

# AMRUTHA SOPAANAM

Significance of Climbing Sacred Tirumala Hills by Foot Steps



Written by

Thimmaraju Viswapathi Rama Krishna Murthy  
(T.V.R.K. Murthy)



Srirasthu

Shubhamasthu

Avighnamasthu

## Amrutha Sopaanam

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T.V.R. K. Murthy

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**Email:** [viswapathi@yahoo.com](mailto:viswapathi@yahoo.com)  
[shridesigns@gmail.com](mailto:shridesigns@gmail.com)

“Viswapathi”

T.V.R.K. Murthy, M.Tech

Flat no. 202, Plot no 11, Sai Arunodya Apartments,

Sunder Nagar colony, Lane Behind Andhra Bank,

Near Erragadda,

Hyderabad – 500 038, Telangana, India

Mob: +91 98494 43752



## Foreword

### **“Venkataadri Samam Sthaanam Brahmande Naasthikinchana Venkatesha Samodeva Nabhutho Nabhavishyathi”**

In this world, no place is as sacred as Venkatadri and no God is neither equal to nor greater than Lord Sri Venkateswara in any of the yugas or will be in the future. Sriman Narayana has incarnated in the form of Sri Venkateswara on sacred Tirumala hills to bless us.

His leela's are amazing, believers are graced with prosperity. He is infinite (Anantham) and is remover of all dangers (Aapadhamokkula vaadu). For yugas He has been taking care of His devotees and giving salvation to those who whole heartedly believe in Him.

My parents Late Brahmasri Thimmaraju Narasimha Rao and Smt. Naga Ratnamba were great devotees of the Lord and served Him throughout their life. Every day early in the morning, my father used to read Venkateswara Suprabhatam which was instrumental in developing my devotion to the Lord. From that time He became my whole and soul. Though I have studied engineering, my heart always used to be on Veda Shastras and Sri Srinivasa would always be present in my core.

I was born in 1956 in my maternal grandfather's home at Pothanuru village in Eluru Taluk. All my education was done in Pothanuru, Nagarjuna sagar, Hyderabad and Warangal. In 1983, I took my engineering degree from Regional Engineering College, Warangal. Till 1988 I worked in Alwyn Company and later till 1998 I worked with Maathrusri Engineering College. After that I have been closely associated with various business houses by the way of designing their titles and logos based on Veda Shastra. Almost all of the businesses are prospering well in their fields. All these achievements are only due to the blessings of Sri Srinivasa.

Sri Srinivasa has ample love for his devotees. Once we overcome our ego and love for materialistic things and submit ourselves to HIM, the Lord will take care of us. In this Kali Yug, there is no God who is superior to Him. That is the reason thousands of people visit the Tirumala hills every day to have darshan of the Lord.

With Sri Srinivasa's blessing, I had written 'Sri Srinivasa Mahatyam', 'Sri Venkateswara Vratha Kalpam', 'Sri Venkateswara Darshanam' and 'Sri Srinivasa - Lord of Seven Hills'. I can only say that all this is due to my previous birth's punyam (good deeds). With Sri Srinivasa's blessing, all these books have become popular among His devotees. There are a lot of divine secrets behind the ritual of climbing the Tirumala hills by foot. Only after gathering a lot of virtue (punyam) through the birth cycles, one will be able to think of going to Srivari darshan that too by foot. Even this book 'Amrutha Sopaanam' was written due to the grace of Sri Srinivasa.

Though I have physically written these books, it is He who was instrumental in making me write them. He was behind each and every alphabet and word that was put on paper.

Perpetually, so many devotees climb the Tirumala hills by walk and take darshan of Lord Sri Srinivasa. All Gods, Goddesses and Demi Gods in various forms also follow the same path of walking up the Venkatadri hills to have His darshan and receive his blessings.

Lord Srinivasa leela's are amazing. If one whole heartedly worships Him, He will bestow all his blessing on them. If one realises Venkateswara Tatwam then there is no greater bliss than that.

Tirumala is a divine Kshethram. If we can sit alone in any place on Tirumala and meditate with full concentration, we can hear the sound of OM. It will echo in our hearts. In addition, we can also hear Vedas, Upanishads and all the Puranas. Even in these days Gods, Goddesses, Demi gods and Maharishis roam around the divine Tirumala hills. Based on our previous birth's good deeds (punyam) only we will be able to step on these sacred hills to have darshan of Lord Venkateswara.

While writing this book, my wife Smt. Venkata Rukmini Vaidhehi, my daughters Chi. Aanandi, Chi. Aamuktha and son Chi. Aditya Srinivas contributed a lot. I pray to Sri Lakshmi Srinivasa to always bless Sri Vasavi graphics owners, Smt and Sri P. Jagadeesh, who have done the DTP processing and printed the book. A number of Lord Srinivasa devotees contributed to the publication of this book. I believe all that is due to the grace of Lord. I pray that Lord Sri Lakshmi Srinivasa should shower their constant blessings on them and their families.

There are no boundaries among devotees and there is no differentiation in devotion. Devotion is like a river of nectar. Sriman Narayana is the central force for all devotees. I offer my salutations to all his devotees.

