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**Live Commentary on 155th Aradhana Festival of Saint
Sri Tyagaraja Swamigal**

by R. Ganapathi Subramanian

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It is raining cats and dogs here from yesterday morning. Yesterday the concerts were held in the new building constructed adjacent to Samadhi. Today also there is heavy rain. The organizers with great difficulty managed to conduct the Aradhana and chorus singing of Pancharathnas before the samadhi. They have covered the pandal where the musicians are going to sing with tin sheets. Of course the rasikas and devotees have to hear the songs with an umbrella in their hands.

Good morning to devotees of Tyagaraja.

COMMENTARY ON SAINT SRI THYAGARAJA

I am **R. Ganapathi Subramanian**, speaking from Thiruvaiyaru on the banks of the River Cauveri, (a small town in Tanjore District) where the samadhi of the famous saint composer **Sadguru Sri Thyagaraja Swami** is situated.

Today is the 155th aradhana day, the day on which Thyagaraja Swami attained Mukthi 155 years back. From 28th January, 2002, onwards, for the past 5 days, the Musicians and Nadaswara Vidwans are paying Musical Homage to the Saint by rendering the kritis of the great Master before His Samadhi.

On the aradhana day, the musicians will start, from the house at Tirumanjana Veedhi in Tiruvaiyaru where Thyagaraja lived, with the accompaniment of violin, mridangam and cymbals in processions singing bhajans and Divya Naama Kritis composed by Thyagaraja and will reach the Samadhi. This procession is called the Unchavrithi Procession. This is done because Thyagaraja took the vow as part of his sadhana to lead the life of a daily mendicant, go about singing the praise of Rama and live on Unchavrithi (alms). As soon as the musicians assembled at the Samadhi, they will start singing the famous Pancharatna Kritis during which the Abhishekam and Alankar will be performed to the Samadhi and also to the idol of Thyagaraja.

History of Saint Thyagaraja

Though Thyagaraja was born at Tiruvaarur, in Sarvajit Chaitra Sukla Saptami Pushya corresponding to 4th May 1767 (another version 1759), he spent his whole life at Tiruvaiyaru or Panchanadha. This town Tiruvaiyaru gets its name since 5 rivers are flowing across the town (Tiru-beautiful, iyaru - 5 rivers).

Thyagaraja was fully conscious of the blessing that made him a native of a region which was so renowned for its cultural importance for he proudly sings of the Tanjore region as the "**Chola Seema**" the beautiful land in this world. He knew the great value of the Kshetra where he lived and strove for his salvation. In his kriti in Atana ("E papamu Jesithira") by playing a clever pun on the word Nada, he says that this place of rivers Nadapura is verily the Lord's own place as the Lord is the embodiment of Nada. In the Mukari song, "Muri pemu galige", he says his Rama should be proud of a place in beautiful Panchanada kshetra worthy of being coveted by Lord Shiva, on the banks of the river cauveri over which the mild zephy blows and where holy persons perform Homams and chant Vedas.

In the kriti "Saari vedalina kaaverini joodare" in raga Asaveri, he describes how the mother cauveri proceeding to the place of her Lord the Sea, fulfilling the desires of all without difference, now speeding fast, roaring terribly and now placid with grace; with cuckoos singing on either side, touching shrine after shine and worshipping deity after deity. The adage goes in Tanjore district that the banks of the cauveri and melody of Saaveri are equally transporting.

Sometime before he attained this One-ness with Godhead, the Saint had taken to the saffron robes and became Sanyasi. Moved by the deep anguish of this devotee, Lord Ramachandra appeared before Him and assured Him of Moksha within a few days. The Saint himself tells us of these in two of his last pieces. "Giripai nela Konna" in the Raga Sahana and "Parithapamu" in the Raga Manohari.

In the Sanaha Kriti, he says "**Unerringly I have seen Rama who is installed in the hill. He promised to give salvation in 5 days. My body was thrilled, tears of joy rolled down my cheeks and I merely mumbled unable to give expression to my thought**". In the Manohari Kriti, Swami asks the Lord "**Have you forgotten the words of assurance which you, seeing my anguish, lovingly expressed when you were on the golden boat on the river Sarayu in the company of the incomparable Sita, the assurance that you take me to you in another 5 days.**"

In accordance with this promise, the Lord took the Bhakta on the Pushyabagula Panchami day in the Tamil year Prabhava corresponding to 6th January 1847, when the Saint was almost 88 years old.

