

Vanavil K.Ravi's

# PRAHLAD

THE EPIC



Along with 60 short poems, "The Songs Of Faith".

# PRAHLAD

- THE EPIC -

&

## SONGS OF FAITH

(SHORT POEMS)

Vanavil K. Ravi



New Goal

New path

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## Preface

The world is moving in a fast pace. The number of persons interested in reading books is dwindling. Even among the few who persist in being members of that shrinking club, very few are interested in reading poems. Naturally, long poems have given way to shorter ones. Limericks and Haikus occupy the centre stage. Still, occasional outbursts do happen. The urge to write at length finds expression, though infrequently. Such an urge made me write a somewhat lengthy ballad last year, “The Ballad of the Warrior-Girl Kuyili”. Again now, the story of Prahlad.

This is a story that has been handed down from generation to generation by Bards, Pandits and Seniors, in temples and homes, through art forms like Sculptures, Paintings, Literature, Folk Lore, Street Shows, Stage Plays and Cinema.

I do not know why I ventured to write this again, that too, in the form of poems and in the language of people to whom it is not familiar. Something in it surfaced from my sub-conscious and I just wanted to share it with the world at large.

The message this story conveys is significant. It makes one realise:

- that the world or Universe is too large to be comprehended by a mere intellectual process;
- that the planet earth may not be the only place of sensory activity in the comparatively large and limitlessly expanding Cosmos;
- that in the Cosmic Calendar, the life of a human being is a matter of a very short duration, almost negligible, like how we human beings consider the life of a mosquito or a moth; and



- that faith is the supreme force that sustains the activities on the cosmic stage.

The term “Epic” that is appended to the title of this work is more on account of the message set out above than on account of the form or length of this work.

I have somehow preferred certain terms more familiar to the English-speaking world while denoting beings or concepts peculiar to Indian ethos. The term ‘Devas’ has thus become Angels; ‘Manasa Putra’ means Ideal Sons; an ‘Asura’ is a demon.

Many of the verses are metrical with a rhyme scheme, though not in accordance with the recognised canons of prosody. Some might appear to be free verses and even unmetrical, if I may say so. Yet, they too have an inner rhythm that may be captured by a discerning reader.

Since the epic under reference is not long enough to be a book by itself, I thought this book could contain also the shorter poems written by me after the publication of the previous collection of my poems in English. A few of them, written before such publication but somehow did not get included in it also find a place in this book.

Of the titles given to the short poems in this book, I reproduce here what I had said in the Preface to the book, “The Sound of Silence”:

Normally, I don’t assign titles to my poems. That’s the prerogative of the readers. It depends on the relationship between a poem and the reader. I hesitate to come in between. However only and only for the ease of reference, I have hesitatingly given titles to the poems.

I thank Prof.Dr. Sanil Raj J, Professor & Head, PG Dept. of English, Sahridaya College of Advanced Studies, Kodakara, Thrissur. He has given a nice and appropriate foreword for this book within a very short time. He is a great scholar and a critic. His foreword has certainly enhanced the value of this book.

Vanavil K.Ravi  
27-12-2022

## Foreword - 1

**Prof.Dr. SANIL RAJ J,**

Professor & Head, PG Dept. of English,  
Sahrdaya College of Advanced Studies,  
Kodakara, Thrissur.

At the outset I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to Shri Vanavil K.Ravi for assigning me the role of writing the Foreword to his forthcoming long poem Prahlad, the Epic along with Songs of Faith - a collection of shorter poems. The first poem attains epic status as it uncovers the story of Prahlad in a grand eloquent manner whereas the short poems are a sequel to his earlier collection of "A Spark, A Petal...!" and "The Sound of Silence" The author deserves accolades for attempting to recite the story of Prahlad from the Hindu epic text Bhagavata Purana in its glory and might. The poet in his preface reminds the readers that the poem is called an epic because of its lofty theme and in this respect it acquires epic proportions. The poem follows most of the epic conventions such as invocation to the muses, use of epic similes, the story of a mighty dynasty, presentation of a great hero and so on.

Prahlad, the Epic takes the readers to the domain of a great literary scenario and from the beginning till the end Ravi maintains the elements of suspense and thrill in a quite reasonable manner with a storyline familiar to most of the Indian common public. John Milton, the great epic poet composed his Paradise Lost to justify the ways of God Man, whereas Ravi is endowed with the mission of re-telling the story of 'Prahlada,' the Asura king and his devotion to 'Prajapati,' the Lord and Protector of Creation according to the Vedas. A poet has all the freedom to modify his art, Ravi, the man of social commitment

has crafted his great poem in such a manner that it becomes congenial to the poetry lovers at large. The poem progresses in a plain simple straightforward style, and anyone with reasonable language skills can enjoy it at a stretch. The poet successfully blends the elements of myths, symbols, comparisons, allusions to eminent figures so that the presentation at full length maintains epic standards.

Similar to a conventional epic poem, Prahlad, the Epic opens with an invocation, but contrary to the epic tradition, the poet attributes his prayer to Lord Vigneswara, instead of the classical muse Urania. Dante Alighieri the great Italian poet divided his Divine Comedy into different cantos, whereas Ravi divides his poem into different sections, each section comprising of different stanzas which are serially numbered. The second stanza of the poem introduces 'OM' as something more than a mere sound. In Section - B, "The Introduction," the poet gives a vivid description of what a legend is:

*Legends are not just stories  
Or meaningless fantasies  
They portray the Reality  
From a different perspective  
They take their shapes according to the  
Meanings that we give  
They are not projections of a  
Single human mind  
They reflect the essence of History,  
Of the entire mankind.*

The author is conscious of the great task he has undertaken and in no way will he dilute the eminence of the subject he is dealing with. Such a compilation is not easy as a single flaw itself can bring disgrace to the grand myth which is his prime focus.

Then the great episode unfolds with the introduction of a "pompous King." Here the poet makes use of the technique of medias res (beginning from the middle of things), typical of an epic. The readers will then have the natural curiosity to know who this king

is and why he is so pompous. Thus the real story commences from Section - C onwards. In the ongoing sections, the poet questions the limitations of human knowledge and the erroneous means of tracing history:

***History is confined to years, three  
Thousand or a little more  
Whatever happened before,  
Is brushed aside as folklore!***

India is a country of outstanding cultural heritage and it is deep rooted in its cultural philosophy and spirituality. How can such a tradition that withstood the ages be undermined, he questions.

***In the land of Bharat,  
Spiritualism was at  
The core of every act,  
Is it not an undeniable fact?***

I often find much resemblance between Shri Vanavil K Ravi and the Italian poet and scholar Dante Alighieri. For example, in Divine Comedy, Paradiso Canto 21, Dante explains the state of human 'mind' both in paradise and the earth below:

The mind, that shineth here, on earth doth smoke;  
From this observe how can it do below  
That which it cannot though the heaven assume it?"

Similarly, in the present poem Ravi also elaborates on the reservations of human mind in defining the universe:

***Mind has its limits  
The world outside its purview  
Seldom it visits.***

Hiranyakashipu's penance and his attaining his blessing forms the centre stage of the earlier sections of the poem. When Brahma expresses his inability to deliver the boon exactly as desired by

Hiranyakashipu, the King wanted something that assured him of immortality:

*Nothing you created,  
Human or animal - shall  
Cause my death, I shall not die  
Inside or outside a house  
- nor  
In the sky or on the floor.  
My death shall not happen  
On a day or a night  
Nor by any weapon.*

Pride takes no boundaries, as the boon was granted, he began his aggressive approach even to Vishnu. The totality of his aggression finds expression in the 30th stanza. Here, the poet explores the possibilities of the italicized font which he makes as a means to convey the pride of the demon.

For Ravi, divinity is not just one entity, and his concept of God is not limited to a particular religion or class. He compares the traumatic experiences of Prahalad to the tribulations of Gods themselves. Lord Shiva and Jesus Christ experienced the very same pains when Man exposed them to corporal punishments:

*Even God was flogged like this, not  
Once but twice, alas! - first  
On the banks of river Vaigai and  
Later, when he bore his Cross*

The poem ends with a note of triumph with poetic justice being executed, virtue is rewarded while vice is punished:

*The Evil was vanquished - yet  
The boon was not violated,  
Angels, Humans, all beings - even  
Stars were elated.*

Shri. Ravi is a prolific writer and he can write poems on any topic. Like the famous Black Mountain poet Charles Olson, his poems are numerous. Still a great many poems remain unpublished, that may be the reason why some of his older poems are seen included in this anthology. The collection of shorter poems entitled “Songs of Faith” which appear along with the Epic are totally different in style, structure and theme. In the first poem “A Prayer,” we could see the poet seeking divine poetic inspiration. Writing poems is his passion and in the third poem “The March of Polemics” he tells the readers how he composes poems and the mystery behind his art of Composition:

*Time may stop one day, they say;  
A timeless Universe?  
It defies reason but that’s how  
I get my every verse!*

How long can he write poems and how long can he sing? It’s a difficult question to answer. A poet like Ravi is inseparable from his art:

*I am not old, am not retired,  
I will never be tired.  
Till I breathe I will sing  
And even after that  
My songs will be on your lips and  
Of those who are yet to come – I’ll  
Live in every word and note,  
In every song that I wrote.*

*(From “My Mailbox Is Full”)*

Ravi can compose mesmerizing poetry and the poet gives us the warning, once entered into the domain of his poetry, there’s no exit. The message is clear, he writes such excellent poems and once we seriously start reading them we will be tempted to go deep into them as he opens up a spectacular world of poetry in our midst.

*Enter now this wonderland  
I will show you more.  
But a warning, to escape from this  
There's no exit door.*

*(There's No Exit Door)*

All the poems of Ravi have some message to convey and the themes vary from poem to poem. He pays tribute to the departed soul of his brother in the poem "Farewell, Dear Brother". He accepts the separation as it is inevitable in human lives and there is no point in lamenting over it.

*I bid you farewell my dear brother  
No tears in my eye - I  
Certainly will miss you but no  
Reason for me to cry.*

The poet possesses an inquisitive mind which often transcends all boundaries. Man's knowledge of the universe is quite limited and at times he feels perplexed at the mystery behind the whole cosmic system. He finds an answer to all his queries in the spectacular world of poetry. Look at the wonderful piece of observation:

*One may have a glimpse and see  
What lies beyond the mind.  
That can happen in poetry  
Or in music that would bind  
The heart and soul together  
Make oneself a feather  
So that one can gently pass  
Through the mind's earthly mass  
And cross the rough weather.*

*(The Beyond)*

All the poems of Shri Ravi are self explanatory. We need to catch the pulse and rhythm of the poems though they vary. They

are the spontaneous outflow of his soul which is rich with much poetic imagination. Does he stick on to one particular theme? Not at all. His love poems are exquisite and the outpourings of a heart rich in love and music. It is not mere carnal love, romantic love, self love, obsessive love or familial love, but the unconditional love that surpasses all human understanding.

*When heaven descends to earth in those  
Rare moments of love,  
I've tasted immortality and  
Felt the power of now.  
See that bud nodding its head  
Waiting for that moment;  
A drop of dew to come and kiss  
That's the love's descent!*

(The Love's Descent)

Much can be said of his poems, but one thing is sure, they will surpass time and the poet attains eternity through his verses.

*In words and tunes I will live,  
Not in fading flesh and bones.  
From lip to lip, heart to heart  
Travel unmapped zones.  
Can touch a bud and cause its bloom,  
Float upon a wave;  
Speed across the starry sky;  
All such things I brave!*

*I know I cannot live for long,  
Yet I sing this song.*

*(You are the song, I am the Voice!)*



Let many a poem gush forth from his mighty pen!

***Dr Sanil Raj J***

***Professor & Head***

***PG Dept. of English***

***Sahridaya College of Advanced Studies***

***Kodakara, Thrissur***

***Former Academic Dean***

***St Thomas' College (Autonomous)***

***Thrissur***

18-12-2022

Chennai.

# PRAHLAD, THE EPIC

## A. Invocation

1. I pray to Lord **Vigneswara**<sup>1</sup>  
To bless me with the inner light  
And guide me in my passion  
To write the divine history  
Of courage and pure devotion,  
Not of a seer, nor of a sage  
But of a child, young in age;  
The first revolt against  
Confinement in the genetic cage.
  
