

The Light House

Words of Swamiji

Role of a Guru

The Guru at times becomes a match stick. How? He may guide you, but how to bring out the divinity inside you which has been completely marred and hidden away by so many resistances? There may be lying a lot of wood for ages. Inherently it has a lot of fire, but only when the fire is lit with the matchstick does it manifest.

The Guru does not give you anything. In a figurative way you can speak of the forest. Ultimately it is true that so long as you are doing your sadhana, you do feel as if you are lost in a big forest. But really speaking, the full divinity is inside you. It has to come up. You are travelling nowhere, there is no journey. So the question of your being lost doesn't arise. It is only the question of your divinity being fully aroused. And it cannot be aroused unless you have faith and love. That faith and love has to come. That also comes from the Guru. So he plays the role of the match stick, he compassionately kindles your faith and the love for it. And lastly in a figurative way, he guides appropriate to every individual.

Inside this issue:

Goal in Life	2
Prayers	3
Ekātma Panchakam	4
Transcribed Conversations	5
Guidance from a devotee of Bhagavan Ramana	7
Photos of Swamiji	8
Select Sloka from Ashtavakra Gita	9



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Your Guru is always there at all times. Even when not in physical form, he will help you just as if he is alive. You can see him as if he is alive. You will not find anything different; he will smile in the same way. He will fool you sometimes in the same way.

Disclaimer:

The views expressed in the various articles in this newsletter do not necessarily represent Swamiji's views. The views are authors' own.

Goal in Life

In conversations with Swami Shantananda

Try and have a goal. What do we want to do from life? Do we want to earn, enjoy? No. Then be sure of what you want. Make it as the one goal. Never have more than one goal. Never never dilute your goal. Work in the world but be attached only to your goal. Is your life purpose to just work? Find out from where you came and where you will go. Then afterwards love your goal because you want that. You have to love your goal and naturally as a concomitant, be with it. More than faith, you need to have the love. Everything will follow.

You need to determine first the goal of your life. It is the only live entity that runs the entire show. Realise the ultimate cosmic truth and He looks after you. Simple steps:

- Determine Goal
- Love it
- Trust it

Where there is love, there is trust. Where there is trust, love may or may not come.

There is nothing great, nothing small. Ultimately, we have to reach the final goal. No use complimenting oneself for anything. We see people, some give us abuses and some praise us. Don't care for them and go ahead. That's all we want. Let people say anything about us, let them say he is a rogue or a hypocrite, does not matter. When we reach the goal, we will realise that the one who blamed is also yourself. Only remove the drama from you, nothing else.

As all sufferings happen in the dream, waking up from the mega delusion of the dream to the Ultimate Reality is our goal. This is the only goal.

Let all things happen in parallel, but the prime goal is to know who we are and reach that stage. When we are one with the source, then we will know all the resources.

Destination is the support; the goal only is the support; otherwise there is no support at all. We should have no support at all. We have to come to that stage. The world has to completely disappear. You have the conviction and love for the goal every second. Grace will flow and it will push you. This is the grace of the Lord and Guru.

Prayers

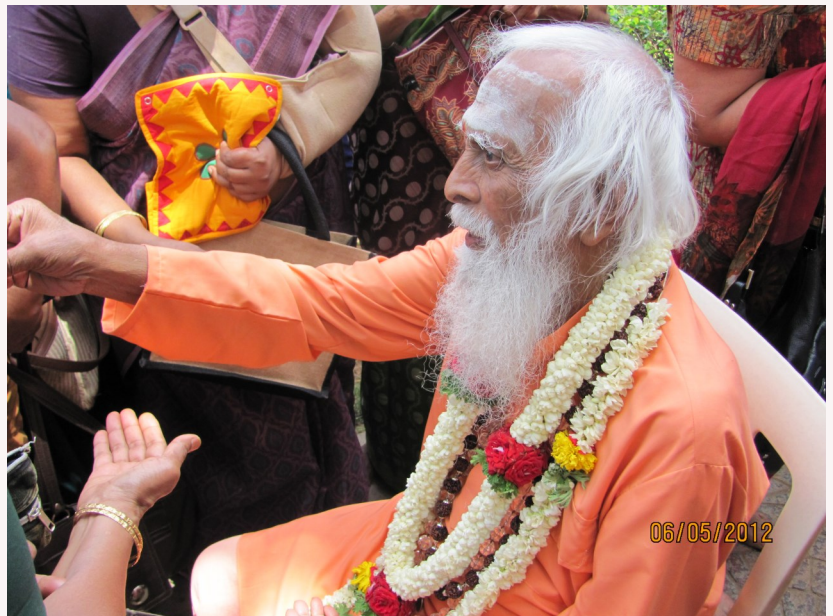
Discourses by Swami Shantananda

Swamiji always emphasised on the power of prayers. Being helpless and surrendering to the Lord, and seeking the Lord through devotion and prayers was something that was emphasised again and again. In one of the conversations, Swamiji said:

There is no easy solution than prayers to the Lord. Lord alone exists, we never exist. You are in the cosmic imagination. You simply weep before the Lord and tell him, "Every day I make a resolution, only to break it. I am unable to do it."

