

SAMARDHA SADGURU

Spiritual Magazine

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Mathaji Charitable Trust	MAY BABUJI'S AND MATAJI'S	
and printed at	BLESSINGS BE SHOWERED	
Samardha Sadguru Publications	ON YOU ALL	
D.No 3-499	ON THE OCCASIONS OF	
Sri Kali Gardens Ashram,	SRI KRISHNA JAYANTI AND	
Nambur Pin: 522508, Gunturdt.	VINAYAKA CHAVITHI	
Andhra Pradesh		
and		
Published at		
D.No 3-499 Sri Kali Gardens		
Ashram		
Nambur R.S Pin : 522508,		
Guntur dt. Andhra Pradesh		
Editor: Ramaswami Sampath.		

Sri Mataji's Benediction

DUAL PATHS – SREYA AND PREYA

There are two distinct and separate paths for a human being in his or her life, namely the paths of Sreya and Preya.

The path of Sreya is blissful, whereas that of Preya is a path of pleasure. Material prosperity cannot by itself provide happiness to an individual if he has not developed a healthy inner personality with a keen aptitude for living a dynamic life. Intelligent self-restraint and discipline are required for such an aptitude.

Self-control and discipline are detested by the man of the present day world since he considers them as shackles put on his freedom. Hence, he repels the very idea of spiritual practice in any form.

Spiritual practice trains a person to follow the precepts and injunctions which provide him an opportunity to appreciate and understand their efficacy as a practical code of healthy living. Denial of sensual enjoyment without proper understanding leads to frustration and cynicism. Spiritual practice, no doubt, helps a man to blossom forth and enjoy a better and more cheerful life.

A proper understanding of man's inner personality alone inspires him and gives him a broader vision of life. This he achieves only through the proper guidance by an experienced "Master" or Guru. As man progresses in his inward vision, the undesirable tendencies automatically drop off. Rejection of lower values of life will lead to sublimation. A person, away from spiritual practice, naturally chooses a path detrimental to his prosperity. Man is naturally attracted to the path of pleasure since it caters for self-gratification providing immediate happiness, but he will sooner or later be forced to face ripples of disappointment and sore.

The path of Sreya is the right way to greater happiness and a sense of fulfilment. Man can realise to choose the right path only under the guidance of the Guru. That can happen only when a person shows inclination for a spiritual way life. All men of determination and discrimination alone can choose the path of Sreya which culminates in blissful life.*



Editorial

FRIEND, PHILOSOPHER AND GUIDE

Om Gururam namaste!

Suppose we are in a strange place. Without somebody or the Google map showing us the direction, it will be difficult for us to locate a lodge to stay. Only a person familiar with the localities and good lodges of that city can direct us to the correct place. When we need the guidance of a Good Samaritan or Google search engine even for the simple job of locating an address, should we not require a knowledgeable guide to pursue our enquiry into the purpose of life? That guidance can be given only by a Sadguru (True Master) who has a thorough knowledge about it.



Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, founder of the Divine Life Society, Rishikesh, gives an example to emphasise the need for a Guru in spiritual matters. “Only a person who has gone to Badarinath before can lead another to that Himalayan spiritual township. A new visitor to Badarinath should take such a person’s help to go to that place. Else, he would stray into some hilly terrain and get lost. Similarly, only the Sadguru who knows the ins and outs of the spiritual realm could guide the ‘saadhak’ (spiritual trainee) on the right royal path.”

The True Master is the repository of all knowledge and hence in a position to guide others. And the Sadguru is always ready to extend that guidance, because it is the nature of such Masters to go all out to help others seeking their advice. “Knowledge of the Self can be obtained by the spirit of enquiry, and if that enquiry has to be successful, it must be done under the guidance of the Sadguru. A glowing candle alone can light other candles. So also, only the Sadguru, who is well versed in the methodology required for the enquiry, can enlighten the ‘saadhak’. The Sadguru is capable of destroying the obstacles in the way of the ‘saadhak’ in realising the Truth,” our Gurudev, Sri Sri Sri Hanumat Kali Vara Prasada Babuji Maharaj, explained in one of his discourses. We generally describe anybody who has been helpful to us as a “friend, philosopher and

guide”. The Sadguru is indeed a friend to the ‘saadhak’, a philosopher who shapes the mental outlook of the latter and a guide by virtue of that act.

The spiritual aspirant is always in quest of such a friend, philosopher and guide, and once he finds that True Master, he does not hesitate to surrender to Him. Such surrender should not be construed as becoming a slave to the Master, intellectually. Service to the Master should not be interpreted as servility to another human being. And the Guru should not be treated like a human being just because he, too, has the same physical features as each one of us. Lord Babuji likens the Sadguru to a electric live wire which, for all practical purposes, looks like the ordinary wire that has not been energised.

Critics ask where is the need for a Guru, when we have examples like Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi and Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, who did not get initiated by any master? Guru Maharaj’s reply to this point runs like this: “These great spiritual personalities are extraordinary examples of realised souls, but they are exceptions to the general rule of having a master for spiritual development. Perhaps, God had willed it so in their cases. Why don’t you appreciate the fact that even Lord Vishnu’s incarnations, Rama and Krishna, sought the guidance of sages Vasishta and Saandeepini respectively?” Almost all great spiritual personalities were inspired by Masters of their choice. The four great yogis who were Lord Brahma’s ‘maanasika putras’ (sons emerged from His mind), Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanaatana and Sanatsujata, had the privilege of having Sri Dakshinamurthy as their Guru. Swetaketu took initiation from Uddhaalaka, Maitreyi from her consort Yagnavalkya, Narada from Sanatsujata and Nachiketas from Yama.

Some assert that the so-called Sagduru has the knack of conditioning the mind of his disciple. Once an individual mind gets conditioned thus, the person mortgages his thinking faculty to the Master, they argue. What a fallacious logic! When we travel in an aeroplane, a train or a bus, don’t we indirectly surrender our safety to the pilot or the driver? Because we have the confidence in the capability of the pilot or the driver, we rely on him.

Yet another argument is that when our scriptures have clearly spelt out the road to reach Godhead, there is no need for a Master,

and the aspirant can learn those texts by himself. This is easier said than done. If we start learning those difficult-to-understand texts by ourselves, the tenure of one life will not be sufficient. Only a Sadguru, well versed in them, can correctly interpret them. The Master is like the cloud that absorbs the waters of the ocean and pours out as rain for the benefit of earth.

Jai Gurudev!*

SAMARDHA SADGURU ENGLISH
QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

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APPEAL TO THE READERS OF
SAMARDHA SADGURU TELUGU
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LIFE MEMBERS ARE REQUESTED TO DONATE RS.1116/- FOR EXTENSION FOR FURTHER 20 YEARS. WE ALSO APPEAL ANNUAL SUBSCRIBERS TO BECOME LIFE MEMBERS BY REMITTING RS.1116/- THIS WILL BE OF GREAT HELP TO MEET THE INCREASE IN COSTS OF VARIOUS INPUTS.

SAMARDHA SADGURU MANAGEMENT

Thus Spake Babuji **DAKSHINA MURTHY STOTRAM**

Sushumna Prasada

Lord Babuji, on one occasion, sat in the midst of devotees who were eager to have His darshan and hear His spiritual exhortation. Sadgurudev, who is omniscient and omnipresent, glanced at all the devotees who assembled there, comprehending their line of thinking.

Though He sat in absolute silence, His beaming face exuded love and compassion. That serene silence conveyed numerous spiritual messages to the devotees assembled there who enjoyed inexpressible peace.

Lord Babuji chose it as the proper time to enlighten them on the spiritual impact of Dakshina Murthy Sthotra, composed by Sadguru Adisankaracharya. He proceeded thus...

Adisankaracharya, the apostle of Advaitic philosophy, is a boon given to humanity by Lord Siva to save them from the mire of ignorance. Jagadguru Sankaracharya blessed humanity in Kaliyuga by sprinkling on them numerous spiritual diamonds in the shape of so many hymns. To learn the goal of human life and to save humanity from the mire of ignorance, he composed numerous poetic works.

Among all such Sthotras (praise of the divine Lord), Dakshina Murthy Sthotra occupies a unique place. The Sthotra, though very small in size, contains the essence of philosophy embedded in all the spiritual commentaries.

