

SRI HARI:

Madhura Murali

March

2018



Spiritual Monthly with the Blessings of
HH Maharanyam Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji



MADHURAGEETHAM

Kunjchithapadham Bhajeham

Ragam: Sindhu Bairavi

Talam: Adi

Pallavi

kunjchitapAdam BajEham

Charanam

ranjita manOhara Ananda nrtyam

manjuLa BASHinI arddAngam (kunjchita..)

BasmOddUlitA maNgala vigraham

patanjali vyAgra pAda amOga darshanapradam (kunjchita)

vyAgra charmAmbarAlankrutam

vrushaBArUDam atisundaram (kunjchita)

manmata dahana lalATAksham

mArkaNDEya lalATAkshara nAshakam (kunjchita)

gangAdara jaTAdara chandrashekaram

kapAla mAlAdara shmashAna vAsinam (kunjchita)

mrutyunjayam amruta gaTEswaram

Brutya muraIdara sadA pUjitam (kunjchita)



Madhura Smaranam

My Guru As I See Him

(...contd)

Australian Devotee Karuna Mai
(Annette Williams)
shares her anubhavas

— DR A BHAGYANATHAN

Personal Secretary to Sri Swamiji

Karunamai has deep love for her mother. Due to age related illness her old mother was bed ridden for several months. To remain with and serve her mother in her last days was one thought that had taken hold of Karunamai. She, therefore, remained with her mother in Sydney and was serving her. Her mother had neither the darshan of Guru Maharaj nor had been initiated by him. But Karunamai always had one prayer – ‘Guru Maharaj! My mother should also receive your blessing’. Every time she visited India she would offer this prayer to Guru Maharaj; she would pray for and take some kind of Prasad from Guru Maharaj for her mother and give it to her.

On the morning of 1st January 2017 Karunamai called me from Australia. She said, "I desire to pray once again to Guru Maharaj on behalf of my mother. Doctors opine that she would live only for some weeks or months. Please do inform Guru Maharaj about this." Immediately I informed our Guru Maharaj about Karunamai's prayer. At once Guru Maharaj asked me to pass on the following message to Karunamai – "Innumerable Mahans have said that not only those who chant the Lord's Divine Name but also those who have begotten such children shall certainly attain to the Lord's holy feet. So, inform Karunamai that Premika Varadan would take her mother unto His holy feet for the one reason of having begotten this one daughter who chants the Mahamantra. Ask her to immediately chant the Mahamantra thrice in her mother's right ear." Guru Maharaj asked me to convey this message at once to Karunamai over telephone. I did as bid. Karunamai asked me, "The doctors have said that my mother would live a few more weeks or months only. Should I chant the Mahamantra right now or when the time comes?" I told her, "Guru Maharaj has asked you to chant it immediately, right now." Karunamai at once went to the hospital and chanted the Mahamantra thrice in her mother's right ear.

At the same instance, in India, Guru Maharaj's mass prayer was being conducted at Kalatipet. In Australia Karunamai's mother's life left the body and as told by Guru Maharaj it attained to the holy feet of Krishna. Karunamai shed tears thinking of Guru Maharaj's compassion. She felt elated that her mother who had never had a single darshan of Guru Maharaj had attained to such great state. During her recent visit to the Ashram Karunamai had brought two Australian mangoes for offering to Guru Maharaj. When Guru Maharaj came to Bhagavata Bhavanam she prostrated before Guru Maharaj and offered the two mangoes. Looking at the two mangoes Guru Maharaj said, "They do not look like two mangoes to me. I only see the two fruits – fortitude and perseverance. If you chant the Divine Name with fortitude and perseverance you will certainly reach your goal," and smiled. Karunamai was very happy. This was a stimulating upadesha for her.

One evening Guru Maharaj was sitting on Madhuvani at the ashram. Prostrating before Guru Maharaj Karunamai said, "I wish to clear a doubt from you."

Guru Maharaj said, "What's your doubt? Speak out."

