

PART THREE

EXPERIENCE OF THE TRUTH

(*Tattva Anubhava Viyal*)

1 Direct Knowledge

(*Aparoksha Jnana Tiran*)

878 Self alone is the real eye. Therefore Self, which is known by itself, alone is the real direct knowledge. But insentient people, who do not have Self's sight, claim the knowledge of alien sense-objects to be direct knowledge.

Sadhu Om: Sri Bhagavan here describes those who do not see through the eye of Self as 'insentient people', since they see only through the insentient physical eyes. Such people say that the knowledge of the objects of this world is direct knowledge [pratyaksha aparoksha jnana]. However, the world seen in front of the eyes is not perceived directly, since it is known only through the medium of the mind and the five senses. Self, the knowledge of one's own existence, is a more real and more direct knowledge than the knowledge of any alien object. It is only after there is the first knowledge 'I am' that the knowledge 'the world and all else exists' can come into being, and hence no knowledge except 'I am' can be direct knowledge; Self alone is the ever-direct knowledge.

879 Can the appearance of the triads [*triputis*] be possible in the view of Self, which exists and shines as the [one] unlimited eye [of pure consciousness]? All other objects in front of It will be [found to be] Self alone, having been burnt by the powerful look of the eye of the fire of *Jnana*.

880 The one undivided real consciousness which does not know anything as different [from itself] and which is devoid of the knowledge of all these – the dual sight of good and bad, time, space, cause, effect, karma and so on – is the unlimited eye [mentioned in the previous verse].

2 The Ever-Direct Experience

(*Nitya-Aparoksha Tiran*)

881 All the benefit to be obtained by inner enquiry is only the destruction of the deceptive 'I'-sense [the ego]. It would be too much to say that it is to attain Self, which always shines clear and ever-attained.

Sadhu Om: In Maharshi's Gospel, Book One, chapter six, page 30, Sri Bhagavan says, "To make room, it is enough that the cramping be removed; room is not brought in from elsewhere." See also Talks p. 199. If the ego is destroyed, that alone will be sufficient, for it will be equivalent to attaining Self.

882 The pure and direct shining forth of Self, like that of the tenth man, is attained merely by the removal of the false forgetfulness [of Self]; the gain experienced is not a new one. Know thus.

Sadhu Om: After crossing a river, ten fools began to count themselves to see whether they had already crossed safely. But while counting each one forgot to count himself, and so they each counted only nine, which led them to believe that one of them had drowned in the river. Seeing their distress, a wayfarer understood that their misery was only due to their having forgotten to count themselves, so he said, "I will give each of you one blow, and you must each count aloud as you receive your blow". As soon as the tenth man received his blow and counted "Ten," they all exclaimed, "Yes, we are ten after all. Our lost companion has been found." In truth, however, the tenth man was not newly gained, for he had never really been lost. Likewise, the experience of Self is not to be newly gained. The fruit of sadhana is only the removal of the seeming forgetfulness of Self.

883 Will an ornament become gold only when its form is destroyed by melting? Is it not [in reality] gold even while it is in the form of an ornament? Therefore, know that all the three [unreal] entities [the world, soul and God] formed by the mind, are likewise [in reality] nothing but existence-consciousness [Self].

Sadhu Om: Even while they appear to be many different things, the world, the soul and God are in reality nothing but the one Self alone. It is wrong to think that they will become Self only after their diverse forms have disappeared. In truth, only Self, the substance or reality of those diverse forms, is real, while the forms themselves are ever unreal.

884 One's seeking and attaining Self in the heart is just like a woman searching for her necklace being deluded into thinking that she had lost it though she was [in fact] always wearing it around her neck, and [finally] regaining it by touching her neck.

Michael James: Just as the woman had in fact never lost her necklace, so in truth Self is never unknown. Therefore to think that Self-knowledge is something to be newly attained is no less foolish than to think that the woman had regained her necklace only when she touched her neck.

885 Except by [the effort made through] the path of enquiring into the mysterious sense, [the ego], by whatever effort is made through other paths such as karma, it is impossible to attain and enjoy Self, the treasure shining in the heart.

Sadhu Om: In this verse Sri Bhagavan clearly and emphatically gives His verdict that however much one may strive on whatever other path such as karma, yoga, bhakti or jnana, one cannot attain the bliss of Self until one enquires 'Who am I who strive in these other paths?' Compare verse 14 of Ulladu Narpadu – Anubandham [here](#).

886 If that unequalled state which is to be experienced in future through *tapas* in the form of [the six steps of] *sama* and so on is a real state, it should exist [and be experienced] even now as much as then.

Sadhu Om: If we were to say that we do not experience Self now and that we will experience it only at some time in the future, it would amount to saying that Self is non-existent at one time and existent at another time. If something is non-existent at one time and comes into existence at another time, will it not inevitably be lost once again? Therefore, since it does not exist in all the three times [past, present and future], how can it be called a real thing [sat vastu]? Hence, since Self-knowledge is the reality, it should be understood to be here, now, ever-attained [nitya-siddha] and directly experienced [pratyaksha]. The same idea is also expressed in the next verse.

887 If that state does not exist now but will come [into existence] only later, that state which will come cannot be our natural state, and hence it will not remain with us permanently but will [at some time] go away from us.

Sri Muruganar: See the last point mentioned in the previous verse. Since a state which comes at one time and goes away at another time is not the final state, no matter how glorious and blissful it may be, it will not be eternal. If one's own natural state is itself the final state, then there will be no destruction for it. It is only natural and just that any state other than one's own natural state will go away from one at some time.

888 That [*Brahman*] is the whole [*purnam*]; this [the world-appearance] is also the whole. Even when [this] whole merges into [that] whole, it is the whole. Even when [this] whole goes out [as if a separate reality] from [that] whole, the whole alone remains.

Michael James: This verse is adapted from the famous Vedic stanza, "Purnamadah purnamidam ...", which was sometimes quoted by Sri Bhagavan. In some commentaries upon Sri Bhagavan's teachings this Vedic stanza is wrongly interpreted to support the view that "it is both false and futile to affirm that Brahman alone is real and that the world [of names and forms] is unreal" (see Sat-Darshana Bhashya, 6th ed., pp. 6-7). However, when this stanza says, "That is whole and this is whole," it should not be taken to mean that Brahman is real and that the world as such is also real. Sri Bhagavan's teaching is that the whole world is unreal as world but real as Brahman, the whole (*purnam*), just as the snake is unreal as a snake but real as the rope, its base. Therefore this verse should be understood in the following light: "That [the rope] is the rope; this [the seeming snake] is also the rope. Even when this snake merges [disappears] into that rope, it is the rope. Even when this snake goes out [as if a snake] from that rope, the rope alone remains." In other words, just as in truth the rope alone exists, so in truth Brahman, the whole, alone exists; and just as the seeming snake is a false appearance, so the seeming world is a false appearance. Neither the going out (manifestation) of this world-appearance nor its merging again into Brahman is real. Brahman ever remains as the immutable and unchanging whole.

889 That [*Brahman*] is the supreme space; you are also the supreme space. That [the *Mahavakya*] which instructs that ‘You are That’ is also supreme space. [By ‘yoga’ or ‘union’] nothing is newly added to that real whole, which exists and shines as the common space, and [by ‘*neti-neti*’ or ‘negation’] nothing is removed from it.

Sri Muruganar: This verse explains the idea expressed in stanza 29 of Upadesa Undiyar. We should know that in truth there is no attaining Liberation. Since bondage is a false mental conception, Liberation is also nothing but a false mental conception. Apart from Self, there is no Jnani and no ajnani; in the state of absolute truth, there is no jnanopadesa or Mahavakya! Even the thought that the natural state of Self has been lost is false; the tapas done to remove the miseries caused by that thought is also false; even the state of Jnana in which none has again attained abidance [through tapas] is false! The upadesa is that Self alone ever exists.

890 “Except the non-dual whole [Self], all the mundane multiplicities imposed on It as ‘this’ or ‘that’ are not real even in the least; they are all nothing but a complete illusion superimposed on It” – such alone is the final verdict [of all *Jnanis*].

891 Since they [the *Jnanis*] say, “Though the One [seemingly] becomes the many [objects of this world], [in truth] It does not become anything”, and since from the very beginning everyone remains as that One [Self], the attainment of the true knowledge [that our natural state is thus ever-experienced or *nitya-aparoksha*] is Liberation.

892 After understanding theoretically [through *sravana* and *manana*] that Self is non-dual, and after staggering again and again in one’s efforts to attain [through *nididhyasana*] the practical experience of the real Self, when, [finally and with great dejection] all one’s mental efforts subside, the knowledge which then shines in the heart is the nature of that reality.

Sadhu Om: This verse clearly depicts the real experience of an aspirant. Is it not the experience of many sincere aspirants that, after learning about the true nature of Self through hearing [sravana] and reflection [manana], they struggle hard in the practice [nididhyasana] of Self-attention but repeatedly fail in their attempts, until finally they feel weary and dejected, knowing their own inability? This verse encourages such aspirants by pointing out that when the mind, which is the root-cause of all efforts, thus comes to a complete standstill due to utter weariness, that is exactly the moment when Self will shine forth clearly and without obstruction. The Tamil song Konjam Poru [which has been translated into English under the title ‘Wait a Little’ and printed as song No. 15 in ‘A Selection of Songs from Sri Ramana Gitam’] gives a graphic and encouraging description of the state of mind of an aspirant who reaches this state.

3 Nirvikalpa Samadhi (Nirvikalpa Samadhi Tiran)

893 Merely being unaware of the differences [vikalpas] in the outside world is not the sign of the real *nirvikalpa samadhi*. The non-existence of differences [vikalpas] in the mind which is dead is the supreme *nirvikalpa samadhi*.

Sadhu Om: Many people are under the wrong impression that one who is in nirvikalpa samadhi should remain inert like an insentient log, knowing neither this body nor the world. After remaining for some time [either days, months or even years] in such a state, which is called kashta nirvikalpa or kevala nirvikalpa samadhi, one's body-consciousness will return, whereupon the mind will become extroverted and all vices such as lust and anger will rise up due to past tendencies [vasanas]. This kind of samadhi, which is an experience that may occur during the early stages of practice of certain sadhanas, is only a temporary abeyance of mind [mano-laya]. However, the right kind of nirvikalpa samadhi is only the annihilation of the mind [mano-nasa], the permanent destruction of the primal vikalpa 'I am the body'. This is the state of true knowledge and is called sahaja nirvikalpa samadhi.

Kashta nirvikalpa samadhi may be compared to the state of a pot tied with a rope that hangs under water in a well. Like the pot submerged in the water, the mind is submerged in laya. But at any time the pot can be drawn out by the rope. Likewise, since the mind is not destroyed, it can at any time be drawn out again by its vasanas and forced to wander under their sway. But in sahaja nirvikalpa samadhi the mind is dissolved in Self and loses its form or individuality, like a salt-doll immersed in the ocean. Therefore it cannot rise again. Sahaja nirvikalpa samadhi, in which the mind is destroyed, alone is the real samadhi.

894 Abiding in one's natural consciousness, 'I am', is *samadhi*. Being freed from the adjunct-mixed awareness ['I am so-and-so', 'I am the body', 'I am a man', 'I am this or that' and so on], firmly abide in this boundless [adjunct-free] state [of real *samadhi*].

895 Great Sages say that the state of equilibrium which is devoid of 'I' [the ego, 'I am this or that'] is *mouna-samadhi*, the summit of knowledge [*jnananta*]. Until that *mouna-samadhi*, 'I am that [I am]', is reached, as your aim seek the annihilation of the ego.

896 Unlike the rising and setting 'I' [the ego], Self remains shining always. Therefore reject and thereby destroy the false first person, 'I [am so-and-so]', and shine as the real 'I' [Self].

Sadhu Om: The mixed awareness that rises as 'I am so-and-so', 'I am this' or 'I am that', is the false first person or ego. But the existence-consciousness, which shines alone as the pure 'I am', is the true Self-consciousness, which is devoid of all the three persons, first, second and third. Therefore, Sri Bhagavan instructs us to remain as Self, destroying the ego.

897 O my mind who is suffering [or who have lost your real nature] by thinking ‘I am a *jiva*’, you will again be deceived if you think or meditate ‘I am God’ [‘I am *Brahman*’ or ‘I am Siva’]. [Because] in the supreme state nothing exists as ‘I [am this or that]’ but only the one Self [I am], the Heart [which ever exists as it is].

Sadhu Om: The feeling ‘I am a man’ is a mere thought. It is the form of the ego. Consequently, if one begins to think or meditate ‘I am Brahman’ or ‘I am Siva’ or ‘I am He’, that will also be a mere thought, another form of the same ego. Therefore, since this is only another kind of thought, one cannot thereby be freed from thoughts and attain the state of Self, whose form is mere existence [sat]. Hence Sri Bhagavan warns that one who meditates ‘I am Brahman’ will be cheated in the end.

898 The well-established state in which the quiet mind [the mind devoid of thoughts] has the unbroken experience [of pure consciousness] is *samadhi*. Such a settled mind, which has the attainment of the unlimited supreme Self, is the essence of Godhood.

Sadhu Om: A wave is a wave so long as it moves; when that same wave settles down without moving, it is the ocean. Similarly, the mind is the mind so long as it moves and is limited; when the mind becomes still and unlimited, it is God or Brahman. The Tamil word ‘Kadavul’ [God] literally means ‘kadandu-ullavar’ [He who exists transcending]; hence our own real state, Self, which transcends all adjuncts such as ‘this’ or ‘that’, is God [Kadavul].

899 Listen to the clue to attain the reality which abides [as ‘I am’] within the knowledge [the mind] as the knowledge to the knowledge [i.e. as the Self which gives light to the mind]: to scrutinize and know the object-knowing knowledge [the mind] by that same knowledge [enquiring ‘What is it?’ or ‘Who am I?’] is the means to abide within [as the reality].

Sadhu Om: Refer to the second line of verse 5 of Sri Arunachala Ashtakam, in which Sri Bhagavan sings, “Just as a gem is polished, if the mind is polished on the stone called mind in order to free it of flaws, it will shine with the lustre of Thy Grace”. That is, only when the mind attends to itself will it be freed from flaws and thereby shine as the reality, the pure ‘I am’. By attending to second and third persons, the mind will only gather impurities. Therefore, by engaging in any activity or sadhana other than Self-attention, the mind will never die. It will die only when it attends to its own form in order to find out ‘What am I?’ or ‘Who am I?’ This truth was discovered by Sri Bhagavan from His own direct experience. Meditating upon or scrutinizing anything other than the mind is neither introversion [antarmukham] nor a means to know the reality. Only Self-attention – the practice of the mind’s attending to the first person singular feeling ‘I’ – will drown the mind in Self and thereby destroy it. This therefore is the only path to attain and abide as the reality.

900 Firmly abiding as ‘I am I’, without any movement of the mind, is the attainment of Godhood [*Sivatva-siddhi*]. [Because] the shining of the truly well-established

state of knowledge [Self-knowledge] where nothing exists other than that [knowledge] is pure Siva, is it not?

901 The radiance of consciousness-bliss in the form of one awareness shining equally within and without is the supreme and blissful primal reality whose form is Silence and which is declared by *Jnanis* to be the final and unobstructable state of true knowledge.

Sadhu Om: Because the body, which is limited in time and space, is mistaken to be 'I', everyone has the feeling 'I am only inside the body and not outside'. If the body is not thus taken to be 'I', there will be no room for the feeling of difference 'in' and 'out' [see verse 251]. In such a state the Self-awareness 'I am', which shines as the one consciousness devoid of 'in' or 'out', is itself the true knowledge [mey-jnana], the whole and perfect primal reality.

902 Who can and how to think of the whole primal reality, whose finality is Silence, as 'I am That', and why to suffer thereby? Attaining the [thought-free] Silence is Self-abidance [*nishtha*]; it is [attained by] the destruction of [the first thought] 'I'. When 'I' is thus destroyed, where is the room to think?

Sadhu Om: When the reality is in truth nothing but the whole and perfect Silence which exists beyond the range of thought, why should anyone suffer by trying in vain to attain it by thinking 'I am That'? Meditating 'I am Brahman', 'I am He' or 'I am Siva' is futile and is not at all a proper jnana-sadhana. According to Sri Bhagavan, the only true jnana-sadhana is to lose 'I', the ego, through the enquiry 'Who am I?'

4 Changelessness (*Nirvakra Tiran*)

903 O very great and rare wise men, what is the nature of change? Are the appearance and disappearance of all these things really going on continuously, or are they merely [seeming changes] appearing and disappearing [in the ever-unchanging reality]?

Sadhu Om: Verses 63, 64, 65 and 91 of this work are again to be referred to here. Some among us wrongly believe that though this universe undergoes innumerable changes such as creation, growth, decay and destruction, it is an ever-existing reality, and that all these changes are therefore true. Sri Bhagavan tells such people that their belief is wrong, and explains that the reason why they have such a wrong belief is only because of their wrong outlook of seeing the ever-unchanging Self as a universe having innumerable changes. Throughout this chapter Sri Bhagavan continues to refute their wrong belief with many arguments, and hence these verses serve as a proper condemnation of their wrong philosophy.

904 The rising and setting of this universe is a defect [or change] caused by the birth and death of the filthy and fleshy body. To ascribe these changes to Self, the

space of *Jnana*, is a delusion, like ascribing the appearance and disappearance of the clouds to the sky.

Sadhu Om: The state in which the world appears and disappears is petty and unreal, since these changes are seen only by the petty ego, which appears and disappears along with the body.

905 Is there any delusion worse than the delusion of being confused into thinking that Self, which knows the seemingly existing world to be completely non-existent, is subject to change?

Sadhu Om: Refer here to verse 4 of Ulladu Narpadu, where Sri Bhagavan says, "... Can the sight [the seen] be otherwise than the eye [the seer]? Verily, Self is the Eye, the unlimited [and therefore changeless] Eye." In other words, as is the eye, so is the sight. Therefore if, instead of seeing through the defective and changeful physical eyes, one sees through the unlimited and unchanging eye of Self, the universe will disappear and the one Self will be known to be existing all alone. When the truth is such, can there be any delusion more than that of seeing Self, the ever-unchanging reality, as this petty and changeful world? This is Sri Bhagavan's question.

906 Know that not even the least defect [or change] caused by the activities [in the world] will affect the unchanging Self, just as not even the least defect [or change] caused by the other [four] elements, earth, water, wind and fire, will affect the vast space.

Sadhu Om: Refer also to Who am I? where a similar idea is expressed by Sri Bhagavan.

907 According to the outlook of different people the same woman is considered to be wife, husband's sister, daughter-in-law, wife of one's brother-in-law, mother, and so on. Yet in truth she does not at all undergo any change in her form.

Michael James: Likewise, though in the ignorant outlook of the jiva, Self appears to have undergone the change of becoming many different names and forms such as the world, soul and God, in truth It remains ever unchanged.

5 Solitude (*Ekanta Tiran*)

908 When scrutinized, among all the many qualities necessary for those who wish to attain the imperishable Liberation, it is the attitude of a great liking to be in permanent solitude that must be well established in their mind.

Sadhu Om: Sri Bhagavan used to say, "Solitude [ekantam] is not a place; it is an inner attitude of the mind" [see Maharshi's Gospel, Book One, ch. 2]. The mind of a mumukshu should always like to be in the state of happiness free from all vasanas or thoughts. Compare here verse 912.

6 Non-Attachment (Asanga Tiran)

909 O mind [whose true nature is Self], though by the power of your mere presence all the *tattvas* [the unreal principles such as the mind, senses, body and world] join together and play havoc within, be not bewildered by them but be a mere witness to them by [the strength of] the experience of the knowledge of the unattached Self.

Michael James: Though this verse is addressed to the mind, it should be understood to be addressed to the mind in its true nature as Self. That is to say, this verse indirectly tells the mind, "You are in truth not that which is affected by all these tattvas, you are the unattached Self, in whose presence and by whose presence all these tattvas function. Therefore be as you really are (i.e. abide in your true nature as Self)." It is also to be noted that in this verse Sri Bhagavan instructs the mind how to remain as an unattached witness to all these unreal tattvas. By imagining itself to be a witness to them, the mind can never remain truly unattached to them; only by the experience of the knowledge of the unattached Self (asanga-swarupa-jnananubhava), that is, only by knowing and being the real and ever-unattached Self, can one remain as an unattached witness to all the unreal tattvas.

910 Whatever and however much [good or bad] either comes [to one] or goes [away from one], to remain as other than the knower of them and to be unaffected by them, unlike a straw carried away by the wind, is *Jnana*.

Michael James: Whatever good or bad comes to a Sahaja Jnani, He remains Himself ever unaffected by them and unconcerned with them, since He knows Himself to be Self, which is other than the experiencer of the good or the bad. His state may be compared to a cinema screen, which is neither burnt by pictures of fire nor drenched by pictures of water, though it is the support of all those pictures. This completely unattached and unconcerned state of true knowledge (jnana) was well illustrated by the life of Sri Bhagavan. Though so many bad things went on around Him – though some bogus sadhus tried to pose as His guru, though because of jealousy they tried to kill Him by rolling boulders on Him, though some insincere devotees pretended to love Him but did mischief behind His back, though some people gave Him intoxicating drugs like bhang, though a will was made in His name, though court cases went on against Him, though an abusive book was written about Him, though some of His good devotees like Sri Muruganar were ill-treated and abused, though some so-called disciples even tried deliberately to misinterpret His teachings by mistranslating them and by writing false commentaries on them, and so on – and though so many good things went on around Him – though sincere devotees came to Him and praised Him as the Supreme Lord, though His Jayanti, Golden Jubilee and other functions were celebrated on such a grand scale, though His name and fame spread all over the world, and so on – He ever remained as a mere witness, unconcerned with all these things.

911 Unless one realizes oneself to be the unattached Self, which is like the space that remains not even in the least attached to anything, though it exists inside, outside and pervading everything, one cannot remain undeluded.

Sadhu Om: Without Self-knowledge, no one can live in this world unattached.

912 The tendencies [*vasanas*] in the heart are the real attachment [*sangam*] which should be discarded. Therefore, in whatever society [*sangam*] they may live, no harm will befall those great ones who have complete control over the deceitful mind [having destroyed all their *vasanas* and having thereby achieved *mano-nasa*].

7 Mind Control (*Mano-Nigraha Tiran*)

913 For those who allow their mind to wander here and there, everything will go wrong.

Sadhu Om: The mind should be controlled and made to subside, and should not be allowed to be dragged here and there by its vasanas.

914 To make the mind, which runs in all directions with such a speed that even the wind is frightened, crippled like a completely lame man who cannot move anywhere, and thereby to destroy it, is to attain true immortality.

Sri Muruganar: Since the samsara of birth and death is in truth only for the mind and not for the Self, if, instead of moving alone with the mind as if its form were one's own form, one knows it to be other than oneself and thereby destroys it, the state of immortality will be clearly known as one's own reality.

915 To root out the weed-like three desires [the desires for women, wealth and fame] even before they sprout out, and to make the mind subside and remain still like an ocean without wind-created waves, is *Jnana*.

916 When the mind does not wander in the least through any of the senses, which are the cause that throws one into misery, and when the mind remains subsided like a stormy ocean which has completely subsided and become calm, that is *Jnana*.

917 Just as the sun cannot be seen in a densely clouded sky, so one's own Self cannot be seen in a mind-sky which is darkened by a dense cloud of thoughts.

918 One who has destroyed the mind is the emperor who rides on the neck of the elephant of supreme *Jnana*. Know for certain that the turmoil of the mind is the sole cause of the miserable bondage of the cruel and fierce birth [and death].

Sri Muruganar: Since the turmoil of the mind [chitta-chalana] is the root of the miseries of birth, thoughts alone are here said to be bondage. Since one's own nature [Self] shines forth as soon as thoughts are destroyed, the one whose mind is thus destroyed is glorified in a figurative manner as an emperor riding on the elephant of Jnana.

- 919 The tranquil clarity devoid of mental turmoil is the *samadhi* which is essential for Liberation. [Therefore] try earnestly to experience the peaceful consciousness, the clarity of heart, by destroying the deceptive turmoil [of mind].
- 920 Without Self-realization [*atma-darsanam*], the ego will not die. Likewise, without the glorious death of the mind [or ego], this miserable dream world-scene will not disappear. Know thus.

