

Madhura Murali



July 2016; Spiritual Monthly

Sri Swamiji's Kirtan

Ragam: Kundhalavaraali

Talam: Adi

PALLAVI

pANDurangA pANDurangA enDru pAdi vandEnE
un sannidi nAnum thEDi vandEnE

ANUPALLAVI

ANDANDu kAlamAi aDiyAr pala unnai
kaNDu kaNDu ADi pADi paravasam aDaindanare
(pANDurangA)

CHARANAM

sangai kayyil koNDa pangaya kaNNALanE
angam muzhuvadilum adiyArai koNDavanE
abhangA kIrtanatil AnandippavanE
nIngAmal en idayatil nilai peTru ninDriDuvAi
(pANDurangA)

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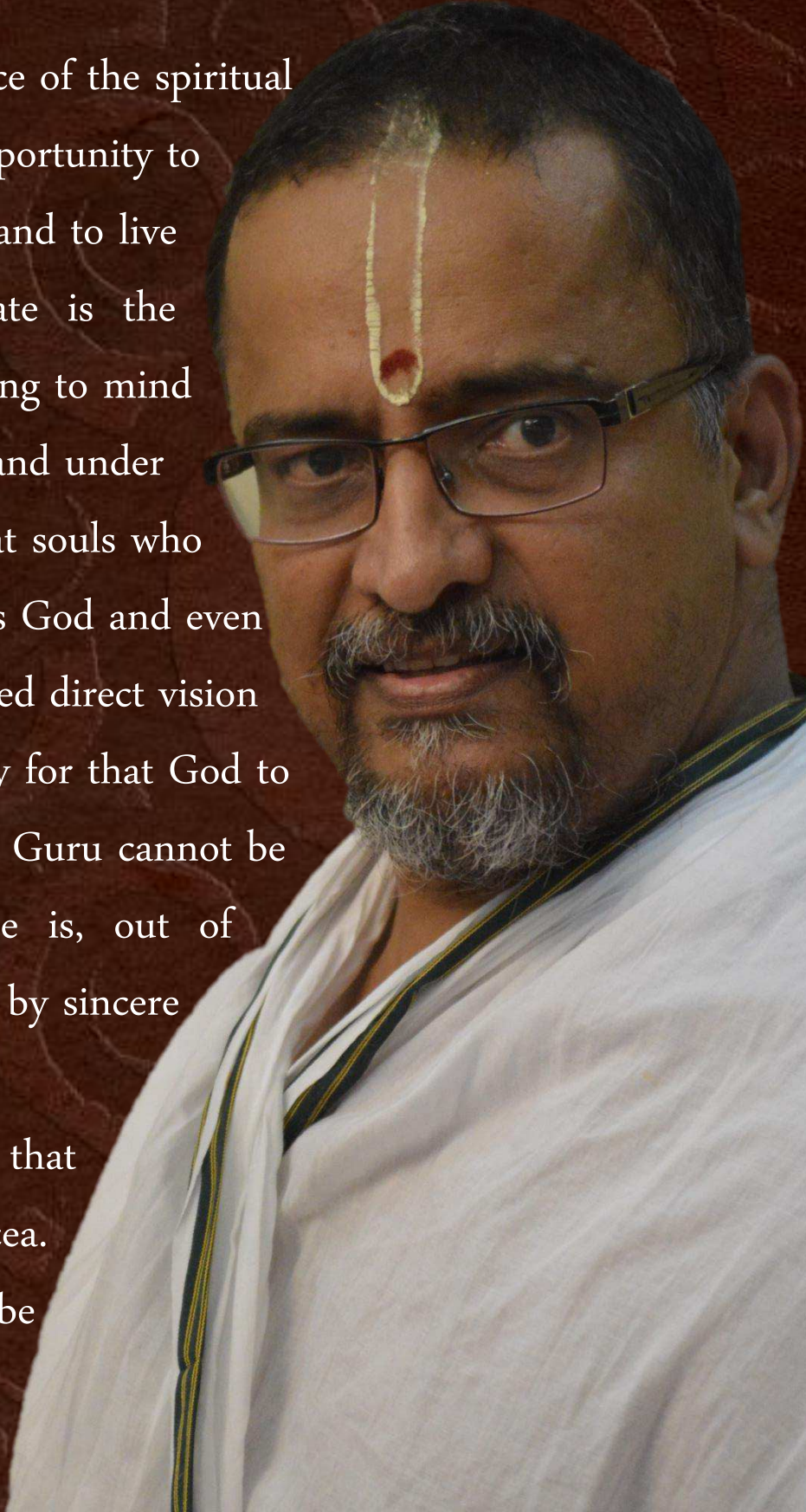
Madhura Smaranam

My Guru As I See Him

~ Dr Bhagyanathan

The sweet remembrance of the spiritual Master (Guru), the opportunity to live in his shadow and to live according to his dictate is the only one that is soothing to mind and body at all times and under all circumstances. Great souls who perceived everything as God and even those who have enjoyed direct vision of the Lord pray only for that God to come as their Guru. A Guru cannot be searched for; yet he is, out of compassion, attainable by sincere prayer alone.

The remembrance of that Guru is the best panacea. It [remembrance] can be done at all times. It



does only good. There is no parallel to this. If there is a way (out) for even those who feel that they know nothing, feel useless, feel that their lives are ever in darkness and face only sorrows in their lives, it is the memory of the Guru. Remembrance of Guru (Guru smaranam) is sweet (Madhura smaranam). Can there be joy other than the sweet remembrance of Guru and remembrance of the Divine Name that he advocates?