I express my sincere thanks to Smt & Sri. Yellapragada Venkata Ramana Murthy, Smt & Sri. Yellapragada Venkata Srinivasa Murthy, Smt & Sri. Y.B.S. Murthy, Hyderabad, Smt & Sri.P. Rama Krishna Rao Tirupati, who always supported my endeavours. I pray to Lord Sri Lakshmi Srinivasa to shower blessings on them.

I offer my obeisance to the Parabramha who has given me this opportunity. I promise to Lord Srinivasa that I would dedicate my life to his service and would make sincere efforts to spread the greatness of Sri Venkata Tatwam and make it popular among the people.

I pray to Sri Lakshmi Srinivasa to bless each and every person who have contributed to this book, either directly or indirectly, with health, wealth and prosperity.

**“Sarve Janaa Sukhino Bhavanthu”**

**“Sriyah Kaanthaaya Kalyaana Nidhaye Nidhayerthinam  
Sri Venkata Nivasaaya Srinivasaaya Mangalam”**

Thimmaraju Viswapathi Rama Krishna Murthy  
Hyderabad

## **Dedication**

This sacred book of "Amrutha Sopaanam" is dedicated to the holy feet of Sri Srinivasa in memory of my father-in-law and mother-in-law Late Brahmasri Valuru Venkata Vasudeva Ananda Rao and Smt. Valluru Srivani.

Viswapathi



# **Benefits of reading this sacred book**

**(Phalasaruthi)**

I believe that there are no restrictions for caste, age and other things when reading devotional books. Mind and body needs to be pure and clean. Devotional books can be read by anyone, in any way, at any day and in any place. One needs to have pure devotion while reading books of Lord Sriman Narayana. One need not follow strict rules or observe fast to read them.

However, reading of Sthothras and recitation of Holy Scriptures on festival days, special days like Vaikunta Ekadashi can be done to get more results.

Ekadashi is most favourite day for Lord Srinivasa. Reading this book on every Ekadashi will bring in prosperity, remove all malaises. Likewise, on reading on Sravana nakshathram day of every month will lead to prosperity. For those who read the book at least once a year on any Ekadashi, there will be no rebirth and they will attain salvation. It can also be read on any day that is dearer to Sri Maha Vishnu to accomplish the same result.

People who are unable to climb the Venkatadri steps due to old age, health problems, financial concerns or any other issues, can read the book and reap the benefits of climbing the steps and having the Holy Darshan of Sri Venkatesa. The magnitude of blessing one receives for reading the book on Tirumala is that of conducting 1000 Ashwamedha yagas.

You can read the book on any day, any time to obtain the blessing of Lord Srinivasa for a healthy and prosperous life.

**“Sri Lakshmi Srinivasa Kataaksha Siddhirasthu!”**

Thimmaraju Viswapathi Rama Krishna Murthy

## Amrutha Sopaanam

### Significance of Climbing Sacred Tirumala Hills by Foot Steps

In this whole world, there is no other sacred place that is greater than or equal to the hills of Venkatadri. The sacred hills of Tirumala where Srīman Narayana always resides is divinity personified. The hills of Venkatadri have miraculous powers. Only those who have done good deeds in their previous births have the blessing to visit to the sacred Hills. The magnificence of Venkatadri hills cannot be described by the thousand tongued Sri Adishesha also. Even after reading and understanding of the gist of Holy Scriptures, Purana Upanishads and Vedas it will not be equivalent to significance of Sri Venkatadri.

One's sins from various births will be negated if one climbs the steps of such sacred hill and take darshan of Sri Srinivasa. Unless one has accrued a lot of punya in his previous births the thought of climbing the sacred steps will not enter one's mind. All Gods, Goddesses and Devatas yearn to climb the hills of Venkatadri to have darshan of Sri Srinivasa. In a way, they desire to be like humans who can climb the steps regularly to have darshan of the Lord. They are unhappy that due to their divine form they are not so blessed as humans.

In the ancient times when Lord Indra visited Bhuloka (Earth) he fought with a pious Brahmin and blamed him unnecessarily which resulted in the virtuous man's death. As a result Indra had to face the sin of Brahma hathya (the act of killing a Brahmin, a major sin, worse than ordinary murder) and hence started losing his powers. Realising his folly, Indra became worried and tried to find ways to overcome this sin which ended unsuccessfully until finally, one day, while travelling around the Trilokas (three worlds), Sage Narada visited Indraloka (abode of Indra). Indra greeted Narada and pleaded with folded hands "Oh Narada! Oh Charitable being who always sings praises of Lord Srīman Narayana! It is my good fortune that you have come to my abode at this juncture. You know what is going on in my life. I have committed the sin of Brahma hathya. Kindly bless by telling me a recourse to exonerate this sin".

Narada comprehended what happened and replied "Oh Lord Indra! Don't be sad, there is a solution to your problem. You have to take human form on earth and climb the steps of Venkatadri hills to have the darshan of Srīman Narayana in Ananda Nilayam. This is the only recourse for your sin. Vishnu whose abode is Vaikuntam has taken residence on Venkatadri hills in the form of Sri Srinivasa and is worshipped by all creatures on earth. You have to travel to this great place at the earliest to absolve this sin". Thanking Narada, Indra did all the required veneration to his satisfaction. He then prayed to Srīman Narayan in his heart "oh Jagannadha! Srīman Narayana! I will immediately take the human form to climb the steps of the Holy Venkatadri hills. Please bless me with your darshan." Narada took leave from Indra and exited to continue his journey.

