

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

NIVETHITHA PATHIPPAGAM

10/3, Venkatesh Nagar, Main Road,
Virugambakkam, Chennai - 600 092.

Cell: 89393 87276 / 89393 87296

E-mail : nivethithathippagam1999@gmail.com

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CONTENTS

I. Preface	7
II. Foreword	9
III. "Prahlad, the Epic"	
A. Invocation (Verses 1 and 2)	17
B. Introduction (Verses 3 to 5)	18
C. 'The Gatekeepers': A Look-back (Verses 6 to 10)	20
D. Earth Redeemed! (Verses 11 to 15)	22
E. The Boon and its Aftermath (Verses 16 to 34)	25
F. The Seed (Verses 35 to 46)	33
G. The Birth (Verses 47 to 58)	38
H. The Cosmic Internet (Verses 59 to 71)	42
I. The Déjà Vu (Verses 72 to 77)	46
J. The Fallen Angel's Fall! (Verses 78 to 88)	49
K. A Golden Fence (Verses 89 to 95)	53
L. The Epic, The Great Moment (Verses 96 to 110)	57
IV. Brief Notes (1 to 26)	64
V. "Songs of Faith" (Short Poems)	
1) A Prayer	67
2) Hey, Bumble Bee!	69
3) The March Of Polemics	70
4) My Mailbox Is Full	72
5) The Music of that River	73
6) There's No Exit Door	74
7) The Gates Of Reason	75
8) She's Poetry, My Dear!	77
9) Farewell, Dear Brother!	79
10) The book of Nature	81

11) The Beyond !	82
12) The Power of Love	83
13) I Call Myself A Poet!	84
14) Nothing Seems Afar!	86
15) On Shakespeare	87
16) Nothing is a Wasteland	89
17) You are the Song, I am the Voice!	91
18) Every moment, eternity!	92
19) Tame this Sea	93
20) The Love's Descent!	94
21) My Goal Or My Fate	96
22) Where is my Bard	98
23) Empower!	99
24) This divine intimacy.	100
25) Change alone is there!	102
26) Only a Short Nap	104
27) In love ...!	105
28) Perfection!	106
29) Friendship	108
30) Where Angels Preside	110
31) Akasa	112
32) Wage a war?	114
33) That Moment Was Long Enough!	115
34) The Poetic Fervour Never Dies	116
35) Should I Alone Suffer?	117
36) The Taste Of Lightning	118
37) I Vote for Keats	120
38) The Story of Tomorrow!	122
39) A Continuum	123
40) Every Day is Mother's Day	124
41) Exchange of Dreams	127

42) Poetry Is My Religion	128
43) On the demise of Queen Elizabeth II	129
44) To Untie The Knot	130
45) This Light Should Shine Forever	131
46) Her Sky Has A Billion Moons!	132
47) So Long!	134
48) The Blue Nightingale	135
49) The Strength to Pray	136
50) Faith	137
51) A Cul-de-sac?	138
52) Not My Choice?	139
53) Why fight in His name?	140
54) The Most Beautiful Beast!	141
55) My Journey Never Ends	142
56) Father Or Brother	144
57) Let The Doorbell Ring	146
58) My Cup of Tea!	148
59) My mansion has multiple rooms!	149
60) Before I disappear	150
VI. Alphabetical Index to “Songs of Faith” (short poems)	151

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 Prahald 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

Sahrdaya 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**¹
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**² 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**³
Guard the golden gate
That leads to the heavenly abode
Of the God incarnate;
That's the seat of Lord **Vishnu**⁴,
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**⁵ of **Brahma**⁶

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**⁷ in abundance!
In the land of **Bharat**⁸,
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'⁹ -
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
Kamsa¹⁰ to Lord **Krishna**¹¹ – and
Ravana¹² to **Rama**¹³
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”¹⁴ 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**¹⁵ 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**¹⁶
Given by his friend
Refusing to betray the
Cause of Truth till the end;

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

The **one**¹⁸ 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**¹⁹, **Kayaadhu**²⁰,
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**²¹, the great sage
Who taught her the virtue of devotion
The power of chanting the mantra
'Om Namō Narayana'
The great Naradha **Muni**²²
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 Namō 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**²³ and
Later, when he bore his **Cross**²⁴
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 Namō Narayana!

Om Namō 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**²⁵, 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**²⁵ 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
Mahalakshmi²⁷, 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 Namō 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

* 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

* 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

* 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 beseched 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

*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, ethereal, 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

* 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

Alphabetical Index to Songs of Faith, (short poems)

A Continuum	123
A Cul-de-sac?	138
A Prayer	67
Akasa	112
Before I disappear	150
Change alone is there!	102
Empower!	99
Every Day is Mother's Day	124
Every moment, eternity!	92
Exchange of Dreams	127
Faith	137
Farewell, Dear Brother!	79
Father Or Brother	144
Friendship	108
Hey, Bumble Bee!	69
Her Sky Has A Billion Moons!	132
I Call Myself A Poet!	84
I Vote for Keats	120
In love ...!	105
Let The Doorbell Ring	146
My Cup of Tea!	148
My Goal Or My Fate	96
My Journey Never Ends	142
My Mailbox Is Full	72
My mansion has multiple rooms!	149
Not My Choice?	139
Nothing is a Wasteland	89
Nothing Seems Afar!	86

On Shakespeare	87
On the demise of Queen Elizabeth II	129
Only a Short Nap	104
Perfection!	106
Poetry Is My Religion	128
She's Poetry, My Dear!	77
Should I Alone Suffer?	117
So Long!	134
Tame this Sea	93
That Moment Was Long Enough!	115
The Beyond !	82
The Blue Nightingale	135
The book of Nature	81
The Gates Of Reason	75
The Love's Descent!	94
The March Of Polemics	70
The Most Beautiful Beast!	141
The Music of that River	73
The Poetic Fervour Never Dies	116
The Power of Love	83
The Story of Tomorrow!	122
The Strength to Pray	136
The Taste Of Lightning	118
There's No Exit Door	74
This divine intimacy	100
This Light Should Shine Forever	131
To Untie The Knot	130
Wage a war?	114
Where Angels Preside	110
Where is my Bard	98
Why fight in His name?	140
You are the Song, I am the Voice!	91



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.

He resides in Chennai, Tamilnadu, India. He is a practising Advocate.

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**, (மின்னற்கவை - **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
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