

# DIRECT PATH

RAMANA KENDRA  
DELHI

August - October 2023

Vol. XXV, No.3

*"Think that you are always in my presence. That will make  
you feel right."*

*Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi*



***74. Om varnasrama matatitaya namah***

One who has transcended varna (caste-distinctions) and  
asrama (stages of life).

***75. Om rasajnayasat-cit-ananda namah***

Relisher of rasa, of every manifestation of  
being-consciousness-bliss.

***76. Om saumyaya namah***

Embodiment of auspiciousness, of benevolence.





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

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VOLUME XXV, ISSUE 3

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# Call for Articles

As the journal depends on articles from volunteer writers, we appeal to you to send in articles for our consideration. We wish to keep the range of subjects both wide and diverse covering aspects such as: Bhagavan's life, teachings, and experiences related to the practice of his methods; life, teachings, and experiences related to the practice of methods taught by other spiritual masters; teachings and stories from religions other than Hinduism; interpretations of sacred texts and verses; spiritual travel and insights; poetry; feedback and suggestions.

As a guideline, articles can be short (around 750 words), medium (around 1500 words) or in longer format (around 2300 words). Please send in your contributions through e-mail to [editor.dp@rkdelhi.org](mailto:editor.dp@rkdelhi.org)

We look forward to hearing from you!

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# Be As You Are

*Perspectives from an Editorial Advisor*



*“Let people quote scriptures, perform rituals and worship deities, there is no liberation for anyone without the realization of one’s identity with the Atman, not even in the lifetime of a hundred Brahman put together” – Adi Sankara, Vivekachudamani.*

This irrefutable message of Sri Adi Sankara is aptly and clearly reinforced repeatedly by Bhagavan Ramana. He has always stressed the importance of identifying and merging with our true Self. The path: the direct one, enquiry or unconditional surrender to the will of the Supreme. The *'Who Am I?'* enquiry, far from being a mechanical process, cajoles us to persevere and seek our source with one pointed attention to the truth of our existence: ever present within each one of us. This sense of ‘I-I’ is the beginningless,

steady presence that is unchanging. Our job is to keep directing our doubts, queries, opinions and anxieties to the origin of our being.

The rituals, prayers and elaborate procedures associated with religious practices have value in so much as they lead our mind to the right path. They are in other words a means to an end. An end that is single pointed and relentless in pursuing one query – to what do we owe the creation of the illusory body mind organism? What is reality? What causes us to associate a sense of truthfulness to what is not the truth – our mortal frame and the phenomenal world? How do we wriggle out of this bondage which is the cause of endless suffering and pain? Our external association is bound to lead to pain in proportion to the intensity

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of our involvement. The timeless message of all scriptures that anything outside of ourselves is impermanent and inconsistent, does not usually sink in, till we experience the trials and tribulations of the phenomenal life; reiterating the writer Thomas Hardy's cryptic line in his novel, *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, 'Happiness was but the occasional episode in a general drama of pain'.

Instead of dwelling deeply into such fundamental aberrations of our identity we tend to get deeply involved with the preliminary aids such as rituals and the mechanisms of worship. In turn, this embroils us into deeper deviations for instance into the rituals and procedures of festivities and ceremonies. We forget that while they assist us on the spiritual path, they are only facilitating mechanisms. Thus for instance, instead of reflecting on the real significance of the festival of lights which as the Maharshi says is to light the lamp of our inner awareness, we gleefully get immersed in the celebratory events surrounding such festivities. Celebratory occasions no doubt have their benefits – they bind communities, people and help build in a spirit of optimism and bonhomie amongst us. However, to really appreciate the intent and significance of these celebrations, it is necessary

for us to dwell within and encourage young impressionable minds on the deeper meaning and value that accrue from introspection and understanding the purpose of who we are and where our true identity lies. Only then can we promote the spirit of tolerance, patience and love, so crucial in a world torn by strife, and relationships filled with insecurities and uncertainties.

Ramana had answered the query as to 'How do you look at others?' with a pinpointed reply: 'There are no others'! To the realized sage it is just one divine energy that runs through across all manifestations. To the Maharshi, what is felt towards or done to others is felt for or done towards oneself – as all that exists is but the sense of one singular being. To progress towards this pinnacle of understanding requires us to shed our egoism and false identity. The challenges imposed due to the demands on inter-human relationships and dealings highlights this. Despite the best of understanding of scriptures and their teachings, humankind continues to struggle in its relationships and transactions within families, communities and nations. The peace that we all strive and desperately seek eludes us. The answer is to be found only within, not without.

Mahatma Gandhi's pertinent call 'Be the change that you want the

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world to be' is as much true in spiritual pursuits as in our day to day lives. To change within is the singular task before each of us. This change can only happen if we shed our individual sense of self-importance and aggrandisement. The Maharshi's direct

path of focusing within is the route to knowing our true identity. With faith, patience and diligence, we can progress towards the goal of existence – to merge, identify and be with our *Atman*, which is the true import of the statement, 'Be As You Are'.

Dr. Venkat Ramanan, the President of Sri Ramanasramam made his first visit to the Delhi Kendra. The 127<sup>th</sup> Advent Day was observed at the Kendra with a deep talk by Prof. Vijay Vancheswar. Michael James, Raghavji, and Sri Anish gave lucid talks through the online mode. The recordings of the talks rendered are available at Ramana Kendra, Delhi's YouTube channel.

Important events within the time frame of the current issue (August - October 2023) are as follows:

- Bhagavan's Advent Day: 01<sup>st</sup> September
- Muruganar Day: 14<sup>th</sup> September
- Navaratri Festival commences: 15<sup>th</sup> October
- Saraswati Puja: 23<sup>rd</sup> October
- Vijayadasami: 24<sup>th</sup> October

### Talk 395

*D.:* How is *Poorna* Brahman to be attained? What is the method best suited to a *grihasta*?

*M.:* You have already said *poorna*, i.e., perfection. Are you apart from *Poorna*? If apart from it, will it be *poorna*? If not apart how does the question arise? The knowledge that Brahman is *poorna* and that you are not apart from the same is the finality. See it and you will find that you are not a *grihasta* or any limited being.

*D.:* What are the *tatvas*?

*M.:* Knowledge of *poorna* Brahman will elucidate the other matters automatically.



1 + 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 = 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0  
SELF + IMAGININGS = THE WORLD

## A Tale of You and I

### NIDAGHA AND RIBHU

TEXT : SHARADA BHANU  
DESIGN : BHARATI MIRCHANDANI

Nidagha was the disciple of the sage Ribhu and was given spiritual learning. But he left before he had absorbed a vital truth: Though we see many people and things in this universe, what exists is only One.

Many years went by. Sage Ribhu wished to make sure that his pupil had attained the highest knowledge through practicing what he had been taught. So he made the journey to where Nidagha lived and found his former student on the street, as a grand procession went by. The king himself was riding past.



Sage Ribhu went up to Nidagha and asked him,

*What are you watching?*

Nidagha saw an old man, no different from any poor villager. He did not recognize his former Guru.

*Why, don't you see, the king of this land is going past, mounted on his horse.*

*Really! But tell me, which is the king and which the horse?*

Nidagha answered and turned again to watch the scene.

*Why, the man seated up there is the king and the animal down below is the horse.*

Nidagha was surprised. Even for a villager, this old man was extremely ignorant.

*Ah, now I understand 'king' and 'horse'. But what is 'up' and what is 'down'?*

Nidagha stopped looking at the procession and he turned, amazed, to the old man.

How could 'up' and 'down' be explained to this foolish yokel?

The king and his royal horse had already gone by and it was useless to point. He decided on drastic measures. Words were not enough. Actions were needed. This old duffer would have to be shown. He climbed on top of the old man's shoulders.

1 + 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 = 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0  
EGO + THOUGHTS = UNIVERSE of MAYA



1 + 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 = 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 1  
 SELF + AWARENESS = ONENESS

Now king,  
 'horse,' 'up' and  
 'down' are all  
 explained.

Now, I am up,  
 and you are  
 down!

But, tell me who  
 is this 'I' and who  
 is this 'you'?



Nidagha gaped, thunderstruck.  
 His head whirled. The 'you' would always  
 depend on someone being 'I'.  
 Could he point to his own body, say 'I' and  
 point to the other and say 'you'?

With an effort Nidagha stopped himself. This was not only inadequate but  
 incorrect. From the old man's point of view, he was 'I' and Nidagha was 'you'.  
 Each entity was an 'I'. And though the bodies and minds were different, the real  
 'I' was the same. Always. Unchanging. Akshara. The syllable uttered in the  
 heart that could never be written. Being. Inextinguishable.

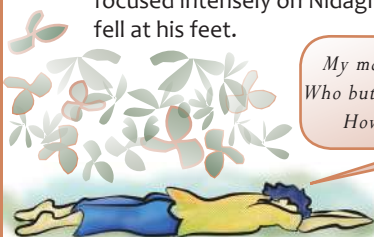
This 'I' could never be limited to a body. This was the arch mistake by which  
 'you' and 'he/she/it' were born, and a whole world of different things  
 seemed to exist.

Surely, he knew that? After studying this for so many years?  
 But studying was different. Now, he knew...

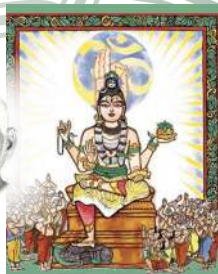
Nidagha stumbled away and looked again at the old man,  
 standing in complete silence, luminous and still, his eyes  
 focused intensely on Nidagha, With a cry, Nidagha  
 fell at his feet.

My master! Beloved sage, Ribhu!  
 Who but you could ask this question?  
 How did I fail to know you?

Ah, that depended on your  
 knowing who you are.  
 Knowing this, you now know  
 everything. Stay in this  
 knowledge forever!



