



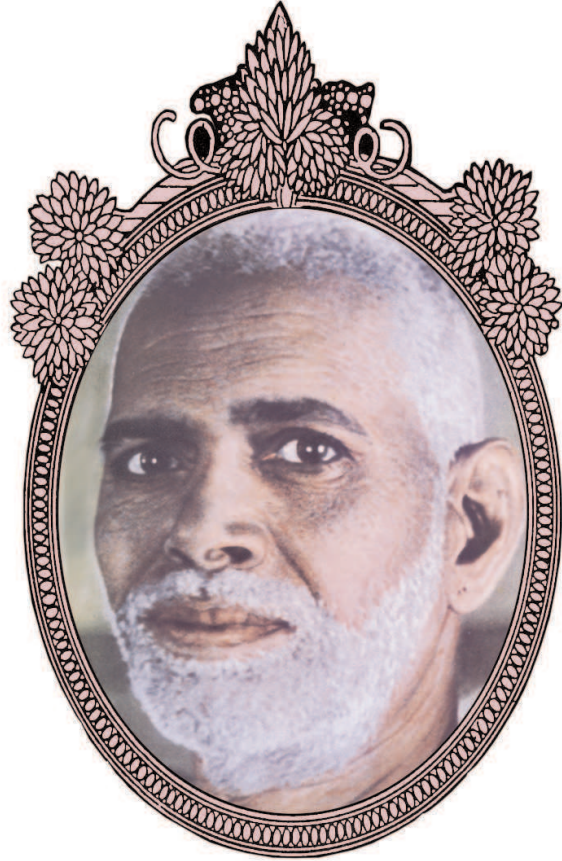
REFLECTIONS

July ~ August ~ September 2008



SOCIETY OF ABIDANCE IN TRUTH





Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi

Contents

Invocation	3
Wisdom of Sri Ramana.....	5
Satsang, January 7, 2007 (Purnam)	8
From <i>Yoga Vasista</i>	18
Temple Archives	21
Announcements	32

Copyright 2008
Society of Abidance in Truth
1834 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060 USA
Ph: 831-425-7287 / e-mail: sat@cruzio.com / web:
www.SATRamana.org

Invocation

*Ramana, pre-eminent seer of Truth,
Embodiment of Silence, the primal Source,
By reaching your feet,
I have realized my true state.*

Muruganar (from Ramana's Muruganar, Sri Ramana Deva Malai)

*In front of the Sovereign of pure Grace who asked me
who stood before Him, "Who are you?," the ego-
delusion slipped away from me through the
inquiry, "Who am I?" and hence my Reality
shone forth in the Heart.*

Muruganar (from Ramana's Muruganar, Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham 4:1266)

*Having clearly realized that the Light of Existence-
Consciousness alone is the Heart, by the blemish-
less, silent meditation in the pure Heart, which is
devoid of thought, I became the "I"-less "I," the
perfectly whole Reality.*

Muruganar (from Ramana's Muruganar, Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham 4:1345)

*With natural, all-pervasive Silence,
As the overflowing plenitude,
He drowns us in the sea of Bliss.*

Muruganar (from Ramana's Muruganar, "Ramana Vinodan" 1:267-69)

*To meet the needs of various minds,
The Master spoke of various doctrines.
Ajata (no-creation, no birth) is the only doctrine
He taught as from His own experience.*

Muruganar (Ramana Mandiram)

The Boundless Wisdom of Sri Ramana Maharshi

(From *Day by Day With Bhagavan*)

Mr. Phillips, an Englishman who used to be a missionary and is now a teacher and who has been about 20 years in Hyderabad, came this morning. He said: "I lost my son in the war. What is the way for his salvation?"

Bhagavan was silent for a while and then replied. "Your worry is due to thinking. Anxiety is a creation of the mind. Your real nature is peace. Peace has not got to be achieved; it is our nature. To find consolation, you may reflect: 'God gave, God has taken away; He knows best.' But the true remedy is to enquire into your true nature. It is because you feel that your son does not exist that you feel grief. If you knew that he existed, you would not feel grief. That means that the source of the grief is mental and not an actual reality.

There is a story given in some books how two boys went on a pilgrimage, and, after some days, news came back that one of them was dead. However, the wrong one was reported dead, and the result was that the mother who had lost her son went about as cheerful as ever, while the one who had still her son was weeping and lamenting. So, it is not any object or condition that causes grief but only our thought about it. Your son came from the Self and was absorbed back into the Self. Before he was born, where was he apart from the Self? He is our Self in reality. In deep sleep the thought of 'I' or 'child' or 'death' does not occur to you, and you are the same person who existed in sleep. If you enquire in this way and find out your real nature, you will know your son's real nature also. He always exists. It is only you who think he is lost. You create a son in your mind and think that he is lost, but, in the Self, he always exists."

K. M. Jivrajani: What is the nature of life after physical death?

Bhagavan: Find out about your present life. Why do you worry about life after death? If you realize the present, you will know everything.

Bhagavan: Why should your occupation or duties in life interfere with your spiritual effort? For instance, there is a difference between your activities at home and in the office. In your office activities, you are detached, and, so long as you do your duty, you do not care what happens or whether it results in gain or loss to the employer. But your duties at home are performed with attachment, and you are all the time anxious as to whether they will bring advantage or disadvantage to you and your family. But it is possible to perform all the activities of life with detachment and regard only the Self as real. It is wrong to suppose that, if one is fixed in the Self, one's duties in life will not be properly performed. It is like an actor. He dresses and acts and even feels the part he is playing, but he knows really that he is not that character but some one else in real life. In the same way, why should the body-consciousness or the feeling 'I-am-the-body' disturb you, once you know for certain that you are not the body but the Self? Nothing that the body does should shake you from abidance in the Self. Such abidance will never interfere with the proper and effective discharge of whatever duties the body has, any more than the actor's being aware of his real status in life interferes with his acting a part on the stage.

