

# Ekadashi dvAdashi and pradosha vratams



SrI nrusimha sEva rasikan  
Oppiliappan kOil Sri.VaradAchAri SaThakOpan

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namperumAL

(Courtesy: Sri. Murali Bhattar - [www.srirangapankajam.com](http://www.srirangapankajam.com))



श्रीः

श्रीमते रामानुजाय नमः

श्रीमते निगामान्त महादेशिकाय नमः

## ஏகாதசி த்வாதசி மற்றும் ப்ரதோஷ விரதங்கள் Ekadashi dvAdashi and pradosha vratams



EkAdasi Vratam observance is very important to the bhakthAs of Sriman NaarAyaNA. The Madhva darsanam followers are very strict on the observance of EkAdasi. One is fortunate to be in the Udipi Sri KrishNA temple on a EkAdasi day. The observance of EkAdasi by VaishNavites and Saivites is age old. In Bengal, some of the Muslims converted to Hinduism from the days of Muslim conquest observe fasting on Ekadasi days even today. The guru of Sitar genius Ravi Sankar was an EkAdasi observing Muslim.

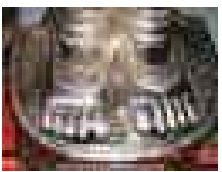
*The Twenty Five EkAdasis and Phalans from observing those Vratams*

1. **Uthpatthi EkAdasi:** This occurs during Maarghazhi KrishNa Paksham. The name of uthpatthi (creation) for this EkAdasi arises from the origin of a divine lady that was born out of the body of the Lord, who was resting in a cave by the name of SimhAvathi at BadrikAsramam after fighting the asuran by the name Muran. The asuran entered the cave and was loudly shouting for the Lord to wake up and fight him. A beautiful lady with weapons arose from the Lord engaged in Yoga nidhrA and with a mere hoomkAram, she reduced Muran to ashes. The Lord woke up from the noise and saw this beautiful maiden and praised her for her valour. He named her EkAdasi in recognition of her martial skills. This Maarkazhi KrishNa Paksha day was the one when she was born (**uthpatthi**) and hence is known as Uthpatthi EkAdasi.

2. **Moksha EkAdasi** or **Vaikunta EkAdasi** (Marghazhi Sukla Paksha EkAdasi): This is a very special EkAdasi linked to Moksham and Lord RanganAthan enters Vaikunta Vaasal to enact the role of a Jeevan that desires to gain Moksham. Any one, who follows Him through that northern gate at Srirangam (**Parama Padha Vaasal**) is sure to attain Moksham. adiyEn will cover this Vaikunta EkAdasi observance at length in subsequent sections.
3. **Saphalaa EkAdasi** occurs during Thai KrishNa Paksham. Dheepa dhAnam is very important on this EkAdasi.
4. **Puthrathaa Ekadasi** falls during Thai Sukla Paksham. A King by the name SukethumAn observed this EkAdasi to get a suprajai and asked the people of his land to observe this EkAdasi for santhAna bhAgyam.
5. **Shat Tilaa EkAdasi** occurs during Maasi KrishNa Paksham. By observing this EkAdasi, one is able to get rid of mighty sins like Brahmahatthi and gOhatthi.
6. **Jayaa EkAdasi** is observed during the Maasi Sukla Paksham. It is said that a gandharvan by the name of Maalyavaan was cursed by Indhra to wander as a ghost, By observing this Jayaa EkAdasi, Maalyavaan got rid of this curse and attained Sathgathi.
7. **Vijayaa Ekaadasi** is observed in Panguni KrishNa Paksham. It is stated that Lord Raamachandra observed this EkAdasi and gained the power to destroy RaavaNan and bring back Sitaa dEvi from Lankaa.
8. **Aamalaka EkAdasi** is observed during the Panguni Sukla Paksham. This EkAdasi is observed near a nelli (**Aamalaka**) tree and is therefore known as Aamalaka EkAdasi. Observance of this EkAdasi gives the fruits of taking many theertha yAthraS and gO dhaanam.
9. **Paapa Mochanikaa EkAdasi** is observed during Chitthirai KrishNa Paksham. Observance of this EkAdasi destroys all kinds of sins.
10. **Kaamadhaa EkAdasi** falls in Chitthirai Sukla Paksham. Observance of this EkAdasi increases the harmony among married couple.



11. **VarUdhini EkAdasi** occurs during the VaikAsi KrishNa Paksham. The observance of this EkAdasi increases one's power of VidhyA grahaNam (acquisition of Knowledge) and multiplies the phalans of dhAnam done on other days.
12. **Mohini Ekadasi** falls during VaikAsi Sukla Paksham. The Observance of this EkAdasi removes of all kinds of sins.
13. **Aparaa EkAdasi** occurs during Aani KrishNa Paksham. PerumAL has to be worshipped as Thriikraman during this EkAdasi. Such worship removes Pancha Mahaa Paathakams .
14. **Nirjala EkAdasi** falls during Aani Sukla Paksham. BheemasEnan, one of the PaaNDavAs, was known for his huge hunger. He complained once to Sage VyAsa that he could not observe EkAdasi Vratams since he could not stay away from food. He observed that he can observe just about one EkAdasi vratham per year. Sage VyAsa told BheemasEnan that the observance of Sukla Paksha EkAdasi in Aani without even taking a drop of water or food would be the right one for him. Thus this EkAdasi came to be known as Bheema or Nirjala EkAdasi. The dhvAdasi that follows this EkAdasi is known as PaaNDava DhvAdasi.
15. **Yogini EkAdasi** occurs in Aadi KrishNa Paksham. KubhEran once cursed an attendant for failing to bring the flowers for VishNu AarAdhanam in time. The curse led to the attendant being inflicted with leprosy. This attendant observed Yogini EkAdasi and got cured from this deforming disease.
16. **Sayini EkAdasi** arrives during Aadi Sukla Paksham. On this EkAdasi day, Sriman NarayaNan laid down on His bed of Aadhi Seshan after dispatching Bali Chakravarthy to PaathALam.
17. **Kaamikaa EkAdasi** occurs during the AavaNi KrishNa Paksham. Tulasi Archanai of PerumAL is to be done on this EkAdasi. The phalan is equivalent to SvarNa and Dheepa DhAnams.
18. **PuthrajAtha EkAdasi** arrives during AavaNi Sukla Paksham. Any



dhOsham that interferes with Puthra Praapthi are neutralized by archanai of PerumAL during this EkAdasi and observing the vratham.

