

Reflections

SAT Temple

January.February.March.2016

**In commencing an inquiry to know the Self, even if it first appears to the spiritual aspirant that there is nothing in his experience other than what constitutes the five sheaths, from the causal through the intellectual and mental to the prana and the body, there still exists one who is the knower, or experiencer, of these. All of the sheaths are objective to the Self, the innermost Consciousness. All of these are not one's actual Existence. The knower can never be a known or unknown object. The knower, the Self, is ever-existent and, being nonobjective, can only be formless without the least trace of any of the attributes of the known.**

– Nome, from the introduction to *Svatmanirupanam*,  
*The True Definition of One's Own Self*



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*Sri Bhagavan is a living expression of desirelessness. Everything we know about him epitomizes desirelessness. Sri Krishna tells Arjuna: "Covered, O son of Kunti, is wisdom by this constant enemy of the wise, in the form of desire, which is greedy and insatiable." (III:39) "When a man, satisfied in the Self alone by himself, completely casts off all the desires of the mind, then is he said to be one of steady Knowledge." (II:55) The Lord says, "That man attains peace, who, abandoning all desires, moves about without attachment, without selfishness, without vanity (not vain of his knowledge)." (II:71)*

*Desire is a force that demands fulfillment. Misused, in ignorance, the whole of life is but an interminable flood of desires yielding dissatisfaction whether they are fulfilled or not. The wise know that the only way to fulfill this driving force, permanently quenching it, and thus abide in eternal satisfaction is through Self-Knowledge. Those practicing Self-Knowledge govern the otherwise obtuse meandering mind, directing it inward, comprehending the essence of desire and its true purpose in life.*

*For the Grace of the great Rishi-s, their teachings and their examples, we can never be too thankful. This quarter, devotees expressed their gratitude in worship during eight events at the SAT Temple: Navaratri on October 22, Dipavali on November 10, The Truth Revealed Retreat on November 13-15, Skanda Shasti on November 17, Karthikai Deepam on November 25, Dattatreya Jayanti on December 23, Arudra Darshanam on December 26, and Sri Ramana's Jayanti on December 30. To enjoy a gallery of images from these special events, please follow this link: <http://satramana.org/web/gallery/pictures/>*

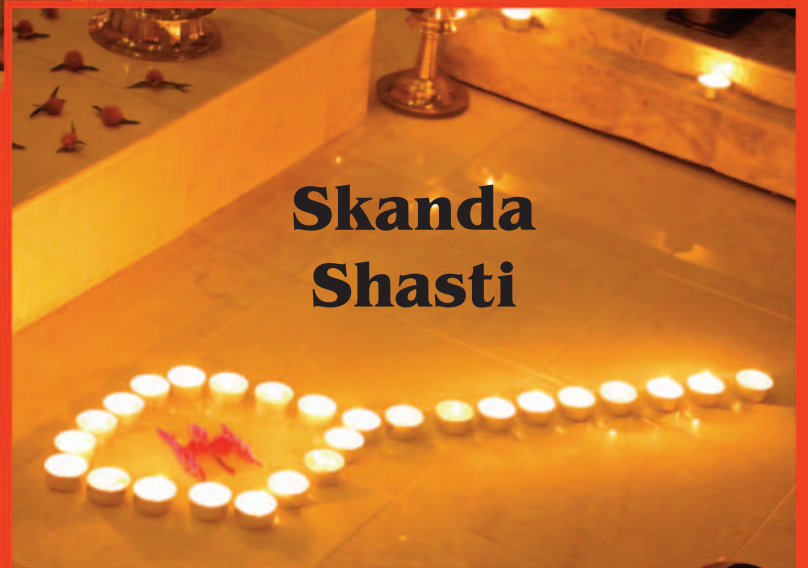
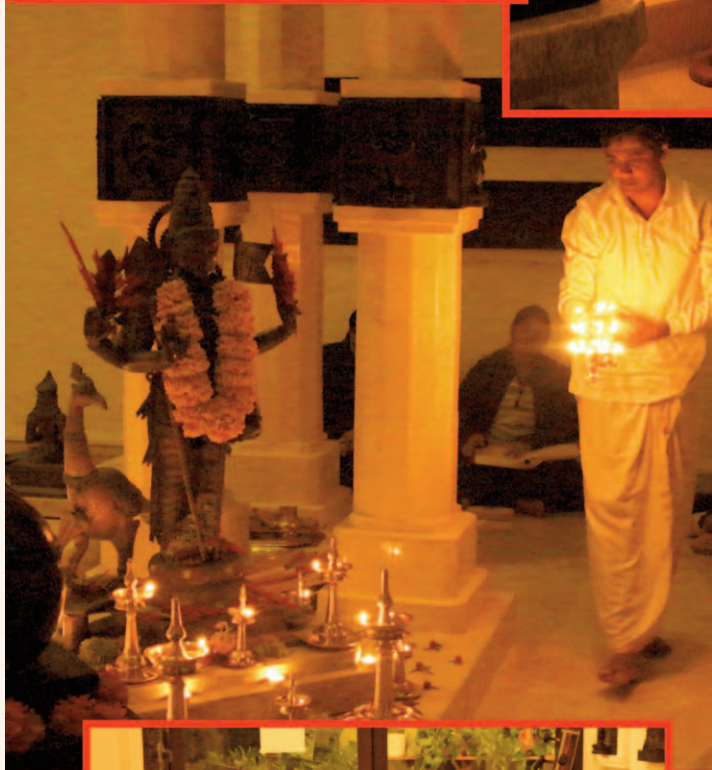


# NAVARATRI (VIJAYADASAMI)



**Devi with flower malas prepared for the Navaratri celebration at the SAT Temple on October 22, 2015.**







# Dattatreya Jayanti





9.

Truly the mind is like space; it seems to face in all directions; it seems to transcend everything; it seems to be everything. But, in reality, the mind does not exist.

13.

You were never born and you will never die. You have never had a body. The Upanishads declare in many different ways this avowed truth: "All is Brahman."

Avadhuta Said:

1.

It is God's grace alone that gives wise men the desire to realize nondual Brahman; thus they are set free from great fear.

12.

Be aware of the Atman always. It is continuous and everywhere the same. You say "I am he who meditates," and "The Supreme One is the object of meditation." Why do you thus divide the indivisible?

15.

For you and me there can be neither union nor separation. In reality, neither you nor I nor this entire world exists. The Atman alone abides.

The above verses, from Avadhuta Gita of Dattatreya, trans. By Swami Chetanananda, are a few of the verses read by Nore to devotees during Dattatreya Jayathi at the SAT Temple on December 23rd.



## Verses from *Skanda Purana*, chapter 74



81.

