

MAARKAZI MAADAM OR SILEI

Period 16\12\2012 TO 13\1\2013

During this month the power of Shakti is mostly felt and devotees can take advantage of the curing vibrations. Fasting with severe penance is strongly advised during this period starting from the 16th itself. The Pilgrimage to Sabari, the hill where Lord Ayyapan waits for his devotees.

#### 1 LORD AYYAPAN PILGIMAGE

Actually it is the Sabari season. Millions of pilgrims from all over India and abroad trek the hills to have darisanam of the Lord. Late comers do not find seats on trains and planes. The streets of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andrapradesh, Karnataka and surrounding regions are all jammed with cars heading for the Sabari hills in Kerala. The only aim for devotees is to have darisanam, sighting of the Lord. The presence of the Lord is strongly felt at this time. Lord Ayyappa is Kaliyuga Varada --Like Lord Murugan, Lord Krishna, Lord Ayyapan is present to devotees during this age of Kaliyugam. What attracts the millions of people to Hariharasutha --Lord Ayyapan of Sabari Hills. Do they pray for riches, do they ask boons to send their children abroad, to get their children married or to collect some rewards? Not all these requests. The only demand is to give them good health to climb the hills again next season. This is real prayer--to be with God. This why Saint Thiruvalluvar starts his Thirukural with "Agaramudalaezuttellam aadibagavanmudattreulagu" These words mean to recognize God only as supreme creator. Nothing more should be demanded. God knows all our needs and He takes good care as per the law of Karma.

Haiharasutha means that Ayyapan has the divine qualities of both Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu. He was seen in the forest of Sabari. The powers of these two Lords were bestowed on him to bless people who came to him. Ayyan is the Supreme Lord Shiva. Appan is Lord Vishnu. Vegetarian sattvik food is firstly offered to him before taken by devotees. Abstinence, austerity and celibacy, all such Shiva practices are the essentials during this MandalaViratham. Devotees wear black as a sign of renunciation, immune to earthly pleasures as if they are dead to world life. Those who wear blue, give much attention to blue colour of the ocean of Lord Vishnu meaning that offering a mind of purity devoid of ego attracts the protective forces of the Protector of the universe. The devotee's aim is to pray before the Lord, offer him his undiluted devotion and return to discharge his duties as householder and social worker. These are in lines with the teachings of the Thirukural. Study the Muppal and do service to the memory of Lord Ayyapan.

Some people believe in the lucky blue colour because Lord Sani was a devotee of Lord Krishna. They believe that any problem connected with Sanibagavan would disappear while they trek the hills. Long ago there were no cleared paths and the pilgrimage through the forest was awaiting danger of being killed by voracious animals, being bitten by mortal snakes and being robbed by thieves. Life was at stake. Getting through this penance was a sign of being protected by God. A simple ritual is nevertheless tolerated by the Lord. The devotees carry Irumudi on their head while stepping up the hill. The

Irumudi is a two compartment bag. The first portion contains the offerings to the Lord including the Mudra coconut. The coconut is filled with pure home-made ghee. The coconut's husk is similar to our skin: the fibre is our flesh, the shell our skeleton. Pure cow's ghee is nectar on earth. If offered with devotion the ghee is penance for all sins.

The coconut contains water which is thrown out before filling with ghee. It indicates that devotion to him is still diluted. When the devotee reaches the top of the hill and before coming close to accepted distance near the Lord, he breaks the coconut to take out the ghee for abhisegum and this action shows that devotion is rock hard. After offering the ghee as Abisegum to the Lord, the coconut is thrown into the sacred fire indicating that the sinful body is burnt and the devotee return absolved of all sins. The back portion of the irumudi contains mundane needs of the devotee. As he climbs he gets rid of the mundane things and purifies his mind and all worries are dissolved in the liquid faith of godliness. Lord Ayyapan was devotedly prayed by foregone Pandyan kings and they propitiated him as their commander in chief, some similarity with Lord Muruga and Lord Krishna --the blending of Shiva and Vishnu. The great light, Deebam or Jhordhi, on Makara Sankranti or Perum Pongal {14th January 2013} viewing the Lord in that splendid light, in that pristine glory is indeed invigorating and satisfying the hearts of devotees.