Sadhu Om: If all the miseries of life are to come to an end, the mind must die. If the mind is to die, Self realization must be attained. Therefore only Self-realization will remove all miseries.

- 921 [By confronting it] no one can destroy the [mind's] nature [of rising and jumping out through the senses]. [The only way to destroy it is to] ignore it as something non-existent [i.e. as a mere false appearance]. If you know and consciously abide in Self, the base [for the rising and setting] of the [mind's] nature, the velocity of the [mind's] nature [i.e. the velocity with which it rises and jumps out through the senses] will gradually come to an end [since there will be no one to attend to it].

Sadhu Om: Vali had a boon whereby he gained half of the strength of any opponent who faced him, and therefore Ram had to kill him without confronting him face to face. Likewise, if one tries to kill the mind-maya by confronting it directly [that is, by struggling to control the thoughts, the rising and jumping nature of the mind], one will in fact be giving fresh strength to it. Since the mind [i.e. the rising and jumping nature of the mind] is an object known to us, we should treat it as a second person and ignore it by turning our attention towards the first person, the mere feeling 'I'. The mind will then lose the power of Grace [anugraha-sakti] and thus it will gradually subside and die of its own accord. For a fuller explanation of this, refer to chapter 7 of The Path of Sri Ramana – Part One, 2nd edition, pages 101 to 105.

- 922 O people who are longing and grieving so much, not knowing in the least the means to destroy the mind so that it will function no more, the means is to experience clearly that the seen [the world-appearance] and the seer [the *jiva*] are nothing but oneself [the Self].

Michael James: So long as one experiences a difference between the seer and the seen, the mind can in no way be brought under control. And until one knows the true nature of oneself, one cannot experience that the seer and the seen are nothing but oneself and are hence non-different. Therefore, the only means to destroy the mind and thereby to control it effectively is to know one's own true nature.

In some translations this verse has been interpreted to mean that in order to end the restlessness of the mind one must "look upon all things that are perceptible and the perceiver as the Self" (see Guru Ramana Vachana Mala, v. 207). However, this interpretation is wrong, because unless one knows the true nature of Self, it is impossible to look upon all things as Self. Trying to imagine that everything is Self would only be a mental bhavana, and hence it would not be an effective means to make the restless nature

of the mind subside. True experience of Self-knowledge is the only means to end the restlessness of the mind.

923 Like ornaments [seen] in gold, like water [seen] in a mirage, and like a dream city with battlements, everything that is seen is nothing but Self alone. To take them as being other than Self is wrong.

Michael James: Just as on scrutiny the many kinds of ornaments are found to be nothing but gold, the seeming water is found to be nothing but shimmering heat, and the dream city is found to be nothing but the sleeper's imagination, so, when the truth is realized, the false world appearance is found to be nothing but Self.

8 The Dead Mind (Mrita Mana Tiran)

924 I declare with certainty that even when the mind is extinguished and is no more functioning in the form of thoughts, there still exists a reality ['I am'] as the abode of *Jnanananda* [the bliss of true knowledge], which was [previously] hiding [as 'I am this body'] as though it were limited by time and space.

Sadhu Om: Here Sri Bhagavan asserts that even after the annihilation of the first thought which was shining all this time as 'I am this body', there does exist a Self shining as sat-chit-ananda, 'I am I'. Some schools of Buddhism say, "Finally there will remain nothing as Self; only a void [sunya] will be there". But Sri Bhagavan refutes this wrong belief and emphatically declares from His own experience, "There certainly does exist a reality [sat-vastu], which is Jnanananda; that state is not a void [sunya] but a perfect whole [purna]". Compare here verse 20 of Upadesa Undiyar, "Where 'I' [the ego-self] dies, that One [the real Self] shines forth spontaneously as 'I-I'; that alone is the whole [purna]," and verse 12 of Ulladu Narpadu, "Self is true knowledge; it is not a void [though devoid of all objective knowledge]".

925 The one which is ever-attained [*nitya-siddha*] and which shines pervading everywhere devoid of [the differences such as] 'now' or 'then', 'here' or 'there', 'existing' or 'not existing', is the pure Siva.

9 Omniscience (Mutrunarvu Tiran)

926 Only the absolute knowledge which shines undivided because of its knowing no existing thing other than Self, and not the objective knowledge which knows even [everything that happens in all] the three times [past, present and future], is the supreme omniscience. Know thus.

Sadhu Om: The ability to know all other things such as the happenings in the past, present and future, and the ability to master all the sixty-four arts, are glorified by people as 'Omniscience' or 'sarvajnatvam'. However, since Sri Bhagavan says in verse 13 of

Ulladu Narpadu, “*Knowledge of multiplicity is ignorance [ajnana],*” and since He says in verse 26 of Ulladu Narpadu, “*Verily the ego is all,*” all these things which are glorified as ‘omniscience’ should in fact be understood to be mere objective knowledge of the ego, and hence to be nothing but ignorance. In verse 13 of Ulladu Narpadu Sri Bhagavan says, “*That which knows [multiplicity or otherness] cannot be true knowledge,*” because in truth no other thing exists to know or to make known. Therefore the non-dual Self-knowledge which shines by itself as the whole [purna] without knowing any other thing, alone is true omniscience or sarvajnatvam.

927 Since even with their little knowledge so many evils and miseries are already crowded in those whose minds have not subsided, if they gain omniscience they will derive no benefit at all but only an increase in the dense darkness of delusion which is already existing within them.

Sadhu Om: *An aspirant whose mind has not subsided will already be confused by all the objective knowledge he has gathered and will thereby be suffocating, being unable to bear the heavy burden of his wavering thoughts. Therefore, if he is able to acquire more knowledge, such as knowledge of all the events happening in all times and all places, will he not be still more confused and will he not be burdened with still more waves of thoughts? Hence, will it not be impossible for him to relieve himself from all thoughts and to abide peacefully in Self? Therefore, such so-called omniscience [the knowledge of all alien objects] is not only useless by also very harmful.*

928 Only for him who, instead of knowing himself to be the one who merely exists, mistakes himself to be a knower [of other things] and who thereby sees the deceptive sight [of this world], omniscience consisting of a flood [of relative knowledge] is real. But for a *Jnani*, who does not have such delusion, omniscience [consisting of so many knowledges] is nothing but a lunatic knowledge.

929 Only when one is deluded [into thinking] that one is the knower [the mind], one feels ‘I am one of little knowledge’. But when the true knowledge dawns, omniscience will also perish completely like the little knowledge.

Sadhu Om: *That which remains as the natural knowledge of our mere being after the Jnana-pralaya, the great dissolution in which all is destroyed, is the reality. Therefore, just like the little knowledge, the various kinds of omniscience must also be destroyed at that time. Thus in the supreme state of Self-knowledge, nothing will remain except the sole real knowledge, the first person singular feeling ‘I am’.*

930 The *Vedas* glorify God as ‘omniscient’ only for the sake of those who think themselves to be people of little knowledge. [But] when keenly scrutinized, [it will be understood that] since God is by nature the real Whole [apart from which no ‘other’ can exist for Him to know], He does not know anything.

931 “Since the experiences of seeing [hearing, tasting and so on] are, when experienced, the same for *Muktas* [as for others], and since they [the *Muktas*] are thus experiencing the many differences which appear as a result of seeing

[hearing and so on], they are experiencing non-difference [even while seeing those differences]” – to say so is wrong.

Sadhu Om: *People have many wrong conceptions about the state of a Jnani or Jivanmukta, and one such misconception is refuted here. “What people see as water, the Jivanmukta also sees as water, and what they see as food, He also sees as food. Therefore, in His experience of sense-objects, the Jivanmukta is the same as other people. But even while the Jivanmukta thus sees these differences, He sees the non-difference in them” – are there not many pandits and lecturers who talk and write thus, even though they themselves have no experience of Advaita but have only read about it in books? But who is the proper authority to say what is the actual experience of a Jivanmukta? Only a real Jivanmukta! Thus Bhagavan Sri Ramana, who has actually experienced the reality and who is the true Loka Maha Guru, declares in this verse that such statements are wrong, and in the next verse He explains how and why they are wrong. Refer also to verse 1180.*

932 The *Mukta* is seen as if He is also seeing the many [different] forms only in the deluded outlook of onlookers who see the many differences; but [in fact] He is not the seer [or anything at all].

Sadhu Om: *Verse 119 of this work should again be read here. So long as one sees oneself as an individual who sees the world of differences, one cannot but see the Jnani likewise as an individual who sees differences [see Ulladu Narpadu verse 4, “Can the sight be otherwise than the eye?”] But since the jnani is in fact nothing but the bodiless and individuality-less Jnana Itself, to see Him as a seer and to believe that even He is seeing differences like oneself, is true only in the outlook of ajnanis. The absolute truth, however, is that the Jnani is not a seer and that He never sees any differences, for as Sri Bhagavan says in verse 13 of Ulladu Narpadu, “Knowledge of multiplicity is only ignorance [ajnana]”.*

Thus in the above two verses Sri Bhagavan clearly refutes the wrong idea expressed in the note at the end of the introduction [bhoomika] to Sat-Darshana-Bhashya, 6th ed. pp. 35 to 38, namely the idea that a Jnani or liberated soul retains His individuality in spite of the destruction of the ego, and that He “perceives diversity in unity and experiences unity in diversity” [compare here pp. 160 to 164 of Maha Yoga, 7th ed.]. Regarding this erroneous theory of bheda-abheda or unity in diversity, Sri Bhagavan used to say that if the least difference or diversity is perceived, it means that the ego or individuality is there, so if difference is experienced, non-difference or unity would merely be a theoretical proposition and not an actual experience [see The Golden Jubilee Souvenir, 2nd ed., p. 295, and The Mountain Path, October 1981, p. 224].

933 It is only due to the wrong habit of attending to second persons that one is deluded [into thinking] that one has little knowledge. When one gives up that attention towards second persons and knows the truth of one’s own Self through *vichara*, the little knowledge will die and shine as the full one [i.e. as the full knowledge or true omniscience].

934 Knowing directly the non-dual Self, which because of one's wrong outlook appears as all these many [names and] forms, [the universe], and nothing else, is [true] experience.

Sadhu Om: Are there not some deluded people who think that this world has been wrongly created by God as a mixture of pain and pleasure, and who therefore try through some kinds of yoga to eradicate the pain and to establish pleasure and thereby to heavenize the world? In order to point out that their way of thinking is wrong and their aim is sheer foolishness, Sri Bhagavan begins this verse with the words "Because of one's wrong outlook," thereby implying as follows: "It is only because of your wrong outlook that this world appears to you in such a way; God never created it thus; the wrongs you see in the world are a result of drishti-dosha [a defect in your outlook] and not of srishti-dosha [a defect in God's creation]". Therefore Sri Bhagavan teaches that true omniscience or sarvajnatvam is only the removal of one's wrong outlook [dosha-drishti] through the attainment of Jnana-drishti [the outlook of Jnana].

935 If all one's mental images [that appear] in dream were not [already] dwelling within [one], they could not be seen. Since it is so, to attain the experience of Self, in which dwell all these [mental images that appear] in the waking state, alone is [true] omniscience.

Michael James: All that one sees in dream is only a projection of the vasanas already dwelling within one. Likewise, all that one sees even in this waking state is only a projection of one's own vasanas (see verse 84). Therefore, in order to know all, one need only know oneself. However, since oneself (the Self) alone truly exists and since the so-called 'all' is truly non-existent and unreal, there will be no 'all' to be known when oneself is known. As Sri Bhagavan says in the second line of the third verse of Atmavidya Kirtanam, "What [else] is there to know after oneself is known?"

936 If one does not take to the deluded life of modern civilization, if one rejects the liking towards the useless worldly knowledges [such as sciences, arts and languages], and if one removes the sense of differentiation [*bheda-buddhi*] between Siva [or *Paramatma*] and the soul [or *jivatma*], then only will the true import of Siva *Jnana Bodham* shine forth.

Michael James: The words 'Siva Jnana Bodham' here give two meanings; either they can be taken to denote an Advaitic text by that name, or they can be taken to mean the knowledge of Siva, the supreme reality.

10 The State Transcending the Fourth (*Turiyatita Tiran*)

937 In *Jnanis*, who have destroyed the ego, the three states [waking, dream and sleep], which were seen previously, will disappear, and the noble state of *turiya* [the 'fourth'] will itself shine gloriously in them as *turiyatita* [the state transcending the 'fourth'].

- 938 The state of *turiya*, which is Self, pure *sat-chit*, is itself the non-dual *turiyatita*. Know that the three states are mere [false] appearances, and that Self is the supporting base for them [i.e. the base on which they appear and disappear].
- 939 Is it not only if the other three states [waking, dream and sleep] were real that wakeful sleep [*jagrat-sushupti*], the pure *Jnana*, would be the fourth? Since those three states are [found to be] unreal in front of *turiya*, that [*turiya*] is the only state; know [therefore] that it [*turiya*] is itself *turiyatita*.

Michael James: The ideas expressed in the above three verses were summarized by Sri Bhagavan in the following verse, which is also verse 32 of Ulladu Narpadu Anubandham.

- B18** It is only for those who experience waking, dream and sleep that the state of wakeful sleep, which is beyond [those three states] is called *turiya* [the ‘fourth’]. Since that *turiya* alone really exists and since the seeming three states do not exist, it [*turiya*] is itself *turiyatita*.

Sadhu Om: The word ‘turiya’ literally means the ‘fourth’. Since only the three states of waking, dream and sleep are under the experience of all people, the state of Jnana or wakeful sleep [jagrat-sushupti], which is none of these three states, is called the ‘fourth’ by sastras. But Sri Bhagavan asks here, “Why should this state be called the fourth or turiya when, at the time of experience of this state, which is the eternal state of Self-awakening, the other three states [waking, dream and sleep] are found to be truly non-existent?” Then should not this state be considered as the very first? No, it would be wrong even to consider it as the first, because no second state will exist to be experienced after this state, the only real state, is experienced. Therefore, instead of calling it either as the first or as the fourth, it should really be called only ‘atita’ [the all-transcending state, turiyatita] – such is the upadesa given in this verse.

Even the jiva’s three states of waking, dream and sleep, are not really three; they are only two, namely sakala [the state of functioning of the mind] and kevala [the state of non-functioning of the mind]. Even these two have only relative reality [vyavakarika satya]. In truth, sleep alone is the nature of turiya or turiyatita. For a fuller explanation of this point, read pages 144 to 145 of The Path of Sri Ramana – Part One, 2nd ed. Refer also to verses 460 and 567 of this work, and to the answer to question 9 of chapter 4 of Upadesa Manjari.

- 940 Whether it is called a grand sleep devoid of waking, or a single waking untouched by in-slipping sleep, it will aptly fit the venerable *Jnana-turiya*.

Sadhu Om: This real state may aptly be described in so many different ways such as wakeful sleep, sleepful waking, unwaking sleep, unsleeping waking, birthless death or deathless birth.

11 Akhanda Vritti (Akhanda Vritti Tiran)

941 Since every *vritti* [movement of the mind] is a fragment [*khanda*], the great *Akhanda* [the unfragmented or unbroken reality] is only a state of *nivritti* [a state devoid of movement]. [Therefore] to say that in the supreme state there is *Akhandakara-vritti* [movement in an unbroken form] is like talking of a river in the form of an ocean.

Sadhu Om: In order to suit the poor power of understanding of immature minds, many unfitting terms are used in the scriptures. Sri Bhagavan sometimes used to point out how inapt are some such scriptural terms, including the term 'Akhandakara-vritti', which literally means 'movement [vritti] in an unfragmented or unbroken form'. This term is sometimes used to denote the final state of perfect Self-abidance, and is also sometimes used to denote certain practices such as meditation upon the Mahavakya 'I am Brahman'. However, Sri Bhagavan reveals in this verse that this term is fitting neither to the state of practice nor to the state of attainment, for the state of practice is a state of khanda [fragmentation], while the state of attainment is a state of nivritti. In the supreme state of Akhanda [non-fragmentation], there can be no room for any movement or vritti. When a river merges in the ocean, it loses its separate identity or individuality as a river and becomes one with the ocean; therefore it would be unfitting to call it a 'river in the form of an ocean' [samudrakara-nadi]. Likewise, when all vritis [movements of the mind] including the first vritti, the aham-vritti or 'I'-thought, have merged into the unbroken state of Self-knowledge, they lose their separate identity as vritis and become one with that unbroken state; therefore, instead of calling that unbroken state as mere 'Akhanda', it is unfitting to try to retain the term 'vritti' and to call that state a 'vritti in an unbroken form' [akhandakara-vritti].

12 Severance of the Knot (Granthi-Bheda Tiran)

- 942 The state in which the mind does not become heart-broken in pain, in which the mind does not become immersed in pleasure, and in which it remains equally indifferent and peaceful [both in pain and in pleasure], is the sign of *granthi-bheda* [the severance of the knot of identification with the body].
- 943 Not thinking about what has happened in the past and not thinking about what is to come [in the future], but remaining as an unattached witness even to all that is happening [in the present] and being blissful because of abundant peace, is the sign of *granthi-bheda*.
- 944 Whatever thoughts may come, their nature is such that they cannot exist without the indispensable Self; therefore, not succumbing to inattentiveness [*pramada*] such as [will make one feel], "Alas, the state of Self [Self-abidance or Self-attention] has been lost on the way", is also that [i.e. is also the sign of *granthi-bheda*].

Michael James: *Even if thoughts should rise, the Jnani, (the one in whom the knot or granthi has been severed) will know through His unshakeable Self-experience that they cannot exist without Self, and hence any amount of thoughts will not make Him feel that He has lost His hold on Self-attention or Self-abidance. A person who thinks that the waves are different from the ocean will feel on seeing the waves that they are veiling the ocean, whereas a person who knows that the waves are not other than the ocean will never feel so. Similarly, the ajnani, who feels thoughts to be other than himself, will feel that thoughts distract his attention from Self, whereas the Jnani, who knows that thoughts are not other than Himself (i.e. who knows that thoughts have no independent existence but appear to exist only by depending upon His own existence), will never feel that thoughts have distracted His attention from Self.*

13 Having Done What is to be Done (Krita-Kritya Tiran)

945 Whoever has whatever experiences, wherever and through whatever things, all those experiences are on scrutiny [found to be] nothing but a [reflected] part of Self-experience.

Sadhu Om: *All objective experiences are nothing but a false reflection of the one true Self-experience, 'I am'. Refer here to verse 1074 of this work, to the sixth answer in chapter 2 of Upadesa Manjari, and to pages 19 to 21 of The Path of Sri Ramana – Part Two, 1st ed.*

946 Since Self pulls inwards the first thought [the mind], the experiencer [of happiness], drowns it in the heart and does not allow its head to rise. Its form is pure *sukhatita* [that which transcends happiness]; to call It *sukha-swarupa* [the form of happiness] is wrong.

Sadhu Om: *That which knows the dyad 'happiness and misery' [sukha-duhka] is only the mind. Self transcends all dyads and is unaffected by them. Since at the time of Self-realization the mind, which rises to classify 'this is happiness' or 'this is misery', is not allowed to raise its head even in the least but is dragged within and drowned in the ocean of Self-knowledge [in the absolute consciousness, which is mere existence], it would be more fitting to call Self as 'that which transcends happiness' [sukhatita] rather than 'the form of happiness' [sukha-swarupa].*

947 After enquiring and thus knowing that Self as 'I am that [Self which transcends even happiness]', desiring which dual pleasure for whom would that true and great *Jnani* get mental craving?

Sri Muruganar: *Since He [the Jnani] is truly Self, the unbroken bliss [akhanda-ananda], and since neither any happiness nor any jiva exists apart from Himself, it is said "desiring which dual pleasure for whom", and since no pain will appear without desire, it is said "desiring what would He get mental craving".*

948 Vedic injunctions which say, “You have to do this”, are not applicable to true *Jnanis*, in whom the dark delusion of doership is dead. The reason why it is said [in the ‘Karma Kanda’ of the *Vedas*] that even *Jnanis* have to perform so many karmas, is only to protect the *vaidika dharma* [and not to compel *Jnanis* to perform karmas].

Michael James: Some schools of thought believe that even Jnanis have to do some good actions (karmas), for example, that they should perform sacrifices (yajnas) for the welfare of the world, or that they should assist God in governing the universe. Such things are also said in the ‘Karma Kanda’ (that portion of the Vedas which teaches ritualistic actions for the fulfilment of desires), but they are said only in order to pacify the minds of ignorant people and to encourage them to follow the path of karmas so that indiscipline will not flourish in society. However, since a Jnani is devoid of any sense of doership, it is only in the outlook of ajnanis that He may sometimes appear to be performing such good karmas. When Sri Bhagavan was asked by immature devotees whether Jnanis have to choose to do some kind of work or karma, even He sometimes used to reply, “Yes, some Jnanis may take up work [karma], but not all” (see Maharshi’s Gospel, Book One, ch.7, p. 39); however, He gave such replies only to suit the immature understanding of such devotees and to pacify their minds.

949 Since there is nothing to be attained beyond what they have already attained, for the egoless *Sukhatitars* [those who have transcended happiness] there is nothing further to do. Since such is their nature, they alone are those who have reached the goal, having done [all that is to be done].

Sadhu Om: Compare here verse 15 of Upadesa Undiyar, “For the great Yogi who has attained the reality, having destroyed his mind-form, there is no single action [remaining to be done] ...,” and verse 31 of Ulladu Narpadu, “What single thing remains for Him to do who thus enjoys the bliss of Self, which has risen on the destruction of himself [the mind or ego]...”.

Sri Muruganar: The state of egolessness alone is pure silence; it alone is what is called ‘that which transcends happiness’ [anandatita] and ‘that which transcends the fourth’ [turiyatita]. Since for those who have attained that state, which is paratpara [the highest of the high], there is no further state which can be attained by effort, they alone are called ‘those who have done what is to be done’ [krita-kriyars]. “Can a full pot contain any more water? [Similarly] how and for what can those who have attained the well-established Silence make effort?” sings Tayumanuvar.

950 If one subsides without one’s own effort in *Sadasiva*, one’s own Self, as Self itself, then one will remain in peaceful bliss as one who has already done everything and who has nothing further to do.

951 Will those *Jnanis*, who have gained the plenitude of Self-experience, know anything other [than Self]? How can the deluded and limited mind imagine their supreme bliss, which transcends the seeming duality [of happiness and misery]?

Sadhu Om: Compare here verse 31 of Ulladu Narpadu, “... Since He [the Jnani] does not know anything other than Self, who can and how to conceive what His state is?” It is impossible to determine the state of a Jnani, and it is wrong to try to do so. Their experience of supreme bliss, which is sukhatita [transcending even happiness], cannot be measured even by people having very sharp intellects, because, how is it possible for the mind to judge a state of bliss which will shine only after the destruction of the mind?

14 The Non-Existence of Misery (Dukha-Abhava Tiran)

952 One’s own reality [Self], which shines within everyone as Heart, is the ocean of unalloyed bliss. Therefore misery, which is unreal like the blueness of the sky, truly does not exist except in mere imagination.

Sadhu Om: In this chapter the truth proclaimed by the Sage Appar, namely, “Bliss alone exists, misery is ever non-existent”, is well expounded. That which really exists is only bliss, our real nature. In the past, present and future there never has been and there never will be such thing as ‘misery’ at all. The dyad ‘pleasure and pain’ is an illusion or imagination which seems to exist only because of the defective outlook of the ego, the rising of which is itself unreal. Therefore misery can only be as real as the ego. Since the ego or jiva is a false appearance which has no real existence, the miseries which appear in the defective outlook of the ego are also a false appearance, like the appearance of the blue colour seen in the colourless sky.

953 Since one’s own reality, the sun of Jnana which has never seen the darkness of delusion, itself shines as happiness, the confusion of misery appears only because of the unreal sense of individuality [jiva-bodha]; but in truth no one has [ever] undergone any such thing [as ‘misery’].

Sadhu Om: Suppose a man who is sleeping happily, having taken a full meal, dreams that he is a wandering about suffering from hunger. When he wakes up, will he not realize that the hunger and misery which he experienced in dream are in truth unreal and non-existent? Likewise, when one wakes up from the sleep of Self-forgetfulness, in which the dream of one’s present life is occurring, one will realize that all the miseries that one experienced as a jiva are in truth unreal and non-existent [see verse 1 of Ekatma Panchakam]. Refer also to the example given by Sri Bhagavan in verse 30 of Ulladu Narpadu Anubandham, “... though lying motionless here [on his bed], [a man in dream] climbs up a hill and falls into a precipice”. The teaching of Sri Bhagavan is that misery is unreal, being merely mental.

