

Sri Hari:

MadhuraMurali

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Madhuramana Mahaneeyar

-Ms Poornima Kumaraswami

Everybody in our satsang knows Smt. Leela Narayanaswamy. A few months ago, she attained Bhagavan's lotus feet in Bengaluru. Sri Swamiji had wanted to do a Bhagavata Saptaham for her. He decided to do the saptaham at Udupi kshetra. After it was decided that it would be in Udupi kshetra, a wonderful incident happened, which Sri Swamiji shared.

It seems there was a murthy of Udupi Sri Krishna with Sri Swamiji. He gave that murthy to a devotee. Within ten minutes of him giving this murthy away, a different devotee gave another Udupi Krishna murthy to Sri Swamiji. As Sri Swamiji gave away that Udupi Krishna to another devotee, another Udupi Krishna came to Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji said that this happened ten times.

Sri Swamiji completed the Brahmotsavam and Rohini at Senganor and returned to the Ashram. Feb 5 was ekadasi day. On Feb 6 evening, Sri Swamiji went to Melvenpakkam, where he participated in the samprokshanam of Sri Lakshminarayana Perumal and gave a discourse there. From there he went to Tirupatkuzhi and had darshan of Sri Vijayaraghava Perumal.

The next day, Feb 7, he conducted the kumbhabhishekam of the Sri Pillaiyar temple located in Vishwaksena Educational Society in Tiruvallur. On Feb 8, he left Chennai and reached Bengaluru Sri Sundara Anjaneya Temple. On Feb 9, he sat down with Sri Sankaranarayanan and discussed the kainkaryams in Bengaluru. After having darshan of Sri Sundara Anjaneya, he reached Udupi kshetra in the evening.

On 10th, he oversaw all the arrangements for the Srimad Bhagavata Saptaham. From Feb 11 to 17, the Saptaham was conducted as an udaya-astamana event (from sunrise to sunset). It would begin daily around 5:30 am and go on until the evening. Sri Swamiji did pravachanam. Myself, Erode Balaji Bhagavathar, Kapila Vasudevan Bhagavathar, Hariharasubramanian Bhagavathar, Kanya Sisters also did pravachanam in between now and then; kirtanam was also performed.

On one day during the Saptaham, the Puthige Mutt Swamiji graced the event and blessed everyone. Every evening, Udupi Krishna was taken around on his chariot. It was blissful to have His darshan at that time. Everyday Sri Swamiji would go to the temple and have darshan of Krishna. On the final day, Mahamantra kirtan was performed on all four of the car (chariot) streets near the temple.

Information that the Saptaham was being performed was not published in Madhuramurali magazine or in Namadwaar website, and nobody was told about it. Yet, people learned about it and about 500 devotees attended. Devotees from Muscat, Singapore, Australia, Finland, USA and other countries came all the way purely due to their desire for satsang. On the last day, avabrutha snanam was performed in the Madhwa Saras which is located in the premises of the Sri Krishna temple. On the way back from Udupi, Sri Swamiji had darshan of Sri Chenna Keshava Perumal at Belur.

Sri Sankaranarayanan, Hyderabad Sri Sundar, Sri Karthik Parasuraman, Sri Naveen Bhat, Sri Pammal Ramakrishnan and others, all together organized the Saptaham in a lovely manner.

Answers and Beyond

Q.1: Why should Moksha saptaham be conducted for the dead?

A: Scriptures raise the question ‘who is the true friend of the dead?’ and answers the same.

“Charity is the right friend”. That is, to do charity on their behalf will be of great help to them. If we offer lamp here (on earth) it shall offer them light. If we offer woollen blanket in charity the dead shall not feel cold. If we offer food their hunger is appeased. A long list of this kind can be shown.

According to the charity we do on the behalf of the dead the fruit reaches them. Srimad Bhagavata saptaham is ‘jnana daanam’ (offering wisdom). If, here, we conduct Bhagavata saptaham for their sake, they shall attain jnana and attain Moksha.

