The influx of people into the west from South to South-East Asia has been accompanied by cross-cultural interaction and spirituality on a massive scale where exchange of ideas has become the driving force for change. The names of the Divine are being repeated over and over again throughout the world.

In Thiruvannamalai, in the North Arcot district of Tamil Nadu there has been a massive upsurge in devotees worshipping the Arulmigu Arunachaleswarar Thirukoil (Temple) and walking the Giripradakshina path around the Theyu Jyothir Lingam Mountain of Arunachaleswarar, especially on the day of poornami full moon.

In Thiruvannamalai the devotee can feel the presence of Divinity. Arunagirivalam is the path of spirituality that many wish to take. We can begin to understand how exceptional this journey is when we realize the relevance of the many glorious happenings that have taken place on Arunagirivalam since the dawn of time. As we walk of Giripradakshina Path around the Theyu Jyothir Lingam Mountain of Arunachaleswarar Siva we will came across many Lingams, temples, ashrams and shrines on the way. Some of these are extremely ancient and some even invisible to the human eye. There are also ashrams and shrines that have been developed in the modern era. All are the magnificent, and all of them, great or small, old or modern, hold the 'Vital key' to understanding the true depth of our wonderful
Hindu religious heritage. In this chapter I have attempted to record as many as possible as it is my sincere wish to bring greater understanding about this path of Divinity\(^1\). I earnestly pray that this information will help us preserve and protect all that is sacred on Arunagirivalam.

Arunagirivalam is not the path for the faint hearted, the raucous or for the mere tourist. Rather, it is the Divine Circle of Silence\(^2\). One must tread the path with purity. It is for the silent aspirant, the true seeker of truth and enlightenment. Everything that has taken place in this blessed area since the dawn of time has special significance. As each foot treads the sacred path, as each pebble or stone is turned or touched by human hand, something is recorded that has an effect on our destiny. This is extremely important for everyone to understand in the modern age where we are prone to carry forward individualistic aims at the cost of our rich religious historical and cultural heritage. No change, no alteration to the blessed route is praiseworthy unless one is accompanied by Sanatana Dharma.

Arunagirivalam is a special path of grace. If it is possible for us to understand that we cannot dissociate ourselves from the richness of the glorious past we may be able to spread the wings of the soul, take hold of the hands that guide us on that path and stand within the Jyothi Light.

There is wonder that many great saints sages and devotees have been unable to leave Arunagiri. It is said that the perfume of the ancient saints fill the air as they silently tread the Divine Circle and remain within the folds of Siva's Divine Grace. When Siva appeared as the Column of
Effulgence before Brahma and Vishnu, their pride was annihilated, as also their sense of separation from Him. At their request, Siva took the form of the motionless hill, Arunachala and abides there eternally in the form of the Linga.

The holy Arunachala is the primal or Adi Linga. The path around its base is the sacred Yoni. Pradakshina of the hill is therefore circumambulation of the source of all Lingas. Making a circuit of the hill is the worship of Arunachala and the Lord is pleased with it. Sonachala has been worshipped by Soma (the moon), Surya (the sun), Agni (fire), Indra and other Devas, Dikpalakas (protectors of the directions), Gandharvas, Siddha Yogis, sages and others. While performing the Pradakshina, one bows mentally to the invisible gods and Siddhas going rounds and keeps to the left edge of the path. There are various visible and invisible sacred Tirthas (tanks) around the hill. There are eight Lingas at the eight cardinal points besides the temples of Arunachaleswarar and Adi Annamalai. Some important mythological stories associated with the various spots on the Giri valam are also narrated.

The Nakshatra (star), the Devatas (deities) presiding over the planets, and divisions of time such as Tithi, Yoga, Hora etc., all become favorable to the devotees performing Pradakshina of Arunagiri. Girivalam on auspicious days like the full moon day, eclipse etc, and yield manifold merit. The details of the special benefits accruing on performing Pradakshina on different days of the week are also given.
6.1. MEANING OF PRADAKSHINAPATH

The syllable ‘pra’ in the word Pradakshina means rooting out sins, ‘da’ granting desires, ‘kshi’ obliterating the fruits of Karma, and ‘na’ bestowing of Gnana (self – knowledge) and Mukti (Liberation).³

On the day of Pradakshina, one abjures all thought of the opposite sex. After taking bath and wearing clean white clothes and the holy ash and remaining free from fear, anger, irritation or sorrow, one walks on bare foot. He proceeds giving alms but without accepting any. He does not wear shirt or shawl or carry an Umbrella. Without swinging the arms, with a silent soft tread, one saunters like a queen in her "tenth month". He bows to the holy hill from each of the eight cardinal directions and to the Lord of the direction Dikpalaka, enshrined in the Linga there. During the Girivalam the devotee maintains silence of speech and mind or meditates on Arunachala or sings devotional hymns⁴.

As the sins are varnished and as merit accrues, the desire prompted devotion to Arunachala flowers into Nishkamaya Bhakti, spontaneous and desire less love. The mind gathers sattwic preponderance and turns inward. With Self-inquiry, it subsides into its source, the Self which is Arunachala. The sacred Arunachala calls to itself all Gnanis, the knowers of the Self. So great saints like Guha Namasivaya, Sri Seshadri Swamigal, Bhagawan Sri Ramana Maharishi, yogi Ramsuratkumar have all settled in Arunachala.

Guru Braham, Guru Vishnu Guru Devo Maheswara
Guru Sakshat Param Brahma Tasmai Sri Gurave Nama⁵
Thiruvannamalai is associated with Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi, whose love, service and inspiration continue to mould the lives of millions of Indians. Sri Ramana Maharishi has described the Siva Linga Mountain as follows:

"When I approached Thee as having Form
Thou standest as a Hill on Earth
If with the mind the seeker looks
For thy essential form is Formless"6

Siva's magnetic call reaches outwards far and wide into the world of souls living in far off places. Those who have developed the ears of the soul can sense and hear His call. This very powerful magnetic pull attracted the great Sages and Saints like Appar, Sundarar, Manickavacakar, Tirugana Sambander, Kannappa Nayanar, Arunagirinathar (Kambathu Elayanar), Seshadri Swamigal, Ramana Maharishi and Yogi Ramsuratkumar etc. to Thiruvannamalai. Even Gods like Vishnu, Brahma, Devas and Puranic Rishis and Saints are no exceptions to this spiritual experience.

On the full moon day of every calendar month, several lakhs of people circumambulate the Holy Arunachala Mountain by foot, for fulfillment of vows, for some people, it is for the mitigation of their sufferings and for many others it is a Holy Pilgrimage, For the Sages, Saints and Pious people it is their Holy March towards God’s realization.

