

Sri Ramana Darsanam

Sadhu Natanananda

The *jiva* cannot find its source so long as retains ‘I’ and ‘mine’, even though it sacrifices crores of births in the attempt.

None of the objects witnessed belong to consciousness. They do not shine by themselves – consciousness alone illumines them. This consciousness is the nature of the Self. Besides shining everywhere and always by its own power, this consciousness also illumines the world. The light emanating from the self-luminous Self is the first thing that is witnessed.

The Self, being consciousness, because of its objectifying tendency, becomes the seer of manifestation, gets reflected in external things and then sees its own reflections as those objects. In the same way that there is no reflection that is separate from the original [light source], the seen is not apart from the seer.

According to *Brahma Gita*: “A *jnani* is none other than God. To stay where he stay is liberation.”

To know oneself as pure Consciousness distinct from the body is to know God.

The *Sadguru* is God in human form, but if the aspirant regards the Guru as being a form, in the same way that he takes himself to be a body, his own I-am-the-body idea will not cease. (...) The aspirant should therefore practice worshipping the *Sadguru* as the unconditioned supreme *Brahman*.

In essence, the aspirant should take consciousness of the Self – which shines within him just as it shines within the *Sadguru* – as his gracious Guru, and abide, thought Self-attention, in its presence. This is the true meaning of living with the Guru.

The aspirant’s thoughts, words and deeds should all be actuated by the same ideal. (...) All the inner and outer organs should be surrendered totally at the same time to the Self, and the aspirant must learn to remain always and everywhere as pure consciousness.

“O Supreme! If you make me fit so serve your devotees, the state of bliss will automatically be attained by me.” - *Thayumanavar*

Only worshipping the Self is worshipping the Guru.

Bhagavan: “Only the Supreme Self, which is ever shining in your Heart as the reality, is the *Sadguru*. The pure awareness, which is shining as the inward illumination ‘I’, is his gracious feet. The contact with these [inner holy feet] alone can give you true redemption. Joining the eye of reflected consciousness [*chidabhasa*], which is your sense of individuality [*jiva bodha*], to those holy feet, which are the real consciousness, is the union of the feet and the head that is the real significance of the word ‘*asi*’. As these inner holy feet can be held naturally and unceasingly, hereafter, with an inward-turned mind, cling to that inner awareness that is your own real nature.”

When Bhagavan was asked about some of the explanations he had given the previous day, he sometimes used to say: “Who said this? Did I make this statement? I do not remember having said that!”

Bhagavan: “To surrender is to offer fully, in silence, the subsided ego, which is a name-and-form thought, to the *aham-sphurana* [the effulgence of “I”], the real holy feet of the gracious Guru.

Bhagavan: “It is good to have the habit of completing all-important works immediately with whatever ordinary instruments are easily available. If we look at likely inconveniences, it will not be possible to complete any task in the allotted time. The happiness there is in simplicity can never be found in ostentation.”

Desirelessness is the hallmark of *sannyasa*. A *sannyasin* should have the firm faith that the Lord who is the all-powerful one, is the protector of *sadhus*, and that he alone can confer all that is needed on those in need. With such total faith in the protection of the Lord, *sannyasins* should totally surrender themselves to the Lord.

Saint Appar: “Because we have surrendered ourselves to the Lotus Feet of Sankara [Siva], who himself is subject to none, we are subjects to none.”

Sadhus must totally surrender themselves to the Lord, that means they must be without likes or dislikes, be free from thoughts and anxieties, and that they should obtain even their essential needs from God alone.

If the false self, just a reflection of the supreme Self, realizes its true nature as not apart from the Supreme Self, and if it holds on to the supreme Self through the introversion of the mind, then it remains as being-consciousness.

The instruments of mind and body that perform the actions are different from the underlying consciousness, but it is the nature of the ignorant one to invariably identify himself with these various instruments of action.

The individual soul, which takes birth to experience the fruits of past actions, because of the power of its imagination, forgets its real nature and identifies with the superimposed attributes.

Self-surrender is to hold on to this supreme silence and to remain still within, abiding only as being-consciousness.

“Mind” is nothing but identification with objects. (...) Unceasing practice of the witness state will lead to a gradual reduction of the rising of the mind.

No one creates his own body. It is a result of karma and is under the control of destiny. It lives according to karma. Even ordinary folks realize that the life and experiences of the body are only according to the pattern ordained by the ordainer, and not according to their own wishes.

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Avvaiyar: “In all the books, beginning with *Vedas*, there is no device shown for conquering destiny.”

Tirukkural: “What is there stronger than fate? Even is something else intervenes, fate will prevail.”

Thayumanavar: “To those who knew the secret that all is Your doing, you gave unlimited bliss. To me, a base covetous dog, you ordained this other way. Oh qualified one! To whom can I go to complain about the weakness of mind?”

Thayumanavar: “There are no actions that can be classified as ‘mine’. It is only proper to say all actions are Yours alone. I have made over to you my body, possessions and soul. It is for you to remove the impurities that abound in my mind and bestow you grace in whatever way you think fit!”

Those who want to put an end to the misery of birth and death should learn to die. That is, they should learn to destroy the mind. The method of practice is not to give room for the rise of even a single thought [*vritti*].

There is nothing more difficult than controlling the mind. Therefore, in order to destroy the mind, it is necessary to understand thoroughly its nature and its power to possess and control consciousness.

The inner meaning of self-enquiry is that consciousness should remain in its natural state as being-consciousness, without being distorted into ignorance by becoming thoughts.

