

Sri Hari:

# Madhura Murali

January 2018



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



# Madhura Geetham

**Raga:** Sahana

**Tala:** Adi

**Pallavi**

buddiyil pugindu aruL purindiDuvAy - hanumantA ||bu||

**Anupallavi**

durbuddi ellAm aravE nIkki

sadbuddi enDrum tiDamAy nilaitiDa ||bu||

**Charanam**

poyyAna ulagattai mei ena ninaittu

OyvillAmal ODiDum en manam

thoyvaDaindu talai sAindu

meyyAna rAma nAmattil nilaittiDa vENDum ||bu||

nAma japam sankIrthanam

pArAyaNam kata sravaNam

guru sEvai hari sEvai eNDrum nAn

tannalamaTru seidiDa vENDum ||bu||



# Madhura Smaranam

## My Guru as I See Him

- Dr A Bhagyanathan

Personal Secretary to Sri Sri Swamiji

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Love of God – if it were to take a form it is verily our Gurudev! This is what strikes me whenever I think of our Gurudev. Truth is we can never comprehend the unparalleled love of Gurudev who is its very personification. However, we feel that we grasp a little of it while seeing the way he leads the families that he has taken unto himself.

2003 – this was the year Mr. Sundararaman and Mrs. Jayanti Sundaraman had their first darshan of our Gurudev along with their children Vignesh and Vaishnavi. The way they came in touch with our Gurudev is truly exceptional. It was the time when Gurudev's discourses were being telecast. Though this family had attended several spiritual events earlier the forceful words of Gurudev that all can certainly have direct vision of the Lord got stuck in their minds and it impelled deep, inexplicable desire to have his darshan. The journey towards Gurudev began at this point of time. Learning about Gurudev's satsang in Ayodhya Mantap, West Mambalam, through newspapers they were drawn to Ayodhya Mantap as is a piece of iron by the magnet. They went to Ayodhya Mantap determined to have his darshan that very day.

Very shy by nature this couple always remains at the back and that day Ayodhya Mantap was overflowing with people. After satsang, hundreds of devotees were following Gurudev as he left the dais. Mr. Sundararaman, as if bound by some Mantra, joined the crowd following Gurudev. Gurudev who had reached the entrance stopped for a moment and turned back. Among hundreds of people standing there he looked at Mr. Sundararaman and smiled. The doubt 'was that for me or someone else known to him'? arose in Mr. Sundararaman. As if to reassure him Gurudev looked deeply at Mr. Sundararaman, wished him well and left. The couple felt highly elated.

From the time of his first darshan of Gurudev Mr. Sundararaman deeply desired to receive Divine Name initiation [Naama upadesam] from Gurudev. Finding out where Gurudev lived he went there after a few days. His whole mind was filled with only one thought of somehow finding the right moment to seek initiation. Well! Does not Gurudev know our thoughts? As soon as

Mr. Sundararaman prostrated to him Gurudev blessed him with the initiation on his own! Mr. Sundararaman was simply astounded.

Mrs. Jayanti Sundararaman was indeed glad to learn this. However, her prayer was quite different. She wondered if Gurudev would initiate her also, unasked, as in her husband's case. 'If Gurudev initiates me into the Divine Name I have to maintain discipline in regular chant of the Name. What if I fail in this? So, may he not initiate me into the Divine Name' was her prayer! A few days later when she went for Gurudev's darshan he smiled as if to say 'I know your thoughts' and he initiated her into the Divine Name and said "Chant whenever possible"!

Once, Gurudev visited Ambur. In Tirupattur, a town near Ambur, lived Mrs. Jayanti's grandmother Lalithambal. A valorous lady she was the councillor of the local Co-operative Society. Lord Krishna was her favourite God. She was deeply devoted to His form as Guruvayurappan. Even in her advanced age she lived on her own holding on to Lord Krishna alone. Grandmother and Granddaughter went to Ambur for Gurudev's darshan. As soon as they reached the place Gurudev said to the Grandmother, "I will come to your home."

He, however, did not tell the time of his visit then. He said that he would, through someone, inform her over telephone. Grandmother and granddaughter at once left for Tirupattur.

