

ॐ श्रीगुरुभ्यो नमः

SRI TAMRAPARNI MAHATMYAM

P.R.KANNAN,M.Tech.

Navi Mumbai

**Placed with humility and devotion at the Lotus Feet of
Jagadguru Sankaracharyas of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham**

May 2017

SRI TAMRAPARNI MAHATMYAM

Appendix: STOTRAS

SRIMUKHAM

**PARAMA PUJYA JAGADGURU SANKARACHARYA SWAMIJI OF KANCHI
KAMAKOTI PEETHAM**

31.8.2017

May the devotees endowed with the wealth of intellect enjoy the greatness of Sri Tamraparni at once and be blessed with fame and prosperity through the compassionate sidelong glances of Sri Chandramouliswara.

O Tamraparni, you are of the form of all Tirthas; you destroy all sins; you show the way of Gnana. Prostrations to you.

The land of Bharat, which is the radiant crown among all countries, highly pure, with all its directions lighted up with the brilliance of spirituality, destroys darkness of ignorance with many rivers flowing with purifying waters of Gnana,

as it were. One of those rivers, Tamraparni is extolled in Srimad Ramayana in these words:

“You cross this great river Tamraparni, inhabited by crocodiles. She is covered, as it were, with divine forests of sandalwood trees on many islands. She is approaching the Ocean for merger, like a beloved woman would towards her lover.”

Tamraparni shines gloriously like Ganga, marked by sixtyfourghats, which are clusters of high merit. She lights up the path of Gnana through numerous kshetras shining on her banks. Her greatness leads to complete elimination of all sins. Our wise disciple Kannan has analysed the complete Tamraparni Mahatmyam, the jewel among books, available in Samskritslokas and written a nice summary in English for the benefit of the vast majority of people. We are very happy to know that he is publishing this book. We bless that with the steady stream of compassion of Sri MahatripurasundariSametha Sri Chandramouliswara, may this effort bear fruit; and reader-devotees may be cleansed of all sins through the grace of Tamraparni; and the writer and publisher may attain all auspiciousness in steady succession.

Narayanasmriti

Introduction

Sanatana Dharma provides guidelines for darshan, bath, Pooja, Sraadham, residence etc. at several kshetras in Bharatadesa. One such case is that of river Tamraparni. SRI TAMRAPARNI MAHATMYAM is a composition of Bhagavan Veda Vyasa, much like the well known Puranas and Upapuranas. It

consists of 64 chapters and 6407 slokas. It was taught by Vyasa to his son Sukabrahmam and Suta Pouranika. Like other Puranas, it was recounted by Suta Pouranika to sages Sounaka and others in Naimisaranyam. The present book summarises the original Samskrit text. Stotras of Sridevi, Tamraparni, Siva, Vishnu and others, appearing at various places in the original text have been compiled and presented in the Appendix for convenient reference and chanting. The divine origin of Tamraparni is unique and very interesting. Adi Parasakthi gave a garland to Parvathi at the time of her wedding with Siva. Parvathi put it on Siva's neck; Siva then handed it to sage Agastya. The garland turned into a Kanya named Tamraparni immediately. The Kanya went with Agastya down South to Malaya mountain and became a sacred river for the benefit of the world. SRI TAMRAPARNI MAHATMYAM asserts:

स्मरणात् दर्शनात् ध्यानात् स्नानात् पानादपि ध्रुवम् । कर्मविच्छेदिनी सर्वजन्तूनां मोक्षदायिनी ॥

“Tamraparni is the river, which destroys the karmas of all living beings, who think of her, who see her, who meditate on her, who take bath in and who drink her waters. She bestows even Moksha on them.” The many names of Devi Tamraparni have been given for chanting. Indra and other Devas, Rishis, Siddhas and humans have all worshipped her and got rid of heinous sins, purified themselves and advanced in their spiritual journey. All rivers including Ganga, Yamuna etc. come to river Tamraparni regularly and offer worship in order to get rid of the impurities gathered by them from jivas bathing in them. Brahma, Vishnu and Siva have eulogised Tamraparni and have chosen to have their permanent abodes on the banks of the river. Sripuram, the Supreme abode of Parasakti, created by Brahma, Siva and other Devas for universal welfare, where Sage Agastya lives, is also described. Many are the

sacred tirthas and kshetras dotting both the banks of the river Tamraparni, right from its origin in Malaya mountain upto its merger with the ocean. Many tributaries of the river have also been mentioned with their significance. Detailed accounts of the stories associated with each of these tirthas are given in the book by Vyasa. Well known Devas, sages, kings and commoners figure in these stories, thus keeping up the reader's interest. For instance, Sundara Pandya, the king of Madurai, who was none other than Siva, and his son Ugrasrivaladhi, who was none other than Subrahmanya, come up in the stories. Sacred occasions, mantras to be chanted etc. for each of the tirthas have been detailed.

Veda Vyasa has brought out in this Mahatmyam all salient aspects of Sanatana Dharma in the guise of telling about the tirthas on the banks of Tamraparni. Karma Marga, Dhyana Marga, Bhakti Marga and Gnana Marga- the paths for attaining Mukti, the sole goal of human life, have all been covered, though not with these specific terms. All dharmas to be practised in daily life have been brought out very succinctly and effectively. Dharmas of the four Varnas, the four Asramas (Brahmachari, Grihastha, Vanaprastha and Sanyasi), of women, kings, subjects, Gurus, disciples etc. are all there. Subtle and vital regulations in regard to bath, Sandhyavandanam, Tarpanas, Sraaddham, yagas etc. have been highlighted as if in a text of Dharma Sastra. Some Vedic rituals have been elaborated in order to illustrate the importance of adherence to niyamas (rules and regulations) in performance of prescribed activities. I have no doubt that a study of this book will, apart from inducing bhakti in Tamraparni, inculcate in the reader deep reverence for our eternal values and a firm will to attempt to be a true Sanatanist.

M: 9860750020

Email: prkannanvashi@yahoo.com

P.R.Kannan

Navi Mumbai

SRI TAMRAPARNI MAHATMYAM

Suta's arrival at Naimisaranya

Once upon a time Sounaka and other sages were performing a twelve-year long yaga at Naimisaranya, the place chosen by Brahma for their living a life free from the fear of the onslaught of Kaliyuga. Suta Pauranika arrived there and was wonder struck on seeing the yagasala. The yagasala appeared to him as no less than Yagalakshmi herself, wearing Asoka garlands of brilliant flames grown by continuous Ahutis of ghee; with white silk apparel of Darbha grass seats; with face of the glorious Uttaravedi (the northern altar); with seemantha (parting line of hair) of Yupastambha (sacrificial post); with two hands of Samitra and Adhvaryu (priests); with breasts of pitchers; with waist of Vedi (altar); with hair of smoke from fire; with shining ornaments of yaga implements. He paid obeisance to the ongoing yaga.

Sounaka and the other sages greeted Suta, and after he was seated, referred to Suta's travels across the country. They said that they perceived a special glow on his face and pleaded for exposition of the sacred tirtha that was uppermost on his mind.

Suta Pauranika replied: "Starting from Badarinath in Himalayas, I travelled on pilgrimage to many tirthas. In the southern Pandya kingdom, I had darshan of Sri Sundareswara on the banks of river Vegavati (Vaigai). Further south, **I saw Malayachala, where Adi Parasakti resides. I saw Parasakti in the name of Tamraparni joining the ocean.**

**स्मरणात् दर्शनात् ध्यानात् स्नानात् पानादपि ध्रुवम् । कर्मविच्छेदिनी सर्वजन्तूनां
मोक्षदायिनी ॥**

“Tamraparni is the river, which destroys the karmas of all living beings, who think of her, who see her, who meditate on her, who take bath in and who drink her waters. She bestows even Moksha on them.”

Another wonder I saw in that area is Sripuram, the Supreme abode of Parasakti, created by Brahma, Siva and other Devas for universal welfare. Sage Agastya lives there. His darshan made my life fruitful.”

On the assembled sages enthusiastically pleading with him to give out the story in all its details, Suta, surcharged with devotion and, after paying respects to his Guru Veda Vyasa, started to cover the story from the beginning. He said that the complete story had been unveiled first by Veda Vyasa to his son Sukabrahmam and subsequently to him.

Siva’s marriage with Parvathi

In earlier times, Dakshayani abandoned her form in the Fire in Dakshayagna and appeared later in front of Himavan and his wife Mena. They sang hymns of praise and begged that she should be born as their daughter. Devi readily agreed, saying that her present appearance in front of them now was a result of severe penance performed by them for thousands of years in previous birth. She agreed to be their daughter and instantly took the form of a baby. She then grew up fast. Devas in the meantime prayed to Siva for a commander-in-chief. Siva despatched Saptarishis to Himavan for talks about his marriage with Parvathi. After expressing his consent with great happiness, Himavan went to Kailasa for inviting Siva to marry Parvathi. Parvathi prayed to Parasakti of Sripura, who appeared before her and, blessing her with great joy, handed to her a garland

taken from her own neck and said that the garland would help all people of the world.

The marriage of Siva and Parvathi took place in Oshadhiprastha, Himavan's capital with great fanfare. Brahma, Vishnu, all Devas, their consorts, and people from all the fourteen worlds assembled to witness the celestial wedding. Parvathi put the garland received from Parasakti on Siva's neck. There was shower of flowers from sky; celestial instruments played sweet music. At that time a divine voice (Akasavani) was heard saying that as the northern part of the earth was heavily peopled, the southern part was lifting up and the earth was losing balance; if the balance was not restored quickly, there would be great harm. Siva promptly called sage Agastya and asked him to proceed southwards along with his consort Lopamudra. Siva also assured that he would not lose out on the marriage festivities and that he would be able to witness the same from there.

Tamraparni the Kanya

Siva also handed to Agastya the special divine garland from Parasakthi, put on his neck by Parvathi. He said that the garland from Parasakti would be a great tirtha, useful not only for Agastya for bath and drink, but a blessing for all people. As Agastya received the garland, when all the assembled sages were witnessing, the garland turned into a beautiful *Kanya*, shining brilliantly like gold and decorated all over with radiant ornaments. Lopamudra was very happy, like 'an impoverished person attaining a treasure'. All Devis and River Devatas gifted her various presents; the light (Tejas) from the bodies of all Devas merged into her form. When Devas noticed that the maiden shone like Aruna, they called her 'Tamraparni'. She also came to be called 'Tamra', 'Manigarbha' and 'Para'.

Meditating on Siva and Parvathi, Agastya reached Bharatadesa with the intent of proceeding south. Having darshan of Badarinatha, Kedareswara, Haridwar, Kurukshetra, Ayodhya, Ujjain, Gokarna, Srisailam, Tirumala, Kanchi, Srirangam, Chidambaram, Tiruvarur etc., Agastya reached the enchanting Malayaparvatha, which had dense forests, beautiful flower gardens, cuckoos singing sweetly, deer and wild animals. The Malayaparvatha Devata received Agastya very reverentially, worshipped him and wished to know what he could do for the sage.

At that time, Tumburu and Parvatha, the celestial singer and sage, arrived there and conveyed to Malayeswara the instruction of Siva that the Mountain Lord should adopt Tamraparni as his daughter and this privilege had been earned by him by long penance in his previous birth. Agastya gave away Tamraparni to Malayaraja, who took her as his daughter. There was shower of flowers and divine music from the sky.

A beautiful Sivalinga appeared there and Malayaraja and Agastya worshipped Siva. Siva emerged from the Linga and said: “Owing to your past merit, you have my Darshan now. This area will be known as Devadutta. Agastya, you now proceed along with Malayaraja to the nearby kshetra, where the beautiful Chitrasabha is located, and worship Siva and Parvathi there. You then go to the peak of Malayaparvatha, where the four Vedas have taken the form of four mountains. There is a peak called ‘Guptisringa’ in the middle. That is my most sacred abode and it is indeed ‘Pranavalaya’. Agastya, you live in your Asrama at that place nearby. Malayaraja and your daughter Tamraparni will make you specially happy.” Saying thus, Siva vanished in the Lingam.

Agastya then reached Trikutaparvatha, which houses Chitrasabha, indicated by Siva. He worshipped the dancing Lord Nataraja there with chant of Panchakshara mantra.

Story of Trikuteswara

There was a powerful emperor Prithu in olden days, who made the entire earth flat and milked the earth (like a cow) and obtained a lot of wealth. Owing to the power of his penance, he made the fourfold Varna system function effectively. A brahmana in his kingdom called Suruchi, together with his brother Rochishman, mastered all Vedas, Sastras and arts and developed great devotion to Vishnu. He set up a new religious system in opposition to established systems in existence and won over all Pandits in debate through his intellectual prowess. Prithu was very upset at this and prayed to Siva at the foot of Kailasa. Siva appeared. In response to Prithu's supplication, Siva said that Agastya would soon come over and reform and re-establish Vedic values and that there was nothing to worry.

Having had darshan at Trikuta Parvata, sage Agastya reached the entrance of the Trikuteswara temple. People there were Vaishnavas, wearing Tulasi garlands and *Urdhvapundram* and condemning Siva worship. They stopped Agastya from entering the temple. Agastya went away and returned in the guise of a Vaishnava. He now entered the temple, invoked Siva in the idol of Vishnu there, worshipped and pressed the idol with both his hands. The idol assumed Linga form; all the Devatas around also turned into Parivara Devatas of Siva. Suruchi's followers then picked up quarrel with Agastya. There was then Akasavani from the sky saying that both the parties should debate and accept the judgement of a neutral judge.

In the northern side of Siva, there arose at that very time a pedestal where Parasakti of golden hue suddenly appeared. Agastya and Suruchi prayed to her to act as judge. The debate between the two parties lasted for five continuous days. On the fifth day Agastya won the debate; the Vaishnavas took Siva diksha and became disciples of Agastya.

Story of Champaka Devi

Suka asked Veda Vyasa to explain the details of Parasakti, who made her appearance there. Vyasa recounted the story. During Pralaya, nothing existed. Suddenly Nada (sound), which was Brahman, emerged. Parasakti, unborn, beautiful, having a mix of white, red and black colours, and possessing the three attributes - Satva, Rajas and Tamas, the mother of three worlds appeared. Through the power of Maya, she created three children – Brahma for generation, Vishnu for sustenance and Rudra for destruction and put them on to their tasks. This place came to be known as Trikuta, as the three Powers were here together. Trikuta also derives its name from various facts: The Universal Mother blessed from here as the form of three Vedas; in every yuga, she induces *Chaitanya* in the idol here and acts as Trimurti herself.

In olden days there was an Asura named Udumbara, who was the uncle of the famed Asura Nisumbha. When Sumbha and Nisumbha perished in the battle with Devi, Udumbara fled and reached Malayaparvata. He got Mayasura to erect a city with mansions in a cave at the foot of the Malaya mountain. He grew in strength in due course and tortured good people in the night. Many sages took refuge in Durga Devi and worshipped her. They prayed for protection and sang hymns of praise (*See Appendix*):

त्वया जगदिदं विश्वं समये पाल्यते भयात् ।

तया नः पाहि कल्याणि प्रसूः पुत्रानिव स्वयम् ॥

तुभ्यं नमः सर्वजगत्सवित्री वित्रास्य पापान् अमरारिवर्गान् ।

आप्तं जनं पाहि भवानि भद्रे रुद्राणि भद्रे करुणे पुराणि ॥

“This universe is protected by you from fear every time. Please protect us from the Asuras, like a mother would protect her children. O Mother of all worlds, Bhavani, Rudrani, Auspicious, Compassionate, Ancient Devi, please destroy the hordes of Asuras and protect us, good people.” Devi emerged from this idol here in a bewitchingly beautiful form, worshipped by Devatas. She listened to the Munis kindly and assured in a sweet voice that she would exterminate Udumbara and his cohorts. In the battle that followed, Durga swallowed the entire army of chariots, elephants, horses etc. Some soldiers were consumed; some destroyed. The dead Asuras attained to Viraswarga. Asuras, numbering 2500, who were dead and who were devoted to Durga, became ‘Maha Bhutaganas’. Durga made them Kshetrapalas. The city of Udumbara in the cave became a resting place for Siddhas. Durga assured the Munis that she would reside permanently there and grant the prayers of all those who worship her.

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भूतले । तथा तथानुरूपेण नाशयिष्यामि विप्लवम् ॥

“Whenever dharma deteriorates on earth, I shall take suitable form and eliminate the calamity.” Saying so, Durga vanished in the idol.

As Durga Devi blesses here near the Champaka forest, she is known as Champaka Devi. Once Brahma and other Devas came here and worshipped Devi for relief from some difficulties. The glory of this kshetra is beyond the ken of speech. Mere thought of this kshetra brings comfort here and Moksha hereafter.

Origin of Chitra River

Agastya worshipped Durga Devi and spent the night peacefully. The next morning the sage sang hymns of praise of Tamraparni and woke her up.

शिवभक्तिमाये पुण्ये विष्णुभक्तिप्रवाहिनी । ब्रह्मशक्तिरसासि त्वमुत्तिष्ठामृतवाहिनी ॥

अन्नदा वसुदा भूरि पुण्यदा मज्जतां नृणाम् । त्वमेव परमा शक्तिः प्रसीद मलयात्मजे ॥

“O Auspicious Devi with heavy flow of nectar, your flow is devotion to Vishnu; the essence is devotion to Brahma; the fruit is devotion to Siva. O daughter of Malayaraja, you grant food, wealth etc. in plenty to those who bathe in your sacred waters. You are the Supreme Power; please bless.” As Devi Tamraparni got up and started to walk gently, the gems from her golden gem-studded anklets scattered in all directions. Devi’s reflected images were observed in those gems lying on the floor. Devi called out to an image in one of the gems and asked that she should flow nicely in the form of a river for the bath and drink of sage Agastya. The two maids next to her would also turn into rivers and be companions to her. The Devi in the image in the gem turned immediately into a mighty river with the shine of nine gems and with several creatures dotting her flow from the peak of Malayaparvatha. Devas showered flowers and came down and worshipped sage Agastya and named the new river ‘Chitra River’. As the river appeared grand with many colours like a painting, it came to be known as Chitra. Further as it originated on Chitra Purnima day, the name of Chitra was appropriate. As the river was young, it was also called ‘Balanadi’. The two companion rivers were called ‘Sukra’ and ‘Mandini’. In the sacred river, Maharishis and Devatas bathed happily. Siva emerged from the Linga at Trikuta and offered the sacred water to Agastya. Sage Agastya bathed, performed Tarpanams etc. and fed brahmanas.

Kuntala blessed

The next morning, sage Agastya proceeded southwards, accompanied by Lopamudra and Tamraparni, and sages Tumburu and Parvatha. They were in a forest, when they sighted a young and beautiful woman, weeping uncontrollably. When Devi Tamraparni enquired her as to the cause of her sorrow, she narrated her story. She was Kuntala, the daughter of sage Kasyapa and wife of sage Sumedhas. When she was enjoying her life with her noble husband, a Rakshasa killed Sumedhas. When he attempted to kill her and pulled her hairs, he was reduced to ashes. She then lighted the funeral pyre for Sumedhas and wished to ascend the pyre herself, the fire got extinguished. There was Akasavani saying : 'May good befall you.' She was crying, not knowing what to do and now she sought refuge in Devi Tamraparni. As Devi Tamraparni embraced her for affording comfort, Sumedhas got up from the pyre as if he had consumed Amrita. Agastya and Lopamudra were struck with wonder and praised Devi Tamraparni. Sumedhas also worshipped her. The tears of Kuntala flowed in the form of a river called Rodini. (Even today this river known as 'Azhugunni' exists).

Vajrangada redeemed

Agastya and his entourage, proceeding further south, reached Silagartha, where Vajrangada, the son of Varuna, cursed by Brahma, lived in a cave. The background of the curse is as follows.

Varuna married Malathi and begot five sons. They were all valorous and famous; they were honoured by Brahma, Vishnu, Siva and Indra. Vajrangada, the eldest of them, once flew from Varunaloka to Brahmaloaka. On the way he saw Manikantha, the lord of Guhyakas, with a yaksha woman Sthabakavathi

travelling in a vimana to Brahmaloaka. He asked Manikantha to hand over the woman to him, as she was his lady love. Manikantha refused. In the ensuing fight, Vajrangada defeated Manikantha, took away Sthabakavathi and returned to Varunaloka. In Brahmaloaka, on noticing that Manikantha was languid, Brahma enquired of the reason. Brahma later decreed that those who come to Brahmaloaka should be free from attachments, and hence he cursed Vajrangada to lose the ability to travel like Devas. Brahma subsequently informed Varuna that Vajrangada would be rid of the curse, when he would receive the blessings of Devi Tamraparni and Agastya at the Malayaparvatha. After spending a hundred years there, Vajrangada now had the opportunity of having darshan of sage Agastya and worshipping Devi Tamraparni; he got relieved of the curse and returned to his earlier state. Varuna also came and worshipped, and offered Devi Tamraparni three crores of tirthas in her service. Devas, Siddhas and Munis were all very happy; there was shower of flowers from the sky.

Ghatana River

Moving down further, Agastya came to the Asrama of sage Atri in Sivasailam. Sivasailam is the place where Malayaraja had performed penance earlier for a long time along with his wife and Siva had appeared and blessed him; that is how Sivasailam got its name. Atri welcomed Agastya and others, and eulogised the sage for having brought Devi Tamraparni and said that the world had been saved from sin, illness and poverty.

यदम्बुपानतो मर्त्याः चिरं जीवन्त्यरोगिणः । यत्तीर्थाप्लुतदेहस्य मोक्षलक्ष्मी करस्थिता ॥

“Men, who drink the water of Tamraparni, live long, free from disease. For one, who bathes in these waters, Mokshalakshmi is available on hand.” He

sang hymns in praise of Tamraparni: “Obeisance to you; though you have assumed the form of *Tirtha* for purifying the world, Sastras represent you as of subtle form. Your form is threefold, consisting of Ganga, Krishna and Saraswathi.” Devi Tamraparni caused a river to flow for Atri’s use. The river came to be known as ‘*Ghatana*’ as it fulfills (घटयति) all the wishes of those who bathe in and drink its waters; as ‘*Atreyi*’ as the river came about for Atri; as ‘*Sivasailavathi*’ as it emerged from Sivasaila; also as ‘*Tamranuja*’ and ‘*Sailodaka*’. Atri, anasuya and others took holy bath in the river.

Hayagriva Muni

Agastya, accompanied by Atri, Tumburu, Goutama, Narada, Kapila, Angiras, Kanava, Kanada and other sages, Varuna, Aruna and other Devas and Siddhas, reached a pond nearby at the foot of the Malaya mountain. The pond known as ‘*Vyoma*’ looked beautiful like Manasa lake, with nectarine water and having dense trees all around. Narayana had taken the form of a hill called ‘*Jyotirmani*’ in earlier times for protecting this pond. This is the place where Siva had penanced for five thousand years for marrying Parvathi. As he had kept his bow ‘*Pinaka*’ by his side, this pond also came to be known as ‘*Painakasaras*’ and ‘*Kalyanatirtham*’. Another name that accrued to it was ‘*Vishnugarbham*’ as Vishnu had protected the pond by taking the form of a hill. Agastya and others bathed in the tank waters and performed rituals and spent five days in the company of Munis, who welcomed them heartily.

They travelled further south and noticed an Asrama, where Vishnu resided in the form of Hayagriva Muni; a beautiful tank called Pisangila existed there. Hayagriva Muni greeted them and paid glorious tributes to sage Agastya, saying that by fetching Tamraparni, he had rendered Bharatadesa more meritorious than

Swarga. He said: “Siva resides in the head of the Devi; Brahma in heart; Vishnu in forehead; sacred rivers Ganga, Saraswathi, Yamuna and Airavati in the hands; Mandara and Kailasa in waist; Chandra and Surya in eyes; Parvathi in nose; Aswinidevas in ears; Godavari and Kaveri in cheeks; Parabrahmam in navel; Vayu in nostrils; Saraswathi in tongue; Sridevi in chest; Nagas in joints; cows like Kamadhenu in feet; Munis, Ashtavasus and Guhyakas in hair roots. All the tirthas in the world become holy by worshipping her. The four Vedas, mantras and Gayatri are all in her. This southern area has been rendered holier than Kashmir, Kedar, Haridwar and Naimisha by you.”

Agastya and others took bath in Pisangila tank; Hayagriva Muni offered ritual worship to Devi Tamraparni. The guests accepted his hospitality and stayed there for eight days.

Visvakarma's message

At the end of that period the divine architect Visvakarma appeared before Agastya and others, worshipped them and conveyed the message of Mahadeva: “We are happy at the service rendered by Agastya. We wish that on the coming Vaisakha Purnima day, Tamraparni, who is my Power and is auspicious, should turn into sacred water and flow down and join the ocean. We will also go over there at that time.” Visvakarma wished to erect an Asrama for Agastya at that place. Permitted by Hayagriva Muni, Visvakarma put up a wonderful Asrama for Agastya on the peak called Guptisringa in three days. It was a huge structure, having Ambikasthanam, Vishnusthanam, Ganapathisthanam, Sivasthanam, Brahmasthanam, Asthana Mandapam, Munisala, Pakasala (kitchen), Bhojanasala (dining area) and Sivadhyanasalas. Trees of plantain, arecanut,

Punnaga, jackfruit, orange, likucha, Rambha, Kramukha and Patala decorated the exterior of the asrama. There were beautiful gardens dotted with cuckoos and other birds. For Tamradevi, he erected a mansion having gem-studded hall, fort and royal appurtenances. The occasion of Agastya's entry into his asrama was a big celebration. There was shower of flowers from the sky; cool and gentle wind from Malaya mountain blew. Agastya offered worship to Devi Tamraparni and honoured all Devas and Rishis. Agastya and the guests spent eleven days there. Along with Tamraparni, Agastya then went to the cave of Sripuradevi and worshipped her. He then got Tamraparni to flow as a river and merge with the ocean.

Virasena's Vimana

Suka enquired of Bhagavan Vyasa on the story and details of Sripuradevi. Vyasa replied in detail. There is a golden coloured city called Manavathi on the banks of Pushpavathi river to the north of the Himalayas. A king named Virasena ruled from there. He pleased Siva with his penance and obtained boons of being worshipped by all three worlds and a vimana. Once he visited the Pushpavathi river and struck at some fearsome aquatic creatures, called Vajradanta as a group, troubling many of the animals and killed them. As River Pushpavathi felt greatly relieved and happy, she gave her daughter Nadeyi in marriage to the king. Virasena handed his kingdom to his son and took his wife on a trip in his vimana, which saw him going round Mount Meru, then to Himalayas and down to various cities and wonders and further south. The vimana suddenly came to a halt at a particular spot. Virasena was shocked. He heard Akasavani saying that the peak of Malayaparvatha cannot be crossed over even by Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra. He got down from the vimana and saw an asrama there, where sage Sankha lived. Virasena went there with his wife and worshipped the sage. After customary

greetings, the king expressed his surprise at the sudden stoppage of the vimana. The sage explained:

यतः प्रवृत्तिर्जगतां यत्साक्षित्वे विवर्तते । येन विश्वमिदं व्याप्तं यत् प्राप्य निवर्तते ॥
मनो वचः तथा बुद्धिः विषया न स्पृशन्ति यत् । तत् ब्रह्म परमं तेजः परमानन्दनिर्भरम् ॥
हिताय जगतां एकं द्वैधीभावमभूत् पुनः । तदत्र मिथुनीभूय रमते हि परस्परम् ॥
श्रीमत्परशिवाङ्कस्थतरुणीरूपलक्षणम् । महःकाञ्चनकल्याणसौन्दर्यामृतनिर्भरम् ॥
तत्र चन्द्रशैलेन्द्रे ज्योतिर्गृहमहान्तरे । विमले चक्रपर्यङ्के रमते परमात्मना ॥
सैषा परमकल्याणी सेव्यमाना सुरासुरैः । आस्ते विस्तार्य जगतीं वागुरामिव सर्वशः ।
पञ्चकृत्यपरान् देवान् वशमानीय सर्वशः । अत्रास्ते विश्वजननी विश्वरक्षाविनोदिनी ॥

“Parabrahmam is the entity, from where the world evolves, which is the witness for the development of the world, which pervades the entire universe. Those who have attained to Parabrahmam are not reborn in the world. Jivas cannot experience Parabrahmam with mind, speech, intellect, sense organs etc. Though Parabrahmam is unitary, it divides itself into two (male and female) and enjoys. The young, golden-hued and beautiful Devi is seated here on the lap of Paramasiva in the cave called Jyotigriha on the seat of Srichakra. Worshipped by Devas and Asuras, she generates the world like a snare. She has appointed Devatas for the five functions-creation, sustenance, destruction, concealment and blessing, and protects the world in sport.” This is the place where sage Agastya established Devi Tamraparna such that she became a mighty river and merged with the ocean; she blesses all from here. She is worshipped by Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra. Here exist the four Vedas, Puranas, mantras and Yagas. Your vimana could not cross

this place of the Supreme Jyoti. You now bathe in the river Tamraparni, worship Agastya and Lopamudra and then have darshan of Parasakti.

Agastya's Darshan of Devi

In response to king Virasena's further enquiry, sage Sankha continued. Sages Kapila and Narada joined Agastya when he and others were proceeding towards this cave. They bathed in the tanks Isha and Urja and worshipped Surya and Chandra and entered the cave. They saw a tank on the east, surrounded on all sides by gardens of Kadamba and Kalpaka trees, plantain and Ketaki plantations, golden grounds and sands of camphor. Cuckoos sang sweetly. Seven crores of Mahamantras took the forms of bees and birds and made loud ringing sounds. The tank had steps studded with nine gems. The divine water destroyed all sins. This beautiful tank is called Purvamnaya. He then saw on the south the Dakshinamnaya tank surrounded by golden sugarcane trees. He proceeded further to the Paschimamnaya tank in the west, surrounded by golden-hued champaka trees. In all these tanks he performed Achamanam. He then bathed in the Uttaramnaya tank on the east, having Hamsas and other creatures and lined by golden sandalwood trees. He then entered **Sripuram (now known as Azhvar Tirunagari)** and had darshan of Parasakti, seated on the cot of Paramasiva. Agastya burst into a soul-stirring hymn of praise (*See Appendix*): "Oh Devi, you are the row for those who wish to cross the ocean of samsara. You are the light from the gem-studded lamp destroying the darkness of Maya. You are hailed by the wise as the four Vedas and the non-decaying Parabrahmam. You bestow nectar for the advancement of those who worship your feet. You are the light on the path of Mukti. Please bless us." Devi responded very happily: "May your stuti and Tamraparni, whom you have brought, make the entire world happy with my blessings. You live here with your wife Lopamudra for the wellbeing of the

world. May all be happy and prosperous. In the present auspicious ‘Vijaya’ Lagna, Tamraparni should change her form into river and merge with the ocean. May the banks of this river be fertile and prosperous.” Devi embraced Tamraparni and kissed her.

Devi Tamraparni’s marriage and flow as River

Sridevi consecrated Tamraparni by bathing her with sacred waters from golden pitchers on gem-studded seat in Vrishankanagaram. Brahma, Vishnu and other Devas, Rishis and Siddhas also bathed her with waters from the four oceans. Tamraparni wore silken apparel, was decorated with beautiful ornaments and held parrot, Vina, conch and lotus in her hands. The golden-hued radiant Devi was assisted by Manimukta and other maids, who held umbrella, waved chamaras. Devas and Rishis praised her with chanting of Upanishads. Samudraraja arrived there with fanfare. Malayaraja took Sridevi’s permission and gave away his daughter Tamraparni in marriage to Samudraraja. There was extreme merriment allround. Shower of flowers from sky, music from celestial players and dances of Apsaras marked the happy occasion.

Sridevi prompted Tamraparni to flow as river. Instantly there was heavy flow of river Tamraparni with ear-splitting sound as Rishis chanted Vedas. A celestial vimana appeared at that time. With the permission of Sridevi and Vishnu, Agastya and Lopamudra went round the vimana and got into it. The vimana started to fly eastwards. The massive river followed the vimana, broke into the two lakes Isha and Urja near Vrishankanagaram, flowed a little towards south in the dense forest of Guptisringa, reached Chakrasila and proceeded northwards. Followed by huge masses, the river flowed and dropped into Kalambagartha (Kalamba pit). It became Vishnu’s Banatirtha with his blessings.

Banatirtha

Sage Sankha explained at this juncture the story of Banatirtha to king Virasena. When Siva burnt down Tripuras, he had used Earth as chariot, Brahma as charioteer, Meru mountain as bow and Vishnu as arrow. The arrow destroyed the three Asuras and their mobile forts; but the wrath in the arrow did not get extinguished. Hence Siva buried the arrow in a pit in Malayaparvatha. Vishnu resided there as arrow for ten thousand years, heating up the land massively. When the waters of Tamraparni dropped into the pit, there was heavy mist going up owing to the pent up heat; it looked like the hiss of Nagaraja of Patala. As the heat spread in all directions, Devas, Siddhas and others in aerial route started crying in agony.

When Agastya enquired Hayagriva Muni of the reason for the commotion, the Muni explained the reason and said: **“Due to the glory of Sri Hari, this Tirtha will rid one of all sins by merely having darshan; as Narayana resided here as arrow, ‘Bana’, this tirtha will be known as Banatirtha. Those who bathe in Banatirtha will attain Sarupya of Narayana. All sacred tirthas like Prayaga will come here every Amavasya day for purifying themselves”**. When Hayagriva Muni was explaining all this, the arrow left the pit and flew off in the sky, brightening all quarters like Surya. Banatirtha was also called Kalambatirtham and Sitodakam. Agastya and others took bath in Banatirtha and got back into the vimana.

Glory of Tamraparni

Tamraparni flowed powerfully, ascending the hills, descending the slopes, dashing with waves appearing like hands. She looked as if she was dancing and talking. She appeared like a stout woman, with face of lotus flower, eyes of fish,

hands of tides, navel of vortex, white apparel of foam, breasts of Chakravaka birds, tresses of green mass and movement of Hamsa. The flowing waters gave the varying appearances of elephant, serpent, cloud and vimana. Devatas were struck with wonder and worshipped Tamraparni.

