

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 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

Table of Contents

Why <i>Reflections</i> ?	i
Invocation	1
Wisdom of Ramana Maharshi	2
Satsang: One Self	4
From <i>Yoga Vasishtha</i>	8
From <i>Ramana Sahasram</i>	10

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Om Tat Sat

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Invocation

My mind is the temple, my contemplation is the fragrance offered, and my love is the water for ablution. O Supreme One, the Beginning and the End, will You come and accept my offering?

Tayumanavar

He, destroying the impurities of my mind, made me Sivam and took me for His own. The Supreme Lord thus was so gracious to me, O wonderful Lord who is so blessed as “I am.”

Manikkavacakar

O Light and Bliss of Supreme Knowledge, which consumes all religions as rivers merge with and dissolve into the ocean. O Stillness, the goal of the Veda. Thy nature is seen where vibration ends.

Tayumanavar

It was Thy Grace that enabled me to realize that this impermanent body is transient and to realize that Liberation is the enjoyment of eternal Bliss.

Wisdom of Sri Ramana Maharshi

From *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi*

M.: You are, and it is a fact. Dhyana is by you, of you, and in you. It must go on where you are. It cannot be outside you. So, you are the center of dhyana, and that is the Heart.

M.: Nirvana is Perfection. In the Perfect State, there is neither subject nor object; there is nothing to see, nothing to feel, nothing to know. Seeing and knowing are functions of the mind. In Nirvana, there is nothing but the blissful pure Consciousness, "I am."

D.: "Neither the sun shines there, nor the moon, nor the stars, nor lightning. How can fire shine there? All these luminaries shine in His Light only. With His Light, all these shine forth!" What does "with His Light" mean here? Does all else shine on account of Him or in His Light?

M.: There is only He. He and His Light are the same. There is no individual to perceive other things, because the perceiver and the perceived are only He. The sun, the moon, etc. shine forth. How? Do they come and tell you that they shine forth, or does another apart from them say that they shine forth?

D.: Of course, I say that they shine forth.

M.: Therefore, they shine on account of you. Again, Consciousness is necessary to

know that they shine forth. That Consciousness is your Self, or you. So, then, you or your Consciousness is the same as He and His Light by which all else shine forth.

D.: Is that Light like sunlight?

M.: No, the sunlight is jada (insentient). You are aware of it. It makes objects perceptible and chases away darkness, whereas Consciousness is that Light that makes not only light but also darkness perceptible. Darkness cannot exist before sunlight, but it can remain in the Light of Consciousness. Similarly, this Consciousness is pure Knowledge, in which both knowledge and ignorance shine.

D.: If God is all, why does the individual suffer for his actions? Are not the actions prompted by Him for which the individual is made to suffer?

M.: He who thinks he is the doer is also the sufferer.

D.: But the actions are prompted by God, and the individual is only His tool.

M.: This logic is applied only when one suffers, but not when one rejoices. If the conviction prevails always, there will be no suffering, either.

D.: When will suffering cease?

M.: Not until individuality is lost. If both the good and bad actions are His, why should you think that the enjoyment and suffering are alone yours? He who does good or bad also enjoys pleasure or suffers pain. Leave it there, and do not superimpose suffering on yourself.

M.: People see the world. The perception implies the existence of a seer and the seen. The objects are alien to the seer. The seer is intimate, being the Self. They do not, however, turn their attention to finding out the obvious seer, but run about analyzing the seen. The more the mind expands, the farther it goes and renders Self-Realization more difficult and complicated. The man must directly see the seer and realize the Self.

D.: So then, it amounts to synthesizing phenomena and finding the one Reality behind.

M.: Why do you still consider the phenomena? See who the seer is. Synthesizing means engaging the mind in other pursuits. That is not the way to Self-Realization.

D.: I want to eliminate the non-Self so that the Self may be realized. How shall I do it? What are the characteristics of the non-Self?

M.: There is one who says that the non-Self must be eliminated. Who is he?

D.: I mean this man. When I travel from Calcutta to Madras, I must know Madras, so that I may not alight at an intermediate station out of ignorance. There are the sign boards and the time-table to guide me in my travel. But what is the guide in my search for the Self?

M.: It is all right for the journey. You know how far away you are from Madras. Can you tell me how far away you are from the Self in order that you should seek it?

D.: I do not know.

M.: Are you ever divorced from the Self?

