



## **In the Name of God**

*Ravi Subramanian*

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The Anantha Padmanabha Swamy Temple in Thiruvananthapuram safeguards within its sacrosanct walls centuries of customs and rituals, unimaginable wealth and an unwavering calm. Until a dead body turns up in its holy pond . . . And then another. The murders threaten to shake the temple's very foundation, and when fingers point to its sealed vaults and its custodian, Aswathi Thirunal Dharmaraja Varma, the titular king of Travancore, all hell breaks loose. Meanwhile, a high-profile heist in a jewellery store at the Wafi Mall in Dubai leads investigators to a massive smuggling racket and brings Kabir Khan, additional director of the CBI, into the heart of south India. In Mumbai, a series of high-intensity explosions kills many, threatening to dismantle the country's most coveted diamond trade. Could these incidents be related? Racing against time, Kabir tries to unravel the puzzle, separating fact from fiction, history from religion, and put a stop to the killing spree. Slick, riveting and fast-paced, *In the Name of God* is Ravi Subramanian's most gripping novel yet.

## **In the Name of God Details**

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Author : Ravi Subramanian

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# From Reader Review In the Name of God for online ebook

## Veena says

### Content

The book begins with Rajan filing a case in court asking them to investigate the wealth in Anantha Padmanabha swamy temple in Thiruvananthapuram. The simple objective was to audit the wealth but as the story progresses, someone gets murdered. A Jewellery store in Dubai gets looted and some more events align themselves to give an impression that all of them are linked to the discovery of wealth in the temple. A well-known jewellery designer and a team of jewel experts are roped in to evaluate the wealth and the thrill builds up.

As the story progresses the characters keep adding up and new events lead to new clues. This thriller is a roller coaster ride. It has been a long time since I have read thrillers, simply because it stopped exciting me. But this one seemed promising.

This book has everything that will keep you at the edge of the bed but still there are a few drawbacks. A new angle is added at every turn which fails to give an opportunity to you to do the guesswork. The plot is multi linear. So much so that it pushes an epilogue towards the end of the book. There are loose threads if not loopholes that justify the epilogue but again you went on to ask yourself: what was the need of all this? At the end of the book you are left satisfied but you can't help and crave for another end to the story. The book is set at the background of the temple but hardly anything happening in the book seems to point that way. The book had a potential which remains unharnessed, for me.

### Language

The language is very simple. The structure is simpler. The chapters are super short. They make you sweep through the pages without making you realise the length of the novel (which is 400 pages by the way). The author has a skill of binding readers to the story. He is gifted.

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## Tilottama Pal says

A thriller of the class of a New York Times bestseller! Probably the best of Ravi so far... gripping read!

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## Chitra Iyer says

A new release, In The Name of God by Ravi Subramanian, had my attention when the Anantha Padmanabhaswamy temple in Thiruvananthapuram was mentioned in the blurb. Being my husband's hometown, I visit the city and the temple every year and have been updated with the "treasure" and "vaults" since the very beginning. But when you mix culture with a fictitious murder story, my curiosity just piqued and I ordered the book immediately. Couldn't resist!

The book begins with a jewelry heist in one of the prominent malls in Dubai. The perpetrators escape but leave behind a clue, leading the investigation to India. While in Delhi, the investigation is being followed, down south in Thiruvananthapuram, the wealth in the vaults inside the Anantha Padmanabhaswamy temple is

ordered to be audited by the Supreme Court and a team of 12 experts arrive for the purpose. But as soon as they begin their work, a body is found in the Padma Teertham kulam, the temple pond, and the current Travancore king blames it as a result of blasphemy in the form of the ongoing audit. Kabir Khan, additional director of the CBI, is following the Dubai heist case but when he finds himself in Thiruvananthapuram, he cannot but help think if these two incidents are related. When another murder takes place, the audit team along with Kabir, begin to wonder if these episodes are indeed a result of the wrath of God.

Oh boy! What a read! I have so many things to say about the book but I don't know where to begin. Let's start from the beginning then. The flow of the story is what seals the deal with this book. Right from the start with the Dubai heist, all the way to Thiruvananthapuram, it is a continuous flow of suspense and intrigue. The narrative must be mentioned, it is superbly engrossing. I am no writer but as a reader I can definitely say that in a mystery/suspense book, the detailing behind the characters is crucial. It shouldn't be overwhelmingly long, lest it takes the inquisitiveness from the plot. But it also shouldn't be deficient of it. The author, here, has done a fantastic job of maintaining that balance with enough details. The characters are well rounded and the story maintains the intensity, which I loved.

