

# Reflections

July, August, September 2013



## Invocation

*That Brahman, that Ocean of Bliss, by taking a fraction of a drop of which Indra and the other gods become happy, that by touching with his inward-turned peaceful mind the knower of Brahman becomes extremely happy and without modifications; that Ocean of Eternal Bliss by dissolving the mind into which one becomes not merely a knower of Brahman but Brahman itself—whosoever has realized his identity with this Brahman, is really the one whose feet are adored by even the king of the gods. Such is my conclusive understanding of the Guru.*

Sri Sankara, Manisa-Pancakam, V. 5

*Nothing in the world can be compared to the Sadguru who gives the Highest Knowledge. The philosopher's stone converts any base metal into gold, whereas the Sadguru makes His disciple, who has surrendered to His feet, identical to Himself. Therefore, the Sadguru is incomparable.*

Sri Sankara

*With the Lord's Grace*

*I have met the Sadguru;*

*Possessor of divine talent*

*Bestower of supreme Bliss*

*He is the conferrer of True*

*Knowledge*

*I was burning in the flames of ignorance and craving*

*He poured the elixir of love*

*And Quenched the fire;*

*I became placid and cool...*

*He shattered the doors*

*Of pretense and delusion*

*That blocked my way;*

*He told the tale of my true Home*

*And all my fears faded away...*

*In the boat of love*

*Kabir's Master, the adept carsman,*

*Ferried him to the eternal shore.*

*The Master became pleased with me,  
He whispered one Word of Grace;  
The cloud of love poured forth  
And drenched my entire being.*

*Kabir, clouds laden with love  
in Abundance poured down on me;  
Within I was drenched  
And around me, even the desert  
turned green.*

Kabir

*I bow to Him who is the spring to the garden of spiritual  
endeavors, an auspicious and sacred  
manifestation of the Wisdom of Brahman, and though  
formless, the very incarnation of  
compassion.*

Jnanadev

*Oh! My Gracious Guru. From the depth of my  
heart I think of you. In deepest earnestness I meditate on  
you. That I never be separated from you, is my prayer.  
Merging in the Self-mind with the Guru is indeed a  
happy thing.*

Milarepa

*...bear in mind that we should not consider a Sadguru to be one of the means to Self-Realization. He should be regarded as the End itself, as the Self itself, the Lord Himself.*

Ekmath

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# *The Boundless Wisdom of Sri Ramana Maharshi*

**(From Letters from Sri Ramanasramam)**

## **The Incarnation of Sri Dakshinamurthy**

February 7, 1947

While translating “Dakshinamurthy Sthothram” into tamil verse with commentary, Bhagavan summarized the original story about the reason for Dakshinamurthy’s incarnation and wrote it in the preface. Besides that he divided nine slokas therein into three groups dealing with the world, the seer and the seen respectively. The first three: (1) Viswam Darpanam, (2) Bijasyanthariva, (3) Yasyaiva sphuranam, deal with the origin of the world. The next three: (1) Nanachhidra, (2) Rahugrastha, (3) Deham Pranam, deal with the seer; and the last three: (1) Balyadishwapi (2) Viswam Pasyathi (3) Bhurambhamsi, deal with the light by which things are seen. The last sloka, Sarvathmatvam, means that the whole universe is merged in Brahman.

Recently I translated the preface into Telugu, Bhagavan went through the translation, and said with a smile, “I mentioned briefly in the preface, only as much of the life story as related to the sthothra, but the real story is much more interesting. It is like this: Brahma asked Sanaka, Sanatkumara, Sanandana and Sanatsujata, who are the creations of his mind, to assist him in the task of creation, but they were not interested in that task and so declined to assist. They were surrounded by the heavenly Gods, saints and other attendants, and were staying in Nandana Vana and so they were considering who would impart to them jnana, the supreme Wisdom. Narada appeared, and said, “Who can impart the Brahma Jnana, the Supreme Wisdom, except Brahma himself? Come on, we shall go to him.” They all agreed and proceeded to Satya Loka, the abode of Brahma, and found Saraswathi playing the veena, with Brahma seated in front of her, enjoying the music and beating time to the tune. They all beheld the scene and wondered how a person who is engrossed in the appreciation of his wife’s music could teach them adhyatma tattva (the essence of spirituality). Narada said to them, “Come! let us go to Vaikunta, the abode of Vishnu.” They all proceeded thither. The Lord was in the interior of his residence.

Narada is however a privileged person and so he went directly into the Lord's abode, saying he would see and come back. Soon he came out and, when asked, told them, "There Brahma was seated a little away from his wife who was playing the veena for him. But here, the Goddess Lakshmi is seated on the God's couch and is massaging his feet. This is much worse. How can this family man who is spell bound by the intimate glances of his consort, render us any help (in learning adhyatma vidya)? Look at the splendor of this palace and this city! This is no good. Let us seek the help of Lord Siva."