Is it possible to be divorced? Are not all these alien to you and the Self the most intimate? Where should you go to gain the Self?

D.: I am now away from the Self. I must retrace my steps in order to regain it.

M.: How far away? Who says that he is apart? Can there be two selves?

One Self
Satsang
July 17, 2005

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

Om Om Om

Silence

N.: One Self alone exists, eternally. There is no other. There is no multiplicity of selves, outside of yourself or within yourself. The conception of multiplicity is only delusion based upon misidentification, which has for its root the false assumption of an ego-entity, an individual identity.

One Self exists, of the nature of pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss. It is unborn. It is unformed, uncreated, and imperishable. The idea of more than one Self is only misidentification. If you mistake yourself to be a body, there will appear to be multiple selves. Are you the body? This is what should be known.

(Silence)

In your spiritual practice, if your aim is to realize the Self, which is the Absolute, or Brahman, you must ask yourself if there are two of you, one seeking to realize and one that is to be realized. Multiplicity of selves, such as “yourself” and “the Self,” is born of misidentification, which is delusion.

In the highest sense, who is to realize what, when all that exists is this one Self? What then, is Self-Realization? It is undoubtedly Knowledge of the Self, such

Knowledge being not a perception or a conception, but utterly nonobjective. With nonobjective Knowledge, the knowing and one’s own Being are identical.

Because there are not two selves, the Maharshi laid the greatest emphasis for Self-Realization upon the inquiry, “Who am I?” It is an inquiry into the true nature of the inquirer, and not the attempt to ascertain something objective to oneself, for whatever is objective to you is dependent upon you. Such is merely false appearance and, ultimately, completely unreal. It is inquiry as to who you are. If you wish to realize the Self, first know your own Self. If you know your own Self, the “your own” part will vanish, for the ego is not real. Individuality is not real. What remains is pure Being, which is, itself, the Knowledge.

If, in our minds, we treat Self-Realization, or the Self, as if it were apart from our own Self, our own Being, we will seek it as if it were some kind of mental mode; as if we are in one mode, and we will later be in another mode. Such is a state of ignorance and a state of knowledge, but the Knowledge of the Self that is infinite and eternal is not a mode of mind. It does not occur within a mode of a mind. It does not even occur within the waking, dreaming, and deep sleep states. It does not occur, for it is not an event. Not being in time, it is indestructible.

Since this Knowledge is One with your Being, therefore, inquire within yourself as to what is it in you that neither wakes nor dreams, which does not sleep, and which has no objective attribute. What is it within you

that is neither perceived nor conceived? If, within yourself, you determine like this, you will have found your Self, and that which you have found, you, yourself, are. No new Self will have been produced, nor will you have been transformed from one thing into another, though all the bondage and suffering, which are a result only of delusion, will have vanished.

(Silence)

Inquire within yourself and cease to misidentify with a body or a mind or the very idea of “I.” You cannot be what is objective. So, who are you? Inquire. If you wish to merge with Brahman or be in union with God, who are you who seems to be broken off that you would later merge or have union with That? Question that very identity. If you inquire nonobjectively in this manner, the “I” and all else that depends on the “I” cease to be for you, because it has no real existence. It is the unreal alone that appears to cease. The Real ever is just as it is. That Reality alone knows itself. Brahman alone knows Brahman. There is no other. The Self knows the Self. There is no second, no other.

It is for this reason that in the Karika, Gaudapada says, “There is no creation and no destruction, no one bound, no one desiring to be free, no one practicing, and no one liberated.”

(Silence)

Q.: (About how she had become deathly ill following a bee sting and had seen that she was separate from the body and the

mind.) I do not know if I need to take the meditation deeper or how to do so. I was looking within myself to see what my Existence is, and waiting for the body to either have a cure or a heart attack. I was just watching everything going on. The only question I had at that point was, with death possible at any second, how else to take the meditation? How to take the inquiry deeper?

N.: Aren’t you always at that moment (inaudible) of death?

Q.: Yes. What I had been thinking was that it is far off. Afterward, I wanted to know how to take the meditation deeper. At the time, I was quite aware of (inaudible).

N.: You were very aware that you are not the body and the mind. You were also very aware of the urgency, or the importance, of remaining free from the body and the mind and realizing your real Existence.

Q.: Yes.

N.: That importance should not wane. If the sense of importance does not wane, the desire for Liberation will be strong. Since Liberation consists of Self-Knowledge, you need to know your own Existence. If you are not the mind and not the body, nothing perceived and nothing conceived pertains to you.

