

Sri Hari:

MadhuraMurali

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

December 2019

*E-copy
English Edition*



Madhuramana Mahaneeyar

- Thanjai Bharat

Sri Swamiji started from Chennai on October 17th and reached Govindapuram that evening. He went to Sri Bhagawan Nama Bodhendral adhishtanam and had darshan. Then, Swamiji, went and had darshan of Yogiransuratkumar bhanashram. He also went to Thirumalangudi Vinayagar temple.

Next day was the 1st day of Iyppasi month. Around 5 AM, Swamiji did Thulasnanam in Cauvery. Then he performed prabodhanam to Premika Jagannathar. He left for Senganoor after. Swamiji welcomed Sri Sri Anna, who came to Senganoor that day, with Poorna kumbam. Swamiji and other who were present there were so delighted to have Sri Sri Anna in Senganoor on Rohini day. As usual, there was paduka procession, homa and Pooja. After completing all the Pooja, Swamiji left for Madurai Namadwaar from there. Swamiji did a discourse on Naama Mahima for devotees present in Madurai Namadwaar. Swamiji left for Thoothukudi early next morning around 5 AM. From 10 AM, Swamiji gave darshan to Thoothukudi devotees. While Swamiji was conversing with Thoothukudi devotees, a devotee by name Vasantha, along with her husband had come there. Her husband prayed to Swamiji that both him and his wife must die the same day and attain Krishna Charanam. Vasantha ji was shocked to hear this. Her husband enquired if he had said something wrong. Vasantha ji said, “we must pray to Swamiji that we must die the same day and attain Sri Swamiji’s charanam.” Swamiji melted on hearing these words.

There was a discourse on Saint Thyagaraja charithram at Subbayya School that evening. Around 1500 devotees attended the discourse. Sri Nehru’s family had arranged everything for the event. Swamiji left for Sivathiyapuram next day evening around 6 PM. Swamiji did the opening of new Namadwaar there, which has been made possible because of untiring efforts of Sri Maalraj and his wife. Swamiji performed Pooja and also gave a discourse on that happy occasion.

From there, Swamiji reached Sri Yogiramsuratkumar's bhajanashram at Pudukottai. Swamiji went to many devotees' houses. He returned back to Namadwaar and then came to Subayya School in the evening. He finished upanyasam there and reached Tirunelveli. He stayed in Tirunelveli as it was very late at night, and then started for Ambasamudram next day. Swamiji visited the site where new Namadwaar is going to be built and then went to Sri Kumar's house.

Then, Swamiji reached Sivakasi. In the evening, Upanyasam and Gopakuteeram children's presentation were performed at a Kalyana Mandapam there. Swamiji visited some devotees' homes that evening. Next morning, Swamiji went to Thaayilpatti Sri Kanna's house and then to Thaayilpatti Sathsang center. From there, Swamiji went to Saathur Namadwaar. At Saathur, Srimathi Raajakani had gathered devotees to welcome our Swamiji and everyone chanted Naama. Swamiji returned back to Sivakasi after. This time, in Sivakasi, Swamiji visited so many devotees' houses.

At the end of 2nd day upanyasam, Swamiji did a mass prayer. Bhavani ji, along with Namadwaar devotees, had organized everything very well. Then, Swamiji visited Sivakasi Namadwaar. He visited Sri Thyagarajan's house in Sivakasi. Sri Thyagarajan's welcomed Swamiji with mixed emotions. She was happy as well as surprised!! That was because, her mother-in-law had seen a dream a week before. In her dream she had seen Swamiji visiting their house. Since that dream had come true, they were overcome with emotions. Then Swamiji came to Virudhunagar. He visited devotees' homes in Virudhunagar. Opening of Virudhunagar Namadwaar epigraph was pending.

Swamiji did the opening of that epigraph the next morning. From there, Swamiji went to Kaariyaapatti. Gandheesan was awaiting Swamiji's arrival there. Devotees had gathered there and did naamasankeertanam. Then, Swamiji reached back Chennai. Swamiji was so delighted to hear the naamasankeertanam performed by so many devotees during this entire trip.

Answers and Beyond

**What is the difference between
'love' and 'affection'?**

We care about our siblings, children, and friends. We are connected to them in various ways and mutually benefit from each other, as we can count on them. This feeling is affection; it is conditional. Love, on the other hand, is unconditional. It is showered on others without expecting anything in return.

This natural and unconditional feeling, without any strings attached, is true love. Any other relationship is just affection. Hence, unconditional love is very rare!

Foremost prayer!

