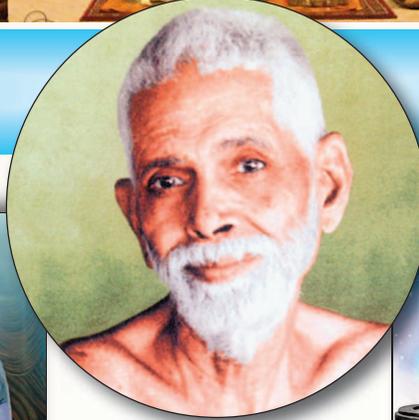




Reflections

SAT Temple

October . November . December 2014



*"To him who is one with the formless Self, everything is formless....Worship under name and form is only a means to realize one's absolute identity with the Nameless and Formless.
- Thus Spake Ramana, 3*



Triumphant Happiness

I have found a sea of love, an inexhaustible flood. I have opened a treasure of spiritual knowledge. It diffuses the luster of a million suns, arisen in thy worshippers souls. Unexpectedly, without an effort, I have heard the eternal secret; I have learned to know God. The seed of the high reunion has been enfolded in my own destiny. I have now beheld Him in whose sight is all goodness, a sea of happy augury, the supreme power of mystic words. I have attained Him whose name is nectar, whose nature is pure intellect free from passion. The very joy of peace and compassion is found in this joy that accompanies the knowledge of the being and knowing God; this Pundalika declares: Lo! Pandhari has unfolded the delight of infinite joy! Tuka says, O Lord of Pandhari, let me now dwell with the saints!

~ Saint Tukarama



Guru Purnima

JULY . AUGUST . SEPTEMBER special events at the SAT Temple . . .

Bhagavan blessed us with many wonderful events this summer. Devotees celebrated Guru Purnima on July 12, followed by Sri Ramana's Self-Realization on the 17th. During the last three days in August, devotees immersed themselves in SAT's annual "Sri Ramana Maharshi's Self-Realization Retreat," ending the quarter with Sri Ramana's arrival at Arunachala on September 1st.

Each transcendent event included the teachings of Sri Ramana graciously expounded by Nome revealing our quintessential nature. There were oceans of meditation, and each event concluded with a puja, singing, and recitations. Below are a few "reflections" from the scriptures read aloud during these events.

D.: What is Guru-kripa? How does it lead to Self-Realization?

M.: Guru is the Self . . . Sometimes in his life a man becomes dissatisfied with it, and, not content with what he has, he seeks the satisfaction of his desires, through prayer to God, etc. His mind is gradually purified until he longs to know God, more to obtain His Grace than to satisfy his worldly desires. Then, God's Grace begins to manifest. God takes the form of a Guru and appears to the devotee, teaches him the Truth and, moreover, purifies his mind by association. The devotee's mind gains strength and is then able to turn inward. By meditation, it is further purified and it remains still without the least ripple. That calm Expanse is the Self.

The Guru is both external and internal. From the exterior He gives a push to the mind to turn inward; from the interior He pulls the mind towards the Self and helps in the quieting of the mind. That is Guru-kripa. There is no difference between God, Guru, and the Self. – Maharshi's Gospel, VII

.....

Glory to the Guru, of the nature of the undivided Absolute, / Who has appeared as an embodiment of Grace, and who has taken me into your Grace! / Glory to the supreme Guru, / Who is eminently fitted to be the rare refuge in all the varieties of worlds! / Glory to the Guru, / Who is blemishless, partless, peerless, and pervasive without a pause! / Glory to the Guru, / Who is the Supreme Siva, the higher than the highest, the Supreme Self, The Supreme Brahman! – Song of Ribhu, 44:18



Sri Ramana's Self-Realization Celebration

“The individual being which identifies its existence with that of the life in the physical body as “I” is called the ego. The Self, which is pure Consciousness, has no ego-sense about it. Neither can the physical body, which is inert in itself, have this ego-sense. Between the two, that is, between the Self, or Pure Consciousness, and the inert physical body, there arises mysteriously the ego-sense, or “I” notion, the hybrid which is

neither of them, and this flourishes as an individual being. This ego, or individual being, is at the root of all that is futile and undesirable in life. Therefore, it is to be destroyed by any possible means; then That which ever is alone remains resplendent. This is Liberation or Enlightenment or Self-Realization.”

– Sri Ramana, Self-Realization pamphlet.



Sri Ramana's Self-Realization Retreat

Verses from "Supplement to the Forty Verses"

The body is inert like a pot. Since it has no "I"-consciousness and since, in its absence in deep sleep, we still exist, it cannot be the "I." Who is it, then, that produces the feeling of "I"-ness? Where is he? In the heart-cavern of those who thus inquire and realize, the omnipresent Arunachala Siva shines of his own accord as That-am-I consciousness. v. 10

Give up the idea that this loathsome body is the Self. Realize the eternally blissful Self. v. 12

Gifts, pendants, sacrifice, upright conduct, self-control, devotion, heaven, substance, peace, truth, grace, silence, the Supreme State, deathless death, knowledge, renunciation, liberation, bliss — know that all these are only severance of the "I-am-the-body" consciousness. v. 13

Those who are not learned are saved from the misfortune of those who have learning but no humility. They are saved from the clutches of the monster of pride, as well as from the disease of wandering thoughts and words, and from running about seeking wealth and fame. Know it is not from one evil alone that they are saved. v.36

Who is there besides the Self? What does it matter whether one is praised or blamed? Without differentiating between oneself and others and without swerving from one's natural state, one should abide as the Self. v. 38



September 1st, Sri Ramana's Arrival at Arunachala Celebration

Bearing and tending me in the world in the shape of my father and mother, Thou didst abide in my mind, and, before I fell into the deep sea called jaganmaya and was drowned, Thou didst draw me to Thee, Arunachala, Consciousness itself, such is the wonder of Thy Grace!

—The Necklet of Nine Gems, v. 9

The waters rise up from the sea as clouds, then fall as rain and run back to the sea in streams; nothing can keep them from returning to their source. Likewise, the soul rising up from Thee cannot be kept from joining Thee again, although it turns in many eddies on its way. A bird which rises from the earth and soars into the sky can find no place of rest in mid-air, but must return again to earth. So, indeed, must all retrace their path, and, when the soul finds the way back to its source, it will sink and be merged in Thee, O Arunachala, Thou Ocean of Bliss!

–Eight Stanzas to Sri Arunachala, v. 8

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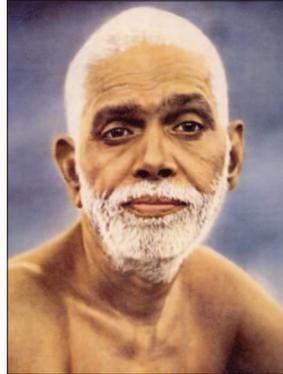
The Boundless Wisdom of Sri Ramana Maharshi

May 15, 1947

(114) Suicide

This afternoon, a young man from Tiruchirapalli wrote a letter and handed it over to Bhagavan. The gist of that letter is, that countless people in the country are suffering for want of food, that there is any amount of commotion, that we are unable to see their troubles, that Bhagavan must give out some plan to alleviate their suffering and that elders like him should not remain unconcerned like this.

Bhagavan read it and looking at him critically said, "Is that what you want? You say that you are suffering at the sight of their troubles. Does that mean that you yourself are all right unlike them and are happy?" "No, I am also suffering in one way or another," said that young man. "Ah! That is the trouble. You do not know what is your own happiness, and yet you are worried about others. Is it possible to make all people similar? If all get into the palanquin, who is to carry it? If all are kings, what is the point in saying that anyone is a king? Some people will be known as wealthy only if others are poor. A jnani can be recognized only when there are ignorant people. Darkness will be known only when there is light. Happiness will be known only if there is suffering. Food will be tasteful only if there is hunger. Hence, help can be rendered only to the extent possible, but if it is desired to make all people equally happy, that is never possible. A number of leaders of the country are working. Some of them say the work that has been contemplated has not been finished properly and so they will lecture. What for? People become leaders one after another and work goes on. There must be one shakti directing them all. If we throw the burden on that shakti with the confidence that it can do what is required and be free from worry, things will somehow go on. Some preach against the killing of animals. If people do not listen to them, they say they will fast unto death, 'we will commit suicide or we will give



up life.' If one says he will commit suicide if others do not give up killing animals, is not suicide itself a killing of a living being? They think suicide is merely leaving the body. Is not the body a part of the Self? Atma is always there, at all times in all places. Instead of looking at the Self which is real and per-

manent, if one looks upon the body, etc., as one's own self it is suicide. What other murder could there be than that? He who is able to see his own self by knowledge and wisdom will not be moved by whatever conflicts may come about. He will look upon the sorrows and happiness of the world as mere acting on the stage. In his view the whole world is a stage. On that stage the same man once puts on the dress of a king, another time of a minister, next a servant, washer man, barber,

and many other dresses, and acts appropriately on each occasion but as he is conscious of his real Self and knows that he is not any one of those whose parts he is acting, he does not worry about the various vicissitudes of life he depicts on each occasion. In the same manner, the world is a stage of Iswara. In that stage you are an actor. You may help to the extent of your ability, but you cannot make all people equal. It has not been possible in the past for anybody to do so and it will not be possible in the future either." The young man said, "Because of all this, there is no peace in this world. I am unhappy about that." "Look, you have come again to the point where you began," Bhagavan replied. "Instead of feeling concerned about there being no peace in the world, it is better to inquire and find out how you will get peace in this world. If you give up that objective, what is the use of worrying yourself about the lack of peace in the world? If one's mind had peace, the whole world will appear peaceful. Tell me, have you that peace?" Asked Bhagavan. That person said, "No." "Ah! That is the thing. You do not have peace. You do not know how to secure that peace. If instead of trying to gain that peace, you attempt to secure a peace for the world, it is like one who has no food, asking for food him-

self which, if given, he says he will use to feed any number of other people. Something like the lame man who said, 'if only someone holds me up can't I beat up the thieves!'"

