

# SADHANAS FROM UPADESA SARAM



Spiritual Instructions of Ramana Maharshi

**Sadhanas from Upadesa Saram  
- Spiritual Instructions of  
Ramana Maharshi**

**Swami Shantananda Puri**

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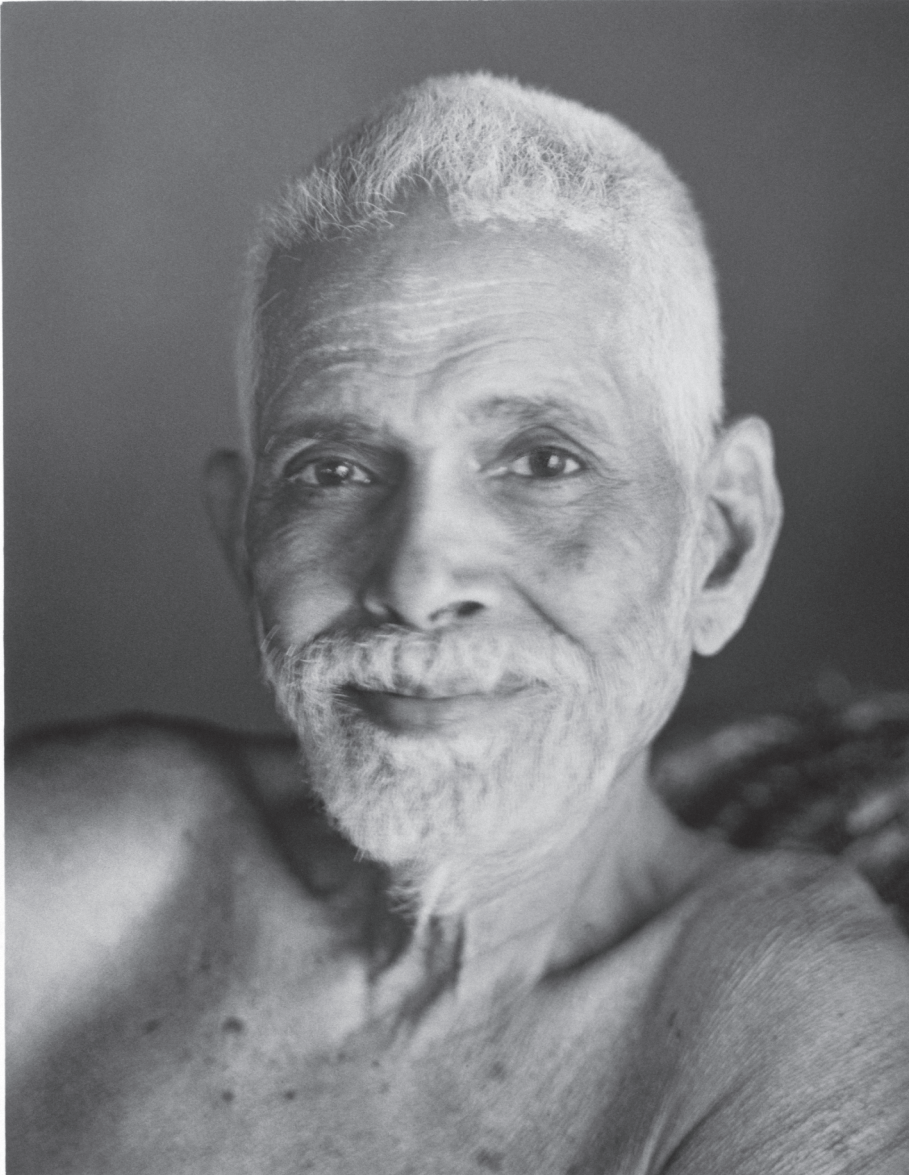
His Holiness Sri Swami Shantananda Puri of Vasishta Guha (Himalayas), born in 1928, is a disciple of Parama Poojya Sri Swami Purushottamananda Puri Maharaj of Vasishta Guha, Himalayas. Swamiji is a scholar par excellence in Vedic scriptures as well as in the puranic texts. His deep knowledge and lucid exposition of Srimad Bhagavatam, Bhagavad Gita and Ashtavakra Gita have made him a popular guide to spiritual aspirants. His simplicity, transparent deep faith in the divine force and absolute surrender to the Supreme have made him an ideal combination of Jnana, Bhakti and Vairagya. Swamiji's prodigious learning and deep devotion to the tenets of Indian philosophy and culture have reflected themselves in all his works, which are practical guides for inner personal experience and to raise oneself to a higher level of being. His emphasis has always been on 'Practice, practice, practice'.

## **SAMARPAN**

Dedicated at the holy feet of  
Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi,  
the greatest luminary in the firmament  
of spirituality in the recent past. In compiling  
this book, I have depended mainly on  
Upadesa Saram published by  
Sri Ramanasramam. My humble  
pranams to Bhagavan Ramana  
and thanks to Sri Ramanasramam.

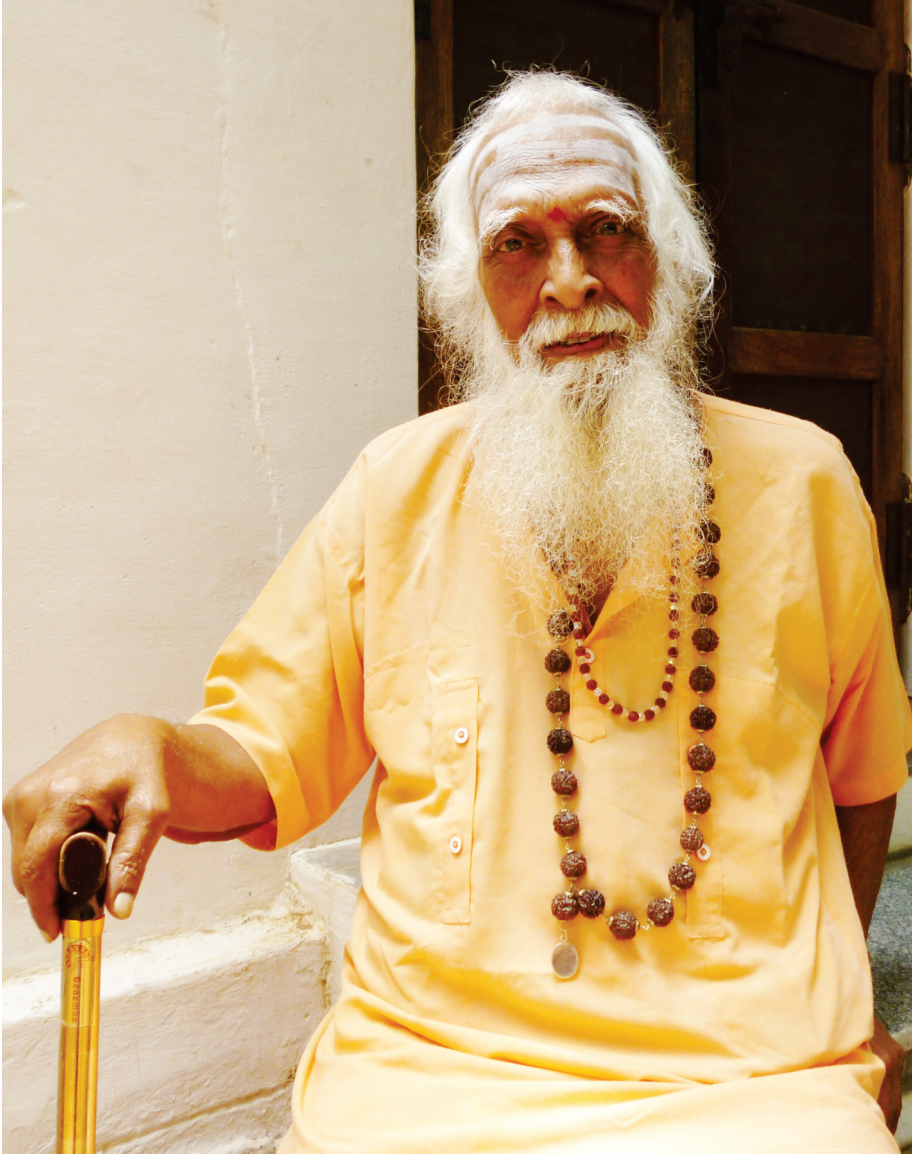
With respectful prostrations

– **Swami Shantananda Puri**



Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi





Sri Swami Shantananda Puri Maharaj

# Contents

## Part A:

Introduction	1
Section 1 – Karma Yoga and Bhakti Yoga	3
Section 2 – Social Service	10
Section 3 – Meditation	15
Section 4 – Breath Control [Prānāyāma]	22
Section 5 – Subsidence and Annihilation of Mind	24
Section 6 – Self-enquiry - Vichara Marga	30

## Part B:

Original Sanskrit Text with Meaning	39
List of books by Swami Shantananda Puri	69



## **Part A:**



# Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

## Introduction

Upadesa Saram is one of the very few books written as full volumes by Bhagavan Ramana himself. The other books are Akshara Manamalai, Sad Darsanam and Ramana Gita. Sad Darsanam and Ramana Gita contain the advices, clarifications and answers given by Bhagavan Ramana to various people who came to see him in Virupaksha Guha, etc. Ganapathi Muni encapsulated some of these as well as gist of his conversations with Bhagavan by way of slokas in Sanskrit and this compilation was released as a book titled 'Ramana Gita'. Upadesa Saram was composed by Bhagavan originally in Tamil [Upadesa Undiyar] and subsequently in Telugu and Malayalam.

