

Reflections

SAT Temple

April . May . June 2015



"...The Seer alone is real and eternal. Abiding in the Self and Being the Self, and not seeing the Self, is realization."

-Sri Bhagavan,
Erase the Ego



"That is the real tongue which eulogizes Siva; that mind is so (i.e. real mind) if it meditates on Siva; those ears are the real ones that are eager to listen to his stories and the hands are so (real hands) if they worship him.

Those are the real eyes that watch the worship of Siva, the head that bows down to Siva and those feet which walk devotedly to the shrine of Siva (are real head and feet).

He whose organs of sense and action are engaged in acts devoted to Siva crosses the ocean of worldly existence and achieves salvation as well as enjoyment of worldly pleasures."

Skanda Purana, Part IX, Chapter 5, The Story of a Gopakumara, Motilal Banarsidass

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SPECIAL EVENTS at SAT:

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Sri Bhagavan—our best friend. Whether we have many friends or few, for those intensely practicing the destruction of vasanas, Sri Bhagavan is our best friend. He will not corroborate the ego perpetuating our desires and fears, justifying our angers and frustrations, nor will He accommodate our belief in a existent world, all of which prop up the pseudo-person keeping us in bondage. He is ever present, waiting to cut at the very root of each vasana through discrimination, detachment, renunciation, conviction, and inquiry and deliver us to eternal peace. We can never be too grateful to Him for His true, everlasting, and real friendship. One of the ways we express our gratitude is through worship of Him. SAT offers the opportunity for worship in a myriad of ways, one of which is special events.

Special events held at the SAT Temple during the months of JANUARY, FEBRUARY & MARCH . . .

In this past quarter, Bhagavan graced us with Arudra Darshanam in January, Mahasivaratri in February, and the Nondual Self-Inquiry retreat in March.

The following are images of these events and some of the texts that were availed of during each event.



"We know what we worship."

"Those who worship know what it is that they worship..."



Arudra Darshanam

For a meditative video of this event, please visit this link:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qwnnd2DOP-g&feature=youtu.be>

During this year's Arundra Darshanam, Nome read Nataraja-Darshanam from the SAT publication *Advaita Devatam*. This text can be seen in the previous Reflections. Here are shared some verses from the Skanda Purana, Part VIII, Chapter 49, Eulogy of Ramanatha (Siva), Motilal Banarsidass

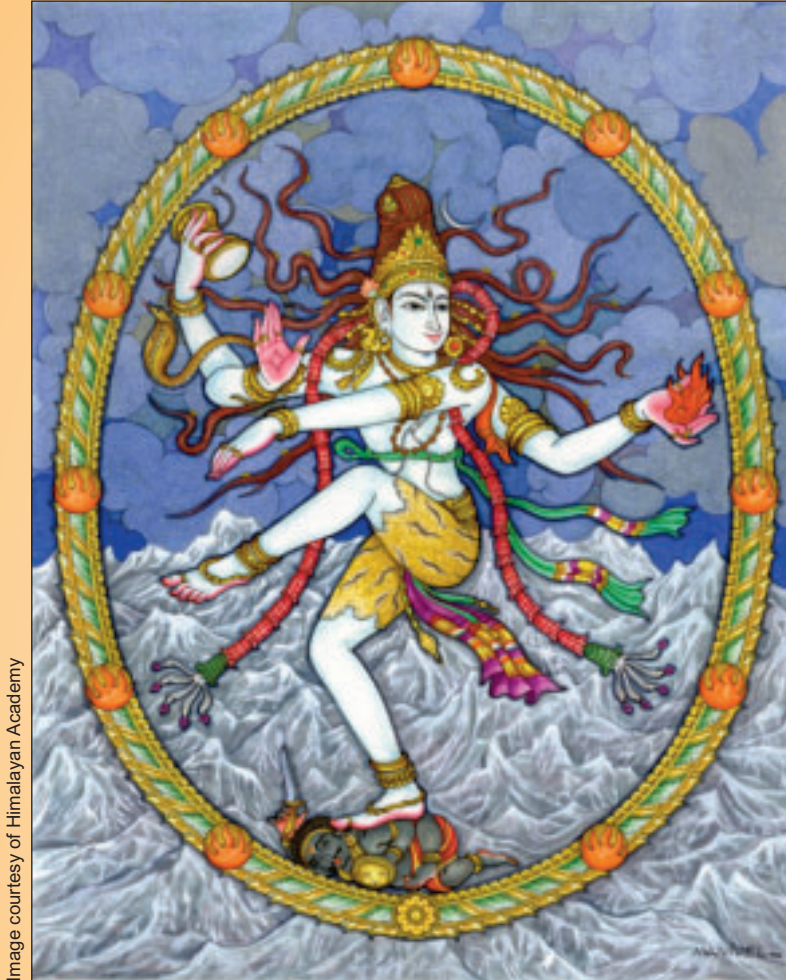


Image courtesy of Himalayan Academy

The Devas said:

85-89. All of us always think in our minds of Ramanatha for the purification of our sins—

Ramanatha who is full of existence, knowledge and bliss, who is devoid of duality, who is of the nature of Brahman, who is self-manifest, and has neither beginning nor middle nor end. He has no aberration or deterioration, no attachment, is pure and eternal, is the witness unto Ether and other evolutes, is the greatest immortal one.

He is beyond knowledge. He is the giver of

enlightenment even to the means of right knowledge. He is always bereft of appearance, disappearance, shrinkage, etc. He is the witness unto this world superimposed on himself. He is unaffected. He is supreme bliss. He has given up all activities. He is great bliss, the supreme soul; he is of the form of consciousness and is bereft of sensual enjoyment. We are desirous of knowing our own Atman and Bliss. O Ramanatha, protect us, O ocean of mercy, obeisance to you. Obeisance to Ramanatha, to Rudra. Obeisance to the dispeller of worldly existence, to the lord who has differentiated himself in the forms of Brahma, Visnu, etc., through his own maya.

Mahasivaratri



For a meditative video of this event, please visit this link:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Q3Ud7-NSDg>

ॐ
श्री सर्वज्ञानोत्तरे स्वात्मसाक्षात्कार प्रकरणम्

om

śrī sarvajñānottare svātmasākṣātkāra prakaraṇam

om

In the Exposition of the Knowledge of All, the Explanation of the Direct
Awareness of One's Self (the True Self)

1. Isvara (the Lord) said:

Now, I certainly shall tell you clearly another
means
To the Truth, Oh Guha!
Of the ungraspable and of the subtle,
Of the all-pervasive and without parts.

2. By which it is clearly known,
Having known which, indeed, one will be-
come Siva (Siva Himself),
Which has not been told to anyone by me,
That Knowledge hear from me.

3. Handed down by the lineage of gurus,
Unknown (unseen) by those with arguments
of all kinds,
For Liberation from worldly bondage,
[That which is] the Supreme, facing all sides,

4. that one who is omnipresent (universally
immanent),
The shining (divine), the Self of all,
Facing all directions, entirely full of Truth (of
the nature of all Truth),
Inconceivable (transcendent of thought), re-
maining above all,

5. and transcending (surpassing) all tattva-s,
“He who is devoid of speech, mind, name, I
am,”
Thus, you should meditate,
With an undifferentiated consciousness
(mind).

6. That which, indeed, is Knowledge without
parts,
Eternal, fixed (firm), indestructible,
Undifferentiated, indeterminable (undefin-
able, incomparable),
Devoid of a cause or an example,

7. Without any marks, without any decay (im-
perishable),
Peaceful, transcendent of the range of ob-
jects,
Unimaginable (imperceptible), without
doubts,
That I am; there is no doubt [of this] here.

8. I, indeed, am the Supreme God,
Siva, of the nature of all mantras,
And transcending (surpassing) all mantras,
Devoid of creation and destruction.

9. By me is pervaded all this,
The perceptible and the imperceptible, the
moving and the unmoving;
I, indeed, am the Lord of the universe;
Because of me, all shine.

10. Of various forms, established as differen-
tiated (divided),
The worlds that have come into being,
From Siva to the earth,
All that is established (abides) in me.

11. Whatever little in this world
Is seen or is heard, also,

With such divisions as outside and inside,
All that is pervaded by me.

12. "I am the Self, Siva is, indeed, another,
the Supreme Self":

He who thinks thus

In delusion contemplates (from delusion ap-
proaches, because of delusion considers),
[And] will not attain Siva-hood.

13. "Siva is another; I am, indeed, another":
[Such] an attitude (mentality) of differentia-
tion should be discarded.

"He who is Siva, He, indeed, I am (He alone I
am)":

Thus, certainly, the nondual conviction one
should always have.

