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# RAMANA GYAN **DIRECT PATH**

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Original ink sketch of Arunachala by Sri Ramana Maharshi from Kunju Swami's notebook

# RAMANA GYAN DIRECT PATH

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## Editor's Note

We are regularly updating our website [www.ramanamaharshi.in](http://www.ramanamaharshi.in). We have our Direct Path magazine including the previous issues on the site. Most of the recent talks of our Kendra's Sunday satsangs have been uploaded onto the website. Those of you who have missed the satsang can catch up or listen to the talk as a revision. Please do visit our site for latest updates and we welcome any feedback.

The flavour of the times seems to be "Doership", "Self-effort", "Prarabdha" and the like. Enjoy reading the two articles in this issue.

Hope to see you all at the seminar on 30th Dec in connection with Bhagavan's Jayanti.

Please send your articles for consideration to **directpath@rediffmail.com cc shiromani.vijay@yahoo.co.in**

Readers are welcome to express their views on the articles printed (in not more than 200 words) and send them to **directpath@rediffmail.com cc shiromani.vijay@yahoo.co.in**

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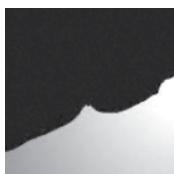
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# Why do we celebrate Bhagavan's Jayanti?

*Shiromani Vijay*

**W**hen we study our scriptures, at every step we learn that we are not this body and we are the Atma which does not have any birth (*ajaha*). However, every year we religiously celebrate the birthday of great saints. Why?

In this transactional world all our experiences are through our senses and to get a deeper understanding of ourselves, we cannot negate the world we experience but have to look beyond. Having said this, we have only this body, mind and intellect as our instruments to understand and realise what is outside our limits. As this seems contradictory, we need to learn the technique from the lives of great saints who were liberated.

“Who is a saint?” He who lives in God or the Eternal, who is free from egoism, likes and dislikes, selfishness, vanity, mine-ness, lust, greed and anger, who is endowed with equal vision, balanced mind, mercy, tolerance, righteousness and cosmic

love, and who has divine knowledge. Usually all the above qualities are not apparent when the saints are born but manifest as and when they go through the various experiences in their lives. According to Vedanta, these saints, even when they are born are in an advanced stage in their journey towards liberation and events in their lives turn them into liberated souls (*Jivan Mukhta*).

When we study the lives of saints we see that they are normal human beings who lived a life in allegiance to our scriptures. It is easy to relate to the life of a saint or learn from them as they are like one of us. Most of the saints are not born perfect but used their life’s situations to get over their imperfections. Let us start from the fact that Bhagavan took birth like all of us and realised his true Self.

Ramana was seemingly a normal boy who was not the best in his class, loved to play games and have fun and frolic with his friends. He seemed

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uninterested in book-learning. One thing that distinguished him from his friends was his love to frequently visit the Madurai Meenakshi temple and lose himself in the deity. But it is the incident of his death experience which changed the normal boy into a saint, which impacts us.

What can we learn from life of Bhagavan? From his “Death experience” we have to imbibe his spirit of enquiry to delve deep into the situation. When he had the feeling of dying without any apparent reason, he neither panicked nor ignored the episode but started questioning himself about it. Next, we are inspired by his resolve to look within and not get confrontational when his brother pointed out that if he did not have any interest in the normal things of life he might as well be a sanyasi. Then we are overawed by his risk-taking to leave a cosy life with his family in pursuit of truth. He left his home in search of an unknown place of which he had just heard the name—“Arunachala”. From his early life in and around Tiruvannamalai we realise that his needs were very limited. He loved solitude and was in deep meditation most of the time. Later on, with fearlessness he roamed in and around the Arunachal hill and showed compassion to one and all. With great

ease he pacified everyone who came to him for succour. With his realisation of the all-pervading Atman, he treated everyone including the animals the same manner. His deep understanding of the scriptures reminds us that even as he entered this world he had done most his work towards self-realisation. His life was Upanishad personified.

It matters to us when our friends announce that they have designated moral exemplars and narrate us the story about their ideals, heroes and models for their own lives, which then interests us. With Bhagavan Ramana, there are many still alive to tell us the story first hand and hence we cherish his life all the more!

Its normal human nature to cherish the legacies of people we love. Every family, every community and every country holds their heroes in great honour and celebrate their birth anniversaries. Saints are our heroes who conquer our minds and show us how to live through the various situations in our lives. And of course we celebrate birth anniversaries to admire their lives and teachings.

Let us all joyfully celebrate Bhagavan’s Jayanti! ■

Om Namo Bhavathe Sri Ramanaya! ■  
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## Interpreting ‘Non-Doership’ and ‘Self-Effort’

*Dr. Vijay Vancheswar*

The subject of doership or its absence thereof is a much misunderstood one in spirituality. This is bound to be so because each individual or group of people is inclined to interpret this as it suits their temperament.

Spiritual Masters also do not give exactly the same emphasis on aspects that govern this subject. However, masters like Sri Ramana Maharshi, Ramakrishna and Nisargadatta Maharaj to name some, are quite clear on the subject and do not deviate from what they say on matters relating to the subject of doership, freewill and destiny.

Ramakrishna says,” A man verily becomes liberated in life if he feels: *‘God is the Doer. He alone is doing everything. I am doing nothing. Man’s suffering and worries spring only from his persistent thought that he is the doer’*” (The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna). Sant Dnyaneshwar (1275-1296) in his acclaimed work

*Dnyaneshwari* (an English translation from ‘The Genius of Dnyaneshwar-His renderings on the Geeta’ by Ravi Thatte) says: ‘*Work or karma, Come to happen, The fool avers “I” made it happen..those who think it’s they who work and act, have twisted the facts; and are riddled with their acts.*’ Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj (I AM THAT-Talks with Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj, 1999, pp339-340, 4th. Edition) responds to questions posed to him as follows; Question (Q): My actions, surely, I can control. Maharaj (M): Try. You will soon see that you do what you must. Q: I can act according to my will. M: You know your will only after you have acted. Q: I remember my desires, the choices made, the decisions taken and act accordingly. M: Then your memory decides, not you. Q: Where do I come in? M: You make it possible by giving it attention. Q: Is there no such thing as free will? Am I not free to desire? M: Oh

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no, you are compelled to desire. In Hinduism, the very idea of freewill is non-existent, so there is no word for it. Will is commitment, fixation, and bondage. Q: I am free to choose my limitations. M: You must be free first. *To be free in the world you must be free of the world. Otherwise your past decides for you and your future. Between what happened and what must happen you are caught. Call it destiny or karma, but never freedom. First return to your true being and then act from the heart of love.*

What is most difficult for a majority of people is to accept this inscrutable law of the divine unconditionally; that it applies to all acts, good, bad ugly or otherwise. We just are not able to resist the temptation to ask, ‘*What should I do??*’ In fact, one wonders how Sri Ramana patiently put up with repeated queries on this subject! Repeatedly, we find that queries such as “*Should I renounce my life as a householder? (or) Is visiting holy places beneficial?*” were asked of Sri Ramana.

Bhagavan Ramana’s responses to such questions (Day by day with Bhagavan, from the diary of A. Devaraja Mudaliar, pp.211-212, 3rd reprint) clarifies such doubts without an iota of confusion, “*It does not*

*really rest with a man whether he goes to this place or that or whether he gives up his duties or not. All that happens according to destiny. All activities that the body is to go through are determined when it first comes into existence. It does not rest with you to accept or reject them*”. Let us for a moment introspect on this statement-what does this imply? *The candid fact is that you cannot but do what you are supposed to do, sometimes good in the eyes of society, other times not so.* However, an individual who unconditionally accepts that an event could not have but not happened will substantially be rid of the feeling of pride (I did it) or regret or guilt (why did I do it?). This basic fact is what the late advaitic sage Ramesh Balsekar (1917-2009) used to repeatedly emphasise.. Bhagavan’s response to the query of Mrs. Desai (Day by day with Bhagavan, A.Devaraj Mudaliar, (p.78, 4.1.46, afternoon), “*Are only important events in a man’s life, such as his main occupation or profession, predetermined, or are trifling acts in his life, such as taking a cup of water or moving from one place in the room to another, also predetermined?*”, drew a remarkably precise and unambiguous response:

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*Yes, everything is predetermined!*

However, Bhagavan's response to the pointed question on 'what responsibility or freedom do we really have' is very insightful and slightly at variation from the interpretation given to the subject by some modern day proponents of the philosophy of advaita. Sri Ramana while very clearly mentioning that freewill governs the body and its activities and all our experiences are already determined at birth, emphasised that '*we are all always free not to associate with what happens by not identifying with the body and not being affected by the resulting pleasures and pains.*'

