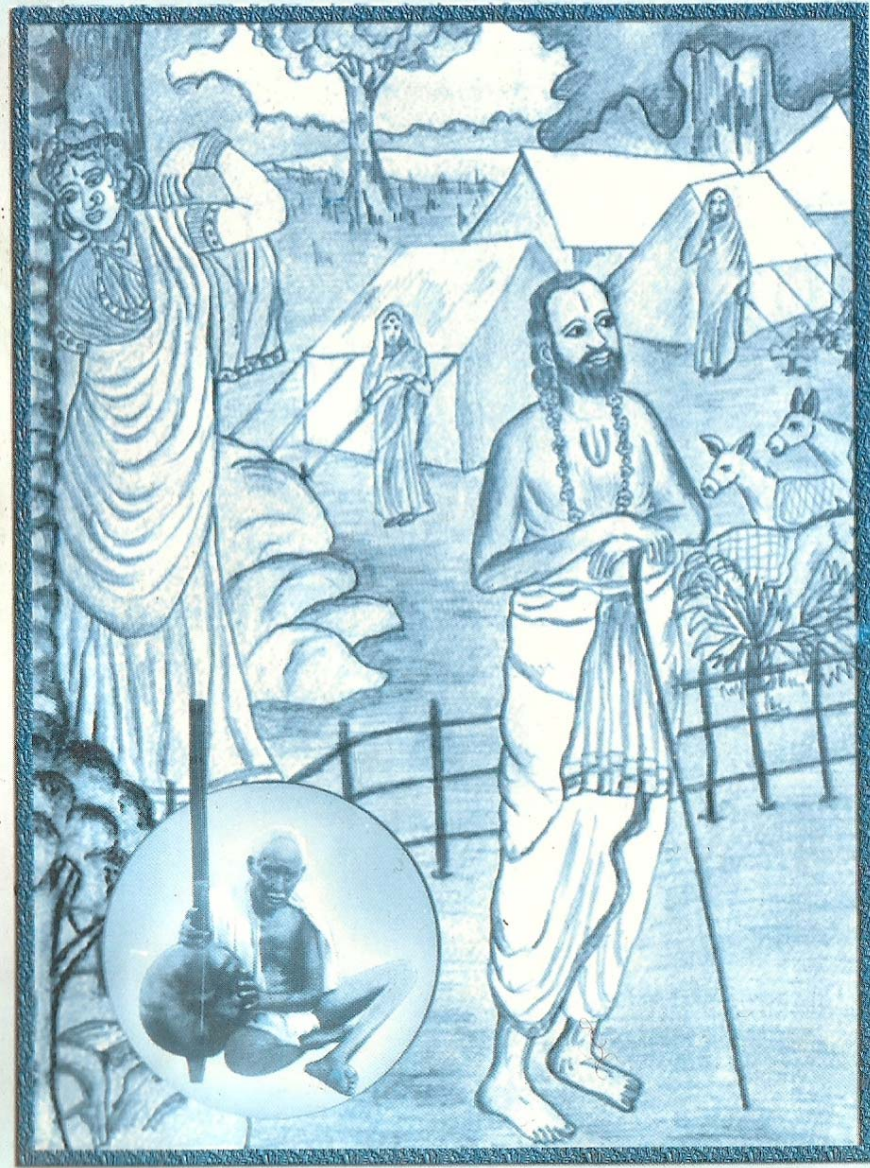


Where is Mantra and Where is Tantra? (Sri Venkayya Swamy)

Divine Biography of Sri Madhavadas



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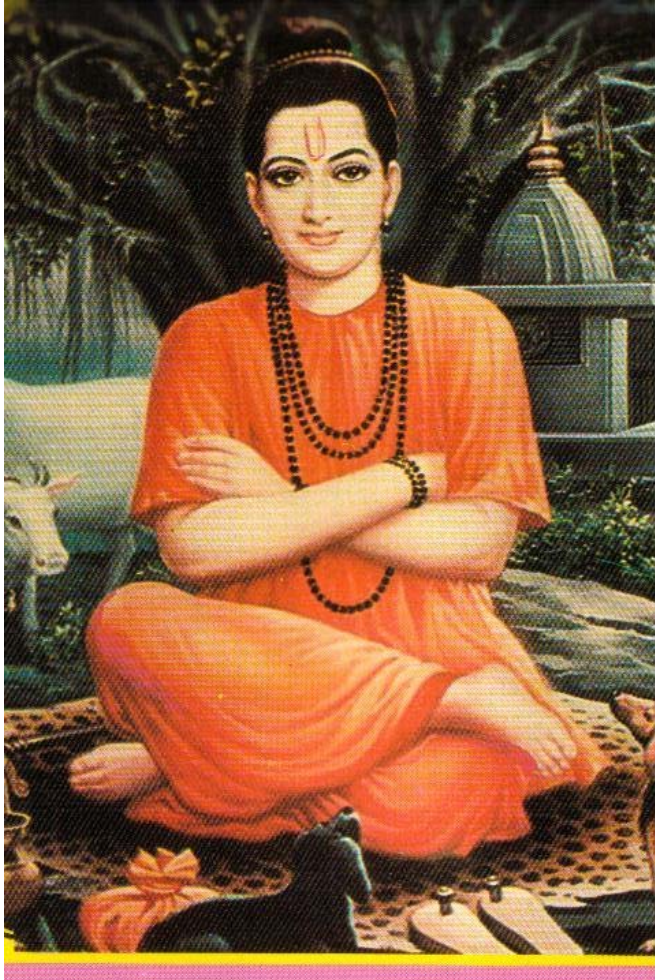
Address:

Sri Sai Master Seva Trust
Golagamudi
Via Sarvepalli Post
Nellore District
Andhra Pradesh
India – 524 321

Visit us online at:

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DEDICATION



To Thy Holy Feet! In reverence with infinite gratitude, Oh, Lord
Sripada Srivallabha! Thou art the Refuge of supplicants! May
Thou keep us in Thy Eternal Sanctuary!

- Translated into English by Peddineni Jyothirmai

Translator's note: Explanation for the words in bold & italics is provided in the glossary presented at the end of this booklet.

This book was held in such high regard by Sri Venkaiah Swami that he endorsed it as the ultimate guide as to how we should live our lives.

“There is no *mantra* or *tantra*. Go ahead with vichara (discrimination)”, said Sri Swami. Such was the sense of fulfillment derived from this story that Sri Venkaiah Swami left his mortal coil after hearing the complete recitation of Madhavadas Charitra.

Sri Madhavadas acquired divine *siddhis* even before he was initiated to mantra by his Guru.

1. fashioning a plate out of a leaf and cooking food on it, fuelled by firewood.
2. swans shading him as they led him to a pond
3. clapper-less bells chiming
4. reaching the divine abode of Lord *Srihari* even before practicing mantra *japa*

These incidents prove that it was his inner purity and NOT mantra that elevated his status.

Yada sarve pramutyante kamayesya hridisritah
ada martyoh amrutho bhavathi atra brahma samasnute

A living being attains immortality upon the cessation of all desires. The lives of Sri Madhavadas, Sri Venkaiah Swami and Buddha bear testimony to this *sloka*. This story is a lesson to those of us who are in quandary as to which mantra is great. This

story teaches humanity to strive for inner purity and perfection in service to guru rather than chasing after perfection in mantra sadhana. Incidentally, this forms the foundation of Sri Shirdi Saibaba's teachings.

AUM Sri Gurubhyo Namah

Foreword

Sri Madhavadas' divine life story was written by Jaimini, a disciple of the legendary sage, Vyasa. Sage Vyasa accepted this book as **guru dakshina** from Jaimini. In time, some parts of the book were lost as deemed best by divine will and the rest was in possession of sage Uluchi. He was said to have restored those parts which were lost.

This book depicts how a true seeker lives his life. Sri Madhavadas' life embodies the five cardinal principles as highlighted by Sri Swami:

1) truth 2) righteousness 3) nobility 4) simplicity 5) service to Sadguru

As Acharya Sri **Bharadwaja** quoted from **Manu Smriti**, this story highlights the futility in experiencing **Brahman** so long as our promises, our vows and our duties are not fulfilled. Our goal in life should be to strive for purging inner impurities through practices aided by grace of **Sadguru**. If we take one step of being cautious not to be entangled in new **runanubandhas**, the ever compassionate Sadguru's grace becomes manifold and takes us to the goal.

Sri Madhavadas' Guru

The greatness of Sri Madhavadas' Guru is beyond description. Divine messengers arrived in a golden conveyance to transport his soul to heavenly abode. Denizens of heaven welcomed him. Sri Mahavishnu Himself gave **darshan** to him. Being such a **Mahatma**, he definitely must have foreknowledge of his impending death. Sri **Veerabrahmendra** Swami attained **Samadhi** after sending away **Siddhaiah** to fetch flowers.

Why? Unable to compose himself after witnessing the final moments of Guru, Siddhaiah would have died of heart failure. Likewise, Sri Madhavadas' Guru left his mortal coil after sending the latter to fetch water. He scribbled the sacred mantra on the ground before departing.

Guided by runanubandhana, an illiterate gipsy woman, passing by just then, wrote the mantra on a palmyra leaf in the manner of a **rangoli** pattern, wore the leaf around her ear and left. At that time, Lord Srihari appeared as a cowherd to Sri Madhavadas and recounted the events related to the **Eetela sani's** (hereafter referred to as gipsy woman) role in copying the mantra. Lord also advised him to serve her and obtain mantra at an appropriate time. The prime reason was to serve her and clear the runanubandhana.

