

GOD Canada Newsletter –

February 2022

Cherished Memories - Lessons learnt from Sri Swamiji's Speeches

This series chronicles interesting experiences recounted by the devotees of HH Maharanyam Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji.

The following inspiring excerpts were taken out of few Bangalore devotees' experiences:

We had the privilege of having Sri Guruji right through an entire week during March in Bangalore. His Holiness spent the first few days at the Bhagavata Saptaham at Jakkur, and the rest, giving spiritual discourses in the evenings at Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Mutt.

Sri Guruji began the speeches on the special day of Ugadi. It is supposed to be the beginning of a New Year for many South Indians. Large crowds that thronged there to greet and meet with Sri Guruji were blessed by listening to some really invigorating discourses of His. His Holiness covered a wide range of topics on religion, spirituality and divinity. There was one particular story that touched us all deeply. It was about a comparison between a dog and a bull and that led to show how loyal and affectionate the dog is. He went on to say, 'The dog simply stands by us at all times. It shows its affection as soon as it sees us when we return home. Whereas the 'emotionless' bull is outright hardworking and people merely use it for its

physical efforts. The dog hardly does any work for us, yet we always allow the dog in our houses and take care of it. Meanwhile the bull is something we extract maximum work out of and hardly care a jot for it once it becomes old and 'unusable' any further.'

In the end we learnt that we all have to primarily extend our love and affection for one another and to our Guruji rather than merely supporting them with various physical efforts. Love and affection alone is necessary and sufficient.

Another topic that moved us deeply was on cultivating Bhakti. Sri Guruji quoted the example of Ajamila and how he reached Vaikunta. Ajamila, being born in a Brahmin family, grew up to become a very notorious character. He had cultivated all sorts of bad habits. He led a life accumulating loads of sins and there is only place his soul would have reached after his death and that is not unto the feet of the Lord. However, the interesting fate of Ajamila serves as a tremendous source of learning for us all. Ajamila in his deathbed, called out to his 8th son named 'Narayana' for the sake of water. Calling out the bhagawan's name knowingly or unknowingly, he was the beneficiary of reaching Vaikunta as opposed to hell. We learnt that we need to perform our Nama-chanting continuously and our bhakti will increase many fold as rituals alone may not benefit us in this Kali-Yuga, even if it is only as much as Ajamila's 'Nama-chanting'.

Originally Published in Maduramurali Magazine.

Fond Memories Of Bliss

This series chronicles interesting experiences recounted by the devotees of HH Maharanyam Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji. These articles are from the series, “Fond memories of Bliss” that is published Namadwaar.org

During a recent trip to Hyderabad, Sri Sri Swamiji happened to visit a temple one day. It was raining then and as Sri Sri Swamiji was circumambulating, the sight that He saw touched his heart. Behind the sanctum sanctorum, there was a peepal tree. Under that tree there were many pictures of Lord Srinivasa. They were all around the tree in a disorderly fashion. Devotees who visited the temple had probably left them there over several years when they shifted home or moved out. The portraits of the Lord, who is the Creator of the whole Universe did not find a safe haven! This thought was unbearable to Sri Sri Swamiji.

As soon as Sri Sri Swamiji got back to where He was staying, he directed Smt Srilatha Ravichandran, a Chartered Accountant devotee from Hyderabad to go to the temple and get the pictures from them.

She did so and that evening all those pictures were handed out by His Holiness to devotees who came to the lecture.

Sri Sri Swamiji’s heart finally found peace at the thought that the Lord would be taken care of “safely” by the devotees who received them from Swamiji.

During the trip, there was an interesting interaction with a devotee.

He asked Sri Sri Swamiji, “We speak of the Alvars, Nayanmars and the great Bhaktas in great reverence and awe. We speak so highly of their elevated state and universality.

But if we look closely the Azhwars who were devotees of Narayana have not sung of any other Lord. The Nayanmars have sung of none other than Lord Shiva. They have not even sung on Devi. This seems to hold good to most devotees and their respective God.

Does this not amount to narrow-mindedness?"

Sri Sri Swamiji gave the most beautiful reply....

"All this narrow-mindedness is only from the perspective of the ignorant because they see many names and forms.

For the true Bhakta who is in the highest state, all he sees is his favourite God.