Karunamai said, "This world is illusory. Only Madhuri Sakhi sametha Premika Varadan, Guru Maharaj and this Mahamantra blessed by Guru Maharaj are true. I do keep telling my mind 'without getting caught in this illusory world I should chant the Divine Name, always, with devotion and sincerity'. Yet this mind does not act the same always. Sometimes it keeps chanting the Divine Name while at other times it gives me the slip and runs towards the world. Why does this happen? I am unable to get an answer for this. You must only give me an answer to this."

Guru Maharaj laughed and said, "Do you wish to know the answer for this? I am also searching for an answer to this! I also do not know the answer. You keep chanting the Divine Name incessantly. If you keep on chanting the Divine Name the answer to this would come in search of you. You then come and give me the answer received." Guru Maharaj then blessed Karunamai with three fruits.

Karunamai understood that Guru Maharaj desired her to do Namakirtan incessantly. On receiving the Prasad, a thought arose in Karunamai 'Guru Maharaj would say three things to be prayed for of the Lord are wisdom, devotion and determination [jnana, bhakti, vairagya]. It is verily that Guru Maharaj has blessed me with'. Very joyfully Karunamai received those three fruits.

As if reflecting her thought, in a few days' time, Guru Maharaj asked her to stand in front of Premika Varadan and pray the following – "Premika Varada! I desire nothing in this world other than you. I do not desire anything else. You should only protect me from getting caught in this Maya. You should only bless me with the highest jnana, bhakti and vairagya."



FOUR CONVERSATIONS - 3


Devotee: Respected Sri Swamiji, many people who are in the same path of Krishna bhakti call Sri Adi ShankaraBhagavadpada as a 'mayavadi'...

Sri Swamiji: They speak this way because they have not understood the great Acharya properly. I believe that they have not gone really in depth into the works of Sri Adi Shankaracharya. One of his important Vedantic works is PrabhodaSudhakaram. Of all his Vedantic works, this work has harmonized the Saguna Brahman (Divinity with attributes) and Nirguna Brahman (attribute-less Divinity). He talks about the supremacy of Bhagavan Sri Krishna clearly in this.

So Sri Bhagavadpada is not a mayavadi but a brahmavadi. He proclaims that Brahman alone exists and not Maya. Hence he is a brahmavadi.

His works like PrabhodaSudhakaram, Hari stotram (Hari meede) clearly show that Sri Adi ShankaraBhagavadpada is an ardent Krishna bhakta and a clear Vaishnava. Only few have realized this. In the village of Tiruvisainallur there was a mahan by the name, Sri Rama SubbaShastri. He has pored deep into the various works of Sri Adi Shankara and come to the clear conclusion that Sri Adi ShankaraBhagavadpada was an ardent Vaishnava who was truly devoted to Krishna.

Is this clear?





Devotee: Pranams to Sri Swamiji! It is amply clear now! How much apacharam (divine offence) would it be to belittle or disrespect this great Acharya, Sri Adi ShankaraBhagavadpadacharya! I have heard Bhagavan may even tolerate His apachara but not a vaishnavapachara. I realize now that his detailed commentary on Vishnu Sahasranaama, his Krishnashtakam, Govindashtakam, BhajaGovindam, Pandurangashtakam, Yamunashtakam, Gangashtakam, Rama Bhujangastotram... all clearly proclaim his love for Krishna and the Divine Name. I have been truly blind all along!

So always, at all places, and at all cost, the praise of Lord Krishna has to be sung with a firm belief, without entertaining any idea of finding fault with different Sampradayas.

May Krishna forgive me if I had even thought ill of other great acharyas!Pranams with gratitude, Sri Swamiji.

Sri Swamiji, I just have one last question if Your Holiness would permit...(Sri Swamiji nodded with a smile.)



To My Lovely Satsang Family

SRI SWAMIJI

Radhe Radhe!!

May this New Year bring in bountiful goodness and prosperity your way!

The Kalpatharu Day Mass Prayer took place in a very grand and festive manner at the Kotai Mariamman Temple Ground at Dindigul, Tamil Nadu. More than 10,000 devotees took part in this grand gathering. As the entire audience raised their hands and clapped blissfully to the tunes of the melodious and sweet Mahamantra, it was a sight to behold! It was as sweet as honey to the ears and my heart was overjoyed.

