



AUM SHANTHI

Introduction

Nat chinthanai - 001

Welcome to the first of a series of articles entitled Nat chinthanai. This series is a focus on the Hindu Saivaite Tradition and the teachings of the Satguru Yogaswami. In short this is an attempt to revise and rehearse the spiritual teachings of our ancestors, elders and Gurus in a synopsis form.

In today's 'Thought of the day', we will be discussing; the standard practice of prayer, the meaning of the words Guru, Satguru and Natchinthanai.

The standard practice in our Saivite Tradition of worship, whether it be at home or at temple is to:

First cleanse ourselves (a bath or at least wash the face and hands)

Then we start with Bajan (Group singing of hymns).

The Pooja consisting of Theepa Araathanai, Manthiram, Pancha Puranam and Offerings(Flowers or leaves)

Followed by a discourse of the Scriptures or Teachings - termed - Natchinthanai.

A moment of meditation.

Completed by sharing the offerings with everyone present (at home, family members - in the temple, all the devotees)– the holy ash(veebuthi), holy water (Theertham), sandalwood paste(sanathanam) and Kunkumam.

Finally everyone participates humbly in the sharing of the food(Prasatham), prepared by the devout volunteers. This get-togetherness gives all, a chance to do small chores on the up keep of the temple, exchange personal views and community news.

The meaning of the two Tamil words Guru and Natchinthanai - Guru, simply means teacher, an authority of great knowledge and or skill in one or more aspects, whether it be music, dance, art, science or technology. Our spiritual teachers and saints will be some of our gurus in these series of articles. 'Satguru' refers only to an enlightened one, who guides their disciples in that path.

Nat chinthanai is a compound Tamil word that literally means 'good thoughts'. Satguru Siva Yoga swami from Jaffna, Sri Lanka(one of the foremost Hindu Saivaite gurus) referred to his collection of songs and words as Nat chinthanai . We will learn more about this distinguished saint in our other articles. In this series Nat chinthanai will mean the development of spiritual aptitude.

In this series, we are going to include any thought provoking words, that will improve our life according to Hindu Dharma(Virtuous path). In one way this includes every subject on earth . May be not! Few exceptions like the latest Java_script in computer, Hollywood top actors doping habits, new model car, Sony's latest HD format, building of the space station, new viruses on the internet, rumors about the prime minister's family. Now you may be wondering whether Natchinthanai speaks of nothing. True it deals a lot about the metaphysics of Nothingness. But also it deals with the most simple things like, what is good to eat, how to talk, learn, sleep better; concentration, Meditation, will power, mysticism, achievement; satisfaction, peace of mind, peace at home, peace in the humanity at large; religion, Saivism, scriptures, doctrines, ritual and practices, and what not.

To begin, Hindu dharma states and directs us to live conscientiously. For that we have to know what is good and bad within ourselves; right and wrong in the society's ethics; civic and criminal acts as defined in the law of the land. In other words, starting from external to inner most - Dharma - law of cosmos(nature), social law(culture), self law(discipline), law of consciousness (meditation), spiritual law(enlightenment), and the divine law(samathi).

Praise to the Almighty, which our forefathers, in the Tamil language called Siva. Thus our religion got its name Saivism, a sector in Hinduism.

We pray to Thurka Devi to lead us in the path of Dharma.

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