



## Can the Ultimate be attained by scriptures?

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**Aruḷnanthi sivam**, a 13<sup>th</sup> century Saiva legend was well versed with scriptures thus known as *Sakalagama Padit*. He was the Guru for the clan of **Meikaṇḍār** family. When **Meikaṇḍār's** father **Achchutha Kalāppāḷar** approached his **kula guru** for guidance to beget a son, **Aruḷnanthi** directed the couple to go the Temple of **Thiruvenkādu**, take daily dips in the three sacred ponds and worship the Lord there. That's how they got the son **Meikaṇḍār** whose real name was **Swēdhavana – perumāḷ**, the name of the Lord in that temple.

When two years old **Swēdhavana perumāḷ** was playing in front of his maternal uncle's home in **Thiruvenṇai nallūr**, sage **Paramjōthi**, who was travelling in the astral plane, happened to see him. Struck by the maturity of the child's soul and directed by the will of the Almighty **Shiva**, **Paramjōthi** came down, gave all necessary initiations -**dīkshās** - and initiated him into the supreme renunciation order of **parāma hamsa sanyāsa**. He instructed the child with **Siva Jnāna Bōdha** - part of **raurava āgama** -and requested him to make this message available in Tamil. He also renamed the child as **Meikaṇḍār**, which is the direct translation of his Guru's name in Tamil, **Satya jnāna dharsini**.

**Mei kāṇḍar** was fixed in the envisioning, personal, nondual experience of the Supreme called **nishta** in the Temple of **swayambhu** (self-manifested) **vināyaga** in the village for fourteen days. Then Saint **Meikaṇḍār** graced us with the twelve aphorisms consisting of 40 lines and 216 words, known as **Siva Jnāna Bōdha** in Tamil. This is the essence of the ULTIMATE TRUTH in a condense and concise format.

Considering the difficulties in interpreting such a concise and condensed message of TRUTH, **Meikaṇḍār** himself wrote explanatory poems and notes for this. He started teaching and spreading this message from his place. Many people started coming to him, even though he was a child.

Hearing that the small boy, who was born from the advice he gave to his parents, is teaching **Siva Jnāna Bōdham**, **Aruḷnanthi** was amused. He wanted to check himself the ability and the wisdom of the child. **Meikaṇḍār** was teaching to the disciples when **Aruḷnanthi** went there. The lesson was about the **Āṇava**, the primal fetter of the soul. Observing the class for some time, **Aruḷnanthi** interrupted with a question, "what is the nature of **Āṇava**". "The state you are in now" was the answer from the child prodigy **Meikaṇḍār** .

This one word was enough for the **Aruḷnanthi**, who has the maturity of the knowledge from his sincere study and practice - **apara jnāna** - but in short of personal experience of the TRUTH - **para jnāna** by himself. Transcending the barriers cast and creed this elderly Brahmin Guru of the clan, fell at the feet of this child **Meikaṇḍār**, who was from the fourth caste. He became the prime disciple of **Meikaṇḍār** and wrote this text **Siva Jnāna Siddhiyār** based on his **jnāna guru Meikaṇḍār's** text of **SIVA JNĀNA BŌDHA**.

This is the message conveyed in this following song from Tirukaḷittrupadiyār.

சாத்திரத்தை ஓதினர்க்குச் சற்குருவின் தன்வசன  
மாத்திரத்தே வாய்க்கு நலம் வந்துறுமோ? – ஆர்த்த கடல்  
தண்ணீர் குடித்தவர்க்குத் தாகம் தணிந்திடுமோ?  
தெண்ணீர்மை யாய்இதனைச் செப்பு.

*cāttirattai ōtiṇarkkuc carkuruviṇ taṇvacana*  
*māttirattē vāykkunalam vanturumō – ārttakāḷal*  
*taṇṇīr kuṭittavarkkut tākan taṇintiṭumō*  
*teṇṇīrmai yāyitanaic ceppu*

Resolve. Will drinking the water from the salty ocean quench one's thirst? Will those who, mastered all the scriptures reap the benefit comparable to that of a single word from the gracious **Guru**?

- மெய்கண்ட சாத்திரம், திருக்கடலூர் உய்யவந்த தேவர் அருளிய
- திருக்களிற்றுப்படியார் – பாடல் 06
- Meikāṇḍa Sāththiram, Thiru- kaḷittru - padiyār
- by Saint Uyyavanta tevar - song 06