*Her ears were not interested in listening to other words and sounds. Her hands became very efficient in making the excellent garlands of the Lord.*

82.

*Her feet did not wander elsewhere for pleasure abandoning the precincts of the shrine of Omkara occupied by the glorious goddess of salvation.*



83-89.

Her organ of speech pronounced the names of Omkara  
refraining from uttering other names She uttered  
names of Omkara. Jsvara is Pranava. It is Sara  
(permanent) even in Pralaya. It is Para  
(greater than all). It is the  
illuminator of Brahman. It is the embodiment  
of Sabdabrahman as the three Vedas.  
It is the abode of the Kalas of  
Nada and Bindu.

It is the excellent immutable one.  
It is the primordial form.  
It is in universal form. It is the form of  
Para (cause) and Avara (effect).  
It is the most excellent of all. It is Varennya  
(worthy of being desired). It is Varada  
(bestower of boons).  
It is Sasvata (eternal), Santa (quiescent),  
Jsvara (the powerful Lord).



It is the sole creator of all the worlds;  
it is the sole protector  
of all the worlds. It is the sole annihilator  
of all the worlds; it  
is the sole adored one of all the worlds.  
It has neither beginning nor end; it is everlasting;  
it is auspicious. It is Sankara  
(benefactor). It is Avyaya (unchangeable).  
It is one. It is beyond the three gunas.  
It is embodied in the minds of devotees.  
It is unconditioned.

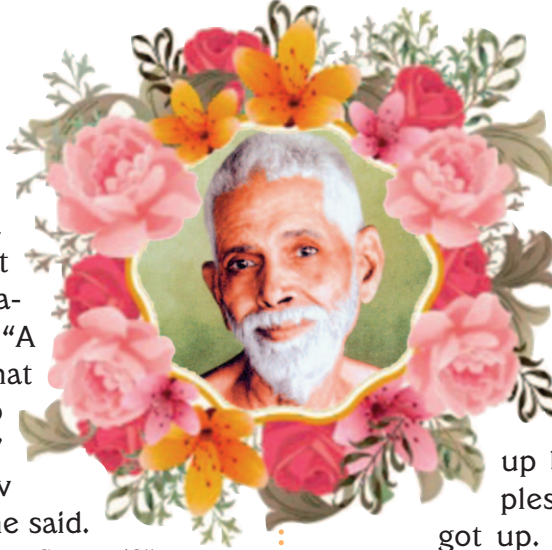
It is Nirakara (free from forms or shapes),  
Nirvikara (free from modifications);  
It is Niranjana (free from the limitations of causes),  
it is Nirmala (devoid of passions  
or impurities), Nirahamkara (devoid of the ego),  
Nisprapancha (devoid of ramifications),  
Nijodaya (ever rising and flourishing),  
Svatmarama (rejoicing within itself),  
Ananta (infinite), Sarvaga (moving everywhere),  
Sarvadarsin (seeing everything),  
Sarvada (bestower of all),  
Sarvabhoktr (enjoyer of all),  
the all, the abode of all pleasures.



“. . .At meal time, he would have a big leaf spread out for me, sit by my side and instruct the cook to serve me food over and over again. . .  
How could I eat all that was piled on the leaf?. . .”

## (125) Forced Dinners June 27, 1947

This afternoon at 3 o'clock, a devotee from Eesanya Mutt came and bowed before Bhagavan. Seeing him, Bhagavan said, “A telegram has been received that the Swami in Kovilur Mutt is no more. Is Natesa Swami gone?” “Yes. Two days ago. We knew beforehand that he was sick,” he said. Someone asked “Who is Natesa Swami?” “The deceased who passed away at the Kovilur Mutt was originally in charge of the Eesanya Mutt. When the Matadhipathi (head of the Mutt) of Kovilur passed away, Natesa Swami was taken there and was made the head of the Mutt. That is the most important Vedanta Mutt this side. Though he was not very learned, he was a good sadhak and so he was chosen. It might be about 20 years back,” said Bhagavan. “Is he the same person that made Bhagavan get into a bandy?” I asked. “No. That was the one who was in the Mutt before Natesa Swami. He was not like this person. He was a powerful personality,” said Bhagavan. “When was that?” someone asked. “That was when I was still in Virupaksha Cave and about four or five years after I came to Tiruvannamalai. It is a funny story. One day when Palaniswamy and myself went round the hill and came near the temple, it was 8 p.m. As we were tired, I lay down in Subrahmanya temple. Palani went out to fetch food from the choultry. He (the head of the Mutt) was going into the temple. As usual there were a number of disciples around him.



One of them saw me and told him about it. That was enough. While returning, he came with ten of his disciples and stood around me. He began saying, “Get up Swami. We shall go.” I was in Mouna then, so I showed by signs that I wouldn't accompany them. Was he the man to listen to me? “Lift him up bodily, lift,” he said to his disciples. As there was no alternative, I got up. When I came out, there was a bandy ready. “Get in, Swami,” he said. I declined and showed them by sign that I would prefer to walk and suggested that he should get into the bandy. He took no notice of my protestations. Instead, he told his disciples, “What are you looking at? Lift Swami and put him in the cart.” There were ten of them and I was alone. What could I do? They lifted me bodily and put me into the cart. Without saying anything more, I went to the Mutt. He had a big leaf spread out for me, filled it with food of all kinds, showed great respect and began saying “Please stay here always.” Palaniswami went to the temple, enquired about me and then came to the Mutt. After he came, I somehow managed to escape from there. That was the only occasion on which I got into a cart after coming to Tiruvannamalai. Subsequently, whenever new people arrived, they sent a cart, asking me to go over to their place. If once I yielded, I was afraid, there would be no end to that sort of invitation, and so I sent back the cart, refusing to go. Eventually, they stopped sending carts. But that was not the only trouble with them. Even if I did not go to them when invited, I



used to go around the hill, when sometimes I used to visit the Mutt. He would then go in and say something to the cook. At meal time, he would have a big leaf spread out for me, sit by my side and instruct the cook to serve me food over and over again. On other days he would not eat along with the disciples in the Mutt, but, when I visited the Mutt, he used to sit by my side for food. How could I eat all that was piled on the leaf? I used to touch a little of the various preparations. The balance used to be mixed together by the disciples, and the inmates used to eat it, saying, "It is Swami's prasadam." Noticing that, I gave up eating from a leaf. Whenever I felt like eating there in the Mutt, I used to stay in Pachiammankoil or somewhere near-about, go to the Mutt soon after the naivedya bell was rung, stay near the main entrance and ask for the nivedana (food offering to God). They used to bring it and give it into my hands. I used to eat without the aid of a leaf. Salt is not put into that nivedana, as it is a Siva temple. Even so, I didn't mind it at all. All that I wanted was to satisfy my hunger. As the head of the Mutt was staying upstairs, he knew nothing about it for some time. One day, he saw it accidentally, "Who is it that is giving Swami food without salt?" he inquired angrily. Subsequently, he learned all the facts and left the matter at that. The person who died recently was not like that. He was a very peaceful and easy going man. He used to sit by my side along with all the others and arrange for serving me food in normal quantities, similar to the others."

