

Sri Hari:

Madhuramurali

December 2016

Spiritual Monthly
By the Boundless Grace of
His Holiness Maharanyam
Sri Sri Muralidhara Swāmiji





Sri Swamiji's Thirunakshatram, 31 Oct 2016



MADHURASMARANAM

My Guru As I See Him

Dr A Bhagyanathan

Mrs. Savitri Ramakrishnan of Thanjavur, an ardent devotee of Sri Swamiji, is carrying out the work of spreading the Divine Name [Nama prachar] with great zeal at Thanjavur. Her son's wedding was celebrated at Thanjavur on October 18. As Rohini utsav at Senganur was also on the same day, Sri Swamiji participated in Sri Sri Anna's Paduka procession at Senganur in the morning and blessed Mrs. Savitri Ramakrishnan's family wedding in the evening. Sri Swamiji then conducted a satsang in the Ganesha temple in SBI colony there.

Presently, Sri Navaneetha Krishna temple at Thanjavur is under renovation. Sri Swamiji visited this temple in the evening, eager to have darshan of Sri Navaneetha Krishna here. All through the way to this temple Sri Swamiji was in the thought of this Lord Navaneetha Krishnan.

“Was it not in this Navaneetha Krishnan temple that Sri Sri Anna discoursed, for the

first time, over a mike? Further, was it not here that Sri Bhakta Kolahalan's first Brahmotsav celebrated? Only due to the reason that it was Sri Sri Anna who had first discoursed here that some yearsback I was blessed with the fortune of the service of 'Gita Mantap' construction in this temple." Sri Swamiji went for darshan recalling such sweet memories in connection with Lord Navaneetha Krishnan.

When Sri Swamiji went to the temple those carrying on the renovation work there said that they needed a further sum of Rs.5,00,000/- for the completion of the work. At once, Sri Swamiji gave them Rs.30,000/- that some Thanjavur devotees had offered. Thanjavur Mr. Ganapathi Subramanian's son Mr. Bharat, an ardent devotee of Sri Swamiji, at once offered Rs.1,00,000/- for the renovation work; further, Mr. Mani, a devotee who had come from Germany, offered Rs.50,000/- for this noble cause.

All through the return journey to Govindapuram Sri Swamiji continued to speak about Lord Navaeetha Krishnan's beauty and how fortunate he was to have the opportunity to serve Him.

That night, Sri Swamiji had a divine vision. Lord Navaneetha Krishnan appeared before Sri Swamijji and said to him, "You should certainly render the service of renovation for Me. Have you not renovated Kavalampadi, Semponsei and other temples at Nangoor only for the reason that Sri Aazhwaars have sung on them? Sri Sri Anna has sung My praises through several hymns. Is not Sri Sri Anna most important to you? Therefore, as Sri Sri Anna himself has sung My praises you must render this renovation service for Me [My temple]." Saying this Lord Navaneetha Krishna disappeared.

The next morning Sri Swamiji shared this with me. As it is interesting I share this with you all.

Answers and Beyond

Sri Swamiji answers questions from devotees

How is the sloka “Shuklaambharadaram Vishnum shashivarnam chaturbhujam prasannavadanam dhyaayet sarva vignopa santaye” that is chanted for Lord Ganesha said to apply to Lord Vishnu, too?

This doubt may arise as Lord Vishnu is ‘peetambaradhari’ [wearer of yellow clothing]. But it has been said that in the first yuga of Krita when the Lord appeared before Kardama Prajapati, the Lord’s garland, clothes, etc. were all white.

The description in the sloka mentioned would also fit Lord Mahavishnu. The sloka says ‘let us meditate on the One who wears white clothes, is omnipresent, whose body bears the colour of the Moon, in order to remove all obstacles’. At the start of any work we meditate on the form of Lord Vishnu who had appeared in Krita yuga, the first of the four yugas.

Swamiji! You say that to one who wishes spiritual progress it is not only desires but also fame that proves to be a hurdle! Is not fame a good thing? How can you say that fame itself is dangerous?

God does not feel attracted to and bound by service rendered through vast wealth. The Lord does not give in to charity, too. Intelligence and high birth also do not bind Him. The Lord who does not feel bound by all these feels bound by hymns sung in His praise! When it is so we do realize how vigilant we should be when praises are heaped on us!

Even when I know that what you say is for my own good I am unable to follow it. What is the reason for this?

