

# *Reflections*

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*Society of  
Abidance in  
Truth*

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# *Why Reflections?*

*Reflections is a special publication of SAT.*

*The print version is intended for members of SAT to enhance their spiritual understandings and practices.*

*This on-line version is offered to so that Reflections can be available to all.*

*Reflections presents the actual teachings of  
Ramana Maharshi in every issue.*

*Reflections presents enduring Wisdom from  
ancient texts in every issue.*

*Reflections presents a transcript of satsang in every issue so that  
aspirants can have the opportunity  
to carefully study and reflect upon the teachings  
given in these sacred events.*

*So, read, reflect on what is here, and then dive within to realize.*

# *Reflections*

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**Om Tat Sat**

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## Invocation

He instructed me in things unknown.  
He made visible things unseen before.  
He revealed Himself to me as Light and Truth,  
Granted me the honey of His Grace;  
And while the world mocked at me,  
He attuned my whole being to His music.

Manikkavachakar (*Tiruvachakam*)

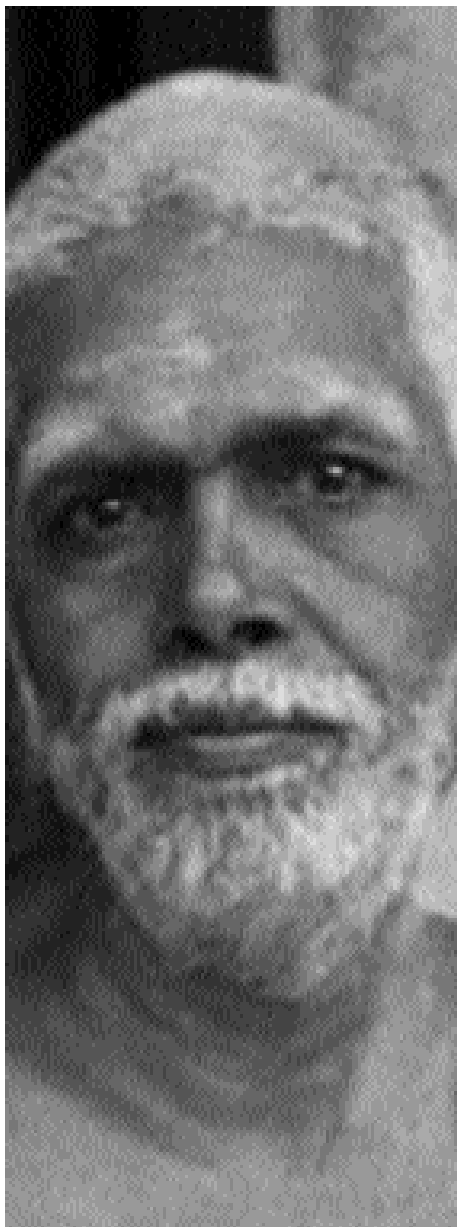
Oh Supreme Splendor!  
Come Thou as love.  
Come Thou as joy.  
Come to me as Thou art.

Manikkavachakar (*Tiruvachakam*)

Perfect Fullness, flawless ambrosia,  
Mount of endless flaming Light!  
O Lord, who came as the Vedas and their meaning,  
And did enter the portals of my being,  
Breaking all bounds like a rushing torrent;  
Siva, the dweller in the great, holy shrine,  
Sovereign Lord, who has made me Thy abode,  
What else can I now beg of Thee?

This day in mercy unto me, my darkness dispelled,  
Thou filleth my heart as yonder morning sun.  
Thy mode of rising I comprehend not by thought.  
There being naught else but Thou,  
Every atom, all things great and small, change and merge,  
Into Thy Oneness, Siva, dweller in the holy shrine.  
Though Thou are not in this and that,  
Yet art Thou the Essence in all:  
Who, oh who, can know Thee?

Manikkavachakar (*Tiruvachakam*)



***Sri Ramana Maharshi***

# **The Wisdom of Sri Ramana Maharshi**

## **(From Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi)**

A question was asked why it was wrong to say that there is a multiplicity of jivas. Jivas are certainly many. For a jiva is only the ego and forms the reflected light of the Self. Multiplicity of selves may be wrong, but not of jivas.

M.: Jiva is called so because he sees the world. A dreamer sees many jivas in a dream, but all of them are not real. The dreamer alone exists, and he sees all. So it is with the individual and the world. There is the creed of only one Self, which is also called the creed of only one jiva. It says that the jiva is only one who sees the whole world and the jivas therein.

D.: Then, jiva means the Self here.

