

Saranagathi



eNewsletter from www.sriramanamaharshi.org

In This Issue

Dear Sri Bhagavan Devotees,

The month of October was busy one at Sri Bhagavan's Ashram in Tiruvannamalai.

After the [Navaratri Celebrations](#), in early October, which was covered extensively at our website, [Diwali](#) and Vishwanatha Swami Day were celebrated in a grand manner. There was some much needed rain, all over South India and Tiruvannamalai, which led to tanks and wells getting replenished at the Ashram, thanks to the 'rain harvesting' methods adopted.

We are saddened to report the demise of 'Tirupattur' Balasubramania Sastrigal, who was part of the 'puja' team at the Ashram and pray for Sri Bhagavan's grace on the departed soul. The Ashram Management appreciates his dedicated service to the Master and His devotees and will miss his ever smiling face.

The focus of the November issue of Saranagathi is on Sri Bhagavan's explanation of the significance of

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Diwali extracted from the book, *Letters from Sri Ramanasramam* by Suri Nagamma. This is followed by a recent satsangh reading of *Ramana Puranam* and a report on 'Vishwanatha Swami Day' and Diwali celebrations at the Ashram.

Please lookout for recent 'updates' to our website: [Ashram Calendar for 2009](#), [Special Days in 2009](#), additional issues of [Mountain Path](#) and more '[Devotees' Interviews](#)' of their experiences of His Presence.

We look forward to hearing from you, about your satsanghs and experiences. Please send your emails to saranagathi@sriramanamaharshi.org.

Yours in Sri Bhagavan,

Editorial Team.

The Essence of Instruction

*Ether, Fire, Air, Water, Earth,
Sun, Moon, and Living Beings—
Worship of These,
Regarded All as Forms of His,
Is Perfect Worship of the Lord.*

— Upadesa Saram by Sri Bhagavan (Verse 5).

Narakasura – Dipavali (65)

An extract from *Letters from Sri Ramanasramam* by Suri Nagamma

20th August 1946.

Ramachandra Iyer came here from Madras recently. One day he was seated in the hall going through an old notebook and correcting some dates and numbers in it. Seeing that, Bhagavan asked what it was. He replied, “This is an old notebook written by Bhagavan. I am looking into the numbers and dates in it, and entering them in the printed book.” “Give it to me,” Bhagavan said, and taking it and turning over the pages, said to me, “There are some Dipavali padyams (verses) in it. Have you heard them?”

When I said I had not, he read them out and gave the meaning thereof as follows: “He is Narakasura (a demon) who feels attached in the thought that he is the body. That attachment to the body itself is a Naraka (hell). The life of a person who has that attachment, even if he be a Maharajah, is hellish. Destroying the attachment to the body, and the self shining by itself as Self is Dipavali. That is the idea contained in those verses.” I asked, “Are all these verses in *Nool Thirattu*?”* Bhagavan said, “These were all composed extempore on the spur of the moment from time to time. Why include all these in that book?”

After the first publication of the book, these verses were read out in Bhagavan’s presence, and he asked, “Do you know why I wrote those

verses?” When I said that I did not know, he said, “Is that so? One Dipavali day, Muruganar wanted me to write something about Dipavali. ‘Why don’t you write? Why should I?’ I asked. He said that he would also write if I did. I agreed, and wrote these verses. I did not write anything without reason. There is a story behind every verse that I wrote.” So saying he showed me the verses (in Tamil). I give them below with the meaning:-

Vrittam:

நரகுட னானா நரகுல காளும்
நரகனெங் கென்றுசூஅய் ஞானத் திகிரியால்
நரகனைக் கொன்றவ னாரண னன்றே
நரக சதுர்த்தசி நற்றின மாமே.

Meaning:

He is the king of hell who says that he is the body which is hell itself. He is Narayana who ascertains who Naraka is, and destroys him with His vision of wisdom, Jnana Drishti. That is the auspicious day of Narakachathurdasi.

Vennpa:

நரக உருவா நடலை யுடல
கிரக மகமெனவே கெட்ட-நரகனாம்
மாபா வியைநாடி மாய்த்துத்தா னாயொளிர்ந்தல்
தீபா வளியாந் தெளி.

Meaning:

The false belief that this hell-like house called body is me, is Naraka himself. To destroy that false belief and let the self shine as Self, is Dipavali.

**Nool Thirattu* is the title of the book in Tamil containing all the verses, songs and prose writing of Bhagavan. *The Collected Works of Sri Ramana Maharshi* contains the English translations of these. Both these books have been published by Sri Ramanasaramam and available for download from our website.

