

🙏 Thiruppavai Pasurams 16-21: Journey to Krishna's Palace



Thiruppavai Pasurams Collection

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Description: Detailed explanation of Pasurams 16 through 21, including the story of Ramanuja as "Thiruppavai Jeeyar," the significance of the Thirty-Three Devas, and the divine tale of Gajendra Moksham

Tags: thiruppavai, andal, krishna, ramanuja, gajendra-moksham, devotional, hindu-scripture

🚪 Pasuram 16: Nayaganai Nindru (Seeking Permission)

In this verse, Andal and the Gopis arrive at the palace of Nandagopala. Because of previous attempts by demons (like Putana and Sakatasura) to kill young Krishna, the palace is heavily guarded. The maidens must respectfully seek permission from the gatekeepers to enter.

🛡️ The Address to the Guards

Andal addresses the **Koile Kaapaane** (Guard of the Temple/Palace) and the **Vasalkaappaan** (Guard of the Gate), specifically noting the gate adorned with flags and festive festoons (*Kodithondrum Thorana Vaayil*).

👑 Praise of Nandagopala

She refers to Nandagopala as **Nayagan** (The Leader), acknowledging his authority.

The Request

They ask the guard to open the jeweled doors (*Manikkathavam Thaazh Thiravaay*). They identify themselves as innocent "cowherd girls" (*Aayar Sirumiyaro*) to show they pose no threat.

The Justification

They remind the guard that the Lord (*Mayan/Manivannan*) had promised them the drum/audience the previous day (*Nennale Vaay Nerndhaan*).

Purity

They claim to have come with purity (*Thuyomaai Vandhom*)—implying physical cleanliness and internal purity (chanting the Lord's name).

The Plea

They beg the guard not to say "no" (*Maatraadhe*) but to open the doors with love (*Neya Nilai Kathavam*).



Pasuram 17: Ambarame Thanneere (Waking the Family)

Once inside, they do not go straight to Krishna. They follow protocol by waking the elders and Balarama first.

Waking Nandagopala

He is praised for his immense charity: giving clothes (*ambaram*), water (*thanneere*), and food (*sore*) to the needy.

Waking Yashoda

She is addressed as the "tender creeper" (*Kombanarkku*) and the "beacon light of the clan" (*Kula Vilakku*), asking her to rise and give them wisdom.

Waking Krishna (Trivikrama)

He is described as the one who pierced the sky to measure the world (*Ambaram Oodu Aruthu Ongi Ulagalandha*), referring to the Vamana-Trivikrama Avatar. He is called the King of Devas (*Umbar Koman*).

Waking Balarama

He is addressed as *Selva Baladeva* (Wealthy Balarama) who wears golden anklets (*Sempon Kazhaladi*). Andal asks him and his younger brother (*Umbiyum Neeyum*) to sleep no more.

The Sleeping Arrangement

Commentators note a protective arrangement in the bed: Nandagopala, Yashoda, Krishna, and Balarama. Krishna lies in the middle to ensure He is protected from all sides against demons.



Pasuram 18: Undu Madakalitran (Waking Nappinnai)

Andal now approaches **Nappinnai** (Neela Devi), recognizing the need for the Divine Mother's mediation (*Purushakara*).

Nandagopala's Valor

The verse begins by describing Nandagopala's strength to highlight Nappinnai's status as his daughter-in-law. He owns elephants with flowing rut (*Undu Madakalitran*) and possesses undefeated shoulders (*Odaadha Tholvaliyan*).

Addressing Nappinnai

She is called the daughter-in-law (*Marumagale*) with fragrant hair (*Kandham Kamazhum Kuzhai*).

Sensory Awakening

Andal points out that the world is awake: roosters are crowing (*Kozhi Azhaithana*) and cuckoos are singing on the Madhavi creeper bower.

The Request

The maidens ask Nappinnai to open the door with her beautiful "red lotus hands" (*Senthaamarai Kaiyal*), causing her bangles to jingle (*Seerar Valai Olippa*).

Why Ramanuja is called "Thiruppavai Jeeyar"

This Pasuram is central to Ramanuja's title. Ramanuja had a deep devotion to the *Thiruppavai* and chanted it daily. Once, while seeking alms (*unchavritti*) in Srirangam, he was chanting this 18th Pasuram. As he reached the line **"Senthaamarai Kaiyal Seerar Valai Olippa"** (Open the door with your red lotus hands, with bangles jingling), he found himself at the door of his guru, **Periya Nambi**.

