



*Silently
Celebrating
26 Years in
Sri Bhagavan*

Reflections

SAT Temple

July . August . September 2015



*"Worship united with
the understanding that
the universe is the
Lord, is worship of God
bearing eight forms."*
-Sri Ramana, Essence of
Spiritual Instruction



"Samsara is just this much—the feeling 'this exists.' When this feeling or wrong notion ceases, there is liberation. This is the essence of all wisdom. When the heart has been cleansed of desire, then the instructions of the preceptor are reflected perfectly in it. Whenever desire arises in one's heart, knowing that it is extremely destructive, one should, with the weapon of non-awareness of the object of that desire, destroy it. Rid of desire, the jiva abandons its conditioning or limitedness or finitude. When the object is not held in the mind, desire for it does not arise. The mind is quiescent, and this is known as pratyahara (introversion of mind). By this all desires are destroyed."
-Vasistha

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Sri Bhagavan accomplishes all that is true, good and beautiful;

the ego produces the opposite of these virtues. A good deed is done. Those practicing the destruction of vasanas through Self-Inquiry know that we are infinitesimal instruments in His hands. For us, we are intent on renouncing the ego. Vigilant, should the ego-notion arise desiring recognition for a deed, we are ready, strengthening our dispassion with our tool of Self-inquiry, not willing to settle for something so small. We know our goal—the annihilation of the “person” wanting glory, and we will not accede to anything less than the limitless Bliss of the Self. In this egoless state of true anonymity, we know that nothing is ours to give, that Sri Bhagavan does all that is true, good, and beautiful, and that He alone is to be glorified. SAT offers a myriad of means to glorify Him. One way is through puja worship at special events.

Special events held at the SAT Temple during the months of April and May . . .

In this past quarter, Bhagavan graced us with Adi Sankara Jayanti on Wednesday, April 22nd; Citragupta Day on Sunday, May 3rd; Sri Sadisvara Mandiram Pratishta on Thursday, May 14th; and The Self-Knowledge Retreat on May 22-24.

The following pages contain images of these events and some of the texts that were read during each event.

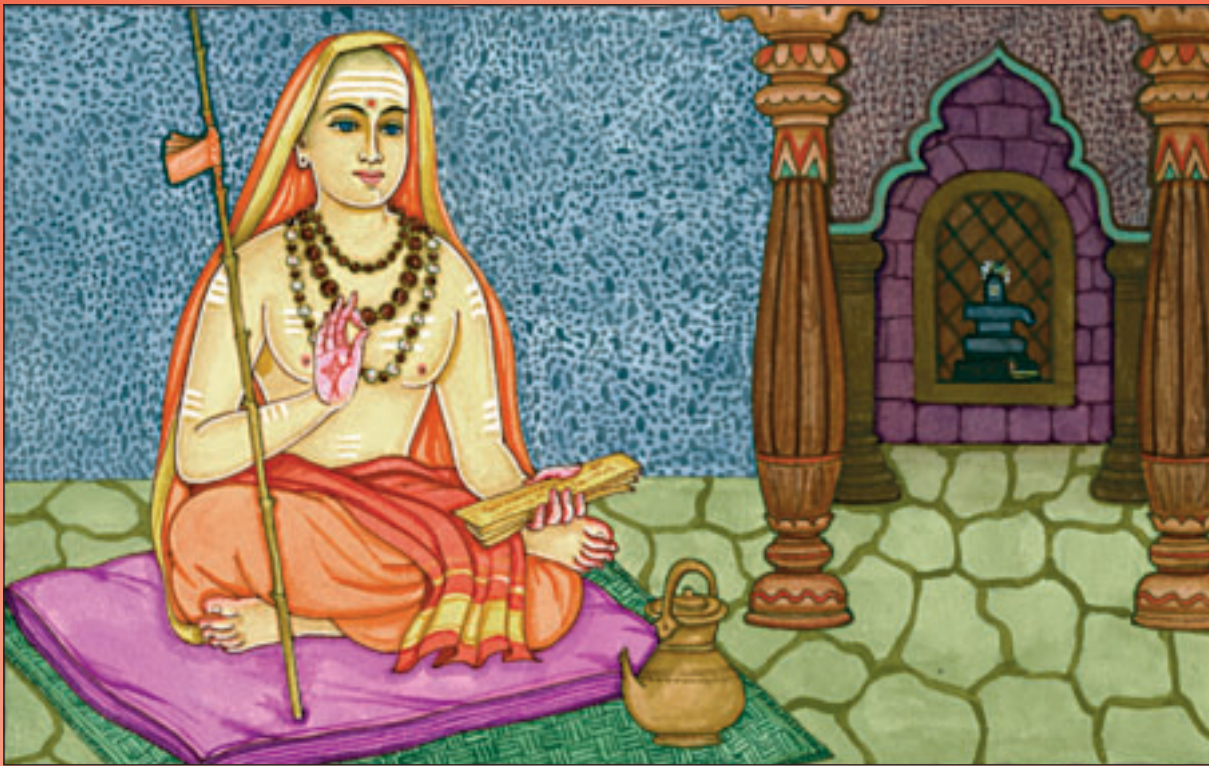


Adi Sankara Jayanti

Some verses from: Advaitanubhutih (The Nondual Awareness)

by Adi Sankara, Trans. by Dr. Ramamoorthy and Nome, A Bouquet of Nondual Text, SAT, 2006

Image courtesy of Himalayan Academy



1

I am indicated by "Bliss," "Truth," and such.
That which alone is, Siva,
That nature which is by itself ever blissful and
such,
I am, the motionless and nondual.

2

Just as, due to a defect in the eye,
The moon, even though one, appears as if two,
Likewise, due to illusion (delusion)
The Self, even though one, falsely appears as if
two.

3

Just as, for those devoid of a defect in the eye,
The moon is only one,
Likewise, for those devoid of the defect of
delusion,
The Self, indeed, is ever One.

4

Being two appears due to a defect in the eye, in
the case of the moon;
So, by its own delusion, [does] the world (the
universe).
Just as being two is false in the case of the
moon,
So, likewise, duality is false in the case of the
Self.

5

The effect of the Self, space,
Will not arise (exist) without the Self;
Completeness of the effect being accomplished
(established),
How much more is this so for the completeness
of the Self !

6

Just as space, being the effect,
Is only one and not, indeed, twofold,
So, this Self, being the cause,
Is only One for those who know.

7

Just as space, though only one,
Appears as if two, being conditioned (limited),
So, likewise, this Self, though only one and
complete,
Being conditioned, [appears] as if two.

8

Consciousness, which is the cause that is
conditioned,
Stays as the Consciousness, which is the effect,
and is not greater (more). The space of the pot,
the cloud, [or] the clay
Will not be greater anywhere.

9

Just as space with limitation removed
Is only one,
Likewise, this Self, with limitation removed,
Is only One ever.

10

Just as, from space another space
Is, indeed, not for space,
Because of oneness of the Self, also,
Another self does not arise (originate) from the
Self.

11

Just as water, by association with a cloud,
Appears in the form of a water vessel,
Likewise, indeed, the Self, by association with
delusion,
Appears in the form of the universe.

12

By association with a cloud,
Water, itself, appears as a rain-laden cloud.
By destruction of the rain-laden cloud,
There is, indeed, no destruction of the water.

13

Likewise, this Self, indeed, appears,
By association with delusion (illusion), as the
manifest universe.
By the destruction of the manifest universe,
there is not, indeed,
Destruction of one's own Self at any time.

14

Just as a bubble, arisen from water,
Appears as if different from water,
So, likewise, this manifest universe in multiplic-
ity
Appears as if separate from the Self.

15

Just as, by the destruction of the bubble,
There is not, at any time, destruction of the
water,
So, likewise, by the destruction of the manifest
universe,
There is not, indeed, destruction of the Self.

16

Purity and such pertaining to the slough of a
snake
Do not attach to the snake.
Likewise, purity and such related to the gross
body and such
Do not attach to this (Self).

17

Just as the snake does not consider
The slough that is discarded as being itself,
So, always does the man of Wisdom (jnani), with
Self-hood
The triad of bodies renounced.

18

Just as, by the destruction of the slough of the
snake,
There is, indeed, no destruction of the snake,
So, likewise, by the destruction of the triad of
bodies,
There will be no destruction of the Self.

19

Just as buttermilk and such mixed with salt is
considered salty by the ignorant,
The Self, in association with the gross body and
such,
Is wrongly considered as if the one in the gross
body and such.

20

Just as iron, wood, and others,
Being united with fire, appear like fire,
The gross body and such, all,
Being united with one's own Self, [appear] as if
the Self.

21

That which burns is not, indeed, that which is
to be burnt.
Likewise, that which is to be burnt is not that
which burns.
The Self is not, indeed, the non-Self,
And the non-Self is not the one that is the Self.

22

By which the triad of Veda-s shine with their
meaning,
Like pots and walls by the sun,
That, indeed, am I,
Devoid of the characteristics of being measura-
ble and such.

23

Just as, by the shining of the sun,
Pots and others are as if shining,
So, likewise, the Veda-s and others are
As if shining by the shining of the Self.

24

Just as flour and such, being mixed with jaggery,
Become enjoyable like jaggery,
Being connected with the Self,
The Veda-s and such (what is to be ascertained
and such) become satisfying like the Self.



Chitragupta Day

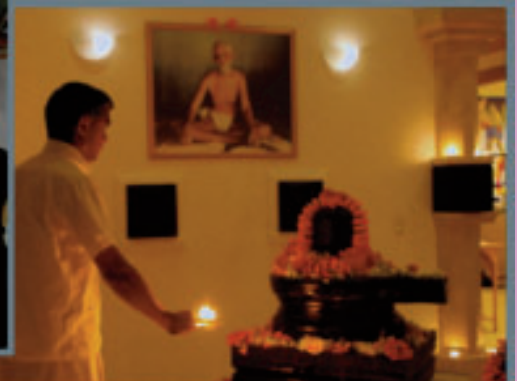
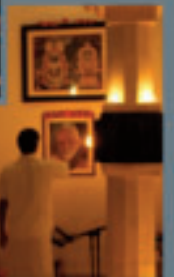
Yama's (Dharmaraja's) Praise of Siva

Skanda Purana 4:2:78:32-41

Dharma said:

32. Obeisance, obeisance to the cause of all causes. Obeisance, obeisance to the one without a cause. Obeisance, obeisance to you who are the nature of the effect (the purpose). Obeisance to the one whose nature is different from the effects (with effects destroyed/separated from effects).
33. To the one whose form is formless, to the one who is all forms, to the one whose nature is the subtlest, to the one who is prior and after (to the one who is the higher and the lower), to the one who carries one across the boundless sea [of samsara], to the one who grants the further shore of the extensive waters [of illusion], to you, the moon-crested one, obeisance.
34. You are without a lord (having no other lord over you). You are the Lord of the universe. You are the nature of the attributes (gunas). You are without attributes. You are beyond time. You are beyond prakriti. To the one who is time, to the original nature of time (and death), to you, obeisance.
35. You alone are the bestower of the abode of Nirvana. You alone are the infinite power of Nirvana (or: you alone are Nirvana, Oh, infinite power). You alone are the nature of the Self. You alone are the nature of the Supreme Self. You are the inner Self of the moving and the unmoving.
36. Oh, sole kinsmen of the universe, from you the universe [originates], you, indeed, are really (evidently) the universe, and the universe is yours. You are the first creator, the protector, and the destroyer, the Lord of Vidhatr (Brahma) and Vishnu. Obeisance, obeisance [to you].
37. You are the bestower of compassion to those who follow the path of the Vedas. You alone are the terrible one to those who do not follow the path of the Vedas. Oh, Soma (one with Uma), you are the benefactor of those possessing (living in) excellent devotion. Oh, Rudra, you are the fierce one to those devoid of devotion.
38. You are the trident bearer to the hateful (hostile). You alone are Siva (the auspicious) for those with humble minds and words. You are the sole glorious-throated one to those who resort to your feet. You are the fierce-throated one with the poison halahala to the wicked ones.
39. May this obeisance be to you, Oh, Sankara, the quiescent one. Obeisance to you, Oh, Shambu, adorned with a digit of the moon (the crescent moon). Obeisance to you, the one with serpents for ornaments, with the pinaka (bow) in the hand. Obeisance to the enemy of Andhaka.
40. He, indeed, is blessed (fortunate) who has devotion to you. He alone who is your worshipper is meritorious and virtuous. He who always praises you shall be praised by Indra (the unshaken) and other devas (gods).
41. Oh, [Lord with] infinite power, who here like me with an insignificant intellect is capable of praising your magnificence, you here who are inaccessible to the words of the ancients? This prayer to you is only bowing with humility to you.

