

## The Only Safe Haven

For free distribution only. Not for sale. To receive this newsletter by email, send request to [newsletter@godivinity.org](mailto:newsletter@godivinity.org)

An entire plane filled with passengers disappears, never to be found again. *It could be a plane we are on.*

A sudden tornado kills people in a neighborhood. *It could be our neighborhood.*

There's a shooting in an elementary school; teachers and students are killed and injured. *Could be our children!*

A neighbor's child drowns in their pool. A friend's friend dies in a car crash while on vacation. A relative dies of lung cancer. A close friend is diagnosed with breast cancer. *All of these people could be us!*

If we are alive and healthy and reading this, we are extremely lucky... *for now.*

Life is fragile. It's a stark fact that we are all aware of deep inside. Yet we like to think we are invincible; that neither we nor our close family will die – even in old age, let alone prematurely! Amazing indeed is the Lord's *Maya!*

Death stares us in the face every day. But where can we run? Where can we hide? Where can we be safe?

There is only one answer to this question: We can be truly safe only with the Divine Name on our lips, and only at the feet of a true Guru. There is no other haven. This is the plain, simple truth.

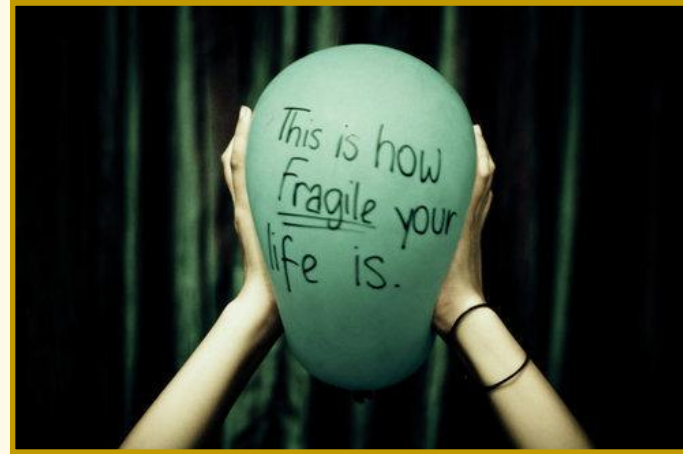
However devout we may be or however strong our faith in God, faith can easily desert us when we are faced with death or danger.

What then can we hold on to? In such a dire situation, we need something more concrete than a strand of delicate faith for support. The Divine Name (the graspable connection to God) and the Guru (God in a concrete form) are that strong lifeline when we are drowning in fear.

When the Divine Name of God or Guru is constantly on our lips, we are constantly protected.

This is the *actual experience* of every single person who has fervently chanted or cried out the Divine Name in the face of danger. (The key point here is that only when the Name is always on our lips will our mind remember to chant it when faced with danger. After all, how can an agitated mind have the intelligence to suddenly do something that it is not used to?)

The greatest benefit of taking refuge in the Name and the Guru is that not only are we protected, but also strengthened. Death is inevitable in this world. But *fear* of



Picture courtesy: World Wide Web

death is optional. Only a Guru can completely eliminate this fear.

When God brought forth this world with death and danger in it, He also provided a simple way out — for those of us who really want it. He gave us His Divine Names. And He Himself comes time and again in the form of *mahatmas* to give us solace and remind us all about the Divine Names.

In this world fraught with danger at every step, we do not have to live in constant fear of death and misery. We have the choice to rise above it—if only we so desire—by holding onto the Divine Name and the Guru's feet!

Nisha Giri, Houston TX

### Inside this Issue

<b>Cherished Memoirs - 13</b>	Pg 2
<b>Crossword - Divine Fathers</b>	Pg 2
<b>Madhura Geetam - 13</b>	Pg 3
<b>Story Time - Rantideva</b>	Pg 3
<b>News and Events</b>	Pg 4

## Cherished Memoirs 13 - Food and Love

*This series chronicles sweet experiences recounted by the devotees of HH Maharanyam Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji. These articles are translations from the series, "Madhuramaana Mahaneeyar" by Dr. A Bhagyanathan, personal secretary to Sri Swamiji, that is published every month in Madhuramurali Tamil monthly magazine.*

One day Sri Swamiji was talking about Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. At that time, he mentioned that Sri Ramakrishna would be very cautious with food offered by others, and would not take any food offered by sinners as that would affect him. Then Sri Swamiji said that we should always offer the food we eat to God. He said that it was enough even if

offered the food mentally; then all the impurities and negative effects of the food will disappear.