2. **Om**<sup>2</sup> is not a sound, not a syllable either.  
It's a pulse, a swell, a throb;  
An intense yearning to open up;  
The seed of life's longing for itself;  
A call to expand incessantly;  
An urge to break all the barriers,  
Refusing to be bound; – Yes,  
Om is not a mere sound!



## **B. The introduction**

3.    Legends are not just stories  
      Or meaningless fantasies.  
      They portray the Reality  
      From a different perspective;  
      They take their shapes according to the  
      Meanings that we give.  
      They are not projections of a  
      Single human mind.  
      They reflect the essence of History,  
      Of the entire mankind.  
      Springing from an ancient  
      Memory of the society – they're  
      Stored, expressed and distorted  
      To be discerned carefully.
  
4.    Here we see a pompous king,  
      Indulged in his vanity,  
      Pretending to be immortal,  
      On the edge of insanity.  
      All the people around him  
      Praising him overtly,  
      Cursing in their heart of hearts  
      The beast in him silently.

5. Basking in vainglory,  
Boasts he unabashedly:  
“Nothing can now defeat me  
I am the Lord of Universe”  
How presumptuous and perverse!  
Closing his eyes to destiny,  
The self-begotten enmity  
That happened somewhere far away,  
Much beyond the Milky Way.



## C. The Gatekeepers: A Look-back

6. Two sentinels of **Vaikunta**<sup>3</sup>  
Guard the golden gate  
That leads to the heavenly abode  
Of the God incarnate;  
That's the seat of Lord **Vishnu**<sup>4</sup>,  
The Great, the Ultimate;  
The Cosmic Being, all-pervading  
In everything innate;  
The highest goal of every soul  
In its journey through the fate.
7. 'Jaya' and 'Vijaya' are the two  
Guards with loyal devotion  
To their Master Lord Vishnu,  
Always in attention!  
Once there came four little boys  
Who were denied permission  
By the two loyal guards - thus  
Causing some commotion.
8. The boys who came were not boys  
But sages of renown;  
Ideal **Sons**<sup>5</sup> of **Brahma**<sup>6</sup>

That's how they were known!  
Without knowing their credentials  
Jaya and Vijaya forbade them  
From entering into Vaikunta  
Infuriating the foursome

9. In their fury they cursed the guards  
To be born as human beings  
Jaya and Vijaya then realised  
The power of the four siblings  
At that time Vishnu appeared  
In this scene of commotion  
The Guards pleaded for mercy – the  
Lord gave them an option
10. “Opt to take birth on Earth  
Seven times as my devotees  
Or thrice in the cosmic spread  
As my powerful enemies.  
The choice is yours” said the Lord,  
A difficult choice though  
The gatekeepers decided and  
Gave a brief reply: – “*for  
Sooner release from the curse – we’re  
Ready to pay the price,  
Let us suffer only thrice!*”



## D. Earth Redeemed!

11. History is confined to years, three  
Thousand or a little more!  
Whatever happened before,  
Is brushed aside as folk lore!  
Till the sixteenth century,  
The earth was not a sphere!  
The world was geocentric!  
Truth, subjected to fear!  
Even the scientists lived in  
Blissful ignorance  
Of the wisdom handed over  
By **Rishis**<sup>7</sup> in abundance!  
In the land of **Bharat**<sup>8</sup>,  
Spiritualism was at  
The core of every act,  
Is it not an undeniable fact?
12. The Earth they knew was elliptical  
Not flat as we see - they  
Measured both, Time and Space  
With utmost accuracy  
Can we measure the distance between  
Planets in metres?

Can we mark a Yuga  
In the Gregorian calendar?  
One must shed all prejudices  
And widen one's perspective  
To comprehend and assimilate  
The events in this narrative.

13. The three births taken by  
The heavenly gatekeepers  
Spread over three Yugas  
In millions of years  
Every time they were born  
As enemies of their Master  
He, the Divine Caster  
Had to descend and slain them  
To give them release faster
14. In the first birth as brothers,  
Hiranyakashipu, Hiranyaksha  
Born as Demons, conquered all  
The planets and the Akasa  
The younger one grabbed the Earth and  
Hid it beneath the ocean  
His Master came as Varaha,  
The Wild Boar, for redemption.
15. In the  
Form of a Boar, the Lord  
Came with a roar – and  
Killed Hiranyaksha,



After a  
Battle that lasted,  
Thousands of years.  
From the  
Depth of the Galactic  
Space, the Ocean – He  
Brought out the earth with compassion!  
Averting  
A cosmic disaster  
As the real Master  
His victory was thundering  
'Hail Lord Vishnu – **Om**  
**Namo Narayana**'<sup>9</sup> -  
The Angels were all singing.



## **E. The Boon and its Aftermath**

16. On hearing this, the older brother  
Hiranyakashipu was pained  
For several years the wound inflicted  
In his heart remained – to him  
His brother was more important  
Than the planet earth.  
Anger surged in him, he vowed to  
Avenge his brother's death.
17. On taking birth, one's memory  
Fades and goes out of focus – it  
Gets buried deep into  
One's sub-conscious  
Those who reach that depth are called  
'Rishis' or the Seers.  
Not easy for the lesser mortals - who  
Battle with their fears.
18. The Demon King was not aware of  
The events of his past  
In the quagmire of Ego, he was  
Sinking very fast  
Had he known the purpose of his

Lord's descendance – he  
Wouldn't defy Him, how then he could  
Gain ascendance?

19. It is a real irony that  
Non-believers too – are  
Characters in His drama – like  
**Kamsa**<sup>10</sup> to Lord **Krishna**<sup>11</sup> – and  
**Ravana**<sup>12</sup> to **Rama**<sup>13</sup>  
He is their handler, they act  
Unaware of this  
The intrigue continues but the hidden  
Truth we should never miss!

20. With a burning desire for  
Immortality  
He started doing penance and  
Practised austerity.  
Years rolled on, he wavered not  
In his penance or mission  
None could break his concentration – the  
Earth was trembling, even the sun!

21. See!  
The younger one displaced this Earth  
The older one made it tremble  
How could they have lived on Earth?  
The solution is simple.  
They were beings born elsewhere  
Not at all on Earth.

They travelled across the Universe  
Throughout its length and breadth!

22. Their names were suggestive as if they  
Belonged to a different planet  
**“Hiranyagarbham”**<sup>14</sup> its source is called;  
From that the Planet Gold evolved!  
Made of gold or some metal  
But not of mud like Earth.  
They belonged to the Planet Gold,  
Made of such a different mould:  
One was golden-eyed and the  
Other was clad in gold  
This is how such distant events are  
Remembered and told!

23. ‘When  
Oceans are on Earth,  
How can Earth be hidden  
Beneath the Oceans?’ –  
Asks the Intellect.  
The poor mind knows not of  
The Galactic Oceans,  
The Cosmic Clouds, the Stellar Dust  
The devouring Black holes!  
Like a frog inside a well, the  
Mind has its limits  
The world outside its purview,  
Seldom it visits.

24. The memory carried forward by  
Beings Superior  
Who lived and live in subtler planes  
Far away and near  
Passed on to lesser mortals  
When they visited earth – or  
By the Divine Will of God  
They had to take birth  
That's the stuff epics are made of - with  
Stories from the distant past,  
Understood in mundane terms,  
Some preserved and some lost.
25. The world was shivering because of  
Hiranyakashipu's penance – to  
Save the world, the penance should end  
Somehow at once  
The power of penance was penetrating  
Every corner of the cosmos  
Brahma, the boon-giver, stood  
Stunned in an impasse
26. Brahma had to grant the boon – to  
Stop the penance soon  
He appeared before Hiranyakashipu,  
Spoke to him and appeased him:  
"What do you want, my son?  
I shall grant your wish  
Stop the penance, I'll grant the boon  
Let's put an end to this"

27. “Oh Brahma, the Creator!  
Make me immortal  
The flow of life in me should be  
Invincibly perennial.  
Grant this boon or go away, I’ll  
Continue my penance”  
Hiranyakashipu was adamant, the  
World awaited deliverance!
28. The world was in a plight – so  
Brahma had to be polite.  
He cannot underestimate the  
Penance and its might  
“Perfect immortality? I’m  
Powerless to grant.  
Ask for something short of it,  
I’ll immediately grant”
29. Hiranyakashipu thought of it.  
He wanted the boon quickly!  
“Alright, let me ask something that  
Assures immortality.  
Nothing you created,  
Human or animal – shall  
Cause my death, I shall not die  
Inside or outside a house  
– nor  
In the sky or on the floor.  
My death shall not happen

On a day or a night,  
Nor by any weapon.  
Also grant all the powers  
Known and unknown  
Grant this boon or quit at once  
My penance will continue”  
Thus came the reply - And  
Brahma had to comply!  
The boon he asked was granted - at  
Once he jumped and ranted:

30. “Where is Vishnu? I will kill him  
No god can be above me.  
No God, No God, there is no God.  
I am the supreme being.  
All shall worship me – and  
Only me.  
Those who do not accept me  
Will be tortured brutally  
Till they get converted  
– or  
Will be killed for blasphemy”

31. Sounds familiar? Now and then such  
Intrusions do happen – to  
Foster faith and fortify the  
Law of Divine Creation.  
Good and Evil are just two sides  
Of the Coin that is One.  
No win or loss in this toss  
It’s a game, a fun.

32. Hiranyakashipu's Proclamation,  
Upon getting the boon,  
All those weak and meek in mind  
Had to accept soon  
Those who started questioning  
Yielded after torture  
No one stood bold enough to  
Defy that evil creature.
33. The world is full of cowards,  
Afraid of death  
As if life ends with it - and  
Nothing survives that.  
Courage and valour do not belong to  
The realm of muscle strength,  
Nor to that of weaponry - or  
The physical life, its length.  
They belong to another realm  
That of spiritual strength,  
Rare to find in someone, maybe  
One in a billionth.
34. The **king**<sup>15</sup> who stood by Truth, losing  
All his wealth and kingdom,  
Even his wife and son  
And had to accept serfdom;



The one who drank **hemlock**<sup>16</sup>  
Given by his friend  
Refusing to betray the  
Cause of Truth till the end;

The **one**<sup>17</sup> who got crucified  
For speaking the Truth  
The son of god, the Saviour  
Became the glorious Martyr;

The **one**<sup>18</sup> that rejected outright  
The false model of planets  
Was burnt as a heretic but  
Stood his ground with guts;

A handful of such heroes  
Appeared now and then  
Unafraid of death – they  
Attained martyrdom;



## F. The Seed

35. The daughter of **Jamba**<sup>19</sup>, **Kayaadhu**<sup>20</sup>,  
Was horrified by the attitude  
Of her husband Hiranyakashipu  
Of his Atheist mindset  
Of his anger and arrogance,  
Of his blasphemous intolerance!  
She knew the fate of all those – who  
Defied the Law of Nature  
She was not afraid but still  
Concerned of his future
36. She recalled the days of peace and joy  
When she was under the tutelage  
Of **Naradha**<sup>21</sup>, the great sage  
Who taught her the virtue of devotion  
The power of chanting the mantra  
'Om Namo Narayana'  
The great Naradha **Muni**<sup>22</sup>  
Had told her stories many  
Of Vishnu and his benevolence

37. She was not alone in hearing the  
Mantra, teachings and stories  
From the great Naradha Muni,  
For, she had company  
Of someone not yet born;  
The one growing in her womb;  
The one who had sprouted from  
The seed that was sown  
By her husband; the one by whom  
The path of redemption would be shown.
38. The Gatekeepers were born to get  
Freedom from the Sages' spell.  
Taking birth itself for them  
Would be a scary hell!  
On taking birth they at once  
Forget all the past.  
For their redemption the Lord should come and  
Kill them thrice and fast.
39. Somehow in their genetic seeds  
An exit clause was embedded.  
That's the real boon given  
To them when they surrendered - that  
Secret code had entered into the  
Womb of Kayaadhu!  
When would it manifest?  
No one had the clue.

40. The demon king was preoccupied, not  
Aware of what's happening  
Around him or even among  
His own kith and kin  
He was totally ignorant of  
The plan in the making  
So absorbed in himself, not  
Knowing the Real King!
41. He blared and made a noise that shook the  
Pillars of the Heaven.  
All the clouds dispersed as if  
They were storm-driven.  
He laughed like a rolling thunder  
Enough to rip the sky asunder.  
His cruel deeds engulfed the world, the  
Earth and all the galaxies.  
The innocents were tortured and the  
Universe lost its peace.
42. None was free to say a word  
Without his permission.  
Anyone can be punished without – a  
Trial or admonition.  
All must worship only him – the  
Demon king decreed.  
Whatever he said, his word itself  
Was the Law indeed.

