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# Shri Kanchi Mahaswami Thiruvadigal Saranam

## Foreword

Hari Om!

We are pleased to bring you our **Third E-book** from the **Kanchi Paramacharya Community on Facebook** ([www.facebook.com/KanchiParamacharya](http://www.facebook.com/KanchiParamacharya)) titled **“Go Samrakshanam” (Cow Protection)**.

This group is dedicated to spread the life and teachings of His Holiness Sri Kanchi Paramacharya, more affectionately known to His devotees as Sri Maha Periyava. The Community is also on **Google Plus**. Just look for **Kanchi Mahaswami** on **Google+** and add us to your Circles, to receive the **Gems of Paramacharya** in your mail box every morning.

In this E-book, we bring you the extract of Sri Maha Periyava’s Upadesam on ‘Go Samrakshanam’ - Protection of Cows. As you will read from the pages that follow, the Mahaswami has divinely addressed every argument that one can think about on why the holy animal must be protected and why cruelty to the cow is a great sin. Sri Maha Periva loved cows and in this E-book, we also bring you a couple of incidents which happened at the Sri Matam surrounded around the sacred animal.

The Paramacharya in His discourses stresses the need for all sections of the society to come together to prevent the slaughtering of cows. We hope this E-book will be an eye opener for readers. If you find this E-book interesting, we request you to forward this to all your friends, relatives and other devotees of the Mahaswami.

Although this e-book is for restricted circulation among like-minded members of the society, it is a free publication which can be downloaded from our Facebook Page.

We humbly submit our **Third E-book** at the Lotus Feet of Sri Maha Periyava, seeking His blessings and guidance to continue to spread His Light far and wide.

Any feedback may be sent to us at [kanchimahaswami@gmail.com](mailto:kanchimahaswami@gmail.com)

Administrator

**Kanchi Paramacharya Community**

[www.facebook.com/KanchiParamacharya](http://www.facebook.com/KanchiParamacharya)

**Jaya Jaya Shankara, Hara Hara Shankara!**

## Go Samrakshanam (Cow Protection)

Source: Deivathin Kural/ Voice of God – Volume 7



### The Cow as Mother

The cow belongs to the species which cannot speak. Yet, it cries out from the depth of its being 'amma'. The cow that cries out 'amma' is for us like the mother. What is the outstanding quality of the mother? She gives milk. When we were children, our mother gave us milk and protected us. The cow also gave us milk even at that stage and protected us. Mother giving the milk ended with our childhood. But even after we have become old, the cow gives us milk and all that comes from it namely, curd, buttermilk, ghee. Even in our advanced age, when we can take only little of all other food, the cow's milk serves as the life giving food. If our mother gives milk only for a short period of our life, the cow gives milk throughout our life. That is why we associate the cow with the greatest of relationships namely mother, and we call it 'Gomatha'.

Everyone knows that the word 'Go' (Sanskrit) means the cow. The word 'cow' is also derived from 'Go'. From time immemorial, the cow has been considered mother and great love has been shown to her. Even if we look at a cow which is a picture of love and peace we will get the feeling of seeing our mother. The mother who gives birth to the child is called 'Janaka Matha'. Gomatha is among other mothers like Bhumatha and Srimatha.

### Gomatha and Bhumatha

Just as the real mother and Gomatha give milk, the earth produces grains, metals etc and more than anything else, gives water. That is why the earth is called Bhumatha. Our ancestors perceived motherhood in cow and the earth which appears inert and called them Gomatha and Bhumatha. It also happened that Bhumath herself took the form of Gomatha.

It was the time when Dwapara Yuga was about to end and just before Kali was to begin. When the cruelties inflicted by asuras became too much, Bhumatha could not bear it. At such a time, Bhumatha along with Brahma went to Mahavishnu and prayed to Him and as a result Mahavishnu took avathar as Krishna. The puranas say that Bhumatha took the form of Gomatha and went to Vishnu because she thought it would be possible to move the heart of Mahavishnu and make him come down for protection only if she went to him not as his wife, Bhumatha, but in the form of Gomatha who enjoyed greater love and sympathy. In accordance with that the Lord came as 'Gopala' and moved closely with cows.

'Go' also means the earth. Krishna was a 'Purna Avatharam'. Bhagawan has also taken avathars by showing only one of his aspects. According to Bhagavatham, Bhagawan had twenty four avathars.



Of these, other than the ten avathars (Dasavatharam) which all of us know, the remaining fourteen are avathars of one or the other of the aspects (amsa). One such 'amsa avathar' was Brudhu Chakravarthi. He was the one who had organized the state, towns etc. In Bhagavatham, it is said that he saw Bhumatha in the form of Gomatha and made everyone receive from her the wealth that each wanted making use of his swadharna as the calf.

I have said this to show what great love Bhagawan had for the form of cow. Similarly, the cows also had great love for Bhagawan. When Bhagawan as Venugopala was keeping his left foot in the vertical position, a cow would be licking the lotus like bottom of that foot. This could be seen in paintings.

### **Srimatha and Gomatha**

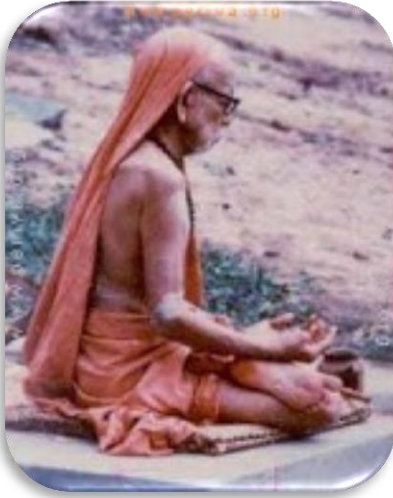
Just as there are Gomatha, Bhumatha and Janakamatha, there is also Srimatha who is a mother. The Parasakthi who is the very life of all the other three mothers as well as all the sentient and insentient things in the world is Srimatha. It is by the milk of grace that flows from her that the Janakamatha and Gomatha are able to give milk. It is by that grace too that Bhumatha gives the wealth of water and grains.

In Lalitha Sahasranamam, Gomatha has been mentioned as a name for Srimatha. The very first name in Sahasranamam is Srimatha. In the 'Namavali' (the row of names), the names *Gurumurthih* and *Gunanidhih* occur. In the Sthala purana of Therazhundur (Thanjavur district, Tamilnadu), it is said that Ambal, the Srimatha had actually come there as Gomatha. There is also a story which combines in it five or six Sthala puranas according to which Ambal's brother Maha Vishnu later came there as Gopalakrishna, protected her when she was in the form of a cow and gave her in marriage to Parameswara, the Pasupathi.