Tamraparni filled the Pisangila tank on the west of Hayagriva Muni's asram, flowed further in the middle of Jyotirmani hill and dropped into Painakasaras (Kalyanatirtham) with great noise. After crossing the forest of Malayaparvatha, the river travelled in the Pandya kingdom.

At the starting point in Vrishankanagaram, Devi Tamraparni is seated on a gem-studded, fanciful throne. Dressed in silken apparel, with a crown radiating the cool light of the moon, with face of autumn moon, decorated with gem-studded bangles, armlets, necklaces of pearl and gold and gems, waistband, jingling anklets, and holding in her four hands conch, lotus, Vina and female parrot. Many Yoginis serve her. As the river travels, she enlivens many villages and towns on her banks, distinguished by Vedic chants, festivals, cool breeze and lilting music of the birds. When she finally merges with the ocean, she is seated on the left side of Samudraraja's lap and delights him.

The tirthas in the world do not match even one-sixteenth the glory of Tamraparni.

धर्मद्रवा भगवती ताम्रा मलयनन्दिनी । परापराभृतस्यन्दा तेजिष्ठा कर्मनाशिनी ॥

मुक्तिमुद्रा रुद्रकला कलिकल्मषनाशिनी । नारायणी ब्रह्मनादा मालेयी मङ्गलालया ॥

मरुत्वद्यम्बरवती मणिमाता महोदया । तापघ्नी निष्कलानन्दा त्रयी त्रिपथगात्मिका ॥

चतुर्विंशति नामानि पुण्यान्येतानि भूपते । ये पठन्ति जना भक्त्या तेषां मुक्तिः करे स्थिता ॥

“Mukti is ready at hand for those who chant with devotion the twentyfour names of Devi Tamraparni: Dharmadrava, Bhagavati, Tamra, Malayanandini, Parapara, Amritasyanda, Tejishtha, Karmanasini, Muktimudra, Rudrakala, Kalikalmashanasini, Narayani, Brahmanada, Maleyi, Mangalalaya, Marutvathi, Ambaravathi, Manimatha, Mahodaya, Tapaghni, Nishkala, Nanda, Trayi and Tripathagatmika.”

One should take holy bath at least once in his lifetime in this sacred river. One, who drinks at least a drop of the water of this river, will not have to enter the mother’s womb again. Devatas celebrate her compassion and reside on her banks at many places. There are many kshetras of Siva, Vishnu, Durga, Ganapathi, Bhairava, Kumara, and asramas of great Rishis.

Dandadhara redeemed

Once upon a time in a Kritayuga, Brahma created all the fourteen worlds and became conceited. An asura came and took away all the four Vedas and went to Patala. Brahma became unable to do the work of creation any further in the absence of Vedas and spent a hundred years feeling very sad. He felt: “For one, whose mind, speech and action are not pure (are tainted with arrogance and lack of discrimination), nothing good will ever happen, just as no produce will be generated from salty land. For great souls, who look at all jivas equally and are free from conceit, all great Siddhis (attainments) including the eight celebrated ones like Anima will automatically seek them out. When faced with danger, Vishnu should be worshipped for relief.” Brahma decided thus and sat down in meditation. At that time an ugly, malformed woman emerged suddenly from his face. The woman asked Brahma about what she should do for fulfilling all her wishes. Brahma said that he would materialize a garland from the end of his stick

(Danda); she should perform penance at the spot where the garland enters the ground. The woman Tamasi followed the garland till it halted on the shore of the ocean. She made an asram for herself there and performed severe penance for a hundred years, meditating on Siva. Siva appeared and she sought a boon that would make her attractive for every male in all the three worlds; she should get all objects she desired instantly; she should be youthful and beautiful always. Siva granted the boons. Tamasi became gorgeous with youth and learning. She travelled in the sky and enjoyed many males as she pleased.

Brahma then asked his stick (Danda) to look on earth for a suitable spot for performing penance, not touched by funeral fire. Danda took the form of a handsome brahmachari, looking like Manmatha. In the course of his travels on earth, he happened to cast his eyes on Tamasi, looking like Rati. He fell in love with her and enjoyed her company. When Danda did not return for long, Brahma found that Danda had strayed from his assigned duty. He cursed that Danda should immediately go to Kumbhipaka naraka and that he would not be able to come to Brahmaloaka any longer. He also cursed that the woman Tamasi should turn into a huge tigress and suffer for long from hunger and thirst in the forest, till she comes into contact with Tamraparni river, when she would get purified and attain to her original state.

Brahma now asked his water-pot to go to earth and find a suitable place for penance. When the pot searched on earth and found the appropriate place, it stayed there for twelve years. Brahma came there, honoured the pot and performed great penance there. He set up a beautiful idol of Vishnu and worshipped him with mantras and rituals. He sang hymns of praise (*See Appendix*): “With all external acts of sense organs blocked completely and with

the strength of will, I perceive you, the signifier of the import of Pranava, in my heart, rid of all impurities. I take refuge in you.” Brahma was in penance for a hundred years. He saw the entire world as the visible manifestation of Vishnu. Vishnu appeared and said to Brahma: “I am very pleased with your penance and stotra. This place found by ‘Kalasi’ is holier than even Vaikuntha and Milk Ocean and will be known as ‘Kumbhatavi’. I shall reside here as in Vaikuntham for granting Moksha to living beings here.” Vishnu then went to Patala and brought the Vedas back from the asura after killing him and restored them to Brahma. He then vanished.

Dandadhara came and worshipped Brahma and pleaded for annulling the curse. Brahma said: “Virtuous people come to suffer by associating with wicked persons. Wise persons do not feel miserable on that account. Those, who tolerate and bear with equanimity the pairs of opposites of cold and heat, happiness and misery, alone are wise. River Tamraparni, who purifies the three worlds, will arrive here soon. After bath in that sacred river, you will attain to me back.

There is a place called Soundirakam about 50 kilometres from here, where sage Goutama’s asrama is situated. A Rakshasi called Kumbhinasi, cursed by Goutama, is killing all humans in that forest. You go there and free her from the curse. You worship Siva till Tamraparni arrives there, when we will meet again.”

Saying so, Brahma returned to his Satyaloka.

Tamasi redeemed

Sage Agastya, together with other Rishis, took bath in three designated spots at the place of merger of Tamraparni with the ocean. He performed

Tirthasraaddhas; established an image of the Devi and worshipped her. He prayed:

नमस्ते देवि कल्याणि महापातकनाशिनि ॥

ताम्रपर्णि त्वयि स्नास्ये त्राहि मां भवसागरात् ।

“O Auspicious Devi Tamraparni, you are the destroyer of all sins. I take bath in your waters; please protect me from the ocean of samsara.”

During that time a tigress appeared there, making terrible sound and causing fierce winds and trembling of earth. When she came in front of sage Agastya, he made the sound of ‘Hum’; the tigress flew over a long distance and dropped in Tamraparni, causing heavy upsurge of water, followed by falling of heavy rain, as it were. The tigress drowned and was dead. A young and beautiful woman, well decorated with gem-studded ornaments, appeared at that time in front of the sage. She had a garland of lotuses in her hand and prayed to the sage to arrange a suitable husband for her immediately. Agastya called Sankharaja, the son of Samudraraja and asked him to marry the woman, who was none other than Tamasi. Akasavani also occurred, appreciating their matrimony. Tamasi put the garland on the neck of Sankharaja. They shone like Manmatha and Rati; and like a man with his Vidya (learning). The garland flew into the air and turned into many garlands. Two of them dropped on the necks of the newlywed couple. The others came down on the head of Dandadhara. Narada explained to Sankharaja the background of Tamasi and the garland. Sankharaja and Tamasi established a large town called **Nadipuram (now known as Atrur)** on the southern bank of

Tamraparni and spent ten centuries very happily, worshipping Devi Tamraparni; they finally attained to Brahmaloaka.

Siva gives darshan to Agastya

Along with Hayagriva and other Munis, Agastya worshipped Madhava on the northern bank of Tamraparni, Purushottama in **Sripuram** on the southern bank, Hari in **Kumbharanya (now known as Srivaikuntham)**, Surya in Kasavana, Kali in Sambarakshetra and then proceeded to **Brahmavridhdhapuri (now known as Tirunelveli)** in Venuvana. It is on the west of Tamraparni: Siva with Kanthimathi blesses all from here. There are two subtle rivers on the south and north, called Para and Saivanubhuti. Devas call this town 'Paranubhuti'. As Devi brought Kanchipuram to this place and showed to a devotee called Rudravathi, this place is also called 'Dakshinakanchi'. Siva ruled from here as Pandya king. Parasakti is here practising thirtytwo dharmas. Vishnu worships Siva here. Siva once protected the crops here from heavy deluge of rain by acting as fence himself. This place is therefore also called Salivatipuri. Siva also begs as Mahakankala in the streets for the welfare of devotees. Agastya bathed in Tamraparni here, worshipped her and performed tarpanas for Pitrus etc.

The next morning Varuna came there with Tumburu and others. Amidst thunder of divine musical instruments, Siva appeared in the northern sky along with Parvathi, mounted on the bull. They were beautiful beyond description, decorated with attractive ornaments. They were worshipped by Brahma, Vishnu, Nandi, Bhringi, Ganapathi, Skanda and others. Sacred rivers and mountains were all there. They all bathed in the north-flowing Tamraparni. Siva then entered the kshetra. Agastya burst into a soul-stirring hymn (*See Appendix*): "I bow to the Lord, who appears in emerald green colour in half the body and white like crystal

in the other half; though Advaita (unitary), you appear as dual.” Siva blessed Agastya saying: “You are ourselves; we are you. Just as there is no difference between flower and its fragrance, there is no difference between you and me. Now you go to Soundirakavana, where sage Goutama’s asrama is situated. You worship the Sivalinga there, provide for suitable place for Dandadhara and then proceed to Amalakakshetra. You crush a Rakshasi called Kunda, who is committing atrocities there. You establish Sivalinga there. You then go to Guptisringa and live there in your asrama.” Siva also told Lopamudra to serve her husband and attain glory.

Siva continued to instruct Agastya: **“This Brahmavati kshetra is so sacred that by mere darshan of this holy spot, living beings attain Moksha. The other kshetra called Kshiptapushpakalam (Sindhupoonturai) on the bank of the north-flowing Tamraparni is also very sacred; those who bathe or drink the waters there attain to Moksha without doubt. Bathing in Kshiptapushpavathi and Svarnapushkarini (Potramarai), Archana to Jyotirlinga and darshan of my form, worshipping the Feet of Kanthimathi and Mahavishnu – these are indeed steps for attaining Mukti.** You should come here with Lopamudra every year on Chitra Vishu and Chitra Pournami days and worship me.” Saying so, Siva gave Agastya a gem-studded necklace and crestjewel and embraced him. Lopamudra also received many gems as gifts from Kanthimathi. Agastya took leave of Siva and Parvathi and left the place along with other Rishis after worshipping Vishnu.

Kumbhinasi’s Story

Agastya with his entourage reached sage Gautama’s asrama (Tiruppudaimarudur) in Soundirakavana as directed by Siva. Lopamudra noticed

a huge corpse lying on the east of the asrama and asked Agastya about it. Agastya said: “There was a sage named Ekata; his wife was Satya; they had a daughter called Kumbhinasi. Kumbhinasi was good-natured, knew all dharmas and was obedient to her parents. One day she saw Satananda, the son of Goutama, while playing in a forest. She said to him that they should play husband and wife; perform Aupasanam, Vaisvadevam, Panchayagnam, honouring of guests, having food, sleeping etc. Playing thus, they spent a long time in the forest. Sage Goutama called his son for lunch. When Satananda came, Goutama found him devoid of Brahmic radiance. He found out what had happened. He cursed his son to become goblin; when he would come in contact with Tamraparni waters, he would be freed of the curse and rejoin him. Goutama also cursed Kumbhinasi to become Rakshasi; she would fall down with a huge form on contact with Dandadhara; she would be freed of the curse again on contact with Tamraparni waters. Goutama left along with his wife for Himalayas.

Satananda came now to where Agastya was. Agastya sprinkled Tamraparni water from his water pot. Satananda instantly attained to his former brilliant form. Kumbhinasi, who had been killed by Dandadhara, also attained her former beautiful form on contact with Tamraparni waters. Dandadhara also bathed in Tamraparni and attained his glorious form and resided in that kshetra as protector. Sages Ekata and Goutama arrived there at that time. They praised Agastya’s contribution in getting Tamraparni there. They asked him to reside there and took leave of him and returned to their asramas.

Putarjuneswara’s Darshan to Agastya

Sage Agastya entered Soundiraka forest. He noticed in the hollow of an Arjuna tree a wonderful Sivalinga. He felt that the Linga was like a lamp in the premises

of Upanishads. Agastya bathed in the holy Gautamatirtha on the south of the tree and performed rituals. He also bathed in many sacred tirthas in the vicinity:

Gajendratirtha, which bestowed Moksha on Devendra;

Paisachamochanam, which grants the bather freedom from going to Yamapuri;

Dandapavanam, which grants relief from sins, fulfillment of desires here and Moksha finally;

Triveni, where Ghatana river and Antarvahini (subterranean) Yamuna and Saraswathi merge with Tamraparni, which grants Sivasayujya;

Mandavyatirtha, which grants the ever pure Satyaloka;

Karmatirtha, which destroys the Karmic bonds;

Rakshasimochana, which destroys sins.

Agastya then went round Putarjuneswara and Devi Gomathi and offered ritual worship. He sang a beautiful hymn in praise of Siva (*See Appendix*), referring to his various lilas including the creation, sustenance and destruction of the world. Siva emerged as Ardhanariswara from the Linga and gave darshan to the sage and blessed him. He asked him to win over sages Goutama and Ekata to agree to his departure for Guptasringa and to proceed there as instructed earlier. **Putarjunam is now known as Tiruppudaimarudur.** Agastya left the place in his vimana along with Lopamudra, Devas and Rishis.

Rakshasi killed and Goshtiswara's Darshan to Agastya

As Agastya's vimana entered a terrible dense forest, he saw a Rakshasi with pig face there. Her atrocities so terrified the animals that they took refuge in the sage. Agastya furiously made the sound of 'Hum'; from that sound emerged an exceptionally strong man, armed with a mace. He beat up and killed the Rakshasi in no time. Agastya complimented him and said: "May this huge body of the Rakshasi turn into stone; may you be always here on top of that body and protect this place along with your followers."

Agastya then attempted to make a Linga out of river sand there. He failed despite many attempts. Unable to bear the difficulty, he embraced the Linga and prayed desperately. Siva blessed and the Linga got established properly. Agastya performed Puja and sang Siva's praise (*See Appendix*). He said: "Goshtiswara Siva, you carry out five krityas (activities) for the benefit of the world – creation, sustenance, destruction, concealment and blessing. You also destroy the five great sins of devotees. I should always be chanting the names of Siva; I should have unflinching devotion to Siva at all times in all births." Siva emerged from the Linga in a beautiful form, half in emerald green woman and half in crystal white man, blessed the sage and said that he would permanently reside along with Parvathi in the Linga and bless the devotees, who bathe in the holy river and have darshan of him. He added: **"May this sacred spot be known as Munitirtha. As nectar is dropping on the Linga continuously from the crescent moon on the head, this place will be called Bindusthana. As this place bears the marks of the nails of the Rakshasi with pig face, it will be known as Nakharanya. You should come here every year and offer Puja. You may now proceed to Malayaparvatha." This kshetra is equal in merit to Kashi.**

Agastya visits here every year when Surya is in Simha Rasi and performs Puja. Goshtiswaram is now known by the name of Urkadu.

Agastya then went to Malayaparvatha. He bathed in the holy confluence of rivers Purna and Kumudvathi with Tamraparni, which rids one of even sins like Brahmahatya. Devendra, mounted on his elephant Airavata, arrived there and praised the sage in a beautiful hymn (*See Appendix*): “Nobody could have done greater service to mankind than you. Vedas, mantras and all Tirthas are here; all virtues including truth, non-violence, purity etc. are all here; this place is more glorious than Swarga; all because of you. **Siva, Vishnu, Brahma, Parvathi, Lakshmi and Saraswathi are all present in you. Darshan of you is nothing short of experiencing Brahmananda.** Let my seven clouds shower rains here in this Malayaparvatha at all suitable times. Let there be no famine, misery etc.; let there be fertility and increasing penance. I shall come here and have your darshan every year on Amavasya day in Margasirsha month.” After paying homage to all Rishis, Indra returned to Swarga.

Varuna and his sons established Siva Lingas in that region. Similarly Lingas were also set up and worshipped by Munis Kapila and Parvatha. Agastya bathed in the holy Indratirtha, where Siva had blessed Tamraparni. After spending three days in Hayagriva Muni’s asrama, Agastya reached his own asrama along with his consort Lopamudra to the accompaniment of music and stotras of Gandharvas and other celestials. All Devatas and Rishis took leave of him. Agastya’s gem-studded vimana, with horses, flagstuffs and other decorations entered into Tamraparni river.

Tamraparni worships Siva in Indrakila Kshetra

Agastyakuta was splendid like Brahmaloaka. Devi Tamraparni resided in Vrishanganagara, next to the sage's asrama. One morning, her companion Kumudvathi noticed black spots on the beautiful face of the Devi and gave her a mirror for her to see. Devi proceeded immediately to the sage's asrama. Welcomed with great honour, she asked him about the reason for the appearance of the black spots in her face every day in the morning and disappearance by evening. Agastya replied: "Great sinners, including those who kill brahmanas and cows, covet Guru's wife, drink liquor and are ungrateful, take bath in your waters every day and fly away, purified. Those sins are seen as black spots in your face. For getting rid of this, you perform Siva vrata in the holy Indrakila kshetra." (**Indrakila kshetra is now known as Papavinasam**).

Indrakila kshetra's holiness is linked with the story of Indra obtaining sage Dadhichi's spine for making a weapon to be used for killing Vritrasura. Indra, accompanied by Agni and other Devatas, went to Dadhichi's asrama and conveyed his request. Dadhichi went through great mental churning: "Through karma, living beings attain merit, also reap misery. The ignorant person is subject to delusion caused by the power of Maya; the wise one is not. Devatas are the wisest among created beings. Are they justified in troubling another person for their own personal end? Or, is it due to their compassion to me? In the absence of body, the four Purusharthas – Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha – cannot be pursued. But, of all dharmas, helping others is the greatest, is it not? This body, given to me by Devatas for earning merit, I shall hand over to Devatas and attain to good state." He conveyed his conclusion to Devatas. He sat in yoga; conveyed the five elements in the body into the five basic elements; qualities in basic qualities; Pranavayu to the Amritalaya in Mahapadma in the head. The radiance

left his body through Brahmarandhra (the subtle hole on top of head) and went up to Adityaloka and on to Brahmaloaka. Brahma and Devas praised Dadhichi's act of sacrifice.

Vishnu and other Devas asked Visvakarma to prepare Vajrayudha out of the bones of Dadhichi's body. Visvakarma prayed to Bhagavan and went near the sage's body. A blob of high brilliance emerged from the body and spoke to Visvakarma in thundering voice, "Never keep the body on ground. No evil person shall cast his eye on this body. Make Vajrayudha out of the bones" and disappeared in the sky. Visvakarma prepared Vajrayudha; the earth could not bear its weight and started to tremble like a ship in cyclone. There was pitiable uproar of all creatures. Indra and Vishnu then decided to drive nails of the balance of the bones of the sage's body in sixteen mountains – Mahendra, Malaya, Vindhya, Himalaya, Gandhamadana, Kalinda, Manikuta, Kalanjana, Konachala, Chandrakuta, Manthara, Sahya, Saratvati, Ambara, Sankhakuta and Mahameru. As nails were driven by Indra in these places, they are known as 'Indrakila' kshetras. They are the places of dharma, where sins are destroyed. Even small penance here yields the eight great Siddhis. Indra received Vajrayudha from Visvakarma and killed Vritrasura using that weapon. Peace was restored in all worlds.

Agastya explained Siva vrata in detail to Devi Tamraparni: **"This vrata should be started when Surya enters Dhanur Rasi in Margasirsha month and completed when Surya goes to Makara Rasi in Thaishya month. After performing Acharya Puja, prepare a suitable place by cleaning with cowdung in riverbank, Malaya mountain, cowpen or temple. Prepare design ('Kolam') of lotus with five colours and invoke Siva and Parvathi**

therein. Do Avahanam etc. with Sri Rudra mantras. On its south side, in a design called Swasti, set up a pot, draped with thread and filled with foodgrains, invoke Bhudevi and do Puja. Perform Archana of Siva with good bilva patras and Akshatas, and Parvathi with lotus flowers, chanting the following eight pairs of names:

Siva: Soma- Isana; Sankara- Hara; Girisa- Bhima; Santa- Sarva; Gangadhara- Sasidhara; Kamada- Kamadahana; Suli- Ugra; Sambhu- Bharga.

Parvathi: Girija- Arya; Gowri- Amba; Sambhavi- Durga; Maya- Haimavathi; Panchami- Kali; Katyayani- Ila; Annada- Satya; Aruna- Sri.

Perform Dhupa, Dipa, Naivedya, Tambula, Nirajana etc. and give Arghya thrice with mantras:

नमोऽस्तु नीलग्रीवाय गौर्यै देव्यै नमो नमः ॥ अर्घ्यं दास्यामि युवयोः प्रीतौ मे भवतस्सदा ।

Chant Stotras containing essence of Vedanta and pray for forgiveness of mistakes committed. Give the pot with grains, together with dakshina, to the Guru with mantra:

गुरो त्वमसि विप्रेन्द्र प्रतिगृह्य मदर्पितम् ॥ अभीप्सितं फलं देहि पापं नाशय मे गुरो ।

Do Udyapanam with prayer for coming again.

Perform Puja like this every day for one month, consuming only Havis as food. Once Surya has entered Makara Rasi, after performing the Puja as before, give cow with calf, of spotted dark, white or tawny colour, with Dakshina as Dana to the Guru with mantra. After feeding brahmanas, eat food as Parana.

If one performs puja thus in one day, three or five days, he will be freed of all sins and receives blessings of Siva and Parvathi for all times. He is blessed with long life and wealth etc.”

Devi Tamraparni performed the Siva Puja vrata accordingly at Indrakila, taking Diksha with Agastya himself as Guru. Once the Puja was completed with devotion by her for five days, Siva appeared from the ground as Linga of Jyoti (Light) and Bliss. Devas showered flowers. There was celestial music. Stotras were heard everywhere.

पापनाश महादेव हरिचूडामणे विभो ॥ प्रसीद भगवन् पापात् परित्राहि जगत्त्रयम् ।

Devi Tamraparni burst into a beautiful Stotra (*See Appendix*). Out of the Linga, Siva appeared with enchanting form with three eyes, Ganga on the head, blue mark of poison on the throat and holding Trisula and other weapons. He spoke to Tamraparni: **“We are very pleased. All your wishes will be fulfilled by our grace. One, who bathes in your waters or meditates on your feet, will have all his sins, even crores of them, destroyed like bales of cotton in fire. All tirthas in this Brahmanda come to you every year for washing away the sins accumulated by them.”** Tamraparni prayed that this kshetra should be known as ‘Papavinasa’ henceforth and that one, who bathes in her waters in Margasirsha month and has Siva’s darshan, should not have rebirth. Siva granted her wishes and disappeared in the Linga. Tamraparni completed Guru puja and returned to her abode along with sage Agastya.

River Tamraparni starts from the cave in Guptisringa in five streams. Of them, three streams named Varuna, Kamala and Amritadhara flow westward, turn to south and join the ocean. Mahanadi Tamraparni travels eastward and merges

with the ocean. On both banks of the sacred river are many Tirthas and temples. Devas, Rishis, Siddhas, Siva, Vishnu, Brahma and others reside in these places and worship Devi Tamraparni. Even worms and insects, trees and grass, have attained Mukti here; what to speak of humans? **Of the many Tirthas, the following are regarded in Puranas as the most important:**

Salatirtham, Dipatirtham, Gajendravarada temple, Putarjunapuram, Mahadurgalayam, Manigrivapuram, Somarajavimokshanam, Vyasasramam, Romasatirtham, Mahajyotirvanam, Chayatirtham, four Mantratirtha and Agnivayutirthas, Brahmavridhapuram, Vishnuvanam, Vaikuntham, Sripuram, Somaranyasangamam. Veda Vyasa recounted a story to illustrate the huge benefits of mere bath in these sacred waters.

Story of Eagle and Doves

Once upon a time there was a hunter called Kantaka in Pandya country in Simsuparanya in Kritayuga. One day he threw the snare, hid himself in the cavity of a tree and started singing in the voice of birds. Two pairs of male and female doves were caught in the snare. Kantaka put them in a basket and, sealing it nicely, he handed it to his son and went away. As the boy busied himself in hunting, an eagle suddenly swooped down, picked up the basket and flew up in the air very fast. At that time a storm started. Trees were uprooted; many birds died. The eagle also lost its balance and dropped in the river Tamraparni owing to merit accumulated in previous lives. When the storm died away, a brahmana lad noticed the basket floating in the river. He picked it up and opened it. The doves flew away immediately. They sat on a tree and wept bitterly. The eagle came to the riverbank and then it approached the place where the birds had gathered. Initially the birds were frightened. But the eagle embraced the birds

kindly, and being also embraced by them in turn, the eagle too started to weep. The brahmana lad, who was surprised at this, asked the eagle and the doves to explain. The eagle recounted a story of their past.

Ratnakara was the capital of Kamboja country in the past. It was very prosperous. Vikrantakesari of the Solar dynasty ruled the kingdom from there. He was a learned, virtuous and just king. Two children named Vaijayanta and Jayanta were born to him and his wife Kalika. They grew up into good natured and learned youth. They were married to Anagamanjari and Indupatakini, princesses of Magadha country. They were enjoying good married lives. After some time, Vikrantakesari died and the two princes ruled the kingdom well. Unfortunately in course of time the elder brother developed lust for his younger brother's wife; and the younger brother for his elder's wife. A Rishikumara named Yugandhara came to the city. He had mastered Sastras; but he lived his life as a Kapalika, entertaining people by use of Siddhis like attraction, repulsion etc. The two princes approached him independently and pleaded with him for help in their lustful acts. They got 'Ghutikas' from him and using them, they spent a pleasurable time in the company of the women they lusted. They had a Purohita named Uddalaka, who, though well versed in Sastras, acquiesced in the evil deeds of the princes. The princes became conceited in course of time and indulged in violence to people. They lost their kingdom under attack from enemies. Having lost everything, they moved to Sahyadri with their wives and Uddalaka.

One day they saw Yugandhara arriving there by chance. Vaijayanta fell at his feet and prayed for help. Yugandhara spoke to them about the greatness of Tamraparni and Malayaparvata, and the fertility, the beauty and peace of the

area, and said that they should all move there. He took them all there. They all lived in a cave in the mountain. One day Yugandhara advised them that they should invoke Yakshini in a woman in the night; the Yakshini would give them a gold coin. The gold coin was procured accordingly. Now Yugandhara entered into an arrangement with a hunter in the forest. He gave him the gold coin; the hunter would exchange the coin every day with a grocer for grocery, fruits etc. The hunter agreed. This process went on for three years. The grocer, who was the hunter chieftain, was putting the gold coins in a jar and keeping the jar in a safe place at home. One night he opened the jar and found it was completely empty. He could not suspect any of his family members. The next day he said to the hunter that he wished to meet the Siddha, who materialized a gold coin every day. Accompanied by a large group of armed hunters, the chieftain went to the place where Yugandhara stayed. He asked him for a gift of a crore of gold coins. Yugandhara promised to give him in gradual steps; but the chieftain wanted all gold coins instantly. When Yugandhara was unable to meet his request, the chieftain understood that he was a sorcerer and that was why the coins had disappeared from the jar at his home. He killed Yugandhara, the Purohita Uddalaka, the two royal princes and their wives. All of them went to Yamapuri. Owing to their having bathed in and drunk the waters of Tamraparni, though they witnessed the miseries in narakas for many years, they were never tortured themselves. They were then born on earth as animals; but again owing to the extraordinary merit of bath in Tamraparni, they had past memory intact even as animals.

The eagle was Yugandhara. The doves were the princes and their wives. The brahmana lad was Uddalka the Purohita. The lad questioned the eagle about the happenings in Yama's assembly, and specially as to how he was born as a

brahmana lad, when he had been equally sinful. The eagle continued to recount the events. All of them, killed by the hunter chieftain, were subjected to extreme forms of punishment inflicted by Yamabhatas. But even after continuous efforts by the Yamakinkaras, the culprits did not feel any pain or misery, nor even hunger or thirst. Even as the servants of Yama were shocked at this unprecedented development, Akasavani said in thundering voice that as those persons had partaken of the waters of the sacred Tamraparni, they could not be punished. On hearing this, Yama, overcome by fear, burst into a hymn of praise of Devi Tamraparni (*See Appendix*). He recalled her greatness and said that creatures are freed from fear even by mere listening to her name. Yama chanted a beautiful Tamraparni Kavacham (*See Appendix*) and prayed for her blessings. The honoured members of Yama's assembly pleaded to Yama to tell them about Tamraparni's greatness. Yama recapitulated a story.

Thief redeemed

There was a Muni named Hariswami in Kritayuga. He entrusted his wife to his son's care and, taking up Vanaprasthasrama, went for penance on the north bank of Tamraparni. Once he obtained a special Urvaruka seed from Varuna in Yagnavalkya's asrama. He planted the seed in his garden; the creeper gave him a nectarine fruit every day. A brahmana, versed in Vedas, named Bhanuchitta visited him once, stayed in his asrama, had bath in Tamraparni, performed rituals and partook of the Urvaruka fruit. When he was leaving the asrama the next morning, he saw the fruit in the Urvaruka creeper and plucked it and went home. Hariswami looked for the fruit for his lunch during noon and not finding it, cursed that the thief should become a jackal. The curse worked instantly. Bhanuchitta, turned into jackal, rushed to Hariswami, fell at his feet and prayed for mercy. Hariswami came to know now only that he had cursed Bhanuchitta.

He consoled him and asked him to stay near his asrama in a cave, and develop bhakti in Siva and Iswari. He added that when Surya enters Dhanur Rasi in Margasirsha month, he should take bath in Tamraparni and get rid of the curse.

During that time the Pandya king, who found many robbers were active in his kingdom, came to that forest with his army, caught hold of the robbers, took them to the city and killed them by putting over spikes. The jackal smelt the flesh of the corpses, which were being feasted upon by eagles and other birds. It flew there and saw the terrible scene. It suddenly remembered that it chanced to be a jackal by curse, but actually a brahmana versed in Vedas. It thought: “I should raise myself instead of falling further down. I have been Purohita for these thieves all along and have nurtured myself on their money. I shall get them to good state and rid myself of that debt.” The jackal picked up the bones of the corpses lying on the ground and immersed them in the sacred Tamraparni. It also had a bath in the river and returned to the cave. At that very moment the robbers, who were suffering in narakas, emerged with handsome forms like Manmatha and radiance of Surya and ascended vimanas. They came in vimanas to the place where the jackal was and purified him also and went to Swarga.

Eagle and Doves attain to Swarga

Yama then called the Yamabhatas and said: “These six persons (two princes, their wives, Kapalika and Purohita) have been purified by partaking of the holy waters of Tamraparni. However, to rid them of the evil karmas, take them through many terrible narakas.” The six culprits were accordingly taken round thousands of horrible narakas including Rourava, Kumbhipaka etc., where sinners were subjected to the worst tortures. They spent eightyfour thousand years and were then put up before Yama. Yama pronounced: “This Uddalaka

was a brahmana, well versed in Vedas and chanted Gayatri mantra. Though he fell into bad company and sinned, he should now be born as a brahmana again. This Kapalika was a great sinner and cheated everyone; let him become eagle. Let the princes and their wives become doves and live in forest. When they will bathe in Tamraparni, they will be purified and will gain memory of their past birth. When all the six of them meet each other, they will bathe in Tamraparni and attain to Swarga. Let this brahmana, full of Gnana, please Devas, Rishis and Pirus by performing many types of yagnas and attain to Sivaloka.”

Having recounted the long story, the eagle, accompanied by the four doves, fell at the feet of the brahmana lad and sought his help. The lad was greatly surprised. He took them all to the river; they all took bath chanting Vedic mantras. The birds attained handsome forms like Manmatha and radiance of Surya. They went round the brahmana lad and ascended vimanas and went to Swarga. The brahmana lad, having got the memory of his past life, developed high dispassion and started on severe penance after taking permission of his parents. He lived on water, dry leaves and air. At the close of three years of penance, Sridevi appeared in a beautiful, decorated form before him, lighting up all directions with her brilliance. She was surrounded by Munis. She asked the lad to seek boon. The brahmachari sang a beautiful hymn of praise of Devi Tamraparni (*See Appendix*) and prayed for constant bhakti and meditation of her, life on her riverbanks and her complete refuge. He fell at her feet. Devi raised him with her four hands and granted his wishes with a nectarine smile. She said: “May all sixtyfour vidyas come to you abundantly. May Brahma, Vishnu, Siva and Devas be ever beneficent to you. May Lakshmi shower all her blessings on you. You live here for a thousand years with sons and grandsons, performing many yagnas. Worship Siva and me always. May all be well.” Siddhas and Devas called him ‘Ugratapas’

(person of severe penance). He went home, fell at the feet of his parents, learnt Vedas from sage Bharadwaja, married Salavathi, daughter of sage Medhatithi and performed many yagnas like Vajapeya etc. He performed Tirthayatra starting from Malayaparvatha upto the ocean every year along with his wife, children and disciples. Taking bath thrice every day in the sacred Tamraparni, he spent five thousand three hundred years. Finally he performed penance in Malayaparvatha and attained to the state of Brahma.

Salatirtham

At king Virasena's prayer, sage Sankha started to expatiate on the greatness of the twenty most sacred tirthas on the banks of Tamraparni.