Q.: Yes.

N.: What remains of your nature? This was being addressed a few moments ago. The Existence that you want to realize and you: what makes up that “you”?

Q.: I do not know.

N.: That is where your inquiry should be pointed.

Q.: Do you mean the ego “I”?

N.: Someone has the body and the mind. That is called “I.” You divested that “I” of the body and mind. So, what remains of “I”? If you inquire in this way, that “I” will be consumed.

Q.: That is what I am trying to ask about. I had been doing meditation on the “I.”

N.: Pull your mind inward into this inquiry, “Who am I?” fueled by the intense desire for Liberation. Feel that it is as important now as it was then.

Q.: At a point in the meditation, I feel the need to surrender. The inquiry seems to go just so far. (inaudible)

N.: What do you mean by “surrender”?

Q.: (inaudible) Letting go is the best way to explain it. It is to let go and keep from being that “I.”

N.: How will you let go of that?

Q.: I don’t know.

N.: If you do let go of it, won’t you still remain as “I”?

Q.: Yes. When I let go, I am here. I know where “here” is.

N.: Is “here” in this world?

Q.: No.

N.: Then, where is “here”? When you say, “I am here,” what is this “here”? If your senses cease, and there is no vision or experience of the world, are you still here? If so,

where is “here”? If your mind ceases to think, and, indeed, thinking alone constitutes the mind though it may be regarded as if it were an entity, are you still here?

Q.: Well, yes, sure.

N.: If you ask, “Who is here?” the forms of both the “I” and “here” vanish.

Q.: Yes.

N.: Either inquire so that the “I”-less true “I” alone remains, for that alone is real, or, as you mentioned, surrender. Then, God alone is, and nothing remains of you but God.

In either case, the sense of “I” and “mine” vanish. “I,” “my mind,” “my body,” “my life,” “my death,” etc.: that “I” and that “mine” vanish.

Q.: During that event it seems that they were not mine.

N.: So, can you repossess them? If you do, it will only be imagination. The idea of “I am the body” or “the body is mine” is only imagination. Likewise is it with your thoughts, such as the idea of “my thoughts” or that you are what you think is only imagination. How could you be a body? How could you be what you think?

Q.: (inaudible)

N.: Imagination ceases. So does creation.

Since nothing that is imagined can go with you, you might as well be detached from all that is imagined even now. Since that with which you might misidentify really never has anything to do with your

Existence, you might as well remain disidentified even now. Since freedom from attachment and misidentification, your own innate Bliss, the innate Peace, shines, you might as well experience that even now.

Q.: (inaudible)

N.: Yes, first it seems that, in the middle of the chaos, there is Peace. Later, it is said that there is a drop of chaos in the midst of vast peace. Finally, there is only Peace, and there isn't any chaos.

Do not let the experience fade in memory. The phenomenal portion of it will. The sensory portion will fade away in due course. The lesson, though, about the importance of Liberation and about what is your nature, should endure. Continue inquiring into the nature of your own Existence.

Another Q.: The Maharshi said to inquire as his main advice. He also spoke of the importance of pranayama, meditation, and so on. This is so with the scriptures and other great teachers. It is one thing to intellectually understand that we are That, but, in my view as an unrealized person, I have samskara-s. I need to "fry" them through samadhi. I have techniques that I can use to do that and for controlling the prana, and so on. I am confused about what he meant when he said, "Inquire." One can intellectually understand that he is not the body, not the prana, not the mind, not the buddhi, not the ego, and not the bliss sheath. So what, if it is intellectual? When he was first surrounded by people, they were very lucky and advanced souls. If one isn't that because of many impressions, is it still the right thing to

operate and do things, to inquire, even though there is really no need to do anything and there is not seeking, etc.? That's great to say, but if one hears something and remembers something from childhood as an impression, my understanding from the scriptures is that the only way to get rid of that is samadhi. Does that make sense?

N.: Samadhi indicates utter absorption in the Self.

Q.: Right.

N.: That means that the separate individuality has vanished or is dissolved. The inquiry should not be mistaken to be some kind of activity of the vijñanamaya kosa, the sheath of the intellect. There is nothing intellectual about it at all. Why does the Maharshi recommend the inquiry? He said that it is the only method that does not include the duality that one is trying to transcend. It is not that other methods were ridiculed. If they are of assistance to you, use them. In the end, though, you must come around to knowing yourself, for that samadhi to be sahaja, innate, effortless, or natural.