This is a story Bhagavan Sri Ramana used to narrate.  
 He recommended the reading of the Ribhu Gita to  
 spiritual aspirants.  
 This intense long poem is believed to hold Sage Ribhu's  
 instructions to his disciple Nidagha.  
 This book teaches that there exists only the One Self.  
 The seeker needs to understand this,  
 be one with the Self, and live joyfully in That always.



1 + 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 = 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 1  
 SELF + AWARENESS = CONSCIOUSNESS

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## In the Cave of the Heart



The first time one heard of *dahara vidya* was at a talk given by Brahma Shri Nochur Venkatraman on the occasion of Delhi Ramana Kendra's Golden Jubilee celebrations in March 2014. Mentioned in the Chandogya Upanishad and the Taittiriya Upanishad, in this *vidya-upasana* the sadhaka concentrates on Brahman (the Self) in the cave of the heart. Said Shri Nochur: "In Bhagavan's teaching there is a force that is not different from you which rises in the heart and serves to put you back in the centre. Because you are complete – *purnavastu* – through Bhagavan's very look or *amritdrishti*, you are put in the centre, the centre or heart itself being the central teaching. The circumference is disorderly and cannot be put in order; in the centre

everything falls into place."

Shri Nochur spoke of *dahara vidya* or *hridaya vidya* as the sole property of Arunachala. Aruna (the colour of the heart) merging in Achala (the immovable Self) is Arunachala. A clue seems to lie in the deep sleep we experience, a subject often mentioned by Bhagavan for its peaceful mind-free state. Explained Shri Nochur: "We cherish deep sleep for its state of completeness where we own nothing. Why do we wish to return to it? Simply because it was a happy state and we infer this from memory. The period between deep sleep and waking seeps into our waking, giving us a glimpse of what is hidden in sleep. We wake up with a sacred feeling; we need to bring this feeling back to our waking state consciously."

Shri Nochur outlined the process: “The first thought to rise from deep sleep is ‘I’. It is either one with Truth or limited. When the ‘I’ is held, it is as if Sri Hari is himself doing *japa* in the heart – first aham, then aum. Meditate till you recognize this *dhara*; it rises from the heart and merges in the heart. When the mind beholds the Self, it becomes the Self – ‘I’ merges with Self in Siva’s mudra. This is the *sankarshan sakti* of the heart. When we constantly struggle to find the center, the Guru gives us a push from within. Slowly we learn to remain there. Abiding in the center, the ‘I’ does not rise and you are not asleep. Parvati came to Arunachala in the final stages of her *sadhana*. Under the instructions of Rishi Gautama, she merged in Arunachala. This is *hridaya vidya* – the sole property of Arunachala.”

In Verse 26 of Bhagavan’s poem Aksharamanamalai, there is a reference to Rishi Gautama:

gautamar pōttrum kuranaīmā  
malaiyē  
kadaik kanit tālvai Arunāchalā  
“O, Hill of Grace, adored by Gautama! Give me your grace of Jnāna.”

It was only under Rishi Gautama’s secret instruction in Arunachala that Goddess Parvati is finally granted mergence into Siva’s formlessness in

a reunion intensely desired. Among the many spiritual stories Bhagavan narrated, the most prominent theme was of Siva bhaktas, foremost among whom was Goddess Parvati herself.

Siva and Parvati, as the Father and Mother of the world are imbued with a secret knowledge that while seemingly two they are fundamentally one. So when Parvati causes untold suffering to humanity by playfully closing Siva’s three eyes, she is struck with remorse and seeks penance. The anguish of imminent separation is reflected in Siva’s words when he says, “What penance can be prescribed for you leaving me out?” Asked to follow her own path of *dharma* and to guide the earth in this, Siva asks Parvati to proceed to Kancheepuram, “heaven on earth, where a little penance yields boundless results. I shall remain there in the lotus of your heart in my formless state as the Absolute Pure Being,” he assures her. This is *dahara vidya* or ‘the knowledge of Brahman within’.

Before she can reach Kancheepuram, Parvati must shower her grace and goodness through her passage on earth. She does this by first addressing the immediate need of assuaging hunger in famine-struck Kasi and next by assuring Kasi’s King that the land would now have rain and no

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more famine. She is restless to reach Kancheepuram where Siva has assured her of his presence in her heart. Here at the holy river Kampa, she practices austerities with devotion. Out of sand, she creates a *linga* and passes Siva's test by her willingness to perish with the *linga* when the floodwaters rise, rather than let the *Sivalinga* dissolve in the flood.

But her *tapas* is still not over. For though a divine voice from the sky refers to her as the 'noblest of beings' who will help worshippers of the *linga* attain the goal of their lives, she herself must proceed to Arunachala to learn from Rishi Gautama about devotion to Siva and of the glory of Arunachala. While received with thrill and elation by the sage, she must perform penance for a long time under his instructions, before Siva finally appears before her, granting her whatever boon she wishes. She seeks to merge with her Lord to become half of Siva himself. So while Siva takes residence in the lotus of Parvati's heart in Kancheepuram itself, the goddess's penance is a long one: from good deeds to worship of Siva's form as a hand-shaped *linga* simultaneous with service to mankind, on to secret instruction under Rishi Gautama, so she can merge into Siva's

formlessness in a reunion intensely desired.

When Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni, despite having studied all the Vedas and other texts, done crores of *mantra japa* and undertaken many fasts, humbly asked Bhagavan what 'tapas' actually meant, Bhagavan's reply in Tamil best suited to Kavyakantha's needs is translated as: "If one does *japa* of a mantra, if one attentively observes from where that mantra-sound goes out, there the mind is dissolved; that itself is tapas".<sup>1</sup> This is a powerful method. It helps to harmonize the breath with the mantra as it rises; in tracing the breath and the mantra back to the source from which it 'goes out', there is a centring that takes place that quietens the mind. If thoughts rise, they can also be returned to the source from which they rise. With practice, the feeling element increases, simply because this is Bhagavan's instruction. As devotion grows so does love and gratitude – feelings that throb in a heart which is aware, if only for a moment, of the possibility of infinite happiness.

Sat has been described as pure Being, Chit as pure Awareness and Ananda as pure infinite happiness. Michael James, who has studied deeply

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1 <https://happinessofbeing.blogspot.com/2015/08/that-alone-is-tapas-first-teachings.html>, Michael James.

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Bhagavan's original Tamil words and texts in collaboration with Sadhu Om, and is a devout interpreter of these for devotees worldwide, describes happiness thus: "Happiness is the cause for love and love is the cause for happiness. Since, in dreamless sleep we are happy and we alone exist, there is reason to conclude that happiness is our real nature. We want to be happy because we love our real Self. From this we can infer that love is our real nature. The Ananda aspect explicitly means happiness and implicitly means love. Without love, we cannot make progress on this path – love, not for the person, but for the Reality of ourself."<sup>2</sup>

From this one learns that to know Bhagavan, one must have all-consuming love for him; only then can we surrender ourselves to him; through love we lose ourselves in him. Michael narrates the case of Akhilandamma, a child widow from a poor family in Desur village. Along with Mastan Swami, she made regular trips to Tiruvannamalai to see Bhagavan and cook for him. She would listen to answers given by Bhagavan to visitors' queries but, conscious of not being learned, she could never ask a question herself. One full moon day, considering it auspicious, she asked Bhagavan for some

teaching. Bhagavan said to her, "Be without leaving yourself." Years later, she recounted this to Sadhu Om. She said that though Bhagavan's words were spoken in Tamil she didn't fully understand them. But they had always been with her, always as consolation, working in her heart in ways she did not understand. This is the power of Bhagavan's words, the power of *dahara vidya*.

Another devotee, Amritanatha Yati wrote on a paper a Malayalam verse imploring Bhagavan to say whether he was Hari (Vishnu) or Sivaguru (Subrahmanya) or Yativara (Siva) or Vararuchi. Bhagavan wrote his reply in the same Malayalam metre on the same paper. Bhagavan's reply:

"In the recesses of the lotus-shaped Hearts of all, beginning with Vishnu, there shines as pure intellect (Absolute Consciousness) the *Paramatman*, who is the same as Arunachala Ramana. When the mind melts with love of Him, and reaches the inmost recess of the Heart wherein He dwells as the beloved, the subtle eye of pure intellect opens and He reveals Himself as Pure Consciousness."<sup>3</sup>

To return to the subject of Sage Gautama and Parvati, the sage's ash-

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2 The practice of self-investigation, San Diego Ramana satsang via zoom, April 3, 2022.

3 Collected Works of Sri Ramana Maharshi, pdf, Page 143.

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ram lies on the Giripradakshina road between Raja Rajeshwara temple and Surya lingam. At the site of the Raja Rajeshwara temple (dedicated to Parvati with its nine depictions of the goddess), Arunachala hill is almost hidden from view by Parvati hill, the west-most extension of Arunachala. Some consider Parvati hill to be the ego, veiling our vision of Arunachala, the real Self.

Further down the road to the left is Rishi Gautama's temple. Besides being a regional rishi of Tiruvannamalai and hailing from Tiruchuzhi, Bhagavan's birthplace, he is one of the great seven cosmic rishis and author of the Gautama Dharma Sutra, the oldest law book in the world. The temple is inevitably very quiet with hardly any visitors. On the *gopuram* are images of the rishi instructing a lady, probably Parvati, clad in a green sari. From the *mantapam*, one can see into the sanctum sanctorum. The rishi's stone image is heavily garlanded, a vermilion and red *tilak* marking the centre of his forehead. Seated in *padmasana*, he has a moustache and a pointed beard. His eyes are open and shine even at a distance. As the priest prepares for puja, he moves with purpose, indifferent to the numbers who come or slip money into the donation box. Bhagavan often stopped here with his companions dur-

ing pradakshina, cooked and ate food here. It is here that Parvati performs penance for a long time under Sage Gautama's secret instructions, before Siva grants her the boon of mergence into his own formless Being.