With the blessing of Srīman Narayana, Indra took human form and reached the first steps of Alipiri (the starting place to climb Tirumala hills) at Venkatadri. He was dressed like a Tamil Brahmin. Indra prayed to Srīman Narayana in his heart and stepped on to the first step at Alipiri. Instantaneously, he sensed divine charisma and felt some strange power entering his

body. “What a wonder! Does this hill have so much power? I have never ever experienced such bliss! Wow! What a heavenly place! If I could feel the magnificence of this place by treading on the first step itself, what would be the feeling when I reach Tirumala?” With these thoughts, Indra started climbing the steps of Venkatadri hills. He was wonderstruck seeing the variety of people taking the pilgrimage: small children, women, aged people, people from various regions and languages following different customs, in diverse garments and get-ups. Even those who are sick were climbing with a smile. Mothers with very small children, some carrying their parents on shoulders, some with clothes bale, with trunks (suitcases). Indra was pleased and wonderstruck seeing the devotion people have on Lord Srinivasa. Everyone was climbing the steps forgetting all their problem chanting with a smiling face ‘Govinda! Govinda! Govinda!’

As Indra was climbing the steps, he observed the picturesque sights around him. On both sides of the path a number of Maharishis were performing penance. These divine souls have been performing the penance from thousands of years. However, they are visible to the human eye as only trees. When Indra stopped at a place for some rest, two devotees came and sat next to him. They were chatting between themselves; one of the devotee said “surprisingly the tiredness we felt is gone, there is some mystic power around this place. My body feels so light”. They did not realise the reason for this feeling - it is due to the presence of these Maharishis and their penance in that area. Owing to the presence of these Maharishis who are not visible to the humans, the hills of Venkatadri have divine radiance. Once the devotees take rest and overcome their tiredness, they feel doubly revived. We need to realise it is because of the presence of these saints in the form of trees. Devotees need to climb the seven hills without footwear. Whilst climbing we have to offer salutations to these trees in addition to doing chanting of Sri Srinivasa’s name.

Ascending the steps chanting Bhagawan’s name, Indra met a person with a certain luminescence descending the steps. He wondered who this divine person is. Immediately he realised it was none other than Vayudeva (the Wind God). Surprised, Indra exclaimed “Oh Transcendental Vayudeva! Why are you descending the Venkatagiri hills in human form? And why are you in this Maharashtrian attire? I am surprised that one who is the vital life force for all living beings is roaming around these hills taking a human form”.

Vayudeva replied “Oh Indra! Please accept my pranamams/ salutations. Tirumala where Sri Srinivasa resides is a divine shrine. My existence on these hills is exhilarating and blissful. That is why all devotees who come here enjoy the cool breeze and get refreshed. There are so many mysteries associated with these Tirumala hills. Devotees who climb these hills have worshipped Sriman Narayana in various ways in their previous births and only these people will receive the blessing to approach Lord Srinivasa by foot. The consequence of climbing these steps is equivalent to performing one thousand Ashwamedha Yagams. Look Indra! You see that Kannada devotee, he served Bhagawan with his melodious singing. That lady over there, she offered HIM lots of flower garlands. All these people have in their previous births served Sriman Narayana in their own way. That is the reason even in this birth they receive His blessing in this form. Oh Indra! Have you seen the person who went now? He is climbing these holy steps for the twenty first time. In Dwapara Yuga he served Krishna as



one of his Gopika. Due to this virtue, he is able to climb the hills and take darshan of Bhagawan so many times. Do you know old soul over there? He, in his previous birth, had enthralled Bhagawan with melodious and divine voice. All these devotees have some or the other divine relation with the Almighty. Unfortunately, most of them have no clue about this aspect. Everyone has to realise that they are able to climb these hills only and only due to their previous birth's virtuousness. Oh Indra! On Bhagawan's instructions I climb these mountains by foot every pournami (full moon day) taking human form to take Lord's darshan. I also come down the same way. This gives me great pleasure. Even though I spread across all the worlds, I am enamoured by the celestial experience I get over here. There is no other place in this world which is as divine and as sacred as Tirumala".

While Indra and Vayudeva were discussing, a couple came and took seat next to them. Vayudeva enquired about their welfare. The couple said they were from Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh and that although they were married for seven years they are yet to be blessed with a child. Indra consoled the couple saying "Do not worry. Lord Srinivasa is very gracious. With Srivaru's blessing you will be blessed with a baby boy in a year's time". Hearing this the couple were joyous and started their forward journey with renewed vigour.

Taking leave from Vayudeva, Indra continued his journey, admiring the beautiful natural surroundings. On one side, he saw peacocks on trees, and on the other cute rabbits. He listened to the humming noise of the bees. Amongst these beautiful experiences, Indra met an old devotee who was smiling at him. Instantly, Indra recognised Him to be the Lord Sri Srinivasa himself!!! Wow what a scene? Lord of the World, Sriman Narayana himself was descending the hills in the form of an old devotee. Quickly Indra approached Him and offered his salutations, saying "Hey Swamy! Rescuer of the people (Aapadh baandhava)! Care taker of poor! What a wonder! Why are you walking here? What is this miracle Swamy?" Bhagawan smiled and said "Oh Indra! You know that I have great love and regard towards my devotees! They take a lot of stress and strain to have my darshan. I love to walk along with them on these hills. I like to take care of their welfare and love to bless them with prosperity. That is why I take different forms and roam around these hills. Have you recognised the parrot duo that flew over your head a while ago? It is Myself and my beloved Sri Mahalakshmi. Everyday both of us take different forms and travel around the Sathagiri hills. While Bhagawan was saying these words, Sri Mahalakshmi appeared as an old lady next to Him. Immediately Indra welcomed Her and praised Her glory.