Throughout this chapter Sri Bhagavan expounds the truth that misery is non-existent in order to strengthen the titiksha [the forbearance or ability to endure misery] in aspirants, lest they should become disheartened and give up their sadhana on account of the various miseries which occur in their life.

954 If [through the enquiry ‘Who am I?’] one scrutinizes [and knows] one’s own Self, which is auspicious bliss, there will be no misery at all in one’s life. It is due to

- one's having a wicked delusion that one suffers through the notion that the body, which is never oneself, is 'I'.
- 955 Those who do not know themselves to be the one [non-dual] Self will perish daily, vainly suffering in fear [because of seeing the world as something other than themselves]. [Therefore] destroying the notion 'I am the body', the root [of all misery], by gaining [through the enquiry 'Who am I?'] the firm knowledge of your real Self, attain the state of non-duality [*advaita*].
- 956 If one clings only to the knowledge [of one's own Self] as the real refuge, then the misery of birth [or the birth of misery], which is caused by ignorance, will come to an end.

15 The Pervasiveness of Sleep (*Sushupti Vyapaka Tiran*)

- 957 Do not be disheartened and lose your mental vigour thinking that [the state of experiencing] sleep in dream has not yet been obtained. If the strength of [experiencing] sleep in the present waking state is obtained, then [the state of experiencing] sleep in dream will also be obtained.

Sadhu Om: The words 'sleep in the present waking state' [anavum nanavil sushupti] denote the state of wakeful sleep [jagrat-sushupti] or turiya, the state of experiencing no differences during waking. In order to attain this state, aspirants have to make efforts in the waking state. However, some aspirants used to ask Sri Bhagavan, "Do we also have to make such efforts in dream, so that we may attain the state of experiencing no differences even during dream?" This doubt is answered by Sri Bhagavan in this verse.

The feeling 'I am this body' [dehatma-buddhi] rises in the subtle body during dream only because of the habit of identifying the gross body as 'I' during waking. Hence, if one practices Self-enquiry in the waking state and thereby eradicates the dehatma-buddhi [the habit of thus identifying a body as 'I'] in this state, that itself will be sufficient to eradicate the dehatma-buddhi in dream also. Therefore Sri Bhagavan advises in the next verse that, until the dehatma-buddhi is completely eradicated even in dream, one should not give up Self-enquiry in the waking state. Refer here to the fourth paragraph of the first chapter of Vichara Sangraham where Sri Bhagavan says, "All the three bodies [gross, subtle and causal] consisting of the five sheaths are included in the feeling 'I am the body'. If that one [i.e. the identification with the gross body] is removed, all [i.e. the identification with the other two bodies] will automatically be removed. Since [the identification with] the other bodies [the subtle and causal] survive only by depending upon this [the identification with the gross body], there is no need to remove them one by one."

The words 'kanavil sushupti' [sleep in dream]), which are used in the first and last lines of this verse, may also be taken to mean 'sleep without dream', in which case the following alternative meaning can be given: "Do not be disheartened and lose your mental vigour thinking that sleep without dream has not yet been obtained. If the strength of [experiencing] sleep in the present waking state is obtained, then sleep without dream will also be obtained."

958 Until the state of sleep in waking [i.e. the state of wakeful sleep or *jagrat-sushupti*] is attained, Self-enquiry should not be given up. Moreover until sleep in dream is also attained, it is essential to persist in that enquiry [i.e. to continue trying to cling to the mere feeling 'I'].

Michael James: The ideas in the above two verses were summarized by Sri Bhagavan in the following verse.

B 19 The state of sleep in waking [or *jagrat-sushupti*] will result by constant scrutinizing enquiry into oneself. Until sleep pervades and shines in waking and in dream, do that enquiry continuously.

16 Conscious Sleep (*Arituyil Tiran*)

959 O men who, caught by the dangerous snares of the world and struck by the sharp arrows of cruel miseries, are suffering greatly and are wandering in search of the attainment of supreme bliss, the sleep in which there is no loss of consciousness [i.e. wakeful sleep or *jagrat-sushupti*] alone is the imperishable happiness.

Sadhu Om: 'The sleep in which there is no loss of consciousness' [arivu-azhiya tukkam] means only the state of Self-knowledge. Here consciousness [arivu] means prajna or the knowledge of one's own existence, and not the knowledge of other things. That which knows other things is not true knowledge [see Ulladu Narpadu verse 12]. The state we call sleep is the state in which we know no other things, not even the body. The state we call waking is the state in which, along with the knowledge of one's own existence ['I am'], there is also knowledge of other things. The state in which we remain conscious merely of our own existence, like in waking, but in which the mind [the knower of other things] does not rise, like in sleep, is called the state of conscious sleep or wakeful sleep. Since no other thing is known in this state, it is a sleep; and since one's own existence is shining clearly there, it is a state of consciousness or waking.

960 Those who are sleeping, having given up the habit of [going out through] the deceitful senses and having become established in the heart-lotus, are those who are awake in the abode of real knowledge [*mey-jnana*]. Others are those who are asleep, being immersed in the dense darkness of this unreal world [*poy-jnala*].

17 Non-Dual Knowledge (*Advaita Jnana Tiran*)

961 When the 'I' has died by *Sivaya Namah* [complete obeisance to Lord Siva] and is burning in the fire of unobstructed and blazing devotion [*bhakti*], then in the flame of Self-experience will shine the true clarity of the unfailing *Sivoham* [the experience 'I am Siva'].

Sadhu Om: 'Sivoham' is the final state of experience which results from the death of the ego. But the ego will never die by merely doing japa of or meditating 'Sivoham, Sivoham' [I am Siva, I am Siva]. In order to make the ego die, the practice of 'Sivaya Namah' [complete obeisance to Lord Siva, the Supreme Reality] is necessary. And in order to make the ego do obeisance [i.e. surrender itself] to Lord Siva, one must attend to its source and thereby prevent it from rising [see Ulladu Narpadu verse 27, "The state in which 'I' does not rise, is the state 'We are That'. Unless one scrutinizes the source whence 'I' rises, how to attain the state of egolessness, in which 'I' does not rise?..."]. Therefore Self-enquiry, the true practice of 'Sivaya Namah', alone is the sadhana which will destroy the ego and thereby bring about the true experience of 'Sivoham'.

962 Know that the bright light of fire that rises within, kindled by more and more inwardly grinding the mind, which has been made free from impurities, on the stone of heart through [the enquiry] 'Who am I?', is the true knowledge 'Anal Haq' [I am the reality].

Sadhu Om: The idea expressed in verse 341 of this work should be noted here. If a religion is a true one, at least one sacred utterance of Mahavakya which reveals the transcendent nature of Self, should be found in its scriptures. If such a Mahavakya were not found in its scriptures, it would not be a true religion. For example, Sri Bhagavan used to point out the peerless Mahavakya 'I am that I am' which is revealed in the Holy Bible. In the same manner, He also used to point out the sacred utterance 'Anal Haq' in the Islamic Religion [al-Haq is one of the 99 names of Allah, and means 'the reality' or 'the truth'; 'Ana-Haq' means 'I am the reality', and is a sacred utterance made by Hallaj, a famous Sufi Sage]. Sri Bhagavan used to explain that the final aim of all these religions is to make one know the Self. [Refer also to verse 663.]

963 Only steadfastness in non-dual knowledge [advaita jnana] is heroism. On the other hand, even conquest over [one's] enemies is, on scrutiny, [found to be due not to heroism but only to] great fear possessing the mind, which is shaken by the hubbub of the unreal world of duality. Know thus.

Sadhu Om: Only when a thing is felt to be other than oneself, will a fear of it or a desire for it arise in one. Since no other thing exists in the non-dual state of Self-knowledge, there can arise no fear or desire in that state, and hence it alone is the state of true fearlessness or heroism. Even if by one's own strength one is able to conquer and subdue all one's powerful enemies, one cannot be said to possess real heroism, for one tries to conquer them only because of the fear that they may do harm to one. Fear is the sole cause which impels one to conquer one's enemies, and knowledge of duality is the sole cause for fear. Only the Jnani, who has the experience of non-duality, has no fear, because nothing whatsoever exists as other than Himself, and thus He alone is truly the great hero [maha-dhira].

964 Only that [state] which is devoid of the differences created by the ego, the dense and great delusion, is the realization of Oneness [Kaivalya-darsanam]. That

piercing, all-transcendent, silent and divine supreme consciousness is the Supreme Abode [*param-dhana*] experienced by the great Sages.

18 Divine Grace
(*Tiruvavul Tiran*)

- 965 If you, thinking of Him [God or Guru], take one step [towards Him], in response to that, more [graciously] than even a mother, that Lord, thinking of you, will Himself come nine steps [towards you] and receive [you]. See, such is His Grace!
- 966 When divine Grace is only the reality which shines [in the heart of every *jiva*] as 'am' [*ullam*], the blame of disregarding [or being ungracious towards] the reality will be fitting only to the *jivas* who do not think of it [i.e. who do not attend to that reality which shines as 'I am'] melting inwardly [with love]; how, on the contrary, can the blame of not bestowing sweet Grace be fitting to that reality?

Sadhu Om: The first person consciousness 'am' is the experience of everyone. This consciousness of our existence exists in us only because God resides within us as Self due to His unaccountable Grace. Thus God is always bestowing His Grace on everyone in the form of the consciousness 'am'. Since the shining of this consciousness 'am' is the greatest aid enabling jivas to attain God and thus be saved, this consciousness itself is here said to be the divine Grace of God. Therefore, it is wrong for jivas to accuse God of being ungracious towards them. On the contrary, since jivas never attend to Self, the existence-consciousness which shines as 'I am', but always attend only to second and third persons, it is not God by only the jivas who are to be accused of being ungracious.

Sri Muruganar: Since, in order that jivas should not have even the least difficulty in knowing and attaining Him, God exists and shines due to His infinite Grace in each and every jiva, not as another but only as Self, the reality of those jivas, it is said, "Divine Grace is only the reality which shines as 'am'"; since God is unceasingly bestowing Grace by always shining in the hearts of all jivas day and night in the form of the continuous shining of 'I-I', it is said, "How can the blame of not bestowing sweet Grace be fitting to that reality?"; since, unless the jivas turn within towards Him and attend to Him, they cannot understand the truth that God is ever bestowing Grace upon them, and since it is thus a great wrong for jivas who do not attend to Him, whose very nature is Grace, to accuse Him of not at all bestowing Grace upon them, it is said, "The blame of disregarding the reality will be fitting only to the jivas who do not think of it, melting inwardly". Since, just as the one reality, the Self, which exists and shines as one without a second in the heart, itself [seemingly] exists as many, so in all jivas, who are [seemingly] many because of the adjuncts [upadhis], it [seemingly] shines individually as 'I-I', know that the first person plural verb 'ullam' [a contracted form of 'ullom'] is fittingly used here. Since the heart [hridayam] is called 'ullam' in Tamil because it is the place where that [Self] thus exists and shines, this world 'ullam' is used here with a double meaning [namely 'am' and 'heart'], and hence both meanings can be taken here.

- 967 Although the existence-consciousness [*sat-chit*] that shines abundantly in the [state of] abidance – in which the mind has turned inwards [through the enquiry

‘Who am I?’] and the ego has [thereby] subsided – is devoid of characteristics and qualities and is beyond the mind, it appears as Guru, [having characteristics such as name and form]. [Such is] the Grace of God, who is Self.

Sadhu Om: In this verse it is clearly taught that Self alone is the Guru, Self alone is God and Self alone is Grace. Although Self, which is God, has no characteristic [kuri] or quality [guna], because of Its abundant Grace towards the devotees, It assumes characteristics and qualities and appears in the form of a Guru in order to save them. Thus Grace, God, Guru and Self are one and the same.

968 The ‘I’ of [those] true devotees who have seen the form [or nature] of Grace, will shine as the form of the supreme reality, since the ego, the unreal *chit-jada-granthi* [the knot between the conscious Self and the insentient body] which creates the delusive mental agonies, has died and no longer rises in the heart.

Sadhu Om: The phrase ‘the true devotees who have seen the form [or nature] of Grace’ [arul vannam kanda mey anbar] may be taken to mean either (1) those true devotees who have seen the Sadguru, who is the embodiment of Grace [as explained in the previous verse], or (2) those true devotees who have realized Self, the true nature of Grace, through Self-enquiry.

969 [Since, as explained in verse 966, the Lord is always and everywhere bestowing His Grace upon everyone by shining in them as ‘I am’] *jivas* stand immersed in the ambrosial flood of Grace; [when it is so, their] being deluded and suffering through illusion is foolishness, [just like one’s] dying [because of] not knowing how to quench [one’s] thirst [even though one is] standing in the midst of the flood of water of the rushing river Ganga.

Michael James: One who is standing neck-deep in the flooding water of the Ganga need only bend down in order to drink and quench his thirst. Likewise, since God or Guru is always bestowing His Grace upon us by shining within us as ‘I am’, we need only turn our attention within towards that ‘I am’ in order to drink and quench our thirst for His Grace.

970 Why does the impartial God, who bestows [His] gracious glance upon one and all, discard wicked people? The [divine] eye which surges as everything, does not discard anyone; [it is only because of] the delusion of their dim, defective outlook [that it seems to reject some people].

Sadhu Om: The Tamil word ‘kan’, which means ‘eye’, is also sometimes used to mean ‘true knowledge’ or ‘jnana’. Therefore the words ‘the eye that surges as everything’ [ellamay pongum kan] also mean the knowledge ‘I am’ which shines as everything. Since the knowledge ‘I am’ is shining in everyone as the true form of Grace, it can never be said that the Eye of Grace is rejecting anyone.

If we are to say, “So-and-so has not seen me,” can we not do so only after looking for that person? Similarly, if we are to accuse God of not bestowing His gracious glance

upon us, can we not do so only after we have turned within and looked at Him, the Self-consciousness which shines within us as 'I am'? Therefore, when we never attend to Self but always remain extroverted, we cannot justly accuse God of not bestowing His Grace upon us. "Turning inwards, daily see yourself with an introverted look and it will be known [that He is ever bestowing His Grace] ... ," sings Sri Bhagavan in verse 44 of Sri Arunachala Aksharamanamalai. The extroverted look of ignorant people who never turn inwards, is describe in the present verse as "the delusion of their dim defective outlook" [avar mangun kan malai mayakku].

Sri Muruganar: When God resides within every jiva as Self and unceasingly always knows all of them as Himself, unless the jivas know Him they cannot know the fact that God is bestowing His Grace upon them; therefore it is said "the delusion of their dim, defective outlook".

19 Existence-Consciousness-Bliss

(Sat-Chit-Ananda Tiran)

- 971 When, by changing [its direction, i.e. by turning Selfwards], the deluded knowledge, the intellect [*buddhi*] which knows other things, reaches [and merges in] the Heart [Self], which is pure existence, that existence-consciousness-bliss [*mey-arivu-ananda*] will be attained.
- 972 When [all its] mischiefs [or movements] subside, the mind [*chittam*], which is [in its real nature] consciousness [*chit*], will itself see itself as the reality [*sat*]. [When thus] the *chit-sakti* [the power of consciousness or power of knowing] becomes one with the reality [*sat*], what is the [resulting] dense supreme bliss [*paramananda*], the remaining one [of the three aspects of *Brahman*], other than that Self?

Sadhu Om: *Knowing [chit] oneself to be the reality [sat] is bliss [ananda]. Knowing oneself, the Self, to be the body is the deluded knowledge which is called 'mind' [chittam]. It is only because of this wrong knowledge that such a thing as 'misery' appears to come into existence. However, when one knows oneself to be Self [atman], since the chittam then loses its nature of movement and attains the nature of consciousness [chit-rupa], it knows itself to be the reality [sat]. Since this union of sat and chit is the fullness of ananda, misery will be known to be ever non-existent and the truth that Self alone is sat, chit and ananda will shine forth. The state of supreme bliss [paramananda] which is experienced when the power of consciousness [chit-sakti] and the Lord [Siva] whose nature is existence [sat] thus become one, is the true significance of the form of Ardhanariswara [the Lord who is both Siva and Sakti].*

- 973 When the insentient ego, the *jiva* which is *chit-jada* [a combination of consciousness and the insentient], dies, he will shine as the nature of consciousness [*chit-swarupa*]. Since the nature of consciousness remains there [in that state] as existence [*sat*] alone, the bliss [experienced there] is ever Self alone.

Sadhu Om: *The ego or jiva is a wrong knowledge which acts as a false knot linking together Self, which is consciousness [chit], and the body, which is insentient [jada]. When this ego dies, i.e. when its wrong identification with the insentient body is destroyed through Self-enquiry, its nature of insentience [jada-swarupa] alone is removed and thus it remains shining as the very nature of consciousness [chit-swarupa]. Since there can be no existence other than this consciousness, this consciousness [chit] itself remains as the single mere existence [sat], which is Self. Since that state is a state of non-duality, the bliss experience there is also nothing but Self itself. Thus the knowledge [chit] of Self, one's own existence [sat], is itself bliss [ananda].*

Sri Muruganar: *The death of the insentient ego is the severing of the chit-jada-granthi [the knot between consciousness and the insentient body]. Severing the chit-jada-granthi means separating through Self-enquiry the body and Self, which were joined together through ignorance [avidya]. "The Lord of the Mount danced and [thereby] separated the body and Self," sings Sri Sundaramurti Nayanar. Here [in the present verse], the fruit of the severance of the knot [granthi-bheda] is described as "the bliss [which is] Self alone" [tan-mattira-inbam], and the nature of consciousness, which results from that [the severance of the knot], is described as "existence alone" [sat-mattiram].*

974 Not forgetting consciousness [i.e. not forgetting one's own Self-consciousness due to *pramada* or inattentiveness] is the path of devotion [*bhakti*], the relationship of unfading real love, because the real consciousness of Self, which shines as the undivided [non-dual] supreme bliss itself, surges as the nature of love [or *bhakti*].

Sadhu Om: *The true knowledge of Self, which always shines naturally, is the fullness of non-dual bliss [ananda], because it shines as the truth of love. Existence [sat], consciousness [chit] and bliss [ananda] are not really three, but one and the same. We should know that being conscious [chit] of our own existence [sat] is itself bliss [ananda]. Verse 979 should be referred to here. The love for oneself shines in all jivas because self-love is the very nature of Self. Therefore, since love is the nature of Self, and since Self is the very form of supreme happiness, it is wrong to regard happiness as being the result of love; instead of thus regarding love and happiness as being cause and effect, we should understand that love is itself happiness. Since by loving Self one knows Self and by knowing Self one loves Self, we should also understand that knowledge itself is love, which is happiness. Since Self is one's own existence or being, it can never become an object to be known, and hence knowing Self is nothing but being Self; thus we should understand that being [sat] itself is knowledge [chit], which is both happiness [ananda] and love [priyam]. Therefore, the true knowledge 'We, the form of love or happiness, alone exist' is the state of perfect, non-dual bliss [ananda].*

975 When the fleshy ego-defect, the efficient cause [of the seeming existence of the world-appearance], which is [itself] non-existent, has been destroyed, that state [of Self] is the one existence [sat] which was lying [as a supporting base] for all

the worlds that appeared to exist, being dependent on It [for their apparent existence].

Sadhu Om: The ego is here described as impermanent, unreal and fleshy because it identifies the impermanent, unreal and fleshy body as 'I'. Since the ego is unreal [asat], the names and forms of the world, which are seen only by the ego, are also unreal. However, the ego seems to be real because it is a mixture of the unreal name and form of the body and the real consciousness of Self. Therefore it is Self, the real aspect of the ego, which makes the unreal names and forms of the world appear to be real. Thus Self is the sole reality of this seeming world-appearance.

976 When the mad ego-delusion, the one *jiva*, which is [itself] insentient has been cast off, that state [of Self] is the one consciousness [*chit*] which was lying [as a supporting base] for all the *jivas*, which appeared as if having sentience, to know [i.e. to be seemingly sentient and to know other objects].

977 When the miserable ego-pride, which is the one cause [of all suffering] and which is [itself] unhappiness, has been destroyed, that state [of Self] is the bliss [*ananda*] which was lying [as a supporting base] for all objective pleasures, which appeared as if having happiness, to be experienced [as seemingly pleasurable].

Sadhu Om: The ego is here described as the pride which causes all misery because it proudly identifies the body, which is completely devoid of happiness, as 'I'

The above three verses, 975 to 977, should all be read and reflected over together. Does not this world appear as if it were an ever-existing reality [sat], do not all jivas in the world appear as if they were sentient [chit], and do not all the objects in the world appear as if they were giving happiness [ananda] to us? The secret behind all this is revealed in these verses.

The body is impermanent [and hence unreal or asat], insentient [jada] and the source of all miseries such as disease and so on, whereas the consciousness 'I' is the shining of sat-chit-ananda. The wrong knowledge which identifies this body as 'I' is the ego. It is only during the time of the ego's functioning and only in the outlook of the ego, which thus mistakes the unreal, insentient and miserable body as being real, sentient and a source of happiness [that is, as being sat-chit-ananda], that this world appears to be real [sat], the living beings in it appear to be sentient [chit] and the objects in it appear to be a source of happiness [ananda]. These three verses thus clearly assert that the ego is the sole cause which makes the names and forms [nama-rupa, the two unreal aspects of Brahman] appear as if they were real, sentient and a source of happiness [sat-chit-ananda, the three real aspects of Brahman]. To impose existence [sat], consciousness [chit] and happiness [ananda], which are real, upon the names and forms, which are unreal, and thereby to see those names and forms as real, is the wrong outlook [dosha-drishti] of the ego. When this ego is destroyed through Self-enquiry, the apparent sat-chit-ananda imposed upon the world will disappear, and the real sat-chit-ananda, which is Self, the base or support of the world-appearance, alone will shine. Only when the ego is thus destroyed, will the truth be known that it was only because of the existence [sat] of Self that the names and forms of the world appeared as if they were really having existence, that it was only because of the consciousness [chit] of Self that the names and

forms of the world appeared as if they were really having consciousness, and that it was only because of the happiness [ananda] of Self that the names and forms of the world appeared as if they were really giving happiness.

Not only do these verses reveal this profound truth, but they do so in a very beautiful manner. The first and last words of each verse denote respectively sat, chit and ananda. In the first verse the ego is described as being unreal, defective and fleshy [in contrast to reality or sat], in the second verse it is described as being insentient, deluded and mad [in contrast to consciousness or chit], and in the third verse it is described as being miserable, proud and devoid of happiness [in contrast to bliss or ananda]. Many other points of literary and linguistic beauty can be pointed out in these three verses, all of which help to emphasise the profound truth revealed in them.

978 Those who say, “If they abide as the supreme reality, the form of bliss [sukhaswarupa], for them there can be no experience of bliss,” are those who [thereby] argue and assert that the form of bliss [i.e. the supreme reality, which is sat-chit-ananda] is merely an insentient object like sugar.

Sadhu Om: *In the intoxication of dualistic devotion some people used to say, “I do not like to become sugar itself; I prefer to remain like an ant sitting by the side of the sugar to taste its sweetness”. That is to say, there is a wrong belief among some devotees that the state of non-duality [advaita] in which one merges in and becomes one with Brahman will be a dry and empty state devoid of bliss [ananda]. Only those who have not achieved the experience of perfect devotion [sampurna-bhakti] can believe or speak like this. Refer to page 152 of The Path of Sri Ramana – Part Two, where it is explained that the perfect devotee [sampurna-bhaktiman] is only he who has ‘otherless love’ [ananya-priti].*

Sugar is an insentient object [ada-vastu], while an ant is sentient and is thereby able to enjoy the sweetness of sugar. But Brahman is not like this; It is not an insentient object like sugar. Brahman, which is the reality [sat], is also consciousness [chit] and is thereby able to know itself. Since Brahman is also bliss [ananda], which is the very nature of consciousness [chit-swabhava], no other sentient object [chit-vastu] is needed to experience the bliss of Brahman. Therefore it is foolish to compare Self, which is not only bliss but also the consciousness which knows bliss, to an insentient object like sugar.

It is completely wrong to say, as some people do, that this comparison was taught by Sri Ramakrishna. Sri Ramakrishna, who had the perfect experience of sat-chit-ananda, would never have thus compared Brahman to an insentient object like sugar. When people say that Sri Ramakrishna thus used to compare Brahman to sugar, we have to doubt the accuracy of the recording of His teachings.

