pure sweet Tamil ten verses to wake up Thiruvaranganaathar were composed approximately six hundred years before the Sanskrit composition that is heard everyday in our speaker systems.

There is also another logic in the ‘Subrapaatham’ of Sanskrit and the ‘Thirup Palli Ezhuchchi’ of Tamil language. Even in that, only Tamil is triumphant. Thiruppatti Venkatachalapathi for whom the ‘Subrapaatham’ was composed is in standing position. Does it sound reasonable to wake up a person who is standing on his feet? On the otherhand, Thiruvaramanaathar of Thiruvarangam is laying in a flat position. Does it make logical sense, to wake up a person, who is laying on a bed? Thondaradip Podi Aazhwaar had composed, ten verses to wake up a deity, who is laying on a bed of snake while Annaa, had composed the Sanskrit verses, to wake up a deity who is standing. However, we are listening every morning, the Sanskrit ‘Subrapaatham’ that is illogical and that does not make any sense.

Let me again emphatically state, that ‘Thirup Palli Ezhuchchi’, composed with the same meaning as the Sanskrit ‘Subrapaatham’, written in sweet Tamil, six hundred years back was sidelined. Today, in the temples during the daily worship services, Thondaradip Podi Aazhwaar’s ‘Thirup Palli Ezhuchchi’ is broadcast through the speaker system. However, just like the Sanskrit ‘Subrapaatham’, for the Tamil ‘Thirup Palli Ezhuchchi’, at least now, would someone come forward and set melodious music to the lyrics, and must be proudly broadcasted, through the speaker system every morning, so the sweetness of Tamil will hit the ear drums, of every Tamil citizen?... Some of the Sanskrit criminals have classified Tamil as a low class language and distanced themselves. From the life history of another 'Aazgwaar', you will find that tamil not only for us, but also for the Thiruraranganaathan, it is the friendly and preferred language.

He was Thiruppaanaazhwaar... He was born in fertile city of Uraliyur located in the Chola country into 'Paanar' caste. 'Paanars' normally play the musical instrument called 'paan', in the court of the kings and earn a livelihood from the gifts they receive from the kings. However... our 'paanar'... was singing his praises only on the presiding God at Thiruvarangam. Through his musical instrument 'paan', he used to create 'dingu dinu ding dinu...' reverberation, and continuously sing praises on the presiding deity of Thiruvarangam, which is encircled by the Kaaveri river. But... those higher caste looked at hi and said "Look! You are from a lower caste. How can you enter into Thiruvarangam?... Run away"... with these words, they chased him away. In spite of it, Paanar... "I am determined sing praises on God and noone can stop me"... thus, he was relentlessly and with utmost devotion, singing praises on Arangan in pure tamil language. Not paying any attention to his tamil devotional songs... the higher caste devotees drove him away from the town...

While he was carrying on his praises, for the Lord, standing on the banks of river Kaaveri, a extraordinary incidence happened. As Paanar was standing lonely on the Kaaveri river bank, and singing praises on the God Aragan, in front of him appeared, a very orthodoxy learned priest. He said "Paanar! Please forgive
us... We have committed sin, to this date, by not allowing you inside Thiruvarangam... and not allowing you to worship Arangan. We have been showing disrespect for your Tamil 'Kiirthanai' (songs). However... 'Bhagawaan' (God) Aranganaathar is praying for your Tamil music. Arangan is enjoying your melodious Tamil music. He summoned me and commanded thus...‘You go and bring me that abandoned Paan Perumaal (Great Person) by carrying him on your back. Do not try to isolate him from Me. Hurry back’. Please come with me. Climb on my shoulder. I will carry you and take you to Arangan and leave you with Him”... thus, Loka Saarangar, the messenger sent by Arangan, told Paanar, very humbly. Paanar, a.k.a. 'Thiruppaanaazhwaar' climbed on the shoulders of Loka Saarangar and as he reached Thiruvarangam... There, as Arangan saw Thiruppaanaazhwaar... He appeared in front of him and requests "Paanaazhwaare, now you stay right next to me and sing for me in Tamil". After, witnessing this scene, overwhelmed with joy, Thiruppaanaazhwaar composed ‘Amalanaadhi piraan’ consisting of ten verses (927-936)... Now you tell me whether tamil is a low level language?... or Is it the language preferred by Gods?

Based on the life history of Thiruppaanaazhwaar, we have seen whether Tamil language is very much liked or hated by God. Just to listen to the Tamil Kiirthanais of Thiruppaanaazhwaar, the presiding deity of Thiruvarangam, Aranga Perumaal, sent a person to carry him with proper respect and bring him to His abode. However... in that very Sri Rangam, in front of the Ranganaathan, who is laying on Aadhiseshan, do they recite those four thousand sacred verses? Every ‘Thiruvaal’ (Vaishnava God) temples, in each year, ten days before and ten days after the ‘Vaikunta Ekaadhasi’ day, sum total twenty days, they conduct Tamil festival, during which period, they recite all four thousand sacred verses of the Aazhwaars. This festival takes place every year. If you want to know how this is conducted in Sri Rangam... as the consecrated deity (‘Moolavar’) is laying down on the bed of ‘Aadhiseshan’, eagerly waiting to hear all four thousand sacred verses of the Aazhwaars... the priests will carry the small replica of the ‘Moolavar’ called ‘Urchavar’, i.e., ‘Urchava Moorthy’ from the chamber of the ‘Moolavar’ (Garbhagraham) to an open hall. They place him on a pedestal, and recite all four thousand verses with melodious music. This is called ‘Arayar Sevai’. After this event, i.e., after the recital of Tamil verses the ‘Urchavar’ is returned back to the chamber of the ‘Moolavar’. So... Just to prevent the Tamil getting inside the Garbhagraham, they carry the alter ego of the ‘Moolavar’ (God) outside. That too... the same Aranganaathan, who has sent a priest for carry and bring Aazhwaar to His Garbhagraham so He can listen to the sweet Tamil music... according to the man devised worship rules, God is forbidden to hear His favorite Tamil music. Even though I have stressed this point several times before... some of the ‘Vaishnava sect’ people kept on opposing to it. Yet, in my position on this issue or in the status of Tamil language, is there absolutely any change?

O.K... We have seen the treatment to the Tamil language, by the ‘Vashnava sect’. How about in ‘Saivaite sect’?

"Thennaadudaiya Sivane Potri
Ennaattavarkum Iraiva Potri"

Through this poem, ‘the God Sivan is from the Southern part of India i.e., He is a Tamil God... However, He blesses people from every part of the world’... assures that Sivan is a Tamil God. If someone does not melt away to the music of ‘Thiru Vaachakam’ they cannot be melted by any other word. Thus, a tight relationship was drawn up between the Tamil language and Sivan by the devotees of Sivan and the saints of Saivaite sect (‘Naayanmaar’). For example... todays Vedhaaranyam that was called earlier as Thirumaraikkaadu... The door of the ‘manivaasal’ (bell plaza), of the Sivan temple at this town, was shut through Vedic chants and prayer. The Siva devotees were troubled by this shut down, and they were claiming, that they have done everything they could, and it will not open. The great Saivaite Naayanmaars Thirugnyaanamsambhandhar and Thirunaavukkarasar decided to open the doors by the request of the devotees. Thirunaavukkarasar was standing at the entrance to the temple...

"Pannineer mozhiyaal umaipangaro
Manninaar valam seimaraik kaadaro
Kanninaal umaik kaanak kadhavinai
Thinnamaaka thiranthurul seimminee..."

Thus he sang in Tamil. The results were delayed. Again he continued...

"Arakkanai viralaal adarththitta
Irakkam ondriliir emperumaanaree
Surakkum punnaikal soozhmaraiik kaadaree"
As soon as the second Tamil song was heard, the belled door of the Sivan temple, that was shut down, during the past several years by Vedic chanting, slowly opened. They worshipped Sivan through several Tamil devotional songs. Everywhere, happiness was overflowing! O.K... It is getting dark. We must shut the door and open it tomorrow morning. Again, as Thirugnyanaasambhandhar was singing the Tamil verse, 'Chathuramaraithaan...' the door closed. Only from that time on, that belled door was, altered so that it can be opened and closed. Even though we may not believe this story... the thought that ‘the door that was closed for several years, by Vedic priests, shall be open through Tamil songs’ is enough to convince us that Tamil language has all the powers just like any other language... To establish the principle that ‘What Vedham can shut the Tamil can open’, this story of the door was crafted. Thus, giving importance to Tamil, Saivam (Saivaite Sect) has created, thousands of devotional verses, in pure basic Tamil language, that can be understood by the masses. In ancient days, when the river Kaaveri dried out and famine ruled over Chola Naadu... it was said, that the God Himself gave money and requested that everyone be fed, because He was so anxious to listen to the Tamil music through His Naayanmaars. These verses...

"Irunthu niir Thamizhodu isaiketkum
Ichchchayaaal kaasuniththal nalkiriir"

are by Saint Sundharar. In addition...

"Paadalangaara parissil kaasaruni
Pazhuththa senthamizh malat soodi..."

thus says Senthanaar in his composition 'Thiruvaisappaa'. That is... using the Sivan in the forefront, the Saivaites are sending the message that ‘even if there was a famine for food, for Tamil language... as well as for Tamil passion, there shall be no famine’. Thus, as Sivan and Tamil are twisted and roped together... what is the status, today, of Tamil language, in the poojas and rituals conducted, in Sivan temples?... Sivaachchaariyaaars wear 'thiruniitruppattai' (three horizontal lines on their forehead using ashes) and will go near the 'Sivalingam'. He will conduct poojas. There won't be any Tamil in his mouth and only Sanskrit. At the same time staying outside the Garbhagraham, away from the Lingam and the Sivaachchaariyaar, few persons will recite Tamil verses. They usually recite few verses of devotional songs from 'Thevaaram', 'Thiruvaachakam', 'Thiruvaisappaa', 'Periya puraanam' and 'Thiruppallaandu'. They are called 'Odhuvaarkal' (Reciters). In essence... whatever they are reciting, will not reach the ears of either Sivaachchaariyaar or the Sivalingam. In Sivan temples, Sivan hears the recited Tamil songs so barely, just like, while we are travelling in a bus, the song which we like most, sometime faintly pops up from nowhere, and then fades away from our ears.

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In Saivam (Saivaite Sect) as well as in Vaishnavam (Vaishnava Sect), why Tamil was derailed into oblivion? We get the answer to this question only from 'Vedham'. Let us look at one of the mantra from 'Suklayajur Vedham':

"Thasmaathu brammanena
Namlechchitha vai
Namaababhashitha vai..."

Stagnant in these few lines are mammoth philosophy. I have already told you that there was a war between the dwellers of the heaven (Dhevar) and uncivilized souls (Asuran). The 'Vedham' calls the good person as 'Dhevan' and the bad souls as 'Asuran'. According to 'Vedham', the Dhevars who spoke Sanskrit language were victorious. Those who spoke other languages (non-Sanskrit, 'Milechcha') were defeated. Hence... sanctified BrahmIns shall not speak any other language except Sanskrit. 'Milechcha' means non-Aryan. Except Sanskrit, all other languages are flawed language belonging to awful people. It is 'Milechcha Bhaashai' i.e., it does not have sanctity... as per Vedham. To simplify the contents of the Vedhams, Manu was composed and for its share it states :

"... Dhayo reva anthadham kiriyohaa
Dheva nadhiyohaa yadhantharam
Thamdeha nirmitham dhesam
Aariya varththam vithur puthaahaa..."

That is... the region between the Vindhyan mountain and the Himalayan mountain... the region that contains the rivers Gangai and Yamunan and lies in between the rivers is called 'Aariya Varththam'. Only here the sanctity and the Sanskrit language are permanently stationed. Hence...except this region... all other regions of the world do not possess sanctity. At the same time, Manu is also giving another statement. Manu also categorizes the suitable areas for the BrahmIns to live... he notes, certain regions of
the Himalayan foothills called 'Brummaa Varththam' and 'Brummarishi Varththam'. All these regions are now called Afghanistan. According to Vedhas and Manu, Brahmins shall not talk in any other language than Sanskrit. If they do it is a sin. In addition, they shall live only in Himalayan mountain ranges, Vindhyan mountain ranges, along rivers Gangai and Yamunai and they shall not live in any other parts of the country. If orthodox Brahmins strictly want to adhere to the Vedhas and the Manu, let them discard Tamil language. However... Blindly following the mantras, that was written by someone, several centuries back, who knew no more than the land in which he was living, and trying to live within its bounds, isn’t it an irrational act in itself?

Let me give you an interesting example to show the incongruity. In the performance of various rituals and ‘yaagams’ they always recite a Vedic mantra :

“Namo Gangaa Yamunai yohe
Madhyeye vasanthii...
Theme prasaninaath maanaahaa…”

Sitting on the banks of our own rivers such as Kaaveri, Vaigai or Thaamirabharani, the Brahmin recites this Vedic mantra. He joins his palms together and asks those sitting in front of him also to join their palms together to salute God. If you ask me the meaning of this mantra, here it is… "Hey! ‘Rishi’s! I bow to those living in the land that lay between the rivers of Gangai and Yamunai”. If you challenge him, “What a thievery… You are sitting on the banks of river Kaaveri. The person who is paying for your services also belongs to the plains of Kaaveri. Why are you bowing to those ‘Rishi’s living in the land between Gangai and Yamnai?”... thus, he replies simply “It is in the ‘Vedham’ and I am simply reciting it”. ‘Vedham’ also declares that Tamil is a bad language and you should not speak that language. ‘Vedham’ says that your mother is a bad woman. It tells you whom you should worship. Based on that, would you obey to everything that the ‘Vedham’ dictates?

The people of the Vedic period… based on the geography and environment, in which they were living, worshipped their land mass, rivers and the mountains. They worshipped the nature in which they were living. Similarly, you also worship the land mass, rivers and mountains near which you are living. That is the nature worship.

Rather than that... What is the logic in standing on the banks of Kaaveri river and worshipping the Gangai river? That mantra was written in ancient days when they were living on the banks of Gangai and it must be adapted to our new surroundings. For example those Brahmins living in Chennai shall say :

"Namo Adaiyaaru Koovamyohe
Madhyeye vasanthii..."

Meaning : "I pray to those Rishi’s who are living between the Adaiyaaru and Koovam rivers". Don’t say this in Sanskrit. Rather say it in Tamil language thus... "Adaiyaarukku Koovam aattrukku idaippatta rishikalai vanangukiren". O.K... If it is Southern districts such as Madural and Nellai, then "Thaamirabharanikkkum Vaikaiyaatrukkum idaiye ullavarkalai vanangukiren"... If you start with this statement in Tamil language itself, everything that you start will be enormously successful. People living in the Kaaveri delta may pray by joining their palms and acknowledging the rivers Kaaveri and Kollidam before starting their project. "Gangaiyir punithamaaya Kaaviri naduvuppattu..." thus, Thondaradippodi Aazhwaar says in his composition 'Thirumaalai'. He says that the sacred place, Thiruvanamgam is encircled by Kaaveri river that is more purer and more sacred than river Gangai. In spite of it... If you are stubborn to worship only Gangai as per the Vedham and refuse to worship Kaaveri... you can judge your own ignorance!

In the last chapter, we have seen the ignorance in most of us, as we sat cross legged on the banks of the river Kaaveri and worshipping the river Gangai. In addition, we have also seen the claim that except Sankrit all other languages are ‘Milechcha Bhaashai’ (non-Aryan) and the Vedham prohibits their usage by priests. Those who are stubborn and standing on one leg, about praising only Sankrit and listen only if spoken in Sankrit, I would like to recite one ‘slokam’ (verse). This is also in Sankrit, and as it is in Sankrit, would they obey per the contents of this slokam?

"Vedha praamaanyam kasya mithu
Karthru vaadhahaa snaane
Dharmeetchaa jaathivaatha avalebaha
Santhaav paarampahaa paabhahaanaa yasaiithii
Sadhvastha prakgnyaanaam sanjalingaanii jaamye..."
Let me explain the meaning of this Sanskrit poem, please listen. Humans have life. They have soul. They are obligated to think. Thus, born to be a thinker, he became an inanimate matter. That is, he became a lifeless matter, like a disintegrated wall and those stones laying on the roadside. How did he become a matter? How did he lose his ability to think? This slokam stacks reasons for the degradation of the human ability. I will describe one by one!

1. Vedha Praamaanyam: Whatever issue at hand, rather than thinking and taking a rational decision based on what is good and bad... blindly believing in Vedham and following it to the letter, as if Vedham has all the answers to the problems confronted.

2. kasya mithu karthravaadhahaa: He becomes an inanimate matter, by baselessly believing that ‘We were all created by one person. He is our creator and our nucleus. He will protect us’ and not using his brain cells and acting accordingly.

3. Snaane: This is a very important word. Taking a bath in early mornings of everyday, is for the sole purpose of cleansing the body, so we are healthy, revitalize our body and mind. However... this bathing was given a religious twist. Assembling a crowd, and taking a bath in the river or a pond, was called ‘Punitha Nilraadal’ or ‘Thiirththavaari’, by giving a coat or religious paint. If you paint an object, you can wash it, probably with water or a solvent. However if you paint the solvent itself... Then what? New moon days of ‘Aadi’, ‘Thai’, ‘Mahaalaya’ and on ‘Mahaamaham’ were considered to be religiously auspicious days and on these days crowds of people gather at the river or pond and take bath. In the name of washing their sins, they are polluting the rivers and ponds. Thus, by introducing religion into everyday routine and making bath an ablution, he becomes a lifeless matter.

4. Jaathivaatha avalebaha: The one who argues ‘He is from a higher caste... He is from lower caste... He was born from shoulder... He was from thigh... Hence, they cannot be equal. Where he prays another person of lower caste shall not pray... Where he dwells another person of lower caste shall not live’. Thus, the one who sets rules and the one who follows those rules based on caste discriminations are not human beings and they are matter... useless matter!

5. Santhaa paarampaha: For converting from human to a ‘Jatam’(matter), this is most important qualification. What is that?... We witness everyday in the roads and streets the following scene. A strong man... with his family, portraying himself as a devotee of a God, visits every house or shops and flogs himself with a whip and endures the pain. All over his back and chest there are lines of blood and blood oozing from the wounds. If you ask him the reason... he claims that he has pledged to the almighty God. Someone else, pokes a needle through his tongue, and comes in a procession and collects money. Thus, in the name of God... if you hurt yourself physically, you are not a human being but a inert ‘Jatam’.