When we reflect upon this, the doubt arises as to 'do we really have this "freedom", to disassociate with what happens to us?' Is this capacity not a function of the ingrained "*Vasanas*" that are deeply embedded in us right from conception? Honestly, from our personal experience this appears to be so. An abundance of '*tamasic vasanas*' will make it very challenging for one to refocus within and avoid getting entangled with what happens to or through oneself. The interpretations to this important query can be that what Bhagavan meant was: '*Potentially*

we are all Free. Destiny governs the body and its pre-ordained activities. To focus within is our birthright. The 'self-effort' that Bhagavan talks of is the effort or *sadhana* required for understanding 'who we are'. For progress, this *sadhana* has to happen. In some cases, this happens faster than in others. While we are all potentially free, each one of us in a different stage of the evolutionary cycle. Some take to the inward path like a duck to water. Others require some effort. Some others require monumental efforts. To others, the process itself is not appealing (oh God it's not my cup of tea!). This is akin to a student who despite not having professional or family support is born with a brilliant mind, a perfect fit for academic pursuits, others have to work hard, some need to struggle, yet others despite the best of schooling and upbringing; just cannot get themselves to engage in academic exercises. When Bhagavan says '*no effort on the inward path will go wasted*', what he perhaps avers to is that though not discernible, any effort to dissociate and embark on the inward path will lead one to make positive progress on the evolutionary path. This could be spread between the present birth, next birth or maybe

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after multiple births of sincere efforts of focussing within.

The whole journey does indeed look daunting. But as Sri Ramana says, ‘That is the only way-enquire or surrender’. To the question ‘*Why is it that turning inward alone is left to us and not any other outer things?*’ Sri Ramana says: *Nobody can answer that. That is the Divine scheme.*

Given the multitude of people with diverse temperaments; do teachings and discourses really create the needed impetus to change people? Bhagavan Ramana was clearly not for public discourses. He said that given the varied temperaments of people, a common discourse would not be effective or productive. Thus, he preferred ‘silent diksha’ over verbal discourses. Interestingly, on the topic of instructions and teachings, the mystical sage Neem Kaoli Baba

had this to say (*Miracle of Love*, compiled by Ram Dass, p. 180 2011, edn. 4), “*What’s the use of giving a particular teaching? You’ll do what you want to do. There is no use forcing anything on anybody. It is the Almighty who teaches everybody-they all come well taught. One who poses as a teacher does so only to satisfy his own ego*”.

Suffice to say this-Absorb the essence of the message of the guru and master, introspect, spend time within, disassociate with what happens (potentially this is the only freedom we have), have faith and enquire or fully surrender to the Divine. All else is just an entertainment show and pass-time activity to keep one’s overactive and turbulent mind busy and occupied! ■

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## In The Name of Faith

*Tuktuk Ghosh*

We are living in complex times. Much is happening around us which is in the name of faith. To our dismay it is difficult to accept that faith does sanction what is clearly against all tenets and values of humanism and morality. The phenomenon has global tentacles and its macabre implications are truly mind boggling.

Faith is complete trust or confidence. When transposed to religions it means an unshakeable belief in a particular religiously prescribed and ordained system. The reasons for something as sacrosanct as faith to be disfigured have been analysed at length especially in the context of the scourge of terrorism which often seeks validation in given religious faiths. However, there can be absolutely no justification for such perverted distortions of faith.

In recent times there have been horrifying instances of lynching and torture in different States of our country purportedly to make a faith

based and religious affirmation. In a Study of the Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi, conducted by Anand Ranganathan, Associate Professor, 50 cases have been documented in this year. Against the more popular perception, this is not restricted to any one religious community. Hindus have been attacked by Muslims, Christians have been attacked by Muslims, members of both communities have been killed by Hindus. Dalits have been lynched by Muslims, Hindus and Christians. The troubling reality was a key subject at events to mark Human Rights Day on 10th December. Some commentators went so far as to articulate a deep concern about the idea of India and its pluralistic, inclusive values being endangered.

There may be different views on this dark prognosis. But it will not do to disregard an ugly reality that is rearing its head in the name of faith. I believe it is religious teachings that can and must be deployed to address

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the problem before it assumes more potential for damage to our socio-cultural fabric.

Here Bhagwan's lifelong philosophy can play a catalytic role.

Faith for Bhagwan was not quite as it is commonly understood. For him faith is the bedrock of self realization, the ultimate goal for all spiritual aspirants. The central plank is the enquiry into the nature of the Self, the content of the notional "I-thought". It is no wonder that Carl Jung wrote glowingly: "Sri Ramana is a true son of the Indian earth. He is genuine and, in addition to that, something quite phenomenal. In India, he is the whitest spot in a white space. What we find in the life and teachings of Sri Ramana is the purest of India; with its breath of world liberated and liberating humanity, it is a chant of millenniums...."

Uniquely removed from the trappings of blind, unquestioning faith that is mandatorily associated with almost all organized religions, the essence of Bhagwan's teachings is conveyed in his frequent assertions that there is a single immanent reality, directly experienced by everyone, which is simultaneously the source, the substance and the real nature of everything that exists. He gave it a

number of different names, each one signifying a different aspect of the same indivisible reality.

"That in which all these worlds seem to exist steadily, that of which all these worlds are a possession , that from which all these worlds rise, that for which all these exist, that by which all these worlds come into existence and that which is indeed all these - that alone is the existing reality. Let us cherish that Self , which is the reality, in the heart.."

(S. Om (Tr.) - The Original Writings of Sri Ramana, Ulladu Narpadu Anubandham- benedictory verse)

At one level these teachings of Bhagwan may appear to be esoteric and too distant from the regular folks to make any impact especially in situations which are bordering on the spill-over of concern- zones of religions. While this is a challenge, it is also an opportunity for devotees of Bhagwan. Afterall, down the ages, teachings of great religious teachers have been blended in with changing needs. If the outreach helps in understanding and appreciating the true meaning of faith, it is well worth a try. ■

Shiva Arunachalaya!

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# Swami Prabhuddhananda's Kathopanishad Discourses at the Kendra

*Bharti Mirchandani*

The Kathopanishad is a powerful advaitic text that can completely transform life. It points the way to liberation from being trapped in an endless circle of birth and death. Swami Prabhuddhananada has undertaken to reveal the deeper meaning of this Upanishad to a group of seekers at the Delhi Ramana Kendra across numerous Sunday evenings. Though this entire text can be read in one go, only a deep study accompanied by deeper meditation can lead to understanding and real transformation.

Advaitic truths are communicated in the Kathopanishad through dialogue between a master, Yama, Lord of Death and of Dharma, and his disciple, Nachiketa. The conversation is set within the story of a father conducting a yagna where he is sacrificing only what is of no use to him. Nachiketa, his son, thinks that giving away old and ailing cows is

not real sacrifice. He also knows his father loves him dearly, so he asks him, 'To whom will you give me?'

'To Death!'

This is what many a father would say even today when pestered and challenged by offspring beginning to assert themselves. Except here Nachiketa actually goes to Lord Yama, waits outside his door for three days, and the story proceeds from granting a boon for each day of waiting; the child's expression of enquiry into the truth of existence; testing of the sincerity of the questioner; discovery of an ideal student; and then the revealing of Reality without beginning or end, the vast Peace that is the substratum of All That Is.

This little synopsis of the grand Upanishad is to provide an idea of the task that Swamiji has undertaken in the peaceful atmosphere of Delhi Kendra that offers an oasis from the noise, chaos and pollution at

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all levels that pervades our beloved Bharat, a land where the language of the Vedas has been ignored, where few know Sanskrit, and even Hindi often misspelt and mispronounced.

Even at the Kendra few can chant the text fluently even in the read-and-repeat style that the Swami uses to introduce each verse. As Swamiji says, our ignorance is ‘but the tip of the iceberg’. If those with an interest in the Vedas have so little mastery over basic pronunciation, can nuances of meaning even begin to be understood?

Infinite love has infinite patience. This is perhaps the only explanation for Swamiji’s persevering with us. Ignoring his physical health, suffering pain in the vocal chords, he carefully explains each word, helping us follow Nachiketa’s journey to discovery of his own inner truth, the truth that lies within each, understanding of which is vital for anyone to truly live. Swamiji explains how we can break free of the limited world where activities and thoughts ‘effectively eclipse the truth’.

Swami Prabhuddhananda allows time for questions and answers towards the end of each session. This way he can gauge just how much, or how little, we have understood; what

complex side tracks our minds have created, what filters of religiosity and mysticism we have grabbed, blocking yet again, opportunity for clarity, for real understanding.

