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MYTHOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCES OF AVINASI SRI LINGESHWARA TEMPLE.

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ABSTRACT :

Avinasi Lingeshwara temple is the famous and familiar with Siva Cult. The reason I took this temple for study is that the miracles and wonders that happened here in the past times. This temple situated in Avinasi in Tirupur district. It is situated in Avinasi, which is 40 kilometres away in the via of Coimbatore to Erode. The north Indian language epic Skantha Puraanam, Sivamaniya Kaandam tells about the features of this place under 60 headings. Ilayan Kavirayar has translated this into Tamil in 1021 lyrics in the name of Avinasi Thalapuram. He has born 300 years before at Lakshimi Nayakanpatti nearby Dharapuram. Here, from God worship to nirvana has been presented briefly.

KEYWORDS : Mythology, Samharathandavam, Avinasithalapuram, Akkinithandavam, Viswanatha, Kasi, Ganga, Thirupukkoliyur, Mahilam, Shenbagam, Kontrai, Pathri, Panchavilvam.

INTRODUCTION

Umadevi gets the right part of Lord Shiva: After Lord Shiva finished His Samhara Thandavam in rainy season and everything has demolished. He told Parvathi Ammaiyyar that He would going to do Akkini Thandavam, and you will get the appearance of Pranav. Then He was dancing vigorously no one can bear this and hide themselves. Then He felt missing Parvathi and so He took herself on His left side and did the five essential works of creating, guarding, demolishing, hiding and passionate. Then He come to patience and passionate to be graced with the souls. So he emerged as a lingam in Kasi in the name of Viswanatha where river Ganga and Varanasi city embraces. Then Umadevi went there and requested Him that she is going to do a Thabha to remove the affliction of separating of clearing Samhara Thandavam.

He was happy with her love and asked her to do it at Thirupukkoliyur Avinasi where Thirumal, Brama, Indira and thirty three crore Devas hide themselves from clear Samhara Thandavam and promised that He will surely show mercy upon her and send off her.

Umadevi take in the golden flying chariot and went to Avinasi where Mahizham, Shenbagam, Kontrai, Pathiri, Mantaram, Panchavilvam and Mango flowers has blossomed and peacocks, cuckoos, deer's and parrots live. There she did Thabha under a mango tree which seems like kanchimavadi and smells like Shiva for 1000 years. There a root come from Kasi and grew up here, that is Avinasiappar which mean has no end. River Gangai too come here and formed like a well and Kalabairava too settled nearby to guard Gangai. Umadevi finished her Thabha and praised and worshipped Avinasiappar by the law of Sivaagama. Siva was very much delighted by this act. He blessed Umadevi with the blessing that till that Umadevi was on his left side after that she took his left side too. Devars like Thirumal, Brama have seen this scenery and worshipped them. Perunkarunambikai Amman presence situated right side of the swami presence based on this myth.

BRAHMA WORSHIPPED SHIVA AND GOT PERU:

Once Thirumal and Brahma decided to meet Shivaperuman therefore they reach Kayilaya hill and stayed in a forest. There they have a conversation. Brahma told Thirumal that if we see the feet of Shiva only that will be a proud to us. Suddenly a fire pillar appeared before them. Then Thirumal said that he will see the base of the fire and Brahma the crest. Then Thirumal took the form of white swan and ploughed the ground for many years and can not find the crest so he returned with the depression. Brahma took the form of swan. He flied high and high but cannot find the top.

Therefore he was returning, that time he saw thalam flower which a Siva bramin named Vamamuniva had worshipped Shiva with that flower. Brahma caught that flower with his beak when it was going to fell down. He told his history to it, and it replied that no one can see beginning and the end of the fire pillar. He asked the flower to tell a lie that he has seen the top and the flower is a witness to it. Then he returned to the place.