"Bhagavan also once lectured there, didn't he?" someone asked. "Yes," he replied. "When the person who recently passed away was teaching some

lessons to the inmates of the Mutt, I happened to go there. They received me with great respect and made me sit down. "Go on with the lessons," I said. "Can I teach lessons in Swami's presence? Swami himself must say something," he replied. So saying, he got a copy of *Gita Saram*, made his sishyas to read and requested me to explain it. As there was no way out, I gave a discourse."

"Ramachandra Iyer's grandfather once took Bhagavan to his place, it seems," said that questioner. "That was long back, perhaps in 1896. I was then at Gopura Subrahmanyeswara temple. He used to come to me daily, sit for a while and then go. I was in Mouna. So, there was no talk or consultation. Even then, he had great devotion. One day it seems he invited someone to his house for a feast. In the noon, before meal time, he came to me with another person. Standing one on either side, they said, "Swami, get up. Let us go." "Why?" I inquired by signs. They told me the purpose. I refused. But would they go? They caught hold of my hands and forcibly pulled me up. They were prepared even to carry me in their arms. He was tall, stout and with a big belly. I was at the time lean and weak. I was nothing before him. His friend was even sturdier. What could I do? I was afraid they might even carry me in their arms if I resisted any further. I knew they were inviting me with great bhakti. So, thinking it was no use arguing with them, I walked with them. From the main entrance they took me into the hall with great respect, spread a big plantain leaf and fed me sumptuously and then sent me back. That is the only family house here where I have eaten on a leaf." ॐ

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## Endless Happiness

Satsang

August 23, 2015

Om Om Om

(Silence)

Nome: All beings desire happiness without end. Because it is without end and because the body is of a transient nature, what one desires truly is something entirely bodiless and objectless. This is experienced, as Bhagavan explains, in deep dreamless sleep. What is bodiless and objectless is your own real Being. You never desire an object for its own sake, but for the sake of that which is actually your very Existence. Being though, is already itself, so how can it desire itself? Is there another? It is in the subsidence of another, the ego, that unending happiness is found. So, seek that which is bodiless, objectless, and egoless.

The ideal way to seek that which is objectless, bodiless, and egoless is to inquire. Inquire to know the Self. The body cannot inquire; it is inert. The ego cannot inquire, because it does not actually exist. Who inquires? Who is it that yearns for the objectless, bodiless, egoless state? Just this inquiry reveals the truth. In the truth of the Self, your very Being, is happiness, without cause and without an end.

Questioner: Whenever one is caught up in happiness, it produces less sense of the body in every case, rather than more sense of the body. One of the parables that I always liked was one of those elephant analogies. In this one, the cruel ego mas-

ter tormenting the elephant, at one point, falls off. The elephant unwisely fails to finally trample the cruel master. The cruel master sweet talks his way back on and the elephant is controlled again and is back where it started. The point seems to be that if one can dislodge the ego, finish the job once and for all. Legend tells that when the young Shankara pleaded with his future Guru, Govinda Bhagavadpada, for guidance, the Guru meditating in solitude under a rock overhang, kindly extends one foot, and Shankara grabs hold of one toe. With that one drop, symbolically, of the Guru's guidance, there's superabundance, and he's completely safe. I feel that, to the best of my ability, I grab that toe and never let go.

N.: If you know these things, what further illumination could you desire?

Q.: The illumination that comes from any comment you'd ever make always seems to expand the light.

N.: The light of your own Consciousness is infinite. Be a wise elephant and find out if the ego even exists. As for the mind, what is its nature? If this is inquired into, there are no more troubles with the mind. The story relating to Adi Sankaracharya is self-evident.

Another Q.: Obviously, the body doesn't inquire. It's not a body inquiry.

N.: Inquiry consists of nonobjective Knowledge. Nonobjective Knowledge is neither perceptual nor conceptual. Beyond the perceived and the conceived is pure Consciousness. Consciousness constitutes the Knowledge. What shines as Self-Knowledge in the end is the very substance of the inquiry in practice. The end is the means to itself.

"You never desire an object for its own sake, but for the sake of that which is actually your very Existence."



Q.: It can't be foreign to me. If it's the Self, it has to be present right now. It wouldn't be that I have to go somewhere for it. The discrimination has to be from that same source.

N.: The means and the end must match each other. If they do not, how will the realization be attained? If they are, the imaginary gap, the chasm apparent between yourself and the Self, dissolves.

So, the inquiry is always into the nature of the inquirer. Turn inward entirely, making your vision utterly nonobjective. You are not an object; the Self can never be a known or unknown object. Inquiring in this manner, the entirety of illusion is consumed.

Q.: You mentioned that that ego is assumed.

N.: By whom is it assumed? Can it assume itself? The Self has no ignorance, so it does not assume an ego. There is not a second, or another consciousness, other than the Consciousness of the Self. So, for whom is the assumption? In this way, pursue the spiritual instruction and practice accordingly. When something is stated, such as, "The ego is assumed," it never should be mistaken to mean there's a real ego that is assumed. The intention behind the instruction, the significance of it, is that there is no such thing as an ego. In the absolute, utter absence of ego, your happiness is complete.

Another Q.: You mentioned to turn the mind completely inward, so that one is not an object. Not assuming the ego, not thinking of oneself as an individual, is that not taking oneself as an object?

N.: You are Being-Consciousness-Bliss. Not to mistake yourself for an object is not to confound your Bliss with objects, not to confound your Being with the body, not to confound your Consciousness with thought. Worldless and egoless, without "this" and without "I," your own nature stands self-revealed, resplendent, and perfectly full. How could you ever be an object, gross or subtle, to yourself? If you seek the Self as an object, it seems elusive, always slipping out of your grasp. If you make your vision nonobjective, truly inquiring to know within yourself, "Who am I?", the nonobjective Self is found to be yourself, the only Self that there is. That is Brahman, and that alone is what you are.

Q.: Here, in the "Requisites for Realization," you mention the non-dependence of the mind on anything external is renunciation. Right now, my mind goes into the concerns.

