

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya



Om Namah Sivaya



Reflections ॐ SAT Temple

July . August . September 2020



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Publisher: Society of Abidance in Truth (SAT Temple), Editor: Sasvati Nome .
Contributors: Grant Summerville, transcription of Satsang and Ribhu Gita events; Ganesh Sadasivan for The Lila of Sri Sadisha.
1834 Ocean St., Santa Cruz, CA 95060 USA / Ph: 831.425.7287 / email: sat@satramana.org / www.SATRamana.org
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Commentary by Nome from

Origin of Spiritual Instruction

(A Catechism of Instruction)

Chapter 3 Continued from Previous Reflections

(This commentary was taken from the May 2018, Self-Knowledge Retreat held at the SAT Temple.)

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Nome: One Self alone is. It is without fault, being perfectly full always. It is unlimited. It is without parts. It is free of all modification. It is immutable. It is everywhere and always, yet beyond time and space. Formless, bodiless, without the least trace of particularization or individuality. It is absolutely one, and, being indivisible, Knowledge of it, Self-Knowledge, is unique, in that there are not two, a knower and a known, one to realize and one to be realized. This being so, to the discriminating person, the question naturally arises, “Who does the spiritual practice?” The doubt arises because one mistakes practice to be an action, but, it is not an action, it is Knowledge. The end is Self-Knowledge, and the means to it is the same. Knowledge takes the form

Nome: Whatever you consider yourself to be, in addition to Brahman, is just a mistake, an illusion, and not the truth of you at all. Your Existence came from nowhere but always was. Your Existence goes nowhere but always is. It is not in the world, but the world appears nowhere else but in it.

of Self-Inquiry in practice but never is there a division. Never are there two or more selves. In delusion, what is mistaken for the Self is not at all the Self. Delusion consists of the attribution of what is not the Self at all to the Self. “Who am I?” This inquiry consisting of Knowledge results in Knowledge. You are always only one, never divided. Just as there is no division inwardly, there is no multiplicity of selves outwardly. Such multiplicity appears only due to attributing to the Self what is not the Self. What is truly yourself? What have you

been considering to be your Self that is not at all your Self. Discriminate, discern. The power of such Knowledge to illumine is innate. Make use of it. When and where do you begin? When and where do you end? Beginningless and endless is your Existence. The Existence, itself, is utterly indivisible. Is there anyone apart from the Self? If there is any distinction between the Self, that is Brahman, and your Self, you must ask, "Why?" You will find that it is only mistaken identity. So, inquire, "Who am I?"

The disciple asked Sri Bhagavan: When there are innumerable individual souls animating the bodies, which can so plainly be seen moving about independently of one another, is it possible to say from one's experience that the Atman is but one?

Sri Bhagavan replies: If the awareness expressed by the statement, "I am this physical body," were taken as synonymous with the Atman, or the Self, no doubt it would be many. That is the Self, or that is the state of Self-Realization, though, wherein the "I"-notion or body-consciousness is utterly destroyed, since in such a state there cannot be the least sense of duality, it has been said that the Atman is but one.

Nome: If you are a body, then you may be considered to be an individual. If you are the body, there are other bodies, and, thus, there would be the

assumption of other individuals. Are you the body? Is individuality actually your existence?

Q.: When we talk about the body, why, when Bhagavan's mother wanted to go near him, she could not even go near. Our body is dependent on the bodies of our parents. That is the reality, but, if I'm saying this, it can only be my body that is saying. So, how can that come from the form to the formless? If I'm saying that my body is different than the bodies of the parents, this body only is saying that.

N.: That has nothing to do with you. The Self is not dependent on the parents, though the parents are none other than the Self. Likewise, you are not the child of the parents. You are only the Self. You are not a body, and you are none of the attributes or qualities of the body. Everything that happens for the body, from birth and before to death and afterward—none of that pertains to you. Does Brahman have parents? Of course not. So, it was asked a few moments ago what is truly your Existence and what do you consider yourself to be? Whatever you consider yourself to be, in addition to Brahman, is just a mistake, an illusion, and not the truth of you at all. Your Existence came from nowhere but always was. Your Existence goes nowhere but always is. It is not in the world, but the world appears nowhere else but in it. This will make sense to

the bodiless; to the body it is incomprehensible.

“In Self-Realization,” he says, “the I-notion or body-consciousness is utterly destroyed.” How is it destroyed? Only by Knowledge. Knowledge alone destroys ignorance. The concept of “I,” the concept of being embodied, is only a concept and not the reality. A belief that you are the body, goes along with regarding what is sensed as real. But the senses do not determine the reality, and the body is not “I.” How is the connection with the body destroyed? Only by Knowledge manifesting as Self-Inquiry. All of ignorance, and the foundation of such ignorance as the “I am the body” concept, is but an assumption, bare supposition, and not at all the fact. You are not a body now, you have never been a body, and you will not become embodied in the future. If you are not a body, where do you begin and end? If you are not a body, what is the significance of others? For the body-misidentified, everyone is other. Free of the misidentification with the body, there is only one Self without another. If there is the supposition of “I” there will be the supposition of this, this being something else—another. If there is no “I,” there is no other. The two are always associated. So how many of us are there here?

“In such a state,” he said, regarding Self-Realization, “there cannot be the least sense of duality.” Not the least distinction is there between Brahman

and the Self. There is no difference such as “I” and this. There is no distinction such as the experience and the one who experiences. There is an utter absence of the world and “I.” All duality stems from the ego-notion, and, with the disillusion of the ego, duality dissolves.

Who am I? Are you the body? Are you embodied? Do you even possess a body? Question yourself like this.

Another Q.: It takes a really long time to get unstuck. What happens with the auditory and visual forms as that is going on?

N.: Why do you say it requires a long time?

Q.: I will start out with every intention of keeping my attention on my sense of self and not anything else. It doesn't take very long before I drift.

N.: Where were you the entire time?

Q.: My mind gets wrapped up in whatever I'm doing. There are times when I go through a good part of the day and I will be aware of myself doing things. One thing follows another, it goes very smoothly, and I get a lot done. I don't get directly involved in deciding this or that, it's just one thing goes to another.

N.: Yes, it is a sattvic state.

Q.: But there are other times when that doesn't happen. And then I start thinking I have to do this now, and then that...

N.: It is a rajasic state, and the tendency of having inertia, of remaining in it and taking a long time to get back, is a tamasic state. All these gunas are merely modes of the mind. Where are you the whole time?

Q.: I'm just observing, just aware of all of that.

N.: What is the nature of that awareness?

Q.: It doesn't really have a nature, it's just there. I get frustrated because I suddenly find that I've gotten wrapped up again in the usual meaningless details.

N.: It requires no time to begin to inquire who has become wrapped up, and that will unravel the entire mess.

Q.: I forget. I don't remember to do that.

N.: Then, in addition, you should ask, "Who is the forgetful one?"

Q.: Then I remember to do so, that's exactly what I do. Sometimes, I get so far away. I have pictures of Sri Ramana, and I just look at one and hang on to it for a while, and that reminds me of what I'm doing and where my attention should be.

N.: What occurs when you look at the picture? It is not just a visual experience.

Q.: Everything else goes away a little bit.

N.: Goes away or becomes less important?

Q.: What about the visual and auditory experiences?

N.: Do you regard what you see and hear as real?

Q.: Not when I'm in the right place, no. It's there, but it's sort of dreamlike. I get wrapped up in it. That's my problem.

N.: I am not pointing out different modes of sensations, but whether or not the sensations are at all real.

Q.: They press upon me a lot.

N.: What is the definition of you that is pressed upon? Are you an embodied entity?

Q.: Not really, no.

N.: Know it for certain.

Q.: It's like having a herd of flies buzzing around my head.

N.: A herd of flies?

Q.: Well, what do you call it? A flock, a swarm? They're big enough, they're like a herd. And actually, real flies don't bother me as much as what I'm talking about.

N.: Become certain of your bodiless nature. You are not what is sensed, you are not the sensing, and you are not a sensing entity. You are not passing through time; time appears only in you. There is nothing frustrating about inquiry or Knowledge. Ignorance, however, is very frustrating.

Q.: What I mean is that I can't keep my attention focused, and I get distracted.

N.: That which knows the coming and going of your attention should be realized. The placement of attention is still a mental mode. You are beyond all mental modes. You see the attention coming and going. Who is that? When you see Bhagavan's gracious picture, you are reminded, in the deepest possible way, of the nature of that One. Indeed, the very meaning of the term Bhagavan is defined by Adi Sankara in his Gita Bashya, as one who knows the coming and going, the beginning and end, and the ignorance and knowledge of all beings. So, you say you look at his picture. It would be better to say, "That body [referencing the questioner's body] is a picture, and he is the Reality." This again is best understood, from the perspective of being bodiless, which is true. There are no flies here. It's a no fly zone. (Laughter)

Q.: I focus on the eyes. That seems to be the source within the picture that gets me headed back in the right direction.

N.: He is always there, which means His help or Grace is always there. There is nothing to be frustrated about.

Another Q.: The closing of the eyes when we start meditating. Personally, I don't know about my fellow devotees here, I feel like I'm only closing my eyelids, but my eyes inside are wide open, looking for objects, and wandering. But, in a particular state it stops. So, what do the words, "attention inwards" mean? The attention itself appears to be the object for me. That attention, self-attention inwards, is troubling, and that attention itself appears to be the object for me.

N.: True Knowledge is non-objective. The placing of attention is a mental mode and will have transient results. It is objective to you. True Knowledge transcends mental attention. True Knowledge is of the eternal. Mental attention with the eyes closed or open is not eternal. "What is not eternal is not worth seeking," says Bhagavan. ॐ

The Boundless Wisdom of Sri Ramana Maharshi

Existence After Realization

October 26, 1947

This morning after Veda Parayana, a gentleman who came a few days ago enquired of Bhagavan, "Swami, it is said that, though a jnani (a realized soul) appears to be doing all the routine things, he really does nothing. How can that be explained?"

