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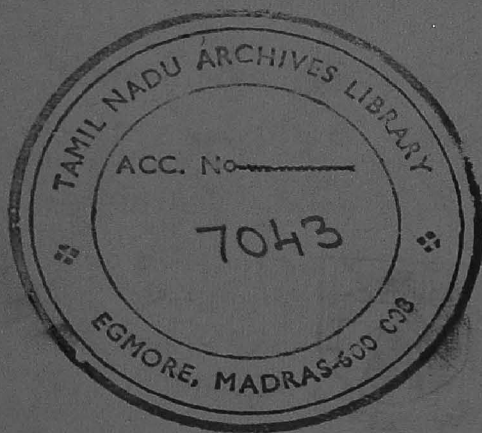
SOURCES OF SAIVA SIDDHANTA PHILOSOPHY

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Sources of Saiva Siddantha Philosophy

By T. S. Kandaswamy Mudaliar.

Religion which was once an object of all absorbing and reverent study by many a scholar of our holy land, has ceased to be so. Even our Pandits have directed their attention and study to other fields of knowledge. It has very little interests to modern scholars of our times. There is no chair in many of our Universities for any of our religions or for comparative religion and philosophy. I heartily thank the syndicate of Annamalai University which has its seat at Chidambaram a holy shrine, a place of pilgrimage and a place much loved and adored by millions of votaries of Sri Nataraja i.e. Lord Siva in eternal cosmic dance for admirably administering the trust endowed by the most munificent patron of religion and philosophy - His Holiness the Head of the Mutt of Thirupanandal.

The bulk of the people in South India are Saiva Siddhanthins by persuasion and belief. Siddantham means true end. It denotes that system of thought or philosophy the tenets of which have seen established beyond a shadow of doubt and beyond dispute. Lord Siva, who is not one of the Trinity but who is the one and the only Supreme Being is the God of the Saiva Siddhanthins. That branch of philosophy which treats about the various problems and tenets of Saivasim as practised by Saiva Siddhanthins is called Saiva Siddantham. There are also other worshippers of Siva but their religion is far different from that of the Saiva Siddhanthins even in fundamentals. Saiva Siddhanthins are popularly called Saivites but their religion is called Saiva Siddantham which is different from other forms of Saivism. Siddantham means true or established religion.

The word means in logic that which is proved and established. Purvapaksham means a proposition which is refuted.

Saiva Siddantham is a very ancient religion, the origin of which is shrouded in the remotest past and goes far remoter than even the prehistoric period of man. The worship of Siva is referred to in the Epics of Mahabaratam and Ramayanam. The excavations of Mohanja Daro and Harappa have brought to light that the people who inhabited the indus valley several thousands of years ago before the birth of Christian era, worshipped Sivalinga and Nandi the sacred bull.

Sathanar (சாத்தனார்) the celebrated author of Manimekalai who lived in the beginning of the Christian era, has devoted a chapter for 'describing the various religions which were practised then in Tamilnad. He has therein vividly described how the heroine Manimekalai went to Vanji the capital of Chera Kingdom and Kanchi the capital of Thondainad, sat at the foot of spiritual and religious gurus of various religions in quest of truth and got profound knowledge and insight into the doctrines and tenets of the various religions which flourished during his time. Saiva-vathin was one among the religionists referred to by him. A tamil poet of the first century A.D. addressing a Tamilian King thus (Oh, King wind up your Royal Umbrella while you walk in reverence round the temple of the Supreme God with three eyes (Siva).

In Silappadikaram, the immortal epic of the Tamils, its author Elango who is believed to be a Buddhist monk, refers to the temple of Siva as the holy temple of the God who transcends everything and whose body is uncreated (பிறவா யாக்கைப் பெரியோன் கோவில்)

It is held by the orthodox followers of Saiva Siddhantham, that their system is based primarily on Saivagamas. But by no means they repudiate the authority of Vedas. They equally accept the authority of the Vedas and call their philosophy as Vedantha Siddhantham or Vaidika Saivam. Saint Thayumanavar refers to it in the following words.

வேதாந்த சித்தாந்த சமரச நன்னிலைப் பெற்ற
வித்தகச்சித்தர் கணமே
ராஜாங்கத்தில் அமர்ந்தது வைதீகசைவம்
அழகிதந்தோ

It is also called Suddatdwaita philosophy by learned scholar St. Meikandar. The author of Sivagnana Betham is called Advaita Meikandar by Thayumanavar. Many eminent scholars are of opinion that the system of Saiva Siddhantham has been evolved by the Tamils themselves though it cannot be gain said that the system of philosophy has been influenced to a considerable degree by the Sivagamas in thought and language. The Agamas are said to be revealed words of God and the word indeed means the words which have come (out of God). The Agamas are sealed books to many. Even Eastern scholars did not direct their attention to a study of the Agamas. Sivagamas are twenty eight in number but many of them are mere names. Many of the Agamas which are now extant relate to ritualism or Karma Kanda. Umapathi Sivacharia has written a brilliant and illuminating commentary on one of the Upagamaspaushkara. The Agama like the Veda is divided into karmakanda and Gnana kanda. There are a large number of Upagamas corresponding to Upanishads. Mrigendra is one of such Upagamas. It is cited by Sayanacharya. As the mode of worship conducted in the temples of South India is based upon one or the other of the Agamas, Karma kandas alone are preserved to us.

Saint Tirumular says.

“வேதமோடாகமம் மெய்யாம் இறைவனால்
ஓதும் பொதுவும் சிறப்பு மென்றுன்னுக
நாதன் உரையினவ நாடில் இரண்டந்தம்
பேதமதென்னில் பெரியோர் கபேதமே”

The Vedas and Agamas are both true, both being the word of the Lord. Think that the first is general in its nature, while the other is a particular or a special one. Both are words of God. When difference is found between the two on examination by the ordinary men the great ones perceive none, Sri Nilakanta the famous commentator in the Brahma Sutra says that he finds no difference between the Vedas and the Agamas. He says that the Veda itself is Sivagama.

Of the several commentators to the Brahma Sutras, Sri Nilakanta is the earliest. His commentary has been referred to by Sri Sankarachariya. It is surprising that his commentary is not known to many distinguished scholars. Sri Nilakanta is said to be a contemporary of Govinda Yogi the guru of Sri Sankaracharya. His commentary is called Siwadwaita Bashya. Sri Nilakanta's doctrines as propounded by him in his commentary on the Vedantha Sutras are similar to those that are found in the Meikenta Sastras except those that relate to Parinama Vada. Sri Nilakanta differing from Sri Sankaracharya holds that the world has evolved out of God. This view of the Universe is shared by him along with Sri Ramanujam. But this view is rejected by Saiva Siddanthins. Sri Nilakanta is not a saiva Siddanthin. He is not an authority on Saiva Siddantha. Sri Nilakanta might have been well versed in the Agamas and with the help of his profound knowledge in them he would have written his commentary on the Brahma Sutras. The Tamils in South India have been from the very

earliest times worshippers of Siva and had developed a system of religion and philosophy popularly their own. Siva is derived from the Tamil word (செம்மை) Red by eminent scholars including Dr. CALDWELL. It means according to them the God who is red. Later on the word acquired a secondary significance, the God who is absolute good and causes the same to the souls. Gnana Kanda is the most important branch of knowledge whether in Agamas or in the Vedas. There is paucity of Agamic literature on this aspect of religion or philosophy. Even the small account of Agamic literature extant in South India is fragmentary and does not cover the entire field of Saiva Siddantha Philosophy. Barring the Agamic literature which is referred to above, Saiva Siddantha literature entirely consists of the Maikanda Sastras which were written by saintly and inspired authors in Tamil. As the religious and philosophic literature of Saiva Siddanthins is written in Tamil, as the Tamils have not taken any keen interest in the propagation of their sacred literature outside their little Tamil Nad and as even Western scholars took very little interest in studying the literature, the system of Saiva Siddantha philosophy is little known to the people outside Tamil Nad.

It is one of the cardinal tenets of Saivism that God alone is competent to speak with authority on the entire and comprehensive truths about religion. He takes a divine form of His own accord and out of His super-abundant grace. He reveals the mysteries of religion to the erring mankind. The Agamas are the revealed words of God. The principal Agamas are twenty-eight in number, while the Upagamas are more numerous. The Agamas and the Upagamas are written in Sanskrit. They deviate from the the path of worship laid down in the Vedas and adopt and advocate the worship of the sacred symbol in religious worship and in the acquisition of superb spiritual experience

they can hardly be over-estimated. As the worship of Sivalinga was particularly prevalent among the Tamils even prior to the prehistoric period, modern scholars are of opinion that the Saiva Siddantha philosophy is an original contribution of the Tamils and that they had themselves translated their ideas into Sanskrit as Agamas. Whatever might be said of the origin of Saivism it cannot be gain said that it has undergone slowly changes by the influence of the Vedas and Vedic religions of our land. Umapathi Sivacharaya classifies religions literature into two categories, the Vedic and Saivite scriptures.

Besides the Agamas alluded to above are the Meikanda Sastras which are fourteen in number and which are written in tamil which is not less hallowed or less adapted than any other language to express and convey spiritual wisdom and divine experience. All the fourteen books have been written by Saiva Saints under the inspiration of God Siva.

I shall refer to them in detail presently but before doing so, I wish to lay stress upon one fact that Saint Tiruvalluvar's immortal Kural is also an authority on Saivism. Saint Tiruvalluvar has simply codified the ethical philosophy of Saivism which was in vogue then, in a net-shell. His aim was to write a comprehensive Veda for all the Tamils without offending the religious sentiments of any one of the Tamils. He has therefore, studiously avoided any reference to anything parochial or polemical in nature. He has at the same time taken care not to omit any religious doctrines or tenet which is of universal application. When we analyse and investigate into the religious doctrines embodied in his book we find that they exhibit a very close resemblance to those of Saiva Siddantham. He is believed to have been a Saiva Siddanthin himself. Though every

religion in Tamilnad claims the saint to be its own Guru, yet no other religion except the Saiva Siddantham has proclaimed the sacred Kural as its accredited authority. Saint Uyyavanda devanayanar the author of Tirukkalitru-padayar has cited two remarkable verses of kural in his book under reference as his authority for certain ideas which are peculiarly Saiva Siddanthic in character.

