

GOD Canada newsletter – November 2021

Cherished Memories - Guruvayoorappan's own wish!

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

Sri Ramanujam, the pracharak and speaker of our Kendra thus writes:

During the recently concluded Udayastamana Saptaham at Guruvayoor, Hari and myself had the fortune of accompanying Sri Sri Swamiji to the temple to have the Lord's darshan. The temple was heavily crowded on that particular day and we felt that having darshan was close to impossible. We stood in the outer 'Prakara' and were continuously chanting the Maha Mantra.

Hari and I told Sri Sri Swamiji that we shall talk to some officials to get a special entry into the temple. Sri Sri Swamiji replied that it was not necessary. We tried to convince Him as the thronging temple crowd wouldn't let us take a further step.

Sri Sri Swamiji persisted in his denial, saying that the Lord knew that Sri Sri Swamiji performed Nama Kirtan always and it is purely Guruvayoorappan's wish to either let us have darshan or not.

Just then to our surprise, out of nowhere, someone approached us and asked Swamiji 'darshanam aayo?' (Did You have darsanam already?).

This person did not even wait for a response from Sri Sri Swamiji! He took along Sri Sri Swamiji in for darshan through the special side entrance and let Him stay in the sanctorum as long as He wished!

The Lord Guruvayoorappan indeed chose to meet Sri Sri Swamiji, even as there were so many other thousands of devotees wishing to have Guruvayoorappan's Darshan!

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

While in Premika Bhavanam, Sri Swamiji usually sits in a corner of His room for meditation. A photo of Sri Premika Varadan is placed just by the side of where Sri Swamiji usually sits. Even on days when Sri Swamiji is out of town, the deity on the picture would be decorated with flowers and incense sticks would be lighted.

It was a time when Sri Swamiji stayed in the Ashram for an extended period of time. Sri Bhuvan Sundar, one of Sri Swamiji's devotees and caretaker at Premika Bhavanam routinely decorated the photo with flowers.

After a few days, Sri Swamiji returned to Premika Bhavanam and went into His room. He went to the corner of the room. No sooner did He sit down in that place than He looked up right into the eyes of Bhuvan Sundar who was standing by the door. Sri Swamiji asked him, 'Did you sit in this place and try to meditate?' Bhuvan's face betrayed his surprise when he said 'Yes!'. With a beautiful smile on His effulgent face, Sri Swamiji said, 'Yes! I can feel it!' Sri Swamiji says, 'People speak of seven wonders of the world. But these are not the real wonders. The real wonder is the way the Mahans wander about in this world, in spite of their high state.'

The state which Mahans revel in cannot be understood by commoners. Out of their infinite grace, sometimes they stoop down to our level to express their extreme love and devotion for God.

Recently, when Sri Swamiji visited Bangalore, He went to Sri Sundara Hanuman temple that is being constructed there. When He was in the

temple precincts, a person approached Sri Swamiji and handed over a small Srinivasa Perumal idol to Him. The deity of the Lord was beautiful beyond comparison. Our Guru Maharaj kept the idol with Himself and kept looking at the beautiful form of the Lord on the idol. He was so much immersed in the love for the Lord that He kept staring at it for a long time, admiring its divine beauty.

That day, a devoted couple came to the temple to have Sri Swamiji's darshan and were present with Him. When they watched Sri Swamiji staring at the idol for a long time, one of them approached Him and asked, 'Is the idol Sri Swamiji's Pooja Murti?'

Sri Swamiji momentarily looked at them and nodded in the negative. He continued, 'This is a small man-made idol. If the Lord in this idol itself is so beautiful, I am just imagining how beautiful He would be in His real form!'

The couple were simply moved by Sri Swamiji's words.

GOVINDA'S FAMILY – GOVINDANUKKU AATPATTA KUDUMBAMAMMA 5

(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 fifth article in this series. We shall see each of the following parts in the coming issues.



Image courtesy: MadhuraMurali magazine

(How will a satsang family be, that is the recipient of the Guru's grace, that leads a life of servitude to Govinda, that lives in Bhagavata dharma; how will they live and how is their mental maturity? Let us now see the third verse of the sweet song (madhuraageetham) that picturizes all of this.)