The Grandmother cooked food and was preparing to welcome Gurudev. No call was received and there Gurudev was at her door arriving suddenly! This stunned the old lady and she was beside herself not knowing what to do. Collecting herself together she prayed to Gurudev, "This is like Sabari's house. I have prepared what best I could. I had no information about your arrival time. Please kindly accept what this Sabari has been able to do."

Gurudev stayed there for a while and while leaving said to her with a smile, “Next time I will inform Sabari and then come.”

After some years the Grandmother, a great devotee of Guruvayurappan, visited Guruvayur and after darshan of the Lord attained the holy feet of Krishna at Guruvayur itself. Have we not often read that it is verily our favourite God who voluntarily comes as Gurudev and takes us unto Himself!

The children Vignesh and Vaishnavi have been deeply devoted to Gurudev since their early years. Both are dear to Gurudev. They worshipped a picture of Gurudev in their house. Whatever they wished to say to Gurudev would be told to this picture. Both had the practice of writing down their prayers in the form of a letter and placing it in front of the picture. Once Vaishnavi’s school unexpectedly announced holiday. She deeply desired to join Gurudev’s satsang at the ashram. Not knowing how to contact Gurudev for seeking his permission she, with deep faith, wrote down on a piece of paper her desire and placed it in front of the picture. No sooner had she done this than she received the invitation from the Ashram over telephone! The caller passed on the words of Gurudev, “Is Vaishnavi’s school closed? She can come and stay in the Ashram!” Several such prayers have been fulfilled in their home through such letters.

Once, during the family’s visit to the Ashram, Gurudev pointing to Vignesh asked Mrs. Jayanti, “Will you give him to me?” she responded wonderfully, “He is yours Gurudev!”

One day while in school Vignesh fainted as he was moving on the staircase. The parents had no information of this. But at the same time, at the behest of Gurudev, devotees repeatedly called their home and enquired if Vignesh had returned home. It was much later that the parents got the information from school about Vignesh. Mrs. Jayanti felt shaken but on learning that he was not hurt calmed down. Only then did she comprehend the reason behind the repeated calls from Gurudev.

The family, every moment, feels deeply touched by the way Gurudev protects those who take refuge in him.





## *Four Conversations*

In a freely flowing conversation, Sri Swamiji answers four vital questions on our sampradayam (tradition) to a devotee, who questions 'pariprashnena sevaya', with humility and simplicity.


Devotee: Sri Swamiji, I have a question... it is about our sampradaya. Should we, as Krishna bhaktas, go only to Krishna temples or can we go to other temples as well?

Sri Swamiji: Humans should love and respect other humans and not hate one another. We need to see Krishna in every individual being. Bhagavan Sri Krishna Himself says in the Bhagavad Gita:

“yO mAm pashyati sarvatra sarvam cha mayi pashyatitasyAham na  
praNashyAmi sa cha mE na praNashyati”

(6:30):

The one who sees Me everywhere, and sees all in Me, to that person I am not lost, nor is that person lost to Me. So when Sri Krishna tells us



to see Him everywhere and in all beings themselves, what to say about higher deities? We worship Krishna; we do smaranam (joyful meditation) of Krishna. If it so happens that you need to go to any temple due to some circumstance or by chance, certainly you can go. At times when we go for an upanyasam (discourse), for example, there happens to be a sanctum there of some other deity (a deity which is praised by the Vedas). We should never disrespect Vedic deities. Even these deities have Krishna alone as their Indweller (antaryami); we pray to these deities also for Krishna bhakti alone. This is our sampradayam.

At the same time, we will not start worshipping other deities in our Ashram. We will always stick only to Krishna bhakti. We will never speak low of or belittle or demean any other deity.

In a joint family, the wife loves her husband with her heart and soul. Towards all others who are related to her husband, she holds respect. The love she has for her husband is different, and the respect she has for others who are related through her husband is different. The respect she has for others is because of their relation with her husband. We will always have respect for all deities. Likewise, we Krishna bhaktas shall never rebuke or disrespect any deity. Do you understand?

Devotee: Yes Swamiji, it is so clear now. When we Krishna bhaktas are directed by our Bhagavan in the Gita to respect every other life form and to see Krishna everywhere, how much respect should we have for deities who are praised in the Vedas! (Bhagavatam says “vEdO nArAyaNa sAkshAt”) Of course, we adore our Thakurji – Sri Radha Krishna – with all our heart and soul. But this does not mean that we should belittle other Vedic deities or criticize or speak ill of them. Respect all deities; love our Krishna! This is very clear now.