Selected verses from the Katha Upanishad were also read during this event. The significance of Chitrugupta and the legend behind him can be found in the previous issue of Reflections.



Sri Sadisvara Mandiram Pratishtha

Verses from the Siva Gita (Padma Purana)

by Dr. P.K. Sundaram, Publisher: The Centenarian Trust, 1997

Where one's mind revels in the thought on Siva irrespective of restrictions of time, place, or location, there he will attain by sure contemplation union with Siva of becoming one with Siva himself. 1:30

The Self, which is unsullied by blemish, the very embodiment of Existence-Consciousness-Bliss, and all perfection is neither born nor dies nor partakes of sorrow. 2:6

It is the jiva alone that thinks of itself as "I am joyous; I am miserable," deleted by the maya of Siva, though it is by nature supernal light and unattached. 2:35

The six-fold enemies, desire, anger, greed, arrogance, jealousy, and delusion are said to be located in the ego. 2:36

The jiva is found only in the states of waking in dream. Since it, the ego, is absent in deep sleep, the jiva attains there the nature of the Lord Sankara. 2:37

Only it (jiva) conditioned by the internal organ,

Image courtesy of Himalayan Academy



which is the modification of maya, becomes subject to pleasure and suffering. The world is perceived in Siva through maya, just as silver is seen in nacre. 2:38

The discriminative knowledge, being available to everyone, there is none subject to suffering here. Therefore, free yourself from suffering by discriminative knowledge. Why do you grieve in vain? 2:39

Since I save my devotee from the ocean of the dread of being born in the womb, old age, death, and the cycle of births and deaths, I am called the Savior. 6:34

Since there is no second to the transcendent Brahman, which withdraws all the beings into itself, I, that Brahman, alone exist as Rudra. 6:38

Since I rule all the world, along with my wondrous powers, I am the Isana of this universe, the Lord, and the witnessing eye. 6:39

The Scripture extols me, the Isana, as Indra, Brahma, and the Lord of all at all times and the Lord of all knowledge. Hence, I am called Isana (by the Rg and Yajur Vedas). 6:40

I behold all beings. I teach the knowledge of the Self and the path to that knowledge. I pervade everything. Therefore I am called Bhagavan. 6:41

I perpetually create, protect, and dissolve all the worlds and enliven them all. Therefore, I am the great Lord. 6:42

He, the great Lord, glories by the stupendous powers in the yoga of Self-knowledge. He creates and protects all that exists. I am He. 6:43

This God am I, present everywhere. I was prior to everything else. I am in the womb. I am the born and that which is to be born. I have faces in every direction. I am the indwelling spirit in beings. 6:44

I have eyes everywhere. I face in all directions. My arms are everywhere. My feet are everywhere. With my arms and feet, I command the world, producing, as one secondless Lord, the earth and the heaven. 6:45

Knowing me as Brahman, the bliss, from which speech, along with the mind, recoils unable to reach it, one does not fear anything whatsoever. 6:49

From me alone everything is born. In me everything is established. In me everything is resolved. I am that Brahman, which is secondless. 6:52

I alone am the subtler than the subtlest. Similarly, I am the great. I am the universe and am pure (unsullied by the creation). I am the most ancient. I am the complete being. I am golden and of the very nature of auspiciousness, Siva. 6:53

I am without hands or feet. I am of inconceiv-

able power. I see without eyes. I hear without ears. I am every manifest form, and there is no one who knows me. I am ever the Consciousness. 6:54

I am alone the one revealed by all the Vedas. I am the author of Vedanta, and I am alone the knower of the Vedas. There are no merits and demerits in me. There is no destruction for me; nor are there birth, body, senses, and the intellect for me. 6:55

Earth, water, fire, and air do not find a place in me; nor is there space. Thus knowing the nature of the supreme Self indwelling the cave of the heart, partless and secondless, the witness of all, devoid of cause and effect, one attains the pure supreme Self. 6:56

Oh Rama, of great intelligence! One who knows me truly, he alone, and none else, in all the worlds attains the fruit of Liberation. 6:57

The Self is the truth, knowledge, and infinity, the embodiment of supreme bliss. The supreme Self is the supreme light, the unmanifested, and the cause of all that is manifested. 10:5

Eternal am I, pure, the Self of all, unattached, actionless, devoid of any kind of attributes or objects, and ungraspable even by the mind. 10:6

I am not graspable by any sense organ. Indeed, I am the knower of everything. I am the knower of all the world. There is no one who knows me. 10:7

I am beyond the reach of all evolutionary modifications and atomic configurations. 10:8

Having known that I am Brahman, of the nature of bliss, from which words recoil powerless to reach me, one does not have fear from anyone. 10:9

One who clearly sees all beings as abiding in me only and me in all beings does not hate anymore. 10:10

There is no delusion or sorrow for one for whom everything is known to be the very Self and who sees the oneness of all. 10:11

The subtle Self is not evident to beings, though equally resident in all of them, but it is seen by the astute observers by their trained and subtle intellect. 10:12

Just as a pot filled with seawater immersed in the sea carries only the water from the same sea, so the Self of Awareness (vijnana-atma) from the birthless (Brahman). 10:59

Brahman, the cause, verily appears as the intelligent soul (vijnana-atma). When ignorance and its effects are present, the world of differences as between Brahman and the soul is experienced. When these are dissolved, differences, too, disappear. 10:60

Just as the one sun appears to be many when reflected in various waters, similarly, the changeless, supreme Spirit appears to be coming and going. 10:61

Knowing that I am that Brahman which is manifest in the worlds of waking, dream, and deep sleep, one is liberated from all bonds. 12:33

I am the experiencer, the object of experience, and the experience itself. I am the witness Self in all of the three states, the undifferentiated consciousness alone, the eternally auspicious,

Sadasiva, of a luminous nature. 12:34

Luminous like billions of midday suns, cool like billions of moons, having the sun, the moon, and fire as three eyes, and a face like a beautiful lake, on this one should meditate. 12:35

One God is hidden in all the beings, all pervasive, the inner Self of all beings, the one presiding over all existence, the one who lives in all, the witnessing Consciousness, the attributeless, that which alone is. 12:36

Just as one fire, entering the world, assumes various forms of objects, similarly, the one Lord who is the indwelling Self of all beings is not touch by the sorrows of the world and is outside. 12:38

One who knows here in this life, itself, this great Spirit (Purusa) of the color of the sun and beyond darkness, he alone is a wise one and becomes immortal here. There is no other path known for release. 12:39

One who is endowed with a peaceful mind and such sees me as being his very

Self and remains as Brahman alone, one without a second, and of the nature of transcendental light. Thus, to remain in one's own nature is called release (liberation). 13:8
Brahman is truth, knowledge, infinity, and bliss, that which alone is. It is devoid of any attributes and inaccessible to mind and speech. 13:9

Just as the cloud-city is seen in the sky but has no reality, just so all of this universe is falsely presented in me through beginning-less ignorance. 13:12

When the ignorance perishes by the knowledge of my true nature, I alone remain as one alone, beyond speech and mind. 13:13

I, indeed, am always Existence, supreme Bliss, self-luminous, the Consciousness-Self. There is no time, none of the five elements, no quarters, and no intermediate directions. 13:14

There is nothing other than myself. That I am, alone. 13:15





The Self-Knowledge Retreat

Origin of Spiritual Instruction

by Sri Ramana Maharshi

Disciple: What are the distinctive marks of a Guru (of a real teacher (Sadguru)) or Master, that enable one to know and recognize him as such?

Master: The Guru is one who at all times abides in the profound depths of the Self. (Steady abidance in the Self, looking at all with an equal eye, unshakable courage at all times, in all places and circumstances.) He never sees any difference between himself and others, and he is not in the least obsessed by false notions of distinction, that he himself is the enlightened one (jnani, i.e., has realized Truth) or is the liberated one (mukta), while others around him are languishing in bondage or immersed in cimmerian darkness of ignorance. His firmness or self-possession can never be shaken under any circumstances, and he is never perturbed.

D.: What are the requisite qualifications of a disciple? (Of an earnest disciple (sadsishya?))

M.: He should have an intense and incessant longing to get free from the miseries of life¹ and to attain supreme spiritual Bliss. He should not have the least desire for anything else.

D.: What is the essential feature of upadesa, or spiritual instruction, to the disciple by the Master?

M.: The term “upadesa” literally means restoring an object nearest to its true and proper place. The mind of the disciple having become differentiated from its true and primal state of pure Being, or the Self, which the scriptures describe as Sat-Chit-Ananda, Being-Consciousness-Bliss, slips away from it and, assuming the form of thought, ever runs after the objects of sense gratification. Thus, the mind gets buffeted and battered by the vicissitudes of life and becomes weak and dispirited. Now, upadesa, or spiritual instruction, consists in the Master (the Guru who is the embodiment of that which is indicated by the terms sat, cit, and Ananda—existence, consciousness, and bliss) restoring the mind of the

disciple to its primal state and effectively preventing it from slipping away from that state of pure Being, of absolute identity with the Self, or, in other words, the spiritual Being of the Master. (And establishes him in his own real nature without differentiation.)

The term “upadesa” may also be understood as presenting an apparently distant object to one's near view; i.e., it consists in the Master showing to the disciple, as immediate and identical with the disciple, that which he has been considering (viz., the Self, or Absolute (Brahman)) as distant and different from himself.

D.: If, as the above statement implies, the spiritual Being of the Master is really identical with that of the disciple (the Guru is one's own Self), why then have the scriptures categorically declared that however great the attainments² of a seeker may be, he cannot have spiritual awakening (attain Self-Realization) except with the Master's Grace?

M.: It is true, indeed, that, in the spiritual sense, the Being of the Master is identical with that of the disciple. It is, however, very seldom that a person can realize his true Being without the Grace of the Master. Mere book learning, however profound and extensive, or doing rare, meritorious, and apparently impossible deeds does not enable one to obtain true Enlightenment. Ask such a scholar or hero, “Do you know yourself?” and he will be constrained to admit his ignorance. Verily, it is impossible, except at the feet of the Master and in his divine Presence, for the seeker to reach and abide in that true and primal state of pure Being, or the Self, in which the mind is entirely subdued and all of its activity has completely ceased. Hence, it is said that the Master's Grace is essential for the spiritual awakening of the disciple.

D.: What then is the Grace of the Master?

M.: It is far too subtle to describe, since it transcends thought and speech.

D.: If that is so, where is the basis in experience for saying that with the Grace of the Master the disciple realizes his true Being?

M.: The disciple's experience of the Master's Grace, whereby he gets spiritual awakening, is likened unto that of the elephant waking up from sleep on seeing a lion in his dream.³ Just as the mere sight of the dream-lion wakes up the elephant from his sleep, even so the mere gracious glance of the Master dispels the disciple's sleep of ignorance and awakens him to the Real. (Into the wakefulness of true Knowledge.)

