

GOD Canada Newsletter – September 2022

Cherished Memories - A Special Invite To Brindavan

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

Sri Satyanarayanan of our satsang shares his experience of his, which goes to show how the Guru's grace is with us in every moment of our life.

It was the summer of 2001. 15th March, to be precise. The scorching heat of the March sun did not seem to spare any of the Chennai residents, including me. I was on my bike, heading to Mr. Srinivasan's residence in Chetput, Chennai.

I was especially overjoyed that day, as it was only that morning that I had received the glad news of passing CA Final Examination. I was then going to each of my teachers' homes to thank them personally for my success. (Mr. Srinivasan taught me Operations Research for CA Final Examination).

I was traveling on Spur Tank Road and had put on the indicator. I was about to take a right turn.

My joy had another major reason behind it. I was slated to travel to Brindavan the very next day for the Bhaghavata Saptaha Shatakrtu organized by our Satsang. My mind was reminiscing the delightful experiences that we had with His Holiness on our previous Brindavan Yatra which took place a few years back then. I was recounting those blissful moments and my mind was already imagining how this trip is going to be!

A sudden jolt from behind interrupted my train of thoughts. The next thing that I realized was that I was sitting on the road. I had no clue about what happened. My mind went totally blank. Without any further thought, I got up and started walking in a split second.

A truck that came from behind at a very high speed had actually struck my bike and my bike went missing. It was later found under the truck some twenty feet away.

As I walked up to the footpath, a crowd of around 100 people gathered around the spot and started shouting at the truck driver for his careless driving. They were astonished by the miraculous escape I had and said I was very lucky.

Based on feedback, I learnt that the truck had hit the bike from behind on one side and pulled it along. Somehow I fell on the road as if someone had lifted me up and placed me there. For all practical reasons, I should also have gone under the truck along with the bike, and perhaps thoroughly deformed too, taking into account the force and velocity of the hit. This was indeed a miracle for everyone there. Another thing I was informed was, had I not got up immediately and started walking, I would have been hit by a bus coming from behind.

I was unhurt except for minor scratches on my palm as it was rested on the road. The bike also suffered damages on the side that went down.

Even while I was standing in the midst of the crowd arguing with the truck driver, a slim woman waded her way in and called me. With a smiling face and folded hands she greeted “Radhe Krishna!”, I looked at her and returned the greeting mechanically and continued arguing. She called me again and greeted “Radhe Krishna!” and I returned this time with a smile brought on to my face. I didn’t notice her after that.

Later that day I was recollecting the entire sequence of events to my friend, and when I was telling him about the lady, I realized she was wearing a very ordinary sari, gopichandan on her forehead, tulsimala on her neck, a cloth bag on her shoulder and that she could come and go easily unnoticed.

The next day, it was my train to Brindavan....

Pilgrimages have their merits, reading holy scriptures have their own merits, regularly visiting temples and taking a dip in holy rivers have their merits. But can one limit the grace and compassion of the Satguru in that by merely reminiscing Him, the gravest of dangers are averted! And even if we seem to momentarily lose consciousness of that fact, He appears there to remind us and reassure our faith in Him!

And for me this was a special reminder from our beloved Guru Maharaj! I consider it as a special personal invite extended to me by Him to Brindavan!

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

Everyday, numerous visitors come to have Sri Sri Swamiji’s darshan. Each one has his own story to narrate to Sri Sri Swamiji. The way Sri Sri Swamiji listens to each and everyone of them patiently and responds with a smiling face is simply incredible. I have always been baffled by Sri Sri Swamiji’s beautiful way of replying, a style unique to our Guru Maharaj!

Let me narrate a few of them here.

A lady doctor who is a devotee of Sri Sri Swamiji came for His darshan with a handful of books. Sri Sri Swamiji, with a light smile on His lips, looked at her questioningly.

“Books on Philosophy, Swamiji,” explained the devotee and added, “I have got them for you only, Swamiji!”

Sri Sri Swamiji said to her, “These books are good for you. Read them. I do not need them. I have got what I sought.”

The devotee looked at the radiant and smiling face of Sri Sri Swamiji and took the books back home.

Once a person gave a small note to Sri Sri Swamiji. Sri Sri Swamiji opened it and found in it the words ‘God is no where’.

Sri Sri Swamiji picked up a pen and altered it, wonderfully, to read, 'God is now here'!