Q.2: Desire, anger, fear, jealousy, ego, etc. do not seem to leave me in spite of my prayers and concerted effort in this direction.

A: We speak of our troubles to God or Mahans and pray for its redemption. For example, we pray for a child, for marriage, for employment, etc. and these come about at once. This is because any block in these matters is due to some sin. The blessings of Mahans eradicates the sin/s and our prayer fructifies. However, the reason behind our desire, anger, fear, avarice, jealousy, etc. is the vaasanaas (latent imprints) within. They cannot be removed on the strength of punya (merit earning act/s).

Vaasanaas are removed gradually by performance of Namakirtan done unconditionally.



Udupi Sri Krishna

Sri Swamiji

Sri Vaadhiraajar in 'theertha prabandham' while explaining the glories of Udupi kshEtram, which is popularly known as Anna kShetram and Rajatha peetam, says,

“dwAravathIm sakala bhAghyavathIm upEkshya
gOpAla bAla lalanA karapoojanam cha |
vArthim vadhoo graham upEthyA sa madhvanAthO
yathrAsthi thath rajathapeetapuram garlya: | |”

In this slokam, Sri Vaadhiraajar is saying, “can anyone explain the glories of Rajathapeeta puram (Udupi), where Krishna Himself has come and has been residing there, leaving Dwaraka, that He Himself built , leaving Brindavanam where He got the loving care and affection of gOpis, leaving his father-in-law's place, the kshlra samudram, which is the birth place of Lakshmi pirAtti.”

In this glorious kShetram, our Udupi Krishna stands with sama charanam with a churning rod (matthu) in His right hand and gives darshan as bAla gOpAlan. What is the story behind this kshEtram?

Krishna was residing with Sri Rukmini in Dwaraka. One day, Rukmini Devi wanted to hear Krishna's bAla leelAs from Krishna Himself. Granting this request, Krishna not only explained the bAla leelas, He made Rukmini pirAtti have

darshan of the bAla leelAs! Rukmini's heart got deeply rooted in the little Krishna's form, that broke the pots of butter, milk, curd with a churning rod in his hand, drinking the milk and curd and placing the feet on the flowing milk and butter and running here and there making marks of milk and curd on the floor. Looking at Rukmini's love towards this form, Krishna became an archa moorthy as a little Krishna holding a matthu in His right hand. Rukmini devi started doing daily Pooja for this little Krishna.

Rukmini devi got attracted towards Krishna only by listening to His leelas and she herself says in her message to Bhagawan, 'srutvA guNAN'. So, Rukmini Devi had the desire in her heart to do rAsa with Bhagawan. Bhagawan accepted her loving prayer and along with Rukmini, Sathyabhama and other 16,108 mahishis, Krishna did rAsam, imagining the ocean itself as Yamuna River. During this rAsam, the sandalwood paste that the mahishis have applied melted and formed a small hill that looked like Gopi chandanam.

Bhagawan, after doing many leelas and after reducing the Bhoo Bhaaram, went back to His own abode. Bhagawatham says, "dwArakAm hariNA thyakthAm samudhrO plavayat kshaNAt' – as soon as Bhagawan left dwAraka, it got immersed under the ocean. The little Krishna that Rukmini Devi did Pooja everyday, hid Himself in the Gopi Chandanam hill.

Some business people, gathered many items and left on a business trip from dwAraka on a ship. To equalize the weight on the ship, they had put bags of gopi chandan on one part of the ship. When they were travelling, a storm hit. Looking at the state of the ship, the business men looked here and there to call for help and they spotted a sanyasi sitting at a distance.

Knowing that the sanyasi won't be hear their call for help, they surrendered to the sanyasi in their hearts. That sanyasi was sAkshAt Sri MADhwAchAryAr! Being an avatar of vAyu Bhagawan, Sri MADhwAchAryAr understood the fear of these business people and stopped the strong winds and the storm slowly died down.

