

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

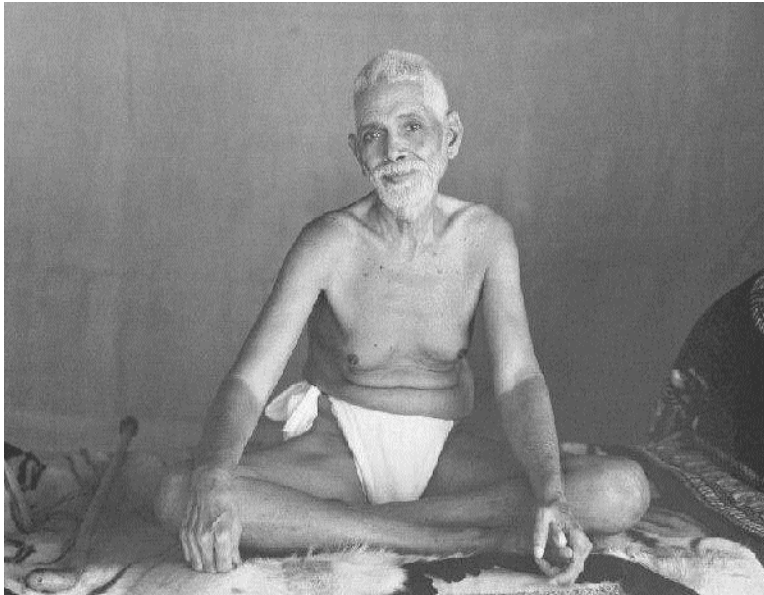
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Om Tat Sat

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Sri Ramana Maharshi

Invocation

What is that which is not confined to “here” or “there,”
But pervades all space as boundless bliss
And all-filling splendor?
What is that which exists as the Life of life,
Willing the entire universe to abide
In the Space of its Grace?
What is that which stands beyond
The reach of thought and word?

What is that which has for its domain
That for which neither day nor night is found?
That Subject alone is worthy of contemplation.
Therefore, let us meditate on and worship
That Subject perceiving all we see
As of the nature on the unspeakable One.

Tayumanavar

The Wisdom of Sri Ramana Maharshi

(From *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi*)

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. Synthesis means engaging the mind in other pursuits. That is not the way to 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 timetable 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?

D.: It is said that individuals are modifications of the Self, just as ornaments are of gold.

M.: When a man speaks in terms of ornaments, ignoring their substance, gold, he is told that they are gold. But here the man is Consciousness and speaks of himself as its modification. Do you remain apart from the Self that you speak of yourself as its modification?

D.: Cannot gold be imagined to say that it has become an ornament?

M.: Being insentient, it does not say so. But the individual is sentient and cannot function apart from Consciousness. The self is pure Consciousness. Yet the man identifies himself with the body that is itself insentient and does not say "I am the body" of its own accord. Some one else says so. The unlimited Self does not. Who else is he that says so? A spurious "I" arises between the pure Consciousness and the insentient body and imagines itself limited to the body. Seek this and it will vanish as a phantom. That phantom is the ego or the mind or the individuality.

All the sastras are based on the rise of this phantom, whose elimination is their purpose. The present state is mere illusion. Disillusionment is the goal and nothing more.

D.: The mind is said to be a bundle of thoughts.

M.: Because it functions on account of a single root — the “I” thought. *Mansam tu kim margane krte naiva manasam marga arjavat.* [Ed.: This is from verse 17 of *Upadesa Saram*, which may be translated as: What, indeed, is the mind? When the search is made, there is not, indeed, the mind. This is the direct / straight path.]

It has no real existence as a separate entity.

D.: Are not thoughts projections from the mind?

M.: In that case, the mind is taken to be synonymous with the “I”—thought or the ego.

D.: If one is to withdraw oneself, why is there the world?

M.: Where is the world and where does one go withdrawing oneself? Does one fly in an airplane beyond space? Is it withdrawal?

The fact is this: the world is only an idea. What do you say: are you within the world, or is the world within you?

D.: I am in the world. I am part of it.

M.: That is the mistake. If the world were

to exist apart from you, does it come and tell you that it exists? No, you see it exist. You see it when you are awake and not when asleep. If it exists apart from you, it must tell you so, and you must be aware of it even in your sleep.

D.: I become aware of it in my *jagrat*. [Ed.: waking state]

M.: Do you become aware of yourself and then of the world? Or do you become aware of the world and then of yourself? Or do you become aware of both simultaneously?

D.: I must say simultaneously.

M.: Were you or were you not, before becoming aware of yourself? Do you admit your continued existence before and when you become aware of the world?

D.: Yes.

M.: If always existing yourself, why are you not aware of the world in sleep if it exists apart from the Self?

D.: I become aware of myself and of the world also.

M.: So, you become aware of yourself. Who becomes aware of whom? Are there two selves?

D.: No.

