

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya ॐ Om Namah Sivaya

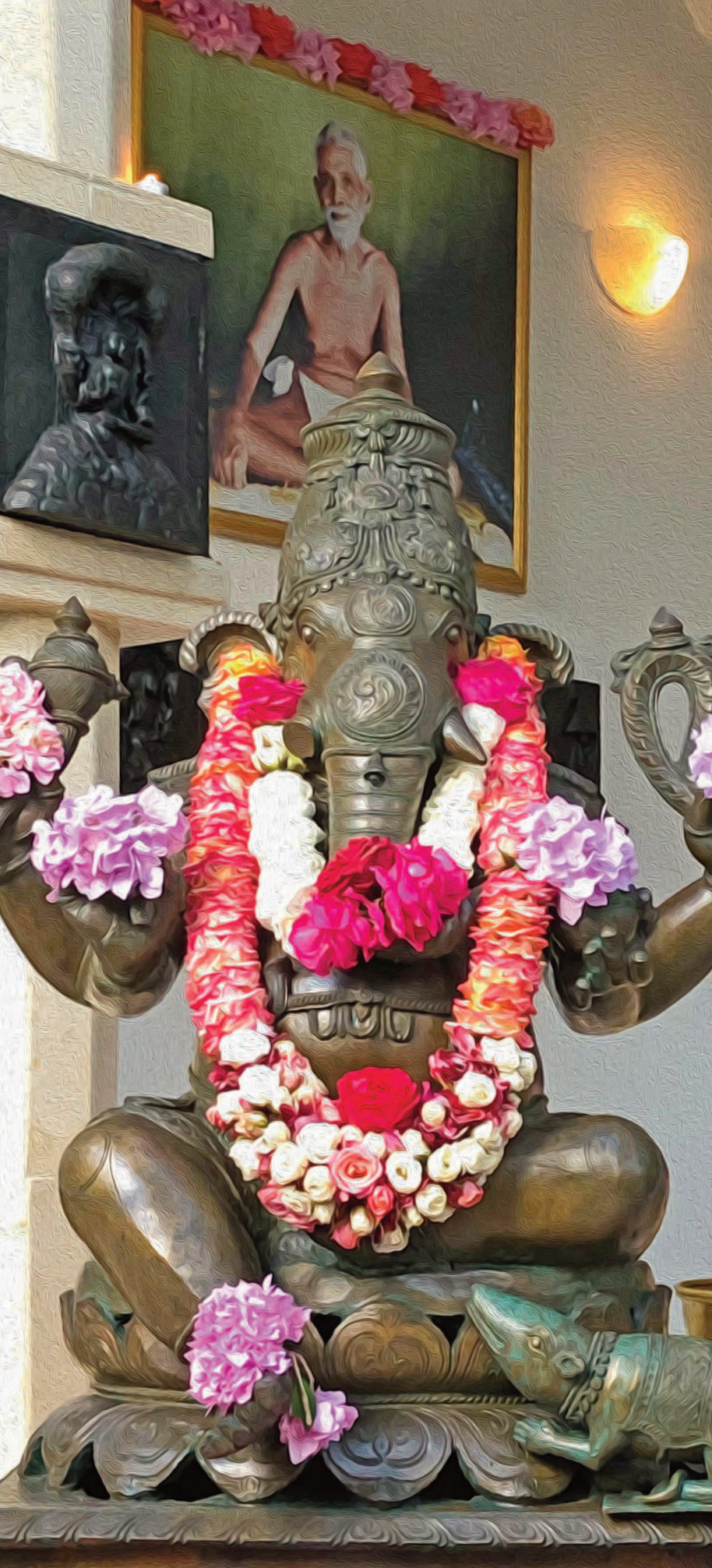
The illuminator of Existence is Consciousness. Where is there another? As Existence is, indeed, Consciousness, as Consciousness, indeed, is "I."

- Sri Ramana Maharshi, The Essence of Spiritual Instruction, v. 23



Knowledge abandoned, ignorance abandoned, Consciousness is Knowledge. Is there another to Know?

- Sri Ramana Maharshi, The Essence of Spiritual Instruction, v. 27



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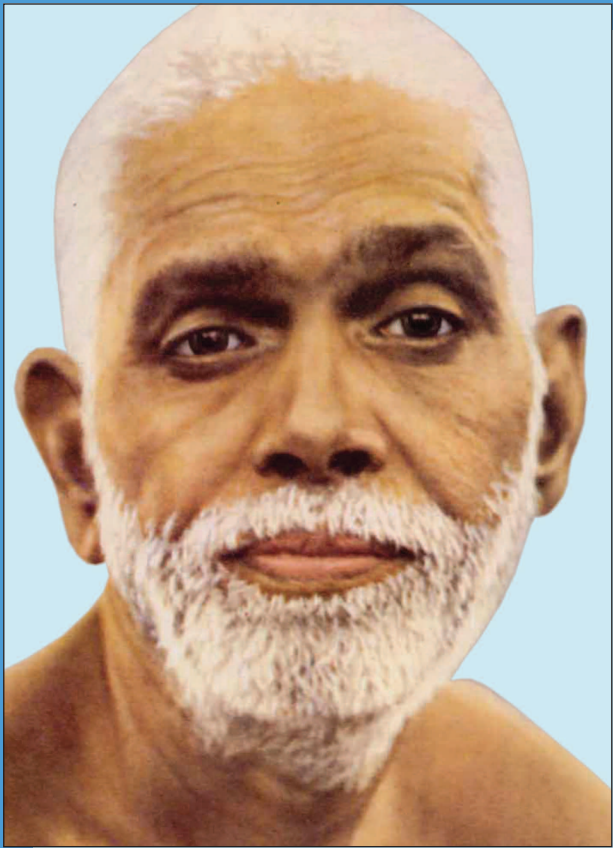
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THE PATH OF LOVE

April 26, 1948

This morning a Tamil youth approached Bhagavan and asked, “Swami, it is good to love God, is it not? Then why not follow the path of Love?”

“Who said you couldn’t follow it? You can do so. But when you talk of love, there is duality, is there not — the person who loves and the entity called God who is loved? The individual is not separate from God. Hence love means one has love towards one’s own Self. For this, i.e., loving one’s own Self, examples have been given in the Vasudeva Mananam, stage by stage. Man loves money most; but he loves his son more than money; his own body more than the son; his indriyas (the organs of the body) more than the body; the eye most among the organs; life more than the eye; and the self (atma) more than life. This is exemplified thus: If the son does something untoward and the government decides to punish him for it, the parents offer money and even bribes to set him free. Hence, the love towards the son is more than money. If, however, the government does not accept money but say that they will let off the son if the father agrees to undergo the punishment himself instead, then the father will say, ‘Do whatever you like with the

boy; I have nothing to do with him’. Hence, the father loves his own body more than his son. If a man does something for which the powers that be say that his eyes must be plucked out, he tries to save his eyes by agreeing to bodily torture; so bodily torture is preferred to loss of an organ. If, however, they decide to take his life by beheading him, he would be prepared to lose his eyes or any other organ rather than lose his life; so life (prana) is loved more than the organs. In the same manner, a person who desires to have Atma-Anandam (bliss of the Self) would be prepared to lose his life even, if necessary; so the Self is loved more than life. Hence, the idea of a person in loving God, is only with a view to being happy himself. He is, however, the embodiment of happiness and that happiness is God. Who else is to be loved? Love itself is God,” said Bhagavan.

