

Reflections

SAT Temple

July . August . September . 2016

“The state of supreme renunciation is that in which nothing adheres to one and one adheres to nothing. It is that in which there is no attachment to anything, from thought to the objects. The supreme renunciation is found in Self-Realization. It is to abide eternally renounced.” – Nome, *One Self*

“The true renunciation is the abandonment of the ego and of the concept of an objectively existing world. Complete detachment, born of the knowledge of the source of happiness, is necessary for Self-Realization. Renunciation may thus also be understood as the expression of such detachment in the form of cessation of those actions that are based upon, or motivated by, ignorance regarding the nature of happiness.”

– Nome, *Ever Yours in Truth*

“Freedom from the concept of “my” is renunciation of possessions, and freedom from the notion of “I” is liberation from all of the imagined bondage.” – Nome, *Ever Yours in Truth*

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Sri Bhagavan cast His sacred thread into the tank symbolizing supreme renunciation. The limiting adjuncts of the world ceased—ajata—His eternal state.

In Vivekacudamani, verse 24, Adi Sankara says, “The pre-eminent (peerless, ultimate) uparati (renunciation) is the nondependence of the mind on anything external.” Sankara tells us that renunciation is non-misidentification with thought, which constitutes the world. In Ever yours in Truth, Nome says, “The unreality of the world is renunciation.”

Image living the whole of life under the influence of the mind—thoughts—taking them to be real, pursuing ideas and concepts like a dog chasing a mechanical lure, and seeking fulfillment in them. The wise do not depend on any thought to expose Reality or grant happiness, for they understand the dreamlike, repetitive nature of thoughts—vasanas—and hence the unreality of them.

The examples given by the wise are profound, and we can never be too thankful to them. This quarter, devotees were blessed with four special events at SAT: Chitragupta Day was celebrated on April 22; Adi Sankara Jayanti on May 11; Sri Sadisvara Mandiram Pratishtha Day was celebrated on May 14; Self Knowledge Retreat on May 27-29.

Chitragupta Celebration at the SAT Temple



Verses from

Katha Upanisad / Eight Upanisads

Trans. by Swami Gambhirananda, Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta

Yama said:

O Naciketa! You, such as you are, have discarded, after consideration, all the desirable things that are themselves delightful or are the producers of delight. You have not accepted this path of wealth in which many a man comes to grief. (I.ii: 3)

Of that Self, which is not available for the mere hearing to many, (and) which many do not understand even while hearing, the expounder is wonderful and the receiver is wonderful, wonderful is he who knows, under the instruction of an adept. (I.ii: 7)

The wisdom that you have, O dearest one, which leads to sound knowledge when imparted only by someone else (other than the logician), is not to be attained through argumentation. You are, O compassionate one, endowed with true resolution. May our questioner be like you, O Naciketa. (I.ii: 9)

Having meditated on the Self, as bodiless in the midst of bodies, as permanent in the impermanent, and as great and pervasive, the wise man does not grieve. (I.ii: 22)

This Self cannot be known through much study, nor through the intellect, nor through much hearing. It can be known through the Self alone that the aspirant prays to; this Self of that seeker reveals Its true nature. (I.ii: 23)

He is hidden in all beings, and hence He does not appear as the Self (of all). But by the seers of subtle things, He is seen through a pointed and fine intellect. (I.iii: 12)

The unintelligent people follow the external desires. They get entangled in the snares of the wide-spread death. Therefore, the discriminating people, having known what true immortality is in the midst of impermanent things, do not pray for anything here. (II.i: 2)

His form does not exist within the range of vision; nobody sees Him with the eye. When this Self is revealed through deliberation, It is realized by the intellect, the ruler of the mind, that resides in the heart. Those who know this become immortal. (II.iii:9)

When all the knots of the heart are destroyed, even while a man is alive, then a mortal becomes immortal. This much alone is the instruction (of all the Upanisads). (II.iii: 15)

The significance and legend of Chitragupta can be found in the April, May June 2015 issue of Reflections, page 33. Please follow this link:

https://reflections.satramana.org/Reflections_AprMayJun2015.pdf

Adi Sankara Jayanti

Verses from

**Sri Advaitanubhutih, by Adi Sankara
Trans. by Dr. H. Ramamoorthy and Nome,
A Bouquet of Nondual Texts, SAT Temple**

25. The warmth of the pot, water, cooked rice,
and flour

Is by connection with fire,
As, without fire,
How can there be their warmth at any
time?

26. The manifestation of bodies formed from
the elements

Is by union with one's own Self.
Without the Self,

How could there be their manifestation, in
that manner, at any time?

27. Just as, in different varieties of pots,
Exists the one space,
So, likewise, in different varieties of bodies,
I, the One, exist (dwell).

28. Just as, in the variety of pots,
Space does not, indeed, move,
So, indeed, in the variety of bodies,
I do not move.

29. Just as, when the pots disappear (are destroyed),
The space in the pots is not destroyed,
So, likewise, when the bodies disappear (perish)
I, indeed, am not destroyed, being all pervasive.

30. Just as flowers that are the best, as also others,
Remain on a thread running through,
So, likewise, the bodies that are the best, as also others,
Abide always in me.

31. Just as the best of the flowers, as also others,
Will not affect the thread,
So, likewise, being the best of the bodies, as also others,
Will not [affect] me, the One, the all-pervasive.

32. Just as, when the flowers perish,
The thread is not destroyed,
So, likewise, when the bodies are lost (perish),
Never, indeed, am I destroyed.

33. Even though only one, the light of the sun [appears]
In variety, indeed, through the apertures in the rope of a cot.
Likewise, even though only the One, the all pervasive appears
As if many in [various] places.

34. Just as deficiencies and such of the apertures in the ropes
Will not affect the light of the sun,
So, likewise, the deficiencies of being in [a variety of] places and such
Will not affect me, the all-pervasive.

35. Upon the apertures in the ropes being destroyed,
The sunlight is not, indeed, destroyed.
Likewise, upon the places ceasing to exist,
I, all pervasive, am not, indeed, destroyed.

36. I am not the body, [it] being very much the seen.

I am not, indeed, the senses, [they] being elemental (material).

I am not the prana-s (vital airs), [they] being many.

I am not the mind, because of its movement.

37. I am not the intellect, because of [its] mutability.

I am not ignorance, because of [its] insentience.

I am not the body, senses, and such,
Because of [their] destructibility, like pots and such.

38. Illuminating the body, the senses, the prana, the mind, the intellect, Ignorance, and others,
Likewise, I illumine the ego
And one who erroneously lays claim to these (who imagines himself to possess or be these).

39. All this manifest universe I am not,
Because of its being an object of this intellect.

I am not the "I" in the deep sleep state and such,

Because of being the Witness of the "I" always.

40. Just as [I am] changeless in the deep sleep state,

So, likewise, [am I] in the [other] two states, also.

By nothing more than a slight connection (slight exertion),
I appear as if one [who is] changeful.

41. The [transparent] crystal is not, indeed, smeared (tainted)

By the conditionings of blue, red, and others;

Likewise, the Self, is not, indeed, tainted (smeared)

With desire and such arising out of all of the sheaths.





