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Nampillai Vaibhavam



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Nampillai Vaibhavam

vedantavedyAmrutavArirAshe:
vedArtthasArAmruta pUramakrUYam |
AdAyavarshantamaham prapadye
kAruNya pUrNam kalivairi dAsam ||

Sri Nampillai was the disciple of Sri Nanjeeyar and the acharya of Sri Vadakku Thiruveethip Pillai and Sri Periyavaccan Pillai. His vyakhyanam "eedu 36000ppadi", popularly known as just "eedu" is considered the greatest vyakhyanam written for Swami Nammazhvar's Thiruvaymozhi. It was this vyakhyanam that Swami Manavala Mamunigal presented as a series of discourses in a period of one year in Srirangam at the end of which Azhagiya Manavalan Himself delivered the "Srishailesha Dayapatram" thaniyan.

Nampillai was born in the city of Nambur. His original name was Varadarajar. He was born in the star Kartthigai in the month Kartthigai - the same as Thirumangai Azhvar. Since he was born as the amsam of Thirumangai Azhvar, he was also known as thiru-kalikanRi dAsar.

He then moved to Srirangam and was one of the many disciples of Nanjeeyar, who was the direct disciple of Sri Parasara Bhattar and to whom Bhattar had handed over the sampradhayam before attaining paramapadham. Through Bhattar's grace, Nanjeeyar had written a vyakhyanam called "9000ppadi" for Nammazhvar's Thiruvaymozhi. He then decided to have this work written down in silk sheets and was looking for someone who could do a good job of it. He asked his disciples who that person could be and they pointed to Nambur Varadarajar. Nanjeeyar called Varadarajar and asked him to write something down which he did. Nanjeeyar appreciated his writing but was wondering how he could let one not initiated into the sampradhayam write Bhagavad Vishayam. Varadarajar then fell at Jeeyar's divine feet and requested him to initiate him into the sampradhayam. Jeeyar felt kindness in his divine heart and performed pancha samskaram for Varadarajar and taught him the 9000ppadi in full. Then he handed over the 9000ppadi manuscript to him and told him to rewrite them in silk sheets. Varadarajar then took the manuscripts and obtained permission from Nanjeeyar to go back to his home town and rewrite them.

On the way back to his home town, he had to cross the Cauvery river and at one place he had to swim across it. So, he put the manuscript in a towel and wrapped it around his head and started to swim. At that time, a wave came and took away the towel and manuscript. Varadarajar got to the other side and became greatly distressed that he had lost the manuscript. However, he managed to rewrite the whole script again from memory, as Nanjeeyar had taught him the whole work, and being one of great scholarship added additional references and meanings here and there in the work that added to its greatness. He then took the work back to Jeeyar who upon reading it was amazed to see these beautiful additions to it. When he asked about it to Varadarajar, he fell at Jeeyar's feet and told him the whole story. At which time Nanjeeyar picked him up and embracing

him called him "nam piLLai" (Our son) and gave him the name "thiruk-kalikanRi dAsar". From that day onward, Nambur Varadarajar came to be known as nampiLLai.

Nampillai then never left Nanjeevar's divine company and continued to perform all kinds of service to him. When Nanjeevar completed one hundred Thiruvaymozhi Upanyasams, Nampillai performed sadAbishekam ceremony for him.

Nampillai continued to learn more and more from Nanjeevar and his fame began to spread. During this time, disciples such as Periyavaccan Pillai, Vadakku Thiruveethi Pillai, Pinbazhagiya Perumal Jeeyar, Eeyunni Madhava Perumal gathered at Nampillai's feet. Seeing this Nanjeevar was very pleased.

Seeing Nampillai's fame and the great number of disciples he had, Kanthadai Thozhappar, the grandson of Mudhaliyandan, felt great jealousy and one day severely reprimanded him in front of Namperumal. Nampillai feeling great sadness left for his home. When Thozhappar returned to his home, his wife who had heard about the student was greatly distressed and did not perform any of her duties. Seeing this, Thozhappar asked her why she was ignoring him and her duties - something she had never done before. She replied that he had insulted Nampillai who is verily the reincarnation of Nammazhvar; and having done that, he is not even regretting the act. So, she wanted no further association with him who had committed a great bhAgavata apacharam. At which time, Thozhappar recognized his great error and asked her how he could rectify it. She replied that he should seek Nampillai's pardon. He agreed and asked her to go along with him as he was ashamed to go alone. She agreed and they both came out to go to Nampillai's home.

In the meantime, Nampillai who had gone home from the temple sent all his disciples to their homes, did not take any food all day and in the evening covering himself with a blanket went alone to Thozhappar's home and stayed there in his front gate.

When Thozhappar and his wife came out they were amazed to see Nampillai in front of their home. Thozhappar then enquired if Nampillai had come there to commit a folly for what happened at the temple. Nampillai fell at his feet and replied that he was there to seek his redemption for having caused such grief in the heart of the grandson of Mudhaliyandan that he had to say these things in the temple. Upon which Thozhappar picked up Nampillai and embracing him said that he had thought that Nampillai was the acharya to only a few disciples till that day and that he has now realized that he is the acharya to the whole world. From that day forward, Nampillai came to be known as Lokacharyar.

Naduvil Thiruveethi Pillai Bhattar, a grandson of Kuratthazhvan, had initially succumbed to jealousy but later had sought Nampillai's divine feet and taken him as his acharya. Having listened to Nampillai's discourses on Thiruvaymozhi, he wrote them down in an extensive work of 125000 padi's. Upon finding that, Nampillai said that he should not have written such an extensive work without asking for his acharya's permission and destroyed the manuscript.

Nampillai then asked his disciple Periyavaccan Pillai to write a vyakhyanam for Thiruvaymozhi and thus was born 24000ppadi.

Later Vadakku Thiruveethi Pillai wrote down Nampillai's discourses on Thiruvaymozhi as a manuscript and showed it to Nampillai. Nampillai saw that it was neither short nor long and was written beautifully in 36000 padi's. He appreciated Vadakku Thiruveethi Pillai's effort but told him that he should not have done it without his permission. Therefore, he took the manuscript and hid them in his home. Later Eeyunni Madhava Perumal prayed to Namperumal for a long time and asked for the manuscript. Namperumal then asked Nampillai to give the manuscript to Madhava Perumal and Nampillai accepting the divine order did the same.

His works are:

- Thiruvaymozhi Eedu MuppaththARAYirappadi Vyakhyanam

Nampillai continued spreading the sampradhayam for many years. After which, laying his head in Naduvil Thiruveethi Pillai Bhattar's lap and his feet in Pinbzhagiya Perumal Jeeyar's lap, he focused his mind on Nanjeeyar's feet and attained His divine abode.

Azhvar Emberumanar Jeeyar Thiruvadigale Sharanam