Sri Varamangai Muni Vaibhavam
Translated in English by Smt. Sumithra Varadarajan

Srimathi Ramanujaya Namaha
Sri Vana Vana Manaye Namaha
Sri Varachala MahA muniye Namaha
SivasvAnkAdayA pAthram deebhakthyaAdhi gunAmaA
YakeendrA pravasam vand hE zamya jamaiham munim
RamyaAbhaya aAgrendara pAde hEeka mayam sarha
thatAynthAtha sar handhAtkim ramAmaAja munim bhaje

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1. PREFACE

With the divine grace of Sri Andal sametha Sri Parthasarathi emperuman and with the blessings of HH Sri VanamAmalai kaliyan ramanuja jeeyar swami, adiyen is trying to take up this difficult kainkaryam of writing about the life history of HH Sri onnAna VanamAmalai Jeeyer swami (renowned as HH Sri ponnadikAl jeeyer swami). With the support of the all the shisyas and Apthars of the vanamamalai mutt, adiyen will proceed with this kainkaryam. This E-book will be based on a book “Sri Varamangai Muni Vaibhavam” released under the kind grace of HH Sri Vanamamalai 27th pattam Sri chinna Ramanuja jeeyer swami.

HH Sri kaliyan vanamamalai Ramanuja Jeeyer swamy (30th Pattam)
The above book was originally written based on a book “gaganagiri muni charitram” in Sanskrit and “yatheendra pravana prabhabAvam”. The great grand son of Sri Ramanuja pillan, one of the ashtadiggajas and jnana putran of Sri Vanamamalai onnAna jeeyer swamigal wrote Gaganagiri muni charitram. The author, sundarAryar, commonly called as ‘AththAn’, was considered as an amsam of VanamAmalai Perumal, Sri DeivanAyagan. He was a very great scholar appreciated by many elderly scholars. As per the instruction of the then peedAdhipathi Sri Ramanuja jeeyer swami and as per the order of vanamAmalai perumal in his dream, he did this divine work in Sanskrit. Based on this gaganagiri muni charitram, and in many places with the style and contents of yatheendra pravana prabhabAvam, the book Sri Varamangai Muni Vaibhavam has been written in Tamil. Based on this, adiyen will try to write on HH Sri OnnAna jeeyer swami (VanamAmalai madam mudhal pattam).

Swamy performing eedu kAlakshEbam in front if sishya goshti
(Including Namperumal)

May the divine couples make this kainkaryam a grand success.

2. INTRODUCTION

Sri:pathi, Sri VaikundanikEtanan, aVapthasamasthakAman, Sriman Narayanan, the bhagavan who enjoys all the comforts in his divine abode, Sri Vaikundam along with his divine consorts Sri, bhoo and nELA devis and with all the nithya sooris, viz., garuda, vishvakEna, anantha and others, inspite of all these celebrations, like a father who is in the thoughts of his son, away in a foreign country, while celebrating some festival at home with his other sons, emperuman also was immersed in the thoughts of the
jeevatmas who were unable to enjoy him like the nithya sooris (“vaikundethu parE lOkE sriyAsArtham jagathpathim! AstE Vishnu rachintyAtma bhakthair bhAgavathair saha!!”).

Emperuman’s kainkaryam at all times, at all places and at all conditions is a right to all jeevatmas. But seeing the sad state of the jeevatmas which lack this kainkaryam and those which do not even realize that they are lacking such enjoyment, emperuman’s dayai(mercy) fell on such jeevatmas. Hence he lost interest in all the enjoyments in the nithya mandalam and felt lonely (“sa AkAki na ramathE”). So he gave the jeevatmas which were dormant the karna kalEbharams (activeness). Emperuman gave life to those jeevatmas, which lay like birds without wings to enjoy his kainkaryam. But unfortunately, these jeevatmas like cutting a cow with a knife given to cut sacred grass (samith) or like pricking the eyes with a stick given to remove the weeds started using the life given by perumal for enjoying lowkikam. Perumal gave them the boat to come ashore but the jeevatmas used the same boat to submerge themselves. As per alwars words, “Akkaiyin vazhi vuzhandru” the jeevatmas acted as per the instructions of their sense organs and hence fell again and again in the cycle of life and death (mAri mAri pala pirappum pirandhu). To help the jeevatmas out of this cycle, emperuman gave the sAstras (“sAshanAth sAstram”). The jeevas never cared about the sastras but remained indifferent as per the following verses:

“IswarOham aham bhOgi siddhOham bhalAvAn sukhee AtyObhi janavAnasmi kOnyOsthi sadrushO mayA” “yOnyatha sandham AthmA pratdhipathyathE 0 kimthEna na krutham papam chOrEna AthmA pahArina”

A king who wants peace and not war first sends his messenger to the enemy’s court but if the enemy doesn’t accept peace then the king has no other go than to go for the war himself. Similarly emperuman sent the sastras as his messenger but the jeevatmas disregarded the same so emperuman now decided to come to the leela vibhuti himself taking various avatars in order to change the jeevatmas. But then this again gave little fruit. The only result was the difficulties emperuman underwent (manisarkkAi padAdhana pattu). The jeevas remained with ahankara and mamakara and preferred to go to naraka like ravana and duriyOdhana even when emperuman appeared in front of them and showed his powers and wanted to grant them moksha. Even after so much insult from the jeevatmas emperuman, the kind father couldn’t leave his sons to suffer. So like catching a animal with another trained animal he decided to send the alwars who were none other than the nithya sooris- srivatsa, kowsthuba, vaijayanthi, vanamalai, sri, bhoomi, neela, Sri Panchajanyam, ananda, garuda, and vishvaksenar. Emperuman ordered them to be born in different places in different varnas and spread the messages (rahasyams) already given by him in the sastras for the upliftment of the jeevatmas. The alwars did as per the order of emperuman. Since the alwars were more contained to
their bhakthi and anubhavams, then the acharyas took birth to spread the words of the alwars. The acharyas spread the message of our sath sampradAyam along with acharya shisya bhAvams.

To felicitate the divine work of the alwars and acharyas in our guru paramparai two great works, Guru ParamparA prabhAvam and Yatheendra pravana prabhAvam were given by our poorvAcharyas. In our guru paramparai garland the last ratnam was Sri MaNaVAla mAmunigal who became the acharya of Sri ranganatha himself. The prathama and sat sishya of Sri Mamunigal was Sri VanamAmalai Ramanuja jeeyar swami. Yatheendra pravana prabhAvam, talks in detail about the acharya, mAmunigal but only briefs the important occasions in the life of the shisya, ponnadikAl jeeyer. Hence Sri Vara mangai muni Vaibhavam, which gives a detailed life history of Sri vanamAmalai swamy was written, based on which we will proceed in this Ebook

3. BIRTH OF THE DIVINE ACHARYA

“VaramangA mahAdEvi gaganAchala yOginaha: 
ParAnu bhava bhOdhaAya suprabhAdham thanOthviha”

As per the thiruvullam (desire) of Periya perumal, Lord RanganAtha, thiruanandAzhvan (Adisesha) took one more avatAram as Azhagiya maNaVAla perumal nAyanar to complete the jobs left over in his previous avatAram as Sri Ramanuja. As NayanAr grew up as sakala sAstra vithpannar, to help him out in his venture to uplift the jeevatmas, emperuman desired to bless him with a sath shisya. Once again thiruanandAzhvAn himself took another avatAram as a shisya to help the acharya.

The shisya was born in one of the sacred places where number of great scholars lived as per alwar’s paasurams, “thEru jnAnaThthavar vEda vElviyarAch sirivara mangala nagar” and “SenthozhilAlar vEda vElviyarA sirivara mangala nagar” and added a lot of credit to the divine kshEtram. In such a divine place, in a very orthodox SriVaishnava family, whose ancestors where under the service of emperuman generation after generations (“EzhAtkAlum puram thozhAdhu kudi kudi vandhu At seibhavargal”), lived a great scholar, Sri RangAchariyAr, Who was respected by all for his jnAnam and who was a shisya of ThiruvAimozhi pillai. Sri RangAchariyar was blessed with poorna lakshmi katAksham and Jnana, bhakthi and vairAkhyam. To this great scholar a son was born in Rakthashi samvatsara, kanyA mAsam, punarvasu nakshatram, as a amsa and shisya of Azhagiya maNaVAla perumAl nAyanAr. This avatara was like nara avatAra as a shisya to nArAyana avatara (both were bhagavat avatarams);
madhurakavigal avataram to NammAzhvar (both were azhvars); MudaliyAndAn avatara as a amsa of bhagavat ramanuja (acharya avatars); this avatar as a amsa of Azhagiya manavAla perumal nAyanAr. Among the three sons of RangAchariyar he was the second son. Pleased with the beauty of the child’s thirumEni (body), the child was named Azhagiya varadar. Scholars predicted the child to be an amsAvatAram, a great jnAni and a ardent disciple. Sri RangAchariyar himself realized his second son to be a special child and hence regarded him very dear to him. He did all the ceremonies that had to be done to his sons in appropriate times. The sons were taught Veda and Vedanta in the appropriate ages.

Azhagiya varadar – Sri PonnadikAl Jeeyar swamy in thiruvallikeni
Azhagiya varadar was very intelligent and grasped any lesson the very first time and learnt everything in a very short period of time. Deciding to do panchasamskAram to his son under his acharya, Sri RangAchariyar proceeded towards Alwar thirunagari along with his sons.
4. ACHARYA SAMASRAYANAM

On reaching Alwar Thirunagari they took a refreshing bath in the divine Tamparabharani river, which is regarded even more sacred than Ganga, Yamuna, Godavari, Saraswathi, Kaveri and all other rivers. They then went to have the darshan of the prapanna Jana Koodasthar, Sri NammAzhvAr. Getting pleased with the darshan, they then proceeded towards the thirumAligai of their acharya, ThiruvAimozhi pillai.

Swamy at that time was delivering the divine arthas of thiruvAimozhi (thondarkku amudunna sonna sol mAlai), along with sabdha, artha and bhAva rasAs to a crowd of Srivaishnavas, in such a great manner that, even ignorant and innocent people easily understood the Vedanta arthas in alwar’s paasurams. Sri RangAchariyar and his sons prostrated before the acharya, who with great love enquired about their well being and
asked them to be seated. Then, they accepted the sree pAdha theertham of their acharya with great regards and sat down to hear his divine out pouring.

The next day, Sri RangAchAriyar took bath, finished his nithyAnusandhAnams proceeded along with his sons to pillai’s sannadhi, prostrated the acharya, and requested him to accept his son Azhagiya Varadar and others as his shisyas and pour his divine grace on them. At that time, Azhagiya ManavAla perum nAyanar, a scholar of all sastras and a disciple of ThiruvAimozhi pillai, doing guru kula vAsam under pillai, came and prostrated the acharya. ThiruvAimozhi pillai was a jnani (sarvegner). Hence he realized that Azhagiya varadar was a shisyAvaTaram of Azhagiya manavAla perum nAyanAr. So he ordered nAyanAr to do pancha samskAram to Azhagiya varadar and others. Nayanar remained quiet hearing the order of the acharya. He then looked at Azhagiya varadar with eyes filled with krupai. On seeing Azhagiya varadar nAyanAr realized that he had divine qualities (A-mudalvan Evan) and hence showered his special grace on him.

NayanAr did pancha samskAram first to Azhagiya Varadar and then to the others. Then Azhagiya Varadar and others did danda pranAmam to their acharya, nAyanAr and the acharya graced them with his Sree pAda theertham and prasAdam. Nayanar then started from his acharya thirumAligai along with his shisyas, azhagiya varadar and others to do mangalAsAsanams to alwar. On the way, nAyanAr first did mangalAsAsanam to EmperumAnAr, starting with “SrimAdhavAngri jalajath vaya
nithya sEvA” and ending with “RamAnujam yethi pathim pranamAmi moorthnA”. NayanAr then showed azhagiya varadar, the divine feet of emperumAnAr but azhagiya varadar fell into the feet of nAyAnar (vara vara muni mEva chintayenthi), since nAyanAr has always been under the divine feet of emperumAnAr (nithyam yatheendra tava divya vapus smrithoumE…vruthyantharEsthu vimukam karana thrayancha) azhagiya varadar felt it to be more appropriate to fall in his acharya nayanAr’s feet.

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bavishyadAcharyan at azhwAr thirunagari
Azhagiya varadar then did mangalAsAsanam to his acharya, and requested his divine grace always on him. (“apakatha madhamAnai: anthimOpAya nishthai: athikatha paramArthai: arthakAma anabhEkshai!: Nikila Jana suhruthbhihi: nirjitha krOdha lObhai:

Srimathe Ramanujaya Namaha
Sri Vava Vava Manaye Namaha
Sri VarAchala mahA munaye Namaha
Sivaa desa dayA pathram deepakthyAdhi gunAmanam
Yakshendra pravakam vand ke savya jamAtvam munim
Ramya/Anathya yOgendei padhe rEkA nayam sadhA
thathA yothAtha/ba sah dhAthim ramAnuja munim bhajE

Photo Courtesy www.phase.com/svami
vara vara muni brithyair astumE nithya yoga :). They then accepted the theertha prasAdam given in the sannadhi and then accepted the divine thiruvadi of EmperumAnAr on their heads and with great happiness and gratefulness came out in pradakshinam. After coming out of the emperumAnAr sannadhi, azhagiya manavAla perumAl nAyanar along with azhagiya varadar and his other shisyas prostrated Thirukachchi nambigal (“DevarAja dayA pathram Sri kAnchi poorna muththamamI RAmAnuja munEr mAnyam vandhEham sanjanAsrayamII).
They then proceeded towards the entrance of the temple, paying their due respects to periya thiruvadi, entered the gopura vAsal, had the darshan of “Ayar thalaivan” and “Sudarshana Alwar”.

As they proceeded inside, they had darshan of the golden dwajasthambham. Inside they passed through thiruvEngadamudaiyan sannadhi, chakravarti thirumagan sannadhi and navaneedha Krishnan sannadhi. Finally they entered the sannadhi of ‘Polindhu nindra pirAn’ (“thirithanthAgilum dEva pirAnnudai kariya kOla thiruvuru kAnban nAn”) reciting the verses from thiruvAimozhi which are the mangalAsAsanam done by nammAzhvar to this perumal starting with “onnum dEvum....” Then they did mangalAsAsanam to jnana piran (“mangalAni prayunjAnA mandham mandham viniryuyu :”) and then to kuruga dEvi, the holy mother filled with ‘kshama’
(forgiveness) and krupai (mercy). She is the same piratti who showed her mercy even on the rakshasis who did utter cruelty to her in ashOkavanam saying, “na kaschit nAparAthyathi” (Apjath kurukAdEveem kurukAnAdha vallabhAm I PoornAkassu ksama jushtAm svapriyAya priyamvadhAm”).

swamy adhinAthan in seshavahanam in azhwAr thirunagari

From there they prostrated the dasAvatArAs and then proceeded towards the AdhinAyaki sannadhi and then towards thirupuliAzhvAr. Then after having the divine darshan of our sampradayam’s important acharya, Sri Nathamunigal, who got back the divya prabandhams from nammAzhvar by reciting the kanninun siruthambhu 12000 times, they then proceeded towards the golden dwajastambham of Azhvar. Like a rising sun, in-between four beautiful golden pillars, on a golden simhAsanam studded with precious stones, very pleasant to the viewer’s eyes, they had the darshan of one who has been praised by poigai muni and others and who Sri madurakavigal surrendered as his soul master and delivered the divine kanninun siruthambhu, amidst a great crowd of ubhyavEdanthAcharyas, pandits, sastra vithpannAs, those who have shed all their bad
qualities (selfishness, anger, greed etc) and those who have a great regard for azhvar and are mumukshus(interested in moksha). Azhvar, prapana Jana kootasthar, sarvaprapyam to all over there, in turn was showering his divine grace with his eyes filled with krupai, like a lotus which has just bloomed but with a gambeeryam like a lion, himself being like a princess in the kingdom of emperumAn, Srivaikundam, wearing a sweet smelling garland (“nAt kamazh magizh mAlai mArbinan”).

Deeply enjoying the divine glory of nammAzhvAr, azhagiya manavAla perumal nAyanar did mangalAsAsanam to alwar, starting with “mAthA pithA uvadhaya:” and ending with pranamAmi moordhnA” followed by the recitation of kanninun siruthAmbhu. While reciting the same and having the mesmerized darshan of the alwar, nAyanAr got deeply involved in the lines “anaiiyAi aththanAi” and regarded alwar to be his relation in all types (mother, father etc.)
Seeing nAyanAr, so deeply involved in alwar’s darshanam, like seetha piratti who enjoyed perumal doing thiruvArAdhanam to periya perumal, azhagiya varadar got deeply involved in the darshanam of nAyanAr. Like thirupAnAzhvar who got himself dissolved in the beauty of ranganAtha and sang “en amudhinai kanda kangan mattrodrinai kAnAvE” and vaduga nambi who regarded the darshanam of emperumAnAr even more important than namperumal darshanam, azhagiya varadar enjoyed nAyanAr’s darshanam.

Seeing the way nAyanar enjoyed azhvar’s darshanam and azhagiya varadar’s Acharya bhakthi, the achargars in the sannadhi were highly pleased by the extraordinary mix of acharya-shisya Bhavanai. They then, as representatives of alwar himself, presented the acharya and shisya with alwar’s parivattam, thirumAlai, theertham, sandhanam, prasAdam and on top of all these the madurakavigal and all other honors. Receiving all the honors presented by the archagars, nAyanar and azhagiya varadar came out of the sannadhi and did pradakshinam to alwar with their mind still lingering in the divine beauty and grace of nammAzhvar.

