



Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya



Om Namah Sivaya

Disciple: If it is true that the jiva has forgotten itself, how does the “I”-experience arise for all?

Sri Ramana: The veil does not completely hide the jiva; it only hides the Self-nature of “I,” and projects the “I am the body” notion, but it does not hide the Self’s existence, which is “I” and which is real and eternal.

– v. 39, Vicharasangraham





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The Boundless Wisdom of Sri Ramana Maharshi

From
Letters from
Sri
Ramanasramam



THE DOER AND THE DOING (184) 29th April, 1948

This morning, at about 9 o'clock, a lawyer from Rayalaseema who came here yesterday, sat near Bhagavan's couch and asked, "Swami, in the Gita, Lord Krishna first said that everything is embraced

in the 'doing' only, and one's self plays no role. Subsequently, He says that He Himself is the 'doer', the 'doing' and the 'deed' (karta, karma and karyam); though 'doing' (karma) is the most important of the three, it is ineffectual by itself (jadam). If this is so, then everything depends upon the 'doer', who is Ishwara. Why when He first created 'doing' (karma), did He create different karmas for different people? It is said that afterwards everyone is made to function according to his karma. How did this difference come about in the very beginning? How did it arise? Not only that, if everything is left to the 'doing' and to the 'doer' who is Ishwara, where does personal effort (purushakaram) come in? If there is no personal effort, why is it said that we ourselves must attain Realization? What does it mean?"

Bhagavan said, "Who is it that is asking? To whom has this doubt arisen? Why has it arisen? First think that over and find out."

The devotee: "Swami, I am only enquiring why Lord Krishna said that."

Bhagavan: "That is what I am referring to. What exactly did Lord Krishna tell Arjuna? He told him, the deed will get done according to the 'doing'. I am the 'doer' watching the whole thing from above. Why do you worry? It is your body which does the killing of your relatives. Are you the body? No! Why then this bondage for you? Renounce the idea, He said. This means that He asks Arjuna to do the thing but to give up the feeling that it is he that is doing it. That is personal effort. The feeling that one is, or is not, the body, comes from one's own ignorance. One only has to give up that feeling; that which one has, one must oneself reject. Who else can do it? If by personal effort that bondage is removed, action, under the orders of the 'doer', Ishwara, goes on of its own accord. Every one has his work allotted to him and he will do it automatically. Why should one worry? Arjuna, when he felt that it was not proper to kill his relatives, was only told to give up the feeling that he was the 'doer', yet it was Arjuna himself who ultimately fought. By listening to the Gita, he lost the feeling of being the 'doer' and the doubt he had had was no longer there. The work had to be done with that particular body, and it was done. Even Duryodhana was like that. Not that he was not aware of the correctness or otherwise of what he was doing. He knew that what he was doing was not right, but some force was leading him on to that work. What could he do? That work had to be done in that way by that body, and it was done. He is reported to have said so at the time of his death. Hence it is clear that some Force is making all people to do things. Getting rid of the feeling that 'I myself am doing' is personal effort (purushakaram). All spiritual practices (sadhanas) are towards that end."

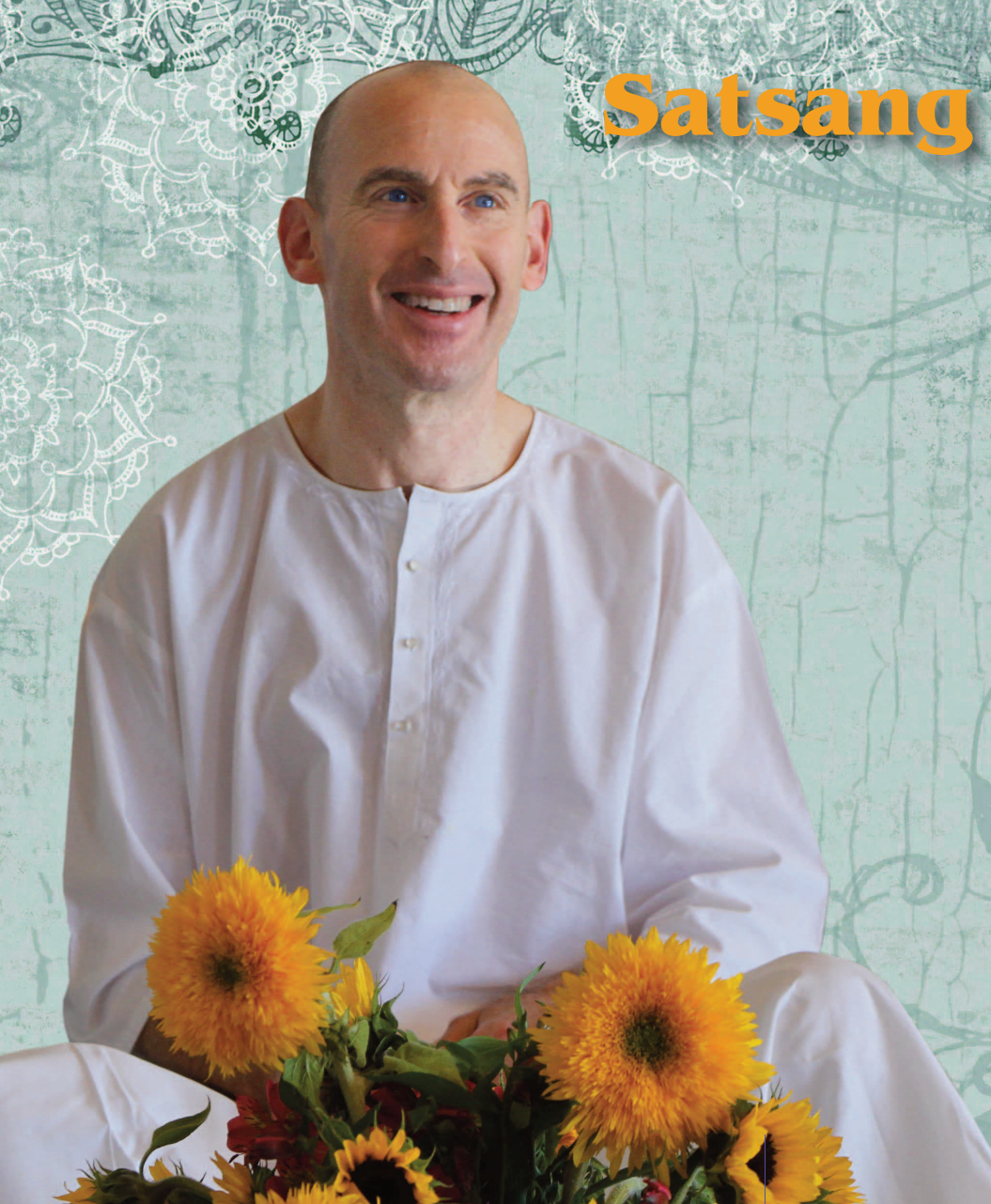
Another devotee: "That is all right. For this karma there must be a beginning, but how it began, no one has mentioned."

