

CENTRAL INSTITUTE OF CLASSICAL TAMIL

SAGE AGASTHYA

**If the mind is pure, no need to chant manthra-s
If the mind is pure, no need to raise the vaayu
If the mind is pure, no need to control the breath
If the mind is pure, manthra-s will all be right.**

(Agasthya Gnaanam)

Of the eighteen Siddhas of the Tamil tradition, Agasthya is considered the greatest. Because of his love for Tamil, he is reported to have come down to the South and settled in Pothigai. It was he who wrote the first Tamil grammar which includes analyses of all the three aspects of Tamil known as Iyal (prose and poetry), Isai (music) and Naadagam (drama). Together with Lord Shiva and Murugaṅ, he adorned the first Tamil Sangam. As a great physician, he wrote remarkable medical treatises on the treatment of various diseases afflicting the body and the mind. Besides Tamil language and medicine, he mastered logic, music, astrology, astronomy, and also the yoga system.

There are several legends and stories about the life and teachings of Agasthya. He is also known as Tamil Muṇi, Guru muṇi, Kuru muṇi, Pothigai muṇi, Kuda muṇi and Kumbha muṇi. Since he was believed to have been born in a **Kumbham**, he was also called 'Kumbha sambhavar'. The name 'Agasthya' is interpreted in more than one way: (1) He completely freed himself from 'ahamkaara' (pride), (2) He subdued the ahamkaara of the Vindhya hills, and (3) He appeared with inherent light (agas=light). The name Agasthya is held as 'agatthiyar' in Tamil. Since the word 'Agatthiyam' also means 'indispensable', the priceless grammatical text that he authored was given the title 'Agatthiyam' and the author became 'Agatthiyar'. The name 'Agasthya' is considered to be derived from the root, 'agasth' which means 'light' and 'effulgence'. From a Tamil text of the name, 'Dakshinamoorthy Guru Mugam Nooru', we learn that he was also known as 'Dakshinamoorthy'.

Another siddha poet, Bōhar in a song (5882) in his *Bōhar Ēlāyiram* says that Agasthya was born in the Ayilyam (aslesha) star of a Maargazhi (Maargasirsha / Dhanur) month, which day is celebrated as the National Siddha Medicine Day.

In our puraaṇaa-s and other texts in Tamil and Sanskrit, we come across numerous stories about Agasthya's birth and divine deeds. He married the daughter of Vidarbha king, Lopamudra, widely recognised as the most beautiful woman of the time.

The best known happening of Agasthya's life relates to his journey from the Himalayas to Tamil Nadu. A great gathering of deva-s, saints and devotees attended the wedding of Lord Shiva and Parvathi at the Himalayas, as a result of which the northern portions of the land mass sloped down and the southern portions rose up. On noticing this dangerous development, Lord Shiva asked Agasthya to immediately rush to the South and balance the land. It was done to the delight of everyone. On his way down to the South, he humbled the Vindhya hills which, at first, refused to give way. Another episode deals with his punishment of the two rakshasa brothers Vaathaapi and Vilvalan (sometimes referred to as Ilvalan) , who, by a clever trick, managed to kill several saints. At the request of the victims, Agasthya killed Vaathaapi and taught his brother an unforgettable lesson.

His expertise in music is evidenced in a story about his encounter with the formidable Ravana, who had the audacity to compete with the sage in a Veena Contest. When Agasthya began to sing, the melody melted the Pothigai hills and delighted the birds, animals, trees, plants around so much that they stopped making any movement. The asura felt ashamed of himself and fell at the feet of the rishi.

One story claims that Agasthya was the cause of birth of the river Kaaviri (also spelt Cauvery) in Tamil Nadu. The kamandala of water that he brought for the worship of Lord Shiva was tumbled down by Vinayaka in the form of a crow and the flowing water swelled into a big river. Since the river swelled and expanded by the action of a crow, it was named Kaa + viri (kaa= crow; viri=expand or flow out)

Kavi Chakkaravarthi Kambar's *Raamayana* praises Agasthya for several contributions. Raama, during his sojourn in the Dhandakaranya, visits Sage Agasthya in his ashram, and receives blessings from the sage. Agasthya gave Raama a divine bow and plenty of powerful arrows. *Kandapuraṇam*, a work authored in Tamil by Kacchiyappar, narrates the life and achievements of the far-famed rishi. The Commentary on *Iraiyanaaar Kalaviyal* mentions the significant role played by Agasthya and his grammar during the first two Tamil sangam-s.

The sage was the guru of several scholars, including Tholkaapiyar, Adhankottaasaan, Thuraalingan, Sempootchey, Vaiyaabhikan, Panampaaran, Kazhaaramban, Avinayan, Kaakkai Paadiniyaar, Natrathanaar, and Vaamanar. It is said that the above-mentioned scholars learnt Tamil grammar from Agasthya.

The sage is credited to be the founding father of the Siddha system of Medicine.

There are several temples dedicated to / caused to be established by Sage Agasthya throughout Tamil Nadu; the ones at Paapanaasam, Ambasamudram, Agaththiyaan Palli, Agastheeswaram, Vadaseri are worth mentioning.

