

THE VOICE from BEYOND THE VOID



Words of Guruji

1. Do not be ambitious and expecting results for your actions/ sadhana in material / spiritual sphere. Do not complain, evaluate, demand, fret and fume about your so called progress. Just do your part and try to accept whatever comes to you from GOD naturally during your sadhana. This is full surrender. After surrendering we forfeit all rights and let go things. Then only Lord will step in. As long as you are expecting and looking for results or progress, the Divine will not manifest. This is a Law.

2. For most of your available time, think of GOD - Satata Smarana i.e. continuous remembrance. Do Japa (mental) incessantly as far as possible and on all occasions while walking, eating, etc.

3. Surrender is the key word. Your only and intense prayer for at least 5 or 10 minutes should be for Lord's grace. The intense prayer for at least those 5 to 10 minutes is surrender. Absolute subjugation of ego for 15 minutes is possible definitely.

[Source: Clarifications of doubts of a Sadhak, 06 January 2011]

Issue 12:
01 April 2016

So long as you think that you are an individual Sadhak struggling to get Jnana, that very thought is due to ignorance. You are a radical and integral part of the Lord who is doing His LILA through the various bodies and minds. You are the Director of the Drama and not a mere actor. Enjoy the Drama. The Drama has to end and the so called MOKSHA is a must.

Inside this issue:

Special Article Series: On Japa	2
Message during Mahakumbha Abhishekam - Sri Rajarajeshwari Temple, Bangalore [2014]	5
Conversation between a devotee and Guruji	8
On Grace	9
Memories of our Gurudev	11
On Suffering and Pain	12

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

Special Article Series: On Japa

Compiled from various sources

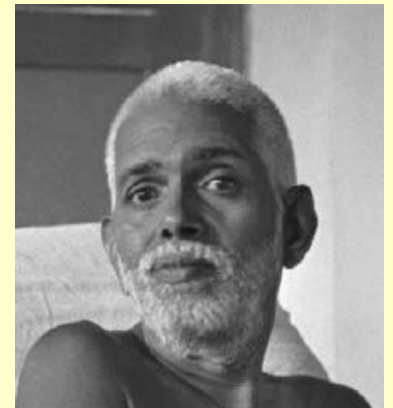
Insights of Spiritual Masters in the recent centuries such as Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa along with those of our Guruji, Swami Shantananda Puri have been compiled and presented on a topic of spiritual significance. This month's article is on Japa.

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, Talks by Bhagavan Ramana, words of Sri Sarada Devi and Swami Shantananda Puri Maharaj.

Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi

Japa means clinging to one thought to the exclusion of all other thoughts. That is the purpose of japa; it leads to dhyana which ends in Self-Realisation.

Reality being yourself, there is nothing for you to realize. All regard the unreal as real. What is required is that you give up regarding the unreal as real. The object of all meditation (dhyana) or japa is only that, to give up all thoughts regarding the non-self, to give up many thoughts and to hold on to one thought. The object of all sadhana is to make the mind one-pointed, to concentrate it on one thought and thus exclude our many thoughts. If we do this, eventually even the one thought will go and the mind will get extinguished in its source.



Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi



- The mind keeps well when engaged in work. And yet Japa, meditation, prayer also are specially needed. You must at least sit down once in the morning and again in the evening. That acts as a rudder to a boat.
- As wind removes the cloud, so the Name of God destroys the cloud of worldliness.
- Do you know the significance of Japa and other spiritual practices? By these, the power of the sense-organs is subdued.
- A devotee took a tiny banyan seed and said to Mother, "Look, Mother, it is tinier even than the tiniest seed we know. From this will spring a giant tree! How strange!" "Indeed, it will," Mother replied. "See what a tiny seed is the Name of God. From it in time come

divine moods, devotion, love, and spiritual consummation.”

- The conjunction of day and night is the most auspicious time for calling on God. The mind remains pure at this time.”
- True it is that there is no hard and fast rule about the time of Japa, yet morning and evening are the favourable periods. Whatever the time be, you must do Japa every day. It is not good to forgo it any day.”
- Once a devotee forgot how to count the repetitions of the Mantra on his fingers. Mother said, “What does it matter? The purpose of all this is to direct the mind towards God.”