Unknown in its own form, its name as yet not defined prior to resting there, Existence has come to earth; fallen from the Principle, swelled with pride, it had become all filling; unprincipled as it is, it creates disorder and defeats its aim; accepts defeat on coming to earth, its valour proved and spent, it sinks down and receives name and definition. Sunk to the bottom, it reclines there, rests and sleeps securely in its reintegrated identity; lost to the world, sunk to the ground, absorbed and one with it; and from then onward at the same time, for all time, till the dissolution of the very ground on which it rests it is one with the gods who have defeated the un-principled Bhuta Existence and settled on it, so that while it carries them, they carry it on, each in its proper place and time. Existence, rid of itself, of its assertiveness (ahamkara, the principle of individuation, which grows into the all-filling, destructive asura-bhava) becomes the support and covers the extent of the Vastu, an image of ordered manifestation. Vastu now is its name. Its image is that of the Purusha, the place of reference in which man beholds the identity of macrocosm and microcosm. On its appeased being and form spread out on the ground he sets up the temple, the monument of his own transformation. Its superstructure points to the origin of the primeval descent; it is undone by the ascent step by step, shape by shape, along the body of the temple. This body once more, is the concrete form (murti), made by art, is that of the Purusha arisen. (The Hindu Temple, Stella Kramrisch, Motilal Banarsidass, 1976)

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

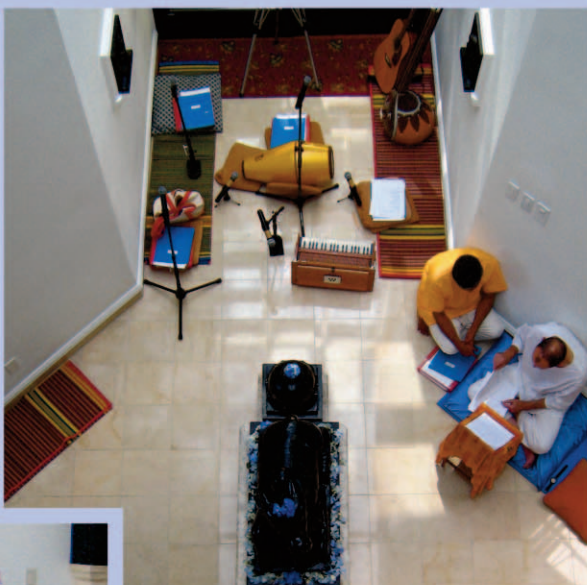
Siva Gita, 13:15



Sri Sadisvara Mandiram Pratishtha









For readings from the Siva Gita during this event, please see Reflections from July, August, September 2015.

Verses from

Origin of Spiritual Instruction

by Sri Ramana Maharshi, Published by SAT

D.: What is dhyana, or meditation?

M.: Dhyana consists in abiding firmly and unswervingly as identical with one's pure Being—in whichever of the three states of the mind, wakeful, sleeping, and dreaming, one may be—without harboring the thought that one is in meditation. Such a person is not even remotely conscious of the distinction between the three states of the mind. Consequently, the apparent

sleep in profound meditation should also be considered dhyana. In short, meditation essentially consists in transcending one's awareness of the idea, or notion, "I am in meditation."

In sadhana, one should pay particular attention to the following points:

(a) If the aspirant would only devote every minute spent in vain thinking about objects, which constitute the not-Self, in earnest inquiry in quest of the Self, he would, in a very short time, attain Self-Realization.

(b) Until the mind obtains a firm and steady hold on the state of pure Being, practice of profound meditation tinged with religious emotion (bhavana) (Bhavana, besides being a keen imaginative contemplation on the deity of one's choice, is tinged with deep, religious emotion, which runs to the very core of one's being. In that attitude, which involves a high pitch of concentration, the mind is wide awake yet is free from wayward thoughts.) is essential, for, otherwise, the mind becomes an easy prey to wayward thoughts or is overcome by sleep.

(c) The aspirant must not waste his time in an endless and vain repetition of such scriptural dicta as "Sivo'ham" (the Supreme Lord am I) or "Aham Brahmasmi" (I am Brahman), which is considered characteristic of nirgunopasana. (i.e., any sadhana practised for realizing the Nirguna Brahman, or the Supreme beyond attributes, as distinguished from the worship of the Supreme with attributes, or sagunopasana.) Instead, the aspirant should, with the strength of mind he gains by such devout repetition, or upasana, practise Atmavicara, or investigation in quest of the Self even as he is, without the superimposition of such ideas as "I am Brahman," etc.

(d) The excellence of the sadhana, or the method of practice adopted, consists essentially in not yielding, by every possible means, any scope for obsessing thoughts of any kind to enter into the mind.





Self-Knowledge Retreat





from LETTERS FROM SRI RAMANASRAMAM
**The Boundless Wisdom of
Sri Ramana Maharshi**

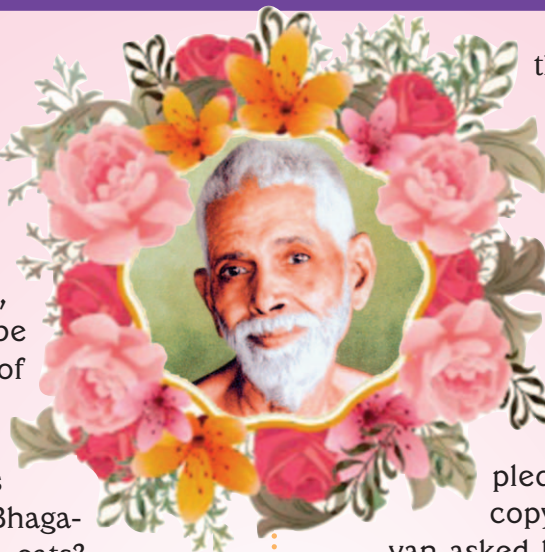
July 8, 1947 (130)

. . . About 10 or 15 days back, a sadhu came here and stayed for a few days. Approaching Bhagavan humbly one day, he said: "Swamy, I pray that, when you take food, you may be pleased to give me a morsel of food as prasadam." "Take all the food you eat as prasadam of the Lord. Then it becomes God's prasadam. Isn't all that we eat Bhagavat-prasadam? Who is it that eats? Where does he come from? If you go to the very root of things and know the truth, you will find that everything is Bhagavat-prasadam," said Bhagavan.

July 10, 1947 (131)

Vicharamanimala (Vicharasangraham)

It seems that a book by the name Vichara Sagara Sara Sangraha written by Bhagavan in Tamil about 30 years ago, was printed by Arunachala Mudaliar. As, however, Bhagavan's name was not mentioned



therein, it remained unknown. Recently, someone took Vichara Sagaram in Malayalam from the library and while he was returning it, it came into the hands of Bhagavan. He then remembered that he had once written Vichara Sagara Sara Sangraha and enquired where a printed copy was kept. After some search it was found in a crumpled state. When a devotee was copying it out for reprinting, Bhagavan asked him to include the example of a flag in regard to vairagya. When that devotee asked what is the significance of that example, Bhagavan said with a smile, "It means the flag of vairagya for a jnani and the flag of raga for an ajnani will be there as if tied before them. One can tell who is a jnani and who is an ajnani by seeing that flag. For an ajnani, even if he gets vairagya on account of mental or physical ailments, it will be temporary only. The flag of raga will come and stand in front of him. The flag of vairagya will never move. What greater sign does a jnana require than that?" . . .

Two verses from Vicharasangraham

8th ed., 1971, Sri Ramanasramam

D: Is Self-experience possible for the mind, whose nature is constant change?

