

Sri Vijayeendra Swamiji

ಭಕ್ತಾನಾಂ ಮಾನಸಾಂಭೋಜ ಭಾನವೇ ಕಾಮಧೇನವೇ |
ನಮತಾಂ ಕಲ್ಪತರವೇ ಜಯೀಂದ್ರ ಗುರವೇ ನಮಃ ||

Sri Vijayeendra Swamiji, a contemporary of Sri Vaadi Rajaru, Purandara Dasaru and Kanaka Dasaru lived in the sixteenth century. He studied under the accredited saint Sri Vyasa Rajaru. When studying under Sri Vyasa Rajaru, he was already a young ascetic with the appellation of Sri Vishnu Tirtharu. Kings of Vijayanagar, Madurai and Chieftain of Thanjavur were having Sri Vyasa Rajaru as their Rajaguru (royal teacher). Sri Vyasa Rajaru was evincing keen interest in the young saint, as he desired to place him on the gadi of Sri Vyasa Raja Mutt. But divine dispensation was otherwise.

Predecessor of Sri Vijayeendra Tirtharu - Sri Surendra Tirtharu, happened to pay a visit to Vijayanagar. Finding abundant growth of basil plants (Tulasi) in the royal garden, Swamiji dedicated all of it to Sri Krishna (Krishnaarpanamastu) in his heart of hearts. Disciples of (Sri Vyasa Rajaru) not knowing the act of Sri Surendra Tirtharu, plucked Tulasi leaves for puja as usual. Sri Vyasa Rajaru, who lifted Tulasi leaves, observed them as already used (nirmaalya) and questioned the disciples. By his occult powers, he realised what had happened. He arranged with Krishna Deva Raya, a grand reception for Sri Surendra Tirtharu. In the royal assembly, Sri Surendra Tirtharu observed the young sanyasi Sri Vishnu Tirtharu's radiant face. With these yatis, it appeared sun and moon both had landed there and shining bright. After performing Puja, both the swamiji's settled for afternoon meals. The young, radiant serene appearance of Vishnu Tirtha made an indelible imprint in the mind of Sri Surendra Swamiji; he contemplated on having him as his apparent (uttaradhikaari). SriVyasa Raja Swamiji understood this but appeared composed and requested SriSurendra Swamiji to sip theertha and partake food. As if, he had taken a decision at the

spur of the moment, Sri Surendra Tirtha Swamiji made a request of Sri Vyasa Rajaru to make a gift (Bhiksha) of young Sri Vishnu Tirtharu to him, before he sipped Tirtha. Sri Vyasa Rajaru who visualised all this mentally, made a boon (handing over young swamiji) to Sri Surendraru. Having received this gift of a gem in young form of the Sanyasi, Sri Surendra Swamiji ordained him to rule the Vedanta Samrajya with the name of Sri Vijayeendra. All the world felt elated.

Vijayindra scored a straight victory over one Krishna Sarma, who hailed from Navadweep of Bengal region - in a debate. People exulted in joy. On the invitation extended by Sri Vaadirajaru, Sri Vijayendraru proceeded to Udupi and had darshan of Sri Krishna. Sri Vaadirajaru handed over a building to Sri Vijayeendraru and that building houses the present Sri Raghavendra Swamiji Mutt today.

Later on both Swamijis viz. Sri Surendra Tirtharu and Sri Vijayindra Tirtharu proceeded to Thanjavur. There was a Saiva saint at Kumbakonam by name Lingaraj who with erudition, scholarship and magical powers was reigning supreme. Vaishnavites desired to get him defeated and salvage respect and command. They urged Sri Vijayeendraru to engage him in a debate. Sri Surendraru approved this move. Young Swamiji had vision of Sri Vyasa Rajaru, Sri Madhva and Sri Ramachandra during meditation. In the dream, Kshetramurti Mangalambal also appeared and blessed young Swamiji and garlanded him with shanbaga flowers. Immediately he left for Kumbakonam where he was received with great ovation. The very next day the debate started. Sri Vijayeendraru left his Mutt in a palanquin. On the way Lingaraj Swami chanced to see him but he looked at the Swamiji with nonchalance. He jumped over a compound wall and started moving towards the venue of debate. Not lagging behind young swamiji asked the bearers of his palanquin to be grounded. When so done, it started flying and the swamiji passed on Saiva Temple and landed in front of Kumbheswarar Temple. People were wonder-struck. That itself was a victory.

