



FESTIVITIES OF THE MONTH

Murali Krishna Kalvapudi Ramanuja Dasa

We are very fortunate to celebrate two major festivals '*Dasara*' and '*Deepa:vali*' along with the birthdays of three great *A:cha:ryas* in this month itself - '*Sri: Manava:la Maha:mun?*', '*Sri: Ve:da:ntha De:sika*' and His Holiness our beloved, *Sri: Chinna Jeeyar Swamiji*. All the three *A:cha:ryas* are exceptional and unparalleled in establishing the *Ve:dic* tradition, propagating the philosophy as explained by *Bhagavad Ra:ma:nuja:cha:rya* and upholding the supremacy of Lord *Sri:man Na:ra:yana*. Just as a lighthouse guides the ships to the shore, they continue to lead us. Let us know a bit about them.

Sri: Ve:da:ntha De:sika (October 5th)

Sri: Ve:da:ntha De:sika's birth anniversary falls on the day of '*Vijaya Dasami*' or '*Dasara*'. He was born in 13th century, in a village called '*Thu:ppul*' in south India, in the solar month of '*Kanya*' when the star '*Sravanam*' was ruling the day. It is the star of Lord '*Ve:nkate:swara*' too. Hence, his parents named him as '*Ve:nkatana:ttha*'. He was a child prodigy with tremendous command over language and poetry. In the guidance of his maternal uncle '*Appullar*', he mastered all the scriptures, poetic compositions of '*A:Iwa:rs*' and *Bhagavad Ra:ma:nuja*'s commentaries on '*Bramha s:uthras*', well before reaching 20 years of age.

Once, when he was in deep meditation, the divine vehicle of Lord,



Garuda, appeared before him and gave him a small idol of Lord '*Sri: Hayagri:va*'. Then onwards, *Sri: Ve:da:ntha De:sika* meditated upon '*Lord Hayagri:va*' and had a profound vision of the Lord. He composed the '*Hayagri:va Stho:thram*' - which bestows excellent education, knowledge and debating skills on the person who recites it regularly.

His ability to instantaneously compose poetry filled with devotion, philosophy, beauty of rhyme and ornamental style was amazing. His expertise in defeating challengers in philosophy earned him the title "*Kavi Tha:rkika Simha*" - lion among poets and debaters. He was lesser known by the name '*Ve:nkatana:ttha*' and more popular as '*Ve:da:ntha De:sika*' because of his authority over '*Ve:da:ntha*' - the philosophy - a title conferred by Lord '*Rangana:ttha*' Himself. He visited a number of shrines and composed innumerable *Stho:thrams* in praise of Lord in different forms, both in Sanskrit and Tamil. '*Pa:duka: Sahasram*', a poetic composition of 1000 verses was done by him in just one night at *Sri:rangam*.

He did yeomen service in establishing supremacy of Lord '*Sri:manna:ra:yana*' by defeating away the challengers with great ease in his debates. Over thirty times, he taught *Bhagavad Ra:ma:nuja*'s commentaries on '*Bramha Su:thras*' to his disciples. When muslims invaded *Sri:rangam*, he supervised the efforts to conceal the main idol of Lord '*Sri: Rangana:ttha*'. It is said

that he saved the only written copy of 'Srutha Praka:sika' – commentary on 'Bramha Su:thras' by Bhagavad Ra:ma:nuja - by hiding himself for 7 long days under dead-bodies during the muslim invasion. If we are fortunate to see the works of our great ancestors, it is only because of this great preceptor. During the long muslim occupation of 'Sri:rangam', 'Sri: Ve:da:ntha De:sika' went on a pilgrimage to Melkote, Tirupati and other places propagating the tradition through his disciples. They have established a lineage of A:charya:s which is continuing even today. After the defeat of muslims, Sri: Ve:da:ntha De:sika went back to Sri:rangam and spent his remaining life before reaching the abode of Lord in 1369. Let us pray at the lotus feet of such great A:cha:rya on this festival day of 'Dasara' with the following two slo:kas

sri:ma:n ve:nkatana:ttha:ryaha
kavi tha:rkika ke:sari: |
ve:da:ntha:cha:rya varyo: me:
sannidhaththa:m sada: hrudi ||

kavitha:rkika simha:ya
kalya:na guna sa:line: |
sri:mathe: ve:nkate:sa:ya ve:da:ntha
gurave namaha ||
x-----x-----x