## Background

Muruganar, one of the greatest devotees of Ramana in his days was an excellent poet in Tamil and composed a poem detailing all the Lilas [disportation] of Lord Siva on the lines of the famous book in Tamil called Periya Puranam. There a chapter comes wherein certain Brahmins who were completely devoted to rituals [Karma Kanda], ignoring the presence of an ultimate reality, called God or any of his manifestations wanted to acquire a lot of miraculous and other powers in this world. Lord Siva took pity on those Brahmins and wanted to put them on the right track of moksha. He requested Lord Vishnu to take the form of a very beautiful girl [a divine nymph] and he himself took

the garb of a young attractive monk. Thoroughly naked he went to the place where the Brahmins were performing rituals. On seeing the attractive girl [Lord Vishnu] those Brahmins left out all the rituals, became mad with love and went after the girl. The girl decoyed them to a big forest and disappeared from sight. Disappointed when they managed to return to their own residence, they were horror stricken to see that all their wives were running behind the young monk [Lord Siva in disguise]. Being enraged, they conjured up an elephant, a tiger and a snake, one after another and directed them towards Lord Siva. Lord Siva killed both the elephant and the tiger while he put the snake around his neck. The Brahmins there assumed that the young monk had far superior powers than themselves. They prostrated before him and requested for spiritual instruction. At this stage of writing all this, Muruganar was unable to proceed further. He took the papers to Bhagavan Ramana and requested him to fill the portion of Siva's spiritual instructions to the Brahmins. Without hesitation Bhagavan Ramana complied with his request and those instructions have been separately published as Upadesa Saram.

## Section 1

### Karma Yoga and Bhakti Yoga

In the days of yore, there were rishis who believed and followed any of the five systems of vedic philosophies known as Sankhya, Yoga, Nyaya, Vaisesikha and Poorvamimamsa [the philosophy of non duality or Advaita being the sixth and known also as Uttaramimamsa].

The followers of Poorvamimamsa of Jaimini recommended only rituals like fire sacrifices [yagas and yagnas] which would either endow the persons with immense powers in this world or satisfy the desires for worldly objects like begetting a son, etc. These Mimamsakas<sup>2</sup> had no overall concept of God or Ultimate Reality and believed in individual or multiple souls. According to them, each one of the various rituals performed by them in their lifetime created an energy called ‘Apoorva’ on its own which also had something like a ledger account with an invisible imprint of the various rituals done by a person, the rewards of the various planes [lokas] of enjoyment to which one was entitled for a fixed number of days, etc. This energy was invisibly attached to the individual so that it will guide and direct the individual after death to earn the rewards in the other planes of enjoyment to which they were entitled. This according to Lord Siva is a meaningless concept as an inert action like a ritual cannot produce an intelligent and dynamic energy. So in the very first and second verses of

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<sup>2</sup> These are people called Mimamsakas who advocate and practice the tenets of the philosophy called Jaimini’s Poorvamimamsa.

this book, Bhagavan Ramana is condemning the way of actions as per the imaginary theory of Poorvamimamsa. The ritualistic actions performed by people in various stages of their lives [say different types of Yagaas], the result of the various types of rewards to various people and to endow them with the various powers they craved for, are all done only by the will of the Almighty, i.e. the Supreme Lord. An insentient or an inert object is one which cannot act by itself unless impelled by another external force which has to be a conscious force, since the actions cannot be supreme and superior to this consciousness. The actions are inert and are incapable of producing any intelligent energy. Here the word karma refers to those ritualistic actions which are divided into five categories:

1. Nitya karmas: which are actions like the chanting of Gayatri mantras at prescribed intervals like dawn, dusk etc., the performance of agnihotra [a type of obligatory fire sacrifice for certain group of people], etc.
2. Naimittika karmas [seasonal or occasional karmas]: which are imposed on groups of individuals, for instance fasting and doing pooja on the day of Sivaratri. These are done only on certain occasions.
3. Kamyas karmas: Going to the office on a salaried basis, running a business or a factory or an industry, tilling the land and growing crops [agriculture], etc. are called Kamyas karmas. In other words, they are not imposed or given as injunctions by the scriptures but stem out of



personal desires for promotion, status, prestige, money, etc. These are not included in the word karma or action in our scriptures like Bhagavad Gita.

4. Nishidha karma: These are prohibited actions like drinking of liquor, adultery, etc. which are prohibited in the scriptures as sins of the first order.
5. Prayaschitta karma: These are actions performed as a remedy to absolve oneself of the effect of sins committed.

[Note: The above two, i.e., Nishidha karma and Prayaschitta karma are not very important in the present context].

In the first verse of Upadesa Saram, Bhagavan Ramana has stated that ritualistic karmas alone may not give any result without the acceptance of the presence of an overall almighty. The overall almighty alone being the doer of all actions can decide [and not the inert actions] as to what sort of result is to be given to the false doer and for how long.

When once we start doing action after action, the results will lead to a fall in the great ocean of samsara caused by the actions. Naturally, the karma kanda of the scriptures which advocates the various actions like the daily and occasional yagas and yagnas like the one prescribed for begetting a child [putra kameshti] give us only results which are impermanent and will not lead to the permanent results of having no more birth or death called moksha. Whatever work we do, including desire-oriented-actions [kamyā karma] can only

be classified either as good or bad actions. If it is a bad action, another birth is needed to get a body for experiencing the punishments for the bad deeds done in previous births. Likewise, if the actions were good, we have to get a body in order to enjoy the rewards for the good actions done. Thus we fall into the endless ocean of repeated births and deaths and there will be no end to it. The rebirths will carry over the vasanas and desires of the previous birth into the next birth and again will be induced to do good or bad actions accordingly. Thus a chain of births and deaths become inevitable. The result of any particular action alone out of personal desires [out of ever so many actions being done everyday by an individual] stops when once the desired end is obtained, say begetting a child. Not only it has a negative role but it also blocks our way to moksha [which means cessation of all rebirths forever].

Now naturally the question arises that if this method of karma yoga<sup>3</sup> [the path of action] is going to result in endless trouble and will not take us to moksha at all, why have they been prescribed in the scriptures. This karma yoga can be made to be beneficial and most effective to us provided we apply a small technique in its operation.

The two conditions for the actions to be beneficial for moksha are:

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<sup>3</sup> The word yoga is used in two different ways. The final union with the Lord is called yoga and the path to the Lord is also called yoga. If the term Karma yoga is used, the word 'yoga' in this context would mean a path in connection with reaching the Lord.

1. Make the action to be done as an offering to the Lord saying, “Lord, let all these actions done by me become dedicated to you. You are the only doer. I do nothing. May all the results redound to you.”
2. The work should be done without being impelled by any personal desire like obtaining of prestige, honour, promotion, status, etc. in the society or to earn money, etc. This is the key point in obtaining moksha. It is told in the Upanishads, if only all the desires leave us and get out, then immediately the mortal becomes immortal and attains the Brahman or the Supreme Reality here and now [which is called moksha].

The action should be done either because we are inspired and impelled by the Lord to do the task or as a bounden duty imposed by the scriptures.

In realising God or the Ultimate Reality, two steps are involved:

1. To keep our mind clean so that the Lord can come and occupy it.
2. We have to pray to the Lord at all times requesting Him to come and sit in our mind and heart and endow us with liberation or moksha.

What is this impurity which sticks to our mind and has to be removed? It is fundamentally the ego, i.e. considering

the body as myself. All other impurities like attachment [to son, wife, etc.], anger, jealousy, desires, etc. will follow. If we have to call the President of United States to visit my house in India, is it not essential that we should keep our house spic and span, neat and attractive? This applies to moksha also. It is not enough if we keep the house clean but the most important part of it is to go to USA, get an appointment with the President and to persuade him to come to our house. If we go on cleaning the house without doing the second portion, the President of USA will never know that we desire him to come to our house. Thus, keeping the house clean serves our purpose only indirectly. The same thing applies to moksha. Karma purifies the mind and thus becomes indirectly beneficial in getting liberation.

Even among the actions, the ritualistic worship of the Lord [puja], chanting of Guru mantra [japa] and meditating on the Lord by thinking of Him at all times, which are all done respectively by the body, the speech and the mind are the best respectively in this order, puja being the least effective and the meditation most effective.