M: Since sattva-guna (the constituent of prakriti which makes for purity, intelligence, etc.) is the nature of mind, and since the mind is pure and undefiled like ether, what is called mind is, in truth, of the nature of knowledge. When it stays in that natural (i.e. pure) state, it has not even the name mind. It is only the erroneous knowledge which mistakes one

for another that is called mind. What was (originally) the pure sattva mind, of the nature of pure knowledge, forgets its knowledge-nature on account of ne-science, gets transformed into the world under the influence of tamo-guna (i.e. the constituent of prakriti which makes for dullness, inertness, etc.), being under the influence of rago-guna (i.e., the constituent of prakriti which makes for activity, passions, etc.), imagines “I am the body, etc.; the world is real,” it acquires the consequent merit and demerit through attachment, aversion, etc., and, through the residual impressions (vasanas) thereof, attains birth, and death. But the mind, which has got rid of its defilement (sin) through action without attachment performed in many past lives, listens to the teaching of scripture from a true guru, reflects on its meaning, and meditates in order to gain the natural state of the mental mode of the form of the Self, i.e., of the form “I am Brahman” which is the result of the continued contemplation of Brahman. Thus, will be removed the mind’s transforma-

tion into the world in the aspect of tamo-guna, and its roving therein in the aspect of rajo-guna. When this removal takes place the mind becomes subtle and unmoving. It is only by the mind that is impure and is under the influence of rajas and tamas that Reality (i.e. the Self) which is very subtle and unchanging cannot be experienced; just as a piece of fine silk cloth cannot be stitched with a heavy crow-bar, or as the details of subtle objects cannot be distinguished by the light of a lamp flame that flickers in the wind. But in the pure mind that has been rendered subtle and unmoving by the meditation described above, the Self-bliss (i.e., Brahman) will become manifest. As without mind there cannot be experience, it is possible for the purified mind endowed with the extremely subtle mode (vritti) to experience the Self-bliss, by remaining in that form (i.e., in the form of Brahman). Then, that one’s self is of the nature of Brahman will be clearly experienced. (– verse 11) ॐ

D: Is the aforesaid Self experience possible, even in the state of empirical existence, for the mind which has to perform functions in accordance with its prarabdha (the past karma which has begun to fructify)?

M: A Brahmin may play various parts in a drama, yet the thought that he is a Brahmin does not leave his mind. Similarly, when one is engaged in various empirical acts, there should be the firm conviction “I am the Self,” without allowing the false idea “I am the body, etc.” to rise. If the mind should stray away from its state, then immediately one should enquire, “Oh! Oh! We are not the body etc.! Who are we?” and thus

one should reinstate the mind in that (pure) state. The enquiry “Who am I?” is the principal means to the removal of all misery and the attainment of the supreme bliss. When in this manner the mind becomes quiescent in its own state, Self-experience arises of its own accord, without any hindrance. Thereafter, sensory pleasures and pains will not affect the mind. All (phenomena) will appear, then, without attachment, like a dream. Never forgetting one’s plenary Self-experience is real bhakti (devotion), yoga (mind-control), jnana (knowledge) and all other austerities. Thus say the sages. (– verse 12) ॐ

When Bhagavan was living at Virupaksha Cave at the age of twenty-one, an early devotee of Bhagavan, Gambhiram Seshayya posed questions to Him. Since Bhagavan was at that time keeping silent, not because of any vow to do so, but because he was not inclined to speak, he wrote out answers to Seshayya’s questions on bits of paper. Seshayya later copied Bhagavan’s answers in a note book. The material was published by Sri Ramanasramam under the title *Vichara Sangraham*, which means “A Compendium of Self-Inquiry.” The book was later printed in English bearing the title *Self-Enquiry, Vicharasangraham*. (– This abridged, historical note is from the introduction of *Self-Enquiry*, published by Sri Ramanasramam, 1971.)

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Satsang with Nome



Supreme Happiness

January 27, 2013

Om Om Om

(Silence)

Nome: Being is supreme happiness. Your Self, as you truly are, is the happiness that all desire. If you abide in the Knowledge of the Self, as Being, as Being truly is, you are completely satisfied, and you, yourself, are the satisfaction. If there is misidentification as an ego, an individual, there is suffering, and it is the ego alone that suffers, for the Self is ever beyond all of that. As the ego is not a reality, but purely illusory, the sufferer and the suffering are, likewise, of the nature of illusion. Based upon the supposition of "I," if there is further misidentification with various thoughts and the body, there is unhappiness, or suffering. Such is not natural. Such is of the nature of illusion. The reality of the Self is supreme happiness, and for that happiness to shine continuously, always, and completely for you, you have only to know yourself as you truly are. Ceasing to misidentify with a body, a mind, or an ego, with this supreme happiness you will be satisfied. Nothing else, not anything of this world, can provide such satisfaction, for nothing else can give you what is innately yours. Being is bliss. If we think of happiness as something that comes and goes or as something that will be acquired, or will be experienced in some objective sense, that is not quite it. The ac-

tual nature of happiness is Being, Existence, itself. If you know yourself as just this undefined, unconfined, absolute Existence, your happiness is complete. So, then, devoting yourself to the realization of the Truth and inquiring within to know yourself is very joyful.

In numerous sastras, scriptures, it is stated again and again that the Self-realized sage is satisfied with whatever comes unsought. The common understanding of this is that, due to his detachment, he is satisfied with whatever occurs to him in this world, for which he applies no effort to acquire. The deeper understanding is that, having known himself and thus being the Bliss that is supreme, which is the eternally unsought, for it is not an object, he is happy at heart always. Because of such profound happiness, because of his identification as being the Bliss itself, he is utterly indifferent to whatever occurs phenomenally, to the body, and such. This profound satisfaction, which is complete happiness awaits you, and all you need do is deeply inquire to know yourself as you are.

As nothing in this world can give you yourself, so nothing can provide you with the happiness that is yours. As Sri Bhagavan has pointed out, when happiness seems to shine in the midst of some objective experience, it is really the happiness of your own Self that is shining. There is only one kind of happiness, and you are that, just as there is only one kind of existence, and you are that. For happiness that is utterly nondependent, know yourself. For that happiness that leaves no other happiness to be desired, know yourself.

Questioner: Does the forbearance that Adi Shankara recommends in the four requisites come from the turning away from objectivity and being happiness rather than seeking to attain it?

N.: It is in the very nature of true sadhana to be an expression or reflection of the Absolute, only in the context of practice. By forbearance one arrives at that, or comes to know that, which is ever unmoved, unattached, and unaffected, which is none other than the Reality itself, just as one realizes true Knowledge by means of Knowledge.

Another Q.: I am reflecting on the reading on Friday night about a samsari and a sanyasi. It said that if one thinks he is a sannyasi, he is not one. I one does not think he is a samsari, he is not one. And actually your discourse this morning clearly showed why I think that there is bondage in the samsara. As a samsari, there is this notion that it's a bound state. There is this idea that there is not supreme happiness there. Being is the supreme happiness, but somehow there is this feeling that the state of being in the samsara is lacking that peace and that happiness that you spoke of. The whole samsara is in the mind. As Bhagavan mentions, the mind moves and it is samsara.

N.: That is right.

Q.: We need to see that it's all in the mind and we are just mistaking where this happiness is. The body could be anywhere but, but the state of the mind is what matters. This is what my understanding is.

