



# *Reflections*

October    November    December  
2010

*Society of Abidance in Truth*



## Invocation

*If you gain this Knowledge, you will not be drowned in the ocean of worldly life. I have gained this perennial Knowledge of the Self from my spiritual preceptor.*

Inanadeva

*He who acquires true Knowledge by the grace of his spiritual preceptor alone will attain the Supreme Brahman. He will realize that the all-pervading is present in the Supreme Spirit.*

*When I saw the Paramatman pervading everywhere, it was His formless state that I witnessed. On seeing Him thus, I felt gratified.*

*If a doll of camphor is brought in contact with the flame of camphor, they become one. Likewise, I have been united with Him.*

Inanadeva

*Dweller in the Asrama on Arunachala, steadfast and stainless Paramahansa, assuming activity out of compassion while ever established in the imperishable Atman;*

*Spreading Grace like the friend of the blue lily (the moon), bright like the lord of the lotus (the sun), by his abidance in Brahman, he reminds one of his Father (Siva as Dakshinamurti) under the banyan tree.*

*Full of power, yet full of peace; full of devotion, yet without a sense of difference; free from likes, yet loving all the world; God manifest, yet in conduct humble.*

Kavyakantha Ganapathi Muni, Sri Ramana Gita 18:2, 13, 23

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# *The Boundless Wisdom of Sri Ramana Maharshi*

(From *Letters from Sri Ramanasramam*)

November 22, 1945

Aham Sphurana

Yesterday a Bengali Swami in ochre robes by name Hrishikesanand came here. This morning from 8:30 to 11:00 Bhagavan continuously discussed spiritual matters with him. That voice flowed full of nectar and uninterruptedly like the waters of the Ganges. How can my pen keep pace with that great flow? That amrit (nectar) can only be drunk deep with the hand of devotion; how can it be gathered and conveyed on paper? When Sri Bhagavan was relating his experiences in Madurai of the vision of death, these eyes were incapable of taking in the radiance of his personality, these ears of grasping the full wisdom of his words. It is natural for the enthusiasm of one who relates an incident to reflect the level of intelligence of him who listens.

I should have given you a more detailed account of the questions asked by the Swami and the replies given by Bhagavan; only at present the place reserved for ladies in the hall is rather far from Bhagavan, and, as I happened to be sitting at the back, I could not hear properly all that was being discussed. I did however hear one thing clearly. Bhagavan said, "In the vision of death, though all the senses were benumbed, the aham sphurana (Self-awareness) was clearly evident, and so I realized that it was that awareness that we call "I," and not the body. This Self-Awareness never decays. It is unrelated to anything. It is Self-luminous. Even if this body is burnt, it will not be affected. Hence, I realized on that very day so clearly that that was "I.""

Many more such things were said but I could not follow or remember them; and so I am not able to write any more about them. There have been several discussions as this before, I am only sorry I have let slip such innumerable gems. Please excuse my laziness and indifference in not writing you even though you have been asking me all these days to write.

November 28, 1945

Service of Atma Swarupa is Atma Seva

During the last two or three months, Bhagavan's personal attendants have been massaging his legs with some medicated oil to relieve the rheumatic pain. Some of the devotees, zealous in attention to Bhagavan's body, also began massaging by turn every half an hour, and this resulted in upsetting the usual Asramam routine.

Would Bhagavan tolerate all this? He was always considerate even to his personal attendants and would never say emphatically "No," to anything, so he said in a casual way, "All of you please wait for a while, I will also massage these legs a little. Should I too not have some of the punyam (grace)?" So saying, he removed their hands and began massaging his own legs. Not only was I very much amused at this but what little desire might have still been lurking in me to touch Sri Bhagavan's lotus feet and thus perform pranam (salutation) was completely obliterated. Bhagavan's words have a peculiar charm of their own! Look! He too wants a little of the punyam! What a delicate hint to those who have the intelligence to take it!

It was about that time that a retired judge of ripe old age said, "Swamiji, I should also be given my share of service to the feet of the Guru." To this Bhagavan replied. "Oh, really? Atma-vai guruhu! (Service to Self is service to Guru.) You are now 70 years of age. You to do service to me? Enough of that! At least from now onwards, serve yourself. It is more than enough, if you remain quiet."

When one comes to think about it, what greater upadesa (initiation) is there than this? Bhagavan says it is enough if one can remain quiet. It is natural for him to do so, but are we capa-

ble of it? However much we try we do not attain that state. What else can we do than depend upon Sri Bhagavan's Grace.

December 1, 1945

What is Meant by Samsara?

During the early days of my arrival here, on one day at about 3 o'clock in the afternoon a middle-aged Andhra, who had come recently, asked Bhagavan, "Swami, as I repeat Ramanamam (the name of Rama) regularly every morning and every evening for an hour, other thoughts come in, one by one, increase from time to time and ultimately find that I have forgotten my japam. What shall I do?"

"At that time catch hold of that name (Ramanamam)," said Bhagavan. We all laughed. Poor man! He felt grieved and said, "The reasons for these interruption is the Samsara (family), is not it? I am therefore thinking of abandoning the samsara." Bhagavan said, "Oh! Is that so? What really is meant by samsara? Is it within or without?" "Wife, children and others," he said. "Is that all the samsara? What have they done? Please find out first what really is meant by samsara. Afterwards we shall consider the question of abandoning them," said Bhagavan. He could not reply and so kept quiet, crest-fallen.

Bhagavan's heart was full of compassion. With a look full of tender kindness he said, "Supposing you leave your wife and children. If you are here this will become another kind of samsara. Supposing you take to sanyasa. Another kind of samsara comes into existence in the shape of a karra (walking stick), kamandalu (water bowl) and the like. Why all that? Samsara means samsara of the mind. If you leave that samsara, it will be the same thing wherever you are. Nothing troubles you."

December 2, 1945

Go the Way You Came

On another occasion an Andhra youth came and said, "Swami having a great desire for moksha (deliverance) and anxious to know the way thereto, I have read all sorts of books on

Vedanta. They all describe it, each in a different way. I have also visited a number of learned people and when I asked them, each recommended a different path. I got puzzled and have come to you; please tell me which path to take.”

With a smile on his face, Bhagavan said, “All right, then go the way you came.” We all felt amused at this. The poor young man did not know what to say. He waited until Bhagavan left the hall and then with a depressed look turned to the others there appealingly, and said, “Gentlemen, I have come a long way with great hope and with no regard for the expenses or discomfort, out of my ardent desire to know the way to moksha; is it fair to tell me to go the way I came. Is this such a huge joke?”

Thereupon one of them said, “No Sir. It is no joke. It is the most appropriate reply to your question. Bhagavan’s teaching is that the enquiry, ‘Who am I?’ is the easiest path to moksha. You asked him which way ‘I’ should go, and his saying ‘Go the way you came,’ meant that if you investigate and pursue the path from which that ‘I’ came, you will attain moksha.

The voice of a Mahatma indicates the truth even when speaking in a light vein.” Thereupon the book, “Who am I?” was placed in the hands of the young man who felt astonished at the interpretation, and taking Bhagavan’s words as upadesa, prostrated himself to Bhagavan and went away.

Bhagavan usually gives us his teachings either in a humorous or a casual way or by way of consolation. During my early days at the Asramam, whenever I felt like going home, I would approach Bhagavan at some time when there were hardly any people present and say, “I want to go home, Bhagavan, but I am afraid of falling back into family muddles.” He would reply, “Where is the question of our falling into anything when all comes and falls into us?”

On another occasion, I said, “Swami, I am not yet freed from these bonds.” Bhagavan replied, “Let what comes come; let what goes go. Why do you worry?” Yes, if only we could realize what that “I” is, we should not have all these worries.



December 31, 1945

How Do You Know That You Do Not Know Anything?