Thus, being rescued by Sri MADhwAchAryAr, the business men reached the shore safely and prostrated to Sri MADhwAchAryAr. They wanted to offer Sri MADhwAchAryAr something as a token of showing gratitude. The, Sri MADhwAchAryAr himself asked the men to give him the bags of gOpi chandan that they carried on their ship. The business men wondered why he was asking for the bag of gOpi chandan while they were ready to offer precious stones, diamonds etc.

Sri MADhwAchAryAr humbly accepted the bag of gOpi chandan and applied the gOpi chandan with utmost respect. He also explained the greatness of gOpi chandan to the business men. Then, he danced in joy and prayed to Sri Krishna. Then, the little Krishna that Rukmini Devi Herself had worshipped came out of that small bag of gOpi chandan! That is the little Krishna that Sri MADhwAchAryAr did prathisha of in Udupi kshEtram. That is the Krishna, we have darshan of in Udupi kshEtram.

There is a special thing in the darshan of this little Krishna! We won't be able to do darshan of this Krishna from main entrance like we do in other temples. We can have darshan of this Krishna from only a small side window. Also, even though, Sri MADhwAchAryAr did prathisha of this Krishna facing East direction, today we see that this Krishna is facing

west! The reason behind this is the bhakti of another great bhaktha, 'KanakadAsar'. Kanakadasar was influenced by Sri Veda Vyasar and he was doing klrtna seva for Udupi Sri Krishna. He used to stand in front of the temple and sing and dance to the names of Krishna. One, day, KanakadAsar was standing in front of the main entrance of the temple and was doing singing and dancing the whole night. He did not even realize when the day dawned. The other devotees who came to do prabOdhanam for Krishna could not enter the temple as KanadAsar was blocking the entrance. He did not even hear them when they tried to call out to him. Finally, they drew his attention towards them.

KanakadAsar felt very sad for being a hindrance to them. He decided to sing klrtnas standing at the back of the temple so that he won't cause any more trouble to the bhakthas who are entering through the main entrance. Drawn towards the humility and love of KanakadAsar, our little Krishna started to turn in the direction of KanakadAsar. Krishna also turned towards the back of the temple! But, there is no entrance there! Krishna made a hole on the wall with his matthu (churning rod) and called out 'Kanaka' and gave darshan to him! From that day onwards, Krishna has been standing there facing west. Even today, when we go to Udupi, we can have darshan of Krishna only through 'Kanaka gindi', the small hole on the wall that Krishna Himself made to give darshan to KanadAsar! Krishna gives darshan every day in this Udupi kshEtram and is taking care of all His devotees.

Learning and Experience

- Sri Swamiji

For those following the path of spirituality, there are two schools of thought.

One group thinks that it is enough to learn and understand the truths illustrated in the vedas and shastras; the other believes that mere learning without experiencing these truths is of no use. Both are correct - how can this be?

The first step is to learn about the highest truths of Moksha, Atma, Karma, Jnana, Bhakti and dispassion from scholars. However, after hearing about these truths, we question their existential reality.

What the head understands, the heart will not accept. Instead, it will question whether there really are jnanis who have experienced the truths described in the shastras, or if it is simply myth. If this quest is true and heart-felt, it will take us to an experienced soul in this birth. The experienced souls will prove to us that these truths are not fiction, but a reality. This is the second step.

However, learning and being in the company of a jnani will not be enough. The final step is to experience these highest truths on our own; a very difficult path, one in a million would make it through successfully.

Many obstacles are on our paths when we try to bring these higher truths into practice - our karmic imprints from the past, laziness, and doubtful nature. Our past births influence our current behavioral tendencies and torment our senses. Our intellect will begin to doubt our notions. Laziness will make us complacent with our existing lives and prevent us from continuing our quest in the path of spirituality. We try and fail, over and over, finally becoming exhausted and unmotivated. Only the strong individual can succeed in this quest.

