

GOD Canada Newsletter – January 2022

Cherished Memories - Nonchalant Miracles!

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

Sri Kannan (popularly known among our devotees-circle as Kasi Kannan) has been with Sri Sri Swamiji for a very long time now. He narrates one of his experiences thus:

In 1997, the Krishna Jayanthi Brahmotsav was just over. Sri Sri Swamiji was sitting outside the cow-shed and chatting with a handful of patashala students.

It was a very hot day and I was very tired as the Utsav had just gotten over. My body very badly cried for some rest and in the idea of catching some sleep, I entered the hall. In the hall was a swing ('oonjal'). It was a heavy piece of wood and pretty lengthy too. I found the place right below the swing very comforting to lie down. As Sri Sri Swamiji was sitting outside, He was constantly staring at me. I gently crept down below the swing and made myself comfortable.

As He was watching me, all of a sudden, He raised and came towards the hall along with the students and sat right beside where I slept and started chatting with boys. As it grew noisy, I could not sleep peacefully, and

mumbling, 'Guruji! Could you not find any other place to sit that you have come here and disturbed my sleep?' Saying so, I just got up and moved away.

No sooner had I taken a few steps towards the door than I heard a big bang and a crash! The plank of the swing crashed on the floor. I was aghast and shocked at the incident. I was stunned and spell-bound realizing the love and care He showered on me, protecting my life. But, with His usual smile, He jokingly remarked, 'Did you see? Kannan spelt a curse and immediately the swing crashed!'

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

This incident in the life of Sri Sri Swamiji must have taken place when Sri Sri Swamiji was still a teenager [about 15 years old], in His hometown Cuddalore, a beautiful coastal town in the State of Tamil Nadu. Even in that tender age, Sri Sri Swamiji’s mind was always filled with questions such as, ‘What is the purpose of life? What is the origin of all creation? Who is that great person or force that has created this beautiful world? If there is a Creator, why does He not explicitly reveal Himself? Is death the end of the road? If not, what lies beyond that?’ so on and so forth. He was always lost in such thoughts and immersed in a deep trance like state – immersed in His Self.

An amusement park in Cuddalore was one of Sri Sri Swamiji’s favourite places. He would sit there, all by Himself, gazing at the wide world and the evening sky, in deep contemplation. One such evening, when Sri Sri Swamiji was all alone in the park, a group of ruffians came there and began hurling abuses at Him, who in their view was an ordinary school-goer. They began threatening and abusing Him in a foul language. Though merely a teenager, Sri Sri Swamiji remained unperturbed. He continued to be in deep contemplation. The action of the ruffians did not create even the smallest impact on this lad. The ruffians continued with their abuses for a while, trying to provoke the young lad who showed not the least response. After a time, however, the ruffians gave up their game of abuse, stunned at the lad’s composure, calmness and serenity. All of them fell at Sri Sri Swamiji’s feet and sought His pardon. Sri Sri Swamiji’s face bore no ill-will but held the

same calm smile. Neither the abuses thrown earlier nor the reverence shown later seemed to touch Him at all. One cannot but be reminded of a similar incident in the life of the great Sant Eknath.

Originally published in Namadwaar.org

GOVINDA'S FAMILY – GOVINDANUKKU AATPATTA KUDUMBAMAMMA 7

(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.

How will we Raise our Children?

Govindanukku Aatpatta Kudumbamamma... #7

(Family beholden to Govinda!)



Image courtesy: MadhuraMurali magazine

(The fortune of satsanga is the greatest fortune in life. Should not we, who have obtained that great fortune, feel pride in being immensely blessed, think again and again of the grace showered by Guru-Hari, melt again and again with love combined with gratitude, and live blissfully? This Madhuraageetham has come to us, to enable us to reminisce our utmost fortune with gratitude. Let us taste more of this sweetness; let us remember more and more the fortune that Govinda has blessed us with; let us immerse ourselves more and more in bliss...)

When we say we are “Govinda’s family”, our satsang is not the kind to dislike the world, remove themselves from society and go live in some forest. To show that we are also like the Gopa and Gopis of Gokula who lived with their family and children, we saw that this Madhuraageetham began with the words “illaratthil irundhiDuvOm” (we shall live with our families) right at the outset.