### **Glory of the Cow**

The cow which gives the most nutritious milk and other things gives greater benefits in spiritual terms (in Vaidhikam). Divinity, spirituality etc are all Vaidhikam – what has come to us from the Vedas. What can be perceived by the senses and proved scientifically is earthly, secular (lowkikam). But that which is not so but does good to the soul is Vaidhikam. The glory of the cow is seen in both.

## Cow's milk: Wholesome food, improves Sathva Guna



In practical terms, it is only cow's milk which is a wholesome food. Usually, such a nutritious food will not be easily digested. But cow's milk can be easily digested even by a small child and also by old people. It is also a food for the sick and the very weak.

Looking at it in terms of Vaidhikam, cow's milk has the quality to improve sathva guna. This need not be accepted merely on the basis of faith. This will be clear if we look at sadhus who take only milk for their food and or so sathvik in nature.

Before the name Gomatha for Ambal, the name *Gurumurthih* and *Gunanidhih* occur. The power of food is among those which helps a person to evolve into a *Gurumurthih*, *Gunanidhih*. Milk is such a pure

food.

There is something funny in this. Usually, the food that we get from the animal kingdom will affect sathva guna and increase rajasa and thamasa gunas. Sathvam – sathvikam means the mind being clear and being peaceful and at the same time remaining alert and not feeling tired or sleepy. Rajasa or rajasam is being affected by desire, anger etc and being in an agitated state. Thamasam means having no enthusiasm for anything, feeling exhausted and sleepy and dull. In such a dull stage, noble attitude will not develop but desire and anger will keep coming up. Sathva alone is pure. Cow's milk though coming from an animal and is almost like its blood should normally affect the development of sathva guna and it also looks like being opposed to ahimsa food. But our sasthanas have allowed cow's milk as food for the sanyasi whose greatest dharma is ahimsa and who must have sathvik guna till the mind and guna are destroyed. If the cow has something which creates such purity, should it not be greatly divine?

## Universal love

The food of a sanyasi has two aspects. One is that it should improve sathvik quality and the other is that it should have been obtained without causing any harm to any other being. Cow's milk satisfies both these requirements. In God's creation, it has been created as the dwelling place of universal love. That is why among the mammals, it is only the cow, which produces more milk than what is needed for its calf and gives the excess to us. If a calf sucks the entire milk that the cow has, it will upset its health. What is clear from this is that it is the intention of the Lord that although the cow gives out milk only when its calf is near, it should also be mother to human beings and gives them milk. It is that love of a mother which has given the cow the high status not given to any other animal. The status is so high as to be considered divine.



The cow is God. Although she is an animal, she is Gomatha who gives milk like a mother and is the form of Srimatha. As Kamadenu, she is the divine mother who gives all that is desired. Kamadenu manifested from the Ocean of Milk (*Kshirabdhi*). It was Srimatha who came as Gomatha. This is how Muka prays to Kamakshi in his *Panchasathi* – ‘May you be our Kamadenu’

*Kamadhuga bhava Kamale Kamakale Kamakoti Kamakshi*

காமதுகா பவ கமலே காமகலே காமகோடி காமாக்ஷி  
(‘முக பஞ்சசதி’, ஆர்யா சதகம், ச்லோ.49)

### Even the Cow's dung is pure

What appears to be opposite come together in the cow. I have said that its milk which is like its blood instead of spoiling the mind purifies it. What gives energy to the body also gives purity to the mind. More than all these, its dung which is actually its excreta also purifies. It purifies both the body and the mind. Usually, any excreta is dirty, foul smelling and capable of spreading disease. But the cow's excreta is capable of removing all other dirt and killing disease causing bacteria. It has no foul smell. In fact, it has a kind of healthy smell.

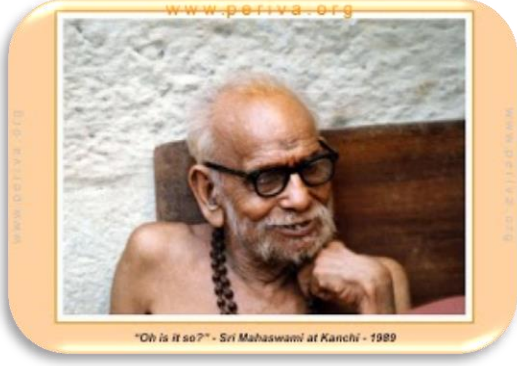
There are several proofs to show how holy the cow dung is considered. There are Sadhus who strictly follow the rule that the sanyasi should not have any connection with fire. They will not take any food that is cooked on fire. But a section of sanyasis follow the custom of taking food cooked entirely by using cow dung cakes. It is because of the cow's divinity, its dung too enjoys such greatness.

### The example of Bhopal

Those considered educated used to say that it is only people who believe in sashtras are, out of blind faith, thinking that the cow dung purifies. But now the purifying quality of cow dung has been accepted scientifically. The scientists of atheistic Russia have conducted experiments and found out that the smoke emitted by the burning cow dung cake acts as a disinfectant and anti-pollutant.

Recently we saw something wonderful reported in the papers. **(This was said in 1984)**

In the catastrophic gas leakage accident that occurred in Bhopal, people in the entire town were affected in various ways and many people died. The news report says that in a particular home which was full of smoke generated by the performance of Agnihothram, no harm was caused.



But in this, it will not be correct to give the entire credit to the cow dung only. Although the dung is a good anti-pollutant which can counter poison, greater importance here is only to the Agnihothram performed with mantras and using the cow dung cake. More than the power of the dung, it is the mantra which must have nullified the effect of the poisonous gas. But when a mantra is not recited as a japa, but is connected with the performance of yajna, the materials used in the yajna according to sasthanas add to the

power of the mantras and give full benefit. Looked at this way, it would mean that the cow dung also had a share in countering the effect of the poisonous gas.

The power of purification which the dung has when used in yajnas also protects the mantras and increases their potency. It is laid down that only the cow dung is to be used as a purifying agent in yajnas and not any other material.

## Panchagavyam

What is more important about the cow dung is that more than being an external purifying agent, it acts as an internal purifying agent in the Vaidic way. Sasthanas have laid down that the cow dung is to be added to the panchagavyam which is to be taken for internal purification.

What is *Panchagavyam*? Gavyam' is what is connected with the cow (go). Three of these are milk and milk products namely, curd and ghee. The remaining two – it is here the opposites come – are the cow's urine and its dung. These five mixed together make the panchagavyam. '*Kshiram, dadhi, thatha sajjam, muthram, gomayam evacha*', it is said. When *punyahavachanam* is performed to remove the ritual impurity caused by any reason, *panchagavyam* is given and it should be taken in. The use of *panchagavyam* is not merely to remove the external ritual impurity, but to remove the internal impurity and previous sins. This is not a simple matter. The sinful acts are the cause of our birth and suffering. If these are destroyed, is it not a big thing? If the cow gives the five things required for this, is there anyone more helpful than the cow. Sasthanas say that when taking the *panchagavyam*, one has to say, 'just as fire reduces wood to ashes, may this *panchagavyam* which I take reduce to ashes the sins that have spread from the skin to the bones'.

