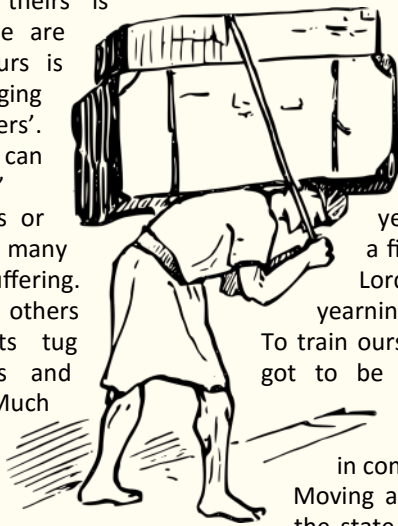


## Whose Problems are the Greatest?

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Each one of our prayers and situations are so unique that it is hard to compare with others. While some situations might be very similar on the outside, only the person experiencing the sorrow knows that theirs is different, isn't it? We are often certain that ours is much more challenging and difficult than others'. We complain, "None can understand my plight!" Every day we witness or read about so many different people suffering. Some close to us, and others distant. Some events tug close to our hearts and others not as much. Much of the news around us too is quite negative – disasters, terrorism, corruption, scandals, crime and what not! They all affect us.



Amidst larger world problems, we also face everyday problems in our petty individual lives - the lack of time, energy, health, money, love and so on. Our lives are a constant battle of chasing the never ending quest for joy, when the odds are stacked so high against it. Until the time we realize that it is not our chasing that is important, but that something else (death) chasing us is far more critical. And the latter is the only sure end of either quests. Our bodies will lose the battle. No one has ever beaten it – like the unending version of Temple Run!

When we go a step further, we see there are some in this world who have given their lives completely in quest for God – *mumukshus* (seekers). Their worry is so different from ours. They can't seem to concern themselves with any of the above worldly problems – that are mostly centered around "me and mine", or about the world at large. The seeker's only concern is about how they can leave the cycle of births and deaths and attain the Lord. No one in the world can relate to them, many even relegate them as different, crazy, inert, or selfish. As for themselves, they are neither here nor there. Oh! What a state that is! They have not (yet) attained the Lord, which would

rid them of all worldly clutches, and nor are they able to relate to the world and seek solace in it. Truly in the middle of nowhere.

Their suffering has got to be much worse than people of this world who at least have swings of joy. For *mumukshus*, yearning is the key that can open their doors to the Lord, and they need to become experts at it. That yearning needs to be like that of a fish out of water – without the Lord, they should die. That yearning needs to be matured. Alas! To train ourselves on the art of dying has got to be the most difficult thing to accomplish. In contrast, our worldly problems seem pale in comparison.

Moving a step further, what to say of the state of those *jnanis* (God-realized souls)? They have seen the Lord, and are in that thought always - forever immersed in the ocean of Bliss. And they suffer too. However, their suffering is unique! They pray to the Lord, "I need a life to just cry, for You!" Tears constantly roll down their eyes, filled with the prayer of wanting to be with their beloved Lord, unwilling to be separated from them even for a second. On one hand, they seem to always be immersed in that love, and on the other hand, we see them constantly praying wanting to be with their Lord, begging, pleading, crying. Who can understand this paradox? Let us not even try, for this is outside the realm of normal human logic. The fire of separation from their beloved Lord is what the *jnanis* seek... perhaps even more than the Lord himself, for it is that desire that keeps the flame fueled. Even attainment of the goal cannot guarantee the *smarana* (thought) of the Lord always, but the eagerness to want it assures them the state of constant remembrance of the Lord and His qualities.

Needless to say, the state of the *jnani* is incomparable to anyone, and it only makes our worldly problems or even the problems of the seeker infinitesimally lower in grade.

Above all of this, there is a kind of person, whose life is inarguably the most difficult.

It is that of a Guru – a self-realized *jnani*, who takes the garb of a normal man, and owns the responsibilities of taking ashore all of his disciples, who are all swirling in their own worldly troubles. Not only are they consumed with their own sorrows that is unique to a *jnani*, (as if that is not enough!), they also come down to the level of the disciples, and assume all of their problems as his own. Worried and consumed about our exams, our marriages, our relationships, our wealth, our jobs, our children, our houses, our lives, our seeking, they offer prayers and solutions - Not for one, but for thousands! The Guru is actually much more concerned about our welfare than we ourselves are. They rejoice in our happiness, celebrate our successes, and at the same time wait for our sorrows and losses as if a mortal.