There is no point in saying that there is nothing to seek. Rarely will you hear such teaching like that around here, "no seeking, don't do anything, etc." That is, generally, a misconception. The Maharshi advised to inquire and to know one's Self.

You do not require intellectual analysis to know that you exist. Start and end with that Existence. It is purely experiential and not theoretical. When you so inquire, even your comprehension of what the scriptures advise becomes very much clarified. You

come to understand them from the very same position from which the Rishi-s uttered them.

Q.: What does “inquire” mean? That is what I am trying to figure out. What do I do? Is it just to be? When I have the experience of purity...

N.: How are you going to just be?

Q.: Sometimes, all of us have, in between thoughts or whatever, for various lengths of time, the experience of just being. Is it that I just groove on that? Is that the inquiry? I could never figure it out, though I have read all the books ten times, what do I really do. It is obviously not just saying it again and again to myself. It is nothing intellectual. What is it?

N.: You exist. You know that you exist. What is the way that you know that you exist? It is inseparable from the Existence, itself. You know that you are. That knowing should be turned in on itself rather than coursing through imagined objects. Now, the mind is accustomed to objective vision. Make your vision nonobjective. It is tracing the sense of existence within yourself. You may wish to have some detailed instruction about (inaudible), but how can detailed instruction be given for something that is nonobjective? There is precision in the Maharshi’s instruction. In that sense, it is marvelously detailed, but it is entirely of a nonobjective, non-conceptual character, just as you are. You exist. You know that you exist. What else do you add to that Existence, in your mind’s imagination? All that which is “I” or belongs to the “I.” You

should relinquish the misidentification....

(Recording ends here with a recitation of holy texts in Sanskrit and English)

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

From *Yoga Vasishtha*

Rama asked Sri Vasishtha: Please tell me by what knowledge of negation the seen world disappears and by what knowledge ignorance is destroyed. Please describe to me the state of the original Brahman, after the mutually dependent ideas of the “seer” and the “seen” are completely destroyed. Also, kindly let me know by what method the true, great Knowledge of Brahman is possible and obtaining which, no other method is necessary.

Vasishtha replied: Rama, the false notion of the world is deep-rooted in the mind of man for a very long time. This vicious disease of this false notion will be cured only by the means of deep reflection. It is, though, very difficult to address it, just as it is very difficult to go up and down a mountain that is not sloping but entirely perpendicular to the ground. At the same time, it is very easy by practice of right reasoning and correct spiritual instruction. I will tell you how. Listen attentively. You shall attain Liberation in your True Nature, which is Knowledge, if you follow me.

I now reveal to you the origination of the world. It will reveal to you the fact that the

delusion of the world is like the delusion of the sky, which is birthless and deathless. The world is not real. The world is full of the gods, demons, kinnaras, and others and is filled with innumerable animate and inanimate things. At the time of Great Deluge (or Great Dissolution), all of the “that,” the seen, is destroyed and disappears, along with the great Gods such as the Rudra-s. Then, there is no light and no darkness.

A certain unnameable, invisible (nonobjective) Sat remains. It is not a void, not a formless thing, not a perceived or seen thing, not a seeing (perceiving), not any of the five elements, and not any other thing. It cannot be specified as “this” or “that.” It is more full than full. It is neither existent nor nonexistent, but both existence and nonexistence. It is neither nothing nor something. It is pure, infinite Consciousness. It has no beginning, no middle, no becoming old or decayed, and is not anything else. It is full of auspiciousness (Siva).

That supreme Reality, the original, is both sat and asat (existence and nonexistence), and is not a thing. As a certain arrangement of pearls appears as if in the form of a swan, so, in the supreme Reality, the world has a form. Though it has no eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin, it is perceived everywhere at all times and it sees, hears, smells, tastes, and touches. By the Light of this supreme Reality, the existent and nonexistent things are perceived, and the beginningless, transient creation is seen. The original nature of Brahman, and the whole creation as Brahman, is seen when one, who is highly concentrated, sees within.

Just as the hare does not have a horn, so

the omnipresent Brahman has no cause and no mind. Just as the waves rise in the ocean, the creation rises from Brahman. Brahman illumines the three worlds, and it takes the subtlest form, like lightning, and dwells in the mind. If this illuminating power is absent, even the greatest luminaries like the sun and the moon become dark. In this, the three worlds shine like mirages. According to its desire, the three worlds proceed, as sparks come out of a fire, and they subside in Brahman, like the sparks in the fire, when it so desires. By the simple desire and non-desire of that which is by nature the eternal, indestructible Brahman, the creation, sustenance, and destruction of the worlds revolve, like a potter’s wheel.