(From Sri Swamiji's lecture on 18th October in Madurai
Namadwaar)

Prayers possess power. Any prayer placed in the right manner has never failed. A failed prayer only means it had not been done properly. Do not God and His Name possess power? Does it not amaze one to hear that there is indeed something greater than God? Faith! Faith in God is greater than God Himself. There is nothing greater than Faith! Only prayers that are bereft of this faith fail. Therefore, a foremost prayer, which is absolutely essential, has to be made before placing any prayer. And, what is that?

“Krishna! Please bless me with steadfast faith in Thee and Thy Name!” is that foremost prayer. As this prayer is verily the need all through our life it becomes our perpetual prayer! Once prayer for marriage or cure of some disease is fulfilled the need to pray stops. But as we need faith, always, prayer towards this end also becomes a perpetual and daily requirement. The key to fructify other prayers is verily this ‘prayer for ever-lasting faith’.

Before praying in this manner we do Mahamantra Nama kirtan. Is it not 'mahaa' (great) Mantra? Would it not bestow the required fruit even when uttered just once? Why then should this Mahamantra be chanted incessantly?

Most of us do not have clarity in knowing our real needs in our daily life – in matters big and small. We confuse ourselves and others, too, needlessly. How can there be clarity in a restless mind?

Prayer placed through a restless mind will not bear fruit. Isn't there an adage in Tamizh related to even worldly matters? — 'புதறாத காரியமே சிதறாது' (padaraadha kaariyame sidaraadhu) only work done in a calm, relaxed mind (not agitated) will not go haywire.

So, before placing a prayer the mind sans agitation should be focused. Only prayers done in this manner will fructify. As we sit calmly and, before placing our prayer, chant the Mahamantra incessantly, the mind will gradually come to rest; and such restful mind becomes clear. Prayers placed in this state will certainly come to pass.

Though single Nama is powerful, for the mind to become one-pointed Nama should be chanted incessantly.

Let incessant Nama chant for securing one-pointedness and perpetual prayer for steadfast faith become our daily practice!

Envy the virtue!

- Gadadharan

Envy or jealousy is categorised as a bad quality. However, we can transform even that into a virtue!

How? Generally we envy those who are better educated than we are, more beautiful, occupy higher office, wealthier, etc. that is, we envy all those who are better off than we are, in any way. That should be altered.....let us feel jealous of those who are simpler than we are! Envy of not being like them should take hold of us. Looking at people who are humbler than we are the feeling of envy should take hold of us – ‘how is it possible for them to be this way?’ ‘I am not like them. Would I ever become like them’ should be our yearning. It would even suffice to just get that yearning: God’s Grace would arise there and begin to help us.

We should never give up our japa, dhyana or any other spiritual sadhana out of despair or dislike due to failure to have any vision or spiritual experiences. Continuous effort would certainly bring the result one day.

Instead of doing several charities as atonement of our sins and transfer the sins to others, feeling repentant and taking up fasting, etc. is verily the sign of a good natured man.

- Sri Sri Swamiji

“thannaithAnE pugazhAdhu iruppAi
pirar pugazhnthAlum kElAdhiruppAi
ulaga sugatthai tuccham endriruppAi
unmai sugatthil nAttamAi iruppAi”

After overcoming ‘tamasic’ tendencies like sleep and lethargy which are the sworn enemies of continuous chanting of the Name, Sri Swamiji now advocates the above four pearls of wisdom to overcome ‘rajasic’ tendencies.

‘Sattvic’ tendencies of the mind come to the fore only after ‘tamasic’ and ‘rajasic’ tendencies are completely subdued; devotion, wisdom, and dispassion shine only in such a mind.

In Srimad Bhagavatam, sage Vyasa says,
‘tamasastu rajas tasmAt satvam yadbrahma darshanam’
(1.2.25)

STAIRWAY TO DEVOTION

- M.K. Ramanujam

13



A favourite phrase of Sri Swamiji is, "No Name, No Fame, No Self-interest, Only God". This phrase emphasises that our lives have to be dedicated for attaining God and not for name or fame or any selfish interest.

'Kamam, Kanchanam and Keerthi' (lustfulness, desire for wealth and desire for fame) are the three congenital enemies of spiritual life. Even if by some means someone overcomes lust and desire for wealth, it is highly difficult to relinquish the desire for fame.

This desire for fame which feeds the ego, manifests itself in two forms -- the worst form being self-praise. To praise oneself and to announce it to everyone, fattens the ego and dilutes our spirituality. Humility is the heart of devotion. If we have a clarity that all our actions are for the divine, where is the need to proclaim it to everyone? If we are clear that all actions are done for the love of Lord Krishna and there is no point in getting praised by the world, then we can escape from the web of self-praise.

Some people will nicely hide their self-praise. They will outwardly mention, "Everything is God's grace, what do I have?" But if we tell them, "What can you do, everything is done by God's grace", they will get angry. Some others will say that they are not interested in name or fame but by repeating it again and again they will seek to attain the praise that they are very humble!