There was a king named Vasumana, grandson of Yayati, in Dvapara yuga; he conquered the entire earth and amassed wealth. Once the celebrated sage Gargacharya came; the king extended a very warm welcome, performed Puja and very humbly offered to fulfill his wishes. Gargacharya smiled with sarcasm. Vasumana prayed to know the reason for his displeasure. Garga replied: **"I do not find anything detestable in you. In the universe there is always some defect everywhere just as blemish in Chandra; difference in colour in Ocean of Milk; inertness in Himavan, father of Gouri; crookedness in bow; harshness in Surya; defect in dusk time; hardness in Chintamani; animalism in Kamadhenu. But I do not find any defect in you like in milk. However I found a defect in your kingdom. During your conquest in wars, the earth has been run over severely by your army of horses, elephants and chariots. Many temples were damaged; yagnasalas destroyed; even gardens and villages of own people spoiled. Many people have undergone untold**

suffering. As a result your lifespan has reduced. Twelve days from this day, you will meet death. For atoning your sins perform Prayschitta. I am on my way to Mathura for performing yagna. You proceed to the nearby Malayaparvatha and pray to sage Agastya, who will protect you.”

Accordingly king Vasumana met Agastya and prayed for his grace. Agastya said: “There is this great river Tamraparni, also known as Ghrutamala, Madhudrava, Dharmadrava, Parushni and Suparna. Vishnu, Siva, Amba, mantras, Vedas and Devas all reside here. By drinking a drop of this water, even sin like killing of brahmana is extinguished.” As advised, the king took bath in the sacred river under the tutelage of Agastya. The waters in the river turned black for a long stretch all around. Vasumana enquired of Agastya for the reason. Agastya explained that he had been freed of his sins. At the same time the effect of vitiation in the water vanished and it became shining like a gem. There was shower of flowers; Akasavani blessed Vasumana with long life and all auspiciousness. The king stayed for three days there, taking regular bath in the river. He performed Tirthayatra all along the riverbank right upto the river’s merger with ocean. After spending a few months this way, the king planned to perform Asvamedhayagna on the banks of river Ganga, which, he thought, is the greatest river; japa, homa and dana performed there bestows enormous fruit. He proceeded there, erected a large gem-studded hall for the yagna and performed the rituals with great devotion. As the flames in the Agnikundas were up brilliantly, river Ganga flowed violently all of a sudden, breaching the banks, and inundated and destroyed the yagnasala. His wife, the brahmanas and all materials were washed away. The king’s sorrow knew no bounds. He performed severe penance to please Siva. In a month Siva appeared before him. The king prayed for the boon of Yagnasala in its earlier radiant state with the splendour of

flaming Agni, and restoration of his wife and brahmanas. Siva said: “You obtained long life by the grace of Devi Tamraparni, whose waters you spoiled with your sins that emerged when you bathed. You then thought of another Devata, thus disgracing the Mother, like one wishes for other mantras, leaving Gayatri aside. You insulted Tamraparni, where Ganga, Yamuna, Godavari and other sacred waters are present. You go and worship her again. Through her grace you will get back your Agnisala together with your wife, brahmanas and other parts.” Saying so, Siva disappeared. Overcome by fear, the king rushed back to Kasyapasrama on the bank of Tamraparni and performed very severe penance. Facing west, he stood on the toe of the big finger, with arms raised and with no food, meditating on the beautiful Devi in his heart. After a month, the Devi appeared before him. Vasumana prayed fervently for pardon of his indiscretion and for grant of unflinching devotion at her feet. The river appeared to have different colours. Ganga of milk-white colour, Yamuna of Indranila, Saraswathi of Padmaraga, Godavari of white, Narmada of conch-white, Kaveri of camphor-white colours, and other rivers came up from the banks in the form of beautiful, well decorated Devis. Ganga said to the king: “This Devi Tamraparni is my Pranasakti. There is no difference between us. Tamraparni is known in Veda as Rudraprabha.” The king noticed Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswathi, Godavari, Narmada, Kaveri and other sacred rivers entering her chest. Brahma, Vishnu and other Devas witnessed this. There was shower of flowers from the sky to the accompaniment of celestial music. Devi granted all his prayers and said: “Let this tirtha be known as Salatirtham. Those who bathe here and drink the waters shall enjoy all comforts here and Mukti hereafter. The king got back the Agnisala along with his wife and brahmanas and all materials on the banks of Tamraparni and performed the yagna as he wished. He was praised by Devas, Siddhas and Rishis. He returned to his capital.

Kasyapatirtham

During Savarnika Manvantara in Kritayuga, Aditi, the wife of Prajapati Kasyapa, once asked her consort as to the means by which her sons, the Devas, would be victorious in battles. Kasyapa advised her to go and pray at the sacred Tamraparni, who would grant all her wishes. Accordingly she came there and performed severe penance for long. Asuras created many obstacles. The omniscient Devi Tamraparni made short work of all of them. She created a brilliant ring of fire around Aditi, who was in deep meditation, unaware of external surroundings. Asuras developed fear on seeing that and went back. Tamraparni appeared before Aditi in beautiful form with radiance of a thousand Suryas, red like Sindur, four arms, three eyes, enchantingly decorated and surrounded by a hundred *Tirthakanyas*. Aditi sang a hymn of praise of Devi (See Appendix). Devi Tamraparni granted her wish and said that Devas would henceforth be invincible and free from fear of death. The Devi also gave out Phalasruti for the Stotra chanted by Aditi. Those who chant the Stotra at three Sandhyas in a day shall reap the benefit of Asvamedha yaga. Devas and Rishis came there and praised the Devi. Kasyapa also came and worshipped her. At that time thousands of radiances developed in the sky from the ring of fire around Aditi. These radiances entered the bodies of Devas, who became very strong and resplendent. Devas worshipped their parents, Kasyapa and Aditi and returned to their abodes. Kasyapa established Sivalinga there and worshipped along with Aditi. Kasyapa performed Angirasa yaga along with Aditi with great devotion on the banks of Tamraparni. He established Sivalinga there and worshipped; three hundred years passed thus like a minute. Siva appeared from the Linga together with Parvathi with great radiance, beautifully decorated, mounted on the bull, surrounded by Devas and Siddhas. Kasyapa sang a very devoted hymn

of praise (*See Appendix*). Siva was highly pleased. He said: “I shall reside here permanently along with Parvathi for the benefit of devotees. Those who bathe in this Kasyapatirtham in Tamraparni and have my darshan will be relieved of the bondage of samsara. One, who reads the Stotra chanted now by you in front of me during dawn and dusk, shall attain the four Purusharthas. In the ensuing Rathantara Kalpa, you will appear on earth as Kapila Muni with my *Amsa* and propound the philosophy of Sankhya yoga. Kashi has been brought by me here for granting people Mukti.” Saying so, Siva entered into the Linga again with Parvathi.

Siva Sarma, the son of the great sage Sankrita, developed great dispassion and went on extensive pilgrimage. He came to the Malayaparvatha region, bathed in Tamraparni river and felt very happy to be in the midst of brahmanas chanting all Vedas and performing many Homas, and fertile lands and beautiful gardens. He had darshan of sage Agastya and Lopamudra, and Mahadeva in Indrakila kshetra. Moving about in that region, he happened to reach Kasyapa’s asrama. Kasyapa welcomed him very warmly and asked him to bathe in Kasyapatirtham, perform tarpanas to Devas, Rishis and Pitrus, then bathe in Dipatirtham and Adityakundam and worship Kasyapeswara and Dahakeswara. Siva Sarma did accordingly and returned to Kasyapa’s asrama. He performed Soutramani yaga there under the guidance of Kasyapa. He expressed great surprise at the large number of people, well decorated, moving about in vimanas, like Gandharvas, and women, beautiful and jovially singing sweetly. He prayed to Kasyapa to tell him about this incredible phenomenon. Kasyapa told him about the glory of Dipikatirtham and Dahakeswara giving darshan in that kshetra. Kasyapa thereafter went to Brahmaloaka along with sage Narada, who came and conveyed

Brahma's desire to meet him. Sivasarma went to Gangadwar after spending a long time in the Tamraparni region.

Dipikatirtham

In the north of Pandya country, on the fertile banks of river Venuvati, there was an \square grahara (street occupied by brahmana households) called Kalamba. A large number of brahmanas, well versed in Vedas, wealthy and devoted to Siva and performing yagas, lived there. One of them, Pramoda by name, went through a very tough period; he lost his wife and children – son and daughter, and grandchildren too. He realized that all calamities were due to his fault of having cheated his brother in division of property after his father's death. He decided to hand over his wealth to his brother and proceed on pilgrimage. Despite being dissuaded by his brother, he did so. After travelling a krosa (3 km), he came across a Sanyasi, who advised him against undertaking the arduous journey to Kashi. He guided him instead to go to sage Agastya and said: “स्नाता मुनिना येन विधिना दक्षिणा हरित् ॥

यदङ्घ्रिपङ्गजासक्तसौभाग्यसुदृढामही । दुर्वारदर्पो विन्ध्योऽपि येन बद्ध मनोरथः ॥

निःशेषाब्धिजलं येन पाणौ चुलुकितं पुरा । निरामयमिदं येन कृतं वातापिवरिणा ॥

गावो विप्राश्च मन्त्राश्च क्रतुः धर्मश्च पालिताः । तं याहि शरणं शीघ्रं स ते श्रेयो विधास्यति ॥“

”Go and take refuge in that great sage Agastya, who has brought and bathed in Tamraparni river to South; whose lotus feet have rendered the earth firmly auspicious; who humbled the highly conceited Vindhya mountain; who drank the complete waters of the ocean in palm of his hand; who has rendered the earth and the ocean free of trouble by killing the Asura Vatapi; by whose effort cows, Vedic brahmanas, mantras, yagas and

dharma have been protected. He will bless you with spiritual progress.” Saying so, he taught the supreme mantra of Agastya to him. (This mantra was revealed by Kasyapa to Sivasarma at the latter’s insistent prayer. It is given in ‘*Stotras*’ in *Appendix*.) Pramoda thanked him with reverence and proceeded to Tamraparni. He bathed in Kasyapatirtha and had darshan of Kasyapeswara. He had with him a bamboo stick filled with gems, with ends closed with iron covers. He entrusted it to the care of a brahmana there and went to Malayaparvatha to have darshan of Agastya. For three days and nights he meditated constantly on the sage, chanting the mantra taught by the Sanyasi. Agastya then appeared before him, highly pleased and offered to fulfill all his wishes. Pramoda prayed for constant devotion at the sage’s feet and also for going to Kashi for darshan. The sage handed a lamp (Dipika) and made him take a dip in Painakasaras. Pramoda felt transported instantly to Kashi; he bathed in Manikarnika ghat and worshipped Dhundhi Vinayaka, Dandapani, Visvesvara, Annapurna and Kalabhairava. He completed the Nityayatra there. He saw a young couple on the banks of Manikarnika. They enquired of him as to what he was looking for. He said that being old, he was worried about the long journey ahead for going South. The couple made him take a dip in the river again with Dipika in hand. Pramoda came out in Tamraparni river as a young handsome man of sixteen years of age, spreading radiance in all directions, to the utter surprise of onlookers. He told them of his trip to Kashi. Pramoda then went to where he had left his bamboo stick with his friend and asked him to return it. The deceitful brahmana said he knew nothing of the stick. Pramoda explained the story surrounding the change in his appearance; but the brahmana would not budge. Pramoda enlightened him on the miserable fate he would be subject to, if he cheated a friend; but it produced no fear in him. The brahmana said he would swear in the presence of Siva the next day; all were agreed. In the evening he

prayed to Siva with appropriate mantras that Siva should be present in the water pot when he would swear the next day. Siva granted the prayer and entered the water pot. Siva also consoled Pramoda in a dream that night and said that he would get his wealth at the foot of the tamarind tree there. The next morning the brahmana swore falsely in the Siva temple; but Pramoda asked him to come to the tamarind tree and swear. The brahmana did accordingly. At that very moment large serpents emerged from the tree and reduced not just the tree to ashes, but also the brahmana cheat. A great Siva Linga emerged from the fire. There was shower of flowers from the sky to the accompaniment of celestial music and dance. Devas and Siddhas prayed. Pramoda burst into a soulful hymn of praise of Siva (*See Appendix*). Siva was highly pleased and blessed him with unflinching devotion and announced that he would reside there for the benefit of all devotees. The tirtha would be known as Dipikatirtham. On being prompted to ask for a boon, Pramoda showed his generosity. He prayed to Siva to bring the dead brahmana back to life. The brahmana rose alive and married and was happy. Pramoda got the gem-filled bamboo stick back and lived the rest of his life there. Siva blessed everyone there as Dahakeswara.

Gajendra Moksham

There was a Pandya king named Indradyumna. He was endowed with the extraordinary grace of Saraswathi and Lakshmi; he was also Manmatha incarnate. Dharma was on all four legs in his kingdom. (The four legs of Dharma are: Truth, Ahimsa, Purity and Danam.) His enemies had to flee to the ocean and forest. He performed many Aswamedha yagas, Vajapeya and Rajasuya yagas. He spent twelve thousand years observing all tenets of dharma. He developed dispassion towards mundane objects. He anointed his elder son Manivarna as king and proceeded on pilgrimage. He worshipped Tirthas on both the banks of

Tamraparni. One day he was performing elaborate Puja to Vishnu, when sage Agastya, surrounded by disciples and radiating brilliant shine, arrived. Rajapurohita said to Agastya very reverentially that the king, who was performing Puja, would be at his service in a minute. Agastya did not pay heed to what he said. He entered the Puja room. Indradyumna did not get up for fear of break in the Puja. Agastya became enraged. He cursed: "In order to bless you I came here all the way, crossing forests. Disrespecting me, who am tired of the long journey, you continue to be seated. Hence I curse you to become a wild elephant." Indradyumna completed the Puja in a minute, wept and fell at Agastya's feet. He said: "A child catches hold of his mother, even when she is angry. This sin has been committed by me unknowingly. Kindly pardon me. I am aware that past karmas haunt a person and result in unexpected happenings. In our family all have been your worshippers. It is unfortunate that I have been castigated. Save me; save me." Agastya became pleased and blessed him with unflinching devotion to Hari. He added that Hari would soon free him of the curse, and vanished.

Indradyumna became a huge and strong elephant. He was soon the head of a large herd of male and female elephants. Taking bath in sacred tirthas and worshipping Hari, he spent five hundred years like five yugas. There was then a long period of famine, which drove these elephants to the neighbouring country. One day, he collected a lot of lotus flowers over the whole day and in a very tired condition, he bathed in the holy Tamraparni river. A crocodile caught hold of him. He fought and freed himself and rushed to the shore; but the strong crocodile pulled him back into the river. The fight between them lasted twelve days. Thoroughly exhausted, Gajendra prayed to Hari with deep devotion for protection. Vishnu, who was lying on the bed of Sesha in the Milk Ocean, being

served by Lakshmi, got up and rushed instantly even without wearing his footwear and came on his mount Garuda to the spot where Gajendra was, crying ‘Fear not’. He sent his Chakra rushing to kill the crocodile. Gajendra, overcome by great surprise, had darshan of Vishnu, who had the radiant Kaustubha in his chest and Sankha, Chakra, Gada and Padma in his four hands. He worshipped him with the lotus in his hand, chanting ‘Namo Narayanaya’. Vishnu embraced him kindly and said to him to ask for boon. The wise and dispassionate Gajendra prayed for release from the unending and distressing cycle of births and deaths. Bhagavan granted him Moksha and added:

“अत्र मज्जन्ति ये मर्त्याः तीर्थे त्वन्मोक्षदायिनि । तेषां दास्यामि निर्वाणपदवीं नात्र संशयः ॥

चन्द्रे मत्तारसहिते सिंहेयुषि पूषणि । स्नात्वात्र मां ये पश्यन्ति ये शृण्वन्त्यावयोः कथाम् ॥

तेषां दास्यामि सौभाग्यं संपदो नात्र संशयः । अत्रैव निवसन् नित्यमहं क्षीरार्णवे यथा ॥

भक्तानां संप्रदास्यामि सत्यमेव मनोरथान् ।“

“I shall grant Moksha to all those who take bath in this tirtha, which has bestowed Moksha on you. I shall reside here always like I do in Milk Ocean. I shall grant all good fortune and all wealth to those, who bathe here on the day when Chandra is in my star Sravana, and Surya is in Simha Rasi, and have my darshan; no doubt. I shall truly confer fulfillment of all desires on devotees.” As Vishnu pronounced these blessings, Indradyumna emerged brilliantly from the head of the elephant and entered the radiant chest of Hari. There was shower of flowers from the sky, as Siddhas and Devas including Brahma and Rudra chanted Stotras. A Yaksha also emerged from the crocodile and, freed from the curse of Brahma, he worshipped Vishnu

and went to his abode. Vishnu took his residence at the Tirtha of Tamraparni and blesses devotees to this day.

Durgatirtham

During Swayambhuva Manvantara, in Kritayuga, there was a king named Agnivarṇa in Kanchipuram. He was a wise king, handsome like Manmatha. Once a young Vaisya landed along with a beautiful young woman in the home of an aged and wise Vaisya named Srikara in that city. He introduced himself as Dhenudatta from the city of Chandi and the accompanying woman was his sister. After his parents died, he brought up his sister like a father would, and gave her in marriage to his cousin, the son of his father's sister. After some time the intelligent cousin proposed that he would go abroad and gain a lot of wealth and come back in six months, thus fulfilling the duty of Vaisya to earn riches. As the expected time of return of her husband has crossed, the young woman had abandoned food and sleep. Hence Dhenudatta would now go abroad, look for his cousin and get him back. In the meantime, he wished to let his sister live with the aged Vaisyas in Kanchi, as he expected insecurity for her during his absence from the lusty people in his own city. He praised the old Vaisya couple, saying that they were like his own parents. The aged Vaisya expressed great happiness and said that being childless, they had now been blessed with a son and a daughter. With Agni as witness, he agreed to the proposal of Dhenudatta.

After spending a few days with the aged Vaisya couple, Dhenudatta took leave of them and went abroad after reiterating his request to them to take good care of his beloved sister. He prayed to Devi intently for the safety of himself and his sister. After some time the spies of the king of Kanchi happened to look at the young Vaisya woman by chance and were struck with wonder at her other-

worldly beauty. They immediately informed the king and advised that he should get the woman to the palace as his own companion. The king was overcome with lust; he immediately went to the aged Vaisya's home, caught hold of the young woman and brought her by force to the palace. He tried to pacify her. But the young woman, overcome with untold shock and misery, dropped dead. The king wept very grievously. He mounted her on a funeral pyre of sandalwood. Suddenly a very strong goblin descended from the sky, drove away the royal servants, picked up the body of the dead woman and went up and disappeared. The aged Vaisya couple were miserable with the thought of what reply they could give to Dhenudatta when he would return. They fell into the burning pyre and lost their lives. At that time Dhenudatta returned to the city along with his cousin and, hearing of the disaster, rushed to the cremation ground. They both also dropped into the burning pyre and were killed.

The sin of Strihatti (killing of woman) followed the king, wherever he went, taunting frighteningly. The king went to sage Kanva, his Guru and, falling at his feet, prayed for redemption. The sage offered Ahuti in Agni. A huge goblin emerged from the fire, carrying a stone idol of Durga Devi. The goblin said to the sage: "Let this king carry this idol and perform pilgrimage. As long as he holds this idol in his hands, Strihatti will not bother him. At the tirtha where the idol gets dissolved, his sin will go away." The sage blessed the king and handed him the idol. King Agnivarna proceeded on pilgrimage and bathed in sacred rivers of Ganga, Yamuna, Sarayu, Saravathi, Phalguni, Goutami, Nanda, Kapila, Godavari, Tungabhadra, Sona, Indumathi, Kaveri, Ghanakantara, Kampa and Vegavati. At last he reached Tamraparni. He took bath in the waters east of Gajendramoksha kshetra and west of Somatirtha. As he took a dip, chanting prayers of Tamraparni, the Durga idol in his hands got dissolved. It was a

wonder. The king found his form to be brilliant; the Pisacha of Strihatti had run away already. King Agnivarna shed tears of relief and joy. Sage Vamadeva, who was there, enquired of the king as to what had happened. The king explained to him with great humility the sin he had committed, the rounds of pilgrimage he had undertaken all over Bharatadesa and the way he got relief now in Tamraparni. Sage Vamadeva replied: **“There is no wonder in this. Even those who had committed the sin of Brahmahatti get freed of their sins here. This is the Durgatirtha, where Adi Parasakti Durga bathed and refreshed herself after killing a number of Asuras like Mahishasura in battles. She is Kamadhenu; she abides here always. You worship her.”** The king did accordingly. He performed great yagas. He sang a soulful Stotra of Devi (*See Appendix*). Durga Devi appeared before the king. She was extremely beautiful, highly decorated, with four arms, holding Sankha, Chakra, Gada and Mudra of fearlessness. She said to the king to ask for boons. King Agnivarna said: “You have appeared before this sinner; this is nothing but your compassion. Please grant me eternal bhakti towards you. I also wish to see my dear ones, who lost their lives because of me. My third prayer is that you should abide here permanently for blessing the devotees who bathe here.” Durga was greatly pleased and granted all his prayers. She asked him to reside in Kanchi and spend many years in deep devotion of Devi. He would be granted Moksha thereafter. Durga planted her Sakti (lance) weapon on the ground on the riverbank and disappeared. From that spot the dead Vaisya woman emerged first, followed by her husband, her brother Dhenudatta and the aged Vaisya couple. King Agnivarna consoled all of them and returned to Kanchi after offering grateful worship to Devi Tamraparni. At Kanchi the Vaisya couples also came and spent a good time, protected by the king. On the sacred banks of Tamraparni Devi

Durga is present even today; at her instruction, crores of tirthas, who joined her there, are blessing the devotees.

Bhairavatirtham

In Savarnika Manvantara, there was a son of Kubera, called Manigriva, who was virtuous and had earned the grace of Siva, and friendship of Ganapathi and Subrahmanya. He once went to the dense forest at the foot of Dhara mountain, accompanied by friends, and was carried away by the natural beauty of that area, marked by the spring season, blossomed flowers, joyous birds and animals etc. He noticed a lovely tank, plated with gold and studded with gems. He bathed in the cool waters of the tank and felt refreshed. As he was moving around in the surrounding region, he spotted Lilavathi, the daughter of Chitrasena, the king of Gandharvas. One of her companions, who was plucking flowers in the garden there, happened to cast her eyes on Manigriva. Carried away by his handsomeness, she fell in love with him instantly. She rushed to him and said: “I am Chitrlekha, the daughter of Kumbhanada, king of Gandharvas. I am a good friend of Lilavati. Please accept me. If not, I shall lay down my life without doubt.” Manigriva said:

बाल्ये पितृवशा नारी प्रौढा भर्तृवशे स्मृता ।

पुत्राधीना हि वार्धक्ये न स्त्री स्वातन्त्र्यमर्हति ॥

“A woman is under the control of her father during childhood; her husband during youth; her son during old age. A woman is never to be independent. If your father consents, it will be my pleasure.” Chitrlekha was extremely happy; she asked Manigriva to stay there itself and rushed to Amaravathi. Kumbhanada was highly pleased with the proposal. Accompanied

by Kubera and other Yakshas and Gandharvas, he came to the garden with his daughter Chitralekha. He arranged for the marriage at that very place immediately. Manigriva started to perform the Homas. Kumbhanada got his daughter decked up and was about to perform Kanyadanam. Suddenly Lilavathi came rushing in. She asked Manigriva to marry her in addition to Chitralekha, saying that she was madly in love with him, and she would not be able to live without him and that she was equal to him in lineage, qualities, conduct, education and wealth. Manigriva quickly and flatly refused, saying that she had been engaged to be wedded to Puranjaya, the son of Guhyaka, the Yaksha chieftain and that both she and himself would be subject to ridicule and censure, if he were to accept her proposal. Lilavathi was overcome by rage and said she would curse him if he went ahead with the marriage with Chitralekha without marrying herself in addition. When Manigriva persisted in censuring her for her blatant attempt at sinning, she instantly pronounced the curse that would make Manigriva and Chitralekha ugly in form, with all divine enjoyments and Tirthas rendered out of bounds. Manigriva too uttered a similar curse to Lilavathi. Both of them lost all charm and became ugly immediately. They did not know how the curse would come to an end. At that time Ganapathi appeared and consoled Manigriva saying that grief betakes one in accordance with his karma. He advised Manigriva to proceed to Tamraparni and bathe in the sacred river, which is the very form of Devi Parvathi; drinking a drop of its waters grants the person Moksha. He told him to take 'Anugna' (permission) of Bhairava and bathe meditating on Bhairava and Ganapathi, and thus he would be rid of the curse. The women would also be similarly freed from the curse, he added. Ganapathi then lifted them on his tusk and dropped them gently on the banks of Tamraparni river and vanished.

Manigriva performed severe penance on the banks of Tamraparni with no food and with all sense organs under full control, as instructed by Ganapathi. After twentyfive days, Siva appeared in front of him in the form of Bhairava. Manigriva sang a beautiful hymn of praise (*See Appendix*), saying that Siva is the very form of Vedas and Agamas, and is the Light driving away the darkness of disease, grief, fear, pain and delusion. He shed tears, fell at the feet of Siva and prayed for protection from the ocean of Samsara. Siva raised him very kindly and asked him to bathe in Tamraparni along with the women and assured that he would enjoy all pleasures and that all Devas including Brahma and Vishnu would bless him. Manigriva, along with the women, accordingly took bath, praying to Devi Tamraparni and meditating on Ganapathi. At that instant, Ganapathi appeared in front of him, followed by Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, Indra and other Devas. Kubera also bathed and asked Manigriva to marry both women as blessed by the Gods and for the pleasure of all relatives. He added: “May this place be known famously as **Kalyanabhavanam** in view of your marriage here. This Tirtha will be known as **Bhairavatirtha** in view of Bhairava’s presence. This town will be known as **Kamapuram**, as I shall be pleased to grant all the wishes of those who bathe here.” With Brihaspati as Purohita, the marriage of Manigriva with Lilavathi and Chitralekha was celebrated in the immediate presence of Ganapathi. From that day onwards, Ganapathi, together with Kalabhirava, adorns the Tirtha, blessing all devotees with long life, prosperity and Siva bhakti.

Somatirtham

Cursed by Daksha Prajapati, Chandra suffered from severe disease of consumption. He took refuge under sage Bharadwaja, who took pity on Chandra and initiated him into a specially powerful mantra. Chandra performed severe

penance in the Himalayas, meditating on the feet of Guru in his head, chanting the mantra internally and establishing Bhagavan in the heart. After three years of penance, Devi Ganga appeared in front of him, prompted by Siva. She directed Chandra to proceed to Tamraparni, where Siva, Ganga and other divinities would be arriving soon, and take holy bath in the river, with the blessing of Silada and regain good health. Chandra reached sage Silada's ashram in the southern bank of river Tamraparni. Silada welcomed him warmly and enquired the cause of his weakness. Chandra recounted the happenings and pleaded for Silada's blessing. Silada said: **“Those who follow Siva's order will never face difficulties. My wife Sambaravathi, though cursed by my mother to be childless, gave birth to Nandikesa by bathing in this sacred river. Nandikesa conquered death and attained to the state of the mount of Siva, difficult of attainment even for Brahma and other Devas. Eight great Nagas bathed here earlier and attained friendship of Garuda.** Hence you also bathe here in these sacred waters with your wives and fulfill all your wishes with the blessings of Siva. Tomorrow is the holy day of Ratha Saptami, when Surya changes his course northward. You bathe here tomorrow along with us.”

Chandra accordingly took bath the next day along with his twentyseven wives (stars), praying devotedly to Devi Tamraparni. Siva appeared with Parvathi, accompanied by Brahma, Vishnu and Devas. **Siva embraced Chandra and showered him with blessings: “You are the greatest of the brilliantly shining Devas. As you have penanced and got rid of your troubles, may your brilliance, strength, intellect, fame, mastery, knowledge, Supreme Experience all shine forth unobstructed. You are the lord of herbs and foodgrains, the Soma of Soma drinkers, the source of the offerings of Havya to Devas and Kavya to Pitrus. By mere meditation on you, calamities of poison, disease etc. are warded off. May your form grow and diminish in**

the two fortnights; during the two phases, let Devas and Pitrus drink your Kalas (Amrita). Let Ganga and other sacred rivers be ever present here; I shall also be present here for blessing the devotees who bathe here.” Chandra established **Someswara** Linga there and worshipped the Linga under the guidance of Silada. After obtaining his blessings, he repaired to his realm along with his wives. The tirtha came to be known as **Somatirtham**.

Nadambujatirtham

Bhagavan Vyasa completed the task of dividing and teaching Vedas to chosen disciples; similarly he also composed Itihasas and eighteen Puranas and taught them to Suta Pouranika and others. He considered that he had accomplished the most urgent requirements before the advent of Kaliyuga. Thinking of what next to be done, he ascended the golden, Meru Parvata and reached the city of Brahma. He saw Brahma seated on the throne of Satya, surrounded by Vedas, the elements etc. in assumed forms, Rishis, Siddhas, Devas, Gandharvas and others. When Vyasa entered the assembly, everyone became extremely happy and uttered loud expressions of welcome. Brahma and Saraswathi extended kind hospitality. Vyasa then said: “By your grace Sastras of Gnana and Vignana have all been composed by me. I am born in a celebrated lineage. I am in the asrama of Brahmacharya; all Vedas were learnt by me. All Vedas point to performance of Karmas, which would grant Swarga; but once the merit is exhausted, one will have to go down to earth. I wish to know as to how one can get freed from the web of karmas and attain to Supreme Bliss. Please protect me; I am immersed in the ocean of grief. I am overwhelmed by fear like an elephant at the onset of forest fire.” Brahma replied: “Hari is the prime giver of Gnana and Moksha. You should therefore take refuge in Vishnu.” Vyasa then enquired as to where Hari can be worshipped for obtaining his grace. Brahma expressed great joy at

Vyasa's devotion and said: "There are many kshetras for worship of Hari; however forty of them are considered very important. Ten of them are outside Bharatavarsha and are only places of pleasure. They are: Harivraja, Merusringa (peak of Meru mountain), Mainaka. Ocean of Milk, Ketumala, Nagachuda, Indragola, Brihadvana, Saibya and Pranavaketa. Then there are twenty kshetras where Hari presents himself with Rajasa quality and where he grants eight great Siddhis. They are Karmasthanas: Dwaraka, Mathura, Haridvar, Vrishachala, Syanandura, Seshasaila, Kumbhaghonam, Raivatam, Sankhana, Bhoganagara, Naimisham, Chakramokshanam, Gajaranyam, Saketam, Vajrakosam, Khagalayam, Bhagandam, Achchatirtham, Havirdhanam and Vamanam. Then there are ten Gnanakshetras on earth: Avimuktam (Kashi), Jagannatham (Puri), Srirangam, Kamalapuram, Naranarayanakshetram (Badarikasrama), Varaham, Sethubandhanam (Dhanushkoti), Brahmanabham, Sahyamalakam and Nadambujam. In these kshetras Hari is with Satva quality. He grants Gnana and Moksha quickly in these kshetras. In all the ten Gnanakshetras except the last mentioned, viz. Nadambujam, there are dangers of not attaining the desired goal owing to many uncertainties and obstacles. But in Nadambujam (now known as Cheranmadevi), Vishnu teaches Gnana with kindness like a mother would feed breast milk to the newborn baby. I therefore advise you to proceed there quickly, live the life of a Sanyasi and chant the Ashtakshara mantra of Vishnu (Om Namoh Narayanaya) continuously." Vyasa thereupon prayed to Brahma to enlighten him on the location and the significance of Nadambuja kshetra.

Brahma replied: "In ancient times, when I was charged with the task of creation at the beginning of a cycle, I performed severe penance for a

thousand years to please Vishnu. Then I saw a luminescence of a crore of Suns. I praised the Light with fear. Then there was a burst of sound like thunder. That was the Taraka mantra, Pranava, Omkara, the seed of all creation. I then saw a Lotus of gold, eight petalled, of the form of eight Letters, in the middle of that Light. From that Lotus emerged a Swan with wings of golden and white colours, of the form of Truth. The Swan spoke to me asking me to go ahead with the task of creation. Bhagavan Vishnu then clearly said: “You should keep your mind focused on me always; I shall grant you the Supreme State.” He then showed me a Lotus of Nadabrahman and added: “This is my Supreme abode, where I live constantly. This has within itself the entire creation from Brahma to the grass. Those who worship me here will attain to the supreme state. Even when all created beings vanish, I shall remain here. Even if I were to leave Lakshmi or Bhudevi, I shall not abandon my devotees and this abode of mine. My gross form is this Lotus and my subtle form is the internal golden Light. May this kshetra be known as Nadambujam. Now you proceed with creation with my grace and worship me constantly.” Vishnu then vanished. I have been following the instruction of Vishnu. I was able to perform the task of creation and I feel happy. Now I cannot teach you that Vidya. You proceed to that kshetra, the abode of Light, known as Nadambujam, on the south of the Vindhya, east of Malaya mountains, where Vedas in form, Siddhas and Rishis assemble and worship the Lord. There the great river Tamraparni merges with the ocean. Many Rishis have become Jivanmuktas by worshipping Hari with devotion there and attaining Tatvagnana; they are moving around there. Even great sinners attain to Gnana there by worshipping Hari. So you too proceed and worship Vishnu there; you will cross over Vishnu Maya, the great power, so difficult to cross.”

