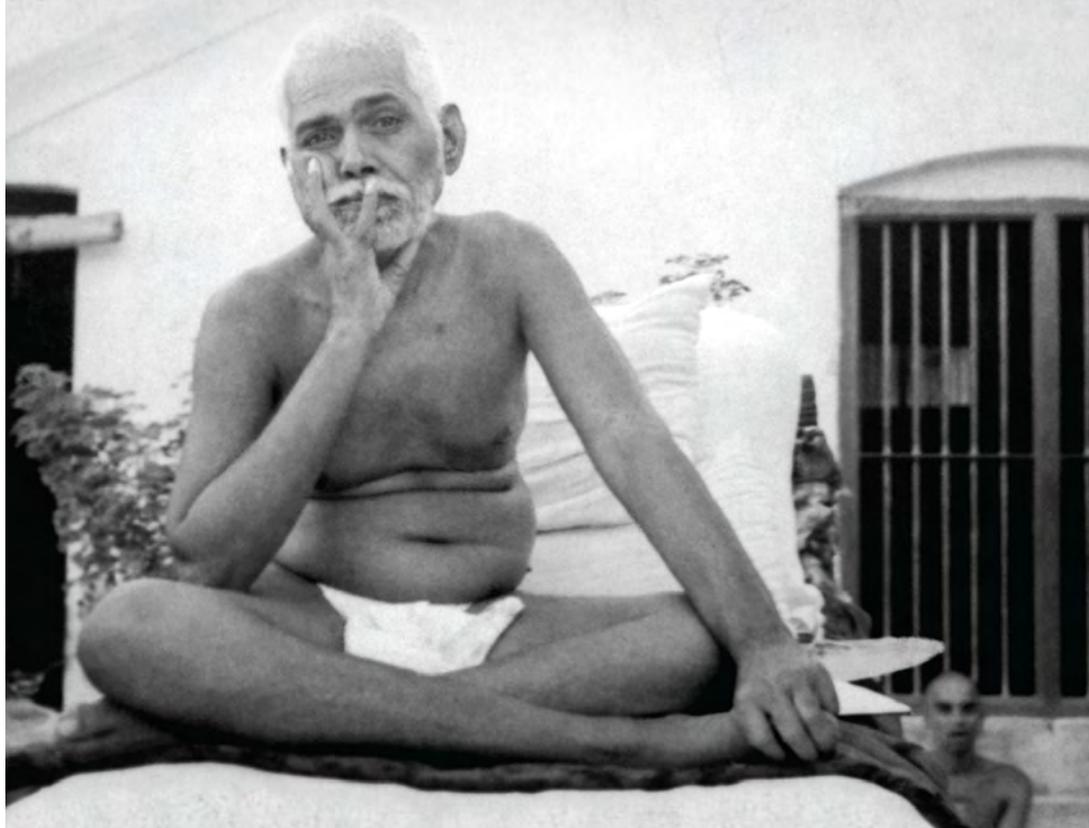




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# RAMANA GYAN **DIRECT PATH**



VOL. XIX, No. 2

November - December, 2016



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

# RAMANA GYAN DIRECT PATH

VOLUME XIX ISSUE 2

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER, 2016

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## Letters to the Editor

Readers are welcome to express their views on the articles printed (in not more than 200 words) and send them to [directpath@rediffmail.com](mailto:directpath@rediffmail.com)

Direct Path team would like to place on record the invaluable contribution of Dr. Vijay Vancheswar as the Editor of Direct Path for the past 10 years. An unassuming personality, Vijay is steeped in Bhagavan's teachings and it reflected in his editorials and articles. His guidance and contribution would continue to be available to us. We wish him all the best in his pursuit of "I".

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# Transformational Experience

*Shiromani Vijay*

**R**ecently, the Advent Day, an important event in the Ramana calendar was celebrated with great fervour and devotion. It was the day in 1896 when Bhagavan completed his journey from Madurai to Tiruvannamalai to reach the feet of His Master Arunachala after a transformational experience.

Most of us would know about the transformational experience in Ramana's life but it is worth recapitulating briefly. At the tender age of 16, Ramana suddenly felt that he was dying. Unable to fathom it, he decided to dramatize it. He mimicked his own death and lay down totally still and 'lifeless'. He got an experience whereby he felt that his body had gone dead but deep inside some life force was throbbing. At that moment Ramana realised that this body was just an envelope and the real Ramana was the life-force which resided in him.

Throughout history we find similar incidents. Take the case of Buddha - he

was born in a royal family that ruled Kapilavastu. After a family astrologer had warned his father of the monastic leanings of his Prince Siddhartha, the King tried to keep the young Prince secluded from the realities of life and from the company of scholarly monks. However, when he was just 29 years old, the Prince Siddhartha, the heir-apparent to the throne saw in quick succession an old man, a sick man, a dead body and an ascetic. From the first three the inevitability and stark reality of old age, disease and death were driven home to him. In the peaceful face of the saffron-clad mendicant, Siddhartha saw a possible answer to these sad happenings. At that moment, he left his beautiful wife, his new born baby, the comforts of a palace in search of answers and eventual self-realisation.

Saint PurandaraDasa, the father of Carnatic music, was originally a miserly jeweller. When one day, knowing fully well that the nose-ring in his safe deposit vault was his wife's,

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was about to punish her for selling, it appeared mysteriously on her nose. When his wife narrated the story, he suddenly realised that there is an ordainer beyond our comprehension. From then on, whatever he uttered was divine music.

More recently, for Sri Aurobindo in Alipore Jail where he was facing sedition charges, Lord Krishna appeared in his dreams and told him to go to Pondicherry and he should spread His message. The Magistrate changed suddenly. Sri Aurobindo was released from Jail and taken to Pondicherry through unknown benefactors. Aurobindo started spreading His message.

These experiences transformed a prince into an Avatar, a greedy jeweller into a musical Saint and a firebrand nationalist into a Spiritual Master. Such is the power of experience in inner transformation. These great souls were already in an advanced stage of their spiritual journeys because of their Prarabdha and these experiences acted as a trigger from the Divine for self-realisation.

In Bhagavan's presence, scores of devotees have experienced their transformation. For them all their questions, doubts and concerns were laid to rest just by his glance. Bhagavan always talked about being

in a constant state of self-awareness; which is tuning ourselves to the inner I which is throbbing inside each one of us. However, in modern life there are too many distractions to blow our mind away from introversion and introspection – exacting jobs, glitzy malls, TV and of course the ever-present internet and mobile. The result is we are just not attuned to hear voices from within to uproot ourselves from the grooves in which our minds are stuck. Many a times even when we hear faint messages, we tend to brush them aside for the fear of being ridiculed by others. How can we hear the sweet sound of Krishna's flute if we our receivers are tuned always to Bollywood, Gmail and WhatsApp?

Some transformational experience needs to occur for any great change to take place. They are most often triggered by inexplicable events, when we start seeking the grace of the Lord. I would argue that the transformational experiences are not the prerogative of a chosen few; but do happen in the life of each one of us, albeit in a small way. We need to be ready to receive and internalise it to transform our lives. Often, a subtle experience maybe gently steering us towards the search of our own identity and truth, we may not brand it as a transformational experience. ■



## Bhagavan on the death of a loved one

*Neera Kashyap*

In India people have always known that to go before your time has come is as great a transgression as to cling to life when death has arrived at your doorstep. Hinduism seeks to soften the universal dread of death by viewing it as an interval between lives - likening it to sleep as an interval between two waking states. Unlike the western view which sees sickness as something foreign and toxic in the body that needs to be eliminated, the traditional Ayurveda view sees sickness as a disharmony between the body and its environment that needs to be corrected so that balance is restored. Logically, a good death is one that we need to prepare for with balance and even-mindedness.

The Hindu world view of *moksha* helps to prepare us for this through the conviction that the ultimate reality lies beyond the body, mind and intellect. This offers us a pervasive sense of hope, even in the most iniquitous conditions, as it feeds our conviction

that there is an unknown design to life that can be trusted, despite life's sorrows, cruelties and injustices. And because this ultimate reality transcends our minds and intellects, it must be central to all, connecting us equally to everyone else. Subtly, this gives us a sense of equality, self-worth and interconnectedness.

Unfortunately, decades of modern medical advances with vastly improved medications and therapies have changed our attitudes towards death and dying, priming our expectations to simply live longer. Surgeon, public health researcher and author of the New York Times best-seller, *Being Mortal*, Atul Gawande said in a talk at Stanford in March 2015 that well-being had become synonymous with a longer and more robust life, supported at every stage by effective medical interventions, thereby 'medicalising our mortality' to the point where even terminally ill patients and their families look to their doctors for life-

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saving answers.

He reiterated that medicine's typical approach had become to trade time and quality of life in the short term for a longer life in the future. "But the trade-off isn't always a good one. For example, aggressive cancer treatment can be debilitating and painful, and often fails to prolong life, merely making the end of life miserable for patients. In contrast, the goal of palliative care is to create the best possible day for patients *today*, improving their quality of life, control and empowerment," he said, adding: "Palliative care practices reduce unwanted medical procedures and cost and have been shown to actually increase life span – by 25% in one study of late-stage lung cancer patients. If doctors took the time to ask their patients about their values and priorities for the time they have left, the chances are that patients will want to forgo complex in-patient procedures in favor of treatments that enable them to spend more – and more comfortable time - at home."

From my own observations of terminally ill relatives in India, I have noted that most gave in to the advice of their doctors who prescribed expensive and painful tests/interventions right till the end, leaving

little scope for a peaceful and dignified exit. A 2013 study in Economic and Political Weekly states that the cost of the inpatient care of decedents (the deceased) in India is much higher than that of survivors at all stages of life. This is because physicians in private hospitals prescribe more expensive drugs, subject patients to more clinical tests and charge higher for utilizing hospital facilities. The cost is even higher for those who come from rural areas as they stay longer in hospitals, utilize private health facilities and suffer from chronic diseases. The study concluded that the economically better-off spend more on health care in terms of absolute income than the less well off, and that healthcare expenditure on efforts to save life is high.

In this context where there is little difference now between India and advanced countries in 'medicalizing our mortality', what was Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi's guidance to us on the death of a loved one? Bhagavan's answers were acutely adapted to the understanding of the seeker, perhaps more on this subject than on any other. For those who could grasp pure non-duality, he explained there was no death but only the changeless Self. For others, His answers were graded.