During the first week of last month on one morning, an ignorant traveler came to the asramam and, after staying here for two or three days, and in accordance with the saying “satra bhajanam matha nidra” (eating in choultries, sleeping in mutts) went away to eat and stay elsewhere, but was all the same coming here for some days enjoying the bliss of staying near and having the darshan of Bhagavan. Before leaving this town he approached Bhagavan one day with great hesitation and said, in humble tones, “Swami, the people sitting here always ask you something and you give them some replies; when I see that, I also feel tempted to enquire, but I do not know what to ask you. How then can I get mukti?”

Bhagavan, looking at him endearingly and smiling, said, “How do you know that you do not know anything?” He said, “After I came here, and heard the questions asked by all these people and the replies Bhagavan is pleased to give them, the feeling that I do not know anything, has come upon me.” “Then it is all right. You have found out that you do not know anything; that itself is enough. What more is required?” said Bhagavan. “How to attain mukti by that much alone Swami?” said the questioner. “Why not? There is some one to know that he does not know anything. It is sufficient if you could enquire and find out who that someone is. Ego will develop if one thinks that one knows everything. Instead of that, isn’t it much better to be conscious of the fact, that you do not know anything and then enquire how you could gain moksha?”

He felt happy at that and went his way. That questioner might or might not have understood the essence of that Bhagawathvani (the voice of the Lord) but, for us people here, those words were echoing in our heart of hearts like mantraksharas (letters of the gospel).



# *Only One Self*

Satsang  
May 9, 2010

(Silence)

Om Om Om

(Silence)

The Self, which alone truly exists, and which is absolutely one, is yourself. There is no other kind of “yourself.” The Self is absolute Being, without beginning, without end, free of form, embodiment, and individuality. There is no other kind of Being. This is your Being.

The Self is Consciousnessself—luminous, infinite, and homogeneous. This is your own Consciousness, and there is not a second or third type of Consciousness.

The Self is of the very nature of Bliss, and there exists no happiness apart from that.

The appearance of a self other than the Self, a reality other than the one Reality—Brahman—is merely an illusion. The power of illusion is just one’s own knowing, or believing in, it. Illusion is not inherent in Brahman or the Self, but is merely delusion. It is delusion to regard what is not the Self as the Self, what is unreal as real. To eliminate the illusion so that Reality comprehends itself is what we call “Self-Realization”

The Maharshi teaches that one should inquire, “For whom is the illusion?” The inquiry is entirely nonobjective in nature, for the idea of an objective sphere of experience is also illusion. Inquiring within yourself, “Who am I?”, ascertain your true nature—bodiless, unborn, with no creation, limitless, without rising or setting. It is not a body, and is not embodied. It is completely formless, yet entirely real.

Ascertain the nature of your very Existence by enquiring into what it is that appears as the individual. If the inquiry is nonobjective, as it ought to be, there is the Self-revelation of perpetually egoless Being-Consciousness-Bliss—your true Self.

For whom is the illusion, the illusion of a separate Self or of differentiation of any kind? The illusion can not be for the real Self. The real Self, as the Maharshi explains, is true Knowledge, which transcends the usual conceptions of ignorance and knowledge. True Knowledge, to be true, must be innate, for the innate alone does not rise and set. What, then, is ignorance and for whom is it? Difference is imagined from the standpoint of an “I,” the individual, yet the individual “I,” itself, is a form of ignorance. Can difference image itself? Does ignorance delude itself?

The scriptures declare that it is impossible to define maya—illusion, for how could that which has no existence be defined? Though it has no existence, one appears to dwell in it and be bound accordingly until he inquires, “Who am I?” Then, the very root of illusion, the very root of delusion, vanishes because it is unreal. What remains, knowing itself, is eternal.

Just question the assumption that you are a body or have any of the characteristics, activities, or qualities of a body, such as being in space, in time, in a world, and so forth and so on. Just inquire, and determine if you are the body or not, and the birthless, imperishable Truth becomes self-evident. Just inquire into what you regard as “I.” Discern what is objective, for you can not be an object of any kind, gross or subtle, and abandon that definition; eliminate that misidentification. What remains as “I”? (Silence)

True silence is that in which there is no “I-notion.” To abide in silence, therefore, truly means to abide free of the notion or assumption of an individual. There exists one immeasurable mass of imperturbable silence—never-ending Being, limitless Consciousness—which is the perfect fullness. The illusion that dreams otherwise is rootless. If it seems otherwise to you in your experience, trace the seeming to your knowing of it, your believing in it. Trace the believing or knowing of it to the reality of your own Being—to the knowing of your own Consciousness. Know the Being-Consciousness as it is.

Brahman knows Brahman. There is no second. No matter how you practice spiritually, in the end, you must come to this—Self-Knowledge.

This much has been said as a general hint of the right direction. Inquire within and know yourself, and, if at any point you have a question, please feel free to ask, or, if you wish to relate your own experience, please feel free to speak.

Questioner: Thank you for the very direct statements in your discourse. Most of them are ones that often seem to engender further discussion and dialogue as they should. Sometimes I am fascinated by things that could be heard or read in the scriptures that generally don't get further discussed. Maybe it's because at face value they are complete as they are, but I sometimes wonder if there isn't a depth beneath them that could be also enjoyed or explored. In many of Sankara's works, he concludes a section with, "And having inquired and realized the Self, one knows what is to be known and has accomplished what is to be accomplished." That seems complete in itself, but I wonder why he has it there in this work and that work. Is there anything beyond the direct face-value of it?

N.: What is there to be known?

Q.: The real identity of the one who wonders what there is to be known.

N.: Alright. Without his identity being known, all that he supposedly knows is only ignorance—various forms of delusion. Only if he knows himself does he know what is real. Knowledge of something unreal is also unreal. Knowledge of Reality alone is real Knowledge.

In addition, because the Reality alone exists and the unreal never comes to be, the Reality alone is what is to be known. It is the only thing capable of true Knowledge, and it is the only thing capable of truly knowing. In the Knowledge to which Adi Sankara refers, there is no triadic division of knower, knowing, and known. If one knows That, the Reality rests in itself, and there is complete peace. If that is not known as it is, seeking will go on until one does find.

What is there to be accomplished? Everyone seeks for happiness all of the time, yet it is only when one realizes the Self that that happiness shines unveiled in all of its fullness. That is what is to be accomplished.

One always wishes to know all the time. You attempt to know; you attempt to know what is real. Even in all kinds of ignorance, in all kinds of permutations of thinking, sensing, etc., always you want to know. The Knowledge of Reality as it is ought to be accomplished. If not, one is only living and dying in an unreal dream.

What needs to be accomplished is something that is perpetual and eternal. If something is gained, it will be lost; if something appears, it disappears. The supreme accomplishment must be something that neither arises nor sets, neither appears nor disappears. Where else can that be found except in one's own identity—the Knowledge of one's Existence—for you cannot separate from your own Existence. The one who accomplishes such is the Existence. No other can do so. The Existence is simultaneously Consciousness. Consciousness is the very substance of true Knowledge, which is the non-triadic, transcendent Knowledge.

Therefore, it is only through Realization of the Self that one has known what needs to be known and accomplished what needs to be accomplished. If you do anything else but do not accomplish that, of what avail is it? If you know everything else but do not know yourself who knows, what kind of knowledge is that?

Q.: I have a question about what could be called qualified experiences in the direction of knowing Reality. I've heard you very helpfully discourse on one. If someone says, "I felt so clear when I was in the presence of the sage, when I was in the temple, but then when I was not..." and one of the teachings I very much enjoy is when you take apart the assumed reality of the "not being in the temple existence," as if that were something that was ongoing and stable and ask, "When are you out of the temple? When are you out of the presence of the sage?" Now, similar to that, is that which is qualified as a partial or incomplete vision of the Real. It struck me that why assume a stable, ongoing reality to the incomplete part? Why not just take that apart and keep seeking for the Real that is behind instead of dismissing it as a passing experience and hoping for better next time?

N.: Yes. That is wise. The one who would dismiss it is what is passing.

Q.: Even incomplete inklings of the Real are pretty good. If only the incomplete part would just be taken away.

N.: If you inquire into the individual who yearns for the complete to dissolve the incomplete, that very “I,” there will be no incompleteness.

