

Sri Hari:

# MadhuraMurali

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HH Maharanyam Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji

# Madhura Smaranam

My Guru As I See Him

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The birth centenary of Tiruvannamalai Bhagavan Yogi Ramsuratkumar was celebrated grandly for one whole year at Yogi Ramsuratkumar Ashram. For 12 months, Veda parayanam, Namaskirtanam, parayanam of Itihasas and Puranas, discourses, as well as cultural programs were all conducted wonderfully. Sri Swamiji's discourse was to take place a few months earlier. But at that time, the spiritual successor of Bhagavan Yogi Ramsuratkumar, Sri Justice Arunachalam, had to undergo surgery. So, Sri Swamiji said that he will discourse at a time when Sri Justice Arunachalam would be at the Ashram. By divine providence, that took place for five days alongside the 100th jayanthi day (Dec 1, 2018) celebrations of Bhagavan Yogi Ramsuratkumar.

Sri Swamiji went to Tiruvannamalai on the evening of Nov 26. He stayed at a bungalow belonging to Sri Jeyachandran of Singapore. That bungalow was situated in beautiful, serene surroundings, amid trees and greenery. From the terrace of that house, one could have wonderful darshan of the holy Arunachala (Annamalai) mountain. Since it had been only a few days since the holy festival of Karthikai Deepam, the lamp that is lit atop the mountain on that day, was still burning. Once darkness set in, after sunset, the holy deepam would be beautifully visible.

On the first day, Sri Swamiji went to Bhagavan Yogi Ramsuratkumar Ashram and delivered a discourse on Sri Bhagavan Nama Bodhendra Swami. The next morning, he remained in the house he was staying and meditated for a long time. That evening he discoursed on the life of Saint Thyagaraja. The next morning, he went to Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi's ashram. He sat in the hall in the presence of Bhagavan Ramana and meditated for a long time. Then the head of Ramanasramam, Sri Mani, lovingly invited and took Sri Swamiji close to the adhishtanam (samadhi) of Bhagavan Ramana. Sri Swamiji himself performed arati to Bhagavan Ramana that day. Then from there, he went to Skandasramam (which is on top of the Arunachala hill). Since Sri Swamiji has heart problems, he does not climb up steps that much. But on that day, in an enthusiastic moment, he climbed up the hill. Pradeep, Ajith, Hari, Prasanna, Sabari and Ashwin also walked up along with us. Concerned that we will feel hungry on the way, Sri Mani from Ramanasramam sent Nagendran along with us, with some snacks.

When we were climbing up the mountain it felt like it was going to rain. Because of that, the weather was very cool. While climbing up the mountain, Sri Swamiji spoke continuously about Bhagavan Ramana and many other Mahans who had lived in Tiruvannamalai. He also shared many of his experiences from about 20-25 years ago, when he had visited Skandasramam and also had climbed up to the summit of the hill. We went to Skandasramam and stayed there for some time. That evening he discoursed on the life of Bhakta Meera at Yogi Ramsuratkumar Ashram.

The next evening, the book release function of the books written by Mother Vijayalakshmi was conducted. Bhagavan Yogi Ramsuratkumar gave up his body on Feb 20, 2001. Everyone knows the state in which the ashram was, at that time. Today we all can see the state in which the ashram is.

The only reason for that is the Guru bhakti and selfless service of Sri Justice Arunachalam. Amid a lot of hardship and difficulty, he has completed all of this. Whatever kainkaryam that Gurunathar had told him to do, he completed all of that excellently. Sri Thinnappan explained one by one all the services that Sri Justice Arunachalam had performed, to all who were present. Then Sri Swamiji presented Sri Justice Arunachalam with the prasadam of Bhagavan Yogi Ramsuratkumar. That day, Sri Swamiji discoursed about Guru bhakti.

The next day, on Dec 1, Sri Sri Anna came to the ashram and blessed all the devotees. He also gave a brief upanyasam. On that day a special postal envelope of Bhagavan Yogi Ramsuratkumar was released. Sri Nityanandagiri Swamiji had also come. All around were crowds of devotees. Ma Devaki and Mother Vijayalakshmi took great loving care of all the devotees who had come for this Utsav. The whole ashram was agog with activity and excitement. That evening Sri Swamiji discoursed about Tiruvannamalai Mahatmyam (the greatness of Tiruvannamalai).