M.: So, you see that it is wrong to suppose that awareness has passing phases. The Self is always aware. When the Self identifies itself as the seer, it sees objects. The creation of the subject and the object is the creation of the world. Subjects and objects are the creations in pure Consciousness. You see pictures moving on the screen in a cinema show. When

you are intent on the pictures, you are not aware of the screen. The world stands for the pictures and Consciousness stands for the screen. [Ed.: meaning that the pictures stand for the world and the screen stands for Consciousness]. The Consciousness is pure. It is the same as the Self, which is eternal and unchanging. Get rid of the subject and object, and pure Consciousness will alone remain.

D.: But why did pure Brahman become Isvara [Ed., the Lord] and manifest the universe if He did not mean it?

M.: Did Brahman or Isvara tell you so? You say that Brahman became Isvara and so on. This, too, you did not say in your sleep. Only in your jagrat state you speak of Brahman, Isvara, and the universe. The jagrat state is a duality of subject and object—owing to the rise of thoughts. So, they are your thought creations.

D.: But the world exists in my sleep even though I am not aware.

M.: What is the proof of its existence?

D.: Others are aware of it.

M.: Do they say so to you when you are in sleep, or do you become aware of others who see the world in your sleep?

D.: No, but God is always aware.

M.: Leave God alone. Speak for yourself. You do not know God. He is only what you think of Him. Is He apart from you? He is that pure Consciousness in which all ideas are formed. You are that Consciousness.

Determination of the Self

Satsang

February 5, 2006

Om Om Om

(Silence)

N.: Your true nature is determined only by your own nature. Nothing else determines the nature of your Self, Being-Consciousness-Bliss. Nothing other than your nature of Bliss determines your happiness. Nothing else other than this Consciousness determines real Knowledge. Nothing other than Being determines what is real. The senses do not determine this. Activities do not determine this. States and conditions of the body do not determine this. Your thoughts do not determine this. Mental attention, placed here or there, does not determine this. Mental states and modes of mind do not determine this. Time, place, sensations of any kind do not determine this.

The Reality is not determined by the unreal, even to the slightest degree. Your Self, being the Reality, is not determined, in any way whatsoever, by any of the non-Self, the unreal. It is not determined by such in terms of definition and in terms of actual knowledge.

The identity of your Self remains forever unalterable. The only one who can know this unalterable nature is the unalterable nature itself. Only Consciousness knows Consciousness. That which is not Consciousness cannot do so.

Only Absolute Being, Brahman, which is your Self, knows itself. No one and nothing else can do so. When you inquire to know your Self, such is the Light of your own Consciousness illumining itself; it is self-luminous. Nothing else is involved. Because nothing else is involved, it is nondual from start to finish. Because nothing else is involved, because there is no second, there cannot actually be any obstacle to the inquiry and its fruit of real Knowledge.

If, at any time, you seem as if bound, limited in any respect, or seem to have broken off from that Absolute perfectly peaceful Reality, and then experience something else, know that that something else is dependent upon this definition of having broken off, of assumed individuality, and inquire as to who you are. In that case, the ego, or individuality, being entirely unreal, will vanish. Thus your Self knows your Self.

If the truth of just this much is traced within yourself, that nothing else defines youf Self but your Self, that would suffice.

(Silence).

Q.: In the light of Friday's instruction and meditation and the mention of "trifling joy," I see that each vasana is only the attempt to be happy. Looked at for what they are, they are of no consequence. I understand now that to feel discontent or to want to seek happiness or to want to express the next vasana that comes rolling by, I must first be acting from the knowledge of not standing as who I am. I am not standing as the Bliss that is my Being. That knowledge points directly to the Self.

Then, each vasana points directly to the Self, and I just have these other ideas that I attach to it. I can inquire into Being and into Consciousness, but how to use Bliss? A thousand times, you have instructed to look for the source of happiness, and I am seeing that it is the Bliss that stimulates any of the vasanas. This makes it easier to look inside rather than outside for that which is real and doesn't need anything added to it.

N.: The motion of all the tendencies or vasanas has been for the sake of your own Being, which is Bliss. Since you now know that, each time a tendency arises, you can inquire as to the real nature of Bliss, the real nature of Being, and, thereby, that which initially appeared to be some kind of obstacle or bondage has merely pointed you back to your real nature, which is Liberation. The vasana is dissolved.

In the midst of what is referred to in *Svatmanirupanam* as "fickle joy," and which you this morning called "trifling joy," there is actually one, infinite, and timeless joy shining through that very thing. Through the limitations of mis-identification, manifesting outwardly as attachment, it appears fickle and trifling, losing its infinity, its eternity, and its steadiness. Remove the limitations that adhere through delusion to our own nature. Then Bliss is no longer defined. Or, we may say that Bliss defines itself, which means that it is unconfined.

If the intuitive search for your own Self is the motivation of the vasanas, primarily through the form of seeking happiness, and if you know the source of happiness and, inquiring, you know who you are, the very

motivation to create such tendencies has been cut.

