

THE THIRUKACHUR KACHABESWARAR SHRINE SIGNIFIES THE DEVOUTNESS OF LORD SHIVA

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Abstract

Thirukkachur - Kachabeswarar Temple (VirutharthaIswarar) is a temple dedicated to Sundarar. Thondai is one of the most popular places in the country. It is located in Chengalpattu in the Kanchipuram district. Here Sandeswarar appears with four faces. It is believed that the Lord came in the guise of Antanar, quenched Sundar's hunger, and worshiped Thirumal (Lord Vishnu) in the form of kachapa (tortoise) at this place. Kachabesam temple is in the middle of the town. This temple is also known as Alakoil. The Thyagaraja here is called Amrita Thyagesar. Thirumal worshiped Lord Shiva in this temple (Kachapam means tortoise) to get the power to support the Mandara mountain, which was considered as Madha when the Devas and the Asuras together ate the ocean of milk, hence the name Kachur.

Key Words: Kachabeswarar, Kanchipuram, Sandeswarar, Kachabesam

Introduction

The temples serve as the foundation and primary focus of the Hindu faith. Under its Latin root, "templum," the term "temple" initially denoted any sacred enclosure. It referred to God's home, where His picture was kept for living purposes. The Tamil people were ardent adherents and promote Hinduism.¹ They were devout believers. In general, they believed in an ultimate force they named Irai. (supreme King). They thought that the ultimate power's primary responsibility was to safeguard them against all perils and evils. He was said to be based on the actual King, or the protector of his people, whom they called Ko and housed in a koil. (palace). A sanctuary is considered the home of God by Hindus. Its Tamil counterpart, koil, was created after the king's current home.

In Indian culture, a temple serves as a site of devotion for followers, a hub for social and cultural celebrations, and a venue for philosophical discussions. People were compelled to find locations to build temples using a variety of materials as a result of the veneration of deities in different locations. The sanctuaries were built to create a structured method of living in society and the outside world. Additionally, the sanctuaries supported the populace's cultural and religious pursuits. The faithful and those who believed in redemption in the afterlife found refuge and consolation in temples.²

ThirukachurKachabeswarar Temple

The Kalabhras took over a region of Tamil country after the Sangam era, where they established new administrative and societal structures. The governmental, social, and religious lives of the Tamils were all impacted by their authority. Although their influence was short-lived, they altered the traditional religious lifestyle and brought new religious practices. Simhavishnu, the powerful king of the Pallavas, conquered the Kalabhras and took the kingdom. A time of intense religious fervor and the erection of numerous churches and memorials also began during that time. Additionally, the beginning of the Bhakti movement coincided with a time of tremendous spiritual revival and religious growth.³

Literary mention About the divine of the Thirukachur

The Kanji Purana is a mythological book that highlights the Kanji place. The author of this manuscript is a wise sage. SivajnanaMunivar has written this manuscript in detail with Kanchimanmiyam in the vernacular

as the nucleus. The number of songs in this manuscript is 2742. Like Sekizhar's Periyapurana, this Purana has raised the pride of Purana in Tamil. The manuscript describes the merits of more than seventy places in Kanji. This manuscript, which represents the theory that Lord Shiva is the supreme God, mentions the ten incarnations of Thirumal and the places where he has temples.⁴

The sage explains the ideas of Saivism very simply in many places. As in the Shiva Jnana Bodha, the trinity is beautifully stated. The sage has explained the methods of worship in terms of the method of worshipping the Lord, the goddess, adapted from this myth. If the god is worshipped, the Lord causes a flood, and he embraces it because of the fear that the flood will wash away the god whom he has created and worshipped. Therefore, the Lord shows a picture of bending and bending. The final part of this Purana explains the morals to be followed by the people and how Patipuniyam is better than Patipuniyam and Pashupuniyam. And in this section, the natures of the twenty-four forms of the Lord are beautifully explained. This manuscript has an older text. The hill located in this town is called AushataGiri. When Sundara Murthy Nayan was hungry, this place was the place where his servant begged for food. In this place, the wedding ceremony under the vine tree is very special.⁵