979 Though existence [sat], consciousness [chit] and bliss [ananda] are spoken of as [though they were] different, when actually experienced these three are [found to be] one [namely ‘I’, the Self] just as the harmonious three qualities, liquidity, sweetness and coolness, are [in substance] only the one water.

20 The Greatness of the Reality (Unmai Matchi Tiran)

980 Existence [literally, to be that which exists] is the nature of Self. All things other than that one [the Self] are a multitude of false imaginations [*kalpanas*] and cannot [really] exist. All of them will go away from Self, but this one [the Self] will never go away [i.e. will never become non-existent].

Sadhu Om: The word 'existence' [uladadal] here denotes our true existence-consciousness [the feeling of our being] which is devoid of body and mind. Though the mind, body and world, being unreal, disappear during sleep, death and dissolution, we [Self or Brahman] alone are that which shines as the indestructible existence-consciousness.

981 He [i.e. Self] who exists as the form of consciousness, will not become non-existent. If one remains devoid of other knowledges, [that is] if the deceptive, unreal and dual imaginations [superimposed] on consciousness are removed, for oneself who [thus] exists as [mere] consciousness there will be no destruction.

Sadhu Om: Only those things which are known by the mind as objects are liable to be destroyed, whereas we, who are existence-consciousness, can never be destroyed. Since the pure consciousness 'I am' shines even after the ego, the knower of objects, has been destroyed, there can never be destruction for us.

982 Self, the Whole [*paripurnam*], will appear as if completely non-existent [*sunya*] to those who have *pramada* [inattentiveness to Self], which murders Self [and which comes into existence] when the 'I' rises [even] a little due to superimposition [of adjuncts or *upadhis*] upon one's own supreme Self, which is the supreme Reality.

Michael James: Pramada or inattentiveness to Self, one's own being, comes into existence only when the ego, the unreal feeling 'I am so-and-so', rises due to superimposition of the adjunct [upadhi] 'so-and-so' upon the pure consciousness 'I am'. Since the superimposition of this adjunct veils the true nature of Self, the pure 'I am', and makes it appear as if non-existent, pramada is said to murder Self.

Sri Muruganar: Since the thought 'I' alone is the ego, when it rises [even] a little, bondage comes into existence due to the 'I am the body' feeling [dehatma-buddhi], and hence the ignorance [ajnana] known as pramada, which is a slipping down from [abidance as] Self, is born. Know that in truth this alone is the sin of murdering Brahman [brahma-hatja dosha]. For those bound jivas who are thus under the sway of pramada, the Whole will seem to be a state which cannot be known, and [thus] it will appear as if non-existent [sunya].

983 He who knows himself to be the great one, the real state [of Self], instead of wrongly knowing himself to be the one who sees objects outside, will attain the

state of fullness of peace, having lost through [proper discrimination] the desire for all the eightfold *siddhis*.

Sadhu Om: *This verse can also be read along with verses 645 to 649 in the chapter ‘The Severance of Objective Attention’.*

Only those people who are deluded into thinking that objects exist outside and are real, will consider that the eightfold occult powers [ashta-siddhis] are wonderful and worthy to achieve. But one who knows himself to be Self, the existence-consciousness, and who has thereby given up objective knowledge, will understand the worthlessness and unreality of all siddhis, and hence he will reject them as trivial and will remain in the bliss of Self, the sole reality.

984 The powerful One who [always] clings to the reality will never be afraid, due to mental delusion, of anything at all.

Sadhu Om: *A feeling of fear can arise in one only so long as one is deluded into thinking that there really exists anything other than oneself. But the Hero who has attained the strength of Self-abidance [nishta-bala] has the firm, unshakeable experience that He, the reality, alone exists. Therefore, since no other thing exists in His outlook, neither fear nor confusion can arise for Him.*

21 All is Brahman (*Sarvam Brahma Tiran*)

985 It is only Self, the one pure knowledge, that, as the unreal knowledge [the mind], makes all differences [*vikalpas*] appear. [Therefore] for the one who knows and reaches Self, which is the harmonious knowledge, all those other things [the entire world-appearance] will be [found to be] of the nature of the one Self.

Michael James: *All differences such as name and form, time and space, subject and object, are made to appear only by the mind, which is truly non-existent, being nothing but an unreal appearance in the real Self. Just as when the real rope is seen, the unreal and non-existent snake is found to be nothing but that rope, so when the real Self is known, the unreal and non-existent mind and all its products (the entire world-appearance) are found to be nothing but that Self. It is only in this sense that the unreal world-appearance is said to be of the nature of the one Self or Brahman.*

986 Only the ever-existing Self, other than which nothing exists and from which nothing is different, is the sole reality. All that is known in that Siva [that sole reality], who is the Supreme which exists and shines as *sat-chit*, is only that Supreme and nothing else.

987 Whether real or unreal, whether knowledge or ignorance gathered by the intellect, whether pleasant or unpleasant to the mind, all are only *Brahman* and nothing else.

988 Faith [*shraddha*], faithlessness [*asraddha*], thought [*chinta*], thoughtfreeness [*achinta*], desirelessness [*virakti*], non-desirelessness [*avirakti*], knowable

[vedam], unknowable [avedam], eminence [varam], baseness [avaram], laudable [vaniyam], despicable [avanidyam] – all are only *Brahman* and nothing else.

Sadhu Om: The four verses in this chapter all emphasize that Self or Brahman is the sole existing reality. We should understand that all the dyads or pairs of opposites mentioned in these verses are in truth non-existent and that the one Brahman alone exists [see note to verse 985]. We should not take these verses to mean that, since even the dyads are only Brahman, the dual outlook is appreciated, or to mean that there is no wrong in one's being immersed in those dyads.

22 Harmony Among Religions

(Samarasa Tiran)

989 Since Silence, the summit of knowledge, is the common nature [of each and every religion], all religions [matas] are agreeable as a means to true *Advaita*, which shines unique and pure, and [hence] they are not opposed to the wonderful Vedanta.

Sadhu Om: Whatever knowledge is proclaimed by whatever religion to be the final goal or achievement, since Silence alone is the limit or boundary of all knowledge, the final knowledge of each of those religions is contained in Silence. Since Advaita Vedanta is a common principle having Silence as its goal, each and every religion is a means and is agreeable to Vedanta. Refer here to verses 1176 to 1179, 1235 and 1242.

990 Even though [some] narrow and mean-minded people invent a different religion due to enmity [with the already existing religions], know that even that religion is acceptable to Siva, who shines as the form of the undivided knowledge.

991 In whichever religion you have faith, follow that religion with true love, turning inwards instead of outwardly arguing against other religions due to attachment [abhimani] to your own religion.

Michael James: All kinds of attachment [abhimani], including even the attachment to one's own religion [matabhimana], are rooted only in the ego, the deabhimana or attachment towards one's own body as 'I'. Therefore, if, due to one's attachment to one's own religion, one turns one's attention outwards to argue against other religions, one will only be strengthening one's deabhimana or sense of identification with the body. Since the ultimate aim of all religions is to destroy the deabhimana, one should turn within and know one's true nature, thereby rooting out the ego.

992 It is best to give up the various arguments about duality [dvaita], qualified non-duality [visishtadvaita] and pure non-duality [suddhadvaita], and instead think of and worship God with ripening love [tapas] in order to attain the wealth of divine Grace, and [thereby] to know the reality.

993 Religion [mata] will exist only so long as mind [mati] exists. After it [the mind] has merged into the heart by turning within and scrutinizing that mind [by

enquiring ‘Who am I, this mind?’], in [that] abundantly peaceful Silence no such religion can stand.

Michael James: In Sanskrit and Tamil religion is called ‘mata’ because it can exist only within the realm of the mind (mati). Therefore, when the mind merges in Self, the state of Supreme Silence, through the enquiry ‘Who am I?’, no religion can remain. Thus aspirants should understand that all the differences and controversies created by the various different religions exist only in the mind, and that those differences and controversies can be resolved only by the mind’s turning inwards and merging into Self, the reality or Silence which is (as revealed in verse 989) the common and harmonious factor in all religions.

23 The Childlike State (Saisavya Tiran)

- 994 Among the multitudinous human race, only children [i.e. the childlike Sages] who are bereft of the mischievous mind, the ego-sense, will be completely protected from distress by the Mother-Father [i.e. God], who is always thinking of them.
- 995 Only the pure *mahatmas* in whom the changeful mind [*vikara manas*] does not rise even the least are fortunate people, because the joy of sitting and playing for ever upon the lap of the Mother, who is the source of happiness, is their complete experience.

Sadhu Om: Even though God is so compassionate that He is always bestowing His Grace upon everyone of His own accord, we, the ego, obstruct His Grace by our rising and our mischievous activities. Since Jnanis, who are bereft of those mischievous activities of the ego, are like young babies who do not obstruct the efforts which their parents make to protect them, they alone are fortunate ones who always enjoy the supreme bliss of God’s Grace.

24 Union with Self (Atma Muyakka Tiran)

- 996 The state which is devoid of the dual distinction ‘I’ and ‘He’ and in which one has become one with the Bridegroom, Self, who is the space of true knowledge [*mey-jnana*], the ‘I’-sense having dropped away, is itself the glory of the chastity of being one with Siva.

Sadhu Om: If verse 73 of this work is also read here, the expression “the glory of the chastity of being one with Siva” will be clearly understood.

- 997 Can there be speech or breath in that silent union in which the dual outlook ‘I’ and ‘He’ [or ‘I am He’] is merged in oneness? When ‘I’ is [thus] destroyed, [that is] when the look of eye meets together with eye, spoken words are of no use whatsoever.

Sadhu Om: The last two lines of this verse are verse 1100 of Tirukkural [see verse 286 of this work, where the same Tirukkural verse is used]. This verse of Tirukkural describes the meeting of the eyes of two lovers, but in this present verse Sri Muruganar uses the same verse in a spiritual context.

When the ego is destroyed, all dual feelings such as ‘God and soul’ [Siva-jiva] and ‘Master and disciple’ [Guru-sishya] will also be completely destroyed, and hence Silence alone will remain. Only when the difference ‘Siva and jiva’ exists can the power of speech be used to worship God by singing stotras and so on, and only when the difference ‘Guru and sishya’ exists can the power of speech be used for imparting upadesa to the disciple. However, since the purpose of all spoken words such as stotras sung by the devotee or upadesa given by the Guru is only to destroy the ego and thereby to make the difference ‘I and ‘He’ merge into oneness in the state of supreme Silence, in that final state spoken words will be no further use.

Since the Tamil word for ‘eye’ [kan] also means knowledge or consciousness, the phrase “When the look of eye meets together with eye” should here be understood to mean when the attention of the limited individual consciousness [the ego] meets with and thereby merges into the unlimited supreme consciousness [Self], just like a river meeting with and merging into the ocean. When the ego thus merges into Self, it loses its individuality and is completely destroyed, and thereby all dualities and differences created by that ego are also destroyed. In such a state of perfect Silence, how can there be even the least speech or breath, or anything else for that matter?

998 [Only] those who have united [with Self] can know the nature of those who have united [with Self]. How can those who have not united [with Self] know it? The nature of those who have united [with Self], like a honey-bee which has drunk honey, is so great that they do not know anything other than Self.

Michael James: When a honey-bee has drunk honey, it is so much intoxicated that it knows nothing else. Likewise, having become one with Self, the Jnani knows nothing other than Self, and hence the nature of his state [i.e. the nature of His existence, the nature of His consciousness or knowledge, and the nature of His bliss] cannot be known by others who have not attained that state. Compare here verse 31 of Ulladu Narpadu.

Sri Muruganar: The nature of those who have united with the reality, like a honey-bee which has drunk honey, is so great that it cannot be known by others. This is so because they do not know otherness. Only those who have united can know the nature of those who have united; those who have not united cannot know it.

999 Even by those who have united [with Self], the happiness of union cannot be thought of but can only be experienced. Those who have united [cannot think even of] the method by which they have attained [that state of] Silence, annihilating the ego-sense in that *anandatitam* [that state transcending bliss].

Michael James: Though only those who have attained union with Self can know the nature or state of those who have attained that union, even they cannot express it to others but can only experience it. If it were then asked, “They cannot express it to others

because for them there are no others, but cannot at least they themselves think of that state and how they attained it?”, the answer would be that even that is impossible, because for them the thinking mind or ego has been completely destroyed.

Moreover, in the state of absolute reality which is experienced by Jnanis, the state of ajnana is realized to be ever non-existent, and hence it is impossible for them to think of a method by which they passed from the ever-non-existent state of ajnana to the state of Jnana, the ever-existing and sole reality. That is why it is said in verse 413 of this work that it is impossible to trace the path by which Jnanis have reached Self. Since Self alone exists, there can be no place or state (such as ajnana) outside Self from which it can be reached and hence no path by which it can be reached. For a bird which is flying in the sky, there can be no path to reach the sky, and for a fish which is swimming in the water, there can be no path to reach the water. Since we are truly ever Self and Self alone, there can be no path or method for us to reach Self. However, so long as we think that we do not know ourselves to be Self, the sole existing reality, Sages have to advise us to try to find out who or what we really are. When we thus turn our attention towards ourselves in order to find out ‘Who am I?’, we will find that we are always nothing but Self alone, and that the seeming ego or individuality which we are wrongly taking to be ‘I’ was ever non-existent. In that state we cannot think that we have followed any path or method; we will merely realize that we are ever as we are, and that we have never undergone even the least change or movement of any kind.

25 The Greatness of Consciousness

(Chaitanya Matchi Tiran)

1000 The knowledge which sees the world as if different [from itself], the objective knowledge which is the ego [*ahankara*], is merely insentient [*jada*]. When [this] ego dies, the flame of pure non-duality [*suddha-advaita*], which is the knowledge of the source of the mind, will shine forth.

Michael James: The ego, the objective knowledge which sees the world as other than itself, is insentient [jada] and unreal [asat] because it identifies the insentient and unreal body as ‘I’. Therefore, the pure non-dual real knowledge will shine forth only when this insentient ego, the unreal knowledge, is destroyed.

1001 Existence [*sat*] itself shines as consciousness [*chit*]. Therefore, until the mind [*chittam*] is completely extinguished and [thereby] becomes the absolute existence-consciousness [*kevala sat-chit*], it is impossible for the petty mind, which is a false imagination [*kalpana*], a reflection of consciousness [*chit-abhasa*], to see the reality, which is the non-dual supreme consciousness.

1002 Only till the sun appears on the eastern horizon, will the self-conceit of that moon [shine proudly] in this world. [Likewise] only till the knowledge which is of the nature of consciousness [*chinmaya-unarvu* i.e. Self-knowledge] appears, destroying the delusive knowledge, the ego, will the self-conceit of the *jiva*’s knowledge [shine proudly]. Know thus.

Michael James: That is, the jiva's intellectual knowledge and skill in the various arts and sciences.

1003 In the front of the great sun, the Self – [which ever shines] in the Heart, the sky of consciousness [*chit-akasa*], without rising and setting – the mind of the *Atma-jnani* is, in the vast world, like the moon seen in broad daylight.

Michael James: During the night the moon may be of some use in enabling one to see the world dimly, but after the sun has risen the moon is of no further use, even though it may continue to be seen in the sky. Likewise, in the state of ajnana the mind, which is a mere reflection of the pure light of Self, may appear to be of some use in illuminating the world, but after the sun of Self-knowledge [atma-jnana] has risen, the mind is of no more use than the moon in broad daylight.

1004 Know that the mind which illumines the illusory world is [a mere reflected light] like the glittering mirror-light, reflecting the bright sunlight.

Michael James: The illusory world of names and forms is projected and illumined only by the mind-light, which is but a dim reflection of the true light of Self. Just as the pale moonlight is swallowed when the bright sunlight appears, so the pale mind-light is swallowed when the bright Self-light surges forth (see verse 857). When the mind-light is thus swallowed, the illusory names and forms of the world, which were depending upon that sunlight for their seeming existence, will also disappear, being found to be unreal in front of the real light of Self-consciousness. (See verse 114 of this work).

26 The Greatness of the Infinite (*Bhuma Matchi Tiran*)

1005 The state in which one does not see any second-person object, the state in which one does not hear a second-person object, the state in which one does not know any second-person object – know that state alone is the infinite [*bhuma*].

Michael James: The upadesa given by Sri Bhagavan in this verse is the same as that given by Sanatkumara in the Chandoyga Upanishad, 7.24.1, namely, "That [state] in which one does not see what-is-other [anya], does not hear what-is-other and does not know what-is-other, is the Infinite [bhuma], whereas that [state] in which one sees what-is-other, hears what-is-other and knows what-is-other, is finite [alpa]. That which is infinite [bhuma], alone is immortal [eternal and hence real], whereas that which is finite [alpa] is mortal [transitory and hence unreal] ... ". In the same Upanishad 7.25.1 and 7.25.2, the Infinite [bhuma] is identified as being synonymous first with 'I' (aham) and then with Self (atma). Therefore in this verse and the next, the word 'Bhuma' should be understood to mean Self or Brahman, our own true state of mere being.

From the present verse we have to understand that any state in which there is even the least knowledge of any second- or third-person object is not the true state of Self, the real waking; it is only another dream occurring in the sleep of Self-forgetfulness (refer here to The Path of Sri Ramana – Part One, p. 143). Therefore, whatever state we may

experience, even if it be a divine or heavenly state such as living in Siva Loka or Vaikuntha, so long as we experience anything other than the mere Self-consciousness 'I am', we should enquire 'Who knows these other things?' and thereby turn our attention back towards the first person feeling 'I'. When the attention is thus fixed more and more intensely upon the first person, the rising of that first person (the ego or mind which sees those other things) will subside more and more, until finally it merges forever in its source, whereupon the true state of Self, in which nothing other than the mere Self-consciousness 'I am' is known, will be experienced.

1006 Where that which is seen, that which is heard and *pramada* [i.e., the ego, whose nature is *pramada* or inattentiveness to Self], which has the greatness of seeing finiteness, are [all] destroyed, [that] immeasurable *Bhuma*, [whose form is] the non-dual knowledge [*advaita-jnana*], alone is the pure happiness of abundant peace.

Michael James: The upadesa given by Sri Bhagavan in this verse is the same as that given by Sanatkumara in the Chandogya Upanishad, 7.23.1, namely, "That which is infinite [bhuma] alone is happiness [sukham]. In the finite [alpa] there is no happiness. The infinite alone is happiness [bhumaiva sukham]" But in the present verse Sri Bhagavan reveals more about the nature of that Bhuma, which alone is happiness, namely that it is the non-dual Jnana which is devoid of anything seen or anything heard, and which is devoid even of the ego, whose nature is pramada (inattentiveness to Self) and whose so-called 'greatness' lies only in knowing finite objects. From the two verses in this chapter we should understand that true happiness lies only in the infinite, eternal and real state of non-dual knowledge, which is devoid of both the knowing mind and the objects known, and that not even the least real happiness exists in the finite, transitory and unreal state of dual knowledge, in which objects are known.

27 The Space of Jnana (*Jnana Veli Tiran*)

1007 O men who – after running all over the world and after seeing and worshipping holy men – are making research upon the truth with great love, if you scrutinize the supreme reality which [those] great *tapasvins* clearly know, [you will find that it is nothing but] the open and empty space of *Jnana*.

Michael James: The reality which is experienced by Jnanis is only the empty space of Jnana (the knowledge of one's own existence), that is, the mere consciousness 'I am'. This space of Jnana is the same as the Bhuma described in the previous chapter, and it is here said to be an open and empty space because it is the state which is completely devoid both of objects to know and of a mind to know them.

1008 When scrutinized, that which is shown and given by the Guru-Fathers [the father-like Gurus] to the disciples who go in search of spiritual masters, hurrying around the world, is only the wonderful space of *Jnana* [the mere consciousness 'I am'].

1009 The eternal goal, which is the resort or refuge in which the weary wanderings here and there come to an end, [and which is given by] the *Jnana-Guru*, who is Siva, the supreme reality, who shines triumphantly as the defectless existence-consciousness [*sat-chit*], is only the wonderful space of *turiya* [the empty space of *Jnana*].

Michael James: The weary wanderings through so many births and deaths, as well as the weary wanderings of the body and mind in each birth, come to an end.

1010 If, to the very end, one makes a full effort to attain abidance [as Self], which removes bondage [in the form] of desires [*sankalpas*], just as a snake removes its skin, what emerges is [only] the open and empty space of *Jnana*.

1011 The glory of the light of the space of consciousness [*chit-akasa jyoti*] is the cremation-ground in which the *jiva*, the unlimited reflection of consciousness [*chit-abhasa*], is completely dead [and is being burnt to ashes]. It is like [a fire] catching a dense dry forest and spreading and burning without limit.

Michael James: The jiva, the reflection of consciousness, is here described as unlimited because it is the root-cause of an unlimited quantity of tendencies (vasanas), the seeds which give rise to all ignorant imaginations (ajnana-kalpanas). When this jiva is completely destroyed and is burning along with all its vasanas in the fire of true knowledge (jnanagni), the cremation-ground in which it thus burns is the expanse of pure consciousness (chit-akasa), whose light is like the expanse of blazing fire which catches and instantly spreads all over a vast, dense and dry forest, reducing it completely to ashes. In this simile, the dry wood of the vast forest is to be understood as being like the innumerable vasanas of the jiva, which have become dry as a result of the jiva's vairagya or inattention to them, and which have thereby become fit fuel for the fire of Jnana (see pages 102 to 103 of The Path of Sri Ramana – Part One). The Light of pure consciousness, which is here said to be like a wild forest fire that spreads all around and instantly consumes the ego and all its products (the whole world-appearance), is the same as the blazing sun of Arunachala (the sun of Self-knowledge) which, as described in verse 27 of Sri Arunachala Aksharamanamalai and verse 1 of Sri Arunachala Pancharatna, swallows everything by its spreading rays of bright light (see verse 114 of this work).

1012 Know that that which is worthy [to be attained] is only Silence, which is mere Self, the [wrong] knowledge 'I' having died as ignorance [*ajnana*]. If you ask the truth, "Why [is it so]?", [it is because that state of Silence is] the space [of *Jnana*] in which nothing exists to desire and [thereby] be a cause of misery.

Michael James: Desire is the sole cause of misery, and it can arise only if something other than oneself exists. Therefore, since Silence, the state of Self, is the space of mere consciousness in which nothing other than Self exists, it alone is worthy to be attained. In order to attain this Silence, the ego, the wrong knowledge 'I am the body', must be destroyed, having being found to be nothing but a non-existent ignorance.

- 1013 The glory of the vast space of true knowledge [*mey-jnana*], whose greatness cannot be excelled by anything else, cannot easily be seen by any other means, but only by the Grace of the Guru, who destroys [all our] defects.
- 1014 Those who have seen the glory of [that] vast space [of *Jnana*] will be transformed into the supremely blissful and silent Siva, having destroyed birth [and death], which were multiplied more and more because of the vanity of attachment [to the body as 'I'] and the other vanity [of taking the objects of this world, including the body, to be 'mine'].
- 1015 The subject for Parasakti, who stands as the predicate, having as objects all the things which are known by the five – tasting, smelling, seeing, hearing and touching – is the space of *Jnana*, the wonderful state.

Sadhu Om: In a sentence the object depends upon the predicate or main verb, and the predicate depends upon the subject. Without the predicate and object, the subject can stand, but without the subject, the predicate and object cannot stand. In this verse the entire world-appearance, which consists merely of the knowledge acquired through the five senses, is compared to the object of a sentence; Parasakti, the power of maya which creates this world-appearance, is compared to the predicate or main verb of a sentence; and the empty space of Jnana, the true state of Self upon which both Parasakti and Her creation depend for their seeming existence, is compared to the subject of a sentence. Thus in a humorous way Sri Bhagavan declares that this whole vast universe and its powerful creator exist only by depending upon a mere open and empty space.

Another hidden meaning is also given in this verse. The Tamil word for 'subject' is 'ezhuvay', which can also mean 'the rising place'; the Tamil word for 'predicate' is 'payanilay', which can also mean 'useless'; and the Tamil word for 'object' is 'seyyappadu porul', which means 'the thing made'. Thus Sri Bhagavan indirectly warns, "If you rise from the space of Jnana and thereby create so many things, it is of no use".