For people who like to have a personal God [with form], there is a limb of the prerequisites for vedic studies called 'kalpam'. Many maharshis like Parasurama have written 'kalpasutras' detailing the elaborate but separate methods of worship of the various Gods like the Divine Mother, the Sun, Vishnu, Siva, etc. which are used by us on various occasions like Janmashtami, Sivaratri, etc. There are pujas which are done with five offerings like dhoopa [incense sticks], deepa



[showing the light of a lamp], archana [offering flowers to the Lord with the various names of the Lord like ashtottara, sahasranama, etc.], naivedya [offering of food articles] and lastly arati [like the waving of the lighted camphor]. There is also a method with sixteen offerings called shodasopachara. The Puja is mainly done with hands and hence an external form of worship.

The second form of worship is japa which has been defined in yogasutra as ‘chanting of the mantra with the mind fully concentrating on its meaning’. This is less external to puja as it is done with our speech which starts as ‘paraa’ [Supreme] and ends as ‘vaikhari’ [the sound which comes out of the mouth like a spent cartridge].

Better than these two forms of worship is the meditation where one is aware of the body and has his mind concentrated on the Lord with form or without form. The subtler and less external the sadhana is, better is its effect.

## Section 2

### Social Service

Now the question arises, “What about our being engaged in social service to serve the world – the needy and the distressed. Will it take us to God?” Here again it will take us to God if this work is done applying a small technique. The technique is to consider our actions to help somebody in this world as a service to the Lord whose manifested form is the entire world. Tulsidas, a great Hindi poet says in Ramayana, “Siyaramamaya sab jag jani; karau pranam jori juga pani” - “I consider the entire world as consisting of my Lord Ram and Sita. So I bow to the entire world by folding my both hands.” This teaching of Ramana is found in the teaching of the Adi Sankara who had interalia expressed the same teaching in Dakshinamurti stotra. Towards the end, Adi Sankara has written one sloka where people who are not able to go on the jnana marga can worship the Lord manifested in eight forms. This shows that the world, the creation of the Lord, is always one with the Lord [the Creator] and cannot be separated<sup>4</sup> .

Here, one could be reminded of the form of Nataraja where Siva is depicted as a dancer keeping one foot up and one foot down. When he puts one foot down, it is supposed to be the creation of the entire world and when he takes it up,

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<sup>4</sup> Hence, one who wants only liberation should not do social service as is normally perceived as doing good for the distressed, down trodden, deprived, etc. Even the social service can become service to the Lord. People who cannot think of the Lord alone and are engaged in social service can think of the world as the Lord’s form while performing social service.

the dissolution takes place or vice versa. Why did not they depict Nataraja as a singer and not a dancer? When a person sings, the music can be separated from the singer. Through recorders and cassettes, the voice alone can be recorded and played. But in the case of a dancer like Nataraja, you cannot separate the dance from the dancer. This only means that one cannot separate the creator and the creation. The entire creation is made up of the thought waves of the Supreme Lord and thought wave being the energy of the Lord, the material cause for the entire creation is God Himself, just as the entire pot is made up of mud.

### **Note on Social Service and Compassion:**

Today the subject of social service is very much emphasised by various individuals. Even profit earning organisations like the banks and even corporates, etc. allot substantial sums for social service like free eye treatment, feeding the poor, sponsoring education, etc. A question arises as to how this will help us in our progress to moksha especially when considered for each individual? As already told earlier, whenever you enter into a project, it will become cumbersome and complicated as any other project for any other worldly purposes. There will be a trust where there will be so many office bearers each of whom with his ego will be fighting against the others and the project will go on getting delayed or sometimes fall by itself. I have seen myself many institutions established by great mahatmas wherein researches in our culture are being conducted practically without any properly qualified staff and the top brass of the

research association never visiting the office even for days together. We become entangled in this phenomenal world with jealousy, competition, anger, etc. and thus our prospects of liberation recede far away. Before a person undertakes a project, should he not analyse his own status in this life, the source from which he has come after inheriting all the assets from that source and thus assess our own competence for taking up such a social service project. Hence, it is important that we should do Self enquiry and know to some extent as to who we are and after knowing our infinite capacity to do many more magnificent works of even social service. A volunteer going to the battle field may bandage the wounded soldiers at the rate of two hundred persons per day. A man who is liberated, if only he wills in his super consciousness, he will be able to sit at one place and treat and bandage some millions of persons at great distances away in a trice. Let us first take up the project of Self enquiry and recognise all the heritage we possess before taking up a project for social service to the world. This does not mean that we should stop all social service activities immediately. My idea is how this social service can be done to cover the majority of the people at the shortest of time with the best efficiency possible and effortlessly. The social service which we do at present does help us in cleansing our mind when done individually instead of collectively.

In connection with social service, more often it is the compassion which is the mother of inducement to social service. It is told that a Jivanmukta is neither arrogant nor compassionate. When there is only one true entity, whom

we may call God, who has taken different roles in his cosmic dream drama, where is the question of any other person to whom he has to be compassionate. It is better you first have compassion on yourself and know 'who you are' by constant Self-enquiry rather than have compassion on others.

Even granting that compassion towards the so called distressed and the needy, is an excellent quality to be developed, one should know where and when to stop compassion. A compassion exercised beyond a minimum limit will only entangle us more and more into the world. Spiritually there will be a retrograde action. To illustrate it, an anecdote is detailed below.

There was a very good Swamiji living alone in a cottage facing the Ganges. One day, he saw a young lady sitting very near the waters of the Ganges from noon onwards. He suspected that the lady was contemplating suicide. So he was keeping a watch on her all through. Just when the dusk was setting in, the lady got up and walked inside the waters and suddenly disappeared into the river. The Swamiji ran to the spot, swam and brought the lady to the banks. He pumped out the water from her body and she recovered. He walked a little distance where an autorikshaw was available and seated himself along with her and took her to her parents' house giving advice to her all the way as to how suicide was extremely reprehensible. When he reached the parents' house, there was ovation on seeing their daughter who was missing from the morning. They thanked the Swamiji profusely and the latter went home. Every two days, he began to go to their

house to enquire about their welfare and one day the lady wanted to read two books of scriptures Lalita Sahasranamam and Srimad Bhagavatam. The Swamiji asked her to come every morning at 8am to his cottage. Within six months they got married. Within one year, they got divorced legally from each other and the Swamiji again went and married for a second time. This is because the Swamiji did not know where to stop the compassion. In times of dire emergency, where there is nobody else on the spot, we should try to do our best to help that person in danger but to the extent just required and not to get entangled further.

## Section 3

### Meditation

In the course of dhyana or meditation, mixed with bhakti, there are two possibilities:

1. To praise the exalted Lord through hymns of praise or do the japa of Guru mantra, etc. either in a low tone with one's lips or loudly that all can hear.
2. The second course is to perform the japa of the Lord in silent meditation in the mind.

The word stava used in the verse may represent normally the various hymns of praise which have been composed by various maharshis and mahatmas like Adi Sankara and may also by an extension refer to the japa of a mantra. Mantras are certain potent sacred syllables by chanting which the various maharshis had the direct vision of their personal God like Durga, Siva, etc. and these mantras are to be taken by following a rite called deeksha from the Guru. These mantras are to be held secret and repeated several times for atleast ten hours a day [initially for want of time, the persons do the japa only some 108 to 1008 times per day]. The japa has been dealt more elaborately in the book called Patanjali Yogasutra. There are three methods of doing the japa. The best method is to do the japa mentally so that nobody can hear it. For some people, when this process is difficult, they are allowed to do it less silently by only twisting the tongue and pronouncing the mantra in such a low voice like a murmur that others, even if they are sitting in the lap of the

person cannot hear it at all. This is called upamsu japa. This is one hundred times less effective than chanting mentally. People who cannot do even this, may chant it loudly but it is one hundred times less effective than even upamsu japa. This loud pronunciation is called vaikhari and it is a spent cartridge with very little effect. Hence, when Bhagavan Ramana used the phrase, “Loudly and slowly”, this is more applicable to the japa of a mantra<sup>5</sup> than to the hymns of praise which are normally to be done aloud only and there is no specific prescription for it. In japa, only if it is done silently, we will be able to lapse into a deep silence where all thoughts will disappear and the mind will be automatically demolished and ultimately the Self alone will remain, thus leading us to Self realisation. This is the reason why japas are advised to be done mentally. On the contrary, the hymns of praise can be chanted loudly in any manner we like and it is not prescribed that it must be done in a low voice or loudly only. Thus, japa itself leads to the deep meditation and finally to the state of samadhi where the awareness of the body disappears and the Self alone remains. The more internal our sadhana, the more effective it is. Hence it is said that the japa takes you inward and is far better than any hymns of praise. That is why Bhagavan Ramana calls the silent japa as the best method of meditation. Meditation means constant attention on the Self with single mindedness.