This the gist of that Sanskrit slokam. If you go to those priests, who insists on having Sanskrit in everything, everywhere... give this Sanskrit slokam and tell him 'Please perform an ‘archanai’ (reciting) for the God Vishnu, using this slokam', he will readily agree to perform using this very slokam. Why?.. Because, the depth of their Sanskrit language is at a level, they do not even know the meaning of the slokam. Those who claims, that they will accept anything, only if it is written in Sanskrit language, would they accept the content of the above Sanskrit slokam, contained in the book ‘Piramaana Vaarththikam’, written by Dharmabaalar? They will definitely say ‘NO’. Why not? Sanskrit is the God’s language! If anything was written in that language, was it not the commandment of God? Everyone must understand one thing. Language is a tool. It is a communication tool. It shall be used only to communicate between each other and not to be used to degrade others by establishing a hierarchy. If we establish adjectives to languages such as, low class language, higher class, God’s language... Asuraa’s language then the language itself will curse us. Just to bring out this point, I have explained the slokam of Dharmabaalar.

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We have explored the slokam by Dharmabaalar about ‘Jatam’ (lifeless matter). Hasn’t he given five different pathways for a human beings to become a ‘Jatam’? We will look into one of them in more detail. We have seen Just to get God’s blessing, we torture our own body and endure sufferages hoping that God will show sympathy. One type of such sufferage is ‘Viratham’(Austerity). What is ‘Viratham’? ‘God! Keeping you in my thoughts, I am not going to eat any food today. You must recognize my resolve and hardship, and bless me with what I ask of you’... thus demanding God for a favor in return for the sufferage endured. In essence it is a barter system. In modern days, several people are observing Viratham. The Viratham also observed for various purposes and hence several varieties. A virgin unmarried girl prays for her future
husband to be handsome, courteous, kind to her and earn good income, and observes 'Varalatsumi Viratham'. On that day, they do not consume any food, and requests plenty of food for her future life. The married ladies, request that they must remain married, till their death (Thirikkasumangali) and that their 'Thaali and Kungumam', shall stay with them, during the entire duration of their life. For that purpose they also observe 'Varalatsumi Viratham', and they donate a piece of cloth as bribe, to married ladies just like them.

This is 'Varalatsumi Viratham'. Of all 'Virathams' the most important 'Viratham' is 'Ekaadhasi Viratham'. On this particular day, they believe that if they do not eat rice and sleep, then they directly go to heaven ('Moksham'). Just to go to heaven several people are observing this 'Viratham'. On the day of 'Ekaadhasi' one is restricted from eating a meal or drink even a drop of water. Another bizarre tradition of that day is... On the day of 'Ekaadhasi', those who observe the 'Viratham', pray to Perumaal (God Vishnu) and then start their 'Viratham'. Our tradition has been, that since the observers are fasting all day long, Perumaal also shall not be fed during that period. Yes... Only on the day of 'Ekaadhasi', they do not offer cooked rice to Perumaal. They offer, on that day only 'uppuma' (cream of rice or cream of wheat) is offered to Perumaal. Just like that, on the new moon day, people observe 'Viratham' to get blessings from their departed beloved fathers and ancestors. To get blessed with children, Vaishnava devotees observe 'Viratham' on the ‘thiruvonam’ star days, and Saivaite devotees observe ‘Viratham’ on ‘Sashti’ (sixth day after full moon). Another famous ‘Viratham’ is on ‘Piradhosham’ day. Most of the people, not knowing what is ‘Piradhosham’, they worship Sivan and observe their ‘Viratham’. ‘Piradhosham’ means early part of the night i.e., beginning of night. ‘Viratham’ observed on trayodasi (thirteenth moon day) between 4.30 p.m. to 6.00 p.m. is called ‘Piradhosha Viratham’. It comes once in fifteen moon days. This period is most auspicious for Sivan. Worshipping Sivan at this prescribed time and harvesting the benefit is ‘Piradhosha’ worship.

O.K... We have seen various types of ‘Virathams’. How did they evolved to present state? In the ancient days, as per Vedic rules there were various rituals and ‘yaagams’ that can be performed, at considerable expense... without any poojas, rituals, showoff, elaborate arrangements and expense a personal contract between the observer and the God is this ‘Viratham’. i.e., There is nothing about this in the books, to conduct such one does not require a priest, and no requirement to conduct a ‘homam’. ‘Viratham’ was unprescribed by ‘Vedham’ and was uncommitted to the Vedic traddition. If you strictly follow the Vedic tradition, then you cannot deny food and go onto fasting. Why?

"Thasmaadhau aahaara
Manushyaa achhanamichchanthe
prayathascha chaayanchcha...."

These Vedic verses, are indirectly talking about the ‘Viratham’. For a man, food is very important. Only if you consume food regularly you will be able to live like a man. The animals only can eat of fast any time they choose to. However... as a man, you must eat morning breakfast, noon lunch and night dinner at set schedule and regularly. You must follow this faithfully. Thus, 'Vedham' advises to eat regularly three meals a day. Another mantra :

"Asnaathi Chapraanaeva
Aathitho bhavathi...."

'Hey!... That which gives you life is the food. You must be capable of conducting huge 'yaagams'. To conduct such 'yaagams' you need strength and stamina. Hence, you must eat good. Do not stay without food' ... thus 'Vedham' is very plain about the necessity of food for the body. Now, the ‘Viratham’ that was not encouraged by ‘Vedham’, let us look at ‘Manusmiruthi’ to find out what it says. For the fasting it is prescribing a fasting.

"Naasti sthriinaam
Barath yagnyaha
Na vratham
Naaba ubhoshanam"

"One can observe ‘Viratham’. However, since all the females are considered as 'Sudhraas', they as well as all 'Sudhraa' men shall not observe ‘Viratham’ "... thus, Manu establishes its rule on 'Viratham'. (T.C.: Probably, since these groups are supposed to carryout all the manual labor, Manu probably considers that they require strength and thus forbids ‘Viratham’). The married people raising a family, have needs, and they may request blessings from God, to grant them various treasures. However, the religious monks, who have renounced the world, what is the need for them to observe 'Viratham'? A monk was in his 'aashram' (abode), sitting and in deep meditation. Outside heavy rain was pouring... When enquired his
disciple about the monk’s whereabouts, he replies that the monk is observing ‘Chaathurmaashya Viratham’. If the sesame is thrown in the sun for drying out, should the mouse excreted balls also be dried? The sesame seed is dried in the sun, to extract the oil from it. Along with it, the excreted balls of the mouse, that is mixed in the sesame also gets dried up. However, what is the benefit derived by drying up the mouse excretion? Just like that... those attached to the life in this world, family men or women, request for... attitude of... count during Vedic days can be supposed to thrive by... can they afford to move... e applicable to... happened, in the life of a... germs, die and smell. Hence, what they imposed on themselves... four months 'Viratham'. If they go outside during the rainy season, they will get infected with mul... 'Chaathu maashyam' means four months... for this they established the rule 'They have to stay in... pitch the tent and camp! Hence, they stayed, the entire four months of the rainy season, in one place. Just... pouring down ra... During the rainy season you cannot stick your head outside. The sages looked at the environment. In this... be equated to the tree count of today. Should we ask further?... Pure... be equated to those of the human count of today. Again, the human c... Vedic days, the rain used... journey...

Before that we look into a slokam in 'Baghawath Githa', that was given by Sri Krishna.

"Yathaha pravarththini
Bhoothaanaam enasarvarvam
Idhamthadham sokarmanaahaa
Dhamabyarchcha chiththim vinthathii maanavahaa..."

The meaning : "If you want to go to heaven, do not sit and meditate closing your eyes. Run... be active... move within the society. Get involved in the society and contribute to its welfare. Be part of the society and discharge your faithful duty. You must give back to the society to your maximum capacity. Only by fulfilling your obligations to your family and to the society, you can attain 'Moksha'. This is told by Sri Krishna, in 'Baghawath Githa' as an advise to everyone. Out of which some items, may be applicable to the sages also. One such item is 'Run... Run... Keep on running...'. The sages are supposed to thrive by begging and eating whatever was offered to them. If they stay in one village, begged and ate the outcome, they shall not stay in that village next day and beg for food. The sun rises in the East next morning and his rays slowly engulfs the village. The sage, who stayed in that village last night, rolls up his... Why?... Because a sage, shall not stay in a village, no more than one night. He must keep on moving. That is, he must travel relentlessly everyday. That too... Do you know how?... "Vaaganastham pathin thirushtvaa chasera snanamaasye..." If he encounters, any vehicles traveling in the opposite direction, such as vehicles powered by bulls or horses, or palanquin carrying royal family members, chariots... he must take a bath, to get rid of the sin. acquired by witnessing them and then continue his journey. So what is the gist of all these? They must roam around only on foot. That too they must travel, not staying in any village no more than one night. Thus, those sages, who has the discipline and adhering to the principle 'one night, one village', are called 'Parahamsa parivraasakar'. The sages or saints are graduated into four stages... Kutsan, bahudhahan, hamsan and paramahamsan. Classified such as First stage, second stage, third stage and in all these stages those who attained the final and highest stage are called 'Paramahamsar'.

O.K... Let us set aside all these classifications. We were talking about the 'Chaathurmaashya Viratham'. What happened to it? Those sages, who are supposed to be moving everyday, can they afford to move throughout the year? On hot summer day, one can rest under the shade of a tree and continue their journey. They can cross several villages before halting into one. However... on rainey days...? The rainy season of today is different... and the rainy of ancient days were different. During the rainy season of Vedic days, the rain used to pour, pour and continue to pour. The total number of trees in the Vedic days can be equated to those of the human count of today. Again, the human count during Vedic days can be equated to the tree count of today. Should we ask further?... Pure unpolluted earth... philanthropic sky. During the rainy season you cannot stick your head outside. The sages looked at the environment. In this pouring down rain, going house to house, village to village, and begging for food is not feasible. Let us pitch the tent and camp! Hence, they stayed, the entire four months of the rainy season, in one place. Just for this they established the rule 'They have to stay in one place during all four months of the rainy season'. 'Chaathu maashyam' means four months. This evolved later on to be 'Chaathurmaashya Viratham'. That is four months 'Viratham'. If they go outside during the rainy season, they will get infected with multitude of germs, die and smell. Hence, what they imposed on themselves, to safeguard their health, they
eventually made it a ‘Viratham’. Even today, there is a place called ‘Aandi Kaadu’ in Thanjaavur district. Here during the rainy season, the sages, saints, ‘rishis’ and renounced souls stay. Afraid of rain and staying in a shelter for four months was ‘Chaathurmaashyam’. Even in this modern age, when there is not that much rain, because they are afraid to present themselves in the courtroom, some sages claim that they are observing ‘Chaathurmaashhya Viratham’. O.K... The truth about ‘Viratham’ has climbed the mountain. Next... The truth about climbing on the mountain...

We have seen about various ‘Virathams’. Performing continuous meditation, without eating, is against the preachings of ‘Vedham’ and ‘Baghawath Githa’. Another important aspect of ‘Viratham’... Nowadays, crowds and crowds of devotees, observing ‘Viratham’ for a prescribed number of days, either one of two ‘mandalams’ (In religious concepts the ‘Mandalam’ is forty one days. The thirty days from the ‘prathipada’, after the full moon to the next full moon day and eleven days to the ‘Ekadasi’ is the period of ‘Mandalam’) and they start their pilgrimage to their favorite temple, with strong determination, and promise to God that they will reach His/Her temple by foot. They walk several miles, with leg pain, and they invariably climb the mountain, where the temple is located. Upon reaching the temple, at the top of the mountain, they finish their fasting. Haven’t I, in the previous chapter, told you that the truth about ‘Viratham’ has climbed the mountain?... Now, we will explore certain truths about climbing the mountain after observing the ‘Viratham’.

“Dhayo reva anthadham kiriyohaa
Dheva nathiyohaa yadhantharam
Thamdheva nirmitham dhesam
Aariyavarththam vilthipurudhaahaa…”

That is, the region between Himalayam mountain and Vindhyan mountain was the devine region according to Manu. Rest of the areas of India was considered as ‘Milechcha’ (Asura) region. Yet... people living in the mountainous regions in various parts of the world, considered that their mountains are equally devine and made them sacred. One among those mountains is the mountain in South India. Since there are seven hills in this mountain, it is called ‘Eezhumalai’. Think about the status of the mountain, long long times back, how it would have been? Wherever you look it was forest. Very thick forest infested with herds of various wild animals. Within this thick forest and among the dangerous wild animals was also living the native mountain people... that is hill tribes people were also living in this wild forest. They knew nothing more than the mountain. Coming down from the mountain was an ardent task and if not was impossible. Living and dying happened... only on the mountain. They ate only the fruits that were grown in the forest. Whatever, wild animals that was caught by them or hunted was the only meat they ate. Yet... for these people of the hill tribe, the fear about their security, from the animals or other tribe people, never vanished. “What is this... Everywhere the wild animals are wandering and commit atrocities. Even though we are on top of the world, why are we haunted constantly by fear? Should the fear and life be always intertwined?... Noone knows, when the children of the hill tribe, would be going to be torn apart, by the wild animals. The ever changing darkness of the thick forest itself was scary enough for these primitive people.

I have already said that, fear was the greatest motivation, and the foremost key to discover God. Because of the fear over their life... those people of the hill tribe, decided to install a security God for their protection. At first, they used to worship the sun, who drove away the darkness, and later on, started to worship wild beasts, to fend off the fear of the animals. Now they drifted to idol worship and they installed their deity. What kind of shape their deity took? Of course, it had to look something like them. In those days, the people of hill tribe, was having scarcity only for God. But, they never had any scarcity for granite stone. They took the stone from their own mountain... and they carved out an idol similar to themselves, in black granite. That was ‘Kaali’. Yes!... ‘Kaali’ means black. We have already seen about the female deities, and in particular when we talked about the rural Gods, they were installed at the village boundaries for the protection against the intruders. Male, deities cannot be depended for staying in one place and they keep on wandering. Females, just like they take care of the home, staying inside the home, the primitive people believed that the female deities were more suited to protect their villages, by staying at their temple and constantly guarding against their enemies.

Along the same logic... to protect their own mountain, their people... for the first time they created ‘Mountain Kaali’ and began to worship that deity. The males, worshiped ‘Kaali’ as they go for hunting...
and after they finished their hunting, bestow their hunted animals under the feet of the ‘Kaali’, before they take it to their home, became their tradition. May be because of it or not... to conform to this routine habit, they have carved out the idol. The ‘Kaali’ had two hands. Her right hand was pointing downwards, to her feet, and the left hand was pointing upwards, showing her palm to her devotees. It was as if telling in sign language, ‘If you offer all your huntings under my feet, I will protect you’. This may even be the meaning in the hill tribesmen’s dictionary. Thus, whatever they have hunted was offered under the feet of ‘Kaali’, and protecting themselves from the darkness and the wild beasts... they never forgot to celebrate their festivities, with ‘Kaali’ as their centerpiece. Just for ‘Kaali’ they wandered all over the hills and plucked fresh flowers... offered to the deity... and enthusiastically sang their stimulating songs and danced around. All these celebrations... are a form of entertainment, just to get rid of their fear over the darkness and wild animals. In the same manner, this ‘Kaali’ worship continued, for several centuries. Till the mountain was not encroached by the outside people, the only form of worship that was carried on the mountain was ‘Kaali’. Let us set aside this mountain ‘Kaali’ for a while. In the modern scientific era... whatever God has created, the humanity challenged and tried to change. That is, by performing various sex change surgeries, the medical profession claims that it is possible to convert the males to females and change females to males. Is it possible to convert males to females and females to males?... During those days of ‘Kaali’ worship, when the science was in its primitive state, such an operation for sex change, was carried out very successfully... What?... What?... Where?...

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Wasn’t I talking about the surgery to convert a female to a male?... What is wrong with him?... As he was talking, in a series, about the God and religion, don’t get confused and ask, ‘why he is carrying on about sex change operations?’. Yes... We are talking about a sanctified surgery. I was talking about the worshiping of ancient deity of the hill tribe, mountain ‘Kaali’. For over several centuries, till the people of plains invaded the mountain, ‘Kaali’ was their security God. If that is so... that mountain ‘Kaali’... the one carved in Thiruppathi... established and worshiped by the hill tribe on the seven hills... Where is it now?... The answer this question is the commencement of the sanctified surgery. Several centuries later... The plains people began to migrate to the mountain. Plains people means?... You can consider them as Brahmins. Those climbed on the mountain... they saw the statue of mountain ‘Kaali’. They also saw the way the people of the hill tribe performing ‘Pooja’ to the deity. As the Brahmins saw, the hill tribesmen were picking and offering the fresh forest flowers, and placing the flesh of the hunted animals under the feet of the deity, and performing the ‘Poo Sei’... they questioned the tribesman “Is this how to perform ‘pooja’?... We know the ‘aagamam’ (pooja rituals). We know how to perform the poosai the right way. The way you are performing the ‘poosai’, ‘Kaali’ will not get energized. In addition, you will not get the blessings of ‘Kaali’ either. Hence, you must leave the responsibility for performing the ‘pooja’ rituals to us”. Thus the Brahmins urged the hill tribesmen to handover the responsibility.

The hill tribesmen were surprised. Wherever, they were from, came up the hill... now, they are asking us to hand over the responsibility to perform the ‘pooja’ rituals. They all assembled together. We have been worshiping this deity for several centuries. Now... why they are asking us to handover the pooja responsibility to them?... Should we handover or not? ... This is the centerpiece of discussion. Some of them said “Let us handover... Let our ‘Kaali’ acquire more powers”. However, others said “No... We will worship our ‘Kaali’, the way we have been for centuries”. The handing over of the ‘pooja’ responsibilities to Brahmins did not happen immediately. As the time passed on, gradually, the idol of mountain ‘Kaali’ fell into the hands of the Brahmins. They told the tribesmen “You may have worshiped, and offered ‘Pooasi’ to ‘Kaali’, till this time with flowers and meat. From now on you are not allowed to offer flowers and meat to God”. After the Brahmins brought under control the ‘Kaali’ of the tribesmen, they began to offer rituals according to ‘aagama’ rules. They also built a small temple to enclose the deity.

As the Brahmins brought the ‘Kaali’ worship completely under their control, they enclosed the deity within the ‘Vimaanam’ (chamber). According to the ‘aagama’ rules, wherever there are female deities, a lion shall be installed as the vehicle for the deity to ride on. Where a male deity is installed, in those temples, a bull shall be installed as the vehicle. As per this rule... they installed a lion next to ‘Kaali’. As the ‘Kaali’ was brought under control of the Brahmins, over few generations, they told the hill tribe... “From now on you shall not enter the temple. We will perform all the worship rituals. You stay outside of the chamber, worship the deity, and return to your home. This ‘Kaali’ is now bound by the ‘aagama’ rules. She is not your old mountain ‘Kaali’, to worship any way you want. If you are not abiding by our ‘aagama’ worship rules...
Kaali' will loose Her power. Hence, whatever you have brought to mountain 'Kaali', during festivals, celebrations and offerings, give everything to us. We will take care of everything"… The hill tribesmen, never expected, such sweeping handover of the control. There was another change brewing; that can swallow, the changes brought out by the ‘aagama’ tragedy...