19. **Ajaa EkAdasi** falls on PurattAsi KrishNa Paksham. Harischandra's sorrows over his losing his wife, son and kingdom were removed by his observance of Ajaa EkAdasi.
20. **PadmanAbha EkAdasi** arrives during PurattAsi Sukla Paksham. A famine was ravaging in the kingdom of MaandhAthaa, an illustrious predecessor of Lord Raamachandra of Soorya Kulam. King MaandhAthaa observed this EkAdasi vratham to rid his land of the horrors of famine.
21. **Indhraa EkAdasi** occurs during Iyppasi KrishNa Paksham. Observance of this EkAdasi removes Pithru saapam.
22. **PaapAnkusa EkAdasi** is observed during Iyppasi Sukla Paksham. The Phalan from observing this EkAdasi is the removal of all types of sins.
23. **Ramaa EkAdasi** is celebrated during Kaarthikai KrishNa Paksham.
24. **PrabhOdhini EkAdasi** comes amidst Kaarthikai Sukla Paksham. On this day, our Lord awakens from His Yoga Nidhraa and AarAdhanam of Him with Pushpams and TuLasi pleases Him immensely.
25. **Kamalaa EkAdasi** is an extra EkAdasi in some years. ParipoorNa KaDAksham of Mahaa Lakshmi falls on those who observe this EkAdasi.

### *Observance of EkAdasi and DhvAdasi Vratams*

For the EkAdasi Vratham, one observes oru vELai (eating once) during Dasami Tithi and fasts thru EkAdasi day fully and conclude it with partaking of special kind of food on DvAdasi day while the Tithi is there. For those who are older or very young in age, EkAdasi fasting is not recommended. Those who can not observe full fledged EkAdasi Vratham, fruits and milk or food prepared from broken grains can be taken. For people working in offices full time, it is not advisable to observe complete fasting because of the need to be alert during the work hours and can not fade off. Nirjala upavAsam is also not easy to observe. Chinthanai about BhagavAn is most essential. TuLasi should not be





picked on EkAdasi days for AarAdhanam. It should be picked on the day before. One should not sleep during the EkAdasi day. No anger should be displayed either. In old times, Naama Sankeertha Bhajan used to take place on EkAdasi days at the Bhajana matams to maintain VishNu chinthanam.

The significance of EkAdasi and DvAdasi vratham are covered in Srimadh Bhagavatham in Canto 9, chapters 4 & 5. These chapters of Srimadh Bhagavatham are brilliantly summarized by Sri NaarAyaNa Bhattadhiri in his NaarAyaaneeyam (33rd dasakam). The significance of Vaikunta Ekadasi and the splendour of the observance of that special Ekadasi at Srirangam will be covered in detail later. In this section, we will focus on the Ekadasi and Dvaadasi vratham.

EkAdasi Vratham is the observance of suddha UpavAsam (total fast) on Ekaadasi tithi. DvAdasi vratham is the start of the fast on the night of Dasami tithi on both sukla and KrishNa paksham (waxing and waning moon fortnights), observance of the full fast on EkAdasi day and breaking of the fast on DvAdasi day BEFORE the end of the Dvadasi tithi. Ekadasi vratham however does NOT require the breaking of fast before the conclusion of the Dvadasi tithi. Even on Ekadasi Vratham days, the elderly and the children are exempted from fasting. It is also permissible to observe EkAdasi vratham with partaking of fruits and milk for those who can not observe a complete fast. The day of EkAdasi is to be spent in meditation and DhyAnam of Sriman NaarAyaNA, Aaraadhanam, Japam et al. For those, who are unable to perform all of these, a recitation of VishNu Sahasra Naamam once is recommended.

Breaking of the fast (PaaraNai) on DvAdasi days is done after feeding first guests, if available. Special food like ahatthi keerai (a type of broad-leaved spinach) and Nellikkai pacchadi (jam of a citrus type of fruit) have to be taken in first to serve as a restorer of the mineral equilibrium in the stomach after extended fasting. The physiological effect of biweekly fasting is significant on the body. One gives a break to the digestive system and let it rest & recover for two days in a month. People live longer. In the beginning, it may be



difficult to observe the fast, but one gets used to it afterwards. If one has low blood sugar or other symptoms, one should moderate the severity of the fasting. Even intake of meals in moderation is recommended for them. Prayers, meditations and reflections on the divine attributes of the Lord are recommended accompaniments to EkAdasi and DvAdasi Vratams. The day of EkAdasi is to be spent in prayers and japam and, visits to the temple.

In MahA Bharatham, Lord KrishNA answers DuryodhanA's query on why He did not eat at his palace and instead ate at VidhurA's house. The Lord explained:

**sudham BhagavathAsyaannam suddham Bhageerathi jalam |**

**suddham VishNupadha dhyAnam suddham EKAADASI VRATHAM||**

*Meaning:*

The food partaken at a BhakthA's house is superior and pure. At the same level of holiness are the intake of GangA theertham, VishNu DhyAnam and the observance of EkAdasi vratham.

SaasthrAs state that those, who fail to eat on Ekadasi days due to anger, desire (kaamam) or stinginess (lobham) get the full fruits of the observance of EkAdasi Vratam, even if their intent was not on observing EkAdasi vratham.

*Ambhareesha Charithram*

The greatness of DvAdasi vratham that incorporates inside it the EkAdasi vratham is illustrated by the story of the king Ambarisha, a predecessor of Sri Ramachandra. He observed DvAdasi Vratam for an year on the banks of the river YamunA. Ambarisha was a great devotee of Sriman NaarAyaNA and a Nishkaama Karmi. BhagavAn's archana and Bhagavatha SevA were his goals in life (**KarmaNyEvaadhikArasthE maa palEshu kadAchana**).

At the conclusion of the year's observance of DvAdasi vratham, a sage by the name of DurvAsa came to visit AmbarishA on the day of the final paaraNai. The king was happy to have the visit of the well known sage and invited him to



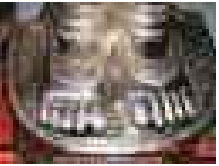
be his honored guest before his paaraNai. DurvAsa was known for his habit of flying into rage over any intended or unintended discourtesy to him.