N.: Yes. It is a matter of identification. If you misidentify with the body, no matter where the body is, there is samsara. If you do not misidentify with the body, wherever the body is, there is no samsara. In the mind's movement you seem to become caught. Misidentification with the mind is samsara. Samsara is totally in the mind. If you are free of misidentification with any thought, what would bind? Without inquiry, it seems so solid and real. With inquiry, it is seen to be an illusion, made up of the stuff of the mind, which is just thought. If you are not a samsari, that means you are not a body, not a mind, and not an ego. Without those

misidentifications, where is the scope for samsara? If there is no scope for samsara now, there will not be return to it later. It is imaginary even now, and it does not lie in wait for you later. This is so concerning samsara, however it is defined, whether it is worldly life, attachment and suffering or is the tract of transmigration. If you are the unborn, bodiless Self, how could there be transmigration? If you are the unborn, bodiless Self, how could you have a worldly life, no matter what the activity of the body is? Seen in this way, a living being is divine, as mentioned in Upadesa Saram, and that divinity will never perish.

If there is birth, there is death, and, if death, life, and, if life, death again, etc. But what if one has never been born? The essential Existence has no cycle, no beginning, and no end.

Another Q.: When I go to sleep, there's no fear of the loss of the body and the world. In the waking state, why do I have any connection with the body? Why do I have any concern about its eventual demise? I have not got rid of the misidentification with the body.

N.: What constitutes it?

Q.: I don't know. It's inadvertent. I'm doing things. I, but that's I guess downstream.

N.: Yes, the idea of being the performer of action is utterly dependent on the "I am the body" concept.

Q.: So, what is it actually made of? The "I am the body" concept?

N.: You have been instructed that you are not the body and that it is only a misidentification that makes it appear otherwise. What composes or constitutes the misidentification?

Q.: At its core is thinking that I'm an individual. If that's not there, it's really hard to misidentify with the body.

N.: Yes, where there is no scope for "I," where the "I" that is the first to perish is not, there certainly cannot be the "I am the body" misidentification.

tion. However, it is possible in the course of sadhana, to first disidentify from the body and then see the egoless truth. It would be ridiculous to say that you must remain misidentified with the body until you see that there is no ego, especially because, as long as you have the “I am the body” concept, the ego will seem to flourish.

Q.: I’m trying to see what is it actually made out of, this thing called the misidentification with the body.

N.: Examine that thoroughly. Spiritual instruction that describes forms or patterns of ignorance is given not to build up a concrete concept that such patterns of ignorance actually exist, but to destroy the belief in them.

Q.: That’s a very different way to approach than thinking there actually is something real that I’m going to get rid of, as opposed to questioning its validity to begin with.

N.: The entire purpose of spiritual instruction and practice thereof is to question that validity. To leave that validity unquestioned is the same stuff of which samsara is made: baseless suppositions, to which one has attributed belief.

Q.: Why am I making that? I don’t know if “why” is a very good approach.

N.: “Who” would be better.

Q.: I think I’ve heard that before. (laughter) That’s definitely better. Who am I talking about?

N.: Who are you really? Can that be a body?

Q.: As we speak, my existence gets clearer, and there’s no body in that.

N.: Then, you have the answer to your original question. In light of what we were reading of the Maharshi’s instruction on Friday night, learn it by steadfast inquiry and by satsang.

Another Q.: There’s a line I read in the Bhagavad Gita recently, where Krishna says that only the unenlightened or the uninformed lament for

the dying or the dead. It seemed to affirm that death of the body is not to be troubled with.

N.: Practice the immortal Knowledge that is expressed in the Bhagavad Gita, especially in the second chapter as alluded to by you. Practice this in such a way that it remains self-evident and eternal for you.

Another Q.: If all samsara is in the mind, where is the mind? We can look at the samsara and still keep the mind that imagines it intact.

N.: What is it made of and who knows it? If the mind is constituted of thought, the knower is beyond it, for thoughts do not know themselves. That which is beyond thought remains forever undefined by thought; it does not have the form of thought. Can that which never has the form of thought enter samsara?

Q.: So, the thoughts themselves that consider samsara, are part and parcel of the samsara.

N.: But there is something that is not a thought. It is only one, for multiplicity is a product of thinking. That one which is thought-free is your Self. Vasishta says that the entire mahakasha, the great space, is contained within cittakasha, the mind space. The cittakasha is contained within the Cidakasha; that is, the mind space is contained within the space of Consciousness. Nothing contains the space of Consciousness, though, and, in its actual nature, it transcends the ideas of a container and a contained.

Q.: It’s a very helpful description.

N.: That great space, which is never cooped up inside anything, in which everything is contained and yet which contains nothing but itself, that is you, that is Consciousness. If there is a mind, it is only in that. But in That, itself, which is entirely undifferentiated, homogeneous, how can we speak of a mind?

Another Q.: You said, “Who is probably better.” I’ve been thinking that I need to rely on this direct Knowledge, and that isn’t a “why.” I forget that all the time, so everything becomes a “why.”

N.: If asking the reason why leads you in a subjective direction to find out who you are, it is all right. If asking why merely leads you to the belief that you are dealing with objective things with objective causes, regarding bondage and samsara, etc, that is just so much thinking and asking "Who am I?" would be far better.

Q.: We need to say "Who am I"? Even that, I think I make into something objective.

N.: Who makes it into something objective?

Q.: (laughter)

N.: While one is thinking, "I, I, I," who am I, anyway? (laughter)

Q.: Where ultimately is happiness? Once that's known, that nonobjective state--- I don't know that really clearly. I get a glimpse of it.

N.: Are you satisfied with anything less than yourself?

Q.: No, as I keep coming back.

N.: So, intuitively you do know.

Q.: I need to make that stronger.

N.: All right. Whatever explanations you utilize, whatever scriptural texts you read and try to understand, you must comprehend them in terms of liberation and not conceive of them in terms of bondage. If spiritual instruction received, read, etc, merely pointed out how one was bound, there would be no need for it, because one already knows that by alternative means conceived in worldly experience. Rather, the spiritual instructions in the scriptures, etc, are all for pointing out your liberation from the imagined bondage. Likewise is it with asking why. If looking for the reason shows you the falseness of delusion, it is beneficial. If it merely builds up the idea that the bondage is real, it is only part of the same illusion.

Another Q.: Sri Dattatreya's says that the whole world is simply like the water contained within a mirage.

N.: It is somewhat silly to consider the mirage as something lying on top of the substrate, as if it were a real thing. It is far sillier is to consider that the substrate is contained within the mirage. It's like that with the world and "I."

Another Q.: Going back to the company of the holy: I look at my experience, and it seems to be a complete dependence on it.

N.: Well, if there is complete dependence on it, you don't depend on anything else. One who depends on association with Sat - Existence, finds himself in due course to be that Existence.

Q.: It would be an error to consider it just a phenomenal, objective occurrence.

N.: It would be narrow and shortsighted. It is not really just a gathering of a herd of bodies in a room. What actually occurs in satsang? What actually occurs when you inquire? What actually is it when one realizes the Truth? Where words and thoughts turn back unable to grasp, there is true Knowledge.

Q.: So we should be really thankful for the teaching that points us in this direction.

N.: That for which we are thankful is ours.

(Then followed a recitation in Sanskrit and English of verses of Aparoksanubhuti)

(Silence)

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

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

Knowledge

May 4, 2014

Om Om Om

(Silence)

Nome: Brahman knows Brahman, and Brahman is the Knowledge. Brahman is the Self. So, the Self knows the Self, and the Self is the Knowledge of itself. The Reality knows the Reality. The unreal, being unreal, has no capacity to do so.

To confuse the Reality and the unreality, to define the Self by that which is not the Self, is ignorance. For whom is the ignorance? The Self, being Knowledge, pure Consciousness, has no ignorance. Another self is the product of imagination, the product of ignorance. So, can we say ignorance has ignorance? It just makes no sense. If we inquire as to who is ignorant, ignorance vanishes and the Knowledge of the Self, which is true Knowledge, shines forth for itself.