The mountainous Linga worship makes bondage non existent. Ceaseless worship of Arunachala Siva the creator of all destroys the bonds
that hold us to the world of senses. Thiruvannamalai is "The Light of the Universe" and the light is always there.

It was in that far-off existence that a Divine stream arose which had the power to unite and carry forward the love. In an extraordinary and peculiar manner our souls were ever joined, and since that time we have strived life after life against a multiplicity of popular instincts, impulses, and barriers to keep alive all those wonderful Divine elements within us. And, in that unity we have grown to realise, it does not even matter if we live far apart, or appear outwardly different from each other in this world of form. As long as our souls are inseparable we can continue to walk His sacred path together in meaningful silent love. Thus, we are made to realise that there is a sublime purpose in our union. It reveals itself, it has consecrated all our actions, and it has filled us with holy significance so that the whole body has become subservient to the ecstatic soul.

The Lingam Mountain of Arunachaleswarar is Lord Siva, who calls us to Thiruvannamalai to witness His presence in His Lingam form at that blessed place. For the means of salvation of souls the Lingam Mountain calls loudly to seekers of truth. Lord Siva's mighty invitation draws us to Him like a powerful magnet. The magnetic call spreads outwards in waves of glorious light into the universe, into the worlds of Souls in far off places. So that even though Lord Siva's Lingam Mountain form at Lingasthana.

Arunagirivalam is a special journey of identification. It is for everyone who has developed the ears of the soul, so that might hear and partake of
the truth in this world of form. It we walk the Giripradakshina path with a pure uncluttered mind His Divine Energy penetrates. The soul begins to open like a lotus flower so that it has the awe-inspiring opportunity to understand its true nature.

As our bare feet touch the holy ground, our souls will have the opportunity to move outwards and enter the Tunnel of Divine Existence, that Divine Circle, where the saints and the gods and even some departed Souls walk. We may even feel and smell the sweetness of their presence as we take the path around the Holy Lingam Mountain. Indeed, there is no better place of contact, no easier route through the Tunnel of Life (samsara), than doing Giripradakshina around the holy Lingam Mountain of Arunachaleswarar Siva. The soul, lifted by the Grace of Siva, becomes fully enfolded; elevated to such a great height it is able to experience the ecstasy of knowledge.

Thus, we pray honestly that one will be able to make this special journey and have the opportunity of walking around the Lingam Mountain. If for some reason if one is unable to walk, do not let this deter from this wonderful task go and by or a taxi, a bike, or even a horse cart. One must go around the Lingam Mountain for the sake of soul. But, one start this special holy walk of identification clean one’s body and to make an extra special effort to empty all thoughts from the mind, as it neither is nor granted to anything on this earth to recreate, to pass into a new form until it has arrived at nothingness.
Arunagirivalam is the Supreme Path of Grace within the Tunnel of life. The path is here to help us on the journey of spiritual discovery. It is a very special journey in a blessed designated location in this world of form. Filled with glorious light, it is the location where we can find a way forward even while in this bodily form. We must be innocently clear in ours Soul that this enchanted circle of Siva's is the pinnacle of awareness and existence, that it contains within it not only the beginning of the quest but also the Supreme Ultimate Destination. Salivates are insisted to under take a journey of Giripradakshina.

6.2. THE TUNNEL-OF LIFE

"The Lord supports this universe, which consists of a combination of the perishable and the imperishable, the manifest and the unmanifest. As long as the self does not know the Lord, it gets attached to worldly pleasures, and is bounded; but when it knows Him, all fetters fall away from it."

The soul will become fully conscious of its own movement, spiritually evolve, and make mighty progressive progress while experiencing and enduring many difficult encounters on the way. It has to let go of material values and feel part of everything and everyone, eventually to experience the truth of its own existence. It does this through discriminatory discipline and acknowledging the Supreme Reality as not only the cause of the world-process but also as transcending it. When the soul identifies and
acknowledges the reason for entering into the Tunnel of Life (samsara), it can move swiftly pass through the Glorious Gate into Bliss.

All souls make this wonderful journey through the Tunnel of Life. The Tunnel has many openings, but only one true exit, many doors, leading in and out from all sides, but only one true door leading out to freedom. For the Soul who recognizes the vision, the path can be sweet and smooth and that soul lives in bliss even while in this human form.

Of course, seeking and walking the True Path is not always easy. It can feel as if it is filled with rocks, or so smooth we actually feel as if we are carried in the arms of the Beloved. If it is saturated with difficulties of his present life and obstructed by the debris of past life experiences the path can become extremely difficult for us to navigate. There are many hurdles and obstacles to overcome.

Karmic experiences from previous existences enter with the soul into the current life and unless we are extremely careful they can gather together, increase in numbers and there by multiply our difficulties. This is why we must make an extra special effort to clear all unwanted debris. If refuse is allowed to remain without cleansing, it stagnates within the Tunnel impregnating everything. When this happens, our life is very burden some. Terrible mental distortions, wrapped antisocial and criminal behavior can even appear in the vicious circle of events, where there is little chance of renewal in the current life of the soul. The soul that is held fast in the vice of ignorance, hooked by the fetters of existence is unable to comprehend the
truth of its own nature. This manacled Soul, ignorant of the nature of true consciousness is dragged by the mighty wagon of the senses. It associates only with the material world and mistakes the body for reality and does not recognise the Master within.

Therefore, it is important that we work diligently towards liberation. If we do not work hard towards purification we are caught in the world of entanglement. Souls are housed everywhere, in pools of water, in stones, and in plants, where they await the hour of rebirth and deliverance. Yet, not only souls are imprisoned everywhere, but also spark of souls. Nothing is without them. They live in all that is and are imprisoned in every shape.

The Blessed Lord created this world of ours for a serious moral purpose. He wants the Soul to become fully conscious of its own movement. Therefore, we must work not only for our Self, but also for the redemption of the whole world. Mankind must work hard for purification by lifting up the fallen and setting free the imprisoned, as we are not meant to wait and look on but work for the redemption of the world, and by so doing set our souls free.

The truth is that all souls partake the Glory of the Divine. We may hold that all souls and sparks of souls which have sprung from the Great High soul that live in many existences that struggle in one shape or another for completion will eventually learn and find their way. Through the calamity of the world or the guilt of ages they may have sunk down, and have
scattered amongst all creatures. But, through Divine Grace they will eventually cease their wanderings and will eventually return home purified.

6.3. OUR TRUE SELF

In this great wisdom Sri Sankaracharya explained that the soul has no agency of its own and fully dependent on Divinity. That the material world and its objects, which include bodily organs and the Manas (mind) exist only through the forces of the great Divinity and can only be known through His power. Further, as Saiva Siddhantam explains, it is Avidya; lack of knowledge that defiles the Manas (mind) and darkens the light of the soul.