Even in this meditation, a continuous meditation for hours together is far superior to meditation done at broken intervals. It takes time for the mind to settle down from its

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<sup>5</sup> Mantras can be done in three different ways, i.e. mental, twisting the tongue in silence and loudly. Hence, the phrase applies to mantras.



diverse thoughts while being engaged in the world. Hence, when you sit for meditation, suddenly the mind will not subside. It takes time for it to settle down and then to get into the silent plane deeper and deeper, and to finally abide in the Self. It might even take years of practice. Hence, the longer the time of continuous meditation, the earlier the chances of our realisation of the Self. Otherwise time will be lost every time you withdraw yourself from the world and sit for meditation, to bring back the mind to concentrate on the Lord and to reach the deep layers of meditation. Continuously meditating on the Self is like an unbroken flow of ghee poured over in a fire sacrifice or like the flow of a river [flowing towards the sea]. A question arises how effortless meditation can ever be done. Where there is love, there is a spontaneous continuous attraction and the mind will be all the time thinking about the beloved. For instance, a woman who is expecting to meet her paramour in the evening will be thinking of him only throughout the time when she is cooking or doing other works at home. Here the mind becomes effortless in the continuous thinking of the paramour. Hence, it is my firm opinion that if only one develops deep love for the Supreme Lord then automatically effortless meditation will take place.

Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi goes progressively up in the ladder of the union with the Lord starting from Karma yoga and now he is reaching a stage of meditation of soham ['I am That'] which is of a high level. This requires a background of philosophy. We normally think that the Atman or Self is inside the body. These are all notions. The Atman is all

pervading and hence both inside and outside the body. The body is just like a water bottle kept drowned inside the Ganges. The water is not only inside the water bottle but also outside it. How does this happen? In the ultimate reality, the Atman alone remains and there is no time or space at that time. The Atman is beyond time as it is beginningless and endless. As it is everywhere, it is beyond space. The space and time are its creation. When once the water has come inside the water bottle, it begins to think that it is separate from the Ganges as it has been separated by a water bottle. This water bottle is just like our own body. When once the water has come inside the bottle, it begins to think that the bottle is part of itself and a separate 'I' is created which is called the ego. Similarly, if there are hundred water bottles, even though it is the same water which is in all of them, because of the separateness of the bottle, the water in each bottle begins to develop an ego of its own. The same thing happens with reference to the bodies that even though all the bodies are occupied or pervaded by the same Self, each soul in each body begins to think that it is separate from the universal totality called God or Self. This ego follows us even in our meditation so that in the earlier stages we the meditators feel that we are separate from the object of meditation, namely the Self. This sort of meditation with an attitude of duality and separateness from the Lord belongs to an inferior type. If only we can meditate on soham, i.e. 'I am That', where the individual soul is able to completely identify itself with that universal totality, this method is far better than the meditation with duality and is considered as more purifying. Naturally, when the individuality is lost and

merged with the Self, the ego is lost which is a sine qua non for moksha. In the final analysis, the truth of that universal totality called God is the truth of myself, the individual. Here we should note that soham is not to be repeated like a japa. One has to meditate abiding in his heart in the Self and considering oneself as zero and keeping the Self alone as being the only existence. This means that one is identifying oneself with the Ultimate and this type of meditation is far superior.

This sort of soham meditation wherein one is firmly established in the abidance in the Self, with absolutely no thoughts in the mind [the mind having been annihilated], is also considered as the best type of devotion [bhakti]. Infact bhakti has been defined in the ancient text books like Narada Bhakti Sutra as supreme love. What is this Supreme Love, how does it differ from the ordinary love? The ordinary love at the base level is based on the mutual body attraction of the lover and the beloved where the bodies want to become one. The better type of love will be where the minds of the lovers coincide where they like similar dishes for eating, similar scenery, similar poems and fiction, etc. For instance, when the lover exclaims, “see how beautiful is the peak of the Himalayas seen yonder” the other party says, “Aye, you have snatched away my words. I was about to tell the same thing.” This is the second type of love. Still superior is the love where one of them does not retain his separate identity but completely merges with the lover which may be called as full surrender too. Kabir, a devotee poet says, “The lovers lane is so narrow that two people cannot be

accommodated in it.” So this type of meditation where we identify ourselves completely with the Self is tantamount to a complete surrender to the Self and merging with the Self. Hence, it can be rightly called the highest type of love called bhakti or devotion. One can reach a stage of remaining without thoughts only when the mind has been annihilated. This stage can be reached by daily practice of trying to sit without thoughts for an hour or so. This stage can also be reached when the mind is continuously made to abide in the Self without any other thoughts. This also has a precondition that unless our deep interest in our wife, in our office, in our money, in our possessions, etc. completely dies out and we have no more interest in them, the mind cannot easily be turned towards the Self without any other thought. Jalal Rumi, the great sufi saint as also the Bible aver that, “Be still and know that you are God.” Even Bhagavan Ramana has told in one of his talks that there is no difference between a true jnani and a true devotee. Thus, ultimately to meditate continuously on soham is an excellent meditation. In the second portion of this work, after verse number 15, Ramana Maharshi would found mainly expounding on koham vichara, i.e. Self enquiry as to “Who am ‘I’”.

The ultimate sadhana as well as the destination of Self enquiry is to abide in Self as Self alone in a firmly established manner. This is done by concentrating on the spiritual heart which is a term that Ramana Maharshi has been fond of talking repeatedly. Actually speaking, the Self is everywhere and it is not a question of any particular place in the body. But the spiritual heart is supposed to be the center of spiritual

experiences. It is well known that we are not the body but the energy inside it which makes us talk, walk, joke, hear, see, smell, etc. Initially, we are conceived as a flesh gel in the fallopian tubes of the mother. It slowly descends into the womb and begins to form the container, namely the body. It is in the fourth week that the energy enters into the womb and finally into the body. The point through which the energy has entered the body is called the spiritual heart according to my knowledge. The mind may temporarily abide in the Self for a little while and again come out to think of worldly things but by continuous practice for a long time, the mind disappears forever and the Self alone remains. This is our original nature and is reached by karma yoga [the yoga of action], bhakti yoga [the yoga of devotion] and also bodha [the path of knowledge]. Hence, when once we abide in our Self firmly, it is the same as all these yogas. We finally reach a state of permanently abiding in the Self as a result of repeated practice.

## Section 4

### Breath Control [Prānāyāma]

Now Bhagavan Ramana proceeds to explain the method of controlling the mind through prānāyāma, i.e. the control of the breath. There are many sadhaks who think that the Self realisation can be reached by prānāyāma alone. Bhagavan Ramana is not very much in favour of prānāyāma as a method by itself to attain the Lord. The principle behind the prānāyāma can no doubt be used to demolish the mind totally [mano nasa]. Prānāyāma is a method where the breath is controlled in a systematic manner by inhaling at a particular speed, by retaining it [called kumbhaka] for a specified period and exhaling it. When thus the breath is retained in the heart, the mind also gets subsided. This is explained by an example. A hunter is after a flying bird. It is not so easy to control the bird and catch it in his hand. So he spreads a big net with a few grains thrown on it. Out of greed when the bird comes to the net, it gets entangled in it and cannot leave. In the same manner as the bird caught by the net, the prānāyāma becomes a way to control the mind.

The attribute of the mind is the power of recognising, i.e. to become aware of the objects of the world. For instance, the eyes can only see a form but it cannot recognise it as an elephant or a horse. It only passes on the form or the figure it sees to the mind and it is the mind which recognises it as an elephant or a horse with the help of the archives it has. Thus, the mind becomes aware of the elephant or the horse

and begins to think. This capacity to recognise and think is called 'chit'. It is awareness.

As far as the pranas are concerned [which are five in number called as vyana, udana, samana, apana and prana] known as vital elan, they are responsible for all action. It is with the help of the power of prana that food is digested and we lift our hands and feet, etc. Hence, action is the attribute of the prana which is manifested from the breath. When it is questioned as to what is the relationship between the mind and the prana, it will be found that both stem from the same source of power and simply branch out as two, i.e. chitta and prana. By controlling the one, the other can be automatically controlled. For instance, when we are seeing attentively a suspense serial in the television, till the final conclusion comes in that serial, our breathing also stops along with our deep one pointed mental attention. When the serial ends, we heave a big sigh indicating that so far the breath had also stopped along with the mind. This is because the power source for both of them is the same. Now the question which arises is as to how is this fact useful in our meditation or the process of sadhana in reaching the final reality. This is discussed in the next section.