As mentioned earlier, I am very familiar with Thiruvananthapuram, and the temple. And I must applaud the efforts taken by the author to make sure that all the facts were as close to reality as one could possibly get. Every description of the temple and the city of Thiruvananthapuram has been described accurately which is a huge relief. It can be really off putting when something close to your heart is just taken for granted for the sake of a story. Thankfully, this book left me beaming with pride!

I have read only two other books by Ravi Subramanian, *The Bankster* and *The Bestseller She Wrote* , so I cannot give a clear verdict but according to my opinion, *In The Name of God* is his best work so far. His last book was of a totally different genre but this one is a pleasant surprise! I cannot recommend it more!

A must read for thriller/suspense fans!

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### **Vadassery Rakesh says**

There is something called "Chavittu Natakam" in Kerala, which roughly turns out to be like a street play. It has many characters coming and going so that the onlooker gets confused on who is who. Exactly this is what happened to me in the final stages of the book, after having seen a very promising start. After the initial 200 pages, I tweeted about the book as my impression of the book went sky high. But the later part was a great let-down in the author's over zest to bring in twists and turns.

But I should say that the book was a page-turner. I completed it in record time. Author is undoubtedly the best thriller-story teller in India. Unfortunately we do not have the likes of Alistair Maclean or Jeffrey Archer in this country.

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### **LuvLaw says**

This is the second book of Ravi. S. That I bought to read and I am spellbound. What an amazing writing skill this author has.

One of the best books I have had the opportunity to read and cherish and keep within me.

Each is a page turner and I felt I am with Kabir Khan trying to figure out what is happening.

Right from Rajan's thought to file a writ petition (and he never even had any idea of the catastrophe his decision is going to make) to Nirav Choksi and the others being dragged into it.

I did feel though that maybe... maybe there could have been a stronger epilogue but hey... we always want some people who we hate to be punished. Right? Even though it doesn't happen that way.

But none the less, give it a try and sit back and enjoy this beautiful amazing book.

Njoy!!!

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### **Richa Bhattarai says**

One of the rare books I left midway and didn't want to pick up. Was interesting enough but too drawn-out and cumbersome to continue.

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### **Naddy says**

When I picked up Bankster, I was told Ravi Subramanian is John Grisham of India, but my expectations were quite lost, I thought it would be moderate mystery laden with dramatized events, but to my surprise it was logical, technical thriller rather than factual and dramatized thriller.

So, when I saw the new book is coming from Ravi S. In the Name of God, I was quite excited, so I picked up little high expectations, as compared to previous one. It started with a bang, a dead body in temple, followed by heist in Wafi mall Dubai, followed by Ancient antique smuggling, Kerala king dynasty, then there is other angle of jeweler barons, BKC bourse, continue shifting from Kerala to Mumbai then Dubai.

The plot, subplots, the characters how they build up, the murders how they had happened, technical and medical details, how the subplots connected reaching towards final conclusion is totally filled with twists and unexpected turns. Imagine a heist starting in Dubai and perpetrator leave a clue which took the investigation to Delhi, then there is something happening in richest temple of Anantha Padmanabha Swamy Temple India, the wealth it contains, custodian issues, mixing these stories is quite challenging (because if not done properly it will feel like a pure fictions) but I would say in this part author has done great deal of work in research, it is piece of fiction which didn't seem fiction.

Also thanks to Ravi S for introducing joel Arthur Rosenthal and also shedding a little light to Sunanda Pushkar's death...

Those who read mysteries will definitely try to scratch their head to find out real killer, and they try to contemplate with investigation of Kabir khan, trust me it will all go in vain, it was nearly impossible to find out the real killer.

While reading *In the name of God* I didn't feel like anything like John Grisham on the other hand I felt quite like David Baldacci or Vince Flynn, I would recommend to Ravi he should proceed with series like with officer Kabir Khan, starting from background and the next mission.

All in all, it is a thriller in true essence, and after a long time I have read something like this totally dark, nerve biting, gripping, hard to put down, jaw dropping finale. If you read thrillers you will truly feel the research which author has put in this piece. It is not masterpiece from Ravi, but certainly this book which really deserve high regards,

As a ritual takeaways from this book :-

*"Almost all the criminals in the world are foolish, driven by greed, they commit a crime. They assume that the crime is harmless one, for invariably they don't know the full story."*

*I think alike with the below one....*

*"We are god fearing, yet we do not let slip a single opportunity to strip our Gods of all dignity and plunder their temples. That's our culture, we are possibly most corrupt race in the world. "*

*Little enlightenment :*

*Why a person commits a crime- there are possibly six reasons - love, faith, greed, boredom, fear or revenge....*

Hope to read more from Ravi Subramanian and won't be surprised if this will be adapted to TV series or movies.