Bhagavan: "How? There is a story about it. Two friends, while travelling on business, slept the night somewhere, and one of them had a dream that he and his companion had gone together to several places and had done various things. On rising in the morning, the other man had nothing to say, for he had slept soundly. But the first man asked his friend about the various places they had seen together during the night, but the second man could say nothing about them, having had no dream like the other. He merely said, 'I have gone nowhere, I have been here only.' As a matter-of-fact, neither had gone anywhere; but the first man had only an illusion of having gone. Similarly, to those who look upon this body as real, and not unreal as in a dream, it may appear real, but, strictly speaking, nothing affects the jnani."

Remarked some other person: "It is said that the eyes of a jnani appear to look at things, but in reality they see nothing."

Bhagavan: "Yes, the eyes of the jnani are likened to the eyes of a dead goat; they are always open, never closed. They glitter, but they see nothing, though it seems to others that they see everything. But what is the point?"



The devotee continued: “It is also said that for such adepts, siddhas, there is no conditioning or limitation (upadhi) of space and time.”

Bhagavan: “That is right. It is true that there is no such thing as conditioning or limitation, but the doubt then arises as to how the day-to-day work is done. It has, therefore, to be said that they have limitations. It is also stated that the limitation will be there in a subtle way until there is deliverance from the body (videha mukti). It is like a line drawn on water; the line appears while it is being drawn but is not there immediately after.”

The devotee: “If that is so for emancipated souls (siddha purushas), there will be no upadhi (support) after their mortal body falls away. But Bhagavan himself has said that there are several emancipated souls on the hill. If they have no support (upadhi) how could they remain in existence?”

Bhagavan:

क्षीरं क्षीरे यथा क्षिप्तं तैलं तैले जलं जले।

संयुक्तमेकतां याति तथाऽऽत्मन्यात्मविन्मुनिः ॥

kṣīraṁ kṣīre yathā kṣiptaṁ tailaṁ taile jalaṁ jale ।
saṁuktamekatāṁ yāti tathā”tmanyātmavinmuniḥ ॥

-Viveka Chudamani, 566

Those who have attained complete emancipation (jnana siddhi) merge with the universe after their bodies fall off, just as milk merges with milk, oil with oil, water with water. In the case of lower souls, because of some samskaras or latent tendencies remaining unexpired, they stay in this world, taking whatever form they please, and ultimately become merged.

The devotee: “Why does that difference arise?”

Bhagavan: “It arises because of the strength of their desires (samkalpas).” ॐ



Satsang with Nome

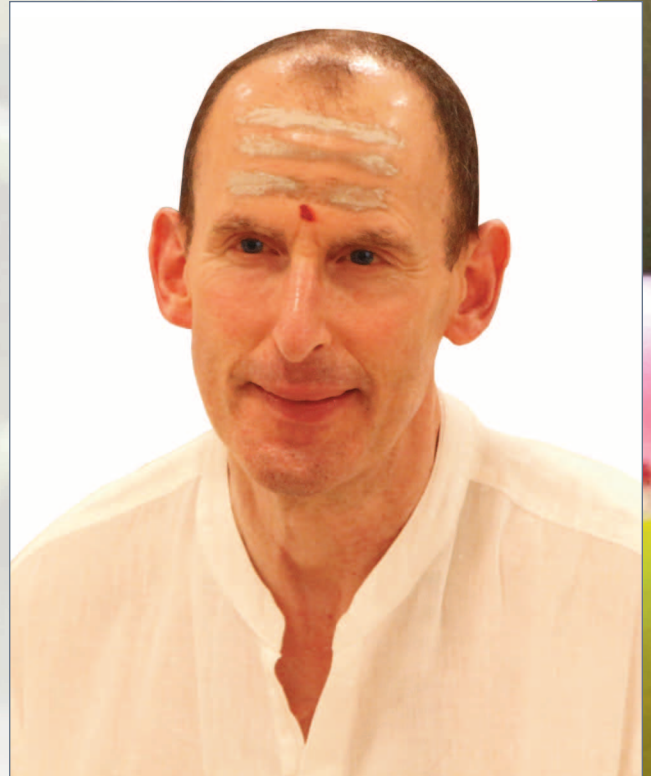
How do you know?

Satsang, October 4, 2015

Om Om Om
(Silence)

Nome: You know that you exist. How do you know this? Such knowledge does not require sensation or anything bodily in character. Such knowledge does not require thinking. How do you know that you exist? You are absolutely certain of it. No one doubts his own existence. If, at the depth of this knowledge, you ascertain what, in truth, is your nature, it will be found to be beginningless and endless, undifferentiated Existence-Consciousness-Bliss. For this certainty of Self-Knowledge, relinquish any tendency to misidentify as a body, inclusive of all the characteristics or qualities of the body. Inwardly inquire to discern the nature of the existence that may presently seem to be, or is assumed to be, individualized – “I.” If you inquire to know what, in truth, this “I” is, its individuality or “I”-ness, being an illusion, vanishes. What remains?

The shastras—the scriptures—are replete with descriptions of something that is actually ineffable and inconceivable. That before which words, along with the mind, turn back, unable to grasp, is your own nature. It is bodiless, egoless, birthless, imperishable, attributeless, and free of the least trace of differentiation. It is absolute, being self-existent, not depending on anything else in order to be. Being of the very nature of Consciousness, it is not dependent on anything else in



order to know. This Being-Consciousness, Existence-Knowledge, is identical with Bliss, happiness that is uncaused, the perfect fullness of our real nature.

Turn within by inquiring into what your actual identity is, what your existence is. That is Brahman, and Brahman alone is what you are. Who can truly understand this? Only the real Self. If you suppose there is another self, with which you identify, inquire to know what it is, and it will vanish, being unreal. Only its quintessence will remain, and that is pure, unalloyed, undifferentiated Existence-Consciousness-Bliss. If you do not inquire to know yourself, you will be asking, “Where is this Brahman? I don’t experience it.” That will be the idea. If you do inquire to know the Self as it is, then you will be saying, “Where is the ego, the embodied individual? I don’t experience it.” Where there was the assumed jiva, there is found to be only Siva; where there was “I,” there is only the true Self. Inquire.

Questioner: I think most people have the experience of trying to impart something

about the teaching to someone and being baffled that there is not the slightest interest on the part of the other party. I take that as a sign of great blessing and grace. To even have an interest in the Absolute is an indication and a proof of the great statement, "Brahman alone knows Brahman." There can be two kinds of emphasis. One notes Consciousness as the Absolute, and the other notes Absolute Self as Atman, as Brahman. My previous training makes it easy for me to relegate Cosmic Consciousness, or Universal Mind, to the Absolute and not so easy to claim it as the very essence of my existence, that by which I am certain that I exist. I might be too willing to accept the "I," or self-hood, but only in a limited, individualized sense as my own, and less skillful at recognizing the Absolute in the true Self. I should claim Consciousness with more vigor, and surrender self-ness to the Absolute?

N.: How do you distinguish the Self from the Absolute? How can you discriminate between Being and Consciousness?

Q.: There seems to be a divine element in Consciousness, but it is not so recognizable in the self.

N.: What are you referring to as the self?

Q.: It is a very individualized, body-identified self.

N.: Are you the body?

Q.: No, that is the value of switching that around.

N.: What constitutes the individual?

Q.: False identification with a body.

N.: If it is false, it does not really exist. So, then, there is no choice; there are not two to decide between.

Q.: Hmm. The Maharshi quoted an Old Testament phrase, "Be still and know that I am God." He was pointing to the Absolute Self and cer-

tainly not the individual. Half of the mahavakyas, "Aham Brahmasmi" and "Ayam Atma Brahma," make that emphasis. So, I am inspired to give that special attention in meditation.

N.: Then continue doing so. Sri Bhagavan stated that by stillness is meant the destruction of all name and form. Consider name to refer to the conceivable and form to the perceptible. If something is real, it cannot be destroyed. If it is unreal, its destruction so-called is by Knowledge. So, "Be still" signifies an absence of misidentification, not leaving one's true nature to wander in the realm of imagination. The significance of all four mahavakyas is the same. When it is said, "Ayam Atma Brahma—this Self is Brahman," what is meant by Self? When it is said, "Tat Tvam Asi—That you are," That is Brahman. What is meant by "you"? Knowing that is, as Sri Bhagavan has said, the true display of Grace and the ego's death.

Another Q.: One kind of meditation I am doing is looking at my mind and then inquire who it is that watches the mind. When I ask that question, an idea coalesces. Within the imagery of it, it seems to go into the heart area, the chest area. It is a burning sensation and that sits there gradually moving deeper. When I inquire into other things, the same imagery that arises. Is this is in the right direction?

N.: Question and wonder about this. There are these sensations. They appear and disappear. For whom do they appear and disappear? For whom is the perception of the body? There is this imagery conjured up by the mind. Who is it that knows it? Whoever he is, he cannot be a body. There is no bodily sensation that is indicative of him. The experience of his nature is utterly bodiless, transcendent of all sensation; likewise is it for the imagery. Imagery is conjured up in the mind. For whom is the mind? The mind comes and goes and so does its imagery, and with it comes and goes the sensation. You do not come and go. You are before, during, and after the sensations, the imagery, the thinking, etc. Who is this you? Wonder about him. That is truly to go more deeply. Is this now clear?