M.: So it is. But the Self is not a seer. But here, he is said to see the world. So, he is differentiated as the jiva.

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D.: How to conquer desire, anger, etc.?

M.: Desire or lust, anger, etc. give him pain. Why? Because of the “I”-conceit. This “I”-conceit is from ignorance; ignorance from differentiation; differentiation from the notion of the reality of the world; and this, again, from the “I am the body” idea. The last can be only after the rise of the ego. The ego not arising, the whole chain of mishaps disappears.

Therefore, prevent the rise of the ego. This can be done by remaining in your own real nature. Then, lust, anger, etc. are conquered.

D.: So then, all these have their root in ignorance.

M.: Quite so. Ignorance gives rise to error, error to conceit, etc. What is ignorance? Can it be of pure Brahman, which is only the Self or pure Knowledge? Only let the questioner know his real Self, i.e., be the Knowledge; this question will not arise. Because of ignorance, he raises the question. Such ignorance is of the questioner and not of the Self. The sun seen, no darkness persists.

There is hoarded wealth in an iron safe. The man says that it is his own; the safe does not say so. It is the ownership-conceit that is responsible for the claim.

Nothing is independent of the Self, not even ignorance, for ignorance is only the power of the Self, remaining there without affecting it. However, it affects the “I”-conceit, i.e., the jiva. Therefore, ignorance is of the jiva.

How? The man says, “I do not know myself.” Are there then two selves— one the subject and the other the object? He cannot admit it. Is, then, ignorance at an end for him? No. The rise of the ego is itself the ignorance and nothing more.

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M.: Environment, time, and objects are all in me. How can they be independent of me? They may change, but I remain unchanging, always the same. The objects can be

differentiated by means of their names and forms, whereas each one's name is only one, and that is "I." Ask anyone, he says, "I" and speaks of himself as "I," even if he is Isvara. His name, too, is "I" only.

So, also, of a locality. As long as I am identified with the body, so long as a locality is distinguishable; otherwise not. Am I the body? Does the body announce itself as "I"?

Clearly all these are in me. All these wiped out entirely, the residual Peace is "I." This is Samadhi, this is "I."

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M.: Just as the physical ether, though accommodating all the gross objects (the whole universe), is itself the content of the mind-ether, so, also, the latter is itself the content of the Chit-ether. The last one is Chit itself. There are no things contained in it. It remains as Pure Knowledge only.

D.: Why call it ether? Physical ether is not sentient.

M.: Ether denotes not only the insentient physical ether but also pure Knowledge. Knowledge does not consist in knowing objects: this is relative knowledge. But Knowledge in its purity remains all alone, One, unique, transcendent Light!

D.: Well, should we be imagining it in our meditation?

M.: Why imagine? We can think of another only if we are independent of it, whereas here we cannot remain independent

of this Pure Knowledge. Rather, only It is! How can it be imagined to be so and so or such and such?

D.: How are we to proceed?

M.: Only get rid of the non-Self.

D.: It looks all right now; but after it is all forgotten.

M.: Your forgetfulness implies knowledge, for you know you forgot; otherwise how can you speak of forgetting it? So, forgetfulness also is Chit-akasa (Chit-ether) only.

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D.: Can you kindly give me a summary of your teachings?

M.: They are found in small booklets, particularly "Who am I?"

D.: I shall read them. But may I have the central point of your teachings from your lips?

M.: The central point is *the* thing.

D.: It is not clear.

M.: Find the Center.

D.: I am from God. Is not God distinct from me?

M.: Who asks this question? God does not ask it. You ask it. So, find who you are, and then you may find out if God is distinct from you.

D.: But God is Perfect, and I am imperfect. How can I ever know Him fully?

M.: God does not say so. The question is

for you. After finding who you are, you may see what God is.

D.: But you have found your Self. Please let us know if God is distinct from you.

M.: It is a matter of experience. Each one must experience it himself.

D.: Oh! I see. God is Infinite and I am finite. I have a personality that can never merge into God. Is it not so?

M.: Infinity and Perfection do not admit of parts. If a finite being comes out of infinity, the perfection of infinity is marred. Thus, your statement is a contradiction in terms.

## **Eloquent Silence**

**Satsang**

**April 10, 2005**

[N. signifies Nome; Q. signifies Questioner; “laughter” means that everyone was laughing, not just the speaker.]

Om Om Om

(Silence)

N.: Absolute Truth is the continuous silent teaching of the Maharshi. Truth refers to Reality as it is, while “Absolute” is indicative of it being invariable and of its not being in relation to anything else—in other words, its utter nonduality.