Nayanaar was highly pleased and felt mentally peaceful for having been blessed with such a great Acharya, who is a jnani filled with bhakthi and vairaghyam. Azhagiya varadar then followed his acharya to the thirumAligai of thiruvAimozhi pillai and prostrated under the divine feet of pillai. That day they stayed in the thirumAligai enjoying the thiruvArAdham to perumal done by pillai, followed by the dadiyArAdhanam and then the shower of divine arthas by pillai on thirumanthram, bhagavat vishayam and many other divine subjects.

The next day, thiruvAimozhi pillai ordered azhagiya varadar to go along with his father and brother to his birthplace vanamamalai and stay with great regards to his parents by taking care of them with great sincerity and also involve him in the divine kainkaryam of vanamamalai emperuman. Listening to the sweet words of the paramAcharyan but unable to get separated from his own acharyan, azhagiya varadar remained silent. Understanding the inner thought of azhagiya varadar, azhagiya manavAla perumAl nAyanAr requested his acharya thiruvAimozhi pillai to allow azhagiya varadar to stay on for some more days and to let others continue their journey back. Pillai accepted for the same and hence rangAchariyar and his other sons returned back to vanamamalai leaving azhagiya varadar in Alwar thirunagari.

Azhagiya varadar, a bAla brahmachAri, stayed along with his acharyan, considering his guru, nAyanAr to be his god (“peethaka vAdai pirAnAr pirama guru vAgi vandhu”, “ThEnAr kamala thirumAsgal kozhunan thane” guruvAgi). He considered his acharyan, who has blessed him with all happiness and joy, to be everything for him and
engaged himself in the kainkaryam of the acharyan as per the acharyan’s wish ("mAdum manaiyum kilaiyum maraimunivar thEdum vuyar veedam senneriyumpeedudaiya ettezhuthum"thandha Acharyan. An acharya blesses a shisya with cattle, house, relation and the high arthas of the Veda adorned by the pandits and also the astAksharam, the manthra raja.)

Very pleased with the disciple’s kainkaryams, nayanAr with great interest thought him the sastras, viz., tarka, meemAmsa etc. Azhagiya varadar grasped all the lessons in the very first shot, which surprised nAyanar and also made him very happy. He then continued to teach him the drAvida vedam starting with thirupallAndu. After that nAyanar proceeded to give the shisya the most important lesson in our sampradAyam, the rahasyas. He first blessed azhagiya varadar with the rahasyam which has 8 aksharAs, 3 padhams which is been always meditated in their minds by Srиваishanavas("nAth thazhumbhezha") who are mumukshus filled with jnana, bhakthi and vairaghya, the thirumanthram, which bestows all good results. Nayanar thought all the inner meanings and all the explanations as given by the poorvAcharyas to azhagiya varadar("nalam tharum sollai nAn kandu kondEn NarayanA ennum nAmam").

Followed by the manthra raja, nAyanar blessed azhagiya varadar with the detailed explanation of the meaning of the manthra ratnam, the dvayam. Next lesson was on the words of geethAcharyan, the charama slOkam, thereby teaching the shisya the essentiality to leave all other upAyas and fall into emperuman, Sri Parthasarathi’s feet considering him to be the siddhOpAyam.

Then azhagiya varadar learnt all the nalAyira paasura vyakhyanams and their corresponding rahasya arthas. Azhagiya varadar, was filled with extreme joy to have obtained all the divine meanings from his own acharya, but he still remained without any ahankAra mamakArams (ego and pride), looking at anything with a balanced mind and as a foremost paramaikAntin, considering sheshatva (master), saranayathva (to who’s feet one surrenders) and prapyathva (the ultimate goal) all to be his own acharya. He remained in madurakavi bhAvam ("Dhevu mattruariyEn") and with strong belief in the alwars words,"vun padha yugAmAm yEr konda veetai elidhinil Aidhuvan”. Like lakshmana ("aham sarvam karishyAmi") azhagiya varadar was also always ("ozhivil kAlamellAm vudanAi manni”) involved in all types of kainkaryams to his acharya. When one fine day, nAyanAr who is none other than the reincarnation of ethirAjar himself, always in the thought of the way to uplift the masses, called azhagiya varadar and with a graceful look suggested him to go to do mangalAsAsanam to deivanAyagan if he desired. Azhagiya varadar was shocked to hear this, and unable to digest the thought of separation from his beloved acharya, started thinking why nAyanAr has suddenly ordered for separation?
5. BACK TO VANAMAMALAI

After deep thinking, azhagiya varadar realized the reason behind his acharyan, Sri NAYanar’s words. The reason was azhagiya varadan was still a samsAri and along with his duty towards his acharya he had other duties too. So NAYanar wanted azhagiya varadar to return back to vanamamalai to take care of his parents and other relatives. Thereby realizing his duty but still with deep sorrow to get separated from his acharya, azhagiya varadar started his journey. But, throughout the journey his thoughts circled around the grace and athma gunas of his acharya (elders say, “pAdhEyam pundareekaksha nAma sankeerthanam” but for this shisya everything was only his acharya). With the same thoughts he reached sirivaramangala nagar. He bathed in the sacred tank, “Settru thAmarai” and completed his anushtAnams (daily rituals) and proceeded towards perumal’s sannadhi. He did mangalAsAsanam to the emperuman (“thOthAdri nAtham lakshmeesam dEvAnAtha mavandhatha”) reciting nammazhvar’s paasuram starting with “nOtrra nO nibilliEn” and ending with “sreevara mangala nagar veetrirundha endhAi”.

![Image of Sirivaramanga sametha Deivanayakan](image-url)
From then on he started doing kainkaryam to deivanAyaka perumal with utmost vairakhyam, ignoring his sareera bandhus and involving himself more with the athma bandhus (bhAgavatAs). Azhagiya varadar started developing hatred towards all the worldly affairs, which stood as a hinderence in his acharya kainkaryam, staying along with his acharya (“thAyE thandhai endrum thArAmE kilai makkal endrum nOyE pattu ozhindEn”, laments thirumangai alwar). So he decided to accept the final sacred ashrama, the sanyAsAshramA. He submitted his thought under the divine feet of the deivanAyaka perumal and requested perumal to release him from this samsAram and grant him the dhanda-pavithram and kAshAyam required for him to take up sanyasa, regarded as the mokshAshramam. Emperuman seeing the vairakhyam of azhagiya varadar blessed him with the kAshAyam and dhandam and ordered him to have them till he was in this world, through the mouth of the archagar. Like a great king of a big empire, consulting his queen to crown the prince, DeivanAyakan also consulted his piratti, jaganmAthA about making azhagiya varadar, a prince to the empire of “Darshana pravarthakam” and crowned him with his parivattam and blessed him with the name, “vanamamalai rAmanuja Jeeyer”. Giving all his prasAdams, abhaya hastam, thirumAlai and Srisadagopam, deivanAyaka emperuman ordered jeeyer saying, “Stay like our rAmanujar in our sannadhi and take care of the temple administration and also spread the ramanuja darshanam to one and all”. He then blessed the Jeeyer with a golden vessel filled with some prasadam as mAdukaram and also ordered for a mutt to be built for the Jeeyer close to the temple.

DeivanAyakan then called all the archakas and other kainkarya paras in his sannadhi and ordered them to leave ‘vanamamalai rAmanuja jeeyer’ in his mutt with all respect and to consider Jeeyer, who is close to his heart, as their master (acharyan) and get enlightened by his preaching and live following his orders. As per perumal’s order, all of them accompanied Jeeyer to his mutt along with divine vAdyaghOshams (sound of divine instruments) and other honors. After reaching the mutt, they did mangalAsAsanam to Jeeyer, “rAmanuja muni kanagamouli kalandhoozhi vAzhiyE” and returned after getting the blessings of the Jeeyer.

Vanamamalai perumal showered his divine grace on the Jeeyer and putting aside the phrase, “AthmA karmaththOdE pOm; Ishwaran kanneerOdE pOm”, relaxed in his seat, relived of his tensions about the jeevatmas. Everyone in the city, including ladies, young children and elders prostrated before the Jeeyer and thanked deivanAyaka perumal, with great happiness for blessing them with such a great acharya, who was like a reincarnation of udaiyavar to them. Meanwhile, the king of kerala heard about the greatness of Vanamamalai Jeeyer swami and wanted to have darshan of this great Mahan. He came to vanamamalai, bathed in the sacred tank ‘settru thAmarai’ (which has been praised as, “rAjabhAvA vahEchuna:”, “bhukthi mukthi pradhE” etc), finished
his anushtanams and with clear mind and body proceeded towards deivanayakan sannadhi.

Onnana swamy-Thiruvallikeni mutt

He submitted to emperuman all the valuable stone studded jewels and grand vstrams he has got. He ordered to make special prasadams (thaligai akkAravadisil and many others) and with great love submitted to the emperuman.

Later he proceeded to have darshan of the jeeyar with great enthusiasm. As he entered the doorsteps of the mutt, he was awestricken by the divine glory of the jeeyar filled with atmost jnanam, wearing dvadasa pundram all over his body, beautified by the yagnOpaveetham, thulasi mAla, nalinAksha mAla and various thirupavithra malas. The thirumugam (divine face) of the jeeyer was like a lotus flower and his eyes like the petals
of the flower. With a beautiful shikai adding to the beauty of his back the jeeyer was seated on a koormAsanam. With all grace, the jeeyer was delivering bhagavat vishayam to all the srivaishnavas in front of him. The king out of great respect fell down on the same place and did danda pranAmams to the great Mahan. The king went to the state of ecstasy, considering his bhakyam to have obtained this opportunity to have the darshan of such a great acharya in his lifetime. To show his joy he submitted some wealth and a few villages to the mutt, to be used for nithya dhadhiyArAdhanam.

The king then requested Jeeyer swamy to grace him with sreepAda theertham and prasAda sEsham, to purify his soul. Since the king didn’t have any sambandham (relation) with the mutt,Jeeyer hesitated but on the request of all the srivaishnavas collected over there to shower his grace on the king, jeeyer blessed the king with the same. Accepting with utmost pleasure, the king submitted all the responsibilities of the deivanAyaka perumal temple administration, along with the villages and all the properties of the temple under the incharge of vanamamalai jeeyer and returned back to his own place with mental peace.

6. KAINKARYAMS OF HH JEEYER SWAMY

1. Construction of the udaiyavar sannadhi;
2. Renovation of the vanamamalai vimAnam which was in a very bad state;
3. Construction of the artha mandapam;

Along with all these kainkaryams, Jeeyer also took care of the vanamamalai temple administration just like udaiyavar’s administration of the periya koil. He also took care of the nithya dhadhiyArAdhanam at the vanamamalai mutt. Though very busy with all these kainkaryams his mind was always in the thought of his acharya and he very badly wanted to go and do nithya kainkaryam to nayanAr. Deciding to go for the same to thirunagari, he appointed one srivaishnava to be incharge of dhadhiyArAdhanam in the mutt and srikAryams in the temple.

7. VANAMAMALAI JEEYER BECOMES PONNADIKAL JEEYER

At the very same time, nAyanar sent a srivaishnava to fetch Jeeyer swamy for some important work. Thereby jeeyer started immediately and reached,”mAda mAligai soozhindhu azhagiya thirukurugoor” and did sAshtAnga danda pranAmams to his
acharya, nAyanar who remained with divine excellence. After a long time, jeeyer had the darshan of his acharya and hence he with great joy enjoyed the divine thirumEnii from bottom to top (pAdhAdhi kEsam) trying to nullify all his grief due to separation all these days. NayanAr was also highly pleased to see Jeeyer and with great love he lifted jeeyer and looked at him with eyes filled with grace. Nayanar welcomed jeeyer like a mother/father welcoming their son returning home after many days and then uttered the words “NAM PONNADI ANEERO PONNADIKKAL JEEYARE!” and thereby blessed vanamamalai jeeyer swami with the name “ponnadikkkAl Jeeyer”. NayanAr then enquired about the kainkaryams in DeivanAyakan sannadhi. With the graceful look nAyanar then told to Jeeyer, “Oh! Jeeyer I planned to take up sanyasa and then grant you the same. But then you opted to it even before me so I lost the good fortune”. Jeeyer then fell into the feet of his acharya and requested him to bless him with his sreepAda theertham. Nayanar blessed him with the same and jeeyer took it with great regard and also distributed to all the srivaishnavas over there.

NayanAr then got ready to start the thiruvArAdhanam to perumal and went to the yagasAlai (perumal sannadhi). After the yAgam (thiruvArAdhanam) nAyanar took Jeeyer along with him to anuyAgam (dhadhiyArAdhanam). Jeeyer requested nAyanAr to bless him with his prasAdam and obtained the same. Then the other Srivaishnavas had prasAdam. Following this, nAyanAr started with his kalashepam on thiruvAimozhi. By bhagavat krupai, that day’s paasuram happened to be “nOttra nOnbillEn” (Nammazhvar’s first sharanAgathi under the divine feet of vanamamalai deivanAyaka perumal). Jeeyer immensely enjoyed the divine nectar of the thiruvAimozhi paasuram as delivered by his Acharya (eettu perukkar). At the end, nAyanAr told the Srivaishnavas in front him about the greatness of vanamamalai jeeyer swamy, his jnana, bhakthi and virakhyam and completed the kalashepam.

Later, nAyanar decided to go to Srirangam (“SubEna manasA dyAyan”) and stay over there for rest of his life doing kainkaryam under the divine feet of lord ranganatha, considered to be the soul for all srivaishnavas. Thereby nAyanAr went to take the permission of alwar to do the same. Getting alwar’s permission, nAyanAr along with ponnadikkAl Jeeyer proceeded towards srirangam (“emperumAn thiruvarangam engE ennum”). In the middle, wanting to have the divine darshan of Rangamannar (“villiputtur vuraivAn than ponnadi kAnbhadhOr AsaiyinAl”) they went to Srivilliputtur.
They did mangalAsAsanam to vada-perun-kOil-vudaiyAn and periyAzhvar and then proceeded towards Sri Andal sannadhi and did mangalAsAnam starting with “neelA thungastana giri tadee” and ending with “nama etha mitham Bhooya AvAsthu Bhooya.” They stayed for three days over there and then nAyanAr along with jeeyer proceeded to thirumAlirunchOlai. Both of them bathed in the sacred noopuraganga and finished their anushtAnams and proceeded to have the divine darshan of the thirumAlirunchOlai azhagar (sundaran). On their way, Srivaishnavas of that place payed their homage to nAyanar and jeeyer swamigal and lead their way to the temple. At the Gopura vAsal (main entrance to the temple—“kodiani nedu madhil gOpuram”) kainkaryaparas (the persons involved in the divine service of emperuman at the temple) and archakas welcomed them along with the seeravadagopam.

Nayanar accepted the seeravadagopan on his head with great regards and entered inside. As per the verse, “thadarsha sundaram drushtu drishtichittApahArinam” they were mesmerized by the beauty of azhagar (“thirumAlirunchOlai nindrAn”). They did mangalAsAsanam to the sundarar by reciting the thiruvAimozhi padhigam “senchor...
kavigAl”. Accepting the theertha prasAdam, thirumAlai, thiruparivattam and other honors they got themselves deeply involved with the emperuman and stayed there for three days.

Then both of them proceeded towards Srirangam. Some days passed on the way and they finally reached Srirangam, the bhooolOka vaikundam (“sezhuntadham punal soozh thiruvarangam”). They took bath in kAveri – “gangayil punidhamAya kAviri”, the kAveri which is even more sacred than even the river ganga and finished their appropriate anushtAnams and with great joy, nAyanar and his shisya vanamamalai Jeeyer proceeded towards the temple, passing many beautiful gardens on the way and then the divine mAda veedhis (streets around the temple) and then reached the ‘nAnmugan gOpura vAsal’ (nAnmugan entrance).

Sundaratholudaiyan-thirumaliruncholai
Starting with “dEvee gOdhayathi pathi sadathveshinou” they did mangalAsAsanam and reached the sannadhi of Sri RanganAchiyAr. They prostrated the divine mother and did mangalAsAsanam to her. Further, they proceeded towards the perumal sannadhi, paid homage to the dvArapAlakas and then entered inside and in between the two divine pillars (“mAyOnai mananththOnE pattri nindru vAyAra vAzhththi”) had the pAdhAdhikEsAntham (from the thiruvadi to thirumudi- as per thirupAnAzhvar in amalanAdhipiran) darshan of periya perumal and did mangalAsAsanam with pallAndu. Then they requested perumal to bless them with his kainkaryam and showed their gratefulness to have given such a great Acharya-shisya sambhandam (relationship). Periya perumal with a graceful look blessed them with his theertha prasAdham, thirumAlai, thiruparivattam and Sreesadagopan. Nayanar and his shisya, jeeyer swami, accepting the same enjoyed the divine beauty of emperuman along with sri and bhoo devis, with immense happiness came out of the sannadhi in pradakshinam.
While doing pradakshinam, around the temple vanamamalai- ponnadikkAl jeeyer followed nAyanar like his shadow enjoying the thirumEni (physical) beauty of nAyanar. Nayanan was highly pleased with the shisya and hence he blessed him with the perumal prasAdams in his hand, to Jeeyer as his own prasAdam. Jeeyer accepted the same with great regard and followed nAyanar as his padarEka.

Nayanar then proceeded towards the thirumAligai of koil annan and relaxed in a seat with the jeeyer standing in front of him with folded arms. It was bhagavat sankalpam to unite nAyanar and vanamamalai Jeeyer swamy to spread and make our darshanam (rAmAnuja siddhAntham) flourish, in order to lift the jeevatmas who were lost in the samsAric ocean of miseries without realizing their own svaroopam. After submitting this responsibility to the acharya and shisya periya perumal relaxed without any tension in his adhisesha paryankam (bed of adhisesha). Vanamamalai Jeeyer, who had deeply involved himself in the service of his acharya and mangalasasanam to namperumal, one fine day wished to go to thirumalai to do mangalAsAsanam to thiruvEnkatamudaiyan and appealed the same to nAyanAr.