Let's use SWOT (strength, weakness, opportunity, threat) analysis to assess our position:

- Our strength is seeking the highest truths and trying to attain them
- Our weaknesses are our karmic imprints, laziness and doubtful nature
- Our opportunities arise when we get a jnani's darshan and blessings to stay focused in our quest
- Our threats are maya and bad company

We can overcome all this and attain our goal. First, we have to strengthen our hope. Following a strict diet regimen, we have to control our mind and senses. We need to establish a definitive goal, which could be in terms of time or actions. Parikshit set a time-oriented goal of seven days while Dhruva set an action-oriented goal to sit on his father's lap. We can set a goal of chanting 10,000 naamas by the next ekadasi or to attain the darshan of the lord in our lifetime. More importantly, moksha is not too far if we pray to seek god's blessing and guru's blessings!

prEma bhakthi siddhikkumAm
yEn ippadi endru kelvigaL kELAmal
bhakthi yEni padigalil EriduvAi
thattu thadumAri palamurai vizhundhAlum
pidivAdhamAi nl mIndum mIndum muyandriduvAi
akandAnubhUthiyil kalandhiduvAi

Divine love blossoms by the grace of the God and the Guru. That lover of God will see Krishna everywhere. Deep Jnana is that state where nothing is perceived other than Krishna. Srimad Bhagavatham also refers to this state as

'kham vAyumagnim salilam mahlm cha
jyOtlshim satvAni dishO drumAdln |
saritsamudrAncha harE: sharIram
yat kincha bhUtam pranamEdananya: ||
(11-2-41)

Stairway to Devotion

- Sri Ramanujam



This blessed devotee who is soaked in divine love will see space, air, fire, sea, and land as the form of Krishna. The devotee will develop a deep sense of respect towards these natural elements.

By divine grace, the devotee realises, 'Krishna is inside me; this universe is his play and also of his form. Indeed, all this is Vasudeva' and revels in that knowledge. This divine lover will become one with the infinite consciousness. He will fully attain the purpose of life. That devotee in the state of knowledge has nothing to be done or achieved. That devotee of knowledge has fully traversed all the steps in the stairway of devotion and has attained the highest state of knowledge.

One major enemy which impedes someone who is climbing the stairway to devotion is seeking answers to worthless questions like, "Why did this happen?" Rather than trying to sincerely come out of our wretched states, if we start questioning like 'Why is my mind so wavering? Why did God create such a situation for me? Why is the world like this?' Such questions are only obstacles in our spiritual path and are not necessary. Sometimes we may slip and fall while climbing the stairway to devotion and there could be setbacks. At such times, we should not get depressed.

Even if we fall a hundred times, we should steady ourselves and try to climb for a 101st time. One essential attribute required in spirituality is obstinacy! By ceaseless effort, prayer, patience, and with the faith that there is nothing impossible with God's grace, if we continue to persevere, we can also become one with that Infinite Existence.

Our life then becomes complete. Our travel across crores and crores of repeated births and deaths comes to an end and we finally reach the destination; we make our present life fruitful; there is no more sorrow or delusion or fear; only bliss, bliss and bliss.

(Concludes in the next issue)

Friendship

Madhavan's child Rajan was extremely fond of toys. Only toys were Rajan's friends. Whenever Madhavan travelled to various places on official trips, he made it a habit to buy a toy and come. Once, Madhavan went with his friend Kannan to buy a toy. There was a variety of toys in that toy shop. A glittering, long gun drew Madhavan's eye. It could fire rubber bullets. It made realistic noises. He decided to buy this for Rajan. After buying that toy gun, they were both returning in a vehicle.

Madhavan looked at Kannan and said, "You have read the Mahabaratham, Bagavatham, Bagavat Gita and all! Why don't you tell me some story?" As if he was waiting for this opportunity, Kannan started telling a story.

A Tale for Children

"Madhava! This is a story from the Ramayan. There was a sacred forest where deer and beautiful birds lived. Long ago, a hermit lived there. Day by day, the intensity of his penance kept increasing. Lord Indra was terrified on seeing this and decided to disturb his penance.

