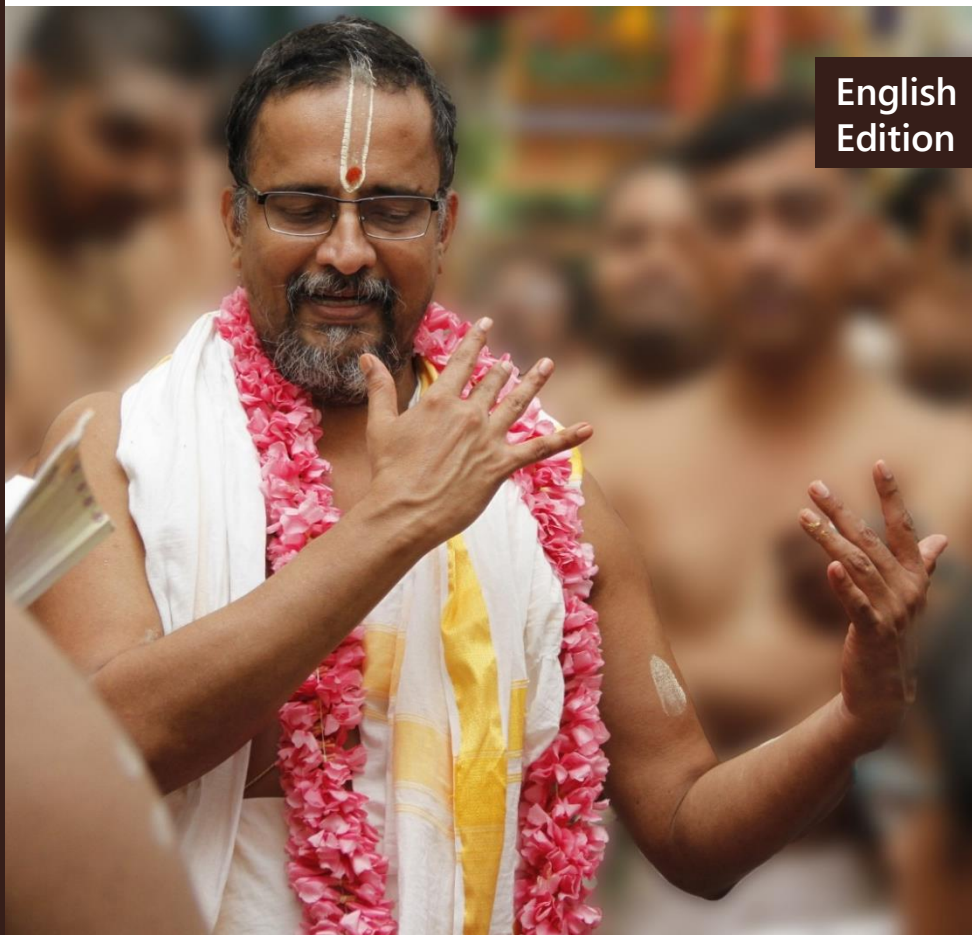


October 2016

Sri Hari:

Madhura Murali



English
Edition

Spiritual Monthly
Inspired by the Teachings of
HH Maharanyam Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji

For e-circulation only



Chaitanya Kuteeram,
Govindapuram, 16 Sep 2016

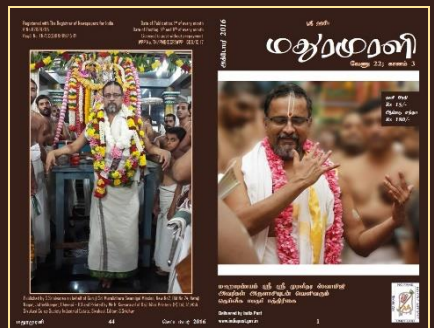


Front Cover:

Madhurapuri Ashram

Back Cover:

Kudhirai Vahanam at Brahmotsav,
Madhurapuri Ashram





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Hare Rama Hare Rama
Rama Rama Hare Hare
Hare Krishna Hare Krishna
Krishna Krishna Hare Hare



MadhuraGeetham

Kuzhandhayaaga Kannan

Raaga: Aarabi

Taal: Aadhi

kuzhandai kaNNan indru kanavil vandAne
mazhalai pEchu pEsi ennai mayakki ninDrAne
vizhalukkiraikkum nlrAi vAzhkayai pAzhpaDutthAdE endru
kuzhalUdi Udi Udi ennai mayakki ninDrAne