“That is why I am asking you whether God could be worshipped through the path of love?” said the questioner. “That is exactly what I have been saying. Love itself is the actual form of God. If by saying, ‘I do not love this; I do not love that’, you reject all things, that which remains is Swarupa, i.e., the innate Self. That is pure bliss. Call it pure bliss, God, atma or what you will. That is devotion; that is realization and that is everything,” said Bhagavan.

“The meaning of what you say now is that we should reject all outside things which are bad, and also all those which are good, and love God alone. Is it possible for anyone to reject everything, saying this is no good, that is no good, unless one experiences them?” said some other.

“That is true. To reject the bad, you must love the good. In due course, that good also will appear to be an obstacle and will be rejected. Hence, you must necessarily first love what is good. That means you must first love and then reject the thing you love. If you thus reject everything, what remains is the Self alone. That is real love. One who knows the secret of that love finds the world itself full of universal love,” said Bhagavan and resumed silence. ॐ

from LETTERS FROM SRI RAMANASRAMAM

Self-Knowledge Retreat 2023

(Saturday Morning session)

Nome:

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri
Ramanaya

Sri Bhagavan teaches by silence. What does it mean?

Bhagavan says, “Jnana, Knowledge, is the utter annihilation of the mind by making it realize its absolute identity with the Atman, the Self by incessant practice of dhyana (meditation), or vichara (inquiry) in quest of the Self. Utter annihilation of the mind is synonymous with the state of pure Being in which all effort either to control or to direct it, which is necessary only if the mind is wayward, or in any way subject to the influence of mundane existence, has finally ceased. Those who attain this state never swerve from it. What is called Mauna (Silence) or quiescence is verily that state of pure Being.”

“Knowledge is the utter annihilation of the mind.” How can you annihilate the mind? Only by knowing what it is. What is your mind? What is the mind? Consciousness exists. Consciousness is the knower. Is there a second knower in the form of the mind? If the mind is caught up in delusion, of course correct it or direct it. But what is the mind itself in its real nature?

“Utter annihilation of the mind is synonymous with that state of pure Being.” Pure Being is what is called Mauna or Silence. So, Bhagavan teaches in silence. He teaches by pure Being.

Question: Is there any thinking that is actually required?” I am wondering if there is a way that the mind can be used that doesn’t have some goal in mind?

N: The mind seems to have two aspects, one the objective content and the other the illumination or knowing. If you set aside the content, what remains of the mind?

Q: There is a knowing. Is that Consciousness?

N: Does Consciousness have a form?

Q: No.

N: So, the mind’s real nature is formless Consciousness. No second knowing entity, something other than Consciousness, exists. Your question revolves around the notion “I.” Who am I? For whom are the thoughts of any kind?

Q: Okay, “of any kind”. Well, they seem to be for an individual “I,” but, then, it couldn’t be for Consciousness?

N: Is there another knower besides Consciousness?

Q: No.

N: There would need to be someone who knows those differences. Multiplicity of knowers is based on false definitions.

Q: So, then the question is, what am I defining myself as?

N: To define the knower in terms of the known is mere illusion. The cessation of defining the knower by the known reveals formless Consciousness and nothing else exists to the mind.

The next passage in this book pertains to your question.

What is Mauna, or Quiescence? Is it, in itself, dynamic, or is it mere passivity and inertness?

Sri Bhagavan replies: It is not a state of indolence devoid of activity. Every act that constitutes what is known as the external activity of the mundane world is carried on intermittently by only a fraction of the mind. The inward Quiescence of Atma-vyavahara, or the communion with the Self, is a continuous and unbroken activity of the entire mind. Maya or illusion, which is not to be destroyed by any other means, is completely destroyed only by this inward communion, which is activity par excellence.

Q: That part where the Maharshi speaks about “fraction of the mind,” what is that part that he is talking about?

N: Only Consciousness. Do you have any experience of that part of the mind apart from the Consciousness that knows it? The differences in the mind are only maya or illusion. The only actual substance involved in all the thoughts is just pure Consciousness, and pure Consciousness is pure Being. How do you know about this thought and the other thought?

Q: Not by thinking?

N: Abiding free of illusory differences is silence.

Q: So, my question comes from thinking that there is a second knower?

N: It assumes thought is real and takes for granted the implicit “I” who knows the thoughts or thinks the thoughts of different varieties.

Q: So, my question is based on not knowing my identity?

N: With thoughts or without thoughts, Being alone truly is. With thoughts or without thoughts Consciousness is the only knower, and Consciousness is forever unmodified. So, all the modes of the mind are what?

Q: So, they don’t exist?

N: The unreality of the thoughts applies to all of them, not just a small selection of them. Being is reality, with or without the thoughts. Silence is a matter of one’s identity. Clarity regarding your identity destroys illusion. The destruction of illusion is not the destruction of anything real. It is just a destruction of ignorance. Do not define the knower in terms of the known.

Abidance as absolute pure Being, the nondual Consciousness, is abiding in silence and is the way to comprehend such instruction. So, in silence, what does He reveal? Not a thought. Not a group of thoughts. He reveals his own existence. Such revelation is knowledge and grace. The destruction of the mind, then, is what? It is the cessation of mere illusion. Do thoughts end in such a state? There is no existence to the thoughts; that is thorough annihilation. ॐ

Satsang with Nome

Existence of the Self

March 3, 2022

Om Om Om
(Silence)

Nome: The Self exists. The Self is Existence. Is there anyone who is not the Self? Are there two selves, one to be realized and another that is ignorant of it? Or is not Existence always one? Existence is naturally undifferentiated. Individuality, or the ego, is merely a false assumption. Existence itself is unformed, unchanged, infinite, and eternal. Undifferentiated Being-Consciousness-Bliss is our nature. Is there anyone distinct from that? Can you be separate from your own existence? As for your own existence, what is it? Ineffable and inconceivable, what is it? It is not an object of thought. It is realized only with nonobjective knowledge. That is knowledge in which being and knowing are one and the same. You cannot be both infinite and eternal and simultaneously an embodied individual. So, discern, what you are? Is there anyone who is not the Self? You exist. What is this existence? It is Brahman, only Brahman. For Brahman, in Brahman, there is no possibility of another. For anyone else, that is merely a concept of another. The nondual is that which has no alternative. That which has no alternative is the reality. What is other than that is not real, which means it does not exist. What exists? Existence, of course. What is your existence? The one Self alone exists eternally. Know it to be the reality and your only true identity.