You ask whether you can tell yourself: "I am not the body but the Self." Of course, whenever you feel tempted to identify yourself with the body (as you may often have to, owing to old vasanas) it may be a help to remind yourself that you are not the body but the Self. But you should not make such repetition a mantram, constantly saying: "I am not the body but the Self."

By proper enquiry into the Self, the notion 'I am this body' will gradually vanish and in time the faith that you are the Self will become unshakable.

K. M. Jivrajani: In the early stages, would it not be a help to a man to seek solitude and give up his outer duties in life?

Bhagavan: Renunciation is always in the mind, not in going to forests or solitary places or giving up one's duties. The main thing is to see that the mind does not turn outward but inward. It does not really rest with a man whether he goes to this place or that or whether he gives up his duties or not. All of that happens according to destiny. All the activities that the body is to go through are determined when it first comes into existence. It does not rest with you to accept or reject them. The only freedom you have is to turn your mind inward and renounce activities there.

K. M. Jivrajani: But is it not possible for something to be a help, especially to a beginner? Like a fence around a young tree. For instance, don't our books say that it is helpful to go on pilgrimage to sacred shrines or to get satsang.

Bhagavan: Who said they are not helpful? Only such things do not rest with you, as turning your mind inward does. Many people desire the pilgrimage or satsang that you mention, but do they all get it?

K. M. Jivrajani: Why is it that turning inward alone is left to us and not any outer things?

I answered: Nobody can answer that. That is the Divine scheme.

Bhagavan: If you want to go to fundamentals, you must enquire who you are and find out who it is who has freedom or destiny. Who are you and why did you get this body that has these limitations?

Dr. Haridas, a disciple of Swami Madhava Theertha and a relative of Mahatma Gandhi by marriage, asked Bhagavan: "If ajnana is also Brahman, why is Brahman not visible but only ajnana or the world?"

Bhagavan: Brahman is not to be seen or known. It is beyond the triputis (triads) of seer, seen and seeing or knower, knowledge and knowing. The Reality remains ever as it is; that there is ajnana or the world is due to our moham or illusion. Neither knowledge nor ignorance is real; what is beyond this, as all other

pairs of opposites, is the Reality. It is neither light nor darkness but beyond both, though we sometimes have to speak of it as light and of ignorance as its shadow.

G.V.S.: It is said that the Self cannot be realized by reading books but only by anubhava (personal experience).

Bhagavan: What is anubhava? It is only going beyond the pairs of opposites or the triputis.

In the evening, Bhagavan said, with reference to a question somebody had asked: “During sleep, there is both the Self and ajnana—ajnana because we knew nothing and the Self because we existed, and, when we wake, we say: “I slept well,” although we knew nothing. If one asks how the Self and ajnana can exist together, any more than light and darkness, the answer is that, to one who realizes, the Self is all light, and there is no such thing as darkness at all, but, to one who has not realized, we say that there can be ajnana in the Self like the seeming shadows on the moon.”



Purnam

Satsang, January 7, 2007

Om Om Om

(Silence)

Nome.: Undifferentiated Being is who you are. That alone exists, and that alone is real. All spiritual practice is for the purpose of this nondual Realization.

Know this undifferentiated Being alone to be your nature, and all is perfect. (Silence)

There is a verse associated with the Upanishads: Om Purnamadah purnamidam, purnat purnam udacyate, purnasya purnamadaya, purnamevavashishyate.

Purnamadah purnamidam means That is perfectly full, this is perfectly full. The emphasis is not on “this” as differentiated from “that,” the manifest from the unmanifest; the emphasis is on the Perfect Fullness, Purnam. That is the Perfect Fullness, and what may be referred to as “this” is the same Perfect Fullness. The singular, perfectly full Brahman, which is our real Self, is invariable. It is immutable.

Because That alone exists, the verse could conclude with just the one phrase, “That is perfectly full.” The rest follows as an explanation, so that the fullness of that Perfect Fullness is fully realized.

What is known as “this” is only That. That which seems to be one’s experience is only the Self, which is the Perfect Fullness. It is Being, which can neither be born nor be destroyed, which does not increase or decrease, but ever remains its undifferentiated self.

“From the Perfect Fullness, perfect fullness arises, or comes forth.” The emphasis is not on the idea that something has come forth, but it is on the ever-existent Perfect Fullness. Nothing else constitutes anyone or anything anywhere. What is this perfect fullness? It is the unborn, imperishable Existence.

If, or when, “the perfect fullness comes from the Perfect Fullness, the Perfect Fullness alone remains.” Before anything is created, there is the Perfect Fullness. When anything is created, or imagined, there is the Perfect Fullness. After the dissolution of such, there is the Perfect Fullness. Before the beginning, after the end, and all throughout, you are that Perfect Fullness, the infinite, eternal Brahman. That is the Reality of undifferentiated Being. You are not a being, a “this” that has come forth, but if you imagine yourself to be such, inquire as the Maharshi instructs, “Who am I?” Thereby, the “this-ness,” the limitation or objectivity, will be negated as a mere illusion, for it is entirely unreal. All that remains is the ever-existent Perfect Fullness of undifferentiated Being.

