

# Truth Speaks



by Yoga Siddha Sivavakkiyar

## Sampler

Civavākkīyar, a Tamil Siddha of 15<sup>th</sup> century A.D composed Civavākkīyam a collection of approximately 530 verses in Tamil. These verses follow the concept of āṛṇupadai or “showing the path to the people”. This concept has two aspects, one positive and another negative. They tell people “what they should do” and “what not to do”. The sample of verses from Civavākkīyam given below will show you the variety of topics that Civavākkīyam deals with.

### On Mindless worship rituals:

Verse 13

சாத்திரங்கள் ஓதுகின்ற சட்டநாத பட்டரே!  
வேர்த்துஇரைப்பு வந்தபோது வேதம்வந்து உதவுமோ?  
மாத்திரைப்போ தும்உளே யறிந்துதொக்க வல்லீரேல்  
சாத்திரப்பை நோய்கள்ஏது? சத்திமுத்தி சித்தியே!

Translation:

Sattanātha Bhatta who recites the scriptures!

Will the Vedas come to help when sweating and wheezing occurs (at the time of death)?

If you are capable of realizing and contemplating inside even for a moment

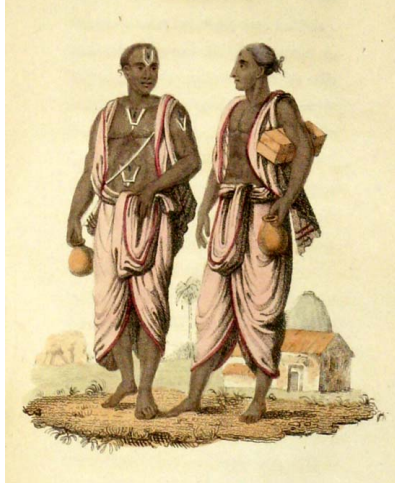
Where are the diseases of scriptural baggage? Only power, liberation, attainment!

Commentary:

Civavākkīyar ridicules performing rituals mindlessly. Here he reprimands the practice of mindlessly reciting scriptures. He says that when wheezing and sweating occurs, portending death, mere scriptural knowledge will not help. One needs pills, *māttirai*. Probably, he makes a pun on this word by saying that if at least for a *māttirai*, a moment, one realizes and contemplates on the Divine, the diseases caused by the baggage of empty scriptural knowledge will not trouble one. One will be bestowed with true power, liberations and siddhi. *Cittam*, the limited knowledge, will become *citti* or supreme consciousness.

Civavākkīyar has humorously addressed the listener as *Satta nātha Bhatta*. This term means a traditionalist who is ruled by the rule book or *sattam* or one who thinks he is the lord of the rules, *nātha of sattam* or one who swears by the scriptures.

Civavākkīyar, being a Siddha, is a free thinker and a revolutionary who refuses to allow himself to be carried along by any religion, scripture or ritual.



“A Siddha is one who has burnt the śāstras” (**Agathiyar Jnanam-2** verse 5, *Bhadragiriyar* verse 155). This is to be interpreted not in the literal sense but in the sense that for a *jnāni* or a realized soul, “the Vedas are not Vedas” (**Agathiyar Jnanam-1** verse 7, *Bhadragiriyar* verse 147).

A Siddha is one who has attained a stage of realization where he is not bound by the injunctions of the *śāstras*, one who has gone beyond the Vedas. The Vedas and the *śāstras* (not only religious texts but also texts on science, politics, medicines etc.) are an only guiding post showing the direction where one has to go. The Siddhas say that there is no point in hanging on to the guide-post. A traveler if he wants to reach the destination, should go beyond the guide posts and travel in the direction shown by the guide-post. In this context, one is reminded of Tirumular’s question: when one has realized “That” which is beyond worship, what is the use of spiritual education and *śāstras* (mandiram 3052). One must refer also to the verses of Civavākkiyar 136, 178 and 454, which convey a similar message and also the Christian gospel “The letter killeth, the spirit giveth life”.

The Siddhas wanted to convey the spiritual experiences directly to the people without the medium of the *śāstras* and rituals. There is always a wide gulf between words and the experiences they describe. To seek enlightenment in words and ideas is like expecting the right of a menu card to reach and satisfy the inner processes of a hungry man. A *śāstra* is like a finger pointing to the moon; it would be a calamity if one took the finger for the moon. The rationalists rejoice at the expression of the Siddhas that one should burn the *śāstras*. It is not the intention of the Siddhas to burn the *śāstras* or destroy the temples. The only thing that the Siddhas want is that one should be free from the unrealized description of truth. To them a description can never in itself transmit the experience. The word “rose” by itself will not smell sweet!

Hence, the Tamil Siddhas are not atheists; their temper is devout; they are “pious rebels” inside the field of religion. In the spiritual journey the motto is: Have less scriptural baggage and make spiritual travel a pleasure!

Verse 14

நாலுவேதம் ஒதுவீர், ஞானபாதம் அறிகிலீர்  
பாலுள்ளெய் கலந்தவாறு பாவிகாள், அறிகிலீர்!

ஆலம் உண்ட கண்டனார் அகத்துளே இருக்கவே  
காலன் என்று சொல்லுவீர், கனவிலும் அஃதில்லையே

Translation:

You will recite the four Vedas but will not know the part, wisdom  
You do not know that it remains like clarified butter within milk,  
When the Lord with the neck through which poison was consumed remains within,  
You will say there is Lord of Death. It does not exist even in dream.

Commentary:

Civavākkīyar says that people recite the four Vedas, *Rg*, *Yajur*, *Sāma* and *Atharvaṇa* but will not know the part, wisdom. *Carya pādam*, *kriya pādam*, *yoga pādam* and *jñāna pādam* are the four parts of God realization. Civavākkīyar refers to the fourth part here. The Divine actually remains within the limited soul like clarified butter within milk. Its presence is not obvious but through proper practice, it becomes visible like the butter which becomes visible upon churning. Like butter that is spread in every milk particle, the divine is present in every cell. It is all pervading.