Each Sunday session with Swamiji covers a few verses of the text. The read-and-repeat chanting of each verse is followed by an explanation of words and then whole phrases. This is interspersed with cross references from other Vedic texts which Swami has pat on his fingertips. Punctuations also take the form of current social commentary in a lighthearted manner that can be mistaken for flippancy to help us evade facing the deeper meaning. His jokes about frailty of the physical body are heart wrenching as we realize he can no longer offer a dandavat pranam, nor digest the delicious prasadam that is offered to Bhagavan and then shared by all present. Yet some of his precious gems are stored and revisited often, like his line, ‘each of us has been sent to this earth packaged with so much preservative that we need not worry about chemical additives in our food!’

But scattered in the literal explanations and occasional light banter are pearls, each of which could take us ‘across the ocean to

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the other shore we aspire for,' if only we could cherish, caress, ponder over and assimilate even one of these. Hopefully the seeds are sown, and one day plants will grow and bear fruit.

Some of these precious nuggets are reproduced here:

- God is no less solid for not having form. God is no less evident for not having thought.

- Without understanding the Truth, no problem can be solved. With understanding the Truth, no problem exists!

- In every gain there is a loss. In every loss there is a gain.

- Life runs neither on destiny nor on free will. Life runs only on Truth.

- Events harm us only if we, through ignorance, hold on to the event and let it cause depression. A short term event is made long term by the process of thinking.

- Do your duty as a prayer to Bhagavan.

- Inner honesty, inner right thinking, inner prayer, give one peace of mind. Then we perform all acts; eat, sleep, etc, with peace in the heart. Peace of mind and being is the greatest luxury, not attained

by accident, but through doing all actions prayerfully.

- Visions of god are only figments of imagination unless one knows oneself. Without knowing oneself one cannot know god. Knowing oneself, one knows god too.

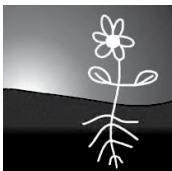
- The world can tire us with its multitude of smells, sights, tastes and textures. We cannot search for sleep. Only when we turn within for sleep can we get rest. So too it is only within oneself that we can find what we seek most, what we love most, Peace, God, Satchidanand.

- The visions of gods seen by Arjuna, Prahlad, Mirabai, Hanuman, Dhruv, were not subjective maya, yet within the realm of maya. Just as seeing my own body is not subjective maya.

- To give in to impulse is effortless. To control anger, worry, jealousy, fear, needs effort. Self reflection is not easy because we have a strong habit of living impulsively.

We are indeed blessed to have a teacher totally steeped in the advait philosophy of Shankaracharya and Ramana to be so accessible, and to be expounding this important Upanishad for us. ■

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## The Symphony of Silence

By Rupa Anand

the world and its rhetoric  
tires me with its noise.  
into still waters of solitude  
I jump -  
to maintain equipoise.  
waves of chatter,  
flatter, clamor and din  
arise and subside in the  
sea contained in -  
patiently, I wait  
anchored within,  
for cacophony to cease  
and the Symphony begin.  
silence is but the  
substratum of sound  
as the latter recedes  
we hear the background.

My father introduced Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi to me in the eighties with the 'Talks with Ramana Maharshi' and a photograph of Bhagavan. Later I studied the texts Saddarshanam and Upadesha Saram at Chinmaya Mission Delhi. Very often I would open 'Talks' and read from anywhere. The reading was not academic but intuitive. The understanding though obscured at first became more refined and subtle as the years went by. Such was and is His Grace - the Grace of Silence. Many have testified to this Grace and felt its power when they met the Maharshi or been in His Presence. He put people in touch with their innermost core from where thoughts emanate. Much like the deepest recesses of the ocean away from the surface waves of turbulence. He taught in silence. This was not physical silence, but total silence of the mind. His mind was still. He spoke only briefly in response to the world.

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## Saranagathi

*Geetha Ravichandran*

Ramana Maharishi has emphasized the importance of Saranagathi or surrender.

He has said that for those who find the practice of self enquiry difficult, this is the appropriate alternative.

*He knows what is best and when and how to do it. Leave everything entirely to Him. His is the burden, you have no longer any cares. All your cares are His. Such is surrender. This is Bhakti.*

*Or, enquire to whom these questions arise. Dive deep in the heart and remain as the Self. One of these two ways is open to the aspirant. (Talk 450)*

Surrender in common perception is considered defeatist or at best a survival tactic - supplicating a superior force for protection or support. In spiritual endeavour, surrender is an act of wisdom which means acknowledging that beyond the limitation of the senses and

ego there is a greater guidance and support available, if only we would take the trouble to seek it out.

I have heard Swami Shantananda Puri of Vasishta Guha speak about the six factors of Saranagathi which is the basis of the Vishistaadvaita school of Ramanujacharya -

*Anukulasya sankalpah, Prathikulasya varjanam;*

*Rakshishyatiti vishwasah, Gopatratva varanam tatha-*

*Atmanikshepa karpanyam, Shadangam Saranagathi.*

*To totally submit to the will of the Lord, to accept without protest even what is unfavourable, to have faith that only the Lord can protect, to turn to the Lord alone for protection, to surrender completely to Him and feel utterly helpless are the six principles of Saranagathi*

*Anukulasya Sankalpah –*

This is the first step in the act of

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Saranagathi. This involves doing things which are acceptable to the Lord. It is the acceptance of every situation, keeping in mind that it is the will of the Lord that determines everything. This attitude will ensure that even in favourable circumstances one remains humble and detached and the ego does not claim credit for itself.

#### *Prathikulasya Varjanam-*

This means not doing things which displeases the Lord like not even entertaining negative thoughts. When circumstances are adverse, acceptance is to be practiced with the understanding that it is a manifestation of the will of the Lord. No attempt to alter or change what is unfavourable should be made. Difficulties or problems are very often a ripe occasion for the grace of God manifest. When Kunti prayed that she may constantly face troubles, she did so with faith and conviction. She had experienced the Lord's grace on each occasion when the Pandavas faced seemingly unsurmountable problems. It is in difficult situations that faith sprouts and takes root.

#### *Rakshishyatiti Vishwasah-*

This is the realisation that it is the Lord alone who is capable of

rescuing a person in distress and will definitely give succour out the person. Swami Shantananda Puri would often cite the example of Uttara the mother of Parikshit to illustrate this. When the Brahmastra of Ashwattama attacked the unborn child in her womb and threatened to destroy it, Uttara in the midst of the assembly the victorious kings who were her late husband's kinsman, chose to fall at the feet of Krishna realising that only He could save her unborn child. Even if there appears to be alternatives, it is necessary to realise that the only succour is the Supreme Being.

#### *Gopatratava varanam tatha –*

Surrender involves reaching out to the Lord for protection. While in distress it is normal to assume that the Lord who knows everything should automatically come to one's rescue. In such situations the mind slips into a 'why me?' lament. Instead it is necessary to call upon the Lord for help. As the saying goes it is the crying child that gets milk.

#### *Atmanikshepa-*

This is the attitude of total surrender. It means offering oneself unreservedly to the Lord. The responsibility for one's own well-

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being should be transferred to the Lord to remain free from care and worry. However such an attitude is possible only when there is no haggling and bargaining involved. Ultimately it is necessary to understand that it is only the person who surrenders who stands to gain. There is a beautiful verse in Aksharamanamalai -

*L a b a n i y i h a p e r a ,  
labaniyennaiuttru, labamenutranai  
Arunachala(87)*

*O Arunachala! You are the ultimate gain. You gained nothing by obtaining me, who has no gain here or hereafter.*

#### *Karpanyam-*

Karpanyam means helplessness. To acknowledge that one is incapable of salvaging any situation and one is utterly helpless allows the immense strength of the Lord to act. To cling to the feet of the Lord is wisdom which is possible only when we throw ourselves at His mercy.

The above principles are both practical and time tested. However the concept of surrender poses certain difficulties to the modern ego as it is trained to believe in its own

abilities, to manipulate circumstances and to accomplish goals. Bhagavan Ramana's words point to the folly of this attitude-

"Why should you bear your load on the head when you are travelling on a train? It carries you and your load whether the load is on your head or on the floor of the train. You are not lessening the burden of the train by keeping it on your head but only straining yourself unnecessarily. Similar is the sense of doership in the world by individual." (Talk 503)

To be free from being bound by the results of actions the *Bhagavat Gita* speaks of the need to surrender the fruits of action. The consequences of one's actions cease to affect the person who has surrendered to the Almighty.