A Deserving Disciple

Sri Madhavadas' dedicated service to Guru earned him Guru's grace. To one who is enslaved by senses and does not follow a strict code of conduct, would swans come and lead him to a water source in a deep forest? Would they shield him from the fierce noon Sun?

Another testimony to his simplicity – even when doing such a miraculous thing as cooking rice on a plate fashioned out of a

leaf, he never once attributed it to his greatness. Instead, he attributed it to the greatness of his Guru. He deemed the command of Guru to fetch water as a divine instruction. Ordinary mortals would have been beset with countless doubts and questions about Guru's command. Could we have unquestioningly obeyed as the blind **Rosi Reddy** did when Sri Swami told him to travel in a straight course to reach the destination? Acharya Sri Bharadwaja said a true disciple never questions the wisdom of Guru when he is commanded to do something.

I am indebted to Sri Venkaiah Swami and Acharya Sri Bharadwaja '**mastaru**' for bestowing this book which is the ultimate guide for a human being to attain **moksha**.

Divine Biography of Sri Madhavadas

Sri Madhavadas was born in Thirukurungudi near Tanjavur in the Chola kingdom in south India. He lost his parents at a tender age. Just as a flower blossoms, perfuming the air, he disseminated devotion, knowledge of Self, dispassion and equanimity (chitta visranthi). How powerful the karmic footprints are! His karmic merit earned in previous lives blessed him with exceptional Knowledge of Self that belies his youth. Leaving home at the mere age of 12, Sri Madhavadas faced his orphaned circumstances imperturbably. He was never distraught that he lost his parents so early. What would envelop such a divine personage, if not equanimity? He was ever abiding in the awareness that Lord **Srimannarayana** was his everything – mother and father.

Adults would do well to pause and reflect, how a young 12-year old possessed a deep knowledge of Self, in marked contrast to people who have the benefit of age but who have been living in ignorance.

Shortly before leaving home, his parting message to people was "Day and night are alternating forever. Everyone works to feed oneself from birth until death. A millionaire or a pauper; many have forgotten that we are being gnawed away by death at every moment. Taking birth as human being makes it imperative upon us to acquire knowledge to attain Realization."

He conveyed the importance of associating with true devotees and the wise. "Association with great devotees brings riches that can never be stolen by thieves. It also tears asunder the six passions of mind or enemies of desire - kama (lust), krodha (anger), lobha (greed), moha (delusion), mada (pride) and matsarya (jealousy). All sins cease in the company of the wise."

"Many parents have been coming and going for countless number of births and deaths. So are relatives and friends on account of Runanubandhana (karmic relationship). But we are not getting the Sadguru who bestows the **Atmajnana** (knowledge of the Self). I am leaving home to redeem myself by serving a Sadguru at least in this lifetime. May you, the elders, kindly bless me" – saying thus he left home, taking leave of them.

Madhavadas is above Temptation

Like the child **Prahlada**, he wandered across many pilgrim places and arrived at a village near the pilgrim town of Venkatachalam. He was about to rest near the center of the village (chavadi). However, some debauched men had already made that place a vice den. They drove away Shri Madhavadas, abusing him. He found a place to sleep outside the courtyard and left for Venkatachalam the next morning, singing the glory of Lord Srihari. That morning, passersby were repulsed by the sight of these debauched men and women, lying shamelessly in each

other's embrace in deep slumber. Sri Madhavadas reached Haridwar after visiting many pilgrim places including Pandurangagiri.

Meeting with Guru

He found a Mahatma seated on a deer skin, his face radiating divine effulgence. He then circumambulated the latter with devotion, and prostrated before him. The Mahatma asked about Sri Madhavadas' wellbeing and the reason for his arrival and accepted the latter as his disciple.

Rising above Rituals and Appearance

"My child! The Mind should be stilled by leaving all desires. One should live with constant awareness in one's heart that the Guru is no different from **Parabrahma**, the Absolute. All the Vedas and scriptures can be remembered and recited. But rare are those who experience the Self. One may claim to have surrendered one's body, wealth and everything to the Guru, but letting go of meanness is very rare. Donations, charity, strict observance of code of conduct, listening to scriptures and others are but the tools to check the wavering mind. Growing a beard, wearing ochre robes, ashes and **rudrakshas** etc are but the aides to constantly remind the seeker that he is ever dedicated to a holy life. So long as desires are unceasing, all the practices aimed at stilling the mind are in vain.

Knowledge of Self cannot be attained through mugging up scriptures, reciting mantras, gajakarna-gokarna practices, takku-tamara practices, practicing customs, and wearing particular robes. It is attained only through serving Sadguru and following his instructions strictly. There are many instances to this effect in **Guru Charitra**

"We hanker after the warm pleasures of beautiful women, trusting this delusory house of 9 doors (nava randhras). We are being weaned away from attaining eternal bliss. We can only do any **sadhana** only when our merits outweigh the sins; and only then will there be a meeting with Sadguru. Living according to his instructions is tougher still. Only our merits earned in previous lives enable us to practice sadhana. They say helping others is meritorious and troubling others is a sin. Recognizing divinity in others and extending service to them without expecting anything in return results in accruing **punya**. Causing pain to others is a sin.

Concept of Past Lives

Past life doesn't mean being born in some other womb; past life means till a moment ago when the eyelids batted. Act of punya can be done right at this moment. Its result will be deemed as previous life's merit in the next moment.

Steps to Meet Guru

Having identified vices in us, we should strive to rid ourselves of those vices. Conviction in the belief that this universe is nothing but the visible manifestation of Sri Sadguru himself leads a person to dedicate every act as a service to Him. This, coupled with **nama smarana**, enables one to acquire more punya resulting in getting the opportunity to serve Sadguru.

Not Out of Danger Yet...

In the meanwhile, care should be taken not to be entangled in new bonds. We should neither be enamored of individuals nor actions. Enamouredness results in either pleasure or sorrow. Living without pleasure and sorrow is living without bonds. Striving to rid ourselves of likes and dislikes, desires, eeshana

trayam (attachment to wealth, wife and children), eight types of pride (*ashta madamulu*) surely lead us to meet Sadguru.

The Deluded Denizens of this World

The Guruji of Sri Madhavadas said, “The arrogant, the haters, the stealers of knowledge (vidya), the ingrates, the quarrelsome, the proud, the enjoyers of sensual pleasures, the practitioners of *sthambhana*, *mohana*, and *utchatana*, the deluded of this world, the slothful, the ones who do not serve Guru with humility, devotion, and faith, the ones who oppose Guru’s instructions never attain Self Knowledge.”

Sri Madhavadas thought to himself, “Elders speak of the debt to parents, debt to God, debt to Rishis, yet debt to Sadguru can never be repaid in full.” Understanding that debt to Guru can only be redeemed by service to him, he went about living with his Guru.

Living with Guru

This Guru-disciple duo wandered from place to place along the Yamuna riverbank, bathing in holy *teerthas* and serving the elders.

Although his Guru had not taught him any mantra (*mantropadesa*), Madhavadas never lost his patience. He was guided by the thought that without the *Trigunas* being fully overcome, six-passions-of-mind and eight-prides being ceased, Guru’s grace won’t be bestowed and mantra won’t be taught. He felt that there must be still some impurities in him because of which, he had not yet received *guropadesam*. Thinking thus, he continued his service to Guru with enhanced determination and perseverance. He was elated that he obtained such an opportunity to serve Guru only because of his punya.

Testing Thirst

The duo was walking towards Hastinapuram along the bank of river Yamuna. Sri Madhavadas was walking for a long distance and carrying his Guru on his shoulders whenever his Guru was unable to walk due to old age. He motivated himself by dwelling in thoughts of the Lord.

“My child, I am thirsty, please fetch me some water”, requested the Guru as he rested under the shade of a tree.

Sri Madhavadas set out to fetch water in the forest but could not find any source of water. He started repenting for going far off from his Guru. He was unsure if he would be able to return to his Guru with water in this deep forest.

Besieged by doubts, any normal person would typically question, “Where is the water in this forest, Guruji! Kindly have patience. You can quench your thirst once we reach a village.”

But, Sri Madhavadas was an exemplary disciple who would not say a word against the wish of his Guru. He was obediently trying to carry out the Guru’s instruction. He was, however, pained by the separation from his Guru. At the exact moment of this sadness, a flock of royal swans were flying in the sky on account of Guru’s grace. He addressed them, “Oh royal swans! Kindly let me know where the water is available in this daunting forest.” Miraculously, the swans understood human language and also replied in the same: “Oh Das, please follow our path, we will show you water”. Saying so, the swans flew close to the ground, acting like an umbrella for him and took him to a beautiful lake with placid and clear waters.

Taking him under His Wings

This episode was none other than the one 'arranged' by his Guru. Satisfied by his disciple's unrelenting and intense quest to locate water, braving the dangers in such a hostile environment, the Guru himself came in the form of swans. Is it mere coincidence that the swans took the forlorn Madhavadas to the lake while shielding him like an umbrella? That too, speaking in human language?

It is tempting to think of this episode as an exaggerated folk tale. Yet, this incident is not at all improbable when we consider the infinite wisdom and mercy of God and the multitude of forms His mercy assumes. Upon listening to the complete recitation of this book, Sri Venkaiah Swamy left his mortal coil. His soul was so fulfilled by this book that he departed contentedly. Sri Venkaiah Swami's earthly departure after listening to the recitation of this book is a testament to the genuineness of this story.