The Azhwars see none other than Narayana. The Nayanmars see none other than Shiva.

When this is the only object of their perception, where is the question of narrow-mindedness or hatred from their view-point?

Only the ignorant who see many names and forms, think that this Bhakta has sung of one Lord alone and not others. As far as the Bhakta is concerned he sees none else!"

Originally published in Namadwaar.org

GOVINDA'S FAMILY – GOVINDANUKKU AATPATTA KUDUMBAMAMMA 8

(Family beholden to Govinda!)

This series was originally published in Tamil MadhuraMurali monthly magazine in India, as a 12-part series. Based on Sri Swamiji's Madhurageetham, "Govindanukku Aatpatta Kudumbamamma Engal Kudumbam", it speaks beautifully of how the family members of our satsang lead / need to lead their lives.

This is the translation of the seventh article in this series.

Love vs Attachment

Govindanukku Aatpatta Kudumbamamma #8



Image courtesy: MadhuraMurali magazine

(Due to the fortune acquired over many births, we have received the great gift of leading our life in Bhagavata Dharma. Here is the next verse of the Madhuraageetham that celebrates our fortune with awe...)

Just like we proudly celebrate our deity Bhagavan Sri Krishna, Krishna too proudly celebrates His devotees in Srimad Bhagavatam:

shilOnchavritya paritushTachittO dharmam mahAntam virajam jushANah
| mayyarpitAtmA gruha eva tishThan nAtiprasaktah samupaiti shAntim ||

We saw the meaning of this earlier.

Like Krishna celebrates His devotees, our Guru Maharaj also, because he is the head of all our families, celebrates the divine path of our family along with us.

It will not be an exaggeration if we say that the sweet words that came out of our Guru Maharaj's heart are indeed the essence of the above words of Krishna.

These words of Krishna: "na atiprasaktah samupaiti shAntim"... the purport of this is indeed the next verse of this Madhuraageetham.

pErAsai paDamATTOM, pAsatthilE vizhamATTOM

nEsatthuDan thAmarai ilai thaNNIrai pOl vAzhndiDuvOm || gOvindanukku
||

(We shall not feel greedy; we shall not fall into attachment

We will live loving and unattached, like water on a lotus leaf)

If we hold this one sentence of our Sadgurunatha as our life's guiding philosophy always, we will indeed have immense peace.

Desire (aasai) is different; love (nesam) is different. Even within desire, needs are different; greed (peraasai) is different.

Having been born as a human and living a family life, we cannot deny certain essential needs. We also cannot deny the necessity to take the effort to fulfill such needs. Desiring good for our children, thinking of a good future for them, are all reasonable desires. Greed is desiring for things beyond our need. We [as Govinda's family] will not get caught in that net of greed. This is what Krishna speaks of as "nAti prasaktah".

"What benefit do I have from him?" is desire; "How can I serve him?" ... such an attitude is love (nesam), prema.

In the name of love, we will not unnecessarily develop attachment to others and struggle. Without knowing limits getting overly caught in attachment is paasam; moving [with a person] within limits is love. Love will elevate us; attachment will pull us down.

Living with the ego of 'I' and 'mine' is attachment. Living with the bhakti that "I am Govinda's child", "This family is Govinda's family", "This home is

Govinda's abode" ... is love. Doing actions with the intent of getting joy just for ourselves and feeling sorrowful, is attachment; doing all deeds for the smile on Govinda's (Guru's) face is love.

We will not live vehemently shunning paasam or attachment; nor will we run away from the world like a coward. Our Madhuraageetham shows beautifully how we will live in the world. "thAmarai ilai thaNNIrai pOl vAzhndiDuvOm."

Generally the phrase "like water on a lotus leaf – thAmarai ilai thaNNIrai pOl" is a widely used example to mean living without attachment. Because water does not stick to a lotus leaf. It will look like pearls on the leaf, but it won't stick. That a person has to live like that in the world, without being attached, is the general meaning. But here, what depth there is in our Guru Maharaj's words! He said, "pAsatthile vizhamATTOM" (we will not fall into attachment) did he not? When we see that, another beautiful meaning arises for "thAmarai ilai thaNNIrai pOl" (like the water on a lotus leaf), which is... how the water on the lotus leaf remains without falling into the pond that is below it!