Q.: Clear. It should have been obvious, because you were so repetitive. When you say it, it is so obvious. (laughter)

N.: Yes, that is what is humorous or perplexing. Though the truth of the Self is self-evident, somehow one does not see it. Though that alone is real, something else is imagined. But when we examine the imagination, it dissipates, and clarity remains.

Another Q.: I was mistaking the knower to be in thought or part of thought.

N.: All thought is the known. It has no knowing power of its own. The illumination, or knowing, belongs only to the knower. Discern the knower from the known. The knower is utterly nonobjective. That can never be a known or unknown object. You cannot be an object to yourself. If the knower is divested of all misidentification with the known, because of what its innate nature is, what is it? It is without definition and without limitation, without ignorance and without bondage. The knower is pure Consciousness, unalloyed with anything else. You are only always the knower and never the known. Among the known, there is multiplicity. In the knower, or undifferentiated Consciousness, multiplicity is impossible. It is only One, without anything else whatsoever.

Q.: So, the inability, itself, consists of some concepts.

N.: Those concepts are known, aren't they?

Q.: Yes.

N.: They are inapplicable to you. You, being the Self, cannot possibly be incapable of abiding as the Self. The thought that Self-Realization is impossible, or one is not capable, is completely absurd. It is like saying that you are incapable of existing. It is absurd. Existence is the fact. Existence is the very substance of Self-Realization.

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

(Silence)

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

(Then followed a recitation in Tamil from Chapter 15 of the Song of Ribhu.) ॐ



Correspondence with Nome

[In answer to questions from a seeker about discipleship, guru, and grace:]

March 19, 2020

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya
Namaste. By referring to liberating grace, you have very well answered your question. Free from misidentification with a body, the guru is eternal. All of the Self-realized sages are the one undifferentiated Self, and thus Sri Bhagavan declared his identity with Adi Sankaracharya in his translation of Dakshina-murti-Ashtakam.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[In answer to questions asked by a seeker:]

March 23, 2020

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya
Namaste. It is the spirit with which the verses are declared that should be comprehended and infuse your spiritual practice, just as you are doing with love and the feeling of gratitude.

The conjuring up of ignorance and adherence to it appear to obstruct the absorption of the instruction in Self-Knowledge. Such obstruction is illusory and not real. Deep devotion dissolves the illusion, and, thereby, the instruction can be comprehended. Such also is "the display of grace," as proclaimed by Sri Bhagavan. This is the essence. More about this can be found in *Parabhakti*.

The usefulness and pertinence of the experience of puja (worship), wearing sacred ash, rudraksha, etc., are known only by those who engage in such. Without experience of such, the formulation of opinions in the intellect regarding such would not be beneficial.

Rudraksha means the eye (aksha) of Rudra, which is an ancient name of Siva (the auspicious, the good) signifying possessing great power and that which should be worshiped. That is Consciousness. The Realization of that is the Self is the wearing of rudraksha. Whether or not one wears a mala of seeds on the body, she should be sure to adorn herself inwardly with the eye of Siva.

Similarly, the ash is called vibhuti, which means glory, magnificence, power, penetrating, and pervading. Such is a description of the residuum of absolute Being upon the complete burning up of the triads of illusion. Whether or not one applies the ash, she should wear the inner vibhuti in the state of identity with absolute Being always.

The inner essence, transcendent of difference, is the joyful necessity.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[A reply to a seeker:]

March 30, 2020

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya
Namaste. The Self alone is real; all is only the Self alone. The first of these declarations is indicative of the highest wisdom. The second is expressive of the deepest love. The essential meaning is the same and is realized in

Self-Knowledge. Sri Bhagavan, Adi Sankara-charya, and others have again and again proclaimed that this realization depends on the cessation of ignorance, which is the cessation of mistaking the world to be real as if it has an objective reality. All are dear and loved for the sake of the Self, declares an Upanishad. Yes, it is simple. Limited thoughts may seem to contradict each other, but, in transcendent Knowledge, there is no contradiction at all, just One without a second or another. If the unreal ego vanishes, all of this is self-evident. Self-inquiry reveals this.

Om Namah Shivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[A seeker raised questions about desires and thoughts. This is the reply:]

April 11, 2020

Dear ,

Om Namoh Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya
Namaste. All desires have a common motivation, which is to be happy uninterruptedly. If you search to know the source and nature of happiness, you will find such to be your very Existence. To mistake the Self for what it is not, confused regarding identity, reality, and happiness, is ignorance. Ignorance alone is the cause of illusory bondage and its consequent suffering. Inquiry that eliminates ignorance reveals perfectly full happiness that never ends.

Thoughts are unreal, both in content and as entities or occurrences. They do not know themselves or each other and do not know the knower of them. They have no existence apart from you, yet you are not a thought. The Self is always free from thought. To realize this, Self-inquiry is the means.

The idea that you are in a world is dependent on misidentification with the body. Are you a body? The Self is innately bodiless. To realize the truth regarding this, for Self-Knowledge, Self-inquiry is the means.

The ego is the false assumption of existing as an individual. The mind is the same false notion of the existence of a separate knowing entity apart from the Self, which is infinite, undifferentiated Consciousness. Who are you? By such inquiry, the Knowledge shines forth to itself by itself.

May you ever abide in the thought-transcendent Knowledge of the Self, the happiness of which leaves no other happiness to be desired.

Om Namah Shivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[Another question about desire and action. This is the response:]

April 15, 2020

Dear ,

Om Namoh Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya
Namaste. You may find it beneficial to reread the previous reply sent to you, for the answers contained in it are applicable to your present questions as well.

Self-inquiry consists of knowledge and is not an action. You know that you exist. How do you know that? You do not need to perform any action with the instruments of the body, speech, or mind for this doubtless knowledge to shine. At the same depth, you should inquire. In this manner alone can inquiry be constant.

Comprehension of the nature and source of happiness yields the necessary detachment.

Only if you are a body can you be the performer of action. Are you a body? What do you regard yourself to be, and what are you really? No matter what activity the body apparently engages in, you remain actionless, unmoving, and immutable.

Who is it that has these desires? Knowing the nature of that one fulfills all desires, is the end of all desire, and reaches the final goal of life.

Nothing expressed here in these replies contradicts what Sri Krishna declares in the *Gita*. The real ever is; the unreal never is. The truth regarding these is discerned by the seers of truth. May your inquiry be deep and thorough so that you abide as that which is the Self that dwells in the hearts of all, the beginning, middle, and end of all beings.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[A seeker asked about the meaning of bhava as it pertains to verses in Ribhu Gita. Here is the reply.]

April 16, 2020

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya
Namaste. I am glad to know that you are delving into *Ribhu Gita*.

In the passage cited by you, “bhava” means a mentality or attitude. Brahman is the absolute Reality, which is transcendent of all such mental modes, inclusive of every concept about it. Brahman exists; indeed, Brahman is existence. That alone is the Self. Self-Knowledge is the revelation of Reality. Just this Knowledge is the central focus of *Ribhu Gita*. The Quintessence of True Being is also so. You are not a bhava. Who are you? Even the loftiest state of mind you are not. Who are you? If you inquire in this manner, the desired clarity will be self-evident.

May you ever abide in the Knowledge of the Self and thus dwell in happiness and peace always.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[To a question about Brahman-bhava, here is the reply.]

April 22, 2020

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya
Namaste. Thank you for both of your messages. What is meant by “the experience of just being aware”? If such is sensations (seeing, etc.), such is illusory and is negated as unreal. If such is bodiless, non-sensory, mind-transcendent, and results in a deep conviction of the Truth expressed in the Mahavakya, such may be regarded as Brahman-bhava. Continuing to inquire, the ego, which is the false assumption of individuality, vanishes along with the abandonment of the objectifying tendency. Thus, there is neither an experiencer nor an experience. Who experiences what? Who has a bhava of what? Brahman does not have or need a bhava. In abidance as the Self, Being is Knowledge. The supposition that there is someone to have a bhava should be examined. Who are you?

What is mentioned above is what is indicated in the verse in question. May your inquiry be profound so that Brahman is realized as the only Self that there is, in bliss.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[Here is a response to some questions that can be inferred from the answers:]

April 22, 2020

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya
Namaste. When you watch the news, do you think it is real? Sri Bhagavan read the newspaper; does it mean that he had desire?

From where does thought derive its apparent reality, power, or solidity? What is the nature and source of belief?

The pursuit of desire only tends to increase compulsion. Discriminate and choose wisely.

Yes, it is certainly possible to abide free of an ego, for Existence is innately egoless, and an ego does not exist at all.

Binding patterns of thought are based upon misidentification. Self-inquiry destroys such, and the perfectly full Self alone remains.

Self-Knowledge is experiential and devoid of the ego-notion and all that is imagined based upon it. If there may be the ideas and corresponding words “I know that I alone am. The world is unreal,” etc., but delusive tendencies still prevail, one does not really know, does he? If there is Self-Knowledge, there is certainty beyond all doubt and difference, and, in That, as That, there is only the Bliss—Being—which all desire.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[Another reply:]

April 27, 2020

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya
Namaste. Regardless of the modes of mind and the senses, you ever changelessly exist as Existence itself, which is illimitable, self-luminous Consciousness. By inquiry, return the sense of identity to its source and thus abide with certainty in Self-Knowledge. The clarity of such is innate.

Planning presents no spiritual difficulty, bondage, etc., provided there is no confusion concerning the source and nature of happiness, no delusion regarding the reality, and no misidentification regarding the Self.

Beyond thought, where is the bewilderment or the tendencies of imagination? Beyond thought, how free are you? Beyond thought, who are you?

