



Srimath Ramanujar in SriRangam

SAKTHI FOUNDATION - CAC SRIRAMGAM AND SPIRITUALITY

The following events have been taken from various texts which talks in details about many great SriVaishnava tutors who lived in SriRangam [10th - 15th century A.D] The events convey us the following values.

- 1. Dedication to Lord through a tutor.**
- 2. Life is to attain salvation - free from fear and unhappiness.**
- 3. Serve the people behalf of God.**
- 4. True love to God and guru with service will solve our karmas.**

1.VISA TO VAIDUNTAM - THE ADOBE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Nampillar was one among the great spiritual tutors of Tamil Nadu.

He lived in SriRangam. He was adorned with many disciples. One day when an ascetic surrendered to him as his disciple, he said that there is no place in his ashram to stay.

The young disciple approached the neighborhood old woman's home for a place to stay. She refused to give first. Nampillai called her and advised her to serve the young man so that she will be gaining punya.

"Guru! if you promise me that I will get the same piece of place in Vaikunda, I can give place in my



home to this boy!" - She replied.

"Ho, sure! Please offer this letter which I am writing to Lord of Vaikunda behalf of bahavath Ramanuja! He will grant your wish!" - says Nampillai.

He wrote a recommendation letter to Paramapadhanadhan [always shrine near Chandra Pushkarini in SriRangam]

The old lady also offered that letter with total surrender to her acharya and Lord. On the third day she shed her body.

Photo: Lord Ranganatha - utsava moorthy

2. Meaning for Lord Ranganadha's form

Pattar was one among the great tutors lived in SriRangam. One day he was having darshar of Lord Ranganadhar. Appillai [his student] asked a question.

"Dear teacher! Why Lord is pointing his right hand to his head and left hand to his feet?"

"Good! His right hand is pointing his head which is the state of being conscious. This state can be achieved only by humbleness and true surrender. This is denoted by his left hand. By surrendering to his feet, when we serve the world our karma will be dissolved!" - Pattar

3. Lava - Kusa recited like this...

Once St.Ramanujar listened to Pattar's discourses upon upanishads and gave him the title "Vedantha acharya". This encouraged Pattar to further talk in depth about Namalwar's Thiruvaimozhi.

Lord Ranganadha appeared in the awareness of few great priests in SriRangam and asked them to crown Ramanujar as "King of SriVaishnavism" and Pattar as "Prince of SriVaishnavism".

On that day Ramanujar asked Pattar and his younger brother SriRama Pillai to recite Valmeki Ramayanam. Both of them started reciting with perfect tune and made many to shift them self into the awareness. Ramanujar was spilling tears. After the session they asked him to comment about the recitation.



"Lava Kusa recited like this in Ayodhya before my Lord" - calmly said the saint. Many could not understand. He was the incarnation of Laxmana known?

4. "I am fortune to touch a King cobra"

A group of temple officials who were jealous of Pattar blamed him for a theft. They asked him to open and put his hand inside a copper pot which has a king cobra. Pattar was very happy to do it. His disciples asked why?

"It is very auspicious to touch a cobra, because he is the mat for my Lord. He is the foot wear for my Lord. He becomes his shade when he walks and also a pillow when he sleeps in ocean. He becomes a throne when he seats. So

today Lord has given the great fortune to touch him." - says Pattar

This came out of his awareness. The jealousy men apologized him and left. In this case the guru has not discriminated the cobra - his self and parama sathya - universal truth.

Photo: Lord Ranganatha - utsava moorthy

5. How to dissolve previous birth's karma - effects for our sins?

Ammani alwar was a Vaishnavite. He came and surrendered to Pattar after crossing 200 miles from his home town. He was so tired. The guru asked him to take some rest. But he said that the life is uncertain and he requested the guru to give him the initiation immediately.

"what is the purpose for you to have a spiritual initiation through me?" - Pattar

"Acharya! I need to dissolve all my bad karmas and their effects!"

"I will give you a hymns from Namalwar's Thiruvaimozhi. In this song Alwar has given the clear way to shed our karma. By dedicating to Lord and serving the people with selflessness we can dissolve our karmas and attain salvation" - Pattar

6. Exemption from daily duties

It was a festival time in SriRangam. Lord Namperumal [Utsava moorthy - Lord for procession] was



seated outside of the temple in a coconut grove. It was summer. It was very hot also. Pattar was fanning to Lord and he has lost himself in doing that service to him. It was slowly darkening.

“Sir, it is time for your evening rituals in our ashram!” - A student

Photo: Nam Alwar Moksham festival

“Thanks for making me to remember. But you all have to know that true service directly to God and his devotees can exempt a man from his daily duties. In Vishnu purana Lord says that there are 1000s of Maharishies waiting to perform that man’s rituals still

he is selfless in his actions.” - Pattar

7. How can we transform our mind?

- The objective of the mind must be Lord’s feet.
- To attain Lord, we must first listen and follow our spiritual teacher’s lessons.
- Read great scriptures and understand various aspects.
- Focus in Ramayanam and try to connect yourself with Rama’s character.
- Hymns of true devotees will transform our mind when we recite with real love and dedication.