This pitfall of self-praise will even extend in to the realm of spiritual sadhana. Aren't all our spiritual practices like puja, japa, dhyana, sankeerthan, spiritual enquiry, self-less action and spiritual recitations meant for quenching the ego and attaining God? How dangerous would it be to allow this cancer of self-praise to spread? Sri Swamiji used to say that to the extent we do our spiritual practices privately, to that extent its results will come quickly.

Hence if we wish to be 'sattvic' and progress in devotion and if we truly desire that love should blossom in our hearts, we should totally eschew from self-praise directly or indirectly. Once we realise that it is an obstacle in our path of devotion, we can abstain from praising ourselves.

The roots of ego are very deep. Hence Sri Swamiji emphatically sings,

“thannaithAnE pugazhAdhu iruppAi
pirar pugazhnthAlum kElAdhiruppAi”

If someone feels, “Okay, I will not indulge in self-praise; but if someone else praises me, can I listen to it”? The next line answers this question.

“pirar pugazhnthAlum kElAdhiruppAi”

Spiritual aspirants should not wish to hear being praised. Is not the ego, “I, I” and the feeling ‘mine, mine’ the main obstacles to blossoming spiritually?

Here we recall an interesting gem of an anecdote from Sri Swamiji. Once a devotee who took the divine Name in initiation from Sri Swamiji asked him, “Till when should I chant this divine Name”? Sri Swamiji gave a beautiful reply, “You chant Krishna’s name till you forget your name”!

Don’t we listen to the stories of Lord Krishna only to forget our stories? Probably Srimad Bhagavatham refers to this only as, “Srimad Bhagavatam rasam aalayam”.

Hence we should totally avoid self-praise or listening to our praises. Only in this way we can conquer ‘rajasic’ tendencies, become ‘sattvic’ and grow in devotion.

Sri Prabhodananda Swamigal, a disciple of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, goes one step further when he says in his sloka,

“sammAnam athi gOra karaLam
nlcha apamanam sudhAm
sri rAdhA muralidharau bhaja sadA
brindAvanam mA tyaja”

It means, “Consider praise as cruel and criticism as ambrosia. Stay in Brindavanam always and sing the praises of Radha and Muralidharan”.

Hence Sri Swamiji sings that those desirous of climbing the stairway of devotion should totally eschew self-praise or listening to praises.

Is there true happiness in this world?
In the next step...

SANSKRIT WORD FOR THE MONTH

kala

Sri Vishnupriya

The word 'KALA' in Sanskrit means that which could give joy.
(कं लाति रति कला)

'KALA' means ART or FINEART. Generally, any talent is referred to as an art. There are many art forms viz. cookery, sculpting, dance etc. Our shastras mention 64 art forms. Some of them are - singing, dancing, playing instruments, drawing, hair-dressing, making flower garlands, different types of cooking, tailoring, writing poetry, to name a few. Srimad Bagavatam says Sri Krishna learned these 64 art forms in 64 days from his guru Sandeepani.

"अहोरात्रैः चतुः षष्ट्या संयत्तौ तावतीः कलाः"

It is amazing that Sri Krishna learned these arts, and also amazing is the fact that Sandeepani by himself taught him all these arts!

In this context, some words that are formed from KALA are:

KALAKARA - ARTIST

KALALAYAM - COLLEGE

KALAVIHARA - ACADEMY

KALAKOUSHALAM - PROFICIENCY IN ARTS

Sri Radha's mother is named Kalavathi. 'Kalavathi' denotes one who has arts, that is, one who knows arts.

Next, 'KALA' denotes a 'feature' / an aspect.

Bhagavatam says - एते चाम्शकलाः पुंसः कृष्णस्तु भगवान् स्वयं

"All other avatars are only an aspect of Vishnu, but Krishna is a
'poorna avatar' - Bhagavan himself".

KALA also commonly means one-sixteenth part (1/16). 'Shodasa Kalas' (16 art forms) are popular. A complete being has 16 'kalas'. While comparing a being with something superior to it, if this being is very inferior, they say - 'कलां नार्हति षोडशीं'.

Meaning, it does not have even one of those sixteen features.

The 'chandra mandal' also has sixteen 'kalas' (features). That is what we refer to as the crescent. From Amavasya (no moon) to pournami (full moon) the moon progresses through each crescent phase. These are the moon's 'kalas'. Because it has these 'kalas', Chandran is also called 'KALANIDHI'. Lord Paramasivan wears the crescent moon on his head and is hence called 'KALADHARAN'.

Similarly, the virat purusha (primeval force) of Lord Narayana which is the source of all avatars has sixteen 'kalas' says Bhagavatam.