Sri Madhavadas is en route, hurrying back to his Guru, bringing water with him. His Guruji was resting in the shade of a tree at that time. As he rested, a golden, airborne conveyance hovered close to him and halted.

Four messengers of Lord **Vishnu** disembarked from the plane and addressed the Guru. "Oh great soul! We are the messengers of Lord Vishnu. Please board this divine conveyance and come to the world of Lord Vishnu. We have come to escort you to the divine abode."

Doleful that his beloved disciple, who had followed him all these days like a shadow, was not present, he scribbled the **thiru** mantra on the ground and left his body for heavenly abode. His subtle body was transported in the divine conveyance to the river **Viraja**. In greeting, five thousand celestial nymphs

(**apsarasas**) waved **arti** to his subtle body. They welcomed him by playing ten varieties of musical instruments. On the command of Sri Maha Vishnu, all gods waved arti, holding umbrellas studded with emerald and applying perfumes to his body. That great soul received darshan of Lord Vishnu in **Vaikuntha** and resumed his journey. These honours testify to the greatness of that Mahatma.

No Coincidence; Guru's Foresight

It is no chance or coincidence that a divinely venerated Mahatma had left his body without initiating his disciple to thiru mantra. Didn't such a Mahatma know he was about to leave his body?

That Mahatma was all-knowing; he was aware of all the pending karmic debts (runanubandhas) of his disciple. He also knew if the disciple was present at the time of his leaving the body, the latter would die of heart failure, being unable to face the separation from his Guru. Therefore, he left his body after sending away Madhavadas on the pretext of fetching water. There are many precedents of such meticulous foresight. A similar anecdote: Sri Veerabramendra Swami took samadhi after sending away Siddhaiah to fetch flowers.

Being one with all-pervading consciousness, the Guru, in the guise of swans, formed a shade over the disciple while leading the latter to the water body.

He also engineered the arrival of the gipsy woman onto the scene. By copying the mantra onto a palmyra leaf and wearing it on her ear, she had unknowingly safeguarded the mantra which could then be entrusted to its rightful recipient, Madhavadas.

The Guru himself appeared to Madhavadas in the form of a cowherd and told him that gipsy woman had copied the mantra

and that he should serve her until runanubandhanas are repaid and then ask for the mantra at an appropriate time.

Hence, one should ponder how foolhardy it is to rush for the experience of Brahman before paying all the debts.

Acharya Sri Bharadwaja uses the examples mentioned in Manu Smruthi to reiterate and caution us that, “you will be ruined if you seek experience of Brahman before settling runanubandhas, promises, duties, and vows.”

Acharya Sri Bharadwaja exhorts us to leave all the existing runanubandhas to Sri Shirdi Saibaba. It is entirely up to Him whether he would deal with them by making you experience them in dreams, in small measure in normal life, uprooting them with his power of penance, or even postponing them to next birth. For now, be careful not to get entangled in new runanubandhas, he says. We ourselves can figure out if we are entangled. One should not brood over, ‘Alas! Why did it happen so?’ If that’s the case, that itself is a sign of having created a new runanubandha.

Gipsy Woman Chances upon the Mantra

A gipsy woman and her caravan were travelling on the road. She was walking with her female companions while the men folk, carrying spears and other weapons, were walking alongside the donkeys laden with luggage. Gipsy woman paused upon noticing the Guru lying in the shade of a tree. Realizing that the Guru had passed away, the gipsy woman read the mantra scribbled on the ground near his right hand.

She immediately copied the mantra on a palmyra leaf and wore it on her ear. She erased the mantra from the ground before leaving the place.

After a while Sri Madhavadas returned with water for his Guru. With folded hands he implored repeatedly, “Oh, king of the Gurus! I was distraught as I could not find water despite searching the entire forest. Just then, I spotted a flock of swans flying overhead, I asked them to lead me to a water source. The swans took me to the source of water, all the while holding their shadow as an umbrella for me. Now, please quench your thirst, my Lord”. He then removed the scarf on the face of the Guru, who was lying motionless and touched the body with his hand.

Sensing that his dearest Guru was no more, he slumped to the ground, grief-stricken. Then he noticed the marks on the ground. “My dearest Guru, out of compassion, wrote a thiru mantra on the ground. Someone has erased it. Whom should I ask now? Alas! What a fate has befallen me.”

“Oh compassionate king! Oh protector of the devotees who slays our sins, the great warrior, oh Lord, kindly rescue me. I lost my Guru. I could not secure thiru mantra. Being forsaken, I deem you as my sole refuge, oh Lord. What will become of me if you don’t take pity and uplift me,” he prayed fervently to Lord Srihari.

Mourning in bereavement, he interred his beloved Guru’s body, performed *puja* and continued his journey in bleakness.

Lord Srihari Points the Way

Taking pity upon Madhavadas' pathetic state, Lord Srihari appeared in the form of a cowherd boy to the former. Harboring hopes that the boy would be able to assist him, Madhavadas enquired, “Boy, has any traveler passed by this way?” “Sir, a gipsy woman passed by this way a short while ago,” replied the cowherd. Upon that, Madhavadas humbly requested,

“Boy, who is this gipsy woman? Please let me know how to find her.”

“A young woman belonging to **dommara caste** is known as gipsy woman. She dances on a tightrope like an acrobat. She holds an umbrella in one hand to balance herself on the rope. There are around 100 people in her group. They travel with their hounds while donkeys carry their luggage. These itinerant artistes entertain people with their performance, beating drums and kettles. You will locate them if you go in search of them immediately.”

Lord Srihari, in the guise of cowherd, questioned, “Oh Das! You are asking if anybody had gone this way. What business do you have with them?” Madhavadas replied, “Sir, I've been serving my beloved Guru for quite some time. I am an orphan. My Guru looked after me with love like father, mother, friend and relative. We were going on a pilgrimage through this forest. My Guru was resting in the shade of a tree upon sending me to fetch water, as he was very thirsty. It was too late by the time I came back with water. By then, he left his physical body after scribbling the mantra on ground out of love for me. That great mahatma attained **moksha** and merged in the Universal consciousness. I was grieving after interring his body and performing puja with devotion. On account of my previous punya, you appeared to me in this form of cowherd. You, by giving details about gipsy woman out of compassion, helped me a great deal when I am in this perilous forest where there is none to console me. It's you who is Lord Srihari unto me.”

A Cowherd's Advice

Thereupon, the Lord in disguise said, “I am a cowherd. Is it right to call me Lord Srihari? I am a cowherd making a living by grazing cattle. There can't be parallels between Lord, the one without beginning and end, **purushottama** and **sarveswara**, who lords countless universes, and me, the cattle-grazing simpleton. You are extremely virtuous. Mere darshan of you removed my ignorance and wisdom dawned on me. Listen to me as I explain what I had seen. That gipsy woman, while going this way, copied the mantra on a palmyra leaf, which was scribbled on the ground near his hand. She took this leaf and wore it around her ear and left. Then the cowherd left, advising “You should serve her like a slave and obtain the mantra at an appropriate time.”

Madhavadas resumed his journey without food and water in that forest. His thoughts dwelt broodingly on his loss. “The secret mantra is lost to the gipsy woman. I lost my beloved Guru. Who will rescue me now, oh Lord?”

Finding the Gipsy Woman

Traveling for some distance, he found the huts of gipsy woman on the outskirts of a village. He sat near those makeshift tents for two days without any food and water. At this juncture, by grace of God, the gipsy woman called Madhavadas and enquired after him.

Gipsy woman: where are you from? Why are you traveling in this forest?

Madhavadas: Mother! I am an orphan. I have no place of my own. Since my beloved Guru passed away, I have been wandering across all the villages.

Gipsy woman: so why do you have to struggle for food? If you stay with us taking care of our donkeys, I will provide you with food and clothing. You can wander along with us.

Madhavadas: Mother! I must not eat others' food. My food must be cooked by me and eaten only after I have offered it to my Guru. Hence, I will stay with you if you would be so kind as to provide me with provisions.

As the gipsy woman agreed to this, Madhavadas joined them and started tending to the donkeys.

Casting aside Caste

Some ignorant men approached Madhavadas and questioned, "What is your name? Where are you from? Which **caste** and **gotra** do you belong to?"

"Respectable ones! I am a haridas (i.e., the servant of Hari). My name is Madhavadas," he replied.

The men took umbrage at his reply since he did not disclose his caste and gotra. They mockingly said, "You don't belong to any caste and gotra!"

They persisted in badgering him about his caste and gotra. Madhavadas countered by asking them who they were. Those rogues were affronted by Madhavadas' temerity when he countered their insistent questions with one of his own. In retaliation, they tied Madhavadas firmly to a tree.

Wishing to educate these bigots, Madhavadas gave them this food for thought "Respectable ones! Do you think wealth, wife and children are great to live for? Are you deeming caste to be

great? All this is the effect of **maya**. Dwell on God every moment. Make your lives purposeful by knowing God."

"Respectable ones! Be aware of the hardships which are in store for you with advancing age by observing the people around you. God is not pleased if you are condescending to others. Don't be puffed up with the pride of being an upper caste on this earth. Only those who are devotees of God are considered high caste. The rest are low caste. None is closer than parents. Those who testify as false witness and tread the path of unrighteousness are made to walk on red hot embers. Those who covet the wealth of others and insult elders are clobbered with hammers by the messengers of Lord **Yama**. When we discard or neglect **dharma**, we earn bad **karma** and as such, we are weaned away from God. The true elders are the ones who live in **samsara** with detachment. The prime reason for ruination is greed. Every living being takes birth, is pre ordained to go through pre-determined experiences. When a person who is motivated by greed earns wealth through unethical means, all the tangible proof of wealth such as money and even seemingly immovable, solid assets like properties, all come to naught in the end. Instead of this ill gotten wealth, we should aim to earn the grace of Sadguru by living righteously."