D.: What is the truth underlying the scriptural dictum that the Master is verily God, Himself, or the Supreme Being?

M.: The scriptures declare that, for the sake of the aspirant, who, seeking true Knowledge and Enlightenment, in other words to realize the Supreme, is devoted (always practices devotion) to the Lord with no desire but to obtain His Grace, that Divinity, which is really the core of his being and is ever present in him as pure Consciousness, the Seer of sight, takes up, at the right time, as a result of such devotion and out of solicitude for him, a human form with the three-fold inherent qualities of Sat-Chit-Ananda and appears before him as the Master. Further, the scriptures state explicitly that, through his Grace, the Master helps and enables the disciple to lose himself⁴ utterly in and become even as, or identical with, his Master (absorbs him in Himself). The Master should, therefore, be recognized as none other than the Supreme Being.

D.: If the Master's Grace is thus considered essential, how is it that some great men did achieve Self-Realization without having had resort to a Master?

M.: To some ripe souls, it is also true, the Supreme Being, as the Light of light within, imparts spiritual Knowledge. (Shines as the Light of Knowledge and imparts Awareness of the Truth.)

D.: What is the end and aim of the path of devotion, or Siddhanta Marga?

M.: It consists in the devotee leading a life of absolute purity in thought, word and deed. He considers himself merely a servant of the Lord and ever acts with that faith and devotion that has no desire to enjoy the fruits of his labor. Such a

devotee finally comes to realize, not as a matter of intellectual ratiocination, but by direct and indubitable experience and by submergence in the Divine, the truth, namely that all his acts are really the acts of the Supreme Ordainer. He does not feel as having an individual will of his own or any initiative in the acts he does or even an independent being separate from that of the Lord. He is entirely free from the sense of "I" (ahamkara) and "mine" (mamakara), no matter what his body may appear to do or what he may appear to possess. He thus shines in the resplendent glory of selfless Existence. This, indeed, is what is called Parabhakti, or Supreme Devotion,⁵ according to Siva Siddhanta.

D.: What, then, is the final stage on the Path of Knowledge or Vedanta Marga?

M.: It consists in the utter annihilation of kart1tva, or the egoistic notion, "I am the actor" (in other words, ahamkara), by realizing that one has no existence apart from the Supreme Lord, i.e., that the real "I" and the Absolute are one and identical.

D.: Do, then, the Path of Devotion and that of Knowledge lead to the same goal?

M.: Yes, they do.

D.: How can that be?⁶

M.: Mukti, or Liberation, consists in the utter annihilation of the ego, or ahamkara, and the entire destruction of "my" and "mine," or mamakara, by any possible means. Further, as these are found to flourish together, being entirely interdependent, the destruction of either ahamkara or mamakara causes also the destruction of the other. In order to attain that state of supreme Quiescence, or Mauna,⁷ transcending speech and thought, either the Path of Knowledge, or Vedanta Marga, which leads to the annihilation of the ego, or the Path of Devotion, or Bhakti Marga, which results in the destruction of "my" and "mine," is equally effective. Therefore, there can be no doubt that the goal according to either path is one and the same.

Note: It cannot be disputed that the devotee should accept the existence of the Supreme Ordainer as governing his life and conduct so long as the ego, or ahamkara, subsists in him. It

stands to reason, therefore, that his position of entire subordination to the Supreme Lord should be accepted and acted upon until the end, if one desires to reach easily the goal of sayujya, or the realization of one's identity with the Supreme, where the ego is utterly lost.

D.: What is the ego, or ahamkara?

M.: The jiva, or individual being (which identifies its existence with that of life in the physical body), expressing itself as “I,” is called the ego, or ahamkara. The Self, which is pure Consciousness, has no ego-sense about it. Neither can the physical body, which is, by itself, inert, have this ego-sense. In between the two, namely the Self, or pure Consciousness, and the inert, physical body, there arises most mysteriously the ego-sense, or “I”-notion, the hybrid, which is neither of them and flourishes as jiva, or individual being. This jiva is the root cause of all that is futile and undesirable in life. If, therefore, it is destroyed by any possible means, That which ever is alone remains resplendent. This, indeed, is Liberation, or Emancipation. (That which really exists will be seen as it is. This is called Liberation.)

¹ This does not consist in running away from life, but in transcending mind and thought by realizing the eternal Spirit that is beyond birth and death. Such a Sage remains for all time a source of spiritual strength and power.

² These include animadi siddhi-s, or thaumaturgic powers to work miracles, etc., which do not connote

spiritual awakening or enlightenment. The desire for these powers is a positive hindrance to one's spiritual progress.

³ The analogy of the elephant's dream is not intended to suggest that the Master's Grace is unreal like the lion in the dream. The analogy is given merely to explain how the disciple's experience of the Master's Grace constitutes a link between the two states of consciousness, the relative and the absolute. While the former involves the subject-object relation (dvandva-s), the latter transcends such relation (dvandvatita).

⁴ Either by selfless service ever conscious of the Master's immediate presence or by constant meditation on his form, etc.

⁵ Otherwise called “being or standing in service of the Lord (and His devotees).”

⁶ Bhakti Marga, or the Path of Devotion, presupposes the existence of God, in Whose service the devotee lives, thus apparently involving the separate individuality of God and His devotee. Vedanta Marga, or the Path of Knowledge, starts, on the contrary, with the declaration that the Self, or Absolute, is alone real and that it is one and universal. The disciple now seeks to know how the Path of Devotion and that of Knowledge, starting from such apparently irreconcilable positions, could lead to the same goal.

⁷ Quiescence, or Mauna, is the exalted state of abidance in the Self. It also constitutes the highest form of upadesa. Cf. Dakṣiṇāmurti Stotram:

मौनव्याख्या प्रकटितपरब्रह्मतत्त्वम्

maunavyākhyā prakāṭitaparabrahmatattvam

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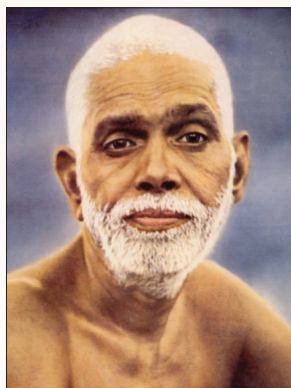
The Boundless Wisdom of Sri Ramana Maharshi

“Living only under trees, eating food out of their palms, disregarding even the Goddess of wealth like an old rag, fortunate indeed are those dressed in a cod-piece.”

Ajapa Tatvam (The Meaning of Involuntary Japam)

(120) May 23, 1947

This morning at 8 o'clock, an ochre-robed person asked, “Swami, for controlling the mind, which of the two is better, performing japa of the ajapa mantra or of omkar? Please tell me which is more useful?” Bhagavan replied as follows: “What is your idea of ajapa? Will it be ajapa if you go on repeating with the mouth ‘so’ham, so’ham’? Ajapa means to know that japa which goes on involuntarily without being uttered through the mouth. Without knowing the real meaning of that japa, people think that it means repeating with the mouth the words ‘so’ham, so’ham’ lakhs of times counting them on the fingers or on a string of beads. Before beginning a japa, ‘pranayame viniyogah’ is prescribed. That means, first do pranayama (regulating of breath) and then begin repeating the mantra. Pranayama means first closing the mouth, doesn’t it? If, by stopping the breath, the five elements in the body are bound down and controlled, what remains is the real Self. That Self will by itself be repeating always ‘aham, aham.’ That is ajapa. To know that aspect is ‘ajapa;’ how could that which is repeated by mouth be ajapa? The vision of the real Self which performs japa of its own accord involuntarily and in a never ending stream, like the flowing down continuously of ghee, is ajapa, gayatri and everything. At the time of the upanayanam itself, pranayama is taught by anganyasa, karanyasa and other methods of stopping the breathing, and people are asked to understand that ajapa by practice with suitable accompaniments. Without thinking of it, people talk of ajapa. It is the same thing in regard to omkar. Om is all pervading and complete by itself. How can one



do japa of that word with the voice? The sutra is always there: ‘Omityekaksharam Brahma Adviteeyam Sanatanam.’ Without understanding that elementary thing, big books have been written stating the number of times each name should be repeated, such as so many thousands for Ganapathi in Mooladhara and for other chakras, so many thousands for Brahma, so many for Vishnu and Sadasiva. If you know who it is that is doing japa, you will know what the japa is. If you search and try to find out who it is that is doing japa, that japa itself becomes the Self.”

Another person asked, “Is there no benefit at all in doing japa with the mouth?”

“Who said no? That will be the means for chitta suddhi (purifying the mind). As the japa is done repeatedly, the effort ripens and sooner or later leads to the right path. Good or bad, whatever is done, never goes to waste. Only the differences and the merits and demerits of each will have to be told, looking to the stage of development of the person concerned,” said Bhagavan. His Upadesa Saram itself is an authority on the subject.

Karathala Bhiksha (Alms in the Palms)

(123) June 20, 1947

Four or five days back, a notebook of Madhavaswami was found. As Bhagavan was looking into it, he saw a Tamil verse in it written by him, long ago. It was in Malayalam script, and, while transcribing it into Tamil, he told us its meaning: “When a man attains jnana, he will not have any regard for this body. Just as, after taking food, the leaf on which it was taken is thrown away however nice it may be, so also after attaining jnana one will

be waiting eagerly for the time when it can be thrown away. This is the essence of what is stated in this verse."

One devotee asked, "For what reason did Bhagavan write this verse?" "In Tamil, in a book called 'Prabhulingalila,' the same idea was expressed in a verse of four lines, and so, seeing it, I thought it better to write briefly in a smaller verse of two lines," said Bhagavan. He then wrote it in Tamil script and began telling us further as follows: "The symbol of the used leaf has been given by many people. However nicely a leaf plate is stitched, it is useful only until the meal is over. After that, will there be any regard for it? It is immediately thrown away. Rich people have food on silver plates with gold flowers inlaid in them. Why are such things required when we have hands given by God? When I was on the hill, someone got a leaf plate made of silver and requested me to eat from it. I sent it back saying that I did not require it. When the food can be eaten out of the hands, why silver and gold? For a long time, I did not eat food from a leaf. If anybody brought food, I used to stretch out the palms of my hands, and, when the food was put in them, I used to eat it. It is only of late that I have begun eating food served on a leaf."

Another person said, "Is it because of that that Ganapathi Muni praised you saying 'Karathamarasena supatravata'?" Bhagavan replied, "Yes. When you have hands, why all these things? It used to be an exhilarating experience in those days. When I was going out for bhiksha, I used to take the alms in the palms of my hands and go along the street eating it. When the eating was over, I used to go on licking my hands. I never used to care for anything. I used to feel shy to ask anyone for anything. Hence, that karathala bhiksha (alms in the palms) used to be very interesting. There used to be big pundits this side and that; sometimes big government officials also used to be there. What did I care who was there? It would be humiliating for a poor man to go out for bhiksha, but for one who has conquered the ego and become an Advaiti, it is a great elevation of the mind. At that time, he would not care if an emperor came there. In that way, when I went out for bhiksha and clapped my hands, people used to say 'Swami has come,' and give me bhiksha with fear and devotion. Those who did not know me used to say, 'You are strong and sturdy. Instead of going out like this as a beggar,

why don't you go out to work as a cooly?' I used to feel amused. But I was a Mouna (silent) Swami and did not speak. I used to laugh and go away feeling that it was usual for ordinary people to talk like that. The more they talked like that the more exhilarated I felt. That was great fun."