*Yath thvak asthi gatham papam dhehe thishtathi mamake  
Prasanam panchagavyasya dhahathvagnirivendhanam*

*யத் த்வக் அஸ்தி கதம் பாபம் தேஹே திஷ்டதி மாமகே-|  
ப்ராசனம் பஞ்சகவ்யஸ்ய தஹத்வாக்நிவேந்தனம் ||*





'*Indhanam*' means firewood. The meaning of '*dhahadh agnih eva indhanam*' is 'just as fire burns out the wood, let this *panchagavyam* burn the sins'. Four great qualities of milk, curd, buttermilk, butter and ghee are: they are tasty, nutritious, not only serve as food but act as medicine and are useful for Vaidic purposes and remove the sins and save the athma.

### **In medical treatment and musical instruments**

Just as in *Punyahavachanam*, it is said that *Panchagavyam* cures diseases from the skin to the bone. In Vaidya Sasthra also, it has been so stated and we see that as a medicine, it has a goof effect. It is to be noted that the allopathic system also supports what is said in Ayurvedha, namely, the milk helps in curing the skin disease of leprosy and that it contains calcium which strengthens the bone. In the Ayurvedhic system, many medicines are to be taken along with milk. Curd, buttermilk, butter and ghee also have curative properties.

The cow is useful even in music also. Leather instruments like mrudangam, drum etc, are made of leather.

### **Cruelty to the cow is like killing the mother**

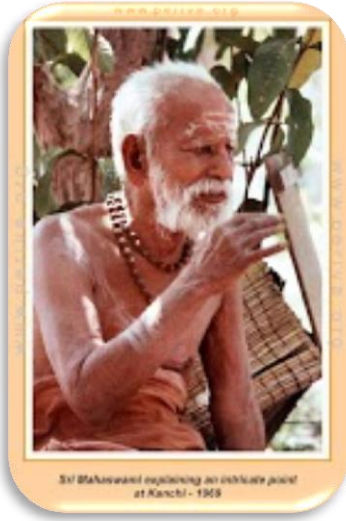
What is said above namely the use of leather in musical instruments means leather taken from cows which die a natural death. Killing of cows (go hathi) is a great sin not to be thought of even in dreams. Not killing but even small cruelty caused to a cow is sin. We have seen that 'go' is mother. Therefore, killing of the cow is like killing the mother, a sin for which there is no remedy (*prayaschiththam*). I started speaking about the cow only to highlight this point.

If we enjoy the milk from the cow as long as it gives milk and then send it away for slaughter once it stops yielding milk, it is like killing the mother who has become old and cannot do any work. The meat of a cow is the same as the meat of a mother.

Since music is divine, it is necessary to play musical instruments in temples. But, for that purpose, if a cow is to be killed, the Lord will never forgive such acts. It is only the skin of a cow which dies a natural death that can be used for making musical instruments.

It is the same in respect of 'gorochan' which is in the cow's stomach. It is true that it is offered as incense during pooja. It is also used in medicine. But the cow should not be harmed just for getting the gorochan. The skin or gorochan should be taken only from a cow that dies a natural death.

## The cow's horn is something special



Since the cow is holy, even the gorochana that is taken from inside its body becomes fit for being offered to the Lord in pooja. Many people know that in the sannidhi where Nataraja dances, Nandikeswara plays the mridangam. But there is something more special than that. Abhishekam (holy bath) being performed to Iswara through the horn of a cow has been said to be something special. It is said to be great punya if milk abhishekam is performed to Sivalinga through the hole of a *gosringam* (horn) for the duration of reciting Rudram – Chamakam once. Is it not appropriate that abhishekam is performed through *gosringam* to one who is seated on the bull?

If the cow gives milk, it is the bull that is useful in ploughing and raising crops. Thus it is the cattle that render great help to the humans. We have to show gratitude and devotion to them in a big way. We have to think that even a little harm caused to them is an offence committed against God.

Apart from abhishekam done through the horn, all the five materials used in *Panchagavyam* are used for the abhishekam of the Lord.

## Abhishekam with Ghee

We know only the abhishekam done with milk. We have not heard much about abhishekam with ghee. In Trichur (Kerala), the abhishekam is done with ghee only. The Lingam there will be covered with ghee like snow in the Himalayas. It does not become bad even after a long gap of time. Not only that, the older it is, the more it is useful for medicinal purposes. The Vaidis in Kerala administer as medicine the old ghee itself as '*Purathana krutham*'.

Apart from milk, curd and ghee, doing abhishekam with the cow's urine or dung is not in practice. But it is considered special to do abhishekam with *Panchagavyam*.

## Vibhuthi

Parameswara who is fond of abhishekam is also fond of vibhuthi. What the Lord wears is the ash of the burnt corpse. But the vibhuthi that we make, apply to him, do abhishekam also and we wear – where from does it come? It is by burning balls of the cow dung that it is made. There is nothing more sacred than vibhuthi. In the *Basmajapalopanishad*, Paramweswara himself explains in detail how vibhuthi is to be made and says that it removes all sins and gives moksha. The cow's dung has got such pure Sakthi. Vaishnavas too wear with manthra the ash that gets generated in homas. In that, the ash of samid will be mixed with that of cow dung.



There are two ways of purification: One is to take bath and another is to apply vibhuthi over the body. We perform abhishekam to the Lord with vibhuthi. It is basically abhishekam with cow dung.

### **The Dust rising from the cow's hoof**

Just as the cow dung is sacred, the dust rising from its hoof is also sacred. Usually, dust from the feet is considered something lowly.

But we accept the same with bhakthi from divine personages. The dust from the cow's feet is also sacred. When the cows return as a herd after grazing they raise a cloud of dust. If we stand at a place where such dust falls on our body, it is said to be a bath which is holier than a bath in holy water. Normally, we take bath to remove the dirt on our body. But here, dust itself becomes holy bath! Young Krishna had immersed himself in such dust. His body being covered all the time with dust enhanced his appearance. Acharya himself has sung: '*Saswath Gokura Nirdhudhothhadha dhuli dhusara sowbhagyam*'. (*Govindashtakam*). The evening time when the cows return home as a herd raising dust is considered special and is described as '*Godhuli lagnam*'.