“ சார்புணர்ந்து சார்புகெட ஒழுகின் என்றமையால்
சார்தரா சார்தரு நோய் ”

is one of the Kurals used by him in his verse

சார்புணர்தல் சார்புகெட ஒழுகின் என்றமையால்
சார்புணர்தல் தானே தியானமுமாம் சார்புகெட
ஒழுகின் நல்ல சமாதியு மாம்கேதப்
படவருவதில்லை வினைப்பற்று

Saint Tiruvalluvar has laid down as follows: If the soul perceiving the Divine Grace which has been its sole proof and support from time without beginning, with aid of the said Grace which is Sivagnanam i.e. deep meditation on Siva. If afterwards the soul gives up even its consciousness of meditation, it has indeed attained Samadhi. If the soul pursues the said course of conduct, its actions do not bind it nor cause any re-birth.

Another remarkable kural relied on by him is the following one.

“ வேண்டுங்கால் வேண்டும் பிறவாமை மற்றது
வேண்டாமை வேண்டவரும் ”

The verse in Tirukkalitru Padayar is given hereunder.

வேண்டுங்கால் வேண்டும் பிறவாமை என்றமையால்
வேண்டின ஃதொன்றுமே வேண்டுவது—வேண்டினது
வேண்டாமை வேண்டவரும் என்றமையால் வேண்டிகு
வேண்டாமை வேண்டுமவன்பால்,

It is commanded by Tiruvalluvar as follows: If you want to pray to God to grant you any request pray to Him to grant you cessation of birth. If you really want it, then pray for cessation of desire. So what the soul should pray for (to our merciful and beautiful God) is to grant you absolute and complete eradication of desire.

Other relegionists merely find out parellel ideas in the Kural and are satisfied with it. They do not in the least accept it as their authority on their relegion. There are a number of verses in Kural which give beautiful and eloquent expression to the tenets of Saiva Siddanthins. I shall attempt to briefly refer to some of such kural verses but I shall not embark at present on a detailed inquiry into the subject.

One of the cardinal principles in Saiva Siddantha is the existence of the three entities-God, Soul, and Matter. Tiruvalluvar has written a chapter forbidding begging. He has commanded that men need not beg under any circumstances whatever. He raises an imaginary objection from an utterly destitute beggar to the effect that begging is ordained on him by the Creator and that he cannot therefore dispense with it and he answers it thus.

இரந்தும் உயிர்வாழ்தல் வேண்டின் பரந்து

கெடுக உலகியற்றியான்

If the maker of the world ever intended that one should live by begging, let him make haste to lose his life. This Kural clearly proves that its Author is a believer, in the reality of the world, in its creation by its creator and its destructability, and the existence of soul. It is also clear that the Creator of the phenomenal world is not the Supreme deity but a pure soul with the Mala of power. His power to create is derived from the Supreme deity.

மன்னுயிரோம்பி யருளான் வார்க்கில் லென்ப
தன்னுயி ரஞ்சம் வினை

is another kural which throws considerable light on his religious belief. It means, 'the wise say that he who cherishes souls which are eternal, and are always guided by grace in his conduct, has nothing to be dreaded'. It is evident from this Kural that its author is a firm believer in the eternal nature of the souls and their plurality.'

I shall not indulge any longer in the citation of Kural to demonstrate that Saint Thiruvalluvar is also an authority on Saiva Siddhantham.

Whatever might be the original source of Saiva Siddantha philosophy, the authoritative literature on the subject is found only in Tamil. It consists of the Meikanda sastras which are fourteen in number and the Thurumurais which are 12 in number. There are also the Pandara Sastras and other later works on the subject. Saint Kumaraguruparar the founder of the Kasi Mutt, the present head of which is the donor of the endowments for these lecture is the author of many poetical works wherein the truths of Saiva Siddantha philosophy have been expounded.

Of the fourteen books which go by the common appellation of "Meikanda Sastras" or Darshanas of Truth. St. Meikanda's Sivagnana Botham is easily the foremost though it is not the earliest of them. Tiruvunthiar and Tirukkalitrapadyar are anterior to it in point of time. The latter books do not cover the entire field of philosophy but merely touch on the salient and important theme relating to the liberation of souls.

The author of Tiruvundiar was Uyyananda Devanayanar of Thiruviyalur who wrote his book in 1147 AD.

His disciple and student Uyyavanda Devanayanar of Thirukkadavur wrote his book Thirukkalitrupadyar in 1177 A.D. Both the authors mainly refer to the experiences of Saints who had climbed upto the topmost heights of religion. Many of the thoughts and expressions found in one have their close resemblances in the other. Both dwell on mysticism but the language of Thiruvundiar (திருவந்தியார்) is more mystical and paradoxical. I have referred to the verses in Thirukkalitrupadiar alone in connection with another topic. I shall refer to one verse in Tiruvundhiar (திருவந்தியார்) to illustrate my point.

“கிடந்த கிழவியைக் கிள்ளி எழுப்பி

உடந்தை யுடனேநின் றுந்தீபற

உன்னையே கண்டதென் றுந்தீபற”

(திருவந்தியார் 14)

“The old maid is reposing within you already. He will pinch and wake her up. Stand and be united with her. He will seek after you and attract you to Himself”. It may be in plain language thus :- Siva-Sakthi or Sivagnanam is already dormant within you. It is beginningless. It was dormant because you trusted your Indryas and anthakarana, which did not give you the correct lead but misled you. By the magic touch of Sivadiksha the Divine Guru will set you free from the clutches of the implements and cause Sivasakthi to blazen out into ever-ceasing light of Sivagnanam. Merge yourself in it and God will seek after you and submerge you under His Grace and hands.

There was a set-back in the progress of Saivism in South India. Various other religions were followed by then ruling kings of Tamil Nad. People become hetrodox and even heretics and sceptics. Some of the Pallavas who ruled at Kanchi had extended their rule even further south;

They were not Saivites in faith and became intolerant. There was even persecution of other relegionists. Then about the middle of the seventh century and in the ninth century the Saivacharyas went throughout the length and breath of Tamilnad visiting the holy shrines and singing soul-stirring hymns of Devarams in melodious and musical tunes. All the tenets of Saiva Siddantha have found expression in their hymns. People were stirred to the depth of their souls and became religious minded. Thirukkalittrupadyar and Thiruvundhiar have formulated some of the main tenets of the Saiva Philosophy. All the Thirumurais had set the minds Godward and had them attuned for serious religious study and research. Just then, about the first half of the 13th century A.D. St. Meikandar was born. He was precocious and a prodigy. Saint Meikandar while he was yet an infant wrote the book Sivagnana Botham under divine inspiration. His original name was Swetavana Perumal. But after his divine initiation by Paranjothi Munivar he was called by his dikshanamam Meikandar. Sivagnana Botham is a systematic scientific and comprehensive treatise on Saiva Siddantha. Though it was once held that Sivagnana Botham is only a translation of twelve stanzas appearing in the heart of the Papa Vimochana Padalam of Purvagama, St. Meikandar has not said anywhere in his book that it is a translation of an original book. Almost all the modern scholars are unanimously of opinion that St. Meikandar's is the original work. What is said to be the original in Sanskrit appears to be a pale copy of the Tamil Sivagnana Botham. I am not going to marshall all the reasons advanced by the modern scholars in favour of their view. It may be taken as well established that Saint Meikandar Sivagnana Botham is the original contribution to the field of relegious philosophy. Mr. K. Subramania Pillai the talented and versatile and prolific author of many

a book was the first to discover the truth of Meikandar's work is the original. He has given many convincing reasons for his conclusions. My friend Mr. M. Balasubramania Mudaliar has marshalled all the reasons numbering about a six hundred for the said conclusion in an interesting and instructive article contributed by him to "Siddantham" which is the official journal of the "Saiva Sindantha Samajam" of Madras.

Sivagnana Botham is a most important treatise on Saiva Siddantham written in aphorisms of Sutras which are 12 in number which fall into 2 groups of six Sutras each-the general and the particular. It would be said to the credit of the author that the sutras are known for the simplicity and grandeur and perspicuity. We know that there are Sutrams written by various other authors wherein we do not find any clarity. From one and the same text different commentators have drawn varied conclusions which are not only different in thought and idea but some which are conflicting with each other. Such a difference cannot be merely due to the ingenuity of the commentators. It is more due to want of clarity in the text itself. No ingenuity of any commentator can give any interpretation different from what the author intended to convey in the Sutras of Sivagnana Botham. He has marvellously covered the entire field of Saiva Siddantham in about 40 lines in all.

The book is divided into 2 parts each of which is again divided into 2 parts. In the first three Sutras the author establishes the existence of the three eternal entities, in the next three their characteristics and attributes. Thus the first half of the book is devoted to the proof of existence of God, matter pasam and soul and to their characteristics in their interrelated state. The first half of the second part treats about the sadanas which ultimately lead the erring

souls to bliss or mukthi while the latter half treats about the final goal or end to which the sadanas lead the souls. This in short is the scheme of the immortal work Sivagnana Botham. In addition to the Sutras, varthikams (the gist) and illustrations are also appended. Each sutra is capable of being and in fact is analysed into athikarams (themes). The frame work of the book has a striking similarity to that of Brahma Sutras.

In the first half of the work the author proves beyond doubt by unerring and grim logical reasoning the existence of the three entities, God, Matter and Soul and their general characteristics. In the second half he has made reasoning subsidiary to anubuthi, the unparalleled immediate, and divine experience-which alone can take the soul to the height of Divine Wisdom and immerse it in never-ending bliss. No other author has ever attempted to solve all the knotty problems that face an enquirer into the depths of reality in so short a compass as our author has successfully done. His achievement is miraculous.

Saint Meikandar has been very fortunate in having got a commentator. Sri Sivagnana Munivar, whose profundity of knowledge in Vedic. Agama and Tamil Saiva Siddhantha literature is unrivalled and is balanced only by his deep scholarship in Tamil language and literature. He was a poet of a very high order, a grammarian of a very great distinction, a master of Tamil prose and a Bashyakar (commentator) of eminence. He had written a masterly, learned and elaborate commentary as Sivagnana Botham, known as Sivagnana Maha Bashya even as Sankara and Ramanuja have written for the Brahma Sutras. He has also written a short commentary on the self-same work. It was written in the eighteenth century A.D. Long before

the said Maha Bashyam came into existence Saint Arulanandhi Sivacharya distinguished for his profound knowledge of the Sivagama and called on that account as Sakala Agama Panditha and the family priest of Saint Meikandar, became an ardent disciple of saint Meikandar and studied the scriptures under his master's guidance and expounded the Sastras at the command of his master, in his great treatise known as Sivagama Siddyar. Arulanandhi was a scholar of very high attainments both in Sanskrit and Tamil. Above all he had a skill of expression in an eloquent and simple style, even subtlest of ideas which ordinarily defy expression. His verses are of such exceptional beauty and literary value, that one great scholar poet has included his work among the six greatest works in Tamil. Saints like Thayumanavar have paid handsome tribute to its greatness and say that the knowledge of even half a stanza in Sivagnana Sidiyar is sure to lead the student to paradise and immortal bliss.