N.: What is truly your concern? In all your concerns about a great number of things, you are interested actually in only one thing. That one thing is actually your Self. The inquiry should be intense and continuous, as intense as Reality is, as continuous as Being always is. If you want to be at peace and happy always, make the inquiry always. If you want the happiness and peace to be only partial, inquire only partially. Of course, you naturally desire to be happy always. So, seek to know the Self without a break. If you know the source and nature of happiness, even when you must think about other things, the affairs at hand, there will be no actual concern on your part, no attachment. Where there is no attachment, there is no bondage and no suffering.

Q.: The key is to not give any scope for the ego. So, keep inquiring so that there's no trace of the ego.

N.: That's right. Let your inquiry to know the Self be deep, continuous, and intense.

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

(Silence)

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

(Then followed a recitation in Tamil from Chapter 12 of the Song of Ribhu.)

.....

Pure

Satsang

September 6, 2015

Om Om Om

(Silence)

Nome: (Silence)



Questioner: When the term “pure” is used, there can be an implied something that it need no longer be purified of, and what would that be?

N.: What is meant is that there is no admixture, there is no combining, of the Real and the unreal, for the unreal does not exist, and the Real simply is as it is always. It is undivided. It is without “other.” Divisions, otherness, etc. are merely imagined limitations superimposed upon the reality of pure Consciousness, pure Existence. The Self is pure Existence, Consciousness, and Bliss. It never becomes other than what it is. Since it is without other and is the abiding Reality, there is no one who can be ignorant of this or be missing this. That this is the Reality, ever still, ineffable by any word, inconceivable by any thought, is indicated in silence. The inconceivable is Brahman, and that is what you are. If there is only Consciousness, infinite and eternal, without a “this,” without an “I,” what then? Pure should be understood to be without differences. The primary difference that is imagined in delusion is the ego, the falsely assumed individuality, the notion of “I” Pure means egolessness. That which is egoless is of an eternally untainted nature. Find this for yourself by deeply inquiring, “Who am I?”

Another Q.: I noticed a tendency in me. I think that I am a deficient individual. Instead of putting energy in the inquiry, my mind was engaged in that thinking. It immobilizes me, because I don’t do anything that I’m supposed to do. I need to somehow not engage in such thoughts.

N.: You are not what you think yourself to be. If you consider very deeply how your happiness depends utterly on Self-Knowledge, the motivation for inquiry will not diminish.

Q.: Knowing that the individual is unreal ...

N.: If that is truly known, everything is accomplished. Where there is no jiva, there is only Siva. If you know that your happiness utterly depends on Self-Knowledge, you won’t have to put energy anywhere. It will be natural, just as you do not have to put energy into searching for happiness. You do so naturally because it is your nature to be happy. Likewise is it with intensity, depth, and perseverance in the inquiry to know the Self.

Q.: My mind was thinking in terms of what I have to do. Instead, know that the happiness is ...

N.: Yes, it is not what you have to do; it is what you must know.

Another Q.: Knowing that at the depth of which it is beyond a shadow of a doubt blows away anything else, and it is achievable. It is achieved by Self-inquiry. I forget all the time.

N.: What is the nature of the one who forgets?

Q.: The nature of that one is usually thinking happiness is external and that I am a body in a world. It is all based on ideas.

N.: Are any of those thoughts you, or are you a thinker?

Q.: In that case, I am a thinker with thoughts.

N.: If you were a thinker, you would always be a thinker, but that is not the case, as in deep dreamless sleep. Whatever you are, you are always. Changelessness is indicative of reality. What are you really? Yes, all the wondrous Truth and glorious Bliss described in the shastras is realizable. If it were not realizable, who would have ever bothered to mention it?

Q.: It is definitely not realizable by that one that I take myself to be. That is not going to happen.

N.: The one you take yourself to be is merely an illusion and not a second knowing entity. If you inquire nonobjectively, you will find that there is no such thing as the individual entity or ego.

Q.: What doesn’t move, there’s a certain beauty in that. There’s no happiness in the continuous externalization of looking for happiness. There’s movement, there’s unrest.

N.: What moves and what does not? What propels the motion when it appears? Into what does the motion subside? How do you even know that there is motion? When thoughts move, where do they move, in what?

Q.: I could see that focusing on the so-called movement, with the so-called changes, makes a be-



lief in change. What it's in may not be actually moving at all, and from that position it's very different. Any sort of outward going, where it's believed to be real, causes that, in other words, the belief in myself, someone unquestioned.

N.: Who is it that believes in the various suppositions? Trace his nature.

Q.: Tracing seems not to lead to something, like another thought.

N.: No, of course not. One thought does not possess another. One thought does not know another. Your identity, your existence, cannot be a thought; nor can it be any number of thoughts. Beyond thought is the undifferentiated, indivisible Reality. That is of the nature of Saccidananda – Being-Consciousness-Bliss. For that, there is nothing external and no externality.

Q.: So, that's why the method is to inquire, because it leads to that nonobjective Self.

N.: The nonobjective Self is your bliss, is your happiness. Happiness is not an object. Reality is not an object. Obviously, your identity cannot be objective to you. Identity, reality and happiness are all the same thing. That same thing is inconceivable but realizable in nonobjective Self-Knowledge. All dualism or differences vanish there, and that is ever-existent. Is this not shown in Bhagavan's Silence?

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

(Silence)

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

(Then followed a recitation in Tamil from Chapter 13 of the Song of Ribhu.)

## Just Existence

Satsang

September 13, 2015

Om Om Om

(Silence)

Nome: You exist. By this is meant you are Existence. What form does Existence have? With or without sense perceptions, with or without thought, Existence is. Brahma Satyam – Existence is Brahman, Brahman is Truth, Brahman is Reality. Brahman is what you are.

You know. By this is meant your very nature is Consciousness, the unknown knower of all that is known. What form does it have? All forms are it, yet it has no form.

Existence is real. What is not actually Existence is unreal, and the unreal does not exist.

Who are you? You exist, you are Existence, all-pervading, undifferentiated, illimitable and undivided. If you mistake yourself to be a body or an individualized entity, an ego, the reality appears to be otherwise. The unreal is mistaken to be real, and the real is mistaken to be unreal. Yet who are you really? As Existence, itself, you are eternal and timeless. As That, you are all-pervading yet location-less. Bodiless and attributeless, you are without beginning or end, unborn and imperishable. You exist. You are Existence itself. Existence never ceases to exist, but always is just as it is, changelessly so, for all eternity.

For the sake of happiness, for the sake of peace, identify yourself, with Self-Knowledge, as being only that which is changeless. That is Existence alone. Cease to misidentify with anything objective, anything perceptible or conceivable, and what remains?