Increasing happiness and peace indicate one is on the right path.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[A seek asked about continuous inquiry and the transience of his spiritual experience. This is the reply:]

May 7, 2020

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya
Namaste. If the essence and substance of Self-inquiry is recognized to be Knowledge, confusion will dissolve. Knowledge destroys the ego by revealing its unreality. Knowledge is transcendent of thought. Because it is so transcendent, as well as free of the body and the senses and their activities, this inquiry can be continuous.

The Self, which is Existence, is continuous. Your knowledge that you exist is already uninterrupted. Inquire at the same depth, and the inquiry will be continuous.

Your focus should be upon your identity. What are you truly, and what do you consider yourself to be?

The transient, apparent loss of peace is known by someone; who is he?

An occurrence of any kind is not constant or eternal. Being, which is Consciousness, is eternal, changeless, and constant. Therefore, do not wait for something to happen to you; seek inwardly and inquire to know who you are.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[A seeker in Germany asked about tendencies and expressed his desire to be at the SAT temple. Here is the reply.]

May 9, 2020

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya
Namaste. If the sense of happiness, reality, and identity are returned to their one source, all the tendencies will vanish. If you inquire,

"Who am I?" the root of all the tendencies is destroyed.

What is it that knows the mind, yet is unknown by the mind?

This is not a good time to come to Santa Cruz, because of the severe restrictions imposed by the government.

May you abide in the Knowledge of the Self, the sole-existent Brahman, and, thus liberated from all of the imagined bondage, dwell in bliss and peace always.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[A seeker wrote:]

May 10, 2020

Namaste dear Nome,

What I do not understand is that consciousness seems to be somehow centered around my body-mind. I am clearly aware of what the senses of this seemingly individual body-mind perceive and not what other body-senses perceive. There is some degree of recognition that I am the same being that is a tree or another person, but there is also still a sense of individuality based on this somewhat localized experience of consciousness plus sense perceptions.

What I am misunderstanding or how should I proceed?

[The reply:]

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. The idea, or mental mode, of location for the Self is an illusion imagined in and by a waking state of mind. Consider your dream state, which, during its occurrence, seems as if real, but which you know to be unreal upon awakening. In the dream, there is a dream world, though it seems to be real, perceived by dream senses by a dream character,

from a supposed bodily location, with the dream character's inner thoughts and outer sense perceptions, other dream characters, the subject and the object, and such. None of that is real except the Consciousness that knows. The Consciousness has no location in the dream, although it is the only substance there, and cannot be said to be more in one character than another. The waking state is experienced similarly. The Consciousness is not located anywhere, though it is omnipresent.

In your inquiry, discern that the idea of location is objective and does not pertain to the Self. Question, and thus abandon, the misidentification with a body, as a sensing entity, and the assumption of individuality. The Existence that remains, of the nature of Consciousness alone, is the one Reality.

May you abide in Self-Knowledge and thus joyfully dwell in the peace of the imperishable Being-Consciousness-Bliss.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[This is the reply to a question that can be inferred from the answer:]

May 16, 2020

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Self-Knowledge, though perfectly full of peace and happiness, is entirely impersonal. Inquiry to know the Self dissolves the personality with all its tendencies and reveals the unreality of the ego, which is the root of such. If this is comprehended, deep peace will shine.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[A reply to a Ramana devotee:]

May 15, 2020

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message. Sri Bhagavan's silence and spoken spiritual instruction are of the same nature. Silence, mauna, is that in which no "I," no individual, arises, he declared. That is perpetual and self-luminous.

Yes, otherness is rooted in the "I" notion, the illusory assumption of individuality. This false supposition is implicit in the very idea of other. Free of such assumption, one's own true Being is Realization. That alone exists.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[A reply to a seeker who said she had difficulty negating her past experiences:]

May 16, 2020

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. We are glad to know that you are finding *The Quintessence of True Being* so beneficial.

You need not negate the love and bliss you experienced during your previous spiritual practices. You need only know the source of such. Knowing the nature of the source by profound Self-inquiry, abide as that which is Being-Consciousness-Bliss and which is the indivisible Reality.

Yes, the Reality is completely so; the unreal is completely so. So, what can be said about the world, Shakti, etc.?

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome ॐ

There is one who knows the mind. That one is God. Quite obviously, you cannot hide something in the mind from God. God is omniscient, all-seeing. You see everything of the mind; nothing in the mind is hidden from you. Nothing of the truth is hidden, and nothing of delusion is hidden. The Knower of the mind can only be one. Multiplicity is possible only in the known, the objective. In the nonobjective, there is no form by which to delineate the multiplicity. A plurality of knowers, a multiplicity of consciousnesses, is not possible. The Consciousness, which is absolutely One, that knows the mind, but which the mind cannot know, is God. Inquire to know your nature as God, and do not mistake yourself to be anything that is the content of the mind. -Nome

The Ribhu Gita

Chapter 2, Verses 45-49
With Commentary by Nome from a
Boundless Wisdom Event held on
August 6, 2010
at the SAT Temple

the Ribhu-Nidagha Dialogue

Om Om Om
Om Namah Sivaya

45. There are no pairs of opposites, nor is there any non-Self at any time. There are no duties relating to holy waters, no growth, no generation, no death, nor the misapprehension of coming and going.

There are no pairs of opposites, nor is there any non-Self at any time. The Self is the solitary Reality. It is One without a second. There is no alternative to it. It alone is. This solitary Existence is the real meaning of Advaita – nonduality. Any other conception of nonduality is merely a conception. There is no non-Self at any time. The Self alone exists, and this is eternally so. The idea of non-Self is generated from the notion “I,” which itself is regarded as non-Self, as if there were two selves. From this initial duality, or pair of opposites, mirroring this duality, spring all other dualities. From the distinction between the Self and “I,” then comes the distinction between “I” and “this” and then “this” and “that” and then all samsara breaks forth. There are no pairs of opposites means that there is only one thing that exists. Nor is there any non-Self at any time means more than everything is the Self; it means there is no question of everything. There is just the Self. That is Existence, and there is no second kind of existence. If there is no non-Self at any time, what is the meaning of “I”? If there are no pairs of opposites, no duality, where is bondage?

There are no duties relating to holy waters, no growth, no generation, no death, nor the misapprehension of coming and going. What is declared concerning the duties relating to holy waters is applicable to all kinds of religious duties. This is mentioned just as an example. If there is the world, there are certainly religious duties. Is there the world? If there is one who is not the Self, there are various duties to be performed by that someone who is not the Self, but are you

distinct from the Self? Into this should be the inquiry. If you were born, there is growth. If the world is born, it grows. If there is growth, there is eventually decay and death. If there is generation or birth, there is death. Are you born? If you have not been born, has the world been created? There is no growth, no generation, no death, nor the misapprehension of coming and going. What comes, what goes? The "I" arises, and the "I" subsides. With its rise, everything else rises, and with its subsidence, everything else subsides. What, though, is the reality? It is without rising and setting. It does not appear, and it does not disappear. Consider coming and going as the appearance of the present experience, or consider it as life and death. From where have you come? To what do you go? There is no death. All want to exist forever, because everyone intuitively feels that his Existence is Bliss. If you know this Existence as it is, it has not been born. Nothing produced it. It is. It is already infinite; it does not grow. It can never cease to be; there is no death. One who knows that there is no death is at peace within himself. It is a misapprehension when you think you have come, and you will go. It is a misapprehension based on a misidentification with the body when you think you have come, and you will go, whether this pertains to location, as with here and there, or in time, as with life and death. Similarly, it is a misapprehension when one thinks this has come, experience has arisen, and the world has appeared'. If it comes, it will go. The Reality is without coming and without going; It simply is, and that Existence is your Self. There is no non-Self ever, nor is there any of the pairs of opposites.

46. There is no "here," nor is there "hereafter." There is no guru, no disciple, no reality, no unreality, no existence, no action to perform, and no action performed.

There is no "here," nor is there "hereafter." There is no present realm of experience, whether you refer to such as this life, this moment, or by any other term. Here is merely imagined in the mind. It is like the "here" in a dream. In reality, there is no such place and no such realm of experience. The Self alone exists, of the nature of Being-Consciousness-Bliss. Here, whether this is called "the world" or by any other term, simply is not. If there is "I" and the "I" is embodied, there is "here." If there is here, when the body is gone, then we may suppose there will be a hereafter. Are you the body? If you are not the body, where are you? If you are not the body and not even an "I," how can there be talk of here and hereafter? The so-called transition of life and death presents no change to Existence, no change to Consciousness, and one who realizes this sees no change to Bliss.

"I" comes first, then the idea of "here." Just as identity is wrongly borrowed to form the assumption of the individual who can then become the experiencer, the reality of pure Sat, pure Being, is borrowed to give a sense of the here and the now etc. But that here, now, and "I" are not the Reality.

Just one "I" alone exists. It is absolutely transcendent. In Truth, there is nothing else. Where there is nothing else, there is Advaita. There is no here; nor is there hereafter. If you dream of here, you will dream of a hereafter. Know the truth regarding your Self, unborn and unceasing. That which is unborn and unceasing obviously does not come to an end later, such as upon the passing of the body. What is real now is real always. Conversely, that which is real always is alone real now. There are not different kinds of reality; duality is false.

There is no Guru, no disciple. Why would such a wondrous guru, such as the great Rishi Ribhu, say that there is no guru? Whatever the conception is of the guru, he is transcendent of that. Consider Sri Bhagavan. All of us refer to him as Guru, Sadguru etc. Yet, by giving him that name, have we defined him? One is referred to as Guru because of what he does, but how about what he is? It is that which alone exists.

It is at the level of that which alone exists that Ribhu declares to his disciple Nidagha that there is no guru and there is no disciple. Any other approach to understanding this would be a pitfall and a mistake. If one cannot grasp this, one should definitely grasp the meaning of no disciple. If the no disciple part of the verse is comprehended, the other will become clear.