This is what I called as the operation or surgery. When the people of the hill tribe came to worship, one day, they were shocked at the sight of ‘Kaali’. The reason?… The ‘Kaali’ who stayed as a female till yesterday... suddenly, she changed Her sex and became a male God. Cobra snakes were coiled around the arms of ‘Kaali’. The snakes were outfitted around the arms. Cobra snakes… What is this?... “We are going to make this deity famous. This is a ‘Saivaite’ deity named ‘Siva Peruman’. This is not ‘Kaali’… Only now, the hill tribesmen realised, that the Brahmins are out to make profit, out of their native deity. They started to fight back. They started to bear weapons. However, the Brahmin’s keen tactical knowledge and sharp mind defeated the weapons. They said to the hill dwellers "Please wait! Be patient! Because of this deity you must be benefitted and we also must be benefitted. Tell us about your ancestral trade and we can find a way that will be beneficial for both parties”… The tribesmen answered “hunting, collecting honey and shaving the heads”. Brahmins “What?... What was the last one you mentioned?”... Tribesmen said “Among us one part shaves heads of others!” Brahmins clinched a compromise. “Great! From now on, whoever visits the temple… comes to pray the God… they must sit with you, and get their head shaved, before they enter inside the temple premises. This is the condition of entry from now on. You must collect the appropriate fee, for shaving the head, and keep it for yourself. What we collect inside the temple belongs to us. You are benefitting from this arrangement, and we also benefitted, out of this agreement. You are getting ‘dhatchanai’ and we are also getting ‘dhatchanai’. It will bring good things to you as well as for us”... Thus, the Brahmins, convinced the hill tribesmen, to shave the heads of the pilgrims. The people of hill tribe, lost their right to their ‘Kaali’, and became barbers staying outside the temple, and shave the heads of the religious pilgrims, who came to worship the God. The Brahmins, on the other hand, entered and went inside the temple, and robbed the tribesmen of their right to the idol.

At this situation ... What situation?... The situation, under which the mountain ‘Kaali’ of Thiruppathi, was sex transformed by the Saivaites, into Paramasivan and Subramanyan... the news of this change reaches the ears of the Vaishnavas. Their blood boiled. They were under the leadership of Vaishnava elder of all time, Sri Ramaanujar, who has been acclaimed as ‘Vainavaththilakam’ and ‘Em Perumaanaar’, determined to fight this occupation. The ‘Vainava’ (‘Vaishnava’) army marched up the mountain to fend off the intruders. Sri Ramaanujar lived in the eleventh century. That is approximately one thousand years back. He went to Thiruppathi, to listen to the Raamaayana (Story of Lord Raamaa) from his uncle, Thirumalainambi. While he was learning the Raamaayana, in the lower Thiruppathi... the news of Saivaites takeover, of the mountain ‘Kaali’, and subsequent conversion to Siva worship, at the upper Thiruppathi, must have reached his ears. He took along with him, several Vainavaas and climbed up the hill. There he found a temple, in which the mountain ‘Kaali’ was converted to Sivan, and the Saivaites were ruling over, the native hill tribe. This Saivaites-Vaishnavaite confrontation and the part Sri Ramaanujar played is well documented in the sacred text 'Guruparambarai'. 'Guruparambarai' means?... I have already told you that Guru are the ‘aachchaaariyars’ (The elders of the Vaishnava sect). That is... the book of compilation of the life history of the teachers of the ‘tradition of the Vaishnava sect’ is called ‘Guruparambarai’.

In that sacred book, the incidence that happened on the Thiruppathi mountain, between the Vaishnavas and the Vaishnavaite, is explained in detail. As Ramaanujar, under his leadership, reached the mountain top, along with his Vaishnava acompañies... the anger of the Saivaites, who have already occupied the mountain, reached its pinnacle. They shouted at the Vaishnavas... "Why did you all come here? This is our temple, and this is our God. Politely, go back to where you came from". Neither Ramaanujar nor his associates were not shaken by these demands. The Vaishnavas claimed that ‘This is where ‘Bhagawaan Narayan’ has materialized naturally. This temple is very sacred for the Vaishnavas. All these preceeding years, that you have profitted out of our temple, is more than enough. At least now, you must vacate this place, without any skirmishes". "Impossible! We want you to look at the cobras that are spiraled around the deities arms. Hence, He is Sivan"... with these arguments, they showed the cobras that they coiled around the arms of the deity, a while back, as the proof that the deity was indeed Sivan.
Both sides were engaged in explosive arguments and counter arguments. They brought a king, from somewhere, named 'Thondaimaan Chakkaravarty' to mediate the dispute. In the presence of the king, the 'Bhagawath Panchaayath' (God mediation) continued. (I myself was wondering about this. In those days, was there a king, on the top of the mountain? Why did he came here?... T.C.: King Thondaimaan was ruling the northern part of Tamil Nadu during this era and probably he was invited to mediate this dispute). Sri Raamaanujar, opened his mouth and said... "O.K... Among us, both sides are explosively, continuously, engaged in heated arguments. As far as we are concerned, we claim that this God, on this hill, is none other than 'Perumaal', and we can conclusively prove this fact. However, you Saivaites claim that this hill is Sivagiri (Siva's mountain). Since, we were unable to conclude this dispute, by arguments and counter arguments... I propose that the God Himself put an end to this dispute. Who am I? Am I Sivan? Or am I Perumaal?... Let Him tell us His decision". One of the disciple of Raamaanujar, wondered about this jurisprudence, and asked... "My great master... How is He going to relate His decision to us?". At this time, a little turbulance, in the gathering! While heated arguments was going on among the two sects of Hinduism, and after winessing the entire proceedings, the native people of the hill tribe, were baffled over, to either laugh at it or cry over it. After all, it was the 'Kaali', they installed to protect their tribe!

Let us, again, travel back to 'Guruparambarai'. Sri Raamaanujar was answering to the question "How 'Bhaghaawaan' is going to relate His decision to us?". "Please bring here the most important weapons of Perumaal (Naaraayanан) such as 'Sangu' (Shell) and 'Chakkaram' (Wheel) and the weapons of Sivan such as 'Maan' (Deer) and 'Mazhu' (Mallet)"... thus he commanded. Believing that 'under favorable circumstances, we can take our sets of weapons and we can adorn the deity', both sects brought the weapons of their choice belonging to their deities. Sri Raamaanujar continued... "Now we will place the weapons from both parties, in the God's 'sannidhi' (chamber), under the feet of the deity. Night we will lock the chamber with weapons inside. We all go home and will assemble back sharply at sunrise. We will open the chamber and witness the deity together. If He is wearing 'Sangu' and the 'Chakkaram' then the deity is 'Perumaal'. If He is wearing 'Maan' and 'Mazhu' then He will be declared to be Sivan. Is this condition acceptable to everyone?" Each group had a caucus of their own and deliberated on that proposal. They felt it was a fair proposal. 'Everything is an act of God. O.K... This is fair'... everyone agreed. They placed the 'Sangu' and 'Chakkaram' on one side and the 'Maan' and 'Mazhu' on the other side of the idol. Night time! Pitch dark! Every one was suspicious that 'at night time someone may hide inside the 'Garbhagraham', and fit the deity with the weapons, of their choice' and hence, everyone looked around very carefully, and exited the chamber, leaving behind only te weapons. With everyone witnessing, they locked the door to the 'sannidhi'.

Inside noone but the 'Bhaghaawaan'. From here on everything is in His hand. Justice is His! Everyone left th place. The night time, to everyone's expectations, slowly disintegrated... the sun raised his eyelids slowly... The sky and the earth gradually flooded with light. Who is 'Bhaghaawaan'? What is His verdict? With considerable anxiety, they opened the door. Inside...

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As per the compromise proposal advocated by Sri Raamaanujar, the select favorite weapons of both Sivan and Naaraayanан were placed inside the 'sannidhi' and it was locked. Next morning, even before the sunrise, everyone started to assemble and were eagerly waiting to see the results. Their hearts were pounding in elevated rhythm and curious to know the God's justice. After the sunrise... the 'sannidhi' was unlocked... the door was opened. Inside...

On His shoulder, with 'Sangu' and 'Chakkaram', the deity was standing with grace. The reason? The four hands that are characteristic of the 'Perumaal' was not there. Only two hands to that idol. As soon as they saw the 'Chakkaram' worn on the idol, the face of al the Vaishnavas were bloomed and filled with smiles. The faces of the Salvaite had no life in them. There was also another reason. The Perumaal did not stop at just wearing the 'Sangu' and 'Chakkaram'. Last night, along with 'Sangu' and 'Chakkaram', weren't there also other favorite weapons of Sivan such as 'Maan' and 'Mazhuvu' placed in the 'sannidhi'? They were all crushed up and tore into pieces and they were all spread everywhere on the floor. As if a rowdy person invaded the 'sannidhi'... the Sivan's weapons were torn into pieces and were spread all over the floor. When the Vaishnavaites saw this scene, their excitement sky rocketed. The Salvaite, were ashmmed and silencey vacated the place. Because of this event... Sri Raamaanujar earned the title 'Appanukku Sangaazhi Aliththavar'. 'Appan' means the the presiding deity Thiruuppathi Perumaal. Expanding further, for
the ‘Appan’ itself, that is, for the Thiruppathi Perumaal, Sri Raamaanujar has presented the ‘sangu’ (shell) and ‘Aazhi’ (‘Chakkaram’, wheel). All these facts are noted in the book titled ‘Guru Parambharai’. Just like this... Sri Raamaanujar has defended and saved the Vainava sect from other religious denominations and to commemorate these heroic deeds ‘Thiruvarangaththu Amudhanaar’ has composed series of one hundred poems called ‘Raamaanuja Nootranthaathi’. I want you to listen to one such ‘Anthaathi’:

“Dharkka samanum saakkiya peykalum... Thaazhsadaiyon Sorkatra sombarum sooniya vaathamum Nirka kurumbu sei niisarum nilaththe Porkarpakam em Raamaanusa Muni pontha pinne...”

Meaning of this Tamil verse: “The ‘Samanars’ (Jains), who constantly engaged in arguments; the so called ‘Budhdha’ religion that has been haunting the people of Tamil Nadu like a ghost; the Saivaites, who have been following ‘Thaazh Sadaiyon’ (one with matted hair) a.k.a. Siva; those who were engaged in empty banal arguments; and those ‘Adhvaithis’ who claims that everything is unreal (mirage) ... everyone noted above died and uprooted”.

When?... After the birth of our Raamaanujar... thus states this ‘Anthaathi’.

If you have the feeling that we may be descending from the Thiruppathi hills abruptly. I have some more messages to add to it. The ‘Bhaghawaan’ on the top of the mountain has selected the weapons of His choice and wore it on him. That is O.K. But why did He destroyed all the weapons of Sivan and tore it into pieces and spread it across the floor?... Just by wearing the ‘Sangu’ and the ‘Chakkaram’ alone everyone will be convinced that He is Perumaal. Why then... ‘Bhaghawaan’ Narayanan had to destroy the weapons of Sivan into pieces?... Breaking the materials thus, is this expected of a God?... Only when this question was raised, along the medium of ‘sevi vazhi seythi’, a news has been circulating among the religious elites. That is... the night before, all the weapons were placed within the ‘Garbhagraham’, and it was locked. Everyone was convinced, that no other human beings were hiding behind, inside and they went to their bed. Later on... at night, Raamaanujar returned to the temple. How?... He assumed the figure of a snake. Snake?... Yes. According to the religious notes, God Vishnu appeared in front of Nammaazhwaar (most respected of ‘Aazhwaars’), who lived several years before the birth of Sri Raamaanujar, and told him that would be Raamaanujar, is none other than Aadhiseshan, the snake on which Aranganaathar is laying. Accordingly... Nammaazhwaar has written a song, based on this encounter, about the one going to be born, Sri Raamaanujar, titled ‘Kaliyum Kedum Kenmin’. This type of writing is called ‘Pavishyadhaasaaryar’. That is... knowing about someone, who is going to be born in the future, and praising them. Thus... there is a belief that Perumaal Himself communicated to Nammaazhwaar... "Raamaanujar will come to this world as the incarnation of Aadhiseshan".

With these characteristics... Again at night, Raamaanujar with the skills of snake Aadhiseshan, came to the temple. The ‘sannidhi’ is locked. Inside, the weapons of both sides are laying on the floor. As he decided that, in the morning, the idol shall wear the ‘sangu’ and ‘chakkaram’, and He must portray the image of God Vishnu, he goes around and around the temple to find a solution. Only one pathway is open to get inside the temple... only ‘Gomukai’. What is that?... During celebrations, when the idol inside was given a bath, using sacred turmeric water, the drainage hole to get the water outside is called ‘Gomukai’. Except that hole there was no other way to get inside the temple. Since, he was born with the characteristics of Aadhiseshan, he immediately changed his form to that of a snake, and through that hole, he entered into the ‘sannidhi’. In a hurry, he fixes the ‘sangu’ and ‘chakkaram’ on the shoulders of the idol. The task was accomplished! He again, converts back to the form of snake, exits through the same hole and disappears into the darkness of the night. Later on... in the morning, he was accompanied by everyone and as they opened the door, the idol was wearing the ‘sangu’ and ‘chakkaram’ and was appeared as Lord Vishnu... and found some of the weapons of the opposition party was crushed into pieces. This was the ‘Sevi Vazhi Seythi’... If that was so...

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With ‘Guru Parambharai’ as the nucleus, you have heard the ‘sevi vazhi seythi’, that provided an insight into the process, by which the idol has selected its weapon of choice. Since it was only a ‘sevi vazhi seythi’, you may accept this explanation or decline it. If this message, sprang up without a basis, you may refuse to accept. However... since it was an auxiliary to the incidences contained in the ‘Guru
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Parambharai’, you cannot reject this explanation, in its totality. On the other hand... original copy of ‘Guru Parambharai’, contains references to Raamaanujar assuming the shape of Aadhiseshan, and entering the temple through the ‘Gomukam’. If that message was left intact, whatever Raamaanujar underlook to prove, will become a question mark. Hence, it was strongly believed that, the elders decided to leave that portion of the message out and carried it on as a ‘sevi vazhi seythi’. Under these conditions... a question may arise... "Who are you to talk about the Thiruppathi Hills? What rights do you have?". Some people have directly posed these questions to me! To answer this question, I am going to relate another interesting incidence to you.

Do you recall that I told you that Raamaanujar’s uncle was Thirumalainambi? He stayed on the hills and was performing necessary services (‘Kainkaryam’) for the Perumaal. The major ‘Kainkaryam’ that was needed on the top of the hill was to bring water for Perumaal according to the Vedic rules. The main hurdle was, that the water may be logged, in small ponds, between the hills. He has to search for these ponds, and carry it to the temple in a pot. It was strenuous and an ardent task. Thus, Thirumalainambi used to find and carry the water, and thereby rendering his services to Perumaal. On one day... nowhere water to be found, all around the temple. Alas... with the thought ‘somehow I have to serve the God’, Thirumalainambi was wandering up and down, through far away places on the hill. Nowhere, water to be found! After considerable roaming, and with much difficulty, he collected one pot full of water. (When they described his dedication, they used to tell that he went to ‘Aakaasa Gangai’, high region of Himalaya where Gangai originates, and brought the water). With a feeling of accomplishment, he returned happily, back to the temple with water. On the way back... from other side of a small hill... he heard someone calling him 'Thaatththaa'. Thirumalainambi turned towards the caller. There was a person standing with utter thirst. He was begging “I am very very thirsty. Even my saliva is dried up. If only you give me little bit of water I will always be grateful to you”. His eyes as well as his hands were anxiously expecting for a positive reply from Thirumalainambi.

Thirumalainambi turned towards the requester. His look was stern, just like the look of a person, when asked for a liter of water, either living in the village area, who have wandered all over the village, from well to well, to fetch a pail of water, or look of a city dweller, who was waiting all day long, and struggled to get a pot full of water, from the municipality lorry. He told the parched man... "Sorry sir... I am taking this to service the God Himself. I have fetched this pot of water with considerable difficulty. I cannot spare this for you”. The dehydrated man continued... "A man is struggling to survive. Without giving water to me... you are giving Perumaal as the excuse? Does it seems as justice to you? If you give me water, you will accrue 'Punniyam' (good karmic point) for saving a life. What are you going to get by pouring water over a stone?". Thirumalainambi resolutely refused to his request and continued his journey. Again, he heard, "Thaatththaa" in a bolder voice. He turned towards the man. That was, to his surprise, Perumaal, who was testing the dedication of Thirumalainambi, and appeared before him as a thirsty man.

Why am I telling you this encounter now?... "Thaatha' also in Sanskrit means father. Perumaal was considered as father of ‘Brammaa’, the creator. Such a great father Himself was calling, Thirumalainambi as 'Thaatha...': i.e., since Perumaal called him as ‘appaaw’ (father)... Thirumalainambi became 'Thaatththaa' (grand father) to this writer. His descendants became ‘thaathaachaariyaars’. That is ...

"Pithamakasya abhi pithaamahaaya piraasethu
Aadhesa palapradhaaya sribhashyakaaraa
Uththama dhesikaaya srisaila poornaaya
Namo namasthe...

"Since, the father of Bramma, Perumaal Himself, has called Thirumalainambi as 'Thaatha...' (father), we pay our respect to him" ... thus states this slokam. Hence... the successors of Thirumalainambi became 'Thaatththaachhaariyaars'. My family has told me that I was descendant of this clan. Since I also was born in the 'Thaatththaachhaari' dynasty, I claim to have roots to the Thiruppathi temple. Hence... I also claim rights to talk and write about the Thiruppathi temple. I was not relating this story, just to establish my rights to talk about the temple. I just wanted to bring this justice to the forefront ... "Help the humanity. Take care of the God later on"... the very message of God given to Thirumalainambi. Next... When we talk about the Thiruppathi Hills, an important personality of this temple was Haththiyaraam Baabaaji. Who was this gentleman?...
The original natives of a place normally termed as 'Kallin Kadavul' or otherwise son of the soil. Like wise we have seen, that of the native deity of the Thiruppathi hill was none other than 'Kaali', and how she was transsexualized into other deities by low land invaders. In addition, at the end of the last chapter, I have noted about Mr. Haththiyaram Baabaaji and said that he was an important personality of the Thiruppathi temple. Who was this person? What was he doing in Thiruppathi? As soon as you heard his name, you may have guessed, what kind of person he could have been. As you may have guessed, he was a North Indian. He was wandering all over India, looking for peace, and landed in Thiruppathi. In those days, in the Thiruppathi temple, all the worship services were conducted in a natural and peaceful manner.