In the meanwhile, those rogues who tied Madhavadas to a tree had suddenly gone blind. They realized that the blindness was the result of their tying a Mahatma to a tree. They later untied Madhavadas and prostrated before him in remorse. They miraculously got back their vision after the heartfelt repentance, and they left to their houses happily.

How the Divinely Blessed Cooks Food

At midday, after herding the donkeys under a tree, Madhavadas put some rice provided by gipsy woman in a leaf fashioned into a

cup. The gipsy woman had not provided any utensils. So, he washed the rice in the same leaf cup, added some water and propped the cup on a hearth arranged with three stones. He put three wooden poles around it and surrounded the hearth by wrapping his scarf around those poles. He lit a fire with small sticks and wooden pieces. He added a pickle, tamarind and some chillis to the boiled rice. He then offered that food to his beloved Guru and then partook the food.

Taking a Leaf from a Cook

Here Madhavadas' greatness is clearly evident. Do reflect, a leaf cup filled with rice and water cannot be stabilized and retained in an upright position on the hearth. Furthermore, he lit a fire in the hearth and cooked the rice in that cup. In normal circumstances, the leaf cup would have been burnt resulting in rice falling onto the hearth. However, this leaf cup co-operated serving like a utensil. Madhavadas was oblivious to his own miracle. Thinking that all this was made possible only by Guru's grace, he attributed everything to the Guru.

Cooking rice like this is as incredible as swans talking to him in the forest, shielding him from the fierce noon sun by offering a protective cover, flying in formation above him and leading him to water.

We notice how virtues are naturally embodied by him. Perhaps it was due to the merits in many previous lives that he placed ultimate trust in Guru and surrendered everything to him. Thereafter he never talked back or questioned the wisdom of Guru.

We are entitled to test a Guru until we are convinced that he possesses omniscience, omnipresence and omnipotence. A seeker can test a Guru just as **Vivekananda** tested **Ramakrishna**

Paramahansa by placing red-hot ember on his thigh and by hiding a rupee coin under his pillow. But once there is a total surrender, there should not be any further questioning of the wisdom of Guru. Sri Madhavadas was freed of runanubandhas and obtained thiru mantra only because he followed this doctrine in letter and spirit. We should also emulate Madhavadas' unquestioning loyalty to Guru. In this manner, we hope to attain the same blessings that **Rosi reddy, Poli Reddy, Vakkemma and Tulasamma** procured.

Madhavadas was tending to the donkeys of the gipsy woman and at the same time, maintaining unparalleled devotion to Sadguru. Wandering across several places, the gipsy woman eventually arrived in Indraprastha puram.

The gipsy woman, along with her group, went to the charitably run kitchen and ate a sumptuous meal offered in honour of **Rajasuya Yaga** being performed by Yudhithira.

Sri Madhavadas returned from grazing donkeys at around 2pm; well after lunch time. The gipsy woman suggested, "Oh Das! King Yudhithira has been performing Rajasuya yaga for the past month in this village. He has been feeding ten million brahmins everyday. You go there and have a meal."

Hearing that Madhavadas said, "Mother! I don't eat food cooked by others. It should be cooked by me even if it is as simple as a meal of porridge. The food should first be offered to my Guru before I eat it as **prasadam**. This is the command of my Guru. Therefore I will go there and ask for provisions instead." Saying so, he left for the venue of Rajasuya yaga.

A dejected Sri Madhavadas thought, "My life imitates the adage 'fate makes one tend to donkeys even though one wishes to rule kingdom.' I wanted to obtain the mantra for the sake of ending the cycle of birth and death. But as my fate would have it, I am

condemned to tend to donkeys. Perhaps, God created this adage to reflect my life. Many elders vouch that Sadguru alters one's fate. But why am I fated to tend to donkeys? Alas, what a horrible sinner I am! Utterances of the wise never turn false. Sadgurus' words never go in vain."

Observe how staunchly Madhavadas adhered to the command of his Guru. It was past 2pm by the time he returned after grazing cattle. Despite the lateness of the hour and his hunger, he did not waver in maintaining adherence to his Guru's injunction not to eat any food that was not cooked by him. His sole aim was to abide by Guru's command. He set out to the venue of Rajasuya yaga for bhiksha disregarding his hunger.

How Guru Deals with Devotees' Karma

Sadguru is none other than all-pervading Brahman. Sadgurus deal with karmas of devotees in four ways.

1. The karmas can be postponed to some future date in this life itself or can be postponed to some future life.
2. Heavy karmic load can be made lighter, and devotees are made to experience less suffering.
3. Sadguru can reduce karma to ashes with his yogic power.
4. Karmic results can be experienced in dream state thereby freeing the devotee from that karma in real life.

The Guru's choice of methods depends on the nature of our karmic load.

Here is a simple analogy: a man who was heavily in debt to some villagers tried to escape. The villagers caught him and were

about to beat him up. Just then, his brother comes and pleads with them not to harm his brother saying he will repay them instead. They let off the debtor. Compare this to the next analogy: A man assaults another man. The victim survives and later rallies his supporters to hunt down the assaulter. Upon finding him, they are so bent on revenge that they want to thrash him soundly. Now, the assaulter's brother arrives at the scene and offers himself in lieu of his brother who was about to be beaten. Do the victim and his accomplices heed his pleas and offer?

They would reason that, since the assaulter initiated the attack and not his brother, the punishment should be meted out solely to the culprit. Using this same line of argument/thinking, our karmic results are dealt in any of those four ways by Sadguru. Only Sadguru knows how to deal with them. Hence it would be our loss if we were to sulk, thinking that Sadguru didn't bestow grace the moment we entreated.

"I am going there at an odd hour. I am unsure if there will be any donor who will pay heed to my request. Even if there is a donor, he might mock me for the way I look" Thinking thus, a hungry and tired Madhavadas reached the free kitchen. He explained his predicament to the gatekeepers: "Sir, I am feeble due to hunger. Having heard of Yudhisthira's kitchen, I have come here. I am a Haridas. Kindly let the donors know that I am at the gate seeking alms." The gatekeepers passed this message to **Vidura** who was resting in his room at that time. Vidura came to Madhavadas and asked, "Sir, where are you from? Why have you come to this kingdom? What is the reason for your tiredness?"

"Your Majesty! I belong to whichever kingdom I am in. Guru's preaching is my kingdom. Being affable is my caste. God's religion is my religion. Friendship is my gotra. I traveled across the country serving my Sadguru. As that Mahatma passed away leaving me orphaned, I thought the only refuge is to worship my

Guru, and started taking whatever food I get only after offering to my Guru. Satisfying my hunger by partaking that food as prasadam, wandering across many places, I arrived here. Therefore, if you could donate some provisions, I will offer it first to my Guru and then eat it as prasadam.

Vidura, being a wise and insightful man, immediately gave the provisions to Madhavadas. Vidura's greatness lies in empathizing with Madhavadas' plight and donating provisions unhesitatingly to the feeble and hungry Madhavadas without question. He knew well the essence of ***Bhagavad Gita*** that exhorts us to recognize Him in the form of hunger in every living being. That was why Vidura honoured him by immediately donating provisions without question.

Sri Venkaiah Swami advised us to offer food, without discrimination of caste, creed, age, religion, economic status and clout to anybody who supplicates in hunger.

He also clearly taught us not to offer to those who are already belching with fully sated appetites. We should put aside any pride of being great devotees and question ourselves if we treat everybody alike; with no discrimination while serving food in temples and on auspicious occasions.

Sri Venkaiah Swami exhorts us to review how we treat the poor, the downtrodden, the ragged beggars, the handicapped, the frail, elderly and ill patients. In contempt or detestation, we refuse them access to the kitchen or make a token offer of leftovers after all of us have finished eating a meal. Is this the way to give due recognition to God?

God Himself is manifested in all the five forms of earth, sun, air, water and ether enabling crops to be grown. Food is the result of toil of countless living beings. Do we recognize that it is God who toils in their form? Do we recognize that God Himself has

approached us for food in their form in tiredness and hunger? That's why Sri Venkaiah Swami posed this question, "whom do all these foods belong to?" All is His treasure. It amounts to abandoning our dharma if we were to insult God in their form with a false notion that all is ours just because it is we who have grown it. No matter how pompously and lavishly we celebrate a festival, it won't please God if it was done by trespassing the bounds of dharma", cautioned Sri Venkaiah Swami.

Sri Venkaiah Swami reiterated that nobility and simplicity come naturally to true seekers. This is in sharp contrast to today's fake Gurus whom we follow in delusion upon witnessing their 'miraculous' abilities. Sri Madhavadas took care not to let anyone see the way he was cooking food by hiding the hearth behind a curtain. But today's fake Gurus would have made a show of it to their devotees.