## Section 5

### Subsidence and Annihilation of Mind

When the mind stops along with the breathing process, it results in either of the two different things namely the temporary absorption of the mind called 'laya' or thorough destruction of the mind, i.e. destruction of all the thoughts forever - called 'nasa'. The difference is that 'laya' being a temporary subsidence of the mind, it gets revived again and all thoughts including the ego prosper. These vasanas continue to guide our action in our present birth and thus 'laya' by itself is of no use. To illustrate the nature of laya, there is a story. A sage, while talking to his disciples, called for a cup of water to quench his thirst. Before the disciple could come with the water, he went into deep 'laya' Samadhi which lasted a thousand years. He was abandoned by the disciples and was carried hither and thither by wind and water. After nearly thousand years when his place was flooded by rain waters and he woke up, he found himself sitting on the sands of a river. The first thing which came out of his mouth was, "Aye, where is the drinking water that I had called for?" Thus, this shows that laya does not result in any practical help. When one comes out of it, he is the same person in all aspects as he was before the samadhi. All the thoughts and all the vasanas get revived. On the contrary, it is the complete destruction of the mind which is useful for us and will take us to the ultimate goal. When the mind through constant practice gets completely destroyed forever all thoughts including the 'I' thought, namely the ego dies. When the individuality called 'I' is gone, the



universal Self alone remains and that is the stage of moksha. No doubt, except for saying the aforesaid fact regarding *mano nasa* or destruction of the mind or annihilation of the mind, Bhagavan Ramana does not expatiate fully on how to attain the *mano nasa* [he has just touched on this point] as his purpose was only to take a person to the one pointed meditation of the Self or the Self enquiry. Here, I am tempted to cite an interesting episode. One gentleman was sent by Mahatma Gandhi to Swami Sarnanandaji Maharaj of Brindavan who was born blind in both eyes but a *jivanmukta* in his own right. Mahatma Gandhi had sent his devotee with a recommendation that, "Please help this gentleman; he has a question to ask." The gentleman put this question, "Maharaj, it is told that the mind should be destroyed in full [*mano nasa*]. How to destroy the mind?" Sarnanandaji Maharaj exclaimed, "You are coming from Mahatma Gandhi and talking of violence, i.e. destruction. Do not annihilate the mind but do what Gandhi has said. Gandhi has told we should have non-violent non-cooperation; so you refuse to conform to the mind's advice. You say to the mind, 'I am sorry, I will not do what you want'."

The point is when the breath is stopped, either *laya* [subsidence] can take place or *nasa* [destruction] can take place. It has been already mentioned that *laya* is of no use as the mind gets revived again after some time with all its *vasanas* and desires. Then, the question is what is the use of *laya* at all? There is a method by which the *laya* can be converted into *mano nasa* or destruction of the mind. When once the mind has completely subsided and due to control

of the breath by stopping it in kumbhaka, you try to think of only one thing, the Self or the Lord. The continuous thinking of that one Supreme entity results automatically into the destruction of the mind. Think of the One, again you repeat it. Thus the single minded concentration on the ultimate truth results in the destruction of the mind and thus it will lead us to our natural state of being, i.e. as satchidananda.

In this connection, an interesting episode in the life of Bhagavan Ramana is worthy of narration. Once a Kashmiri Pandit came to see Bhagavan all the way from Kashmir and began to talk to Bhagavan in Hindi. All the people who were present at that time there laughed and told the Kashmiri Pandit that none in the Asramam knew a word of Hindi and Bhagavan was no exception. The Kashmiri Pandit expressed surprise over that as Hindi was the national language and talked for a little while in English. At about 11 O' clock, Bhagavan asked the Pandit to go to the town and have his meals, as in those days meals were not served in the Asramam. The Panditji went away and immediately the servant of the Pandit, a Kashmiri villager who knew no language other than Kashmiri came and prostrated before Bhagavan with a distressed face and began to pour out all his troubles in his household, etc. before Bhagavan in pure Kashmiri as he did not know Hindi even. After about twenty minutes, he stopped for a while when Bhagavan was looking at him unwaveringly for about twenty five minutes. The servant boy with tears brimming in his eyes prostrated before Bhagavan again and again and all the people present thought that the servant boy got the solution for all his problems from

Bhagavan Ramana through mental communication perhaps. In the afternoon, the Pandit came straight to Bhagavan Ramana and with anger in his eyes tiraded against Bhagavan saying, "You are a cheat. You are a deceitful person. You are a liar. It was told that you never knew Hindi but my servant boy says that you talked to him for twenty five minutes in chaste Kashmiri while you pretended to me as if you did not know any language other than Tamil and a little smattering of English." Everybody in the audience laughed and told the Pandit that, "Bhagavan never talked one word and we were present at the time your servant boy talked to him. Bhagavan was only looking at him for twenty five minutes and he got all the solutions to his personal problems. Only after reading this episode I was able to understand a saying of Buddha. In my young days I was reading an English translation of a Chinese version of the various episodes in Buddha's life. After enlightenment Buddha had travelled far and wide and had been giving lectures in various places both morning and evening. Just two or three years before his final nirvana he called his favourite disciple Ananda and told him, "Ananda, believe me when I say that in all my lifetime so far after enlightenment, I have never walked a single step and I have never spoken a single word." This was a puzzle to me which was unravelled only after I read the aforesaid episode in Bhagavan Ramana's life. This shows that it is a fact that a jivanmukta whose mind has been destroyed has nothing to do in this world and does nothing. But many of them are found to be engaged in various types of social service activities, etc. This is because it is only the other spectators in the world, out of their deep delusion of maya, saw things which

never happened. They saw Buddha talking and walking but nothing happened. He was actionless. Thus we can see that in reality, a jivanmukta [a man who is liberated while alive] does not have any duties or actions to do in this world but the onlookers see him engaged in various activities while it was never true for various factors beyond the knowledge of an ordinary person.

When the mind is once for all destroyed, then the person is considered as one of the best of yogis. When once the mind is lost forever, all the thoughts go, all thoughts include the ego which also goes. When the ego goes, when the mind is empty of thoughts [one reaches a thoughtless state], then the 'I' is the state where we remain in our own natural state. Such a person, having attained his natural state has nothing left for him to lose in this world. Even though this is the ultimate truth, a jivanmukta [the one who attains liberation while alive] is still found in actual spirit to be engaged in some work or the other at that time. This has been explained by Ashtavakra in the following manner:

“A leaf had fallen from the tree and had become absolutely dried and shrunk in every way devoid of all moisture. It cannot go anywhere. When once the big tornado comes, the leaf is blown off a good distance away from its original place. Similarly, even though a jivanmukta is actionless, when the entire cosmic wind is blowing, in the form of running of the world [samsara], this jivanmukta also is wafted away. Thus the action happens at the universal level while it appears to the onlooker as if it is taking place at the individual level.”

When once all the self is withdrawn from all perceptions of the outside world, then, the mind is concentrated<sup>6</sup> on the Self alone. Then we remain as the witness without any objects and this is the direct vision of the Ultimate Reality. In this connection, it can be mentioned about a very highly reputed philosopher who has also put forward a method of choiceless perception which can lead to our being identified with the Self. A person may go to the terrace in the upstairs and sit in solitude. All around him is the greenery containing several flower pots with plants grown using the art of bonsai. The main perception now is through the eye. His eyes should see the totality and not choose or select a particular plant and exclaim, "Oh, this is the same sapling I had put three days back. How big it has grown." Here, among the objects of totality, you have chosen one and your mind is running in that direction. Similarly, the second perception, is hearing of various noises in the street through the ear. A neighbouring lady is playing on the piano, some music in the opposite shop is glaring, two people are quarrelling in the street and one is beating the other, a child is wailing and weeping. He recognises the voice of the child which is his own sister's child. He exclaims, "How careless these ladies are? The child has been weeping for a long time and nobody bothers to pacify and take it inside the house." Thus, he has chosen this one noise of the child among all the noises and his mind will be engaged in it further. He will have no peace of mind. Hence, all our senses should be concentrated on the entire totality of perception whether it be the noise or various sights or various kinds of smell, etc. In that case, a stage will come when we will forget ourselves. When the mind becomes void, our entire ego will be gone.

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<sup>6</sup> This would mean the self concentrating on the Self. This means to remain as the Self without contemplating on anything, without chanting or thinking of God, etc.

## Section 6

### Self-enquiry - Vichara Marga

As Bhagvan Ramana path is vichara marga, i.e. Self enquiry, a part of jnana marga, half of the book is devoted only for that path. When one persists in searching as to what is the source of the mind and what actually is the mind made of, it will be found that ultimately there is nothing called the mind at all. The mind is not an organ like the ear or the eyes. It is only a bundle of thoughts. The thoughts belong to the past. When we recall them, it is called memory. So ultimately, the impressions of thoughts, past and present, etc. are only called the mind. Vichara Marga is considered as the direct path. When once the body is born, the universal soul which is spread everywhere including in all the bodies begins falsely to consider the body as its own and an ego is created called 'I' which includes the body. This 'I' is the first thought. The ego, namely 'I' is the very mind. The first impressions in the mind bring the ego. When the mind becomes thoughtless, the 'I' goes and all thoughts go. When all thoughts go there is no mind left. The mind was only an imagination and when we begin to search for its source, we will find that there is nothing called the mind at all and the mind has disappeared. Even though Bhagavan Ramana gives a lot of importance to Self enquiry, he has also firmly added a note of stern warning which is ignored by many. He has emphasised that this path is meant only for those 'Pakwees' i.e. people who have spiritually advanced in their maturity. Everybody in his ego is tempted to think that the path being so easy, he is entitled to practice this path. And once you get some small

experiences like the astral travel while asleep or producing certain objects like small idols of God, etc. from an empty hand, etc. they are well satisfied that they have reached their goal. Unfortunately, these siddhis are not connected with any spirituality at all and are on the contrary obstructions in their path of progress in the spiritual path.