43. The boon that Brahma gave to him  
Empowered the goon  
Who became a monster soon.  
Even the power of Rishis could not  
Curtail his whim.  
Only Lord Vishnu can  
Tame the brute in him.
44. Prayer, only prayer keeps the  
Lamps of hope alive  
At least in the hearts of those who  
Transcend all the five  
Senses and are sincere  
In their hearts and pray – to  
Such prayers Vaikunta would  
Never be far away.
45. Even the slightest murmurs of a  
Sick and dying heart – are  
Heard by Him, He feels the pain of  
Everything at last.  
Every blade of grass and so  
Every speck of dust – can  
Speak to Him with intense Love,  
The language at its best!
46. Prayer was on every lip – though

No one made a sound.  
In that powerful vibration  
Space and Time were drowned – the  
More it spread, the more vigorously  
Hiranyakashipu frowned – and  
Unleashed his anger like a  
Fierce and hungry hound.



## G. The Birth

47. The son was born and it was  
A glorious dawn!  
Bliss and Faith, a perfect blend,  
Took a child's form!  
Kayaadhu was filled with joy  
She named her son, the little boy,  
"Prahlad", meaning, 'Full of Joy'!
48. The breeze sang a lullaby – the  
Bees hummed a tune.  
Like a bowl of milk arose  
The full, silver moon.  
Sky weaved a garland with  
All the shining stars.  
"Faith would win", the five elements – did  
Sternly endorse.  
Every corner of the Space  
Welcomed the little one,  
The Child of God, but now he is  
The Fallen Angel's son!
49. The Demon King was busy with his  
Agenda of conquest.  
Everyone was forced to say –  
Only he the best,  
The best among the kings – and

All the living beings;  
The best among the gods they worshipped,  
The real King of kings!

50. He paid little attention to the  
Happenings at home.  
His head was full of pride and thus  
Swollen like a dome.  
He was not aware of the  
Holy seed that sprouted  
In his garden or that by it  
He would soon be routed.
51. As the boy was growing up  
Hiranyakashipu visited him.  
Saw the glow in his face – that  
Made even the sun dim.  
Somewhere deep inside his heart – he  
Felt a lurking fear!  
Yet, he couldn't understand;  
The cause was not clear.
52. He bade a learned scholar to  
Teach his son the Mantras,  
Substituting everywhere his  
Name for God's, alas.  
The teacher had to just obey and  
Tweak every hymn – to  
Praise his king with the hope that  
God would pardon him.



53. The class began and the teacher  
Started reciting  
Not the praise of God but  
Of the demon-king.  
The child uttered the Mantra  
In its original form.  
Scared to death, the teacher pleaded  
“Dear Prahlad, please conform”.
54. Prahlad did not yield - and  
Refused to be trained.  
“Never will I do it” – with  
Faith he proclaimed.  
He chanted loud the Syllable Eight,  
“Om Namō Narayana!”  
Is it not to Vaikunta  
A sure Antenna?
55. Hiranyakashipu came that way and  
Heard his son reciting,  
“Om Namō Narayana” – that  
Struck him like a lightning. - he.  
Slapped the teacher, threatened him – for  
Misleading his son. – the.  
Teacher bowed and told him that the  
Child would heed to none – so  
Steadfast in his faith – in  
Narayana, the protector!  
Hiranyakashipu blew his top - and  
Slapped again the instructor.

56. Violence has no religion – no  
Religion can be violent.  
None can justify terror – and  
Claim he is god-sent.  
Everyone is made by god – so  
None can kill another.  
Every act of violence is  
Against one's own brother.
57. Ego is a wall that blocks  
Even the simplest truth.  
Creates illusions, nurtures fear – the  
Fear of one's own death.  
The fear which makes one forget that  
Death and birth are twins – with a  
Leg on this, the other on that,  
Life constantly spins.
58. The lesson that one must learn  
From this routine cycle – is  
Shed one's Ego and become  
At once identical  
With the world, the whole of it  
And every particle. – Of  
All achievements, the conquest of  
Ego is the pinnacle.



## H. The Cosmic Internet

59. The boy was friendly, friends with all  
Fat, thin, short or tall  
Friends with all the colours too  
Black, white, yellow, brown.  
Made no discrimination – saw  
Everyone as God’s creation.  
That’s how Prahlad appears  
In this poet’s intuition.
60. He spoke with love to everything,  
Holding back nothing –  
Be what may, a flower or insect  
Always with equal respect  
Every step he took forward  
Took him near the goal – the  
Parts enacting a great drama – but  
Nothing affects the Whole.
61. Came again the demon king  
To see his son’s progress  
What he saw aroused in him  
Anger and distress  
Prahlad was a stubborn boy – him  
Nothing could bother  
Chanting always the name of God – in  
Defiance of his father.

62. The father was furious.  
All around were curious.  
The boy remained composed.  
Politely declined to comply with the  
Rule his father had imposed.  
Naradha Muni was watching the scene  
From above but unseen.

63. "If my son disobeys me  
Who else would obey?  
How to put sense in him and  
How to mend his way?"  
Hiranyakashipu called his aide and  
Decreed at once:  
His son be kept in prison and flogged  
Till he made amends

64. Kayaadhu was horrified,  
How can this happen?  
Can there be a war between the  
Father and the son?  
Can the boy, so young in age,  
Withstand such tortures? – why  
God is silent? She didn't know – His  
Drama and its features.

65. Prahlad was jailed at once and  
Lashed with a whip  
The boy stood unruffled with the

God's name on his lip  
'Om Namo Narayana' – the  
Chanting continued – that  
The whip can tear the skin but not the  
Spirit inside was proved.

66. On and on went this flogging – no  
Change it brought about  
The only mantra the boy was chanting  
The Name of God, without doubt!  
Though his tender body suffered with  
Bruises and blood  
The more it suffered the more and more – with  
Faith his spirit was fed.

67. Even God was flogged like this, not  
Once but twice, alas! – first  
On the banks of river **Vaigai**<sup>23</sup> and  
Later, when he bore his **Cross**<sup>24</sup>  
In the first instance, the  
Pain was felt by all  
In the next He suffered the pain  
On behalf of all.

68. In the web of cosmic events  
Everything is connected  
The chain of causes, the law of Karma – if  
Correctly interpreted  
One may see the grandeur of the  
Cosmic Internet – the

One who can is the Seer – like  
Naradha, the adept.

69. As hours passed repeatedly the  
Flogging continued  
With every lash the faith in god – got  
Stronger and renewed  
The mantra, of course, was protecting  
The child from every harm  
For a true devotee,  
God may come in any form.
70. The king was perplexed: how his son could  
Withstand that torture? – what  
Gave him strength and power? – is it  
Not against nature?  
He had forgotten that  
By his boon and its force  
It was he who was attempting to  
Change the nature's course!
71. The gaurd who had to whip the boy  
Lost his strength and patience  
He wondered who that boy was,  
Awe-struck by his radiance  
Was his king losing ground? – which  
Side he should take?  
Was the rumour of immortality  
Of his king, fake?



## I. The Déjà Vu

72.

### A Song

*Faith never fails – in  
Crisis the world hails:  
'Om Namo Narayana' – in  
Stormy weather – the  
Boat sails – with  
Faith in Narayana*

*Om Namo Narayana!  
Om Namo Narayana!*

*God does no miracle – but  
The power of Mantra does  
Faith is the right vehicle – in  
The journey that is arduous  
Have faith for that alone  
Gives you immense power. – It  
Carries you through turbulences*

***Caringly forever***

***Om Namo Narayana!***

***Om Namo Narayana!***

73. The song of Angels floated in the air;  
A new awakening everywhere.  
A billion buds with folded hands  
Started reciting a prayer.  
Every drop of dew that fell  
Upon their lips would tell  
The secret of Mother Nature,  
Heralding a bright future!
74. The servant of the demon king – was  
Overcome by sleep.  
Slipped away from his hand and  
Fell down the whip.  
The boy, like a lotus flower  
Waiting for the Sun – was  
Sitting on the ground with eyes  
Closed in meditation.
75. The one that ordered flogging did  
Spend a sleepless night  
Came to prison and witnessed there  
This most defiant sight - in  
A fit of anger, killed the guard – in  
One stroke with his sword – caught  
Hold of Prahlad's shoulder – and  
Pulled him up from his posture.



He felt a shock, a déjà vu,  
The Touch of his Master!

76. Ego blocks intuition – makes the  
Inner voice feeble  
Eyes would fail to see – what's  
Crystal-clear on the table  
Ears would fail to hear – the  
Clarion call of conscience  
That's the veil of Maya creating  
Avidya or Nescience!
77. Ignoring the inner feeling,  
Hiranyakashipu, with anger still  
Called more guards to take his son to the  
Top of the nearby hill – and  
Throw him down from that height  
With all their strength and might  
Hoped his son, out of fear, would  
Mend his ways outright.



## **J. The Fallen Angel's Fall!**

78. The Planet Gold had several hills with peculiar flowers – its  
Sun was like a ball of fire larger than ours  
Moons were two, on either side  
The one that shines bright in the night – the  
Other somewhat far away,  
Dull and pale, and  
Visible only during the day.
79. The hill that stood like a tall giant  
Near the King's palace  
Resembled the king himself – always  
Fuming and restless.  
The flowers on the slopes were red,  
As if woven with fiery thread!  
Making the hill look like a huge snake  
Basking in sun, soaked in blood.  
Even the clouds were afraid to  
Touch the hill anywhere  
They went around and passed by – like  
A belt made of air!
80. That morning was hot, hotter than ever – the  
Hill stood silent waiting for a shower  
The flowers were more crimson and pink

As if their roots got messed up in ink  
Suddenly came a rumbling sound  
Not from the clouds but from the  
Top of the mound.  
The noise made by a gang of demons!  
They appeared worried, even  
Confused in a sense!

81. Why did their king command them to  
Kill his own son?  
A son who was quiet and charming  
Bright like the brilliant sun.  
They couldn't ask questions about their  
King's intentions.  
They had to obey or face  
Dire consequence.

82. When they reached the peak,  
One of them dared to speak  
A few words to the boy:  
"Why don't you obey your father – and  
Be spared of all the trouble?"  
Replied the boy with peace and joy:  
"That is what I am doing, obeying my father,  
The father of this Universe."  
The demons were baffled by this reply,  
Mystic and also terse!

83. They could see their king waiting and  
Watching from the vale

For a moment it appeared as if  
Sun itself was pale  
What will happen? How would end - this  
Unprecedented tale? – Only  
The Angels knew that their Lord  
Would never, never fail.

84. The demons pushed, with reluctance,  
Prahlad down the hill – he  
Rolled on rocks, on thorny shrubs that  
Strengthened his will;  
The will to speak only truth – never  
Bow down before the evil.  
He chanted again the Mantra that would  
The whole valley fill.
85. Where is heaven? people ask,  
Far away in the Milky Way? – or  
In some distant galaxy? – or  
In the mind as some would say?  
The stretch of mind expands beyond – the  
limits of the known world  
The speed of thought is faster than the  
Speed of light, as told.
86. Hiranyakashipu was pained in heart – yes  
He too possessed one!  
That to save his own honour  
He had to kill his son.  
He was sure his son would die – while

Rolling down the hill.  
For a moment everything and  
Time itself stood still.

87. Who would know that during that  
Suspended moment,  
Prahlad was lifted by some  
Unseen hands from heaven?  
After reaching the ground  
Through the slope so steep – he  
Stood up as if he had  
Woken up from sleep
88. The fall was gentle, not like the  
Fallen Angel's fall!  
The hill a mustard compared to  
Faith that stood tall  
The little boy defied death – the  
Whip, the fall and all - what  
Gave him strength was his own faith  
And his earnest call.



## K. A Golden Fence

89.