That which looks at a notion of yourself must be beyond that notion. Therefore, the “me” does not really look at the “me;” something else does.

Since time without beginning, satsang, or association with the wise, has been recommended. It is within this context that one, turning fully inward, realizes himself, and, then, the meaning of “no here or hereafter, no guru, no disciple, no reality, no unreality”, strikes home. The purpose of being a disciple must be to eliminate the disciple; that is, the false sense of embodiment and being an individual should disappear. If there is neither “I” nor the body, what, then, is designated “the disciple,” and what is designated as “the guru”? The Guru reveals his own Existence. Existence is the supreme Reality, the One without a second. The ideas of guru and disciple, extremely holy in themselves because of their essence, dissolve in the Existence, the One without a second

No reality, no unreality, The idea of the reality is not the Reality. Certainly, there is no unreality. To regard the unreal as real in the least, even if you think, “It is there, but it is unreal,” is not true. What is to be grasped fully, by being absorbed in it, is the pure Existence, itself, which alone is. The unreal just never is, not even a little bit. In this is found immaculate Liberation.

Where there is no “I,” there is neither the opposites nor the relation of them. Likewise is it with the ideas of real and unreal. Who is there who would perceive the unreal? Could he then perceive the Real? Is the Real an object to be perceived? If there is no individual caught in the unreal, and if the unreal is not, then, certainly, the Reality being nonobjective, there is no individual who recognizes it or loses track of it.

The finality rests in absoluteness. Therein lies the solidity of Self-Realization, why it is unshakeable, unmoving, and doubtless. If there were even the slightest trace of the possibility of difference, just as much as the assumption of “I,” there could be unsteadiness, but, where that is impossible, Knowledge is perfect.

The teaching is never about an “it;” it is always about you, never some thing, but only Being. Being, which is of the nature of pure Consciousness, is the teaching. The words used to express are merely auxiliary. When the objectifying outlook is abandoned, there is real Self-Knowledge, real inquiry, and it is experienced as immense freedom and bliss. If you treat it as an “it,” will it make you happy? One who really knows is happy. He is happiness, itself.

No existence, no action to perform, and no action performed. “Existence” should be understood as the world. “No existence” means no world. If there is no such thing, what is real? As long as the world is mistaken to be real, there will not be Self-realization. When the world is known to be unreal, there will be Self-realization. If there is no such manifest existence, where are you, who are you?



If there is not this existence, what actually is? We could say that there is "is." To conceive of it as an object of any kind is illusion. If the illusion ceases, which can be only by profound inquiry to know the Reality as it is, what actually is that? Such inquiry is nonobjective. The very idea of "it" is delusion. Trace your experience inward, finding Consciousness. "No action to perform, and no action performed" refers to what has been done and what will be done. If the world is not real, how can we speak of action and inaction? If you are not the body, in all that you have done, have you done anything? If you are not the body, with all that you will do, will you actually do anything? Retaining the "I am the body" misconception, what Ribhu has just stated is incomprehensible. If the "I am the body" misconception is eliminated, what Ribhu has just stated is self-evident. Difficulties or sufferings in relation to action occur only within the context of this misconception. If the misconception vanishes, no activity whatsoever creates suffering.

47. There is no community, no refuge, no caste, and nothing customary; indeed, there is no sextet of sama and others, no niyama (physical and mental regulations), and no yama (ethical restraints) either.

There is no community, no refuge, no caste, and nothing customary. One seeks a refuge in what is considered customary with the community of other living beings. One seeks some kind of security in that. All that is so only within the context of illusion. In the Reality, there is not even one individual being. So, how can there be a community of them, let alone a stratification of them, whether it be by caste or any other system conceived in thought? In the Reality, can there be anything customary? The Reality is unchanging, but it does not conform to customary thought and action. It transcends all that.

There is no sextet of sama and others. This refers to the third of the four requisites: sama is tranquility and peacefulness; dhama is self-control and control of the senses; uparati is renunciation; titiksha is forbearance, endurance of the pairs of opposites, and fortitude; sraddha is faith; and samadhana is deep absorption in meditation. Vairagya, detachment, precedes them, and viveka, discrimination, precedes that. Following the sextet is mumuksutva, the desire for Liberation. All these are aids for one aspiring to Liberation. When one knows his actual nature as it is, the ever-liberated, what is the meaning of all those descriptions? Of course, only one who practices in such a manner reaches that conclusion in which they no longer apply. How can the Reality be described in terms of sama, tranquility, or otherwise? Can we speak of self-control in relation to the Self? If there is another, a mind, self-control should be exercised. Where there is neither "I" nor the mind, what is the meaning of that? If there is a world or attachment, it should be renounced. Where there is no world and no possibility of the least attachment, who is to renounce what? Likewise is it with the rest.

No niyama and no yama. Yama is ethical restraints. Niyama is physical and mental regulations, considered one step subtler than yama. Such are necessities for one on the spiritual path, but when the path has entered, or reached, its destined end and that end is found to be the only existing Reality, then what can we say of these steps and stages? We may regard all that have been negated as like things that appear in a dream that prompt one to wake up. After you have awakened, what happens to those dream things?

48. There is no such thing as “All is illusion” or “All is as Brahman.” There is nothing “as Consciousness.” There is no such thing to be spoken of as “I am Consciousness.”

There is no such thing as “All is illusion.” If you perceive all, you should know that it is an illusion. Is there all, to begin with? The original intention of wise rishis who proclaimed, “All is illusion,” was not to leave a vestige of belief in the all. The statement effaces itself. All is illusion. An illusion is something entirely unreal. It does not exist. Therefore, there is nothing called “all” that can be referred to or thought of as an illusion. If one mistakes the illusion to be real, then, he may meditate upon the truth that all this is illusion, but, in the Self, there is no such bhava, no such conception.

All is as Brahman. We may say, “All is Brahman,” if there really is all. In truth, Brahman alone is. There is not a trace of even the idea of all. **There is no such thing as “All is illusion” or “All is as Brahman.”** Both ideas do not define the Reality. They are statements of explanation, as if there were something else, other than Brahman, to explain. The wise have graciously done so, yet, in their own experience, Brahman alone is, and nothing was explained. Oh, everything was explained, but nothing was explained, for Brahman alone is.

There is nothing “as Consciousness.” If one has the idea that this world exists as Consciousness, this mind exists as Consciousness, it is still just an idea. There is Consciousness, which is Brahman. There is no “as Consciousness.” If one inquires deeply, “Who am I?” and completely abandons the objectifying tendency, what is indicated in this verse by Ribhu is abundantly clear.

There is no such thing to be spoken of as “I am Consciousness.” Are they two, an “I” and a Consciousness? If Being and Consciousness are identical and utterly thought-transcendent, the idea “I am Consciousness” is superfluous. It does not make it more or less so.

Spiritual instruction imparted by a sage such as Ribhu is a description of the Reality and a description of the direct experience, or realization, of the Reality, which is of the same nature and not distinct therefrom, and simultaneously provides the means, by profound meditation upon the significance of what is stated, to realize the Truth. All of that is fused together, so that, within even a single verse or a single phrase, you can receive and understand all of that. Self-Knowledge is revealed, and, because Knowledge constitutes the practice, or the path, the consistency is seamless, for you are not dealing with a multiplicity of things.

49. Indeed, nothing as “I” exists; there is never anything as “I am eternal.” There being only Brahman, all these are unreal – indeed, ever unreal.

Indeed, nothing as “I” exists; there is never anything as “I am eternal.” That conception is superfluous. In relation to the transient, the Self is eternal. In itself, in its timeless glory, that conception falls far, far below. Nothing as “I” exists.” The “I,” which is the root of all other thoughts, does not exist. It is not just less important, quasi-unreal but still existent; it simply does not exist. This means that the root of all suffering, bondage, and everything that is futile does not actually exist. If the one for whom the illusion could rise up does not exist, what can we say of such illusion? If the “I” is not true, what of all of your other thoughts?



The “I” is integral to all of them, the root of all of them, what does this say about everything you have been thinking?

That which ceases never was there to begin with. This knowledge comes only by profound inquiry. Merging is better than being distinct. You merge by dissolution, like ice in a warm ocean, like a river when it joins the ocean. What marks out the river is only the banks. Remove the banks of the “I,” the forms of it, which are the tendencies that seem to constitute the person. See what remains of the water of the self. When the banks pull back, as it were, we say the river has joined the ocean. When the limitations superimposed on the self are tossed aside, it is said that the self has merged with Brahman. Upon such merger, one finds that it is like speaking of space merging with space; there’s only one space – not a small space and a big space. To see that it is only one space requires deep knowledge, inquiry aimed at destroying the boundaries on the so-called limited space.

Merger comes by dissolution of the separate individual. Merger really is a process of knowledge, and knowledge reveals what is real and what is not. The more you discard what is unreal, the more there is the feeling of merger. If you go on discarding the unreal, the non-Self, all that will be left of you is Brahman. Someone may say, “He merged,” but really he was That all along.

There being only Brahman, all these are unreal—indeed, ever unreal. All the ideas, from “I” to the ideas of the world, are ever unreal. Every distinction, every differentiation, is unreal, there being only Brahman. All your efforts are aimed at the cessation of imagination, which alone constitutes ignorance. Where words and thoughts turn back, unable to grasp, there is your true abode. Only Brahman is real.

