

Sri Hari:

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

November 2017

# MADHURAMURALI



# Madhura Smaranam

My Guru As I See Him

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- Dr A Bhagyanathan

Personal Secretary  
to Sri Sri Swamiji

Our Malaysia Namadwaar is being beautifully run by Sunithaji, who, also involves herself directly in many social service activities in various parts of Malaysia. She visits every house and conducts prayer sessions too. Supporting her, there are many families in Malaysia Namadwaar, who are greatly devoted and dedicated in their service to Sri Swamiji. Sunithaji, accompanied by few other devotees from Malaysia, visited Chennai from Sep 15 to 17, to have the darshan of Sri Swamiji. Let me share with you all, the essence of that small discussion, Sri Swamiji had with them.

“Amongst all the species in this world, humans alone have the ability to discriminate. A person with such discrimination ponders about, “Who created this world? Who is protecting us? Who is the cause behind all the happenings in this world? Why does death occur?” , thus, some started seeing the Sun as God, some worshipped fire as God and a few others created images on their own for worship while some developed devotion for the most powerful person amongst them.

Like this, many imagined different types of Gods. This is not wrong. Why? Who can perceive God? Unless God reveals His own self and imparts the knowledge about His cause and effects, all that the man does, can only be imagination. If God does not reveal Himself, then His entire creation itself would be of no use. So, Bhagavan revealed the knowledge about Himself to Brahma, who in turn passed it on to Devas and Narada. And, the same was transferred by Narada to Sage Vyasa, which for our comprehension came as the Vedas, Mahabharatha and Puranas. God does appear and speak to the one who is eligible. Thus, Bhagavan revealed Himself through the well deserving Sage Vyasa.

This religion is eternal. It existed even before a thought called religion occurred in the minds of others. In our present time, this religion shows NamaKirtan as the simplest path to attain the Lord. Let us too chant the divine names incessantly and attain all the benefits!"

This is the essence of Sri Swamiji's talk, that was bestowed upon the devotees from Malaysia Namadwaar.

It is to be noted that Sept 17th was the 6th Anniversary of Malaysia Namadwar.

*Even if a man shuts himself completely in a cave and dies holding on to only a single noble thought, this thought would pierce and pass through the walls of the cave, spread through the sky and finally go deep into whole humanity. The power of thought is so dangerous. Therefore, do not be in haste to voice your opinion to others. Only one who has something to give can give counsel [upadesam].*

- Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa

# Answers and Beyond

Some people spend long hours doing puja whereas we seem to complete it in a simple manner!

*What is the significance of puja? God does not expect it of us. The real fruit of a puja is fixing our mind in thoughts of God all through the hours that we conduct the puja. We follow Bhagavata dharma. In this path reading holy texts, listening to and narrating God related stories, singing divine hymns are considered more important than puja. In fact we spend more time in all these than in puja. Even puja could be done mechanically as it is related to the body. Kirtan [singing divine hymns], japa [chanting the Divine Name/Mantra], parayana [reading holy texts] are verbal. They can be performed only if the mind is involved in them at least to a certain extent. If not it would stagger. Verbal japa would lead to dhyana [meditation/concentration]*

*Shedding tears touched by the Lord's compassion while narrating His stories is verily abhishekam. Non-violence, forbearance, determination and dispassion that we come across in the life histories of Saints are verily flowers. Horripilation is verily archana. Annihilation of mind's ignorance resulting in the birth of jnana [wisdom] is verily karpooora harati. Being humble is verily namaskara.*

# TOUCHING MEMORIES!

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Sri Swamiji

In Kalettipettai village youths belonging to our Satsang regularly get together and perform Namakirtan. On an early morning in the month of Margazhi [mid-December to mid-January] I had gone to participate in the street bhajan there.