"Oh Lakshmi Narayana! Blessed are your devotees! Those who worship you are very lucky and sanctified. What else would devotees need when they have your assurance" said Indra. Lord Sri Srinivasa and Sri Mahalakshmi replied "These devotees are very dear to us. All these people who are climbing the hills were our followers in their previous births. They have taken rebirth due to various reasons. Due to the lingering devotion, they come back to climb hills to receive our blessings". Saying this both Sri Srinivasa and Mahalakshmi disappeared.

Indra offered his salutation to the couple in his heart and continued his journey. Understanding the magnificence of the sacred hills, Indra was surprised. He realised there is no other place on this earth which is as sacred as these hills. As the hills are frequented by

all Gods, Goddess and Demigods the place has attained more sanctity. On his way, Indra saw a pair of parrots. As he was admiring their beauty, he realised the pair was servants/devotees of the Lord in their previous birth. Although they had immense devotion towards Him, due to a minor mistake they committed, they had to take rebirth as parrots. With Lord's blessing they are able to live on these hill in this birth. The pair took pleasure seeing the devotees climbing the hills and spent their time roaming around.

As he was walking, Indra suddenly felt a cool breeze and the weather was becoming serener. There was a slight shower of rain. As he was enjoying the weather, he met Varuna Deva (God of water) in human form. Indra said "Oh Varuna Deva! You are also here? What a pleasant surprise!" Varuna replied "Oh Indra! These Venkatadri hills are very dear to me. I love to wander around these hills where Sriman Narayana has his abode. That is the reason, without any connection to the seasons, I tend to shower light rain all throughout the year here. Nature will always be pleasant on these hills. In this world, there is no other place which is more sanctified. In this sacred place countless times yagnas were performed by saints, sages as well as Devatas. There is no other pace that has this sacredness and no other place has been through this spiritual progression. All these yagnas have been performed by sages who were well versed with vedas and mantras and had divine powers. Venkatadri radiates so much of glow and sanctity due to the result of these yagnas".

Indra answered "Oh Varuna Deva! The more I hear about these Venkatadri hills, the more curious I feel to hear. Please go ahead and tell me additional information". To this Varuna responded "Oh Indra! No one can fully describe the speciality and sanctity of this place. However, I will attempt to describe as much as possible. All Gods and Demi-gods roam on these hills whenever feasible. They take human form and join the human devotees who are climbing the hills. Enquire the wellbeing of the devotees and they facilitate their journey. They believe that by taking care of Bhagawan's devotees they will get His beneficence. Brahma and other Gods have conducted so many uthsavams (festivals) on a very grand scale here. These are only a few that I am quoting. When climbing any mountain or hill, human beings tend to lose a lot of energy. Yet while climbing the seven hills they feel more refreshed and gain strength. They will gain more vigour. Oh Indra! Let me tell you the story of a devotee called Kesava Rayudu. It will make you realise the love of Sriman Narayan towards his devotees".

#### **Varuna narrated the story of Kesava Rayudu as below:**

Once upon a time, in Vangadeshm, there lived a devotee named Kesava rayudu. He was a staunch Vishnu devotee and used to constantly chant Swamy's name. Whenever feasible he would have darshan of Lord Srinivasa in Tirumala. Kesava rayudu had two daughters, the elder one was married around two years back. When he started planning for his second daughter's marriage, luckily a close relative showed his intention to marry her. Kesava rayudu took it as a divine intervention and started wedding preparations. However, he intended to visit Tirumala before starting the formalities. Unfortunately, he slipped and fractured his leg. Feeling awful, he cried in pain "Oh Srinivasa! What is this paradox! What sin did I commit that you are punishing me like this? I was happily thinking of visiting your abode. Why did it happen to me now? Please help me overcome this pain at the earliest so

that I can visit you and get your blessing". However saintly a person is in this birth, no one can escape previous birth's karma and have to face the consequence/ karma of his sins in this birth. No one can predict how one's good karma will take effect; even if one has accrued a lot of good karma in the last birth, he still may face difficulties in the current birth. It could be that whatever the accrued misdeeds in any one of your previous births can result in the current problems. Only God knows in which birth we have to face the repercussions.

Although Kesavarayudu has done innumerable good deeds in this birth, his misdeeds of one of his previous births has caught up with him. Hence the suffering. Though, everyone requested him to postpone his journey, he was adamant on going ahead. Being very kind hearted, Bhagawan immediately blessed him by reducing his pain. Due to this blessing, Kesava rayudu's pain subsided in two to three days. Along with his family he started his journey to Srivari abode.