Another Q.: In your discourse there were so many opportunities to meditate deeply. When you pointed out the utter rootlessness of illusion, it was clear that it has absolutely no connection to anything that is real. It eventually consumes itself, so that all that remains is what is real. What remains is not individualized at all. It does not even have the seeds for it, let alone that they have ever sprouted. I can see that that truly is my nature. There is no other nature that is real. The idea that I am an individual is totally rootless. It is hard to imagine how one would actually imagine himself as something else.

N.: That would suppose you were there to begin with.

Q.: What is there already, there is no reason to make anything more. It would be a silly, fruitless exercise to add to what you have described as an infinite, imperturbable mass of Bliss.

N.: We can say illusion is pointless; we can know it as non-existent. We can also say that illusion is the attempt to know oneself, but in an inverted or fruitless manner. In whatever manner it is described, there actually is no getting away from the Self. Nameless and formless, it is the ever-existent. It is not that it becomes one-without-a-second upon Realization of the Absolute, for it is always one without a second. By this, along with other means, one transcends the idea that Realization is an event. The Realization must necessarily be of the same nature as that which is realized; otherwise it will not be nondual. If it is not nondual, it is only illusion. If it is nondual, the realizer, the Realization, and that which is realized are identical—one and the very same thing. If it is ever-existent or eternal, it is not an event. An event occurs to someone, but who is there?

Q.: I understand that my Existence is not an event and is never an event. It never stops. It never changes. It is just pure Being, as it is always, and I am never anything other than that.

N.: Sri Ramana's Grace is marvelous, isn't it?

Q.: Yes, the Grace and the devotion are as unbroken as the Existence.

Another Q.: It makes sense that ignorance can not come out of ignorance, but it seems that it does to me. It appears as though nothing or ignorance spawns more ignorance.

N.: Ignorance may appear to spawn more ignorance, but where does it actually start?

Q.: It does not start. The ultimate starting point is not there.

N.: The ignorance is just the story of the adventures of a man who never existed.

Q.: So, the missing link remains missing. That seems to be the ultimate fulcrum that needs to be understood. The whole hinges upon that assumption.

N.: The starting point of illusion or ignorance is said to be the "I" or ego-notion. Has anyone ever actually seen the "I"?

Q.: I could image something, but that could not be myself. In other words, that is already objectified from myself. So, myself always has to be before that.

N.: The effect of imagination is of the same nature as its cause—imagination. But you exist. Existence is not imagined. Indeed, there can be no imagination apart from the Existence. Where in Existence does ignorance rise? Where within the Self does "I" spring up?

Q.: Yes, that does not make any sense.

N.: It can not spring up outside it, because That is infinite. How can it spring up within it, if it is undifferentiated?

Q.: Yes, there is not a corner or a place or a starting point. It is only some differentiation in the mind.

N.: What is the root of the mind?

Q.: (laughter) I was going to say that differentiation, but, hmm...

N.: So, the differentiated “I” is the root of the mind and in the mind the “I” appears?

Q.: Yes, it seems as if the “I” is assumed to already have been there.

N.: Assumed by whom? Can the real Self assume an “I”? Can another that comes after the “I” assume it? It is not possible.

Q.: There is something solid that everything is based upon, as you were saying. That is always the real part.

N.: Yes, what appears as the substrate is alone real. Just as we casually say that the rope is the substrate of the snake, but the snake is not actually there at all, for there is only the rope, so it is with delusion and the Reality—the differentiated and the undifferentiated. If the Self does not give rise to “I” and if anything other comes after the “I” so it can not give rise to it, can “I” give rise to itself without it first existing? It cannot be.

Q.: So, there is the Existence...

N.: If you would just stop there, it would be fine. (laughter)

Q.: O.k. So, you are saying: do not imagine anything else.

N.: “There is Existence” is true. “There is Existence, and, but, and also,” is not true. “I am” is true. “I am this, I am that,” is not true.

Q.: It is a combination of something that is real mixed with something that is totally unreal, and the unreal becomes.

N.: Yes. Is it not the very definition of ignorance or the ego? The real mixed with the unreal. Because the unreal can not stand apart from the real, it will always be a mixture. You cannot have just the unreal. But the unreal is, after all, unreal. So, the Real alone is actually existing.



Q.: So, discrimination is not leaving what is real. It would not [just] be discriminating the unreal from the real.

N.: By keen discrimination, perceive that there is no one to leave the Self—no one to leave Reality—no other reality to go to and no other kind of self to become. Tying together, as it were, with an illusory knot, the Reality, which is pure Consciousness, with the idea of “I,” and a body, and so forth and so on, illusion is displayed. Turning inward, inquiring into your bodiless, “I”-less real nature, illusion vanishes. When the snake is imagined it is not that something has actually been added to the rope, not even in the least degree.

Q.: So, that is why, in a certain sense, Enlightenment is instantaneous because it never did not occur.

N.: It is timeless. It does not come slowly and it does not come quickly to any individual. The liberation from the individual is, in itself, timeless. The individual, or jiva, does not become enlightened. Consciousness is already self-luminous. In that Light, no shadow can be. The idea of jiva-hood, or individuality, is abandoned. From the supposed position of bondage, such abandonment is known as liberation. The real substance of liberation, though, is just the Existence of the Self that always is. Because it always is, Liberation is declared to be eternal. Because it always is, it is not a new attainment. Because it is not a new attainment, it will not perish.

[Then followed a recitation in Sanskrit and English of selected verses of Brihadaranyaka Upanishad.]

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om



## *From Yoga Vasishtha*

*(Continued from previous issues)*

Literal translation with alternatives:

3:101:6

At some time, for the purpose of finding the best, exceeding this, they hence assembled together, obstructed in bondage (or, having no relations), with distressed (depressed) faces and afflicted with sorrow in their minds.

From that void town, they came forth, spreading out variously, as [in] the contiguous sky of the heavens, (or, in the sky of the heavens, closely connected) are Mercury (waking up), Venus (bright and clear), and Saturn (moving slowly).

With limbs as delicate (very) as shirisha flowers (a type of Acacia), their backs heated (pained) by the sun, going on the way (in their search), they were like young shoots (buds) fallen into the hot affliction beating down during the summer heat.

Their lotus (“grows in a lake”) feet scorched on the burning (inflaming) sandy path, they said, “Oh Father!” grieving like deer from a herd (or, like a herd consisting of deer).

Their feet were afflicted by the sharp tips of the bunches of grass, and the joints of their limbs suffered pain, as their embodied forms were grey with the dust of the distant road they had passed beyond (transgressed).

On the path, they reached three trees that had twisted nets of clusters of blossoms, garlanded (crowned) with fruit and blossoms (sprays of fruit), and that were a support for the forest animals and flocks of birds.

Of (lit., in) that triad of trees, two trees were not brought into existence even in thought (imagination), and, indeed, a seed of the third, for its own growth, does not exist.

There, beneath one of the trees, they rested from their thorough fatigue (exhaustion), like Shakra (“The Mighty,” Indra), Anil

(God of the wind), and Yama (God of death) at the base of the parijata tree (celestial tree) in heaven. [Note: The latter portion of this verse can also be interpreted as: like the Mighty having no resting place at the base of the parijata tree in heaven.]

Having eaten (enjoyed) nectar-resembling fruits (or, imaginary nectar of the fruits), having drunk that juice, having made garlands of the clusters of blossoms for a long time (slowly), and having rested, they [started] moving. [Note: the latter portion of this verse can also be interpreted as: having made garlands of the clusters of blossoms and having rested, after a long time, they [started] moving.]

Having again rapidly gone far, at midday, they approached the confluence of three rivers, with unconquerable (troublesome, difficult to overcome) waves moving to and fro and roaring. [Note: the last phrase can also be interpreted as: tremulous and noiseless.]

*Summary translation, including two verses from previous issue:*

Once upon a time, there were three splendid royal sons of the great Self, who were proclaimed as righteous and valorous, in an endless, nonexistent town.