Because these water droplets are on the lotus leaf, it will not mix with the water in the pond below it. The world is like the pond; Govinda's satsanga is like the lotus leaf. It ensures that we do not fall into the pond of worldly attachment and protects us as the drops on the lotus leaf. Even though it is itself in the pond of the world, He says the lotus leaf of Guru-Govinda's

satsang floats on it and bears us—the droplets of water—on it, and protects us from falling into or mixing with the pond.

Even if there are many droplets of water, they are not a burden for the leaf; and staying on the leaf is indeed a protection for the droplets. For those droplets of water, the lotus leaf is indeed the reason for its existence. The lotus leaf is also the only refuge for the droplets to keep from drowning in the pond. Just like these droplets remain peacefully without any other self-effort, wherever the lotus leaf keeps it, similarly remaining in servitude to Govinda alone, staying however He keeps us, considering His compassion as our only refuge, having attachment only to Him, without falling into the pond of worldly attachment... the beauty in the way He protects us on His own accord – this is what our Sadgurunathar shows here beautifully with a simple example. Isn't this a wonderful verse?

(More shall follow verse by verse...)

*Originally published in Tamil MadhuraMurali magazine

Madhurageetham - Krishna Leelai - 07

Little Krishna played with his Friends in Gokulam / Brindavanam. The little Gopas and Gopis were very eager to play with Krishna everyday. Even before the dawn breaks, they would run towards Nanda baba's palace and would call Krishna and Balaram for playing.

In this Madhurageetham Sri Guru ji brings out the joy of the little Gopas and Gopis when they are calling Krishna to come out and play with them.

ராகம்: மாண்டு

தாளம்: ஆதி

01. காட்டு மேட்டில் ஓடியாடி மாடு மேய்த்து வரும் கண்ணா
ஆட்டமாடி பாட்டு படலாமே - எங்களுடன்
02. காட்டிலிருந்து கொண்டு வந்த பூ பழம் தருவாயானால்
வீட்டிலிருந்து கொண்டு வந்த பால் வெண்ணை தருவோமே
03. உன்னை விட அழகன் யார் என்ற எண்ணம் உனக்கு வேண்டாம்
உன்னை விட அழகு தானே - உன் நிழல் தானே
04. கண்ணிலிட்ட மை கன்னத்தில் வழிந்து உன் கருமையை கூட்டுதே -
கண்ணா
கன்னத்துடன் கன்னம் வைத்து கை கோர்த்து அழகாக கொஞ்சி
மகிழலாமே
05. ஆணிற்கு ஆணாய் பெண்ணிற்கு பெண்ணாய் ஆவது எப்படியோ
ஆய கலைகள் அறுபத்திநான்கினில் அகப்படவில்லையே - இது
06. மையிலிறகைக் கொண்டு மயக்கும் மந்திரவாதி நீயோ
கையிலைநாதன் மயங்கி நின்றானே - உந்தனிடம்

rAgam: mANDu

thALam: Adi

01. kATTu mETtil ODiyADi mADu mEytthu varum kaNNA -
ATTamADi pATTu pADalAmE - engaLuDan
02. kATTilirundu koNDu vandha pU pazham tharuvAyAnAl
vITtilirundu koNDu vandha pAl veNNey tharuvOmE
03. unnai viDa azhagan yAr enDra eNNam unakku vENDAm
unnai viDa azhaku thAnE - un nizhal thAnE
04. kaNNiliTTa mai kannatthil vazhindu un karumaiyaik kUTTudhE - kaNNA
kannatthuDan kannam vaitthu kaiyuDan kai kOrtthu azhagAkak konjchi
magizhalAmE
05. ANiRku ANAy peNNiRku peNNAy Avadhu eppaDiyO
Aya kalaigal aRupatthinAnginil agappaDavillaiyE - idu
06. maiyiliRagaik koNDu mayakkum mandiravAthi nlyO
kaiyilainAtham mayangi ninDrAnE - undaniDam

December 2021, January 2022 Edmonton Monthly Sathsang Report:

By the immense grace of Sri Swamiji and Sri Madhuri Sakhi Sametha Premika Varadha Takurji, GOD Sathsang families did Naama sathsangs & Madhura Utsavam in December 2021.