What bliss it is once we join Govinda's family through 'satsangam'? Daily, drawing kolam in the morning, beautifully lighting a lamp, making garlands for Krishna-Radha, chanting Bhagavata stutis in the mornings, singing Bhagavata Gitams in the evenings, serving and spending time with Radha-Krishna from prabodhanam in the morning to dolotsavam in the night – as husband and wife together do this bhakti, it is indeed blissful isn't it? And, with Krishna's grace, if one or two children also join? How beautiful it will be!

piLLai kuTTiyuDan vAzhndiDuvOm, nallaRangaL solli vaLartthiDuvOm

kaLLamilla bhAgavatha dharmatthilE pazhakkiDuvOm || gOvindanukku ||

(We shall live with our children, we shall bring them up teaching them to do good

We shall get them used to leading a life in Bhagavata Dharma, which is without hypocrisy)

When we realize suddenly, "Oh there are no betel leaves for dolotsavam!" – to have a son who can run and get some; or when we sing for dolotsavam – to have a little son or daughter to sing more sweetly than us... if such children also join us in this life of bhakti, it is even more blissful isn't it?

Don't we need a lineage to lovingly take care of our Radha-Krishna as long as the sun and moon exist? Hence "piLLai kuTTiyuDan vAzhndiDuvOm" (we will live with our children)... and being parents who live by dharma, they will impart the right ways of living to their children also, in a disciplined way with sweet words and a caring heart. How? Is it by saying "Speak sweetly! Only then you will get ahead in life!"? Or is it by saying "Do Tulasi pooja. That punya will protect you in the future!"? Or by saying, "Don't ask questions. Do as I say"? Not at all.

The way our satsang families impart right ways of living to their children is indeed unique!

Don't we have madhuraageethams to teach right living in a sweet (madhura) manner!

"Child, do tulasi puja, serve cows, speak sweetly, work hard without being lazy... if you do all this, our Kitta will be happy. Do good deeds for that!"

"tuLasi pUjaiyAl kaNNan magizhginDRAn
gO-sEvaikyAl kaNNan magizhginDRAn..."

Does this madhuraageetham need an explanation? This is how we will teach our children the right way to live (nallarangaL solli vaLarthiDuvom).

This is also the path shown by Srimad Bhagavatam.

At the very outset doesn't Srimad Bhagavatam say "dharma prOjjita kaitava..."?

Kaitavam means hypocrisy. Only Bhagavata dharma is without hypocrisy. If something is done with a selfish end in mind, it is not Bhagavata dharma.

The dharma that is done with the thought that it will please Govinda is only Bhagavata dharma without hypocrisy. Without doing good for name, fame or self-interest, the parents of our Govinda's family do good deeds because "Our Gurunatha will like it; our Thakurji who is Govinda will approve of this; our Swamini Madhuri Sakhi will also be pleased by this" and also teach their children this way!

Doing good deeds is itself noble. That too, doing it not for punya, name, fame or to show off to the world, but only for the pleasure of Govinda, is indeed the noblest of the noble.

To be born in such a family is the greatest fortune of all.

(Our exalted story shall continue...)

Originally published in Tamil MadhuraMurali magazine

Sri Guruji's Kalpatharu day Message - Part 1

Naadeer Naal thorum Vaada Malar Kondu

Padeer Avan Naamam - Vee-dey Pera-laamaey !!!

Kootu prarthanai or mass prayer is not a new thing. Mahatma Gandhiji has conducted many such mass prayers in the past. When we gather in groups with one chinthanam in mind and pray to Bhagawan, the effect will be multifold. For example, if we have only one jasmine flower in front of us, its fragrance can be smelt only by people very close to it. On the other hand, if we have a few baskets full of jasmine flowers, its fragrance can be smelt not only in that room, it might even attract people from neighbouring houses as well. How a basket full of jasmine flowers can spread more fragrance compared to a single flower, prayer done by many people gathered together will have more impact compared to a single person offering his prayer to Bhagawan.

An important avatar of Bhagawan that happened in this Yuga is the avatar of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsar granted all the boons that His disciples asked for, on January 1st. His disciples celebrate this January 1st as Kalpatharu Day till today. Our Sadhgurunathar also chose this Kalpatharu day to conduct mass prayer sessions and these prayer sessions are being conducted since 2007.

Only topic that is being talked about, discussed about and publicized by the media for the past 2 years is Covid. Some astrologers say it's because of planetary position, some say it's in nature to throw these kinds of pandemics once every few 100 years. Whatever may be the reason, it has affected so many people and has created fear in us. It has caused so many fatalities. The reason can only be "kaalam", time.