Saint Thyagaraja's life and *kirtanas* are the heritage of Indian culture expressed in classical Carnatic music. This heritage can be described as the eternal verities of divinity. His contribution to posterity is at once devotional, religious and philosophical. His songs are frozen melodies intuited in the inspired depths of a saintly soul. His way of life was illumined by rock-like *bhakti*, invigorated and sustained by his unshakable faith in Rama.

Vidwans have finished rendering the Pancharatna kritis. Now Mangala Harathi or Deeparadhana is shown to the idol of Thyagaraja and to the Samadhi and the harathi is being taken to the Vidwans and devotees. Let us hope to meet next year without hindrance of rain.

The centre of Thyagaraja's existence and the summit of his aspirations were to experience in every breath the bliss of Rama *bhakti* and thereby gain a vision of his *Ishta Devata* (favorite deity). In many of his songs, this longing finds eloquent expression. The dimensions of his music include not only *sangita sastra*, but also contain a core of spirituality. It is because of this great quality that his compositions, like the *Atman*, endure. The consummation of spirituality in his songs is really the Voice of the Eternal.

Sri Thyagaraja's life was a confluence and symphony of three streams - spirituality, saintliness and *sangita* and the harmony of these find spontaneous self-expression in every syllable of his *sahityas*. The divine words come vibrating from his soul. To describe them as *kirtanas* would be superficial for his utterances are authentic revelations of what he directly experienced. They comprehend the one and only purpose of music, that is, *moksha sadhana* (eternal bliss). The value of his music is instrumental, a means, but the goal is intrinsic, to lay one's soul at the feet of Sri Rama.

The greatness of Sri Thyagaraja is the way he linked the human to the divine. What is the saint's message to humanity? Aspiration is human. Grace is divine. Only through God's grace can one realize his aspiration, *bhakti* (devotion) in the case of a saint. *Sahityas* fall from his lips full of wisdom and devotional fervor. The most moving songs owe their composition to particular incidents and the state of his mind. The process of his creations is far beyond our comprehension. But the product is before us, each a jeweled beauty.

While all his *kirtanas* are soulful, Sri Thyagaraja has outclassed himself in his *Pancharatnas* where he is at his greatest and perhaps touched the pinnacle of Carnatic music. The fusion of lyrics and melody, the fusion of *bhakti* and *sangita* form the very essence of his songs. In all his compositions, Sri Thyagaraja's style shows a greatness of manner which marks him as a *vaggeyakara* par excellence. The outward form and inner meaning is so well meshed that the *kirtanas* remain unexcelled. At Sri Thyagaraja's hand each song, each raga gains

individuality and in every one of them is reflected the working of a *bhakta's* yearning in his soul.

We recognize in Sri Thyagaraja a master spirit combining in him the *bhakti* of Prahlada, the music of Narada and the *vakpatutva* of Valmiki. Sentiments are passionate, his reflections on music and life profound. His works therefore stand apart in the history of *vaggeyakaras*.

If Sri Thyagaraja's music is sublime it is because it emerged from the privacy of his soul. It is one of the greatest aspects of Sri Thyagaraja that he made the infinite (Sri Rama) finite for us and the ideals of music real. Born and bred in a highly cultured family, Thyagaraja was a profound scholar and poet. He studied Sanskrit, astrology, and was, of course, well versed in his mother tongue, Telugu.

Thyagaraja took his early training under a Sanyasi Sri Ramakrishnananda. His maternal grandfather had some Palm leaf manuscripts which contain notes on Music. When he went through the manuscripts he could not understand anything from the Manuscripts. When he approached his Guru he told him to pray to Sage Narada who is an embodiment of Music. Thyagaraja did so and Narada appeared before him and gave a book "Swarnava" which explains everything about Music. After using this book he was able to compose number of songs and able to understand the intricacies of Music. As an acknowledgement he composed kritis in praise of Narada: Sri Narada (kanada), Narada guruswami, .

Besides, he was a highly trained musician, having been the disciple of Sonthi Venkataramanayya, one of the foremost singers of the day. His genius is evident in every song of his; but his immortal Pancha ratna kritis (the five gems) reveal the mastery he had over his musical technique. Apart from thousands of songs of kriti type, he composed utsava sampradaya keertanas and divya nama sankeertanas which are sung in devotional congregations. He has also created two operas: Prahlada Bhakti Vijayam and Nauka charitram. While there are a number of songs in Sanskrit, the majority of them, including the operas, are in Telugu.

