

THE VOICE from BEYOND THE VOID



Words of Guruji

Somehow my opinion is we should not dilute our goals by asking for

- (1) Give me a solitary atmosphere
- (2) Let me meditate for a long time

Only one prayer: "Mother, reveal thyself. I want you. (Only final goal)".

Then what is required for that will automatically come. Occasionally we may pray for intense devotion and love and a pure mind.

Mind will always go hither and thither. It is because our love for mother is less. When the love increases we would not like to leave meditation because it will be separation.

All knowledge can flow straight from the Mother.

Issue 19:
01 January 2018

*Why camphor arati?
Camphor through
austerity (tapasya - tap
means austerity and
being heated) makes
itself Nil and merges in
the void.*

*If our heart becomes
white - pure like
camphor and if a Guru
lights it, it will merge in
the great void - the void
of fullness, plentitude.*

Inside this issue:

Oh Death! Where is thy sting?	2
JNANA YOGA [from "A Peep into the Gita"]	4
The knot that remains	6
Article on Gita	8
Conversation with an IAS Officer	9
Photos of Gurudev	11
On death	12

Disclaimer:

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

OH DEATH! WHERE IS THY STING?

Source: **SADHANAS IN BHAGAVAD GITA** by **Swami Shantananda Puri Maharaj**

The fear of death is the most overwhelming and frightening sensation in the minds of most of the people especially when they grow older.

This chapter gives the technique of realization at the last moments of life so that we could attain bliss, peace and immortality.

But one cannot afford to be careless and complacent till the last moments of one's life. Unless this technique is practised diligently all through one's life, it cannot be wielded at the death bed.

All manifestation springs from the limitation of Brahman, the Supreme being who is beyond all and stands alone as imperishable. He is neither the subject (seer) nor the object (seen). He, by his power of Maya, becomes the subject and sees himself as the objects. The Brahman which projects itself as the transcendent subject (called Adhyatma) manifesting as the individual soul (Jiva) residing in each body, stands in another aspect as the eternal object (Moola Prakrti) also, which becomes the unmanifest source of the manifest world of forms which goes on changing all the time (called the physical entity i.e., Adhi Bhutam). On the other hand, Brahman also remains the witnessing consciousness in all the beings, as the indweller (Adhi Daivatam) Purusha. The universal self, the subtle centre from which all beings get their sense power is the (Adhi Daivatam) DIVINE ENTITY.

Because of this two fold nature of Brahman manifesting as the consciousness (Chaitanya) and the insentient (jada) body (which is part of the world of forms), even at the critical hour of death one identifies oneself with the mortal form called body and not with the immortal. It is the imagination



that we are the body which has involved us in disasters and it is again through the imagination identifying ourselves with the immortal that we can get out of this mess. As a man thinketh so he becomes.

कविं पुराणमनुशासितार
मणोरणीयांसमनुस्मरेद्यः ।
सर्वस्य धातारमचिन्त्यरूप
मादित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात् ॥ VIII - 9 ॥

Remembering the Lord at the time of death is the surest way to reach Him. But only he who strives all through his life with continuous practice of meditating on the Lord with a one pointed mind will be able to remember God at death bed. Otherwise, the remembrance of all the worldly activities and relatives to whom we were attached all through our life will only come before the mind's eye. Whatever thoughts come to the mind at the time of death, they alone will influence the nature of subsequent life and rebirth. Constant and one pointed remembrance of the God till death is the key to liberation.

All through life, an aspirant has to fight against all negative tendencies (accumulated as Vasanas) inherited as a legacy from previous births but if he constantly remembers Him and invokes His presence while fighting, success is assured.

Bhakti or devotion expressing itself as constant remembrance of the Lord is the best way to reach the Lord.

One can meditate on the Lord as the Omniscient, the Ancient, the Over-ruler of all beings, the one who is subtler than the minutest particle, the sustainer of all, one of inconceivable form, self-luminous and beyond all darkness:

This is a beautiful verse to meditate upon.