Sri Swamiji: Very good. You have truly understood. Krishna blesses you!

Devotee: Swamiji, now can I ask a second question?...

(to be contd...)





# The rarest of the rare Bakthi

- Sri Swamiji



The story of a demon called Vrithrasura comes in the sixth canto of Srimad Bhagavatam. In spite of being an asura, he exhibited certain attributes of the highest Prema bakthi while waging a war against Indra. He proffered four slokas towards Lord Hari. The essence of these slokas reflect the in-depth meaning of the Supreme Bhagavata Dharma, which shows that Hari Bakthi is verily the four Purusharthas, namely, Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. We might wonder, “How is it possible for an asura to have such devotion”, isn't it? King Parikshit, while listening to the story, got the same question. But, Parikshit, who knew about the greatness of such a devotion, didn't pose the question abruptly. As Parikshit was aware of the fact that that Bakthi is something that is rare and does not blossom all of a sudden, he asks the question very gracefully through six questions.

The fourteenth chapter of the sixth canto of Srimad Bhagavatam begins like this. This question itself is very nectarine! Parikshit Maharaj asks, “Oh! BrahmaRishi! Aren't the qualities, rajas and tamas conflicting to Bakthi? But, they form the innate qualities of asuras. While this being the fact, how Vrithrasura alone could develop such steadfast devotion towards Lord Narayana?

The reason I ask this is because, generally, not even the Devas and Rishis, who are sattvic and pure hearted in nature, develop such Bakthi towards Srīman Narayana. I have heard that

Hari Bakthi is extraordinary! The living entities are numerous, just like the countless dust on earth! In the experience of few Mahatmas, there are many jivas lying dormant, waiting for the order of Bhagavan to take even the first birth. Thus the living entities end up taking birth as any one of the 84 lakhs of species. Amongst these 84 lakhs of species, human beings constitute a very insignificant portion. Getting a beautiful human birth, as opposed to being born as a donkey or a weary cow carrying heavy burden or a pig steeped in the ditches, is indeed rare! And that too, a human birth with fully developed organs and well functioning eyes, ears, hands and legs is a rarity! In spite of having a perfectly functioning body, to get a mind that is sane is the rarest! How wondrous would such a human birth be, if it is in a society adhering to righteousness, in our Sanathana Dharma!!

We also see, how, mere survival becomes difficult in certain neighboring countries. Unlike that, a human birth, in a tranquil society where our Sanathana Dharma prevails, peace and harmony well preserved, is really hard to obtain! While majority of them lead a meaningless life or question the existence of God or lead a self centered life enjoying the worldly comforts without bothering about the God's presence, only a few of them live a truly dharmic life. Of all the living entities, only a very small percentage of them get a human birth and we saw how only a handful lead a dharmic life. Of those who lead such dharmic life, many carry on the prescribed acts, unsure of why they are doing it. Few others live only as mere believers of God. While others wander around astrology, propitiation, mantras & tantras, augury, etc. Of the dharmic people, only very few desire to attain Moksha. They are called as 'Mumukshu'. Such a desire for Moksha is extremely rare! It is not enough if one just gets the desire to attain Moksha. One must possess a strong dispassion to renounce everything. Also, the path one takes on to attain Moksha should be in line with the sastras. While there are many ways to attain Moksha, it is very rare for a sadhak to identify the appropriate path for which he is truly eligible and then to pursue it. Of one thousand Mumukshus, only one renounces his house, wife, children and all his ties. He emerges victoriously in that attempt too. To walk in the path of Bakthi and to become a Jnaani, who is a Baktha is really rare! Such a bakthi, that too



towards the most Sattvic God Narayana is the rarest of the rare!! Purest form of devotion towards Lord Narayana with a clean mind, free from all desires, is possible for only one in a crore!

While, this being the case, how could Vrithrasura, in the battle field, do such unwavering Hari Bakthi. This is very surprising to me and has created a big doubt in my mind” asked Parikshit Maharaj.

Srimad Bhagavatam shows how wondrous and rare Hari Bakthi is, simply through such questions! Yes! Hari Bakthi is the rarest of rare! And, Srimad Bhagavatam, which elegantly brings this out, is indeed the rarest of all, isn't it?



