

THE VOICE from BEYOND THE VOID



Words of Guruji - Real Faith

Everybody more or less proclaims his deep faith in God. How much of a deep faith they all have. It is so easy to avow verbally about the devotion to the Lord. Most of us think faith only means a complete belief in the Lord that he will help us in times of dire need, etc. Actually speaking, we have faith even in our servant whom we entrust with lakhs of rupees for doing some bank transactions through the servant. But you don't love the servant. The real faith is there when you love the other one with all your heart and soul. Where there is love, faith has to be there and not vice versa. Unless a crisis occurs and our faith is tried on the anvil of a real experience, we never know ourselves as to how much faith we have. If you have 100% faith and trust in him, everything will be taken care of. Everything will happen; but I don't know what will happen in case there is a least amount of suspicion. Only 100% surrender helps.

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Issue 11:

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Jiva is the same as the paramatma – when once it joins the mind and body it accumulates all conditioning.

Because of the conditioning it is suffering. Ignore your body, mind suffering and keep your mind always on the Lord. In case of Jivamuktas, there is no conditioning since their mind doesn't exist as separate and they are merged with the totality.

Disclaimer:

The views expressed in the various articles in this newsletter do not necessarily represent Swamiji's views. The views are authors' own.

First Aradhana Day Celebrations of Sri Gurudev Swami Shantananda Puri Maharaj

Sri Gurudev's Mahasamadhi occurred on 14th October 2014. Swamiji in one of his old manuscripts had mentioned that the Aradhana of a realised soul is to be observed based on the lunar position. The Aradhana of all Mahatmas are usually observed on the basis of lunar calendar. Consultations were made to senior devotees and priests including priest of Sri Ramanasramam. They advised that the Aradhana is to be observed in the Tamil month of PURATTASI on KRISHNA PAKSHA SHASHTI DAY (Shashti coming after Pournami and before Amavasya).

Accordingly Sri Swamiji's first Aradhana (Anniversary) was observed on Saturday, 3rd October 2015 at the adhistanam situated at Guru Bhoomi, Pandhitapattu Village, Perumbakkam Road, Survey No. 26/7D, Tiruvannamalai. The functions commenced on 2nd October and lasted till 10th October. A large number of devotees participated in the functions with devotion and fervour.



Swami Shantatmananda, Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi graced the functions by his presence. He arrived on 2nd October and had a satsang session with devotees from 2 PM to 4 PM. On the same day evening from 6.30 PM to 9 PM, the famous South Indian Sampradaya Bhajan artist Sri Udayloor Kalyanaraman and his troupe enthralled the devotees with their soulful singing of several devotional songs, many of which were on Mahima (Greatness) of Gurus. The day ended with offerings and arati at Gurudev's adhishtanam followed by dinner by devotees.

On 3rd October 2015, milk offering was made to Sri Gurudev at the adhistanam at 7 AM in the presence of Swami Shantatmananda. Immediately thereafter Sri Swamiji released the second volume of "Selected Works" by handing over the copy of the book kept at the adhistanam to Sri. K. Subrahmonyan (popularly known as KVS) - a senior devotee of Bhagavan Ramana and close friend of Sri Gurudev. This was followed by breakfast.

At 7.30 AM around 15 Vedic Pandit's from Chennai chanted Sri Rudra Ghanan. This rare and traditional chanting which lasted for 2.5 hours was a rare spiritual treat for all the devotees. Following this the devotees collectively and blissfully rendered "Aksharamanamalai" and "Sri Lalita Sahasranamam". This was followed by archana (floral offerings) by all the assembled devotees at the Samadhi mandapam, with the chanting of Guru Ashtottaram (108 names of Guru).



After the Archana offerings of vastra (dresses) and dakshina was made to the assembled sadhus. Food offering was made to Sri Gurudev and Arati was performed. The sadhus and all the devotees partook the lunch.

In the evening at 4.30 PM, Bhagavatha Saptaham commenced with Sri Viswantahan from Palakkad, Kerala as the Acharya with a group of devotees from Kerala. Bhagvatha Mahatmyam (the glory of Bhagavatham from Sri Padmapuranam) was read. This was followed by chanting of Sri Vishnu Sahasranamam and offering and Arati at the Mandap.



From 4th October onwards Bhagvatha Saptaham (reading of Bhagvatham Sanskrit text in the conventional manner) took place for seven continuous days from 6 am to 12 noon along with chanting of Sri Vishnu Sahasranamam. On the 7th day (10th October) the saptaham concluded with recitation of Srimad Bhagvad Gita.