14. Firmly united (attached) to the nondual
conviction,
All is established (abides) in the Self (one-
self),

Omnipresent, established in all bodies,
He perceives [himself] here; [there is] no
doubt of this.

15. Thus, to the yogi who is established, in-
deed,

In (by) the conviction of the one Self,
And who is devoid of wrong perception
(imagination, doubt),
Omniscience shall arise.

16. That one who is read about, indeed,
In all the scriptures as the Unborn, the Lord,
The formless (bodiless), the attributeless
Self, indeed,
He I am; there is no doubt [of this].

17. He is, indeed, the unenlightened (un-
aware, unknowing) individual (lit. tethered
animal),

Who resorts to the law (dharma) of creation.
The one who knows, the eternal, the pure,
He is Siva; there is no doubt [of this] here.

18. Therefore, the Self is always to be known
By persons of discrimination (the wise, the

discerning, the clear-sighted), after thor-
ough inquiry,

With its higher and lower aspects,
The gross and subtle aspects.

19. The higher, indeed, is the supreme Libera-
tion (Nirvana);

The lower is differentiated as manifest cre-
ation.

The gross is said to be of the nature of
mantra;

The subtle is the one established in medita-
tion. (or: The subtle is abidance in medita-
tion on the One.)

20. Or else, what avails by repeating (saying)
this

In various ways, Oh Six-faced!

By a profusion of erroneous (doubtful, imagi-
nary, differentiated) words,
Creating confusion of (in) the mind.

21. All dharmas, whatever are thought of
(supposed),

Are of the Self.

That becomes That, without doubt,

By that determination ever of that conviction.

22. Thus, indeed, the Knowledge of the Self
Has certainly been told, succinctly, bringing
all together.

Knowing, indeed, all to be full of (of the na-
ture of) the Self,

One meditates upon the Self.

23. Therein are not gods or Vedas,

Ritual sacrifices or various gifts to priests.

One should resort to the Knowledge of the
Self,

Blemish-less, omni-faced.

24. For those beings who are drowning

In the sea of samsara and seeking protection
(refuge),

There is nothing else at all anywhere afford-
ing protection (refuge),

For steadfastness, apart from the Knowledge
of the Self.

25. He who, in Truth, realizes (knows),
Having become the Supreme Self,
Is, indeed, liberated effortlessly,
Though passing through all the states.

26. A greater gain than the gaining of the Self
(a gain beyond the gain of the Self)
---Anything else does not exist!
Therefore, meditate upon the Self;
He who is this Self, he, indeed, is the
Supreme.

27. Neither the prana (the prana that circulates)
nor the apana (the prana that travels downward) are,
Therefore, superior instruments.
Indeed, one should always remember (think of)
That omniscient, completely perfect Self.

28. Indeed, neither inside nor outside, also,
Not far away or nearby,
To that partless, supreme abode (place),
There the mind should be directed.
(Or: In that partless, supreme state
Should the mind be placed.)

29. Across, above, below,
And, indeed, outside and inside, also,
Ever entirely void, upon that shining Self,
One should ever meditate.
(or: Ever entirely void, that Light,
Upon the Self one should meditate always.)

30. Not as only the void, and not non-void,
And not, indeed, non-void-and-void,
Liberated from adherence to one side or the
other,
Upon the Self one should meditate.

31. Without afflictions, without support (receptacle),
Devoid of color (caste) or form,
Taintless, transcendent of qualities,
Upon the Self one should meditate.

32. Without a support, without any dependence,

Immeasurable, without anything similar,
By nature (its own being) blemishless, eternal,
Upon the Self one should meditate.

33. Renouncing (abandoning) all actions,
free from desire,
Devoid of association (keeping off society),
One should meditate by the Self, upon the
Self,
Established in the Self, itself, by the Self.

34. Connected with country and lineage
(place and birth),
Along with caste and order of life,
Abandoning these attitudes (conceptions,
suppositions, fancies),
The wise one should meditate upon one's
own nature.

35. This is the mantra, this is, indeed, the
Deity,
This is the meditation, this is the tapas,
Abandoning all attitudes (conceptions, suppositions,
fancies),
One should meditate, indeed, upon the Existence
(nature) of one's own Self.

36. Resorting to the conviction of nonexistence,
The conviction should be made supportless.
Having made the mind established in the
Self (as the Self),
One should think of nothing at all.

37. That cannot, indeed, be thought of, cannot
be not-thought-about,
[And] is not, indeed, non-thought-and-thought.
Liberated from taking one side or the other,
One should meditate upon the Self.

38. Upon what cannot be thought of one
should ever contemplate (consider),
Having made the mind supportless.
Becoming partless and beyond the tattva-s,
One experiences (finds) in oneself (in the
Self) that which is joy (happiness).

39. Free of all differentiation, inconceivable
(beyond thought),
And devoid of cause or example,
That supreme happiness is declared to be
Unlimited and unparalleled.

40. Discarding attachment to objects,
One should ward off (be devoid of) the
modes of the mind.
If a state of absence of mind is attained,
That is, then, supreme happiness,

41. In all directions, places, and times,
The practice of yoga is prescribed.
For all castes and orders of life,
Difference in Knowledge exists not.

42. In cows of various colors,
Oneness of the color of the milk is, indeed.
Like the milk, Knowledge is seen,
And those with [different] characteristics are
like the cows.

43. Because of Brahman being omnipresent
(universally immanent),
All-pervading, facing all directions,
Therefore, being established in Brahman,
One should not consider (inquire into) direc-
tions and places.

44. Nothing, indeed, is there for him to do
(by him nothing, indeed, is done),
Nothing to be acquired (no purpose), no ac-
tion to be done, no injunctions laid
down,
No marks (characteristics), no tradition of
lifestyle (no stage of life and manner of
conduct),
For one established in the Supreme Self.

45. Going, standing, dreaming or awake,
Eating and drinking, also,
In all ways and at all times,
In wind, cold, and in the heat of the sun,

46. In fear, poverty, in periods
Of sickness, high fever, and such,

Abiding (established) in the Self alone, [one
is]
Peaceful, satisfied in the Self (in oneself),
and shining in full (undivided, existing
without parts).

47. I am not one who has returned or, indeed,
one who has gone.
I shall not come back; not for me is there
movement.
I am not born (come to be), and I shall not be
born.
I am not bound by the laws of prakṛti (mani-
festation).

48. Actions relate to prakṛti, indeed.
[Because of] actions, prakṛti comes into
being.
“I do not do anything,” thus
The yogi should think, being aware of the
Truth.

49. Not, indeed, in the bondage of prakṛti
Is the liberated one, thus [he] is called.
Not, indeed, also, is he touched (stained)
By the defects pertaining to prakṛti at any
time.

50. Destroying the form of darkness,
As in the manner in which a lamp shines,
Thus, luminous certainly is the Supreme, the
Self, (or: Thus the Supreme, the Self, in-
deed, shines),
Abandoning the darkness born of nescience.

51. Just as by depletion of oil
A lamp, from being strong, reaches extin-
guishment,
Just so, united with the conviction of the
Self,
In one's own Self, indeed, one is established.

52. Just as, when the space surrounded by a
pot
Is carried in the pot,
The pot is carried, not the space,
Likewise is the jīva, similar to space.

53. Just as, when separated from the pot,
The space attains space-ness,
Just so, when separated from the body of
prakrti,
The Self ["attains"] Supreme Self-hood.

54. Thus was it declared with authority,
By the omniscient authority.
Liberated from all bondage,
One shall become omniscient and om-
nipresent.

55. So, discarding all agama-s,
Grasping the pure (shining, clear, holy) yoga
of the samadhi of the Self,
Realizing (knowing), indeed, that higher than
(superior to) this nothing else here exists
in the least,
Abandon wrong ideas (differentiation,
doubts) of the mind.

56. Thus meditating well upon Knowledge,
The knower, ever in yoga, making the body a
corpse,
Becomes, here, all-pervasive, established
outside and inside,
The liberated, whose dharma is the dharma
of That.

57. Omniscience, contentment, origin-less
Knowledge,
Freedom, ever undiminished power,
And limitless (infinite) power, the affliction-
less Self,
[With] an immaculate body, he attains
(reaches) the nature of Siva (Siva-hood).

58. [There is] no japa (repetition of a mantra),
no worship (homage) or ablution
(snanam),
No ritual sacrifice with fire (homa), no prac-
tice (means), indeed (or: these are not the
practice),
No result (fruit) of right and wrong action
(dharma-adharma),
[And] there is not the oblation to the ances-
tors, [and there is] not the water offering
(for the dead).