500 years back, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, 'He is indeed the most fortunate, who chants the Mahamantra even once in his lifetime.' He said 'Nama is the only way'. There are many suffering till date without understanding the truth in these words. We are extremely blessed and fortunate that we are treading this path.

My kith and kin in all parts of the world, have risen early every Margazhi dawn, and chanted Mahamantra in the streets of their cities and villages, gathering and motivating everyone in their neighbourhood, with the sole intent of making me happy and pleased. My blessings to each and everyone of you!!

Periyakulam Namadwaar, due to the sincere yearning of Smt Latha and Smt Vijayarani, was inaugurated on 8th November 2017. Incessant Nama chanting has been taking place here since then. The devotees are served prasad everyday. Chaitanyadas and Padmavathi have been serving this cause relentlessly. This Namadwaar shines beautifully and magnificently.

Madurai Namadwaar is in the making with the support of Sri Swaminathan Iyer's family and devotees at Madurai. Sri Nehruprakash of Tuticorin has been working on this day and night. Kariapatti Namadwaar is also in the making with the support of Sri Lakshmikanthan. Sri Gandheesan of Virudhunagar has devoted his entire time to this purpose. Two Namadwaars are functioning at Senganoor. A plot of land has been purchased at Udumalpettai by the support of Smt Premila and other devotees, and another at Ambasamudram for the construction of Namadwaar. Sri Sivaram Ganesh of Arupukottai has been earnestly wishing for Namadwaar to be constructed at his own land. Namadwaar devotees of Arupukottai led by Sri Kannan are working towards this. Sri Vijay of Thanjavur has purchased a piece of land with his hard earned money and has been insisting that the space be used for building a Namadwaar.

Due to the efforts of Subbuji and Vidyaji, Melbourne Namadwaar was inaugurated on 8th November 2017 and is functioning very well. Atlanta Kishoreji was dreaming of a Namadwaar night and day. By his efforts, Atlanta Namadwaar became a reality on 8th November 2017.

Namadwaars are coming up at Dallas, Virginia, Fiji, and New Zealand too. Mayaji of Dallas breathes Nama every second. He has begun the efforts for a Namadwaar at Dallas. Muraliji, Malathiji and Ramanji of Virginia, spend sleepless nights working towards a Namadwaar in their region. Sri Deepak Vinod, Sri Nilesh-Smt Eshwin, Sri Raj, Sri Aman and Sri Swastika have Namadwaar Fiji as their sole objective in life. I cannot express in words the longing that New Zealand Smt Kavitha-Sri Venkat and Smt Pavithra- Sri Vijay have, towards making Namadwaar New Zealand a reality.

We will now strive to make Namadwaars of all their dreams come true!
Finally, an interesting mention - Ramuji has already reserved a place in Moon and Mars for Namadwaar, with his hard earned money!

No matter what anyone in this world says, I have absolutely no worries!!
I have you all....and we all have Nama!! Let's incessantly chant Nama,
and make others chant too!!

Generations to come, will benefit by all your sincere service to
Namadwaar!

All glories to the Guru's Grace!!

- With Love,

Head of the Family,

Muralidhara Swamiji



Wander Like The Dead

In Srimad Bagavatham, Sri Shuka extols the extraordinary glories of Bhagavan. King Parikshit's very first question paved the way for this. "What is to be listened to? What is to be chanted? What is to be remembered? What is to be seen? What is to be done? What is to be avoided? Sri Shuka himself celebrates these questions of Parikshit.

Sri Swamiji says, "The King's lovely questioning was the main cause for the wonderful answers given by Sri Shuka",

A devotee from Indonesia posed a beautiful question to Sri Swamiji, for which, Sri Swamiji too gave a wonderful answer

“Learn to live with a feeling that I’m dead, in order to be in the state of happiness’ - What is the true meaning of this?”

Sri Swamiji joyfully started to reply. Many such philosophical sayings exist in Vedanta. In tamil Vedanta, there is a saying, “Neethaarai pol thiri”(Wander like the dead”). “Neethar” means the dead ones. “Thiri” means to roam about in this world.