Devikālottara, a Sanskrit text framed as a dialogue between Siva and Parvati contains 24,000 slokas. In this, Parvati inquires of Siva the path of Supreme wisdom and the conduct to be followed thereby. The text is a record of Siva's intimate response delivered into Parvati's ear. Bhagavan selected 85 of these verses and translated them spontaneously into Tamil in the early days while living at Virupaksha cave. According to the Publisher's note, "This work, one of the upa-āgamas, explains the supreme wisdom to be attained by mature souls and their mode of life, as expounded by the Supreme Lord Siva to Devi Parvati. It is the essence of all Agama Sastras on matters of spiritual knowledge. This is verily the boat which can rescue the mortals struggling hard, sinking and rising, in the sorrowful ocean of samsara of endless cycles of births and deaths and take them by the direct path to the shore of liberation. Let all earnest seekers after Truth, instead of groping in the dark, bewildered, and losing their way, adopt the help of this straight path and reach the supreme



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state to bliss and peace.”<sup>4</sup>

The main idea emphasised in Bhagavan’s translated slokas is the idea of *nirālamba* or the *sadhana* which is without support. When the body and mind are considered unreal, all things associated with it are considered equally unreal. There is no need for *puja* or prostrations; *japa* or *dhyana*; diverse mantras or pilgrimages; *pranayama* or concentration on the six *adharachakras*. This is made clear at a general level in Verse 35:

*Make the mind, which always clings to some support (attaching itself to sense objects), devoid of all such supports. Making the mind, which is restless in clinging to external supports, motionless, do not disturb that tranquillity even a little.*

There are references to the heart and the heart cave which gives the text the quality of *dahara vidya* in a heart that beats with feeling for the Self. The beginningless, unborn, unattached, whole and pure consciousness is described as residing in the natural home of the heart-cave. It is perfectly steady and without a trace of movement. By destroying the ego which rises from that consciousness, consciousness itself bestows the supreme joy of lib-

eration. The verses enjoin unrelenting practice which is clear from Verse 41:

*Dispelling all attachments completely and fixing that mind in the heart firmly, persist in your practice always in order to strengthen the awareness which then shines forth with great effulgence and clarity.*

From the many verses chosen by Bhagavan, there are some that give us methods to follow during meditation and through our daily lives. Verse 32 helps us distinguish between the real Self and the separate individual identity:

*If one meditates that the one Consciousness (chit) is different from the prāna (life-force), which has subtly attached itself to this gross body, from the mind, from the intellect and from the ego, one will become established in that consciousness.*

Ashtavakra Gita reiterates this in the verse:

Separate yourself from the body and remain as awareness. You are liberated. (1.4)

Another important method in Devikālottara especially applicable for meditation is Verse 39:

*If the mind falls asleep, awaken it.*

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4 Sri Devikālottara, Jñānāhāra Vichāra Patalah, Sri Ramanasramam, First edition, 1998.



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*Then if it starts wandering, make it quiet. If you reach the state where there is neither sleep nor movement of mind, stay still in that, the natural (real) state.*

Devikālottara emphasises the void as the infinite and all-encompassing one whole without a second, devoid of visible phenomena, bearing the aspect 'I' as seed which fructifies to unite with the Supreme. This is the absolute stillness of the mind, free of all thought where the awareness of one's Being continues to exist. It is a void which is nevertheless full or *purna*, bearing the universes and galaxies and gods in its womb. There is a sense of invocation in the verses below that vibrate with this fullness of Being which will fructify as the bliss of liberation when it merges with the Supreme.

*With great devotion meditating constantly that "I am that Siva the form of the one consciousness that*

*is always unsullied by any adjunct" dispel all your attachments: Verse 47*

*I alone am. No one belongs to me; nor do I belong to anyone else. I can see no one who call me his; neither can I see anyone who is mine. I am all alone: Verse 49*

*Repeatedly see thus: "I am He, the eternal, omnipresent Reality which is Brahman." Meditating thus for a long time, whoever abides imperturbably will become the Supreme Brahman, thereby attaining immortality: Verse 60*

This is the 'I AM' form of meditation or Ahamgraha Upasana free of all adjuncts, where Siva or the Alone or Brahman is invoked not as a thought but as a feeling in the heart of an infinite existence, an awareness of infinite existence and the bliss of this awareness throbbing in the cave of the heart. ■

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### Talk 360

The aristocratic gentleman from Lucknow has written to Mr. Paul Brunton that his wife has since lost that peace of mind which she had gained by her visits to Sri Bhagavan; so he desires that Sri Bhagavan may be pleased to restore the same peace.

When requested, Sri Bhagavan said, "It is due to weakness of mind that peace once gained is later lost."

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# A Talk by Dr. Venkat Ramanan

Prof. Vijay Vancheswar



**D**r. Venkat Ramanan (Anand) who has recently taken charge as the President at Sri Ramanasraman made his maiden visit to the Delhi Kendra in his new capacity, accompanied by his family including his mother.

The evening commenced with the customary puja at the shrine of Sri Ramana. This was followed by a welcome address by the President Justice K. Ramamoorthy (Retd.) who welcomed Dr. Anand and the gathering, recalling how it was fortuitous that he could attend this meeting. Recalling the last-minute cancellation of a scheduled professional meeting with a fellow judiciary member due to the indisposition of the key participating member, Justice

Ramamoorthy mentioned: mysterious are the ways of Bhagavan as this helped solve the dilemma as he was very keen to be present for this important Satsang.

The overall theme of Dr. Anand's talk was on the value and importance of *Satsanga* (association with the wise and good).

The talk started with a quote of Adi Sankara from his composition '*Bhaja Govindam*', on the importance and value of Satsang, '*Satsangatve nissangatvam nissangatve nirmohatvam, nirmohatve niscalatattvam niscalatattve jivanmuktiH*'. – (verse 9)

[Through the company of the good, there arises non-attachment;

through non-attachment there arises freedom from delusion; when there is freedom from delusion, there is the Immutable Reality; on experiencing Immutable Reality, there comes the state of ‘liberated’-in-life]

Dr. Anand reiterated the supreme importance of *Satsanga* by recalling its value as confirmed by many sages including Sage Agastya.

He mentioned that Sri Ramana has also confirmed the great benefit that can accrue to *sadhaks* through *Satsanga*. It can enable one to traverse the multiple vicissitudes of the transient phenomenal world. Indeed, we as devotees of Bhagavan are very fortunate to be drawn to Him. Dr. Anand mentioned that we should understand that we did not choose to come to Sri Ramana, Bhagavan has drawn each one of us. Our *samskaras*

have guided us to Him. It is for us now to benefit from the teachings of the Master with devotion and faith. Swami Chinmayanada who had initially visited Tiruvannamalai to have the darshan of Sri Ramana had recalled that later in life he realized that how supreme the state of a *jivan-mukta* was. Bhagavan Ramana perpetually embodied and demonstrated this state of peaceful presence.

The President concluded his talk by quoting verses of Muruganar, one of Bhagavan’s most dedicated devotees, from his composition ‘*Guru Vachaka Kovai*’ (The garland of the Guru’s sayings). Recalling verses 329 and 330 amongst others he said Sri Muruganar has captured the essence of the value of *satsanga* as explained by Bhagavan: “Association with wise and cultivating their company will rid us of the evils of temptations posed by the impostor, the ‘false ego’ which entangles us in the web of *maya* and delusion. *Satsanga* is a sure shot recipe for ridding our sense of volition, doership which our false ego generates. It is an assured means of realizing our true nature by being aware of the undulating and steady state of who we are – the Self”. ■

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# Royal Beggar: Significance of Bhiksha According to Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi

Dr. V. Bharathi Harishankar



In common perception, the term ‘royal beggar’ is an oxymoron in that the quality of regality is not associated with a beggar and vice versa. However, there is an interesting description of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya by Gandhiji as a ‘princely beggar’ because “he [Sri Malaviya] used to collect large sums of money from the Indian princes and businessmen for the Banaras Hindu University, of which he was the Founder and builder.”<sup>5</sup> On the same count, Gandhiji used to refer to himself as a ‘professional beggar.’ In his autobiography, *The Sacred Touch*, Sri. T. S. Avinashilingam (fondly referred to as Ayya) proudly recalls how his friend Sri. C.P. Subbiah used to call him a professional beggar “in affectionate appreciation of my

tireless begging .... [for] public donations by social workers for public causes.”<sup>6</sup> These two references are food for thought in that the shame associated with begging for personal reasons morphs into a respectable action when it is for a purpose beyond personal aggrandisement. A similar transformation, albeit in a spiritual sense, has been highlighted by Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi in his description of his days of *bhiksha* on the streets of Tiruvannamalai.

In Book I of *Arunachala Ramana: Eternal Ocean of Grace*, an entire chapter – “The Move to Arunagirinathar Temple” – is devoted to Bhagavan’s life as a mendicant, living on *bhiksha*.

“He [Bhagavan] would stand in front of a house and clap his hands. He

would accept the food offered in his two cupped hands and eat it standing on the road.”<sup>7</sup>

The *Bhiksha* practice is different both from the traditional offering of food served to a monk or guest inside the house and food doled out to beggars in their begging bowls outside the house. While many householders used to wait with lanterns to serve food, some criticised young Bhagavan for begging instead of working like other young men. Bhagavan Ramana responded to a devotee many years later thus:

“You cannot conceive of the majesty and dignity I felt while so begging .... I felt like a king and more than a king. I have sometimes received stale gruel at a house and eaten it without salt or any other flavouring, in the open street .... I then wiped my hands on my head and passed on, supremely happy in a state of mind in which even emperors were mere straw in my sight.”<sup>8</sup>

How can this state of mind described by Bhagavan be explained? On what grounds can we extol the act of begging, which is often associated with deprivation? Highlighting the

greatness of *bhiksha*, Bhagavan narrates the story of King Bhagiratha, which is included in *Vasishtam*. Perceiving royal duties as obstacles to his quest for self-realisation, King Bhagiratha willingly gives up the throne and leads a life of a mendicant. Bhagavan’s explanation is perceptive:

“There is nothing great about begging or eating food from a leaf which is thrown out after taking food from it. But if an emperor goes out begging, there is greatness in that *bhiksha*. ‘Living only under trees, eating their food out of their palms, disregarding even the Goddess of Wealth like an old rag, fortunate indeed are those dressed in a loincloth’.”<sup>9</sup>

Bhagavan makes a clear distinction between begging to satiate hunger arising out of poverty and deprivation and *bhiksha*, which demands an individual to overcome shame and humiliation associated with the act of begging and by doing so overcome egoism.