To him music was so creative that he could not be bound in mere traditional grammar. He saw the potentiality in new melodies and from them gave forms to ragas like Kharaharapriya, Harikambhoji and Devagandhari; at least he must have breathed life into such simple tunes to make them into ragas, if not produced them de novo. The rhythms used by him are also simple and are generally confined to talas such as Adi, Tripata, and Roopaka. Complex temporal and melodic patterns would not have expressed the lyricism of his mystic adoration. A beautiful elaboration introduced by him was the sangati as a built-in part of his kriti. These melodic variations convey so many shades of the main mood that all the finer nuances of text and music find expanded expression. It need not be offered as an excuse, but it is a fact that he was also as much

capable of technical musicality as any learned grammarian: Thyagaraja's "five gems" in ragas Nata, Gaula, Arabhi, Varali and Sri, his songs in slower tempos.

Spiritually he was one of the rare souls who gave up everything except bhakti and cared for nothing else beyond the Grace of God. The early influences on his life make this trend more pronounced. The Bhagavatha of Bammera Potana, the mystic poet of Andhra, was for him a book of daily parayana (recitation). Indeed there is a close parallel between the thoughts and lives of these two. The devar namas of Purandaradasa were fed to him as if they were his mother's milk. Such early environments led to a positive direction by initiation into yoga. It is supposed that he was given the Rama Taraka Mantra by one sanyasi, Sri Ramakrishnananda. Thyagaraja's father's fellow scholar and yogi, Sri Upanishad Brahmendra of Kanchipuram, also exerted a great influence on him. So also the works and personality of Narayan Teertha, the author of Krishnaleela Tarangini, had considerable effect on the musician.

The only things that mattered to Thyagayya were music and bhakti - they were synonymous. In the kriti, "**Nada Thanumanisam**", he says "Is there a sacred path than music and bhakti?". "O Mind, salute the gods of the seven notes". "The knowledge of music, O Mind, leads to bliss of Union with the Lord". "I bow to Sankara, the embodiment of Nada, with my body and mind. To Him, the essence of blissful Samaveda, the best of the vedas, I bow. To Him who delights in the seven swaras born of His five faces I bow".

Thyagaraja was a great bhakta; the only meaningful act for him was complete surrender to Him whom he called Rama. In the song "**Ika gavalasina demi (Balahamsa)**", he sings, "What more do you want, O Mind ! Why are you not happy? When the Lord of the Universe has rested in your heart - what more do you want, O Mind?"

Nava Vida Bhakthi

The well-known classification of Bhakthi in major forms occurs in the Bhagavatha. There is a sloka in Bhagavatha

**Sravanam keerthanam vishnoho Smaranam Paadasevanam
Archanam vandanam Dasyam Sakyam Atma Nivedanam**

Thyagaraja, in his long and rich enjoyment of Rama Bhakthi exemplified all these forms. **Sravana** - the listening to the glory of the Lord comes first. In the song **Ramakatha Sudha Rasa Paanam**, he explains the drinking of the rasa of Rama's story would confer upon one a veritable kingdom. It would give one dharma and all other fruits; it would give one firmness of mind, spiritual bliss, material happiness and destroy all the shackles of Karma and the many ills of Kali. In another song, **Sudha madhurya bhashana**, Thyagaraja says that his

long hunger had been appeased by the story of Rama, to listen to which he had avoided the wicked and resorted to the devotees of the Lord.

The entire life and output of Thyagaraja exemplifies the second form Keerthana. In Yelaavathara (Mukari Raaga) he goes to the extent of saying that the Lord Himself incarnated to draw out Thyagaraja's Keerthana. In another kriti, Intha saukhyamani (Kaapi Raaga) and Inta Kannananda (Bilahari), he says that there can be no joy greater than that of singing of the Lord and dancing with the praise of the Lord on one's lips.

The third is Smarana, the constant memory of the Lord and [meditating] upon him Naama Japa was futile if not lighted up all through by the glow of the thought of Rama. In his Nagaswaravali piece, Sri pathe nee pada, he specially mentions *chintana and smarana* as his very life. He expresses the same in another song Rama Kothanda Rama (Bhairavi). We can give examples like this for this form in many number of songs of His Smarane Sukamu (Janaranjani), Marache vaadanaa (Ketharam).