May 16, 1947

(115) The Shakti That is, is One

Like the young man of yesterday, a North Indian gentleman handed over to Bhagavan a letter full of questions, chief among being why Bhagavan does not try to improve the welfare of the world. After reading it Bhagavan said, looking at those near, "Yesterday also we had the same type of question. It is enough if all these people preach about working for the welfare of the world, first work for their own welfare. Unable to inquire who they are and know that, they think of reforming the world. They must first find out who it is that is thinking thus. They don't do that. And they say, they will reform the world. It is just like the story of the lame man."

That questioner said, "Swami. How can jnanis like you sit quiet without moving? When there is strife and turmoil in the world should they not help in establishing peace?" Bhagavan replied, "Yes, they should; but how do you know that jnanis are not rendering any help? Their remaining where they are is itself a help to the world. To all outward appearances they seem to be doing nothing. Supposing there is a wealthy man. In his dream he goes about begging, works as a cooly and sweeps the streets. When he wakes up, he realizes that he is not that sort of person and remains dignified in the thought that he is a wealthy man. In the same manner, a jnani may do anything according to his prarabdha (fate) but he remains unattached and maintains a dignified aloofness. His shakti works in many ways but he does not feel happy or unhappy over the success or failure of his efforts. That is because he sees the world as full of Brahman and so nothing appears to him to be happy or unhappy. How can he have feelings of gratification or sorrow when he does not feel that he is in this body, that he is in this man or that he is in this world? Accordingly, it is said: *dristim jnanamayeem kritva pasyeth Brahmamayam jagath*, when a person gains the outlook of a jnani that very moment everything appears to be full of Brahman. Where then is room for the

feeling I am doing? They will then realize that everything is going on through the force of some Shakti. That is all," said Bhagavan.

Another person said, "Jnanis are said to be capable of cursing and giving boons. You are saying that they have nothing to do. How is that?" Bhagavan replied, "Yes. Who said they are not capable? But they do not have the feeling that they are one thing and the Shakti or Iswara is another. The force that is, is only one. They realize that they are moving because of that shakti and keep themselves from the feeling that they are the doers. Their presence itself is of use to the world. They do whatever acts they have to in accordance with their prarabdha. That is all."

May 17, 1947

116 Prarabdha (Fate)

This morning at 9 o'clock one devotee addressed Bhagavan as follows: "Swami, you said yesterday that a jnani will perform such actions as are ordained according to his prarabdha. But it is said that jnanis have no prarabdha at all!"

Bhagavan said, in a leisurely way, "How did they get this body if they have no prarabdha? How do they perform the various actions? The actions of jnanis are themselves called prarabdhas. It is stated that there is prarabdha from Brahma right up to the Sadasiva and the avatars of Rama and Krishna and others also.

**परित्राणय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।
धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे ॥**

"For the protection of the good, for the destruction of evil-doers, for the sake of firmly establishing Dharma (righteousness), I am born from age to age."

- Bhagavad Gita (IV:8)

As stated in this sloka, Iswara assumes a shape when the virtues of good people and the sins of bad people mingle and become prarabdha and he has to establish Dharma. That is called *parechcha prarabdha* (the acts of other people). The body itself is prarabdha. The purpose for which that body has come into existence will get done of its own accord."

The questioner of yesterday said, "In the Gita, Karma Yoga has been given greater prominence." "Oh! Is that so? Karma yoga is not the only one. What about the others? If you understand them all, you will know the real secret of Karma yoga; only you don't do that," said Bhagavan.

अहं क्रतुरहं यज्ञः स्वधाऽहमहमौषधम् ।
मन्त्रोऽहमहमेवाऽज्यमहमग्निरहं हुतम् ॥
(IX:16)

"I am the oblation, I am the sacrifice, I am the offering, the fire-giving herb, the mantram; also the clarified butter, the fire, and the burnt offering."

Before saying this, Lord Krishna in the Gita has said:

न च मां तानि यर्माणि निबध्नन्ति धनंजय ।
उदासीनवदासीनमसक्तं तेषू कर्मसु ॥
(IX:9)

"Nor do these works bind me, Oh Dhananjaya, enthroned on high, unattached to actions."

Besides this:

उदासीनवदासीनो गुणौर्यो न विचाल्यते ।
गुणा वर्तन्त इत्येव योऽवतिष्ठति नेङ्गते ॥
(XIV:23)

"He who, seated as a neutral, is unshaken by the qualities (gunas) who stands apart immovable saying, the gunas revolve."

And:

समदुःखसुखः स्वस्थः समलोष्ठाश्मकांचनः ।
तुल्यप्रियाप्रियो
धीरस्तुल्यनिन्दात्मसंस्तुतिः ॥
(XIV:24)

"Balanced in pleasure and pain, self-reliant to whom a lump of earth, rock, and gold are alike, the same to love and unloved, firm, the same in censure and in praise."

And again:

मानापमानयोस्तुल्यस्तुल्यो मित्रारिपक्षयोः ।
सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी गुणातीतः स उच्यते ॥
(XIV:25)

"The same in honor and dishonor, the same to friend and foe, abandoning all undertakings, he is said to have crossed over at the qualities (gunas)."

"That is what has been stated. The Mahapurushas (great personages) mentioned above, are realized souls. Whatever outward shape they may have, sishya (disciple), bhakta (devotee), undaseena (the unconcerned) and papatma (center), all the people in these four categories are protected through the grace of the jnanis. The sishyas worship them as gurus, ascertain the truth and attain Mukti (freedom from bondage). Bhaktas pray to them as the swarupa (form) of God and get release from their sins. Udaseenas listen to what the guru says, get enthused and become devotees. Sinners hear the stories from people that come and go and get release from their sins. People in these four categories are protected by the grace of jnanis," said Bhagavan.

Someone said, "You said that bad people will be released from their sins. Is that by listening to what others say or by talking amongst themselves?" "It is by hearing what other say. They are sinners, aren't they? How will they talk about good people?" Said Bhagavan. Yesterday's questioner asked, "You said sinners will get released. Does that mean from their bodily or mental ailments?" "It is for the mind only," Bhagavan replied; "happiness is possible only if the mind is right. If the mind is not right, whatever else may be, there is no peace. The mind becomes right according to each person's fitness. A nastic (an agnostic) becomes an astik (a believer), and astik becomes a bhakta, a bhakta becomes a jignasu (one desirous of knowledge) and a jignasu becomes a jnani. This refers to the mind only. What is the use of saying it refers to the body? If the mind is happy,

not only the body but the whole world will be happy. So one must find out the way of becoming happy oneself. One cannot do this except by finding out about oneself by self-inquiry. To think of reforming the world without doing that is like thinking of covering the whole world with leather to avoid the pain caused by walking on stones and thorns when the much simpler method of wearing leather shoes is available. When by holding an um-

rella over your head you can avoid the sun, will it be possible to cover the face of the whole earth by tying a cloth over it to avoid the sun? If a person realizes his position and stays in his own self, things that are to happen will happen. Things that are not to happen will not happen. That shakti that is in the world, is only one. All these troubles arise if we think that we are separate from that shakti.” ॐ

TEMPLE SEVA

Seva means service. It can also mean worship. Since the God that we worship here is none other than the Absolute Self, it becomes for us a form of meditation. – Nome

Below are talks given by Nome after meditation and prior to engaging in our temple seva, which occurs once each month at SAT.

June 14, 2014

“In spiritual experience, that which you know, you find yourself to be. That to which you devote yourself, you become. That which you serve, your mind is naturally drawn toward. In caring for our temple, that of which it is a manifestation, an expression and a symbol, you find dwelling within yourself. The result of such is endless blessing.”

July 19, 2014

“In light of all that was read aloud last evening, the Maharshi’s instruction regarding activity and Self- Knowledge, not much more can be said. To paraphrase what was read aloud yesterday – Attending to our temple is attending to the Self.”