We conclude the verse with Om Shanti Shanti Shanti to indicate the superlative peace of this utterly nondual Realization. It is the Perfect Fullness that is indestructible. It is

the innate, undifferentiated Existence of your own Self. Inquire to know yourself, and thus realize what the sages have proclaimed to be the Truth. Then, you, yourself, are the peace that you experience.

Q.: I am confused about happiness. My experience is that happiness is an emotion. Looking for the source of happiness, I must ask what the difference between that and other emotions is, such as the source of anger and sorrow.

N.: When you are in sorrow, you are suffering due to the lack of happiness.

Q.: Yes.

N.: Then, such can be regarded as a form of the desire for happiness.

Q.: Ok.

N.: When angry, you are annoyed that your happiness has been stolen from you. At the moment of anger, you do not recognize who has robbed whom. You are angry about the lack of your happiness. So, it also is a form of the desire for happiness. When angry, you do not wish to remain in an angry state. It is not an end in itself, but it serves another purpose. Likewise, in sorrow, you are not sorrowing just to remain in grief, but rather your grief is due to the removal, obscuration, or veiling of your own happiness.

You may experience various emotions that you regard as forms of happiness. The common element is happiness. You also experience happiness in the absence of emotions, perhaps more powerfully than with the emotions. Sri Bhagavan often mentions deep dreamless sleep, in which there is a profound peace, or happiness, but in which, evidently, there are no emotions, for there are no thoughts to create the emotions. Emotions are particular patterns of thinking to which undue emphasis is given.

You experience happiness with and without things. What is this happiness? You experience happiness with and without emotions, but, when the emotions are removed, you are happier than you are with them. At any time, does the hap-

piness come to you from external sources? Do objects provide happiness.

Q.: No, no. I am clear about that.

N.: So, when happiness wells up, it must come from something that is not an object. Is happiness a sensation?

Q.: It seems to be.

N.: What kind of sensation is it?

Q.: Bodily.

N.: Is it seeing, hearing, tasting, touching, or smelling?

Q.: If I am in a state of happiness, I feel it is the chakras. The body feels good.

N.: Do you regard the chakras as bodily?

Q.: Yes.

N.: Have you ever experienced happiness without the sensation that you associate with the chakras?

Q.: I have never discriminated to that extent.

N.: Look into this. When you are happy in deep sleep, do you experience chakras?

Q.: No, but I would not call that happiness. Perhaps it is just semantics. There is peace, but I do not know about the happiness.

N.: When you are at peace, are you happy or do you feel that something is lacking?

Q.: Nothing is lacking.

N.: If you are in a pleasurable moment or if you are thrilled by some sensation, but you do not have peace because you are agitated, are you really happy?

Q.: By your definition, no.

N.: How is it for you? One of the signs of happiness is that desire subsides. Since, in your desires, you wish for a state of happiness, however defined, when that happiness shines in your

experience, desires should subside. If the desires persist, can you be said to be happy?

Q.: Certainly not completely.

N.: Incompletely means that it is mixed. To the degree that the desires have subsided, to the degree that you have found the source of the happiness, to that degree the happiness shines unobscured. To the degree such discrimination has not occurred, to that degree the innate happiness is obscured.

How many desires have you had?

Q.: Many.

N.: Have the desires arisen from outer things, been caused by the external things, or have the desires arisen from within you?

Q.: Unlike happiness, which comes from within, in the mind, I can desire things that are outside the mind, such as objects and states.

N.: Is the desire produced by the object or by your own mind?

Q.: Well, my mind.

N.: When it thinks of the object.

Q.: Yes.

N.: You have had a great many different kinds of desires.

Q.: Yes.

N.: In all those desires, were you searching for a bodily sensation?

Q.: No.

N.: For what were you searching?

Q.: Happiness! (laughter)

N.: If you would experience bodily sensations or the sensations that you said that you associate with chakras all of the time, would that be happiness? Would you grow weary of the sensation?

Q.: If I had it all of the time? It would be different from not having it.

N.: The discrimination between the sensation and the subtler happiness is being pointed out. You may wish to examine your experience to determine if there has ever been a time when you were happy, to any degree, when that sensation has not been present. If happiness is dependent upon bodily sensations, it is very precarious. Many things can cause the bodily sensations to change. If you examine more deeply within your own experience, you are sure to find that happiness is one thing and sensory sensations are another. Even subtler sensations are passing phenomena. The pleasurable ones you associate with happiness, and the painful ones you don't. If you dive within, you will find that happiness shines when you know yourself to be transcendent of sensations and the body and that happiness is not a bodily state. It is a state of you, but you are not the body.

Another Q.: I am happier, but the desire is still there. The desire is for happiness. I feel that it is like a tug-o'-war. I look at the desire and opposition to it, but there is really no opposition. What the desire really wants is in here.

N.: What the outward mind desires is really within. It is a search in objects, circumstances, and events for that which is not an object, circumstance, or event but is the Self. The power in the motion of the desires may be regarded as a testimony to the innate wisdom that knows that happiness is our natural state. We are not satisfied until we find it completely. We find it completely by knowing that it is within and what the "within-ness" is. Because the "within-ness" is our own Self, it cannot be known in an objective manner. Hence, the purpose of Self-inquiry, which is nonobjective Knowledge.

When you find your Self, you find happiness that does not come to an end, because your Existence does not come to an end. Desires are said to be extinguished, because the searching by desire, for the entire time, was an intuitive search for your own Self. Knowing your Self and being unable to part from your own Self, your very Existence, you are the happiness. This Self is not a body, mind, or ego. There is nothing contradictory in it.

Another Q.: This clarifies for me that happiness is beyond the ego. I have good experience of Being, though it is incomplete, and so ideas enter.