The fourth **Paada Sevanam** or the worship of the Lord's feet in particular is a devotional mode exemplified by Bharatha and the adoration of Rama's Paduka. Rama's feet had two great exploits to their credit: the re-creation of Agalya from her accursed stone state and through their sandals ruling over the kingdom of Ayodya. Thyagaraja has two songs to adore both these exploits of Rama's feet. Both are cast in Ragas of appropriate names, Amrita vahini (Sri Rama Padama), the feet that bring immortality and ambrosial bliss and Ramapriya (Sandeha munu Dirpumayya), Rama's beloved sandals.

The fifth form of devotional propitiation of the Lord is to do his worship daily and incessantly - **Archanam**. This form is exemplified by two important factors of Thyagaraja's life and work – one is Thyagaraja's daily Pooja of the Rama idol and the other the collection of the songs called **Utsava Sampradaya Kirthanas** composed for the several items of the celebration of a Rama festival including the songs that he sang for the several stages of his own Pooja and its sixteen kinds of Upacharas offered to the Lord. Some of the songs to be mentioned are Hechcharikaga raara hey ramachandra (Yadukula Kambodi), Raara seethamani manohara (Hindola vasantham), Sethulaara sringara (Bhairavi/Karaharapriya), Thulasi Bilva (Kethara Gowla), Aaragimpa (Thodi), Vidamu Seyave (Karaharapriya), Upachaara mulanu (Bhairavi) etc.

The sixth form **Vandana** or paying obeisance to the lord is illustrated by the kriti Vandanamu (Sahana) and Dandamu Pattedanu ra (Balahamsa).

Lakshmana, in whose form also the Lord incarnated exemplified the ideal of service as a servant, **Kainkarya** or **Dasya**, Thyagaraja while describing Rama mentions Lakshmana also often as attending upon him as the most accomplished servant of Rama who knows Rama's inner intention and who at

the mere glance of Rama would carry out his idea. This is specially referred to in the Kritis **Lekana** (Asaaveri). Similarly Hanuman's service to Rama also portrayed in the kritis **Pahirama** (Vasantha Varaali) and **Kalu gunaa pada neeraja** (Poorna Lalitha). Thyagaraja also yearns to join this company of Rama's servants in the kritis **Thavada soham** and **Upachaaramu**.

Sakya, the eighth form, besides references in many songs to friends of Rama like Sugreeva and Vibhishana and the devotion, there is a mention in **Chelimini Jalajaksha**, **Sami ki sari** and **O Rama O Rama** as Thyagaraja's friend, **Thyagaraja sakhudu** and **Thyagarajunimitra**.

Now come to the important form called **Atma Nivedanaa** or surrender of one's self to the Lord as the Lord's own. Rama is the incarnation par excellence the supreme [exemplar] of protection of those that surrender unto the Lord. Thyagaraja does not fail to make express mentions of this special feature; In the kriti, **sarame gaani** (pantuvaraali), he describes Rama as the Lord who has the special title of the protector of those who take refuge under him. When the devotee surrenders, he is to surrender everything he possesses. Thyagaraja explained this in the kriti **Kaalaharana** (Suddha Saaveri). Similarly Thyagaraja says in his **Rama Paahi Mega Shyama** (Kaapi) that he had surrendered himself and all his good deeds to the Lord. In **Nannu Vidachi** (Reeti Gowla) and **Enaati Nomu Phalamo** (Bhairavi), he declares that he and his body are the Lord's property. When the devotee declares himself as the complete saranagatha, he used to have no more anxiety for anything; all his burdens have been laid on the Lord and it is for the Lord to come and help and save the [refugee]. Thyagaraja asks Rama in the Kritis **Maakelara Vichaaramu** (Ravichandrika) "Why should I feel any concern? The anxiety is His." Similar sentiments are revealed in another kriti **Nee chittamu Naa Bhagyamayya** (Vijaya Vasantham).

Rama's beauty

There are hundreds of epithets and [vocatives laden] with Rama's gunaas with which Thyagaraja describes and addresses Rama in his songs; in all these, the personal qualities of Rama are extolled. Foremost among the qualities comes **Rupa**, the personal charm of Rama's appearance. When Thyagaraja tells Rama "You are my Ishta Deiva", it is the surpassing beauty of this Shyaama Sundara that made him prefer this form. This is described in his song **Shyaama Sundaranga** (Danyasi). In another song **Intanuchu Varnimpa Tharama** (Gundakriya), he says even Brahma, Indra and other gods cannot describe the beauty of your benign look, your charming face, surpassing the moon in splendor. In the kriti, **Muddu momu** (Suryakantam), he speaks of his captivating beauty which bewitches the sages of the forest when he appears before them. In **Endu Kaugilintura** (Suddha Desi), he admires that "Every portion of Your body, Oh Rama, is captivating. Which portion shall I embrace? Your speech alone is speech and Your brilliance alone is brilliance." We can add number of kritis which [describe] the beauty of Rama like **Lavanya Rama** (Rudrapriya), **Alakalalla**

Ladagagani (Madhyamavathi), **Sogusu chooda Tharama** (Kanada Gowla), **Mohana Rama** (Mohanam), etc.