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In relation to the loss of a visitor's wife Bhagavan said: "There will be no pain if the physical outlook is given up and if the person exists as the Self. Mourning is not the index of true love. It betrays love of the object, of its shape only. That is not love. True love is shown by the certainty that the object of love is in the Self and that it can never become non-existent". (Talk 203) Yet in the same talk, He does concede there is pain which "can only be assuaged by association with the wise". "It is said, 'The wife is one-half of the body'. So her death is very painful... The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says, 'The wife is dear because of the love of the Self'. If the wife and others are identified with the Self, how then will pain arise?" He asked. "Nevertheless, such disasters shake the mind of philosophers also."

Bhagavan's classic response to thought – grief or any other – was to ask if it existed in sleep. He saw all thought that existed in the waking state but not in sleep as impermanent. Being impermanent, He offered the hope that it had no stamina and having no stamina, it could easily be subdued by the Self for the Self alone is permanent. To an aristocratic lady who had lost her son, He said: "Recall

the state of sleep. Were you aware of anything happening? If the son or the world be real, should they not be present with you in sleep. Nor can you deny you were happy then. You are the same person now speaking and raising doubts. What has transpired in the meantime that the happiness of sleep has broken down? It is the rise of ego. That is the new arrival in the waking-*jagrat* state. There was no ego in sleep. The birth of the ego is called the birth of the person. Whatever is born is bound to die. Kill the ego: there is no fear of recurring death for what is once dead. The Self remains even after the death of the ego. That is Bliss – that is Immortality" (Talk 251).

Through constant reiteration, His words acquire urgency for us to heed: "What if anyone is dead? What if anyone is ruined? Be dead yourself – be ruined yourself... What is meant by this sort of death? Annihilation of the ego, though the body is alive. If the ego persists the man is afraid of death. The man mourns another's death. He need not do so if he predeceases them (by waking from the ego-dream which amounts to killing the ego-sense). The experience of deep sleep clearly teaches that happiness consists in being without the body." (Talk 203).

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Besides explanations that sometimes seem beyond our understanding, Bhagavan offered us methods that would aid us transcend grief. To a lady from U.P. who had lost her son he explained the rise of the ego as the birth of the 'I-thought' from which begins the wrong identity with the body – individual self, family, clan, country, race etc. "Did you think of your son before his birth? His thought came after his birth and persists after his death. Inasmuch as you are thinking of him, he is your son. Where has he gone? He has gone to the source from which he sprang. He is one with you. So long as you are, he is there too. If you cease to identify yourself with the body, but see the real Self, this confusion will vanish." (Talk 276). When the lady confided that when she held to the 'I-thought', other thoughts rose to disturb her, Bhagavan gave his characteristic one-pointed instruction: "See whose thoughts they are. They will vanish. They have their root in the single 'I-thought'. Hold to it and they will disappear."

The trick Bhagavan gave us is to hold on to the griever - not the grief, the mourner - not the mourning. For the griever, the mourner is the ego. By holding it, other thoughts will fade away, leaving the ego in its primal

state of the 'I-thought'. Then the quest is to dive into the source from where the I-thought rises. That is the Self or pure consciousness. When grief was intense, a common doubt that devotees expressed was whether they had the ability to realize the Self. Bhagavan's response: "You are already the Self. Therefore realization is common to everyone. Realization knows no difference in the aspirants. This very doubt, 'Can I realize?' or the feeling 'I have not realized' are the obstacles. Be free from these also." (Talk 251). What devotees also craved was His Grace and strength as they left His presence to return to their individual destinies. His assurance: "Grace is the Self. I have already said, 'If you remember Bhagavan, you are prompted to do so by the Self'...Is there a moment when Grace is not operating in you? Your remembrance is the forerunner of Grace. That is the response, that is the stimulus, that is the Self and that is Grace. There is no cause for anxiety." (Talk 251).

Through His narration of stories, Bhagavan indicated other methods for seeking a way out of our grief. He pointed to the story of *Punya and Pavana* in *Yoga Vasishtha* where the enlightened *Punya* consoles his brother *Pavana* on the death of their

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parents, and turns him to realizing the Self. Among the virtues to attain fulfillment of mind, Punya points to the need for utter dispassion, not appeasement of desires which only fuel the mind's already raging fires. He asks his brother to reflect on the fact that he has had countless births in the past with countless relatives in countless countries. He did not grieve for them. Neither did Punya himself, for being enlightened, he saw them all clearly, hence could rise beyond grief itself. His instructions are very reminiscent of Bhagavan's when he says to Pavana: "Your suffering is self-inflicted, caused by notions of father and mother. You grieve for those who are liberated. Why do you suffer unnecessarily? Enquire

into the nature of the Self. See it as different from the body.....Abandon all rising notions of 'I'. Realize you are the Self - directly. You have no unhappiness, no father no mother. You are the Self and naught else. Sages know well this middle path. They have firmly established themselves in it. They are always at peace within and without - established always in witness-consciousness." Pavana was awakened. Both brothers lived as enlightened beings.

Sages, established always in pure consciousness, have taught us with abiding love how to tread grief so as to transcend the opposing pairs of pleasure and pain... to glimpse and abide firmly in the Self. ■

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### **Smt. Meenakshy Viswanathan**

With profound grief we inform the sad demise of Smt. Meenakshy, wife of Late. Sri. S. Viswanathan on October 12, 2016. A great devotee of Bhagavan, she ably assisted her husband who was the priest of our Kendra for a number of years. We especially used to enjoy her Prasadam made for Sunday Satsangs. We offer our sincere condolences to the bereaved family.



## **I do not Say**

I do not say it is the Linga,  
I do not say it is oneness with the Linga,  
I do not say it is union,  
I do not say it is harmony,  
I do not say it has occurred,  
I do not say it has not occurred,  
I do not say it is You,  
I do not say it is I  
After becoming one with the Linga  
in Chenna Mallikarjuna,  
I say nothing whatever.

Translated by : Swami Ghanananda

## **Don't despise me**

Don't despise me as  
She who has no one  
I'm not one to be afraid,  
Whatever you do.  
I exist chewing dry leaves.  
My life resting on a knife edge  
If you must torment me,  
Chennamallikarjuna,  
My life, my body  
I'll offer you and be cleansed.

Translated by : Susan Daniel

By Akka Mahadevi 12th century Poet Saint from Karnataka whose chosen  
God and lover was Chenna Mallikarjuna - a form of Siva.



## Deepam Day\*: An occasion to reinforce our inner quest

*Vijay Vancheswar*

**T**he Deepam day is an auspicious and important day. This is more so for the devotees of Sri Ramana. Bhagavan's message reinforces and reminds us of the significance of this day when it is celebrated as the day when Lord Siva manifested as the divine column of light, later transforming as the sacred Arunachala mountain, revered and worshipped by countless people.

This is a day when we have an opportunity to reflect, decipher and understand the true import of Bhagavan Ramana's teachings. The essence of this is captured in Muruganar's Guru VachakaKovai's(verse 110) "If one enquires to the very end, "Who is this *jiva*, 'I'?", it will be found that he is non-existent, and Shiva will be revealed as being nothing but the Supreme Expanse of Consciousness. Thus, when the *jiva*-the seer, who

with great desire saw this world-has disappeared, it is ridiculous to attribute reality to the world-the seen"

Sadhu Om, one of the most revered followers of Bhagavan's teachings sums up the essence of this verse: "*Since the truth of the seer and the seen are one and the same, when the seer [i.e. the jiva] is found to be unreal, the seen will also be known to be unreal. The true nature of Self [which was hitherto conceived in this trinity, as being God] will then be found to be the only reality.*"

The mythological references made to the appearance of the column of divine light on this day allures to the fight between Lord Vishnu and Brahma to establish who is superior. This has a deeper significance. It illustrates the futility of our tendency to demonstrate and exhibit our 'o called valour and accomplishments. When our sense of individuality is

itself a myth, of what use is it, to foster its growth? This therefore is a day when we need to deeply reflect on the core teaching of the Master—the importance of vanquishing our ego demonstrated through our sense of pride, individuality and volition. The Truth of Non-duality cannot be ‘found’ by the insentient ‘i’. It is for this reason that ‘no individual’ can demonstrate to another the existence or presence of the Power called ‘Shiva’ or ‘Consciousness’. Arguing within the limited prism of what is seen in the illusory universe, people steeped in the field of logic, reason and objective analysis, fail to accept this subtle truth. How can something (seer-as the individual) which itself is a figment of imagination fathom the vastness and power of the supreme reality, within the boundaries of dualism?!

It was for this reason that Bhagavan always countered the question of ‘why?’ with ‘to whom?’. The question why something occurs is pointless as the belief in the basis of its existence is fallacious! Sadly, we are so much embedded in taking what is unreal to be real that we get caught and trapped into the crafty happenings that characterize the quicksand of mortal existence. Our

only recourse is to seek the help of the Guru’s hand in a spirit of unconditional and sincere surrender. The Deepam day is an opportune time to reinforce our inner quest and journey by dwelling on the substratum of our sense of being—the sense of ‘I-I’ which resonates within each of us. Earnestness and attentiveness to its presence will slowly but surely guide our devious minds away from externalities to what matters and what is ever present within us.

A good recipe to help us move forward on this journey is to follow the guidance received by Muruganar through his interactions with Sri Ramana and pointed out in his commentary ‘Guru Vachaka Kovai’ : *“In direct contrast to revealing the Truth, words only cloud it, making it dim. Therefore, simultaneously restrain words and thoughts in the Heart in order that the Supreme Reality which is concealed by these words may shine spontaneously”* (verse no.525). It is the power of the Master’s silence that quietly and unseeingly works wonders which is far more potent and effective than that of words and actions. Sri Ramana has explained this when asked “Why do mahatmas not

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help?” by mentioning:“How do you know that they do not help? Public speeches, physical activity and material help are all outweighed by the silence of mahatmas. They accomplish more than others”

As we approach the auspicious day of Deepam let us spend more time reversing our outward flow of thoughts and cajole it to its source, where it belongs. The peace that we unconsciously seek and which is our very nature cannot be found outside of us, try as we might. External engagements and involvements can produce a fleeting but not lasting sense of relief. Our experiences with the phenomenal world will one day awaken us to the need to redirect our minds to focus on the screen rather than the seemingly interesting variety of displays that get exhibited on it. We will then reaffirm our faith in Ramana’s message in Guru VachakaKovaiv.168 ‘Listen! People cannot even think unless prompted to do so by the all-embracing and impartial chit-sakti [the power of Consciousness] that has benevolence towards all. Here in this world, the jumping about of people, excited by the feeling ‘I will accomplish this’, is indeed a great wonder!’