Thirumal said I couldn't see the crest and Brahma said I have seen the top of the fire and the thalam flower is the witness to it. Suddenly lord Shiva appeared from the fire and accuse Brahma for lying and cursed that no worship will be to him on earth and cursed the flower to help him the curse is that the flower will be disliked by Him. Thirumal prayed to the Lord Shiva who comes out from the fire to forgive Brahma and the flower. Then Lord Shiva told Brahma to worship Him in Avinasi which is equal to Kasi only then he will redeem from his curse and Shiva disappeared. Thirumal went to Vaikundam.

After these things, Brahma went to Avinasi there he made a Liverpool with the thantayutham, and he made the Kapila river flow into it. He washed himself in the river and made a stage under a Pancha vilva tree and worshipped Lord Shiva for hundred years by Sivaagama rule. Then he prayed to Lord Shiva to forgive his mistake. Lord Shiva was happy with his worship and blessed him to do the work of creation and the thalam flower with the blessing that from Parvathi every one will wear it.

Then Brahma did many construction work for Avinasiappar temple, and wanted to celebrate festival therefore he called the Devas and decorated the city. He hoisted the rishapa flag on the day of Chithirai month, mirugasreeda star, and with the music of instrument like devathuntuki. He down the flag on the day of Poora star and gave water from the singa theertham which is in the niruthi direction. He celebrated the festival for eleven days. Devas have seen the festival and valediction from Brahma and he once again worshipped Lord Shiva and requested that lord should appear here forever and Lord Siva accepted it, then he went to do his work of creation.

AYIRAVATHAM WORSHIPPED LORD SHIVA AND GOT HIS DESIGNATION:

Indira who got the blessings from lord Shiva forgot his works and spend his time with being enjoy the pleasure with his wife Indirani. His white elephant Ayiravatham went to the earth and roamed near by the hill. There it got a relationship of a female elephant and forgot its place and lived there. This time giants invaded a part of a Devaloga and called for war. A Vidhyadharan known this informed this to Indira. Then Indira asked Ayiravatham to go to the war, the Devas replied that it was not there for a long time.

Indira knew about the elephant with his sense. So he cursed it to lose its place in Devaloga and lie in the earth. Ayiravatham become restless after the curse of Indiran got it.

A Kantharan met Ayiravatham and told about the status of Devaloga and the curse of Indira. It becomes unhappy by hearing this. It met Naratha one day and wished his feet, and then Naratha console it and tell the way to get rid of its curse. Ayiravatham. There are lot of Shiva temples north to Mehru hill. In that there are five places that will get rid the curse. They are, Thiruvarur, will get rid the curse by birth, Chithambaram by see, Arunachalam by thing, Kasi by dead and Avinasi by stay there and speak of the famous of the place. So you go to Avinasi and worship the Lord and you will get rid of your curse. Then it thanked him and went to Thirupukkoliyur Avinasi.

There it multitude the river Nallaru which flows down to the presence of the swami and washed itself in it. So it also has the name of Ayiravatha thurai. Then it fetches water from the kasi well by its trunk and worshipped the lord. It made a linga in the name of itself and worshipped Shiva followed this for 12 years. Lord Shiva was happy with its worship and did a miracle. Indira come to Avinasi with his golden aircraft and saw that the white elephant worshipping lord Shiva and he called and touched it. Then it redeemed from its curse. Then it

wished his king, Indira told that because of you I came here, bring me to the lord. Then Ayiravatham took him before the lord. Indira bowed before the lord and Shiva told him to take Ayiravatham to Indiralogam. Then they he went there by the white elephant.

THAADAKAI WORSHIPPED AND GOT THE BLESSING OF BEAR A CHILD:

There was a giant named Thaadakai in Srilanka. She has mighty power, black body and sharp teeth. She eats meat. She roams in sky and earth. She has no good character and lives as her wish. She looks everything under her. She can go anywhere in night. One day she reached a forest in Kudaku hills. She enjoyed the plays of deer. She decided to do tabha and get a son of her. She reached a sindhu pond and did tabha as lifting her hands to the sky. She has been in that position for many years and Brahma appeared before her one day. He asked her to go to Avinasi where his mistake has forgiven. So she reached Thirupukkoliyur Avinasi. She washed herself in the Ayiravatham thurai and plucks the paathiri flower and took the water from the Kasi well. She worshipped lord like this for 3 years. One day Karunambikai asked Shiva to bless her. Lord Shiva appeared before her and asked what her prayer was. She told that she want a son.