On December 11th, we had weekly satsang started with naama followed by Premika varadha dashakam, Vishnu sahasranamam, Pranaya Gitam , few madhurageetham and concluded with Kaliyayum bali kollum.

With Gurunathar's immense krupa, we celebrated Madhura Uthsavam

from Dec 24th to Dec 30th. Uthsavam highlights:

GOD Sathsang families have made naama maalai (garland made of handwritten mahamantra) and offered it to our Sadhgurunathar.

Thodayamangalam in the evenings were rendered by KrishnaCottage kids every day.

Every evening, we had Sri Ramayanam Harikatha. Harikatha was presented by Gopakuteeram children.

We had family fun Kahoot, Jeopardy, board game, Kaun Banega Buddhimaan games as part of celebrating our rich tradition and culture.

Dec 24th:

Morning program: Prabodhanam, Thirupaavai, Vishnu sahasranamam followed by Pancha Stuthi and Dasama skandha parayanam from Chapter 1 to Chapter 8.

Evening program: started with Thodayamangalam, Ashtapadi 1, 2, 3 & 4, Harikatha by Gopakuteeram & Krishna cottage kids, Kahoot and followed by Saint Thyagarajar Katha.



December 25th:

Morning program: Prabodhanam, Thirupaavai, Vishnu sahasranamam followed by Sri PRemika Varadhan, Madhuri Sakhi thirumanjanam with madhuraageethams & Dasama skandha parayanam from Chapter 9 to Chapter 15.

Evening program: Thodayamangalam, Ashtapadi, 5, 6, 7 & 8 followed by Nikunjothsavam and Marudhanallur Sadhguru Swamigal Katha.



December 26th:

Morning program: Prabodhanam, Thirupaavai, Vishnu sahasranamam followed by Pancha Gitam and Dasama skandha parayanam from Chapter 16 to Chapter 23.

Evening program: Thodayamangalam, Ashtapadi 9, 10, 11 & 12, Harikatha by Gopakuteeram & Krishna cottage kids, Jeopardy and followed by Sant Thulasidasar Katha.



December 27th:

Morning program: Prabodhanam, Thirupaavai, Vishnu sahasranamam followed by Pancha Stuthi and Dasama skandha parayanam from Chapter 24 to Chapter 33.

Evening program: Thodayamangalam, Ashtapadi 13, 14, 15 & 16, Harikatha by Gopakuteeram & Krishna cottage kids, KBB and followed by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu Katha.



December 28th:

Morning program: Prabodhanam, Thirupaavai, Vishnu sahasranamam followed by Pancha Sthuthi and Dasama skandha parayanam from Chapter 34 to Chapter 40.

Evening program: Thodayamangalam, Ashtapadi 17, 18 & 19, Harikatha by Gopakuteeram & Krishna cottage kids, Kahoot and followed by Sri Narayana Theerthar Katha.



December 29th:

Morning program: Prabodhanam, Thirupaavai, Vishnu sahasranamam followed by Pancha Stuti and Dasama skandha parayanam from Chapter 41 to Chapter 49.

Evening program: Thodayamangalam, Ashtapadi 20 & 21, Harikatha by Gopakuteeram & Krishna cottage kids and followed by Ashta Mahishi Vivaham Katha.



December 30th:

Morning program: Prabodhanam, Thirupaavai, Vishnu sahasranamam followed by Pancha Gitam and Dasama skandha parayanam from Chapter 50 to Chapter 54.

Evening program: We celebrated the Radha kalyana vaibhavam in the evening starting with Thodayamangalam, Ashtapadi 22, 23 & 24, Janavasam, Divyanamam, Premika varadha gadyam and Madhuri saki gadyam followed by Churnikai, Shri Krishna pravaram, Radha Pravaram and Anjaneya utsavam and concluded with Kaliyayum bali kollum.



January 2022 Sathsangs:

January 2nd: With Sadhgurunathar's krupai, we celebrated Hanumath Jayanthi with Sundarakandam parayanam. Parayanam started at 5 am and 7 GOD sathsang families took part in parayanam and we all took turns reading the chapters. We concluded with Sri Rama Pattabishekam parayanam, Anjaneyar uthsavam with madhuraageethams.

January 8th: Edmonton GOD sathsang families took part in Global Naama relay sathsang and chanted naama for an hour in Zoom.