Sri: Manava:la Maha:muni
(October 30th)

The great works and reforms of Sri: Ra:ma:nuja:cha:rya are available even today, because of the great A:cha:rya 'Sri: Manava:la Maha:muni'. He is also known by several other names like 'Sri: Ramyaja:ma:thru Muni', 'Sri: Periya Jeeyar', 'Sri: Sathako:pa Jeeyar' and 'Sri:

Yathi:ndra Pravana'. He is the personification of the qualities of how an A:cha:rya should be. His greatness has been widely acclaimed by all, including the Lord 'Sri: Rangana:ttha' Himself. He is regarded as the incarnation of Sri: Ra:ma:nuja and honoured with same reverence as Sri: Namma:Iwa:r and Bhagavad Ra:ma:nuja:cha:rya.

He was born during the 14th century in South India, in a traditional Sri:vaishnava family, in the solar month of 'Thula' with birth star as 'Mu:la'. He was named after the Lord 'Azhagiya Manava:lan'. As an exceptional student, he completed the study of Ve:das and scriptures under his father's guidance. He then went to 'A:Iwa:r Thirunagari' the birth place of 'Namma:Iwa:r'. Here, he mastered the various commentaries of A:cha:ryas and the works of A:Iwa:rs under the guidance of 'Sri: Sailesa' who was also known as 'Thiruva:imozhippilla'.

Sri: Sailesa told him to treat Sri: Ra:ma:nuja as his A:cha:rya and the young 'Manava:lan', with lot of devotion composed 'Yathira:ja Vimsathi', a set of 20 poems on 'Sri: Ra:ma:nuja'. On seeing the composition and observing sincerity and devotion of Manava:lan, Sri: Saile:sa ordered him to look after Sri: Ra:ma:nuja's temple at A:Iwa:r Thirunagari at the same time continuing to practice and propagate the philosophy as given by Sri: Ra:ma:nuja. His reverence to Sri: Ra:ma:nuja earned him the title 'Yathi:ndra Pravana'.

He went to Sri:rangam as per the wish of his A:cha:rya to establish and propagate the tradition and works of Sri: Ra:ma:nuja. He restored back all the temple procedures as set by Sri: Ra:ma:nuja earlier, which were breached after long muslim occupation. Because of



the foreign invasion, almost two generations had lost the valuable culture. **Sri: Manava:lan** took up the task of guiding the society in right direction, setting up the correct *Ve:dic* practices, spreading the message of sages, saints and masters of yester years and worked ceaselessly following the words of his master. The number of his disciples grew in leaps and bounds. His love and devotion towards Lord was amazing. He also started collecting and recovering the manuscripts of the works of earlier *A:cha:ryas* during his stay at **Sri:rangam**. Not able to bear separation from the services of Lord even for a single day, he renounced the materialistic world and took to '*Sanya:sa:sram*'. Even though he took the name of '**Sathako:pa Jeeyar**', he was more lovingly known as '**Sri: Manava:la Maha:muni**'.

His nectarine lectures on '*Thiruva:imozhi*' – the 1000 verse poetic composition of **Sri: Namma:Iwa:r** were a treat to listen. Lord **Sri: Rangana:ttha** requested **Sri: Manava:la Maha:muni** to teach him all the commentaries of '*Thiruva:imozhi*'. **Sri: Manava:la Maha:muni** accepted the request and started the lectures. It went on for one year and Lord **Sri: Rangana:ttha** listened with joy and rapt attention, cancelling all other functions during the year. He gave up his seat for **Sri: Manava:la Maha:muni**, as a teacher has to be seated higher. At the end of the lecture series while **Sri: Manava:la Maha:muni** was being honoured with grand temple honours, a small boy appeared amidst everyone and chanted the following *slo:kam* in praise of **Sri: Manava:la Maha:muni**.

sri: saile:sa daya: pa:thram dhi:
bhakthya:di guna:rnavam |
yathi:ndra pravanam vande:
ramya ja:ma:tharam munim ||

Saying these two lines, the boy disappeared into the sanctum sanctorum. Through the temple priests, the Lord revealed that He Himself, unable to resist Himself, had come as a boy to praise **Sri: Manava:la Maha:muni** as He accepted him as His *A:cha:rya*. The same verse was revealed through *Archakas* in other shrines like *Thirupathi, Kanchi* and *Melkote* and it was ordered by the Lord that this verse be recited before starting any recitation in temples or homes from then onwards.