Praying Lord Ayyapan brings devotees nearer to God and farther from earthly amusements. There will be a need to get ready for the next coming pilgrimage time. SARANAM AYYAPA SWAMI SARANAM. The only regret is the amount of waste collected on the pathways leading to the top of Sabari hills. The 2200 volunteers from Mata Amritanandamayi Math in Amritapuri, Kerala, on 3/4 November 2011 collected some 35000 bags of waste over two days, showing their love for Sri Sri Mata Amritanandamayi a champion of green management. This seva is a testimony to the zeal of thousands of foreigners and locals and their prayerful attitude of service inspired by Amma. By sheer attitude alone they had transformed hard work into inspired worship. If you wish to adore Lord Ayyapan in Mauritius there is no need of any kovil in his honour. Just do this.

CLEAN THE MIND WITH POSITIVE THOUGHTS, CLEAN THE HEART WITH LOVING ATTITUDE

AND DO CLEAN ACTIONS TO HELP NEEDY PEOPLE IN A TOTAL CLEAN ENVIRONMENT IN THIS LIVING WORLD.

## 2 ARUDRAABHISEGUM ---- AADAL VALLAAN THIRUKAATCHI

Another important ceremony in markazi maadam is ARUDRAABHISEGAM to propitiate Lord Nataraja the cosmic force of Lord Shiva. Rudra is another fierce energy form of the Lord. On the 28th December 2012 there appears the Arudra Star, this star is considered to be the birthstar of Lord Shiva. The day when Lord Shiva's energy is very close to the earth. He is worshipped in the cosmic dance making his power and heightened consciousness accessible to those who seek it. Nataraja, Lord Shiva's lifts his left leg high and has his right footing on the demon of Ego. It is an ideal time to invest in the enlightenment of the mind and leave behind the human experience of confusion disappointment and doubt. The

Arudra abhisegam is performed at pre-dawn, 4 a.m, on the murthi of the lord with the five ingredients--pure water, honey, coconut water, milk and rosewater and finally anointed profusely with vibhuti on recitation Shiva mandirams drawn on OM NAMASHIVAYA PORTRI .

Barathanaatyam dancing is performed by professionals who know correctly the art as prescribed in the the nathyasastrams. The cosmic dance represents the continuous cycle of creation, protection, destruction, concealment and release. The Sakti is the source of all the energy. Modern physicists have studied the cosmic dance and have come out with a reflexion that the dance is that of subatomic matter, the electron now used in television and radiotherapy. All people who want to be fully energized, seek the feet of Lord Nataraja by meditating or dancing with the mind focused on the Lord.

### 3 SRI ANDAL

The month of Maarkazi is also marked by the veneration of Sri Andal. Villiputhur, a devout Peryaalvar of Lord Vishnu, collected a baby girl under a Tulasi plant in his garden of flowers dedicated to the arradanai of Lord Vishnu. The child girl was named Godai, a gift of the mother earth. Godai became very fond of Lord Krishna; She took the liberty of wearing, in the absence of her foster father, the garland before putting it on the Lord. That was her regular play. She made up her mind to marry the Lord but her father punished her for her folly. The Lord appeared in the dream of Villiputhur ordering him to get Godai married to Him in the Kovil. Andal sang Thiruppavai and Thiruvempavai, visualizing imagining her marriage with religious vows {paavai} to Lord Krishna. and then another song, Nacciyar Tirumoli, the sacred sayings of the Goddess. She was now known as AANDAL, the girl who ruled over Lord Krishna and merged into Him.