Existence is Consciousness, and, in Self-Knowledge, Being is knowing. There appear to be a multiplicity of knowers or selves only if you misidentify the knower with the known, the Self with the body, the Self with thoughts or the mind. If such misidentification ceases, the one Self remains, self-revealed. There are not many of you. You are only One. Who is this you that exists, that knows, that is only One? Find this out for yourself, by a profound, inner inquiry. Trace your existence to its very nature. Trace knowledge to its origin. Having found Being-Consciousness, you will have also found Bliss, for Saccidananda – Being-Consciousness-Bliss, is the single indivisible Reality. If you understand this, deeply inquire. If you do not understand this, deeply inquire.

Questioner: Sri Shankara talks about the four recommended requisites for inquiry. It is implied



that, if someone had discrimination and the six virtues fully developed, without complete renunciation and intense desire for Liberation, he would still need those latter two to be driven to Liberation, to be driven to the inquiry, to be open to the Guru's grace; that one needs those other two, as a complete endeavor, in order for the best results.

N.: The entirety of the fourfold sadhana, or requisites, is very useful. Why pick and choose? Why not just embrace the spirit of all of it?

Q.: It's a little artificial, granted.

N.: One can say that, if there is sufficient intense desire for Liberation, the vairagya, or dispassion or detachment, will be naturally forthcoming. Of course, this requires discrimination. The one who discriminates is bound to be tranquil, and the others of the six-fold characteristics are bound to be seen in him. Better than dividing and analyzing, embrace the spirit of it entirely. If the fourfold sadhana were not important and were not useful for Self-Realization, Adi Shankara would never have mentioned it.

Another Q.: My mind is often foggy, and that hinders meditation. Your instruction blew apart my inquiry on myself. I feel that it's a bit more limited than the vastness that you were describing in your discourse; you said "as "That," and that is limitless.

N.: Is that which is aware of the limits limited? What is it that so clearly knows the foggy of the mind?

Q.: Somehow, I superimpose that one with something that has a limit, that it's entrapped by.

N.: If limitations are superimposed upon the reality of the Self, remove the limitations, which are only superimpositions, by clear discrimination, by inquiry.

Q.: Okay.

N.: Discern if that which is aware of limitation is limited itself. Superimposition, though it is made of imagination, is not upon nothing. It is based upon something entirely real. What is the reality?

Q.: It must be stateless, even though often I project it on a state, or I am trapped in it.

N.: Is not the form of the "I" that appears to be trapped within the state a product of the state? So, in a waking state of mind, you appear to be a waking state experiencer. In a dreaming state of mind, you appear to be a dreamer, that is, a dreaming state experiencer. Similar is the case in deep dreamless sleep. What is it that knows the passing of the three states and all of their content?

Q.: That can't be in a state.

N.: The states change, but you do not. Who is this "you" that does not change? You are the same one now as you were in dream and the same as in deep dreamless sleep, in which there is neither thought nor object. The one who was then is still now and always is. Who is he? Why consider yourself to be a product of a state of mind, when clearly you are immutably existent always?

Q.: What you are describing about the discrimination of the states, there is something in me that knows the truth of that. You're saying that's who I am. It could not be my feeble mind, which is trying to comprehend a meditation or transcend something.

N.: Does your existence depend upon the feeble mind? That the feeble mind depends utterly on the Existence is obvious, but does the Existence depend upon the mind?

Q.: Hmmm.

N.: In deep dreamless sleep, the mind subsides. There is an absence of content, yet your existence is still the same. It is just Existence; not existing as something, but just Existence. Existence is devoid of the notions of "I" and "this."

Q.: That's where there is success in the meditation.

N.: The Lord of Knowledge is also the remover of obstacles.

Q.: Say again, please.



N.: The Lord of Knowledge is also the remover of obstacles.

Q.: I don't understand how that ... Did I say something that related to that?

N.: It guarantees success.

Q.: Oh, I see.

N.: If you don't comprehend, you can look at Ganesha in the Sadisvara Mandiram.

Q.: (laughter) Yes, yes. I'm taking myself to be located here.

N.: Where?

Q.: Okay.

N.: Are not "here" and "there" mere concepts in the mind?

Q.: Yes. Actually, it isn't very clear where it is. I hear often that it isn't nebulous.

N.: "Here" is in relation to a body. Are you the body? If you are not the body, what significance could "here" and "there" possibly have?

Q.: It doesn't make any sense that my location is inside a body somehow.

N.: If you are not the body, you are location-less, though ever-existent. So, Sri Bhagavan says, "Nowhere do we shine, yet everywhere we shine," in Saddarsanam.

Q.: Can you explain, "Nowhere do we shine, but everywhere do we shine?"

N.: You are not something objective that appears anywhere, yet your nature is the infinite, all-pervading Consciousness. If it is truly all-pervading, there is nothing apart from it to pervade, nothing other. Existence, Brahman, alone is; we just speak of it as all-pervading.

Q.: What you are describing is the only thing. There are not parts.

N.: Existence is partless. That is Brahman. That is the Self, the only Self that there actually is. How could there possibly be an obstacle between yourself and your Self?

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

(Silence)

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

(Then followed a recitation in Tamil from Chapter 13 of the Song of Ribhu.) ॐ





# From The Ramana Way

**The following articles appear in the May 1988 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](http://www.ramanacentre.com)**

Background: Freepik.com



## Understanding Happiness

by Sarada Natarajan

Look up at the sky, at the white fluffy objects floating by and ask your neighbor, “What are those?” The answer you get will depend on who is standing beside you at that moment. If he’s a geologist (ed.: nephologist?), you’ll probably be told that those objects are cumuli-nimbus, or plain nimbus, or stratus or cirrus as the case may be. After a while, if you meet a meteorologist and put to him the same question by way of seeking confirmation, he may define those objects in the sky in terms of their effect on weather, an agricultur-  
alist could equally well tell you whether they are rain bearing or not and how they will influence the current crops. A psychologist might believe you’re testing his imagination and say, “That one’s a dragon. The one next to it is a throne, no, I think a crown and that third is a cup and saucer.” You may begin to get worried because those things all look alike to you. They may be different shapes and sizes, but not really different in nature. Yet, all these people seem to think they are various things. Stop a child and ask him. “What are those?” He’ll laugh at you as if to ask. “Don’t you really know or are you teasing me?” But then, he’ll answer. “Those are clouds.” Yes,

that’s the simple, direct answer. Now, you ask the geologist (ed.: nephologist?). “Aren’t those clouds?” “Yes, of course,” he’ll say, “I thought you knew that. I was only telling you what kind of clouds they are.” And the meteorologist, farmer and psychologist would also give you similar answers if you were to confront them with the proposition that these are really just clouds.