The Knowledge is silence, and it also pours forth in the form of the teachings bestowed by Sri Bhagavan, Adi Sankaracarya, and others. The potency of the spiritual instruction lies in the fact that it is of pure Knowledge. It is the peaceful power of Reality, before which nothing else can stand. To suppose something else can stand before the Reality, something of an illusion can stand before the Supreme Brahman, is only egotism. So, in sadhana or spiritual practice, the focus is upon the dissolution of egoism, which is the belief in a separated, individualized existence with all of its attendant definitions.

Distilling the highest essence of the Knowledge of the Vedas, Sankara taught, "Tat tvam asi" -- "That you are." That is Brahman, the absolute Self. Who is the "you" in this statement? Certainly, it cannot be an embodied ego-entity. Certainly, it cannot be the ignorant notions that confuse the Self with the not-Self and appear as a pseudo-entity. Certainly, it does not refer to a body, to the senses, or to the thinking mind. You are That --- "Tat tvam asi". To whom is this referring? To whom has the instruction been addressed? The spiritual instruction is that you are That, you are Brahman, you are the Self. You cannot be both an ego and the Self. You cannot be both the unreal and the Real. So what are you?

This Knowledge liberates one from all the imagined bondage. It is the highest form of grace. What is the grace of Ramana? What is the grace of Sankara? It is inexplicable, for it is beyond conception. The Knowledge is, itself, grace. What is this Knowledge? It is Self-Knowledge, of course, and not objectified conception. It is not a sense impres-

sion and is not a thought. Beyond, or interior to, thought, there is only Consciousness. Being thought-free, it is undifferentiated. Being nonobjective, it is the Self.

Sri Bhagavan has made clear that there are not two selves, that one could be ignorant of another. There is only one Self. Your Existence, that is to say Consciousness, is indivisible, entirely partless. What is the nature of this one Self? Sankara says that this one Self is That, Brahman. If you are Brahman, what does that mean? If you are Brahman, what does that mean regarding anything else, whatever it is, that you seem to experience? If Brahman were not That, you would not be That. If Brahman is beginning-less and endless, you are without beginning or end. If Brahman is entirely formless, what form do you have? If Brahman is without difference and without duality, so it is for your Self. If Brahman is bodiless, likewise is your Self. If Brahman is inconceivable by any thought, likewise is your Self. If Brahman is infinite and eternal, so it is with the Self. Your inquiry to attain such Knowledge, to be absorbed in such Knowledge, should be focused on what your identity is, what the very nature of your Existence is. Tat tvam asi - - That you are.

Questioner: There are five words in one of your Mandalas that I love so much, which are, "Inquire ceaselessly with full penetration". It seems as a natural caution to let go of any idea of an objective mechanism, of a someone penetrating to something or some place. Someone beginning with yoga might make a good intent to visualize the third eye, and that would have an objective duality to it. Or even higher, maybe visualize through a third eye. But it doesn't seem that the penetration you speak of there has any objectivity to it or duality.

N.: That is correct. The inquiry is always nonobjective.

Q.: I want to ask about "ceaselessly." There can be the good intention to repetitively return with the great desire for Liberation, and there's the more passive way of discarding anything else of mental content, identity, reality, or happiness. It is unresolved.

N.: Is such discarding a mental structure, or something beyond it? No thought construct is ceaseless. So, if you are going to discard all that ceases, from what vantage point do you do so? It must be from the vantage point of something that is already unceasing.

Q.: Sort of from the end, instead of the beginning?

N.: The end is the beginning. Thought cannot be unceasing, but Knowledge can be. The inquiry consists of Knowledge, not mere thinking. Because it is thought-transcendent, it is fully penetrating. What in you does not cease? Your Existence does not cease. The Knowledge of Existence does not cease. That very same Knowledge can be used to discern what, in truth, you are. It penetrates thoroughly, leaving no trace of misidentification, leaving no superimposition of the unreal upon the Real. It is, indeed, quite natural.

Another Q.: If I'm not experiencing myself as Brahman, then what am I actually experiencing? You said that the experience of individuality doesn't exist, or there is no experience of individuality. When you said that, it really penetrated. I assumed that you meant direct experience. The only thing I know that I experience directly is my Existence. I think I'm an individual, so what am I actually experiencing when I experience that? Where I thought I was an individual, all that's left is just the direct experience of Existence. It is something that I keep going back to over and over. I started exploring the connection between that real experience, or what's real, and this dream that I make up about individuality. It is incredibly helpful, simple instruction to follow.

N.: All are already the Self. There is no one who is not the Self. Individuality is merely imagined. If the origin of such imagination is sought, only the Reality is found, and there is no seed from which the imagination can sprout. It is a superimposition of the false upon the Reality. When a snake is superimposed upon a rope through imagination, there is no actual experience of the snake, and there is no actual existence to the snake. There is Existence, but it is only the rope. Similarly, there is

Existence, which is the Self; there is no nonexistence. Yet, this Existence is not individualized at all. To discern what is actually experienced, in contrast to what is assumed, can be very worthwhile.

Q.: A couple of weeks ago, you said to me in a nice polite way, that insight is worth nothing unless you practice whatever you get insight about; you actually have to practice. So, I've been trying to practice.

N.: Keep trying. Sustained efforts are very worthwhile.

Another Q.: It seems that there is a lack of necessity of that kind of endeavor, as in Sankara's four requisites for Liberation, the fourth of which is intense longing for Liberation. There is great value in applying Ramana's "Who am I?" question to when I'm not remembering the past – thought, interpreting the present – more thought, or imagining the future – more thought and also who am I when I'm not intensely desiring anything whatsoever, including even Liberation? As you've mentioned, who is it that's in bondage?

N.: Only one who is intensely desirous of Liberation will sustain the inquiry as to, "For whom is the bondage?" and find that Liberation is his natural state. There's no actual discarding of the desire for Liberation or any of the requisites, the fourfold sadhana. Their essence is revealed in the course of the inquiry.

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

(Silence)

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

(Then followed a recitation in Tamil from Chapter 26 of the Song of Ribhu.) ॐ

From The Ramana Way

The following articles appear in the March 1992 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



Editorial
by Dr. Sarada
March 1992

Enough! Enough!

“Enough—a strange topic for you” remarked a friend, “You never say enough—al-

ways let’s have more ballets on Bhagavan, more music, more writing.”

“But it is not Sarada who says enough. She is quoting what Muruganar said to her,” answered my father. Memories of Muruganar return, memories of silence, of his ever-flowing tears at the very mention of Bhagavan’s name, of his being moved beyond words when we sang on Bhagavan. On one visit, an elder cousin reprimanded a younger one for excusing himself from Muruganar’s presence on some pretext. “He had no interest in what was going on,” I stated. “It matters little,” came the answer. “Whether one is disinterested or even totally restless at that time, one must somehow spend the maximum time possible in a jnani’s presence. The extraordinary good that comes out of even simply being in such a presence cannot be estimated by us,” he explained. “For sadhakas, such a presence is invaluable. When you see a jnana, you can concretely perceive what it means to be apart from the body,” he continued, and added, “I have been

with Muruganar on an occasion when he was extremely unwell. Yet, it was so obvious that his body’s suffering did not even touch him.” To those who have seen Muruganar this would be quite evident. In fact, even to one as young and unlettered in spiritual lore as I, it was obvious at that time that there was really no Muruganar before us. There was just this form that pulsated love for Bhagavan from every pore. Someone mentioned after going through the book “Ramana’s Muruganar” that almost every article contained reference to Muruganar’s tears of joy on hearing Bhagavan’s name. I explained that this was not a mere repetition of a single fact, but that it was a continuous experience, which is sure to have had an impact on all those who came to Muruganar. Just as it is impossible to speak or write without words, even so it is impossible to think, speak or write on Muruganar without mentioning how he would melt with love for Bhagavan.