In Srimad Bhagawatham, Sri Krishna goes to see Dharmaputra. Sri Krishna tells Dharmaputra, "Bheeshmacharya is lying down on the bed of arrows. His

father has given him a boon. Death will come to him when he desires for it. You know why he is waiting? To people he might say he is waiting for Utharayana punya kaalam, but, inside his heart he is just longing for my darshan. I am going to go see him. To have darshan of a mahatma during his last moments is very special because all the 33 crore devathas will be present there. A chariot would have come from the loka where he will be taken after he sheds his mortal coils. Dhoothas from that loka would also have come. Though we might not be able to see them, their presence itself will create a chemical reaction in us. So, you also come with me.” Krishna takes Dharmaputra to the battlefield where Bheeshmacharya is lying on the bed of arrows.

Arjuna, Bhima, Nakula, Sahadeva, Kunti, Draupathi everybody goes along. Bheeshmacharya cries looking at Kunti. How many difficulties has she gone through in her life? Nobody else would have experienced so many troubles in life as she did. Kunti herself tells Sri Krishna, “Krishna, it is normal for people to go through sukham and dhukam (joy and sorrows) in life. But for me troubles came to me from different directions.” She had lost her husband at a young age and the responsibility of raising her children was her’s. Duryodhana and his brothers mixed poison in kozhukattai and tried to kill Bhima, they tried to burn them in the wax palace, though being princes they were forced to eat begging for biksha during their exile, they had to hide their identity and live in Virata desam during agnatha vaasam. When they lost everything in the game of dice they were forced to keep their wife as a bet in the game. At that time Draupathi was insulted in that royal court. Their troubles were not one or two. Bheeshmacharya remembers all this and feels very sad.

When someone is going through troubles, we immediately say, “ayyo, paavam!”. What is the meaning of this? It means he/she has committed a paapam, that’s why he is experiencing this trouble now. When a person has committed a sin or led his life in adharmic way, others will feel that the

troubles that this person is going through is justified. But, here dharma itself has taken an avatar as Yudhistira, son of Kunti. In another case, people might say, “he is a coward, that is why he is going through so much trouble in life.” But, here Bhima who was so courageous and full of strength was another son of Kunti. There are two things, balam and parakramam. An elephant has balam and a lion displays parakramam. A lion does not know fear at all. Bhima had strength and Arjuna had parakramam. Nakula and Sahadeva were very intellectual, with the help of shastras they were able to foresee what is to come in the future. Even though Kunti was surrounded by all these people, she went through so many difficulties in life.

One might say, even though dharmam, balam, parakramam, intellect everything is favourable, if Bhagawath anugraham is not there one has to suffer. But, here Bhagawan Himself had taken avatar as Sri Krishna and He was with the Pandavas and Kunti always. In Spite of all this Kunti had to suffer, Bheeshmacharya thinks about all this and says, “sarvam kala krutham manye!”

There is something called kaalam and people are bound to this kaalam. Everything that we see in this world is bound by time, Sun comes in the morning, Moon comes at night, a child in the mother’s womb stays there for 10 months, planetary positions, earth’s revolution and rotation everything is controlled by time. The joys and sorrows that each person experiences in their life is also controlled by time.

- To be continued

Madhurageetham - Krishna Leelai - 06

As we saw last month, Brindavanam is special to all Bhagavathas. Every Bhagavatha wants to be born in that sacred place, where Little Krishna played with the Little Gopis and Goppas. The fact that somebody lived in brindavan itself is enough for that person to attain Moksha.

We all know the story of kaliya. He was blessed by Krishna even though he did no good deed, but instead just troubled the villagers. Just living in brindavan was enough for him to be blessed by krishna.

Sri oothukadu venkata Subbhaiyar also sings ...

புல்லாய் பிறவி தர வேணும் கண்ணா

புனிதமான பலகோடி பிறவி தந்தாலும்

பிரிந்தாவனமிதில் ஒரு புல்லாய்....

Likewise, Sri Guru ji has bestowed us with the following song. He is praying Krishna to give him a chance to live in Brindavanam.