At that time, a devotee who was listening to this, asked, "Some mahans eat the food offered by anybody. How do they do that?"

Swamiji answered, "When we offer food to God, we recite mantras and purify the food, and then offer it. But greater than the power of mantras is the power of love! That is why in "prema pooja" (worship based on love), importance is not given to ritualistic mantras.

In the same manner, when someone offers you food with great love, that love itself will completely cleanse the



HH Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji

food of any impurities. "

Then Sri Swamiji added, "However this is hard to understand for those who have a dry heart that does not understand what love is."

*From December 2005 issue of Madhuramurali.*

*Original Tamil article by Smt. Jayanthi Janakiraman.*

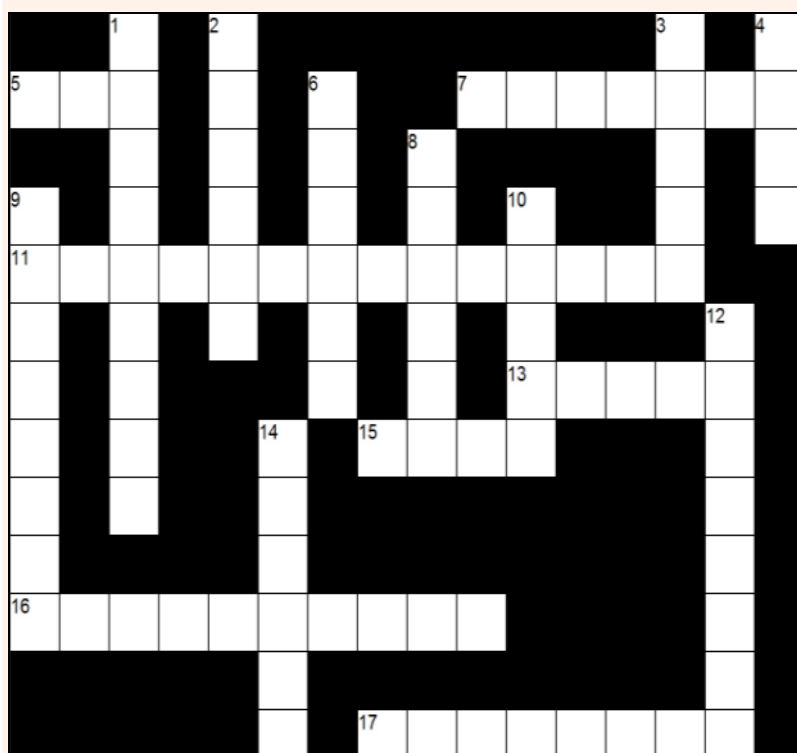
*Translated by Viji Ramkrishnan Dallas TX*

## Crossword - Divine Fathers

*The third Sunday in June is celebrated as Father's Day in the USA and parts of the world. Here's a fun crossword to test your knowledge about 'father figures' from our scripture.*

### ACROSS

- 5 King Dasaratha's father
- 7 Draupadi's father



11 Father of Prahalada

13 Sage Suka's father

15 Father of Lava and Kusha

16 Father of Dhruva

17 Father of Vamana

### DOWN

1 Father of Lakshmana

2 Abhimanyu's father

3 Father of the

five Pandavas

4 Father of Hanuman

6 Father of Sita Devi

8 Sage Narada's father

9 Bheeshma's father

10 Father of Lord Ganesha and Karthikeya

12 Father of Lord Krishna

14 Devaki's father

*Compiled by*

*Ramya Srinivasan, San Jose CA*

**Solution:**





## Madhura Geetam - Bharata Pradakshina 13

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.

### Bhadrachalam

Bhadrachalam, a pilgrim spot for devotees of Lord Rama is situated on the banks of River Godavari. It is believed to have been part of a huge forest



called Dandakaranya. Lord Rama along with Lakshmana and Sita lived in Dandakaranya during his fourteen year exile and is also believed to have visited the current site of the temple during his search for Sita.

The present day deities are self-manifested who were discovered by a devotee called Dammaka. Damakka built a basic structure and arranged for regular worship. The temple was later renovated in 17th century by the ardent devotee Sri Ramadas.

Ramadas or Bhadrachalam Ramadas, as he was popularly known, came to Bhadrachalam as a government officer. He was pained by the state of the temple and decided to renovate it. When he fell short of funds, he used some of the state tax funds to build the temple and was therefore jailed by the king for this offense.

As he served his time, he composed numerous songs on Lord Rama in the cell. Finally, Lord Rama and Lakshmana appeared in front of the king as servants of Ramadas and repaid the misappropriated amount.