Swami Shantananda Puri

Question: Everyday we are doing Paath (recitation of the holy books, etc.). Is that better or Japa better? What is better? [This question was put across to Guruji by an old lady from Patna, who is also linked to Vashishta Guha.]

Response of Guruji:

As regards paath [recitation] is concerned, it only means daily reading of some holy book. Like the Sikhs read daily, or the Christians read certain portion of bible each day. Some read Ramayana or Vishnu Sahasranama. Japa is given by a Guru. In later years of practice, a disciple is expected to spend 8-9 hours in japa each day.

Now comes the question which is better?

Naturally when Japa / mantra recitation is given by a Guru, it is more important. Mantra alone is given by a Guru. Paath [recitation] is read by the self and has a lesser impact.



Mantras have all come to Maharishis doing sincere sadhana. They are sound effects when we say ka / ra, etc. Ra is the agni beeja, Lord of fire. It is so subtle that it cannot be seen.

So what does Japa do? It can eliminate the vasanas or tendencies from several births. For example, ma – Amrit beeja, it is a rejuvenator and improves concentration towards adhyatmic or spiritual side.

Everyone has some defect, some have anger, some jealousy, etc. Each one has his own defect and

accordingly the Guru chooses the right mantra for the shishya. Sometimes before giving the mantra the Guru asks which God do you like. This liking for the Lord comes from various births. The recitation of the mantras takes away the respective defects.

Thirdly, in Japa, you not only get just a Guru but also his lineage. Even if one of them is a hypocrite, then the effect of the others in the lineage continue. Say for example Totapuri Maharaj, Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Brahmananda Maharaj, etc. All their wordings or sounds containing their vibrations have come into Shantananda.

Even if one of the members in the lineage is a fraud, the others will be sufficient to carry us through. Hence we don't just choose a Guru but also see his lineage. We should see the lineage before choosing a Guru. However, 80 to 90% of the people just get tempted by the Guru and his lectures and forget to see the lineage. All these things show that any day Japa is greater than any readings alone.



Where we are not able to get a Guru, then we could choose any God we like.

In addition, one can do paath [recitation] like Bhagavad Gita, or understand some of the slokas.

People usually do paath [recitation] for specific things; like someone has lost a job, bag, etc. and does not know what to do. As such paath [recitation] is generally meant for specific worldly purposes – very rarely it helps in getting moksha. Main benefit is obtaining worldly benefits by doing path [recitation] .

Japa is the route to moksha – to be permanently out of the dream drama.

We are part of that Supreme Being and by Japa we can always be aware of it.

Message during Mahakumbha Abhishekam - Sri Rajarajeshwari Temple, Bangalore By Swami Shantananda Puri Maharaj

Below is Gururji's Message on the occasion of the Mahakumbha Abhishekam of the Rajagopuram of Sri Rajarajeshwari Temple at Rajarajeshwari Nagar in Bangalore on July 8 2014:

Sarvamangala mangalye Sive Sarvartha Sadhake

Saranye Trymbike Devi Narayani Namostute

I bow to the Holy feet of Sri Rajarajeshwari, my Divine Mother as also to the revered Maha Mandaleshwar Sri Jayendra Puri Maharaj with all humility, respect and love. I shall first talk what little I know about H. H. Thiruchi Swamigal in my personal capacity and thereafter share also the very little knowledge I have of the Divine Mother.



H. H. Thiruchi Swamigal was an eminent disciple of an equally eminent Guru. His Guru Shivpuri Maharaj was the Gurubhai of Totapuri Maharaj, the sanyas Guru of Swami Ramakrishna Paramahansa. He mainly devoted his life to the revival of the temple culture and the worship of the all powerful divine mother Raja Rajeshwari. Whoever went to him with a desire in his mind, came back with his desires fulfilled. He was a silent worker. The present temple here of Sri Raja Rajeshwari



was got constructed by him and the mother was installed. Go and stand before that mother for one minute, you will then know what a high voltage of power emanates from the Goddess and pervades all your body.