"They all proceeded towards Himachala and seeing Mount Kailas, they ascended it with great hopes. But there, in the midst of a vast gathering of his fellows, was Siva performing his celestial dance with his wife sharing half of his body. Vishnu was playing on the Drum, and Brahma was keeping time with the bells as an accompaniment for the dance. They who came eagerly seeking spiritual guidance, were aghast at the sight, and thought, "Oh! He too is after women! Brahma was no doubt having his wife sitting very close to, but was not in physical contact with her, while Vishnu was in physical contact with his wife, but she was merely massaging His legs, but Siva is actually keeping Parvathi as part of His body. This is much worse! Enough of this." And they all departed. Siva understood and was sorry for them. He said, "What delusion on their part! They regard the three Godheads as devoid of spiritual wisdom merely because they were being served by their respective wives at the time the devotees saw them! Who else can impart spiritual knowledge to these earnest seekers of Truth?" Thus thinking, Siva sent away Parvathi on the plea of himself doing tapas and the kind-hearted Lord seated Himself in the guise of a youth with Chinmudra, and Dakshinamurthy, under a Banyan tree on the Northern side of Lake Mansarovar, just on the way by which these disappointed devotees were returning to their respective homes. I read this story somewhere," said Bhagavan.

"How interesting is the story! Why did not Bhagavan include it in the Introduction?" I said.

"I cannot say! I thought it unnecessary for me to record all these incidents of Dakshinamurthy's life in the Introduction. I included only as much as was required for the Ashtaka (8 slokas)," replied Bhagavan.

On further inquiry, it was found that this story was narrated in Siva Rahasya, tenth canto, second chapter, under the heading, "The Incar-

nation of Sri Dakshinamurthy.” A devotee who heard this asked, “Does incarnation mean birth of Sri Dashinamurthy?” “Where is the question of a birth for him? It is one of the five Murthys (forms) of Siva. It means that he is seated facing south in mouna mudra (silent posture). It is the want of Form, Formlessness, that is indicated in its inner meaning. Is it the Murthy, the Form, that is described in the Dakshinamurthy Ashtaka? Is it not the want of Form, Formlessness? Sri Dakshinamurthy—Sri means Maya Sakti (illusory force); one meaning of Dakshina is efficient; another meaning is in the heart on the right side of the body; Amurthy means Formlessness. A lot of commentary on this, is possible, isn’t it?” said Bhagavan.

The same devotee asked, “Sanaka and the others are described in the Bhagavata Purana as young boys of five years of age for all time; but this sthorthra says: vridha sishya Gurur yuva (old disciples and young Guru); how is that?”

“Jnanis (the wise) always remain young. There is no youth, and no old age for them. The description “vridha” and “sishya,” “old” and “disciple” means that Sanaka and the others were old in actual age. Though they are old in years they remain everlastingly young in appearance,” said Bhagavan.

I give below my translation of the introduction written by Bhagavan:

“Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanathkumara and Sanatsujata who are the four sons born from the mind of Brahma, learnt that they were brought into existence to further the creation, etc., of the world, but they were not interested in the task, and sought only Truth and Knowledge and wandered in search of a Guru. Lord Siva sympathized with those earnest seekers of Truth and Himself sat under a banyan tree in the silent state as Dakshinamurthy with chinmudra. Sanaka and the others observed Him, and were at once attracted by Him like iron by a magnet, and attained self-realization in His presence in no time. To those who are not able to know the real significance of the silent and original form, (of Dakshinamurthy) Sankara summarized the universal truth in this sthorthra and explained to Uthamadhikaris (highly developed souls) that the Sakti (force) which dissolves the three obstacles for realization of the Truth, that is the world, the seer and the seen, is not different from one’s own self and that everything gets ultimately merged in one’s own self.”



## The Jnani's Mind is Brahman Itself

February 15, 1947

I went to the Hall at about 7:30 this morning. It was all silent inside. The aroma of the burning incense sticks coming out of the windows indicated to the new visitors that Bhagavan was there. I went inside, bowed before Bhagavan and then sat down. Bhagavan, who was all along leaning on a pillow, sat up erect in the Padmasana pose. In a moment his look became motionless and transcendent and the whole hall was filled with lustre. Suddenly someone asked, "Swamiji! Do the Jnanis have a mind or not?"

Bhagavan cast a benevolent look at him, and said, "There is no question of one realizing Brahman without a mind; realization is possible only if there is a mind; mind always functions with some upadhi (support); there is no mind without upadhi; it is only in connection with the upadhi that we say that one is a jnani. But how does the upadhi function without mind? It does not; that is why it is said that the jnani's mind itself is Brahman. The jnani is always looking at Brahman. How is it possible to see without a mind? That is why it is said that the jnani's mind is Brahmakara and akhandakara. But in reality his mind itself is Brahman. Just as an ignorant man does not recognize Brahman within but only recognizes the external vrittis (things), so also though the jnani's body moves about in the external vrittis, he always recognizes only the Brahman within. That Brahman is all-pervading; when once the mind is lost in the Brahman, to call the mind Brahmakara is like saying that a river is like the ocean; when once all the rivers get lost in the ocean, it is all one vast sheet of water; can you then distinguish in that vast sheet of water, "This is the Ganges, this is the Goutami, this river is so long, that river is so wide," and so on? It is the same with regard to the mind also."