Questioner: From Friday night's meditation, it was very inspiring to make the inquiry continuous. In Essence of Inquiry, it is mentioned that one should not take the thoughts to be existent. Also, the Maharshi has said, whatever strange things happen, you be the witness. I know that if I am not doing self-inquiry, I am doing world inquiry,

and I follow the thoughts. You have said that the wise do not go that way, but practice nonattachment and do not take the thoughts to be real. I don't have that clarity.

N.: You must first see that the content of the thoughts is not valid. Then, you will further perceive that thought does not exist as such. How do you know about thought? Is the Consciousness that knows all thought itself a thought? This cannot be. Are you the thought or the Consciousness?



Q.: There is the habit of conjuring the thought. The thought throws up images. That is true; the content is not real.

N.: It does not tell you what is real. It does not tell you about yourself. If that much is understood, how will thought bind?

Q.: It is said that not following any thought is desirelessness, but I take the content to be valid and am looking for happiness. I follow the thought.

N.: If you did not do that, if you did not become attached, would there be anything binding regarding thought?

Q.: Every moment, the inquiry must happen. I must develop that strength of inquiry.

N.: Is not Consciousness always? It is never interrupted. What desire does it have? Beyond thought, inquiry shines unbroken. The inquiry consists of knowledge. The real nature of Knowledge is just Consciousness. That is your real nature.

Another Q.: In considering the question, what is my existence?, I turn inward for that feeling, I know that I am. I am, and I can feel that always. The deeper I dive into it, the clearer it becomes that it cannot be described or explained. To whom would I explain it? There is nobody else to describe it to, and it is totally unnecessary. How deeply self-satisfying existence is. It has no doubts, no suffering, and it alone satisfies.

N.: It is perfectly satisfied with itself. Being is bliss. Happiness does not come to one. Rather, you are happiness.

Another Q.: I have to absorb or go into a different state or a mode of mind, being absorbed in this teaching or consciousness. It is subtler, but it is still my own creation. When you ask a question, it does not seem to be my own creation. It feels like something outside of my creation. I try to inquire, but, if it's just mental goop, it does not do anything.

N.: For whom is the mental goop? Is he mental?

Q.: Yes. I think of him as mental.

N.: When we speak of being spiritually absorbed, what is it in which you are absorbed?

Q.: It has nothing to do with thought. My imagination is gone. Something is bigger than all this. My mind cannot do it. It is intense longing for knowing myself combined with devotion and knowledge, all that converges into a deeper experience. I am telling you mentally, but it is deeper.

N.: In the experience, it is blended together, knowledge, devotion, yourself and the realization? Whenever and in whatever manner the ego notion subsides, there is absorption. It subsides merely by questioning.

Q.: I am trying to pick at the imagination instead of chopping the root out.

N.: The ego notion is the root imagination. Investigate its nature.

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

(Silence)

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti



The Nature of the Self

September 4, 2022

Om Om Om

(Silence)

Nome: The Self, of the nature of undifferentiated Being-Consciousness-Bliss, is Brahman. Only the ignorance of misidentification makes it appear otherwise ever.

Inquiring “Who Am I?” and discerning your freedom from misidentification with the body, you find that its attributes and qualities, conditions etc. are not your own. Bodiless, your existence is un-

born and imperishable. Bodiless, you are changeless and indivisible.

Similarly, cease to misidentify as an ego entity, a separate individuality, and you find that there is no otherness in your existence. There is no duality in your existence. Your existence has no alternative. It is, and it is just as it is forever.

What is your existence, and what do you consider yourself to be? Free of misidentification with the body and as an individual, you are without beginning and without end. Free of misidentification, your existence is found to be immutable. Similarly, your existence is without birth and death. It is beyond all that is perceptible and all that is conceivable. Not considering your existence in terms of the conceived and perceived, beyond the mind and the senses, what is your real Being?

Your existence never changes its nature. It undergoes no modification at any time. Therefore, regard only the changeless Existence as yourself. Your Existence does not become more or less at any time. Existence is ever the same. That which is changeless, ever the same, is the root of peace.

Who realizes this? Certainly not the embodied individual, which is but an illusion. The Existence that you are is self-known. It is self-luminous Consciousness. The happiness of that is something that is not produced. It is, and nothing causes it.

The Realization of the truth of the Self is of the nature of Knowledge – Self-Knowledge. Such Knowledge is nonobjective. It is not something conceived in thought and is certainly not perceived by the senses.

The means to the revelation of Self-Knowledge is primarily Self-inquiry. It is the introspective investigation as to what your existence actually is. You exist, and you know that you exist. What is this existence? It is invariably present. How do you know it? You never doubt your own existence. Do not define it in ways that it is not. Free of the ideas of “I” and “this,” what is your existence?

Q.: At the last satsang you answered a question that was explosive to me. You were talking about the three states and how the three states are just appearances in the fourth state. The fourth state is the Self that is always present. Even in ignorance, if ignorance were to dispel itself, as if it could, in any moment, that is it. That is all that

is needed. When one inquires “Who Am I?” the answer could be existence.

N.: Not the word or thought of “existence” is the answer. Rather the nature of the inquirer, your very being itself, is the answer. Similarly, the fourth state or Turiya is not actually a state. It is spoken of as such only to differentiate it from the waking, dreaming, and deep dreamless sleep states, although, actually, it is just pure Consciousness.

Q.: How to bring awareness to that fourth state in daily life?

N.: Who conceives of daily life?

Q.: There is that instant dissolution of ignorance. That one does not exist and so immediately ...poof. Thank you.

N.: If ignorance returns, it is indicative of a deeper inquiry being required. It is not difficult to dispel ignorance. After all, ignorance is merely an illusion and not a real thing. Your inquiry must be persistent. Depth and thoroughness are required.

Q.: The sadhana is a framework to support that thoroughness. That is the challenge.

Another Q.: I was listening to one of your talks. At one point, you were talking about Gurutvam, and you said “The Guru is the Self.” I want to know more. I realize that the Guru is not an individual. The Self is all-pervasive, pure Consciousness, Bliss, Existence. So, I presume the Guru is that as well. Could you please elaborate more?