Surrender can only happen, only when there is both faith and understanding. The most obvious benefit of surrender is freedom from anxiety and fear. This absolute sense freedom which arises from letting go is the ultimate reward in itself. ■

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## Kendra Bulletin

**W**e had a very nice event on December 2nd - “Tiruvannamalai Deepam”. It was celebrated in the traditional style with the chanting of Rudram, going around the shrine with the lit Deepam which was placed on top of the shrine. Many devotees took part joyfully in lighting candles around the shrine. The function concluded with the partaking of the prasad.

Swami Durgeshananda is continuing his talks on Atma Bodha. Swami Prabhuddhananda continued his classes on Katopanishad. Talks on Bhagavan’s Saddarsham by Shri Shankarnarayanan is drawing a large audience as usual. Shri P N Vijay is continuing his Bhagavad Gita classes.

Management body meeting was held on 25th November. The format for the 30th December Seminar was finalised..

### FORTHCOMING EVENTS

<b>Jan 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	Bhagavan’s Jayanti according to the Nakshatram	
<b>Jan 7<sup>th</sup>, Jan 21<sup>st</sup> &amp; Feb 4<sup>th</sup></b>	Shri Shankarnarayanan	Saddarshanam
<b>Jan 14<sup>th</sup> &amp; Feb 11<sup>th</sup></b>	Swami Prabhuddhananda	Katopanishad
<b>Jan 28<sup>th</sup> &amp; Feb 25<sup>th</sup></b>	Swami Durgeshananda	Atmabodha
<b>Feb 18<sup>th</sup></b>	Shri P N Vijay	Bhagavad Gita Ch VI
<b>Feb 13<sup>th</sup></b>	Maha Shivaratri	

### Other discourses hosted at the Kendra:

Swami Prabhuddhanda continues his daily (except on Saturdays) morning discourse on various scriptures including Bhagavad Gita, Ashtavakra Gita and Upanishads.



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## Que Sera Sera

*Ambarish N Dave*

Que Sera Sera – whatever will be, will be – is the refrain of a beautiful old song and poem ( Que-pronounced Kay-Spanish). Many get extremely concerned and agitated over this small phrase. Is everything pre-destined? Is there no free will? Are we hostages to destiny? Then why should I exert myself or work at all? These questions bother us and never convinced of the answers one way of the other. When we are in God mood we feel everything happens by His will. When we are in egotistic state then we are convinced that we are intelligent, wise and hard-working and control our lives and the world and can achieve anything. However, if we look back in our lives and reflect and examine the past, we realize that hardly any of the events happened exactly the way we conceived of them.

Then, after all, when and where

is this – whatever will be, will be – conceived and designed and then converted into actions and events and circumstances in our lives?

Every situation and circumstance is the result of ‘Prarabdha’. Prarabdha is collectively the field where we reap the fruits or results of actions performed in the past, extending over past lives, which have started bearing fruits now in our lives. We, each of us, have an infinite stock of karmas (actions) accumulated over infinite lives that we have been through. Ishwara, the lord, decides the package of karmas whose fruits we would reap in the present life and this is the Prarabdha which we must experience in this life. Ishwara decides the form of life – human or otherwise – the type of body, instruments required for each one to work-out the karmas. All these are done by the lord dispassionately and in accordance with His immutable

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and irrevocable ‘Law of Karma’. The Lord does not participate or interfere with His Law.

So, we individually are responsible for and accountable for what we go through. We are creators of our destiny. The problem is that we perceive our destiny, events in our life, situations and circumstances, effects of free will and the like from the narrow perspective of a discrete and finite period of time which we call life and define as the period between the birth and the death of our body. We see our life only with reference to the manifestation and dissolution of our body. This identification of ours with our body is the root of all confusions. This wrong identification is the root of all problems, sorrows, dilemmas and confusions in life. The confusion arising out of this identification with this finite functioning body gives rise to our dilemmas and sorrows and further karmas, the fruits of which we must experience in future. This will go on infinitely and we will keep acquiring suitable bodies and life and life forms to work out our karmas.

Whereas, the body manifests for a finite period of time, for exhausting the Prarabdha, the mind, intellect, stored memory and ego along with

the life principle (pranas) among other components continues further to experience the fruits of karmas through different bodies and life forms. This entity which moves on acquiring different bodies – human or otherwise – keeps working out karmas, creating new karmas and then inexhaustibly working out those karmas is known as the jiva.

The jiva in its search for happiness in this world of objects goes on creating an inexhaustible ocean of karmas and its fruits and creates this unending cycle of births and deaths. Each life between the birth and death of a particular body brings with it the pains of the birth, death, old-age infirmities and disease. Sorrows are caused by hankering after elusive happiness, unfulfilled desires, unmet expectations. The so-called successes, achievements and joys of life are illusory, temporal and finite.

The karmas we perform as we go through different situations and events in life can be viewed as allowing room for free will and these karmas are the causes for future effects. The ‘Law of Karma’, therefore, has almost a crocodile’s jaw like grip over us jivas. How do we free ourselves from this grip?

Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi

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guides us. First and foremost, we must seek the Lord's grace, like Gajendra, to free us from this grip. Then we must realise that all our troubles start with the wrong identification with the body, mind and intellect. If we accept that this identification is wrong then we need to know our true identity. Who am I? If one can find the answer to this question and realize ones' true identity one would be liberated from the jaws of birth and death called samsara.

The very same instruments of mind and intellect which through desires, wrong notions and ideas of happiness and the search for it pushed us into the abyss of the cycle of birth and deaths have now to be utilized for the search of our true identity. Mahatmas who have realized their true nature and identity guide us on how we should conduct this search and self-inquiry to know our true nature and real identity. His 'Upadesa Saram' gives us very crisp and clear instructions on how to gain this self-knowledge.

No one can remain without action. Act we must, even our nature will propel us into action. We will be compelled to act even just to maintain our body. Actions in turn will create the causes for us to bear the fruits

thereof later. Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi instructs us to act selflessly for fulfilling our duties thereby asking us to act in a way that our actions are not driven by desires for particular fruits of the actions. Since the fruits must follow but according to the Lord's wish or orders we must act with an attitude of dedicating our actions and their inevitable fruits to the Lord who has manifested as the world. This attitude will also motivate us to right and good actions only since we would not offer to the Lord anything bad. Such actions for the Lord will become selfless service to Ishwara and will result in the development of deep love for Him. We love those whom we serve selflessly and unconditionally and we serve those whom we love unconditionally. This love can further be enhanced by singing His glories and repeating His name. All our thoughts then flow towards our beloved. We must further control our objective thoughts by the practice of pranayama or breath control. There is a close connection between the flow of prana and the activity of the mind.

The mind is nothing but a bundle of thoughts. The origin of all thoughts is the 'I' thought. From where does

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the mind rise? Bhagavan instructs us to dive deep and find the source of the ‘I’. It has to be beyond the mind since the ‘I’ thought came from the mind. If we observe and analyse our mind the ahankara or the mind falls as a false entity and the self-shines forth or is revealed of its own. The self does not need another light to reveal it since it is self-luminous just as no light is required to see the sun. What this means is that no other knower is required to gain knowledge of the self because it is itself knowledge. Bhagavan further tells us that self-realization is God realization, that there is no difference between the Self and Ishwara. There is a difference between jiva and Ishwara only from the stand point of form and intellect but in substance there is no difference. Bhagawan therefore instructs us to place our mind/buddhi in the Self, that is pull it towards the Self from the objects of the world and abide there. The buddhi will be subsumed by the Self.

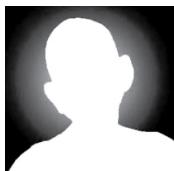
This is firm abidance in the Self and Self-knowledge, knowledge of our true identity.

However, till this happens we need to accept with humility, equanimity and with an attitude of surrender to His will, all that we pass through in life. Since we all look forward to rewards for our good deeds and actions, ‘The Law of Karma’ is the biggest incentive and motivating factor for leading a life of ethics and values – dharma. The great master Swami Sivananda exhorted all – ‘Be good, do good’ – ‘Serve, Love, Give, Purify, Meditate, Realise’.

Knowledge of our true nature, knowledge of ‘Who Am I’, Self-realization is the end of all miseries and sorrows.