We have the freedom to connect

within because the ‘Inner Self’ as explained by Sri Ramana is beyond freewill and destiny. Destiny governs the body, which we are not. So, why delay this inner journey? It is a route that we all are inevitably bound to take eventually. Rather than get caught into the net of the phenomenal trappings, it is pertinent and wise to embark on the road that we are meant to travel - the path of quietude, peace and tranquility by reposing our faith in the Master’s reassuring words “*Like a deer caught in the jaws of a tiger, those who are trapped by the Satguru’s jnana-bestowing glance of grace will never be abandoned. Rather they are destined to lose their individuality, their restricted nature, and attain liberation.*” ■

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\*Deepam festival commemorates the sacred and auspicious manifestation of the divine beam of Consciousness in the Tamil month of Karthikai falling on Pournami (Full Moon Day) which later took the form of the holy ‘Aruna’ (red and motionless hill) at Tiruvannamalai. This year the deepam day falls on Monday, December 12.



## Kendra Bulletin

Advent Day was celebrated with great solemnity on 1st Sept. This also marked the anniversary of the Kendra and the 20th Anniversary of Direct Path. The Chief Guest was Swami Prakarshananda, of Delhi Chinmaya Mission. Momentos were given to senior devotees -Shri Mahalingam, Shri A.S. Rajaraman and Dr. Dharma Chatterji.

Brahmashri Nocchur Venkataraman gave a talk on Bhagavan Ramana and his teachings to a packed audience emphasising that Self-Enquiry and Self-Surrender were important and complementary. He recalled several incidents from Bhagavan's life to illustrate his kind and loving nature. We were treated to a 3-day discourse on Aksharamana Malai by Swamiji Ramana Swaroopanada who gave a deeper insight into this popular composition of Bhagavan. Dr. Sarada President RMCL Bangalore, gave a special talk on how to overcome obstacles in spiritual path through self-enquiry. Shri Prashant led a satsang speaking on Advaitic principles. Swami Anubhavabanada gave a talk on Spiritual Life in his own inimitable style to an appreciative audience. Regular Satsangs were conducted by Swami Prabuddhananda on Katopanishad, Swami Durgeshananda on AtmaBodha and by Shri P N Vijay on Ch IV of Bhagavad Gita.

Managing Body meeting and a meeting of the Members were held on 25th September. The Annual Accounts of the Kendra for Financial Year 2015-16 were presented, discussed and approved. Members participated enthusiastically and offered useful suggestions on various matters.

### FORTHCOMING EVENTS

<b>Nov 6, Nov 20 and Dec 18</b>	Bhagavad Gita Ch 4 by Shri P N Vijay
<b>Nov 13 and Dec 11</b>	Katopanishad by Swami Prabuddhananda
<b>Nov 27 and Dec 25</b>	Atma Bodha by Swami Durgeshananda
<b>Dec 12</b>	Deepam
<b>Dec 30</b>	Bhagavan's Jayanti



## Adi Sankara - Saint Missionary Commentator and Reformer

*P.N.Vijay*

**A**di Sankara is a much admired and not-so-much-understood Saint who lived in Medieval India. When he was born is still a matter of conjecture though the fact he was born in Kaladi in Kerala in a spiritual Brahmin family and renounced the world and took to *Sanyasa* at an early age are facts about which there is general agreement. Also well understood is the fact that he gave *Advaita* (or Monism) its present form; though the principles of *Advaita* are very much embedded in the *Prastanatrays* - Vedas, Gita and Brahma Sutra. I would like to elaborate more on his contribution to the country as a Saint, a Missionary, a Commentator and Reformer who re-established *Sanatana Dharma* and brought considerable order into Hindu rituals and practices.

By the time Sankara was born much of India had been converted to Buddhism. Though Buddha had rebelled against Brahminical

practices he never had any serious differences with Hindu thought; and the essence of what he preached was already present in Hindu theology as one of the 23 prevalent schools. But the followers of Buddha- as it often happens- changed the priorities and aggressively converted the royalty of the land (King Ashoka of the Maurya dynasty being a big “catch”) and through them converted the people by methods both fair and foul. So as many present day Acharyas would make us believe Lord Shiva incarnated as AdiSankara to restore Sanatana Dharma in the land of its origin.

What Sankara achieved starting from Varanasi is well known and is perhaps the greatest peaceful conversion that the world has witnessed. Purely through discussions and presentations he did the job which Christians and Muslims could not with huge bloodshed, In his efforts he was assisted by the Tamil saints

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called Nayanmars who reconverted the monarchs and subjects in South India. The accounts of the lives of the Nayanmars is chronicled in *Sekkizhar's Periapuranam* - a work close to Bhagavan Ramana Maharishi's heart.

If Sankara had done only this he would be remembered and worshipped; but this is only a small portion of his achievements. Hinduism had become too elitist and obscurantist and this was one of the reasons why Buddhism and Jainism could spread so fast. Realising this Adi Sankara set out to bring the religion closer to the people. He achieved this in two ways. Firstly he brought the scriptures closer to the people with his memorable *Bhashyas* or Commentaries on all the major *Upanishads*, *Bhagavad Gita*, *Brahma Sutra* – for which he is often referred to as *Bhashyakara*. With these esoteric scriptures were brought within the comprehension of the educated people. Even major stalwarts like Ramanuja and Madhwa, studied Sankara Bhasya and used his works as a basis before making their own interpretations to establish schools of Vishistadvaita and Dvaita. In recent times, many Acharyas like Swami Vivekananda, Swami

Sivananda, Swami Chinmayananda, Swami Dayanda Saraswati have used these commentaries to teach their students.

Adi Sankara was a great composer in his own right. He composed *Prakarna Granthas* like *Tatva Bodha*, *Vivekachoodamani* and *Atma Bodha* where his aim was to help the spiritual aspirant progress in a focussed intelligent manner by clearly understanding the terminology of our scriptures. Last but not the least, he composed many Stotrams like *Bhaja Govindam*, *Soundarya Lahiri*, *Nirvana Satkam*, *Dakshinamoorthy Stotram* to name a few. These are recited by the devout with great enthusiasm. This shows how much importance Sankara gave to Bhakti or devotion for one's spiritual progress.

With his grand vision of an Akhanda Bharat Sankara established Mutts in literally the four corners of India; in Joshi Mutt way up North near Badrinath in the Himalayas, in Dwarka in the extreme West, in Puri in the East and Sringeri in the South. These monastic orders flourish to this day not only educating the community but also doing yeoman social work. He also built temples in the holy towns of Kedarnath,

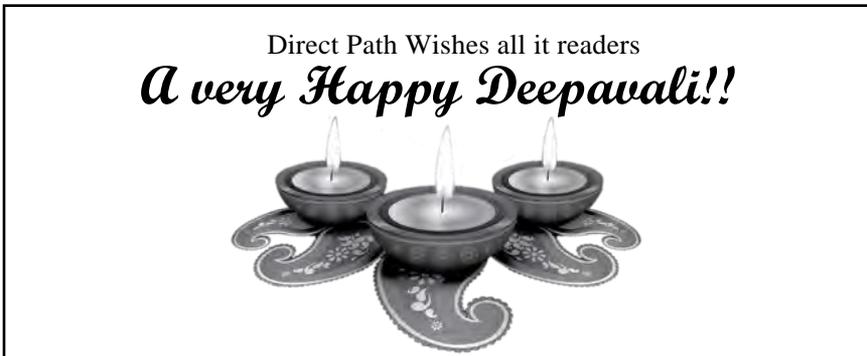
Badrinath, Rameswaram; even more his sense of national unity made him install a South Indian Namboodri priest in Badrinath and a North Indian priest in Rameswaram!. His grand vision encompassed Srinagar (name given by him) where he established a temple and in Guwahati where he established the famous Kamakhya temple. All these temples are places where Hindus throng to get solace from the Divine.

Very few people are aware of is the tremendous work done by Sankara in the way of reforming the Hindu religious practices. Prior to his time rituals were grand, time-consuming and prerogative of a privileged few. He made it possible for common people to conduct worship at home by introducing the practice of *Panchayatana Puja* – worship of five deities Ganesh, Surya, Vishnu,

Shiva and Devi. He made a format to be used for worshipping deities during various festivals consisting of *Achamanam, Prayanamam, Sankalpam, Ashotram, Uttaranga Pujas* culminating in *Aarti*. He even brought order among the monastics and created the *Dashanami Sampradaya*; Sanyasis took only specific names like *Ananda, Saraswati, Theertha, Giri* etc depending on the specific monastic order.

It is difficult to find a single adjective to describe AdiSankara; it is no exaggeration to say that if we are fortunate enough today to practise Sanatana Dharma in a proper manner as set out in the scriptures and to understand our great scriptures the credit goes to him. Let us all bow down to him in reverence and gratitude. ■

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## Smt. Sulochana Natarajan



When Ramana calls to His abode of bliss can anyone refuse? Least of all Smt. Sulochana Natarajan who not only believed for herself that Self-Knowledge was the only goal of life but fed this belief along with breast milk to her daughters as well. Such was her conviction. Could it be otherwise, having been caught in Ramana's net of Grace through His first glance when she was a girl of 12? Hence, when the call came on the 23rd of August at 8.00 pm, soon after an hour of Ramayana and a Ramanabhajan, she submitted completely to the 'Sharanagathi' bhaava that had begun to ring in the air as well.