Bhagavan: "Yes, but it is the same thing. If you are asked 'how did you get this?' you say you have got it by 'doing' (karma). How were you born? By 'doing' (karma) that is all that could be said. If, however, you ask how was this karma born, you are told you should not ask such questions. This is known as the Law of the seed and the tree (bija ankura nyayam). The tree is born of the seed; again from the tree a seed is born. Where is the origin of that seed? That is a question which you are told is not to be asked. What can we say to that? That is why I always ask people to find out first how they were born and where they were born."

"O Arjuna, the Lord dwells in the heart of all beings who are mounted upon the automation of this body, causing them by His illusive power to spin round according to their actions."
Gita XVIII: 61

"Seek refuge in Him alone, with all your being, O Arjuna! Through His grace, you shall obtain supreme peace and the eternal abode."
Gita XVIII: 62

Satsang with Nome



Self to be the Self is only delusion, made of the stuff of imagination. Without misidentifying with some attribute, you are location-less and timeless.

So, what is really you and yours? That which is you and truly yours is forever. What is forever is changeless. Your nature is changeless Existence. It is not something that belongs to you; rather it is what you are.

Sat-Chit-Ananda, Existence-Consciousness-Bliss, are not attributes. They are not attributes of something else. They are just the one indivisible Reality, which is the Self.

Being bodiless, you truly have no action or activity. Always, your Existence is silent and serene.

What is truly yours must be so always. What is that? What is always? The body is not always. What exists always? The body has a birth

and a death and a changeful period between those two. What in you exists always? Find that, and you will have found that which is perfectly full, timelessly so. It is Brahman, and that is who you are—immutable, forever unmodified, free of all differentiation, one with no other, all pervading, partless, and indivisible.

So, who are you, and what is yours? For one who is endowed with nonobjective inquiry, there is neither the notion "I" nor the notion "mine." "I-less" and "my-less" is Existence, and you are that Existence. To abide just as changeless Existence is peace.

Abidance just as Existence is Knowledge. Abide only in Existence, as Existence. Such is to know the Self in which knowing and being are the same.

I and My

April 23, 2023

Om Om Om
(Silence)

Nome: Bodiless Being, of the nature of Existence-Consciousness-Bliss, is the Self. Realization of the Self is characterized by an absence of "I" and "my."

Without the notion of "I," without the notion of "my," what are you? The Self is Brahman and has no attributes. Without the attributes of "I" and "my," you are eternal and infinite. What is eternal and infinite cannot be a body. To attribute what is not the

Questioner: Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Rāmanaya. Once we step outside these premises, in regular life outside, there are many activities that present themselves that we would indulge in. These could be going to a get together, participating in social service, or a bigger commitment like taking up a new job. Inevitably, many of them are a distraction from the primary goal, I feel. So, when such opportunities come, how should we decide which ones to take up and which ones to not follow, in keeping Bhagavan's guidance as the primary goal in life?

Nome: What do you want to know?

Q: Truly, I want happiness that doesn't get disturbed. So, everything that takes me away from that happiness, seems like a distraction, but there are some actions we must do. For example, if a new job or an opportunity comes, how do I decide? Should I take it up because it can potentially help the world?

N: Are you the body? If not a body, you never actually have action. You do not do anything. The idea of being a doer is a false attribution upon the Self. If there is misidentification with the body, the Self seems to be a limited embodied being. But we are not bodies. In the Knowledge of bodiless Being, there is unceasing satisfaction.

You wish for happiness, and you wish for happiness always; it cannot be dependent on the body, for the body is not always and is limited in scope. The source of happiness must be illimitable and, for it to be always, it must be immutable, changeless. Nothing forces you to misidentify. Ignorance is not mandatory. On the other hand, wisdom is a necessity. Since the cornerstone of ignorance is the "I am the body" misconception, this tells you how to direct your inquiry. Disidentify from the body, and you never do anything, even if you are involved in countless activities. None of them force you to be bound, none of them require ignorance. What is bodiless is beginningless and endless, unborn and imperishable. Know it with certainty by steady inquiry, "Who Am I?" That is also the revelation of grace.