In the extensive void town, like the sky and the reflection of stars in water, two of them were not born, just as the remaining one, indeed, did not even abide in the womb.

At some time, for the purpose of finding what would be best, exceeding this, they assembled together, obstructed in bondage, with distressed faces and afflicted with sorrow in their minds.

From that void town, they came forth, spreading out variously, as in the contiguous sky of the heavens are Mercury, Venus, and Saturn.

With limbs as delicate as shirisha flowers, their backs painfully heated by the sun, in their search, they were like young shoots fallen into the hot affliction beating down during the summer heat.

Their lotus feet scorched on the burning, sandy path, they said, "Oh Father!" grieving like a herd of deer.

Their feet were afflicted by the sharp tips of the bunches of grass, and the joints of their limbs suffered pain, as their embod-

ied forms were grey with the dust of the distant road they had passed beyond.

On the path, they reached three trees that had twisted nets of clusters of blossoms, garlanded with fruit and blossoms, and that were a support for the forest animals and flocks of birds.

Of that triad of trees, two trees were not brought into existence even in thought, and, indeed, a seed of the third does not exist for its growth.

There, beneath one of the trees, they rested from their exhaustion, like Shakra, Anil, and Yama (God of death) at the base of the parijata tree (celestial tree) in heaven.

Having eaten nectar-resembling fruits, having drunk that juice, having made garlands of the clusters of blossoms, and having rested for a long time, they started moving.

Having again rapidly gone far, at midday, they approached the confluence of three rivers, with troublesome waves moving to and fro and roaring.

(to be continued)



## *From the Temple Archives*

*[This is a message to a SAT member who, during satsang, mentioned that a person who was involved with his work situation had made false, derogatory remarks about him.]*

June 20, 2010

Dear ,

Namaste. Regarding the topic of which you spoke during satsang:

One's own thoughts are not true definitions of the Self. How much less are those of others! Remain transcendent.

In delusion, a person may project his/her view of himself upon others. This encompasses the obvious misidentifications with the body, as an ego, etc., as well the projection of tendencies, traits (e.g. “laziness”) upon others. Perceive the utter foolishness of the formation of opinions regarding others, and remain wise yourself.

Underlying the projection, generally, is the fear that that trait, etc. is one’s own. See the Self that one truly is, even if that person is oblivious to such.

The tendency to ruin another’s reputation is a perverse one born of misery that just makes more misery for himself/herself. Abide happily at the very source of joy.

Some friends or acquaintances may be so fearful of becoming the target of rejection (defamation, name-calling, etc.) themselves that they appear to distance themselves from the targeted person or pretend that they are unaware of the facts actually experienced by them. Inwardly they pay the price of conscience. Do not depend on them but have compassion for them.

The Truth is the Truth, no matter what anyone says. Likewise, the facts are the facts no matter what anyone says. God sees all and is not fooled by false statements. Repose peacefully in God.

What may seem momentous now, will be as if nothing later. Abide in the eternal as the eternal.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

*[A SAT member wrote concerning the death of his mother. The response to him follows.]*

June 22, 2010

Dear Nome,

My mother passed this morning. No tragedy, she was more than ready to go.

Om Arunachaleswaraya namah,

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. There is no grief over the inevitable when one knows the imperishable nature of the bodiless Self.

On Namah Sivaya

Om Arunacalesvaraya Namah

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

*[Another SAT member wrote that she was ill. She also wrote about freedom from thought. This is the response to her.]*

June 28, 2010

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your letter of the 25th, which just arrived.

I am glad to know that your bodily health is recovering. Though you have not supplied the details concerning your health, from what you have written, it seems that this illness is not one from which you are able to quickly recuperate. The bodiless Self, though, remains unaffected and serene.

To see the importance of freedom from thought is correct. Moreover, it should be realized that the Self is ever beyond thought. It is inconceivable, undefined, and unconfined by any thought. In Self-Knowledge, that thought is purely illusory, being the imagined superimposition of the objective upon Consciousness, and does not actually exist, is certain. Free from thought, abide in the bliss and peace of the Self.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

*[A message from another SAT member, followed by Nome's response.]*

July 21, 2010

Hello Master Nome:

Being no difference in samsara and nirvana, one has a glimpse of consciousness. What is it to steadily abide as the Self?

Namaste.

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

Consciousness alone is the Reality. Misidentified as an ego, the imaginary assumption of an "I," it, itself, appears as samsara. From the perspective of being in samsara, Consciousness appears as if a state, called "nirvana" because of the extinguishment of the "I" and its supposed samsara. Turning inward and inquiring into the very nature of "I" to know the real Self, one then may speak of glimpses. Yet, who sees what? Who sees otherwise? Thus inquiring, the notion of two selves vanishes, and only indivisible Being exists. The notion of two knowers disappears, and only one Consciousness exists. That alone abides as itself. That is the Self. That is who you are. The innate immutability of the Self is the steadiness of Atma-nishtha (Self-abidance, being in the Self). In sadhana (practice), abandonment of attachments and misidentifications by depth of inquiry yields steadiness.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

*[Another message from the same SAT member. The response by Nome follows.]*

July 22, 2010

Good morning Master Nome:

As I reflect on what I thought was a glimpse of peace, joy and quiet, I observe that I was working as a hospice volunteer on Tuesday, and, in so doing, all that was coming out of my mouth were words of inspiration from Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, Buddha, St. Francis of Assisi, and I seemed to be gone. There was peace, joy, energy. Yesterday, after some time at the office, I returned, in the form of thinking, and feelings arose and questions as to the feeling of the doer, which has been so present in this life. I realize that all of the “doing” this I think it has done is just that, a thought, nonexistent. May the turning to the subjective be deeper by the grace of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi for this mind seems not to be sharp enough.

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

In Devotion,

Dear ,

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

When the ego subsides, the words of wise sages are one’s own.

If one ceases to misidentify with the instruments of body, speech, and mind, all concepts of being the performer of action are gone.

Bhagavan’s Grace is always. Turning inward, the ever-existent is realized.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

*[This is a message from a seeker, with Nome’s response. The seeker’s message has been slightly edited for the sake of brevity.]*

July 21, 2010

Dear Nome,



Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. I am feeling that you, my precious guru, are pushing from the outside and pulling from the inside. I am happy to feel you and I want you to always be with me. I have been thinking that the strong attachment, the needy part of me, seems better. Still I want to be one with my guru more than anything.

Please be well.

All my love,

Dear ,

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

At some point, you may find it interesting, and perhaps beneficial, to examine what you refer to as “the needy part.” Though attachment represents a confusion regarding the source of happiness, what actually is that for which you wish? Deeply considered, the desire to be happy is an intuition of your natural state. Of course, such happiness is to be found within, and within means the Self. That is also the nature, or very existence of the Guru. Thus, Sri Ramana says that God, Guru, and the Self are one and the same.

So, instead of attempting to modulate the sense of need, it is wise to determine what, truly, you need and how much you need it. Then, you will naturally make every effort, in joy, to realize it. All the wise have declared that truly only one is needed. Some call that one God. Some call that one Guru. Some call that one Self. Those who realize that one within know that to be ineffable.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

*[This message is from a seeker who had corresponded previously. Nome’s response follows.]*

July 27, 2010

Namesthe Nome,

Om Namo Bagavathe Sri Ramanaya,

I have question. When doing Self-inquiry, one thought arose. I inquired, who created this thought, to whom, but suddenly another thought arose. So, I couldn't find the source of thought rising. I will know by more practice of Self-inquiry or I am doing wrong?

Please clarify. Now, I am reading Yoga Vasista book. It is really useful to understanding about oneself.

Thanks,

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message. Reading Yoga Vasishtha is excellent.

It does not matter how many thoughts appear. You know all of them. You remain as the ever-existent. They do not. Inquire to know who this unchanging "you" that is not the thoughts truly is. Keenly discern how no thought defines Consciousness, which is your true nature.

Continue to inquire in a nonobjective manner, and, with Grace, the Supreme Self will be realized.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

*[This message is from the same SAT member who wrote twice previously above. Nome's response follows.]*

July 29, 2010

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Master Nome:

Please elucidate what the transitional "I" is and what notices it.