It is the remembrance of the Guru that lights up the barren future and brings in happy times. It can be declared with certainty that those who have attained a Guru in their lives are highly fortunate. Remembrance of the Guru gives a new meaning to life. It is the Guru's holy feet that – while ignoring questions that have no answers – changes one's objective and also helps in its attainment.

The infinite God, out of compassion, comes taking the form of the Guru. The incomprehensible Lord adorns himself with comprehensible characteristics, and comes as the Guru. Guru's grace may work in any manner. It is not subject to reason, prejudice, likes and dislikes, or time. The only question is 'do you want grace'. If you do you will certainly get it. Giving milk is not merely the nature of the cow but also its pleasure; likewise, grace is the Sadguru's nature. When a jiva finds relief from sorrow, that also has in it an experience of joy.

There is nothing called insoluble sorrow in the world. Sri Swamiji would say that if there is a sorrow there will certainly be a solution to it. Nevertheless, the result depends on where we search for the solution. A lamp that gives light becomes a disturbance for sleep at night. The sun that is soothing in winter gives unbearable heat in summer. Though travelling is enjoyable, nonstop travel is tiring. Food may be tasty but it cannot be eaten

beyond a certain amount. Though the vast blue sky, the deep ocean and the high mountain are enjoyable, the same cannot be enjoyed when they are struck by nature's fury. Also, relatives are not only a source of joy but also a cause of sorrow. Actions of a married couple affect each other. Thus, nothing gives everlasting happiness. In the world, a person or thing which is the source of delight also becomes the source of sorrow. This is, in fact, the play of life.

There is a devotee at Sivakasi who has deep affection for Sri Swamiji. He worships Guru Maharaj with great devotion and chants the Divine Name. A woman works in his home. For quite some time she was worried over her daughter. On enquiry she said tearfully that her daughter, who was working in a hospital along with her husband, did not enjoy a happy married life.

This satsang devotee was always aware of the power of Guru's grace. When he asked what was worrying her, the woman shared her sorrow. Characteristic of a mother with deep concern and worry, she spoke of her mental agony. Her daughter's husband came home drunk and beat the wife black and blue. He harassed her in all ways and did not seem to mend his ways though many years had passed; and she did not know a way out. Once, when this man beat his wife, her mother-in-law (the man's mother) was severely injured and they feared that she would lose her eyesight. Fortunately, her vision was restored with the help of an ophthalmologist. She lamented, "What if my daughter or someone else was seriously injured?" Was she not justified in her fear?

A complaint had been lodged with the police but even that did not offer any solution. The woman with profuse tears said that helpless as she was, she had

She also added that a sympathetic doctor had offered to help them in this, provided the daughter lived away from her husband for a month. Though this seemed to be the ultimate and necessary step to be taken, the woman's mind and heart did not accept it. It was learnt that the drunkard husband also did not favour a divorce. Yet he did not give up his habit of drinking. The daughter was also not able to take a positive decision in this respect. It was under this circumstance that this woman had confided in our satsang devotee.

Feeling sad on hearing everything from the woman, our satsang devotee spoke to her about the glory of Guru Maharaj and the Divine Name. He told her that prayer along with Nama chanting will certainly earn the grace of the Guru, and asked her to chant Nama with faith, assuring that it brings solution to all kinds of sorrows. Therefore, every day the woman did Mahamantra kirtan in front of Sri Swamiji's picture and offered heartfelt prayer.

It is only circumstances that bring about a change in man. That woman also, with all her heart, anticipated a change in circumstance that would bring about a transformation in her son-in-law. She prayed only for this.

Only a week had passed. Her son-in-law went to his native town on some work. While there, he was bitten by a dog. No relative came forward to help him get medical aid or help him in any other manner. Fear gripped him. He began to understand the reality of the world. He at once rushed back to Sivakasi and told his wife all that had happened. She, at once, took him to a doctor and had him treated for dog bite. She also attended on him during this period.

Very soon he was cured of his bodily ailment. During this period he recalled the way he had ill-treated his wife and his own mother and felt immensely sorry for his behaviour. He also realized that in time of need it was his wife who had stood by him. His mind too stood cured. He gave up drinking and began to take good care of the family.

This may sound like a simple matter to us. But that woman did not feel so. Only one who undergoes suffering in worldly life realizes value of relief attained!

Prayer offered to the Lord brings about a solution through a change in circumstances. That woman whole heartedly believed that her prayer was being heard by Guru Maharaj.

Did she not chant the Divine Name and pray? Does not Guru Maharaj say that chanting the Divine Name brings about a change in the cosmos? Prayer offered along with Divine Name chanting brought about a change in the cosmos and created a favourable atmosphere.

Do we not know that it is Guru's grace that creates a momentary situation and through it, a positive change of mind, and brings about a favourable atmosphere and involvement of all in the remembrance of God?

BLISSFUL BLOSSOMS

Even when we have not been visibly afflicted with great suffering we create one for ourselves by feeling that we have not been given the right attention and importance.

.....

‘O, Gurunatha! You always bless me unconditionally. But my devotion to you is always with some motive.’

.....

Answers & Beyond

Sri Swamiji replies
to questions
from devotees

WHEN WILL I RECOGNIZE
THE WORTH OF
MAHAMANTRA KIRTAN?