Let Me now narrate an interesting account of the incarnation of Lord Dakshina Murthy. In the beginning of creation, Lord Brahma directed His spiritual offspring Sanaka and Sanandana to participate in the act of creation. But the two sons with total detachment refused to participate in the activity of creation and sat in Nandanavanam pondering over the fact of searching a Maha Purusha, who could give them spiritual initiation. Meanwhile, the divine sage Narada came there and suggested to Sanaka and Sanandana that to give spiritual initiation, nobody else was there except Lord Brahma and asked them to proceed to Satyaloka. Sage Narada also



accompanied them. But by the time they reached the Satyaloka, they saw Lord Brahma in a trance with half-closed eyes enjoying the melodious music of Sri Vani playing on Her matchless musical instrument veena. Immediately they felt that Lord Brahma who was immersed in the sweet melodies produced by Sri Vani was not competent to give them spiritual initiation. Then Narada advised them to proceed to Vaikuntha to receive the initiation from Lord Vishnu. There they saw Sri Lakshmi and Narayana on the same bed. The Divine Mother was massaging the lotus feet of Lord Vishnu. Then Sanaka and Sanandana looked at each other and thought that Lord Vishnu was no better than Lord Brahma. Then they proceeded to Kailasa to seek the initiation from Lord Siva. There they had the darshan of Siva as 'Ardhanareeswara' absorbed in divine dance. They felt that giving half of His body to Divine Mother Parvathi was worse than what Brahma and Vishnu did. Disappointed, they retreated along with Narada.

Then Lord Siva, the embodiment of compassion and love, wanted to save them and quench their deep desire of spiritual enlightenment. In order to initiate them spiritually, the Lord took the incarnation of Dakshina Murthy, an attractive youth of spiritual effulgence, sitting under the shade of a banyan tree on their way. He was seated in a meditative posture, facing south with the union of the thumb and the forefinger, which indicates the union of individual soul (Jivatma with the universal soul, Paramatma). The Lord wanted to offer wisdom to them in absolute silence (Mounam). It was indeed the fortune of Sanaka and Sanandana to get all their doubts cleared by the absolute spiritual silence (Mounam of the handsome young Yogi).

The moment they saw the youthful saint, they experienced the magnetic attraction and realised that there was no difference between Power and the Powerful person, that there was no difference between sight and the seer and that the light that effulged from it was the Divine Universal Soul. Having got their doubts cleared, Sanaka and Sanandana participated in the act of creation following the instructions of their father, Lord Brahma.

Some profound scholars are of the opinion that Sri Dakshina Murthy occupies the seat of Jagadguru in Krutayuga. In Tretayuga Dattatreya Swami is considered as Jagadguru. Sri Vedavyasa is deemed as Jagadguru in Dwapara yuga and in Kaliyuga, Adisankaracharya occupies that position.

Dakshina Murthy starts with the traditional salutation to spiritual master (Gurudev). The main disciples of Sri Adisankaracharya were men of wisdom (Jnanis) who renounced family life. Their salutation (Vandanam) was different from that of ordinary people. They offered pranamam deeming the Guru as the very incarnation of God (Parabrahma) and they felt that they were part of it. Sri Adisankara established the mode of offering Sadguru salutation. It is indicative of the all-pervasive Brahman. It is a tradition to recite ‘Dakshina Murthy Sthotra’ before the commencement of any commentary on ‘Prasthanas Thrayam’. While listening to the commentaries, in the beginning one should listen to the five slokas of Dakshina Murthy Sthotra commencing with ‘Viswam Darpana Drishyamana Nagari’. After listening to them, the other five-sloka series starting with ‘Rahugrasta’ are considered as a continuation of Sadguru salutation by scholars. The concluding part of each sloka, ‘Tasmai Sri Gurumurthyaye Namayidam Sri Dakshina Murthyaye’, is the pivotal line indicating the all-pervasiveness of Brahman. Though it outwardly looks different, it is the same spiritual content of the all-pervasiveness of Brahman that illumines and activates the human life. It is the deep-rooted desire of the spiritual master (Gurudev) to reveal it. That is why the tenth sloka concludes with the line ‘Sarvatma Tatwamiti sphutikruta’.

Sri Adi Sankaracharya’s disciple, Sri Sureswara Acharya, who fully understood the feelings and thoughts of Gurudev, explained the same secret. That was why he commenced his text, saying ‘Eswaro Gururatmeti Murthybheda Vibhagini’.

Dakshina Murthy Sthotra starts with the explanation of the Sadguru to the disciples in absolute silence through the sloka, “Chitram Vatatharormule/ Vrudhasishya Gururyuva/Gurostu mounavyakhyanam/Sishyastu chinna samsaya”.

It means: ‘It is a matter of surprise that under the shade of the roots of banyan tree, the spiritual Master (Guru) in the bloom of youth was surrounded by aged disciples. The powerful and meaningful commentary of Gurudev in the form of absolute silence enlightened the devotees by totally dissolving all their doubts.’ It is indeed a wonder.

If we observe the portrait of Sri Dakshina Murthy, we find four aged saints around him. Sri Dakshina Murthy is the most peaceful incarnation of the Lord Shankara. The plaited hair of Lord Dakshina Murthy hanging down and in the midst of the clusters of hair, we see the Moon wafting his rays which symbolise the rays of wisdom.

The Moon with his pleasant and peaceful rays shines as a matchless decoration on the Lord's thick clusters of hair. His very sight offers immense bliss and contentment to one and all.

Generally the masters are old and the disciples are young. But here the order is reverse. The Guru is in the prime of youth, while the disciples are quite aged. They had been performing penance and yagas for a long time and they sought the spiritual guidance of Sri Dakshina Murthy who with His infinite grace gave spiritual initiation to the aged sages. Sri Dakshina Murthy is the embodiment of wisdom.

Usually the teacher keenly observes the nature and intellect of the disciples before offering right and suitable spiritual education to them. But here it is the case of 'Gurosthu Mouna Vyakhyanam'. That means Guru teaches everything not with the medium of speech, but with absolute silence. 'Guru' is the embodiment of absolute peace and silence. All the problems and the doubts can be solved with the thought-provoking silence and peace of the spiritual teacher. Sadguru Dakshina Murthy being the incarnation of peace and bliss, all the doubts automatically disappeared without a single word from either side, and the disciples became one with Guru, enjoying the peace and bliss - the fruitful result of their penance for ages. Sri Adisankaracharya explained this situation clearly in the following sloka:

*Mouna Vyakhya prakatitha parabrahma tatwam yuvanam
Varshistante vasadrushi ganairavrutam Brahma nishtai
Acharyendram karakalitha chinmudramananda murthim
Svatmaramam muditavadanam Dakshinamurthi meede*

It means: Sri Dakshina Murthy conveyed the spiritual message and the essence of philosophy to his disciples who were sitting around him under the shade of banyan tree. The aged sages who have been doing penance for self-realisation had a blissful vision of their matchless Master who is in the prime of youth with a blissful understanding smile. His appearance with 'chinmudra' (union of thumb and forefinger) is indeed an indication of the bliss and He indulges in Atmanandam and shines with an inimitable smile on His face. I am praising by offering prayer to such a supreme Acharya (master of the masters).

- to be concluded

CHAR DHAM YATRA - FOUR LEARNINGS

Kali Prasad Paluri

Sri Guru Maharaj recently granted me the rare opportunity of participating in the Char Dham Yatra, along with Pujya Sri Mataji and other devotees. Since it was the tour of four holy places, I would like to share four things I learned/observed during the trip.

As we went through the Himalayas we observed that many mountains were converted into farm lands through the process of step farming. We all know that it is the nature of water always to reach the lowest altitude. So, all the rain that falls on a mountain directly flows down to the valley. To retain the water on the mountain, the farmer flattens a small portion of the slope and constructs a wall. This will retain the water and make the soil ready for cultivation. He then flattens the next part of the slope and constructs another retaining wall so that any overflow of water can be held in the next step. Like this, the whole slope of the mountain is converted into several steps and used for farming.

If we imagine the mountain as God and the rain water as our mind, when we try to concentrate our mind on God, it keeps sliding down to the worldly things. The mind never likes to stay in one place and always has the tendency to wander, shop, etc. So the Sadguru constructs retaining walls like yatra, deeksha, puja, japa, homa, etc., to still the mind on God while we do our favourite things like travel and shopping.

The second thing we witnessed was the origin of holy rivers like the Ganga and the Yamuna. A river is formed with rain water from a mountain which in turn is the evaporated water from the ocean. Once a river forms, it starts its journey to go back and merge with its origin, namely the ocean. At the starting of a river, there are huge rocks and big boulders washed off from the mountains by the mighty force of the river that also flows very speedily with a gushing sound. But as the river advances, the rocks keep colliding with each other and turn into small stones and finally sand and dirt. At that stage the river turns calm and serene. Finally when the river merges with the ocean it leaves behind that dirt, too.

In the same way when we start our spiritual journey to reach our origin, God, we are filled with the big rocks of our good

and bad qualities, or Gunas. They keep colliding with each other throughout the journey reminiscent of the epic battle of Mahabharata. As we progress in the journey these Gunas diminish into insignificant proportions and we attain Sthitaprajnatva. Finally we leave out all these Gunas when we merge with God.

