

## Bhaja Govindam, Moodha Mathe!

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We human beings are, in general, a rather confused lot. We always tend to mix up things... do one thing where something else should be done and vice versa. And in the realm of spirituality, this is even more true.

The great saint, Purandara Dasa, who actually saw and communed with God, sings to us with great emotion, "Nara janma bandaaga naalige iruvaaga Krishna ena baaradey! Krishna endare sakala kashtavu parihaara, Krishna ena baaradey!"

"You have got a human birth [which is so rare!] You have a tongue and can speak! Will you not then say 'Krishna'? If you say 'Krishna', all your troubles will go away! Will you not say 'Krishna'?"

And what do we do when we listen to this song? We say of the singer, "What a soulful rendition! What emotion when she sings! What a raga!" We even say, "O what a beautiful song! How wonderfully Purandara Dasa has composed it. What a deep meaning!" But do we immediately start chanting Krishna's name? No.

Sri Adi Shankara, the great Acharya, an *avatara purusha* (incarnation of God Himself) who went all around India re-establishing the greatness of Sanatana Dharma, and who composed so many songs, *slokas* and treatises, sings, "Bhaja Govindam, bhaja Govindam, Govindam bhaja moodha mathe!"

Here the Acharya does not stop with entreating us like Sri Purandara Dasa did in the previous song. Sri Adi Shankara literally gives us a blow here! He says, "Sing Govinda's name, sing Govinda's name, sing Govinda's name, you fool!"

Yet, this affront too passes us by, thick-skinned and dull-headed as we are. We say, "Oh what a lovely song. How wonderfully MS has sung it! What 'bhava'!" We listen to the song, admire its musical and lyrical beauty, teach it to our children, even sing the phrase "moodha mathe" (meaning 'one with a dull intellect', in other words, a fool!) with all earnestness and seriousness, completely unaware that that is exactly what we are exhibiting by focusing only on the song's

musical aspect while ignoring its original intent.

And after so much glorification of this song, do we sing Govinda's name? No.

Guru Nanak ji's "Sumiran kar le" bhajan is very well known, made popular by famous ghazal singers. In this song, under the pretext of speaking to his own mind, Nanakji actually tells our minds, "Sumiran kar le mere mana teri beeti umar Hari naam bina! Koop neer bina; dhenu ksheer bina; dharti megh bina; jaise taruvar phal bin heena; taise praani Hari naam bina!"

"Chant the Name of Hari, O Mind; See, your life wastes away without Hari's Name! A well without water; a cow without milk; the earth without rain and clouds; the tree without fruit – such is a man who does not chant the Name of Hari!"

Again, when we listen to this song, what do we do? We praise the singer; we praise the song's poetic beauty. We may even admire the song's profound meaning or speak of the greatness of the mahatma who composed it.

But do we immediately start to chant the name of Hari? No.

It is not just with music and kirtans that we choose to overlook the essence. We do the same even with *pasurams*, *slokas* and *stotras* that we recite frequently.

Kulasekhara Azhwar, in his celebrated Mukunda Mala stotram says,

"tattvam bruvanAni param parastan, madhu ksharantiva mudAvahAni pravartaya pranjalir asmi jihve, nAmAni nArAyana-gocharAni"

"My dear tongue, I stand before you with joined palms and beg you to chant the names of Lord Narayana. These names describing the Supreme Absolute Truth bring great pleasure, as if exuding honey." and again he says:

"shatru chedaika mantram sakalam upanishad vAkya sampUjya mantram samsArOchcheda mantram samuchita tamasah sangha niryANA mantram sarvaishvaryaika mantram vyasana bhuja-ga sandashta santrAna mantram

jihve sri Krishna mantram japa japa satatam janma sAphalya mantram"

"O tongue, please constantly chant the mantra composed of Sri Krishna's names. This is the only mantra for destroying all enemies, the mantra worshiped by every word of the Upanishads, the mantra that uproots samsara, the mantra that drives away all the darkness of ignorance, the mantra for attaining infinite opulence, the mantra for curing those bitten by the poisonous snake of worldly distress, and the mantra for making one's birth in this world successful."

We chant such verses often without knowing what the Mahatma who composed it is saying. Or even if we do take the trouble to find out the meaning, do we immediately start to constantly chant Krishna's name? No.