A man travelling several kilometres distance in the severe heat of summer feels exhausted. At that moment it is cool water rather than food which will lessen his fatigue. In the same way, one who finds no peace due to mental agony caused by life's travails will realize the worth of the Mahamantra quite well.

RAMANA MAHARISHI HAS
NEVER LISTENED TO THE
WORLDLY PROBLEMS OF HIS
DEVOTEES AND OFFERED A
SOLUTION! WHY?

Ramana Maharishi advocated only Advaita philosophy. As per his philosophy the world itself is unreal; that is, it does not exist. To say that the world is unreal and to listen to and offer solutions to the unreal world's problems would contradict his claim, would it not? That is the reason he did not do it.

FROM SRI SWAMIJI'S LECTURES



A little boy lived in a town. Good looking and cheerful he was affectionate towards all. Once, there was heavy rain in this town and its surrounding areas. Hearing a moaning sound close to his house the boy rushed out. It was coming from a lion cub getting drenched in the heavy rain. Being compassionate by nature he brought the cub home and brought it up. The cub grew into a lion and behaved like a pet animal. The big lion followed the boy wherever he went.

Once, he happened to pass a forest near his town. Is not a forest filled with wild and dangerous animals like tiger, bear and leopard? These wild animals thinking that the boy was alone came up to kill and devour him. But going near him they were shocked to find a lion playing so closely with him. All the animals who came to make a meal of the boy ran away out of fear on seeing the lion with him. The boy had no power to control these wild animals of the jungle: yet, these cruel animals feared this little boy because the lion, the king of the forest, was with him.

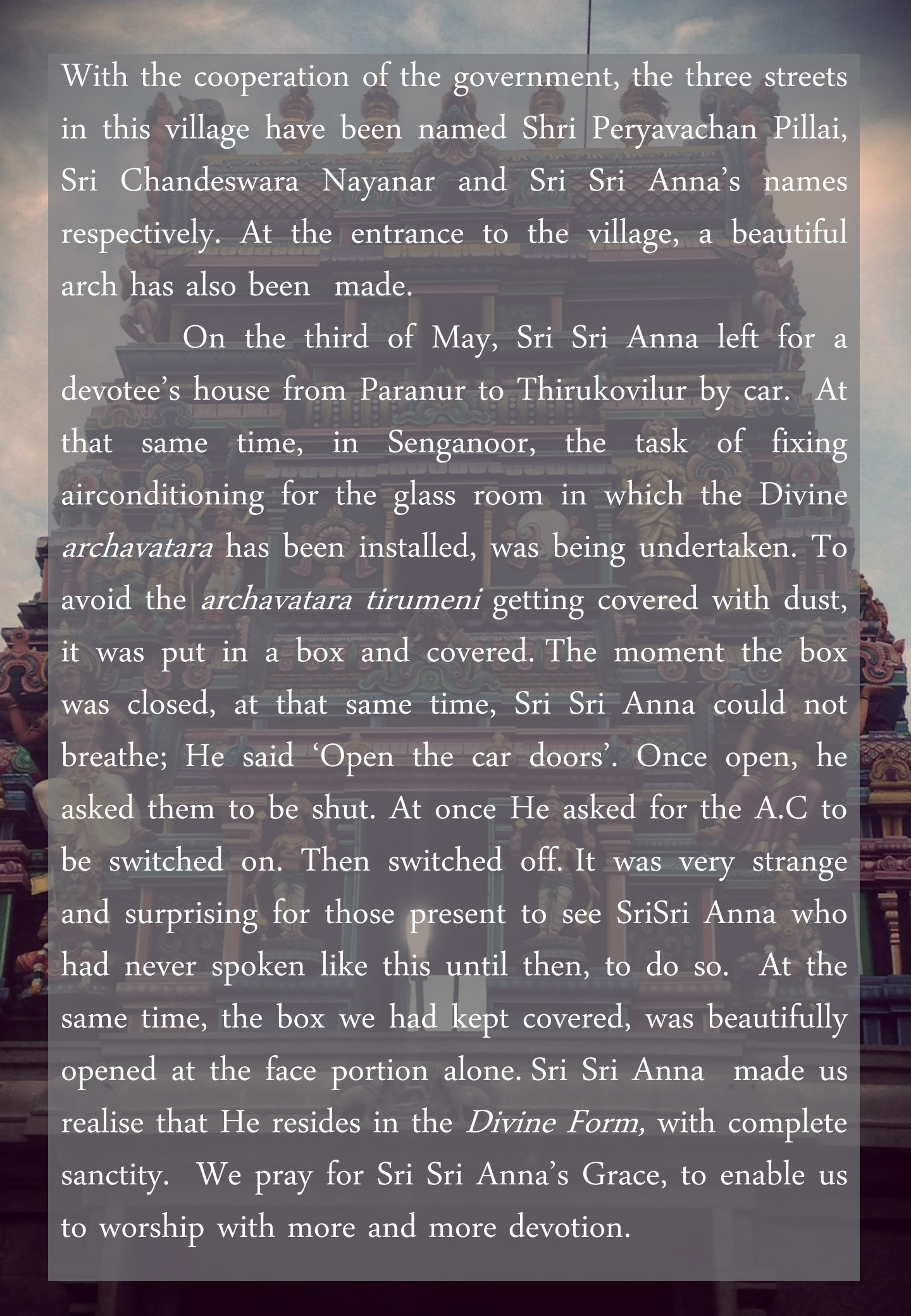
In the same way, the wild and dangerous animals of desire and hate are waiting to take hold of us and pull us away who are passing through the forest of life (samsara). To protect ourselves from it we have to surrender verily unto the Lord's Divine Name (Bhagavan Naama). No sin will touch the Devotee (Bhakta) who surrenders unto the Lord's Divine Name and incessantly chants the Divine Name. Sins will flee from one who has the Divine Name with him.