The third thing we observed was the ghat road. In plains the roads are straight and we don't see anything twice on the road. But the roads on the mountains go back and forth on the same side of the mountain and we see the same scenes again and again. One may think why are we going on the same road again and again, but we should understand that with each iteration we are attaining new heights. Same way, in a worldly curriculum there is no repetition. Punarukti, or repeating same words, is even called a dosham. But in spiritual curriculum, we keep listening to the same concepts in the discourses and one may wonder why he or she is listening to the same things again or doing same yatra or puja every time. But we should realise that with each repetition we are attaining new spiritual heights.

The fourth thing we observed was that there are two kinds of mountains, those made of hard rock and those made of soft soil and small rocks. The rocky mountains are tightly packed and hardly have any tall trees, unlike the soily mountains that are loosely held together and host a lot of tall trees. It is very hard to construct roads on the rocky mountains but once constructed, the road is safe and free from risks of roadblocks by mudslides and trees falling. On the other hand it is easy to construct roads on the soft mountains but you always have the risk of the above mentioned roadblocks.

Great Gurus like Sri Babuji Maharaj went through the hardest of Adhyatmik Sadhana at a very tender age and through their hard work constructed the safest road for our spiritual journey. On the other hand those who give discourses by simply reading some books and memorising lead us on a road full of risks.

Just as I observed these things in the Char Dham Yatra and tried to link to the spiritual aspects, so we should derive spiritual meanings to our day-to-day experiences, and this will keep us always in the spiritual realm.*

Divine Mother Speaks

EXPERIENCE ALONE MATTERS

Japamala Prasada

Our Gurudev Sri Babuji Maharaj once gave the definition of Bhakta (devotee), Sadhaka (spiritual aspirant), Ajnani (ignorant person) and Jnani (the all knower or enlightened soul)

A Bhakta is one who loves God and sheds tears of joy as soon as he hears the Lord's name. Sage Narada, in his aphorisms of Bhakti, states that Bhakti is the divine love with which a devotee loves God.

Who is a Sadhaka? A Sadhaka is one who is striving for the above state and to attain the ultimate Truth.

An Ajnani is one who is not bothered to know who he is or his real self. He spends his time in material pleasures, laziness and sleep.

A Jnani is the one who knows his real Self, the ultimate Truth. Even though he is with a physical body, it is like a burnt rope which looks like a rope. His mind is under his control and his deeds are not dictated by it. His five senses do not scatter outward. He remains as observer of the three states of wakefulness, dream and deep sleep. Even if he has physical body, he is not attached to it. Such self-realised souls are known as 'Videha Muktas'.

Having got the human birth, we must take refuge at the divine feet of such realised souls and follow their orders with implicit faith and trust. One should never imitate such men but should follow their teachings and practise what they say. Such great souls are Satya Gurus or True Masters. A Satya Guru is the embodiment of knowledge and divinity and He is not bothered about your wealth, name, fame, etc. He only sees the divinity in you. He is one teacher who gives his everything to his disciples. The only way He is satisfied is when He sees us experiencing and enjoying the spiritual bliss.

The Satya Guru gives us 'Mantram'. Mantram is the divine name or phrase given by the Gurudev. The more we chant that Mantram, the more it makes us forget our body and mind. When we contemplate upon it, our mind will cease to go hither and thither.



When the mind stops thinking and becomes still, our true Self gets reflected in it. This is what is meant by 'Nissabdham Brahma uchyate' (Silence is Brahman).

Philosophy or 'tatvam' is not something to be found in the books. "Tatvam" is a Sanskrit word which means "tat = that", "tvam = you"; that is you. It means you are that infinite Energy and not the mere mortal body. This is not something which you can get by reading books, the Vedas and the Upanishads. It is not enough to quote the Upanishads. One has to imbibe the essence that is there in the Upanishads and experience it. This can be achieved only by the constant and diligent practice of meditating on the 'Lakshyartham' given by the Guru. The 'prasadam' or holy offerings we eat is visible to our eyes. But there is another 'prasadam' which transforms our mind and is not visible - it is the divine teachings of the Gurudev, 'Gurubodha'.

Sri Guru Maharaj has given us this Ashram (located in Nambur) so that we can do our spiritual practice without any interruption. We have all amenities at our doorstep. We are far from the madding crowd. We are in a cage of 'Omkaara' and experiencing the divine bliss.

There is a sloka (verse) describing the Divine Mother –

“Omkaara panjara sukeem

Upanishad udyanavana Keli kala kanteem

Aagama Vipina Mayureem

Aryam Antar Vibhavaye Gowreem”

The Divine Mother and Guru are one and the same. She is the parrot in the cage of Omkaara. She is the sweet-voiced maiden playing in the gardens of Upanishads. She is the peacock dancing in the woods of the scriptures. She is the beginning of everything. She is the energy inside us and we should concentrate and contemplate upon her. She will draw us inside and we will become one with Her.

That is exactly what a Guru wants us to do. Are we doing that? Question your own self. Do not fritter away the most invaluable human birth given to you. You also got the next impossible thing: A Satya Guru and also the wish to attain Nirvana. Follow the path shown by the Gurudev. May He grant us immense devotion, knowledge and detachment to achieve our goal!*

**CURRENT PROGRAMMES
IMPORTANT PUJAS AND SATSANGS
AT SRI KALI GARDENS**

July 2018

- 08 Sun - Sri Guru Dasami - Satsangam, Sri Sadguru Pada Puja
11 Wed -Masa Sivaratri - Ekaham at Pavuluru Branch
13 Fri - Amavasya
17 Tue - Starting of Dakshinayanam
23 Mon-Toli Ekadasi - Sri Sadguru Pada Puja,
Bhakta Samaradhana
27 Fri - Ashada Guru Purnima - Sampurna Chandra
Grahamam, Satsangam, Sri Sadguru Pada Puja,
Bhakta Samaradhana, Starting of Chaturmasa
Deeksha

August 2018

- 06 Mon - Sri Guru Dasami - Satsangam, Sri Sadguru Pada Puja
10 Fri - Masa Sivaratri - Ekaham at our Pavuluru Branch
11 Sat - Amavasya
14 Tue - Sravana Suddha Tadiya - Satsangam,
Sri Sadguru Pada Puja
24 Fri - Varalakshmi Vratam
26 Sun - Rakhi Poornima - Sri Sadguru Pada Puja,
Bhakta Samaradhana

September 2018

- 02 Sun - Srikrishna Janshtami - Morning - Kalasa Stapanam,
Sahasranamarchana of Sri Radha Krishnulu,
Bhakta Samaradhana,
07.00 P.M - Sri Sadguru Pada Puja
03 Mon - 11.00 A.M. Samuhika Pujas of Sri Radha Krishnulu,
Bhakta Samaradhana
04 Tue - 11.00 A.M. Sri Sadguru Pada Puja, Bhakta Samaradhana

- 05 Wed - Sri Guru Dasami - Satsangam, Sri Sadguru Pada Puja,
07.00 P.M. Utti Kottuta
- 05-09-18 Wed to 11-09-18 Tue - Mouna Dhyana Saptaha Sibiram
- 08 Sat - Masa Sivaratri, Ekaham at our Pavuluru Branch
- 09 Sun - Amavasya
- 12 Wed - Vinayaka Chavithi - 05-30 A.M. Sri Sadguru Pada Puja,
11.00 A.M. Samuhika Vinayaka Chavithi Pujas,
Bhakta Samaradhana
- 24 Mon - Bhadrapada Poornima - Sri Sadguru Pad Puja

October 2018

- 04 Thu - Sri Guru Dasami, Satsangam, Sri Sadguru Pada Puja
- 07 Sun - Masa Sivaratri - Ekaham at our Pavuluru Branch
- 09 Tue - Amavasya
- 10.10.18 Wed to 20.10.18 Sat-Sri Sarannavaratri Mahotsvam
10. Wed - Morning Deeksha Sweekaram, lightening of Akhanda
Jyoti, Sri Devi Bhagavata Pravachanam by Sri Ramanuja Das,
15. Mon - Moola Nakshatram, Sri Saraswati Puja,
17. Wed - Sri Durgashtami, Samoohika Kumkuma Pujas
18. Thur - Mahanavami and Vijayadasami - Samoohika Kumkum
Pujas, Annaprasanalalu and Akshrabhyasams
19. Fri - Ekadasi - Ekaham, Deeksha viramana, Sri Mataji
Asirvachanam with Akshintalu.
7.PM Jaganmata Nagarotsavam.
20. Sat - 7.Pm. Sri Sadguru PadaPuja Mahotsavam
- 24 Wed - Aswiyuja Purnima - Birth day function of Sri Mathaji -
Starting of Sri Sadguru Mandala Deeksha, Sri Sadguru
Paada Puja, Bhakta Samaradhana.