Someone else asked, "They say that satvam is Brahman, and that rajas and tamas are abhasa; is that so?" Bhagavan replied: "Yes! Sat is what exists; Sat is satvam; it is the natural thing; it is the subtle movement of the mind. By its contacts with rajas and tamas it creates the world with its innumerable forms. It is only due to its contact with rajas and tamas that the mind looks at the world which is abhasa, and gets deluded. If you remove that contact, satva shines pure and uncontaminated. That is called pure Satva or Suddhasatva; this contact cannot be eliminated unless you enquire with the subtlest of the subtle mind

and reject it. All the vasanas have to be subdued and the mind has to become very subtle: that means, subtle among the subtlest they say anoraneeyam (atom within an atom); it should become atomic to the atom. If it becomes subdued as an atom to the atom, then it rises to the infinite among infinities, “mahato maheeyam’; call it the mind seeing, or the mind acquiring powers; call it whatever you like; by whatever name it is called, we sleep; the mind, with all its activities lies subdued in the heart; what do we see then? Nothing. Why? Because the mind lies subdued; we wake up from our sleep; as soon as we wake up there is mind, there is Sat and Brahman; as soon as the mind that is awake is attached to the gunas, every activity emerges; if you discard those guna vikaras, (vagaries of the mind), the Brahman appears everywhere, self-luminous and self-evident, the Aham, “I.” Then everything appears thanmayam (all pervading). See the technical language of the Vedanta; they say, Brahma-vid, (Brahman-knowing), Brahma Vidvarishta, (supreme among the Brahman-knowing, and so on, and then they say, Brahmaiva Bhavati (he becomes Brahman itself). He is Brahman itself. That is why we say that the jnani’s mind itself is Brahman.” Someone else asked, “They say that the jnani conducts himself with absolute equality towards all?” Bhagavan replied. “Yes! How does a jnani conduct himself?”

“Maitri (friendship), daruna (kindness), muditha (happiness) and up-eksha (indifference) and such other bhavas become natural to them. Affection towards the good, kindness towards the helpless, happiness in doing good deeds, forgiveness towards the wicked, all such things are natural characteristics of the jnani.”



## *Satsang*

**Illimitable Existence**

**December 9, 2012**

Om Om Om

(Silence)

Nome: The illimitable, birthless, deathless, perfectly full Existence of the Self is inconceivable and ineffable. It need not be regarded as a

known or unknown object. If you set yourself free of any tendency to misidentify with any of the content of the three states of waking, dreaming, and deep dreamless sleep—inclusive of the body, the appearance of the mind, and even the least trace of individuality—the Existence that is the Self will know itself quite naturally, directly, and without any intermediary. In this lies immortal bliss and peace.

Inquiring as advised by Sri Bhagavan, “Who am I?”, discern where you suppose yourself to be and realize what you truly are. Never a known or unknown object, you cannot be an object to yourself. As all thought has objective characteristics, whether gross or subtle, you cannot be a thought. Whatever may be thought of yourself is simply not you. If you are not anything conceived in thought at any time, what in truth are you? Quite evidently, your Existence, your very Being, is mind-transcendent. What, then, is the nature of That?

What is referred to as the Self is truly your Self. The idea that there is another kind of self, an individual entity, to know or to be ignorant of the Self is but a false notion, a baseless assumption. That which is described as infinite and eternal, Brahman, is what, in truth, you are. It is not a part of you, and you are not a part of it. Most certainly, you are not apart from it. Rather, the Infinite, the Eternal, the Formless, the Homogeneous, the One without another, is what, in truth, you are. If you cease to misidentify as a body, this will become clear as a matter of direct realization. If you cease to regard yourself in terms of the mind, this will become clear as a matter of direct realization. If you inquire into the very basic assumption of individuality, the ego as it is called, the Self will be self-evident.

You know that you exist with a doubtless Knowledge that is inextricable from the Existence. This is natural for you. (silence) The Existence knows itself. Just so, the Self realizes itself. You do not require the activity of the senses to know that you exist. You do not require the activity of the mind in order to know that you exist. You do not require anything but the ever-existent Existence. Just so, the Self knows itself with its own Knowledge. Being does not require anything else to make it exist. Consciousness does not require anything else in order to know. Bliss does not require anything else in order to be experienced. This Being-Consciousness-Bliss, Saccidananda (Sat-Cit-Ananda), is your very nature.

Where the notion of “I” subsides, right there and then, the Self shines forth in its own light perfectly. Therefore, the subsidence of the “I”, by any possible means, is most desirable. What means could be

more direct than inquiring, “Who am I?”, so that you discover that precisely where you thought you were an individual entity you are actually the one Existence, the one Self, all along.

Questioner: Thank you Master. While your discourse was thoroughly complete, I was curious to ask about something that would be more preliminary or auxiliary and maybe serve like Sankara’s suggested requisites for Self-Inquiry. But, this would be prerequisite: taking the instruction of the sage as direct Truth. That could be experienced just on that basis. The sage is not taken as an individual, but that sage is utterly trusted as the Absolute, and then take that instruction just on its own merits.