Senganoor is a beautiful village situated on the banks of river Manniyaar between Tirupanandhal and Sozhapuram, in the Tanjore District. This is also the *avatara sthala* (birth place) of Shri Periyavachan Pillai who wrote the *vyakyanam* (detailed commentary) of the 4000 *prabandhams* (collection of 4000 tamil verses by the 12 Alvars) and the foremost Siva baktha Shri Chandeswara Nayanar. It is also a '*paadal Petra sthalam*' (temple revered in the verses of Saiva Nayanars) by one of the Naynmars Sri Gnanasammandhar.

This is also the *avatar sthala* of our Guru Sri Sri Anna. Sri Premika Janmasthan has been established in the *avatara sthala* of Sri Sri Anna and the *archavatara* (in the form of deity in temple) of the Divine Couple has been installed and traditional festivals are being performed regularly. A cow shed has also been started in the name of Sri Sri Anna and is being maintained.

Senganoor

~ R Venkatesan



With the cooperation of the government, the three streets in this village have been named Shri Peryavachan Pillai, Sri Chandeswara Nayanar and Sri Sri Anna's names respectively. At the entrance to the village, a beautiful arch has also been made.

On the third of May, Sri Sri Anna left for a devotee's house from Paranur to Thirukovilur by car. At that same time, in Senganoor, the task of fixing airconditioning for the glass room in which the Divine *archavatara* has been installed, was being undertaken. To avoid the *archavatara tirumeni* getting covered with dust, it was put in a box and covered. The moment the box was closed, at that same time, Sri Sri Anna could not breathe; He said 'Open the car doors'. Once open, he asked them to be shut. At once He asked for the A.C to be switched on. Then switched off. It was very strange and surprising for those present to see Sri Sri Anna who had never spoken like this until then, to do so. At the same time, the box we had kept covered, was beautifully opened at the face portion alone. Sri Sri Anna made us realise that He resides in the *Divine Form*, with complete sanctity. We pray for Sri Sri Anna's Grace, to enable us to worship with more and more devotion.

our philosophy

There has been a lot of questions if our philosophy is Advaita or Visishtadvaita or Dvaita or Achintya Bhedaabheda, etc. When we brought this to our beloved Sri Swamiji's notice, this is the divine response from Sri Swamiji:

'Even amongst the various mathas (sects) which accept the Vedas, there are some sub-sects within the Vedic Religion of Sanatana Dharma which do not accept a Supreme God like Sankhya system of philosophy. We generally know only three main philosophies in Vedanta – Advaitam, Vishishtadvaitam and Dvaitam, but there are many more systems of philosophies like Suddhadvaitam by Sri Vallabhacharya, Eka-Deiva-Vaadam by an Assamese Acharya (Sri Sankaradeva), Sivadvaitham by Sri Appayya Dikshitar and many more! So there are many systems of philosophies like this in this world!

Even within Advaita systems, there are many subsects like Ajaata Vaadam, Shruti Dhruti Vaadam, Dhruti Shruti Vaadam and so on. Similarly in Sri Vaishnava Samparadaya philosophy there are two main sub sects – Vadakalai and Thenkalai..'

Sri Swamiji says whatever philosophy these Mahaans have established, we never criticize, nor do we object to any Mahatma. We find all philosophies acceptable.

What is our philosophy then?

Chant mahamantra and realize the ultimate

What is that ultimate, is the decision of Krishna.

This is verily our philosophy.

An episode in Srimad Bhagavatam mentions about the Lord suddenly disappearing from the midst of Gopis. The gopis were aghast and did not know what to do when separated from him. They pined and yearned for the Lord. Then, they started to reminisce amongst themselves, the divine playful acts of the Lord. A gopi would lie down as the snake, Kaaliya and another gopi would dance on her like the Lord. A gopi would stand like the Lord and play the flute and many gopis would gather around her like cows and calves. This way, they enacted the playful acts of the Lord and contemplated on them. Then, all of them sat together and sang the Gopika geetham. The Lord also re-appeared in their midst. Through this story, it is evident that the easiest way to see the Lord within us is to sing and dance his divine playful acts.



Kirtan & Nartan

~ Nalla Hari

ADVAITA MOKSHA

‘Trayambakam yajamahe’—thus starts a Mahamantra. It says that we should worship the three-eyed Lord Siva who has won over death. How is this three-eyed one? He is one filled with sweet fragrance. Going near him one can smell the divine fragrance. Worship of Lord Siva would bestow wealth, progeny and health on us.

What is the important boon to be sought from him? The Vedas says it is to free



ourselves from death
called 'mrtyu' just as the melon
frees itself from the stem that had held it
captive: and, also says that it is not to move
away from Moksha.

Use of the illustration of melon, here, has
special significance. We find that different
kinds of fruits drop off a plant in different
ways. The fruit from a mango tree on
separating from its stem at once drops down
to the ground. Cotton fibre on separating
from the boll fly high. When melon gets
separated from its stalk it just remains there
without flying up or falling down. Moksha
attained through the worship of Lord Siva is



akin to this. That is, one who has attained
Moksha neither flies up to worlds like
Vaikunta/Kailash nor does he fall down into
hell. Even after being liberated he remains
here. He enjoys Bliss here. That is the import
of this Mantra.