Nome is silent

Q.: Should I assume that you are saying that the guru is everything, is all-existent, is Silence, is within everyone, everywhere all the time, and not in any particular individual, but in everyone, because the Self exists within everyone? I better stop there. (laughter)

N.: The Guru is the Self. For a description of his Existence, silence is most eloquent. The Guru

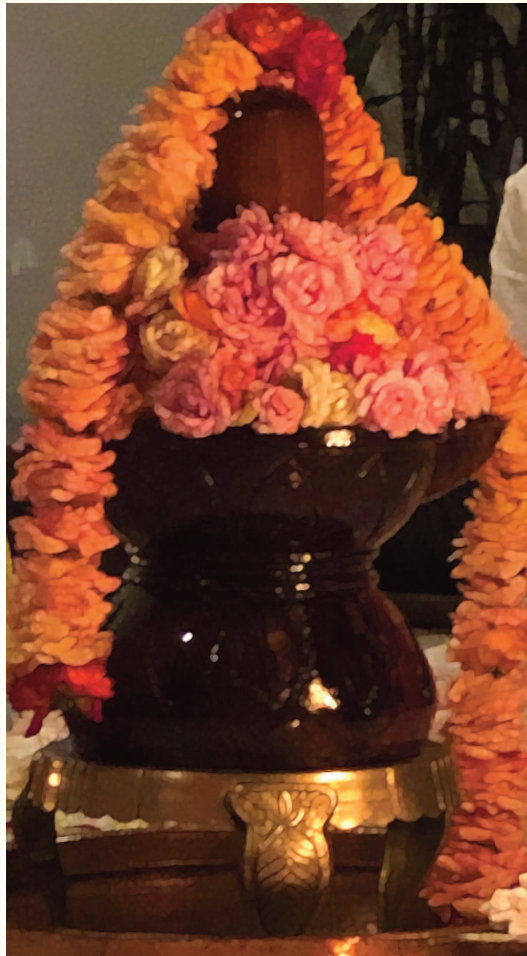
is not only silent, he is silence itself. He simply reveals his own Existence. Absorption in That is the essential Knowledge.

Another Q.: There is a depth that I try to understand in my practice. Maybe, because this is so formless, I forget. My inquiry is not deep enough. This is a good reminder about how transcendent this teaching is. When you say your practice has to be continuous or thorough, to me, all this is coming from within. It is a drive that I cannot stop. One must recognize where it comes from; but I often become confused. I think it is in the mind, and then it spins out into all this stuff.

N.: Who becomes confused?

Q.: There is an unchecked person there, somewhere (laughter). The power of the Guru is the transcendent Knowledge until the aspirant can understand it. There is a confusion there.

N.: About what are you confused?



Q.: I become confused thinking happiness is external somehow.

N.: Have you ever experienced happiness externally?

Q.: No. I try.

N.: Did you ever see the happiness, hear the happiness, feel the happiness, taste the happiness, or smell the happiness? All that is inapplicable, isn't it?

Q.: There is a beauty that underlies all that but is not that, in a simple thing as smelling the roses.

N.: If you were permanently smelling roses, you would not be permanently happy. If happiness wells up from within, what is its source?

Q.: A deeper Self has to be. This is what I strive for in my meditation.

N.: Trace the happiness inward. Trace your identity inward. Trace reality inward. You will find that all these are the same thing. Of what does the confusion consist?

Q.: It consists of mixing up my identity.

N.: That is right

Q.: When I inquire, I see that I am confused. Right at that point there is a confusion where I have mixed it up. When I see clearly, I feel how can this be?

N.: So, clarify the knowledge of your identity, and happiness will remain permanently.

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

(Silence)

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti ॐ

Correspondence with Nome

[A seeker in Canada asked about Consciousness and awareness. This is the response.]

February 10, 2023

Dear ,

Om Namoh Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. One Consciousness alone exists, by whatever name called. That is the undifferentiated Reality. It knows itself. It knows all. It is all. If the individual is assumed, a corresponding object appears, a subject aware of an object. Thus, whenever you know (are aware of) anything, the Self knows itself as that thing, the experience, awareness of it, etc. The Self is forever unmodified and indivisible Consciousness only. Inquire to know yourself as that, and thus find all to be only the Self alone.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[A response to a questioner during a recent satsang.]

March 11, 2023

Dear ,

Om Namoh Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Please accept my apology for misinterpreting your question during yesterday's satsang due to deteriorated hearing ability. Because of hearing loss, the words karma, kama (craving, lust), coma, and krodha (anger) sound very similar.

As long as there is the performer of action, who is also the experiencer of its consequent results, there is karma. If the assumed individuality is abandoned by the Knowledge of the Self, thinking of karma is



inapplicable, for the knower of the Self is the Self. The Self transcends all karma. It is egoless, timeless, bodiless Being.

If you have more questions, feel free to ask them in satsang. May you abide as the Self, the unspoken and unheard, and thus be happy and at peace.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[In response to a seeker:]

March 23, 2023

Dear ,

Om Namoh Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. The "I -thought" signifies the falsely assumed individual, and the realization of its nonexistence is called its "death." "Heart" should be understood to signify

one's quintessential Being. Self-Knowledge is that in which Being and Knowing are one. Such is transcendent of all thought and thus is described as entirely experiential. Abidance in the Self as the Self is the complete freedom from the ego and all the vasanas dependent on such misidentification. Establishment or abidance is that Knowledge in which Being is Knowledge. The Self is the Reality, without a second. Self-Realization is That alone. Who would conceive otherwise?

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[A seeker in Singapore asked about the three states of the mind. Here is the reply.]

March 25, 2023

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. The three states of mind appear and disappear, come and go. You remain ever-existent as the transcendent Self. Cease the misidentification with any of the content of the states. Abandon the belief that such is real.

Inquire to find the nonexistence of the ego. Thus realize the Reality of the Self.

Truly, surrender leaves no scope for "I" and "my."

I am glad to know that your platform is completed.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[A seeker asked about tamas states of mind. Here is the reply.]

April 3, 2023

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. To which book are you referring? In what context is the statement? Ample description of the gunas and the answer to your question about tamas can be found in the Bhagavad Gita.

Is your "thought-free" state of the nature of transcendent Knowledge of the Self, which is Consciousness, or the mere transient diminution of the number of thoughts? Using clear discrimination, one should discern the unreality of thought both regarding its content and its occurrence.

For whom are the thoughts and their absence? Inquire. For whom are the gunas? Inquire. Who experiences what? In the Knowledge of the true nature of the Self, there is no false assumption of the individual, the "I," and no modes of the mind.

May you ever abide in the Self, as the Self, which is self-luminous, immutable, and eternal, and thus dwell in happiness and peace always.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome

[In reply to questions about sensations.]

April 2023

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. We are glad to know that (name omitted) is recovering well.

Bodily sensations, whether gross or subtle, are not eternal and are not the Absolute Reality. Such are not the Self. The eternal Being of the Self is pure Bliss. For whom are these experiences? What is her true nature? Inquiring thus to know the Self, abide in Bliss, which is illimitable, everlasting, location-less, immortal, and perfectly full.

Om Namah Sivaya
Ever yours in Truth,
Nome



The Ribhu Gita

Ribhu-Nidagha Dialogue



Chapter 4, Verses 14-19 With Commentary by Nome from a Boundless Wisdom Event held on August 5, 2011 at the SAT Temple

Om Om Om
Om Namah Sívaya.

