

Sri Hari:

MADHURA MURALI

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HH Maharanyam Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji

MADHURASMARANAM

My Guru As I See Him

A Letter To The Members Of Namadwaar Family

It's almost twenty six years since our Madhurapuri Ashram was established. Although we have always been celebrating the birthday of Bhagavan, this is the twenty fifth year after starting of the grand ten- day celebrations of Janmashtami! The number of years is a mere number. However, as everyone is reminiscing, it is a matter of joy to think of the same!

The village where our ashram is located has no previous connections to us. Swami Sivananda Saraswathi was born in Pattamadai in TamilNadu but moved to Rishikesh. So also, Swami Abhedananda was born somewhere in Kerala but settled in Trivandrum. The list is endless. Although Mahans are born in one place, it is at a different place that they permanently stay and bestow grace on their devotees. And so it is with our Madhurapuri Ashram where our Sri Swamiji came to reside. This place is known as the Mahanyam village. Originally called Maharanyam , it changed over a period of time and became Mahanyam.

Beneath the land where the ashram stands, Maharishis continue to do penance till date. Since twenty five years, incessant Veda chanting, nama sankeertanam, Bhagavatha parayanam, discourses and prasadam to devotees has been happening flawlessly.

Pure water from the well, milk from the cows, fresh flowers and everything that is needed for the worship of Premika Varadan are all available all the time.

Vasanthotsavam in the spring season, Navarathri utsavam, Adhyayana utsavam in the month of Margazhi (Dec-Jan), Gokulashtami utsavam, Hanumath Jayanthi, Kanyakumari Jaya Hanuman Pradishta Dinam (Sivarathri), Vasantha Panchami being the Pradishta Dinam Of Sri Kalyana Srinivasa Perumal, Sri Rama Navami, Maha Periyava's Jayanthi are utsavs celebrated throughout the year.

There must have been only about a hundred bakthas during the first utsav. At that time, there were no facilities at the ashram. But now, Premika Varadan has vastly expanded his empire .

There are namadwaars functioning at Tuticorin, Sivakasi, Periyakulam, Virudunagar, Kariyapatti, Madurai, Tiruttani, Valliyur, Kangeyam, Trichy, Srivilliputhur, Sriperumpudur, Salem, Kovilpatti, Govindapuram, Vathalagundu, Cuddalore, Chidambaram, Kalattipet, Pammal, Kovur, Anna Nagar, Arakkonam, Ambasamudram, Senganur, Tirunelveli, Mannargudi and Saththur. Work is in progress for Namadwaars at Thanjavur, Gudiyatham and Udumalpet. At places like Chaitanya Kuteeram in Govindapuram, Nangur, Senganur, Brindavan, Delhi, Gurgaon, Hyderabad, Vedaranyam and Srirangam our organisations are involved in various activities. Besides this, we are also involved in several temple renovation works. Outside India, in Malaysia, Singapore, and in many cities at United States of America, Sydney and Melbourne in Australia we have our own namadwaars in our own properties. In the U.S.A, a vast area of land has been purchased and efforts are being made to create a SRI KRISHNA THEME PARK. A new namadwaar has been started at Ernakulam in Kerala. In Karnataka, a namadwaar is functioning in Bangalore. Recently a namadwaar has been opened at Chitradurga.

At this juncture, I am sharing with you what Sri Swamiji wished to convey to all of us.



“Earlier about hundred bakthas used to come to ashram for Ekadesi. Nowadays, thousands of bakthas come to have darshan of Premika Varadan. On some Ekadesis there are even three thousand, four thousand bakthas. Bakthas come from other states too. We have not been publicising and inviting people over for Ekadesi. However, they learn somehow and come. Why? It is because Premika Varadan has bestowed every prayer of bhaktas who come for Ekadasi. I have a desire/wish from this year on. Gokulashtami utsav should be celebrated grandly in all Namadwaars and GOD satsangs just like it is celebrated in our Ashram. Many bakthas should participate in those places and receive the grace of the lord. This year, members of our Namadwaar families have been making arrangements for the same. All of you should join hands with them to make this festival a grand one and bring more and more new bakthas under the umbrella of the Lord’s Grace. Talk about Lord Krishna to all. Reach nama to everyone.

It would give me more happiness to see all of you celebrate Krishna in Namadwaars around the world, than your participation at the utsav at Ashram. There should be a Namadwaar in every city, village, small and big towns of Tamil Nadu. There should not be a single place in this world without a Namadwaar. Let us all work hard with devotion towards this.