We must feel the forces of the Great Divinity deep within the soul. We do not want our souls to become entangled within this world of the senses through lack of knowledge and faulty perception. While it may well be possible to mistake an orange for an apple as both are fruits and both are round, every body knows that an orange is an orange and not an apple, just as we know the Soul is the Soul and the body is the body.

6.4. MOTHERS SAKTI’S LOVE

Siva’s Sakti, the intermediate link between Siva, Pure Consciousness and matter unconsciousness, is the Blessed Mother of All. She works in matter to open the Soul to Divine Grace. Mother Sakti has deep love for Her children and trains and instructs with great love. The Blessed Mother works with our soul in the created world, towards the wonderful possibility of
developing as true knowledge. Mother is the desire on which all our karmic experiences depend.

Mother Sakti works in Maya for the sake of the development of our souls, she is a skilful expert in concealment. She does this by limiting the soul with the illusion of multiplicity governing the conflicting rhythm of pleasure, pain and delusion in this created world of the Divine. But, she does this for a very special purpose. Her illusion is only a covering and is removable by the sustained effort of the soul. It may be difficult for us to understand that Maya Sakti conceals out of commitment and love, but if we see Maya Sakti’s work in this world as having a serious moral purpose, we can comprehend that it is necessary karmic experience for the ultimate good of souls

The truth is that she wants us to understand that the soul is forever free, that the Soul is all knowing and realized within as Knowledge and Bliss absolute. It is, therefore, essential for us to understand the magnitude of Her love and power if we wish to free our Soul from its fettered bonds. We are her children undergoing the great karmic learning experience within this world of matter. Through Her instruction we can eventually experience the harmony of unity and non-distinction. We can ultimately understand this fully when we work intelligently and diligently and relinquish everything to Her blessedness. We are brought closer and closer towards that goal of complete awareness by her grace.
This is the true purpose of Arungirivalam. It is the Supreme Path of Grace. It leads us into bliss we must walk the sacred Giripradakshina Path acknowledging that this Sacred Path of God’s Glory is our road to Moksha. Then, as we travel in the created world of the Divine and listen to the Inner Voice of our Soul out of our sense of love for the Divine, our action will become filled with justice and fairness.

The path is here ready for us if we are willing to take it. It is a path filled with Divine Light. It covers, protects. Shields, destroys ego and enlightens. It wards off future births. It offers us the opportunity to show our devotion. It is provided by Lord Siva out of His love for us. It is all knowledgeable. It is the Divine path that is the Divine. It is Siva waiting to be known.

**6.5. THE GLORIOUS GATE INTO BLISS**

The Divine wants all souls to pass through the Glorious Gate into Bliss, into the blazing light of Divinity. The Master is always with us ready to help us within His created world. This vision is available for us all. The path is brilliantly lit to illumine the way forward. He is always here with Mother Sakti. He is ready to instruct and enlighten us. Forever the is ready to help us clear the debris from our Tunnel so that we can partake of His knowledge. The soul, through Divine Grace experiences the most wonderful flashes of illumination. It has the opportunity to make a determined effort to
clear the blockages, obtain release from the bondage of forgetfulness in this world of form\textsuperscript{11}.

We can do for the sake of the inner vision. Let us take His Supreme Path of Grace around the Jyothir Lingam Mountain of Arunachaleswarar Siva. We can walk together around Arunagiri through the wonderful Path of Grace for the sake of the soul. We will move together in the silence of dedication around Arunagiri. We will hear the vibration of our bare feet as they touch holy ground, and we will make that sound a mantra offering to the Divine. We will immerse our physical forms in His blessedness; silence our minds in His spirituality while linking with other souls who are dedicated to His Divinity.

6.6. Sri Chakram

Sri Chakram, the Holy Lingam Mountain of Arunachaleswarar Siva carry forty-three triangles with central Bindhu of Lord Siva. Para Sakti is symbolized by the triangles, the Lord by the central Bindhu. Manifesting as the Jyothi Light in this world of form the Lingam Mountain fills the soul (Atma) with glory; Parameswaram is forever joined with Para Sakti., the Mother of the Universe. Everything emanates from the glorious One of many names and forms who governs the universe with Her infinite expanding power\textsuperscript{12}.

Sri Chakram is the key to unlocking the mysteries of the barrier of Maya in this world of form. Petal after petal opens pulling us into the circle of
Divine creation the force is so great that none can escape Lord Siva's, magnetic call of grace.

Surrendering and worshipping the Sri Chakram with perfect knowledge opens the soul to Jyothi Light. This is the grace of Divine Couple descending into the soul so that it is led step by step to discover more and more about His glorious creation. Controlling the vital forces, transcending the physical corporeal state dominated by names and forms, the soul becomes conscious of its own expanding strength to eventually discover that which is within the womb of eternity. Identifying with its true identity the soul stands in the midst of the Jyothi Light in Sarva Anandamayee, the supreme ecstasy of Sat-Cit- Ananda. Inseparable from this Glory everything is crystal clear in the absolute bliss of true consciousness.

The power of the Sri Chakram Jyothir Lingam Mountain of Arunachaleswarar moves across mother India and throughout the world. Scattered by the gentle breeze the sacred medicinal rare herbs sweep across the Holy Mountain curing the ills of the world so that we are blessed with knowledge, relaxation and peace.

The Lingam mountain of Lord Arunachaleswarar Siva is the all-pervading, uncaused, Timeless Supreme Deity, the Divine living presence in this world of matter. Out of His Divine Arul (Grace) for reason of salvation of souls. Lord Siva manifested Himself as the Theyu Jyothir Lingam at Lingasthan. This is well known highly sacred area in Thiruvannamalai.
Southern India is the holy location where we can attain enlightenment through His loving Grace.

The incomparable blessedness and the profound sacredness of the Holy Lingam Mountain has traversed the many ages of man, summoning rulers, saints, sages and ordinary men and women to it for generations. Thousand of souls have heard Lord Siva's summons. Many have listened to His command echoing deep within their inner self and have answered with knowing humility, while others have unknowingly been drawn to Him, and having arrived at His Mountain Lingam have looked around and seen the wonderful vision spreading out like a brilliant canvas deep within their souls.

While all other elements in this world of matter a beginning and an end, and are therefore liable to decay, the blessed Divine tradition of the origin of the Lingam Mountain grants us precious insight into its eternal everlasting qualities.

6.7. Siva as a mighty lingam of fire

This profound legacy explains how Lord Arunachaleswarar Siva rose as a mighty Lingam of fire, How for the sake of the vision and for salvation of souls Lord Siva became diminutive in size as the glorious Lingam Mountain.

