

## Faith and Nama - Cure For All Our Miseries

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We find people visiting temples on their birthdays and wedding anniversaries. It turns out to be a recreational activity for them. Even in the vicinity of the temple deity or while circumambulating the temple, we find that some will be preoccupied with worldly chit chat or others will close their eyes to meditate.

Once I went to a hospital to visit someone. Though a hospital is not a temple, we find photos of deities hung on the walls. There I witnessed a wonderful spectacle. People stood in front of these pictures and prayed



intensely with tears welling in their eyes. Should they not be praying in the temple? However, the same people who do not pray in the temple are seen crying in front of these pictures of deities. This shows that people think of God only in times of crisis.

Prayer is an intense, heartfelt submission of our request to God. In times of need, we hesitate to ask for monetary help from our siblings or a friend or a relative. However we demand it, as it is our right, from our parents without any hesitation. The underlying fact in a prayer is that we have the same rights with God. Aren't we all the children of God? We should not feel shy or reluctant to ask God. Just as we have a privilege in seeking God's help, the same way He has the privilege in answering our requests.

Faith is the most important requirement for prayer. The faith that we are His children and He will shower us with all we need when we pray. Questions such as 'I know He is merciful, but will He answer my prayers?' should be shunned away. You should have the steadfast faith that you are His child. Other questions such as 'these bad events are due to my past karma' or that 'my astrological situation predicts bad times for me, will God

overrule these factors and shower His mercy?' should also be discarded. Let's look at an incident from Mahabharata.

In the game of dice, we find Yudhishtira gambling away his money, his army, his brothers, himself and finally his wife Draupadi. When Draupadi is dragged by Dushasana into the royal court,

Duryodhana decides to disrobe her in public. The misfortune of 'public humiliation', which is worse than death, is about to befall Draupadi. What could Draupadi have done to prevent this calamity? Can she bargain for some time to perform *pranayama* or to perform *homa* or to chant some mantras? Is the situation conducive for such a request? Or instead, Draupadi could have thought that all this is destined to happen as per her past karma or astrological signs and there is no point in calling out to God. **If we develop such a thought, then our prayers will never fructify. God's grace is beyond our karmic deeds.** It has the power to overcome anything. Thoughts such as fate, karma, or questions such as 'will this happen or not' will weaken our faith. We should never allow such thoughts to creep into our head. Without such thoughts, Draupadi just yelled out to God and He protected her from the imminent crisis.

Those who require God's grace are eligible for prayers. Whom can you ask if you have wants such as a child, or to get married, or to be relieved of diseases, or need unity in the family, or peace of mind, or your business to flourish? There will be people who can assist in one of your wants but not all of them. If there is one who can

fulfil all your wants, it is God. So if we visit a temple and while away the time in worldly chatter instead of focusing on our prayers, how does this establish a communion with God? How can one establish a communion with God who is omnipresent? The only way is to Call or Yell out to Him.

Once, the king of Tanjore had a weird doubt. He wanted to know the distance between Earth and Vaikunta. All the learned scholars in his court could not answer him properly. Soon the news spread across the kingdom that the no one was able to answer this question. Hearing this, a bangle seller from the nearby Narasimha temple, approached the king. He told him that from Earth, Vaikunta is within 'calling distance'. The proof is that Draupadi called out 'Govinda' and Gajendra called out 'Narayana' and this was heard in Vaikunta.

I often ask a standard question to people from different walks of life. "What will you do in times of crisis?" The common answer I receive is that they will visit an astrologer and perform the required remedial measures. There are others who blame fate for these bad times and get depressed, and finally ending up seeking medical attention. To my surprise, not one of them say that they will pray to God. Prayer is such a beautiful thing and we have forgotten this beautiful concept.

**Where the prayer is intense, there God's presence is felt.**

**Please read the entire translation online here. – Click [here](#) to read the entire article.**

**Excerpts from Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji's Mass Prayer Talk at Madurai on Jan 1, 2016. Translated by Aravind Thathachari, Dallas TX**

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## Cherished Memoirs 32

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

### How Sri Swamiji's Mass Prayers Began

In 2006, Sri Swamiji, while visiting Tuticorin elucidated on various topics at Sri Kathiresan's house. With fervor, Sri Swamiji said, "We conduct discourses for several days in various towns and cities. We sing *ashtapathis* and *abhangs* written in languages unknown to us. The melodious tune and the rhythm of the songs mesmerizes and attracts all; but nobody actually comprehends the underlying meaning of the songs.



HH Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji

Hence, a desire to conduct a mass prayer, that can easily relieve people of their suffering, kept arising in my heart. Mahatma Gandhi too has conducted mass prayers. We hear people say: 'We attended discourses, we went to bhajans, we conducted *archana*, donated money to conduct *homams*, performed remedies suggested in *shastras*.' Yet, why doesn't anybody say, 'We prayed to the ever compassionate Lord?'