Let us remain absorbed in the one undivided Essence, which is what Ribhu reveals.

14. Knowledge is from the one undivided Essence. Existence is from one undivided Essence. Dissolution is one undivided Essence. Father is one undivided Essence.

Knowledge is from the one undivided Essence. We may consider knowledge in two ways, and his wisdom is applicable to both. One way of considering knowledge is the knowledge of all things apparently experienced. The other way of interpreting knowledge is true Knowledge,

which is Self-Knowledge. Knowledge is from the one undivided Essence. Whenever you apparently know anything, from where does that knowledge come? It is erroneous to conceive of knowledge coming from the things known or sensed, which are but an inert illusion. An illusion must rest upon some substrate. If that substrate would be insentient, that would have to rest on another substrate, and on and on, until one arrives at something that knows. That which knows is Consciousness, and all knowledge, of whatever kind, comes from that, is based upon that, and has its origin in that. Knowledge does not come from the divided senses. Knowledge does not come from the things sensed; to consider such is delusion. Knowledge comes from within, and within is the “one undivided Essence” or pure Consciousness. We can consider Knowledge in terms of Knowledge of the Truth – Knowledge of the Self; from where does such Knowledge come? It obviously does not come from your senses. It does not come from your mind or thoughts. Can it come from the ego – the individual? Self-Knowledge cannot come from any of these things. It can come from the Self, which is of the nature of “one undivided Essence” or pure Being. Self-Knowledge is nondual. It must be in and of the undivided Essence. It cannot be otherwise. Knowledge is from the one undivided Essence. So, whether you know your Self, or you consider yourself knowing another, it is still just one undivided Consciousness or Essence.

Existence is from one undivided Essence. Stitham may also mean abidance. If something seems to be – if, indeed, you seem to be – from where does this abiding existence derive? It is from the one undivided Essence. If that is so, manifold objects are not really manifold objects but just one undivided Essence or Existence. Manifold experiencers of those objects are not many, but all are just one undivided, essential Existence. Then, what are you? Trace your own sense of existence – that which seems to be presently abiding – to this Essence, and thus realize pure Being. It is the same as the Knowledge mentioned in the previous phrase.

“Dissolution is one undivided Essence.” When all forms dissolve, what is it that remains? When the forms of perception and conception dissolve, what is the dissolving power? To what does it belong? The power of dissolution is inseparable from that which remains. It is the same Essence as mentioned in the previous two phrases, regarding Existence and Knowledge. This one undivided Essence, which is truly your Self, dissolves all and remains. What is the experience of such dissolution but the same one undivided Essence? If you turn deeply within and dissolve, by the power of inquiry, the false assumption of individuality, you realize clearly and with certainty why Ribhu says, “Dissolution is one undivided Essence.” “Knowledge is from the one undivided Essence. Existence is from one undivided Essence. Dissolution is one undivided Essence.” What is this one undivided Essence? As soon as the illusion of an ego subsides, you realize it as your Self.

“Father is one undivided Essence.” Who you regard as your father and everyone and everything is this one undivided Essence. We also may interpret father in a divine, spiritual sense, in which case the significance is that God – conceived of as Father – is the one undivided Essence – just as Knowledge is, just as Existence is, just as dissolution is, just as you are, so God is.

15. Devotees are one undivided Essence. The husband is one undivided Essence. The mother is one undivided Essence. Virat is one undivided Essence.

Devotees are one undivided Essence.” If all of them are one undivided Essence, all the devotees are actually one devotee, inseparable from that to which they are devoted. What actually

constitutes a devotee? Is a devotee his or her body? If it is in the very nature of a devotee to be beyond the body, how could we count them? That which is dear to their hearts – to which they are devoted – is the one undivided Essence. If that is their very Self, how can there be a multiplicity of them? All of their love for the Supreme is really the love of the Self, and all their devotion becomes Self-revelation. Devotees are one undivided Essence. When devotees gather together for the purpose of devotion, they actually enjoy a unique form of solitude. When you meet with others who are similarly devoted – or think of them – remember that they are this one undivided Essence, just as all are.

“The husband is one undivided Essence.” Pati means husband, but it also means Lord. A husband, just like a father mentioned before, and others are just this one undivided Essence. All living beings are one undivided Essence. Or, a “husband” is to be understood as the Lord. “The mother is one undivided Essence.” Siva, the Lord, the husband of Parvati, in reality, is this one undivided, essential Existence. She is also the same one undivided, essential Existence. So, all of the Unmanifest, Siva, and all that is manifested, from subtlest thought to the form of objects of the universe, Shakti, is just this one undivided, essential Existence. When you conceive or perceive anything of Shakti, you see the one undivided Essence. When you transcend all form and abide in the Unmanifest, the absolutely formless, it is still just one undivided, essential Existence.

When we look at Ardhanareshwara, the meaning is clear: one undivided, essential Being. It is not intended to signify a fundamental dualism, as if the Absolute had two parts to It. Rather, it signifies something utterly indivisible from which nothing can be separate. That is what one devotes oneself to, and the devotee himself is also of the one undivided Essence.

“Virat is one undivided Essence”. Virat is the Self, with the upadhi, or limitation, or conditioning, of the waking state superimposed upon it. It is that which shines, apparently as if multiple, as the Consciousness embodied in all living beings. All of the apparently divided consciousnesses perceived in the waking state, are really only one cosmic, waking-state Consciousness. Just as, in a dream, the dreaming consciousness appears as if manifested in manifold ways, as the consciousness of all the living beings inhabiting that dream, so Virat is one undivided Essence. That which is shining apparently as diverse, is actually one indivisible Consciousness. It is only due to the ignorance of superimposition of the attributes of the body that makes one assume that there are multiple consciousnesses, or minds. When the superimposition is done away with by clear inquiry, one Consciousness remains; It is the undivided Essence. Utterly One, it is not to be defined in terms of the waking state and the multiplicity imagined in it. To realize how this is so, trace the consciousness in you to its source.

It is only so long as individuality is maintained that you can imagine such parts in it. The start can only be for the individual, who is himself the starting point. If the individual proves nonexistent, what could have started and for whom? In this way, by inquiry, is brought about an absolute cessation of that which never actually existed. In such is complete liberation from the illusory samsara.

16. The body is one undivided Essence. The head is one undivided Essence. The nose is one undivided Essence. The exterior is one undivided Essence.

You know that you are not the body; the Self cannot be a body. The Self does not depend upon the body for its existence. The body is utterly dependent for its appearance on the Self.

The Self is the one undivided, essential Existence, apart from which there is nothing else at all. What appears as the experience in this life, of your body? It is only this one undivided Existence. Within the experience of illusion, the body is mistaken to be, as it were, some kind of dividing line or boundary between what is regarded as exterior and interior, even though the mind does not really inhabit the body as if it were physically inside it, and the world, the external to the body, is not at all real. Nevertheless, within the experience or conception of illusion, the body is considered to be the dividing line. The dividing line is only the one undivided Essence. If the boundary is only one undivided Essence, what can we say of that which is on either side of the boundary?