The Holy, Lingam Mountain is the sacred location where Mother Uma did her great penance, resulting in her unification with her Lord and Master; Lord Siva with His Sakti Ardhanarisvara. It is also the place where Lord
Murugan appeared, the result of the wonderful prayers of Saint Arunagirinathar within the Arulmigu Arunachaleswarar Temple at the lotus feet of the Holy Lingam Mountain. It is uniquely blessed as the place where Lord Siva rose like a blazing Lingam of fire without beginning or end-Lingasthana. Lord Siva rose as the Blazing Lingam of fire many years ago, before our forebears existed, during the first Kalpa of the world when an egotistical argument arose between Brahma and Vishnu.

The dispute began when Lord Brahma saw Lord Vishnu reclining on his thousand headed serpent couch surrounded by his retinue of attendants. When Lord Brahma saw Lord Vishnu resting in this manner he asked him who he was and why he did not get up from his couch and pay homage to him in the appropriate manner. On hearing Lord Brahma's words Lord Vishnu became annoyed, explaining in his thunderous voice that everyone in the universe, including Lord Brahma himself sprung from the lotus blossom of his navel region.

With a dignified show of presence the two monarchs mounted their respective Vahanas; the mighty swan and Garuda and commenced their great battle in an attempt to show each other that was superior. The Devas looked on in dismay as the two Lords fought together. Lord Brahma used his terrible Pasupata weapon, and Lord Vishnu in his fury discharged his Mahesvara weapon. Blazing like a thousand suns the earth and sky erupted as their missiles and weapons were sent screaming through the air.
It was in the midst of this terrible skirmish that Lord Siva appeared before them in the form a blazing Lingam of fire. The two Lords stopped in their tracks amazed at the glorious fire that covered the universe. Gazing in astonishment at the stupendous column of the Lord asking, "Where its beginning is and where is its end?" Lord Brahma flew into the higher regions, flying higher and higher, searching and seeking the origin of the flame. While Lord Vishnu descended into the earth, looking for the root of the flame. But, both the great gods were unable to find the source of the glory.

In returning, they stood together. Lord Vishnu with his hands clasped reverently worshipping and adoring Lord Siva explained that he was unable to find the root of the wonderful awe-inspiring flame. But, Lord Brahma, seeking to delude said he had found the top of the flame. In his flight upwards he found the top of the glorious Lingam flame and He had the karthigai flower as a witness of this even.

The allmighty One without beginning and end was surprised when he heard Lord Brahma speaking dishonestly. Calling the mighty Bhairava He requested him to pluck off Brahma's fifth head. The gigantic Bhairava stood astride, chest puffed out, head thrown back, fingers at the ready to pluck off the head of Lord Brahma with a twist of his mighty wrist. And, it was only after pleas for mercy from the assembled gods that Lord Siva demonstrated His great compassion and spared Lord Brahma. However, because faulty deeds require punishment, the Great Lord rebuked him for assuming a false
role in such a manner and told him that he would never be honoured a temple in his name. Yet out of His great love for the world, Lord Siva granted that no sacrifice would be complete without Lord Brahma’s presence.

6.8. GIRIPRADAKSHINA PATH

1. Agastya Tirtham
2. Agni Lingam
3. Alkkamarathu (Boa Tree) Cave 4. Kambathu Elayanar Murugan Sannathi
5. Anjaneya Temple 6. Annamalaiyar Lingam
9. Arulmigu Arunachaleswara (Annamalaiyar) Temple
10. Arulprakasa Vallalar 11. Arunagirinathar Temple
22. Ganesh Shrine 23. Ganesh Temple
26. Gurumurtam 27. Hanuman Temple
28. Indra Lingam 29. Isanya Lingam
30. Isanya Temple & Mutt 31. Iyankulam Tank
32. Jada Swami Ashram 33. kadaga Tirtham
34. Kali Amman Shrine 35. Kannan Temple
36. Kannapar Mandapam 37. Kannapar Temple
40. Kumara (Subramania) Temple 41. Lalobhamatha Agastya Ashram
42. Mango Cave & Grove
43. Manickavacakkar Temple
44. Mariyamman Temple
45. Mulaipal (breast milk) Tirtham
46. Nirudhi Lingam
47. Pachai Amman Shrine & Kulam
48. Pada Temple
49. Palani Andavar Temple
50. Pali Tirtham
51. Panchamukam darshanam
52. Pavalakunru-Coral Hill
53. Rajarajeswary Amman Temple
54. Ramana Maharishi Ashram
55. Ramsuratkumar Ashram
56 Sheshadri Ashram
57. Siddha Ashram-Kattu Siva
58. Siva Ganga Tank
59. Skanda Asharam & Sri Ramana Maharishi Tirtham
60. Soma Tirtham
61. Sunai Lingam
62. Suriya Lingam
63. Tortoise Rock-Amaiparai
64. Unnamulai Amman Shrine
65. Varuna Lingam
66. Vayu Lingam
67. Vedapari Mandapam
68. Virupaksh a cave
69. Vishnu Temple
70. Yama Lingam
71. Avoikurpottai Road
72. Chengam Road
73. Dindivanam Road
74. Kanji Road
75. Manalurpettai Road
76. Pallikondapputtu Road
77. Polur Road
78. Tandarampattai Road
79 Tirukoilur Road
80. Vettuvalam Road

6.9. THE PLANETS – SCIENTIFIC ANALYSIS

Days suitable for walking around Arunachaleswarar Siva

All of us are born in this world under the power of one of the twelve astrological Sun signs of the zodiac called Rising Signs. These Rising signs fall under one of the astrological elements; Agni-Fire, prithvi-Earth,
Akasa/Vayu-Air/Ether, Appu-Water, which are the five eternal elements of Siva.

**FIRE**

| Aries | Leo | Sagittarius |

**EARTH**

| Taurus | Virgo | Capricorn |

**AIR**

| Gemini |

**WATER**

| Cancer | Scorpio | Pisces |

The fire element relates to the activity. Those of us with heated temperaments are independent pioneers. The Earthy temperament is tangible and physical. These are the practical cautious ones. The Air element relates to the social, mental and often restless energies. These are logical thinkers who are friendly and good communicators. The Water element relates to the intuitive. The feelings and the emotional energies are ever changing and often very mysterious.

In the Hindu heritage there are twenty-seven Stars (Natchatrams). Similar to western astrology each of these Natchatrams has their own distinct characteristics and move in their own special way.