### A Song

*Faith never fails – in  
Crisis the world hails:  
'Om Namo Narayana' – in  
Stormy weather – the  
Boat sails – with  
Faith in Narayana*

*Om Namo Narayana!  
Om Namo Narayana!*

*God does no miracle – but  
The power of Mantra does  
Faith is the right vehicle – in  
The journey that is arduous  
Have faith for that alone  
Gives you immense power. – It  
Carries you through turbulences  
Caringly forever*

***Om Namo Narayana!***

***Om Namo Narayana!***

90. Hiranyakashipu could not hear – the  
Song that Angels sang  
He was too full of himself – now  
Perplexed by the miracle  
Angered too that his son's  
Defiance continued  
One by one his attempts failed  
To mend or kill his child  
He became restless like a  
Hungry beast in the wild
91. He made his son drink poison – who  
Survived the fall  
His son was born of his sperm – the  
Deadliest of all  
Poisons in the world – so  
How could any poison  
Kill him? No harm it did  
Nothing, nothing at all.  
Could it be deadlier than  
What was swallowed by Shiva – which  
Stayed in His neck like the Dark Matter  
Reserved for the incarnations of  
Rama and Krishna later!
92. The demon king ordered then:  
“Throw him into fire”.

The fire was set; with hanging tongue – it  
waited to devour  
Anything that was near its reach – but  
What makes fire a fire is its  
Cleansing nature; it purifies  
All that's thrown in it  
Be it a thing or even the devil  
Absorbing from them all that is evil

93. **Agni**<sup>25</sup>, the deity of Fire –  
Bows before the fire of Truth – and  
Dares not touch what is pure  
When that's its nature it's no wonder  
Prahlad could endure – Fire  
Extended its arms around and  
Embraced the little boy!  
A pure gem he was, with  
A child's heart filled with joy.  
Nothing at all to cleanse! – fire  
Weaved around him a golden fence!

94. Once again, the same song, the  
Angels sang in chorus!  
From his Mantra, the little boy  
Never did lose his focus.  
Agni bowed with folded hands – and  
Disappeared soon  
Prahlad's face was shining like a  
Bright full moon



95. All **Rakshasas**<sup>25</sup> were dumbstruck  
Plants and animals bowed with awe  
Rishis and people celebrated – the  
Momentous Event as they saw.  
Hiranyakashipu blew his top,  
Burst out with extreme rage,  
Unaware of what would follow – which  
None could envisage.



## L. The Epic, The Great Moment

96. Time was inching towards dusk – the  
Sun was about to set.  
Tired of day's work, wind stood  
Still to take some rest.  
Fragrance from the faraway  
Monkey flowers and musk – all  
Added up to foretell that  
Something was in the offing! – Could  
An epic moment be unfolding?  
The Planet Gold was shivering  
Partly due to cold weather – but  
Mostly in anticipation – of  
A great happening like never before – that's  
About to open an unknown door.
97. The silence did not last long; was  
Shattered by the noise  
From the king's voice – that  
Shook all the nearby planets,  
As if they were little toys! – it  
Echoed across the hills,  
Inflamed the trees around –  
Oh, what a beastly sound!  
"Where is he? Where is Vishnu?"

Where is Narayana  
The coward in hiding;  
The juggler playing childish tricks!  
Let him come before me  
I will kill him, here and now”  
Hiranyakashipu’s thunderous voice  
Disturbed not the equipoise  
Of Prahlad whose golden silence  
Added more incense  
To the fury of the king, who  
Dragged his son by hair and asked him:  
“Show your god Narayana.  
Where is he, where is he?”  
Prahlad broke his silence, and  
Politely spoke these words:  
“Everywhere, He is everywhere  
Not an inch of space is there  
Where He is not.  
We can see Him only if  
He decides to appear – He  
Takes His form only from  
Our own thoughts – also  
From a drop of tear  
Prayer is the only vehicle to  
Reach Him instantly  
Not for boons but to melt and  
Surrender one’s identity  
Oh king!  
Open up your inner eyes and  
See

He is here, He is there  
He is everywhere  
In you and in me!"

98. "Stop this sermon, spoiled brat!"

Shouted the king:

"Show me where He is – in

This or that thing".

The reply came at once with the

Speed of lightning:

"He is there in everything – yes,

He is everything!"

99. "Everywhere! Everything!"

Laughed the king aloud.

"Nothing can be everything –

Nowhere it's allowed.

Is He in this pillar,

Hiding away from me?

Let me break it into pieces – and

Expose your insanity"

100. "He is in this pillar and

Also, in this piece of dust"

With an air of confidence and

Absolute trust,

Replied the little boy – not

Unnerved by his father.

His faith in Truth did make him stand

Steadfast like a soldier.

101. "In this pillar?", mockingly – the  
King kicked it hard - then  
Harder with his mace, yelling:  
"You or me, the Lord?  
Let us fight, come out coward, - see  
Who's the mighty killer!"  
Saying so again and again – he  
Kicked the same pillar.

102. Nothing happened, no reply.  
For a moment he paused;  
Laughed aloud and exclaimed that  
The little boy had caused  
Such a waste of time by his  
Stupid assumptions  
Forgetting his father was the  
Lord of all creations

103. "Forget your Narayana  
I am the only Lord  
None above me, what I say  
Is the real law.  
No god, no god, I say again  
There is no god" –  
As the king was ranting  
The pillar started parting!

104. All eyes blurred, ears deafened by a  
Thunderous explosion – the

Cosmic egg was broken – all  
Galaxies were shaken  
None could see or understand this  
Utter confusion  
The palace walls were jolting – all  
Demons ran helter-skelter  
Where to go? Where to hide?  
None could find a shelter.  
They heard a roar, a lion's roar – more  
Powerful than a thunder - all  
Fled in different directions - like  
A swarm of bees, no wonder.

105. Jumped from within, what was that?  
A man? A lion? No, neither!  
The demons were sure that in its hands  
Their king for sure would die there  
To swallow a mountain and even an ocean – it  
Had a mouth, so wide!  
Whatever it is, it carried with ease  
Their king to the doorstep aside.

106. The Lion placed the  
Speechless king on its lap – with  
Claws it tore his torso – blood  
Splashed and stained the floor and walls  
A ghastly scene and more so  
As it  
Pulled out his intestines and  
Wore them on its shoulders

Like a bloody garland that was  
Hanging on some boulders  
With bones and body parts around  
The Lion made a threatening sound  
Even the Angels were afraid;  
“The world might end”, they cried.

107. It was neither day nor night – but  
Something in between  
The Demon king was slain – not  
By human, animal or anything else  
Created by Lord Brahma – but  
God himself materialized  
In a form at His own will  
Just to make a grand kill  
On the gateway to the palace – not  
In or outside as we know  
On the lap of God Himself – not  
Sky, floor but near the door.

108. The demon king was nowhere – but  
That Lion was everywhere  
Who would make it calm again? – how,  
Peace, the world would regain?  
Without fear – Prahlad  
Went near  
The roaring Lion with dare  
The light of joy – that  
Filled the boy  
Spread everywhere

The red-eyed Lion smiled with joy and  
Peace was restored at once  
Prahlad was crowned the king of  
All the worlds and heavens  
Though she lost her husband  
Kayaadhu was peaceful  
That her son had won the battle  
Against the force of evil

109. The Evil was vanquished – yet  
The boon was not violated.  
Angels, Humans, all beings – even  
Stars felt elated.  
The master stroke of the One – who  
Creates, preserves and destroys.  
In every act, natural – He  
Delivers justice and enjoys!

110. Deliverance His duty – yet  
A self-imposed duty  
He discharges that every time  
With a touch of beauty  
**Mahalakshmi**<sup>27</sup>, His consort  
Came and sat upon – His  
Lap and blessed the world again:  
Universe, the Peaceful Home – that  
Sprang from the cosmic OM!





## Brief Notes

1. **Vigneswara:** 'Vigneswara' is another name for Ganesa, a divine form of God in which He has the head of an elephant. It is a matter of faith in India that anyone venturing into any act or task should, at the outset, invoke the blessings of Vigneswara for the successful fulfilment of it. The Sanskrit term 'Vigneswara' means the Lord who removes all obstacles.
2. **Om:** It is an invocatory sonic representation of the Cosmic Seed and generally forms the beginning or the end of every line of a hymn in Sanskrit.
3. **Vaikunta:** The celestial abode of the Supreme Being envisioned as Maha Vishnu or the The Great All-Pervading Cosmic Spirit.
4. **Vishnu:** One of the three principal forms of the Supreme Being in which He is the preserver and protector.
5. **Ideal Sons (Manasa Putras):** They were the off-springs of **Brahma**, not begotten through sexual intercourse but just through a process of thought.
6. **Brahma:** One of the three principal forms of the Supreme Being in which He is the Creator.
7. **Rishis:** The Seers endowed with the special faculty to see or intuit subtle dimensions and planes not perceptible to ordinary beings.
8. **Bharat:** The landscape that geographically embraced what are now politically identified as India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Tibet, Bangla Desh, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Brunei, Java, Sumatra, Jakarta, Bali and Sri Lanka.
9. **Om Namo Narayana:** A Mantra with eight syllables invoking Narayana or The Great All-Pervading Cosmic Spirit known also as Maha Vishnu.

10. **Kamsa:** The maternal uncle of Lord Krishna and the tyrant ruler of the Vrishni kingdom, with its capital at Mathura
11. **Krishna:** An incarnation of God Vishnu.
12. **Ravana:** The Demon King who, eons ago, ruled the island of Lanka, the present-day Sri Lanka.
13. **Rama:** An incarnation of God Vishnu.
14. **Hiranyagarbham:** Literally meaning Golden Womb or Something born of a golden womb. In the present work, it is stated to be the cosmic source from which the Planet Gold evolved. The Planet Gold is stated to be the original abode of the demon king Hiranyakashipu.
15. **The King, Harishchandra:** A king who belonged to a long lineage called Raghu Vamsa in which Lord Rama took birth. Harishchandra was a strong adherent of Truth and his steadfastness and refusal to deviate from the path of Truth made him lose his kingdom, wealth, wife and son and even become a slave. A street-show based on his life inspired Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi who became Mahatma Gandhi.
16. **Socrates (470 – 399 BC):** A Greek Philosopher from Athens. Socrates authored no texts and is known mainly through the posthumous accounts of his students Plato and Xenophon. Socrates was a polarizing figure in Athenian society. In 399 BC, he was accused of impiety and corrupting the youth and was sentenced to death. He spent his last day in prison, refusing offers to help him escape. He willingly asked a friend to give him a cup of Hemlock (Poison), drank it without pain or remorse and attained martyrdom.
17. **Jesus (c. 4 BC – AD 30 or 33):** The Son of God born to Virgin Mary, a Jew by descent. He is considered to be the Son of God by Christians. The author of this work believes that He was an incarnation of God.
18. **Bruno:** Giordano Bruno (1548 – 1600) was an Italian Philosopher and cosmologist known for his cosmological theories, which conceptually extended the then novel helio-centric model proposed by Copernicus. He was denounced by the Orthodox Christians as

a heretic preaching doctrines that were blasphemous and after a farce of a trial he was turned over to the secular authorities. On 17 February 1600, in a central Roman market square, he was hung upside down naked and burnt to death.

19. **Jamba:** She was the mother of Kayaadhu who, in turn, gave birth to Prahlad, the protagonist of this work.
20. **Kayaadhu:** She was the mother of Prahlad.
21. **Naradha:** He is a revered sage who freely travels around the Universe and all its planes, playing a vital role in many of the cosmic events.
22. **Muni:** It is a term meaning a sage or a seer.
23. **Vaigai:** It is the principal river in and around the City of Madurai in Tamilnadu, India. According to a legend, once there was an unprecedented flood in the river Vaigai and the king ordered every citizen to participate in the work of building a dam to control the flood. An old lady who was selling sweetmeat too was asked to work, though she was too old for the job. In response to her prayer Lord Shiva manifested as a rustic worker and asked her what wages she would give him if he did the work assigned to her. She offered the sweetmeat and He accepted the offer and ate all the sweetmeat she had. Since He ate a lot of Sweet he was tired and slept. The king's men came and tried to wake him up but he feigned sleep. They whipped Him and at once the lash fell on every being in the world including the king. All realized that He was God and had come to teach a lesson.
24. **Cross:** The legend goes that Jesus was made to carry his cross and climb the hill and while he was struggling, he was flogged by the guards.
25. **Agni:** The Deity of Fire.
26. **Rakshasha:** is the Indian term for a Demon.
27. **Mahalakshmi:** She is the consort of Lord Vishnu and also the goddess of wealth.

## **Songs of Faith (Short Poems)**

### **1. A Prayer**

**(From the Archives)**

When I wandered like a cloud – you  
Caressed me like breeze.  
When I faltered in my tune – you  
Made me sing with ease – To  
Float like a leaf on the waves of Time,  
Will you not, will you not  
Teach me a Rhyme?