The Uttama Guru is indeed the greatest in the world, and unenviably the One who carries the most burden of sorrows too! All glories to the Guru!

**Sriram Ramanujam, Houston TX**

### Sri Poornima Kumarasami



**Sri Poornimaji**, a disciple of Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji, is an excellent speaker who is adept at

presenting philosophical, spiritual, devotional and inspirational subjects in a wonderful and interesting manner. She will be in the USA between March and June 2016. She will conduct spiritual discourses and satsangs, Vasanta Utsavs, Bhagavata Retreat programs and more in various cities across the USA. Please visit [www.godivinity.org](http://www.godivinity.org) for schedule.

### Inside this Issue

<b>Cherished Memoirs - 35</b>	Pg 2
<b>Quiz - Divya Desam Series 5</b>	Pg 2
<b>Madhura Geetam - Prayer Series 9</b>	Pg 3
<b>Kid's Contribution - Putana Moksham</b>	Pg 3
<b>News and Events</b>	Pg 4



## Cherished Memoirs 35

*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. The original article was written by Dr. Bhagyanathanji, Personal Secretary of Sri Swamiji.*

### Destiny Rerouted in NZ!

With the blessings of Sri Swamiji, for the past five years, devotees from twenty countries all around the world have been performing Global Nama Relay (chanting of the Mahamantra) on the first Saturday of every January. Details about this were published in our last Madhuramurali issue.

Well, how did this event take birth?

Mr. Venkat and Mrs. Kavita Venkat, a devotee couple from New Zealand, spoke to Sri Swamiji about a beautiful little desire they had and by his grace it turned into the Nama Relay. In Auckland, New Zealand, it is this couple who bring together the G.O.D satsangs and perform Nama service. Mr. Ravi and Mrs. Padma Ravi are their close friends. Mr. Ravi is highly virtuous. He is an ardent devotee of our Ashram's Kanyakumari Sri Jaya Hanuman and our Sri Swamiji. He also, without fail, participates and serves in New Zealand G.O.D. satsangs.

Mr. Ravi came to the mass prayer held on the Kalpataru day January 1, 2015 at Ambattur Vivekananda Vidhyalaya, for his first darshan of Sri Swamiji. Mr. Ravi stood within the precincts of the school looking at the thousands of devotees gathered there and thinking 'it is indeed my great fortune that I have earned the opportunity to chant

Nama along with the devotees and Sri Swamiji.' Even in that huge crowd, Sri Swamiji, while walking up to the stage, called him up and blessed him with personal darshan. Mr. Ravi keeps saying that he can never ever forget this.

Mr. Ravi's only son Jayasimhan, though he grew up in New Zealand culture, also has great attachment to our Indian values. We are now going to read about this youth who is always eager to help others.

At Sri Swamiji's behest, at the time of my visit to inaugurate Australia Namadwaar, satsangs were conducted in Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and Papua Guinea in November-December 2015. Jayasimhan participated with great enthusiasm in all the events that took place through the week at Auckland, New Zealand. It was vacation time after his school final examinations and he actively served in all these satsangs. For five consecutive days, with Sri Swamiji's kirtan 'Kaliyaiyum bali kollum' as the basis, discourses were conducted under the title "Bhagavata Dharma – the Path for All." At the end of it a mass prayer was conducted.

During this mass prayer, all the devotees stood in front of Sri Swamiji's divine picture, chanted Nama wholeheartedly and submitted their prayers. At this time Jayasimhan prayed that he should pursue medical or dental studies. His father too placed the same prayer request. Mr. Ravi also requested me to place the same prayer to Sri Guruji in person, on behalf of Jayasimhan.

Does not our Guruji advocate that prayer through Nama is the most powerful? And in these times, the desire of parents that their

children should do well in studies and thus in life, is only fair isn't it? As

Jayasimhan was the only son of Mr. Ravi, the latter's prayer was that he should be well educated.

But getting admission into a medical college there was very difficult. The reason was that the Australian University that he wanted to study in is one of the best medical universities in the world; further, there is also high competition in this field. Even though Jayasimhan had very good scores, getting admission there was not certain. On returning to Chennai I informed everything to Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji patiently listened and blessed, "The best will definitely happen."