Vyasa then worshipped Brahma and took leave of him and came down to Himalayas. There he saw a group of young women, having serious injuries on their bodies and full of misery. On enquiry, they told Vyasa that they were the sacred Rivers - Ganga, Yamuna, Narmada, Godavari, Kaveri and others. They added: “Many are the sinners who bathe in our waters, drop all their sins and get purified and proceed to meritorious realms. Their sins have affected our forms badly. We are now proceeding to the sacred kshetra of Vishnu, Nadambujam, to purify ourselves. That kshetra is so meritorious that mere darshan grants humans Bhukti (enjoyments here) and Mukti.” Vyasa was highly surprised. He said: “All the eighteen Puranas sing the praise of you Rivers - Ganga, Yamuna etc. Where is that Tirtha to which you wish to go for purifying yourselves?” Ganga replied: “At the beginning of creation Brahma created Adharma first, followed by Dharma. Asuras picked up Adharma and were very happy. Devas took up Dharma and became conceited. Then Dharma slipped out of their hands and fell at the feet of Hari. Devas prayed to Vishnu and asked for Dharma. Vishnu then divided Dharma from his feet into four parts. He gave Satya (Truth) in the face of Devas; Kratu (Yaga) in their hands; Mantra in their tongue; Tirtha in their body parts. He asked the four of them to remove the sins of Jivas. Satya and his three companions then asked Vishnu as to how they would purify themselves. Vishnu smiled and said: **“You come to my kshetra Nadambujam every year and get purified by my grace. I reside there in the form of Tirtha. Tamraparni worships me there. Devas always serve at my feet there. Those, who bathe there in Margasirsha month and during Vyatipata at dawn, attain to Mukti without doubt. Whatever is chanted, offered as Homa, Dana and other acts of merit reap fruit crore of times in comparison with other places.”** Satya and others have accordingly been purifying themselves every year. We are also proceeding there every year for purification.”

Vyasa accompanied Ganga and the other River Devis to Nadambujam. When he saw from a distance the mass of Light, the very form of Vishnu and Pranava, Vyasa was overwhelmed with devotion. He asked Visvakarma to bring an image of Vishnu. He established the image with mantras in auspicious time and worshipped as ordained in Sastras. There was shower of flowers and music of divine instruments from the sky. Vyasa set up asram called Sarada Peetham on the west of the Vishnu shrine and penanced for a long time. He took holy bath in the Tirtha and worshipped Vishnu in the Tirtha and the image. On seeing all Tirthas in the Brahmanda coming there for self-purification, he uttered the Stotra in praise of the Nadambuja Tirtha of Tamraparni:

नमोऽस्तु तीर्थराजाय हरिपादाब्जभूतये । त्वदम्भसाहमात्मानं क्षालयामि प्रसीद मे ॥

महामङ्गलदे मातः मलयाद्रिसमुद्भवे । दातुमर्हसि मे तीर्थ मज्जनात् मलिनापहम् ॥

माया मलयजा पुण्या ताम्रा मुक्ताफलप्रसूः । गौरी मरुद्वधा गङ्गा शिवचूडा शिवोद्भवा ॥

सर्वतीर्थेडिता सत्या सर्वपापप्रणाशिनी । ज्ञानप्रदीपिका नन्दा हरिसायुज्यदायिनी ॥

षोडशैतानि नामानि ताम्राया मुनिपुङ्गवः । नित्यं स्नात्वा महातीर्थे देवर्षीनभिपूज्य च ॥

पूजयामास मन्त्रेण महापुरुषविद्यया ।

Vyasa spent a hundred years in the Tirtha in this manner. One day he completed bath and worship and sang a Stotra in praise of Vishnu (*See Appendix*). Vishnu appeared and told him to ask for a boon. Vyasa said: “I am tired of travelling back and forth in various births. I am miserable due to the web of karma like an elephant caught in slush. Kindly grant me your twin feet and protect me from the

shoreless ocean of samsara.” Vishnu showed him Gnanamudra and asked him to show the Mudra to devotees who come to this Tirtha. He added: “You will attain to Mukti at the time of Pralaya” and vanished. Vyasa resides in the Tirtha even today, worshipping Vishnu with devotion.

Romasatirtham

Once sage Romasa, accompanied by his disciples, came down from Brahmaloaka to Meru mountain and entered the beautiful garden named Gandhavathi of Vayu Bhagavan. Many were the golden plantain trees and lotuses, trees studded with gems, and lakes and tanks in that captivating garden. Romasa sat under a mango tree on the banks of a tank of honey. Yogis came to him and discussed divine stories. Then suddenly a golden coloured bird with wings of yellow and red appeared rendering the sky brilliant with its shine. He called his friends and soon all of them assembled. They asked him as to where he had been and why his body is dirty and weak. The bird recounted an interesting story: “There is Tamraparni river in the South, which grants Moksha to those who bathe in her sacred waters. I saw a wonder enacting right in front of my eyes. A terrible looking Rakshasi woman happened to contact a drop of the sacred river water from the flapping of wings of a bird. And lo! The Rakshasi turned instantly into a beautiful woman and left in a Vimana in the sky. Let us all go there. I wish to attain to the Supreme State by bathing in the sacred river.”

Romasa heard the above conversation, went near the bird and said: “From your appearance and speech, I conclude that you are a venerable sage. Tell me how you became a bird. Also tell me where you saw the sacred river and who that Rakshasi was.” The bird said: “There was a brahmana called Saradvan in the lineage of Vaisvanara. He had seven sons, of whom I am one. We were all in

Gurukulam in sage Goutama's Asram. We used to protect five lakhs of cows of the asram while grazing in grasslands. A hundred years passed. Then there was a very severe famine. No water, no food; all living beings started to die. In order to sustain our lives, we had no option but to bring dead animals, perform Sraadha with the meat and eat the balance meat. When we died, Yama consulted Chitrugupta and others. Finally he decreed: "You, who are well-versed in Vedas and Sastras, performed the despicable act of consuming cow's meat; however you performed Sraadha. You have to go to animal births seven times. Owing to your Pitru puja, you will remember the past even in those animal births. You will be born twice as Chakravaka birds, four times as deer and lastly as Sarnga bird. Then, with contact with sage Romasa and bathing in sacred waters, you will attain to Supreme State. Now that I have met you, my redemption is not far; I am grateful to you."

The bird continued: "There was a Pandya king named Prasadachandra; he was learned, virtuous, just, wealthy and munificent. He went round the whole earth, collected a lot of wealth from chieftains and reached Manalur. Manidhwaja, the king of Nagas, met him there and recounted his story of misery. An asura called Dambhaka did not like to celebrate the marriage of his son with the daughter of another asura, Udhotaka and during the marriage, he attacked and defeated all Nagas. Prasadachandra immediately set out for Patalaloka and reached the city of Gangamukhi. He waged a war with the asuras and defeated them squarely. He established Manidhwaja as the undisputed Naga king. In gratitude Manidhwaja offered his daughter Seshaguna in marriage to Prasadachandra. The king brought her to his capital; the marriage was organized. During the festivities, the girl disappeared just during Kanyadanam. Manidhwaja then brought his second daughter to be given in marriage to the king. She too disappeared; the same

development repeated with the third and fourth daughters also. Manidhwaja was overcome with untold grief. Sage Narada arrived at that time. He narrated the following story.”

“There was a sage called Sumathi, whose wife Gandulaka was very greedy. Once when the child of Maharishi Kuruvinda came to their house, she grabbed all the jewels on his body, pushed the child in a pit and killed him. Kuruvinda and his wife searched everywhere including forest areas for the child. Not finding him anywhere, they prayed to Surya. Surya apprised the sage of the truth. The sage immediately cursed the woman Gandulaka to turn into a hideous looking, man-eating Rakshasi. Gandulaka thereupon became a Rakshasi and lives on the southern bank of Tamraparni, devouring all beings. It was she who had used her Maya and hidden from view the daughters of Manidhwaja during the marriage. Narada now asked Prasadachandra to go and eliminate the Rakshasi for the good of the world. The Pandya king proceeded to the bank of Tamraparni and killed the Rakshasi. When the Rakshasi dropped dead in the waters of the sacred river, crying and emitting blood, a mass of light emerged from her head. A beautiful woman emerged from that mass of light and ascended the Vimana and went to Brahmaloaka, worshipped by Devas and Siddhas. Prasadachandra returned to Manalur, married all the daughters of the Naga king Manidhwaja. He is there now as a Rajarishi, shining with fame and wealth. O sage Romasa, kindly protect us from sins and guide us on virtuous path.”

Romasa and other sages, accompanied by the birds, reached Tamraparni soon. The birds bathed in the sacred waters, attained divine forms and, permitted by Romasa, they ascended Vimana and went to Brahmaloaka. Romasa established Sivalinga on the east of Vyasa’s asrama on the southern bank of Tamraparni and

worshipped. He also set up Narayana's image nearby and offered worship to both divinities three times every day. He performed severe penance for thirty thousand years and attained to the Supreme State. He continues to live there even now. The tirtha where he lives came to be known as **Romasatirtha**; sage Mrikandu bathed here and attained the Lord.

Dourvasatirtham

Once when sage Durvasa reached the assembly of Brahma in Brahmaloka, he found that Rishis and Devas were worshipping Brahma; Sounaka and others were reading Puranas; some were chanting Vedas and Upanishads; some were discussing Dharmas and Mantrasastra; some were talking about Brahnavignanam. Durvasa chanted Sama Veda, but in very faulty notes of intonation. It was intolerable; but everyone kept quiet due to fear of Durvasa's possible curse. Saraswathi, who was waving the chowrie for Brahma, laughed. Durvasa cursed Saraswathi to go to earth as human being. Brahma consoled her saying that she would be on earth for sixtyfour years, propagating Sastras as per the path of Vedas and then come back to Brahmaloka. Brahma then chided Durvasa for getting angry and losing the strength of Tapas and asked him to proceed for Tirthayatra on earth for three years. Durvasa came down to earth and visited many kshetras. When he was in Kalahasti, having spent a year in penance there, Siva appeared before him and expressed happiness with his Tapas and asked him to go to Tamraparni, where the river (Punyadrava - giver of pearls) joins the ocean. He directed Durvasa to bathe there and establish a Sivalinga and worship; he handed him the Linga. Durvasa reached Romasatirtha and spent three days with sage Romasa. On Kritika day in Kartika month, he took holy bath in Tamraparni and prayed (*See Appendix* for his Stotra). There was shower of flowers from sky. A mass of flowers also appeared in the flowing waters. Siva

appeared with Parvathi on the mount of Nandi. He blessed Durvasa and added: “Those, who chant the Stotra on Tamraparni sung by you and bathe here, shall obtain the four Purusharthas with my grace.” Devi Tamraparni also gave him darshan and blessed him and said that the Tirtha would be known as **Dourvasatirtha**. Durvasa then established the Siva Linga there and worshipped him with great devotion for a hundred years. He continues to live there even now.

Chayatirtham

Once a sage named Kandulaka, master of Brahmagnana, performed severe penance near Vindhya mountains on the bank of a river. A woman named Duralapa, daughter of a Vidyadhara, served him from time to time. At the end of a thousand years, the sage asked her about her identity and said that he was highly pleased with her and told her to ask for a boon. She replied: “I am the wife of Kumudvan, the king of Vidyadharas. We were happily spending our time. Once we happened to be sporting in Malaya mountains. Then a Rakshasa called Kripida killed my husband, remembering earlier enmity and also lost his life in the fight. When I was about to follow my husband in the pyre, Akasavani was heard telling me to serve you. I have been serving you accordingly. Please grant me a son, equal in merit to you.” Sage Kandulaka replied: “There is in your womb a son, the best among knowers of Brahman. There is no doubt. You may go home.” Duralapa went home. After some time she worshipped Siva in the Himalayas and then proceeded to Malaya mountains. There she gave birth to a female baby. She was shocked at how the word of the Rishi did not come true. She left the baby in the woods and went away. Bhudevi took pity on the baby and fed her breast milk. The baby instantly grew into a ten year old girl. Bhudevi blessed her and left. Rishis and Siddhas named her Pravalamanjari as she was

found in thicket of sprouts. After three years, Devi Parvathi appeared and asked her to proceed to Kunda forest on the northern bank of Tamraparni and penance for a thousand years at the spot where Bali had established Siva Linga earlier. By doing so, Siva would bless her with male form. Asked for further explanation, Parvathi clarified that she was indeed a male baby in the womb when the Rishi had said so; but Duralapa, her mother had entered Sthanukanana unknowingly, on return from the Himalayas. In Sthanukanana there was a curse of Siva that whoever male person enters, be he even in womb, would turn into female.

Pravalamanjari did as instructed. She bathed in Tamraparni and penanced for a thousand years. One day suddenly a terrible looking and massive Rakshasa came and fell at her feet and asked for protection. Asked to explain, he said: “In earlier birth I was Kusaketu, the son of Koushitaka, an erudite brahmana. I studied all Vedas and Sastras. When my father prepared for my marriage, I expressed my wish to go to the king and ask for a lot of wealth based on my scholarship. I did accordingly. The king named Sridhara bestowed on me huge gold and jewels. I was returning home, carrying the riches. I was in the Vindhya, when I sat under a tree on the bank of a tank, very tired and thirsty. A girl came and expressed insatiable love for me. I also felt attracted to her and enjoyed her company, roaming around in the forest. I forgot all of my Vedas and karmas. The riches were spent in due course. The end came. I was pushed into twentyone Narakas. I then became a Brahmarakshasa. I was in a forest on the south of Mahendra mountain. Tormented by hunger and thirst and exposed to the cruel elements, I spent over eightyfour thousand years. Suddenly by some favourable turn of destiny I got back my memory of previous birth. I am now in front of you. I see you like my mother. Please protect me.” Pravalamanjari took pity on him and said: “Here is the sacred Tamraparni river. Siva Linga has been established here

long ago. I have heard from Devi Parvathi that one who looks at his image in the waters here gets all his sins destroyed.” She made him bathe in the sacred waters along with her. He prostrated to Siva. Then a mass of light emerged from his head. He turned into a Deva, handsome like a crore of Manmathas. All devas including Viishnu arrived and praised Siva. There was shower of flowers and much wonderment. Siva emerged along with Parvathi from the Linga and touched Pravalamanjari. Instantly she turned into a very handsome sixteen year old male Deva. He sang a hymn of praise of Siva. Siva blessed him and said: **“You will be a Gandharva known as Haha, as the Devas assembled here expressed surprise saying Haha at your turning into a male. Your companion will be a Gandharva known as Huhu. You will be worshipped by all. You will attain my Sayujyam at the end of the cycle. Those who bathe in this tirtha, known as Chayatirtham, and worship me here, will attain me.”** Saying so, Siva disappeared. The two Gandharvas ascended to their realm in a Vimana.

Jyotirvana Mahatmyam

Parvathi was sporting with Siva in a golden hall in Kailasa one day. Pleased with the Tapas of the king of Pandyas, Devi pleaded with Siva to bless him suitably. Siva immediately acceded and suggested that Devi be born as the Pandya king’s daughter and that Siva would come and marry her later. Devi was born as the king’s daughter and was named Tatataka. She had a unique feature of three breasts. Finding that she was endowed with great qualities, conduct and auspiciousness, the king entrusted the kingdom to her rule, retired to the forest, penanced severely and attained Siva Sayujyam. Tatataka was a great ruler. She conquered all rulers on earth and also the great Lokapalakas including Indra, Varuna et al. She heard a divine voice from the sky that when she meets a certain

man, her third breast would disappear and that that man would be her husband. When Tatataka went to Kailasam, she found that her third breast disappeared. It was clear that Siva was her husband. Siva came to Madurai and married her. Siva assumed the name of Sundara Pandya. They had a son, who was none other than Subrahmanya; he was noted for strength, intellect and auspiciousness. He was master of Vedas and Sastras and served his parents with great humility. He obtained with the prowess of his austerity a wonderful Sivalinga, established it in **Jyotirvana** as requested by sage Sanaka and worshipped the Sivalinga there. Jyotirvana became famous because of the Linga. Many were the wonders that occurred there owing to the power of the Linga. A great mass of light of Brahman emerged there and Siva showed it to Indra. King Nanda, who suffered from lunacy, got rid of the disease there. Gowri emerged from the waters there and the Tirtha came to be known as **Gowritirtham**.

Ugrasrivaladhi's Valour

Siva and Tatataka got five sons, all masters of Vidyas and brilliant like Surya, Chandra and Agni. The eldest was Ugrasrivaladhi, who was known as the eliminator of Krouncha (Avatara of Subrahmanya). The second son Vajradharma was known to equal Nandi in glory. Soudasa, the third son, was celebrated as Maanibhadra, the lord of Pramathaganas. Next was Kumbhaketu, who came to be called Agni. The last son Satadhama was celebrated as Chandra. All the sons were known for valour and mastery. In due course Sundara Pandya made the eldest son Yuvaraja and gave him charge of the south of Sumeru. Similarly, the second son was made in charge of west, the third north, and the fourth east. The area known as Satasringa on the south of Kailasa was glowing with gold and valuable gems, many gardens and towns. There the town of Koutuka was beautiful and prosperous, with three nectarine rivers dotting the

terrain. Humans lived for ten thousand years there. Satadhama, the last son was given charge of this place.

Srivaladhi, the eldest son, was at Manalurpuram, engaged in royal duties. Sage Narada one day met him and, praising his virtues and abilities, apprised him of the dangerous strength acquired by Kundodara, an Asura, grandson of Tarakasura, by pleasing Siva with penance. Narada pleaded with him to protect the worlds from the Asura. At that time, Matali, the charioteer of Indra, came from the sky with the golden chariot and conveyed Indra's prayer to Srivaladhi to come and fight the Asura. Srivaladhi ascended the chariot. After crossing several regions, he reached a place called Mahamahidhara on the north of Manasarovar. In a special cave there, Kundodara was stationed with a huge army. A terrible war ensued between Srivaladhi and the Asura and his army. Finally Srivaladhi killed the Asura with his powerful Sakti weapon. There was shower of flowers from the sky. Indra came and eulogized him for all the valorous help extended by him. He said: **"In your previous incarnation as Subrahmanya, you exterminated Tarakasura. Now by making short work of his grandson, the danger to the three worlds has gone away. We wish to honour you with fulfillment of some desire, though we are aware you are ever completely fulfilled."** Srivaladhi declined any offer of wealth and said:

भूतेषु च दया नित्या शिवे भक्तिश्च शास्वती । ब्रह्मण्यता वदान्यत्वं प्रार्थनीयानि अमूनि मे ॥

एतत् एव महाराज युष्माभिः करुणा यदि । क्रियते सततं तस्मात् श्रियं काङ्क्षो न मे क्वचित् ॥

"If you are pleased with me, kindly grant everlasting compassion to living beings, eternal devotion to Siva, love of those who are pursuing the path of attainment of Brahman, and munificence. I am not at all desirous of

wealth.” Indra assented and proceeded to his city Amaravathi on his elephant Airavata. Srivaladhi came to Madurai in the celestial chariot and worshipped at his father’s feet. Siva conveyed his best wishes to Indra through Matali, the charioteer. Srivaladhi then went to his mother, accompanied by father. His mother expressed serious apprehension about the injuries he must have suffered in the war with the merciless Asuras. Srivaladhi said that he felt no pain owing to the blessings of his parents. Later he left for Manalurpuram.

One day when Srivaladhi was in the royal assembly, there was a sudden outburst of thundering sound and rain from the sky. There dropped from the sky three Sivalingas together with shower of gems. Akasavani wished the king well and asked him to establish the Lingas at a place where good light is continuously shining, and worship them. There was a downpour of gold and precious stones, filling the entire city. There was enveloping joy all over the place. At that time sage Sanatana entered the assembly. Srivaladhi welcomed him warmly and enquired as to the task expected of him. The sage described the glorious assembly of Devas in Kailasa, where Brahma narrated his victory in the war with Kundodara; Siva handed the three Lingas to Varuna, who dropped them here along with rain of gems. Srivaladhi asked the sage for guidance on a suitable location with good and steady light for setting up the Lingas. The sage recounted a story.

Jyotirvana - Bhaga’s Eyesight Restored

In olden times when Daksha’s yagna was destroyed at the behest of Siva, Bhaga’s eyes were gouged out. Bhaga took refuge at guru Brihaspati’s feet. Guru clarified:

शृणु वक्ष्याम्यहं साधो मर्यादामादिकल्पिताम् । यः करोति शिवद्रोहं दूषयत्यपि तद्गुणान् ॥

तेषां कदापि जन्तूनां पुरुषार्थो न हि ध्रुवम् । अन्धन्तमः प्रपद्यन्ते यावत् आभूतसंप्लवम् ॥

तथाभ्युदयं वक्ष्यामि तेन सौख्यमुपैष्यसि ।

“Listen, the ancient rule of conduct is this: one, who militates against Siva or criticizes his qualities, can never attain any of the Purusharthas. Such persons are thrown into blind alley of darkness till Pralaya. However I shall let you know the means of attaining wellbeing.” Guru continued and said that Siva protects people by providing for use of Vibhuti, Rudraksha and Panchakshara mantra. Brahma, Vishnu and Devas worship him this way and attain wellbeing. Guru initiated Bhaga into Sivsadiक्षा and taught him the Shadakshari mantra, ‘Om Namah Sivaya’ and the procedure of worship. Bhaga then asked Guru for guidance on the kshetra appropriate for worship for quick attainment of wish fulfillment. Guru advised him to proceed to Jyotirvana, which is endowed with good and steady light, on the southern bank of Tamraparni river. Bhaga went there accordingly, worshipped Siva with devotion and attained his eyesight quickly with Siva’s grace.

Kumbhataka freed from Matruhatya

There was a king called Vasushena, very valorous, known as the second Indra, and generous to a fault. He married Vasumalini, the daughter of the king of Kashi and performed many yagas – Vajapeya, Aswamedha, Rajasuya etc. Vishnu blessed him with the gift of a Vimana. He conquered the entire earth and ruled virtuously. He was not blessed with progeny. Hence he handed over the kingdom to his ministers and performed severe penance for a hundred years along with his wife in the forest. He prayed for a son, whereas the queen asked for a

daughter. Siva and Parvathi gave them darshan and blessed. They returned to the city. Not long after, the queen gave birth to a baby, having the signs of both male and female. The royal couple was immersed in grief. Sage Vamadeva arrived at that time and, after listening to the heart-rending account, informed the king that the baby would be male for three years and female for the next three years and that this would continue in turns. There was nothing to worry; Siva's blessing was with him. The child would make him happy and meritorious. The son grew up and studied the art of weapons as well as Brahnavidya. In time he married Madhavi, daughter of the king of Kekayadesa. As he was both male and female in turns, he came to be known as Dvivartma. He begot a son. As a female, he married the king of Panchala and begot a son, who was called Kumbhataka. Both the children became masters in the art of rulership. The king of Panchala died. The younger son Kumbhataka, under advice of ill-meaning friends, concluded over time that his elder brother would be an obstacle in the path of his becoming king later. By killing his mother (Madhavi), his elder brother would be king of Visala in due time, whereas he himself would get the rulership of Panchala. Thinking thus, one night Kumbhataka decapitated his mother with a sword. The city was plunged in grief. The Purohitas anointed the elder son as king. The terrible goblin of Matruhatya followed Kumbhataka everywhere. He went round all over the country, but was tortured by the goblin. Finally, when he reached Tamraparni, he was surprised that the goblin had left him. He took bath in the sacred waters and saw a Tapasvini, shining with austerity, in a large asrama on the southern bank. He took refuge in her instantly like a brahmana would do in Gayatri. When the female sage opened her eyes and saw Kumbhataka, she asked him about his story. Kumbhataka submitted to her the truth of his grave sin of Matruhatya and prayed for blessing with the means of redemption. The woman was Kachavathi.

Kachavati's sorrow relieved

In olden times there was a brahmana called Ajameeda, whose wife was Padma. Their daughter Kachavathi was master of the sixtyfour arts, virtuous and humble. She was given in marriage to Harita. Once she threw a piece of wood for fun on a mating chameleon couple. The chameleon cursed her that she would suffer from separation from her husband. Saying so, the chameleon couple mounted a celestial vimana with their forms turned into Gandharvas. The couple then pacified Kachavathi and said that the curse would last for only twelve years, after which she would be happy. Asked for the story of how the celestials turned into chameleons, they recounted their old story.

The Gandharva was earlier called Suruchi, the son of Vasunabha, the king of Gandharvas. He was master of the art of music. Once when he was touring various places with his wife and arrived at Gandhamadana mountain, two music experts, Priyamitra and Sumitra came and cursed them as Suruchi did not treat them honorably.

Suruchi continued to say that Shadjapala, another Gandharva, his extremely close friend, once happened to be cursed by Indra and lived in Gokarna as a woman for a hundred years. An Asura tried at that time to trouble his wife and was reduced to ashes by her chastity. The Asura would then be born as Kumbhataka, who would kill his mother and later approach Kachavathi. Suruchi taught Kachavathi the Siva Shadakshari mantra and asked her to initiate Kumbhataka into the mantra. Saying so, the Gandharvas went away in their vimana.

Haritha performed the funeral rites of his dead parents along with his wife Kachavathi. When he took a dip in the Tamraparni river, a servant of Bali, the Asura king, took him away for fun and stood him before Bali. Bali honoured the sage Haritha and asked him to stay with him for some time. The relatives of Haritha concluded that Haritha had been devoured by some aquatic being. Kachavathi then performed severe austerities to please Siva, taking bath in Tamraparni thrice daily. Twelve years elapsed. Kumbhataka came; Kachavathi taught him the Siva Shadakshari mantra and released him from his sins.

Kachavathi became worried that Haritha had not returned, though twelve years had elapsed. She decided to end her life. On the chosen day she bathed in the river Tamraparni and planned for Jala Samadhi. Devi Parvathi appeared, touched her and told her that Haritha would return just then and that Kachavathi would lead a very happy and devoted life with him, and finally they would attain Sayujya. She added that those who chant the prayer uttered by Kachavathi (*See Appendix*) and bathe in the sacred **Gowri Tirtham** would attain Sayujya. Saying so, Parvathi vanished from sight. Soon Haritha appeared from the waters of the river amidst a glow, and decorated with jewels given by the Asura king Bali. The divine drums sounded. Brahma appeared, mounted on his vehicle swan. He said to Haritha: “The whole world is happy with the austerities performed by you and your loving wife Kachavathi. After living long on earth and performing yagnas and praying to Siva, you will attain the Supreme State. This tirtha will be known as **Prabha Tirtha**. Bathing here and having darshan of the Jyoti that is Siva here, humans would be rid of all their sorrows.” Saying so, Brahma returned to his abode.

Haritha had been gifted by Bali with Siva Linga during his stay in Rasatala. He established that linga on the banks of Tamraparni and worshipped. After leading a virtuous life for a thousand years, he and Kachavathi attained Sayujya in Jyotischakra.

Kachalika's Tapasya

After receiving Siva Diksha from Kachavathi, Kumbhataka performed severe austerities at a place not far from where he met Kachavathi. After a hundred years, Siva gave him darshan. Kumbhataka burst into a soulful hymn in praise of Siva (*See Appendix*). The highly pleased Siva said: "You are Shadjapala, the Gandharva king, turned into a human, owing to some past karma." **A blinding mass of Light emerged at that spot. Dharma, in the form of bull, held Kumbhataka by his hand and, after going round the mass of Light, immersed him in the sacred river.** Then a handsome Gandharva emerged from the waters. Other Gandharvas, who had assembled there in their vimanas, were happy to have found their long-lost companion and asked him to accompany them to their world. But Shadjapala appeared lost and kept silent. Sage Narada came. **He complimented Shadjapala on his austerities and conveyed to him the greatness of Jyotirvana sanctified by Siva himself. Even if one spends a second in Jyotirvana, he will be freed of rebirth.** Narada then asked Shadjapala to proceed in the vimana to his Gandharva world. Shadjapala thereupon sought and obtained Narada's leave to stay for some more time in the sacred Jyotirvana and worship Siva before proceeding to his abode.

Shadjapala then decided to perform severe austerities in order to earn for Jyotirvana the power of freeing any human coming there for darshan, from the greatest of sins. He stayed on earth purely for the purpose of ensuring this great

public good. After a hundred years of severe penance, Agni of Tapas emerged from his body, which engulfed all the three worlds. A worried Indra, accompanied by Devas, prayed to Brahma to bless him with fulfillment of whatever desire he had. Brahma assured them of necessary help. He then told them of a princess called Kachavali.

Many years ago there was a Pandyan king named Ritudhama. During excavation for establishing Yupastambha (post of altar) in a yaga performed by him, the Ritwiks found a girl child. The king took her as his daughter and named her Kachalika. When the time of her marriage arrived, the king arranged for Svayamvara. During that time, the beautiful Kachalika did not choose any of the assembled princes, but threw the garland up in the sky. The garland was caught by a young handsome man, who vanished. The princes felt cheated and were about to abduct Kachalika, when Akasavani announced that Kachalika was indeed a part of Devi Parvathi and that anyone wishing to use force to get her would have his head blasted to a hundred pieces. Once the princes departed, Kachalika entered upon intense Tapas, which lasted three yugas. Brahma said that the time for blessing her with the fruit of her Tapas had come.

Brahma went to Kachalika and conveyed that her intense Tapas had borne fruit. She was asked to make her form flow as a river on the north bank of Tamraparni river at the place where Shadjapala was penancing, and herself to proceed to Amba's Sayujyam.

Kachalika, turned into a river, flowed with great speed from Nandakanana and threw Shadjapala on to the north bank of the river over a great distance. When Shadjapala came out of trance and opened his eyes, he saw in front of his eyes not his asram, but a beautiful forest. He wondered where his familiar Jyotirvana

had disappeared. He wandered for some time and found an old Tapasvini in a hut. Her name was Agnisikha. She said to Shadjapala that she knew all about his past. When enquired about herself, she recounted a story.

There was a great sage called Valkala performing austerities in the Himalayas. A Rakshasi called Ulukakshi ensnared him into love and gave birth to a son called Manduka. Manduka became very strong and performed severe penance for a hundred years. Siva appeared. Manduka asked for the boon of freedom from killing by Devas and freedom in transit everywhere. Siva gave him a gem and blessed him with his wishes provided the gem remained on his head. Manduka went on destroying the whole world and devouring all human beings. He finally came to the spot where the asrama stood now and drove away all sages. The sages took refuge in Agastya, who prayed to Vishnu. Vishnu assumed the form of a bewitching woman Maya, and approached Manduka, who fell for her other-worldly beauty. Maya then asked him to part with the gem on his head. The moment Maya took away the gem, Manduka fell dead. Siva, Brahma and other Devas came. Siva joined Maya the Mohini and brought forth a son. The son was Hariharaputra, Sasta. Siva taught him the Truth and left him to protect the kshetra. Siva and Vishnu returned to their abodes. This kshetra, known as Harihara, is frequented by Siddhas and Rishis.

The husband of the Tapasvini Agnisikha, who recounted the above story, attained to Vaikuntha. At that time he stopped his wife Agnisikha from following him and told her to bathe in Harihara kshetra regularly and spend time on earth in devotion. She should place a small piece of stone every day in the pitcher handed by him. When the pitcher would become full, a Gandharva would take refuge in her. She should tell the story to him and return herself to her husband's

abode in Vaikuntha. Accordingly Agnisikha handed the pitcher to Shadjapala, took bath in the sacred river, went round Jyotischakra and proceeded heavenward with her present form.

Shadjapala's Ascent

Shadjapala found that the pitcher in his hand had turned into a Siva Linga. He felt extremely gifted. Sage Bharadwaja came and asked him to establish the Siva Linga there and worship. Accordingly Shadjapala set up the Linga and performed Abhisheka to the accompaniment of Satarudriya mantras. He sang a hymn of praise (*see Appendix*). Siva appeared, accompanied by Nandi and other followers. He fulfilled the public-spirited wish of Shadjapala by assuring that those who bathe in Harihara and worship Siva would never have rebirth. He added that Shadjapala would have darshan of the great Light again by his grace. So saying, Siva held him by his hand and showed him the Light there itself and entered into the Linga. There was shower of flowers from the sky. Shadjapala was happy beyond measure. Indra, accompanied by Gandharvas, arrived.

Indra took him to Jyotirvana, where they all had holy bath in Mahatirtham in Tamraparni and Gowritirtham on the southern bank and worshipped at various sacred centres in that region. Indra showed him the Jyotischakra, and Shadjapala burst into a beautiful hymn in praise of the Nirguna aspect of Siva (*See Appendix*). Siva blessed him and asked him to proceed to Gandharvaloka and enjoy the delights there. He added that the Gandharva would be born as Amsuman to Aditi in the future Kalpa of Rathantara and would eliminate many Asuras and protect the earth. Once Siva's Akasavani was completed, there was shower of flowers from the sky. At that time Vishnu, mounted on Garuda, arrived. He also blessed Shadjapala and added: "This place is sanctified by Siva.

When Surya enters Mina Rasi, one should bathe here and worship Siva on Bharani day. One should bathe in the sacred waters here and worship Harihara and go round Jyotischakra; he will be relieved of all sins. One should give a lot of prescribed Danas in these kshetras.” After Vishnu left, Shadjapala went to Gandharvaloka in the vimana.

Srivaladhi establishes three Siva Lingas in Jyotirvana

Srivaladhi, who listened to all the enchanting stories of Jyotirvana from sage Sanatana, now decided to have darshan of the great Light in Jyotirvana and establish a Linga there for worship. Accompanied by many sages, ministers and the army, he reached Jyotirvana. It was filled with sages doing penance, and some brahmanas chanting Vedas and performing yagas and some in deep trance of Yoga. The king bathed in the sacred tirthas, offered Pujas and spent a few days there. He then established a Siva Linga on an auspicious day in Jyotirvana to the chanting of Satarudriya mantras. There was shower of flowers from the sky; divine musical instruments played music. Visvakarma brought at that time an image of Gowri. The king established that image as per Vedic procedure. He sang a hymn in praise of Siva in the form of Jyoti (*See Appendix*).

Jyoti (Light) emerged from the Linga, held Srivaladhi by hand, led him inside the mass of Light and showed him the great city of Madurai. The city was bristling with people and activities. Srivaladhi saw the mansion of his father in the city, similar to Kailasa. He then saw his father in the gem-studded throne, with his mother alongside and ministers and Rishis in the assembly. He fell at the feet of his parents. **His father took him on his lap and blessed him, asking him to rule the earth with dharma. All activities should be devoted to Isvara. Guru’s instructions should never be violated. Yagnas should be performed**

to please Devas and pitrus. Sundara Pandya, father of Srivaladhi, also told him that he resided there for the good of the world. Saying so, Siva vanished.