Release of Sri Gurudev's Dhyana Sloka

A Dhyana Sloka (Meditation hymn) is a Sanskrit couplet describing the qualities of a spiritual master or a saint. A need was felt to have a Dhyana Sloka for Swami Shantananda Puri and based on Sri Anandji's request, one of the senior devotees of our Gurudev, Bhaktakavi Sri. T.B.Lakshmana Rao, a Bangalore based scholar, kindly composed a dhyana sloka. This was examined and approved by Mahamandaleswar HH. Sri Jayendra Puri Mahaswamiji of Kailash Ashrama Mahasamsthana, Bangalore.

By Sri Gurrudev's Grace the Dhyana Sloka was dedicated to Sri Gurudev at his adhistana at Gurubhoomi on 4th October 2015, by Bhagavatha Acharya Sri Viswanathan of Palakkad.

This Dhyana Sloka prays to Sri Gurudev for bestowing all spiritual as well as worldly benefits. It is meant for chanting by all devotees of Sri Gurudev before commencing and after concluding their daily prayers / japa / meditation.

ध्यानस्तोकः

वेदान्तादिसमस्तशास्त्रजलधिं कारुण्यजन्मस्थलं
जीवन्मुक्तयतीश्वरं भयहरं वैराग्यभूषान्वितम् ।
सौलभ्यादिगुणोज्वलं शिवसमं मन्दस्मितं तापसं
शान्तानन्दपुरिं नमामि सततं सर्वार्थसंसिद्धये ॥

Vedaantaadi-samasta-shaastrajaladhim kaarunya-janmasthalam
Jeevannmukta-yateeshwaram Bhayaharam Vairagyabhushaanvitam I
Saulabhyaadi-gunojwalam Sivasamam mandasmitam taapasam
Shantanandapurim namaami satatam sarvaartha samsiddhaye II

I incessantly bow down to Sri Shantananda Puri Swamiji,
the ocean of Upanishadic and Scriptural Lore, the origin of compassion,
the liberated Lord par excellence among the saints,
the one who dispels fear, the one adorned by the jewel of dispassion,
the one embellished with the radiance of easy approachability,
standing on par with Lord Siva, the ever smiling ascetic,
for the attainment of all purushaarthaas (dharma, artha, kaama, moksha)

Special Article Series: On Surrender

Compiled from various sources

Insights of Spiritual Masters in the recent centuries such as Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa along with those of our Guruji, Swami Shantananda Puri have been compiled and presented on a topic of spiritual significance. This month's article is on surrender.

Our humble gratitude to Sri Ramanasramam and Sri Ramakrishna Mission for granting permission to reproduce content from their publications in our newsletters. The current article includes extracts from Gems from Bhagavan compiled by Sri A. Devaraja Mudaliar, the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna and words of Swami Shantananda Puri Maharaj.

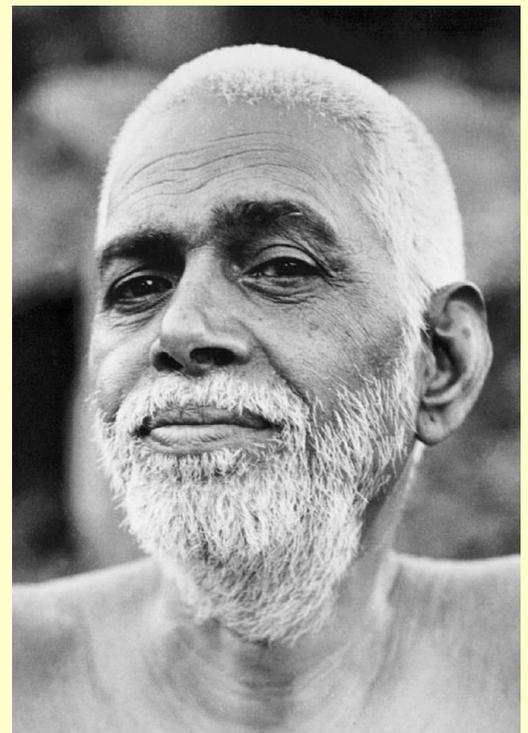
Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi:

God will bear whatever burdens we put on Him. All things are being carried on by the omnipotent power of a Supreme God. Instead of submitting ourselves to It, why should we always be planning, 'We should do this or that'. Knowing that the train carries all the load, why should we, travelling therein, suffer by carrying our small bundle on our heads, instead of leaving it on the train and being happy.