Like thirumazhisai Alwar who followed kanikannan, his shisya (“kanikannan pOgindrAn kamarupokachchi manivanna nee kidakka vEnda- thunivudaiya senNAp pulavanum pOgirEn- neeyum nin painAgappAI surittikol”) nAyanAr also decided to go along with ponnadikkAl Jeeyer. Both of them then went to namperumal sannadhi, did mangalAsAsanam and after getting the permission from namperumAl to go to thirumalai and other vadu nAttu thirupadhigal, started on their journey.

They started their divya dEsa yAthrai (journey) with Thiruvellarai (“muppOdhum vAnavarEffhum munivargal vellarai”) and had darshan of pangaiya selvi sametha senthAmarai kannan. Then they proceeded to srimushnam to have the divine darshan of swethavarAhar. From there they went to thirukkOvaloor and did mangalAsAsanam to edaikazhi Ayan (“ThirukkOvaloor adhanul kandEn nAnE”) and proceeded on to thirukkadigai, had darshan of thakkAn and climbed the hill to do mangalAsAsanam to the “kadigai thadang kundrin mEl erundha akkArakkani”). Finally they reached thirumalai (“paran sendru sEr thiruvEnkata mAmalaigal”).

ThiruvEnkata mudaiyan didn’t want them to have darshan like all the other devotees. He wanted to show the greatness of the acharya and shisya, who were none other than thiruanandAzhvan, emperuman’s bed and his aparAvathAram (incarnation), to the world and hence he showed the same in the dream of periya kElvi Jeeyer. Periya kElvi Jeeyer saw in his dream, himself standing to the south of Alwar theertham facing north. In front of him lay a Srivaishnava, with a huge body covering from the top of thirumalai to the bottom, like periya perumal with his thirumudi in the west and thiruvadi in the east and facing south. Under his feet was standing a Jeeyer. Periya kElvi Jeeyer was amazed to have this darshan and he enquired to the people around who the Srivaishnava and the Jeeyer were? The people replied, “They are the muppatherAyira perukkar, kOil azagiya manavAAla perumal nAyanAr and his shisya, ponnadikkAl Jeeyer”.

Hearing this periya kElvi jeeyer woke up with surprise. It was then time for him to get ready and go to the second day purattAsi thirunAl morning purappAdu. Before the eyal ghosthi, periya kElvi Jeeyer told about his dream to thOzhappar who with surprise expressed the experience in the form of a sloka. Some elders, not belonging to thirupathi but who have come from outside for the celebration, came to know of this and started discussing among themselves about the dream.

One said, “The Srivaishnava who has appeared in periya kElvi jeeyer’s dream is none other than kOil nAyanar;” another followed, “Oh! Yes it is our fortune that he has come to thirumalai at this time for taking part in the purattAsi utsavam;” another said, “yeah and nAyanAr calls vanamamalai jeeyer his very close shisya as “ponadikkAl jeeyer”.

*Srimathe Ramanujaya Namaha
Sri VaYa VaYa ManayE Namaha
Sri VaN Achala mah A munayE Namaha
SriVallEa daya pathram deebhathiyAdhi guNAmavam
Yathendri pravaaram vand he amya jamAtin munim
Ramya AmOthu yOgrendra vAdhe thElkA mayam ezhAnA
thatha vOthathAths uAd lhhAthin ramAnuja munim bhajE

Photo Courtesy www.phase.com/svami
Everyone over there were very happy to know that nAyanar along with his shisya was present in thirumalai at that time to glorify the celebration.

Meanwhile, nAyanar has reached thirumalai with a great desire to have the darshan of thiruvEnkatamudaiyAn (“venkatath thuraiVArku nama”) prostrated the thirumalai, and then having darshan of govindarajar in keezh thirupathi proceeded to climb the hill and with great bhakthi bathed in the swamy pushkarini along with vanamamalai jeeyer, wore the thiruman kAppu and in a orderly fashion entered the temple doing appropriate mangalasAsanams at the various sannadhis and finally reaching the divine feet of thiruvEnkatamudaiyAn. The acharya and shisya did mangalAsAsanam to thiruvEnkatamudaiyAn “Sri Venkata nivAsAya SrinivAsAya mangalam” and then started climbing down the hill.
Then nAyanar, followed by vanamamalai Jeeyer as usual, and then started his journey towards, “vulagamEththum AzhiyAn aththiyoorAn”. He did mangalAsAsanam to all the surrounding divya dEsams and then proceeded to do mangalAsAsanam to dEvaperumAl. They entered the temple in the appropriate way and stood in front of devarajan reciting the verses, “kadha punas sangA rathAnga kalpaga……...trivikrama dvach charanA…” from aalavandaar’s strotra ratnam. Devaperumal highly pleased with the acharya and shisya showered his grace and with a cool kataksham (divine look) blessed them with theertham, thirumAlai, thiruparivattam, srisadagopan, prasadams and other honors.

Then nAyanar and Jeeyer proceeded towards Sriperumbudur.
Sriperumbudur

Just on stepping into the holy land of Sriperumbudur, nAyanAr prostrated the land with due respect. “eduvO perumbudur engE pirandhO ethirAsar em edarai theerththAr (Is this perumbudur? Was this the place where ethirAsar took birth to wash all our miseries?) Wondered nAyanAr. He started reciting the paasuram starting with, “Andugal nAI thingAlAI” and ended with, “erAmAnusanai porindhinamE”. Then nAyanar enjoyed the divine darshan of emperumAnAr and requesting ethirAjar’s permission to learn the sribhasyam received the same and then went back to perumAl kOil and became a shisya of kidAmbi nAyanar and starting hearing Sribhasyam from him. Meanwhile, vanamamalai Jeeyer also stayed in perumal koil along with his acharya doing all sort of service to him and also joined him as a co-student in listening to Sribhasya. Days passed and the Sribhasya lectures came to an end. Now, nAyanar along with his shisyas started towards kOil (Srirangam), bathed in the kaveri, finished anushtanams and then went to the temple, did mangalAsAsanam to periya perumal and spent time in sath kAlashEpam.

Srimathi Ramanujaya Namaha
Sri Vana Vana Manaye Namaha
Sri Varachala mahA munaye Namaha
SriLaksha dayA pathram deebhakthyAdhirganam
Yadendra pravaSaram vand ke samya JAmatnam munim
RamaYAmman yogendra pUdhe deekha mayam saha
thathAyotkathaSwa sad hAhkim ramAnuja munim bhajE

Photo Courtesy www.phose.com/swami
8. NAYANAR BECOMES PERIYA JEEYER

While nAyanAr was spending his time in sath kAlashepam, some people came from the south and told nayanar some bad news (asowcham, which hindered nayanar’s bhagavat kainkaryam). Not being able to be out of kainkaryam even for few days, nayanar decided to take up sanyasam and requested perumal’s permission for the same. After
accepting sanyasa, nayanar came to do mangalAsAsanam to namperumal. Pleased with nAyanar, NamperumAl blessed him with theertham, thirumAlai, thiruparivattam, and Sri Sadagopan and also with the honorable name – AZHAGIYA MANAVAVALA JEEYER. Then perumal ordered pallaVarAya thirumandapam to be the place for the Jeeyer’s mutt. Thereby, Azhagiya manavala Jeeyer (commonly called manavala mA Mununi. From now on we will refer as mA Mununikal for easy reference) started towards the mutt. On reaching the mutt, like elaya perumal who requested, “paravAnami kAkusta! Tvayi varsha satham stithE! Svayam tu ruchirE Deshe kriyathA mithimAm vathall”, Vanamamalai Jeeyer swamy requested his acharya to order him to renovate the mutt area (“madaththai ellam seppanidumpadi niyamikka vEndum”). For which mA Mununikal like perumal (who replied, “Eha saramapadam sowmya I yathAvath karththumarhasi”) ordered vanamamalai jeeyer, to do the same.
Immediately vanamamalai ponnadikkAl Jeeyer started the job with great vigor along with some more shisyas. He renovated the place, established the thirumalaiAzhvar (name of the kalahepa mandapam) for regular kalahepam and in the place where swamy will regularly sit he made a beautiful picture of swamy seated with jnana mudra and also made his own picture under the feet of swamy with folded hands.

On seeing the excellent renovation of the place, mAmunikal was highly impressed. He appreciated Jeeyer for the same saying, “you have done an excellent job exactly understanding my inner mind” (Just like lakshmana who built the bharnasala according to the divine couples wish). Mamunikal continued saying, “I am highly grateful to our poorvacharyas to have blessed me with such a great shisya to help me in darshana pravarthakam (spreading the sampradayam)”. From that day, vanamamalai jeeyer continued his uninterrupted service to his acharya and always remained under his acharya’s feet. He accompanied mAmunikal whenever he went to the temple to do mangalasasanam to perumal and like a beggar suddenly attaining huge wealth and like a hungry person getting food, vanamamalai Jeeyer cherished his acharya sambandham and always was involved in the kainkaryam to his acharya, azhagiya manavala jeeyer with the following always in his mind, “dvath bruthya bruthya parichAraka bruthya bruthya bruthya bruthya bruthya ethi mAm smara:”

Meanwhile, Koil annan and others who were enlightened due to perumal’s grace (perumal appeared in their dream and corrected them) and understood that surrendering under mAmunikal’s feet will do all good to them, thereby, came along with a big crowd of friends and relatives, with fruits and other offerings in hand to undergo acharya samAsrayanam.

On reaching the mutt they first saw vanamamalai Jeeyer swamy and prostrated him. Koil annan with due respects told him that they have come to the feet of Jeeyer considering him to be the prapyam (goal) and prapagam (way to attain the goal) and requested to kindly accept them. Hearing this jeeyer was highly happy. He ran to the sannadhi prostrated his swamy mAmunikal and requested as follows: “Swamy! Today annan and others, a big crowd has come to get devarir’s samAsrayanam. They are all waiting in front of the mutt with their offerings in hand. They being swamy mudaliyAndAn’s descendents are famous and have received sathvika thinking due to our appAchiyAr (“Eshwarascha sowhArtham yathruchchA sukrutham thathA vishnA katakshham tVishnApmimukyam cha sAtvikai:II sambhAshanam kshadhE thAni”). Regarding this AychiyAr has also come to devarir’s sannadhi. Due to all these reasons all of them should get devarir’s thiruvadi sambhandam (become your shisyas).
Devarir is a great acharyan, who continuously strives for the benefit and upliftment of all jeevatmas (“AthmaLAbhAth param kinchith anyath nAsthi”). Thereby adiyen requests swamy to shower your grace on them which will fulfill both aiyichiyAr’s and adiyen’s request.” Since the people waiting outside belonged to an acharya parampara they have to be welcomed with great regard. So mAmunikal himself came out and with great pleasure welcomed them saying, “Vidhya vimukthi jananee cinayadhi gathvam Achara sampath anu vElavikasi seelaml Sri lakshmanArya karuna vishayee kruthAnAm chithram na dhAsarathi vamsa sanuth bhAvanam Il” and after having a look at all of them crowded over there continued saying, “Sri rAmAnuja yOgeendra karuna pari brumhithAm I srEya see manakAm vandhE sreemath vAdhoola sandhathim”.

Hearing swamy’s welcoming note all of them prostrated fully into swamy’s feet and recited panchAdhees like “nakarmana” and “vEdhAhamEtham” and submitted all the offerings they have got to swamy. Swamy accepted them and went inside followed by the crowd of vAdhoolas and sat in his seat. Then swamy gave a brief lecture on “poliga poliga” thiruvAimozhi padhigam and thiruppallAndu. Swamy then blessed them all to become good srivaishnavas and spend their time in mangalAsAsanams.

Swamy manavAla mAmunikaL in Thiruvallikeni
Then annan requested swamy to permit Vanamamalai Jeeyer swamy to do samasrayanam to him. Periya Jeeyer stood up from his seat and went to a secret place and called annan to that place through vanamamalai Jeeyer. Then swamy asked annan, “Don’t you belong to a great kulam and are you not in a position to become the kulaguru of many? Then why this request?” Annan replied, “Please swamy don’t say like that” and apologized for his earlier acts and explained to swamy about his dream and devaperumal’s orders.

Swamy with a smile then said, “Ok. Now there are a few more who belong to EyAn’s clan who haven’t change their mind yet. They have been opposing us for quite sometime and now perumal will change them too like he did for you and so along with all of them after three days, the fourth day from today, all of you will get samAsrayanam”. Happy with swamy’s assurance all of them received the prasadams and returned back to their places.

Then dEvaperumAl appeared in the dream of Annan’s cousin, varadAryar and ordered him as follows: “Go immediately to kOil and surrender under the feet of vanamamalai Jeeyer, who is like a shadow (padharEkhA) of ramyajAmAthru yoGeendrar and who is fully involved in service to his acharya and hence very close to his acharya’s heart, and get uplifted.” Surprised by the dream but unable to neglect it, varadArya started towards kOil (Srirangam). He met annan and others and told them his dream. They inturn told him about their dream. Similarly periya perumal also changed a few others by declaring in their dreams, “I, who has taken archAroopam have now taken Acharyaroopam also. So you all according to the verse, “Acharyam mAm vijAneyAth bhava bhandha vimOchakam” surrender with due regards into jeeyer’s feet and get uplifted”.

Considering this to be their prime duty all of them followed annan to Periya Jeeyer’s mutt. Annan took them all to swamy and requested swamy saying, “The day marked by devarir has come and all those who remained egoist till today have been changed by bhagavat krupai (perumal’s words in their dreams) and have now joined this ghosti. Now we all beg devarir to please shower your grace on all of us.”

Pleased with the request, Periya Jeeyer ordered Vanamamalai Jeeyer to make necessary preparations for the samskAram (ritual) and proceeded to do thiruvArAdhanam. After thiruvArAdhanam, swamy sat himself in front of the sannadhi and called everyone interested in undergoing samAsrayanam. “ChakrAdhi dhAranam pumsAm parasambhandha vEdhanam I pathivrathA nimitham hi valyAdhi vibhooshanam II”

Srimathe Ramanujaya Namaha
Sri Vana Vana ManayE Namaha
Sri VarAchalA mahA munayE Namaha
SriiilEsa dayA pAthram deebhakthyAdhi gunAmayam
Yatrendra pravarAm wand hE raman jAmanAm munin
RamyajAmAthru yoGeendra pAdhe rEka mayam adhA
thaYa vOthAthaAm sata dhAthAim ramanAja munin bhaje
Photo Courtesy www.phase.com/swami
9. ACHARYA SAMASRAYANAM OF THE VADHOOLAS AND OTHERS

Periya Jeeyer first gave the sanghu, chakra lAnchanam (thApa samskAram) to annan and looked into his eyes for a long time with eyes filled with grace and then pointing towards vanamAmalai Jeeyer told to annan, “He is very close to me. Whatever fortune I receive should also go to him. Like me getting a relation with the mudaliyAndAn clan, he should also receive the same”. Understanding the implications in Periya Jeeyer’s words annan replied, “Can’t you make me a shisya of VanamAmalai Jeeyer too?” Jeeyer was happy to hear this and said, “That’s my wish too. You learn the rahasya arthas from my beloved vanamamalai Jeeyer”. Annan was very happy and considered it to be his bhAkyam (good fortune).

Then remembering the dream and dEvaperumAl’s wish annan with the same in mind looked at appAchiyAr anna. Understanding the entailment in annan’s look, appAchiyAr anna came forward and prostrated Periya Jeeyer. Swamy asked him, “What?” for which appAchiyAr anna told swamy about the dream and requested swamy to submit him to the divine feet of “engalAndavan vanamAmalai Jeeyer swamy”. Highly pleased to hear this periya jeeyer exclaimed, “nam appAchiyAr andrO!” and granted him the permission to become a shisya of vanamamalai jeeyer.

Then, mAmunikal made vanamamalai jeeyer to be seated in his place and appAchiyAr anna near him and also gave the thirukkaiAlwars (thiruvAzhi, thirusanghu elachchinai) in the hands of vanamamalai Jeeyer and told vanamamalai jeeyer to do sanghu chakra lAnchanam to appAchiyAr anna. Feeling a little shy to do the same in front of his acharya, vanamamalai jeeyer hesitated. But then mAmunikal told him, “Don’t hesitate; this is my wish so carry on without any hesitation” and showered his grace on anna and embraced him with love. Then as per appAchiyArs words his brother dAsarathi appai also surrendered under the feet of vanamamalai jeeyer and underwent samAsrayanam.

Due to the sankalpam of Periya perumAl (“Sri sakasya niyOkEna sisriyE dEsiga sriya;), Periya Jeeyer, seated in the topmost unparalleled acharya position, blessed his shisya, very close to him and under the divine krupai of Sriyapathi Sri Vanamamalai peruma,l with his symbols and power to do samAsrayanam to the Srivaishnavas belonging to vAdhoola kulam. Seeing this, annan and others were wonder struck. And meanwhile few others who heard of this (how achAryasrEshta Periya Jeeyer showered his grace on vanamamalai jeeyer and made him do pancha samskAram to the vadhoolas) talked among themselves about the same and showed their due respects to swamy.
At that time, Koil annan swamy submitted suddha sattvam anna to the divine feet of vanamamalai Jeeyer. Thereby becoming a shisya of vanamamalai jeeyer, suddha sattvam anna was deeply involved in the divine qualities of his acharya, filled with kalyana gunas, and with a thirumEni filled with soundaryam (beauty) and sowkumAryam (fragile nature) and was highly pleased to become the shisya of such an acharya with Jnanam and anushtAnam (knowledge and practice).

