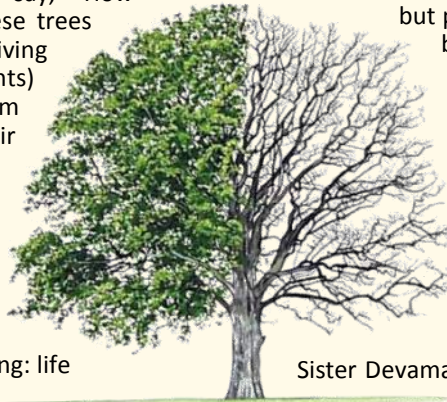


## TREES, CONSCIOUS AND LIVING!

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### EARTH DAY SPECIAL—April 22

In Srimad Bhagavatam (10:22:29-35) we find Krishna speaking to the Gopas about the role of trees. Seeing the trees serve Him as parasols shading Him from the scorching sun, Krishna points to the nobility of the trees in living entirely for the sake of others. They take on rain, wind, heat and snow and protect others. Krishna then goes on to say, "How glorious is the birth of these trees which offer support to all living beings just as Mahans (saints) do! No one leaves them disappointed. With their leaves, flowers, fruits, shade, roots, bark, timber, fragrant sap, ashes, pulp and shoots they offer everything that one desires." Then Krishna says that this is an example for every living being: life becomes meaningful when energy, wealth, intelligence and speech are utilized for the good of others.



served in the samadhi of his Guru. Before plucking flowers for worship he would go around the tree, bow down and speak to the tree, "Do you know how fortunate you are to have been born here close to the samadhi of my Guru, while so many other plants have been rooted elsewhere? When I pluck flowers from you it will pain you but please bear with me because all these flowers that are your children are being offered to my great Guru. It will bestow you with a good 'gati' (state)." He would then pluck the flowers softly.

Sister Devamata, formerly known as Laura Glenn and born in an aristocratic American family in Ohio, joined Swami Vivekananda's newly-founded Vedanta Society in Ohio. Later, she spent almost two years in Chennai, India, under the guidance of Swami Ramakrishnananda, a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna. In her book 'Days in an Indian Monastery' she writes about an incident during her stay in Chennai.

"...Without meaning to, I grew to be the protector of the banyan beside my door-court. When I saw men stripping whole branches of their new leaves and making them wither for lack of sufficient breathing surface, I would drive them away by clapping my hands and calling in Tamil: 'Go! Go! I will call the police.'

"One afternoon I was sleeping when I heard the call of 'Mother, Mother'. I jumped up and ran to the front door and the back gate. There was no one. I looked again. Still no one. Then going out on my verandah I saw a man in the tree with his cloth full of fresh leaves. In the evening when I went to the monastery I told Swami Ramakrishnananda about the incident and asked him if he knew who had called me. "The tree," was his answer. And he continued: "You were sleeping, your sub-conscious mind was uppermost, so you were able to hear the appeal of the tree for protection." It seemed a matter of course to him. He used to say that 'plants were conscious animals without the power of locomotion'. Everything for him

was pulsing with life and consciousness."

Sister Devamata goes on to quote Swami Ramakrishnanada: "It requires great purity and insight to be able to see the workings of Nature and perceive life and intelligence in every part of her. The whole universe is bristling with omniscience. To an ordinary man this may appear to be a dead, soulless universe, but that man who has the inner eye opened sees that the whole universe is palpitating with life."

The world famous American horticulturist Luther Burbank said, "The secret of improved plant breeding, apart from scientific knowledge, is love. While I was conducting experiments to make 'spineless' cacti I often talked to the plants to create a vibration of love. 'You have nothing to fear,' I would tell them. 'You don't need your defensive thorns. I will protect you.' Gradually the useful plant of the desert emerged in a thornless variety."

In the Vishnu Sahasranama we come across a Divine Name – 'Pushpahaasan', that means one whose smile is like that of a flower! But what does this really mean? It means the One who is all-pervading (Vishnu) smiles through these bloomed flowers! Know that wherever a flower has bloomed that is verily the smile of the Lord.