He plotted a conspiracy. He disguised himself as a warrior and came to the ashram with a beautiful, glittering sword. He stayed there for a while, and gave the hermit his sword and requesting him to take care of it , he left. The hermit wandered about, always carrying the sword. Because of the weapon in his hand, his nature started changing gradually. Initially, he pretended to cut the grass with it and laughed to himself.

Next, he started cutting the thorny shrubs with that sword. Then, he started cutting even the soft grass. In course of time, he got used to killing small animals. Thus, in a few months, the extremely gentle hermit who used to do penance was reduced to being a great sinner who committed horrifying murders. Did you notice how the company of a sword transformed him?" So saying, Kannan finished his story.

On hearing Kannan's story, Madhavan fell silent for a few seconds. He told the driver to take them back to the toy shop.

On the way back, he was overwhelmed thinking of the elegant manner in which Kannan wordlessly conveyed his advice. They rushed to the shop before it closed, to return the gun and then went back home.

‘पञ्च’ refers to the number five. ‘Pancha Pandavas’, ‘Pancha Praana’, ‘Pancha BhUta’, ‘Panchavarna’ are some of the well known words. But the word ‘पञ्च’ stands as a root for so many other words. Let us see some of these.

Sri Vishnupriya

SANSKRIT WORD OF THE MONTH

‘पञ्चमम्’ means ‘the fifth’. In music, ‘Pa’ being the fifth swara, is called पञ्चमम् . And, also because this swara is triggered by the Praana passing through the five ‘sthaanas’ in the body, it is known as पञ्चमम्.

pancha
‘पञ्च’

वायुः समुद्रतो नाभेः उरोहृत्कण्ठमूर्धसु
विचरन् पञ्चमस्थानप्राप्त्या पञ्चम उच्यते ।।

The Panchama Swara originates from these five places viz, Navel, chest, Heart, Throat and Head.

Sri Jayadeva, while describing the Raasam in Ashtapadi, sings, ‘उदञ्चितपञ्चमरागम्’, meaning, a Gopi, beautifully sings out loud in panchama swara.

Next, let us look into the word ‘पञ्चत्वम्’. The word ‘पञ्चत्व’ means death. It is named so because our body merges with the ‘पञ्चभूता’, the five elements, after death.

In Viveka Choodamani, Sri Adishankara says,

शब्दादिभिः पञ्चभिरेव पञ्च ।

पञ्चत्वमापुः स्वगुणेन बद्धाः ॥

Adishankara questions - while the animals attain death by merely being bound to just one of the five senses like sound, etc, what would be the fate of a man who is captivated by all five senses?

Gajendra too says in his stuthi,

“कालेन पञ्चत्वं इतेषु कृत्स्नषु

लोकेषु पालेषु च सर्वहेतुषु “

Gradually, when all the worlds, their protectors and all the elements get destroyed, all that remains beyond the deep vast darkness of the great deluge, is that Supreme Being, shining eternally.

‘पञ्चशर’ or ‘पञ्चबाण ’ is the name given to the Lord of Desire. As he arouses the desires with his five arrows, he is known by the name पञ्चबान. It is said that ‘Unmaadam, ‘Thaapanam’, ‘soshanam’, ‘stambanam’, ‘sammoham’ are those five arrows.

‘पञ्चगव्य’ is quite popular. It is called so because, it is made out of cow’s dung, urine, milk, curd and ghee. गव्यम् means that which belongs to the cow. One can be free of all diseases by intaking पञ्चगव्यम् .