Saint Arulanandhi Sivam, refutes the tenets and beliefs of various systems of philosophy in the first part known as parapaksham and establishes the infallible nature of Saiva Siddantha system of philosophy. Saint Arulanandhi Sivam though very much a senior in age to his master was a contemporary of St. Meikandar. He is the author of another work known as Irupa Irupadu Twice Twenty poems. Saint Meikandar had forty nine disciples of whom Saint Manavachakam Kadanthar of Tiruvathigai is one. This saint is the author of Onmai Vilakam (உண்மைவிளக்கம்) which is ranked as the sixth among the 14th Siddhanta sastras. It is a book which treats about Tattvas in particular.

Among other topics Umapathi Sivacharia of Kotr-
vagudi near Chidambaram lived in the beginning of the

14th century and was one among the three thousand priests of holy Chidambaram which is revered by the Saivites as the Temple". He is a prolific writer and the author of several books on Saiva Siddantha. The most important of his works is Sivaprakasam which treats about all the themes concerning Saiva Philosophy in 100 verses. Like Sivagnana Siddhiar it is of inestimable value even if it is judged as a piece of literature. The books of Umapathi Sivam are Sivaprakasam, Thiruvarulpayan, Sankarpa Nirakarnam, Vina Vanba, Potripakrodai, Kodikkavi and Nenjuvidu Thoothu, Unmai Neri vilakkam of Srikali (தத்துவ நாதர்) Thathavanather is said to be the fourteenth of the series. It is said by some scholars that Thuhalarubotham (துகளறு போதம்) of Srikali Sitrambala Nadigal is the fourteenth. Umapathi Sivam has stated in his Sankarpa Nirakaranam that the date of the work was the Saka year 1235 which is 1313 A.D.

I referred to the Thevaram Hymns sung by the three great Saiva Acharias, Saint Appar, Saint Sambandar, and Saint Sundarar. They are classified into seven Thirumarais and are collected together as Thevaram Hymns. The Saiva Acharias had a variety of lofty religious experience. They were always in a mood of divine communion with God, Siva. They visited holy shrines day after day with a myriad of followers, and poured out their heart through their graceful hymns of matchless beauty, sung in praise of Lord Siva from the highest altitude of emotions to which they rose and stood sustained. The Hymns which they sang filled the earth and wafted towards God.

Saint Manicka Vachakar has sung the eighth Thirumarai, which is (திருவாசகம்) Tiruvvasagam means the sacred word. The highest, ineffable and divine experience of a perfected soul which attained bliss, has found

expression of exquisite beauty in this immortal book. There is a proverb in Tamil to the effect that a heart which does not melt on hearing Thiruvachakam will not melt at all. Thiruvisaippa and Thiruppallandu form the ninth Thirumarais and were sung by a number of Saints.

The Tenth Thirumarai is Thirumanthram the author of which is Saint Thirumular. It is said that he was a siddha who attained the eight Siddhis and was a gnani. He lived for 3000 years and sung at the rate of one manthram after the lapse of every year. Moved by the sight of the lamentation of a herd of cows at the death of their kind cow-herd the saint entered the dead body of the cow-herd and removed their grief. As the relatives of the cow herd Moolan did away with the Siddha's body, he lived in the body of Moolam for three thousand years and sang the Thirumanthram. The style of many of the verses in Thirumanthram are mystic and are in the nature of a riddles and puzzles.

The eleventh Thirumarai is an anthology of poems composed by a number of saints.

The last of Thirumarais is Periapuranam of Saint Sekilar, a scholar and saint of a very high order. Sekkilar has written the lives of 63 Saiva Saints and called his work Thiruthondar Puranam which is now popularly called Peria Puranam. Sekkilar has written the lives of Saiva Saints with singular insight into their lives and with profound wisdom. He has brought to light the qualities of Saintliness its value and the contribution of those saints to the spiritual wisdom of the country and the world in general. Religion enables one to rise up to his fullest spiritual height and to live in religious ecstasy and happiness. Sekkilar's saints belong to the noble class of the republic of saints of the world and are always beacon

lights calling towards them men of saintly ambition sailing in the waters of the sea of life. Sekkilar in delineating the lives and qualities of Saints, has solved many a tangled problem of religion. Many of the truths and doctrines set forth in the Saiva Sastras by the various authors are amplified or explained, or commented on or implemented by Sekkilar. Instances are too many to be quoted here.

In conclusion I may state without fear of contradiction that the Meikanda Sastras and the Sacred Thirumarais are illuminating books wherein the illustrious and saintly authors have laid down for all times and all men immortal truths and wisdom to follow which is only to walk towards the noble goal of Mukthi.

LONG LIVE NAMACHIVAYA. LONG LIVE THE LOTUS FEET
OF OUR LORD.

OM, SANTHI ! SANTHI !!

THE ULTIMATE ENTITIES

Saiva Siddantham postulates the existence of matter, self and God as the three eternal realities. Behind the phenomenal World there is cosmic matter into which all material things in the Universe will ultimately resolve at the time of the final destruction which will take place at the end of one cycle of yugas or deluges. Then creation takes place again when the Universe with all its various forms of life in all its complexities will be created by God. Thus the Universe emerges into existence once again. Matter is eternal and imperishable in its subtlest form. This primordial cosmic matter out of which all forms of matter and Universe arise and emerge into appearance and into which all the phenomenal world and gross forms of matter including the five elements resolve is called Maya in Saiva Siddantham. It is in this sense that I use the word Maya. Material Universe has its material cause in Maya and the instrumental cause in God. God is all intelligence and wisdom and matter cannot take its origin from God as matter is unintelligent. Matter cannot assume various forms of its own accord as it is devoid of intelligence, but God creates things out of it and out of his unbounded love towards souls. The created things of matter are body, mind, universe and objects of enjoyment. The created things are also subject to preservation and decay but Maya is uncreated. It is beginningless and endless even as God and souls are.

Maya falls into two categories, pure and impure. There are also authors who postulate pure and impure maya as two different entities. Maya is the cause as aforesaid of all material things and is real. It is different and separate from soul and God. Soul and God manifest themselves only with the aid of Maya. It is Sakthi which

helps the manifestation of God. Unless souls come in conjunction with matter and assume subtle forms of bodies, they cannot manifest their intelligence.

Hence matter in Saivaism is not illusory nor illusion caused by Avidya as some eminent philosophers hold, nor does it form part and parcel of God as some others hold. Though this phenomenal Universe is liable to be destroyed as it consists of divisible parts yet matter in its original state as Maya is endless. It is eternal, all pervasive, subtle, formless, unintelligent, single and indivisible and is the seed of the universe. It is the Sakthi with the aid of which HE manifests and is the cause of body and mind, world and things for enjoyment of the souls.

As already stated Man's body and mind are made out of Maya. But for this body and mind man cannot acquire any knowledge Man before creation is destitute of intelligence not because he is utterly devoid of it but because he is swallowed up and enveloped in Anavam i.e., a mala (impurity) which nullifies and benumbs his intelligence. He becomes ignorant and drawn to do evil and commit sin. It has the effect of benumbing the soul's innate intelligence. It is also material and in nature is devoid of intelligence. Soul is not inherently unintelligent but becomes so by the inevitable influence of 'Anava'. Anavam is not a mere quality or attribute of anything. It is a dravya or substance which has the deleterious effect of totally eclipsing the inherent intelligence of the soul.

Some religionists hold that ignorance of self is the result of its having come into contact with the material body. Saiva Siddantha refutes this theory and argues on the other hand that maya (material body and mind) enables the soul to acquire knowledge and allows intelligence

to come into play though in slow degrees. There are yet other philosophic systems which hold that souls are by nature devoid of intelligence. Saiva Siddantha concedes that at times maya instead of causing intelligence to become manifest may hinder its manifestation. Saiva Siddantha is realistic in its philosophy. It concludes that unreal things can have no appearance and things having appearance are real and substantial. This universe has appearance and is grounded on its reality. This Universe in its fundamental and basic state is as real as God. It is called 'Satkaryavadam' which is common to this philosophy and other systems of philosophy. Though believing in Satkarya Vadam, Ramanuja holds that the World is part and parcel of God along with souls. World is only a parinama of Vasudeva. Hence Ramanuja is a distinguished Monist. God pervades through the whole universe, but at the same time transcends it. The world is eternal but it is not meant thereby that World is equivalent to or made of same things as God who is also eternal. World is changing but God is changeless. World is devoid of intelligence while God is Supreme Intelligence. As matter is Jata (Unintelligent) it cannot change itself and it undergoes change because of God.

We have seen that Maya has no beginning. What then is creation? There cannot be the first or original creation as matter is beginningless. When we speak of creation, we think of one among the cycle of many creations. Saiva Siddantha, like many other religions in India, believes in Karma (action), transmigration, birth and rebirth of souls.

In quiescence where matter ultimately resolves into Maya, the primordial cosmic matter and the souls become radically disembodied and all souls and matters have their

shelter in Him. This takes place at the final destruction of of universe at the instance of the Supreme God Siva through Rudra. There can be creation only in pursuance of the super-abundant Grace of Siva after It has taken shelter in him. When the yogies analyse the World they find that there are altogether 36 Thathwas of which 5 are called, Siva Thathwas, 7 are called Vidya Thathwas and 24 are Atma Thathwas. The same thathwas are found in the human body itself. The thathwas are matter in essence and hence are unintelligent. Body is absolutely indispensable for man if he wants to develop his self, to purify himself and eventually to attain infinite bliss. Body cannot be discarded nor treated with contempt. Siva is not doing any action even in his super abundant Grace unless he becomes the Lord of the Universe as and when he creates it. He is then called Pathi.

Souls yearn for rest after having been tossed hither and thither by the waves that surge up in the ocean of birth. Individual souls get tired of their embodied existence and the consequent cycle of births and deaths existence and Siva in his unbounded grace gives the desired rest by causing death which is not the end of soul's journey. It means only rest before the start of a fresh one.