Let us celebrate the birth of Krishna in all places. And let us make everyone celebrate. Let us wear new clothes on that day. Let us make sweets at home and offer to the Lord, and with all our near and dear ones and rejoice. Let us decorate our homes with colourful lamps. We shall keep placards that say “HAPPY KRISHNA JAYANTHI”, “HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO KRISHNA” above our homes. In places where there are no Namadwaars, we shall celebrate by having Mahamantra Kirtan and bhajans in public places. Let our hearts overflow with joy on this auspicious occasion of Krishna Janmashtami”.

-Sri Muralidhara Swamiji



As ordained by Sri Swamiji, let us celebrate on behalf of
Global Organisation for Divinity,
under the guidance of GOD Head Office.

- Dr A. Bhagyanathan

ANSWERS AND BEYOND

(Sri Swamiji's answers to
questions from Devotees)

Some say one has to go inward to do dhayna or japa, while some say the vasanas (latent tendencies) should be completely destroyed. Which of this will give the correct spiritual progress?

Both are correct. When one's mind goes completely inward, one's vasanas are completely destroyed. As vasanas gradually get destroyed, one's mind goes further inward.

I noticed that you were looking at archavathara Bhagavan without batting an eyelid. And as you were immersed in it, I could notice some bhakti bhavas in your physical body. Is there so much sanidhyam in that archavathara Bhagavan?

I did not ponder about who consecrated this archavathara Bhagavan, who performed pooja etc. As my eyes fell on Him, I was unable to take my eyes off Him. My mind experiences peace and bliss. That is sufficient.





NOBODY CAN RUIN THIS RELATIONSHIP OF OURS!

(uravel namakkingu ozhikka ozhiyAdhu)

Lord is there only to protect all. 'Is the Lord for us or are we for the Lord?' Lord is verily for us! This indeed is the truth. Who but God can protect us? But for the Lord we will all be verily orphans. It is but natural for all of us to feel the need for some support. If, while walking we feel that we would fall down our hand automatically gropes for something to hold on to. Likewise, from our young age we are always in search of some support. This is our nature. Only God is everlasting and true support. God is verily the refuge.


God verily desires 'us'! He verily 'desires Bhaktas'. Just as a mother does everything for the child, so too, the Lord Himself does everything for the Bhaktas. Mother is the refuge for the child. Child is verily the refuge for the mother. It is verily a child that makes a woman a mother. In the absence of a child she cannot be called a mother. Likewise, God earns 'sharanyatvam' (being the refuge) only because of Bhaktas. Only because God offers refuge to Bhaktas He is called 'Sharanyan' (the refuge). In the absence of Bhaktas to whom will God give refuge? Who but God can give us refuge?





Sri Andal sings 'uravel namakkingu ozhiyave ozhiyAdhu': 'nobody can ruin the bond between us' says Andal. The relationship between us and God cannot be broken even if we exerted effort in that direction. It cannot be destroyed because others ask us to stop being devoted to Him. Would our relationship come to an end just because our detractors say 'do not keep uttering 'Krishna! Krishna!', do not go to Him, do not think of Him'? Or, would God Himself ruin the relationship by asking us not to come to Him? None of these will happen. Effort to destroy it will only meet with failure. This is because the nature of Bhakti is so powerful. If we were to tell the Lord 'I do not wish to have anything to do with Thee' or even if the Lord were to tell us 'we have nothing to do with each other' the relationship between us and the Lord will not be ruined. Even after spotting defects this love cannot be removed. Relationship cannot be destroyed.

Let us say that our friend has some shortcomings. Or, we may cherish affection for him as he is blemishless and is of great character. Well! if some defect arises in him later which shall we consider? – the affection or the shortcomings? Flaws can be set right is the way of the world. If a defect is habitual in our friend or if it arises in him suddenly we must try to set it right. We cannot push him away and end the association if we feel that he will not rectify his mistakes. Realizing it to be his way and that he cannot be transformed one should accept him and not give up on him: because the friendship is genuine. It does not change on the basis of character – good or faulty.





When Sugreevas says


“dhana tyAga: sukhatyAgO deshatyAgOpi vaanaka: |


vayasyArte pravarttante sneham drushtvO tathAvidam |”

Sri Rama looks at Sri Lakshmana and laughs. Sri Rama and Sri Lakshmana understand what Sugreeva says and accept it. When Sugreeva says ‘if Vibheeshana is taken in he will spoil our relationship; so, do not accept him’, Sri Rama tells Sugreeva ‘if a person can ruin our relationship then such a relationship need not be’. Sri Rama is furious with Sugreeva and tells him ‘you stay with me only if you think nothing and no one can ruin our relationship’.