Throughout this present chapter, from verse 1007 to 1015, the state of Jnana – the supreme goal of life [parama-purushartha] which is finally to be attained by sadhakas after practising so many sadhanas and after making so many sacrifices throughout so many births – instead of being glorified as a very great achievement, is described as "an open and empty space, a mere space which is devoid of any other thing to be desired or attained, a mere state of absolute silence". However, it should be understood that the reason why Sri Bhagavan seemingly ridicules the state of Jnana in this manner is only to enable us to know the real greatness of that empty space-like state. That is, Sri Bhagavan teaches in these verses that, since not only all the countless objects of this unimaginable great and vast universe, but even the parasakti which creates and sustains them, rise and spread out only from the space of Self-knowledge [atma-jnanakasa], which is the mere consciousness 'I am', the supreme and unsurpassed state is only the state of Jnana, the mere knowledge of our own existence, which is the base that supports that almighty Parasakti.

Since, having risen from and forsaken the state of mere existence-consciousness [the knowledge of their own being], the minds of all jivas always remain extroverted and take pride only in objective knowledge, they will not be fit to attain the state of moksha or Jnana unless they give up that liking for objective knowledge and instead gain great love for and find complete satisfaction in the state of mere being. It is only in order to teach

this truth and thereby to instill firm vairagya in the hearts of His devotees, that Sri Bhagavan glorifies the state of Jnana by describing it in this chapter as a mere open and empty space. It is also only for this same reason that Sri Bhagavan once humorously remarked, “Everyone who comes here says that they have come only for moksha. But if even a small experience of moksha were given as a sample, that would be sufficient, and not even a single crow or sparrow would remain here; all would fly away and I would be left sitting here all alone!”

28 The Space of Consciousness (*Chit-Ambara Tiran*)

1016 Wandering here and there in search of the space of consciousness [*chit-ambara*], which exists and shines everywhere as Self, is like searching with a flaming torch for the sun in broad daylight, which by its supremacy puts the white moon to shame.

Sri Muruganar: The space of consciousness [chitrabalam or chit-ambara] is that which is also called the Heart-space [daharakasa or hridayakasa], the consciousness-space [chidakasa] and the knowledge-space [jnanakasa]. That alone is the true form of God, who shines as Self.

1017 ‘I’ [the ego] is unreal; this [the world], which is not [that ‘I’], is also unreal; the knowledge which knows ‘That I am this [body]’ is also utterly unreal [or that ‘I’, the knowledge which knows this, is also utterly unreal]; the primordial cause [*mula-prakriti*] which makes the triad [*triputi*] appear, is also unreal. The wonderful space of consciousness [*chit-ambara*] alone is real.

Michael James: The primordial cause (mula-prakriti) mentioned here is maya, the mind or ego. The space of consciousness, which alone is real, is the same as the Bhuma described in verses 1005 and 1006, whose nature is mere existence-consciousness and which is completely devoid of the unreal triad – the knower (the ego), the act of knowing and the objects known.

1018 Those who are deluded, thinking ‘That which is known through the five senses is real,’ and who set aside as unreal their own state [of Self], which is the space of consciousness on which all the many vast and crowded worlds appear [like pictures on a cinema-screen], cannot attain the supreme benefit [of Self-knowledge].

1019 Who else but *Jnanis*, who shine as Siva Himself, having destroyed the impurities of the mind [i.e. the tendencies or *vasanas*], can clearly know the greatness of the glorious space of consciousness [the state of true *Jnana*], which is untouched by any defect or deficiency?

28 Revelation (Arivurutta Tiran)

- 1020 “Therefore that space of consciousness is itself the real supreme Siva, which cannot be described by anyone” – saying thus, the divine Lord Ramana, the supreme *Jnani*, revealed to me the state of Self, which is Siva Himself.
- 1021 Self itself graciously revealed and bestowed Self, which is the form of Self, at the time, which is the form of Self, and in the place, which is the form of the Self; in order for Self to attain [itself], it realized itself as the form of Self.

Sadhu Om: In the above two verses Sri Muruganar expressed the experience of supreme Jnana which was bestowed upon him by the Grace of His Sadguru, Bhagavan Sri Ramana. Sri Muruganar’s state of egolessness can be clearly understood here from the fact that he says the Self realized itself, and not, “I have realized Self”.

Truly, no jiva can ever realize Self; it is Self alone that realizes itself [refer to pages 105 to 106 of The Path of Sri Ramana – Part One]. Moreover, from the words used in verse 1021, “at the time, which is in the form of Self, and in the place, which is the form of Self”, we should understand that Self does not realize itself at any particular time or in any particular place. Since time and space are both unreal, being nothing but a false appearance in the real Self, the experience of a Jnani is that He, the Self, has ever known Himself at all times and in all places. For Him ignorance [ajnana] is something which is ever non-existent, so though in the outlook of others it may appear as if He has attained jnana at a particular time and place, in His own outlook He does not truly feel that He was once in ignorance and has now attained Jnana [see verse 1085].

30 The State of Self (Atma Nilai Tiran)

- 1022 When the ego, which projects the world but hides itself [being unable to know its own true nature], enters the heart [by enquiring] thus ‘What is the shining source of myself?’, the supreme knowledge which shines forth triumphantly and with vigour [in the form of the *sphurana* ‘I-I’] is the unending and real state of Self.

Sadhu Om and Michael James: The very nature of the ego is to attend only to things other than itself. Therefore, the ego does not know who or what it is. This ignorance of its own nature (i.e. the ignorance of the fact that it truly has no existence of its own) is what is meant here by the words “the ego which hides itself” (olikkum ahankaram). But if this transient and unreal ego, which rises in the form of the wrong knowledge ‘I am this’ or ‘I am that’, tries to turn its attention away from the world of second and third persons, which it projects through the five senses, and towards itself, the first person, in order to find out ‘Who am I?’, it will subside into its source, the heart or Self, whereupon the eternal and real state will shine forth of its own accord in the form of the true knowledge ‘I am I’.

- 1023 If – instead of whirling with longing [for worldly pleasures] because of objectively knowing other things which appear in front of it due to [its] objective

- attention – the wicked mind attends to itself, enquiring ‘Who am I who knows objects?’, [it will attain that state of] abidance in its own reality which alone is the true state [of Self].
- 1024 Whichever *asrama* they have entered and whichever caste [*varna*] they have been born into, *Jnanis* will ever remain in their own state [the natural state of Self]. Only their own state is the real state; tell me, on the other hand, are not all other states [such as the *varnas* and *asramas*] merely unreal states [since they pertain only to the unreal body]?
- 1025 The state of Self alone is the real and lovable state. On the other hand, all the states of living in heaven, [which is] like a sky-lotus, are only unreal mental states which feed more and more upon delusion and which, like the water of a mirage, appear [only] due to imagination.

Sadhu Om: The words ‘like a sky-lotus’ [van-murali pol] can give two meanings, namely (i) ‘[heavens] such as Brahma-Loka’ [because the throne of Brahma, whose abode is in the sky, is a lotus], and (ii) ‘like an imaginary lotus in the sky’. Just like the imaginary lotus seen in the sky and like the imaginary water seen in a mirage, all states other than the state of Self are mere mental delusions and are truly non-existent. Even the pleasures of living in the various kinds of heavens such as Brahma Loka are trivial and unreal, and hence they cannot satisfy our yearning for complete and perfect happiness any more than the water of a mirage can quench our thirst. Therefore, the only state which is truly worthy to be loved and aspired for is the state of Self.

- 1026 Even though one’s own natural reality itself exists [and is experienced daily in deep sleep] as the supreme happiness, [one’s] searching for happiness and [thereby] suffering with the deluded and deceptive mind always going after what-is-other [the non-Self], is itself losing that which is happiness.

Sri Muruganar: Since the actual truth of their own experience is expressed by everyone thus, “I woke up from sleep; I slept happily,” it is agreed by everyone that Self shines as the form of happiness in the natural state of sleep, where the mind is empty and devoid of attachment to sense-objects. If it is asked why that happiness, which existed as one’s own nature in that state, ceases to be experienced as soon as sleep comes to an end, it is because of one’s desire to run after sense-objects, having been separated from one’s own state. Therefore it is advised that one should attain the unsurpassed happiness which is one’s own true experience, by keeping the mind unshaken by the desire for sense-objects, which arises due to delusion, by knowing oneself and by shining without inattention [pramada], remaining peaceful even in the waking state as in sleep.

- 1027 *Jnanis* know that the taste of Self [*atma-rasam*] alone is the best taste [*ati-rasam*], and hence they abide in the state of Self. Those who do not know that the happiness of Self alone is definitely the highest, abide in the state of the world [i.e. they remain immersed in worldly life seeking only mundane pleasures].

Michael James: In the appendix of Guru Vachaka Kovai – Urai, Sri Sadhu Om included eleven stray verses of Sri Bhagavan and gave notes indicating where each one should be

incorporated in the text. In verse 6 of that appendix, which should be incorporated here, Sri Bhagavan says:

If [through the enquiry ‘Who am I?’] one knows one’s true nature in the heart, [it will be found to be] existence-consciousness-bliss [sat-chit-ananda], which is beginningless and endless fullness [wholeness or perfection].

In the above verse Sri Bhagavan has paraphrased verse 28 of Upadesa Undiyar.

1028 Those who do not know that their own nature is happiness, will be deluded like a musk-deer, [whereas] those who clearly know their own nature [to be existence-consciousness-bliss], will abide in their own state [of Self] without attending to the world [and without seeking happiness from worldly objects].

Michael James: The musk-deer emits a pleasant odour, but not knowing that the odour is coming only from itself, it runs here and there in search of the source of that odour. Similarly, not knowing that all the happiness they enjoy comes only from their own Self, whose very nature is happiness, ignorant people (ajnanis) run after worldly objects in search of happiness. Compare here verse 585 of this work, and pages 36 to 40 of The Path of Sri Ramana – Part One.

1029 That which is called happiness is only the nature of Self; Self is not other than perfect happiness. That which is called happiness alone exists. Knowing that fact and abiding in that state of Self, enjoy bliss eternally.

Sadhu Om: Refer to the work Who am I?, in which Sri Bhagavan says, “That which is called happiness is only the nature of Self; happiness and Self are not different. The happiness of Self [atma-sukha] alone exists; that alone is real.”

31 The Power of Self (Atma Vala Tiran)

B20 Proclaim thus, “Whoever has conquered the senses by knowledge [*jnana*], being a knower of Self [*atma-vid*] who abides as existence-consciousness, is the fire of knowledge [*jnanagni*]; [He is] the wielder of the thunderbolt of knowledge [*jnana-vajrayudha*]; He, Kala-kalan, is the hero who has killed death.

Michael James: The wielder of the thunderbolt (vajrayudha) is Indra, the most powerful of the gods, who is believed by some followers of the karma-kanda (the portion of the Vedas which teaches ritualistic actions for the fulfillment of worldly desires) to be the Supreme Lord of the Universe. Therefore in this verse Sri Bhagavan tells such karma-kandis that the real Indra, the Jnana-Indra, is only the Atma-jnani.

The word ‘kala’ means either ‘death’ or ‘time’, and is a name of Yama, the God of death. Kala-karan means either ‘death to death’ or ‘conqueror of time’, and is a name of Lord Siva, who killed Yama.

Thus in this verse Sri Bhagavan reveals that the Jnani is not merely an incarnation of any particular God. The Jnani is Jnana itself, and hence He is none other than Indra, Lord Siva and all other Gods. Since the Jnani has conquered the senses, through which the whole universe is projected, He has in truth conquered the whole universe. Therefore, in the entire universe there is no power greater than the power of the Jnani's Self-abidance.

The above verse of Sri Bhagavan, which is also included in Ulladu Narpadu – Anubandham as verse 28, summarizes the ideas expressed in the following two verses of Sri Muruganar.

- 1030 Only the powerful *Jnani*, who has conquered the five [senses] by Self-abidance, which blazes forth unobstructed [by even the least *pramada*], is the wielder of the thunderbolt of *Jnana* who has destroyed Yama, who will never turn back [empty-handed]; [He is] the sun of *Jnana*, which destroys [the darkness of] the appearance of [the six inner enemies, namely desire, anger, miserliness, delusion, pride and] jealousy.
- 1031 Know that He [the *Jnani*] who, angrily driving it back into the heart [through Self-attention], destroys the cruel Surapadma, the 'I' [or ego], who possesses the power of creating and sustaining all the worlds through the six senses, is Kumara [Lord Subramanya], who revels in supreme bliss.

Sadhu Om: *Since it is only through the mind that one is able to know the world through the other five senses, the mind is sometimes counted as one among the senses, thus making them six in number.*

The fact that the true Jnani, who has conquered and destroyed the ego, is the embodiment of all the forms of God [Iswara-murtis], is also revealed by Sri Bhagavan in verse 6 of Devikalottaram, "He is the Four-faced One [Brahma], Siva and Vishnu; He is the king of the devas [Indra] and Guha [Lord Subramanya]; He alone is the Guru of all devas; He is the great Yogi and the possessor of the wealth of all tapas."

32 The Nature of Self (*Atma Swarupa Tiran*)

- 1032 O men who are [wrongly believing] that this body, which is [insentient like] a picture, is 'I', can a picture think anything? That which thinks and that which forgets is only the soul. Therefore, that which is called 'I' is [not the insentient body but] only that [the sentient soul].

Sadhu Om: *In this verse the ego or jiva, the false 'I', is referred to as if it were the real 'I'. Why? Since Sri Bhagavan's aim at first is only to prove the sentient being is only the jiva or mind which thinks and forgets. He then concludes that the body, which is insentient and which cannot think anything, is therefore not 'I'. Then in the next verse He reveals the truth that even this mind is not the real 'I'. Thus the method of teaching adopted by Sri Bhagavan in these two verses is the same as that mentioned in Kaivalya Navanitham, chapter 1, verse 18, namely, "Like showing the crescent moon by first*

showing some trees on earth, and like showing Arundhati [a small star] by first showing some [larger] stars in the sky ... ”.

1033 When that body is [thus found to be] different [from ‘I’], there must be another soul [or life] having as its body the soul, whose form is ‘I am the body’, shining within that soul. When this is so, except that [other soul], which is the real soul, can there be other souls? Tell me.

***Sadhu Om:** The thinking and forgetting soul mentioned in the previous verse is the jiva, whose form is the thought ‘I am the body’. But since that verse concludes that the body is not ‘I’, the jiva or ego is found to have actually no form at all. In other words, since the jiva is neither the insentient body nor the consciousness ‘I am’, but is only a false link which seemingly comes into existence when these two different things are mistaken to be one and the same, we have to conclude that the jiva has no real existence and that it therefore cannot be ‘I’, the real soul or life. Thus we must accept that there is another soul [another sentient reality] which has been existing all this time within that insentient jiva, activating it and having it as its abode. This other soul [the Self], which has the jiva as its body and which is the consciousness or life that makes that insentient jiva appear as if it were sentient or alive, alone is the real soul. When Self [the real, pure consciousness ‘I am’] is thus found to be the sole reality of the jivas [the unreal, mixed consciousness ‘I am the body’], how can there truly exist any souls other than Self? Thus this verse teaches that except Self, the one and only real soul or life, there never exists any soul at any time or in any place.*

***Michael James:** Refer here to verse 1051.*

1034 The reality which shines fully, without misery and without a body not only when the world is known but also when the world is not known [as in sleep], is your real form [*nija-swarupa*].

1035 Let the world which is known [through the five senses] be real or let it be discarded as an imagination of the mind which knows [it], do you not exist there as the form of the knowing consciousness? That, the pure consciousness [‘I am’], alone is the form of Self [*atma-swarupa*].

1036 The reality which is the mere consciousness [of one’s own existence] that remains when ignorance [of objects] is destroyed along with knowledge [of objects], alone is Self [*atma*]. In that *Brahma-swarupa*, which is abundant Self-awareness [*prajnana*], there is not the least ignorance [*ajnana*]. Know thus.

***Sadhu Om:** People generally think that the state of not knowing other things is a state of ignorance [*ajnana*]. But this is not correct. Indeed, the knowledge of other things is itself ignorance [see Ulladu Narpadu, verse 13]. Since even during the absence of the so-called knowledge of other things, which is nothing but ignorance, the pure Self-knowledge ‘I am’ is experienced by everyone, this knowledge of one’s own existence is alone the perfect knowledge [*purna-jnana*]. This knowledge, which is different from other knowledges, is referred to in this verse as ‘the reality which is mere [or empty]*

consciousness [vetrarivana unmai], *'Self'* [atma], *'Self-awareness'* [prajnana] and *'Brahma-swarupa'*.

1037 It [that *Brahma-swarupa*] is not only that which is devoid of ignorance [*ajnana*], but is also Self, which is perfect knowledge [*sujnana*]. If it were not real knowledge [*sat-bodha*], how could the differences of the intellect be born from it?

Sadhu Om: *The phrase 'the differences of the intellect' [vijñana-bheda] means the knowledge of differences [the knowledge of dyads and triads] which shines in the intellect or vijñanamaya-kosa and which is experienced by all jivas. Though this qualified knowledge [viśeṣa jñāna] is unreal, the base from which it seemingly rises or is born must be a real knowledge or consciousness. Therefore it is to be concluded that Self [atma], the source of the intellect, is of the very nature of knowledge [jñāna]. Refer here to verse 12 of Ulladu Narpadu, "... Know that Self is knowledge, not a void".*

1038 That knowledge is not a quality [*guna*] of Self, because the nature of Self is *nirguna* [devoid of qualities]. [Moreover] Self-knowledge is not an act [of knowing], because [Self is] without doership [*akartritva*]. [Therefore] knowledge is the very nature [of Self].

Michael James: *Since Self is the non-dual reality, there is no other thing to know Self, and hence it is Self alone that knows itself. But since Self is by nature without doership and hence actionless, Self's knowledge of itself is not an act of knowing; Self knows itself not by an act of knowing, but by being itself [see Upadesa Undiyar verse 26, "Being Self is itself knowing Self, because Self is that which is devoid of duality ..."]. Therefore it follows that the very nature of Self is itself knowledge, though it is a knowledge which is devoid of the act of knowing. That is why Sri Bhagavan says in verse 12 of Ulladu Narpadu, "... That which knows cannot be [true] knowledge ...". The same truth is also expressed by Sri Muruganar in verse 831 of Mey Tava Vilakkam, where he says, "The real 'I' is such a knowledge which knows neither other things nor itself". Since Self-knowledge is non-dual, it is a knowledge which shines without the triad [triputi] – the knower, the act of knowing and the object known – and hence it is quite different from other kinds of knowledge, all of which involve the act of knowing. Refer also to The Path of Sri Ramana – Part Two, appendix 4 (c), p. 236.*

1039 That adjunctless knowledge, which is merely powerful existence, which shines within of its own accord as the indestructible 'I am', and which does not depend even in the least upon any other thing, alone is the nature of one's own unshakeable reality [Self].

1040 How to know one's own reality, which [as described in the previous verse] exists as the shining of *Jnana*, like [one knows] petty sense-objects [second and third persons]? [But] if one peacefully abides in Self, [thereby] destroying the false first person 'I' [the ego which rises mixed with adjuncts as 'I am this, I am so-and-so'], the real first person [Self, the real 'I'] will shine forth of its own accord.

1041 Among the many groups which are triads [*triputis* or the three factors of objective knowledge], no factor [*puti*] can exist leaving Self. However, not even one among

those factors is Self. Only that which remains as the base of all those [factors] is the real state of Self.

Sadhu Om: The group of three factors, the seer, the act of seeing and the object seen, is a triad [triputi]. 'I am the seer', 'I am seeing' and 'these objects are seen by me' – none of these three knowledges can exist without an 'I'. But this 'I', the seer, is not Self; it is only the ego. Therefore, it is said in this verse that none of the three factors which constitute a triad is Self. Actions or pravrittis such as seeing are not the nature of Self. 'I am seeing' is the nature of the ego's knowledge. The knowledge of one's own existence, 'I am', alone is the nature of Self. If there did not exist the basic knowledge, 'I am', the qualified knowledge 'I am seeing' could not arise for the ego. Therefore it is said in this verse that none of the factors for a triad can exist leaving Self, and also that, since objective knowledge does not exist for Self, none of those factors are Self.

1042 One's own Self, whose greatness is eternity and perfect wholeness is not at all duality [another thing] to be attained. Uniting with [attaining yoga with] Self is knowing [one's own] existence [*sat*] and is not knowing any other thing. That knowledge [the knowledge of one's own existence] alone is the real form of Self.

Michael James: Real yoga is only union with Self, which is not the state of knowing other things but only the state of knowing one's own existence. Since in order to know a thing we must attend to it, the only path to attaining the real yoga is Self-attention and not attention to any other thing. When by Self-attention one thus attains yoga or union with one's own Self, it will be found that such Self-attention (the consciousness of one's own existence) is itself the real form or nature of Self.

1043 The one unending supreme knowledge which exists as the base for the appearance of all dyads [*dvandvas* or pairs of opposites] which are seen, such as subtle [*sukshama*] and gross [*sthula*], void [*sunya*] and full [*purna*], and despondency [arising from craving] and elation free from craving, alone is 'I' [the real form or nature of Self].

1044 The one real consciousness [*chinmaya*] that exists as the base for the rising of the many unreal selves [egos] and for [their] suffering, without itself suffering due to the miseries produced by the mind, which exists without performing the two karmas [good and bad], alone is Self.

1045 Know that the Heart-space which, like the sun, exists and shines of its own accord as the mere nature [of existence] 'I am' and as the true clarity [of consciousness], which is devoid of pride of [attachment to] the body, alone is Self.

1046 That which is the dense Silence, real consciousness, the subtlest light, which is not the ego that objectively knows things in front of it as 'this', and over which the mind becomes dejected and laments, "I do not know it", alone is Self, the existence-consciousness.

1047 All the worlds are a moving picture-show, [whereas] Self is the unmoving [screen of] real consciousness.

Michael James: Compare here verse 1218.

- 1048 [Just like in a cinema show] those triads [*triputis*] are projected on the screen of that reality [Self], which is the form of consciousness.
- 1049 Just like the keynote [*sruti*], which is the [unchanging] note mixed in with and indispensable for all the seven [changing] notes, and just like the screen, which is the [unmoving] base for the pictures which are moving [on it] due to [electric] power, that which exists devoid of the defects [of change and movement] is Self, the reality.

Michael James: Though the other notes are always changing, the keynote (sruti) remains ever unchanged; similarly, though the mind and its products, the body and world, are always undergoing innumerable changes, Self, the basic consciousness 'I am', remains ever unchanged. And though the pictures on the screen are always moving, driven by the electric power in the projector, the screen itself remains ever unmoving; similarly, though the mind and its products are ever moving, driven by the power of prarabdha, Self, the basic consciousness on which they appear, remains ever unmoving. Thus, like the keynote and the cinema screen, Self is not affected even in the least by any changes or movements which might appear to occur in it.

- 1050 That which exists always and everywhere without characteristics such as coming and going [or rising and setting], and which, because of its shining within every unreal thing, makes those unreal things, which are many and different, appear as if real, alone is Self, the supreme reality [*para vastu*].
- 1051 He who is unknown though residing within each and every *jiva*, and who is unceasingly, untiringly and efficiently activating all those *jivas*, having them as His bodies, alone is the immortal inner Self [*antar-atma*].

Michael James: Refer here to verse 1033 and its note.

- 1052 Know that Self is only [like] the unmoving axle in the middle [of the wheel], and not [like] the spokes of the revolving wheel, which are [similar to] the ever-suffering [or ever-wandering] ego-souls, whose nature is rising and falling [setting].

Sadhu Om: In this chapter, verses 1033, 1046, 1051, 1052 and 1057 clearly show the difference between the jiva [the individual soul or ego] and the atma [the real Self].

Though in some religious schools of thought such as Saiva Siddhanta and Buddhism the suffering jiva is called 'atma' [or jivatma], in the teachings of Sri Ramana and in many Advaitic scriptures the word 'atma' is not used to denote the jiva [the ego or unreal soul] but only to denote the supreme reality. Therefore, readers should understand that the difference between these various schools of thought lies only in the meaning given to the word 'atma', and not in their final conclusion about the unreality of the individual soul.

- 1053 That which appears [whatever it may be], let it appear; that which disappears [whatever it may be], let it all disappear. What [loss or gain] is it to Self-

knowledge? That which remains after everything has entered and ceased to exist in the oneness [*kevalam*] of Siva – who surges as the Whole [*purnam*] – alone is Self, one’s own nature.