I informed Mr. Ravi about Sri Swamiji's blessing words. But later when the results were announced Jayasimhan's name was not in it. Mr. Ravi was deeply disappointed. Highly disturbed, he contacted me and informed that Jayasimhan had not got a medical seat but had got admission to study engineering. But Jayasimhan did not desire that, he said. Once again I informed Sri Swamiji about it. Just as before, Sri Swamiji said, "Let us keep chanting Nama; the best will certainly happen."

Accordingly I informed Mr. Ravi to chant Nama incessantly. But he felt that as the allotment list had been announced, nothing could change; and that, in spite of Sri



HH Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji

Contd on page 3...

### Quiz - Divya Desam Series 5

*There are 108 Divya Desams – temples/ abodes of Lord Narayana that have been sung by the Azhwars. This month, take the quiz to learn more about the famous Sri Anantha Padmanabhaswamy.*

1. In which state is Sri Padmanabhaswamy temple located?

- A. Tamil Nadu
- B. Kerala
- C. Andhra Pradesh

2. Name the Azhwar who has sung on Padmanabhaswamy temple

- A. Andal
- B. Thiruppaan Azhwar

C. Nammazhwar

3. How many verses in DivyaPrabandam have reference to the Padmanabhaswamy temple?

- A. Two-hundred and one
- B. Eleven
- C. Fifty-eight

4. Name the city that takes the name of the presiding deity Sri Padmanabhaswamy.

- A. Thiruvananthapuram
- B. Thiruvella
- C. Thrissur

5. About how many Salagrams are present in the divine image of Padmanabhaswamy?

- A. Five thousand

B. Twelve thousand

C. Fifty thousand

6. Which river contains the divine Salagram stones?

- A. Ganges
- B. Godavari
- C. Gantaki

7. In which posture is Padmanabhaswamy worshipped in the temple?

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

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

**Answers:**

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





## Madhura Geetam - Prayer Series: 9

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.

### O Lord! Please Come and Reside in My Heart!

*'sakala bhuvana madhye nirdhanAstepi dhanyA*

*nivasati hrudi yeshAm shriharer bhaktirekA*

*harirapi nijalokam sarvathAto vihAya*

*pravishati hrudi teshAm bhaktisUtrOpanaddhaha ||'*

Padma Purana says, "In the entire universe, the poor may still be considered rich, if he has devotion for Lord Hari in his heart. For such a devotee, the Lord abandons his abode to dwell in His devotee's heart, bound as He is by the cord of the devotee's love!"

The Gopas and Gopis of Vrindavan were simple people who had immense love for

Krishna. It was bound by that pure love, that the Lord danced on the poisonous Kaliya, lifted the Govardhan hill to save Gokula from torrential rain, killed several demons like Aghasura, Bakasura, Dhenukasura, and drank the forest fire, etc. In Damodara Lila, Yashoda was able to bind the Lord only because of her pure love. As long as she ran around trying to catch the Lord, He was unattainable. The moment she gave up, the Lord took pity on her and allowed himself to be caught and tied to the mortar. This clearly shows us that our efforts will not suffice. His grace is required. In the song, "Agachcha Svayameva", set in Kamas raga, Sri Swamiji prays to the Lord to come and grace his heart with His presence. The lyrics and the meaning are presented here.

### Agachcha Svayameva

**Raga: Kamas**

**Tala: Adi**

*Agachcha svayameva mama hrudaye  
mA gachcha kshaNamapi sriya pate*

*sAdana rahitoham pAvanarahitoham  
tava krupAmAtram avalambanam sri hare*

*chandrasamAna sundaravadana  
shankha chakradhara shyAmala varNa  
shata koTi manmata sundarAkAra  
charaNa rasika muralldharanuta*

#### Meaning:

Please come of your own accord and reside in my heart

Do not leave it even for a second, O Lord of Shri!

I am neither capable of efforts nor capable of purely loving you

Your grace is my sole refuge, O Sri Hari!

The One whose face is as beautiful as the moon!

The dark hued One bearing the conch and discus!

The One who is as beautiful as hundred crores of Manmata!

The One who is eulogized by Muralidhara, the devotee of Your Holy Feet!

**Sowmya Balasubramanian, Fremont CA**

### Putana Moksham

In Dwapara Yuga, one of the 10 avatars of Lord Narayana, Krishna, descended in Mathura. As you all know, a heavenly voice warned Kamsa "that the 8<sup>th</sup> son of Devaki will finish you" Certainly a vain person like him would fret.