One of the following should be the only reason if we are unable to follow the good counsel offered to us even when we realize it is only for our own good — indifference, lethargy, play of the ego in accepting another's advice, avarice in some other matter, unable to comprehend the value of and the seriousness in the matter advised.

Cleansed Gold!

Dr A Bhagyanathan

Sri Swamiji discoursed on the Ramayana in Sri Bhuvaneswari Amman temple, Jaffarkhanpet, in connection with Navaratri festival. Thousands of devotees enjoyed peace listening to Sri Swamiji's Ramayana discourses. All these ten days Sri Premika Varadan along with the divine Mother Sri Madhuri Sakhi was at Premika Bhavanam. Every morning at 8 the divine couple Sri Premika Varadan and Sri Madhuri Sakhi would be placed on a swing and Radhika shatakam sung.

One day during this time Sri Swamiji suffered deep pain when, by chance, he happened to read in the newspaper about some people burning Sri Rama. He lost his peace of mind and became restless thinking 'we are unable to do anything; how helpless we are; tussle,

crowd, politics are not our line'.



Lord Rama who had ordered Sita Devi to enter the fire had a grievance. 'I had ordered Sita to enter the fire and prove her chastity; Shouldn't I also have entered the fire and proved my vow of loyalty to my wife?' Rama must have nurtured this thought. If He had ordered his devotees to build a fire so He could enter it none of them would have dared to comply with it. Lord Rama must have thought that these were the right ones to do it!

That is the reason that entering the fire that they had set He shines bright like the gold cleansed in fire!' Sri Swamiji consoled and calmed himself with these thoughts.

Our great scriptures enlist six paths (shanmathas) namely — Ganapathyam, Kaumaram, Sauram, Saivam, Vaishnavam and Saktham. To me, there is a seventh path where **THE GURU IS ALL!** And the name of that special path is **'GURUTHATHVAM'.**

- Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji

Our Humble Pranams to the Lotus feet of His Holiness Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji



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Amar Seva Sangam extolled even by Devas!

This is the thousandth year of the birth of Bhagavat Sri Ramanuja, who on receiving the great treasure of 'Ashtakshara Mantra' at Thirukoshtiyur, out of deep compassion, desired its benefit to reach all and sundry, here and hereafter. Many of us are aware of this!

Such great souls who desire the welfare of all are to be found in all ages. Mr. Ramakrishnan, the founder of Amar Seva Sangam at Aykudi, Tirunelveli, S. India, is one such soul who has become the vessel of our Sri Swamiji's affection. As a youth when he had joined the Indian Airforce he met with an accident during the training period and became paralysed neck downwards. But with great mental strength and courage he undertook special physical training. This helped in reactivating his body to some extent. He then felt that he must offer encouragement and new life to those who also had to face this kind of suffering.

With the initiative to establish a training centre he founded Amar Seva Sangam at Aykudi, in 1981, in the name of his own trainer Dr. Amar Singh. Today this foundation has grown into a huge banyan offering shade and solace through training to thousands affected in this manner. It now functions on a 32 acre land offering new life to countless. Sri Swamiji who has visited Aykudi Amar Seva Sangam several times went to Sengottai on September 21 to participate in a devotee's family wedding. Then Sri Swamiji visited his much-loved Aykudi Amar Seva Sangam which serves humanity as verily the service of the Lord. While there Sri Swamiji spoke lauding the great service of those working there and inspiring the school children there. Heaven is not a place somewhere up above but truly where service is rendered. Aykudi Amar Sing Seva Sangam is verily testimony to the fact that God is highly pleased there.





Sri Ramanujam

Garuda Seva at Kanchi - 4

We have seen that the Garuda Seva is performed in Kanchi in the Tamil month of Aani (mid June to mid July) in connection with the upholding of Supremacy of The Lord (parathathva nirnayam) by Shri Periyalvar. We have been witnessing our Kanchi DevaPerumal appearing on the Holy Star of Swathi, which is the birth star of Periyalvar, in the month of Aani in the 'sannidhi' (sanctum sanctorum) of Periyalvar and beautifully accepting all the offerings submitted by him.

With the evening breeze gently blowing, our Perumal, like a bridegroom, enjoying the drums and music, is coming this way again! Our Swamiji also, enjoying the rear beauty of Perumal was following the procession. Swamiji was constantly chanting Varada, Varadha! as He was walking. Even before Perumal could reach Periyalvar's 'sannidhi', Periyalvar was eagerly awaiting Perumal's arrival, at the entrance to his sannidhi. As Perumal neared, Periyalvar also climbed down the steps.



