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Just an other vessel, as He ferries us towards the golden shores....

As we sail our way from the darkness of ignorance to Light...



Charanāmṛth



svāgatam

aum Ganeshaya namaha

With Sri Guru Narasimha Saraswathi Jayanthi is due in a week, let's share the joy, as we partake of 'amrith' (nectar) from HIS Kamandalu.

Knowingly or unknowingly, starting with the Kamandalu, every bit of this month's extract is associated with the excellence of Sri Guru Who is eternally present at the confluence of rivers, Sangam. HE is Omnipresent. But HIS presence is glorified, celebrated and enshrined at Sri Kshetra Ganagapur.

Let's rejoice HIS eternal Presence. Sri Guru is here as a preaching power. His many subtle sports in silence, leads us from darkness to Light. There is a deeper significance behind every sport of HIS' as stated in the Guru Charithra. The essence is deeper. The wisdom that lies concealed is profound. Let us surrender our ego at His Feet.

Let us remind ourselves of His timeless teaching...

Let's move from fear to fearlessness; from arrogance to humility...

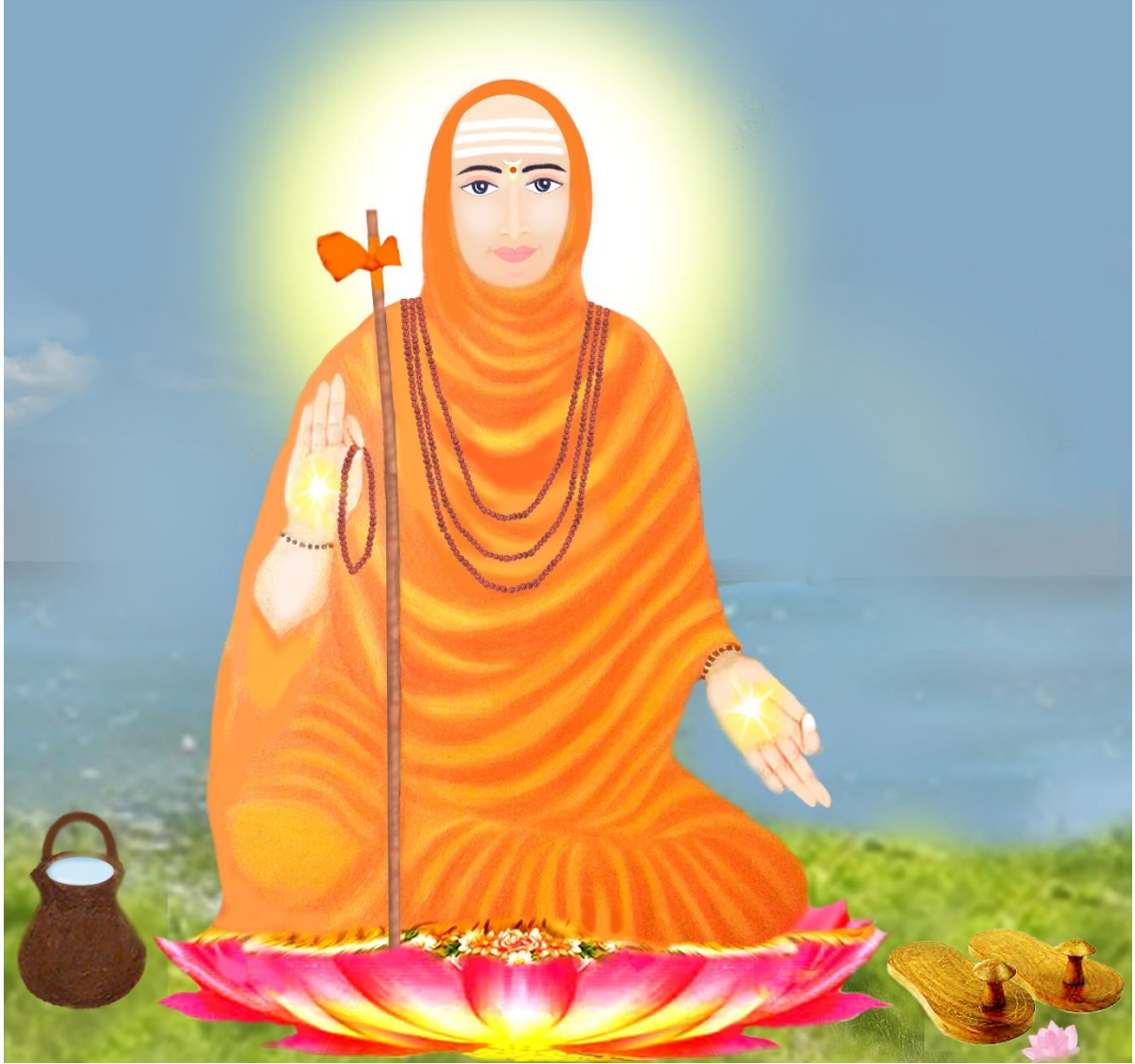
And thus, from darkness to Light....