We had our regular weekly sathsangs on Jan 22nd and 29th.

We are continuing Akhanda Naama satsang by chanting Mahamantra for 7hrs daily (Morning 3.5hrs & Eve 3.5hrs). The GOD family members have been taking slots and participating in this sathsang by offering our prayers to Gurunathar & Radha Krishna.

Jan 2022 Toronto Monthly Satsang Report:

By the immense grace of Sri Swamiji and Sri Madhuri Sakhi Sametha Premika Varadha Takurji, Toronto GOD Satsang families had weekly satsangs in January 2022.

Apart from the weekly satsangs, Toronto GOD satsang Family had the following special events.

Jan 02: Hamumath Jayanthi - All Toronto Satsang family joined over Zoom call and did SundaraKaanda

Paraayam.

Jan 13: Ekadasi Akanda Nama from 5:30 am to 12 noon

Jan 25: Swathi Akanda Nama from 5:30 am to 12 noon

Jan 28: Ekadasi Akanda Nama from 5:30 am to 12 noon

Upcoming Events:

Feb 11 - Ekadasi

Feb 21 - Swathi

Feb 26 - Ekadasi

Feb 28 - Maha Shivaratri

“I AM AWED!” Hindu Youth Q & A Series

Did our religion once exist all over the world?

A series of “Little Questions and Lucid Answers” sessions were conducted to explore the greatness and depth of Hinduism through questions posed by global Hindu Youth to Sri Ramanujamji.

The excerpts of each of these questions and answers are being presented every month by our youth, as they understand and absorb it.

The original Q & As are also presented as short videos on Namadwaar E-Satsang’s YouTube channel as the “I Am Awed” series. Here is the link to the original video, where Sri Ramuji answers this question – [How did the Hindu religion start? | "I Am Awed!" Hindu Youth Q & A Series | Sri Ramuji](#)

How did our Hindu religion start? When was it founded? And by whom?

The Hindu religion is based on the intelligence of God Himself. Rishis (seers) managed to reach this intelligence of divinity and got this intelligence in the form of Vedas. When we ask, “How did the Hindu religion start?”, the answer is that it was founded by Bhagavan.

What is the source of our religion? When it started there was no other religion because all of the other religions had a founder and a starting time. For us, Bhagavan is the founder. The intelligence of God is called Vedas and since the Vedas are the basis of our religion, how can we ask, “When did it start?” It has always been here.

Saints from all over India protected the Vedas in its original form – as Sound. They didn’t write it down because if they misspell one thing the meaning changes. You would memorize everything so that the sound doesn’t change.

The Hindu religion has always existed, it’s as old as Earth itself. Just like gravity had already existed before Newton figured it out, the Hindu religion

has always been there even before people knew what religion was. When asked, “Who is the one who founded Hinduism?” Our Swamiji wrote, “Hinduism was founded by God.”

Madhuri Murali, 14 years, Glen Allen, VA

Excerpts from Sri Ramanujamji’s “Little Questions and Lucid Answers” Q and A series.

Originally published in godivinity.org

QUIZ TIME : INDIA'S ICONIC WOMEN

This month's quiz is based on Anandamayi Ma.



1. When was Anandamayi Ma born?

- a. 30th January 1894
- b. 30th April 1896
- c. 30th May 1898

2. Name the village where Anandamayi Ma was born.

- a. Kheora
- b. Sitamarhi
- c. Bargarh

3. Who are the parents of Anandamayi Ma?

- a. Ramachandra Mukhopadhyay and Shyama Sundari Devi
- b. Jagannatha Mishra and Sachi Devi
- c. Ramakrishna Mukhopadhyay and Shyama Sundari Devi

4. What was the birth name for Aanandamayi Ma?

- a. Ganga Sundari Devi
- b. Nirmala Sundari Devi
- c. Radha Devi

5. Aanandamayi Ma got married to _____.

- a. Ramnath
- b. Bholanath
- c. Vishwanath

6. In which year did Aanandamayi Ma get married?

- a. 1908
- b. 1910
- c. 1912

7. Her smiling countenance earned her the name _____.

- a. Mother of Bliss [Kushir Maa]
- b. Mother of Knowledge
- c. Mother of Strength

8. Aanandamayi Ma revived _____ as a place of worship. She built a Temple where kirtans and religious rites were performed.