– Like a  
Drop of dew that lands upon a  
Bud that's still asleep – Like a  
Deer that touches not the ground  
In its graceful leap.  
Let me live this tumultuous life  
Not stained by greed, pain or strife

None but you can pardon me  
None but you can punish me

In my joy and in my grief  
None but you can cherish me

Only you can show the way  
Without you I 'd go astray  
Let this journey end in peace  
Will you grant my prayer, please?



06-10-1985

## 2. HEY, BUMBLE BEE!

Why did you sing that song?  
The song that carries sorrow and joy.  
It unsettles my mind,  
Is it love or just a ploy?  
I was just a wanderer;  
Did I ask you anything?  
With a glance, like a lance,  
You started on your own to sing.  
Why did you sing that song?

The pitch, the notes, the timbre of the voice;  
They captured me, didn't afford a choice.  
Were you the lass, the solitary reaper?  
Or the veiled Rebecca, the weeper?  
What sang were not your lips,  
But your eyes and the heart beneath.  
How can that sound cease to be?  
It haunts me, hey, Bumble Bee!



25-10-2020

### 3. The March Of Polemics

Some would say that I  
live in mind and  
close my eyes to reality  
Some would say my outpourings are a  
Mere exercise in futility  
Should I agree my dear friend - or  
Take this debate to its logical end?

One thing I should make clear.  
I am not at all anthropocentric.  
Every animal, every insect and  
every plant has its life;  
Every atom, proton, electron, and  
Every photon has its life.  
The next step in evolution,  
That's what man must take.  
That's the goal and everything else is  
What we ourselves make.  
The span of time is so vast - that  
Our life is just a speck in it.  
Yet we indulge in taste and haste,  
Even engage in conflicts!

Time may stop one day, they say;  
A timeless Universe?  
It defies reason but that's how  
I get my every verse!  
Words are not only vehicles of thoughts - they  
play an active part - in  
Making thoughts, creating worlds,  
Mapping every chart.  
Which is first, thought or word?  
Egg or chick? We are baffled!  
In this march of polemics – oh,  
Many a flower dies trampled.



07.04.2021



## 4. My Mailbox Is Full

(I wrote this upon reading a poem titled, ‘My Mailbox Is Empty’ that a poet had posted on FB lamenting of Old Age.)

My mailbox is full,  
More with love than letters;  
- with  
Hopes of seeing a better world,  
I can have no jitters.

Every day is lively - and  
Encouraging me - to  
Speak not to just a few - but to  
All and the god in me.

I am not old, am not retired,  
I will never be tired.  
Till I breathe I will sing  
And even after that  
My songs will be on your lips and  
Of those who are yet to come – I’ll  
Live in every word and note,  
In every song that I wrote.



24-04-2021

## 5. The Music of that River

The night is silent not because it is soundless  
But because I fail to listen.

I drift into slumber,  
Even dreams I don't remember;  
The morning comes with drops that glisten!

Time and again the same story!  
Until I get weary  
Of this monotony.  
Then I break this chain,  
Relieve myself from  
Pleasure and pain - and  
Hear the stars' Symphony

The pace of Time in words that rhyme;  
The Light of Music;  
The Sound of Silence;  
In that moment I discover.  
You can also gently pause,  
Set my songs in your heart - and  
Hear the music of that river.



16.09.2021

## 6. There's No Exit Door

I don't propose to entertain you  
Nor do I claim I'd elevate you  
All that I do and can do - is  
Say something to invite you  
Invite you into the sphere - of  
Poetry and Music as a peer.

Will everything be beautiful  
And serene in that realm?  
I am not sure it's up to you - please  
Come and check and then affirm.  
I can only invite you  
Singing just a song or two.

Will everything be truthful?  
Yes, I would guarantee.  
What is truth and what is not,  
For that there's no warranty.  
Enter now this wonderland  
I will show you more.  
But a warning, to escape from this  
There's no exit door!



26.06.2021

## 7. The Gates Of Reason

The cage that kindly sheltered me is  
Wearing out in time.  
Release me and set me free  
Don't patch it up and  
Put me back again.  
A life beyond awaits me!  
If there is an afterlife – it's  
Worth all this waiting.  
If there isn't even then  
I don't lose anything.

I leave behind not footprints  
But resonances of a heart,  
That wondered at this universe  
The whole and every part.  
Every speck of dust to me  
Did speak but silently;  
And made me speak the  
Words I spoke and  
Also sing some tunefully.

By my words I convey not  
But communicate with you.  
Every moment of communion is  
Always fresh and new.

Open up the gates of reason  
And let us flow together  
Or fly across the Universe,  
Like the birds of a feather.



26.07.2021

## 8.     **She's Poetry, My Dear!**

I broke and fell, shattered into pieces!  
All around me  
I see the remnants of what I used to be.  
From inside me She emerged  
Like a furious warrior  
With weapons galore in her arms!  
I bow before her masculine beauty,  
Dark in complexion, blood stained attire,  
Fiery eyes and hanging tongue!  
The world is shivering with a cosmic fear.  
Yet, I know, She is Poetry, my dear!  
She's Poetry, my dear!

In front of a mirror I stood in silence  
Watching the youth that's withering away.  
Every speck of dust was once  
A part of me, my vanity!  
Suddenly the mirror vanished and there She stood  
Like an ancient tree that sprouted from a lotus,  
Stretching Her arms to embrace me!  
Or entwine and devour me?  
I stood frozen with mortal fear.  
Yet, I know, She is Poetry, my dear!  
She's Poetry, my dear!

I felt I was shrinking inside my robe,  
Gradually shredding my dimensions;  
Like a globe getting compressed  
To the point of becoming a pointless point.  
I could see my robe still hanging in air.  
Suddenly She filled it with herself!  
Clinging to the contours of Her fluid body  
The robe became the ethereal sky!  
Her stunning looks and charming gait,  
All meant to give a final blow to me,  
The dying me,  
The pompous, arrogant King Lear!  
Yet, I know, She is Poetry, my dear!  
She's Poetry, my dear!



28.07.2021

## 9. Farewell, Dear Brother!

Everything must end somewhere

- but

Nothing ends nowhere.

Every end becomes something - of

This we are aware.

I bid you farewell my dear brother

No tears in my eye - I

Certainly will miss you but no

Reason for me to cry.

You were simple and straight of course

Always transparent

Nothing hidden, nothing big

Passed your every moment.

In a moment you passed away!

Should I cry or what shall I say?

I know the love you had for all -

Yet

You had to leave.

I bid you farewell dear brother - no

Reason for me to grieve.

Sometime somewhere you and I

Perchance may again meet.



Till then, in my heart of hearts,  
Now and then I greet  
Farewell my dear brother!  
Tread the path of light.  
I speak to you one last time,  
I know it is trite!



13.08.2021

## 10. The book of Nature

The book of Nature, the cosmic book  
Keeps unfolding forever.  
Page after page it flows  
Like a perennial river.  
Some are lengthy, some are brief - but  
Every page a golden leaf!

In the starry ocean - this  
Earth's a tiny speck.  
In that speck, the live bubbles  
Surface and disappear.  
In that little moment we learn to  
Wander in our thoughts  
All across the ocean  
As its tiny drops.



16-08-2021

## 11. The Beyond !

A shade or a shadow,  
A vision or a dream;  
A curtain that hides the truth – but  
Shows colourful scenes  
You and I may never know;  
Can we ever say: ‘No’?

What lies beyond that,  
A void or another world?  
Many a story about it  
Our ancestors have told.  
One must probe deeper –  
The mine, the mind, for gold.  
One can never raise the curtain  
Unless one is bold.

One may have a glimpse and see  
What lies beyond the mind.  
That can happen in poetry  
Or in music that would bind  
The heart and soul together  
Make oneself a feather  
So that one can gently pass  
Through the mind’s earthly mass  
And cross the rough weather.



19-08-2021

## 12. The Power of Love

I am not here to teach you,  
Trying only to reach you.  
You are behind a wall,  
Closing all around you.  
That you yourself had built  
Not with bricks and mortar  
But with ego matter,  
Unbreakable to the hilt,  
Except by you from inside - and  
Faith alone can be your guide.

Though I cannot pass through that  
Or climb up and jump to you,  
My voice can pierce the barrier  
Through words to give a clue.

Plant a sapling, the tree of love;  
Its roots with all their might  
Will breach the wall and show the way.  
Come out and see the light!



24-08-2021

### **13. I Call Myself A Poet!**

When clouds gather together to sing  
Wind stays quiet – what  
Pours down is welcomed by  
Earth in sheer delight - I  
Hum that tune now and then and  
Call myself a poet!  
Every little flower would say that  
Nature is the Spring.  
Every drop I drink from it  
As a poem I sing.

When lakes open their lips apart – to  
Drink the honeyed dew drops  
In that moment a verse is born and  
Time itself would pause - I  
Pick up words from that verse and  
Call myself a bard!  
Every blade of grass proclaims  
Nature is the singing lass:  
“Stop here or gently pass”

She I see everywhere in  
Everything around - I  
Hear Her voice inside my heart

In silence and in sound - I  
Try to write something from that and  
Think that I compose!  
Call that as you please but still  
A rose is just a rose - In  
Nature I repose!



02-09-2021

## 14. Nothing Seems Afar!

Why my heart vibrates with everything around me,  
With the flap of wings of a bird or a honey-bee;  
With the notes of a blooming flower  
Or a mighty river;  
At times with the pangs of a distant star.  
Nothing seems afar!

Sometime I have been inside the cosy bed of a pregnant cloud.  
Did I not, like a drop of rain, fall upon a roof, aloud?  
Or upon a blade of grass? Among the drops many  
Inside me and outside me, the same expanse of sky I see!

Come and sit by my side; I will sing a song for you.  
You too can melt and become a little drop of dew!  
A cloud may swallow you and then you can make a fall  
Upon a roof, a blade of grass, or a mountain tall.

Hear the sound of the ticking clock, the rhythm of my heart.  
See the whole that manifests as such in every part.  
This moment, made for us, waste not the precious time.  
Let's make a song in which, together, you and I can rhyme.



19-10-2021

## 15. On Shakespeare

He set the stage of life before us  
With you and me as characters.  
With every strand of emotion  
He made a giant, a colossus.  
With a flaw, a tragic flaw  
He crushed them into pieces.

Every speck of dust would be  
A testimony to his poetry.  
Be the self-centred Lear;  
Or Macbeth, in the grip of fear;  
Othello, the suspicious;  
Or Hamlet's vengeful madness.  
We will be with them on stage  
Still reading them, page by page.  
Grammar did a somersault - and  
Prostrated before him.

Syntax and meter served him best  
- For words  
Shakespeare is the test!  
The greatest in English literature  
Past, Present and in future.  
As once a great poet said



His fancy was untutored,  
Free to visit the farthest realms - or  
Delve deep into conundrums.  
He spoke directly to people's heart.  
Will live as long as the world would last.



24-10-2021

## 16. Nothing is a Wasteland

Nothing is a wasteland unless we waste the bountiful Nature,  
Ignore its benign call and  
Engage in meaningless strife and wars.  
Excuse me Elliot,  
Of course, you are a great poet!

The spirit in us can never dry,  
Unless the mind, in greed and lust,  
Covers the spirit with smoke and dust – and  
Halucinates a bloody world, dark and gloomy,  
Bereft of love or Bonhomie!

One little flower, a cactus flower,  
Smiling in the desert;  
One little drop of rain in summer;  
One sweet song that defies hunger;  
That's enough, as a wakeup call,  
To regain the Paradise Lost!

In the name of caste and religion,  
In the name of language too,  
In the name of names and forms  
We divide ourselves and fight;

Forgetting our roots in culture,  
We fall a prey to the evil vulture.

One word, only one last word,  
Before I cease to be:  
Fill up your senses with Nature,  
Its Truth, Goodness and Beauty;  
Regain the music of your heart  
That can surely bring you out - and  
Dispel all that's dark.  
If you have any doubt, come,  
Listen to this lark!



24.10.2021

## 17. You are the Song, I am the Voice!

I know I cannot live for long,  
Yet I sing this song:  
The song in which you can hear  
The beats of my heart, smell my dreams,  
See my smiles and feel my tears,  
Even after a hundred years!

In words and tunes I will live,  
Not in fading flesh and bones.  
From lip to lip, heart to heart  
Travel unmapped zones.  
Can touch a bud and cause its bloom,  
Float upon a wave;  
Speed across the starry sky;  
All such things I brave!