ராகம்: பிலஹரி

தாளம்: ஆதி

ஸ்ரீவன வாஸம் தே₃ஹி மே க்ருஷ்ண
ஸ்ரீத₄ர தா₃மோத₄ர பு₄வன ஸுந்த₃ர || ஸ்ரீ ||

01. காத்யாயனிஸோத₃ர ஸ்ரீ க்ருஷ்ண
காளியநர்த்தன ஸ்ரீ க்ருஷ்ண
கேஸிவிமர்த₃ன ஸ்ரீ க்ருஷ்ண
கோ₃பேஸ்வர பூஜித ஸ்ரீ க்ருஷ்ண || ஸ்ரீ ||

02. பா₃ங்கேவிஹாரீ ஸ்ரீ க்ருஷ்ண
ப்₃ரஹ்மாதி₃ஸேவித ஸ்ரீ க்ருஷ்ண
பீதது₃கூலி ஸ்ரீ க்ருஷ்ண
ப்₃ருந்தா₃பூஜித ஸ்ரீ க்ருஷ்ண || ஸ்ரீ ||

03. ராஸவிஹாரீ ஸ்ரீ க்ருஷ்ண
ராஜ கோ₃பாலா ஸ்ரீ க்ருஷ்ண
ராதா₄லோல ஸ்ரீ க்ருஷ்ண
ரஸிகபரிகா₂மணே ஸ்ரீ க்ருஷ்ண || ஸ்ரீ ||

04. வம்ஸீவடவாஸ ஸ்ரீ க்ருஷ்ண
வம்ஸீத₄ர ஹே ஸ்ரீ க்ருஷ்ண
வத₃னாங்க₃மோஹன ஸ்ரீ க்ருஷ்ண
வரமுரளீத₄ரஸேவித ஸ்ரீ க்ருஷ்ண || ஸ்ரீ ||

rAgam: bilahari

thALam: Adi

shrlvana vAsam dEhi mE kriShNa

shrldhara dAmOdharma bhuvana sundara || shrI ||

01. kAtyAyanisOdara shrI kriShNa

kALiyanartthana shrI kriShNa

kEshivimardana shrI kriShNa

gOpEshvara pUjitha shrI kriShNa || shrI ||

02. bAnkEvihAri shrI kriShNa

brahmAdisEvitha shrI kriShNa

plthadukUli shrI kriShNa

brindApUjitha shrI kriShNa || shrI ||

03. rAsavihAri shrI kriShNa

rAja gOpAIA shrI kriShNa

rAdhAIOLA shrI kriShNa

rasikashikhAmaNE shrI kriShNa || shrI ||

04. vamshIvaTavAsa shrI kriShNa

vamshldhara hE shrI kriShNa

vadanAngamOhana shrI kriShNa

varamuraLldharasEvitha shrI kriShNa || shrI ||

Dec 2021 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 December 2021.

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

Dec 14: Ekadasi Akanda nama from 5:00 am to 4:00 Pm

Dec 16 - Jan 15 - Marghazi Nama from 5:30 am to 9:30 am. Also recited Thirupavai.

Dec 25 - Dec 31 : Madhura Utsav - Radha kalyanam over zoom

Dasama Skanda Parayanam, carnival games, Madhura Smaranam, Katha by bala Bhagavathaas, Sang madhurageetham and songs by Thyagarajar, purandara dasar, meera bhai.

Upcoming Events:

Jan 02 - Hanumath Jayanthi - Sundara Kanda Parayanam over Zoom

Jan 13 - Ekadasi

Jan 29 - Ekadasi

“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 – <https://youtu.be/2e2WXehDJWw>

Yes! Sanatana Dharma was once the religion and way of life all over the world. Let us now see how our traditions were once followed all over the world and some customs being practiced even now can be traced back to ancient times.

- Australia: There is a dance called the “Shiva Dance” done by the native Australian aborigine tribes in the month of December
- Thailand: During the wintertime (Dec-Jan) there is a cultural festival where they swing an empty swing and is known as Trippavai-Trivempai (Tiruppavai-Tiruvenbavai) festival – cultural impact remains but deities are gone. The airport also has a statue depicting Amrutha Mathanam.
- Cambodia: There is a giant temple complex (Angkor Wat) which initially had Lord Vishnu then later Buddha. Now there is no standing deity and it has been converted into a museum. When

looking back on older times data has shown that certain areas in Vietnam and Cambodia had Sanskrit as an official language.