Therefore, the Maharshi pointed to the destruction of vasanas as being imperative for Self-Realization. In the destruction of a vasana, be sure that it is destroyed from beginning to end, from top to bottom. Be very deep and be very thorough. The general rule for the examination of such should be that no vasana is too small to be overlooked in your inquiry, and none of them are so big that you cannot get over it.

Q.: This morning, as I was driving over the hill to come here, I returned to the vasana of identification as a body. I was examining to see what that has to do with happiness. Much argument could be made that having a body is not a source of happiness. (laughter) Still, there was the confusion. I need to look at old, deep tendencies and see them anew.

N.: That's right. (silence)

Another Q.: A small feeling that I need to keep myself going arises. Something starts, and I have this feeling of, "What about me?" and that I need to keep this thing going. If I follow that, what follows is a body and a world that I now struggle in, trying to be happy. I am looking at what I think that I am going to get out of that. It appears to be a vasana of the idea that I need to keep this going.

N.: What precisely are you keeping going?

Q.: Looking at it, it's not a very good idea.

(laughter) I need to ask who is keeping it going, because I am not sure what it is that is going, because it doesn't have much to it if I examine what I am keeping going.

N.: What is your experience of the "it" that you are trying to keep going?

Q.: It is "I" that I am trying to keep going.

N.: Something can be kept going only if it started to begin with. See if you have been born. (silence)

That a person perpetuates an ego because he wrongly identifies that ego-sense with himself and he intuitively desires continuous existence is sufficiently clear. Inquire directly into what it is that has started or if it has started. That is, what exactly is this "I"-sense?

Q.: There really is no "I"-sense. If I try to get hold of the "I" that is separate, it keeps moving ahead until it is not there anymore. When that happens, is that "me" being born? When the vasana starts to form, I think that that is I.

N.: How does it start to form? If the particular vasana or tendency being described is the sense of "I" or ego, how does it form?

Q.: If I look at the point where it starts, it's not there. I can remember the idea of an "I," a personality, or whatever. If I proceed to "Where did that start from?" it is like running up to a mirage. At a distance, it looked as if there. When I move closer to it...(pauses)

N.: Alright. In this case, the mirage is both the subject and the object of the search. So, if

you have seen that there is no such thing answering to the name of “I,” how can there be any recurrence later? If you have not seen it deeply enough, who has not seen this deeply enough?

Q.: The one who has not seen it deeply enough is the one who is not really there.

N.: If he is not really there, then, as the Maharshi says in a verse, “The thought ‘I saw’ did not arise, so how could the thought ‘I did not see’?”

Q.: Could you say that again, please?

N.: It means that both knowledge and ignorance, conceived as a duality, do not exist. “I see that I am not there.” “I don’t see that I am not there.” Both statements are fallacious.

Q.: Hmm.

N.: Who is there to see or not see when all that exists is the one Self? The inquiry reveals that.

Q.: One needs to ask who is not there. Who is it and where is there?

N.: That is why I asked you, “How did it start or what got started?”

Q.: (laughing and quiet alternating) My experience is that nothing gets started.

N.: If nothing ever started, how can there be recurrence of that which never started?

Q.: (laughter) Ok. It clearly doesn’t start. Is the question, “How could there be a memory that it started?”

N.: A memory of something that did not happen? But if you say that it starts again, how can you have a recurrence of something that

did not exist to begin with?

Q.: Then, I need to ask what I think is actually occurring.

N.: Yes, and if all the occurrences are only the “I” in the guise of the occurrences, you, yourself, manifest as everything. Then, who are you?

Q. (Silent)

Another Q.: To destroy tendencies from top to bottom, isn’t that giving them too much attention and feeding them? Is it not enough to say, “I am not going there,” but to go within?

N.: If there is no reappearance of the vasana, or tendency, it is sufficient. The idea that we would strengthen ignorance by the examination of it is worthwhile to examine.

Q.: Yes. I see.

N.: If we bring light to illumine a dark corner or space, the light does not become darkened by the darkness. Rather, the darkness becomes illumined, or simply vanishes for the darkness is merely the absence of light. Likewise, if we examine a tendency and find that it is not our happiness and that it is not who we are, we have not strengthened it. We have destroyed it. We destroyed it because it is destructible. Destructibility is the characteristic of the unreal. So, in one sense, we have destroyed nothing, but, in another sense, the destruction of the very causes, or seeds, of sorrow and bondage is brought about. They have been dissolved.

If we do not examine and do not inquire thoroughly, we must be very sure that we do

not continue living by that which we have not examined.

Q.: So, the examination isn't from (missing word).

N.: If it is thorough and deep, there is knowledge. Aside from knowledge, how to get rid of ignorance?

Q.: Yes, I see.