The sage was an observer of EkAdasi vratham, but not DvAdasi vratham. He showed up in the court of king AmabarishA, while there was one and half hour alone left for the completion of the DvAdasi tithi. The sage accepted the invitation for the partaking of the food at the royal household as an athithi (guest) of the king on that dvAdasi day. He mentioned to the king that he would go to the river to perform his snAnam and rituals and return to the palace for the meals.

As stated before, DurvAsa muni was not an observer of the DvAdasi vratham. He only observed the EkAdasi vratham and had no sensitivity about completing his meals before the conclusion of the DvAdasi tithi. Hence, he tarried at the river as the clock was ticking away towards the conclusion of the tithi. The king was on pins and needles. On one hand he could not start his paaraNai before feasting DurvasA, his surprise guest; on the other hand, he will lose the fruits of the observance of the whole year's DvAdasi vratham, if he did not break his fast before the conclusion of the Dvadasi tithi. He consulted his AchAryAs on what to do with respect to this dilemma, while waiting for DurvAsar to return from the river bank.

The assembled Vedic scholars ruled that the king can take a sip of the theertham used in the thirumanjanam of the SaaLagrAmams prior to the conclusion of the DvAdasi tithi to fulfill the requirements of the timely pAraNai. This way, the king can gain the fruits of the observance of the DvAdasi vratham, while waiting for the return of the Sage DurvAsaa. The king took one spoonful of SaaLagrAma theertham. Minutes after, the sage came back to the palace and flew into a rage, when he learned that the king had broken his fast with sacred water, prior to feeding him. The angry sage pulled a hair from his matted locks and threw it on ground. A fierce demon came out and began to run towards the king to destroy him. The king did not move. At the same time, the divine Sudarsanam (the powerful Disc resting on the right





hand of Sriman NaarAyaNA) appeared and killed the demon. Next it began to chase the angry DurvAsa. The heat from the Sudarsanam was equivalent to thousands of Suns and DurvAsa ran to escape from it. He ran in all directions and could not escape from the chasing disc of the Lord. He went to Brahma and appealed for rescue. He was turned down by Brahma, who acknowledged his powerlessness. Next he went to SivA in KailAsam. Lord SivA admitted that he has no power to stop the powerful Sudarsanam either. Finally, DurvAsa went to Sri VaikuNtam and prayed to Sriman NArAyaNA to save him from the chasing disc of His.

The Lord replied:

aham Bhaktha parAdheena: hyasvatantra iva dhvija |  
sadhubhi: grastha hrudhaya: bahkthairbhaktha jaanpriya: ||  
naahamAthmAnam aasAsE madhbhakthai: saadhubhervinaa |  
Sriyam chAthyanthakeem brahmanyEshAm gathiraham paraa||

Meaning:

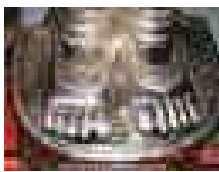
O Great Sage! I am deeply attached to my devotees. In fact, I am controlled by them. Therefore I am incapable of doing anything out of my own volition in such cases involving aparAdham to my devotees. My love for my bhakthAs is greater than that for Myself or My consort, MahA Lakshmi.

SaadhavO hrudhayam mahyam Saadhunaam hrudhyam tvaham |  
madanyatthE n ajaananthi naaham tEbhyO managapi ||

Meaning:

My bhakthAs are like my heart to me. I am their hearts. Our understanding of each other is total and complete.

Then, Sriman NaarAyaNA reminded Sage DurvAsA that the Tapas (penance) and the JnAnam are fruitless as long as there is no modesty/humility (Vinayam) that accompanies them.



Sriman NaarAyaNA suggested that the Sage return to the side of His BhakthA AmbareeshA and seek his forgivance for the ApachAram. Sage DurvAsa ran to the side of AmbarishA as Sudarsanam followed him and fell at the feet of the parama BhakthA of the Lord. The sage returned to the king's side after an year of runnning hither and thither to escape form the Lord's disc and to seek relief with the help of Gods. Meanwhile, King AmabarishA was waiting patiently for the return of the Sage to complete his Dvaadasi PaaraNai. The king was taking water only as his intake during that whole period of waiting.

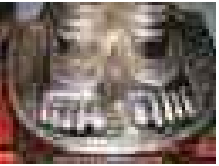


**ChakratAzhwaR - Srirangam**

AmbarishA saw the fierce Sudarsanam with its flames and sixteen kinds of weapons chasing the Sage rushing towards him. He was awe struck and began to pray to Sudarsana BhagavAn to spare the sage:

**Sudarsana namasthubhyam sahasrArAchyutha Priya|  
sarvAsthraghAthinviprAya svasthibhooyA itaspathE ||**



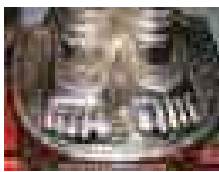


### Meaning:

O BhagavAn Sudarsana with thousand points of flame ! O Sudarsana dear to Sriman NaarAyaNA ! O powerful SudarsanaA, who can destroy all kinds of weapons ! My salutaitons to You ! Please confer auspiciousness on Sage DurvAsA and spare him from Your wrath.

The Lord's Weapon, Sudarsanam acceded to the request of the parama BhakthA and returned to the hand of the Lord. DurvAsA saluted the King and blessed him as well.

That is the legend behind the power of DvAdas/EkAdasi UpavAsam.



## SRI RANGAM AND VAIKUNTHA EKADASHI CELEBRATIONS



**Lord Sri RanganAtha on Vaikunta Ekadashi in SrIrangam**  
(Courtesy: [www.pbase.com](http://www.pbase.com))

The ritualistic celebration of Sri Vaikunta EkAdasi at the sacred Srirangam temple commences on the first day of Iraa patthu and ends with NammAzhwaR's moksahm on the tenth day of this festival. This uthsavam fits with the ritualistic aspects going back to the time of Thirumangai AzhwaR, when he started the AdhyayaNOthsvam at Srirangam as a result of the niyamanam of NamperumAL.