How does the awareness of the transitional “I” become awareness of it?

In Devotion,

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. The phrase “transitional I” may be a result of translation and would be best considered in the context in which it is used. It may be a way of describing the appearing and disappearing character of the notion of “I,” the illusory connection between Consciousness and the body, the superimposition of individuality upon the Self, or the continuity of Consciousness that is the unbroken Existence amidst the transitory states of mind.

There is only one Consciousness, and that alone is the Self, the only true “I.” Discern this real knower free from the known, such as the mind and the notion “I.”

Sri Bhagavan said that devotion is the “mother” of knowledge.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

*[Here is a message from someone who had attended the earliest public satsangs in 1978, had been present during the previous, mostly silent years of satsangs 1974 to 1978, and was present during Nome’s sadhana 1971 to 1974. He attended the celebration of Sri Ramana Maharshi’s Self-Realization at the SAT temple on July 17, 2010. His message also discussed suggestions and information relating to Nome’s bodily health, and these have deleted here. Similar editing has been performed on Nome’s response, which follows.]*

July 29, 2010

Dear Master Nome,

I have reviewed and have determined that Swami Dayananda taught and published the text Upadesa Saram and not Saddarsanam. In fact, the book title is, Talks on Upadesa Saram (essence of the teaching) of Ramana Maharshi. The ashram no longer publishes this work, and I'm sure that is because of the Ramana Ashram Trust that had previously demanded that Swamiji refrain from public talks on any text of Ramana. Swamiji had continued to teach Upadesa Saram in private to his students, and I was fortunate enough to study this work with him in India in 1995. I do have a copy, but it is packed with other books that are going to Hawaii. At some point, I will either unpack and mail the book for your enjoyment or obtain a copy and mail it to you. Also, I have an audio tape of the last class he taught on this text, in which he does a breathtaking summation, and I will copy and send along that tape after I unpack in Hawaii. I apologize for the delay, but I will follow through, as no one will enjoy this unfoldment more than you.

I was delighted to affirm our oneness without the illusion of a spatial separation. 32 years later, your realization is as palpable and timeless as the very first Satsang together!

Om Tat Sat,

Love,

P.S. If I can ever be of service to you in any capacity, I would be honored to do so and hope that you would call upon me. If you do wish to travel to the island of Hawaii, there will always be space in our home and our hearts, and there is a depth of unity that brooks no separation.

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message. Please convey my thankfulness to [name omitted] for so kindly sending the information, which arrived in yesterday's mail.... The care she, you, and others have expressed is, itself, a sweet remedy.

The Upadesa Sarah (Saram) commentary by Swamiji sounds quite interesting. I am sure that his commentary is very thorough and erudite. Just yesterday, I finished a manuscript of

a translation of the same text with a very pithy, perhaps terse, commentary that, rather than an explanation of the verses with corollary scriptural passages and such as is usually expected of a commentary, focuses exclusively on the Knowledge that is the basis and the implied result of each verse. The intended readership is those who are already very deeply engaged in Self-inquiry. It will, though, be some time before it is printed, for there is a need to catch as many as possible of the Sanskrit typographical errors that inevitably slip in, usually showing themselves only after the printed book is in hand....

Why the management of Sri Ramanasramam would make such a peculiar demand of Sri Swami Dayananda is incomprehensible. Moreover, there are many translations and commentaries, several of which are not published by the Asramam.

Knowledge, the nature of which is Consciousness, is the very nature of our Being. Its freedom is boundless. It is possessed by none, but, in the nonexistence of the individual who would gain or lose it, it is realized, and what is realized we are.

I hope that the move to Hawaii is successful. Whenever you visit the mainland, be sure to visit us at the SAT temple.

We ever remain One.

Om Tat Sat

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

*[These are two messages from a seeker, with responses to each.]*

July 5, 2010

Hi, my companion and I would like to visit with Nome and would like to know if Nome attends the Friday night sessions. We live 500 miles away and have the funds only for a one night stay in Santa Cruz, and we would not want to miss seeing Nome. My friend needs his grace and guidance. Thanking you in advance,

Arunachala Shiva!

July 5, 2010

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message. I am present at all the events at the SAT temple. You will be warmly welcome at any of them. The calendar of events can be found on the SAT website at [www.SATRamana.org](http://www.SATRamana.org).

May you abide in the Knowledge of the Self, absorbed in That which is of the very nature of Grace, and thus be always happy and at peace.

Om Namah Sivaya

Om Arunacalesvaraya Namah

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

August 3, 2010

Beloved Nome, I cannot express in words my joy and thanks at being able to see you again after so many years. How I wish I could meditate with you and “catch the Samadhi habit” that you so generously offered those many years ago. I feel my time in the body is quickly running out, and I have a fear of dying in ignorance yet again. Perhaps Providence will come to my rescue and allow for it to happen.

My friend [name omitted] was with me and remembers all that you said and feels that you were speaking to her directly, she was duly impressed and hopes for your continued guidance.

Arunachala Siva,

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

The body is, indeed, transient, but you truly are the Self, which is unborn and imperishable. Ignorance is considered the

obstacle to Self-Realization, but for one who ardently inquires within, the ignorance dissolves and the obstructions prove to be imaginary.

Just as the Self is ever-existent, so Grace is ever present. Guidance shines from within, and, if you and [name omitted] feel it to be beneficial, is available in a manifested manner, too (satsang, retreats, recordings, books, downloads from the website, etc.). What is truly important is to put the instruction into practice to the best of your ability and find the blissful Truth of your very Being.

May you ever abide in the Knowledge of the Self and thereby be ever happy and at peace in the perfect fullness of the Self.

Om Namah Sivaya

Om Arunacalesvaraya Namah

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

*[In early August 2010, a SAT member wrote about her spiritual practice, her wondering of whether or not she was experiencing enlightenment, and about some ridicule from a loved one (which she quoted extensively) towards her spirituality. This is Nome's response.]*

Dear ,

Namaste. Thank you for your letter of the 4th and this email message.

Rather than think, "Is this enlightenment or not?" in the attempt to evaluate your experience, it is wiser to continue to inquire. What comes and goes, increases or decreases, is not the finality. The Self is ever existent, and the realized Knowledge of it is invariable. It may be helpful to refer to the comments in *Saddarshanam and an Inquiry into the Revelation of Truth and Oneself*.

Peace and bliss cannot be wrong. Just continue to trace their source, so that you fully identify yourself as that.

It is absurd for the unhappy to ridicule the happy and for the disturbed to condemn the peaceful. Insistence upon others

conforming to one's own opinion is narrow-minded and characteristic of the dense delusion that forms samsara. The quotations of [name omitted] given by you are, perhaps, not in a completely described context. Standing alone, they seem very contradictory, expressive of bigotry, may be hypocritical, and seem to be of an ignorance rooted in egotism and worldly attachment, as explicitly stated in the quotations. While it may be possible that such is the state of mind expressed, you are in a far better position to understand the context and to perceive if that is a mollifying factor or not. Whatever be the case, it is best for you to abide as the undivided Self and remain happy at heart.

Where the ego does not appear is true silence. The highest prayer is that in which the individuality of the worshipper vanishes. The presence of God precludes the existence of an ego. The joyful state devoid of attachment is according to God's will.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

*[A message from another seeker, slightly edited for brevity, and Nome's response]*

August 13, 2010

Nameste Nome,

Om Namo Bagavathe Sri Ramanaya

I am working a part-time job. In this worldly life, any kind of action that happens for me that is positive or negative is affecting my peace of mind. I always remember that this action can't decide my happiness. So, I am inquiring about who is affected by this worry, but, mostly, within a moment, worries go deep into my mind even without time to think about inquiry. After some-time, I realize that I am thinking like this. Then, I start inquiry about my thoughts and action of mind. In that situation, I am sitting in front of a Sri Ramana Maharshi photo praying for help. How can I work without any attachment in work and my personal life? My mind always sticks to something and creates worries or imagines some worldly happiness.