Prayer is greater than meditation.

While praying, if you give an emphasis on different words, it has a different effect. For example, as an illustration, a prayer like, "O Lord, have compassion, pity, mercy on this poor man." If you emphasize O Lord, or compassion or pity or poor man, it has a different effect. If you concentrate on poor man, its effect is much less, because you are not concentrating on the Lord but you are concentrating on yourself. However, if you focus on O Lord or compassionate Lord, then it belongs to a higher class of prayers.



How many saints came out of samsara only through prayers?

Here people say meditation, meditation, meditation. Your heart is not yet ready. You meditate on the Lord in a dry way. Where can it take you? So prepare your heart for it. Your heart should become wet with inside tears. For bhakti to grow, it requires the water. For that purpose, weep to the Lord, pray to Him in your own way. Don't borrow fixed prayers done by Thyagaraja or Purandaradasa. Your heart is not in it, you may not even know the meaning or pronunciation and you are only bothered about the swara and don't know what it means. So you pray in your own words in your own heart in a simplistic way. Keep aside all your cleverness, keep aside all your cunningness, keep aside all your scholarship. Tell Him, "Lord I am a child, I know nothing. Except recently I have come to know You are the only saviour."

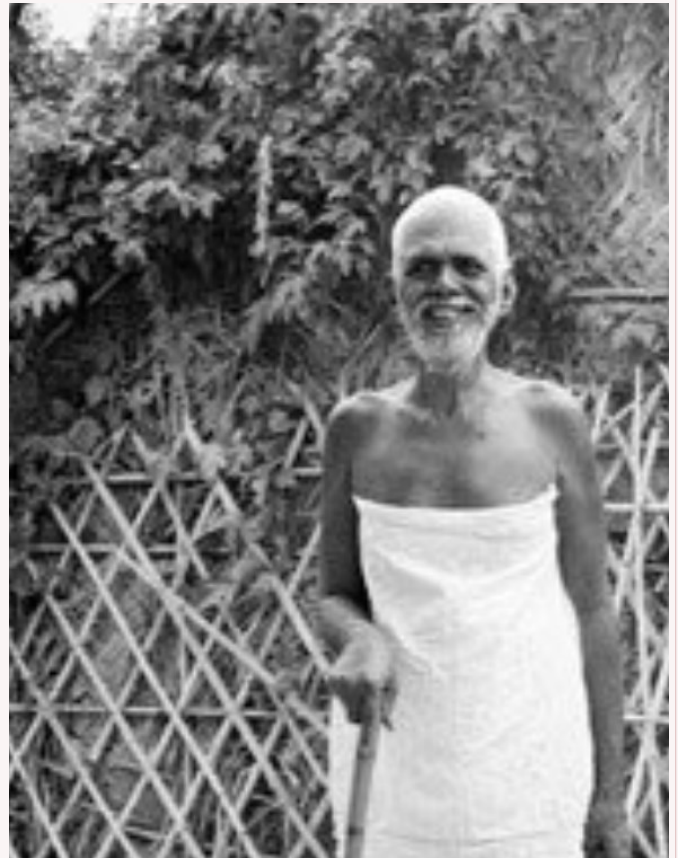
Ekātma Panchakam

By Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi

Ekātma Panchakam are the last verses composed by Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi. They were written at the instance of a devotee, Suri Nagamma, the author of 'Letters from Sri Ramanasramam'. He wrote them first in Telugu, but to a Tamil metrical form called venba, and then translated them into Tamil. Since there was already a composition of Shankaracharya called the Atma Panchakam, Bhagavan decided to call his composition Ekātma Panchakam. English translation is given below:

Verses:

1. When, forgetting the Self, one thinks
That the body is oneself and goes
Through innumerable births
And in the end remembers and becomes
The Self, know this is only like
Awaking from a dream wherein
One has wandered over all the world.
2. One ever is the Self. To ask oneself
"Who and whereabouts am I?"
Is like the drunken man enquiring
"Who am I?" and "Where am I?"
3. The body is within the Self. And yet
One thinks one is inside the inert body,
Like some spectator who supposes
That the screen on which the picture is thrown
Is within the picture.
4. Does an ornament of gold exist
Apart from the gold? Can the body exist
Apart from the Self?
The ignorant one thinks 'I am the body';
The enlightened knows 'I am the Self'.
5. The Self alone, the Sole Reality,
Exists for ever.
If of yore the First of Teachers
Revealed it through unbroken silence
Say who can reveal it in spoken words?