Civavākkīyar says that once the presence of the Divine within is recognized, there is no death for the aspirant. He says that death does not exist even in such a person's dreams. This idea is explained in the story of Markandeya who was released from death and granted eternal life by Lord Yama, the God of Death, the Ultimate Reality manifested as Śiva and rescued him from death. This verse is also about the nature of the Ultimate Reality.

The Ultimate Reality is referred to as 'the one with neck that consumed poison' or '*vidamuṇḍa kaṇḍan*'. In Siddha parlance, this refers to a supreme state of yoga. Through kundalini practice, the aspirant changes the direction of flow of his seminal fluid and raises it upwards. This process is called '*madai māṛṇal*' or *ulta sādhana*. The sexual fluid that flows down is the poison that submerges a person in worldly life. The same fluid, when it moves upwards, grants liberation. This is indicated by Śiva's blue neck and the story that he consumed the poison that emerged from churning the milky ocean. Churning of the milky ocean corresponds to breath control and rising of kundalini śakti through the *suṣumna nāḍi*, a process that confers extraordinary powers to the practitioner. Tirumular laments that none knows this significance of the "blackened neck" and they simply say that Śiva swallowed poison. They are ignorant about the real significance (mandiram 521).

Verse 33

மாறுபட்ட மணிதூலக்கி வண்டின் எச்சில் கொண்டுபோய்  
ஊறுபட்ட கல்லின்மீதே ஊற்றுகின்ற மூடரே  
மாறுபட்ட தேவரும் அறிந்து நோக்கும் என்னையும்  
கூறுபட்டு தீர்க்கவோ குருக்கள்பாதம் வைத்ததே

Translation:

Cleaning the bell taking the oral secretion from bees  
Ye stupid people who pour it over broken stone!  
The Lord who is different from it placed me, one who explores with knowledge  
At the feet of the Guru to understand the ultimate true nature.

Commentary:

True knowledge is obtained only from a preceptor. Civavākkīyar says that the Lord himself placed him at the feet of the Guru so that he would understand the true nature of everything. Civavākkīyar was trying to comprehend the truth having obtained the knowledge which is the prerequisite for it. He says that unless one surrenders to a true guru any amount of empty rituals such as *abhiseka* or pouring material over God figurines would not grant realization.



Civavākkīyar, in his fervor, calls God's image carved in stone as a 'broken piece of stone, a stone that was harmed'. He calls honey as 'spit of bees'. This verse stands as an example of how the Siddhas called a spade a spade. There are no pretenses or false glorification.

Verse 34

கோயிலாவது ஏதடா குளங்களாவது ஏதடா  
கோயிலும் குளங்களும் கும்பிடும் குலாமரே  
கோயிலும் மனத்துளே குளங்களும் மனத்துளே  
ஆவதும் அழிவதும் இல்லைஇல்லை இல்லையே!

Translation:

Temples- what are they, tanks- what are they,  
Ye fools who worship temples and tanks!



Temple and tanks are within the heart  
Creation and destruction, never, never, never at all.

Commentary:

In the previous verse, Civavakkiyar deplored mindless worship rituals. Here he is banishing mindless visits to temples and sacred water bodies. He says that the temple and the tank exist within the mind.



The place where the Lord resides is the temple. 'koil= ko+il', the residence of the Lord, is the heart as the divine is immanent. The *antaryami* form or the divine as the indweller is the supreme form as it functions as a witness and a guide- a guru within. Such a location of the Lord is beyond creation and destruction unlike the material temples and tanks. To the Tamil Siddhas the real temple and real *thirtha* (as thresholds of religious experience) are not outside but inside the individual. Refer also Karuvurar Puja Vidhi verse 10.

## On kundalini yoga:

Verse 4

உருத்தரித்த நாடியில் ஒடுங்குகின்ற வாயுவைக்  
கருத்தினால் இருத்தியே கபாலம் ஏற்றவல்லீரேல்  
விருத்தரரும் பாலராவீர் மேனியும் சிவந்திடும்  
அருள்தரித்த நாதர்பாதம் அம்மைபாதம் உண்மையே.

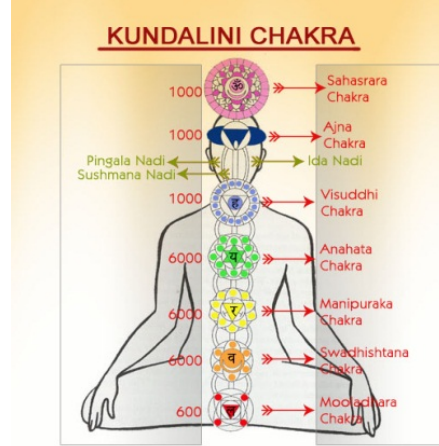
Translation:

The vital air that abides within the main *nādi*  
Holding it there through mental focus if you are capable of rising it to the skull  
The old will become young, the body will glow red,  
This is true, I swear by the graceful Lord's feet and the feet of the Mother God.

Commentary:

In this verse, Civavākkiyar explains the concept of kundalini yoga in a nutshell. Through breath control and mental focus, the *prāna* is made to travel through the *suṣumna nādi*

and reach the *sahasrāra cakra*. When the *prāna* reaches the *sahasrāra*, it results in tranquility of the body (*cinmaya*). A body of light (*divya deha*) and descent of ambrosia ensues. Drinking of this divine nectar confers youthfulness to the body. Civavākkīyar declares that this is true by swearing on the sacred feet of the Divine. *Nāthan* represents Śiva and *ammai* represents Śakti. Śiva-Śakti continuum represents consciousness and bliss, the two inseparable concepts.