As soul is enshrouded in Anava which clouds its innate though limited intelligence, the ignorance caused by Anava is sought to be removed by endowing the soul with a body befitting its past karma. Darkness caused by Anava is removed slowly but surely by yoking it with a body. Birth or embodiment of souls is calculated to give illumination where darkness reigned before. I referred to Vidyathathwas which are Kalai, Kalam, Niyathi, Vidya, Aragam and Maya and Purusha. Kalai removes slightly

the screen of inaction imposed by Anava on the soul, while Vidya enables it to regain intelligence. Out of his grace god protects and preserves the soul and enables it to continue to live in the human frame. This continuance of life is given only to make the soul eat the fruits of its own action and progressively was weaken the hold of Maya.

There is also cardinal and subtle Karma which impels souls to take to action. Souls have to enjoy the fruits of their karmas, but they may not like to enjoy them. God's Grace which allures the souls to take to such actions as will yield even detestable results is called 'Throthaye'. It is also called a Mala. There is Mayeyam the thathwas, which, at times draws the souls into sin. There are on the whole five malas, (impurities) Maya, karma, Thirothayi and Mayeyam. These are called pasas or Malas which tie the souls in bondage and drive them to commit sin and entwine it into manifold sins. The souls are bound by pasas normally and in that state is called i. e., unliberated soul or souls in bondage. Anava causes ignorance and leads the soul to all kinds of error and sin. The rest of the Malas follow the Anavam and help the soul further in its erring journey of life. If Anavam is an entity which has no end, has it got a beginning? It has no beginning, nor end. It is as old as God and soul. It has always been in company with the soul and has always caused the soul's miseries. It is one, but has many sided activities. It envelops all souls in its utter darkness, but the souls do not know that they are under its incurable and disastrous bondage or grip. Though it resembles darkness in hiding things from the sight of men but differs from it in that it does not even show itself to them.

If Anava is beginningless and is indestructible cannot men get themselves disentangled from the stern grip of

Anavam ? If they cannot, does it not follow that they are damned for all times beyond redemption ? Is salvation then possible for souls ? Anava of course cannot be utterly destroyed but souls can successfully ward off the evil effects of Anava if they follow a path prescribed in the scriptures for attaining Mukthi or bliss. In bliss when the souls merge in God and become non-dual, Anava becomes impotent and devoid of all power to harm the soul in the presence of the Almighty God. It practically disappears even as light before darkness. It does not even then become extinct for an eternal thing can never become nought.

In Saivaism soul has independent existence apart from God though God pervades even through the self and is soul of the self even as self is the soul of the body ? Souls are eternal and are many. Soul is not God as some philosophic systems hold. God is all intelligence and knows all things together at once. He is omniscient and omnipotent while man has no infallible wisdom and cannot claim to have even faultless worldly knowledge. Man is not devoid of intelligence as matter is but he cannot claim to have divine knowledge or wisdom. Man's knowledge is very limited, circumscribed and faulty in innumerable ways. His knowledge shrinks and expands at times. Soul is therefore neither God nor matter.

There are some who hold that there is no soul that it is only the senses and mind which have got powers of cognition and perception and nothing apart from them there is no soul. Soul according to them is only a by-product of body and senses. The indryas help men to know things but they themselves do not know them. Nor do they know that they know. The indryas are mere matter which are only instrumental in enabling soul to acquire knowledge. There are yet others who hold that soul is sunyam which means

that it exists and at the same time does not exist. It is simply a paradoxical untruth.

As soul is not unintelligent like Maya and as it has not all faultless and omniscient wisdom like God, it is of a different nature from both. It is held as a separate entity. Soul knows when God enables to know knowledge, that is where he is aided by God on the one hand and the senses and mind on the other. If the soul is self intelligent like God it need not require the assistance of either senses or Mind. If it is unintelligent by nature it can never acquire knowledge; however much it might be aided either by God or mind or both.

Apart from soul, there is God who is called Shiva. Shivam means the absolute good. He is not one among the Trinity but is the supreme Deity. He is devoid of Gunas which are born out of matter, prakriti. His gunas which are alluded to Him in Sivagamas are not prakritic but aprakritic. He is Sat chit ananda. Truth, Wisdom and Bliss. The eight gunas of Shiva which are alluded to in the Shivagunas are the same as the Sat chit ananda, but are different only in names.

The material World is subject to a process of deterioration and destruction. It is subject to perpetual change, and hence will on one day or other meet with total and utter destruction. It must therefore come into existence at a particular time. It is clear that this World was created. As the World is matter and as it cannot shift for itself, it ought to have been created by an intelligent being not out of himself for He is intelligence, but, out of Maya, the Cosmic Matter. It is argued sometimes that if the World required a Creator, necessarily that Creator would require another Creator in his turn and so on. As the argument

for the necessity of a creator leads us to an infinite regress, it is argued that the argument is unsound and specious. The entire argument, is based on a misunderstanding of the tenets of Saivism. Though Saivism posits three entities as set forth above and holds that they are all eternal, yet it does not hold that all the three entities are equal in all respects. Each is different from the other. God is self-existent, faultless, intelligent, infinite and uncaused cause.

We shall next pass on to deal with the characteristics of the three entities or Thripatharthas.

III

GOD

Among the three 'entities', God is the highest on whom the other two depend for their existence. He transcends the material distinction of form and formlessness. He is free from bonds and limitations. He is one and eternal. He is changeless for all times. He is bigger than the biggest of things and smaller than the smallest. He is bliss. He is self-effulgent. He is called Sivam by the enlightened. The eternal supreme power of God manifests itself as Love. Will and wisdom and God in contact with each takes up the holy form of inestimable Grace. He in contact with pure Maya bespeaks and reveals the Holy Scriptures, inspiring Ananthadavar, out of impure Maya creates bodies, and minds, Universes and objects of enjoyment and inspiring Srikanthar out of prakriti creates bodies, minds, universes and objects and similarly in the end causes their involution or winding up. He assumes any form he likes and the form is certainly not material or prakritic when He does the fivefold actions or panchakrityas. He is sat, and is devoid of beginning or end. He transcends

all objects which are perceived. He is chit or pure wisdom and is unknowable by sentient beings. He is bliss. He is the soul of all souls. As He is different from both matter and soul of which matter is Asat and the soul is Gross Chit, God assumes any form. He likes of His own accord. As matter is devoid of intelligence, and cannot shift for itself, as souls cannot take bodies of their own accord as their intelligence is limited and dependent on the intelligence of God for their knowledge and as souls emerge into appearance with bodies falling into different categories exist for a limited time with the said bodies and disappear, and as the souls are in perpetual appearance and disappearance by reason of their defects caused by malas, it is evident that God who is pure creates the Universe. It is God who is the sole author of creation, preservation and destruction of the Universe but is unaffected by the said actions. All these actions are not done with the aid of Karanas only by His sankalpa or Divine will. Hence He stands unaffected. The pancha krityas or His five great actions are done by Him out of his unbounded love and Grace for souls to set them free from bondage and to make them attain bliss. Destruction is done only to give the souls rest, and creation to weaken the grip of the malas. Preservation is done with a view to make souls eat the fruits of their own karmas, and thus let loose the souls from the grip of karma. Screening is only done in order to make the souls attracted to eat the fruits of their own karmas. The bestowal of ineffable bliss in the end is indeed a clear act of Grace. In fact all acts of His are attributable to nothing but His unbounded Grace and Love.

God cannot at all be known or perceived by the senses and the mind as He is the Self of the self. The senses and the mind do not know the self though they are directed by the self. Even so the self does not know its

own self nor god who guides and controls it. All objects known by the senses and mind are subject to decay. In short God transcends the mind and the senses. If mind does not and cannot know God is there no other mode of knowing Him at all? If there is no mode at all by which soul can know God, what avail is there of the existence of such a Godhead which always remains beyond the reach of men. Man is not helpless. He can realise God and have holy communion with Him if man only selects a suitable path which leads to Him and pursues it with indefatigable energy and unswerving faith. Later on we shall probe into the question of the nature of the knowledge which helps one to attain bliss in another place. Suffice it to say now that the individual self can with the aid of Divine wisdom see Him and can have a foretaste of Bliss even while it resides in the human body.

We saw that soul is distinct from matter and from God. It is in a peculiarly fortunate position and is called 'Satasat'. It is neither unqualified sat nor asat. It can experience both. It has the characteristic of becoming one with that with which it comes into contact. God cannot know the World, for the World is asat and does not hold up its head in the presence of God who is the divine light before high it is mere darkness. When Soul is mid-way between the two in that it is capable of knowing both and experiencing both. Soul is drawn towards the world it becomes utterly worldly. To become worldly is only to become miserable. It is also open to the soul to free itself from the ties of the world and become other-worldly. World is jatam and can neither know God nor soul. God does not know the world as it vanishes into nothing in His presence. Then the remaining entity the soul alone is capable of knowing both. Soul is therefore competent to attain salvation.

Soul is formless and is devoid of intelligence when it is enveloped in Anavam before creation. God sets the soul on its journey of birth and death. It begins to acquire knowledge with the aid of the mind and senses. When the soul is enmeshed in body it undergoes the five avasthas. Waking state, dream state, sound sleep, turyam and Turiyathitham. In some of the Upanishads no reference to Turyatheetham is made. In the waking state all the 36 thatthwas are at work but in the other states only fewer and fewer thatthwas are at work. In Turyatheetham, pranam (life-breath) alone is at work.. When man attains turyatheetham in the waking state itself he is called a Jivan Muktha and he actually experiences divine bliss though he still has a body.

LECTURE NO. III

PATH OF REALISATION

We have seen that the soul is in chains and bondage. We have also seen that it is competent to attain salvation. Despite its competency to attain bliss, it seldom directs its attempts towards the attainment of the same. It does not even realise that its condition is miserable.

At the outset it appears that the only way to salvation lies in treading the path of morality. The strength of Buddhism lies in its insistence on the moral conduct of men. Jainism equally emphasises that aspect of religion. It is necessary for a man to attain moral purity. Saiva Siddhanta lays its emphasis with equal if not greater force on upon the necessity of moral conduct for man but holds doubts whether moral excellence alone is not sufficient to enable him to attain mukthi. Every action has its result and reward but the reward for moral goodness

is not bliss but only material prosperity and happiness. There is no material happiness without its own share of misery. Every pleasure has its lamentable end. Saivism thinks that moral goodness as it is ordinarily understood cannot lead one to bliss, or Sivanandam-Moral goodness is not to be ignored nor despised on that account but it can never take the place of religious goodness. Moral goodness is the bedrock on which the edifice of religious goodness has to be built so that it may endure for ever.