Then while vanamamalai Jeeyer was delivering kalashepam to suddha sattvam anna, - Koil annan, and appAchiyAr anna and dAsarathi appai came and requested to give them also the divine rahasya traya arthas as per Periya Jeeyer’s words. Following the orders of his acharyan, vanamamalai Jeeyer, who was always interested only in the upliftment of the jeevAtmas (“AtmaAbhaAH param kinchith anyAn nAsthI”) did the same and thought them the rahasyams and other vishEsha arthas.

Days passed and periya Jeeyer wanted to have darshan of alwar. At the same time, one note from senai mudaliyar, as a representative of vanamalalai perumal came, stating the necessity of vanamamalai jeeyer in the temple srikAryam (kainkaryam) in vanamamalai. Accepting it with due regards, periya Jeeyer ordered vanamamalai Jeeyer to follow the same. Periya Jeeyer, along with Vanamamalai Jeeyer went to get the permission of periya perumAl. It was a daily routine practice of Periya Jeeyer to recite 100 paasurams from Nalayira divya prabhandam and even that day he was doing the same anusandhAnam and when he came in front of periya perumal the satrumurai paasuram happened to be, “aniyAr pozhil soozh aranganagarappa”. Periya perumal highly pleased, wanting to make Periya Jeeyer also happy uttered the following through the mouth of the archakar, after carrying the lakshmi nArayana vigraham in bhoopAlarAyam in his hand. “JeeyA! I am aranganagarappan; I will come as thiruvArAdhanam for you and your acharya” and then handed over the vigraham to vanamamalai Jeeyer.

Originally aranganagarappan (Periya Perumal) came out from ksheerApthi due to the prarthana of chaturmuka brahma, from the divine feet of ksheerApthi nAdhan and hence called svayamvyakhtha roopam. Similarly this aranganagarappan gifted to vanamamalai Jeeyer also appeared from the divine feet of periya perumal and has the strength and authority as declared by perumal himself by his words through the archaka and hence can also be called svayamvyakhtha vigraham. Vanamamalai Jeeyer accepted the vigraham with great pleasure and looked into the graceful thirumugam of his acharya and uttered, “PeriyArkku AtpatAl perAdha payanum perumAru” (If we surrender to elders and great mahans what is that we cannot obtain?). Then perumal blessed them with thirumAlai, theertham, sandhanam, srisadagopan, prasadam and
other honors. Then perumal called uththama nambi (arulapAdittu) and ordered him to leave the jeeyers with all the appropriate respectful honors in their mutt.

Uththama nimbi, similarly followed perumal’s orders and with chatra sAmaram and all type of divine instruments (ashtAdasa vAdhyams) and also with loudly saying the praises of the jeeyers, accompanied them and aranganagarappan to the mutt. From that day, vanamamalai rAmAnuja jeeyer received all glory and remained with fame along with his shisya, the astadiggajas. Getting the permission of Periya Perumal to go to have darshan of alwar, Periya Jeeyer started his journey along with vanamamalai Jeeyer, who was like a shadow to his acharya. Like the sun traveling around the world carrying its brightness and spreading light through its rays, the acharya and shisya proceeded their journey towards thirunagari along with doing mangalAsAsanams to all the divya dEsams on the way.

10. PERIYA JEEYER AND VANAMAMALAI JEEYER VISIT AZHVAR THIRUNAGARI

Periya Jeeyer and his pAdharEka VanamAmalai Jeeyer reached Thirunagari, bathed in the sangani thurai, did the appropriate anushtAnams and then proceeded to do mangalAsAsanams to emperumAnAr starting with “SrimAdhavAngri”. Then doing mangalAsAsanams to various sannadhi’s in order they went to the alwar sannadhi. Starting with “mAthA pithA” and ending with “pranamAmi moordhnA”, they did mangalAsAsanam to alwar and then proceeded to the mutt and stayed there for a few days. Then with a deep wish to do mangalAsAsanam to vanamamalai perumal both of them proceeded towards vanamamalai, bathed in the settruthAmarai (temple tank), finished appropriate anushtanams, then went to deivanAyakan sannadhi and did mangalAsAsanam reciting, “nOtra nOnbillEn” and “kadhA punas sanga…..” (Aalavandaar’s strotA ratnam) and then prostrated under the divine feet of vAnamAmalai perumal, deivanAyagan. They had the divine darshan of the beautiful lotus-like sweet eyes which pierces into one’s mind, the coral-like lips, strong shoulders, divine feet with a beautiful noopuram, the divine crown and all other divya Abharanams (Jewels) and the divine beauty throughout from top to bottom. Their mouth then uttered alwar’s enchanting paasuram, “Ar enakkku nin pAdhamE sharanAga than thozhindhAi, vunakkOr kaimmAru nAn ondriEn enadhAviyum vunadhE, serukol karumbum perunsennellam malindhan sreevara mangai, nAru poonthandhuzhAi mudiyAi deivanAyaganE”. Periya Jeeyer uttered these lines and his eyes filled with tears and loosing himself he stood in front of perumal.
Perumal pleased with the deep involvement of periya Jeeyer told him with happiness, “You have given me one beloved person just like you for my kainkaryam. I have attained the benefit for bringing him up” and then blessed him with thirumAlai, thiruparivattam, srisadagopan, prasadam and other honors and also showered his fullest grace on him. Then Periya Jeeyer took the permission of perumal, came out along with his shisya and proceeded to the mutt.

Periya Jeeyer consecrated the aranganagarappan gifted to vanamamalai Jeeyer by Periya perumal in the mutt with his own hands and ordered vanamamalai Jeeyer to do thiruvArAdhanam daily and blessed him to remain with glory, with number of shisyas and thereby work for the flourishment of sath sampradayam (ramanuja darshanam). After staying in vanamamalai for a few more days they went to thirukkurungudi did mangalAsAsanam to nambi and then returned back to vanamamalai. There they stayed for 3 more days in the service of deivanAyakan and then once again started to alwar thirunagari and enjoyed the divine service of alwar for six months considering days to run like seconds. Then Periya Jeeyer told vanamamalai Jeeyer, “You follow my orders and stay in vanamamalai and do all types of kainkaryam to deivanAyaka perumal and live happily”. Shocked to hear this, but not being able to refute his acharyas words but very very sad to think of separating from his acharya, vanamamalai Jeeyer was soaked in deep sorrow.

When Vanamamalai rAmAnuja Jeeyer was deeply depressed with sorrow thinking about the separation from his acharya, Periya Jeeyer who understood his inner feeling said, “Jeeya! Don't worry. Come on. Accompany me to namperumAl sannadhi. Hearing to these graceful words, ponnadikkAl Jeeyer regained all his enthusiasm and followed his acharya with great joy. Then the renounced paramahamsa sanyAsi, Sri Periya Jeeyer took the permission of alwar and like a chaste women going from her paternal place to her in-laws place, along with vanamamalai Jeeyer left alwar thirunagari and proceeded towards the third vibhoothi of perumal, Srirangam. After doing mangalAsAsanam to periya perumal they proceeded towards the mutt.

11. ASHTADIGGAJAS OF VANAMAMALAI JEEYER SWAMY

At that time, when Periya Jeeyer was delivering kalashEpams in Srirangam, one great mahan belonging to the vAdhoola clan by the name srinivAsAchariyar, learnt about the greatness of swamy and wanting to fall under the divine feet of swamy, came to swamy’s sannadhi and did sAshtAnga pranAmam. He requested swamy to kindly take him as his shisya. Periya Jeeyer showed him vanamamalai Jeeyer and said, “Take our
ponnadikkAl Jeeyer as your acharya and you are destined to get all good fortunes due to that”. SrinivAsAchariyar thereby followed Periya Jeeyer’s orders and fell in the feet of vanamamalai Jeeyer. Vanamamalai Jeeyer swamy also followed his acharya’s words and did panchasamskArAram to the mahAcharyar and in appropriate order gave him the mantras and manthrArthams and also made him undergo the bhagavat vishaya kalashEpam.

Mahacharya then wondered, how the sambandham of elders and mahans can totally change the lifestyle of even an ordinary person like him and felt very grateful to Periya Jeeyer to have blessed him with such a great acharya. With the greatness of his acharya filled in his mind, he then wrote, dhinacharyai, prapathi, and mangalAsAsanam for his acharya, vanamamalai rAmAnuja Jeeyer swamy. This prabhandam has become the nithyAnusandhAnam for mumukshus to attain the divine abode of emperumAn.

Meanwhile, samarapungavAcharyAr, heard about the greatness of vanamamalai rAmAnuja Jeeyer, pAdharEkhA of Periya Jeeyer, and came to swamy’s sannadhi submitted everything to swamy and surrendered into the feet of vanamamalai Jeeyer and got the manthrArtham and bhagavat vishaya sath sampradAyam from Vanamamalai swamy and stayed in the nithya kainkaryam of the acharya.

Then, rAmAnujAchariyar belonging to the srivatsa clan came and surrendered to vanamamalai jeeyer and became his shisya. Vanamamalai Jeeyer seeing the tejas of rAmAnujAcharyar thought, “By the grace of periya perumal he will become the darshana pravarthakar” and was glancing at him when rAmAnujAcharyar came forward and did sAshtAnga pranAmams to Jeeyer and uttered the following words, “dhayasva mAmathya dhayAnithE tvam”. Vanamamalai Jeeyer showered his grace on him and in a way to remove all his samsAric miseries, did panchasamskArAram and gave him the thirunAmam “Ramanuja pillAn” and then taught him all the rahasya arthas and bhagavat vishayam and according to the verse “chakAra vedhantha yuga praveenam” made him ubhaya-vedAntha pravarthakar and showered his full grace on him. Thereby, rAmAnuja pillan who was otherwise commonly called “pillai” stayed along with vanamamalai jeeyer as his prime shisya and lived continuing his uninterrupted service to swamy for 32 years.

Meanwhile Aththan, who was both a great mahAthmA and jedhEndriya (one who has good control over his senses) heard about the greatness of VanamAmalai Jeeyer swamy came and surrendered to the divine feet of Jeeyer and considered that as his good fortune, and that his Athmasvaroopam has attained its benefit (“Athmasvaroopam saththai pettradhu”). He heard bhagavat vishayam from Jeeyer swamy and obtained the required jnanam. From then on he was famously called as “Jnanak kan AththAn”.

Srimathe Ramanujaya Namaha
Sri Vana Vana Manaye Namaha
Sri Van Acharyar maha munaye Namaha
SivamIyya dayA pAthram deebhakthyAdhi gunAnamavam
Yatha te pravasam Vand ke samya jamaIram munI
RamayAmthA yogendra pAnde aIka mayam saathA
thAtha yothatAthAram sah dhAthkim rAmAnuja munI bhajE

Photo Courtesy www.phase.com/swami
Then, Ghostipuraththayar, one another great mahan born in the family of thirukkoshtiyur nambi, joined the ghosti of Vanamamalai swamy and surrendered to jeeyer swamy and remained as his close shisya. Next, pallakAl siththar surrendered to Vanamamalai Jeeyer swamy mesmerized by the jnana, bhakthi, vairakhyam and other kalyana gunas of swamy. Periya Jeeyer has always wanted Vanamamalai Jeeyer to have all the fame and fortune he possessed. So now periya Jeeyer decided to bless Vanamamalai swamy also with ashtadiggajAs similar to his great ashtadiggajAs.

Thereby, he appointed the following ashtadiggajAs to Vanamamalai swamy:
1. mahAryar
2. saramapungavar
3. Suddha sathvam anna
4. appAchiyAr anna
5. rAmAnujam pillai
6. ghostipuraththayar
7. pallakkAl siththar

Then, Periya Jeeyer also allotted the appropriate kainkaryams to each one of them. From then on, Vanamamalai ponnadikkAl swamy remained with great fame along with his ashtadiggajAs, as a krupApAthram of periya Jeeyer. One day all of them where having their divine anubhavams in the periya Jeeyer ghosti, when Periya Jeeyer glanced at mahAchAryar and ordered him to say something on his acharya which would stay, telling his acharya’s greatness for ever. Hearing such an order from periya Jeeyer, mahAryar concentrated on the divine qualities of his acharya and losing himself in the ocean of his acharya’s qualities submitted the following to his acharya’s divine feet:

RamyajAmAtru yOgeendra pAdha rEkhA mayam sadhA
ThathAyath thAthma sadhdhAthim rAmAnuja munim bhajE

Listening to the above, Periya Jeeyer was astonished. He felt that the verse not only got out the greatness of Vanamamalai Jeeyer but it was also both sweet and intellectual to the ears of the listener and hence very admirable. Pleased with the thaniyan told by mahAryar, Periya Jeeyer swamy ordered as follows:

“Like the “SrisailEsa dayApAthram” thaniyan, which was submitted by periya perumal himself in the garuda mandapam with three kandams, this thaniyan should also be regarded equally important and should be recited by all Srivaishnavas. Like starting with “pallandu pallandu” and ending with “appAnjasanniyamum pallAndE” considering the first and second paasurams of thirupallandu to be like a single
paasuram and recited together; and like the varaha charam slokam which has two parts (padhyadvayam) but still considered as a single mantram; and like the mantra ratnam, which though considered as a single mahA mantra rahasyam, still has two parts detailing about the angam and angi; and like the ‘Hari’ padham which has 2 aksharas; Consider “SrisailEsa” thaniyan and “ramya jAmAthru yOgeendra” thaniyan to be connected to each other and to have equal importance.”

Ramanuja pillai and others considered it to be their greatest wealth, bestowed on them by periya jeeyer on that very auspicious day and felt elated to have the blessings of such great mahans. From that day, they followed Periya Jeeyer’s words as their prime duty and recited the thaniyans in the appropriate manner. (“Eka padhamAghavum anga angi pradhipAdhyamAna EkamanthramAgavum anusandhitthu pOruvargal”). Some days passed and vanamamalai deivanAyaka perumal wanted Vanamamalai Jeeyer swamy for his service in the temple and hence a note was sent by senai mudaliyar to Srirangam to send Vanamamalai Jeeyer to seekAryam at vanamamalai sannadhi. Seeing the note, periya Jeeyer ordered ponadikkAl jeeyer accordingly. Not being able to refuse the order of mAmunikal and emperuman himself, vanamamalai Jeeyer was depressed again with sorrow with the following excellent verse reverberating in his mind “Acharyanai pirindiruppArAr manamE pEsu” (“Oh! My mind Tell me who will stay away from his acharya?”).

At the same time, mAmunikal ordered appAchiyAr anna to go to kainkaryam at perumAl kOil and anna was also hesitant and worried to leave the ghosti and sevai. Periya Jeeyer held his hand, went to the sannadhi and told him, “Go and get the theertha sombhu (vessel to keep water), which I have named ‘ramanusan’ and had used for many years and when it become old and worn out the same is being kept in Vanamamalai Jeeyers thiruman basket”. Vanamamalai Jeeyer considering it to be jeeyer’s prasadam placed it in his ‘thiruman basket’ and payed homage to it regularly. When appAchiyAr anna got it, swamy took it in his hand and along with the old thiruvAzhi, thirusanthu, thiruman and srichoorna symbol markers with him which has worn out and unusable, swamy ordered anna to use all of them and make 2 vigrahams like mAmunikal, one for him and one for his acharya.

When the vigrahams were ready swamy showered his grace on them and with his own hands handed them over to vanamamalai swamy and anna and said, “Now that I am accompanying both of you in the form of archA vigraham, shed all your worry and proceed to do your duties in vanamamalai and perumal koil respectively.”

Taking the vigraham from swamy, Vanamamalai Jeeyer consoled himself and proceeded his journey towards sreevaramangai. On reaching vanamalai, Jeeyer swamy consecrated his acharya, mAmunikal’s vigraham in the mutt and like
bharatAzhvan who ruled ayodhya as a parathantran to chakravarthi thirumagan, considering Sri rAmA pAdhuka to be the king and himself to be its dasa, Vanamamalai Jeeyer also did all the kainkaryams considering himself to be a parathantran (slave) of his acharya. Before starting with any kainkaryam, vanamamalai Jeeyer swamy took the permission of his acharya and then only proceeded to do the same. In this way, Jeeyer swamy continued his kainkaryams in vanamamalai, which gave great pleasure to both deivanAyaka perumal and sreevaramangai nAchiyar and stayed in vanamamalai for a long time.

12. SWAMY’S DIGVIJAYAM TO THE NORTH

Here in Srirangam, Periya Jeeyer’s health started deteriorating and once when he fell ill (nOvu sAttri errundAr), he sent a note to vAnamAmalai swamy with the following verses: “pArAlum mannAl erAmAnusa Jeeyer, seerArum senai mudaliyAr nAyanAr, ArAdha anbudaiya Aththan arindilArE ennuDaiya thunbhamadhai theertharkku thAn” (ramanusa Jeeyer who rules over the world, Great senai mudaliyAr nAyanar, and the ever loving Aththan doesn’t know how to solve my problem); ‘thAimanam nindru erangi thaniyE nedumAl thunaiyAi pOyina’ (Leaving beside the mother with great sorrow the girl left considering emperuman alone to be her sole refuge)” Vanamamalai swamy accepted the letter from periya jeeyer with great regard and immediately started and reached periya jeeyer’s sannadhi and prostrated to swamy’s divine feet. Slowly Periya Jeeyer started recovering. But he had a worry in mind. He felt bad for being unable to travel to various places and spread the ramanuja darshanam to the innocent masses. Then he decided to appoint vanamamalai swamy for that task for the benefit of the whole world. He called vanamamalai Jeeyer and uttered the following:

“Earlier this world was organized and taken in the right path by emperumAnAr, who remained as “pAshanda trimashanda thAvadahanar”. But now days have changed. Many kudrishtis and local preachers have confused the masses and have changed tracks. Mainly in the northern regions people have been totally left in the dark. So, you on my behalf, travel in the northern direction, impart true knowledge to the ignorant people, bring them to light from darkness by blessing them with pancha samskAram, emperumAnAr sambandham and jnana upadEsam”.