This kind of Moksha is Advaita Moksha. It is
verily this that Sri Sankara has stressed in his
commentary (bhashyam).

~ KANCHI SRI MAHASWAMI



While Mahaprabhu was going in to the house of a south Indian brahmin, the two brothers followed Mahaprabhu into the house, after the crowd had slightly dispersed. The brahmin had arranged a seat for Mahaprabhu in the field outside his house. While Mahaprabhu was sitting and admiring the nature, the two brothers prostrated at Prabhu's lotus feet. On seeing Rupa Goswami at his feet, Prabhu quickly got up, embraced him and fondled his head with his gentle hands.

After Mahaprabhu sat once again, both of them tended to his feet. Prabhu learnt who Anoop was. That was the first time Anoop had Prabhu's darshan. Prabhu then wanted to know about Sanathana. Shri Rupa Goswami narrated the whole story and continued, "Prabhu! Being in the prison, he must be longing to have the darshan of your Holy feet". Prabhu replied with a smile, "Who said he is in the jail now? He would have come out by now. If God wills, both of you would meet him soon. Now you stay with me for a few days". Prabhu also made arrangements for the two of them to stay in his place itself. That day itself, they were blessed with Prabhu's prasadam (food). This

RUPA GOSWAMI

Janani



way, the brothers rejoiced at Prabhu's service. Rupa Goswami along with his brother Anoop stayed near the Lotus feet of Prabhu for 10 days.

Rupa Goswami was not only a Pandit and a scholar, he was a 'Baavuka bhaktha' (a devotee with feelings), and above all, he had received Prabhu's divine blessings. Then, will there be any doubt about his well-being? Having tended to the Guru's feet and with the Guru's divine blessings, can one show interest in this mortal world with its petty pleasures? Would a swan ever go in search of the crow's food? It is Bhagwan who appears as Sadhguru. The Sadhguru is nothing but Brahman with form. To Rupa Goswami's sight, Mahaprabhu was Lord Krishna himself! Considering Krishna as his Guru, he has described the *leelas* (divine plays) of Shri Krishna. He never made any effort to establish that Chaitanya Deva is the incarnation of God. He never regarded Mahaprabhu as someone different from Krishna and he did not need to make any effort in this direction.

In those days in Prayag, Rupa Goswami, the great scholar that he was, learnt the nuances of Bhakthi from Mahaprabhu. This he has elaborated in his innumerable books. Prabhu was fully aware of Rupa Goswami's heart. Hence, to bless him with dispassion, he said, "Rup! Look how the people who are tied to Samsara (worldliness) are crazy about the materialistic pleasures. They waste this precious human life only to earn status, fame, money, offspring and objects etc. Lust, wealth and fame are the three ropes which tie the '*jeevan*' (individual soul) tightly to this samsara, because of which, the jeevan cannot even swerve a little here or there. The path to attain Bhagwan is in the opposite direction to these three".

RUPA GOSWAMI

Janani

...to be contd



SHRI GNANESHWAR – 17 GNANESHWARI

In the village Mevasa, a person called Sachithanandam had died in a house. His wife was wailing loudly. A compassionate Gnaneshwar asked the lady, "Why are you crying"? She said, "My husband has passed away. How would'nt I not cry"? Gnaneshwar asked the lady her husband's name to which she replied, 'Sachithanandam'. Gnaneshwar started laughing, clapping his hands and said, "Will Sacchithanandam ever die? Sath-Chith-Anandam is Sath Chith Anandam!"

Even as Gnaneshwar was clapping his hands and laughing, the dead Sachithanandam got up alive. He however rose up



VITTALA
WOULD COME
KNOCKING AT
YOUR DOOR

Excerpts from a TV
series that conquered
the hearts of millions

and started following Gnaneshwar. Gnaneshwar then went to Kalleswar's temple. In those days, there had been huge pillars in that temple. Gnaneshwar leaned on one such stone pillar and wrote the commentary for Bhagavad Gita. Over a long period of time, even as the temple came to ruins, this pillar has however been preserved and is being worshipped.

Bhagavad Gita is a common scripture for all Hindus and is adored by all. There is none who hasn't spoken about the greatness of this book. Ramakrishna Paramahansa used to say "when 'Gita-Gita' is uttered, it becomes 'tagi- tagi'. 'tagi' in Sanskrit refers to '*thyagam*' (sacrifice). '*Thyagam*' is the essence of Gita". Gnaneshwar wrote the commentary for this Bhagavad Gita in Marathi at the age of 14 in the year 1283 for three years. The Sachithananam whose life was brought back by Gnaneshwar, sat near him and copied all that Gnaneshwar narrated, reclining on the stone pillar.

Today, the stone pillar on which Gnaneshwar leaned, is also worshipped as God. More Puja is being done to this pillar than even to the deity Kalleswar! People worship this pillar by adorning vastram (clothes), offering garlands, flowers and performing Pooja and Arathi. Above this pillar, Gnaneshwar's commentary on the Bhagavad Gita,

"Bhavaartha Deepika' has been kept. The inscription of Sun and Moon on this pillar can be seen even today. This implies that Gnaneshwar's 'Bhavaartha Deepika', otherwise known as Gnaneshwari, will live as long as the the Sun and Moon are present in this world.