Thanks,



Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

If the mind is not rooted in the Truth, but rather pursues its own delusive ideas, peace will be obscured. Sri Ramana advises those who desire Self-Realization not to pursue the delusive ideas. The result of such pursuit is unhappiness. Instead, inquire and abide happily as the Self.

Know with certainty that happiness is within. External objects and events do not provide or affect it.

If you know that happiness is within and seek to know the Self, you will remain at peace and will not suffer.

Thus, when the body engages in work, you will be unattached, and happiness and peace will still shine. For one who inquires to know the Self, activity and inactivity are the same.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

*[A seeker started regular attendance at satsang. After three months, he wrote this message, which has been slightly edited here for the sake of brevity. Though Nome does not refer to himself as a guru, the seeker has addressed him as such in this message, and this has been left unedited to maintain the accuracy of what is printed here. Nome's response follows.]*

August 15, 2010

Aum Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste Guruji

Guruji, I really don't know where to start because, for the past 3 months of being at your feet, I have become more and more speechless. It seems there is so much to say but not enough words and, deep in my heart, I know you already know. From day one, you have taught me and guided me not just through your words, but your unexplainable silence, ever gently showing me that the ways of the Guru are beyond all things imaginable. Since day one, guruji, I've had so many experiences

being at your feet, experiences that I thought only existed in rare accounts of the past, like with Bhagavan.

Such is the case that I have left you/Bhagavan in tears of joy and humbled beyond all words, more and more each week, but, over time, I became very comfortable and lazy. A foolish child I am and easily admit. Coming week in and week out, I would look forward to the radiance of your presence in which all worries, effort, and time ceased, where the depths of my very being seemed to be revealed so effortlessly. A fool who came to feed off the energy of his guru without putting in the necessary effort afterwards I became. Over time, the experiences dwindled down, and you constantly hinted for me to dive inwards (as you do every day), to take my eyes away from you and find you within.

Stubborn I've been for so long, guruji, stubborn because, at your feet, I felt like a child being held by his mother and father, lost in such bliss that seems to know no end. Over time, you silently showed me the way, showing me that even a devotion, however pure it may be, must end at a point where guru and disciple exist no more. Showing me that the true devotion is not to sit and silently let my mind dive deep into the love for Bhagavan or in composing spontaneous poems of devotion to you/Bhagavan in my mind but, instead, to transcend these and realize that eternal state which is you and abiding as You will be the purest service and devotion to you. To practice intensely, as you say, is the purest karma that can be offered.

I don't know what to say, for, honestly, I know you know it all already! I even took for granted the experiences; I got lost in the depths of my own imagination. Keeping myself lost on a merry go round of thought-hell, I believed I was making head way, until you stopped them and made me put the work in. What a fool I've been, yet how thankful am I. You silently, week in and week out, pointed to where I was caught, but, ignorant as I am, I thought I understood fully. Silently allowing me to run rampant in the corners of the very mind I thought I was transcending due to your grace, you taught me the deepest lessons ever by forcing me to do the work of inquiring and not relying upon Bhagavan. Please forgive me. I just want to say thank you, and I promise I will immerse myself in my practice like I have been more lately and stop slacking like I was. I truly know your strongest teaching with me has been in silence, and I can't ever

be thankful enough for Bhagavan bringing me in his presence each week. If I couldn't come, I honestly would cry like a little child until he got his way.

One of the main things that stopped me, guruji, from fully practicing was the fear of death, which I've come to see wasn't that simple of just being a mere thought of bodily death, but was carrying the weight of belief that if I were to immerse myself in practice and abide in that state which revealed the experience I shared with you when I first came, it would be selfish. If I went into this thought-transcendent space, I would not be able to help anyone or the world, and I would have to listen to this overwhelming feeling of being obliged to have to roam in the mind and play this silly game of the world that I know not to be true from the core of my being. I don't know what to do. Guruji. All I want is to sit in silence, but I get this feeling it would be selfish and hurt people's feelings if they came to me and wanted to talk, and I just sat there silently and smiled, though I somewhat do this now. I feel I have to participate in the world, and letting go of my thoughts completely, no matter how stupid this is going to sound, is going to cause me to have no interest in the world, and, even though I have none now, this would just seal the deal. I feel like I have to play this role of "[name omitted]" who is 21 years old and lives here and blah blah blah, and I honestly have no care for any of this, guruji, and know it is all as phony as the dream I had last night. I am doing this just for the sake of others and there is still a trace of fear. I must just let go of this nonsense and see if its true through my own inquiry. Sorry if this message was too long, but I feel like I had to tell you this. I have a few questions, but I will save them for satsang, even though I feel you answered them already.

With the deepest gratitude.

Aum Namo Bhagavate Dakshinamurtya

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

The fullness of deep devotion is true Knowledge. The effort of spiritual practice and Grace are of the same nature. Bliss is of the very nature of Being. Who can say whether such is the beginning or the end of devotion, the dawn or finality of Knowledge?

Silence is the self-evident nature of the Self, for which there is no alternative and no other.

If the mind moves, determine who knows it. By such inquiry, the true nature of the mind becomes clearly known. If the misidentifications, which are the root of the perplexing thoughts, are destroyed, illimitable peace remains.

The Maharshi has set the supreme example: Egoless Self-abidance is the greatest good for all.

If you know yourself, you will always be happy, at peace, and free as immortal Being-Consciousness-Bliss.

Om Daksinamurtaye Namah

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

*[These are two messages, with responses, from a seeker who had also written and received a response on April 23, 2010, to which he refers, inspired by reading *Essence of Enquiry*. Each of Nome's responses follows the respective message of the seeker.]*

August 18, 2010

Namaste.

Since sending these questions, I have almost finished your book, *Essence of Enquiry*, and your points are taken.

It seems to me that one of your purposes in writing the book is to compel readers to engage in a practice of inquiry. I have committed to do so, and it now seems to me that there is no other activity that comes close in value.

I must believe that enquiry is a practice, or was a practice, of yours and my question is: from your experience of your practice, can you make any recommendations as to the most effective and efficient practices beyond those described by Ramana in the book? Can you note any pitfalls to avoid?

The process, as I understand it, starts with the efforts of the illusory “me” “doing” the practice and ends with the disappearance of the “me,” and the arising of the always-present Self. As I have been practicing, I notice a reduction of arising of thought and an increase in quiet mind and peace. I assume that the practice is continued until there is no more arising of thought and, in its place, is a continuous, effortless presence of Self experienced as Sat, Chit, Ananda.

Any recommendations or corrections will be appreciated.

As all is Self, this com is a Self to Self message. Namaste, in the form of [name omitted]

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

Sri Bhagavan’s teachings are complete in themselves. When deeply understood, the teachings revealed by Ribhu, Adi Sankara, the sages of the Upanishads, and others only reiterate the same Truth and the same inquiry.

An illusory “me” does not actually practice, for how can that which is unreal have any part in the self-revelation of the Reality? The power, illumination, etc. of the practice of inquiry is rooted in the ever-existent Self. The inquiry, itself, is composed of mind-transcendent Knowledge; the end is the means.

If the nonobjective inquiry remains deep and constant, you will experience no obstacles or pitfalls. Always, the inquiry is into the very nature of the inquirer.

Peace and happiness are natural for one who inquires, for his very nature is Ananda, just as he is Sat-Chit. Regardless of whether thoughts appear to be few or many, inquire to destroy the misidentifications. When the nonexistence of an “I” is conclusively realized, there is the certitude of knowledge that there are never any such things as a mind, thoughts, etc.

If you are finding “Essence of Inquiry” helpful, you may also find benefit in “Saddarsanam and an Inquiry into the Revelation of Truth and Oneself” and “Self-Knowledge.” Both have Self-Knowledge and Self-inquiry as their sole focus.

Depth of inquiry is essential. As discrimination sharpens by discriminating, inquiry becomes deep, strong, steady, and clear by actually engaging in the practice of it.