Baabaaji was intensely devoted to Venkatachalapathi, the presiding deity of Thiruppathi, and he used to stay close to the alter of the temple. He will take over various responsibilities of the temple and complete it with utmost devotion. Within few days... because of his enthusiasm and devotion to the temple, he became the administrator of the temple itself.

O.K.... Are you having urge to ask me ‘what great things he did to earn a name for himself?’... I have already talked to you, about the origin of that tradition, of shaving the head of people, who climbed up the hill and came to visit the temple. Do you remember that? As per the compromise, worked out by the Brahmins and one sect of the hill tribesmen who were barbers, everyone agreed with the common good of ‘you need to earn an income, and we need to get some income’ and accordingly, the barbers got the right to shave the head of the devotees, visiting the temple and earned their income. That tradition of shaving the head of the visitors, was popularized and made it a foremost signature event, of Thiruppathi temple by Baabaaji. He realized, that to propagate the name of the temple, amongst the masses, a trade mark was essential, and he actively promoted the shaving of the head. During his period, more people resolved to offer their hair, if their request to this God was realized, and as aconsequence, people started to pour in bunches. Now... during the Tamil month of ‘Purattaasi’ (Sep-Oct)... the surge of crowd is so vast that the Thiruppathi mountain itself appears to be shaking. Eventhough the crowd in those days was not as much as it is today, based on the economic condition of the people and transportation facilities available in those days, the crowd started to pour in by popularizing the hair offering.

Under these prevailing conditions... some of the Brahmins went to Baabaaji and said "In the hands of the idol, the snakes are carved in and if we remove it it would be better. Similarly, if we also get rid of the braided hair at the rear of the ‘Vigraham’ (statue) it would be ...". Baabaaji rejected their request and said "Everything will be just like it has been. Nothing will be changed”. Wait! What is that braiding?... Behind this, there is an interesting story. I should not be telling this to you. I was firmly resolved not to reveal this story to you. However... I am relating this very reluctantly and a bit nervously. Several years back... You know more about Israel and Palestine. They are countries where there are lots of blood shed due to clashes between the muslims and the jews. The Israelis and the Palestinians were breathing only the war. In that war dusted sacred land is the city of Jerusalem. What is this?... You may wonder 'While talking about Thiruppathi, why is he meandering into Jerusalem'?... A lady who was born in that city, was very much interested in exploring the temples of India and in particular she was very excited to learn more about the Thiruppathi temple, visit and get the blessings of God. She was a jew and she knew our own queen of music M.S. Subbulakshmi. With M.S.S.’s introduction, she came to the temple. From time to time when she has a doubt or needed clarifications about 'Sanaadhana Samayam' (music M.S.S.’s introduction), she came to the temple. From time to time when she has a doubt or needed clarifications about 'Sanaadhana Samayam', she was looking for someone, who is well versed the 'Vedham', to bounce her questions to get a reliable answer. Someone gave my name to her and she contacted me. I accepted her invitation, and accompanied her to the Thiruppathi temple. She belongs to ‘Milechcha’ (lower level) religion per Vedic interpretation, and how did they let her in?

It was very difficult! After considerable song and dance, pulling some power ropes, they let her in. After she was admitted into the temple, she became anxious to go around the 'Vigraham' (idol), and examine it. After some heavy hitting, she got permission to go inside the ‘Garbhagraham’. That is when... I have also witnessed, the braided hair of the Thiruppathi Perumal, that was combed and well decorated. Now, are you convinced, that she was indeed mountain 'Kaali', as per my earlier claims? I was afraid, that someone is going to ask me, one of these days, 'Have gone there in person and checked it yourself?'. Just for that reason, with very, very much reservation and half heartedly, I have revealed the entire truth to you.

Even today, crowds and crowds of people with considerable hope, climb up the hill and worship Venkatachalapath Perumaan. It is everyone hail and praise, that all their wishes are fulfilled by going to Thiruppathi and they hope that 'If you go to Thiruppathi and return back, there will be change in your life'.
Yet, what is happening in Thiruppathi? If a person is rich, they take him close to the deity and let him worship as long as he wishes. From all others, they collect 50 rupees and 100 rupees, just to see the God and worship, and drive them out as fast as they enter. If one do not have even that much money to pay, they have to stand anywhere from 5 hours to 24 hours, depending on the season and occasion, just to get the glimpse of the 'Vigraham'. That too, fifteen to twenty feet before the God, they block the devotees and force them to 'Keep on moving'. Thus, I was talking only about, the past history of the Venkataachalapathy, who eventually, became a commercialized God. What a pity... The sons of the mountain, who originally worshiped 'Kaali', today they sit outside the temple, and shave devotees heads. Even, shaving the heads was made into a big business... Just because of this commercialization, I have to relate to everyone, about the twists and turns, that happened in the past life of 'Kaali'! Next...

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So... What did we see so far?... We have seen what I have witnessed in Thiruppathi temple. We have explored the various issues over the 'Vigraham'. In addition, we can also accumulate more evidences to justify the claim. Generally, Perumaal has four arms with two hands holding 'Sangu' and 'Chakkaram' and the other two hands are extra. However... for Thiruppathi Perumaal has only two hands. He is not holding the 'Sangu' and 'Chakkaram' in His hands. They are hanging onto His shoulder. The counting of the hands also throws the weight on our side. Next, another important evidence... Have you seen, near the Thiruppathi Perumaan, His consort 'Piraattiyaar'? You will not see Her? Why not?... After descending from the mountain, when you travel in the plains for a while, you will find 'Padhmaavathith Thaayaar', in a place called Thiruchchaanoor. Why was she not installed on the top of the mountain? How can you place the 'Vigraham' of a female deity, next to the 'Vigraham' of another female deity? Yes... After all, the 'Vigraham' that was installed on the mountain, was it not, but the original 'Thaayaar' ('Kaali') of the hill tribesmen? That was the reason, there was no consort on the mountain, for the one who became Venkataachalapathi. Later on, to camouflage this deficiency, the concept of Piraatthi living in Thiruchchaanoor, was propagated. These are further evidences to support our contention.

Now... for us, it is not important whether Venkataachalapathi is a male or female idol. Yet... today, how the foreign cool drinks are profiting, using our own water, by crushing the local competitions such as 'Maappillai Vinaayakar', and 'Goli Soda'... just like that, the local hill tribesmen's deity 'Kaali', was crushed by the invaders from the plains and they continue to profit. I am only bringing this fact to the forefront, to demonstrate how the rights of the downtrodden hill tribesmen were defrauded. Please do not misconstrue my intentions, and I beg pardon from all the devotees of Thiruppathi, if I have caused any anguish. Devotion is same for everyone, for you as well as for me. O.K... What next?...

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“Yappappaa”, what a speed... Did these horses eat horse gram? Or were they eating horse meat? Why they are chasing them, with such speed and coarseness, what a wonder, galloping and riding at the speed of hurricane? Who are these people?... The people of the village, on the hill, were trembling. Sitting on the horse, holding the horse rope on one hand and the whip on the other hand, those burgler soldiers were thrashing the horses to speed them further. The women were fleeing in every direction... Small children were thrown out of the pathways... Some men were facing the riders and they were ready to resist them. However... they could not bear the force of the whip and they fell to the ground. Who were those soldiers?... Where was this village located?... Why are they whipping the village folks?... The village was located in the Western ghats, in present day Malaiyaala (Kerala) country. Those who came to rob the villagers were low class soldiers. The Malaiyaala country, one time was ruled by 'Paandiya' king, was very fertile, during and after the rule. After plundering all around the village, the tired soldiers, were straitened themselves up a bit. All around the village, there were five hillocks, appeared very beautiful. The natural panorama was a spectacular view. “Would they have any treasures up the hill?”... one of the soldier questioned. “Mmmm... May be” another answered. Everyone, with considerable effort, climbed up the hill.

There are two versions of the scenery they witnessed, are floating around. As they climbed up the hill named 'Kaanthu Malai', the soldier's eyes were blinded by a powerful reflection. As they were getting closer and closer, all their body parts were getting illuminated. What was there to emit such brightness? Golden statue. Yes... Bright shiniy golden statue was proclaiming the prosperity of the people living in that mountain region. The soldiers robbed everything. This is one of the rumor ('sevi vazhi seythi')
circulating. The other version of this story is that the soldiers wrecked the statue and broke it into pieces. After loosing the idol that they worshipped, to the soldier bandits, the people of the hill tribe descended down from the top a bit. In the valley between the five hillocks they carved out and installed a new deity. Starting with worshiping the nature, then switched to worship the wild beasts and eventually settled on human form, this deity called Ayyanaar, was that village dwellers prime God. Just like, they used to install female deities as their security God, this idol was a male security God. Just in this manner, the hill tribes people have installed Ayyanaaar, as their security God, and have been worshiping that deity for centuries.

This idol was also robbed, by low class soldiers, few centuries back. The first place, where the golden statue was installed, called 'Ponnambalam'. 'Pon' means gold and 'ambalam' means 'temple'. After the golden idol was robbed... they were hoping to istall an idol safely in between the hills... that was also robbed. Here another contradicting message... During the second raid by the bandits, the statue was not robbed but it was disfigured and broken into pieces. Thus... the idol of the hill tribesmen was said to be stolen and/or broken into pieces, by the enemies, today, it is a very distinguished and a very sacred God. Keeping the deity, for which everyday, the pooja was performed with flowers... and religious celebrations are performed by the hill tribesmen... as the center piece... today few people, keep that temple open only for few days in a year, and holding onto the steering wheel of worship. That statue?... Disfigured and stolen by the low class soldier bandits, the statue that was neglected for a while, was recarved by the hill tribe and was re-installed for worship.

Bringing the pure and chilled water, that flowing in the mountain streams, the hill dwellers bathed their deity 'Ayyanaar', and adorned it with fresh plucked flowers, that bloomed, that very same day and thus they were worshiping daily on gentler manner. On another side, they also offered under the feet of the deity, the fresh meat of the wild animals, that was killed by pointed sharp tools, and worshiped in primitive sadistic manner. As the gentler worship, and the primitive sadistic worship, continued simultaneously... to that hill country, a crowd of people, exodus from present state of Andhrapradesh, arrived by foot, looking for a livelihood. Upon arrival, they witnessed the deity Ayyanaar, and the people of the hill tribe. That was night time. They were carrying, on one hand fat fueled fire torch, and on the other wild animal meat. They lighted the torch, and set it in front of the deity, and they started to offer the deity, the bodies of all the animals they have hunted. Those 'Namboodhries' emigrated from the present state of Andhrapradesh, as they were twisting their 'poonool' were witnessing their prayer ritual. The 'Namboodhries' who were staunch followers of Vedic tradition... watching this 'Ayyanaar' worship ritual for few days... suddenly, one day they put forth a new dilemma in front of the tribesmen... "Yappappaa (unbearable cruelty)... What a disservice to the deity? Instead of offering ghee (clarified butter) and coconut to the deity, you are offering the meat dripping with fat...? Do you really know who this deity is"?

The hill tribesmen were shaken up. When they saw the 'Namboodhries', who were built majestically, the tribesmen paid very much respect for them. "Swami, what are you saying?"... they asked. "Listen... This is not your 'Ayyanaar'. He is our 'Ayyappan'. Do you know the story, how he got to this place?"... the 'Namboodhries' were fishing for an entry. Tribesmen..."We knew! It was disfigured two or three times by bandits. Later on, we ourselves, with considerable hardship, carved out this statue. We kept it for our security"... thus they answered. The Namboodhri Brahmins retorted "Wrong... Wrong...There is a long unwritten story, behind the arrival of this deity, to this place". With these words they shared the story. "You know God Siva... Whoever meditates, thinking of Him. He appreciates and gets intoxicated with their praises, and he awards them whatever boon they request. Like that one time a 'asuran' (cruel person) named 'Padhmaasuran' was observing severe meditation on Siva. He was not concerned about the heat, rain, 'pari', snake and tiger, and without any motion, he was reciting the names of Siva. Siva appeared in front of him and asked him... "what boon are you longing for?". "Devaa (my God)... If I keep my hand over anybody's head, they must be in flames, and become ashes"... the boon he requested. Without giving deep thought over the boon he requested, Siva..."I award you Padhmaasuraa"... thus He sanctioned the boon.

From that day on, the hands of 'Padhmaasuran' became restless. He put his hands on the heads of, his enemies, those humans whom he do not care for. The minute his hand, touched their heads, they were burnt and became ashes. For him, a very strange thougth cropped up. I have kept my hand on everyone's head, and the only one left over, is the one who granted me this boon. That was Siva... He went to Him.
Siva asked..."What is the matter?", "I would like to test the strength of the boon you have granted to me. Hence, I would like place my hand over your head..."... said 'Padhmaasuran'. Sivan understood. He is trying to destroy me with the same boon I have granted to him. He got scared and ran towards 'Thirumaal' (Vishnu). 'Perumaal' understood the plight of Sivan. If we have change the direction of this 'asuran', it can only happen by 'Dhasai' (flesh), and 'Perumaal' immediately changed into 'Mohini'. 'Mohini'?... Yes! With lust at its zenith, inviting to taste the forbidden fruit, the one with most beautiful body was the 'Mohini'. Well built body... Very fertile soft body... Small hip... Colorful jewelries... Her beauty was such that it intoxicates, and elicits everyone's lust, when they see her. She was standing like a beautiful sex figure.

'Padhmaasuran' looked at her beauty. As he intensely surveyed her body, each part, one by one, from toe to the top of her hair, he was impaired with intoxication of sexual lust. When he was in the impaired state... how is he going to remember, Sivan, 'Dhasai', and the boon? As he was immersed into the lustful pool of Mohini’s sexy figure... everything about his past was nothing but a blur. 'Perumaal' i.e., 'Mohini' gaged at his toxic level. She wanted to take him to a higher level of ecstasy and started her dancing. What a beauty? Even if 'Mohini' was standing still, her beauty cannot be described in words. As is, if she shakes her body and moving her body parts... how can one describe the dynamic energy, passing through everyone’s nerves? "If only you can dance like me, 'Padhmaasuran' you can have me. Are you ready?"... she enticed him. Her words was so soothing, he was floating in the heaven. He forgot about the rogue activities of his past, and he stood in front of her and started to imitate her dance postures. As 'Mohini' bent her hip, he followed her and bent his hip. 'Mohini' using her bangled arms, performing various dance postures and 'mudhraas' (seals) and he copied and followed it exactly. She bent down, raised up and smiled and he imitated the same. 'Mohini' raised her leg way up and showed her silky feet. He tried to raise his leg. She swirled around. Her braided, beautiful hair, was floating in the air. Again, she put her hand on the hip. Placed, her hand, on the chest. Later on, she closed her face with both palms over his head. That was it!... The boon, that he obtained, dictated his own fate.

Intoxicated over the shape of the ‘Perumaal’, who came as ‘Mohini’, Just like her, he also placed his palms over his head. That was itl... The boon, that he obtained, dictated his own fate. Based on the boon that he obtained... ’whoever heads I place my hands on, they must burn to death’, he was burnt to death by his own actions. After burning him to death, Sivan became peaceful. ‘Mohini’ face also relaxed and bloomed, by the fact the ‘avathaaram’ (incarnation) she took was very successful. Sivan, who thought that he buried the troubles from ‘Padhmaasuran’, He was haunted with ‘Mohini’ trouble. Yes!... The beauty of ‘Mohini’, especially after burning the ‘Asuran’... stoked the love lust in Sivan. Gently, he approached ‘Mohini’, ‘You have destroyed that ‘asuran’. However... within me there is another ‘Asuran’ named ‘Premam’ has sprouted and he is taking a ‘Vishwaroopam’ (monumental shape). I need your help in suppressing this ‘Asuran’ also and destroy him”... thus he pleaded. Sivan and ‘Mohini’ thought for a while. They both made love. With their affair, ‘Mohini’ gave birth to a divine baby... that baby... that divine baby was... Ayyappan. Their one born by the union of Sivan and ‘Mohini’, was born with a bell around His neck and hence. He was also called as ‘Manikantan’.

When this story of the birth of Ayyappan was told by the Namboodhries to the hill tribesmen, they were in a shock. Here, with this brief narration of this story, if it was so interesting, in those days, when it was related to the hill tribesmen, in detail, by day by day, like a soap opera, one can imagine the excitement, that was elicited among the people. “Is that so?... Did our Ayyanaar was born in this manner?”... in great surprise, the hill people asked them. “Yes... He has performed, many more wonders. Since Ayyappan was a creation of two different Gods, you should not be worshipping in this primitive manner... You must delegate this worshipping rituals in our hands”... said the Namboodhries. The hill tribesmen, gradually, started to believe the story of the origin of Ayyappan as related by the Namboodhries. In the steep hill range, to reach the plateau, where the Ayyappan idol was installed, and offer the flowers, the hill tribesmen have built some steps. When the Namboodhries saw the steps and they asked... “Aah haa... do you have any idea about these steps?...". The hill dwellers... “Why wouldn’t we know? Just to make it easy, to climb up the steep slope, and to worship the God, we built these steps”. “What a sin?... What an ignorance?... These were not ordinary steps... Each step has the characteristic of a particular deity. Six steps have the characteristics of Sivan. Six more steps have the characteristics of God Murugan. The last six steps have...
characteristics of Ayyappan a.k.a. ‘Manikantan’. You cannot climb up these steps in ordinary manner. You must observe strict ‘Viratham’… Not ordinary ‘Viratham’… One ‘Mandalam’ period of ‘Viratham’… in addition, you must avoid meat eating during this period… stay clean… then only you may be eligible to climb up these steps. Do you all understand?...” with high commanding voice, Namboodhries took away the rights of the hill people, and put a stop to their freedom, in worshiping Ayyappan. Thus, gradually, little by little... as the years were passing by, the Ayyanaar of the hill inhabitants… was converted to Manikantan and eventually, Ayyappan by the Namboodhries.

The inhabitants of the hill were left standing at the bottom of the steps, and the Namboodhri Brahmins climbed up the steps and reached the top. When they were on the top, their eyes witnessed, a flickering colossal beam of glow with a ‘Dhigu Dhigu’ oscillation.”What is that?”… the Brahmins asked. The hill dwellers were laughing at that question. “We are wondering. We are very much frightened over this huge flame in the middle of the forest. However, your faces are not even showing any signs of fear or concern”… the Namboodhri Brahmins asked again. “Oh... that... Remember, when you have met us for the first time, at night... we had lit our fat fueled fire torch... haven’t you noticed us?...” asked the hill tribesmen. “Yes...” the Brahmins replied. “Today, is our celebration day. We have lit our fire torch and we are celebrating in the light of the torch. That is the fire, shining on top of the ‘Kaantha Malai”... thus replied the tribesmen.