When we inflict pain on the trees and plants it is really done to the Lord! In the Sanatana dharma there are chants that are used while picking *darbha* grass, etc. These chants seek their forgiveness for the action.

Remembering that the trees provide us with the much needed oxygen apart from shade, rain, flowers, fruits and more, let us, at least for our own selfish end, protect trees and plants.

Nirmala Giri, Chennai, India

### Inside this Issue

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The devotee, without paying heed to Bhagavan's words, continued to use the iron instrument. After a week while he was once again plucking the coconuts he was hit slightly on the nose by a coconut. When someone mentioned this to Bhagavan, he sympathized with him but at the same time commented, "He will now realize what pain is. How much suffering would the pick-axe have caused to those trees who cannot complain?"

Sridhara swami was a highly evolved bhakta of Sant Samarta Ramdas, who



## Cherished Memoirs 10

*This series chronicles sweet experiences recounted by the devotees of HH Maharanyam Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji as well as some divine experiences of Sri Swamiji himself. These articles are translations from the series, "Madhuramaana Mahaneeyar" that is published every month in Madhuramurali Tamil monthly magazine.*

### Mahaprabhu and Mahaveera

Once in Madhurapuri Ashram (near Chennai, India) Sri Swamiji was performing *pooja* to Madhuri Sakhi sametha Sri Premika Varadan as usual. After finishing the *pooja*, he continued to sit in front of the Divine Couple in deep meditation. At that time, he had a vision of two divine personalities singing the Mahamantra (*Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare! Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare*) and

dancing blissfully in Bhagavata Bhavanam, the main hall in Madhurapuri ashram. [Later Sri Swamiji said that the divine personalities he had seen were Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Sri Nityananda.]

After a few days, Sri Swamiji had another vision of some divine women from Goloka (the abode of Lord Krishna) who were also singing the Mahamantra and dancing in *bhava* in the same place.

From that day onwards, with the Lord's grace, the Mahamantra has been continuously chanted everyday at Madhurapuri Ashram.

Due to this chanting of the Divine Name, a gigantic [24-ft tall] Hanumanji has come to live at the Ashram. This Hanumanji (Kanyakumari Sri Jaya Hanuman) has been installed with divine, auspicious *yantras*

placed beneath Him. Sri Swamiji while talking about this great Hanumanji says, "He is a boon-giver; keeps married couples in unity, and also blesses them with children; He removes all obstacles, and even one's enemies; He treats not only physical ailments but mental illnesses too; He will bless us with good health and wealth and a long life; He will reunite families."



Let us worship this Hanumanji and attain happiness and auspiciousness in our lives.

*Translated by Viji Ramakrishnan, Dallas TX, from "Madhuramaana Mahaneeyar" column in Madhuramurali Tamil monthly magazine, June 2009 issue*

*[March 16, 2014 was Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's jayanthi and Feb 27 2014 was MahaShivaratri, the prathista day of Sri Jaya Hanuman at Madhurapuri.]*

## Quiz Time: Ramayana - Part 1

*Starting from March 31, 2014, Ramayana will be recited/read for nine days at several temples and holy places around the world, culminating in the auspicious Rama Navami (birthday of Sri Rama) on April 8.*

*In commemoration of this auspicious time of the year, we have a two-part Ramayana quiz for you in our March and April issues.*

1. Name the author of the original Ramayana

- A. Sage Vashishta
- B. Sage Valmiki
- C. Sage Vishwamitra

2. What does the term 'Ayana' mean?

- A. Path
- B. Strength
- C. Knowledge

3. In which Yuga did Ramayana take place?

- A. Dwapara
- B. Treta
- C. Kali

4. Name the river on which Ayodhya - Rama's city - is located

- A. Godavari
- B. Yamuna
- C. Sarayu

5. Name the city whose name

means 'Unconquerable':