During the month of Maarkazi, these 170 verses are recited and sung by devotees of Lord Krishna and Lord Vishnu to honour Sri Laxmi in the person of Sri Andal. A Tulasi plant is usually used to solemnize the ceremony. This is Sakti worship. In this month, religious fervour and spiritual exercises sprout up much vibrations in the atmosphere, causing the kundalini of ardent devotees to arise and some people do make unexpected revelations out of the subconscious mind as if the deities do come as respond to devotees demanding needs. Rulers, businessmen and other economic and social stakeholders go for the counsel of sages. In economic and social prevoyance, some do really believe in visioning or foresight management.

### 4 TEEMEEDEE

Teemeedee is another Sakti worship ceremony. In Tamil Nadu, Teemeedee is mostly performed during the holy month of Aadi dedicated to Ammen worship. In Tamil Nadu fire ceremony is dedicated to Lord Shiva Nataraja dancing in a circle of burning fire and to Rudra a wild form of Lord Shiva who is propitiated with a yagam of burning firewood in a sacrificial ceremony. In Mauritius Teemeedee is held in Maarkazi. The original teemeedee was performed by Sati who could not bear to see her Lord Shiva being insulted by her father, Dhaksa, the all powerful son of Lord Brahma. Sati sacrificed and

immolated herself in a yagam fire and the ash was dispersed in the universe for the multiplication of Shakti to meet the future needs of humanity. This is the reason for Devi to incarnate on this earth whenever needed by human beings. Sita, in Tetrayugam, entered fire to prove her purity of herself to Sri Rama, after being kidnapped by Iravanan the raksasah king of Sri Lanka.

In Dwaparayugam Draupadi had to kill her enemies in defence of her dignity and consequently she got a defiled dosham or natural curse for killing and She had to enter through the fire to clean her astral body. In many villages in Tamil Nadu people perform teemeedee propitiating their Gramadeivam, the village God and Sri Karumariamenn who looks after rain and health of people is a village Deity. There are also a multiple variations of Ammen in Tamil Nadu. Ammen is Mahasakti---it embodies both nuclear energy and that consciousness in man. Chit sakti activates the human consciousness to interact with the material manifestation of Mother Earth.

- Goddess! who removes the sufferings of those who take refuge in thee, be gracious!
- Mother of the whole world be gracious and protect the universe
- Goddess ! You are the Supreme of all that is movable and immovable.

Devi Mahatmyam.

The worship of God as mother is as ancient as the concept of God itself. Saint Thiruvalluvar in his Thirukural, has given the seekers of Truth, the potent sway of Divine Mother's grace, the experience of Truth realisation. Teemeedee means Pookulittal or walking on a bed of flowers. Walking on fire is a penance inviting the mercy of AMMEN known under many names such as Durga, Devi, Eswari, Jaganmata, Kali, Kamatchi Salatchi, Meenakshi, Parvathi, Badrakali, Uma, Sakti, all from the essence of ADIPARASAKTI, the creatrix of the Universe. Ammen has 1008 names. Prayers may be addressed to Her at all times--good and bad times.

As shakti she attends to the needs of devout devotees. The Tamils of Mauritius are not well conversant with Kottravai. Sangam literature speaks of her as the spouse of Lord Shiva in the wild form. She is the mother of Lord Skanda when She reunited the six bodied babies into One, releasing the Krittika maidens to form the Kartigai nakshastra. Goddess Kottravai, the war goddess danced among the slains on the battle field. Her dwelling places are believed to be deserted areas and riversides. Warriors worshipped her for victorious achievement. In Silappadigaram, the most ancient book of the Tamils, She is known as Gawri always fasting for Shiva's longing { Gowri Nomboo } or Thiru sooli, the wielder of soolam to eliminate the three worlds for permanent peace of the soul. She knows everything. She carries a skull meaning she has mastery over death. She is the partner of Lord Shiva, Bairavar. Formerly Goddesses were given blood sacrifices which practice is slowly fading away whilst the practice of fire continues to be a testing penance for devotees who wish to receive the grace of Mother Sakti. There is a kovil dedicated to Kottravai along the highway at Reduit.