Concluding Verse

Guru Ramana, who revels in the form of Jnana, composed these five verses on the Self. Declared in them is the nature of Reality, which destroys the illusion that the body is the Self.

Conversation with Swami Shantananda

Source: Transcribed conversations (08 February 2014)

Devotee: Which comes first – desire or thought?

Guruji: You see the thought actually becomes the *iccha Shakti*. There are three types of *shakti*. First the *icchi* (I want food). But you don't know where to go in Tiruvannamalai. You have to ask somebody and find out. Someone tells you, "You go there, there is a hotel." So this is called *Jnana Shakti*. But that is not giving you food. You have to walk and go there. And this last one is called *Kriya Shakti*. That is why for the Mother we say, *iccha Shakti, Jnana Shakti, Kriya Shakti swarupinyai namah*. She is *iccha Shakti*, she is *Jnana Shakti*, She is also *Kriya Shakti*. So this is how it comes. First *iccha* and then you get the *jnana*, then you put it to implementation. That is how it happens.



So everything is a thought of course. So the desire produces one thought, saying that, "I want this, I want this." This is one of the thoughts. So it could be many thoughts. So everything will ultimately be called a desire; "I want to become a painter, I want to become an author." So everything ultimately is a desire only. Either desire for status, desire for money, or whatever you may call it. So these are desire for things. I want this particular thing. I want a very good house in Kolkatta. So all these things are there. So these *vasanas* creates desires.

Vasanas are in the previous birth you have been accustomed to certain things, you have been habituated, like having coffee or having something. So in this birth also you want that, "I want coffee." So this is called the tendency you imbibed from the previous birth. So that creates the desire. And that desire is expressed through thought. Because everything comes with thought. You are only a thought of the Lord, the Ultimate Lord. Just as in your dream, thirty people come, wherefrom they came? They are all your thoughts. So similarly this entire thing, is the dream of the Lord. *Yeh sab Bhagavan ne shapna*. It is only a dream of the Lord. So in the dream he has created entire Africa, America, Austria. So the entire thing including the stars and the sun and the moon, you see, they are all His thoughts. That's all. You and I are His thoughts. And a thought is always linked to the thinker. But you are not aware of it; you have forgotten it. The moment you remember that, then, you are a

billionaire. Because everything is yours. So all the Shakti which the Lord has got, so all the things are yours. So that is what we are trying. So a thing which we have forgotten, you are going to remember it until you get into contact with that. So anyway you came out of it. That is your source. So at that time when you came out of it you were definitely in contact with it. And now you think you have come out, you don't know you are in contact. Whether you know or not, you are always in contact. But the moment you know that, "I am in contact", then you will get the heritage of the entire billions. That is all. You can do anything, everything - except *shrishti*, you cannot create and do the dissolution, you cannot dissolve. Except those two, rest of all His powers you will get. Anyways we are not concerned with that. We want this thought to disappear, it should never come back again. I want to go back to the Lord. This is called ultimately moksha. When the thought goes back once and for all into the thinker, and no more it comes, then no more birth and death. Everything is a thought.

Devotee: When will this thought dissolve, Swamiji?

Gurujī: Can you tell regarding your dream when it will dissolve? Because it goes on from your subconscious mind. So you do not know. And why are you having the dream, you do not know the reason. Why are you having the dream? The dream you are having is in order to help understand what is happening in the waking state. That is why you are having it. God is also having a similar one.

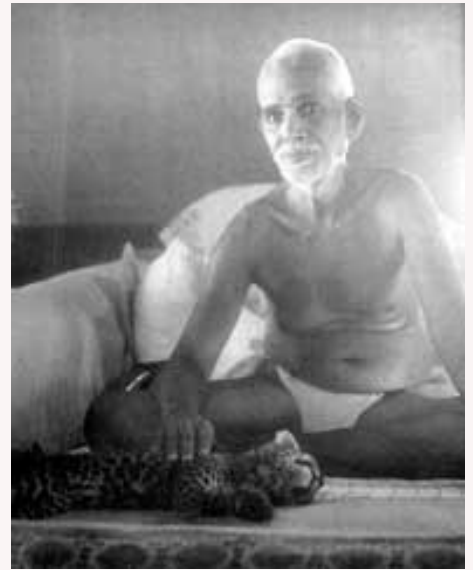
That is why, just as in the dream you find one tiger coming. You are afraid no doubt; at that time it looks real. But when the dream is over, you know it was only a nightmare. There was never a tiger inside your room. That could not have been possible, you have already locked the room, so no tiger can come even through the windows (*laughs*).