There is no worse failure than being unsure of our friendship. When friendship is based on some set goal it comes to an end on achieving the goal. Genuine friendship never ends. It survives against all odds. God stretches out His hand in love. Anyone’s effort to change our mind will only go in vain. The friendship, the love will not change.


Hiranyakashippu, the most wicked in the world, could not change Prahlad’s mind. None of Rana Kumbaji’s effort to change Mira’s mind bore fruit. One who gives up affection as a result of others’ advice knows not the value of affection. True love is not time bound. That kind of love must have arisen either out of selfishness or based on one’s goodness and shortcomings. So long as we see others’ goodness and shortcomings our love will not be steady. Affection born out of selfishness is not genuine. When love sprouts between two without any self-interest and is not based on the other’s attributes that love can never be ruined. “Urael namakkingu ozhikka ozhiyAdu” says our Mother Andal.






Everything turned supportive for Sri Andal in her love for Perumal. Her father was very supportive. Nobody stopped Sri Andal saying ‘do not be devoted to Krishna! Do you think Krishna would appear?’ Further She was not lazy. She did not get into a dormant state after waking up others. She was ever thinking of Him – “Krishna! Krishna! Krishna!” There was no end to her Krishna Bhakti. Krishna also did not put her devotion to test. Her Bhakti was so strong. She brought about the relationship of ‘uravel namakkingu ozhikka ozhiyadhu’! This indeed was such a relationship! The love that sprouted in Andal for Ranganatha was like the relationship between Rama and Sita, like the one that Radha and the Gopis had for Krishna. Do you know the answer for the question ‘did He create that relationship or did she bring about that relationship with Him?’ The one and only answer is – verily ‘b h A g y a m’! – fortunate! blessed!

A magnetic needle always points to North. You may place it in any direction but the needle will always point to North. Hiranyakashippu is furious with Prahlad – “Even after I repeatedly warn you, you keep uttering ‘Narayana! Narayana!’” Prahlad tells him, “The reason behind this is attraction!” just like the magnetic needle always pointing to North. The magnetic needle feels attracted to North. Other needles do not turn to North! That attraction is felt only by the magnetic needle! That attraction is with the magnetic needle and the Northerly direction. The pull from this (the magnetic needle) and the pull from that direction creates this attraction. I have affection for you; you have affection for me. The relationship is broken even if one of us drops it. One should regain the relationship even if one has to fall at the feet.






“smaragaraLa khandanam mama sirasi mandanam” asks Sri Krishna of Sri Radha in Ashtapadi. Love should not be defiled for any reason. As God knows the glory of love He will certainly not push us away and we too shall not give Him up. Even if out of our folly we give Him up, He will not forsake us. Showing this kind of relationship with Ranganatha, Andal was triumphant. As a result of such relationship she massages Sri Ranganatha’s feet – ‘Kesava nambiyai kAl pidippAL ennum ippEru enakku aruL kaNdAL’ – and even today blessing all of us with her divine glance, she shows us that His Feet is our only refuge.

In the third Canto of Srimad Bhagavatam is the term ‘jalajalOchanaiya Jananya’. The Mother (that Andal), placing His feet on Her lap does not look at those Holy feet but is verily looking at us! Had She been looking at His Feet the term would have been ‘jalajalOchanaiya Mahishya’! Since it reads ‘Jananya’ its connotation is that She is looking at us. She looks at us and tells us ‘this Feet is verily the succour for you and for me’! Blessing us all with Her divine glance Andal says ‘take refuge in this Feet’.

‘NAcchiyAr’ means ‘nAyaki’ – Consort. She was nAcchiyAr and after wearing Perumal’s garland around Her neck She became Andal. Taking hold of Ranganatha’s Feet She becomes the Mother (ThAyAr) and blesses all of us as a Mother. Such is the relationship; such lofty bhakti!