Telling the above to vanamamalai Jeeyer, Periya Jeeyer wanted to get the consent and blessings of periya perumal also in this issue and hence proceeded towards the perumal sannadhi along with ponadikkAl Jeeyer and submitted his request to perumal. Perumal pleased with the request of periya Jeeyer showered his grace on vanamamalai Jeeyer and said, “You are none other than an amsAvatAram of your own acharya. So, undertake this journey on behalf of your acharya, successfully establish rAmAnuja
darsanam in all places and return back with glory”. After this perumal blessed the acharya and shisya with various honors in order.

On returning to the mutt, Periya Jeeyer told vanamamalai Jeeyer to start his divine yAthra according to perumal’s order and come back successfully. Vanamamalai Jeeyer considering this to be his great fortune, prostrated under the divine feet of his acharya, manavala mamunigal (“ponnadiyAm senkamalap pOdhuGai unni chiraththAlE theendi”), bid good-by and along with his disciples (his ashtadiggajas) and many more srivaishnavas started his journey in the northern direction. As Vanamamalai swamy proceeded his journey, at various divya desams the srivaishnavas crowded around and started saying the praises of swamy as follows:

“kOil manavala mAmunivan ponnadiyAm senkamala pOdhuGai_vandhAr” (one who has come, is the divine lotus feet of manavala mAmunikal at sriRanganam)
“Varamangai mA munivan vandhAr” (the great varamangai muni has come)
“DeivanAyagarkku eniya desikanAn vandhAr” (deivanAyagan’s beloved acharya has come)
“EmperumAnAr darisanaththai valarkkumavar vandhAr” (the one who spreads and establishes RaManuja darshanam has come).

Accompanied with all these praises and with the sound of divine instruments and thiruchinnam being played, swamy’s ghosti proceeded forward. Attracted by swamy’s procession the locals in various places, considered swamy to be like a light which has appeared to remove all their darkness and similar to a sudden rain which has been showered in a draught affected area. Many came and fell under the divine feet of swamy. Swamy showered his grace on all those ignorant people and gave them the RaManuja sambhandam. All of them became “meiadiyArgal” “thirumAl adiyArgal” (“thiruththi thirumagai kelvanukkAkki …arangan seiyA thAlinaiyOdArAsththu”) Swamy then proceeded further north, had the darshan of dwarakAdeesan at dwarakai, and then proceeded to brindavan, KEdharam, jillikAranyam, naimisAranyam and sAlagramam. After the divine darshan at salagramam Vanamamalai Jeeyer proceeded towards badrikAshramam. The shisyas were elated to see the way in which their swamy went from one place to another, bringing many people, who have been left for so many years in dark to the light of ramanuja darshanam. The shisyas admired their swamy’s Jnana, bhakthi, vairakhyam and eulogized swamy as follows: “Our swamy, vanamamalai ramanuja Jeeyer is like the thick dark clouds; This cloud has absorbed the water of knowledge from the ocean of wisdom, Sri manavala mamunikal; Then as per the order of the ocean, his acharya, this cloud has now moved towards the northern direction and due to its impartial pity for all, has showered the rain of krupai on one and all without any differentiation; Due to this the greenery of emperumAnAr darshanam which was earlier drooping has gained strength and has flourished”.
With such admiration for their swamy in the minds of the shisyas, swamy and the
shisyas reached the divine place where the thirumanthram took birth, BadrikAsharamam. They did mangalAsAsanam to nara and narayanan and then with
gratefulness and due regard swamy constructed a mandapam for naranarayanan and
celebrated a grand festival for nara-narayanan and stayed there for some more days
doing mangalAsAsanam to the prathama guru, narayanan. Then, after taking the
permission of nara-narayanan swamy proceeded to the banks of ganga, where once
udaiyavar had taken a dip and considering it to be the most sacred place bathed in the
gangus (“gangai gangai yenna vAsagaththAIE ezhumaiyum koodi Eendiya pavam
eriapozhuthalavinil kazhividhum perumai yudai gangai”, “thirumAl kazhalinai keezh
kuliththu”). The river ganga is considered to be the sreepAda theertham (water that
washed the divine feet of emperuman) of emperuman in thiruvikramAvathAram. So it
is very sacred and hence just by the utterance of the name ‘ganga’ one can get rid of
crores of sins he has accumulated over many crores of time. In such a sacred river in the
same place where acharya ramanuja took a divine dip, our swamy also bathed and
changed clothes, adorned himself with the divya dvAdasa pundram and then had
darshan of perumal at “kandamenum kadi nagar”.

Kandam ennum  kadi nagar

Srimathe Ramanujaya Namaha
Sri Vana Vana Manaye Namaha
Sri Varachala mahA munaye Namaha
Sivathri devi pAthram deebhakthyAdhiguna Namam
Yadeendra pravanam var khe samya jamaikum muni
Rama Janaka yOgendra paDhe ekA mayam sadhA
thatA yathAtHama sadhathikum Ramanuja munihe mhaE
Photo Courtesy www.phase.com/swami
From there swamy then started his return journey towards the southern direction. Amidst the loud reverberating voice of the disciples saying his praises, swamy proceeded furthur south towards varnasi. On the way, they met many dvaithis and mAyAvAdhees, objecting the praises said to swamy loudly by the disciples. They called swamy to a debate. Swamy like a mighty elephant won over all of them and victoriously converted all of them to ramanuja sampradayam. Astonished by swami’s talent to win over anyone who came opposing him and the way swamy proceeded spreading ramanuja darshanam in all places, where he placed his divine feet, the shisyas, with great love towards their acharya, did mangalAsAsanam, to prevent any evil eyes from affecting swamy, “thandivarum sAkkiyar vAi thagarththavanE pallAndu mandivarum vAdiyarai vadaiththavanE pallAndu manavAla muni kazhal sEr varadhanE pallAndu endhisaiyum paravu kazhal eraiyavanEy pallAndu elagu pugazh erAmAnusa muniyEpallAndu pallAndu”

Then swamy further proceeded south towards srirangam. All through the way, many people were attracted towards the charm and talent of swamy and surrendered to his divine feet mesmerized by the vaibhavams of swamy and submitted a lot of offerings infront of swamy. Swamy showered his grace and blessings to all of them and accepted the offerings keeping in mind the need for renovation of vanamAmalai temple vimAnam, mandapam, Gopuram, and prAkAram.

13. PERIYA JEEYER ASCENDS TO PARAMAPADAM

Swamy continued his journey and reached thirumalai. By this time, it has been a year since swamy left srirangam as per the order of his acharya, Sri manavala mamunikal. In thirumalai, swamy came to know of the sad news about the paramapada prApthi of his beloved acharya, Sri manavala mAmunikal. Swamy was struck by absolute sorrow. The agony swamy underwent hearing the news cannot be explained by words. Slowly he consoled himself, reached thirumalaiaappan sannadhi, and along with all the jeeyers and srivaishnavas there did the appropriate thiruvadhyayana rituals, which a shisya is destined to do to his acharya. Then swamy stood in front of thiruvEnkatamudaiyan requesting him to grant him permission to return back to vanamamalai.

AlarmEl mangai urai mArban (the lord who has the goddess, who sits on a lotus flower, in his chest), srinivasan wanted to honor vanamamalai jeeyer greatly. Srinivasa was in a short thought, when he realized that Jeeyer has already be fully graced by periya perumal and periya Jeeyer and has been bestowed with the riches of the ubhaya vibhoothi which is the two wealth bhagavan possesses.
So he told vanamamalai Jeeyer, “Oh! Jeeyer! You have been already blessed fully by me in thiruvarangam and also by our Jeeyer and hence you remain a poornar (complete personality). You are an avatar as par with manavala mamunigal, so stay at the end of the guru paramparai and remain as a head to all the acharyas who are yet to follow you. You now go and stay in vanamamalai for the benefit for one and all.”

Thereby with the warm blessings of thiruvEnkata mudaiyan swamy proceeded along with his ashtadiggajas towards kOil (Srirangam). On reaching the entrance of the mutt swamy prostrated fully with heavy heart. On entering inside, swamy totally lost himself and sorrow engulfed him to see the silent mutt without his acharya, Sri mAmunikal’s divine presence. Swamy rolled over the floor and expressed his sorrow while the others lifted swamy and consoled him. Slowly gaining his composure, swamy then stayed there for some more days when Jeeyer nAyanar at the mutt told swamy about the last instructions of mAmunikal. Jeeyer nAyanar told vanamamalai swamy the last instructions of periya Jeeyer as follows:

“Swamy has instructed to give the upathandam in his trithandam, the thiruvAzhi ring in his hand and thiruvadi nilai (divya pAdhukai) of thiruvAimozhi pillai to you to be kept with you always. Swamy has also told to inform you to do a grand thiruvadhyayanam (final rituals) and then attained paramapada prApthi”

With these words Jeeyer Nayanar submitted the upathandam, thiruvAzhi ring and thiruvadi nilai to vanamamalai Jeeyer. Jeeyer accepted them with due regards and then stayed there for few more days along with annan and others. Then wanting to go back to vanamamalai, Jeeyer went to periya perumal sannadhi to request for permission to leave. While standing in front of perumal, Jeeyer swamy got deeply involved in the divine kalyana gunas of emperuman and was cherishing the same as per the arulicheyals of alwars when periya perumal got deeply impressed by jeeyer’s bhakthi and along with the appropriate honors uttered the following:

“Oh! Jeeyer all my sorrow due to missing periya jeeyer has been washed out on seeing you, his shisya. You from now on stay in the place of periya Jeeyer and spread and establish the rAmAnuja darshanam and prevent the world from going in the wrong path”

Thereby after getting the honors and blessings of periya perumal, jeeyer proceeded to vanamamalai. In vanamamalai, Jeeyer did lot of renovations at the temple viz., the vimanam, gopuram, prAkAram etc. After the temple kainkaryams, swamy then started his sanchAram (going from one place to another) and as per his acharya’s words all through the way won over many kudrishtis (who preached the wrong philosophies to people) and remained with great fame. He delivered the manthra-manthrArtha rahasyas.
to all those jeevatmas who surrendered to his feet to get uplifted. Many people surrendered to swamy and paved their way for moksha. In this way swamy stayed in vanamamalai for few more days and then wanting to do mangalAsAsanam to “pAyum neer aranganthannul pAmpanai pallikonda mAyan” (ranganatha who was lying on adhisesha amidst the kaveri river) once again he stood in front of vanamamalai deivanAyaga perumal to take leave. After getting the permission of perumal he proceeded with his jnana puthran, rAmanuja pillAi to srirangam.

On the way to Srirangam, swamy remembered the verse of alwar, “villiputtur vuraivAn than ponnadi kAnbhadhOr AsaiyinAl” (Due to the wish of having darshan of the divine feet of emperumAn in srivilliputtur) and with the same wish proceeded to srivilliputtur and halted in the kannan sannadhi at the outskirts of villiputtur. At that time, nAchiyAr pleased with the arrival of Jeeyer swamy sent her “uduththukalaindha peedhaga vAdai” (the divine dress adorned by her earlier), vanamAlai (her garland from her chest) and abhaya-hastham (the impression of her divine hand in abhaya mudra) in a golden plate, along with many adiyars and srivaishnavas. All the Srivaishanavas came to welcome swamy accompanied with the sound of divine instruments and words of praise for ponnadikkAl Jeeyer swamy.

They came to swamy submitted all the honors viz, thiruparivattam, thirumAlai, abhayahastham etc in the appropriate order. Swamy accepted them with due regards and then along with the parivarAram of Andal (the srivaishnavas representing Andal) and his own shisyas went into the town towards Andal sannadhi. Swamy prostrated before the dvajasthambham when nAchiyAr sent her Srirasagopan, indicating her personal welcome to swamy. Accepting the same with due regards swamy proceeded inside with great amount of joy and gratefulness to nAchiyAr’s sannadhi.

Swamy did mangalAsAsanam to andal starting with “neelAtungastanagiri” and enjoyed the darshan of andal along with rangamannar. Then after accepting all the prasAdams of andal given to swamy by the archakar, swamy then proceeded to have darshan of vadaperunkOil udaiyAn and periyAzhvAr. After that swamy started from srivilluputtur and proceeded towards thirumArlirunchOlai. Swamy bathed in the noopura Ganga, finished the appropriate anushtanams and proceeded further to do mangalAsAsanam to mAlirunchOlai sundarar. On the way, swamy was greeted by the kainkaryaparas from azhagar sannadhi and swamy was taken with appropriate honors to the perumal sannadhi. As swamy at the gopura vAsal (temple entrance), perumal happy to welcome Jeeyer sent his Srirasagopan in thirukkaiththalam (in the hands of the archakar). Swamy accepted the same with due respects and proceeded towards the sannadhi. Swamy did mangalAsAsanam to ‘mAlirunchOlai nindrAn’ (one who stood in malirunchOlai) as per our alwars paasurams.

Pleased with Jeeyer, perumal
with all his grace on swamy said, “Oh! Jeeyer you are an avatar as par with Periya Jeeyer and hence seeing you is like seeing Periya Jeeyer himself” and then blessed swamy with his parivattam, thirumAlai and other honors.

Grateful with the krupai showered by perumal on him swamy stayed in thirumAlirunchOlai for three more days and then further proceeded his journey. Travelling for few more days, swamy finally reached ‘ponnisoozh’ thiruvarangam (sri rangam surrounded by ponni river). On reaching Sripuram, VanamAmalai Jeeyer bathed in the sacred kaveri river (“gangaiyil punithamAya kaviri”), changed clothes adorned himself with the dvadasa urdhva pundrams and finished his anushtanams. Meanwhile, periya perumal sent uththama abbigam along with his “uduththukalaintha peedhaga vAdhai”, vanamAlai, abhaya hastham and other honors accompanied by many Srivaishnavas and chatra samara respects and sound of divine instruments, to welcome Jeeyer.

Seeing the whole lot of Srivaishnavas, vanamamalai Jeeyer wondered if they were adiyars of ranganatha or the nithya sooris themselves. Immediately alwar’s paasuram, “van ponnip pErAru pOl varum kannaneer kondu arangan kOil thirumutttram sEru sei thondar sEvadi cHeru en sennikku anivanE” flashed in Jeeyer’s memory and getting deeply involved with the divine arthas of the paasuram fell down to prostrate and show his due regards to the crowd of Srivaishnavas. The Srivaishnavas happily submitted to swamy all the honors sent by namperumal and swamy accepting the same and entered Sripuram. Swamy enjoyed the divine beauty of the beautiful gardens, mAda veedhis, palaces and gopurams as per the anubhavams of the alwars about this great divya desam and finally reached the mutt of his beloved acharya, Sri manavala mAmunikal.

At the entrance swamy did sAshtAnga pranAmam and then went inside to do mangalAsAsanam. Swamy prostrated once again in front of the thirumalai- Azhvar (the place in which periya jeeyer used to sit and deliver kalashepam). Swamy then glanced at the picture, which he himself has installed during the renovation of the mutt. The picture, which got to memory the divine exotic beauty of the thirumEni (physic) of Sri Periya Jeeyer swamy. Swamy enjoyed and expressed his anubhavam in sweet words to the shisyas near him. Swamy’s memory ran to the sweet old days, which he spent, in the very same mutt along with his acharya. Then, imagining his acharya to go in front, swamy followed him to the nanmuga gopura vAsal and did mangalAsAsanam as before starting with “devi godhA” to Sri andal and then to udaiyavar and azhvar and then proceeded to ranganAchiyAr sannadhi. As per the verse, “rakshakAm sAparAdhanam AhEduka krupA mayeem I parathanthram param pathyu: anyAm seiva vallabhAm” thAyar remained with her divine grace showering mercy irrespective of anyone’s umpteen number of mistakes. Having darshan of the divine mother, swamy did
mangalAsAsanam starting with “ullAsa pallavidha” and ended with “sriranga raja mahisheem sriyamAsrayAma:” and stood reciting the stotras of the poorvAcharyas when Sri ranganAyaki thAyar said, “Oh! Jeeyer! You being very close to periya perumal’s heart is very close to me too”. Then with great pleasure thAyar blessed Jeeyer with her thiruparivattam, thirumAlai and other honors. Accepting them Jeeyer then proceeded towards the chandra pushkarini, payed his homage to the divine theertham and proceeded inside. Swamy then had the darshan of ranga vimAnam and senai mudaliyAr and further proceeded towards the dvajasthambham when namperumal as a welcoming note sent his Srisadagopan through the adiyars to swamy. Swamy accepted the same with due regards and then went inside. After taking the permission of the dvarapAlakars swamy went into the sannadhi and mesmerized by the beauty of the divine thirumEni of periya perumal stood inbetween the two divine pillars (thirumana thoongal).

Standing in between the divine pillars, swamy had the darshan of Lord ranganatha, (“Sri RangarAja math raksheeth ramyajAmAtharam prabhum”). Swamy enjoyed the divine beauty of periya perumal from bottom to top (pAdhAdhikEsAntham) with the recitation of the amalanAdhipiran paasurams. Swamy then sung pallAndu to perumal, “paduththa pAmpanai pallikondAnukku pallAndu”. Further swamy proceeded to do mangalAsAsanam to namperumal who stood with abhayahastham (a mudra assuring us that he will protect us and stopping us from leaving him), and with all the divyAyudhAs held in his hand, kavitha mudi (showing the supremacy, paratvam of bhagavan), mugamum muruvalum (the face and the smile in it showing his soulabhyam so that we do not run away in fear due to his supremacy), and his divine feet on a lotus flower (Asanapadhmaththil azhuthina thiruvadigalumAi).