These were the simple ways shown by Nampillai to his huge number of disciples who used to meet him in SriRangam.

8. Why we need to worship only one God?

This was question asked by a student to Nampillai.

“There is only one sathya - truth which is being manifested as many Gods. All these are nothing but the various forms of energy. There is no harm in worshipping them. But when we depend upon many Gods we are again pulled back to materialistic pleasures. One who is interested in having a comfortable materialistic life has to worship all these energy forms to increase his selftual energy.

Every God is having own energy pattern. The process of transformation also varies. If we wish to attain salvation and get rid of birth-death cycle it is better to focus in one God. Try to understand the whole spiritual lessons based on that particular God and follow the life.”



9.

10. What is surrender to lord?

Once Pattar with his disciples had sacred bath in Sethukarai and worshipped Ram Sethu. While returning back they stayed in a hunter's hut. He also offered special worship to the guru and gave a simple feast.

"He is new to us. We are also unknown to him. Today he has served us with the true faith that we are good in nature. Like this we must surrender to Lord with true faith upon his grace. Like this hunter Lord will take care of us!" - Pattar

"Acharya! Yesterday when I caught a rabbit, its mother came before me and just blinked at me. From her face I understood that she wants to save her child rabbit. I just left the rabbit to escape!" - Hunter

"From this understand the grace of Lord. He will accept our true prayers and transform us to escape from this birth cycle" - says Pattar.

Photo: Panguni Uthiram setting - Lord Ranganatha with Ranganayaki

11. Dedicated disciple

It was a rainy season. Nampillai went to Thiruvellarai divya desam and had the darshan of Lord and he was crossing the Cauvery with his few students to reach SriRangam. Suddenly the water level of the river raised and the wind was also heavy. Boat man said that it is very difficult for him to save the boat and someone has to jump and swim.

Suddenly a woman jumped into Cauvery saying, "Nampillai's feet will save me or take me to Vaikundam". Everyone was shocked to see this. Nampillai immediately started chanting the mantras of Lord to save her. The woman was washed away by the wild waves and she got hold of a tree and escaped.

When she came back to the river bank she said, "Guru's feet has saved me and tested me whether I am attached to this life and body"

Nampillai bestowed her with his grace of spirituality.

12. "I cannot leave you and Lord"

Pinbu Azhagiya Perumal Jeeya was one among the famous tutors lived in SriRangam. One of his students was suffering from sickness. He asked him whether to survive or leave this life. The disciple requested his master to ask Lord to bless with few more years of life. The guru worried that his disciple is attached to body. But he went to Lord and addressed for his health.

Few days later when he came to see him he was talking to the friend as follows,

"Our Guru must now misunderstand me. I have no attachment to this body. But I cannot leave Lord Ranganatha. I always wish to see his sacred bath [Abishekam] and sit for a long time by seeing his graceful face! This cannot be enjoyed in Vaikundam". When the tutor listened this he felt very proud about his student.

13. Tolerance is the seed for salvation

Mudhaliandan was Ramanujar's close disciple. His grandson was Kandhaadai Thozhappar. He was following Nampillai's lessons and accepted him as guru. Few years later he was jealous of his own guru's fame.

He tried to establish his own ashram based on his grandfather's lessons and fame. So he was very angry. One day he left to temple and shouted at Nampillai and his disciples who were having discourse about scriptures.

That evening his wife came to know about this and felt very bad about her husband's attitude. She says, "my body belongs to you. But my atman belongs to Guru. Today you have insulted my Guru which cannot be excused. If I want to continue the family life, better surrender to guru and serve him for one mandalam [41 days - man's gestation time to cure any mental and physical sickness]

Her husband also accepted and realized his mistake. He left out to his ashram but when he

reached Nampillai was sitting on the way to his ashram in the drizzling. He was shocked to see that.

“Dear friend! Thanks for abusing me. You have made me to shed my ego of anger.” - Nampillai.

14. Physically constructing a compound wall is waste

Veera Sundara Bhrama Raayan was a local xhief lived near SriRangam during Pattar’s time. He was much dedicated to Lord Ranganatha. Once he sponsored a huge amount of money to erect a compound wall around a sub shrine within the temple complex. But the wall has to be erected by demolishing a guru’s home. He was Pillai Pillai Alwan. So Pattar advised the chief to leave that home and erect the wall. He refused.

“In 9th century A.D when Thirumangai Alwar planned to erect the wall around the temple he left the small garden maintained once by Thondar Adi Podi Alwar in 7th century A.D with real respect to that devotee. Like this why cannot you do it? Physically constructing a fort wall cannot protect Lord. The wall has to be erected within our self through spiritual lessons to avoid enemies without disturbing the atman.” - says Pattar.

The chief did not accept the words and demolished the tutor’s home.