Then Lord Shiva makes her to see him with wisdom eyes. Then he blessed that He will give her a son. No one can defeat him, he will have the power of ten thousand lingams. Then she bowed Karunambikai and requested that everyone should get child who prays here like she got. Then Amman asked her to go to karuvur – Anilai. Then she went to Thirumurugan Poondi which is in eastwards from Avinasi and worshipped Thirumuruganatha. After that she reached the Karuvur which is blossomed by the Amaravati river and worshipped Pasupathi Eswara. Then her barren womb become life and she begot a son and named as Maareesan. She was very happy and worshipped and thanked Lord and went to her place.

NAGA KANNI WORSHIPPED LORD SHIVA AND GOT BLESSINGS:

At the end of the Thuvbarayuga in the Naga world, Naga kanni born for 1000 headed Athisesan who was the king of the Naga world and his wife Suvathi. She was very beautiful and has learnt every art. One day another king sent his people to her kingdom to ask her in marriage. Her father gave feast to them. On hearing this Naga kanni become sad and laments with her friends. When her parents come to know of this they asked her reason for her sadness. She told them that she would marry only after she completed her tabha unless she will kill herself. Her parents understood her feelings and accepted her wish.

After these things one day she come to her father and told that, Lord has appeared in her dream and asked to do her tabha in the earth and she asked them to let her to go. King of the Naga sent fare well her with some assistants to her and gave all the things she requires. They existed in the pilathuvaram. They reached Thirupukkoliyur and they stay there in an ashram where the spiritual people gather and live together.

Then she washed herself in the Kasi well and wore uthiratcha and holy ashes and anointed the Avinasi Nathar with the Pathiri flowers and the Kasi water. Then she worshipped Perunkarunalaya selvi, Vinayaga and other Gods. She followed this every day and decided to do this for 21 months. In this same time Arithuvasa, king of Dravida kingdom who was the son of Manusekara, hatred of his wealth and become a mendicant. He washed himself in Kaviri, Vaikai, Thamirabharani, Yamuna, Saraswathi and Gangai rivers and visited the each Shiva temples. One he went into the forest that no one can reach, there he met Agasthia mendicant and bowed him.

He blessed Arithuvasa that he will get the entire boon if he worships the Thirupukkoliyur Avinasiappar which called as South Varanasi and in the Kingdom of Chera king Veera keralan, who wore the ornament of palm flower who plant his flag in the Himalayas. Then he asked the mendicant to bless him, then the mendicant put his feet on his head and blessed that he will be ever happy.

Then Arithuvasa reached Avinasi as soon as possible by querying the way and travelling day and night. There he spent the night in the gardens and went to the temple in the morning. Then he washed himself in the Kasi well and did all the sacraments and plucking the flowers. There he saw Nagakanni and astonished that whether she is a human or an angel or goddess in the human form. He went nearby her and asked her who she is. She did not reply to him so he left her because of the manners. Then both of them worshipped Avinasiappar with whole hearted. The day Arithuvasa and Naga kanni met and end of her dhaba is the same day. Lord appeared

before them and told them to go to Naga world and got married in before her father and return to Avinasi. They went to Naga world by pilathuvaram and she told everything to her father. Soon they got married and were in happiness.

They thought of when they will return to Avinasi and slept. They made a Naga kanni water source in the north east of the Avinasi temple and supported many Anthanar and celebrated the Chithirai festival in grand manner. They reached the feet of Avinasi Nathar and got everlasting happiness.