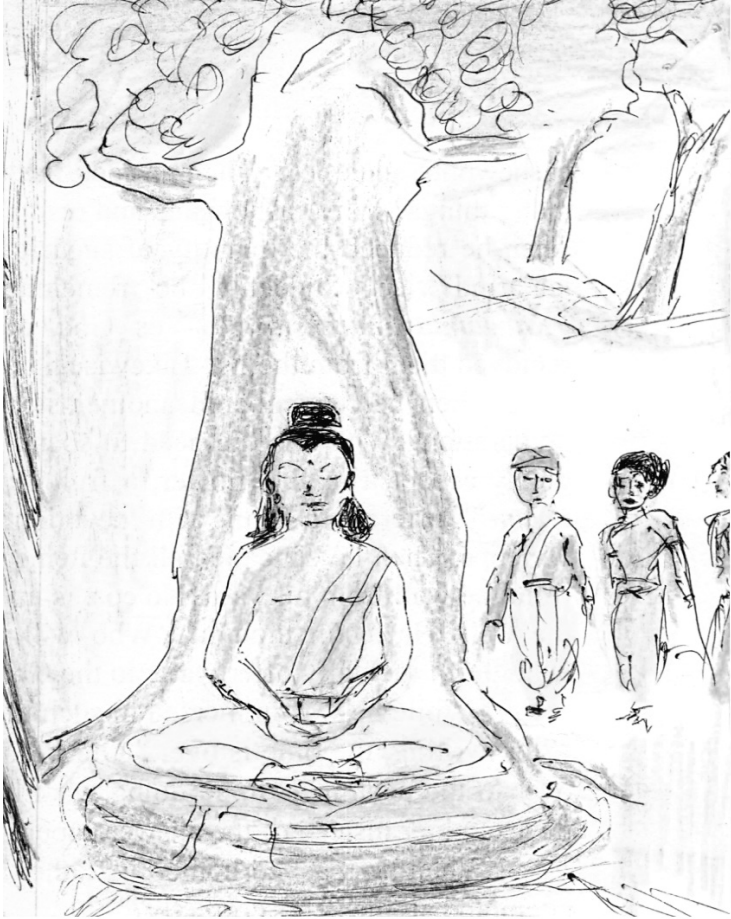
Children's Section

Tales of Sri Ramakrishna

VILLAGER WHO PRETENDED LIKE A SAINT

Ramana Prasad

One night, a villager stealthily entered someone else's garden and started catching fish from the pond there. When the news reached the owner of the garden he sent his servants to catch him.



They lit oil lamps and searched all over. As there was no way to escape, he smeared his body with ash and quietly sat under a tree

posing like a mendicant. Not finding any one, the servants were returning home. On their way, they came across the villager in the garb of a saint. They prostrated at his feet and left.

Next day, the news spread that a saint was sitting under a tree doing meditation in that particular garden. People started thronging the place for his darshan. They offered flowers, fruits and money to him in reverence.

The villager then thought within himself, “What a wonder! Though I am not a saint, people are worshipping me taking me to be a real sadhu.” Realisation dawned on him: ‘If I really become a sadhu and do penance, I will surely have the glimpse of Almighty Lord.’

He then turned into a real sadhu and started doing penance to have darshan of the Lord.*

OBITUARY

Sri Rudraboyina Veeraraju aged 44 years, an ardent devotee of Sri Babuji and resident of Srikaligardens attained Gurusayujyam on Monday 09-04-2018.

May Sri Sadgurudev bestow peace to his soul and courage to his family members.

OBITUARY

Sri Paluri Venkata Ramana, aged 87 years, an ardent devotee of Sri Babuji and resident of Srikaligardens attained Gurusayujyam on Thursday 19-04-2018.

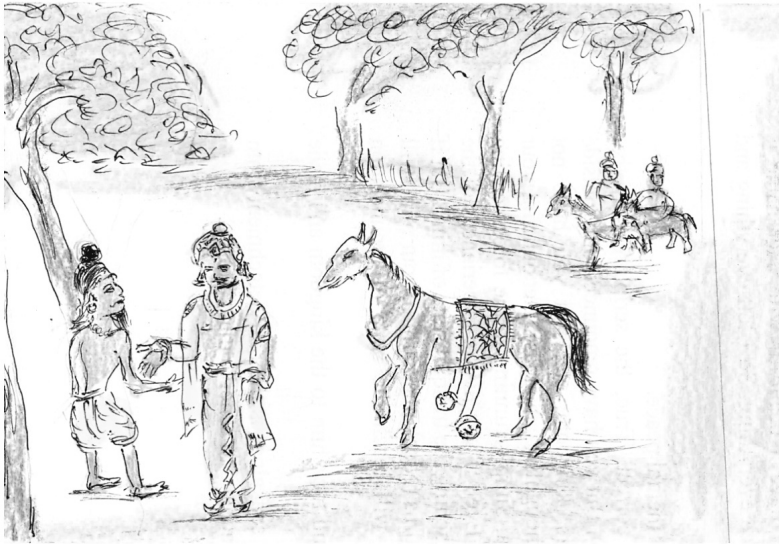
May Sri Sadgurudev bestow peace to his soul and courage to his family members.

DEVOTIONAL STORIES

GURU DAKSHINA

Ramana Prasad

In those times when king Janaka ruled Mithila, he used to convene debates with scholars on spiritual matters, apart from his regular royal activities. His interest on Adyatma Tatwa grew to that extent, he made a proclamation thus: “We invite scholars and other learned persons in the field of Vedanta to come to Mithila. The king will take initiation from the one who can take him to the divine state on the very moment he keeps his left leg on the stirrup of the



horse. Those who fail to do so will have to leave the country at once.”

This created a furore all over the country. Many scholars, poets and other luminaries knew what would happen if they failed in the process and, therefore, they did not come forward for fear of dire consequences. When sage Ashtavakra was passing through Mithila where the proclamation was made, he saw many people discussing this matter. He proceeded to the king’s palace and declared that he would give Brahmopadesa to the king. The king agreed. But the sage put one condition that the initiation would be done in a solitary

place where only the king and himself would be present. King suggested nearby forest as the venue and they both reached the place with his horse and guards.

Janaka told his guards to remain at a point and then proceeded to the venue with his horse. The condition was that he should get Brahmanubhuti before he puts his left leg on the stirrup of the horse. When the king was about to place his left leg on the pedal, sage Ashtavakra stopped him and said: “Raja! Don’t you know that you have to give me Guru Dakshina before initiation?” Janaka said, “Yes, I will give whatever you want.”

“Then please give me the thought making power of your mind to me,” said Ashtavakra. The king agreed. As soon as he gave his mind as Guru Dakshina, his body became still. At this juncture the sage left the place.

After a long wait, the guards approached the king and they found the king in a motionless state. They suspected that the sage must have done some foul-play to the king before leaving the place. They immediately made an intense search and found him not very far from this place. They then brought him to the spot to see what he had done to the king.

With a beaming face, the sage touched and called the king, and the later instantly responded. Ashtavakra then said, “You are the blessed one. You got the Brahmanubhuti in a split second. This happened because you had made your mind thought-less before your initiation. I need not teach you anything more. What you have done is removing the veil of thought-flow which instantly gives Brahmanubhuti. This is the essence of all spiritual teachings. Moksha is nothing but the state of Amanaska (being thought-less). By merging your mind in the Self (Manolaya), you could reach such a divine state.”

King Janaka became extremely happy for having been taught the technique of reaching the state of ‘mukti’ by the sage. He then prostrated at the feet of Guru Ashtavakra.

Moral: Without allowing your mind to wander outside, you should merge the mind in Atman (Manolayam). That is the state of ‘Moksham’. Reaching that state is the real Guru Dakshina you can offer to your Spiritual Master (Sadguru).*

SINGLE-POINTED DEVOTION

My dear Chiranjeevulaaraa:

To obtain God's grace, one must develop single-pointed devotion towards Him, and ignore all distractions. Sri Babuji Maharaj would always advise disciples to strive for such single-pointed devotion to achieve their goal. Sadgurudev once narrated an episode from the 'Mahabharata' to emphasise this.

Once, Dronacharya wanted to test the archery capabilities of his disciples – the Kauravas and the Pandavas. He took them to a nearby forest and showed them a parrot perched on a tree branch, and told them to shoot it down.

The acharya first asked Duryodhana what he was seeing before him. He replied, "Sir, I see the setting sun, the tree and the parrot on one of its branches."

"Okay, shoot."