Perumal deeply impressed with our swamy showered his karunyam (grace) and with arulappAdu (calling from perumal through the archakar) as “Vanamamalai Jeeyer!” honored swamy with his thiruparivattam, thirumAlai, theertham etc and then perumal instructed jeeyer to continue with the spreading and establishment of the rAmAnuja siddhAntham (as darshana pravarthakar) as per his earlier orders and take up all the responsibilities required for the same and in the process uplift one and all. Swamy accepted perumal’s order as his prime duty and then with great gratefulness accepted the prasadams humbly and with a mind which wanted more of perumal’s darshanam and not wanting to leave came out in pradakshinam. The greatness of emperuman is such that even after a long session of enjoying his beauty no one ever wants to come out but wants to continue with the same enjoyment (“apOdaikku apOdhu en ArAvamudhu” this sweet is ArA-amudhu, that which never makes us bored).
On the way, swamy enjoyed all the divine beauties of the whole temple and finally reached the mutt. In the mutt, koil annan and others honored swamy. In this way swamy remained in sri rarangam for some more days doing mangalAsAsanams to periya perumal daily. At that time koil annan requested swamy to tell him the rahasyatraya sampradAya arthas once again, as he hasn’t grasped all the meanings strongly in his mind, the previous time. Swamy replied, “In Erumbi, suddha sattvam anna and others have requested me to visit them, so I have to leave now. You can also accompany me there” So annan followed swami’s order and did accordingly.

Next day, swamy started towards kAnchi to do mangalAsAsanam to deva perumal. On the way, swamy did mangalasasanams to all the divya desams he passed and then finally reached hasthigiri. On swamy’s arrival, appAchiyAranna and others informed devaperumal about the same and got his thirumAlai, thiruparivattam and other honors along with the sound of divine instruments and chatra samara mariyAdais, along with a huge crowd of srivaishnavas. On reaching swamy they did sAshtAnga pranAmams to swamy. Then the archakas of devaperumal sannadhi submitted the honors, devaperumal has sent to swamy. Swamy accepted them with due regards and proceeded towards perumal sannadhi.

On reaching kancheepuram, swamy had darshan of all the sannadhis in order as per the following sloka:
“SrimathdvAravaram mahathhi palipeetAkrayam panEndrahrudham gopseenAmramanam varAhavabhusham Sri bhattanAtham thathA I Srimantham satavarinam kaliripum Sri bhakthisAram munim poornam lakshmana yOginam munivarA nAthyanaatha dvAdhasam II Sriman majjanamanthapam sarasijam hedeesa bhOgeeshvarou RAMam neelamanim mahAnasavaram dhArshyam nrusimham prabhum I SEnAnyam karipoodharam thathu pari sripunya kotim thatha thanmathyE varadham ramA sahasaram vandhE thatheeyair vrutham I kamala nivEsi thAngri kamalam kamalAramanam kanamani bhooshana tyudhi kadharitha kAthrusim I Abhaya katha sudarshana saroruhaArukaram karisEkarim kimapi chEdasi me nidhathE” The above sloka excellently shows the order of sannadhis located in the temple, most of which is seen even today in varadaraja perumal koil, kanchi (bali peetam, lord venugopala, lord gnyAna piran, sri bhattapiran, sri saTakOpa, sri kali kandrithirumangai Azhvar, thirumazhisai piran, periya nambi, emperumAnAr, mudhal azhvars, mudali’s guarding the entrance, abhisheka mantapam, perundEvi thAyAr, thiruvAzhviAzhvan, thirumanthAhzhvan, chakravarthi thirumagan, kariya mAnikka varadar, thirumadad palli, periya thiruvadi, azhagiya singar, senai mudaliyar after darshan of all of them infront of us appears the thiru-aththi malai on which stays the lord varadaraja along with his consorts Sridevi and bhooodevi under the divine punyakoti vimAnAnam and along with all his divya ayudhas in his hands.)
In this way swamy had the darshan of all the sannadhis and came infront of devarajan and did mangalasasanam to perumal as follows,”mangalam vEdhasE vEdhi mEthi nEgruha mEthinE I VaradhAya dayA dhAmnE thirOdhAya mangalam”. DevAdhirajan highly pleased called swamy with arulappAdu and bestowed his theertham, thirumAlai, thiruparivattam, srisadagopan and other prasadams to swamy. Accepting the same with due regards swamy proceeded to the mutt and staying there continued his mangalasasanam to devaperumal for three more days. Then swamy started his journey towards thirumalai to do mangalasasanam to thiruEnkatamudaivyAn. But on the way, some chaturthAcharyas from erumbi came to know about swamy’s visit and hence came to swamy and after paying their due respects requested swamy to visit erumbi.

Swamy accepted their invitation and gave them the bhakyam of doing various kainkaryams to swamy. They finally requested swamy to grace them with the divine rahasya arthas and bhagavat vishayam. Swamy accepted and delivered the divine arthas in front of suddha satvam anna and others who requested for the same along with pOllipAkkam nayanAr and others (the chaturthAcharyas) and koil annan and others who have accompanied swamy from srirangam. Swamy thereby completed the rahasya artha kAlashepam followed by the bhagavat vishaya kalashepam by which time a year has passed since swamy came to erumbi.

Then swamy went along with all of them to thirukkadigai (‘neel sOlai vanpoonkatigai) to have the darshan of thakkAn and the akkArakkani emperuman on top of the hill (‘katigai thadankundrInmEl nindra akkArakan’). There, swamy stayed for three days and did mangalasasanam to the emperuman. Then swamy proceeded towards thirumalai. Swamy and others then proceeded towards thirumalai. First they had darshan of the govindaraja perumal at the foothills of thirumalai. Swamy did mangalasasanam to emperumAnAr (who was responsible for consecrating govindaraja perumal in that sannadhi) and then did mangalAsAsanam to emperuman, along with the recitation of the paasuram “kayinAr surisanganalAzhiyar”. Then all of them proceeded to have darshan of nammAzhvar and the other azhvars at the foothills of thirumalai and stayed that night over there. Swamy showered his grace to many during his stay.

Next day, swamy bathed, finished his anushtAnams, prostrated the thiruvEnkata hill, which stays like a lighthouse to the agnAni’s (ignorant people) of this world to reach emperuman’s divine feet (“thiladha ulagukkAi nindra thiruvEnkatam”). Swamy then climbed the thirumalai which was like climbing steps to vaikundam and after having the darshan of kAttusingar proceeded climbing enjoying each and everything in the divine
thirumalai (“malugandha oor” “nan mani vannanoor”). On reaching the top, swamy was reminded of the paasuram “kannan vinnOr thozhavE”, emperuman kannan stands there where even the nithya sooris come to worship him.

At that time, thiruvEnkata periya Jeeyer and other Ekanki srivaishnavas from the perumal sannadhi, submitted the news of arrival of periya jeeyer in perumal sannadhi and according to the order of thiruvEnkatamudaiyan rushed to welcome swamy with perumal’s thiruparivattam, thirumAlai and other honors, in a usual manner along with number of srivaishnavas holding chaatra sAmaram and amidst the sound of divine instruments. Swamy on seeing the crowd of srivaishnavas immediately did danda pranAmam to them considering them to be nithya sooris who have been blessed to live in thirumalai as per the paasuram, “emperumAn pon malai mEl AdhEnu mAvEnE”. The Srivaishnavas honored swamy with thirumAlai, thiruparivattam and prasadams which swamy accepted with due regards and proceeded inside; prostrating the vaikunda thiruvAsal and avAvara soozhthAn vAsal went in pradakshinam towards the kOneri. After taking a divine dip in the holy water, swamy visited the thirunandavanam (garden) of Sri ananthAzhvan named ‘rAmAnusan’ after his acharya, Sri ramanuja. Then swamy had the darshan of jnanapiran and further with the recitation of the paasurams “oonEru selvaththu” entered the temple, prostrated infront of the dvajasthambham, had the darshan of azhagiya manavala thirumandapam (in which namperumal stayed during the muslim invasion ) and then further proceeded to have darshan of various sannadhis in order.

Swamy had darshan of aththAni puli, Sri bali pedam, the flower mandapam called as yamunai thuraivan, senpaka thiruvAsal, periyi thiruvadi, thirumadappLLi, thirumAmani mandapam and divya vimAnam, senai mudaliyAr, and then after getting the permission from emperumAnAr proceeded towards the thiruvEnkata mudaiyAN sannadhi. Swamy stood in the ‘vendru mAlai yittAn mandapam’ and then had darshan of “vidaintha vEzh marangalum adangu veidhu vEnkatamadaidha mAl “ Sri chakravarthi thirumagan and then finally reached near the kulasekaran padi (step) and did mangalAsAsanam to emperuman starting with “agalagillEn” and ended with “adikkeezh amarindhu pugundhEnE”

Having darshan of perumal from bottom to top (pAdhadhikEshAntham) swamy said pallAndu to perumal and finally ended with the mangalam, “mangalam mAnushE IOkE vaikunda mathidhisthE I sesha salla nivAsAya srinivAsAya mangalam II” Pleased with swamy perumal presented him with all honors and showered his full grace and blessings on swamy which swamy accepted with a lot of gratefulness and love and came outside. Thiruvenkata Jeeyer, then welcomed swamy and made the required arrangements for swamy’s stay. Jeeyer then requested swamy to bless them all with
bhagavat vishaya kalashEpam. Swamy accepted for the same. During the days while swamy delivered kalashEpams on alwar’s arulicheyals, many mahans surrendered to swamy’s divine feet and deeply enjoyed the divine outpourings. Swamy completed the kalashEpam and did sattrumurai and then proceeded to thiruvEnkatamudaiyan sannadhi for mangalAsAsanam. Swamy then took the permission of perumal to leave the next day to continue his kainkaryams in vanamamalai and returned back to the mutt.

14. SWAMY BECOMES THAYAR’S FATHER

That night in the dream of swamy, appeared a pretty young girl, with a face like a freshly blossomed lotus flower. She climbed over the lap of vanamamalai swamy. Like a beloved daughter talking to her father and enchanting him with her sweet innocent kid’s talk, the girl continued to talk to swamy calling him, “Anna” (a reference to father) and said “Take me also to vanamamalai”. Swamy woke up astonished by the dream. At that time, many others including thiruvEnkata Jeeyer had similar dreams which they expressed in front of swamy. In their dreams, nAchiyar has said as follows, “My father, vAnamAmalai rAmAnuja Jeeyer, is returning back to his place. Send me also along with him to vanamAmalai”.

Many of them had the same dream and hence they rushed immediately to swamy’s sannadhi. At that time swamy, told about his dream to thiruvEnkata Jeeyer. Hearing this everyone got further surprised and totally believed that there was absolute truth in the dream that each one of them witnessed. ThiruvEnkata Jeeyer, then told the following poorva vruththANtham (old legend):

“Many Many years ago, one thanikkOil nAchiyar appeared in thirumalai. But since alarmEl mangai thAyAr is already present in the divine chest of emperumAn it was finally decided before the kalyana mahOtsavam that there should not be a separate sannadhi for thayar on the hills. So from then this thAyAr has remained without any separate sannadhi and kalyana mahOtsavam.

Saying this Jeeyer continued to say, “yesterday thAyAr appeared in my dream and said, ‘vanamAmalai jeeyer is my father and deivanAyakan my husband. I am going along with him to varamangai. You also come following me’. So this is the wish of nAchiyar and hence vanamamalai jeeyer swamy take your daughter along with you to vanamamalai and celebrate a grand kalyAnOtsavam. Since this nAchiyAr has appeared due to the wish of AlarmEl mangai uraimArban, you will attain all the athma balam (“Atma IAbhAth param kinchithanya nAsthi”) from deivanAyakan due to her purushakAram (recommendation) and will become a poornar (complete one)”
Listening to all these words of thiruvEnkata jeeyer with great surprise, swamy then with great joy prostrated appan and with nAchiyar in a separate palanquin, along with sufficient archakas, parichArakas and srivaishnavas for safety started on his journey. On the way of the long journey, thiruvenkata Jeeyer, anantAzhvan and others involved in a deep discussion about the greatness of vanamamalai swamy as follows:

“Janaka, found piratti in his yaga shAla. He cared and brought up the child as his daughter and was immensely happy to give her in marriage to rAma piran. Vishnuchithar (“meimai peruvArthai ketturuppar”) found goda piratti under a tulasi plant in his garden. He brought up the child with great love and affection and gave in marriage to perumal with great joy. But janakan, king of mithilai, father of sita piratti or vidarpa raja, father of rukmani piratti or periyAzhvar, father of soodhikkoduththa nAchiyar will never equal the greatness of our swamy.

Why because, janakan considered sita piratti has his daughter and when perumal himself (“rAmam sathya parAkramam) came and asked him to give her in marriage to him, Janaka didn’t do it immediately but stubbornly said, “veerya sulkEthi bhagavan naththAmi sudha maham I thEsham jignAsamAnA nAm veeryam thanarupAhrutham ll” and accepted for marriage only after perumal satisfied his veerya sulkam (test for bravery) by breaking the siva dhanush. So janaka was more concerned with his own promises even in front of perumal. In case of vidarpa raja though he knew that rukmani was in deep love with Krishna paramatma (“sruthvAN gunAn bhuvanasundara srunvathAm thE nirvichya kannavivarair hara thonga thApam I Roopam thrushAm thruchinthA mahilAthma IAbham tvai achchutavi sadhA chithA mapathrapam mE ll”) and that only the two suite each other and inspite of all the other relatives and friends voting for the marriage, he listened to his beloved son rukmi and arranged for rukmani’s marriage with sisupala.

Periazhvar, though being well versed in all sastras considered piratti to be his daughter and hence had a doubt if perumal will accept her and with a abhimAnam that she is his daughter gave her in marriage to perumal. In all the above cases each one considered piratti to be their daughter but in the case of our swamy, piratti who was found in thirumalai, considered him to be her father and climbed over his lap in his dream, called him as her father and requested him to take her along with him to vanamamalai and do her wedding with deivanayaka perumal. Can janaka or vidarpa king or periAzhvar be considered anywhere near swamy’s greatness?

In this way, they enjoyed exchanging views among themselves praising the divinity of vanamamalai swamy and at one point taking leave of swamy and nachiyar returned back to their places. Then the procession of nAchiyar, lead by vanamamalai swamy,
along with the respective honors for nAchiyar (chatra sAmaram) and playing of divine instruments to enlighten nAchiyar throughout the journey, proceeded with full vigor towards vanamamalai. On the way the procession went through many villages and towns. People all through the way welcomed Nachiyar and jeeyer swamy with due respects and submitted a lot of offerings to nAchiyar.

Jeeyer swamy submitted the offerings in the divine feet of nAchiyar and distributed the prasadam to all and carried out the dadhiyArAdhanam. On the way, Jeeyer swamy did mangalAsAsanams to various divya desams and after paying his homage to azhvar continued his journey and finally reached srivaramangai along with his daughter, nAchiyar. Planning to have the thirukalyAna mahOtsavam the following day (“nAlai vadhuvi manamendru nAl ettu”) swamy made arrangements for nAchiyar to stay in the mutt for that night.

15. THIRUKALYANA MAHOTSAVAM

Nachiyar was very happy to stay in her father’s place (mutt) and cherished her stay while Jeeyer went to deivanAyakan’s sannadhi did mangalAsAsanam to perumal and requested perumal to accept his daughter and also grant permission for a grand vivAhamahOtsavam the following day. Getting the permission from perumal, Jeeyer filled with ecstasy started to quickly arrange for the divine wedding. The wedding was planned as per the wish of Sri Andal, soodhkoduththa nAchiyAr (pAlai kamugu parisudai pandar keezh) and arrangements were made accordingly. The marriage mandapam was decorated in a traditional manner with plantain trees and mango leaves and the sound of divine instruments were heard everywhere. The place was filled with divinity. Completing all these arrangements personally, swamy then proceeded towards the mutt to decorate the bride.

Swamy did alankAram to nAchiyar with a beautiful silk saree, a kasturi thirunAmam on her forehead, a garland made of senkazhuneer flower in her chest, kAjal in her divine eyes and adorned her with kumkum and a lot of ornaments throughout her thirumENi and with number of bangles in her hand making divine noise (SeerAr valai ollippa). After the alankaram was over, swamy carried nAchiyar to the marriage hall, walking slowly like a swan with shyness, which is characteristic of any bride.

Thereby nAchiyar reached the beautifully decorated mandapam (muththudai thAmam niraithAzhindha pandharkeezh) and stood in front of deivanAyakan. Along with the recitation of various Vedic mantras the divine couples exchanged garlands and madhusoodhanan, Sri DeivanAyaka perumal held the hands of nAchiyar amidst the
sound of maththalam and vari sangam (divine instruments). After the divine marriage 160 kalam (a measure) of prasadam (amudupadi) and 60 kalam paruppu amudhu (dal) and other prasadams, silk dresses, ornaments, cow, elephant, horse and men and women servants were all presented to perumal as dakshina (seer) by swamy. After that with great honors (varanamAyiram soozha) the divine couples came out in procession in the mAda veedhis and returned back to the temple. While returning back ladies invited them with kalasaddeepams and did pradakshinam to the divine couples. Indiran and other devas were waiting to say mangalam to emperuman and piratti with various Veda mantras. Kappu (protection with mantras) was done to the divine couples so that no evil eyes feel on them, since the beauty in serthi (perumal and piratti together) were beyond words. After that the divine couples entered the temple.

Thereby completing the kalyana mahOtsavam of his daughter with perumal vanamamalai jeeyer swamy became the father in law of deivanAyakan like samudra raja, janakan and periAzhvar and attained all fortune and remained with a number of special shisyas happily in the kainkaryam of perumal and piratti. Perumal also obtained srivaramangai nAchiyar as his divine consort and with joy enjoyed the nithyOthsava,
pakshOtsava, MasOtsava, samvatsarOtsavas and remained happily showering his grace on all devotees. Jeeyer swamy built a separate sannadhi with vimAnam, artha mandapam and mahA mandapam for Srivaramangai nAchiyar and remained at her service.