That which truly exists alone exists. It is of the nature of Being-Consciousness-Bliss. This is your Self, the only self that there is. This is what exists, apart from which nothing else exists.

According to what it is with which you identify is established your relation to the Absolute and all else. If you misidentify yourself with the form of a body, you will be in relation to a supposed external world and God distinct therefrom. If you know the truth that you are not the body, and the body is not a definition for yourself, that you are neither a body nor embodied, can there be a relation to a universe? Can there be a relation to a God apart from yourself?

Look at this more deeply. The Truth as expounded everywhere in Advaita Vedanta is Tat tvam asi, That you are. How are you going

to realize That? That is something that cannot be grasped and cannot be lost. It is ever existent. According to how you regard your identity, you will conceive of your relation to That. So, if you misidentify with the mind, that is thought, you will conceive of yourself as one thing and That as another, though the instruction, both in aphorism and in silence, is “That you are,” and not “That you are not.”

If you imagine yourself to be an individual, you will then be, in some manner or another, in relation to the Truth, but the Truth is absolute and is not in relation to anything. How can the Real be in a relation with that which is unreal? Or the Self with what is not the Self? Where is the connection?

So, if you regard yourself as a thing, there will always be this distinction or difference. Nondifferentiation, Non-duality, is Truth. And Truth is supremely blissful. So, to realize that Truth, you must set yourself free of all the imagined differentiation, the imagined duality. To do so is a matter of ascertaining your identity.

If you are distinct, even in the least, from the Self, from Brahman, and that is true even for a moment, it is true for all eternity, and there is no liberation, which is absurd. For everyone who feels bound seeks Liberation as an intuition of the natural state, just as everyone who feels suffering seeks happiness as an intuition of the natural state. That seeking for happiness cannot be stopped, though it can be fulfilled.

The Maharshi gives the instruction to inquire, “Who am I?” If you thus determine, in Self-Knowledge, what your identity actually

is, you yourself are the Liberation. You yourself are the Bliss sought. You yourself are the very Being, or Consciousness, of That. So, in order to find out the Truth, realized experientially, first-hand as That you are, Tat tvam asi, inquire as to who you are. See for yourself that you yourself are not in relation to a body, to thought or a mind, and that you are not an assumed individual who could be any such thing.

Though the Maharshi’s answers to questions posed to him were always extremely relevant to the questioner, the glorious beauty of his answers was that the answers always uprooted the imagined identity, thereby revealing absolute Truth in which he was giving instruction silently all the time. That Silence still is. Absolute Truth is eternal. Realize that Absolute Truth as your very Being. It is a matter of Self-Knowledge.

If you misidentify as an “I,” as a mind, as a body, and so forth and so on, you will assume that you are, in some way or another, in some kind of relation to the Absolute. If you cease to misidentify with the body, the mind, or the ego, there is no relation. There cannot be a relation where there are not two.

(Silence)

Attempting to inquire to know the Self, therefore, do not regard yourself as one thing and the Self as another. If you do have that idea, “I am a self attempting to realize the Self,” leave the Self alone, for it is fine, and inquire as to who you are. If you inquire, that which is unreal is revealed as such. What is known as unreal cannot bind and does not



remain. Then, Reality knows itself, as the Reality, Brahman, the real Self, alone can know itself. Only the Nondual Truth can realize the Nondual Truth. Do you understand? There is nothing objective in this Knowledge. There is nothing objective, except that which is negated, in this inquiry. All is resolved in indivisible, nondual, absolute Reality.

(Silence)

Thoroughly and deeply inquire into your own Self, “Who am I?” If you have a question at any point or you wish to relate your own experience, feel free to ask or to speak.

Q.: From the teaching today I understand that there cannot be any relation of the Real with the unreal except in imagination, and the imagination is just not necessary.

N.: If imagination is not necessary, no kind of ignorance is called for, no kind of suffering is necessary, and no kind of bondage is needful.

(Silence)

Q.: No separation is there?

N.: Separation is only according to the nature of the one who perceives it.

(Silence)

Another Q.: What you were just speaking about is going back to the one who knows this. I keep forgetting this aspect. I do not know why I forget. It seems clear at times. It is so important to investigate that assumption that everything is based upon.

N.: All right. Do you ever forget yourself?

Q.: Hmm. I can think that I am something else.

N.: But do you forget yourself? Do you forget your existence?

Q.: Probably not at that level.

N.: And the Existence is itself the substrate upon which the thinking could even appear. It is by the Light of Existence, or Consciousness, that you can even be aware of the thinking. Can you remember yourself?

Q.: I’ve tried.