Some of the western writers wrongly think that Saivism has no system of morality and that it does not insist on the moral perfection of its followers. Certainly they are wrong and their criticism is unfounded and unjustifiable. They perhaps think that religion is but a bundle of moralls. Saivism does not agree with that view. To be morally is not to be religious. Faith in God and self-surrender to His Supreme Will are the two unfailing characteristics of a religious man. I am fully alive to the fact that there are some religions which are merely moral in their nature but Saivism does not accept the theory that morality is equivalent to religion.

The Tamils have developed a perfect system of ethical philosophy and very few people in the world have equalled them in that respect. There are on the whole eighteen classical works on the subject in Tamil written several centuries ago. No branch of ethical philosophy has been omitted or lost sight of by them. The Tamils are fortunate in having an excellent moral code in Thiruvalluvar's Thirukkural. Saint Thiruvalluvar codified the moral philosophy of the Tamils in about the Second century B. C. They have developed in themselves a keen moral consciousness. It is borne out by the definition of intelligence given by that immortal poet

“சென்ற விடத்தாற் செலவிடா தீதொரீஇ
நன்றின் பாலுய்ப்ப தறிவு.”

Intelligence is that faculty which checks the roving mind, withdraws it from the path of vice and sets it firm on the path of Virtue. Thirukkural is preeminently the best of the above said eighteen works on morals. It is of inestimable value not only as a piece of literature but also as an authority on ethical philosophy and religion. Tiruvalluvar has influenced and guided the conduct of the Tamils to a unique extent (such a great degree as no other author has done.) He continues to wield the same influence (over the Tamils) even now after the lapse of several centuries since he wrote his famous book. What is called Dharma in Sanskrit is called Aram in Tamil. Dharma is defined by Thiruvalluvar as that which leads one to happiness and that which never causes pain or misery.

“அறத்தான் வருவதே இன்பம் மற்றெல்லாம்
புறத்த புகழுமில்

Happiness is the result of Dharma while all the rest yields no happiness nor deserves any praise.

This definition is too abstract to be of any practical guidance to an ordinary man. If practical guidance is needed he gives in the following Kural.

“அழுக்காறு அவா வெகுளி இன்னஞ்சொல் நான்கும்
இழுக்கா இயன்றதுஅறம்”

Keep yourself free from envy, greed, wrath, and four kinds of sinful words, and all of your actions are virtuous. You have achieved dharma. The four kinds of sinful words are, unpleasent word, backbiting, falsehood and idle talk. All these are opposed to sweet or pleasant word which the author defines as follows :

“இன் சொலால் ஈரம் அனைஇப் படிநிலவாஞ்
செம்பொருள் கண்டார்வாய்ச் சொல்”

“Sweet word is that which is soaked in love (drops it down on its way) and at the same time is free from falsehood. In short it is the word of one who has perceived and experienced dharma itself.

The great cultured philosopher states that Ahimsa is the first and foremost of all virtues and that truthfulness is also one, if it falls in line with it.

“ஒன்றாக நல்லது கொல்லாமை மற்றதன்
பின்சாரப் பொய்யாமை நன்று”

is the original

Love and kindness should be the guiding principle of conduct of a householder as even grace, or mercy is that of an ascetic. Grace is only unbounded love. The saintly author has aptly said in another place that Compassion is the child born of love and has her affluent nurse in wealth.

He lays down the duties of a house-holder in the next twenty chapters, (following the introductory chapters which are four in number), and those of an ascetic in the next thirteen chapters.

Love is the gold thread which runs through the pearls of kurals and strings them together into a fascinating and beautiful jewel. All the 133 chapters of kural are all correlated together and in all these chapters we do not find anything which cannot be correlated to love. Love is understood by the Tamils as affectionate devotion to all human beings and grace as passionate devotion to all sentient creatures.

Loveless men are numerous and loving ones are very few. So Thiruvalluvar describes the nature and quality of loveless ones before he explains the nature of loving ones. He says in the following Kural: that "The loveless ones are selfish and treasure even trifles for themselves while the loving ones give away even their bones. Self restraint, patience, marrow to others.

“அன்பிலார் எல்லாம் தமக்குரியார் அன்புடையார்
என்புழியார் பிறர்க்கு”

freedom from backbiting, freedom from envy, freedom from covetousness, and from idle talk, shrinking from evil philanthropy, alms giving and acquisition of fame are dealt with in 'இல்லறம்' i. e., duties of householder.

A man who is full of affection towards others is always hospitable even to strangers. He never utters any harsh or unkind and he always speaks truth. He feels always grateful to those who do him any obligation however insignificant it may be. In the ever memorable kural.

“எந்நன்றி கொன்றார்க்கும் உய்வுண்டாம் உய்வில்லை
செய்நன்றி கொன்ற மகற்கு”

Thiruvalluvar says that there is a way of redemption for transgressors of any moral law but there is none for those who offend the law of gratitude, ungrateful. The kural is pregnant with meaning. The loving man is always honest equitable, fair and just in all his dealings with others. He has resolute control over his body and mind. He knows that he cannot be kind to anybody unless he gets mastery over his self, knowing the value of the character, he develops and acquires unimpeachable character. He is always faithful to his partner in life and never swerves from the paths of fidelity. He is the embodiment of patience and knows that want of it will only lead him to

be unkind. He is always free from backbiting and slanderous talk. He never indulges in idle talk for he knows that indulgence in it can be had only at the expense of righteousness. His mind automatically shrinks from evil at its mere sight. He is charitable and philanthropic. These are the duties of a house-holder as laid down by Thiruvalluvar and I have attempted to show that all the said duties have intimate bearing on love and are coorelated to it.

St. Thiruvalluvar lays down duties of and ascetic from this 25th chapter to the 33rd chapter of his book. The rest of the chapters in “துறவியல்” i.e., 34th chapters to 37th chapters treat about wisdom which leads to liberation of soul. The first duty of an ascetic is to cultivate grace i.e., unbounded love for all living beings. He has to restrain from met-eating, to practice austertity which consists in getting mastery over his self, to restrain from harbouring any ideas to steal another's wealth, to speak truth, to studiously abstain from causing any pain or injury to any life, to give up attachment of all kinds and to eradicate desire. The ethical philosophy of saint Thiruvalluvar is the same as that of the Saiva Siddhanthins. St. Arulnandhi Sivam has summarised the ethical conduct to be practised by Saivaitees in his observed Sivagnana Siddhiar as follows :—

“ஒழுக்கம் அன்பருள் ஆசாரம் உபசாரம் உறவுசீலம்
வழுக்கிலாத் தவம்தானங்கள் வந்தித்தல் வணங்கல்

வாய்மை

அழுக்கிலாத் துறவடக்கம் அறிவொடர்ச்சித்தலாசி
இழுக்கிலா அறங்களானால் இரங்குவான் பணியற்றங்கள்”

Good character, love, grace good conduct, (Sadachar) courtesy, love, good temper, austertity, charity, respect reverence towards elders, truthfulness, renunciation, self restraint, moral consciousness praising the holy, and cognate

virtues are desirable to be possessed by one who wants to perform dharma.

Performance of dharma is no doubt conducive to happiness and deviation from it leads to misery. Karma entails results. Even good deed, has to be avoided as it equally cause rebirth just like evil deeds. So long as man does karma, he cannot get himself liberated from the cycle of births and deaths. Action is therefore not desirable but to be action-less is impossible.

Saiva scriptures lay down that man should dedicate himself to the threefold divine service of Charya, Krya, Yogam, and these will make him hallowed. Charya consists in doing such physical acts of service that are connected with Siva, His devotees and temple. Krya consists in performing worship of the deity, and Yoga in deep meditation on Siva. The soul which has performed these duties in prior births acquires “சிவபுண்ணியம்” which causes the soul to detest doing any kind of worldly actions good or bad and discern in itself the desirability of cultivating an equanimity of temper. The Siva-Sakthi, which is also called Athisakthi and Trothayi-Sakthi which has been hitherto helping Anavam, to work itself out, seeing that Anavam has become mellowed in its nature, turns into Arul Sakthi or Grace, atonce. It becomes all merciful and goads the soul to happiness. In the said soul, the Grace of Sakthi works with four different grades of intensity of which the last and final grade is the most intense form of Sakthi. When the soul reaches this state, Lord Siva, taking the form of a celestial Guru initiates him into Sivagnanam by Sivadiksha and cuts off its bonds, puts an end to the recurrence of both the embodied state and solitary state of the soul. The soul is said then to have attained a state of purity. God who was hitherto hidden in his heart appears before him as his divine

Guru, weans him from the clutches of the malas and imparts divine wisdom. Mind cannot grasp God. In fact it cannot know anything of its own accord. The souls cannot know Him as He is the Heart of hearts. As there is no human being can make the soul perceive God, God himself comes out as the Divine Guru and reveals Himself to the soul at the proper moment when the soul becomes fit to perceive Him. The soul gives up its hold on the senses and reaches the Lotus feet of the Lord as the only other hold for it, is God. Even as a man seated in a fast moving swing can fall only on the pervasive mother earth when the ropes of the swing break off, the soul which gives up its hold of the senses, falls automatically on the lap of the Divine grace i. e., the all pervasive sacred feet of God.

Souls are classified into three categories; Vignanakalars. Pralayakalars and Sakalars. Sakalars are those who possess all the three malas while Pralaya kalars are those who possess only two i. e., Anava and Kama and Vignanakalars are those who possess only one i. e., Anavam. We are all sakalars. The other two classes of souls are those who had disentangled themselves from the bondage of gross material bodies. Naturally their ways of salvation are different from those of ordinary souls-sakalars. Now I shall confine my attention to the path of realisation which has to be followed by the ordinary souls that is mankind.