The next morning Sri Swamiji visited Seshadri Swamigal Ashram. There the parayanam of Sri Rudram happened. Sri Swamiji participated in that and spoke briefly about the greatness of Sri Rudram.

That evening, the grand giripradakshina (circumambulating the holy mountain) of the archavatar of Yogi Ramsuratkumar began, along with an elephant, horses, different types of musical instruments, Veda parayanam, bhajans, and with the participation of thousands of devotees. Sri Swamiji commenced the procession with camphor arati to Bhagavan Yogi Ramsuratkumar. In this, all devotees belonging to Yogi Ramsuratkumar satsangs in Tamil Nadu organized themselves by city and participated enthusiastically in the procession while chanting Nama. It was indeed a sight to behold! All the

thousands of devotees who had come for this Utsav were fed amazing and sumptuous food. The entrance to the Ashram was decorated beautifully with thousands of plantain trees and sugarcanes.

For such a huge celebration to be conducted in such a well-organized manner, Dr. Ramanathan, Sri Swaminathan, Sri Kumaran, Sri Indrajith, Sri Mugilan, Srimati Rajeshwari and many other Ashram devotees worked hard and served day and night. Their service is extremely commendable.

While staying in Tiruvannamalai, Sri Swamiji's thoughts were constantly on the numerous Mahans who have lived there. Since the next day was Ekadasi, Sri Swamiji left for Madhurapuri Ashram.

## *Answers and Beyond*

**Why saints belonging to Hindu religion do not get involved in social activities like building hospitals for the poor?**

**Miseries including various kinds of diseases that we see in this world are only because of the repeated cycles of birth. Since, the Hindu saints know well, that the solution to these miseries will come only when we attain mukthi and get out of the cycles of birth and death, they don't get involved in social activities though these are good for the society.**



# A Unique Conversation

**Devotee's question: Will everyone who have the dharshan of a mahaan or get associated somehow with a mahaan achieve spiritual progress?**

**Sri Swamiji: Sri Krishna, in Bhagawad Gita, says, 4 kinds of people do bhagawad bhajanai. They are people with needs, desire, spiritual seeker and jnanis. Likewise, 2 kinds of people approach a mahaan,**

- 1. People who are in dire necessity or people who want to uplift their living conditions. They approach a mahaan with the aim of finding a solution to their specific problem in life or to gain some puNyam. Even though, this is right, it will not help them in their spiritual progress.**
- 2. People who approach a mahaan with unique love and with sincere interest to improve their spiritual path of life; they lead a true spiritual life.**

**If they have sincere and deep desire to improve their spiritual walk of life, depending on their amount of vairaghya (dispassion to worldly things), no obstacle in their spiritual way of life is difficult to overcome! Their endeavors to achieve progress in spiritual life will not seem difficult!!**

This travel towards achieving spiritual progress is like climbing uphill. Those who really want to reach the peak of the mountain, will not consider the difficulties they have to go through to achieve that aim. Likewise, those who have spiritual desires is also of 2 types.

It is very very difficult to find people who really want to life themselves up in spiritual path. To further explain this, those with sincere spiritual desire will be afraid of taking any more births; they will have earnest desire to attain mukthi; they will consider this samsara as 'life or death' battle alone. To find such people is rather difficult. Bhagawan Ramanar and Buddhar can be pointed as examples for such people.

How does these people with great spiritual interest get themselves out of the cycles of birth and death?

They see this world with fear. They will look at the animals that are being taken to slaughter houses or animals that are being abused for getting them to do unreasonable tasks, and get scared about taking that kind of a birth in their next life. Looking at all this, they will have earnest desire to get out of these cycles of birth and death. Such kind of people are very difficult to find.

Second type of people are even more difficult to find. They desire to have dharshan of the Lord. They will be ready to do or sacrifice anything to have this dharshan. In my opinion, these kind of people who are ready to sacrifice anything to have Bhagawan's dharshan, are far superior to first kind of people.