Let us not waste our time in wondering why certain things happen? How things happen? Why do good peoplesuffer...Que Sera Sera – Whatever will be, will be. ■

*[e-mail: a\_n\_dave@yahoo.com]*



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## Aksharamanamalai Part 7

39

*Jñama/liyir/ke/da  
Na/nen/nuru/diya  
Na/dinin/nuru/ven  
Aruna/chala.*

O Arunachala! By what strength can I, who am worse than a dog, approach Thee and attain Thee? The devotee-soul realizes her smallness and helplessness in the glorious presence of Arunachala, her Lord. She deprecates herself by saying that she is worse than a dog. What right has a dog to demand entrance into a holy place? How can the soul by her own effort reach the feet of the Lord? Even to be able to worship His feet, His grace is necessary. All that the soul can and should do is to resign herself to the Lord's care. The Lord cannot escape, saying to the soul, 'You are unfit, get away!' It is His duty to make the soul fit and accept her. An alternative meaning of the stanza is this:

O Arunachala! Am I worse than a dog? I shall, through persistent effort, seek Thee and attain Thee.

Just as a dog, separated from its master, will put forth an untiring endeavour with the help of scent and track him down, so also the devotee-soul will not rest till she joins her Lord. The 'Who am I' inquiry will be the means whereby she will arrive at the goal.

40

*Jña/namil/la/dun  
Na/sayat/ralar/vara  
Jña/nan/derit/tarul  
Aruna/chala.*

O Arunachala! In order that the weariness born of love for Thee without knowledge may go, please grant me knowledge.

Love for God is good; but love without knowledge will only end in weariness of the soul. One may begin loving God even with wrong

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notions about His nature; but one will not realize the goal without the true knowledge of God. Since 46 Arunachala Siva the darkness of ignorance is what binds the soul, it is only the light of knowledge that will remove this bondage. To imagine that God is far away or that He is different from our true Self is not to understand what God is. When one acquires the liberating knowledge one realizes the non-dual Spirit. In the Panchadasi there is a simile which explains how weariness is caused by ignorance. Two travellers have come very near the destination. One of them knows that the destination is near, and the other does not know. The former is happy, while the latter is depressed. Ignorance thus causes weariness. Arunachala is our very Self. It is the realization of this truth that will free us from sorrow. The devotee-soul implores the Lord in this stanza to grant her divine knowledge. Sri Krishna gave Arjuna the ‘divine eye’ in order that he may behold the All-Form which is the true form of the Lord. He declares that He discloses the way of knowledge to His devotees so that they may reach Him. ‘Out of compassion for them’, says the Lord, ‘I who am their Self destroy the darkness born of ignorance by the

blazing lamp of knowledge.’

#### 41

*Jñimi/rupo/ni/yum  
Malarn/dilai/yen/dre  
Ner/nin/dranaï/yen  
n' Aruna/chala.*

O Arunachala, the sun of wisdom! How is it that Thou too, like a bee, stayest before me (without opening me and entering into me) saying, ‘You have not blossomed’?

At sunrise the lotus blossoms; the bee enters it to drink the honey. The bee will hover about without entering if the lotus remains unopened. Arunachala is not helpless like a bee. He is the sun of wisdom, possessing the power to make the heart-lotus of the devotee blossom forth. The devotee-soul tells the Lord that she will not accept His excuse that her heart has not opened. To make the heart mature is not beyond His power. How could He behave like a bee while He is the sun?

#### 42

*Tat/tuvan/deri/ya  
Dat/tanai/yut/ray  
Tat/tuva/midu/ven  
n' Aruna/chala.*

O Arunachala! Thou sayest thus: ‘Without knowing the truth (or,

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without hearing the text ‘That thou art’) you have attained that. This is the truth’.

The devotee-soul praises here the grace of the Lord which has enabled her to realize the truth without any formal instruction. The truth of non-difference — the truth that is taught in the *mahavakya*, ‘That thou art’ (*tat tvam asi*) — has come to her as a gift. And she asks the Lord Himself to proclaim this to the world. *Advaitanubhava*, the experience of non-duality, cannot come to one without the grace of God. Even the taste for *Advaita* (*advaita vasana*) has to arise in one out of God’s grace alone (*isvaranugraha eva*). The devotee-soul rejoices at the fact that she has been granted the vision of truth by God out of His abundant love. The first line of this stanza may also be rendered thus: ‘You have attained the Lord who is beyond the reach of the principles (*tattvas*)’.

**43**

*Ta/ne/ta/ne  
Tat/duva/mida/nai  
Ta/ne/kat/tuvay  
Aruna/chala.*

O Arunachala! Show Thou Thyself this truth, that Thou art the Self of all. The Lord reveals His true nature as

the Self of all. The Self is the basic reality, and that is God. Limited identifications of God with this or that form do not constitute the final truth. They are intended only for those who cannot grasp the All-Form of the Lord. In the tenth chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita* where Sri Krishna enumerates for the benefit of Arjuna the various manifestations of His splendour (*vibhuti*) in the best of each species of beings, He makes it clear that in truth, He is the Self seated in the heart of all beings. Then He reveals His All-Form (*visvarupa*).

That the Self is the basic reality, may be understood, says the *Panchadasi*, even by an analysis of ordinary empirical usage. We say, for instance, ‘Devadatta himself goes’, ‘you yourself see’, ‘I myself am not well’, etc. Here self-hood (*svatva*) is common and constant, while the persons, viz. first, second and third, vary. It is this constant and abiding Self that is God.

**44**

*Tirum/biya/han/danai  
Dina/mahak/kan/kan  
Teri/yumen/drana/yen  
n' Aruna/chala.*

O Arunachala! Thou taughtest thus: ‘Turn the ego within and look

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constantly with the inner eye, and you will see.'

Having indicated the nature of the ultimate Truth, the way to realizing it is taught here. This teaching too comes from the Lord Himself. The way to realization lies through Self-inquiry. One has to turn away from the external objects towards which the ego ordinarily flows through the sense channels and direct the attention within. This is not exactly what is meant by introversion in psychology. It means the turning of the mind towards the source of its own light, which is the Self. This is true inwardness. When the attitude or inwardness becomes constant, the truth is revealed. The truth is that the Self that is God is the sole reality, the Self-luminous pure Awareness.

**45**

*Di/ramil/lahat/til  
Te/diyun/dranai/yan  
Tirum/bavut/re/narul  
Aruna/chala.*

O Arunachala! Seeking Thee in the limitless heart, I have regained Thee. Hail Thy Grace!

The Lord has now taught that He is the Self residing in the heart of all beings and that Self-inquiry is the way to reach Him. The devotee-soul here

declares that she has sought Him and found Him, following the direction given. The search is inward search. The heart which is the location of the Lord is not the physical heart, but the spiritual heart, the limitless heart-ether (*daharakasa*). It is here that He is realized. He is ever there; but the soul is unaware of His Presence because of ignorance. When, as a result of the inward search the ignorance is destroyed, she discovers Him as her own inmost Self. This is regaining what was never really lost, discovering the eternal Truth.

If the expression *tiramil* (limitless) is read as *dhiramil* (without courage or strength), the meaning of the verse would be: 'I have searched for Thee within the heart without the requisite strength, and so I have come back to Thee, being defeated in my attempt. Please be gracious to me'.

**46**

*Tup/pari/vil/la  
Ip/pirap/pen/payan  
Op/pida/va/yen  
Aruna/chala.*

O Arunachala! Of what use is this birth without knowledge born through inquiry? And, why should I compare it to anything?

To be born as a human being is

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rare. Of all the species of living beings, man has a privileged position. “Among living beings”, says Sankara in the *Vivekacudamani*, “human birth is difficult to obtain” (*Jantunam nara janma durlabham*). Human birth is even more precious than the status of the gods; for, while one may enjoy heavenly pleasures as a god on account of one’s past meritorious deeds, one must be born again as a human being for acquiring fresh merit or for endeavouring to gain perfection. Man is particularly gifted with the ability to discriminate and inquire into the truth. And, since inquiry is the direct means to perfection (*moksha*), human birth is most precious. Having been born as a human being, one should not waste one’s time and energy in pursuits that do not result in release from bondage. “If one knows here, then there is truth,” declares the *Kena Upanishad*. “If one does not know here, there is great destruction.” “Even while in this body,” it is said, “knowledge should be gained; otherwise when the body is given up, *Brahman* would become very distant, indeed.”

Having been born as a human being, if one does not strive to gain Self-knowledge, it is a great tragedy. Wasting precious human life in futile

pursuits is “like boiling oil-cakes in a vessel made of emerald on fire fed by sandalwood as fuel, or like growing weeds in a farm which has been ploughed with a ploughshare made of gold, or like cultivating maize by using camphor as manure”. So far as creaturely pursuits are concerned, there is no distinction between man and beast; the latter too eats, sleeps, and multiplies. The only distinction that man possesses is that he can know the truth. If he does not benefit by this special gift, his condition becomes more pitiable than that of the animals. Therefore, Bhagavan says in the present verse that such a futile life cannot be compared to anything—not even, say, to the life of a dog. *Oppida vayen*: This phrase may be interpreted also thus: (1) O, Arunachala, I have not learnt to entrust (i.e. surrender) my ego to you; (2) I have not striven to remove the defect of neglecting Self-enquiry and make good my past remissness.