N.: Has your Self ever been an object of memory?

Q.: That is the confusing part. There is an experience of it. Trying to remember that experience does it, but it is something more than that. It is not the memory. It is the actual experience itself.

N.: Is the actual experience a thought or not a thought?

Q.: Not a thought.

N.: Memory is a kind of thought.

Q.: Yes. There is no question of that. I mix those up, though.

N.: In truth, you cannot remember the Self, but you can’t forget it, either.

Q.: (laughing) You say you can’t forget it.

N.: Do you ever cease to exist or ever forget your own existence? That which is within thought can be subject to remembrance,

forgetfulness, and other such mental conditions and modes. Are you a thought? Is it possible to really think of your Being? Even if you think “my Being,” that is not the same thing, is it?

Q.: No, it is very bland and unexciting.

N.: It is not the actual experience.

Q.: No.

N.: Not the actual Existence. Your Existence is neither subject to being remembered nor subject to being forgotten. In addition, how would it be possible to have a memory that is steady and would survive not only the waking and dreaming states, but also the deep, dreamless sleep in which there is no thought activity? Self-Knowledge, though, transcends all three states.

Q.: That really eliminates...If I would examine my meditation to see if it would survive the transitions involved in those states, so that the meditation is existing and continuous throughout those three states, it is valid.

N.: Are you existing throughout all those three states? If you are, what is the nature of this you? Who are you that you transcend all three states? Whatever is limited to the scope of a state is merely a product of that state. So, all the dream perception and conceptions are just a product of a dreaming state of mind. The waking state world, perceptions, and conceptions are just a product of the waking state of mind and is equally imaginary. The apparent not-knowing or forgetfulness in deep dreamless sleep is just a product of that state. You exist, though,

throughout all. So, your nature cannot be anything of those states. Self-Knowledge, Self-Realization, to be eternal and nondual must be of the very nature of the Self that is realized. Otherwise, it would be dualistic and transient, and what is transient is not worth seeking, as the Maharshi has stated. Only what is eternal is worth realizing.

You exist in all three states. The three states pass by and you still exist. That existence is invariable. Real Knowledge, the essence of deep meditation, is the very same thing. Look at your own experience and discern.

Q.: I know that whatever is on a mental level definitely does not cut it. It seems that I become fooled by that mental level quite often.

N.: The real Self becomes fooled or is there another one?

Q.: (laughing) The other one.

N.: What is the nature of the other one?

Q.: I don't know the nature of it.

N.: Who is the one who doesn't know?

Q.: (quiet for a while) It seems that that one knows more specific things and is closer to myself. When I try to investigate it, that is more expansive.

N.: How expansive?

Q.: (quiet for awhile) I don't know...

N.: Find out. If you find that it is expansive beyond all ideas of expansiveness,

it is that which is formless. This means that whenever you actually inquire into the ego entity or individuality, no ego or individual is found, but just the expansiveness, Brahman, the real Self. If conceived otherwise, how many are there of you?

Q.: This is important. I never really feel that there are multiple [selves]. However, there is a confusion that there are multiple [selves].

N.: Where does the confusion dwell?

Q.: Definitely on the superficial.

N.: Where is the superficial contained?

Q.: (quiet for a while) It seems that it must be contained in the notion of “I” existing as something.

N.: Alright. Within the notion of “I am existing as something” is all that is superficial, all that is just the thin veneer of illusion. It is all that does not actually exist. It is the stuff of imagination. One notion of “I” contains all the illusion and is the source of all the delusion. It, itself, constitutes the entire illusion. All of maya is just “I.”

Q.: This goes back to the original question, for it is so important to know that which is aware and always before that existence as an individual.

N.: Is there a “before” and an “after”? Was the “I” born? There is the unborn real Self, which is also imperishable. Was another one born? If you assume so, there will be a “before” and an “after,” the “original Self” and the “break-off self.” Then, you will

attempt to determine the relation of this “break-off self” to that Real Self, whether it is entirely divided, partially divided with some similarities, much similarity but partially divided...

Q.: It will all change.

N.: Yes, it will change.

Q.: Just like the weather. Or the ideas.

N.: The ideas usually change more quickly. (laughter) But, were you born?

Q.: That being born could be anything. It is just going from one state to another.

N.: There must be someone who traverses from one state to another. That one “I” makes up all the illusion. It, itself, appears as subject and object. So, examine that “I.” See what is there.

Q.: When you say, “examine,” what do you mean?

N.: Inquire. Try to see the “I” as it is.

Q.: When you ask me that, my experience becomes much deeper.