Is this a short distance path? Can we achieve the target easily? Is it easy to achieve? No. First of all, this thirst for spiritual life must be deep and should not change from time to time. Only when we have the deep thirst and

desire to get a sip of water, we will try our best to get the water even though it is deeper down in a well.

Likewise, we must have that deepest desire to have the dharshan of the Lord. Also, that travel towards Bhagawan should be unhindered and with one pointed focus, then only we will see some progress. So, spiritual travel is long distance travel. One should be ready for that.

It has taken 10 years for Sri Ramakrishnar to have Devi's dharshan in spite of having steadfast, deep and strong bhakti. What can be said about ordinary people?

So, when you approach a guru, with a desire to cross the ocean of samsara or with a desire to have Bhagawan's dharshan. Then only spiritual progress will happen. On the other hand, whoever approaches a guru for uplifting their living condition or for gaining puNyam, will see only very little spiritual progress.

Those who desire to have spiritual progress, should keep their mind steadily focused on the guru, follow the words of the guru with at most obedience. They should not try to find reason or do research about the words uttered by a guru.

Finally, they should follow the path shown by their guru. Then only spiritual progress can happen.



# Sankalpa Shareera

Sri Sri Swamiji

In Viveka Choodamani, Adi Sankara describes how a jnani who has attained jnana becomes one with the boundless Atma Swaroopam:

kShIraM kShIre yathA kShiptaM tailaM taile jalaM jale  
saMyuktamekatAM yAti tathAtmanyAtmavinmuniH |

Just as milk poured into milk, or oil poured into oil, or water poured into water mix to simply become more milk, oil and water respectively, the jnani attaining jnana becomes one with the Atman.

However, the jnani, free of bondage, still carries on with his/her actions in the material world. This instills doubt in us - how can one who is unrestrained by upadhis attend day-to-day matters?

Hence, the jnani is also bound by the upadhi. Upadhi lasts until the jnani attains 'videha mukthi' (liberation). Until that point, it exists like a line drawn on the surface of water - transient. Some jnanis like Yogiramsurat Kumar, Bhodendral, and Brahmendral shower their grace even after attaining 'videha kaivalyam'. Their presence can still be felt today in their 'adhistanams'.

It is a well-known fact that siddha purushas exist in places like thiruvannamalai after shedding their material presence.

Jnanis have remnant samskaaraas, even after they attain samadhi. These samskaaras take the form of sankalpa. Therefore, the jnanis take on a form of their choosing and remain hidden until the samskaaras are exhausted. The mahans' sankalpa sariira is why we feel the presence of jnanis, like Bhodendral and Raghevendra, and experience the divine grace in mahans' samadhis like those of Kanchi Mahaperiyava and Yogiramsurat Kumar.



# Grief that destroys everything

M.K. Ramanujam



**(The external world is indeed strange! Many are the colours , shapes, smells and sounds around us!! No two faces are identical. No two moments are identical.! But in our daily grind, we hardly notice these details. But many times stranger than the external world is our internal world!! The internal world too has so many different aspects to it viz., the mind, intellect, feelings, emotions !! Happiness, Sorrows, Anger, Jealousy, Compassion, Love, Friendship, Fear, enmity are the myriad colours, sounds ,smells and tastes of our internal world!. To take a sneak peek into our internal world and to try to understand it at least in a small way, let us look into a few thoughts that randomly arose in Sri Sri Swamiji's mind. Shall we enter? Shall we enjoy the scenes of the internal world? Shall we put in order our day to day life? Come on, let's raise the curtain!!)**

Whenever one of our fellow satsang members come back from a visit to various places, Sri Swamiji would ask in detail about their visit, stay etc. Once when I came back from Muscat and London Satsang visits, Sri Swamiji enquired about my experiences. Recalling my London Satsang, I said , “Swamiji, everyone kept asking one question again and again”!. Sri Swamiji asked, “What would that be?”. I replied, “The question was, “So many people and even children either die in natural calamities or accidents or they are badly effected. Why is God not stopping all this?”

Sri Swamiji asked me, “What reply did you give”? I said, “Swamiji, I quoted from the Vedanta and they seemed to know the reasons too yet in the end the question persisted”.