The image shows a central logo for Buddies Infotech Private Limited. The logo consists of a large white circle with the text "BUDDIES INFOTECH" in bold, black, sans-serif capital letters. Below this, in smaller capital letters, is "PRIVATE LIMITED". A stylized dollar sign with a vertical line through it is positioned between the words "BUDDIES" and "INFOTECH". Surrounding this central circle are seven smaller circles, each connected to the center by a thin line. These circles contain the following text or images: "WEB" (top left), "MOBILE APPS" (top right), "DESIGN" (bottom right), "GAMES" (bottom left), and three circles containing small, abstract images (top, middle right, and middle left).

75 & 77, KG Marina Bay, Santhome High Road, Santhome, Chennai - 600 004  
Phone: 044 - 42144662, 43033313, 43033326  
contact@buddiesinfotech.com www.buddiesinfotech.com



‘To be or not to be ?’ is the question !” as the famous DRAMATIC line goes.

A spiritual aspirant faces such a dilemma when it comes to controlling his mind also.

A human mind is plagued with many emotions which are detrimental to the spiritual progress. Sages have classified their enemies of spiritual progress into six main emotions: lust, wrath, arrogance, jealousy, miserliness and infatuation.

The goal of spirituality is to free the mind from these enemies and let it aside in self or God.

Mind seems to work with these six as its foundation. Many huge structures are built on ‘pile foundation’ aren’t they? Like that mind has these imprints (of the six enemies) as its foundation. These vasanas or imprints seem to have been carried over from innumerable birth cycles before. We come to know of these imprints which are buried deep down inside only when its already too late – only when we are engulfed by these emotions like lust or anger for example.

Let us take one of the six to understand the problem- Jealousy. This negative emotion arises due to the tendency to compare and hence compete with another.

A rogue, when he (she) feels jealous may physically harm the person whom he (she) feels jealous with. Some rogues have even resorted to murder.

A rogue may resort to mental torture if he (she) don’t inflict physical harm.

*To Suppress or to Express ?*  
- MK Ramanujam





A normal human may, in frustration imagine a harm to the person he (she) is jealous with but may not actually do any harm.

A better person may try to work harder in the view of bettering that person.

The first three types of people tread the path of six when afflicted with one of the six enemies- jealousy in this case. Though the degree of sinning is very intense in the first case and least in the third case, it is an act of sin nonetheless.

The fourth category of people have not sinned yet, they are certainly not progressing towards spiritual enlightenment.

Now what is the remedy?

One can say, do not act on emotions like this, suppress them ! When we try to control them by suppression, for the time being it may appear to disappear. But it hides beneath. In the next provocation, it pops up! Only with renewed vigour. The alternate is to express the emotion, act on it- hoping that once you have given a vent and fulfilled that emotion it will be quenched. But will it be ? Can one quench fire by pouring clarified butter (ghee) in it.

It will only add 'Fuel to the Fire'. The emotion will promptly pop up after some time and demand action to quench its again! Now we are caught in a dilemma. 'To suppress lust, jealousy etc. or to fulfil them by expression?' Any Human is born with such tendencies like we are born with thirst, hunger etc. so we need to work on them to etch them out of our being. How?? When neither suppression or expression works, there is a third path.

Like when there is dirt, we clean it with acid. Acid etches out the dirt. More we use, greater does it clean; acid with stronger concentration cleans even better. Like that when we chant Nama more and more, it cleans our heart more and more. The greater the concentration when chanting, the clearer we become.

Remembering that it is natural for humans to be affected with negative emotions like lust, jealousy, arrogance etc., without justifying it or condemning it, just focus on chanting the divine name. The incessant focused chanting will do the miracle of cleansing our hearts. Can there be a simpler and more effective way to tackle this problem ??? As Alwar says : "Nanjuthaan kandeer nam vinaikku"

Know the name to be the poison to our negative karma.

[On July 26th, Sri Swamiji conducted a satsang with devotees from the Gulf countries. We read Swamiji's answer to a devotee's question about 'service' last month. Let us look at the concluding part of Sri Swamiji's conversation in this month's issue.]

Q: In this birth, we reap the results of our actions from past births. Experiencing karma in this 'janma,' how can we know which birth and consequence of which action it originates from?

SS: Before we address this, answer my question – What came first, the chicken or the egg?

Everyone laughed.