N.: Who has had the good experience? For whom do the ideas arise?

Q.: To be more accurate, no one has the experience. The claimant comes in after the fact. My own Being is the Truth. That is where my happiness lies.

N.: If you know this, does illusion recur?

Q.: Yes, that is why I am speaking.

N.: The inquiry regarding for whom the illusion appears was indicated. What is the definition of “you”? Ideas arise for someone or are based upon some identity. What is that identity? Inquire into this.

Q.: Someone is already there prior to the arising of those ideas or things.

N.: Find out if there is someone there.

Q.: Ok. Without questioning, there will be an appearance.

N.: In the lack of inquiry, all kinds of nonsense appear.

Q.: This lack of inquiry is a lack of questioning or examination.

N.: Yes. If you do not inquire into the Self, you will look for the same thing in that which is non-Self. As the Self is not the ego, the body, or the senses, the Self may be said to be non-sense, but it is really the non-Self that is utter nonsense. (laughter)

Q.: That is my experience.

N.: (Silence)

Another Q.: These dialogues about happiness are great.

N.: Are you happier?

Q.: Yes! Definitely. (laughter). Discrimination between sense impressions and the source of happiness is so important. A sense impression is neutral. Repeated, they become dull.

N.: The attempt to satiate the senses by repetition of the sensory experiences will not, in any way, provide happiness. If you associate a sensation with happiness and repeat the sensation ten thousand times, you are not ten thousand times happier.

The senses, as you say, are neutral. They are not real. If we attribute our happiness to them, we will attribute our suffering to them, as well. Thus, one becomes caught in the midst of pleasure and pain, which is not a happy state.

Q.: The mind goes outward. One way to bring it inward is to notice from where happiness comes. It does not come from the object. This helps me to focus inward.

N.: This is the reason why knowledge of the source of happiness figures so predominantly in the preamble to *Who am I?*, by the Maharshi, and appears later in the text, as well. If you know the source of happiness, you become detached from everything else and develop a naturally one-pointed desire for Liberation. Your mind is turned inward, and your peace is no longer disturbed by the various vicissitudes and other changes of life. You are not dependent on external things, and you experience within the welling up of the bliss of the Perfect Fullness. Desires are extinguished, because you know the source of them. The source of happiness, the source of the desire for happiness, that which is capable of experiencing happiness, and the very “substance” of happiness are completely identical.

Q.: What is capable of experiencing happiness is deep.

N.: Is it the eyes, ears, or nose? Is it the body or intellect? It is none of these.

Q.: The senses try to gather impressions of the objects. In my mind there is the accumulation of the attempts to find external happiness. My mind tries to establish reality, to determine what is real. There is not much juice in the thoughts.

N.: The only way the mind can establish what is real is by finding its own source. If it turns inward to know what knows it, its own form is dissolved.

Q.: All this starts with the “I.” Then, the mind starts to churn. Then, something seems fouled up.

N.: If you lose track of your identity, something seems out of place. Then, the seeking to get it back in place begins. If we lose something, we should search for it where we lost it and not elsewhere.

If the senses are fine, the external world does not matter much. If the mind is afflicted, the same senses do not matter much. If the mind is happy and at peace, the aches, pains, and such do not matter much, and still one feels fine, because the identity is not mixed with the senses. If the inner is content, the outer loses its significance. If the inner is not content, the outer seems to be more significant. The more that one searches in the outer for the inner, in the non-Self for the Self, though, the less happiness there is. It is an inverted view.

Q.: It is based on non-investigation.

N.: Exactly so.

Q.: Whatever is not investigated goes on automatic pilot, which does not usually do a good job of finding it.

N.: Such is the repetitive cycle of illusion.

Q.: The automatic pilot does not get one where he wants to go. (laughter)

N.: And there is no estimated time of arrival. (laughter) Investigate the nature of happiness, what is real, and, most importantly, "Who am I?" If you inquire, you find happiness and peace to be innate. Thoughts, sensations, and the world no longer disturb. That which is the innate Bliss is also Existence and Consciousness, apart from which there is no other existence or separate mind.

Q.: Complete detachment is equivalent to Realization, you have mentioned. This pertains to the body, senses, mind, and the individual.

N.: Yes. The Maharshi says that vairagya (dispassion or detachment) and jnana (knowledge) are the same. One is regarded as not adhering to what is not the Self, and one is regarded as adhering to the Self. They amount to the same.

Q.: How is the sense of individuality eliminated?

N.: By inquiring to see if it exists.

Q.: There must be attachment to some external reality.

N.: Why must there be that?

Q.: I am thinking about the detachment.

N.: To what do you feel attached?

Q.: If I don't inquire, it could be whatever. It is not permanent.

N.: Is it real?

Q.: No, because it is so flimsy.

N.: It is impermanent and unreal.

Q.: Yes. Yes.

N.: We speak of detachment to further the experience of it. Your own nature is utterly detached. It is the Perfect Fullness, which alone exists everywhere yet which is not attached to any particular thing.

Q.: Yes. That is everything. Without that, one does not have anything.

N.: When there is attachment, there is confusion regarding happiness, reality, and identity. It is mixing up the Self with the non-Self. When there is detachment, there is no such confusion. If you inquire, "Whose is the attachment?", it is similar to the inquiry, "Whose is the misidentification?" That false assumption is, itself, misidentification, attachment, and ignorance. That very ego has no existence, and this is realized as soon as you inquire into its nature. You find that there are not two states, one with ego and one without. So, Sri Bhagavan says, "The egoless state is the only real state that there is."