During a Recent Satsangh

The following verses from Ramana Puranam¹ were read out along with their meaning during a recent Satsangh at Connecticut, USA. Ramana Puranam was jointly composed by Sri Muruganar and Sri Bhagavan.

Verses 305–306 of Ramana Puranam

Even if the most insignificant of your devotees come to possess a desire, you enable them to be enthroned in the royal assembly of the king of the gods.

In the presence of the Guru, desires are automatically fulfilled, even worldly ones. The Guru does not pick and choose which of his devotees' desires he is going to fulfill because he has no sankalpa.

No individual will that decides 'I will fulfill this desire,' or 'I will not fulfill that particular desire'.

However, by continuously abiding as the Self, the Guru generates a Sannidhi, a presence, that Automatically takes care of the desires of devotees who come into this presence.

Footnote: Bhagavan explained in some detail how this process works in a conversation he had with Narayana Iyer that was recorded in *The Mountain Path* (July, 1968, p. 236).

Mountain Path, Vol. 5, July 1968

Cry of the Destitute

By Vishnu (Narayana Iyer)

One day when I was sitting by the side of Bhagavan I felt so miserable that I put the following question to him: "Is the sankalpa of the jnani not capable of warding off the destinies of the devotees?". Bhagavan smiled and said: "Does the jnani have a sankalpa at all? The jivanmukta can have no sankalpas whatsoever. It is just impossible."

I continued: "Then what is the fate of all us who pray to you to have grace on us and save us? Will we not be benefited or saved by sitting in front of you, or by coming to you? What use is there then for family men like me to gain by coming here to you?".

Bhagavan turned graciously to me and said: "Just as a trouble (or arrow) that comes to destroy the head, goes away carrying with it only the turban, so a person's bad karma will be considerably reduced while he is in the presence of a jnani. A jnani has no sankalpas but his sannidhi [presence] is the most powerful force. He need not have sankalpa, but his presiding presence, the most powerful force, can do wonders: save souls, give peace of mind, even give liberation to ripe souls. Your prayers are not answered by him but absorbed by his presence. His presence saves you, wards off the karma and gives you the boons as the case may be, [but] involuntarily. The jnani does save the devotees, but not by sankalpa, which is non-existent in him, only through his presiding presence, his sannidhi."

I was filled with joy. Even today His presence is the most powerful thing and that alone, I am confident, saves me!

¹ In the 1920s and 30s Muruganar wrote *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai*, an anthology of devotional poems in praise of Sri Bhagavan that was modeled on the *Tiruvachakam* of Sri Manikkavachakar. In the first edition of *Ramana Sannidhi Murai* there was no poem corresponding to *Siva Puranam*. So Sri Muruganar started composing a poem on the same lines. At this stage a doubt arose in his mind as to what would be the appropriate title for this work. The obvious title could be *Siva Puranam*. But the verses were extolling the glory of the Lord as Ramana, so why not call it *Ramana Puranam*? Thus tossed by doubt Sri Muruganar left the place, leaving the lines at Sri Bhagavan's feet. When he returned in the evening Sri Bhagavan handed back the poems. A great surprise was in store for Sri Muruganar. Sri Bhagavan had distinctly written *Ramana Puranam*, not only at the top of the work, but also at the top of each and every page. He had not stopped with that and composed three hundred more lines and completed the work. The concluding portion of *Ramana Puranam*, a section that runs approximately from line 233 to 540, contains teachings, written by Sri Bhagavan himself.

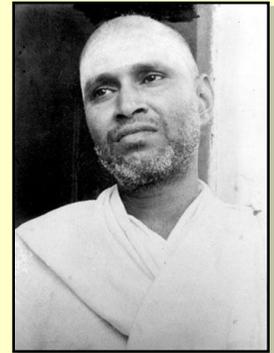
'Vishwanatha Swami' Day

A report from Sri Ramanasramam

Vishwanatha Swami Day was observed at the ashram on 22nd October.

One of his most important contributions to Ramana Devotees was the composition of *Ramana Ashtottaram* (The 108 Names of Sri Bhagavan) which is chanted at His Shrine every day during daily puja. Devotees may remember that these 108 names are being serialized in the *Mountain Path*.

All devotees gathered around his samadhi and chanted 'Aksharamanamalai'. Arati was performed to the lingam on his samadhi and everyone received the blessings of this great devotee, who incidentally was closely related to Sri Bhagavan.



Vishwanatha Swami

Diwali Celebrations at Sri Ramanasramam

A Photo Essay



*Early morning arathi
at the Rameswara Lingam...*



*...arathi at
Matrubhuteswara Lingam...*



...some fireworks...



..nagaswaram at His Shrine...



*...devotees gathered for early morning
Darshan around 4.30am...*



...followed by breakfast.

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