A hunter named Vyathan worshipped the lord with milk and got a child and blessing:

A hunter named Vyathan lived in the nation Malavam with is in the south part of Vindhya hills with is in the south direction to Himalayas. He was a leader to his hunters. He was like a fire and thunder to his enemies and an eye lid to the hunters. He has married three wives who look like Lakshmi. But he did not have a child. So he went to many temples and prayed for the child. Once he went in to the forest named Gayathri with the hunters and met Naratha Muni. He bowed him and the Muni asked him what he wants? He replied that he wants his heir. Naratha Muni told him that in the last birth he has born as an Anthanar and he did not take care of the cow he brought up. He did not allow the calf to drink the milk so that only he got curse. Naratha Muni told him to go to Avinasi and brought up 10 cows and worship Avinasiappar with the milk from the new moon day three times a day in Panguni month and fast for those days and eat only the fruits and roots alone and gift those cows and calves to the Anthanar.

By his words he went to Avinasi and did what he said. Merciful Lord appeared before him and blessed him that he will get three sons and named them as Kala kanda, Vida kanda and Neela kanda. They will look like Manmatha and gave them the reign and come again to Avinasi now go to your place. When he reached his palace his kiths and kin come before him and told that his wives were conceived. On a fine day his first wife bore Kala kanda, second wife Vida kanda and the third wife Neela kanda. They learnt every art and good characters. They seem as Brahma, Thirumal and Ruthra. Vyathan found girls for them and did their marriage and gave them the region. Then he hatred the worldly life and become a mendicant and went to Avinasi.

He worshipped Avinasiappar with the five vilva leaves daily. One day Vyathan saw the Thai poosam festival seated on the rishapa vehicle and he fell down and died.

A HUNTER NAMED SANKA KANNAN GOT BLESSING:

Once a in the reign of Sinkavarman a good character Anthanar lived in Sowda nation. He saved some rice, grains vegetables and roots for his old age. But an ill mannered Brahmin come there and stolen all the things. That Brahmin went a widow who was living in the nearby hill and a concubine to him and enjoy the pleasure with her. He had killed by his enemies for the sins he did to them. The angels of Yama took him to the hell and him again born in the hunting clan, and he was named as Sankakannan. He grew up as the image of sin. He hurt others from his young. He stole from the pilgrimage to Kasi and drank the Kasi water. Then there were no pilgrimages so he decided to steal the jewels of the gods. So he disguised himself as a Sadhu and joined with the other mendicants and went to many places. Finally he reached Avinasi from Kerala. He joined with the devotees and showed himself as a sincere devotee. He heard the prominences of lord that others devotees spoke off. Then he decided to steal the gems stoned anklet of Nataraja. But he couldn't because of the often visit of devotes. So disgustedly he come out and stood under a Vilva tree. He continuously thought about the anklet and the lord. He thought that for three days. On the fourth day Viswamithra, Vamadeva, Gowthama, Sownaka and Kannuva have come there for the Thiruvathirai festival.

After all the worship they come to the Vilva tree and relaxed themselves by conjuring the lord's name. They wondered that Sankakannan's sins have cured and he becomes holy because of thinks about the lord for four days without doing any work. He died in that evening. And he went to Kayilaya, Devas wondered that the one who capable for hell went to heaven only because of thought about the lord and drank the Kasi water.

RAMPA REDEEMED FROM HER CURSE AND WENT TO INDIRA WORLD:

Long ago, Devendra was in his court with the Devas. Then Vidhyadharan played Veena and Rampa was

dancing according to the music. On seeing the dance the Devas even forgot themselves and watching it. So Indira signed her to stop the dance. So angrily she left the court without bow the court people. So the Devas told Indira that she had humiliated them. So Indira cursed her that she will born in the earth as a harlot and live a miserable life. She requested him to tell the way how she could redeem from her curse. Then he told that she could recover from her curse if she worships the lord in Avinasi where Ayiravatham the white elephant cured from its curse.