In Truth, your Being is ever detached. It is not connected to anything else, for its nature is nondual, infinite, and homogeneous. There is nothing to which it could become attached. There is nothing in its nature connected to anything else. So, the practice of becoming detached is really the recognition of the fact regarding the Innate. The same holds true with happiness.

Q.: So, Realization is not mental or sensory. All these things

disappear. I should notice the qualities of the Realization, that it is the source of happiness and peace.

N.: It is Sat-Cit-Ananda, Being-Consciousness-Bliss. It is satyam, jnanam, anantam, the true, the knowledge, the infinite (limitless).

Q.: Yes.

N.: We can be quite sure that that of which the Rishis have spoken since the time of the Vedas is not a sense experience; nor did they speak of some mere intellectual recognition. No mere sense experience could earn the appellation of “blissful immortality.” No mere mental conception could be called, “Brahman” or “Atman, the Self.” (Silence)

This is wondrous. You are no mere sense perception. You are no mere intellectual conception. What they realized is what you are. So, Self-Knowledge is the essence.

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

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om



From Yoga Vasishtha

(From previous issues)

[Ganesh Sadasivan recently brought from India a complete Sanskrit edition of *Yoga Vasishtha*. This is now being used for translation of passages from this holy scripture. In this issue, we proceed from the same point in the text as the previous issue ended, directly translating from this Sanskrit edition. Numbers indicate the section, chapter, and verse of the start of the translated passage and ellipsis(. . .) indicate there are passages left untranslated.]

3:96:36

Sri Rama said: Is the mind inert or is it Brahman, indeed, and, therefore, intelligent (conscious)? Thus, the One who knows the Truth, my inner ascertainment is not [yet] attained.

Vasishtha said: The mind is certainly not inert, Rama, and is also not coming from (or being in) the consciousness (intelligence, cetanam). (Or: The mind is certainly not inert, Rama, and is also not bereft of consciousness.) If the non-inert is darkened (weakened, faded), then (in that case) alone, the intelligence (drsthir) is thus called “mind.”

In the middle, of the form of both existence and nonexistence, when confusion is upon a being, the cause of the universe, that is called by the name “mind.” (cittam)

Without abidance in the certainty of the nature of the eternal One, that which is thus the mind, from that is the production of this world (or, birth and this world).

In the midst of the appearance of the inert and the non-inert, of the nature of a swing of its own imagination (of its own fashioning), that which is of a darkened (weak) form, that is declared to be the “mind.”

The motionless Consciousness, indeed, because of the impure stain of the inner imperfection (deficiency, confusion), is thus the mind, it is said, Rama. It is not inert and not of the nature of Consciousness.

Of it, these various, sufficient names are provided: ego, mind, intellect, individual (jiva) and such and also others.

Just as an actor goes by many (lit., enough) forms (i.e., appearances), just so, indeed, the mind is given many names because of the movement (wandering) of its inner activity.

Just as, on account of various ranks (titles), there are transformations of various names that a man goes by on account of his actions (work) and such and more, so it is with the mind....

3:96:48

Ego, mind, intellect, the seen, and the imagined creation are of one nature, which has been declared by me, Raghunandana.

Just as a man is regarded as a bather, a donor of gifts, and such from being the performer doing the activities, so this mind is called variously.

According to the various deeds, with different (divided)

names is the doer. The mind is described by the “jiva,” “vasana,” and “karma” names.

The mind alone is all this. Similarly, all this exists accordingly. For, with no mind, a man, though seeing the word, does not see.

Having heard, having felt, having seen, having eaten, and having smelled the pleasant and the unpleasant, the inner excitement (joy) and disappointment (depression) one finds is, indeed, unanimous.

Like the seeing (light) is of the forms of things, the mind is the cause. If the bondage of the mind is destroyed, the liberated intelligence (mind, citta) is, indeed, free.

Know that as the supreme dullness (inertia) by which it is said that the mind is inert; he whose [view is that] the mind is inert, he does not understand consciousness (cetanam).

Not the intelligence and not the inert is it from which this mind has sprung forth. In the various joys and sufferings of the “I,” the world then has risen.

In the one nature in the mind, indeed, the samsara vanishes (is absorbed). Confusion is the cause of wandering in the appearance of the universe. (Or: The error of “the universe has happened” is the cause of confusion.)

(to be continued)

ॐ

From the Temple Archives

[During the time of the translation work of the Tamil *Ribhu* Gita, published by SAT in 2001 with the title *Song of Ribhu*, the “108 Names of Ribhu” was prepared for the book. Dr. Ramamoorthy composed a Dhyanam Verse for it. Somehow, it was not included in the final manuscript sent to the press. It is included here so that those who possess the *Song of Ribhu* can insert it into the book to begin the “Salutations to Sage Ribhu.”

ऋभुमहर्ष्यष्टोत्तरशतनामावलिः

ध्यानम्

ṛbhumaharṣyaṣṭottaraśatanāmāvaliḥ

dhyānam

स्वयं शम्भुमुखोद्भूतं स्वात्मज्ञानरसामृतम् ।

निदाघवृन्दव्याख्यातं ऋभुनाथं नमाम्यहम् ॥

svayaṁ śambhu-mukhodbhūtaṁ svātma-jñāna-rasāmṛtam ।
nidāgha-vṛnda-vyākhyātaṁ ṛbhu-nāthaṁ namāmyaham ॥

Expounding to the assembly of Nidagha and others

The nectar of the essence of the Knowledge of one’s Self,

Coming out of Siva’s words themselves,

To this Master Ribhu I bow.