He was always jocular and used to crack some jokes with me but he loved me also very dearly. Whenever I went to him, he used to abandon the group with whom he had been conversing and turned all his loving

and kindly attention to me. He always used to love to hear me conversing in Sanskrit with the present Maha Mandaleshwar and his successor and he used to listen to it with a very evident ecstatic pleasure. Once he described to me how he went to the Vatican and had an interview with the Pope. He presented the Pope with a Siva linga with all instructions for worship. Being a liberated soul, he

never had any fears and was never awed by any of the persons irrespective of the status they held in this world. I can never forget his smiling and loving face. I mentally prostrate to him again and again [still my heart is not satisfied].

H. H. Thiruchi Swamigal was born on 29th March 1929 and he blessed this world with his presence for a period of about 76 years.

My loving prostrations again and again to his loving memory and his continued presence even after shaking off his mortal coil. Oh revered saint of Kailas Ashram, how blessed you have made me!

9th of July is a sacred day when the Rajarajeshwari temple which was got built by H. H. the Trichy Swamigal, is having its Kumbabishekam (rejuvenation day). In commemoration of it, let us have a few thoughts regarding the glory of the Divine Mother. As per the Srividya sampradaya, the highest reality and the only reality is Raja Rajeshwari who is also known as Lalitambika, Mahatripurasundari, Parashakti, etc.

It is the Ultimate Reality namely, the mother Raja Rajeshwari herself has created this dream like world out of herself and thus she became all. That is why, in one of the thousand names it is told that she is *Brahmatmaikya-svaroopinyai namaha* – the one who is identical with the Brahman and the Atman as representing the Universal totality. She is called the Brahman. As she has become all the beings, etc., the quantum which has gone into the making of the individual is called the Self or Atman. In the same way, another of the thousand names says that she is identical with Siva as well as Sakti.

The special way in which she is worshipped by a group of people is called Tantra marga. There again, she can be worshipped in an orthodox way which is called Samayachara or in a highly unorthodox way using intimacy with ladies and fish, meat, liquor, etc. which is called the Vamachara.

There are also separate high powered mantras called the Srividya mantras. The basic Srividya mantra contains fifteen letters and is called Panchadasi which is the base for the other mantras known as Sodasi, Mahasodasi, Saubhagya Panchadasi, etc. In the north the most popular Srividya mantra has only nine letters and is called Navakshari. There are two types of mantras in general – the one which will increase our enjoyment and comforts in this world while the other will give us liberation or moksha. The specialty of the Srividya mantras is they will give both bhoga and moksha, i.e. worldly enjoyment as also liberation.

Sri Sundari Sevana Tatparanam

Bhogascha Mokshascha Karastha Eva

The Sri Vidya mantra is considered so potent that only two types of persons will be able to get the diksha of this mantra.

Athava Paschimam Janma

Athava Sankarah Swayam

Only those who have no more rebirths and are to get moksha in this very birth will get this mantra. Otherwise, if Lord Siva himself goes and begs, the Mother will deign to initiate him in the Srividya mantra.

Who can ever describe fully the glory of the divine mother Sri Raja Rajeshwari, the suzerain queen of the entire world which manifested from Her? A Bhakta says, "I challenge you, I can write all the glories of the Divine Mother by taking the best of materials from this world. At the end of this world, there is a huge black mountain called Anjanagiri. I will get it all powdered as ink powder and dissolve it in the entire ocean. I shall take a small bough from the famous wish fulfilling tree [the Kalpa vriksha]. That will be useful as my pen for dipping into the ink. The entire surface of the earth will form the paper required to list her glories." The Goddess of learning, Mother Saraswati will be detailed to work for 24 hours without respite. A realised soul replied, "Oh man, inspite of all these things, Her glories can never be exhausted by writing."

I bow again and again to the holy feet of Sri Rajeshwari, my divine mother and to the holy feet of H. H. Thiruchi Swamigal and also to the holy feet of the present Maha Mandaleswar, H.H. Jayendra Puri Swamigal Maharaj, who is not only an eminently appropriate successor to H. H. Thiruchi Swamigal but has also excelled his own Guru. It is only appropriate because as per our scriptures, a Guru should desire that his disciple excels him.