We've moved!

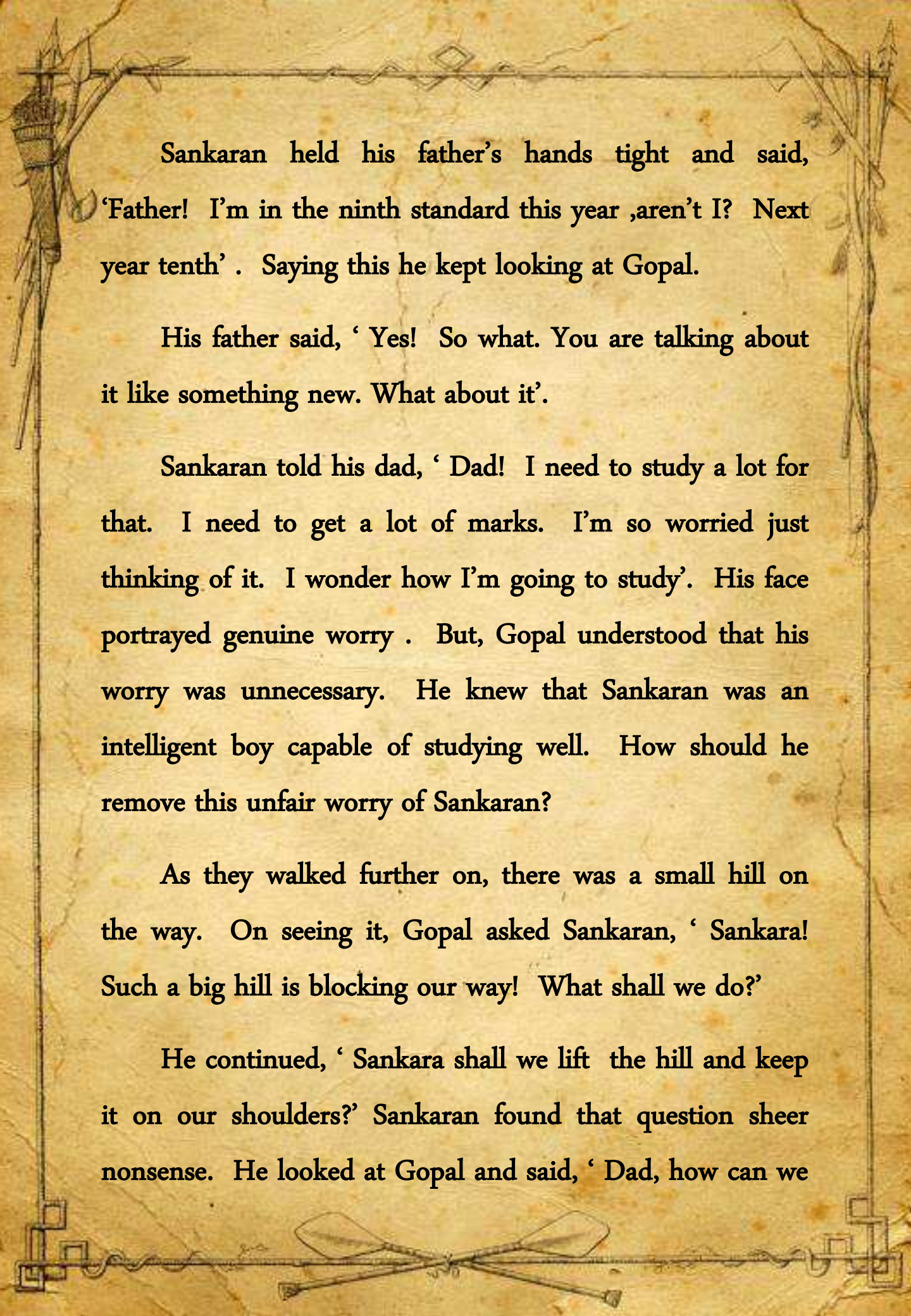
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A Tale for Children

Sankaran was a small boy. He used to be jovial and merry with his friends always. But that evening, he was strangely silent. His father came and tried saying different things to try and cheer up Sankaran. However, Sankaran did not seem inclined to open his mouth.

At times like this, Sankaran's father Gopal, would take Sankaran walking to quiet places to enjoy the breeze. Sankaran, would at once, become normal like before. That day too, he started out for walking ,taking Sankaran with him. Sankaran too, quietly held his dad Gopalan's hand and followed him.

As they were silently walking along,Sankaran's dad noticed Sankaran beginning to pay attention to the streets. Deciding that this was the right moment, he looked at Sankaran and asked, 'Sankara! Why are you so silent? Can't you tell dad what the matter is?'



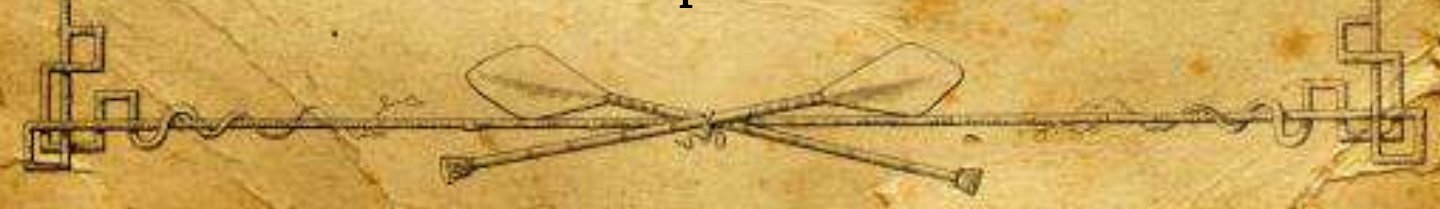
Sankaran held his father's hands tight and said, 'Father! I'm in the ninth standard this year ,aren't I? Next year tenth' . Saying this he kept looking at Gopal.