Construction of the temple

At the signboard "Thyagarajapuram - Thirukkachur" you can take the road that forks to the right and reach Thirukkachur. After reaching Urul, if you go back to the right (Kachur) you will reach AlakKoil and if you go to the left you will reach the hilly temple of DarshaneesarKoil. Sundarar worshiped Thirukkalukkunram and reached Thirukkachur and prayed to Lord Alumana in the Alak temple. He was sitting hungry in the north. The Lord came in the form of Anthana and made Sundarar stay there.⁶The servants of this town went from house to house, got food, and brought him food to relieve his hunger. Sundarar, who got rid of his hunger, marveled at the Lord's mercy and praised him by singing the hymn 'Muduvayori'. First, you should visit Alaka temple and then Darshaneesar temple. This temple is one of the ThiagarajaSannidhis in Thondai Nadu and the Thiagesar here is named 'AmudhathThiagar'. History has it that Thirumal worshiped the Lord in the form of kachapa (tortoise) to collect the elixir. This temple is a temple. Therefore, the name 'Kachhapavoor' was later changed to 'Kachur'.facing east. Kachure lake is visible in front. No Rajagopuram. The front gate only. Opposite the temple is a sixteen-quarter hall. On the pillars of this hall, there are many sculptures like AnumantaSeva, Kurmavathara, Kalinga Narthana, Kalki avatar, Durgai, Adhisana, UrthuvaThandavam, Kali, etc.⁷Upon entering the gate, there are flagpoles, Nandi, and altars. These are located outside the window opposite the shrine of the Swami. There is a mandapam in front of the side (south) gate. One of the pillars of this hall has a sculpture of Tirumal worshipping in the form of a tortoise.

In this hall, there is 'AmudhaThiakesar Sabha'. If you bow down and enter the gate, it is the hall. Darshan of NereAmbal. Sannidhi facing south. Thirukolam where Ambal stood. Four Thirukaras with Abhayavaratam. The Opposite is a lion. Ambal temple is a separate temple - a crawling facility. On the left is the path leading to Swami Sannidhi. Crossing the entrance gate and coming to the prakara to the right, there are Sannidhis of Surya, Vinayagar, many Shiva Lingam Tirumenis, Naga Lingams, Valli Deivayanai, Subrahmaniyar, Natarasara, and Nalvar. After worshipping, the deity will appear if you go out through the side gate. There is a window in front.⁸

Shiva's adoration in several forms

In the KachabeswararMoolamurthySivalingathThirumeni - Swayambu. small drink Swami sanctum sanctorum is moated. Koshtamurthas include Ganesha, Dakshinamurthy, Mahavishnu, Brahma, and Durga. In this temple, all the festivities that take place in Chitra are dedicated to Thyagaraja. On the 9th day of this festival, ChinmutraiUpadesaAidegam, which was blessed by Lord Sanakathi Muni, is held. 'Muduvayori' Thalapatigam - Sung by Sundarar is engraved in stone. Opposite this temple is ArumugaChettiarChatram. They help the pilgrims who come to the temple to sit and eat and rest. At the foot of the hill is the temple of Darshaneesar. No Rajagopuram. South-facing gate. On entering there is a small hall.⁹

The pillars of this hall are carved with images of Dwarapalagar. Apart from these, there are sculptures of Iingolpavar, Mavadisevai, Pattinathar, Vallalar, Vinayagar, Dandapani, Appar, Sambandar, Sundarar, etc. Among these is a sculpture of the Lord looking towards Sundarar, with Amud in his hand - a sight to behold. It's on the wall. Small temple - nature surrounding, peaceful place. There is a Ganesha temple in the inner prakaram.¹⁰

The Swami Sannidhi faces west. There is a window in front. Outside this, there are flag-tree Nandi altars. There is a 'Walkway Well' which is a drinking water system that can be taken down the steps. NavgrahaSannidhi on the side. AmbalSannidhi faces west. Standing shrine. Four Thirukaras with abhayavaratam. Opposite is the Nagalingam tree. If you go to worship Dwarganapati, Subramaniam, you will see Moolavar Darshan, the highest Thirumeni - Gomukham. As GoshtaMurthas, there are Ganesha, Dakshinamurthy, Maha Vishnu, Brahma, and Murthas. In front of Goshta Brahma, Sandeswarar with four faces (ChaturmukhaSandeswarar) is seen. This structure is a prominent iconography in this temple. There is BhairavaSannidhi.¹¹