Another Q: In the Ribhu Gita chapter 8, you mention "eternal dwelling" in the context of a jivanmukta. I want to know if "dwelling" is an experience? I am wondering if the word "experience" is objective.

Nome: What about nonobjective experience? Indeed, nonobjective experience is the only true experience. It is the only experience you actually ever have.

Q: I just got stuck on the word "experience" as it pertains to a human being, time and past etc.

N: You can be sure that the word is not there for you to become stuck. One who has nonobjective experience of the Self, in the Self, as the Self, is indeed a jivanmukta. He does not have the concept of "I" or of "my."

Q: So, experience and Being or dwelling are synonymous?

N: Where do you dwell? If you are a body, you dwell in the world. If you know the Self, you find that to be the only abode. It is world-less and bodiless.

Another Q: You spoke of "I" and "mine" and that, in mediation, those would not be there. On Friday's reading from Maharshi, where a devotee asked how to realize the Self, the Maharshi said, "There are not two selves. You are the Self." That blew my mind. That simple teaching is really the fulcrum. I was meditating on this dialog and how to practice it.

Nome: By investigating what seems to constitute the second self.

Q: You have asked me the same question, and that question clarifies the mediation in a big way. But I slip from that.

N: Who is it that slips? Not the Self; it ever is, just as it is. Is there a second self?

Q: My discrimination has to be sharper. It starts off as a little belief, as a thought that there is a little happiness outside.

N: The idea that you are something else other than the supreme Self is mere delusion.

Q: Another idea that I have been meditating on is, where does the real power come from? Is it from the Self or a thought?

N: For whom are the thoughts? Whether it be thoughts, objects, or delusion, they appear to be for someone and are dependent upon that one. What is the nature of that one? If he is real, what is his nature? If he is not real, then likewise is his ignorance.

Q: I get confused there. I mix the real with the mind.

N: Then inquire to see if it truly is yourself. What is the Self must be ever existent. It is always the Self and never otherwise. What is ever existent? That alone is you. Ignorance does not have a real source.

(Then followed a recitation in Sanskrit and English from the Katha Upanishad and in Tamil from the Song of Ribhu.)

(Silence)

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti ॐ



Correspondence with Nome



[A seeker reading Essence of Enquiry asked about the witness.]

November 11, 2023

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya
Namaste. The Self, of the nature of unalloyed Consciousness, is referred to as the witness, when considered in relation to anything else. When known in itself, it is just by itself, the sole-existent reality. In either case, it is self-luminous. The Self knows itself by itself; nothing knows it, and no other exists.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[A seeker raised questions about Self-inquiry. This is the reply.]

September 11, 2023

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya
Namaste. I am glad to know that you are attempting to practice Self-inquiry. The inquiry is for Self-Knowledge. Therefore, your efforts should be directed to realizing what your existence actually is. Discern what, in delusion, you consider yourself to be and what, in truth, your existence is.

May you ever abide in the Self, as the Self, of the nature of Being-Consciousness-Bliss, innately egoless, and thus dwell always in happiness and peace.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[A reply to a question regarding thoughts and inquiry:]

Dear ,

Om Namah Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya
Namaste. Only the Self is unchanging. Only the Self is continuous. Thoughts are not so. See to it that you do not misidentify with the thoughts. Transcendence, not acceptance, is the correct approach.

Thoughts do not know themselves. You may know the thoughts, but you are not the thoughts. Inquire "Who am I?" for Self-Knowledge.

To think that thoughts are one after another or are a multitude is only another thought. Meditation ought to be upon the nature of the one who meditates.

May you ever abide as the self-luminous Self, ever free from thought, of the nature of pure Consciousness, and absorbed in the Self, dwell in peace.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[A seeker asked a few questions to which this is the response.]

August 7, 2023

Dear ,

Om Namah Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya
Namaste. It is always a deep joy to hear from those who are devoted to Sri Bhagavan and follow his teachings.

If you discern the source and nature of happiness, detachment is natural, and desire is not confusing. The same knowledge regarding the nature of happiness eliminates anger. The source of the mantra may be regarded as Brahman or as the Guru. If, whether one repeats the mantra or not, the source of the mantra is realized, that is found to be at no distance from oneself.

There are not two selves, that one could not know the other. The Self is only one, indivisible, forever unmodified, changeless, undifferentiated, infinite and eternal, and of the nature of Existence-Consciousness-Bliss, without beginning or end.

What is the nature of the mind? Profound inquiry to know the Self reveals that there is no such thing as the mind. There is only one Consciousness, one Existence.

The concept that you are a performer of action, a doer, is based on misidentification with the body. Are you the body? If you are not the body, how can you be considered to do anything?

The Knowledge of your true identity is the focus of the inquiry. Absorption in the Self, as the Self, is the Knowledge in which knowing is Being. It is transcendent of thought, and so it is continuous.

The false assumption of individuality, or ego, is destroyed by such knowledge, and thus ends all ignorance, bondage, and its consequent suffering.

You may find reading some of the SAT publications to be beneficial.

May your inquiry be deep so that the Knowledge of the Self is self-evident for you, and you thus remain always happy and at peace.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[This reply was written in October 2024 to a question about maya.]

Dear ,

Om Namah Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya
Namaste. By the cessation of misidentification, the nature of blissful Being, the Self, is revealed.

The suppositions of "I" and "the world" are maya, illusion. Illusion, itself, is illusory. Maya is that which is not. The unreal does not have a real cause. It is merely imagined in ignorance.