It is important to understand how we are constantly bombarded if we want to conquer those treacherous senses that hold us to this world of form and strengthen our soul. We live in a world of evolution and devolution; a world of continuous change. As the Lunar calendar continues to change
daily throughout the year, like wise our vitality and intellectual capacity can also be changed by the movement of the many planetary forces.

Planets roam around the sky in different directions and through different zodiacal signs. As these planets move and rotate, their energies change and affect people on earth. Mankind reacts to these movements just like plants react to the Sun's movement through the heavens. How we are affected throughout our life on this earth depends on a vast number of correlations. This can depend on the position of the planets at the moment we take our first breath, their movements thereafter, as well as the way our particular star sign moves within the twelve houses of the Zodiac throughout our life.

There are numerous harmonious and inharmonious combinations. When planets are in opposition, they test each other's ability so that we can feel pulled in different directions. When they are square they tend to block us in and we can feel conflict. When two planets are conjunct or two signs away from each other, it is rather like having a constant companion by our side. Nevertheless, whatever God given forces are at work, they are here for a purpose. They show us our vulnerabilities, add to our strength of character and move us towards the 'Glorious Gate into Bliss'\textsuperscript{15}.

We must ultimately understand that we are governed by God's Karma, which is His Grace. Our life may appear to be ruled by the planets from the moment of our birth, but first and foremost it is Divine movement together with our own residual karma that travels with us from birth to birth. If we can
develop understanding and acknowledge that we are born into this earthly realm for the vital purpose of removing the unnecessary karma that holds us to this earthly world of form, we can begin to remove all the outer external weakness that bind us. When we are unaffected by influences other than those of the Divine the soul is removed by Divine grace from the bondage of matter.

We can certainly do much to appease the gods and placate unnecessary elements within us. Indeed, there is nothing better than humble worship of the Divine in thoughts, words and deeds, in everything we do. We can worship the Divine in our houses during prayer. We can walk around the planets (Navagraham) in our temples. We can also walk around the Holy Arunachaleswarar Lingam Mountain every day of the week or on special days. If we want to serve God, each and every one of our actions must be filled with love. The way we speak, walk, stand still, look and hear. For when each action is filled with devotion it is a vessel of dedication and powerfully beneficial for the soul.

In Kali Yugam, the age we are living in, there is something very special about the Arunachaleswarar Siva Lingam Mountain. The Lingam Mountain is Lord Siva. It is the place where the Lord picks us up in his arms of grace. The sacred area where all the fetters can be removed and the jeevatma (soul) can become fully possessed by Siva. This is the reason why devotees choose to walk around Him and find it difficult to leave Him.
Lord Siva is the Mountain Lingam. He is Arunagirivalam, the Giripradakshina path, the Supreme path of Grace.

The Arunachaleswarar Lingam Mountain is a glowing gem. It is the Sun of Wisdom that shines in this world. When we take refuge in Arunachaleswarar Siva He will hold us in His arms and remove the veil of ignorance. 'O Arunachala! As snow in water, dissolves as love in Thy form which is Love. Thus be gracious.

6.9.1. MONDAY – MOON (Chandran)

Moon is probably the most important heavenly body after the Sun. She partners the earth and moves through the sings of the zodiac extremely quickly. The position of Moon at the time of birth plays a great part in one’s personal character. It rules our emotional attitudes. Empathy, receptivity and subconscious needs. The Lunar Calendar makes sweeping changes daily and it is worth keeping a note of this cycle.

On Monday the Moon gives us her blessing to start on any new project whether it is thinking about starting a new college course or even trying to start a family. It is particularly beneficial to do Giripradakshina on poornami full Moon. It is extra beneficial if Poornami falls on a Monday or on other special days$^{16}$.

6.9.2. TUESDAY – MARS (Angarakan)

Mars rules our self – expression speech and action, energy physical energy, stamina and motivation it does not cancel our Sun Sign personality
or the Moon's emotional attitudes; it influences the way we speak and the way we express ourselves.

Mars like a twin of the earth is rather like our shadow, its axis is the same as the earth and it has four seasons. It is, however, unlike other planets have annual retrograde cycles. Mars goes retrograde only every two years and two months. And it is because of this lesser orbit that it stations itself most frequently in Cancer. Leo and Virgo and least frequently in Aquarius and Sagittarius. It moves back and forth and is likely to spend less than half a year in any one house before moving to another, and then returning to the previous house again.

Retrograde Mars can engender some feeling of frustrated energy, discord and conflict. It is within this psychological level that we can heal much of the distress that is caused by unexpressed creativity, passion, desire, ambition and challenges, mars also protects us against conflicts and keeps our fighting spirit well oiled in case we need it to fight against adversity. Mars, therefore, teaches us that if we want to avoid unwanted fights we will need to make a determined effort let not provocative. It also teaches us that it is necessary to pay close attention to the goals and the forces within our life.

We may under its influence need to review projects and long term plans, goals ideas and relationships. But, this is what we need to do. It is an excellent opportunity to evaluate and look seriously and deeply into projects.
A fortunate time for asking questions about personal goals like the quality of work and leisure and where investments will lead. Tuesday is therefore an excellent time for Giripradakshina when you deeply and sincerely require answers to these pondering questions of personal goals, adversity, passions, wealth and other projects.  

6.9.3. WEDNESDAY – MERCURY (Buthan)

Mercury is the planet of commerce and communication. As it is the closest planet to the Sun and can only ever be in the same sign as our Sun Sign, or in the sign next to it on either side, it can tell us much about our ability and character. Mercury deals with relationships and brings our thought patterns into focus. It rules mental agility, intelligence, logic and reasoning. With observation on what is going on around us, with thoughts, phrases and sounds, the way we talk to others.

Mercury flows through life wheeling and dealing with various ways. It tells us about our ability to research in, trade, commerce, ways of making money and expressing ourselves on paper. It also looks into the past, delving deep into our memories bringing back thoughts so that we can reapply them for our everyday needs. It encourages us to use our skills of communication and technical information how we can move from one project to another. Under its influence we can be flexible and understanding, judge ourselves too harshly, bossy, or even develop an inflated ego where we can stubbornly think we know everything so that we want the last word.
Wednesday is a good day to do Giripradakshina for the thinker, communicator, the entrepreneur and the student. In southern India it is possible to worship in Temples that have been ordained for the individual planets.\(^\text{18}\)