At that exact moment, the door opened, and Periya Nambi's daughter, **Athuzhai**, appeared. Her sudden appearance and the sound of her bangles perfectly coincided with Ramanuja's meditation on Nappinnai opening the door. Overwhelmed by seeing the divine Nappinnai in the child, Ramanuja fainted in ecstasy. Periya Nambi realized Ramanuja must have been chanting the *Undu Madakalitran* verse. Because of this profound experiential connection, Ramanuja is celebrated as the *Thiruppavai Jeeyar*.



Pasuram 19: Kutthu Vilakku (The Dialogue with Nappinnai)

The maidens are now visually inside the bedroom. This verse is a conversation urging Nappinnai to let Krishna wake up.

The Setting

The room is lit by standing lamps (*Kutthu Vilakku*). Krishna is sleeping on an ivory cot (*Kottukkal Kattil*) on a soft mattress (*Pancha Sayanam*).

The Divine Posture

Krishna rests His head on Nappinnai's chest (*Nappinnai Kongai Mel*). He is described as *Malar Marban* (One with a broad chest where Lakshmi resides).

The Plea to Nappinnai

They address her as the one with beautiful eyes adorned with collyrium (*Maitthadam Kanninay*). They gently accuse her of being possessive, saying she will not let her husband wake up even for a moment (*Etthanai Podhum Thuyil Ezha Ottay Kaan*).

The Argument

They tell her that being unable to bear even a moment's separation (*Pirivaatragillayal*) does not befit her nature as the compassionate mediator (*Thathuvam Andru Thagavu*). They need her to help them reach the Lord.



Pasuram 20: Muppathu Muvar (Gajendra Moksham & The 33)

Andal addresses the Lord's valor and Nappinnai's beauty, asking them to wake up.

The "33" (Muppathu Muvar)

The verse addresses the Lord as "**Muppathu Muvar Amararkku Mun Sendru**" (He who goes before the 33 celestials). The number 33 refers to the principal classes of Devas:

- **12** Adityas
- **8** Vasus
- **11** Rudras
- **2** Ashwini Kumaras
- **Total:** $12 + 8 + 11 + 2 = 33$

The Story of Gajendra Moksham

The commentary links the phrase "going before the 33" to the story of **Gajendra Moksham**.

An elephant named Gajendra was caught by a crocodile in a pond while gathering flowers for worship. Unable to free himself, he cried out

"Adimoolame!" (Oh, the Primal Cause). Indra, Brahma, and Shiva did not respond because they realized they were not the "Causeless Cause".

Sriman Narayana, hearing the cry, rushed to the scene **ahead of the 33 classes of Devas** to save the devotee. He removed the elephant's fear/tremors (*Kappam Thavirkkum*).

Andal uses this to remind the Lord of His nature: He is the *Kaliye* (Capable One) who rushes to aid the helpless before anyone else.

Request to Nappinnai

They ask Nappinnai, described as *Thiruve* (Lakshmi), to give her husband a **fan** (*ukkam*) and a **mirror** (*thattoli*) to wake Him gracefully.

Pasuram 21: Etra Kalangal (Surrender to Krishna)

Having gone through the gatekeepers, parents, and Nappinnai, the maidens now address Krishna directly. This verse emphasizes **Saranagati** (Surrender).

The Prosperity

The cows of Nandagopala are so generous (*Vallal Perum Pasukkal*) that milk flows continuously into the vessels (*Etra Kalangal*) until they overflow. This symbolizes the overflowing generosity of the Acharya (represented by the cows) giving wisdom (milk) to the disciple.

Addressing Krishna

He is the son of the one who possesses this wealth. He is described as **Periyai** (The Great One) and **Sudare** (The Resplendent Light).

The Nature of Surrender

The maidens draw a parallel between themselves and Krishna's defeated enemies:

- Enemies surrender at His feet because their strength is destroyed (*Matrar Vali Tholaindu*)

- The maidens, however, surrender out of love, having no other refuge
(*Aatradhu Vandhu Un Adi Paniyuma Pole*)

Conclusion

They declare they have come solely to praise Him (*Potri Yam Vandhom*).

Reference

[Thiruppavai Pasurams Playlist](#)



Acknowledgment & Disclaimer

These articles are based on discourses by **Sri Dushyanth Sridhar**, who renders discourses in English & Tamil on Rāmāyana, Mahābhārata, Bhāgavata, Vishnu Purāna, Bhagavad Gitā, Vishnu Sahasranāma, and Divya Prabanda in the upanyāsam, pravachanam, or kālakshepam style. Visit <https://desikadaya.org> for more information. These notes are presented solely for educational purposes to help viewers download and benefit from these teachings. Any incorrect interpretations or inaccuracies are mine and unintentional—please forgive me. For any feedback, please send an [email](#).

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