Let's remain grateful....

Digambara Digambara

Sripada Vallabha Digambara!





Digambara Digambara Sri Narasimha Saraswathi Digambara

From Sri Guru Charithra ~ An eternal symbol of bhakthi

Sri Guru Narasimha Saraswathi is the 2nd wholesome manifestation (paripurana avathar) of Adi Guru Dattatreya. HE chose Ganagapur where He spent most of the physical years, while on the face of the earth. It was either by the shade of a tree or on the banks of the confluence of rivers that HE took His seat.

To one ailing from the deep effects of Leprosy, Sri Guru asks him to plant a dried bark of wood from a dried branch of a shelled Audumbar tree.

The day that dried bark shall sprout, that day, his body shall be clean of ailments, relieved from the wild leprosy - so declared Sri Guru Narasimha Saraswathi.

With absolute Faith on Sri Guru, the leper planted the branch on the banks of Sangam (at the banks of Ashta thirtha) and watered the tree with devotion, 3 times a day. The onlookers and few others kindly advised the leper not to take pains needlessly, as it was practically impossible for a dried wood to sprout.

Perhaps it was an indirect suggestion from Sri Guru, that the incurable karmic effects need to be suffered.

Whatever the people might say or whatever the Scriptures might say, in front of absolute Faith, they pale into insignificance. And that's how it happened.

The leper's faith was answered in the same manner.

Digambara Digambara Sri Narasimha Saraswathi Digambara



When Sri Guru Narasimha Saraswathi walked that way, HE sprinkled some water from HIS Kamandalu and the dried branch sprouted with fresh shoots at once. No sooner, the leper's sick body shone like gold.

To this day, the Tree stands tall on the banks of Sangam and people reverentially walk around the tree even after 500 years.

Digambara Digambara Sri Narasimha Saraswathi Digambara

Madhukarya ~ Glory of Ganagapur

It has been the age old tradition at Ganagapur, unique and special. It is believed that Sri Guru Narasimha Saraswathi, arrives there in some form or the other, and receives 'bhiksha' every noon, unfailingly at Ganagapur. Well, it shall be an understatement if it is merely called as a 'belief'. Rather, it is proved and it remains a 'fact' to this day.

Yes, the Supreme Master Narasimha Saraswathi is present there unseen and every noon, He walks in disguise and receives the 'bhiksha' (an offering of food with love) from His devotees. This has been happening since the last several hundred years.

This system of the Guru visiting His devotees in disguise and receiving the 'bhiksha' for which, several devotees visit from other towns, states and even countries - is called 'Madhukariya' (madhukari in the local terms). It loosely translates to 'a work of nectar' - the system of offering nectar to the Divine.

To keep with the tradition and partake of the Divine joy of blessings, devotees to this day assemble at noon at the Sangama, and seek bhiksha in the many households present there. As per the description of an avadhuth in the long past, "devotees gather here believing Datta seeks bhiksha at noon. When Adi Guru walks bare foot beneath the hot sun, seeking bhiksha, it only befits us as His devotees, to follow Sri Guru's footsteps. The least we can do is, while here physically, we too, walk to every house believing Datta is along with us in a form unseen or incomprehensible to our sight."



Why do they do this?

By this act,

- one enrolls voluntarily in the bhiksha system which is intrinsic in Datta Sampradaya
- one practices humility
- it is a reminder that Datta alone is the True Giver
- one embraces the system of 'adwaitha' where the distinction is dissolved
- as it is believed that Lord Datta in disguise seeks bhiksha, the devotee considers it as a rare blessing to join Lord Datta in disguise.

An extract from comprised Sri Guru Charithra's by Acharya Ekirala Bharadwaja. On my second visit to Ganagapur, I ignorantly exclaimed to a fellow ascetic who was seated by my side, expressing my doubt about Sri Guru visiting every noon for bhiksha. The ascetic was startled as I voiced my doubt. The elderly ascetic said that he had been visiting the sacred Ganagapur since very many years. And during one of his earlier visits in the earlier years, he was very eager to observe the people who seek bhiksha at noon, just in his eagerness to see if he can possibly identify Sri Guru in disguise. The eagerness gripped him so much so, that it had become one of his primary occupations, getting engrossed in observing the people seeking bhiksha at noon.