After the bhajan devotees made me sit on a chair placed below a tree. Even as I wondered why I was made to sit there all but one youth moved away. This youth then shook the tree. It was a parijata tree. It was filled with flowers. The moment he shook it all the flowers dropped on me in a huge heap! In several places several devotees have worshipped me with flowers but this was unique and highly enjoyable.



By the grace of our Sadguru, Chaithanya Kuteer was established very near to the adhistanam of Sri Bhagavannama Bodendra Swamigal at Govindapuram. It's anniversary was celebrated this year on 5th of september. Chaithanya Kuteer was established on 26th september 2007, on the Aradhana day of Sri Bodendra Swamigal. Like every year, 'Akanda nama kirtan' (chanting of Mahamantra) took place from 6am to 6pm this year also. During the procession of Sri Bodendra Swamigal in the evening, Sri Sri Anna graced the occasion with his presence at Chaithanya Kuteer. Vishnuradha Bhagavathar, who has been taking care of Chaithanya Kuteer since it started, made all arrangements perfectly. Sri Sri Anna's discourse of Srimad Bhagavatham was held from 5th of september, 2017 at Sri Mutt. Sri Sri Anna would give Theertha prasad everyday after salagrama pooja early in the morning. Our Vishnuradha Bhagavathar also would take Theertha prasad everyday.

On the morning of 11th september 2017, as usual Vishnuradha Bhagavathar took Theertha prasad from Sri Sri Anna and returned to Chaithanya Kuteer. Then he started making preparations for prabodhanam (waking up the Lord) of Lord Premika Jagannathar. Suddenly there was an excitement among the devotees near the entrance. A devotee informed Vishnuradhar that Sri Sri Anna was visting the nearby Gosala (cowshed) and hence he rushed to the entrance.

## Bhagyam Aho Bhagyam!



With a smile on His face, Sri Sri Anna entered the Kuteer and sat on the sofa. When the curtain was drawn after the prabodhanam of Sr Premika Jagannathar, Sri Sri Anna did Arathi to the deities and offered tulsi leaves. He stood for a while with his eyes closed and then proceeded to the inner room. Vishnuradha Bhagavathar followed Sri Sri Anna and offered him prabodhana prasada (milk). Sri Sri Anna brought out the significance of the fortunate life of Vishnuradha Bhagavathar which was filled with Namakirtan (chanting of the divine names), kathashravanam (spiritual discourse), and Bhagavath kankaryam (service to the Lord) by the blessings of the Guru.

“There is a song in Rasa. 'What more do I need?' In our Radhika shatakam, the song 'kim mama varaniyam...' also brings out the same bhava (feeling). It is a great fortune which cannot be attained easily. When blessed with this kind of a fortune, one feels, and indeed should feel apprehensive about continuing to do this service without a break. Just as Brahma sang in praise of Lord Krishna, 'Thathre anukampam sukameekshamana:', if one is fortuitous to have received the blessings of the Lord, He himself makes everything favourable to the devotee. In the eleventh canto of Srimad Bhagavatham, Sri Krishna tells Uddhava, 'Mayanukulena', that he makes everything favourable for a life of devotion.”

After a brief silence, Sri Sri Anna continued, “In his Prabodhasudhakara, Sri Adishankara says, 'Nidhahara vihareshwanadhara:'. Likewise, without bothering too much about food, sleep and leisure, one should listen to the discourses on the Lord everyday.” With a smiling face, Sri Sri Anna then blessed saying him Radhe Krishna.

Vishnuradha Bhagavathar's joy knew no bounds since it also happened to be his birthday.

On July 26, 2017, Puri Jagannatha Rath Yatra was held with Mahamantra kirtan at Govindapuram. After this event, Sri Swamiji came to Chennai for an Akhanda Mahamantra satsang. From morning 6 am, everyone – right from a 4-year-old boy to an 84-year-old grandfather – was chanting Mahamantra here enthusiastically like 16-year-old youths. As soon as Sri Swamiji entered the place, the Mahamantra kirtan resounded more blissfully. Seeing this energetic Mahamantra kirtan being done by all these bhagavatas, Sri Swamiji was extremely pleased. Spurred by the beautiful, happy smile on Sri Swamiji's face, the Mahamantra resonated even more joyfully. Was this Goloka or Vaikuntha, we wondered! The joyful bliss there was like that! Five hours of Akhanda Nama flashed by like five minutes.