Steady, deep inquiry yields Knowledge of the Self, which is ever-existent Being, self-

luminous Consciousness, and perfectly full Bliss. The Self is the Reality, which is without an alternative.

Bodiless and transcendent of all states of mind are you, the Self. Knowing this, abide in the Self, as the Self, and remain happy and at peace.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[A seeker was attempting to consume a vegan diet and wrote the following.]

Dear Nome

Namaste

I have recently transitioned to a fully plant based sattvic diet. Ramana emphasized that a satvic diet is one of the best aids. I have a question about onions. Not adding garlic is very clear, but I was wondering if adding a little onion on most days (if rest of diet is sattvic), would be not supportive to this diet. My son is also plant based but for health not spiritual reasons and loves onions. It is much easier to cook only one meal. I would very much appreciate your guidance.

Many thanks.
Warmest regards.

[Here is Nome's reply.]

November 15, 2023

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Are not onions and garlic plants? Has anyone missed Self-Realization due to eating such vegetables? How could these plants become so powerful? Sri Bhagavan joked in a similar manner when his mother became concerned about consumption of onions. So, eat your fill of Self-Knowledge, drink the nectar of blissful immortality, toss away the inedible husk of misidentification with the body, and abstain from the ingestion of the worthless, tasteless ego.

It is up to you to decide about eating onions, garlic, and other plants.

You may enjoy reading the verses entitled the Appalam (poppadam) Song written by Sri Bhagavan. It may be found in Collected Works.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[This is the reply to questions regarding reading a variety of spiritual books and Durga.]

October 24, 2023

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. If you read books using the discrimination of Self-inquiry, with the aim of Self-Knowledge, you will not be distracted, and you will see what is helpful and pertains to your spiritual practice and what is not so. If a book clarifies your knowledge of the reality of the Self or if it deepens your devotional bhava, it is good for you. Om Namah Sivaya

Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

Dear Nome,

Namaste

I have a question regarding devotion and surrender. Sri Ramana Maharshi is my blessed guru. As well as my devotion to Sri Ramana I feel drawn to Goddess Maa Durga. Tomorrow, I have arriving a brass murti and beautiful framed picture of Maa Durga. Although I feel that any devotion or surrender to Maa Durga is in truth only devotion and surrender to Sri Ramana, I am unsure if my feelings and attitude are actually correct or am I in anyway at all being disrespectful to my Guru?

Your guidance would be truly appreciated.

Warmest wishes,

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya
Namaste. God and Guru are the same.
Devotion inwardly reveals their true nature.
So it is also with the inaccessible one
(Durga) revealing who She is. If there is de-
votion, all is right.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

Thank you so much for your reply. My
heart leaps with joy and gratitude. May I
just ask why Durga is called the 'inaccessi-
ble one'.

Many thanks to you.
Warmest regards.

Dear ,

October 22, 2023

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya
Namaste. She is difficult to attain or
know, or inaccessible, for those who are
caught in the ego assumption.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome



A vibrant, multi-colored nebula (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple) is visible through a large opening in a rocky cave. Two statues are seated on the cave floor, facing each other. The statue on the left is smaller, with a shaved head and a simple dhoti. The statue on the right is larger, with a long white beard, a tall crown, and a dhoti. The title 'The Ribhu Gita' is written in a large, white, serif font across the top of the image.

The Ribhu Gita

Chapter 4, Verses 28-30 With Commentary by Nome from a Boundless Wisdom Event held on October 7, 2011 at the SAT Temple

Ribhu-Nidagha Dialogue

Om Om Om
Om Namah Sivaya.

28. I am. I am ever the knower. I am the Truth. I am blemishless. I am the empirical knowledge. I am special. I am the common. I am all.

"I am" is the Truth, I am is correct; I am this or I am that is incorrect, it is delusive. What is this "I am" for you? Not I am this thing or that thing; I am a body, I am a mind, I am so-and-so. What is it that rightly deserves the name 'I' or "I am"? That which is truly 'I' exists; hence, "I am." The nonobjective is the existent, as "I am."

"I am ever the knower." What is it that knows "I am"? That you exist is self-evident. Who is the knower of this which is self-evident? What is his nature? In knowing any number of things,

experiences, etc, there is one knower. What is the nature of the knower? To determine this, cease to misidentify the knower with the known; do not superimpose the definitions or forms of the known upon the knower. If you inquire in this way, what is the knower? It is pure Consciousness and not to be objectified or known objectively. It is the Knower, which can never be an object of Itself or of anyone else. Know the Knower. "I am. I am ever the knower". Never is there a time when your Existence ceases. Never is there a time when the Knower disappears. The known can appear and disappear, and that which appears and disappears is not actually real; it is not Existence. Your true Self, the Self that you are, is ever the Knower. For the Knower – the "I am" – immortal Existence and eternal Knowledge are natural.

"I am the Truth". As for Truth, It is best described in silence. If a description is to be given to It, it is best to say that it is, it exists. What actually exists? What is the Truth? That which is endowed with names and forms, the perceptions and conceptions regarding supposed things, gross and subtle – such is not the Truth; such is not the Existence itself. What is it that is, not what appears in the context of misidentification? What exists? This is that which is to be realized. "I am. I am ever the knower. I am the Truth": thus he has spelt out Existence, Consciousness, and the Identity of the Self.

