

Saranagathi



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In this Issue

Dear Sri Bhagavan Devotees,

Happy New Year!

Duncan Greenless once asked, "Bhagavan, while we are in your presence, a certain halo of purity and peace seems to surround us. It continues for some time after we leave. Then it disappears and the old stupidities return. Why is it so?" Sri Bhagavan replied, "It is all the work of the mind. Like the battery it wears out and has to be re-charged. But when the mind-control is perfect, there will be no further trouble."

Let us continue our sadhana... in 2010...with renewed rigour...Sri Bhagavan's Blessings & Grace are already with us.

This issue features Madhavaswami as part of the 'attendant' series. 'How I came to the Maharshi' by P.V. Sastri is from *The Mountain Path* published in July 1964. This is followed by Reports for Sri Ramanasramam.

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Updates to our ashram website include the video titled '[Arunachala Dhyanam](#)' and an addition to the [Old Devotees Interviews](#).

In Sri Bhagavan,

The Editorial Team.

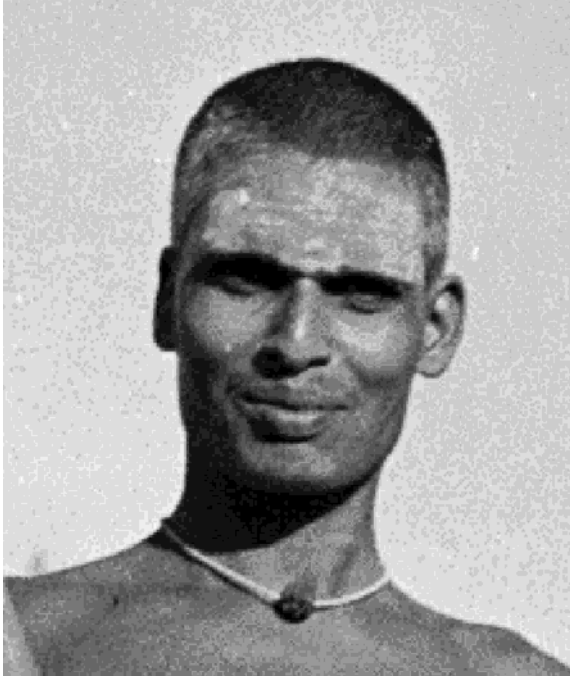
The Essence of Instruction

*When one turns within and searches
Whence this 'I' thought arises,
The shamed 'I' vanishes –
And wisdom's quest begins.*

– Upadesa Saram by Sri Bhagavan (Verse 19)

Madhavaswami

Madhavaswami rendered dedicated service to Sri Bhagavan for approximately twelve years. Below are two instances where Sri Bhagavan talks about Madhavaswami with great compassion.



Madhavaswami

Letters from Sri Ramanasramam, by Suri Nagamma

12th July 1946, (51) DEATH OF MADHAVASWAMY
Madhavaswami was a Malayalee. His birthplace is a village near Palghat. He was a brahmachari. He came here about 15 years back, when he was only 20 years of age and did personal service to Bhagavan. For some time past, he had had a desire to visit holy places, and so used to go away frequently and come back. When Acharyaswami, who was another devotee of Bhagavan, in charge of the Math which was built for him in Kumbakonam, came here some time back and passed away, Madhava went there as head of the Math and passed away within a short time there after.

About four days ago, i.e. in the morning of the 8th or 9th, I went to Bhagavan's presence at 7-30. As I

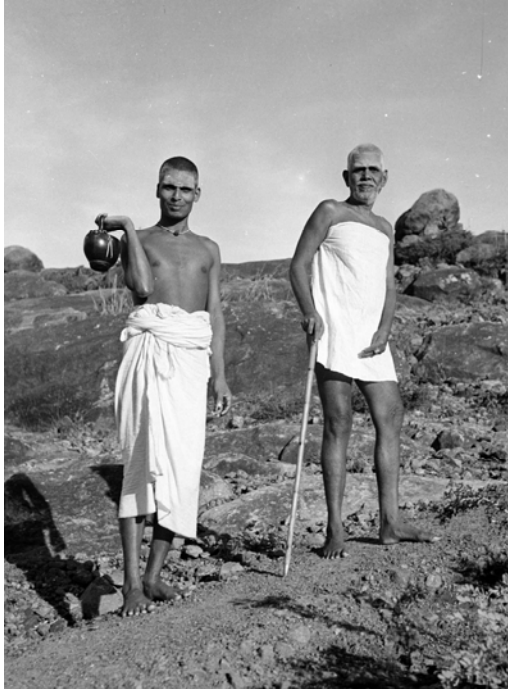
got up after prostrating before him, Bhagavan said, "Madhava is gone." "Where to?" I asked, as he was in the habit of going away from the Asramam on pilgrimage now and then. Smilingly Bhagavan said, "Where to? To that place, leaving the body here." I was shocked and asked, "When?" "The day before yesterday at 6 p.m.," replied Bhagavan, and looking at Krishnaswami, said, "Acharyaswami who was there came here and died, and the one who was here went there and died. Everything moves according to fate. For a long time Madhava had a desire that he should be independent and without anyone in authority over him. His desire has at last been fulfilled. Anyway he was a good man. Merely for fun when Acharyaswami who was in Kumbakonam passed away, I asked Madhava whether he would go, as there was no one there in the Math. He took up the idea, went there and thus fulfilled his desire. See how things happen! When I wrote Telugu Dvipada and other verses in Malayalam script in a notebook, he used to read them well just like Telugu people. He had some Telugu 'Samskara' (knowledge). He took away that notebook saying that he would be looking into it now and then. If it is there, tell them to bring it here. It was the same with Ayyaswami. He took away a notebook, saying that he would bring it back after reading it. He himself never came back. The same thing has happened with this man also." So saying he changed the topic. When they heard that a person who had followed Bhagavan almost like his shadow for 12 years, and was extremely meek and gentle by nature, had passed away suddenly somewhere, there was no one in the Asramam who did not shed a tear.