16. KAINKARYAMS IN OTHER DIVYA DESAMS

Adding to the kainkaryams in vanamamalai, ponnadikAl Jeeyer swamy also made and submitted a crown and other jewels (thiruvAbharanams) for thirukurungudi nambi, renovated the madhis (walls) and gopurams over there and also built a kaisikOtsava mahA mandapam and many other mandapams as part of his kainkaryams in thirukurungudi. Swamy thereby stayed with the kainkarya sri.
17. WORDS OF CHINNIAMMAL

At that time, one-day swamy bathed in settruthAmarai and finished his anushtanams when one of swamy’s shisyas chinniammAl came and payed homage to swamy’s divine feet. Swamy enquired her about her whereabouts as a series of questions. For which chinniammAl answered as follows (the dialogue shows how great a srivaishnavite she was):

Oh lady! Which is your
Country: Thiruvazhudhi nAdu (place of nammazhvar)
House: PandudaiyAn veedu (or pandE adimaiyAgakkonda eraivan veedu, paramapadam)
Kulam: Achchudha kulam
VEDam: Dravida vEdam (thiruvAimozhi)
Sootram: Ramanuja sootram
KArigai: parakAla kArigai (parakAlan is thirumangai mannан)
Kudi: Anju kudi (andai is praised as ‘anju kudikku oru santhadhiyAi’)
Friends: Athma bandhus (those who are not physically related to us but mentally related)
Relation: One who knows to join
Relatives: uttradhum vummadiyAr (those who do service to the servants of lord)
Father: DeivanAyakan
Mother: Srivaramangai Nachiyar
Inlaws place: VanumAmalai
Husband: Varamangai muni (samAsrayanam is equal to marriage between the shisya and acharya)
Father-in-law: kAnthOpayanthA (Sri Manavala mAmunigal)
Job: bhAgavata kainkaryam
Payment: The job itself is a payment (svayamprayOjanam)
Eligibility: sarvAdhikAram (have the right to do all types of kainkaryams)
Nishtai: panchamOpAya nishtai (Acharya pratipaththi)
UpAyam: charmOpAyam (last among the 5 upayas viz., karma, jnana, bhakthi, prapaththi and acharya bhakthi)
AbhimAnam: BhAgavatAbhimAnam
Prayer: kainkarya prarthanai

Highly pleased with the great intelligence and devotion of the lady, swamy blessed her with the divine abode of emperuman.

One-day rAmAnuja pillan, a prime disciple of vanamamalai jeeyer swamy saw his wife wearing all her jewels and standing in front of him. He immediately told his wife,
“Seeing you like this makes me doubt your athma guna. As per the words of rAma piran to piratti, it is like a deepadarshan to a blind man, to my eyes. These jewels do not decorate or add beauty to pathivrattAs (chaste women) but only seelam (Athma gunam) beautifies pathivrattAs.” The words of pillan were very cutting but his wife, who knew him well, understood his inner mind and in a manner to satisfy him immediately removed all the jewels and handed them over to him and remained without any hard feelings. Pillan accepted the same, and made a mahalakshmi padhakam (dollar with the impression of mahalakshmi on it) out of the gold obtained from the jewels.

Ramanuja pillan was waiting to submit it to deivanAyakan and enjoy seeing him adorning the same. Pillan got the permission from vanamamalai swamy and submitted the same to perumal. Then he along with his wife went and did mangalasasanam to deivanAyaka perumal. Elated by the deep devotion of ramanuja pillan, vanamamalai swamy blessed him with swamy’s thiruvArAdhana perumal (Devaperumal with ubhaya nAchiyars) and also the acharya chinnams (symbols). Then, ramanuja pillan took his acharya’s permission and left to thirunagari and stayed under the divine feet of azhvar. At that time he showered the divine arthas of thiruvAimozhi (bhagavat vishayam) to many interested srivaishnavas.

Meanwhile, one-day pillan’s wife prayed to azhvar to bless them with a child. Azhvar blessed them and due to the divine grace of azhvar, a very intelligent sAtvika son was born to pillan and his wife. Pillan named his son after his own acharya ThirunAmam. At the same time, Sri vanamamalai Jeeyer swamy lived with all glory due to his acharya krupai, stayed with ripened knowledge and all atma gunas (thrineekrutha virinjAdhi nirangusa vibhUtaya:1 rAmAnuja padhAm bhOja samAsrayana sAlina:). Swamy had a great regard for the pramAnams, pramEyam and pramAthas and lived as par alwars and acharyas words (“adiyArkkadiyar thamakkadiyAr adiyAr thammadiyArradiyOngal”). Swamy followed each and every word of his acharya, Sri Manavala mamunikal, who lived like a mangala deepam in Srirangam, like a good son following his father’s words (Sreevachanabhooshanaththin semporulai sindhaithannAl thErilumAm vAikondu seppilumAm AriyargAl enthamakkku nAluminidhAga nindradhu”).

18. VANAMAMALAI SWAMI’S DINACHARYA (DAILY ROUTINE)-1

1. Swamy got up early in the morning with the recitation of the vakhya guruparamparai starting with “asmath gurubhyO namaha” and surrendered to the divine feet of all the acharyas. Swamy then meditated on the divine meanings of the rahasya trayams (which
gave a clear knowledge about the atmasvaroopam, yAdhathmya Jnanam) followed by the archirAdhi gathi starting with “sathsangAth” and finally the parasvaroopam. Following this swamy meditated on the vyuha moorthis, vasudeva-sankarshana-pradyumna and aniruddha and fell under the divine feet of the bhagavan. Following this his thoughts flowed towards the vibhava and antaryAmi roopams followed by the archA roopam. Finally swamy meditated on the Acharya svaroopam.

2. Then reciting starting with “sristanabharanatheja:” swamy did his snanam (bath) in the vushat kAlam meditating on his acharya, wore his thirumankAppu and with the same thought then went to the sannadhi of aranganagarappan, did the appropriate pooja (thiruvArAdhanam), prostrated the emperuman and offered food to perumal and then accepted perumAl’s sreepAdha theertham (holy water obtained as a prasadam after washing the divine feet of perumal). After that swamy sat in front of the sannadhi and blessed all the interested souls with pancha samskAram and showered his grace on all of them.

3. After this, swamy as per periya Jeeyer’s anushtanam, started with number of shisyas towards deivanAyakan sannadhi. Starting with “Devi Godha” swamy did mangalAsAsanam to all sannadhi’s including that of Sri Manavala mamunikal, emperumAnAr and other azhvars and then proceeded inside and had divine darshan of srivaramangai and deivanAyakan. Swamy then did mangalAsAsanam to vanamamalai perumal, who is considered as the first among the Ekadasa moorthis.

4. After this swamy returned back to the mutt and took the seat of his acharya (considering himself to be the divine feet of his acharya, mamunikal) delivered excellent kalashepams (“vyAkhyAyasa vidhaktha soori parishath chiththApahara kshamA”). Swamy had a great talent in expressing the bhagavat vishayam along with the saptharasam (intricacies of sound), Artha rasam (indepth meaning) and bhAva rasam (sentiments and emotions) in a manner that even ignorant and the uneducated people can easily understand and enjoy.

Swamy’s talent was so great that even the birds which lived near the mutt used to talk among themselves as follows: “Sriman Narayana is the paratvam, as per all Vedas and sastras; Brahma and all other devas are seshas (under the control) of Sriman narayana”

5. After the kalashepam, swamy blessed the disciples with his sripAda theertham. When the time for thiruvArAdhanam to aranganagarappan came, swamy did thiruvArAdhanam and offered fruits, a lot of prasadam along with pAyasam (a grand meal) to perumal and then according to the procedures of his acharya, did sattrumurai (completion of pooja).
6. Swamy then distributed the perumal theertham to all and did bhagavata dhadheeyArAdhanam and accepted some prasadam himself. Then swamy stood in front of perumal with folded hands and recited the manthra ratnam. As per the verse, “gurO: pAdhAmbhuja dyAyEth gurOr nAma sadHajabhEth” swamy mentally always meditated on the divine feet of his acharya and always kept saying, “Jeeyer thiruvadigalE sharanam” and there by remained for many years.

7. Swamy then delivered kalashepam on Sri Ramanayana and also continued his sannadhi kainkaryams without any shortcomings. In his leisure time, swamy similar to his acharya, mAmunikal discussed many sath vishayams with elders and other srivaishnavas interested in bhagavat vishayam. Swamy used to tell them a number of interesting vishesha arthas and words of poorvacharyas during those discussions.

8. Meanwhile, one fine day the topic of discussion happened to be about bhAgavata prAvanyam. Swamy immediately remembered the thirukkOloor vriththAntham in the life history of Sri ethirajar and told it to the collected bhagavatas as follows:

When emperumAnAr visited thirukkOloor, he met a lady on the way, who payed her obeisance to emperumAnAr. Ethirajar asked the lady, “Oh! Lady from where are you coming?” The lady promptly replied, “I started my journey from thirukkOloor” EmperumAnAr shocked with the reply said, “How is that the place where everyone has to go and settle became the place for you to start from? Shouldn’t you stay in thirukkOloor even if you have to share a single dress with 7 others and get only a few vegetables or fruits to eat?” As per alwar’s words, “thinna ennilamAn pugumoor” thirukkOloor is the place of refuge for everyone.

The intelligent lady replied in the form of 82 questions, which showed her great knowledge in puranas, itihasas, guru paramparai and in sampradaya vishayams. We will just see a sample of 10 questions here

ThirukkOloor ammal’s reply:

Adiyen nAyindhE! NAyindhE! (I am right over here at your service)
1. Did I say I would bring him like akroora?
2. Have I shed my ego like vidhura?
3. Did I leave my body like the rishi pathni?
4. Did I curse dashamukan like piratti?
5. Did I wake a corpse like thondaimAn?
6. Did I serve a treat of deadbody like kandAkarnan?
7. Did I take the part of a mother like anasooya?
8. Did I ask where my father was? like druvan?
9. Did I utter the three letters like kshatrabhandu?
10. Did I get the first step like akalya?

And thus the questions continue. Finally thirukkOloor ammal ended saying that I do not possess the greatness of any of the above so what difference does it make whether I stay in thirkkOloor or elsewhere? I am like the remains of a rabbit, it never matters whether I am in the field or outside. You continue your journey and go and do mangalasasanam to vaiththamAnidhi and madurakavigal so that they celebrate nithyOtsava, pakshOtsava, mAsOtsava, samvatsarOtsava without any hinderence forever. Highly pleased with the reply of the lady ethirajar visited her house and asked her to cook and ate the food made by her. He also blessed her with his SripAda theertham and prasAdam. In this way my paramAcharya, Sri ThiruvAimozhi pillai used to say and enjoy line by line, the greatness of the intelligent bhagavatai’s words.

Saying all these to his shisyas, vanamamalai Jeeyer swamy spent his daytime. We will see the evening anushtanams of swamy in the next posting and also his acharyAbhimAnam.

9. As the day passed, in the evening swamy finished his evening anushtanams and went to deivanAyakan sannadhi and headed the nithyAnusandhAnams (daily procedures at the temple). Swamy accepted the theertham and prasadam of perumal did mangalasasanams and returned back to the mutt. In the mutt swamy did mangalasasanams to aranganagarappan and sat in an Asanam (seat) in front of perumal and delivered the divine sampradhayic meanings in a elegant, sweet voice to his disciples who stayed with great respect under the divine feet of swamy, with the following verse in mind: “tvam mE bhandu: tvamasi janaka: tvam sakA desika: tvam vidhya vriththam sukrutha mathulam vidhdhamapyuththamAl tvam” Swamy and the shisyas spend a lot of time in enjoying the divine kalyana gunas (qualities) of emperuman.

10. Then completing the day’s lectures swamy blessed all his shisyas who prostrated swamy and started from there. Swamy sent all of them and with the kalyana gunas of his acharya lingering in his mind swamy rested for sometime. In this way swamy spent each day of his life. The shisyas of swamy, according to the verse, “yath thainam dhina sathkriya yathivrathyA sAra sanmathrukA” medidated on swamy’s daily routine while swamy remained in the meditation on the dhinacharya of emperumAnAr and his acharya Sri Periya Jeeyer. Swamy had a great regard for his acharya Sri Manavala mAmunikal. Swamy’s mind lingered around the kalyana gunas of his acharya always. Due to the love and affection swamy had towards his acharya, he has lamented many times due to the separation from him. The great slokas which came out of swamy’s
mouth due to his grief of separation from his acharya are great and are worth remembering

19. VANAMAMALAI RAMANUJA JEEYER SWAMY’S
ACHARYA BHAKTHI

“vedapporul vuraiththa viththaganE! Mandhargalin pEdhai madhi turakkum periyOnE !PAdhamalar thandaruli OyAch sananam kazhiththarulAI endhai varamuniyE endru.”

Meaning: Oh! My master who explained all the Vedic meanings. The master! Who removes all the ignorance from the minds of people. Please bless us with your divine grace today and remove the cycle of birth and death Oh! Varavaramuni.


Swamy here calls his acharya like a mother calling her beloved kid. The affection swamy had towards mAmunikal is enormous which is reflected in the above verse.

Meaning: Oh! My capable master, the king! Manavala muni! You are a clear personality, with a glowing bright crown, you are like a pearl, you are as sweet as a sugarcane, you are like the divine nectar which came out of the ocean please grant us your divine feet with mercy.

There are similarly 18 slokas of swamy under the name “guna vaguppu”. Swamy spent his time immersed in the divine qualities of his acharya. Then the fine day Iyappasi thirumoolam came. Swamy celebrated the day in a grand manner with great enthusiasm and submitted the nAl pAttu (song of the day) to the divine feet of Periya Jeeyer. The song goes as follows:

“senthamizh vEdiyar sindhai thelindhu sirandhu magizhthidu nAl seerulAriyar seitharul narkalai dEsu polindidu nAl mandha madhippuvi mAnidar thangalai vAniluyarththidunAl mAsaru Jnaniyar sEr ethirAsartham vAzhvu mulaiarthidunAl kandha malarpozhil soozhkuru kAdhipan kalaigal vilangidunAl kAramar mEni yaranga nagarkkiraI kangai kaliththidunAl andhamil seer manavAlamunip paranavadhAram seithidunAl azhagu thikazhinthidu iyppasiyil thirumoolamenu nAIE.”
Meaning: This is the day when the dravida vedic scholars got cleared of all their doubts and are filled with ecstasy; This is the day the divine works of lOkAcharya has attained its glory; This is the day which uplifts even the ignorant and less intelligent masses to the divine abode of emperuman; This is the day the divine glory of ethirajar, to whom all the flawless scholars surrender spread everywhere; This is the day when the work of nammAzhvar, kurugoor nambi wearing the sweet smelling magizh mAlai (garland), attained its height of glory; This is the day when the king of Srirangam, ranganatha with a divine beauty, rejoiced with his eyes; This is the day our dear manavalu muni took avataram to lift us all; This is the beautiful day of “IYPASI THIRUMOOLAM”. No more words to really explain the greatness of this day (iypasi moolam), the acharya of this day (Sri manavalu mamunikal) and the shisya of the acharya (vanamalai ponnadikkAl Jeeyer swamy). The Iyappasi thirumoolam is a great day, on which day our Periya Jeeyer, ettuperukkar, ramya jAmaatu muni, yatheendra pravanar, Sri manavalu mAmunikal took avataram to lift us all from this ocean of samSAram to the divine abode of emperuman. Each Srivaishnava is destined to celebrate this day in a grand manner and also recite the nAL pattu as given by swamy above and the srisailEsa thaniyan given by namperumal himself as a sambhAvanai to his acharya, mAmunigal. Even today the nAL pattu is recited in all the divya desams on this very special day.
The other works of vanamamalai swamy are: ThiruppAvai svapadesam and the thaniyan “kOla surisangai mAyan”.

20. GREATNESS OF VANAMAMALAI JEEYER SWAMY

1. Swamy was responsible for acting as purushakaram (recommendation) for annan and others to surrender to the divine feet of Sri Periya Jeeyer and also accepted a few of them as his shisyas as per the order of Sri Periya Jeeyer.

2. Swamy was responsible to bring appillai and appullAr to the divine feet of Sri Periya Jeeyer swamy. First swamy convinced periya jeeyer to accept them as his disciples and then he went to the banks of kaveri and along with the help of erumbiappa, swamy brought both appillai and appullAr to the divine feet of Periya Jeeyer and made them the two among the ashtadiggajas of Sri Mamunikal.

3. Sri Periya Jeeyer himself used to praise and call Swamy as “PonnadikkAl Jeeyer”.

4. Periya Jeeyer considered swamy his very close disciple and also an atma bandhu and also wanted vanamamalai swamy to get all the pleasure and treasure he obtained. And hence made swamy sit in his seat and presented his thirukkai Azhvars in the hands of vanamamalai swamy and asked him to do samAsrayanam just like him.

5. Then Periya Jeeyer appointed ashtadiggajas for vanamAmalai Jeeyer swamy just like his own ashtadiggajas.

6. Further Periya Jeeyer sent vanamamalai swamy to tour in the northern states as his representative and fulfill his wish to uplift all jeevatmas over there and bring them to our sampradayam by giving them ramanuja sambhandam through samAsrayanam.

7. During his last days, Periya Jeeyer instructed his upadandam, thiruvAzhimOdhiram and thiruvadinilai of his own acharya thiruvAimozhi pillai to be given to vanamamalai Jeeyer, though swamy was not near periya Jeeyer at the time when periya jeeyer attained paramapadam.