Both Sulochana and her husband A.R.Natarajan had been drawn to Bhagavan irresistibly in 1956. For Sulochana the journey into Ramana became inextricably interwoven with Carnatic Music that pervaded her very veins as it were and was her deepest passion. Her first introduction to Ramana Sangeetham was from Manavasi Ramaswami Iyer with the songs Sharanagati and Ariya Taramamo. The journey continued in Ramana Bhakta Sabha, Chennai, setting Aksharamanamalai to music along with Mahalakshmi (Maggie) and Dharma. But the first giant leap came in Ramana Kendra Delhi under the loving guidance of Prof.K.Swaminathan who introduced her to the fascination of Muruganar's songs. That was the beginning of composing music and she went on to set to music all of Bhagavan's songs, all of Ganapathi Muni's compositions on Bhagavan and many of Muruganar's and Sadhu Om's songs. The Delhi Ramana Kendra was a mother's nest, nurturing fostering and preparing the fledgling to fly.

What a flight it has been with 30 years at Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning Bangalore – a flight into the vast unbounded skies of Ramananjali Sangeetham – as it has now come to be called. Beginning with the first Ramananjali live concert during the birth centenary celebrations at Sri Ramanasramam and going on to more than 500 concerts across the world which she led, Smt. Sulochana Natarajan planned the recordings of numerous Ramana songs, notated and published them in books, Audio and Video CDs in several languages. Her voice and her compilations remain in the hearts of hundreds of Ramana devotees. ■



## The Dance of 'I'

*Dr. Sarada Natarajan*

**A** child asked her mother one day, "Amma, who is that child Lord Nataraja is stamping on, won't the child's mother feel bad?"

And all those around wondered how the mother would reply, without disturbing the compassion in the question, yet, without compromising the Lord's grace. The mother had no problem though. She answered easily, "The child was very ill and the mother prayed to the Lord, my dear. Then He danced upon the child and the child was full of health. The child was bad mean before, but when the Lord danced on him, he became pure and full of love. The child was cursed to die and after the dance he was filled with immortal life. The Lord danced on the child to transform him, to give him back to his mother as wonderful new person. Have you not seen the face of the child? In the best of images the face of the child has as much joy as that in the Lord's

smile, the joy that the Lord gives him through His dance, through the impress of His feet. And do you the Lord is heavy because He seems so large on the child? The wind is so much larger than us, so much more powerful, is it not? But when the wind blows it cools us. The huge river in which we dip seems to swallow us but it really cleanses us. So the touch of the Lord may be gentle, we cannot imagine how gentle and loving it would be. Yet again, my child, do not think that the pain is bad either. The rose bush is pruned by the gardener so that it may bear the best of blooms. The surgeon cuts the body to remove that which is diseased and will eat away into all health. A mother may practically starve a child who has diarrhea and vomiting. These seemingly disciplinary and pain-inflicting methods are for the higher good, are they not? So, even if the child was pained by the Lord's dance the mother would bear it,

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knowing that after the pain would come infinite joy”.

We are often like the anxious child, worried that when the Lord stamps out our individuality we would die, we would be in distress. We are afraid that as a culmination of self-enquiry when the Self engulfs us there would only be a void. And like the wise mother the sadguru reassures us time and again that what awaits is fullness, no void. The wonder of the Self is that it is perfect stillness like the ocean depths, like the mountain heights. Yet it is not dull – it is a dynamic stillness, a magnificent universal dance. When we see a table can perceive the dance in it? It seems so dull – so unmoving. So also the rock and the mountain. But then there is no stillness at all in the universe. Within every molecule of the table, there are atoms that dance. Within atoms are neutrons and protons that dance. And every particle is in eternal motion. This the vibrant dance of the universe, the form of the Self of the Lord. And as the Heart, in every being, the Self dances as ‘I’ as ‘I’ as ‘I’. It is sphurana – a throb – which Bhagavan describes as a dance in Arunachala Panchratnam.

“Ever as ‘I’ in the heart you dance.

Hence are you called the Heart.”

Where movement is ordered in harmonious rhythm and grace that is dance. It is because of this that every aspect of the universe may be said to be dancing. For it is a co-ordinated movement, never random; always a marvelous pattern, as in the cycle of birth, life and death. And this pattern repeats itself in the individual as in the world, in the smaller as in the bigger-moon revolves round the earth, the earth round the sun. New galaxies are born and grow and are destroyed. Individuals too follow the same pattern and within the body millions of cells are born, they grow and decay. On a daily basis too this pattern, this rhythm occurs in our lives. Daily in sleep we die, it is as good as death – for there is no awareness of the world, or the body, or even a sense of ‘I’. Immediately on waking, the sense of ‘I’ is born, as it were. We become aware of ourselves, the body, the world. Through the waking and in dream this picture of life is sustained and then dissolves again in deep sleep.

But for all this movement to be perceived there must be an unmoving substratum, a picture screen that stays fixed while the movie moves, a stationary platform that makes is

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possible to register the movement of a train. The unchanging that can register all change, is the Self. For, unless there is silence who can discern the melodies that rise in it or know them to be such? If one has never visited a place before can one say that it has changed? It is because the perceiver remains constant that changes are perceived and registered. So the Self is silence in which the universe is heard, the Self is infinite in which things start and end, the Self is stillness in which all things move and dance and become quiet again. This part of the verse is easy to understand, we can accept this of the Self. But Bhagavan says the Self dances in the Heart as 'I' as 'I' if the self itself dances then what is substratum for its dance? Why, it is itself the substratum too! The beauty of this description of the Self by Bhagavan lies in this very dissolution of opposites by merging them, the transcendence of paradoxes by uniting them. We tend to impose relative qualities on the Self. We say it is bliss. But it is not a bliss that is the opposite of sorrow, which can be sensed only when we know sorrow. It is inclusive of sorrow, and joy and transcends both. Similarly, we think of the Self as silence and stillness but it is also music and dance, voice and

movement. Yes, it is all these and none of these.

So let us by no means imagine the state of Self-awareness to be negative, to be passive, to be dull. It is positive, it is fullness that is active and dynamic and it is ever fresh. In fact, it is the mind alone that knows dullness. As it moves away from Self-attention it becomes increasingly dull. As it becomes purer, as it reflects more and more of the Self's brilliance, the mind too becomes increasingly sharper and clearer.

Can we ever think of joy as being dull? Sorrow can be dull, pain can dull, but joy? The very word is so alive. And the Self, Bhagavan says, is bliss ever fresh, ever renewed. Dullness must wither away even in its proximity. Joy is dynamic – joy conjures images of flight and laughter, of dance and song. But joy must also be peace. True happiness must be complete, it must be full. The joy of the Self is total – thus there would be no more seeking, no more striving, an absolute, perfection would be experienced. In this sense it is silence absolute, it is majestic stillness.

It seems rather difficult to imagine what this state would be like. Difficult? It is impossible, for all

imagining is with the mind. That is why the Buddha, it seems refrained from describing 'Nirvana' lest it too should become mere concept. Bhagavan, however, describes it, and repeatedly, as being fullness, most blissful, consciousness, the very basis of existence and here as the marvelous throbbing dance of the Heart. Why? Because to remember this is an important aid to enthuse inwardness. On the one hand is the recognition of the triviality of all our pursuits, on the other magnitude, the marvel of the Self. When we are sufficiently convinced of both then the practice of Self-abidance would

be unswerving. Hence it is helpful to remember the qualities of the Self in order to strengthen the search.

This description serves as a telescope – a peep into the promised land. It is not the same as to be there, as to have arrived – but certainly gives impetus to the journey. Thus with a desire for the highest, if we attention constantly to the dance of the 'I' in the heart – then ours would be surging joy of Self-awareness, the unalloyed bliss. ■

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### **Bhagavan on Deepavali**

Deepavali signifies the shining of Self after the destruction, through enquiry, of the greatest sinner, Naraka [the ego], who took the abode of this filthy body, which is the form of hell, as 'I'.

He is Narayana who ascertains who Naraka is, and destroys him with His vision of wisdom, *Jnana Drishti*.

That is the auspicious day of *Narakachathurdasi*.



## Sri Ramana Maharshi seen through David Godman's Lens

*Rochie Rana*

**D**avid Godman is best known for his anthology of Ramana Maharshi's writings, *Be As You Are*, which has become the customary single-volume reference for the new Ramana devotees on the great sage's teachings. But it is not well-known that David has written eleven other books, and each one is equally notable in its own way. During his fourteen-year stay at Ramanasramam (1978-92) he managed the ashram's library, catalogued its archives, and recorded the stories and experiences of devotees who had had direct contact with Sri Ramana.

David is the authorized biographer of two devotees of Sri Ramana Maharshi (Lakshmana Swamy and Papaji) who realized the Self in Sri Ramana's presence and who later went on to become gurus themselves.

Godman concluded early on

that Sri Ramana is all things to all people. There was no standard Ramana Maharshi who was the same for all people. People who approached him brought their minds with them, and Bhagavan, being a non-person with no mind of his own, enlarged and reflected back all this incoming mental energy. So, different people saw him and experienced him in many different ways and to Godman it became a sort of spiritual mission to see Bhagavan through the lens of the many people that he would talk to and gather information from.

Godman shares a beautiful anecdote which he also mentions in one of his books:

“A certain lady who had a lot of devotion performed a traditional ritual for worshipping sages whenever she came into Bhagavan's presence to have darshan. She would prostrate to Bhagavan, touch his feet and then put the hands that had touched

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Bhagavan's feet on her eyes.

After noticing that she did this daily, Bhagavan told her one day, 'Only the Supreme Self, which is ever shining in your heart as the reality, is the Sadguru. The pure awareness, which is shining as the inward illumination "I", is his gracious feet. The contact with these [inner holy feet] alone can give you true redemption. Joining the eye of reflected consciousness [*chitabhasa*], which is your sense of individuality [*jivabodha*], to those holy feet, which are the real consciousness, is the union of the feet and the head that is the real significance of the word "*asi*" ["are", as in the *mahavakya* "You are That"]. As these inner holy feet can be held naturally and unceasingly, hereafter, with an inward-turned mind, cling to that inner awareness that is your own real nature. This alone is the proper way for the removal of bondage and the attainment of the supreme truth."

He concludes to that story "I appreciate and applaud anyone who has devotion to Bhagavan's form, but at the same time I love the purity of Bhagavan'sadvaitic response to this woman."