PurANic episodes deal with the significance of this special celebration (Amrutha mathanam, GeethOpadesa dinam, Lokan-KaNtakan Moksha dinam). Also AzhwaR and Achaarya Sooktis on ArchirAdhi Maargam (Brahma Soothram, NammAzhwaR, Acharya RaamAnuja, Swami Desikan's Sri Sookthis) relate to Sri Vaikuntam and Moksha siddhi.

The famous sLOkam about EkAdasi Vratam is:



na GaayathryA para manthra: na Maathu para dhaivatham

na KaasyA: paramam theertham na EkAdasyA : samam vratham

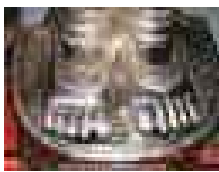
Meaning:

There is no manthram that is superior to Gaayathri manthram; there is no dhaivam superior to one's mother; there is no sanctifying theertham better than Kaasi and there is no vratham that is more sacred than EkAdasi Vratham. King RukmAngathA, NampAduvAN Kaisikan, our AchAryAs of all Vaidhika mathams have demonstrated the greatness and power of observing EkAdasi Vratham. Through his observance of EkAdasi vratham, a Harijan like NampAduvAn has reached such an exalted status to get an EkAdasi and a chapter of Varaha PurANam named after him (Kaisika EkAdasi and kaisika MahAthmyam). Sri Parasara Bhattar wrote a commentary on the Kaisika PurANam in Tamil. Parasara Bhattar read this work in front of Sri RanganathA on a Vrisichika Maasa (Nov-Dec) sukla paksah EkAdasi and was recognized by Sri RanganathA with a Brahma ratham (Being carried around the streets of Srirangam on a palanquin by BrahmaNAs).

Of all EkAdasis, The one connected with Dhanur Maasa Sukla Paksha EkAdasi is the most exalted and is known as Sri Vaikunta EkAdasi. There are number of reasons associated with the special significance of this EkAdasi:

(1) This is the day of the churning of the Milky Ocean for nectar. Besides Amrutham, KaamadhEnu, Ucchairsravas, Iraavatham, Kalpa Vruksham, Apsaras, Kousthubham, and PaarijAtha Pushpam appeared as a result of the churning.

(2) The most exalted of auspiciousness that happened on this day is the appearance of MahA Lakshmi. She appeared with the golden colour (HiraNya VarNAH HariNIm SuvarN arajathasrajAm) and shining with Her innate glory like a cool moon (ChandhrAm prabhAsAm YasasA jvalanthIm). Like a brilliant lightning bolt out of the sky, she incarnated right in front of the Lord engaged in churning the Ocean and made all the directions shine with Her glory (Ranjayanthi disa: kAnthyA Vidhyuth SoudhAmini YathA) .



(3) BhagavAn Dhanvanthri appeared thereafter with the amrutha Kalasam (AmruthApUrNa Kalasam Bibhrath Valaya BhUshitha:).

(4) According to one school, the day of the GitA Upadesam to Arjuna by the Lord on the battle field is said to be on Sri Vaikunta EkAdasi day. Some opine that it was on Vijaya dasami day that Our Lord commented on the significance of GitA in VarAha PurANam this way:

**GitA jn~Anam upAsrithya ThrIn lOkAn PaalayAmyaham**

**GitA mE paramA vidhyA Brahma RoopA na Samsaya: et al**

**Meaning:**

I am rooted in GitA. The passages of GitA are sections of my temple. Thru the Jn~Ana Saaram housed in GitA, I rule the three worlds. GitA is my supreme Vidhyai (UpadEsam/revealed knowledge to reach me). It points out to the way for Moksham. It can not be separated from Me. It is beyond the limits of Desam, Kaalam and other limitations. This is the essence of VedAs and Upanishads. It is the key to open the lock of Athma VichAram and to gain Moksha Siddhi. That is why the day of birth of this sacred revelation, Sri Vaikunta Ekadasi day is considered the most sacred.

Lord Parthasarathy says further:

**yOashtadasajapO nithyam narO niscchala maanasa:**

**Jn~Ana siddhim sa labathE tathO yAthi param padham**

**Meaning:**

The One who reads all the 18 chapters of my GithOpanishad and meditates as well as comprehends the meanings of the verses, will come sthitha Praj~nan, achieve Jn~Ana sampath and finally reach the safety and comfort of the shadow of my feet and gets fulfilled in his life's purpose.

The tattvam behind Sri Vaikunta EkAdasi or MokshEkAdasi is the principles taught by Sri ParthasArathy to us through Arjuna as an excuse (vyAjyam).





Sri Krishna on peepal leaf after maha pralayam  
(Courtesy: Sow.R.Chitrakala)



They are the essence of VedAs, Upnishads, AnushtAnAs, ashtAnga Yogam et al. Those who are not able to comprehend the esoteric doctrines of the Vedas, Upanishads or able to practise anushtAnams and Yogams can wake up in Brahma muhUrtham on the month declared as the most holy by GitAchAryan (MaasAnAm margasIrsham), recite ThirupaLLIyezucchi, ThiruppAvai, participate in the Thiru Adhyayana Uthsavam and on Sri Vaikunta EkAdasi day travel with the Lord thru parama padha Vaasal and get Moksha Siddhi. The Lord Himself enacts the role of a Mumukshu ,the Jeevan earning for Moksham on this day.

### *Lokan-Kantakan and Sri Vaikunta Ekaadasi*

Thiru Adhyayana uthsavam starts on Dhanur maasam Sukhla Paksha Prathamai and continues for 21 days that are divided into Pahal and Iraa Patthu. Sri PaancharAthra Aagamam explains the reason for the initiation of this Uthsavam. During the great deluge (PraLayam), Lord was floating on the swirling waters of deluge on the leaf of a pupil tree as a small baby (Vata Pathra Saayee). He created chathurmukha BrahmA and commanded him to engage in the act of Creation.

Soon, BrahmA forgot as to who had created him in the first place and was stricken with ego as he went about his act of creation. At that time, two asurAs with the names of Lokan and Kantakan emerged out of the ears of the Lord and jumped on Brhama with an intent to kill him for his offences. BrahmA quickly understood the fix that he got himself into and prayed to his father, the Lord to save him. The Lord forgave BrahmA. The Lord also wanted to give a boon for the two asurAs for the services rendered and asked them as to what they would like to have as boons. They begged the Lord to give them the boon of battling with Him for a month and then reach His sacred feet. The Lord blessed them with the boon and fought with them for a month and at the end killed them; thereafter, our Lord transformed them into Nithya sUris with sankham and chakram and made them residents of Sri Vaikuntam.