Lord Shiva Himself says to Parvati Devi, "sri rAma rAma rAmeti rame rAme manO-rame, sahasranAma tattulyam rAma nAma varAnane."

"I constantly chant the name of Rama and enjoy its bliss. Chanting this holy name – Rama – once, is equal to chanting the Vishnu Sahasranama (1000 names of Lord Vishnu)."

We all know this verse and even chant it thrice for emphasis while chanting the Vishnu Sahasranama. But, realizing the verse's implication, do we begin to then chant the Rama Nama constantly? No.

A truly unfortunate lot are we, whose minds and tongues – despite all the declarations, assertions, entreaties, promises, rebukes, and even threats, of hundreds of Mahatmas who exhort us to constantly chant the Divine Name – refuse to take refuge in the simple, yet All-Powerful Holy Name!

Nisha Giri, Houston, TX

### Inside this Issue

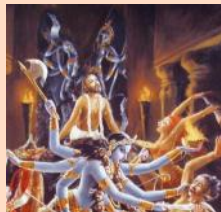
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## Learnings from Srimad Bhagavatam

Srimad Bhagavatam instantly touches one's heart, as it unfolds the lives of *bhagavatas*, with their finest qualities like forgiveness, acceptance, gratitude, humility, steadfastness, love and so on. While the story of the *jnani*, Jadabharata, in the fifth Canto revels in its own glory; his previous births form an essential prelude to the intense dispassion and equanimity that he possessed in that birth.

King Bharata, the son of Lord Rishabhadeva, was born with a taste for *bhakti*, which comes only to a select few by Bhagavan's grace. After fulfilling the responsibilities of a dutiful monarch, he bequeathed his kingdom to his son and left for the forest. Though his yearning to attain Bhagavan was without a second, due to a sad twist of fate, his serene mind – which would not be lured even by the Goddess of fortune and all his kingly comforts – became attached to a baby deer; and alas, he died thinking, not about God, but the deer. In his next birth as a deer himself, having the memory of his regrettable previous birth he dissociated from his herd and exhausted his karma to



## Equanimity—A Vital Quality

be finally born anew as Jadabharata, the son of a pious brahmin.

In this birth, determined not to lose the missed opportunity one more time, Jadabharata constantly thought of Bhagavan and concealed his glorious inner self in the garb of a mute dunce. All material pursuits tasted insipid to him. He distanced himself from the dizzying whirlpool of duality: happiness – sadness,

praise – insult, hunger – satiety, heat – cold, rain – shine. Having attained *jnana*, he viewed everything and everyone with equanimity. Wandering under the cover of dirt, he was spited by others, but how did it matter to one who truly saw all as God?

If Jadabharata was given a feast, he ate it; if he had no food, he sat just as happily in thoughts of Bhagavan. Once he was taken away by a tribe to be sacrificed to their goddess. He sat innocent and unmoved when his body was first decorated beautifully by them and as they placed him on a throne and paid obeisance to him as a sacred “offering”; but later he sat equally unmoved when the same people came charging at him with a sword, ready to chop off his head as an offering. The fact that – although Jadabharata sat unmoved

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## Sri Bhagavan Nama Bodhendra Saraswati Swami

### Story Time

Purushothaman was born in Kanchipuram to pious parents and even as a child was given in service to the then pontiff of Kanchi Kamakoti Mutt.

He had great love towards his Guru and served him with all faith and sincerity. Later his Guru gave him the *sanyasa* name of Sri Bhagavan Nama Bodhendra Saraswati Swami.

Sri Bodhendra travelled to various villages spreading the greatness of Rama nama (*Taraka mantra*). Once He went to a village called Perambur near Raja Mannargudi. There he was invited by a couple to their house for *bhiksha* (partaking food). He initiated them with ‘Rama’ nama and then agreed to visit their house. All arrangements were made in the house for the arrival of Swamiji. The host had a 5 year old son who was deaf and dumb since birth.



Since all the householders were busy carefully preparing for Swamiji's arrival, the child was not fed anything since the morning. He was starving.

Sri Swamiji was greeted with respect by the family members of the house, and was served lunch on a banana leaf. He then saw the little boy standing and gazing at the food. The compassionate Swamiji asked the little one to eat with him. When the child did not respond to his call, the parents told him that the boy was deaf and dumb.