जगृहे पौरुषं रूपं भगवान् महदादिभिः ।
सम्भूतं षोडशकलं आदौ लोकसिसृक्षया ॥

It is only from there all shrishti(creation) took place.

From this, all other avatars appear with certain 'kalas'. However, Sri Krishna, as mentioned earlier, is complete, Krishna has all the sixteen 'kalas'.

Next, 'KALA' is a unit of time. It is calculated as 1/900th part of a day, that is, 1 min 36 sec.

Next, Gardama Prajapathi and Devahuthi had a daughter named KALA. She was one among their nine daughters. Bhagavatam says they got her married to a rishi called Mareechi. 'KALA' also means a droplet. In Bhagavatam, wherever there is a mention of tear drops, words like अश्रुकला, बाष्पकला are used.

Finally, Bhagavatam while mentioning the 'virat roop' of Bagavan says -स्नेहकला द्विजानि - the teeth (द्विजानि) of the Lord manifest as an aspect of his love (स्नेहकला). When the Lord smiles, isn't it his teeth that show us his love!

Sant Namdev

Maharaj Charitram

Shiv Kanya - Shri Kanya

In the fifth canto of Srimad Bhagavatham, there is the story of king Priyavrata, the elder son of Swayambhu Manu. Since PriyaVrata devoted himself to the Lord's feet from a very young age, he was strongly inclined towards the path of Moksha. He was not interested in leading a family life (Grihasta Ashrama); so he went to the Sage Narada and conveyed his intention of leading a life of renunciation. Knowing Priyavrat's steadfast ideals, Narada was also ready to initiate him. Priyavrat's father Swayambhanu was alarmed when he came to know about this. He thought to himself "It is I who should should proceed to the forest to observe vanaprastha and do penance. My son should rightly take over the reins of the administration of the kingdom". He approached his father Brahma with this worry. Brahma along with Manu, then came to Narada's Ashram where Priyavrata was staying. Brahma, through Bhagwan spoke to Priyavrata thus:

SB Canto 5 chapter 1 Verse 17

"Bhayam pramathasya

vaneshu api syaadh

Yatha: sa aasthe sahashatpatna:

Jitendriyasya, aatmarater budhasya

Gruhasrama: kim nu karoti avadhyam"

"One who is not able to control his sense organs; what is the use of him going to forest and doing penance? There is no use at all. He will always be fearful of future births (since he is living with his mind and 5 senses). On the other hand a learned person who is the master of his senses need not go to the forest. Even when he is leading the life of a normal



householder his mind would always reminisce the Lord's names and each of his actions will be dedicated to the lotus feet of the Lord. The day to day activities of a householder, thus, will not effect him. This is verily the essence and beauty of "Bhagavatha dharma". One need not renounce the family life, go to forest or do penance. There are no hard and fast rules to observe "Bhagavatha dharma". Guruji in one of his keertans about the simplicity and beauty of Bhagavatha Dharma says "One need not know the realms of the higher truth, Nor does one need to forego wife and family;

One need not renounce the world at large, Can Turiya not be achieved surely?

I do not know anything other than singing your glories'.

The lives of saints in " Bhakta Vijayam", show us that they were all simple house holders who did "Bhakti". The path of Bhakti is so simple and easy to adopt. Isn't it pleasing to watch an entire family doing "Bhakti" together. The sage Aandal says " Koodiyirunthu kulirnthelor empacavai", inviting everyone to do the sadhana of Bhakti together.

When we see the lives of many saints, we see that dispassion or vairagya comes naturally to them. So even when they may not want to get married and lead a householder's life, the lord himself intervenes and arranges for them to be married. After all, what can be more divine than the sight of an entire family observing the beautiful and simple Bhagavatha Dharma??

Jayadeva Kavi, the author of one of the most revered works, "Gita Govindam" lived in a place called Sindhubillam in Orissa. He lived alone, observing spiritual disciplines like Japa, Dyana and constant remembrance of God. But the lord Jagganath saw in him a Rasika or a person with tender heart. And the lord thought, " Such a devotee should be in "Bhagavatha Dharma, or else I will lose a Bhakta". Therefore to awaken his tender hearted Bhakti, the lord himself sent a divine consort Padmavathi for Jayadeva.

Similarly, there lived a great Mahatma by the name of Sri Vallabh. He was a great devotee of Lord Krishna. He is credited with establishing the PUSHTI marga of Bhakti in Srinath Dwara. To help him in his daily Aradhna to Krishna and to further beautify his pure devotion, Krishna himself got him married to a suitable girl ,Mahalakshmi. Similarly, Lord Panduranga got Namdev Maharaj married to a suitable girl.