*Bhiksha* as an act of self-effacement deters the ego from rising its ugly and evil thoughts and actions. In this regard, it is worthwhile to differentiate

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5 T. S. Avinashilingam. *The Sacred Touch*. Coimbatore: The Avinashilingam Education Trust, 1986. p. 91.

6 Ibid. p. 91

the practice of *bhiksha* and related practices like *dakshina* and *dhana*. *Dakshina* is an act of payment for services rendered and received as between a guru and his sishya. *Dhana* is an act of charity by a benefactor. There are several instances of *dhanveers* in puranas like Karna. In both these cases, there is a clear division between the giver and receiver, benefactor and beneficiary. As against this, *bhiksha* puts both parties on equal footing.

While the giver receives blessings and benediction, the receiver has to overcome the ego states of shame and humiliation. In this respect, the act of giving and receiving *bhiksha* is a shared journey to overcome not only the hierarchical divisions but also to negotiate the petty ego states that prove to be the stumbling blocks in the path of self-realisation. ■

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7 *Arunachala Ramana: Eternal Ocean of Grace. Book I.* Tiruvannamalai: Sri Ramanasraman, 2018. pp. 69-70.

8 Ibid. p. 70

9 Ibid. p. 72

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Three persons came on a short visit; the eldest of them asked: There is one process of creation mentioned in the Upanishads and another in Puranas. Which of them is true?

*M.:* They are many, and meant to indicate that the creation has a cause and a creator should be posited so that one might seek the cause. The emphasis is on the purpose of the theory and not on the process of creation. Moreover, the creation is perceived by someone. There are no objects without the subject, *i.e.*, the objects do not come and tell you that they are, but it is you who says that there are the objects. The objects are therefore what the seer makes of them. They have no existence independent of the subject. Find out what you are and then you understand what the world is. That is the object of the theory.

*D.:* The soul is only a small particle whereas the creation is so huge. How can we surmise it?

*M.:* The particle speaks of the huge creation; where is the contradiction?



# अन्तिम ऊँचाई

कुंवर नारायण के काव्य संग्रह 'अपने सामने' (राजकमल प्रकाशन) से एक कविता प्रस्तुत है।

## कुंवर नारायण

कितना स्पष्ट होता आगे बढ़ते जाने का मतलब

अगर दसों दिशाएँ हमारे सामने होतीं,

हमारे चारों ओर नहीं।

कितना आसान होता चलते चले जाना

यदि केवल हम चलते होते

बाक़ी सब रुका होता।

मैंने अक्सर इस ऊलजलूल दुनिया को

दस सिरों से सोचने और बीस हाथों से पाने की कोशिश में

अपने लिए बेहद मुश्किल बना लिया है।

शुरू-शुरू में सब यही चाहते हैं

कि सब कुछ शुरू से शुरू हो,

लेकिन अन्त तक पहुँचते-पहुँचते हिम्मत हार जाते हैं।

हमें कोई दिलचस्पी नहीं रहती

कि वह सब कैसे समाप्त होता है

जो इतनी धूमधाम से शुरू हुआ था

हमारे चाहने पर।

दुर्गम वनों और ऊँचे पर्वतों को जीतते हुए

जब तुम अन्तिम ऊँचाई को भी जीत लोगे—

जब तुम्हें लगेगा कि कोई अन्तर नहीं बचा अब

तुममें और उन पत्थरों की कठोरता में

जिन्हें तुमने जीता है—



जब तुम अपने मस्तक पर बर्फ का पहला तूफान झेलोगे  
और काँपोगे नहीं—

तब तुम पाओगे कि कोई फ़र्क  
नहीं सब कुछ जीत लेने में  
और अन्त तक हिम्मत न हारने में।  
पहले भी आया हूँ  
जैसे इन जगहों में पहले भी आया हूँ  
बीता हूँ।  
जैसे इन महलों में कोई आने को था  
मन अपनी मनमानी खुशियाँ पाने को था।  
लगता है

इन बनती-मिटती छायाओं में तड़पा हूँ  
किया है इन्तज़ार  
दी हैं सदियों गुज़ार  
बार-बार  
इन ख़ाली जगहों में भर-भर कर रीता हूँ  
रह-रह पछताया हूँ  
पहले भी आया हूँ  
बीता हूँ।

एक अजीब दिन  
आज सारे दिन बाहर धूमता रहा  
और कोई दुर्घटना नहीं हुई।  
आज सारे दिन लोगों से मिलता रहा  
और कहीं अपमानित नहीं हुआ।  
आज सारे दिन लोगों से मिलता रहा  
और कहीं अपमानित नहीं हुआ।  
आज सारे दिन सच बोलता रहा  
और किसी ने बुरा न माना।  
आज सबका यक़ीन किया  
और कहीं धोखा नहीं खाया।

और सबसे बड़ा चमत्कार तो यह  
कि घर लौटकर मैंने किसी और को नहीं  
अपने ही को लौटा हुआ पाया।



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# Wisdom of the Ether: Resonance and the Harmonics of Being (Part I)

Michael Highburger



When devotees talk about the teachings of Bhagavan Sri Ramana, they look to self-inquiry almost exclusively and rarely take up the theme of Bhagavan's surrender. Perhaps for them surrender is thought to be more difficult to practice than enquiry. Or maybe surrender is not seen by them as a practice at all, but rather as the fruit of practice. The difficulty in understanding how we develop a mind and heart that are surrendered is knowing what surrender is and how we go in search of it. But suppose we came to see that surrender is really the natural state of the heart? What if we came to see that all the created order, the entirety of the natural world is governed by a single principle, a common essence that permeates the

whole? What if surrender were not different from the Self? And what if the wisdom of the Self were nothing more than the perfect resonance and harmonization of all things, animate and inanimate, divine and mundane, born of non-resistance? What would this look like?

An image from the *Atharva Veda* made its way into the 3rd-century *Avatamsaka Sutra* describing the mysterious interpenetration of the external world and the internal realm of the mind:

*Far away in the heavenly abode of the great god Indra, there is a wonderful net which has been hung by some cunning artificer in such a manner that it stretches out infinitely in all directions. In accordance with the extravagant*

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*tastes of deities, the artificer has hung a single glittering jewel in each intersection of the net, and since the net itself is infinite in dimension, the jewels are infinite in number. There hang the jewels, glittering like stars in the first magnitude, a wonderful sight to behold. If we now arbitrarily select one of these jewels for inspection, we will discover that in its polished surface there are reflected all the other jewels in the net, infinite in number.*

Now consider for a moment what is being offered here. The jewels in the net are the disparate entities in the world, including individual human hearts, each reflecting the life of the hearts of others, each containing a perfect reflection of the other. Each jewel is infused by the light of the Self which is the whole. But this ‘infusion’ is not separate from the whole, for each reflection *IS* the whole.

Bhagavan tells us that all the material world is merely Consciousness. But since form and consciousness are just words, terms relative to one another pointing to the same ultimate reality, what we call It doesn’t really matter as much as knowing it first-hand. In earlier generations, this vision of

the cosmos as a *field of knowing* was called *chidakasa*. Bhagavan most often called It *the Self*. Here we are reminded of lines from *Talks* where Bhagavan says:

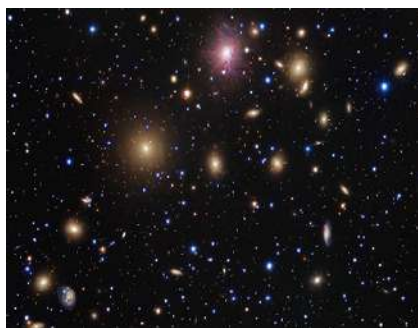
*A mirror, as we know it, is an insentient object which reflects light. What corresponds to a mirror in an individual? The light of the Self-luminous Self is reflected on the Mahatattva. The reflected light is the mind ether or the pure mind... Chidakasa (chit ether) is Pure Knowledge. It is the source of the mind. At the moment of rising, the mind is only light; afterwards the thought “I am this” arises; this ‘I’-thought forms the jiva and the world. The first light is the pure mind, the mind ether or Isvara. Its modes manifest as objects. Because it contains all these objects within itself, it is called mind ether.<sup>10</sup>*

Indra’s Net is simultaneously a cosmological vision and an empirical description of the world. Strange as it may seem, modern scientific descriptions of the cosmos, what Bhagavan calls *bhootakasa*, begin to resemble the image from the *Atharva Veda*. Consider the recent discovery by NASA’s Chandra X-ray Observatory of a vacuum-pressure wave originating

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<sup>10</sup> *Talks*, §569 and §589.

in a super-massive black hole in the Perseus cluster of galaxies 250 million light-years from Earth. The wave has been traveling through outer space for 2.5 billion years i.e., more than half the age of the earth. At a frequency fifty-seven octaves below middle C, it is well below the threshold of human hearing but nonetheless carries a lot of information about its place of origin.<sup>11</sup>



While the illustration from Indra's Net is just a symbol, it shows that the ancients were on to something. Chandra's pressure wave is one tiny example of the vast flow of information circulating in the frictionless medium of our cosmos, revealing a multi-

directional information field. The medium is so frictionless that even the pressure waves of our very first cries as new-born infants and, for that matter, every audible sound that has passed our lips since, are still being transmitted, however faintly, throughout the cosmos. Therefore, the entire universe is brimming with *wave memory*,<sup>12</sup> i.e. what Bhagavan calls the reflected light of the 'mirror'. Every event in the present universe has been faithfully recorded, not least of all, its first moment, namely, the primordial eruption of the Big Bang.<sup>13</sup>

If the ancient vision of Indra's Net is relevant to modern science, what would the 'reflected light' look like in contemporary scientific language?