Few days passed... The Brahmins decided, to take advantage of the celebration of the hill people, and claim it as their own celebration. “You stupid people... That not only has been your festival... there was a ardent devotee of Ayyappan from the forest dwellers called ‘Sabhari’. Ayyappan delivered ‘Moksham’ for her. As the flowering trees showering their flowers... and the angels came and showering praises... a huge bright light appeared on the earth. ‘Sabhari’ entered into that light and reached the state of ‘Moksham’. That is ‘Moksha Jyothi’ (Light of Liberation). You have started celebrating this event afterwards. Do you understand now the significance of this ‘Jyothi’ (illumination). This region of the Western ghat is called ‘Sabhari Malai’. That was how this hill was named. Now you understand the source of ‘Sabhari Malai’?... The Brahmins have delivered a new light on the ‘lighting festival of fire torch by the hill dwellers’. Even to this day, on the reignning star of ‘Makaram’, during the Tamil month of ‘Thai’... on the top of the ‘Kaantha Malai’, one can witness a ‘Jyothi’. All of a sudden, it disappears. Even now, are the hill tribes people lighting their fire torch and celebrate their festival?... it is not?... Then how one witnesses the ‘Makara Jyothi’? This is a secret arrangement of the Namboodhries! They go to the top of the hill and set fire and return back. This fact, has been claimed among the top circles, of the famous Kerala leaders. ‘Makara Jyothi’ was the lighting festival of hill tribesmen. Now, the Namboodhries adapted it as their own and celebrating it with ‘puranic’ (fabricated stories) claims.

We have explored much about the worship of God. Now we will go into exploring the philosophy of ‘Who is God?’ and the various philosophers who explored the concept of God. When I say philosophy, do not get all psyched up about it. To look into this... we need to go backward little bit. We have seen so much about the ‘Vedham’ and the ‘karmaas’ devised by the ‘Vedham’. What came after the ‘Vedham’ was called ‘Upanishadhs’ written by several scholars and practitioners who have given their impressions...

“Na karmanaa naprajaa thanenaa
Thiyaakena eegee
Amirthathvam aanaso...”

“Sacrifice the ‘karmaas’ themselves. i.e., let it go of your past deeds. That is the ‘Moksham’...” according to this slokam. Thus... the Vedic and the Upanishadh authors thoughts about God differing wildly... six different major philosophers were born... they have learnt these ‘Vedhams’ and ‘Upanishadhs’ and based on these, they have established their own philosophy. Who were they? What did they say?... But before that ...

The luckiest part of the ‘Vedha sanaadhana religion’ (Hindu religion) was its recognition for giving importance to knowledge and absorb whatever makes sense. The reason for survival of ‘Vedham’ and those treatises based on ‘Vedham’, to this date, were those books that explained and expounded on the Vedic knowledge. I need to tell you, at this juncture, about another matter. Brahmins never go to war. Their sole profession was only to think. That was how, they kept on writing books, on various subjects. Since, they were on the driver seat of religion, they were leading and kept the religion under their control.
Hinduism … The Evolution?

Holding on to the orthodoxy, they showed special interest for learning new ideas and concepts and adapting to them to their advantage. The reason was, in several of the Vedic prayers, they begged God, thus… “Please give me wisdom”. So much for that digression. Shall we look at the life history of those six persons? They were : 1.) Kanaadhar; 2.) Akshapaathar; 3.) Vyaasar; 4.) Kabilar; 5.) Pathanjali; & 6.) Jeymini. Their teachings were called as ‘Dharshanas’ (Philosophies). Of these six people, Kanaadhar and Akshapaathar preached respectively ‘Vaisheshikam’ and ‘Nyaayam’. ‘Nyaayam’ means debating. Debating over God and it was also called ‘Dharkkikam’. Kabilar practiced ‘Saankyam’. Basically he practiced in-depth questioning about God. Pathanjali wrote about the principles of ‘Yogam’. Here we will explore in detail about Vyaasar and Jeymini. But before that…

The banks of the river Gangai… ancient banks of Gangai… dense forest… In those days, several ‘Munis’ (sages) used to roaming around these banks. They were usually, in deep meditation, most of the time. Along with them, living in the forest were, those ladies living in the forest i.e., those cot the trees and gather firewoods… those women collecting herbs and spices… and since, it was river banks those women belonging to the fishermen caste. Among these ladies, were the ‘Munis’ carrying on with their meditation. “Puthrene… paaryene…” conforming to these words “Do not need a wife and do not need a son”… thus the ‘Munis’ shall carry on with their life without worldly attachments. But… life in those days was such that, while carrying on with meditation, numerous girls can be seen around them. The beauty of those women, entice sexual lust, in the meditator. ‘Munis’ must reject such urges and control their desires. However, if the build of the ladies body, was troubling and hinderence to their meditation, immediately they must approach that woman and touch her and put an end to his sexual urge. Those ladies were also not in a position to deny the sages sexual propositions and ready to satisfy the sages.

In such cultured banks of Gangai, a ‘Muni’ called ‘Paraacharar’ was carrying on his meditation. One romantic, beautiful day, as he was strolling on the banks of the river Gangai… he saw a girl with well built curvy body, wrapped with wet clothing that accentuated her beautiful body. All of a sudden, his mind was hanging on to her body. He approached her. “Girl, Who are you?”… He asked her. She replied…”Maharishi (Great sage)… my good name is ‘Machchakanthi’ a.k.a. ‘Sathyawathi’. I am a girl belonging to fishermen caste. My father casts his net and he catches fish. I collect those catches and carry it home”. As she was introducing herself… ‘Paraacharar’ approached her still closer. From the body of ‘Machchakanthi’ emanated terrible, intense stink of fish. That stinking odor, did not bother him at all. He was deeply immersed in the smell of woman. ‘Munivar’(sage) gently touched the shoulder of ‘Machchakanthi’. “Maharishi…” (Great sage) as hair raised with energy passing through her body, ‘Machchakanthi’ gently moved away from him. “Girl… would you help me to cross the river Gangai?”… asked the sage and she accepted to help him to cross the river. Though, the ‘Muni’ crossed the river, he could not cross over his overwhelming lust. He embraced ‘Machchakanthi’ and held her tight. “This is ‘Bhaghawath Muhurtham’ (godly auspicious time). At this auspicious time, you agree with me, and become one with me. You give birth to a great ‘Muni’ for me. Nobody will know anything about this… What do you say”… he begged her. ‘Machchakanthi’ yielded to his request. As the fish odor faded away from her body, the men odor prevailed.

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‘Paraacharar’ leaped, over the body of ‘Machchakanthi’, the fishermen girl, on the banks of Gangai. In that forest region, at that auspicious time, an event to create a very special creation has taken place. Among the thorny bushes, ‘Paraacharar’, has performed his miracles, for blooming of a flower. "Machchakanthi… you have helped to fulfill my lust. I thank you for that. Now you can give birth to my son, and you can go back to your father. He will never know about our affair… You will remain as a virgin”… thus ‘Paraacharar’ said to her. ‘Machchakanthi’, within few hours of gestation, gave birth to a male child. You may be wondering ‘What is this…? It looks like, the tree sprouted and stood up as soon as the rain stopped’. The girl, who had sexual relation with ‘Paraacharar’, gives birth to a child instantly? In spite of giving birth, to a child, she remains a virgin?… Yes! There is a saying ‘Rishi garppam raath thangaathu’ (i.e., the gestation period of a rishi’s child wouldn’t last overnight). That is, the Rishis channel their sexual urge, only if it is, extremely essential. i.e., to only increase their knowledge, of other areas.

After the union of ‘Paraacharar’ and ‘Machchakanthi’, a baby was born. He grew. Wasn’t ‘Paraacharar’ telling that noone will know of the birth of the child? But… everyone in the forest came to know that this child was born to a ‘Valayachchi’ (fisher woman). ‘Machchakanthi’ gave the baby to ‘Muni’ and she left.
Hinduism … The Evolution?

However, all other ‘Rishis’ in that forest were Brahmins. They said “chii... chii... we cannot accept a baby born to a ‘milinavaththi’ (fisher women). Take him back to her”. They decreed, that no one should teach him, the sacred scriptures and no one should teach him, our tradition. More or less, the Brahmins of that day, discarded him, i.e., they sidelined him. In spite of their indifference, that boy grew up. He learned the sacred scriptures. He learned the tradition and culture. Whatever the Brahmins refused to teach him, he learned them all. He grew... His knowledge expanded... Beard grew... He became a great ‘Rishi’. The ‘Vedhams’, that are celebrated by the Brahmins, even today, were compiled by him. He also compiled the eighteen ‘Puranic’ stories that is the root and origination of thousands and thousands of stories over various deities. He also wrote ‘Bramma Soothram’, that is considered as the most ancient and sacred book by the Brahmins.

He was the great ‘Vyaasar’ a.k.a. ‘Vedha Vyaasar’. We may consider, that the incidences leading to the birth of ‘Vyaasar’, may be an imaginative story. Yet... look at the message conveyed in that story. He was discarded by the Brahmins of yesterdays, Just because he was born to a ‘milinavaththi’, later on he was considered as a boon to their caste. At this point, another minor incidence comes to my mind. I want to take you from the forests on the banks of Gangai to Kaaraikudi located in the Southern part of Tamil Nadu. In Kaaraikudi, we have convened a meeting of the Hindu religion. I was addressing the participants. The crowd was huge. I was talking about ‘Vyaasar’ also. At that time, E.V. Ramaswamy Naicker, came to the meeting. As he heard me, addressing the crowd about ‘Vyaasar’, he asked me “Sir... was ‘Vyaasar’ born to a ‘milinavaththi’?”. I replied... “Yes”. Naicker again... “When he was born, did the Brahmins outcaste him?”. I said... “Yes”. Naicker continued... “In that case, can’t you also throw away his creations?”. The crowd turned towards the direction of Naicker. O.K... Now we will return back to the forest region on the banks of the Gangai river.

‘Vyaasar’ on the subject of God, in his ‘Bramma soothram’, has criticized the four philosophers, I have mentioned earlier. O.K... What is the reservation of ‘Vyaasar’? “You are all approaching at the ‘Brammam’, i.e., God, on the basis of reasoning. But, He is beyond knowledge and He is crossed over the debate. The world was created by Him. He is the protector of this world. Do not approach Him through knowledge, reasoning or debate. God is beyond human’s logic”... thus he concludes. This is Vyaasar’s concept of God, in a nutshell. He compiled all four ‘Vedhams’. He also, compiled the puranic stories, that simplifies the basic of Vedic philosophy, for average human beings. Hence, approached God through Vedic teachings using poetic means. i.e., stories told through poetic form. O.K... ‘Vyaasar’ had a disciple. One may call him as a naturalist. His name was Jeymini. The arguments between Vyaasar and his disciple Jeymini are very interesting. They provoke everyone’s thinking power.

One time... in the forest, when Vyaasar was instructing to Jeymini, he was delivering his usual advise. "...‘Sishyaa’ (Disciple) God has created this forest, plants, trees, this soil, you and me. He not only created us, but also He is protecting and maintaining us”... as ‘Vyaasar was continuing with his discourse... Jeymini was holding onto a plant and said “Swami, please call Him”. “Calling who?”... asked Vyaasar. “That is the one! The God you were talking about”... said Jeymini. Jeymini’s curiosity was to Vyaasar...

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"Swami, please bring Him here"... Jeymini
"Bring who?”... Vyaasar
"The one you were talking about. The very same person, that you said, has created this world with ease. Only that God” ... Jeymini

The request of Jeymini pierced through Vyaasar. Vyaasar, slightly closed his eyes and opened wide and said... “He is dwelling in ‘paralokam’ (beyond this world)... You cannot see Him from here...”. Jeymini smiles and asks “How does that place looks like?”. "Here when we conduct ‘Yaagam’ how we get so much of smoke. That ‘paralokam’ will look like very dense and intense smoke”... thus describes Vyaasar. “Have you seen this place? Do you know this ‘paralokam’?... If you know please show it to me. If not, you can call someone who knows the ‘paralokam’. I will be excited to meet them, and enjoy his company”... said Jeymini. As Vyaasar was silenced, without an answer... Jeymini continued...

"Kohi thasvedha yathya mushpin loke
Asthii vaaravethii..."

This mantra is from Yajur Vedham. Meaning... "Who knows about ‘paralokam’?... Who has seen this place?... If there is one, please bring him/her here... How does it looks like?”... Thus, Yajur Vedham stacks
question over questions. Jeymini was asking "Do you have any answers for this Vedic questions?". Vyaasar... "He is living in 'paralokam'... He was the one gave life to you, me, this plant and for this vine and he also gave a body for every one"... After hearing this Jeymini, immediately got hold of a vine and said... "This vine also has a soul. It grows, moves, flowers, yields and bears fruits. Everything was possible because of the water it took in. That water itself, its food. Now, if you claim that this vine is surviving because of God, then is the water, indeed God? On the other hand, is that God, indeed water? That vine has an inner energy. It possesses adequate energy to grow. That energy is derived from water. Why are you calling that God?"... These are Jeymini's questions and his exploration of the existence of God. Jeymini, thus by using the plants and vines as example, to demonstrate that they also have a life, of their own. Only after several centuries after his death, the scientists confirmed that 'plants also have life'. When Jeymini talks about food it was not merely eating stomach full and after consuming paan (Betal leaves, nut,calcium combination) and burping...

"Eetho vaanasya mahimaam
yadhaannenu
Adhilogathii"

"The food that delivers 'praana shakthi' a.k.a.'praanic energy' or life energy is the God". We eat in the morning. Little past noon, we are hungry again. Why?... That energy delivered by the morning food is exhausted. For further survival... for the function of our body and life no more energy was available. We need more food to keep us going. Food that delivers the vital 'energy' is the God. Hence, 'The Food is God'. Thus, Jeymini was placing the nature, in the forefront of the debates, over God. If we carry on the rituals such as 'yaagams', poojas, 'homams' and 'vrathams' to alter our karmas... what is the necessity for God?... That was question, Jeymini has raised. This was the essence of the argument between Vyaasar and Jeymini.

We have seen that, Vyaasar has created the sacred book, called 'Bramma Soothram' (Soothram means notes or sketches). It was called 'Uththara milmaamsa'. Saints such as Sri Raamaanujar, Sankarar have written 'Bhaashyam' (Treatise). That is, they have elaborated it, so an average person can understand. However, Jeymini has created a 'Chiththaantham' (offerings after considerable research or thought) called 'Poorva Milmaamsa'. We have already seen that 'Milmaamsa' means enquiry. Those who have touched 'Vyaasar's Milmaamsa', they never paid any attention to, 'Jeymini's Milmaamsa'. Because, In those days, Jeymini was considered by some, as 'Naasthikar' (Atheist). Here, a bizarre observation! That too it is a troublesome joke... Some Brahmins claim, that they are engaged in the enqiry over God, based on Jeymini, and they declare that they belongs to 'Jeymini Gothram' (Jeymini clans). However... their belief and concepts are directly opposite to what Jeymini has been advocating.

O.K... We have seen Vyaasar and we have also seen Jeymini. Now we will slip into another 'Dharisanam' (vision). The whole head resembles a parrot. The whole body was built like a human being. Who was this unique person?... How was he born like this?... What kind of conversation he is carrying on with that king?... Shall we listen to it?... There is a relationship between him and Vyaasar.

Who was that?... The head resembling that of parrot, and the body was built like a man. Besides, was he having relationship, to the Vyaasar, that we have seen earlier? We have seen the manner in which Vyaasar was born. It was different from the normal birth of a human being. That is, Muni Paraacharar was having a bodily relationship with a girl of fisherman caste... conceived and Vyaasar born instantly. O.K... Then Vyaasar was instrumental for birth of a baby. How was he born?... This was also a puranic story. Don't get alarmed saying... 'What is this man, a very old man, kept on telling stories'. If you flip the pages of the 'puranams' (sacred stories to religion close to commoner), and do a bit of research, you will find such stories are very common. O.K... Let us come to the subject. Vyaasar was the source for birth of a baby. How was he born?... I have already told you, that the 'Rishis' were engaged in sexual pleasures, only when it was very essential. Thus when they were not engaged in sexual pleasures for very long time, isn't it a natural phenomenon for their semen to eject, during the periods of non-engagement?

Under such circumstances, one time Vyaasar's semen was ejected through natural causes. What did a parrot do, to that semen, that was spilled over the floor? It picked on it, and swallowed the same. Some claim that, he was having relationship, with a woman, who came in the form of a parrot. Aahaa... A Rishi's semen... that was considered to have intense intuitive knowledge... That parrot, which ate the semen,
would she get by without any effect? She became pregnant. What normally happens, if a parrot became pregnant? She lays eggs... have baby parrots... and they eventually become beautiful parrots. However, this parrot was not going through that cycle. After all, wasn't she became pregnant with, a great Rishi Vyaasars's, semen? So this pregnant parrot gave birth to a little baby. What?... A parrot gave birth to a baby?... That is what the 'puraanam' says. How did that parrot baby looked like?... The entire head was like a parrot and the body was that of a human being. What is this? Are you saying, that it looks like, a new bizarre embellishment?... Yes! it is an ancient bizarre disgust. Wait... The story continues... The fact that this 'parrot baby', was born to the great sage Vyaasar and a parrot, came to the knowledge of Vyaasar. As Vyaasar came out of his hut, and called for the 'parrot baby'... before that the 'parrot baby' flew away. Any how... what was the name of that 'parrot baby'?... 'Sukahaa'... in Sanskrit means 'parrot'. Hence, he was named 'Sukar'. He was also called as 'Sukabrammam'.

Even though Vyaasar has digested all of the Vedhic verses... classified it and compiled it into four 'Vedhams'... wrote 'Bramma Sooththiram' to expound on all the 'Upanishadhs', and assembled all eighteen 'puraanams', he was not satisfied with his accomplishments. Hence, he also created the great epic 'Bhaagawatham'. 'Bhaagawatham' gives the details about the life history of God Krishna, and various divine messages associated with His accomplishments during His lifetime. There is a belief, that if one hears this story, or if they were tutored on 'Bhaagawatham', their soul gets liberated from reincarnation, and they would reach 'Sri Vaikuntam', the abode of God Narayana. This story of the parrot...

"Emprav vishantham
Anubetham upadhe hiruthyam
Dhanava paayahai
Viraka kaatharaaha aahijaa
Kaadhethii thanmayedhaya tharavo..."

thus, is given in the 'Bhaagawatha paaraayana' slokam. O.K... This 'Bhaagawatham' wrote by Vyaasar, was narrated to king 'Parilitchiththu' by Sukar, who was considered as more intelligent than Vyaasar and excelled in knowledge. That too, the critical condition was, that the king shall receive the entire teachings of 'Bhaagawatham', within a week, if he has to attain 'Moksham'. How today's teachers rush, chase, threaten, slapping, flipping complete that portion of the subject necessary for the upcoming examination, likewise, Sukar completed his lectures on 'Bhaagawatham' to king 'Parilitchiththu'. By listening to the 'Bhaagawatham', the curse on 'Parilitchiththu was annulled and he attained 'Moksham'.