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## **Samidha Kalia says**

*\*NOTE: A copy of the book was provided in exchange for an honest review. All opinions are my own, I would like to thank the publisher, Penguin India, for this.\**

**4.5 Stars.**

**????1/2**

Why a person commits a crime- there are possibly six reasons - love, faith, greed, boredom, fear or revenge.

Thrilling. Exciting. Shocking. These are the only adjectives that I can use for *In the Name of God*.

What starts off as Wafi Mall Heist, quickly escalates into a larger issue than **just a robbery**. It combines almost all corners of India – from Surat, to Mumbai, to Thiruvananthapuram. This book ropes in all the elements that a good thriller is supposed to have. I would not like to talk about the plot much, lest I give away some spoiler. Suffice is to say, that if you read the first chapter, you won't be able to put the book

down.

It is gripping from the start to the end. I hadn't even realised that I had already read two hundred pages. The characters are *plenty* but unique. There is crime, murder and a *logical* investigation. The sites as well as history is well researched, the sub-plots seamlessly connect to the main plot. Almost all of the medical and other resource aid is done with a rational approach and not some over the top fantasy which usually tends to happen. The chapters are short, the writing style is fluid, and it is one of the **best thrillers** India has produced. More so, some of the characters like the King of Travancore/Kerala, are real life figures : so association becomes easy. It keeps hinting at real like events, like the Sunanada Pushkar case, which just gives it an element of reality.

This Temple enjoys immense political patronage. The who's who of India's polity and business is a devotee. Anything that changes the status quo will face huge resistance.

It is definitely one of the better novels that I have read this year. It covertly hints at political power and religion, but that doesn't become the focus of the novel. It remains true to its genre. Kabir Khan was a dynamic, brilliant character, and so were the *sixteen other* people who occupy space in this novel. The best part about the author is that he isn't loyal to any character, so all the shades and shortcomings are visible through the third person narrative.

The justice system, police as well as CBI seem like a real setting where clues *aren't* just falling from the sky – but are decoded by applying adequate use of technology ~~and brain~~. The pace is fast moving, and unearths a lot of secrets and hidden links that we usually would've missed. Ravi Subramanian never lets the reader pre-empt his clues, instead, mostly, the reader and the character realises the same thing, at almost the same time.

The problem with lying was that while the first few lines were thought through, the subsequent ones tended to fall apart. That's why no liar emerged unscathed from a sustained interrogation.

I would love to see and hear more from Kabir Khan, I wish he would become a series already. Subramanian has been compared to authors like John Grisham and Lee Child, but I would say he has more of a Dan Brown-ish, David Baldacci kinda vibe.

However, one thing is for certain, I am definitely picking up more books by this author. So, if you want to read a fast-paced, action-packed, numerous plot twists culminating in a great crime-thriller, you shouldn't hesitate before picking this up.

As he stood there at the window looking out into he distance, he couldn't help but wonder at what all people were willing to do in the name of God.

- Samidha

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## **Aryan Sarath says**

After giving continuous hits like *The Incredible Banker*, *Bankrupt*, *If God was a Banker*, *God is a Gamer & The Bestseller She Wrote*, Ravi Subramanian is back again with a bang. This time, it was the most sensational topic which had kept all of us on toes a few years back - The hidden treasure of Padmanabhaswamy Temple in Kerala.

He has used the sensational news in this new novel in a very subtle manner combining some of the real life events like donation of an elephant to the temple by India Cements N Srinivasan making it a real life thriller.

The story would keep you guessing as to who the real culprit was till the end. Initially I too thought that I did find the murderer but I was wrong in the end. There were lot of twists and turns which was handled so very neatly by the author.

The story begins with treasure being found in the temple and chaos that surrounds it as to whether they need to be documented and who would be the custodian and things like that but it gets into a different dimension when couple of murder takes place. I am not mentioning the name of the characters as it may play a spoilsport.

Why did these murders happen?

Who was behind it?

Was it for the treasure or something else?

Were the culprits been found and brought to the justice?

There were so many why's which can be answered only when you buy this book and read it completely. I am sure that you would not feel fatigued reading this 405 page marvel. It was the usual style of the author who has never failed to enthrall the readers like in the past.

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## **Anantha Narayanan says**

A well thought book, but completed in hurry. A New genre I think, which making fiction out of news events. I think this is the best way to summarize the book.

While reading it till end of part 2 (of 3), it was nail biting. I couldn't keep the book down till that point. But after that the expectations suddenly collapsed and a less impressive climax followed.

The author has managed to piece together various news headlines and as a jigsaw puzzle he fitted it very well in this book. But the main plot where the story unwinds transforms into a mere sub-plot.

Linking events like Dubai mall heist, opening of temple vaults of Sree Padmanabhaswamy, Mumbai blasts, returning of Lord Nataraja by Australia to PM Modi, etc makes up sub plot of the fiction. The main plot is only revealed in climax, but still unclear.