It is the same with all things, there is necessarily a unity that underlies, that is the essence of, the manifold variety—trees are all wood, and ornaments are gold. Happiness may seem to assume varied forms, be perceived from different angles, but happiness is always happiness. Can the happiness one gets from eating chocolate be the same as that which springs forth from playing with one’s child? It seems absurd at the start to say that they are the same. But then, the former would think it equally absurd to equate a rain-bearing cloud with a non-rain bearing one, absurd to say, “They’re both the same water vapor really, only the density differs.” Yet, there’s no denying the fact that both are clouds, both are water vapor, they are not different, only their effect is perceived differently. However, it is only he who knows the nature of clouds (that they are all water vapor) who can recognize their unity. It is only he who understand the nature of happiness who can discern whether it is truly varied or only perceived to be so.

Everyone knows what it means to be happy. Everyone has been happy at some time or other,



at least at some moment in their lives, and each is constantly striving to recreate that moment. So, everyone must know the meaning of happiness, at least from their given perspective. Proceeding on a survey, one may begin with a glutton and ask him, "What is happiness?" "Food," will be the immediate answer, "Lots and lots of good food." Deciding not to make the study quantitative, but in depth, if one drops in on the glutton a week later and asks him the same question, he would give the same answer. But, if it so happens that, on the third visit, the glutton is suffering from a severe stomach ache and one suggests, "Happiness is good food, is it not?", he would grit his teeth and gnash out, "Don't talk to me of food." The glutton is not alone in changing his mind about the "happiness-giving object." In fact, his condition only typifies that of all people towards their chosen objects of happiness.

This is the simple instance oft quoted to emphasize that happiness is not object-dependent. If happiness lay in the object, the same object must continuously provide happiness from the experience of that object, and there should be great unhappiness in deep sleep where no object, whatsoever, is known. On the contrary, sleep is a longed for joy by one and all. No, happiness does not lie in objects, happiness is subject-dependent.

Why is it so important to know this? Because so long as we are under the illusion that happiness springs from objects it is impossible to turn

within in search of our own true nature. Even those, who, through firm faith in the Guru's words, or through their own intellectual conviction, sincerely wedded to the pursuit of Self-Knowledge, often find their interest lagging and their efforts half-hearted. They may be tempted into the pursuit of some strong desire, else they may be motivated to take to the way of activity. While activity is by no means intrinsically wrong (in fact, it is purifying, says Bhagavan, provided it is done in the spirit of dedication) it is no substitute for diving within, for serious pursuit of self-enquiry. Often, one may tell oneself that it is not possible to perform self-enquiry for a long stretch of time and instead one could at least get involved in purifying actions. Yet, one's desire for self-enquiry and ability to pursue it would grow as one gives oneself more and more to it. Besides, one may underrate one's own capacity for self-enquiry in the unconscious reluctance to be inward. To combat this problem it is essential to remember that the source of happiness lies within, as our very Self and eventually one must turn within through self-inquiry to tap that spring of bliss. The time given to self-enquiry may be a little to begin with and may gradually increase naturally. The seriousness with which self-enquiry is pursued for the given time will permeate the rest of one's waking hours, because the impetus to reach one's Self becomes the strengthened urge to savor wondrous bliss.



**Meditations on Teaching**  
by A.R. Natarajan

**"Yes. Experience is the word. Knowledge implies subject and object. But experience is non-terminous, eternal."**

—Sri Bhagavan, Talks

The experience referred to here is of the natural state, the state of bliss. This bliss is inherent and is not dependent on others or situations in life. What little we know of it is vicarious and is based on the authority of the scriptures. The scriptures are clear on this point that our true nature is eternal, pure and is one of happiness. We do believe this to be true. However, the foundation of faith is not the product of one's own experience, and, under stress, it clearly falls like a pack of cards. This is why we find Ramana being categorical on one point that experience alone matters, for doubt will always



linger, hidden, to disturb faith and to break the fabric of the edifice built on concepts. One has therefore to learn to be aware of this bliss, a taste of which would draw one to the deep within, to the core of one's heart.

Here, it may be necessary to be sure on one point. The experience which is spoken of is different from what we are used to. What we know of is the happiness of the subject derived from an object or from relationship born of identification. In the experiencing of the natural state, there is only the experience for the subject alone is. Perception is unitary and not divisive. This oneness of perception, being total in its sweep, is of totally different dimension. Yet, it is our own. Hence, it is that we are always drawn by an inner urge, and we are sure to discover it as surely as the river would find the ocean. But, often we wander away too far off pastures pulled by our past, pulled by what we have taken so far to be means for happiness. One has to remember that any new experience is possible only to the extent to which room is created, mental space is created, by removing the burden of the past. All life renews itself by the withering away of, by the dropping off of, the past. The changing seasons, the trees totally without even a single leaf become a nice foliage of greenery only because the dead leaves have been dropped to give place to vibrant life as fresh leaves.

Why do we hang on to the past, to the memories of experience which have come and gone, which can have no meaning when it is over? Why are we so scared of living totally in the present, not escaping from it by shifting attention to the past and future? The answer seems clear. We are afraid of losing what we know for what we don't. The experience of the joys and sorrows of the externalized mind is within our field of knowledge. We know precious little about the breadth and sweep of a mind firmly anchored in its root, of a life where the mind is sunk in the Heart. It is precisely here that Sadguru Ramana steps in. Having taken the human form, he literally pushes the mind within by the power of His steady Knowledge. Many would come to His presence with rutting minds, only to find instant peace, a mind at rest. It may happen during the evening hours after recital of the Vedas when the power of Raman's

silence would radiate or it may happen just by a furtive glance of Ramana, when grace would be directed.

Unfortunately, we would never permit Him to do the job fully. The frightened mind would send its s.o.s. As Ramana told Major Chadwich, so long as one does not know better, so long as one is unaware of the experience of an unitary life, fear would surely show its head. The solution, quite clearly, is only the direction of giving the mind repeated dosages of the medicine of diving within, which enables the savoring of the true sweetness of life.

Some would complain that the experience which they had in Bhagavan's presence lasted only a few days or at the most a couple of months till they were back in their old grooves. Ramana would not encourage them in this train of thought. For what is natural is capable of being found wherever one may be. Practice is what is needed. Persistent practice, unflagging practice, which indeed would be the true measure of our faith in Sadguru Ramana's words. He would encourage by gently reminding one of the universality of His presence—by his remark that Bhagavan's feet are everywhere, where can you gather except at His feet—(as He answered Subbaramayya) or the message to Mrs. Merston that she could carry Bhagavan in her Heart even if she went to London leaving the old Hall at Ramanasramam. What was told to them is equally true for each of us. Being the hound of heaven, his outstretched hands are available always in sustaining steadfastness of practice.