After reaching Alipiri, Kesavarayudu started ascending the steps. However, climbing one step at a time was becoming very difficult. His whole body was in pain. Even though the pain had subsided, mounting the steps has its own draw backs. Both his legs were throbbing. Seeing his suffering, Jaganmaatha Alivelu Mangamma requested Srivaru to assist his devotee. Alas! When climbing the next step, Kesavarayudu, tripped and rolled down twenty steps. His family was shocked and saddened. They were wondering on how to complete the rest of the journey. Wonder of wonders! Kesavarayudu stood up by himself dusted the sand and started climbing the steps with a big smile. His whole body was filled with renewed vigour and lustre. His whole family praised the Lord and continued their trip to have darshan of Srivaru.

Enroute, there was a Maharishi in the form of a tree who was performing penance from Tretha Yug. With Lord's blessing, he transferred some of his powers on to Kesavarayudu. Kesavarayudu was unable to tolerate the sudden benediction of the saint's power and fell down. However, due to this power he regained his health. Devotees ascending the Tirumala hills experience a number of miracles on their way.

**---End of Story---**

Indra and Varuna Deva were discussing the divine the stories while going uphill. On their way, they saw four Maharishis who have taken human form and chatting under a tree. They greeted the Rishis and took seat next to them.

After enquiring about each other's welfare, one of the Maharishi said "Oh Guardians of the Directions (Dikpalakas)! We are very happy with your arrival as well as you are going for Darshan of Sriman Narayana. Once in Tretha Yug, Sri Ramachandra Murthy along with his consort Sita Maa ascended these hills and had darshan of Srivaru. At that time all the Gods and Goddesses also visited the place and performed uthsavas (festivals) and yagnas for nearly a month. The Venkatadri hills are very sacred. In this Kali Yug there is no other place as blessed as these hills for human beings to visit. Once they perform this pilgrimage they will overcome all their sins and will prosper. People who are old or not keeping good health can just pray in their hearts to Sriman Narayana who lives on Venkatadri hills. They will receive the benevolence of Srivaru. These hills, in all seasons and at all times resonate with

the sound of Om. Just contemplating the name of Venkatadri itself will make all your sins perish. Oh Indra and Varuna! Both of you are blessed". Hearing this both Indra and Varuna were elated. They took leave of the Maharishis and continued their journey.

Enquiring the wellbeing of the devotees who were joyously climbing the steps, they too joined them. No harm will come to those who continuously meditate on Srīman Narayana; they will always be able to complete all their deeds without any hurdles and will attain wealth and prosperity. In addition, they will not have rebirth.

Devotees are of three types. One who perceives Srīman Narayana in himself as well as in both animate and inanimate objects is the most exemplary. Although he may be enjoying a good lifestyle, he will be uninterested in worldly pleasures. He will show neither interest nor disinterest. He will only contemplate on Vishnu and understand that the universe is all Vishnu's maya.

One who has belief in God, treats other devotees well, offer un-enlightened beings compassion and ignore those who are adversaries of God are termed as moderate devotees. Whereas, a common devotee is one who worships the physical form of God and does not show respect or compassion towards other devotees or any person.

Human beings concentrate on materialistic pleasures. Financial growth, which is a major factor of sadness and death, is what they aim for. All their deeds are focused on attaining these worldly pleasures and centre on their family and children. Jealousy and enmity become part of their life as they experience the consequences of their good and bad virtues. Those who realise the divinity of Srīman Narayana and those who always reminisce in HIM will be connected and attain oneness with Lord Narayana. Worldly matters would not touch or affect them.

Bhagawan is aware of what is happening with his creation, the changes that occur within the living organisms as well as their deeds. However, all these are irrelevant to Him. Undeniably, He stands witness to everything; with no start or end; it is infinite. In this universe, it is only Para Brahma, who is constant truth, he is none other than Srīman Narayana. Worshipping His lotus feet will liberate one from all sins and enhance his divinity.

Praising the Lord, Varuna and Indra proceed further. Continued his description, Varuna said "Oh Indra! These holy hills are known by different names. It is called 'Chitamani' as ones wishes are fulfilled as soon as they ascend these hills. As it the most important pilgrimage centre it is known as 'Tirthadri'; due to the presence of a number of puskarāms it is recognised as 'Puskhadri'. It derived the name 'Vrīshadri' owing to the charitable nature (dharma swaroopam); 'Kankadri' as it is golden; 'Vaikuntadri' as it came from Vaikuntam; 'Simhachalam' as Srīman Narayana took Narasimha avatar to kill Hiranyaksha; 'Anjanadri' as it is birth place of Lord Hamunan. It is also called 'Neeladri' due to the fact that a pious vanara (primate/ monkey) called Neela lived here. 'Aanandaadri' as it gives blissfulness to its devotees, Sri Lakshmi Devi's residence and hence 'SriSailam' Sri Srinivasa's abode 'Srinivasagiri' and finally 'Venkatadri' as it home to wealth and prosperity. Since it is so precious even remembering or recalling the name of Venkatadri will free us from all sins".

There is no perfect season or time to ascend these hills. Without considering any auspicious day (tidhi, nakshatra) one can take the journey. However, the resultant impact will be better if it is done on specific days like Ekadashi, Poornami etc and much better on Vaikunta Ekadashi.