So similarly, what all you are seeing now, my wife is ill, I am ill, my child is ill. So all these things are all only in the dream. Remember it is all a dream. Then you will not suffer, that's all. You will not suffer, that is the only way. Or the other approach is to forget this suffering and you go on thinking of the Lord. There will be no time to think of anything else. That's all. Go on thinking of Him, the Lord in any form you like, whether you like with form or without form. You go on thinking of Him. Morning to evening when you go on thinking of Him, there will be no time to think of anything else. That is there. There will be no time to think of your wife, there will be no time to think of your son. So only He, He alone. Let that thing come. Then normally this will dissolve. It will happen automatically. The only thing is "*ekagara chittam*", i.e. with a one-pointed mind, the mind should be completely glued to it. The mind should not move anywhere, half an inch even. That's all. Let it be attached to only one. Let it be to Gopal, let it be to Ma, but let it be to only one. Don't have some hundreds. Don't say, "I don't know whether Ram exists or Krishna exists and then go on after everyone" (*laughs*). After all it is one and the same, whomsoever you choose.

Guidance from a devotee of Bhagavan Ramana

In conversation with another sadhak

- Surrender for abidance. Sit in Bhagavan's Old Hall and ask for guidance. Do not talk after meditation. We have to get rid of the body sense. We say, but we identify.
- No thoughts for tomorrow, have utter trust of life, with the confidence that I will be looked after.
- Peace is where faith is. Go to a cave but peace is nowhere to be found.
- Faith is the root of all. It is said that doubt dies hard. Where there is love, there is faith.
- Spiritual instructions of Bhagavan, read daily. You will do good reading Bhagavan's materials. Keep Guru at the center of actions. By divine will, help keeps coming. You are not what you think you are.
- You are in a dark cave full of shadows and you think this is the world. Go out under the sun and there are no shadows.
- Put your daily life in sadhana. It is in shambles. If in shambles, forget vaikuntha, forget moksha – they are far off.
- Having no conflict every day is a blessing.
- You are searching for fire with a lantern. You are the knowledge but you have no time to think of the source. The more you dwell on 'I am', the identification loosens.
- Always be honest to yourself. If you are honest to yourself, you cannot be false to the world.
- Through every action you reflect your nature or swabhava. You are awareness. Bhagavan brings you to that. Read Bhagavan repeatedly. You have all the ingredients. You are not the object.
- Sattvic sadhana is to think of God, to talk of God and to do good actions. Life of purity itself is living in the atman. What is moksha? The joy once experienced, no other joy is desirable or that happiness once experienced, no other happiness is desired. Just sit, don't expect anything.



Photos of Swamiji



Sloka from Selected Gems from Ashtavakra Gita

By Swami Shantananda Puri Maharaj

15. When the mind neither grasps nor abandons anything, it is liberation (moksha):

तदा मुक्तिर्यदा चित्तं न वाञ्छति न शोचति ।
न मुञ्चति न गृह्णाति न हृष्यति न कुप्यति ॥

One gets liberation when one's mind is free from desires, regret or sorrow, acceptance or leaving and happiness or anger. Bondage and liberation are both states of mind. The mind has to be controlled and one cannot get liberation either by procuring any objects of the world or by renouncing them. A liberated state is our own nature. We are ever liberated (*Nitya mukta*). This is not realised by us because of certain mental delusions. The Self alone is true and all the world and its objects are superimpositions (appearances) on the substratum of the Self. The objects are not apart from the Self and they are unreal appearances on the Self only. There cannot be any object if there was no Self at all. The Self is Poorna-plenary. It is self-sufficient and perfect.

Atman lacks in nothing. That being the case, any desire to acquire anything shows that the person considers himself as lacking in that thing and has not realised his nature. He is bound by his desires and is not liberated. Self is not limited by time, space and objects. Similarly, unhappiness or regret comes as we either have failed to get what we desired or have lost what we possessed while we desired to save it forever. This again shows our imperfection. The Self is ever perfect, complete and lacks nothing. The unhappiness shows that we are not aware of our Self which is ever perfect and full. Only when all desires and unhappiness due to the non-fulfilment of desires are eliminated, one gets liberation. As one's Self is full, there is nothing which has to be acquired and accepted. There is also nothing which one gains or loses. If one imagines that something has been acquired or lost by one, it is ignorance. Such a one is far from liberation. Similarly one gets angry when one fails to get one's desires fulfilled or when some person puts impediments in the way of getting the desires fulfilled. Similarly one is very happy when the desires materialised without any problem. In the case of the Self-realised person, as no object remains apart from him, the question of acquiring it or rejecting it, as also being pleased or displeased, does not arise.

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Address of Adhistanam:

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Timings: Morning: 8-11am; Evening: 4-6pm

Getting there: Auto drivers can take you from Ramanasramam gate. Some numbers of auto drivers: Pasha: +91 9442809982; Seenu: +91 9486274689; Grandhi: +91 9962180975