Duryodhana shot the arrow which zoomed past the parrot leaving it safe. Then the other cousins also were asked the same question and they described the entire scenery, but failed to hit the parrot.

Fiinally, it was Arjuna's turn. When he took the bow and arrow, Dronacharya asked him "Are you ready to shoot the parrot? What are you seeing?"

"Venerable Sir, I see only the parrot's eye and nothing else," replied Arjuna.

"Okay, shoot," commanded Dronacharya.

The next moment the parrot fell dead hit by Arjuna's arrow. The acharya then told the other disciples: "Look, to succeed in archery your aim must be perfect. It should only concentrate on the target. Arjuna succeeded because he had that marksmanship."

Children, hope you liked the story. Whatever you want to achieve in your studies, sports activities, etc., you need to develop such single-pointed concentration to reach the goal. By the grace of Lord Babuji and Poojya Mataji, you will definitely succeed in your efforts.

Yours affectionately,

Maathula*

Babuji's Fables

INSCRUTABLE ARE THE WAYS OF GOD

Once upon a time there was a pundit who had mastered all the scriptures. Unfortunately, he was very poor and unable to feed his family and himself.

So, one day, he decided to go to the king with a request to arrange Srimad Bhagavata discourses by him (pundit), and in return he wanted to get some remuneration.

Next day, the pundit went to the royal court and said, “Oh King! I have studied the Bhagavatam inside out and I want to share my knowledge with you.” The king replied: “I will definitely listen to you, but before that you read the epic once again.”

The pundit was disappointed but went home and read the book again and again. He returned to the king after a few days. But this time also, the king told the pundit to study the sacred book in detail and come again. The same thing happened three or four times.

Now, the pundit thought deeply and realised that there should be some reason behind the king’s insistence on reading the epic again and again. He started reading the Bhagavatam once more. This time he was so deeply lost in the scripture that his mind was totally immersed in the Lord Almighty’s grace. “Won’t the Lord, who has taken care of so many devotees, take care of me? Why am I begging a mere mortal king for my living? Why should I sell the scripture and earn livelihood? How foolish I am!” he felt. So thinking he was lost in a trance in his home, and when he opened the eyes he saw the king seated next to him!

No need to say God took care of the poor pundit’s needs, but the king had himself become a disciple of the pundit and received ‘Lakshyartham’ (Mantropadesam) from him!

- Retold by Dr. Swarnamukhi Prasada

Down Memory Lane

LIFE IS A JOURNEY

Sushumna Prasada

On one occasion, a number of devotees had assembled in order to listen to the exhortation of Lord Babuji. Then, a topic was discussed by the devotees about the proposal of a spiritual tour to important Places of Piety (Pavitra Kshetras).

As soon as Sadguru Babuji occupied his seat, out of curiosity, one of the devotees humbly questioned “Is there any need to visit sacred places?” Lord Babuji, with an understanding smile, remarked that it was a relevant question and said, “First, one should realise the purpose or goal of life. It is essential to know the purpose of any action (karma) we do. Otherwise, it is of no use,” and continued the discourse thus...

Life itself is a journey which commences with birth and ends with death. Every journey we undertake has a destination to reach. Any journey we start has a final destination to reach either by bus or train or flight. We have to purchase a ticket to get into the bus or train or aeroplane. The traveller has to be very cautious in choosing the right vehicle and the right path. Otherwise his journey will be lost in wilderness. For example, with the intention of reaching Hyderabad if you get into a Chennai-bound express you will not reach your goal. So if you start on an aimless journey, your life is no better than that of an insect, bird or animal. So man who is endowed with intellect should have a target to reach in life. Eating, drinking and sleeping are done by every living being. God has given a boon to man in the shape of intellect to ponder over the purpose of human life. That is called as ‘Vicharana’ in Vedantic terminology. By continuous Vicharana (pondering over how to reach the goal), a spiritual trainee (Sadhaka) will be able to discriminate between the Real or Truth and the unreal (falsehood). It is known as ‘Nityaanitya Vastu Vivekam’ or Satya Asatya Vivekam. When you realise what is real and Truthful, you will naturally give up the worldly pleasures which are tentative. That is called as ‘Iha Mutra Phala Bhoga Vairagyam’. It leads to the control of the internal limbs and control of external limbs (that is Samadamadi Shatka Sampatti). The promotion of the six potent qualities (Samam, Damam, Uparathi, Tithiksha, Sraddha, Samadhanam – ‘Samadamadi Shatka

Sampatti’) ultimately leads to the quest for Salvation (Mumukshutvam). A Sadhaka, by developing ‘Sadhana Chatustaya Sampatti’, reaches the goal of human life.

As long as we live on this earth, we have to act. Action (karma) is a part and parcel of human life. It is wrong to think that renunciation of family life (Sanyasam) enables man to give up action (karma). Every minute thing, we do is a part of karma. That’s why Gitacharya encourages Arjuna to become a ‘Karma Yogi’ and perform the deeds according to shastras. As a kshatriya, it is his duty to do the required work (fight) in order to eliminate injustice. When the opponent does objectionable deeds, you have to take action (karma) by way of fighting in the battle also. It is called as ‘Vihitha Karma’. If a person does unfair, harmful and objectionable deeds, it is called as ‘Nishiddha Karma’ (prohibited action). Lord Krishna pointed out the third karma as ‘Nishkama Karma’ (action done without anticipating fruitful result). That means the ideal Karma Yogi performs the deeds approved by ‘Shastras’ (Vihitha karma) without any desire. In other words, he is disinterested in the result of the action. He remains undisturbed either by success or failure. He is only mindful of the duty, but not the result. Hence Gitacharya encourages Arjuna to be an ideal warrior, entrusting himself completely to the care of his Master (Gitacharya) without anticipating the result. That is ‘Nishkama Karma’ is the best type of ‘karma and the person who does such action (karma) is declared by Gitacharya as the real, ideal Karma Yogi. So journey is unavoidable in human life.

You have questioned whether there is any need to visit Punya Kshetras. The goal of human life is to attain Peace and Bliss, which is otherwise known as ‘Salvation’. When your goal is to gain Peace and Bliss, you have to do the deeds which promote Peace and Piety. The purpose of visiting sacred places is to turn our minds as the recipients of pure and sacred thoughts. It is said in the Skandopanishad, “Deho Devalayah Proktho, Jeevo Deva Sadasivah”. That means ‘This physical body is to be considered as a temple where the Jiva (individual soul) is to be deemed as Sadasiva’.

When we are involved in regular worldly activities, the mind gets too much absorbed in those activities, to think of anything else. Hence it is desirable to have respite which promotes spiritual

thoughts. Of course, God is Omnipresent (present everywhere). But the impact of spiritual (Divine) power can be experienced more effectively in Places of Piety. So to go on a pilgrimage always exercises a positive spiritual influence. You should remember that pilgrimage is not a pleasure trip. Pilgrimages undertaken with the blessings of the Spiritual Master (Gurudev) certainly promote the spiritual outlook of the devotees. Pilgrimages help to promote sacred thoughts, dwindling the material outlook of Life. Hence, there is nothing wrong in undertaking a pilgrimage. But it is fallacious to think that pilgrimages alone enable the spiritual trainees to attain Salvation. They only help to promote the spiritual thoughts. In this journey of life, we have to travel on the right road which enables us to reach the right (proper) destination. Otherwise human life will be lost in wilderness...

Concluding His exhortation, Lord Babuji said that every travel has its goal and the ultimate goal of life's journey is to attain Salvation.*

OBITUARY

Sri Kankanala Sambasivarao, aged 59 years, an ardent devotee of Sri Babuji and resident of Srikaligardens attained Gurusayujyam on Monday 26-04-2018.

May Sri Sadgurudev bestow peace to his soul and courage to his family members.

OBITUARY

Smt Pabolu Dhanalakshmi w/o Satyanarayana, aged 49 years, an ardent devotee of Sri Babuji and resident of Srikaligardens attained Gurusayujyam on Tuesday 12-06-2018.

May Sri Sadgurudev bestow peace to his soul and courage to his family members.

WAITING FOR SRI RAMA—XVIII

(Continued from the previous issue)

Ramaswami Sampath

EPILOGUE

The famous Tamil magazine editor ‘Kalki’ Krishnamurthy once remarked: “When a writer starts his attempt, very soon he would find the storyline would be taking a different shape from what he has originally intended.” To substantiate this statement, he cited his own example of writing popular novels wherein the characters he had in mind were literally dictating to him how he should depict them.