“Once I have demolished many homes like this and now I have to accept this karma! It is Lord’s wish” - says Pillai Pillai Alwan.

15. “It is time for Lord to listen about me”

Pattar was enjoying Thiru Kai Thala Sevai [a festival in SriRangam during which, Lord will be hold in our hands to make us aware about our actions]. He was surrounded by his students.

There came a Vaishnavite priest who does not like Pattar started abusing him before the public. His students were upset and tried to stop that.

“During every day when I do my poojas, I used to render all my problems mistakes which I need to change before Lord. Today Lord gave the opportunity to hear in front of his sanctum through this person. Si he will sure soon make me to get transform! Let us thank him!” - says Pattar

16. “Think about SriRama and his vaanara army”

Veera Sikaamani Pallava Raayan was a small king in northern Tamil country. He came to SriRangam and had the darshan of Lord. Later he heard about the great tutor Pattar and went to his ashram.

“Gurudev! Please accept my humble respect at your feet! Please tell me a simple way to surrender to Lord. I cannot focus much in spirituality.” - Chief

“Dear king! Do not worry! It is very easy to surrender to Lord. When all vaanara soldiers came to Thirupullani sea shore to cross the ocean to reach Lanka, they were scared to see the deep sea.

SriRama understood this and he started talking very positively about their braveness and encourages them. Laxmana also did the same!

Our thoughts are the monkeys. They are very powerful. But they have to be boosted up often. We also have to cross this sea of birth. For that our thoughts must be tamed and focused. So just think and enjoy this scene from Ramayanam. SriRama will give you the mental courage. Just by thinking with deep awareness about any one aspect of Lord our mind can be transformed” - says Pattar and initiated with Rama thaaraka namam.

17. Nama jepam must be done with real awareness.

Pattar’s disciple was Nanjeeyar. He was from Karnataka. He was given initiation with special mantras.

“Please do nama chanting with awareness. While doing when you getting deviated please think about your Guru and again pull back your mind and focus upon that.” - Pattar.

18. Why Lord Ranganatha is residing very near to Chandra pushkarani holy tank?

Chandra - moon is the symbol of our mind. The mind has to be focused in spirituality to free our self from bondages. Chandra pushkarani tank is the main holy theertham in SriRangam. The main sanctum is just adjacent to that.

“Why Lord is residing here without going to SriLanka with Vibeshana?” - A student questioned Pattar.

“ Once upon a time the elephant called Lord to rescue him from the crocodile Lord came from his abode Vaikuntam. Till his arrival that elephant can tolerate the pain of samsara. In this kaliyuga - era of ignorance we cannot tolerate our pains of life. So he is very near to Chandra tank. He is waiting for a call. But no one wants to call him. We are allowing the crocodile to chew our self.” - says Pattar

19. Service to Guru is service to Lord

One day Pattar was arriving to his ashram in a palanquin. Suddenly he saw his disciple Nanjeeyar bearing the palanquin and shocked.

“a monk cannot carry the palanquin.” - Pattar

“Dear Gurudev! I have attained your holy feet after giving up my family life. If this monk life is an obstacle to serve you better again I wish to go back to family life!” - Nanjeeyar.

Pattar felt happy about his disciple's true service.

20. Why Rama was not a messenger to any one?

This was the question from Siriya aathan when Pattar was giving discourse in Ramayanam. “Rama was born in a great dynasty. He left to forest by giving up his total attachment to materialistic life. So it was very easy for him to be a messenger. There was no king who can send him as messenger.” - Pattar

21. Final wishes before death.

Nanjeeyar was suffering from sickness. He says I have covered this body with sickness to shed this body. I am preparing to get into consciousness. His disciples asked him to convey his last desires.

“I wish to have the divine darshan of Ranganatha's graceful majestic walk while having a procession.

I wish to see and listen to the dance drama of Arayar for Thirumangai Alwar's songs.” Says Nanjeeyar.

22. The first commentary written for Thiruvalmozhi

Thiruvaimozhi recited by Namalwar is considered to be the sacred Tamil Veda equal to Sama Vedham. This has several great spiritual lessons for man to get salvation. It is considered to be very sacred. It has 1000 Tamil hymns.

Many acharyas has given long commentary for this scared scripture. One among them is Nampillai's commentary which is celebrated as a very special work. The commentary has been written on manuscripts by Vadakku Thiru Vedhi Pillai.

But in early times this was not appreciated. Written documentation may make others to get stagnant in further thinking. So Nampillai refused to give back the manuscripts. Later another disciple Eyunni Madhava Perumal asked Lord's permission and spoke to the guru and got permission to release the commentary.

23. 6 feet bug

We can come across bugs as messengers to Lord in hymns of Alwars with romantic mood.

Pattar says,

"6 leg feet bug is the symbol of Guru, his wife and disciple. [Each one with 2 feet] It is better to connect the hymns and the inner meaning with our self and enjoy the hymns"