- A. Videha
- B. Lanka
- C. Ayodhya

6. What is the birth star of Lord Rama?

- A. Rohini
- B. Punarvasu
- C. Aayilya

7. For how many years was Lord Rama ordered to go to and live in the forest?

- A. Thirteen
- B. Fourteen
- C. Fifteen

8. Name the brother of Lord Rama who accompanied him to the forest.

- A. Bharatha
- B. Shatrugna
- C. Lakshmana

9. Who was the twin brother of Lakshmana?

- A. Shatrugna
- B. Bharatha
- C. Rama

10. Name the Lord who incarnated as Lakshmana

- A. Adi Sesha
- B. Brahma
- C. Siva

11. What does the term 'Sita' refer to?

- A. Plough
- B. Beautiful
- C. Sunshine

12. Who was King Janaka's wife?

- A. Sachi Devi
- B. Bhuvaneswari
- C. Sunayana

13. Name the son of Vayu [Wind God] and also an ardent devotee of Lord Rama

- A. Hanuman
- B. Sugreeva
- C. Vali

14. Name the place where Lord Rama met Hanuman

- A. Rishyamukha
- B. Kasi
- C. Anga

**Compiled by:**

**Ramya Srinivasan, San Jose, CA**

**Answers:**

1-B, 2-A, 3-B, 4-C, 5-C, 6-B, 7-B, 8-C, 9-A, 10-A, 11-A, 12-C, 13-A, 14-A





## Madhura Geetam - Bharata Pradakshina 10

Pushkar,  
Mathura

In this series, we will go on a pradakshina of Bharata desha as we present, each month, a kirtan composed by His Holiness Maharanyam Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji on a particular kshetra, starting from south India and then going north.

### Pushkar

Two hundred kilometers north of Nathdwara is the town of Pushkar. Pushkar, like Nathdwara, is situated in the state of Rajasthan. The town developed around a lake by the same name. Pushkar Lake or Pushkar Thirth is considered one of the holiest places in India and a dip in its sacred waters, especially during Karthik Purnima is believed to yield salvation. The lake itself is said to be Lord Narayana Himself. It is in this location that the famous episode of Gajendra Moksham is said to have taken place.

Padma Purana expounds in detail about the lake's sanctity. It is also mentioned in the two major epics of India - Ramayana and Mahabharata. Even Srimalad Bhagavatam mentions the greatness of the lake. In Canto 12, Chapter 12, Sloka 61 of Srimalad Bhagavatam, it says,

**"pushkare mathurAyAm cha**

**dvAravatyAm yatAtmavAn**

**uposya samhitAm etAm patitvA muchyate bhayAt"**

*One who reads this scripture by fasting in*

*and Dwaraka will be relieved of all his fears.*

Pushkar is closely associated with Lord Brahma. The lake is believed to be the manifestation of the "lotus" on which Lord Brahma is seated. Our scriptures (Puranas) also mention that Lord Brahma chose Pushkar as the site for his Maha Yagna. It is also one of the few places in the world to have a temple for him. Also, another notable place of worship at Pushkar is the ancient Varaha temple.

Sri Swamiji has written a beautiful song on Lord Narayana at Pushkar Thirtha. The lyrics and the meaning of the song can be found below:

### Gajendra Varado Vijayate

**Pallavi**

*gajendra varado vijayate*

*garuda gamano vijayate*

**Charanam**

*pathra pushpa pala thoyAdi thoshithah*

*chatra chAmara veda glthadi pUjithah*

*prasiddha pushkara tirtha nivAsah*

*prapanna rakshana dhrida vratah*

*prakatita vaibhava trijagan mUlah*

*bhritya muralldhara sadA sevita*



### Meaning

**Pallavi**

Victory to the one who blessed Gajendra  
Victory to the one who rides on Garuda

**Charanam**

You are One who is gratified with leaf, flowers, water

One who is worshipped with the umbrella, fly-whisk, Veda and songs

You are One who resides in the sacred town of Pushkara

One who has taken a staunch vow to protect those who have surrendered unto Him

One whose power is manifested as the source of the three worlds

One who is always be served by the devoted Muralidhara.