Some of the manthra-s of the Rig Veda are attributed to Agasthya.

Sage Agasthya has authored several works; not all of them are available. The available texts include the following:

1. Agatthiya Naayaṇaar aruli cheytha Sakala Kalai Gnaanam 1200
2. Agatthiya Muṇivar aruli cheytha Akaṇṭita Agaraathi
3. Agatthiya Muṇivar aruli cheytha Aṭṭa karmam
4. Agatthiya Muṇivar aruli cheytha Vaidhya Kaaviyam 1500
5. Agatthiyar 1200
6. Agatthiyar 12000
7. Agatthiyar 5000
8. Agatthiyar Agaraathi
9. Agatthiyar Ashva Vaakaṭam
10. Agatthiyar Aṭṭakarma Mooligai Vaseegaram
11. Agatthiyar Aṭṭavaṇai
12. Agatthiyar Avatthai-k kuṛi
13. Agatthiyar Avizhtha Saaram
14. Agatthiyar Aṛusuvai Nigaṇdu
15. Agatthiyar Aṛupatthu Naalu Mooligai Vivaram
16. Agatthiyar Anṇasaaram - Dhaaṇya Vargam
17. Agatthiyar Anṇasaaram - Rasa Vargam
18. Agatthiyar Anubhava Vaidhya Murai

19. Agatthiyar Anubhava Vaidhyam
20. Agatthiyar Anubhoga Soothiram
21. Agatthiyar Indhrajaaa Nigaᅇdu 200
22. Agatthiyar Uᅇkaru-ch Surukkam
23. Agatthiyar Udharakiriyai
24. Agatthiyar Oozhi-k kattu-ch Soothiram
25. Agatthiyar Ezhuvagai-th Thotram
26. Agatthiyar Aindhu
27. Agatthiyar Aimbadaayirathil sanjeevi
28. Agatthiyar Aimbadhu
29. Agatthiyar Auᅇhadha Murai
30. Agatthiyar Kaᅇᅇu Vagaigaᅇ
31. Agatthiyar Garbha-k Koᅇ
32. Agatthiyar Garbha-ch Soothiram
33. Agatthiyar Garbhamurai Soothiram
34. Agatthiyar Karma Kaandam
35. Agatthiyar Karma Kaandam 300
36. Agatthiyar Karma soothiram
37. Agatthiyar Karma Nivarthi Soothiram
38. Agatthiyar Karma Nivarthi Nadu-k Kaandam
39. Agatthiyar Karma Vyaapagam
40. Agatthiyar Karisaal 300
41. Agatthiyar Karisil Bhasmam 200
42. Agatthiyar Karukkidaᅇ surukkam
43. Agatthiyar Karukkuru 1000
44. Agatthiyar Karumaana Soothiram
45. Agatthiyar Kalaignaana-ch Surukkam
46. Agatthiyar Kalaignaana-ch Soothiram

47. Agatthiyar Kalaignaana-ch Soothiram 1200il Vaadha Kaandam
48. Agatthiyar Kalangu 60
49. Agatthiyar Karchunnam
50. Agatthiyar Kaamaroomi Lehiyam
51. Agatthiyar Kaayasiddhi Vazhalai-ch Soothiram
52. Agatthiyar Gunavaagadam
53. Agatthiyar Guru Jeyaneer 60
54. Agatthiyar Gurunaadi
55. Agatthiyar Guru nool
56. Agatthiyar Guru nool 60
57. Agatthiyar Gurunool Muppu 50
58. Agasthya Gurunool Vaidhyam 600
59. Agasthya Kuzhambu
60. Agasthya Kuzhambu Vagai Vaagadam
61. Agasthya Kuligai
62. Agasthya Kulirchi Ennai
63. Agasthya Kesari Nool Jaalath thiraṭṭu
64. Agasthya Chakkara vidhi
65. Agasthya Sanjeevi
66. Agasthya Shanmuga Cālam
67. Agasthya Saththi Cālam
68. Agasthya Sapta Kaandam
69. Agasthya Samarasa Nilai Gnaanam
70. Agasthya Sarakku 100
71. Agasthya Sarakku Vaippu
72. Agasthya Sivajaalam
73. Agasthya Surukkam
74. Agasthya Swaami Kaaviya Nigaṇdu

75. Agasthya Soothira Vaadham
76. Agasthya Soothiram
77. Agasthya Senthooram 300
78. Agasthya Shodasa maalai @ Aṣṭadhi Maalai
79. Agasthya Saumya saagara-ch Surukkam
80. Agasthya Saumya saagaram
81. Agasthya Thandagam
82. Agasthya Tathvam
83. Agasthya Tarkka Shasthram
84. Agasthya Tarkkam
85. Agasthya Tirattu 80
86. Agasthya Draavaga-ch Soothram
87. Agasthya Thribhuvana Kaṇṇaadi
88. Agasthya Dheekshai Naadi Soothram
89. Agasthya Dheekshai Vidhi 200 (Moodhanda Lehiyam)
90. Agasthya Naadi Nidhaanam
91. Agasthya Naadi Pareekshai
92. Agasthya Naadi Vaidhya-k Kurippu
93. Agasthya Naayanaar Tirattu 80
94. Agasthya Naayanaar Vaagada Venba
95. Agasthya Naalu kaandam 1200
96. Agasthya Nigandu
97. Agasthya Nethra Vaagadam
98. Agasthya Noyin saaram
99. Agasthya Pacchilai Mooligai
100. Agasthya Pacchai
101. Agasthya Panchapakshi
102. Agasthya Paṭchani