1. Buthan Bhagavan - Mercury  
   Thiruvenkadu near Mayiladuthurai  
   Wednesday
2. Sukaran Bhagavan – Venus  
   Kanjanore – Aduthurai  
   Friday
3. Chandran Bhagavan – Moon  
   Thingalore, kumbakonam, & Tirupathi  
   Monday
   Alangkudi, near Mannargudi & Thiruchendur  
   Thursday
5. Suriyan Bhagavan - Sun  
   Suriyanarayanar Kovil, Tanjavour  
   Sunday
6. Sevvai (Angarakan Bhagavan – Mars  
   Vaitheeswaran Kovil, Mayiladuthurai & Palani  
   Tuesday
7. Kethu Bhagavan* (head)  
   Keelaperumpallam – in Sirkali (TK)  
   Wednesday
8. Saneeswara Bhagavan – Saturn  
   Thirunallar – Karikkal.  
   Saturday
9. Raagu Bhagavan * (Torso Thirukalahasti & Thirunageswaram  
   The two planets who are divisions of Vipersenan Asura\(^\text{19}\)

6.9.4. THURSDAY – JUPITER (Guru)

Jupiter rules benefits and finances, good future, expansive ideas, advanced thinking and social adaptation, Jupiter makes us generous and
extroverted, ready to work and do favours for others and can boost all relationships, whether they are with family or friends or in romance. Jupiter reveals our personal growth, ethics and philosophies. It represents the promises of all good things. Good luck and changes help for the better. Jupiter works well in harmonious relationship with other planets. Some of the advanced thinkers of history have had Jupiter in a appropriate situation with other Planets in one of the zodiacal houses. Giripradakshina on a Thursday is necessary for everyone. It is good for marriage, relationships, romance, growth, children, finance, and ethics.

6.9.5. FRIDAY – VENUS (Sukaran)

Venus rules love, marriage and attraction. The ultimate Bhakti. It reveals our capacity for love, beauty and harmony ruling the cultural side of our life. This Planet represents colors, sounds, music and the many varieties of love bringing beauty and blessing. Friday is the day of sharing. It is the best day for love and artistic activity. Venus, the ruling planet, wants us to share with others. It is wonderful day for joining in with family activities and for communal prayer, for starting something new for others and sharing and caring. It is not necessarily a good day for starting something new just for ourselves. Giripradakshina is particularly a speciality on Friday. Joining with others while walking around the Arunachaleswarar Lingam Mountain fills the Soul with deep love and enlightenment.
6.9.6. SATURDAY – SATURN (Saneeswaran)

Saturn rules our philosophies, personal growth and public recognition. It reveals our sense of responsibility, our loyalties, commitments, stability and can take us on a positive inner journey of self – discovery.

Many of us have a mental image of Saturn. Perhaps a dark hooded figure revealing a body hand from under his cape and holding a sickle in the other. He is the 'sixth planet. From the Sun and second in size to Jupiter. The planet is well known for its elaborate system of separate rings made up of rock and frozen gases. Indeed, some scientists have likened the planet to a complete solar system. Saturn turns on his axis so quickly that if we lived on his planet we would age twice as fast as we do on earth. What is interesting significant is the importance of number six. Which figures prominently with Saturn. Six represents the union of threes. The Yantra symbol of Siva and Shakti and Lord Murugan's yantric symbol which is made from the union of two triangles. This six-pointed star was later adopted by Judaism and became a Cabbalistic symbol for union. These are only a few of the numerous examples that can be given of the importance of Saturn number.

We have conceptualized Saturn in many ways, but to fulfill our understanding of his greatness we must above all understand that he rules those issues that we have to face since they concern life issues and facing adversity. But, there is a wonderful reason for having to face such issues
and taking action whenever Saturn moves into our life he acts as a Karmic agent of change. He challenges us to grow inwardly so that we achieve our full potentiality. If we think we are being challenged by him and suffering, and by so doing run in fear and shudder from the difficulties he represents, we will languish in fear and regret. As Saturn tests our mettle he can help to bring us to greater understanding. He will give us new responsibilities and give us strength to make decisions and plans so that we can leave behind those trivial things that take up so much of our time. If we can learn not to see him as an oppressor but to rejoice and see him in his true perspective as he moves us into action we can eventually know our true Self.

Doing Giripradakshina on Saturn’s day the sixth day of the week as the sixth planet has many fortunate features. We may not be able to avoid the immutable laws of the Divine universe, but we can attempt to understand them a little. Giripradakshina around Arunachaleswarar Siva will undoubtedly move us towards understanding and enlightenment. It is very possible that if we reach out with humility to all suffering we experience, Saturn will teach us that he is both the 'means' and the 'end' of all that is dismal.

6.9.7. SUNDAY – SUN (Suriya)

Sun has been worshipped by many cultures for generations. The Sun rules the life force, the physical body and character. He represents the strongest of harmonies. Everyone is born under the influence of the Sun's
life force. It reveals all our inner self. The Sun is the symbol of Light that brings us joy and happiness and reveals our determination. By offering a constant stream of light he functions to maintain and sustain the effort of the Creative Forces at work both in our solar system and on our planet. Giripradakshina on sunday is for gathering the forces of Light within the soul. A truly wonderful day for walking the Divine circle of Lord Siva.21

6.10. THE OUTER PLANETS

The outer planets are so far away in the solar system it makes their orbit take a much longer time than the inner planets. Uranus, for example, takes 84 years to complete an orbit, Neptune takes 165 years and Pluto circles the sun in 248 years. This does not mean that these planets are not effecting us, it has been said that it is these outer planets that inspire us greatly and cause the biggest changes to take place. They represent our ability to make sweeping changes to our lives as they endow us with the ability to evolve by shredding off the old habitual ways and taking on the new.

6.10.1. NEPTUNE

Neptune rules illusion, imagination, vision and the romantic side of our nature. All that is so often coupled with fantasies, so that we can often become deceived. With her long gown she sweeps across our vision filling in the blanks with her own version of the story. Thus, unless we are very
careful she can make us dreamy and woozy so that we begin to form negative addictions.

6.10.2. PLUTO

Pluto rules transformation and change, our ability to transform our lives. He gives us subtle messages, telling us to rid ourselves of attitudes that don't serve us well. He also gives us energy to make real progress.

Of all the Star Signs Pluto loves Scorpio the best. In his dark cloak he reveals beginning and ends, life and death. He shows us what is buried deep within our inner Self. In his stark manner he brings humanity face to face with the reality of their own existence. Pluto changes our life, tears down and rebuilds. He is here for our ultimate good so that we can reinvent ourselves within the life of form. In the 'Age of Aquarius' Pluto is looking down at us from the top of the plutonium nuclear waste pile. He is asking us to open our eyes and see the reality of our own mistakes so that we can build anew.

6.10.3. URANUS

Uranus is the planet of change. Connected with futuristic thinking Uranus comes and goes making sweeping changes to our lives when we least expect it even in relationships. Sometimes it will make us feel the need to free ourselves from obligations. It is not unpleasant unless we try to resist
the changes that are destined to take place. Uranus reveals the genius in us. He is the Head of the Department of Science, Technology and Rebellion and can pull us into Space in the new millennium\textsuperscript{22}.