59. Not for him are the injunctions [for obser-
vance],
No fasting is prescribed,
And no entering (proceeding, pravrtti,) [into
action] and withdrawal [from action] (or:
And no issuing forth and no return),
And vows of brahmacarya (vow to live a life
of study of and according to the Vedas,
celibacy).

60. There is not entering into fire,
Falling from mountains (or: into crackling
fire) or into water.
Having drunk the [immortal] nectar of Siva-
Knowledge,
[One] moves about just as one pleases (hap-
pily),
Like Siva, eternal, pure,
Devoid of the dharma (codes, object) of cre-
ation.

61. [This is] the truth, the truth; again it is the
truth;
Three times the truth, it has been declared by
me.
Greater than this there is nothing
To know anywhere, Oh Guha!

62. Blemishless (stainless), indeed, in all
states,
The blemishless Self, the pure intellect, the
intelligence without ignorance,
The blemishless one by the blemishless con-
viction
Perceives all as blemishless. 🙏



The Nondual Self-Inquiry Retreat

PREFATORY

These are the instructions given in
writing by

BHAGAVAN SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI

in His days of Silence, about the years
1901 & 1902 for His devotee,

SIVAPRAKASAM PILLAI.

The Essence of the Teachings
in His Words is:

*“The body is insentient like an earthen pot
and to it there is not the ‘I’ sense.*

*(But) we exist as the self-established Atman even in deep
sleep, where there is no
body (-consciousness).*

*Therefore, ‘I’ is
not the body.*

WHO AM I? WHENCE AM I?

*In the Hearts
of those, who seeking
thus with keen insight
stay in Atma-nishtha
(steadfast and tranquil
abidance in the Self), there shines
forth Arunachala Siva as “I-am-That”—
Consciousness, self-luminous and perfect.”*

- Who Am I? of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, 1955, 8th Ed.

Background courtesy of Himalayan Academy

If the mind, which is the instrument of knowledge and is the basis of all activity subsides, the perception of the world as an objective reality ceases. Unless the illusory perception of the serpent in the rope ceases, the rope on which the illusion is formed is not perceived as such. Even so, unless the illusory nature of the perception of the world as an objective reality ceases, the Vision of the true nature of the Self, on which the illusion is formed, is not obtained.



The world is perceived as an apparent objective reality when the mind is externalized thereby forsaking its identity with the Self. When the world is thus perceived, the true nature of the Self is not revealed; conversely, when the Self is realized, the world ceases to appear as an objective reality.



For the subsidence of the mind, there is no other means more effective and adequate than Self-enquiry. Even though by other means the mind subsides, that is only apparently so; it will rise again.



That which is Bliss is verily the Self. Bliss and the Self are not distinct and separate but are one and identical. And That alone is real. Not even in one of the countless objects of the mundane world is there anything that can be called happiness. It is through sheer ignorance and unwisdom we fancy that happiness is obtained from them. On the contrary, when the mind is externalized, it suffers pain and anguish. The truth is that every time our desires get fulfilled, the mind, turning to its source, experiences only that happiness which is natural to the Self. Similarly, in deep sleep, in spiritual trance (Samadhi), in a state of swoon, etc., when the desired object is obtained or when evil befalls an object considered undesirable, the mind turns within and enjoys that Bliss of Atman. In this manner, wandering astray forsaking the Self and returning again to it within is the interminable and wearisome lot of the mind.



This phenomenal world, however, is nothing but thought. When the world recedes from one's view—that is when free from thought—the mind enjoys the Bliss of the Self. Conversely, when the world appears—that is when thought occurs—the mind experiences pain and anguish.



There are not two minds, one good and the other evil. It is only the vasanas or tendencies of the mind that are of two kinds, good and favorable, evil and unfavorable. When the mind is associated with the former, it is called good; and when associated with the latter, it is called evil. However evil-minded other people may appear to you, it is not proper to hate or despise them. Likes and dislikes, love and hatred, are equally to be eschewed. It is also not proper to let the mind often rest on objects or affairs of mundane life. As far as possible, one should not interfere in the affairs of others. Everything offered to others is really an offering to oneself, and if only this truth is realized, who is there that would refuse anything to others?



If the ego rises, all else will also rise; if it subsides, all else will also subside. The deeper the humility with which we conduct ourselves, the better it is for us. If only the mind is kept under control, what matters it where one may happen to be?



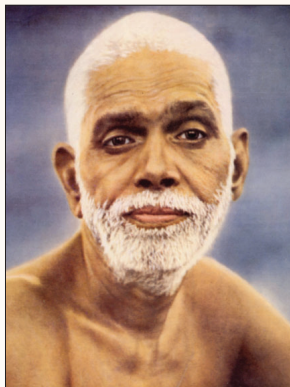
The Boundless Wisdom of Sri Ramana Maharshi

May 21, 1947

(119) Nididhyasana (Intense Concentration)

Yesterday morning at 8 o'clock, Dr. Syed, who is a worker for Arya Vignana Sangha and one of the disciples of Bhagavan, came here for Bhagavan's darshan and asked, "Bhagavan says the whole world is Swarupa of Atma. If so, why do we find so many troubles in this world?"

With a face indicating pleasure, Bhagavan replied, "That is called maya. In Vedanta Chintamani, that maya has been described in five ways. One by name Nijaguna Yogi wrote that book in Canarese. Vedanta has been so well dealt with in it, it can be said to be an authority on the Vedanta language. There is a Tamil translation. The five names of maya are, tamas, maya, moham, avidya and anitya. Tamas is that which hides the knowledge of life. Maya is that which is responsible for making one who is the form of the world appear different from it. Moha is that which makes a different one look real: sukti rajata bhranthi—creating an illusion that mother-of-pearl is made of silver. Avidya is that which spoils vidya (learning). Anitya is transient, that which is different from what is permanent and real. On account of these five mayas, troubles appear in the Atma like the cinema pictures on the screen. Only to remove this maya, it is said that the whole world is mithya (unreal). Atman is like the screen. Just as you come to know that the pictures that are shown are dependent on the screen and do not exist otherwise, so, also, until one is able to know by self-inquiry that the world that is visible is not different from Atma, it has to be said that this is all mithya. But once the reality is known, the whole universe will appear as Atma only. Hence, the very people who said the world is unreal have subsequently said that it is only Atma swarupa. After all, it is the outlook that is important. If the outlook changes, the troubles of the world will not worry us. Are the waves



different from the ocean? Why do the waves occur at all? If asked, what reply can we give? The troubles in the world also are like that. Waves come and go. If it is found out that they are not different from Atma, this worry will not exist."

That devotee said in a plaintive tone, "However often Bhagavan teaches us, we are not able to understand." "People say that they are not able to know the Atma

that is all-pervading. What can I do? Even the smallest child says, "I exist, I do, and this is mine." So, everyone understands that the thing "I" is always existent. It is only when that "I" is there, the feeling is there that you are the body, he is Venkanna, this is Ramana and the like. To know that the one that is always visible is one's own self, is it necessary to search with the candle? To say that we do not know the Atma swarupa, which is not different but which is in one's own self, is like saying "I do not know myself." said Bhagavan.

"That means that those who by sravana (hearing) and manana (repeating within oneself) become enlightened and look upon the whole visible world as full of maya will ultimately find the real swarupa by nididhyasana," said the devotee.

"Yes, that is it. Nidi means swarupa; nididhyasana is the act of intensely concentrating on the swarupa with the help of sravana and manana of the words of the Guru. That means to meditate on that with undeflected zeal. After meditating for a long time, he merges in it. Then, it shines as itself. That is always there. There will be no troubles of this sort if one can see the thing as it is. Why so many questions to see one's own Self that is always there?" said Bhagavan. ॐ



Know with Certainty

January 4, 2015

Om Om Om
(Silence)

Nome: Bhagavan graciously and perpetually reveals his own Existence, which is the only Existence that there actually is. That is Brahman, the Self, of the nature of Being-Consciousness-Bliss, without beginning and without end. To whom does he reveal the Existence? Existence is One without a second. There is no other, no difference, in Existence. It is nameless, formless, not to be perceived by the senses, and not conceived by thought. Whoever realizes the Self's Existence exists only as the Self and has lost the false assumption of individuality. If you know your existence as it truly is, you find it to be bodiless and mind-transcendent. You find it to be devoid of the concepts of "I" and "mine." That state in which there is not the least possibility of the trace of "I" and "mine" is the real state, the natural state, the innate. It can be realized by profoundly inquiring within, "Who am I?"