47

*Tuy/mana/mozhi/yar  
To/yumum/mey/yaham  
o/yave/yaru/len  
Aruna/chala.*

O Arunachala! Be gracious so that I may sink in Thy true form, wherein

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sink those whose mind and speech are pure.

Union with God is not possible for those who are impure in mind, speech and body. Purity of heart is essential for those who seek to enter into the precincts of the Divine. Through the path of good works, through dedicated service (*karma yoga*), one should have the mind and heart cleansed. It is desire or passion that makes the mind impure. Inertia (*tamas*) and passionate activity (*rajas*) prevent the mind from reflecting the Self. So, the aspirant should free the mind from these defects and make it function in a disinterested and unattached manner. In other words, all selfish motives should be removed, and *sattva* should become the dominant nature of the mind. Even devotion to God should

become unselfish; one has to dedicate action as well as the fruit thereof to God. As the *Bhagavad Gita* declares: “By worshipping God through one’s allotted work, one gains fulfillment.” The saints are those who sink their egoity in the Divine; they are *santas* (the holy men), *nayanmars* (spiritual leaders), alwars, (those who are immersed in God-love). In the present verse, the devotee-soul prays to Arunachala that by His grace, and following the example of the saints, she could lose herself in Him.

*tuymana mozhiyar:* This phrase may also mean, “Those who have attained the state of mindlessness through purifying the mind.” ■

*Source TMP Mahadevan’s Book Arunachala Siva Aksharamanamalai*

"Direct Path wishes its readers a very  
Happy 2018"



## श्री रमण महर्षि के संस्मरण

65

पापाजी (हरिवंश लाल पुंजा) (1910-1997) का जन्म त्यालपुर (पंजाब) में हुआ था। वे भारतीय सेनामें अफसर थे। बचपन से ही श्रीकृष्ण के प्रति अत्यंत गहरी भक्ति के कारण उन्हें दिव्य दर्शन भी हुए थे।

सेना में अपना अधिकृत पर छोड़कर आध्यात्मिक खोज में वे जगह-जगह धूम कर अनेक महात्माओं से मिले। प्रत्येक से उनका एक ही प्रश्न था, “क्या आपने ईश्वर को देखा है? क्या आप मुझे उसके दर्शन करवा सकते हैं?” जिसका उत्तर उन्हें कहीं नहीं मिला। निराश होकर जब वे वापस लौटे तब रमण महर्षि जैसा दिखने वाला एक साधु भिक्षा के लिए उनके घर आया। उसे भिक्षा दे दी गई, किंतु वही प्रश्न पूछा गया। पापा जी कहते हैं:

मुझे बड़ा आश्चर्य हुआ जब उस साधु ने कहा कि वह एक ऐसे व्यक्ति को जानता है जो ईश्वर के दर्शन करा सकता है: उसका नाम है रमण महर्षि, और वह तिरुवण्णामलै में रहता है। उसने मुझे विस्तार से समझाया कि वहाँ कैसे पहुँचा जा सकता है। मैंने सब विवरण ध्यान से नोट कर लिया। मैं अपने सारे पैसे, जो मैंने सेना में नौकरी से बचाए थे, निष्फल यात्राओं पर व्यय कर चुका था। मैं चिंतित था कि वहाँ कैसे पहुँचा जाए।

अगले दिन एक आश्चर्यकारक संयोग से मैंने एक विज्ञापन देखा जिसमें सेना से निवृत अधिकारी के लिए मद्रास में स्थान रिक्त था। मुझे वह नौकरी मिल गई। मेरे मालिक ने मुझे मद्रास जाने और ठहरने के लिए आवश्यक राशि दी। यह 1944 की बात है, तब मैं 34 वर्ष का था।

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चूकिं पदभार ग्रहण करने में समय बाकी था, मैं साधु की सूचना के अनुसार रमणश्रम पहुँच गया। महर्षि के कक्ष में प्रवेश करने से पूर्व मैंने खिड़की से देखा तो पाया कि वही साधु जो मेरे घर आया था, सोफे पर बैठा है। मुझे घृणा ने घेर लिया। मैंने सोचा कि यह कोई ढोंगी है। मेरे घर आकर इसने मुझे अपने आश्रम बुला लिया, और मेरे से पहले यहाँ बैठ गया। मुझे क्रोध आया, और मैंने तुरंत आश्रम छोड़ने का निर्णय ले लिया।

तभी एक आश्रमवासी ने मुझसे पूछा कि आप तो अभी आए हैं, महर्षि से बिना मिले कैसे जा रहे हैं? जब मैंने उन्हें अपनी कहानी बताई तो वे बोले, आपको कोई भ्रम हुआ है। महर्षि तो पिछले 40 वर्षों से कभी नगर के बाहर ही नहीं गए हैं। यह भी संभव है कि वे अपनी शक्ति से पंजाब में प्रकट हुए हो, जब कि उनका शरीर यहाँ था। इस बात से मेरी जिज्ञासा जागृत हो गई और मैंने रुकने का निर्णय लिया।

11.30 से 2.30 दोपहर के मध्य महर्षि अपने कक्ष में भोजन के उपरांत विश्राम करते थे। उस समय वहाँ जिज्ञासुओं को जाने की अनुमति नहीं थी। महर्षि के परिचारक ने मुझे भीतर जाने से रोका। मैं अंदर जाने के लिए अड़ गया। हमारे विवाद को महर्षि ने सुन लिया और मुझे भीतर आने की अनुमति मिल गई।

मैंने क्रोधित और लड़ाई के स्वर में पूछा, “क्या तुम्हीं वे व्यक्ति हो जो मेरे घर आए थे?” महर्षि मौन रहे। मैंने फिर कहा, “क्या तुम नहीं आए थे यह कहने, कि मैं यहाँ आऊँ?” वे फिर भी कुछ नहीं बोले। जब मैंने समझ लिया कि वे उत्तर देने को प्रस्तुत नहीं हैं, तब मैं अपनी मुख्य बात पर आ गया और पूछा, “क्या आपने ईश्वर को देखा है? क्या आप मुझे उसके दर्शन करा सकते हैं?” उनका उत्तर था, “नहीं, मैं तुम्हें ईश्वर के दर्शन नहीं करा सकता, क्योंकि ईश्वर कोई वस्तु या पदार्थ नहीं है, जो इंद्रिय गोचर हो सके। वह तो स्वयं ही विषय है, कर्ता है, दृष्टा है।” फिर उन्होंने कहा, “तुम ही ईश्वर हो, अपने शुद्ध रूप को पहचानो।” मैं उनके शब्दों से प्रभावित नहीं हुआ होता, और मैं उनकी उपेक्षा कर देता, यदि मुझे निम्नलिखित अनुभव नहीं होता।

जैसे ही महर्षि ने मेरी ओर देखा और मेरी आँखों में झांका, मेरा पूरा शरीर काँपने लगा। मेरी नसों में शक्ति की लहर फैल गई। ऐसा लग रहा था कि

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नसें नाच रही हैं। मेरे रोंगटे खड़े हो गए। मुझे अपनी छाती के दाहिनी ओर आध्यात्मिक हृदय का भान हो रहा था। मुझे लगा कि मेरे हृदय में एक कली, जो चमकदार और हल्के नीले रंग की थी और जो बंद थी, वह महर्षि की दृष्टि पड़ते ही खुली और अरुणिमा पूर्ण हो गई। यह एक अत्यंत असामान्य अनुभव था; मैं आश्चर्यचकित हो गया।

जीवन भर की आध्यात्मिक खोज में मैं सैकड़ों स्वामियों और गुरुओं से मिला; किंतु उनमें से कोई भी सत्य को वैसे प्रकट नहीं कर सका था जैसा कि महर्षि ने किया। वे जानते थे कि मैं आत्म साक्षात्कार के लिए तैयार था और उन्होंने अपनी दिव्य-दृष्टि से मुझे अपनी शुद्ध अवस्था में स्थापित कर दिया।

आत्म साक्षात्कार के प्रारंभ के कुछ महीनों में मुझे विचारों ने तंग नहीं किया। मुझे यह समझने में देर नहीं लगी कि संसार में हम विचार-रहित होकर भी रह सकते हैं। जब हम आत्मा में निहित हो जाते हैं तब कोई दिव्य शक्ति हमारे जीवन का बागडोर संभाल लेती है; सब कार्य स्वचालित, बिना अधिक मानसिक प्रयत्न के हो जाते हैं।

महर्षि ने कभी भी कोई चमत्कार दिखावे के लिए नहीं किया। उनका एक मात्र चमत्कार था मनुष्य का आंतरिक परिवर्तन। वे एक शब्द से, दृष्टि से, संकेत से, या केवल मौन रहकर अपने आस-पास के लोगों के मन शांत कर सकते थे।

जुलाई 1947 में, स्वतंत्रता के एक मास पूर्व, देवराज मुदलियार (सं 30) ने मुझसे कहा कि मैं पंजाब से अपने परिवार को ले आऊँ, क्योंकि वो हिस्सा शीघ्र ही पाकिस्तान बनने वाला था। मैंने कहा कि मैं महर्षि को छोड़कर नहीं जा सकता। मैं उनके साथ अपने संबंध में ऐसी स्थिति में पहुँच गया हूँ कि मैं उन पर से आँख नहीं हटा सकता। जब मुदलियार ने महर्षि से कहा कि पुंजा का परिवार पश्चिमी पंजाब में फँस गया है और वह वहाँ नहीं जाना चाहता, तब महर्षि बोले, “तुम्हारे क्षेत्र में बहुत गड़बड़ होनेवाली है, तुम जाकर अपने परिवार को क्यों नहीं ले आते?”