N.: Whether described as deeper or more expansive, it is the same thing. The ego, which was never born, is said to cease to exist. Its cessation is really the realization of its utter unreality. The one Self that has been there alone all of the time knows itself.

Another Q.: You said that all illusion comes out of the “I” misidentification. Before that, I was meditating after we first

spoke, and I was reflecting on this sense of body-misidentification and the waking-state-misidentification as being the same. Certainly, they are known. At the level of that knowledge, which is not dual even though there are these things that I thought were dual somehow, when looking that way instead of at what is nondual, this knowledge that knows the states is mostly the identity and seems to have no boundaries, edges, starts, or finishes.

N.: So, that which knows the body is utterly bodiless. That which knows the states is stateless. That which sees all the characteristics is Nirguna, no characteristics or quality-less.

Q.: So, how can that ever enter the mind?

N.: Therefore, you know that transcendence of the body is not being in the body and going out of the body. There is nothing bodily about it. Transcendence is pure Self-Knowledge. Since it never had any relation to a body, it is naturally immortal. The Knowledge and the Bliss of one who knows his own bodiless nature is, similarly, of the same immortality.

Q.: Immortality implies some kind of duality that isn't present.

N.: In what way?

Q.: Immortality implies mortality, and that is dual as an idea, which the experience is not.

N.: Such is determined by how we understand. Immortality is just immortal. It implies a duality only for those who conceive of such. Likewise is it with body and bodiless, realized and unrealized, and so forth and so

on, and all of the other terms that are expediently used to point out something that can only be silently expressed.

Another Q.: On Friday night, you gave instruction to meditate with certainty and pointed to the one thing of which we are certain, which is our existence. That was a great meditation. The question of, "What do I really know for certain?" also struck me. My existence is the one thing of which I am certain. Everything else should be probably questioned.

I spent most of yesterday working in the garden. I wanted it to be a day of meditation. I started from, "I know that I exist." It was not very long, though, until I was into the gardening, in a body, and then, I now had hands. I went from the formless to battling with the weeds.

(laughter)

N.: How did that happen? Is it just intrinsic to gardening? In that case, all should renounce gardening. (laughter) I do not think that the Vedas say anywhere that one must renounce gardening. What happened? How did you go from being formless to having hands?

Q.: It seems that I made the mistake when I supposedly woke up. There was the thought that I am going to garden today. Then, I thought that on top of that I would try to meditate.

N.: Why would the earnest desire expressed in the idea, "I want to meditate," or,

“I am going to meditate,” endow you with form and hands? You could eliminate the “I am going to meditate” attitude and see if it does you any good. Most likely, you would just be stuck with a pair of hands, and that would not be very impressive. (laughter) What happened?

Do you have hands now? Are you the body?

Q.: I am trying to answer that question from an identity called (gives his name), which is in a body.

N.: Where in the body are you? Are you in a particular place or all over it?

Q.: Sort of all over it, but more focused right about here.

N.: So, there is more of you there and less of you elsewhere?

Q.: It’s silly.

N.: You shaved this morning. Did you lose part of your existence? If you are all over, such includes the hairs that...

Q.: Went down the sink. (laughter)

N.: You literally went down the drain? (laughter) Is that what happened or is that absurd?

Q.: That is so absurd. I would have had to feel less after shaving.

N.: Right now, your body is endowed with hands. If your body did not have hands, would you have less existence?

Q.: No.

N.: So, how can you say that you are all over the body? The same thing would apply to a particular spot. If something would happen to that particular spot, does something happen to your Existence?

Q.: In deep dreamless sleep, the spot and everything is gone.

N.: Yes, and that is due just to a change in mind. So, the idea of being a body, or a (the name of the questioner) in a body, is only an idea in your mind. It is just like in your dreams last night, in which you seemed to occupy a body, but the body, the occupation of the body or the inhabiting of the body, and the things beyond the skin of that body, inside and outside—all of that was just the dream mind. The dreaming mind, itself, appeared as all of that. Likewise are your present ideas of being someone in a body.

If, in deep dreamless sleep, you were not a body, how did you become a body yesterday? But now you are not a body, again. Is your Existence changing its nature, or is something else happening?

Q.: Something else is definitely happening.

N.: What is it?

Q.: As soon as I start to examine what it is, there is less of it.

N.: That is the nature of maya. It is seemingly beginningless, but when we find out its nature, it ceases to exist. The more we examine it, the less there is of it. It is like looking for darkness with a lamp in your hand.

So, are you the body? Are you a pair of hands, right now?

Q.: No, not really.

N.: Then, could you have become a pair of hands yesterday?