“The head is one undivided Essence. The nose is one undivided Essence.” All of your senses are constituted of the same essential Existence, which is sense-transcendent. The head, the apparent place of the mind, is this one undivided, essential Existence, which has neither head nor nose, nor tail, nor anything else.

“The exterior is one undivided Essence”. If the Self, which is inner, is one indivisible, essential Existence, and if the body, which marks the division between internal and external, within the scope of illusion, is the same essential Existence, there being nothing else anywhere to constitute experience of any kind, what is the so-called exterior? The exterior is only within, the same as the interior. The idea of exterior and interior collapses and dissolves in the light and power of the one undivided Essence. When you think you experience anything external to the Self – subtle or gross – what is it that you are actually experiencing? All that rises as apparently interior is only the same essential Existence, which has no rising or setting. All that arises exteriorly is the same unborn, undecaying, non-setting, essential Existence. What becomes of “I”? What becomes of “this”? The realization of such is entirely a matter of spiritual Knowledge.

You can know, with the certitude of strength inside you, that there is, in reality, no obstacle to your spiritual realization or spiritual progress. The obstacle would be entirely just in the mind, the illusion, which is not in reality at all. There is nothing actually binding your true Self; it is only an illusion that makes it appear otherwise. You can destroy the illusion, delusion, by profound, intense inquiry to know yourself. See what constitutes the doubter.

17. The perfectly full is one undivided Essence. The immortal is one undivided Essence. The ear is one undivided Essence. The home is one undivided Essence.

Everywhere and always the Reality is of the nature of the Perfect Fullness. That is perfectly full. What is regarded as this is also perfectly full. It is said that this Perfect Fullness originates from, or springs forth from, that Perfect Fullness. Even so, all that actually exists or remains is the Perfect Fullness. What is this Perfect Fullness, the very nature of Brahman, this one essential Existence? Is this one undivided Essence? Grasp well the full experience of this, steeping yourself in Knowledge of it. Immerse yourself in this; be absorbed in this. Where divisions no longer hold true, and the sense of “I” cannot arise, there is the Perfect Fullness of the indivisible, essential Being. That is your Self, and that is the Reality.

“The immortal is one undivided Essence.” You are, in truth, this indivisible Essence. It has no beginning and no end. It cannot possibly be defined in bodily terms, all of which would be transient. Therefore, it is unborn and imperishable. It is natural to seek for immortality; no one wishes to cease to exist. Immortality is already one’s essential Being. To abide in That, as That, free of the supposition of individuality, of embodiment, is immortality. The ancient sages realized this and still abide. You also realize this and thus abide as the eternal. For such who realize

this one essential Essence, the Maharshi says, "Where is the room or scope for the thought of death?"

The immortal is one undivided Essence. The ear is one undivided Essence," just as all the senses are. That which you are using to listen to this teaching tonight is actually the one undivided Essence. If you think that the ears hear this, those ears are also the one undivided Essence, for there is nothing apart from this indivisible Existence – nothing whatsoever.

"The home is one undivided Essence." Your home, like everything else in the world, is just this essential Reality. What actually is your home? Is a house your home? What is your home? It may be commonly thought so, but that is just the one undivided Essence appearing as such. What is truly your home? It is where you can be yourself naturally, the place where you belong. What is the home? If you know That, you are at home, even after the whole world disappears.

18. What is to be kept secret is one undivided Essence. Śiva is one undivided Essence. Name is one undivided Essence. The sun is one undivided Essence.

"What is to be kept secret is one undivided Essence." Different people may keep different things secret, but that is not what he is alluding to here. He refers to spiritual Knowledge. Some things are considered to be kept secret, an initiated mantra for example or other kinds of initiation. In some circles, even the knowledge of Vedanta is to be kept secret. Sri Bhagavan said that here, where his teaching is, everything is an open secret; that is, it is no secret at all. What is the nature of that which is secret, whether it be initiation, mantra, or any kind of spiritual knowledge or vidya? Its real nature is one undivided Essence. If you are that one undivided Essence, what is to be kept secret from whom? The answer to such inquiry is sometimes regarded as a great secret, but no one keeps it from anyone else.

"Śiva is one undivided Essence". Who, indeed, is Śiva? In the Agamas, Śiva himself declares that one who meditates with a sense of difference, such as "I am one thing and Śiva is another," does so out of ignorance and does not know Śiva. Who is Śiva? What is the nature of Śiva? Śiva is none other than the one undivided Essence. So, if you regard Śiva as particularized, you should know that He is only the one undivided Essence, just as everything else described here. If, though, Śiva is known deep within the heart to be the one undivided Essence, everything is Śiva. The Perfectly Full is Śiva, the immortal is Śiva, the ear is Śiva, the home is Śiva, etc. The thing to realize, without the least trace of differentiation, is this essential Existence; known by the name Śiva and by countless other names.

"Name is one undivided Essence". The real meaning of every name of the Supreme is this one essential, undivided Existence. Inasmuch as it is one undivided Existence, the name for everything and everything so named is the same Existence. Whether you regard name and named as different or as the same thing, it is still just one undivided Existence. The thing named, from the Supreme to the universe, is this indivisible Existence only, there being nothing else. The name for it, even in idea form, is the same Existence. There is just no getting away from this undivided Existence. Neither you nor God nor anyone else can break away from it. It is absolutely One.

"The sun is one undivided Essence". It continues with the next verse; Verse 19: **"The moon is one undivided Essence."**

Indeed, all that shines – everything in this universe, however great, however fine and small, is just this one essential Existence. To realize it, realize your Self as That; then, the starting point of all differentiation is absent.

19. (cont.) “The Guru is one undivided Essence. The witness is one undivided Essence. The friend is one undivided Essence.” The word for friend may also mean good-hearted.

“The Guru is one undivided Essence.” If this be so, this leaves no scope for a differentiated disciple. The Guru is; the disciple is not. Or, the disciple is only the same undivided Essence, which is none other than the Guru. The Guru – Sri Bhagavan – alone is, and that settles the matter. The Guru is the one undivided Essence, which is more than a body, more than a manifested life, more than manifested divinity, more than the holy, more than the holiest of holies, more than anything that can be conceived of him. He is the one undivided, essential Being. What he is and what he teaches, what he reveals, what he guides to, what he supports you in, are the same thing. His eternal wisdom of the eternal, his endless compassion, his immeasurable peace, his liberation-bestowing freedom, and all such are composed of this one indivisible Essence. He is the Guru, because at no time does he ever experience even the least trace of the possibility of differentiation from That. Is there anything more to be said about him, the unutterable, except that the Guru is one undivided Essence?