August 9, 2014

“Siva, Ramana, the Self of all, it is to that One that this temple is dedicated. That to which you devote yourself, you become.”





Sahaja Sthiti

January 13, 2013

Om Om Om

(Silence)

Nome: Sahaja Sthiti means abidance in the natural state, abidance as the innate. This is one of the ways in which Sri Bhagavan describes Self-Realization. He says that Self-Realization is innate. How can it be? It must be because the nature of Realization is identical with the Being that is the Self that is realized and, as such, is ever-existent, without coming and without going. What comes and goes, appears and disappears, is not innate, is not our Self. Even the state of coming and going comes and goes. The innate is ever-existent. It is nirguna, attributeless, for that which is innate is nonobjective and cannot be conceived in terms of qualities.

What is natural for you? The innate is most eloquently described in silence, yet, turning inward, some expression can be

given of it. What is natural for you? It is natural to be happy; unhappiness is never natural. We should abide in that which is natural. We should abide as that which is natural. If that which is natural is nirguna, without attributes, happiness should not be considered as an attribute, as something that comes and goes, or belongs or is lost. Rather, the nature of happiness must be one's very Being.

What is innate? No perception and no conception can be considered innate, for they are objective, and they are not always with you. The innate must be ever-existent. What is natural for you? Your very Being is, of course, natural. What is its nature? What is Existence, itself? What appears to be known is not innate, but the Consciousness that shines so that such knowing is even possible is so. Being is innate; Consciousness is innate; Ananda, Happiness, Bliss, is innate. These are not qualities or attributes. This is just a means of expressing one indivisible, homogeneous Reality.

It is wise to identify yourself as the Self, the innate. To consider what is not the Self to be yourself is delusive. Delusion takes the form of misidentification and, in outward terms, attachment. An attached state is not natural. A misidentified state is certainly not natural. Delusion is not natural. What is natural for you? What is innate, you ever are; what is not so, you never are. Inquire to determine what,

in truth, you are; who am I? The idea of a separate individuality is a falsely conceived attribute. It is not innate; it is not true. Determine the truth of what you are by inquiring within, nonobjectively, "Who am I?"

Who or what is it that can abide as the innate? Only the innate can abide as itself. There are not two of you, a true Self and a false self, a greater Self and a lesser self. There is only one Self. So, the natural state is that in which there is no other, no other "I," no other world, just one indivisible, absolute, unchanging Existence. Considering any kind of bondage and its consequent suffering---none of that, not one speck of it, is natural. All of it is born out of the stuff of imagination. Understand it to be so. In disidentifying from false definition, know yourself as you are. That which so knows is that which ought to be known. There is only one Self.

Questioner: Thank you Master. It seems that the abidance in the natural state that you spoke of is a matter of Knowledge and certainly not limited to thought. I considered the term bhava, and I realize I do not know what bhava exactly means in this context. Perhaps, having the bhava of abidance in the natural state would be a good approach.

N.: If bhava be understood as conception or attitude, although such may be helpful if it is religious bhava, it is not the same thing as abidance. If bhava be

understood as conviction, such as described in Ribhu Gita, such bhava results in the natural state, but what kind of conviction is it and what is its root? Consider the conviction that you have in your own Existence. It is unbreakable, and it is continuous. What is its root? It does not come from perception or conception. It does not come from thought or sensation. If the conviction from the source is in the source, it is all right.

Another Q.: The impression came to me some time ago that abidance in one's natural state is effortless, and one actually needs to make an effort to leave one's natural state and be in a kind of misidentification or delusion or even sustain a particular bhava.

N.: That is so. What is natural requires no effort. In spiritual practice, effort is applied, only to undo the previous effort of the ignorance. That accomplished, the effortless remains.

Another Q.: That's such a wondrous question to ask oneself, "What is natural?" It's really asking one to find out who you are.

N.: We are always doing that here. (laughter)

Q.: Many forms of, "Who am I?"

N.: Different ways of coaxing.

Q.: (laughter) I have a doubtless knowledge of that Existence all the time. It's always there.

N.: Is it individualized?

Q.: Not at all.

N.: If it is not at all individualized, the question of effort or absence of such no longer applies.

For whom would such qualities or states be?

Q.: For the unnatural one. My practice now is to meditate intensely twice a day, in the morning and in the afternoon. Most of the time, that experience of being in the natural state is there in the morning and again in the afternoon. Between those, there's some drifting.

N.: To what do you drift?

Q.: I drift to what the body's engaged in, what I'm thinking, the task of making a livelihood.

N.: What is it that you are referring to as drifting?

Q.: Drifting would be moving away from that natural state.

N.: If it is natural, how do you move from it?

Q.: Your question makes me question my assumption. Am I actually moving from it?

N.: Again, what constitutes the drifting? What do you suppose is your identity?

Q.: Somebody sitting in front of the computer at a desk, looking at a screen, moving hands around, thinking about what's on the screen.

N.: Why do you consider that do be yourself?

Q.: I should be asking myself that. (laughter)

N.: That you can ask at any time.

Q.: I don't need to wait until the middle of the day.

N.: Is the body the Self? Are you a sitter, a speaker, a performer of action?

Q.: What I consider the body to be becomes much more nebulous. I'm not quite sure what I'm actually misidentifying with when I look at what it is. When Ribhu speaks about the concept and how small it is, but, when I don't look at it, the concept seems to have some solidity.

N.: It is wiser for the inquiry to be carried on subjectively. What the body is may be according to viewpoint. You might view it as inert, as an instrument, as a temple, as a collection of particles, as a thought within the mind, or as something that was never actually created. Regardless of the view, are you the body? Whether you think it is inert or sentient, are you that?

Q.: Returning to the question, "What's natural?" and asking from there, no, the body is not part of that. That's not "I."

N.: The body is not your continuous experience is it?

Q.: When you point out that it's not continuous, then, that's clear that I'm not something that's discontinuous like the body. I don't experience the answer to the question, "What's natural?" as a discontinuous and broken definition of myself. It doesn't feel that way.

N.: Similarly, is your Existence an object? The body is an object. Apart from the sensations regarded as it, you have no experience of it. Are you an object? Are you a product of sensations?

Q.: No.

N.: The body is obviously transitory. It most certainly will not last forever. It is quite impossible, though, to even imagine

the cessation of your Existence, let alone experience such.

Q.: If I attempt to do that now, it just drives me further into the Existence. It becomes more obvious that it's break-less.

N.: In light of this, how can the body and "I" be equated?

Q.: Yes, the body does not equal Existence. When you point out that the only thing that I know of the body is perceptions, it becomes very clear that the rest of it is some additional concept about those perceptions.

N.: The perceptions, also, are merely conceived. They appear in one state of mind, but do you appear in a state of mind?

Q.: No, because, if I look at states of mind, they're just made up of a bunch of objects, and I'm never one of the objects in any of the states.

N.: That which knows about the states of mind must be beyond the states of mind. Sahaja Sthiti is not a temporary experience. It is the supreme Realization in which there is absolutely One without a second, without the possibility of any alternative whatsoever. There is no going into it and going out of it. What the Maharshi realized, he didn't just dip into twice a day. (laughter) When the natural state is realized, all doubts are resolved, all misconceptions are obliterated. The entirety of illusion becomes impossible. It is immortal, blissful, true Knowledge. It is Brahman.

Another Q.: First of all, thank you for all this: this beautiful temple and being here with us week after week. A few days ago I was

puzzling over death, and it was disturbing me. It occurred to me that it was just a part of death that was troubling me; not the actual dying, but the thought of it, and it occurred to me that those thoughts are the problem.

N.: Thought of death is not necessarily problematic. It can even be an inspiration, prompting one to find that which is immortal. If we merely did not think about death, that would not resolve it, but, in the light of the thought of death, to turn within and inquire, to find out what dies and what does not, and to know yourself as that which does not die is very beneficial.

Q.: That's my goal.

N.: If that is your goal, you need not be concerned when the thought of death arises. Use it to prompt a deeper and deeper inquiry to know your eternal, real Existence. It will not be morbid; it will be blissful. The body dies, but, with the death of the body, are you dead? Like this, inquire.

Another Q.: When I have some task in the world I have to do which involves thinking, how can I keep that in an objective state. Thinking seems to be so subjective that it captures me in that state, and I forget then who I really am. So, how do I handle that?

N.: What knows the thinking? The knower is truly subjective; the known is objective. Aren't your thoughts objective? Don't you know about them? Consider thinking to be merely an instrument, for purposes of this question. You are not the instrument. You are the knower. To define

the knower in terms of the known is delusion. What is the knower when he is not defined by the known? The knower is pure Consciousness. It is untouched by thought.

Q.: So, all thinking is objective?

N.: It is not your Self. How could you be a thought? More of something that you are not, thought, does not make it any more you.

Q.: It's just an action of the brain.

