

THIRUJNANA SAMBANDHAR - I

Story : RV

Graphics : Sankar

Thanks to Ramakrishna Mission Madras.

1 In Sirkazhi Sivapadahridayar, a great devotee of Lord Siva, was bathing in the temple tank. On the bank his three year old son Sambandhar was sitting. The father, repeating mantras, did not come out of the water for a long time. The child got afraid and began to cry looking towards the temple.

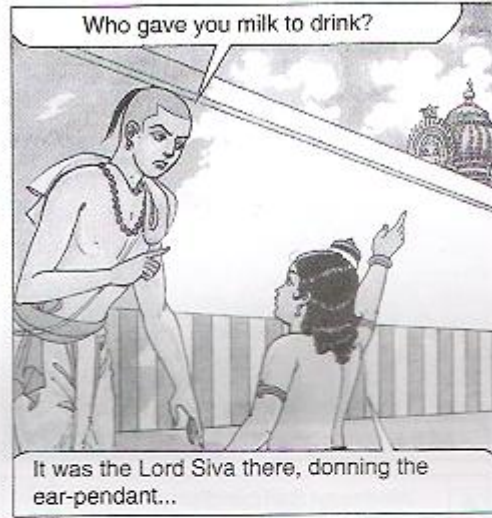


2 Hearing the child's cry Lord Siva and consort Umadevi appeared near the child. At the behest of the Lord the Divine Mother fed the child with the milk that is Siva's divine wisdom. That very instant the child became Thirujnana Sambandhar.

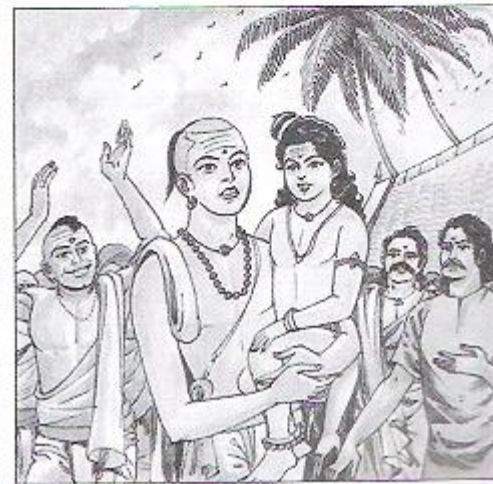


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3 When the father came back to the bank he found milk oozing from his son's mouth. He became angry.



4 Sivapada was overwhelmed with wonder at this episode... And hearing about it the people of the village came rushing to the place and carried Sambandhar home in procession.



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5 One day Sambandhar started for a place called Thirukolakka, accompanied by devotees, and singing a ten-line stanza, clapping hands in tune. When he reached the temple Lord Siva presented him with a pair of golden cymbals.

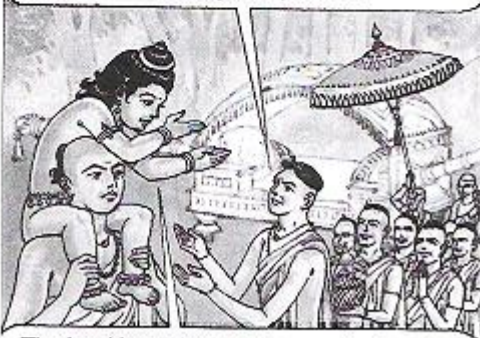
See, see! What I have in hand! Golden cymbals with the five-lettered mantra etched on them.



All the Lord's grace!

6 Whenever Sambandhar went on pilgrimage to various temples his father would carry him on his shoulders. In a place called Thirunelvayil the priests met him at the temple gate and honoured him.

They said, 'Master, the Lord appeared to us in a dream and asked us to present to you this pearl palanquin, umbrella and other paraphernalia. Kindly accept them.'