# A Divine Dialogue

Devotees who had come from abroad desired to listen to Sri Swamiji's pravachan. Sri Swamiji said with soulabhyam, "Why... we can keep it as a dialog (Q&A)!" The devotees were so happy, it could not be expressed in words.

First, a lady devotee wishing to clarify a doubt she had, humbly asked a question. The dialog began.

"Radhe Radhe to Sri Swamiji," she said.

"Radhe Radhe. What question do you have?" Sri Swamiji asked.

"To perform Guru kainkaryam, one should have complete involvement, correct?"

"Yes, definitely."

“But when we do that kankaryam, the mind does not sit quietly but instead does its job.”

Sri Swamiji, with a smile, asked innocently like he did not know, “What job does the mind do?”

“While doing kankaryam itself, the ego raises up and heaps self-praise that ‘It is I who is doing this kankaryam’; ‘It is because of Me that this kankaryam is being done.’ After a while, the knowledge that it is not really I who is doing this kankaryam rises up. Is it right to continue to do kankaryam while thinking like this? Or are these thoughts trying to distract us away from doing kankaryam?”

Sri Swamiji enjoyed that question and began to answer it in his own inimitable style. “We perform a kankaryam. At that time, thoughts like ‘I am doing this kankaryam. Who can do kankaryam like I do? Nobody else can do it like me!’ will always arise. To do kankaryam without such thoughts is an ultimate, high state. Victory-loss, joy-sorrow, pride-insult... have they all become equal for us and ceased to affect us? No. Hence it is only natural that we get such thoughts.”

Sri Swamiji then gave a few seconds for the people gathered there to digest what he had just said. What he said next, gave a new angle to the answer. “Have you noticed one thing? Along with the thought that ‘I am doing this kankaryam’, the thought that ‘such a thought is wrong’ also arises, in truth. That is why we are able to realize the presence of the [egoistic] feeling that ‘I am doing the kankaryam’. That is how we also realize that such a thought should not come. This kankaryam itself will help you to reach that highest state where both these thoughts do not arise at all. Hence we should not stop doing kankaryam for any reason at all.”

All the devotees who were until then listening quietly, respectfully and without any movement, now joyfully nodded their heads automatically. They understood the greatness of this simple, rare gem that had fallen from Sri Swamiji’s lips.

Everyone understood the depth of what Sri Swamiji meant when he said, “We notice the thought that ‘I am doing’.” We do our everyday work only with the ego that I am doing it. But we do the work without realizing that we are doing it with that ego. However when we involve ourselves in lofty, divine kankaryam, we notice that we have the ego that ‘I am doing’... isn’t this the first step in our [spiritual] evolution?

Let us assume that everyone has been affected by a disease. That disease is there always. If we want to cure ourselves of that disease, should we not first understand that we have been affected by a disease? Only then will the feeling arise that this disease is not right; that we should not be afflicted by it. For this feeling, the knowledge that the disease exists is the root, isn’t it? This disease is nothing but our ego (ahankaram). Sri Swamiji beautifully explained this as “we learn 2 things.” He said simply, “We realize that the thought that ‘I am doing this’ is arising; we also realize that this thought should not arise.”

“Even though it sounds simple, what profound meaning it has!” the devotees were filled with wonder.

Sri Swamiji continued, “We should not stop doing kankaryam for any reason. You should somehow motivate yourself to constantly do kankaryam. If you don’t do kankaryam, what will you do? You will watch movies, watch TV shows. You will go shopping and waste time. Hence, no matter how egoistic you are, just be patient... perform kankaryam continuously.”