Now Perumal and Periyalvar were face to face and had Darshan of one another. Periyalvar was blessed with Perumal's 'Sadaari' (considered to be the Holy Feet of the Lord). And, Perumal was Periyalvar's son-in-law, wasn't He!! So, Periyalvar respectfully offered to Perumal flower garlands, clothes, fruits along with 'vetrilai paaku' (betel nut and leaves). Perumal happily accepted them. Then, both of them together went to the mandap in Periyalvar's 'sannidhi'.

In the mandap, as Perumal was seated, Periyalvar stood sideways gazing at Perumal. Sri Vaishnavaites chanted around two hundred 'paasurams' (shlokas) from Perumal's Tirumozhi. Following this 'neivedyam' was offered to the Lord. Then 'parivattam' (turban tied as a mark of respect) was tied on Periyalvar's head and he was adorned with the same garland that had been worn by Perumal. Aalwar delightfully accepted these. At this time, our Swamiji realising the lateness of the hour, was preparing to leave. At that time, a Shri Vaishnavaita came running and placed fruits and 'vetrilai paaku' as Perumal prasadam in Shri Swamiji's hands. It was the same 'vetrilai paaku' and fruits earlier offered by Periyalvar to his son-in-law Perumal. Shri Swamiji was very very happy when He received that. "See! Perumal is blessing us with fruits along with 'vetrilai paaku' Herein he is saying without words that 'Through seven lives and forever we would be close to you and serve you alone' (எற்றைக்கும் ஏழேழ் பிறவிக்கும் உற்றோம்).

"Normally, the bride's family or the groom's family or both families probably exchange 'vetrilai paaku' because it strengthens the relationship! Ascetics do not accept 'vetrilai paaku' because by thus exchanging 'vetrilai paaku', the relationship will improve and bring them closer. That's why Perumal gave it to us and shows that we have an unending relationship. Look at this fruit! They have given half a pomegranate. In Kanchipuram, they will cut the fruit and give as half only. This is a unique feature here. Take special care of these prasadhams. Not one seed of the pomegranate should fall down. One betelnut should not drop down either. It's given by Perumal Himself", Sri Swamiji instructed me. Can it even be possible to describe with words the bliss enjoyed by our Sri Swamiji at that time? Periyalvar followed Perumal and after Perumal reached His abode, he returned to his sannidhi. Following this, after the utsavam got over, Sri Swamiji returned to Keerthanavali Mandapam, and fully partook of the prasadam given by Perumal.

Sri Swamiji has in His pravachans (lectures) very often spoken about the greatness of Bagavath Prasadam. Isn't prasadam nothing but Lord's boundless grace borne and offered to us! From evening onwards, Perumal kept sending prasadhams on and off through Sri Vaishnavites. What was happening here was similar to how a mother who would think that whatever she gives would not suffice and keep giving something constantly to her child who has returned home after a long time! Isn't it natural for The One whose very Name can do to us what even a mother cannot do! Perumal kept sending several prasadhams like 'paalgova' (sweetened condensed milk), tamarind rice, ksheera (kesari), curd rice and the speciality of Kanchipuram - kanchipuram idlis. One by one Shri Vaishnavites came, courteously exchanged pleasantries with Shri Swamiji, give prasadhams and left. (..Varadha will come)

There once lived a zamindar known as Beema Rajan. A musician came to see him to sing and receive gifts.

He was an exceptional musician. He had been to many places and had received several accolades and titles for his talent. Zamindar welcomed him and requested him to sing before him. The musician sang very well in various ragas, expounding his full talent.

He initially sang in the raga, Thodi which was melodious and sweet. Zamindar was very pleased and told his servant, 'take a gold necklace and keep it there'. Hearing this, the musician was very happy.

Then the musician sang a song in Kalyani raga. It turned out to be a very divine song. Zamindar was even more satisfied and told his servant, 'keep a golden crown ready'. The musician was even more happy and smiled.

A TALE FOR CHILDREN

The Right Path

This way, the musician sang several new songs in various ragas and the zamindar kept asking his servant to keep a golden ornament ready. The musician got enthused and sang many more songs. Zamindar also was very happy and asked his servant after every song to take out and keep a priceless ornament.