Verse 19

சங்கிரண்டு தாரையொன்று சன்ன பின்னல் ஆகையால்  
மங்கிமாளு தேயுலகம் மானிடங்கள் எத்தனை  
சங்கிரண்டையும் தவிர்த்து தாரைஊத வல்லிரேல்  
கொங்கை மங்கை பங்கரோடு கூடிவாழல் ஆகுமே!

Translation:

Conches are two; blow horn is one, finely knit. So  
The world is dimming and dying, how many humans!  
Avoiding the conches if you are capable of blowing the horn,  
Living together with the consort of the lady will occur.

Commentary:

This is also a verse couched in twilight language. The conches correspond to the two meridians *ida* and *pingala* and the blow horn is the *suṣumna nādi*. A *nādi* is a fine energy channel through which various signals pass. The three humors *vāta*, *pitta* and *kapha* pass through various *nādis* and affect the physical and mental health of a person. Their imbalance causes various diseases and different mental states that make a person act in a certain way. This leads to accumulation of karma which results in further births. Hence, Civavākkīyar says that millions die and the world grows dim. The energy of breathing is wasted as it is not directly towards the right *nādi* for spiritual pursuit. This is another reason for Civavākkīyar saying that the world is dimming and dying.



If a person is capable of regulating the breath so that the life force, *prana*, flows through the *suṣumna nādi* and not through the other two, then he will win the opportunity to remain with the Divine. He will realize the Divine. Civavākkiyar says that during pranayama one should blow the *prana* with as much force as if he is blowing through a blow horn. This will open the channels for the *prana* to ascend to the *sahasrara*.

Verse 164

நெற்றிபற்றி உழலுகின்ற நீலமா விளக்கினைப்  
பத்திஒத்தி நின்றுநின்று பற்ற றுத்து என்பலன்  
உற்றிருந்து பாரடா உள்ளொளிக்கு மேல் ஒளி  
அத்தனார் அமர்ந்திடம் அறிந்தவன் அனாதியே

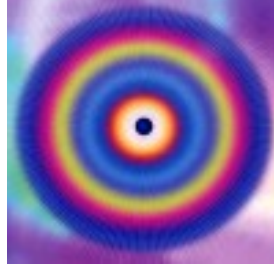
Translation:

The supreme blue light that roams in the forehead,  
What is the use of cutting attachments holding to it and remaining with it?  
Look carefully, the light above the inner light,  
The seat of the Lord/the father, the one who knows this is deathless.

Commentary:

Blue pearl or blue light is an interesting concept in Siddha yoga. Swami Muktananda in his book **Kundalini the Secret of Life** writes about the blue pearl as follows: In the center of that effulgence lies a tiny and fascinatingly beautiful light, the Blue Pearl, and when your meditation deepens you begin to see it, sparkling and scintillating. Sometimes it comes out of the eyes and stands in front of you. It moves with the speed of lightning and it is so subtle that when it passes through the eye, the eye does not feel its movement..... The scriptures describe this blue pearl as the divine light of consciousness which dwells within everyone. It is the actual form of the self, our innermost reality, the form of God which lives within us... within the blue pearl are millions and millions of universes. The Blue Pearl contains the entire cosmos."





The blue light that Civavākkīyar is referring to may be this Blue Pearl that all the practitioners of kundalini yoga seek to experience. By contemplating on it, seeing it continuously through intense meditation one experiences the Absolute, the Lord. Such an aspirant goes beyond death.

Verse 346

வித்திலே முளைத்த சோதி வில்வளையின் மத்தியில்  
முத்திலே ஒளிவதாகி மோனமான தீபமே  
நத்திலே திரட்சிபோன்ற நாதனை அறிந்திடார்  
வத்திலே கிடந்துமுன்ற வாலையான சூட்சமே

Translation:

The effulgence emerged from the seed-in the middle of the curve like a bow,  
Glistening in the pearl, the flame of silence,  
They will not know the Lord, who is like the accumulation in the oyster,  
Wastefully whirling- the subtlety of kundalini śakti.

Commentary:

Some of the practitioners learn kundalini yoga for various minor benefits and not for spiritual realization. They learn to raise the flame of the kundalini śakti, the seed, from the *mūlādhara* and make it reach the middle of the brow, the *ājñā cakra*. When this happens, the aspirant sees a blue pearl at the *ājñā cakra*. This represents the soul, the flame, the true silence. Just the sight of this pearl does not confer realization on the practitioner. It is just an experience. Such people do not realize the Divine. Following this experience the kundalini śakti descends back to *mūlādhara*. Thus, the cycling of the kundalini śakti becomes wasted.



The third line talks about how the Lord, the supreme consciousness slowly builds up in the aspirant. Civavākkīyar equates it to creation of a pearl in an oyster.

From this verse, we understand that even though one becomes an expert in kundalini yoga, true realization does not occur unless he is spiritually mature. Kundalini yoga is like playing with fire. If it is not the right person it will only make one delusional. One gets all kinds of powers that one will quickly descend through the wrong path. This verse warns the practitioners about this pitfall.

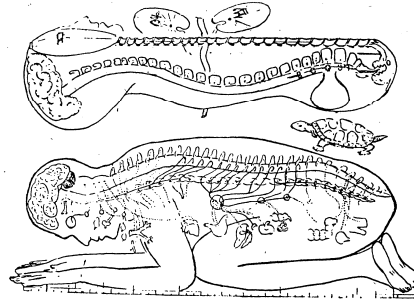
Verse 370

வடிவுபத்ம ஆசனத்து இருத்திமூல அனலையே  
மாருதத்தி னால் எழுப்பி வாசல்ஐந்து நாலையும்  
முடிவுமுத்தி ரைப்படுத்தி மூலவீணா தண்டினால்  
முளரிஆல யம்கடந்து மூலநாடி ஊடுபோம்

Translation:

Remaining in the *padmāsana*, raising the fire in the *mulādhara*,  
With the vital air, crossing the four and five gates,  
Sealing it in the terminal state, through the stem of the *veena*, (*suṣumna nādi*)  
Crossing the temple of the lotus, will go through the main *nādi*.