"In Vasishtam, there is a story about Bhagiratha before he brought Ganges down to the earth. He was an emperor, but the empire seemed to him a great obstacle to Atmajignasa (Self-inquiry). In accordance with the advice of his Guru and on the pretext of a Yagna (sacrifice), he gave away all his wealth and other possessions. No one would, however, take the empire. So, he invited the neighboring king who was an enemy and who was waiting for a suitable opportunity to snatch it away, and gifted away the empire to him. The only thing that remained to be done was to leave the country. He left at midnight in disguise, lay in hiding during daytime in other countries so as not to be recognized and went about begging alms at night. Ultimately he felt confident that his mind had matured sufficiently to be free from egoism. Then he decided to go to his native place and there went out begging in all the streets. As he was not recognized by anybody, he went one day to the palace itself. The watchman recognized him, made obeisance and informed the then king about it, shivering with fear. The king came in a great hurry and requested him (Bhagiratha) to accept the kingdom back, but Bhagiratha did not agree. "Will you give me alms or not?" he asked. As there was no other alternative, they gave him alms, and he went away highly pleased. Subsequently, he became the king of some other country for some reason, and, when the king of his own country passed away, he ruled that country also at the special request of the people. That story is given in detail in Vasishtam. The kingdom which earlier appeared to him to be a burden did not trouble him later when he became a Jnani. All that I want to say is, how do others know about the happiness of bhiksha? There is nothing great about begging or eating food from a leaf which is thrown out after taking food from it. If an emperor goes out begging, there is greatness in that bhiksha. Now, bhiksha here means that you must have vada and payasam (pudding). In some months, there will be several such things. Even for padapuja (worshiping of the feet), money is demanded. Unless the stipulated money is tendered beforehand, they may

refuse to take upastaranam (a spoonful of water taken with a prayer before beginning to take food). The unique significance of Karathala Bhiksha has now degenerated to this extent,” said Bhagavan.

मूलं तरोः केवलमाश्रयन्तः ।
पाणिद्वयं भोक्तुममन्त्रयन्तः ।
कन्थामिव श्रीमपि कुत्सयन्तः ।
कौपीनवन्तः खलु भाग्यवन्तः ॥

mūlaṁ taroḥ kevalamāśrayantaḥ ।
pāṇidvayaṁ bhoktumamantrayantaḥ ।
kanthāmiva śrīmapi kutsayantaḥ ।
kaupīnavantaḥ khalu bhāgyavantaḥ ॥

“Living only under trees, eating food out of their palms, disregarding even the Goddess of wealth like an old rag, fortunate indeed are those dressed in a cod-piece.” ॐ



Image courtesy of Himalayan Academy





Freedom From Thought

Satsang, June 23, 2013

Om Om Om
(Silence)

Nome: Throughout every state of mind, waking, dream, deep dreamless sleep, you are the same. What is this “you”? With all of the modes of mind that appear in those states, you exist and are the same. What is the nature of this existence? One of the modes of mind is sensory perception, apart from which there is no experience of objects. You are not a mode of mind. Therefore, the object sensed known as the body is not you. If you are not the body, what are you? Being bodiless and transcendent over all modes and states of mind, there is no change in life or death for you. What is this unchanging existence? This is most certainly the nature of you and not any of the modes of mind.

The Maharshi stated that, of all the vrittis, that is to say, modes of mind or thoughts, the aham vritti, “I” notion or the “I” mode, is primary. This “I” comes and goes; your existence does not. If you are not an “I,” an individual being, what are you? (silence)

Bodiless, you are unborn and imperishable. Free from thought or modes of mind, you are inconceivable, unimaginable. You undoubtedly exist, not as an “I,” not as a “this,” that is, not as an individual, or ego, and not as an object. Inquire to know the nature of this existence. If you so inquire, it will be found to be beginningless, endless, undivided, formless, without condition or state at any time, the eternal, the infinite, Brahman itself.

One should remain free from thought, that is, free from the notions constituting ignorance. Further, one should remain free from thought in the knowledge that one is ever untouched by any thought. Still further, one should be free from

thought in the certainty that thought does not exist. You are not any mode of mind. Cease to misidentify with the content of any of your thoughts and thus know your existence as it is.

Self-Realization therefore, is not a mode of mind. It does not occur within a state of mind. Indeed, transcendent of states of mind, it is not an occurrence. Rather, it is the very nature of that which is realized, the perpetual Being-Consciousness-Bliss.

Is there a mode of mind? For whom would it be? You are not a mode of mind. You can never be a thought. So, what are you? You can think about this if you wish, but really you should inquire and know. In the true Knowledge born of inquiry into the nature of one’s Self, the triadic differentiation of knower, knowing, and known does not appear. Being knows itself with its own self-luminous Knowledge.

Questioner: There is a statement found in the Maharshi’s dialogues, in Talks for instance, in which he’s always suggesting Self-inquiry. “Go back the way you came.” It seems to have a special power.

N.: What did you wish to know?

Q.: Just some of the ways to enjoy the spirit of that particular suggestion. It’s no different than the others, but it seemed very powerful. Whatever impression of personal identity might appear, it need only be reversed.

N.: You have said it. What more need be said? If the infinite appears to become finite, “Go back the way you came.” If the eternal seems to become transitory, “Go back the way you came.” If the egoless and the bodiless seem to have become an embodied individual, inquire and, thereby, “Go back the way you came,” tracing your sense of identity to its source. “I,” then “this,” “Go back the way you came,” not “this,” not “I.” What remains?

Another Q.: I’ve heard it said that thought is a prerequisite for coming up with the thought that

thought does not exist. How would you respond to that?

N.: The nonexistent does not need to exist, in order to be nonexistent.

Q.: Sorry? (laughter)

N.: The nonexistent need not be existent, in order to be nonexistent. So it is with thought. True Knowledge is not thought-dependent.

Q.: That's certainly true. (laughter) Thank you.

N.: If a rope has been mistaken to be a snake in dim lighting, there is no necessity for the snake to exist in order to know that it is unreal. Likewise is it with the reality of the Self and the unreality of all else. The very idea of all else does not exist in the Self, and the Self alone exists eternally.

Q.: Then, there wouldn't really even be anyone who would need to go back the way he came.

N.: Spiritual instruction is given according to the temperament and needs of the seeker. So, if you have come forth, "Go back the way you came." If you have gone back the way you came, you see that you never really came forth.

Q.: I love it. (laughter)

Another.: You said something on Friday about scriptures. It really deepened my appreciation for scripture and how to approach it. If I recall correctly, you spoke of scripture as something that's not intended for the mind or for the body; it's not a sensory thing to be felt, nor is it something to be thought about. In the beginning of the book Sad-darsanam, there is instruction about it is important to understand that this instruction is about you and not about something else. So, I approach listening to your discourse in the same way. It changed the way that I read. I read scripture when I meditate, and it has deepened the way that I approach it. It is very, very helpful to consider what is being said to me is not being said to my mind. It is said to who I really am, with the purpose that I can find that out.

N.: The Consciousness that you really are alone has the power to realize this Knowledge. The senses cannot do so. A bundle of thoughts cannot do so. What was explained on Friday night is that the Knowledge that is thought to be inculcated by the scriptures, and by the spiritual instruction given by sages, is of a nondual nature. Duality, or multiplicity, can be ascertained by other means. It is an illusion, but it can be ascertained by other means through the senses and with the thinking mind. If the purpose of the scriptures were to reinforce belief in multiplicity, they would not be of any use, because the job is already covered by the senses and the thinking mind.

So, they must be for another purpose. That other purpose is sense-transcendent, mind-transcendent Knowledge. That is the Knowledge of Consciousness by Consciousness. If we comprehend this, we can correctly interpret, or understand, what the scriptures impart. What they seek to impart in ever so many ways is the Knowledge of your own true Self.

Q.: The Knowledge comes from within me and not from without.

N.: Yes.

Q.: It has a very different feeling than objective knowledge. I am not attaining and then trying to hold something; Something is being revealed within me that is not at all objective.

N.: Indeed, as soon as the misidentification with the body is abandoned, the entire concept of something coming from outside is relinquished. If you are not the body, then where are the sages, where is Sri Ramana, and where are you? To say that you are the same as he is not quite right. To say that you are different from him is also not right.

Q.: No, both of those would require duality.

N.: And the individual to be in such relation.

Q.: Often, when you pose a question, an answer appears that is not at all objective. It appears as the step that one takes to move inward. I want it to appear more and continuously. It isn't always

posing a question. Sometimes it is a statement. What appears to me is the next step inward that one would naturally follow.

N.: Whether it is a statement or a question, the purpose of it is the inward turning. Consider the question, “Who am I?” What possibly could be the answer to that? The very nature of the inquirer is itself the answer. Direct experience becomes self-evident. Now, if you think in your mind, “Now, I know that the nature of the inquirer is himself the answer,” that is not the answer. That is just a mode of the mind. What was said is, “The nature of the inquirer is the answer.” So, what is your nature? As the Upanishad declares, “Where words and thoughts turn back unable to grasp,” that is the Self, that is Brahman.

Another Q.: Even though previously there was a mental understanding that the self means the Self, I realize now that inquiry is also not for the individual. I’m just realizing that there’s more love to do it for the Self than there is for the individual. More love to do anything for the Self, than there is for the individual.

N.: The individual, or ego, does not count, does it?

Q.: Well, it’s never worked, I’ll say that. (laughter)

N.: First, see that it never works. Then, see that it does not ever count. Finally, see that it never actually exists. For the revelation of that, there is inquiry. It reveals that which is the Self of all. Inquiry is not for the individual self. Inquiry eliminates the idea of an individual self.

(Then followed a recitation in Sanskrit and English of verses from the Ashtavakra Gita.)

(Silence)

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

(Then followed a recitation in Tamil from chapter 6 of the Song of Ribhu.) ॐ

Ineffable

Satsang, April 12, 2015

Om Om Om
(Silence)

Nome: Ineffable, inconceivable, immutable, undifferentiated, nondual, and ever just as it is, is your true Being. Sri Bhagavan said that all of the sastras, the scriptures, are based upon the ego, the elimination of which is their purpose. The sastras point out the ways to realize Mukti. Mukti means Liberation. It is release from all bondage. Bondage, though, is merely imagined, and it is imagined only so long as the ego-notion is assumed to be real. If you profoundly inquire within, “Who am I?”, the ego-notion, being false, vanishes, and all of the imagined bondage ceases, thus fulfilling the intent of the sastras and, indeed, the intent of all upadesa, spiritual instruction.

The ego-notion, the supposition of existing as a limited individual entity, is not something bodily. The means to realize freedom from it, to bring about the destruction of the ego-notion, is nothing bodily. The ego-notion is ignorance, and it is the seed of all other forms of ignorance. What is it that brings about the destruction of ignorance? Inquiry, true Knowledge. So, seek this Knowledge within yourself.

Read the shastras and understand their meaning within yourself. What is yourself? The sastras call it Atman, meaning the Self. What is truly the Self? It cannot be known objectively, for this deals with your Self, not an object removed from yourself. Be certain that you remain free of misidentification with the body, for the body is not dependable, is perishable and is not a definition for yourself, your true Being. The Self is not a body, and there are no bodily signs of Realization of the Self. The Self is not a bodily experience. Seek that Knowledge of yourself which is transcendent of the body.

The Self is not the senses and cannot be sensed. Therefore, seek the Knowledge of the imperceptible Self, by not identifying with the senses. Seek that Knowledge that is non-sensory. It is the interior Knowledge of your actual Existence.

The collection and movement of thoughts that constitute the mind are not the actual definition of

your true Being. Seek the Self which is unimaginable, by means of Knowledge that is inconceivable. The Knowledge that is of the nature of pure Consciousness, devoid of objectivity, is such Knowledge.