8. Periya Jeeyer had his special grace on vanamamalai swamy.

9. Vanamamalai swamy also was blessed specially by Periya perumal, and that is why he gifted him the aranganagarappan and himself went with him to vanamamalai. There is no need to say that vanamamalai perumal, who have got his divine consort, sivraramangai nAchiyar as kannikAdAnam from swamy had his special wishes for swamy and that is why he gave all the responsibilities of the deivanAyakan sannadhi kainkaryams to swamy himself. Next thiruvEnkatamudaiyan, showed the greatness of swamy and his acharya bhakthi in the dream of thiruvEnkata periya kElvi Jeeyer and thus showed his love for Vanamamalai Jeeyer. And nAchiyar in thirumalai accepting swamy as her father, shows largely the great mahimai of PonnadikkAl Jeeyer swamy.
10. With the blessings of all the perumals swamy did a lot of kainkaryam in the deivanAyakan sannadhi, thirukkurungudi nambi sannadhi and also in spreading our ramAnuja darshanam all over India.

11. The greatness of swamy lies mainly in his acharya nishtai (charamOpAya nishtai). Though he took sanyasa even before his acharya, nayanar (Sri Manavala mamunikal)
still he remained with great prathipaththi towards his acharya and considered mAmunikal to be upaya and upEyam (as per the well known verses, “DevumattririyEn” (Madhurakavi bhAvam);
“GururEva param brahma gururEva paramdhanam l gururEva param KAm: gururEva parAyanam ll gururEva parA vidhyA gururEva parAyathi: l yasmAth sadhupadhEshtasow thasmAth gurutharO guru: ll”

Sri Vara Vara Muni in Thiruvallikeni vanamamalai mutt


12. Though swamy was blessed with a birth in a high caste Brahmin family (“therulkol nAnmarai vallAr”, “thEru jnanaththar” “senthozhilavar”, “thelliyAr thirunAnmaraigal vallAr”, “seidhavElviyar vaiyaththEvar”) and also a wealthy family and remained with great knowledge and intelligence still swamy didn’t possess even a little bit of pride due
to all these. His mind was clear from the mukkurumbhu ("vidhyAmathO dhanamatha: thirthEyO bhijanOmatha.")

With all these and many more greatness, swamy remained with parama krupai on everyone and established our sampradayam in the world as per the wish of his acharya. Swamy showed love and care towards all including plants and animals and wanted to uplift each and every jeevatma without any barriers to the divine feet of emperuman. In this way swamy remained acting as the bridge between the paramatma and jeevatma for sometime. Then wanting to go to the divine abode of emperuman, swamy shed all his interest in this leela vibhuti (thAjya bhoomiyilE jihAsaiyum) and prepared himself to go to the nithya vibhuthi (prApya bhoomiyilE prAvanyam).

21. SWAMY ASCENDS TO PARAMAPADAM

Vanamamalai ponnadikkAl swamy got himself mentally prepared to leave this samsAric world and start his journey towards the nithya vibhuti of emperuman. Considering this body to be the hinderance, swamy prayed to his own acharya to remove the obstacles and accept him into the divine abode of emperuman. Due to the prayer, swamy fell sick putting all the shisyas in grief. The shisyas lamented saying, “Oh! This world without swamy will be like stars without moon, a crown abandoned without a king, a pond without a lotus, a ahothi without fire and a recitation without vedic scholars”. All the shisyas crowded around swamy with deep sorrow.

Jeeyer swamy saw the shisyas in grief and thought of selecting one of them to proceed him as the next peedhAdhipathi, to take care of the kainkaryams. Meditating on his own acharya, swamy selected one of his intelligent shisyas, well versed in all sastras, kalamoor varadamuni as the next acharya to follow him and called him “Vanamamalai ramanuja jeeyer” with his own mouth and made him the second peedhAdhipathi of the vanamamalai mutt. Then swamy submitted varadamuni under the divine feet of the divine couples, deivanAyakan and srivaramangai nAchiyar and requested them to accept him to their nithya kainkaryam.

Swamy then instructed all his disciples to be under the control of varadamuni and continue with bhagavat/bhAgavata kainkaryams. At this time, some Srivaishnavas happen to come from thirukurungudi and they requested swamy to appoint a Jeeyer for the kainkaryam of nambi. Swamy selected one among them and instructed him to be in the nithya kainkaryam of thirukurungudi nambi, but be under the control of vanamamalai jeeyer and act according to his words. The nambi Jeeyer also accepted the same with gratefulness and proceeded towards nambi sannadhi. Then vanamamalai
varada Ramanuja jeeyer and ramanuja pillan, after getting the permission from their acharya, got two divya mangala vigrahams of swamy and requested swamy to grace the vigrahams, so that after swamy leaves to the divine abode of emperuman, they can all still have darshan of swamy in archA roopam, in the mutt. Jeeyer showered his karunA kataksham on the vigrahams touched them with his divine hands and gave one to varada muni to be kept in the vanamamalai mutt always. Swamy then gave the second vigraham into the hands of ramanuja pillan. On consecration of swamy’s archA vigraham in the mutt even deivanAyaka perumal and srivaramangai nAchiyar were filled with ecstasy since this removed their grief of getting separated from swamy.

Swamy then called the kainkarya paras (persons involved in the service of perumal) in the deivanAyakan sannadhi and apologized for all the knowingly or unknowingly done apacharyams (mistakes). The kainkaryaparas replied, “Oh! Swamy devarir can do mistakes only if vanamamalai perumal can ever commit a sin. Both are never possible”. Swamy then told them “I have appointed varadamuni to be the next jeeyer of the mutt and also to take care of the nithya kainkaryam of perumal. Please consider him to be my representative and continue the kainkaryams in the temple as usual”.

Swamy then did dhadhiyArAdhanam and accepted prasadams from srivaishnavas and showed his deep regret for any mistakes he could have committed till date. Then swamy’s arthi to reach the divine feet of emperuman reached its height and hence he started meditating on the divine feet of his acharya Periya Jeeyer and uttered, “EmperumAnAr thiruvadigale sharanam” “Jeeyer thiruvadigale sharanam” and remained in silence while the shisyas with folded hands started reciting brahmavalli, bhruhuvalli, Soozhvizhumpanimugil and then all the divine instruments along with thiruchinnam was played when Jeeyer swamy meditated on his acharya’s thiruvadi and swamy’s soul got itself released from the body and through the sushumnAnAdi, smashing the brahmaratham continued its journey towards the divine abode of emperuman. Thereby swamy attain paramapadam to get himself into the divine service of paramapadanAdhan along with all the nithya sooris.

Varada muni, ramanujam pillai and others were struck by very deep sorrow due to the separation from swamy and they fell to ground like trees without root and wept thinking about the glory of swamy and their state in this world without swamy. Then consoled by all the other disciples, varada muni, the next jeeyer of the vanamamalai mutt, appointed by swamy to perform his last rites, went to bathe in the settruthAmarai, took a divine dip and then returned to do thirumanjanam (divine bath) to his acharya. They placed swamy on a thirumanjana seat and did the thirumanjanam along with the recitation of purusha sooktham, dvayAnusanthAnam and other manthras. Then they changed the vastram (dress) of Swamy and decorated
him with thiruparivattam and thirumankAppu. While everyone involved themselves in enjoying the divine beauty of the thirumEni (body) of swamy with eyes and mind with utmost concentration, deivanAyaka perumal sent his uduththukalaindha peedaga vAdai (dress earlier adorned by perumal), and his garland in a golden plate. Srivaishnavas from the deivanAyakan sannadhi carried the plate amidst the sound of divine instruments and chatra samara honors and came in front of the mutt.

Varada Muni accepted the perumal mariyAdai (honors) from the srivaishnavas and honored swamy’s vimala sarama vigraham. Then all the sannadhi kainkaryaparas, swamy’s disciples (SripAdhaththu mudhaligal) and other sAththAdha Srivaishnavas (those who didn’t undergo upanayanam) had the divine darshan of swamy’s body. Everyone was grief struck. Each one started lamenting not being able to get away from the darshan of swamy. The following were the feelings expressed by few of them:

“Iyo! KannapirAn araiyO muraiyO srivaramangai veetrirundha vAnanAdanE en kArmugil vannanE!” (Oh! my god is this fair; Oh my swamy who lived in srivaramangai, my karmugil vannan)

“Anantham prathamam roopam lakshmanasthu thatha: param l balabathra: thretheeyasthu kalau kaschit bhavishyatii” (Oh! swamy were you the ramanuja muni who took avatar as per the above verse? Or were you the punarAvathAram of varavara muni? Or are you only varamangai muni, who was like varavaramuni to ramanuja muni? The shisyas submitted a number of strotras to the divine feet of swamy. A few of them are as follows:

“MaththAr mannar thozhum thottaiyaikarappai, valarsamarapungavaguru, suddha sattvam annA, EththAdhavarEththum appAchiyArannA, A-rArum kalvi nidhi erAmAnusam pillai, kAththulagai yAdharikkum thiurkkOttiyuraiyar, kalai muzhudhum kaivandhu kalakAdha Jnanakkan AththAnum pallakkAI siththanum enmaru ashtagajamAgiyE, adimai seitharulukaiyAl vanamamalai munivan pOE desikar mAnilaththil vErundO”

(Vanamamalai ramanuja Jeeyer is a great acharya who has been blessed with 8 gem-like sathshisyas (close and good disciples), thottaiyaikarappai, samarapunavaguru, suddha sattvam annA, appAchiyArannA. Eramanusan pillai, thirukkOttiyuraiyar, Jnankan AththAn and pallakAI siththar called the ashtadiggajas. Is there any acharya who has such greatness?)

“eththanai pEr thandhai, eththanai per maindhanAi, eththanai pEr kEval thozhil seidhEn, aththanaiyum, mAttruviththAn mangaiyum erAmAnusamunivan A-trtramula ettu ezhuththinAI” (I have become a father of many, the son of many and done a lot of jobs under many but only ramanuja muni changed everything due to the divine power of the ashtAkshari)

“mannia senjol manavalamunivan kazhal unniya kondal eramanusan enpadhangal, thanniya nenjil tharikka vallAr avar padhatththai senniyil soodha vallAr vinnulAriyum
sEriyarE” (Those who have the divine feet of rAmAnusa muni, the one who has always the divine feet of manavala muni, one filled with sweet words, in his hearts, in their minds, those who bear the feet of such adiyars on their head are to be considered even greater than the nithya sooris).

In this way, the disciples expressed the divine qualities of their acharya. The disciples, filled with deep sorrow due to the separation from their acharya, Sri vanamamalai onnana ponnadikkAl Jeeyer swamy, remembered and discussed each and every event in the life of swamy from the day swamy took avataram till the end and talked greatly about the divine contributions of their acharya to the srivaishnava community, following the words of his acharya, Sri manavala mAmuniKal at all times. The close shisyas of swamy then, submitted the following sloka to the divine feet of swamy to let the whole world know the greatness of the great day in which swamy left this world:

“ArudE katakam prabhaparibrudE srisOpakruth vatsarE moolE sukra dhinE trayOdhasi thrithow pakshE valarsE subhE l vairAkhyAdhi samastha sathguna nidhi rAmAnujAk Yojvala: srivAnAchala yOgiRAt njiguru: pAdharavindhou yayowll”

Then Varada muni, the next Jeeyer along with the others did Srisoorna paripAlanam, accepted the sesh (left over) prasAdham himself and also distributed the same to all the srivaishnavas, celebrated with oil and turmeric spraying and then neatly decorated the pushpaka vimanam and placed swamy’s vimala charama thirumEni on it. Then the disciples carried the pushpaka vimanam with due respects (chatra sAram honors and amidst the sound of all divine instruments) went through the streets of deivanayakan, which were all decorated in a traditional manner with dvajas, flags and auspicious plants like kadali. The other disciples carried sugarcane in hands and reciting the nootrandhadhi and others went through the well decorated streets throwing Pori (puffed rice) and flowers all over the place with the playing of a single thiruchinnam (type of divine instrument) indicating the attainment of divine abode of emperuman by Sri Vanamamalai Jeeyer swamy. (Darshanaththil varamangai munivan thirunAttukku ezhundharulinAr). Sumangali (married women with their husbands alive) womenfolks held a deepam in their hands. Everyone had darshan of swamy and thus the divine procession reached the eastern side of the settruthAmarai. Facing the vAnamamalai divya vimAnam, yethi samskAram was done to Sri PonnadikkAl Jeeyer, just like that which was done to Alavandaar, ethirajar and periya Jeeyer.

Then all the Srivaishnavas, along with varada ramanuja jeeyer, payed their homage to swamy and then took avabrutha snAnam (divine dip after a holy ritual) and returned back to the mutt. The mutt appeared to be ayodhyA without rAma piran for all of them, quiet and without any life due to the absence of his holiness Sri PonnadikkAl Jeeyer.
swamy ("ellAm veriyOdittrAlO!"). They all talked among themselves greatly about swamy and his words and slowly recovered from the shock of separation and did all the rituals to be done for 12 days and on the last day did a grand thrudadhyanam, to honor the greatness of swamy and accepted the theertham and prasadam with due respect. Later, vanamamalai varada ramanuja jeeyer, decorated the peedam of Vanamamalai mutt, like the change in rAsis, due to the passage of time or like the change in rathapeedam of sooryamoorthi and took the place of vanamamalai ramanuja muni peedam which has remained varamangai muni peedam till then. Though time has passed and Varada Ramanuja Jeeyer took the place of Varamangai muni, he considered himself to be the pAdhukai of varamangai muni and acted according to the words of his acharya and continued the kainkaryams.

Varada rAmanuja Jeeyer swamy took utmost care of all the srikAryams in the vAnamAmalai perumal sannadhi and also did all that had to be done to uplift the jeevalmas. He followed his acharya and delivered the divine meanings of thiruvAimozhi and rahasya granthas to the interested srivaishnavas and remained with glory in the peedam.

All the ashtadigajas of ponnadikkAl swamy followed their acharyas orders and continued with their allotted kainkaryams. Ramanuja pillai along with the divya mangala vigraham of swamy returned back to thirunagari and stayed with great devotion in the divine feet of his acharya, delivering ubhaya Vedanta kalashepams to the shisyas.

22. HH Sri OnnAnA Vanamamalai ponnadikkAl Jeeyer swamy's:

Thirunakshatram (birth star): kanni punarvasu

Thirunakshatra thaniyan:

“ramyOpayanthu munivarya katAksha pAthram
vairAkhya bhakthimathi mukya gunAm purAsim l
kanyA punarvasupajAtha manarkka seelam
rAmAnujam gagana saila munim bhajAmi ll”

Vaibhava thaniyan:

“SrisailEsa……muniml
ramyajAmAthru yOgeendra pAdharEkhaErayam sadhA l
thathAyath thAthma sadhDhAthim rAmAnuja munim bhajE ll”

Vazhi thirunAmam

“thiruvirundha malar thAlgal vAzhiyE
sirandha sendhuvArAdhaiyum vAzhiyE
tharuvirundha kai mukkOlum vAzhiyE
tadampuyaththinil sangAzhi vAzhiyE
maruvu kondal manavAla yOgiyai
vAzththhi vAintharul vAimalar vAzhiyE
karunainEvum erAmAnusa muni
Kanaka mouli kalandhoozhi vAzhiyE”

“adiyavartham thuyaranaiyththum aruththarul vOn vAzhiyE
anipozhih serivaramangai avathariththOn vAzhiyE
kadipozhihsoozh poodhoorman kathal paninthOn vAzhiyE
karuththhthai yadar punalainthum kadindhu vittOn vAzhiyE
vAdAmoZhi thenmooZhi maraigal vagooththuraippOn vAzhiyE
manavala mAmuniyai vAzththhumavan vAzhiyE
edaruththu muzhugumenai eduththalippOn vAzhiyE
enappan erAmAnusa munivan vAzhiyE”

“panavAl aravil thuyil arangEsar padhampaniyum
manavAla mAmuni mAmalarth thAlgalai vAzhtthtum nalla
gunavAlan endhai erAmAnusamuni kOdhil padham
thanAv nidhi namakkendrenru nAdhOrum sAttru nenjE”
“vAzhi rAmAnuja munivan mAmalarthAl
vAzhi avan karunai mAnOkkum- VazhiyE
endhai manavala muniyinArulAl maranisai
senthamizh thErinduraikkum seer”

There by HH Sri vanamamalai ponnadikkAl Jeeyer swamy lived with glory for 100 years as per the vedic verse “sadhayu: purusha:” and uplifted many jeevatmas to the divine abode of emperuman and left the world under the care of his ashtadiggajas (appAchiyAranna, samarapungavar, suddha satvam anna, mahAryar, ramanujam pillan, thirukkOtiyuraiyar, jnanakkan AththAn and pallakkAl siththar) and many other shisyas like dasarathi appai and other shisyas who surrendered in thirumalai and erumbi and many others in the northern states.

Srimath Ramanujaya Namaha
Sri Vana Vana Manaye Namaha
Sri VanaChala mahA munaye Namaha
Srimathadhipathi thAdhikAmanaye Namaha
Yathidri prasanth paum kE ramyA jainAnam munim
RamyAjAmutha yOgeendra pAdharEkhaErayam sadhA
thathAyaththAtha sadhDhAthim rAmAnuja munim bhajE

Photo Courtesy www.phase.com/swami
23. THANKS

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“BrindAranya nivAsAya balarAmAnu jAyacha l
rukmini prAnAnAdhAya parthasoodhAya mangalam ll”

Azhvar emperumAnAr Jeeyer thiruvadigalE sharaNam
Jeeyer thiruvadigalE sharaNam

Srimathe Ramanujaya Namaha
Sri Vana Vana Manaye Namaha
Sri VarAchala mahA munaye Namaha
SriSriShri dya patram dreebhalthAdhi gUnAmaya
Yaleendra pravasaram vand E ranya jaAthaA vyamE
RamyEAnur dhyA pendra padhe Elka mayam saalha
thathaA yo thathaA yudhhaA A tEUnAm u rA mumAyE bhajE

Photo Courtesy www.phase.com(svami)