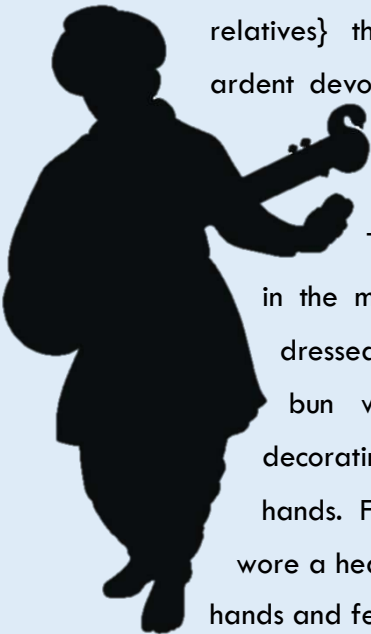
पञ्चजन commonly refers to all people. That is because a man is made up of the five elements. But there was an asura by the name ‘पञ्चजनन्’ , who lived under the waters of Prabhasa Kshetra, assuming a form of a conch. He was killed by Sri Krishna who came to recover the son of His Guru Sandeepani. But the boy was not to be found. Hence Krishna went to Yamaloka to retrieve him. Krishna, after killing the demon पञ्चजनन्, took the conch that emerged out of his body. The conch that appeared from पञ्चजनन्, is thus called ‘पाञ्चजन्यम्’. This is the same lovely conch ‘पाञ्चजन्यम्’ that is present in the hands of Lord Vasudeva.

Sri Namdev Maharaj

Shiv Kanya - Shri Kanya

On the day of the wedding, Bhagwan Pandurang decorated the wedding venue with a variety of fragrant flowers. He welcomed each of the wedding guests by standing at the entrance. Sri Namdev Maharaj wore fine silk clothes, bracelets and a Mundalvyā (a crown studded with pearls) and came to the dais. In Maharashtrian weddings, there is a tradition, where in before the kanyadan, a screen (andarpat), normally of a silk cloth is put between the bride and groom to hide them from each others' view and Mangala Ashtakam is recited by the priests presiding over the ceremony. AS Namdev sat on one side of the screen, all the celestial devas {in the guise of Namdev's relatives} that had come to witness the wedding of an ardent devotee sat along with him. Surrounded by all the relatives, the whole venue wore a festive look.

The bride Rajaayi was also woken up early in the morning. After a ceremonial bath, she was dressed up in fine clothes. Her hair was tied in a bun with a row of fragrant flowers, 'veni' decorating it. She wore green glass bangles on her hands. Fine gold earrings adorned her ears. She wore a heavy gold necklace and other ornaments. Her hands and feet were decorated with a red paste. Thus



dressed befitting a bride, she was brought to the dais in the company of her friends and lady relatives. She was made to sit on the other side of the screen. Both the families were happy to see the young couple seated on the wedding dais. On the auspicious moment,(Muhurat), to the accompaniment of auspicious musical instruments and the chantings of divine names by the people assembled, the screen was removed . The chants of Sulaghne Saavdhaan, Shubha Muhurthe Saavdhaan, Lakshmi Narayan Dhyaan Saavdhan””rent the air. Bhagavan Pandurang and Rukmini devi did the paanigrahan for Sri Namdev. Later the remaining rituals like Sapthapathi etc also took place. After the wedding, vithoo seth disappeared. The devas who came as the relatives of Naamdev also disappeared.

Now only Sri Namdev, his parents Damu Seth, Konabai and Aavubhai were left. Now bereft of Pandurang”s Maya, they were in their old clothes. Seeing all this, Rajaayi’s father Govind Seth became very upset. He understood the high state that Sri Namdev was in (spiritually), but was very sad for his daughter. He wondered how his daughter who was used to all the comforts in life would be able to live a life of utter poverty. Rajaayi, an epitome of good qualities addressed her parents, ‘My wedding was conducted in a grand manner in Bhagawan Pandurangan’s presence. What more could i ask for? This is all HIS Leela”. I am indeed lucky to be married to such a great devotee. If I serve lord’s devotee, i will also get HIS darshan. I will go to Pandharpur and stay happily. Please don’t worry on my account”. Hearing this Raajaayi’s parents were a bit relieved. Later they bid farewell to Sri Namdev’s parents and left. Later Damu seth also left for Pandharpur along with the young newly wedded couple Sri Naamdev and Rajaayi. They reached Pandharpur and after the ceremonial Gruhapraves ceremony, took darshan of Lord Pandurang.