Srivaladhi set up a city at that spot, similar to Madurai, as directed by sage Sanatana and lived there. Devatas were set up in all eight directions to protect the city. He bathed in all sacred tirthas and performed many yagnas. His sons, Dharmasena and Brahmadatta, also established two Siva Lingas, called Srivaladhiswara and Maheswara on the banks of Tamraparni. All Devas showered boons very happily on the royal family and the citizens.

Mantratirtham

A celebrated ascetic named Hiranvan lived with his wife Mayavathi in a forest near the Kandarpasikhara mountain. After begetting a hundred sons, he propitiated Siva for getting daughter. Four daughters were born to him. The first three daughters were given in marriage suitably. The fourth daughter was Ardra. One day Bhairavadri came to Hiranvan and asked for Ardra as daughter, as he was childless from his wife Bhadravathi. Hiranvan agreed and gave her to Bhairavadri. Ardra, while playing with her friends, imagined Siva's presence in front of her and conducted her own marriage playfully with Siva by garlanding him. This practice continued for some time. One day Siva appeared in person and accepted the garland from Ardra. There was shower of flowers from the sky. Siva disappeared into the sky, holding Ardra in his hand. Bhairavadri and his wife wept bitterly in separation from their dear daughter Ardra. Sage Vamadeva took pity on them and revealed that Ardra was indeed Gowri, the consort of Siva, who was born as daughter of sage Hiranvan, and who became daughter of Bhairavadri in order to reward his Tapas over a long period of time. The sage

initiated him into Mahamantra and advised that Bhairavadri should go to Tamraparni and worship Siva if he wished to see his daughter again.

Sage Vamadeva accompanied Bhairavadri and his wife to Tamraparni, bid them to bathe in the sacred river and worship. Bhairavadri continued with this practice for almost a year. Siva then emerged from the Linga and gave him darshan. Bhairavadri sang a hymn of praise. (*See Appendix*). When told to ask for a boon, Bhairavadri said: “Siva and Parvathi should live as son-in-law and daughter in my home permanently for a whole Kalpa, so that I shall have the pleasure of seeing you both always in my home.” Siva granted the boon and said: **“Your daughter will now turn into a river and join Tamraparni. She will be known as Bhairavachalaputri as your daughter; also as Syama in view of her dark colour; Hairanvathi as she was born as the daughter of Hiranvan initially; Ardrapaga as the river generates from Ardra; Rudrani as the consort of Rudra. She will destroy sins of those who bathe in and worship her. I shall reside in this Mahalinga along with her and grant Moksha to those who worship.”** Saying so, Siva vanished.

River Syama (known nowadays as ‘Pachaiyaru’) immediately appeared, started off with heavy flow of water and joined Tamraparni. Brahma and Devas came, took bath in the sacred confluence of Syama with Tamraparni and hailed it as Mantratirtham, as sacred as Prayaga. Siva, known as Pranavesa, resides with Gowri in the city of Bhairavachala in his father-in-law’s home even today.

Vahnitirtham

There was a Pandya king named Dharmaketu. His Purohita was sage Yagnavalkya. One day

when the two were seated in the royal assembly, a group of citizens came and complained to the king that the crops in the fields were being devoured by wild animals. They pleaded that hunters be deployed and the wild animals be eliminated. The king and the Purohita immediately proceeded to the forest and killed a large number of wild animals. When they were resting in the afternoon, two beautiful girls came to them and introduced themselves as the daughters of sage Visravas. They said they were motherless and were looking for suitable bridegrooms. They had now found the king and the Purohita as suitable matches and said they would commit suicide if they were not accepted. The king and the Purohita thought over and agreed to marry them. The king married the elder girl called Visarada, and the Purohita wed the younger one named Bindumathi.

After many years the king begot from Visarada a son named Purudhama and the Purohita also a son named Srutakirti. The children studied Vedas and art of weaponry etc. in due time. They then started to roam about in the city by night in secret and kill and devour humans and also bring the meat for consumption of their mothers. Soon the sudden disappearance and loss of more than a thousand humans made news and reached the ears of the king. The king consulted sage Vaitanika, who divined the truth and revealed to the king: “The two women whom the king and the Purohita married were indeed Rakshasis and should be thrown out immediately.” The king and the Purohita did accordingly. The two youth, Purudhama and Srutakirti were stunned and decided to propitiate Brahma as advised by Yagnavalkya. After three years Brahma blessed them with the boon of a hundred ‘Mayas’; he further blessed that Purudhama would acquire half the kingdom as desired by him and that he would remain unconquered by persons other than brahmanas, and further that Srutakirti would be the Purohita for Purudhama. Purudhama set up a city in the forest with the help of Maya and

Rakshasas joined him in large numbers. He terrified the citizens and attacked and devoured them.

Puranjaya went to war with his own son. In a bitter battle he decimated Purudhama's army. Purudhama resorted to his powers of Maya and killed by stealth the king Puranjaya as well as the Purohita Yagnavalkya. The king's army returned to the city and did not know what to do. They preserved the bodies of the dead king and Purohita. Chamasa, the son of Yagnavalkya, emboldened them and said that they should anoint prince Hariketu as the king and that he would himself annihilate the Rakshasas. Chamasa and Hariketu prayed intensely for three days to Siva. Siva appeared before them and blessed that both Puranjaya and Yagnavalkya would be restored to life and would be strong and powerful. Siva also bestowed on them chariot, charioteer, horses, weapons etc. produced from his third eye of Agni.

Puranjaya and Yagnavalkya came back to life and were extremely happy to see Hariketu and Chamasa. Hariketu, accompanied by Chamasa, proceeded to war with the Rakshasas. He employed the divine weapons given by Siva and exterminated the Rakshasas including Purudhama and Srutakirti. He returned victoriously to the city. However, owing to the grievous sin of killing of mother and Guru's wife, i.e. killing of woman and brahmana, Hatya (goblin of killing) gripped Hariketu in the form of fever, incapacitating him physically and mentally. Puranjaya consulted Guru Yagnavalkya, who advised the king to meet and offer prayer to sage Agastya. The king met Agastya, who said: "Your son is suffering owing to the great sin of killing of woman and brahmana together. But this killing has happened for the protection of the world.

अपि पापसहस्रं वा प्रजारक्षणहेतवे । कर्तव्यं राजपुत्रेण एष धर्मः सनातनः ॥

तदेव हि राजसुतः च करोति स्म भूपते । पश्चात् तापस्य शान्त्यर्थं प्रायश्चित्तं समाचरेत् ॥

इति मन्वादिभिः प्रोक्तं तत्तथा कार्यमेव वः ।

“A prince should certainly perform the duty of protecting the people and if necessary for that purpose, a thousand sins may be committed by him. That is what your son has done. For subduing the heat and pain arising from the sin, expiatory ritual should be undertaken. This is what sages like Manu have advised; this is what you should do.” Saying so, Agastya went and saw Hariketu, writhing in heat and pain and with only bones left in the body. He embraced him and transferred the unbearable heat of his body on to the water in his Kamandalu. The prince now got up, relieved of the heat and pain. All became happy.

Agastya then took all of them to the confluence of Hairanvathi and Tamraparni and made them bathe in the holy waters. He bade Hariketu to establish a Siva Linga and offer worship including Danas to brahmanas. By that time the water in Agastya's Kamandalu, which had become like boiling oil, got reduced by a fourth in quantity. Then Agastya made Hariketu bathe in Tamraparni in front of Hariketu's asrama and establish another Siva Linga there and worship and give Danas. This resulted in reduction of another fourth part of the water in the Kamandalu. The sage then took him to Vaikhanasa asrama and made him take bath in Tamraparni and establish yet another Siva Linga and worship and offer Danas. Then reduction of the third (one-fourth) portion of the water in the sage's Kamandalu was noticed. For the last one-fourth portion of the sin of Hariketu to be removed, Agastya said: “There was a great sage called Chamasa in olden days, who penanced for a hundred years for attaining Moksha. At that time a hundred Yagas came and said that they had been created by Brahma for the well-

being of the world; now that Chamasa had adopted the path of Tapas, nobody would perform yagas. They therefore pleaded that Chamasa should perform the Yagas. Chamasa thereupon performed all the hundred yagas, from Agnishtoma to Asvamedha. At the request of the Yagas, he performed all the Yagas three times and finally ascended to heaven with his own body. Now those Agnis have not been propitiated through Yagas for long and hence they are troubling the world. You should establish a Siva Linga for this purpose at that spot and worship.” Agastya took them to the spot and showed them the Agnis. After taking bath in Tamraparni, Hariketu established two Lingas there as directed by the sage, while Agastya himself set up a third Linga there. After worshipping the Lingas, Danas were given by Hariketu. There was shower of flowers from the sky and divine music. Siva appeared along with Gowri and blessed and said that Hariketu was now completely rid of the sin and that he would rule the earth for many years and finally attain to Siva Sayujyam. He further blessed that those who bathe in the sacred waters there and worship the Siva Lingas would not undergo rebirth.

Agastya then returned to his asram. Puranjaya and others returned to the capital. After handing over the rulership to Hariketu and spending many years in devotion, Puranjaya attained to Sayujya.

Ramatirtham

In Kekaya country, there was a king called Bhimadhanva. Though he had performed many yagas including Rajasuya and Asvamedha, he had no progeny. He consulted all sages on the expiation to be adopted for removal of the sin prohibiting him from getting progeny. Sage Agastya said: “Do not grieve. You will get progeny very soon. In earlier times there was a Chola king named

Dhanaketu, who had two sons. After the virtuous king attained to the Supreme State, his two sons Dhiman and Kratu performed the Aparā Kriyas properly. The following Sraaddhas were performed by Dhiman, the elder son. The younger son, Kratu joined him in the Sraaddhas and failed to perform independently owing to avarice. When the two died in battle, they were seated in a vimana and were headed for Viraswarga. Dhiman attained to the higher worlds, but Kratu was stopped before reaching Suryamandala. Kratu was stunned. Narada came and told him that owing to improper performance of Sraadham on Pitrudina, Viraswarga was not attainable to him. He would be born as Kekaya king Bhimadhanva, full of all prosperity and enjoyments, but without progeny. Only after performing expiation as advised by sage Agastya, he would get progeny. This was the story of your previous birth. Now you are that king Bhimadhanva. I shall explain the procedure for expiation.”

“In earlier times, when Narayana incarnated as Rama, he met Jatayu in near-death condition after Jatayu had been attacked severely by Ravana, who had been pounced upon by Jatayu, when Ravana was flying away after abducting Sita. After hearing about Ravana’s abduction of Sita from Jatayu and after Jatayu had breathed his last, Rama performed Jatayu’s Uttara kriyas. Siva appeared at that time with Brahma and other Devas and sages like Sanaka. He said: “Those who bathe in Jatayutirtha, Ramatirtha and Sivatirtha here, would be rid of all sins and attain to all prosperity and finally to Mukti.” Hence you proceed to these tirthas and take holy bath there. By worshipping Rishis and brahmanas there, you will attain progeny.”

King Bhimadhanva went to the Malaya mountain. As advised by Agastya, he bathed in Ramatirtha, Jatayutirtha and Sivatirtha, gave Danas and performed

Sraaddhas etc. After that, he heard Akasavani pronouncing that he had been completely freed from all sins, like Surya and that he would beget five virtuous sons and he would be a Jivanmukta. The king returned to his capital. In due course five eminent sons were born to him. He ruled the earth for five thousand years. He continues to live in Himalayas as Jivanmukta.

Pasavathi

Once Vasishtha went to Varunaloka and spent some time with Varuna, his father. (Though Vasishtha was Brahma's son, he lost his body due to the curse of king Nimi. He then acquired a new body as the son of Mitra and Varuna). He happened to see the rich treasury of Varuna there. The gems there were such that by mere contact with the gem, human being would become free of all diseases; by mere contact with the shadow of the gem, human being would acquire enormous strength; by contact of the gem with one's ears, he would live for a whole Kalpa as a handsome youth. Vasishtha was stunned to see the gems. He took a few of them and put them in his Kamandalu and started for his asrama. Seeing this, the power of Pasa (Rope) of Varuna caught and bound him. Varuna happened to come there and saw his son Vasishtha rolling on the ground in pain. Out of compassion he released him from Varunapasa by teaching him a mantra from Rigveda. He also chided him for stealing others' wealth and handed him many gems and let him go. Vasishtha returned to his asrama on earth; but he was overcome by a sense of shame and sorrow. He thought: "Sages have laid down that taking away father's wealth is not faulty on the part of the son." Hence he decided to punish the power of Pasa, Pasasakthi. He cursed Pasasakthi to be born as human being on earth. Pasaskthi was born as a girl in the asrama of sage Santapana, son of Bharadwaja. Santapana heard her tale of sorrow and adopted her as his daughter and kept her in his asram. One day a serpent bit the girl and

made her discoloured, bent in form and ugly. Santapana felt sad on seeing this and initiated her into the Siva Panchakshara mantra. The girl penanced, chanting the mantra, while abstaining from food and sleep. At the end of a hundred years, long black ropes appeared on her body. Sages identified her as Pasasakthi.

Siva appeared and blessed and said: “There is a sage named Drona, who went to Kubera’s home for performing a yagna. His chaste wife Devala was taken away by a Rakshasa during that period. Devala reduced him to ashes by mere intense look. But she decided to shed her body by yogic power, rendered impure by contact with the Rakshasa. She is now living in the form of air in the forest. You should now turn into a large river, carry her body and merge with Tamraparni. Devala would acquire her purified body and join her husband Drona. You will also become pure by contact with the sacred waters of Tamraparni and get back to Varunaloka as Pasasakthi.”

Pasasakthi turned into a river **Pasavathi (known nowadays as ‘Kayitraru)** as directed by Siva and washed away the body of Devala. At her confluence with Tamraparni, Devala rose as a youthful woman, and Drona regained his wife. There was shower of flowers from the sky. The astonished sages and Devas assembled and bathed at the holy confluence of rivers. Pasasakthi returned to the hands of Varuna.

Sudarsana Chakra in Vishnuvanam

Once upon a time, at the end of a battle between Devas and Asuras, in which Asuras were defeated and killed, the surviving Asuras took their abode in the ocean. Diti, the mother of Asuras, took refuge in Sukra, the Guru of Asuras. Sukra pacified her. At that time, Sukra’s mother (the wife of sage Bhrigu) came

out from inside the home, having heard the plaintive cry of Diti. She took pity on her and said: “I shall destroy the Chakra of Vishnu, together with his army and Marudganas, who killed your sons. I feel like devouring the the entire Brahmanda together with Brahma. Let Asuras occupy Swarga.” Saying so, she grew into a massive form, extending into the realms beyond Surya and Chandra. Terrified at this, Indra and Devas, headed by Brahma, , took refuge in Vishnu in Vaikuntha. Vishnu despatched his Sudarsana Chakra, which cut off the head of Sukra’s mother swiftly. Brahma, Indra and others went back happily to their abodes. Chakra was on his way back to Vaikuntha, when he found his journey was halted beyond the realm of Saptarishis. He was greatly worried at this strange development.

Kapila Vasudeva happened to come that way. Chakra fell at his feet and asked for the reason for his being stopped en route to Vaikuntha. Kapila explained that though Chakra had killed Sukra’s mother for universal wellbeing, he had committed the despicable sin of killing a woman. He was hence required to atone for the grave sin. He advised him to take holy bath in Tamraparni and worship Vishnu in Vishnuvana on her banks. **(Vishnuvana is in the present day Seevalipperi area)**. He spoke in high praise of the sacred river.

शृणु चक्रेश्वर विभो श्रोतव्यं सावधानतः ॥

या परा परमा शक्तिः जगत्कारणरूपिणी । उमा गौरीति विख्याता कमला भारतीति च ॥

सर्वमन्त्रमयी शक्तिः सर्वतीर्थैकरूपिणी । भक्तिभाजां फलाकारा सूक्ष्माकारा दुरत्यया ॥

ब्रह्मरुद्रमुखैर्देवैः पूज्यमाना दिने दिने । सैषा भगवती शक्तिः मूलप्रकृतिसंज्ञिता ॥

क्लिश्यमानं जनं दृष्ट्वा कर्मपाशानुपाशितम् । यातायातं प्रकुर्वन्तं जन्मं मृत्युजरातुरम् ॥

परित्राणाय वै तस्य कर्मविच्छेदहेतवे । प्रार्थिता शङ्करेणापि हरिणा वेधसा पुनः ॥

तेषामभीप्सितं कामं पूरयन्ति दयात्मिका । कृत्वात्मानं तीर्थरूपं जाता मलयनन्दिनी ॥

तदम्बुपानात् स्नानात् वा दर्शनात् स्पर्शनादपि । मोचयिष्ये जनं पापात् मुक्तिं दास्याम्यस्संशयम् ॥

इति कल्पित दीक्षा सा वर्तते दक्षिणापथे । तस्याः तीरे विष्णुवने विष्णुसान्निध्यकारके ॥

इष्ट्वा विष्णुं यथान्यायं स्नात्वा तस्यापि वारिणि । निर्मुक्तपापो भविता नात्रकार्या विचारणा ॥

Kapila also told Chakra of the story of how Visvedevas got rid of their grievous sin of insulting Pitrus by bathing in the sacred Tamraparni and worshipping Vishnu. Chakra went to Tamraparni along with Kapila Vasudeva and saw the beautiful Vishnuvana, busy with many Tapasvis and birds and animals. Chakra worshipped Bhairava, Vishnu and Devi Tamraparni and took holy bath in the river. He offered Tarpanas and Danas. Akasavani was heard declaring Chakra to be totally free from all sins. It also directed him to perform Asvamedha yagna and give a lot of Dakshina to brahmanas and then to return to Vaikuntha. There was shower of flowers from the sky and divine music. At that time Siva and other Devas arrived and offered worship to Chakra. Vishnu also came and complimented Chakra. Chakra performed Asvamedha yagna and offered huge Dakshina; all the world was pleased. Chakra established image of Vishnu on the northern bank of Tamraparni and worshipped him. Vishnu gave him darshan and praised his efforts as conducive to the good of the world. He blessed that the kshetra worshipped by Chakra would be so meritorious such that he would remain present there for ever and that all living beings there would attain to

Moksha. Saying so, Vishnu held Chakra by his hand and they both vanished and went back to Vaikuntha. All people enjoyed their sojourn there and went back later to their places.

Visvedevas in Vishnuvana

There were ten sons of Kasyapa and Aditi, known as Visvedevas. They were Kratu, Daksha, Vasu, Satya, Kala, Kala, Dhuri, Ruchi, Pururava and Ardrava. They decided to earn a special place among Devas, for which they set upon severe penance at the east side of Meru mountain, north of Chandrakuta. That place was special in that no disease of body or mind, no hunger or thirst would trouble them. River Haridrava flowed nearby. Even animals would secure their desires in such a place. These ten Visvedevas performed intense penance for thirty thousand years, chanting the supreme mantra. Pitrus including Vasu came there and offered to them to ask for desired boon. But the ascetics spoke in utter insult of the Pitrus and said that they were waiting for boon from Easwara and not from the powerless Pitrus. Though assured very kindly by Pitrus, they drove them away. Because of this sin, they were affected by conceit and hopelessness. Their penance became fruitless. Kasyapa, who came to know of this, asked Brihaspati to go to his sons and give them sound advice. Brihaspati went and advised Visvedevas: “Pitrus are even higher than Devas and are worshipped even by Brahma, Vishnu and Siva.” Visvedevas felt saddened at their grievous sin and asked for guidance on expiation method. Brihaspati asked them to go to Vishnuvana on the banks of Tamraparni and perform all rituals including sacred bath and worship. Visvedevas did accordingly. Pleased with their worship, Vishnu appeared from the waters of the sacred Tamraparni and blessed and said: **“In Sraaddhas you will be worshipped first, followed by Pitrus, and me at the end. Pitrus are no longer unhappy with you.”** Visvedevas were

highly relieved and happy. They went round and prostrated before Vishnu and Pitrus and went back to their city.

Liberation of Bull in Vishnuvana

There was a farmer named Pingala, who had vast landed property and grew many crops. He had a lot of cattle. Once when his workers were ploughing the fields, one of the bulls, which was old and feeble, could not cope up with the hard work of tilling the field. He broke open from the plough and ran away into the forest and then it reached the Tamraparni river. The very tired bull was carried in the speedy waters of the river and dropped by chance in Vishnuvana. The bull suddenly gained memory of its past birth and wept bitterly. Sage Katyayana, who was nearby, heard his plaintive cry and, taking pity on him, sprinkled sanctified water on the bull. The bull's head burst and a mass of Light went up in the sky. A divine being emerged from that mass of light and prostrated to the sage and said: "I am grateful to you for liberating me from the bull's form. Please permit me to go to Vishnuloka." Asked by the sage for the background of his having fallen into the bull's birth, he recounted his story. He was a prosperous Vaisya named Karusa in the city of Sakalya. He and his wife lived a happy life. One day he happened to see a beautiful Vaisya girl called Malathi and fell in love with her. He married her and took her as his second wife. In course of time he became so attached to her that he developed hatred for his first wife, Sougandhika and started ill-treating and even beating her. Without food, she eventually lost her life. All his relatives cursed him as killer of wife. Sougandhika's father, an ascetic, cursed him in anger to turn into a bull. And instantly he turned into a bull. Losing memory, when he was roaming about, he was caught by the farmer and engaged in tilling of the field for many years. By

divine chance he happened to get into contact with the sacred Tamraparni and the sage Katyayana. After recounting this story, the divine being worshipped the sage and left in Vimana for Vaikuntha.

Sadhyas purified in Vishnuvana

There was a sage called Srutadhama in Treta yuga in Savarnika Manvantara. He had a beautiful daughter named Kanchanamalini. A Vidyadhara fell in love with her and took her away, after killing her parents. She cried bitterly and prayed to Siva. Siva gave her darshan and burnt away the Vidyadhara with his third eye of Agni. Siva said to her: “In your last birth you separated a love-lorn couple with a powerful drug. Then the man became this Vidyadhara. You failed to attain this man in the last birth as your lover after your husband’s death. Later you were blessed with Pasupathi Vidya by sage Kanva and hence you attained Vignana and Bhakti. Now you enjoy life after marrying a suitable boy.” Kanchanamalini prayed for refuge at his feet. Siva asked her to worship him in the Linga there after taking regular bath in Tamraparni. He added that those who bathe in the sacred river and worship the Linga would not be reborn on earth. Siva then entered the Linga with Gowri and Chandra.

After some time a Sadhyadeva called Dyuman happened to see her and lusted after her. When he tried to grab her, she threw him away over a great distance with her power of Tapas. He reached Swarga. On finding him unhappy, his brothers came down to earth along with him. When they all saw Kanchanamalini, they could not believe their eyes. They decided to take her away to Swarga for enjoyment. When they neared her, she was overcome by untold grief. She thought: **“For the self-controlled, woman is poison. For the woman who has no protector, beauty is poison. Let me enter Agni.”** She went

round the sacred Agni and entered it. Siva emerged from the Linga. He threw away the Sadhyas and cursed that they would not be able to get back to Swarga. Kanchanamalini came out of the Fire, shining brilliantly. She entered Siva's heart. Siva then entered back into the Linga.

The Sadhyas were struck with unspeakable sorrow. They decided to worship Vishnu there itself. They performed severe penance for a hundred years. Vishnu gave them darshan and said: "Offending Siva is a grave sin. However I shall initiate you into the Pasupata vrata." The Sadhyas performed the Vrata devotedly. Siva appeared before them and granted them Brahmagnana. He named the tirtha of Tamraparni there as Sadhyatirtha and blessed that those, who bathe in that Tirtha and worship Siva with Panchakshara mantra, or Vishnu with Ashtakshara mantra, attain to the Supreme State. The Sadhyas went back to Swarga.

Liberation of Dasavatara Dancer in Vishnuvana

On the eastern side of Tamraparni there was an Agrahara, in which a brahmana named Tejasvi lived. He had a son called Mitrasakha. He was attracted to a beautiful girl, who arrived in that town as part of a group of actors and dancers. He approached the girl, who agreed to his proposal. He left the town with that girl and went about entertaining many people in many parts of the country through music, dance etc. assuming various roles and to the accompaniment of different musical instruments. He abandoned his brahmana dharma. He reached Kashmir and entertained the king there called Kunkumanka by donning the ten Avatara forms of Vishnu, viz. Matsya, Kurma, Varaha, Narasimha, Vamana, Parasurama, Rama, Balarama, Krishna and Kalki. The king's daughter, Chandramalini, on seeing the dance dramas enacted by Mitrasakha, was greatly

enamoured of him. Without informing the king, she decided to meet the dancer somehow in his camping place and elope with him. With the help of a friend, she met him in the night. He warned her of the dangers of being seen together in the palace. He told her to come separately and meet him in a different place. Accordingly Chandramalini left the palace with a few trusted companions and met him in a safe place outside the city. They left Kashmir quickly and, after crossing many kingdoms, they finally reached Vishnuvana on the banks of river Tamraparni. They spent some time there enjoying each other's company and chanting the names of Bhagavan. One day Chandramalini asked Mitrasakha to wear the attires of the ten Avataras of Vishnu in succession. She also donned the corresponding female roles and enjoyed their union continuously. During that time Mitrasakha fell dead out of exhaustion. Chandramalini was shocked. She did not know what to do alone in unknown country. She decided to drown in Tamraparni. With the thought of Vishnu's ten Avataras haunting her mind, she entered the swirling waters of Tamraparni. Vishnu decided to intervene and save her. He took the form of an old brahmana and, pulling her out of the swift current of waters, he advised her to chant the Dvadasakshara mantra of Vasudeva and have darshan of Vishnu.

Without speaking and sleeping and engaging in any other activity, Chandramalini chanted the mantra continuously, bathing thrice a day in the sacred river and meditating on Vishnu's Dasavataras in her heart all the time. At the end of three years, on a Sukla Dvadashi day in Magha month, after her morning bath, she had darshan of Vishnu in a Vimana in the sky. Vishnu showed the ten Avataras in his form, resplendent with four arms, holding Sankha, Chakra and Gada. He was worshipped by Siva, Brahma and Devas. Siva called Chandramalini, who was emaciated and thin, and said: "Pleased with your

worship of Vishnu, he has come to bless you with fulfilment of all desires. Though Mitrasakha was of evil conduct, owing to your Tapas, he has attained the state of Deva. Look at all the ten Avataras of Vishnu here. Take a dip in these holy waters and then proceed to Vaikuntha in the Vimana.” Chanting “जय शम्भो हरे विभो पाहि पाहीति”, Chandramalini bathed and emerged with a beautiful and radiant form, defeating that of Rati. She ascended the divine chariot and saw Mitrasakha, handsome like Manmatha. They both prostrated to all Devas, and left for Vaikuntha, never to return to rebirth on earth.

Vishnukshetras

There are nine sacred kshetras of Vishnu in front of Vishnuvana, capable of granting Mukti.

1. One is the forest of **Brahmasramam**, where Kailasa and Vaikuntha both shine. This is where sage Romasa worshipped Siva and Parvathi; there is tirtha called **Romasatirtha** in Tamraparni. There is also Kalasitirtha in this kshetra, where Brahma regained the Vedas lost by him by worshipping Vishnu.
2. Next is kshetra called **Vijayasanam**. Once Mlechhas (a term used generally for Greeks and those who do not believe in Veda) captured power and drove away the Pandya king Pratapangada. The king escaped to the forest and, setting up residence on the northern bank of Tamraparni, worshipped Vishnu. Vishnu gave him darshan and took the king on his lap. Vishnu brought the waters of Tamraparni in his Panchajanya conch and bathed him and vanished. To the great wonder of the king, crores of fully armed warriors suddenly emerged from the legs of his lion-throne. They went and fought the Mlechhas

and exterminated them totally with their powerful army. The Pandya king regained his kingdom. There was shower of flowers from the sky. The tirtha came to be known as **Panchajanyatirtha**.

3. **Haridhama** is the next kshetra. When Parasurama was on a spree killing kshatriyas all over the world, the Pandya king worshipped Vishnu for protection. Vishnu hid him and his supporters in his stomach. The king saw Tamraparni, Manalur town etc. from inside his stomach and enjoyed. He ruled his kingdom from there. Vishnu offered him complete protection. This went on for a thousand years. By that time Parasurama retreated from his killing spree, handed the earth to sage Kasyapa and proceeded to Mahendra mountain for performing austerities. Vishnu then brought out the Pandya king and his followers from out of his stomach. The tirtha here was known as **Harshatirtha**. There was shower of flowers from the sky.
4. The next kshetra is **Yugmala** and tirtha is **Aswinitirtha**. Aswinidevas had been deprived of their share of offerings in yagnas by Indra, as he considered them lowly as they were doctors. They therefore established residence on the northern bank of Tamraparni and worshipped Vishnu intensely. After a hundred years, Vishnu gave them darshan and granted their share of offerings in yagnas. Having obtained their wishes, Aswinidevas went back to Swarga.
5. **Mayalasya** is the next kshetra. In Rathantara Kalpa in Savarnika manvantara, a brahmana called Srutadhama came to Tamraparni river and engaged in Tapas for a thousand years, meditating on Vishnu. Vishnu then gave him darshan. Srutadhama prayed to him to show him all the lilas of Krishna right from childhood upto the final stage of going back to Vaikuntha. **Vishnu granted his prayer and showed him all the lilas of Krishnavatara –**

Avatara in Kamsa's rule to Devaki, Avatara of Yogamaya to Yasoda in Gokula, proceeding to Gokula, taking away the lives of Putana, Sakatasura, Trinavarta; dismembering Yamalarjuna trees; proceeding to Brindavana, killing Bakasura, Aghasura; destroying the ego of Brahma; killing Vatsasura, Pralamba, Dhenuka, Sankhachuda and Hayasura; Akrura's arrival at Brindavana; Krishna proceeding to Mathura and killing Kamsa; rescuing parents from prison and coronation of Ugrasena; erection of Dwaraka; weakening the prowess of Jarasandha; marriage with princesses; killing of Narakasura; destruction of Sisupala; protecting Yudhishtira's Rajasuya yagna; Kurukshetra war; coronation of Yudhishtira; preaching to Uddhava; returning to Vaikuntha. Srutadhama was happy beyond measure. He sang a sonorous hymn in praise of Vishnu (*See Appendix*). Vishnu, in turn, asked Srutadhama to lead a grihastha's life at that place at the **Mohapaha** tirtha and said that he would attain to Sayujya eventually. He added that those who bathe at the tirtha and worship Vishnu would attain to Sayujya by his grace. He then vanished. Srutadhama spent seventyone yugas there and finally attained Liberation.

6. The next tirtha **Sripuram** is on the southern bank of Tamraparni. Vishnu gives darshan here. He will take Avatara in the ensuing Kaliyuga.

Once in Vaikuntha Vishnu was reclining with his head on the lap of Lakshmi. Parshadas were all around. Vedas, Puranas and Sastras had taken the forms of birds and praising the Lord. At that time two birds struck a conversation touching upon the creation of various jivas, the varnas and asramas. They said that the life of a grihastha brahmana was the best, as brahmana pursued the

path of attainment of Gnana most intently and as grihastha (householder), he was the source of sustenance of the three other asrama holders. Lakshmi was happy to listen to this conversation and she developed a longing to live such a grihastha life. Vishnu, who decided to fulfill her wish, then spoke to Lakshmi: “You proceed to Bharatavarsha to the area of river Tamraparni, where Sesha is performing penance in the form of tamarind tree in order to attain me. You go there and offer worship to me. I shall come there and meet you. Our union there will bring good to the world.” Lakshmi proceeded along with Garuda to earth and reached the beautiful spot where the tamarind tree stood. She made her asrama there, bathed in the holy river and worshipped Vishnu. Garuda served her as a brahmachari. This went on for a thousand years. On a Dvadashi day in Phalguna month Lakshmi sang a hymn of praise of Vishnu at the close of her Puja (*See Appendix*), grieving at her separation and praying for reunion. At that time there was shower of flowers from the sky, accompanied by divine music. A vimana carrying Vishnu appeared. Vishnu lifted Lakshmi on to the Vimana and gave her boons. He said: “I am very pleased with your Tapas and Stotras.” Lakshmi asked that separation from him should never occur. Vishnu said that they both would reside on the banks of Tamraparni, blessing devotees, who bathe in the holy waters and worship Vishnu and Lakshmi, with removal of all sins. Vishnu and Lakshmi lived grihastha life there. The place came to be known as **Lakshmipuram**.

7. Anantha and Vishvaksena

In earlier times Brahma and Devas prayed to Vishnu for killing Ravana and protecting the innocent. Vishnu incarnated as Rama and, together with Sita, decimated Ravana and established Dharma, complete with all its four parts and ruled for ten thousand years. Sesha took the form of Lakshmana and

served Rama faithfully. After many years one day Yama came in the form of a Sanyasi and met Rama. Rama asked Lakshmana to keep vigil at the door and not allow anyone inside and warned that violation of this instruction would result in Lakshmana's decapitation. In a few minutes, sage Durvasa arrived and insisted on meeting Rama instantly, though Lakshmana prayed to him very humbly to wait. Durvasa threatened to unleash a curse on the entire family. Lakshmana thought that it would be better that he lost his head at the hands of Rama rather than the entire family getting cursed at the hands of Durvasa. He therefore let the sage in. Rama sent away the Sanyasi. After worshipping and discussing with Durvasa, Rama sent him away too. He then told Lakshmana: "As you violated my instruction, you deserve to be killed. But your previous acts of assistance to me prevent me. In these circumstances sacrificing you is better than killing you. I do not wish to see you now. You may go quickly wherever you wish."