At the end, when the musician bid farewell to the zamindar, he told him, 'You sang very well. It was very sweet and divine to my ears'.

Although the zamindar asked him to leave, the musician did not leave. He told the zamindar, 'when I was singing, out of happiness, you mentioned about keeping golden necklace, crown, garland, bangles etc. Where are they?'.

Zamindar smiled quietly and told the musician, “your songs captivated us and they were very pleasing to our ears. In the same way, I also mentioned the names of many golden ornaments and made you happy. Your songs and my words equalled each other”. The musician got very disappointed.

Children! like this musician, if we keep talking about devotion, vedanta and knowledge without the spiritual experience, as the zamindar did not give the real gifts to him, God also will not grant the true knowledge to us. Experience is important. There is no use of talks without experience. To get this experience, hold on to the holy feet of Sadh Guru and follow the path shown by him.

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SANSKRIT WORD OF THE MONTH

Asupathi

Sri VishnuPriya

This time, we will be looking into the word 'Asupathi'. We might wonder, we have heard of the word 'Pasupathi' but not 'Asupathi'. Yes! This is a very rare and a beautiful word. Asupathi means 'Pranapathi'. Asu means 'prAnan' or life force. Hence, 'Asupathi' gives out the meaning, Prananaatha, the dearest Lord of one's own being!

Sri Rukmini Devi writes a letter to Lord Sri Krishna isn't it? In the last sloka of the letter, what Sri Rukmini Devi conveys is "If I do not obtain your Grace, If you do not come to take my hand in marriage, I shall give up my life through severe penance, even if it might take one hundred births but shall never end up marrying another. जह्यामसून् व्रतकृशान् शतजन्मभिः स्यात्. Here, the word "asUn" is used at the place where she indicates giving up of life!

It is very amazing when we look into the context of the word 'asUpathi' in Srimad Bhagavatam. There is a story of a dreadful asura called Vrithrasuran in Srimad Bhagavatam. Having lost his son Viswaroopa in a battle against Indra, Thwashta, out of rage, did a massive Yaga to slay Indra. While reciting the mantra "इन्द्रशत्रो विवर्धस्व " for creating a person to Kill Indira, a mispronunciation of a particular swara, led to the appearance of the one who will be killed by Indra and that is Vrithrasura. But, what is really surprising is that in that horrendous form of the

asura, a delicate heart is hidden deep inside. It is astonishing to see that heart of Vrithrasura, melting in Maadhurya Bhava Bakthi towards Lord Sri Hari. We come to know of this during a terrible battle against Indra, when he bravely prompts Indra saying “ Go ahead and hit me, your rival, with your Vajrayudha! I shall attain my Lord Sri Hari as my heart goes out to Him” and extols the Lord with a beautiful stuthi comprising of four slokas.

In that stuthi, he addresses Bhagavan as “Asupathe! PrAnakAnthA!”, similar to the way Gopikas calling out to their Lord Krishna. Such a lovely word is not seen anywhere else! What is wondrous is that an asura calling out to Bhagavan with Maadhurya Bhaava. He ardently prays “Hey Asupathe! Let me ever remain at your Lotus feet serving your devotees, with my mind ever dwelling in your thoughts, my body ever serving you and my mouth ever singing your glories.

Sri Vallabhacharya, who is drenched in Krishna Bakthi, describes in great detail, these four slokas of Vrithrasura that are brimming with such tender bhava and Bakthi. This is known by the name “Chathusloki”.

Dr. Shriraam Mahadevan

MD (Int Med), DM (Endocrinology)

Consultant in Endocrinology and Diabetes, Regn No. 62256

ENDOCRINE AND SPECIALITY CLINIC

New 27/1, Old 11/1, (Gr. Floor), 4th Cross Street, RK Nagar,

Mandaveli, Chennai -600028

(Next to Krishnamachari Yogamandiram)

Tel: 2495 0090, Mob: 9445880090

E-mail: mshriraam@gmail.com, www.chennaiendocrine.com

IMPROVING SELF-CONFIDENCE

Many of us have an inferiority complex, at least about some aspects of our life. This inferiority complex pulls down our self-confidence. Though we understand that for achieving success we should remain confident, the question beckons as to how to improve and maintain this self-confidence.