Godman wasn't just someone who spent years putting together books

about RamanaMaharshi; he had deep faith in Bhagavan and the passion to practice what He taught. In fact David Godman himself propounds out of personal experience that "If the attitude is right and if the practice is intense enough, it doesn't really matter what you do when you meditate. The purity of intent and purpose carries you to the right place. Self-inquiry is a bit like swimming or riding a bicycle. You don't learn it from books. You learn it by doing it again and again till you get it right."

Godman's books on Bhagavan have inspired many, but his own story of finding Grace at Arunachala is awe-inspiring and remarkable on its own. Godman in a recounting of his tale remembers how when he first came to Arunachala, he fell in love with the place and wanted to stay as long as he could, well aware that he had only limited funds and he had to keep tabs on how much he was spending every day, as a result, he forever had the money equation floating in his head "so much money equals so many days in Arunachala". Then one day as he was doing the pradakshina of Arunachala, he had a sudden revelation that "whatever power had brought me here would keep me here until its purpose was



*Brahmashri Nocchur Venkataraman talking on Bhagavan 's Self-Enquiry and Self-Surrender*



*Swami Prakarshananda giving a memento to Shri Mahalingam*



*Shri A S Rajaraman receiving the memento from Swami Prakarshananda*



*Dr. Dharma Chatterjee being honoured with a memento by Swami Prakarshananda*



*Shri Prashant leading a satsang speaking on Advaitic principles*



*Swamji Ramana Swaroopananada during his 3-day discourse on Aksharamana Malai*



*Swami Anubhavabanada talking on Spiritual Life in his inimitable style*



*Dr. Sarada President RMCL Bangalore giving a talk on on overcoming obstacles based on self-enquiry.*

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finished, and that when it was time to go, it wouldn't matter if I was a millionaire or not, I would have to leave." From that point on he simply stopped caring about the money and whenever he needed the money, it would appear miraculously to him.

David points out "when you work for Gurus, God pays the bills; at least that's my experience anyway."

He says of self realization that it is that which remains when the mind dies in the formless self, the origin of all manifestation. He quotes Papaji to elaborate ""What comes and goes is not real. If you have had an experience that came and went, it was not an experience of the Self because the Self never comes and goes."

In one of David Godman's interviews he sums up his entire experience beautifully "About two or three times a year someone asks me this question, 'Summarise Ramana Maharshi's life and teachings in a few words and I would say Sri Ramana Maharshi was a living embodiment of peace and happiness and his 'teachings' were the emanations of that state which helped other people to find and experience their own inner happiness and peace."

He recollects a beautiful story

passed on to him by Arthur Osborne's daughter. "In the 1940s their house was a kind of dormitory for all the stray foreigners who couldn't find anywhere else to stay near Sri Ramana's ashram. A miserable, crabby woman appeared one evening, having been sent by the ashram. They put her up, gave her breakfast and sent her off to see Sri Ramana the next morning. She came back at lunchtime looking absolutely radiant. She was glowing with happiness. The whole family was waiting to hear the story of what happened, but she never said anything about her visit to the ashram. Everyone in the house was expecting some dramatic story: 'He looked at me and this happened,' or 'I asked a question and then I had this great experience.'

As the lunch plates were being cleared away, her hosts could not contain their curiosity any longer. 'What happened?' asked one of them. 'What did Bhagavan do to you? What did he say to you?' The woman looked most surprised. 'He didn't do anything. He didn't say anything to me. I just sat there for the whole morning and then came back for lunch.' She had been just one new person sitting in a crowd of people, but the power coming off Sri Ramana

had been enough to wash away a lifetime of depression, leaving her with a taste of what lay underneath it: her own inherent, natural happiness and peace.”

Godman continues and weaves the story to match his own experience of Sri Ramana Maharshi, “ Sri Ramana knew that transformations such as these were going on around him all the time, but he never accepted responsibility for them. He would never say, ‘I transformed this woman’. When he was asked about the effect he was having on people, he would

sometimes say that by continuously abiding in his own natural state of peace, a sannidhi, a powerful presence, was somehow created that automatically took care of the mental problems of the people who visited him. By abiding in silence as silence, this energy field was created, a field that miraculously transformed the people around him.

Similarly, I came into his sannidhi and through its catalytic activity I discovered my own peace, my own happiness.” ■

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### **Bhagavan on Tiruvannamalai Deepam**

To make the intellect rid of the sense  
‘I am the body’, and to introspect  
By fixing it securely in the Heart,  
And so perceive the true light of the SELF,  
The one ‘I-I’, which is the ABSOLUTE,  
This the significance of witnessing  
The Beacon Light of Arunachala,  
The centre of the earth.



## Aksharamanamalai -1

**D**uring the years when Bhagavan was at Virupaksha, his devotees used to go into town to beg for food. Devotees urged Bhagavan for a unique devotional song to sing as they went around. Soon after, one day Bhagavan set out on pradakshina round the Hill, taking a pencil and paper with him, and, on the way, composed the hundred and eight verses. Tears of ecstasy streamed down his face as he wrote, sometimes blinding his eyes and choking his voice. It was as though Lord Arunachala Himself was singing through Bhagavan. All the pain of longing and all the bliss of fulfilment are set out in these verses symbolically from the standpoint of a devotee who is still a seeker. Pure Knowledge is combined with the ecstasy of devotion. Though spontaneously composed, hundred and eight verses begin with the successive letters of the Tamil alphabet. Some devotees asked Bhagavan the interpretation of some of the verses

and he replied: "You think it out and I will too. I didn't think while I was composing it; I just wrote as it came."

Arunachala Aksharamanamalai, means 'the bridal garland of letters for Arunachala.' Mana Malai is the wedding-garland which symbolises the union of the bride with the bridegroom. It is aptly composed in Shringara Rasa, the language of love. The name also means sweet-scented garland. The poem is called Aksharamanamalai because the initial letters of the verses of the hymn are in the alphabetical order. Aksharamanamalai may also mean 'the garland that serves as the insignia of marriage with the undecaying (akshara) Lord'. The phrase contains the name of Bhagavan Sri Ramana too — aksharamana. It is significant that the hymn is composed of 108 verses — a number that is supremely sacred.

It is 100 years ago that Aksharamanamalai was composed by

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Bhagavan and from this issue we are serialising the poem at the request of many devotees, as most are not aware of its meaning and import. This is being sourced from Shri T M P Mahadevan's book. - Editor's Note

### **Invocation**

*Arunachalavarkettra*  
*Aksharamalaishattra,*  
*Karunakara Ganapathiye*  
*Karamarulikaapaye.*

Oh merciful Ganapathi, give me a helping hand, to make a garland of letters suitable for Lord Arunachala.

### **Refrain**

*Arunachala Siva, Arunachala Siva,*  
*Arunachala Siva, Arunachala Siva,*  
*Arunachala Siva, Arunachala Siva,*  
*Arunachala Siva, Arunachala Siva.*

This is the mantra or theme of this grand litany. It is recited at the end of each verse. Even those who are not acquainted with the verses join in the recitation of this mantra in chorus.

The mantra is Arunachala Siva. Siva is the most auspicious name of God. It itself means 'The Auspicious'. Siva, the formless, appears in many forms in order to bestow his grace on his devotees. At Tiruvannamalai, the form he assumes is that of light and fire — the light that reveals the truth,

the fire that burns away all impurities. There is a legend according to which Siva appeared as a column of light at this place, and Brahma and Vishnu failed to discover the top and bottom, respectively, of this column. The source of Linga worship is to be traced to this legend. The Linga is the symbol of the luminous Siva who has neither beginning nor end. The Arunachala Hill is itself a Linga of Siva. It is believed that in kritayuga it was a hill of fire, in tretayuga a hill of gems, in dvaparayuga a hill of gold and that in kali yuga it has become a hill of stone. To mark the association of the Hill with fire, a lamp is lit at its top once a year. Arunachala, the Fire-Hill, is the symbol of the immutable Reality. To the devotee, Arunachala is the Bridegroom.

*I Arunachalamena*  
*agameninaippavar,*  
*Agathaiveraruppai Arunachala*

O Arunachala! Thou dost root out the egoity of those who think 'I am, verily, Arunachala!'

It is God's grace that leads to Self-realization. The culmination of devotion (bhakti) to God lies in the realization of the non-dual Spirit. Arunachala the Supreme God, is the Self of the so called individual soul. What prevents the soul from realising

this fact is the ego, born of ignorance. The ego, the pseudo 'I', has usurped the place of the real 'I', God. The soul, identifying itself with the ego, has estranged itself from God. The purpose of devotion is to remove this estrangement and bring about the recognition of God as the real 'I'. The final realization is of the form "I Am Arunachala", "I and the Father in Heaven are one." Here the word 'I' denotatively and connotatively means God and not the ego. The Supreme Identity is the end of even bhakti. In some of the bhakti schools four paths are taught: the path of the servant (dasamarga), the path of the good son (satputramarga), the path of the friend (sakhamarga), and the path of good union (san marga). Here, the grading is on the principle of lessening the distance between the devotee and the deity. The goal, therefore, must be the annihilation of even the least distance between the soul and God; in other words, the aim is the realization of the Supreme Identity. What stands in the way of this realization is the ego, and what causes the ego to appear is ignorance.

Devotion to God results in the destruction of ignorance, the root cause of the ego.

## ***2 Azhagusundarampol***

***agamumneeyumuttru***

***abhinnamayiruppom Arunachala***

O Arunachala! Like (the words) azhagu (Tamil for 'beauty') and Sundara (Sanskrit for 'beauty') let me and Thou be completely nondifferent!

Non-difference is the goal of bhakti. The so called jiva and Isvara are one in reality. The oneness of the two, however, is not as endowed with adjuncts, but as free from them. The jiva's ignorance makes for the difference; when the ignorance is removed, the oneness is realized. Arunachala and the bhakta, God and soul, are not two, *sub specie aeternitatis* - in its essential or universal form or nature. An example of apparent difference and essential nondifference is given. The Tamil word azhagu, means 'beauty'. The Sanskrit word sundara also means the same. One who knows either language alone may imagine that the two words have different meanings. Most language controversies arise out of ignorance. When one realizes the identical connotation of the two words, one would know that it is evil to be misled by difference in expression. Note: Azhagu and Sundara were the names, respectively, of Sri Ramana's mother and father.