N.: You have read something of the Maharshi’s instructions, haven’t you? What if what he has declared is true, completely, absolutely true? Even if you take just a sentence or two of it, considering it deeply: a simple statement such as “You are the Self” – what is the significance of it? If you are actually, truly the Self, what does that mean? In the light of that, how could any delusion or illusion stand? (silence) There is nothing preliminary about this. Reality does not require something preliminary.

Q.: The feeling I had was that, even though there would be full devoted enthusiasm to following through with the instructions, it could be done from the end point, rather than from some imagined beginning point.

N.: That’s right. What is considered as the end point is actually what exists all the time. The Knowledge of the Self that is the end becomes the means to itself, manifesting as the discrimination, the detachment, and so forth and so on, that are so necessary. (silence) If you are truly the Self, as has been declared by the wise, discriminate. Discern clearly what you suppose yourself to be that is other than the Self, that makes you treat the Self as if an object and the individual as if a subject. In truth, you are not the individual, and the truth of the Self is nonobjective. What do you take yourself to be? Is it you? (silence)

Another Q.: I’m just so grateful to have the Maharshi’s teaching and Sat-Darshanam. They’re so understandable, if I just read it over and over. I’ve read the same verses, I don’t know how many times, and there is more in them every time I read them. That’s not possible with anything else other than the Maharshi’s teachings. Sankara does it, and Ribhu

does it, but it's all that same perfect non-dual teaching. The one that was reading it two years ago: parts of him just aren't here reading it now. It has a way of whittling away the misconceptions about oneself.

N.: That which is revealed in Saddarshanam, Truth Revealed, and similar scriptures is timelessly ancient. It never grows old. It is conclusive, yet of limitless depth. It is of such a nature that it is of perpetual fascination. For those who inquire, they find it to be so. (silence)

Q.: What I find most fascinating about Bhagavan's teaching and inquiry is that there is no time and no place that inquiry can be done. I know that it is the pull of Bhagavan. He is the one that is pulling.

N.: Yes, it is his Grace, and he himself is the Existence that reveals itself within. He reveals his own Existence, as he has said. As certainly as you are, you can be immersed in Knowledge always; just as you are always. Since inquiry into the Self to know the Self is not a mere thought process, it is not subject to the interruptions that thinking is. As Self-Knowledge is not an activity, it is not subject to interruptions as actions are. If there is continuous depth of inquiry, there is no room left for delusion, no vacancy. Then when there is no scope for ignorance, not even so much as room for the seed of imagination, that which was in practice called inquiry reveals itself as steady Knowledge, which is of the nature of pure Consciousness. Since Consciousness can never be a known or unknown object, you, yourself, are the Knowledge. That is the very Knowledge that was called inquiry in practice. It is innate.

Q.: The fascination is that it is experiential. It's not an idea I pick up from a book.

N.: There's nothing theoretical about this. It's purely experiential, just as your existence and your happiness are purely experiential. That something so transcendent, so vast, so inconceivable and thus inexplicable could be so fully revealed by Sri Bhagavan is a great wonder.

Q.: Ribhu says, "If you are Brahman and not an atom apart."

N.: If we think there is some little bit apart, just the mere notion of "I," that is the silliness. It is just not true. How could there be an "I" apart from Brahman? In Brahman, there can't possibly be a trace of "I". This Brahman that is "I"-less is the only true "I." If we lose the contrary supposition, the certainty of this Knowledge is obvious. You are Brahman; how could it ever be otherwise?

Another Q.: All the sadhana is to lose that contrary supposition. If somebody tells us we have a medical problem, such as a heart condition or cancer, it plays on our mind, and it becomes a huge worry. But when our teacher says that we are Brahman, why doesn't that play on our mind and become really big?

N.: Can there be a good reason for illusion? Even when one is fascinated with something, such as what you described, for what is it that the mind searches? What are you trying to know? You hear of a cancer or a heart condition, and you want to know about it, but why do you want to know about it?

Q.: Always, it is the misidentification of that "I" in this body.

N.: Yes, and, from there, this thinking proceeds. What is that thinking an attempt to find? What is it that you want to know?

What you really want to know is about eternal existence. You want the answer. Whenever we attempt to know anything, we are actually looking for our own identity. We search to know what is real. We want to find immortal existence, because we know intuitively that in that lies our happiness. So, we learn about a disease to find an answer to the disease, if an answer can be found. While researching such matters certainly does not necessarily entail ignorance, but can be done egolessly, it is in the absolute Knowledge of egoless, bodiless Existence that the final cure is found. It the cure for the entirety of illusion, the cure for samsara. Everyone seems stricken with the disease called "birth and death." The prognosis is not good. Fortunately, a remedy has been supplied. We have only to apply it. It's a kind of medicine you take always. If you take it always, inquiring continuously, abiding in Knowledge of the Self continuously, you get more than just remission. You find Liberation from all birth and death. So, while you are learning about these things, studying these things, be sure to abide steadily in the Knowledge of what is actually real – your own bodiless nature. This bodiless, eternal nature is alone actually, consistently fascinating. Any other topic, at some point, sooner or later, will become boring or repetitive. Truth is eternal, but not repetitive, perpetually fascinating, and blissfully non-boring. Devotion shares the same nature.

(Then followed a recitation in Sanskrit and English of Aparokosanubhuti.)