Man with close association and alliance with senses and mind during his endless cycle of births, has become a bond slave to them. He identifies himself with them. But in course of his spiritual evolution he becomes righteous in conduct, and virtuous in his behaviour. He finds that love is the only sovereign rule of his conduct. Love is divine and it slowly engenders in him an affection for service (divine) which is fourfold in nature and is called

generally Siva Punyam. They are Charya kriya etc. already alluded to. When man is engrossed in doing Sivapunyam, the anavamalam grows weaker and weaker until it becomes impotent and incapable of alluring the soul to do evil. He has surely attained “மலபரிபாகம்” or mellowing of mala. He then attains a state of mind which is indifferent to the results of good and evil. He is not attached to the good nor does he hate evil. He develops an equanimity of temper and mind. This unique frame of mind is called ‘இருவினைஒப்பு’ or equality of action. Pain and pleasure have no longer any significance for him, they are alike to him.

In the wake of the mellowing of mala, and equanimity of mind, the Divine Grace flows into him with different degrees of intensity on which depends the power of the aspirant soul to receive the spiritual wisdom of the celestial Guru who is sure to appear to him and wean him once and for all from the world and its ways, initiate him to the divine wisdom and ultimately leads on and immerse him in the never ending infinite. Sivananda or Sivagnanam. The Divine wisdom is called Pathignanam or Sivagnanam. It is the omniscient wisdom of the Lord which our immortal acharya Thirugnanasambanda the infant saint, experienced. The Divine experience and wisdom which the saint had attained is described in the following immortal words of the Saintly poet Seikkilar

“சிவனடியே சிந்திக்கும் திருப்பெருகு சிவஞானம்
பவமதனை யறமாற்றும் பாங்கினி லோங்கியஞானம்
உவமையிலாக் கலைஞானம் உணர்வரிய மெய்ஞ்ஞானம்
தவமுதல்வர் சம்பந்தர்தாதாமுணர்ந்தா ரந்நிலையில்”

“Saint Sambandar the master of purity and austerity attained divinely rich wisdom called Sivagnanam, the wisdom of Lord Siva which makes one singularly, and ceaselessly conscious of the sacred feet of the

Lord. It is at once the infallible and transcendent divine wisdom and the unparalleled wisdom of all sciences. Man's knowledge is limited. He gets it through his senses and mind. Senses carry their message to the mind which in its turn transmits it to the soul. Senses grasp only matter and things material and so does the mind. Things perceived by the mind and senses are finite and perishable. God cannot be perceived by mind. Mind and senses do not help man even to have a glimpse of Him. (Man cannot acquire knowledge without the adventitious aid of senses and mind.) mind cannot conceive of things which transcend nature and matter. God is not matter. Of the three entities man alone is gifted with intelligence to perceive God and matter. How then is man to know God? Though He cannot be perceived by the senses and the mind, yet it cannot be said that He cannot at all be Seen reached (If by no means He can be perceived, it is futile to think of Him.) Sages have proclaimed that they have perceived God. To seek the aid of the senses and the mind, is only not to know God. To discard them is to plunge oneself into impenetrable darkness.

When the soul's mala is mellowed, and when it attains equanimity of action, the Sivasakthi or the divine grace (இரோதாயி) which helped the soul to lose signs of the effect of karma impelled it to act and sat the fruits of its own action is suddenly transformed into Super-abundant grace of the All merciful which leads the soul to the right path. Lord Siva assumes a human form and initiates it into the mysteries of religions and cuts it off from its moorings. It is liberated. Pasas no longer exercise any hold on it. It is one of the cardinal tenets of Siva siddantha that Lord Siva alone is competent to lead the disciple to see Him and that none of the human teachers however omniscient they may be, can do the same. Ordinary teachers can impart

only a fraction of their knowledge to their students. The students cannot grasp or comprehend all that is imparted to them. One cannot have an objective knowledge of god for He dwells even within the innermost recess of his heart. It is therefore held in Saivism that Lord Siva out of His unbounded mercy, gets also out of the hearts of His disciples assumes the human form of Guru, and teaches him the sacred art of perceiving Him. The disciple sees Him with the aid of Sivagnanam. His senses and mind help him to perceive Him and they are also transformed into celestial ones. The unknown is known. Lord Siva dwells in the hearts of all but He lies there hidden. Nobody can perceive nor feel His presence unless He manifests Himself. He does not manifest himself to all but the attained soul. The attained soul which is initiated into the sacred arts by the divine guru, knows itself, God and the real nature of pasa.

The liberated soul knows that its knowledge of things is acquired with the aid of implements which are material in nature. That itself is neither material like the implements, nor unlimited intelligence like God. It sees itself, God, and the implements with the aid of the wisdom of God. The soul then knows that it has no action of its own and desire, and action of the soul no longer function. It surrenders its intelligence, will and action to those of Lord Siva. Surely then God manifests himself and the soul has a Darshan of Lord Siva. Selfhood is eradicated; egoism disappears; the Lord's bountiful grace is perceived. It is called the Lord's feet. Soul perceives God in everything. It is then our Lords grace. To delight oneself in ecstatic bliss is to perceive His Crown. When the soul is initiated into Sivagnanam by the Divine Guru, it loses its hold on the world and eventually perceives God. To be always keenly conscious of God and to keep oneself

removed from the wily pasam the liberated soul should always be focussing its attention on and ceaselessly chanting, the mukthi Panchaksharam lest the pasam should bring the soul again within its grip. The mystic word of five letters has varied forms. I do not propose to deal at length with the different forms of the mystic word. The varied forms and the chanting of them have to be learnt at the feet of spiritual Guru. Saiva Acharyas have beautifully referred to it in their sacred hymns and sung in praise of its efficacy and greatness.

Saint Gnanasambanda has sung in the following hymn in praise of the said mystic five letters.

“காதலாகிக் கசிந்துகண்ணீர் மல்கி
ஒதுவார்தமை நன்னெறிக் குய்ப்பது
வேதநான்கினும் மெய்ப் பொருளாவது
நாதன் நாமம் நமச்சிவாயவே”

“Namassivaya” the hallowed name of our Lord is the quintessence of the four vedas and leads him who, enamoured of it, chants it with passionate affection with tears trickling down his cheeks, to the holy path which leads to bliss”

Saint Manickavachaka, the celebrated author of “Thiruvachagam begins with the words” “நமச்சிவாய வாழ்க, நாதன் தான் வாழ்க” i.e., ‘Long live the mystic word Namassivaya and long live the sacred feet of our Lord.’ Obeisance was made by the saint to the holy word before it was made to His sacred feet for it was the sacred word that finally set him free from the clutches of pasa and enabled him to feel the presence of God. Chanting of the mystic word is enjoined by the scriptures as it is the only effective mode of preventing one from falling a victim to the snares of pasam between which and man there has been affinity in a myriad of births.

Man's intelligence is very limited but none the less It is inherent in him. It requires the aid of the senses and the mind to enable it to function. It is not omniscience of God, but it falls short of it and different from it. Senses and mind have no intelligence and are made of perishable and unintelligent matter. The whole universe is material and perishable. Discriminating pasam as merely fleeting matter, and the soul to be defectively intelligent depending for the function of its intelligence the Divine intelligence of God, the soul perceives the presence of the ever-existing God as entirely and miraculously new. The finite and defective intelligence of man becomes widened, partakes of the intelligence of God when he surrenders his individuality to God. Dissociating itself from each of the transient forms of matter in the universe, the soul finds radiating from within supreme light and all pervasive intelligence, Lord Siva. The soul should imagine that and act as that all pervasives intelligent Siva. Siva the manifests Himself on all the soul's intelligence as entirely different from its innate intelligence and as the faultless, and infinite Guanam. By the manifestation of Lord Siva in the soul's intelligence, Anava which is the cause of ignorance and other human frailties and errors begins to fade and eventually to lose its grip on the soul. This attitude of the soul is called "Sivohambhavana" The soul perceives God within its intelligence even as the planets Ragu and Kethu are seen in their effects over the sun and moon, in the solar and lunar eclipses by inference. Scriptures enjoin on the liberated souls ones that they should perform (pooja and Homam) worship in their heart after installing Lord Siva therein by bhavana or imagination. This kind of performance is called Antharyogam. Man should worship God both objectively and subjectively. Antharyogam is a form of subjective worship.

Lord Siva is perceived by the devotee. The devotee gives up his freedom and becomes a servant of God. God becomes apparent in the devotee's heart as fire hidden in a piece of wood suddbely blazens out when it is rubbed with another piece of wood.

Saint Appar refers to the experience in the following words :

“விறகிற்றீயினன் பாவிற் படுநெய்போல
மறைய நின்றாளன் மாமணிச் சோதியான்
உறவு கோல் நட டுணர்வு கயிற்றினால்
முறுகவாங்கிக் கடைய முன்னிற்குமே”

He is celestial light and resembles a self-luminous ruby. He is hidden in the soul of man even as fire in a fuelstick and ghee in milk. But He will appear before the seeker but suddenly a spring into appearance) if man churns his heart the stick of love with the rope of gnana tied round it.

Man then sees the Lord in the heart of heart. This perception of God is not the result of fancy or imagination but is real.

God is different from souls is independent of them. In the unliberated state of the soul, God is the source and cause of soul's intelligence and knowledge, appears to be one with the soul that His existence is not even suspected by the soul. It is because god's close union with the souls that souls even think there is no God. Even so, the soul in its liberated state should so merge itself in God that it should not at all be conscious of itself. The soul should do nothing except the biddings of the will of God. This is the highest wisdom and the crest of divine service. The liberate soul then has no action of its own to perform and no self to feel conscious of. It does not feel its own body burdensome. It has no needs or wants to be satisfied,

The world is not answer it any longer. It is not drawn into errors or evil, for anavam the cause of a vidye and defect no longer raises its head. The soul is thus freed from the effects of the three malas. The soul has thus purification.

But this is not tantamount to bliss, which is the soul's enjoyment of Sivananda which is positive in character while freedom from malam is only negative in nature. Positive attainment of bliss has to be secured only by one's deep love of God.

IV

Realisation or Mukthi

The Saiva Religion is Adwaita in its tenets. The word adwaitam is interpreted to denote oneness of the entity by Sri Sankara and his followers. Saivism holds that the word does not at all predicate the number of entities but simply expresses the relationship between goal and God as being non-dual. When the Vedas say that it is one, it affirms that there is only one supreme God. Saivism is therefore pure adwaitam. Things which are two in the beginning can under no circumstances become one. If two becomes one and the same there can not be bliss nor experience of ananda. The soul exists even in mukthi but effaces selfhood in the said state, so as to become merged in God. Anavam does not become extinct but loses its hold on the soul and becomes impotent. Sivagnana Yogi the saintly commentator on Sivagnanabotham and the author of the Dravida Maha Bashya and a host of other works rightly points out that the negative prefix "na" in Advaitam simply denies the dual nature for it denotes only simple negation when it is prefixed to a numeral though it has two other meanings in other contexts.