Once a foreigner came to have darshan of Sri Sri Swamiji. When he met Sri Sri Swamiji, he exclaimed, 'India is full of mosquitoes!'

Sri Sri Swamiji smiled, and at once said, 'Even they wish to be born in this holy land only!'

Originally published in Namadwaar.org

Nama Anubhavam

Experience shared by one of the Bhagavathas

My husband and I started chanting in this group for some time. It has brought such positive vibes to our house. My little champ who listens to us always chanting also started chanting in the mornings and at night. And there is no stipulated time..our mouth keeps on humming this chant. All our gurus gave me such an opportunity that I started chanting groups for my entire family and started chanting in the morning and night before sleep. Little kids who are not even into school started Chanting with all of the family members.

My Son now feels the presence of Krishna.. says Amma Krishna is with us in our home so we need to keep chanting.

No bad vibes, no bad dreams.. Peaceful sleep at night .

Thank you so much for providing this opportunity.

Chanting alone will make us reach his feet.. Namavali is very important, it doesn't have rules or partiality.. all are Krishna's children.

Madhurageetham - Krishna Leelai - 14

Damodara Leela – Bound by the Cord of Unalloyed Love!



Lord Sri Krishna is bound by the pure selfless love of His devotees. He is the Supreme controller of the entire universe and all the gods, but willfully submits Himself to the immense love of His devotees, for that is the love He also has for them.

All the Gokula and Brindavana leelas very vividly bring out this quality of the Lord. He was the life and soul for all the devotees of Brindavan and they totally dedicated themselves to His service alone and He in turn had great delight in being bound by them.

Sri Shuka, in Srimad Bhagavatam, expounds this particular quality of Bhagavan in the story of “Damodara Leela” – the leela where mother Yashoda bound Krishna to a mortar with a rope.

Sri Shuka begins this episode thus. One fine morning, Yashoda in her house in Gokula, started eagerly to churn the curd all by herself for her little darling. She had great joy in churning the curd because this was Krishna kankaryam for her and she wanted to do it all by herself. While churning the butter, she was singing about the wonderful childhood pastimes of her

Krishna – the navaneetha chourya leela, putana moksham, shakatasura bandhanam, mrudh bhakshanam and so on and was revelling in His thoughts.

Sri Swamiji also in one his kirtans, “kaiyaithADA gOkula ramaNa”, very beautifully recounts all the Gokula and Brindavana leelas of Bhagavan.

As Yashoda swayed the rope back and forth around the rod, her earrings dangled and her bangles moved about in her hands. This sound of the churning of curd along with the jingling sound created by her bangles woke up little Krishna who was sleeping. Rubbing His sleepy eyes, Krishna came up to Yashoda, hugged her and very sweetly pressed his cheek against hers from behind. By these loving gestures, He gave so much joy to Yashoda and also conveyed that He was hungry. Yashoda fondly took Krishna in her lap and fed him milk as she lovingly admired his beautiful face that was lit with a smile. Suddenly she heard the sound of the boiling and overflowing milk that she had kept on the hearth in the kitchen. Hurriedly placing Krishna down from her lap she ran into the kitchen to remove the milk from the hearth.

Krishna whose hunger was not yet appeased, was not satisfied drinking His mother’s milk and became very furious. Great bhaktas exclaim, He whom the Upanishads praise as “nityatrupta” (ever contented in all respects) is “atrupta” (discontent/not satiated) for mother Yashoda’s mAtruvatsalyam – for He never felt satiated with all the love and affection that His mother showered on Him.

Why did Yashoda give so much importance to that milk in the kitchen while Lord Krishna Himself was on her lap drinking her own milk?

Mahatmas say that the true reason why Yashoda ran in to save that milk was because that too was meant for Krishna and only if that milk was saved, she could churn and get butter for her dear Krishna. That is why it was so important to her. Mother Yashoda had such deep affection for Krishna that every single action and thought of her’s was focused only towards Him.

Nevertheless, Krishna was very displeased that Yashoda had left Him. His lips

turned red as they quivered in anger. He wanted to show His annoyance and so he smashed the pot with a piece of stone, broke the churning rod and snapped the rope into pieces by biting it. He did all this while continuing to whine. He then saw a pot of butter in the corner and happy at seeing that, he took the pot in his hands, and with eyes brimming with tears went to a secretive place and started eating all the butter. Though he was crying all through, Sri Shuka says, he was shedding only false tears for how can Krishna really cry when His hands and mouth were full of his favorite butter? Yashoda on coming back was shocked to see the place in a mess – the pot was smashed, the curd had spilt all over the floor, the churning rod was broken and more than anything, her naughty Krishna was missing there. Still He had left a clue for His mother to find Him – His buttery footprints had left a white trail that led to where He was.