(Silence)

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

(Then followed a recitation in Tamil from chapter 39 of the Song of Ribhu.)



*Atmotsava*  
*(Ramana Nama Sankirtanam)*

*Question: How can I increase my devotion?*

*Nome.: You might as well ask how to make the grass greener. Devotion is like the Ganges: one is sanctified by immersing oneself in it. (1989)*

Atmotsava, held each Wednesday night at SAT, is truly an event for the bhakta at heart and an opportunity to immerse oneself in devotion by listening to texts on devotion and singing songs of devotion to God and Guru to our hearts' content. During each Atmotsava Nome will read passages of devotion, either written by him or selected from other holy texts. Below is an excerpt from SAT's Publication, *The Essence of the Spiritual Instruction*, from which Nome read to us during the most recent Atmotsava.

जगत ईशधीयुक्तसेवनम् ।  
अष्टमूर्तिभृद्देवपूजनम् ॥ ५ ॥

jagata īśadhīyuktasevanam ।  
aṣṭamūrtibhṛddevapūjanam ॥ 5 ॥

**Worship united with the understanding that the universe  
is the Lord**

**Is worship of God bearing eight forms. (5)**

**Service of the world united with the understanding of  
God  
Is worship of God bearing eight forms. (5)**

**Worship with the mind united with the Lord of the uni-  
verse  
Is worship of God bearing eight forms. (5)**

**Note: “the universe” in the first translation is literally of  
the universe.**

**The word for “worship” in the first line also means serv-  
ice.**

**In the Tamil version, the first line states only “worship-  
ing” according to Sri Sadhu Om and Michael James.  
The word for understanding can also mean mind, medi-  
tation, spiritual thought.**

**“bearing” can be translated as wearing.**

**The eight forms are the earth, water, fire, air, space, the  
sun, the moon, and humankind.**

**Thus:**

1. The universe is only God perceived as such.
2. The Lord of the universe, who is its sole power, is that very God, who is its sole existence.
3. Boundless spiritual love for the entirety of the universe rests in the mind that is united with God.
4. Union is found in the Knowledge that understands the truth of non-differentiation in which there are no such distinct entities as the world, the individual or mind, and the Supreme or God.
5. Worship is not for acquisition of something in the world, for the world is already the Lord’s, but only for the Realization of God, who wears this mere universe and apart from Whom it cannot appear.
6. Understanding God and meditation upon God leave no scope for the ego in this world.
7. Divinely inspired activity performed with this comprehension is



- service, and the mind's union with God is worship.
8. The Lord of the universe is the Lord of the mind, so "my Lord is the glorious Lord of the universe, my Guru is the glorious Guru of the universe, and my Self is the Self of all beings."
  9. The Lord who bears the elements and such forms experienced, the mind as the instrument of experience, and the individualized experiencers are of one nature. That of which all are composed, being the Light of all lights, is Siva, and it is Siva who is worshiped in the mind's union with Him and by serving beings with the knowledge that all are only He.
  10. God has no other and wears Himself, and that is service in which this knowledge is certain, and that is worship in which God alone is, with the mind absorbed therein.



## *From The Ramana Way*

***The following excerpt is from "A Practical Guide to Know Yourself," by A.R. Natarajan (available in the SAT Bookstore), which appears in the January 2013 issue of "The Ramana Way," a monthly publication produced by the Ramana Maharshi Center for Learning in Bangalore, India. RMCL 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)***

### EGO

When the ego is uprooted, the Self shines limitless. Ramana says that this is true penance. What is meant by the uprooting of the ego? Is it an independent entity? No. It is a formless link between the Self which is consciousness, and the body which is inert. The only way to tackle it is to enquire wherefrom it arises. Then one goes to its very root. Since it has a scent of consciousness, once the ego merges in the source it

becomes a wave in the sea of consciousness. Tackling the ego through other methods is like attempting to bury one's shadow. For such methods are based on the wrong notion of its reality.

Ramana would not allow one to indulge in negative forms of ego, that one is impure and so on. For, one's essential nature is purity and this truth has to be remembered.

Ramana uses the terms "ego" and "mind" as interchangeable expressions.

Mrs. D. Jinarajadasa, wife of the late President of Theosophical Society and resident of Adyar, Madras, wanted to go to the root of the human ego, which is the cause of so much discord between nations, families and individuals.

Mrs. J: What is the difference between the ego and the Self?

B: That which comes and goes, rises and sets, is born and dies is the ego. That which always abides, never changes and is devoid of qualities is the Self.

J: I suppose one has to sublimate the ego-self into the true Self.

B: The ego-self does not exist at all.

J: Then why does it give so much trouble? Look at the havoc it has created among nations and people. It is dreadful even to oneself.

B: To whom is the trouble? The trouble also is imagined. Pain and pleasure are to the ego, which is itself imagined. When the ego disappears through constant enquiry into its nature, the illusion of pleasure and pain also disappears, and the Self, their source, alone remains. There is neither ego nor ignorance in reality.

J: But how did the ego arise?

B: Ego is non-existent, otherwise you would be two instead of one—you the ego, and you the Self. You are a single, indivisible whole. Enquire into yourself and the apparent ego and ignorance will disappear.