One day, a septuagenarian Vishnu devotee named Venkatachaaryulu, wished to have darshan of Sri Srinivasa. He went to Alipiri and started his pilgrimage. He was climbing with a lot of difficulty as he was carrying a big cloth bag under his arm. He was chanting 'Govinda! Govinda' to overcome his tiredness. Coupled with his old age and ill health as well as a heavy bag, it was becoming difficult for him to ascend. However, he did not stop his chanting of Govinda Naamam. Suddenly a small boy approached and said "Grandpa! Why are you carrying such a heavy bag? Please give it to me, I will carry it for you". Venkatachaaryulu did not want to part with the bag. He said "If you take the bag and run away, what would I do? All my sacred belongings and clothes are in this". Saying so, he refused to give the bag. However, the boy insisted and said "Why do you have to suffer? Please give me. You are scared that I will run away with your bag. Believe me I will never do that. I will walk along with you". The old Brahmin tried to further dissuade saying "You are very young. It is not in your capacity to carry such a big bag". The boy smiled and said "Don't worry! It is nothing. I can carry any amount of weight. If you want, I can carry this whole mountain. This bag is very light for me". Seeing no other way out the old man handed over the bag to the boy. As soon as he touched the boy's hand, he felt a divine power. All his tiredness vanished. For a moment he thought "now all my tiredness is gone, why can't I take back the bag from the boy and carry it myself". He, however, hesitated to ask, thinking the boy might misunderstand.

While on his way, he saw a group of devotees climbing singing psalms (songs) of Sriman Narayana. Venkatachaaryulu joined them along with the boy. The boy was smiling at the group who were singing melodiously. Venkatachaaryulu also started singing cheerfully along with them and continued his journey. He forgot everything else in the world, even the boy who is carrying his bag. After an hour, the group took a break to have food that they brought with them. They invited the old man to partake their food.

Just then Venkatachaaryulu remembered the boy. He looked around but could not find him. He thought "what I anticipated had come true. The boy ran away with my bag. What will I do now?" He shared his feelings with the fellow travellers. The group was surprised and exclaimed "Who are you talking about, Grandfather? We don't understand. You were walking with us from the past one hour. But we have not seen any boy till now. None of us have seen him". The old man replied "Oh devotees! I am surprised. There was a boy with me till a little while ago. No! No! He was with us. I am amazed how you people have not seen him. Amidst all of us, he was bouncing and skipping carrying my bag with a big smile. He was happily listening and singing along with all of us. You all were so involved in singing and in your ecstasy, may not have noticed him. Anyway, I lost all my belongings along with my devotional kit/ items".

The devotee group tried to calm him down saying "Don't worry. We will take the responsibility of searching for the boy. Please have your meal along with us. You will



become weak if you don't eat in this heat. Please forget about the boy for the time being. We will go to Tirumala together. As soon as we reach we will search all over and find the boy. This is the first thing we will do even before having darshan of the Lord". There was no other choice but to bow down to their request for Venkatachaaryulu. After the meal everyone rested for some time and started walking singing their bhajans. Even though Venkatachaaryulu was listening to the melodious songs his heart was still on the lost baggage. He started praying "Srinivasa! What is this test! I leave it to you to find the boy!" After two hours the group almost reached the top of the hill. They were near a bend on the path. The rest of the group took the turn and he was about to take it. Surprise! The boy suddenly appeared in front of him with his bag. Venkatachaaryulu shouted at the boy "Where did you go till now?" The boy smiled and replied "Where did I go Grandfather? I was with you all the time". Venkatachaaryulu replied "Don't lie to me. There were so many of us. No one could see you. Whatever. I finally got my bag. Child! Could you please tell me your name?" The boy retorted "My name? Your wish, you can call me by any name in this universe. I will respond when you call me by any name". Saying that the boy ran away. Wondering "What a strange boy? He did not even share his name", Venkatachaaryulu took the turn on the path thinking he will see the boy. Surprisingly he could not see the child. The devotee group was waiting for him. Immediately Venkatachaaryulu realised that the boy was none other than 'Lord Sri Srinivasa'. He cried "Hey Swamy! Guardian of sufferers (Aartha jana rakshka)! Jagannatha! I could not recognise you! Instead of worshipping I was cursing you. Please pardon me My Lord!" On hearing the whole story from him the group was very happy and felt blessed that Sriman Narayana walked along with them. They sang praises of Sri Srinivasa and wondered at the fortune of Venkatachaaryulu who could see him in human form.

Sri Srinivasa has immense love for his devotees. He accompanies the devotees while climbing the Venkatadri hills and takes care of their needs while being concerned about them. He will arrange and makes sure devotees get His darshan at the earliest and monitors it through unfamiliar people. He has special consideration for the devotees who come walking to his abode. He walks along with them and narrates stories and events so that they would not feel exertion. He takes care of his devotees who at all times and in all conditions offer their soul and pray to him. In this whole universe, there is no other God other than Sriman Narayana who bestows so much of love on his devotees.