May you, deeply inquiring to know your own true Self, abide in the Self, as the Self, free of the least trace of imaginary delusion and ever full of peace and bliss.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

August 19, 2010

Dear Nome,

Namaste. Thank you for the quick, comprehensive and deep reply.

Again, I suspect several re-readings will be of benefit. I assume the readings you recommended are books, and I will search them out. Thanks for that too.

You mentioned “deep” inquiry several times, and it caused an alert in me. Can you say anything more about deep inquiry vs shallow I suppose. Is there any way to gauge the depth of one’s inquiry?

Another book I am reading is Padamalai, by Godman. It focus almost entirely on enquiry too, and I find it also very compelling and centering.

Again you say “depth of inquiry is essential.” Since it is so important, I want to be sure to understand as much a possible about this essential aspect. How should I go about deepening my understanding of what you mean and more importantly applying it?

Thank you so much for the pointers and encouragement. Ever seeking truth,

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Depth of that which is nonobjective cannot be measured in objective terms. If, though, you keep your focus on

the clarity of the knowledge of your identity, so that you abide free of misidentifications, your inquiry will be deep, and Being will remain self-revealed.

Inquiry is deep if it is experiential, though such is not sensory or a mental mode, just as you exist and you know that you exist. At that depth the inquiry should be.

If you inquire in such a way, vasanas (tendencies) of ignorance will vanish, and Self-Knowledge will shine.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

*[Here are two messages from a SAT member and responses to them.]*

August 30, 2010

Dear Master Nome:

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

The closing spiritual instruction where you stated the message that Sri Ramana Maharshi indicated as part of the five verses went deep: where you stated that there is no consciousness in the body that it would be as if the screen were in the moving film was recognized as truth by truth itself.

Master, could you please elucidate what is called chit-jada-granthi? Is it understood correctly as being the knot of the ego which is partly consciousness?

In devotion,

Om Shanti shanti shanti

Dear ,

Om Nammo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. The more the inquiry is continued, the deeper the Knowledge experienced. Yes, Truth alone knows itself.

The Cit-jada-granthi is the supposed connection between pure Consciousness and the inert. It is the ego. It is not con-

scious at all. It is entirely illusory and appears as if borrowing the knowing power of Consciousness and combining it with the body. When sought, it vanishes. Egoless, bodiless Consciousness is the only knower. That is the Self. That is who you are.

May you ever blissfully abide in the Self, as the Self.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya!!!

Master Nome:

As the reading of Saddarsanam continues to take place, the heart is increasingly joyous in truth. On page 206 “N: You know that you relate to another person only from the perspective of being a body. If not, there is blissful love and identity in truth, but there is no relating. The wise will understand this.” Does this point to the truth that there is nothing objective, no relating, only Existence-Consciousness-Bliss?

Yours in Devotion,

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Dear ,

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. It is as you have stated. One undifferentiated Self alone exists. There is no “other” or anything objective at any time. This is “blissful love and identity in truth.”

The height of devotion shines with true Knowledge.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

*[This message is from the same SAT member who previously wrote in early August. Nome’s response follows.]*



September 6, 2010

Dear Master Nome,

As always, I wait a little time to gain the true distillation of what was absorbed from the retreat. It is this: I can recollect not just with mind, but more importantly with feeling, the Silence of Dakshinamurti, or, in other words, the Essence of Reality, that Vibrant Stillness which is at the Source of all. Now, I feel more empowered to stay in that Stillness when disturbing things happen, and not just for that, but as a general practice throughout the day.

We will not be going to India this year. Instead we hope to come to SAT for the big retreat....This was all [name omitted]'s idea!

Always with Love and Gratitude,

Dear ,

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

You will be very welcome at the retreat if you are able to attend. The Silence of Dakshinamurti is absolute. It is the Being of the Self. Abidance in that is to be that. It is also the perfect, transcendent sanctuary from all illusion.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

*[A seeker attended satsang and wrote to Nome with questions about experiences of the chakras that the seeker was having, silence of the mind, and other topics. This is Nome's response.]*

September 7, 2010

Dear ,

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namamste. Thank you for your message.

If your goal is Self-Realization, such is eternal. What appears disappears; what comes goes. The eternal is unchanging and nonobjective. It is your true Being. Therefore, meditation should be upon the very nature of the Self, and not merely upon that which is perceived and conceived.

Regardless of whatever experiences, gross or subtle, come and go, you are aware of them. Inquiring to know the nature of that “you” is the direct means to Realization.

Silence is the undifferentiated, absolute Existence in which the illusion of a separate “I” does not appear.

May you deeply inquire and thereby abide in the Self, as the Self, formless and unchanging, space-like and infinite, so that you are always happy and at peace.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

*[This message is from the same seeker who wrote on August 15, 2010. Again, the original message has been retained as written, though Nome does not refer to himself as a guru. His response follows.]*

September 12, 2010

Aum Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya! I humbly prostrate before the Guru of gurus, the Eternal Father, in whom I take refuge.

Namaste Guruji

“A certain lady who had a lot of devotion performed a traditional ritual for worshipping sages whenever she came into Bhagavan’s presence to have darshan. She would prostrate to Bhagavan, touch his feet and then put the hands that had touched Bhagavan’s feet on her eyes. After noticing that she did this daily, Bhagavan told her one day, ‘Only the Supreme Self, which is ever shining in your heart as the reality, is the Sadguru. The pure awareness, which is shining as the inward illumination “I”, is his gracious feet. The contact with these [inner holy feet] alone can give you true redemption. Joining the eye of reflected

consciousness [chidabhasa], which is your sense of individuality [jiva bodha], to those holy feet, which are the real consciousness, is the union of the feet and the head that is the real significance of the word “asi” [“are”, as in the mahavakya “You are That”]. As these inner holy feet can be held naturally and unceasingly, hereafter, with an inward-turned mind, cling to that inner awareness that is your own real nature. This alone is the proper way for the removal of bondage and the attainment of the supreme truth.”

Guruji, I just found this today on David Godman’s site, and it raised a few questions because it is what we talked about at satsang today. Bhagavan here uses the term reflected light also in referring to the mental attention and says the union of the eye of the mental attention on the real consciousness is the real union. He even uses the term inward turned mind here as he does in *Talks* and says cling to that inner awareness. When Bhagavan says this, doesn’t he mean to turn the mental attention inward on the consciousness only and hold there?

Today you said to me, “now you see that real enquiry has nothing to do with mental attention at all, don’t you?” When you said this, were you referring to me not confusing this mental attention as the goal, being that it is only reflected light? Could the result of confusing the mental attention with the pure consciousness in enquiry be the mind falling asleep and/or just being locked in a fancy state of mind that seems nice and pleasant, but not quite there?

This happens to me, if I don’t pull the attention off thought etc., then it gets lulled to sleep by just staying aware of its own reflected light with thought still in the background. I’m not really sure what it is because it happens so quickly sometimes. Also, as I slowly begin to fall asleep, I feel this dipping experience within me, like I’m dropping into/out of my body. I don’t understand what is happening; can you please help me guruji? At times, it is very easy to, as Bhagavan says, cling to the inner awareness, while all thought, sensations are very see-through, so to say, and become completely silent and no longer are there, but then, at times, it’s like a whirlwind and tracing to the source can be very hard.

Am I doing something wrong now guruji that I begin to fall asleep? I've even tried becoming aware of who is it that falls asleep. It worked for a short bit, but then I began to fall asleep in due time again, though there was a short point where it seemed that I was aware while asleep, but it didn't last long. I actually don't remember. Guruji, I know you know where I'm at in my practice, and your words are my only guidance and what I surely regard as unshaken Truth. What you say, I will do. I pray for your graceful guidance and that you leave no room for my deluded ways.

With the deepest respect and love that I can't express.