N.: Or, the brain is just another thought. Leave that aside for now. First determine your identity. Then, you can see what the nature of the mind or thought is. First determine your identity and know that your Existence, of the nature of pure Consciousness, is not defined or confined by thought, is not bound by thought, is not touched by thought, and is not conceived by thought. You are not the thought, and you are not the thinker.

If you were a thought, a thought would have to be with you always. If you can exist without a thought, that thought cannot be you, even a notion of being a thinker. You are not always thinking, but you do always exist. Cease to regard what is objective as your Self, and it will not bind you.

Another Q.: In considering the natural state, or any spiritual matter, it seems that there's a tendency to just conceptualize it. Even in the attempt to consider it very deeply, still that tendency exists. Although it might be a nice concept, it still tends to stay

in the conceptual level, nonetheless.

N.: Is there something that is not a concept?

Q.: That's certainly what this seems to be pointing toward.

N.: Are you a concept? (silence) Is that which prompts you to smile now a concept?

Q.: Then, it's really not letting up for a moment, unless it just becomes another concept.

N.: As there is never an opportune moment to be ignorant, to practice true Knowledge in the form of inquiry, all the time, is just sensible. Do you love Bhagavan? Is that merely a concept? You know much that is not a mere concept. Your Being is not a concept. Consciousness is not a concept. Happiness is not a concept. Love and devotion are not concepts. In fact, everything that's actually important is not a concept. You need not worry that you will become trapped in a concept. It won't satisfy. You already know something better and deeper. That will goad you, for the sake of your happiness, and only that which transcends every kind of concept will be found to be satisfactory. Is this clear for you?

Q.: Yes, thanks, it's very helpful. It's clear what's important.

Another Q.: When I take myself to be objective, then my inquiry assumes that same habit of assuming that my Self somehow is objective. That would lead to some sort of imagination of my Self.

N.: What is it that you are referring to as "inquiry"?

Q.: Well, it is not inquiry obviously. (laughter) That would be more imagination.

N.: The experience of inquiry is always a non-objectified introversion.

Q.: Every time you ask about the mind, about any doubt, you're asking it way beyond that framework. That's what blows my mind. It's obvious that that vision is unencumbered. I have conviction, but it's weak. It's a weak conviction because it is weakened by attachments.

N.: How can you eliminate attachments?

Q.: By questioning the very root of them, the basis of them, what is happiness, and, if I would subtract the object part, what is the actual goal.

N.: Of the belief that the goal, happiness, is natural for you, you are very convinced. There is nothing weak about that at all. The attachments are weak. Ignorance is weak.

Q.: They lose their hold, because you start speaking about what's real.

N.: Interior, nonobjective Knowledge, which is the very nature of inquiry, is inherently strong, and the characteristic of ignorance is that it is weak and fractured.

Q.: Yes, somehow I thought that there was some power to it. That wouldn't make any sense. Where would the power come from?

N.: If there was any power in it, it came from you.

Q.: Going back to your question about, "How do you eliminate attachment?"

N.: To what are you actually attached? What is it that you hope to from any object to which you become attached?

Q.: It seems to be my Self, Sat-Cit-Ananda.

N.: In Sat-Cit-Ananda, there is no attachment whatsoever.

Q.: Yeah. So, I end up getting ripped off. It doesn't yield.

N.: With attachment to any object, you desire happiness. It is actually the very nature of your Being. Recognizing this, attachment is destroyed. The object can never give you your Self, and your Self has no use for an object.

Q.: Consciousness never deviates from. It doesn't become blinded because of desire in any sort of way.

N.: The Consciousness is just itself. Desire is born of ignorance. Ignorance is merely misidentification, starting with the root notion of "I." Right where there is absolute, undifferentiated Being, an "I" is imagined. If we inquire, "Who imagines it?" the imagination vanishes. That undifferentiated Being, infinite and eternal, is your Consciousness. That is also your happiness. It is not something that comes and goes. The nature of the Self is birthless and without a creation. There is nothing else for it to associate itself with; nor is there anything else to touch it. It is supremely nonattached. Where there is only One, how could there be attachment? Where you are the Bliss, itself, how could there be attach-

ment? If the tendency to objectify a definition for your Self is abandoned, that will suffice. How could you be an object?

Q.: That's very interesting, because that would be pure inquiry. Everything I imagine is objective.

N.: So, to be done with imagination means to be done with the objectifying outlook. When the imagination, which is the objectifying outlook, is abandoned, only pure Consciousness remains. That is perfectly full. There is no question of attachment for That, and you are not another one. You are That, and That alone.

(Then followed a recitation in Sanskrit and English of verses from Aparoksanubhuti.)

(Silence)

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

(Then followed a recitation in Tamil from Chapter 41 of the Song of Ribhu.) ॐ

Egoless Existence

January 20, 2013

Om Om Om

(Silence)

Nome: Bodiless Existence, mind-transcendent Existence, egoless Existence, is the Self, what you truly are. As bodiless Existence, you have no birth, and you do not perish. As bodiless Existence, you have no form, and you have no activity. As bodiless Existence, you have no condition, and you have no state. This bodiless Existence is always.

As mind-transcendent Existence, you remain forever unconceived and are never the object of any thought. As mind-transcendent Existence, you are beyond the perceptible and the conceivable. As mind-transcendent Existence, your nature is forever unmodified, unalloyed Consciousness.

As egoless Existence, there is not the least trace of individuality in reality. As egoless Existence, you have no bondage, no limitation, no beginning, and no end. As egoless or non-individualized Existence, you are the Infinite, the Eternal, of the very nature

of Brahman. This bodiless, mind-free, egoless Existence is always.

You exist. It is a doubtless fact. What is this existence? From the delusive standpoint of an ego, mind, or body, duality or multiplicity is possible, but such is merely illusory. Existence, itself, is forever indivisible and innately nondual. Your Existence is only one. There is no multiplicity of selves. There is not the absolute, eternal, infinite Self, which is Brahman, plus another self that is embodied or individualized. The Self is only one. Find out what the Self is by inquiring within, "Who am I?"

Existence is always. Knowledge of existence is, similarly, always. How do you know that you exist? It is not by perception and not by conception. How do you know that you exist, and what do you ascribe to the existence? Existence is realizable but inconceivable. What do you imagine your existence to be: individualized, an idea, a set of ideas, in a state of mind such as waking, dreaming, or deep dreamless sleep, as a body, as a performer of action, etc.? None of that is actually the Existence. What is the Existence, itself, and how do you know it?

Sri Bhagavan says, "Our greatest glory lies where we cease to exist." Yet, "The Existence of the Self." he says, "is always." It is eternal, and never do we not exist. So, what does he mean by this "greatest glory is where we cease to exist"? The perfect fullness and the absolute peace of the real Self lie where you find, in Self-Knowledge, the cessation of misidentification.

If you are not the body, what are you? Such is the cessation. If you are not the senses, neither anything sensed nor a sensing entity, what are you? If you are not the prana, or the animating life energy, what are you? If you are not the mind or any of the permutations of thought, what are you? As the notion, or false assumption, of individuality also comes and goes and is objective, it cannot be you. If you are not an individual, or ego entity, what, in truth, are you?

The perfect peace of Self-Realization lies in the immutable nature of the Self, which is beginningless, endless Saccidananda (Sat-Chit-Ananda), Being-Consciousness-Bliss. You cannot simultaneously be the absolute Brahman-Self and any kind of individual. It is not possible for your true Existence to alternate; it is immutable by its very nature, never undergoing any change. If you were an ego, you

would always be an ego, but this is not so. If you are the Self, you are always the Self, for your nature does not change. If you are always the Self, is there another kind of you that pops up on occasion? Find out. If you inquire within yourself, "Who am I?" just as the Maharshi has instructed, you find that the one Self alone exists eternally. Realizing this with certainty is perfection. The perfection is actually innate. Inquire and see.

Questioner: Thank you Master. In the course of advising inquiry and contemplations such as, "How do you know that you exist?", you mentioned the various things that one certainly is not. It seems natural to have the feeling of not assuming or not taking on such identity, or such form, and then moving from there into inquiry. It is, perhaps, a good first reaction.

N.: If you do not possess anything, is that not the same as the inquiry to find out who you are? If you do not possess anything, not so much as a mind or a body, what remains? In Adi Sankaracharya's "Ten Verses" (Dasasloki), the constant refrain of the final phrase of the first nine verses is, "That One which alone remains, That am I, Siva am I." You must find that remainder. Negate from your sense of identity or reality anything that can be negated. There is One that can never be negated. It exists. It alone exists. It is your Existence. It is the solitary Existence.

Do you possess existence? Reality cannot be possessed. Do you possess identity, that is, the Self? Not really. Do you possess happiness? Is it not the shining of your self-luminous real nature? If, by inner discrimination, you determine the source or nature of happiness, reality, and identity, you find them to be the same, and you are dispossessed of all delusion. Where there is One without a second and no concept of other, who is to possess what?