The debate started. The huge audience included learned pundits, government officials and public. It was agreed that the defeated should hand over his Mutt to the victorious and the defeated will have to be the disciple of the victorious. The two giants started debating testimonies were quoted from Vedas Itihaasa, Purana and allied scriptures. This debate went on for nine days and later as requested to by the opponent was extended by three more days, Lingaraj was put on the mat. Sri Vijayeendraru with his guru Surendraru and Thanjavur king, worshipped Mangalambika. When the Shanbaga garland around the neck was noticed the Senior Swamiji narrated how it had to junior's neck. The vanquished Saint was ready to implement the undertaking. But Sri Vijayeendra Swamiji desired only to take over temple(Mutt) and announced there was no need for the defeated to be his disciple. Lingaraj Swamiji applauded the open - heartedness of the young Swamiji. As desired by the king, two Swamijis were taken in procesion. This enhanced the fame of Sri Vijayeendraru. Next time when Sri Vijayeendraru arrived at Kumbakonam, one goldsmith by name Vinayak Ramachandra Joshi challenged Swamiji to manufacture a pendants just as the one to be made by him. Swamiji accepted the challenge. In Twelve days they manufactured the pendants independently. Judges, examining the workmanship, selected one manufactured by Sri Vijayeendra Swamiji as the best. Joshi, the goldsmith appreciated the workmanship of Swamiji and also handing over his pendant to Swamiji sought his pardon. One can see these two pendants in the Mutt even today. By his mantra sakthi, Swamiji warded off an impending invasion as a result of which, the custom of Sri Sarangapani and Chakrapani idols being it to Mutt premises has come into vogue.

Once when a musician from North challenged him, Swamiji, to the surprise of the large audience elaborated alapana of Raga Deepak and made panchamukhi light burn (on its own). Then obliging a musician from Vijayanagar, singing

Karnataka music, he caused the sky to rain. When one Bhattoji Deekshitar pointed out grammatical mistakes in a treatise "Tatva Kaustubha", argued with him and convinced him about his own correctness of usage.

Appiah Deekshitar also lived in the same period. He was a great, erudite eminent scholar. Without knowing the capability of the Swamiji, he composed a piece of poem- I "Asthyaranyam dharanyanghriSaranyantardi Paadayam -

meaning - a forest, a thick one where even the sun's rays could not penetrate.

Sri Vijayeendra Swamiji had a glance at it and composed one

"Jareedatta Pareerambha dhareesupta sarasiroopam I

meaning - In the same forest, existed a mountain cave - Two cascades falling (descended) lined the walls of the cave and appeared as if embracing it - In the coolest place in the cave a python is sleeping without botheration"

In another instance, Appiah Dikshitar showed his work "Madhva Mukha Mardanaa" to swamiji. Debate followed:

"Athaapi Anandatheerteeyamatam Agrahyameva na"

meaning - however judiciously Madhva might put forth his arguments we are not in a position to approve of it or accept it. Dikshitar desired a quick short reply and then detailed discussion could take place later. Swamiji, repaid the compliment re-arranging Dikshitar's words and made it his reply also i.e.

"Athapi Ananda Theerteeya! Matam Agrahyameva Naha" thus he arranged the words. "Whatever might be my objections, hey Madhva! our Dikshitar's matam (thoughts) are not to be accepted by you". Dikshitar was taken aback. Even in the debate conducted later exhaustively, Swamiji won the debate, yet they remained as good friends.

He penned 104 works and was a master of 64 arts. Sixteen - shouldered Narasimha Vighraha made by him is in the Mutt today. It is said he composed some Haridasara padas also.

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He ordained Sri Sudhindra Teertharu as his successor to the gadi. He in turn gave asrama to Sri Raghavendra Teertha Guru Sarva Bhoumaru.

The Brindavan of the Tapasvri and Mahan Sri Vijayindraru lies at Solaiappan Agraharam, on the banks of Cauvery at Kumbakonam.

Let us all pray to the Mahan to grant us Bhakti, Vidya and Virakti.

SrKrishnarpanamastu

(Courtesy: Based on Madhva Makarandam)

Courtesy VAAGVAIKHARI- Nanjanagud Sri Raghavendra Swamy Mutt Mantralaya Kumbhakonam
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