[In the archives of the temple, much correspondence is preserved. New correspondence is continual, and some of it is being preserved. In this issue, a few recent letters are presented. This first message was sent from an associate professor in Japan. Nome’s response follows.]

June 20, 2008

Dear SAT/Nome,

I am very impressed with what I read about Nome and the experience of Self-Being he describes. I have one burning question which I would like to ask . . . not just to ask a question, but because I really want to know.

Nome says about the false “I”—

“This ‘I’ does not come from the real Self, does not come from “anything else,” and is not self-generated.”

I find this a bit confusing . . . I can’t get my head around it and have trouble experiencing this reality . . . if the false ‘I’ doesn’t come from the real Self, where does it come from? I thought everything comes from the one Consciousness, even the “false”—therefore everything is nondual.

I’m sorry to take your valuable time. If Nome is unable to answer this question, then any of his students will do.

Dear . . .,

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

Yes, you are correct. If you consider everything as existing, it has only one source, which is the indivisible Consciousness. Even ignorance, then, is of the nature of Knowledge, which is solely Consciousness.

Upon inquiry into the nature of “I,” it is realized that there is no “false I,” or ego-entity. For that which does not exist, there is no birth or beginning. The one Self alone exists, eternally.

The undifferentiated Being-Consciousness is forever unmodified. There does not exist anything to modify it; as the Self is homogeneous, there is no other within it, and it is infinite, so there is nothing beside it.

Nonduality is not only the perception of the unity of the supposed multiplicity but certitude of the Realization of That, the Self, as the only Existence, other than or second to which there is nothing whatsoever. To realize this, it is necessary to

know oneself. This is the absence of both avarana (veiling) and vikshepa (the projection of multiplicity).

The Reality is never unreal and does not give rise to the unreal. The unreal is never real. It cannot give rise to the real. Therefore, the effects of the ego are as unreal as it, and no individual “realizes” the Self. The Self is self-known and ever is as it is.

An unreal effect in the form of an ego cannot have a real cause. An unreal cause would simply have no true existence. A false existence is really no existence at all. Thus, maya, illusion, is that which is not.

Thus, the inquiry changes for you from “Where does it come from?” to “Does it arise or exist?” For Realization, the inquiry is clearly, “Who am I?”

The assumed individuality cannot come from anything more objective than it, which is its effect in the form of multiplicity. It cannot come from the Self, which is absolute and has no trace of ego. It cannot truly come from itself, for such would presume its pre-existence. To experientially verify this within yourself, inquire deeply to know the nature of your own Existence. Who is the one who asks and inquires? If his nature is known as it is, it is not an ego, or individual, but undivided Being-Consciousness-Bliss.

If you have further questions, please feel free to contact me again. My answers will be necessarily brief due to the nature of email. Of course, you are always welcome to visit the SAT temple here, should you have the opportunity to be in California.

May your inquiry be deep, so that you ever abide as the one Self, which, being nondual, is ever without “a second,” and thus be ever happy and at peace.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[This next message came from India from a person who had attended satsangs at the SAT temple and is now staying at Ramanasramam]

Thursday, July 24, 2008

Dear Nome,

Om namo Bhagavate,

I'm writing to you to ask you something that I can't seem to get clear about. I'm staying at Ramanashramam once again for a month and engaging the inquiry. But I've been involved with spiritual life and practice for almost 30 years, the last few quite intensely and focused on the enquiry. I know I'm not the body and even the mind appears as a passing shadow much of the time, but I am not abiding as the Self nor do I know if any of the deep samadhis or states of calm abiding I experience are the direct experience of the Self, I don't think so since they come and go. And if they are, then how to remain as That. I have been talking some with Subrahman but haven't gotten more than "continue the inquiry". But am I missing something? I am experiencing a kind of desperation and depression coming too related to having been at this such a long time and feeling like there is something I don't or can't understand. If you can shed any light on how to move beyond this challenging mental state I would be deeply grateful.

Namaste,

Dear....,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message. To continue the inquiry is essential until the least trace of doubt, dualism, and the possibility of ignorance have vanished.

Inquiring, it is important to actually inquire. Be sure that the approach is nonobjective in nature.

The notion of existing as an individual being is the false assumption that is to be abandoned. It is abandoned by realiz-

ing its nonexistence. Self-inquiry reveals that. The destruction of this assumption is the revelation of the true Being of the Self.

Therefore, be concerned with the experiencer of those experiences, of the life, etc., and find his nature. The dissolution of the individual "I" is by Knowledge. The Self is not an object of experience, though it alone exists.

Self-Realization is not an event in time and does not occur to someone. The ego is unreal. The Realization is of the very nature of That which is realized, the Self, which is unborn and eternal. This is true Knowledge, which is nondual.

No spiritual effort is ever in vain. All of it bears fruit. He who is devoted to the Supreme is never lost.

Dissatisfaction with one's spiritual practice is a call to examine what one is actually doing in the name of "practice," even in the name of "inquiry," and thus discern more clearly the path, the way to truly inquire. If one is really desperate to know the Truth, nothing will obstruct him. The obstructions are only the imaginings within one's own mind that he conjures up and to which he adheres. Depression is due to not knowing the source of happiness. He who knows that cannot be depressed.

Since you know of Sri Bhagavan, and are even blessed to be at His sacred Asramam, and since the teaching is accessible to you, blessings upon blessings, you have no excuse to suffer but ought to be delighted at heart, filled with the joy of such Grace. You may find reflection on this to be beneficial.