It was thus thought right when I encountered my first spiritual doubt, to ask Muruganar for clarification. And so I asked him on our next visit, “Is it enough if I think of Bhagavan as my Guru and practice self-enquiry?” The doubt arose in the context of mantropadesa by a Guru being stressed by our scriptures. On hearing the question, Muruganar was deeply moved. He went red in the face, and his voice choked with emotion, as he said “Enough! Enough! Cent per cent sufficient.” After a moment’s pause he added, “More

than hundred per cent sufficient.” He then stressed that Bhagavan is the only everlasting illumination within us and that His presence is the only existence everywhere and for all time.

How simple the answer seems. An affirmation that the Ramana Way is open to anyone who wishes to tread it. An answer that satisfied the doubt at the level at which it was posed. Yet, the words of great ones have far deeper meanings than what we understand from them in the first instance. In relation to the answer when one looks back at the question, it is seen that the question itself was not really understood, let alone the answer. By stressing the all-pervading presence of Bhagavan and saying that Bhagavan is the only everlasting illumination within, Muruganar, it seems, was turning my attention to the very question. He was telling me, without directly spelling it out, that, if I firmly believed in and experienced Bhagavan’s presence everywhere, that that would be more than enough. “Is it enough to consider Bhagavan my guru?” “More than hundred per cent, but do you know what it means to consider Bhagavan your Guru?” Muruganar’s answer seems to be questioning in return. To accept someone as one’s Guru implies investing total faith in Him, in what the Guru says. And what does Bhagavan say? He says that the Self alone is and that the Guru and the Self are non-different. If one had total faith in Bhagavan, the moment one hears or reads, the moment one knows what Bhagavan says, those words should become one’s own experience. Thus, to have total faith in Bhagavan as the Guru means to experience His presence as the Self.

“No, no,” objects the mind. “That is surrender. We are not capable of surrendering totally. But we do have faith in Bhagavan’s words. That is why we are keen on practicing self-enquiry.” Has not Bhagavan advocated the practice of self-enquiry? Has he not affirmed time and again that the earnest pursuit of self-enquiry will lead to Self-abidance? It is faith in his words which keeps us at self-enquiry. “I am not capable of such total faith that springs from surrender, but I am not faithless either”—thus the mind reasons and says to itself. Muruganar has also said that it is more than sufficient if one pursues self-enquiry thinking of Bhagavan with devotion.

Thus thinking, the mind satisfies itself with

what it takes to be the simpler pursuit of self-enquiry. What is this self-enquiry that one strives to pursue? The process seems simple enough. Bhagavan has explained that the sense of “I,” one’s identity, the feeling that “I am so and so,” exists only in the waking and dream states. Even in dream, it often undergoes drastic changes of name, form, circumstance and so on. And in deep sleep, the identity, the “I”-thought as Bhagavan calls it, is totally absent. However, in deep sleep one is not conscious of the experience that exists when identity ceases. To consciously observe the dissolution of the “I”-thought into its source constitutes self-enquiry. Bhagavan has also clearly delineated the methodology for doing so. The means to track the “I”-thought to its source while remaining alert is to isolate it. The mind is a bundle of thoughts in which each and every thought is linked with or can exist only in relation to the “I”-thought. Without the connection with the “I”-thought, no other thought can subsist. The “I”-thought, although it is thus the central thought, can also not exist by itself. That is, since it has no consciousness of its own, but only reflects the consciousness of the Self, it cannot bear pointed scrutiny. Hence, it camouflages itself by constantly associating itself with other thoughts. How to penetrate this camouflage is, therefore, the question. By questioning the “I”-thought, by questioning its locus-standi, answers Bhagavan. When any thought arises, ask of yourself, “For whom is this thought?” The answer will come, “For me.” Then again, ask, “Who am I?” This question will scorch all other thoughts and attention will rest on the “I”-thought. Repeat this process as often as attention wanders to other thoughts and give attention invariably to the “I”-thought. Then, it will automatically merge in the source, the Self.

This is the process of self-enquiry which one diligently follows. One is happy to pursue this exercise for a few minutes in the beginning and then for more and more time. One is content to think that this will eventually lead to Self-Knowledge. Has not Bhagavan himself declared so time and again? Has not Muruganar also affirmed that it is “Enough! Enough!”? Am I doubting their words? No, never. There can be no doubt that self-enquiry is the sure means to Self-Knowledge. But we must be sure that what we are practicing is self-enquiry as taught by Bhagavan. Where is the

hitch? The understanding seems clear. The “I”-thought must be isolated by posing the question, “Who am I?” Then, what is the mistake we are making? Having understood the technique clearly, we fail to remember the attitude with which the enquiry is to be made. As often as he proclaimed the efficacy of self-enquiry, has not Bhagavan repeated that it is not merely a verbal question? To ask the question “Who am I?” one must really be in doubt about one’s true nature. Otherwise, the question has no meaning. Who will ask a question if one already knows the answer? Is it not absurd to mentally ask oneself “Who am I?” and the very next second to think “I am getting late for the office. Today, I can do self-enquiry only for five minutes,” or “This afternoon I must contact my students and confirm the next rehearsal?” Who is the “I” that must go to office or conduct rehearsals? If one knows that “I,” then where is

room for asking “Who am I?” If one does not know that “I,” then who is to think of things related to the “I”? That is why, when one seriously enquires “Who am I?” every other thought becomes redundant, becomes totally irrelevant. If the enquiry is real, it is bound to prevent the rising of any other thoughts, of any motivation. Only the intense searchlight of attention on the “I”-thought will remain, and then the “I”-thought will automatically dissolve into its source, the Self. That is why Bhagavan has explained, “Of all ways, this is the easiest,” when Muruganar stated, “Lo! Very easy is Self-knowledge.” That is why Muruganar said so emphatically, “Enough! Enough! More than hundred per cent enough.” Thus, Self-enquiry becomes, in effect, non-different from surrender, both resulting in immediate and total Self-attention.



What is Special about Muruganar?

by A.R. Natarajan

To those who know about Muruganar, the question itself would be sacrilegious. Would it not? Muruganar is so obviously the inspiring symbol of Ramana’s power and grace. They might well ask, “Did not Ramana bestow on Muruganar by his very first look, on the 23rd of September 1923, his own supreme state of bliss?” They may further feel why this question when Muruganar had become the pure instrument of Ramana, having lost his individuality totally. Undoubtedly, special he was. Why justify? This would be their line. True. But how many know of Muruganar’s exalted status in the Ramana galaxy? Hence, the need to focus on his innumerable virtues and strength. The purpose of the title is also to set one thinking about the beauty of a timeless relationship between Muruganar and Ramana. It is to make one sit up and enjoy the interplay of relationship between the unique disciple and Ramana Sadguru. It is to partake of

the joy of what it is to just be Ramana's servant, Ramana's slave.

