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RESEARCH ARTICLE

**A HISTORICAL STUDY ON SRI PRASANNA VENKATESA PERUMAL TEMPLE AT
THIRUPARKADAL**

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Abstract

Right from ancient times, temples played a vital role in the development of culture and civilization. Thiruparkadal temple serve as a centre by bringing the people of different sections of the population together by forgetting their caste differences. Hence it is the bound of duty of every individual to preserve and care these temples as they are memorials of traditions and culture.

Introduction

Thiruparkadal a small village near Kaveripakkam, located 103 kms from Madras off the Bangalore National Highway and about 12 kms South East of Sholingur are the temples of Prasanna Venkatesa Perumal and Ranganatha temple. These temples have a very interesting story behind them. The Mummoorthikal (Braham, Shiva and Vishnu) is said to have given dharshan for a sage.

In the first temple Lord Prasanna Venkatesa Perumal resides and showers his blessings to us. In the next temple Perumal is residing on Aadishesha. Here Perumal is said to have given dharshan for the sage

with Brahma from his Naabikamal. Perumal lying on the Aadisheshan is around 6 foot long and his Thirumeni is made from a tree called ‘ athi’ (athimaram)

Thirtuparkadal – 107th divya desam

Staunch Vaishnavites believe that Sri Mahavishnu is dwelling in 108 holy places called Divya Desams and he is the highest providence conferring mukthi on those who are visiting and adoring these worshipful archamurtis installed therein. Pilgrimage to the Divya desams is as indispensable as birth to the living and water for healthy sustenance. Those Divya desams are strewn across our holy Bharat but more than 81 found in Tamil Nda and they are in

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three zones of Dravida desa like Chola, Pandya and Tondamandala. The rest are in Chera and Northern countries. Sri Prasanna Venkatesa Perumal Devathanam, Sri Ranganathaswamy Devsathanam is present which makes the place to be called as 107th Divya desam. Out of 108 Divya desams, 106 only situated in the Earth. Thiruparkadal (107) and Paramapadam (108) were said to be situated at extraterrestrial universe. The God wanted all the devotees to visit all the 108 Divya desams and hence created Sayana Position at Thiruparkadal.

Historicity of the temple

Thiruparkadal village as it was called as Karapuram in ancient time, is surrounded by greenish fields and worlds two Sivan temples and two Vishnu temples with it. Lord Brahma once lost his concentration on Thirumal and decided to perform a yagha at Kanchipuram to seek the blessings of God Thirumal. He as asked all his three wives to accompany with him. One of his wives Saraswathi, refused to accompany with her husband and hence Lord Brahma preceded to Kanchipuram along with his other two wives namely Savithri and Kayathri and started to perform the yagha. Angered by the action of Lord Brahma, the Goddess Saraswathi, transformed herself as the mystic forceful river called as Vegavathi, gushing forth with tremendous force and tried to disrupt and destroy the yagha. Thirumal having affection with Brahma wanted to go for his help and laid on Adishesan as barrage and prevented the gushing venerated Saraswathi as Vegavathi River from disrupting the yagha. Goddess Saraswathi obeyed for the action of Thirumal and went away from the place and the yagha completed with all rituals.

Vishnu stands on sivam

Vaishnava Maharishi named Pundareegar visited Thiruparkadal to have dharshan of Sri Ranganathaswami. But he found a Siva lingam into the sanctum sanctorum named Sree Doseswarar instead of Vishnu, by seeing this he was disappointed and returned back.

Lord Vishnu wanted to fulfill the aspiration of the vaishnavite and transformed himself as an old vaishnavite and enquired Maharishi. He shared his disappointment with old vaishnavite. But the old man insists that it is only Thirumal sannathi and asked the Maharishi to visit the temple once again and accompanied the Maharishi to temple and then disappeared. Maharishi walked right into the inner sanctum of the temple and seen the Thirumal with Abhaya Mutra standing on Siva lingam. This was on Ekadasi day and from on that day the presiding deity is called as Sri Prasanna Venkatesa Perumal. This temple is hailed as the place to show the devotees that Siva and Hari are one and the same. Every year on Vaigunda Ekadasi day a number of devotees visit this temple.

Temple architecture and significance the venkatesa perumal sanctum

Atop the Prasanna Venkatesa Perumal Sannidhi on each side of the Pundareeka vimanam are interesting postures - Dakshinamurthy (on the Southern side), Lakshmi Narasimha (on the Western side) Brahma (On the Northern side) and Gajendra Varadan on the elephant (on the Eastern side). There is another mandapam in the entrance of sanctum sanctorum which has also shrines for Thumbikkai Azhwar, Nammalvar, Madurakavi Azhwar, Thirumangai Azhwar and Boothathazhar. Inside this sanctum the presiding deity Lord Venkatesa Perumal stands on Avudiyar (Siva lingam) with Abhaya Mutra. The sprawling temple was renovated by the king of Vijayanagar, Krishna Devarayarar and hence inside the sanctum there is an idol of him. There are shrines for Alamelu Mangai Thayar, Anjaneyar, Karudaaazhwar, Desikar, Rukmani, Sathyathama and Thirukkachi Nimbi Adigal.

Athi ranganatha – anantha sayana kolam

In the 2nd of the two temples, north of Prasanna Venkatesa temple is the Ranganatha temple where the Lord is seen sleeping on the 9 ft long 3 ft height Adishesan. The interesting feature of Ranganatha at Thiruparkadal is that he is seen resting his head (Southern direction) on a Marakkal (measuring bowl) in a grand Anantha Sayana posture. Bhoo Devi is seen

at the Lord's feet. Yet another special feature is that the entire moolavar deity of Ranganatha is made of Athi Maram. Like how Kanchi Varadarajan is referred to as Athi Varadar, Lord Ranganatha at Thiruparkadal is referred as Athi Ranganatha.

Pujas and festivals

Vaikunta Ekadasi is celebrated in a big way here. Over 5 lakh devotees visit the twin temples on this day. Panguni Revathi star is a special occasion at this temple. Lord Ranganatha goes on a sannidhi procession on the revathi star day every month. On each of the puratasi Saturdays, there is a 'flower' decoration of the Lord. On the 9 days of the Navarathiri Utsavam, there is a special Thirumanjanam and Alankaram. Between 4 pm to 6 pm it is auspicious to visit the temple on Pradosham.

Administartion of the temple

Inscriptions found on the walls of the temple registers a number of gifts and endowments bestowed upon the temple. The Pandya ruler Parthivendradivarma four hundred kuli of wet land was given. The land included a garden and a field. By the Chola king Parakesarivarman a record of the gift of gold lamp is found on the south wall of the Garbhagraha. On the Northern wall the record of the gift of land to this temple by Parantaka I is also seen. On the eastern wall of the first prakara the gift of land by the Vijayanagara king called Ariyanna Udaiyar (Hari – Hara II) is also recorded. At present this temple is being maintained by the H.R. and C.E department of Tamil Nadu.

Conclusion

Right from ancient times, temples played a vital role in the development of culture and civilization. Thiruparkadal temple serve as a centre by bringing the people of different sections of the population together by forgetting their caste differences. Hence it is the bound of duty of every individual to preserve and care these temples as they are memorials of traditions and culture.

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