OM is the nearest symbol of the Supreme being. Close the gates of senses by withdrawing the consciousness and keep the mind merged in thoughts of the Lord, while concentrating on the heart centre, at the time of death. Chant OM and leave the body. Thus one could reach the highest state wherefrom there will be no return to Samsara.

Loving devotion with an anguishing heart towards the beloved who is the higher Self is a great force which can take one to the supreme abode of peace and bliss wherefrom there is no return.

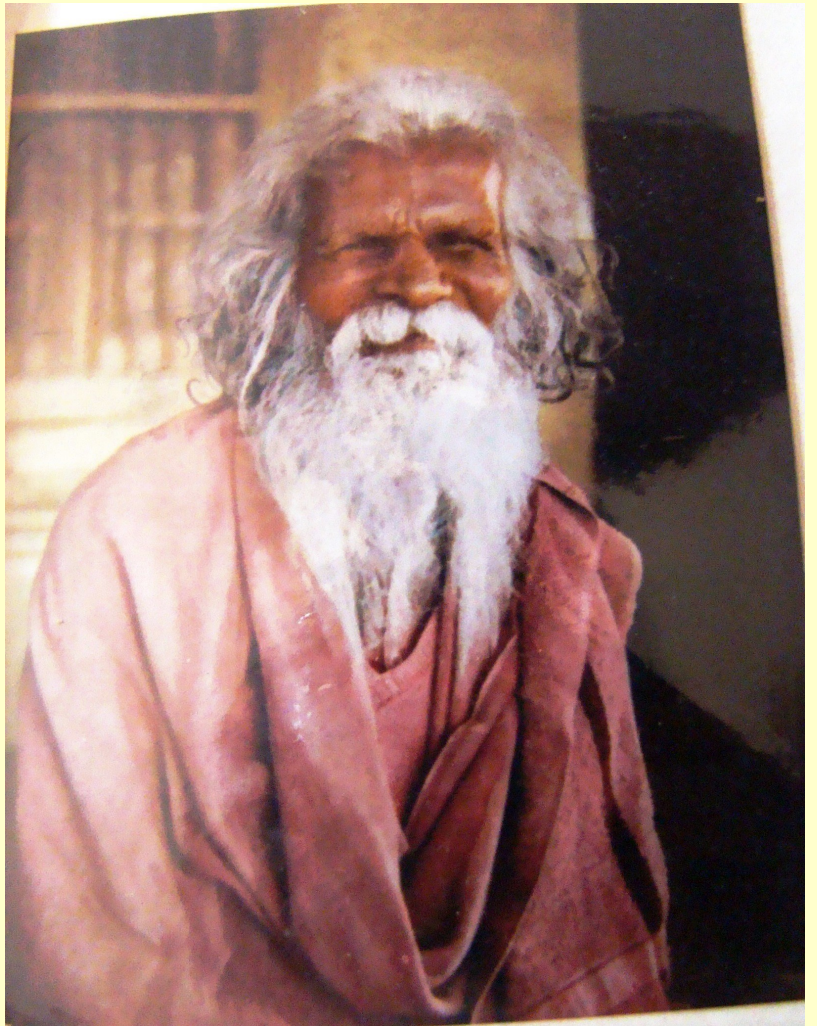
There are two paths by one or other of which all souls go forth - the path of light and the path of darkness. The soul of the one who has practised remembrance of the Lord all his life will go through the bright path of consciousness from light to light to the ultimate abode of Brahman. The one who has been involved in activities (sacrifices etc.) throughout his life and has not practised constant devotion to the Lord goes through the smoky and dark path and has to come back and experience the cycles of birth and death again and again.

Fourth Discourse, JNANA YOGA [from "A Peep into the Gita"]

By Swami Purushottamananda

'My friend Arjuna, you talk like a great philosopher and act like a fool. Do you know what you are doing? You are grieving for those for whom there is not the least room for grief. A man with some wisdom never grieves for those who are already dead, or going to die or for those who are living.'