"I am blemishless". There is something within you that never becomes stained or sullied in any way. It does not become corrupted by thought and nothing leaves a mark on It. No experience conditions it, no sensation taints it. It is never entangled or involved in illusion. That blemishless Truth is pure Existence-Consciousness and should be known as the significance of "I." That you should regard as your Self.

"I am the empirical knowledge." The word in Sanskrit is vijñana. It is like the word "awareness," in English. It may mean the knowledge that is the awareness of relative experience. It may mean intellectual knowledge. It may mean absolute Knowledge – absolute Awareness. The meaning is usually grasped or interpreted from the context in which the term appears. It may be empirical knowledge, the knowledge of all experience. All experience rests in Knowledge. The Knowledge is of the nature of the Knower described previously. Such is of the nature of an undivided, difference-less Existence. If you assume you experience ever so many experiences, all that also, without exception, is only your Self. It is not that your Self becomes those experiences – those things of which you are aware – but, if you see those things, know that they are only truly your Self. Diving inward, determine the nature of your Self.

"I am special. I am the common." Whatever is particularized in your experience and whatever is common – common may mean equal or the same, as well-- whatever seems distinguished from other things; whatever seems the same in all things, is only you, your Self. You are special because there is nothing like you; but you are the same – equal everywhere, for there is only you.

The verse concludes with, "I am all." If I am all, where is there scope left for the notion of a separate individuality? Whatever appears and whatever is experienced, by anyone at any time, all of that is truly your Self. Instruction of this kind is comprehensible only within the vast context of steady Self-inquiry to know the Self as it is. Within the context of misidentification with a mind and a body, as a separate individual or ego, what Ribhu declares remains incomprehensible, but for you who are inquiring to know the Truth of your own Being, this is comprehensible, because it is a description of your Self.

29. I am pure. I am without sorrow. I am Consciousness. I am equanimous. I am devoid of honor and dishonor. I am without attributes. I am Śiva.

What, in truth, you are is pure; extremely pure. It is not only pure in the sense of being of the nature of innocence, love, happiness. and all that is good, but it is pure in the sense, also,

of being unalloyed with anything else whatsoever. Your Existence does not mix with illusion; your Consciousness does not mix with ignorance.

That which is Being and Consciousness is also Bliss; so “I am without sorrow”. Bliss cannot suffer. Real Being has no sorrow. For whom is sorrow? Who suffers? The one who is in ignorance suffers, for it is well known that one who is endowed with Self-Knowledge is free of suffering forever; hence he is called Liberated. What is the nature of the one who suffers? If you go in search of the one who has sorrow, that one will vanish leaving only the expanse of pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss. It is for this reason, and also due to the absence of duality of life and death, that the Gita commences its instruction with, “Neither for the living nor for the dead do the wise grieve.” Why do they not grieve, why do they have no sorrow? It is because of the unborn and deathless nature of the Self and because of the absence – the utter nonexistence – of an ego, to be trapped in such sorrow.

There are a thousand entrances to the same space. The experiential Knowledge, the teaching, and such belong to those who value it, who appreciate it, in their hearts. For those who treasure it, it is as if it is in their hand, plainly in view. As one realizes one experiences depth within depth, but, in the finality, it is found to be just one thing only. There is no alternative to That. Find this true “I” in you and never suffer again,

“I am Consciousness.” How often have you heard this? “I am Consciousness; you are Consciousness.” Grasp the full significance and the depth of it. If you are Consciousness, you are ever the Knower. If you are Consciousness, you cannot be anything that is objective or known; which means you stand without conditions or limitations forever. If you are Consciousness, you are self-luminous. This is self-known Knowledge, and such does not require the instrument or means of anything else, such as thought or the senses, in order to be known. If you are Consciousness, how are you going to find It? Then, how are you going to lose It? If you are something else, assuming you have some degree of spiritual wisdom, you will be in search of the Consciousness. But if you are Consciousness, what then?

You cannot simultaneously be Consciousness and some other thing. When one thinks that he is Consciousness plus other things, the “I” that is composed of Consciousness and the other things is not defined as Consciousness but is some assumed individuality with objective, limiting attributes. None of that is possible if you are Consciousness. If you are Consciousness, there can be no duality. If you are Consciousness, there can be nothing added to you or subtracted from you.

“I am equanimous”. It is wise to recognize how invaluable it is to be spiritually perfectly even, perfectly equanimous, ever the same and not moved by anything and not changed. In such a state, happiness is full; otherwise, it appears and disappears. For one who is growing in wisdom, there is the recognition of the importance of finding that state which is ever the same, that is not disturbed, no matter what happens, in life or death, in the body, in the world, or in anything else. How is one to find the equanimity? Can we make the body impervious – absolutely impervious – to pleasure and pain? If it is a corpse, it is, but that will not do. Can we make prana or the senses perfectly even? Can we get thought to be so stable as to never twist and turn and never make waves or eddies? With what must you identify yourself firmly, in order to be perfectly equanimous, a transcendent equality or sameness that cannot be measured or perceived by outer appearances, but is known only in that which is most internal? What is it that you must know?

Misidentification happens before you have doubt, an alternative to Truth. There must be some individual with a peculiar characteristic. The objectified doubt is based on the subjective false definition. It is only by inquiry that reveals the true Knowledge of your very Self that all the knots of the heart and the doubts are cut asunder. Disidentify from those attributes. Disiden-

tify from the entirety of the personality, from the attributes that give shape or form to the core idea of “I,” the individual. The destruction should be thorough. Both the individual and his attributes should be abolished. To say that you will destroy the ego but retain his attributes would be absurd and to say that you will destroy his attributes but leave the central character intact is also a bit funny. Be thorough.