(kuzhandai)

kazhalai tUkki talayil veitu gadi iduvE enDrAn
sUzhal tannai marandu nAnum mayangiviTTEnE
pazham vENDum pazham vENDum enDru azhudennai
ezhuppinAn

ondrondrAi nAn tara iduvalla iduvalla enDru vimminAn
(kuzhandai)

seivadariyAdu nAnum tigaittu ninDra pOdu
sukar kaDitta pazhamE nAn virumbum pazham enDran
sukar kaditta pazhattai avanum unDru
prEmayai prasAdamAga tandarulinAn
(kuzhandai)

Madhura Smaranam

My Guru As I See Him

Dr A Bhagyanathan



Sri Ramanaganes is an alumni of our Madhurapuri Sandeepani Gurukula Vedapatasala. He is devoted and affectionate towards Sri Swamiji. Childlike, he knows no deceit or pretence. After completing his studies he now lives at Tiruvannamalai.

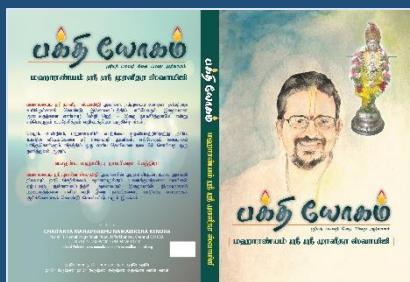
A few days ago Sri Swamiji had gone to Tiruvannamalai.

During his stay there Sri Swamiji suffered from severe pain in his leg. At that time Ramanaganes desired to do 'padaseva' (massaging the holy feet). Sri Swamiji who was resting, permitted it. Ramanaganes began to do padaseva. Suddenly he stopped and pulled away his hand. His fingers were bent! His face clearly reflected the fear he seemed to be gripped with! He seemed as if struck with some electric shockwave. He kept stretching his fingers and massaging them.

Sri Swamiji asked him affectionately, “What’s the matter?” Ramanaganesh took some time to speak out. Slowly he said, “Swamiji! Even as I was massaging your feet I suddenly felt some kind of severe shock as if an electric current had passed through my hand,” and asked innocently, “Would this affect my arm? Have I committed some mistake?”

A smile playing on his lips, Sri Swamiji consoled him, “There is no need to feel scared. This happens very rarely. Due to some fortune you have received it. In times to come this will bring about great prosperity in your life.”

At once, the shadow of sorrow on Ramanaganesh’s face was replaced with clarity and joy.



A compilation of Bhakti Yoga based on His Holiness Maharanyam Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji's Lectures in Bengaluru, by Sri Ramanujam in Tamil. Released by : Chaitanya Mahaprabhu NamaBhiksha Kendra. Price Rs 80/-



Bhagavata Dharma – The Path for All, Audio CD based on H.H. Maharanyam Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji's KALIYAYUM BALI KOLLUM, Live recording at Melbourne, Australia - 6 part lecture in English by Sri Bhagyanathanji, Organized by Global Organisation for Divinity Australia, Released by : Chaitanya Mahaprabhu NamaBhiksha Kendra. Price Rs 80/-

Answers And Beyond



The desires and needs of some get fulfilled easily. But

I struggle to get mine. What is the way to experience happiness each and every day?

Deed everything as verily sanctified gift (prasada) from Krishna. He knows what is good for you: does He not? In gratitude, place all your affection on Him. Krishna is the very form of Love. If you feel affection for Him alone, every moment of your life will be sheer bliss.

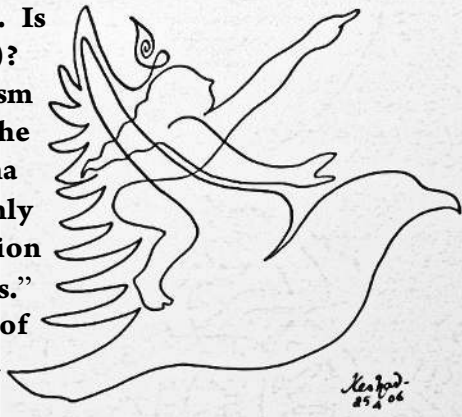
Garuda Seva at Kanchi - 2

Sri Ramanujam MK

We have been, beginning from last issue, reminiscing our Sadguru's delight in Ani Garuda at Kanchi on July 13 and 14. In this we saw Lord Varada's unreserved grace and our Swamiji's experience during Garuda seva. Let us now turn to all that happened from that evening.

