

Nallavai Ketpom – 10

Glories of Makara PushkariNi

Makara PushkariNi is at ThentirupErai on the southern banks of river Tamirabarani. It is one of the pANdiya nAttu nava tirupathi Divya DEsams.

Story 1:

Once, Sri DEvi says to DurvAsa maharishi that BhagavAn has more affection towards BhUmi Devi than to Her. On hearing this, maharishi went to see BhUmi DEvi where She failed to receive him properly and honor him. Angered by this maharishi cursed BhUmi DEvi to become like Sri DEvi. When BhUmi DEvi asked maharisi what is to be done to be freed from the curse and to get back to the original form, he asks her to go to HaripAdha kshEtram on the southern banks of river Tamirabarani. So, BhUmi DEvi comes here, takes holy bath in the river, sits there and started meditating on NArAyana nAmA with unwavering focus and one-pointed mind. At that time, two fish shaped earrings(kundalam) appear in the river and floats towards BhUmi DEvi. The earrings are so beautiful, bright and shiny. She takes them in her hand and thinks how beautiful and nice it will be if BhagavAn adorn these!. Next moment BhagavAn appears before BhUmi DEvi and immediately She offers HIM those earrings and while BhagavAn wears them, DEvAs showers flowers from the heaven and celestial dundubhi drums resounds and a mystical voice is heard from the heaven saying, from this day onwards the **EmperumAn** in this kshEtram will be known as “**Makara NedunkuzhaikAthar**” and the pond “**Makara PushkariNi**”. As per the voice, this place is known as **TirupErai** and the tIrtam **Makara tIrtam**.

Story 2:

Once VaruNa DEvA was fighting with asurAs. DEva guru Brihaspati comes there at that time and VaruNA insults Him. So, DEva Guru curses VaruNA that He will loose his divine rope(varuNa pAsham) which is used to bind those who violate truth, dharma, or cosmic law. Anybody bounded by this rope will not be able to come out of it. Such is the power of the rope. On hearing the curse, VaruNA immediately falls at DEva Guru’s feet and asks for any remedy to get released from the curse. DEva Guru asks him to go to TirupErai, take bath in Makara pushkarini and perform abishEkam to that BhagavAn. VaruNA at once comes to TirupErai, take bath and performs abishEkam to Lord on Panguni full moon day(paurNami). Lord holds the thirumanjana water in His hands and turns the water that is continuously pouring through the gap between the fingers into varuNa pAsham and hand over to VaruNA. VaruNa DEvA accepts it very happily and returns to His place. Even today this thirumanjanam(abishEkam) is being performed in this kshEtram on Panguni paurNami day.

Story 3:

The king of Vidarbha dEshA bows his kula guru/AchAryA and asks for remedy as there is no rain in his place. Guru asks him to go to ThentirupErAI and have darshan of the Lord. So, the king comes to ThentirupErai, takes bath in the makara tIrtam and have darshan of the Lord. Later, rain pours down in abundance and the Vidarbha dEsham turns prosperous. There is a faith that ganges and other holy rivers meet in this pushkariNi and hence it is also known as “**kUttu punal turai**”(river bank where water flows and people gather). Such is the pride of that pushkariNi.

There is one more speciality in this temple. Usually in all Vaishnavite temples, Garudazhvar Sannidhi will be straight before PerumaL Sannidhi. But here, it is a bit away. Reason being that EmperumAn wants to witness and enjoy the celebrations during Brahmotsavam festival. When it comes to temple festival, elders and children will celebrate with great joy, especially all children gather and play at the temple entrance. EmperumAn wants to see these children playing and hence asks Garuda to move aside a little. Hence Garuda Sannidhi is a bit away from PerumAL Sannidhi. EmperumAn wishes to hear the Vedic chants, festival sounds and sounds of children playing merrily. Azhvar beautifully says in **TiruvAzmozhi 7.3.1**

வேத ஒலியும் விழா ஒலியும்
பிள்ளைக் குழா விளையாட்டொலியும் அறாத்த
திருப்பேரையில் சேர்வன் நானே

and wants to go to such a place where all these sounds are heard. In **TiruvAzmozhi 7.3.10**, AzhvAr says that he will go and search the town and country of that Lord who stole his heart long ago.

Like this, 3 different stories are being told about this ThentirupErai. The tirunAmam of the Lord is **Makara NedunkuzhaikAthar**. If we go to this place, take bath in the holy Makara tIrtam, hear those sounds and have darshan of the Lord and Garuda, then all our sins are lost and we get EmperumAn’s grace wholly. As AzhvAr says, we should go to that place atleast once and receive Lord’s blessings.

To be continued.....

Transcription by Smt Vasanthi Sampath