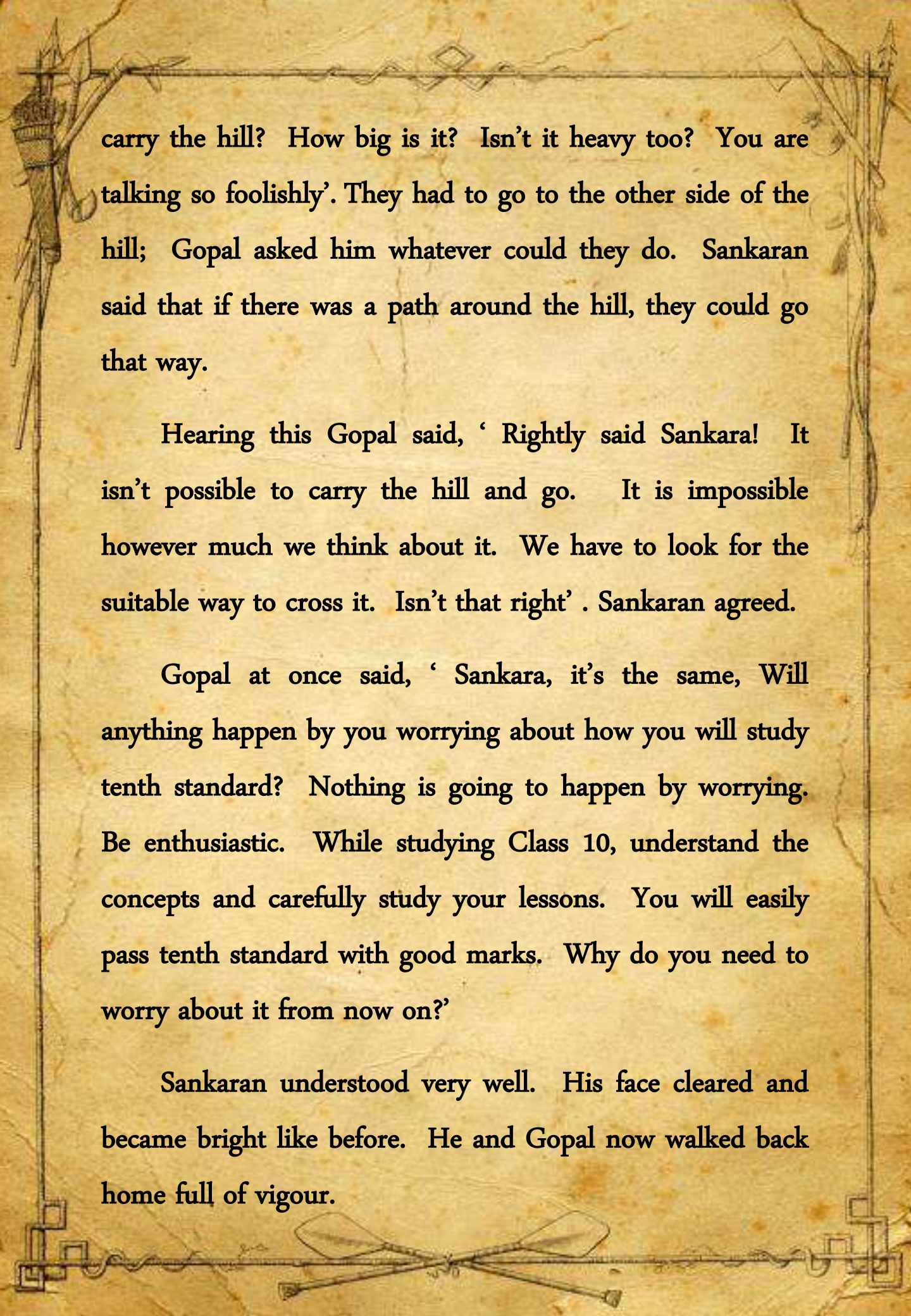
His father said, ' Yes! So what. You are talking about it like something new. What about it'.

Sankaran told his dad, ' Dad! I need to study a lot for that. I need to get a lot of marks. I'm so worried just thinking of it. I wonder how I'm going to study'. His face portrayed genuine worry . But, Gopal understood that his worry was unnecessary. He knew that Sankaran was an intelligent boy capable of studying well. How should he remove this unfair worry of Sankaran?

As they walked further on, there was a small hill on the way. On seeing it, Gopal asked Sankaran, ' Sankara! Such a big hill is blocking our way! What shall we do?'

He continued, ' Sankara shall we lift the hill and keep it on our shoulders?' Sankaran found that question sheer nonsense. He looked at Gopal and said, ' Dad, how can we





carry the hill? How big is it? Isn't it heavy too? You are talking so foolishly'. They had to go to the other side of the hill; Gopal asked him whatever could they do. Sankaran said that if there was a path around the hill, they could go that way.