During Garuda seva, the serving devotees, after bowing down to the Lord and before crossing the Main tower of the temple (Rajagopuram), hid Lord Varada for a few seconds with a huge umbrella. The question 'why was this done?' rose up in the minds of those who were near our Sadguru. True to the words 'sakala jaanasi mama antara stiti' (knows all about my inner state) can a single thought rise up in us without the knowledge of our Sadguru? With a smile, even without our voicing it, he spoke of this beautiful divine play of Lord Varada.

"Cholingar, a holy place for Lord Nrisimha, is situated close to Kanchi. In this holy place lived Thottaachaarya, a great devotee. Never for any reason would he miss coming to enjoy Kanchi Varada's Garuda seva. Is Not Bhakti verily passion (sraddha)? Is it not for this loving enthusiasm that Lord Varada falls? Do not the shastras declare 'yaadrusi sraddha taadrusi siddhir bhavati'— it is only according to one's level of passion that Lord Varada blesses boons." Listening to these sweet words of our Sadguru, devotees who stood close by gathered around him.



This Thottaachaarya possessed that deep passion. Kacchi Varada's, the very personification of love, eagerness to see Thottaachaarya was far more than the latter's passion to see Lord Varada! Once, Thottaachaarya, caught in bad state, was unable to go to Kanchi to enjoy the Lord during Garuda seva. With a heavy heart he kept thinking of Varada – 'now the first cracker must have been burst to start Varada's procession. Now Sri Varada must have crossed the stone mantap'. With a painful and yearning heart Thottaachaarya kept thinking of each and every step of Garuda seva. He went to bathe in the nearby Thattankulam, a pond. He was reminded of Kanchi temple's pond 'Ananda saras' and, at once, his tears which were until then held in control gushed forth just as water floods when the gates of the dam is opened. The gushing tears mixed with the waters of the Thattankulam pond waters and true to the saying 'teerthikurvanti teerthaani' [Sadhus purify even the holy rivers] purified the pond."

Our Sadguru's voice choked even as he narrated this, touching the hearts of the devotees around him. Tears could be seen in some of the devotees' eyes. Our Sadguru continued, "Unable to bear the yearning Sri Thottaachaarya cried out 'Hey Kacchi Varada! PerarulaLaa! O, The compassionate! O, Saviour of the downtrodden! O, Protector of devotees! the misfortune of not seeing you today in Garuda seva! How am I to console my eyes that are shedding tears as they cannot behold the beauty of your sweet Garuda seva? Please save this downtrodden by blessing your fortunate darshan to my eyes'. Even as Thottaachaarya cried out from the pond, Perundevi thaayaar (the Consort of Lord Varada), unable to bear it requested the Lord to bless him with His darshan. At that very moment the Lord blessed Thottaachaarya at Cholingar with His form as in Garuda seva. Thottaachaarya shed tears of joy thinking of the Lord's mercy. It is in line with this divine play of Kanchi Lord Varada's archaavatar that even today while crossing the Main Tower, for a moment, the Lord is hidden by the umbrella: the scene that you all saw."

The sweet episode when heard from our Sadguru sounded all the more sweet. All felt joyous thinking of Lord Varada's compassion and Thottaachaarya's steadfast Bhakti.

(Sri Varadha will Return)

Ramanatha brahmachari

Courtesy: Ramana Periya Puranam (Sri Ganesan)

Devotees like Ramanatha brahmachari exemplify and show us how to surrender to a Guru who has realized the Self and attain liberation in this very birth

Bhagavan Ramana would say 'I am afraid of only two – Mudaliar paatti and Ramanatha brahmachari' (their responsibility is totally mine). The reason is that both of them had served Bhagavan with pure love and complete surrender. Bhagavan himself knew that he could never refuse them anything that they asked.