The story of Ashtavakra teaches that in order to experience Brahma Jnana all that is necessary is to surrender yourself completely to the Guru, to give up your notion of 'I' and 'mine'. If these are surrendered, what remains is the Reality.

There are two ways of achieving surrender. One is looking into the source of the 'I' and merging into that source. The other is feeling, 'I am helpless myself, God alone is all powerful, and except by throwing myself completely on Him, there is no other means of safety for me'; and thus gradually developing the conviction that God alone exists and the ego does not count. Both methods lead to the same goal. Complete surrender is another name for jnana or liberation.

Surrender to Him and abide by His Will If you ask Him to do as you like it is not surrender but command to God. You cannot have Him obey you and yet think you have surrendered. He knows what is best and when and how to do it. His is the burden. You have no longer any cares. All your cares are His. Such is surrender. That is bhakti.



Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa

Can one know God through reasoning? Be His servant, surrender yourself to Him, and then pray to Him.

Who can ever know God? I don't even try. I only call on Him as Mother. Let Mother do whatever She likes. I shall know Her if it is Her will; but I shall be happy to remain ignorant if She wills otherwise. My nature is that of a kitten. It only cries, 'Mew, mew!' The rest it leaves to its mother. The mother cat puts the kitten sometimes in the kitchen and sometimes on the master's bed. The young child wants only his mother. He doesn't know how wealthy his mother is, and he doesn't even want to know. He knows only, 'I have a mother; why should I worry?' Even the child of the maidservant knows that he has a mother. If he quarrels with the son of the master, he says: 'I shall tell my mother. I have a mother.' My attitude, too, is that of a child.



Surrender yourself to God and you will achieve everything. This is the stoutest hedge of all, For Death himself cannot come near it.

Swami Shantananda Puri

Surrender is when you become absolutely nil and He alone is. It is not about falling at the feet of the Guru. Hundred percent surrender means joining together. It is about how you can, you make yourself absolutely nil and He alone remains. That is the real surrender.

Never bother what happens, never bother of what will happen. Even if you are exhausted with the wind of samsara with will of Lord, never bother about the result. People think, "I should have done like this, I would have been promoted." Never think, you will get as He thinks, it cannot be otherwise. Leave it to Him.



What is surrender? After giving power of attorney you have no right to say anything. When once you have surrendered to the God, you have no right to think of moksha. There is no point repeating 'I surrender' morning and evening. If you do, your surrender is not real. Once you say 'saranam ayyapa' [meaning I seek refuge in You], it is over once and for all. Surrender will develop by going to satsanga and where people are talking about Him.

Conversation between a devotee and Guruji on progress in Spirituality

5.53pm, A1 Room, November 2013 , Transcribed by Aparna, Tiruvannamalai

Devotee: Guruji, how can one know the progress one is making in spirituality?

Guruji: See when you are making a gross item like a building or a house. You can say that we have finished. You have put the foundation; on another day you say, "I have come to the wall level," the next day you say "I have come to the roof level." Like that you say each day about the progress. Now the question is how to find out the progress in spirituality.

Example 1:

A person is having Rs. 50 lakhs in cash and he has kept in his bag. He forgot to put the money in the bank. With that bag, he goes to sleep and during the sleep he get a dream. The dream is that he is standing outside Tirupati Venkateswara Swamy Temple and he is a beggar. He is calling to everybody, "You are bringing ten thousand, twenty thousand rupees and giving in donation – why don't you give some money to me? I haven't eaten in the last five days, atleast give me five rupees?"



Now at that time is he a beggar or a billionaire?

Devotee: At this time he is a beggar.

Guruji: Then where did the fifty lakhs rupees go? See whatever is there, he is still a millionaire. He has got so much money with him. So he is still rich but he has got an illusion that he has got nothing. In reality he is still a millionaire. Illusion is not actuality. So he never became a beggar. He merely forgot about his wealth. Every morning he gets up. And what is the progress? From the beggar he became clerk, from the clerk he became head clerk, from the head clerk he became an officer, as an officer he earned a lot of money and he became a big businessman – there is progress is it not?

So what happened in reality? The illusion went away immediately when he woke up and he got into the original self. There is no progress at all.