(Excerpts from the benedictory address by Sri Sri Anna during his visit to Premika Bhavanam on Adipooram)



SAMPOORNA SHUKLA YAJUR VEDA PARAYANAM

Under the auspices of Maharanyam Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji Kainkarya Sabha, Sampoorna Veda Parayanam is being conducted every year. In the year 2016, Sampoorna Sama Veda Parayanam was organized at Sri Sundara Anjaneya temple, Bangalore, from July 20th till 29th, led by Ambattur Brahmmsari Chandramouli Srouthigal. In this Sama Veda Parayanam, 28 Vedic Scholars participated. In the year 2017, Sampoorna Rig Veda Parayanam was conducted from Jul 16th till July 22nd at Sri Sundara Anjaneya temple in which, 48 Vedic Vidwans participated under the supervision of an Adhyapak of our Sandeepani Gurukula, Brahmmsari Udhaneshwara Bhat Ganapadigal. This year, in 2018, Sampoorna Shukla Yajur Veda Parayanam happened from July 30 till Aug 5th. 28 Vedic Vidwans participated under the guidance of Brahmmsari Vijayaraghava Ganapadigal, Brahmmsari Dhandapani Ganapadigal. On the concluding day, Aug 5th, the vidwans were honored with Padhapooja, were offered garlands and crown and also Sambavanai was given to the best of our ability. On behalf of Dr. Yagnyasubramanyam of Om Foundation, Chennai Sri Sethuraman joined in person and honored each and every Vidwan with Sambavanai. The entire event was well coordinated under the responsibility of Bangalore Sri Shankaranarayanan.

BAGYAM AHO BAGYAM!

Sri Rangam Karpagavruksha Vahanam

- Sri Venkatesan

As per the divine will of our Guru Maharaj, which was to have a Veda Patashala in the Ratha veethi of Srirangam, known as the Bhuloka Vaikuntam, an elegant and gratifying Patashala with 30 children, is now running through Sri Sandeepani Gurukulam Sri Rangam Trust, in the North Uthira veethi, at the entrance of Thayar Sannidhi.

In the month of Masi, during the Thirupalli Odam Utsav, Namperumal, gives darshan everyday in the North Uthira Veethi, exactly where our Patashala is located. In the recent utsav, in Masi, our Gurunathar stayed in the Patashala with great eagerness to enjoy the beauty of Namperumal gracing the devotees from the palanquin in the morning and on a Vahana in the evening. It was at this blissful juncture that a divine sankalpa occurred in the heart of our Gurunathar to offer a KarpagaVruksha Vahana to our 'Sarvaloka sharanyan', Bhagavan SriRanganathar.



As ordained by our Gurunathar, through our Jaya Hanuman Seva trust, an extremely wonderful Vahana in Burma teak, embellished with gold plating and copper armor, was made in accordance with the laws of sculpture and agama sastra, suiting the traditions of Srirangam temple and most importantly in a way pleasing to Namperumal. On the evening of 9/8/2018, at the auspicious Godhuli time, the Vahana was offered at the feet of Srirangam Sri Ranganatha Perumal, in the presence of the temple administrator, officials, Bhattacharyas and other temple personage.

It is our highest fortune that, the bestower of all wishes, Sri Ranganatha, made us the instruments to get this KarpagaVruksha Vahana done for Himself!

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A TALE FOR CHILDREN

maithreem bajatha

Once a question was asked to around 100 participants of a camp, "What is true happiness?" A unanimous answer that everyone gave was that achieving something in life is true happiness.

The camp coordinator said they will be finding out what true happiness is, on that day of the camp. He introduced them to a strange game. He gave everyone a balloon, asked them to put a green tape on it and write their name on the balloon. He put all these balloons in a room and said the participants will be given 5 minutes to find the balloon with their name on it.

Everybody rushed into the room and started searching for the balloon with their name on it. There was total chaos inside the room for 5 minutes. After the 5 minutes was done, they all came outside. Except for two people, Ramesh and Suresh, everyone else were sad. The coordinator asked them why they were feeling happy.

Suresh, with a happy smile in his face showed the balloon with his name tag on it. He was delighted to have found his balloon. The coordinator asked if Ramesh found his as well as he was happy too.

Ramesh replied that he did not find his balloon. But, when we found the balloon with Suresh's name on it, he felt it would be easy to find Suresh in the crowd and hand over his balloon rather than searching for his own in that commotion. When Ramesh gave the balloon to Suresh, he was happy to see the big smile on Suresh's face.

The coordinator then explained, "Now do you understand? Achieving something gives happiness for sure. But, helping others achieve somethings gives joy to two people. In today's world, offering support and enabling other person to achieve his/her goal is gaining importance. When we are in a position to serve other people, we must learn to succeed as well help people around us succeed as well. That is true happiness." So, we have to understand that happiness is not only in achieving something, but, helping others succeed in their journey as well.