When there was a need to provide food, Sri ***Rakhadi Baba*** took out fresh, steaming food from behind some stones but he didn't even reveal this to ***Purnananda Swami***. Sri Shirdi Saibaba, despite getting only 20 Rupees on a particular day, donated around 500 Rupees; every time he would take out cash from his pocket; he never made a show of it by creating currency notes in his hand. The wise of yore say that creating things, out of thin air, is the most wretched act, and that one should never believe them

Observe the level of discretion in Madhavadas' behaviour. He discreetly cooked behind a cloth curtain. He took pains to conceal the ***mahima*** bestowed by his Guru. Sri Swami advises us to develop a keen sense of discernment by observing the habits and behaviour of Gurus so as to distinguish who is a genuine and discreet Guru.

Madhavadas, after offering the cooked food heartily to his Guru and thanking God internally, put a first morsel in his mouth.

In Indraprastha Puram, at the venue of Rajasuya yaga, Yudhisthira arranged 100,000 bells with no clappers. After 100,000 brahmins finished their meal, at best, only one bell would chime since the commencement of yaga but this time all the bells started chiming every minute as if earth and sky were jostling.

Immediately Yudhisthira convened a meeting with **Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula, Sahadeva, Bhishma, Drona, Krupa, Aswathama, Karna, Vikarna** and others and addressed them in astonishment: "Oh great men! You have heard the chiming of these bells! Usually, one bell would chime upon 100,000 brahmins finishing their meal. But, what are these sounds today? I have got a fortune due to some Mahatma today. Moreover this is not lunch time. Has any Mahatma come to the city and sought alms?"

Thereupon, Vidura stood up joyfully and narrated, "A Mahatma came at an odd hour when I was resting. He said Guru's preaching is his kingdom. He belongs to whichever kingdom he is in. He said he was hungry and hence sought provisions. When I told him to eat food here, he politely rejected saying he can't eat like that; he should cook his own food, offer it to Guru, and then eat it as prasadam. I acceded to his request. That Mahatma happily took the provisions with him. All the chiming of these bells is only due to his mahima."

Yudhisthira immediately summoned his police and instructed them to search every nook and corner of the town for every Haridas.

The police searched everywhere and finally arrived at the outskirts of the town where there was a man doing something behind a cloth curtain pitched near the huts of dommari community. They questioned the dommari women, "Who are

you? Who is that person doing something behind the cloth curtain? What is he doing?"

In reply, the gipsy woman explained, "Sir, we hail from Nepal. We are nomads belonging to dommara community. Dancing on tight rope is our profession. The Das behind the curtain under that tree grazes our donkeys. Today he brought provisions from king's free kitchen, cooked it, offered it to his Guru, and is eating behind the curtain now. He is ever immersed in singing the glory of Lord Srihari but doesn't speak to us. He sleeps under the tree."

Thereupon the police approached and questioned Madhavadas as to what he was doing there. He replied that he was eating his meal. Then, the police returned to the palace and informed Yudhisthira, "Your Majesty! There was a Mahatma who was eating his meal. Our bells were chiming thunderously with every morsel of food he was eating. That Mahatma grazes donkeys of a dommara nomadic group. He is said to cook food every time behind a cloth curtain, and eats it after offering it to his Guru. He sings the glory of Srihari all the time and sleeps under a tree. He does not interact much with the rest of the community. He has been tending to donkeys for the last 3 months", they reported.

Hearing that, Yudhisthira said, "We've been feeding brahmins for several days now. Yet not even a few clapper-less bells chimed like this. The fact that all these bells are chiming as if earth is shattering today is only on account of that Mahatma eating our food. Please bring that Mahatma to the palace with due honour", Yudhisthira ordered.

Shortly after, Nakula, Sahadeva, and Vidura took a golden palanquin, decorated with garlands of emeralds, pearls and flowers, accompanied by instrumental music, to the tree where Madhavadas was resting. Several villagers along with dommara

men and women gathered to witness the spectacle taking place there.

Sri Madhavadas mistook them for a marriage party. The royal police pointed out Madhavadas to Nakula, Sahadeva and Vidura who then approached him and prostrated.

Seeing this, Madhavadas politely submitted, "Sir, you look like you are from a royal clan. I am an outcaste who grazes donkeys. Is it appropriate to prostrate to me like God? You must have mistaken me for someone else. Your Majesty! Please forgive me."

To this Vidura replied, "Oh Mahatma! We have come here at the behest of our king, Yudhisthira who wanted us to bring you seated in this golden palanquin to the palace with due honour. He wants to serve you. Therefore, we entreat you to come to the royal palace." After that, everyone including Nakula and Sahadeva followed suit in prostrating to Madhavadas.

"I am a sinner. I am ignorant. I am a fool who tends to donkeys. Whyever all this royal treatment to me? I haven't done anything wrong. I have just eaten the prasadam cooked with the provisions given by you."

Despite Madhavadas' earnest pleas, Vidura did not back off. Madhavadas tried to reason with him saying, "Sir, it's inappropriate for an inferior sinner like me to sit on a palanquin befitting royals. I will come walking." His peripatetic preference is a clear sign of his humility.

Sri Madhavadas walked without any ceremony alongside the golden palanquin. Witnessing this, some dommari men said, "Our Das must have committed some crime. Royal police are taking him away."

Others had a different opinion and commented to gipsy woman, "Mother! All royal pageantry prostrated to our Das. He must be a great man! We failed to recognize his greatness".

Gipsy woman lamented, "My goodness! I never knew Das's greatness. I've become a great sinner by foolishly treating him as an inferior. How did they come to know of his greatness? Will we be fortunate enough to see him again?"

In his honour, **brahmins**, **kshatriyas**, **vysyas**, and **sudras**, **rishis** and thousands of royal police performed **bhajans** and hailed victory.

When Madhavadas neared the palace, everyone prepared to welcome him. Noticing that Madhavadas was walking, Yudhisthira quickened his pace towards him, hugged and prostrated. He insisted upon seating Madhavadas on the palanquin. Then, he wrapped a gold embroidered shawl on Madhavadas' shoulders. Fanning him, Yudhisthira proceeded to escort the palanquin towards the palace.

Plied with this unexpected honour, a worried Madhavadas thought "Oh **Krishna**, **Pundarika Varada**! What is this fate of mine, father! Why I am being taken in a procession, seated on a palanquin? Lord, have I dwelt on and prayed to you for all these comforts? Do these comforts, which are cravings of ignorant men, follow beyond one's death? Is it the fruit of my prayers aimed at securing thiru mantra? I have sought a path that grants eternal comfort; not these illusory ones."

As the palanquin wended through the streets of the town, the party chanced upon **Balarama** and Lord Krishna. The moment he saw them, Sri Madhavadas immediately got off the palanquin and prostrated at the feet of Lord Krishna. He then glorified the Lord thus, "**Paratpara**, who contains all the worlds in his stomach and rules all subjects as their master puppeteer, I have

the rare fortune of seeing your divine form today. Bhava Bhaya Harana (the destroyer of worldly fears), please uplift me. **Vedas** and **Puranas** are not equipped enough to describe you adequately. Brahma and others can't know your True nature. Your Mahima is beyond the reach of even Eeswara."

Beaming approvingly, Lord Krishna embraced him lovingly. Standing in the middle of the royal assembly, Lord Krishna addressed Yudhisthira, "You are very fortunate as you have the opportunity to serve this Mahatma now. Of what use is wearing sacred marks on forehead if one doesn't know thiru mantra? Having been born as human being, if one is ignorant of the path to moksha, one is deemed a tree. One is useless despite being a **Vaishnavite** if one is stuck in caste and creed. Can those, who proclaim to belong to high caste and gotra, ever be considered true Gurus? Can they be men of virtue unless they seek moksha and forgo desires?"

Oh Yudhisthira! Paramatma (God) stays contentedly in the hearts, on the tongues and in senses of true Haridasus. It is because of that the 100,000 clapper-less bells chimed shattering earth and sky even though you gave provisions that were just enough to cook one meal. Imagine how blessed they are who drink this great soul's **padateertha** after worshipping him in the manner of **Shodashopachara**."

Then Madhavadas and Yudhisthira took their blessings and continued to make their way to the palace. Walking by his side, Yudhisthira addressed him, "Oh Mahatma! Scriptures vouch that sins of people like me are destroyed by serving Mahatmas like you. Can moksha be attained without serving the devotees of Lord like you?"

Witnessing this spectacle, the townsfolk remarked, "The mahima of this Mahatma was so great that all the clapper-less bells chimed at the same time when he ate food! Maybe, he practices

bhakti yoga!" Witnessing the festivities honouring this Mahatma, the gods in the sky showered flower petals. All the bells chimed deafeningly once the palanquin was lowered to the ground.

Yudhisthira immediately seated that highest-of-the-devotees on a gem-studded throne on a golden dais and prostrated to him. He then instructed Draupadi to bathe Madhavadas in **abhyangana** tradition.

First, Lord Krishna applied **magnolia champaca** oil to his head. Following suit were Yudhisthira, sapta maharishis and seven beautiful women.

Next was a specially drawn bath of perfumed water and **shikakai** powder. Then, **Draupadi** and her female companions dressed him in silken clothes. Seven virtuous women including Anasuya, Arundhati and Ahalya combed his hair and applied vermilion on his forehead. They applied fragrant oils to his body. After that Balarama and Lord Krishna offered oblation (naivedyam) and waved light (neerajanam) to that Mahatma, and partook holy water (teertha), offering (prasadam), and distributed them to all in the assembly.

Then Yudhisthira humbly asked with folded hands, "Oh Mahatma! I was conceited with my riches. I am ready to dedicate my whole kingdom and serve you forever. You being such a Mahatma, I am puzzled as to why you were grazing donkeys of gipsy woman." Madhavadas clarified, "Oh Yudhisthira! Those striving for moksha, knowing full well that this world is an illusion, recognize the evanescence of these honours and pleasures and renounce them willingly. What great fortune is there other than approaching a Sadguru and serving him!"

