

Incarnation in Incarnation

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Article History: Received: 11 January 2021; Revised: 12 February 2021; Accepted: 27 March 2021; Published online: 10 May2021

Abstract

Iranyan Vadai Padalam is sung as one of the gems of the Navaratna garland of Kambaramayana. This article discusses the reason for the inclusion of this chapter 'Iranyan Vadai Padalam'. It also speaks about incarnation of God, whose motive is to establish Dharma and destroy Adharma. This chapter highlights the bhakthi of Prakalathan, son of Iranya and describes the arrogant king Iranya's death. The poet Kambar insists the people to give up their ego which may lead to destruction. He wants to announce the end of Ramayana beforehand and also explained the main mantra (Om Namō Narayana) of Sri Vasihnavism.

Keywords: Inclusion of new chapter – Incarnation of God – Brother's advise to Ravana – Arrogant king's death – Objection to Kambaramayana – Acceptance of Lord Narasimha – Dramatic irony – Vaishnavites agreed

Preface

Kambar named his epic Ramavataram. Later, it became popularly known as 'Kambaramayana'. The epic was written in Tamil following Valmiki's Sanskrit version of Ramayana. Kambar, a transcendental poet, has composed this epic with many changes that do not attribute to the Sanskrit version. When tales and legends pass on from one language or country to another it is naturally bound to transform through interpretation. Thus, Kambar has cleverly utilised the changes in translation to his advantage in the epic. By doing so he augmented his epic.¹

One of the changes that Kambar has made is the creation of the 'Iranyan Vadai Padalam' that introduces the incarnation of Lord Narasimha. The 'Iranyan story' is the only chapter in the Kambaramayana that the poet has newly inducted, while the rest of the epic remains unchanged.²

Superiority of the incarnation

The superiority of the incarnation emphasises the order in which the incarnation of Tirumal took place. "From the kingdom of God, divine incarnations appear in the physical world. Thus, each particular deity who descends is called the 'Incarnation'. These incarnations remain permanently in the spiritual world. They get the name Avatar when they come and appear in the spiritual sphere."³

Although the incarnations were taken place in order to destroy the Adharma, its purpose is different. Incarnations are formed to free its devotees from the bad and the evils. There are two types of incarnations, one is 'Purnavataram' and the other one is 'Amsavataram'. In the Purnavataram - it is customary for the God to appear with all his might and defend virtue. This is called full incarnations. In Amsavataram, he takes on a worthy role in the lives already born and gives them his ambition and immediately completes the action he considered.⁴ Kambar has shown the complete Ramavatar and its power through Narasimhavatar.

Natural changes can be accepted and run by any society at any time. But any unnatural conditions leads to revolution. Iranyan excelled in all respects such as education, skill and leadership. He was very arrogant, as for him there was no God. There the humility is drained. Thus, Iranian changes nature and becomes arrogant. Then the service of the Lord is formed. Mahakavi Subramanya Bharathiar says about the contradiction between the good and the evil and also warned about the origin of the superior power. When all the filthiness was ruined and the cruelty had become virtuous, The Mother God will appear. With her kindness she will save her devotees and she can destroy Adharma with her kind look.⁵

Iranyan, who has stopped all veneration, penance, etc., and torturing all the virtuous people may shine in fear. He commands and praises Himself as God, and causes suffering in many ways to his son Prakalathan. Thus the incarnation takes place, so that all the gifts received by Iranyan are not false.

Advice to Ravana

Ravana loses caliber due to the qualities of ego, anger and lust. His spiritual light is obscured by the Tamas (laziness) and Rajas (anger) character. In this situation, his younger brother Veedanan advised Ravana to free Sita from his custody. Veedanan don't want to lose his brother Ravana and his name, fame and noble birth because of Sita. So he expressed the idea of sending Sita with Rama. Hence the great poet established his creation of "Iranyan Vadai Padalam".

Ravana made an error; despite warnings Ravana refused to back away. He has gone to the point where there is no other end without death. Therefore Kambar thought that perhaps Ravana would change his mind if he showed arrogance like this and the destruction of the one who lived and died under the illusion that whole world was his slave. In this situation the poet teaches a lesson not only for Ravana but for the future Ravana so they may live not for their self fulfillment but for others.⁶

Thirumanthiram Release

The original mantra of Vaishnavism has been published only in Iranyan Vadai padalam. The author tried to stage the Ramavatara epic at SriRangam. Then the Vaishnavas protested. The rumour was that Kambar ignored the mantra 'Om Namō Narayanaya'.⁷ However, there are reports that Kambar has used the name 'Rama' as the original mantra without praising the eight-letter mantra. Vaishnavites came to accept the Ramavatara epic after the ascension, and Lord Narasimhamoorthy also accepted the Kambar epic.

Dramatic Irony

The Upanishads explain theology in two different ways, Dvaitam and Advaitam. Kambar also accepted with these two theologies and also added one more philosophy called Visittaitam in the following song:

“தாமே தனிநா யகரா யெவையுமும்
போமே பொருளென் றபுரா தனர்தாம்
யாமே பரமன் றனரென் றவவர்க்கு
ஆமே பிறர்நின் னலதா ருளரே,”⁸

Vaishnavism is the doctrine of the threefold truth, which speaks of, 'Chith', 'Achith' and 'Eeswaran'. But Advaitam says that it is all false and that only God is true. Tamilians are not ignorant of the Upanishads as Advaita policy swirls like a storm. Kambar must have sung the song, trying to say that the trio had knowingly accepted the truth. Squeezing the Upanishads, Kavichakravarti Kambar, wanted to announce the end of the Ramayana beforehand. The poet was helped by the technique of reference before the play.⁹ The result is "Iranyan Vadai Padalam".