Another Q.: Listening to others here speak of their Self-inquiry, it seems so different from what occurs for me. I sit and inquire. There is a feeling that arises when I say "I." It is a physical sensation, and I think that we are supposed to lock on to that physical sensation and feel that "I" thought. When I do feel that, everything fairly much goes away. Then, I become distracted from it when some thought comes through, and I inquire about that. I return to the feeling of the "I" thought. Then there is quiet as long as I can hold on to that "I" thought. But there is nothing purposeful about it. Random thoughts and emotions come up constantly. The idea that I could examine a vasana from top to bottom is just not clear. Either there is nothing there, or almost, or there is emotion coming through. Or there are random thoughts. There is no purposeful or intentional examination of the vasanas occurring for me. Am I doing it incorrectly?

N.: Latching on to a physical sensation means directing your mental attention to that physical sensation. Whenever you give your mental attention in a concentrated fashion to one object, and that object could be a

sensation or another gross or abstract object, other thoughts will tend to recede or subside.

Q.: Yes.

N.: Consequently, because there is not the flurry of thoughts, you enjoy a certain degree of calmness. It is also very observable that this state of calm does not endure. It is not eternal.

Q.: It is not.

N.: So, then, we know that what we are searching for, Self-Realization, cannot be an object, including this sensation. The purpose of one's inquiry should not be to latch on to any objective sensation, but to actually know oneself. You also know from your own experience that, since attention flits about and can become concentrated, diffused, etc., that whatever the substance of this Knowledge is, it should not be mistaken for mental attention. That is, mental attention is not an adequate instrument for knowing yourself. So, you will want to step entirely beyond that context if you desire real Knowledge.

You say that you have thoughts that seem, at first glance, random. Yet, you also recognize that they are not so random. They do have patterns to them. Only the thought that they are random is random. (laughter). And even that idea may not be so random.

You say that emotions are constantly bubbling up. What is the cause of all those emotions? Trace the thoughts that constitute those emotions. Find out the misidentifications that are at the root of them. If we cut the vasana from top to bottom, such means that we cut the misidentification. We cease to take ourselves to be something that we are not.

Everything that trails out from that misidentification, from the way of thinking to the particular modes of mind and thoughts, to what you are calling your emotions—which are thoughts given undue emphasis—and the repetitions of the same, the entirety of that collapses, dissolves, and does not return. That is freedom.

Q.: If I stay with the feeling of this “I” thought, there is an opening that happens. An expansion occurs inside.

N.: Is that a physical expansion or is it something else?

Q.: I think that it is my mind. It is a tight thing, like a sphincter, that opens. When reading *Self-inquiry*, I got the impression that I was supposed to stay with the feeling of the “I.”

N.: You are, but “the feeling of ‘I’” refers to your sense of existence and not a physical sensation. “Feeling” is said for lack of better words. It means that it is not a conception, mental form of any kind, or a thought, and not a sense perception of any kind, such as seeing, hearing, touching, etc., whether such appear as manifestly gross to your senses or some subtle sensation in the subtle body. You are to get beyond everything that is gross, subtle, and causal and really know yourself. To feel or hold on to the “I” means to inquire in relation to all that you are describing, “For whom are they?”

There is a sense, not a sensation, of existing, of “I.” Dwell upon that.

Q.: This is so confusing. When one reads enough of *Talks*, there are passages dealing

with sensations on the right side. They are equivocal about it, but they say that it is an important experience to look into because that is where the sense of the Self arises from, though they are incorrect. There are dialogues that almost say that.

N.: There are dialogues that describe the “I,” “the Self,” and “the Heart,” that predominate in the book *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi*, that speak of such as timeless, locationless, and absolutely bodiless.

Q.: Yes.

N.: There are other dialogues, which are relatively few in number, often in relation to a text, *Ramana Gita*, that deal with particular sensations that are subtle, and not physical or gross. They are very explicit about not referring to a physical heart, physical body, and such. They pertain to yogic lore pertinent to those who are practicing yoga and having subtle experiences. They tie together those experiences with, or endow those experiences with, the wisdom that rightly belongs to Jnana, or Knowledge. Indeed, the entire *Ramana Gita* is fairly clearly divided between those verse that are yoga and those verses that are Jnana. For those with an interest in yoga, the Maharshi is the supreme yogi and can answer all their questions. For those who want to know the final culmination of yoga, he has said that yoga, or union, culminates in the Realization of the Self. For those who, then, want to know the Self, all the teachings of Jnana, which include Atma-vicara or Self-inquiry, Self-Knowledge, and the vast abundance of his teachings were given.

So, if you have a sensation or an experience in any location, such is not the end. You must still further inquire, “For whom is this? Who am I?” If, in the experience of that sensation, you have been lifted entirely beyond the gross body and the world, it is very beneficial, but it is not the end point. If you find your mind feeling more expansive, by any means, it is beneficial, and there is no criticism of such, but you should not stop short with that. Similarly, you should not stop short with temporary calm, but find the permanent, eternal source of peace and find your Self to be That.