## *A Divine Dialogue*

- M.K. கிருஷ்ணசுவாமி

It is difficult to comprehend the origin of our past actions. We can merely understand things that are within our intellect. The origin of karma and its associated cycle of action and reaction are beyond the boundaries of our comprehension. Quoting an incident from a Mahatma's life helps us better understand this question.

Gnananda Swamigal was a Mahatma who lived in Tapovanam, located in the South Arcot district of Tamilnadu. Sri Krishnaswamy, the High Court judge, was one of Swamigal's devotees. One night, the same question arose in Sri Krishnaswamy's mind that perturbed him so deeply that he was unable to sleep. Hoping to seek answers, he set out in his car early in the morning to have darshan of his Guru Maharaj. As per usual, Sri Krishnaswamy was dressed in white. When he reached the ashram, he informed his Guru Maharaj that he had a question to ask him. Swamigal responded, "The question can wait. First go and drink some coffee." Being a coffee lover, Sri Krishnaswamy immediately went to drink some coffee.



After his first cup, he asked his question to Swamigal. Swamigal sent him to have another cup. This continued into the evening and by that time, Sri Krishnaswamy had consumed several cups. Finally, Swamigal asked the judge, "What is your question?" The judge repeated his query. Swamigal paused and instead pointed to the judge's white attire and said, "I see a coffee stain on your dhoti." The judge immediately got up to go clean the stain before it set permanently. Swamigal said, "Wait! Wait! Before cleaning the stain, can you answer one question? You drank several cups of coffee today, which cup caused the stain on your dhoti?" The judge replied, "Swamigal, is that important? Now that I have a stain, I need to clean it before it sets in."

Similarly, trying to find the birth in which the karma inducing action originated is insignificant in comparison to the action we must now take in order to remedy our karma. Adi Shankara says, "These questions arise only in those who do not have the burning desire to attain liberation. When a thatched roof house catches on fire, the inhabitants of the house will try to grab their belongings and escape to safety. In contrast, the bystanders will wonder how or when it happened while merely observing and deliberating from a distance. In the panic of the fire, the individuals in the house will not be asking these questions; these questions will only arise in those who wish to analyze and propose their own theories of the incident, without taking any action to aid the situation."

Analogous to the inhabitants of the house are those who seek liberation. If you seek 'moksha,' these questions of 'how' or 'when' are not apparent nor are you involved in their pointless musings. Instead, you aim at escaping the clutches of birth and death, with naama as the sole relief.

(..to be contd)

(Professor Meghanathan started jotting down the conversations he had been having with his son Srivalsan. Soon he realized that one had a lot to learn even from children. Here is one more of such jottings.)

I brought home the new currency denomination of Rs.2000 with much excitement. It was a nice bright pink note with a silver security thread running through. I showed it to my wife and Srivalsan. My wife took it immediately to the altar and laid it in front of the photograph of Goddess Lakshmi reverently. Meanwhile, my brother's five year old daughter Meenakshi saw the 2000 Rupee note kept there. Attracted by the color, she took it and started playing with it. After playing with it for a while, she crushed it with her little hands, made it into a ball and threw it. Fortunately, before further damage could be done, Srivalsan took the currency note, unfolded the creases, straightened it and gave it to me. He also narrated how the note had become crumpled. I put it my wallet and thanked him. Srivalsan laughed. I looked at him enquiringly and asked, "Why are you laughing?"

He replied, “ Remember, you always say that God constantly keeps on teaching us lessons in his own different ways “. Yes What about it now?”, I replied. Srivalsan replied, “ Dad, I learnt a lesson from this Rs. 2000 note also”! Surprised, I asked “ Really, What would be that”?

“Dad, the value of Rs. 2000 note remained the same on both the instances. One, When you brought home the newly printed currency, it was brand new and shiny and second, when it was all crumpled”. Similarly, one should not evaluate or judge a person based on his external appearance or his present station in life. “Remember, dad, you always say that true wisdom lies in understanding that GOD is there in each one of us. I realized that today with this Rs.2000 currency note. Some currency notes are new and shiny and some are old and worn out, but irrespective of their external appearance, their inherent value remains the same. Similarly, for the path of Bhakti ( Devotion), the understanding and firm belief that Krishna is within each of us is its very foundation. Is it not dad”??