Aum

September 13, 2010

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

Though directing mental attention toward spiritual matters and inward may be regarded as beneficial, such cannot be equated with absolute Consciousness, which is the Self, or with true Knowledge (Self-Knowledge), which is eternal and nondual. Nondual means that it is without divisions, such as subject and object and, also, that it is of the very same nature as that (the Self) which is known, which is the knower himself. Attention is a transient mental mode that is apparent only if there are thoughts. It is not eternal. For Self-Realization, the means must be of the identical nature as the end, for that (the Self) alone is real, and the unreal cannot result in the real. Self-inquiry, which reveals Self-Knowledge, therefore, is of the nature of Knowledge and should not be misconstrued as the mere mode of the mind referred to as mental attention.

Now, in light of the above explanation, consider the profound teaching given by Sri Bhagavan, as quoted by you. He simultaneously reveals the true significance of the expression of devotion and lifts one's view from action, which is performed with the instruments of body, speech, and mind and which can-

not yield Self-Realization, which is Liberation from all of the imagined bondage, to Self-Knowledge, which is the very nature of Self-Realization.

First, he reveals the identity of the Self, Consciousness (“shining”), the Reality, and the Sadguru. Implicit in this is the elimination of conceptions based upon the body, a person, or the individual. He then reveals this to be the only true identity, one’s real Being, which alone is the true significance of “I.” “Inward” is nonobjective. Contact is such as to merge or lose the false sense of a separate individuality. Such loss of the unreal, the ego, “alone can give you true redemption,” that is, alone yields Liberation from the imagined bondage, for it consists of the egoless true Knowledge.

Joining is the union with or the clear Knowledge, in which Being is the Knowledge, of one’s identity as That, the Self. It is the revelation of what is ever true and not the conjoining of two different things. Abhasa means reflected or a distortion or a false appearance. Cit (Cid) is Consciousness, which is real. There is only one Consciousness, and there are not different kinds of the Self. If, by inquiry, you trace the light, now seemingly reflected as a second knower or second awareness or mind, to its source, such is the union referred to. This is by Knowledge (inquiry) alone, for thought cannot reach beyond itself and has no knowing power of its own. Jiva means the individual or individual life. Bodha signifies knowledge. Trace the knowledge of existence, of “I” or the sense of identity, to its source. In the union referred to, which is the utter dissolution of even the least dualism, the egoless nature of the only true “I,” which is the Self without any trace of individuality, alone remains and is self-evident. That is the real Consciousness, which is one without a second.

“Asi” means “are.” The meaning of the mahavakya can only be that of being That. That is Brahman, the real Self. Thoroughly elucidated by Adi Sankaracarya, the meaning is solely true Knowledge in which Being is Knowing. It is an instructional statement of absolute identity.

It is not possible for thought, attention, or any mental mode to be unceasing, but actual inquiry, of the nature of Knowledge, can be so. Natural refers to the innate. An inward-turned mind

is one that abandons its own imaginings, such as the world, etc., and refers to nonobjective vision. Clinging to the inner (nonobjective) Consciousness (Awareness), can only be by knowing that alone to be real and oneself, without an alternative.

Thus, the unreal bondage, inclusive of the assumption of one to be bound, is destroyed, and there is the Self-revelation, or attainment, of the eternal Supreme Truth.

In light of what is actually declared by the Maharshi, it is not necessary to interpret it by reducing it to the play of mental attention. Indeed, with that interpretation, much of what is taught would remain an enigma. From another perspective, first-hand experience by practice will show the value and limitations of mental modes and the invaluable, illimitable nature of pure Knowledge. Moreover, the attention is something known, just as that upon which it is placed is known. Who knows?

There may be many factors affecting sleepiness. If you engage in Self-inquiry, which reveals Consciousness that is transcendent of the three states, sleep will not be a problem.

I hope that you find the above helpful.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

*[This is a response to a message from a SAT member who had experienced a depressed state of mind and then, abandoning that mode of thinking, perceived that the Self is actually always present and all was “under its umbrella.]*

September 16, 2010

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

Everything is only in and of the Self. The perfect fullness of Absolute Being ever remains un-fractured, undiminished, and unblemished.

The ego is unreal. All sorrow is only in, by, and for it. Therefore, as Sri Bhagavan said, quoting Vasishtha: “That in

which this entire universe is established, to which it pertains, out of which it arises, for which it exists, by which it comes into being, and which it really is, that is the Self-existent Reality, the Truth. Let us worship That in the heart.”

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

*[In response to a seeker who wrote that he was caught in frustration and worry due to worldly concerns and lack of practice of Self-inquiry.]*

September 16, 2010

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

Suffering, in the form of frustration, worry, and such, in relation to worldly things and circumstances, is experienced by all who do not truly know that the source of happiness is within. If this is truly known, one remains at peace, filled with serene detachment.

The mind wanders toward what is conceived as determining one's happiness and toward what is conceived as defining oneself. If you know that happiness is within, naturally the focus will be upon knowing what is within, that is, upon Self-inquiry. Self-inquiry reveals the true definition of one's own Self (svatmanirupanam), and such is Self-Knowledge, which is the highest bliss.

Deeply reflect and meditate upon the significance of what is indicated above, so that the precious time of this life is used wisely.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

*[A Ramana-devotee from Russia sent a copy of his Russian translation of the book, Maha Yoga. This message was sent in response.]*

Dear Sri ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. It is a joy to hear from you. Thank you for so kindly sending us a copy of your Russian translation of “Maha Yoga.”

To make the spiritual teachings of Sri Bhagavan available in various languages is a wonderful, holy service that is of immense benefit for the seekers of the supreme Truth who read those languages. Though, as with Dakshinamurti, Sri Ramana’s perpetual Silence is the absolute teaching, His words are fully permeated by that Silence and explain in an unsurpassable, sublime manner the Knowledge of the Self and the inquiry that reveals it. Thus, the service you are performing, by His Grace, and the books you are writing are truly blessings for Russian-speaking people.

Should you ever travel to California, please accept our warm invitation to visit us at the SAT temple.

May you ever abide in the undivided Self, as the undivided Self, and thus be always happy and at peace.

Ever yours in Sri Bhagavan,

Nome (for SAT)



## *Announcements*

### ***Thank You...***

The selfless service we do here to help maintain the temple is prompted by the love we have in our hearts for this teaching. We do not desire acknowledgement for such. We would, though, like to thank all of the folks who perform service at our temple...

Bob Haber: keeping the bathrooms clean, watering plants, sweeping the walkways & parking lot, cleanup after events, cleaning the temple, set-up for events; Ryan Shaw: maintaining the temple grounds gardens; Tim Frank: vacuuming & cleaning the temple, cleanup after pujas and retreats, providing meals at retreats; Myra Taylor: vacuuming & cleaning the temple, provid-



ing prasad after satsang & atmotsava, cleanup after pujas and retreats, providing meals at retreats; Raman Muthukrishnan: running the bookstore including mail order service, maintaining the SAT website, providing prasad after satsang; Sangeeta Muthukrishnan: helping with the bookstore mail order, organizing things around the temple, providing meals at retreats, providing prasad after satsang & atmotsava; Wimala Brown: providing meals at retreats and prasad after satsang & atmotsava; Dhanya Nambirajan: singing during special events, providing meals at retreats, providing prasad after satsang, cleanup after pujas; Ganesh Sadasivan: organizing special events including singing, recitation, and chanting; Eric Ruetz: editing and mastering all recordings of satsangs and special events, providing meals at retreats, securing the temple; Jim Clark: securing and maintaining safety at the temple, lighting candles at meditation events, flower aranging, painting the Satsang Hall; Richard Clarke: providing incense for the temple and helping with book orders from India; Nome: temple grounds maintenance, writing books, administrative stuff, general help wherever needed including spiritual guidance; Sasvati: preparing books & Reflections for publishing, maintaining residential rentals, overseeing property repairs, flower arangments, maintaining temple gardens; Scott Fraundorf: gardening, dusting in the temple, assisting in the SAT Bookstore; Advait Sadasivan: providing play time at any time for anyone who wishes to play.

## *Upcoming Special Events*

***Truth Revealed Retreat:*** November 10-14, 2010.

***Sri Ramana Jayanti:*** December 23, 2010 (according to the Indian calander).

***Sri Ramana Jayanti:*** December 30, 2010 (according to the historical date).