Ishta Devatha

Lord Rama is Thyagaraja's Ishta Devatha. This we found in the song **Rama Eva Deivatham** (Balahamsa). He says that Rama alone is my god. He is the only destroyer of the mental distress of devotees. In the kriti, **Rama nee samaana** (Karaharapriya), Thyagaraja says "You are the beloved parrot in the cage of Sita's Bhakti. You are yourself gentle in speech and have brothers whose words drop with honey. Who is there equal to you?" The above ideas are also expressed in **Kaaru Vel pulu** (Kalyani), **Itara deivamula** (Chhaya Tarangini), **Madilona Yochana** (Kolahalam).

Pilgrimage

An invitation from his far-flung disciples and admirers took Thyagaraja on a pilgrimage which extended up to Tirupati. When he reached the Tirupati temple to have the darshan of Lord Venkateswara, the drawn curtain at the sanctum sanctorum moved him to composer the song **Terateeyaga raga** (Gowlibanthu) in which he moans "Oh Tirupati Venkataraman! Could you not remove the screen, the screen of anger, arrogance and jealousy, which, taking a firm stand within me, keeps me out of the reach of Dharma and other Purusharthas including Moksha? It effectively hides from vision, the immaculate light of the lamp, Jnana. By the existence of this screen, my mind gets caught by evil, just as ignorant beasts are got into the Hunter's net. I have been following you faithfully, I pray promptly; remove the screen". Promptly the screen was removed and he had a good darshan of the Lord.

His next move was to the neighborhood of Chennai where at the insistence of Kovur Sundaresa Mudaliar, he visited the village Kovuur and composed five songs on Lord Sundaresa - **Sundareswaruni** (Sankarabaranam), **Eevasuda** (Sahana), **Kori Sevimpa Raare** (Karaharapriya), **Nammi Vachina** (Kalyani), **Sambo Mahadeva** (Banthuvaraali).

At Tiruvettriur, he was drawn by Goddess Tirupura Sundari to sing 5 kritis - **Kanna Talli** (Saaveri), **Sundari nee divya** (Kalyani), **Sundari Ninu varnimp** (Aarabi), **Sundari Nannindarilo** (Begada), **Daarini Thelusu Konti** (Sudda Saaveri). A srimukam from the noble Sanyasi and Rama Bhakta, Upanishad Brahmam took Thyagaraja to Kanchipuram where he sang in praise of Lord Varadaraja and Goddess Kamakshi- **Varadaraja Ninu Goru Vachithi** (Swara Bhushani), **Venkatesa Ninu** (Madhyamavathi), **Vinayakuni** (Madhyamavathi).

At Nagapattinam, he composed two pieces on Neelaayadakshi - **Karmame Balavanthamayya** (Saaveri) and **Evaru Teliya Boyyeru** (Thodi). He visited srirangam also and sang five kritis on Lord Ranganatha = **O Ranga Sayee**

(Kambodi), **Chootamu Raare** (Aarabhi), **Vinaraadhaa** (Deva Gandhaari), **Raju Vedale** (Thodi), **Karuna Joodu Maiyya** (Saranga). The next shrine he visited was Lalgudi otherwise known as **Tapas Tirthapura** where he composed 3 pieces on Goddess Srimathi and 2 pieces on Sapta Rishiswara - **Isa Pahimam** (Kalyani), **Deva Sthree tapa Thirtha** (Madhya mavathi), **Lalithe sri pravriddhe** (Bhairavi), **mahitha Pravriddha** (Kambodi), **Gati nee vani** (Thodi). He also sang in praise of Lord Panchanatha of Tiruvaiyaru and his consort Dharmasamvardhani.