“I am devoid of honor and dishonor”. If you know your real nature and abide firmly therein, beyond any care for praise or blame, these do not touch you. The very mentality or state of having honor or dishonor is absent. As for the Self that you really are, how could it ever be honored? It is utterly transcendent. How could it possibly be dishonored? Situated thus, you find both praise and blame as meaningless to you.

“I am without attributes. I am Siva.” Nirguna means attributeless, having no attributes. What does it mean to say that the “I” has no attributes? If you are any kind of thing, you have attributes. As a body you have the attributes of a body, which are numerous. As a mind, you have the attributes of the mind, which are quite numerous. If the Self is without attributes, there is no possibility of thinking about it in any way whatsoever, for every thought is about something, about an attribute. If you are attributeless, not a single thought can touch you. If you are attributeless, you are absolutely undefined. This undefined, absolute nature is known with absolute precision, stainless clarity. It is undefined, but there is nothing vague about it. What you are is without attributes. Inquiring to know who you are, cast off from yourself, from your sense of identity, anything that has an attribute and any of the attributes themselves. Even good attributes fail to define you; how much less of a definition are the poor attributes. Without attributes, without qualities, without thinking of yourself in any such manner, what are you? “I am Siva.” Siva does not allow for another. If you are Siva, you are nothing else whatsoever, not even the speck of individuality. This is about the one “I” that actually is, the one Self. This is about what you are. I am Siva. Remain absorbed in this Knowledge, in which your Being is the Knowledge This is the supreme Bliss. It is most auspicious.

30. “I am without the concepts of duality or nonduality”. I am without duality or nonduality. It is not possible to be without nonduality. I am without the pairs of opposites. Such a one am I. “I am without existence or absence of existence. I am without language. Such a one am I. That am I.

“I am without concepts of duality and nonduality. All duality is only a concept; it is not the Reality. An idea of nonduality, of oneness, of sameness, or resolution of opposites, etc. is not actually the nondual Truth. The realization of the Self, in which there is no alternative and no difference or division of any kind, is the real meaning of nonduality. If you do not think of many, and you do not think of one, not thinking of dual and not thinking of nondual, what are you?

“I am without the pairs of opposites. Such a one am I” – That am I. “I am without existence or absence of existence.” For everything, there is an opposite, but you, in your real Being, have no opposite. You are not on any one side of duality. You are not on both sides of duality. You are completely beyond duality. Inner and outer, higher and lower, life and death, I and this, pleasure and pain, etc. none of these pertain to your real Being. You are that which is ever-existent. “I am without existence or absence of existence.” A thing is and a thing is not, and one thinks it exists and it does not exist, but true Being, or real Existence, is not within those pairs of opposites. What is being thought of as existence and absence of existence is only appearance. That which truly is, the Truth, is ever-existent; for it, there is no opposite. The idea of existence and nonexistence as pairs of opposites, is conceived only from the perspective of the non-existent. The real and the unreal as pairs of opposites, as different from each other, is conceived only within the context of the unreal. For the Reality itself, there are no such things. Just one undifferentiated Truth is.

“Such a one am I,” or That am I.” What is That? That which has no opposite, that which is pure Consciousness, that which is lauded as Siva, that which is known as the Self – that is the One that you are, not anything other.

“I am without language. Such a one am I”, or That am I. If you had attributes, language could describe you. You are without attributes. Even this “without attributes” should not be imagined as an attribute. What then can be said of your Being? Words are used to indicate the Truth of the Self, but the words do not touch it; they turn back, as it were, or dissolve before It. Most of the instruction that appears in the shastras and elsewhere, reveal the Truth of the Self by negating what it is not. What you are is not actually said. Even when it is declared you are Being, you are Consciousness, is the word “Being” the actual Being? Is the word “Consciousness” the actual Consciousness? This does not make the instructions given in language worthless; far from it, they are supremely helpful. The instructions of the wise are the greatest grace, yet what is revealed by them? For this, there is no language. Regarding That, all fall silent, just as Sri Ramana is silent, just as, in ancient days, the Adi Guru, Dakshinamurti is silent.

Om Namah Sivaya

(Silence)

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om ॐ

SAT TEMPLE



Ribhu Sivakumar, age 11

आदिशंकरं ādi-śaṃkaram



आदिशंकरं अनादिशंकरं
लोकशंकरं अलोकशंकरं
सिद्धशंकरं प्रसिद्धशंकरं
स्वामिशंकरं नमामि शंकरं

ādi-śaṃkaram anādi-śaṃkaram
loka-śaṃkaram aloka-śaṃkaram
siddha-śaṃkaram prasiddha-
śaṃkaram
svāmi-śaṃkaram namāmi śaṃkaram

The first Sankara, the beginning-less Sankara
Sankara beneficent to the world, Sankara without a world
Accomplished Sankara, famous Sankara
Lord/Master Sankara, I prostrate to Sankara

भक्तशंकरं विरक्तशंकरं
बुद्धशंकरं विशुद्धशंकरं
स्मार्तशंकरं कृतार्थशंकरं
स्वामिशंकरं नमामि शंकरं

bhakta-śaṃkaram virakta-śaṃkaram
buddha-śaṃkaram viśuddha-śaṃkaram
smārta-śaṃkaram kṛtārtha-śaṃkaram
svāmi-śaṃkaram namāmi śaṃkaram

Devotee Sankara, dispassionate Sankara
Awakened Sankara, completely pure Sankara
Sankara well versed in tradition, Sankara who has accomplished the
goal