This writer also had a similar experience while penning this effort of ‘Waiting for Sri Rama’. After listening to the fine narration by Samardha Sadguru Sri Sri Sri Hanumat Kali Vara Prasada Babuji Maharaj of how Vasishtha Maharshi had to await the ‘avatar’ of Lord Rama, I made an attempt at writing an essay on how many more characters in the ‘Ramayana’ epic were similarly waiting for Him. But by the grace of Guru Maharaj, the essay had extended to a long serial of eighteen chapters, including this Epilogue, and compelled me to retell the entire ‘Ramayana’. ‘Am I competent to narrate such a beautiful, soul-sublimating story authored by Adikavi Valmiki since I am not a pundit?’ I would wonder. But, I now realise, when the Master’s grace is there, competence comes automatically.

I must admit that I have not read the complete version of the Valmiki Ramayana, except for the entire Sundara Kanda and a few cantos in other Kandas; nor have I read thoroughly the Tamil version by poet Kamban. I have also enjoyed the sweetness of Tulasidas’s ‘Ramacharita Maanas’ by listening to some lectures in Hindi, Tamil and Telugu on the subject. I have read several times Rajaji’s ‘Ramayana’ (English) and its original in Tamil and excerpts from the ‘Ramayana Lectures’ of Rt. Hon’ble V.S. Srisnivasa Sastri, freedom-fighter who earned the epithet, ‘silver tongue orator’; Prof. K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar’s ‘Sitayana’ (an English rendering of the story with Sita as the main character); and revolutionary freedom-fighter V.V.S. Iyer’s ‘A Study of Kamba Ramayana’.

Apart from benefiting from the discourses of Sadguru Maharaj and Poojya Sri Yogini Chandra Kali Prasada Mataji,

which would be replete with several episodes from the epic, I have heard eminent Telugu scholars like Sriman Sribashyam Appalacharyulu, Divakarla Venkatavadani, Malladi Chandrasekhara Sastri, Chaganti Koteswara Rao and Samavedam Shanmukha Sarma and the Tamil lectures of Annaswami Bhagavathar, Embar Vijayaraghavachariar, Sengalipuram Anantarama Dikshitar and T.S. Balakrishna Sastri expatiating on the inner significance and ‘Dharma Sookshmams’ of the epic. These have helped me in understanding the secrets behind the epic to a great extent.

Before making this attempt I also interacted with a good number of Rama Bhaktas to elicit their views on the subject. During one such tete-a-tete with a friend in Vizag, Sri K. Lakshminarayanan of Hindustan Shipyard Limited, he asked me to refer to the Mohana raga kriti of Sri Thyagaraja, “Mohana Rama”, in which the saint poet lists a good number of celestials right from Lord Brahma who descended on earth to have the glimpse of Sri Rama’s captivating handsomeness. The poet says in the ‘charanam’ of the kirtana thus:

“Dhara manujavatara! Mahima vini
 Sura kinnera kimpurusha vidyaadhara
 Sura pati vidhi vibhakara Chandradulu garaguchu premato
 Vara mruga pakshi vaanara tanuvulache girini velayu
 Sitavara! Chirakaalanu guri dhappaka meymarichi sevinchiri....”

[Hearing the glory of Your human form did not all the gods from Lord Brahma downwards, including Devas, Kinneras, Kimpurushas, Gandharvas and Vidyadaras, come down to earth and took in love the forms of birds, beasts and monkeys and long enjoyed Your darshan with riveted eyes and ecstasy?]

Those who have studied in depth the ‘Ramayana’ would describe the handsomeness of Sri Rama as “Pumsaam mohana rupah”. According to them, even men would like to be born as women so that they could choose Sri Rama as husband! Tamil ‘vaggeyakara’ Arunachala Kaviraya, who has rendered the entire ‘Ramayana’ (‘Rama Naatakam’) in a string of kirtanas, in one of the songs, describes how Vibeeshana was captivated by the charm of the Lord even from a distance before surrendering to Him. Such was the charisma of Sri Rama!

Over twenty characters of the epic, besides inanimate objects like Ayodhya’s crown, the simhaasana and the pair of Sri Rama’s sandals that were worshipped by Bharata for fourteen years

at Nandigramam, were waiting for the Prince's arrival. To this list we can add the two important characters, Ravana and Kumbhakarna, also. I am not sure whether pundits would accept this contention. It is well known that due to the curse of Lord Brahma's yogic sons, Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanaatana and Sanatsujaata, the gatekeepers of Vaikuntam, Jaya and Vijaya, had to take birth on earth thrice as the enemies of Lord Narayana. In their second manifestation, the two were born as Ravana and Kumbhakarna and had their redemption by Sri Rama, after waiting for Him for a long time. Come to think of it, was not Surpanakha waiting for an opportune time to take revenge on her brother Ravana for slaying her husband Vidhrusimha?

It is my humble conviction that Lord Narayana incarnated in a human form as Sri Rama to teach us how we should face boldly the trials and tribulations in our day-to-day existence. The slaying of Lanka giants was only an incidental motive. Though born as Raghukula Tilaka and the prince of Ayodhya, Rama subjected Himself to all the discomfiture he had to undergo in the process. He was neither overwhelmed by the joy of the coronation offer of His father one day nor depressed by the banishment from Ayodhya the next day. Can there be a greater distress for a man than the deprivation of the company of his wife? Yet how Rama conducted Himself on the two occasions is an abject lesson for human beings. Mother Sita, too, showed us how a 'pativrata' would not budge even in dire circumstances. Sri Rama's life history is an example for us that we should adhere to a life of righteousness, however insurmountable the hurdles may be.

It has become a fashion for some critics to pinpoint the so-called faults of Rama. My appeal to them, with folded hands, is: "If you treat the 'Ramayana' as a mere story, by all means find fault with the author who created such situations in his epic. If you accept Sri Rama as an 'avatara purusha', you have no right to question the mysterious ways of God. Whether it is the killing of Vali while he was wrestling with Sugriva or the abandoning of Queen Sita, you should appreciate the 'Dharma Sankatam' (righteous difficulty) into which He was plunged. For these acts, our Puranas have a lot of explanations. Without giving them due consideration, if you persist in your criticism you will be only doing injustice to Sri Rama. The Lord certainly does not require my advocacy to defend

Him. At the same time, with our limited knowledge of the full background of this epic, let us not function like the devil's advocate."

The former Vice-Chancellor of Andhra University, Prof. K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar, once gave a lecture on 'Irony' at Nagarjuna University's Department of English. In the course of his lecture he referred to the following sequence in the 'Ramayana' as follows:

....One day, Rajarama, after a hectic 'durbar' schedule, comes to the harem, where he sees Queen Sita, who is in advanced stage of pregnancy. Charmed by her beauty, he offers a boon to her. Immediately, Sita says, "My Lord, I feel like enjoying the salubrious forest ashram life once again, serving the sages." Why should she seek a boon even if offered, as what is not within her reach? Has she forgotten the disastrous impact of her desire to acquire the 'golden deer' in Panchavati, leading to separation from her beloved Rama? First of all, why should Rama offer a boon to the queen of Ayodhya? And why should Sita choose the forest life once again? Aren't these questions boiling down to the irony of fate?

At the Shakespeare Theatre in London, the bard's play 'Othello' was running successfully for days together. The hero and heroine of the play were also man and wife in their real life. One day, in the climax scene of the drama, Othello, suspecting his wife Desdemona's chastity, was to strangle her neck. As the hero was totally absorbed in the play, he furiously strangled the heroine. Unable to bear the pain, the heroine gently told her husband, "Have you forgotten that this is only drama?" Immediately he softened himself. After returning home the hero asked his wife, "My darling, did I cause much agony to you in the climax scene?"

The Divine couple Lakshmi and Narayana descended on earth as Sita and Rama to stage their play 'Ramayana' effectively so as to educate human beings how they should conduct themselves in extraordinary circumstances, and returned to Their abode Vaikuntam. If we can understand the secret behind Their play, we will not complain that Rama was uncharitable towards Sita....

A word about the intriguing character of Kaikeyi. She was the most favourite queen of Dasaratha, and her fondness for Rama was greater than that of even mother Kausalya. For Kaikeyi, the attachment towards her own son Bharata was a shade less than her affection for Rama. How could such a mother full of empathy be hell-bent on exiling Rama? Could she have changed her mind

merely at the behest of servantmaid Mandhara, whom she first rewarded for breaking the news of coronation? What is the significance of the duration of the exile: fourteen years? These questions have been taunting me for a long time, but the answers, too, have not been long in forthcoming.

