

THE VOICE from BEYOND THE VOID



Message from Guruji

What do you want in life? Do you want money, do you want possession? No I want only happiness unmixed with unhappiness. How do you get it? Are you ever happy in a day? Sure, when I am in deep sleep. What is the reason that you are so happy in deep sleep? The mind temporarily subsided and all relations starting from one's own body extending to the entire world including wife, children, father, mother, etc. were cut off. Then why don't you apply it to the waking state – you deliberately cut off all your imagined relationships with everything around you and remain absolutely inactive as in deep sleep. You can get happiness not by doing anything but by ceasing to do any action. You are sure to get happiness. Let us all keep that as our goal and succeed excellently. Hari Om.

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We all say “we are fine”. In a conversation, Guruji defines the word ‘fine’.

When is one ‘fine’ – when there is absolute harmony between the mind and body. Then we have no attachment and no aversion to anyone in the world. And when we are absolutely thinking of the Lord.

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Love is God [By Swami Shantananda Puri Maharaj]

It is told that God is love. In Bhagawan Ramana's teachings, as retold by Muruganar, he has made a small change in "Love is God".

There is a lot of difference in meanings between the two. In the first, as one doesn't know as to what exactly is God and as our Gods are only concepts of the mind, we are defining God from a known factor called Love. In the second one there is no assumption. We start with the definition of God that he is nothing but all Love. As nothing finally exists except a Supreme true entity called God and there is no other object to be loved, one will surely love oneself as Self alone exists.

In Bhagawan Ramana's interpretation, we start from a known factor called love. In other words, we love everybody we see in this unreal world including animals, birds, reptiles, etc. We have to reach God as it is a synonym for Love which we all know. The love at the first level is only carnal because you love the way a girl behaves towards you and her external features too. At the second level, both the minds become one as she loves all the TV pictures you like and your likes and dislikes are identical. At the highest level, the two souls of the lover and the beloved become one and one completely identifies one with the other. That is the stage where one only exists and no two entities. This in other words means that the one has become zero or nothing while the other only becomes all in all. This is what is called the Self surrender. In the legal parlance, we may call the self surrender as giving an irrevocable power of attorney to the other which is the only existing entity known as God. The great devotee poet Kabir says, "The lovers' lane is so narrow that only one can enter into it."

Now the question comes as to how to love God. As our actions in this birth are governed by the latent tendencies of the previous births called vasanas, even though theoretically we should approach the Lord by loving all beings, in practice it becomes impossible. The better way should be to fake our love for God, the invisible cosmic director by going on asserting love even without actually having any love inside our heart. A day will come when we will really begin to love the Supreme Lord. Another alternative can be to seek the company of such holy men who love God alone, weep for Him in the hope of getting Him one day or dancing with joy. This will result in one day in our genuinely loving Him. If you are unable to get the holy company, we can read the biographies of some of the reputed devotees of the Lord, of recent times, for example, like the books "God Lived with them" or "They lived with God" of RK Mission where heart rending stories of the quest of the intimate disciples of Ramakrishna Paramahansa have been told in elaborate detail.

Let us never worry about our deservedness for loving God. We are ultimately the Supreme God Himself acting in the arena of the world in the cosmic dream in all the roles. Irrespective of whatever bad qualities we may possess, cling to the feet of the Lord with all the strength we possess and confess to Him that with all the bad qualities we want to love Him intimately. As it is a prayer from Self to the Self, it will be granted without doubt.

If we have the fortune of getting a good Sadguru, he will push us from the back and pull us from the front so that we can never avoid loving the Supreme God. May we all develop that Supreme love for God which will ultimately merge in Him with infinite bliss.

Gurudev's protection for eternity

Anecdote on Swami Purushottamananda Maharaj

Mr. G was a member of the faculty in the polytechnic college at Dehradun which was situated a little far. One day Mr. G went out of station, and the servant also has taken a day off. The telephone at the house was not in a working condition. It was about night 9.30pm when Mrs. G found her young daughter aged about 3-4 years, having very high temperature. She could neither leave the child to go in search of a doctor nor was she able to communicate with anybody as the telephone was not working. She put the child on a cot on the terrace and was reciting the eleventh chapter of Durga Saptasati for three to four times. There was



no sign of abating of the fever and the child never opened her eyes. In a panicky condition, the helpless mother shouted, "Gurudev, you only told me to read the eleventh chapter when at any time there is an illness or an ailment in the family. I have done it several times, and I am in a helpless condition. Please help me." This event was four or five years after my Gurudev had left this world.