He continued to narrate his experiences, beginning from the day he left home to his time of service to gipsy woman. He drew Yudhisthira 's attention to his dilemma of recovering the mantra

that was currently in the gipsy woman's possession. He enlisted Yudhisthira's aid in its retrieval, imploring, "Oh best of kings! If you help me to obtain that mantra, you will accrue a merit of having donated the entire world to me. Please help in any way or means to bring the mantra to me."

Yudhisthira opined that their task would become easier if he could know where she kept the mantra. Madhavadas replied that she wrote the mantra on a Palmyra leaf and wore it around her ear.

Yudhisthira immediately had the goldsmith bring nine-gem studded ear studs. He sent his royal police to bring gipsy woman to court. When she arrived, Yudhisthira said, "Miss, we heard of your skill in dancing on tight rope. Please dance in this assembly of the revered so as to please them." Prostrating to all, wearing anklets she at once jumped onto the rope with ease. She started dancing, holding an umbrella in one hand. Yudhisthira said, "Oh lady! I am pleased with your performance. I am going to throw these gem-encrusted ear studs into air. You should catch them and wear them while you are on the rope." He then threw them into air. She deftly caught and wore them around her ear, dropping down the previously wearing stud containing the mantra.

Yudhisthira quickly took that stud containing the mantra, paid obeisance before handing it over to Sri Madhavadas. Witnessing this, all gods showered flower petals. Yudhisthira prostrated to Sri Madhavadas in reverence. In gratitude, he honoured the gipsy woman with liberal monetary gifts.

Upon obtaining the mantra, Sri Madhavadas started dancing with great joy in the assembly. He then glorified the mantra as follows:

"I obtained the **Srimannarayana** mantra that is tastier than sweetmeats. All of my horrible sins have been reduced to ashes. I found something that is tastier than sugar, honey, and fruits. This sacred mantra is the enabler of moksha – cessation of the cycle of birth and death. It is this mantra that was given by **Virat Purusha** to **Brahma**, sage **Vasishta** to Sri **Rama**, and Sri Rama to **Hanuman**. It is the same mantra that is glorified joyfully by rishis. It is this mantra that was given by Sri Krishna to **Akrura**, by **Suka** to **Parikshit**, and by **Narada** to **Prahlada**."

Holding the feet of Sri Madhavadas, a repentant and teary gipsy woman said, "Oh Swami! Not knowing your greatness, I amassed great sin by asking you to tend to donkeys. Had you asked right then, I would have given the mantra to you. In my ignorance, I committed a grave transgression against you. Please forgive me."

Sri Madhavadas consoled her, "Mother! It's Sri Krishna **paramatma** alone who is saviour and Lord of you, me, and the entire world. You should hold fast to his feet. Don't be sad that you assigned donkey-grazing work to me. I will explain to you about who the real donkeys are."

Who is a Real Donkey?

A woman who serves and obtains the grace of Sadguru is a worthy lady. A woman who arrogantly ignores truth and consciousness, is a donkey. If she serves her in-laws, she is worthy. On the other hand, if she harasses her in-laws, she is a donkey indeed. If she is wealthy and does not ill-treat others, she is worthy. She, who takes pride in wealth and harms others, is a donkey.

Respecting elders comes naturally to a worthy lady. However, she, who is condescending to elders and devotees, is a donkey. A worthy lady maintains harmony and amiability with her husband

whereas a quarrelsome woman is a donkey. Another symbol of worthiness is a lady who provides succor, within her means, to the hungry who beseech her. Obversely, she, who drives away those who approach her in hunger, is a donkey indeed.

The hallmark of a worthy lady lies in her generosity to sadhus and the poor. Contrarily, a woman, who pains them with harsh words, is a donkey. Worthy ladies practice goodness gleaned from wise discussions with elders. If she keeps abusing elders, she is a donkey. She is worthy who checks her inner enemies of **Arishadvargas**. She, who constantly fights with others for no rhyme or reason, is indeed a donkey.

A worthy lady respects her husband's words and acts accordingly. In marked contrast, a woman who incites quarrels between husband and wife is a donkey. A worthy lady doesn't roam and linger in other peoples' houses. She, who laughs and mingles with other men, is a donkey. Being immersed in the recitation of Lord's name distinguishes her as a worthy lady. Contrastingly, a woman who finds sweetness in the words of her paramours is a donkey. Striving for moksha is emblematic of a worthy lady. Antithetically, a woman who mindlessly fritters away time and finds faults with others is a donkey."

Madhavadas assured her, "Therefore, you are the virtuous. You helped me to get food. Furthermore you saw, uttered and wrote with your hand that great mantra, which bestows moksha. Consequently you have become holy. May you attain kingdom of moksha in your old age by glorifying Lord Srihari." By now, messengers of Lord Vishnu had arrived to escort Madhavadas and said, "Swami, we have been sent by Lord Srihari to bring you. Please come with us."

Madhavadas reached Vaikuntha. Lord **Vasudeva** welcomingly embraced Madhavadas. Madhavadas prostrated at the feet of Lord Srihari. Then Lord instructed him to go to the town of

Madra Pattanam on Earth in order to initiate the royal couple – Chitrasena and Chitravathi – to thiru mantra. After he completed this mission, Madhavadas returned to Vaikuntha.

Points to Ponder:

The episode of Sri Venkaiah Swami leaving his mortal coil upon hearing the recitation of Madhavadas' life story carries a timely reminder to hone our powers of discernment in telling apart today's fake Gurus from genuine Gurus like Sri Madhavadas.

We must observe the manner in which Mahatmas like Sri Venkaiah Swami adamantly stayed away from pomp and pageantry whereas today's fake sadhus, enamoured of pomp and pageantry, embrace ostentatiousness. Madhavadas, who is capable of making clapper-less bells chime, has no qualms travelling on foot. When Vidura extolled him as a great Mahatma, Madhavadas humbly denied saying that they were mistaken and that he was a mere donkey-grazing fool.

It is the effect of Kali maya that fake Gurus use media tools for popularity. Even if the wealthy invited Sri Venkaiah Swami to visit their homes by car, he would decline their invitation, saying there were some thorny obstructions on the way and as such, the way was not visible to him. It is a sobering reminder to take note how, on the other hand, fake Gurus would not go anywhere unless they travel in comfort!

Sri Madhavadas had yet to obtain the mantra given by his Guru. Not once had he recited that mantra. How then did he get this ability to make clapper-less bells chime? We should ponder the reason behind this feat. A possible explanation to this curious phenomenon was provided by Sri Venkaiah Swami himself, "There is no mantra or tantra. Go ahead with vichara (discrimination)."

Sri Madhavadas' life is a testimony to this single-minded focus. Sri **Jnaneshwar** Maharaj too said the same. So did Sri Shirdi Sai and Acharya Sri Bharadwaja. They advised us to purify our heart before thinking of mantra. Practices performed in absence of inner purity are akin to recipes cooked in unclean utensils. Guru himself appears before the seeker once his inner purity is achieved. It is similar to how the Guru of Shirdi Saibaba appeared and blessed him. It's how Acharya Sri Bharadwaja obtained darshan of Shirdi Saibaba and spent 5 hours in communion with him.

That is why, to those who approached him, Sri Venkaiah Swami would not only say "There is no mantra or tantra. Go ahead with vichara (discrimination)," but also advised them to read the life of Sri Veerabramendra Swami.

Finally, he chose to listen exclusively to the recitation of the life of Sri Madhavadas before departing his body. In the life of Sri Veerabramendra Swami, the inner recess of Siddhaiah was pure like that of Sri Madhavadas. They were endowed with a mind that never craved for anything materialistic yet possessed a heart that was ever ready to put their lives at stake in order to fulfill the command of Guru.

We see the same in the lives of **Baidu, Aruni** and **Upamanyu** which are mentioned in Gurucharitra. The words of Sri Venkaiah Swami are like elixir to true seekers! That's why that Mahatma was compassionate to Poli reddy, Rosi reddy, Tulasamma, Vakkemma, and Narasamma and uplifted them. Sri Swami never initiated them to any mantra. Neither did they know any scripture other than scrupulously following the command of Sri Swami.

No sooner than the mantra was found, the divine conveyance arrived and took Madhavadas to Vaikuntha. He didn't get to

recite the mantra at all. This incident illustrates that possession of a mantra itself does little in attaining moksha. The fact that events took this turn, independent of him reciting the mantra, is proof that we should not be overly reliant on mantras.

Madhavadas was such a virtuous man that his thoughts focused solely on the constant remembrance of God. He could not escape hardships on account of his **prarabdha** karma. He was not deterred by hardships because he understood that his runanubandhana dictated his journey and experiences before meeting with Sadguru. His total dedication in serving his Guru earned him Guru's grace. Since he could not do anything unless the runanubandhanas were paid, the Guru sent Madhavadas to gipsy woman in order to clear them. Devoid of any desires, constantly contemplating on God, he worked in her caravan, tending to donkeys. On the command of Guru, he cooked his own food and was content with whatever God provided him. Once all the runanubandhanas were cleared, he attained moksha without relying on any mantra sadhana.