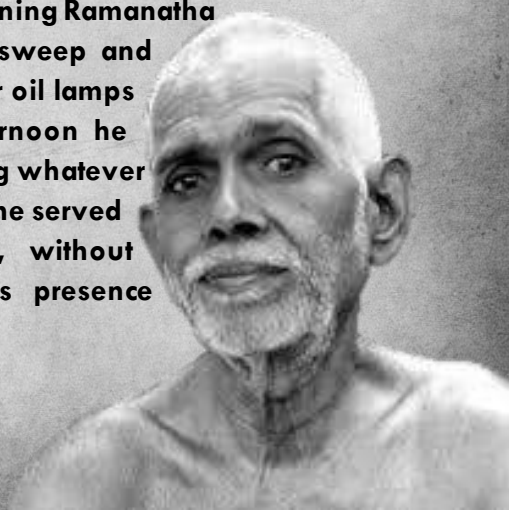
Ramanatha brahmachari was studying in a school of Vedas (Vedapatasala) in the Town. Even in his very first sight of (darshan) Ramana Bhagavan his mind quietened and he whole heartedly surrendered his all unto Bhagavan. After this most of his time was spent in Bhagavan's presence in silence. Though he received free boarding and lodging in the Vedaspatasala he desired to stay with Bhagavan. He begged for his food on Tiruvannamalai streets and offered it to Ramana Bhagavan who was then living in Virupaksha cave. Whatever Bhagavan shared with him he ate with relish.

The surrender of this rare brahmin Sadhu was of such beauty.

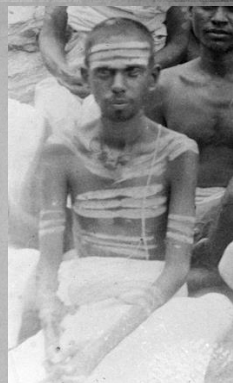
Bhagavan's mother practised strict caste regulations of those times. She permitted Ramanathan to lend a helping hand in her work. She would frequently call out 'Ramanatha! Ramanatha!' even for every small need. Bhagavan Ramana would jokingly say 'Amma's Nama japa has begun'.

Once, Bhagavan said to Ramanatha brahmachari, "Ramanatha! You have realised the Self." Ramanatha could not believe it. He, therefore, kept raising his doubt in this connection. Bhagavan also kept reassuring him 'you are realized'. Finally, once, Bhagavan got up from his seat and hit Ramanathan's head endearingly with his knuckles and once again said 'you are realized'. At once, Ramanatha went into ecstasy. He ran out of the hall and excitedly pointed to everyone the place on his head where Bhagavan had knuckled and said that it was there that Bhagvan had hit him. He did not tell them that Bhagavan had told that he was realized. To this simple, pure minded sadhu Bhagavan's touch was greater than wisdom (Jnana)!

Further, while staying at Palakotthu he served several devotees of Bhagavan viz. Kavyakanta muni, Muruganar, Cohen, Paul Brunton, Viswanatha swami, Kunju swami. The goal of these devotees was to spend as much time as possible at the ashram with Bhagavan. Every evening Ramanatha brahmachari would, voluntarily, sweep and clean their places of stay and their oil lamps with great devotion. In the afternoon he would go to the town and bring whatever these devotees needed. Though he served them in this manner he would, without fail, sit in the hall in Bhagavan's presence when Bhagavan was there.



***'Ramanatha's
life was
always
centred
around
Bhagavan.'***



Those in Palakotthu had not spoken to Bhagavan about Ramanathan's golden service. An opportunity arose in this regard. Once, Viswanatha swami received a post card. In it was a post script that read 'pass on my namaskara to Palakotthu sarvaadhikaari'. At times, Bhagavan would himself hand over the letters to the devotees. At the receipt of this letter, Bhagavan asked Viswanatha swami, with a smile, "Who is this sarvaadhikaari?" Ramanatha brahmachari who was seated in a farther corner stood up humbly and said to Bhagavan, "Bhagavan! Since I serve them they call me that way. They have permitted me to serve them and in stamping their approval call me 'sarvaadhikaari'." Hearing this Bhagavan was very happy, "Aha! A real Sarvaadhikaari (Manager) should be like this only." Thus Bhagavan also gave his approval!

(to be contd.)