Another Q.: That question, 'How do I know I exist?' there isn't an individual that actually knows the answer to that. If one were to assume that there was an individual that knew the answer to it, he would have to objectify his own Existence to do that. How do I know it? I know it by the Existence itself. I can't stand away from my Existence and know it.

N.: It cannot be an object, and it does not require an intermediary. There is no other instrument

used to know it. The question reveals the identity of Being and Consciousness, that they are One and the same thing. In deep dreamless sleep, in which there is no thought activity, you still exist. What is that Existence? You know the Existence, but with no need of thought. What is that Knowledge?

Q.: I have never had to know anything to know my own Existence and never had to have some other instrument or have somebody else tell me what it is.

N.: It is self-existent, non-dependent, and does not come and go.

Q.: If I ask myself if it is my continuous experience that I always know that Existence as my Self, I need to say, "No."

N.: Yet the Existence, indeed, is always, and it is the "you" that comes and goes.

Q.: Okay. Who is that "you"?

N.: That would be good to inquire into. In any deeper spiritual experience, the boundaries that are supposed for the experience, its beginning, its end, its limit, etc., are actually the boundaries of delusion and not of the deeper spiritual experience. The coming and going of pure Existence is not so. It is merely the coming and going of the so-called "you." When he goes, your Existence shines forth, by itself, to itself.

Q.: I can see the forms that I attach to the "you," but I can't actually see the "you." I can see "you" as a body and "you" as a performer of action, but if I try to get hold of the "you" that I misidentify with, there's nothing really there.

N.: Become very certain of that. The "I" notion is integral to every other misidentification. It's at the center of all of them. If you truly, with certainty, find the absence of the ego, the entirety of samsara is destroyed.

Q.: I don't know it with certainty, because it's not destroyed.

N.: Who is the "I" in that statement?

Q.: It's not the Existence.

N.: Question him. The ego's apparent survival is due entirely to non-inquiry. If you so much as look for him, he vanishes. What do you take for granted

regarding yourself? Every vasana, or tendency, comes out of that.

Q.: That means that I'm just assuming it, and I'm not really looking to see if that's true? So what do I assume? If I have thoughts that I need to do this, I need to do that, and there's some anxiety, and it takes some of my focus, I must be thinking that I'm a body.

N.: Yes, in order to think that you are a performer of action. The "I am the body" misconception is implicit in the idea of doership. Are you the performer of action? Are you a body?

Q.: I know that I have Existence, but not like having it.

N.: Alright.

Q.: Regarding the body, I don't know where I'm actually making that mistake. I don't know if I'm trying to look for a place where it happens, or how it happens, or what am I doing to do that? I don't seem to find that thoroughly.

N.: Where is the connection between your Self and the body? What is the connection?

Q.: I can observe the body, and I can observe the senses. I can't actually see a connection, though, like something that is gluing them together.

N.: Then, why do you suppose there is?

Q.: That must be the assumption. I don't know why that is. I don't know if I need to figure out why.

N.: Ignorance does not have a good cause; hence it is called "ignorance." If illusion had a real cause, it would be real and not illusory. Every time you assume that you are limited to the scope of the body, the location of the body, wrapped up in the senses, thinking of yourself in terms of the qualities or characteristics, the activities, etc., of the body, inquire. Find out if you are a body to begin with. If the "I am the body" misconception is left unquestioned, the rest of the tendencies follow.

Q.: Doership. Fear of death.

N.: If the misidentification is severed, which is merely the destruction of ignorance and not the destruction of anything real, all the tendencies that are dependent on that misidentification collapse and vanish and are unable to be revived. The body

is too small for you. Dissolve the misidentification. It is also quite transitory and not a place for a long stay.

Q.: It has a certain expiration. I don't know if this is a useful approach, but I know that there were certain misidentifications that I've been able to dissolve and I ask myself if I can bring that to bear to kill this body-misidentification once and for all.

N.: It is the same principle at work. Knowledge is the essence. It takes the form of the cessation of misidentification. If you can determine a mistake is a mistake, you won't repeat it. If you see ignorance as ignorance, it subsides. It is only so long as you think that the ignorance is somehow valid, that it is actually knowledge, that it continues.

Another Q.: Master Nome, I've read and heard of you in the poems of Sankara. I like the way he reinforces the truth that there is One without a second. He has some beautiful descriptions of that state. Are there similarities between him and Ramana, as far as their lives or their work?

N.: Where there is One without a second, how can we speak of similarity or contrast? In Vedanta, differences are spoken of as being of three kinds: differences between things of different natures, differences between things having the same nature, and internal difference, division within one thing. The nature of the real Self is devoid of all three kinds of differences. This real Self is Sri Ramana, as well as Adi Sankara.

They tell you to find that One within yourself. Devotedly follow the instruction to your utmost, applying all your effort introspectively, and find out just how beautiful it is.

Another Q.: You mentioned Existence. I treat all these things like an object, even my Existence. It's weird.

N.: Who treats these things? The Existence treats these things?

Q.: No.

N.: Does the Self have ignorance?

Q.: Definitely I can see that that was a mistake and it's only based on the ignorance.

N.: So, ignorance has ignorance?

Q.: If I start misidentifying, it's good to try to take this understanding to the source. The body is sick, so there's been a modification of what I call myself. The mind feels sleepy.

N.: Is any of that you?

Q.: Those are all things that I know. I think that they're me all the time.

N.: Do you?

Q.: No, not all the time; not even close. In fact, this whole satsang has been really good for seeing how fragmented that is.

N.: Ignorance is full of fragmentation. In fact, there are more holes in it than there is substance. Indeed, when you closely scrutinize it, it is entirely holes, and there is no substance.

Q.: I have to see that more clearly.

N.: The desire to see it is excellent. Now, who is it that desires it?

Q.: It's assumed to be myself.

N.: But who assumes?

Q.: Oh, it can't be that Existence-Consciousness; it can't be That.

N.: That is without the concepts of "I" and "this." There is only one of you. Your pure Existence is indivisible, and it can never become other than what it is. Pretending to stand apart from it to say, "I know it," or "I do not know it," is actually ridiculous.

Q.: Isn't that the essence of inquiry? Isn't it the drive to know my Self? I know that I

can't be separate from my Self, but it's imagined to be so.

N.: When such imagination arises, naturally there is the desire to be free of it. The desire for Self-Realization is extremely important. It is imperative for successful sadhana. It reaches its culmination when we inquire, "Who is bound? Who imagines?" Can imagination imagine itself? The Reality does not do so.

Q.: But it is funny that I believe that, that I imagine, that's who I am. It's totally wrong.

N.: But it is not so. The essence of inquiry is pure Knowledge, which is inherent in the Self. If we understand this, inquiry becomes continuous, leaving no scope for delusion. What is imagined cannot be the cause of imagination. The Self, being absolute, cannot be the cause of such imagination either. Imagination cannot be self-caused, for that would presume that it pre-existed.

Q.: If it pre-existed, it would be real?

N.: When the Maharshi, the other sages, and the scriptures declare that I and this, the ego and the world, are but imagination or illusion, they mean it. It is not necessary to imagine distance between yourself and That. Chandogya Upanishad says, "Tat tvam asi, That you are." It means what it says; that That, Brahman, is what, in truth, you actually are. What do think if somebody says, "I'll work on it. I'll think about it." Work on what? Think about what? It is a statement of fact. Interior in-

quiry reveals how true the Truth is.

(Then followed a recitation in Sanskrit and English of verses from Aparoksanubhuti.)

(Silence)

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

(Then followed a recitation in Tamil from chapter 41 of the Song of Ribhu.) ॐ



From The Ramana Way

The following articles appear in the June 2007 issue of "The Ramana Way," a monthly publication produced by the Ramana Maharshi Center for Learning in Bangalore, India. RMCL has been producing monthly publications entirely devoted to Sri Ramana and His teaching since the early 1980's. Sri A.R. Natarajan dedicated his life and his family's life to the cause of Bhagavan Ramana. Sri A.R. Natarajan was absorbed in the lotus feet of His Master in 2007. His daughter, Dr. Sarada Natarajan, continues in his legacy, keeping the Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning and "The Ramana Way" alive for all Ramana devotees. May the devotion and wisdom from which these articles are written "jump" off the pages and into your heart. Please visit them at: www.ramanacentre.com



Don't Disturb Me (or) For No Rhyme or Reason

by Dr. Sarada Natarajan

Will our purpose crazed mind drop all purposes and simply rest in Bhagavan for the joy of doing so? "I do not know about the Self. I do not know about life and death or the continuing cycle. I do not know about release. But I know there is an extraordinary power shining within me. It makes me know everything. It makes me know even that I do not know. It is beautiful beyond words, beautiful in itself. It draws my attention to itself repeatedly. There is no reason for my paying attention to it except that I cannot help it. If there is any benefit on account of my thus paying attention, I do not know of it. If there is no benefit, it makes no difference to me as I cannot help paying attention to this power in any case."