Sri Swamiji looked around to see if what he had said had reached everybody. It was clear that everyone had taken to heart what Sri Swamiji had said. Sri Swamiji then proceeded divinely to elucidate on this question further with another wonderful angle...

(to be continued)

- M.K. Ramanujam

It was Srivatsan's birthday that day! His father, Professor Meghanathan wanted to buy a set of new clothes for him and took him to a shop hurriedly, leaving his rental car waiting for him. There was a lot of crowd in Ranganathan street, so they rushed to the shop to buy the clothes quickly as they did not want the rental car to wait for long. They went into the children's section of the shop and found a good collection of colourful clothing. The salesman welcomed the Professor with a smile. He opened each and every box slowly and showed the clothes in a relaxed manner. The Professor lost his patience and spoke harshly to the salesman and said, "Hey, why are you doing this so slowly? Should you not be faster?".

He selected the outfit within five minutes and hurriedly left the shop. As he was getting into the car, Meghanathan started to complain about the salesman.

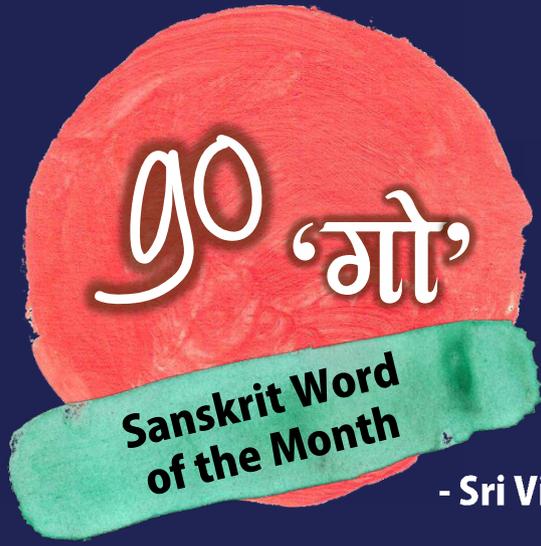
For the next five minutes, he continued to criticise about him and how lazy he was. Srivatsan was listening to all of this quietly.

The Professor asked, "Srivatsa! You seem to be lost in thoughts! Are you also annoyed about the act of the salesman?". Srivatsan responded, "Father, I just thought of something. Can I tell you about it?" to which the Professor said, "Of course, why are you even asking? Tell me".

Srivatsan said, "Father, today, we had a need to buy a new set of clothes urgently. If our attention was only on that, we would not be thinking unnecessarily about the nature of the salesman or whether what he did was right or wrong etc. I observed one thing. Whenever we felt that the salesman was lazy, we somehow forgot about our basic need to buy the clothes urgently. Our criticism and judgements about the salesman became more important. Instead of focusing about our urgent necessity, when you started to judge the salesman and thought that he was wrong, you got angry. I learnt something very important from this experience. It is not for us to focus on the qualities of a salesman, father. It is not our business!! Only when we loose sight of our own primary needs, we start criticising people. When we form the judgement that what others did was wrong, we get angry. Such thoughts take us away from our real needs and necessities".

"These judgements and criticism become barriers to the fulfilment of our needs. If we function with a clear vision about our needs, these judgements about others is totally unnecessary. In fact, our needs are likely to be fulfilled relatively quicker". When he finished saying this, the Professor could not say a word in return. He thought to himself, "what a beautiful lesson". Next day during his English class, he told his students, "I have learnt something new today. When we focus on our needs, we don't judge or label people. So our needs get met quickly. When we judge or label people, I have seen that it is a pathetic way to express our real needs".

When his students heard this important practical point to follow in life, they gave a standing ovation. Our Professor mentally offered this appreciation to his son.



The word “GO” is very prominent in Sanskrit. It has different meanings in different contexts. It is also the source of origin for many other words. Let us see a few such words.