Thus she has born in Namikapuri as a daughter to a harlot. She was very beautiful and learnt music and Bharathanatyam in correct age. She becomes famous for her art. Then she too become a harlot and enjoyed the pleasure. Therefore she lost her beauty and got diseases and become like an old woman. Then she went to Avinasi with devotes who come to the Chithirai festival. She washed herself in the Ayiravatha thurai and went to the presence of the lord and worshipped lord with nice psalms with the accompaniment of Veena.

Agastia Muni who comes there realised everything with his wisdom then her curse left her. He drank the water and milk that has given to the lord. She went to the chariot room and went to the temple at evening and slept. When the next dawn she again went to Indira world with the Indira chariot and she got back her designation too.

CROW GOT THE BLESSING:

In kongu Nadu there is a forest named Vatharikasiram where the river Kaviri and Bhavani mingles. That was a suitable place for the mendicants. Dhurvasa Muni lived there and did poojas for Shiva. One day Kamadenu ie., a cow which gives milk to the lord came late on that day. So the mendicant becomes angry and cursed to roam like other animals. He prayed to tell the way of redeem from its curse. He told it worship the god in Palani. Then he went Thirumurugan Poondi and worshiped the lord. It was a new moon day so he found that it was a suitable day to do some ritual for his forefathers. He did all the sacraments and put food for the crow, which assumed as forefathers. A crow took some rice in its beak and going to feed its young. On the way another crow opposed it and plucks the rice at that time rice fell on the vessel of a stranger who has disguised as Shiva. He ate that rice. It collected rice from another place and goes to its young, a hunter killed it with his clay ball and it died. Then the crow got the appearance of Deva and reached Kayilaya. On seeing lord Shiva it worshipped him, then lord Shiva told that it come here because of fed a stranger who disguised as me. Then it become a Deva and lived there.

A MERCHANT NAMED ENNAKUTHAN GOT BLESSING:

A merchant named Ennakuthan lived in Thirumurugan Poondi. He is not kind hearted and has no faith in god. He doesn't even know how to treat the elders. He is a cunning merchant and he went to the Avinasi Chithirai festival and put a grocery shop in a house nearby the flag wood. During the festival one day, the harlots danced for the song in the Nagavarali tune. He forgot his business and followed them and went into the temple. At the time evening time Poojas were going on, there he saw Vashista Muni. Then he going on to grab the harlot with the things he heard the second half history of Thaadakai. But it becomes dusk so he went out from the temple and was thinking whom he can send to grab a harlot. So he ate the food in hurry it stricken in the throat and died. Then the angels of Yama come there to take him, but the Devar come there and took him to Deva world because he has seen the Sandhya Pooja, Vashista Muni and heard the history of the place after all he had died in Avinasi. So he got place in Deva world.

KING DHARMASENA GOT CHILD AND DEVA WORLD:

In the north a king named Dharmasena ruled a place called Sathumukapuram which is in the banks of the Gotha River. He is a mighty one and has learnt every script. He is kind and a donor. One day a Siva Brahmin has come to his palace. He welcomed him and treated him well. He asked him what the script he is holding in his hands is; he replied that it is a history of the place Avinasi. And he told him the history of Umadevi, Brama, Thaadakai, Ayiravatham, Nagakanni, Vyathan, Sankakannan, Rampa and Ennakuthan in detail. Then he left the palace after receiving many gifts from Dharmasena.

Then Dharmasena went to Avinasi with his family. By knowing his arrival the devotees welcomed him. Then he gets down from his chariot and bowed the pillar. Then he put a tent nearby Suriya water source and stayed there. Then he bathed in the Suriya, Ayiravatha water sources with his wife on the day of Thai poosam. Then he stayed there for one year and did many poojas and worshipped lord. Then his wives conceived of the blessing of Karunalaya selvi. He named his elder son as Akkini Varman and his younger son Raniyasena. He did many things to the temple. He gave 12 villages for the festivals. He made many ornaments to the god and goddess. Then he built inn for food, water inn, medical pharmacy, dwelling places for the poor people. Then he gave akkara adisil for the devotees. He put three Siva statues in the altar. He built a pool named pushkarani and a kali temple in the north to the temple. He did many more things to the temple and the people and went to his nation. Then he got place in the Deva world when he died.