Commentary:



This verse talks about kundalini yoga. The aspirant sits in the lotus posture or *padma āsana*. The kundalini śakti which remains as the fire is raised with the help of the *prana* or the vital air. It crosses the nine gates or the nine apertures in the body. The aspirant holds the *kechhari mudra* and makes the kundalini force go through the *suṣumna nādi* which hums like the stem of the musical instrument *veena* and makes it cross the cakras (represented as lotuses). Civavākkīyar calls them 'temple of lotuses'.

## On hypocrisy:

Verse 429

ஓசைஉள்ள கல்லைநீர் உடைத்திரண்டாய் செய்துமே  
வாசலில் பதித்தகல்லை மழுங்கவே மிதிக்கிறீர்  
பூசைக்கு வைத்தகல்லில் பூவும்நீரும் சாத்துறீர்

ஈசனுக்கு உகந்தகல் எந்தக் கல்லு சொல்லுமே

Translation:

Breaking the stone with a sound into two,  
You stamp on the stone placed at the entrance making it blunt,  
On the stone kept for worship, you place flowers and water,  
Which is the stone that the Lord prefers? Please tell.

Commentary:

This is a typical Siddha verse where Civavākkiyar ridicules worship rituals performed without true understanding. He points out a situation where one stone is broken into two; one half of it is place at the entrance of the temple and the other inside the sanctum. Everyone passes in and out of the temple stepping on the stone at the threshold. People walk on it without any thought and ultimately the stone is blunted by the feet walking over it. The other half inside the sanctum becomes the object of worship. People fuss over it placing flowers and other sacred articles over it. Basically there is no difference between these two stones. It is only the importance that people give to them which makes them different.

Civavakkiyar asks a very important question here. He asks people whether they can tell which stone God prefers. There are two answers to this question. The straight forward answer is that both the stones are the same to God. He created them both and there is no inherent difference between them. However, there is another interesting answer to this question. The stone at the entrance tolerates the foot steps of thousands of people who walk over it. It is serving the Lord in its own way by helping people come in and go out of the temple. If God has to prefer one stone, it will be the one at the entrance which is serving his devotees sincerely!

Verse 467

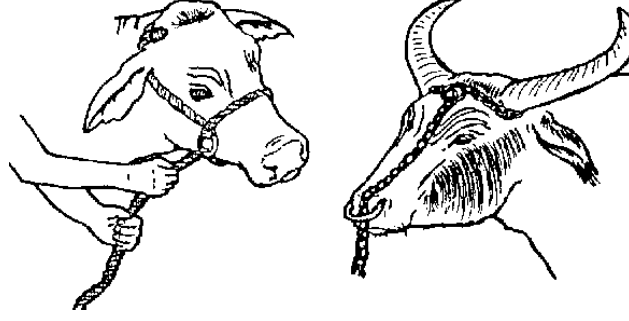
மேதியோடும் ஆவுமே விரும்பியே புணர்ந்திடில்  
சாதிபேத மாமூருத் தரிக்கும்ஆறு போலவே  
வேதம்ஓது வானுடன் புலைச்சிசென்று மேவிடில்  
பேதமாய்ப் பிறக்கிலாத வாறதென்ன பேசுமே

Translation:

If the buffalo copulates with a cow willingly,  
The offspring will be a hybrid as they are different species.  
If a low class woman copulates with a man who recites Vedas  
The offspring is not a hybrid but a human child. What is it (that is different)? Tell me.

Commentary:

This is another verse where Civavākkiyar ridicules distinctions people make of each other based on one's caste. Civavākkiyar says that if a buffalo copulates with a cow, the offspring is a hybrid. It looks neither like the cow nor the buffalo. However, if a man born in a higher caste copulates with a lady from a low caste, the offspring is still a human child. Civavākkiyar asks people how they are justified in talking about the offspring as different when it looks the same, as a human being.



Verse 39

பறைச்சியாவது ஏதடா பணத்தியாவது ஏதடா  
இறைச்சிதோல் எலும்பினும் இலக்கமிட்டு இருக்குதோ  
பறைச்சிபோகம் வேறதோ பணத்திபோகம் வேறதோ  
பறைச்சியும் பணத்தியும் பகுந்து பாரும் உம்முளே

Translation:

Who is a low class woman, who is a rich woman?

Is it marked on the flesh, skin or bones?

Enjoying a low class woman, is it different from enjoying a rich woman?

Low class woman and rich woman, look at them critically within you.

Commentary:



This verse is commonly quoted to indicate Civavākkīyar's intolerance of discrimination which people hold dear. He says that everyone is basically the same, as there are no physical markings, born of caste, in one's bone, flesh or skin.

Civavākkīyar goes to the extent of saying that enjoying a low class woman and a rich woman are the same. He further comments that if one looks critically at a rich woman and a low class woman one would realize that they are none other than the limited consciousness which is free from caste, creed and even a particular sex, that which is within everyone including the enjoyer. Hence, one should shun the evil practice of discriminating people based on their caste.

Lines 3 and 4 give Civavākkīyar's famous shock therapy to the readers!

Verse 130

காலைமாலை நீரிலே முழுகும்அந்த மூடர்காள்  
காலைமாலை நீரிலே கிடந்ததேரை என்பெறும்  
காலமே எழுந்திருந்து கண்கள்மூன்றில் ஒன்றினால்  
மூலமே நினைப்பிராகில் முத்திசித்தி யாகுமே.