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**3 Agampugumtheerthum  
agaguhaishirayai,  
Amarvithathenkol Arunachala**

O Arunachala! What a wonder this — that Thou didst enter my mind, and rescuing me, holdest me captive in the cave of Thy heart!

The mind which is but a cluster of desires and the home of unrest is the jiva's residence. The ether of the heart which is unsullied and pure is the place of the Lord. It is in the cave of the Heart that He is said to be hidden (guhahita). His saving grace makes Him lift the soul out of the slough of despond and draw her into His home, the Heart which is the hall of bliss. The Lord expects nothing in return. His benignity knows no bargain. Even under the slightest pretext, He is prepared to save the soul. In her empirical state, the soul is a captive of the roving mind. By the grace of the Lord, she is liberated from the mind's torture, and is afforded safety and protection. This Sanctuary of my soul Unwitting I keep white and whole, Unlatched and lit, if Thou should's't care To enter or to tarry there. — Captain Sorley. Note: Sri Ramana left his parental home as a boy of seventeen, being rescued by Arunachala and remained unwaveringly thereafter at

Tiruvannamalai.

**4 Aarukkavenai aandanaiagattridil,  
Akhilampazhithidum Arunachala**

O Arunachala! For whose sake didst Thou rescue me? If (now) Thou dost reject me, the world will accuse Thee!

God saves the soul by bestowing His grace upon her for no purpose of His own. He has nothing to accomplish, no end to achieve. It is for the soul's sake that He rescues her from bondage. Having rescued her, He will protect her for ever. But the devotee-soul is in doubt. Having had to pay bitterly for her association with her fleeting companions — the denizens of the world, and having now regained the grace of the Lord, she is apprehensive that divine protection may be withdrawn from her. So, she appeals to the good sense of her Lord: "Do not reject me saying, 'You are no good, you have this defect and that'. Having drawn me unto you, it is not proper that you should send me away. If you desert me, what will the world think of you? It will certainly blame you; and you pretty well know that it is interested in blaming you, and is only looking for a chance. At least for the fear of public opinion, you should not be inconstant to me." ■



## श्री रमण महर्षि के संस्मरण

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कृष्ण भिक्षु (वोरुगंति कृष्णाय्य) (1904-81) एक वकील थे, किंतु उनकी रुचि आध्यात्मिकता में थी। उनके द्वारा लिखित 'रमण लीला', महर्षि की प्रमाणिक जीवनी मानी जाती है। उनकी पुस्तक 'रमण योग सूत्र' में महर्षि के उपदेशों का संकलन है।

मेरे लिए महर्षि एक पितृवत महापुरुष थे। मेरा उन पर संपूर्ण विश्वास था। वे राह दिखाते और मैं पीछे-पीछे चलता था। मुझे ज्ञात था कि मैं उनके हाथों में सुरक्षित हूँ। मैं उन्हें दिलोजान से चाहता था। उनके पास रहकर जीवन बिता रहा था। उन्हीं के कमरे में सोता, उन्हीं के साथ खाता, बातचीत करता, हँसी-ठट्टा करता, किंतु सदैव उनके प्यार और परवरिश की डोर में बँधा हुआ रहता।

मैं यह सब गर्व से नहीं कह रहा हूँ, क्योंकि जैसे वे मेरे साथ थे वैसे ही प्रेममय वे सबके साथ थे। उनके सब भक्तों को लगता था कि वे किसी विशेष अवर्णनीय सूत्र से महर्षि के साथ बँधे हुए हैं, जो अपने आप में निराला है। हम सब अपने को विशेष समझते थे। महर्षि सबसे प्रेम करते, किंतु प्रत्येक से अलग-अलग।

मेरा नाता उनके साथ माँ-बच्चे का था; एकदम सुरक्षित व प्रसन्न। जब कभी समस्या हो तो, मैं सहायता माँगता, और वे बड़ी सरलता से उसे सुलझा देते। जब मैं उनसे दूर होता था तब भी मात्र 'रमणा' कहते ही मुझे उनका सहारा मिल जाता और मेरी बाहरी-भीतरी सारी समस्या सुलझ जाती। जब मैं आश्रम में होता वे मेरा पूरा ख्याल रखते; पूछते, मैंने बिस्तर कहाँ लगाया? किस वस्तु

का तकिया बनाया ? इत्यादि ।

पशु-पक्षियों के अतिरिक्त, पेड़-पौधे भी महर्षि की सहानुभूति के अधिकारी थे। एक बार सर्वाधिकारी के आदेश का अतिक्रमण कर एक मजदूर वृक्ष के सूखे भाग के साथ हरे-भरे पत्ते वे डालियाँ भी काटने लगा। महर्षि से नहीं देखा गया। उन्होंने आवाज़ लगाई और कहा, “तुम पेड़ को कष्ट पहुँचा रहे हो। क्या तुम्हें पता नहीं कि यह जीवित है ? बालों में जान नहीं है, किंतु यदि कोई तुम्हारे बाल पकड़कर खींचे तो क्या तुम्हें पीड़ा नहीं होगी ? छोड़ो इसको और जाओ।”

महर्षि का कहना था कि व्यक्ति दूसरों के दोष देखने से पहले, अपने दोष और कमियों की ओर ध्यान दे। एक बार एक समाज सेवी बनने के इच्छुक ने महर्षि से कहा, “समाज में जो कुछ बुरा है मैं उसे सुधारना चाहता हूँ आपके पास क्षमता और शक्ति का आशीर्वाद लेने आया हूँ, ताकि अपने मनोरथ में मुझे सफलता मिले।” महर्षि का उत्तर था, “पहले अपने आप को सुधारो, उसके बाद औरों को सुधारने जाना। कहीं तो पहल करनी होती है” व्यक्ति अपने से ही पहल क्यों न करे ?”

महर्षि अपने भक्तों का बहुत ध्यान रखते थे। हैदराबाद के प्रसिद्ध डॉक्टर मेलकोटे, जो महर्षि के भक्त थे, उनकी दाद-खुजली का उपचार कर रहे थे, किंतु रोग कम नहीं हो रहा था। डॉ. को किसी अत्यंत आवश्यक कार्य से वापस हैदराबाद जाना था, किंतु महर्षि को उस स्थिति में छोड़कर जाने में उन्हें बहुत संताप हो रहा था। मैंने उन्हें सलाह दी कि वे महर्षि से ही प्रार्थना करें कि वे अपने आप को ठीक कर लें। उन्होंने ऐसा ही किया, और सच्चे हृदय से प्रार्थना की, ‘हे महर्षि, आप तो सर्वज्ञ हैं। मैं बड़ी दुविधा में हूँ, मेरी सहायता कीजिए।’ उस रात के बाद से महर्षि के रोग पर उपचार का प्रभाव होने लगा। डॉ. मेलकोटे इस चमत्कार पर रो पड़े; अब वे बिना अनुताप के घर जा सकते थे।

नेल्लोर के वकील रामकृष्णन् प्रश्नों की एक लंबी सूची लेकर आए। उन्हें अपने प्रश्नों पर बड़ा गर्व था और समझ रहे थे कि महर्षि के लिए भी उनका उत्तर देना कठिन होगा। किंतु जब वे कक्ष में महर्षि के सामने बैठे तो उनका मस्तिष्क जैसे थम गया और वे एक भी प्रश्न नहीं पूछ सके।

इलाहाबाद विश्वविद्यालय के प्रो सैयद (सं. 20) और उनकी पत्नी दोनों महर्षि

के बड़े भक्त थे। वे आश्रम के बाहर एक किराए के घर में रहते थे। एक दिन श्रीमती सैयद को बड़ी तीव्र इच्छा हुई कि वह भगवान श्री रमण को भोजन के लिए अपने घर बुलाएँ। उन्होंने यह बात अपने पति से कही, किंतु वे ऐसी असामान्य माँग को महर्षि के सम्मुख रखने का साहस नहीं जुटा पा रहे थे। जब पत्नी ने ज्यादा परेशान किया तो उन्होंने एक दिन महर्षि को अपनी पत्नी की इच्छा बताई। महर्षि सुनकर मुस्काए किंतु मौन रहे। पत्नी ने हार न मानी और पति के साथ स्वयं महर्षि को बताया, वे हँसे, किंतु चुप रहे।

घर आकर पति-पत्नी में खासा विवाद हुआ। पत्नी का कहना था कि प्रो. ने सही ढंग से बात नहीं कही। जब बात बढ़ गई तो पति ने कहा, "मैं कैसे दोषी हूँ? सत्य तो यह है कि तुम्हारी भक्ति कच्ची है।" ये शब्द पत्नी के हृदय को बंध गए और वे सारी रात महर्षि के ध्यान में बैठ गईं। वे अपनी प्रार्थना के बल पर उन्हें भोजन पर बुलाना चाहती थीं। बहुत सवेरे उनकी आँख लग गई तो महर्षि दिखाई दिए। वे कह रहे थे, "इतनी जिद क्यों? मैं आश्रम छोड़कर भोजन के लिए कहीं नहीं जा सकता। मुझे आश्रमवासियों के साथ ही भोजन करना पड़ता है, अन्यथा वे खाना नहीं खाएँगे।"

महर्षि ने श्रीमती सैयद को सपने में तीन भक्त दिखाए और कहा कि इनको भोजन खिला दो, वह मुझे भोजन कराने के समान होगा। वे तीन भक्त थे — हैदराबाद के डॉ. मेलकोटे, एक बंगाली संन्यासी-स्वामी प्रबुद्धानंद, और तीसरा मैं।

जागते ही उन्होंने अपने पति को सपने का पूरा विवरण बताया। प्रो. ने हम तीनों को भोजन के लिए आमंत्रित किया। महर्षि के प्रतिनिधि बनकर हमें उनके घर जाना है, यह समझ कर हम बड़े प्रसन्न थे। किंतु हम तीनों ब्राह्मण थे और इस बात से चिंतित थे कि एक मुसलमान के घर भोजन करने पर आश्रम के लोगों की क्या प्रतिक्रिया होगी। मैं डॉ. मेलकोटे के पास गया और पूछा, "आपका क्या विचार है?" वे बोले, "मैं भी सोच रहा हूँ, वे मुस्लिम हैं, यदि हम गए तो अवश्य विपत्ति में फँस जाएँगे।" मैंने कहा, "मैं तो जाऊँगा, क्योंकि मैं इसे अपने भगवान का आदेश मानता हूँ, नहीं तो श्रीमती सैयद हमारे नाम और हुलिया अपने पति को कैसे बता सकती थी?" डॉ. मेलकोटे और बंगाली संन्यासी भी जाने के लिए तैयार हो गए। हमने आनेवाली कठिनाइयों की बात अपने इष्ट महर्षि पर छोड़ दी। फिर भी

डॉ. मेलकोटे असमंजस में थे : मुस्लिम लोग हम हिंदुओं के स्वच्छता और शुद्धता के नियमों को कैसे जानेंगे ? हम एक मुस्लिम महिला के सपने पर क्यों विश्वास कर लें ? क्या हम सचमुच कह सकते हैं कि हम महर्षि के आदेश का पालन कर रहे हैं; हमारी बात पर कौन विश्वास करेगा ?