How wonderful it would be if we could say so! How wonderful it would be to pay attention to Bhagavan's presence shining as the Heart, not for any reason whatsoever but simply because we love to do so, simply because we can't help doing so. How wonderful it would be if the thought of Bhagavan, on his name, of his form, simply fills us all the time on account of its indescribable beauty.

Sundaresa Iyer would visit Bhagavan every day without fail. One day he suddenly thought that no spiritual progress was happening on account of these visits. Of course, he did not blame Bhagavan for this. Instead, he blamed himself. He thought he was not fit enough to receive Bhagavan's grace and must make himself so before going into Bhagavan's presence again. So, for a full 100 days he kept himself from Bhagavan, engaging himself in spiritual practices that would make him fit to receive Bhagavan's grace. What could be more purifying than Bhagavan's presence itself? Bhagavan says this about self-inquiry, as well. He says that one need not purify oneself in order to pursue self-inquiry, as it is in itself most purificatory.

Did Sundaresa Iyer not know this? Who could have known better than he? Yet, somehow, the need to improve, to become more spiritual, to have spiritual experiences, in short, the pursuit of purpose blinded him for a while and took his attention away from that very purpose. So, he kept himself away from Bhagavan.

On the 100th day, Sundaresa Iyer could bear it no longer and ran all the way up to Skandasramam. Bhagavan was waiting for him at the gate. Where does Bhagavan go? He is ever waiting for us. Only we do not go to him; we do not turn to him. We make him unavailable to ourselves by our lack of attention. We have 1001 important reasons for not paying attention to Bhagavan, including our inability to do so. All these reasons seem very valid when

we give them to ourselves, just as Sundaresa Iyer's reasons must have seemed very valid to him at that time. Otherwise, how could one who was seeing Bhagavan every day and who could do so at any moment he wished to willfully keep himself away?

When we do not pay attention to the Self, when we do not pay attention to Bhagavan's presence, we, too, have seemingly very good reasons for not doing so. We do not realize that all these reasons will melt away when it is no longer possible for us to keep away. When it is impossible for us to pay attention to anything else, where will attention rest? When it is impossible for us to have any purpose, any goal, any need for any mental movement, where will attention rest? Only in the Self; where else can it go? When the thought of Bhagavan becomes the only meaningful thing in our lives, not because it should be so (for whatever the reason) but simply because it is so, then what else can disturb attention?

Do we need a reason to breathe? We breathe. Does the river need a reason to move towards the sea? It simply cannot help doing so. Do we need a reason to think of those who are dearest to us? We simply cannot help thinking of them. Do we need a reason even to think of the things that disturb us from time to time? No, not even for that. "I wish to forget it, but my mind goes back to it again and again, I cannot help it," we say. How come we do not say, "I cannot help it, my mind is just filled with Bhagavan?" How come our minds are not so filled with Bhagavan, whose beauty surpasses all else in the world, that we have no space to think even that it is so filled?

We believe we must think of Bhagavan, for some good reason no doubt, but there is a purpose, a motive. We believe we must do self-inquiry, for an equally good reason (or the same good reason). Here, too, there is a purpose, a motive. It is something that should be done, not something that is done. Why? Why can we not pay attention to Bhagavan when His presence is available all the time? What keeps us away? Our tendencies, our distractions, our attention to other things, paltry or exhausted and all our preoccupation with our own purposes. We lose Bhagavan by wanting to seek Him.

Sundaresa Iyer did not keep away from Bhagavan because he was bored of going to him. He did

not keep away from Bhagavan because he was angry or hurt or found something more interesting. He kept away from him to be better prepared to receive his grace. This is the story of the situation. This is the story of our lives. As surely the drama of Sundaresa Iyer has been played out in Bhagavan's divine sport only for our sakes. It is for us to face the truth that there is no need whatsoever to keep away from Bhagavan's presence. Everything that keeps me away is a mere excuse.

And Bhagavan does not keep himself away or hide himself either. That thought, too, is one of the excuses that the mind offers. If I say "Bhagavan is hiding himself," is not the awareness of Bhagavan's presence also implied? Just as when I say "the sun is hiding the clouds," am I not aware of the sun? To feel someone's absence, I must be first aware of that presence. Can I say someone is hiding if I do not at all know of their presence? Can I say that someone I have never seen or heard of or known in my life is hiding from me? No, I cannot. Hence, in awareness of absence there has to be and there always is the implied awareness of presence. In every seeking there has to be the awareness of the presence of the sought.

When this is the case why not focus on the presence instead of on the absence or on the seeking? When we cannot keep ourselves away any longer, we run to him like Sundaresa Iyer did and he is waiting.

Sundaresa Iyer fell at his feet and wept and blurted out the reason for his absence. "Bhagavan I kept away from you because I felt I was making no progress," he said. Bhagavan lovingly lifted him up and asked, "What if it is so? You felt the difference, did you not?"

Sundaresa Iyer writes while recording this incident, "I realized that we did not go to him for profit or loss, but because there was no life for us away from him." What does it matter whether we do or do not progress? How does it matter whether we do or we do not attain anything? Be it self-knowledge, liberation, freedom from birth and death, call it by any name, of what significance is it? What matters is that Bhagavan is waiting for us. We could go to his presence every day, every hour, every minute. We could stay, so that we have no possibility of going there any more. Or we could keep ourselves away. ॐ

Darkness at Noon, Battling With the Mind

by A.R. Natarajan



It was the morning meditation hour, time to be related to Ramana in the heart. Nothing should be smoother than its pull. However, it was such a struggle, a regular Waterloo with my mind. Thoughts arise in their teeming millions. They seem to be just waiting for their favorite prey; the time allotted for silent relationship with the divine, with the Sadguru. All the lessons which one has learned about the ways to tackle the mind seem to have become so futile. One knows it for sure when one is in the fangs of the tiger-like jaw of thoughts. One has to get up disgusted, disillusioned about one's own super efficiency in being aware of the formation of thoughts in time and not letting them grip attention. One cannot say, "Damn it all!" For so vital, so meaningful it is to be related to the luminous treasure in the heart, Ramana. It makes such a world of difference, the difference between happiness and sorrow of life in the company of thoughts; a life, in which their sudden lording never seems to be over. Sometimes the going is so tough that even prayer seems futile. When can one say, "Oh! Master, my master, the fearful trip is done." Time with its memories is ready to draw one into the gutter waters of the world's ceaseless allurements and the world's endless enjoyments. This "I" and "mine" are ceaselessly in operation adding fuel to the fire. How is one to counter attack? It is only by re-focusing on the center of the thought world, the "I." Strange as it may seem, the one, the thinker, the "I," who has fathered all these countless thoughts has been collectively gunned down by the thoughts to usurp that place and make one feel that thoughts are more important than the thinker, their creator. By repeatedly thinking about the particular thoughts, immeasurable power is injected into particular thoughts giving them Frankenstein strength. The net result is the anarchy of an un-understood mind.

Would you like to see your reflection in the mirror of truth or would you shy away from it? It might burst your puffed up ego, your overrated sense of

importance. Whatever be the image it may show, there is often so much pretense in life that no one seems to like to face the truth. Lost seems to be frank and open-minded expression. There is need to sugarcoat whatever one says, for each is carrying his own armor of the ego image about himself. The mask can never be torn off. So it seems. All problems are my problems. All arise in my mind, flourish and flounder. There are many, many mental states in the course of the 16 hours of waking; the lazy and indolent moods, the overactive moods with their "let me do this or that" attitude. Times when an inexplicable calm takes over. Then nothing seems to matter. There is calm strength. The mind is cool, serene like the ocean in midday with just gentle tiny movement of ripples as against the roar of the waves on a full moon night or stormy night. Strangely, the same mind becomes sometimes volcanic, when it erupts throwing its lava all around. At those times, the individual is down and out in moods of depression, in loss of confidence in his own ability. It is corrosive of one's courage for facing events in their ceaseless succession. Therefore, one has to look for the solution outside the individual mind, which is the first and primary illusion, born of identification with that which one is not, the body. So long as one seeks solutions within the mental framework, one can be certain that there will be no end to a merciless mind and its sudden onslaughts. One who has the problem would have remained un-tackled. Time, the past with its memories, which is the enemy within, would have been left scot-free to do its damage and spray of bullets at will. Until the reality of the individual mind is seen to be false, all solutions would be so patchy that no amount of adhesives can put them together for any length of time. It would be no better than sweeping the dust under the carpet and believing that the carpet has been cleaned. One cannot turn a Nelson's eye to the problem, which is suicidal. This strong expression is being used because, in the bargain, one is losing his own inheritance, the abundant joy of the natural state. It is therefore of paramount importance to find a root-and-branch solution to this festering wound.