Swamiji became very sad and tears rolled down his eyes. He was dejected that the boy could neither hear nor chant ‘Rama’, the Name that would shower him with happiness and lead him to God.

The parents tried to console Swamiji, but he could not eat anymore and left the house. As the family was seeing the saint off, the hungry child, who was alone at the house,

## Cherished Memoirs 5

*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.*

### Thus Spake the Lord

In Ambur, chanting of the Mahamantra Kirtan “Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Hare Hare Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Hare Hare” takes place in the Sri Srinivasa Perumal temple on every new moon, full moon and Vaikunta Ekadasi. Hundreds of devotees participate in this kirtan and receive the Lord's grace. Mr. V. Kumaresan and Mr. S. Mohan Kumar from our Ambur satsang are driving this Nama Sankirtan initiative splendidly.

Recently our Swamiji told Mr. M.K. Ramanujam, a member of our satsang, “Go to the place where Nama Sankirtan is taking place and talk about the greatness of Bhagavan Nama for some time.” Later, Sri Swamiji himself travelled from Vellore to Ambur, and participated in the Nama Sankirtan and addressed the devotees who attended the kirtan. Hearing Sri Swamiji's speech, Mr. M.K Ramanujam, who was in Ambur at that time, was awestruck! Because what Sri Swamiji said was exactly what he himself had prepared to talk that day!

*Translated from Madhuramurali, Tamil monthly magazine, Feb 2009 issue*

ran and ate the *uchchishta* (remnants from Sri Swamiji's leaf). When the family members came back inside, they were stunned! The dumb boy was dancing and singing the Divine names of the Lord – ‘Rama, Krishna, Govinda’.

That is power of the *uchchishta* of a Mahatma. Not only did the boy begin to hear and speak because of it, but he also got *jnana* and *bhakti* through it!

**Yamini Kelappan, Chicago, IL**





## Madhura Geetam - Bharata Pradakshina 5

And,  
true

*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.*

### Sri Guruvayoorappan

In the state of Kerala is the town of Guruvayoor. Guruvayoor is an important pilgrim destination for Lord Krishna's devotees. Lord Krishna stands here in the form of a small child with four hands holding the conch, discus, mace and the lotus flower. It is believed that it is in this form that Krishna appeared in front of Vasudeva and Devaki. This deity was worshipped by Uddhava—Lord Krishna's disciple and minister—in Dwapara Yuga. After his time, Brihaspathi (Guru) and Vayu brought the idol to the current location and consecrated it here. Hence, Krishna is known as Guruvayoorappan here and the town is known as Guruvayoor. Devotees also refer to this Lord as "Unni" (baby) or "UnniKrishnan" (baby Krishna) lovingly.

to his name, in numerous circumstances the Lord became a child for many of his devotees. Several stories abound about the lilas of Guruvayoorappan with His devotees such as Poonthanam, Kroorammai and Bhattathiri.

Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji has visited Guruvayoor several times and has composed several songs on Lord Guruvayoorappan. This month's song—"Guruvayoor Ennoru Kshethram undu" has been composed in Malayalam and is set in Madhyamaavati raga. In this song, he refers to the Lord as "Unni" Krishnan and describes the Lord's captivating looks and his pastimes in the temple.

### Guruvayoor Ennoru Kshetram

**Ragam:** Madhyamavathi

**Tala:** Thisra nadai

guruVayUr ennoru kshethramundu  
kshethranthanil oru unniyundu  
unniku Krishnanennu perumundu  
unniyai sriveLiyil divasam kandu



mOhichu poi bhaktha mArgalokke

kottAram thanil vaLara aishwaryam-  
aviDe

kuttiyaanaigaLodokke unniyAdum

thAmarai pUvinum kaiyil konu

kaLLasiriyudan shObikum

appamum veNNaiyum tharAmo

appamum veNNaiyum vegam thandhAl

vEndiya dhokke unni anugrahikum

### Meaning

There is a holy place called Guruvayoor

And, in that holy place lives an infant.

The infant is known by the name Krishna.

On seeing this infant ride the elephant in a procession everyday,

The devotee stands mesmerized!

The palace is filled with riches—and there the infant plays with the baby elephants.