What worldly events bother you? What kind of problems affect you? Right from the time you wake up in the morning, the news in the TV and newspapers or the day to day issues in the family, all of these create either happiness or worry. In this situation, consider yourself to be dead. If I’m dead, will any of the above issues disturb me? What kind of effects will these have on me?

Suppose, a dear friend or a relative had passed away 2-3 days ago or 1-6 months ago. What effect can the news that we see on Television or newspaper or the worldly happenings bring about in a person who is already dead? Nothing, right? Why? They don’t exist to notice or to even lend their ears to it. Assume that “I’m too in that state”. Think that “I’m a dead person with respect to worldly happenings” To that extent we should remain unaffected by such happenings.

All that happens in the body or surroundings, kindle the emotions. The mind gets affected by such feelings. Hence, the emotions need to be controlled.

We worship Lord Sri Krishna. Sri Krishna is the greatest of all Jnanis and a great Yogi. He remains impervious to anything. By worshipping Him, we too shall attain a state of remaining unaffected by anything. That is the purpose of “Upasana”. To become like Krishna does not mean getting a similar form like Him with Peacock feather, Peethambara or Vijayanthi mala (to be contd..)

[On July 26th, Sri Swamiji conducted a satsang with devotees from the Gulf countries. One devotee raised the question if we can follow other religious practices. This is the concluding part of Sri Swamiji's answer to that question.]

Despite many paths the goal is the same. Progressing down one path results in a chemical change in our body that is unique from other paths. You may think, "I don't feel any chemical changes". Changes are very subtle and yet there is no denying that they occur. One following the path of pranayama and the one following the path of karma have different resulting changes. For example, one following the path of bhakti, specifically Krishna bhakti, experiences changes that result in prema bhakti, culminating in Jnana and vairagya. If one following the path of pathanjali yoga comes into physical contact with one following the path of bhakti, it results in a state of confusion. Any physical contact is enough to invoke a transfer of thoughts from a mentally strong person to a mentally weak person. Thus, associating with many worldly-minded individuals makes a spiritual seeker mentally vulnerable.

A Divine Dialogue

— MK RAMANUJAM

Until the truth is experienced, it is best to follow one path with firm conviction to reduce the difficulty in attaining the ultimate goal. If you want to attain God in this birth and escape the cycle of birth and death, you need to be clear on your path in order to progress.

A famous musician visited Yogi Ramsuratkumar regularly. After a while, he started visiting another ashram that was close by. Later, when he learned about the greatness of a temple, he started going there. Finally, after many months of wandering, the artist came back to Yogi Ramsuratkumar. Yogi Ramsuratkumar Maharaj said, "If you want punya you can go to many places. But if you want liberation you should

stick to one Guru. It need not be this beggar.” We should all keep this in mind - just as an infant will feed only from its own mother not another woman, grace should come from the master himself!

Another illuminating example is from the life of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. He was weak and debilitated while living in the Cossipore gardens; hence, most of his close disciples lived with the master. One day, Swami Vivekananda and Swami Akandananda were meditating in close proximity to one another. Deep in meditation, Swami Vivekananda felt a throbbing spiritual energy. Unaware of his action, he touched Akhandananda, who felt the transfer of strong energy. When both the disciples went to have the darshan of their master, Sri Ramakrishna addressed Vivekananda, “I instructed both of you to follow different paths. Since the divine energy from you passed into him, it has wrecked the seed of divinity that I had built in him.”

Who can comprehend all these minute details and changes? Novices who are in the early stages of their spiritual journey do not understand all these nuances. It can be perceived only by the spiritual aspirant who sticks to a single path and has progressed in it. To conclude, the changes that happen for a bhakta is different from the changes that happen in a yogi. Blending them causes trouble.

(To be continued...)

Everything Has Its Use

Once there lived a wise sage in his hermitage. He led a very simple and austere life with the principle of “not wasting anything”. One day, one of his disciples asked him, “Swamiji, Is it not nature’s rule that everything existing in this universe originate from the five elements of nature (Air, water, fire, earth and space) and will go back to nature and dissolve in these very five elements”? And find their place again in the nature”? Plants, animals and even men are not exceptions to this rule. The seed sown grows into food and fruits. Only if this rule is followed, nature can exist”.