Sadhu Om and Michael James: All that appears and disappears exists only in the wrong outlook of the ego, and not in the true outlook of Self. Therefore, Self is not affected even in the least by whatever appears or disappears, and hence in this verse and in verse 6 of Sri Arunachala Ashtakam Sri Bhagavan says, “Let them appear or let them disappear”. That which remains unaffected in any way either by the appearance of this universe or by its disappearance (as in sleep), and which remains shining as the one perfect Whole even after all this appearance has been destroyed at the time of dissolution (pralaya) – that alone is Self, that alone is ‘we’, that alone is Siva.

1054 The pure knowledge which shines forth [as the *sphurana* ‘I-I’] when that deceitful ego is scrutinized [through the enquiry ‘Who is this I?’] and destroyed, which the *Upanishads* praise as the glorious *darshan* of Siva’s dance and which is the true clarity of God’s Grace, alone is the form of Self.

Michael James: In this verse Sri Bhagavan reveals that the true significance of Nataraja, the dancing form of Lord Siva, is the shining forth of Self in the form of the sphurana, ‘I-I’.

1055 Know that the nature of *Brahma-swarupa*, which is [one] without another [i.e. which is non-dual], is the ancient glory. Though that ancient *swarupa* [Self or *Brahman*] appears to be like a void [*sunya*] it is not a void; [it is] the one single existence-consciousness [*sat-chit*], which is the whole reality itself.

Michael James: Refer also to verse 12 of Ulladu Narpadu.

1056 Sages say that the state [or place] in which the thought ‘I’ [the ego] does not rise even in the least, alone is Silence [*mouna*] or Self [*swarupa*]. [That] silent Self alone is God; Self alone is the *jiva*; Self alone is this ancient world.

Sadhu Om: The same idea is also expressed by Sri Bhagavan in the following two passages of Who am I?: “The place [or state] where the slightest trace of the thought ‘I’ does not exist, alone is Self [swarupa]. That alone is called Silence [mouna] Self alone is the world; Self alone is ‘I’; Self alone is God; all is the Supreme Self [Siva-swarupa].” Refer also to the note to verse 985 where it is explained in what sense everything is Self or Brahman.

1057 The reality – the mere existence which is to the world, soul and God as space is to all objects – alone is the nature of Self, which is the supreme Siva, and which is praised as the supreme abode [*param-dhama*] transcending the mind.

33 The Greatness of Self (Atma_Matchi Tiran)

1058 Since the greatness of the nature of oneness is that the seer alone is the seen, one's own reality [Self] is the greatest thing [*mahat*]. The silent radiant first person [which shines] after the ego, the first person who is the seer, has been completely destroyed, alone is Self, the supreme consciousness.

Sadhu Om: All the objects that are seen are nothing but an expansion of the ego, the false first person who sees them. Therefore the reality of both the seer [the ego] and the seen [the entire vast universe] is only one. That reality is nothing but Self, one's own existence-consciousness, which is the real first person that remains shining as radiant Self-awareness in the state of Silence in which the ego, the false first person, has been completely destroyed. Therefore, since the ego or seer is nothing but an unreal, petty and atom-like reflection of Self, one's own reality, Self alone is the greatest of all things.

1059 Those who dive deep fixing their mind [or attention] in Self – the abode of the bliss of consciousness, the vast ocean of peace, the greatest thing [*mahat*] – will attain the Grace of Self, the unending treasure.

1060 Self alone is the greatest thing [*mahat*]; indeed, there is no other *mahat* which is greater than Self. Therefore, by any kind of means [or *tapas*] whatsoever, we have not seen any other thing worthy for one to gain by bartering Self.

Sadhu Om: There is no attainment higher than the attainment of Self; therefore, it is foolish to forsake the attainment of Self in order to attain anything else such as the eightfold siddhis. However, there are some so-called mahatmas nowadays who ridicule Self-realization, saying that it is not the highest attainment and that even after attaining it there are many greater things which one can attain by practising some peculiar kinds of yoga. Therefore, in order to refute such wrong beliefs, in this verse Sri Bhagavan, the greatest of all tapasvins, emphatically declares the truth which He realized from His own experience, namely that whatever amount of whatever kind of tapas one may do, one cannot attain anything greater than Self-realization.

1061 Except the glorious attainment of the supreme Self, which is the greatest thing [*mahat*], there is no [worthy] attainment in this life. To know and experience it [the supreme Self], destroy the worthless ego-self by enquiry [or scrutiny] done in the heart.

1062 If by enquiring [Who am I?'] in the heart one attains the rare wealth of Self, which is the beautiful gem of true knowledge [*mey-jnana*] that is [ever] existing and shining, the poverty in the form of dense delusion will die, [thereby] destroying the misery of birth [and death], which is the root of [all] suffering.

1063 Being ignorant of the value of that gem [of *Jnana*], fools die lazily [without trying to attain it]. [On the other hand] those who, knowing the method [of Self-enquiry], have attained that [gem of *Jnana*], which is the rightful possession of everyone, are the Great Ones, those who have attained supreme bliss. Adore them.

- 1064 Instead of abiding in the consciousness of one's own Self by peacefully scrutinizing thus, 'Who am I, the form of consciousness?', why to suffer [by going out] through the wicked senses, mistaking [oneself] to be the reflection of consciousness [*chit-abhasa*], which, being separated [from the true Self-consciousness], is the form of the mind [*chittam*]?
- 1065 Even though one has attained abundantly and completely [all] the occult powers [*siddhis*] beginning with *anima*, which are loved [so much] by foolish worldly people, all the learning learnt by one who has not attained the perfect gem of Self by severing the primal knot [the *chit-jada-granthi* or ego], is void.

Michael James: Anima, the first of the eight siddhis, is the ability to become as small as an atom.

- 1066 They [the Sages] say that the treasure of Grace-Silence, the never-leaving thought of divine Siva [i.e. the unbroken state of attention to Self] – is the real wealth. That lustrous supreme treasure, which is difficult to attain, is the wealth which is [available] only to those who have the love to destroy [all] thought.
- 1067 Just as [a pearl-diver] dives into the ocean, [where pearls lie] hidden, with a one-pointed mind and with a stone [tied to his waist], obtains the precious pearl and [thereby] becomes happy, dive into the heart with non-attachment [*vairagya*], attain the treasure of Self and [thereby] be free from misery.

Sadhu Om: The same idea is also expressed by Sri Bhagavan in the following passage of Who am I?: "Just as a pearl-diver, tying a stone to his waist, dives into the ocean and takes the pearl lying at the bottom, so everyone, diving deep within himself with non-attachment [vairagya], can attain the pearl of Self."

- 1068 The consciousness of the extremely pure Self-experience – which silently exists devoid of both 'I' and 'mine' in one's own Self, which is the one bright reality, that which exists devoid of defects – alone is that which shines above [all].

34 The Supremacy of Self

(Atma Para Tiran)

- 1069 The existence-consciousness [*sat-bodha*] which shines without [ever] becoming unreal, alone is Self, which transcends the mind and in which the intellect and soul revel. That gracious Supreme, which is a heap of extreme peace, alone is the medicine to make the knowing [or thinking] mind [subside and become] peaceful.
- 1070 Those who do not know [themselves to be] Self, which is the reality uncontaminated by [even the least] unreality, but [know themselves to be] only the body, which is transient and unreal, will mentally feel happy by sometimes seeing with enthusiasm many kinds of forms of God.
- 1071 If one approaches and worships any other [any God other than Self], one can obtain all other things [all things other than Self]. But which petty one [which petty God] can bestow upon the *jiva* the life in the divine state of Siva, who is the eternal and real supreme consciousness?

Sadhu Om: *If one wishes to attain things other than Self, such as wealth, health, fame, heavenly pleasures and so on, one can attain them by worshipping Gods other than Self. But if one wishes to attain Self-realization, the state of Siva, the supreme consciousness, the direct path is for one to worship Self through the practice of Self-attention. By itself, the worship of any of the names and forms of God is not sufficient to enable one to attain Self-realization, and this is why Sri Bhagavan says in this verse, “Which petty God can bestow upon the jiva the life in the divine state of Siva?”. The worship of God in name and form can only purify the mind and thereby lead one indirectly to the path of Self-enquiry.*

From this verse the reader can understand that the real meaning intended by Sri Bhagavan in verse 8 of Ulladu Narpadu when He used the words “peruruvil” is only ‘in name and form’ and not ‘without name and form’. Refer here to appendix 4 (b) of The Path of Sri Ramana – Part Two.

1072 Those who do not know their own Self to be the witness both of that which is known in the waking state [the state of *sakala* or manyness] and of that which is not known even in the least in the enveloping sleep [the state of *kevala* or oneness], will be deluded [or distressed] as if they had [at one time] attained [a vision of God] but had [later] lost [it].

Sadhu Om: *Just as the objects of the world appear during the waking state and disappear during sleep, so visions of God appear at one time and disappear at another time. Therefore, those visions of God have no more reality than the world and the objects in it. But that which always shines [in the form of the Self-awareness ‘I am’] both in waking [when objects are known] and in sleep [when objects are not known] is Self. Only because they do not attend to and realize the ever-shining nature of Self as it is, some aspirants feel happy at one time as if they had seen God and feel distressed at other times as if they had lost that vision of God. But those who have known Self, which neither appears nor disappears, will never have cause to experience such distress.*

1073 Since the many Gods which are seen due to [the strength of] the worship [*upasana*] performed, undergo [the change of] appearance and disappearance, one’s own nature [Self], which is that which ever exists and is known, is the real and supreme God, which remains [for ever] without changing.

Sadhu Om: *The nature of the reality is to shine always, without changing or disappearing, whereas visions of God appear and disappear. Even before that God appeared, the knowledge of our existence [our existence-consciousness, *sat-chit*] was shining; even while that God was appearing, our existence was shining in the form ‘I, who see this God, exist’; and even after that God had disappeared, our experience was that we existed to know that disappearance. Therefore, since that which was shining in all the three times without changing or disappearing was only our own existence-consciousness, this verse affirms that that existence-consciousness [*sat-chit*], which is Self, alone is the supreme God [*para-deva*] and the real God [*nija-deva*].*

1074 Here or there, as this or that, whatever is known wherever as a second person due to [one's] looking through the objective knowledge [the mind] – all of them in every place are [nothing but] the pure space of light [the space of consciousness], one's own reality which exists and shines as Self.

Sadhu Om: In the answer to question 6 of chapter two of Upadesa Manjari, Sri Bhagavan says, "Wherever whatever objects are known, it is Self that knows itself there as those objects". Refer also to verse 945, and to p.19 of The Path of Sri Ramana – Part Two.

1075 Knowing that whatever is known objectively as 'this' or 'that' is [nothing but] an imagination of the mind, if one remains still [*summa irukka*] in that which is neutral [i.e. if one remains merely as 'I am', the neutral consciousness which does not objectively know any second or third person], that reality which [then] shines forth alone is existence-consciousness [*sat-chit*], the supreme and great Self.

1076 One's becoming confused by scrutinizing, due to delusion, principles [*tattvas*] other than the supreme principle, Self, is just like undergoing the pain of thoroughly scrutinizing a barber's worthless rubbish instead of collectively discarding it.

Sadhu Om: The same idea is also expressed by Sri Bhagavan in the following passage of Who am I?: "Just as it is fruitless for one to scrutinize the rubbish which should be collectively discarded, so it is fruitless for one who should know himself to count the number and scrutinize the properties of the tattvas [the principles which constitute the world, soul and God] which are veiling oneself, instead of collectively casting all of them aside."

Sri Bhagavan here condemns the way in which scholars waste their time by reading, learning by heart, discussing and endlessly arguing about the details regarding how the universe is created from the five elements, regarding the functioning of the pranas, jnanendriyas, karmendriyas, nadis and so on in the body, regarding the various kinds of jivas, and regarding all the other innumerable such classifications given in the scriptures. Since all these principles or tattvas are only second or third persons, the non-Self [anatma], one should not waste one's time in scrutinizing them, but should instead scrutinize Self, the only real principle, through the enquiry 'Who am I?'

1077 Know that for those who abide within with dutiful love [for Self], bliss will surgingly rise more and more. Bliss, love, Siva, Self, Grace, knowledge, peace and liberation – all these are [only names for] one's own real nature.

35 The State of Fearlessness

(Abhaya Nilai Tiran)

1078 Because of the ignorance of the mind experiencing a sense of difference [*bheda-buddhi*] in Self, [even] great *devas* are disturbed by fear. [Therefore] it is wise to remain without fear in the supreme state of non-duality, having attained the reality, one's own Self, through negation [of the non-Self].

Sadhu Om: *The nature of jiva is to think that fear will be removed only when there is some other person with him. But this idea is foolish. How can there be cause for fear in the state of Self, where no other thing exists? Only in a state where there exists something other than oneself is it possible for one either to have desire for that thing or to have fear of it. Therefore, true fearlessness can be attained only in the non-dual state of Self, where no other thing exists.*

To illustrate how fearlessness can be attained only when one attains the state of Self, Sri Bhagavan used to narrate the following story: After Lord Vishnu had killed Hiranya, Hiranya's son Prahlada was happily ruling the kingdom. But after some time, a fear arose in Prahlada. "Because Lord Vishnu is kind to me, I am living safely. But if one day He becomes angry with me, He will kill me just as He killed my father," thought Prahlada. Being a great devotee of Lord Vishnu, Prahlada had no one else to turn to, so he prayed to Him. The Lord immediately appeared before Prahlada, who then explained his fear and prayed for the state of fearlessness. "Yes," said Lord Vishnu, "You are correct. By seeing me like this in name and form, you cannot be free from fear. You must see me within yourself. Only when you thus realize me to be not different from yourself, will you attain the state of fearlessness". Then the Lord taught him the path of Self-enquiry. When Prahlada followed the Lord's instructions and realized Self, he attained the state of fearlessness. This story thus illustrates that even God cannot serve as permanent refuge from fear so long as one retains the sense of difference [bheda-buddhi]. Only by attaining the non-dual Self can one become truly and permanently free from fear.

1079 Only when one attains the freedom of Self [the state of Self-realization] will the abundant peace of mind in which one will endlessly rejoice, be obtained. In the experience of that monarchy [the kingdom of Self], which is the real and space-like [state of] non-duality, there will not be the least dual desire for fear.

Sadhu Om: *Only in this one non-dual state of Self, will the truth of the words of Saint Appar, "Now there is nothing to fear, and nothing will come to cause fear," be known practically.*

34 Non-Duality (Advaita Tiran)

1080 Since the one existence-consciousness-bliss alone is seen as God and the soul – just as because of a pot or a room the one open space alone is seen as this or that space [as a pot-space or a room space] – their existence [the real existence of God and of the soul] cannot be different. Know thus.

Michael James: *The space in a pot [ghatakasa] and the space in a room [mathakasa] appear to be different only because of the limiting adjuncts of the pot and the room, for in reality the space is only one. Similarly, God and the jiva appear to be different only because of their limiting adjuncts, for in their real nature, which is existence-consciousness-bliss, they are one and the same. Refer to verse 24 of Upadesa Undiyar, where Sri Bhagavan says, "In [their real] nature [which shines] as existence, God and*

the souls are only one substance [vastu]. [Their] sense of adjuncts [upadhis] alone is different.”

1081 In the reality [the real consciousness ‘I am’] is it possible for two different things to come into existence as *jiva* and Siva? If there is any difference [in substance] between the master-doll and the slave-doll, both made of the ambrosia attained, tell me?

Michael James: The only difference between two dolls made of ambrosia, one in the form of a master and the other in the form of a slave, is their names and forms. Their substance, the ambrosia (amrita) or nectar of immortality, is one and the same. Similarly, the substance or reality of both God (Siva) and the soul (jiva) is the one immortal Self, and the seeming difference between them lies only in their names and forms.

37 Atheism (*Nastika Tiran*)

1082 Will not only he who mistakes himself to be that which does not exist [i.e. to be the body, which is in truth non-existent] declare You [God] to be non-existent? How can he who knows his own reality as it is [that is, as the mere existence-consciousness ‘I am’] deny You, who are that [same] reality, saying that You are non-existent?

Michael James: A note in the Tamil text states that this verse is addressed to God, and that it concerns the belief of the atheist who believes God does not exist. ‘Asattu’ means that which does not exist. ‘Mey’ means the reality. That is to say, ‘How can one who knows that he exists say that God, who is not different from that existence or reality, does not exist?’

Sadhu Om: Sri Bhagavan concludes verse 20 of Ulladu Narpadu by saying, “ ... because Self is not other than God”. Accordingly, the atheist who denies the existence of God is thereby denying the existence of his own Self. Since no one can truly deny his own existence, those who wish to deny the existence of God should first try to enquire and know the true nature of their own existence, ‘What is the truth of my existence? Who am I?’ If they do so, they will automatically come to know the truth of God’s existence. Therefore we should understand that those who realize their own existence as it is, will never deny the existence of God, and that since no one can truly deny his own existence, no one is really an atheist. But who is the real theist will be explained in verse 1084.

38 Theism (*Astika Tiran*)

1083 For those who say that He [God] does exist, He exists in [their] heart as consciousness. [But] in the venomous mind [of those who do not believe in Him], He will never exist [that is, He will never shine or be known]. If, by purifying the

venomous mind, one sees without delusion, He will shine triumphantly and unalloyed as Self.

- 1084 Know that the Buddha [the Sage or *Atma-jnani*], who has experienced the pure reality [Self], having clearly known ‘This is the nature of consciousness’, alone is truly worthy of the name ‘theist’ [*Astika*].

Sadhu Om: Since the world, soul and God all appear, exist and disappear simultaneously, they all have the same degree of reality [sama-satya] as each other. Therefore, if one accepts one’s own existence as a soul or jiva, it amounts to one’s accepting the existence of the other two entities, the world and God. That is why it is concluded in the note to verse 1082 that no one is truly an atheist. Yet who is the real theist? All who say that God exists are not real theists. Only the Jnani, who has realized himself to be the supreme Self, having given up the wrong knowledge that he is an individual or jiva, is fit to be called a real theist [Astika]. Thus the beauty of verse 1082 and 1084 lies in their final conclusion, namely that anyone who cannot deny his own existence is not an atheist, and that anyone who has not realized Self is not a theist.

39 Beginningless Freedom From Impurity

(*Anadi Mala Mukta Tiran*)

- 1085 Since the darkness of the delusion of [identifying] the body [as ‘I’] has never existed [either in the past, present or future] for Him who knows His real nature, which is the sun of true knowledge [*mey-jnana*], and who has the space [of consciousness] as His body, know that the darkness [of ignorance or *ajnana*] exists only for him who is blinded by [identifying] the body [as ‘I’].

Sadhu Om: It is only according to the outlook of the jiva, the unreal soul, that it is said in sastras that bondage exists in the form of impurities such as ego, maya, the darkness of ignorance, and so on, and that liberation will be attained when such bondage is removed by sadhana and by divine Grace. However, in this chapter it is revealed that, since this jiva is only a non-existent and false entity, for you, who are Self, the reality, there never exists any such thing as impurity, maya or bondage, and that freedom from impurity [mala-mukti] is your beginningless real nature [anadi swabhava].

- 1086 The enquiry which should be done and the *Jnana* which should be attained, are applicable only to the *jiva*, who is afflicted by the delusion of attachment [to the body as ‘I’]. The delusion of wrong knowledge [*mala bodha*] is not applicable to [the *Jnani*, who is] the non-dual Self, which is devoid of delusion and free without beginning from impurity [*mala*].
- 1087 Is it possible for Self, which exists pervading everywhere as the real essence [*nija rasam*], to be bound by *maya*, which is a false appearance? [Therefore] do not be perturbed as if you were bound, [but instead] calmly enquire and calmly know [this truth].
- 1088 Why are you unnecessarily in a turmoil by mentally thinking yourself to be the limit of the adjunct [the body]? Know that your reality [Self] exists [and shines]

unobstructed even in sleep, where you merge devoid of [any such] mixing adjunct, [and thereby be free from misery].

40 The Life Lived in Accordance with Reality

(*Sat-Achara Vazhkkai Tiran*)

- 1089 O men who wish to live for ever, you do not know what is the way to live [thus]. Seeing a day-dream through the [darkness of] delusion which sprouts out from the void [of *maya*], you are proud to think and argue that that which is fallen [your present fallen life, your so-called waking state] is the [real] life. [By clinging to the Self-consciousness 'I am' and by thus] piercing through the void [which is the cause for the false delusion of this waking state], achieve the real life [the ever-imperishable state of Self].
- 1090 Observance of being indifferent towards everything by preventing the wicked anger and desire so that the confusion of the defective mind-illusion [*mana-maya*] may be destroyed, alone is the best life lived in accordance with reality [*sat-achara vazhkkai*]. Observe [such a life].
- 1091 The true, love-suffused life of abiding unobstructedly in the heart as one's own reality, alone is the beauty of *Jnana*, the enjoyment of the nature of [*Siva-swarupa-bhoga*], in which the unreal and delusive ego, which prevailed [formerly], has been destroyed.
- 1092 The *Jnani*, who shines as the intense beauty [or happiness] of Self, living the majestic life of indifference [*udasina*], having placed his entire burden at the Feet of Lord Siva, alone is truly beautiful [or happy] and fortunate.
- 1093 Bliss will surge forth in the heart which is soaked in the experience of the love-suffused true knowledge [*mey-jnana*]. Misery-creating, delusion-caused desire will not exist there. That extremely pure natural life of Self will be full of peace.
- 1094 That which is worthy to have as [one's] target is Self, the knowledge which is pure bliss. The perfect life is for one to exist directly as that [Self], abiding in the heart through the unforgettable knowledge ['I am'].
- 1095 The divine life [of abiding as Self] alone is the life of supreme reality. On the other hand, life in the world which is seen, is a life of delusion. What an illusion [*maya*] it is to live a life of fear [fearing death]. Is not that [life of fear] merely [one's] drowning in the play of the mind-illusion [*mano-maya*]?
- 1096 No *tapas* is needed for those who abide [firmly in Self] devoid of the *jiva*-mischief of catching the world of delusive [names and] forms by the attention which springs upon the petty sense-objects [on account of] believing the world which is seen through the five senses to be real.

Sadhu Om: What is meant in this verse by the words 'jiva-mischief' [uyir-cheshtai] is only the extroverted activity [pravritti] of the mind going out towards the world through the five senses. The real 'observance of reality' [sat-achara] is to prevent the mind from thus running after second and third persons and to make it abide instead in Self, the real first-person consciousness.

1097 For those who are established in Grace and who experience [or rule] all the worlds as Self, having lost the life of the rising ego and having conquered the dyads such as pain and pleasure, no [other] *tapas* need be done.

Sadhu Om: In order to do any kind of tapas, an ego or individual 'I' must rise as the doer. But the perfect fruit of all tapas is the destruction of this 'I'. Once the 'I' is destroyed, what other tapas is to be done and who is to do it? That is why, in order to establish that any yoga other than the destruction of the ego is useless, Sri Tayumanuvar sang, "When you remain still [summa irukka], bliss will surge forth; why then [to do any] such illusory yoga [maya-yoga]? Is it possible [to attain bliss] by your objective attention? Say no more, O karma-nishtha [one immersed in karma], O you small child."

41 Formlessness (*Nishkala Tiran*)

1098 If oneself is a form [the body], even Self, the source who is the Lord, will also appear in that manner [i.e. will also appear as a form]. If oneself is not a form, since there cannot be knowledge of other things [in that state], will that statement [that God has a form] be correct?

Sadhu Om: This chapter deals with the question of whether or not God has a form. So long as one thinks that one has a name and form, the body, one must accept that God also has a name and form. Only after one has lost one's ego-sense, 'I am the body', can one know God as formless. Till then, one should not rise to argue either that God has form or that He has no form. Verse 4 of Ulladu Narpadu is also to be read here.

1099 He [God] assumes [any] form imagined by the devotee through repeated thinking in prolonged meditation [*bhavana*]. Though He [thus] assumes endless names and forms by [His seemingly identifying Himself with] illusory adjuncts [*maya-upadhi*], the real formless consciousness alone is Hara [God].