Satsangam means the basis is 'shravanam', 'kirtanam' and 'smaranam'. It is this that our Guru Maharaj refers to in the verse

bhAgavatha kadhai kETTIDuvOm, rAgathALatthuDan pADiDuvOm

shOkamOga paDamATTOM, nAgarlgamAy pazhagiDuvOm

(We shall listen to Bhagavata Katha, we shall sing in tune and with rhythm

We shall not be sorrowful or infatuated, we shall move with others gracefully)

We, who are Govinda's devotees, are indeed unique! We have immense desire to blissfully speak about Govinda always! Other spiritual sadhanas need to be done in solitude; in fact, getting together with others will even cause adverse effect to that sadhana. Can we practice dhyana, or atma vichara, or mantra japa in a large group? Or if we do like that, will we get the right fruit of the spiritual practice?

However Bhagavata dharma grows through satsangam (company of devotees). It is satsanga that nourishes it. Satsanga itself also gives Ananda (joy). Sri Andal also sings of this as 'kUDIyirundhu kuLirnthElOr embAvAi' (Let us celebrate Him together).

It is only bhakti that, instead of practicing all alone, gives joy when practiced along with other devotees. That's why, we who serve Govinda:

kUDI kUDI pEsiDuvOm, ADippADi kaLitthiDuvOm – avan

aDiyArgaLai thEDi thEDi, ODi ODi paNindiDuvOm

(We shall get together and speak about Him, we shall dance and sing with joy,

We shall search again and again for His devotees, and happily run up and prostrate unto them!)

Where there is love, there a crowd will not feel like a burden. On the contrary, it will only enhance the joy. Do you know how such a satsang will be? “If there is someone to tell katha, we will all sit and happily listen; if there are those who listen to katha earnestly, we will tell katha like our Gurunathar says and enjoy it; if there is no one to tell or listen to katha, we will sing and dance kirtanam with cymbals in our hands and anklets on our feet.

For bhakti, singing and dancing are important aids. “vishNOrgAnancha nrityancha naTanancha visEshatah” – Bhakti shastras say that singing, dancing and abhinaya are special to Govinda who is Vishnu. In Srimad Bhagavatam also, Sri Kapilavasudeva Bhagavan celebrates such bhaktas.

madAshrayA kathA mrishTAha shruNvanti kathayanti cha |

tapanti vividhAstApA naitAnmadgatachEtasah || 23 ||

“My devotees will live to serve Me, have prema for Me, and they will get together and enjoy speaking about and listening to My sweet stories. Because of this itself, they will overcome all sorrows of life and think constantly of Me,” says Bhagavan with pride.

When it comes to such devotees, Bhagavan is very proud. In Bhagavad Gita also Krishna says,

macchitthA madgataprANA bOdhayantah parasparam |

kathayantascha mAm nityam tushyanti cha ramanti cha || 10:9 ||

“Holding Me in their chittam, taking Me to be their life, they will get together and speak about Me, and joyfully listen and speak of My stories always.”

While speaking of His glory (vibhuti), Govinda also speaks of the greatness of such devotees. Some learned people will call Nama kirtanam, bhajana, divyanama sankirtana as bhakti sadhana.

Once, in our Madhurapuri ashram, a blissful divyanama sankirtanam took place. After it was completed, Sri Swamiji was walking out. At that time, our Sadgurunatha said, “Some people will say that bhajana is bhakti sadhana. But if we see the bliss that it gives us, it doesn’t feel right to call it a ‘sadhana’. This is indeed anandam!?” he graced.

Yes! Speaking about Govinda is anandam! Listening about Him is anandam! If we chant His names and sing... aha! It is pErAnandam (great bliss) indeed! Our Sadgurunatha once said, “Perhaps it is the anandam that comes from His ‘pEr’ (Name) that is called ‘pErAnandam’!”

Hence this Madhuraageetham beautifully says, “ADipADi kaLitthiDuvOm...” (we shall sing and dance joyfully!)

When bhakti is practiced as a sadhana, then it can be separated into two as sadhana and sadhyam.

Telling Govinda’s stories, listening to Govinda’s stories, doing Govinda nama sankirtanam, dancing gracefully in divyanama sankirtanam, at a particular time daily (whether we are involved or not), is the state of sadhana. When we keep doing this, with the grace of Sri Guru-Govinda, it will lead us to ‘sadhya’ bhakti!

Then, telling katha will also be blissful; listening to katha will also be blissful; bhajana will be immensely blissful (pErAnandam!). Sadhana bhakti itself will lead us to sadhya bhakti.