Conversation between a devotee and Guruji

17 August 2014, Tiruvannamalai

Following are the extracts from a conversation between Guruji and a devotee from Mumbai in 2014:

Adi Sankara says:

Na baddho: Nobody has been bound

Na mukto: There is nobody who is a mukta. When you have never been bound, where is the question of release from that? Where is the question of liberation? You are ever liberated. That is all; as the totality of the energy. There was never anything else. There was no creation at all. So this is also all an illusion.

Na mumukshasya: “Oh, I want moksha, I want moksha.” When you know you have not been bound, why should you ask for moksha? Moksha iccha [desire] is mumukshasya.

Ityesha parmartatha: This is the ultimate truth, whether you believe it or not.

This is called Ajatavada. The unborn theory. That’s all. You are never born at all. But it is very difficult to believe it. But this requires the grace of the Guru, the grace of the Lord.

Then there is no problem. It will come. Because you are no outsider. You are He. He is entertaining himself with the drama. He himself is all the actors. He has become Rama, he has become Dasharatha, he has become Sita, he has become Lava Kusha, then what. It is only one Amitabh Bachchan who has taken all the roles. He became the judge, he became the dacoit, he became the superintendent of police. The superintendent of police is going after the dacoit. The father of the dacoit shouts, “Aye aye don’t shoot him, don’t shoot him, he is your brother!”



You see, you should develop that attitude of looking at the entire thing as an outside picture. Then it will be an entertainment.

Just leave it. What will happen? Whatever is to happen, has to happen. With all your worry, with all your anxiety, with all your fear, you cannot achieve anything. You cannot achieve even the movement of a fingertip. It has to happen. So leave it and enjoy. See what His plan is. How he is taking it.

On Grace [transcribed by Arpana]

December 2013, Tiruvannamalai

Conversation between Guruji and a devotee in December 2013

Devotee: How does the grace of the Lord work?

Guruji: You see among the Hindus there is a particular tree called the wish fulfilling tree or Kalpataru. If you want you may ask the tree, "O wish fulfilling tree I want a beautiful seven story house in Malabar Hills in Bombay". However in order for you to ask the tree you have to walk up to the place where the Kalpatru tree is. You can't ask the tree sitting here in Room A1 in Sri Ramanashramam saying, "O wish fulfilling tree please fulfil this wish of mine". "No". You have to do your sadhana and then reach the particular state and then the grace of the Lord begins. That's all.



Devotee: What is this grace?

Guruji: It's the gravitational force. You take the first three letters GRA (from the word gravitation) and the last two letters CE (from the word force) and you call it GRACE. Between two items there is always a gravitational force. The one attracts the other. The bigger or stronger force attracts the lesser one. Is there anyone greater than God? Naturally the gravitational force is very strong and so when you come there He automatically pulls you to Himself. But up to that you have to go on your own petrol. Do prayers and meditation regularly. That's all. Rest all leave to him. Don't bother about it at all.

Devotee: Swamiji, you said prayers but what prayers?

Guruji: If you don't have any idea you tell the same prayers as given in the Bible. I would suggest that you pray from the heart. Pray to Him one to one. Why should you simply borrow from somebody? Prayers should come from you. So you say, "O Lord I don't know where I am. Sometimes I get confused. Deep down there is faith in you but it is you who has to make my faith firm and sturdy. Lord, sometimes I think I love you. I'm not so sure. Please Lord, unless you bestow your love on me, how can I know how to pray? How to love? You have to do everything. I'm nobody, I'm nothing". In this way you completely pray from your heart. They should be your own words doesn't matter if the spelling is wrong or you pronounce badly. He knows what you are talking about. The papa knows what his child wants. That's all.

Devotee: Is grace there all the time?

Guruji: Yes! Before you were born he has kept food ready for you in the mother.

Devotee: But when something negative happens to me then how do I associate it with grace?

Guruji: You are thinking from the individual point of view. And whatever He is doing is from the uni-

versal point of view. So you can never know it.

Devotee: So we cannot associate grace only with positive things?

Guruji: Grace doesn't think that it comes only for you. The grace of the wind is blowing and you just go and take it and any number of others can take it. So the grace is there. He is more universal than individual.

Devotee: Swamiji, suppose I have a child and he dies. Is that also part of grace? Why?

Guruji: There was an excellent devotee and his only fault was that he was deeply attached to his child. In order to enable the devotee's progress the Lord had to take the child away. This was the only thing which was impeding his progress.