Sri Swamiji replied, “In Srimad Bhagavatham, When Yashoda sees the entire Universe in Lord Krishna’s mouth, she is taken aback for a moment. But the next moment, she forgets everything and cuddles Lord Krishna as her baby. Similarly, whenever Krishna did his divine leelas (which cannot possibly be done by a human being), though the Vraj People are astounded, they forget everything the next moment and treat HIM like one of their own. In Srimad Bhagavatham we say, the pure unalloyed love of gopas and gopis hid BHAGWAN AS THE ETERNAL TRUTH/PARAMATMA. But if you ask, can it be hidden that way,don’t we sometimes say, “The soft white puffy clouds made by the sun, has hidden the SUN itself”?!. I also agreed to this example.

Sri Sri Swamiji continued, “This is exactly like that.” People do know GOD, Paapa, Punya, Karma, Wisdom etc. But being faced with and experiencing

**grief/sorrow directly or observing them first hand prevails over the known wisdom. This is because of the extent of pain caused by personal loss/grief.**

**I marvelled at Sri Sri Swamii's beautiful explanation. He continued with a kind smile, "I am not saying anything new, This is what Kausalya said in Valmiki Ramayana ( Canto 2, Chapter 62 Verse 15)**

शोको नाशयते धैर्यं शोको नाशयते श्रुतंम् ।  
शोको नाशयते सर्वं नास्ति शोकसमो रिपुः

**Grief /Sorrow destroys courage. A mind filled with hurt destroys knowledge. There is no worse enemy than sorrow which destroys everything!!!**

***Someone came and asked me, "Could you please describe Kali Yuga, the present age, in one line?" I replied, "In this Kali Yuga (present age), people would be unable to control their mind as well as their sense organs (Indriyas)".***

***- Sri Sri Swamiji***

(Aashada Ekadasi — Ekadasi in the month of Aadi! That too in the holy abode of the Lord at Vittalapuram! Premika Vittalana was elated to see so many of his devotees assembled in his name at Vittalapuram. Our beloved Guruji had also reached there in the early morning itself. Seeing the beautiful, blue-hued Lord Vittal, Sri Swamiji and devotees were dancing gracefully with the elegance of a peacock. On that day, many new wonderful songs poured forth from Sri Swamiji. One of those songs was ‘Punniya nadhigalil neeradiduvai’ which elucidates the steps in climbing the ladder for attaining devotion. The fourth episode of this series...)

# Stairway to Devotion

- M.K. Ramanujam

“Aalaya kainkaryam seidhiduvai, Nilayana bhakthiudan irundhiduvai”

Our Swamiji often makes an interesting observation from the Gita and Bhagavatham. “In our devotional scriptures, whenever they refer to ‘bhakthi’, they always mention along with, that the bhakthi has to be continuous and steadfast. This idea of steadfastness is reiterated at various places in Bhagavatham and Gita, “Mayyaveshya mano yemam nithya yuktha”, “theevrena bhakthi yogena”, “eka bhakthir vishishyathe”, “bhakthya ananyaya sakyaha”.



What is steadfast devotion? When is devotion likely to be disturbed? Srimad Bhagavatham beautifully addresses this question. Our Swamiji also in Madhuraageetham sings, "Pattam, panam, padhavi, pughazh, kamam endru alaindhidum manathai thiruppi". The first major reason for the inconsistency in our devotion is when 'bhakthi' is used as a tool for satisfaction of our desires. This is known as 'kamyā' bhakthi. When bhakthi is done only as a means of attaining money, power, fame or awards, then will not the devotion become unnecessary once these are attained? Also, if there is a delay in the attainment of these, one may become weary and lose faith.

Similarly, if we try to connect devotion with the normal worldly events, then also bhakthi may become inconsistent. Joys and sorrows are natural in this worldly life isn't it? If we start thinking that in spite of doing bhakthi we are facing sufferings in life and stop the devotional practices at the slightest obstacle, then also bhakthi will not be consistent. Let us say, a small child is fond of a particular sport. During the play, if it gets slightly injured, the child worries that the parents may not allow it to play and hence it does not mind the injury and continues to play. It may even forget its injury during the course of the game. True involvement endures any obstacle. Hence Srimad Bhagavatham says that for devotion to be consistent, "Ahaithuki apranihathaa yayathma supraseedhathi".