For a moment , I was rendered speechless. I may be much older than him. But he was wiser beyond his years. With a faint smile, I recalled the saying, “Child is the father of man”!

HUMBLE PRANAMS AT  
THE LOTUS FEET OF GURUJI

**DR SHRIRAAM MAHADEVAN**

Consultant Endocrinologist

Endocrine & Speciality Clinic

Sri Ganesh Flats, Flat No 4, Ground floor,

Old no.72, New No 460, TTK Road, Alwarpet, Ch - 18

Tel: 044-24350090, Mob: 9445880090

Email: [mshriraam@gmail.com](mailto:mshriraam@gmail.com),

[www.chennaiendocrine.com](http://www.chennaiendocrine.com)



# SANSKRIT WORD OF THE MONTH

## - Sri Vishnupriya

Firstly, ‘thanthri’ means ‘thanthi’. The string (thanthi) played on instruments like the veena,violin is called ‘thanthri’. In the Ramayana, when Seetha Devi left for the forest with Lord Rama, Kaushalya advised Seetha.

When she says,“You should regard your husband who is leaving the kingdom and going to the forest with the same love and affection”, Seetha Devi beautifully replies

नातन्त्री विद्यते वीणा नाचक्रो विद्यते रथः

नापतिः सुखमेधेत या स्यादपि शतात्मजा

“The veena cannot function without the ‘thanthi’(नातन्त्री), there is no chariot without a wheel. So also,even if a sthree(woman) has a hundred children, she cannot live happily without a husband”. Therefore, be it the kingdom or the forest, wherever it may be, Shri Rama is my all says Seetha.

Thanthra is a popular word. We all have heard the word “Panchathanthra”. This word ‘thanthra’ has many meanings.

‘तन्त्र’

tantra

‘Thanthra’ is the name of a shashthra. It is referred to as ‘Thanthra Shashthra’. Manthras, magical tricks, occult power, certain procedures for worship of God are all mentioned in this shashthra.

It also means a ‘treatise’. An essay made under five headings on the word ‘thanthra’ is only what is today popularly referred to as ‘Pancha Thanthra’. A person named Vishnu Sharma has written it. With animals as subject, it has been written as many stories in Sanskrit. There cannot be one who hasn’t read the Panchatanthra tales. It also teaches many morals.

‘Thanthra’ means functioning by dependence. Therefore, ‘Svathanthra’ means depending on one’s own self, and not depending on others. As ‘svathanthra’ refers to depending on oneself, we call that Freedom. ‘Parathanthra’ means depending on others, being slaves to others, being bound by fate. Beyond all this, in Srimad Bagavatham, a very beautiful name of the Lord is mentioned. That is ‘Nijabrithyavargathanthra’. It means Bagavan is the one bound by his ‘daasas’(devotees) society(Nija-brithyavarga), their slave, and dependent on them.

Bhagavan has a name ‘Aathmathanthra’. It means one who rules himself. In spite of being an ‘Aathmathanthra’ he is being bound by his bakthas, therein lies the beauty of Bagavan. Because, in Ambarisha charithra, Bagavan Himself tells Sage Durvasa “अहं भक्तपराधीनो ह्यस्वतन्त्र इव द्विज” - meaning ‘I am not a free person, I am bound by my bakthas’.

‘Thanthravaaya:’ means a spider. It is called ‘thanthravaaya:’ because it spins its web from its mouth like spinning thread.

We say ‘He is acting with thanthra (slyly)’, ‘The fox is sly(thanthra) animal’, don’t we! We say so because they think, plot and act cleverly. Because ‘thanthra’ also means researching, thinking and then deciding.

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### **Translation Team**

Smt Nirmala Giri  
Smt Latha Kumanan  
Smt Jeyashree Ramakrishnan  
Smt Jayanthi Sundararaman  
Smt Sujatha Manikandan  
Smt Ramya Balaji  
Smt Nisha Giri  
Smt Sujatha Natarajan

### **To convey your prayers to Sri Sri Swamiji, mail to**

Dr A Bhagyanathan, Personal Secretary to  
HH Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji  
Plot No 11, Door No 4/11, Nethaji Nagar Main Road, Jafferkhanpet,  
Chennai - 600083  
Tel: +91-44-24895875  
Email: [contact@namadwaar.org](mailto:contact@namadwaar.org)