It was the Nobel prize-winning Danish physicist Niels Bohr in the early 20th century who laid the ground for quantum theory and non-locality, that is, quantum objects communicating with each other at a distance. How

11 See *Science and the Akashic Field*, Ervin Laszlo, p. 50. See also the Frankfurt School sociologist Hartmut Rosa in his 2016 'Resonance: A Sociology of the Relationship to the World' (*Resonanz: Eine Soziologie der Weltbeziehung*).

12 To better understand *wave memory*, consider how the waves of a ship transfer information. By measuring waves from a ship that passed hours earlier (even at a great distance), we can know the ship's size, weight, speed, direction, and time of travel. A submarine conveys information in every direction. In wave memory, there is no pure place of the observer who does not simultaneously affect the field. The ocean is a relatively frictionless medium and preserves its information for long periods. If it were not for coastlines, wind and ocean currents, scientists tell us, the information would be preserved indefinitely. The cosmos by contrast is perfectly frictionless and thus its *wave memory* is virtually perfect (see Laszlo, p. 53).

13 The signature of the Big Bang is preserved 14.7 billion years later in various ways, not least of all by the ongoing expansion of the universe as well as cosmic microwave background radiation which registers a temperature of 4 degrees Kelvin throughout space (UT Austin, Astronomy Dept).

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did the idea of non-locality emerge? Observational physicists found that every measurement of a particle yielded a complementary outcome in the measurement on its companion particle. Every action on a particle seemed to have an instantaneous effect on its companion.<sup>14</sup>

Non-locality exemplifies the metaphor of Indra's Net as linking the various 'jewels' that make up the (physical) universe. The non-local connection between particles, irrespective of the distance between them, is predictable and instantaneous. One physicist describes it this way:

*The essence of non-locality is unmediated action-at-a-distance. A non-local interaction links up one location with another without crossing space, without decay, and without delay.*<sup>15</sup>

To adequately apply the metaphor of Indra's Net to the natural order, the non-locality of a quantum field should have some correlation, at least metaphorically, at the macro-scale of

biological life. Hence, we might ask if there is such a thing as biological 'non-locality' in information fields of knowing among organisms and the inanimate world?<sup>16</sup> Bhagavan's remarks would suggest a resounding, 'yes'. The German theoretician Marco Bischof comments:

*Quantum mechanics has established the primacy of the inseparable whole. For this reason, the basis of the new biophysics must be the insight into the fundamental interconnectedness within the organism as well as between organisms, and that of the organism with the environment.*<sup>17</sup>

### Holograms and Entrainment

The British physicist David Bohm made use of the hologram as a metaphor for what he calls the "implicate order". In a hologram, each region of a photograph contains within it "the whole three-dimensional image, which can be viewed from various perspectives. Each region contains a whole and undivided image."<sup>18</sup> This is

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14 Thus, causing its wave-function to collapse into a complementary state. It has been speculated that quantum nature's non-locality is born of a strange kind of topography in the universe (UT Austin, Astronomy Dept).

15 This comment from Nick Herbert. It should be added that non-locality is the basis for 'quantum teleportation', or what in computer science is called quantum computing, namely, an instant transfer of information among remote particles without requiring they be proximate with one another (see Laszlo, p. 82).

16 The biologist Rupert Sheldrake suggests that memory is inherent in the natural order and that "natural systems... inherit a collective memory from all previous things of their kind." Sheldrake proposes that such memory is also responsible for telesomatic interconnections between organisms much like non-local communication between particles. (*Morphic Resonance: The Nature of Formative Causation*).

17 Laszlo, p. 53.

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precisely what Indra's Net describes, namely, that the light reflected in any jewel of the net reflects all the others. Bhagavan takes up this discussion and asks rhetorically:

*What is [this] world? It is objects distributed through space. Who [or what] comprehends [them]? The mind. Is not the mind which comprehends space itself space (akasa)? Space is physical ether (bhootakasa). The mind is mental ether (manakasa) which is contained in transcendental ether (chidakasa). The mind is thus the ether principle (akasa tattva). Being the principle of knowledge, it is identified with ether metaphysically. Considering it to be ether, there's no difficulty in reconciling the apparent contradiction. Pure mind is ether. The dynamic and dull aspects (rajas and tamas) operate as gross objects. [Thus,] the whole universe is only mental.<sup>19</sup>*

From an empirical point of view, resonance and communication at a distance between organisms and inanimate objects can be thought of

in various ways. One is entrainment, for example, the way that singing a *Sa*, a *Re* or a *Ga* at a distance causes the string of an instrument tuned to that key to vibrate on its own.

In 1665 the Dutch physicist Christian Huygens studied entrainment and 'phase syncopation', experimenting with pendulum clocks. He set them in motion and found upon returning to his lab the following morning that their pendulums had synchronized. This is accounted for in conventional scientific terms by the *small amounts of energy that are transferred between the two systems when they are out of phase such as to produce negative feedback*.<sup>20</sup>

Neuropsychologists studying brainwave entrainment point to the acoustical resonance of participants at a music event. Group entrainment as a form of social resonance means brain patterns of large groups of people synchronise. Take evening Tamil *parayana* at Ramanasramam as an example. Participants synchronise their recitation by rhythm and harmony.<sup>21</sup> Reciting in unison bonds those gathered and strengthens the

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18 David Bohm, *Wholeness and the Implicate Order*.

19 *Talks*, §451.

20 Stated in more detail: *As the two machines assume a more stable phase relationship, the amount of energy gradually reduces to zero, with systems of greater frequency slowing down, and the other speeding up*. A modern example comes from the laundromat where the tumbling clothes-drying machines synchronize their rotations (*see Wikipedia for 'Entrainment'*).



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cohesiveness of the community<sup>22</sup>. But entrainment is measurable. Studies show that couples married for three decades or more exhibit pronounced brainwave entrainment as do identical twins. The entrainment in identical twins is so pronounced that they can often sense the pain or trauma of the other at a distance. When pairs of identical twins were rigorously monitored for brain waves, blood pressure, and galvanic skin response, and one of the unsuspecting twins was subjected to a loud alarm fitted to the back of his or her chair, the other registered the resulting shock even though he or she was closeted some distance away in a soundproof room.<sup>23</sup> How do we account for such occurrences? Bhagavan comments:

*[Whereas] physical ether which contains objects, mind ether contains thoughts. Just as physical ether accommodating the gross objects of the universe is itself the content of the mind ether, so the latter is the content of Chit ether. Chit remains as Pure Knowledge ...*

*Ether denotes not only the insentient physical ether but also Pure Knowledge. Knowledge does not [merely] consist in knowing objects, which is just relative knowledge, but knowledge in its purity, remaining alone, one, unique [is] transcendent Light.*<sup>24</sup>

The human heart is vast and mysterious and there may be more to our world than meets the eye. Studies show—and we know from our own experience—that unassisted communication at a distance takes place on a daily basis. Consider something as quotidian as the communication between humans and their pets. In one hundred filmed tests of pets and their owners, the former spent far more time at the window when its owner was on their way home than when they were not. Additional tests had the owner travel home in a taxi or some other unfamiliar vehicle at randomly selected times to rule out the possibility that the pet was reacting to familiar car sounds or routines.<sup>25</sup> While these findings are

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21 As well as by deeply held feelings regarding the content of the texts recited, namely, Bhagavan's verses, what social psychologists call 'narrative empathy'.

22 And perhaps we can talk of entrainment without any salient external cues such as that which meditators in the Old Hall experience, i.e., a shared sense of 'stillness in the hall', possibly linked 'to collective cuing' to subtle ambient sounds.

23 Guy Playfair, from his book *Twin Telepathy*.

24 *Talks*, §589.

25 Rupert Sheldrake, *Dogs That Know When Their Owners Are Coming Home*.



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not surprising, still, they challenge conventional assumptions we have about the world.



### **Bhagavan's Surrender**

Now, if humans and other living creatures are (unconsciously) participating in vast fields of knowing—*manakasa* and *chidakasa*—replete with multidirectional transfers of information of every imaginable sort, still, what does this have to do with our starting point, namely, Bhagavan's surrender, and how can it help us in our walk on the path?

Surrender is wisdom and freedom. Non-surrender is groping after something one wants but does not have, on the one hand, and resisting something one does not like, on the other. Mostly, any obstacle born of the small self is rooted in non-acceptance

of the conditions one is facing at any given moment. If there are no wants and no complaints whatsoever, then we are in Bhagavan's surrender and for the moment our fierce clinging to the small self diminishes. Here is where the language of *chidakasa* and resonant fields enters the picture. In non-resistance, the vast trove of universal 'memory'—what tradition calls intuitive wisdom—is made available to us. Non-resistance opens a whole new field of knowing, namely, the inner world of Bhagavan's self-inquiry.<sup>26</sup> Practicing non-resistance means greeting each moment of resistance with patience and empathy, carefully making a mental note of episodes of the least form of non-surrender and reactivity as and when they arise without trying to make them be other than what they are. By patiently inquiring into them, we come to understand something of their nature and their causes and begin to become more friendly toward them, slowly assimilating them into the heart. By this process we discover what we are and what we are not, learn to differentiate wisdom and delusion, come to know ourselves, and gradually free ourselves from long-standing afflictions born of

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<sup>26</sup> Sadhu Om once said, "Bhagavan taught two paths, self-enquiry and self-surrender. Just as it is natural for a man to walk on two legs, so it is natural [...] to follow these two paths." (Interview from *Arunachala Ramana*.)

confusion. What is the confusion? It is the *samsaric* assumption we carry with us day in and day out which posits an ego in a body, Bhagavan tells us. Upon experiencing the cosmos as a vast harmonised resonant field which includes all the manifest forms of *bhootakasa*<sup>27</sup>, we come to see that we are bound up with one another and with the greater inanimate whole, and that this thing I call ‘myself’ is not separate from any other ‘self’. The assumption that we are a *jiva* in a body situated in a world is upside-down, says Bhagavan. Rather, the world and the body are contained *within Us*, and the jewels of the net and the light which passes through them are a seamless whole.