***You shall not forget but remember,
won't you? I shall wait!***

- Dr Bhagyanathan

(Personal Secretary to Sri Swamiji)

The celebration of annual Brahmotsav of Sri Madhuri Sakhi sameta Premika Varadan by Sri Swamiji is simply wonderful! Those ten days our Ashram would appear like NandaGokula and Srivanam where the Lord had taken Avatar and performed His Lilas. Sri Swamiji would begin the Utsav with the birth of Sri Krishna and enjoy conducting it on the lines of Srimad Bhagavatam.

Devotees from all over the world assemble in great numbers. The ten-day utsav is a divinely delightful one filled with Puja for the Lord, procession, Namakirtan, Bhajan, Bhagavata Parayanam, discourse, etc. Above all no words can describe the way Sri Swamiji would administrate the Utsav! Sri Swamiji would, in his inimitable style, show his affection to each and every devotee come to participate in the Utsav. In spite of all the festivity bustle nothing, not even the smallest matter, will escape his attention.

At the end of each Brahmotsav Sri Swamiji himself would bless all those who had served in the Utsav with prasada. That particular year, too, it was the same. Arrangements had been made

for all those who had served in the Utsav to receive prasad from Sri Swamiji directly. Sri Swamiji was sitting on one side of the hall and those who had served came in a line and received the prasad. Even as Sri Swamiji was giving the prasad to the servitors with his right hand he was answering the questions of a devotee who stood to his left kept asking.

The line was moving fast. Suddenly when a man came up to receive the prasad, Sri Swamiji placed the prasad down and stretched out his hand towards him as if to say 'you give me'! To an onlooker it would have seemed as if Sri Swamiji, in that fraction of a second, would not have even noticed that man's face properly. The question 'why is he stretching out his hand to him?' arose in all those who were present there.

That man, looking at Sri Swamiji, said with tearful eyes, "Please pardon me, Swami! Next week I will do as promised," and fell at Sri Swamiji's feet. Sri Swamiji asked him, even as he gave him the prasad, "You will not forget again, will you? I will never forget but wait for it," and nodded him off.

Coming out of the hall, the man explained, "Several years back Sri Swamiji had come to my village. He then blessed my home, too, with his visit. It was a time when I was totally broke. I had placed the small deities that my parents had worshipped, in a box. Each deity was an inch in height. Seeing them Sri Swamiji was totally bowled over. Sri Swamiji asked me, "Why have you kept them in this manner without doing puja?" My answer shocked Sri Swamiji. I told

him, "There are several more like this. I am selling them one by one." The moment I told this Sri Swamiji closed his ears as if he had heard what should never be heard! I told him, "If you so desire, I shall give them to you."

Sri Swamiji at once instructed an attendant devotee near him, "He is suffering due to financial problem. Give him the required assistance. With his permission bring all the deities." And, it was done.

Before leaving, Sri Swamiji asked, "Are there any more or only this much?" I said, "I have kept some more in another place." Sri Swamiji who was about to leave stopped and said to me, "You go and bring all the deities here. I will wait," and sat there itself.

I said, "Swami! That will take time. I will myself bring them all to the Ashram and give them to you directly."

Sri Swamiji told me several times, "Come immediately! Will you come tomorrow? I will be waiting."

Just as a mother expecting her child to return Sri Swamiji asked this of me and left.

But I did not keep up my promise. When Sri Swamiji enquired about it several times through someone or the other, I did not respond. It must be almost a decade since this happened. But Sri Swamiji has not forgotten. How many people Sri Swamiji meets! In that split second that he saw me he stretched out his hand! I never even thought that he would remember me! My first work now is to keep up my promise," he said shedding tears.