## *From The Temple Archives*

The year was sometime around 1977-8. Nome had checked out a book from the Theosophical Society Library entitled, "Notes on Spiritual Discourses," written by a disciple of Sri Atmananda, Nitya Tripta. The book was donated to the library by Shanti and bore a rubber stamp inside indicating the name and address of its donor. Nome wrote to Shanti asking her if she had other copies and if he could obtain a copy from her. From this point onward, spiritual correspondence between Nome and Shanti began and continued over the next 2-3 years. Shanti was a spiritual teacher in New York state, teaching weekly classes on Advaita Vedanta. She had her own following, and, once each year, she would hold a "Convocation" drawing hundreds of aspirants. Around 1980-1 Shanti moved to California and remained with her Sadguru, Nome, until she was eternally absorbed into Bhagavan in 2006. Shanti, whose picture hangs in the front entry of the SAT Temple, was a deeply devoted bhakta. She has left behind a wealth of writings and poetry expressive of the glory of her Sadguru. Below, is just one poem among many expressing this glory. As this issue of *Reflections* occurs during the time of Guru Purnima, it is fitting to share this poem here.

### *Sat Guru Purnima 1992*

O perfect Sage and Sweet Guru,  
You are the ever-blissful Brahman!  
Abiding fully as the Truth,  
You are a well of deepest Wisdom.  
In Silence You transmit it first,  
All merged in Love Divine;  
Moreover, You reveal the transcendental wealth in  
words sublime.  
O dearest Sage, our Bhagavan,  
You are the treasure of our Being.  
Indwelling us in timeless Grace,  
You are the source of every blessing.  
In oneness you pervade our life

And guide it safely Home  
So that we can abide in Siva's Heaven now,  
Fulfilled and One.

O honored Sage and Master,  
You are the absolute Perfection.  
Self-realized as the Ultimate,  
You shine, established, free from action.  
In wondrous Love You care for us,  
Arousing Self's own Light  
To blaze in its own Nature, free from all disguise,  
Forever bright.

O precious and beloved Sage,  
We offer thanks in gratitude to you,  
Our greatest Friend, so True!  
And more: You are our very Self!  
In Wisdom and in deep-sweet Love  
We can now ever Be  
And live exactly as we are: Full of Bliss,  
Non-dually.

O blessed and most cherished Self,  
I love You as my own Existence.  
Fulfillment, Life, and True Nature  
Are all in You perfectly present.  
You are the Living Sadguru,  
My heart's utmost delight.  
Abiding, One with You in Freedom and in Joy,  
I am satisfied.

O Holy Sage, most wondrous One,  
The sole-existent Supreme Brahman,  
Your formless Self is unbegun,  
Being immortal, perfect Jnanam.  
You are profundity itself  
And merge us into it;  
Your radiant Light of Being, Consciousness, and Bliss

Is Lasting Peace.

-Offered to my Supremely Beloved Master on July 14, 1992. Om Shanti

## *Correspondence Archives*

[In the course of a message, a seeker wrote: "Bhagavan says ultimately it is God that will help you realize, grace alone can will it, nothing else. What makes one receptive to grace? That is my goal right now in my sadhana; just to be receptive to this grace and wherever it wants to take me. I try to let go of the desire to "become" liberated since I have heard and read that desire of this can be an obstruction." This is Nome's reply.]

February 7, 2013

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

Grace is ever fully present. Sincerity of purpose, earnest and ardent practice of the teaching, faith, intense desire for Self-Realization, and such make one keenly aware of it.

Generally, if one attempts to be rid of the desire for Liberation, she desires something else, due to the persistence of the motivation to be happy. It is wiser to, endowed with the desire for Liberation, deeply inquire to know the Self and thus destroy the ego-supposition and its false bondage by finding their unreality.

You will be very welcome at the SAT Temple.

Om Namah Sivaya  
Ever yours in Truth,  
Nome

[This is from a Sri Ramana devotee in India. Nome's response follows.]

February 22, 2013

Dear sir,

I have been repeating Bhagawan's name and I feel happy and the same day afternoon I could not do it, since my mind dominating and prevent from doing it.

Kindly give some suggestion. Why mind once again dominates?

Thanks,

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. If, repeating His name, you do so with a heart full of joyful devotion and faith, the waywardness of the mind will subside and it will no longer veil the Truth that Sri Bhagavan reveals.

Ignorance, in the form of misidentification, is the root of the illusions of the mind. Self-Knowledge destroys such ignorance. For this Knowledge, inquire "Who am I?"

For the earnest devotee of Sri Bhagavan, the tendencies of the mind appear only for the purpose of being destroyed.

As the Maharshi's Grace is always present, and as the nature of the ever-existent Self is Bliss, you have no real reason to ever be unhappy.

Om Namah Sivaya

Ever yours in Sri Bhagavan,

Nome

[In reply to a message from another devotee of Sri Bhagavan:]

March 7, 2013

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

Peace and freedom are experienced proportionately to the disappearance of ignorance. Inquiry reveals that they are of the very nature of the Self. Inquire so as to discern the false definitions of the "I" that seems to be distinct from the Self and, conceiving of a state other than

the Self, thinks that he cannot be in the Self continuously.