In the word “அநேகம்” Anekam, the negative prefix simply denies oneness and does not denote a particular number other than one. Mukthi therefore in Saivism is bliss which is the result of the soul reaching the lotus feet of God and merging itself in Him.

“அரிவையரின் புறு முக்தி கந்தமைந்தும்
அறு முத்தி திரிகுணமு மடங்குமுத்தி
விரிவுவினை கெடுமுத்தி மலம் போம் முத்தி
விக்கிரக நித்தமுத்தி விககே முத்தி
பரவுமுயிர் கெடுமுத்தி சித்தி முத்தி
பாடாண முத்தியிவை பழிசேர் முத்தி
திரிமலமும் அகலையிர் அருள்சேர் முத்தி
திகழ் முத்தியிது முத்தித் திறந்ததாமே.

சிவப். 50

“Diverse goals are aimed at, as salvation by different creeds. They are the pleasures of women, the annihilations of the categories of experience, the subdual of the gunas, the destructions of Karma, the mere dissolution of bonds, the immortality of the body the realisation of the self, the annihilation of the soul, the attainment of Siddhis and the deadening of consciousness as in petrified condition. All these are of blameable nature. The realisation of Supreme bliss by the attainment of divine grace in consequence of the dissolution of three bonds is the highest and faultless of all.”

In these words Umapathi Sivacharya the prolific author of eight works on Saiva Philosophy analyses different kinds of Mukthi held by different schools of philosophy. I need not labour the point that many of the ideals of Mukthi held by different schools of thought are not lofty, the conception of Mukthi varies from religion to religion according to their tenets concerning matter, soul and God. Lokayats who deny the existance of God, soul and

Karma have for their ideal for attainment sexual pleasure Omakayam in his own materialistic way has said in his Ubyat.

“Here with a lot of bread beneath the bough
A flask of wine, a book of these and-those
Beside me singing in the wilderness—
And wilderness is paradise now.
How sweet is mortal sovereignty
Think some Oh, the brave music of a distant trum
Others how blast the paradise to come,
Ah take the cash in hand and waive the rest.

A set of Buddhists called Southirandikars who do not believe in God, have for their goal the annihilation the five skandas, categories of experience. They know that life entails miseries and the sources of experience are responsible for their plight. In order to get rid of their miseries they hit on annihilation of the categories of experience. A set of Jains called Niganta-vathins have analysed and classified the evil propensities of man into three kinds and they say that suppression of the three propensities is Mukthi. The Prabakaras held that if one puts an end to karma or action, the soul loses its faculty of perception and becoming devoid of any sign of life or activity is insensible to pain. This is mukthi according to them. To the Bedavadins Mukthi consists in doing away Anava Mala and in making the soul thereby eternally pure. Soul then becomes pure as copper becomes gold by the touch of the philosophers' stone. A section of Sivasamavadins thinks that to get divine imperishable body is to attain mukthi.

Some yogis say that to make the body imperishable and permanent is Mukthi. The mayavains hold that to attain wisdom is Mukthi. The Samkkyas have a similar idea of Mukthi, Bhaskaryas says that mukthi is the state in which

the soul utterly effacing itself with its desire, wisdom and action becomes one with God. Siddhars say that it consists in souls' attaining the eight kinds of Sidhies. There are Pashnavadins who say that when the soul casts away its finite knowledge and experience of pain and pleasure it is in union with Anava Mala and is devoid of any experience is like as a piece of stone. It has then attained Mukthi.

All the kinds of Mukthi referred to above are dependent on thirty six thathvas which are material in nature. When the thathvas met with destruction as they are bound at some time or other Mukthi also comes to nought. The last one of the series of Mukthi is spoken to by Sri Umapathi Sivam's Advaidic mukthi held up by the saivite school as the noblest goal to be sought after by men. Mukthi according to Saiva philosophy is of two kinds. They are Jeevanmukthi and paramukthi. Jeevan Mukthi is attained even during one's own life time on earth and even when the soul does not do any action except under the influence of the divine Grace, it loses its egoism and selfhood and becomes at once liberated from the hold of the three malas. The corporeal body does no longer do him any harm nor affects his wisdom. The body clings to him as long as the prarabtham lasts. When prarabdam becomes extinct and the soul does not do any action for itself, the said soul liberated from bondage attains paramukthi or Supreme bliss on the body falling off from him. The Soul does not attain mukthi at once on its getting itself freed from malas. This is only negative in characters while Mukthi is positive attainment bliss. Hence the soul even after getting itself purged from the malas, has to practice some sadana in order to attain the Supreme bliss. The sadana is referred to in the XIth Sutra of Sivagnana-boham.

காணுங் கண்ணுக்கு காட்டும் உளம்போல்
காண உள்ளத்தைக் கண்டு காட்டலின்
அயரா அன்பின் அரன் கழல் செலுமே.

“As the soul enables the eye to see and itself sees, so Hara enables the soul to know and itself knows. And this advaita knowledge and ceaseless and untiring love will unite it to His feet.”

The soul is endowed with intelligence, but it is very limited. Soul does not perceive anything except with the aid of the senses and mind. If they are on intelligent as matter, no amount of adventure as can enable it to know. This intelligence is altogether found a mentally different from the supreme intelligence of God. As indryas are made up of matter, they cannot themselves know, nor can pass on any knowledge to the soul. It is therefore clear that as the soul has no intelligence which can function without an extraneous aid and as the senses and the mind an merely intelligent matter, the soul's intelligence functions only when the supreme intelligence of God makes its impact on the intelligence of the soul. The Soul is not utterly devoid of all intelligence as matter is, nor is it as intelligent as God.

“அறிவெனில் வாயில வேண்டா
அன்றெனில் அவைதாம் என்னை
அறிவதை யுதவு மென்னில்
அசேதனம் அவைதாம் எல்லாம்
அறிபவன் அறியும் தன்மை
அருளுவன் என்னில் ஆன்மா
அறிவிலதாகும் ஈசன்
அசேதனத் தளித்திடானே

(சிவம் 54)

If the soul can know things by itself it does not require the implements of knowledge. If the soul is unintelligent what

is the good of the implements? Can implements supply intelligence to the soul? It is not possible, for they themselves are unintelligent. If it is said that God vouchsafes intelligence to the soul, it will imply that the soul by itself has no intelligence which conclusion is wrong since God does not make the unintelligent intelligent.

Iswaravikara vadins, and Sivasamavada Saivites believe that the soul is fully intelligent and knows things by itself. The Nayayikas and Vaisesikas hold that the indryas will endow the soul with intelligence. Parinamavadins admitting that the soul is intelligent say that Lord Siva will give them intelligence. Saivites in referring all these theories hold that the soul is defectively intelligent and that God enables the soul to know things. As the eye which has the power to see, sees at the instance of the soul which also sees through the eyes, so God enables the soul to know and Himself knows so that soul might know and enjoy. Even after the soul gets itself purified, it has yet to do certain duties before it can attain bliss. It has to perform Gnana Nishta. The soul, even as God, has intelligence, desire, and action (Gnana sakthi, Iksha sakthi, Kria sakthi) both in its liberated and unliberated states. Soul because of the said attributes it experiences the world and worldly pleasure with delight and intensity when it is unliberated. But when it becomes liberated, the said attributes of the pure soul continue to function still. The freed soul knows of the infinite Grace of God which guides him to know and itself knows so that he might know. Thus the soul's intelligence is at work. The soul loves God more and more intensely and plunges itself into it. Thus its Iksha sakthi is at work. With its unbounded love for Siva, the soul experiences the infinite bliss. It is the function of the soul's kria sakthi. Thus we find that the soul cannot be idle and is not so even after it absolves

itself from all the malas. All its attribution become keener and purer and function with all their intensity and purity so that the soul experiences infinite bliss. This is called Gnananishta, bliss by the scriptures. In experiencing Sivan the Jivan Muktha ultimately loses the knowledge that God helps him with the two great acts of grace and simply enjoy bliss.

Saint Thiruvalluvar has in his own inimitable way puts this truth in a nutshell as none else has done, in the following famous kural.

“சார்புணர்ந்து சார்புகெட ஒழுகின் மற்றழிதுச்
சார்தரா சார்தரு நோய்”

This kural is addressed to the liberated soul. If you by dyana know your dependance on His Grace, and then so act as to give up even this sense of dependance you are for ever free from the disease of birth.

The author of Thirukkalittrupadyar has in the following oft quoted verse has brought out the entire significance of the kural.

“சார்புணர்ந்து சார்புகெட வெழுதிகின் என்றமையால்
சார்புணர்தல் தானேதியானமுமாம் — சார்பு
கெடவெழுதிகில் நல்ல சமாதியுமாம் கேதப்
படவருவதில்லை வினைப்பற்று

The soul which has reached the high altitude of gnananishta, is in the state of Duryathitha even in its waking state. Though the soul lives in the body and is in its waking state when it attains the highest state of a jivanmuktha, is not tainted by this Indryas or karanas nor by other kinds of pasam, but it is always in intense and immediate holy communion with God. All Thathwas cease to function as such. They are not dead

altogether but do no longer stand in the soul's way of experiencing the bliss. The Thathwas are material and finite, but they are metamorphosed into Sivakaranas. They no longer hinder the soul from the experiencing bliss, but on the other hand help it to do so.

Saint Seikilar has in his holy Peria Puranam portraying the lives of the Saiva Saints expatiated in many a place on the immaculate and divine experience of these Saiva saints. It can surely be said that no other poet nor saint has ever dwelt so admirably well on the most subtle and ineffable experience of bliss experienced by saints. In referring to the bliss which saint Sundarar had at the time when he worshipped the sacred feet of Nataraja says as follows,

“ஐந்து பேரறிவும் கண்களே கொள்ள அளப்பருங்
கரணங்கள் நான்கும்
சிந்தையே யாகக் குணமொரு மூன்றும் திருந்துசாத்து
விகமேயாக
இந்துவாழ் சடையானும் ஆனந்த எல்லையில் தனிப்
பெருங் கூத்தின்
வந்த பேரின்ப வெள்ளத்திற் றிளைத்து மாறிலா
மகிழ்ச்சியின் மலர்ந்தார்.