Hence doing devotion for satisfying worldly desires or thinking that we'll do devotion as long as there are no obstacles, does not lead to steadfastness in devotion. To highlight that we should do devotion and avoid both of these, Sri Swamiji sings, "Nilayana bhakthiudan irundhiduvai".

Here Swamiji says 'Be devoted'. What is devotion? It is nothing but the flow of love towards God, Sri Hari. Here it is said that the devotion should be steadfast. If everything is seen as God's grace, that devotion will not change and can only grow. By a great blessing, if we feel the urge to remain steadfast in devotion, Sri.Swamiji lists the steps that need to be taken to remain in true devotion.

“Thannalamattra sevai seidhiduvai,  
Pirar nalamendrum peniduvai”

Our scriptures identify karma yoga as the first step to be taken to attain 'prema bhakthi'. The Madhuraageetham song nicely and simply explains the gist of karma yogam. To remove 'I', 'I', 'I', 'Mine', 'Mine', 'Mine' and do all our activities in a spirit of service is karma yogam. "Lord Krishna should fill my mind with love. What should I do for that? Whatever I do, I'll do it only for your love. Krishna, it is said that you are pleased with selflessness and sacrifice. I surrender all my activities to you. I shall not henceforth act for name, fame or out of my petty selfishness. 'Jani janardhana aiysa bhav' — that is, since all the living beings are your forms, I shall do selfless service only for your pleasure. Krishna, it is said that you are pleased with someone who is compassionate towards all living beings and who is humble. So henceforth I'll involve myself in serving others". This clarity and its manifestation in our actions is known as karmayogam. The madhuraageetham song in just two lines explained this profound concept in a simple way.

Lord Krishna is very pleased when someone does karma yogam like this. How will He show his happiness? Keeping the welfare of this karmayogi in mind, He slowly pushes him in to an association of sadhus (Satsang). Only Krishna can do this and being in a Satsang itself is a proof of His happiness.

The Madhurgeetham song continues with 'Sadhukkal sangathai adaindhiduvai'. Here the beauty of the Tamil language also comes to the fore. The word 'adaindhiduvai' can be considered as an advice and also as a statement of fact. Thus it is capable of both meanings.

Mahans and scriptures clearly state that Satsang is obtained only by the grace of Lord Krishna and not by our effort. Thulasidas also says that Satsang is not easily obtained but only through Lord Rama's grace, " Rama krupa binu sulabu na soye". Thus a speciality of this Madhurgeetham verse is that it is capable of both meanings.

Having come to a Satsang, what is the next step?  
That is the next step in the stairway to devotion.



# **SELF CONFIDENCE**

## **A TALE FOR CHILDREN**

Once, a child was caught in a fire accident in his school. Everyone thought that he will not survive. Since the lower part of his body was completely damaged, his mother was told that the chances of his survival are very slim. Even if he did live, his legs would be completely useless for the rest of his life.

But that brave kid did not wish to be dead or to have useless legs for all his life. His doctors were astonished that he did manage to survive. But unfortunately, all the parts of his body below the hip were lifeless and he did not feel them and he had also lost his ability to move them.

After a few days he was taken home from the hospital. He had the firm determination that he should be able to walk by himself.

Other than the time when he was resting in his bed, he was always sitting in his wheel chair.

One day, he voluntarily fell down from his wheel chair. Then he started shaking his legs and slowly moved towards a fence. He held the fence and stood up. With the fence as support, he started moving. He started practising this daily with the firm conviction that he should be able to walk by himself.

By persistent effort and firm mental determination, the child was able to stand and with the help of others cultivated the ability to even walk and run. He started walking to school. Due to the joy that he obtained from running, he started running to school. Later on he was even able to participate in running races for his college team.

The child who everyone thought will not survive or even if he survives will not walk, later on became Dr.Glenn Cunningham and in February 1934 became the fastest runner in the world in the famous race at Madison square garden in Newyork. Till today he continues to inspire people by showing what self-confidence and positive thinking can achieve.