Translation:

The blind, stupid people who bathe submerging in water in the morn and eve,  
What will the toad that remains in the water day and night attain?  
Waking up early in the morning and through one of the three eyes,  
If you contemplate the Origin then liberation will be attained.

Commentary:

The verse is another example of Civavākkīyar's satire. In a previous verse, he has ridiculed people who claim that they are pure when they bathe and questioned what purity is. Here he makes fun of those who bathe in sacred waters or even generally bathe in the morning and evening claiming that they are pure and hence deserve liberation. He jokingly asks such people that if they claim that they will attain liberation by bathing so, what will a toad that remains in the water all the time attain. Isn't it more deserving of liberation if all the qualification required for liberation is bathing in the morning and evening?



In this connection one is reminded of one of the verses of Kalin. He says that if bathing in the Ganga ensures liberation, then the fish that live permanently in Ganges are more appropriate candidates for liberation than once in a lifetime bathers are.

Civavākkīyar does not leave us with only the ridicule but with a practical suggestion for liberation. He says that one should get up early in the morning and through the eye of discrimination/knowledge, the third eye, we should contemplate on the Absolute. Only this will grant us liberation.

The third eye is popular not only in the Eastern traditions but also in several Western traditions. The third eye, also known as inner eye, refers to the *ajna cakra* in the middle of the



eyebrows. It is considered as the gate that leads one to higher conscious states. It symbolizes enlightenment, a state of non-dualistic perspective. In the Western traditions the third eye is localized in the pineal gland. This point helps in establishing contact with the cerebrospinal nervous system which gives a person the faculty of perception in the higher worlds. This connection and knowledge are under the control of the person's will because it is connected with the voluntary nervous system.

In the Christian teachings, the third eye is referred to in the Book of Revelations, which is seen as a work describing the kundalini and its progression upwards. Several meditation schools such as Zen, Chinese martial arts, Taoism and Aikido use the third eye in their meditation practices. In the Jewish Kabbalah tradition, the third eye is attributed to Chokmah or wisdom.

Rising early has been recommended in both the yoga tradition as well as several health systems such as ayurveda. The time between 4 AM and 5.30 AM is called the *Brahma muhurta* or the time of Gods. Waking up at this time for *sādhana* is highly recommended.

## About Godhead:

Verse 9

அரியும்அல்ல அயனும் அல்ல அப்புறத்தில் அப்புறம்  
கருமைசெம்மை வெண்மையைக் கடந்துநின்ற காரணம்  
பெரியதல்ல சிறியதல்ல பற்றுமின்கள் பற்றுமின்  
துரியமும் கடந்துநின்ற தூரதூர தூரமே.

Translation:

Not Hari, not Brahma, it is beyond the beyond,  
The cause that stood beyond blackness, redness and whiteness,  
Not big, not small, hold on to it, hold it,  
That which stood beyond *turiya*, far, far verily far.

Commentary:

According to the Siddhas, the Ultimate Reality, which is formless and quality-free, includes all forms and qualities. It is beyond the beyond. The three colors, black, red and white represent the three energy channels or *nādis*, *ida* (black), *pingala* (red) and *suṣumna* (white). When the *prāna* rises through the *suṣumna nādi* and reaches the crown *cakra* true realization dawns.

The three colors also represent the three qualities, *sattva* (white), *rajas* (red) and *tamas* (black) represented by Brahma, Viṣṇu and Rudra. Civavākkīyar says that the Ultimate Reality is the primal cause which is beyond these three qualities (and hence beyond the holy triad) also.

The color white represents *prakāśa* (wisdom/effulgence-Śiva) aspect and red, the *vimarśa* (experience/ bliss-Śakti) aspect of Godhead. The *prakāśa* and *vimarśa* are the first emanations, the state of duality of the Ultimate Reality. It is the state of wisdom and bliss. The color black includes all other colors. It is the ultimate state of union. It represents the state of union of the male and female aspects, the wisdom and bliss aspects of the Ultimate Reality. Thus the Absolute is beyond all these three states.

Consciousness comprises of the four states *jāgrat* (wakefulness), *swapna* (dreamstate), *susupti* (beyond the dreamstate) and *turiya* (supreme consciousness). Realization about the Ultimate Reality occurs at the *turiya* state. However, the Ultimate Reality is beyond even this state. It is the '*turiyātīta*'.

Tirumular describes this quality of the Ultimate Reality in Tandiram eight of his **Tirumandiram**. In *mandiram* 2936, he calls the *turiyātīta* state, *mona samādhi*.

Verse 503

நட்டகல்லைத் தெய்வம் என்று நாலுபுட்பம் சாத்தியே  
சுற்றிவந்து முணமுணென்று சொல்லுமந்திரம் ஏதடா  
நட்டகல்லும் பேசுமோ நாதன் உள் இருக்கையில்  
சுட்டசட்டி சட்டுவம் கறிச்சுவை அறியுமோ

Translation:

With the stone planted as God, placing four flowers on it,  
Circumambulating it, chanting mantra under breath, what is it?  
Will the planted stone talk when the Lord is within?  
Will the cooking pot and the ladle know the taste of the dish?

Commentary:



This is Civavākkīyar's often quoted signature verse. People make a bid deal of worshipping God's images carved in stone. They offer flowers and other sacred things to the stone, circumambulate it and chant mantras. Civavākkīyar wonders whether that stone worshipped so will speak as the Lord. No it will not. It is only a place holder. It only represents the Lord. It is not the Lord himself. To explain this Civavākkīyar says "will the pot and ladle know the taste of the food they helped prepare?" Hence, one should have a clear understanding about the purp purpose of a stone image of God and not fight which image is superior to which other.