I know I cannot live for long,  
Yet I sing this song.

The song I sing is not for you to merely understand.  
It's for you to synchronise and see the wonderland!  
The land that blossoms from inside and spreads with equipoise.  
That moment you'd realise: you are the song, I am the voice!



05-11-2021

## 18. Every moment, eternity!

Let me be one among you,  
Let me stand in the queue.  
No tower of gold can lure me.  
I am a speck in the multitude.

Just because I write some lines  
And sing a few songs,  
I cannot ignore the place  
To which my heart belongs.

I do not want to go beyond or  
Even above all.  
I long to reach your inner core,  
For that I need your call.

Once I reach that innermost  
Sanctum Sanctorum,  
I will realise it's the place  
That I hail from.

A little flower smiles at me,  
The wind sings for me.  
Nothing more I want my friend,  
Every moment, eternity!



09-11-2021

## 19. Tame this Sea

Tame this sea, the sea of thoughts bubbling with emotions  
Let it be a seamless spread  
Without nodes or dimensions  
In that spread I would be one with you, my Lord!  
Won't you grant this simple prayer  
Of this humble bard?

Organs, mind and will power!  
Peel off every layer.  
That and that alone is  
Now my constant prayer.  
Let us not play ping-pong, the game of birth and death!  
Make this moment eternal, let me surrender my breath.



25-11-2021

## 20. The Love's Descent!

When heaven descends to earth in those  
Rare moments of love,  
I've tasted immortality and  
Felt the power of now.  
See that bud nodding its head  
Waiting for that moment;  
A drop of dew to come and kiss  
That's the love's descent!

Even when I walk alone I've  
Never been lonely.  
Flowers along the path - or  
The stars that fill the sky  
All around me, friendly!  
The song of love is etched - in  
Every moment we live.  
Read it or listen to the  
Brook that sings the song - or  
The reverberating gong.

Have a trip outside your  
Body now and then.  
Whether it's cold or scorching sun  
Try to have some fun.

Not limited by the fragile limbs  
Touch the horizon.  
Then, only then, you'd know  
The limitless extension.  
Earth and sky, You and I, - no,  
There can be no division.



06.12.2021



## 21. My Goal Or My Fate

The morning is wet unusually;  
Complaining croaks of tired frogs,  
Rumbling noise of rolling clouds,  
Occasional caws of unsettled birds,  
Rushing words that repeatedly  
Demand a place in poetry!

Sitting on an easy chair,  
Enjoying the dampened air,  
I could see her passing by.  
I closed my eyes and still could see  
Her walking gently, silently.  
Oh, I am not that daffodils-guy!

With a basket on her head  
She's walking up the ascending path.  
What could be inside that basket?  
Is it full of jewels, a casket?  
Filled with milk or butter milk?  
Or some clothes made of silk?

Or just flowers whose scent permeates  
The breeze that woke up late today?  
She walks as if it's her duty  
Just to walk whether she sells or not.  
She doesn't stop but walks,  
Whether it rains or the weather is hot!

She becomes small and smaller  
As she walks away from me.  
Never does she vanish once  
From my sight, for the path is straight;  
Always in my vision,  
Be it day or the darkest night!

Who is she? I do not know.  
Whence she came, where does she go?  
Rays of sun will now take  
The reins in hand and start the gallop.  
Till this day I see her walking,  
Whether awake or even sleeping!

I saw her first eons ago  
Might be in a different birth!  
Or even in a different plane  
Far away from this earth  
Where and when doesn't matter.  
The vision remains, it doesn't shatter!

When body and mind are at rest  
I could see her upon a crest,  
Walking with the same gait.  
Her brightness grows with distance,  
Converging and dense  
Like a star that rises late,  
She could be my soulmate,  
My goal or my fate!



06.12.2021

## 22. Where is my Bard

This balloon may explode one day.  
Pieces of it may disintegrate  
And get transformed into other elements.  
What filled it up and made a balloon  
Continues to be whatever it has been,  
A part of the whole cosmic scene!

The pot filled with water may break,  
Water flows out on this mother earth.  
Soon absorbed by the thirsty clouds,  
Then pour down again and again:  
Pot, water, vapour, cloud!  
Persists the one in several forms;  
Nature has its endless charms!

Uttered words would never die.  
They resonate for ever.  
Like water from a broken pot  
They merge in the Akashic river.  
“Akshara” - a word is called.  
I am the word, where is my bard?



06.12.2021

## 23. Empower!

Angel voices greet me from  
Inside my heart.  
“You have come to cleanse the world  
by your words and thought”  
If I am so destined to do,  
Give my every word  
The power to pierce all that’s evil  
Like a mighty sword.

Hails me a thunder Storm,  
“Sing to make a better world  
The world without bloodshed, let  
The flag of peace be unfurled”  
If I am so ordained then  
Give my every verse  
The fire that devours all that’s evil  
In this Universe

“Sow hope and faith in everyone  
Soar above the sky”:  
Thus commands my conscience.  
I promise I will try.  
I only pray, please give my words  
Wings and strength to fly.  
Let me see Her face to face  
Transcending the time and space.



07.12.2021

## 24. This divine intimacy

She could make a fool a poet;  
With a glance could quell a riot;  
Make the New Moon full and bright,  
Or make a day a starry night.  
In her womb she could carry  
The Son of God as Virgin Mary.  
She could nurture ev'n a prophet  
Or fight for justice with an anklet.  
I am her child, brother, lover  
I keep writing, she is the giver!

When the wind fills up my lungs  
I feel her touch in it.  
When it turns gusty I could  
Hear her voice in it.  
When my breath is fixed in her  
I realise the bliss.  
Every word I say, I write  
Carries her love and kiss!

Logic has no place at all in this  
Magic and mystery.  
Love, devotion are inseparable;  
No conjunction, no query.  
I cannot feign ignorance of

This divine intimacy.  
She and I will always be.  
I say this honestly - yes  
I say this honestly!



09.12.2021

## 25. Change alone is there!

Cast away your silken robe  
Oh, Misty morning!  
The golden sun is coming.  
Get ready to welcome him,  
The earth is clothed in leaves and flowers  
Waiting to join you.  
Lips of grass murmur some tunes,  
Birds may lend some words.  
Poetry, Poetry everywhere!  
Soulful music, playful dance!  
Everything will come to life  
The moment you come out of your trance.

Don't think just one more day.  
Don't sulk don't be reticent.  
Take it as a new gift  
From your designer.  
Open up your eyelids dear.  
Light up the whole sky clear.  
Let the world be spell-bound.  
You only have to turn around!

Pleasant mischiefs are in wait,  
Wake up and enjoy.  
Birth and death like pleasure and pain

The binaries of life.  
Nothing makes one sad forever,  
Nothing ceases to exist.  
Change and change alone is there!  
Don't complain, it is not fair.



14.12.2021



## 26. Only a Short Nap

Wake up morn, wake up soon,  
Unleash the glorious sun;  
Hide the fading stars;  
Fill up the sky with birds and fun.  
My poem has now given the call,  
Igniting the horizon!

Throw aside the cloudy muffler,  
Show your bright face.  
Dreams have all receded fast,  
Not leaving a trace.  
Energise the earth at once;  
Set the time's pace!

You and I greet each other  
Every day like this.  
You are the one who makes my day  
And gives the first kiss.  
One day my day may come to stop.  
And me, will you miss?

Even then my poems would be  
Resting on your lap.  
Just a touch could wake them up  
And make their wings flap.  
I will never cease to be,  
But for a short nap



19.12.2021

## 27. In love ...!

Have we not met before,  
In a Fairytale or a Folk Lore ?  
Did we not take a vow  
To always be in love?  
In love ...!

Are you not the apple of my eye? - you  
Smile when I'm happy - shed  
Tears when I cry.  
Are you not the sky,  
So that I can fly - it's  
Length and breadth?  
Oh! Let me try.  
(Have we not)

In every drop of rain I see your face. -  
It lands  
Not upon the earth  
But inside my heart.  
Every drop gives a word;  
A song is thus made and heard.  
I melt and become one with you.  
That's why the sky is blue!  
Blue ....!  
(Have we not)



20.12.2021

## 28. Perfection .....!

Let me complete myself;  
Am I not a fragment  
Of the perfect whole?  
Perfection?  
That's my goal.

One step with music,  
Another with poetry;  
One step with compassion,  
All of course with humility.

With every step I take forward  
Shouldn't I get closer to it?  
But  
As I move, it recedes farther  
Should I continue or quit?

Halted I!  
For a moment, it halted too!  
I started introspection:  
With every step I take inside,  
Inside me,  
Closer I move to perfection.

Not outside but inside is  
The path to perfection.  
It's a process of unlearning  
A de-adhesion!

As I shed one by one  
Every layer covering me,  
I get  
Closer to the goal - of  
Becoming the perfect whole!



10.01.2022

## 29. Friendship

Don't we belong to different clubs?

So what?

Still you are my friend.

Should our friendship depend

On ideas or ideologies?

After an earnest argument,

Can drink some tea together;

Okay!

Coffee, tea from different pots;

Even that should matter not.

Come and sit with me please.

Ideas should never divide or

Give rise to conflict.

Friendship shall be free

From the shackles of the wit.

The trees that shook vigorously

During a storm,

Regained peace and birds flock them

That is Nature's charm.

Language is the carrier

Of thoughts and emotions;

Should it be a barrier  
'tween friends or even nations?  
Break the walls of enmity  
Based on presumptions.  
After all we live amidst  
Vivid illusions! – let's  
Make the most of what remains.  
In our hands, let's take the reins.



25.01.2022

## 30. Where Angels Preside

Show me something better,  
Better than this:  
A word and a musical note  
Trading a gentle kiss!  
When it happens I am mesmerised!  
Welcome to my dream where angels preside.

An angel takes care of all my cares,  
Another my anxiety;  
One more provides the software  
That creates my poetry;  
One more waves a magic wand,  
I just lend a helping hand.  
I welcome them, I worship them,  
This team I call my band!

Welcome to my dream where angels preside.

A word would give me wings,  
Another a boat;  
Yet another softly sings  
When I cross the moat; – I  
Fly, row or like a bow  
Shoot an arrow with a  
Solemn vow.

Show me something better,  
Better than this:  
A word and a musical note  
Trading a gentle kiss!

Some  
Spit fire in anger; - some  
Sway like a flower; - some  
Roar aloud to challenge those  
Who assume enormous power.  
Fire, or a drop of honey,  
Poetry, only poetry!

Show me something better,  
Better than this:  
A word and a musical note  
Trading a gentle kiss!



11.01.2022



## 31. Akasa

“Shouldn’t I leave some trace behind?”

Asked my mind:

“Trace me in my poems

Trace me in my songs”

Trace me in every atom

To me everything belongs”

The mind-voice was intercepted

By my heart and it said:

“Not you, but Aakasa!”

Quipped my heart at once:

“You and me in equipoise,

In a perfect balance,

Holds that great being –

All encompassing, all seeing!

Didn’t we get inspired by

The billion hues of sky?

Did it not quench our thirst

When existence went dry?

The earth, water, fire and air

In Akasa inhere.

How can it be expanding  
Without any limit?  
How can gods and goddesses  
Take their forms in it?  
The formless Akasa,  
The Brahman of the Vedas  
The repertoire of everything  
Our thoughts, words and deeds  
Aren't we made of it?  
Aham Brahmasmi.\*"

I heard the echoes of a thunder  
Acknowledging the statement.  
My mind and heart in unison,  
Expanding that moment!



26.01.2022

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\* My self is the Absolute

## 32. Wage a war?

Wage a war against hunger,  
Against poverty.

Wage a war against ego  
And dishonesty.

Wage a war against evil,  
Not against the meek;  
Never against a country; and  
Never against the weak.

No idea or ideology is  
Worthy of a war.

No excuse can be given to  
Justify a war.

The flag of peace should flutter high  
Upon the single spar  
That's the people's collective will,  
Here, near and far.

Don't we have mouths to speak?

Don't we love others?

Can't we see eye to eye,

Sisters and brothers?

Take a vow, at once now:

No war on earth again.

Enough with all the loss of lives

Haven't we endured enough pain?



25.02.2022

### 33. That Moment Was Long Enough!

Fascinated by the rhythmic steps of the grasshopper  
Frozen by the mesmerizing look of the lizard  
The morning sun, not yet hot, stood still,  
Resting its elbow on the window sill.  
Welcomed it with a cup of tea,  
The friend in me, yes, Poetry!