यह लगभग एक आदेश था, किंतु मैं फिर भी हिचक रहा था। मैंने महर्षि से कहा कि मुझे आप में बहुत आसवित हैं। मैं आपको नहीं छोड़ सकता। मैं

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अपनी आँख आप से नहीं हटा सकता। महर्षि का उत्तर था, “तुम जहाँ हो, वहाँ मैं तुम्हारे साथ हूँ।” जिस प्रकार से वे बोले उससे मुझे लगा कि महर्षि का निर्णय है कि मैं जाऊँ। मैंने उसे स्वीकार कर लिया। जीवन में पहली बार मैंने साष्टांग दंडवत किया और अत्यंत आदर और श्रद्धा से उनके चरण छुए। सामान्यतः वे किसी को अपने पैर नहीं छूने देते थे, किंतु यह विशेष अवसर था और उन्होंने मुझे नहीं रोका। मैंने उनके पैर के नीचे से कुछ धूल उठाकर निशानी स्वरूप अपनी जेब में एक पुड़िया में रख ली।

मैं लाहौर पहुँचा। वहाँ वातावरण वैसा ही बिगड़ा हुआ था, जैसा मुझसे कहा गया था। मैंने स्टेशन जाकर अपने शहर ल्यालपुर (नया नाम फैसलाबाद) का टिकट खरीदा। उन मुसीतब के दिनों में हिंदू और मुसलमान अलग — अलग डिब्बों में बैठते थे, ताकि कोई मुसीबत आने पर एक दूसरे की सहायता कर सकें। हिंदुओं वाले डिब्बे लगभग खाली थे। तभी मुझे एक भीतरी आवाज़ मेरे स्वामी की सुनाई दी, ‘जाकर मुसलमानों के डिब्बे में बैठो, वहाँ तुम्हें कुछ नहीं होगा।’

मैंने सोचा कि यदि मैं उनके डिब्बे में बैठता हूँ तो मुसलमान सहयात्रियों में कैसे मिल पाऊँगा। मेरे कपड़े उनसे भिन्न थे और मेरी एक हथेली के पीछे मोटा सा ‘ज़’ गुदा हुआ था। किंतु मैंने अपने गुरु द्वारा संचालित आत्मा की आवाज़ को माना और मुसलमानों के साथ बैठ गया। किसी ने मुझसे कुछ नहीं पूछा। जब गाड़ी देहात के इलाके में पहुँची, मुसलमानों ने उसे रोक लिया और हिंदुओं के डिब्बों के यात्रियों को गोलियों से भून दिया। मैं साफ बच गया।

गाड़ी से उत्तर कर मैं अपने पारिवारिक घर गया और परिवार के 34 सदस्यों को, जिनमें अधिकतर स्त्रियाँ और बच्चे थे, सुरक्षित भारत लाने में सफल रहा।

महर्षि ने मुझे पंजाब अपना कर्तव्य पालन करने भेजा था। यह उनकी विशेष शैली थी। वे अपने भक्तों को कभी अपने पारिवारिक कर्तव्य से च्युत नहीं होते देते थे। मुझे यह कहकर ‘तुम जहाँ हो, वहाँ मैं तुम्हारे साथ हूँ’ उन्होंने मुझे अपना कर्तव्य पूरा करने भेजा। मैंने सोचा था कि उनके शब्द केवल आध्यात्मिक संकेतार्थ मात्र थे। अब मुझे समझ आया कि यथार्थ में मैं

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उनके संरक्षण में रह रहा था। इसीलिए उन्होंने मुझे बताया कि मैं कहाँ बैठूँ। 20 घंटे तक मैं एक मुसलमानों से भरे डिब्बे में रहा। मेरे कान छिदे हुए थे, जो मेरे हिंदू होने के स्पष्ट प्रमाण थे। मेरे हाथ पर 'ऊँ' गुदा हुआ था। किंतु किसी ने मुझे नहीं पहचाना। साथ ही पूर्ण अराजकता के माहौल में अपने इतने बड़े परिवार को सुरक्षित भारत लाने में सफल रहा। हमारी ट्रेन लाहौर से भारत आनेवाली आखरी ट्रेन थी।

मैं अपने परिवार को लखनऊ ले आया, क्योंकि वहाँ मेरा आर्मी के दिनों का एक मित्र था। महर्षि के पास जाने का प्रश्न ही नहीं था। सारे परिवार का भरण—पोषण करनेवाला केवल मैं ही था। इसके लिए मुझे दिन—रात काम करना पड़ता था।

मैं लखनऊ में जो सत्संग करता था, उसमें शामिल होनेवाले किसी व्यक्ति ने मुझे एक कागज़ दिया जिस पर लिखा था, 'आप रमण महर्षि के शिष्य थे। आपको मेरा विनम्र प्रणाम।' मैं अपने को नहीं रोक सका। मैं चिल्लाया, 'कृपया अपना व्याकरण ठीक कर लें, मैं उनका शिष्य हूँ, वे मेरे गुरु हैं, मैं उन्हें भूतकाल में कैसे फेंक सकता हूँ, मैं कभी नहीं सोचता कि मैं पुंजा आपसे बोल रहा हूँ। पुंजा के मुख से जो भी निकलेगा, वह झूठ होगा। यह तो मेरे गुरु ही हैं जो बोल रहे हैं। मैं यहाँ बैठकर अपने गुरु और उनकी शिक्षा से आपको अवगत करा रहा हूँ। वे ही गुरु हैं, मैं नहीं। पुंजा तो सदा के लिए मर गया, गुरु ही मेरे हृदय में मेरी अनश्वर आत्मा बनकर सदा रहेंगे।' ■

क्रमशः

“श्री रमण महर्षि 120 व्यक्तियों के प्रबोधनकारी, प्रेरणादायक संस्मरण”  
पुस्तक से उदधृत

(संपादक - प्रो. लक्ष्मी नारायण  
अनुवादक - डॉ. छाया तिवारी)

*Translated from Hindi version of book*

*'Face to Face with Sri Ramana Maharshi'*

## Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi



*Ramana's Birth place before the recent renovation*

Born on 1879 December 30 Monday 1 a.m. - Born at Tiruchuli. [Corresponding to 16, Margali of Tamil year Pramadi - Star Punarvasu - Arudra Darshan day.] Father was Shri Sundaram Iyer and Mother Azhagammal. Name given at birth was Venkataramana Iyer.

House where born is now called 'Sri Sundara Mandiram'. Tiruchuli temple Deities are Sri Bhuminatha and Mother Sri Sahayavalli about which Sundaramurti and Manickavachakar have sung hymns. 'Arudra Darshan' commemorates the occasion when Siva manifested himself to his devotees as Nataraja. It is also on this date that an endless column of Light - Siva's transcendental and immanent aspect - was manifested as the benevolent Arunachala.



## श्री रमण महर्षि से बातचीत

23 जनवरी, 1937

341. श्रीमती जैनिंग्सः श्री भगवान् के अनुसार साक्षात्कार की अवस्था संकल्पों के अत्याचार से मुक्ति है। क्या संकल्पों का प्रकृति की योजना में कोई स्थान ही नहीं है—चाहे निम्न भूमिका पर ही हो ?

**महर्षि :** संकल्पों का उदय 'मैं—भाव से होता है जो स्वयं आत्मा से उदय होता है। इस प्रकार आत्मा 'मैं' तथा अन्य संकल्पों के रूप में व्यक्त होता है। संकल्पों के होने या न होने का क्या महत्त्व है ?