To accomplish that requires a deep inquiry, or examination, as to who you are, which is necessarily a negation of every false definition. When false definitions are repeated, they are called tendencies or *vasanas*. First there is the ignorance, and then there is the adherence to, or repetition of, it. Sankara has pointed out that the two constitute the denseness of *maya*, or illusion. So, we destroy the tendencies and we find out who we are in one motion of inquiry. We are thorough, and we are deep. Does this clarify the matter for you?

Q.: Yes, it does. There is something I need to do about being affected by these upsurges of emotion, with some kind of thought, so that it is something about which I can inquire. My experience is that of a disconnection between those two.

N.: If you abandon the attribution of your emotions to outer causes, such as circumstances and other people, the idea that they make you feel that way, and realize that they are self-conjured, you will

find yourself in a better position to examine, and inquire, so that you see which thoughts you are thinking that, being repeated, are being called “a feeling” or “an emotion.” Once you have seen those thoughts, without attributing them to outer causes, focusing on what is the apparently inner thought, rather than the outer object of the thought, not justifying your thought, but with the recognition that you are responsible for your own state of mind, and are stable in that recognition, you will be able to see which of these repeating thoughts are giving the substance or “body” to this emotion. Then, inquire regarding what definitions of yourself are at play so that you can be thinking the way that you are thinking.

So, we look at not only our thoughts, but why we think the way that we think. This will always boil down to an inquiry as to who you are. Your sense of identity determines the entire pattern. Then, it is time to inquire within yourself, “Who am I?”

Q.: That is where a *vasana* could really meet its end?

N.: By examining in this manner, from top to bottom, from its gross manifestations to the repetitive thoughts or feelings, from the seed idea of the *vasanas* to the very misidentification that starts all of this, all of that dissolves.

Q.: That is tracing it out.

N.: That is tracing inward, more and more subjectively. It is not tracing out in the body or subtle body. It is tracing subjectively and tracking down the “I.”

Q.: I see that this state of identity is the fundamental foundation.

N.: That is right. When you destroy the vasana, you own Existence, which is the residuum of real Being that has been untouched by all of this, stands out radiantly clear. The more radiantly clear that is for you, the easier it is to see these incongruous vasanas, or tendencies, as blatant cases of the shadows of delusion.

Another Q.: I was looking at shadows that are similar in attraction to the Truth. I have noticed that, earlier in life, my interest in love, my preoccupations, other interests, and such always came from a recognition of my identity. No one and nothing could reverse that. I would no longer care about this and would care about that. My ultimate longing for the Truth has the same qualities, only more so. The real part of it does not have obstacles and is not supported by a sequence of thoughts. It is simply the recognition of what is worth caring about. Even the relative examples seemed independent of thought, but this is much more so in terms of the Absolute. I am looking at this to dispel the idea that there are any obstacles or that there is anything else so attractive that it would hold me back. It seems that it will wither with recognition.

N.: Yes, you adhere to something only because you want to do so.

Q.: Right. So, I am confusing my identity.

N.: There is no glue to cause you to adhere to illusion against your will.

Q.: I can look at that both ways. The

attraction to the Truth and the necessary lack of attraction to the false come from, not thought, but recognition.

N.: So, you naturally adhere to whatever you regard as true. What you regard as false, without any further effort to abandon it, is of no interest and of no consequence to you. So, in this deep sense, you have always been searching for what is true, during this entire life and before.

Q.: Even with these lesser examples, it is very difficult to say when it began. It is a movement or shift to a new recognition in each case.

N.: You may be able to spot when the particular thought that put truth in that form for you began, but the yearning for Truth does not have a beginning point. It could be said that you have yearned for Truth since before there was time.

What is Truth? Since the Truth must be of the very nature of your existence, for otherwise it would be nonexistent truth, what is ultimately important is to know yourself. All of this, for however far back you can remember, has been an attempt to know yourself.

If you inquire to know yourself, you find that you are not so much the one who has been looking for the Truth as if you were apart from it or deficient in it, but you are the very space in which all that search for Truth occurred. So, the search for Truth occurs nowhere but in the Truth itself. You cannot, in Truth, step outside the Truth or separate yourself from it.

If you pretend to be an "I," a mind, and a body, it will seem otherwise. Abandon that

misidentification by clear Knowledge, and you, yourself, are that for which you were looking. All that searching occurred only with yourself, which was never apart from that space or substrate. (Silence)

Q.: (with anjali, offering salutation with his hands) Thank you.

Another Q.: When I am busy, I do not like to be interrupted. It seems that this always happens. (laughter) It seems...

N.: Why don't you like to get interrupted? I don't mean to interrupt you right now. (laughter)

Q.: (laughing) I have a train of thought that gets diverted.

N.: Alright. What is unpleasant about this?

Q.: The other person wants me to give time right then or I am already on a telephone call.

N.: How does the bondage or unhappiness come in? If you are becoming aggravated over it, such is because you feel that, in some way, it robs you of happiness. In what way is it robbing your happiness? You may cite examples of this happening, but what is the reason for this loss of happiness?

Q.: I am so short-tempered just because I think that my happiness is dependent upon whatever else is going on. It detracts from finishing what I am doing or prevents me from finishing it.