“The witness is one undivided Essence”. By the Guru’s instruction, you come to know that you are not an object of conception or an object of perception but the Consciousness, which in relation to all is a silent, immovable witness – a witness that always knows and never becomes the known. What is the nature of the witness? It is not the individual; that is also the witnessed. It is not a function of the mind; that is merely the witnessed. What is It that is meditated upon as the witness? It is none other than pure Consciousness conceived as if in transcendent relation to all else. The nature of this Consciousness is one undivided Essence, and all that is witnessed is none other than the same Essence. The nature of the witness is pure Consciousness, devoid of subject and object.

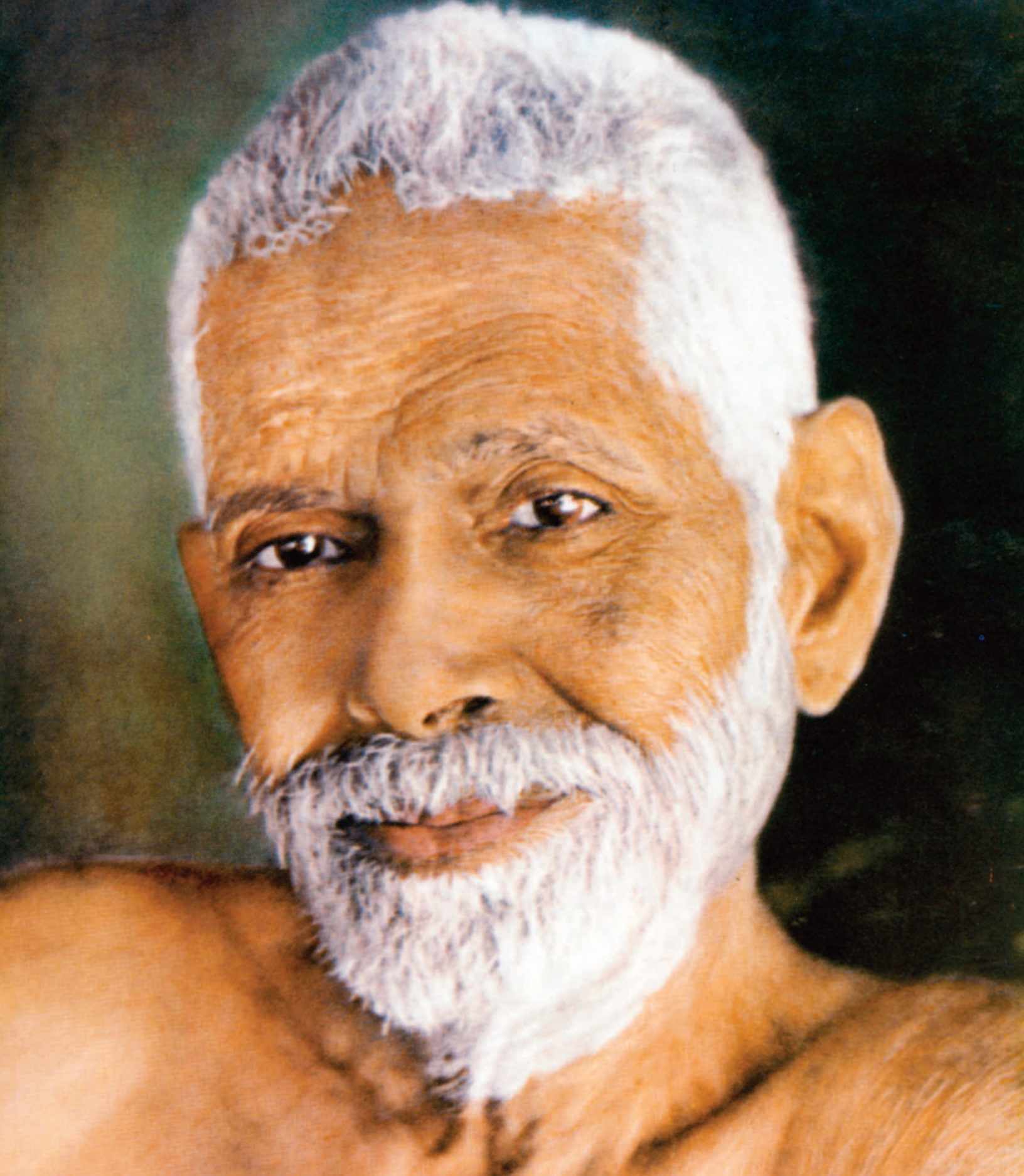
“The friend, the good-hearted, - “is one undivided Essence”. What makes the good-hearted, the good-hearted, or, what makes a friend truly a friend? If it is merely an agreement of ideas and such and shared external experiences, that is shallow. What is the essence of truly being a friend? What does it mean? It is something beyond worldly and bodily concerns, something beyond mental perspectives. In the good hearts of those who are good-hearted, what wells up as that goodness? If we know the Source, we find It to be the same one undivided, essential Existence. Om Namah Sivaya.

Om Namah Sivaya

(Silence)

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om ॐ

Ramaṇa Ramaṇa Sadguru-Ramaṇa



रमण रमण सद्गुरुरमण

रमण रमण सद्गुरुरमण शिव अरुणाचल गुरुरमण
भवभयहरण वन्दितचरण भगवान् रमण गुरुरमण

ramaṇa ramaṇa sadguru-ramaṇa śiva aruṇācala guru-ramaṇa
bhava-bhaya-haraṇa vandita-caraṇa bhagavān-ramaṇa guru-
ramaṇa

Ramana Ramana, True Guru Ramana, Siva, Arunacala, Guru
Ramana

The destroyer of the fear of mundane existence, whose feet at
to be extolled, Bhagavan Ramana, Guru Ramana

करुणाकिरण मोहनिवारण शिव अरुणाचल गुरुरमण
जननमरणसागरतरण भगवान् रमण गुरुरमण

karuṇā-kiraṇa moha-nivāraṇa śiva aruṇācala guru ramaṇa
janana-maraṇa-sāgara-taraṇa bhagavān ramaṇa guru ramaṇa

The ray of compassion, the remover of delusion, Siva,
Arunacala, Guru Ramana

Who helps cross the ocean of birth and death cycle, Bhagavan
Ramana, Guru Ramana

कोऽहम्विचारपारगलक्षण शिव अरुणाचल गुरु रमण
सोऽहमनादि कारणवर्जित भगवान् रमण गुरु रमण

ko'ham-vicāra-pāraga-lakṣaṇa śiva aruṇācala guru ramaṇa
so'ham-anādi-kāraṇa-varjita bhagavān ramaṇa guru ramaṇa

The mark of one who mastered/accomplished the inquiry “Who
am I?”, Siva, Arunacala, Guru Ramana

The state of “That am I”, beginningless and devoid of cause,
Bhagavan Ramana, Guru Ramana

बन्धविमोचनं नामस्मरणात् शिव अरुणाचल गुरुरमण
पावनपङ्कजचरणे शरणं भगवान् रमण गुरु रमण

bandha-vimocanaṃ nāma-smaraṇāt śiva aruṇācala guru
ramaṇa

pāvana-paṅkaja-carāṇe śaraṇam bhagavān ramaṇa guru ramaṇa

By the remembrance of whose name there is freedom from
bondage, Siva, Arunacala, Guru Ramana

I take refuge at your holy lotus feet, Bhagavan Ramana, Guru
Ramana

– by Ganesh Sadasīvan

Siva's Cosmic Dance



CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS REFLECTIONS

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

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

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



21. Vikṣiptākṣiptakam

Inquiry being beyond a mental state, should be continuous throughout all situations that one encounters.