This is the reason why we draw the footprints of Krishna with rice flour, on the day of Krishna Janmashtami, reminding us of Krishna's footprints soaked in curd.

Now Krishna was seated on a mortar which was turned upside down giving away butter happily to all the monkeys. Sri Swamiji would interestingly say here, Krishna gave butter to the monkeys and also smeared some on their body just for fun while even to this day we smear Anjaneya with butter (veNNai kAppu). It was Krishna who had initiated this ritual long ago and perhaps He wanted to do something in return for all the service that Hanumanji had rendered to Him in the previous Yuga!

Seeing Yashoda coming, he looked at her with eyes full of fear and mischief. Yashoda slowly sneaked behind her naughty son with a stick in her hands to admonish him. As soon as Krishna saw her, He immediately jumped from the mortar and began to flee in fear. Yashoda ran as fast as she could behind this prankster, but Krishna was so swift that she could not keep up with Krishna's pace. The braids of her hair loosened and the flowers fell to the ground.

Sri Shuka is absolutely dumbfounded seeing this. He whom the Upanishads declare to be faster than mind was being chased by this Gopi! He exclaimed

at this wonder saying, “Yashoda is trying to catch hold of that Supreme Being whom even the great Yogis cannot capture in their minds!!”

Yashoda was now really exhausted. Krishna saw his dear mother’s fatigued form and took pity on her. He decided to allow Yashoda to get hold of him. By doing this, Krishna shows us that He can be attained by us only through His own compassion and not by our efforts.

As Nammazhwar says in his pasuram –

“pathudai adiyavarkku ELiyavan, pirargaLukku ariyA vithakan” meaning, “He is easily reachable to those who in their hearts nourish such deep love and affection (bhakti) towards Him and is distant for those bereft of it.”

Due to His infinite compassion, he simply allowed Himself to be bound.

Krishna was now guilty but like any ordinary child pretended to look very pitiful and innocent. He rubbed his eyes with his hands and the collyrium from his eyes got smeared all over his face making his eyes look very teary, red and puffed up. He now looked up at his mother with eyes full of fear. Kunti Devi reminiscing this leela of Krishna praises Him saying, “He whom Fear-personified is itself afraid of, actually shows Himself to be in fear!” (bhaya-bhAvanayA sthitasya).

Yashoda wanted to reprimand Him but at the same time she was so full of love and affection for Him that she could not bring herself to beat or scold Him, when His eyes full of fear and tears. She dropped the stick and decided to punish Krishna by tying Him to that same mortar that he was sitting on. Once again here Sri Shuka is overwhelmed seeing how Yashoda in all her motherly affection, being oblivious to the greatness and glory of her son, actually sought to bind Him!

Being wonderstruck he says, “He who pervades all space and time, who has nothing exterior or interior to Him, who exists before and after; inside as well outside the universe and is indeed the universe itself, with nothing in the world that is other than Him to bind Him at all, that Para Brahman was

being bound by this cowherd woman!”

(na chAnthar na bahir yasya na purvam nApi chAparam |

purvAparam bahischAntharjagato yo jagachhayaha | |)

Sri Shuka is unable to fathom the soulabhya – the simplicity of this incarnation! Just like Sri Shuka, the great saint, and Azhwar Nammazhwar too, just as he started writing this leela, entered into a state of trance and it took him six months to return to the normal state to complete writing the pasuram. Such is the soulabhya or the simplicity of Krishna avatara that it bewilders even the jnanis.

The great Krishna Bhakta, Leela Sukha too in his work called KrishnakarnAmrutham exclaims, “Upanishad artham ulookale nibaddham” – the import of all the Upanishads, the Supreme Brahman now stood bound to a wooden mortar!