Efforts to tarnish the image of padmanabhadasa doesn't go unnoticed. Not sure how much research was done to make this claim. I don't think any Malayali would buy this.

Rajan, who is incidental in arranging the opening of temple vaults (and the story) hides away to oblivion.

The unparalleled unison in the enquiry team is nothing short of fantasy. Where else can a Tamil Nadu DIG,



Additional director CBI, and Kerala DGP jointly enquire a case?

Now to say about the climax itself. Totally hollow and looks like the author wanted a forced thrilling end.

In nutshell a good thriller for 2/3rd of the book and a lame climax. Worth reading once.

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### **Shivangi Yadav says**

Honestly I just picked up this book because of the message about Nirav Choksi that went viral after the huge scam. And trust me, never ever do that.

To cut a long story short, I plodded through the book, because I refused to give up and the book refused to end.

There are too many stories, too many sub-plots and too many characters for the book to pull off any convincingly. Half the time you don't know who is coming or going and why.

By the end I was just rolling my eyes and speed reading.

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### **Kala Ravi Sarathy says**

With 'In the name of God', Ravi Subramanian is back in my good books! I've read and enjoyed all his books bar his last one, 'The Bestseller...!' What I liked: I think it is a brilliant theme, close to the hearts of all who followed the news of the riches of this famed temple. The story is strewn with plots within plots and red herrings. I liked the author's in depth research on the topography, intelligence procedures, hospitality tech workings as it lends so much authenticity to the story. The story weaves effortlessly from one locale to another, again great research!

What could have been better: The characters are interesting yet one doesn't connect with any of them. I mean, I didn't feel like rooting for anyone, love or hate any of them. The pace is good yet one aches for the long drawn chase to end. Towards the end, even the author seems to be in a rush to tie up loose ends and call it a wrap. The initial mystique and intrigue are lost somewhere along the way. Quite like Dan Brown's books. Still, I would say it was an engaging read that kept me hooked till the end.

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### **Girish says**

Ravi Subramanian's book is an intelligent fast paced thriller put together from some major eye grabbing headlines around the world. A book pacy enough to want to know how it all pans out - except it meanders quite a bit.

With the supreme court decree to audit the sealed vaults of Anantha Padmanabha Swamy Temple to decide who should control the temple administration, we get the name of God invoked multiple times. When a member of the audit team of the Anantha Padmanabha Swami temple is killed 2 days after a body is found in the theertha kulam, the Thamburan establishes it is God's will. Except, the police and CBI refuse to back off. There is also another track of international ring for smuggled idols from India which is being pursued by the CBI.

Linking the Wafi Mall Heist in Dubai, with serial bombings in Mumbai and the wealth of Anantha Padmanabha Swami temple is intself quite a stretch of imagination (What if true?). A proper procedural investigation into 2 murders in the span of 3 days in Tiruvananthapuram involving CBI investigator Kabir

Khan, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Mumbai police officers. Based on the source of the news articles the descriptions are fairly accurate of facts, which make it difficult to set apart the fiction.

On it's wave it takes on Nirav Choksi's clout in jewel design and banking (before the PNB fiasco), the royal family's stance in the temple (N.Srinivasan too) and the political pressure surrounding high profile investigations. As the investigation progresses, the book decides to play it safe by closing only the fictional story line and leaving all the factual storylines as open ended possibilities. So much so that you wonder what just happened after the story ends.

For a non banking thriller, this is as good, if not better, than the best Indian thrillers out there. One complaint is the cheap thrill of not passing all the information to readers could have been avoided.

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### **Andrew Bernstein says**

Another one picked up in India on the raving recommendation of a bookstore clerk. It started strong, surprisingly strong, yet finished up with a bit of chaos. Well done, and apparently related to some real-life news events, the writing was pretty crisp and the pages flipped fast. A lot of characters to follow, but that was actually ok till the end when the writing felt rushed and a little forced with all the plot twists and turns. The insights into how India "works" can be enlightening, from police interrogation "strategies" to social nuances. I did also appreciate that I had actually been to some of the locations used in the book. 4 star first 3/4th, with a 2.5 star finish.

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### **Jayasree B says**

Ravi Subramanian has done a brilliant job with his new book. Of course, there is the mystery and the whodunit element of the book, but there is also insight into the workings of smuggling rings, drugs, and the history of the temple and its surroundings. It was a glorious work which was well researched and an absolute joy to read. (At a certain point, I might have wanted to reach into the story and take the vehicle Kabir Khan was travelling in and actually move it to the place where he was travelling to. Not because they or the story were slow, but because I couldn't wait for the 'what happens next' moment.)

*For the entire review, visit [Frost At Midnite](#).*

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