Madhura Bhava in Thyagaraja's Kritis (Naayaka Naayiki Bhaavaa)

In the **Ritigoula Raga** song "**CheraraaVade Mira Rama**", Thyagaraja says "Just as an orphaned girl married to a man has no other house to turn to and clings to her husband, I entirely rely on you and implore you. How is that you do not come?". In another song, "**Paluke Vaemi Naa Deivama**" (Poorna Chandrika), Swami asks the Lord, "Oh my Lord! Why is it that you do not talk to me though I have always danced to your tune? What is the reason for your being angry with me? Is it fair that others should laugh at me? My parents gave me devotion and protected me; others tormented me much. Knowing all these, how long are you going to keep quiet?".

In the song, "**Chani Thodi Theve**" (Harikamboji), where the mind is made the duty to bring the lover Rama to Thyagaraja, the beloved. "Oh, Maid of my mind! Go and bring quickly my Lord. Seek him early and lead him to me with due respect. I want to enjoy happiness for a long time with him."

One may listen to "**Rama bi Rama**" (darbar), where Thyagaraja says "The maid, my mind, is in deep love with you but you do not seem to respond and take her hand. I have provided for you a comfortable bed".

The Nayaka – Nayaki Bhava is expressed in number of songs like "**Patti Viduvaradhu**" (Manjari), "**Daya Seya Vaiyya**" (Yadukula Kamboji), "**Sami ki Sari**" (Begada), "**Joothamu rare**" (Arabhi), "**Eti Jenma Midilo**" (Varaali), "**Rama Rama Ramachandra**" (Ghanta).

Importance of Bhakti

In one of his beautiful Thodi songs "**Tappi Bratiki**", Thyagaraja expatiates on Bhakti as the means to keep one free from temptations and vices.

"Is it possible to escape from being lost in the pool of sense pleasures, if one does not worship the Lord with his whole heart and firm mind? Without Bhakthi, is it possible to develop the feeling that valuable metals like Gold are poison, to remain unaffected by the sight of wily and well dressed woman with charming curly hair?"

In another Kriti, "**Emi Jesite Mi**" in the same raga, Thyagaraja explains the utter worthlessness of anything in the absence of Bhakthi. In "**Enta Nerchina Enta Juuchina**" (Udaya Ravichandrika), he emphasizes, how in the absence of devotion, even learned men gain no benefit out of their scholarship and became slaves of senses.

To seek salvation in other ways is to resort to by lanes. Not to revel in Bhakthi but in mundane pleasures is to leave off rich milk and cream and to drink toddy. Swamigal says this in the well-known piece in Karaharapriya "**Chakkani Raja Margamu**". We can see number of pieces for the importance of Bhakthi, like "**Rama Bhakthi Samrajya**" (Sudda Bangala), "**Sangeetha Gyanamu**" (Danyasi), "**Ide Bhagyamu**" (Kannada), "**Nee Bhakthi Bagya**" (Jayamanohari).

Superiority of Nama Japa

Adi Sankara in his Bhashya on the Vishnu Sahasranama says the superiority of Nama Stotra over the Dharmas and Yagnas. Nama japa does not involve injury to a being in the form of sacrifice; it is an Ahimsa Yaaga. Taking the cue, Thyagaraja in his Darbar piece "**Paripaalayamaam**", says that the Lord is never more pleased than when a concourse of devotees raise their voices singing aloud his name.

Thyagaraja embarked in the prime of his youth (in his twentieth year), on the great Tapas of reciting Rama Nama ninety-six crores of times; and took him twenty-one years and fifteen days to finish this Japa; at the end Thyagaraja had the dharshan of Sri Rama. In his ecstasy on seeing Rama, spontaneously he composed the kriti, "**Ela Nee Dayaradhu**" (Atana). In the kriti, "**Sri Raghuvara**" (Deva Gandhari), Thyagaraja prays for nothing more than that his tongue should become used to continuous repetition of Lord's name. We can give number of songs where Thyagaraja explains the value of Rama Nama. **Uooraka** (Sahana), **Pahimam sri Ramachandra** (Kapi), **Nanu Brova** (Abogi), **Ninne nera Namminaanu** (Pantuvvaraali), **Neevegaani** (Bilahari), **Pahimam Hare** (Sourashtra), a Divyanama piece.