- a.Kedarnath
- b.Varanasi
- c.Naimisharanya

9.Who was the first and early disciple of Aanadamayi Ma?

- a.Jagannath Roy
- b.Subh Ray
- C. Jyotiscandra Ray

10.When did Aanandamayi Ma attain Mahasamadhi?

- a.27th August 1982
- b.27th September 1984
- c.27th November 1984

11.In which year was Aanandamayi Ma invited to the council of Sadhus at Jhunsi?

- a.1940
- b.1944
- C.1947

12.There are many ashrams for Aanandamayi Ma. Name the city where one of the ashram is located.

- a.Trivandrum

- b.Chennai
- c.Dehradun

13.In which did she get the name Aanandamayi Ma?

- a.1920
- b.1924
- c.1928

Answers:

1-b, 2-a, 3-a, 4-b, 5-b, 6-a, 7-c, 8-c, 9-a,10-a, 11-b,12-c,13-a

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Illustration by Lalitha Raman Richmond, VA

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Raka Kumbhar

Mahans have always held "Jeeva Karunyam" as one of the supreme principles of their life. "Jeeva Karunyam" pleases Lord Pandurangan to a greater level. It is believed the Gods performed the srardha karma in Santh Eknath Maharaj's home for the Karunyam he had for the poor hungry family in order to offer food. Our Bhagavad Gita also tells us that Karunyam is a great Dharma. As our Guru Maharaj sings

"Karunai ondre aadaramam Kanna
Ivvulagirkum maruvulagirukkum bakthikkum mukthikkum, andraikkum
indraikkum endraikkum - Karunai"

There was a great devotee named Santh Raka Kumbhar. He was a potter by profession. He made his living making and selling pots. He and his wife earned a very simple living doing sadhu kainkaryam and spent their entire life in Panduranga Bhakthi. Here is one such incident in his life which tells about his Jeeva Karunyam towards all living beings with a view that everything in this world is Pandurangan and everyone is taken care of by Pandurangan.

Before selling the pots there was a procedure for the pots to be kept in fire to be baked to get its material strength. Once Santh Raka Kumbhar was baking his pots, he saw a mother cat weeping and circling around the fire pit where the pots were kept to be baked. Raka Khumbar realized that the mother cat had given birth to its kittens inside one of the pots that he had kept to get baked. Accidentally he didn't notice that. He felt guilty as he was unable to do anything. He cried regretting so much for the mistake he did,

unknowingly. Out of guilt , he and his wife even wanted to sacrifice their life instead of seeing the kittens die. But their bhakti towards Lord Pandurangan was so much that they believed Pandrangan would definitely leave them guilt free by saving the kittens. They wanted to wait till the next morning. They kept praying to Lord Pandurangan every moment , pleading with him to save the kittens. The next day after the fire was completely down, Raka Khumbar removed all the pots and noticed the kittens were alive inside one of the pots. They were overwhelmed by the “Kripa Kataksham” of Pandurangan. They felt really very happy and relieved.

In another incident, Lord Pandurangan wants to show to Santh Namadevar , the Bakthi and Vairagya that Santh Raka Kumbhar had. Santh Namadevar and Santh Raka Kumbhar were contemporary. One day as Lord Pandurangan, Rukmini matha and Santh Namadevar were walking in a garden , they dropped a very expensive necklace in the ground to observe what Raka Kumbhar and his wife did. When Santh Raka Kumbhar and his wife saw the necklace, they reacted immediately as though it was something they never wanted to touch or see. For Mahans , they don't have interest in any materialistic pleasure but rather they always attain the ultimate blissfulness in Bhagavatha seva.

Let us all pray to our Guru Maharaj to bless us with bakthi and vairagya and help us realise that the ultimate saramsam of life is falling in the lotus feet of Lord Krishna through Namasankeerthanam.

-- Ms Uthara Bajali - Mississauga ON

SRI MADHURAGEETHAM QUELISH – ADHENNA PAZHAMA 1

We shall relish, little by little, the rasa in Sri Madhuraageethams, compositions of HH Maharanyam Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji, in the form of 'questions to relish', which we call as a 'quelish', as shared by his disciple Sri Ramanujamji.