How seriously is one seeking a solution? This is an important question because many are lifetime meditators. Meditation is integrated into routine life and increasingly it becomes prosaic. It does not give

the individual, the necessary result of progressing towards the goal of greater association with the grace of the Sadguru and Self-knowledge. Many complain that though they have read all the literature, their doubts seem to be endless. One who is familiar with economic newspapers and magazines would be used to the twofold classifications: top 10 gainers; top 10 losers.

A list would be given periodically, be it for that mutual fund performance or of stocks. Frankly, it seems that if one is honest with oneself one would have begun with the intention of being among the top 10 performers, but would soon end up in the losers list due to gradual disinterest. Now and then, one seeks the solution, sometimes half-heartedly and sometimes quite earnestly. But the sustained force, the energy and the drive, can come only to the extent that one shies away from the way of life which one wants to hang onto. It is a question of eating the cake and wanting to keep it. Unless the directional pull of the mind and its constant predisposition to link happiness with enjoyments is negated, the problem will remain for the individual. It will cut into the drive of purposeful direction to-

wards what one should eagerly believe in, the urgent need to find the truth for oneself.

There is no journey as such, nor goals to be reached and surpassed. Ramana would say that to seek Self-knowledge is like a man who is already in Tiruvannamalai wanting to know how to reach Tiruvannamalai. For truth is ever existent. It is not a goal to be achieved at the end of a point of time. Its purpose is to end time itself. It is not to be found by any searching. What does one search for? Search presupposes prior knowledge of what is being sought.

This is always the problem when one is on the discovery route. Discovery is only unfolding. The truth is that one is ever free, ever unbound, ever the fullness of consciousness and the very source of the spring of joy. It seems that this truth is lost on us in spite of the fact that Ramana is dinning it into our ears. Truth is always staring us in the face with all the brightness of the midday sun. Whereas one's understanding is heavily covered by dark clouds of the tentacles of time in whose grip one has been well and truly caught. ॐ

Yoga Vasistha

Yoga Vasistha is an Advaitic masterpiece. It is the story of the illustrious sage Vasistha instructing Rama on the misconception of the world and the false notion of duality. The setting is in a palace where numerous other sages and holy beings are present. This scripture is filled with captivating stories and legends that are used to expose ignorance to Rama and awaken him to Pure Being.

Vasistha said, "Craving is the root of all sorrow, Oh Rama: and the only intelligent way is to renounce all cravings completely and not to indulge in them. Even as fire burns all the more fiercely when fed with fuel, thoughts multiply by thinking, thought ceases only by the extinction of thinking. Hence, ascend the chariot of nonthinking and with a compassionate and limitless vision behold the worlds sunk in sorrow... I shall narrate to you the story of Bali listening to which you will gain Knowledge of the eternal Truth. The demon-King

Bali, son of Virocana, ruled over this region (the netherworld). The Lord of the universe, Sri Hari, he himself was the protector of this king: hence, even the King of heaven, Indra, adored him. By the heat of the very radiance of this King Bali the oceans got dried up as it were. His eyes were so powerful that by a mere look he could move mountains. Bali ruled for a very long time over the netherworld.

In course of time, intense dispassion overcame King Bali, and he began to inquire thus, "How long should I rule over this netherworld, how long shall

I wander in the three worlds? What shall I gain by ruling over this kingdom? When all that is in the three worlds is subject to destruction, how can one hope to enjoy happiness through all this? Again and again, the same disgusting pleasures are experienced and the same acts are repeated day after day in this world: how is it that even a wise man is not ashamed of this? The same day and the same night, again and again, life in this world revolves like a whirlpool. Doing all this every day, how can one reach that state in which there is cessation of this repetitive existence? How long should we continue to revolve in this whirlpool and of what use is it?

Ah, I remember what my father Virocana once told me. I had asked him, "Father, what is the destination of this world appearance or repetitive existence,

when will it come to an end? When will all the delusion of the mind cease? Gaining what shall one attain total satisfaction, seeing what shall one seek not else? I see that it is impossible to attain this by means of experience of the worldly pleasures or actions. For, they only aggravate the delusion! Pray, tell me the means by which I shall rest forever in supreme peace."

Virocana said to Bali, "My son, there is a vast realm, wide enough to engulf the three worlds. In it there are no lakes, no oceans, no mountains, no forests, no rivers, no earth, no sky, no winds, no moon, no gods, no demons, no demigods, no vegetation, no heaven, no high and low, no words, not me, nor the gods like Vishnu. Only One is there and that is the supreme Light. He is Omnipotent, Omnipresent, He is all — and He re-

mains silent, as if inactive. Prompted by him, the king, his minister does everything — what has not been he brings about and what is he alters. This minister is incapable of enjoying anything, nor does he know anything; though ignorant and insentient, he does everything for the sake of his master, the King. The king remains alone, established in Peace."

Bali asked, "What is the background which is free from psychosomatic illnesses? Who is that minister and who is that King? The story is wonderful and unheard-of. Kindly explain all this to me in detail." (Read The Supreme Yoga, by Swami Venkatesananda, for Virocana's answer to his son Bali.) [Aug. 14, 15, 16] ॐ

(See page 22.)

FROM THE Brahmaloka Library

Q: What should we do for our spiritual growth?

Ma: Follow the Guru's instruction.

Q: How can some of us rise to that state?

[Arya interpreting Ma]: Again, follow Guru's instruction and you will reach the same height.

Interpreter: That she did not say. She said, "Guru's

instruction." (Laughter)

Arya: Mother, when we come to you there are no questions.

Ma: There are two ways, when you have passed an examination there are no more questions, or when you have not started studying yet there are no questions. (Laughter)

(Continued on next page.)

Q: How do you conquer loneliness?

[Here followed a discussion on how to translate the word “loneliness” into an Indian language. It had to be explained, since no equivalent Indian word could be found. The question was finally worded, “When the mind feels lonely without God, what should one do?”]

Ma: God is everywhere. There is no loneliness. Everything is touching God. You do not conceive of “not,” of “emptiness” (of loneliness). The mind cannot but think. It thinks of a “no” — form, emptiness. You are then not alone. When will you be alone? When God’s touch will come. When your own Nature will be revealed; then you will see that “eko brahma dvitiyo nasti” (there is one Brahman and there is no other. – The Upanishad). There is no question of there being two.

Interpreter: You can not be alone in fact because at present this mind always believes in something. And these beliefs are always two (this versus that) but you will become alone when you have realize that there is only one God. Whatever you are seeing, whenever you are hearing is God only. When you see only God, then you are alone. At present there are always two.

(From an interview with Anandamayi Ma, Himalayan News, Sept./Oct. 1985)

Mahadeva said:

32. The devotee should meditate upon the form of the nature of a fiery pillar. He should meditate upon the Linga well known as Arunadri. Meditating upon this huge Linga, the devotee should circumambulate slowly.

33. Meditating duly upon this fiery Linga having eight forms and circumambulating it (the devotee) shall burn his sins.

34. If anyone regularly circumambulates the Lord in the form of Sonacala, he has no rebirth. He shall certainly attain eternity.

35. If a person takes even a step by way of circumambulation, the entire Earth is sanctified by coming into contact with the dust of his feet.

36. With palms joined in reverence he should make obeisance in every direction. He should then meditate and eulogize. He should circumambulate slowly without his hand touching anyone else.

37. Without any agitation, without even hearing the sound of his own steps, the devotee should circumambulate in the manner a woman walks when delivery is imminent.

38. The learned devotee should put on a clean dress after bath. He should apply sacred ash over his body and adorn himself with Rudraksa beads. Remembering Shiva, he should take steps slowly.

46-50a. This Linga with the name of Arunachala is the greatest on account of its inscrutability resulting from its state of not being an object of speech and mind and also because of its fiery nature. It is unapproachable. But I become approachable immediately to the person who circumambulates after meditation.

If a person holds at least one form (?) in the course of the circumambulation of the Lord of Sonacala, the dust of his feet becomes the cause of unaging immortality.

The vehicles of the groups of Suras vie with one another to bear the feet of those who circumambulate Arunachala.

The trees of Suras beginning with Kalpaka offer shade to those men who circumambulate Arunachala on the earth.

From: Skanda Purana, Chapter 9 (The Efficacy of the Circumambulation of Arunesvara), Motilal Banarsidass, Pub.

Ever yours in Truth

Correspondence between Nome and seekers.

(Names of seekers are omitted to preserve their privacy.)



September 1, 2014

[A seeker asked if, when he practices japa with the mahavakya "Aham Bramasmi," if there is a preferred language to use. He also asked, ". . . is there anyone living amongst us who has had the experience of the promised in Ribhu Gita results?" This is Nome's response.]

September 1, 2014

Dear . . . ,

Om Namoh Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

The Knowledge indicated by the aphorisms mentioned by you pertains to that "before which speech and the mind turn back, unable to grasp." It transcends all words and thoughts. The inner revelation of this transcendent Knowledge is the purpose of Ribhu Gita.

If you wish to make japa of the aphorism, be certain to proceed from such to the actual Knowledge expressed by it. Since you already know the Sanskrit, the question is moot.