Om Namah Shivaya
(Silence)

Om Shantí Shantí Shantí Om ॐ



॥ श्री सदीशलीलाभुजङ्गम् ॥
॥ śrī sadīśa-līlā-bhujāṅgam ॥
The Lila (Sport) Of Sri Sadisha (in Bhujangaprayata meter)

महाम्भोधितीरे तपोभूमिमध्ये
महामन्दिरे मञ्चके राजमानम् ।
महामौनभावेन संदर्शयन्तं
महावाक्यसारं सदीशं भजेहम् ॥ १ ॥

mahāmbhodhi-tīre tapobhūmi-madhye
mahāmandire mañcake rājamānam ।
mahāmauna-bhāvena saṁdarśayantaṁ
mahāvākya-sāraṁ sadīśaṁ bhajeham ॥ 1 ॥



1. I worship Sadisha, the essence of the Mahavakya-s (the four great aphorisms), on the shore of the great ocean (Pacific Ocean), in the center of the place of tapas (SAT ashram), in the great Mandiram (Sadishvara Mandiram), shining on a raised platform, revealing Himself by the state of great silence.

करेदिव्यबाणः पवित्रैस्तुनेत्रैस्-
त्रिमोहालयानां गतीरीक्षितारम् ।
दुराचारदैत्यान् क्षणे सन्दहन्तं
सुशक्तं सुरेशं सदीशं भजेहम् ॥ २ ॥

kare-divya-bāṇaḥ pavitraistṛnetrais-
trimohālayānāṁ gatīrīkṣitāram ।
durācāra-daityān kṣaṇe sandahantaṁ
suśaktaṁ sureśaṁ sadīśaṁ bhajeham ॥ 2 ॥



2. I worship Sadisha, who holds the divine arrow in His hand, who watches the path of the three cities of delusion (tripura - floating fortresses inhabited by asuras) with his three holy eyes, the Lord of the gods and is well capable of burning up the wicked demons in an instant.

जगन्नाशकं कालकूटाह्वीर्यं
मुखात्वासुकेः क्षीरसिन्धौ पतन्तम् ।
प्रजारक्षणार्थं पुनर्मन्थनार्थं
पिबन्तं सदीशं हृदिस्थापयामि ॥ ३ ॥

jagannāśakaṁ kālakūṭāhva-vīryaṁ
mukhāt-vāsukeḥ kṣīra-sindhau patantaṁ ।
prajā-rakṣaṇārthaṁ punar-manthanārthaṁ
pibantaṁ sadīśaṁ hṛdi-sthāpayāmi ॥ 3 ॥



3. I fix/establish Sadisha, drinking the poison called Kalakuta (Halahala), which destroys the world, falling into the ocean of milk from the mouth of Vasuki (snake), for the protection of humankind and for [gods and demons to] further churn [the ocean of milk], in my heart.

निजाभेदभावं विहायाजविष्णू
वृधारब्धवन्तौ स्वशूरत्ववादम् ।
तयोर्मनिहर्तुं अनन्ताग्निलिङ्ग-
स्वरूपं धरन्तं सदीशं स्मरामि ॥ ४ ॥

nijābheda-bhāvaṃ vihāyāja-viṣṇū
vṛdhārabdhavantau sva-śūratva-vādam ।
tayor-māna-hartuṃ anantāgni-liṅga-
svarūpaṃ dharantaṃ sadīśaṃ smarāmi ॥ 4 ॥



4. I contemplate on Sadisha, bearing the form of an endless linga (column) of fire, to remove the ego/pride of Brahma and Visnu, who in vain started to debate/quarrel over their heroism overlooking/disregarding [their] own/innate differenceless nature.

न वाक्कायचित्तैः सदा लभ्यमानं
चतुःशिष्यसंन्यासिनां चित्तचोरं ।
गुरूणां गुरुं ज्ञानदातारमीशम्
वटस्थं सदीशं भज त्वं सखे तम् ॥ ५ ॥

na vāk-kāya-cittaiḥ sadā labhyamānaṃ
catuḥ-śiṣya-saṃnyāsināṃ cittacoram ।
gurūṇāṃ gurum jñāna-dātāram-īśam
vaṭasthaṃ sadīśaṃ bhaja tvam sakhe tam ॥ 5 ॥



5. O friend, you worship Sadisha, the banyan tree dweller, the guru among gurus, the Lord who grants Knowledge, who stole the minds of the four Sannyasi disciples (Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatku-mara, Sanatsujata), and who is never attained/reached by speech, body and mind.

शिवाराधनायं निमग्नं यदा यो-
मृकण्डवात्मजं मृत्युपाशेन बद्धः ।
तदा मृत्युदेवं त्रिशूलेन बद्धः
समृत्युञ्जयः पाशमुक्तः सदीशः ॥ ६ ॥

śivārādhanaṃ nimagnaṃ yadā yo-
mṛkaṇḍvātmajaṃ mṛtyupāśena baddhaḥ ।
tadā mṛtyudevaṃ triśūlena baddhaḥ
samṛtyuñjayaḥ pāśamuktaḥ sadīśaḥ ॥ 6 ॥



6. He is Sadisha, the one liberated from bondage, the conqueror of death, who punished the god of death (Yama) with [his] trident when the son of Mrikandu (Markandeya), immersed in the worship of Siva, was tied with the rope of death.

चरं स्थावरं कालसर्गादि सर्वं
मनोबुद्ध्यहंकारचित्ताणि नृत्याद् ।
अभिन्नं सदा यस्य सन्मन्दिरेशं
हृदाकाशमध्ये नटन्तं भजेहं ॥ ७ ॥

caram sthāvaram kāla-sargādi sarvaṃ
mano-buddhyahamkāra-cittāṇi nṛtyād ।
abhinnaṃ sadā yasya sanmandireśaṃ
hrḍākāśa-madhye naṭantaṃ bhajehaṃ ॥ 7 ॥



7. I worship Sanmandiresha (the Lord of temple at SAT), who dances in the center of the heart-space, from whose dance the mind, intellect, ego, memory, the moving, the unmoving, time, creation and all such are not different, ever.

उमायास्तपोमङ्गलान्तं प्रदातुं
तथा ब्रह्मदेवाय शक्तिः प्रदातुं ।
जगन्मातरं वामभागे धरन्तं
अखण्डैकरूपं सदीशं नमामि ॥ ८ ॥

umāyāstapo-maṅgalāntaṃ pradātuṃ
tathā brahmadevāya śaktiḥ pradātuṃ ।
jaganmātaraṃ vāmbhāge dharantaṃ
akhaṇḍaika-rūpaṃ sadīśaṃ namāmi ॥ 8 ॥



8. I prostrate to Sadisha, of the nature of the undivided one, who wears the Mother of the universe on his left side, to bestow an auspicious end to Uma's tapas (penance) and likewise [in another instance] to grant power to lord Brahma [to continue with creation].

इदं स्तोत्ररत्नं सदीशस्य लीलां
स्तुवन्तम् पठेत् भक्तिभावेन नित्यम् ।
यतिर्ब्रह्मचारिर्गृही वा वनस्थः
सदीशप्रसादाल्लभेदात्मशान्तिः ॥ ९ ॥

idaṃ stotraratnaṃ sadīśasya līlāṃ
stuvantaṃ paṭhet bhakti-bhāvena nityam ।
yatir-brahmacārir-grhī vā vanasthaḥ
sadīśa-prasādāl-labhed-ātmaśāntiḥ ॥ 9 ॥

9. An ascetic, a brahmachari (student), a householder, or a forest dweller, who reads this jewel of a hymn, which praises the lila (sport) of Sadisha, daily with devotional fervor, attains the peace of the Self by the grace of Sadisha.

– by Ganesh Sadasivan

This stotram was recited during the 2020 Sri Sadishvara Mandiram Pratishtha event at the SAT Temple.
For more information on Lord Sadisha and Sri Sadishvara Mandiram refer to
<https://satramana.org/web/sat-temple/sri-sadisvara-mandiram/>

With Body and Mind

November 1989

By Dr. Sarada

To tune the mind to inwardness even in the midst of activity, an attitude of dedication is called upon. We recognize that for us to perform activity while remaining detached from it, it is necessary to dedicate our actions to God. Only this attitude of devotion can make one perform action with interest yet remain unattached to it. However, it seems difficult to right away imbue our every action with the spirit of dedication. Certain kinds of actions appear more Godly to us than other kinds. The actions which we automatically or naturally connect with Godliness are worshipping Him, chanting or singing His name, and meditating upon His name and form. That is, of the physical, oral and mental ways of these, Bhagavan classifies the mental form of worship as the highest. This is because the physical and oral means of worshipping God would also be meaningful only when permeated with the attitude of devotion.

When the mind is the crucial factor why at all are physical and oral means of worship advocated by the great ones? Would it not be better if everyone who wanted to turn Godward began by meditating on Him? Why worship Him physically? Why chant His name? Because, though the mind is of utmost importance, having identified itself intimately with the body, the body's condition has an enormous effect on it. Normally, the mind's attention is caught by what the eye sees, what the ear hears, what the hand touches, and so on. The mind easily attaches itself to whatever the body experiences at a given time. This may appear to be a strange paradox, but the fact is that the relationship works both ways. The body can register an experience only if the mind's attention is on it. But, from the other angle, the mind attends to physical stimuli most readily.

Hence, at least to begin with, physical worship is an important means of relating to God. As one sees His form before one's eyes, the mind finds it easier to focus on the image. Worship also entails certain ritualistic actions related to God's image. These actions are prescribed in



order to keep the mind from wandering. If one were to simply gaze at the image, after sometime one's mind would begin to stroll into other terrains. For, at the beginning of one's attempt at inwardness the mind would still be unaccustomed to one-pointed attention. Thus, the actions performed in worship help to hold the interest and, thereby, the attention of the mind. At the same time, these actions are to follow a prescribed pattern so that they would not absorb too much attention to the extent of disturbing the God-turned mind. Moreover, the action of worship follows a rhythmic pattern which gives a steady rhythm to the mental movements as well. Worship also helps one to establish a personal relationship with God, decorating Him with beautiful ornaments, offering Him the choicest delicacies. It is for this reason that Bhagavan advocated worship of the Supreme in name and form as an important aid to inwardness, to Self-Knowledge. He only adds a warning note that, when this worship is physical, it should also be combined with the right mental attitude. If not, it bears the possibility of becoming merely mechanical.