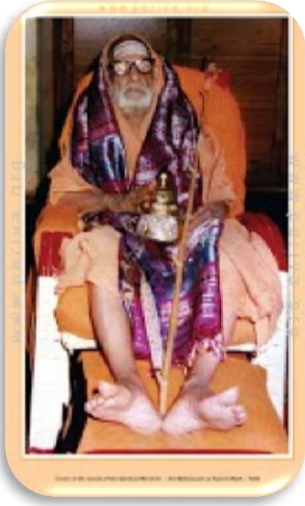
### **No Yajna without the Cow**

Abhishekam is part of devotional worship. Agamas and puranas are the authority for the same. More than all that, the basic authority for our religion are the Vedhas. Without the support of the Vedhas, agamas and puranas cannot have a status of being the authority.

If it is thought that Vedhas are meant only for our country, there cannot be a greater mistake. Vedhas are recited only in our country and only if Vedha karmas are performed here in Bharath (which is *karmabhumi*), they are fruitful. But the fruit is not only for this country. We do Vaidhika karmas here keeping in mind the good of the entire world. Just as the blood flows from the heart to all parts of the body, the Vaidhika anushtanas we observe here bestow welfare on the whole world. In other words, the world will be there only if the Vedhas are there. The welfare of the world depends on the yajnas and other Vaidhika karmas done here. There need be no doubt about it. Yajnas give life to the whole world. Two things are very necessary for the same. One is the person who performs the yajnam (yajamanan) and the other is the cow that gives the important materials to be used in the yajna.

The important 'ahuthi' offered in yajna is the cow's ghee. All the things that are offered in yajnam have the common name 'havis'. But 'havis' particularly means the cow's ghee. Even the other things are offered only after cleaning them with ghee. In agnihothram and other yajnas, cow's milk is offered in the homam. Curd is also used in the homa. If ghee, milk and curd become homa themselves in the fire, it is the cow dung cake that keeps the fire glowing. Therefore, if there is no cow, there will be no yajna.

## Protecting the Cow is protecting the World



Vedhas are the back bone for the welfare of the world. Yajna is the backbone of the Vedhas. The kartha who performs the yajna and the cow which yields the important materials for the yajna are the backbone of the yajna. Therefore it means that the cow is there for the welfare of the world.

That is why it is said 'Go rakshanam is Bhurakshanam'. It is for this reason that when prayer is offered for the welfare of the world, the cow and the kartha (who performs yajna) are first mentioned separately and then prayer is said for the welfare of the world.

*Go brahmanebyo subamasthu nithyam  
Lokah samasthah sukino bhavanthu*

கோப்ராஹ்மணேப்யோ சுபமஸ்து நித்யம்-  
லோகாஸுகினோ பவந்து :ஸமஸ்தா :

The reason why the cow and the Brahmin have been mentioned separately when there are so many animals and there are so many jathis is that the two are most useful in yajnas which are performed for the welfare of the world. This was not said out of any feeling of partiality. These lines are from the first of the 'Mangala slokas' recited at the conclusion of Ramayana Parayanam. Since the sloka comes at the end of the recitation of Ramayana which is the story of Ramachandramurthi who ruled his kingdom in accordance with Vedhas, performing Asvamedha yajna etc, first it is said that the king should rule justly and then the welfare of the cow, the Brahmin and the world has been mentioned.

*Swasthi prajabyah paripalayantham  
Nyayyena margena mahim mahisah  
Go brahmanebyo subhamasthu nithyam  
Lokah samasthah sukino bhavanthu*

ஸ்வஸ்தி ப்ராஜாப்யபரிபாலயந்தாம் :  
ந்யாய்யேந மார்கேண மஹீம் மஹிசா :|  
கோ ப்ராஹ்மணேப்யோ சுபமஸ்து நித்யம்  
லோகா ஸமஸ்தா ஸுகினோ பவந்து :||

Rama and Krishna are the two eyes of this country. When praying to Krishna Paramathma for the welfare of the world, before mentioning the good of the world, the welfare of the cow and Brahmin are mentioned.



*Namo brahmanya devaya go brahmana hithaya cha  
Jagadh hithaya Krishnaya govindaya namo Namah*

*நமோ ப்ரஹ்மண்ய தேவாய கோ ப்ராஹ்மண ஹிதாய ச |  
ஜகத் :ஹிதாய க்ருஷ்ணாய கோவிந்தாய நமோ நம-||*

Although the two are the pillars of yajnas, the cow has been given the first place and then the Brahmin – ‘go brahmana’.

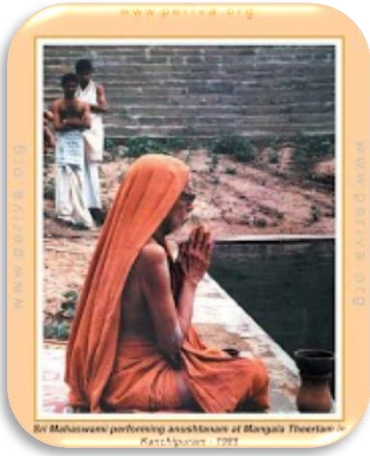
The Brahmins are called ‘Bhudevas’, they are the devas who are not in devaloka but are in bhuloka. Those Brahmins who have dedicated themselves to the Vedhas and are doing yajnas and other anushtanas for the welfare of the world are referred to like this, not the present day Brahmins who have given up the swadharmas. The cow is mentioned before such true Brahmins who are bhudevas. It is said of someone that he not only spoiled himself but spoiled the holy temple tank. Similarly since the Brahmin has given up the swadharmas of Vedha rakshanam and therefore yajnas and homas have declined, the virtuous function of the cow (of giving its ghee, dung etc) has been affected.

The cow which protects the yajnas by giving the important materials needed for the same has the power to protect the efficacy of the mantras by its mere presence. That is why it is said that doing japa inside a cow shed yields crores of times the benefit that normally accrues. There is no place as pure as a ‘koshtam’, the cattle shed. All the holy waters are within it. In our temples there are sannidhis for different deities and there is a holy tank. But the cow is the temple in which all the deities and all the holy waters are there.

## **Gomatha and Lakshmi**

If it is said that the cow is the embodiment of all the devathas, it is not possible for our little mind to comprehend it. We only wonder at it and it is a wonder tinged with fear. That is why Gomatha is particularly referred to as one devatha namely, Lakshmi. In Amarakosam where the several names are given for Lakshmi, the names Lokamatha and Lokajanani occur. Gomatha is the Lokamatha.

On the one side Gomatha is called Lakshmi. On the other, she is said to be one of the abodes of Lakshmi. **Lakshmi’s abodes are five: The simantha (central parting of the hair on the head) of a sumangali, the interior of a fully blossomed lotus flower, the forehead of the elephant, the rear part of the bilva leaf and the hind part of the cow.**



We have already seen that opposites come together in a cow. Similarly Lakshmi does not reside in the face of the cow, but in the rear part. While we may decorate the cow by applying sandal paste, kumkum etc on the face and putting garland around its neck, when it comes to worship we have to decorate the hind part and do archana. There is nothing lowly about the cow. Everything about it is great.