One day, when he was slightly asleep after reading a few chapters from the Guru Charithra, beneath the tree, he was graced with a dream. In the dream, an Avadhooth appeared, majestic and tall, in the attire of a Sanyasi, the form which was too bright to recognize and HE said, "Do not try to catch me amidst the group of visiting devotees. It is not your task to probe on it."



The voice was crystal clear and in an instant the bright Sanyasi disappeared from his vision. On waking up, the ascetic was startled and was sure that it was Sri Guru Himself Who appeared in the form of an Avadhuth Sanyasi in his dream. This further enhanced his interest in looking for Sri Guru amidst the visiting folk, for he was 100% sure that Sri Guru was appearing in disguise for bhiksha.

A few weeks later, one particular day the number of devotees at Ganagapur was unusually fewer. Considering it easier to observe if Sri Guru was in guise of anyone, the ascetic eagerly took bath at the river and was seated in the banks. But around 10 am itself, he felt catching fever and a tiredness took over him, that he went to sleep. When he woke up from sleep, it was almost 3 in the noon. Tired and hungry, he went to seek bhiksha as was his practise. But strangely none offered him that day. When he went to one household and asked why he wasn't being offered, the person asked, "Dint we offer you just a while ago when you came seeking bhiksha?" Surprisingly, many others seemed to ask the same Question.

It was very confusing to the ascetic. That night, the same avadhooth sanyasi appeared in his dream and said smilingly, "Did I not tell you, not to look out for Me. You cannot spot me with your physical eyes only. I went in your form and received bhiksha." Thus, the ascetic realised how in vain it is to logically unlock the puzzle Sri Guru sports.

It is a confirmed fact, that HE seeks bhiksha every noon at Ganagapur. Several devotees stand witness to this fact!

Here Sri Guru gives us a hint –

that HE is accessible only by means of Yogic Insight.



On the full moon of Karthika, devotees gathered in large numbers at Ganagapura and honoured Sir Guru with thousands of lit lamps. The worship would go on, from evening to past night, until the moon was visible in the sky.

Sometimes till Brahmauhurtha, the worship of Sri Guru would continue at the Sangama, by waving arathi and rendering excellent bhajans; and recounting from the Puranas, the devotees would immerse themselves in bhakthi.

So did the villagers from the seven villages gather too, to take part in the Karthika Purnima celebrations at Ganagapura. During course of conversation, each of them mentioned that Sri Guru graced their village for Deepotsava. Each one said that Sri Guru was present in their town only on the occasion of Deepavali. This caused a lot of confusion, as the people of Ganagapura said that Sri Guru did not leave Ganagapur at all. Each thought the other was lying and questioned on the same.

They were pointing to the gifts (like vastra) they had given which were kept in the mutt. More over, they had their own people from their villages arriving. They all vouched in one voice that Sri Guru visited their town only.

This was happening with every set of villagers who arrived. Meeting with the devotees of Ganagapura and other villagers affirmed the fact that Sri Guru had in-fact presented Himself at eight different places at the same time, heeding to their love and devotion.

Seeing Sri Guru, the Omniscient One compressing His Praramjyothi to present Himself as a human, in their midst, for their sake, they were all moved to tears.

When Sri Guru returned to the mutt, they asked about the maha lila to Sri Guru Himself.



He said, “I have always told you, there is more to truth than that which meets the eye. Do not confine truth to your physical vision alone. Do not confine Me to this visible physical frame alone.”

Sri Guru further graced them with wisdom, “Division causes the ideas of greed or desires; ego or hatred. Those who succumb to these vices are harassed by the miseries of the world. Hence let go off it. Forget the differences amongst you, and realise the subtle presence of the atman within one and all. This Truth binds us all together.



Sri Guru's Eternal Presence

Sri Guru Narasimha Saraswathi is forever present at the confluence of rivers, at the foot of the ancient Tree at Ganagapur.

Sri Guru is tall, with a radiant frame, wearing a lengthy orange robe, which almost covers His head as well, and from neck, downwards. His eyes are lengthy and too beautiful to look at, like the sparkle of stars on the midnight sky – His eye balls emit such unique radiance. He has a subtle smile, which seems to transport us to worlds beyond. Compassion and unbound love oozes out from His kind looks, that overwhelms the onlooker's heart.

In one hand, He holds a 'kamandalu' (a tiny water pot, made of dried piece of fruit) and in the other hand, He holds a 'dhanda' (short wooden stick).