Sadhu Om: The jiva projects his own vasanas, which lie stored in his chittam, through the five senses and sees them outside as the world of names and forms. Visions of God in name and form are also seen in the same manner. Sri Bhagavan used to explain that even the viswarupa darshan [the vision of the cosmic form of God] shown by Sri Krishna to Arjuna in the Bhagavan Gita was only a projection of Arjuna's own vasanas. Sri Krishna gave Arjuna divine sight [divya-drishti] to enable him to see in Him the auspicious ideas [bhavanas] about God which Arjuna already had stored in the form of vasanas within his chittam. This divya-drishti was not jnana-drishti, as some commentators have wrongly stated, but was only the ability to project certain auspicious vasanas which existed in a subtle form in his chittam and to see them as gross objects outside. In jnana-drishti, Jnana alone will shine and no names and forms will be seen. What Sri Krishna said was only, "I give you the divine eye" [divyam dadami te chakshuh – XI.8]. Moreover, He said, "See in me whatever else you want to see" [yach chanyad drashtum ichchasi – XI. 7], and not, "See me as I really am"! What is to be understood here is that Sri Krishna simply

enabled Arjuna to project and see in a gross form the past ideas [bhavanas] about the names and forms of God which were already stored within his chittam.

1100 Being still and attending to the supreme reality [Self] by means of the *para-vak* [the supreme word 'I-I'] uttered by the heart, alone is praising the perfect primal Supreme, which is the inner light [of knowledge] that is shining in the heart and that is devoid of names and forms, which are unreal illusions like the blueness of the sky.

Sadhu Om: *Atma-anusandhana, the state of attention to and abiding as Self, alone is the perfect way of praising God [see verses 730 and B13, where it is said that atma-anusandhana is the supreme devotion to God]. Why? What is the aim of all praises or stotras? Is it not to glorify the real greatness of the Lord? The only way to glorify the greatness of the Lord permanently and perfectly is to make the ego merge into Self so that it will not rise again. That is, since the real greatness of God lies in the fact that He alone exists, and since that perfect state of oneness is marred by the rising of the ego [being seemingly divided into two separate entities, the soul and God], only when one abides in Self and thereby prevents the ego from rising, does the real greatness of God shine in all its glory. Therefore, the perfect way of praising God is only to abide in Self without the least rising of the ego.*

1101 The heart of any kind of praise [*stuti*] sung by those who are observing such *Jnana-achara* [i.e. by *Jnanis*, who are ever remaining still and attending to the supreme as described in the previous verse] is only that pure supreme reality [Self], and is not in any way limited to [a particular] name and form.

Sadhu Om: *Though Jnanis praise God in name and form, it should be understood that what they are really praising is only Self, the nameless and formless supreme reality. It should not be thought that their praises are limited to any particular name and form. From this verse it is clear that whenever Sri Bhagavan uses the names 'Annamalai' or 'Arunachala' in works such as Sri Arunachala Stuti Panchakam, He is in fact referring only to Self. Similarly, Lord Siva who is praised in the verses of Saivite Saints such as Jnanasambandhar, and Lord Vishnu who is praised by Vaishnavite Saints such as the Azhwars, are only Self itself.*

Sri Muruganar: *The true object of any kind of praise [stotra] sung by Sages, who observe Jnana-achara in the form of Self-abidance [atma-anusandhana], is only that supreme reality which transcends mental conception, and not any particular name and form which they handle only as symbols. Though in a superficial view those stotras appear to be concerned with many different religions, those who can comprehend with deep insight, will not fail to perceive the common nature of impartiality with which they [the sages] behave devoid of that [concern with any particular religion].*

1102 The raising of the gracious Foot of Lord Nataraja, who dances the loving enquiry, [thereby] embracing His devotees so that they may reach the Heart, is a new and wonderful mystery, just like the moon and the sun uniting together.

Michael James: The Self-enquiry done with great love by a devotee is nothing but the functioning of the Lord's Grace within him. Hence it is metaphorically said in this verse that the Lord Himself dances the loving Self-enquiry. The rising of the sphurana 'I-I', which enchants and embraces the devotee's mind, thereby leading it to the Heart, is here likened to the Lord raising His Foot at the climax of His dance. This rising of the sphurana is a new and wonderful experience, and it is here likened to the moon and the sun uniting or being wedded together because the devotee's mind is a reflected light, like the light of the moon, while the Heart is the original light or consciousness, like the light of the sun, and hence the merging of the mind into the Heart is similar to the moonlight uniting with and merging into the sunlight.

This verse thus reveals that the true significance of the form of Lord Nataraja is only the formless experience of the sphurana 'I-I'. See also verse 1054.

1103 Being deluded in this life, wandering around the whole world and experiencing misery [on account of one's desiring so many things], is foolish. Abide in the Feet of the Supreme Siva, the [state of] Silence which is *Sadasiva* and which destroys the movements [*chalanas*] caused by the ego.

1104 Except those who subside [and abide] in the Heart with consciousness [with remembrance of the existence-consciousness 'I am'], no one can attain the flawless state of reality, [because] the reality is veiled by the mind's forgetfulness and thinking in sleep and in waking respectively.

42 One who Abides in the Natural State

(Sahaja Nishthar Tiran)

1105 The *Jnani*, the unchanging one, who is sleeping naturally within the body, does not know His activities [*vyavahara*] in the world, His absorption [*nishtha*] and His sleep, just as one who is sleeping in the cart does not know the moving of the cart, its standing still and its lying [with the bullocks unyoked].

Michael James: The above verse by Sri Muruganar was rewritten by Sri Bhagavan in the form of the following verse, which is also included in Ulladu Narpadu – Anubandham as verse 31.

B21 To the knower of the reality [*mey-jnani*], who is asleep within the fleshy body, which is [like] a cart, His activities [in waking and in dream], His absorption [*nishtha*] and His sleep are similar to the moving of the cart, its standing still and the cart being unyoked, to one who is sleeping in the cart.

Sadhu Om: The bodily life of a Jnani appears to be real only in the outlook of others. Thus ignorant people [ajnanis] think, "This Jnani is performing activities here in the waking state". But since the Jnani is in truth bodiless, He does not know those activities; for Him the body and its activities are completely non-existent. Such is the teaching given in this verse. Just as the traveller who is sleeping in a bullock-cart does not know the movement of the cart, and just as a sleeping child does not know that it is taking food

[see verse 1140], so the Jnani does not know the state in which the body, senses and mind are active.

When the body, senses and mind of a Jnani remain without activities [pravrittis], people think, “This Jnani is in samadhi”. This is similar to the state in which the bullocks remain yoked to the cart but stand without moving. Even this state of samadhi or nishtha is not known to the Jnani; for Him it is completely non-existent.

When people think, “This Jnani is sleeping”, this state of seeming sleep in which His body, senses and mind appear to be unconscious, is similar to the cart lying with the bullocks unyoked. Just as even the cart’s lying unyoked is not known to the traveller sleeping in the cart, so even the state of sleep is not known to the Jnani; for Him this state is completely non-existent.

Therefore, these three different states in the life of a Jnani appear to exist only in the wrong outlook of ajnanis, who see the bodiless Jnani as a body. For the Jnani, the state of activity [waking and dream], the state of samadhi and the state of sleep do not in reality exist at all. That is why Sri Bhagavan says in verse 31 of Ulladu Narpadu, “Who can and how to conceive what His [the Jnani’s] state is?”

- 1106 The pure mind of the *Jnani*, which exists and shines as the witness [who is unattached to anything], is a clear mirror which reflects all the defective thoughts of the perverted minds of others [who come near Him] and which [thus] deludes the minds of people by making Him [the *Jnani*] appear to be defective.
- 1107 To the eyes of those [ignorant people] who are deluded by the sense of doership [*kartritva*], the *Sahaja Jnani*, who lives transcending even the *sattva-guna*, may sometimes appear like one who has much deceptive *rajo-guna*. On account of that, do not doubt [their *Jnana*, because the *rajo-guna* is merely a reflection of the rajasic thoughts of the onlooker].
- 1108 If one does wrong to a Great One, a *Jivan-mukta*, who shines and is known as treasure of purity, one will earn and carry as a burden vast blame and sins for this life and future lives [that is, blame to be experienced in this life and sins whose fruits are to be experienced in future lives].
- 1109 Low-minded people do wrong in the same manner both to bad people and to great Sages, not knowing them to be different, just like a dog which lives by licking in the same manner both the oil-expeller and the *Siva-lingam*, not knowing [the difference between them].

Michael James: After puja has been performed, oil will remain on the surface of the *Siva-lingam*. Therefore, being ignorant of the sanctity of the *Siva-lingam*, stray dogs will sometimes come and lick the oil from it in the same way that they lick the oil spilt on the outside of an oil-expeller. Similarly, being ignorant of the real greatness of the *Jnani*, low-minded people will behave towards Him in the same wrong and disrespectful way that they behave towards even bad people.

- 1110 Though a dog barks at the sun, the insult will not affect the sun. [Similarly] ignorant people’s petty words of blame [censure, ridicule or slander] will not touch one who has attained the light of true knowledge [*mey-jnana*], which is bright like the sun.

43 One who Firmly Abides as Pure Consciousness (*Sthita Prajnar Tiran*)

1111 The *Jnani* [literally, the one who is the space of consciousness], who ever abides only as the bright knowledge [the mere consciousness ‘I am’] devoid of the difference of the transitory [states of] attention of introversion and extroversion, alone is the immutable *sthita-prajna* [the one who firmly abides as the immutable pure consciousness].

Sadhu Om: He who shines devoid of the dual feeling ‘in’ and ‘out’ and who does not experience the least sense of difference between the state of absorption [samadhi] attained through introversion [ahamukka] and the state of activity [vyavahara] which results from extroversion [bahirmukka], alone is a sthita-prajna [one who firmly abides as pure consciousness] or a dridha-jnani [one who has attained steadfast knowledge]. He who experiences Self only in the state of samadhi and who experiences the body and world when he is not in samadhi, is only an aspirant [abhyasi] and not a sthita-prajna. Since this difference in experience does not exist for the sthita-prajna, He ever remains in sahaja-nishtha [the natural state of Self-abidance].

1112 Know that He who, through the true knowledge of the Heart, shines as the nature of Siva [*Siva-swarupa*], which is Self and which is devoid of ‘I’ [the ego], is the perfectly silent *sthita-prajna*, who is not moved by anything.

Sadhu Om: Of all movements [chalanas and vrittis], the rising of the ego as ‘I am this body’ is the first. Therefore, all other kinds of movement [chalana] will naturally become non-existent for Him who has attained the state of Silence by subsiding and knowing Himself to be the motionless [achala] Siva, who is Self and who is completely devoid of even the least rising of the ego, ‘I am this’. Such a steadfast state of knowledge alone is the state of sthita-prajnatvam [firm abidance as pure consciousness].

44 One who has Severed the Knot (*Granthi Bhedittar Tiran*)

1113 Just as the whirling-minded ignorant people [*ajnani*s] see [only] the world, which is a bundle of sense-objects, everywhere due to [their] objective knowledge [the knowledge by which they see everything as second and third persons, as objects other than themselves], so the Sage who abides [as Self] having severed the knot [the *chit-jada-granthi* or ego] and having [thereby] given up [the objective knowledge] sees [only] Self, the basic consciousness, existing and shining everywhere.

1114 He alone is a Buddha [a Sage or *Atma-jnani*] who ever exists and shines as the [self-luminous] sun [of *Jnana*] and in front of whom the dual world-appearance, which appears as a wonder having so many differences, does not appear and becomes [completely] non-existent.

1115 Know that the knower of reality [*mey-jnani*], who is well established in the Heart and who is always contentedly rejoicing in the greatness of Self, will neither think the world to be a dense [unreal] delusion, nor will think it to be other than Himself.

Michael James: The statement which is made in Sri Ramana Gita, chapter 1, verse 11, and which is reiterated in this present verse, namely that the Jnani does not consider the world either to be unreal or to be other than Himself, has been misinterpreted by some people to support their wrong belief that the world of names and forms is real as such. However, the fact that such an interpretation is wrong is made clear in the previous verse of this work, where it is stated that the dual world-appearance (i.e. the world of names and forms) is non-existent to the Buddha or Jnani, and also in the next two verses of this work, where it is stated that the Jnani knows that consciousness is the sole reality of the world, and that in the state of Jnana or pure consciousness nothing exists except that pure consciousness.

That is, the Jnani does not experience Himself to be the body, which is a mere name and form, but only to be Self, which is existence-consciousness-bliss (sat-chit-ananda), and hence, according to the principle established in verse 4 of Ulladu Narpadu, He does not see the world as names and forms but only as Himself, the nameless and formless pure consciousness or sat-chit-ananda (see Ulladu Narpadu verse 18, “ ... to those who have known Self, the reality shines devoid of form as the substratum of the world ... ”).

Thus, since the Jnani knows that He, the reality, alone exists, and that the unreal names and forms are completely non-existent, He cannot see the world as something unreal or other than Himself. On the other hand, since the ajnani sees the world as names and forms, it is right and necessary for him to discriminate between the unreal names and forms and the real sat-chit-ananda, and to regard the world of names and forms as an unreal delusion created by the mind, which is itself an unreal and non-existent entity. Refer here to Maharshi’s Gospel, Book Two, chapter 3 (8th ed. p. 60), where Sri Bhagavan says, “There is no alternative for you but to accept the world as unreal, if you are seeking the Truth and the Truth alone”. Refer also to verses 50 and 51 of this work, where Sri Bhagavan says that the statement ‘the world is real’ can be correctly understood only by the Jnani and not by the ajnani.

1116 The *Jnani* knows the whole world, which appears in consciousness, to be of the nature of consciousness [the Self]. He, the fortunate one, will [always] abide in Self, knowing that other than consciousness [the Self] there is no reality for the world.

1117 He whose mind has been destroyed, having drowned in the non-dual whole [*advaita-purna*], will never be perturbed in this unreal life of duality, [because] in that supreme state of Grace, [the state of] Self, which is pure consciousness [unmixed with any adjuncts such as ‘this’], nothing such as ‘I’ [the ego or subject] and ‘this’ [the world or object] exists except that [Self, the pure consciousness ‘I am’].

Michael James: The last line may also be translated as, ‘nothing [no adjunct-feeling] such as “I am this” exists’.

In the state of pure consciousness, nothing exists except that pure consciousness, 'I am'. Therefore, in the true outlook of the Jnani, who ever abides as pure consciousness, nothing exists as 'I' [the ego] or as 'this' [the world].

- 1118 Since the *Jnani* has severed the knot of doership [*kartritva*], He does not see [any] action which must be done [by Him]. Since in His state of *Jnana* not even an atom will appear to be an insentient other object [an insentient object other than Himself], not even an atom of doubt or delusion will arise [for Him].
- 1119 Though the mind [of a *Jnani*] which has been enchanted by the true light [of Self-knowledge] is [seemingly] engaged as before in the five senses, which know taste, smell, sight, sound and touch, it has [in fact] been severed [destroyed] by the power of intense Self-enquiry.
- 1120 He who has attained the life of a *Jnani* in the heart, will not derive even the least pleasure from the life of the fleshy body and the petty [five] senses. Is not that life of Silence itself the unlimited and unbroken experience of [the bliss of] the supreme *Brahman*?

Michael James: Therefore, in front of that unlimited bliss, will not the petty pleasure derived through the five senses become utterly insignificant?

- 1121 Just as a river which has joined and become one with the wavy ocean will not become separate [from the ocean] by changing [itself once again into a river], so for the *jiva* which has reached [and become one with] Self, which is the form of knowledge, there will be no rebirth on account of its being deluded.

Sadhu Om: Since the very nature of Self is knowledge or Jnana, and since birth is nothing but the wrong knowledge or ignorance 'I am the body', which appears to exist only on account of delusion or forgetfulness of Self, the soul which has attained true Self-knowledge will never be born again.

- 1122 Among those whose minds are possessed with forgetfulness [of Self], those who are born will die and those who die will be born [again]. [But] know that those whose minds are dead, having known the glorious supreme reality, will remain only there in [that] elevated state [of reality], devoid of [both] birth and death.
- 1123 He who has seen [Himself to be] existence-consciousness [*sat-chit*], has seen *Sadasiva*; He has seen the destruction of fear-creating duality; He has seen His natural state, which is the pure state of *turiya*; He is the Great One; He will not see birth [ever again].
- 1124 If at one time previously the original knot [the ego] has been severed, one will not be bound again at any time. This [state of liberation], which is one's own nature, alone is the state of Godhood; this alone is the powerful Lordship; this alone is the abundant peace. Know thus.

45 The Greatness of the Sage (Sandror Matchi Tiran)

1125 When He who has [realized] God [*mahesan*] within as the great reality [as His own Self] and who does not have even a single attachment, walks, know that that God, who exists and shines as the Protector from danger, is walking.

Sadhu Om: This verse can be interpreted in the following two ways:

a) *When the Jnani walks, know that it is God Himself who is walking in the form of that Jnani.*

b) *When the Jnani walks, know that God Himself is walking behind Him to protect His body from danger.*

The idea expressed in version (b) is also expressed in a verse of Kurundirattu which Sri Bhagavan sometimes used to refer to [see My Recollections of Bhagavan Sri Ramana by Devaraja Mudaliar, 1970 edition, pp. 31 to 32].

1126 He [the *Jnani*] who abides as Siva Himself, having destroyed the mind [the limited knowledge 'I am so-and-so'], is residing equally within all *jivas* [as their real Self, the unlimited knowledge 'I am']. [Therefore] by one's meditating upon the form [*swarupa*] of Him, who clearly shines as a *Mukta*, [by His Grace] the true light [of Self-knowledge] will shine forth from within [as the *sphurana* 'I-I'].

Michael James: The swarupa of the Jnani may here be taken to mean either His physical form or His true nature. But since the true nature of the Jnani is Self, one's own true nature, which is common to all (samanya), and since this verse points to the swarupa of the Jnani in particular (visesha), it is more fitting here to take the word 'swarupa' to mean His physical form. Moreover, when we see the other verses in this chapter, we can understand that they are all concerned with the greatness of the Jnani's physical form and the priceless benefit to be gained by associating with that form.

Sri Bhagavan often used to extol the great efficacy of sat-sang (association or contact with a Jnani), and He also used to point out that mental contact is better than mere physical contact (see Day by Day, 9-3-46). That is why Sri Bhagavan assures in this verse that by one's thinking of the Jnani's form, the true light of Self-knowledge will shine forth from within. That is also the reason why Sri Bhagavan affirmed that by one's merely thinking of the form of Arunachala, Mukti would be attained. Therefore, devotees need not fear that Sri Bhagavan's sat-sang is no longer available now that His physical form has passed away; His sat-sang is always available to those who turn their mind towards Him.

Sri Muruganar: The swarupa of a Mukta resides as the swarupa of Siva in all jivas. In order to reveal that the reason why the true light will shine forth of its own accord in the heart of those who practice meditation upon His swarupa, it is said, "He who abides as Siva Himself", and, "He is residing equally within all jivas".

- 1127 The glance of Him [the *Jnani*] who is rich in true knowledge [*mey-jnana*], which is the supreme life that surges like the rising of a hundred suns without ever diminishing, will easily bestow the unequalled *Jnana* upon those who bathe in it, thereby saving them and leading them to the goal of immortality.

Michael James: Muruganar indicated that the following verse by Bhagavan should be included here. It originally appeared as verse 7 of the appendix to Guru Vachaka Kovai.

Through lecturers, scriptures and virtuous deeds, no state can be attained equal to [that state which is attained by] the clue [of Self-enquiry or Self-attention] which is clearly attained within by association with a Sadhu [one who abides as the reality or sat]. [Knowing this for certain,] go.

In this verse Sri Bhagavan expresses in a two-line metre (kural-venba) the same idea which He expressed in a four-line metre (venba) in verse 2 of Ulladu Narpadu – Anubandham.

- 1128 Those [the *Jnanis*] whose minds are soaked in the essence of the enjoyment of Siva [*Siva-bhoga-rasam*], the true knowledge [*mey-jnana*] which exists and shines as the *eka-rasam* [the one essence, the non-dual Self], will convert the void [the mind of the *jiva*], which is a burning desert, the essence of delusion [*moha-rasam*], into a [cool and fertile] place [which yields the fruits of *bhakti* and *Jnana* and] which is loved even by gods.
- 1129 The minds of all those who come to the *Jnani*, whose heart is brimming over with peace, will become blissful [being filled with His peace]. [For] is not His cool [moonlike] face, which is soaked with joy, the [fully blossomed] red lotus [of *Jnana*] to which the bees [the devotees] are attracted?

46 The Glory of the Great One (*Periyar Matchi Tiran*)

- 1130 If he does holy service to a Great One [a *Jnani*], the deluded soul will lose his delusion, the well-established and permanent wealth of Grace will be attained [by him] in the heart, and he will [thereby] live as the most fortunate person.

47 One whose Vasanas are Dead (*Vasanai Mandar Tiran*)

- 1131 Since agitation [or confusion] will never rise without [the rising of] the feeling ‘I am only the body’ [the ego] in the heart, one whose tendencies [*vasanas*] – [which are the form of] the ego or mind – are dead will not be mentally agitated [or confused] even in dream.
- 1132 Low creatures such as four-legged animals and birds [always] live with agitated [or wandering] minds. [But] the enlightened one [the *Jnani*], whose mind lives devoid of any thought [as mere existence-consciousness ‘I am’], [alone] is the one who [really] lives.

Michael James: The silent life in which the mind is dead, alone is the life fit for a man to live; the life of a man whose mind is wandering, is no better than the life of birds and beasts.

1133 Though they undertake and do many actions [vyvahas], those whose mental tendencies [mana-vasanas] are dead are just like one who sits for a long time [seemingly] listening to puranic stories but who has [in fact] directed his mind far away.

1134 Though they are [sitting] quiet, if their mental tendencies [mana-vasanas] are not destroyed they are indeed those who have done everything as the doer, just like one who [suffers by thinking] in dream [that he] has climbed a hill and is falling head-first over a precipice, though [in fact his body is] lying quietly [sleeping on his bed].

Michael James: The ideas expressed in the above two verses by Sri Muruganar, which are also expressed in the eleventh chapter of Vichara Sangraham, were summarized by Sri Bhagavan in the following verse, which is also included in Ulladu Narpadu – Anubandham as verse 30.

B22 Just like one who is [seemingly] listening to a story when his mind has [in fact] gone far away, the mind [of the Jnani] in which the vasanas have been erased, has not done [anything] though [seemingly] it has done [many things]. [On the other hand] the mind [of the ajnani] which is soaked with them [the vasanas], has done [many things] though [seemingly] it has not done [anything], [just like] one who [thinks] in dream [that he] has climbed a hill and is falling over a precipice, though [in fact his body is] lying motionless here [sleeping on his bed].

Sadhu Om: Though a person may appear to an onlooker to be sitting and listening to a story, if his mind is not attending to the story but is absorbed in thinking of some other matters, he is not in fact hearing the story. Similarly, though a Jnani may appear to us onlookers to be engaged in many activities, since His vasanas have been destroyed and since He has therefore lost the sense of doership, He is in fact not doing anything [refer also to verses 1105, B21, 1140 and 1165].

Though a sleeping person's body is seen to be lying quietly in one place, he may be suffering due to his dreaming, believing that he has climbed a hill and is falling over a precipice. Similarly, though an ajnani's body is seen to be sitting still for a long time in meditation or samadhi, and though he appears to have given up all activities, since his tendencies towards action [karma-vasanas] have not been destroyed and since he therefore retains the sense of doership, he is in fact one who is doing all kinds of karmas and experiencing their fruits.

48 The Liberated One (*Jivan-Muktar Tiran*)

1135-1136 “Though their doership has been destroyed, is it proper to call those who are wearing a body, who are eating [making a living] by other activities and who are doing actions [*karma-bandha*] ‘a liberated one’? We also see that, being victims to the allotted karma [i.e. to their *prarabdha* karma], even those Great Ones suffer, [so how can it be said that they are free from the experience of pleasure and pain, which are the results of action?].” If it be asked thus, [the reply is that] their sufferings are merely according to the outlook [*drishti*] of the onlookers [the *ajnanis*]; tell me, do they [the *Jivan-muktas*] say that they are suffering?