Generally, when we say the word “GO”, the first thing that comes to our mind is the word “cow”. Yes, though that is the primary meaning of the word in Sanskrit, the word “GO” has various other meanings too. Our mother earth is also known as “GO”. It is mentioned in the Puranas that mother earth takes the form of a cow. The heaven or ‘Swarg lok’ as we call it is also called “GO” in Sanskrit. Even our sense organs are called “GO”. In Srimad Bhagavatham, in Ajamila Upakhyanam, there is a verse wherein Yamadharmaraj says “Yam vai na gopihi, manasaasubhirva...” Meaning “ one who cannot be perceived by the sense organs, mind, words or the life force, prostrations unto Him”. Further, the rays of Sun and Moon are also called “GO” in Sanskrit. In Raasa Pancha Adhyaayi (Srimad Bhagavatham 10th Canto), while describing how Krishna reveled in the beauty of Brindavan and played his flute, Sri Suka says, “vanam cha tat komala gopi ranjitham” meaning, Brindavan which is beautified by the soft rays of the moon”. The word “GO” also means ‘word’

or “Goddess Saraswathi”.

Thus there are so many meanings for the word “GO” and one can go on and on. Now let us also see the meanings of some of the words that originated from the word “GO”. Did we not say earlier that the word “GO” means “COW”? the words Gokulam, Gopalan and Gopi are all known to us. So let us see a few words that are not so familiar to many of us.

There is a word “GODHAHANA”, which means “milking the cow”. While describing Sri Suka, Srimad Bhagavatham says, “Sa Godhahana maathram hi gruheshu gruhamedhinaam”. This means Sri suka would remain in one place for only as long as it takes for the milk to fall from the udder of the cow to the vessel kept below to collect it. “So How did Suka, who would not stay in any place remain in the banks of Ganges for 7 days to impart Srimad Bhagavatham to Parikshit”??, the sages asked incredulously.

The word “GOCHARAM” is also a fairly familiar word to many of us. That which is tangible and within our reach is “Gocharam”. It is very interesting to see how this word originated. The cow is normally kept tied with a rope, is it not? The distance or the radius within which the cow can move would depend on the length of the rope tied and this distance is called “Gocharam”. From then onwards, what is within our reach came to be known as “Gocharam”. For the very same reason Brahman came to be known as “Agocharam” as in “Mano Vacham Agocharam”, meaning that which cannot be reached /perceived by our mind or word.

“GOMUKHA” is the name of a musical instrument. “veena Panava Gomukhaa:” is often used where it is indicated that the demi gods played the musical instruments.

The next most familiar and well known word is “GOPA”. The one who looks after the cows ( Paalayathi ) is called “Gopan” or “Gopalan”. But there is also another meaning for the word “Gopa”. It means to hide, to keep a secret etc. The word “Gupt” originated from “Gopa”. “Gupt” means “secret’ or ‘kept hidden’. The holy Neelachal Puri Jagannath Kshetra is called the “Gupt Brindavan”.

Similarly, one is very familiar with the word “Gothra”. Gothra is used to indicate our lineage i.e the Rishi from whom we descended. There is also another meaning for the word “Gothra”. It means ‘mountain’. Since the mountain takes care of the cows by providing them grass to eat, it came to be known as “Gothra”. In Srimad Bhagavatham while describing the glorious “Govardhana leela” of lord Krishna, it is said “Gothra leelaapathrena”. Which means Krishna lifted the mountain (Gothra) as though he was playing”.

“GODHOOLI Samayam” is the time when the cows return in the evening after grazing the whole day. Dhooli means dust. When the cows return enmasse in the evening, the dust that rises in the air because of the stamping of their hooves on the ground is known as “GODHOOLI”. The time is between 5 to 6 pm. This time is said to be very auspicious for Sridevi, the Goddess of wealth. It is said that one who pays his obeisance to the Goddess during this time will be blessed with all auspiciousness.