Verse 131

எங்கள்தேவர் உங்கள்தேவர் என்றிரண்டு தேவரோ?  
அங்கும்இங்கு மாய்இரண்டு தேவரே இருப்பரோ?  
அங்கும்இங்கும் ஆகிநின்ற ஆதிமூர்த்தி ஒன்றலோ?  
வங்கவாரம் சொன்னபேர்கள் வாய்புழுத்து மாள்வரே.

Translation:

Are there two Gods, as yours and ours?  
Can there be two Gods, here and there?  
Isn't it One God who remains as everywhere/everything?  
Those who speak such evil words will die with their mouths putrefying.

Commentary:

People constantly fight about the supremacy of their God as if there are many Gods. Civavākkīyar ridicules this stupidity by affirming there is only one God who is omnipresent. Arguing and fighting over whose God is better will only breed hatred and other bad qualities. People who indulge in such deplorable arguments will ultimately be destroyed.

Verse 29

தங்கம்ஒன்று ரூபம்வேறு தன்மையான வாறுபோல்  
செங்கண்மாலும் ஈசனும் சிறந்திருந்த தும்முளே  
விங்களங்கள் பேசுவீர் விளங்குகின்ற மாந்தரே  
எங்குமாகி நின்ற நாமம் நாமம் இந்த நாமமே!

Translation:

Like the gold is one and its form another,  
The beautiful-eyed Viṣṇu and Īśa remain gloriously within you,  
Ye people who remain arguing uselessly,  
The name that is all pervasive is verily this name.

Commentary:

This verse seems to be out of place in the sequence of verses as a specific name of the Lord is not mentioned here but is referred to it as 'this name'. The most appropriate place for this could be next to the verses that praise the glory of 'rāma nāma'. However, one may think that perhaps Civavākkīyar is saying that God is formless, yet underlying all forms and should not be given any name that demands a specific form.



Civavākkīyar is explaining this idea with the example of gold and various ornaments made from it. Gold is a concept. One cannot explain what gold is, except to describe its qualities like luster, pliability, hardness etc., and see it in various forms. Similarly, universal consciousness is a concept that has, as its form, various manifestations such as Rudra, Viṣṇu, Brahma and other Gods in the Hindu pantheon who are assigned specific qualities (by people). These Gods are none other than specific aspects of the one and only Divinity, the Universal Consciousness. Hence, Civavākkīyar reprimands people that arguing who is superior, Viṣṇu or Śiva, is a useless as He is the One in All.

Verse 222

எங்கும் உள்ள ஈசனார் எம்முடல் புகுந்தபின்  
பங்குகூறுபோடுவார் பாடுசென்று அணுகிலார்  
எங்கள் தெய்வம் உங்கள்தெய்வம் என்றிரண்டு பேதமோ  
உங்கள் பேதம் அன்றியே உண்மை இரண்டு இல்லையே

Translation:

After the all-pervading Lord entered my body  
(I, they) have not gone towards those who divide and separate.  
Are there two distinct entities as your God and our God?  
Other than your distinction, the truth is not two.

Commentary:

Siddhas vehemently try to establish that there is only one God. Tirumular in his Tirumandiram says “the tribe is only one and there is only One who is God”  
Civavākkīyar reflects the same idea here when he questions whether there are two entities as “my God and your God”. He clearly says that “the distinctions or differences exists only in your mind”, the truth is, there is nothing but the One only.

Verse 394

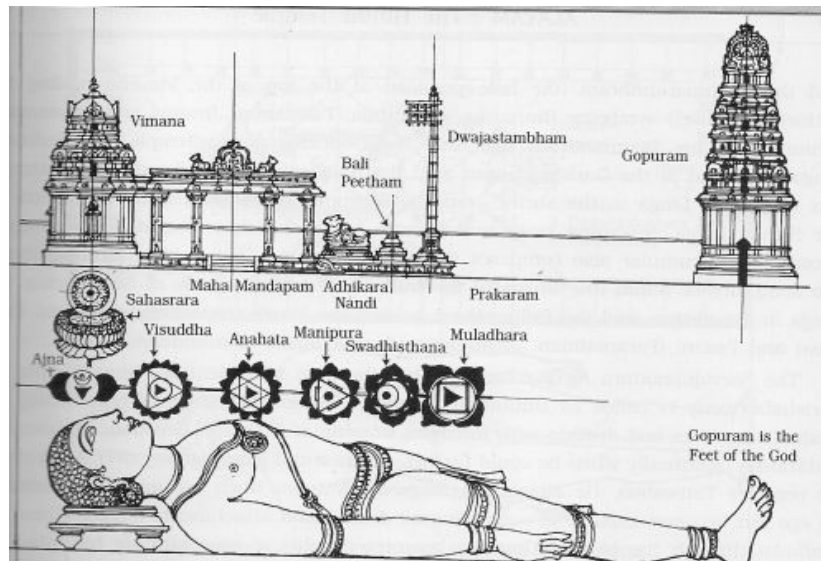
கோயிலும் குளங்களும் குறியினிற் குருக்களாய்  
மாயிலும் மடியிலும் மனத்திலே மயங்குநீர்  
ஆயனை அரனையும் அறிந்துணர்ந்து கொள்விரேல்  
தாயினும் தகப்பனோடு தான் அமர்ந்தது ஒக்குமே.

Translation:

Temple and tanks, as signs of Lord,  
You becoming delusional with *maya* and laps,  
If you realize the cowherd and Hara,  
It is like sitting with mother and father.

Commentary:

A Temple and a tank are only symbols of the Divine. They are not Divinity themselves. Instead of realizing this, people consider them as Divinity and waste a lot of time visiting them. This is the illusion which confuses their minds. Civavākkiyar says that instead of this, if people spend their time seeking the cowherd, Paśupati, and Hara, the one who dispels birth, it will be like the limited soul sitting with the father, Śiva and mother Śakti- like the limited soul remaining with the supreme soul.



