

# **A Short Note On Sri. Kidaambi Aachaan**

( English Version )



**Shri Kidaambi Aachaan (a.k.a Madaipalli Aachaan)**

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The life stories of some of our Acharyas, who were contemporaries of Swamy Ramanuja, are so inseparably intertwined with the biography of the latter, that it lends only to a limited narration. Very prominent among such were Koorathazhwan, Thirukurugai Piraan Pillaan, Mudali Aandaan, Embaar, Nadadur Azhwan, Kidaambi Aachaan, Vaduganambi et al.

This note is on Shri Kidaambi Aachaan who was born in the village “Kidambi” located between Kooram and Thiruputkuzhi near Kanchipuram in the year 1057 A.D.in the tamil month of Chithirai on Hasta Nakshatara day in Atreya gothram. As he had parental affection towards Shri. Ramanujar (like how Periazhwar had towards Perumal), he was fondly addressed as “Aachaan”.

The para below is necessary to serve as the background link to the narration on Shri Kidaambi Aachaan.

During his second visit to Srirangam from Kanchipuram in the good company of Shri Periya Nambi, Shri. Ramanuja, was on the way at Maduranthakam, insistently urged that he should be post-haste imparted the Manthropadesam with Panchasamskaaram by Shri. Periyambadi and the latter obliged then and there. On reaching Srirangam, Shri Periyambadi urged Shri Ramanuja to approach Thirukoshtiyur Nambi for deep understanding of the esoteric meanings of the three mantras, Rahasya-Thrayam, as he, Thirukoshtiyur Nambi, was the repository thereof, after their Acharya, Shri Aalavandhaar. After repeated visits (17 times), Thirukoshtiyur Nambi finally consented and blessed Swamy Ramanuja. Thereafter at Srirangam, Swamy Ramanuja, true to his Sanyaasa Dharma, was doing daily Bhikshaavandhanam (receiving alms from households) in the streets reciting with devotion Shri Aandaal's Thiruppavai. Thus he came to be known as Thiruppaavai Jeeyar.

While doing so, a few bad elements, envious of Shri Ramanuja's popularity in society, wanted to eliminate him and forced a housewife to offer poisoned food as Bhiksha. The noble woman that she was, she reversed the order by offering food first and then prostrating before Ramanuja and looking at his face with teary eyes and retired to her house. Then Ramanuja sensed that there was something amiss in the food and hence the strange behavior of the woman. He found out that the food was poisoned and became depressed in mind, Ramanuja went on a fast. Hearing this, Thirukoshtiyur Nambi rushed to Srirangam to meet his disciple Ramanuja. The latter on knowing this and with the intention to receive his Acharya at the entrance of Srirangam met Shri Nambi at the Cauvery bed near Tiruchy. As Ramanuja was prostrating in the hot sand, Thirukoshtiyur Nambi did not stop him. This so much enraged Kidaambi Aachaan, who was part of Ramanuja's entourage, that he taunted Thirukoshtiyur Nambi as merciless and unbecoming of an Acharya. Thirukoshtiyur Nambi then said that this was the person he was looking for and ordained that Shri Ramanuja thereafter should only accept the food prepared and offered by Kidaambi Aachaan. Then onwards, Kidaambi Aachaan was known as Madaipalli Aachaan.

While thus involved in such personal service (Kainkaryam) to Shri Ramanuja with sincerity, discipline, implicit obedience and ardent love and respect towards his Acharya, Kidaambi Aachaan earned the opportunity of offering Biksha and Madukaram to Sri Ramanuja. His master. Sri Ramanuja blessed Kidambi Aachaan with all the rahasya meanings of Vishistadvaidya granthas. Aachaan also learnt the esoteric meanings of the Rahasya Thrayam and continued his Rahasya parampara through his progeny, extending up to Shri Vedantha Desika through Kidaambi Ramanuja (a.k.a Appullaar). This is alluded to by Swami Desika in his Stotram Sharanagathi Deepika as Yeteeshwara Mahaanasa Sampradayam meaning the great kitchen tradition of Shri Ramanuja, and in Tamil Prabhandham, Paramapadha Sopaanam, as “Yethivaranaar Madaipalli Vandha Manam”, meaning the sweet fragrance of Shri Ramanuja's kitchen.

To add a small post-script, Kidaambi Aachaan (named at birth as Pranatharthihara) was the father of Kidaambi Ramanuja (named after the Acharya), grandfather of Kidaambi Rangaraja and great grandfather of Kidaambi Ramanuja, known as Appullaar, who was the maternal uncle of Shri Desika.

Shri. Kidaambi Achaan was one of the 74 Simhasanaadhipadhis post Ramanuja and his Thirunakshatram, Chaithra Hastham.

**Shri. Kidaambi Achaan's thaniyan:**

**rAmAnuja padhAmbhOjayugaLI yasya dhImatha:**

**prApyam cha prApakam vaNdhE pranNathArththiharam gurum**

**ராமானுஜ பதாம்போஜயுகளீ யஸ்ய தீமத:**

**ப்ராப்யம் ச ப்ராபகம் வந்தே ப்ரணதார்த்திஹரம் குரும்**