Kunjuswami who had gone from here to supervise Madhava's burial ceremonies, came back this morning at 8 a.m. and after prostrating before

Bhagavan said, “Madhavaswamy was wandering about in search of peace of mind but could not gain peace, and so he told people that he would not live any longer, and came to the Math at Kumbakonam. He had a sudden attack of diarrhea for a day, and as he complained of difficulty breathing while taking soda water, he was made to lie down. He never regained consciousness, according to what the people in the Math told me. They kept the corpse till I got there. It did not deteriorate in any way even though three days had elapsed. I got it buried and have come back. I could not find the note–book anywhere.”

Sri Ramana Reminiscences, by G.V. Subbaramayya

One noon Sri Subbalakshamma observed that the white peacock who was being so much fondled by Sri Bhagavan might be Madhavaswami, the late attendant of Sri Bhagavan. A little later as I entered the Hall, Sri Bhagavan said that some people believe that the white peacock was the reincarnation of Madhavaswami; and ever afterwards Sri Bhagavan used to address him as



Sri Bhagavan on the Hill with Madhavaswami



Sri Bhagavan returning from hill with Madhavasami and devotee

‘Madhava’.

On June 20, 1947, I composed eight Telugu verses on the white peacock in Mayura Vrittam (peacock–metre) and presented them to Sri Bhagavan in the Jubilee pandal. He appeared greatly pleased with them and handing them to Srimati Lalita Venkataraman, he suggested that she might sing them with her *veena*. Within half and hour she brought her veena and got ready to sing. Just then the white peacock was absent. Sri Bhagavan said, “But the hero must be present to hear his praises sung! Where are you, Madhava? Come.” Lo! At once the white peacock jumped down from the roof of the pandal; and while Lalita Venkataraman sang, he spread out his tail feather and danced as Sri Bhagavan sat and watched him with beaming eyes. When the singing concluded, the peacock walked to the veena and pecked at its strings with his beak. Thereupon Sri Bhagavan told the singer, “Madhava wants you to repeat the song.” So she sang once more and the peacock danced again. It was a sight for the gods to see.

How I came to the Maharshi By P.V.Sastri (Published in *The Mountain Path*, July 1964)

Which is the greater miracle, to change the date on a tombstone or to change a man's heart?

In May 1945 my eldest son, who was 23 years old, married, devout and a very promising young man, passed away. The event was so terrible and caused such grief that it was thought I would not survive it. I neglected practically all my worldly duties for some time. Later I was somehow attracted to Sri Ramanasramam and went there with the whole of my family. Ordinarily people, under such circumstances, would go to obtain peace and get rid of their sorrow. But that was not the idea of my wife and myself. Having read about Sri Krishna's bringing Sandipani's son back to life, we were so mad as to think of getting our son restored to life by the grace of Bhagavan Sri Ramana. We were prepared to sacrifice our all for that.

We left for Tiruvannamalai and, reaching the Ashram at 11 a.m. entered the hall where Bhagavan used to sit. Our one idea was to beseech him to bring our son back to life; but despite our intense desire we found that we could not open our mouths to speak. We simply sat silent till Bhagavan rose for lunch and everyone went out. Then we too went back to where we lodged. We went again in the afternoon, when devotees assembled in the hall, with the same purpose but with the same result. In that way eight days passed. Each morning and afternoon we wanted to implore Bhagavan to bring our son back to life but we could not utter a word in his presence. On the eighth evening we talked it over together on coming out of the hall and decided that it was no use staying any longer since our purpose had not been fulfilled. So we decided to leave next morning.

At that moment a gentleman of the name of Subbarao met us. He was formerly a pleader, think at Nellore, and had come to Tiruvannamalai and settled down as one of the resident devotees. We had made

friends, perhaps because I also am a pleader. He asked me what we were talking about, so I told him our whole story. I admitted that we felt peace in Bhagavan's presence, but the moment we left the hall our grief burst out again like a volcanic eruption; and yet, we were unable to speak out and put our desire before Bhagavan.