**Sowmya Balasubramanian, Fremont, CA**

## Walk the Talk

There once was a boy who loved eating sweets. He always asked for sweets from his father. His father was a poor man. He could not always afford to buy sweets. But the little boy did not understand this, and demanded sweets all the time.

The boy's father thought hard about how to stop the child from asking for so many sweets. There was a very holy man living nearby at that time. The boy's father had an idea. He decided to take the boy to the great man who he thought would be able to persuade the child to stop asking for sweets all the time.

The boy and his father went along to the great man. The father said to him, "O great

saint, could you ask my son to stop asking for sweets which I cannot afford?" The great



man was in difficulty, because he liked sweets himself. How could he ask the boy to give up asking for sweets? The holy man told the father to bring his son back

after one month.

During that month, the holy man gave up eating sweets, and when the boy and his father returned after a month, the holy man said to the boy, "My dear child, will you stop asking for sweets which your father cannot afford to give you?"

From then on, the boy stopped asking for sweets.

The boy's father

asked the saint,

"Why did you not ask my son to give up asking for sweets when we came to you a month ago?"

The saint replied, "How could I ask a boy to give up sweets when I loved sweets myself? In the last month I gave up eating sweets."

A person's action is much more powerful than just his words. When we ask someone to do something, we must do it ourselves also. We should not ask others to do what we do not do ourselves.

**Greatness and success lie in doing and being what we talk. Actions and words should not be in conflict. All the great masters from all religions were in this state only.**

Source: [www.namadwaar.org](http://www.namadwaar.org)

**Story Time**

## News & Events

### "RADHE RADHE"! - BHARATANATYAM DANCE BALLET - HOUSTON



US Namadwaar celebrated its 4th year anniversary on March 15 2014 with a dance ballet based on Sri Swamiji's kirtans.

### GOPAKUTEERAM ACTIVITIES



Shiva Linga—Richmond



Magic tree - Raleigh

### Moon phases - Minneapolis



### ORLANDO - 12 HR MAHAMANTRA



#### Upcoming Events!

- **Chicago - Traditional Treasures**—'An exclusive spring workshop for youth & adults' - Sat, Apr 5, 10 AM @ Schaumburg Library, IL. For more info contact: [midwest.god@godivinity.org](mailto:midwest.god@godivinity.org), 630.851.8578
- **Raleigh - Sri Rama Navami Celebration** - April 12 @ Shirdi Sai Mandir of NC. For more info: [gopakuteeram.nc@gmail.com](mailto:gopakuteeram.nc@gmail.com)
- **Bay Area - Gopa Kuteeram Spring Recital** - April 27, 3 PM @ Evergreen Library, San Jose, CA. For more info, call 408-431-5688

Apart from weekly satsangs in numerous cities across the USA, a Telecon satsang is held every Fri evening and Tele-Bhagavatam discourse is telecast every Tue evening, both at 8:30 PM CST. Anyone is welcome to attend. Ph: 605-475-4000, Passcode: 131581

Gopa Kuteeram (kids' programs) & Srimad Bhagavatam study circles are conducted in various cities.

Email [newsletter@godivinity.org](mailto:newsletter@godivinity.org)

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3363 Bel Mira Way

San Jose, CA 95135

Phone: 1-(830)-4GOD-USA

Feedback email: [newsletter@godivinity.org](mailto:newsletter@godivinity.org)

Visit our websites:

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#### Newsletter team:

**Content**—Aravind TRA, Latha Kumanan, Lekshmi Nair, Narayanan Sathiamoorthy, Nisha Giri, Ramya Srinivasan, Sriram Ramanujam, Sowmya Balasubramanian, Viji Ramakrishnan, Yamini Zivan Prakash.

**Illustrations**—Sripriya Sarathy.