If, in this manner, you deeply inquire to realize the significance of "I," the imaginary individuality, or ego, disappears. The residuum, that which remains, is pure Existence-Consciousness-Bliss. Though it is described as such, it remains inconceivable, yet realized. It remains ineffable. Where words and thoughts turn back, unable to grasp, there is your true Being. It ever is just as it is. Being transcendent over the body and the mind, it is without differentiation. It remains formless unmodified, and absolutely One, without anything else existing whatsoever. All of the ideas of something else, from the notion of "I," extending to the forms of the world, are based upon the ego-notion, the elimination of which is the purpose of your sadhana, or spiritual practice. To fulfill this purpose, inquire deeply, "Who am I?"

Questioner: Thank you Master for your instruction, beginning with the ineffability of the Self, ending with it, and the instruction on destroying the ego-notion in between. How to best make use of that instruction about the ineffable? To contemplate infinity suggests such an overwhelming reasonableness of humility. A false personal idea would be an

insignificant speck, To really let the idea of the Infinite keep expanding, even if there was an idea of an individual, it shrinks so fast to nothingness, that it sets the right receptivity to the instruction of destruction of the ego.

N.: Then, you have answered your own question.

Q.: The Eternal is even more powerful I feel for me. Because the Happiness that is the Self, being everlasting lends it so much importance, so much significance, It is so important that it strengthens the aspirant to listen to the rest of the teaching.

N.: So, one does not merely stop with formulating an idea that corresponds to the word, but plunges inward in order to have direct experience. The nature of the direct experience is indescribable.

(Then followed a recitation in Sanskrit and English of verses of the Avadhuta Gita.)

(Silence)

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

(Then followed a recitation in Tamil from Chapter 3 of the Song of Ribhu.) ॐ

It is the mercy of my true Guru that has made me to know the unknown; I have learned from Him how to walk without feet, to see without eyes, to hear without ears, to drink without mouth, to fly without wings; I have brought my love and my meditation into the land where there is no sun and moon, nor day and night. Without eating, I have tasted of the sweetness of nectar; and without water, I have quenched my thirst. Where there is the response of delight, there is the fullness of joy. Before whom can that joy be uttered? Kabir says: The Guru is beyond words, and great is the good fortune of the disciple.

- Kabir, Songs of Kabir, trans. Rabindranath Tagore

From The Ramana Way

The following articles appear in the July 1999 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

Ramanananda Swarnagiri states: “I arrive at this stage of stillness of mind. I have no thought of any kind and there is an emptiness... A mild light pervades, and I feel that it is myself bodiless. I have neither cognition nor vision of body and form...” Bhagavan answers: “Such a condition is termed manolaya or temporary stillness of thought. Manolaya means concentration, temporary arresting the movement of thoughts. As soon as this concentration ceases, thoughts, old and new, rush in as usual, and, even though this temporary lulling of mind should last 1,000 years, it will never lead to total destruction of thought...”



The Doctor’s Prescription: Leaving Laya Behind

By Dr. Sarada

From dawn to dusk, from dream to waking, the mind is busy, busy spinning thoughts. It is practically a round-the-clock factory with a brief break, in sleep, deep sleep. For the most part we seem quite happy, too, with this immense scale of production. Then again, we are sometimes worried by the inept nature of certain thoughts, and, at those times, we long for the possibility of mind control. There are also times when we wish for a real respite, when we wish to be free of thoughts. Indeed, we become almost convinced that an absence of thoughts is the very goal we are seeking. And towards this end we work.

Any experience, for a brief or long while, which in itself is or leads to an absence of thoughts gives us great satisfaction. Perhaps not a bubbling bliss, but a certain sense of calmness. Surely, when the continuous drone of heavy machinery ceases, the lull would be very welcome. When the unbroken gunfire of thought ceases a while, the resultant calm would be sweet, indeed. So sweet, sometimes, that we strive to hold onto it, to prolong it, to nurture it even and to believe that this cease-fire is indeed the end of warfare. If a cease-fire can be made to continue for two days instead of one, for a week, a month, a whole year, hey! wouldn’t that mean that peace has come to stay? Unfortunately, not necessarily. If the basic factors that brought about the war in the first place have not been tackled, if the economy has not been stabilized, if prejudice and hatred have not been wiped out, if joy and love and harmony have not filled the hearts of the warring people, then it is only a

prolonged cease-fire. It would not be the end of the war; it would not be the coming of peace. Sinner walls may be broken down, yet, unless hearts unite, disaster strikes again, sooner or later, in the ugly forms of racism, or marginalization, of inhuman, mad massacres from time to time for some apparently logical but truly insane reasons. Forced cease-fire may be maintained for as long as ever almost by the presence of a stronger authority. Yet, the moment that authority departs, the fighting breaks out once more. We have seen it happen everywhere, every time. In our war with thoughts, the situation is quite similar. A mere absence of thoughts, a lull, is like a cease-fire. The duration may be short or very prolonged, but eventually thoughts return with all their positive and negative concomitants. Yes, the reign of tendencies revives. Unless, of course, this cessation of thoughts is not enforced or brought about by any external factor but is a natural result of steady Self-awareness, the silence, the bliss surging forth and swallowing all in its inundation. The crucial factor, then, is to distinguish a temporary lull from a natural silence and do away with it if the experience be the former. This lull is laya. And while it is no negative experience, its danger lies in its deceiving us into believing it to be the destination. Success on the Selfward path, then, would be in identifying laya if and when it occurs and then moving forward in leaving laya behind as it were.

Symptoms of the disease

1. Absence of thoughts for a temporary period of time. Temporary, as we have said, must be understood to mean not permanent. It may even last for years sometimes.

2. As a corollary to the above, laya does not result in a dissolution of any tendency. The mind with all its thoughts remains absolutely the same after laya as it had been before. This is why the absence of thoughts is termed temporary.

3. A certain sense of calmness is surely experienced because of the very absence of thoughts (though purely temporary).

4. A tendency to return to, hold onto, or to perpetuate this calmness, mistaking it for the natural silence of the Self.

5. The sheer continuance of the experiencer for whom the laya is and who seeks to return to it.

Possible benefits

1. The knowledge through experience that it is possible and within one's power to remain without thoughts for a stretch of time.

2. As a continuation of or conclusion from the above, the experience that the absence of thoughts is not a negative state, not a state to be feared. Indeed, is quite pleasant.

3. As it indicates progress in one's practice, it can act as reinforcement to keep us holding on to the pursuit of Self-knowledge. It gives us the confidence that one is making some headway, moving in the right direction.

Note: These very benefits often get transformed into hurdles if not viewed and handled with alertness. For instance, our joy at being able to remain without thoughts makes us seek to prolong that state. Its pleasantness compounds the danger. The sense that this experience is in the right direction and a recognition of one's own power to bring about such an experience at will both lead to a tendency to stay with the experience and a reluctance to travel beyond it. What is wrong with that? It comes to me quite naturally and is very pleasant. Why should I seek to drop it? And this is where the disease of laya really strikes. For, the experience in itself is not dangerous. But tragedy would strike if we mistake it for the ultimate experience, consciously or unconsciously, and refused to leave it behind.

Course of treatment

1. What is laya? Unless we are able to recognize it how would we ever seek to transcend it? It is all important, therefore, to be able to know laya when one experiences it. Let us look first at the various dictionary meanings of the term: Laya is born from the root Li. Li means cling, stick to, adhere, recline on, settle on, lie, disappear, dissolve. Laya will mean: sticking, adherence; fusion, solution, disappearance, dissolution, destruction, absorption, deep concentration, exclusive devotion (to any object), rest, repose, a place of rest, abode, making the mind inactive, indifferent, mental inactivity, a swoon.

It is obvious that, as with all Sanskrit words, the term laya acquires different meanings in various contexts. Some of these meanings may not be relevant at all to our context. Others may indicate a positive connotation. Hence, the word has to be

understood in the proper context. (The word “aham” in Tamil, for instance means “ego,” “home,” “heart,” it is used by Bhagavan in all these contexts in his Marital Garland of Letters. The root “li” is used in the positive context of sticking, adherence, exclusive devotion by Viswanatha Swami in his Astottaram on Bhagavan when he hails Him as “Sonacalamaholina manasaha.” This makes it clear that to understand the place of laya in spiritual practice we have to look at its meaning from the manner in which Bhagavan has explained it. There is a lucid chapter in Crumbs From His Table on the very subject. Ramanananda Swarnagiri states: “I arrive at this stage of stillness of mind. I have no thought of any kind and there is an emptiness... A mild light pervades, and I feel that it is myself bodiless. I have neither cognition nor vision of body and form...” Bhagavan answers: “Such a condition is termed manolaya or temporary stillness of thought. Manolaya means concentration, temporary arresting the movement of thoughts. As soon as this concentration ceases, thoughts, old and new, rush in as usual, and, even though this temporary lulling of mind should last 1,000 years, it will never lead to total destruction of thought...” Let us also look at Bhagavan’s explanation of laya in Upadesa Saram in verses 11 and 13: “The mind becomes quiescent by regulation of breath, like a bird caught in a net. This is a means of mind control.” “Control of the mind is of two kinds, its lulling and its destruction. A lulled mind will rise again, but not the one which is destroyed.”

In Ramana Gita, Bhagavan gives a similar example for a mind controlled by restraint of breath: “Then it would, like a tethered animal, cease to stray.” Again, in the chapter, The Science of the Heart, Bhagavan says: “When there is forcible arrest of thoughts by swooning, sleep, excessive joy or sorrow, fear and so on, the mind goes back to its source, the Heart.” “Such merger is unconscious and the person is unaware of it. However, when one consciously enters the Heart, it is termed ‘samadhi.’”

From these we can arrive at a clear understanding of the state that is termed laya:

I) Laya is a state of mental quietude. The dictionary definitions of disappearance, dissolution, rest, repose, mental activity, apply. However, the meanings destruction and exclusive devotion are not applicable to this state.

II) The experience is pleasant and can be brought about by deep concentration and/or breath regulation.

III) The experience is similar to what happens in sleep, swoon (one of the definitions) and in any state of excessive emotion. However, these mergers, dissolutions of the mind, take place unconsciously, without one’s knowledge or volition. Laya, on the other hand, is a state that occurs in the course of spiritual practice. It happens, therefore, with one’s volition. It can be repeated by the practitioner, and it can also equally be dropped if it is considered unnecessary or obstructive to further progress.

IV) The question follows that, if it is not an involuntary stillness like that in excessive emotion or swoon, why is it considered to be different from the natural silence. Or, how is one to recognize it as such? The important factor here, which it shares with the other states of quiescence, is that it is a forcible arrest of thoughts. Laya is a stillness brought about by the application of an external force. This force may be the sudden upsurge of emotion of which one is unaware or the planned breath regulation of which one is aware. In either case, there is an external agency causing the thought vacuum. When the application of this force is withdrawn, the mind returns to its original state. The factors distinguishing laya from merger in the Self are: (a) there is no change after laya. This is the most important sign to signify whether an experience is laya, lulling, or destruction. Bhagavan says that, even after thousands of years of such laya Samadhi or yoganidra, one would wake up with the last thought that happened prior to laya. If even the last superficial thought does not vanish, what of the deep rooted-latent tendencies? (b) The presence of identity, of ego, of individuality, is undisturbed by laya. The individual is happy with the experience. Whose experience? His or hers. And the individual wishes to repeat it. “I experienced this and can experience it again at will.” In the natural destruction of the mind, the way and the seeker both disappear totally, in the silence, the fullness that is the Self. No tendency survives. Identity itself is lost.