It is this that is spoken of in Srimad Bhagavatam, in the Navayogi Upadesam (11th canto, 3rd chapter)

smarantah smArayantascha mithOghoughaharam harim |

bhaktyA sanjAtayA bhaktyA bibhratyutpulaAm tanum ||

The yogeshwara called Prabuddha says, “By thinking of Govinda, which destroys all sins, and makes one think more of Him, these devotees attain the state of sadhya bhakti from sadhana bhakti, and remain in the state of bliss that comes from bhakti!”

Our Sadgurunatha also beautifully, in this half a line, presents all of this completely – bhakti sadhana, the state of bhakti sadhya, and the bliss that comes from that state.-

“kUDi kUDi pEsiDuvOm, ADippADi kaLitthiDuvOm”

In this state, these devotees who are bhagavatas, yearn only for more and more satsangam. Shall we see that in the next episode?

The flower shall bloom further...

Sri M. K. Ramanujam, Chennai, India

Originally published in Tamil MadhuraMurali magazine

Balagargalukku oru Kadhai - Who reaches Kailasam?



(Pic Courtesy: <https://pixabay.com/images/search/kailash/>)

Kasi Kshetra is a holy pilgrimage place. Many thousands of devotees go to Kasi Kshetra each year. Our Puranas say that one who visits Kasi Kshetra will definitely reach Lord Shiva's abode, Kailasam; whoever dies in Kasi will not be born again.

Once, on a Shivaratri day, Mother Parvati saw so many bhakthas who had come to Kasi Kshetra to have the divine darshan of Kasi Vishwanatha Swamy. Mother Parvati asked Lord Shiva, "Oh Lord! I have heard people say that whoever comes to Kasi to have Your darshan reach Kailasam. Is this true? Do all these people who have come to have your darshan today at Kasi reach Kailasam?"

Lord Shiva immediately replied, "No, no! Not all these pilgrims reach Kailasam, I will show you who reaches Kailasam." After saying this Mother

Parvati and Lord Shiva changed themselves into an old couple. They both appeared near the entrance to Kasi Vishwanathar's temple.

Lord Shiva pretended to have fainted on Mother Parvati's lap. Then, Mother Parvati started addressing the people who were entering the temple, "Hey devotees! My husband here has fainted because of thirst. Can one of you please give him some Ganga water to drink? He is almost dying, so I am unable to leave him to go to the river to fetch water on my own. Please show some compassion. Somebody please help us." All the people who were entering the temple had had their bath and were holding a vessel full of Ganga water. But nobody was ready to spare some water for the old couple. Some people thought it was inauspicious to see such a state of the couple before the entrance to the temple.

Some people said, "Wait here. We will first go and have darshan of Vishwanatha Swamy and then come back and help you." No one was ready to help the old couple. At that time a thief came to that temple entrance. On seeing so many people thronging the entrance, he thought it would be the best time to steal the jewels from the ladies and wallets from the men. He also heard the cry of the old woman sitting at the entrance. Immediately the thief asked the old woman, "Who are you? Why have you come here? What is your problem?"

The old woman said, " This is my husband. We both came to have darshan of Kasi Vishwanatha Swamy. Because of hunger and thirst my husband fell down. I have been asking for little water from these people who are entering the temple."

Instantly, the thief took out the water bottle that he had with him. The old woman said, "Son! Please wait. I don't know when my husband will breathe his last. Before offering the water please tell me the good deeds that you have done so far. Please do not lie. If you lie, my husband will die as soon as he gets the water from you. I will permit you to give the water after I hear

the truth from you.”

The thief was silent for a few moments and then he started talking. “ Mother! I have not done any good deeds till today. Offering this water to your husband will be my only good deed in my entire life. I have told the truth. Please give this water to your husband.” He then gave the water bottle to the old woman.

At once the old man and woman disappeared and Lord Shiva and Mother Parvati gave darshan to the thief and said, “ This human birth is given to serve others, not for being selfish. Even though you had done many bad deeds throughout your life, now you tried to save the life of the old man and you also told the truth; From today onwards, you will be a reformed person and will spend the rest of your life serving other people. There is no greater dharma than Truth. Doing pooja is not considered greater than helping a person in need. You should help the person in need first and then continue with pooja.” The divine couple gave their blessings to this thief and disappeared.

Back in Kailasam, Lord Shiva asked Mother Parvati, “Now do you understand who a real devotee is? Do you understand who is eligible to reach Kailasam?”

So, Children! This human birth is for serving others, so let us help others as much as possible!