His eyes absorbed to themselves all the powers of the five greae senses; his chittam withdrew to itself all the powers of the four immeasurable anthakkaranas or mental functions faculties, his three gunas get themselves transformed into the perfect Sathvaguna. As a result of the transmutation, he get himself in the midst of the flood of infinite bliss and, danced with ecstasy of happiness, born out of the infinite, blissful and unique cosmic dance of Lord Siva of matted hair. This is the lofty experience of one of the Jivanmukthas of renown. Though the soul of the jivanmuktha has for its abode the mortal frame, his karanas are no longer human in characer, that is they are not pasu-

karanas. They have become pathi karnas, or Sivakaranas. They become attained with the infinite and become eminently fitted to enable the soul to enjoy infinite bliss. Saint Seikilar calls the five senses of the jeevan-Muktha as the great ones to denote that they are no longer small but have become pure and considerably extended. He calls the mental faculties immeasurable, only in a similar sense. Gunas spring up from prakriti, but the gunas of the jeevan-muktha are not prakrithi but are divine. They are 'aprakrithi'. To denote it, he calls the gunas as (திருந்தியது சாத்துவிகம்) perfect Sathvaguna.

Saint Gnanasambandar who is one of the samaya-charyas, and a jivanmuktha goes to the holy shrine of Chidambaram, and worships Lord Siva in the form of Sri Nataraja. He also gets divine experience and sings in praise of the Lord. While singing he is said to have stated by the author of Periapuranam as follows :—

உணர்வின் நேர்மபற வரும் சிவபோகத்தை ஒழிவின்றி
உருவின் கண்
அணையும் ஐம்பொறி அளவினும் எளிவர அருளினை
எனப்போற்றி
இணையில்வண் பெருங்கருணையே ஏத்திமுன் எடுத்த
சொற்பதிகத்தில்
புணரும் இன்னிசையொடுபாடினர் ஆடினர்
பொழிந்தனர் விழிமாரி

He sang melodious hymns in praise of His unparalleled grace, danced with joy while tears flowed down from his eyes and said "O Lord, Thou hast out of thy divine grace enabled to enjoy ceaselessly even through my senses the Sivabogam (bliss) which is attainable only in the purest of hearts where unfailing love for Siva resides. Though Siva resides in the heart of all souls inseparably, yet he

metes out to each according to his desert. A question may be legitimately put as why the Lord who resides in all should grant bliss to a chosen few and deny it to the rest. Though the sun shines in the sky in all his glory the blind do not see his light. Just so, the soul entangled in *pasa* cannot see Him at all nor enjoy His bliss. The sun only opens the lotus flower when it is matured. So His Arul dispels the darkness of those who understand Him by their love and attracts them to Himself. The soul does not vanish for it does, there will be nothing to unite with God; If it exists permanently in its unliberated state, there is no possibility of holy union with God just as the salt dissolved in the water becomes united with it (water). The soul losing its *mala* unites His feet and becomes His servant of God. Soul does not perish.

சென்றி வன்றூன் ஒன்றில் சிவபூரணம் சிதையும்

அன்ற வன்றூன் ஒன்றுமெனில் அன்னியமாம்

இன்றிரண்டும்

அற்றநிலை ஏதென்னில் ஆதித்தன் அந்தன் விழிக்

குற்றமற நின்றது போற்கொள்.

உண்மைவிளக்கம்—48

முத்திதனில் மூன்றுமுதலும் மொழியக்கேள்

சுத்தஅனு போதத்தைத் துய்த்தலணு—மெத்தவே

இன்பங்கொடுத்தல்இறை இத்தை வினைவித்தல் மலம்

அன்புடனே கண்டு கொள்ளப்பா

உண்மைவிளக்கம்—50

Hear how the three entities exist even in bliss. The soul enjoys bliss ; the Lord grants it, and the *malam* causes it (by its total loss of strength in His presence) True love or *Mukthi* is the cause of the soul's happiness or bliss as it is the cause of its *pathignanam*. Some want to discriminate between *bhakthi* and *gnanam* where as *Saivaism* finds identity between the two,

In this context, the following memorable mantra from the sacred Thirumurai Thirumanthram of Thirumolar is called to my mind.

அன்பும் சிவமும் இரண்டென்பர் அறிவிலார்
அன்பே சிவமாவது ஆருமறிந்திலார்
அன்பே சிவமாவ தாரும் அறிந்தபின்
அன்பே சிவமா யமர்ந்திருப்பாரே

Supreme wisdom like God. This in Saiva philosophy is called Atmaroopam. When the soul then becomes merged in the Divine grace, and gives up actions for itself, it knows then its real nature. This is Atmadarshanam. Then the soul investigates into the true nature of thathwas and knows them to be alien to itself. Divine wisdom dawns upon him if the soul immerses itself in it abandoning its hold on thathwas, it gets itself purified, and has a direct sight of the Supreme being. This is called Amatasudhi or purification of the soul. Purification of soul and Siva darshanam happen together. Both god and Soul have intelligence, desire and action though they are different in nature. If the Soul abandons its own intelligence, desire and action and merges itself in God, the Divine Grace which enlightens the soul is pure gnanam which is called parai. It then sees God has Sivadarshanam. Soul then has certainly escaped from the state of science and equally so from that of being victimised by Thathwas. There is still another danger for this soul even after it has The ignorant think that God and love are different. None knows that God and love are the same. Did all men know that God and love as love. They would repose in God as love. In the unliberated state, the soul does not know the existence of the three entities nor their mutual relationship. It does not know even itself till God dispels all ignorance from it. When the senses and mind become functionless,

and when the soul gets patignana or divine wisdom, anava loses its power (in the presence of divine gnanam), the soul perceives the real nature of the matter soul and God. In the unliberated state, though the soul cannot know anything by itself, yet it thinks that it knows things by its own invoke intelligence and eats the fruits of his actions, when it gets divine wisdom. It understands that its gets is knowledge with the aid of the senses and mind also knows its own real nature. It also knows that mind and senses are matter, that they are fundamentally different from it, and that it is weaker matter, like the implements, nor kept clear of the dangers aforesaid. It should avoid the temptation to misconceive itself to be God. If the soul keeping clear of these dangers merges itself in Gnana-sakthi without a break, and abandons consciousness of itself, and does merely the biddings of the Divine Arul seeing it everywhere the Divine Grace shines and radiates itself when the soul gives up its selfhood. The Divine Grace is called Sacred Feet of the Lord. When the Divine Grace or Sivam is found everywhere that is called His Holy Divine Face. The soul knows no bitterness in experiencing the fruits of its own prarabdham and it sees only His Grace even when the effect of his prarabdham surges up to itself.

(To dance in ecstasy of sivanada is His divine Crown)

It is very often asked, when the soul attains the supreme gnana, how can it be said that there is God spart from gnanam. That gnanam is called is His Grace. Even as sun light, cannot exist independantly of the sun, Grace or Divine Light cannot exist without God, for Divine Light is only the attribute of God. Hence the Supreme Entity is God while Grace that radiates from Him is His Sakthi, Arul sakthi or Divine Grace is itself illuminating,

and infallible divine Gnanam of light which does not stand independantly of God. Just as the sunlight dispels all pervasive darkness and shown the sun to us so the light of Divine grace dissolves the base bonds of darkness and delightfully shows the Supreme Being to the freed souls.

It is argued by the Sivasamayavadins that when the soul is freed from bondage and attains His grace, all the attributes of Siva will manifest themselves in it. As a man possessed by evil spirits, exhibits the distinguishing features of the departed spirit so the liberated soul, which attains His grace, will also attain His Supreme infallible intelligence and will even acquire the mighty powere of the Almighty. Surely this view is incorrect. If a ghost possesses a blind or a dumb or a lame man, it cannot make him one, or speak, or walk. Similarly all knowing Grace of God which possesses the soul will only develop the latters innate powers.

Knowing that the thathwas cause erroneous and defective knowledge, the liberated soul should merge itself in the Divine Grace, and stand firmly rooted in it. The soul then enjoys all comprehensive wisdom. The soul rejecting its own desire inteligence and action and sees that all that happen is the result of H's Grace as the purified soul. It stands unaffected by any of the implements without at the same falling into unconsciousness. It surrenders itself to the control of the highest wisdom realised giving up its egoistic efforts identifying itself with the Supreme Being it attains the supreme state of pure consciousness in its waking state. This state is called jakrathuryam. Thuriyam is a shortened form of Duryatheetham which denotes that state of the embodied soul passing far beyond the state of deep sleep where no thathwas function. This state is reached by an emodied soul in its deepest slumber. If this state dursyatheetam is

reached by the soul in its waking state while it is fully alive in its body it is said to attain jakratheetham. A man who attains this state is called a jeevanmuktha. A jeevanmuktha though immersed in body, soul has his implements always subdued. The implements should cease to act. They themselves will not cease to function the soul will revel ignorance. The soul cannot by its own intelligence subdue them for they are the only source of knowledge in unlibrated state. The soul has necessarily to subdue them with the aid of God's Grace. Without having resort to His grace then there is no way of subduing the implements.

In order to secure final salvation, the soul should listen to the words of God who appears as his spiritual Guru as a result of his puranic-during his previous births, meditate on the significance of such words get a clear vision of truth and realise. Adwaita is union with God. These are the four steps which lead the liberated soul to bliss. It cannot be reached by any other mode. Neither Yogic meditation nor Yogic ideals will help any man to attain salvation for all of them have to be attained with the aid of mind and its faculties and mind is as at and cannot perceive God nor can it help man to perceive Him. The Jivanmuktha is one who has attained bestitude and anandam, and one who has become liberated. He still has a body and has to live in this world till he shakes off his body and reached the final salvation and merges in god. As long as he dwells in a body he runs the risk of being drawn again into the vertex of worldliness. If he is so drawn, the miseries also return to him. He has therefore to avoid the happening of such a contingency. What should he do to avoid it? His duties are laid down in the last and the twelfth Suthra of Sivagnanabotham.

Having purged one self of all malas in which all evils and sins take their origin, the liberated one should always live in the midst of the holy saints, chant the sacred mystic word of five letters in a form approved by the Divine Guru, see God manifesting Himself in all the phenomenal world, give up his attainment to the world and take hold of his Grace and worship the Saints and Sivalinga, with loving and melting heart as the forms of Him whom even the gods do not know. Such jevanmukthas purely attain paramukthi on the falling off the material body as a result of the exhaustion of prarabdha, the last vestige of Karma.