**The pictures below have something common.
Connect them!**



(Answers in the next issue)

A TALE FOR CHILDREN

A unique way of seeking alms



In the sacred place of Mokshapuri, frequented by many devotees, a beggar wearing ragged clothes was wandering around. Unlike the other beggars, he was going to each and every choultry where food was being offered free, with twenty rupees in his hand - Not for begging but to donate his twenty rupees for the free food.

Each mutt was decorated in festive mode that day. It was the day when many donors would come to donate for free food. No body respected this beggar, instead people showed anger at him and ridiculed him for donating a meagre amount of twenty rupees by saying, 'Are you a rich man? What would one get for twenty rupees? Just eat one meal and go..... Look at his face and he wants to be a donor..'.

This beggar's approach was very unique. He did not get discouraged by the many insults he received in various places he went to nor did he give up his efforts. In the end, he went to a choultry run by a great sage (mahan). The manager of the choultry greeted him with a pleasant smile and kind words and invited him to have food.

The beggar was very happy and he offered his twenty rupees. The manager received it humbly and added, 'Many

thanks for offering this donation, even when you yourself are under hardship'. He called one of his workers and asked him to go and buy mustard for twenty rupees. He also remarked, 'We will season the mixed rice prasad for distribution today with the mustard fried in oil. Let this donor himself commence the food distribution today'.

The beggar was extremely happy that the manager of the choultry not only knew the value of twenty rupees but also showed respect to the person donating the money and had the maturity not to judge a person from outward appearances.

He distributed the food to people with much happiness. Before leaving, he asked for a pen. On an unclean envelope, he wrote, 'a few lines to express my gratitude' and gave it to the mutt and left the place. When the manager, who provides free food from the daily donations checked the envelope, he found a letter inside the envelope.

The letter read as, 'I came to give donation to a choultry that offered free food to people. Only in your place, I found that true food offering takes place. Hence, kindly accept this humble contribution'. The letter was signed as Mr Pitchai, Owner of Pitchai Enterprises.

There was a cheque for Rs 5 crores in the envelope!! Should we appreciate the noble quality of the manager who did not disrespect the person who offered a meagre donation? Or should we glorify the noble quality of Mr Pitchai for donating the money without any publicity? Isn't this the real competition of noble qualities?

(From a true incident that happened in India in the last century)



Student Mass Prayer by Sri Vallabhadas at Vivekananda Vidyalaya, Agarmel 9 Sep 2016



Lectures on Srimad Bhagavatham by Sri Ramaswamy at Ernakulam, 18-23 Sep 2016



Srimad Bhagavatha Saptaham by Kanya Sisters at Tuticorin, 9-15 Sep 2016

Puranava Final at Bengaluru, 17Sep 2016





Srimad Bhagavatha Sapthaham by Poornimaji and Kumari Gayathri at Madhanagopala Swami Temple, Madurai, 25 Sep - 1 Oct 2016
Trichy Namadwaar, 17-24 Sep 2016



Satsangs at Indonesia by Kumari Priyanka, 12-29 Sep 2016

SANSKRIT WORD OF THE MONTH

Sri Vishnupriya

anukampa

Sanskrit language comprises of many fascinating words with profound meanings. Few of these words are packed with so much depth that a simple translation may not imply the complete meaning. It is by looking into the usage of such words at various instances, we can grasp their in-depth meaning.

Let us consider some of these rare, invaluable and interesting words from Sanskrit and explore them with respect to the usage in our scriptures like Srimad Bhagavatham and Srimad Ramayanam.

The word for this month is “ANUKAMPA”. The literal meaning of the word “Anukampa” is mercy, compassion, loving support, etc. The definition given in the Sanskrit thesaurus “Amarakosha” is “*krupa dhaya anukampa syath anukosha:*”

This particular word ‘anukampa’ occurs at 43 instances in Srimad Bhagavatham, at places where the infinite, causeless love and mercy of Bhagavan is described. Let us look into few such nectarine, heart-melting occurrences of this word.

In Srimad Bhagavatam, many *bhaktas* (devotees) use this word “*anukampa*” when they are completely taken over by the unlimited compassion of Bhagavan. The first one is seen when Lord Sri Krishna visits Bhishmacharya who was lying on the bed of arrows. Bhishmacharya who never revealed his inner anticipation to see Lord Sri Krishna, was overwhelmed with devotion when Lord Krishna Himself, knowing the heart of his *bhaktha*, out of His causeless mercy came on His own to see him.