Lakshmana went to a forest to the north of Ayodhya and sat on a bed of Darbha grass under a tree, facing north, in complete meditation of Rama's lotus feet. Durvasa appeared and said: **"You are none other than Sesha. You have committed two grave sins. One, you uttered strong words of condemnation against your father, King Dasaratha when Kaikeyi stopped Yuvaraja Pattabhishekam of Rama and thus offended Rama badly. Secondly, when Maya Sita was removed, you criticized dharma. For these two serious sins, you need to expiate. The expiation prescribed in Dharmasatras for sins of condemnation of dharma and Guru is to become a tree."** Lakshmana assumed mentally the nature of a tree. He looked at his own image reflected in the ruby gem in his finger ring with half-open eyes and deposited his own power in that image.

At that time an ascetic couple arrived there and prostrated and worshipped him. They said: “O Sesha, obeisance to you. We are brahmanas. We worshipped Siva for getting progeny. Siva appeared before us and asked us to meet you and take your finger ring from you. He also told us to deposit your body in Ganga waters after you have merged with Brahman. He added that we would get a son celebrated in all three worlds when a brilliant sprout like a gem would appear. We have taken refuge in you.” Lakshmana handed his ring to the couple, who became extremely happy. He abandoned his body and flew upwards in the form of a bright light. There was shower of flowers; Devas were happy. Durvasa also left for Brahmaloaka. The brahmana couple deposited Lakshmana’s body in the Ganga waters, bathed and worshipped Pitrus and Devas. Feeling satisfied, they left southwards and reached the south bank of Tamraparni. Keeping the ring handed by Lakshmana in his lap, the brahmana worshipped the Lord along with his wife. His wife became pregnant. A wonderful sprout like a gem appeared. At that time the woman gave birth to a son to the accompaniment of thundering divine music of drums. **Brahma and Devas pronounced the twelve names of Sesha – Ananta, Bhudhara, Asvapna, Manibija, Manidruma, Amrita, Atmavan, Yogi, Bhumandalasikhamani, Varada, Mudrikankura, Vanaspatikuleswara, and worshipped him.** They saw in the newborn baby the same Sesha. Sesha had become a ‘sleepless’ tamarind tree expiating for his sins by meditating on Vishnu. At the foot of the tamarind tree, they worshipped the child, who made all directions radiant and who grew with the blessings of all Devas assembled. Akasavani named him Vishvaksena and said he was born as part (amsa) of Vishnu. Vishnu came and took the child in his lap and granted him the boons of Sarupya (form like Vishnu), headship of all Parshadas. As the child was the son of the brahmana, Agnidhrut, he was

also known as Aagnidhra. Vishnu blessed him and said: “You live here for a thousand years, worshipping your parents. Grant them Moksha at the end. Reach me then.” Saying so, Vishnu vanished. **Those, who bathe in the sacred Tamraparni river, worship the tamarind tree, which is Sesha, and also Vishvaksena, are indeed Jivanmuktas.**

8. Kubera once bathed in **Vasudhara** and worshipped Vishnu and attained the nine Nidhis (treasures) – Sankha, Padma etc. Devotees bathing there and worshipping Vishnu are blessed with all wealth.

9. Once Varuna bathed in **Makarikatirtha** and prayed to Vishnu. *(His song of praise of Vishnu is given in Appendix.)* Vishnu then granted him many boons. He gave him Pasa (rope) for conquering Asuras and Makara (Fish) as vehicle. Varuna was victorious over Asuras using his Pasa and performed Rajasuya yagna. This kshetra is known as **Adi Varuna kshetra**.

Greatness of Various Tirthas and King Manasanga’s absolution

There was once a king of Panchalas, called Manasanga. He was a very learned, powerful and virtuous king. He had conquered even the eight Lokapalakas like Indra. He had a chariot capable of flying in the sky. Once he landed in the Himalayas and rested near a Sala tree. Soon his dear friend king Brihatsena happened to come there. Manasanga greeted him cordially and enquired about his welfare. Brihatsena was very sad. His Purohita informed Manasanga that Sankhaga, king of Mlechchas, had overrun his kingdom and that Brihatsena had come to take refuge in Manasanga, having left his family and companions behind. Manasanga instantly assured Brihatsena of his help and deployed Yamyastra to kill his enemy. The Astra exterminated not just the Mlechcha king

and his army, but also his womenfolk and returned to Manasanga. Manasanga reestablished Brihatsena as the king in his kingdom amidst great festivities. Manasanga returned home. In a few days' time, he suddenly developed the disease of mental instability, which grew severely in a short time.

Sage Katyayana, who came there, cured the king completely by applying sanctified Vibhuti all over his body. Asked by the king for guidance on the sin which led to the sudden and dreaded disease, the sage said: "A Gandharva was flying in his vimana with his wife. In Kimpurushavarsha, on the banks of the sacred Dadhisara river, the son of sage Uddalaka, by name Kusumabinduka, was penancing to please Vishnu. He had developed a nice garden in which he grew very fragrant flowers, which he used for decorating his wife. One day, when he entered the garden and found no flowers, he divined that the flowers had been removed by the Gandharva. He cursed the Gandharva that he, along with his wife, would turn into Mlechchas. The Gandharva fell at Kusumabinduka's feet and prayed for end of the curse. The sage replied that the curse would end when Yamyastra would attack him. The Yamyastra unleashed by you killed him and relieved him of the curse. However, the Astra, deployed by you without directly seeing the enemy, also killed thousands of women in his palace, when they were asleep. This grave sin of killing women caused your disease."

As regards expiation for the sin, sage Katyayana said: "In Brahma's creation, followers of dharma as well as adharma are present. Once in the bitter fight between the Asuric forces of adharma and the divine forces of dharma, the former were victorious. They wreaked havoc. Rishis, who were struck with fear, took refuge in Brahma. Brahma, Vishnu and Siva gathered in Meru mountain to find a proper solution. At that time, Akasavani was heard saying: "Do not fear.

I shall incarnate and drive away evil forces and establish dharma.” From the golden pond at that spot, a garland came up and dropped on the neck of Devi Ashtalakshmi. The garland then went to the neck of Gowri and Siva. Devi Tamraparni then gave it to sage Agastya. The gentle and fragrant winds from the pond drove away the evil forces and nurtured the virtuous. Devas, brahmanas and cows all became very happy. When Tamraparni is there, where is the fear? Proceed to Tamraparni today itself in Vijaya muhurta.” The king left for the Southern part of the country the same day as advised.

At the prayer of the king, Katyayana expounded the merits of worshipping at the kshetras of Tamraparni. He said: **“By bathing in the sacred river, chanting नारायण हरे शम्भो मातः पाहि तरङ्गिणी, one reaps the benefit of twelve Kruchchra expiations. By bathing in Papanasa tirtha and chanting Ashtakshara or Panchakshara mantra, and having darshan of Somanatha, in the Mesha month; by bathing in Brahmatirtham and worshipping Somesa; in Vaisakha Purnima, by bathing in Gajendravaradatirtha; one is freed of all sins. By bathing in Somatirtha and chanting Vishnusukta on Jyeshtha Sukla Dvadashi day, one gets the fruit of many baths during eclipse time and many Kruchchra expiations; by bathing in Vishnutirtha and chanting ‘Tadvishnu’ mantras, one gets the fruit of Agnishtoma yaga; by bathing in Banatirtha and chanting Gayatri mentally on Ashadha Amavasya day, one gets the fruit of Somapana; by bathing in Kshiptapushpavathi and chanting Rudrasukta on Sravana Pournami day, one gets the fruit of all yagas; on Bhadrapada Sukla Chaturdashi day, by bathing in Vaikunthakalasa and chanting names of Vishnu, one gets the benefit of Vajapeya yaga; by bathing in Durgatirtha in Asvayuja Suklapaksha Friday early in the morning and chanting Devisukta, one reaps the fruit of all yagas; by bathing in**

Gowritirtha on Vijayadashami day, one enjoys the fruit of Dana of earth; by bathing in Tamraparni's union with the ocean on Kartika Kritika day and chanting Shadakshara and Skandasukta, one gets the fruit of Dana of thousand cows.

By bathing in Vyasatirtha on Margasirsha Dvadashi day early in the morning and chanting Purushasukta, one gets the fruit of Veda Parayana; by bathing and chanting Lakshmisukta and Upanishad in the Sannidhi of Vishnu in Sripura on that Dvadashi day, one gets the fruit of Dana of crore of Kapila (tawny coloured) cows; by bathing in Putarjunapura and chanting Rudranuvaka on Pushya Pournima day in Vrishabhalagna, one becomes verily Brahman; by bathing in Makaratirtha in Pushya Suklapaksha and observing Vrata for three nights and chanting one-lettered Somamatra, one reaps the fruit of hundred Kanyadanas; by bathing in Somaranya on Sivaratri day early in the morning and chanting the six-lettered Shadakshara mantra and worshipping Somanatha, one gets the benefit of Taptakruchchra expiation; by bathing in the confluence of river Chitra on Sukla Harivasara day and chanting Sudarsana mahamantra, one gets the fruit of Mahavrata; by bathing in Mantratirtha in the confluence of river Syama on Phalguna Amavasya day and chanting the Panchakshara mahamantra, one reaps the fruit of feeding crore of brahmanas; by bathing in Ramatirtha on Rohini or Punarvasu day and chanting 'Bhadra, Bhadra', one gets freed of sins of thousands of killing of brahmanas; by bathing in Trinadi (three rivers) confluence on Krishnashtami Rohini day and chanting Hamsa Yajurveda mantra, one gets rid of all sins; by bathing in Gajendravarada tirtha on Sravana Dvadasi day, meditating on Vishnu and chanting "Brahmavidapnoti' mantra,

having fasted the previous day (Ekadashi day), one becomes verily Brahman; by bathing in Dakshinavarta in the Sannidhi of Siva and chanting Suparnakarmanuvaka, one gets rid of the sin of conspiring against Guru; by bathing on Mahodaya or Ardhodaya day in Ghatana confluence, one becomes free of the sin of killing of cow; by bathing in Chayatirtha on Gajachchaya day and chanting Aghamarshana and Varuni suktas, one is free of the sin of killing of friend; by bathing in Romasa tirtha on Mahajayanthi Rohini day and chanting Kalmashaghni mantra, one is freed of the sin of killing of foetus; by bathing in Vishnuvana on the day of yoga of Vishnu and Srinkhala, one is rid of all sins; by bathing in Brahmatirtha in Somaranya and chanting ‘Rudreti’ mantra thrice with control of breath, one gets freed of even the sin of killing of woman; by bathing for a month every year and chanting Pranava, one is rid of the sin of killing of woman; by bathing in Gandharvatirtha and chanting ‘Avate Hela’ mantras, one gets freed of sins; by bathing in Rishitirtha and chanting ‘Yaddeva Devahelana’ Anuvaka, one is freed of sins. By bathing in Brahmatirtha, Indra got rid of the sin of killing of woman, which he contracted when he killed the daughter of Purochana; he regained his kingdom by following Guru’s teaching.”

King Manasanga, along with sage Katyayana, reached Brahmatirtha, bathed as per Panchanga rules and gave away cows etc. in Dana. He then went happily to the great forest Somaranya. He worshipped the Tirthadevatas there and said: ‘Jaya Jaya, Mother, Protect me’. He bathed chanting Aghamarshana mantras and performed Tarpanas. The stick in sage Katyayana’s hand, which was rotating like a wheel all along, owing to the king’s sin having been transferred to it by the sage, became still now. The highly pleased king gave away a lot of wealth including a lakh of cows in Danas to brahmanas. There was shower of flowers

from the sky. The Gandharva Pingalaka arrived in a vimana and expressed his gratefulness and happiness to the king and handed him the wonderful Gandharvastra and divine medicated oil, which would bestow eternal youth. He added that he was ever available to help the king, whenever the king remembered him. King Manasanga embraced him lovingly. After the Gandharva left, the king prostrated to Tirthadevi, Someśa, the reclining Vishnu and went round the kshetras and worshipped Devi Tamraparni. He bathed in all tirthas from the Malaya mountain onwards upto the sea and gave away Danas and worshipped Devatas and sage Agastya. Sage Katyayana went away to his Muniloka. King Manasanga went back to his capital of Panchalas and ruled the kingdom for thirty thousand years. He then established his son in the throne and attained to Brahmaloḳa.

Greatness of the kshetra of merger of Tamraparni with Ocean

At the confluence of river Tamraparni with the ocean, the river flows in three branches. Sages eulogise them as three Agnis (Ahavaniya, Garhapatya and Dakshinagni are the three Agnis to be maintained constantly by Grihastha brahmana Agnihotri), three Vedas (Rig, Yajur and Sama) etc.

There was a beautiful and prosperous city called Chandrasala on the southern bank of river Kaveri near Sahyadri range. A brahmana named Nandaka lived there. He had a very beautiful daughter called Parnavathi. Once, when her parents were away, a great yogi called Sadyumna came to her home and asked for food, saying he was very hungry. After he had food and accepted the hospitality of Parnavathi, the highly pleased yogi taught two Vidyas to her saying that the mantras, when chanted by her, would attract the mind of anyone at whom the mantras were directed and that the man, chosen by her, would instantly fall

in love with her. Some time after this happened, Parnavathi was much attracted to a handsome youthful Muni, who she saw at a distance on the riverbank. She chanted the mantras. The Muni was compelled to approach her and he ravished her in an adjacent garden. For having obstructed his spiritual pursuits, he also cursed her to become a goblin (Pisacha). Parnavathi instantly begot a hundred sons; she and her sons were all Pisachas by the Muni's curse. She moved among forests and was laughing, crying and becoming unconscious. Yogi Sadyumna happened to see her in the forest in this condition and felt very sad. He thought: "The Vidya I taught her had gone to a wrong recipient like milk fed to a serpent. However I should rescue this girl, who fed me when I was hungry." Using his power of Tapas, he bound her with children with mantras and took her to the place of confluence of Tamraparni with the ocean. The moment she was made to take a dip in the sacred waters, she was relieved of the bondage of Pisacha. Along with her children, she fell at the Yogi's feet. Then he made her and the children bathe with proper Sankalpa to the chant of Santhisukta. Devi Tamraparni appeared before him and said: "This girl has been freed of sins through your grace. She will soon join her husband, Vatsaka, the father of these children. These children will all be healthy, great yogis, masters of Vedas and Brahmagnanis, and live a long life extending through the Kalpa. Parnavathi will enjoy life with her husband here for long and finally attain to Brahmaloaka." There was shower of Kalpaka flowers from the sky. All Devas and Rishis assembled. Vatsaka also came there and married Parnavathi as per Sastras and took her home. The children all became great Yogis as blessed by Devi Tamraparni.

The merit of the kshetra of the confluence of Tamraparni with the ocean cannot be explained in words. Siva alone knows it. Skanda, having married Devasena

and Valli, is protecting this tirtha, from his abode in **Jayanthipuram (now known as Tiruchendur)**. Those, who bathe in this holy kshetra and worship Devas, Pitrus and brahmanas, are blessed with fulfilment of all their wishes.

Conclusion

Sage Sankha, now about to conclude the discourse, said to king Virasena: “Whatever I know of Sri Tamraparni Mahatmyam, I have told you. You are indeed fortunate and blessed. You have performed a hundred yagas with ample Dakshina. You have bathed in all tirthas. On the banks of Tamraparni, you have chanted all the seven crore Mahamantras.” Sankha concluded with a beautiful Stotra of Agastya, Tamraparni, Adilakshmi and Harihara (*Nadambujam*).

King Virasena showered sage Sankha with gems and golden flowers and pearls and chanted Stotras in his praise. He bathed in all tirthas right upto the ocean and worshipped Devatas and obtained the precious grace of Sridevi. He paid obeisance to sage Agastya and his consort Lopamudra. Taking leave of Guru Sankha, he got into the golden vimana. He showed to his wife various kshetras in Pandya country, Kaveri, Tungabhadra, Krishnaveni, Srisailam, Venkatachalam, Gokarnam, Godavari, Vindhya, Reva, Ganga, Sarayu, Pushkala, Bhadra and Sharavathi and many cities and towns. He worshipped Gowri and Siva in the Himalayas and, passing through Kimpurusha Varsha, he reached his capital. He ruled the earth for three thousand years, meditating on the greatness of Tamraparni. He then handed over the rulership to his son and attained to the Supreme State.

Suta Pauranika concluded the discourse at Naimisharanya, delivered to sages Sounaka and others by saying: **“I have told you whatever Vyasa taught Suka**

and me. There is no doubt that Devi Tamraparni grants eternal Moksha to those who worship her. One, who meditates in the morning on her, will be free of poverty, illness and all sorrows. Those, who read and listen to this sacred compendium, will get rid of all sins and attain to Siva Sayujya. Those, who listen to this story with devotion, will get all their desires fulfilled – sons, wealth, long life, learning. They will enjoy freedom from fear of bad dreams, sins, diseases, enemies, serpents, goblins etc. Pitrus will get satisfied as with Sraaddha in Gaya. Brahmanas will come to them on their own and bless. One, who reads this book, gets the blessings of Vishnu, Siva and Brahma. Sage Agastya is present at the place where this book is read.”

OM TAT SAT

STOTRAS

SRIDEVI STOTRAS

Devi Stotra by Agastya and Devi's blessing (Chapter 10)

२६.कृताञ्जलिः प्रहृतनुः प्रविश्य श्रीपुरं महत् । ददर्श परमानन्दां शिवपर्यङ्कवर्तिनीम् ॥

२७.चतुर्भिः पञ्चमैः सूक्ष्मैः मेलनं यत्र दृश्यते । पञ्चकृत्यपरा यत्र पञ्चतामुपपेदिरे ॥

२८.यत्र शिवकामेश्वराङ्कस्था जयते शांभवी कला । तां दृष्ट्वा परमानन्दसन्दोहामृतरूपिणीम् ॥

२९.लोपामुद्रान्वितो धीमान् समाराध्य महेश्वरीम् । ताम्रपण्यां समायुक्तः तुष्टाव परमेश्वरीम् ॥

३०.अगस्त्यः ---अंबं जृम्भत्कृपापूरे दूरीकृतपराभवे । भवभञ्जनि रुद्राणि प्रसीद मम शांभवि ॥

३१.दुरितार्णवस्अन्तारस्त्रिस्त्वमसि देहिनाम् । मायान्धकारविध्वंसविनोदमणिदीपिके ॥

३२.यान्त्वामाहुः सदा मातः चिरन्तनगिरां ततिः । अक्षरामक्षराकारां आद्यामीडे पुरातनीम् ॥

३३.प्रसन्नजनसौभाग्यसुधासमुदयार्णवे । प्रसीद मातः प्रत्यक्षमोक्षमार्गैकदीपिके ॥

३४.महामातरसंभाव्यकर्मकालविकल्पने । कलाकलितमर्यादे तुभ्यं देव्यै नमो नमः ॥

३५.एकामनेकामेकस्थां शोकापायां निरामयीम् । त्वामाहुः श्रुतयो वाचां तान्त्वां अन्तरुपास्महे ॥

३६.मायां अन्ये पराम् अन्ये परे शंसन्ति शांभवीम् । सन्तः स्वच्छन्दचारित्रां तमहन्तान्ममः पराम्
॥ ३७.स्तुत्यं सत्यं परं प्राप्य ध्येयमर्च्यमहर्निशम् । यन्महस्तरुणीरूपं स्रोतामाराधये पुरः ॥

३८.मय्यनन्यगते मातः प्रसीद वरदेवते । प्रसीद विश्वजननि प्रसीद् प्रणवात्मिके ॥

३९.विभक्तननाविधचक्रकोणे पाणिस्थलालङ्कृतपञ्चबाणे । प्रपन्नसन्तानलते प्रसीद
प्रकृष्टपाशाङ्कुशपद्महस्ते ॥

४०.मातःप्रसीद मलयाचलपद्मपीठे मायाविशेषकलया रचितप्रपञ्चे ।

पञ्चप्रपञ्चेश्वरमञ्चसंस्थे मह्यं महःकल्पय मातराशु ॥

४२.श्री देवी ---अभिनन्द्य मुनिश्रेष्ठमपि तद्धर्मचारिणीम् । त्वदागमनतोऽप्येषा स्तुतिर्मे हृषदायिनी ॥

४३.आह्लादयति मे चित्तं चकोरमिव चन्द्रिका । त्वयानीता ताम्रपर्णी त्वत्कृतेयं स्तुतिस्तथा ॥

४४.आह्लादयेतां भुवनं समन्तात् मधुनुग्रहात् । एषा नदी ताम्रपर्णी जलशक्तिर्मदात्मिका ॥

४५.मम तुष्टिकरी चैषा वाङ्मयी तीर्थदेवता । उभयत्र कृतस्नाताः पूतात्मानो भवन्ति हि ॥

४६.वस्तव्या भवता चैव पत्न्या सह महामुने । त्वयेदं सकलं सौख्यमुपयातु जगत्त्रयम् ॥

४७.त्वयि स्थिते ताम्रपर्ण्या सरिता मुनिपुङ्गव । सिद्धक्षेत्रं भवेत् स्थानं समन्तात् दशयोजनम् ॥

४८.अस्मिन् देशे मत्प्रसादात् विप्लवो न भवेत् नृणाम् । दुर्मिक्षभयसन्तापाः तथारिष्टादयः परे ॥

४९.कदाचिदपि मा सन्तु मास्तु लोके पराभवः । सर्वे च सुखिनः सन्तु सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः ॥

५०.मा विशन्तु जनं पापाः पराभवः भवादयः । स्वस्त्यस्तु सर्वजगतां चिरं जीवन्तु जन्तवः ॥

५१.भवन्तु तव भद्राणि मत्प्रसादात् महामुने । अद्य पुण्यतमे लग्ने मुहूर्ते विजयाभिते ॥

५२.एषा महानदी पुण्या प्रयातु वरुणालयम् । अस्याः तीरद्वये देवी श्रीर्नित्यात्वनपायिनी ॥

५३.फलन्तु सर्वसस्यानि फलानि विविधान्यपि । समन्ततो महानद्याः पुष्पान्त्यौषधयः परे ॥

Rishis' Stotra of Devi Durga (Chapter 5)

जय देवि महादेवि महामङ्गलदायिनि । प्रसीदत सीदतां नः त्वं परित्राणाय पार्वति ॥

२४.शूलखट्वाङ्गमुसलविनिष्पिष्टारिसनिके । प्रसीद सीदतां नः त्वं परित्राणाय पार्वति ॥

२५.त्वयांब सकला दैत्याः भक्षिता रणसंकटे । प्रसीदत सीदतां नः त्वं परित्राणाय पार्वति ॥

२६.त्वत्कराग्रलसत्शूलदलिताः दानवाः पुरा । रक्षणायैव लोकानं सा कृपा क्व गतांबिके ॥

२७.सिंहनादविनादेन मोहिता दैत्यदानवाः । रक्षणायैव लोकानां सा कृपा क्व गतांबिके ॥

२८.दंष्ट्राकरालवदनं दृष्ट्वा ते मूर्च्छिताः परे । रक्षणायैव लोकानां सा कृपा क्व गतांबिके ॥

- २९.अस्मान् पाहि भयात् भीतान् अनाथान् भक्तवत्सले । अविलंबं दयापात्रं विधेहि भुवनत्रयम् ॥
- ३०.लीलयैव विहन्त्री त्वं दैत्यानां कीर्तिभञ्जनी । अविलंबं दयापात्रं विधेहि भुवनत्रयम् ॥
- ३१.त्वदस्त्रवित्रस्तबलं दैत्यानां क्षणभङ्गुरम् । तान् उदस्यासि दुर्गे त्वं भक्तानां हितकांयया ॥
- ३२.त्वया जगदिदं विश्वं समये पाल्यते भयात् । तया नः पाहि कल्याणि प्रसूः पुत्रानिव स्वयम् ॥
- ३३.तुभ्यं नमः सर्वजगत्सवित्री वित्रास्य पापान् अमरारिवर्गान् ।

आप्तं जनं पाहि भवानि भद्रे रुद्राणि भद्रे करुणे पुराणि ॥

King Agnivarna's Stotra of Devi Durga (Chapter 34)

- जगद्देवि जगद्धात्रि दैत्यदानवहारिणि । जय जम्भान्तकनुते विशीर्णविमदोदये ॥
- १०.मातः प्रसीद चामुण्डे दण्डिताशेषदानवे । दुर्गे दुर्गार्तिमथने मातर्मयि दयां कुरु ॥
- ११.हरनारायणमुखैरमरैरभिवादिते । मयि प्रसीद विश्वेशि विश्वरक्षाविचक्षणे ॥
- १२.माये मायावहे मातः मङ्गलानां च मङ्गले । त्राहि त्राहि भयत्रस्तं संसारार्णवसंप्लवात् ॥
- १३.स्वभावकरुणापूरतरङ्गितविलोचने । वञ्चितासुरसंघाते वरदा मे भवाम्बिके ॥
- १४.त्वदपाङ्गलोकां च कलया ये परिष्कृताः । उभयत्रापि ते धन्याः त्वमतो मे गतिर्भव ॥
- १५.त्वामाहुः कमलां दुर्गां श्रुतयो भारतीमुमाम् । प्रभामर्केन्दुवह्नीनां त्वमतो मे गतिर्भव ॥
- १६.त्वया ततमितं सर्वं हेतुशक्तिः त्वमेकिका । त्वया सञ्जीवितं मातः त्वमतो मे गतिर्भव ॥

१७.त्वं त्रयी त्रिपदी त्वं हि हविर्हव्यवहः क्रतुः । इज्या त्वं यजमान त्वं त्वमतो मे गतिर्भव ॥

१८.अम्ब प्रसीद परमेशचरिपारिजातवल्लीमुशन्ति वचनानि मुहुः श्रुतीनाम् ।

पादाम्बुजद्वयपरागपरायणानां तां त्वां व्रजामि शरणं भव सुप्रसन्ना ॥

DEVI TAMRAPARNI STOTRAS

Yama's Stotra of Devi Tamraparni (Chapter 25)

अहो महोदयमिदं श्रुतं मे चिरकालतः । कृतानि सुकृतान्यत्र फलितानि न संशयः ॥

३२.यस्याः श्रवणमात्रेण मुच्यन्ते जन्तवो भयात् । तामिदं त्वत्प्रसङ्गेन शृणोमि श्रुतिलालिताम् ॥

३३.यामाहुः श्रुतयो नित्यं पापघ्नीं मलयात्मजाम् । स्तुवन्ति मुनयो नित्यं निष्पापाः पावनीं च ताम् ॥

३४.यत्र वेदाश्च मन्त्राश्च क्रतवो ब्रह्मचोदिताः । यत्पयःकणिकामात्र पवित्रीकृतमूर्तयः ॥

३५.यत्प्रवाहेन या पूताः मूर्तयःखलु कीर्तयः । यत्तोयममृतं प्राहुः ब्रह्मात्मकमकल्मषम् ॥

३६.यत्र नारायणः साक्षात् वटुरूपेण वर्तते । इरावती धेनुमती परुष्णी भवनी सुधा ॥

३७.अरुणा चेति वेदान्तवचोभिः परिगीयते । यत्तीर्थपरिणामेन जायन्ते मणयो भुवि ॥

३८.सदाशिवेन नियता कण्ठाभरणमालिका । विष्णुचूडामणिरियं हल्लेखा भारतीपतेः ॥

३९.अदृश्या सर्वभूतानामादिशक्तिरनामया । प्रार्थिता शङ्करेणादौ तीर्थाकारा प्रदृश्यते ॥

४०.तां नुमः परमानन्दजननीं मलयात्मजाम् । पुरतःपातु मां नित्यं पापघ्नी ललितेश्वरी ॥

- ४१.पृष्ठतः सततं पातु पाटीराचलकन्यका । दक्षिणे चाक्षुषी नित्या वामा माणिक्यगर्भिणी ॥
- ४२.अधस्तात् उपरिष्ठात् च पातु मां पद्मगर्भिणी । दिवानिशं महादेवीं ताम्रपर्णीं स्मराम्यहम् ॥
- ४३.स्मरामि सायं प्रातः तां सावित्रीं तीर्थदेवताम् ।

Brahmachari's Stotra of Devi Tamraparni (Chapter 26)

प्रसीद मातर्माहेशि मलयाद्रिसमुद्रवे ॥

- ४१.महापातकजंभालपरिशोषणभास्करे । पापान्धकारसंघातभञ्जनैकार्कमण्डले ॥
- ४२.परितापापहे भास्वन्महामणिमहोदये । कल्याणि कमलावासे महामलयनन्दिनि ॥
- ४३.मायाजालमहाध्वान्तपरिपन्थिपयःकणे । धर्मद्रवे भगवति भवज्वालापहारिणि ॥
- ४४.प्रसीद प्रणवाकारे प्राक्तने तारकोदये । ताम्रपर्णि जगन्मातः प्रसीद मयि सन्ततम् ।
- ४५.जन्महारिणि जन्तूनां पापहारिणि मज्जताम् । भयहारिणि भक्तानां भोगदे पुण्यकर्मणाम् ॥
- ४६.कुंभसंभवसौभाग्यसाधने कामदोहिनि । पापघ्नि भवपङ्कग्नि परमानन्ददायिनि ॥
- ४७.पाटीरशैलतनये पवित्रे ते नमो नमः । सस्ततीर्थजननि समानाधिकवर्जिते ॥
- ४८.अनादिशक्तिसंभूते पूवे पूर्वे नमो नमः । स्वर्गसोपानसुभगैः तरङ्गैरुपशोभिते ॥
- ४९.आवर्तरूपैः प्रणवैरभिरामे नमो नमः । त्रिलोकजननीशानहृदयाब्जविहारिणि ॥
- ५०.विधातृविष्णुसंभाव्ये तीर्थमातर्नमोऽस्तु ते । त्वदङ्घ्रिभक्तिरच्छिन्ना मयि भूयान्निरन्तरा ॥

- ५१.त्वदन्यत्र मनो मे स्यान्न कदाचित् दयात्मिके । त्वत्तीरे वसतिर्भूयात् त्वत्पादजलसेवया ॥
- ५२.आनन्दबाष्पपूर्णाभ्यामक्षिभ्यां त्वां विलोकये । त्वत्कथामृतपूरेण पूरये श्रवणद्वयम् ॥
- ५३.मनसा भावयिष्यामि मातस्त्वामेव सन्ततम् । ममेन्द्रियाणि सर्वाणि सदा सेवनपूजने ॥
- ५४.मामनन्यगतिं भक्तं मा मुञ्च मलयात्मजे । महामङ्गलदे देवि मातर्मयि दयां कुरु ॥
- ५५.त्वां विश्वस्य वसाम्यम्ब त्वन्नस्त्राणकरी परा । अन्यां गतिं न पश्यामि त्वयैव मम जीवनम् ॥

Aditi's Stotra of Devi Tamraparni (Chapter 28)

या शक्तिरन्तर्जागर्ति लोकानां प्राणरूपिणी ।

या पुनर्जीवनाख्या स्यात् ताम् त्वाहं शरणं गता ॥

- ५६.गायन्ति श्रुतयो नित्यं तीर्थरूपां मरुद्वधाम् । तां त्वामखिलतत्त्वार्था माहेयीमाश्रये श्रियम् ॥
- ५७.हेतुरादावशेषस्य जीवनत्वे व्यवस्थिता । मृत्युः प्राणभृतां भूयो यदंशेन प्रवर्तितः ॥
- ५८.अनादिशक्तिरव्यग्रा निग्रहानुग्रहक्षमा । सा त्वं लोकहितायैव जाता हि मलयात्मजा ॥
- ५९.मन्त्रसक्तिं प्रशंसन्ति सन्तः कर्मकलां पुनः । त्वमेव फलदा लोके तीर्थमातर्नमोऽस्तु ते ॥
- ६०.शिवः शिवान्वितो भूरि तपसाराध्य माधवि । त्वामेव लब्धवान् आदौ तस्मात् त्वां शरणं ब्रजे ॥
- ६१.मालेयी मलया नन्दा गङ्गा भागीरथीति च । घृतधारा परुष्णीति पठ्यसे त्वं पुरातनैः ॥
- ६२.प्रसीद मलयानन्दे ताप्रे मातः प्रसीद मे । अब्धिपत्नि नमस्तुभ्यं नमस्तुभ्यं नमो नमः ॥

Durvasa's Stotra of Tamraparni (Chapter 42)

मलयाचल संभूते मलयानिलसोदरि । मरुद्वधे महाभागे मङ्गलानि प्रयच्छ मे ॥

६१.नारायणि शिवे गङ्गे गौरीदेहसमुद्भवे । सर्वपापहरे मातः तुभ्यं नित्यं नमो नमः ॥

६२.महापापपरिप्लुष्टं देहं मम तवाम्भसा । क्षालयामि जगन्मातः मह्यम् नित्यं प्रसीद मे ॥

Kachavathi's Stotra of Tamraparni (Chapter 47)

कल्याणि कलिपङ्कधे कन्दलत्करुणाशये । सदाशिवहृदावासे सायुज्यं संप्रयच्छ मे ॥

८७.गङ्गाद्यशेषालिलालितामृतवाहिनि । सदाशिवहृदावासे सायुज्यं संप्रयच्छ मे ॥

८८.ब्रह्मविष्णुमहेशेशसदाशिवमनोरथे । मलयाद्रिसमुद्भूते मार्गं देहि महेश्वरि ॥.