Stop comparison with others

All of us at some point of time have compared ourselves with others and tried to emulate them. We then later realise that we cannot be like them. They were in a different period with a different culture and we do not know what they tried to project to the world. Our confidence weakens, when we try to be what we are not and when we make a lot of effort to earn others' approbation. Instead of making comparison with others, if we direct the attention to ourselves and to our objectives, we can immediately perceive an improvement in our self-confidence.

Exercise

Exercises like cycling, walking, swimming etc. create a good feeling about us and strengthens our will. They expand the opportunities in our life and cultivate the right attitude. When we exercise, a chemical known as 'Endorphins' gets triggered in our brain, which helps to keep us cheerful. If we feel that we don't have the time to exercise, we only have to identify three activities in our life from which can take out 10 minutes each, and use the 30 minutes for exercise.

Coming out of our comfort zone

Before embarking on this, we have to identify those activities which we are avoiding, thinking that they are beyond our capability.

If we are shy to speak before an audience, we should utilize the

the speaking opportunities that we may get and without avoiding them, we should decide before hand what to speak and prepare well. By doing this we can avoid the pitfalls that may arise. When we frequently come out of our comfort zone and act, our confidence improves. We are able to realise new opportunities with more and more successes. Such increasing accomplishments would be a sure sign of our improved self-confidence.



Attention to our thought-processes

The thoughts that we think during the whole day would be a reflection of our ability to identify the opportunities before us, our execution of those tasks and the successes that we achieved in them. We should immediately stop those thoughts which diminish our capability and make us defeatist. Negative thoughts have to be completely eliminated and replaced with constructive thoughts and words which enhance our faith.

When this is done repeatedly, our confidence will grow.

I CAN



Right food

Lack of proper food causes mental fatigue. The negative thoughts that are caused due to this fatigue weaken our confidence. As far as possible, we should avoid taking anti-biotic, preserved-foods and food items rich in sugar and carbo-hydrates. Healthy food strengthens us and our attitude in all ways. Food that has to be eschewed has to be strictly avoided. We should identify and consume foods that strengthen our body and mind. This can be tried for a week and we can look for any noticeable improvement in our thoughts and in our confidence levels.

Catch hold of Mahamantra and God

Imagine the battlefield in the Mahabharatha war which had Karna with Salya as charioteer and Kauravas on one side and Arjuna with Lord Krishna as the charioteer and other Pandavas on the other side. We see that Salya destroys the self-confidence of Karna who was initially full of enthusiasm. Arjuna was initially very despondent about having to fight his relatives but Krishna advises him and instils confidence and enthusiasm in him. It is evil to destroy one's confidence and divine to enhance it. God is none other than he who always makes us march towards goodness. With faith, when we hold on to Him and to His divine names, our confidence will be strengthened.

ATOMIC THEORY IN ANCIENT INDIA

Balaji Ramachandran

The earth is flat; Neptune and Uranus are plantes; Galaxy can be contained within a considerable limit and many such early beliefs have been changed by Science. But, all these final conclusions of Science are very similar to what have been described in our Vedas and scriptures. Many illustrations can be shown for this. It is interesting to see that we have always been referring to the earth as “Bhugolam” indicating the elliptical shape of the earth. Geography too educates that the earth is neither circular nor flat, but is elliptical.

The chemical formula for water is H_2O meaning, it is a combination of two parts of Hydrogen and one part of Oxygen. In Veda, this is beautifully mentioned as ‘प्राणन् एकं अन्य द्वे’(prAnan ekam anya dve) which means one part of ‘prAna’(the life- force) and two parts of ‘anya’(the rest). It has been said in the Vedas, “चन्द्रमसि कृष्णम्”(chandramasi Krishnam) which means ‘Krishnam’ refers to the black color and ‘chandramasi’ means ‘on moon’. Even today we can see that the sand on the moon is black in color.

Today it has been discovered that there are trillions of galaxies. In our scriptures and Bhagavad Gita, it has been mentioned that there are many galaxies contained in every

single pore of Bhagavan. It is countless and science agrees with this phenomenon today.

The age of the bridge built by Sri Rama has been determined using the stones used in the bridge. It has been approximated to 19.75 lakhs years. This exactly matches with the age of Rama's appearance thus proving to be in precise accordance with our calculations regarding the yugas.

Every little thing mentioned in our Vedas, scriptures, by our siddhars and Maharishis, be it on any subject ranging from cookery to astronomy and beyond, all of them have been proved to be accurate.