Throughout the night, one forgets himself and his designation, family, etc. As soon as he gets up, the first thought that arises is 'I' [that is Krishnamurty, Ramamurty, Sarala, etc.]. Soon enough, all other thoughts will follow as for example, "Today my uncle is coming from UK. I have to go to the airport to pick him up and bring him" and, "Oh, there is a seminar at 4.00pm today. I have not yet prepared at all for the seminar", etc. Thus, all thoughts follow the 'I' thought and all these thoughts become a bundle and is known as the mind. So that is why, the 'I' thought or the ego itself is the mind. If only we manage to remove the 'I' thought through concentrating on the ultimate reality, we reach the goal immediately.

When we search inside the mind, as to wherefrom this 'I' has started, we will find that there is no 'I' or ego at all. Hence, the 'I' will vanish. This is called the Self enquiry or the atma vichara.

When once the ego falls, you have something which will replace the 'I'. Otherwise, what is left will be a dead body and there will be a void. To that, Bhagavan Ramana replies. When once the 'I' known as ego [which considers the body as oneself] attains destruction, then, the basic universal 'I-I'

only remains. When once at dusk we see a rope and mistake it for a serpent, the serpent is called a super imposition on the rope. By the light of a torchlight, when the illusion of the serpent goes, the base namely, the rope alone remains. Hence, when the illusion of the 'I' goes, a continuous 'I-I' which is also called the heart [hrid] which is the base on which the 'I' was superimposed shines as the ultimate existence called Self which is always fully plenary, i.e. it is full in itself and nothing is wanting or nothing is needed. It alone is. This is called poorna.

This uninterrupted continuous feeling of 'I-I' is the true meaning of the term 'I'. The other 'I' is narrowed by limitation and is a superimposition only. It never existed at any time. In the night, when you sleep deeply, you are not aware who you are. There seems to be an absolute void. But in the early morning when you get up, you say that you had slept soundly. When you did not exist and had no external consciousness at all, whoever told you that you had a good sleep? This means there was a watcher on the tower keeping vigil inside you while you were sleeping and not conscious of the external. And that is the Self which never dies. It is the universal Self which you narrow down to an individual self which took over charge in the night. Hence, there is a continuity of the Self which is consciousness itself and never ceases to exist even when the ego or the individual 'I' is lost. This true 'I' which is the only absolute reality which is universal beyond all space and time is not the body nor the senses nor the mind nor the breath nor our basic ignorance of who we are. This body, senses, mind, etc. are all inert



and have no energy to move by themselves. The Ultimate Reality or the Self is the one which infuses the prana sakti or the vital elan into us which in its turn enables us to lift, to walk, to talk, to see, to hear, to smell, etc. The body and the senses of the eye, the ear, the mind, the breath, etc. are after all inert instruments which allow the Self to do the various actions through them.

When we say that the ego goes it is replaced by the mere being or existence known as the Self, how do we know that? What is that reveals itself? The one that reveals its existence is called awareness or chit. Here, there is no need for one torchlight to reveal the other torchlight. The one torchlight reveals itself also. Similarly, the Self reveals itself and it does not require another chit or awareness to reveal it. In other words, that which exists, the Self that exists is aware of its own existence. This Self awareness is called chit; the sat and chit are not different and are one and the same. So it is the chit in it which reveals the basic 'I-I' which is sheer existence<sup>7</sup>.

God and individual soul look separate from each other because God looks unlimited beyond time and space, etc. while the jiva looks limited. The former is immortal and the latter seems mortal. The former has got the full knowledge while the jiva is imperfect. Thus God and jiva wear different costumes in the same drama. This mortality, limitedness are all called upadhis or limiting adjuncts. They are all only costumes and different make up worn by the same actor who

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<sup>7</sup> In other words when you say sat and chit it is only for a purpose of differentiating it for the person hearing them for the first time. The sat and chit are not separate.

enacts a double role. A child's father acts as Ravana in a drama. But the child who witnesses the drama cannot be convinced that the Ravana in the stage and the father is one and the same. He thinks that they are different. Similarly there is only one Ultimate Reality. While we are dreaming even though we are all alone, our thoughts project various people who are none but ourselves. When we dream, all the tigers in our dream were only in our thought and thought is our own energy and hence all those dream figures are only ourselves and have not been projected from elsewhere. Similarly, this entire world and all the jivas in the dream are only the thoughts of the Ultimate Reality. They are all dreams which are superimposed on the Self. Hence, the world and all the individuals [jivas] even though they look to be separate with different characteristics are only one and the same. If only we see them from the standpoint of the essential nature of existence alone, both are existent and never become non-existent. There can only be one existence which is everywhere. It is because of our ignorance of our nature as to who we are, that delusive duality looks real.

When once the various costumes of jiva and God are removed, there is only the non-dual Self which has no attributes or upadhis. This Self realisation is also known as God's direct vision or sakshatkar. Elsewhere in the text it has already been told that the truth of God is the truth of our Self. When the jiva becomes free from all conditioning and limitations, the ego which is the same as the mind disappears forever. When the superimposed 'I' goes, what remains is the pure Self which is also known as God.

We always speak of Self realisation or recognising the Self, etc. What actually is the knowing of the Self and how can it be done? There is only one Self and there are no two selves. To remain in the Self or abiding in the Self or being the very Self by identifying ourselves with that one non dual existence is known as being established in the Self. This is Self realisation. Thus, to become the Self, which is non-dual, is known as abiding firmly in the Atman.

The Self which is called true knowledge is beyond knowledge and beyond ignorance also. It is only pure awareness. As there is only one Self as the Ultimate Reality, there is no other knowledge to be known.

Through Self enquiry, when we search for our real nature, and come face to face with the Self [by being the Self], we are freed from both birth and death. We remain as the eternal being and the ineffable bliss of awareness which is perfect and full. It is only a dream where we think that we are born and dying after having experienced various pleasures and sufferings in this life and when the dream vanishes we find that there is nothing but the Self. The jiva or the individual soul attains the supreme bliss beyond bondage or freedom. Both bondage and release were only dreams. Then the jiva becomes one with the absolute divinity.

This text comes from the words of Bhagavan Ramana himself as a result of immense austerities. The purpose of the entire text is to instruct us as to how to remove the ego known as 'aham' and to make the 'I-I' which is the substratum of the false 'I' or ego shine by itself as the only absolute reality. The Self enquiry process itself represents great austerities and because of that only, we reach the reality.



## **Part B:**



## Original Sanskrit Text with Meaning

### Verse 1

कर्तुराज्ञया प्राप्यते फलम् ।  
कर्म किं परं कर्म तज्जडम् ॥

Word	Meaning
Ājnayā	By the will
Kartuh	of the Supreme God [the Ultimate Supreme Being or the only Doer]
Phalam	The fruit [of any of our actions]
Prāpyate	Is obtained
Kim	Is it that
Karma	Action
Param	Is Supreme? [to be Supreme it has to be a conscious entity and not inert]
Tat Karma	That action
Jadam	Is after all insentient [inert]

## Verse 2

कृतिमहोदधौ पतनकारणम् ।  
फलमशाश्वतं गतिनिरोधकम् ॥

<b>Word</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Patanakaranam	It [action] is the cause of falling down
Kritimahodadhau	Into the immense ocean of action [and reaction]
Phalam	[The] result of action [karma]
Asasvatam	is non-permanent [or temporary]
Gatinirodhakam	[Also] blocks the way [for the Ultimate Goal, i.e. moksha or liberation]



Verse 3

ईश्वरार्पितं नेच्छया कृतम् ।

चित्तशोधकं मुक्तिसाधकम् ॥

Word	Meaning
Isvararpitam	If the action is offered as a dedication to the Supreme Lord
Na kritam	[And if the action] has not been done out of
Icchaya	Longing or desire for the fruit
Chittashodhakam	[The same action becomes] a purifier or a cleanser of our mind [which is full of impurities and mainly the ego]
Muktisadhakam	And also helpful in attaining moksha [the final goal] indirectly

## Verse 4

कायवाङ्मनःकार्यमुत्तमम्  
पूजनं जपश्चिन्तनं क्रमात् ।

Word	Meaning
Poojanam	The ritualistic worship [of the Lord]
Japah	Repeatedly chanting the mantra [the one given by the Guru]
Chintanam	Meditation on the Lord or continuously thinking of Him [whether with form or without form]
Kayavangmanah	Done by the body, the speech and the mind respectively [external instruments]
Karyam	The [above mentioned] actions
Kramat	Respectively in that order
Uttamam	Are the best [the more internal the instrument, the better]

Verse 5

जगत ईशधीयुक्तसेवनम् ।  
अष्टमूर्तिभृद्देवपूजनम् ॥

Word	Meaning
Isa-dhi-yukta-sevanam	To serve [the world] looking upon it with the attitude that it is the Lord Himself who has manifested in the form of the world
Jagatah	The world [included in the previous meaning]
Ashta-murti-bhrt-devapoojanam	Is the same as serving the Lord directly in the form of the world consisting of eight constituents [namely the five subtle elements (known as earth, water, fire, air and space), the sun, the moon and the jiva <sup>1</sup> (individual soul)]

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<sup>1</sup> Jiva is put separately because it has the energy in it. The other elements are in the nature of matter, while jiva is energy.