**भक्त :** क्या उत्तम विचार साक्षात्कार में सहायक हैं ? क्या वे प्रामाणिक माध्यम अथवा साक्षात्कार हेतु प्रारम्भिक सीढ़ी नहीं हैं ?

**महर्षि :** हाँ—इस प्रकार वे निकृष्ट संकल्पों को दूर करते हैं। साक्षात्कार की अवस्था से पूर्व स्वयं भी लुप्त होना होगा।

**भक्त :** किन्तु सृजनात्मक संकल्प क्या साक्षात्कार का ही एक पहलू नहीं हैं तथा उस दृष्टि से सहायक नहीं हैं ?

**महर्षि :** उपरोक्त प्रकार से ही वे सहायक हैं। इन सबको आत्मा में लुप्त होना होगा। संकल्प उत्तम हों या हीन तुमको दूर ले जाते हैं, समीप नहीं; चूंकि संकल्पों से आत्मा अधिक निकट है। तुम आत्मा हो, जबकि संकल्प आत्मा से अलग हैं।

**भक्त :** इस प्रकार आत्मा अपनी स्वयं की सृष्टि को अन्ततः आत्मसात् कर लेती है, जिसने उसके साक्षात्कार में सहायता की थी। इसके विपरीत सम्भता गलती से अपनी सृष्टियों की उपासना करती है और इस प्रकार अपनी सृष्टियों को अलगकरती है और उनकी लघु परिधियाँ (short-circuits) बनाती है जो इसकी प्रगति में सहायक हुई हैं।

**महर्षि :** क्या तुम संकल्पों से अलग नहीं हो ? क्या तुम्हारा अस्तित्व उनके

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बिना नहीं है ? किन्तु क्या तुम्हारे बिना संकल्पों का अस्तित्व सम्भव है ?

**भक्त :** क्या सभ्यता सामान्यतः, धीरे-धीरे किन्तु निश्चित रूप से, इस आत्म-साक्षात्कार की सही दिशा में आगे बढ़ रही है ?

**महर्षि :** सभ्यता प्रकृति की योजना में ही है। अन्ततः यह भी उवके समान अपने आपको आत्म-साक्षात्कार में विलीन करेगी।

**भक्त :** क्या प्राचीन ढंग का एक उत्तम पुरुष आधुनिक सभ्यता के एक बुद्धिमान तथा व्यवहार-कुशल व्यक्ति की तुलना में साक्षात्कार के अधिक निकट है?

**महर्षि :** साक्षात्कार करने वाला मनुष्य देखने में गँवार प्रतीत हो सकता है, परन्तु गँवार साक्षात्कारी पुरुष नहीं है।

**भक्त :** क्या यह धारणा उचित है कि समस्त घटनाएँ जो हमारे साथ होती हैं, ईश्वर प्रेरित हैं, तथा इस कारण उत्तम ही है।

**महर्षि :** हाँ ऐसा ही है। तथापि अन्य वस्तुएँ तथा ईश्वर आत्मा से पृथक नहीं हैं। यदि तुम आत्मभाव से रहो तो इनका संकल्प भी क्यों उत्पन्न होगा ?

**भक्त :** क्या 'समर्पण' का आशय यह है कि चींटी, मच्छर, सर्प आदि समस्त शारीरिक सन्तापन को स्वीकार कर वास्तव में उनका कोई दुख न मानें ?

**महर्षि :** यह जो कुछ भी है, क्या यह तुम, द्रष्टा अथवा विचारक से पृथक है?

श्रोताओं में से एक पारसी महिला बीच में बोल पड़ी :

यदि वे पृथक नहीं हैं तो क्या हमें चींटी का दंश अनुभव नहीं होता ?

**महर्षि :** चींटी किसको काटती है ? वह देह है। तुम देह नहीं हो। जब तक तुम में देह से तादात्य है, तुम चींटीयाँ पौधे आदि देखते हो। यदि तुम आत्मभाव से रहो, तो आत्मा से अलग कोई दूसरा नहीं है।

**भक्त :** देह दंश की वेदना को अनुभव करती है।

**महर्षि :** यदि देह उसे अनुभव करती है तो उसे ही प्रश्न करने दो। देह की चिन्ता देह पर छोड़ो। तुम्हें उससे क्या सम्बन्ध ?

अमरीकी महिला ने पुनः कहा: क्या पूर्ण समर्पण का यह आशय है कि हमें अपने वातावरण के समस्त कोलाहल एवं अशान्ति को, ध्यान करते समय भी स्वीकार करना चाहिए ? अथवा एकान्त सेवन के लिए हम किसी पहाड़ी की गुफा में जायें ? क्या श्री भगवान् ने ऐसा ही नहीं किया था ?

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**महर्षि :** न कहीं जाना है, न आना है। आत्मा को पंचभूतों से अप्रभावित कहा गया है, यह निस्सीम है, शाश्वत है। यह चल नहीं सकता। आत्मा को जाने के लिए कोई स्थान नहीं है।

**भक्त :** किन्तु आत्मा को खोजने की प्रक्रिया में, क्या बाह्य साधनों का उपयोग आध्यात्मिक दृष्टि से उचित है ?

**महर्षि :** आत्मा का शरीर से तादात्म्य करना ही भूल है। यदि भगवान् देह है तो तुम उस देह से प्रश्न करो। किन्तु जिसे तुम भगवान् कहकर सम्बोधित कर रहे हो उसे जानो। वह देह नहीं है। वह आत्मा है।

फिर महिला ने 'हरिजन' पत्र में प्रकाशित एक लेख का उल्लेख किया जिसमें यह कहा है कि प्रत्येक पदार्थ ईश्वर है तथा व्यक्तिगत कुछ भी नहीं है। तथा इसी प्रकार।

**महर्षि :** प्रत्येक वस्तु, व्यक्ति, ईश्वर एवं समस्त आत्मा ही हैं।

इसके बाद महिला ने कवि शैली रचित कुछ पंक्तियाँ सुनायी तथा प्रश्न किया कि क्या शैली आत्म—साक्षात्कारी पुरुष नहीं था ?

मनुज की दुर्गम्य उस अन्तर गुहा में

मूर्त दिव्यासीन रूप अतीव सुन्दर

तनिक भी यदि पहुँच पाते अदम भाव समीप

अर्चना आजानु करते सलज कम्पिल गात

त्वरित धर लेते उसी नव ज्योति का परिधान

स्वप्नवत् वपु मुखर करता रश्मिपुंज अशोक

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**महर्षि :** हाँ। पंक्तियाँ श्रेष्ठ हैं। उसने जो लिखा है उसका साक्षात्कार अवश्य ही किया होगा।

तब महिला श्री भगवान् को धन्यवाद देकर विदा हुई। ■

क्रमशः

“श्री रमण महर्षि से बातचीत” पुस्तक से उद्धृत

(संग्रहकर्ता - श्री मुनगल एस. वैकटरामैया

अनुवादक - श्री दिनेशचन्द्र शर्मा)

*Translated from 'Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi'*



**BHAGAVAN JAYANTI CELEBRATIONS  
SATURDAY, 30TH DECEMBER 2017  
SEMINAR AT THE RAMANA KENDRA  
LODI RD, NEW DELHI**

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**PROGRAM**

10.00 to 10.15 AM	Registration
10.15 to 10.45 AM	Invocation Lighting of the Lamp Opening Remarks by President Ramana Kendra Blessings from Swami Prabhuddhananda
10.45 to 12 Noon	"Nature of the Mind" - Sri Shankaranarayanan
12.00 to 12.15 PM	Tea/Coffee
12.15 to 1.30 PM	"Shiva and Shakti" - Swami Durgesananda Acharya of Chinmaya Mission Gurugram
1.30 to 2.30	Lunch
2.30 to 3.45 PM	Film on the Life Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi
3.45 to 4.00 PM	Tea/Coffee
4.00 to 5.00 PM	"Guru Tatva" - Swami Prakarshananda Acharya of Chinmaya Mission Delhi
5.00 to 5.15 PM	Bhajans led by Swami Prakarshananda
5.15 PM	Vote of Thanks

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Those who succeed owe their success to  
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*The results of Karma (Action) pass away,  
and yet leave seeds that cast the agent  
into an ocean of Karma.  
Karma yields no salvation*

*Ramana Maharshi {Upadesa Saram (2)}*

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**“When the mind turns away from the objects, it beholds its source, consciousness. This is Self-abidance.”**

**Ramana Maharshi (Upadesa Saram-16)**

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“Consciousness is the screen  
on which all the pictures  
come and go. The screen is real,  
the pictures are mere shadows on it.”

**Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi**



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