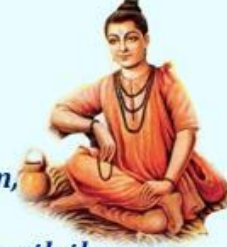
A chain of 'rudraksha' beads is seen around His neck and in His wrists.

Thus, He appears, majestic, yet laden with love and compassion, and grants the sight of His presence to pure hearted ones.



What does the Kamandalu Hint at?

Kamandalu



*In the eras goneby, a pumpkin would be peeled of its skin,
its seeds, scrapped off and the empty fruit set to dry beneath the sun.*

*After days at a stretch (it's penance), the dried fruit would be deemed
fit to take shape as a vessel. Then, it is called a 'kamandalam'.*

*The skin is symbolic of the identity being peeled off; and the seeds,
represent the ego-mind that ought to be discarded.*

Only after which, a 'jivatma' is fit to be instrumental in Divine hands.

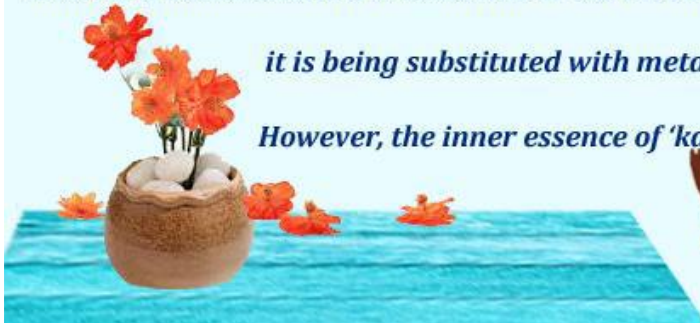
What comes out from the kamandal, is nothing short of Elixir!

Thus says our 'Purana'.

*With time, as lesser became the visible presence of Divine incarnates,
they used wood from the Cresecntia Cujete tree, which came to be
known as kamadalataru vrksha. And in the recent times,*

it is being substituted with metals and its alloys.

However, the inner essence of 'kamandalam' remains...



*ŚrīPāda
Vallabha
bhaktā Samājam*

Thought for the Day

As we sip each mouthful of water, let us for a moment, pause and recall Sri Guru Narasimha Saraswathi.

May every sip of water cleanse us on the inside;

Cleanse us of all negativity and may the sacred water purify our thoughts and thus cleanse our system from within.

Seated at the Sangam, today too, the most compassionate Lord, Who is unbound by time or space, eternally showers HIS blessings, sprinkling sacred water from His Kamandalu on HIS devotees.

Our body comprises majorly of water. By HIS jala yagna, Sri Guru Sri Pada cleanses the liquid material in the gross body of all HIS devotees.

One thought of the Guru, as we drink water each day, helps us get purified internally; our thoughts, our energy bodies are thus cleansed from within.

Digambara Digambara Narasimha Saraswathi Digambara



From Srī Narasimha Saraswathi Ashtothra Zata Nāma

Aum agnyāna pratirūpa vallī nirmūlanā ya namaha

Salutations to the Lord Who pulls out the creeper of ignorance

Aum Gnyāana pratirūpam suvarna nidhi pradhāya namah

Salutations to the Lord Who grants the inexhaustible golden treasure
(wisdom)



A Little Sanskrit

Audumbarakshetra sasvatha Isa

Vibhuthi yanga bhushana

Gandharvanagara adhi bhairava

kaala kaala Jagath abhirama

The Eternal Lord of Audumbara Kshetra

Whose limbs are adorned with the sacred vibhuthi

The Primordial Lord of Gandharva Nagara

The Timeless Lord, Beloved of all Times



punar darshanāya

punar darshanāya punar harshanāya

Śrī Guru kripā varshanāya

Until we meet again, in a peaceful manner (on a note of contentment) Let us all be showered with Sri Guru's blessings! Closing this note with one of the most wonderful verses illustrating the essence of universal harmony and wellbeing.

sarve bhavantu sukhinaḥ sarve santu nirāmayāḥ |

sarve bhadraṇi paśyantu mā kaścidduḥkhabhāg bhavet ||

May all be fine; May all be free from infirmities;

May all see good; May none partake suffering.

With Sri Guru's blessings, the next episode will be available at the link for the next Chithra nakshatra @

<https://sripadavallabhabhakthasamaj.org/journals/charanamrth.php>

Jai Guru Datta Digambara

Jai Sainatha Digambara

Digambar a Digambara ŚrīPāda Vallabha Digambara