V) The experience of laya is temporary. The arrest of thoughts is temporary as they return the moment the pressure is released. The stillness comes and goes. Again it must be stressed that

“comes” and “goes” does not mean even for a few minutes or hours. It could be for years. Then, how is one to recognize that the experience is laya? By the presence of the experiencer, of course, by the continuation of duality. “I am experiencing this pleasant stillness.” There is the “I,” the subject and the object, “the experience.” This is also the means to distinguish it from natural intermittent dips into the Self, which Bhagavan terms “abhyasa.” Because these mergers are also not continuous one should not dismiss them as laya. Nor can one argue that laya is a natural merger into the source that is intermittent. In the latter, though for a brief while, the sense of identity would be totally dissolved, like a bucket of water in a well. Secondly, when such merger occurs, the peace, the bliss, and the upsurge of love would continue even after one comes out of the experience. The thought-force, itself, would be very minimal even when one is back to functioning with identity.

2. Having understood the nature of laya one must strive to leave it behind, to cross over it. Bhagavan clearly warns: “One must not allow oneself to be overtaken by such spells of stillness of thought. The moment one experiences this, one must revive consciousness and inquire within as to who it is who experiences the stillness... By such inquiry, you will drive the thought-force deeper until it reaches its source and merges therein...” It is crystal clear that Self-inquiry must be used to pursue the mind beyond laya and into the source.

3. Laya is not a negative state. As Bhagavan indicates, “...it is a clear sign of one’s progress, but the danger of it lies in mistaking it for the final goal of spiritual practice and being thus deceived.” While everyone may not experience laya as a specific milestone in spiritual practice, one may experience similar states in the course of one’s life. Hence, laya, wherever, however it occurs, could well be utilized as a stepping stone to merger in the source. Whether unconsciously in a moment of deep joy or sorrow, or consciously in a fusion of the mind in the wonder of nature, music, dance, creativity, or through breath-regulation or concentration on an object, laya may occur. Even the experience of light, of pleasant sounds, of vastness and so on during one’s spiritual practice would also be laya. The criterion, one must not fail to remember, is the presence of the experiencer, “I am experiencing this.” The subtler the experience the more one is in danger of mistaking it for the real. The important thing is to recognize this and use laya as an asset. “Ah! The mind is now still, calm, unperturbed, free of thoughts. For whom is this experience? For me, I. My experience. Most wonderful. But what is this I?” Whether or not one actually uses these words, one must pay keen attention to the experiencer of the stillness, the peace, the pleasantness, the vastness. It is a moment, it is a time, when the mind has left all else behind. We can easily be made to take the dive. Yes, it is time to plunge deeper into the source, leaving laya behind. ॐ

The Sport: Rediscovery of the Joy of Life

By A. R. Natarajan

There are millions of cricket fans all over the world whose number is growing thanks to one-day matches and their nail-biting finishes. It reaches the dizzy heights when a mega event like the World-Cup takes place. So, too, there are vast millions of soccer fans the world over. Each sport, be it tennis, hockey, kho-kho, has its own enthusiasts. But though the numbers are innumerable, the players are confined to the chosen 11 and, in some sports, to 2, like boxing, wrestling, grand slam singles tennis, and the like. The rest are only spectators, onlookers, who play the game vicariously depending on their knowledge of the respective games and the state of their enthusiasm. Too many days cannot be taken off from work even if one dotes on his idol. There are many other work pressures. One might have to miss some of his favorite events however much he may not wish to. But, there is a different game in which all could be participants if they choose to.



This sport may be termed “Rediscovery of the Joy of Life.” It is a sport which is directly related to one’s very purpose of existence. Isn’t it time that we ask ourselves the fundamental question, “What is the purpose of life itself?” The reason for this is not far to see. One is always in a hurry. Ambitions, targets, goals and dreams keep pushing one to the fast track and confine him to it. It is so barren to live and die in this way, like bullocks going around and around to crush oilseeds for extracting oil, or any other purpose. Such a waste of an opportunity, is it not?

There are however times in each person’s life when he pauses, reflects and questions, “What is this life full of care, with no time to stop and stare?” When this happens, the Sadguru’s grace has already made its unnoticed entry. But this questioning about the spiritual path can yield its immense potential only if one observes the rules of the game. Otherwise, one would remain half-baked, in a neither here nor there kind of situation. You cannot play any game without observing its rules, can you? Let us then familiarize ourselves with the rules of the greatest sport of “Rediscovery of the Joy of Life.”

Rule 1: Do not make such heavy weather of it. Enjoy life as you would enjoy your swim, your daughter’s smile or grandson’s brilliance. For it is a sport, a way of life in which an undercurrent of joy and peace awaits you. It is there. Let the obstacles be removed. Then, one’s own true nature would be revealed. Don’t hanker after and worry about results, for 100% success is assured for everyone who is courageous and steadfast in playing this game according to its rules.

Rule 2: Don’t be in such a hurry. Can you imagine how foolish it would be to put your leg on the accelerator of your car, forgetting the need for brakes and the need to adjust to the traffic? Not all the roads are long stretches of highway with one-way lane traffic. It is not like preparing an instant cup of coffee or tea when an unexpected guest arrives.

This Rule 2 is BASIC. But one keeps breaching it. This reminds one of a story of two ladies who came to Sri Ramanasramam and fired a barrage of questions at Bhagavan. The compassionate one kept answering them. Suddenly, one of them remembered that they had to catch another train. They wanted Self-knowledge in the interval be-

tween the two trains, for they were transit passengers. One would notice this kind of approach quite often. For instance, one may say, “I spend three days every year at the Ashram with my family and try to go more often.” Nothing is equal to that atmosphere. There can be no two opinions about it. But, still, what about the remaining 362 days when you cannot go there? Undoubtedly, your batteries would be recharged while there, but then should they be allowed to run dry in the intervals between your annual visits?

Again, one notices at the Ramana Shrine at Bangalore quite a few meditators jump into meditation. They do not allow themselves the time to absorb the strong spiritual currents there. Theirs is an allotted time. Start when you sit and get up after 15 minutes or half an hour. There was a lady who carried this to an extreme. She would bring a pocket alarm clock and keep it in front of her. She would regularly be alarmed out of her meditation! Provide at least a little time to go around the shrine, say a few prayers, slip into the meditative mood, and get out of it gently. Stay and enjoy. For heaven’s sake, your habitual mood of hurry-burry should be left outside.

There are another set of time allottees. They must continue for an hour or more. Soon their heads would have dropped. Even if they are not snoring, they have lulled themselves into sleep. What avail my friends of your allotted hour?

Rule 3: Stick to the Self-inquiry exclusively if you can, or, at least, build up your spiritual practice around it. Ramana would emphasize its importance. It was the inquiry, “Who am I?” which had led to his Enlightenment. Sadly, we hardly seem to recognize the importance of this. Our effort is such a “kichadi,” such a mixed dish. Old practices which one is afraid to drop, new ones based on contemporary media hype and so on. A little, just a little, of Self-inquiry is also added. You cannot mix up object-oriented practices with a practice in which the focus is only on the subject “I” to whom all objects relate. The danger of being stuck at whatever stage one is in would be very much there if this fact is forgotten or slurred over. The exception can be only to the extent attention is built around Ramana, for developing faith or renewed faith in him and in the efficiency of Self-inquiry taught by him.

Rule 4: Understand the method of Self-inquiry correctly if you wish to benefit from the path. There are all sorts of misnomers about it. The worry is that the process may be endless because of the innumerable thoughts. The following question and Ramana's answer would indicate one typical misunderstanding.

Q. As far as I can see, it is impossible to realize the Self until one has completely succeeded in preventing the rushing thoughts. Am I right?

A. Not exactly. You do not need to prevent other thoughts. In deep sleep, you are entirely free from thoughts, because the "I"-thought is absent. The moment the "I"-thought rises on waking, all other thoughts rush out spontaneously. The wisest thing for one to do is, therefore, to catch hold of this leading thought, the "I"-thought, thereby giving no chance to other thoughts to distract one. There lies the true value of the vichara and its efficacy in mind control.

The above is only an illustration of where one could go wrong. There are a few other mental clogs which may block the way. One should try again and again in a spirit of humble reverence to refer to the doubts of seekers and the answers of Ramana spread over the Ramana literature. One is bound to find light in this learning, or one might say relearning, exercise.

Rule 5: Be regular, persistent, unflagging in Self-inquiry. Looking for answers and not leaving the doubts raised by the question "Who am I?" and "Whence am I?" to do their jobs would be a grave error. Ramana makes it clear that the effort is really to grow in receptivity to the ever-flowing Guru's Grace. If your heart arteries are blocked, the doctor's first duty is to restore an unclogged flow of blood circulation throughout the body. So, too, your long-time foe/friend can either obstruct the awareness, each moment, of Guru's Grace or become a channel for it. The reason for this is not far to see. Ramana has focused attention on the basic nature of the ego as a link between the eternal Self and the past in the form of fructifying memories. If the ego is questioned then the outward movement caused by the momentum of the past is checked. When this happens, the "I" which started the inquiry vanishes, and the eternal flashes forth as a spontaneous joy expressing itself as "I-I". This, indeed, is the discovery of the Guru's Grace, a knowledge brought

about by well-directed effort. For the Guru is Grace embodied.

Rule 6: Have total faith in the Sadguru and his teachings. This rule is closely linked with the preceding rule 5. Guru's Grace is a must for success for becoming Self-aware and experiencing steadily the state of joy. A conversation between Sri Dilip Kumar Roy and Sri Ramana is extracted below.

Dilip: Some people reported you to have said that there is no need for a guru. Others gave the opposite report. What does Maharshi say?

Ramana: The Upanishads say that none but a guru can take a man out of the jungle of intellect and sense perceptions. So there must be a guru.

In a manner of speaking, this question and answer may be superfluous because, if one is attracted to the direct path of Self-inquiry for Self-knowledge, then he has already been chosen by Ramana. So, the extract is more to dispel any wrong notion about Ramana's view of the guru's importance for success in sadhana.

While on the path it is necessary to nurture and foster, in every possible way, the strong bonds with Ramana, until one discovers that He is none other than the Self sporting in the heart. Until then, there is need for what might appear to be a dualistic mode of worship, chanting, singing, and dancing of his glory and so on. All these lead to the gradual weakening of the various mental attachments, without one being aware of it. It is really association with Sat or Truth because Ramana is verily that.

If this great sport is played according to the aforesaid rules, the portals of inner freedom never close again. The joy would have been re-discovered. What is always one's own, but lost due to forgetfulness, becomes an integral undercurrent of life. ॐ



Destiny Fulfilled

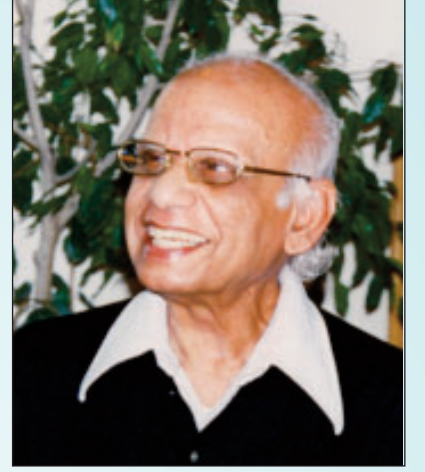
In the mid-1980's, Nome obtained a Tamil copy and a Sanskrit copy of the *Ribhu Gita*. As Nome knew only a little Sanskrit at that time, he set out to find a translator to help him translate both the Tamil version and Sanskrit version of the *Ribhu Gita*. In 1989, SAT came to know of a scholar translator through Chinmaya Mission by the name of Dr. H. Ramamoorthy. Early in his life, Dr. Ramamoorthy worked for the railways in India. At some point, he received his doctorate in Sanskrit, and, upon his retirement, he came to live in the U.S., spending most of his time in San Jose, California.