At that time, Lokan and Kantan addressed the Lord and said: "Oh Sriman NaarAyaNA! We have had the blessings of sathgathi thanks to your killing us with Your own hands and made it possible for us to reside in Sri Vaikuntam and to perform nithya kaimkaryam to You. You let us in to Sri Vaikuntam by opening the northern gates of Your divine citadel on this Dhanur maasa sukla Paksha EkAdasi day. We beg you to give us another boon, which will make it possible for all the people to remember us and this day as Sri Vaikunta EkAdasi. Please grant us this boon, which will make it possible for ALL human beings, who enter the Northern gates at all of Your consecrated temples on Earth to reach Sri Vaikuntam, when their body falls down on this earth at the end of their sojourn on Your earth. After reaching Your Kingdom of Sri Vaikuntam, they should also be blessed with Nithya sEvA Kaimkaryam like us and all other Nithya sUris:

**tathA pasyanthi yEthvAnthu namasyanthi cha yE janA :**

**uttara dwAra maargENa pravisanthi cha yE HarE :**

**tE Vaikuntamimam prApya mOdhanthAm nityasUrivath**

BhagavAn Sriman NaarAyaNA offered them that boon as well. From that day onward, Lord accepted Sri Vaikunta EkAdasi Uthsavam and the entrance of BhakthAs through the northern gate of His temples to reach Srivaikuntam at the end of their earthly residence. Since this EkAdasi is connected with Moksham, this uthsavam came to be known as MokshOthsavam from then on.

*AzhwArs and Thiru AdyayanOthsvam (Moksha EkAdasi)*

In Tamilnaadu, AzhwArs used Divya Prabhandham (Tamil Vedam/MaRai) to worship Sriman NaarAyaNA and attained Moksha Siddhi. The First AzhwAr in our tradition that served as Maarga darsi or the shower of the way was "**Vedam Tamizh seytha MaaRan**", Swami Sri NammAzhwAr. In the last centum of his Thiruvaimozhi, he takes leave of many archA mUrthys with a heavy heart and describes his joyous plans to leave this earth at the end of his avathAra mission to reach the abode of his Lord, Sri Vaikuntam. Like ANDAL,

who described in great detail Her impending marriage to Her Lord through a dream scene (VaraNamyiram Paasurams), NammAzhwAr similarly used Veda PramANams to describe his journey to Parama padham as revealed to us in Brahma sUthrams and Upanishads.

Few hundred years later, the last of the AzhwArs, Thirumangai, was standing in front of Sri RanganaathA at Srirangam enjoying His divine beauty and was reflecting on the tenth ThirumAlai Paasuram of ThondaradipoDi: "KaatinAn Thiruvarangam Uyvbavarkku uyyum vaNNam" AzhwAr wondered about his own moksham. He broke out in a thought sequence, which took the form of the following paasuram passage:

"aNiyAr pozhil Aranga naharappA ! tuNiyEn  
ini ninnaraulallAthu, naNiyE, MaNi MaaNikkamE,  
Madhusoodha ! paNiyAi yenakku uyyum vahai ParamjyOthi"



ThirumangaiAzhwar at Srirangam (Courtesy:Sri.B.Senthil)

Our most merciful Lord of Srirangam responded through Uttama nambi, His priest and showed the way for his salvation.

AzhwAr was thrilled with that revelation and organized the ThirukkArthigai Uthsavam to celebrate the immeasurable, tall Jyothi (*anthar jyOthi: kimapi yaminAm anjanam Yoga dhrushtE*, as revealed later by Swami Sri Desikan) as Sriman NaarayaNa Tattvam reclining on the bed of Adhi sEshan at Srirangam. Thirumangai understood now that was the same "tall" jyOthi tattvam revealed by Sri RanganaathA to NammAzhwAr earlier. Recognizing this as divine indication, Thirumangai brought Swami Sri NammAzhwAr's archA vigraham from AzhwAr Thirunagari with pomp and maryAdhai to Srirangam and placed nammAzhwAr's vigraham in front of Sri RanganAthan. He begged the Lord and requested Him to instruct the world about the Veda Saamyam of Thiruvaimozhi through the conductance of an uthsavam to highlight the extraordinary relevance and greatness of ThiruvAimozhi as Tamil MaRai. Our Lord of Srirangam agreed and gave the orders for the initiation of Adhyayana Uthsavam, which is also known today as MokshOthsavam as a result of Thirumangai Mannan's imitative and the continuation of that Kaimkaryam by our PurvAchAryas from AchArya Naatha Muni's time.

### *Details of the 21 day Adhyayana Uthsavam at Srirangam*

As referred to earlier, there are 21 days of Thiru AdhyayaNOthsavam (First Day for ThirunedumthANDakam, 10 days of Pahal patthu and 10 more days of Iraa Patthu). Thirumangai saluted the Lord's sacred feet as resting on his head in Thiru Nedum ThANDakam (*yenthai TaLir Purayum Thiruvadi Yenn TalaimElEyE*) as a result of the Darsana SoubhAgyam that he was blessed with. Therefore, Thiru Nedum ThANDaka Uthsavam serves as a preface to the pahal and Iraa Patthu celebrations following it. MinnuruvAi Paasuram from ThiruNedumThANDakam is recited on the first day and the arayars perform Abhinayam for it on the first of the 21 days Uthsavam.

On the twenty second day, the First day of Iraa patthu is celebrated. This is



the Dhanur Maasa Sukla Paksha EkAdasi day known as Sri Vaikunta EkAdasi day.

### *The days after Sri Vaikunta EkAdasi*

During the period between Second day of Iraa patthu to the sixth day of Iraa patthu, NamperumAl leaves the AasthAnam at Noon and stays at The Thousand Pillar mantapam till late in the evenng and returns to AasthAnam with VeeNai Accompaniment at night.

Seventh day of the Uthsavam is known as ThirukkaitthaLa Sevai and takes place between 3.00 P.M. and 12.45 P.M. NamperumAL leaves His aasthAnam at 3.00 P.M and returns there at 12.45 P.M. HiraNya Vadham arayar sEvai takes place on this day.