Then, there is the problem of intermittent experience of the intuned mind. Because of the inability to stay within firmly, the mind is externalized again. The problem of the straying mind, however, need not disturb, for, once the experience of staying within is tasted, all else pales into insignificance. So, one is bound to be back for more of the joy of questing, of finding for oneself what has been so elaborately described in the scriptures. If one is prepared to become food of the Sadguru, to the fullness of consciousness, then nothing can bar the loss of individuality in discovering the universal. The scriptural statement that joy is the substratum of all life becomes real. One is then bathed always in bliss. ॐ



# Ever yours in Truth

## Correspondence between Nome and seekers.

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

Background: Freepik.com

*[A seeker in India, who was viewing videos on egoless Existence and reading the book Who am I? asked about the meaning of the term "Consciousness" contained therein and about his experience of momentary subsidence of thought. Here is Nome's response.]*

September 19, 2015

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

Consciousness (Cit) is that by which Existence (Sat) knows itself. It is not different from or other than Existence. Indeed, Existence-Consciousness-Bliss is a threefold term that indicates the singular, indivisible reality of the Self.

For whom do the thoughts appear and disappear? Inquire to know the Self that is transcendent of objects, occurrences, mental modes and states, and the ego.

May you ever abide in the Knowledge of the Self and thus be always happy and at peace.

Om Namah Sivaya  
Ever yours in Truth,  
Nome

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*[In an email, a seeker wrote:]*

I am continuing to use inquiry as my main tool. In reading Ramana Maharishi in his own words there is a section about a Guru. I have no Guru and am wondering how to find one. I have seen those, Ramana and you, who didn't have one, but others got a spiritual nudge from one. Help please.

*[Here is Nome's reply.]*

October 5, 2015

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

It is not true to think that I do not have a Guru. The Guru, being of the nature of the Self, is ever present, transcending even the illusory division of life and death. The spiritual instruction and grace of the Guru are of an immeasurably vast and potent nature. With the sincerity, earnestness, and deep yearning of the disciple, the Guru manifests in a manner that the disciple can understand to reveal the true nature of the Self.

If you have found Sri Bhagavan, what more could you ever need?

Om Namah Sivaya  
Ever yours in Truth,  
Nome

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*[In reply to a question about finding the source of the ego:]*

October 23, 2015

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. "Source" signifies that from which the sense of identity derives, which, in ignorance is attributed to, or misidentified with, the ego, or separate individual. In essence, it is the Existence of the Self, which, in reality, alone exists.



Om Namah Sivaya  
Ever yours in Truth,  
Nome

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*[In response to a question about action and the Gita:]*

October 24, 2015

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

“At the feet” signifies that the ego has been surrendered. If such is complete, there is no conception of jivatva, individuality. In practice, such manifests as the dissolution of the various forms of delusive egotism, the idea of being the performer of action, attachment to the fruits of action, attachment to indolent inaction, desires and fears, and “I” and “mine.”

Om Namah Sivaya  
Ever yours in Truth,  
Nome

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*[A seeker wrote:]*

I have a few questions regarding Bhagavan and Nome. Both of these men have a slight shake in the body at times, and I am curious what this uncontrollable shaking is in the arms and head. I've heard that when an elephant enters a rickety building it tends to shake. My mind is completely submersed in the Self, like a bucket filled with water, no thoughts or distinctions between awake and asleep, however, there is a pain in my body in my shoulder that no matter what I can still feel. Is the true Self without pain in the body?

*[Here is the response.]*

November 8, 2015

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

The Self is entirely bodiless, and one who knows himself to be the Self is that alone. It is not that an embodied individual knows the Self, but, rather, free from the least trace of misidentification with a body or as an individual (ego), the Self abides as it is, forever free and eternally at peace.

Pleasures and pains and all kinds of sensations are merely for the body. Are you the body? Inquire deeply. That which is transcendent of all states of mind is certainly transcendent of all conditions of the body, including birth and death.

Pains and the absence of pain may have various causes. Be certain to be free of misidentification with the body in order not to suffer and so that the innate happiness of the Self is not obscured.

Tremors of the body may have numerous causes. In the case of this body, it is one of many symptoms of advanced Parkinson's disease.

As water poured into water, as light shining in light, as space emptying into space, remain in the undifferentiated knowledge of the Self, in That, as That, and thus be ever happy and at peace.

Om Namah Sivaya  
Ever yours in Truth,  
Nome

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*[In a brief email on November 16, 2015, Nome wrote: May the revelation of Truth ever shine within you, as you, the nondual Consciousness, the one Existence.]*

*The seeker replied:]*

Thank you Nome,

You are the perfect manifestation of the Self speaking to itself. Your direct, precise and methodical instruction reveals the Truth as a formless mind-transcendent experience of "the nondual Consciousness, the one Existence."

I am ever grateful to have been blessed with the privilege of listening to your instruction.

Love,



**NEW**

**SAT  
Publication**

# **Parabhakti** *by Nome*

*To abide unmoving, without giving rise to illusion,  
free of attachment to the transient unreality,  
desireless and fearless, absorbed by the power of  
devotion that gives birth to Knowledge,  
in That, as That, is bhakti.*

– Nome



First Edition, Paperback, Pages viii + 65  
ISBN: 9780981940984 / \$4.95

These writings, by Nome, are an offering to Lord Siva, to Sadguru Ramana, and to all sages of the lineage of Advaita Vedanta. Upon reading this little book, the reader immediately will recognize that he or she is reading writings of both a devotional nature and writings expressive of jnana—Knowledge. This is Parabhakti—supreme devotion.

The first part of this book is in seven chapters. The reader will note subtle differences among the chapters. The first and second chapters describe bhakti (devotion), while the third chapter describes the experience of the bhakta (devotee). The fourth chapter takes the bhakta deeper into jnana through the relationship with the Guru, while the fifth chapter speaks of continuous, absorbing devotion to God and Guru. The sixth describes the practice of the bhakta and the spiritual activities and attitudes with which a bhakta infuses his or her life, and the seventh describes absorption, through bhakti, in jnana.

**Parabhakti is available in the SAT Temple bookstore, online at the SAT Temple website, and may also be purchased through Amazon.**

The second part of this book is in six chapters consisting of a collection of poetry:

Chapter I, Namah Sivaya, presents short verses praising Lord Siva, while simultaneously expressing Knowledge of the Lord.

Chapter II, In Praise of the One Like Space, is a poem that is descriptive of Absolute Being and praising that Absolute.

Chapter III, Realize the One Like Space, is composed of verses that pose questions that, if asked, guide the bhakta to realize the One like space.

Chapter IV, Space of Grace, is a set of verses descriptive of the One like space—a description of Grace.

Chapter V, Within the One Like Space, features verses describing the experience of the space that is the One Absolute.