Bhishmacharya contemplates this mercy of Bhagavan and says, “*tathApy ekAnta bhakteṣu pasya bhUpAnukampitam*” - “Hey Yudishtira, Even though Bhagavan is all-pervading and is the one with an equanimous vision, look at His compassion (*anukampa*) towards the ones with unflinching devotion!” Thus, Bhishmacharya rejoices on seeing Bhagavan’s compassion shown through his ‘*darshan*’ at the time of his last breath.

Prahaladha, in his devotional outpour of a beautiful ‘*stuthi*’ on seeing Narashimha Bhagavan, who emerged from the pillar to protect him, says,

“*kvaham rajah-prabhava isha tamodhikesmin |
jatah suretara-kule kva tavanukampa*” | |

Here, Prahalada, wondering at the immense compassion of the Lord, states with great humility, “Where am I, being born in the clan of *asuras* (demons) filled with *tamasic* and *rajasic* nature and what is to be said of your abundant Grace (*anukampa*) that you shower on me”!

Naradha Maharishi saw little Dhruva and enquired where he was going? Dhruva majestically told that he is proceeding to do penance in the forests with dispassion instilled in his heart by the harsh words of his step mother. Sage Naradha, pleased with the Dhruva’s determination, out of his supreme compassion, gave *mantra upadesha* (initiation of a sacred mantra) to Dhruva. Srimad Bhagavatham uses the word “*anukampa*” to describe Narada’s utmost compassion with which he blessed Dhruva. “*preetha: prathyaaha tam balam sathavakhyam anukampaya*”, which means, “By supreme compassion (*anukampaya*), Naradha pleased with the little boy, showed the righteous path.

In the 10th canto describing the Krishna avatar, we see a beautiful praise by the Devas of the Supreme Lord in the womb of Devaki, saying, “*thrakshyaama kam dhyam cha tvanukambitham*”. “Very soon Mother Earth is going to be decked up with your beautiful feet and be relieved of her burden. And, it’s our highest fortune that the Heaven and the Earth obtain your Grace. (anukampa)

In Brahma Stuthi, Brahma, who got completely freed of his ego, surrenders to Bala Gopala and says,

“*tat te anukampam su-samīkṣamaṇo
bhunjaana evaatma-kṛtam vipaakam
hṛd vaag-vapurbhir vidadhan namas te
jiveta yo mukti-pade sa daaya-bhaak*”

“Lord! The one who patiently endures the consequence of all his actions and worships you with his mind, body and words, while earnestly awaiting your causeless mercy (anukampam), is sure to attain liberation.

Rukmini Devi in her conversation with Sri Krishna recounts the supreme compassion of the Lord “*maameekshuche tathuha na: paramanukampa*” - “Although you are completely self-satisfied, for the sake of the world, you bestow your glances upon me, thus showing your utmost mercy (paramanukampa) on me”!

Once when Arjuna took up the challenge of finding the lost sons of a Brahmin in all the worlds, but finally realized it to be an impossible task, Krishna Himself brought back the children from Vaikunta isn’t? It was then, Arjuna, who initially gave his word taking pride in his valor, realized that nothing is possible without the Grace of the Krishna. “*yat kinchith paurusham pumsaam mene krishnanukampitam*” - Arjuna believes “However little be the might of a man, it is possible only because of Krishna’s blessings. (krishnanukampitam)”

Thus we enjoyed few occurrences of the word “anukampa” used in describing the supreme compassion of the Lord from Srimad Bhagavatam!

Control Anger Before Anger Controls You

We should overcome anger before it overpowers us. Anger is a very normal human emotion. But when it crosses the limits and becomes destructive, it leads to various problems. In work and in individual relationships and generally in life, if we are at the mercy of this powerful and unpredictable emotion, we will be facing several troubles. We can control this anger by handling a situation patiently, using our discrimination. At all times we should act intelligently without losing our enthusiasm. We should realise that others feel the same pain when we hurt them that we ourselves feel when we are hurt by others. When we go to a secluded spot and deeply analyse this, our anger will start subsiding.