Worship, when performed with devotion, prepares the ground for an attitude of dedication. It sows the seeds for detached action, because every part of worship is immediately and obviously offered to God. Also, it gets one into the habit of setting apart some time for His activity. What remains to be done is only to extend this mood to other activities as well, and inwardness would have been achieved. But how is one to carry the spirit of worship into all activities? To find the means, one must first understand the difference between worship and other activities. What makes our attitude to them varied? The contrast lies in looking upon worship as being directly related to God and other activities as being unrelated to Him. Why does one think so? Because worship is performed to God's image into which we invoke, and in which we feel, God's presence. Other activities, however, relate to other people and to other beings in whom we do not experience God's presence. The clue, therefore, lies in feeling God's presence in beings, in seeing every living being and each of the elements as God's image. If we could see God everywhere, then every action would automatically be linked with God; it would be His worship, His service.

But, is not such a vision the monopoly of great seers and sages? Is it possible even for us to culti-

vate such an attitude, to experience such a unity of spirit? These are the doubts that plague us. If it were not possible, Bhagavan would not ask us to try. However, he explicitly asks us to put into practice these means to inwardness. So, it is not for us to ask, "Can it be?" Rather, we must strive to start understanding the process by asking, "How is this to be achieved?"



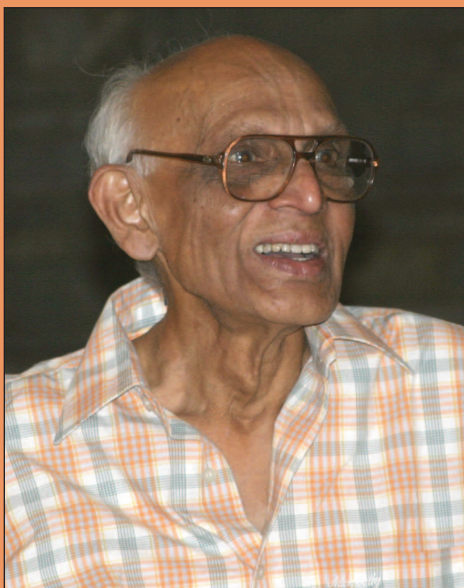
Time to Ponder

February 1990

By A.R. Natarajan

Routine devours everyone. It seems so easy to follow a particular pattern, a set mode, a seeming order. We hardly realize that anything on which the attention of the mind is not bestowed, which is done mechanically, leads to the slow paralysis of the mind. Since the mind is the only instrument we have, nothing could have a more disastrous consequence. This tendency to reduce everything to regularity is extended to our spiritual practices as well. There is an allotted time for meditation, for reading the sacred scriptures and, of course, there is a long petitionary session with the Sadguru. We think we are spiritual because we are observing a certain code of conduct, because we are trying to move away from worldly life. Often, we are smugly content with the thought that, someday, the goal would be reached and that the much talked about bliss would be ours in course of time. The consequent dilution of the sense of urgency takes the edge out of serious effort.

But, having chosen a path different from those who are lost in their worldly illusions, should we not stop to ponder, stop to reflect, whether there is any change at all in our lives, let alone a vital change? If we are as riddled by desires as at the be-



ginning of the journey, if a thousand and one fears haunt us, if we remain as scatter-brained, where is the progress? Where is the achievement? What is one doing with which life gives to become Self-aware? If our spiritual practices are

leaving us as cold-hearted, as unloving, as splintered in thoughts as at the start, then something is wrong. We have missed the bus for sure. We have no one to blame except ourselves for this situation. For spiritual practices rightly pursued must bring in the flowing fresh breeze of a joyous undercurrent of peace. If not, it is time, indeed, to pause and ponder over the failure of our sadhana, time, indeed, to have a serious look at our inner life. Or else time's erosion of our life will take its toll leaving us stranded where we are.

As in other walks of life, in the spiritual life, too, we should care enough. Its importance, its place on the pedestal, should be nurtured. How avid are we really for Ramana's grace? We have heard of the many devotees to whom Ramana was the very breath of their life. We have the case of Rangan who just would not miss any Ramana Jayanthi. One year he missed the connecting train at Villipuram station. His yearning found the way. He was allowed to travel in the engine of a goods train which was to pass through Tiruvannamalai. As the train slowed down, Rangan jumped off and bruised himself all over. The balm of the benign smile of Ramana and his loving concern was enough consolation for him. Muruganar was so love-torn that Ramana would ask him to superimpose the idea that he was still at Sri Ramanasramam even when away. Sundaresa Iyer had to be reminded about his waiting students, that it was not Sunday but Monday. Ramana would send someone to accompany N.N. Rajan and a few others to ensure that they actually boarded the train and did not return on some pretext. Their longing for Ramana's company just would not let them leave his pres-

ence. In the post-nirvana days, too, there are many who cannot leave Ramanasramam without feeling a strong pang of separation. Let us look back and see the world of difference between the first awakening of love for Ramana and our present state. What has happened to those wondrous days? Where has the flutter of fresh love gone? Those were days when all that mattered was to keep his company in some way. How many books by him and on him would we have devoured? Gone is this eager longing in the dullness and listlessness of our daily lives. We are only too ready to find fault with circumstances and duties. But can true longing be ever denied? Will the merciful guru Ramana leaves us to pine in vain?

What is it that is gnawing away at the full beauty of our relationship with Ramana? Why do we let our old enemies, the senses, rob us of our discrimination and determination? Part of the reason why our ardor to be in touch with the inner realm has cooled off is due to avichara, due to our failure to firmly hold on to Self-inquiry. Generally, Self-inquiry is only an add-on to our pre-existing spiritual practices and we never really have a go at it as an independent means, or even a dominant means for Self-knowledge. Why not give it a try? Why not have confidence in the words of Ramana that, by itself, Self-inquiry is most purificatory and that it is the most incisive means for tackling the ego? Enquiry into the source of individuality takes one quickly to the portals of freedom. The initial skirmishes with thoughts end the moment the attention shifts from the thoughts to the thinker. This is not to under-rate the usefulness of other methods. As Ramana says, it is these practices which have given the necessary strength of mind to pursue Self-inquiry effectively. But the question is whether having been exposed to the effective weapon of Self-inquiry, for the final assault on the ego, should we let it rust? Has not the time come for saturating our lives with a keen desire to find out the truth using the potent means of Self-inquiry?

The second cause for our present malaise of languishing in a half-way house lies at the door of our insensitivity to the constant help and grace of Ramana. We read too much, and the consequent muddle-headedness blocks our understanding. When meeting a saint, it is a traditional custom to seek his anugraha or blessings. As Kunju Swami would say, with Ramana it is only anugraha always,

whether one asks for it or not. Yet we find visitors, devotees and disciples petitioning Ramana for his grace almost till his last breath. His statement that grace is always there and that what was needed was only the effort to perceive it was as good as not made. It would seem that none heeds it really. This is all the more tragic, for each one of us is a recipient of Ramana's grace in some measure.

If only we could make Ramana the center around which our thoughts and actions are woven, everything would be different. This, of course, implies steadfastness in the sure fire practice of Self-inquiry. Then, the vastness of our ignorance and its abysmal depth would not matter. Sadhana would cease to be dull and drab. As one remembers his

presence through the joys and sorrows of the day, through the strife and hectic pace of life, one gets disentangled from thoughts, one is freed from the load of the past. His peace and joy would fill our empty lives. The beauty of life which is not strangled by routine, by habit, will open up. ॐ

These articles appear in the November 1989 and February 1990 issues of "The Ramana Way," a monthly publication produced by the Ramana Maharshi Center for Learning in Bangalore, India.



Pentad of sheaths (Pancha Kosa-s) **(pentad=5; kosa-s=sheaths)**

The individual soul (or according to others, one's true Self) is said to be enclosed in five sheaths (coverings) starting with the grossest, the outer-most or most objective experiences, to the subtlest, the inner-most or more subjective experiences in human existence.