SIVA STOTRAS

Agastya's Stotra of Siva (Chapter 16)

--नमः कल्याणवेषाय कलिकल्मषनाशिने ॥

७१.नमो विहारिणे विश्वविबुधानां हृदयङ्गणे । नमः स्वान्तनिवासाय शान्तानां समचेतसाम् ॥

७२.असाधारणकृत्याय नमस्ते कृत्तिवाससे । नीलग्रीवाय नित्याय निस्समाप्त्युदयात्मने ॥

७३.परवामामार्धवपुषे नमः क्षेमङ्कराय ते । अर्धं मरकताकारमर्धस्फटिकसन्निभम् ॥

७४.अद्वैतमपि यत्तेजो द्वैतीभूतं नमो नमः । कान्तं कल्याणनिलयं कलिताशेषकौतुकम् ॥

७५.कन्दर्पकोटिलावण्यं युवानं साम्बमीश्वरम् । मङ्गलाय महस्तोमप्रस्तुताश्चर्यरूपिणे ॥

७६.गौरीनाथाय नाथाय नमस्सोमार्धधारिणे । शिवाय परिपूर्णाय पूर्णानन्दाय वेधसे ॥

७७.महावृषभवाहाय महादेवाय ते नमः । शूलिने नीलकण्ठाय फालचन्द्रावतंसिने ॥

७८.भवाय भवनाशाय पशूनां पतये नमः । जय नाथ कृपादृष्ट्या वत्सं सेचय मां प्रभो ॥

७९.मा मुञ्च पादयुगलात् अनाथं त्वत्परिग्रहम् । एकस्मात् आगसो द्वाभ्यां त्रिभ्यो वा रक्ष मां मुहुः ॥

८०.बहुभ्यो हि महादेव मां पाहि करुणानिधे । त्वत्सन्निधिविधानेन हृष्टोऽस्मि नितरां विभो ॥

८१.आह्लादय कृपादृष्ट्या वृष्ट्या भुवमिवाम्बुदः । घर्मतप्तोऽध्वगोध्वानमतीत्य बहुयोजनम् ॥

८२.अङ्घ्रिपङ्केरुहच्छायमाप्तं पाहि जगद्गुरो । नवेद्वि त्वत्पदाम्भोजात् अपरं दैवतं परम् ॥

८३.अत एव महादेव त्वामस्मि शरणं गतः । प्रसीद गौरीनाथ त्वं प्रसीद गिरिजापते ॥

८४.प्रसीद सततं मह्यं नाथ कान्तिमतीपते । नमो वेणुवनेशाय महाकल्याणरूपिणे ॥

७५.हाटकाम्भोजिनीतीरवासिने शूलिने नमः । ताम्रातरङ्गसङ्क्लिन्नपादाम्भोजाय ते नमः ॥

८६.ब्रह्मवृद्धपुरीशाय पूर्वपूर्वाय ते नमः ।

Agastya's Stotra of Putarjuneswara Siva (Chapter 17)

ओं नमस्सर्वभूतानां सृष्टिस्थित्यन्तकारिणे ॥

८२.सर्वकारणरूपाय तरुकोटरवासिने । हरिनेत्रार्पितं देवं हालाहलविषादकम् ॥

८३.आश्रिताभ्युदयं नित्यं पुटार्जुनमुपास्महे । सुगन्धं सुन्दरं शुभ्रं सोमाकलितमौलिकम् ॥

८४.परानन्दरसाभिख्यं पुटार्जुनमुपास्महे । गङ्गाधरं शशिधरं गौर्या वामार्धविग्रहम् ॥

८५.वासुदेवप्रियं शान्तं पुटार्जुनमुपास्महे । कालकालं (शूल)कलाधरं भवं भक्तभयापहम् ॥

८६.पार्वतीसहितं भव्यं पुटार्जुनमुपास्महे । मोक्षस्थानं मुमुक्षूणां भोगस्थानं तु भोगिनम् ॥

८७.उमादेहार्धशम्भुं तं पुटार्जुनमुपास्महे । रवीन्दुवहिनयनं रामारमणवन्दितम् ॥

८८.कर्पूरगौरं पुरुषं पुटार्जुनमुपास्महे । प्रमाणं प्रणवार्थानां कान्तं कान्तार्धविग्रहम् ॥

८९.रविकोटीप्रतीकाशं पुटार्जुनमुपास्महे । शङ्खकुन्देन्दुसङ्काशं कर्पूरोदारविग्रहम् ॥

९०.कन्दलत्करुणामूर्तं पुटार्जुनमुपास्महे । नमश्शिवायामलविग्रहाय नताभिलाषैकसुरद्रुमाय ॥

९१.नवेन्द्रवृषोदरवाहनाय नमो नमश्चन्द्रविभूषणाय ।

Agastya's Stotra of Goshtiswara Siva (Chapter 18)

देवदेव महादेव भक्तानामार्तिभञ्जन । पुराणदेव देवेश गोष्ठीश्वर नमोऽस्तु ते ॥

३५.धर्मार्थकाममोक्षाणां संप्रदानाय शङ्कर । सान्निध्यं कुरु चैवात्र गोष्ठीश्वर नमोऽस्तु ते ॥

३६.ताम्रपर्णीनदीमध्ये सन्निधीभव सन्ततम् । तीर्थरूपी भवानीश गोष्ठीश्वर नमोऽस्तु ते ॥

३७.नमस्त्रैलोक्यनाथाय त्रयीनाथाय शम्भवे । त्रिपुरान्तकरूपाय गोष्ठीश्वरनमोऽस्तु ते ॥

३८.ब्रह्मोपेन्द्रयोगीन्द्रपूजिताङ्घ्रिसरोरुहे । कामारे पार्वतीकान्त गोष्ठीश्वर नमोऽस्तु ते ॥

३९.विश्वात्मन् सर्वविश्वेश विश्वसंरक्षणक्षम । विश्वमूर्ते विरूपाक्ष गोष्ठीश्वर नमोऽस्तु ते ॥

४०.ब्रह्मादिपञ्चरूपेण पञ्चकृत्यविधायिने । पञ्चब्रह्मस्वरूपाय गोष्ठीश्वर नमोऽस्तु ते ॥

४१.पञ्चपातकनाशाय पार्वतीसहिताय च । सगणाय सपुत्राय गोष्ठीश्वर नमोऽस्तुते ॥

४२.ताम्रानदीतीरसुभूषणाय समाश्रितानां च सुखप्रदाय ।

नित्याय शुद्धाय निरूपमाय श्रीगोष्ठीनाथाय नमःशिवाय ॥

४३.भस्माङ्गरागाय करीन्द्रचर्मकृतोत्तरीयाय नमःशिवाय ।

वृषेन्द्रवाहाय वृषध्वजाय श्रीगोष्ठीनाथाय नमःशिवाय ॥

४४.नमःशिवायामलचित्तवासप्रियाय नागेन्द्रसुभूषणाय ।

वामार्धगौरीपरिरम्भणाय श्री गोष्ठीनाथाय नमःशिवाय ॥

४५.अद्य मे सफलं जन्म अद्य मे सफलं तपः । अद्य मे सफलं ज्ञानं शम्भो त्वत्पादसेवनात् ॥

४६.कृतार्थोऽहं कृतार्थोऽहं कृतार्थोऽहं महेश्वर । अद्य ते पादपद्मस्य दर्शनात् भक्तवत्सल ॥

४७.वयं धन्या वयं धन्या वयं धन्या जगत्त्रये । आदिदेवो महादेवः यदस्मत् कुलदैवतम् ॥

४८.शिवश्शम्भुश्शिवश्शम्भुः शिवश्शम्भुश्शिवश्शिवः । इति व्याहरतो नित्यं दिनान्यायान्तु यान्तु मे ॥

४९.शिवे भक्तिः शिवे भक्तिः शिवे शिवे । सदा भूयात् सदा भूयात् सदा भूयात् सदा मम ॥

Devi Tamraparni's Stotra of Siva (Chapter 21)

भवाय भवनाशाय नमः पापापहारिणे । परिपूर्णाय पूर्णेन्दुवदनाय नमो नमः ॥

६९.नमो विश्वाय पतये विश्वरक्षाविनोदिने । वेदवेदान्तवेद्याय नमस्ते विदितात्मने ॥

७०.शर्वाय निर्विकाराय शंभवे वेधसे नमः । गङ्गाधराय गौराय गिरीशाय नमो नमः ॥

७१.पापघ्नाय भयघ्नाय परञ्जोतिस्वरूपिणे । विरूपाक्षाय वीराय विधात्रे ब्रह्मणे नमः ॥

७२.अव्यक्तव्यक्तरूपाय व्यक्तिविन्याससाक्षिणे । विश्वरक्षाध्वरैकान्तदीक्षिताय नमो नमः ॥

७३.नमः सोमावतंसाय धात्रे भस्माङ्गरागिणे । गिरीशायाखिलेशाय पापनाशाय ते नमः ॥

७४.कर्मणे निर्मिताशेषभुवनघ्नाय हारिणे । विश्वत्राणाय वीराय कालरुद्राय ते नमः ॥

७५.नमः पापविनाशाय पापनाशाय शंभवे । पातकध्वान्तरवये शिवयाश्लिष्ट मूर्तये ॥

७६.नमो नमस्तुभ्यं नमस्तुभ्यं पिनाकिने । नमस्तुभ्यं नमस्तुभ्यं नमस्तुभ्यं नमो नमः ॥

७७.शिवशंभो महादेव देवदेव सदाशिव । जग्न्नाथ जगन्नाथ पापनाश नमो नमः ॥

Kasyapa's Stotra of Siva (Chapter 29)

नतोऽस्म्यहं नाथ नवेन्दुभूषणं सदाशिवं त्वां सकलस्य हेतुकम् ॥

२१.यदङ्घ्रिपङ्केरुहसंस्मृतिर्जयत्यशेषमोक्षैकनिधान दीपिका ।

शिखापिरन्तश्रुतिकल्पशाखिनामविश्रमोच्चावचमन्त्रपल्लवैः ॥

२२.प्रसाद्यते त्वत्पदपद्ममीश यत् त्वदन्यतः क्वापि न यातु मे मनः ।

महेश माया तव विश्वमोहिनी न लङ्घ्यते ब्रह्मपुरन्दराभिः ॥

२३.तथापि मा त्वत्करुणैकभाजनं पराभविष्यत्वभवाय न क्वचित् ।

तवेश निष्यन्दमिदं त्वया जगद्ध्वजस्त्वमङ्गीकुरुते चराचरैः ॥

२४.तथापि सैषा मयि भूयसी भवेत् चकोरसङ्गे शसिनो यथा रुचिः ।

अशक्तमप्यन्तरलीलया जगत् यथैव शक्त्या विमलीकरोषि यत् ॥

२५.दयैव मे चेतसि सन्ततं श्रिया कुरुष्व लीलां भव पार्वतीपते ।

बिभेमि भीमात् विषयान् महाविषान् महेश विश्वादिविषापहन् विभो ॥

२६.मदीयमित्येवमनुस्मरन् जनं त्रिधापथः त्रातुमिहार्हसीश्वर ।

अलं परिश्राम्य भवार्णवोदरे दुराशया ह भ्रमते पुनःपुनः ॥

२७.इतः परञ्चाहवभीतभञ्जनं निरञ्जनं यामि विभो भवत्पदम् ।

विभक्तनानागुणकर्मरूपिणा न जन्मना प्राणिसुखा कृतापि मे ॥

२८.अपत्यदारादिभयादुपागतं विभोऽनुगृहीष्व महेश मामितः ।

दयानिधे देव दिवानिशं भयादयातयामः तव भृत्यमेव माम् ॥

२९.अतर्कितापातदयाविलोकनैः परं परित्राहि सुतानिव प्रसूः ।

उमापते विश्वपते सतां पते पते पशूनामपि रुद्र वाक्पते ॥

३०.प्रसीद सान्द्राभ्युदयप्रसन्नया दृशा यया विश्वमिदं हि मङ्गलम् ।

न कर्मणा न प्रजया न संपदा नयोगसिध्या न मनः समाधिभिः ॥

३१.परं न पश्यन्ति पदं तव दर्शनां विनापि भक्तिं भगवन् प्रसीद ताम् ।

परःशतैः जन्मभिरन्वहं भयात् पुनःपुनः श्रान्तिमुपेयुषा मया ॥

३२.अभङ्गुरानन्दसुतो दयोदयां तवाङ्घ्रिपङ्केरुहमाप्तमद्य हि ।

कथञ्चिदापन्नमनुग्रहेण मे नमोक्तुमर्हस्यविलंबमेव भो ॥

३३.स्तनन्धयं स्वं विषमस्थमप्यहो जनन्यनाश्रयात्मजं यथा ।

अखण्डकपूरवलक्षमेकतः परस्थकस्तूरिकया समप्रभम् ॥

३४.वपुस्तवेदं वृषभध्वजावृतं न यातु चित्तातपरत्र मामकात् ।

नमः पुराणाय पुराणमूर्तये नमोस्त्वनान्तवधूकुटुंबिने ॥

३५.अनामगोत्राय जगत्रयोदयस्थितिक्षयोल्लासकटाक्षवर्चसे ।

प्रसीद गौरीश निशाविटार्भक प्रगल्भकोटीरकुटुंबिभोगिने ॥

३६.द्युसिन्धुसन्धुक्षितकैशिकाय ते सदाशिवायामृतमूर्तये नमः ।

Pramoda's Stotra of Siva (Chapter 30)

प्रायः प्रपन्नार्तिहरोऽसि नाथ प्रपन्नसर्वेन्द्रियवृत्तिभाजाम् ।

अमुक्तसान्निध्यकरो बुधानां अतः त्वमन्यं शरणं न पश्ये ॥

११५.प्रवातशीलः प्रहतेषु नित्यं प्रसिद्धमेतत् वचनं त्रयीषु ।

अनर्चतो मे कृपणस्य शम्भो कृपाकरोऽयं तदहो विचित्रम् ॥

११६.उपेयुषामेव तनोति कामं सुरद्रुमश्रोत्र कथं न दृष्टम् ।

पादारविन्दोऽनुस्मरणोनुतापी दूरे ममानुग्रहकृत् विचित्रम् ॥

११७.पवित्रितं जन्मजगत्त्रयो यत् त्वया कृपालोचनपातितस्य ।

ममाधुना मङ्गलपुण्यपूर्णा स्वयं समानन्दसुसंपदो यत् ॥

११८.नमःशिवाय च शुभहेतुहेतवे सुधांशुचूडामणये नमो नमः ।

नगात्मजालिङ्गितचारुमूर्तये सहस्रकृत्वः प्रणतोऽस्मि नित्यम् ॥

११९.गिरीश विश्वेशाधुना पुनीहि पुण्येन कृपाक्षिवर्चसा ।

पुरत्रयध्वंसनपुञ्जितश्रीः किमद्भुतं भूरुहमात्रतक्षणम् ॥

१२०.वृषाङ्क विश्वाधिक भर्ग ते पादांबुजाराधानभाग्यदायिना ।

विलोकनेनाशु विलोकयाधुना प्रपन्नमेनम् जनमार्तिभञ्जन ॥

१२१.शंभो तवालम् जनितानिलभागधेयमन्ते विचिन्तयति विश्वमिदं समस्तम् ।

त्वय्यद्भुतामधुना तरुमात्रदाहलीला कोपभरात् दयालो ॥

१२२.प्रसीद मयि सन्ततं प्रमथनाथगाथेतर प्रवाह करुणांबुधे प्रणतिभाति पापाहन् ।

अकालविलयागमव्यसनशङ्कुशङ्कावतामपाकुरु भयामयं स्वपदसेविनां मा चिरम् ॥

Manigriva's Stotra of Bhairava Siva (Chapter 35)

नमः सर्वजगत्कर्त्रे पित्रे प्रकृतिसाक्षिणे । भैरवाय परानन्दनिधये वेधसे नमः ॥

७९.नियन्त्रे सर्वलोकानां निगमागममूर्तये । भैरवाय परानन्दनिधये वेधसे नमः ॥

८०.रोगशोकभयक्लेशमोहतामिस्रभास्वते । भैरवाय परानन्दनिधये वेधसे नमः ॥

८१.प्रसीद मन्त्रागमतीर्थदेवताक्रतुक्रियाक्षेत्रविशेषरूपिणे ।

भवाय पापक्षयहेतवे सतां नमो नमो भैरवभद्रमूर्तये ॥

Pravalamanjari's Stotra of Siva (Chapter 43)

द्वैतीभूय जगत् पाति तस्मै पूर्णाय ते नमः ॥

१२५.पुरातनाय पुण्याय पुरुषार्थप्रदायिने । पुरान्तकाय भूतानाम् पतये स्थाणवे नमः ॥

१२६.एकतः पुरुषाकारमेकतः महिलात्मकम् । प्रपञ्चपितरं वन्दे वन्दे विश्वैकमातरम् ॥

१२७.क्वचित् कर्बुरवर्णाय क्वचित् कुङ्कुममूर्तये । नीलग्रीवाय देवाय निष्कलाय नमो नमः ॥

१२८.त्वमादौ रजसाविष्टः सत्वेनासौ जगत्स्थितिः । त्वमेवान्ते तु तावात्मन् त्वामहं शरणं गतः ॥

१२९.त्वामाहुः श्रुतयः सत्यमव्यक्तं व्यक्तमेव च । तस्मात् त्वां जगदाधारं प्रणतोऽस्मि सदाशिवम् ॥

१३०.तत्तत्कर्मफलप्राप्त्यै यदाज्ञारूढमौलिनः । ब्रह्माद्याः सकलाः देवाः तस्मै पूर्णात्मने नमः ॥

१३१.नमश्शिवाय शान्ताय नमस्सोमार्धधारिणे । नमस्सकलकल्याणसौभाग्यामरशाखिने ॥

१३२.शेखरीकृतपीयूषनिधये निधये नमः । यदेकममलं ब्रह्मनिर्गुणं परमाद्भुतम् ॥

१३३.नमः पराय सर्वेषां भास्कराय नमो नमः ।

Kumbhataka's Stotra of Siva (Chapter 48)

नमो नमस्ते लोकानामादिकर्त्रे महात्मने ॥

५६.धर्माकाराय साराय श्रुतीनामात्मने नमः । त्वां भजन्तः तथा भक्त्या स्तुवन्ति त्वां सुरासुराः ॥

५७.ध्यायन्ति योगिनः स्वान्ते त्वामेव च परात्परम् । त्वत्कृपालोककणिकालाभमात्रेण जन्तवः ॥

५८.जगत् क्षोभयितुं कर्तुं त्रातुं पटुतराभवन् । त्वन्मुखान्निर्गता वेदा मर्यादां व्यक्तयन्ति ते ॥

५९.तेषु तेषु च वर्तन्ते त्वदाज्ञागौरवाय ते । येषां त्वं विमुखो देवो ते वै सीदन्ति सर्वदा ॥

६०.त्वदालम्बनयोगेन सिद्धयोऽष्टौ न संशयः । ऐहिकामुष्मिकौ मार्गौ त्वत्सृष्टौ लोकहेतवे ॥

६१.नमः पूर्वाय पूर्वाणां पुरुषाय महात्मने । वृषाय वृषरूपाय वेदरूपाय ते नमः ॥

६२.त्वच्छक्त्या धार्यते सर्वं त्वल्लीलाकलनात्मकम् । त्वं विष्णुस्त्वं शिवो ब्रह्मा त्वं मित्रो वरुणो यमः ॥

६३.त्वं गुणैः त्रिगुणाभिख्यां बिभर्षि कलया स्वया । प्रसीद देवदेवेश प्रसीद परमेश्वर ॥

६४.पाहि पापार्णवाद्भीतं भक्तं मां शरणागतम् । नमो नमःकारणकारणाय ते कलाविशेषैः
कलिताखिलात्मने ।

६५.प्रसीद विश्वेश्वर विश्वमूर्ते प्रसीद देवेश दयासुधानिधे ॥

Shadjapala's (Gandharva's) Stotra of Siva (Chapter 49)

नमो नमस्समाजानां पतये पापहारिणे ॥

१३०.पशूनां पतये तुभ्यं मन्त्राणां पतये नमः । महते महतां नित्यं अणूनामप्यणीयसे ॥

१३१.तेजीयसे तेजसां हि परस्मै ब्रह्मणे नमः । आर्तानामार्तिशमनमशेषाभीष्टदायकम् ॥

१३२.उमासखमहं वन्दे वन्द्यमानं सुरासुरैः । देवदेव दयासिन्धो गङ्गाधर पुरान्तक ॥

१३३.शरणं त्वां प्रपन्नोऽस्मि त्राहि मां दुःखसागरात् । नमस्सोमाय सोमार्धजटाचूडाय ते नमः ॥

१३४.पापघ्नाय मखघ्नाय दुःखघ्नाय नमो नमः । त्रिशूलिने महेशाय महामोहापहाय च ॥

१३५.नमो रुद्राय गौराय गौरीनाथाय ते नमः । नमो ब्रह्मस्वरूपाय नमस्ते विष्णुरूपिणे ॥

१३६.नमो रुद्रस्वरूपाय त्रिमूर्तिप्रेषितात्मने । अन्तराय तमस्तोमभेदिने भानवे नमः ॥

१३७.भक्तभाग्यमहाम्मोधिसुधादीधितिमूर्तये । मृत्युञ्जयाय रुद्राय नीलण्ठायशम्भवे ॥

१३८.अमृतेशाय शर्वाय महादेवाय ते नमः । अपराधशतोद्भूतनानासुकृतवर्त्मनि ॥

१३९.क्षमाकर दयासिन्धो देवदेव जगत्पते ।

Shadjapala's (Gandharva's) Stotra of Jyotischakra Siva (Chapter 50)

ओं तत्प्रपद्ये यदशेषपूर्णं तेजस्तमस्तोमहरं परस्तात् ॥

३१.अपारमानन्दघनार्णवौपममहेतुवीताश्रयमप्रतर्क्यम् ।

अतीन्द्रिये रागविशेषकल्पनाविशुद्धचित्तां पुरुहोतरालयम् ॥

३२. यदागमैर्वा नियमैरुपास्यते तदस्तु नो वस्तु पुरःपुरातनम् ।

पुरातनैरागमगर्भनिर्णयप्रगल्भविज्ञानविशुद्धबुद्धिभिः ॥

३३. सनन्दनन्दादिभिरादियोगिभिः विभाव्यमस्माकमिदं पुरो भवेत् ।

यदक्षरं चैवमचिन्त्यवैभवं भवार्णवोद्धारणकल्पितप्लवम् ॥

३४. शुभाय भूयात् पुरतः पुरातनैः अधिष्ठितं योगिवरप्रमाद्यतः ।

अलं परिभ्राम्य भवार्णवोदरे ममैषणाग्राहवती दुरुत्तरे ॥

३५. त्वदङ्घ्रिपङ्केरुहसावलम्बनं पुनीहि भूम्ना सदयाक्षिवर्चसा ।

शिवोऽद्वितीयोऽपि भवान् अरूपकः गुणक्रियारूपविभागवर्जितः ॥

३६. स्वभक्तलोकैकहिताय केवलं विनोदतो भाति विशेषरूपकैः ।

न नाकपृष्ठं न रसादिनाथता न पार्मेष्ठ्यं न च पौरुषं पदम् ॥

३७. स्पृशामि चित्ताणुतवाङ्घ्रिसत्पते भवेत् पदालम्बनभाग्यमन्तरा ।

उपेत्य वागीश्वरदोयितः प्राक्करोषि कृत्यं रजसा गुणेन तु ॥

३८. निदाघपुष्टो निरयत्विषा च वा पुनः स्वयं ताटस्थमसावपीडनात् ।

बालशशाङ्कमौलिवान् भवार्णवात् पातुमिदं जनं क्षमम् ॥

३९.वाञ्छामि नाहं विषयेन्द्रियार्थान् मरन्द्दिन्दुसदृशान् अलभ्यान् ।

शम्भो भवत्पादसरोजसेवा सुखान्तरायान् दुरितैकहेतून् ॥

४०.परितः पूरवतामियान् विषयासक्तिविकृष्टचेतसा ।

शरणं करुणात्मना हितं भवता लब्धमिदं पदं विभोः ॥

४१.शिवशङ्करशाश्वतादिदेव न परैर्नामपरैरपीशते ।

अमृतत्वम् अयं निजं तपः किमुताक्षणा विषयीकृते मयि ॥

४२.तपत्यसौ मामियं मुहुर्विषयाशा भुजगीव भूयसी ।

भवभेषजपण्डितैरमुं जनमङ्गीकुरु नाप्यलक्षितैः ॥

४३.क्षणमप्यसहामि कल्पकल्पं करुणादुग्धपयोनिधे विभोः ।

अनवाप्य भवत्पदाम्बुजं नहि कालेन विलम्बनं कुरु ॥

४४.चिरमिति कलुषाकूपारपागतिमतिसुखदात्रीमप्यदृष्ट्वा समन्तात् ।

परमिह विनियोगं नयनौघं त्राहि दीनानुकम्पिन् ॥

४५.अभयमहह मह्यं देहि दीनाय शम्भो जनमिममनुपश्यन् आर्द्रयात्मीयबुद्ध्या ।

सकरुणमविलम्बादक्षिकान्त्या दयालो भुवनजननतापं मोक्तुकामोऽस्मि देव ॥

Srivaladhi's Stotra of Jyotischakra Siva (Chapter 51)

ओम् तद्वाच्यं द्योतमानं महान्तं ज्योतिर्नित्यं सत्समाधेयरूपम् ।

मान्यं मोहापायहेतुं प्रपद्ये प्रायः श्रेयः प्राप्तुमैशं महिम्ना ॥

५९.यातायातश्रान्तिसन्तारहेतोः हातुं मायाजालिकाबन्धनानि ।

सन्धातुं वै जीवलेखां महिम्ना साक्षात् ईशं संश्रये तत्त्वरूपम् ॥

६०.कर्माकारं तत्फलाकाररूपं कर्तृत्वे च व्यक्तिमभ्येषि वासम् ।

इज्याकारं देवताकारमन्तः शैवं भावं यातुमीहे महान्तम् ॥

६१.तीर्थाकारो यः परित्रातुमेतत् मन्त्रार्णात्मा नैगमान्तर्विलासी ।

साक्षी दाता कर्मणासौ फलानां देवो भूयात् अग्रतो नः पुराणः ॥

६२.यन्नामर्णान् वाचि कुर्वन् प्रमादात् अभ्यर्थात्वा पापतो मुक्तिमेति ॥

तं त्वामन्तः चन्द्रचूडं प्रपद्ये नीलग्रीव त्राहि नः कर्मबन्धात् ॥

६३.अन्तःकरणा नेडमूकाकनाथाः यत्ते किञ्चित् वृत्तमुल्लास्य शम्भुं ।

पापात् मुक्ता यान्ति तज्ज्योतिरैशं पाशापायं नौमि नाथं पशूनाम् ॥

६४.हेतुस्साक्षी तन्नियन्तापहन्ता जन्तोरन्तर्जीवरूपो च भूयः ।

येऽस्पृश्यात्मा कथ्यते ब्रह्मविद्धिः सोऽयं शम्भुः पातु नः कर्मबन्धात् ॥

६५.विश्वात्मा यो विश्वरूपो नियन्ता काले काले योजयित्वा स्ववृत्त्या ।

कालक्षेपं कल्पयत्येष नित्यं तस्मै धाम्ने कल्पये चित्तमद्धा ॥

६६.युक्त्या मन्त्रैर्वेदतत्त्वार्थदृष्टैः बुद्ध्या शुद्ध्या वाग्विलासाद्गुरुणाम् ।

अन्वेषन्ते योगिनो यत्पदाब्जं तस्मिन् आशा भूयसी मेऽस्तु नित्यम् ॥

६७.नित्यं शुद्धं निर्विकल्पं पुराणं सत्यं सूक्ष्मं सर्वसंकल्पहीनम् ।

श्रद्धामात्रं शम्भुमाद्यं विनोदात् सालङ्कारं कारयेन्नीलकण्ठम् ॥

६८.देव प्रसीद परमेश्वर चन्द्रमौले लीलाविशेषपरिकल्पितपञ्चकृत्य ।

पश्यन् त्रिकालभवभूतपते दयालो मां पाहि मोहकुहरात् गहनात् प्रपन्नम् ॥

Bhairavadri's Stotra of Siva (Chapter 52)

नमश्शिवाय देवाय सर्वातीताय वेधसे ॥

६९.गुणत्वाकृति मानाय गुणाकाराय हेतवे । मन्त्रतन्त्रस्वरूपाय पञ्चतन्मात्रसाक्षिणे ॥

७०.अपञ्चीकृतभूताय पञ्चभूतात्मने नमः । तीर्थमूर्त्या जगत्सर्वं पापात् त्रातात्मसेविनाम् ॥

७१.योऽसौ सीदन्तमशुचौ मां पालयतु भूतभृत् । गङ्गाधरः शशिधरो भवो भीमो भवान्तकः ॥

७२.अन्तकस्यान्तस्सोऽयं अवतात् अंहसो विभुः । यमेनमकृताकारमेकद्वित्रिभेदतः ॥

७३.एकमेव परं प्राहुः तस्मै सोमाय ते नमः । सर्वेषामेव जन्तूनामन्तर्जीवकलात्मकम् ॥

७४.प्रवृत्तिश्चोपलब्धिश्च कथितः तमुपास्महे । नादबिन्दुकलाभेदैः क्षराक्षरविकल्पनैः ॥

७५.स्तूयते निगमैर्योऽसौ सदा भवतु मे गतिः । यदेकदेशात् अर्काद्याः द्योतन्ते हि नभस्थले ॥

७६.यदाज्ञया ब्रह्ममुखाः तस्मै ब्रह्मात्मने नमः । केचित् तरन्ति वै मृत्युं केचित् अंहो दुरत्ययम् ॥

७७.केचित् तरन्ति दारिद्र्यं नमस्तस्मै दयात्मने । अष्टमूर्तिरनेकात्मा निगमान्तः प्रदर्शितः ॥

७८.सर्वात्मा शङ्करः साक्षी क्षेमाय पुरतोऽस्तु मे । त्वां देवदेवं पुरुषं सद्योजातमनामयम् ॥

७९.क्षेमङ्करं वामदेवमघोरं प्रणतोऽस्म्यहम् । ईशानः शाश्वतः साक्षी सोऽयं तत्पुरुषो विभुः ॥

८०.स मेऽसौ भाग्यदातास्तु पुरतः पूर्वपूजितः । नमो नमश्शाश्वतशान्तिकरिन् शमांवतां
भूरिकरप्रियाकरः ॥

८१.स नः समस्ताभ्युदयैकहेतुको भवेद्भयानामुपशान्तिकृत् विभुः ।

VISHNU STOTRAS

Brahma's Stotra of Vishnu (Chapter 14)

नतोऽस्मि मूर्ध्ना नलिनाक्ष ते पदम् वदामि नामान्यपि वाग्भिरुच्चैः ।

स्मराम्यहन्ताकलुषास्पृशाहृदा शरण्यमेनं शरणं ब्रजाम्यहम् ॥

निरस्तबाह्येन्द्रियवृत्तिनिर्मले न मय्यनुस्यूतमपास्तकल्मषे ।

विलोकयिष्यामि विचिष्टभावनाबलेन नाथं प्रणवार्थसूचकम् ॥

नमो नमः शान्तगुणाय विशेषविज्ञान गुणप्रकाशिने ।

नमोऽस्तु तुभ्यं पुरुषाय वै पुनः पराय पारायणधर्मशालिनाम् ॥

Gajendra's Stotra of Hari (Chapter 32)

नाथा नारायणाशेषलोकापायव्यपोहन । आदिमूल हृषीकेश दीने मयि दयां कुरु ॥

७५.दीनबन्धो दयासिन्धो सिन्धुकन्यानिवास भो । आदिमूलार्चनीयाङ्घ्रे दीने मयि दयां कुरु ॥

७६.घनश्याभिरामाङ्ग गङ्गाधरमुखार्चित । आदिमूलार्चनीयाङ्घ्रे दीने मयि दयां कुरु ॥

७७.अलब्धशरणोऽन्यत्र त्रस्यमानः स्वकर्मभिः । घर्मतप्त इव छायां काङ्क्षे कमललोचनम् ॥

७८.जन्ममृत्युजराध्वान्तपरिभूतः पुनःपुनः । लोको यथा दिनकरं काङ्क्षे कमललोचनम् ॥

७९.भूयो भूयो परिक्रम्य कर्कशे कर्मवर्त्मनि । अहमासितुमेकान्ते काङ्क्षे कमललोचनम् ॥

८०.त्वामेव शरणं प्राप्तं त्वयि दत्ताखिलेन्द्रियम् । उपेक्षसे कथं नाथ मामनाथं जनार्तिहन् ॥

८१.मन्दीभूतानि इन्द्रियाणि प्राणाः कण्ठगता इमे । रक्ष मां रक्ष मां नाथ त्वन्नाथं त्वत्परिग्रहम् ॥

८२.भो नाथ किमिदं भृत्ये पतितं शोकसागरे । मय्युपेक्षा तवेदानीं ऊष्मेव शिशिरद्विषः ॥

८३.त्राहि त्राहि महामृत्युबडवावह्निपातनात् । त्राहि मां त्राहि मां आदिमूल मूलाक्षर प्रभो ॥

Vyasa's Stotra of Vishnu (Chapter 38)

नमःपरमशान्ताय निगमान्तःप्रबोधिने । नित्यानन्दरूपाय योगिने ब्रह्मणे नमः ॥

७०.योऽसौ विभूतिभिः सर्व आत्मदेहसमुद्रवैः । आवृत्य बहुधा भाति भूषणैरिव हाटकः ॥

७१.नामानि यस्य पुण्यानि जपन्तः जन्तवः परम् । पदं गच्छन्ति कल्याणं नमस्तस्मै महात्मने ॥

७२.ओं नमो वासुदेवाय कृष्णाय परमात्मने । भक्तप्रियाय शान्ताय भक्तिमुक्तिप्रदायिने ॥

७३.नमो नमःपङ्कजलोचनाय नमो नमः पङ्कजभूषणाय ।

भक्तप्रियायाखिललोकधाम्ने नमो नमो नादनवाम्बुजाय ॥

Sudarsana Chakra's Stotra of Vishnu (Chapter 59)

नमस्ते देवदेवेश वासुदेवाय विष्णवे । नारायणाय नालीकनयनाय नमो नमः ॥

४१.नाथ नारायण विभो नलिनायतलोचन । प्रसीद करुणामूर्ते प्रसीद जगतां गुरो ॥

४२.यमेकमीशमाद्यन्तमनन्तमकुतोभयम् । अक्षरमनिर्देश्यं शरणं यामि शाश्वतम् ॥

४३.पुराणमाद्यं पुरुषं वृषसेनं वृषाकपिम् । वेदान्तवेद्यं विश्वस्य जनितारमुपास्महे ॥