The nature of one who so inquires is not an embodied individual but the absolute Existence revealing itself to itself. The Existence of the Self is immutable. It undergoes no modification at any time. It was not born and it will never die. Identify yourself clearly as That. This is wisdom, or true Knowledge. As That, for That, there is nothing else. All this is only Brahman, the Self. Only Brahman, the Self, actually exists. Abandon any tendency to misidentify as an embodied individual, and then say what is. The Knowledge of oneself is thus the Knowledge of Realty, in which the Reality comprehends itself.

The body is changeful and not dependable. We are not that. Know this for certain. Its qualities and its activities are not yours. Know this for certain. Whatever is conceived in thought, in any of the states of mind, such as waking, dreaming and

deep, dreamless sleep, is not your identity. Know this for certain. Transcendent of the body and mind, without even the notion of "I," you are naturally, always infinite and eternal. Know this for certain. For happiness and peace without end, without condition, Self-Knowledge is necessary. Know yourself.

Questioner: If I am not turned inward subjectively as inquiry, the only alternative seems to be objective projection, which has no reality. Instead of seeing that objective realm as a starting point from which one would have to make a great concentrated effort at continuous inquiry, I should start with the inward Consciousness-Existence is the Reality. Just relaxing that objective projection returns one or allows one to remain there. So, it is not an effort at continuous inquiry; it is the cessation of the unnecessary effort of objective projection. Just that reversal in recognition seems to make it all the more natural to do that.

N.: What could be more natural than your own Existence? Its Knowledge of itself is innate. You do not know your Existence through objective means. Indeed, if the objectifying tendency is eliminated, that will suffice. There is only one thing that is nonobjective.

Q.: If one could say that the objective projections were objects of Consciousness, there is certainly no knowing quality in them. So, all of Consciousness is in the Self that is sought with that Self-inquiry.

N.: There is only one Consciousness. Multiplicity is a product of imagination.

Another Q.: I have been reading about Milarepa, the Tibetan yogi, and he talks about austerities. I was wondering if Bhagavan ever addressed austerity, or if there is any usefulness in this practice for austerities?

N.: One should utterly renounce the misidentification with the body. As for the value of austerities, it is according to those who practice them.

For Self-Realization, though, cessation of misidentification with the body is a necessity.

Sometimes the word “tapas” is translated as austerity. It means fiery practice; the root of the word means heat. One must inwardly be like a fire to burn up the dross of ignorance. Furthermore, an Upanishad declares, “Tapas is Brahman.” Evidently, this cannot refer to mere physical austerity, but something far more profound. The inward intensity that destroys all illusion and delusion is of the nature of Brahman. Brahman alone realizes Brahman. Engage wholeheartedly in this tapas.

Another Q.: You answered from the knowledge that the Self is not the body. Tapas, in most cases, would apply to the body. To see that one is not the body would include being completely detached because of knowing where happiness. Yet those austerities apply to the body.

N.: The means and the end must always be of the same nature. If the end is Knowledge, practice Knowledge, inquiry. If the end is bodily, do something bodily. But when was there ever an infinite and eternal body? When was there ever a changeless body? Self-Realization is not a bodily state, and there are no bodily characteristics to be attributed to it. Thus, a Self-realized sage enjoys videhamukti, even while alive.

Q.: Videhamukti is?

N.: Liberation out of the body.

Q.: This Knowledge has to be clear.

N.: Does the body possess Knowledge?

Q.: Definitely not. (laughter) I think that the body is just innocent.

N.: It does not possess ignorance either.

Q.: Yes.

N.: So, it is neither a means nor an obstruction to Liberation, which is freedom from all of the imagined bondage.

Q.: It seems that there is a connection, though.

N.: Between what and what?

Q.: There is subtle energy that affects the body.

N.: There may be. Are you the subtle energy?

Q.: There is something very, very subtle about my nature.

N.: It is subtler than the subtlest, and it is neither gross nor subtle.

Q.: I feel a movement in it, like a movement of prana. Then, it is obviously not it.

N.: With what do you feel the movement, and what is the nature of the movement?

Q.: Probably, the nature of the movement is imagination, something that is changed. There is nothing substantial in prana. It feels a little different. The body is coughing or sick.

N.: What has that got to do with you? Fluctuation in the body, fluctuations in the senses, fluctuations in the animating life energy, or prana: what do any of these things have to do with you? They cannot exist apart from you, but is your Existence to be equated with them?

Q.: The body changes in the three states. The prana would also change in the three states of mind, as well. They are totally modified in the deep sleep state.

N.: What changes is known by something that is unchanging. What is that something? If you can perceive the changes of the three states, which means all of their content changes as well, you, being unchanging, must be of what nature? Not waking, not dreaming, not sleeping, not living, not dying, neither moving nor still, what is your nature? Who are you?

(Then followed a recitation in Sanskrit and English of verses from the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad.)

(Silence)

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

(Then followed a recitation in Tamil from Chapter 42, Verse 1 of the Song of Ribhu.) ॐ

From The Ramana Way

The following articles appear in the May 2014 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

Special issue Celebrating 100 years of Arunachala Aksharamanamalai

"You asked me, did you not, to come to you? Very well, I have come. Now you come and assume the burden of maintaining me. It is your fate to look after me thus, O Arunachala." – v. 94, Arunachala Aksharamanamalai



EDITORIAL

By Dr. Sarada Natarajan

Ramana sings in his Arunachala Aksharamanamalai, "When I reached you as the Supreme, O Arunachala, me you totally destroyed."

An ardent devotee of Ramana is offering worship at his shrine, very intently, performing the abhisheka, chanting the Vedas, finally concluding with the offering of flowers in Ashtottara. His worship is intense, and he is completely lost in Ramana. Yet, he is aware of the nuances of every step of worship, and he keeps to them meticulously. He is assisted in the worship by a tiny young boy, evidently his adoring student. The boy does not have eyes for Ramana, to whom worship is being offered. The boy's total attention is on his teacher. From moment to moment, he awaits the commands of the teacher. The boy, too, performs every task assigned to him by the

teacher with meticulous care. He is given a bowl of rose flowers to place along the rim of the pedestal of Ramana. He carefully places them one after another, with equal spacing. He reaches one end of the rim where it takes a turn.

He does not know whether he has to continue all the way to the back. He needs instructions from his teacher. But the teacher is engrossed in worship. With flower basket in hand, one rose in the right hand ready to be placed where the teacher next instructs him to do so, the boy looks intently at the teacher waiting for his command. Somewhere in the midst of his deep mood of worship, the teacher notices that the student is waiting for his instruction. Without breaking the rhythm of his own worship, with a slight movement of the head, the teacher indicates where the little student should place the next row of roses.

The boy continues. The next step has been filled, too, but there are still roses in the bowl. The boy does not allow thought to move in the least. He does not allow any concept to rise in

his mind about where the remaining roses could possibly be placed or whether at all they need to be placed anywhere. Allotted task over, he again intently and patiently looks at the teacher's face, waiting for the next signal. Teacher indicates again with a very subtle movement of the head that the boy need not place any more roses on the pedestal. Immediately, without the least hesitation, the little one puts the bowl away and begins chanting with great gusto. He is full of steam, when the very tall figure of his teacher bends down low and whispers something into his little ear. The boy stops right there, not in the least perturbed about having been cut short right in the middle of his well learned-rendering, and quickly trots out purposefully from the worship arena. He heads to the group of devotees gathered in front of the sanctum and conveys his teacher's message to them in perfect detail before returning to his cherished post beside his teacher to continue the chanting. To one watching the scene, a thought arises, "This is surrender, indeed."

Surrender is by no means passive resignation. On the other hand, it is completely dynamic and active participation in the will of the Supreme, to whom one has surrendered. Simultaneously, it is a total alertness to change track as and when the Supreme signals us to do so. Yet, it is ever the most difficult task to know at any given moment whether one is acting in accordance with the divine command or is being pushed by some dormant or hidden desire. If, on the other hand, one takes a decision not to act and to remain passive, even that would be tantamount to a decision, would it not? So, when is true surrender possible? Only when the least trace of a separate entity does not arise, for the existence of any doubt clearly points to the presence of identity.

If I wonder, "Should I go down this path or should I not?" then it surely means I believe in my existence as a separate entity, that I further believe I must make a decision and that I have the capacity to discern which would be the best course of action. Yet, would it be right to say that I do not have the capacity to discern what is good and what is bad for me and therefore not to take an intelligent course of action? Have I not been bestowed with intelligence by the Supreme? Can I throw away this precious gift as being useless? Ramana says that the best way to use this intelli-

gence is to inquire into its source. He says, do not waste your time thinking whether this is right or that is wrong simply abide in the source of the one who debates thus. Our repartee would be that, so long as the sense of being a given entity is entertained, the responsibilities that go with it cannot be ignored.