Now when Yashoda started binding Krishna another miraculous leela was in store. The two ends of the rope that Yashoda used did not meet at all and fell short of two inches. So Yashoda tried joining another rope to it and to her utter surprise that too fell short to make the final knot. She repeated this with multiple ropes and to her sheer amazement the ends of the rope never met. Puzzled, she finally sat down in exhaustion smiling at all the Gopis who were all laughing at Yashoda and were equally spell bound to witness such a feat. Krishna now again compassionately gazed at His mother. He saw how she had exerted herself all this while. Her hair had gotten disheveled and drops of sweat were dripping down her beautiful brows. Seeing the plight of his mother, Bhagavan thought, “Oh my dear poor mother!, let me get bound now!” and out of sheer compassion He let himself be bound once again!

Sridharacharya here says, the two-finger width length that fell short represents, surrender and extreme compassion that is triggered by such surrender. When Yashoda became tired and helpless, she gave up all her efforts and surrendered and that triggered Krishna’s compassion and He

allowed Himself to be bound. Sri Shuka experiences horripilation all over his body while thinking of this unique and rare blessing bestowed upon Mother Yashoda.

He says, “This supreme blessing that Bhagavan showered on Yashoda, neither Brahma, nor Lord Shiva nor Goddess Sri was bestowed with!”

The all powerful Lord, one whose name when chanted can release one from all worldly bondages actually got Himself bound for the unprecedented love of His Mother. This shows that the Lord can be attained only through pure devotion – the journey itself being sweet and enjoyable!

Finally Yashoda now tied Krishna to the mortar and Krishna became “Damodara” (“Dama” in sanskrit means rope and “Udara” means waist). The name “Damodara” is also one among the 1000 namas in Vishnu Sahasranamam. Bhaktas say that even now Krishna has this mark of the rope in his belly. This leela is also known as “ulookala leela”, for Yashoda tied him to the mortar which is called “ulookala” in Sanskrit.

Our Swamiji too, sings a very beautiful kirtan on this leela of Lord Sri Krishna which we shall enjoy here!

Kattundan Kannan Uralil

rAgam: kEdAragauLa, tALam: Adi

pallavi

kaTTuNDAn kaNNan uralil (2)

anupallavi

uLLum puRamum illAda shruti sollum

Adi-naDu-muDivillAda anda paramporuL

charaNam

bhayandavan pOI angum ingum vaLaiya vandu

AyargaL pArtthu kaikkoTTi sirithiDa – thAyin

suyanalamillAda anbiRku vasappaTTu

kAyAmbhU niRatthAn thAnE valiya vandhu

Meaning

Pallavi

Krishna got bound to the mortar!

Anupallavi

The Supreme Being extolled by the Upanishads as having nothing exterior or interior to Him and,

who has neither a definite beginning, end, or anything in between!

charaNam

Like a frightened boy, He ran here and there and,

the Gopis stood laughing merrily at Him.

Bound by the selfless love and affection of his mother Yashoda,

the blue-hued boy submitted Himself to her.

Nithya Balasubramanian, Pleasanton CA

Illustration: Lalitha Venkatraman, Richmond VA

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Aug 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 Aug 2022.

With the blessings of our Sri Swamiji, the number of chanters in our Nithya Nama Bhiksha Seva growing by the day.

On Aug 20, 2022, we had our Gokulashtami Satsang at a Residence in Ontario. Gopas and Gopis from Toronto Satsang did Sangeetha katha Pravachan on Sri krishna leelas.

On Aug 21, 2022 and Aug 22, we had Nama Bhiksha at a private residence.

On Aug 27, we had a blissful evening chanting Mahamantra at the Brampton Guruvayurappan Temple. We chanted the Mahamantra from 4.30 pm to 6.00 pm.

On Aug 28, we had a blissful evening chanting Mahamantra at Shiva Sathyanarayana Temple in Mississauga. We chanted the Mahamantra from 4.30 pm to 6.00 pm.

Upcoming Events:

Sri Swamiji Jayanthi Celebrations via Zoom:

- Oct 16 - Oct22 - Madhurageetham Saptaham
- Oct 23 - Oct 29 - Nama Sapthaham

- Oct 30 - Nov 05 - Srimad Bhagavatha Saptaham
- Nov 08 - Raasa Poornima

Madhura Utsav (in-Person)

- Dec 23 - Dec 31

Dates to remember:

Sep 01 - Swathi

Sep 03 - Radhashtami

Sep 06 - Ekadasi

Sep 21 - Ekadasi

Sep 28 - Swathi

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QUIZ TIME : Guru Kirtans from Sri Madhuraageetham



We are starting a new Quiz series on Sri Madhuraageetham, the divine compositions of HH Maharanyam Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji that have all emerged from his personal experience. Quiz for this month is based on Guru kirtans from Sri Madhuraageethams.