Muruganar had lost his father at a very young age and was brought up by his mother. We find frequent references to his deep and tender love for his mother in "Ramana Deva Malai." Maybe that is why she was his only attachment. This too, he got over, later, by shifting the responsibility for her liberation to Ramana. Looking at the events in Muruganar's life, one finds everything pre-planned by the divine. He was to be the peerless bard of Ramana in Tamil. Was he not? Hence, his intense love for Tamil and the desire to master it. He was provided plenty of opportunities for this when he became a member of the Committee for preparing a Tamil Lexicon. Membership of this Committee gave him the opportunity to move with contemporary literary giants like U.Ve. Swaminatha Iyer, Chengalvaraya Pillai and Rangaswamy Iyengar. Muruganar would sometimes refer to his involvement in Tamil as an attachment. But we know what a boon indeed it has been for the world. While his Tamil knowledge was being perfected, providence also saw to it that he did not get entangled in dialectic philosophic wrangles relating to Vedantic, Saiva Siddhantic or any other school of thought. So his mind remained unsullied by such distracting thoughts and was ready to receive the message of Ramana without any interpretative analysis to fit it into an existing thought framework.

Muruganar was thus ready and ripe when Ramana entered his life with a bang. His father-in-law, Dandapani Swami, an inmate of Sri Ramanasramam came on a visit and gave a priceless gift, Ramana's "Aksharamanamalai" and "Who am I?" What a combination of the stuthi (praise) and the sastra (the teaching)! Muruganar recognized at once that Ramana was Siva incarnated again after having once rescued Manickavacagar from worldly entanglements at Perunthurai. He proclaims this even in his very first offering to Ramana, "Desika Padigam." Why should he recall this particular ancient bond of Siva and Vacagar? This makes one wonder if Muruganar was Manickavacagar reborn to serve Siva once again, this time as Ramana residing at Arunai. Ramana, too, recognized this fact in December 1923 itself. What does he not know? He declares this almost casually after reading a verse that Muruganar, too, might write like Vacagar. The power of Ramana's words, His look, and His grace did the rest.

For, thereafter, we have the inspired flow of classical Tamil poetry in Muruganar's "Ramana Sannidhi Murai" modelled on "Tiruvacagam" and even surpassing it in its depth and sublimity.

Ramana's love of Arunachala was a virgin and chaste love. As he himself says he was born with the awareness of the glory of Arunachala. From his age of innocence, he had felt that Arunachala was something surpassing all grandeur. In his "Nine Gems on Arunachala" Ramana refers again to this fact by recalling that Arunachala had made him its own by captivating his mind and fixing it firmly at its feet. Muruganar's love for Ramana was also a chaste one. Until the age of thirty-three he did not know about Ramana. But the moment he heard the name and was given his works, he became Ramana's wholly. I say chaste for he had no eye or ears for anyone else. He could not think of Ramana as any particular God, though he does occasionally enjoy Ramana as Siva, Subrahmanya, Krishna and Rama. For him, the leelas or sports of other Gods like Vinayaka, Subrahmanya, Vishnu, Jesus, Buddha are only the sports of Siva Ramana himself, by whose power alone other Gods manifest. We may also recall the incident when he was invited by his co-devotees for a pilgrimage. What could he see, he asked, when his eyes had been blinded by the brilliance of the sun of Knowledge, Ramana? He says, "For me who was born only to adore the feet of Lord Ramana, why should there be any relationship with anyone else" (Jnana Bodham, 2.406). "For me who am out and out of bond-slave to Him, to have a relationship with anyone else would be immoral" (2.407).

Extending the parallel between Ramana and Muruganar further, we find that just as Arunachala had chosen Ramana to proclaim its glory, its splendor of Existence-Consciousness-Bliss, Ramana made Muruganar his instrument for spreading his message by bestowing on Muruganar his own supreme state. Ramana refers to this relationship with Arunachala in the "Nine Gems on Arunachala." As for Muruganar, again and again, he proclaims that Ramana had bestowed his grace on him so that the world may benefit.

Ramana's special purpose is to provide and make easily available the direct path of Self-enquiry for Self-Knowledge. In this task it is difficult to overstate the importance of Muruganar. For Muruganar, every word which fell from Ramana's lips was am-

brosial. His love for him and surrender were complete. So, his attention to Raman's words, to the clarifications given by him, was total and undistracted. Besides, Muruganar, too, was steadily rooted in that state in which Ramana was abiding. Further, in many instances, the questions of seekers and devotees were in Tamil, and Bhagavan's replies were almost invariably in Tamil. As a result, Muruganar was able to record Ramana's message in its pristine purity for posterity. Whet gems have been strung together in "Guru Vacaka Kovai," the Garland of Guru's Sayings. Its authenticity and usefulness have been heightened by Ramana adding verses when required for elucidating the matter.

One can only marvel at the complete self-effacement and total surrender of Muruganar at Ramana's feet. He never tires of repeating over and over again that he is Ramana's slave. In one of his verses he writes:

Having written that from today I am your slave forever, my heart itself being the clear single document, I could not find the one who was to sign, "I have consented." (Jnana Bodham, 4.1392)

Ramana has assured us about His continued presence. If any proof is needed we find it in abundance in the copious flow of Muruganar's poetry even after Ramana's Nirvana. Muruganar has composed seventeen thousand verses, "Ramana Jnana

Bodham" conveying the bliss of experiencing the inner presence of Raman, the experience of the natural state of abundant joy. One of the verses from this work will illustrate the nature of his experience:

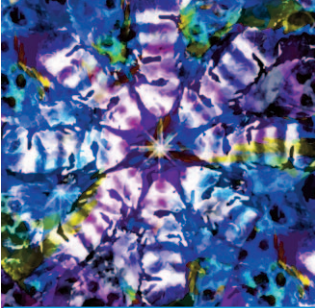
My Lord has established me in his feet, the glory of which cannot be thought of by the mind. The silence of Self-experience which surged forth when the enthusiastically rising ego was destroyed, has filled my heart, having blossomed as bliss. (Jnana Bodham, 3.638)

The Bodham is replete with such verses.

Coming to think of it, how much do we owe to Muruganar! It is difficult to overstate it. He brings Ramana so near. He makes Ramana so dear by making us share that wonderful mystic union with the Sadguru. Only Muruganar's words have the power of communicating that which words cannot communicate, the dynamic silence of Ramana. Had not Ramana chosen him for this purpose? Thanks to this, one is filled with a longing for the day when one would be aware, each moment, that "It is the power of Guru Ramana's Grace that is directing our every step and enveloping us in his bliss."

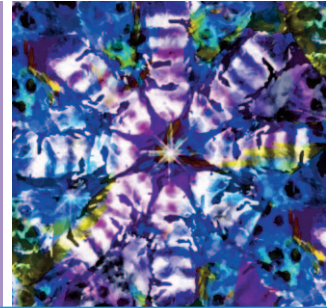
("Garland of Guru's Sayings" and "Guru Vacaka Kovai" are both available in the SAT Temple Bookstore or through the SAT online bookstore.) ॐ





Ever Yours in Truth

Correspondence between Nome and seekers.
(Names of seekers are omitted to preserve their privacy.)



[In reply to a seeker who described how most of his friends are not interested in Advaita Vedanta as he is, Nome wrote:]

April 12, 2016

Dear ,

Om Namoh Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message. Yes, your messages of March 8th and April 6th were also received.

Solitude and being in the midst of others are conceived in the context of misidentification with the body. In the certainty of the knowledge of the bodiless Self, having few friends or many is the same.

Though that which is revealed by Advaita Vedanta is truly the very Self of all, those who actually endeavor to practice these teachings are said to be few. Yet many and few are mere illusions, for one Self alone exists.