Suddenly, she heard some footsteps and saw Gurudev coming up to the staircase straight to her. He took out some of the holy ashes [Vibhuti] from a small packet and put it on the forehead of the child. He assured the lady that nothing would happen that night and the child would be okay but that the first thing in the morning she should rush to a doctor along with the child. He smiled at her and went away. Only after he departed, she remembered that her Gurudev had left his mortal coil long back. How could he come now? She went and saw that the mark of the ashes on the forehead of the child was fully visible. Within 15 minutes she found that the temperature of the child was substantially down. She was so tired, she went to sleep sitting on the chair.

Early morning, when the milk man came at 5.00am, she requested him to go to the main road and get an auto rickshaw for her. The auto was brought and she took the child and went to the family doctor. The doctor examined the child and said it was a case of diphtheria and a lot of white spots had developed in the throat. He himself phoned for an ambulance and took them to a hospital. The child recovered within a week's time. Obviously, this incident was not meant to show the mystic powers of my Gurudev. He knew that unless the child was cured, their belief in him would go away and their progress in the spiritual direction would be stopped all together. Thus, in the interest of their spirituality, he had to exercise his mystic powers even though he was no longer physically present in this world.

God and Guru never fail you

Anecdote on Swami Purushottamananda Maharaj

A lady devotee of my Guru Maharaj named Mrs. Wattal had a house in Allahabad. In one of the Kumbha Melas which took place in Allahabad, she went to the main place for a holy dip accompanied by her mother-in-law, her elder sister and her 6-month-old child in her arms. They had their holy dip in the Ganges without trouble but just then the naga sanyasis, got very angry due to some incident. There ensued one of the biggest stampedes. People began to run in all directions stamping on the bodies of those who fell down.

The two old ladies managed to go to one side but the lady with the child was caught in the middle of the commotion, and fell down with the child. While falling, she cried loudly, "Gurudev, save me." And in a second, her body was to be trampled by the people running helter skelter. In a trice from nowhere two or three mounted policemen came on their horses with whips in their hands and began to whip the people mercilessly so that the mob dispersed to the other side, they lifted Mrs. Wattal and the child and escorted them to a long distance away on the main road.



As Mrs. Wattal had a number of highly-placed police officers as her in-laws and other close relatives posted in various places in UP, she went to the local office of the Superintendent of Police to express her gratitude to him. When she went and related the anecdote to the superintendent, the latter was astonished and told her, "Madam, I proposed to the Government in the beginning itself to lend us some mounted police during the Kumbha Mela period but my proposal was refused outright. So, Madam, not a single mounted policeman was deployed at that spot and I cannot understand how two of them appeared there and saved you."

Immediately Mrs. Wattal knew that it was only her Gurudev [who is my Gurudev also], who saved her at the nick of time. She went out shedding profuse tears of gratitude.

When you have completely surrendered, your prayers are granted. While falling down, Mrs. Wattal cried, "Gurudev save me" and that saved her. The Guru and the Lord are the only reliable sources who never ever let you down in life.

Article on Long Meditation

By Swami Shantananda Puri Maharaj

Long meditation is done for about 12 hours in a group. Long meditation sessions were done by Paramahansa Yogananda Ashram in Dakshineswar. I personally attended two such sessions. It was beautiful and I really enjoyed it. This can be tried by people. Usually it is to be done alone for 6-12 hours but may be difficult. However, if 2-3 people of like nature were to sit together for such long meditation, it may be easy. Some of the key aspects related to long meditation that I observed were:

1. Each one can do his own meditation, however, there are a few people meditating together.
2. The timing of the meditation is from evening 6pm on Saturday to morning 6am on Sunday. One can go back home on Sunday morning and have their sleep.
3. The usual issue that arises during such time is that people feel very sleepy. There are usually certain fixed times in the night where one feels more sleepy. For example, usually around 9.30pm, one tends to feel very sleepy. At this time, play one line of kirtan from a cassette. The kirtan could contain anything spiritual, for example, "O God, You are always by my side". This is to be done for a minute to break the sleepiness. Again you renew your energy. Similarly again by 12.30am to 1.30am, you may feel sleepy and repeat the same thing. And again later at night by 3.30am to 4.00am.

Then by 6.00am, each one can go back home. It is advisable that people don't drive after the long meditation.

I felt it was really wonderful and I happened to attend 2-3 sessions as a guest.



Guruji after brief meditation outside Sri Aurobindo Meditation Hall at Bangalore

Conversations with Guruji —with various devotees

Devotee: Is there any food that is recommended for sadhaks?

Guruji: For sadhakas, the following aahar / cooked food should not be taken:

- The one from which bad smell is emanating
- What which is kept beyond 3 hours one should not eat
- The one from which the juice has dried up
- The one which has been kept overnight

The above are considered as Tamasik food and should not be taken by a sadhak. By taking the above food, you will lose enthusiasm, likely to feel sleepy in meditation or during japa and not alert. As such your sadhana will not be fully useful.