Chetulaara – (Bhairavi, Karaharapriya)

Before starting the Pancharatna kritis, it is customary to render **Chetulaara** (Bhairavi) but flute Vidwans. In this song, Thyagaraja explains how to decorate the Lord. He says,

"I shall decorate you with my own hands so beautifully as to elicit the admiration of even Brahma and other devotees and enjoy the sight myself. You will have golden anklets for your feet, high class golden clothes for your dress. Your tuft will be decorated with sweet smelling parijata flowers; your loins will have a girdle of golden beads; your forehead will be bedecked with a pendant of gems in the shape of the sun; your frontal head will be encircled with precious pearls and your

body besmeared with sweet scented sandal paste; So made up to my heart's content, I shall kiss you and hug you to my bosom. Saraswati will come and fan you then. In that exaltation, I shall ejaculate, "WELL DONE, WELL DONE". I shall thus cut asunder all my bondage."

Pancharatna Kritis

In Jagadanandakaraka kriti, [Thyagaraja] praises the Lord for the good deeds.

Song: Jagadaa Nanda karaka Raga: Nattai

1. May victory abound the Lord, who always gives bliss to the entire world and is the breath-hold of Sita! Thyself, born in the Surya race, Lord of Lords, ocean of virtues, worshipped by Devas, ever yields goodness is like a bright moon with excellence and purity before the cluster of star-like devas.
2. He is a wish fulfilling tree to the celestials. He, who steals away the pot full of curd, milk and cheese, speaks nectar like words, is a cowherd and beauty personified, Hero of Lakshmi and ever handsome, guides virtuous path to his devotees.
3. He is a blowing wind to the clouds of enemy-like Devas; travels on Garuda; Capturer of the heart of great poets.
4. He possesses Surya and Chandra as his two eyes, immeasurable fame; He is the father of Brahma, the creator, relaxes on Adhishesha and worshipped by Shiva, who has conquered yama (the god of death).
5. With the glory of his holy feet, he removed the curse of Gautama Rishi; knows the eminent mantras (Pala and Athipala), possesses absolute patience, gave boon to the Lotus born Brahma.
6. He is the controller of creation, destruction and protection; fulfills numerous desires of his devotees; worshipped by Indra; conquered the pride of [the] king of [the] ocean. He is the essential substance in the famous epic Ramayana, which glitters through Bhakthi and sweet Music.
7. He is a moon rising from the ocean-like gods of good men, possesses PUSHPAKA VIMANA; whose lotus feet [are] being worshipped by pure hands of Hanuman; who has won SURASAI, ever lasting and conqueror of evils.
8. A parrot living in the nest of Pranava; has the image of Shiva, Brahma and Vishnu, killer of Ravana who is the father of Indrajit; gives happiness to good men, blesses the ladies who surrender pure heartedly; a friend of Shiva.
9. Keeps arrows in His hands, destroyer of the mad evils; Protector of Devas and Braahmanas; praised well in the epic written by Valmiki who is the sun of all poets; revered by Thyagaraja.
10. Source of living beings; Killer of demons like Karan, Viradan and Ravana; Pure capturer of heart of Parasara and revered by Thyagaraja.

11. Possesses all good qualities; wears silk woven dresses, broke MARAMARA; has immeasurable fame; hero of Lakshmi who originated from the Ocean.

Song: Dudukugala Raga: Gowla

Oh Lord, who transcends speech and mind! Which prince but you will protect one like me who is so evil-minded that he is drawn every moment by powerful evils;

1. that he has lost the realization that You are immanent in every being;
2. &
3. who, from his early days, has been indulging in vain disputation without enjoying the ambrosias of your divine Bhajana.
4. coveting others' wealth, has gathered money for sustenance by moving the hearts of people by flattery.
5. has spent all the days believing that a comfortable living is the only aim of life (taking living itself happiness).
6. has posed as a good Bhakta, though stone hearted and ignorant of the elements of music and has pleased oneself by delivering sermons to women and ignorant and low folk.
7. taking good-looking women, houses, children and wealth as permanent assets to be coveted, has willfully ignored the worship of your holy feet?
8. I have remained ever a criminal with an unsteady mind without the consistent though in mind of your beautiful lotus face, have sought the company of men of evil infatuation, have been caught up in difficulties and am unable to repel sense-pleasures and low desires and have become a sinner and one of unsteady mind.
9. Without realizing that a human birth is hard to get and without attaining a supreme bliss with its aid, I have become a slave to haughtiness, jealousy, lust, avarice and delusion and have got deceived;
10. being one of foremost birth in this world, have resorted to the service of the low born and seeking inferior people have perversely tried to establish worthless faiths; have wandered in this world for women and wealth for some time, and for the children of other times.

Which Prince but you will protect such a sinner?

Still [there] is a heavy downpour. Unmindful of the rain the bhaktas and Rasikas are standing inside the Pandal with the umbrellas on their hands that shows the bhava and the beauty of the Pancharathna kritis.