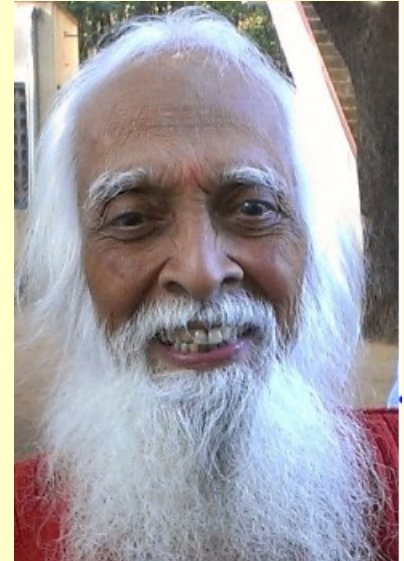
Devotee: So individuals should look at this point of view?

Guruji: You and I with our narrow view cannot understand His point of view. We can know one or two examples but we can never know the extent of His grace which fills the entire universe and all the galaxies.

Devotee: When positive things happen we are happy. When negative things happen do we see their benefits after sometime?

Guruji: Narsimha Swami was a great pleader, a barrister from London. It was the day of his father's shradha (ritual performed in honour of his dead father). On that day there is a custom that until the Brahmins have been fed no one can touch the food. He had two children aged 5 or 6 years. They persistently asked their mother for food. Because of the custom they couldn't be given any food so they were locked up in the terrace. After the ceremony was over and the Brahmins had eaten the parents opened the door and called the boys but neither responded. They searched everywhere and finally found them dead – their bodies floating in the water tank. That same night Narasimha Swami left that place and came to Bhagavan Ramana. Later he was the one who wrote Bhagavan's biography titled "Self Realisation". But he couldn't find his peace of mind here and went about wandering. He went to Shirdi and heard about Shirdi Sai Baba. He read Baba's biography and met the people who knew him. He went to various villages and had long talks with the people. He was convinced about Baba's greatness. He then went from house to house talking about him. He made lots of lockets and distributed them. He came to my school in a village in South India. I noticed he was a short and stout man. Unless his children had died do you think he would have accomplished all this? After all the entire thing is an entertainment, a dream drama. In the dream drama also sometimes there is logic but most of the times we can't make out.

Swamiji laughs!



Memories of our Gurudev [Chennai, December 2012]



On Suffering and Pain

Source: Sadhanas from Guru Vachaka Kovai by Swamiji

One question which we often ask is, “Why God’s good devotees should get sufferings and afflictions?” Actually, it is not meant to hurt them but to strengthen and to make their devotion steady and permanent. The excellent devotees should not be agitated or shaken by these afflictions or ailments but they should take it as the divine grace sent down by God to fortify the mind and make it fit for final liberation. All problems and sufferings arise only in the waking state, i.e. in the dream world which we consider as waking state. To find out where we came from and to go back to the same source is the best way to remove the ills and all evils. Here I remember a story. A boy was getting into a church with a lighted candle in his hand. A bishop who was coming out of the church asked the boy as to who lighted the candle. When the boy affirmed that he had done it himself, the bishop again quipped, “Wherefrom the light came into the candle when you lighted it?” The boy extinguished the candle and asked the Bishop, “Sir, this candle was extinguished in your holy presence. Please tell me where the light has gone. The source from which it came is the same source where it has gone back.” The source from which the billions of beings in this world, all the galaxies, the sun, the moon and all the stars have come, is the one infinite source of the living and loving energy [we use the word ‘energy’ because there is no word in the dictionary to describe the nature of that ultimate Being of perpetual Awareness]. The ultimate Reality of every being is an ocean of pure bliss. Therefore suffering is like the blue colour of the sky – which is a mere illusion in our mind lacking all reality. Bliss alone is the sole reality. Suffering is a false creation of the ego mind. Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi has told elsewhere that while suffering is there, there are no sufferers. It means that suffering is a cap thrown on the road which a person takes and keeps it on his head and complains that it is too narrow and presses on his temples. Bhagavan himself is an example where during the more acute stage of cancer he never showed any signs of suffering or pain.

Website:

<http://www.swamishantanandapurimaharaj.org/>