Walking on fire unhurt is not a miracle by itself. People who do not manifest fear at heart and in mind cannot get burned in fire walking. Just remove fear and be brave and walk on the cinders safely. In the United States, there are colleges of management which teach the techniques of walking on fire. The purpose of this training programme is to remove fear from the heart of managers so that they can take risks in investment businesses. After the year 2008, the world financial crisis worsened and investors were hesitant in trying risky ventures. So to boost up the morale of business men, walking on fire exercises were found productive and those who walked on fire successfully were keener to undertake more investment in risky business. Walkers on fire need not fast or live as vegan. They may eat and drink soberly and can walk on fire without fear. They may not pray God or any deity to walk on fire; They should not develop fear at heart and in the mind;

How walking on fire in a religious way matters?

This is the secret of the Goddess. God is love. God does not need anything except devotion from the human heart. A devotee who fasts and dedicates the penance of walking on fire gets the following benefits

1 Healing from mental, psychic, physical, moral, astral disorders,

2 Aura purification --fire is just for this ---cleansing; when aura is dark, illnesses are on trail and non-resistance facilitates the incursion of diseases;

3 Imagination and visualization ----Fixing Ammen in her eyes she restores the balance as She has a thousand eyes, Ayirankanudeyal and She knows everything.

3 Faith is a curing process and body equilibrium is thus obtained when the nervous system is re-established

4 Fear is the cause of sickness and death. Check out fear and success is at hand. The great message left by Lord Muruga " is not to fear at all when God is present. "

5 The possibility of an heritage of blessings for a walker substituting an incapacitated person. Take the burden off somebody's else shoulders. Take the karma of others.

Fire walking helps in the way.

6 Developing divine consciousness. To be with God on the immediate spot, the very quick moment the walking on fire takes place

7 The soul is happier in the fire when the meeting takes place with the Superior Soul. Atma meeting Jivaatma; from conscious state to subconscious state via unconscious state. Falling into trances may create such possibility.

There are many benefits on a case to case basis. It all depends on the devotional momentum of the devotee. Most of the times, benefits are realised at a later moment. Ammen never fails her devotee. There are actually over 50 countries worldwide where walking on fire are traditionally held although the purposes differ. In African countries devotees do walk but also roll through the flames on the pit. In Malaysia and Singapore, devotees are more frantic in their religious behaviours. Walking on fire in the European union countries had its origin in Greek and Roman empires. In some future article in Pathirikai, I shall delve deeper with clarifying details on teemeedee practices specially all the rituals from the beginning to the end in some Singaporean kovil which I consider to be complete and very relevant to our Mauritian experience. In the mean time I wish all readers of Pathirikai and the management team of this challenging e journal venture, the best wishes for the coming year. May Adiparashakti, the creatrix of this Universe, pour down her graceful blessings on all of us and on our beautiful country, Mauritius. May I thank all the contributors for the advancement of a Tamilian identity within the Mauritian culture. We should call for Aram, Porul, Inbam through Iyal, Isai, and Nadagam, with to be the guiding strategies for our cultural development in Mauritius. Never forget that God is Love.

AMBE SIVAM. Unity in Diversity is our real destiny. Peaceful life should be the national objective. All economic prosperity is the derivative of peace, love, and harmony. The Mauritian paysage can restore its heavenly bliss and proves Mark Twain right. Once again Nandri to all readers who appreciate my humble writings. Here lies the real ROI. return on intent which has always been my contribution to Dharmam, sharing this spiritual knowledge for the creation of Wisdom -Nyanam, which is the pre-requisite for entering God's domain in the way St Appar reached the threshold of Kyalassam and welcomed by Lord Shiva Himself.

Puttaandu 2013 nal vaaztukkal.

OM GANAPATHIYE PORTRI--OM SARAVANABAVAYE PORTRI--OM SAKTIYE PORTRI-OM NAMASIVAYE PORTRI

Gopalsamy Pillay Mauree.