Sri: Manava:la Maha:muni wrote commentaries on several works of earlier *A:cha:ryas*. He composed '*Upade:sa Rathnama:la*' exalting the *A:Iwa:rs* and *A:cha:ryas*, their glory, birth anniversaries, birth places, works done by them etc. This makes it easy for anyone to remember the tradition. He composed '*Thiruva:i mozhi Nu:tthanda:di*' – as the essence of the holy '*Thiruva:imozhi*' in 100 Tamil poems - one poem for 10 verses each of *Thiruva:imozhi*.

During his last days, he was unable to stay anymore in this world and wanted to reach Lord's lotus feet as soon as possible. He composed '*A:rthi Prabandham*' expressing his eager, anguish and desire to Lord. When he was not able to go to temple, Lord **Sri: Rangana:ttha** came upto his doorstep to give His *darsan*. At a very ripe age, **Sri: Manava:la Maha:muni** attained *Paramapadam*. Today, he guides us and showers his benevolence on all of us in the form our beloved *A:cha:rya*, **Sri: Chinna Jeeyar Swamiji**. Let us prostrate before such a great *A:cha:rya* today, with the following *slo:kam*

thula:ya:m athule: mu:le:
pa:ndye: kunthi:puri:vare: |
sri:se:sha:mso:dbhavam vande:
ramyaja:ma:tharam munim ||



HH Sri: Chinna Jeeyar Swamiji

(October 26th)

India is uniquely bestowed with saints and sages from times immemorial, and Lord himself has taken several incarnations like that of **Sri: Ra:ma** and **Sri: Krishna**. Sometimes, we wish that we were present during those days. But we are very fortunate to be present now when our beloved **A:cha:rya, Sri: Tridandi Srimannarayana Ramanuja Chinna Jeeyar Swamiji** is showering his grace on us.

It is needless to enlist the qualities of **HH Sri Swamiji** – who does not know His charming smile and benevolent looks drenching us with love and affection, ever cheerful, ceaselessly active, unmindful of His bodily comforts but always concerned about others' welfare, radiating hope and joy wherever He goes. He enlightens the devotees with profound discourses in very simple language, down-to-earth practical examples, swaying the audience with benediction, depth of thought and beauty of rhythm.

HH Sri Swamiji was born on the day of **Deepavali** in 1956 in Andhra Pradesh, to a pious **Sri:vaishnava** couple, in the solar month of '**Thula**' with the star '**Swa:thi**' on the horizon. The childhood of **Sri: Swamiji** exhibited a deep sense of spiritual quest indicating His sprouting genius. His love for sanskrit grew with age. He had the unique benefit of spiritual instruction under the benediction of **Sri: Pedda Jeeyar Swamiji** and **Sri: T.K.Gopalacharya Swamiji**. It was under their wardship that **HH Sri Chinna Jeeyar Swamiji** grasped the essentials of the great, **Ashta:kshari Manthram**, with lucid

commentary.

HH Sri Swamiji is one amongst the very few who took to **Sanya:sa** without going through the **Gruhasttha:sram**. He is also the youngest '**Jeeyar**' to take to this Order in His early twenties. In addition to the spiritual knowledge inherited from **Sri Pedda Jeeyar Swamiji**, He acquired proficiency in the branches of **Ve:das**, **Ve:da:ntha**, Agamas, Sanskrit and **Dravida Prabandhas**.

HH Sri Swamiji's activities are innumerable covering all walks of life and all places of the world. Let us learn about them one at a time every month. **HH Sri Swamiji** is giving a wake-up call to everyone to realize what they are and what is expected of them. He is encircling the whole world, like the Sun shining above us, lighting the **Gi:tha: Jyo:thi** lamps in our hearts with a message '**Worship your own and Respect All**' and '**Serve All Beings as Service to God**'. It indeed fills our heart with overflowing joy to realize how fortunate we are, to be living in this modern era, being protected by His Holiness like a mother showering the divine love on us. Come! Let us all join hands in His divine service and lead a meaningful life! Let us pray our **A:cha:rya** on this day and forever with the following **slo:kam**:

*durmukhyabde: thowli sukla
pratthame: swa:thibhe: subhe: |
pra:durbhu:tham gurum vande:
sri:manna:ra:yanam munim ||*

Jai Srimannarayana !