When life is simply a drama, the question of actuality does not arise. Take the case of a drama where one actor is playing multiple roles. In the drama, when did Ravana become Rama? First he became Sugreeva, from Sugreeva he became a little better and became Rama. He was a Ravana and he was Rama. When the illusion went, Ravana went away and Rama went away. He was actually an income tax commissioner who had taken part in the drama, that's all. So there is no progress at all. Progress comes when it is a reality. In reality, he was always a millionaire. Nothing has happened.

Similarly, you are always part of the Big energy. You are the Brahman and part of the Brahman. And at no time you became somebody else. You are having a dream that you are Mrs. D and all that. When are you not the Brahman? So you are now praying, "Oh God, please help me and all that." But the moment the dream is over, you get up and become the original. There is no progress in these things. When the illusion goes, immediately you become That.

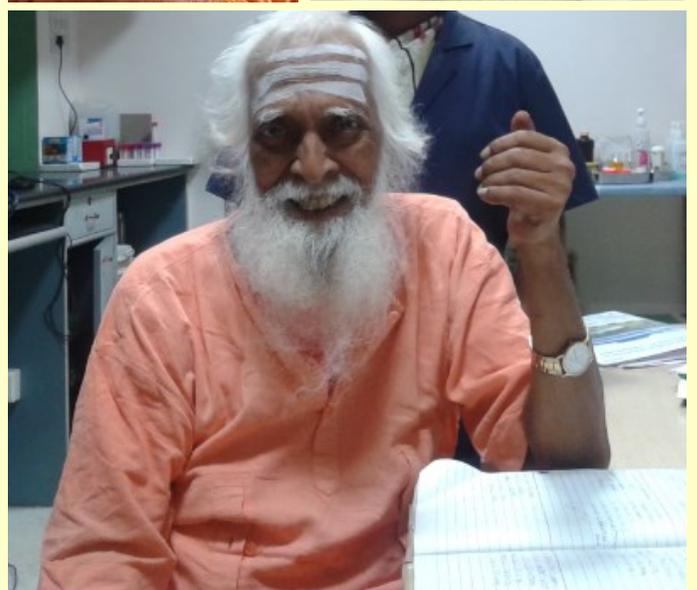
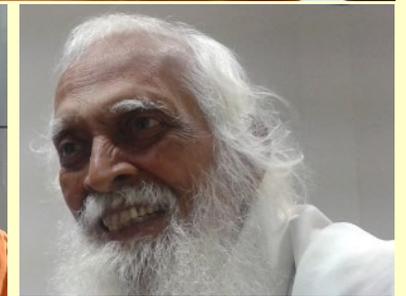
Example 2:

A man thinks he is a horse. He goes on telling, "I am a horse, I am a horse." Two years are over and he still thinks that he is a horse. A doctor came and he took him to a mirror. He shook his head and the "Horse" head. The Doctor asks the person "Your head and my head, is it not similar? It is no different from yours. You are having an illusion. Come on and come out of it." The person then replies, "Yes, yes, I am just like you." Now is that progress? From the horse, did he become a cow and then something else and then a man? No. The moment the illusion went, he became the original.

One needs to remember that I am always 'That', the question of progress does not arise.



Memories of our Gurudev [photos taken in 2014 when Guruji was in Pondicherry Hospital]



From the 'Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna' - Singing by the Master

Acknowledgements to Sri Ramakrishna Mission

Who is there that can understand what Mother Kali is?
Even the six darsanas are powerless to reveal Her.
It is She, the scriptures say, that is the Inner Self
Of the yogi, who in Self discovers all his joy;
She that, of Her own sweet will, inhabits every living thing.

The macrocosm and microcosm rest in the Mother's womb;
Now do you see how vast it is? In the Muladhara
The yogi meditates on Her, and in the Sahasrara:
Who but Siva has beheld Her as She really is?
Within the lotus wilderness She sports beside Her Mate, the Swan.

When man aspires to understand Her, Ramprasad must smile;
To think of knowing Her, he says, is quite as laughable
As to imagine one can swim across the boundless sea.
But while my mind has understood, alas! my heart has not;
Though but a dwarf, it still would strive to make a captive of the moon.

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Address of Adhistanam:

Guru Bhoomi

Pandhitapattu Village, Perumbakkam Road, Survey No. 26/7D,

Tiruvannamalai

Timings:

Morning: 8-11am; Evening: 4-6pm

Getting there: Auto drivers can take you to this place from Ramanasramam gate. Some numbers of auto drivers:

Pasha: 09442809982

Seenu: 09486274689