Thinking before speaking

In an angry mood, it may happen that we say something which we may have to regret later. Before saying anything, we should take a few seconds to collect our thoughts – we should also give enough time for the other party to do this. As far as possible, we should avoid criticising or complaining, since it will only increase the tension. We should use proper sentences to explain the issues. As an example, instead of saying, 'You are not at all doing this' we should say, 'I am unhappy that you have not done this'. When we are aware that we are speaking with anger, we may be able to control the words that we use. This awareness has to be developed. The words should be decent and should be spoken clearly. When we learn to behave patiently like this during the times we get angry, we can avoid unnecessary troubles.

Forgiveness

Forgiveness is a very powerful weapon. When we allow anger and negative emotions to trample upon our positive emotions, we will be consumed by a feeling of injustice which we ourselves will be able to perceive. But if we are able to forgive the person who made us angry, both of us would be able to draw lessons from that situation. It is unrealistic to expect that everyone at all times will behave in line with our expectations.

Training children to think constructively

We should never get angry over the naughty pranks of children.

At the same time we should not remain a mute spectator, attributing everything to fate.

We should patiently teach them in their own language. When they are quiet, we should teach them several stories and make them realise their mistakes. Never should we lose our temper and shout or punish or hurt them. We should learn to praise them when they lose. As an example, if a child has the habit of tearing books, we should praise the child before the friends and relatives saying, 'he is a good child who carefully handles books'. This way, while retaining our good name, we can create a positive pressure in the children to maintain their books properly.

Refusing to reply when made angry

Once, Lord Buddha went to a house seeking alms. The householder not only did not offer food but also scolded him. Buddha stood patiently listening to him. The householder was surprised that Buddha could be indifferent to the reprimand and asked him how he could remain without expressing any feeling. Buddha replied, "If you offer me a cow and I refuse to accept it, who is the owner of the cow ? You yourself, isn't it ? Your rebukes are also like this".

Regulating the food habits

Spicy items have to be considerably reduced from our food. Very hot, masala, salt and tamarind-based foods should be avoided. Food items rich in oil, tamarind and chillies should not be consumed. Before taking food, it has to be mentally offered to Lord Krishna. The blemishes in the foods will be removed when it becomes 'prasad'. In Srimad Bhagavatha, Lord Krishna says that his 'prasad' is 'nirguna' i.e. without any blemishes.

Reading divine books

We should read a lot on the life histories of jnanis and saints.

Physical exercising

Since physical exercise makes us energetic, it also helps to keep the mind in a proper condition. Physical exercise reduces mental pressure and thereby also helps to reduce anger. When anger is perceived to be on the rise, a brisk walk or a jog or some interesting games should be pursued. Learning to do some light 'pranayama' (breathing exercises) is a good way to control the mind. But this has to be done from a knowledgeable teacher and should be done very carefully.

An easy way to do all this is to seek the blessing of God. Mahamantra should be chanted with faith and devotion. While chanting we should make a soulful prayer to God to help us.

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu- 1

Need for his Avatar



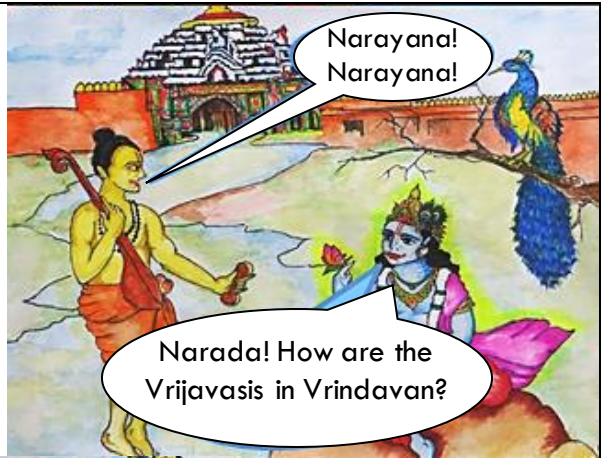
The Puri Jagannath Temple is one of the sacred temples that is mentioned in Vedas. In this temple, the main deities are Lord Jagannath, Balaram and the Goddess Subhadra.

The Rath-yatra or chariot festival is a major Hindu festival associated with Lord Jagannath at Puri which is derived from an incident that happened during the avatar of Lord Krishna.



Once in Dwapara yuga, when Lord Krishna was ruling Dwaraka, HE along with Balaram and Subhadra went to meet HIS aunt, Srutha Devi in Puri.