From the fact that in the dharma pitas like our Mutt early in the morning 'Gopuja' is done, the high status enjoyed by the cow can be understood. Although the elephant is much bigger than the cow, the puja for the elephant (Gajapuja) is done only after the Gopuja.

### A bunch of grass for the cow

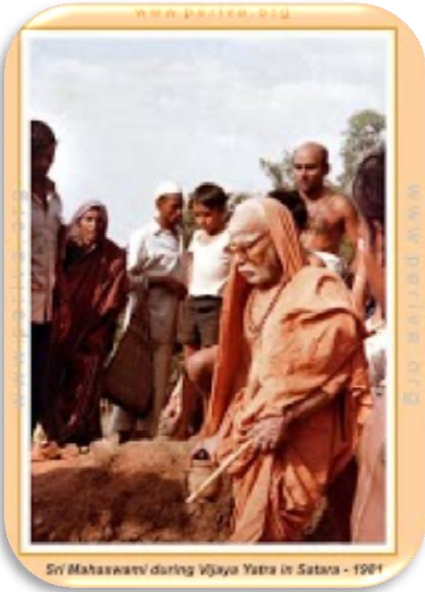
Only some people can do puja to the cow treating it as divine. But there is a duty that is to be performed by everyone – giving fodder to the cow. Every day we have to give atleast a handful of grass to the cow. Sasthras refer to this as 'gograsam'. 'Grasam' means a mouthful of food. It is from 'gograsam' that the English word 'grass' has been derived. In his Thirumandhiram, Thirumular has mentioned the duty of giving 'gograsam' in between the duty of offering a leaf (bilva) to Iswara and giving alms.

### Unpardonable Crime

Whether during the period the cow yields milk or when it stops yielding milk, if we do not give sufficient food to the cow, it is a great blemish on us. All of us are criminals in this respect. Our negligence here is unpardonable.

If we keep side by side our cow and the cow of other countries where it is not being given a status of divinity, we will feel ashamed. People of other countries, though they do not treat the cow as divine and though they may be eating its meat, they feed it well and keep it healthy. But we give it minimum food just to get milk from it. We cannot escape by saying that in other countries, the cows are fattened just for that meat. Whatever may be the reason so long as the cow is alive, they feed it well. Without taking measures to feed the cow well and protect it, there is no use of our shouting that cow slaughter should be prevented by law. Those who support cow slaughter point to the lean and emaciated cows that we keep and say that instead of keeping them like this, it is better to kill them as a relief to them. We are unable to counter this argument.

## The Duty of the State and the People



By what is said above it should not be concluded that a legal ban on cow slaughter is now required. A law banning cow slaughter has to be passed as soon as possible but instead of the matter ending with that, there is the duty of the people.

It is to feed the cow well and provide for them sheds which are hygienic. For a long time now, many people have been pressing for a law to ban cow slaughter and have been even agitating for it. But they have not taken any special steps to ensure what needs to be done by the people to protect the cow. In this matter, I myself have not done my duty well. It is only to point out our duty, I have said that what the other side says is not without justification.

One the whole, a law passed by the government is necessary. I want to emphasize that to the same extent, people should treat the cows

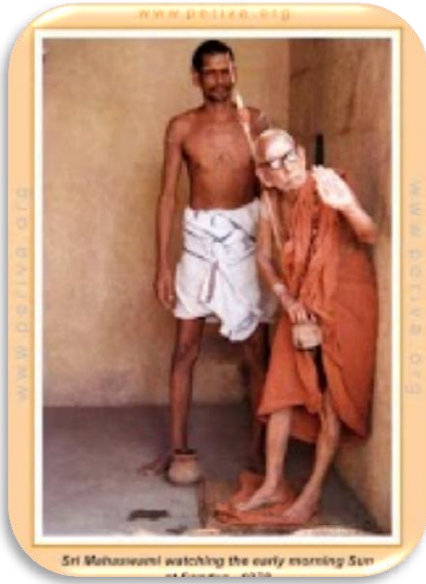
well till they die a natural death.

**On the one hand, we are religionists who worship the cow as a deity. On the other hand, we are making available for slaughter cows which have stopped yielding milk or we starve them. This hypocrisy is a great blemish on us. Till such time we do not protect the cows well until its natural death, we are unfit to call ourselves Hindus.**

## Easy way to feed a cow

It is not necessary that all of us should do some great sacrifice or make great efforts to feed the cows well and ensure that they do not starve. It is true that any amount of sacrifice or effort on our part for the sake of the cow is deserving. If some or even many people set out to do it, it is to be appreciated. But if attention is paid to a small matter by all people, several cows will get a good feed. If we make arrangements to give as feed to the cows all the vegetable waste we generate in our homes daily, a number of cows will get fed. We cut vegetables daily at home. In hotels and hostels, this is done on a large scale. Instead of throwing away the vegetable waste, it should be collected in a special covered container. There should be volunteers who will collect them from door to door.

This idea should not be dismissed thinking that nothing much will become available by this way. Considering the amount of waste that gets generated daily in every home and more particularly in hotels and hostels, each day's collection will be very substantial. We need not be concerned with the cows that are cared for well in rich homes and in farms. Our aim is to protect those cows which starve and are in danger of being dispatched to the slaughter house.



Sri Mahaswami watching the early morning Sun at Kanchi - 2018

If this task is undertaken and carried out with care, we can see for ourselves that a large number of cows can be fed. We can also be the recipients of the grace of Lord Krishna.

Like the peeled off skins of vegetables, the water that is obtained when filtering cooked rice can also be given to the cows. But in most homes, rice is being cooked in cookers. Where rice is still being cooked in the conventional manner, this service can be rendered. Even the water with which rice is washed before being kept for cooking becomes food for the cow. Wherever possible, a small plot can be allotted in the backyard of houses to grow greens that cows specially like.

We should think that we are offering food to Bhagawan Vasudeva and protect the cows by any of these means. Once we develop that feeling, we will not feel the strain in doing anything to help the cow.