At this point, we are going to search, for the answers of the question, raised by Jeymini. That is the reason I narrated this story of Sukar. When they say that he attained 'Moksham' and reached 'Vaikuntam'... What is 'Moksham'?... How does the 'Vaikunta Lokam' (Vaikunta world) looks like? The answers to this can be found in the 'Upanishadhs'. Just like in this earth, 'Vaikuntam' also has all the amenities and pleasures. If that is so... Do they have houses in 'Vaikuntam'?... Those in 'Vaikuntam', are they living with their wives? Just like in this world, are the inhabitants, enjoying sexual pleasures?... Do they also bear children?... Do they have thieves over there?... How about sages? Do they entertain extra-marital affairs?... I am not asking these questions! Moving on...

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Virajaa is a small stream that is flowing uniformly, making the sound 'jala... jala...', in a very narrow path. Across the river there is a town called Aparaajithai. Town is so good and happy... and wherever you see the men and women are very happy... assemble in crowds, and enjoying themselves. Lined up with huge mansions with terraces and elaborate temples there is also a hall with one thousand pillars. Inside that hall also there is entertainment and happiness is overflowing. In that thousand pillared hall, there is a very high cot named 'Dhivyaparyangam'. On that cot, using snake as the matress Perumaal is resting on it. Nearby, another dweller, has created as per his own desire 'Pithru Lokam' (Ancestral world) and 'Shrithi Lokam' (Ladies world). He is also enjoying life like everyone else. What a hooplaa... this is called 'Moksham'. In the Moksha world... Are there families?... Are there kids?... Are there sages?... Does one person takes away another person's wife?... questions such as these were raised in the last chapter. These questions were not raised by me... Chakkaravarththi Aachchaaryaar in his book titled 'Mummadhasaaram' has raised these questions. He himself, later on, gives the answers to these questions. "The Moksham, that these people are associated with, is praised by everyone. Divisions based on caste, class, religion, color does not exists here. Everyone belongs to only one caste. Even in the enjoyment, there is no difference between them... Enjoyment is equal for everyone. This is called 'Saayujujam'. Every
variety of enjoyment is equally divided among the individuals and distributed to all dwellers is 'Saayujyam'. Other living beings such as, nightingale, parrot, eagle, elephant, plant, vine, and tree also found in Vaikunta world. Since they are also living beings, some of you may wonder... based on their size and the intellectual level, wouldn't there be any discrimination?

The answer to this... they are all permanent 'Nithyasoorikal'.('Nithyasoorikal' they are perpetual residents of the Vaikuntam and exist to serve the 'Bhagawaan' himself.) Even though there are two different sexes... in no means one is deprived of the other. Even, the parrot and nightingale can assume other forms, at their will, and serve the God. A 'Mukthaathmaa' (a soul that has been liberated Mukthi+Aathmaa) can assume multiple forms at the same time. 'Mukthaathmaa' can assume the multiple forms, it can assume the forms of male, female and children and serve as a family. Or... one 'Mukthaathmaa' can associate with another 'Mukthaathmaa' and serve together, by both 'Mukthaas' assuming several forms that are suitable for the service mission and carry on joint family service (Kudumbha Dhaasyam). Thus, while performing the 'Kudumbha Dhaasyam'... as the male forms of one 'Mukthaathmaa' and female forms of different 'Mukthaathmaa' associate together and play around or amuse themselves, there is a potential for developing sexual urge between them. Because of those feelings, do not suspect that it is acting against the image of the Moksham. All the 'Ramanam' (naughtiness) among each form is only the mischief of the 'Bhagawaan'.

Why Sri Krishna shall enjoy the company of Gopi women and have bodily relationship with them?... How come Paraasara Bhattar in his book ‘Sri Gunarathna Kosam’ established that Sri Ranganaathan enjoyed His bodily relationship with His consort Sri Ranganaayaki using His male body part?... If we think based on all these writings... just like in this world, in the Moksham also every sort of enjoyment exists. Even if the dwellers of Moksham are puritans, they were flirting around and enjoying the company of opposite sex. Every happenings is the act of ‘Bhagawaan’...” Thus, Chakkaravarththi Aachchaariyaar gives a detailed accout of the Moksham and the life in the Moksha world. Now, shall we look into the lines of Upanishadhhs to find out what is going on in the Moksham?...

“What do you want?... You want to see your deceased mother? You create her yourself. You want to see your father? Create yourself. O.K... You are hateful your wife and relatives... Now, you need an outside women (parasthrii)?... That is, whichever woman you have been longing for, in this world... or in that world, whichever woman you are longing for... If you wish, she will appear in front of you. She will smile at you. Approach closer to you. She will gently embrace you and give the pleasures you are expecting from her. In this world, the enjoyment you derive from bodily contact with women, is considered as little pleasures. Where as, in the Moksham, the same will be great Joy. The pleasures in this world are irrelevant. There it is ‘Bhagawath Aanandham’ (Godly pleasure). This is nature and that is super nature.

… Thus says upanishadh. “Just like the way, you are roaming around in a car in this world, there also you can roam around freely. That too, you can spend your time, with any ladies you choose. You will have the power to create her yourself”... thus goes the upanishadh.

If that is so... What is Bhagawaan’s responsibility in moksham?...

In this world, the one who gave birth to you, is your mother... where as in Moksham, you can create your own mother. Here, the source of your birth, is your father... and in Moksham, if you wish, you can create him. Thus, we have seen more about Moksham, that is being operated under the supernatural laws. It for real?... How to get to this world, in which there is no hunger or famine, if one desires?... For guiding a person who wants to reach this world, several lesserions are given, in 'Sandhokya Upanishadh'. That is, starting from the third chapter... 'Madhu Vidhyai', 'Gaayathrii Bramma Vidhyai', 'Saandilya Vidhyai', 'Samvarga Vidhyai', 'Shoda Sakala Bramma Vidhyai', 'Upakosala Vidhyai', 'Praana Vidhyai', 'Panchaakni Vidhyai'... thus several 'Vidhyai' (learned art) and the list keeps on going. These 'Vidhyais' were taught by Bramman to Prajaapathi and from Prajaapathi to Manu and finally from Manu to common citizens. What is
The content of these 'Vidhyais'?... 'The one who realizes his soul... he attains Moksham'... this is the gist of this Upanishadh. 

The angels in heaven ('Dhevar') and those cruel people in this world ('Asuran') are children of Prajaapathi. He spread, all over the world, the word, 'The one who realizes 'Aadhmaa' (soul) along with its eight characteristics only can attain Moksham'. At once... the leader of the 'Dhevars', Indhiran and the as representative of 'Asurans', Virosanan, approached their father Prajaapathi and asked him 'How to attain Moksham'?... and upon his instructions, they were observing thirty two years of celibacy. At that time their father told them "Fill a pail with water and intensely look through the water. Decorate yourself with jewelries and costumes and look deep into the pail. If nothing is visible you come and ask me". The leader of 'Asuran' clan, Virosanan looked into the water. He can see only his own image. He concluded that this is 'Aadhmaa' and returned back and taught every 'Asuran' his perception of 'Aadhmaa'. Because of his wrong teachings the 'Asura' dynasty became 'Dhehaadhmawaadhi' (Dheham=Body; Aadhmaa=Soul; Waadhi=Believer, petitioner). That is, they wrongly believed, that the body itself is the soul. However, the leader of Indhiran, realized that the reflection resembles his own face, and returned to Prajaapathi. He instructed Indhiran to continue his penance to one hundred and one years during which he instructed various 'Vidhyai' and sent him to Moksham.

Based on this... the Asurans have no privilege to Moksham, and is reserved only for Dhevars. If the purpose of this story, is to relate the differentiation between the Asurans and the Dhevars... then and there, couldn't Prajaapathi have instructed, correctly about the Aadhmaa, to the Asurars also?... Only thing is, that the Rishis, who wrote these Upanishadhs, did not think about this point. From the same Upanishadh another 'Vidhyai'... Son of Arunamaharishi was Uththaalakar. His son was Sveethakethu. He had no interest in learning Vedham, tradition or any other arts. He roamed around as a free bird. After seeing his behavior, his father Uththaalakar told him... "Hey!... What is the use, being a Brahmin, and if you cannot recite Vedhams?... You get out from here, go to a 'gurukulam' (In-residence with a guru and learn) and return back"... with these words, he sent him out. These words of 'Uththaalakar' touched his nerves and he left the house. He learned every Vedham, without any flaw... and returned back after convincing himself that nothing more to learn. His father Uththaalakar asked him... "What happened... You have returned back so soon?". That twenty four year old lad replied..."I have learned twelve years. There is nothing more to learn". His father... "Did you ask your guru, 'If I meditate by requesting on which one thing, that I will get the benefits of meditating, requesting for everything in this world'"... asked. Son... "What are you talking about? This world is so big? How can you know a single thing, and through that know the entire world?...There is no such matter exists in this world"... Later on the father 'Uththaalakar', continued teaching him, on various subjects.

Another scene... Svetakethu went to a 'Sathas' (academy) in Paanchaala Dhesam. 'Sathas' is an academy, where intellectuals get together, and debate over various topics. Ther he met with a Raajarishi (Elder Rishi) named Pravaahanan. Raajarishi asked... "Son... Has your father been teaching you various subjects?"... Svetakethu... "Yes Sir"... Raaja : "If that so... Do you know where everybody goes after their death?"... Sveth : "I do not know..." Raaja : "Do you at least know their return pathway?"... Sveth : "I do not know..." Raaja : "O.K... Do you at least know, of some lives, that has reached the upper world (Moksham)?"... Sveth : "I do not know..." Raaja : "O.K... Do you know the difference between 'Dhevayaana Maarkkam' and 'Pithruyaana Maarkkam'?"... Sveth : "I do not know..." Raaja : "If that is so... What kind of teachings did you had?... If you do not know answers to all these questions, how can you claim that you had any teachings?"...

Svetakethu ran back to where his father was... and told him of the humiliation that he was going though in front of the Raajarishi. After sobbing for a while, he asked "Dad... What are the answers to all those questions?". His father Uththaalakar..."Son... If I only knew the answers wouldn't I have told you about it?"... Thus his father replies. This is how it goes, all enquiries over the Moksham...
We have explored in detail all enquiries about Moksham. We have also seen various examples of enquiries such as, the discussions between Vyaasar and Jeymini, and discussions of Uththaalakar-Svethaethu-Pravaahanan. What did we understand from this treatise? That is, You must live in this very world, as a good person. If you do, there is another world, which even better than this world, is waiting for you. Thus Moksham is nothing but an entity created to stoke your gluttony. We have already seen that women cannot go to Moksham. If they desire, they have to go through an incarnation as man and work towards their goal. If that is so, we have also seen, that there won’t be very many ladies, in Moksham and those men who goes there, they have the ability, to create one or several women, to their likings. If everyone can create, without any effort, whatever they desire, then what is the task of God in Moksham? His only work is to hang around Mahaalatsumi and enjoy Her company. If you go further, Mokshalokam (Moksha World), is nothing but another world, similar to ours, but much happier, sweeter, plentiful and everything is there to pleasurize you. However, to reach that place there are very strict conduct and conditions have to be met... thus, Moksham was created just to force us live in this world per established moral, societal rules and regulations. Nothing more!

O.K... We have swirled around from... "Baby! Here is the milk, and you drink this, and grow to be a good person"... thus starting with the newborn baby, sending them Vedic education, till after life in Moksham as described in Upanishadh. While going through all these topics, have we used the word 'Hindu' at any place? Only at the end of the first chapter... When Brahmins, set foot on Indian soil, there were 450 religions prevailing in this land. I raised the question, out of these, which was Hindu religion? After the usage at that location, have we used the word 'Indhu' or 'Hindhu' in any other locations? Think about it! The title of this book itself is 'Indhu Matham Enge Poogirathu?'. Yet... to this point, I have not introduced this word 'Indhu' to you? We have looked into various details about our religion, our traditions, cultural and religious highlights, incidences, and stories. Yet?... We have not used the term 'Indhu' or 'Hindhu'? Only when this question is raised, we need to tell how this word 'Hindhu' has originated. Before that...

The human race in this world is divided, by the anthropologists, into five groups. What are they?

- Semetic - Jews and Arabs
- Hemetic - At present they are considered to be non-existent
- Negroes - People of African origin
- Mangolis - China and surrounding countries
- Aryans - Europeans and Indian Brahmins

After looking at this classification, of the human race, come to Babylonia. Babylonia?... Yes! I am going to quote a sentence, by the world historians, after they have conducted considerable research. Then you will understand about the Babylonia. "In the dark past of ancient countries... Babylonia and Egypt are only lights with fine culture...". If we go back to the dark days, of the ancient world, and turn it around, there, only at two places, the light of civilization blinds the eyes. One was Babylonia and the other was Egypt. Here, we are going to look among them, one of those bright spots called Babylonia. The inhabitants of this place, several thousand years back, went through a revolution in civilization. They have ruled by establishing a country as well as cities. Their religion and culture were matched and compatible. We get evidences for this from the book 'The Encyclopedia of World Religions and Ethics'.

How did the people of Babylonia look? What kind of deities they worshiped? In ancient Babylonia, the people practiced, 'Totomism Worship'. That is, they were worshiping deities shaped like animals. How?... They were, for their animal deities, conducted functions. That too, just like we take palanquin and carry our 'utsavamoothrilies' (uninstalled movable deities), they used to make palanquin out of wood, and decorated it with live flowers, kept their deity inside, and carried it around the town and thus conducted their festivals. They even went farther... they assigned duties (Dharma) for each class of people, and established principles of justice such as what one can do and not do. They used to wear a short skirt, over their strong rugged body, and wear a sharp machete at their hip, and looked very scary. However, their life style was bloomed out of matured civilization. O.K... Let the cultural flood of Babylonia, over flow the banks. I know that you would like to ask... "How was that culture connected with the word 'Indhu'?"... Wait!... We need to look at little more details about Babylonia.
We have been looking into the civilization of the Babylonians. Before we get back to our subject… we need to look a little bit more about their civilized culture. What culture… The wonder about their civilization is burst open and flowing all over Babylonia. The people of Babylonia have been living such a civilized life. Borrowing few of the books of civilization from Sumerians, Babylonians established for themselves, a much superior civilization, and lived a very happy life and thereby left a mark in this world. To find out more about the life they lived thousands of years back… let us get back to the Babylonian soil.

The flowering trees, with greenest of green leaves… In that area, sweet music was flowing through and fills the tree groves. What type of music was it? How can one describe in words, about the song that was played, several thousand years back? If we move towards the spot, where the music was originating, we find a small gathering. In the middle of the crowd, was standing a person, with shaven head, and wearing full length red dress. Who was that person? He was the religious Guru of the Babylonians. What was the religion of the Babylonians? They worshiped nature such as the sun and the moon. Later on, they worshiped various animals and finally, they created their own deities and named them in their own language. In that crowd… the drums were there and flutes were also there. As some people were playing instruments, others were singing together.

"In the assembly of the elders
May my speech be heard
Oh God…
Daily walk with me
Thy praise I would sing…"

Babylonians, various types of devotional songs, this was a small drop. In the book titled ‘Encyclopedia of World Religions and Ethics’ under the heading ‘Babylonian’s Prayer’, we can read this song. (T.C.: There is no need to translate these verses.) Babylonians were requesting from God, more mental acumen and knowledge.

There are lot more information about the religious Gurus. There were several hierarchy in the religious Gurus. A common religious Guru was called 'Sangu' and it means leader. He was at the bottom of the rung of religious Gurus. The next higher in the pecking order was called 'Sangu Rapu' which means a high priest. Next in the hierarchy was called 'Sangu Danu' which means that he was a mighty priest. The highest level of priesthood was called 'Sangu Mahoo' meaning supreme priest. Though there were such hierarchy existed among the religious Gurus, during the public prayers everyone from the kings to ordinary laborers were admitted to pray without class distinction. Why just ordinary laborers? They even allowed slaves to pray together in the congregational worship practices. However, to participate in the worship services, one has to meet certain conditions. One must pay as tax, one tenth of their income, to be eligible to participate in the worship services. Even those, who do not own a piece of land, are eligible to participate in the worship services. Rather than money, they must contribute sweat labor, and attend to temple related activities.

How about ladies in the worship services?… Why not?… Just like for men, they must also contribute taxes, to be eligible to participate. The chief reason for this inclusion was, that they respected women to be equal, and were also worshiping female deities. Here a scene… There was a common prayer session in progress. At that time a woman walks in to participate. The temple officers refused to admit her into the prayer hall.

Female : "Hey! Do you know who I am?"
Officer : "How does it matters, who you are?"
Female : "My name is Ninqaya. I am the servant of this country's King's mother. I come directly, from the royal palace, and even for me no permission?"
Officer : "Lady!... You pay your dues... Till that time, I am not bothered, even if you are the King's mother."

What happened after that?... The servant woman paid her share of the tax and she was admitted to enter the prayer hall. The reason for bringing this to your attention, was to show that the religious Gurus were not only dedicated to devotion, religious discourses and activities, and worship services, but also they were taking active part in the financial management of the temple. Thus, in the religious matters as well as administrative matters, they practiced strict regulations... collecting appropriate dues and through that carrying out social services... from kings to common laborers same kind of treatment including common worship for everyone... thus they were living in a very civilized and disciplined society. Naturally, such
peaceful urban civilized society has tendency to elicit jealousy from the kings of the neighboring land. The king of the neighboring land 'Antha' was itching to takeover Babylonia.

We have looked into the highly civilized life of the people of Babylonia. Who wouldn't be delighted to rule over such a paradise? That desire overwhelmed one king! History predicts that happened approximately 2600 years back... The adjacent land next to Babylonia, was Paarasilikam (Persia), ruled by king Cambysis I. He had a son named Cyrus, who was very aggressive, even during his birth. Everybody was thinking... 'For a kid born in a vassal country, he is too aggressive... he is going to be a roughneck when he grows up'. Indeed... at that time the people of Paarasilikam were vassals to the king of Midiiya named Astyages. Even though the country of Paarasilikam was vassel to Midiiya, it was run as a self autonomous country. According to ancient historian, Heradatus, 'Persian nation contains a number of tribes'. Basically, then, it had people of several tribes, brought under one umbrella. What are they?... 'Paasaragate', 'Maraahbi', 'Maasbi' were few of the many tribes that were living in that country. Out of these tribes, 'Paasaragate' tribe was considered to be a very respectable one, because of the family ties, that they have established. Just like them, there were several nomadic tribes, such as 'Paanthiyaale', 'Derusiyaaye', 'Taay', 'Drobiki', 'Sakarti', also living in Persian nation. The king of Midiiya was ruling over such tribes who were living in bunches.