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In Srimad Bhagavatam, the entire 7th canto is presented in such a way that it extols the glory of Prahalada, the great Bhagavadhothama. The stories of Bhaktas are more grand than that of Bhagavan. The reason is, without Bhakthas, we would not know anything about Bhagavan. But for such devotees, we would not even know the possibility of making Bhagavan appear before us through devotion and seeing Him just like how we see others. Great merits are accrued simply by seeing such devotees, by remembering them, by serving them. It is because of these Bakthas that the earth gets sanctified.

There are several countries in the world. Each country can be described in a unique way. Australia is called as a land of parks and Finland, a country of lakes. If every country can be described in this way, how would a country like India be best described? It is a land of holy places; a land of holy rivers; the birth place of innumerable philosophies; the country where the Bakthi literatures thrived well, the land which entwined the day to day life with God.



## **Sri Namdev Maharaj**

*Shri Kanya-Shiv Kanya*

It is a country where many great souls lived with Ahimsa and Truth as their basis of life. Those who love to do penance, go towards Badri. Those inclined towards Self-enquiry choose Kasi. Those who walk the path of love, proceed to Brindavan. Those who want to perform ancestral rites go to Gaya. Those who love to sing the glories of Lord, go to Pandharpur.

Pandharpur, is a very important kshetra in India. There will be no end if one starts to pen a book titled Bhaktha Vijayam. comprising the stories of great Bhakthas who adorned our nation. The major portion of Bhaktha Vijayam is filled with the stories of Panduranga Bhakthas. Most of the incarnations of Lord like Matsya, koorma, Varaha, Narasimha, Trivikrama, Parasurama, never interacted much with the devotees. But, we see in the incarnations as Rama and Krishna, the Lord connects well with the Bhaktas. Likewise, not all 'Archaavatar' of Lord interacts with the devotees. But, Pandarinath, Jagannatha, Badrachala Rama played with the devotees. And that too, Panduranga is full of zeal, when it comes to playing with His Bhaktas. Let us see in detail, the story of Namadev, who was in the state of Prema Bhakthi towards Panduranga.

Generally, every God is pleased with a certain activity. Our Panduranga is easily pleased with Bhajans. He is Nama Swaroopa, His very self is that of the transcendental sound(Shabdha Brahman). He is ever hungry for Nama, which is quenched by continuously singing "Jai Jai Rama Krishna Hari" before His sanctum sanctorum. Even today, every single street and every single house in Pandharpur echoes Nama all the time. Every house has Panduranga and Rakumayi in a beautiful mandap, decorated well with colorful clothes, garlanded with fragrant flowers, and worshipped by doing NamaSankeertan all the time.

Till today, in many houses, continuous namakirtan is happening non-stop, day and night, for several years, generations after generations. The place is ever engulfed in the sound of the cymbals. A Mahatma named Balakadasa calls Pandari as "Namacha Bazaar", which means, it is a bazaar of Nama. Every town has a unique speciality. We see flower bazaar or Vegetable bazaar in some places. When we visit such places, we can hear the names of the flowers and the vegetables being called out aloud by the sellers. Likewise, in Pandharpur, the loud sounds of Nama is heard. The vibrant echo of the chants of 'Rama Krishna Hari' ! "Vasudeva Hari" is heard everywhere. A barber, before commencing his work, says Rama Krishna Hari and then places the knife on the face. A coachman driving the horse carriage, is seen uttering, not the usual sounds of "hai! hoi", rather, calls out "Rama Krishna Hari", "Vasudeva Hari". Every shop is loaded with Tulsi Mala, Vittal Rakumayi idols, musical instruments like jalra and chaplakattai, dhoothpeda, a milk sweet to be offered to Vittala, and sacred books like Tukaram Gaatha, Namdev Gaatha, Gnaneshwari etc. In all shops, the shopkeepers say Rama Krishna Hari before handing over the purchased items. Pandharpur is a such a holy kshetra where 'Kali' has not stepped in.

When we look into any holy Kshetra, we may or may not know the details of its history, the vimana, the yantra or the mantra but will definitely know about the Sadhus born in that place and the Mahatmas who dwelled there.