It should therefore become clear that consciousness is the substratum for the shadow of thoughts that is cast on it. When consciousness remains without slipping from its real nature, the *mauna* state, the shadow scene of thoughts will not appear on

it. Because of this, an aspirant should remain apart from the *vrittis* and should observe their rise and subsidence. This, indeed, is how *sankalpas* are destroyed, and it is also self-enquiry.

[*Dehatma buddhi* is the primal ignorance, original *vasana*. All other *vasanas* has their root in this primal *vasana* and are classified as gross ignorance.]

An aspirant should unceasing examine inside himself whether the I-am-the-body belief is present in each one of this thoughts, words and deeds.

It is possible to destroy the root of ego only by the practice of remaining unceasingly in the witness state in such a way that the ego is not allowed to rise even in dream.

Total destruction of *sankalpas* is attainable only by those who have perfect desirelessness.

Bhagavan: “Humility alone is the real ornament of the sages. It is the storehouse of all other virtues and is therefore extolled as the wealth of divine grace. Although it is a characteristic befitting wise people in general, it is especially indispensable for *sadhus*. (...) Humility is indeed the hallmark of the destruction of the ego. Because of this, humility is specially extolled by *sandhus* themselves as the code of conduct befitting them. (...) Since Arunachala has the power to humble even those who would not be humbled, those who do not humbly subside at Arunachala will surely not attain that redeeming virtue anywhere else.”

The total destruction of *vasanas* is the only proof of having renounced individuality completely.

Sri Seshadri Swami: “*Jnana* is that which remains after rejecting, one by one, by enquiry, whatever is transient. That alone is reality. God – Lord – I – you – all these are only That. It is madness to wander here and there thinking that *jnana* can be attained only if we go to a mountain or a cave.” [Bhagavan himself approved of this teaching when he heard of it]

Bhagavan remarked: “Our job is only to witness all that happens. It is not to imagine this way or that way regarding anything.”

Jnana is not different from that knowledge by which one feels oneself to be “I am ignorant”.

So long as one retains the ego, one has the *vasanas* associated with sense objects. This is so even when there is external renunciation and no involvement with sense objects.

The ego is not destroyed without discrimination, and *vasanas* are not destroyed without dispassion.

One who has realized the falsity of cinema scenes that appear on the screen does not experience any pain or pleasure watching them. The *jivanmukta* has realized the false nature of external objects. For him, there is no association with them, and the belief that they are real does not arise. Because they disappear in the same way that a dream does, even after seeing external events he remains as one who has not seen them. Because of this, none of these events leaves any *vasanas* in this mind.

Kaivalya Navaneeta: “If you always remain aware that ‘I’ am perfect consciousness, what does it matter how much you think, or what you do? All this is unreal, like dream visions after waking. I am all bliss!”

Samadhi without body consciousness is not experienced by all *jnanis*.

Some thoughts do occasionally arise in *jnanis* on account of their response to their environment. However, such thoughts do not attach to their minds. Like seeds that cannot sprout after they have been roasted, these thoughts do not lead to rebirth.

As long as the body acts, *prarabdha* should be accepted, even in the life of the *jnani*. [For the *jnani* we may say that: from the phenomenal point of view, *prarabdha* exists, and from the point of view of supreme truth, he has no *prarabdha*.]

Bhagavan: “Without staying in one place and without making specific plans for the tomorrow, in keeping with the *dharma* of *sadhus*, who live like birds without any attachment, I feel I should go wherever my legs take me and spend my time [wandering freely]. But my *prarabdha* does not allow this! Thought I have tried many times, every time it creates an obstacle. Not allowing me to go anywhere, it keeps me in this place! If one remains like this, with a residence, possessions and many people, will not worldly activities arise? What to do? My *prarabdha* is like this!”

Prarabdha exists for one who identifies with the body and the mind, and it is absent for one who identifies with nothing.

Since both of them are beginningless, one cannot determine whether *prarabdha*, responsible for birth and death, comes first or whether *agamya*, which is responsible for *prarabdha*, precedes it.

Consciousness, which is eternal, perfect, all pervasive and non-dual, can at no time have anything external to it. It is therefore at no time bound by anything.

Bhagavan states that the attainment of liberations itself is imaginary.

The perfect experience of reality is abiding as the witness, without associating with the ten organs of activity and perception. Due to *prarabdha*, the body experiences misery and joy. Shine as the witness to this unfolding destiny.

Bhagavan once told Sadhu Natanananda: “Why are you so dejected? If you were really unfit to realize the Self in this life, then you could not have come to this place at all. The power that drew you here will make you realize the Self. If not today, it is bound to fulfill its commitment, There is no reason why you should feel dejected.”

Bhagavan said: “If you get firmly established in the Heart as the being-consciousness ‘I am’, the illusory mind, *maya*, will disappear”.

Sadhu Natanananda: O *Sadguru*! Just as you took possession of my body and belongings, accept my soul as well, and by doing so graciously put an end to this life of identifying with the inert body. Be aware that I am begging from you only that you will keep me permanently beneath your feet, without ever leaving them. I want nothing else.

Sadhu Natanananda: There is no means of getting redeemed other than by having a mind that possess love for you in such abundance that tears flow like a river.

When I realized that no actions were ‘my’ actions, and that all actions were actions of the Lord, I was freed from ego.

Bhagavan said that to be humble, to become as tiny as an atom is extremely great.

Since it was suffering that developed into dispassion and redeemed me, misery became more beneficial than joy to poor me.

Even is devotees are lacking in maturity, if they see the grace-emanating lustrous countenance of the one who is the embodiment of *jnana*, their liberation is certain.