At that period in time, Cyrus (He was also called as Curus) was an young lad. Under his fathers upbringing, Cyrus learned all the arts... and in his youthful days... roughened age he became the king of his country. During those days, Persia was called as Anson. As soon as Cyrus became the king of Anson, he brought the nomadic tribesmen who were dodging around his father, completely under his control. Cyrus was putting more restrictions, and controls over these nomads than his father. He himself was under the rule of the king of Midiiya. However, if he goes and beats up the nomadic tribesmen and collects royalties... what would those people do? They took every weapon, they can get hold of, including machete and stones, and revolted against his administration. The king of Midiiya was sizing up the situation. "This Cyrus himself, is under my rule. How can he exercise, more authority, over the tribal nomads?"... he became very angry and decided to send an army to suppress Cyrus's power. He sent his army under the leadership of his general Harpogus, to conquer over Cyrus.

However, Cyrus, himself was waiting for an opportunity to confront the king of Midiiya. "Come you damn it... come on... Were you thinking, that I am an older gentleman, just like my father?... I was pondering over the issue 'whom should I attack?'... that too, I was waiting for an opportunity, to trounce you, for keeping us, as vassals for all these years"... thus Cyrus was beating his thighs. He defeated and chased the army of the Midiiya country as they were fleeing. After, Cyrus crushed the army of the general Harpogus, as a next step he marched on Midiiya country, and brought it under his rule. From that time on, he not only became the king of Midiiya and Persia, by his own actions, but also those who made the country of Persia, as a vassal during his father's ruling, he made them as vassals and made them pay tribute to him. At this juncture, there was a 'Raaja Ragasyam' (king's secret) concealed by the historians. This secret was brought to light by great historian Herodotus.

What secret?...

You see... Cyrus's father, somehow chased around and got married to Mandane, the daughter of the king of Midiiya, the one who has kept him as a vassal king. That is, he added her also to his stable of numerous wives he already had in his haram. "O.K.... What kind of 'Raaja Ragasyam' was it? This happens every day in the royal families"... you may ask. The secret is yet to come! As you know, Cyrus's father was married to a daughter of the king of Midiiya. Ctesias of Cnidus, a prominent Greek historian, gives further account of the happenings in the Kingdom of Midiiya. "Another daughter of the king of Midiiya, was married to Cyrus himself!"... wrote the Greek Historian. What is this? One daughter was married to father and her sister was married to the son. That too, the son gets married after the wedding of the father! That means he married his step-mother's sister. Because of this marriage, Cyrus officially became the owner of the kingdom of Midiiya. Hence, Cyrus was elevated to king of dual kingdom, one, of his father-in-law's, and if we go still further, his grandfather's kingdom of Midiiya, and the other, of his own kingdom of Persia. This Cyrus was the one, who wanted to takeover Babylonia. However?... In order to face the mighty Babylonian army,
Cyrus needed more reinforcement for his army. What did he do to overcome this handicap? Whom did he approach for that help?...

What have we seen so far? We have seen the Persian king Cyrus’s love for Babylonia and his determination to take it over. When he found out that he cannot accomplish the task with his own army... few people were giving him advice ‘how to reinforce the army’? “Go little bit farther... There you will find the king of Sindhu Desh. You ask his help for conquering Babylone. He will definitely assist you”... they advised. Cyrus or his messengers reached the Sindhu Dhesam. Sindhu Dhesam means... Huge country that was laying on the banks of the present Sindhu river. Sindhu river originates in the Lake Manosarovar located in present Tibetan region meanders along the Himalayan plateau, descends into Pakistan and at Karachi, it confluences into Arabian sea. Sindhu Dhesam, probably was located, on the banks of the river and extended beyond into the plains. Cyrus was requesting military help only from this very powerful kingdom of Sindhu Dhesam. Historian Arrian, in his sketch, confirms that Cyrus had visited the Sindhu river region. However, he concludes that there was no evidence, or stone tablets, to prove that he had conquered this region. The king of Sindhu Dhesam, helped Cyrus with a strong contingent of elephant and horse brigades. With the reinforcement of these contingents, Cyrus, was victorious and he took control of Babylone. This is given in the writings of historian Taalmil. A book publisher, I believe it was P.T. Paani, located in Thiruvallikeni published the book called ‘Age of Shankara’. In this book, Taalmii’s statements are explained in detail.

O.K... Are you saying, ‘Let the king of Sindhu Dhesam help Cyrus’?... ‘What about it now’?... Only now we are getting back to the point. I have asked earlier, ‘How the name ‘Hindhu’ was given?’ Now you listen to me. This Cyrus... being friendly, with the king of Sindhu Desham, wouldn’t he had few conversations with him? The reason is... based on the conclusions of the philology experts of the world... there are some similarity and differences between the Sanskrit and the Persian language. What is ‘Sa’ in Sanskrit is ‘Ha’ in Persian language. Example, What is ‘Saraswathi’ for us was ‘Harahwathi in Persian. We say ‘Asurahaa...’ and while Persian’s worshiped a God ‘Ahuramasthaa’. Along these lines, ‘Sindhu’ was called as ‘Hindhu’ by Persian people. The Persians pronounced it incorrectly. However... in our books, and in ‘Vedhams’, approximately in one thousand locations, it was referred only as ‘Sindhu’, and nowhere it was referred as ‘Hindhu’ or ‘Indhu’. Absolutely not! O.K... How was the word ‘Sindhu’ was used in our Vedhas?...

“Sindhohaa... aparapaa patha aasanna...”

The words that follow this sentence, are flowing like a river on the mountain slope with roaring noise of ‘Sala...Sala...’. What is the meaning of these words? ‘Sindhu’ river, several times wider than the present width, is flowing like a ‘Jiiva’ (perennial) river. The surface waves are moving very beautifully. In that perennial river Sindhu... few people are crossing the river starting from the other bank and coming towards this bank, by a boat... this is the meaning of this Vedic lines. On the banks of this river only, various karmas were devised by the ‘Vedham’. One such karma was, the people who were living in this valley, used send their children to learn various arts and ‘Vedham’. This karma was called ‘upanayanam’. That is, this karma, what was originally performed, to send off a child to his school (Gurukulam), now it is used to put a ‘poonool’ (sacred thread) around the upper body. Besides, they wrote mantras for several social ritual such as conducting marriage, birth of a child, naming a child, feeding the child his first solid meal. Based on this, using Vedham as the source, not only these karmas, but also karmas such as ‘Poorva Pirayogam, Apara Pirayogam’ (that is those karmas to be performed during one’s life, and those karmas that has to be performed after death, of a person) were explained, by Rishi Aapasthambar. This was called Aapasthambar soothram.

“Nadhevaahaa nakantharvaahaa
Napithalthii aajakshathe
Ayantharmoo aayantharmethii
Yanthaa aaryaa krumaanam samsanthi natharmahaa”

That is... these mantra karmas, that was to be performed by all people, was called ‘Dhesaachchaaram’. This tradition shall be called as ‘Aarya Matham’... thus states Aapasthambar. One strange thing... the daily rituals of the people, living on the banks of the river Sindhu, that he codified, was not even named by him as ‘Sindhu Madham’ (Sindhu religion). He named it as ‘Aaryaa madham’. If that was the case... why in the school certificates of our children of Tamil Nadu, living thousands of miles away from Sindhu river, they are writing his religion as Hindu... Why?...
We have seen about the river ‘Sindhu’ and how the letter ‘sa’ was mispronounced by the Persians as ‘ha’. i.e., we have seen the ‘si’ eventually transformed to ‘hi’. Other than the Persian’s called that region around the Sindhu river as the ‘Hindhu Dhesam’, the composers of ‘Vedham’ called it only as ‘Bhaaratham’. In Rig Vedham, a ‘manthram’ (mantra) with the name of a very famous sage of that era called Vishwaamithrar...

“Viswaamithrasya rakshathii
Bramme itham
Bhaarathanjanam…”

What is the meaning of this verse? Vishwaamithrar says... “With my bright knowledge... along with the benefit of the knowledge that I accurred by learning the religious scriptures... the mantras that I teach will shower the people of the Bhaaraatha Dhesam prosperous life and will protect the people of this land”... boldly, and with confidence. Vishwaamithrar said neither “My mantra will protect Hindhu Dhesam” nor “My mantra will protect Sindhu Dhesam”. He refers it only as ‘Bhaaratham’. Next... I have given an example, ‘Sindho aparapaathe aasanna…’, do you remember? Before that there is a sentence, ‘Bhaarathaasi eenaa…’ meaning of these sentences “The people of the Bhaaraatha Dhesam are crossing the Sindhu river…”... goes like this. Even where the river mentioned, as Sindhu river, the country was called by the composers, of the ‘Vedham’, only as Bhaaratha Dhesam. Just like this, let us look at another example. Among the Brahmins, there is a tradition called ‘Sankalpam’. ‘Sankalpam’ means... everytime a karma (ritual) is performed, they take an oath through a mantra, which goes thus... “I shall carryout this Karma to its completion, with utmost devotion and effort”. ‘Sankalpam’ means resolve. i.e., Oath... O.K...

What is that ‘sankalpam’?

“Vishno…aagnyaya…

........

Bhaaratha varshe bharatha kante... sakaaphe…”

I am quoting this 'Sankalpa' mantra, just for the middle of the sentence. 'Bhaaraatha Varshe' means 'the one living in 'Bhaaratha Dhesam' and 'Bharatha Kante' means 'that country ruled by Bharathan'. This ‘sankalpam’, was highlighted in various ancient devotional texts, such as ‘Vishnu Puranaam’ and 'Bhagawatham'. Hence, this region of the country, has been called only as 'Bhaaratha Dhesam', even in ancient days. They have not even called their country as 'Sindhu Dhesam'. If that is so... what is the possibility of calling it as ‘Hindhu...’? Yes!... what I have told you, were based on the happenings and writings, that took place thousands of years back. What I am going to talk now, has happened only few hundred years back.

Yes!... If you count, only about four hundred years back, the Europeans have set foot in India. During that period, in various parts of our country, moghul rulers were governing. That is, the muslim sulthaans were ruling the country. As they set foot in India, for the sole purpose of trading with the country, noticed that the country had abundance of natural resources, except 'unity' among the rulers was parched. As a matter of fact, those people under the rule of muslim kings, were fighting among themselves. Those princes, under muslim rule, were fighting among themselves, for securing more revenue. Kings themselves were fighting against each other. The people were divided into castes such as 'Brahmins, Sudhras and Panchamars and living in hatred. The white man observed the situation and asked the locals about such cracks in the society. The reply he got was "This is our caste philosophy. Who are you to ask us about it?"... was the voice he received.

'O.K... Among them prevails, so much of divisive energy. This country, has abundane of natural resources'... with these thoughts, he displaced his family to India, along with his wife and children. The priests from Europe were also immigrated to India. They observed the practice of ‘Jaathi Thathvam’ (Caste philosophy) i.e., ‘Brahmin is the God’, ‘Nasudhraa mathinathyaathu’ (whip and kick the sudhraas. they shall not receive any form of teaching)... and the prevailing treatment of the lower caste people ... and printed propaganda materials at the cost of one anna (one sixteenth of a rupee) and two annas. They distributed it among the Sudhraas and Panchamars. They showed those books to them to make them realize about their own suppressed state in the society. Their main theme of their preachings was... 'Don't follow the religion of the Brahmins. We give you an alternative'. Thus, as many years have been passing by... they were wondering 'How should we call these people?'. That was when, he realized that these people, were originally living on the banks of river Sindhu, and decided to call them ‘Sindhu’. That is, in the British documents of earlier days, the people of India were called as 'Zindoo'...
We have seen, the naming of our religion, by the composers of the 'Vedham' to that was given by the Englishmen. Because the Englishman believed that we were originally from the plains of Sindhu river, and based on that he called us 'Zindoo'. You may be urged ask "How do you know that?". I have seen that document by British and I have personally read it. In Kumbhakonam, on the banks of the Kaaveri river, just about everything can grow. There on the laps of Kaaveri, there was a place, where knowledge can grow as well as enlightenment can also grow. That was the library of my great teacher Raghunaatha Rao. Raghunaatha Rao was older than me and he served as a Dhivaan of Baroda Samasthaan. During his appointment period, he used to correspond with the British government. After his retirement from the position of Dhivaan, he returned to Kumbhakonam and opened a library on the banks of the Kaaveri river. That is where I had the opportunity to see the British documents. At first he used to write about us, in the official documents as 'Zindoo', and as time passed, he gradually changed his pronunciation to 'Hindu'. The gradual change in his pronunciation was also recorded in his documents.

Now the 'Zindoo' has evolved into 'Hindu'. Hence, now what we call ourselves and our own religion as 'Hindu' was not christened by ourselves. It was given to us by foreigners and that is what we have been cherishing all these years. If we go into it further... this name was given to our religion by Christians. Since, he did not know, how to call us using a common name, while Christian invented... not even invented. Whatever, was convenient for his tongue, to pronounce... now we have been carrying it, as our own brand! We claim that we are following, the 'Vedhams', 'Manu Smiruthi', 'Sasthiram', 'Puraanam', 'Sundaikkakaay'... and such scriptures and literatures, that were composed, thousands and thousands of years back.... we never distilled, a common name for ourselves, from these scriptures. That never could be accomplished! Because...

Several religions are practised in our country. As I told you before, when the Aryan Brahmins entered into India, there were close to four hundred and fifty religions were practiced. Haven't I questioned you, out of all these religions, which was Hindu religion? Now you can tell me. Which is Hindu religion? Religions such as, Vedhic religion, Aryan religion and Brahmana religion immigrated into our society. Budhdhism evolved to oppose all these religions. Madhva religion florished. Dhvaitham branched out. From there, Adhvaitham branched out. Visishtaadhvaitham grew. Saivam and Vaishnavam was the talk of the country for a while. Jainism was established. Even in Vaishnavam, splits such as Vadakalai and Thenkalai shaped up, and they went all the way upto the courts, to resolve their issues. Leaving these behind... in the wide landscape of our country, worshiping of numerous local favorite deities, are seen everywhere. Kaali Amman, Maari Amman, Dhurgai Amman, Ayyanaar, Muniappan, Karuppasaami, Thoondikkaar... one can keep on stacking the names of local favorite deities. That is, after seeing the varieties of worship practices, the whiteman was perplexed, and bundled all of them together, and called everyone living in this country as 'Hindhu'. Upon the birth of a baby in our house, if that baby is a boy, customarily we name him with his grandfather's name. If it happened to be a girl, we name her with the name of her grandmother. If not, we name them with the name of our 'Kula Dheivam' (family god). However... if a stranger... who has no knowledge about us.... and who cannot talk our language... called us with a 'blurry sound' that he can conveniently make from his tongue, can you name your child the same 'blurry sound'? That is how we have named our child a.k.a. our religion

O.K... We have seen the origin and history of the word 'Hindhu'. This is the history of the word, that you carry in your school certificates, and in your life, that serves as your own brand. The brand that was awarded to us by the whiteman, we are proudly carrying it around. Now let us talk about another matter. When there was consideration of giving independance to our country... in Tanjaavur district, in a small village near Aaduthurai...there held a secret meeting. If you ask me when... the night queen was stepping beyond 10:00 p.m. and progressing towards mid-night. This was about sixty years back and at this particular part of the night, the villages usually get into deep silence. The meeting was lit with 'ghadaa' lamps and fire torches and was presided by 'Maha Periyavar'. Why?... What for?...

Haven't I told you previously, that in a village near Aaduthurai, 'Maha Periyavar' Sankaraachchaarliyaar has arranged for a meeting at night?... Scattered around were small lamps, and fire torches, to provide needed light. The place where the meeting was held appeared like a house. I was seated outside on a
raised area (Thinnai). I had prior knowledge of the subject of discussion and hence, I did not go inside the house. Shouldn't you also know, what I have learned over there? Didn't I explain to you the origin of the name 'Hindhu'? Hinduism is also known as 'Sanaadhana Dharmam'. The sole purpose of the meeting was to conserve 'Sanaadhana Dharmam' and to protect the 'Varnaasramam' as dictated by 'Manu Dharmam'. Why?... What kind of trouble was anticipated?... We have already looked into the 'Mana Dharmam' (wedding rules) that was dictated by 'Manu Dharmam'. Recapping it... 'A girl shall get married before the age of eight. If not, and if the wedding has not taken place even after her puberty, the father of the bride shall consume the secretion from her vagina till her wedding'... We have seen in detail this bizarre commandment of 'Manu' in the 45th and 46th chapters.

"Ashtaa varushaa paaleth kanyaa..." Before the girl reaches eight, she shall get married'... This rule of the smiruthi, was executed in our country, till the middle of the twentieth century, with considerable hardship. As a matter of fact, during my young age, I have witnessed several child marriages, like these. Nowadays, in the marriage halls, you will see several children, running and playing around. Even in those days, the children used to play around in the 'Kalyaan Mahaal' (Wedding Hall). There is only one exception! Just like those playing, two children, will be seated on the wedding stage. Just like this, several child marriages, were taking place. During that time period, there were several protests, against the child marriages, staged by the social reformers cum independence fighters. Social reformers from our own country... were vehemently opposed to the child marriage. Because, if they get married at the young age, and if the child husband accidentally dies, the widow has to remain as a widow lifelong and in addition, she has to endure severe sanctions imposed on the widows.

After understanding the cruelty and its aftermath, the British enacted a law in 1929, which barred the child marriage, and if anyone violating this law will be subject to prison terms. Now, we will come back to, the meeting organized by 'Mahaa Periyavar'. Already there were few laws enacted by the British government that beheaded some of the 'Manu' laws and the 'Varnaasrama Dharmam' (discrimination based on caste system). At the time of awarding the independence to India, a parliamentary delegation of the British government, arrived in India. The purpose of this delegation, comprising of the Members of the British Parliament, was to explore the mode and method of awarding independence, and to have discussion with various groups in India, to get their input. The Aaduthurai meeting was convened, during the time of the visit by the parliamentary delegation. 'Mahaa Periyavar'..."Already they have barred the child marriage... I am not sure what other attacks are planned over our tradition... Hence, we need to convey to this parliamentary delegation, that no more damage should be done to our traditional 'Sanaadhana Varnaasrama Dharmam'. What do you all say?"... thus he was trying to get a consensus. However, his followers... "Swami (respectable sage)! Requesting them to conserve 'Sanaadhana Dharmam' and to protect the 'Varnaasramam' as dictated by 'Manu Dharmam'. Why?... What kind of trouble was anticipated?... We have already looked into the 'Mana Dharmam' (wedding rules) that was dictated by 'Manu Dharmam'. Recapping it... 'A girl shall get married before the age of eight. If not, and if the wedding has not taken place even after her puberty, the father of the bride shall consume the secretion from her vagina till her wedding'... We have seen in detail this bizarre commandment of 'Manu' in the 45th and 46th chapters.