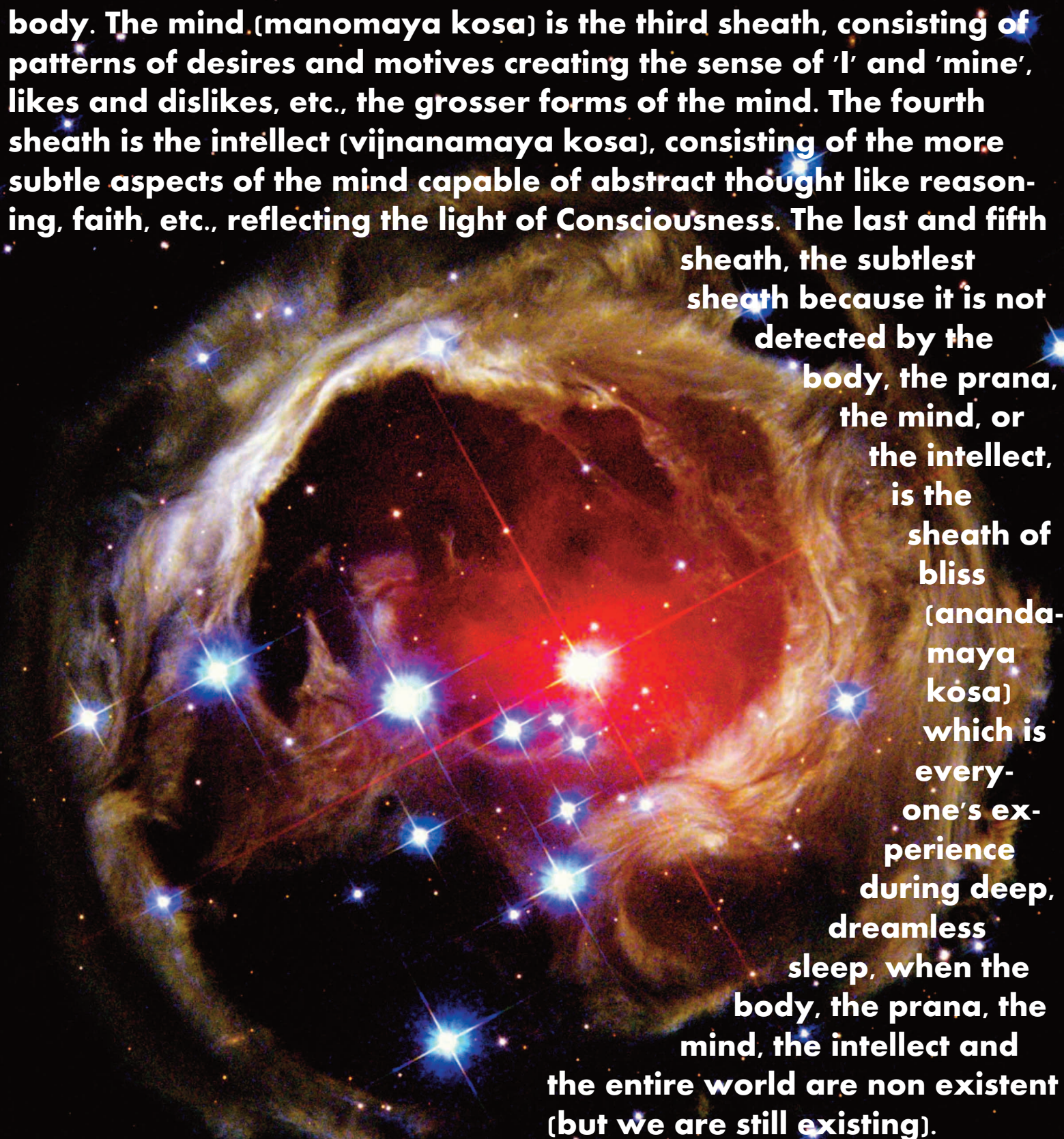
The physical body (annamaya kosa) is considered the first or outer-most sheath

because it is made up of the matter made of food and is

inert like a pot, which is why it is called

grossest. The prana (pranamaya kosa) is the second sheath, consisting of the energy or life force which animates the body. It can also be described as the 'breath' that gives life to the

Background Starry Night Nebula

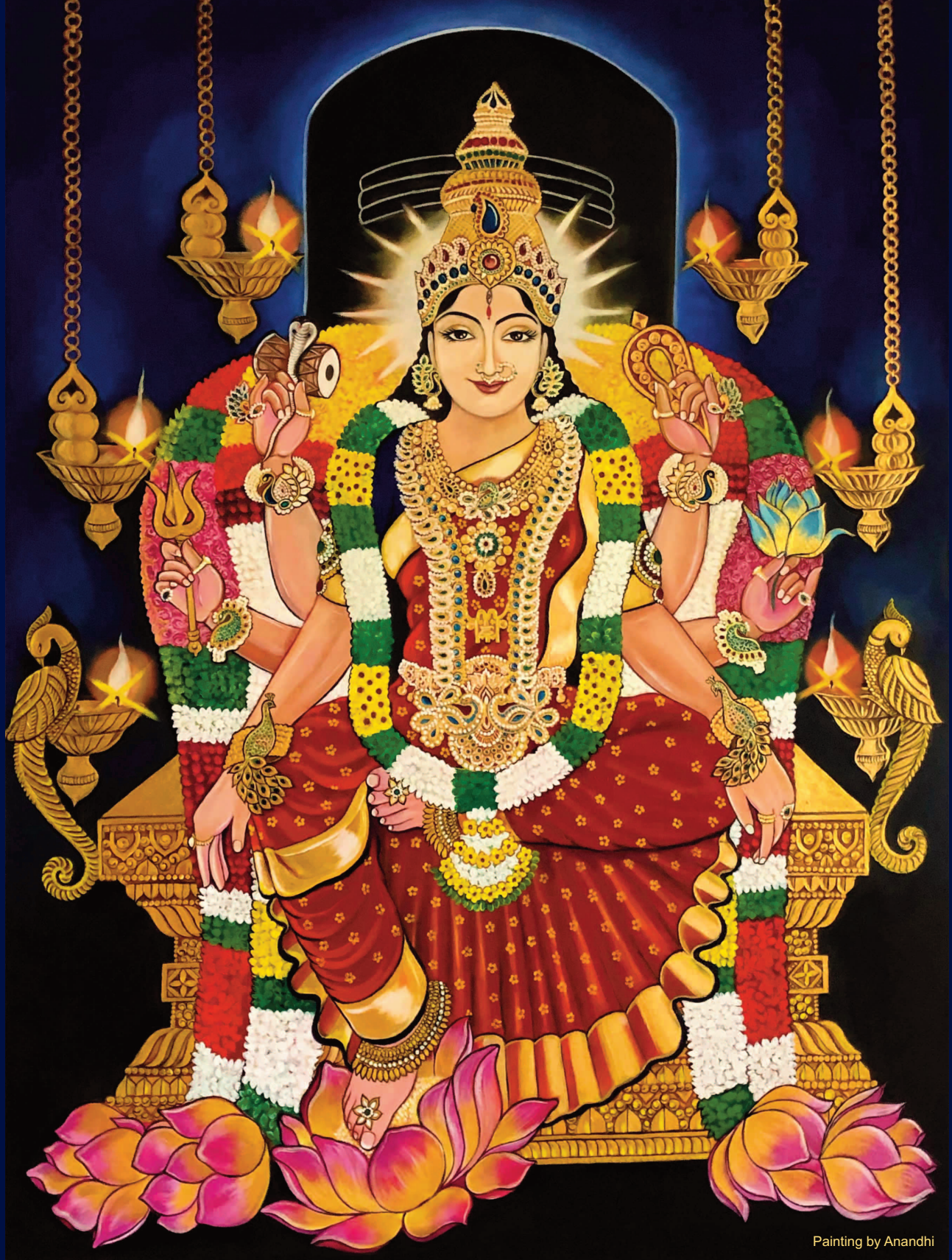


body. The mind (manomaya kosa) is the third sheath, consisting of patterns of desires and motives creating the sense of 'I' and 'mine', likes and dislikes, etc., the grosser forms of the mind. The fourth sheath is the intellect (vijnanamaya kosa), consisting of the more subtle aspects of the mind capable of abstract thought like reasoning, faith, etc., reflecting the light of Consciousness. The last and fifth sheath, the subtlest sheath because it is not detected by the body, the prana, the mind, or the intellect, is the sheath of bliss (ananda-maya kosa) which is everyone's experience during deep, dreamless sleep, when the body, the prana, the mind, the intellect and the entire world are non existent (but we are still existing).

It is called the bliss sheath because everyone is quite happy and at peace during this time and the mind has not arisen giving birth to the world. However, in Advaita

Vedanta, it is understood that we are not these sheaths, either singularly or as a whole. Our nature is Supreme Brahman—Supreme Consciousness—the Self (God). In Advaita Vedanta the goal is to strive for this Knowledge—Self-Knowledge or Enlightenment—through the spiritual practice of deep, non-dual meditation or self-inquiry, uncovering our true nature (Brahman or God or the Self) by removing (ceasing to misidentify with) the sheaths and the belief in their reality. –Nome, a reply to a person asking about the Pancha Kosa-s, 2009





Questioner: "Why are you in this world?"

Ma: "In this world? I am not anywhere. I am myself reposing within myself."

—Sri Anandamayi Ma, Matri Darshan



SAT Retreats 2020

In SAT retreats, Self-Knowledge and Self-inquiry meditation, the means of inquiring within to know the true Self, are taught, with ample time to ask questions as the teachings are given, so that you can clarify and deepen your understanding and experience. SAT retreats are very thorough in their presentation and provide a tremendous amount of spiritual guidance. The experience of attending retreats is profound and very helpful for spiritual development.

All of SAT's retreats are taught by Nome, a sage who practiced the inquiry for steady abidance in Self-Realization. He places no emphasis on himself, but keeps the focus of the instruction entirely upon Self-Knowledge and Self-inquiry, turning the aspirants' attention fully inward, for it is in this way that meditation, Self-inquiry, and Self-Knowledge truly open for one.

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

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

Sri Ramana Maharshi Self-Realization Retreat

August 28 - August 30, 2020

The date of September 1st is when Sri Ramana Maharshi arrived at Arunachala, steadily abiding in and as the Self, where he would henceforth reveal the highest Nondual Truth with teachings of Self-Knowledge, showing the primary means of the path of Knowledge – Self-inquiry. This retreat, which precedes the celebration of that holy day, focuses on the Maharshi's teachings contained within Atma Vidya, Ekatma Pancakam, and other short texts, with spiritual instruction about these teachings, and much time for silent meditation. This retreat is an immersion in the fusion of Knowledge and devotion.

The Truth Revealed Retreat

November 6 - November 8, 2020

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

Online Retreat Registration Available!

End of sign-up date is
one month prior to the commencement of each retreat.
To sign up for retreats on-line please visit the SAT website at:
satramana.org › Events › Retreats

**Images and Bhajans from special events
held at the SAT Temple may
be accessed on the SAT website at: SATRamana.org**



Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya
Om Namah Sivaya