On the eighth day of IrAA patthu, Thirumangai Mannan vEdu PaRi uthsavam is inserted. NamperumAL leaves on Horse Vaahanam from Santhanu mantapam at 4.45 P.M. and has VyAALi from 5.30-6.30 P.M. He reaches the ThirumAmaNI mantapam at the thousand pillared hall at 8.00 P.M. From there, He returns to AasthAnam at 1.15 A.M.

On the Tenth day, TheerthavAri at Chandra PushkaraNi takes palce at 9.45 A.M. and our Lord reaches the thousand Pillar Hall at 12.00 Noon. Sri Bhattar SwamigaL's Brahma ratha Maryadai takes place first and is followed by Thirumanjanam (6.30 P.M to 9.30 P.M). Curtain comes down for NaivEdhyam at 9 P.M and holds until 11 P.M. There are Exceptional occasions, when Thirumanjanam takes place at night. This is one such .The others are before midnight on Sri Jayanthi and in the evening on Sri Nrusimha Jayanthi day.

At 11.00 P.M. Arayar sevai and ThiruppAvadai GhOshti start and goes on until 3.00 A.M. Curtain comes down again from 3-4 A.M for VeLLI champA amudhu naivEdhyam. The elated PerumAL gives his subhAsraya daranam to the assembled Bhaktha kOTis from 4-6 A.M.







NammAzhwAr being brought out in procession in Srirangam  
(Courtesy:Sri.B.Senthil)



sadagopan.org

NammAzhwAr after moksha prApti  
Sri Ranganatha Temple, New York - VaikuNTha Ekadashi - 2001  
(Courtesy:www.rangantha.org)



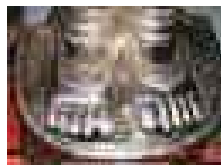


### *NammAzhwAr Moksham*

Next follows the climactic event of NammAzhwAr's Moksham (6-7 A.M). The ritualistic steps of the NammAzhwAr Moksham:

1. AzhwAr is clothed in white, wears dwAdasa puNDrams and TulasI maalai and is brought on Kaitthalam to PeriumAL's presence with chathra (umbrella) chaamara (Fan) maryAdhai.
2. During his travel to NamperumAL's side, "Soozh Veesum Pani Muhil" paasuram (Thiruvaimozhi 10.9.1) is recited.
3. AzhwAr is placed at the holy feet of NamperumAL and is covered with Tulasi leaves completely. During that time, Arayar recites the paasuram, "MuniyE NaanmuhanE MukkaNNappA" (TVM 10.10.1 ) The coverage by TuLasi leaves refers to the paasura Vaakhyam "nEsam seythu unnODu yennai uyir vERanRi onRAhavE koNDai" and denotes the granting of Saayujya MOksham for NammAzhwAr by Sri Ranganathan in front of every one. This is the significance of Meykalatthal (uLL kalatthal) doctrine.
4. After AzhwAr's Thiruvadi Thozhal, NamperumAL presents the AzhwAr with His ThirumaNN, Garlands and kasthuri. This ceremony signifies the Lord's honouring of the Mumkshu, who has become a resident of His Paramapadham.
5. AzhwAr is then placed on Tirukkaitthalam and returned to his honored place with sakala MaryAdhais.

NamperumAL moves on to the four pillared mantapam and performs maryAdhai to all the other AzhwArs. Archakar then utters the word "PaDippu". At that time, the story of Lord RanganAthA arriving at Srirangam from the Milky Ocean is read for the benefit of the assembled BhakthAs. SthAnikar then says with reverence "naayinthE RaghunAthA" and prays for the Lord's blessings for Uthsava sampUrNam. NamperumAL blesses the SthAnikar with



SevA and Theertham and orders him to conduct the ThirukkalyANa uthsavam well. Bhattar, Arayar Brahma Rathams take place after the Lord leaves for AsthAnam. During the Iraa patthu uthsavam, Moolavar adorns Mutthangi and offers Mutthangi sEvai to Bhaktha Kotis. At aasthAnam, IyaRppA recitationis commences. It continues at Santhanu MaNtapam next day.

During the early morning of the next day, after AarAdhanam takes place between 2-4 A.M, IyaRppA SaathumuRai is completed at mUla sthAnam between 4 -5 A.M. Thriut ThuzhAi and Theertha PrasAdhams are presented between 5-6 A.M. and another Thiru AdhyayaNOthsavam comes to completion.

This year too, on Sri Vaikunta Ekaadasi Sri Rangarajan will enter Parama Padha Vaasal at Srirangam and bless all of us, who are blessed to be there in person or join Him mentally in that procession from where ever we are.



**NamperumAL resplendent in ratnAngi sevai - Sri Rangam**  
(Courtesy:Sri.B.Sentil)

On this most sacred occasion, let us reflect on the mood of Swami Sri NammAzhwAr, who followed Veda PramANams and traveled by ArchirAdhi Maargam and joined SarvEswaran at Sri Vaikuntam and enjoyed the limitless bliss there (anthamil pErinbam) through nithya kaimkarya sEvA BhAgyam.

We will focus on the tenth decad of the tenth Centum, where Swami Sri NammAzhwAr describes his journey to Sri Vaikuntam to rejoin His Lord. This is celebrated as the NIGAMANA PATTHU of Swami Sri NammAzhwAr's Thiruvaimozhi.

The etymology of the word Nigamanam is worth an analysis. The root "NIGAM" has many substantive meanings. It means, "to go to, to acquire, to obtain, to enter, to be inserted". NIGAMA: means Vedam or Vedic Text. Nigama: also means the divine words of a revered AchArya like Swami Sri NammAzhwAr. The other name for such an AchArya Purushan is: "NIGAMIN", OR NigamAnth Desikan. The tenth decad of the tenth centum of ThiruvAimozhi (muniyE naanmukanE mukkaNNappA) has been referred to earlier as "NIGAMANAM".

The word "nigamanam" has three meanings:

1. going into (here) Sri Vaikuntam
2. The conclusion in a syllogism or a deduction in Tarka Saasthram (the summing up in logical debate)
3. Quotation of a word from the VedAs or the word so quoted

All the three definitions are relevant to the Nigamana Patthu. AzhwAr's entry through the climbing of the nine ladders to reach Paramapadham is indicated by the first definition.