N.: Is there happiness only when you are done with the particular endeavor, or can you be happy all along?

Q.: No, I have to...(laughing). I have a long list of "to do" things. The list does not seem to get any shorter.

N.: Yes, it is in the very character of manifest life. (laughing) There is always something more to do. (laughter)

Q.: That is a ridiculous idea: that I can't be happy until this is done.

N.: After all, your Existence is still fully present and perfectly full. This is so the entire time, and it does not depend on a particular activity reaching its fruition.

Q.: I have this idea that I can't be happy until the action is done.

N.: Do you believe that?

Q.: (after a short pause) No, not really. (laughter) I pretend. (laughing)

N.: Become confirmed in your disbelief. (laughter)

Q.: Yes, it is foolish and a waste of energy.

N.: If you do not rob yourself of your own happiness, will the interruption by whatever creature be annoying?

Q.: (laughing) It could be any creature.

N.: This does not preclude you from telling someone that you cannot deal with him right now for you need to attend to something, and you will attend to him later. Thus, this does not necessarily determine your action, but it does determine your inner experience.

Q.: Yes, that is clear. I am no longer limiting the experience of myself to the completion of some task. If that is there during the

activity, it doesn't matter if I am interrupted or not.

N.: That's right. All things, both those that are done and those that yet need to be done, depend on you. You don't depend on them.

Q.: Yes.

Another Q.: In the destruction of a vasana, what is the acid test to prove that one is, in fact, thorough?

N.: Your own experience.

Q.: Sometimes, I feel that my inquiry might be too shallow or too superficial.

N.: If you have that perception, make your inquiry deeper.

Q.: Sometimes, I accept a mental image of release rather than the actual release, out of laziness or lack of concentration.

N.: Can you please explain more what you mean by "accept"?

Q.: I am too mechanical in the questioning and do not go deep enough.

N.: Do you find that satisfactory?

Q.: No.

N.: There, your natural discrimination is at work.

Q.: (laughs) So, don't accept anything except that.

N.: You can't accept it. There is only one thing that is agreeable for all. There is only one thing that is completely agreeable for you.

Q.: The true experience.

N.: You won't be satisfied with anything

less.

Q.: As you have said, one should do whatever it takes to engender that deep experience.

N.: If you need to practice more deeply, practice more deeply. Practice is joy. If you need to practice more continuously, inquire more continuously. Continuous inquiry reveals blissful Knowledge. If you merely mechanically repeat some thought, you already know that won't work. It will not be satisfactory. When you consider that the deeper approach is always already available for you, there is no reason to resort to such mechanical thinking.

Another Q.: God, Self, or Guru reveals itself in a wondrous way. Consciousness is awakening to Consciousness. In some ways, it seems mysterious, yet, in other ways, it seems very natural.

In my heart, I experience a rekindling in my heart of love for God, devotion to the Truth, and devotion to the Guru. That has made my practice and inquiry much more real for me. Different spiritual activities hold a wonderful treasure that was unexpected. It unlocks and reveals that which is there.

N.: Didn't Sri Bhagavan say that bhakti, devotion, is the mother of jnana, knowledge? (silence)

Another Q.: The same discrimination that shows that happiness is permanent and not bound by petty things provides good

meditation. The deep Knowledge comes from the Self. It seems, though, that when I mix it with something else, it is harder to hold. When it is clear, my mind easily goes to it. I just remember that teaching and see that there is no sense in letting my mind go toward any smaller thing. At other times, it seems more difficult. I guess that then it is vasana removal time.

N.: Why did it seem more difficult? What was the difficulty?

Q.: I need to eliminate the larger vasanas. The smaller ones are just distractions and do not carry much attachment. It seemed that later in the day, when I was more physically exhausted, it was more difficult.

N.: Because?

Q.: I don't know.

N.: How does physical exhaustion relate to blissful Being?

Q.: (chuckling) It doesn't. There is no relationship.

N.: Then, how does mental attention relate to blissful Being?

Q.: Hmm. That doesn't either. I think that it is nice to be focused on what is real.

N.: When you focus on what is real, what actually occurs? Is it that you just think about what is real?

Q.: Oh no. That would be no good.

N.: So, what we are referring to as "focus" is much deeper and non-mental in character. It is something that shines even upon mental attention and is not dependent on it. Can you

see this?

Q.: Yes.

N.: So, whatever the state of condition of the body or mind, such does nothing in terms of determining your Being or your Bliss.

Q.: It is determined by whatever vasanas I am holding on to at the time.

N.: Whose vasanas are they?

Q.: I am the vasana storage tank. (laughter) They come from me.

N.: Are you a vasana?

Q.: No. (laughing). I am definitely not a vasana.

N.: If you are not a vasana, are the vasanas your attributes?

Q.: Are they my attributes? Vasanas are different from attributes. I never thought of them in that way. They are attributed to me.