As I was seated, he came to me and said,
Swami : "Thaatthaachchaari, only you and me are remainders".
I : "What Swami?"
Swami : "Nobody accepted my proposal. However, we should not let this issue go. We must safeguard our tradition. For that, we are going to give that British delegation a memorandum. I have selected you for this task."

I was baffled at his proposal.
Swami : "You may have to go to New Delhi. Before that, we must give a telegram, to the delegation about our concerns"

That night at approximately 11:00 p.m. we have drafted the words for the telegram. Was it one or two?...

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One or two?... One hundred telegrams! In those days, giving a single telegram, itself was very difficult. Because, the telegraph offices were located only in big cities. If it was one telegram, we can send it easily. However, one hundred telegrams? That too, it shall not appear, that they came from one location. We have to send it from various parts of the country. The wording of the telegram went like this... "We request protection for the religious and ritualistic traditions of the Bhaaratha Dhesam. Because of the change in the government our religious liberty shall not be sacrificed". We sent telegrams to the
delegation, with the same wording, from one hundred different cities. The expenses for sending the telegram was borne by 'Mahaa Periyavar' himself. I just helped him. After I have sent the telegrams, he called me again and said "We must meet with them face to face, and explain to them about our religious tradition, and ask for the liberty to practice, 'Sanaadhana Dharmam', our religion. You must carry on this task also".

That time, the members of the parliamentary delegation, were visiting with various newspaper publishers... and were gathering information, about the consensus of the country, over the independence. This was because... several newspapers, have been involved in, promoting the independence uprisings. Along these lines, the delegation came to Chennai. They were visiting, one of the most important English newspaper, of that times in India, 'The Hindu', published from Chennai. 'Mahaa Periyavar' came to know of their visit to Chennai. He immediately called me and asked me to go and meet with the delegation. I also obliged and went to the corporate office of 'The Hindu'. I was introduced to the delegation by the chief editor of 'The Hindu' newspaper Sri K. Srinivasan. He introduced me as the representative of the 'Madhaachchaariyaars' (religious leaders). Among the delegation was Mr. Sorenson, who was a priest. He and I have exchanged mutual greetings. First, I reminded him of the one hundred telegrams that was sent to the delegation. He remembered them and said... "Oh yes! We will meet at night and go over it". That night, I met him at the residence of a famous attorney. I have given here the gist of the conversation that happened between me and Mr. Sorenson at around 10:00 p.m.

Sorenson : "Welcome! What do you want?"
Myself : "We live in India. However, we do not have any rights to practice our own religion. We must have freedom to follow our own 'Dharma'."
Sorenson : "Oh... It is a very serious matter... Give me a memorandum and please meet me in Delhi."

I immediately traveled back to Kumbhakonam and briefed 'Mahaa Periyavar' about our meeting. With the help of few advocates, and religious traditionalists, we prepared a memorandum stressing the need to have full freedom to practice the 'Varnaashrama Dharmam' (caste system). We were prepared to travel to Delhi, and present the memorandum in person. Before that the member of the delegation, that we are supposed to meet at Delhi, has traveled to Assam to assess the condition of that state. As soon as we found out, we sent an advance copy of the memorandum to Assam. Later on, I reached Delhi. There at the residence of advocate Siva Rao, Congress party leaders Mr. Achchutha Pattavardhan and Mr. Jeyaprakash Narayan, were waiting to meet the delegation at 11:00 a.m. After they concluded their meeting, along with few advocates, I met the delegation. We presented the memorandum to the parliamentary delegation, in person, and requested that we must have our rights to practice the 'Varnaashrama Dharmam'. They accepted it and left.

Later on, from England, a cabinet delegation arrived. We sent telegrams to that delegation also. In addition, we presented them the memorandum also. However, they said "The constitution for your country will be drafted by your own leaders. Hence, please meet with your own leaders and present your case".

We took leave from them and left to meet with leader of our country Mr. Sardar Vallabhai Patel. He read the memorandum and said "What you have said about the Sanaadhanas Dharmam and the religious 'madams' (mutts) is very realistic. However, the chiefs of all the mutts are enjoying 'Raaja Bhogam' (Kings Life) in their mutts. They live with their own disciples and never have any outside contacts and provide no service to the outside world. They never volunteered to perform any social welfare service to humanity or to serve their own religion. Importantly, in the scheme to uplift the harijan people, neither the mutts nor the chiefs of the mutts showed any interest. First of all, the religious chiefs shall realize the needs of oppressed people, and must come forward to serve them". He was very stern and showed his dissatisfaction over the religious chiefs. "Yes sir! In old times they were like you said. In the new Bhaaratha Dhesam, they will get involved and serve the public at large. Mr. Patel was not in agreement with me. I returned back to Kumbhakonam and narrated this incidence to 'Mahaa Periyavar'. He said "Yes! That was the truth". Next... I met with Nehruji...

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We carried the petition, to Sardar Vallbhai Patel, containing the Sankaraachchaariyar's intent, to safeguard the 'Sanaadhana Madhaanusthaanaam' (Hindu religious practice) and, protect it from even the minuscule dangers, and to assure that the 'Varnaashrama' (caste system) boundaries shall not be mutilated. He was not having very high opinion of the chiefs of the Hindu religious mutts and advised us...
"You cannot change the attitude of the chiefs of the Hindu religious mutts. Don't believe them and bring any of their requests to me". With stern warning he sent us back. I have already told you that 'Sankaraachchaariyaar' agreed with Mr. Patel's assertion. Later on, I went to Nehruji, with the same petition. Before meeting with him, I have consulted with several sages... and took along with me few supporters of religious conservatism.

Nehruji asked "What is the matter?". We were briefing him about the essence of the memorandum. He listened to us few minutes and he scanned through the memorandum also. Suddenly... he raised his head, looked at me and said "If you want to talk about religion, you go outside from this nation. We don't allow speciality to any religion. Here all are equal... Don't talk to me about religion... Understand?"... thus, the king of roses poured out his feelings. I was shocked! Even after the overwhelming rejection by two most powerful men of the times, Sankaraachchaariyaar was not discouraged. O.K... we have not earned any special privilege for our religion. We will atleast try to get special privileges for the mutts. He continued his mission.

"Just like what Mr. Patel said, the mutts are nothing but the representatives of the religion, and they must come forward to serve the society at large. We must squee the notion that the chiefs of all the mutts are enjoying the royal extravagance, and floating in lavishness. Hence, we must approach all the religious mutts, and put upon the fact, that they must come forward, to serve the people. Hence, we must convene 'Bhaarathiiya Mutts Sabhai' (Hindu mission conference). Before we assemble that conference, we must visit various mutts and bring it to their attention that 'With the new constitution we will become an independent country. The upcoming situation is going to be markedly different from the present situation. Hence, we must strive to get our right to exist and operate"... thus Sankaraachchaariyaar instructed us. Based on that he instructed me to convene the 'All Bharathiya Mutts Convention' at Delhi. The hardships endured in organizing this convention was immeasurable. As an organizer, Mr. Kullithhalai Annaadhurai Ayyangaar volunteered. He was an ardent devotee of the Sankaraachchaariyaar. To meet with various mutts, we started from Thiruchchi, in a car, and visited Udupi and continued on to Sirungeri mutt, personally and briefed them about the matter. In Udupi there are eight mutts associated with Madhva sect of Vaishnava tradition. Besides these, we visited other mutts in Udupi such as, Uththaraath Mutt, Sothana Mutt, Sumuthirththa Mutt, Manthraalaya Mutt and briefed them in person about the upcoming meeting. We also visited a mutt called 'Subramanyam', that is located at the tail end of the Western Ghats.

Here I have to bring to your attention an important matter. When we visited the Sirungeri mutt, the chief of the mutt was present, outside the building, celebrating the Navaraathri festivals. Our delegation comprising of an ex-district judge and a high court judge, met with him... and the chief 'Periyavar' was speaking to us in pure Tamil. He said that for the undertaking by the 'Periyavaal' (Sankaraachchaariyaar), we cannot provide any direct help. Later on, we visited 'Paalehi' mutt, under heavy rain and met with the chief and invited him to the conference of the mutts. Visiting the mutts located at Sakatapuram and Ariharapur... we reached Shimoga and talked with the chief of Sangameshvara mutt. From there we went to Mysore and visited Vaishnava mutt named 'Parakkaara Mutt' and briefed them about the conference. East Karnataka has few 'Veera Saiva' mutts. After visiting them we went to North Karnataka and visited 'Kothe' and 'Tumkur'. Thus, after going around in Karnataka, we reached Poori Jagannath. There are several Vaishnava mutts in Poori and the chief of the foremost mutt in Poori was Giridhaaridhaas Ramaanujar. With his help and the help of his master Dhurbalaachchaari, we visited several mutts. From there we left for Ayodhdi. We visited the mutts located in Ayodhdi, and briefed them about the efforts undertaken by 'Mahaa Periyavar', to grant freedom to operate the mutts, under new constitution of the country. Later on... we reached Karachi, located in the present day Pakistan, and visited the mutt located in the town of Sindh. Starting from Kunnakkudi Mutt located in Chetti Naddu, to Thirunelveli Senkol Mutt, all the way to Sindh Mutt... when we visited, no one objected to our proposal. O.K... Did the convention took place in Delhi?

I have explained to you about our tedious efforts, to organize a convention of Hindu religious mutts, to be held in Delhi, and our efforts to visit and personally meet, with the mutts located from Kanyaakumari to Karachi. In Delhi the convention was held at 'Indhu Mahaa Sabha'. Who were the people took part in it? None of the representatives of those mutts that we have personally visited, with no regard to rock, forest, mountain and heat of the sun, were in attendance except the representative from Sindh Mutt. With the
efforts put in for organizing, the turn out was a disappointment. What can we do? The convention was only a name sake. Any how we passed the resolution that read... 'Freedom of relation and maintaining religious institutions...' and disbursed. Where?... Even for disbursing there were not enough people. Even after that, without any exhaustion, requesting special privileges for the mutts, we made arrangements to introduce a parlimentary bill. After the new parliament convened, nobody paid any attention to that bill.

After the independence, the country was divided into India and Pakistan. In our country, India, the government proclaimed that... 'All are equal... All religions are equal'... i.e., India was declared as a secular state in the Constitution. No matter whichever religion one follows or whichever Dharmam one adopts, this country's common dharmaam was 'All are equal'. According to our religious tradition... 'dharmam'(rules) are same for everybody. The king also comes under the same 'dharmam'. Why? Even God is subjected to the same 'dharmam' and if he violates or go against it, our religious tradition teaches us how to punish God. This was called as 'Dharmam Vithikkramam'. That is, the 'Dharmam' is same for everyone. Whoever violates the 'dharmam', they will be punished. I shall explain this principle of fairness through two stories. Earlier, few chapters back, I was telling a story of 'Sukabramma' with human body and the parrot head. He was teaching 'Bhaagawatham' to king 'Pariitchchiththu' within seven days. Do you remember it? During the teaching of the 'Bhaagawatham'... let us take a look at a conversation. If it is 'Bhaagawatham', then invariably Lord Krishna's story will be there. Sukabramma was explaining the story to Parilitchiththu.

"Lord Krishna was intensely in love with all the 'Gopikais' (Flirting young girls). 'Gopikais' also, in return, deeply in love with Lord Krishna. If you want to know... How much?... Pitch dark night time... Only few moments before midnight. Even at that late night... they overlooked their own houses and their husbands, forgetting all their obligations... even forgot about themselves, in an intoxicated state they were singing, dancing and flirting with Krishna. Everyone of them were young girls... Out of them, Krishna grabs one of them and ran away. Remaining 'Gopikais' were running around searching for her and Krishna. The Gopika, who was taken away by Krishna was also begging him... "Krishna!... Please let me go. Everyone will be searching for me". She was scared. Just like this, on several occasions, Krishna has abducted several Gopikais and has been playing around with them"... Thus, as soon as Sukabramma finished, Parilitchchiththu was asking "What is this Swami?... When her husband was alive, exciting a girl by singing and dancing, in an intoxicated state abducting her... Isn't it a sinful act. Is it an injustice to her husband? Can Krishna commit such crimes? How is it justified?"... Sukabramma answers... "Yes! It is wrong and not justified. Even though Krishna was a God, if he commits such acts, it is a crime. He also has to endure a punishment. Our 'Dharmam' says that'. The same moral value, was emphasized in detail, in another Puraanic story. Shall we go to that scene?...

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This scene takes place, in the present state of Punjab, in a place that you will recognize as you read this story. You will also understand the reason for naming the town. In that town lived a couple named Jalandhar-Birunthaa. They were living like an ideal couple, except in only one matter, they were differing from each other. That was in the matter of God. What kind of difference? Birunthaa was a passionate devotee of Vishnu and she believed that there was no other God except Vishnu. On the other hand, her husband Jalandhar was an ardent devotee of Sivan. The great sage Naaradhar, heard about this strange divergence between the couple, he wanted to play around a little. One day, when Jalandhar was alone, he met with him. He said to Jalandhar... "What Jalandhar?... You are a devotee of Sivan. On the other hand, your wife is worshiping Vishnu. Through your devotion to Sivan, you may even get Sivan's wife Paarvathi Devi... Why are you keep on struggling with this Birunthaa. Do you know how beautiful Paarvathi is compared to Birunthaa?"... Thus, Naaradhar started the fire in the mind of Jalandhar. Jalandhar was shaken and asked Naaradhar... "Can I really get Paarvathi Devi? How?" Naaradhar himself, gave him the scheme to get Paarvathi. "Sivan is very much fond of Saama Vedham. Wherever, Saama Vedham is being recited, he gets intoxicated, and he goes towards that place. You do one thing. Get hold of few people who can recite Saama Vedham, and make them recite it loudly. Sivan will appear her here and while Sivan is in a state of trance you take off to 'Kailasam' and take care of your thirst". After hearing Naaradhar's cunning idea, Jalandhar, who was frozen with the thought of getting Paarvathi... hired few people versed with Saama Vedham and asked them to recite it loudly. While Sivan was intoxicated with the music, and while Sivan was away, Jalandhar sneaked into 'Kailasam', and found that beautiful Paarvathi Devi was in anguish over loneliness. As per the idea of Naaradhar, he approached her and
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gently embraced Her. Paarvathi realized that a stranger, not Sivan, was messing around with Her and screamed “Swaamii...” with sound waves that can cause tsunami over the seven seas. This was in ‘Kailasam’...

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In the mean while, at the garden of Jalandhar’s home...Birundhaa was perplexed over the missing husband and felt very lonely. She was praying to her favorite deity Vishnu, to find out the whereabouts of her husband and bring him back to her. Vishnu assessed the situation and her loneliness and thought ‘Why shouldn’t I bring some happiness to my passionate devotee?’. She is missing her husband and struggling to find him. Vishnu thought... ‘Why shouldn’t I become Jalandhar and make her happy?’ and he decided to take the figure of Jalandhar and He approached Birundhaa. As soon as she saw Vishnu in the form of Jalandhar, she said... ‘Aahaa... I got my husband back’ with extreme cheerfulness, and embraced Vishnu and celebrated. The celebration turned to lust. While both of them were making love in their garden... as they themselves were squeezed close together, a severed head, fell to the ground with a 'bothhh' noise. That head, severed from the neck, with fresh blood oozing out, happened to be the head of Jalandhar.

Yes!... While Sivan was inebriated with the music from 'Saama Vedham', organized by Jalandhar, Jalandhar sneaked into 'Kailasam' and wasn’t he embracing Paarvathi Devi and she screamed for Sivan?. The screaming was so disturbing and he came out of his music intoxication. He ran to Paarvathi Devi and found her in the arms of a stranger. He was very irritated, 'Shound another being touch my wife?'... with this question He severed the head of Jalandhar and threw it out. That head was the one fell close to Birundhaa and Vishnu who came in the form of Jalandhar, while they were making love. Birundhaa assessed the situation. She was mystified... 'The one with body resemblance is my husband? or the head that fell down is my husband?'. As her doubt inching towards a climax, the body resembled Jalandhar converted back to his original form of Vishnu. He appears and says to Birundhaa... 'Devotee! It was only me'. She was fuming..."You sinful bastard!... You cheated your own ardent devotee. How can you justify your act? Who are you to come like my husband? You have committed the worst sin of all. Eventhough you are God, crime is a crime. Hence, I am going to shed a curse upon you. 'Eventhough you are a God, you must become a stone'. According to 'puranam', Birundhaa's curse caused the Lord Vishnu to become a stone statue 'Saalakraamam'. The moral of this story is that even if the God has committed a crime by violating the 'dharmam' (rule), He shall endure punishment.

At present, in our nation, legally, the untouchability was abolished. However, based on the 'aagama' (Hindu cultural tradition) it is still living. As per the 'Brahmanyam' (Brahmanic philosophy), the Brahmin is the God. This statement is contradictory to the present laws. If you follow Brahmanism... there exists Sudhraas and Panchamaas. Hence, according to the constitution of India, Brahmanism is anti law. Hence, Brahmaniliyam that follows the 'Manu Dharmam', is against our Indian Government statutes. Please understand this fact. My statement is based on philosophical principle. Hence, if one determines to protect our religion, they must accept the fact that all are equal.

Upon delivering his speech on 'Hindhu Dharmam' at the Chicago convention, Swami Vivekananda returned to Chennai and delivered a speech. I am going to present few of them to you.

"Youths of this land... I am personally requesting you to keep this in mind. We must win over the world through our religious thoughts. When I talk about religious thoughts, I am not talking about those foolish beliefs that we are holding near and dear to our heart, but those pathways leading to Self Realization. We must be extremely cautious over our own brain, that is ruining us through the foolish beliefs, that were introduced into the society in the name of religion. Do not chase behind these foolish beliefs. I would rather see you as a staunchest ‘Naasthikar’ (atheist) rather than blindly adapting to foolish beliefs. This is much better for you and is also better for your people"... Thus he spoke in the Madras presidency. This is given in the compilation of Vivekananda's Madras speeches, published by Sri Ramakrishna Mutt at Chennai, titled 'Ilaya Bhaarathame Ezhuka' (Wake up Young Bharatham).

The rules of nature worship devised by 'Vedham' was for the welfare of the world. 'Here is the milk. Please drink this and live healthily'... says the 'Vedham'. Please pour good healthful milk (thoughts) into the goblet (religion) and drink it... Let the entire universe be peaceful!
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