During HIS stay in Puri, Narada came to meet Lord Krishna after visiting Vrindavan. Lord Krishna enquires Narada about Vrijavasis.



Narada expressed that in Vrindavan, Radha Rani, the epitome of devotion, constantly thought of Krishna only and was unconcerned about worldly pleasures.

Bhagavan's wish to experience the joy of doing Bhakthi like Radha Rani was one of the triggers for the need for an avatar of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.



Only blessed souls like Radha are bestowed with such devotion! I too wish to be one such glorified soul!

Artist: Balamurali

Snippets We Enjoyed

Interesting News/Articles from Newspapers and
Magazines in the recent past

**Harappa-like structure, 3,000 ancient
artefacts found in Tamil Nadu**

Deccan Chronicle
May 30, 2016

A signet made of clay with ornamental design was among the about 3,000 ancient artefacts found at the Keezhadi Pallai Sandhaipudur village in this district during an excavation conducted by the team of experts from the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).

According to ASI officials, the ancient settlement at the village, which was on the highway travelled by traders all over the world once, had an underground drainage system which was on par with the Harappan system. The sewage drains had been laid with "baked clay pipe lines".

"The drainage system is similar to what was found in Harappan civilisation site" It is claimed that the settlement was more than 2,500 years old, belonging to the ancient Pandiya era.

Apart from signets, arrows, iron and copper weapons, rare ornaments and scribbling nail, had been found "It is very rare to find the constructions intact. The findings threw more light on the Sankakala Tamil civilisation".

"The signs of urban civilisation were more in Keezhadi village. In fact it was much more than Kaveri Poompattinam," . The signets could have been used by the traders who sent their products with their seal.

Indian Independence Day and Chidambaram Nataraja Temple

Vikatan group
August 16, 2016

Every year on August 15, The Indian Flag is hoisted in the Chidambaram Natarajar temple and the Independence Day celebrated. On that day, our national flag is kept on a silver plate in front of Lord Nataraja and worshipped. Then, the flag is brought, amidst beating of drums and other percussion instruments, and hoisted on the eastern gopuram (tower) of the temple, and respects are paid to it. This is a unique speciality not found in any other place of worship. Yet another speciality of the Chidambaram Nataraja temple, which is already famous for various other special features.

There is not one person who isn't amazed at the design of our national flag, which has three colours and the wheel of justice, so as to celebrate the qualities of renunciation, valour, peace, simplicity, and purity, and to acclaim the tolerance to all faiths. Moreover, besides the white in our flag, saffron and green are special colours. It is said that such saffron and green colours aren't found in the flags of other countries.

When the country got independence, that day was celebrated in a very grand manner in the ashrams of many mahatmas, it is said. Many of our mahatmas have made many sacrifices for our country. They have seen nationality and divinity together. Henceforth, at the mention of Chidambaram, our Independence Day will come to mind too!

Traditional Treasures

Janani Vasudevan



Lepakshi

Many architectural wonders are present in a small historic village called Lepakshi in the Anantapur district of Andhra. Lepakshi is a sermon on stone and a storehouse of sculptural treasures. Two brothers Veeranna and Virupanna are said to have built this temple. Since one of the brothers used the revenue of the Government for the construction, the king became angry with him and was intending to order the removal of his eyes. Virupanna came to know of this and removed his eyes himself. It is believed that the temple got its name from this, 'Lepa akshi' meaning 'anointed eyes'.

The main temple is dedicated to Veerabhadra. Other deities are Papaneswara (Lord Shiva) and Sri Raghunatha. (Lord Vishnu). 'Ardha mantap' (Hall for prayer) and a 'Hall of Dance' add to the beauty of the temple. In the hall of dance are many stone pillars carefully sculpted with various musical and dance postures and look very realistic.

In this beautifully and artistically sculpted temple with more than seventy pillars, one of the wonders is a particular pillar made from a single stone and hanging from the ceiling of the Veerabhadra temple, without any support and not touching the ground. During the British rule, an engineer wanted to investigate the secret behind this pillar. When he tried to relocate the pillar, to his surprise he found that to maintain the equilibrium, it created vibrations in the the nearby pillars.

Though the temple is not in an earth-quake prone area (geographically safe and stable), it is believed that the temple will withstand any earthquakes.

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