Today's atomic theory is well-known. Research is being conducted to determine the extent to which an atom can be divided. However, way back our Avvaiyar talked about, “அணுவிற்கு அணுவாய்” which means the smallest of the smallest and “அப்பாலுக்கப்பாலாய்” meaning farthest to the farthest. Avvaiyar has mentioned about the smallest particle that which is too small to be measured and also about that which is limitless and infinite. So, the greatness of the wisdom prevailed in our ancient Bharath can never be turned down.

It is astonishing to see how effortlessly Kamban, the great poet from Tamil Nadu, mentions in Kamba Ramayana about the division of an atom into hundreds! There are numerous such examples. It is our people who first talked about the indivisible nature of an atom. Science has not reached to that point, yet.

2600 years back, our Acharya Kanaadha,(way before the Dalton's period) researched the principles of the day to day happenings like the ripening of a fruit, and with the results, he explained how the atoms join together in different proportions and cause several chemical reaction resulting in various matter.

Consolidating the conclusions he derived the atomic theory. To teach the atomic and cosmic theory, he established the “Vaiseshika” school of philosophy.

As an outcome of his research, he produced the book “Vaiseshika darshan” and became the father of atomic theory!

Like the well accepted theories of Kanaadha, many such higher principles are undoubtedly seen in our Vedas, scriptures, temples, the works of scholars, Jnaanias, Devotees, in things that are culturally imbibed and ancient literatures. But, just like how an atom is unseen, such truths too remain concealed and invisible!

புராநவா



Last month's
answer

Charecters
present in both
Rama Avatara
and Krishna
Avatara

Where is this Nataraja sculpture
located?

(Answer in the subsequent issue)



Compilation of interesting snippets from
magazines and newspapers

Now, a Diwali-themed train for Singaporeans!

Oct 17, 2016
Times of India



Singapore's Land Transport Authority (LTA) has joined in the festival preparations by launching a special-Diwali based train.

The train was launched on Sunday by Singapore's Minister for Transport, Khaw Boon Wan, the transport authority said on its Facebook page. It's captivatingly decorated with floral designs and rangolis, just like two platforms at Singapore's Little India Station.

The train was launched by the LTA in collaboration with the Little India Shopkeepers and Heritage Association (LISHA).

Instead Of Punishing Kids, A School In Baltimore Replaced Detention With Meditation

Sep 25, 2016
www.indiatimes.com

A Baltimore school replaced detention with meditation as a measure to help kids calm down and reflect upon their misbehaviour. Instead of punishing or throwing them out of class, Robert W Coleman Elementary School introduced meditation classes that actually resulted in a positive impact on the kids. If any kid engages in disruptive behaviour, he or she is sent off to what the school calls the Mindful Moment Room - a space which comes with plush purple windows, lamps, and decorations. Students are asked to engage in meditation or breathing exercises to help them reflect upon their mistakes and calm themselves down.



Fourteen years forever: The Chitrakoot Ramleela is the world's earliest known Ramleela

Oct 11, 2016
Indian Express



In Varanasi, around 470 years ago, was born the earliest Ramleela known to the world. The Chitrakoot Ramleela continues till today, stubbornly resisting change and firm in the belief that the past speaks powerfully to the present.

Chitrakoot Ramleela has not stopped for historic upheavals, be it the fraught year after the demolition of Babri Masjid or when the Mandal Commission cleaved the Hindu heartland. "The Ganga has overflown and flooded the grounds. But the Ramayanis, the Brahmin experts of the epic who read the Ramacharitmanas during a performance, have stood in knee-deep slush and continued as usual," says Shukla.

But first, the play: The Ramleela was, in all probability, started by Megha Bhagat, a friend and disciple of Tulsidas, and follows the jhanki style of performance in which each episode lasts a few minutes.

The Chitrakoot Ramleela also symbolically accommodates the other great religion of the land. A Muslim man is in charge of the fireworks that are lit every evening around the swaroop. Mohammad Arif plays the drums at the head of the procession to announce the arrival of a swaroop.

December Schedule	
10 December 2016	Ekadasi
14,15 December 2016	Madurai Satsang
25 December 2016	Ekadasi
29 December 2016	Hanuman Jayanthi
01 January 2017	Mass Prayer, Kalathipet
7-15 January 2017	Sri Swamiji's Lecture Narada Gana Sabha, Chennai

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Translation Team

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

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, Jafferkanpet, Chennai - 600083
Tel: +91-44-24895875
Email: contact@namadwaar.org

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