There are more than one hundred versions of the 'Ramayana' all over the world like 'Ananda Ramayanam', 'Yoga Vaasishta Ramayanam', etc., wherein one can find interesting facts which are not detailed by Valmiki, Kamban and Tulasidas. Analysing these after a thorough research, scholars like Amrita Shyam (English), N.R. Navlekar (Marathi) and Morari Babu (Hindi) have published their commentaries in which Kaikeyi is described as a farsighted personality who knew the 'avatara rahasyam' of Sri Rama. Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, founder of the Art of Living Movement, once remarked that Kaikeyi sought the exile of her dear son Rama at the instance of Goddess Saraswathi. Having learnt the birds' language from her father, the king of Kekaya, she could discern from the chat of a bird couple that for the next fourteen years Ayodhya would suffer from 'araajakam' and whoever sat on the throne would die. That steeled her heart to demand the exile of Rama in order to save him from that danger.

According to another Puranic version, Lanka ruler Ravana who had his sway over the Jambudweepa up to Dandakaranya, challenged Dasaratha to grab the Ayodhya empire also. In that battle she was the charioteer for her lord. At one stage of the battle, Dasaratha fell in a swoon hit by an arrow of Ravana who thought that it was all over. As Ravana was preparing to leave the battlefield, an enraged Kaikeyi shouted at him: "You will be killed by a scion of the Raghuvamsam." Laughing at her curse, Ravana said: "The childless husband of yours is dead and the Raghuvamsam has come to an end. Where then is the question of my being slain by his heir?" Years after this battle, when Rama and his three brothers were born after the Putrakameshti Yaga, Kaikeyi made up her mind to send Rama to forest so that he could fulfil her wish of Ravana's end. Thus Kaikeyi was one of the many who extended their support to Rama Kaaryam.

Once, I made bold to ask Sadguru Maharaj whether Ramarajya would dawn again. With His face exuding His characteristic 'mandahaasam', Lord Babuji cryptically replied: "Oh, you have such a desire? If Ramarajya were to come, either Sri

Rama should descend once again on earth, or each one of us should shape our life as per the diktats of that Avatara Purusha. Will these be possible? I am not sure. But there is one way: your longing for Sri Rama's grace should touch the high watermark. So, wait for Sri Rama's grace.”
Let us also wait for the grace of Sri Sita-Rama!



Shree Raamachandra Asritha Paarijaatha
Samastha Kalyaana Gunabhi Raama
Seetha Mukha Amboruha Chanchareeka
Nirantaram Mangalam Aatanotu

[Shree Raamachandra is like the Paarijaatha (wish-fulfilling) tree to all His devotees. He pleases one and all with His divine qualities. He is like the bee that flies over the lotus that is compared to the face of Sita. May He grant benediction (“mangala”) forever!]*

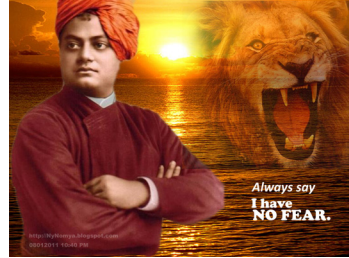
GLORIOUS DEVOTEES SWAMY VIVEKANANDA

C.V. Ramana Babu

(Translation of Telugu original by Jagam)

(Continued from the previous issue)

Naren was very happy that his Gurudev had dedicated him (Naren) to Kali Mata. He felt that Kali Mata was his guide. He also realised that whatever deed he would do would be as per the will of Kali Mata only. Naren spent most of his time in meditation. He enjoyed very much the extraordinary experiences he felt during deep meditation. Once, in meditation, he realised that “there is no difference between ‘I’ and ‘Brahman’”. Afterwards he could not get such



experience. Sri Ramakrishna explained the reason to him, ‘If you enjoy the bliss of meditation throughout day and night, what about the deeds of Kali Mata, which are supposed to be accomplished through you? Only after completion of the accomplishments, you will again enjoy the bliss of deep meditation.’”

One day Sri Ramakrishna wrote on a piece of paper, ‘Naren will deliver his discourses to the people’. But Naren bluntly said, ‘I will not do such thing.’ Sri Ramakrishna said in a calm and cool manner, “You will definitely and whole-heartedly do it.” Two days before leaving his mortal body, Sri Ramakrishna transmitted all his celestial powers into Naren. He said to Naren, “I had transmitted all my powers to you and so I had become ‘powerless’ and ‘ascetic’. With this power you have to accomplish many deeds for the welfare of society.” Then, Naren thought in his mind, “Please declare yourself at least now that you are the embodiment of God. Then only I will trust that you are God.” Immediately he looked into Naren’s eyes and said, “Rama and Krishna were united as Ramakrishna and were staying in this body.” Naren was much satisfied and thought, “With just a blissful look, Sri Ramakrishna can transform many people into Narendranath. But it is my luck and a boon to me that He had chosen me as His only implement.”

When Sri Ramakrishna was sick due to a lump in his throat, Naren and other young disciples served him a lot. In spite of treatment by eminent doctors in Calcutta, Sri Ramakrishna's soul merged in Parabrahman! The young disciples, under the leadership of Naren, were dedicated to implement and spread the ideals of Sri Ramakrishna. The young sages would collect alms from the devotees, as a matter of principle. A devotee, Surendranadh Mithra, would bear all the expenses of the 'Bara Nagar Matham'. They would wear torn and worn-out clothes. Seeing them in such clothes, many would think them to be a wasteful lot. They were helped a lot by Surendranadh Mitra and Mahendranath Gupta. They toured the length and breadth of India and spread the message of Sri Ramakrishna among all without any compromise and without feeling any strain. Thus, they spent nearly ten years. Naren was very grateful to Ramakrishna for moulding him (Naren) as an ascetic and giving him a chance to spread his most valuable ideals. He worked vigorously for the best spiritual future of India and the youth of India. He wrote many books for the welfare of the youth.

After touring the whole India, Naren went to Kanyakumari, the southern tip of India, leapt into the sea and swam across the shark-infested waters to reach a holy rock mid-sea, the very last bit of the mainland. After a long and continuous meditation for three days and three nights, he was enlightened on his life's mission: to arouse the nation from its dismal slumber of a thousand years of slavery and rediscover its past glory.

He decided to attend the Parliament of World Religions at Chicago, America. Much impressed by his hard work to spread the greatness of Hinduism, Ajit Singh, the king of Khetri made all the arrangements to send Vivekananda to Chicago. Before leaving for Chicago, he adopted the name 'Vivekananda'. He took the blessings of Mother Sarada Devi (Sri Ramakrishna's wife). Along with others, he started on May 31, 1893, from Bombay and reached Colombo by ship. After a long and pleasant journey he reached Chicago with much less money. He met the king of Kapurthala there. With his initiation, a grand publicity was given to Vivekananda in the newspapers: 'Arrival of a great scholar from India'. There the boys were attracted by his red coloured suit and turban which they had never seen before.

Vivekananda and some more delegates were given fixed time slots on September 11, 1893. Others went there with prepared speeches. They opened their papers and simply read out the contents. But, Vivekananda did not put his speech on paper. The ‘bomb’ was ready in his mind to blast. He stood before the mike and addressed the gathering in a sublime tone, “Sisters and brothers of America!” It was a deviation from the beaten track of addressing as “Ladies and gentlemen”. Everybody was much impressed by such addressing, which was unheard of till then in the American history. All stood, out of joy. There were continuous claps for about two minutes. He spoke, “I am very proud to be born in the ancient and eternal religion which taught us patience and acceptance of all truths of all the religions equally. In spite of being attacked several times by the jealous rulers of other countries, my country India had welcomed with love the refugees from such countries. Though the ways are different, the essence of the teachings of all the religions is ‘to reach God’. It is like various rivers finally merging in the gigantic ocean.” All the newspapers hailed him and his speech greatly the next day.

Vivekananda founded the Ramakrishna Mission on May 1, 1897. The Ramakrishna Math was established in 1898.

In June 1899 he went again to the foreign countries and inspired the youth there with his strong speeches, which targeted their prosperous future. He returned to India in December 1900.

Owing to continuous and restless tours and work, his health gradually deteriorated. On July 4, 1902, his soul merged in Ramakrishna’s. A few days before his exit, he wrote in a letter to a foreigner, “Just like we throw away the worn-out shirt, I must leave this mortal body and go out of it. But, I will not stop my duty of inspiring all, particularly the youth.”

His famous clarion call to the youth is: ‘Arise! Awake!! Stop not until the goal is reached!!!’

On the occasion of his birth centenary, the Government decided in 1962 to construct the Vivekananda Rock Memorial, thus giving importance to the holy rock. It was dedicated to the nation in 1970.*

BHAJA GOVINDAM!