But for the time and space constraints, one could go on with the list of words that owe their origin to the word “GO”. Gomedhakam ( One of the nine gems), GoroChanam (a fragrant liquid), Gokarnam, a holy place of worship, Godanam, Gorasam ( milk, curd, buttermilk), Gopathi: ( Sun God), Gopuram, Gomayu: (fox), Gosavam, ( a kind of sacrifice) etc. These are but a few of the words that originate from the word “GO”.

At times when we feel that inspite of the best efforts we have taken, there is still so much to do and to ensure that we don't lose positivity in the process of spreading positivity, this little tale comes to our mind.

Once, a writer along with his little daughter, went to a seashore to write an article about how, many starfishes are marooned in the beach and if they remain in the beach for more than a couple of days, it is said that they may die. So, to make sure that people take action, this writer who felt very depressed that millions of starfishes are dying this way, sat down in a calm corner, picked out his pen and started writing furiously about this sad happening. At that point of time, his daughter came and asked him, "Papa!Papa! What's happening here?" And he told his daughter the whole problem. The daughter immediately jumped and then straightaway went to the nearest starfish, ran to the seashore, threw the starfish in, started repeating it with the various starfishes around. The writer was, inspite of the gravity of the situation, very amused, because there are millions of starfishes and this girl is throwing only a couple of them or maximum a couple of dozens. He looked at his own daughter and said, "Hey! What difference does it make when there are millions?" The daughter smiled back at the father, took one starfish and just when she was about to throw it into the sea, smiled so sweetly and said,"Father, to this starfish it makes all the difference!" That's the spirit of positivity in the process of spreading positivity.



## Spreading Positivity

- M.K. Ramanujam

# SNIPPETS WE LOVED TO READ

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## **14-yr-old girl discovers magic of 'Om'**

December 18 2016  
Times of India

A 14-year-old has wowed city scientists with her discovery of the impact of the 'Om' sound in reducing fatigue. Anwasha Roy Chowdhury, a Class-IX student of Adamas World School, topped the recently held Science Congress organized by the state government.

Her findings that chanting of 'Om' increases oxygen level in blood and lowers carbon dioxide and lactic acid, which reduces the level of fatigue, were vetted by physics and physiology professors of Calcutta University and Jadavpur University. Debashish Bandopadhyay, head of the department of physiology, Calcutta University, told TOI, "Anwasha's project is innovative, it's quite flawless and convincing."

An-we-sha, who likes to spell her name thus, since anweshan in Bengal means 'search', told TOI, "I found that sounds with a particular frequency, if heard or recited right, raises the level of neurotransmitters and hormones like serotonin, dopamine, DHEA etc. Because of their vasodilatory actions, the oxygen level in blood soars. It also produces less lactic acid and allows the person to act without fatigue."

"In the last decade, the body of research on workout music has swelled considerably, helping psychologists refine their ideas about why exercise and music are such an effective pairing. But this specific finding on the 'Om' sound is impressive," said Rina Venkataraman, secretary, state science and technology department.

"No one has ever pin-pointed on the 'Om' sound and conducted such comprehensive experiments on its use," Dipankar Das, senior scientist, state science and technology department, said during a workshop conducted on 165 students who were shortlisted for the statewide Science Congress recently.

It all began when Anwasha visited Uttarakhand, where she "found some priests carrying water from Bageshwar to Kedarnath, covering 68km every day, without tiring. The priests sang a tune all along. There was no way she could reproduce the same mantra for her experiments. So Anwasha started looking for a similar tune.

"Finally, a tune with 430+ Hz frequency clicked. In five experiments in various laboratories, I measured the oxygen and carbon dioxide levels of 17 adults (all on the staff of BITM) while listening to the tune for 30 minutes, and there was an increase of oxygen level and decrease in carbon dioxide in their bodies," Anwasha said.

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