Nonetheless, Ramana is absolutely clear and certain in his guidance. As Sri A. R. Natarajan writes, "Another ruse which the mind deploys to weaken Self-attention, to dilute our strength of purpose, our single-minded effort, is to suggest a wrong import to some of Ramana's statements. Some ask, "Has not Bhagavan said, "Be quiet"?" Does being still imply inactivity, a mere passivity? No. This point was clarified to Natanananda. "Being still is not an effortless state of indolence. All mundane activities which are ordinarily called effort are performed with the aid of a portion of the mind and with frequent breaks. But the act of communion with the Self or remaining still inwardly is intense activity which is performed with the entire mind and without a break." The quest for finding out one's true identity demands incessant alertness in warding off thoughts and for clinging to the "I".

Indeed the rise of any thought is only on account of the absence of surrender, for it assumes a need for and a power to think. But what is thought? Thought is a mere form given to consciousness. It is usurping for oneself a bit of consciousness, by first mentally limiting consciousness. If one closely examines the nature of thought instead of focusing on the content of thought, one will recognize that there is nothing in the mind except consciousness. The light of consciousness alone is seen as a mental image which is called a thought, even as the physical light is seen as an image in a motion picture. If thoughts are all nothing but consciousness, where is the need to divide them into subject and object, into "I" and other? Such a division is not only illusory in itself, it further leads to the assumption of an illusory power on the part of the "I," the power to think. This in turn gives rise to the imaginary sense of doership, the sense of being a "doer" or an actor. Thus, allowing the movement of each thought is allowing a flight of fancy wherein the "I" assumes charge, a power that does not belong to the "I" by any stretch of the imagination. For, as

Ramana says in his *Forty Verses*, the seer, the seen, the light and the screen, all are He, the One. Understanding this truth by turning into and abiding as the source of thought is true surrender, the culmination of which Muruganar magically describes:

I too have seen all creatures live and move
Not of themselves but Self, all living prove

That I am nothing and can nothing do, and
So all my duties I have cast on you.
He brought me into being but to think
Of Him as “you,” of me and mine as “yours”
And He has left me wordless, deedless, prone,
Helpless on death’s brink.
Only the vast beatitude endures. ॐ

“Being still is not an effortless state of indolence. All mundane activities which are ordinarily called effort are performed with the aid of a portion of the mind and with frequent breaks. But the act of communion with the Self or remaining still inwardly is intense activity which is performed with the entire mind and without a break.”

- Bhagavan, p. 11-12, Bhagavan Ramana and Mother

Divinity Here and Now: Thief Turned Policeman

By A.R. Natarajan



The shining of the Self, free from thought, from “I,” is tapas, true penance. This is Ramana’s teaching. It is only then the bliss of existence, the abundant joy of Heart—abidance can be felt. The activity of the “I” and the awareness of the Heart’s sparkle cannot co-exist. We accept Ramana’s words intellectually. We know that Ramana’s words have to be true. Yet, we seem hesitant to go the whole way, unwilling to experiment with no-holds-barred, to negate, totally, the ego. So wide apart it is from our present way of life, centered on the ego, that there is an unconscious and unsaid fear of “losing” the very fulcrum of one’s existence. Ramana himself recognizes the reality of this fear. He, therefore, points out repeatedly that the loss of the ego

would open up new vistas, a life without limitation of identifications, a joyous existence uncontaminated by thought. “When the “I”-thought perishes, another “I” springs forth as the Heart. It is existence in all its fullness.” (Upadesa Saram, v. 20) One should push within fearlessly, to find new life, and not stop at the threshold. For this we have to be on guard, wary of the ego’s ways which will wean us away from our right resolve and deny us our moorings.

Let us just have a look at some of the mind’s deceitful ways to retain its sovereignty over us. In Self-Inquiry, all our energies are gathered at the source to push the “I” within. But hundreds of thoughts are right there waiting for a chance to intrude, to take hold of us. These intrusions, this thought veil, cannot be effectively tackled if we

make any distinction between thoughts—being lax to the pleasant ones and battling only against the unpleasant. Ramana makes this point, effectively, when answering a distraught devotee. Bose, drowned in sorrow on his son’s death,

Disciple: Is sorrow a thought?
Bhagavan: All thoughts are sorrowful.
Disciple: Are even pleasant thoughts sorrowful?
Bhagavan: Yes. Because thoughts take one’s attention away from the Self, which is undiluted happiness.
(Guru Ramana, by S.S. Cohen)

wanted to “have it out” with Bhagavan. His first question was, “Is sorrow a thought?” “All thoughts are sorrowful,” replied Ramana. Bose found it hard to accept this and queried again. “Are even pleasant thoughts sorrowful?” “Yes,” said Ramana, “Because thoughts take one’s attention away from the Self, which is undiluted happiness.” (Guru Ramana, by S.S. Cohen, p.42) Anything which comes in the way of Self-attention has to be tackled, and, for this, all thoughts are on par, they have to be discarded. Attention has to be riveted on the “thinker,” for it is only then that the inner journey can begin.

Another ruse which the mind deploys to weaken Self-attention, to dilute our strength of purpose, our single minded effort, is to suggest a wrong import to some of Ramana’s statements. Some ask, “Has not Bhagavan said, “Be quiet?” Does being still imply inactivity, a mere passivity? No. This point was clarified to Natanananda. “Being still is not an effortless state of indolence. All mundane activities which are ordinarily called effort are performed with the aid of a portion of the mind and with frequent breaks. But the act of communion with the Self or remaining still inwardly is intense activity which is performed with the entire mind and without a break.” (Bhagavan Ramana and Mother, p. 11-12) The quest for finding out one’s true identity demands incessant alertness in warding off thoughts and for clinging to the “I.”

Again some ask, “Has Ramana not affirmed, “Whatever is not destined to happen will not happen despite every effort. What is destined is bound to happen. This is certain.”? (Collected Works, Supplement to Forty Verses, p. 125) Therefore, the need for effort is questioned, Why not let the inward journey take its own course? To argue thus would be to misunderstand the Master’s teaching. For one thing, except for a rare few, the acceptance of the inevitability of the course of events is only at the superficial level. Action is done with the sense of doership, with the thought that success and failure are products of that effort. When it comes to spiritual sadhana, an attitude of pseudo-surrender is taken up. What Ramana talks of is not the effort for achieving desired goals, but effort to find out one’s true identity. Such Self-Inquiry, if well directed, will bring about an attitudinal change. Then, all events

could be looked upon neutrally, neither as good or as bad, but as a mere flow of karma. The bite would thus be taken out of any event, for it would not have the power to elate or cause pain. This change in outlook is not a gift of God. It is not manna from heaven but has to be worked for. Ceaseless Self-Inquiry alone can bring it about.

Then, there is the lure of scholarship, particularly for those who have a natural intellectual inclination. There is no end to the study of scriptures or research into works of Ramana. “To what purpose?” one should ask. Once the path is comprehended, it would be a mere waste of time to endlessly delve into the meaning of words instead of practicing the path. Merely to keep on studying the scriptures is bound to be counter-productive. The ego of scholarship, the idea “I know,” would take a subtle hold. Hence, it is that the Master says, “It may be the wives and children form the family of the unlearned, but, in the minds of the learned, there are many families consisting of books.” (Collected Works, Supplement to Forty Verses, p. 125) What matters is practice and experience. All else would lead only to dry polemics and meaningless philosophical disputations. “When one is “That,” the Self, is it not mere mental weakness to endlessly repeat words instead of just abiding as “That”?” (Sat Darshanam, v. 32)

Another mental clog is the feeling which creeps in, along the way, that we are not making any headway. One doesn’t seem to progress at all, get anywhere. The sense of arrival is not there. Used as we are to tangible results, we feel lost. There are, of course, some who want fruits in double quick time as typified by a casual visitor who said, “Tomorrow, I am leaving this place. Maharshi, if you give me Self-Realization, I shall always think of you.” (Guru Ramana, by S.S. Cohen, p. 32) But even those who are totally involved are apt to lose heart. Hence, it is important to remember that right effort would never go to waste. When, in what time, it would bear fruit cannot be postulated with any degree of certainty. For, one might be gun-powder ready to catch fire or wet firewood which can light up only slowly. Then, there is also the difference in the intensity of effort, in the passion for Self-Knowledge, in the total concern for it. Here it

would be worth recalling the conversation which Cohen had with Bhagavan. "Bhagavan, you have given me a home for my body. I now need your grace to grant eternal home for my soul, for which I broke all my human ties and came." Ramana gazed silently on the calm waters of the tank nearby and replied, "Your firm conviction brought you here; where is the room for doubt?" (Ibid, p20) This loving reassurance is not only for Cohen but for all those on the Ramana Way. One has the right to demand, "Have you not called me. Curse your fate, but protect me." (Marital Garland of Letters, v. 94) Can his call which draws us to him ever be in vain? We must leave it to Him to push the enquirer within until he is sucked in by the Heart, but effort we must make.