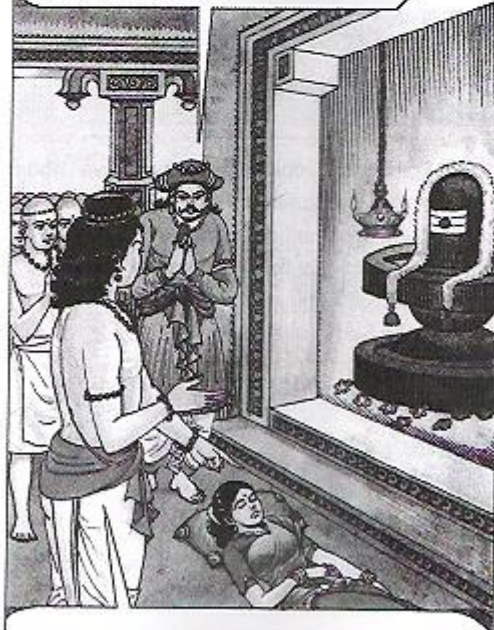


The Lord has given me these only in order to spread His glory all over the land.

7 At Sirkazhi, he was invested with the sacred thread. On that occasion he not only explained the meaning of the Veda mantras, but also elucidated the greatness of the Namasivaya mantra.

8 He visited many temples, his palanquin being carried by the devotees and he himself singing the glory of the Lord. King Kollimazhavan of Mazhanadu was awaiting his arrival at the temple gate.

Master! You must kindly save my daughter who is suffering from an incurable disease.



Master, save the girl lying before you.

As soon as Sambandhar sang a hymn in praise of God the girl got up, free from pain.

9 Sambandhar was staying at Thiruppugalur. He got the news that Thirunavukkarasar, a great Saivite saint, was coming from Thiruvarur to meet him. He was also called Appar. Sambandhar himself started to welcome him.

10 Outside the town the two saints stood bowing to each other and embracing each other.

O boy-saint! I have come here eager to meet you, having heard so much about the miracles you have performed at various places.



O father-saint! I know about your sacred service of cleaning up shrine premises and performing other services to Lord Siva. I am blessed by seeing you.

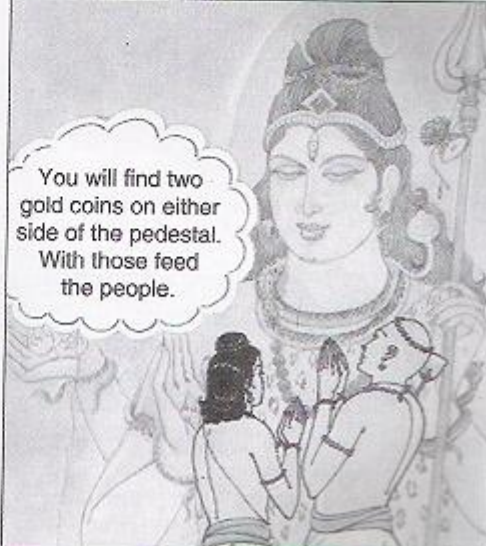
11 After staying there for a few days the pair started visiting temples together. Instead of riding in the pearl palanquin Sambandhar walked along with Appar.

Master, you should not walk. When the Lord has sent you the palanquin should you keep walking with me?



Sir, if you so insist you please go in front, I shall follow you from behind.

12 Both reached Thiruveezhimalai and extolled the Lord, singing hymns. Famine was raging there and people were unable to get food. Lord Siva appeared in a dream.



You will find two gold coins on either side of the pedestal. With those feed the people.

13 Accordingly the two bought provisions with the gold coins presented by the Lord, and satisfied the hunger of the masses.



14 In a few days it rained heavily and famine disappeared. The two saints reached Vedaranyam, the forest of Vedas.

How is it that the front door of the shrine remains closed? Why do devotees go in through other gates?



O Appar! We must worship the Lord by going in through this door.
So please sing a hymn praying for the removal of the bolts.

15 Appar sang ten hymns and yet the door did not open. When, dejected, he sang one more hymn, the bolts got withdrawn and the door opened. Both worshipped the Lord and returned.

I want you to sing a hymn so that this door will open and close without hitch for devotees to have convenient darsan of the Lord.



(After singing one hymn) Henceforward the door will be easy to open and close!

16 Even when I sang ten hymns the door did not open. I had to sing one more. But as soon as you sang one it became easy to open and close the door.



Master, The Lord wanted to hear you sing more and more and so kept the door closed. But He could not stand more than one of my hymns and so closed the door at once.

To be contd....