N.: I notice the use of the passive voice, "They are attributed to me." (laughter) Who's doing the attribution?

Q.: (laughing) Duh! (laughter) Not the Self! (laughter)

N.: It is obviously more powerful than the Self, so maybe you should worship the great "Duh!"? (laughter) If it is not you, if it is other than your nature, how could it be your attribute? If it is not your attribute, who are you?

Q.: I am a little confused. The trouble with vasanas is that one thinks that they are part of him.

N.: Do you?

Q.: Well, not now. (laughter) That's the difficulty with them.

N.: Are they difficult for you now.

Q.: No, not really.

N.: Yes, not really, because you are not that, and that is not your attribute. Are you planning to make them your attribute later? (laughter)

Q.: (laughing) Just preparing. (laughter) I guess I was preparing that, but that is probably not a wise decision. When the Truth shines, it is clear. That is everything. That is so important.

N.: For how long is the Truth shining?

Q.: It seems that, during the vasana, it seems as if it is not shining. However, whenever I see through a vasana, I find that it is shining.

N.: Does it just start to shine or it shining all the time?

Q.: Yes, it did not just arrive.

N.: The shining Truth of the Self has always been and always will be. It doesn't just start. It simply is. Abide in the continuous Knowledge of who you are. If you think that you have a tendency, or vasana, find out whose it is.

Q.: Ok. So that would be the first step. You said to take down the vasana from top to bottom.

N.: Yes, but I am showing you something that is shining without top and without bottom. (Silence).

(Then followed a recitation in Sanskrit and English of verses from the *Annapurna Upanishad*)

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

From *Yoga Vasishtha*

Vasishtha said: Rama, the space, light, and darkness have no individuality and no power of their own. They are there due to the power of the Supreme Brahman, which first creates the idea of consciousness, the idea of a jiva mixed with it, and the cognition of "I." Due to changes in the "I," the intellect grows. This intellect mixes with the subtle elements and changes into the mind, which has the qualities of the mind, such as thinking and repetitive memory. The mind mixes with the subtle elements and changes itself into the great elements and thus appears as the thick forest of the world.

Just as in a dream, the unmade thing appears suddenly, so the Consciousness-Self, joining the mind, sees the world. This seen world appears in the space of the chinmaya (of that the nature of which is Consciousness) and disappears. The Consciousness-Self is the seed of the world forest. This seed need not be planted. It requires no water, no earth, and no light. It becomes a plant on its own accord. The Supreme Self, in the form of Consciousness, creates the elements like

earth, etc. just like the creation in a dream.

Wherever there is pure Consciousness should be understood to be beyond, or contrary to, the seed of the world. Its nature is nonattachment. The seed for the physical world is the five subtle elements. The seed for the five subtle elements is the sentience (Caitanya, consciousness), which is eternal and changeless. Thus, the entire world is full of Brahman.

Before creation in the mahakasa (the great space, the space of the universe), there are the five subtle elements, which are created by the Caitanya by its own power. The five subtle elements are false, yet they grow and become the physical world. Therefore, in Sat (Existence, Being), the root cause of all creation, the world universe appears, like the false objects in a dream. Therefore, it is evident that everything is That and That only, and is not differentiated from it. How can fiction or fantasy be true? In the beginning of creation, the five subtle elements and the world of the elements are apparent in the Brahman-Consciousness. Brahman is the cause of the world and is also the effect. No object, such as the world, was ever born. None ever saw its birth. Just as the towns that are found in a dream are experienced, though they are quite false, so, in the space of Brahman, the true nature of which is ever effulgent, the false, "created" world appears as if true. In the pure Consciousness-Brahman, the existence of earth, etc. is impossible. Thus, like the appearance of the towns of the Gandharvas in the sky, the jiva (the individual) appears in Brahman....

The creation appears to be full of reality,

but it is false, like the town seen in dream. It is not composed of any substance. It does not have any color. But, wonderfully, it shines. It appears to be very real, though it is not created by anyone and though it is not experienced by anyone. At the time of the great deluge (cosmic dissolution), surely Brahma (the Creator) and others will be annihilated. Then, certainly, their creation will be annihilated. As is the creator, so is the creation. When the world disappears, as in a dream, the Supreme Self shines, alone, as the Brahmasvarupa (the True Nature of Brahman). Then, there are no objects perceived whatsoever. The objects are like the houses seen in a dream, after one wakes from sleep, and are experienced only in the form of remembrance.

In the same way, the cause of the world, which is the true nature of space, is also experienced as the form of the world. As liquidity is not different from water, the creation is not different from the Supreme Self. The Brahmanda (universe) is as pure as space. It is peaceful and does not depend upon anything. It does not allow anything to depend on it. It is never two, but is always one, and it has no equal. It is created, and, at the same time, it is not created from Brahman. Like the Supreme Space, it is always a void. It shines as very pure. Really, there is no creation. It is neither independent nor interdependent. It is neither the seeing nor the seen. Why so many words? In That, there is nothing to be called Brahman or Brahmanda. All these are vain, senseless words.