- China and Japan: Patanjali Rishi extolled the significance of yoga and dhyana which was taken by the saint Bodhidharma to China, became known as chuan there. This later spread to Japan where it came to be known as Zen.
- Persia: In the faith of Zoroastrianism they have fire rituals, similar to Agni Homam done in Sanatana Dharma. Many of their deities have similarities to our Vedic mantras and deities as well.
- There have been texts signifying an incident in which 2000 years ago King Ramses (from the Egyptian civilization) made friends with another king, promising in front of fire in the name/witness of Mitra and Varuna (who are deities of Sanatana Dharma).
- Indonesia: Their national airline is called Garuda Airlines, likewise many first names of the individuals there are from Ramayana and Mahabharata as they believe it represents their culture. Jambavati is also famous there.
- Bali: 90% practice Hinduism, Balinese temples depict the Amrutha Mathanam principle.
- Native American: They have a deity named Kokopelli who has many similarities to Lord Krishna.
- Latin America
 - Mayan Empire – “Maya” – God’s power
 - Aztec Empire – “Asthikam” – belief in divinity

These are just a few examples in which we can clearly see and trace the roots of Sanatana Dharma in these cultures today and in the past. Our religion and way of life was so widespread and it is truly something to be

proud of.

Kishori Prakash, 17 years, Frisco, TX

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 on Ma Saradamani Devi Ma, wife and spiritual consort of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa.



1. Name the birthplace of Ma Sarada Devi.

a. Jayrambati

b. Pune

c. Kanpur

2. In which state in India is Jayrambati located?

a. Madhya Pradesh

b. Odisha

c. West Bengal

3.How old was Ma Sarada Devi when she joined her husband Sri Ramakrishna in

Dakshineswar, Calcutta?

a.10 years

b.12 years

c.18 years

4.Ma Sarada Devi is considered as the _____ disciple of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa.

a.First

b.Third

c.Tenth

5.Ma Sharada Devi was called as _____.

a.Holy Mother

b.Divine Mother

c.Both A and B

6. Who were the parents of Ma Sarada Devi?

a. Ramachandra Mukhopadhyay and Shyama Sundari Devi

b. Jagannatha Mishra and Sachi Matha

c. Mohana Pandurangan and Suguna Devi

7. Where did Ma Sarada Devi join Sri Ramakrishna after their marriage?

a. Asansol

b. Siliguri

c. Dakshineswar

8. How old was Ma Sarada Devi when she shed her mortal coil?

a. 54

b. 66

c. 78

9. In which year did Ma Sarada Devi shed her mortal coil?

a. 1898

b. 1912

c.1920

10. In which year was Ma Sharada Devi born?

a.1853

b.1888

c.1892

11. After Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa shed his mortal coil and after spending some

months in Karmarpukur, Ma Sarada Devi moved to _____ where she spent

her longest period of life.

a. Udbodhan House

b. Patna House

c. Pune Home

12. Ma Sarada Devi was widely known for her selfless service, unconditional love and

forbearance. During her stay in Udbodhan house, she was accompanied by many other

women disciples and devotees of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Gauri Ma, Golap Ma to

name a few. She met many people who earnestly met to seek her guidance and

instructions. She continued to inspire people, with the ideals that Sri Ramakrishna

Paramahansa had preached for about _____ years after Sri Ramakrishna

Paramahansa had shed his mortal coil.

a.20

b.34

c.50

Answers:

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

Compiled by Ramya Srinivasan, Bay Area, CA

Illustration by Lalitha Raman Richmond, VA

Originally published in godivinity.org

=====

Madhura Utsav 2021 - Report

Radhe Radhe,

With boundless grace and compassion of our beloved Guru Maharaj Maharanyam Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji and causeless mercy of our Takhurji Sri Madhuri Sakhi Sametha Premika Varadhan, Toronto GOD Satsang families had the bhagyam of celebrating our Year end "Radha Kalyana Mahotsav" via Zoom, between 25th - 31st Dec 2021 in Bhagavatha Sampradhaya.

Each day, The marghazhi mornings began with Prabodhanam, Tiruppavai, Akanda Nama followed by Dasama Skandha Parayanam. In the afternoons we had Ashtapadi bhajan and Krishna Carnival games. We started our evening celebration with Katha by satsang kid(s), followed by rendition of Kirtans of various Mahathmas and culminated with Dolotsavam.

25th Sat - Evening Katha by Sahana, followed by rendition of Sri Thyarajar krithis.

26th Sun - Evening Katha by Viyaan, followed by rendition of Sri Purandaradasar krithis.

27th Mon - Evening Katha by Sri Dharshini and Krishnamithra, followed by rendition of Sri Oothukaadu Venkatasubbaiyer krithis.

28th Tue - Evening Katha by Sahasra, Gandharv and Boo Nithi, followed by rendition of Sri Narayana theerthar Tharangams.