## Protective Shelters

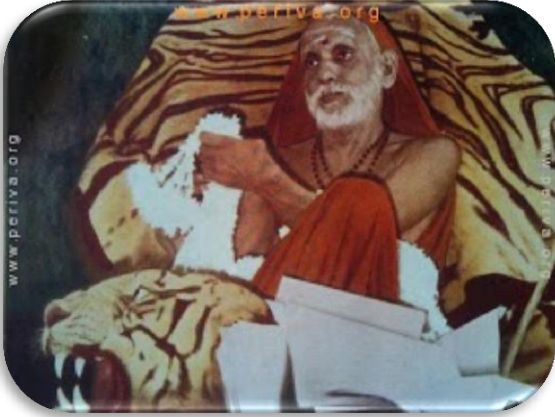
**Finally what needs to be done by all people coming together us to ensure that not a single cow goes to the slaughter house and till their natural death they are given food and are sheltered in hygienic sheds.** For this purpose, shelters should be specially arranged for the cows which have stopped yielding milk. If individuals are not willing to keep them anymore and want to dispatch them to slaughter houses, they should be purchased from them and kept in such shelters.

Several owners of cows may be really poor and will be living a hard life. They cannot be expected to give them away free. But just because money has to be paid for such cows, not a single cow should be allowed to go to the slaughter house. It may be thought; "To purchase such cows from the owners will mean a lot of money. Apart from that it will be a demanding task to take care of the old cows". But when we feel the importance of this service, money and labour do not count for much.

## Society in the service of the Cow

I believe that if awareness is created among our vast population about the need for this service, the requisite finance and the required volunteers will become available. It is enough if a few people get together at different places and start making efforts with perseverance. What should be noted in this is that there should not be a complete dichotomy between those who give money and those who volunteer to do physical service. The one who contributes money should also render some physical service and the one who volunteers to do physical service should also contribute some money. Only then, there will be a total involvement of all people.





Apart from this, in the society too, instead of there being two separate groups of people – those who contribute money and those who render physical service – all people will come together as one family and as children of Gomatha.

**My wish is that in addition to we Hindus coming together as a family in the service of the cow, we have to carry this message with love to people of other religions also, involve them so that the entire society comes together as a family for doing the service. Religious affinity may take different forms for different people but since compassion to animals is common to all, all religionists in our country should come together on this basis. That is my wish.**

### **Nurturing the Cow is Punya, neglecting it is sin**

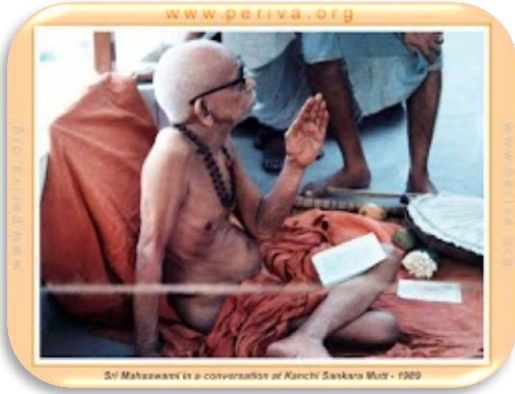
**To nurture the cow and protect it is punya which will give all benefits. To neglect it is a great sin which will invite curse and there is proof for this.** There is proof for both in the life of Dilipan who was a king of the Solar dynasty. When he went to *Devalokam*, he returned without going round *Kamadenu*. For this mistake, he got a curse that he will not have progeny.

There is always a remedy for a curse. The calf of that *Kamadenu*, *Nandini* was with *Vasishta*, the Kulaguru of the Solar dynasty. On being told by *Vasishta*, Dilipan took *Nandini* for grazing, gave it a bath and rendered other forms of service. He did all this along with his wife Sudakshina. The curse was remedied. He got a child who was to become Raghu and the Solar dynasty itself was to take his name as *Raghuvamsam*.

### **Cow Protection in Olden Times**

Although there is not use talking about it now, we cannot remain without doing so. Before the advent of British rule, in every place, in every village exclusive grazing plots have been allotted for cattle to graze. But the British government which did not know the importance of the welfare of the cows distributed those plots. From that time, the cows started losing their food. Similarly, there were tanks meant exclusively for cattle. These have disappeared now. In the government's plans of Minor Irrigation Works, such tanks should be included.

I shall give evidence to show with how much love people cared for the cattle in the olden times. For beings to get redemption, 32 different kinds of dharma (charity) are mentioned. This is also said to be 64.



One of these is to erect vertical stones against which the cattle can rub themselves to get relief from itching sensation. In a country where even such small things are considered as great dharma, we are making the cows skinny and bony and making way for killing them. It is a slur on us.

### **National Wealth**

When speaking about Cow protection we should not fail to express our gratitude to the '*Nagarathar*' (a sect of rich merchants of Tamilnadu) and people of North India who maintain *pinjarapoles* for cow protection. In olden days, in order to ensure that the cows had enough to eat, grazing plots were properly maintained. With urbanization, it is all buildings and offices everywhere without garden or fields.

It is only now that the government has become aware that this kind of urban development deprives people of even oxygen and is therefore taking interest in ensuring vacant plots for play grounds etc. For the people living in towns, these are said to be their lungs. Along with these 'lungs', space should also be provided for grazing plots.

The cow should be considered national wealth. Even after it stops yielding milk, it is wealth because it gives dung till it dies. The dung is useful as manure. Nowadays, '*gobar gas*' is also being produced from dung to be used as fuel.

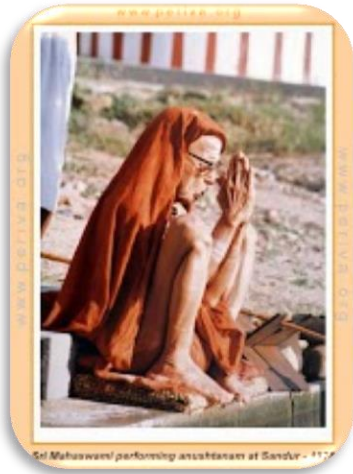
But cow protection is not one which has to be considered in terms of economic viability. Since the cow has also divine and Vaidhika links, it has to be protected as we protect our mothers. We should put a stop to the practice of considering the cow as useful only as long as it yields milk.

### **Milk not to be wasted on Coffee**

Whatever the cow yields is used yajnas and activities related to worship of god. We take the milk, curd etc and improve our health, but unfortunately what is happening us that most of the milk is being used for coffee. Milk is like amruth, but we mix it with decoction which contains poisonous caffeine. Just as cow protection is necessary, people must pay attention to the protection of the soul also and free themselves from the habit of drinking coffee.

Instead of taking several times, a part of the milk used for coffee should be given to the temples for abhishekam and a part to poor children. When there are lakhs of children who do not know the taste of milk, people drinking coffee several times in a day is a crime against society.

Instead of coffee in the morning, we can take '*kanji*' with butter milk. It is said '*dhagaram amrutham*'. *Dhagaram* is butter milk.



From one measure of milk, we can get three or four times buttermilk and therefore it is economical too. Milk will not suit some constitutions. *Gomatha* gives buttermilk from milk for such people. People who should not take fatty food can take buttermilk obtained after removing the butter.