Q.: The whole notion of yesterday, right now, seems a little far-fetched.

N.: It was also in the mind. Time, space, and everything [is in the mind]. You can also see that nothing external is the cause of your pseudo-bondage. Nothing causes ignorance. This is so for the example of gardening. The same holds true with any other activity or external situation. None of it causes our bondage.

Ignorance does not arise from circumstances, since circumstances are imagined based on ignorance.

Q.: They are an effect.

N.: The effect is not the cause of the cause; but the effect is the same nature as the cause.

Q.: The notion of forgetting is only so long as it is not examined.

N.: (silent)

Another Q.: Sometimes I am still caught in a bad mood, in which I don't feel that I am happy. I don't like it, and I want to get out of it.

N.: The desire to get out of it is your first step out of it, for without the desire, no effort

would be made.

Q.: Yes.

N.: What makes up the bad mood?

Q.: When I plan on something, and it doesn't happen that way.

N.: Then, you become grumpy?

Q.: Yes.

N.: Do you know why you become grumpy? Becoming grumpy does not make it [the event] happen the way you want it to. It's not very effective.

Q.: Right.

N.: So, you do not become grumpy for practical reasons. (laughter)

Q.: It's not the goal of it.

N.: It is not the goal, and it does not necessarily make the event go the way you wanted it to go, anyway. It is not practical or effective. So, why do you become grumpy?

Q.: I don't know.

N.: Examine it closely. If you can find out why you suffer in such circumstances, you can get to the very root of that suffering and pull the root out. Such is the "gardening advice."

Q.: I feel the bondage. I feel that I am trapped in all these senses.

N.: All right. Trapped in the senses or trapped in your mind?

Q.: It's all from the mind.

N.: Is the moodiness something that you

see, hear, or touch, or is it in your mind?

Q.: In my mind.

N.: But you're moody about something that you sensorially perceive, that is, the circumstances.

Q.: Yes.

N.: Why did you want the event or circumstances to go a certain way?

Q.: I had an idea that it would probably make me happy.

N.: You want that event or situation to make you happy, and when it does not go the way that you want it to go, you are unhappy or grumpy.

Q.: Yes.

N.: It is because you feel that your happiness, or the potential to be happy, has been stolen from you by circumstances going in a different direction. So, you have a very good reason to be grumpy, because your happiness has been stolen away. Now, the question is, who stole it?

Q.: (laughing)

N.: When you ask something else, be it an object, a situation, or another person, to give you what is innately yours, when you ask something to fill you up with happiness when you, yourself, are the source of happiness, you are always going to wind up grumpy. If situations do not go your way, you are going to be grumpy, and if they do go your way, it is just a matter of time until they eventually do not go your way, and you become grumpy again.

Or, you become bored with the situation being the way you designed it, and then you are grumpy again.

Q.: (laughing)

N.: It is not that grumpiness is the continuum, but as long as you think that happiness comes from something external, you are going to be unhappy. You look to a circumstance perceived through your senses, as mentioned by you, to provide you with an experience that is non-sensory. Happiness is not something that you see or hear or you feel, taste or smell. Happiness is something more internal. It is not inside your body, but internal in the sense of who you are. Where your desire for happiness is rising from is the same place as the source of happiness. It is the very same happiness itself. When you are happy, you are actually just experiencing yourself. Do you comprehend so far?

Q.: (nods in assent)

N.: You can know for certain that your unhappiness, or grumpiness, is due to some mistaken conception about yourself; in this case about where happiness is. It is mistaking the Bliss of your own nature to be something else. It is mistaking yourself to be separate from the Bliss of your own nature. If a person knows where happiness is, what the source of happiness is, or what the nature of happiness is, she becomes serenely detached from everything else. Even if your senses and limbs are engaged in that something else, you are serenely detached. You are not looking for something to give you your happiness, and nothing can rob you of it. You won't rob yourself. Then, if circumstances go as planned,

you are happy, and if they do not go as planned, you are still happy. Is it clear for you?

Q.: Yes.

N.: Contemplate this deeply. Reflect on it and meditate, until you are absolutely certain of it. “Where is happiness?” is a very simple question. The Maharshi places this point concerning happiness as preliminary to the inquiry “Who am I?” in the book, *Who am I?* He returns to a discussion about the nature of happiness later in the book. Like the question, “Who am I?”, “Where is happiness?” is very simple, yet if we understand that one simple thing, it affects so much. A person who knows where happiness is, is unaffected by circumstances, is detached from all of the world, her peace is steady, and she has a single-minded, one-pointed focus on knowing herself, because that is where the happiness is. She understands the motivation behind all other motives. She understands what impels the mind to motion. This is just by knowing where happiness is. One who knows where happiness is becomes utterly desireless, yet fulfills inwardly the essence of all those desires. Such is not the form of those desires, but the essence.