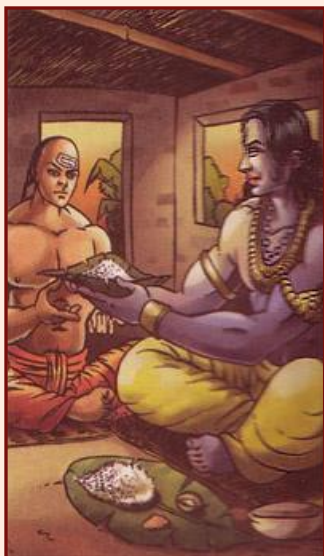
The king, on realizing that it was the Lord himself, sought forgiveness from Ramadas and became a patron, funding activities at the temple.

Sri Swamiji has visited Bhadrachalam several times and has also composed a song describing the greatness of the place. The song and its meaning are presented here:

## Rantideva's Compassion and Selflessness

In addition to emphasizing on bhakti (pure love toward the Lord) and satsang (company of holy) as two strong rungs leading one to Bhagavan, Sri-mad Bhagavatam extensively outlines moral values through the stories of *bhagavatas*.

The story of Rantideva in the ninth canto sends the message of selfless giving and compassion. Rantideva was a king in the lineage of King Bharata. He had surrendered himself to God; and hence he never endeavored to earn a living. Since he subsisted just on what came along, there once arose a situation when he had no food or water for 48 days. On the 49<sup>th</sup> day purely by the Lord's grace, Rantideva got some



about to eat his meal when at first a Brahmana, followed by a Sudra and finally another stranger with dogs come by, asking for food.

All Rantideva saw in each of these people was His beloved Lord. One by one he served them all until there was no food left for himself. Finally, he was about to drink some water when an outcast arrived there, crying for some water.

Overcome by compassion, Rantideva who had neither food nor water for days, happily parted with his last drop.

Even during moments of extreme penury, he was the wealthiest when it came to compassion. There was no expectation in his altruism. Out of immense compassion for

porridge. He was

## Learnings from Srimad Bhagavatam

fellow beings he prayed to the Lord that he did not seek Liberation or the highest Yogic state, but that he would rather take on the sufferings of all embodied souls to relieve them of their misery.

Brahma, Vishnu and Siva who had disguised themselves in different forms to test his fortitude then revealed themselves before him. But Rantideva did not ask of anything from them.

When a devotee sees the Lord in all, *Maya* which exists in the world as three *gunas* loses its identity and merges with its source. His vision fixed on the Lord, Rantideva was clearly free from the clutches of *Maya*. Such was the exalted state of Rantideva that it is said that his association would make one have exclusive devotion to Lord Narayana.

**Lekshmi Nair, Houston TX**

## Bhajare Bhadrachalam

**Ragam: Bimblaas Talam: Adi Pallavi**

*bhajare bhadraChalam - mAnasa*

### Charanam

*gOdavari thlra punyAchalam  
komaLa tAraka mantramayAchalam  
sarva pApa vinAshakAchalam  
sundara rAmabhadra vAsAchalam  
bahu rAmadAsadi vinuthAchalam  
priya muralldhara hridayAchalam*

### Meaning

#### Pallavi

Sing the praise of Bhadrachala - O Mind!

### Charanam

The holy hill on the banks of Godavari  
The hill that is verily the form of the tender Rama Nama  
The hill that destroys all sins  
The hill where the beautiful Rama stayed  
The hill that has been worshipped by many devotees of Rama!  
The beloved hill that resides in the heart of Muralidhara

**Sowmya Balasubramanian, San Jose CA**



**VASANTHOTSAVAM CELEBRATIONS!**

## News & Events

**RICHMOND, VA**



**BAY AREA, CA**



**DALLAS, TX**



**AKHANDA NAMA ORLANDO, FL**



**GOPA KUTEERAM - EVALUATION, QUINCY, MA**



**GOPA KUTEERAM ANNUAL FIELD TRIP—HOUSTON**

**GOPA KUTEERAM CRAFT SESSION—SEATTLE**



### UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Houston - Gopa Kuteeram Summer Camps** June-July. For more info visit [www.godivinity.org](http://www.godivinity.org)
- **Virginia - Madhura Utsav** July 3 - 6. For more info contact, [vagodsatsang@gmail.com](mailto:vagodsatsang@gmail.com)

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)

### Published by:

**Global Organization for Divinity**



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:

[www.namadwaar.org](http://www.namadwaar.org) and [www.godivinity.org](http://www.godivinity.org)

### 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.