## Verse 6

उत्तमस्तवाद्दुच्चमन्दतः ।

चित्तजं जपध्यानमुत्तमम् ॥

<b>Word</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Uttamastavat <sup>2</sup>	As compared to the loud singing of the glories of the Supreme Lord [composed by the erstwhile saints and known as stotras or stavas]
Japadhyanam	The chanting of the mantra and meditation
Chittajam	Which generates from inside the mind [silently]
Ucchamandatah	Either loudly [or by only moving the tongue so that nobody can hear the voice (called upamsu chanting)]
Uttamam	Is the best [from the result point of view]. Note: The subtler the sadhana, the better. Taking the names loudly is less effective than meditation.

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<sup>2</sup>Here Uttama means God as he is the Supreme of all entities.

Verse 7

आज्यधारया स्रोतसा समम् ।

सरलचिन्तनं विरलतः परम् ॥

Word	Meaning
Saralachintanam	Uninterrupted continuous thinking [meditation of the Lord]
Ajya <sup>3</sup> -dharayā samam	Is like the continuous uninterrupted flow of ghee in a fire sacrifice
Srotasa [samam]	Or like the continuous flow of water in a river
Param	Is far better than
Viralatah	The broken meditation done at various intervals [after several intervals]

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<sup>3</sup>Ajya means the name of a special ghee used in fire sacrifice and not any normal ghee. Ghrita means ordinary ghee. Ajya means the ghee set out for fire sacrifice.

## Verse 8

भेदभावनात्सोऽहमित्यसौ ।

भावनाऽभिदा पावनी मता ॥

<b>Word</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Bhedabhavanat	As compared [to meditation], based on the duality of the meditator and the Lord, i.e. the object of meditation as separate from each other
Sohamiti	“I am that” attitude
Asau	This type of
Abidha bhavana	Meditating without any difference, i.e. non-dually [not considering Lord, the object of meditation as different or separate from oneself i.e. the meditator]
Mata	Is considered
Pavani	As sacred or purifying

## Verse 9

भावशून्यसद्भावसुस्थितिः ।

भावनाबलाद्भक्तिरुत्तमा ॥

Word	Meaning
Bhava-soonya-sadbhava-sussthitih	To remain firmly established or to abide firmly [in the Self] in the sheer existence and not having any thoughts whatsoever <sup>4</sup>
Uttama	[Is]The best
Bhaktihi	Bhakti or devotion in the form of the most intense love for the Lord
Bhavanabalat	Because of the immense power of such a deep contemplation <sup>5</sup> .

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<sup>4</sup> To remain rooted in our 'am-ness' bereft of any thoughts whatsoever is considered by Ashtavakra as an instant moksha capsule.

<sup>5</sup> According to Ramana, to remain thoughtless but rooted to the sense of 'am-ness' is considered as bhakti yoga. Even according to Adi Sankara, to remain in our original nature is devotion.

## Verse 10

हृत्स्थले मनः स्वस्थता क्रिया ।  
भक्तियोगबोधाश्च निश्चितम् ॥

<b>Word</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Manah-swasthata	To keep the mind abiding in its own nature or Self
Hrtsthale	In the region of the heart
Kriya	Is the yoga of action
Bhakti-yoga-bodhah cha	Is itself devotion, yoga [the path founded by Patanjali] as also jnana or the method of knowledge. In other words, this itself is the yoga of action, yoga of Patanjali, the devotional path or bhakti yoga elaborated by Sandilya and Narada as also the path of final knowledge [jnana marga].
Nischitam	[This is] the final conclusion [of the scriptures].



Verse 11

वायुरोधनाल्लीयते मनः ।  
जालपक्षिवद्रोधसाधनम् ॥

Word	Meaning
Vayu-rodhanat	By the method of controlling the breath
Manah	The mind
Leeyate	Subsides or gets absorbed temporarily [this is different from the required destruction of the mind in its entirety]
Jala-pakshi-vat	Just like a net spread to catch a bird
Rodha-sadhanam	[It] Is a means for controlling the mind

## Verse 12

चित्तवायवश्चित्क्रियायुताः ।  
शाखयोर्द्वयी शक्तिमूलका ॥

<b>Word</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Chitta-vayavah <sup>6</sup>	The mind and the breathing [inhalation and exhalation]
Chit-kriya-yutah	Have the functions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• awareness of the objects and</li> <li>• activity respectively</li> </ul>
Shakayor-dvayee	Constitute the two branches
Sakti-moolaka	Coming out of the same stem and hence based on the same identical power which functions in both.

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<sup>6</sup> Vayu always means air and here it refers to the process of breathing.

## Verse 13

लयविनाशने उभयरोधने ।  
लयगतं पुनर्भवति नो मृतम् ॥

Word	Meaning
Ubhaya-rodhane	While applying both the methods of control of the mind namely
Laya-vinasane	[Laya] Temporary subsidence and [nasa] the complete destruction of the mind
Layagatam	The mind which has temporarily subsided
Punah	Once again
Bhavati	Comes up [and begins to function]
No mrtam	But not at all the mind that is dead [destroyed]

**Note:** In laya, the absorption of the mind is temporary and after sometime, the mind begins to function fully. If it is destroyed, it can no more be revived.

## Verse 14

प्राणबन्धनाल्लीनमानसम् ।

एकचिन्तनान्नाशमेत्यदः ॥

Word	Meaning
Leena-manasam	When once the mind has subsided [laya]
Adah	This [mind]
Eka-chintanat <sup>7</sup>	By contemplating on the one non-dual Ultimate Reality [Self]
Nasam-yeti	Attains destruction
Prāna bandhanāt	By controlling the breath [through prānāyāma]

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<sup>7</sup>This is a method to convert laya [an obstruction] into nasa [destruction].

Verse 15

नष्टमानसोत्कृष्टयोगिनः ।

कृत्यमस्ति किं स्वस्थितिं यतः ॥

Word	Meaning
Nashta-manasa- utkrsta-yoginah	For that yogi of a high level whose mind has been destroyed
Kim-kriyam	What remaining action
Asthi	Is left [to be done]
Yatah	Because
Swasthitim [gatah]	[He remains established in] his own natural state

## Verse 16

दृश्यवारितं चित्तमात्मनः ।

चित्तवदर्शनं तत्त्वदर्शनम् ॥

Word	Meaning
Atmanah-chittam	When once the mind of oneself
Drsya-varitam	Is withdrawn from all perceptions, namely, seeing, hearing, smelling, etc.
Chittva-darsanam	It directly results in one's coming directly face to face with mere awareness [without any objects]
Tattva-darsanam	It is also the direct vision or realisation of the ultimate truth namely the Self [which may be called as Brahman or God]

Verse 17

मानसं तु किं मार्गणे कृते ।

नैव मानसं मार्गं अर्जवात् ॥

**Word**

**Meaning**

Margane krte

When once we make a deep search through enquiry

Manasam tu kim

What is the nature of this mind?

Manasam na-eva

No mind exists

Marge

Because the path [is]

Arjavat

Simple and direct

[This is the direct path for quelling the mind.]

## Verse 18

वृत्तयस्त्वहं वृत्तिमाश्रिताः ।  
वृत्तयो मनो विद्ध्यहं मनः ॥

Word	Meaning
Tu	But
Vrttayah	All the thoughts
Asritah	Are dependent upon
Aham vrittim	The ['I'] thought [i.e. ego]
Manah	The mind [hence,]
Vrittayo	Is constituted only as a bundle or aggregation of thoughts
Viddhi	Understand [that]
Aham	The ego [individuality]
Manah	is the mind

**Note:** From 'Aham' [i.e. 'I'] thought → All thoughts [i.e. the mind] arises. So Aham thought = ego = mind



Verse 19

अहमयं कुतो भवति चिन्वतः ।  
अयि पतत्यहं निजविचारणम् ॥

Word	Meaning
Ayam	This
Aham	I [ego]
Kutah Bhavati	Wherefrom has it come
Ayi	Oh!
Chinvatah	For the one who searches and enquires [about the source]
Aham	This I [ego]
Patati	Falls down [vanishes]
Nija-vicharanam	[This is] Self enquiry

## Verse 20

अहमि नाशभाज्यहमहंतया ।  
स्फुरति ह्रत्स्वयं परमपूर्णसत् ॥

Word	Meaning
Ahami	When the ego [the individual 'I']
Nasabhaji	Is destroyed
Parama-poorna-sat	The transcendental plenary existence [i.e. the Ultimate Reality called the Self]
Hrit	[Which is also known as] the heart
Sphurati	Shines
Swayam	By itself
Aham-ahamtaya	In the form of 'I-I' [the universal Self is called the 'I']

## Verse 21

इदमहंपदाभिरव्यमन्वहम् ।  
अहमि लीनकेऽप्यलयसत्तया ॥

Word	Meaning
Anwaham	Everyday
Idam	This
Aham-pada-abhikhyam	[Ego] which is known by the term 'I' [vanishes during sleep].
Ahami	Thus even when the 'I', called ego,
Leenake api	has completely subsided, it continues to remain in another form
Alaya sattaya	As the ultimate existence which has always been remaining without destruction as the 'I' 'I' 'I' consciousness [the real Self which is also called as 'I' in the ultimate analysis] over which the narrow ego called 'I' had been superimposed.

