

## **Gargeswara Swamy Temple, East Village, Pallassana.**

By

P.S.Krishnan

As is the normal practice, when our Tamil Brahmins moved to East Pallassana, they started looking for a place of worship – temple. Thus the Siva temple came to existence. The Siva Lingam of the present temple was originally consecrated and worshipped by a Rishi, known by the name, Gargamuniswar and hence the name for our Swamy – Gargeswara Swamy. The original temple was very much below ground level – in a pit. Later on they raised the level to high and reconstructed the temple to the current level. The Ambal of the temple is Kalyana Parvathy. The original stone idol was approximately 5 feet high and with all lakshanams. Later the idol was changed as the original one developed deformity in stomach region (challa vizharathu). This was predicted in prasnam and the present idol was consecrated in the place of old one, some hundred year ago. The original idol was put in Grama kulam (Sivan Kulam) and remained there till 1957-58. Before the ashtabandha kalasa kumbhabhishekam in 1957 – 58 ashtamangalya prasnam was conducted and they recommended to remove the idol from the village tank as it had some bad effects. In 1957-58 the entire water was pumped out of the Sivan kulam and the idol was retrieved from the tank. It was then taken to Gayathri river and buried there. Till this Kumbhabhishekam in 1958 a snake shaped idol as Subramaniaswamy was also being worshipped. During 1957-58 Kumbhabhishekam new Subramaniaswamy idol was consecrated and old idol became Nagar(snake).

Apart from Gargeswarar and Kalyana Parvathi there are other prathishtas like Nandikeswarar, Vigeswarar, Subranmania swami, Nagar, Sastha, Chandikeswarar, navagrahangal (small lingam shaped nine stone prathishtas in inverted “U” Shape near Chandikeswarar) etc are there in the temple.

The temple is constructed in the typical style (Agama vidhi) found in any other Tamil Brahmin agraharam temples. In all Tamil Brahmin Siva temple, if Ambal prathishta is there and when Sivan faces East direction, then Ambal’s prathishta is done facing South direction. In this temple Goddess also is facing South direction.

In East at Kovil vaasal, 5 layer stone Deepasthambham is there. After that when we climb the steps, Kodimaram (Flag post) and Balikallu are there. On entering the inner prakaram Nandi mandapam is there. To the left at the South-West corner Ganapathy prathishta is done.

After worshipping Vigneswarar we have to go back to Gargeswara Swamy darshan which is in the center. Then we have to go clockwise to the back of Lord Siva.

There in the North-West corner there is prathishta of Subramania swamy, Nagar and Sastha. After that we have to come upto the outlet for abhisheka jalam for prokshanam. There we have to see the Chandikeswarar and Navagrahanga placed in inverted "U" shape (Typical of Kerala temples). From there without completing the pradhakshinam we have to go back to worship Kalyana Parvathi at the North-East corner at Lord Siva's left side. Here we also worship the Siva-Parvathy uthsava moorthies. In the inner prakaram we should not complete pradhakshinam as is the practice in Siva temples. In the outer prakaram we make three pradhakshinams. In the front side of the Temple we have Arayal thara and Sivan kulam.

### **Festivals :**

**Annabhishekam :** On Thulam Masam pornami day Annabhishekam is celebrated in a grand way. Early morning the day starts with Ganapathi Homam. In the morning Thirumanjanam ezhunthalathu (jalam is brought) from Gayathri river with elephant procession and vadhya melangal like chenda, nadaswaram etc. and the abhishekam is done with Vedaparayanam. At about 2.30 -3.00 PM Annam (cooked rice) is poured on Gargeswarar. This is very important and if one views this annam choriya he is devoid of all sickness. Steps are made and decorated with flowers, fruits, cheeru items like Murukku, Neyyappam, athirasam and many other items. At 4 PM Panchavadhyam and Grama seeveli (elephant procession ) are there. Lot of devotees pour in to have Annappadi Darshan. In the evening Thayambaka is attraction. Veda parayanam and Kramarchana are chanted. Then the annapadi (Sirasu portion) is deposited in Sivan Kulam. The celebration ends with the night pallacku Kacheri .

**Vaikkaththashtami & Thiruvathira:** Vaikkaththashtami and Thiruvathira are celebrated and Samaradhana on both days.

**Sivarathri :** Every year Mahasivarathri is celebrated in Kumbhamasam. In the morning rudrabhishekam and Deeparadhana are done. On this day Poornabhishekam is done to Gargeswara swamy in the night with chanting of Rudram eleven times with Chamakam. Kramarchana, Vedaparayanam etc are conducted. Afterwards Pallacku Kacheri and Grama urvalam are done.

**Sasthapreethi:** In Kizhakke Gramam Sastha preethi is celebrated on the Saturday following Sivarathri every year in Kumbha masam. In Palakkad region the first Sasthapreethi is conducted in Nurani and the last Sasthapreethi at Pallassana Kizhekke Gramam. On this day, after special poojas and laksharchana samaradhana and annadhanam are conducted.

**Pradhosham :** Pradhosham is celebrated regularly with Rudrabhishekam

And Vedaparayanam.

**Income :** The temple had good agricultural income – 15 Vandi (A cart load-1050 paras) of Paddy was the agricultural income per year. This dried up to nil in 1969 when the Communist ministry headed by Achutha Menon passed the land act. Now the temple mainly depends on the contribution from devotees.

**Timings :** Temple is open in the morning and in the evening.

**How to reach :** Pallassana is 20KMs from Palakkad and buses are available.