Mr. Subbarao promised to take us to Sri Bhagavan next day and introduce us to him. We agreed and next day, on being introduced, told Bhagavan about our grief and in a general way asked for his help. Sri Bhagavan nodded, his head and said "Seri, Seri" (All right, All right). But we still found ourselves unable to talk any more, still less to tell him what it was that we really wanted. Again we felt constrained to sit there speechless. That evening we decided to leave, since even the intervention of Mr. Subbarao had not helped us. But Ramana would not let us go. The thought occurred to me that I should buy some books published by the Ashram, so I went to the bookstall. The gentleman in charge was in meditation, but he opened his eyes immediately and asked us to come in. On being questioned by him I repeated our whole story. He said that the Maharshi was capable of bringing the boy back to life, but since the boy was a highly religious and really devout young man he would have gone to better regions and would not like to come back to us. I assured him that he loved us so much and we loved him so much that he would really come back if it were possible. The gentleman then put me another question. Suppose Bhagavan brings him back to you and then both of you die, what will the position be then? This question dispelled the thick cloud of illusion that had enveloped us and at last we saw that our attempt to get our son back was sheer madness. I felt at the time and still feel now that it

was not the bookseller that was talking to me like that but really Bhagavan speaking through him.

We abandoned the hope of getting our son back to life and also our plan of leaving immediately. We stayed for about twelve more days, until our monetary resources were exhausted. The rest of our stay at the Ashram was only for the purpose of obtaining peace. Sri Ramana's "all right" had been meant to help us in the only way in which a realized Guru will help. His grace was bestowed on us and he began to work silently in our hearts to remove the

thick clouds of sorrow and end the volcanic outbursts of grief. He began to instill peace and develop real knowledge in us. Silently and slowly the grace is still working in that direction. What we wanted to have we were actually prevented from asking for. We were also not allowed to go away in a mood of despair. We were blessed with his grace and uplifted in the right way.

Because this is an experience of an extraordinary type I feel that it is appropriate to make it known to all the devotees of Bhagavan.

Maharshi's Gospel: The Teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi

Silence and Solitude

Devotee: Is a vow of silence useful?

Maharshi: The inner silence is self-surrender. And that is living without the sense of ego.

Devotee: Is solitude necessary for a *sannyasin*?

Maharshi: Solitude is in the mind of a man. One might be in the thick of the world and yet maintain perfect serenity of mind; such a person is always in solitude. Another may stay in the forest, but still be unable to control his mind. He cannot be said to be in solitude. Solitude is an attitude of the mind; a man attached to the things of life cannot get solitude, wherever he may be. A detached man is always in solitude.

Devotee: What is *mauna*?

Maharshi: That state which transcends speech and thought is *mauna*; it is meditation without mental activity. Subjugation of the mind is meditation; deep meditation is eternal speech. Silence is ever speaking; it is the perennial flow of 'language'. It is interrupted by speaking; for words obstruct this mute 'language'. Lectures may entertain individuals for hours without improving them. Silence, on the other hand, is permanent and benefits the whole of humanity. By silence, eloquence is meant. Oral lectures are not so eloquent as silence. Silence is unceasing eloquence ... It is the best language. There is a state when words cease and silence prevails.

Reports from Sri Ramanasramam



Annamalaiyar Giripradakshinam

Sri Arunachaleswarar, the main deity of the Arunachaleswarar temple in Tiruvannamalai, goes around the Hill (Giripradakshina) twice a year viz., the day after Karthigai Deepam and on the second day of the Tamil month Thai which falls on January 16/17th.

This year on December 3rd Sri Arunachaleswarar (Somaskandar) was taken around the Hill accompanied by Apeethakuchambal Amman, the Arunachaleswarar and Amman from Adi Annamalai and Durgai Amman. Devotees eagerly received the Lord in front of the Ashram. Dhotis, sarees and garlands were offered to all the deities and aratis were performed.

Dhanurmasa puja

Margazhi, also known as Dharnurmasam, is a very important month for the people of Tamil Nadu, especially from the religious point of view. Pious people, men and women, young and old, go round temples and tanks, singing bhajans, early morning, braving the cold winds. It is really a sight for the Gods and a feast to the ear and soul.

At Sri Ramanasramam like in other years, devotees gathered at Sri Bhagavan's Samadhi Shrine for the first Margazhi Puja on Wednesday, 16th December 2009 and the singing of the first verses of Saint Manickavachakar's Tiruvembavai, Saint Andal's Tiruppavai and Swami Muruganar's Ramana Tiruvembavai, each known for its exquisite lyrical beauty and depth of devotion. Thereafter, the priests, acharyas and students of the Ashram Vedapatasala recited the Vishnu Sahasranama followed by distribution of the Prasad of hot pongal.

This special puja, singing and recitation of the Lord's 1000 names will go on till the 1st day of Thai the next Tamil month.