### Ghee Lamp

Since the performance of yajnas has come down in numbers, there is very little scope for spending ghee on this account. But since god-related activities like puja at home, in temples, in mutts etc are still taking place, we can use ghee for lighting lamps. If we ourselves make cow's ghee and give it to temples and mutts, it is great punya. The glow of ghee lamps which is white will induce internal purity also. It is specially good if it is in the sannidhis in temples.

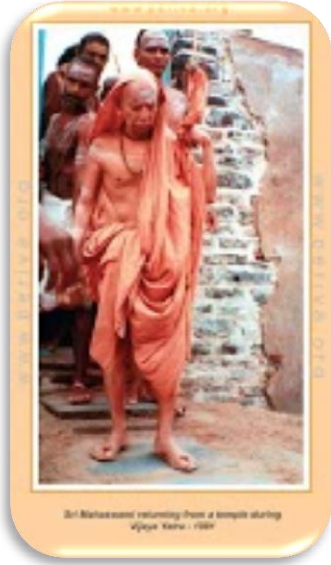
It is the duty of devotees to ensure that ghee lamps are lighted in temples at least on Fridays. Whatever *Gomatha* gives with great compassion must be put to use. Now, either we do not take from her what she gives or use it in improper ways and we are also negligent in protecting her.

*Gita* says '*Parasparam bhavayanthah*'. We and the cow should protect each other mutually. The nourishment we get from the cow is much more than what we give her during the period she gives milk. The dharma of cow protection (*go rakshanam*) which has taken deep root in our ancient culture should reflect in our action.

### Law to prohibit cow slaughter

In the matter of cow protection which as to be ensured by the joint efforts of the people and the government, what the government must do is to make a law prohibiting cow slaughter. It is tireless persuasion on the part of the people that will pave the way for such a law. There should be propaganda and publicity to persuade people of all sects to support the prevention of slaughter instead of stopping it out of fear for a law. Even those who have opposite views should be spoken to with love. It is important to know that the Moghul rulers Akbar and Shajehan and in very recent times Amir of Afghanistan realized the need for cow protection and made laws for that purpose. **Therefore, it is my belief that if the issue is properly put forth, people of all sects will extend to us their support.** The government also cannot avoid making the law on the plea that such a law cannot be made against the views of some sections of people and the lawful protection will become available.

To protect certain things without being destroyed, it is possible only through law. That is why the government enacts laws. Legal protection has been given even for the preservation of wild animals. Sandalwood trees are similarly protected. Similarly, certain other trees which provide food to adivasis have been protected in certain States.



Whether it is seen from the practical point of view or from the point of view of Vaidhikam, there is justification for not killing such a noble animal as the cow. The welfare of the cow will ensure the welfare of the country. If it is protected, sins will come down on their own. If it is subjected to cruelties, there will be trouble for the whole world.

According to Sasthras, *Dharma Devatha* is of the form of a bull (*Rishabham*) with four legs namely, thapas, purity, compassion and sathyam. In *Bhagavatham* (1.17) it is said '*Gomatha*' is in association with that bull, that mother cow yields dharma as milk and because the *Kali Purusha* subjected the pair to cruelty, this age of *Kali (Kaliyugam)* is in a state of such deterioration'.

Therefore, for remedying the *Kali dosham* and dharma to come up, cow protection is an important measure. Lord Krishna should bestow His grace so that we do not suffer from the blemish of failing in that duty.

In Mahabharatham, in the '*Anusasanika Parva*' in which *Bhishma* gives Upadesa of several dharmas to Yudhishtira, he speaks about cow protection and explains its greatness. *Nahusha Maharaja* was once under a compulsion to purchase *Syavana Maharishi* for a price. He was worried about what price he could give. He thought, 'even if I give all the three worlds, that would not equal that great rishi'. At that juncture, a rishi who was born of a cow went to him and told him that if a cow was given as price, that would be adequate. The king also accepted the suggestion and said, 'I have not found any wealth equal to a cow' – '*Gobisthulyam na paschyami dhanam kinchith*'. He gave a cow as the price, purchased the rishi and then made him free.

There is no great punya that the gift of a cow. It is the greatest remedy for sins. The gift (dhanam) has to be made after making sure that the person who receives it is capable of protecting it.

One of the slokas which Syavana Maharishi says about the cow is:

*Nivishtam gokulam yathra swasam munchathi nirbhayam  
Virajayathi tham desam papam chasyapakarshathi*

நிவிஷ்டம் கோகுலம் யத்ர ச்வாஸம் முஞ்சதி நிர்பயம் |  
விராஜயதி தம் தேசம் பாபம் சாஸ்யாபகர்ஷதி ||

The meaning of the sloka is: "That country where cows have no fear of any cruelty being inflicted on them and live peacefully in gokula, all sins will go and will shine".

May Lord Krishna bestow His grace so that our Bharath becomes such a country and all of us develop the attitude and ability to make it such.

Original Tamil version available at: <http://www.kamakoti.org/tamil/7dk180.htm>



*The Holy Adhistanam of Sri Mahaswami at Kanchi Math, Kanchipuram – 1994*

## Sri Maha Periva's love for cows

### The Lost Cow - English

It was in the days when Sri Matha functioned with Kumbhakonam as its headquarters. There was a large cattle-shed behind the Matha. One day, a cow that did not belong to Sri Matha was found in the shed feeding on the hay and drinking at the water-trough. It was not known whose cow it was. The news was passed around in the neighborhood, but no one came to claim it. Four or five days passed. The Manager asked Periyaval, "Shall we drive away the cow?"

"If the cow must be driven out because it does not belong to Sri Matha, then several people in our Matha should also be sent out".

There were indeed many people living in the Matha, eating and sleeping there, doing no particular work. "The cow cannot speak for itself. We do not know its master. Let it stay on in our cattle-shed. It is our duty to protect it".

As the days passed it was seen that the cow was getting ready to calve and in due course did so. The Manager came back to Periva. "The yellowish milk yielded after calving has stopped. The cow seems to be of a very good breed. It is nourished on good cattle-feed too. It gives four large measures of milk in the morning and in the evening".

"Hand over all the milk to Kalathisvara temple for abhiseka. The cow does not belong to Sri Matha. So the milk must not be utilised by the Sri Matha".

Two days passed. Periyaval questioned the Manager. "What are you doing with that milk?"

The Manager replied hurriedly, "I have made arrangements for the milk to be handed over to the Kalathisvara temple everyday".

"All the same, it is likely that the milk may be used in Sri Matha, by mistake. So, handover the cow and calf to a Siva temple".