Once upon a time, in the kingdom of Maghadha, there lived a devotee called Narayana Sharma. Throughout the day he used to chant Narayana namam. He used to follow all rituals and processes and offer help to others whenever feasible. He used to praise Lord and epitomise his stories. One day he reached Alipiri with the thought of visiting the Lord. He started his journey from Alipiri chanting Lord's name. He was thinking how lucky he was that he is able to take this journey to the abode of Sri Venkateswara. Suddenly, under a tree, he saw Sri Krishna playing a flute. For a second he wondered "What is this? Am I dreaming? Is it Krishna's maya? Am I really seeing Krishna? How can I see Sri Krishna who lived in Dwapara Yug?" He rubbed his eyes and saw again. Yes, it is Sri Krishna! And He was smiling even more. He was entranced and cried "What a beautiful form (roopam)! What a divine charisma! How handsome! Wow! I am blessed! Oh Lord! Sriman Narayana! You blessed me

by giving darshan in the form of Sri Krishna! Even after years of penance some people will not be blessed by You. I am so blessed to have your darshan on these Tirumala hills". He extolled Bhagawan in a number of ways and closed his eyes. When he opened them Sri Krishna disappeared. Nevertheless, His flute and 2-3 small peacock feathers were left behind. "Oh Deva! You appeared and disappeared in a moment! I am sanctified!" saying so he took the items left behind and kept in his bag safely.

Thinking of Sriman Narayana's love for his devotees, Narayana Sharma proceeded with his journey. Bhagawan has lot of love and affection towards his devotees who take a lot of stress and strain to have his darshan. He gives His divine darshan to make them ecstatic. The weather was beautiful around. Cuckoos were singing melodiously. A parrot couple was talking to each other. Monkeys were jumping from one tree to another. With the sound of chirping of birds, flowing water, the magnificence of Venkatadri hills was beyond description. On his way, Sharma saw a marvellous sight. Sri Ramachandra along with Sita and Laxmana was sitting on a rock under a tree. Hanuman was sitting on the ground talking to them. Seeing this spectacle, Narayana Sharma lost his speech. He took small steps wondering whether he was dreaming. But he could see them very clearly. Lord Sri Ramachandra was listening attentively to Seetha Maatha. Pointing out towards Narayana Sharma with his hand, Sri Ramachandra was saying something to Lakshmana. Crying with ecstasy and reverentially bowing down he thought "Wow! What a beautiful sight! Oh Lord! Sriman Narayana! Srinivasa! Jagannatha! You sanctified me with your darshan in the form of Lord Sriram who lived in Treta yug. Oh Seetha Maatha! Jaganmaatha! You also blessed me with your gracious darshan!" The surprising thing was other devotees were walking as if they nothing was happening. Thinking "It is only me who was able to see it. Oh! What a blessed person I am!" he approached the tree, immediately all of them disappeared. Narayana Sharma sat under the tree for some time. He was oblivious to everything as he felt blissful and thought for this birth this blessing is more than enough. Chanting Bhagawan's name he completed his journey and reached Ananda Nilayam to take Darshan of Sri Srinivasa. He was wonder stuck seeing the Idol of the Lord. At that time aarti was being performed in the sanctum sanctorum. Seeing the illumination in the sanctum sanctorum, he felt as if a thousand suns were shining at that moment, he extolled the Lord in many ways.

Through the ages, devotees prayed to Lord in various ways and attained His blessings. So many Maharajas climbed the steps to take darshan of Sri Srinivasa. Sri Krishnadevaraya, one of the great kings, climbed the hills seven times in his life and gifted lot of gold ornaments. Another king named Sarangadhar ruled Tirupathi and its neighbouring areas for some years. During his reign, by knowing the importance of the place, he visited Tirumala umpteen number of times. On pournami day (full moon day), he used to celebrate 'punnami festival' in a grand manner. On this day, people could see a lustrous glow in Ananda Nilayam and a radiant Lord. No words could describe the divine Lord on this day. Every pournami devotees would form groups and climb the Venkatadri hills. During the reign of king Sarangadhar, devotees would anxiously wait for full moon day so that they can worship the Lord. They used to take darshan by ascending the hills and enjoy blissfulness.

Once upon a time in Avanti city, there lived a pious Brahmin called Dharmachaary. He was well versed in all scriptures. He always used to pray to Lord Venkateswara and started a school to teach the scriptures. He used to impart knowledge to a number of students praising the virtues of Sri Venkateswara. Although he was very satisfied and happy in his life, he did not have any children. With great sadness Dharmachaary couple used to pray to Lord for a child. Years passed by but they were not blessed with a child. Ultimately, they resigned to their fate.

One fine day, early in the morning, Dharmachaary saw a Yathi in his dream who indicated him to go on a pilgrimage to Tirumala. Dharmachaary thought it was Sri Srinivasa's calling and went to Tirumala with his relatives. He took darshan of the Lord and returned home. Within a short period he was blessed with a son and they named him Venkatachaarya. The child was very cute and mischievous. As he grew, even with lot of efforts from Dharmachaary, the child was not inclined to study or could grasp any knowledge. Dharmachaary tried his best to educate the child. One day, a Saint came visiting to the city. Dharmachaary took his son to him and explained his problem. He expounded that although he is teaching so many other children he is unable to teach his own child. He questioned himself why his child is not learning anything. The Saint closed his eyes for a second and told him on Maagha pournami day (January/February) if he along with his son make the journey to Tirumala and take darshan of Sri Srinivasa, then he might find a change in him. The month of Maagha is very dear to Sri Srinivasa. It is believed that there will be no rebirth, if people take bath in Pushkarini (water pond near the temple) and take darshan of Lord on any day of this month. After enjoying the fruits of this birth, they will attain salvation.