In addition onions and garlic are called aphrodisiac and should not be taken.

A sadhak is not supposed to take biscuits and cakes, etc. A sadhak should avoid luxurious items that will be good for the taste and are not essential.

Never take extremely bitter things [ex: neem], extremely hot things, extremely spicy food, extremely pungent, very sweet, very salty [ex: pickles which are highly salty and may contain a high level of chillies] – i.e. things of extreme nature in the eatables.

Generally itself, the food should be moderate. You cannot take huge quantities of rice even if you feel like eating. Take a middle path, which is called – yuktaaahar vihar – i.e. your play, sports and food should be of moderate quantity.

In the world there is nothing worth having. In a dream, if you become a president of America, what is the use? We think this is real. Please pray to the Lord, “I am not interested. Please take me out of the drama.” Be always courageous. We need not give advice to others. We should become strong like an oak tree. Nothing is worth having. Whether you get zero or a hundred on hundred, both are equal. The drama script has already been written. It will operate as per the script, and what you do will not affect the script. Anything comes, ask the Lord, give me the courage. Always think of the Lord.

Everything is a miracle. And we have to appreciate each of His miracles. Today there was no one from the dining hall to accompany me to the room and it was raining. And then from no where my room neighbour suddenly came and was holding an umbrella.

See how the help comes in time, that’s all. In this case, we are not concerned with the benefit. I could have waited for half an hour there. However, it is an opportunity that the Lord is giving us to appreciate His small miracles. Then all the big miracles are in our hand.

Grains from the Bowl of the Master

Prayer is when we talk and God listens. Meditation is where He talks and we listen.

We know the destination and we know the path but we are not prepared to walk the path.

When a question arises, see whether by knowing is it going to help in reaching to the Ultimate Truth in any way. Else kill the question, what is the use of the question.

The serpent casts off its outer skin only when the time is fully ripe. If it tries to take it off earlier, it will be very painful.

When you are the universality, the ego wants to maintain the individuality. Many more desires to retain your strong identity will come again and again to take you away from your true nature of universality. See, when you ignore the same thought again and again, it will go away. It will say, "I am not getting attention. No use of trying to appear any more." Let the same thought repeat but you do not react to it by turning it into action. You cannot let go of your desires. Your desires will have to let go of you. It can happen only when you completely ignore the desires instead of saying, "Why should I have these desires or I should control my desires." If the thought of a gulab jamun comes, normally you will go and buy it. The thought will come back again. Then do not go and buy the gulab jamun. This thought will keep coming back. Just remain calm. Don't turn it into action. One day you will see that the thought of gulab jamun has left you because you did not give your attention to it. Don't worry. Practise, practise every day.

Message for Diwali: Deepavali has a separate different esoteric significance. Deepavali or Diwali means a row of lights. The day when the darkness of our ignorance is dispelled by lighting the inner heart is the day of Diwali. Diwali is only a symbol of what needs to be lighted within the heart. May the row of lights be lighted inside our hearts and the darkness of ignorance be dispelled.

Except God, all things are passing fancies.

You are concerned with yourself in the spiritual path. Why do you be bothered whether people are truthful or not. Why are you concerned? Never think of it. You think of yourself.

What is surrender? After you give the power of attorney – you have no right to say anything. When once you have surrendered to the Lord, you have no right to even think of moksha. There is no point repeating "I surrender" every morning and evening. If you do so, your surrender is not real.

Love him continuously. This will develop by going to satsanga and where people are talking about him.



Guruji at the new dining hall in Ramana Ashram

Memories with Gurudev - At Tiruvannamalai and at Bangalore



Circle of Love

Composed by Abir Bordoloi and Swami Shantanandapuri Maharaj

You are the circle
Circle of Love
No centre found
Really, really
Centreless circle
No circumference found
Believe me
Believe in the circle of Love

No fear where Love is
No doubt where Love grows
No haste in Love
No envy, no greed
Really, really
Love is peace
Love is life
Love is God
Love is for you

Chorus:
Love is everything

Love is everywhere
Everyone, anyone
Please see it
Please feel it
Who can be outside the circle?
The circle of Love

O mind, please pray
Pray for Love
Cry for Love
Really, really
Beg for Love, beg
Ask for Love
Dance for Love
You are everywhere
Nowhere to go
You are everything
Nothing to do
Really, really
You are Love
You are bliss
You are, you are....

Chorus
Love is everything
Love is everywhere
Everyone, anyone
Please see it
Please feel it
Who can be outside the circle?
The circle of Love
The circle of Love (x3)



Left: A picture of Guruji at the shrine of Bhagvan Ramana Maharishi

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