It is because of Badrachala Ramadas, that the kshetra called Badrachalam is well known today. Chidambaram was made known to the world because of Nandanar. As devotees like Narayana Bhattadri, Poonthanam, Manjula worshipped Lord Guruvayurappan and sang about

Him, the Kshetra of Guruvayur is known to us. Likewise, it is mainly through the devotees who dwelled, sung, danced and relished the glories of the presiding Lord, we come to know of that particular kshetra. However, our Panduranga in Padharpur has been celebrated by numerous devotees of the highest order. Gnaneshwar, Nivrittidev, Sopanadev, Muktabai, Namadev, JanaBai, Chokamela, kora kumba, Raka Kumba, Banudas, Ekanath, Thukkaram, Sakkubai, Kanhopatra, Damaji Pandit, Sena navi, Rahidas, Narahari Sona, Samartha Ramdas, Koormadas, Savta mali and the list goes on and on.

All these Mahatmas were born in the villages around Pandharpur and came running to Pandharpur to have the darshan of Lord Panduranga. Of all these devotees, Namdev has a unique glory of having Pandharpur as is his birthplace and hence enjoyed his entire life in Pandharpur, bathed in Chandrabhaga and had Panduranga darshan every single day. Namdev prays to the Lord in his abhangs, to bestow the same fortune for any number of births that he might take. "Pandaricha vasa chandrabhaga snana, Aanika darshana vittobache"! Namdev, with his devotion, enchanted the Lord and had direct darshan of Panduranga at a very young age and thus remained as the dear child of Panduranga. Let us continue seeing in detail about the divine life story of Namadev who was ever in the state of highest love towards Panduranga.

Sanskrit Word  
of the Month

**Sri Vishnupriya**

mana:  
मनः

The word "mana;", that is mind, is well known to us. Today, let us look into several other words that are derived from this word.

‘Manoharam(मनोहरम्)’ means one that steals the heart. Sri Shukar says in the beginning of Venu geetham, ‘इति वेणुरवं राजन् सर्वभूतमनोहरम्’, which means, the Venuganam of Krishna is capable of captivating the minds of all beings.

‘Manoramam(मनोरमम्)’ means that which gives pleasure or joy to the mind. The word ‘Manoramam’ is used to describe something that is extremely beautiful.

‘Manasija(मनसिज)’, ‘Manoj’(मनोज्) are words that mean ‘appearing in the mind’. These words denote Manmatha as it is he who executes his work by appearing



as desire in the minds of the people. As he was burnt by Lord Shiva, he does not possess his body. Hence, he appears in the mind itself. Also, the name 'Manmathan' is given to him because of his action of churning(मत्तनम् ) the mind in the form of desires.

'Manoratham (मनोरथम्)' means wishes or imaginations. The mind wishes to wander here and there like a chariot(ratham). There is not limit to such desires. However, a devotee's wish would always be related to Bhagavan. That is why, Narayana Theerthar sings, in one of his tharangini,

“परम करुणया मां पालय - कृष्ण भक्त मनोरथं पूरय”

He prays to Krishna to fulfill the wishes of Bhakthas.

"Manasam(मानसम्)' means mind-related, that which can be done by the mind. That is why we say 'Manasa Pooja', 'Manasiga Pooja', etc. Pooja done solely with the mind is called Manaseega Pooja. Our Gurunathar sings in one of His kirtans, “मानसपूजा तोषिनि तुलसि”, which means, tulasi devi is pleased with manasa pooja.

'Mana: sparsham(मनःस्पर्शम्)' is what we say in English, 'touches the heart'. In Srimad Bhagavatam, while describing the darshan given by Bhagavan to Kardama Prajapathi, when he did penance, he says, “मनः स्पर्शस्मितेक्षणं” That is, on seeing Kardama, Bhagavan glanced and smiled at him in a way that it touched the heart.

"Mana: shila(मनःशिला)' is the name given to a mineral that is red in color. In the Sundara Kanda of Srimad Ramayana, Sita Devi narrates an incident to Hanuman, where Sri Rama once applied a thilak on her forehead using this Mana:shila. Sita shares this with Hanuman because when Hanuman narrates this incident on returning back, it would bring confidence in Rama that Hanuman had certainly seen Sita.

'Mana: pootham (मनः पूतं)' means purity of mind. There is a sanskrit proverb "मनः पूतं समाचरेत् माचरेत्", meaning, one should act in a way that would bring in purity of mind.