May your inquiry be deep and continuous so that you ever abide as the only true Self, of the nature of Being-Consciousness-Bliss, so that your peace and happiness are unending.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[This message is from the same person. Nome's response follows.]

Saturday, August 02, 2008 9:34 PM

Dear Nome,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya,

Thank you for your very helpful reply. Your instructions are like the wind clearing away the clouds on Arunachula! I was also able to get a copy of “Essence of Enquiry—a commentary” from the bookstore to clarify and inspire the Inquiry. You were correct in pointing to the dissatisfaction as a sign that the Inquiry needed clarification and the email and book have given a new sense of understanding about the path and its fruition. I am daily reminded also about the blessing of this time at Ramanasramam. Thank you. Namaste...

Dear ...,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message. I am glad to know that the clouds of the mind have cleared.

A brief note about Essence of Enquiry: This book was written here, as explained in the introductory pages, and it was published and printed in Bangalore by our very good friends at the Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning. Indeed, the title was chosen by the revered A. R. Natarajan. Due to the difference in the printing process and lack of matching fonts, a few anomalies appear in the printed work, the primary of which are: Part of the introduction was deleted, a diagram from the original text was not inserted, and the transliteration (not the translation) of the Sanskrit is not reliable, though still understandable. SAT provides a small booklet that gives the corrections for all of these when copies of the book are sold here. Perhaps, if you visit here in the future, a copy can be provided to you, should such be of interest to you. The book is certainly quite readable even as it is printed.

May your meditations be deep and blissful, filled with the luminous Knowledge born of inquiry.

Ever yours in Sri Bhagavan,

Nome

[These next two messages are from a person in the U.K. with Nome's responses to the same.]

August 04, 2008

Hi,

I have only recently began to study Advaita, and would like to know, if there is no creation, does that mean that what we perceive doesn't exist ? That I as Self is dreaming this universe? If so why?

That to believe this, could be a denial of what is, that the universe does actually exist with all its suffering.

Why not accept that's the way it is, warts and all? That could be freedom from trying to understand that its all a dream and denying the fact that its a misery to be alive on this planet for many.

I am quite happy most of the time even though I have illness and not much money, I'm not complaining.

I've been lucky in a lot of ways.

If Self is truth consciousness and bliss why create this suffering universe for itself?

Kind regards,

Dear ...,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

Without first knowing oneself, how could the attempt to know what the universe is yield any result save a mirror-like reflection of the definitions imagined for the knower, or experiencer? Upon knowing truly the Self, which is of the nature of nondual Being-Consciousness-Bliss, homogeneous and illimitable, formless and undifferentiated, what else is there to know or to be known?

When the misidentification with the body is abandoned and when one no longer mistakes the senses to be the determinants

of reality, the identity and “reality” return to their source. When the “I”-notion, or assumed individuality (ego), vanishes due to clear inquiry, the “this” aspect of one’s experience also dissolves. That which remains is the Reality, which comprehends itself.

You may wish to question your idea that the nature of the universe is suffering. From what definition of yourself does this derive? You may also wish to examine the causes of suffering.

If you realize the unborn nature of the Self, the Truth of No-creation, as revealed by the wise, is self-evident. This is a matter of actual experience and not a conceptual doctrine to be accepted or rejected, just as your own existence is not an idea, doctrine, etc. First, know the Existence as it is, and Consciousness, Bliss, and the nature of all will become clear for you.

Yes, possessions and bodily attributes, such as illness, do not determine happiness. The source of happiness is the very same real Being just mentioned.

If you are ever in California, you would be warmly welcome to visit the SAT temple.

May you ever abide in the Knowledge of the Self, which is without beginning and without end, for which there is nothing other and in which there is nothing different, so that you are always happy and at peace.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

Dear Nome,

Namaste.

Thank you for your reply, I’ve had a shift in consciousness, again! So Awareness is, the understanding is here but it has been on and off for several months, the mind takes over and it hurts! How to stabilize the awareness?

But the suffering of all bodies including this one is still apparent whether awareness is here or not.

So what about the others who identify with the mind body? Can one be really free when all this mind/ body suffering is there in them ? And in sick or abused animals, too. How to come to terms with this?

Unfortunately I cannot travel to California, but it would be very nice to visit the Temple.

Kind Regards,

Dear ...,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. With the transcendence of the body by Self-Knowledge, you will find that the misidentification with the body was only delusion. The Self is innately free of the body, and true Knowledge reveals this. As it is for you, so it is for all.

Freedom is not dependent on bodily conditions and worldly circumstances. If it were, what kind of freedom would that be, for it would maintain the identical concept as that upon which the delusive bondage is based? The understanding that happiness is within and not dependent on external factors is the cornerstone of spiritual aspiration. Samsara is characterized by an absence of such understanding. Pains and pleasures of the body do not determine happiness and peace.

It is natural to care for others. The idea that they are “others,” including differences of species, is also based upon misidentification with the body. Free of that, all are oneself, and love is the indivisibility of Being. Being, which is unborn and imperishable, bodiless and free of the mind, is the Self. This is the Self of all.

The great wisdom of the ancient scriptures and of great sages such as Sri Ramana Maharshi is certainly not in error or exaggerated. It is the ideas in your mind that are so and cause you to suffer, as expressed by you. Learn to examine your own mind and discern what is real and what is not, what is the Self and what is not.

You may find it helpful to retain the previous message to you and to reflect on its contents some more. As you are probably aware, SAT can also provide books and recordings that may be beneficial, and such can be found on the website www.SATRamana.org.