Stay with that simple question until the answer saturates your experience.

Another Q.: What of a situation of extreme engagement of the senses in violence, for example, in a concentration camp? There may be torture or starvation or extreme pain. Can one still connect with this Knowledge under such violent circumstances?

N.: The violence or injury is to the body only. The Knowledge is intrinsically bodiless. The situation has no effect.

Q.: That is hard.

N.: Why do you say it is hard?

Q.: Even today, when I needed to put an extra cushion under me, it was needed to be addressed.

N.: Alright. So, there is constant discomfort, or constant pain, or remitting acute pain.

Q.: Yes, and this is just mild.

N.: Yes, this is just mild, but it could continue increasing, depending on the evolution of the situation.

Q.: Yes.

N.: What has that got to do with your nature? Where are you in all of this? Are you that body?

Q.: I misunderstood. I misidentify freedom from sensory pain with Knowledge.

N.: If we just want to eliminate sensory pain, an anesthetic will do, but giving someone an anesthetic does not endow her with wisdom. Nowhere has the Maharshi, Sankara, or, as with your case, the Buddha, recommended anesthetics as a practice. That is simply shutting down the nerves so that you do not have certain sensations. That Wisdom, which is called Self-Knowledge, is not a sensory activity. It is not reached by the senses, and it is not disturbed by the senses. If you think of yourself as being wrapped up in the



senses, either as a body or as some kind of sensing entity, you will seem to be afflicted by them.

That your senses gravitate toward what is pleasant and away from that which is painful is just in the natural course of things, but you are not of the senses. The idea that you are a sensing entity or a nexus point of all the senses is only imagined in the mind. When you don't imagine such in the mind, you are unaffected, just as space is unaffected by whatever seems to be coursing through it.

Q.: Oh!

N.: Just like the space contained within my hands right now [hands cupped together] is unaffected if the hand disintegrate [pulls hands away from each other]. It is the same space. The space is analogous to you real Being, or pure Consciousness. It is not cooped up now, and not now outside. It is not put together, and it is not broken.

Q.: It is not fragmented by obstacles.

N.: There is no obstacle to the space.  
(silence)

(Then followed a recitation in Sanskrit and English from the *Ashtavakra Gita*.)

## From the *Yoga Vasishta*

Rama inquired as to how he could definitively know that the Supreme Self alone is real (sat) and that the seen world is asat (unreal, nonexistent). Vasishta brought clarity thus: Rama, just as in the formless, colorless sky, blue, black, and other colors appear, in Brahman, which is Chinmatra (consisting of Consciousness), the illusory worlds appear. This knowledge leads to the Knowledge of the true nature of Brahman. There is no other way to know the true nature of Brahman than by definitively knowing the utter falsity of the seen (drisya). At the time of Pralaya (great dissolution), all the seen objects (drisya-s) disappear. The Supreme Self (Paramatman) alone will remain. He is of the nature of Knowledge. From Him, all came forth. In the absence of the seen, there will be no reflection of Brahman. There cannot be a reflection without a mirror. If the utter unreality of the seen is not well understood, none can understand Brahman. No body ever realized it.

Rama queried: What is the unreality of the seen world? How is it unreal? In the subtle Brahman, how is the world hidden? Is it possible for Mount Meru to be in a mustard seed?

Vasishta replied: Rama, for some time, associate with the saints and understand the scriptures. I shall drive away the illusion of the seen that is now rampant in your mind, like the illusion of water in a mirage. If the seen disappears, the seer and the seeing do the same immediately. Then, Brahman alone remains. If there is the seen,

there will be the seer. If there is the seer, the seen also exists. If there is two, there will be one. If there is one, the second also appears.

In the world, if there is not one, there cannot be two. If the ideas of one, two, the seen, and the seer disappear, the one Self alone remains. It is the only one, and it is eternal.

I will see to it that you fully realize that the world is not real. I will wipe off the dirt from your mind-mirror, which is the dirt of egoism and the seen. The unreal can never be real. The Real (the Truth) can never be destroyed. The really unreal will vanish of itself. The wide world that we see around us is never created. The pure, true Consciousness is the Self, which has no birth, growth, or death. It is mistaken to be the world, the true nature of which is Brahman, the Self.