Lord/Master Sankara, I prostrate to Sankara

वर्यशंकरं आचार्यशंकरं
ज्ञानशंकरं अम्लानशंकरं
वेदशंकरं अद्वैतशंकरं
स्वामिशंकरं नमामि शंकरं

varya-śaṁkaraṁ ācārya-śaṁkaraṁ
jñāna-śaṁkaraṁ amlāna-śaṁkaraṁ
veda-śaṁkaraṁ advaita-śaṁkaraṁ
svāmi-śaṁkaraṁ namāmi śaṁkaraṁ

Excellent Sankara, Sankara the spiritual teacher
Wise Sankara, unclouded/clear Sankara
Sankara extolled by Vedas, Non-dual Sankara
Lord/Master Sankara, I prostrate to Sankara

– by Ganesh Sadasivan

Siva's Cosmic Dance



CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS REFLECTIONS

The 108 karanas, as described in the fourth chapter of the Natya Shastra (a Hindu treatise on the performing arts), are synchronized dance movements with each posture displaying a particular mood. They are performed to spiritually enlighten the spectators. The Natya Shastra states that one who performs well the karanas created by Mahesvara will be freed of sin and go to Mahesvara. A few Hindu temples exhibit the karanas in the gopuram, the entrance tower to the temple. Lord Siva or Parvati are depicted displaying the karanas.

A number of interpretations are written regarding the karanas, however, there is no universally accepted analysis, leaving each person free to interpret the karanas in a manner that most inspires him or her. Here, we introduce an interpretation by Janane Sivakumar to accompany the production of the 108 paintings of the karanas as painted by her mother, Anandhi Muthukumarasamy, and adorn the walls in the Lotus room of the SAT Temple. Her interpretation is garnered from the descriptions of the movements as found in the 3 volume set of "Karanas, Common Dance Codes of India and Indonesia," by Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam, M.A., Ph.D. Each painting is numbered and titled.

Anandhi uses quartz crystals, 24k gold foil, and metallic paints to adorn each painting, yet, due to the limitations in the medium of photography, the images presented here are not able to capture the sparkling characteristic of each painting, which give them a stunning quality. (Continued in subsequent Reflections.)



84. Prekhalitam

As there is always continuous clarity regarding the nature of happiness, in truth, there is never any oscillation of the mind.



85. Nitambam

With the perfect knowledge that the desire for pleasure is a manifestation of the intense longing for happiness, one can be free from the suffering of worldly existence.



86. Skhalitam

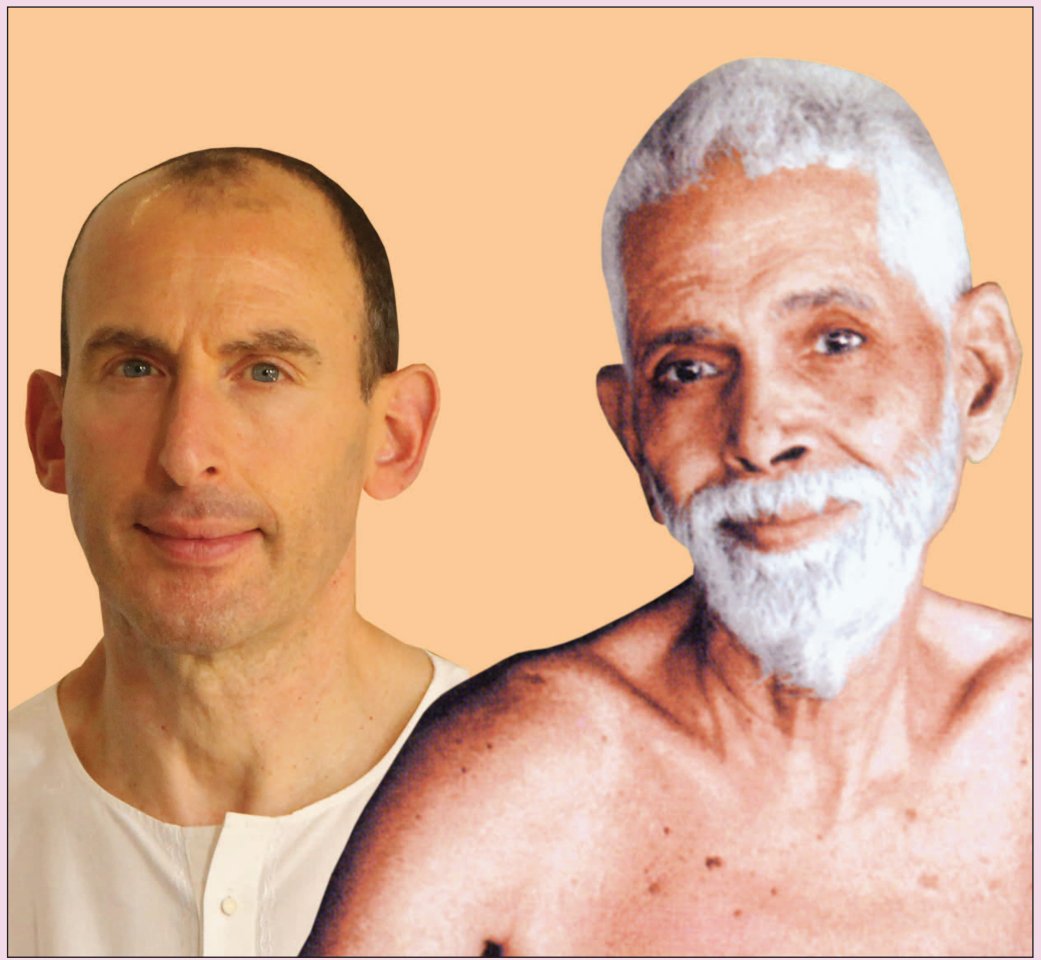
Emersed in confusion regarding the source and nature of happiness, one wanders unsteadily through all of life's occurrences.