Dr. Ramamoorthy was contacted and was delighted to be involved in such a holy endeavor. For Dr. Ramamoorthy it was a love project as he required no funds for the translations. As a retiree, this was a project sent from the Lord, which would occupy the last stage of his life. Nome and Dr. Ramamoorthy soon met, and there was an immediate spiritual connection between them. Dr. Ramamoorthy would say that the time spent with Nome at the SAT Temple on the translations was, for him, going to satsang. Over the course of a dozen years, meeting once or twice weekly at SAT and sometimes at longer intervals when Dr. Ramamoorthy was away, together they translated not only both versions of the *Ribhu Gita*, but many other works by Adī Sankara.

When the Tamil version of the *Ribhu Gita* (*Song of Ribhu*) in English was released by SAT in late 2000, Dr. Ramamoorthy was away. When he returned several months later, Nome presented him with a copy of the *Song of Ribhu*. The look on his face was that of a child receiving a long-awaited, precious gift, and then a peace radiated from him as though he felt he had fulfilled his destiny. When he returned home that evening, he fell ill and was absorbed in Sri Bhagavan one week later.

Together, Dr. Ramamoorthy and Nome translated numerous texts: *Nirguna Manasa Puja*, *The Ribhu Gita*, *The Song of Ribhu*, *Svatmanirupanam*, *A Bouquet of Nondual Texts* (containing 8 texts), portions of *Advaita Devatam* (containing 44 texts, with 14 translated by both Dr. Ramamoorthy and Nome and three more translated by Dr. Ramamoorthy). *Hastamalakiyam Bhashyam* remains as the last unpublished text and is a work in progress.

Shared here, is a translation by Dr. Ramamoorthy of verse 24, chapter 4 of the *Bhagavad Gita*. It was sent to Nome followed by an explanation by Adī Sankara sometime in the late 1990's.



Dr. H. Ramamoorthy

गीता ४: २४

gītā 4: 24

ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्म हविर्ब्रह्माग्नौ ब्रह्मणा हुतम् ।
ब्रह्मैव तेन गन्तव्यं ब्रह्मकर्म समाधिना ॥

brahmārpaṇam brahma havirbrahmāgnau brahmaṇā hutam ।
brahmaiva tena gantavyam brahmakarma samādhinā ॥

The act of offering is Brahman, the oblation is Brahman,
In the Brahman fire, the sacrificing is done by Brahman,
Brahman it is that is to be reached by him,
By samadhi in Brahman action.

Dr. Ramamoorthy writing to Nome:

In Sankara's commentary on this verse from the Bhagavadgitabhasya, the translation of the first paragraph is of interest in understanding the direct meaning of the verse.

The translation of the first paragraph may be given as:

Brahma arpanam—by which act the knower of Brahman offers the oblation in the fire, that itself he sees as Brahman, he perceives the non-differentiation of that from the Self, just as he perceives the absence of silver in the oyster shell; it is said Brahman itself is the offering, just as what is silver is only the oyster shell. Brahma arpanam is an uncompounded word. What is understood worldly-wise as the concept of offering, that, for the knower of Brahman is Brahman itself—this is the meaning. Brahman oblation—likewise, is to be understood as, the concept of oblation is, for him, only Brahman. Similarly, brahma agnau, in the Brahman-fire, is a compounded word. The fire also is Brahman only where the sacrifice is done by the sacrificer, who is Brahman—Brahman alone is the sacrificer, that is the meaning. What is sacrificing, i.e., the act of sacrifice, that is Brahman only. What fruit is to be attained by him, that is also Brahman only, by Samadhi in Brahman-action. Brahman itself is the action, is compounded as Brahman-action, one who has Samadhi in that is brahmakarma Samadhi; brahmakara samadhina means by one in Samadhi in Brahman action—Brahman itself is to be reached.



Image courtesy of Himalayan Academy

ONE SELF

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by Nome

SAT
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One Self is a compilation of satsangs with Nome from May 4, 2003 to January 29, 2012. All the satsangs begin with silence, which reveals the true nature of the One Self—our true nature. Most satsangs then have a discourse on the nature of the One Self and instruction on how to practice Sri Ramana's Self-Inquiry. Each discourse is followed by questions raised by devotees regarding their own practices and Nome's response.



"My children, if you want to practise yoga, you must remove all attachment from your hearts. If you cannot do this, keep the company of holy men, for holy company is the panacea for the disease of worldliness."

—DATTATREYA, AVADHUTA GITA, TRANS., SWAMI
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Ever yours in Truth

Correspondence between Nome and seekers.

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

[A devotee of Sri Ramana in India asked about how to deal with unpleasant thoughts. This is the reply.]

March 16, 2015

Dear . . . ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Sri Bhagavan says that, whenever such a thought arises, you should inquire as for whom it is, thus making your focus inward-turned, and then inquire "Who am I?" Be certain in this inquiry that you discern the misidentifications that are the basis of the thought. Destroy the misidentifications by the inquiry so that the Knowledge of the Self is clearly revealed, and you will remain happy and at peace.

By His Grace, pursuing the inquiry, you can transcend the mind.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[A devotee of Sri Ramana in India expressed how he was suffering due to fears and that reminding himself to "be in the present" did not help him.]

April 3, 2015

Dear Sri . . . ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

Actual Self-inquiry reveals in a nonobjective manner the nonexistence of the ego and the true nature of the ever-existent Self. It includes the elimination of the ignorant misidentifications that are

the basis of the unreal bondage, and your desires and fears, as well as the thorough ascertainment of the source and nature of happiness, which yields complete nonattachment. None of what was just described can be attained by thinking about a concept of "the present" or thinking a thought of "just be."

Bhagavan's teachings are full of spiritual instruction to inquire and know the Self as it is. His Grace is ever-present. If you do your very best to actually inquire, His Grace will shine forth, and the blissful Truth will become self-evident for you.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Sri Bhagavan,
Nome

[The following replies were sent to a seeker who expressed perplexity regarding Siva and worship and the relation of them to the Knowledge of Brahman.]

April 25, 2015

Dear . . . ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

"Siva" means "the auspicious," "the good." Siva is understood, worshiped, meditated upon, etc. according to the perspective of the viewer. Obviously, when Adi Sankara said, "Sivo'ham," (Siva am I), such as in Nirvana-shatkam and elsewhere, that Siva is none other than Brahman.

If the definition of oneself is a jiva (individual), Siva will appear to be Isvara (the Lord). If one is defined as a man, Siva appears as Mahadeva (great God). If as a mortal, as the Conqueror of death. If as a self, as Paramatman (the Supreme Self). If there

is abidance free of all false definitions, Siva is Brahman, the one Self, and alone exists. In light of this, worship is as explained by Ribhu, Adi Sankaracarya, Sri Bhagavan, and such.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

May 30, 2015

Dear . . . ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Siva is only Brahman. Brahman alone exists. In worship of Siva, Brahman alone exists; the worshiped, the worship, and the worshiper are only Brahman. The same holds true for meditation, inquiry, and all else.

The questions you raise are answered in the previous reply sent to you. You may find it helpful to re-read it, contemplating each portion of it as you proceed. One should not expect deeper knowledge to fit within the context of his limited preconceptions, the infinite within the finite, or the real within the unreal.

Alternatively, you can set aside your concern about Siva and worship, as you continue to inquire to know the Self. If such devotion, symbolism, etc. are to become significant for you later, they will make themselves, Siva will make Himself, known.

That which alone exists is Brahman, Siva, or the Self. That alone is pure devotion and Knowledge in which there is no other.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[The following message is from a devotee whose wife and daughter returned to India to be with an ailing brother. This devotee was to join his family a few months later, however, plans were changed due to a sudden, severe illness of his daughter that necessitated urgent hospital care requiring him to return to India immediately. The message is shared here as it captures the utter faith in Sri Bhagavan under such circumstances. Since, his daughter has recovered and is home again.]

Namaste Nome and Sasvati,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya.

Just want to share the magical experience during almost 3 days in transit.

Due to the flight delay in SFO, missed the next flight in Hong Kong. Instead of 1.5 days, it took almost 3 day to reach Coimbatore.

All Bhagavan books were stuck in checked in bags, but luckily English Ribhu Gita was there with me. Had a very good time reading and meditating on it.

In Hong kong, went out to see the biggest Buddha statue [25-30 feet] and read Ribhu Gita in the monastery. it was quite magical with the mountain around; reminded me of Arunachala. Attaching couple of photos as well.

From Hong kong went to Mumbai [not in original schedule, it was supposed to be Chennai]

Went out in Mumbai to SiddhiVinayak temple to have first darshan at 5:30 AM. Very famous Ganesha temple and pretty old as well.

3 days of full meditation was what Bhagavan planned for me even though there was not much sleep, food, constant travel inside and outside airport. None of this affected since just following Bhagavan's order was a great experience even in unknown places.

Around 1 a.m. stuck outside in a bus in Hong Kong with no local money. Prayed to Bhagavan and some one just bought a ticket for me in Bus and guided me. Once outside the bus a couple walked along with me to show the hotel which I might have never found. Nothing but Bhagavan's grace.

Feel very blessed.

Namo Ramana.

With Love,

"The last thing I want is to be someone wanting to be somebody." - anonymous

*Inconceivable is this
supreme Atman; im-
measurable, unborn,
inscrutable, unthink-
able, He whose Self is
infinite space. He
alone remains awake
when the universe is
dissolved, and, out of
this space, He awakens
the world consisting of
thought.*

Krishna Yajur Veda, Maitri Upanishad



*For you is my offering, to
you I will pray, to
you who are worthy of
homage and worship.
You, Oh God, are a
spring in the desert
for the man who is
thirsty for you, Oh
Everliving.*

Rig Veda

*In this great wheel of Brahman,
the life and foundation of all,
the soul wanders like a swan,
thinking himself and the
Inspirer to be separate.
When Grace comes from
Him, he attains immortality.*

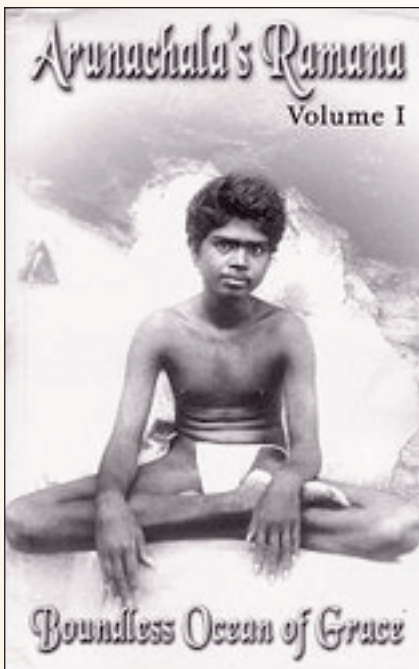
Krishna Yajur Veda,
Svetasvatara Upanishad

*Only One is the fire,
enkindled in numerous
ways; only One is the
sun, pervading this whole
universe. Only One is
the dawn, illuminating all
things. In very truth, the
One has become the
whole world.*

Rig Veda



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



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

Arunachala's Ramana, The Boundless Ocean of Grace

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

**The following excerpts are taken from vol. VIII
(concluding this series)**

Sivam-Sundaram (Bliss and Beauty) September 20, 1949

The wife of the Zamindar of Peddapavani, a frequent visitor to the Ashramam, came with her children last month. She stayed for a month and went away a couple of days ago. One evening, after Vedaparayana,

she approached Bhagavan and said, "Sometime back, Bhagavan gave me Darshan in my dream and gave me Upadesa. After that, I realized my Self, but it is not steady. What should I do?"

Bhagavan: (amused) "Where has it gone without being steady? Who is it that is not steady?"

Zamindarini: "That (realization) is not steady."

Bhagavan: "Where has it gone without being steady?"

Zamindarini: "That experience which I had does not remain steady because of bodily ailment and family worries."

Bhagavan: "I see. Say so. Those that come, come. Those that go, go. We remain as we are."