Only gold is real, and the ornaments are not, for they are only the gold. The world is unreal. Brahman is real. The world is not existent. It is neither created nor is. Therefore, clear away the idea of “the world” from your mind. It is not difficult to do so....

Just as a lake in the sandy desert and a second moon in the moon that is only one are impossible, the world in Brahman is unreal. How can the unborn, nonexistent world continue? There cannot be a son for a barren lady. There cannot be water in a sandy desert. There cannot be a tree in the sky. The world cannot exist in Brahman. Its existence is a delusion. What you see is nothing but Brahman.

It is highly unwise to look down upon the teachings of the wise, which are full of subtle arguments. Rejecting them and following the

words of the unwise is foolish, indeed. Such a one is called a “big fool” by the really wise.

Rama asked Vasishta to tell him about the true nature of the Knowledge of Brahman and the arguments that are aids for the realization of it, for he wanted nothing else.

Vasishta replied: Rama, everyone is greatly affected by the disease called “false knowledge,” or the utter worldly ignorance from time immemorial. The disease cannot be cured by any other medicine, but only by the true Knowledge of the Self....

Keeping their minds on Brahman always, ever dwelling in Brahman, speaking together about Brahman, revealing their experiences together of the Self, the wise remain contented and ever joyful. Such people, who ever keep their minds in the Self-Knowledge, ever reflecting on it, are the jivanmuktas, the great ones who are liberated while alive. They will [also] have Oneness with the Self after death (videhamukti).

Rama then asked: Holy one, please tell me the qualities of the jivanmuktas and the videhamuktas. I shall try to attain them with an eye on the Sastras (scriptures) and a refined mind.

(To be continued)

**Ramana Sahasram**  
**A Thousand Ramanas**  
**By Dr. H. Ramamoorthy**

(Continued from previous issue)

681. Om manava-srestaya ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, the best among men

682. Om manyaya ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is to be revered

683. Om matsarya-vinasanaya ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who destroys jealousy

684. Om maya-rahitaya ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana without delusion

685. Om mayacchetre ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who tears apart (the veil of illusion)

686. Om maya-nasanaya ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who destroys delusion

687. Om mayatita ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who transcends delusion

688. Om maya-vimocanaya ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who delivers from delusion

689. Om manasa-rahita-hamsaya ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, the swan without its habitat of the Manasa lake, without its habitat of the mind

690. Om marga-bandhave ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is a friend on the way

691. Om midhustaya ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who gives bountifully

692. Om mudita-vadanaya ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, with a happy face

693. Om munaye ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, the Sage

694. Om munindraya ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, the Lord of sages

695. Om mundine ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, with a shaven head

696. Om muni-jana-sevitaya ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is served by the congregation of sages

697. Om mukti-vyakhya-nipunaya ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is adept at giving an exposition of Liberation

698. Om mukti-pradaya ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who confers  
Liberation

699. Om muruganar-mukhya-bahu-sisya-stu-  
taya ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is praised  
by many devotees led by Muruganar

700. Om muladharaya ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is the root  
support

701. Om mrtyu-daru-kutharikaya  
ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, the axe for the  
tree of death

702. Om mrtyun-jayaya ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who has con-  
quered death

703. Om mrdu-bhasine ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, of sweet talk

704. Om moha-nasanaya ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who  
destroys stupefaction, delusion.

705. Om mauna-gurave ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, the silent Guru

706. Om mauna-lilaya ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, whose play is  
silence

707. Om mauna-murtaye ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, the form of  
silence

708. Om mauna-svatma-bodhakaya  
ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, the silent  
instructor of one's own Self.

709. Om mauna-vyakhya-prakatita-paratma-  
tattvaya ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who gives a  
silent exposition of the supreme Truth of the  
Self.

710. Om maunasvabhavaya ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, whose  
nature is silence

711. Om yamaya ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is  
disciplined, also the Lord of death

712. Om yama-siksa-nivaranaya ramanaya  
namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who  
prevents punishment by the lord of death

713. Om yasavine ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is famous

714. Om yuga-purusaya ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, the Man of the  
yuga

715. Om yogyaya ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, the who is  
trustworthy, one who could be united with

716. Om yoga-nidhaye ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, the treasure of  
yoga

717. Om yogisvara-vanditaya ramanaya  
namah

Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is  
worshipped by the yogi-masters

718. Om yogadhyaksaya ramanaya namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, the teacher of  
yoga

719. Om yoga-ksema-vahaya ramanaya  
namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who bears,  
takes charge of, welfare

720. Om racitacala-tandavaya ramanaya  
namah  
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who relishes  
the dance of the mountain, dance on the  
mountain