Hearing this Gopal said, ' Rightly said Sankara! It isn't possible to carry the hill and go. It is impossible however much we think about it. We have to look for the suitable way to cross it. Isn't that right' . Sankaran agreed.

Gopal at once said, ' Sankara, it's the same, Will anything happen by you worrying about how you will study tenth standard? Nothing is going to happen by worrying. Be enthusiastic. While studying Class 10, understand the concepts and carefully study your lessons. You will easily pass tenth standard with good marks. Why do you need to worry about it from now on?'

Sankaran understood very well. His face cleared and became bright like before. He and Gopal now walked back home full of vigour.

Brindavan and Nandakumara

Even ascetics immersed in *Nirguna Brahma*(supreme reality without form or qualities), were drawn/ attracted by Hari Baba's qualities and did *bakthi* (were devoted) to him, without expecting anything from him.

SvathaPrakashji went to HanumanGadi everyday. His passion for *keerthan* (divine songs) kept growing. He used to start dancing in *bhava*(state of mind). Knowing this, Achyutha Muni would scold him a lot- ' In the morning you are learning Vedanta from me! In the evening you are singing and dancing in the midst of devotees! If you are practising *dvaita upasana* , you should do that. If you are following *Advaita upasana* , you should practise that. It is not possible to do both together. Either you stop studying Vedanta or stop this dancing-singing',.

On hearing this, he prostrated before Achyutha Muni and did pranams to Vedanta too, left that place and came to Hanumangadi. He started living there and doing bajans and keerthans. He was very fond of the satsang of ShriParanjpe. Paranjpe was

very happy to have got the satsang of such a *bhavuka baktha* (fortunate devotee). On his insistence, SvathaPrakash Maharaj did a pravachan in Hindi on Chaitanya Charitra based on the book 'Lord Gauranga'. Hearing the story of Gauranga ,the very embodiment of bakthi, from a devout baktha, the *shrotas* (hearers) were in bliss.

After a few days, he left from here. He went to a village named Gavan near Anoopshahar. SvathaPrakashji had experienced a divine, loving connection when he visited the Bhrigu kshetra for the first time with Baktha Lala Kundhanlalji, a local wealthy and influential person and his relative Hiralalji.

This time, he went to Gavan, and other neighbouring villages like Prerra, Nijampur, Shivapuri, Piravadi in search of devotees. With the bakthas he thus found, he organised sankeerthana *yagnas* (festivals)in various places.

Doing *keerthan* and making others do *keerthan* became an integral part of his life. He was very serious about making everyone do *Hari Nama Sankeertan* (singing the name of the Lord), with no caste or religious discrimination.

Once, in the month of *Aani* (mid June –mid July), he was coming from Prerra to the village of Gavan singing *HariNama*. On the way, he saw an old potter. That old man was carrying a basket full of mud items on his head, and going towards the village of Sindhauli. He seemed to be very tired. Sindhauli was still 3 miles away.

SvathaPrakash Maharaj told that old man, ‘ Sir! You appear to be very exhausted. Let us rest in the shade for awhile and then leave, I will take the basket off your head’, and lowered the basket . After resting for some time, when the potter prepared to resume his journey, SvathaPrakashji told him, ‘ Now you please raise the basket on my head. You chant the Hari Nama and follow me. I’ll do your work, you do mine’.

(to be contd)

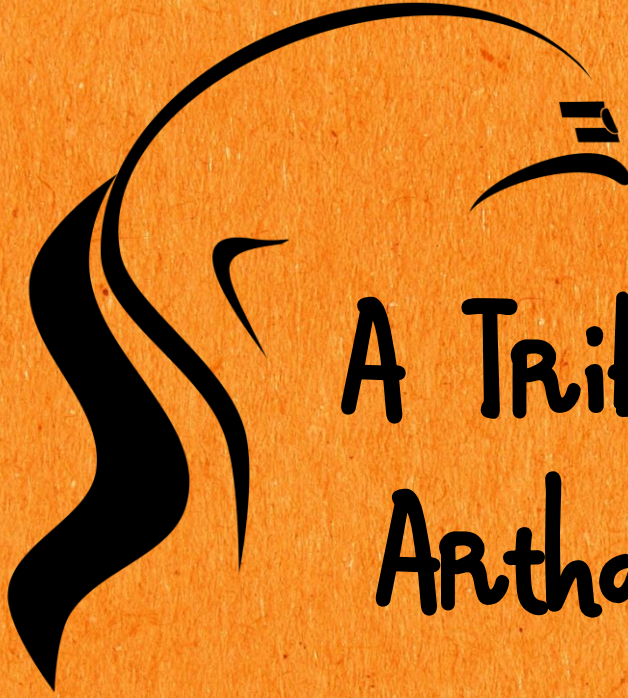
~ Janani



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A Tribute to ARthashastra

9am

Class 1-3

Drawing Contest

Conservation of
Natural Resources

11 am

Class 4-6

Poster Painting

Education is the
Best Friend

1pm

Class 7-9

T Shirt Painting

A Tribute to
Kautilya

3pm

Class 10-12

Design a Doodle

Work to Become;
Not to Acquire

10 am onwards ELOCUTION CONTEST

Class 6-12

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One should take up a work only after considering the pros and cons of carrying out or not carrying out the work. Those in the lower strata fear losing employment. Those in the middle strata fear dying. Those in the higher strata fear disgrace. It is the third fear that wise ones (you) should have. ----

Mahabharat – Udyog parva – 3rd Chapter