"A prayer must be simple. It must not be a business transaction. Prayer is potent. It

can easily fulfill one's wishes. People are suffering only because of the ill effects of Kali. People need to realize that Mahamantra alone can easily offset the adverse effects of Kali."

Further, Sri Swamiji said, "[Kanchi] Mahaperiyava too wished for this. In those days, he ordained the actor S. V. Subbaiyya, who also had an interest in spirituality, and others to go to various towns and villages to propagate the glory of Rama Nama to the masses. Anyone who

wrote Rama Nama incessantly and handed it over to the Kanchi Math, received a silver coin in return. He brought out *Tiruppavai* and *Tiruvembai* to the world and ensured it was sung in all the temples during the month of *Margazhi*. But these efforts lost momentum

soon after.

"Bhagavan Nama Bodendral, Mahaperiyava, Sri Sri Anna and other Mahans have been concerned about this. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa often said, 'When many come together to pray, such a prayer has tremendous power.'"

Thus Sri Swamiji poured his heart out. We have always seen Sri Swamiji's words coming true. Needless to say, the first mass prayer happened the very next day in Tuticorin. Further, on January 1, 2007, a mass prayer was conducted at Chennai's Kamaraj Hall, in which thousands participated. What started humbly this way, has now gathered momentum and

become a giant wave and is transcending not just several towns, cities and states in India but also other countries outside India as well.

Last month (October 2010), mass prayers were held in Ambasamudram, Tuticorin, Sivakasi, Kovilpatti, Virudhunagar, Kallidaikurichi, Periyakulam, Madurai, Trichy, Tiruppur and Udumalaipettai. More than 2500 people participated in each of these locations. The mass prayer organized in Tiruppur, on behalf of Sri Vari trust, was attended by approximately 10,000 people. The mass prayer program was held from 4.30 pm until 8.30 pm in the night. Sri Swamiji spoke about the glories of the Nama, incessantly for four hours. What was even more astounding was the fact that the entire audience sat in rapt attention for those four hours! All were offered dinner prasada after the event.

*The spate of Sri Swamiji's Mass Prayers -- that inspire simple, sincere and powerful prayer through the Mahamantra -- continue even today around India and the world too, through his disciples. Every year on Jan 1, Sri Swamiji conducts a special mass prayer in a different city. This year (2016) it was held in Madurai and was attended by over 10,000 people, and also viewed live on the Web by thousands more from across the world. Excerpts from the Madurai Mass Prayer are presented in the feature article of this newsletter issue.*

**Original Tamil article by Dr. Bhagyanathan,  
Madhuramurali November 2010 issue  
Translated by Viji Shankar Dallas TX**

### Quiz - Divya Desam Series 2

1. Out of the 4000 verses how many were sung in praises of Paarkadal Divyadesam by the Azhvars?

- A. 140
- B. 50
- C. 600

2. The Lord in Paarkadal Divyadesam is facing which direction?

- A. North
- B. West
- C. South

3. Does Paarkadal Divyadesam exist on the Earth?

- A. Yes
- B. No

4. In which posture is the lord worshipped in Paarkadal Divyadesam?

- A. Reclining
- B. Sitting
- C. Standing

5. What is the meaning of 'Paarkadal'?

- A. Milky Ocean
- B. Mount Kailash
- C. Mount Meru

6. Lord Narayana is worshipped in many ways. In which form is the lord worshipped in Paarkadal?

- A. Param
- B. Vyuham
- C. Vibhavam

7. In which form is Lord Narayana worshipped in Sri Vaikuntam?

- A. Param
- B. Vyuham
- C. Vibhavam

8. Name the prominent episode that took place in Paarkadal

- A. Brahma Mohana Leela
- B. Samudhra Mathanam
- C. Maha Maham

9. Divyadesams are \_\_\_\_\_ in number

- A. 108
- B. 16
- C. 12

**Compiled by  
Ramya Srinivasan San Jose, CA  
Answers:**

1 - B, 2 - C, 3 - B, 4 - A, 5 - A, 6 - B, 7 - A, 8 - B, 9 - A





## Madhura Geetam - Prayer Series: 6

In this series, we present, each month, a prayer kirtan composed by His Holiness Maharanyam Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji. These kirtans underline the importance of prayers and show us how to pray.

### Surrender through Prayer

In Bhagavad Gita, the Lord says  
*"sarva dharmAn parityajya mAmekam sharanam vraja, aham tvAm sarva pApebyo mokshayishyami ma sucha"*

(O Arjuna!) Abandon all your efforts (to attain me) and seek refuge under My Feet. I will relieve you of all your sins and grant you liberation!"

In the Bhagavad Gita, after Lord Krishna expounds in detail the various paths to reach Him, Arjuna still remains perplexed. The Lord then tells him the above verse. He asks Arjuna to abandon all efforts and simply surrender to him, promising to take care of the rest.