Bhagavan's Grace is ever present. Rely on it completely and thus be always happy.

Whenever you are able to visit the SAT Temple, such as for a retreat, you are warmly welcome.

Om Namah Sivaya

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[A seeker wrote:]

March 26, 2013

I am a student of One Spirit Theological School and as part of our studies we have been looking at different religions. One is Hinduism. One of our instructors mentioned Ramana Maharshi and I started looking into his teachings and found that I wanted more.

I have purchased books from SAT and am reading them as well as listening to Cd's and your talks on YouTube. I have some questions and was given your email by Raman, who by the way is very helpful, who suggested you could help me, so here are a couple.

Ramana Maharshi says the heart is not the one that is located in the body, that it is not a physical thing, but then says its two fingers width from the center of the chest toward the right. I'm confused. So where is the heart that I am to go back to? Also when I find an "I Thought" I invite it to go back into the heart. Is that correct?

Also it is said that when you look at the "I thought" that one needs to go back to its source. By that I think you mean the original thought that created it, which might be back in the ether's of time (ie. baby hood) and not be readily remember-able. So question, where does one look for the answers?

I have been asking the question "who am I" in various forms and am finding a lowering of the pressure to live in my mind, so for that I say Thank You for the teaching.

I am wanting to come up and be in a weekend retreat but the distance and my current time constraints make that something that will be in the future.

[The reply from Nome:]

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message. I am glad to know that you have an interest in the teachings of Sri Bhagavan.

The source of the assumption of individualized existence, the ego or “I” notion (“I” thought), cannot be another thought, for other thoughts are subsequent to this supposition of “I,” that is, they are further definitions of this “I.” Rummaging through the piecemeal, sporadic, unreliable thoughts conceived as constituting memory will not do much to reveal the true nature of the Self, which is thought-transcendent, timeless, unborn, and imperishable. You, the knower of all thought, cannot possibly be a thought. Therefore, it would be wiser to seek to know yourself and realize what your Existence truly is. The nonobjective, introspective inquiry indicated by the question, “Who am I?” is for this purpose of Self-Realization.

Inquire inwardly, tracing your very sense of existence to its source. The source is not the body and is not the thoughts. Inquire so that you cease to misidentify with such forms.

“Heart” indicates your quintessential Being. Other uses of the term when applied to references pertaining to particular visualized, symbolic meditations mentioned in the Vedas and other Sastras, as well as in reference to yogic lore, must be understood in context. Some exercise of discrimination (viveka) will suffice to bring clarity about this for you. First, inquire and know the Self. Then, you can decide what the heart is, if you so desire.

I hope that you find the above helpful. If ever you find the time or interest to visit the SAT Temple, you will be warmly welcome.

May your inquiry be deep so that you abide in the Knowledge of the Self, the supreme purpose of life, and thus be ever happy and at peace.

Om Namah Sivaya

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[From the same seeker:]



April 15, 2013

Thank You so much for your reply.

When I ask Who am I” it seems that I am asking with the same mind I am trying to kill. So it seems I would not be lead to the source as the I won’t want me to?

[Nome’s reply:]

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. The knowledge of your very Existence does not depend on the mind and shines even when there is no mind. Inquire at this depth.

Om Namah Sivaya

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[From a SAT member, followed by Nome’s response:]

April 23, 2013

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste

Master Nome:

The immense gratitude for the teachings of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, made so clear by you, travel with me as I accompany my wife for the impending death of her father. I miss SAT even though what is here is there.

Master Nome you are deep in my heart!

In Devotion eternally

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message and the messages from last week.

The deepest support that you can lovingly give to your wife is the steady, silent, inner abidance in the peace of the truth of the Self, which is unborn and imperishable. That which Sri Bhagavan graciously reveals, what he is, and that which truly all are dwells in your heart. The gratitude for such spiritual treasure makes it your own.

May you, with the fullness of devotion, ever abide in the Knowledge of the Self, realizing which the wise are free from sorrow, and thus remain as immortal, blissful Being.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[A reply to a seeker:]

April 30, 2013

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Peace is of the nature of the Self. Happiness, also, is of the nature of the Self. One cannot truly expect something else to give her what is innately hers. Suffering is caused by such false suppositions. It is wise to thoroughly contemplate this, not only in reaction to some difficulty or loss, but to clearly guide the remainder of your life.

May you abide in the Knowledge of the Self, which is the eternal, perfect fullness.

Om Namah Sivaya

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[This is in response to a seeker who was considering abandoning his form of daily meditation as a means to enhance his inquiry.]

May 1, 2013

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

You may wish to more deeply examine what meditation is before determining whether or not you will engage in it. If the misidentification with the body is abandoned, what becomes of your question? If the misconception that the senses can determine reality is relinquished, what becomes of your question? You may find it helpful to examine, with keen discrimination, what is truly meant by "inquiry," "silence," "Being," etc. If the misidentification with the mind dissolves, what becomes of all these ideas about them? If the objectifying tendency is absent and you truly inquire, Self-Knowledge will be self-evident.