Divine poetic works have an attribute called 'dhwani' – implied meaning that is discerned and enjoyed by rasikas. This month, since the entire world celebrated the birth of the Supreme One as Lord Krishna, it is befitting that we start this series that listens for the 'Madhura dhwani' with a Madhuraageetham on Lord Krishna. We shall enjoy the Madhuraageetham – 'Adhenna pazhama...', that describes the Lord lifting the Govardhana hill.



When Krishna was seven years old, he stopped the Gopas' annual holy sacrifice for Indra and instead advised them to worship the Govardhana hill, as it was their protector and supported their livelihood by providing food for the cows, water for all, and more. Heeding His words, the people of Vraja too worshiped the Govardhana Hill. Indra became angry on knowing this and tried to destroy the people of Vraja by sending hail and thunderstorm. As the deluge flooded the land of Vraja, the Gopas and Gopis came running to the Lord and sought refuge in Him. Even in that distress, not a single soul in Brindavan blamed Krishna for their misery, not even in their thoughts. When the Lord saw this, He was deeply touched by their devotion. Mahans say, it is usually devotees who shed tears for the Lord. But here, looking at the Gopas and Gopis, the Lord had tears in His eyes. He thought, "These people

consider me as the Lord (mannAtham..), these people are mine (mathparigraham..). Therefore, I shall protect them with my own powers (gopAye svAtmayogena..)". Thus, taking a vow to protect them, the Lord looked around and he spotted Govardhana Maharaj – the one whom the Gopis had hailed with the title "Haridasa" in their beautiful Venu Gitam.

hantAyam adrira abalA hari-dAsa-varyo
yad rAma-krishNa-charaNa-sparsha-pramoda:
mAnam tanoti saha-go-gaNayos tayor yat
pAnIya-sUyavasa-kandara-kandamUlai: [S.B.10.21.18]

Ah! This (Govardhana) hill is the foremost among the devotees of Lord Hari – the one who is joyous by the touch of Lord Balarama and Lord Krishna's feet (as they roam about on the hill). He offers his respects to Lord Krishna by providing him, his friends and the cows and calves with food, fruits, water, etc.

The Lord himself says to Sudhama,

"patram pushpam phalam toyam yo me bhaktyA prayacchati
tad aham bhakty-upahrtam ashnamI prayatAtmana:" [S.B.10.81.4]

I accept whatever one offers with devotion. Be it a leaf, flower, fruit or water.

The Govardhana hill offered Krishna and his friends leaves, fruits and flowers from the plants and trees and water from its streams, thus worshipping Him.

There are certain signs (lakshanas) of a true prema bhakta. Horripilation, tears in the eyes, choked voice and so on. Govardhana Maharaj too, seemed to exhibit the signs of a premabhakta. The sight of the plants and trees standing tall gave the appearance of Govardhana Maharaj experiencing

horripilation. Just as a prema bhakta has tears flowing from his eyes, the waterfalls and streams on Govardhana gave the appearance of Govardhana Maharaj crying in joy. There were a lot of caves in Govardhana where the Lord would play with his friends. So, just as a devotee holds Bhagavan in his heart, Govardhana Maharaj too had Lord Krishna and Balarama, in his heart (caves).

This is why the Gopis address Govardhana Maharaj as “Haridasa varyo...” (the best among the devotees of Lord Hari).

The Lord lifted this Govardhana Maharaj, effortlessly to protect the Gopas and Gopis.

So here, the quesh is – What is unique in the way Sri Swamiji describes Sri Krishna lifting Govardhana Maharaj?

He does not speak, anywhere in the song, of what Krishna is lifting! Yet, the moment he starts, we know it – from the note of great wonder, just like that of the Gopis! The Madhuraageetham starts off on this wondrous note – “adhenna pazhamA? illai ilayA? illai mayil peeli thAnA?” – “What! Is that a fruit? Or a leaf? Or a peacock feather? (You have lifted it so effortlessly and protected Gokula!)”

This is similar to the bhava of the Gopis, who exclaimed “Hanta!...” in wonderment, on seeing Govardhana Maharaj.