29th Wed - Evening Katha by Revanth Rajhaa and Nikitha, followed by rendition of Abhangs.

30th Thu - Evening Katha by Anindita, Purushottaman and Rishi

Ganesh, followed by rendition of Meera Bhajans.

31st Fri - Morning - Radha Kalyana Mahotsavam. All sang Ashtapadi's, madhurageetham, lagnashtakam and had the bhagyam of being part of the Divine Wedding.

Evening - Katha by Sri Sudhan and Laya followed by "Expression of Gratitude" by satsang members. The Utsav culminated with prayers for more and more Kainkaryam to the Divine Couple and Guru Maharaj.

Radhe Radhe!

THE VALUE OF TEACHING GOPA KUTEERAM



(This article highlights from North America-wide Gopa Kuteeram Teachers' Reflections & Celebration meeting with Sri Ramanujamji.)

Pranams to our beloved Sri Swamiji for giving us this wonderful opportunity to expand ourselves. Being a teacher is a blessing! Teaching mirrors Learning. As we teach, we learn. And we learn better when we teach. It is humbling. It expands our horizon of knowledge, it brings us different perspectives. When we interact with students and they ask questions and share thoughts, it gives us an opportunity to grow along with them.

For Sri Swamiji, kankaryam needs to be rooted in joy! His vision is – “Do seva out of happiness. Do seva from happiness”. The biggest happiness a devotee can bring to Sri Swamiji is doing kankarya with joy and a grateful heart for being fortunate to perform a seva, whether the kankarya is social, spiritual, or personal service to our deity at home. Sri Swamiji also encourages everybody to smile as one does parayanam, kirtanam or nama sankirtanam.

There is a proverb in Tamil is “oorAr piLLaiyai ootti vaLartthAI, than piLLai

thaane vaLarum". This means that if we feed all the children in the village, one's own child is also fed. Applying this to our GK family – if one wants a child to embrace a value, no amount of teaching by the parent will be fruitful. Whereas the same values being embraced by a group of children of their own age group makes it easier for our child also to adopt.

When children come together in Gopa Kuteeram, and engage with other young minds, they tend to imbibe the concepts of Sanatana Dharma better and with an open mind. Gopa Kuteeram is a satsang for the children.

GOD follows the dictum given by Sri Swamiji – “Admire all. Adopt one.” Admire and appreciate all paths. And for personal spiritual growth, follow one path. Hence as part of Gopa Kuteeram, the significance of all deities is taught and Bhagavata Dharma is mentioned in more detail as it is the simple path for all to follow. Bhagavata Dharma also shows there is joy and aesthetics within Hinduism that need to be understood. Hinduism is full of rasa and it's important to enjoy it.

Sri Swamiji says “Humanity and Divinity are inseparable”. When we grow in divinity, we also grow as humans. And vice versa. This has been very evident among the youngsters attending Yuva Bhagavatam classes who have themselves said they see an increase in their ability to focus and have a positive impact on their perspective towards humanity.

Some of the concepts to imbibe as teachers are:

Compassionate communication – This is greatly appreciated by Sri Swamiji. This can best be explained from Ramayana when Hanumanji without being hurtful to anybody in the vanara sena showed compassion towards Vibhishana to be accepted as part of their army when he came to take refuge under the Lotus feet of Sri Rama. Hanumanji along with being a compassionate communicator achieved the objective. As humans/teachers /parents being a compassionate communicator enhances the environment of the teachings not only for the subject being taught but also the basic discipline of “Speaking-Thinking-Behaving” in a non-violent, compassionate way. Behaviors have more impact than words on children. As a teacher, one

must try their best to practice being a compassionate communicator without losing sight of the objective. This is in line with Dr. Rosenberg's concept of "Non-Violent Communication (NVC)".

Growth mindset – This is perfectly in line with karma yoga, which says focus on efforts, not on results. Being result-focused can make children not want to take risks in their life or feel jealous of their peers. Thereby impairing their growth mindset. A teacher needs to be mindful of praising the child's effort and not the result.

Although it's tricky to show kids the value of what is being taught, one must try not to force a concept on the kids which may result in a push back. Rather use subtle ways of showing the value of what is being learned in a class. A teacher expressing the joy and happiness of teaching will have a positive impact on the kids.

It is wonderful to see teachers looking forward to more and more learning. Gopa Kuteeram and children are very close to Sri Swamiji's heart. Gopa Kuteeram began as a humble start with Sri Swamiji brainstorming on the syllabus with 3 sheets of paper. And today it is more structured with so many centers in various parts of the world.