Trikkachur feast and medicine

The Lord who entertained SundararSundaramurthy Swami, who was on a pilgrimage to Shiva temple, once left Thirukkalluk hill and arrived at Thirukkachur temple on his way to Kancheepuram. Sundarar was starving with the fatigue of the long journey. He took a seat in the temple compound along with the attendants. Knowing his hunger, the Lord came to Sundarar in the form of an old man. Then he said to him, 'You are very hungry. Stay here for a while. "I am bringing food" and then the Lord came in the form of an old man. The Lord went into the town, carrying a tiruvot in his hand, and went from house to house, offering Yasakam and bringing food. He gave it to Sundar and made him hungry. The servants who were with Sundar were also hungry. Then the old Lord passed away. Knowing that it was the Lord who had come, Sundar was amazed at the grace of the Lord. Then he sang Bhatikam about the Lord. Lord Shiva, who begged for Sundarar, resides a little away from the temple in the name of 'Irantheeswarar', and Shiva, who feasted Sundarar, resides in a separate sanctum in the temple precinct in the name of 'Vrinditheeswarar'¹²

Marunthiswarar

This temple is located on a small plateau about one and a half kilometers from Alakoil. Towards the west, Lord Marudeeswar and their mother with four arms are seen Iruneekiyambal. In this temple, you can visit Chandikeshwar which has four faces. Once Devendran got an incurable disease due to a curse. Then he sent his divine doctors Asupathi and Pasupathi to bring herbs like Palai and Atipala. The herbs were not found even after wandering around in many places. Eventually, the divine doctors came to this mountain region. But as the entire area was covered in darkness, they suffered from not being able to identify the herbs. After this, He blessed this place with light and removed the darkness. After that, the deva doctors plucked the required herb and cured Indra's illness. As she removed the darkness and showed light, this mother got the name 'IrulneekiAmmal'. The Lord was also known as the medicine.¹³

The Early Religious Cults

According to Tolkappiyar, the grammarian of Tamil literature, four Gods—Seyon (Murugan) of Kurinji, Mayon (Thirumal) of Mullai, Vendan (Indra) of Marudaham, Varunan of Neydal, and Kotravai of Palai—are associated with each of the four areas. Other types of devotion existed in addition to the five regional spirits. The Sangam era is a representation of the various religions that were practiced in honor of Siva, Vishnu, Muruga, Indra, and the Mother Goddess Kotravai.

The various religious cults in Tamil Country were made possible by the diverse sects. A thorough description is provided below to help you comprehend the Thirukatchoor income division's long history. Through the items discovered in the Locality and the different locations in the Thirukatchoor revenue division, prehistoric civilization has been demonstrated. The artifacts demonstrate that these locations served as Paleolithic people's major settlements. Up until this point, Thirukatchoor and its surrounding regions have not been used to reconstruct the political history of the early Pallavas. However, it is evident from the extant records that the early Pallavas also controlled Tondaimandalam in addition to Kanchipuram. The documents that were at hand in and around Thirukatchoor at the same time as Nandivarman II amply attested to the Pallava rule in this region.¹⁴

Conclusion

The stone statues are known as moola vigrahas which are firmly fixed in churches and shrines. This chapter tries to examine the importance of the key symbols in this sanctuary and describe them. Stone, wooden, and metal artwork can be found throughout the sanctuary. They display the craftsmanship of our prehistoric artisans. The majority of them are located in the interior prakara of the Thirukatchoor Siva

shrine. typically, in every sanctuary. Two types of pictures are distinguished: one is movable and the other is fixed. The various metal statues that can be moved are called moveable images, and they are used in rituals and processions. generally referred to as the processional pictures. Siva is worshipped at the ArulmiguThirukatcheeswarar shrine.

The gods of Lord Siva adored him in a variety of ways. Lord Siva is the third person in the Hindu triad, according to Hindu philosophy. He is referred to as the killer and holds the place of supremacy among the gods. He goes by many titles, including Nilakanta, Rudra, Maheswara, Dhurjati, and Trinetra. In some literature works that celebrate Siva, he is venerated as a phallus or linga. These include the Markandeyapurana, Bhagavatapurana, Lingapurana, and Vishnupurana, which talk in-depth about Siva devotion. He is depicted as being both sitting and standing. Anugrahamurthi, Nrithamurthi, and Samhamurthy are different names for Siva's representations. Lord Siva is portrayed in Thirukatchoor Temple in all of his guises.

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