The second definition is connected with the logical debate between Swami Sri NammAzhwAr and the para Matha anusAris and the winning of this debate in a convincing manner with the celebration of the attainment of the boon of





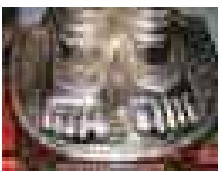
Moksham (apunar janma sAyuJyam) through Prapatthi at the lotus feet of Sri Vaikunta Naathan. This is his avathAra kAraNam.

The third definition of Nigamanam is in reference to the Veda Saamyam of his ThiruvAimozhi, which was the topic of Thirumangai's appeal to Sri Ranganatha in the context of creation of the Thiru AdhyayanOthsavam at Srirangam, which concludes with NammAzhwAr's Thiruvadi Thozhal festival. The equivalence of Tamizh MaRai with the Saanskritic VedAs are established here.

In the ninth centum of his ThiruvAimozhi, MaRan SatakOpan proved that Sriman NaarAyaNan is AvyAja Suhruth. In the tenth centum, AzhwAr senses the end of Thiruvaimozhi Kaimkaryam based on his assessment that his prapatthi has become fruitful and that he is going "home" to the parama padham of the Apunar Janma SaayuJyathan. Like a recently married bride taking leave of her relatives of piranthaham, AzhwAr takes leave of the archA mUrthys of divya desams here and gets ready to enter pukkaham ("her" husband's house) by travel through archirAdhi maargam described by the Upanishads and Vedams. Thus the Veda Saamyam of the divya Prabhandhams is once again established.

Swami Sri Desikan has summed up in his incisive way the essence of each of the ten paasurams of each of the ten decads of the tenth centum:

1. TaaLa ThAmarai -- (praNavam) GathayE nama:
2. kedum idar --(PraNavam)vyadhvak kIEsacchidhE nama :
3. vEyamaru -----(PraNavam)apadha sankhAspadha rasAya nama:
4. saarvE----- (PraNavam) bhajadhbhi: suprApAyaya nama:
5. KaNNan----- (PraNavam)vividha bhajana prakriyAya nama:
6. aruL peRuvAr--- (PraNavam)phalE thIvra udhyOgAya nama:



7. **senchorkavi**---- (PraNavam)sva vishya krutha adhyAdharAya nama:

8. **Thirumaalirum ChOlai**---- (PraNavam)yadhrucchA thushtAya nama :

9. **soozhvisumpaNi**---- (PraNavam) sathsaraNyE nama:

10.**muniyE naanmukanE** ---- (PraNavam) apunarjanma sayujE nama:

It is appropriate to remember that the very last Brahma Soothram of BadarAyaNA (anAvrutthi sabdhAth, anAvrutthi sabdhAth) is about "apunarjanma sAyujyam" of the Thiruvaimozhi tenth decad of the tenth centum as celebrated by ChAndhOgya Upanishad (ChAndhOgyam: VIII.xv.1) and Srimadh Bhagavadh GiTA (chapter VIII.15-16).



**NamperumAL on Vaikunta Ekadasi**  
(Courtesy:www.pbase.com)

The above ten guNams of the Parama Padha Naathan are enjoyed afresh by Swami Sri Desikan in what is revered as "Taathparya rathnAvalyanurOdhEna DramidOpanishadhgamyA GUNA NAMA SAHASRAARCHANAA." For the sake of brevity, we will refer to only four of the key salutations here:

1. Thiruvaai Mozhi: 10.10.4: "UmparanthaNN pAzhEyO" is summarized here as "akhila tanavE nama:". The paasuram words are: "athanuL BIRaman Aran nee, umparum yAthavarum padaittha muivan avan nee".
2. ThiruvAi Mozhi: 10.10.9 : "Muthal tani vitthEyO" is summarized by Swami Sri Desikan as "Mukthi-dhAyinE nama:". Swami Sri NammAzhwAR pleads here for Mukthi (Moksham) to the Moksha DhAyin. He says: "I should Join You; I should enjoy Your unmatched beauty as SvarUpa GuNa BhUshaNAYudha mahishI parijana Visishta SubhAsrayan at Your Parama Padham. When am I to join You?". Swami Sri Desikan summarizes this moving plea as "Mukthi-dhAyinE nama:".
3. Thiruvaimozhoi: 10.10.10 "SoozhnthaRAzhnthu uyarnta--" is summarized by Swami Sri Desikan as "MukthAnubhAvyAya nama:". Sri ThirukkuruhUr SatakOpa Maamuni extols here the Mukthi anubhavam that he has been blessed with by AdhinAthan this way: "--periya sudar Jn~Ana inbhamEyO, soozhanthanil periya yennavA aRac chUznthAyE" Oh Polinthu ninRa pirAnE! Oh Sri VaikuntanAthA! Thou art indeed the sole possessor of Sankalpa Jn~Anam! That Jn~Anam is pure bliss (Aanandham) in svarUpam and pervades all and beyond. It casts its halo everywhere, all the time. It is immeasurably vast indeed. My avaa (yearning) to join You WAS even larger than Your limitless sankalpa Jn~Anam. But, You out of Your infinite DayA and Aasritha Vaathsalyam has united me with You and thus quenched my yearning. I have now become a drop in Your vastness of amruthak kadal (nectar of an ocean). MY LONG TIME YEARNING HAS BEEN ANSWERED AND I FEEL FULFILLED.

On the eve of the greatest of the great EkAdasis, the BahudhA-anyA

(Bahudhaa anya) Sri Vaikunta EkAdasi, let us meditate on Sri Vaikunta Naathan as Sarva Lokha SaraNyan, niradhisaya oujvalya -sougandhya- soukumArya lAvaNya-youvanAth anantha guNa nidhi -divya rUpan".

May we meditate and hold on to Him in our DhyAnam as:

"Lakshmi -BhUmi-NeeLAdhi divya Mahishi sEvithan, adhyujjvala ramaNIya aparimitha divya bhUshaNa bhUshithan, niradhisaya kalyANa divya aayudhajAla sObhithan, sEsha sEshAsana Garuda nAnAvidhAnantha -divya parijana sEvitha CharaNa naLina yugaLan, aparimitha udhAra guNa sAgaran, Parama Purushan, Subha Vibhavan, nithya bhOgyan, upasamsOshakan, Bhava dhuritha-haran, dhAsya Saarasya hEthu, prakhyAtha preethi leelan, paapa bhanjakan, RakshaNArtha avathAran, akhila phala pradhan, praNamadha anuguNan, anupama sushuman, ananya bhOgyAngri yugman, sathpatha prApakan, agatitha gatanan, Veda rUpa svakEthU, AchArya Bhakthi prakAsakan, Sandhra MOdhan, Sarva poorNan and niravadhika mahAnandha pradhAyakan".