We do not know what austerities observed by us, what fasts and prayers of the past lives have

brought us to the Ramana Way. This rare good fortune is inexplicable. Having come, limitless happiness is within our grasp. Would it not be a tragedy of tragedies to fritter away this opportunity? As we tread the Ramana path steadfastly and vigilantly, the joy of Heart-abidance, the beatitude of just existing is felt. It comes and goes, leaving a lingering taste and longing. Then, we slip, become externalized, But this is of no consequence so long as Ramana and the Ramana Way remain as our pole-stars, our mariner's compass. We are bound to get back, feeling, as we mature in steady wisdom, the joy of anonymity, of egoless living. Then, we know the importance of unimportance, and the mind is not there to play its tricks. ॐ

Those who inquire know what it is into which they inquire.

Those who do not inquire do not know that into which they do not inquire.

Those who meditate know what it is upon which they meditate.

Those who do not meditate do not know that upon which they do not meditate.

Those who worship know what it is that they worship.

Those who do not worship do not know what it is that they do not worship.

Those who engage in service and devote themselves know what it is that they serve.

Those who do not serve do not know what it is that they do not serve.

We know that into which we inquire, who inquires.

We know that upon which we meditate. We know what we worship.

We know what it is that we serve.

- Nome

Ever Yours in Truth

by Nome

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Covering a time span of 40 years, *Ever Yours in Truth* is a spiritual treasure in the form of personal correspondence between Nome and other sages and seekers sharing their experience.

With few exceptions, almost all of the correspondence presented was written in response to letters written to Nome. Included with the early correspondence are a few verses composed at the time, but for whom they were written and in what context cannot now be ascertained. The correspondence has been generally presented as written by the various writers to better retain the feeling of the original with only some minor editing to delete comments pertaining to some practical matters and to render some of the messages received more intelligible. Some of the correspondence is a sharing of and reveling in Brahman-Knowledge, while some is correspondence with Nome in which seekers pose various questions regarding their practice of Self-Inquiry and how to apply this practice to their lives.

Available in the SAT Temple Bookstore, on the SAT website at: satramana.org, and through Amazon.

“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*.

Ever yours in Truth

Correspondence between Nome and seekers.

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



[A devotee of Sri Ramana in India wrote: I started practicing to chant Bhagawan's name, but I notice a hindrance in the form of pain that prevents me from proceeding further. Could you kindly provide me with a suggestion? Here is the reply.]

December 23, 2014

Dear . . . ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya
Namaste. Thank you for your message. Since, in devotion, you have taken up the holy name of Sri Bhagavan, nothing can be an obstacle for you. If by "pain" you mean physical, bodily pain, Sri Bhagavan reveals that the Self transcends the body. Be absorbed in this truth. If by "pain" you mean mental suffering, devotion to Him and profound Self-inquiry are the sure means of destroying such permanently.

Om Namah Sivaya

Ever yours in Sri Bhagavan,
Nome

[A seeker was perplexed by a passage that she read about dealing with one's own anger. Part of what she wrote is reproduced here. Nome's reply follows.]

Most beloved Nome,

In response to my question last Sunday, you advised me to trust Bhagavan's words and Maruganar's, but to use my discrimination with the editor's comments or those of others...

On page 337 of GVK, Annamalai Swami recounts an incident and begins by saying

that he often had to get angry with the local workers in order to get work done. Is that true? Is that cultural? Is it mocked up anger used like a riding crop? Or is it wrong understanding? Bhagavan had given him specific instructions about cutting a particular stone, which he passed along very carefully to the stone cutter so the stone would not break. But the stonecutter ignored his instructions and broke the stone; Annamalai Swami got so angry with him that he hit the man.

He felt guilty all day and that evening he "confessed" to Bhagavan. "The anger that came at 9 am has already gone. Why are you still thinking that you got angry and hit someone. . . To whom did all this anger come? Find out the real nature of the person who got angry this morning."

... "For activity that anger was needed," Bhagavan says....Why does Bhagavan say the anger was needed?...

Perhaps Annamalai Swami is not accurately duplicating Bhagavan's words?

In chapter 22 of Saddarsanam, instruction is given about vasanas, and a tendency to impatience and anger is one of mine. Hence my strong interest in this passage. Thank you, Nome, for your unfailing kindness and instruction. Thank you for repeatedly pointing us in the direction of pure Knowledge. "Whatever is destroyed in pure Knowledge cannot possibly recur, whether after a short time or a long time, because the seed of misidentification is absent."

With love and infinite gratitude,

January 7, 2015

Dear . . . ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. This reply must be necessarily be brief, due to bodily illness, but should be sufficient to reiterate and clarify for you that which was stated during satsang.

The passage that you are reading is not written by Muruganar. It is apparently written by the editor as a note to comment on the English translation by the editor's translation team of a verse written in Tamil by Muruganar that includes a reference to or quotation of a Tamil saying by another saint. The passage is attributed to Annamalai Swami, who may have spoken Tamil but not English, so someone translated it into English that was edited by the editor and placed in another book by him, which is then referenced in the present book. This being the case, discrimination may be needed to distill the essence, Bhagavan's instruction, and not become confused due to peculiar phrasing or expression introduced by the translators, editor, their memories, inclinations, understandings, and such. If clear discrimination is not inwardly applied, one may very well wind up with an inverted view. An example of such inversion in relation to the passage that you are reading would be the concept that, if one is prone to fits of anger and engages in violent action, she should merely attempt to forget it ("let go"). That is not transcendence but only loss of conscience, which is not recommended by the wise.

It is evident that Annamalai Swami was sincerely apologetic and regretful the entire day. Therefore, Bhagavan's instruction, recounted in the passage, is primarily inquiry. He also advised him that it was no longer necessary for his mind to continue to dwell in a sorrowful mode on the incident. In the sentence that confuses you, which activity that is referred to is not clearly stated, perhaps due to the factors mentioned earlier in this reply.

If you set yourself free of your own anger, that is best.

Om Namah Sivaya

Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[A seeker wrote:]

January 7, 2015

Dear Master Nome,

Namaste

At this moment, we drive to Los Angeles to celebrate my father's life, as he died last night. At no time have I ever been more grateful for SAT and Ramana's teachings than now.

In Devotion,

[Nome's response:]

Dear . . . ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. The true Self, which neither is born nor perishes, exists forever. That is the very Being of all, of the nature of endless peace.

It is in your heart full of gratitude that the immortal Truth shines brightly and love endures.

Om Namah Sivaya

Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[A seeker stated that he was "studying sahaja Samadhi," described various chakra experiences he had and "brain tingling" he felt, and asked if his present feeling of "emptiness behind the eyes and between the ears" was kevala nirvikalpa samadhi. Here is the reply.]

January 14, 2015

Dear . . . ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

Whatever comes goes. What appears disappears. For that which has birth, death is certain. That which is created will certainly eventually be destroyed. Therefore, the wise seek that which is eternal. The eternal is that which has neither beginning nor end, neither birth nor death.

The eternal is one's very existence. Therefore, the wise seek to know who they are.

The various experiences that come to you also vanish, as described by you. For whom are they? This ought to be discerned in order that you may abide in lasting happiness and peace.

Self-Knowledge is essential. If the Self is known as it truly is, the ego will prove to be nonexistent.

Sahaja means "innate," "natural." What is innate? You must come to know that which is actually your Self. The Self does not come or go. It is not born, and it does not perish. It

is of the nature of timeless Being-Consciousness-Bliss.

May you ever abide as the bodiless Self, which is Brahman, transcendent of all that is gross or subtle, and thus dwell in happiness and peace always.

Om Namah Sivaya

Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

*May your eyes mingle
with the sun.*

*May your breath be
merged with the cosmic
winds.*

*May the waters of your
being mingle with the
oceans.*

*May the ashes become
one with the earth.*

*May you go to the
heavens or to the earth,
whatever your direction
may be.*

- Yajur Veda 39

*Where eternal luster
glows, the realm in
which the light divine is
set, place me, Purifier,
in that deathless, im-
perishable world.*

*Make me immortal in
that realm where move-
ment is accordant to
wish, in the third re-
gion, the third heaven
of heavens, where the
worlds are resplendent.*

- Aitreya Aranyaka 6-11

Blessings From Siva's Little Island ...