The Manager did as instructed. But the temple had several cows already and found it difficult to take on one more. The temple trustee announced the auction of the cows. Periyaval was worried that the cows bought in auction would go straight to the butcher. So he told a wealthy devotee to buy all the cows that were auctioned. Later, one by one, he gifted them to devotees who were committed to tending cows with care. That is the kind of love Periyaval had for cows.

*Source: In the Presence of the Divine*

## The Dead Calf - Tamil

இந்தச் சம்பவம் காஞ்சி மடத்தில் நடந்த நிகழ்ச்சி.

மகா பெரியவர் காலையில் எழுந்தவுடன் பசுவை தரிசிப்பது வழக்கம். பசுமாடுகள் கட்டியிருந்த கொட்டகை ஒன்றில் மகான் அமர்ந்து மாலை வேளைகளில் உரையாடுவது வழக்கம்.சுற்றியிருக்கும் மக்களைக் கொசுக்கள் பிடுங்கி எடுக்கும்.மகான் மட்டும் எதைப் பற்றியும் சிந்திக்காமல், தான் சொல்ல வேண்டியதை மட்டும் சொல்லிக்கொண்டே இருப்பார்.

அந்தக் கொட்டகையில் உள்ள ஒரு பசு நிறைமாத கர்ப்பிணியாக இருந்தது. பேறுகாலம் அதனால் பசு வேதனைப்பட்டுக்கொண்டே இருந்ததே தவிர, அதனால் கன்றை ஈன்றெடுக்க முடியவில்லை. வைத்தியர்கள் வரவழைக்கப்பட்டனர். கால்நடைத் துறையில் சிறந்து விளங்கும் டாக்டர்கள் அவர்கள். ஒருவர் அல்ல.. காஞ்சிமகான் மடம் என்பதால் ஆறுபேர் வந்திருந்தனர்.

பசுவை நன்றாகப் பரிசோதித்துப் பார்த்த அவர்கள், பசு ஏன் இன்னமும் பிரசவிக்கவில்லை என்கிற காரணத்தைக் கண்டு பிடித்தனர். கன்றுக்குட்டி வயிற்றுக்குள் இறந்து போயிருந்தது. அதை வெளியே எடுக்காவிட்டால் பசுவும் இறந்துவிடும். அந்த ஆறுபேரும் ஏகோபித்து சொன்ன முடிவு அது. இதைக் கேட்ட நிர்வாகிகள் நேராக மகானிடம் போய் மெதுவாக விஷயத்தைச் சொன்னார்கள்.

தன் இருக்கையை விட்டு எழுந்த அவர், நேராக பசு இருந்த கொட்டகைக்கு வந்தார். பசுவின் எதிரே அமர்ந்தார். அவரது பார்வை வேறு பக்கம் திரும்பவே இல்லை. கன்று வயிற்றுக்குள் இறந்து போயிற்று என்று ஏகோபித்த முடிவாகச் சொன்ன டாக்டர்கள் ஒருபக்கமா நின்று, மகானையும், பசுவையும் மாறிமாறிப் பார்த்துக் கொண்டே இருந்தார்கள். இப்படியும் அப்படியுமாக நிலைகொள்ளாமல் தடுமாறிக் கொண்டிருந்த பசு ஓர் இடத்தில் நின்றது. சற்று நேரத்தில் அதன் வயிற்றில் இருந்த கன்றுக்குட்டி வெளியே வந்தது. துள்ளியபடி நின்றது. இறந்து போனது என்று டாக்டர்கள் சொன்ன அதே கன்றுதான் உயிரோடு வெளியே வந்தது.

ஆறு டாக்டர்களுக்கும் இது விந்தையான நிகழ்ச்சிதான். அவர்களும் அப்போதுதான் மகானின் அருட்பார்வை எப்படிப்பட்டது என்கிற பேருண்மையைத் தெரிந்து கொண்டனர்.

பசுமாட்டை நன்றாகத் தடவிக் கொடுத்தபின் மகான் உள்ளே போனார்.

## Conclusion

We conclude this E-book with a wonderful poem on the Mahaswami by Shri S Ravisankar, Chennai.  
Source: Kanchi Periva Forum ([www.periva.proboards.com](http://www.periva.proboards.com))

### காஞ்சி மாமுனி ஓர் கருணை வாரிதி!

ஆனை முகத்தானை அன்போடு கும்பிட்டு |  
அவனியில் அடியெடுத்து வைத்த பாலனிவன் ||  
இவ்வுலகில் வந்துதித்த அவதார புருஷனிவன் ||

குருவின்றி குருவே தெய்வமென வாழ்ந்த |  
மாசு மருவற்ற நடமாடும் தெய்வம் இவன் ||

தானேனும் அகந்தையை தனியொருவனாய் தகர்த்தெறிந்து |  
தரணியே இவர்தன் தாள் வணங்கும் தவமுனிவரானார் ||

உலகையெலாம் உய்விக்க உத்தம வார்த்தைகளை |  
பாமரனும், பகுத்தறிவாளனும் பாடமாய் கற்க, ||  
பயமின்றி பயிற்றுவித்த பரமசிவனவன் ||

செல்வமெல்லாம் கற்களாய் காலடியில் இடர |  
கட்டிய கோவணமும் கையில் ஒரு தண்டமுமே |  
தன் சொத்து என்று அவனியில் வலம் வந்தவனிவன் ||

தரணியிலே நூறாண்டு வாழ்ந்து தன்னலமில்லா தவமிருந்து |  
தான் குறித்த நாளிலே இப்பூவுலகில் உயிர் நீத்த தெய்வமிவன் ||

முக்கோடி தேவர்கள் புடை சூழ, விண்மீன்களும் மலர் தூவ |  
மண்ணுக்குள் மண்ணாய் மறைந்த மனிதகுல மாணிக்கமிவன்||

விண்ணுலகம் சென்றாலும், விட்டுச்சென்ற பாதச்சுவடுகளின் வழி நடக்க |  
கோடானு கோடி பக்தர்களில் பாமரனாய் நிற்கும் |  
இந்த கடைக்கோடி பக்தனுக்கும் அருட் பார்வை அருள வேண்டுமெய்யா ||



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1. <http://kamakoti.org/>
2. Voice of God - Published by Sri Kanchi Mahaswami Peetarohana Shatabdi Mahotsava Trust
3. In the Presence of the Divine (narratives of experiences with Maha Periyaval), translated by Sujatha Vijayaraghavan
3. Kanchi Periva Forum ([www.periva.proboards.com](http://www.periva.proboards.com))
4. Photos of the Paramacharya sourced from Kanchi Periva Forum ([www.periva.proboards.com](http://www.periva.proboards.com))



Sri Mahaswami's main deity at Kanchi Mahaswami Manimantapam, Orikkai

**Jaya Jaya Shankara, Hara Hara Shankara!**