That moment was long, long enough  
For a bird to fly across the sky,  
A flower to blush, a child to cry,  
To feel the tremors of a dying star  
In my heart, not very far,  
To stare at the cruel eyes of the murderer  
Pointing a gun at me, ready to pull the trigger,  
To count the trillion droplets that make a mighty river.  
That moment was long enough for  
the soul to realise itself!

The voice of a street vendor brought me back to time.  
I resumed my routine like a blank verse without a rhyme!



17.03.2022

## 34. The Poetic Fervour Never Dies

If the setting sun can bring a million stars upon the sky,  
Why should I be weary of the evening of my life?  
My thoughts can disperse far and wide and beget several trees,  
Even if my body were to terminate the lease

The little drops of dew that plop fill up a distant cloud - and  
Descend again as drops of rain to make the Nature proud!  
Where have gone the couplet-maker\* and the epic-smiths\* of  
yesteryear?  
Has the fiery birdling\* gone? not at all, no mortal fear!

The screen must come down, the play must end - the  
Poetic fervour never dies  
The sparks will spread and bloom somewhere  
Worlds and worlds of starry eyes  
The earth is just a little speck in a  
Corner of the milky way  
This poem extends beyond that - so  
I keep singing every day



21-03-2022

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\* Couplet-maker refers to the Divine Poet Thiruvalluvar.

\*\* Epic-smiths refer to Saint-poet Ilango and the Emperor among Poets, Kambar.

\*\*\* Fiery birdling, of course, was The Great Poet, Subramania Bharati.

## 35. Should I Alone Suffer?

One by one my dear ones are disappearing from the scene,  
The drama continues.

Dialogues become monologues and ultimately a soliloquy.

Is this the plan, oh old man,

You in me and I in you,

Speaking to one self and never be two?

The men from CERN and the Hubble-lovers call this a singularity  
Someone from a snow-clad mountain declares,  
'Aham Brahmasmi'

The seesaw keeps moving:

The one in this and the one in that,

The same in the act of balancing.

The seesaw keeps going surprisingly in a circle.

Why this pain, this agony?

Aren't you responsible?

You and I are together in every moment of pleasure.

Why when something hits me hard I alone should suffer?

Come here and undergo the trial like a common man - oh,

I forgot the fourteen years when you\* walked the forest with a  
bow in hand!

Come and suffer, suffer with me, now I cry a little loud

Suddenly I see with stains of blood Your\* face in the shroud!

I look up with tearful eyes and see a weeping cloud.



01.04.2022

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\* Lord Rama

\*\* Jesus Christ

## 36. The Taste Of Lightning

The mating call of a koel - the  
Yearning to merge or submerge,  
Raises its voice till it is a noise,  
Almost on the verge  
Of a thunderous explosion! - that  
Only he\* saw and only he tasted - and  
Called it a lightning taste!  
Nothing to know or understand but  
An experience ultimate

The taste of lightning? Have a sip – from  
Shelley's 'Crystal Stream' - or  
Sink in that cup with beaded bubbles - that  
Keats extends in a dream.  
Haven't you seen river Godavari  
Flowing like poetry - that  
Kambar did see though not with eyes  
But with certainty!

"Find your morning in the dews of little things" –  
Khalil beseeched you.  
The seed of the greatest is embedded in the  
Tiniest like a hue.

Taste is not just sensory - but a  
Transcendental flight!  
Close your eyes and still you can see  
A glowing inner light!

The mating call of a koel - the  
Yearning to merge or submerge!

The longing to merge only reproduces and  
Multiplies the race,  
Unless it is with the Absolute One,  
Leaving behind no trace!  
That's why she\*\* prayed "transform our lust" –  
A process of sublimation!  
Have I not tasted the lightning a bit? – waiting  
Only for consummation!



15.04.2022

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\*The Great Poet, Subramania Bharati.

\*\*The female poet Andal



### 37. I Vote for Keats

Morning walks are meaningful  
As they give me poems.  
The clouds that float in different forms  
Bursting out in foams.  
The grass, flowers, bees and birds,  
Even the rising sun;  
The angry voice of a mother  
Trying to bathe her son!

The push-ups of a chameleon, a Grasshopper on stilts,  
The daring flight of a dragon fly  
As it lands and sits  
Upon a flower to catch its prey - the  
Moo, the bleat, the caws  
I see and hear everything  
Inside myself, of course!

Do I stand apart from these?  
Descartes winks at me.  
Where is He who makes them all and  
Spreads them out in me?  
The Absolute of Bradley or the Brahman of Shankara?  
The Nothingness of Sartre or the  
Silence of the Buddha?

I vote for Keats who declared that  
Truth is Beauty, Beauty Truth  
My philosophy hasn't lost and would  
Never shed its youth.  
Let me live as long as  
I can sing and dance  
In my mind, in my heart,  
In a blissful trance!



15.04.2022

## 38. The Story of Tomorrow!

The world holds a mirror for me to see my true self - it's  
Not made of glass but made of words and phrases,  
Echoing my laughter and in between some sadness!  
Occasionally my anger against callousness.

The ocean's waves, the river's flow,  
The sun, the moon, the earth below,  
A flock of birds, a single crow;  
In everything I hear a story  
The story of tomorrow!

Every story has in it a seed of inspiration;  
Every seed may sprout to become  
A song, a hymn, a poem!  
Every song would shape my Self that keeps evolving - "O  
Yes" says that coconut tree, greeting me "good morning"!



23.04.2022

## 39. A Continuum

The greedy morning grabs my thoughts and  
Stamps images on them.

The glowing Sun, the blowing breeze, - the  
Daring noise of birds and bees,  
Without revealing where they come from.

Every dawn demands a song, a  
Poem, a verse at least! - in  
Exchange it invites me to enter its  
Heart and have a seat.  
It offers me a cup of tea  
Brewed from clouds and mist;  
Sprinkles a few drops of dew to  
Make a memorable tryst.

Why this friendship, this romance!  
From my birth or even before?  
In the ocean of this life  
Every morning is a shore,  
Giving hopes, illuminating the  
Darkest corners of my mind.  
The sky and me are inseparable, a  
Continuum of a kind!



27.04.2022

## 40. Every Day is Mother's Day

The purple surge of Lavender,  
The Golden Daffodils,  
The countryside of England and the  
Slopes of Scottish hills,  
A riot of violet Kurinji flowers  
On the Slopes of Indian ghats,  
Kashmir Roses, Lotus ponds,  
Lilies, Lilacs, Cupid's Darts!  
The mother earth is bountiful – her  
Mercy has no bounds.  
Let us stop polluting her with  
Plastic and our ugly sounds.

Every piece of plastic thrown  
blocks her arteries;  
Every evil thought or word  
is a scar, a bruise;  
Every reckless, selfish act  
Reduces her life-span.  
Every act of kindness  
Lights her daily lamps.  
The mother earth is getting old - let's  
Show some care and affection.  
Let us stop polluting her and  
Save our next generation.

Was it not upon her lap  
Civilizations flourished?  
On the banks of great rivers  
Settlements were nourished?  
Art, Culture, Music, Poetry,  
Aesthetics cherished?  
Let us wake up, mend our ways  
Before she gets perished.  
Let us stop polluting her and  
Learn the lesson we missed!

Don't we choke her lungs with smoke?  
Don't we suffocate her?  
With greed, lust, ingratitude  
Don't we assault her?  
Why this craze, this deadly race?  
Let us be responsible.  
Let us stop polluting her and  
Let us be sensible.  
Let's us put an end to all  
Lavishness and luxury.  
Let her breathe freedom first - then  
We can all be free.  
Bullets, bombs, battle cries,  
Bloodshed everywhere!  
Terror unleashed, fear ignited - life  
Turned into a nightmare!  
Meaningless enmities and  
Merciless killings!  
All must stop at once now - let's

Discover the path of love.  
When we wake up every morning  
To its first ray,  
Shouldn't we realise that indeed  
Is our Mother's Day.  
Every day is Mother's Day, a  
Gift of god to us - let's  
Handle it with utmost care and  
Live as witnesses  
To her glory, benevolence and  
Her stunning magnificence!



08.05.2022

## 41. Exchange of Dreams

The morning light will now ignite a passion in my heart.  
The wind will carry that and darkness will be torn apart.  
Don't you see the fallen night like a Demon slain? - the world  
Celebrates its victory time and time again.

A thousand cups of marigold blossom in my mind,  
Inviting my restless thoughts to quietly unwind.  
In that pause, at that moment, I see a ray, a strand - of  
Life in every drop of dew and every grain of sand!

You and I can meet somewhere in that horizon - to  
Exchange the dreams we had before the rising sun  
One for us and one for that Master of this game  
Can we now look for the boy who lives down the lane?



07.06.2022



## 42. Poetry Is My Religion

Poetry is my religion, Muse the goddess supreme  
She holds a trident or an infant - and  
Appears in my dream;  
Maybe formless yet she would  
Manifest in every form:  
Truth, Beauty and Goodness - the  
Trinity, a divine charm!

Form or formless, she appears - to  
Me in myriad colours.  
Every time she smiles I see  
In my heart a thousand flowers!  
Every flower becomes a star - and  
Every star a word!  
This is the story time and again - that  
Everyone has heard.

Every time you hear this story  
Won't you become a bee? - and  
Wander in the galaxies to  
Gather sweet honey? - as  
A spark in the star and a speck on this earth,  
With an awe won't you watch and hold your breath?



24-08-2022

## 43. On the demise of Queen Elizabeth II

More than seventy years - you  
Bore the burden of the crown  
War or peace, scam or praise - a  
Smiling face without a frown.  
O Lilibet, I bid farewell to thee -  
Maybe  
The last page in the book of Monarchy!



09-09-2022

## 44. To Untie The Knot

Mind cannot still itself - I  
Don't try to still the mind.  
The more I try the more actively  
Excuses it would find.  
Surrender is the one device  
That the mind seldom defies -to  
What I surrender matters not;  
By surrender, no battle lost.

Mind is tied to space and time - must  
Untie the Time in it - when  
I am in space just as space - then  
Mind will lose its pace  
Without time no here, no there!  
That's to be everywhere!  
I, only I!

Ego is the knot  
I knew that in the beginning  
But then forgot  
The Master came to remind me - and  
Just played his part  
I must untie the knot - and  
Shed everything that I am not.



13-09-2022

## 45. This Light Should Shine Forever

I pray this light should shine for ever  
The lamp may break  
The wick may vanish  
The journey of the light should never end  
Am I asking for too much, my dear friend?

More lamps be lit along its way,  
Every wink a cosmic ray;  
The ray of hope that dispels all  
Darkness in the mind - so that  
The Mind is saved from its own weight - and  
Sheds the burden, becoming light.

Music, poetry, art and dance can  
Lay the path for it.  
Selfless service, love for all can  
Add some fuel to it.  
Let it transcend all barriers –  
Physical, mental, emotional – and  
Continue its journey like a  
Mighty river, perennial.



16-09-2022

## 46. Her Sky Has A Billion Moons!

(Shobana and I spent a golden hour this afternoon with my mentor Shri B.S.Raghavan who recounted his close association with the great Rabindranath Tagore among many other interesting anecdotes from his ninety six years of life. As we stood up to take leave he looked at me with love and affection and said, “Ravi, let there be less of stars, sun and moon in your poetry”. I know he is a thorough humanist and revolutionary in spirit. On my way back I couldn’t resist writing ....)

Less of stars, sun and moon  
Less of Nature wanted he.  
Said, my poems are overloaded - with  
All these around us that we see.  
‘Is it so?’ I asked myself.  
Giggled inside a mischievous elf!

Sufferings, torments, man-made miseries  
Should they not besiege me?  
Hold my pen, hold my tongue - to  
Write and speak of their agony?  
“Give them space” beseeched he,  
Gently, yet gallantly.

I respect him, I salute him - I  
Admire and even adore him - but  
How to tell my muse to act  
Only according to my whim  
She pours and rains flowers at times,  
Fuming balls of fire at times.  
I speak her words, sing her tunes;  
Her sky has a billion moons!



17-09-2022

## 47. So Long!

Plan nothing, be prepared to leave.  
The story ends, maybe the final page.  
Own nothing, owe nothing, don't grieve.  
You cannot ever remain in cage.  
Free of everything,  
Everything you earned - it's  
Time to unlearn - all  
That you had learned.