This is a new theory for Arjuna: he does not understand and looks surprised. The Lord explains further: 'I know the cause of your grief. You think that with the death of this body everything will be lost. That is not the truth, my friend. You see me now before you. You may think that I did not exist before coming into this body or will perish after leaving this body. You might think the same about yourself and about those kings and chieftains who are standing before you ready for battle. We have got eternal existence. Never can we cease to exist.'



Arjuna stands perplexed. The Lord gives an example:

"My friend, you are not a fool. You are, I know, a man of knowledge and intelligence. Only hear me patiently and you will understand. All are afraid of death simply because they do not know what it is. Please hear attentively. You were born a small baby, gradually you grew up into a boy. Nobody wept and lamented for you, saying, 'Oh, my baby is dead.' Then you entered youth. Now too, nobody wept and lamented, 'My boy is dead and lost.' Again, you may grow into an old man. Then too, no fool will weep and cry, 'Oh, my young man is dead.' Please consider why they do not cry and weep. First, they do not notice this change of the body, for it takes place very slowly, like the motion of an hour-hand of a clock from one minute to another. Secondly, they see the infant in the boy, the boy in the youth,

and the youth in the old man. Though they distinguish the change they know that the principal thing is there. But at his death they weep and lament, thinking that he is completely lost. A sage, however, does not lament, because he knows the truth. O Arjuna, know for certain that death also is a stage of transition like infancy, boyhood and growth into old age."

'Jiva never dies. It is the body that dies when the Jiva leaves it. The tree becomes dry and withers when the juice or sap is gone.'

Arjuna becomes attentive. These are all new things for him. He knows for the first time that there is something apart from the body which does not perish when the body perishes. He doubts this possibility. If there is something apart from the body it must remain always unaffected by bodily pain and trouble. But he does not see anything quite apart. Therefore, granted that there is something apart, it must also die when the body dies.

Seeing Arjuna perplexed, his friend says:

'Oh, son of Kunti, truly speaking, the Jiva is above all these bodily changes. But when it comes into contact with the Indriyas it seems to be affected. It is all due to Adhyasa or superimposition. Light itself is not blue. But it appears blue when it comes out of a blue bulb. This Adhyasa or superimposition is the cause of the feeling of heat and cold, pleasure and pain. Knowing these facts, try to transcend them. You can know it for certain that they are not the attributes of the Jiva. They come and go and do not last for ever.'

'These pairs of opposites, pleasure and pain, cold and heat etc., cannot trouble him who is wise and remains the same in pain and pleasure. Such a man alone can be called wise, and he alone is entitled to freedom from birth and death. O best among men, is it not your duty to soar above these pairs of opposites? You are not to be like a straw in the wind, drifting hither and thither with no strength of your own.'

This is the truth, my dear Arjuna, and if you ponder over it, all your doubts and fears will cease. Existence cannot come out of non-existence. And the real can never be non-existent, can never cease to be. That which is real must always be real in the past, present and future. It can never be unreal. And that which has no existence can never be real.' It is seemingly real, apparent. The son of a barren woman can have no existence at any time. A definite conclusion with regard to this truth has been reached by the great seers. You see a rope in twilight, and it seems a snake. But this snake is not real. It had no existence before nor will have any, after. And it cannot come out of nothing. It must have an Adhishtanam, i.e., a substratum and this is the rope.

Similarly, ahamkara, the ego, the mind, the Buddhi, the five Karmendriyas and the five Jnanendriyas cannot exist of themselves. They must have a substratum. And that is the Self or Atman.

The knot that remains

Source – Book authored by Mr. Dwaraknath Reddy, “Rising Sun melting mists”

Name and fame, wealth, praise, flattery,
These are the chains that bind me,
Worn as jewels but borne as penance,
Deftly wrought links of gold and silver
And burnished steel that hides its harshness –
All of them proffered gifts of time,
But I must abandon them now
Before Time lays claim to my mortgaged life,
For too soon it will be too late.
Is it for love of me that Time lavished
This extravagance upon me? Or only
To enslave me through my trust and dependence?