After waiting for two months, on Maagha pournami day, Dharmachaary couple took their son and reached Alipiri. They made him prostrate before climbing the first step. Chanting Lord's name they started ascending the hills. Admiring the nature around the hills and praying to Lord Venkateswara to grant knowledge and education to their son, they continued on their journey. After covering some distance they were tired and stopped for rest.

Due to his tiredness Dharmachaary slept for a little while. He woke up suddenly hearing melodious singing of Sama vedam. Thinking "Wow! Such a beautiful lyrical voice! Who could this be", he looked around. He was shocked to see that it was his son Venkatachaary. The couple praised the Lord saying "Oh! Srinivasa! You have shown your beneficence!" With great joy they continued their journey. Sapthagiri hills are home to all the prosperity and knowledge in the world. Climbing the hills once is enough to understand all the vedas, people will be blessed with immense knowledge.

Singing bhajans along with other devotees Dharmachaary family proceeded further. They stopped for another rest after walking some more distance. They had covered the half the distance. Thinking to take some rest, they sat along with another devotee group. After sometime Dharmachaary realised that his son was nowhere to be seen. While searching for him he was surprised to see his son chatting with another devotee group. When Dharmachaary couple went near them they were shocked to hear Venkatachaary explaining some important slokas from Yajur Veda (An ancient Vedic Sanskrit text, it is a compilation of

ritual offering formulas that were said by a priest while an individual performed ritual actions such as those before the yajna fire). By the time they reached Ananda Nilayam, Venkatachaary was well versed in all the Vedas and Upanishads by the grace of Sri Venkateswara. Just by climbing the steps of the Tirumala hills one can attain so much of knowledge of Vedas and scriptures. Dharmachaary was very pleased and praised the Lord in various ways. The family spent a week on the hills and participated in various pujas and services.

Indra and Varuna while climbing in their human forms were observing a number of things. Indra was surprised to see people dressed in various attires climbing the hills. Thinking “these people from various back grounds have so much devotion for the Lord. They are coming from such distant places by walk. Wow! What a mystic power the Lord has?” they reached Ananda Nilayam and went to have darshan of Sriman Narayana. Closing his eyes Indra prayed to the Lord and when he opened his eyes he saw MahaShiva in front of him. “What is this? This is the abode of Sriman Narayana. So why I am I having a darshan of Shiva?” Thinking so he closed his eyes again and prayed to Sri MahaVishnu. Again, when he opened his eyes he saw Brahma Deva. Surprised at this oddity he once again closed his eyes and contemplated on the Lord. As soon as he opened his eyes he saw Vigneshwara and then Kumara Swamy. Once again when closed and opened his eyes after praying to the Bhagawan, he saw the divine form of Shakthi Swaroopini KanakaDurga. Perturbed, he closed his eyes to contemplate and realised the truth that Sriman Narayana is the whole and soul and all Gods are a part of him. He is the Para Brahma Roopam and all are his followers. After this realisation, he was blessed with the darshan of Sriman Narayana in Ananda Nilayam. Indra was extremely happy after the darshan and requested “Oh Lord! Sriman Narayana! Bless accept my obeisance. You are Yagna Swaroopaa, Vishwa Roopa, you are auspicious provider, and you are spread around the world. Please be benevolent on me and liberate me from sin of brahma hathya”.

Sri Srinivasa then said “Oh Indra! The moment you climbed the Venkatadri hills and came to my darshan, you are liberated from all your sins. In this whole universe, Venkatadri hills are most dear to me. I not only reside in Ananda Nilayam but I roam around these hills taking various forms. I enjoy the waterfalls on these Tirumala hills along with my consorts. I bestow wealth and prosperity on those who climbs these hills by foot. They will not face any calamities. I take their responsibility. I take care of needs and requirements of those who vow/ resolve to climb the steps to have my darshan and give them darshan without delay. Every step they take on these hills will lead them to salvation. All Gods and Demigods on a regular basis come to take my darshan taking the form of normal devotees. They feel ecstasy after my darshan. There is no other happiness other than this for all humans in all yugas. Just thinking of my abode, Venkatadri will exterminate all their sins. Who ever remember me every day will not be touched by any disease. They will be blessed with prosperity. Oh Indra! In this whole universe there is no other place that is dearer to me. Any good deed done on these hills will result in multitude of benefits. I am present in each and every living and non-living thing on these hills. All the thoughts of those who are on these hills will revolve around me and their bodies will emanate divine luminescence. I have deep



attachment towards my devotees. I take completely responsibility of those who always remember, chant and pray to me”.

When Sriman Narayana was explaining to Indra in this way, all the Gods and Goddesses, Yakhas, Kinnaras, Kimpurushas, etc., came to worship Lord in Ananda Nilayam. Every one offered their salutations to Lord Sriman Narayana and left for their celestial abodes. Indra also took leave and left for Indraloka.

**“Sriyah Kaanthaaya Kalyaana Nidhaye Nidhayerthinam  
Sri Venkata Nivaasaaya Srinivasaaya Mangalam”**



**Samastha Sanmangalami Bhavanthu  
Lokaasamastha Sarve Janaa Sukhino Bhavanthu**

**OM! Shaanthy! Shaanthy! Shaanthy!**