The temple signifies a human body. The sanctum sanctorum represents the locus of the Divinity within the human body while the other parts of the temple represent the various limbs of the human body. The temple tank represents the reproductive fluid. The process of going to the temple and worshipping the Divine is actually the process of worshipping the Divine within. Thus, these symbols act as a guru and propel the aspirant towards realization. However, people miss this point completely and spend a lot of time visiting various temples and water bodies.

People are cows, *pasu*, and the Lord is the cowherd, *Pati*, who directs them in the direction. The Lord is Hara who cuts away evil qualities and thus the cycle of *samsāra*. The image of Lord Subramanya sitting with Śiva and Śakti depicts the concept of the limited soul remaining with the active and inactive components of the Supreme Reality.

## About namacivaya



Verse 96

நவ்விரண்டு காலதாய் நவின்றமவ் வயிறதாய்  
சிவ்விரண்டு தோளதாய் சிறந்தவவ்வு வாயதாய்  
யவ்விரண்டு கண்ணதாய் அமர்ந்து நின்ற நேர்மையில்  
செவ்வைஒத்து நின்றதே சிவாயம் அஞ்செழுத்துளே

Translation:

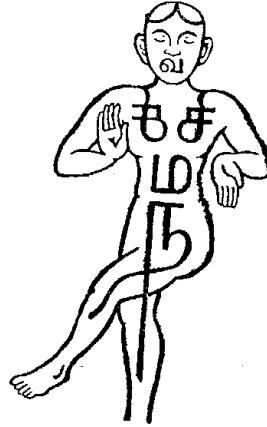
With *na* as the two legs, *ma* as the stomach,  
*ci* as the two shoulders, the superior *va* as the mouth,  
*ya* as the two eyes, that which remained truthfully so,  
As supreme object in the subtle body, everything remained within the five-lettered  
Civayam.

Commentary:

This verse is a form of the Ultimate Reality with *na-ma-ci-va-ya* being its body parts. This verse reflects Tirumular's **Tirumandiram** verse 941,

‘ஆகின்ற பாதமும் அந்தவாய் நின்றிடும்  
ஆகின்ற நாபியுள் அங்கே மகாரமாம்  
ஆகின்ற சீயிரு தோள்வவ்வாய்க் கண்டபின்  
ஆகின்ற வச்சுடர் அவ்வியல் பாமே

The letters *na* are the legs, *ma* is the stomach, *va* as the mouth, *ci* as the shoulders and *ya* as the two eyes. In the muladhara cakra *na* represents earth element, *ma*- the water, *ci*- the fire, *va*- the air, and *ya* the space element. The body constituted by the mantra *ci-va-ya-na-ma* is called *mandira meni* (mantra body) in Siddha literature.



Verse 127

வேதம்நாலும் பூதமாய் விரவும்அங்கு நீரதாய்ப்  
பாதமே இலிங்கமாய்ப் பரிந்துபூசை பண்ணினால்  
காதினினு கடைதிறந்து கட்டறுத்த ஞானிகள்  
ஆதிஅந்த மும்கடந்து அரியவீடு அடைவரே

Translation:

Four Vedas, as elements, will spread everywhere as water,  
If the sacred feet are worshipped with devotion as the *līṅga*,

The trap in the ear will open cutting asunder everything. The wise  
Will go beyond the beginning and end, to reach the supreme locus.

Commentary:

In the first two lines of the verse, Civavākkiyar states that the Absolute is present as the four Vedas, the five elements and as the *liṅga*. *Liṅga* is the formless form of the Divine. Civavākkiyar advises that the yogin should worship this form with devotion. When the meditation of that yogin becomes intense and the concentration is undiluted, then the yogin “hears” various subtle sounds. Civavākkiyar refers to this by saying the “trap in the ear will open”.



Tirumular lists ten sounds that the yogin hears in this process (**Tirumandiram** verses 606, 607). They are: the sounds of bells, sea, elephants bleating, music of the flute, clapping of the thunderclouds, melody of the bees, call of the conch and the song of the musical instrument *yāl*. These are sounds emanating from the Absolute assuring the seeker that he is progressing in the right direction of contemplation. At the end of these sounds is the *nāḍānthā* or the soundless state. At this state the yogin experiences the Absolute. He becomes *jñāni*, a realized soul. Such a soul has gone beyond the beginning and the end; it has attained liberation.

## Emergence of the Universe and lives:

Verse 145

உருத்தரிப்பதற்குமுன் உடல்கலந்தது எங்ஙனே?  
கருத்த ரிப்பதற்குமுன் காரணங்கள் எங்ஙனே?  
பொருத்திவைத்த போதமும் பொருந்துமாறாது எங்ஙனே?  
குருத்திருத்தி வைத்தசொல் குறித்துணர்ந்து கொள்ளுமே

Translation:

How did the body merge before a form was adorned?  
What are the reasons that led to the impregnation?  
How does the wisdom/knowledge fitted within?  
Understand and realize it from the perfected words of the guru.

Commentary:

This verse which is in the form of a set of questions inquires about creation in both the macrocosm and microcosm. Civavākkiyar asks, “where was the body before a form was adorned” first. Were there two separate entities, the body and soul, before they came together, or was the body created after the soul decided which body it will adorn? If so then what were

the causes for that decision and where did the causes reside? Scriptures say that one's karma decides the body one takes in a particular birth. As the karma is a big load who decides which karma should become fruitful? Where do the karmas remain, are they with the limited soul or universal soul? The wisdom or awareness- where was it and how was it fitted with the soul/body combination? How was this assigned? These are some of the questions that plague a spiritual aspirant. Civavākkīyar says that one should learn these from the words of his guru.