Revealing the Truth,
removing all obstacles,
bestowing Knowledge, as
the Lord of all the
retinues, He abides.

Wielding undivided
Knowledge, destroying a
mountain of illusion,
liberating all from
delusion's dream, as that
which is excellent for the
realization of Brahman,
He shines.

Existing without another,
granting to all the nectar
of immortality, silencing
all doubts forever, as That
which alone exists, Siva,
He is.

—Nome



Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya ॐ Om Namah Sivaya

It is difficult to imagine life without Sri Bhagavan and his teaching. It is an inconceivable blessing to have the SAT Temple in our life—a place where we can go and absorb the light and depth of Sri Bhagavan's teaching. How fortunate we are, indeed!

Once each year, the SAT board of directors sends a pledge invitation to those who benefit from the sacred events at the SAT Temple and understand the temple to be an important place in their lives. This invitation places before you the opportunity to express gratitude for this divine place of Grace in the form of a pledge donation. The pledge donations, the membership donations, and love contributions from devotees who come to the temple for satsangs, special events, and retreats are a significant portion of the support that helps the SAT Temple thrive.

Pledges contribute to the general maintenance costs for upkeep and repairs of the temple property. With your donation and by the Grace of Sri Bhagavan and Lord Siva, we can continue to care for the SAT Temple property assuring the perpetuation of this blessed place of Grace.

We invite you to reflect on the brilliant blessing of having the opportunity of participating in the SAT Temple, which shines within your spiritual life, and to offer a pledge for 2024. Please visit the SAT website at: <https://satramana.org/web/sat-temple/offerings/> and provide your donation information there.

With love and appreciation and in service to Sri Bhagavan,
The SAT Board of Directors,
Raman Muthukrishnan, President; Eric Ruetz, Vice-President;
Sangeeta Raman, Secretary; Ganesh Sadasivan, Treasurer; Nome and Sasvati;

SAT Retreats 2024

In SAT retreats, Self-Knowledge and Self-inquiry meditation, the means of inquiring within to know the true Self, are taught, with ample time to ask questions as the teachings are given, so that you can clarify and deepen your understanding and experience. SAT retreats are very thorough in their presentation and provide a tremendous amount of spiritual guidance. The experience of attending retreats is profound and very helpful for spiritual development. Retreats provide much time for silent meditation in addition to the instruction. All of SAT's retreats are taught by Nome, a sage who practiced the inquiry for steady abidance in Self-Realization. He places no emphasis on himself but keeps the focus of the instruction entirely upon Self-Knowledge and Self-inquiry, turning the aspirants' attention fully inward, for it is in this way that meditation, Self-inquiry, and Self-Knowledge truly open for one.

Recommended readings for the retreats are the works of Sri Ramana Maharshi, *Ribhu Gita* and *The Song of Ribhu*, *Self-Knowledge*, the writings of Sri Sankara (Adi Sankara), such as those contained in *Svatmanirupanam* and *Advaita Prakarana Manjari*, *Avadhuta Gita*, *Ashtavakra Gita*, *Saddarshanam* and *an Inquiry into the Revelation of Truth and Oneself*, *The Essence of Spiritual Instruction*, and *The Quintessence of True Being*. Familiarizing yourself with or studying these books will enable you to obtain even more from the retreats, which are an experiential immersion in the essence of Advaita Vedanta.

Vegan meals are provided during the retreats. Lunch and dinner are served on Friday, three meals are served on Saturday, and two meals are served on Sunday. SAT does not provide special meals for those with unique dietary concerns.

The Nondual Self-Inquiry Retreat: March 22-24 This retreat is based upon the teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi as presented in his books, *Self-inquiry* and *Who am I?* The spiritual instruction focuses on the nature of the Self, the natural state of Self-Realization, the introspective inquiry that results in this Realization, the nature of happiness, the nature of Being, the nature of Consciousness, and transcendence of the body, mind, and ego.

The Self-Knowledge Retreat: May 24-26 This retreat is based on the teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi contained within *Origin of Spiritual Instruction*. The spiritual instruction focuses on the discernment between the Self and what is not the Self, between what is real and what is not. It is this Self-Inquiry that yields Self-Knowledge.

The Self-Realization Retreat: August 16-18 This retreat focuses on Sri Ramana Maharshi's teachings contained within *Atma Vidya*, *Ekatma Pancakam*, and other short texts, with spiritual instruction about these teachings, and much time for silent meditation. This retreat is an immersion in the fusion of Knowledge and devotion.

The Truth Revealed Retreat: November 15-17 This retreat is focused on nondual Self-Knowledge as revealed by Sri Ramana Maharshi and consists of an in-depth explanation of the teachings contained in Sri Ramana Maharshi's *Saddarshanam* (i.e., *Sat-Darshanam*, *Truth Revealed*, *Forty Verses on Reality*). There is also much time for the participants to silently meditate upon this quintessential, profound, Blissful Knowledge for the revelation of the Truth within.

REGISTER ONLINE

<https://satramana.org/web/events/retreats/retreat-application-form/>
End of sign-up date is
one month prior to commencement of each retreat.