दूसरे दिन जब आश्रम में भोजन की घंटी बजी, तब हम तीनों ने महर्षि के सामने जाकर प्रणाम किया। उन्होंने ऐसा करने का कारण नहीं पूछा, केवल हमारी ओर देखा। सबके साथ भोजन कक्ष में जाने के बजाय हम तीनों आश्रम के बाहर निकले। सर्वाधिकारी ने भी हमें जाते हुए देखा किंतु नहीं पूछा कि हम भोजन के समय बाहर कहाँ जा रहे हैं ?

श्रीमती सैयद ने बड़ी स्वच्छता और प्रेम से भोजन बनाया। खाना अति उत्तम था। जब भोजन समाप्त हुआ तो उन्होंने हमें अपने हाथ से पान के बीड़े दिए। जब हम वापस आ रहे थे, डॉ. मेलकोटे के नेत्रों में आँसू थे। वे कह रहे थे, " मैं हैदराबाद का हूँ और मुसलमानों के रीति-रिवाज भली प्रकार जानता हूँ। कोई मुस्लिम महिला अपने हाथ से पान का बीड़ा अपने पति को अथवा एक फकीर (संत, महात्मा) को ही देती है। उनकी दृष्टि में हम महर्षि का रूप रखकर उनके घर आए थे।"

जब हम आश्रम वापस आए तो हमें बड़ा आश्चर्य हुआ कि किसी ने यह नहीं पूछा कि हम प्रतिदिन की तरह भोजन कक्ष में नहीं थे, या हम लोग कहाँ गए थे। जो उनका आदेश मानते हैं, भगवान श्री रमण महर्षि कितने अद्भुत ढंग से उनकी रक्षा करते हैं। ■

**क्रमशः**

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

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

***Translated from Hindi version of book***

***'Face to Face with Sri Ramana Maharshi'***



## श्री रमण महर्षि से बातचीत

7 जनवरी, 1937

323. 'अरूणाचल अष्टक' के छठे छन्द को स्पष्ट करते हुए श्री भगवान् ने इस प्रकार कहा :

पूर्व के छन्द में अन्तिम शब्द में प्रश्न किया गया "क्या एक ही है ?" वर्तमान छन्द के प्रारम्भिक शब्द में उत्तर है "हाँ केवल एक ही है"। आगे कहा है, "यद्यपि यह एक ही है तथापि अपनी अद्भुत शक्ति से यह लघु बिन्दु 'मैं' (अहम् वृत्ति) पर प्रतिबिम्बित होता है जिसे अविद्या अथवा संचित सुप्त संस्कार भी कहते हैं; यह प्रतिबिम्बित प्रकाश सापेक्ष ज्ञान है।

यह मनुष्य के प्रारब्ध के अनुसार अन्तस्थ सुप्त संस्कारों को स्थूल जगत् के रूप में व्यक्त करता है एवं बाह्य स्थूल जगत् को सूक्ष्म अन्तस्थ संस्कारों के रूप में लौटा लेता है; इस शक्ति को सूक्ष्म स्तर पर मन तथा भौतिक स्तर पर मस्तिष्क कहा जाता है। यह मन अथवा मस्तिष्क उस शाश्वत अद्वितीय वस्तु के विस्तारक के रूप में कार्य करता है और उसे विस्तृत जगत् के रूप में प्रदर्शित करता है। जागृति तथा स्वप्न की अवस्थाओं में मन बहिर्मुखी रहता है तथा सुषुप्ति में अन्तर्मुखी रहता है; मन के माध्यम से परब्रह्म जागृति तथा स्वप्न की अवस्थाओं में अनेक रूपों में भासता प्रतीत होता है तथा सुषुप्ति अथवा मूर्च्छा आदि की दशा में वापस लौट आता है। अतः तुम केवल वही हो, एवं भिन्न नहीं हो सकते। कुछ भी परिवर्तन हो, तुम अद्वितीय वस्तु ही रहते हो; तुम्हारे अतिरिक्त कुछ नहीं है।

इसके पूर्व का छन्द कहता है : फोटो की प्लेट जब एक बार सूर्य के प्रकाश से खराब हो जाती है तब उस पर चित्र अंकित नहीं होता। इसी प्रकार

तुम्हारा मन आत्म-प्रकाश की ज्योति से प्रकाशित होकर फिर जगत् रूपी चित्र अंकित नहीं कर सकता। वह सूर्य तुम ही हो। यदि उसकी रश्मियाँ ही इतनी बलवती हैं कि चित्र लेना असम्भव कर देती हैं तो आत्म-प्रकाश कितना अधिक बलवान होगा ? इस प्रकार यह कहा जाता है कि अद्वितीय वस्तु जो तुम हो अर्थात् तुम से परे और कुछ भी नहीं है।

वर्तमान छन्द में लघु बिन्दु = देहाभिमान; तम से निर्मित लघु बिन्दु = गुप्त संस्कारयुक्त अहंकार; द्रष्टा, अथवा देखने वाला अथवा उदय होने वाली अहम् वृत्ति, यह दृश्य, पदार्थ अथवा अन्तःकरण के रूप में विस्तार पाता है। अहम् भाव के उदय होने के लिए प्रकाश का मन्द होना आवश्यक है। दिन के प्रकाश में रज्जु सर्प भावित नहीं होती। गहन अन्धकार में स्वयं रस्सी भी नहीं दीख सकती; अतः उसे भूल से सर्प मानने की सम्भावना नहीं है। केवल मन्द प्रकाश में, झुटपुटे में, छायाओं द्वारा किये गये धुँधले प्रकाश में, अथवा अँधेरे के मन्द प्रकाश में ही रज्जु को सर्प मानने की भूल होती है। इसी प्रकार वह शुद्ध प्रकाश आत्मा अहम् बनकर उठता है—अन्धकार के जरिये आये हुए उसके प्रकाश से ही यह सम्भव है। इसको ही मूल अविद्या कहते हैं। उसके साथ होकर जो प्रकाश आता है उसे प्रतिबिम्बित प्रकाश कहते हैं। शुद्ध प्रतिबिम्बित प्रकाश को शुद्ध मन अथवा ईश्वर कहते हैं। ईश्वर माया से युक्त होता है। दूसरे शब्दों में प्रतिबिम्बित प्रकाश ही ईश्वर है।

अन्य नाम — निर्मल मन — अशुद्ध मन का भी संकेत करता है। यही राजसिक अथवा सक्रिय मन अथवा अहंकार है। यह भी उपरोक्त सात्विक मन से केवल दूसरे प्रतिबिम्ब के द्वारा प्रक्षिप्त किया जा सकता है। इस प्रकार अहंकार अविद्या का परिणाम है। तब तामसिक अथवा प्रमादी मन अन्तःकरणों के रूप में आता है; यह जगत् के रूप में भासता है।

स्थूल देह दृष्टि से इसे मस्तिष्क के माध्यम द्वारा बाह्य स्तर पर जगत् रूप में भासित होना कहा जा सकता है।

किन्तु स्थूल देह केवल मन की है। मन चार अन्तःकरणों वाला कहा जा सकता है, अथवा वृत्ति भेद अथवा छठी इन्द्रिय; अथवा बुद्धि को अहंकार से तथा चित्त को मन से अर्थात् स्मरण शक्ति को संकल्प शक्ति से संयुक्त किया

जा सकता है। इसके दो भाग माने जा सकते हैं। — अहंकार तथा मन। इस दृष्टि से विज्ञानात्मा अथवा अहंकार अथवा देखने वाला द्रष्टा होगा तथा मनोमयकोष अथवा दीखने वाले दृश्य पदार्थ।

जाग्रत, स्वप्न एवं सुषुप्त अवस्थाओं की उत्पत्ति मूल अविद्या से है। मन के आवरण में ही मन के बहिर्मुख हो जाने पर तथा जाग्रत तथा स्वप्नावस्था में अपनी वृत्तियों से अनुभव प्राप्त करने में तथा सुषुप्ति में मन लय हो जाने में एक दिव्य शक्ति जगत् एवं व्यक्तियों के कार्यों का नियन्त्रण करती है। ये सब स्वयं प्रकाशमय सत्ता के आधार पर प्रतिबिम्बित प्रकाश से गुजरते दृश्य मात्र हैं।

जिस प्रकार दिन के प्रखर प्रकाश में न रज्जु—सर्प दीखना सम्भव है, न गहन अन्धकार में स्वयं रस्सी का। इसी प्रकार जगत् स्वयं प्रकाशमय शुद्ध अस्तित्व की समाधि अवस्था में अथवा सुषुप्ति में अथवा मूर्च्छा आदि में नहीं दीखता।

केवल प्रतिबिम्बित प्रकाश से ही (अन्धकार से मिश्रित प्रकाश अथवा अज्ञान से मिश्रित ज्ञान), अपने आधार से अस्वतन्त्र, यह संसार उदय होता है, अपनी स्थिति पाता है और लय हो जाता है।

इसका नानात्व भी सत्यता, अर्थात् मूल स्रोत से पृथक नहीं हो सकता। यहाँ एक लीला हो रही है जिसमें एक अद्वितीय सत्ता नानात्व होकर दीखती है और फिर अदृश्य हो जाती है। ऐसा करने के लिए एक आश्चर्यजनक शक्ति का होना आवश्यक है।

वह शक्ति भी अपने स्रोत से स्वतन्त्र नहीं हो सकती। आत्मप्रकाशमय शुद्ध स्वरूप में उस शक्ति का भास नहीं होता है। तथापि उसके कार्य सबको विदित हैं। कितना भव्य !