The deceit of Time will be the grin
Of hideous death when it pounces
Upon my trusting mind and robs me
Of all my hoarded passions in a trice.
But if, alerted now to the treachery,
I can undo the knots of lingering desires
And break the shackles of temptations;
If I can redeem from the usurer
My kindly crown I pawned for tinsel gifts;
If I can surprise Time and await death
Serenely secure in my own innate bliss;
What can I not lay aside without pain?
What shall I want to hold for added gain?

You, only you.

Let all the stars be swept from the skies,
Let all the flowers wither upon their boughs,
Let the joys of a life-time turn barren
And memories drop away like autumn leaves,
Yet you will remain, your lovely face
Too deeply etched for all the veils

Of forgetfulness to dim or hide.
What can I do?
If this be the tribute that Time will extract
From one who would rise in revolt,
If this the cross I can never lay down
Till I sleep smiling upon its thorns,
So let it be, and let it be proclaimed
That time did win. But I did not lose.



Article on Gita

Handwritten notes of Swami Shantananda Puri Maharaj [In 2004]

Kuru = Do (denotes ACTION through the senses of action – hands, feet, etc.)

Kshetra = A land (mainly a fertile land)

So Kurukshetra is the human body where through actions you can either sow the seeds of good karma or the seeds of bad karma and reap accordingly. There is always a fight between the good and the bad.

Pandu and Pandava means 'white' and 'those belonging to white' – i.e. all SATTVA GUNA which is white.

The word Kaurava is derived from the word KURU or ACTION – so they are action oriented i.e. full of RAJO GUNA whose chief characteristics are KAMA [Lust, Krodha (Anger) and Lobha (Greed)].

Sattva Guna enlists God on its side. So on any land (Kshetra), only the seed of Dharma (righteousness) can prevail and flourish. See the last (78th) verse in the 18th Chapter of Gita. From the seed of Dharma, prosperity and success are reaped. So this is Dharma Kshetra. So the message is – The human body which is preponderant is Sattva Guna will be able to invoke the Lord on its side and succeed in the Goal of being victorious over this life. Keep God with you and success is assured.



And God will come to you if you become a Pandava (full of Sattva Guna).

Conversation with an IAS Officer

13 July 2014

An IAS officer in his 50's came to meet Guruji for the first time. Someone had referred him to Guruji to seek clarifications on the questions he had.

Question from the IAS officer:

What is required – to seek promotion or just to do assigned duties?

Response of Guruji:

By intense meditation, we find the way. Like in sleep, in meditation we are not aware of the body. When you are sleeping, there is a watcher. There is only one watcher for all individuals.

The day all your cells of the body accept the universal, then you will be one with the totality. Else you would have understood intellectually but not by direct experience. No scholar can attain God. You can be illiterate and attain God.

The hell also was in a dream. People suffer. Hence some exit gates are there. One of them is a Guru.

I don't want God. I want unalloyed happiness. There is an Upanishad in which it is stated that the name of God is ineffable bliss. The mantra for getting promotion is for normal people. How long will you give a bribe for your child to study? The attention should go from the gift to the gift giver. Hence God tends to incentivise you sometimes but at some point, He wants you to direct your attention to Him.

Guru and scriptures – these are the only two crevices through which one can try to get out of the dream. Even if you have crossed 80% of the ocean, you are still in the ocean and even if you drown there, you are in the ocean. Hence, there is nothing called partial realisation.

There are four types of devotees:

Jnani	For a Jnani, Bhagawan is all in all, He is supreme. He has obtained the highest reality.
Artha	One who is distressed by having set backs in life or difficulties in life. Such a devotee says, "Lord, enough of your problems. Take me to a place where I don't have to face them again."
Jigynasu	The devotee thinks, "someone should have created the universe. It cannot come out of an inert substance. It is a living and loving energy. What is that?" Such a devotee is intent on discovering the truth.
Artharthi	Such a devotee says, "Lord, I want a promotion. I will offer a basket full of flowers."