There are many more such beautiful rasas to be enjoyed in this Madhuraageetham itself. We shall explore them one by one in the coming issues. Also stay tuned to learn more about this poetic embellishment of the hidden analogy – using an analogy without mentioning what the object that it is being compared to really is.

Here is this lovely Sri Madhuraageetham that also begins with this hidden analogy and great wonder.

rAgam: aTAnA

adhenna pazhamA illai ilayA illai mayil pllidhAnA
saTTena oru kaiyAl oru gaNatthil thUkki gokulam kAtthanaiyE
gopAla gopAla giridhara gopAla
kuLir mazhaiyAl unai thEDi oDi vandha gopa gopiyaraiyum
Avinam kanDraiyum aravaNaitthu un thiruvaDiyil vaitthu kAtthanaye
(gopAla)

devar kONum naDunADungi pathapathaitthu thiruvADiyil vandhu
vizhundhanane
than thavaTTrai thAne uNarndhu mannittharuLa veNDinane (gopAla)
AkAsha gangaiyAl airAvathamum kAmadhenuvum pAlai pozhiya
devargaL sUzhndhu govinda govinda enDru muDi sUTTinare (gopAla)

Meaning

Is that a fruit? Or a leaf? Or a peacock feather?

Lifting it effortlessly, in a second, with a single hand, you protected Gokula!

O Gopala, Gopala, Giridhara Gopala

Suffering from the cold weather and rain, the Gopas and Gopis came
searching for you,

Embracing the cows and calves, you sheltered them under your feet and
protected them

Trembling with fear, the Lord of the Devas (Indra), came and fell at Your
Feet

Having realized his mistake, he begged for forgiveness.

With the Akasha Ganga from the heavens carried by Airavata, and
Kamadhenu showering milk

The Devas coronated You as “Govinda”, as they chanted Govinda Govinda

Sowmya Balasubramanian, Dublin, CA

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Sri Guruji's Kalpatharu Day message – Part 2

Even though everything is controlled by time, when we pray to Bhagawan with faith, trusting Him completely, Bhagawan goes beyond that kaalam and showers His compassion. Sri Krishna is antharyami, sarva saakshi, He knew Yudhishtira was gambling, he had betted and lost all his properties in that game and at last he had kept his wife Draupathi as panayam as well. He also knew that Draupathi is being dragged to the court. He did not interfere at all. But, when Draupathi cried "Govinda", He came running to rescue her. Bhagawan does not see any distinction between poor/rich, educated/uneducated nor does He discriminate based on birth, language etc. He expects only one thing, whether we have faith in His compassion. Draupathi had that complete faith that Bhagawan can come and protect her in that situation and cried out "Govinda", that's why Bhagawan came.

When should we have that faith? Most importantly, when we are facing adversities in life. Usually we will have faith during normal times, but, during tough times we lose faith in Bhagawan. During tough times we will start thinking, "What is the use of doing pooja or visiting temples all these days?" Only during difficult times, we must hold on to Bhagawan tightly.

Let us look at this situation: A husband and wife go to a temple as it was their wedding anniversary that day. There they had closed the curtain after evening pooja. The husband enquires the priest as to how long it would take for them to open the curtain and the priest asks them to wait for 15 minutes. But, the husband says they have booked tickets to go to the cinema and they leave without having darshan of Bhagawan. On the way they meet with an accident and the wife suffers a head injury. Now, the husband waiting outside the operating theater will pray the hardest to get his wife back safe and alive. During trying situations holding onto Bhagawan with staunch faith is the key.

Even during purana kaalam, only when Parikshith got the curse that he will be killed in 7 days he comes to listen to Srimad Bhagawatham. Even though the crocodile was holding on to Gajendra's leg for 1000 years, only after he realized none of the other elephants or his own strength can get him out of the situation, he cried, "Narayana akhila guro bhagawan namasthe!"

Bhagawan expects you to call out to Him with faith.

How will we know if we have got that complete faith or not? A person comes to Swamiji and prays to give blessings for getting a job. Swamiji asks that person to chant Naama for 10 minutes every day. Do you know when he will succeed in getting a job? At a subconscious level he will have this question while chanting naama, "what is the relationship between chanting naama and getting a job? How will I get a job by chanting naama? Anyway, Swamiji had asked me to chant, let me just chant." When this underlying negative thought gets removed, only then faith will blossom in his heart.