Iranyan history as a play has many essential references, but while it may seem irrelevant to the epic, in depth it has become closely related to the epic and to other parts of the epic. “The end of the epic is particularly evident: Ravana, like Iranyan, is certain to perish, and Veedanan receive Rama's blessings,

like Prakalathan, is said to have ruled the city of Sri Lanka with the grace of Rama."10 Then the Iranyan Vadai Padalam was sung at SriRangam, scholarly objections arose against it, asking the reason for its inclusion. It is true that there is no such story in the Valmiki Ramayana, yet Kambar requested others to oblige with his creation.

When I tried to write the Ramayana, I did not intend to write about it. We know that Prakalathan and Narasimhamurthy were appearing side by side in the Sri Rama Sannidhi at the Amaruviyappan Temple. While singing Yuttakandam, Sita was taken captive by Ravana, a foreigner, and Rama became very wise at young age. But Prakalathan, who bore all the suffering of his father in his own house where Prakalathan was born. After a cruel slaughter of Iranyan in front of him, Narasimha was finally asked what blessing he would want. Prakalathan's only response was to see Lord Narasimhamoorthy in a serene and sublime state.

When the Ramayana was complete without any hindrance in chanting in remembrance of that Rama, I was fascinated by the scenes of Prakalathalvar at a young age, who was an ordinary human being unlike the incarnated Sri Rama, without an army or an ally. Therefore, we ask the scholars to make a decision after listening to this.

Sri Nathamunigal said that since the history of Prakalathalwar, who was liberated by the devotion of Sriman Narayana, we will listen this Ramayana and can decide.

“நசைதிறந்த திலங்கப் பொங்கு நன்று நன்றென்ன நக்கு
விசைதிறந்த துருமு வீழ்ந்த தென்னவோர் தூணின் வென்றி
இசைதிறந்த தமர்ந்த கையா லெற்றினா னெற்ற லொடும்
திசைதிறந்த அண்டங் கீறிச் சிரித்தது செங்கட் சீயம் “-

இரணியன்வதைப்படலம்

That Ambikapathy took his bronze like voice and sang this song in a heroic raga and the statue of Lord Narasimha nods and stretches out his hand, thus he became known as Eduthakai Narasingar. Sri Nathamunigal declared that there is no doubt that the Tamil epic of Kambaramayana is a divine epic and this is the epitome of destiny. No longer, Iranyan Vadai Padalam is said to be barred from appearing in the Ramayana – is the history of the origin of Kambaramayana Iranyan Vadai Padalam.

Although there is speculation that the Iranyan tale was later sung but there is no conclusive evidence. The incarnation of Narasimha is summoned to boast of the secret of Ramavatar. When souls do not have grace within, they reach the state of arrogance. Iranyan has been brought in to correct Ravana from that situation. In the Iranyan Vadai Padalam, Kambar is deeply immersed in his favourite deity, Lord Narasimhamurthy, and the Vaishnava rites and mantras that worship him. Iranyan Vadai Padalam is sung as one of the gems of the Navaratna garland of Kambaramayana.

The literary treasure of the genius "Iranyan Vadai Padalam" is hailed as the "Little Ramayana". The central theme of the Ramayana is that the seed of destruction sprouts in its place as the arrogance multiplies and crosses its boundaries. The chapter is nicknamed the "Little Ramayana" because of the centrality of the Iranyan dialectic and the use of the Ramayana.

The series embodies the philosophical songs of Prakalathan's preaching to Iranyan. The meaning of the poetry is evoked. He explains. “Nobody adorns themselves with fragrance less flowers. Iranyan wears a fragrant garland. If knowledge blossoms then there should be a sense of devotion. Study without devotion is unworthy. Iranyan learnt but, he did not seek all knowledge and, therefore, did not benefit from education. Hence this has been a treasure of literary beauties with the poet's inventive and subtle modes of poetic devices, catering to its audience, the richness of the poem.

Notes

1. Senthurai Muthu; Kamban – Oru Thiranaivu; p.300
2. A. Pandurangan; Kaapiya Nokkil Kambaramayanam; pp.230 -231
3. Athmadhathvadass (Translator); Bagavatgita; p.245
4. K. Banumathy; Tamil Ilakkiyangalil Hanuman Vazhipadu; p.118
5. S. Subramanya Bharathy; Bharathiyar Kavidaigal; p.87
6. M. Sayabumaraikayar (compiled work); Kambar Aivuk Kovai; pp.257 -258
7. Ma.Ra.Po. Gurusamy; Ramayana Sinthanai; p.50
8. Kambaramayanam; song 6:3:109
9. Ma.Ra.Po. Gurusamy; Ramayana Sinthanai; p.2
10. M. Neelaamani; Kambaramayanak kilaik kadaigal; p.116
11. M. Varadarasan; Kavichakravarthy Kambar Vazhkai Varalaru; pp.110 - 112

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