Sharing the Joy of Siva!

March 11, 2015

Om Namah Sivaya!

Namaste dear Yogi Jothinatha,

Praying for all peace and happiness for you and all of the monks there.

In the spring of 2012 you kindly helped me create an add to be placed in your splendid journal HINDUISM TODAY. The ad was seeking donations for the Sri Sadisvara Mandiram in the SAT Temple. I wanted to share with you the good news that we completed the Mandiram.

I am sending links to our "Temple Blog" that show the progress of the building, which was mostly done by the tireless and selfless volunteer work of devotees here. I hope you enjoy them!

<http://satramana.wordpress.com/2012/03/19/sri-sadisvara-mandiram/>
<http://satramana.wordpress.com/2012/10/16/sri-sadisvara-mandiram-part-2-ganesha-subramania-lingam-parvati-nandi-chitrugupta/>
<http://satramana.wordpress.com/2013/08/20/sri-sadisvara-mandiram-part-4-nandis-altar/>
<http://satramana.wordpress.com/2013/08/22/sri-sadisvara-mandiram-part-5-murtis-arrive/>
<http://satramana.wordpress.com/2013/11/05/sri-sadisvara-mandiram-part-6-bhumi-puja-to-begin-construction-of-the-mandiram/>
<http://satramana.wordpress.com/2013/12/21/sri-sadisvara-mandiram-part-7-phase-ii-construction/>
<http://satramana.wordpress.com/2014/05/28/sri-sadisvara-mandiram-part-8-phase-iii-construction/>
<http://satramana.wordpress.com/2014/06/16/sri-sadisvara-mandiram-part-9-installation-of-the-siva-lingam-and-murtis-pratishta/>
<http://satramana.wordpress.com/2014/06/29/sri-sadisvara-mandiram-part-10-first-abishekam-to-siva-lingam/>
<http://satramana.wordpress.com/2014/06/29/sri-sadisvara-mandiram-part-10-first-abishekam-to-siva-lingam/>
<http://satramana.wordpress.com/2014/09/13/sri-sadisvara-mandiram-part-11-columns/>
<http://satramana.wordpress.com/2014/11/08/sri-sadisvara-mandiram-part-12-completion/>

Sent with love,
in Lord Siva's service,
Sasvati Nome

Siva Lingam in the Sri Sadisvara Mandiram at the SAT Temple.



March 30, 2015

Siva Lingam at the
Kauai Hindu Monastery

Congratulations, great Sevak!

And much love and kudos to
Master Nome and your entire team.

Thank you for thinking of us at your
time of celebrating. I trust our ad may
have helped some toward reaching the
goal.

You are moving the incomparable
teachings of Sri Maharshi and Siva for-
ward to meet more souls. I cannot
imagine a greater thing to do and ac-
complish during our short time on this
planet. The impression I received from
visiting SAT long ago is still very much alive in my mind. To think you are contin-
uing to forge ahead positively is most inspiring and encouraging. Again: congrat-
ulations!

The photos look great. I hope I can see and worship/meditate at the shrines
in person one day.

Likewise, I hope you and yours might visit us here one day.

In the meantime, Master Nome, you and all of you have many blessings from
Siva's little island.

Aum Namasivaya,
Kaivalyanathaswami

kaivalya@hindu.org
tel: 1-888-464-1008 FREE
cell: 1-808-634-5407
fax: 1-808-822-3152
Kauai's Hindu Monastery
107 Kaholalele Rd
Kapaa, HI • 96746-9304 USA



*"Recognizing that all experience
is but a fading dream, you are
closer to the permanence within
you that never changes. You can
sense it. It is God. It is Siva. It
has never changed. It will never
change."*

—GURUDEVA,
SATGURU SIVAYA SUBRAMUNIYASWAMI

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 excerpt is 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. This series is currently out-of-print. 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 excerpt is taken from vol. VII

Sadhana in the Presence of the Guru

Today, I reached the hall at about 3 PM. Bhagavan was at leisure, answering questions asked by some devotee. One of the questions was: "Swami, they say that japa and tapa performed in the presence of Bhagavan yield greater results than usual. If so, what about bad actions done in your presence?" Bhagavan replied, "If good actions yield good results, bad actions must yield bad results. If the gift of a cow in Benares

yields great punya (virtue) to the donor, the slaughter of a cow there results in great papa (sin). When you say that a little virtuous action done in a holy place yields enormous benefit, a sinful action must likewise yield enormous harm. So long as the feeling that you are the doer is there, you must face the consequences of your actions, good or bad.”

“There is the desire to discard bad habits, but the force of the vasanas is very strong; what are we to do?” That person continued. “There must be human effort to discard them. Good company, good contacts, good deeds and all such good practices must be acquired, in order to eliminate the vasanas. As you keep on trying, eventually with the ripening of the mind and with God’s grace, the vasanas get extinguished and efforts succeed. That is called Purushakaram (human effort). How could God be expected to be favorable towards you without you striving for it?” said Bhagavan.

Another person took up the thread of the conversation and said, “It is said that the whole universe is God’s chidvilasam and that everything is Brahmapadam. Then, why should we say that bad habits and bad practices should be discarded?” Bhagavan replied, “Why? I will tell you. There is the human body. Suppose there is some wound inside it. If you neglect it, on the assumption that it is only a small part of the body, it causes pain to the whole body. If it is not cured by ordinary treatment, the doctor must come, cut off the affected portion with

a knife and remove the impure blood. If the diseased part is not cut off, it will fester. If you do not bandage it after the operation, puss will form. It is the same thing with regard to conduct. Bad habits and bad conduct are like a wound in the body; if a man does not discard them, he will fall into the abyss below. Hence every disease must be given appropriate treatment.”

“Bhagavan says that sadhana must be done to discard all such bad things; but the mind itself is inert and cannot do anything by itself; Chaitanya is achalam (motionless) and so will not do anything. Then how is one to perform sadhana?” someone asked. Bhagavan replied, “Oh! But how are you able to talk now?” “Swami, I do not understand that and that is why I ask for enlightenment,” he said. Bhagavan replied, “All right. Then please listen. The mind, which is inert, is able to achieve everything by the force of its contact, sannidhyabala (strength of proximity) with Chaitanya (Self), which is achala. But without the aid of Chaitanya, the inert mind cannot accomplish anything by itself; Chaitanya, being immobile, cannot accomplish anything without the help of the mind. It is the relationship of avinabhavam, one dependent on the other and inseparable. That is why elders discuss this matter from various angles and came to the conclusion that the mind is chit-jada-atmakam. We have to say that the combination of chit (Self) and jada (inert) produces action.” ॐ

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“Those who engage in service know what it is that they serve...”

Left clockwise: Jaya, Prema, Janani, Shruti, and Advait label books for the SAT Temple Bookstore.

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 continued:

Whatever one constantly contemplates, whatever constantly occupies one's mind and to whatever one is devoted with all his life, that he knows to be real and obvious. When the mind is saturated with the consciousness of Brahman, it becomes that; whatever the mind loves most it becomes that. When one's mind rests in the supreme reality or the infinite consciousness, then one engages himself in righteous activity without being interested in the activity itself for its own sake.