इसके प्रारम्भिक दिव्य स्पन्दन से सात्विक स्फुरण प्रकट होते हैं, और उनसे राजसिक अहंकार और तब तामसिक वृत्तियाँ उदय होती हैं। जिन्हें सामान्यतया वृत्ति ज्ञान कहते हैं, अथवा प्रकाश जो आवर्धक काँच (magnifying lens) के अनुसार है। जिस प्रकार कृत्रिम प्रकाश किसी काँच (lens) के जरिये ही परदे पर आता है वैसे ही यह प्रतिबिम्बित प्रकाश संसार रूपी दृश्य का आकार लेने से पहले कल्पना (आवर्धक) के जरिये ही बाहर आता है। वास्तव में कल्पना ही

बीज से संसार है; आगे वही विस्तृत संसार होकर दीखता है। यह अलौकिक शक्ति है ! इस प्रकार ईश्वर, जीव तथा सब संसार यह प्रतिबिम्बित प्रकाश मात्र हैं और इन सबका आधार केवल वह स्वयं प्रकाशमय सद्द्रस्तु (ब्रह्म) है।

अब यह 'मैं' – कल्पना (अहंकार) क्या है ?

व्यवहार में यह द्रष्टा है अथवा दृश्य ?

क्योंकि जागृति में एवं स्वप्न में यह सब दृश्य का साक्षी बनता है अथवा हम तो इसे साक्षी मानते ही हैं, इसलिए इसको द्रष्टा मानना ही पड़ेगा। तथापि शुद्ध आत्मा के साक्षात्कार के उपरान्त यह दृश्य हो जायगा।

यह अहम् कल्पना किसकी है ? यह खोज ही विचार कहलाता है।

'मैं' और 'यह' दोनों ही उसी प्रकाश से उत्पन्न होते हैं। वे दोनों क्रम से रजोगुण व तमोगुण के सम्बन्ध से हैं। रज और तम से रहित वह प्रतिबिम्बित प्रकाश (शुद्ध सत्त्व) पाने के लिए 'इस'—संकल्प से अखण्ड और अबाधित रहकर केवल 'मैं'—के रूप में प्रकाशित होना चाहिए। यह शुद्ध स्थिति सुषुप्ति और जागृति के बीच में क्षणिक होकर रहती है। यदि इसको बढ़ाएँ तो यह महत् बुद्धि या ईश्वर है। स्वप्रकाशमय सर्वोत्तम आत्मा के साक्षात्कार का एकमात्र यही मार्ग है।

सुषुप्ति में दो प्रकार के अनुभव होते हैं, जिनका जागने के बाद ऐसा स्मरण होता है कि 'मैं सुख से सोया था, और अन्य कुछ भी नहीं जानता था।' सुख और अज्ञान वे अनुभव हैं। इस प्रकार हम शक्ति को (1) आवरण और (2) विक्षेप रूप में परिवर्तित होते देखते हैं और मन उस विक्षेप का ही परिणाम है। ■

**क्रमशः**

“श्री रमण महर्षि से बातचीत” पुस्तक से उद्धृत

(संग्रहकर्ता - श्री मुनगल एस. वेंकटरामैया

अनुवादक - श्री दिनेशचन्द्र शर्मा)

*Translated from 'Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi'*



## तप अथवा तपस्या

डा. सुधा गोरावारा

भारतीय संस्कृति और जनमानस में तप अथवा तपस्या शब्द गहराई से प्रविष्ट है। सामान्य जन इसके अर्थ को विस्तार से समझते हैं पर इसकी व्यवहारिक विविधता ही कभी-कभी भ्रमित कर देती है। प्रायः हम इसका प्रयोग योगियों व ऋषि मुनियों के संदर्भ में करते हैं। कभी उनको हिमालय की गुफाओं में अथवा जलनिमरन अवस्थाओं में देख-सुनकर तप के बहिरंग से आश्चर्य चकित भी होते हैं। परन्तु तप मात्र बहिरंग नहीं है – मन और बुद्धि की एकाग्रता का समन्वय इसका प्रथम सोपान है। केवल बाह्य रूप अथवा क्रियाओं का तप भ्रम उत्पन्न करता है, अश्रद्धा को जन्म देता है।

तप का शाब्दिक अर्थ है – तपना, कष्ट सहना, आत्मिक बल की वृद्धि करना अथवा पूर्व कर्मों को नष्ट करना। परन्तु सामान्यतः इसे आत्मसंयम अथवा अनुशासन के रूप में ग्रहण किया जाता है। सभी मानते हैं कि तप के बिना जीवन नहीं है, यह मनुष्यों का धर्म है पशु पक्षियों का नहीं। वस्तुतः यह बुद्धि का, विवेक का गुण है, मन का नहीं, मन तो सदैव सहिष्णुता के विपरीत रहता है। जिसमें त्याग है, केवल वही तप कर सकता है। समय, आयु, परिस्थिति व योग्यता के आधार पर स्वधर्म का पालन करना ही सबसे बड़ा तप है। जीवन की प्रत्येक शोभन परिस्थिति तपस्या का ही परिणाम है। माता, पिता, गृहस्थ परिवार तथा नायक, उद्योगपति, खिलाड़ी सभी अपने तपस के बल पर जीवन की ऊँचाइयों को छूते हैं।

तप आत्म संयम अथवा अनुशासन से बढ़कर है, इसका मूल भाव वैराग्य है। यह वैराग्य परिस्थिति जन्म कारणों से भी हो सकता है पर तब वह

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क्षणिक होता है। सतत विरक्ति के भाव में, त्याग के भाव में रहना और अपने लक्ष्य पर ही दृष्टि केन्द्रित करना तप का लक्ष्य है।

वस्तुतः मनुष्य के चारों पुरुषार्थ – धर्म, अर्थ, काम, मोक्ष तप से ही सिद्ध हो सकते हैं। प्रारम्भ में किसी भी लक्ष्य के लिए प्रयत्न करना प्रेयस नहीं होता, एक निष्ठा और तपस्या कठिनाई का मार्ग है, पर अन्तिम परिणाम अमृतमय ही होता है। अध्यात्म के क्षेत्र में तपस अमृतपद की प्राप्ति का साधन है। महर्षि पतंजलि ने योगसूत्र में स्पष्ट कहा है कि क्रियायोग तप आदि साधनों से ही सम्भव है: – तपः स्वाध्यायेश्वर प्रणिधानानि क्रियायोगः। अर्थात्

– तप, स्वाध्याय (श्रवण, मनन, चिन्तन) और परमात्म भाव में पूर्ण समर्पण बुद्धि ही क्रियायोग है। यही गीता का मूल संदेश निष्काम कर्म है, यही कर्मयोग है। भक्ति ज्ञान और क्रिया का असामंजस्य अनेक दुःखों का कारण है, जीवन की, संसरण की विडम्बना है।

ज्ञान दूर कुछ क्रिया भिन्न है  
इच्छा क्यों पूरी हो मन की।  
एक दूसरे से न मिल सके  
यह विडम्बना ही जीवन की।

जयशंकर प्रसाद

गीता में कृष्ण तप, यक्षव व दान को कभी न त्यागने की बात कहते हैं, उनके कर्मयोग की साधना यहीं से प्रारम्भ होती है – यज्ञदान तपः कर्म न त्याज्यं कार्यमेव तत्।

तपस्या का जीवन जीना ही ब्रह्मण का स्वाभाविक गुण है। माया के भ्रम में पड़कर मनुष्य सात्विक गुणों से दूर चला जाता है। कृष्ण कहते हैं

शमो दमस्तपः शौचं क्षातिरार्जवमेव च।

ज्ञानं विज्ञानमास्तिक्यं, ब्रह्मकर्म स्वभावजम्॥।

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गीता में तीन प्रकार के तप की चर्चा की गई है शरीर, वाणी और मन का तप।

शरीर का तप भौतिक व आध्यात्मिक सभी प्रकार के उद्देश्यों की पूर्ति में सहायक होता है। प्रातः भ्रमण से लेकर 22 घंटों तक अध्ययन अथवा अन्वेषण में अथवा किसी सेवाकार्य में निरत रहना शारीरिक तपस्या है जो मानसिक संतुलन और तप के बिना सम्भव नहीं है।

जैन धर्म में अणुव्रत अथवा संथास इसी प्रकार के तप के स्वरूप है। अध्यात्म में इसको वैराग्य से संयुक्त करके संयम और इन्द्रिय निग्रह के स्वरूप में देखा जाता है। वाणी का तप भी जीवन में अत्यंत महत्व पूर्ण है। मधुर वचनों की औषधि से बड़े से बड़े कष्ट कम हो जाते हैं। कबीर ने कहा है ऐसी वाणी बोलिए मन का आपा खोय, औरनु को सीतल करे, आपहु सीतल होय। वस्तुतः मनुष्य के व्यक्तित्व की सच्ची परख उसकी वाणी, उसकी भाषा से ही होती है।

परन्तु इन सभी तपो के मूल में ही मन का तप। मानसिक तपस्या की धारणा के अभाव में किसी और प्रकार का तप हो ही नहीं सकता। हमारे सभी व्यवहार व चिन्तन की मूल भूमि हमारा मन है। इसे निरन्तर सकारात्मकता, विनम्रता, अनासक्ति और कर्मयोग में लीन रखो तो स्वतः ही सभी समस्याओं का समाधान हो जाएगा।

सम्यक जीवन, सम्यक दर्शन, सम्यक ज्ञान तपस् के द्वारा ही सम्भव है। अध्यात्म में जिस सर्वात्म वाद का लक्ष्य है – 'सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं ततो न विजुगुप्सते' वह तपस् द्वारा ही सम्भव है। मन को निरन्तर तपस् में रखें, इसी को जीवन का लक्ष्य, सिद्धि सभी बनाएँ तो कुछ भी सम्भव है। ■

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**“Even if a trace of ego is left in the mind, it will  
rapidly increase and ruin you spiritually”**

- Ramana Maharishi



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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.”**

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