Post clearing runanubandhas, the next logical question which arises is how not to get entangled in new runanubandhas? Acharya Sri Bharadwaja clarified, "We can figure out if we are entangled. Feeling either attachment or hatred towards anybody is a mark of having created a runanubandha. We should be acting without attachment or hatred even as we continue helping others or discharging our duty. For instance, our loved one is ill and has been hospitalized. We may spend any amount of money but there should not be grief in us. The presence of grief in itself is a mark of our having created a new runanubandha. Adhering to this principle, we will receive Guru's grace and attain moksha without even resorting to mantra and tantra. On the other hand, even after being initiated into mantra, if we don't let go of attachment and hatred, our efforts will go in vain. Even after **Maha Samadhi**, Sri Venkaiah Swami teaches us that this whole universe is but the manifestation of Guru, that He

is in-dweller of every living being, whether one helps or troubles others, it all reaches Him, one should learn to live with no attachment or feeling of hatred towards others

Jai Sadguru Raya

Glossary

Abhyangana: In Sanskrit, Abhyangana means a bath and massage of the body with the paste of various herbs.

Akrura: (Sanskrit: अक्रूर, Akrūra) was a chief of the Yadavas, an ancient people of India, and a descendant of the Vrishni kula (clan).

Apsaras: Apsaras are beautiful, supernatural women. They are youthful and elegant, and proficient in the art of dancing. They are the wives of the Gandharvas, the court servants of Indra.

Arishadvargas: Arishadvarga are the six passions of mind or desire: kama (lust), krodha (anger), lobh (greed), moha (delusion), mada or ahankar (pride) and matsarya (jealousy); the negative characteristics which prevent man from attaining moksha or salvation..

Arjuna: (Devanagari: अर्जुन), He is one of the Pandavas, the heroes of the Hindu epic Mahābhārata.

Arti: (Hindi आरती), also spelled arathi, aarthi (from the Sanskrit term Aaraatrik) is a Hindu religious ritual of worship, a form of puja, in which light from wicks soaked in ghee (purified butter) or camphor is offered to one or more deities.

Aruni: During the age of Dwapara, there was a sage by the name of Dhoumya. Aruni was one of his three disciples.

Ashta madamulu: Eight forms of pride:1) Pride of Knowledge 2) Pride of Worship 3) Pride of Family 4) Pride of Race 5) Pride of Power 6)Pride of Excellent Attainment 7) Pride of Austerity 8) Pride of Body.

Aswathama: A hero of the Indian epic Mahābhārata, Ashwatthama (Sanskrit: अश्वत्थामा, Aśvatthāmā) was the son of guru Dronacharya.

Atmajnana: It means true knowledge, the knowledge that one's self (atman) is identical with Ultimate Reality Brahman.

Baidu: During the age of Dwapara, there was a sage named Dhoumya. Baidu was one of his three disciples.

Balarama: (बलराम, Balarāma), is the elder brother of the divine being, Krishna.

Bhagavad Gita: The Bhagavad Gītā (Sanskrit: भगवद्गीता, Song of God), also more simply known as Gita, is a 700-verse Hindu scripture that is part of the ancient Sanskrit epic, the Mahabharata, but is frequently treated as a freestanding text, and in particular, as an Upanishad in its own right, one of the several books that comprise the more general Vedic tradition.

Bhajans: A Bhajan is any type of Indian devotional song. It has no fixed form: it may be as simple as a mantra or kirtan or as sophisticated as the dhrupad or kriti with music based on classical ragas and talas.

Bharadwaja: Acharya Sri Ekkirala Bharadwaja (1938–1989) (Affectionately addressed by his followers as 'Mastergaru'. He is considered as one of the greatest spiritual explorers. He is the pioneer in introducing Shirdi Sai Baba on a major scale in Andhra Pradesh. He studied the lives of many saints of all the religions in depth, and personally met several saints who are alive at his time.

Bhima: In the Mahābhārata, Bhima (Sanskrit: भीम) is one of the central characters of Mahabharata and the second of the Pandava brothers. Bhima was distinguished from his brothers by his great stature and strength.

Bhishma: Bhishma was the eighth son of Kuru King Shantanu who was blessed with a long life. He had sworn to serve the ruling Kuru king. He was one of the most prominent characters of the great Indian epic, the Mahabharata. He was the grand uncle of both the Pandavas and the Kauravas.

Brahma: (Sanskrit: ब्रह्मा; Brahmā) is the god (deva) of creation and one of the Trimurti, the others being Vishnu and Shiva.

Brahman: Brahman (ब्रह्मन्, brāhman) is the one supreme, universal Spirit that is the origin and support of the phenomenal universe.

Brahmins: (also Brahman; Sanskrit: ब्राह्मण) is a name used to designate a member of one of the four varnas in the traditional Hindu society. Its actual meaning is "the one who is striving to attain the knowledge of the Brahman".

Caste: In ancient India, a social system practiced in society which categorized people based on the type of duties they perform.

Darshan: Darśana or Darshan (Sanskrit: दर्शन) is a Sanskrit term meaning "sight" (in the sense of an instance of seeing or beholding), vision, apparition, or glimpse. It is most commonly used for "visions of the divine", e.g. of a deity, or a very holy person.

Dharma: Duties, Responsibilities.

Dombara: The Domba or Dom are a social group, or groups, scattered across India.

Draupadi: In the epic Mahābhārata, Draupadi, is the "emerged" daughter (She was not born or delivered from a woman's womb.(ayonija). She emerged from the ritual of yajna kunda) of King Drupada of Panchāla and the wife of the five Pandavas

Drona: In the epic Mahābhārata, Drona (Sanskrit: द्रोण) was the royal guru to Kauravas and Pandavas

Eetela sani: Lead female performer in an itinerant caravan in India. Loosely referred to as gipsy woman in this book

Gotra: In the Indian society, the term Gotra broadly refers to people who are descendants in an unbroken male line from a common male ancestor

Guropadesam: Instruction given by guru to his disciple, usually similar to a mantra

Guru Charitra: Shri GuruCharitra is a holy book for Datta Sampradaya devotees. The book includes the life story of Shri Narasimha Saraswati, his teachings and some related stories.

Guru dakshina: Gurudakshina refers to the tradition of conveying the gratitude to one's teacher or guru after a period of study or upon the completion of formal education. This tradition is one of acknowledgment, respect, and gratitude. The expression of

gratitude need not necessarily be in monetary form. It may include performing a special task assigned by the teacher for the student to accomplish.

Hanuman: (Sanskrit: हनुमान्, Hanumān), is a deity, who is an ardent devotee of Rama, a central character in the Indian epic Ramayana and one of the dearest devotees of lord Rama.

Japa: (Sanskrit: जप) is a spiritual discipline involving the meditative repetition of a mantra or name of a divine power.

Jnaneshwar: He was a 13th century saint (Sant - a title by which he is often referred), poet, philosopher and yogi of the Nath tradition whose works Bhavartha deepika teeka (a commentary on Bhagavad Gita, popularly known as "Dnyaneshwari"), and Amrutanubhav are considered to be milestones in Marathi literature.

Karma: It is the concept of action or deed, that which causes the entire cycle of cause and effect.

Karna: (Sanskrit: कर्ण) is one of the central characters in the epic Mahābhārata, from ancient India

Krishna: (Hindi/Sanskrit: कृष्ण) He is one of the incarnation of Lord Vishnu in human form.

Krupa: also known as Kripacharya or Krupacharya is an important character in the Mahābhārata, one of the seven Chiranjivin (the "immortals" who are to remain alive throughout the present age, the Kali Yuga)

Kshatriyas: (Sanskrit: क्षत्रिय) or Kashtriya, meaning warrior. Traditionally Kshatriya/Chattaris constitute the military and ruling elite of the Vedic social system outlined by the Vedas and the Laws of Manu.

Magnolia champaca: is a large evergreen tree, native to the Indomalaya ecozone (consisting of South Asia, Southeast Asia and some parts of China). It is best known for its strongly fragrant yellow or white flowers.

Maha Samadhi: A realized yogi who has attained the state of enlightenment, will, at an appropriate time, consciously exit

from his body

Mahatma: is Sanskrit for "Great Soul". It is similar in usage to the modern Christian term saint

Mahima: glory or greatness

Mantra: a sound, syllable, word, or group of words that is considered capable of "creating transformation" (spiritual transformation).

Mantropadesa: Instruction given by guru to his disciple, usually similar to a mantra.

Manu Smriti: (Sanskrit: मनुस्मृति), is the most important and earliest metrical work of the Dharmaśāstra textual tradition of ancient India.

Mastaru: term of respect used by followers of Acharya Ekkirala Bharadwaja to affectionately address Him.

Maya: (Sanskrit माय māyaa), It is usually quoted as "illusion", centered on the fact that we do not experience the environment itself but rather experiencing a projection of an environment, created by us

Mohana: a type of practice aimed at attracting the targeted person using obscure methods involving black magic.

Moksha: liberation from the cycle of birth and death

Nakula: also spelt "Nakul" (Sanskrit: नकुल, nakūla, 'twin) was one of the five Pandava brothers in the epic Mahābhārata

Nama smarana: (From Sanskrit: Nama = a (divine) name; smaran = remembrance); means remembering the name of God, either aloud or silently

Narada: (Sanskrit: नारद, nārada means Naara = Wisdom + Da = Giver) or Narada Muni is a divine sage, who plays a prominent role in a number of the Puranic texts, especially in the Bhagavata Purana, and in the Ramayana.

Padateertha: water collected after washing the feet of a holy man.

Parabrahma: the Highest Brahman;

Paramatma: the Absolute Atman or Supreme Soul.