The Realization of Brahman, the sole-existent Self, leaves no scope for the concepts of "realized beings" and "unrealized beings." That which you now think of as a "result" is truly the abiding Reality. This is eternally so. If you inquire to know the Self, this Truth will be self-evident.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

September 15, 2014

[A seeker described the difficult health situation faced by her brother, concluding with "Please let me know to find a way out in this cycle of sickness and struggle. And also your guidance to lead their lives in peace." This is Nome's response.]

Om Namoh Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Dear . . . ,

Namaste.

It is clearly evident that the body is not eternal, but rather it is transient. Likewise, is this the case with all situations in this world. Peace and freedom from suffering rest in the realization of the changeless Self. Sri Bhagavan is the Self, and faith in Him helps very much to establish one's identity as the bodiless, immortal Self that He reveals.

The sickness is only of the body however severe it may appear to be. The Self is not the body. If one abides as the Self, the physical disease, pain, etc., do not effect the unchanging peace.

All of life and death, including all the permutations of experience, are within His power. Knowing this to be so one can remain free of anxious thought about anything.

Seek the eternal. Dissolve in the eternal. Repose in the eternal. Identify with the eternal. This is devotion, and this is Self-Knowledge.

Never was there a time when you were not, and never will there will be a time when you cease to be. Therefore, there is nothing to fear and nothing to cause grief. Unborn, unchanging and undecaying you are.

Have faith in this, be convinced of this, and realize this.

Om Namah Sivaya.
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

September 16, 2014

Om Namoh Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste Dear Nome,

Your words helped me to come out of the misidentification with the body and pushed me deep inside to do the enquiry. It made me to stay calm and understand the real nature.

Thank you dear Nome
Yours Kindly,

Jewels from the SAT Temple Bookstore



The SAT Temple bookstore contains an abundance of classic Advaita Vedanta in its purest expression, with emphasis on the teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi, Adi Sankara, Ribhu, Ashtavakra, Dattatreya, Vasistha and many more who have kept Advaita Vedanta alive for millennia.



The following are excerpts taken from Sri Ramanasramam's exquisite 8 volume set of "Arunachala's Ramana, The Boundless Ocean of Grace." This set contains the sublime story of our Sadguru, Bhagavan Ramana and His teaching, and is available for purchase in the SAT bookstore. No further introduction has been included here as Sri Ramanasramam has expressed clearly below the nature of this 8 volume set.

Arunachala's Ramana, The Boundless Ocean of Grace

"Most comprehensive book on the life and teachings of Bhagavan, Sri Ramana Maharshi. The author has brought all the anecdotes, conversations, and interesting incidents from every published source under a single set of eight volumes. This eight volume set is a treasure trove of wisdom for spiritual seekers. Available in Tamil and English."

The following excerpts are taken from vol. V. They are recounts of Suri Nagamma:

Tell Them and See if They Care for Your Words

After coming to Tiruvannamalai I got into the habit of taking coffee in the mornings. At the new house milk was being supplied very late; sometimes as late as even eight or nine AM. As I had no work to do till

then I was going to the Asramam in the early morning hours. Another lady devotee was coming there earlier still. There used to be two or three ladies also with her. While I was sitting somewhere near the back door of the dining hall, they were sitting right in front of the main door which was facing the bathroom of Bhagavan. According to the existing practice, the bell for breakfast used to be rung as soon as Bhagavan came out of the bathroom and he went directly into the dining room. Bhagavan expressed several times his embarrassment about his going in for breakfast while some devotees were waiting just opposite to him without having had their breakfast. "Look at that. While all those are standing there with empty stomachs, not having had even their morning coffee, I feel awkward going in and eating sumptuously." No serious notice was taken of his remarks. One day, after having his breakfast, he was going out to the Hill when he happened to notice me standing at the back door. Grieved at it he remarked, "See. Nagamma is also standing there. She does not eat anything at night. She looks tired. She is not able to have her morning coffee because the milkman comes late. How can I eat heartily leaving all these people hungry? What to do?" It seems he had remarked thus twice or thrice.

A few days later Ramakrishnaswami, Bhagavan's attendant, told me about this. "Oh! If only I had known that this would cause some pain and embarrassment to Bhagavan, I would never have gone that side," I said, and stopped doing so from that day onwards. I went to the Asramam only after Bhagavan returned from his morning walk on the Hill. Ramakrishnaswami appears to have informed Bhagavan about this, and so Bhagavan is reported to have said, "Oh! I see. You have told Nagamma, all right; but tell the other ladies and see what hap-

pens." "Why not? I shall tell them and see that they heed my words," he said confidently. Accordingly, he spoke to them the next day. Are they the people to care for him? Instead, they remonstrated with him saying, "Mind your own business! What do you lose if we stand here? We have not come here for your coffee. This is all your fabrication. Bhagavan would not say anything like that." When Bhagavan came to know about this, he had a hearty laugh. He said, "So you have had it. You said that they would heed your words. Are these people like Nagamma to take it in the right spirit? If you say anything further, they will state that Bhagavan himself had permitted them to stand there. Supposing you say Bhagavan never permitted this, they will say he gave them permission, not verbally but in silence. If that too is disbelieved, they will say Bhagavan told them so in a dream. What can you do then? This is how they behave," said Bhagavan.

Disease

In 1944 when my elder brother came to the Asramam, a retired judge was there. It seems he was sick sometime back and got cured but not completely. After listening to the details of the sickness from early morning till 8:30 PM Bhagavan said, "Yes, indeed! The body itself is a disease. If the body gets a disease, it means that the original disease has got another disease. If you really want this new disease not to trouble you, you must first take the required medicine for the original disease so that the later disease — that is, the disease of the disease — does not affect you. What is the use of worrying about the secondary disease instead of trying to find a method of getting rid of the primary disease? Therefore allow this new disease to go its own way, and think of a medicine for the original disease." ॐ

“In The SAT Temple” . . . is a new SAT publication. It is a guide through the SAT Temple, providing a brief description of the symbolism contained in the murtis, the stone carvings, and other sacred icons representative of Advaita Vedanta in Hinduism. Everyone is invited to take a copy of this pamphlet. They are located on the SAT literature table. For a more in-depth explanation of these, please read SAT's publication, *Advaita Devatam*.



Vasistha Mural

Anandhi continues with her magnificent mural in the Lotus Room of the temple of Vasistha instructing Rama in the company of other sages. Please visit the "Temple Blog" at:

<http://satramana.wordpress.com/2013/12/28/vasisthas-instruction-to-rama/>



Sri Sadisvara Mandiram

Since its conception in March 2012, devotees have nearly completed the Sri Sadisvara Mandiram. Please visit the link below showing the construction of the columns:

<http://satramana.wordpress.com/2014/09/13/sri-sadisvara-mandiram-part-11-columns/>





RMCL Ramananjali Awards

SAT WINS AWARDS! Earlier this year, RMCL held a Global Online Contest and Fest in connection with Ramananjali's 500th public offering and the centenary of the composition of Bhagavan's Aksharamanamalai. Devotees at SAT were invited to participate. Four entries were submitted. Below are links that will take you directly to each entry.

SRUTHILAYA

<http://events.ramanacentre.com/collection/view?vid=7209&cid=7208&lang=Tamil&page=2>

JANANE SIVAKUMAR

http://events.ramanacentre.com/category/view/view?cat_id=2712&lang=Tamil

ADVAIT SADASIVAN

<http://events.ramanacentre.com/collection/view?vid=11349&cid=11348&lang=Multi-lingual&page=10>

SAT TEMPLE

<http://events.ramanacentre.com/collection/view?vid=11789&cid=8248&lang=Multi-lingual&page=4>

Above, Advait and Janani happily display the awards received for their participation and SAT's participation in the Global Contest. Janani won an award for her artistic paper mache creation of Arunachala and Advait, Sruthi and the SAT singers won awards for singing.



Ribhu is SAT's youngest musician. At just 2 years old, he is getting ready to join the SAT Temple singers in instrumentation during puja.



During the Sadasivans' recent visit to India, they procured many beautiful brass lamps and other items for the altars and for pujas to be used in the temple.

Your Amazon purchases can help support the SAT Temple.

For eligible purchases at AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price to your nonprofit organization—the SAT Temple. Visit this link and see how: <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/20-3249462>

Upcoming Special Events

Navaratri: Friday, Oct. 3, 2014, 7:30 PM

Deepavali: Wednesday, Oct. 22, 2014, 7:30 PM

Skanda Shasthi: Friday, Oct. 29, 2014, 7:30 PM

The Truth Revealed Retreat: Nov. 21-23, 2014

Karthikai Deepam: Friday, Dec. 5, 7:30 PM

Sri Ramana Jayanthi: Tuesday, Dec. 30, 2014, 7:30 PM

OM NAMO BHAGAVATE SRI RAMANAYA

OM NAMAH SIVAYA