1. Name the kirtan where Sri Swamiji in the Pallavi, exhorts the mind to meditate on the Guru.

a. Kuppayil Vizhinda Oru Malar

b. Chintayare Sri Gurum

c. Varuvai Varuvai Gurnatha

2. In which kirtan does the fortune teller sing the greatness of a Sadguru?

a. Kurukku Vazhi Thedum

b. Pratyaksha Deivame

c. Unnatha Guru Mandalam

3. In the above kirtan (answer to q2), what does the fortune teller convey about the pAda tIrtham (holy water that has washed the feet) of the Sadguru?

a. It is verily the waters from Ganga and Yamuna

b. It is verily the waters from Cauvery

c. It is verily the waters from Godavari

4. What ragam is the kirtan 'Pratyaksha Deivame' set to?

a. Begada

b. Bhairavi

c. Bhageshri

5. Name the kirtan where the phrase 'divya nAma siddhAntham seydhA nam Gurunatha' is present.

a. Guruvarul ondre ariven

b. Bhagavan Nama Siddhantam Seydha

c. Gurunathan Thaal Panivay

6. Which of these kirtans does not refer to Sri Bhagavan Nama Bodhendra Saraswathi Swamigal?

a. Sadguru Padukam

b. Bhaktim Dehi Shri Guro

c. Bhagyam Aho Bhagyam

7. In which kirtan does Sri Swamiji address a parrot?

a. Guru Krupaiyai Maravadiru Maname

b. Gurunatha Gurunatha Endra Sol Inikkude

c. Gurunathan Vazhi Gurunathan Vazhi

8. Name the deity who is referred to in the kirtan 'Gurunathan Vazhi'.

a. Lord Guruvayurappan

b. Lord Jagannatha

c. Lord Pandurangan

9. In which kirtan does Sri Swamiji offer his prostrations to all the ardent devotees of the Lord and seek their blessings?

a. Golokam Sendru Vanden

b. Unnatha Guru Mandalam

c. Tvameva Sadguru

10. Name the kirtan where Sri Swamiji conveys the beautiful precept that there is no liberation without Sadguru -'guruvillAmal mukthiyillai'.

a. Guru Arul Ondre Ariven

b. Guruvin Arul Petravare

c. Dakshinamurthe Namosthutte

11. In this Namavali, _____ Sri Swamiji says that the heart verily becomes Brindavan only because of Sadguru's grace.

a. Brindavaname Un Maname

b. Brindavanam Bhaje Brindavanam

c. Tava Smaranam Dehi

12. In which kirtan does Sri Swamiji mention that the one who earlier came down as Sri Adi Shankara has now incarnated as 'Chandrasekhara', extolling the greatness of Jagadguru Shri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Mahaswamigal.

a. Chandrasekharam Aham Pranamami

b. Chandrasekhara Chandrasekhara

c. Shri Shankara Guruvaram Bhajami

13. What is the beautiful precept that is conveyed by Sri Swamiji in this kirtan, 'Hariyum

Guruvum'?

a. Lord Hari and the Guru are one and the same.

b. Guru seva is verily Lord Hari's seva

c. Guru's krupa is verily Lord Hari's krupa

d. All of the above

14. In which kirtan does Sri Swamiji exhort the mind to always remember Sadguru's grace?

a. Guru Krupaiyai Maravadiru

b. Kuppayil Vizhinda Oru Malar

c. Gurunatha Gurunatha Endru Kondadiduvom

15. A flower fell tragically into garbage; but it was magically lifted higher and higher till it

adorned the temple gopuram! How could this happen? Name the kirtan that beautifully

brings out this touching meaning.

a. Kuppayil Vizhunda

b. Tvameva Gatir Mama hey Gurunatha

c. Sadguru Padukam

16. In this kirtan, Sri Swamiji glorifies Sri Marudanallur Sadguru Swamigal.

a. Chintayare Sri Gurum

b. Bhajare Manasa Sri Venkataramam

C. Bhagyam Aho Bhagyam

Compiled by Ramya Srinivasan, San Jose, CA

Answers: 1-b, 2-a, 3-a, 4-a, 5-c, 6-a, 7-c, 8-c, 9-b, 10-b, 11-a, 12-b, 13-d,14-a,
15-a,16-b

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