May this Parama padha Naathan accept our Prapatthi performed for us by His most merciful DesikAs and grant us our place in His matchless Sri Vaikuntam and accept our nithya Kaimkaryam there.

NaarAyaNa, NaarAyaNa, NaarAyaNa !



## PRADHOSHAM



**Sri Lakshminrusimhan - Sri Ranganatha Temple, New York**

### *PradhOsha PurANam*

There is a minor purANam known as PradhOsha PurANam, which is connected with amrutha maTanam at the milky ocean and Lord Shiva's (special devotee of Sri Lakshmi Nrusimhan, who gave us the Manthra Raaja Padha SthOthram) part in it by swallowing haala Haala Visham.

### *The PradhOsha AarAdhanams*

First , Let me reflect briefly on the AarAdhanams that we perform at Homes and temples.

There are two kinds of aarAdhanams: aathmArtham and ParArtham.



aathmArtham is the one done at Homes and the ParArtham is for Universal benefits and is done at the temples and Matams.

aathmArtha aarAdhanam certainly has clear rules but gives us some more freedoms based on individual's capabilities. ParArtha AarAdhanam is an entirely different event with very strict restrictions.

Thirumanjanam (AbhishEkam) for Sri Lakshmi Narasimhan in the PradhOsha Kaalam is not recommended. PradhOsham is early evening (Saayam sandhyA) and He is recognized as PradhOshakan. Our Lord was born as Nrusimhan to complete His avathAra Kaaryam. During PradhOsham, Mantra UccharaNam, japam are restricted. Mounam (silence ) needs to be observed. The only exception at PradhOsham seems to be the birth of SrI GodhA Sthuthi from Swamy Desikan, when ANDAL went out of Her way to bless the AchAryan with Her darsana SoubhAgyam at SrI VilliputthUr. Swamy broke his mounam during that PradhOsha Kaalam and burst forth into exquisite salutation to Andal, which we treasure as GodhA Sthuthi.

Lord Rudran is recognized as "AbhishEka PriyO Siva:". AbhishEkam can be done to Him at any time. In fact many of You might have noticed a pot of water over Siva Lingams that drips slowly on the head of the Lingam to signify abhishElkam.

Our Thirumanjanams have Veda Manthrams as a part of the sacred ritual (Purusha Sooktham et al). They can not be recited during PradhOsha Kaalam in view of the restrictions on the recitation of manthrAs.

Thirumanjanam on a Svathi day is most auspicious to Lord Narasimhan. Any other PuNya Kaalam is also very appropriate.

The special Thirumanjanam in the evening for SwaraNa Nrusimha Vignam at SrI matam is a special one not to be seen anywhere else among SrI ViashNavite Temples. During Nrusimha Jayanthi days (VaikAsi Sukla Paksha Chathurdhasi), visEsha aarAdhanam is performed durIng PradhOsham BEFORE

SOORYAASTHAMANAM (vide adiyEn's posting on Bhakthi List aug 18,1997).

### *PradhOsham and Mouna Vratham*

Mouna Vratham has to be observed during PradhOsham. 90 minutes before and after Sunset is PradhOsham time. At this time, the Sun and the Moon are in a horizontal line during their movement on their respective axis.

### *Sri RanganAtha Paadhukais' Mounna Vratham:*

That Mouna Vratham is observed as it were by PaadhukAs for 14 years due to the sorrow of separation from its Lord is suggested by Swamy Desikan in the 849th SIOkam of SrI RanganAtha Paadhukaa Sahasram (**PrakeerNa Paddhathi**). Swamy Dsikan equates the sorrow of not having the darsanam of its Lord and the silence, immobility of the Paadhukais during the 14 years of separation as MahA PradhOsham time, when one has to observe the vow of silence and be immobile.



**Sri RanganAthA's thiruvadi  
(Courtesy:Sri.Murali Bhattar)**

### *PradhOsham and Lord Shivan, the grandson of SrIman NaarAyaNan*

PradhOshams in general and those falling on Mondays and Saturdays in particular are special to worshippers of Lord Shiva, who has six poojAs every day. The 4th pooja (the daily Saaya Rakshaa pooja is blended with the PradhOsha Pooja, which takes place between 5-6.30 P.M). PradhOsha pooja is one of the most important one for Shiva worshippers. Thirteen different saamagriyAs are used for that abhishEkam. Aani PradhOsha abhishEkam is very special for the Lord of Dance, NatarAja at Chidambharam. Summing up, 90 minutes before Sunrise and Sunset on the 13th phase of the Moon during Sukla and KrishNa Pakshams are very special time period known as PradhOsham for aasthikAs.



namOSrI nrusimhAya!

dAsan

Oppiliappan Koil VaradAchAri SaThakopan

**VaikuNTha EkAdashi  
at  
Sri RanganAthA Temple  
Pomona, NewYork  
(A picture tour)**

Pictures taken during the VaikuNTha EkAdashi Celebrations at  
Sri RanganAthA Temple, Pomona, New York in the year 2001.

Complete album available at <http://www.ranganatha.org>





sadagopan.org

Oh RangA!



His divyAyudams !



Vastrams arrive from SriRangam, India





AzhwArs enjoying the darshan of Their Lord!





The AchAryAs enjoying the darshan of Their Lord!





PerumAL in Mohini alankAram





Permal on VaikuNTha Ekadashi day





PerumAl appearing from Paramapada vaasal



Arayar Sevai





NammAzhwAr Moksham





NammAzhwAr with PerumAL after mOksha prApti





Sri.V.SaThakOpan svAmi's commentary on NammAzhwAr Moksham



PerumAL purappAdu after NammAzhwAr Moksham



PerumAl's return to yatha sthAnam on the conclusion of the VaikuNTha Ekadashi celebrations



PerumAL's abhaya hastam

NaarAyaNa! NaarAyaNa! NaarAyaNa!