Although surrendering to the Lord seems so simple and straightforward, it is in fact extremely difficult to put it into practice. The 'ego' residing within us will hinder us

from doing a complete surrender. How then can one surrender completely? It can be done only by the grace of the Lord. And such grace can be obtained only through sincere prayer.

So this month, we present Sri Swamiji's "Thiruvadi Thamarayai", a song set in Bheemplas raga. In this song (in Tamil), Sri Swamiji prays to Krishna, and tells him that He is his sole refuge and beseeches Him to protect him.

### Thiruvadi Thamarayai

**Raga: Bheemplas**

**Tala: Adi**

*thiruvaDi thAmarayai gathiyenDru thanjam aDainthen*

*kai viDAmal kAtthiDuvai premika varadha*

*en muyarchi edhum illai*

*muyanDru muyanDru thOTTRu dhAn pOnEn muTTrilum unaiyE sharaN pugundhEnE*

*kArmugil vaNNane karuNA pUrNanE*

*taruNam idhai arindhu kAtthiDuvAi nlyE*

*rAdhaiyin maNALanE bhakthargaLin*

*bhAgyamE*

*nittham nittham unai nAn koNDaDiDuvenE*

*yamunai karaiyil viLaiyADiDuvonE ennaiyum kAtthiDuvAi muraLidharA!*

### Meaning

Your Lotus Feet are my only refuge!

O Premika Varada! Protect me! Do not let go of me!

My efforts are nothing here

I tried and tried again, but only lost every time

Hence, I surrendered completely to you

O dark-hued One! The epitome of compassion!

Knowing that this is indeed the right time, please take care of me!

O consort of Radha! The fortune of devotees!

Every passing day, I shall celebrate You grandly

O One who plays on the banks of Yamuna

O Muralidhara! Please take care of me also!

**Sowmya Balasubramanian, Fremont CA**

### The Story of Parikshit

After the Mahabharata war, full of anger, Ashwathama

wanted to destroy the Kuru Dynasty. He knew Uttara was expecting a baby who would be so far the last prince of the Kurus. If he killed the baby, the Kurus will be destroyed.

He put the Brahmarshram on Uttara who surrendered to Krishna saying,

"Oh Krishna, please save my child. I shall give up even my life for my baby. My baby should at least survive." Krishna made himself very small and protected the baby with his Sudharshana Chakra.

In due course, the baby was born. They named him Parikshit. After Parikshit

became king, Kali (Demon of Kali Yuga) came inside Parikshit's kingdom. Parikshit was about to kill him and Kali surrendered.



Parikshit then gave Kali 5 places to be in: Where there is gambling, drinking alcohol, murder, greed, and adharmic women. The only reason why Parikshit let

Kali survive was because Kali was the only yuga where one easily could reach Bhagavan just by simply chanting His Name.

One day, Parikshit was feeling very hungry. He came across an ashram in which Sage Samika lived. But Sage Samika was actually in Samadhi but Parikshit mistook him to be

sleeping.

Parikshit was angry because he thought Sage Samika was pretending to be in Samadhi. He put a dead snake on the sage's neck. As he walked home he felt very bad for what he did. After Shringi, Sage Samika's son returned from wherever he went, he saw the snake on the sage's neck. He was totally enraged. He said, "Whoever put this snake on my father will die in exactly 7 days." When Parikshit heard about the curse, instead of groaning over it Parikshit was overjoyed. He was happy that he was going to face punishment for the mistake.

Parikshit went to the banks of Ganga and prayed, "Oh Krishna, please help me!" Krishna told Suka to go to Parikshit and tell Bhagavatam to him. Suka went and narrated Bhagavatam to him in exactly 7 days. At the end of the 7 days Lord Krishna himself came and took Parikshit with him to his abode, Vaikuntam. All Parikshit had to do to attain god was listen to Bhagavatam.

**Illustration & Story by Madhura Sriram Byrs, Houston Tx**

**Kid's Contribution**





# SRI RAMANUJAM JI'S SATSANG ACROSS US

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News &amp; Events

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RADHA KALYANAM, ATLANTA GA

NEW YEAR SATSANG, ORLANDO FL

GLOBAL NAMA RELAY- 2016



The New Year 2016, began with devotees around the world from New Zealand to California chanting Mahamantra for 24 hours on Saturday, January 2nd for peace and harmony in the world, our country, city, community and within our own selves. Around 18 countries participated in this mass chanting by gathering at various venues. In the USA, around 12 States participated in chanting the 'Hare Rama...', Mahamantra with prayers in their hearts for the universal harmony and peace.

NAGARA KIRTAN IN RICHMOND TEMPLE, VA



Published by:



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**Illustrations**—Sripriya Sarathy.

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.**

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