## Verse 22

विग्रहेन्द्रियप्राणधीतमः ।

नाहमेकसत्तज्जडं ह्यसत् ॥

Word	Meaning
Na-aham	I am not
Vigraha-indriya-prana-dhee-tamah	The body, the senses, the vital elan known as prana, the mind or ignorance
Ekasat	[I am] the one non-dual existence or Ultimate Reality
Tat jadam	That body, senses, etc. mentioned above are all insentient [jada]
Hi asat	is only non existent [like the object of a dream which has no real existence]

## Verse 23

सत्त्वभासिका चित्क्ववेतरा ।  
सत्तया हि चिच्चित्तयाह्यहम् ॥

Word	Meaning
Sattvabhasika	When the consciousness makes us aware of the mere existence [being]
Kva-va-itarachit	Where then can be another consciousness or awareness apart from the existence
Sattaya hi	The very existence only
Chit	Is awareness of the Self also <sup>8</sup>
Aham	'I' [am revealed, i.e. my existence is revealed]
Chittaya	by the awareness. Thus 'I', the existence is revealed by Chit [awareness] and the awareness can be there only if something exists. Hence, sat is chit and chit is sat.

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<sup>8</sup> If I am aware of my existence, it is only because something exists and that existence only comes to me as an awareness that 'I am'. Existence is awareness and awareness is existence. Without the one there cannot be the other.

## Verse 24

ईशजीवयोर्वेषधीभिदा ।  
सत्स्वभावतो वस्तु केवलम् ॥

<b>Word</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Veshadibhida	Because of the different garbs [costumes] worn by
Eesa-jivayoh	The Supreme Lord [the Self] and the individual self [the one being immortal and the other mortal, the one having unlimited knowledge and the other having limited knowledge, etc. are the different costumes worn; we think that these two are different].
Sat-swabhavatah	When seen from the viewpoint of their essential nature [it is the Self who is also called the Supreme Lord].
Vastu Kevalam	They constitute only one truth namely the ultimate existence [the jiva also in reality exists forever and the Self also being permanent exists for ever. They are just like the Ganges water in the river and in individual water bottles].

Verse 25

वेषहानतः स्वात्मदर्शनम् ।

ईशदर्शनं स्वात्मरूपतः ॥

Word	Meaning
Veshahanatah	By the removal [by proper enquiry] of the respective garbs worn by the Lord and the jiva [individual soul]
Swatma-Darsanam	The Ultimate Self of each alone is directly seen [as the Self is existence and the Lord and jiva are also finally resolved to existence]
Swatma-rupatah	Because of [the identical nature, namely existence] the Lord and the jiva being in the form of one Self.
Eesa darsanam	Is also the direct vision of the Supreme Lord Himself.

## Verse 26

आत्मसंस्थितिः स्वात्मदर्शनम् ।

आत्मनिर्द्वयादात्मनिष्ठता ॥

Word	Meaning
Atmasamstithi	To abide in the Self is
Swatma-darsanam	The same as coming face to face with one's own Self [is a direct vision].
Atmanirdayat	As there are no two selves – one the seer self and one the seen self
Atmanishtata	To abide in one's own Self, i.e. one has to remain as the Self itself.



Verse 27

ज्ञानवर्जिताऽज्ञानहीनचित् ।  
ज्ञानमस्ति किं ज्ञातुमन्तरम् ॥

Word	Meaning
Ajnana-hinachit	The Self awareness is that knowledge which <sup>9</sup> is free from ignorance and
Jnana-virjitaa	Also bereft of the knowledge of the objects
Jnanam asti kim	Is there a knowledge
Jnatum-antaram	Other than this [different from this] to be known

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<sup>9</sup> The Self knowledge is the only knowledge to be known. There is no meaning in knowing anything else.

## Verse 28

किंस्वरूपमित्यात्मदर्शने ।  
अव्ययाभवापूर्णचित्सुखम् ॥

<b>Word</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Kim swaroopam iti	By inquiring as to what is the essential nature of the Self in this manner [aforesaid in previous verses]
Atma darsane	When Self knowledge dawns,
Avyaya-abhava-apoorna-chit-sukham	An ecstasy of bliss takes place which is inexhaustible, unborn, ever plenary and Self awareness [chit] <sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> When Self knowledge comes, the Self itself is the awareness which is also the final bliss. The Supreme Lord is called Sat-Chit-Ananda i.e. existence-awareness and bliss.

Verse 29

बन्धमुक्त्यतीतं परं सुखम् ।  
विन्दतीह जीवस्तु दैविकः ॥

Word	Meaning
Daivikaha jivah	The individual when endowed with divine virtues [as a result of intense Self enquiry]
Iha tu	Here and now only
Vindathi	Attains
Param sukham	A transcendental happiness
Bandha-mukti-atitam	Which is beyond bondage and liberation

## Verse 30

अहमपेतकं निजविभानकम् ।  
महदिदं तपो रमणवागियम् ॥

**Word****Meaning**

Iyam-Ramana-vak

These words of Ramana

Aham-apetakam

Destroy the ego ['I'] forever

Nijavibhanakam

Makes the Self shine

Idam mahat tapah

And this is the greatest austerity

## **List of books by Swami Shantananda Puri**

### **A. Books in relation to Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi**

Swami Shantananda Puri has written over 30 books. Of the books written by him, some are commentaries or explanations on books recommended by Bhagavan Ramana himself or the books containing his teachings. The list of such books is:

1. Selected gems from Ashtavakra Gita
2. Instant self - Awareness: Talks on Ashtavakra Gita
3. The Quantum Leap into the Absolute: Essence of Ashtavakra Gita
4. Sadhanas from Devi Kalottara
5. Sadhanas according to Tripura Rahasyam
6. Sadhanas from Ribhu Gita
7. Sadhanas according to Yoga Vasishta
8. Sadhanas from Vivekachudamani
9. Gita Sarah
10. Golden guidelines to "Who am 'I'?"
11. Sadhanas from Guru Vachaka Kovai
12. Sadhanas from Upadesa Saram

### **B. Other Books written by Swami Shantananda Puri**

1. Srimad Bhagavatam: Its message for the Modern Man
2. A Treasure Trove of Prayers from Srimad Bhagavatam
3. A quintessence of Uddhava Gita
4. Fragrant Flowers

5. Musings of a Himalayan Monk
6. Sadhanas from Adhyatma Ramayanam
7. Sadhanas in Bhagavad Gita
8. Gita's Sthita Prajna Darshan - A crash course for Moksha
9. The Ecstasy of Love Divine: Essence of Narada Bhakti Sutra
10. Jivan Mukti - Liberation - Here and Now
11. Sadhanas from Kaivalyopanishad
12. Sadhanas from Kenopanishad
13. Answers to basic spiritual questions of Sadhaks
14. Living Happily Forever
15. Sri Lalita Sahasranama Stotram: An Insight
16. Infallible Vedic Remedies
17. Stories for Meditation
18. Stories for Inspiration
19. Quintessence of Practical Sadhana - Thoughts for the morning
20. Sri Shiva Sahasranama Stotram (As per Linga Purana)

All the above books and other articles written by Swami Shantananda Puri from time to time are available on the website <http://www.swamishantanandapurimaharaj.org/>.

Many of these books are translated into Hindi and some of the South Indian languages. Some of these translations are available in the website mentioned above.



There are very few books written as books by Bhagavan Ramana himself and one of them is Upadesa Saram which is a quintessence of spiritual instructions. The author Swami Shantananda Puri in his lucid style has provided clear explanations to the thirty slokas that are contained in the original book. Towards the end of the book, he has given word by word meaning in a logical manner. An extract has been given below:

15. नष्टमानसोत्कृष्टयोगिनः ।

कृत्यमस्ति किं स्वस्थितिं यतः ॥

**Word**

Nashta-manasa-  
utkrsta-yoginah

Kim-krityam

Asthi

Yatah

Swasthitim [gatah]

**Meaning**

For that yogi of a high level whose  
mind has been destroyed

What remaining action

Is left [to be done]

Because

[He remains established in] his own  
natural state