39. Caturam

One who knows the knowledge of reality, even to the least degree, and continues to willingly get caught up in the cycle of pleasures and its associated fears, is a perfect example of a clown.



52. Kuñcitam

When one holds dear the love of God and gratitude for all that he has given, all action taken by such a person will automatically satisfy the Gods and result in everlasting Bliss.



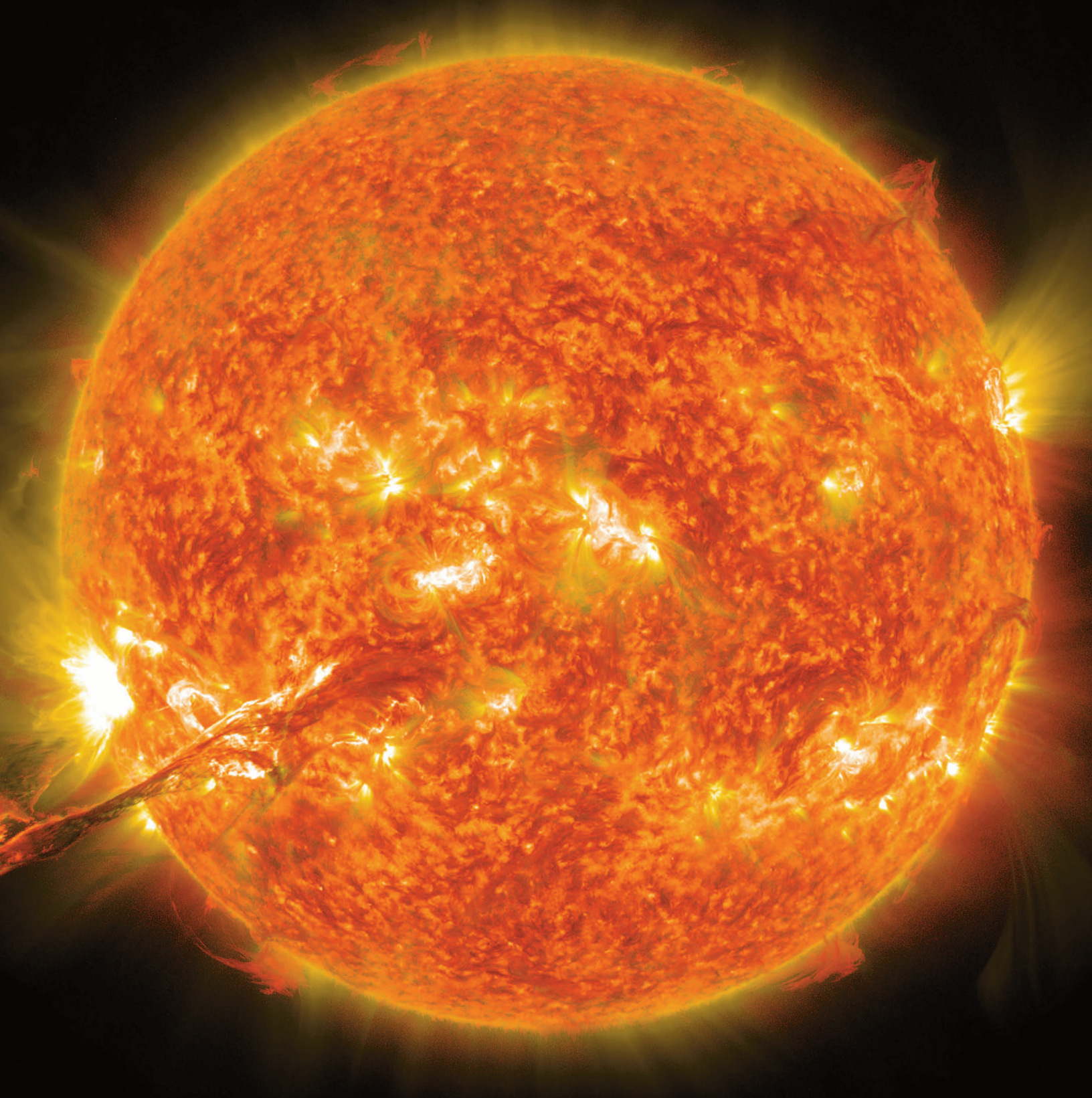
65. Vidyudbhrāntam

In the same way that a tree is completely engulfed in flames the instant it is struck by lightning, ignorance is disintegrated at the dawning of the ever-present knowledge of reality.



78. Sūcīvidham

Become devoid of individuality by contemplating and deliberating the meaning of “I.”



Because of the generous donations given by devotees at SAT, partial energy for the temple property is now powered by our sun.

SAT Retreats 2023

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 Sri Sankara (Adi Sankara), such as those contained in ***Svatmanirupanam*** and ***Advaita Prakarana Manjari, Avadhuta Gita, Ashtavakra Gita, Saddarshanam and an Inquiry into the Revelation of Truth and Oneself, The Essence of Spiritual Instruction, and The Quintessence of True Being***. Familiarizing yourself with or studying these books will enable you to obtain even more from the retreats, which are an experiential immersion in the essence of Advaita Vedanta. All of these books and similar nondualistic literature are available from SAT.

Vegan 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.

The Self-Realization Retreat: August 25-27 This retreat focuses on Sri Ramana Maharshi's teachings contained within ***Atma Vidya, Ekatma Pancakam***, and other short texts, with spiritual instruction about these teachings, and much time for silent meditation. This retreat is an immersion in the fusion of Knowledge and devotion.

The Truth Revealed Retreat: November 3-5 This retreat is focused on nondual Self-Knowledge as revealed by Sri Ramana Maharshi and consists of an in-depth explanation of the teachings contained in Sri Ramana Maharshi's ***Saddarshanam*** (i.e., ***Sat-Darshanam, Truth Revealed, Forty Verses on Reality***). There is also much time for the participants to silently meditate upon this quintessential, profound, Blissful Knowledge for the revelation of the Truth within.

REGISTER ONLINE

<https://satramana.org/web/events/retreats/retreat-application-form/>

End of sign-up date is
one month prior to commencement of each retreat.