Bhagavan never spoke of resonant fields, but he did speak of *chidakasa*, as we saw above. And even if Bhagavan never gave lengthy explanations in how to cultivate surrender, when we apprentice ourselves to Mother Nature, as did Dattatreya with his ‘24 gurus’<sup>28</sup>, we discover first-hand the *dharma* of flawless non-resistance. Thus what had been alien and intangible becomes familiar and intimate. In time, we discover that Mother Nature is here to help us. In Her boundless mercy, she bears us up, holds us in a perfect

embrace and makes us one with Herself.

Thus the *field of knowing* is the *field of being*, and fractal patterns common throughout the natural and Divine orders abide within us, allowing us to sketch a map of the territory ahead. What is the territory ahead? It is just surrendering to things as they are, Bhagavan tells us. Surrender alone can unite us with the disparate fragments of the heart and too, with the fragments of the hearts of others. If it engenders our healing, it likewise assists theirs by virtue of the budding fulfilment within us, the source of blessing and benediction rippling out into the collective. Bhagavan tells us it all begins with seeing clearly and letting go:

*Do not delude yourself by imagining the source to be some God outside you. Your source is within you. Give yourself up to that. That means that you should seek the source and merge in it. Because you imagine yourself to be [apart from] it, you raise the question “Where is the source?” ... [But] can one surrender oneself and yet retain one’s individuality? ... Would God—Pure Consciousness—not ask: “Who are you apart from*

27 Including the immense neuronal network of the human brain.

28 *Srimad Bhagavatam*, Canto 11.

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*Me that you would presume to serve Me?... It is enough that one surrenders oneself. Surrender is to give oneself up to the original cause*

*of one's being.*"<sup>29</sup> ■

*(to be continued)*

*[e-mail:mhighburger@gmail.com]*

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29 Talks, §208.

Talk 394

*D.: How is the mind to be stilled?*

*M.: Looking at the mind with the mind, or fixing the mind in the Self, brings the mind undercontrol of the Self.*

*D.: Is there any yoga, i.e., a process for it?*

*M.: Vichara (investigation) alone will do.*

**“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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***Rajneesh Joshi***

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**New Delhi - 110 026**

## *The Divine Camera*

Dr. Satish K. Kapoor

Mind cannot fathom,  
Senses cannot perceive,  
The Divine Eye,  
That is perennially open.  
The Cosmic camera,  
Rolls all around,  
All time,  
In light and darkness.

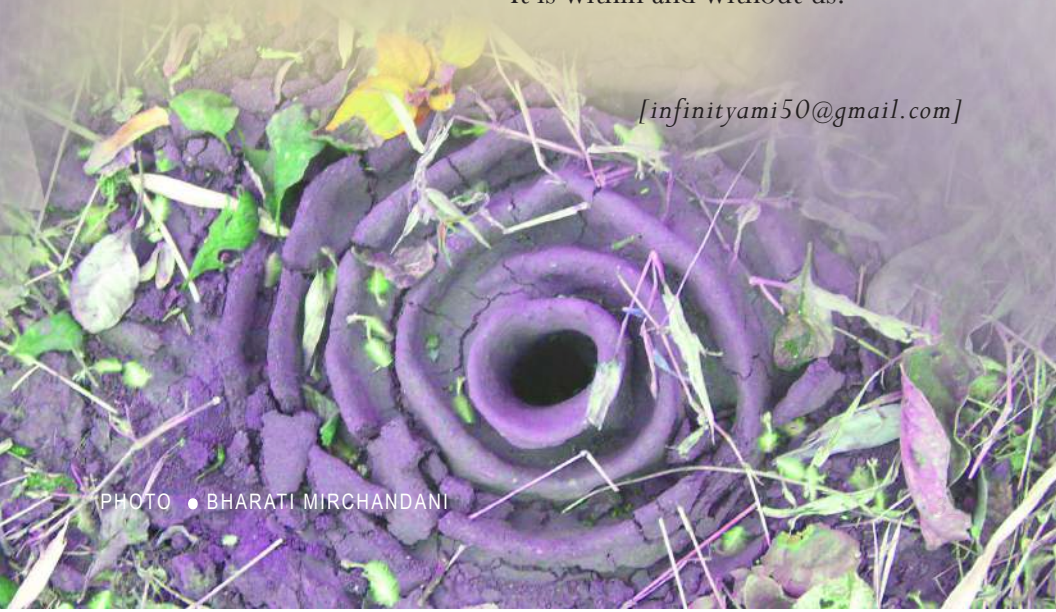
The earth can hear,  
The Air can smell,  
The Water can touch,  
The Fire can see,  
The Space can soak,  
All types of Karma,  
Preserving them  
In subtle form.

The vibrant sky  
At dusk and dawn,  
Halos and afterglows,  
Coronas and sun dogs,  
Mirages and rainbows,  
Planets and other worlds,  
Plants, trees and grasses,  
All absorb karma-currents.

The cosmic camera  
Is without aperture,  
Without lens and film,  
Without flash shoe or user controls,  
None holds it,  
None clicks it,  
It is far and near.  
It is within and without us.

*[infinityami50@gmail.com]*

PHOTO • BHARATI MIRCHANDANI



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# The Bird That Feels the Light

*Bharati Mirchandani*



*‘Faith is the bird that feels the light  
and sings  
when the dawn is still dark.’*

These words of Shri Rabindranath Tagore, written in a different context, seem to me very apt to describe the yearning that awakens within those of us destined to become seekers. With faith and the certainty that there exists a different light, our actions become governed by this confidence. We feel a deep certainty, not knowing how this feeling arises, yet sense it as an almost imperceptible hum, a subtle vibration that lies just beyond the body’s sense organs. Heeding this hum, the song of yearning begins, the poetry of the mystics is born, searching for the unknown that lies beyond the com-

pulsive identification with personality. We search, intensely, without any idea of what we are searching for. ‘Worse than a dog for want of scent, how can I track thee, oh Arunachala?’<sup>30</sup>

For a few lucky ones, the hum develops a tune, a rhythm, and the beat grows strong enough to guide them through every twist and bend of their lives. Surrender to this music! Let not the mind get caught in the worldly clamour of claws kept energised with constantly renewed temptations. Let not the mind throw obstacles of logical argumentation to diminish the light that peeps through tiny cracks in our ‘civilized, educated’ armour. We have to be brave enough to shed all security of habit, established norms and codes

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30 Aksharamanamalai #39 translated by Robert Butler

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of behaviour, of societal acceptance, and even respectability, to truly heed the voice of the inner calling. Mahadevi Akka and Lal Ded threw off even their coverings of fabric when they realised that all are totally bare, absolutely naked, before the Truth. There is no shame when all, yes, ALL, is the glory.

‘Tear off these robes, expose me naked, then robe me in thy love, oh Arunachala!’<sup>31</sup>

There is no coming, nor going either; as Sri Ramana said, where can the I go? There is no place, no time, no absence, no dark. Wherever I look, the I glows. Even in my seeking, the I pervades. The I drives the seeking. On many a morning walk, I meet a pious ‘godly’ man. He proudly claims he eats only *satvik* foods, does yoga and pranayama and mantra *jap* daily. This morning, just as he expressed a wish for company while doing yoga, a happy couple came along with their yoga mats and joined him. As they were leaving after a session of doing *yogasanas* together, the man sighed, ‘Wish finding God was as easy!’

Did he really not see that this was god in action? Just thinking, ‘Oh, I wish I was not alone’ and company

appearing! Do we expect from divinity the bugles and fanfare that accompanies gods in media videos? Divinity appears like an old man with trembling limbs; as a young girl chasing butterflies; as jewelled dew on the grass, gentle birdsong, fresh breeze, all making the yoga session pleasurable. Is all this just too simple? Can the mind not begin to comprehend the universe working to perfection to make it just so? The yellow *kadam* flowers will never dot the tree exactly in this pattern, nor parakeets make the sunflowers bend and dance just so, the sun glint exactly between these *peepul* leaves as at this moment... never ever again will any pattern be identically repeated. How enormous is this power! How subtle is this God that stays unnoticed in the harmony that stretches from horizon to horizon, and beyond.

‘Who can ever find thee? The eye of the eye art thou, and without eyes thou seest, oh Arunachala!’<sup>32</sup>

The waters of divine grace flow unceasingly. Its pure white light shines peacefully, steadily, pervasively. But love has a pulse. A heartbeat. The white light of love seeks expression. So, a prismatic refraction creates a

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31 Ibid #30

32 Ibid #15



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rainbow within the vast whiteness, and the colours make lovely patterns. The patterns dance, create rhythm, and rhythm is Time. Time forgets the now that it always is, and its dancing arms trail enchanting ribbons called Past and Future. What a splendid show! Love is able to love itself in the abundant variety of its own creation. Like Narcissus attracted to his own reflection, Love drowns in the utter attractiveness of its own making. Then we sigh, 'Finding God is not easy!'