- Story translated from Thulasi thalangal - Part 1

Madhurageetham - Krishna Leelai - 04

We are now relishing Sri Swamiji's compositions on Krishna leela.

In last week's issue, we saw how Nanda baba along with the Gopis and Gopas celebrated the birth of our little krishna. Sri Sukha Muni tells us about the many leelas of little Krishna in Srimad Bhagavada puram. In this composition, our Guruji talks about the "karunyam" of krishna. When the demon Puthana came to like little Krishna, he sucked the life out of her. He didn't stop there, he gave her "moksham" in spite of the fact that she tried to kill him. On another occasion he turned all the fruit in the basket of a fruit vendor into jewels with precious stones after getting just a handful of jamun Fruits.

ராகம்: அஸாவேரி தாளம்: ஆதி

பல்லவி

கருணா மூர்த்தி நீயல்லவோ கண்ணா

அனுபல்லவி

சரண் என்று வந்தோரை அரணாய் ரக்ஷிக்கும் ||க||

சரணம்

நாவற்பழம் கொண்டு நவரத்னம் ஈந்தாய்

நஞ்சுட்டியவளுக்கு நற்கதி தந்தாய்

அஞ்சி நின்ற பார்த்தனுக்கு அபாயம் அளித்தாய்

தஞ்சம் அடைத்தேன் உன்னை முரளிதரன் நானே ||க||

rAgam: asAvEri

thALam: Adi

pallavi

karuNA mUrtthi nIyallavO kaNNA

anupallavi

sharaN enDru vandOrai araNAy rakShikkum || ka ||

charaNam

nAvaRpazham koNDu navaratnam eendAy

nanjchUTTiyavaLukkum naRgathi thandAy

anjchi ninDra pArtthanukku abhayam aLitthAy

thanjcha maDaindEn unaiyE muraLIdharan nAnE || ka ||

Inner transformation series -6 :

Character is marked more during the times of adversity than prosperity. The journey of true inner transformation never lets a crisis go to waste. Let's see what nature has to teach us. Bamboo trees are so common in warmer parts of the world. These bamboo trees teach us a wonderful lesson.

Bamboo flourishes the shoots, leaves, stems etc. which are above the ground during the rainy season, in times of prosperity. But what happens during times of adversity, for example when there is a drought? When there is not much available from outside, for the bamboo to grow, do you know what bamboo does? It deepens the roots.

During prosperity, it flourishes the shoots and during adversity, it deepens its roots, so that it can flourish better during the next season of abundance. Inner transformation journey teaches us to deepen our roots of character, to deepen our tolerance, acceptance and firmness in the face of adversity, so that, when the circumstances turn prosperous again we have the strength of our roots to flourish even better.

- "Be happy and spread the happiness around."

Oct 2021 Edmonton Monthly Satsang Report:

By the immense grace of Sri Swamiji and Sri Madhuri Sakhi Sametha Premika Varadha Takurji, GOD Satsang families did Naama satsangs in October 2021.

On Oct 2nd, we had weekly satsang - started with naama followed by Thodayamangalam, Guru kirtans, few madhuragitams and concluded with Kaliyayum bali kollum.

On Oct 09th, we had Anusham satsang - started with naama followed by Adi shankara guru paadham panindhu, Ganesha Pancharatnam, Shiva panchakshara stothram, Anna poornashtakam, Hanumath Pancharatnam and Thotakashtakam, a madhuragitham and concluded with Devaki balaya.

From Oct 15 to Oct 18th we had Srimad Bhagavatham katha thru zoom. Katha started with Bhagawatha Mahathmyam, followed by Naradha charithram, Dhruva charithram and Ajamila charithram.

On Oct 23rd, we had our weekly satsang - started with naama followed by Premika varadha astakam, Vishnu sahasranamam, Bhisma sthuthi followed by few madhuragithams and Ashtapathi 17th and concluded with Kaliyayum bali kollum.

On Oct 30th, we had our weekly satsang - started with naama followed by Vishnu sahasranamam and the Krishna Cottage kids led the Madhuraageetham satsang, and concluded with Devaki balaya.



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

Oct 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 October 2021.

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

Oct 02: Ekadasi Akanda nama from 5:00 am to 11:30 am

Oct 16: Ekadasi Akanda nama from 5:00 am to 11:30 am

Oct 31 - Nov 06: Akanda Nama from 5 am to 5:30 pm

Upcoming Events:

Nov 13 - Govinda Pattabhishegam

Nov 20 - Thulasi Kalyanam