The arrival of Sundara Moorthi to Thirupukkoliyur and calls the boy from the mouth of the crocodile:

Many mendicants gathered in the south part of the Kayilaya. Upamanyu tells him some songs, at that time they a sparkling light they enquired Upamanyu about it and he explains it as follows. In kayilai Shiva called an image of himself from the poison alalam. And he asked to the works of bring flowers, holy ashes. Once he went to pluck flowers in the garden there he saw Kamayini and Aninthathai the friends of Parvathi. He loved them and them too, and then three of them forgot that and went to their place. Shiva realised their state and cursed them to born as humans.

Alalam felt guilt and prayed the lord from the sin when he is in the form of humans. Alaala Sundara has born in the Saiva clan for Sadayanar and his wife. The king accepted him as a son. He brought up in the palace and has learnt arts. He comes to the age of marriage. Lord Shiva stooped the marriage of him with Sadanka Shivachariyar daughter. Then he took him to Thiruvennai nallur. There he lived with a name Van thondar. Then he saw the feet of Shiva in Thiruvathikai. Then he got friendship of Sundara in Thiruvarur so he called as Thampiran Tholar. There he married a girl named Kanikai. Then he got paddy in Kandaiyur. Then he got the friendship of Kotpuliya in Thirunatuthan kudi. He took the gold in Thiruvarur which he lost it in Viruthachalam. He went to every house and ate the food they gave as begging in Thiruchur. He got gold in Kanchipuram. Aninthirayar born in Thiruvotriyur and did the Shiva thondu. Sundara married Athava sankiliyar. He crossed Thiruvotriyur and lost his eyes and he got his left eye in Kanchipuram and the right in Thiruvarur. Cheraman Perumal Nayanar got the friendship of Sundara in Thiruvarur. So he called as Cheraman Devi. Then Cheraman and Sundara went to many places and reached Thituvanchaikalam. There he finely treated by his friend and returned to Thiruvarur. Then he again likes to visit his friend Cheraman so he started the journey. On the way he relaxed himself in Thirumurugan Poondi. By knowing his hunger Shiva come in the form of Shiva devotee and gave him food. Then he asked him the way to Avinasi. In that an Anthanar named Gangatharan lived in Avinasi. He has no child and prayed to the god and got a son after six years. He and his wife named the child as Avinasilingan. The boy is now in his fifth year.

He went to the pool with the boy in his neighbourhood. There crocodile in the pond caught him. The boy informed this to his parents. Three years have passed. The parents of another boy did him the ritual of wearing punool. On seeing this mother of Avinasilingan becomes sad and cried. On that time Sundara came there and knew all the things. The parents of Avinasilingan become happy of the arrival of him. On knowing this Sundara sang a Devara song and got back their son from the mouth of hte crocodile with the growth three years. Then Sundara took him to the temple and they worshipped Avinasi linger and Karunalaya Selvi. Then he went to Thituvanchaikalam and stayed there for some time. Then he worshipped the lord there and the Devas sent the Ayiravatham to bring Sundara. Cheraman too went to Kayilaya and did thondu for Parvathi. Sundara become a Deva.

CONCLUSION:

The famous Saiva monument in kongunadu is Avinasi temple. People called him as Avinasi Lingeshwara, Avinasi Nathar, Avinasi Eswara, and Brahmapureswara because Brahma worshipped Him. Manickavasaga called him as 'Ariya Porule Avinasiappar' which means a rare thing. Apparperuman tells that, 'Avinasi kandai; Andathan

kandai; that means one who visit Avinasi has seen God. Karunampikai Amman Presence situated in the right side of the swami presence which is in the south side of the court of the temple. Opposite to the Ambikai presence the five stage king tower seems beautifully. More miracles and puranic backgrounds are also found here.

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