

benefit has accrued to Western seekers comes from the torch which was lit by the Maharshi himself. I was only the unimportant ‘link boy’ the humble carrier.

The above is ample proof of the fact that Brunton remained Bhagavan’s devotee till the end of his life. His contribution to make Bhagavan known to the world continues to remain unmatched.

*Brunton’s original name was Raphael Hurst. It was changed when he published *A Search in Secret India*, and continued with it thereafter.

EFFORT IS ESSENTIAL: *Ishta devata* and Guru are aids – very powerful aids on the path. But an aid to be effective requires your effort also. Your sincere effort is absolutely essential. It is you who should see the sun. Can the spectacles and the sun see for you? You yourself have to see your true nature. – *Sri Ramana Maharshi*

HOW KUSA GRASS BECAME HOLY: Garuda brought a pot of *amrita* from *swarga* and kept it in a pot on a heap of *kusa(darbha)* grass. Meanwhile Indira stole it away. Since the nectar had been kept on the grass, *kusa* became holy. (*Tattavakoka*, Sep., 2008)

DHANWANTRI: The pioneer god of medicine, is considered to be an *ansa* of Lord Vishnu. He emerged from the *Kshira sagara* at the time of churning of the ocean, holding the pot of *amrita* in one hand and *Ayurveda*, written on palm leaves, in the other hand. He is the first teacher of medical science and is also reputed as the pioneer of surgery. (*Tattavaloka*, Sep., 2008)

GITA’S STHITA PRAJNA*

By Swami Shantananda Puri**

The ultimate purpose of all spiritual *sadhanas* is to control and still the mind. Only a person whose *prajna* is still is *sthita* can be free of the shackles of the *vasanas* and attain liberation.

The qualities or characteristics of a *sthita prajna* have been described in second chapter of the *Gita*. According to scholars, the terms *sthita prajna* and *gunatita* are

synonymous. The qualities of a *gunatita* described in chapter 14 of the *Gita* are identical to those of a *sthita prajna*. They can also be called *jivanmuktas*.

According to Shankara *sthita prajana* is one whose mind is rooted in the conviction that ‘I am the Supreme Being, Brahman.’

Factors necessary for becoming a *sthita prajna* are – renouncing all desires and remaining always content in oneself without depending on external objects for satisfaction. Further, whose mind remains unperturbed by any sorrow or suffering, whose attachment to pleasure is completely gone and who is free from attachment, fear and anger, is called a sage with stable wisdom.

Both joy and sorrow are only psychological states of the mind. It is thus possible to reason with one’s own mind and make it impervious to the reactions of joy and sorrow so that the mind could remain undisturbed and stable.

According to the *Gita*, the wisdom of that person is stable who wholly withdraws his senses from their objects just as a tortoise withdraws its limbs from all sides.

Attachment must be removed by our own efforts, by the grace of the Lord and the guru. *Satsang*, mantra *japa* and prayers are definitely of positive help. Once the mind is concentrated on the Self as a result of severe *sadhana*, all *vasanas* will begin to wane away without our being aware of them.

The mind of a person who keeps his senses under control by withdrawing and subduing them by means of uniting his mind at all times with the Lord and being completely engaged in him with devotion (*yukta*) is considered as stable or well-established. At no time of *sadhana* can a seeker be complacent that his attractions to the objects have ceased. The senses bid their time. Never for a moment relax your reins over them, but continue doing the *sadhana* till the attitude of ‘I’, the seeker, disappears so that there is no need to think, ‘I am keeping my senses under control.’ The senses are so powerful that they definitely drag down even a man of knowledge. The way to fight it down is constant remembrance of God. Let your mind be totally engaged in the Lord with sincere love and devotion, so that you are *yukta* – integrated in Him.

Desires, especially lust and passion, are the last things to leave a *sadhaka* in spite of all the *sadhanas*. Even when a person becomes very old, the *vasana* of *kama* expresses itself in apparently innocuous ways.

Prayers are extremely effective. Engage yourself in the reading of the biographies of saints so that the intensity of longing they had, the austerities they performed, will inspire you to emulate them.

The grace of guru is par excellence and infallible. It must be sought and secured.

*Excerpts from the summary of the book *Gita's Sthita Prajna Darshan*, which appeared in *Tattvaloka*, Nov. 2009. The book is published by Parvathamma C.P. Subbaraju Setty Charitable Trust, 13/8, Pamapa Mahakavi Road, Shankarapuram, Bangalore, 560 004. Phone: (080) 2242 3011 and 4151 6724.

**A great devotee of the Maharshi, who authored *Sri Ramana Suprabhatam*, which appears as first item in the *Centenary Souvenir*, published by Sri Ramanasramam, 1996. An article on the Swami appeared in November 2007 issue of this magazine.

TIRUCHUZH AND ITS GLORY

According to an ancient Tamil composition: Siva the Lord Supreme whom all adore/ Used once His Trident in a mighty act of Grace;/ That Trident-thrust He made in times of yore,/ Proclaims forever Tiruchuzhi a sacred place.

Tiruchuzhi has been celebrated as a sacred abode of Siva for many centuries. Vinoba Bhave during his *Bhoodan padayatra* (tour on foot for soliciting land from the rich landlords to be given to the poor) in 1950's, trudged miles out of the way to sit for a while in silence in the home where the Maharshi was born, and to bless, in his prayer speech, the good folk of this little town for their gift of a Maharshi to the modern world.

Tiruchuzhi goes by different names, one of them being *Avarta Chuzhi*, which means an eddy (a circular movement of water causing a small whirlpool). According to legend, there were several deluges and Lord Siva saved Tiruchuzhi from three of them. On one occasion, when the whole land was covered by water, Siva planted His spear in the earth at this place. All the water, which was flooding it was drawn into that hole and an eddy was formed, hence the name. Again in another deluge, He held the place aloft on the top of his trident. Hence, the name *Soolapuri*, from 'Trishool' (trident).