The Supreme Reality, Brahman, is like the air that is everywhere, full of movement and non-movement. Though such appear to be different from its fullness and Reality, it is not so. Brahman is ever awake and ever asleep. It is truly neither awakened nor asleep. In it are peace, motion, and the three worlds. This is One and indivisible. This is all-comprehensive. Though it is in everything, it does not die with things, like a fragrance that does not die with the flower. Like the whiteness in white cloth, it is evident. Though it is silent, it has all the power of speech. Though it is immutable like a stone, it has the power of meditation. Though it is ever contented, it experiences. Though it has no action, it is the subject. Though it has no shape, it has innumerable forms, spreading the length and breadth of the universe. Though it has no organs, it makes all the organs active. Though it has no mind, it does all the activities of the mind.

Because of the inability to see this Supreme Reality of Brahman, the individual (jiva) is full of delusion, illusion, and the great dread of the serpent of samsara. The vasana-s and the desires run away from one who realizes this. As public performances and dancing programs are possible if sufficient light is available, so, due to the endless Light of this and its existence as the Witness, the different activities are possible. Just as bubbles and other changing phenomena appear in the water of the ocean, so all the actions and things, which are like the pot and the cloth, are coming forth from this Brahman. Just as the one gold, which alone is present, appears differently as the various ornaments, the one Brahman, which alone is, appears as the different things of the worlds in various forms. If you realize the Existence of Brahman in you, you will find absolutely no difference between you and anything in the universe.

Ramana Sahasram A Thousand Ramanas

By Dr. H. Ramamoorthy

(Continued from previous issue)

761. Om vipra-priyaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, dear friend to the learned Brahmins

762. Om vipra-prasadaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is gracious to the learned Brahmins

763. Om vijnatre ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who knows

764. Om vijnana-kalanaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who activates knowledge

765. Om vikalpa-parivarjitaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is devoid of erroneous thoughts

766. Om vidvesana-haraya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who destroyed enmity

767. Om vimocanaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who gives deliverance

768. Om viyat-kalpaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is akin to space

769. Om videsa-visesa-pujitaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is well-worshipped in foreign countries

770. Om vibhasanuvada vicaksanaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, the master of translation into other languages

771. Om vidruma-saila-sthaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who stayed on the Coral Hill (Pavalakkunru)

772. Om virajaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is free of
dust

773. Om virajitaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is
brilliant

774. Om virajad-acalakrtaye ramanaya
namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, shining in the
form of a mountain

775. Om viragine ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, without pas-
sion, without attachment

776. Om viramaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is in
repose

777. Om viveka-bodhakaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who teaches
discrimination

778. Om virupaksa-guha-vasaya ramanaya
namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who lived in
Virupaksha cave

779. Om visistaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, the distin-
guished

780. Om visala-drstaye ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana of far-seeing
vision

781. Om visala-hrdayaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, the large
hearted

782. Om visuddhatmane ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, the pure Self

783. Om visvambaraya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is all-
sustaining, all-bearing

784. Om visva-vandyaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is to be
worshipped by the universe

785. Om vismaya-rupaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana of wonderful form

786. Om sdva-murtaye ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, of the form of
the universe.

787. Om visvesvaraya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, the Lord of the
universe

788. Om videsa visruta jnanine ramanaya
namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, the Sage who is
well known in other countries

789. Om venkataramaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, (named) Sri
Venkatarama

790. Om veda-ghosa-priyaya ramanaya
namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who likes Vedic
chanting

791. Om veda-vedanta-vedyaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is to be known through the Veda-s and Vedanta

792. Om veda-vedanta-tattvarthaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is the true meaning of the Veda-s and Vedanta

793. Om Vedanta-saraya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is the essence of the Veda-s

794. Om veda-purusaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, the embodiment of the Veda-s

795. Om vedya-varjitya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who has nothing to learn

796. Om vaidambhaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, without hypocrisy

797. Om vyaktavyaktaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is the manifest and the unmanifest

798. Om vyapakaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is pervasive

799. Om vyomavat-vyaptaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is pervasive like the sky

800. Om sankaraya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who does auspicious things, Sankara