If you persist in Self-inquiry, using your best efforts to immerse yourself in true Knowledge, you will find the blissful absorption in the Self, as the Self.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[The following letter was written in response to two letters regarding her experiences. The points raised in those letters can be inferred from the response]

August 7, 2008

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your letters of July 29th and August 2nd.

Your first letter begins with a reference to illness or some “dramatic” experience. Freedom from misidentification of the Self with the body includes transcendence of the bodily attributes, activities, and sensory experiences. The Self, alone, is eternal.

Your first letter proceeds to relate the situation with your work. Detachment from the material things of this world is natural for those who realize happiness within.

You mention the need to support the temple. Yes, though a temple is consecrated to That which is nonmaterial and formless, eternal and infinite, and provides a sanctified space in which to receive instruction, practice and realize, it does require physical care and support. Those who wish to do so find the ways of accomplishing this.

Referring to your letter of August 2nd, honesty is natural and essential if one is to find Truth. Fear is a product of dualism, which is concomitant with the ego-notion.

The SAT temple exists for the joy of Self-Knowledge, for the purpose of the revelation of Sat, which is Being. You are equally loved as a member or as a non-member and whether you visit the temple or not.

Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi is the Sadguru here. You may wish to re-examine what you have written in your letter about so-called

“attachment to the guru” and “a clean break at every level.” The first phrase is expressive of a lack of understanding of what a guru is, what a disciple is, and what the relation of them is and the purpose thereof. Perhaps, if you read some scriptural works on the subject, as well as what Sri Ramana has said about this, your understanding would be clarified thereby.

A “clean break” from ignorance is always beneficial. Freedom from the vagaries of the mind is joyful. Let delusion be dissolved and the ego destroyed by an earnest inquiry to know oneself. If that is accomplished first, then one can see if there is anything else to be done. Without first conclusively realizing the Self, in immortal Knowledge, to conceive of “breaking” from meditation, spiritual practices, holy texts, the guru, the tradition of sages and saints, temples, selfless activity, and all else that is true, good, and beautiful is only a nonsensical plunge into maya and samsara. In accordance with the honesty mentioned above, the application of nondualistic verbiage to such an idea is not necessary and does not make it any wiser.

The Truth is ever present. Those who dive within to find That realize That as the Self and remain ever as That. One who has realized That is That. Sri Bhagavan is always present. Those who adhere to Him are absorbed in Him and remain as Him.

The above is intended to be helpful. If you find it to be so, use it. If not, then not, and you may treat it as merely so much prattle.

May you ever abide in the Knowledge of the Self, the wondrous State of Grace, the happiness of which leaves nothing more to be desired and the peace and freedom of which are quite beyond the limited individuality but realized as one’s true Self.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[The following is a response to a person who wrote describing his understanding and meditation upon the teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi and Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj and who requested guidance in how to proceed to realize Brahman.]

August 5, 2008

Dear ...,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message. Communication by email is fine, for it enables you to frame your questions, as mentioned by you, and you do not risk missing me as you would by a telephone call. Your question is well-expressed. There are no foolish questions, except, perhaps, one that is not asked but still perplexes the mind.

“Merging with Brahman” is actually the realization of the ever-existent, sole-existent nature of Brahman. That alone is the Self. When there is misidentification as an individual, this same Self is viewed as a goal to be realized. Inquiring into the nature of this individual (jivatvam, ahamkara, I-am-ness, ego, etc.), its individuality, being unreal, vanishes, and only the Reality of the Self remains. This Self is Brahman, which, being absolute, is also named Parabrahman. Abidance in That as That is referred to as turiya, in relation to all states, or turiyatita to indicate that it is not a state but one’s very Being.

To say that one’s efforts extend only so far and then the Beyond draws one is indicative of the ego’s powerlessness and the non-ego nature of Realization. The “other side” is found to be the only “side” by the relinquishment of the ego-notion. That is attained by inquiry. Who is to meditate on “I-am-ness”? Who am I? If you thus inquire, you will be delighted at heart.

May you ever abide in the Truth of the Self and thus dwell in lasting happiness and peace.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome



Announcements

Appreciation

Thank you!

Thanks to all of those who participate in helping the SAT Temple to flourish. A special note of appreciation to Raman Muthukrishnan,

Sangeeta Raman, Eric Ruetz, Ganesh Sadasivan, Kathy Rogers, Bob Haber, Tim Frank, Myra Taylor, and Ryan Shaw for their selfless service.

Bookstore News

We recently replenished the inventory of books and CDs from the Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning. Be sure to take a look when you are at the temple for satsang.

Website Changes

Thanks to the efforts of Raman Muthukrishnan and Sasvati and the photography of Jim Clark, the SAT website (www.SATRamana.org) has many more improvements. There is a new section on the temple, and there are new descriptions of SAT and satsang. Many past issues of Reflections are available in PDF format, and the number of downloads and recordings of satsangs, meditation events, boundless wisdom events, and Ramana Darshanam events continues to expand. If you have not visited the site in some time, take a look at it now.

Book Reviews

Amazon is another distributor of SAT publications. On their site, readers may submit brief reviews of books. You may visit them on line and submit reviews for almost all of the present SAT publications. You can easily search for them by title.

Om

The temple entry is now graced with a radiant Sanskriti Om, which is positioned above the picture of Dakshinamurti. It is very reminiscent of the same symbol that appears at Sri Ramanasramam. May all who enter this temple be absorbed in its profound significance.

New SAT Temple Sign

Thank you Myra Taylor for your kind generosity in providing the funds needed to create a new SAT Temple sign. This sign will not only

be helpful for newcomers when seeking out the temple, but it will also serve as a means of letting the people who travel Ocean Street know that we are here!