Paratpara: Higher than the highest

Parikshit: Sanskrit: परिक्षित्) was a Kuru king, who succeeded Yudhisthira to the throne of Hastinapura.

Poli Reddy: one of the disciples of Sri Venkaiah Swami

Prahlada: is a character from the Puranic texts, wherein he is famed for his exclusive devotion (bhakti) to Vishnu, despite attempts by his father, Hiranyakashipu to deter him.

Prarabdha: is that portion of the past karma which is responsible for the present body. That portion of the sanchita karma which influences human life in the present incarnation is called prarabdha.

Prasadam: is food that has first been offered to God. Partaking prasadam with devotion is a fundamental practice of bhakti yoga.

Puja: Pūjā (Devanagari: पूजा) (Sanskrit: reverence, honour, adoration, or worship) is a ritual performed as an offering to various deities, distinguished persons, or special guests.

Pundarika Varada: an alternative variant of God's name

Punya: Merits which accumulate as a result of good deeds, acts or thoughts and are carried over later in life or to a person's next life. Such merit contributes to a person's growth towards liberation

Puranas: (Sanskrit: पुराण Ancient scriptures.

Purnananda Swami: Disciple of Sri Rakhadi Baba.

Purushottama: (Sanskrit: पुरुषोत्तम) (Purush + Uttam = Purushottam) means "Supreme Purusha", "Supreme Being". Purushottama is also one of the names of the Vishnu.

Rajasuya Yaga: A grand sacrifice performed by the emperors.

Rakhadi Baba: An avadhuta disciple of Bhagavan Nityananda. Was called Rakhadi Baba because he was always smeared in ashes from head to toe

Rama: is one of the incarnations of Lord Vishnu in human form.

Ramakrishna Paramahansa: He is a great spiritual Master and the Guru of Swami Vivekananda

Rangoli: is a traditional decorative folk art of India. These are decorative designs made on floors of living rooms and courtyards during festivals and are meant as sacred welcoming areas for the deities

Rishi: Rishi is a "seer" to whom the Vedas were "originally revealed" through states of higher consciousness.

Rosi Reddy: one of the chief disciples of Sri Venkaiah Swami.

Rudrakshas: Rudraksha is a large evergreen broad-leaved tree, the seeds of which are traditionally used for prayer beads.

Runanubandha: Karmic connection.

Sadguru: He is the person who had attained liberation and guides disciples on the path of righteousness, to attain liberation.

Sadhana: Literal meaning "a means of accomplishing something". It is ego-transcending spiritual practice.

Sahadeva: was one of the five Pandava brothers in the epic Mahābhārata.

Samadhi: (Sanskrit: समाधि) It is a higher level of meditation or dhyāna. In the yoga tradition, it is the eighth and final limb identified in the Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali.

Samsara: literally meaning "continuous flow", is the cycle of birth, life, death, rebirth.

Sarveswara: The Lord of all

Shikakai: It is one of the Ayurvedic medicinal plants. The fruit is known in India as shikakai.

Shodashopachara: is a way of performing a daily puja to deities. This involves 16 steps.

Siddhaiah: was the chief disciple of Sri potuluri veera brahmendra swamy.

Siddhis: is a Sanskrit noun that can be translated as "perfection", "accomplishment", "attainment", or "success". Any unusual skill or faculty or capability is also sometimes referred to as Siddhi.

Sloka: is a category of verse line in classical Sanskrit poetry.

Srihari: an alternative variant of Lord Vishnu's name

Srimannarayana: an alternative variant of Lord Vishnu

Sthambhana: Immobilizing or paralyzing by means of black

magical powers.

Sudras: is a class of people who serves society with their physical labor.

Suka: was the son of the sage Vyasa.

Tantra: (Sanskrit: तन्त्र), It is one of the branches of spiritual study.

Teerthas: holy source of water in which devotees bath to purify.

Thiru: holy or sacred.

Trigunas: The three divisions of the inherent qualities of differentiated matter - i.e., of pure quiescence (satva), of activity and desire (rajas), of stagnation and decay (tamas).

Tulasamma: one of the disciples of Sri Venkaiah Swami.

Upamanyu: During the age of Dwapara, there was a sage by name Dhomya. Upamanyu was one of his three disciples.

Utchatana: A type of practice involving black magic.

Vaikuntha: (Sanskrit वैकुण्ठ), is the abode of Lord Vishnu

Vaishnavaites: A worshipper of Lord Vishnu.

Vakkemma: one of the disciples of Sri Venkaiah Swami.

Vasishta: is one of the Saptarishis (Seven Great Sages) in the seventh and the Guru of the Suryavansha or Solar Dynasty.

Vasudeva: an alternative variant of Lord Krishna's name.

Vedas: are scriptures originating in ancient India

Veerabramendra: a mystic, born in 1610 in Kadapa district of Andhra Pradesh state in India

Vidura: was an important figure in the Mahabharata

Vikarna: son of Karna.

Viraja: The Viraja River is in Brahmhaloka, the highest heaven, where the Creator Brahma lives.

Virat Purusha: The original Supreme Being from which the Brahma is born.

Vishnu: is the Supreme Lord.

Vivekananda: was the chief disciple Ramakrishna Paramahansa.

Vsyas: is a class of people who serves the society with their trading (for example, merchants and farmers).

Yama: is the lord of death.



The translator, Peddineni Jyothirmai

మా యితర ప్రచురణలు:

1 అవధూత చీల - (భగవాన్ శ్రీ వెంకయ్యస్వామి వారి జీవిత చరిత్ర)	40 రూ॥
2 అవధూత చీల (ఇంగ్లీషు)	30 రూ॥
3 అవధూత చీల (తమిళం)	50 రూ॥
4 అవధూత బోధామృతం - శ్రీ స్వామివారి బోధలు	15 రూ॥
5 శ్రీ స్వామి చిన్నది - శ్రీ స్వామి వారితో వారి సేవకుల అనుభవాలు	15 రూ॥
6 భగవాన్ శ్రీ వెంకయ్యస్వామి (ఇంగ్లీషు, చిన్నది)	5 రూ॥
7 శ్రీ వెంకయ్యస్వామి (తమిళం, చిన్నది)	5 రూ॥
8 గురుస్తుతి	7 రూ॥
9 చూచి నేర్చుకో	8 రూ॥
10 శ్రీ మాస్తిరంగుల బోధామృతం (నాకు తెలిసిన మాస్తిరం(1,2భాగములు)-శ్రీ మాస్తిరం మంచిమాట)40	రూ॥
11 శ్రీ ధనివాలాదాదా చరిత్ర	15 రూ॥
12 శ్రీ శివనేశన్ స్వామిజీ దివ్యచరితము	12 రూ॥
13 శ్రీ బూర్ని రంగస్వామిగారి దివ్యచరితము	8 రూ॥
14 శ్రీ మాధవదాసుగారి దివ్యచరిత్ర	4 రూ॥
15 శ్రీ పూండీ స్వామి వారి దివ్యచరిత్ర	15 రూ॥
16 శ్రీ యర్ర దర్గాస్వామి వారి దివ్యచరిత్ర	5 రూ॥
17 శ్రీ నరోహి గారి జీవిత చరిత్ర	2 రూ॥
18 వార్తాలావము	150 రూ॥
19 దైవం మానుష రూపేణ (దర్గాస్వామి చరిత్ర)	30 రూ॥
20 శ్రీ నాంపల్లిబాబా గారి దివ్యచీలలు	7 రూ॥

1 రూపాయి పుస్తకములు

1. శ్రీ వెంకయ్యస్వామి పూజ	15. వాళ్ళు వుండేదాన్ని బట్టి కడయ్య మనముండేది!
2. శ్రీ స్వామివారి భజన పాటలు	16. స్వామి అనుగ్రహము
3. నమ్మలేని వచ్చి పత్యాలలు	17. మాస్తిరంగుల సత్యంగము
4. నమ్మినవారికి సొమ్ము - నమ్మకుంటే రుమ్ము	18. అమృత బాళ్ళులు
5. స్మృతిమాత్ర ప్రసన్నాయ నమ	19. వ్యక్త్యుపై ఘన విజయము
6. స్మృతి రహిత ప్రసన్నాయ నమ	20. శ్రీ భరద్వాజగారికో భక్తుల అనుభవాలు
7. నరక సమర్పణ	21. శుద్ధ చైతన్యమే తొలైన పూజ్య శ్రీ భరద్వాజ మాస్తిరంగు గారు
8. వెన్నెలపూలు - శ్రీ వెంకయ్యస్వామి దివ్యత్వం	22. శ్రీ మాస్తిరంగుల మానవ సాయి మార్గం
9. దివ్యచీలలు	23. శ్రీ దర్గాస్వామి వారి చరిత్ర - 2వ భాగము
10. బోధ యజ్ఞాయనమ:	24. శివుని ఆజ్ఞ
11. ధర్మమార్గి	25. శ్రీ మాయి అమ్మ
12. వీలించిన పలికే దైవం	26. శ్రీ కృష్ణయ్య స్వామి దివ్య చరిత్ర
13. శ్రీ స్వామిశ్చంద	
14. మానబోధ	

ఉచిత పుస్తకములు

1. శ్రీ వెంకయ్యస్వామి (హిందీ)	2. శ్రీశ్రీశ్రీ నాంపల్లిబాబా గారి దివ్యచీలలు (చిన్నది)
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ప్రతులకు వ్రాయండి - శ్రీసాయి మాస్తిరంగు సేవా ట్రస్టు,
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