“Swamiji, isn’t there a timeframe for creation and destruction? But many products made of plastics and other materials that are being widely used in all walks of life today take millions of years to bio degrade. Thus, it does not turn to soil, nor does it dissolve in water. It cannot be burnt to ashes also. These remains are toxic to men and all other living beings. Not only is the presence of such material against the nature and order of existence, they also obstruct the natural laws of existence.””. The sage did not reply.

However, his countenance indicated that the thought troubled him deeply. The moment his disciple raised the pertinent question, he began introspecting whether his ashram was being run without causing any harm to the environment?

It was growing dark and Swamiji was about to go out. His disciple Lakshmandas was lighting lamps to be carried along the way. The disciple was a very simple guy and today he wore a new white dhoti. Noticing this Swamiji asked, “Lakshman, You are wearing a new Dhoti today”, What did you do with the old one”?

“Swamiji, I am using that as my bed”, the disciple answered politely.

Swamiji replied, “ “Oh, what about your old bed then”?

The disciple answered, “ Swamiji, that I am using as a curtain”.

Swamiji persisted, “ What about the old curtain then”?

The disciple replied. “Swamiji, they had become very old, So I cut them into pieces and use in the kitchen to hold hot vessels”.

Swamiji was ready with another question, “What about the old rags being used in the kitchen for that purpose”?

The disciple answered quietly, “ Swamiji, they were almost in tatters, so here they are, being used as wicks for the lamps I am lighting now”.

Swamiji was delighted at this reply. He said, “This is how we should make the best use of all things, especially in the service of Lord. This is the way acceptable to nature and endorsed by God, the Creator.

The flames in the lamp glowed brightly . Swamiji’s happy smile reflected in the warm glow.

SRI VISHNUPRIYA

Sanskrit Word of The Month

vAma

The word 'Vaama' has many meanings. Primarily 'Vaama' means LEFT. In the famous Yugala Geetham which starts with the words 'वामबाहुकृत-वामकपोलो' Bagavatham describes the beauty of Lord Krishna resting his left cheek on His left shoulder and playing his flute.

Similarly, Sri Sri Anna while describing Shri Radha says, 'गोविन्दवामाङ्किलासिनी', meaning one who is on the left side of Lord Krishna. 'Vaama' also means very beautiful. In Srimad Bagavatham, the moment Draupadi learns that her children, the five young Pandavas were killed by Asvaththama, the son of their Guru Drona, she bows down to him. विलोक्य कृष्णा अपकृतं गुरोः सुतं वामस्वभावा कृपया ननाम च ।

Here, while narrating about Draupadi paying respects, Bagavatham says वामस्वभावा , meaning the 'beautiful, virtuous' Draupadi, on learning that it was their Guru's son who caused them harm, did not display hatred, but bowed down to him. Similarly, there are many words like "Vaamalochna", (one with pretty eyes), "Vaamabroo" (one with pretty eyebrows), "Vaamaangi" (one with good physique) and so on.

Contrary to this, there is another meaning for the word 'Vaama' , namely 'harsh,harmful/evil'. Srimad Bagavatham, while talking about Daksha Prajapathi talking with disrespect to Lord Shiva, says ' उवाच वामं चक्षुर्भ्यां अभिवीक्ष्य दहान्निव ' .It says, he looked with eyes that scorched and spoke harsh words.

There is yet another meaning. 'Vaama' also means 'something negative', 'something positive'. In Ashtapadhi, Shri Radha tells her 'sakhi'(companion) - "पुनरपि मनो वामं कामं करोति करोमि किं ". She says," Although Krishna abandons me and plays with many other 'sakhis'(companions), in contradiction, my mind strangely is in love with Krishna alone".

We might have heard of "Vaamachara", "Vaamamarga" which is a form of worship in Tantra. It involves five things viz., 'Madhu'(Alcohol), 'Maamsa'(Meat), 'Maithuna'(sexual union in ritual context), 'Mathsya' and 'Mudhra'(gestures). It cannot be practised by all. Very few can follow it in secrecy. Lord Shiva also has a name 'Vaamadeva:'. This word has several more meanings. However, let us stop with this.