Ramana Prasad



VERSE 10

*Vayasi gate kah kaamavikaarah
Sushke neere kah kaasarah,
Ksheene vitte kah parivarah
Gyate tatve kah samsaarah!!*

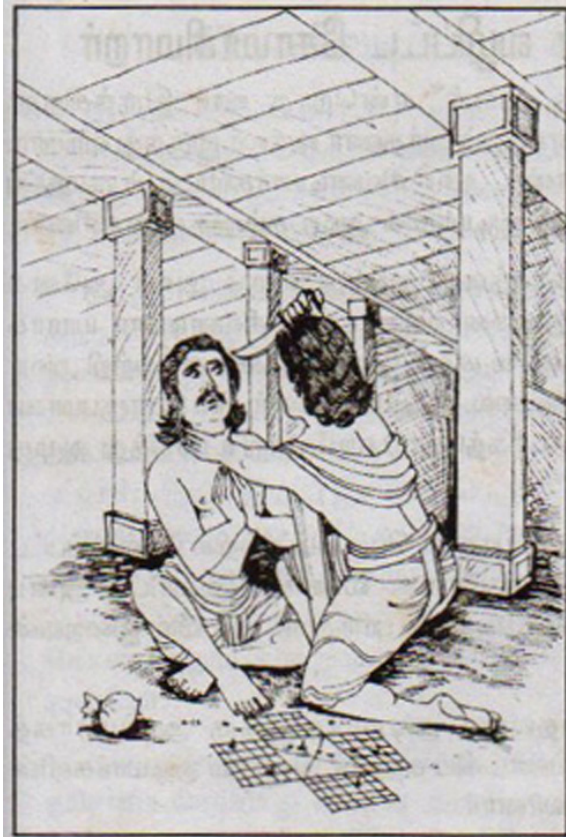
When youthfulness has passed, where is lust and its play (kamavikara)? When water dries up where is the lake (sushke neere)? When wealth has gone, where are your relatives (parivarah)? Similarly, for a person who has realised the Truth, where is samsara? Thus the root-cause of all sorrows is ignorance. When one realises the Truth, there is no samsara.

-to be continued

HE SERVED BHAKTAS BY HOOK OR BY CROOK

-Ramaswami S

About thirty kilometres from Chennai, there is a village by name Tiruverkaadu, in which a great devotee of Lord Siva was living once. A farmer by profession, he had made it his life's mission to serve the devotees of the Lord by feeding them and making their stay in the village comfortable. Because of his munificence, Siva



bhaktas in large number from different places used to frequent the village.

Unmindful of the expenses, he would serve the devotees, utilising all his resources. This way his assets started dwindling,

and he almost reached the end of the tether. As he was keen on continuing his service to the devotees, he was wondering how to meet the expenses.

Suddenly, an idea struck in his mind. "I am adept in the game of dice. Why cannot I make use of this talent and earn money to serve the devotees?" he thought.

Thereafter, he challenged many people to defeat him in the game, and those who took up the gauntlet found themselves on the losing side. Earning a fortune from this game, he continued his services to the visiting Siva bhaktas.

This went on for a long time, but soon people lost interest in playing the game with him, since he was invincible. He soon earned the nicknames, 'Good Gambler' and 'Moorkha' (because of his adamant nature). Very soon, people addressed him as 'Moorkha' and that totally replaced his original name.

In the absence of people willing to gamble with him, Moorkha moved to other places to find opponents from whom he could gather a lot of money to be spent on the welfare of the devotees. That way, he reached the temple town of Kumbakonam and challenged a number of people to defeat him in gambling.

There is a limit to success in gambling. Gradually, he started losing to opponents in early stages. Still he would persist and win the game somehow. Whoever raised any objection he would silence them by directing his dagger at them. Since Moorkha was gambling for the noble cause of serving Siva bhaktas, people did not mind his wayward behaviour, and he continued his service much to the delight of Siva devotees for long. He made it his daily practice to eat his food only at the end of the 'samaradhana' he would host.

At the appropriate time Lord Siva took him into His fold, pleased with his steadfast desire to serve His devotees. Thus Moorkha became one of the sixty-three Naayanaars (great devotees).*

KAIVALYOPANISHAT - II

(Continued from the previous issue)

Rekha

The word Upanishad has been defined in various ways. The most acceptable meaning which can easily be comprehended is, as follows: In Sanskrit Upa means near or close-by (in the presence of a Mahatma); Ni means down or below; Shad means to be seated.

There is a close relationship between Upanishad and Upaasana. Discussion and contemplation of an Upanishad cannot be done in haste. Journey to a holy shrine or sanctuary (Kshetra Darsanam) is an integral part of pilgrimage. When one visits such a sanctuary one should experience the sanctity in the form of that Divine Power (Chaitanya Roopam). For that to happen, we should worship with great endeavour; we should approach a Guru, seek His blessings; and perform the spiritual rite or ceremonial practice as instructed by Him. There is definitely a marked difference between a pilgrimage made after completing the spiritual rite as instructed by the Guru and pilgrimage made to the contrary. Willingness to perform and acceptance to do the ceremonial practice means the Guru has made an indelible imprint on the disciple's mind (manas). It is the mind that has to change or turn inwards. A change has to occur in one's conduct. Such a transformation is made possible only by the Guru.

Sri Gurudev's initiation affords protection like an armour. Wherever we go, Sri Gurudev reassures us with His presence, "I AM HERE". Now, this presence "I AM HERE" is not something which is externally visible. Gurudev in His Divine Spiritual State (Chaitanya Roopam) inspires us. Consequent to this Divine inspiration we become fearless and unflinchingly steadfast in the external world and accomplish great spiritual experiences in our spiritual practice (Sadhana). Sri Mataji reiterated in Her discourse that this was Her personal experience.

Upanishads are Vedic treatises. We have currently 108 Upanishads, out of which, 10 are importantly recognised. However, Kaivalyopanishad is not one of the 10 Upanishads. Nonetheless, we find the intrinsic nature of 'Kaivalyam' or Liberation in all the 10 Upanishads. Kaivalyam is not visible outwardly.

Sri Mataji analogised this as follows: One who has eaten a sweet delicacy alone can describe in words it is delicious. One who

has never tasted that delicacy is incapable of expressing the taste. However, if he tastes that, only then will he be able to personally experience and express in words the taste. Likewise, if we seek a Guru and then do our spiritual practice, our mind will reveal to us the state we attained. We are all in that 'liberated state' - the essential point is, we should recognise that state, retain and remain in that state only.

-to be continued



Sri Mathaji with devotees on the banks of river Ganga at Haridwar during Char Dham Yatra

RAMA, THE RIGHTEOUS RULER

Kasturi Siva Prasad

Monogamous,
Unflinching
In commitment.

Unfailing
At materialising
The word
To father:
Sacrificial
Of property,
Royalty -
Everything
Humans cling to -
For father's happiness.

People centric
But never blasphemous.

Cloud like
At raining mercy
Upon the hapless.

Sure footed
At annihilation
Of everything,
Unrighteous
And fostering
The righteous.

Rama, the Protector
Of the protege.

CLEAR YOUR DOUBTS

Disciple: Amma, which is the best time to practise meditation?

Sri Mataji: Our Guru Maharaj always used to stress upon the importance of timing for meditation. Early morning, i.e. between 3 a.m. and 6 a.m., is the best time to practise meditation. This is called as the 'Brahmi muhurtam' – the time before dawn. You wake up from a good night's sleep, take a bath and sit down for meditation. Your mind is fresh and free from worldly matters and you can concentrate well. As dawn approaches our minds get busy with various matters. Therefore, the best time for meditation is early morning.

Another good time is early evening just after dusk, i.e. between 6 p.m. and 7 p.m. This time is also very quiet and peaceful. Sri Gurudev always stressed that we should practise meditation twice daily, and these two are the best times.

Another most important thing is that a spiritual aspirant should maintain correct timings for meditation. One must stick to his timings, and this disciplines the mind. Sitting at the same place and at the same time is for the beginners. With such diligent practice, one can meditate anywhere, any time.

Disciple: Amma, some people say we should not do meditation in the night but I feel very peaceful and calm after midnight, and do my meditation. Is it okay?

Sri Mataji: Definitely it is okay. Actually, Gurudev used to tell us that it is a very good time, rather the best time to do meditation. Some people are of the opinion that, at that time the Asuras or demons wander around, so you should not meditate. But Sri Babuji would say, "When you are doing the meditation to kill the demons, what will they do to you? Go ahead and meditate all night through and go to sleep at the break of the dawn."

Printed, Published by C.V.Ramana Babu, on behalf of Yogini Sri Chandra Kali Prasada Mathaji Charitable Trust and Printed at Samardha Sadguru Publications, D.No.3-499, Sri Kali Gardens Ashram, Nambur - 522 508, Guntur Dist, Andhra.Pradesh, and published at D.No.3-499, Sri Kali Gardens Ashram, Nambur - 522 508, Guntur Dist., Andhra.Pradesh. Editor - Ramaswami Sampath.