I hope that you find the above helpful. May you, with profound inquiry, ever abide in the Knowledge of the Self, of the nature of Being-Consciousness-Bliss, and thus remain happy and at peace always.

Om Namah Sivaya

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[A devotee of Sri Ramana in India wrote:]

June 10, 2013

Dear sir,

Now my father is improving. At times he comes to know that something that hurts his mind is a thought, he could not come out of it.

Could you kindly suggest,

Thanks

[Nome's reply:]

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

Thoughts are not real. If one inquires for whom they are, this is realized.

Thoughts do not declare their own existence. Who is it that assumes that they exist?

Thoughts do not intrinsically have any importance. Who is it that gives them undue emphasis and assumes that they are valid?

Thoughts unexamined, confused with reality and identity, seem to veil the innate happiness, and thereby one suffers.

Meditating on what is indicated here, with Sri Bhagavan's Grace, happiness, identity, and reality shine clearly free of confusion, as One, and that is the Self.

Ever yours in Sri Bhagavan,

Nome



## *Announcements*

### ***Thank You . . .***

The selfless service we do here to help maintain the temple is prompted by the love we have in our hearts for this teaching. We do not desire acknowledgement for such. We would, though, like to thank all of the folks who perform service at our temple...

Bob Haber: keeping the bathrooms clean, watering plants, sweeping the walkways & parking lot, cleanup after events, cleaning the temple, set-up for events, helping with flower arrangements, general maintenance around the temple; Tim Frank: vacuuming & cleaning the temple, cleanup after pujas and retreats, providing meals at retreats; Myra Taylor: vacuuming & cleaning the temple, providing prasad after satsang & atmotsava, cleanup after pujas and retreats, providing meals at retreats; Raman Muthukrishnan: running the bookstore including mail order service, maintaining the SAT website, mastering recordings of events at SAT, providing prasad after satsang; Sangeeta Raman: helping with the bookstore mail order, organizing things around the temple, providing meals at retreats, providing prasad after satsang & atmotsava, leading kirtans at atmotsava, organizing special events including singing, recitation, and chanting; Wimala Brown: providing meals at retreats and prasad after satsang and at atmotsava; Ganesh Sadasivan: organizing special

events including singing, recitation, and chanting, preparing meals for retreats; Dhanya Sadasivan: preparing meals at retreats and special events; Eric Ruetz: editing and mastering recordings of satsangs and special events, providing meals at retreats, securing the temple; Jim Clark: lighting candles at meditation events, decorating Murtis with flowers, preparing meals at retreats; Richard Clarke: helping with book orders from India; Steve Smith: providing meals at retreats; Advait Sadasivan & Janani Chandran: providing play time at any time for anyone who wishes to play, helping out when asked; Sheila Hillman, providing prasadam after atmotsava and satsangs; Jay Hiremath: transcription; Carol Johnson: transcription; Anandi Muthukumarasamy: providing prasadam after satsang and at atmotsava, cleaning the temple, helping organize library; Ribhu Chandran: providing play time and lots of smiles & giggles; Sabiha Vyas: providing prasadam after satsang and at retreats; Prema Roney: providing prasadam after satsang and at atmotsava; Scott Roney: property and Temple maintenance, property rentals, building altars, preparing wall for mural, & assisting wherever needed; Sivakumar Chandran: property and Temple maintenance, assisting wherever needed, maintains recordings for online bookstore, uploads satsangs on YouTube and Vimeo; Grant Summerville: transcription.



## *Upcoming Special Events*

***Sri Ramana's Self-Realization:*** July 17, 2013

***Guru Purnima:*** July 22, 2013

***Sri Ramana Maharshi Self-Realization Retreat:***

August 30-Sept. 1, 2013



## *Sri Sadisvara Mandiram*

Everything we do at SAT has the direct purpose of evoking devotion in the heart and inducing the immediate experience of the Self. This purpose is fulfilled by all the events held at SAT—satsangs, meditations, Ramana darshanams, atmotsavas, temple sevas, special events, retreats, and publications. This purpose is also fulfilled by the design of the Temple itself including the deities and symbols used throughout the Temple for worship and meditation. SAT has the good fortune of already housing the Temple deities Dakshinamurti, Nataraja, Lingodbhava, Ardhanariswara, and Lingam, which are worshipped regularly at SAT events. To complete the Temple, deities Ganesha and Subramania (Skanda) are to be added. Devotees endeavor to build a proper shrine for these deities downstairs in the front entry to the temple. The “Sri Sadisvara Mandiram” would also include Nandi and an additional Lingam to the one that is already situated in the Inner Shrine outside the Satsang Hall. In addition, murtis of Ribhu and Adi Sankara will take their place in the Satsang Hall near the front Ramana altar next to the dais.

The “Sri Sadisvara Mandiram” will provide an atmosphere in which devotees visiting the temple may experience puja, engage in pradakshina, listen to vedic chanting, read scripture, and worship.

To find out more about this holy endeavor and if you are inspired to sponsor this project, visit the SAT website at:

[satramana.org](http://satramana.org) and then click on “Sri Sadisvara Mandarim” located in the sidebar menu.

Om Namah Sivaya