The lesson that we need to learn from this story is that, if everybody had done what Ramesh did, each person would have found his balloon. Not only that, the amount of happiness would have doubled because of the opportunity that each person got, to help other person win. So, happiness is in helping and supporting other people's success. This is called cooperation. This entire world must change from a competitive environment to a supportive environment.

Our Gurunathar sand "Maithreem bhajatha..." along with the National Anthem, when he hoisted the flag on Independence Day. There is a line, "spardham tyajatha" in that song, which means "give up competition". Ramesh had understood the meaning of this line very well.

**SANSKRIT WORD
OF THE MONTH**

- Sri Vishnupriya

कृष्ण

The word 'Krishna' itself is sweet to us, the devotees of Lord Krishna. It is only apt to study this word during Gokulashtami. Our 'Kanhaiya' was named 'Krishna' by the sage Gargacharya in Krishnavatar. 'Krishna' means black in colour. Since our Kanhaiya looked like a dark blue cloud, Gargacharya named him 'Krishna'. The word 'Krishna' also means, someone who attracts everyone. This name itself is sweet to utter and is a protective shield, apart from being a medicine for our 'samsara' (worldly life).

Let us see the other meanings of 'Krishna'. Arjuna was also known as 'Krishna'. Draupadi was also called 'Krishna' because she was of dark complexion. River Yamuna is also called 'Krishna'. In Srimad Bhagavatham, at the beginning of 'Kaliya nartana' chapter, Sri.Suka says, विलोक्य दूषितां कृष्णां कृष्णाः कृष्णाहिना प्रभुः, meaning, "Krishna finds the 'Krishna' (River Yamuna) poisoned by a 'Krishna sarpa' . A black snake is denoted a 'Krishna sarpa'.

Sage Vyasa was known as Krishna Dwaipayana. Dweepa means island. Since Vyasacharya was born in an island and was also of dark complexion, he was called Krishna Dwaipayana.

In Govindakathamritam, Sri Sri Anna has written a beautiful sloka using this name Krishna with different meanings.

कृष्णं कृष्णाश्रयं कृष्णं कृष्णं कृष्णाश्रयं तथा ।
कृष्णं कृष्णाश्रयं कृष्णं कृष्णं कृष्णाश्रयं भजे ॥

Here he has used the word Krishna to denote Lord Krishna, Arjuna, Draupadi, river Yamuna and Vyasacharya.

Even nightingale and crow are also called 'Krishna' because they are black in colour !!

The word 'Krishna paksha' is quite popular. The waxing phase of the moon every month is known as 'Sukla paksha' and the waning phase of the moon is denoted as 'Krishna paksha'.

Similarly, a male deer is called 'Krishnasaram' and a female deer is referred to as 'Harini'. In Srimad Bhagavatha, Sri Suka describes how the female deers 'Harinis' enjoyed the flute music of Lord Krishna along with 'Krishna sarams'.

Krishnajinam means the skin of black antelope. Brahmacharis wear this 'Krishnajinam'. In Srimad Bhagavatha, it is mentioned that when Lord Vamana came as a brahmachari, Goddess Earth offered him this 'Krishnajinam'.

There is also a river called Krishnaveni in our country. Since Lord Krishna was born on Ashtami

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Sound is sacred. Sound is powerful. It connects us, heals us and expands our hearts. Mantra chanting opens us up to sound on another level and has an enigmatic transformative power. It is an ancient key for unlocking the mysteries of the entire universe.

Mantra has been described as a sacred utterance, or numinous sound. The earliest mantras took birth in India over 3,000 years ago and were composed in Vedic Sanskrit. World-renowned musicians and chant masters, Deva Premal and Miten describe mantras as energetic sound formulas. According to them, mantras are a bridge to something that slows us down and puts everything into perspective. They believe that the way out of today's troubles is to go within, so they travel the world sharing the medicine of mantra.

Every organ in the body has a frequency, a sound. When we chant the mantra there is a neurobiological shift which happens in the physical brain. And the cells rejoice, they get happier. Today, all over the world, people are waking up to the power of mantra. With the massive growth in yoga in the West, and its healing wisdom, including mantra, many people are embracing mantra chanting, kirtan and meditation.

The ancient mantras are needed today more than ever in our busy, stressful lives, and are bringing healing, a sense of belonging, oneness and community to people all over the world.

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