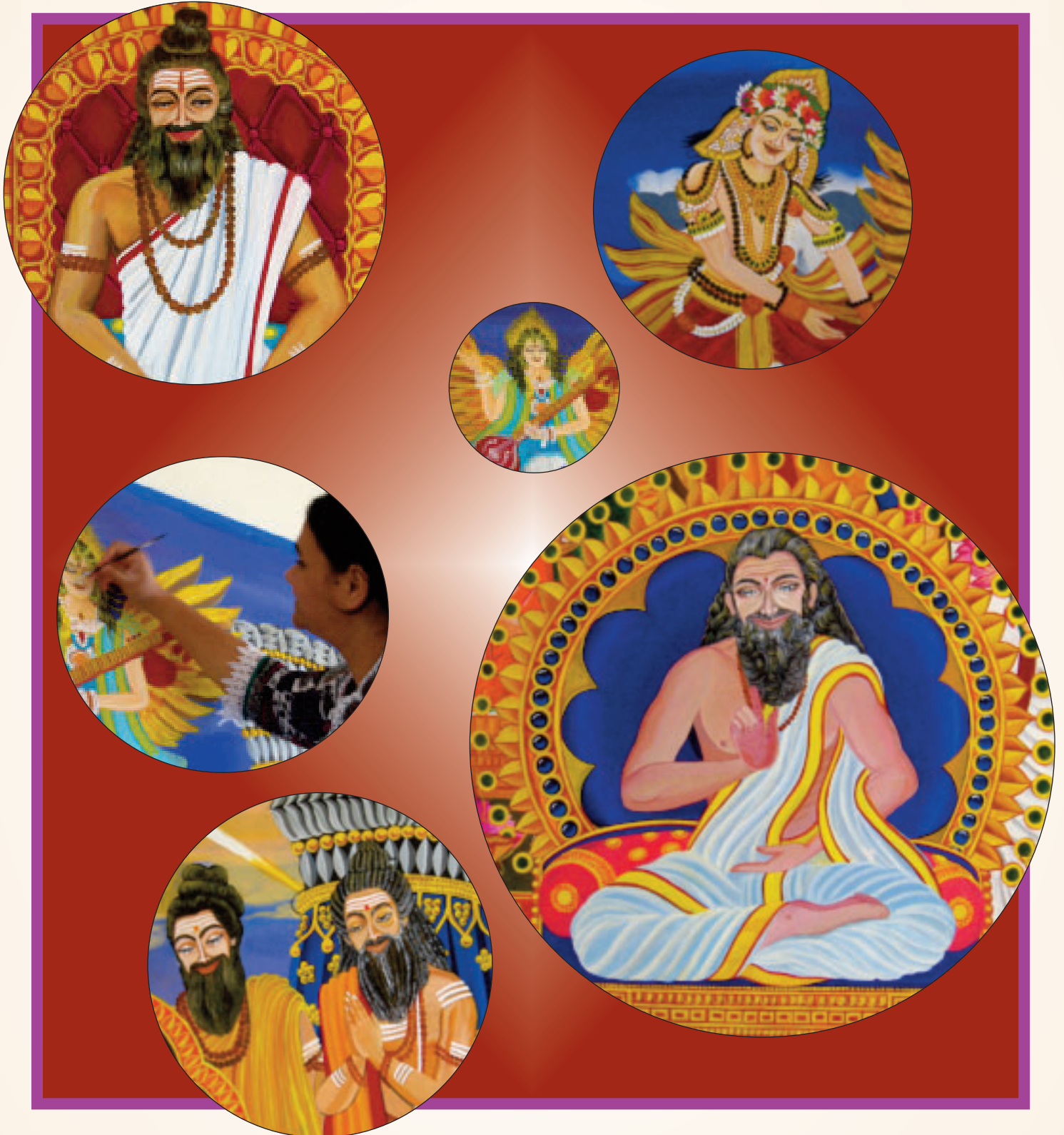
When this objective universe itself does not exist or when one cannot affirm or deny its existence, it is not possible to

determine who is the doer of actions and the enjoyer of experiences. What is commonly known as Brahma the creator or buddhi the awakened intelligence, etc., is itself the infinite consciousness, which is absolutely pure. The peace in the sky is pure void. The appearance of duality in all these is illusory and nonexistent. Therefore, diversity is a meaningless concept. Just as one enters into the dream state after the deep sleep state, the same infinite consciousness moves to the creation state from the state of absolute quiescence; in it, there is neither duality nor unity. The infinite consciousness perceives this creation within the space of its own consciousness.

(The Supreme Yoga, vol. 2, VI.2, 25th Oct.)

Vasistha Mural

in the SAT Temple Lotus Room



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/>

Chitragupta

Chitra means wondrously conspicuous and Gupta means hidden or secret.

*We can interpret Chitragupta to mean: **Hidden in plain sight.***

Chitragupta is the cosmic accountant of our deeds, good and bad, in body, speech and mind. He represents our conscience. Our conscience is hidden from others, but in plain view to us for we always see our own minds. If our conscience is "pure," it is due to our honesty, good-will, trustworthiness, selflessness, and charity in dealing with others, both personally and in our business dealings. If our conscience is impure, it is due to the opposite of these qualities, which is ego-driven. The practice of Self-inquiry, does, by its very nature, bring about the investigation of impure vasanas and destroys the egocentric tendencies that would cause them, thus making our conscience pure, which is fundamental to our emancipation. This is why Chitragupta is an important symbol in our temple.



Chitragupta in the Sri Sadisvara Mandiram at the SAT Temple.

The legend of Chitragupta

(According to Wikipedia)

Chitragupta (rich in secrets or hidden picture) is a Hindu god assigned with the task of keeping complete records of actions of human beings on the earth. Upon their death, Chitragupta has the task of deciding heaven or hell for the humans, depending on their actions on the earth. Chitragupta Maharaj (Chitragupta the King) is the patron deity of Kayasthas, a Hindu caste of India. He is the son of Lord Brahma and holds a fairly special place in the Hindu pantheon because of the order of his birth.

Lord Brahma had many various sons and daughters in various myth structures, including

many seers born of his mind, such as Vashishta, Narada, and Atri, and many sons born of his body, such as Dharma, Delusion, Lust, Death, and Bharata. The story of the birth of Chitragupta is related in different ways, but he is nearly always delineated differently from the other children of Lord Brahma, and a common thread is that he is born directly of Lord Brahma's body.

In one popular version of the creation myth of Chitragupta, it is said that Lord Brahma gave the land of the dead over to the god Yama, also known as Dharamraj or Yamraj. Yama would become confused sometimes when dead souls

would come to him, and would occasionally send the wrong souls to either heaven or hell. Lord Brahma commanded him to keep better track of everyone, and Yama declared that he could not reasonably be expected to keep track of the many people born of the 84 lakh yonis (life-forms) in the three worlds.

Lord Brahma, determined to solve this problem for Yama, sat in meditation for many thousands of years. Finally he opened his eyes, and a man stood before him with a pen and paper. As Chitragupta was born of Lord Brahma's body, or kaya in Sanskrit, Brahma declared that his children would forever be known as Kayasthas. As he was first conceived in Brahma's mind, or chitra, and then made whole in secrecy, or gupta, away from the other gods, he was named Chitragupta.

Chitragupta is sometimes also referred to as the

first man to use letters, and is hailed that way in the Garud Puran. He is known as being incredibly meticulous, and with his pen and paper he tracks every action of every sentient life form, building up a record of them over the course of their life so that when they die the fate of their soul can be easily determined. These perfect and complete documents are referred to in mystical traditions as the Akashic records, and as they contain the actions of each person from birth to death, they can be said to contain every action taken in the universe.

Items associated with Chitragupta in his puja include the paper and pen, ink, honey, betel nut, matches, mustard, sugar, sandalwood, and frankincense. A puja is often performed to Chitragupta in reverence of the four virtues he is seen to embody: justice, peace, literacy, and knowledge. ॐ

Temple Bulletin



In the last issue of Reflections, images of Ribhu, Nidhaga and Adi Sankara appeared. These images were submitted to the sculptors in India to have murtis made of them.

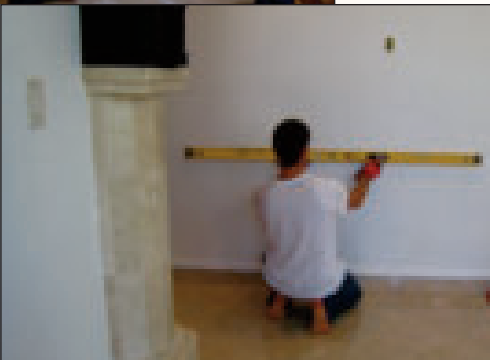


Left to right: Ribhu, Nidhaga, and Adi Sankara have been carved in wax. The next step will be casting the wax and pouring the bronze.

New Temple Murtis

More of Sri Bhagavan

Devotees install another image of Sri Bhagavan in the Sri Sadisvara Mandiram



Counter clockwise from top left: Raman and Gnana remove the coverings from the picture as Nome looks on. Placement of the picture is determined as Gnana and Raman make adjustments. Scott marks a level placement. Bhagavan's image is placed on the wall. He is clearly seen while devotees perform pradakshina in the Mandiram.

Sri Bhagavan's Grace and the generous



donations given by devotees during this year's pledge drive made it possible to replace the 26 year old, deteriorated roof of the SAT Temple. With modern roofing materials, we can expect this roof to last up to 50 years! Thank you to all those whose donations made this possible.

Upcoming Special Events

Adi Sankara Jayanti: Wednesday, April 22, 2015

Citragupta Day: Sunday, May 3, 2015

Sri Sadisvara Mandiram Pratishtha: Thursday, May 14, 2015

The Self-Knowledge Retreat: May 22-24, 2015

OM NAMO BHAGAVATE SRI RAMANAYA
OM NAMAH SIVAYA