Zamindarini: "You must bestow on me the strength to remain as I am."

Bhagavan: "You have realized the Self, have you not? If that is so, all the others disappear of their own accord."

Zamindarini: "But they have not disappeared."

Bhagavan (smiling): "I see. They will disappear. Vasanas have for a long time built their nests within. If we realize that they are there, they will disappear gradually."

Zamindarini: "Bhagavan must bestow on me the strength to make them disappear."

Bhagavan: "We will see."

The next day about the same time she stood humbly in the presence of Bhagavan and said, "Bhagavan, is it not possible for a married woman to stay in the presence of the Guru for any length of time, can she?"

Bhagavan: "The Guru is where one is."

Zamindarini: (still unconvinced) "Should one look upon the whole world as Brahman, or should one look upon one's own Self as the most important?"

Bhagavan: "We exist. And the world is Brahman itself. What then is there to look upon as Brahman?"

She was taken aback and stood still. Whereupon Bhagavan looked at her compassionately and explained further: "As you know we undoubtedly exist. The world also exists as Brahman. That being so, what is there that one could see as Brahman? We should make our vision as the all-pervading Brahman. If we remain as we are, everything adjusts itself to this attitude."

Overjoyed at this and fully satisfied, she came out and sat on the step on the veranda, which is

opposite to Bhagavan's couch. Bhagavan was sitting on the couch in his characteristic pose, silent as usual and with a smile on his face. Looking at the radiant face of Bhagavan, she said involuntarily, "Ah! How beautiful Bhagavan is!" A devotee who heard the exclamation approached Bhagavan and said, "She is saying how beautiful Bhagavan is." With a slight nod of his head, Bhagavan said, "Sivam Sundaram (God is but beauty)." See how pregnant with meaning that expression is?

But, Where is a "Mind" to do All This?

When Bhagavan was laid up in the Nirvana room, Bhagavan's sister, Alamelu Ammal, very hesitantly went near him and pleaded with him, thus: "Bhagavan! Once, when you were in Virupaksha Cave, while trying to move a big rock from one place to another, your hand was suddenly caught under it, and, when the hand was taken out, one of the fingers was dislocated and found hanging down limp. Vasudeva Sastri, who noticed it, was alarmed and started crying aloud. You calmed him saying: 'Why do you cry? Nothing has happened!' Then with the other hand you placed the drooping finger back in its place and lo! It regained its proper position. No trace of any mishap could be noticed! Likewise, why don't you now touch this painful cancer on your left arm-shoulder with your 'golden' right hand, Bhagavan? It will be cured if you do it. All our anxieties will be at an end. Just as you relieved the anguish of Vasudeva Sastri, please bless us now by turning your mind to the arm and curing it."

Bhagavan looked at his sister intently with love and compassion. After some time, he replied, "Yes, yes! I have a body; and that has a hand; the hand has a disease that defies any treatment, and so I must apply my mind to it to cure it. But, where is a 'mind' to do all this?"

Bliss of the Self

January 22, 1949

At 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon, two pilgrims came and sat in Bhagavan's presence. It was clear from their attitude that they were thinking of asking something. After a while, one of them said, "Swami, it is all right if we sit up for meditation with closed

eyes, but, if we keep them open, the outer senses give trouble. What should we do?"

Bhagavan: "What happens even if the eyes are kept open? It is enough if you make the mind sleep just like you are sleeping in a house, keeping the windows open."

Devotee: "That means the mind should be kept away from worldly affairs. However much we try, we are not able thus to control the mind."

Bhagavan: "Yes, that is true. That is why it is said that when a child tries to catch its own shadow by running after it, and weeps when unable to do so, the mother comes and prevents him from running. So also, the mind should be prevented from running away."

Devotee: "By what method can that be prevented?"

Bhagavan: "The mind should be held by hearing and meditating on the sayings of the Vedanta and thereby prevent it from going astray."

Devotee: "That is all right, Swami. But, however much we try, this mind does not get under control and envelops the Swarupa so that it is not perceptible to us. What is to be done?"

Bhagavan, with a smile, placed his little finger over his eye and said, "Look. This little finger covers the eye and prevents the whole world from being seen. In the same way, this small mind covers the whole universe and prevents the Brahman from being seen. See how powerful it is!"

Bhagavan Ramana and the Bhagavad Gita

Maharshi: The Gita starts by saying that you are not the body, that you are not therefore the karta (doer).

D: What is the significance?

M: That one should act without thinking oneself to be the actor. The person has come into manifestation for a certain purpose. That purpose will be accomplished whether he considers himself the actor or not.

D: What is karma yoga?

M: Karma yoga is that yoga in which the person does not arrogate to himself the functions of being the actor. The actions go on automatically.

D: Is it the non-attachment to the fruits of action?

M: The question arises only if there is the actor. It is said throughout that you should not consider yourself the actor.

D: The Gita teaches active life from beginning to end.

M: Yes, the actorless action. Bhagavan Krishna is an ideal example of such a karma yogi. ॐ



Yoga Vasistha

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

VASISTHA continued:

Knowing that the entire universe including one's wealth, wife, son, etc., are nothing but the creation of the jugglery of the mind, one does not grieve when they are lost, nor does one feel elated when they prosper. On the other hand, it may be proper to feel unhappy when they prosper; for such prosperity may intensify one's ignorance. Hence, that which generates attachment and craving in the fool generates detachment and cool indifference in the wise.

Not to desire for those experiences which one does not effortlessly obtain, and to experience those which have already arrived; such is the nature of the wise person. If one is able to wean the mind away from craving for sense pleasures by whatever means, one is saved from being drowned in the ocean of delusion. He who has realized his oneness with the entire universe, and who has thus risen above both desire for and desire against, is never deluded.

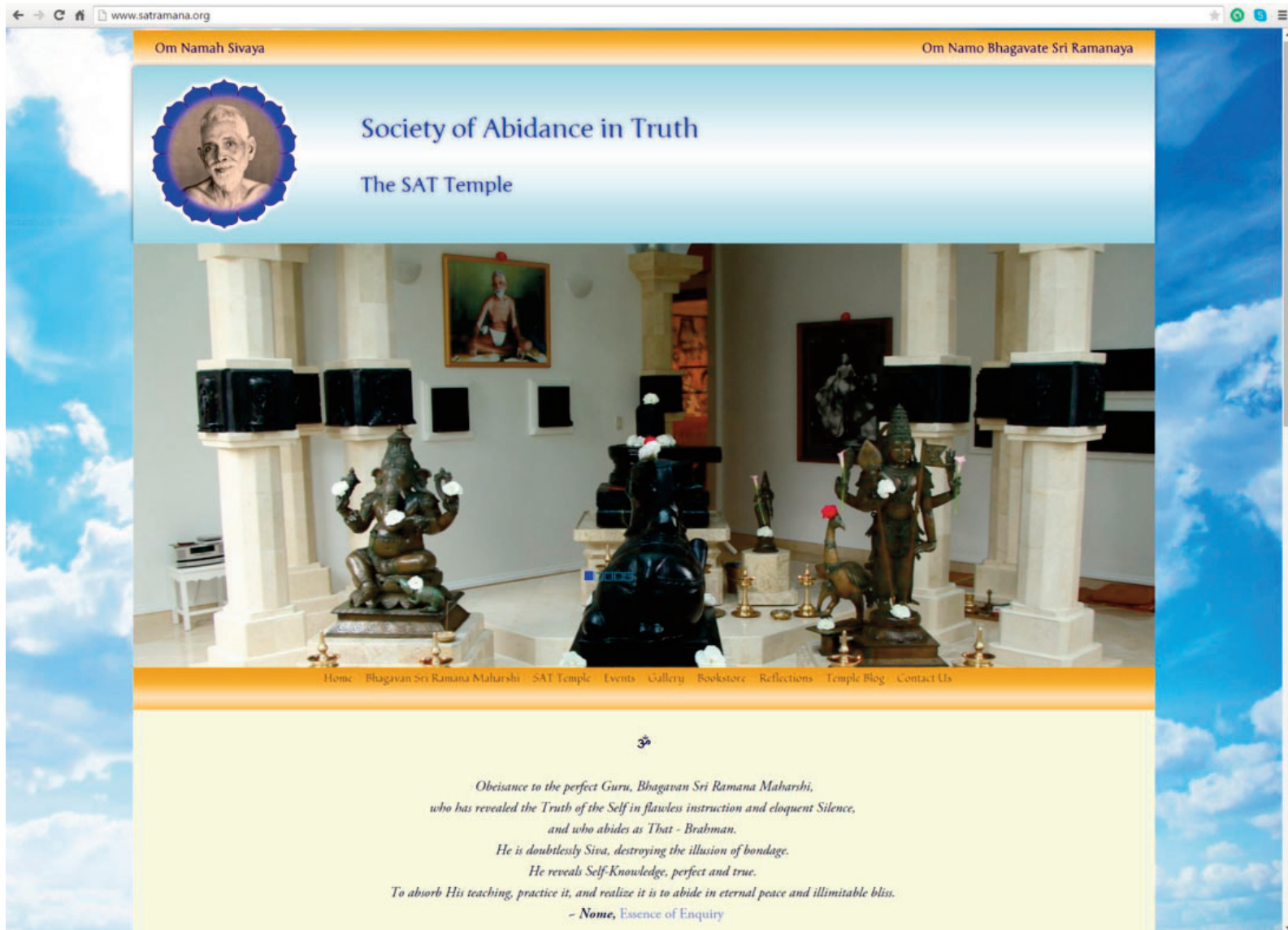
Therefore, O Rama, realize that Self or infinite Consciousness which permeates and therefore transcends both the unreal and the real; and, then, neither grasp nor give up whatever is inside or outside.



Vasistha Mural in the SAT Temple Lotus Room

Temple Bulletin

New SAT Temple Website



The new website is iphone/ipad compatible. In addition, a new “Gallery” page with videos and pictures has been added. The event videos (that are uploaded on youtube) can now be viewed from the SAT website itself. Please visit us at: www.satramana.org



Silently Celebrating 26 Years in Sri Bhagavan

For 26 years the SAT Temple has been an Island floating in the sea of Consciousness with Sri Bhagavan at the helm. For these years, SAT has offered a place where Ramana devotees can come to receive blessings, hear His teachings, worship Him, meditate, practice, and realize.

On August 20, 1989, the SAT Temple opened its doors as an offering to Him. We are eternally grateful to Sri Bhagavan for this wondrous blessing—the SAT Temple, and for all holy temples and ashrams on this earth that are dedicated to Him.

Please visit this link for a fun blog on the “History of SAT”:

<https://satramana.wordpress.com/2010/08/21/in-earlier-days-the-history-of-sat/>



Sia's Annaprashan



Sia's Annaprashan was celebrated at the SAT temple Saturday, June 6, 2015. Please follow this link for more on this event:

<https://satramana.wordpress.com/2015/06/11/annaprashan/>

Under Bhagavan's guidance and in service to Him, the SAT Board of Directors are responsible for the management of the SAT Temple and its activities. If you have any questions regarding events, temple protocol, service, publications, etc., please ask a board member. They will happily answer your questions in a manner upon which you may rely. Directors below, from left to right: Sangeeta Raman: Secretary, Sasvati, Raman Muthukrishnan: President, Nome: Spiritual Leader, Eric Ruetz: Vice-President, Sivakumar Chandran, and Ganesh Sadasivan: Treasurer.



Upcoming Special Events

Sri Ramana's Self Realization: July 17, 2015

Guru Purnima: July 31, 2015

Sri Ramana Maharshi Self Realization Retreat: August 28-30, 2015

Sri Ramana's Arrival at Arunachala: September 1, 2015

OM NAMO BHAGAVATE SRI RAMANAYA
OM NAMAH SIVAYA