There is no superior, inferior. When you have a problem, you approach father, mother and relatives. The Lord is your father, mother and relative. That's why they say, "tvameva mata cha pita tvameva..."

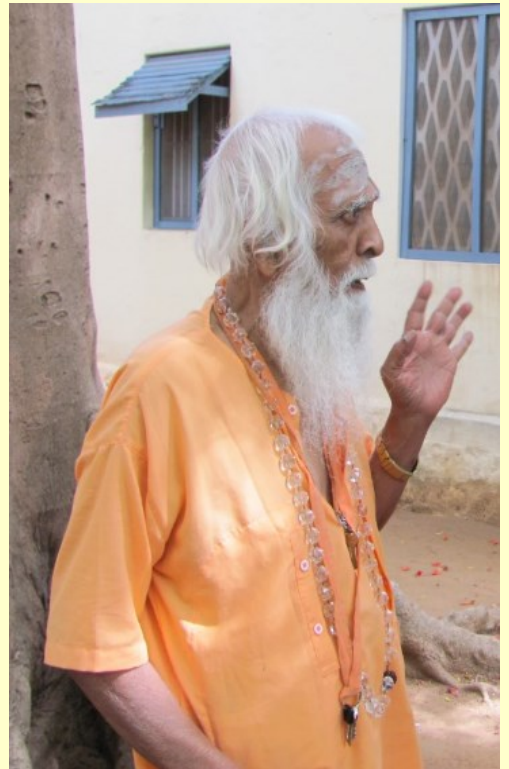
If you go to the ultimate truth, you don't head anywhere. You are where you are.

Buddha was going in the forest. Angolimal – kills people, cuts their finger and puts in his mala. Angolimal says to Buddha, "Monk, stop". Buddha replies, "I have stopped long back. You are still going."

Angolimal asks, "Should I be afraid of you?" Buddha replies, "You and I are the same." Buddha sat and spoke for one hour and gave initiation and then told him, "Go to this town whose people you have killed – take bhiksha from them." When Angolimal goes to the town, they start pelting stones at him. He then returns and tells Buddha, "This is the only Bhiksha I got. I got Buddha. This is the best Bhiksha."



Photos of Guruji



On Death

Conversations in 2014

Even to pronounce or to hear the word death, sends shivers down the spine of anybody. There is no type of fear in this world which can be considered less terrific than death. During the life period of a person how does this fear of death arise at all? It is told that certain events in the life of a person leave such a deep impression which does not get erased in this birth but carried forward to the subsequent birth also. If you are used to seeing TV serials or TV dramas, this taste of ours leaves a deep impression in our mind and in the next birth too. It follows us and we become addicted to seeing such cinema, serials, etc.

It is told the sufferings of the top category in a man's life are:

- To undergo the birth pangs in the womb of the mother while taking birth – “janma dukham”
- To undergo the travails of the old age – “jara dukham”
- The fear of death – “jaaya dukham”
- The greatest of sorrows – “antakale maha dukham”

If you are to be rid of the fear of death, we should first understand the nature of death and how it has arisen.

When we sleep soundly, we are not aware of the world

around us including the bed on which we sleep, the wife and children who sleep beside us, etc. We do not even know who we are. There is a complete black out. The condition is almost like death except that we continue to breathe during sleep. Why does this death like condition occur everyday to each one of us? The main difference between living and death is that while in the former we are full of thoughts about the world, about the past, etc. In deep sleep, all thoughts including the 'I' thought which contains in itself the seeds of all our thoughts vanish without any trace. This shows that the entire world is only a thought. Hence life and death are also equally thoughts. Nobody was born and nobody died.



Contact: Email: divinelove@swamishantanandapurimaharaj.org

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

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 from Ramanasramam gate. Some numbers of auto drivers: Pasha: 09442809982; Seenu: 09486274689