'Grant me thy grace ere the poison of delusion grips me, and rising to my head, kills me, oh Arunachala!'<sup>33</sup>

Sri Ramana came to wake us up. But summer is here, days are getting longer, brighter, warmer. The night feels cool, comfortable. We are not ready to wake just yet. The song of yearning is still soft and blissful. The hard drumming that will not let us rest, has yet to be permitted. The mountain is far, too far now. Tickets and visas, reservations and restrictions, all seem pretty solid walls blocking the way. Internet darshans, online satsangs, login study groups, and emailed discourses, collaborate to create a narrative of being valid paths for going directly to the mountain of fire. We feel (virtually) virtuous, without any

of the discomfort of actual burning. No acrid smoke, no curling, shrivelling or shrinking of the ego. Everything in this world that we think is precious is safe, nothing is lost, family, house, food, all secured. True, we have been told that it is sufficient to 'meditate on thee in the heart, oh Arunachala!'<sup>34</sup> but the intensity of this meditation must be like the magnifying lens that concentrates rays on a focus to make it smoulder and burst into flame. The fire burns within. When the heart is ablaze, the world vanishes. The mountain of fire consumes everything within and without, allowing no difference. All is one. All is pure white light. As it was. As it always is.

Sri Ramana never claimed he was a guru. He did not follow traditional practices of initiation rites and formal displays of spiritual transmission. If anything, he did the opposite. He tried his best to avoid people but had to accept that people recognised the pure light that shone through his form. His body was the instrument through which millions glimpsed their own light, and continue to be guided to the truth that shines within the heart. His presence, which is always with us, combines masculine and feminine energies as a natural harmony of cos-

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33 Ibid #64

34 Ibid #1



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mic being. And for those who need to feel divinity with a paternal quality, he pointed to Sri Arunachala. And for such times when we need some maternal coddling, he installed and energised the Sri Chakra in the Ma-trubhuteswara temple that gradually grew over the burial site of his mother Alagammal, interred there in 1922, a hundred years ago.

Sri Ramana needs no advertising. Those called by him heed the inner hum and are led to the Heart, in some cases even physically, dragged to Arunachala from all corners of the earth. This power has its own magnetism and knows the time and method that are perfectly suited to each person summoned. This is a power beyond description. As Ramana himself asks the question, ‘How is it that thou hast become famous from thy constant union with the poor and humble, oh Arunachala?’<sup>35</sup> We are bombarded each day by large posters and advertisements of those who wear holy attire like a costume for theatre, along with beads, body paint, and other accoutrements. Palatial residences, luxury cars, yachts and planes may also be flaunted by some to depict power. Faith is the quality that

redeems genuine questors, regardless of the authenticity of the person they consider holy. ‘With madness for thee thou hast freed me of madness for the world; grant me now the cure for all madness, oh Arunachala!’<sup>36</sup>

Monkeys, peacocks, squirrels, and other animals who came flocking to Bhagavan’s divine presence would not have cared for richness of clothes or mansions anyway. Nor did they make their special appearances as publicity stunts. Laser lights and drone displays may awe and entertain. But what can match the grandeur and mystery of a single orb of light, spontaneously gliding across the sky, visible even hundreds of miles away, instantly proclaiming the luminous soul’s departure from the mortal frame?

‘Arunachala, making me your target, and hurling the sword of your grace, you consumed me along with my very life.’<sup>37</sup>

Only to others did Sri Ramana appear to be a man wearing a *koupin*, eating, talking, walking like any other person. But, by the grace of Arunachala, the divine fountainhead, he lived so totally absorbed in the Self that his identification with the limited form

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35 Ibid #83

36 Ibid #66

37 Ibid #92

others saw was annihilated more than fifty years before he shed the body. *Jivan mukta*. Free soul. What can death of the body mean to such a one?

‘They say that I am dying, but I am not going away. Where could I go? I am here.’<sup>38</sup> ■

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38 Ramana Maharshi and the Path of Self-knowledge by Arthur Osborne ed. 2002, p222

### Talk 386

D.: In Sri Ramakrishna’s *Life* it is said that an idol, Ramlal was animate. Is it true?

M.: Can you account for the animation of this body? Is the movement of the idol more mysterious than the movement of this body?

D.: Metal does not move itself.

M.: Is not the body a corpse? You will probably consider it a mystery if the corpse moves. Is that so?

*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)}*

*With best compliments from :*



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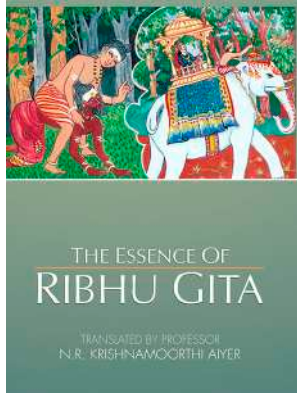
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# The Ribhu Gita

Prema Nandakumar



**C**hakravarti Rajagopalachari once said: The English language is the gift of Goddess Saraswati to India. How very true!

A student of the English medium, I felt at home only reading in English and it was so even later when I began to read books on Indian culture and philosophy. As yet, I was not deeply conversant with the Tamil used in books associated with traditional scholarship. That was when I discovered Prof. N.R. Krishnamoorthi Aiyar's *The Essence of Ribhu Gita*. It seemed much easier reading the work in English, for by then a good deal of Indian works in history, philosophy, religious lore: almost everything had become available in the English language. Tamil grew more and more distant for the present.

If this English version of the Tamil original by Ulagalanda Swamigal has held its importance in Sri Ramana Vangmayam (literature pertaining to the Maharshi), it is because languages cannot disturb the crystalline road to the spiritual worlds of Vedanta.

With great humility the translator, himself a true disciple of the Maharshi, gives wholesome advice to the readers of the work:

“Reading of this English text alone will not be complete unless it is supported by vigorous sadhana with the help of a realised teacher, who has obtained firm abidance in Siva-Self by a life of devotion to Lord Siva. This aspect is stressed in some of the verses selected.”

Fortunately, with a translator who

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was himself an enlightened spiritual master and a much-admired “physicist with an appreciation for scientific precision and accuracy”, we feel comfortable reading this translation. The opening verse:

“1. Salutations to the Supreme Lord Siva, the pure Awareness in the sky of consciousness in the Heart, by meditation on whom, Ganesa, Guha, Mother-Sakti who is the embodiment of Siva’s Grace, and myriads of Devas, saints and devotees have attained their cherished goals.”

The blessing that the sadhaka of Ribhu Gita will attain his goal is in-built in this verse. Prayers to Nataraja, Ardhanareeswara, Siva-Sakti, Vinayaka and Shanmukha that follow help us draw our mind to the Siva family, inspire us to seek the blessings of the Supreme to help us move towards ourselves. From whence my coming, as I stand before these divine powers around me? How do I manage to know myself?

Siva assures Ribhu that actually what we see as a creation has been there all the time. What we need to do is understand its seeming presence (or absence) and what we think is our presence in it. To achieve this is the mantra-japa, ‘I am Self-Brahman’. But this is not easily done for people who

are engaged in life, having taken their birth in this world. Reading the teachings of Siva in *The Essence of Ribhu Gita* we understand this is a hard task for the younger generation. Attractions, difficulties, a general decay in morality due to the myriad advertisements and evil-borne pathways of contemporary politics, so many pulls: naturally not all are blessed with becoming a jnani when in their teens: not Vallalar, not Sri Ramana. But as the poet said, never give up the genuine attempt: try again! Faith in oneself, faith in the Guru who is seated in our heart, always helps us win love for a genuine sadhaka. What is dark within us gets illumined: nor can we know from whom, from what an ordinary moment, the Illumination would come and enter our heart as the rising sun at dawn in the distance:

“And not by eastern windows only,

When daylight comes, comes  
in the light,

In front the sun climbs slow, how  
slowly,

But westward, look, the land is  
bright.”

(Arthur Hugh Clough)

The Ribhu Gita which came as a grace-laden shower of teaching from Siva Himself, became the scriptural

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nucleus for Nithaga and others, was welcomed by the disciples of the Maharshi for they had already great regard for its original by Ulagalanda Swamigal. In fact, the disciples would often recite the Tamil version and the Maharshi would listen to with his happy smile. Remembering the scene, we are able to read this English version also with a sense of fulfilment. Reading the translation with hope lit in our heart we shall bow again and again to the Maharshi. For, there is a divine assurance in these verses in translation.

“60. The firm faith of being the Self is sufficient to dispel all thought and establish one in Brahman-Self. In due course of this practice, even the thought involved in that faith fades away leading to the spontaneous effulgence of the Self. If a person hearkens to this teaching and practises the faith, even if he is a great sinner, he is washed clean of all his sins and is established in Brahman-Self.”

Such is the practical help we gain from assuring ourselves that I am no wandering sinner not knowing how to be rid of my sad past: enough this self-assurance with complete faith in the divine teacher, Siva. For, the ideal of a Guru, unique to Indian culture, never fails us. Such has been the experience

of genuine aspirants.

“78. There is no world apart from the mind. What appears as the world is only the mind. If this mind is investigated, it turns out to be nothing more than a bundle of thoughts based on the primary thought of ‘I am the body’ called the ego. If this ego — I is enquired into and its identity searched, it gets swallowed up without a trace in the pure Awareness-Being-SivaSelf. One should maintain this firm bhavana ‘I am Self-Siva’ until that state of being the Siva-Self — becomes the spontaneous experience free from the effort of bhavana.”

Withdrawing the mind from the world outside is no doubt the most difficult of the steps to be taken in this tapasya. And yet, our ancients attempted it and not unoften succeeded in it even when engaged in day-to-day activities, living like drops of water on a lotus leaf. No attachment to anything material! There is a meaningful popular saying in the Telugu language: Giving up attachment to this world even when toiling in the world is not difficult: just forget the three words, nenu (me), Naadhi (mine) and Nakoraku (for my sake). Action is not done by me, but the Brahman is in charge. What exists does not belong to me, it is Brahman and nothing exists for

my sake but exists for the sake of the Brahman. By yourself you are absent and so the question, *Who am I?*, is answered automatically. Ah yes, it is easy to say so but difficult to achieve. No, not for the followers of the Maharshi. We shall not fail the Mahatma after holding his teachings in our hand. And when there is even a shadow of self-doubt over our determination, we will recite again the penultimate verse that draws us to the physical worship of Siva:

“121. Aspirants of Self-knowledge will find their success accelerated by practical bodily worship of Siva. Living in a Siva kshetra (neighbourhood of Siva Temple) they should offer worship to Siva Maha Lingam, wearing the sacred vibhuthi and rudraksha (garland of a specified sort of beads), and repeating the name of Siva with loving devotion.”