6.11. ASHTA LINGAMS

6.11.1. Sri Indra Guardian God Lord of the East

Sri Indra is a king of the Celestials and Lord of the Heavens. His consort is Indrani. Airavata the four-tusked milk white elephant, ancestor of all elephants in His Vahana Chariot. When the Devas and Asuras churned the ocean of milk, Airavata was one of the fourteen precious items that emerged from the soma of the churned ocean and was presented to Lord Indra by the Devas. Lord Indra rides upon His Vahana carrying His Vajra weapon of light distributing dharma the soma of life, symbolizing how the Lord brings light into the darkness of ignorance.

Sri Indra Lingam can be found very near to the east facing Raja Gopuram in the Car Street. Taking right side direction from the Temple. It is necessary to walk down the congested road where traders sell their merchandise. One will find a small sign on the left and you will have to enter through a narrow passageway between buildings as shown in this picture. A small Nandi can be seen in front of the Holy Shrine\textsuperscript{23}. 
6.11.2. Sri Agni Guardian God of the South East

‘Agni, shining with beautiful shine, praised with beautiful praise, the guest of the clans, the receiver of fine offerings, who is desirable like Mitra Jatavedas the god, amongst godly people. The gods have established beloved Agni among human people. May he eliminate Sri Agni the seven-armed, seven-tongued God Sacrificial Fire is the Originator of the sacrificial fire, messenger of the gods, and the mediator between gods and men.

He represents the vital spark in the life of man, animals and plants. His Vahana Chariot is the sure-footed, warm-coated goat Chhanga, who offers warmth and protection. Chhaga, also called Aja or Immortal, is the sacrificial animal in the Yajnas, the holy Homam rites in which Lord Agni plays an important part and is said to be the link between the two worlds. Lord Agni is invoked many times within temples and shrines in the sacrificial Homam fire and many other ritualistic ways. Oblations offered to Sri Agni reach all the gods. Lord Agni rides his Vahana cleansing the world from evil. His fire consumes, reducing everything to nothingness so that ready to recreate anew. He is within everything, in the earth bringing inner light and heat to hearts souls.

"Agni (fire) is in the earth, in the plants, the waters hold Agni. Agni is in the stones; Agni is within men, Agnis (fires) are within cattle, within
horses. Agni glows from the sky, to Agni, the God, belongs broad air. The mortals kindle Agni, the bearer of oblations that loveth thee. The earth is clothed in Agni, with dark kness, shall make brilliant and alert appearance. Upon the earth men give to the gods the sacrifice, the prepared oblation; upon the earth mortal men live pleasantly by food. May this earth give us breath and life, may she cause to me reach old age! The Sri Agni Lingam can be found in Seshadri Street on Arunagirivalam close to the Arunachaleswarar Temple.

6.11.3. Sri Yama Guardian God Lord of the South

Sri Yama the Lord of the South is the God of Death. With his massive dogs at his side he rides this Yahana, the powerful buffalo Manisha and drags souls bound to the ties of their own karmic deeds towards their own retribution. Although Sri Yama is associated with judgment and sentencing he is also seen to be just. He sentence the soul, and by so doing, shows us that we must learn to control the mind, because if we allow the senses to become steeped in delution we must expect to be rewarded by the cycle of death and rebirth. The two dogs of Yama, the black and the brindled one, that gurard the road is heaven, that have been dispatched, shall not go after thee! Come hither, do not be long away, and do not tarry here with thy mind turned to a distance! Do not follow this path, it is terrible. May Agni’s fire guard thee.
6.11.4. Sri Nirudhi Guardian God of the South West

Sri Nirudhi, king of the Rakshasas, guards the south with Lord Yama. He also has a dog at his side. Sri Nirudhi represents all the worldly need for pleasure and gratification that lead to us to the cycle of death and rebirth. By propitiating and paying reverence to Sri Nirudhi we can eventually recognize that we must remove the cause of dukha (suffering) in this world of form²⁶.

6.11.5. Sri Varuna Guardian God Lord of the West

Sri Varuna, Lord of the West is also the Lord of Rasa or the sense of taste and enjoyment in humans. He is the prime mover of the universe, the ruler of the waters in all the three worlds, celestial rivers and oceans in the sky, the rivers and oceans on the earth, and the underground ones of the nether regions. Lord Varuna's Vahana chariot is Makara, the crocodile. Makara moves at amazing speed carrying the mighty Varuna on his back. He can live on land as well as in his own element the waters. In the earthly region he is ever ready to locate and trap human indulgence in his mighty karmic jaws. When the sun, which is Lord Varuna's eye enters the constellation sign of Makara on Makara Sankranti, it is considered to be an extremely auspicious period²⁷.

6.11.6. Sri Vayu Guardian God of the North West

We worship Sri Vayu the God of the Akasa (ether – air) and the King of the Winds, Sri Vayu rides through the sky at great velocity seated upon
the back of the antelope, spreading Akasa with his four hands. He breaths the Life Force within all living things. Beings and plants and turns the tides with his great force causing the rotation of the worlds. 

6.11.7. Sri Kubera Guardian God Lord of the North

Lord Kubera is the Master of Treasures, the Bestower of Wealth, the Leader of punya-Janas, the King of the Kinnaras- 'horse faced' hidden beings, and the chief of the Yaksas – semi –divine attendants who guard this hidden treasures. Lord Kubera is also known as 'Ekapinga' because he has a yellow mark in place of a burst eye, and 'Siva' Sakha' due to his deep friendship with Lord Siva. He has three legs and eight teeth and resides in his Himalaya capital Alaka, which is also known as Prabha. Vasudhara, and Vasuthali. His consort is Yaksi, the daughter of Danava Mura.

6.11.8. Sri Isanya a Guardian God of the Norht East

The Sri Isanya Lingam represents one of the seven Rudras of Siva, the three eyed all seeing Siva Shankara with Jata matted locks, seated in yogic contemplation on a tiger skin in the cemetery with ashes smeared all over His body surrounded by the Bhutas and pramathas. He has on His head the Ganges and the crescent moon. Snakes are on His body, the Damaru drum in His hands, and the Trishul is by his side.
His Jata matted locks of hair represent His universal nourishment. The ashes from the cremation ground on His body represent the end of material manifestation, that he absorbs everything in the universe into himself. The tiger skin upon which he sits symbolizes the conquest of pride and egotism. The Ganges that falls from His head, symbolizes the eternal uninterrupted flow of the universal wisdom that is nourishment for the body, mind, and soul of us is all. The crescent moon that shines on His head denotes the cyclic motion of time that is just an ornament in the timelessness of the Lord. He is the one that transcends time. The whole world revolves in time, but time itself revolves in Siva. The snakes on His body represents all that is material and gross in the world of form but never effect the Eternal One. The snake crawls around Lord Shankara's neck but he remains unaffected while the earthly get involved with all that is material in this world of form. The Trishool is His power to destroy the negative forces operating within mankind and the universe. The Damaru represents universal sound.