Sky is not a substance nor it has a form - yet  
Spreads like a canopy exuding a charm  
Be like it, etherial, hark the Ariel's song\*!

Let your  
Words be not like flowers that would fade - their  
Fragrance should eternally inspire;  
- must  
Branch across the planes and give shade  
- to  
All who sink in this quagmire.  
Simply sing a song  
That can live forever so long.  
So long! So long! So long!



18-09-2022

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\* In Act 1 Scene 2, Shakespeare's "The Tempest"

## 48. The Blue Nightingale

I was shocked and surprised to see a blue nightingale  
Perching on a branch that has roots in my mind!  
Searching not for food but with a solemn resolve,  
Singing and pouring out leaving nothing behind.  
In a while she would have melted away - then  
Why this obsession will anyone say?

She sings of the forest, her love, her hope - her  
Yearning to surrender, her fear and agony.  
Her voice is meandering as it would grope - in  
Darkness like a shadow; her themes are many.  
One day she might spit some fire - and  
That's when I think she'd retire.

She and I may seem to be two distinct folks - yet  
Am I not her voice or isn't she mine?  
Who is what? Who tied this knot? Is this a hoax?  
Is there someone who can unthread this twine?  
"Day and night I revolve," the earth might say.  
Alright, let me first live through this day!



20-09-2022



## 49. The Strength to Pray

(Last night I came home a bit late after a party and wondered whether I had enough strength to recite my night prayer before hitting the bed. At that moment and in a flash came this poem. It gave me the strength to pray.)

I pray, I pray! but nothing I seek - in  
Prayer, to myself I truthfully speak  
I pray so that I shouldn't fall - a  
Prey to my ego's incessant call.

Whatev'r might get attached to myself,  
To whisk them away I constantly pray.  
To tread on my way without going astray  
I need some light; only for that I pray.

In prayer there is no subject or object  
- no  
Wish, no desire, not even a context  
- words  
Melt like pieces of camphor that burn - in  
Silence I learn and also unlearn!



24-09-2022

## 50. Faith

The glowing flame is flickering.  
The blowing wind is threatening.  
Bending and winding – the  
Path is extending.  
Whither leads my journey?  
Is there a goal, one or many?

Squeezed by the arm of the merciless time – that  
Stops not for even the most sublime,  
My being is shrinking and shivering in cold!  
Is there someone to come and take hold –  
Take hold of my mind and tame that shrew? – why  
Keep me standing forever in the queue?

The lingering faith from the bottom of my heart  
Keeps kindling the flame and playing its part!  
All that I wrote and poured out aloud  
Could not have come from a passing cloud!  
I hear a laughter and recognize the smile  
That makes me walk every additional mile.



26-09-2022

## 51. A Cul-de-sac?

Have I not come to the end of the path?  
Would it be a cul-de-sac?  
Yet I see in some distance,  
A lonely lilac,  
Smiling at me  
Mischievously:  
“Hi boy! You can never be lonely!”

Will I not have some clouds in the sky?  
Will my earth be dry?  
Won't there be a bee or a grasshopper?  
Would it be a clean goodbye?  
“No, No, No! you can never be alone”:  
My Master's voice from a gramophone.

Am I not blabbering like a child  
Or running in the wild  
Can nothing be something I am wondering  
A whisper in my ear: “Goodnight”  
“To be or not to be, hey dude,  
That's what makes your solitude.  
Am I rude?”



29-09-2022

## 52. Not My Choice?

“I don’t mind dying today”,  
I told Him face to face.  
He laughed and said:  
“You mind your business  
I will do mine”.

Is there a purpose to living any more,  
Be it for years three or four?  
He shamed me by his reply, “Son  
What purpose have you served – till  
Seventy or seventy one?”

Why should I be?  
I shouted in dread.  
That’s what you are,  
“Being!” - He said.

Are we different or just the same?  
Do you have a distinct name?  
The questions echoed and came back to me!  
That’s when I started feeling dizzy.

My eyes failed to catch a glimpse of Him;  
My ears didn’t hear His voice;  
The light and shade? This conversation? - all  
Inside my head, though not my choice.  
Not my choice?



06-10-2022

## 53. Why fight in His name?

The one who taught by silence,  
The one in the battlefield,  
The one as the son, a child,  
The one upon a mount;  
All are one, all are one  
The one and only one! - then  
Why fight in His name?  
Why wield a sword, a gun?

Can we ever match Nature  
In the art of expansion – in  
Aesthetics or even ethics – or  
The daily economics?  
Why then battles, missiles, brother?  
Haven't we learnt to live together?

In every breath we inhale a bit of  
Nature and Her bounty  
What we exhale is recycled and  
Returned to us with purity.  
Is She not merciful, a  
Kind-hearted dame?  
Why molest her with war and blood?  
Why this dirty game?



07-10-2022

## 54. The Most Beautiful Beast!

Unaware of being a rope,  
Why I wriggle like a snake?  
Oh Maya! The eternal dope!  
What pictures do you make!

Suns, stars, galaxies,  
Whirlwind of nebulae!  
Where am I? Am I the axis? – or  
Just a child's play?  
In this play of illusions — why  
Feed me with several emotions?  
Can't you hear my voice at least?  
Aren't you the most beautiful beast!

Sometimes aside, sometimes behind,  
Sometimes ahead of me!  
Like the shadow of my mind  
With me constantly.  
Stop this game at once;  
Merge in me but before that,  
Show me your true essence  
Do you  
Partake in my existence?



08-10-2022

## 55. My Journey Never Ends

(I watched an excellent and a moving video in which Mrs.Revathy Shankaran gives a speech on the title and the theme of the book, “The Sky Gets Dark Slowly” written by the Chinese Author Zhou Daxin. She addresses those who get old and pleads, “get ready to face the challenges of the old age”. The poet in me rebels and replies.....)

The sky gets dark every day  
Only to welcome a fresh ray  
A ray of light from the sun - to the  
Wakeup call of an avian;  
A song in waiting pops out from me - to  
Kiss the fragrant water lily.  
Who said, age is catching up?  
The cycle goes up and down and up!

Teeth may fall but not the spirit;  
Bones may become brittle;  
Eyes may dim and ears may fail - all  
Faculties, little by little; - but  
Faith keeps the lamp burning - and  
That is me, the undying!

My every song's a little lamp - that  
Brightens the night sky.

Bursting out in thunder - and  
Sparkling ever in wonder  
Refusing to die.  
Like the light that travels on  
Beyond the far receding aeon,  
My journey never ends.  
Let's celebrate this moment, friends!



21-10-2022



## 56. Father Or Brother

I haven't brought flowers to adorn you  
Nor I light a camphor in your Sanctum Sanctorum – but  
With a heart full of songs,  
A mind full of silence – and  
A hand full of prayers,  
I wait at your doorstep  
To hear your footsteps;  
To feel the warmth of your  
Love and care;  
To embrace you with a dare!  
A drop of tear rolls down my cheek;  
No agony but a moment of bliss.  
Are you just a shadow, my Lord?  
Or the eternal shade for me to rest?  
Have you not brought out from me, my best?  
Should I still suffer a test?

You redeemed this earth when it was stolen;  
You came like a lightning to vanquish the evil;  
Once with a roar, once like a dwarf.  
Once with a bow, once with a flute.  
Once like a dark cloud, once like a damsel!  
You parted the sea to make way for the homeless.  
You shed your blood on a cross to cleanse this world.

You made a cowherd a great poet – and  
An errant lad a Mahatma!  
Your stunning glory is incomparable.  
You are  
The brilliant sun when far away – but  
A little lamp when near,  
Always to me a friend, dear!

Do I not melt like a piece of ice? – yes,  
With tears in my eyes,  
Without disguise,  
Whenever I think of you –  
You and me as just the two,  
Hand in hand, walking together;  
Be my father or my elder brother.



12-11-2022

## 57. Let The Doorbell Ring

(The ninety six year old, young friend, Mr.B.S.Raghavan had posted on Facebook, a few days ago, listing the things that a person of advanced age shall not do in order to avert falling down. He had said that even if the doorbell rings, one should not get up swiftly and rush to the door; the visitor can wait. That, yes, that line gave this poem!)

Let the doorbell ring,  
Maybe this is late evening;  
The visitor can wait.  
Let me take some measured steps - and  
Open the door without haste,  
Never changing my gait!  
A storm has gathered in the west,  
Of course, after a glorious sun-set!

Every moment I live with joy  
Hailing it as God's gift!  
In every song I say this to  
Ensure I don't drift.  
All His Grace, Love, Bliss  
And His Benevolence  
Resonate in my every move  
In those kind moments.

My reading light is bright enough - yet  
My sight has slightly dimmed.  
My Universe has no boundaries - though  
In me I see it rimmed  
With accumulated experiences and  
Limiting faculties.  
When I break those barriers,  
Will I be or cease?



14-11-2022

## 58. My Cup of Tea!

Let me heat this cup of tea  
That has become cold.  
Let me add some ginger that would  
Make you swift and bold.  
First, enjoy its fragrance - then  
Taste it in all exuberance  
When you do, the spirit in you  
Wakes up from its sleep;  
Flames arise reminding you of  
Promises to keep.  
Pour more from the pot,  
The tea there will still be hot.

I made the tea but not the leaves  
Nor the milk in it.  
Did I heat the tea? No, the  
Fire and stove did it.  
I am just an instrument - the  
Player is my Lord.  
Poetry's my cup of tea,  
I am only a bard.



18-11-2022

## 59. My mansion has multiple rooms!

(A friend had posted in a group that I am a diamond among pebbles. I had to respond, no?)

You are not pebbles - nor  
Am I a diamond  
I am one among you  
But my life I spend  
In voicing my heart  
In raising the heat  
So that the tyranny  
On earth might end.

Nothing special in being a poet  
I simply cannot be always quiet  
Whatever I say and whatever I write  
I ask, would it set everything right?

Feeling in pulse the rhythm of Nature  
I sing some happy tunes  
Dancing, romancing and jumping with joy  
At times my Being blooms  
Man-made sorrows trigger my anger  
Then my verses would emit fumes  
I am blessed to hear the Sound of Silence  
My mansion has multiple rooms - yes  
My mansion has multiple rooms!



23-12-2022

## 60. Before I disappear

Before I disappear  
Try to see more of me  
More of my dancing feet  
More of my searching look  
More of the smile that I spread for you;  
You ....!

My songs will remain  
Carrying my words  
Carrying my thoughts  
Carrying my care for you;  
You ....!

Earth and sky appear to meet  
That we call the horizon  
Don't we have one?  
Wouldn't it be fun  
If in the afterlife somewhere I meet you;  
You ....!



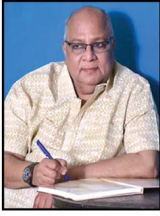
27-12-2022

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Vanavil K.Ravi is a bilingual poet, writing profusely in English and in his native tongue, Tamil. He has authored 20 books so far as listed below. Till date, 101 Seminars, some National and some International, have been conducted by several Universities and Colleges on his published works.

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### List of the published works of Vanavil K.Ravi

1. **Justice Versus Natural Justice** (First Edition, Sun Publishers, Madras, 1996; Second Edition, Nivethitha Pathippagam, Chennai.)
2. **Law, Logic and Liberty** (Vanavil Cultural Centre, Chennai, 1998)
3. **Verses of Wisdom** (Anand Jothi, Chennai, 2002)
4. **Namakku Tozhil Kavithai**, (நமக்குத் தொழில் கவிதை ... **Poetry is My Calling**) (Vanavil Cultural Centre, Chennai 1996)
5. **Unnodu Naan**, (உன்னோடு நான் - **With You, I am**) (Trisakthi Publications, Chennai, 2009)
6. **Minnar Chuvai**, (மின்னற்குவை - **The Taste of Lightning**) (LKM Publication, Chennai, 2007)
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16. **The Sound of Silence** (A collection of Poems in English) - Nivethitha Pathippagam Chennai, 2021
17. **Seamithu Vaitha Nizhalgal** (சேமித்து வைத்த நிழல்கள்) - Nivethitha Pathippagam, Chennai, 2021
18. **KUYILI** The Ballad of The Warrior Girl - Nivethitha Pathippagam, Chennai, 2022
19. **Prahlad**, the Epic.. and sixty short poems, Nivethitha Pathippagam, Chennai, 2023.
20. **The Messiah** - His-Story\* (The life of Jesus in verses)... in print, 2023.