Chapter VI, Gracious Inquiry, appears as both a solicitation for Grace and also Knowledge of the ever-presence of Grace through inquiry.



**D: How is the Guru found?**

**M: God, who is immanent, in His Grace takes pity on the loving devotee and manifests Himself according to the devotee's development. The devotee thinks that He is a man and expects a relationship as between two physical bodies. But the Guru, who is God or the Self incarnate, works from within, helps the man to see the error of his ways and guides him in the right path until he realizes the Self within.**

**D: What should the devotee do then?**

**M: He has only to act up to the words of the Master and work within. The Master is both "within" and "without," so He creates conditions to drive you inward and at the same time prepares the "interior" to drag you to the Center. Thus He gives a push from "without" and exerts a pull from "within," so that you may be fixed at the Center.**

**You think that the world can be conquered by your own efforts. When you are frustrated externally and are driven inwards, you feel "Oh! there is a Power higher than man!"**

## Ramana Nama San Kirtanam

**The ego is like a very powerful elephant which cannot be brought under control by any less powerful than a lion, which, in this instance, is no other than the Guru, whose very look makes the elephant-like ego tremble and die.**

**You will know in due course, that your glory lies where you cease to exist. In order to gain that State, you should surrender yourself. Then, the Master sees that you are in a fit state to receive guidance, and He guides you.**

**D: How can the Silence of the Guru, who gives no initiation nor does any other tangible act, be more powerful than His word etc.? How is such Silence better than the study of scriptures?**

**M: Silence is the most potent form of work. However vast and emphatic the scriptures may be, they fail in their effect. The Guru is quiet, and Grace prevails in all. This Silence is more vast and emphatic than all the scriptures put together.**

**D: But can the devotee obtain happiness?**

**M: The devotee surrenders himself to the Master and it means that there is no vestige of individuality retained by him. If the surrender is complete, all sense of self is lost, and then there can be no misery or sorrow.**

**The Eternal Being is nothing but Happiness. That comes as a Revelation.**

**—Maharshi's Gospel**

Background: Freepik.com



A portion of the text from “Maharshi’s Gospel,” which appears on the previous page, was read by Nome to devotees during a Wednesday night Ramana Nama Sankirtanam (Atmotsava). This text is just one among many different texts read during this special weekly event of meditation, readings, bhajans, and puja.

This event is participatory and is a perfect opportunity to express one’s devotion to God in song while simultaneously learning Sanskrit and Tamil bhajans.

### Sri Krishna Says:

The Mahatmans, O son of Pritha, partaking of the nature of the Devas, worship me with mind turned to no other, knowing (Me) as the imperishable source of all beings. (IX:13)

Always talking of Me, strenuous, firm in vows, and reverent, they worship Me with love, always devout. (IX:14)

Fix thy mind on Me, be devoted to Me, sacrifice to Me, bow down to Me. Thus steadied, with Me as thy Supreme Goal, thou shalt reach Myself, the Self. (IX:34)

To these, ever devout, worshipping Me with love, I give that devotion of knowledge by which they come to Me. (X:10)



Vasantha, Sangeeta and Janani prepare the notebooks containing the songs practiced during atmotsava and sung during special events at SAT.





# Ramana Nama San Kirtanam



# Temple Bulletin

## A New Altar for Sri Bhagavan

### Beautification of the Lotus Room

In the last issue of Reflections, we showed devotees dismantle the fireplace in the Lotus Room due to its non-use. Shared here, are images of devotees painting the Lotus Room and creating a new altar for Sri Bhagavan.



Scott builds a new wall where the fireplace was removed.



Sangeeta and Siva cover the Vasistha mural to protect it during wall painting.



Gnana carefully paints around the wood trim.



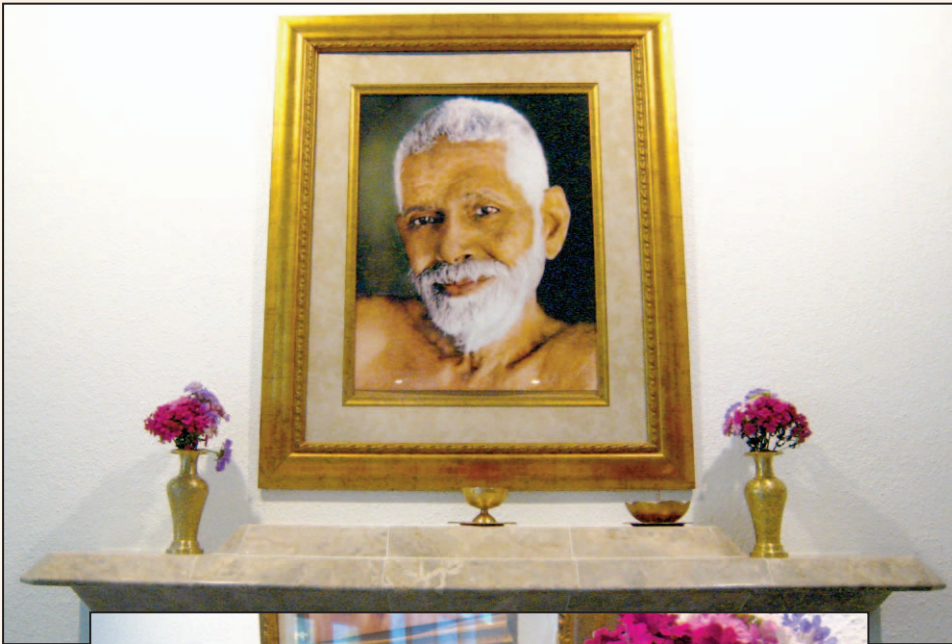
Above: Janani carefully paints the wall behind the existing art that surrounds Sri Arunachala. Left: Sangeeta and Ganesh paint the walls.



Right: Scott builds the new marble altar that is partially showing in the foreground.







Right: Sangeeta polishes the marble.

Above right and below left: Scott and Siva hang the altar on the wall.

Below: Scott adds glue to the brace that will hold the altar, which is already bolted into the wall, for added strength.





The SAT Temple Lotus Room freshly painted with a new altar for Sri Bhagavan.





Above: Ganesh and Scott hang a newly framed picture of Adi Sankara in the second stairwell landing leading to the Satsang Hall at the SAT Temple. Center: Sri Bhagavan can be seen below on the first landing. Right: A picture of Sri Bhagavan as seen from the third landing to the Satsang Hall.

## Upcoming Special Events



*Mahasivaratri:*  
*March 7-8, 2016*

*Nondual Self-Inquiry*  
*Retreat:*  
*March 11-13, 2016*

*Om Namō*  
*Bhagavate Śrī Ramanaya*  
*Om Namaḥ Śivaya*