### 6.11.9. SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ASTA LINGAS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Cardinal direction</th>
<th>Installed By</th>
<th>Dominant Navagraha</th>
<th>Benefits of Worship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indra Lingam</td>
<td>East</td>
<td>Lord Indiran, the king of Celestials</td>
<td>Sun and Sukiran</td>
<td>Long life and fame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lingam</td>
<td>Direction</td>
<td>Deity</td>
<td>Aspect</td>
<td>Effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agni Lingam</td>
<td>South East</td>
<td>Lord Agni (God of Fire)</td>
<td>Chandran (Moon)</td>
<td>Relief from diseases and fear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yama Lingam</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>Yama, God of Death</td>
<td>Sevvai</td>
<td>Longevity of life span</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niruthi Lingam</td>
<td>South West</td>
<td>Niruthi, the king of giants</td>
<td>Raghu</td>
<td>Health, Wealth and Fame. Issueless can get children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varuna Lingam</td>
<td>West</td>
<td>Varuna, the God of Rain</td>
<td>Sani (Saturn)</td>
<td>Relief from illness Especially water related diseases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vayu Lingam</td>
<td>North West</td>
<td>Vayu the God of air</td>
<td>Kedhu</td>
<td>Relief from illness especially the heart diseases, breathing and stomach problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kupera Lingam</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>Kuperan, the God of Wealth</td>
<td>Guru</td>
<td>Wealth and improvement in life status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easanya Lingam</td>
<td>North East</td>
<td>Easanyan</td>
<td>Budhan</td>
<td>Peace of mind</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.12. Temple of the Pancha Bhuta Theyu Lingam

6.12.1. The Self Born Lingam

Temple in Thiruvannamalai there is a Sivalingam, a Self – Born Pancha Bhuta Theyu Lingam of immeasurable holiness growing on that sacred spot and worship of this Lingam of Siva has been performed over and over again for countless centuries. The Arulmigu Arunachaleswarar Temple has developed by the light of 'God Given Grace' around His Self – born Lingam.

There are five Pancha Bhuta Lingams stretching in majestic yantric pattern across the Indian Southern Land. Made of Lord Siva’s Eternal Elements: Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether, individually or collectively they symbolize how Lord Siva has placed His ceaseless presence into this world of matter. The Blessed One created this material world out of His Eternal Self. If by Divine Grace we are able to delve further than this we will eventually understand that when the Divine One created the world He did so for a very blessed reason.

6.12.2. The Pancha Bhuta Lingams

1. Prithvi – Sand (earth) Lingam
   Kanchipuram – Ekaambareswara.

2. Appu – water Lingam
   Thiruvanaikkaval – Jambukeswarar.
3. Theyu – Fire Lingam
   Tiruvannamalai – Arunachaleswarar.

4. Vayu – Air Lingam
   Kalahasti – Kalatheeswarar.

5. Aakasam – Ether Lingam
   Chidambaram – Chidambareswarar.

6.13. RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE OF GIRIVALAM

In general, it is said that by circumambulating the hill one obtains the merit of performing thousands or horse sacrifices, innumerable vajpeyas (a particular sacrifice) and bathing in all the tirthas. Even a great sinner who has no good deed to his credit can attain all kinds of powers. The merit acquired by bathing in all the tirthas, by performing all the sacrifices, by studying all the scriptures and by following all the dharmas can be easily acquired by merely circumambulation Sonachala (Holy hill).

A devotee who circumambulates the hill on a Sunday penetrates the region of the sun and attains liberation. He gains the world of Siva. He who circumambulates the hill on a Monday lives free from the affections of old age and death. He who circumambulates the hill on a Tuesday is released from all debts and becomes an emperor. If pradakshina is done on Wednesday, he becomes omniscient and wise; on a Thursday. If pradakshina is done, he will attain the fame of a Guru. Circumambulation on a Friday brings prosperity and takes him to the abode of Vishnu; a Saturday
Pradakshina brings worldly success and averts the ill-effects threatened by the planets in one’s horoscope.

The panchamuka darshan is an open shrine on Arunagirivalam. Five Lingams are seen on a stone plinth. These Sivalingas are the embodiment of the five faces of Lord Siva in this world of matter. The top is dedicated to Ishana. This is the all seeing, three eyed face of the Lord which looks upwards. The other four faces of the Lord point to the four directions of space. The east is dedicated to Tatpurausha; the south is dedicated to Agoram; the north to Vamadeva and the west to Sadiyojatha.

The five lingas are also considered to symbolize the five elements and five syllables of the Siva mantra, Na – ma – si – va – ya as well as the syllables of A – ru – na – cha – la. The position of the head is placed between the pillars on the top of which, on the entablature, are legs crossed in padmasana posture, surmounted by a Linga. If one perceives the hill, he can see the five peaks of the hill. This is called seeing the five facets of the Arunai hill.

6.14. Girivalam Day Calendar for coming 3 Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>22-Jan-2008</td>
<td>10-Jan-2009</td>
<td>10-Jan-2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>20-Feb-2008</td>
<td>08-Feb-2009</td>
<td>08-Feb-2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>19-Apr-2008</td>
<td>08-Apr-2009</td>
<td>08-Apr-2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month</td>
<td>Start Date</td>
<td>End Date</td>
<td>Start Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>19-May-2008 Monday</td>
<td>08-May-2009 Friday</td>
<td>08-May-2010 Friday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>17-Jul-2008 Thursday</td>
<td>06-Jul-2009 Monday</td>
<td>06-Jul-2010 Monday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>16-Aug-2008 Saturday</td>
<td>05-Aug-2009 Wednesday</td>
<td>05-Aug-2010 Wednesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>14-Sep-2008 Sunday</td>
<td>03-Sep-2009 Thursday</td>
<td>03-Sep-2010 Thursday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>14-Oct-2008 Tuesday</td>
<td>03-Oct-2009 Saturday</td>
<td>03-Oct-2010 Saturday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
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<td>02-Nov-2009 Monday</td>
<td>02-Nov-2010 Monday</td>
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<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>11-Dec-2008 Thursday</td>
<td>01-Dec-2009 Tuesday</td>
<td>01-Dec-2010 Tuesday</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>