103. Agasthya Padhaartha Guṇaadhisaya-ch Soothram
Padhinaaru
104. Agasthya Paribhashai
105. Agasthya Paribhashai 5th Kaandam
106. Agasthya Paripūraṇam
107. Agasthya Paripooraṇam 1200 (Vaidhya Kaandam)
108. Agasthya Pala Tirattu
109. Agasthya Parpamum Sendhooramum
110. Agasthya Parpa vagai
111. Agasthya Paadal
112. Agasthya Baala Sikicchai
113. Agasthya Baala Vaagadam
114. Agasthya Pillai-p piṇi Vaagadam 200
115. Agasthya Pinṇool 80
116. Agasthya Poorāṇa-k Kaaviyam
117. Agasthya Poorāṇa-ch Soothiram
118. Agasthya Poorāṇa-ch Sentooram
119. Agasthya Poorāṇa-th Tirattu
120. Agasthya Poorāṇam 400
121. Agasthya Poojaa vidhi
122. Agasthya Perum kuzhambu
123. Agasthya Perunool 1200
124. Agasthya Perunool Mudhal kaandam, Iraṇdaam Kaandam
125. Agasthya Bedhi Thailam
126. Agasthya Mandhira-k Kirigai 64
127. Agasthya Maandhireeka Nigaṇdu
128. Agasthya Muppatthaaru
129. Agasthya Muppu
130. Agasthya Mun 80

131. Agasthya Mun̄nool 80
132. Agasthya Rasa Kuligai
133. Agasthya Rasa Maṇi
134. Agasthya Rasavaadha Soothiram
135. Agasthya Raṇa Vaidhyam
136. Agasthya Ratthiṇa-ch Surukkam
137. Agasthya Lehiya Vagai
138. Agasthya Vagaaratthiraya Soothiram 200
139. Agasthya Vallaadhi
140. Agasthya Vazhalai
141. Agasthya Vaakkiyam
142. Agasthya Vaakkiyam - Chooranavagai 50
143. Agasthya Vaakkiyam - Ney Vagai
144. Agasthya Vaakkiyam - Lehiya Vagai
145. Agasthya Vaagaṭa-ch Soothiram
146. Agasthya Vaagaṭa-th Tirattu
147. Agasthya Vaagada Vajrakaayam
148. Agasthya Vaagada Veṇbaa
149. Agasthya Vaagadam
150. Agasthya Vaadha-ch Soothiram
151. Agasthya Vaadha-th Thiravukol 48
152. Agasthya Vaadham
153. Agasthya Vaalai Dheekshai
154. Agasthya Vaalai Paripooraṇa Vaidhya Naadi Soothiram
155. Agasthya Vaalai Muppu 30
156. Agasthya Vaalai Vaagadam
157. Agasthya Vidhinool Moovagai-k Kaandam
158. Agasthya Viṣhabetthi Vaidhyam

159. Agasthya Venkaara Mezhugu
160. Agasthya Vaisoori nool
161. Agasthya Vaisoori Maalai
162. Agasthya Vaisoori Vaagadam
163. Agasthya Vaidhya-k Karma kaandam
164. Agasthya Vaidhya-ch Shadhagam
165. Agasthya Vaidhya-ch Chinthaamani
166. Agasthya Vaidhya-ch Choodaamani
167. Agasthya Vaidhya-ch Soothiram
168. Agasthya Vaidhya-ch Sendhooram 300
169. Agasthya Vaidhya-p Paripooranam 400
170. Agasthya Vaidhya-p Pala Thirattu-ch Soothiram
171. Agasthya Vaidhya-p Paadal
172. Agasthya Vaidhya-p Pinnool
173. Agasthya Vaidhya Rathina Surukkam 360 (Naadi
Nidhaanam)
174. Agasthya Vaidhya Rathina Surukkam 360
175. Agasthya Vaidhya Vallaadhi
176. Agasthya Vaidhya Vaagadam
177. Agasthya Vaidhya-k Kannaadi
178. Agasthya Vaidhya-k Kummi
179. Agasthya Vaidhya-ch Sarakku-p Peyar Agaraathi
180. Agasthya Vaidhya-ch Surukkam
181. Agasthya Vaidhyam 1600
182. Agasthya Vaidhyam 1500
183. Agasthya Vaidhyam Mun 50
184. Agasthya Vaidhya Ratnaakaram
185. Agasthya Vaidhyar Saaram
186. Akatticuvarar Dheeksha vidhi Vaidhya nool

187. Dakshinamoorthy Guru Mugam Nooru