४४.तारकः परमो योगी योगिध्येयाङ्घ्रिपङ्कजः । स मे गतिरनन्तात्मा सर्वसाक्षी जगद्गुरुः ॥

४५.गुणातीतः परःशुद्धो हंसाख्यः प्रपितामहः । श्रुतिकर्मः पुमान् साक्षात् आविरस्तु पुरो हरिः ॥

४६.अणोरणीयान् आत्मा च महतोऽपि महान् महान् । ममैव दृशि संभूयात् मोहान्धध्वान्तभास्करः ॥

- ४७.श्यामो हिरण्यपरिधिः वनमालाविभूषितम् । श्रीपतिं शरणं यामि विश्वस्यास्यैवहेतुकम् ॥
- ४८.आलोलतुलसीदाममारूढविनतासुतम् । ज्योतिरिन्दीवरश्याममाविरस्तु ममाग्रतः ॥
- ४९.नमो नमः पुराणाय पुरुषायादिवेधसे । सतां सन्मार्गबन्धूनां परित्राणाय साधवे ॥
- ५०.सत्त्वमेकाक्षरं ज्योतिः आकारः खगरूपकः । यत्तमन्तस्मराम्येतत् पञ्चमस्वरमक्षरः ॥
- ५१.खगः भोक्ता च कर्मात्मा पुरुषो व्यञ्जनात्मकः । ऊर्ध्वतिर्यगतः स्वान्तः केशवो दयितो मम ॥
- ५२.शेषाङ्कशायिनमशेषगुरुं पुराणं नारायणं त्रिजगतां प्रणतापवर्गम् ।
- नाथं व्रजामि शरणं करुणामृताब्धिं नास्त्यत्र मे विशति चित्तमिदं मुकुन्दात् ॥
- Srutadhama's Stotra of Vishnu (Chapter 61)**
- ओं नमस्सत्यसंकल्पविकल्पोल्लासितात्मने । निर्गुणाय गुणाविष्ट कर्मणे ब्रह्मणे नमः ॥
- ७१.सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं यत् धाम नामादिवर्जितम् । ओमित्युपहिताकारमहङ्कारमुपास्महे ॥
- ७२.यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते मनसाप्राप्य माधवम् । हृद्यन्तं परं पश्ये भद्रस्यावाप्तये हरिम् ॥
- ७३.हृषीकम् जगतां साक्षात् श्रुतयो यत् प्रशंसिरे । तमादिपौरुषं तेजः प्रपद्ये व्योमलक्षणम् ॥
- ७४.अलक्ष्यमक्ष्णां गुणिनां ब्रह्मादीनां यदैश्वरम् । महःप्रपद्ये निर्मायं यत् परं परमं हरिः ॥
- ७५.यमन्विष्य महस्तत्त्वमागमान्तगिरां ततिः । तद्धाम कामयैकान्तकलिकल्मषनाशनम् ॥
- ७६.अणोरणीयमाद्यन्तमध्यविप्लववर्जितम् । अहमाराधये चित्ते मायाजालविमुक्तये ॥

७७.देवदेवं महादेवं हरिमभ्युदयेश्वरम् । पश्यामि परतत्त्वार्थं निर्मुक्ताशेषकल्मषम् ॥

७८.भगवन् परितुष्टोऽस्मि मायालास्यप्रदर्शनात् । अहो विभूतिविस्तारो लीलावैशिष्यलक्षणः ॥

७९.पुनाति लोकान् गङ्गेव दर्शनात् कीर्तनात् अपि । इतः परं न शोचामि येनाहं त्वत्प्रसादतः ॥

८०.तथा कुरु दयां मह्यं त्वामहं शरणं गतः ।

Lakshmi's Stotra of Vishnu (Chapter 61)

आद्यं नमः कारुणिकं पवित्रं

नतार्तिशमनाधरबद्धदीक्षम् ॥

१५९.साक्षिं पुनःसकलजीवनपरिश्रमाणां विश्रान्तिमण्डपपदाम्बुरुहं नतानाम् ।

आद्योऽयमस्य जनकः स्वपिता पिता च नेता गतिं निजपदाम्बुरुहाननानाम् ॥

१६०.नाथः समस्तभुवनस्य ममापि जीवलेखामयो भवतु नः पुरतः पुराणः ।

वाणी पुराणपदवी निखिलश्रुतीनां सार्थं परिश्रममुपेत्य मनो विकारैः ॥

१६१.जानाति वा न हि विमृश्य निवर्तिता वा तं केवलं परमकारुणिकं नतास्मि ।

यं प्राहुराद्यमनपायमशेषवेधा मोहान्धकारपटलाथ परं प्रकाशम् ॥

१६२.ब्रह्मादयोऽपि तमिमं हृदयं प्रपद्ये प्राप्तं प्रकाममभिलाषमहोदयानाम् ।

यज्ञैर्जपैरपि मनुप्रवरस्य दानैः पूजाविशेषपुषिताभ्युदयप्रणामैः ॥

१६३.प्राणेन्द्रियोपशमनैः प्रविशन्ति सिद्धाः यन्तं पुमांसमुरुकायमुपैमि नित्यम् ।

यत्पादपद्ममकरन्दजुषां मुनीनां ब्रह्मेन्द्ररुद्रपदवीविभवो हि हेयः ॥

१६४.नाथो ममास्तु नलिनायतलोचनोऽयं अग्रे जगत्त्रयसुरक्षणजागरूकः ।

एकोऽप्यनेकविधमूर्तिविकल्पनाभिः कर्ता यमाविति पिपीलिकजीविकानाम् ॥

१६५.भक्त्या पुनः प्रलयतः प्रणयैकधामा कामाय मे भवतु कारणकारणात्मा ।

आद्योऽयमस्य जगतः प्रभुरप्रकाशः पापात्मनामसुकृतिनां विहितप्रकाशः ॥

१६६.ईशे पदे भवतु मे भगवान् पुराणः भक्तावलम्बितपदाम्बुरुहः श्रुतीनाम् ।

श्रान्तास्मि नाथ निखिलश्रमशान्तिहेतोस्वान्तात् प्रमृज्य परितापततिं मदीयाम् ॥

१६७.आयाहि पाहि पुरतो न सहे वियोगमुर्वीव घर्मतपनांशुमसह्यमानाम् ।

नारायणं नरसखं नलिनायताक्षं साक्षात्करोमि हृदये सदयं दयालुम् ॥

१६८.त्वामादिनाथमखिलश्रुतिसारमेकं मा ते विलम्बनदशा परिवर्तनीया ।

मा हर्तुमर्हसि भवच्चरणाब्जभृङ्गीमङ्गीकुरुष्व सहसा करुणामृताब्धे ॥

१६९.काङ्क्षे मुहुःकमललोचनपादमूले कर्तुं शिरस्सकरुणं परिपश्य दीनाम् ।

Varuna's Stotra of Vishnu (Chapter 62)

जयदेव जगन्नाथ रमानाथ दयानिधे । प्रसीद देवदेवेश शरणं त्वामुपैम्यहम् ॥

१०१.शङ्खचक्रधराशेषदोषशोषणभास्कर । प्रसीद् देवदेवेश शरणं त्वामुपैम्यहम् ॥

१०२.समस्तदैत्याहङ्कारनिर्वापणविचक्षण । प्रसीद देवदेवेश शरणं त्वामुपैम्यहम् ॥

१०३.लक्ष्मीरमण राजीवनवाम्भोरुहलोचन । प्रसीद देवदेवेश शरणं त्वामुपैम्यहम् ॥

१०४.समस्तबन्धो विस्तारकृपापीयूषवारिधे । प्रसीद देवदेवेश शरणं त्वामुपैम्यहम् ॥

१०५.लसन्माणिक्यखचितकिरीटाङ्गदभूषण । प्रसीद देवदेवेश शरणं त्वामुपैम्यहम् ॥

१०६.देवासुरमुनीन्द्राद्यैः वन्द्यमानपदद्वय । प्रसीद देवदेवेश शरणं त्वामुपैम्यहम् ॥

१०७.रमानाथ जगन्नाथ मन्नाथ जगतांपते । प्रसीद देवदेवेश शरणं त्वामुपैम्यहम् ॥

OTHER STOTRAS

Indra's Stotra of Agastya (Chapter 19)

अहो महोदयमिदं जगतां भवता कृतम् ॥

१०.इयं मही महाभागा स्वर्गात् अपि गरीयसी । यत्र सत्यं तपः शौचमार्जवं प्रियकर्तृता ॥

११.समता सौमनस्यं च वर्तते नियतं सदा । तत्र देवाः च मन्त्राश्च तीर्थानि सकलान्यपि ॥

१२.तस्मात् त्वत्तो न पश्यामि परमाधारमूर्जितम् । त्वया महीयं कल्याणी विहिता साधु भारती ॥

- १३.त्वयि शम्भुर्हरिर्ब्रह्मा त्वयि गौरी प्रतिष्ठिता । त्वय्येव कमला वाणी त्वयि सर्वे च संस्थिता ॥
- १४.त्वद्दर्शनैव पूजा च त्वद्भयानं ब्रह्मभावना । त्वद्दर्शनमहं मन्ये ब्रह्मानन्दैकदर्शनम् ॥
- १५.त्वं गुरुर्जगतां ब्रह्मन् त्वमेकः पालकः प्रभुः । तस्मात् अहं महाभाग त्वां सेवितुमिहागतः ॥
- १६.लोपामुद्रा धर्मपत्नी तव पापविनाशिनी । साक्षात् देवी लोकमाता पावनी नात्र संशयः ॥
- १७.युवयोर्दर्शनात् अद्य कृतार्थोऽस्मि महामुने । एनामानयता ब्रह्मन् त्वया मलयनन्दिनीम् ॥
- १८.मोक्षभूमिरियं जाता दक्षिणा दक्षिणा मही । यस्मात् वाञ्छन्त्यमर्त्यत्वमत्र ब्रह्ममुखा अपि ॥
- १९.त्वया लोकहितायैव पुरा चुलुक्तोऽर्णवः । विन्ध्यो नियमितः कोपात् वातापिः कबलीकृतः ॥
- २०.दुष्कराणि त्वदन्यैस्तु जनैः ब्रह्माण्डगह्वरे । एतानि ते चरित्राणि त्रीन् लोकान् न पुनाति किम् ॥
- २१.कृतार्थोऽस्मि कृतार्थोऽस्मि कृतार्थोऽस्मि च दर्शनात् । अत्र वर्षन्तु मेघाः काले काले यथोचितम् ॥
- २२.न भवन्तु जनाः पापाः न भवन्तु क्षयादयः । शरीरमानसाः तापाः मार्यरिष्टादयः तथा ॥
- २३.पुष्पान्तु सर्वसस्यानि तीरयोरुभयोरपि । देवाः प्रसादं कुर्वन्तु वर्धन्तां च तपांसि वः ॥
- २४.चापमेयुषि वै भानौ पञ्चदश्यां महामुने । मां भजन्तु जनास्सर्वे माघे वा पुष्पसङ्गमे ॥
- २५.अत्रैव हरिकीलाख्ये क्षेत्रेऽस्मिन् पावने शुभे । प्रत्यब्दमागमिष्यामि भवतां दर्शनाय वै ॥
- २६.अनया धर्मपत्न्या त्वं प्राप्य निजमाश्रमम् । पितेव पालयन् लोकान् भद्रं प्राप्नुह्यविश्रमम् ॥

Agastyamantra taught by Kasyapa to Sivasarma (Chapter 31)

शिवशर्मन् महाभाग शृणु ते कथयाम्यहम् । यस्य विज्ञानमात्रेण स्वयमायान्ति संपदः ॥

५.अश्रोत्रियेषु पापेषु वेदमार्गविरोधिषु । न दातव्यमिदं स्तोत्रं मन्त्रराजं महामते ॥

६.ऋषिरिन्द्रः तथानुष्टुम् छन्दो देवो घटोद्भवः । सर्वाबीष्टस्य सिद्ध्यर्थे जपोऽयं विनियोजितः ॥

७.पाटीरशैलकोटीरमणिपीठाय वेधसे । मुनये कुंभजायोद्यदनुकंपाब्ध्ये नमः ॥

८.लोपामुद्रासमायुक्तं महायोगासनस्थितम् । प्रसन्नं तपसां राशिं प्रणुमः कुंभसंभवम् ॥

९.इति ध्यात्वा नमस्कृत्य जपेन्नामावलिं मनुम् । अगस्त्यः कुंभसंभूतो मैतावरुणिरब्धिपः ॥

१०.लोपामुद्रापतिश्श्रीमान् वातापील्वलभक्षणः । विन्ध्याद्रिमथनो योगी महामलयकेतनः ॥

११.सर्वतीर्थात्मकपदो भक्ताभीष्टफलप्रदः । लोपामुद्राभुजाश्लेषहर्षरोमाञ्चमूर्तिमान् ॥

१२.नाम्नां द्वादशकं पुण्यमगस्त्यस्य महात्मनः । पठन्त्यपि शृण्वन्ति ते वै सुकृतिनः परम् ॥

१३.तेषामभीष्टदानाय भगवान् कुंभसंभवः । अद्याभ्युद्यत्करांभोजो नात्र कार्या विचारणा ॥

१४.यशस्यं धन्यमायुष्यं ज्ञानदं भुक्तिमुक्तिदम् । नाम्नां स्तोत्रं पठेत् विद्वान् पुरुषार्थाः करे स्थिताः ॥

१५.विमलहृदयमुच्चैर्वेदवेदान्तवेद्यं विधिमुखसुरपूज्यं भूतिरुद्राक्षभाजम् ।

मुनिवरममलाङ्ग्या धर्मपत्न्याप्तभागं कलशजमभिरामं नौमि कारुण्यमूर्तिम् ॥

१६.इत्येतत् परमं गुह्यं मन्त्रं सर्वार्थसाधकम् । यतीश्वरादनुप्राप्य प्राप्तवान् परमं सुखम् ॥

१७.नित्यप्रमोदभूयिष्ठं प्रमोदः प्राप्तसौभगः । उपर्युपरि धर्मस्य प्राप्तभूतो न संशयः ॥

१८.चन्दनाद्रिसमुद्भूते सत्ये शङ्करलालिते । त्वयि स्नास्ये सुप्रसन्ने पाहि मां भवसागरात् ॥

१९.इति मन्त्रं समुच्चार्य स्नात्वा ताम्रानदीजले । पितृन् देवान् ऋषीन् तर्प्य नाभिदघ्नजले स्थितः ॥

२०.जपेन्मन्त्रमिदं मन्त्री त्रिवारं विजितेन्द्रियः । षाण्मासादेव सुप्रीतः तस्य भूयात् घटोद्भवः ॥

२१.शिवशर्मन् त्वया जप्यं प्रत्यहं प्रीतिमिच्छता । इति तेन समाख्यातां कथां कलिमलापहाम् ॥

Sankha's Stotra of Agastya, Tamraparni, Adilakshmi, Harihara (Chapter 64)

६०.नमः परमकल्याणनिधये वीतरागिणे । लोपामुद्रासमेताय कुम्भोद्भूताय योगिने ॥

६१.पुण्यायै पुण्यभूतायै पुत्र्यै मलयभूभृतः । सर्वतीर्थस्वरूपायै ताम्रपण्यै नमो नमः ॥

६२.या पञ्चकृत्यनादेव कुज्जापाञ्चितदुर्दशा । तामादिलक्ष्मीं क्षेमाय साक्षान्मोक्षप्रदां नमः ॥

६३.एकत्र श्यामलाकारा एकतः चन्द्रपण्डुरम् । उमारमापतिं देवं वन्दे हरिहराकृतिम् ॥

६४.ताम्रां मलयशैलेन्द्रमादिलक्ष्मीं हरिप्रियाम् । लोपामुद्रामगस्त्यं च नित्यमन्तःस्मराम्यहम् ॥

Some Tirtha Ghats

Having Snanam anywhere in Tamraparni gives nine Krichira phala. Having snanam in particular theerthas during certain times of the year gives specific benefits.

Poorvavaahini	
Cave's East Southshore Oorjastirtham	
Cave's East Northshore Ishatirtham	
To its East Vrishangatirtham	
To its East Southshore Agasthyatirtham	Chant Agasthyaganamana kanitri
To its east Chakratirtham	
To its east Pavanatirtham	
Uttaravaahini	
Melakarai Vamanatirtham	
To its North Herambhatirtham	
Before it Narasinghatirtham	
In Kizhkarai Bhogirajatirtham	
Bhanatirtham	In Aadi month Amavasya, chant Gayathri; Soma Yaga phala
In Melakarai Paanchjanyatirtham	
Near it in Northern Direction Chakrasilatirtham	
To its North Varahatirtham	
To its North Munitirtham	
In Kizhkarai Pishangkilatirtham	
To its North Kanyatirtham , Kumkumapaarai	
To its North Varunatirtham	
In Melakarai Ramatirtham , kalaimaanmukapaarai	

To its North Kapilatirtham , All these until Kalyanatirtham	
Kalyanatirtham	Chant five Riks including Sadyojata, Nivritti of doshas including Separating Calf from mother, Sin causing Childlessness in females
In Artpamisanyam NaradaTheetham	
To its North Varunatirtham , Fiveheaded waterfalls	
To its North Prachetasatirtham	
To its South Thumburutirtham	
To its South Parvathatirtham	
In Papavinasam Indirakeelatirtham	In Chitra month chanting Panchakshara or Astakshara Mantra; Rajasooya phala; In Pazyapapavinasam Chant Hiranya varna, Pavamana, Yatatassampratyathi, Cure for diseases like leprosy caused by dosha due to killing snakes and other animals; In Papavinasa sannidhi Chant Agamarshana suktham, Rudram, Chamakam, Panchakshara Mantra for Brahmahatti Papa Nivritti
To its North Trinadisangamatirtham	In Mukkodai (kannadian dam) chant Varuna suktham
Poorvavaahini	
In Southern shore Devitirtham , Manimuttanadi sangamam. Here Devi is showering her blessings	In Devi Sannidhi (North of Papavinasam sannidhi) Chant Srisuktham, Devisuktham, Iyameva Sayaprathamaav

	bowcha, Gayathri, Srividya for Putrabhagyam; To the north of Devi sannidhi in Suryatirtham chant Mahasowram for Nethra roganivritti
In Northern Shore to the east of Papavinasam Deepatirtham	Chant Agnisuktham
To its East Salatirtham , Vikramasingham	Chant Kooshmanda mantra; in Hanuman sannidhi in kirumiharatirtham chant Simmemanyu, akshibhyanthe for heart disease, and worm bite cure
To its East Kasyapatirtham , Ambasamudram Snana Ghat	Chant Pancharudram, Rudrasuktham, Panchakshara mantra
To its South Kannuvatirtham , Kallidaikuruchi	In Mrigadharesan Sannidhanam chant Hamsashuchishad for Manodukhanivritti
To its East Brihattirtham	Between Hari and Sankara Sannidhis Chant five riks - Triyambakam, Sadyojatha
Uttaravaahini Northern side Goshtiswaratirtham, Oorkadu	
Northern side Chakratirtham , Vellagkollithurai	Chant Sudarsanam
To its North Mandavyatirtham	In Koraiaaru sangamam chant “Sangavchadhwam’ for Pitrusaapanivritti; In Kalhastheeswarar sannidhi, Mandavyatirtham chant

	Brahamana Ekahotha for begetting many Putras.
To its North Ghatanasangamatirtham, Rangasamudram, Pananjaadi, Pallakaal, Adansaani, Brahmadesam	In Kadana sangamam, Dakshinavartham, vyatipaadayogam; In Dakshinavarthatirtham chant swarnamkarmampariveda for Saapanivritti - curse given by Pitrus
Poorvavaahini	
In Northern shore Maanavatirtham, Pappakudi	Chant Kaivalya Upanishad
To the South Goutamatirtham or on southern side of Putdaarjunalingam Surendramokshatirtham	In Putaarjuna in Thai month, chant Rudra suktham; Paramapadam
To its Southern side Paisachamochana tirtham	Chant Yadandiyascha durage, Jaathavedase
To the Northern side of Thirupudaimarudur western side of Ghatanasangamam (Dharmadharan) Dandabrahmacharitirtham	Chant Namah Somaayacha
On the east Karmatirtham	
To the south of Putaarjuna in Kizhkarai Gajendramokshatirtham , Attazhanallur	In Vaikasi month Dwadasi or Sravanadwadasi chant 'Brahmavidapnothi', 1000 Chandrayana phala, Gurutaragamanadi dosha nivritti; Chant Vishnusuktham for removal of danger
Near it (Maruthunnikaadu) Pushpavanesatirtham	
Below it on the Northern Shore Manigrivatirtham . Also	Chant 'Draape Andhasdasbate'

called Bhairavatirtham , Aryanaayakipuram	
On its east Yakshatirtham	
On its east Gotirtham	
Beyond it Dharmadarsanatirtham	
On the southern shore to the South of Gtirtham Durgatirtham , Karakuruchi	In Aippasi month Suklapaksha or Navarathri, Chant Durga Suktham, Sarvakra thu phala
To the east of it Vishnutirtham , Ghuuniyur	
To its east Somatirtham	In Aani month, Suklapaksha dwadasi, chant 'Somasuktham', Paragakrichra phala
Below Cheranmahadevi on the Southernshore Vyasatirtham . Vyasa is seated here (Bhakthapriyan Sannidhi)	In Margazhi month, Vedapaarayanaphala In Cheranmahadevi, Margazhi month, Vythipaadayogam, chantNarayanopanishad, Purusha Suktham, Paramapada phala ; In Bhakthapriya Sannidhi chant Purusha suktham, Narayanopanishad
To its near east Markandeyatirtham	
Near it Romasatirtham , Kodaganallur, Pattamadai	On Krishna Jayanthi; Chant Agninermanvy
To its east Dourvasatirtham	Chant Kamokaarshit
To its east Bhargavatirtham . These two are in Karisoozhndasmangalathurai. <i>Near this place in the Niruthi (southwest) corner of Seval, Vishnu is expected to incarnate as Kalki avatar.</i>	

In its shore in Kashalikanadi sangamam Vainatheyatirtham	
Opposite side on Northern shore Chayatirtham	Chant Tasmaivaavidhusa
On its east Gandharvatirtham	Chant Varunssuktham, sadyojaatha, 5 Riks; In Pranavatirtham chant Omityekasharam Brahma
On its east Bhanutirtham	
In the same place Prabhavatirtham	
In Seval Gowritirtham, Saraswathitirtham, Vri shabhatirtham ; All this until Syamanadi sangamam	Meenaparani; In Seval (Jothivananam) chant Brahmavidapnoti; in Keezseval chant Sivasankalpa mantras
In Syamanadi sangamam Mantratirtham	(in Pachaiaaru sangamam) In Panguni month Amavasya, Sakala papa nivritti; In Mantratirtham in Panguni month, chant Narayanamantra, Annadanaphala
Uttaravaahini	
In Melakarai Yagatheetham	
To its North Rudratirtham	
To its North Kshiptapushpatirtham , Sindupoonthurai	In Aavani month or Chitra Visu, pournami, chant Rudra Suktham, Chamakam, Aanobhadra, Sarvakra thuphala
Rishitirtham , Moorthisvaram	
Southernshore Agnitirtham , Tharuvai	Chant Agnisuktham; in Shyamasangamam chant Pitrusuktham
In kizhkarai Samridhitirtham	

To its North Dayatirtham	
To its North Bhujanga mochanat heetham	
To its North Suchitirtham	
In Kizhkarai Singatirtham	Chant Simhyamanyu
In Kizhkarai Ketutirtham	
In Kizhkarai Ushatirtham	
In Kizhkarai Halananatirtham	
Poorvavaagini Northern Shore Ramatirtham, Jatayutirtham	Chant Rigveda mantras
Northern shore Rishitirtham	
Northern shore Rudrapadatirtham, Thiruvannapuram, Aruvankulam	Chant Rudram, Panchakshara, Sathyojaadha, 5 Riks
Northern shore Papavimochanatirtham	
Southern shore Pakshitirtham	
Further beyond Asrutirtham	
Further beyond Haasatirtham	
Northern shore Nadisthambhanatirtham	
Northern shore Pooshapatanatirtham, Cheparai	
Northern Shore Dhuritaapakatirtham	
Northern shore Mangalatirtham, Palamadai	Chant Srisuktham
Northern Shore Mahalohithatirtham	
Dhakshinavaahini	
Chitrasangamatirtham	Chant Sangachadhwam, , Vishnu gayathri, Vishnusuktham, Yopaam
In Vishnuvanam Gotirtham, Vishnutirtham, Kusasthambhatirtham,Mrithyunjayatirt ham, Taittreyatirtham, Rajasuyatirtham , Mahavrathatirtham	In Maasi month Sukla Ekadasi, Dwadasi, Chant Sudarsana mantra, Narasingha mantra, Pavamaani, Mahavrata phala
Saadhyatirtham	

Vishvedevatirtham	
Dasaavataratirtham , Agaram	Chant Dasaavatara namas
Southernshore Saptarishitirtham	
Southernshore Maangistatirtham	
Bogitirtham	
Poorvavaahini	
Northernshore Kalasatirtham , Srivaikundam	In Purataasi month Sukla paksa or Dwadasi, chant Vishnu suktham, 1000 Vajapeya phala; In Panguni month, Vishnu Suktham, Brahmahatti Papa nasam; Chant Aakalasyshutavati
In South Saradatirtham	
Dakshinavaahini	Chant
Southeast Smaraalatirtham	Yetonvintaram stavama
Southeast Mahakusumatirtham	
Southeast Kusumavrishtitirtham	
Southeast Satabudbudatirtham	Chant Kadavalupanishad, Maathuvaarudram, Panchakshara
Poorvavaahini	
In Northernshore Kantiswaratirtham	Chant Kadavalupanishad, Maathuvaarudram, Panchakshara
Opposite on Southernshore Ramaatirtham, Bhogitirtham, Dharatirtham, Chakratirtham , Alwarthirunagari (Sripuram)	In Margazhi month Sukladwadasi, Chant Narayanopanishad, Crore Go (Karampasu) danaphala; In Maasi month dwadasi, Chant Vishnugayathri, 1000 Brahmin family Pratishta phala; Chant Vaasudeva upanishad, Srisuktham,

	Vishnusuktham, Lakshmihrudayam
In the East Nidhitirtham	Chant Prathar agnim
Further beyond Kaalatirtham	
Further beyond Nishatirtham	
Further beyond Srutitirtham	
Further beyond Makaratirtham	In Thai month, Suklapaksa, chant Vishnusuktham, Hundred kannikadanaphala
Further beyond Kalaatirtham	
Further beyond Mangalatirtham	
In Northern shore Harshatirtham	Chant Saranam Pavithram
In Northern shore Lakshminarayanatirtham	Chant Saranam Pavithram
In Northern shore Pitrutirtham (Appankoil)	Chant Pitrusuktham, Vishnusuktham
In Northern shore Ashwinitirtham , Erattai Tirupati	Chant Yesho Usha apoorva
In Northern shore Mohapagatirtham, Mukthimudrati rtham, Mataavalatirtham , Perunkulam	In Makarabhooshanatirtham chant Varuna suktham, Aasuchisaano; in Mayakootham Chant Vishnusuktham
In Northern shore Gnanatirtham , Vaazhaivelan	In Aarumugamangalam Chant Brahmavidapnoti
In Northern shore Agnitirtham , Akkasalai	Agnisuktham
In Southern shore Vasthutirtham	
In Southernshore Gangatirtham , Sokkapazh ankarai	Chant Imam Me Gange
In Southernshore Somatirtham , Attur	(In Somaranyam) In Maasi month Sivarathri or Pournami, Chant Pancharudram, Crore Go (Karaampasu)

	danaphala; In Somaranyam chant Simyevyaaghra udayapradagou; In Ramapadatirtham in Panguni month, on Srirama Navami or on Rohini star, Chant Vishnu Gayathri, Sakala papa Naasam.
In Southern shore Chandikatirtham , Sendhamangalam	Chant Kadavalya upanishad
In Southern shore towards East Vallitirtham	
In Southernshore towards East Harshatirtham	
In Southernshore towards East Gowritirtham	In Purattasi month, Vijayadasami, chant Durga Suktham (Meenabarani..), Bhoodanaphala
In Southern shore towards East Sambhunarayanatirtham	
In Southernshore towards East Sankharajatirtham	
Northernshore Agastyatirtham	
Sangameswaratirtham: Gayathritirtham , Savitritirtham , Saraswatitirtham	In Karthika month Pournami, Chant Skandasuktham, Shadakshara mantra , 1000 Godanaphala; In Sangmeshwara sannidhanam Bhairavanama mantra; In Tamra – sagara sangamam chant Yatdevadevahownam, do upasthanam and japam

Tamraparni Snana Vidhi

Introduction

Sastras proclaim that if Tamraparni Snanam is done as per prescribed rules, one will be relieved of all types of sins and diseases. Even sins committed in previous births will go away. Body will develop Tejas, intellect will be sharpened and mind will develop clarity and will be attracted towards the good. With Bhagavan's blessing Sathsangam and Brahma gnana will result. Thus realising the holiness of the river we must endeavour towards prevention of pollution of Tamraparni.

Doctors prescribe medicine as per dosage and time along with dietary restrictions to prevent and cure diseases. Similarly great men have clearly prescribed River snanam, Kshetra visit and Murthi Darshan along with dietary restrictions to get rid of impurities of mind and soul. Thus believing in Sastras and with will power if we follow these prescribed practices then certainly and easily we can attain all auspicious ends.

Before Snana we should meditate on Devi Tamraparni with full concentration. Doing Sankalpa we should remove impure thoughts and vacillation of mind. We should then do snanam with devotion. Doing snana uttering Bhagavan nama will strengthen the benefits.

During or before snana we should avoid oil application, eating thambulam, shaving, unnecessary talk. After snanam we should apply vibhuti or pundhra (as per Kulachara) and do our Nityakarma Anusthanams.

Later we should spend time listening to or reading Tamraparni Mahatmyam. We should also visit local temples and saints. Tamraparni sthalas have a number of Siva-Vishnu temples and are peaceful places inhabited by great souls.

Snana Vidhi

We need to follow certain rules during Snana as per Sastra Sampradaya. We should first prostrate to the river in its bank. Then without setting foot first in the river we should do Prokshanam (sprinkling on head) using the river water. After cleaning our hands and legs we should first do Achamanam. We should then take a dip in the river and hand dry our clothes and wear them again and apply Vibhuti/Pundhra and do Snana Sankalpam. We should know the Year, Ayanam, Rithu, Month, Tithi, Nakshatram and Weekday to complete Sankalpam.

शुक्लाम्बरधरं विष्णुं शशिवर्णं चतुर्भुजम् ।

प्रसन्नवदनं ध्यायेत् सर्वविघ्नोपशान्तये ॥

प्राणायामः ॥

Sankalpam

ममोपात्त-समस्त-दुरितक्षयद्वारा श्रीपरमेश्वर-प्रीत्यर्थं अद्य श्री भगवतः महापुरुषस्य विष्णोराज्ञया प्रवर्तमानस्य आद्यब्रह्मणः द्वितीय-परार्धे श्वेतवराहकल्पे वैवस्वत मन्वन्तरे अष्टाविंशतितमे कलियुगे प्रथमे पादे जंबोद्वीपे भारतवर्षे भरतखण्डे मेरोः दक्षिणे पश्चे शकाब्दे अस्मिन् वर्तमाने व्यावहारिके प्रभवादि संवत्सराणां मध्ये नाम संवत्सरे, अयने, ऋतौ, मासे, पक्षे, शुभतिथौ, वासरयुक्तायां, नक्षत्रयुक्तायां, एवंगुण विशेषण-विशिष्टायां, अस्यां शुभतिथौ जन्माभ्यासात् जन्मप्रभृति एतत्क्षणपर्यन्तं मध्ये सम्भावितानां सर्वेषां पापानां सद्यः अपनोदनार्थं, सकुटुम्बस्य मम क्षेम-स्थैर्य-वीर्य-विजय-आयुर्-

आरोग्य-अभिवृद्ध्यर्थ, सर्वाभीष्ट-सिद्ध्यर्थ, समस्त हरिहर-देवता-सन्निधौ, ब्राह्मणसन्निधौ (Mention local Devi, Devatas' names) (ऋषभतीर्थे) ताम्रपरणीस्नानमहं करिष्ये । (Take bath)

Washing hands, chant the mantras:

अतिक्रूर-महाकाय कल्पान्त-दहनोपम ।

भैरवाय नमस्तुभ्यं अनुज्ञां दातुमर्हसि ॥

गङ्गे च यमुने चैव गोदावरी सरस्वती ।

नर्मदे सिन्धु कावेरी जलेस्मिन् सन्निधिं कुरु ॥

मलयाचल संभूते मलयानिलसोदरि ।

मरुद्वधे महाभागे मङ्गलानि प्रयच्छ मे ॥

नारायणि शिवे गङ्गे गौरीदेहसमुद्रवे ।

सर्वपापहरे मातः तुभ्यं नित्यं नमो नमः ॥

महापापपरिप्लुष्टं देहं मम तवाम्भसा ।

क्षालयामि जगन्मातः मह्यम् नित्यं प्रसीद मे ॥

ब्रह्माण्डोदरसंस्थानि तीर्थानि विविधान्यपि ।

ताम्रातीर्थत्रयैकस्य कलां नार्हन्ति षोडशीम् ॥

पाटीरशैलकोटीरमणिपीठाय वेधसे ।

मुनये कुंभजायोद्यदनुकंपाब्धये नमः ॥

मायाजालमहाध्वान्तपरिपन्थिपयःकणे ।

धर्मद्रवे भगवति भवज्वालापहारिणि ॥

Those who know Vedas can do the five step snana including Sankalpam, Maarjanam (Apohishta..), Bhumi Suktham, Agamarshana Suktham and complete snana with Deva rishi Pitru Tarpanam. After Snanam one must not dry their body with towel instead must let air dry the body.