“Salutations to that supreme integral Existence, the Self!”■

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#### Talk 375

A middle-aged Kanarese visitor asked about *akarma* (actionless act).  
M.: Whatever one does after the ego has vanished is *akarma*.

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# The 127<sup>th</sup> Advent Day

BM



**A**dvent Day denotes the date Sri Ramana first reached Arunachala. On 1 September 2023, the Delhi Kendra celebrated the 127<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this event. Many people attended. The mood was celebratory. Offerings of flowers, fruits and sweets almost submerged the idols clustered around Bhagavan's photograph. Bhagavan himself, majestic and smiling lovingly as always, towered above everyone with the sheer grace that emanates from the much-revered photo.

Dr Vijay Vancheswar spoke about the significance of Advent Day and its relevance to both Lord Dakshinamurthy and Arunachala. Ramana, as a young lad, left home with almost nothing, reached Arunachala temple after various prescribed rituals for an initi-

ate having happened spontaneously, the doors of the sanctum miraculously stood open in welcome, no other person was present. All these are part of a series of miracles accompanying this event. Ramana embraced his 'Real Father.' He had reached home. He was to spend 54 years here, always staying within 2 km from the hill.

Dr Vancheswar book-ended his address with a few minutes of silence. According to Bhagavan silence is the most powerful form of speech. Lord Dakshinamurthy had imparted knowledge to four elderly sages through silence. The first salutary verse of Dakshinamurthy stotram describes how facing Dakshin, south, indicates he has looked at death and overcome it. Hands held in chin-mudra: thumbs touching index fingers (implying



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the union of jiva and atman), the remaining three fingers of each hand stretched out (symbolizing that the three mallas or impurities have been overcome).

We were regaled with many incidents from Sri Ramana's life including Kitty Osborne's recollections. Also, we were given important nuggets of Bhagavan's teaching:

Vijay recounted how a visitor kept asking Sri Ramana if he had seen god. Repeatedly ignoring the question did not stop the visitor from persisting with his query. Then Ramana silenced him with the counter question, had he seen himself? Our minds are always turned outward, whereas Bhagavan tries to instill in us that we need to 'get into reverse gear', turn inward, and discover what we really are. When the world is there, god is also there. But what is constant through appearance and disappearance of the world, is our own presence.

Education can inflate the ego, as the great scholar and poet, Ganapathy Muni, could not achieve self-realization; while the illiterate weaver, Mastaan, did, according to Bhagavan.

We all tend to get distraught by events of the world when we see war and cruelty. We should leave all worry to that power that controls everything.

Find out who you are. Experience yourself. No words can ever be substitute for experience.



Dr Vancheswar made the discourse lively by encouraging interaction, asking questions, and referencing many other saints and sages. Two pithy quotes were from Sant Gorakhnath in Hindi:

Gorakh kahe, suno e avadhoot, jag me aise rahana

Aankhe dekhiba, kaano suniba, mukh te kachu na kahana.

(Live in this world with your eyes and ears open, but let no word escape your mouth... the way for a Sadhak to live in society is to be aware, but ab-

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stain from involvement and action)<sup>39</sup>

Sahaj mila so doodh barabar,  
maang liya so paani,

Kheench liya voh rakt barabar,  
Gorakh bole bani.

(Whatever comes with ease is like milk. What comes on request is like water. What is snatched is like blood. Live in total surrender, then all becomes enriching. Any reaching out to change the course of events dilutes its nourishing power, so that when we grab what is not ordained, we commit violence)<sup>40</sup>

We learnt that Shri Siddheshwarji Maharaj said that maya is nothing but me, me, the ego. Nisargadatta Maharaj taught how we can erode our sense of doer-ship by consciously using the passive tone, e.g. instead of saying ‘I am seeing something,’ say ‘something is being seen.’

Lastly, Vijay read out two verses of Arunachala Pancharatnam which had poured out spontaneously from Sri Ramana in 1917. These two verses in classic Sanskrit, a language Bhagavan had never studied, express the infinite love between Bhagavan and Arunachala. That love in which the whole world dissolves, which cannot be understood by the mind, but can be experienced by merging in the Self, which is also called Heart.

The evening came to a close with the Kendra resounding with the singing of the first 14 verses of Aksharamanamalai. The many voices, enriched with echoes from the walls and microphones, created a magical vibration, that filled the heart with certainty that, whatever our shortcomings and failings, our feeble attempts at deeper understanding are receiving Bhagavan’s grace. ■

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39 Translated by BM.

40 Translated by BM.

#### Talk 347

The mind is a bundle of thoughts. The thoughts arise because there is the thinker. The thinker is the ego. The ego, if sought, will automatically vanish. The ego and the mind are the same. The ego is the root-thought from which all other thoughts arise.



14<sup>th</sup> May

Michael James continued the series of lectures on *Anma Viddai* and threw light upon the second verse. He said that we can eradicate the ego only by being aware of ourselves as we actually are. We can do this only by attending to ourselves so keenly that we thereby cease to be aware of anything else.

--- AS

Online link to this talk: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B7PSHBFjSso>

28<sup>th</sup> May

Raghav ji talked about the content in *Self-Enquiry*. He said that the word ‘ahankara’ is a neutral word as opposed to today’s conventional use in the negative sense. It means that one is identifying with the mind and the body, and it is implicit even in the act of seeing something.

--- AS

Online link to this talk: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K1fn1FfjquM>

04<sup>th</sup> June

Sri Anish rendered a lucid discourse on happiness. He said that the life of a human being revolves around raag (likes) and dvesh (dislikes). A loop of

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suffering is created whenever a desire gets fulfilled. An unfulfilled desire does the same. The constant outward movement of one's mind is the cause of one's unhappiness.

--- AS

Online link to this talk: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kttx8lDsgo>

11<sup>th</sup> June



Michael James spoke further on the second verse of *Anma Viddai*. He said that all thoughts will cease when one will go within owing to the cessation of the first thought 'I am the body'. 'Cave' has been used as a metaphor for the Heart which is one's innermost core.

--- AS

Online link to this talk: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=brefkgXuVd4>

25<sup>th</sup> June

Raghavji threw light upon the content of *Self-Enquiry*. He said that when one discovers that 'I am the doer' is not the real fact about oneself, one becomes a transparent instrument of the guru. His actions happen spontaneously and with much less obstruction. Inward questioning leads to the resolution of the mind.

--- AS

Online link to this talk: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6R9mflDh30Q>

09<sup>th</sup> July

Michael James provided a lucid explanation of a few more lines of *Anma Viddai*. He said that there is no Brahman apart from oneself and one should therefore know oneself to know Brahman. One needs to be as one actually is without uttering the word 'I' at all: be it verbally or mentally.

--- AS

Online link to this talk: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YDGrwNyI2Aw>

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23<sup>rd</sup> July



Shri Raghav Kumar elucidated the contents of *Self-Enquiry*. Consciousness is recognized in the heart as *I Am* but it is everywhere and is not displaced even when external objects are in the field of awareness. The light of awareness within a person gets projected outwards and it appears as the world.

--- AS

Online link to this talk: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WihUd5\\_N7KU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WihUd5_N7KU)

Talk 395

Mudaliar Swami, son of the lady who brings *bhiksha* every day to Sri Bhagavan, related the following interesting incident:

During the time Sri Bhagavan was staying in Virupaksha Cave, Sri Bhagavan and Mudaliar Swami were walking together behind the Skandasramam site. There was a huge rock about 15 feet high; it was a cleft, a girl (a shepherdess) was standing there crying. Sri Bhagavan asked the reason of her sorrow. She said, “A sheep of mine has slipped into this cleft; so I am crying.” Sri Bhagavan descended into the cleft, took the sheep on his shoulders, climbed up to the surface and delivered the sheep to her. Mudaliar Swami says that it was a very remarkable feat for any human being.

Talk 407

*D.:* St. Theresa and others saw the image of Madonna animated. It was external. Others see the images of their devotion in their mental sight. This is internal. Is there any difference in degree in these two cases?

*M.:* Both indicate that the person has strongly developed meditation. Both are good and progressive. There is no difference in degree.

The one has a conception of divinity and draws mental images and feels them. The other has the conception of divinity in the image and feels it in the image. The feeling is within in both instances.

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## Letters to the Editor



We have started this new segment, Letters to the Editor with the aim of relating more closely with our readers. We would truly welcome feedback and suggestions. These should be sent directly to the Editor: [editor.dp@rkdelhi.org](mailto:editor.dp@rkdelhi.org) with the subject line: 'Letters to the Editor'

Dear Advait,

It is good that you have also included a Hindi section to introduce Bhagavan's teachings to those who do not know Tamil or English.

*Michael James*

Dear Advait,

The journal has articles of high quality and I compliment you for that.

*Dr. Satish K. Kapoor*

Dear Advait,

The recent issue looks great. The layout design is fresh and exciting. The material is rich and substantive.

*Michael Highburger*

### Talk 346

Free will and Destiny last as long as the body lasts. But wisdom transcends both, for the Self is beyond knowledge and ignorance.

Views expressed in this magazine are those of the authors and not necessarily of the Ramana Kendra Delhi.  
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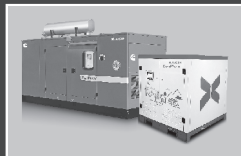
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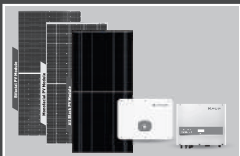
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