When GK first started Guruji said "Mother is the first teacher to a child and someone whom the child trusts. Hence, a teacher becomes the second mother to the child". Just like we may be grateful to our school teachers, but don't always go find them and express it to them, we don't know how many children are grateful and touched by what we have done for them through Gopa Kuteeram classes. In the process we have added value to society as well as also enhanced ourselves.

With gratitude and joy in our hearts. let us grow spiritually and personally to make a positive impact on our youngsters by instilling the values of our Bhagavata Dharma. This is just the beginning.

Happy Teaching! Happy Learning!

Sri Ramanujamji's talk summarized by

Aarti Manoj Ekbote , Dublin, CA

Pleasanton Gopa Kuteeram Teacher

SRI MADHURAGEETHAM QUELISH – BALA HANUMANTHAM

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.

(These quelishes are being shared regularly in a whatsapp group dedicated to enjoying the rasa of Sri Madhuraageethams. To join this group, please reach out to us at newsletter@godivinity.org)

This month we shall enjoy a quelish related to Lord Hanuman.



Where can you find the link between Sri Hanumanji and Lord Srinivasa of Tirumala in Sri Madhuraageetham verses?

While there are several Sri Madhuraageethams that link Lord Srinivasa and Lord Hanuman, the one that best fits this quesh is 'bAla hanumantham'. In this Madhuraageetham, in the last line Sri Swamiji sings that Lord Hanuman is Lord Srinivasa's dearest devotee.

The whole song resonates with the spirit of childhood innocence, joy, spontaneity and divinity. Our Bala Hanuman wearing colorful garlands, playing varieties of games, without "mine" and "I", and being the son of Vayu, is flying freely in the vast blue skies and in the vast blue sky of our Sri Swamiji's heart as well (we can infer this from the term "bhAvayami").

Tattva Rasa

In this Madhuraageetham, Sri Swamiji, when referring to Lord Srinivasa refers to him as "gaganapathi jAmAtA"(son-in-law of Akasha Raja). Wind is contained and is within the vast sky. Lord Hanuman is jeevottama and is in the fold of Srinivasa, who is sarvotthama. Therefore, Lord Hanuman is in the perfect state devoid of "I" and "me".

Prema rasa

Further, in this Madhuraageetham, the "heart" of Sri Swamiji seems to be overflowing with the "bhAvam" of Anjana Devi. A child is decorated by the mother; he does not decorate himself on his own! The motherly affection of Sri Anjana Devi, seeing and rejoicing her 'lil' boy, whom she lovingly decorated, is seen through our beloved Sri G's heart also. Hence, the lines that describe the form of Lord Hanuman (nAnAvidha puShpa mAAdharam).

Why does a mother decorate a son? So that the father finds tremendous joy in cuddling him.

Here, the Vayu Kumara, with all the lovely adornments, was sent by the mother so that the father 'Vayu' could cuddle him to his heart's content. So Vayu Kumara did 'gagana' sanchara for his father to cuddle him and feel the joy along with his Divine Father (Lord Srinivasa) also fondly watching in Tirumala!

What a priceless dominant bhaava of vatsalyam (motherly devotion) towards Hanumanji!

The lyrics and meaning are presented below.

Other Madhuraageethams that link Lord Srinivasa with Lord Hanuman are "Ananda vimaana" and "Jaya Jaya Srinivasa" and to some extent "Govinda undan naamame".