Song: Saadhinchene Raga: Arabhi

Oh mind! Sri Rama, belying the precepts he himself inculcated for treading the righteous path, has carried out what he wanted to and evaded coming to me, uttering words as suited the occasion. He similarly subjected Devaki and

Vasudeva to a number of trials. Without fulfilling the heart's desires of the Gopis, he taunted them. He (Paramaatman) would always make women pine and bow to him. He would [pose] himself as the child of Yasoda, allow her to please herself by kissing him and would smile at her.

Though he was a lover of devotees, an embodiment of all virtues and an eternally stainless one, when I was eagerly expecting that he would free me from the troubles of Kali age and when I was praying to him, chanting his glorious names, he evaded me without protecting me.

He appreciated and lovingly accepted my worship as being typical of a good devotee. He without coming to me, merely advised me not to be put out and not to seek the company of the godless brood and counseled patience in times of tribulation.

Song: Kanakana Ruchiraa Raga: Varaali

Sweeter will be devotee's pleasures, the more he, with a loving mind, daily sees you and your charming face radiating beauty and unbounded glory.

Did not such a Darsana redeem and render happy Dhruva when he felt mortified at the sharp and cruel words of his step-mother, Suruchi?

Did not the description of the glory of your benign form given by Hanuman transport Sri Sita into a blissful trance?

This, my statement, will be amply testified to by Anjaneya, who longingly and lovingly holds your blessed lotus-feet in his hands, by Lord Siva, the enjoyer of the superb sweetness of Ramanamam, also by Narada, Parasara, Suka, Sounaka, Indra, Parvati and Sita.

Equally sweet is the pleasure of the Darsan of sprightly Sita devouring the exquisite beauty of Sri Rama's face with her yearning and modest looks.

Song: Endaroo Mahanubhavulu Raga: Sri Ragam

Great souls are indeed many. Salutations to them all!
Many are those who see in the lotus of their hearts the Lord to moon-face and exquisite beauty and proportion and enjoy bliss.

1. Many are those who are foremost among the blessed ones who have had the realization of the Lord of supreme beauty who delights in Saman music.
2. Many are those who have the blessedness of an unerring Darsana of the glorious Swarupam of the Lord, after seeking and finding Him in the deep forest of their mind.

3. Many are those who unreservedly rush to offer the lotus of their mind (Chittam) at the feet of the Lord.
- 4.
5. Many are the blessed Bhaktas on which necks the necklace of gem-like qualities of Hari Himself shines, who with divine wisdom, overflowing love and solicitude for humanity, protect it with their divine love.
6. Many are the glorious ones who feel immersed in transcendental bliss, enthralled by the direct vision of the Lord and his majestic gait.
7. Many are the great souls, supreme devotees and sages, who are absolutely pure and who are blessed with the enjoyment of the bliss of realization of the Lord, like Chandra, Surya, Sahanandana, Dikpaalakas, Devas, Kimpurushas, Prahalaada, Narada, Tumburu, Anjaneya, Lord Siva, Suka, Brahma, and foremost Braahmana.
8. Many are the great Bhaktas, who delight in adoring the greatness of your personal beauty and Naama and (gunas such as) prowess, courage, mental composure, generosity and rectitude, and who knowing your disposition towards false faiths which do not promote true devotion to you, discard them.
9. Many are those who have understood the significance of the hidden truths of the Bhaagavatha, Ramayana, Gita, Veda, Sastras, Puranas, the six faiths of Siva and other gods and the thirty three crores [330 million] of Devatas and who acquire longevity through the joy of the music endowed with bhaava, raga, laya and other elements and who attain everlasting happiness, thereby becoming Thyagaraja's devotee friends.
10. Many are those, who with overflowing devotion, [meditate] upon the holy name of Sri Rama and become the true servants of the Lord praised by Thyagaraja.

We had a pleasant day and definitely we will also get salvation since all these five days we heard the kritis of Thyagaraja and also his five Pancharathna kritis.

Through the exercise of compassion all beings become our fellow-beings. When anyone suffers we also suffer. This is religious socialism as distinct from religious individualism. If man is not to be lost, he should not be collectivized. He must have the freedom of spirit, the freedom to renounce, the courage to own nothing. We must love without grasping give without expecting. These qualities are with Thyagaraja. We also imbibe these qualities and follow the footsteps of Thyagaraja. Let us meet next year.