

Three Minutes - 22. The smart choice is right in front of you!

dEvu maRRu aRiyEn

kuruhUr nambi

pAvin innisai

pADit tirivanE

(madhura kaviyAzhvAr,
kaNNinuN ciruttAmbu - 2)

தேவு மற்று அறியேன்

குருகூர் நம்பி

பாவின் இன்னிசைப்

பாடித் திரிவனே

(மதுரகவியாழ்வார்,
கண்ணிநுண்சிறுத்தாம்பு - 2)

nambi = (Other than) nammAzhvAr
(from)

kuruhUr = the town of tirukkuruhUr,

aRiyEn = (I am not) not aware of

maRRu = another

dEvu = God.

tirivanE = (I will) spend all my life

pADi = by singing

innisai = the melodious music

pAvin = of the hymns (of nammAzhvAr)

madhurakavi (sweet poet) AzhvAr, an ardent disciple, is the one who collected all the outpourings of his AcArya nammAzhvAr's verses as it came through his mouth. Also, madhurakavi wrote 11 verses called KaNNinuN ciruttAmbu, which is the crown jewel of AcArya bhakti (deep devotion and contemplation about the teacher or guru). History reveals that nAtamuni, a principal AcArya in shrivaiShNa sampradAyam (tradition), in search of the lost nAIAyira divya prabandham (4000

hymns composed by AzhvArs), recited KaNNinuN ciruttAmbu many times and received the darshan (appearance) of nammAzhvAr and was blessed with the lost prabandham. Many recite this hymn to find any lost items and to improve memory etc.

madhurakavi AzhvAr, says here that his guru, nammAzhvAr, is the only God for him and that he will not seek any other; he will spend his life in singing the sweet music of nammAzhvAr's hymns. madhurakavi is an exception, as he is the only AzhvAr who hasn't written any specific hymn about the Lord, but restrained himself to compose only on his AcArya. "Even in forgetfulness, madhurakavi will never even seek another God (maRandum maRRu dEvu aRiyEn yenum madhurakavi)" praised svAmi deshikan.

madhurakavi was born in a higher caste, well trained in all shAstrams (scripts), a gifted musical poet, and was elder to nammAzhvAr. Despite of this, he still took refuge at the feet of nammAzhvAr, who is the avatAra (descent) of Vishvaksena, the Lord's chief operating officer at shrlvaikuNTham (eternal bliss). Even more amazing, madhura kavi sought only nammAzhvAr as the guru and redeemer, although he could have sought Lord KrR^iShNa (who instructed Bhagavat gltA), who was still on this earth via His vibhava avatAra (manifested descent). He was so much enthralled by the kalyANA guNa-s (noble

characteristics) of his guru more than the Lord's Himself!

nammAzhvAr, once, while depicting the saulabhyam (easy accessibility) of the Lord, could not control his emotions and fainted. That was the extent of his captivated love (moham) with Lord KR^AiShNa and is reflected so vividly in his verses. But, madhurakavi, unlike his guru, was not immersed in the bhakti peru veLLam (devotional floods) with KR^AiShNa; not even on His divya mangaLa tirumEni (supreme, beautiful body); not on the nammAzhvAr verses which mesmerizingly describe about that KR^AiShNa; but just only on the sweet music (innisai) of those hymns, that's what he was fascinated with.

AcArya is the one who removes the aj~nAna (ignorance), opens the wisdom eye, and show the Lord to the disciple; so he is more vital than the Lord himself, according to the shAstras (scripts) and sampradAya (tradition). He is the preceptor and is crucial link between the jlvAtma (an individual soul) and the paramAtmA (Lord). To attain mokSham (the permanent bliss), two means are possible, namely bhakthi (extreme devotion and incessant contemplation) and prapatti (total unconditional surrender), the latter is the one which is more probable by commoners.

For Prapatti, AcArya is the inevitable intermediary and without him, breaking away from bondage is nearly impossible. According to

svAmi deshikan, madhurakavi avoided any harm (tunbu aRRa madhura kavi) by surrendering to his AcArya. One may infer that such an escape from harm may not be possible, even if one surrenders to the Lord Himself.

What we learn here –

- 1. AcArya is the direct God** (pratyakSha daivam), who exhibits a greater accessibility than the Lord himself.
- 2. Surrendering to AcArya does not contradict shAstras or sampradAyam;** it does not refute the parattvam of shrIman nArAyaNa (final and all powerful Lord) as well.
- 3. By pleasing the AcArya, Lord is pleased even more.** So AcArya bhakti should see no bounds.
- 4. Surrendering to AcArya is more fruitful** than surrendering to the Lord Himself, and in almost all instances, that is the only method possible.

He showed the path,
with a kinder heart;
Helpless in me,
put a humble thought;
Can't ever thank,
even God tries hard;
All I can is, cherish him
over the Lord.