There is nothing animate or inanimate. Just as water produces whirlpools and

destroys them in itself, so Brahman, of its own accord, creates them in itself and destroys them sooner or later. In the seen stage, they shine as asat (unreal, nonexistent), but are experienced in the form of the seen. It is like experiencing one's own death in a dream. After awakening, one finds it to be false. Thus, experiencing the creation and enjoying its ignorance, one finds it to be false in the light of Knowledge. Then, he experiences, in the Space of Knowledge, only Brahman, which is one, indivisible, beginningless and endless. Thus, like the never-born horns of a hare, the never-born world and such are not true.

Ramana Sahasram

A Thousand Ramanas

By Dr. H. Ramamoorthy

The Conclusion

(continued from previous issue)

961. Om hita-krte ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who acts beneficially

962. Om hitopadesaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who gives upadesa that is beneficial

963. Om hiranya-bahave ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, with the golden hand

964. Om hrdaya-vedyaya ramanaya namah

Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is to be known by the heart

965. Om hrdaya-granthi-vibhedine ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who cuts asunder the knot of the heart

966. Om hastamalaka-pradarsakaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who reveals Hastamalaka

967. Om ksama-yuktaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who has patience

968. Om ksama-dharaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who carries forgiveness, supports the world

969. Om ksaya-vrddhi-vinirmuktaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is free of decay and growth

970. Om ksiti-sama-ksamaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is patient like the earth

971. Om ksayadi-rahitaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is devoid of decay and such

972. Om ksetrajnaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is the knower of the field

973. Om jnanasambandha-svarupaya
ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, of the nature of
Saint Jnanasambandha

974. Om jnana-svarupaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, of the
nature of Knowledge

975. Om jnana-murtaye ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is the
embodiment of Knowledge

976. Om jnana-caksuse ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who has the
eye of Knowledge

977. Om jnana-dipaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is the lamp
of Knowledge

978. Om jnana-bodhakaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is the
teacher of Knowledge

979. Om jnana-prakasaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is the
effulgence of Knowledge

980. Om jnananandaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is the bliss
of Knowledge

981. Om jnanarnavaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is an
ocean of Knowledge

982. Om jnana-saktaye ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is the

power of Knowledge

983. Om jnana-gamyaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is to be
reached by Knowledge

984. Om jnana-siddhi-daya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who confers
attainment of Knowledge

985. Om jnana-samrajya-dayine ramanaya
namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who confers the
empire of Knowledge

986. Om jnana-bhaskaraya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, the sun of
Knowledge

987. Om jnanavataraya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, the
incarnation of Knowledge

988. Om jnanesvaraya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, the Lord of
Knowledge

989. Om ekasmai ramanaya
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, the One

990. Om dvaita-varjitaya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is
devoid of “two” (duality)

991. Om triputi-jagaj-jiva-paradi-paraya
ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is
beyond the triad of jagat-jiva-para (the world,
the individual, and the Supreme) and such

992. Om catustay-antahkarana-mano-buddhy-ahankara-citt-atitaya ramanaya namah

Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who transcends the fourfold of the inner senses, mind-intellect-ego-thought.

993. Om pancendriya-prana-kosadi-paraya ramanaya namah

Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who is beyond the pentad of senses, prana-s, sheaths, and such

994. Om sad-ripu-varga kama-krodhadi nigrahaya ramanaya namah

Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who has conquered the sextet of enemies such as desire, anger, and such

995. Om sapta-sapti-tejase ramanaya namah

Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who has the brilliance of the Sun, with seven horses

996. Om astanga-jnana-vidya prayoga vivarnaya ramanaya namah

Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who gives an exposition of, explains the application of, the Knowledge of eightfold parts.

997. Om navarasa-nirakrta ramanaya namah

Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who has the One undivided Essence, rejecting the nine rasa-s

998. Om dasa-sata madhura punya namne ramanaya namah

Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who has a decad of centuries of sweet holy names

999. Om nama-rup-atitya ramanaya namah
Om! Prostrations to Ramana, who transcends name and form

1000. Om paramai brahmane ramanaya namah

Om! Prostrations to Ramana, the Supreme Brahman

New Publication:
Origin of Spiritual Instruction

As we are preparing to print this issue, we are about to receive copies of *Origin of Spiritual Instruction*, which is the SAT re-issue of the original version of Sri Ramana's "Spiritual Instruction." By the time you are reading this announcement, the book should have already arrived from the press and been released during the July Sri Ramana Maharshi Self-Realization celebration. If you did not obtain a copy yet, please be sure to visit the bookstore to do so.

New Publication:
*Advaita Prakarana Manjari:
A Bouquet of Nondual Texts*

As we are preparing to print this issue, we have received word that the *Bouquet of Nondual Texts*, is being shipped to us at SAT and is expected to arrive in August. This book contains eight texts by Sri Sankara, in Sanskrit with complete English translation. Look for announcements of the release date and event or ask for it in the bookstore in the SAT temple.