He has the lotus flower in His hand

And a mischievous smile on His face!

If you give Him *appam* (a sweet dish) and butter, the infant will answer all your prayers!

**Sowmya Balasubramanian, Fremont, CA**

## Quiz Time—Sri Bodhendra Saraswati Swami

*Read the story about Sri Bodhendra Swami and take the quiz below:*

1. Sri Bodhendra Saraswati Swamiji was born in this town of South India

- A. Madurai
- B. Trichy
- C. Kanchipuram

2. Sri Bodhendra Swamiji's birth name was: \_

- A. Purushothaman
- B. Ekanath
- C. Rama

3. The boy in a house Swamiji visited was:

- A. Blind
- B. Deaf & Dumb

4. Swamiji was upset because the boy could not:

- A. Hear or chant the "RAMA" nama
- B. Speak with others
- C. Hear what others said

5. After Swamiji left, the little boy was very hungry and ate:

- A. Swamiji's *uchchishta*
- B. Fresh food from kitchen
- C. Food from neighbors

6. The parents who returned to the house were surprised to see the little boy:

- A. Jumping in joy singing Bhagavan nama – "Rama", "Krishna", "Govinda"

C. Lame

B. Playing with his toys

C. Talking loudly with his friend

7. Swamiji always asked everyone to chant \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. Rama nama
- B. Sahasranama
- C. Gayatri mantra

8. Bodhendra Swamiji's *jiva samadhi* is in the banks of river Cauvery in the place called.

- A. Kasi
- B. Govindapuram
- C. Rameshwaram

**Compiled by**

**Yamini Kelappan, Chicago, IL**

**Answers:**

1-C, 2-A, 3-B, 4-A, 5-A, 6-A, 7-A, 8-B

### Contd. from Page 2

and untouched by fear – the goddess herself was angered by her worshippers' act and retaliated against them in a different matter altogether.

The inert Jadabharata's greatness was known to the world only when he was once asked to be King Rahugana's palanquin-bearer, which he quietly did, acquiescing and equanimous as he always was. But when he continuously jumped to

avoid hurting ants on the path which were, for him, also forms of God, he was reprimanded by the king. That is when Jadabharata opened his mouth and all his accumulated pearls of wisdom dropped out, stunning the blessed king who immediately fell at the great jnani's feet. In his advice to the king, Jadabharata said with utmost feeling, "Bhagavan cannot be realized just by doing penance, worship,

renunciation, celibacy, study, austerities, etc., if one does not smear the dust of the lotus feet of a Mahatma all over oneself!"

Bhagavan found a place in Jadabharata's mind because for him everyone was equal and all he saw was Bhagavan. His pure mind had transcended the dual state of joy and sorrow to be in a state of constant bliss, as it was connected to the Divine.

**Lekshmi Nair, Houston, TX**

## News & Events

### 'ANTARYAMI' - A G.O.D. FUNDRAISER EVENT IN BAY AREA, CA



### RADHA KALYANAM AT ATLANTA



### RADHASHTAMI - HOUSTON



### Sri M K Ramanujam



Sri M K Ramanujam ji, a senior disciple of HH Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji, will be touring the US between September and December 2013. He will conduct spiritual discourses, Madhura Utsavs, Youth Leadership programs and more in various cities across the USA. Please see below and [www.godivinity.org](http://www.godivinity.org) for more information about his schedule.

### SRI RAMANUJAM JI'S SCHEDULE

City/State	Date
Boston & New Hampshire	Oct 24-28
Holland, MI	Oct 29
Detroit, MI	Oct 30-Nov 6
Minneapolis MN	Nov 8 – 15
Seattle, WA	Nov 16- 21
Dallas, TX	Nov 22-Dec 3
Atlanta, GA	Dec 4 - 12
Houston, TX	Dec 13 - 27

Please visit [www.godivinity.org](http://www.godivinity.org) for contact information and program flyers.

Weekly satsangs are held regularly in the following regions:

*Atlanta, GA; Bay Area, CA; New England area; Chicago, IL; Cortlandt Manor, NY; Dallas, TX; Houston, TX; Milwaukee, WI; Minneapolis, WI; Orlando, FL; Richmond, VA; San Antonio, TX; Seattle, WA; Saskatchewan, Canada*

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) for more info.

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