Raga: Khamboji

Tala: Adi

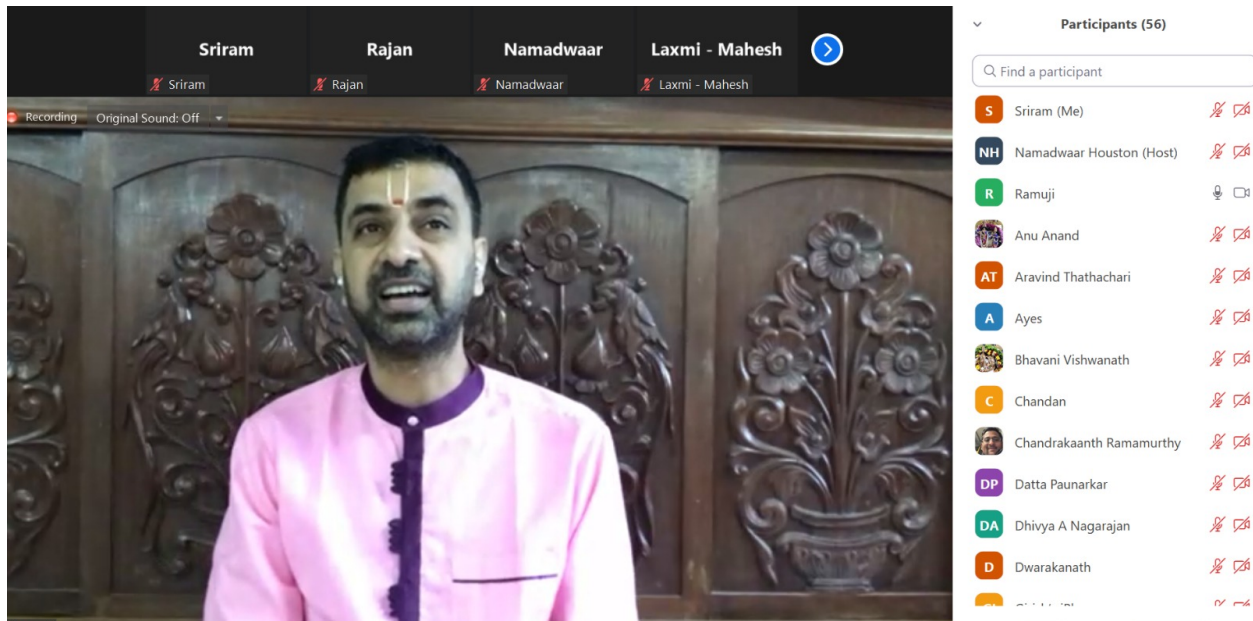
bAla hanumantham bhAvayAmi – sadA
nAnAvidha puShpa mAlAdharam
nAnAvidha krIDana IOlam
mamakAra ahankAra rahitham
mamachitthachOram vAyukumAram
gaganE sanjcharaNa samarttham
gaganapathijAmAthA priyabhaktham

Meaning

I am envisioning Bala Hanuman – Always!
The One adorning garland of assorted flowers
The One who enjoys sporting different leelas
The One devoid of ‘I’ and ‘Me’
The son of Vayu who has captivated my mind
The One who has the prowess to fly around in the sky
The One who is dear to Lord Srinivasa (son-in-law of Akasa Raja)
Sowmya Balasubramanian, Dublin, CA

Illustration by Thaman Sai, Arepalli, 12yrs, Richmond VA

GOD USA – SPECIAL REGIONAL SATSANGS WITH SRI RAMANUJAMJI



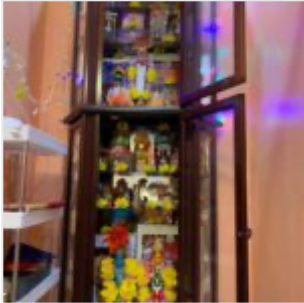
Bay Area:

By the immense grace of Sri Swamiji, GOD Satsang was blessed with a special satsang led by Sri Ramanujamji on Saturday, November 22 2021. The satsang commenced with Nama SANKirtan and then few volunteers gave a short presentation beautifully summarizing the various activities in Bay Area. Following this, Sri Ramanujamji gave a wonderful discourse on the greatness of Satsang and Guru Mahima. Close to 60 members were blessed to take part in this special satsang. The satsang concluded with prayers and Arathi.

Orlando:

By the causeless mercy of Guru Maharaj, GOD Satsang Orlando had a blissful special satsang with Ramuji. The event was conducted at the residence of Ranjini ji/ Nagarajan ji, and was attended by about 35 devotees. The satsang

included Mahamantra chanting, Vishnu Sahasranamam, Madhuraageetams followed by blissful talk by Sri Ramanujam ji through Zoom.



Namadwaar, Houston:

A special satsang with Sri Ramanujamji for Houston based devotees was conducted online on December 11th. Over 60 families attended the satsang. Sri Ramanujamji conveyed that Sri Aishwarya Srinivasa has left the Madhurapuri Ashram to journey to the US. Sri Aishwarya Srinivasa will be the presiding deity of Houston Namadwaar's new building. Sri Ramanujamji added that Sri Aishwarya Srinivasa was sailing the Atlantic portion of his journey. Just as he spoke, Bhagavan had indeed crossed the Mediterranean

and entered the Atlantic ocean. Finally, beginning December 12th, 30 devotees performed the parayanam of Narayaneeyam for the divine couple.