Verse 146

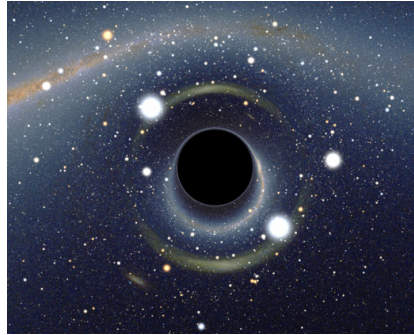
ஆதி உண்டு அந்தம் இல்லை அன்றி நாலு வேதமில்லை  
சோதி உண்டு சொல்லுமில்லை சொல்லிரந்ததேதுமில்லை  
ஆதியான மூவரில் அமர்ந்திருந்த வாயுவும்  
ஆதி அன்று தன்னையும் யார் அறிவது அண்ணலே?

Translation:

Origin- present, no end, also no four Vedas,  
Effulgence-present, no words and none that came out of words  
The vital breath that remained in the primal triad,  
At the time of emergence, and about oneself, who can know about these, O! Lord?

Commentary:

The time of origin,  $T_0$ , has been a puzzle for both, scientists and spiritualists. This verse talks about the  $T_0$  when the universe emerged.



Civavākkīyar says that at the time of creation there were no Vedas, not even the 'col' or word and hence none of the modifications of the word like sentences. Not even the silence which preceded the sound was present. Only the vital breath, the primal triad (either Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra or sattva, rajas and tamas) and consciousness (the sense of I-ness) were present. Civavākkīyar wonders who has the capacity to know about the point of origin.

## Siddha's sandhya bhasha or esoteric language:

Verse 152

சாவல்நாலு குஞ்சதஞ்சு தாயதான வாறுபோல்  
காயமான கூட்டிலே கலந்துசண்டை கொள்ளுதே  
கூவமான கிழநரியக் கூட்டிலே புகுந்தபின்  
சாவல் நாலும் குஞ்சதஞ்சும் தான் இறந்துபோனவே!

Translation:

Four cocks, five chickens and the mother hen in an enclosure,  
Fight among themselves in the enclosure, the body.  
When the enemy, old fox, came into that pen,  
The four cocks and the five chickens died!

Commentary:

This verse is an example of the *sandhya bhāsha* or esoteric language of the Siddhas. Civavākkīyar describes a situation where there are four cocks, five chickens and a mother hen in a pen. All the birds are busy fighting with each other and making a lot of noise. An old sly fox enters the pen. All the cocks and the chicken are killed by the fox.



The meaning hidden in this description is as follows:

The four cocks are the four modifications of the mind namely *buddhi*, *cittam*, *manas* and *ahamkara*. The five chickens are the five senses. The mother hen is the *ātma*, the soul. The mind, its modifications and the senses are busy fighting with each other until the old cunning fox, true knowledge, the Absolute, enters the scene. All the five chickens- the senses, and the four cocks- the modifications of the mind, are immediately killed leaving behind only the mother hen or the soul.

Verse 153

மூலமாம் குளத்திலே முளைத்தெழுந்த கோரையை  
காலமே எழுந்திருந்து நாலுகட்டு அறுப்பீரேல்  
பாலனாகி வாழலாம் பரப்பிரமம் ஆகலாம்  
ஆலம்உண்ட கண்டர்பாதம் அம்மைபாதம் உண்மையே!

Translation:

In the pond of mulādhara, the grass (kundalini śakti) that sprout out,  
Waking up early in the morning, if you reap four stacks of it,  
You turn into a youth and live, you may become the supreme Parabrahman,  
This is true, I swear by the sacred feet of the one who drank poison and the Mother

Commentary:

This verse describes the kundalini yoga where the aspirant wakes up early in the morning and through breathing techniques raises the kundalini śakti from the *mulādhāra* and makes it reach the *sahasrara* cakra. Civavākkīyar says that if one practices this four times in the early morning he will become youthful; he will become the supreme Brahman. Civavākkīyar

assures the truth of this statement by swearing on the sacred feet of Śiva and Śakti. The mother may also mean kundalini śakti.

### Civavākkīyar's social consciousness:

Verse 240

ஆடுநாடு தேடினும் ஆனை சேனை தேடினும்  
கோடிவாசி தேடினும் குறுக்கேவந்து நிற்குமோ  
ஓடிஇட்ட பிச்சையும் உகந்துசெய்த தர்மமும்  
சாடிவிட்ட குதிரைபோல் தர்மம் வந்து நிற்குமே

Translation:

Goats, land, elephant and armies-even if sought,  
Thousand things sought- will they stand in the way (of death)?  
Alms offered willingly, dharma performed happily,  
Like a directed horse, will come and stand.

Commentary:

Any amount of worldly wealth sought cannot save one from death. At the time of death, none of them will come and save one or accompany one. It is only the good deeds performed that help one when death comes knocking on the door.



Verse 241

எள்ளிரும்பு கம்பளி இடும்பருத்தி வெண்கலம்  
அள்ளி உண்ட நாதனுக்கோர் ஆடை மாடை வத்திரம்  
உள்ளிருக்கும் வேதியர்க்கு உற்ற தானம் ஈதிரால்  
மெள்ளவந்து நோய் அனைத்தும் மீண்டிடும் சிவாயமே

Translation:

Sesame seeds, woolen blanket, cotton and bell metal  
(Food) for one who ate voraciously, clothes  
If appropriate offerings are made for the Brahmin who is inside-  
All the diseases that came slowly will return, Civāyame



Commentary:

It is customary to offer sesame seeds, pans made of iron, woolen blankets, clothes, vessels made of bell-metal and food to ward off ill effects of one's karma that usually manifests as diseases.



None of these offerings will save one from diseases. The only way to ward off the diseases, including repeated births, which is the great disease of all, is to make appropriate offerings to the Lord, the object of veneration by Veda, the Vedyar, inside. He does not want these material offerings. He wants one to offer their devotion, sincerity and love.