#### FLASH FORWARD A FEW DAYS

Kamsa and his council of asuras sat around a table to plan how to 'defeat' Krishna. They finally decided to send Putana. At the same time, Nanda Maharaja came to pay the taxes. He decided to visit his good old friend, Vasudev. As they embraced and chatted for a while, Vasudev saw Putana running to Gokulam. That was trouble! Vasudev said, "Leave, there is crisis in Gokulam waiting for you." Usually we say "have a safe trip" or "We will miss you" but "Leave, there is a crisis where you live"?! NO WAY! Nanda Maharaja was shocked, but he left.

#### PUTANA'S ARRIVAL

Knowing she looked scary, Putana disguised herself as a beautiful, not-so-scary woman. As she progressed to the entrance of Gokulam two Gopis said, "Stop, we know who you are!" Putana was about to turn

into her original form, when the Gopis did arathi and sung *Bhaagyathaa Lakshmi Baramma* and said, "You are Goddess Lakshmi, we will show you Krishna's house!" When Putana came to Krishna's house, Maa Yashoda handed Krishna to Putana, thinking Putana will bless Him. Krishna, knowing that Putana was going to feed Him poison, prayed to Lord Shiva. Lord Shiva had drunk poison before,



so he surely would have some experience to share. Then, Krishna closed His eyes because if He looked at Putana, He would grace her. Then, He wouldn't be able to defeat her, and she would continue her evilness. Closing His eyes, Krishna started drinking Putana's poison along with her soul and gave her moksha.

#### MERCY OF KRISHNA

Even though Putana had wrong intentions, Krishna gave the highest state to her. Krishna's bhaktas always relish this *leela* as it shows Bhagavan's unconditional mercy. When Uddhava met Vidhura, he quoted this *leela* as "kam vA dayALum sharaNam vrajEma!" Their hearts melted with the love of Krishna. Sage Shuka told Parikshit that a demon disguised as a mother who had

wrong intentions attained moksha just like a (real) mother with loving intentions. This embodies Bhagavan's unconditional mercy.

Let us pray to Bhagavathas to bless us with prema and sathvika bhakthi.

#### Story & Illustration by

**Haritha Ragouramane, 11 yrs Dallas, TX.**

Swamiji's blessing words, Jayasimhan

**Contd from page 2...**

would only take up engineering. Mr. Ravi had almost mentally accepted this.

In this situation, one evening Mr. Ravi called me over the phone. He sounded very excited. "Sri Swamiji's words have come to pass. Jayasimhan's desire to get a dental seat has been fulfilled. Although the admissions were complete at that college, someone who had got a seat cancelled it. So we were called and he was asked to join tomorrow itself. It is all Sri Swamiji's blessings." I informed Sri Swamiji of these happy tidings.

ing this Sri Swamiji smiled and said, "This is the greatness of the Lord's Name (Bhagavan Nama)." At once I remembered the words of Tiruvannamalai Yogi Ramsuratkumar. He would say 'This Beggar is not capable of doing miracles; only Ram Nam is doing miracles.'

*Original Tamil article by Dr. Bhagyanathan,  
Madhuramurali December 2015 issue Translated by  
Nisha Giri Houston, TX*





**SRI POORNIMA JI'S SATSANGS ACROSS THE US**

## News & Events

**BHAGAVATA SAPTAHAM AT JACKSONVILLE, FL**

**SATSANG AT HANUMAN TEMPLE, ATLANTA GA**



**NAADHOPASAANA AT DFW TEMPLE, IRVING TX**

**AKANDANAMA IN MINNEAPOLIS MN**



**2-DAY SATSANG IN BIRMINGHAM, AL**

### Upcoming Events of Sri Poornimaji

- \* Apr 25-May3: Ramayana Navaham in Bay Area, CA - Contact Ramya ji: 408-431-5688
- \* May 4-11: Satsangs in Seattle, WA - Contact Muthu ji: 206-399-1058
- \* May 12 -15: Satsangs in Minneapolis, MN - Contact Priya ji: 425-445-0157
- \* May 19 - 23: Satsangs in Edmonton Canada - Contact Prakash Jayaraman ji: 780-860-3530
- \* May 25 - 30: Satsangs in Richmond VA - Contact Malathi ji: 804-306-8198
- \* May 31-June 6: Satsangs in Boston MA-Contact Narayanan ji: 617-820-2968

**NAMADWAAR 6TH ANNIVERSARY, HOUSTON TX**



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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**Published by:**



**Global Organization for Divinity**  
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San Jose, CA 95135

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