Consider all the wise sages as your best friends. This timeless friendship endures, and even all the changes in life and death cannot sever or destroy it.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[A seeker expressed her experience of Sri Ramana's Grace and her visit to the SAT Temple, as well as her approach to reading sacred books, such as books of Sri Bhagavan, Song of Ribhu, Timeless Presence, etc. Here is the reply.]

Dear ,

Om Namoh Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message. I am glad to know that your visit here was so beneficial and delightful.

Yes, Bhagavan's Grace is timeless, immeasurable in its immensity, inconceivable in its extent, and always perfectly full.

Ignorance can continue only so long as it is believed to be valid. When ignorance is actually known to be only ignorance, it ceases. That which remains is itself peace and shines blissfully as true Knowledge.

As mentioned during your visit, your approach to reading is wise. That which is indicated by the sacred books is truly the Self, your very Being.

Whenever you are able to come, for a retreat or satsang and such, you are always warmly welcome.

May you, by Grace, blessed with the darshanam of sages and pursuing Self-inquiry, always abide in Self-Knowledge and thus dwell in lasting happiness and peace.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[Someone wrote expressing that he was in continuous samadhi and had realized Self-Knowledge. Here is Nome's response.]

April 30, 2016

Dear ,

Om Namoh Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

The sole-existent Reality of the Self is, indeed, self-evident. Being, Knowledge, and Bliss are one and the same.

Rejoicing with you in your happiness,
Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth
Nome

[The same gentleman wrote again two times discussing his understanding of nirvikalpa samadhi and sahaja samadhi. This is Nome's reply.]

May 8, 2016

Dear ,

Om Namoh Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for both of your messages. Brahman is the only Reality. It is, indeed, indescribable and inconceivable. Hence the opening phrase of the Dakshinamurti Dhyanam, "revealing the Supreme Brahman by eloquent silence (or by silent speech)." In the Upanishads and elsewhere, Brahman is defined as saccidananda (sat-cit-ananda, Existence-Consciousness-Bliss) and satyam-jnanam-anantam (Truth-Knowledge-Infinity). Brahman alone knows Brahman. Another cannot do so, for another does not exist.

Nirvikalpa means without differentiation, without imagination, without doubt. Certainly, such are not present in samadhi. Likewise, the conception of effort and its opposite is not present in samadhi itself. Sahaja means innate, natural. By implication, such is effortless. The Self, absolute Being, undifferentiated Consciousness, which is perfectly full Bliss, is innate. It simply is at is, always. The Self alone knows itself; there is no other to either know it or to be ignorant of it. The Self alone is the innate. In that, for that, as that, there is no question of an individual or a world.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[A seeker asked about beauty and artistic inspiration. Here is the reply.]

May 20, 2016

Dear ,

Om Namoh Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. The expressions of all that is good, true, and beautiful may be said to be the shining of the reflected light of the Self.

Though forms, such as this universe, are only the formless Existence, the formless Existence never becomes other than what it always is. It is not bound by, enclosed by, or limited to any form.

Where the ego dissolves or subsides may be regarded as the source of inspiration.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[A Ramana Devotee in India asked about how to deal with worries and irritations. He asked to know which stanza by Sri Ramana would be of help to him. This is Nome's response.]

May 20, 2016

Dear ,

Om Namoh Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. The cause of worries and mental irritations is mistaken ideas about happiness. Knowledge of the source and nature of happiness removes the cause. The concept of fate or predestination, though sometimes employed as an expedient teaching in the course of spiritual instruction, is not the final truth. Inquire to know the truth of the Self, which transcends the mind, or, filled with devotion, surrender all to Sri Bhagavan. All of the Maharshi's verses are pertinent to you; you have only to dive deeply into their profound meaning.

May you, blessed with Sri Ramana's Grace, abide consistently in the happy Knowledge of the Self and thus remain at peace.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[A seeker wanted to know what to “ask in looking at who am I?” Here is the reply.]

May 31, 2016

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. In Self-inquiry, the focus must be kept on Self-Knowledge. The form of the question is not important. It is the inward-turning, the nonobjective introspection that is best expressed as “Who am I?”, that is so very important. Destruction of vasana-s (mental tendencies) that form the delusion of bondage is attained by examination of the misidentifications that are their basis.

You can reflect upon the various questions posed in the course of the spiritual instruction during the retreat and those raised during satsangs as preserved in the recordings. Of course, the SAT publications are deliberately written to prompt such inquiry.

May your inquiry be deep so that you happily abide in the Knowledge of the Self.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[A seeker asked about the lila, play, of God. Here is the response.]

June 15, 2016

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. The concept of lila is employed as an explanation of the divine nature of the power that manifests as all this, inclusive of time and space, if a higher view is not yet realized. The perspective of lila assumes the existence of the individual perceiver and that the world exists as an external reality. When such are examined and thus vanish, in Self-Knowledge, the triadic differentiation of jagat-jiva-para (the universe-the individual-the Supreme) is realized to be unreal, so how could there be any lila? Nevertheless, if the idea of lila helps your devotion to deepen, you may certainly expediently use it for such.

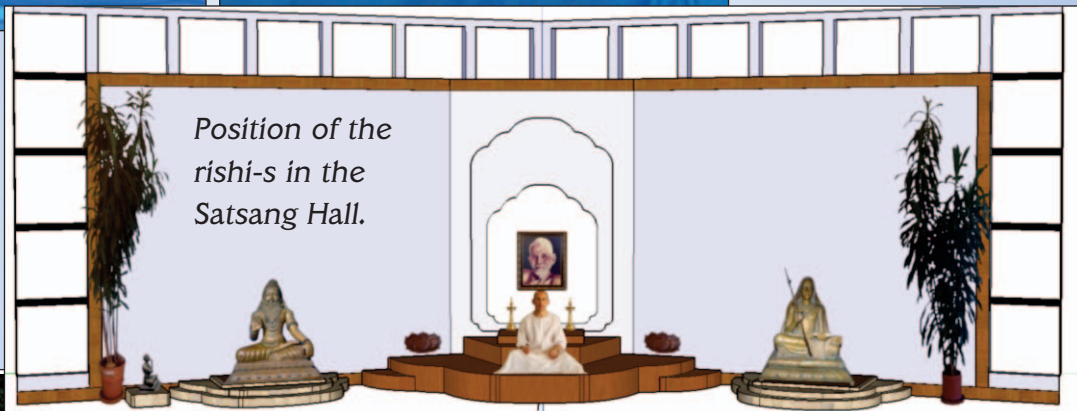
Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome ॐ



Temple Bulletin



Since its conception in March of 2012, the vision of the Sri Sadisvara Mandiram also included the procurement of the three bronze murtis shown here: Ribhu Rishi Natha with his disciple Nidagha, and Adi Sankaracharya. By the Grace of Sri Bhagavan, these murtis are now complete and are sailing the sea at the release of this issue of Reflections. Their arrival date is sometime in July. Please follow the SAT Temple blog as there will be postings regarding their arrival and installment in the temple satsang hall.



Devotees build altars for Ribhu Rishi Natha, His disciple Nidagha, and for Adi Sankaracharya.



Flower kolam offerings to Lord Siva in the Sri Sadisvara Mandiram.

Upcoming Special Events at the SAT Temple

Sri Ramana Maharshi's Self-Realization Day: July 17, 2016

Guru Purnima: July 19, 2016

Sri Ramana Maharshi Self-Realization Retreat: August 19-21, 2016

Sri Krishna Jayanti (Janmastami): August 25, 2016

Sri Ramana Maharshi's Arrival at Arunachala: September 1, 2016

Ganesha Chaturthi: September 5, 2016

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Om Namah Sivaya