Sadhu Om: Since the ajnani thinks himself to be a body [a separate, finite individual], he cannot but see even the Jnani as a body; however, in His own outlook the Jnani knows Himself to be the Infinite Self, which is bodiless and completely devoid of individuality. Due to their defective outlook [dosha-drishti], people see the Jnani as a doer [karta] of actions and as the experiencer [bhokta] of their fruits, which are allotted as prarabdha. But since the Jnani is like the infinite and indivisible space, which has no separate individuality, He does not feel that He is doing any actions or that He is either enjoying or suffering their fruits. Having transcended the dyad of pleasure and pain, He is both a non-doer [akarta] and a non-experiencer [abhokta]. Thus for the Jnani none of the three karmas [agamyā, sanchita and prarabdha] exist even in the least. Refer here to verses 1144 and B23, and to verse 33 of Ulladu Narpadu – Anubandham.

Sri Bhagavan once revealed His own experience by saying, “The radio sings and speaks, but if you open it you will find no one inside. Similarly, my existence is like the space; though this body speaks like the radio, there is no one inside as a doer.”

1137 When those Great Ones [the *jivan-muktas*] experience the transcendent reality [Self] alone as their own form [*swarupa*], these insentient people [the *ajnanis*, who identify the insentient body as ‘I’] seeing them [the *Jivan-muktas*] as the form of the suffering body, is only according to the outlook of the onlookers [these *ajnanis*].

1138 Know that the merit [or *punya* which results from the good deeds which *jivan-muktas* may seem to do] goes to those who approach and praise with love [those] liberated Great Ones, who, having lost the sense of doership, live as ordained by God, and that the demerit [or *papa* which results from the sins which *jivan-muktas* may seem to do] goes to those who vilify instead of praising them.

Michael James: Since the bodily life of a Jivan-mukta is a mere appearance which exists only in the wrong outlook of the ajnani, all the actions of His body, speech and mind are also a mere appearance. Therefore, since such actions do not exist in His outlook, He cannot be affected in any way by their results.

1139 If it be asked, “If they [the *Jivan-muktas*] have lost the sense of doership, how can actions [of their body, speech and mind] go on? We do see [such] actions going

on”, rest assured that, since [their] inner attachments have died, they have God Himself residing in their heart and doing [all those actions].

Sadhu Om: *As mentioned in the note to verse 1136, Sri Bhagavan once compared the body of a Jivan-mukta to a radio, which sings and speaks but which has no one inside it. Just as that which makes the radio sing or speak is the broadcasting station, which is in some distance place, so the doer who is speaking and acting in the body of a Jnani is God Himself.*

1140 The actions of the great *Jivan-muktas* in the intoxication of Silence, which is devoid of all ‘I’ and ‘mine’, are like children’s eating in very deep sleep when made to sit up and take food.

Sadhu Om: *Being intoxicated by their blissful state of deep sleep, those children have no sense of doership, ‘I am eating’, and no sense of experiencership, ‘This food is tasty’, and yet they perform the action of eating. Similarly, being intoxicated by their blissful state of Silence, the state of sleepless sleep, Jnanis have no sense of doership or experiencership even though they may seem to perform actions. Just as the child is completely unaware of its eating, so the Jnani is completely unaware of all the actions of His body, speech and mind. Refer here to verses 1105, **B21**, 1133, **B22**, 1148, **B24** and 1165.*

1141 Just as a coolie carries a burden and happily places it down at the destination, so also the great knower of reality [*mey-jnani*] will be happy to place down the burden of this body.

Sadhu Om: *A coolie will never feel any attachment in the form of ‘I’ or ‘mine’ towards the burden he is carrying. Similarly, a Jnani will never feel any attachment towards His body either in the form ‘I am this body’ or in the form ‘this body is mine’. Just as a leaf-plate is fit only to be discarded after one has taken food on it, so the body is fit only to be discarded after Self-knowledge – the fruit which is to be gained by living in the body – has been attained. By the death of the body, the Jnani will incur no loss and will feel no sorrow. The purpose of the present verse is only to teach this truth, and it should not be taken to mean either that the Jnani is bound by the body until the time of death, or that He feels the body to be an unwanted burden, or that He is suffering by living in the body.*

Michael James: *Verse 8 of the appendix to Guru Vachaka Kovai – Urai is included here. In this verse Sri Bhagavan says:*

He who has known Self will discard the body just like [one discards] a leaf after food has been eaten [from it].

In this two-line verse Sri Bhagavan has summarized the idea expressed in a four-line verse in a Tamil work called Prabhulingalila, chapter 12, verse 11, by Sivaprakasa Swamigal. Refer to Letters from Sri Ramanasramam, p. 208, for more details. In the last days of His bodily life, when devotees were praying to Him, “O Bhagavan, you should

live in this body for many more years,” Sri Bhagavan used to refer to this verse in order to make them understand that, since there is no further benefit to be gained by living in the body after Self-knowledge has been attained, it is fit only to be discarded.

1142 Will the wave of the deep ocean allow a small creature which has fallen [into it] and which is on the point of death, to raise up its head? [Likewise] in the face of the full flood of the Silence of true knowledge [*mey-jnana-mouna*], is it possible for the ego, ‘I am the base and fleshy body’, to rise?

Sadhu Om: *The experience of a Jivan-mukta is a great surging flood of the Silence of Jnana. In that limitless surge of Silence, the ego can never rise again, and hence it is certain that for a Jivan-mukta there will be no rebirth [no re-rising of the ego].*

1143 Can the mind [of the *Jnani*] which has known the greatness of its own Self, having lost the ‘I’ [the ego, whose form is ‘I am this’], be deluded by the deceptive and delusive appearance [of this unreal world]? Can the perception of the unreal appearance of duality be real in the midst of the wonderful and pure space of *turiya* [the nameless and formless space of pure consciousness]?

1144 For a *jiva* who is suffering due to dying and taking birth, the most worthy thing to do and to attain with full love, is [to have] the experience of the great state of *Jivan-mukta*, having subsided and known [its own true nature], so that the rising [of the ego], which is the coming to life [of the *jiva*] because of [its] forgetting its own reality [Self], may die.

Michael James: *The rising of the ego as ‘I am so-and-so’, which happens due to forgetfulness of Self, is the birth of the jiva. So that this jiva may die and so that the unending misery of birth and death may thereby come to an end, the most worthy thing for the jiva to do is to attend to itself with great love and thus know its own true nature [Self], and thereby to subside into its source and attain the experience of Jivan-mukti.*

This verse may be read along with verses 500 and 501 in the chapter concerning what is worthy to be done.

1145 Tell me, when their husband, who is the doer, dies – the sense of doership [*kartritva*] having been destroyed – instead of the wives, who are his three karmas, becoming widows altogether, can two of them become widows and one of them remain unwidowed?

Sadhu Om: *The jiva is not only the doer of the karmas, but also the experiencer of their fruits. Therefore, when the jiva is destroyed by Self-knowledge, all the three karmas [agamyā, sanchita and prarabdha] will become non-existent, since there is no one remaining either to do or to experience them. Hence for the Jnani there is no karma at all. Thus, when some scriptures say that agamyā and sanchita are destroyed and that prarabdha alone will remain for the Jnani, their saying so is to be understood as a mere formality [upachara] and should not be taken to be the actual truth.*

The idea expressed in the above four-line verse by Sri Muruganar, was summarized by Sri Bhagavan in the following two-line verse. Later, when this two-line verse was included in Ulladu Narpadu – Anubandham, Sri Bhagavan added another two lines to it.

B23 Know that just as no wife will remain unwidowed when the husband dies, all the three karmas will become non-existent when the doer dies.

Michael James: This verse is the last two lines of verse 33 of Ulladu Narpadu – Anubandham. In the first two lines of that verse Sri Bhagavan says, “To say that sanchita and agamyā will not adhere to a Jnani, [but] that prarabdha does remain [to be experienced by Him], is a superficial reply to be told to the questions of others”. Refer here to The Path of Sri Ramana - Part One, pp. 66 to 68, for a detailed explanation.

1146 To the body, which was born because of *prarabdha*, that *prarabdha* will never fail [to give fruit]. [But] the *Jivan-mukta*, who has separated Himself [from the body] by severing the *chit-jada-granthi*, has transcended *prarabdha* itself.

Sri Muruganar: The tenet of Visishtadvaita that prarabdha will not fail to give fruit even to the Jivan-mukta, is refuted here. How? Since He has lost body-consciousness by the severing of the chit-jada-granthi, the activities of His body exist only in the outlook of others.

1147 “When [it is a fact that] the experience of [*prarabdha*] karma itself exists as the body, if there is no experience of [*prarabdha*] karma for someone, [even if he be a *Jnani*] will it [his body] not die?” – if you ask thus, tell me correctly by whom the gross body is seen?

Michael James: Is it seen by the Jnani Himself? Is it not seen only by the ajnanis?

Sadhu Om: The Jnani, who has no experience of prarabdha, does not see a body existing for Himself. Just as one’s dream-body becomes non-existent as soon as one’s sleep comes to an end, so, in the outlook of the Jnani, His body became non-existent as soon as He attained Jnana [that is, as soon as His experience of prarabdha was destroyed]. Thus the body of the Jnani seems to exist only in the outlook of ajnanis, who are themselves completely non-existent in His outlook. Therefore, it is meaningless to say that the body of a Jnani is still living.

Michael James: Verse 9 of the appendix to Guru Vachaka Kovai – Urai is included here. In this verse Sri Bhagavan says:

“If the dove caught in the hand of the hunter is let free, it will fly away even from the forest [in which it was caught], [will it not?]” If you ask thus, [the reply is that] when the hunter, turning back home, goes away [from the forest leaving the dove]), it [the dove] will remain [in the forest], since even that forest, which was [previously considered by it to be] alien, will be [found to be its] home.

One day a devotee named K. V. Ramachandran composed a two-line verse (kural venba) in which he said, "If the dove caught in the hand of the hunter is let free, it will fly away even from the forest". Though this verse appears to be an affirmative statement, it was in fact intended to be a question in a metaphorical form. Here 'the hunter' means maya, 'the dove' means jiva, the letting free of the dove means the liberation of the jiva, and 'the forest' means the gross body. Hence the meaning implied by K. V. Ramachandran's verse is, "If the jiva, which is bound by maya, is liberated, it will at once leave the body [in which it was bound], will it not?"

Sri Bhagavan gave His answer to this question by taking the same two-line verse and expanding it into a four-line verse (venba). The meaning implied by His answer is as follows, "If you ask thus, the reply is that when, by attending to 'I', maya [which is nothing but the mind] disappears, being found to be non-existent, the jiva [who has thereby realized his true nature as Self] will remain in the gross body, since even that body, which was previously considered by the jiva to be alien or other than itself, will be known [through the unbroken experience of Jnana] to be nothing but Self".

This implied meaning is made still more explicit in Tamil by the fact that Sri Bhagavan uses the words 'nadi aham', which means both "Turning back home" and "attending to 'I'".

Thus the meaning of Sri Bhagavan's reply is that there is no rule that the body must die when Jivan-mukta is attained. Moreover, since after Self-realization nothing (neither the body nor the world) can exist as other than the single unbroken Self-consciousness, even the limited knowledge 'the body is not I', which existed during the period of sadhana, will be removed, and the unlimited knowledge 'the body is also I' will be attained. Verse 17 of Ulladu Narpadu may also be read here.

1148 One who is blinded by drunkenness does not know whether the cloth on his body remains there or has fallen down. [Likewise] the *Siddha* [i.e. *Jnani*] who knows [and is immersed in] the form of light [His own Self-consciousness], which is [limitless and subtle like] the space, does not know the connection [the living] or the removal [the death] of the unreal and insentient body.

Michael James: This verse is a translation of a Sanskrit verse in the Bhagavatam (XI-13-36) which Sri Bhagavan sometimes used to quote. The same idea is also expressed by Sri Bhagavan in the following verse. Refer here to Day by Day with Bhagavan, 9-1-46 and 18-1-46 to 21-1-46.

B24 The body is transitory [and hence unreal]. Whether [due to *prarabdha*] it is resting or moving, whether due to [*prarabdha*] karma it is clinging [living] or has left [died], the *Siddha* who knows Self does not know the body, just as one who is blinded by toddy-intoxication [does not know his] clothes.

Sadhu Om: Just because the words "whether it is resting or moving, whether it is living or has died" are used here, we should not conclude that for the Jnani a body actually is born, lives, works and dies. We should understand that for the Jnani there is in truth no

such thing as birth, activity and death of the body, and that these seem to exist only in the wrong outlook of the ajnani who sees them.

1149 The form of the living body of the perfect *Jnana-mukta*, who has destroyed the ego-defect, is like a [burnt] red silk cloth, which remains without losing its appearance even though it has lost its reality, having become ashes.

Michael James: When a red silk cloth is burnt, it retains both its form and its colour, even though its substance has become ashes. Similarly, after the ego has been burnt in the fire of Jnana, the body of the Jnani will appear to remain unchanged and will seemingly continue to live and perform activities, even though His 'I am the body' consciousness (dehatma-buddhi) has been completely destroyed.

1150 Just as only a snake can know the legs of a snake, only a *Jnani* can know the nature of a *Jnani*. The nature of a *Jnani* cannot be known by anyone else correctly but only wrongly [literally, as *viparita*].

Sri Muruganar: Since the knowledge of one who possesses only book-knowledge is a deluded knowledge, he can see the reality only wrongly and not as it is, and hence he cannot clearly know the true nature of a Jnani. Even in the scriptures which give the 8857 definition [lakshana] of Jivan-mukti, it is said that Jnanis may appear to be madmen, ghost-possessed people or children, and that it is not possible for ignorant people [ajnanis], in whom the awareness of the world is not lost, to fathom them.

1151 The supreme experience [*brahmanubhava*] – which has the glory of not knowing any other thing – of the great enjoyer of the bliss of true knowledge [*mey-jnana-maha-anandi*], who has attained the state of Silence [*mouna*], the form of That [*tadakara*] which shines triumphant on the destruction of oneself [the ego], cannot be conceived by anyone whosoever.

Michael James: The idea expressed in this verse is re-expressed by Sri Bhagavan in His own words in the following verse, which is also included in Ulladu Narpadu as verse 31.

B25 For Him who enjoys the bliss of Self, which has risen on the destruction of himself [the ego], what single thing remains to do? He does not know anything other than Self; [therefore] who can and how to conceive what His state is?

49 The Jnani (*Jnaniyar Tiran*)

1152 It is impossible to express the greatness of a *Jnani*. He alone knows the nature [or beauty] of His existence. He is vaster than the space; He is firmer than a mountain. Having scrutinized and destroyed the '[I am] the body' feeling, know [this truth clearly].

Sri Muruganar: So long as we have the 'I am the body' feeling [dehatma-buddhi], even the Jnani will appear to have a body and to be in bondage like us, and hence it is impossible for us to know the greatness of the Jnani as it is. Only when we lose this ignorance [ajnana], will the unbroken state [akhanda nilai] of the Jnani shine forth.

1153 Know that the Muni who has known the true light – which is Self, which remaining formless makes all [the forms of the world] shine – shining brightly and without veiling [*tirodhana*] as 'I' itself, is the king who rules [all] the heavens [such as Brahma Loka, Vishnu Loka and Siva Loka].

1154 The mind of the *Jnani*, who sleeps in Self, having settled down immovably in the ocean of the perfectly natural bliss [*nir-atisaya ananda*] of the differenceless Silence of Self [*swarupa-nirvikalpa-manna*], will not sufferingly go to waste in the world.

Michael James: That is, he will not suffer in the world, being caught in the waste of the delusion of the false triads or triputis.

1155 The wise men who, having slipped down [through *pramada*] from Self, which is the [real] waking, desire the illusory dream of the world which is seen, as [if it were] the [real] waking, are different, and the wise men who are in clarity, having known Self, are different.

Sadhu Om: The word 'pulavan' [wise man] means 'one who knows'. The first kind of wise man mentioned in this verse is the learned ajnani, who has only gained knowledge through the five senses, whereas the second kind is the true Jnani who has attained Self-knowledge. Since the knowledge gained through the five senses is a false knowledge, whereas the knowledge of Self alone is the true knowledge, these two kinds of wise men are completely different from each other.

1156 However keenly one looks into the true scriptures, they will tell one only to scrutinize oneself within oneself [and thereby to know who one really is]. The purpose of looking into a mirror is only to be happy by seeing the beautiful face of the man, is it not?

Sadhu Om: The purpose of looking into a mirror is not merely to waste one's time either in looking at the reflection or in appreciating the mirror; the purpose is only to experience the joy of seeing the beauty of one's own face. Similarly, the purpose of reading the scriptures is only to experience the true happiness of Self-knowledge. Therefore, as soon as one reads the scriptures, which reveal 'You yourself are that Brahman', one should make proper use of that information and should verify the truth of it from one's own direct experience by scrutinizing and knowing oneself through the enquiry 'Who am I?'. Refer here to the work Who am I? where Sri Bhagavan says, "Since it is said in all the scriptures that in order to attain liberation one should control [i.e. destroy] the mind, after coming to know that mind-control alone is the final decision of the scriptures, to read scriptures unlimitedly is fruitless" [see verse 141 of this work].

After engaging oneself in the sadhana of knowing Self, making research in the scriptures is of no use. Scriptures are useful only to turn us towards the path of Self-enquiry, and are of no further use to us during the time when we are engaged in practice or nididhyasana. This is what is meant by Sri Bhagavan in the work Who am I? when He said, “For Rama to know himself to be Rama, is a mirror necessary? ... All that one has learnt will at one time have to be forgotten.”

1157 Among those who approach the mirror – the true *Jnana-sastras* which reveal that that which is to be known is Self – many [merely] look at the *sastras* and the big commentaries [on them], while few save themselves [as those scriptures recommend] by searching [within] and knowing their own nature [Self].

1158 If [the truth is] told, the knower of reality [*mey-jnani*] is different, and the scholar [*vijnana*] who knows the scriptures [which tell] about the true knowledge [*mey-jnana*] is different. For those who wish to sever the bondage of ignorance [*ajnana*], it is necessary to leave the scholars and to associate with those who abide as the supreme Self [*atma-para-nishthar*].

Sri Muruganar: He [Sri Bhagavan] says this because experiential knowledge [anubhava-jnana] cannot be attained unless one associates with those who abide as Self. The benefit which can be attained by mere vijnana [scriptural knowledge] is nothing but the praise and worship of the world.

1159 Know that the words [of *upadesa*] uttered by a *Jnani*, who has known the reality which supports everything by the power of [its] Grace, will always be a saving support to the souls who have been deluded for a long time under the sway of darkness [but who wish to be saved].

Sadhu Om: The reason why it is said in verse 1158 that one should leave the scholars and associate instead with those who abide as Self is explained in this verse. Rather than in all the lectures and explanations given by scriptural scholars, in a single word uttered by a Jnani, who [though He may be unlearned] has known the supreme reality, there is more power of authority [the power of the light of Self] to dispel the darkness of ignorance [ajnana] in other jivas. Therefore it is instructed here that we should approach with love a Jnani rather than the scriptural scholars.

50 The Action of Jnanis (*Jnanigal Karma Tiran*)

1160 If the verdict is that actionlessness alone is *Jnana*, [then it would mean that] the verdict is that even the actionlessness due to leprosy is *Jnana*! Know that that exalted state in which one has given up likes and dislikes for actions [and for their fruits] and which is devoid of any doership [literally, responsibility] in the mind, alone is the state of *Jnana*.

Sadhu Om: To remain without the rising of doership either in the form ‘I should do actions’ or in the form ‘I should stop doing actions’ is the true state of Jnana. Sri

Bhagavan used to say that doing nishkamya karma [i.e. performing action without desire for the fruit] truly means only abiding in the state in which one has no sense of doership in the actions that are performed.

- 1161 For those who live in Self as the beauty devoid of thought, there is nothing to be thought of. That which is to be adhered to is only the experience of Silence [*mauna-anubhava-katchi*], [because] in [that] supreme state nothing exists to be attained other than oneself.
- 1162 Know that though they do many immense activities, those who have realized the majestic state of being devoid of thought, having known that the mere existence ['I am'] alone is their real nature, are non-doers [*akartas*] and [due to firmness of their knowledge 'I am he that exists, not he that does'] will not be deluded as [if they were] the doers [*kartas*].
- 1163 Even the renouncing of the path of *niyama* [religious duty] by great *Jivan-muktas*, who abide in their transcendental real nature [Self], having matured in the path of *dharma*, is as beautiful as [their] observing [the path of *niyama*] in [their] outward life.

Michael James: Since the highest of all dharmas (duties) is swadharma, and since the real meaning of swadharma is Self-abidance, Jivan-muktas (that is, those who have achieved perfection in Self-abidance) are ever observing the truest and highest dharma. Therefore, there is no wrong even if they renounce all other dharmas, for their renouncing them is as glorious as their observing them.

In the outlook of ajnanis, some Jiva-muktas may appear to be doing all the dharmas and karmas prescribed in the dharma-sastras, while other Jivan-muktas may appear as if they are not observing such dharmas but are behaving instead like madmen, children or fools. But even their behaving so will be as beautiful as their observing all the dharmas and karmas properly.

- 1164 Know that the bodiless and indivisible great *Mukta's* walking as if [he were] having a body, is as if the supreme space [of consciousness] were walking [on earth], just like Lord Vishnu, who paced [all] the worlds as His domain.

Michael James: Since the Jivan-mukta has realized that He is not the limited body, He shines devoid of the body as the indivisible and unlimited Self. However, in the outlook of ajnanis He seems to have a body and to be walking on earth. Since it is truly nothing but a formless space of Self which seems to be walking in the form of that body, it is as wonderful as Lord Vishnu, who assumed a vast form and covered all the worlds in three paces, thereby claiming them as His domain.

- 1165 Though the *Jnani* – who, having discarded the collection of implements [*karuvi*] and instruments [*karana*] as the doers which perform the actions, has no contact with them, which are the doers – [seemingly] does [actions], He is a non-doer.

Sadhu Om: The word 'implements' [karuvi] means the five sense-organs [jnanendriyas], namely the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin, and the five organs of

action [karmendriyas], namely the mouth, legs, hands, anus and genitals, while the word 'instruments' [karana] means the four inner organs [antahkaranas], namely the mind, intellect, chittam and ego. Knowing that it is only these implements and instruments which are performing all actions and knowing that they are none of them 'I', the Jnani has discarded them and remains without having even the least contact with them, and hence He ever remains without any sense of doership, even though in the outlook of others He may seem to be performing actions. Refer here to verses 1105, **B21**, 1133, **B22** and 1140.

1166 Those [the *Jnanis*] who are joyfully content at heart with whatever comes [of its own accord due to *prarabdha*], who have transcended all the dyads [*dvandvas*], who are devoid of jealousy and who have attained the state of peace in the midst of success and failure, will not be bound by the actions [karmas] which they [seem to] do.

Michael James: The above four-line verse by Sri Muruganar is a paraphrase of verse 22 of chapter 4 of the Bhagavad Gita. The same idea is expressed by Sri Bhagavan in verse 40 of Bhagavad Gita Saram and also in the following two-line verse.

B26 Know that He [the *Jnani*] who is balanced [both in success and failure], being happy with whatever is obtained [according to *prarabdha*], having jealousy and having discarded the dyads [or pairs of opposites such as pain and pleasure, likes and dislikes, and so on], is not bound even though He [seemingly] does actions.

51 The Nature of Those who Abide as Self (*Tanmayar Salbu Tiran*)

1167 Those who scrutinize [and judge] the *Jnani* by outward signs, will come back having seen [Him] as emptiness, [because] they do not see the inner light [of the *Jnani*], which cannot be known by the empty [fleshy] eye in the face.

Sadhu Om: Some people go to see a Jnani in order to earn merit [punya]. However, due to their immaturity of mind they see only the outward appearance of the Jnani, and since that appearance is not in accordance with their wonderful preconceived notions of how a Jnani should be, they return disappointed. Moreover, just like a person who wants to take a bath who returns covered with mud, such immature people sometimes even ridicule the Jnani and thereby come back with bundles of sins [papas] accumulated by their vilifying Him instead of praising Him [see verse 1138].

Even in the life of Sri Bhagavan there were some people who used to ridicule and find fault with Him. For example, not knowing how Sri Bhagavan had lived in the early days, completely oblivious to His body and lying or sitting on the bare mud ground, some people who saw Him in later days living a seemingly normal life of activity and sitting on a comfortable sofa, used to remark, "What is this! He is sitting on a sofa supported by soft cushions. He is eating and behaving like us. Is He a Rishi? Is this Jnana?" Therefore, the present verse is given as a warning to such ignorant people who try to judge a Jnani by His outward appearance.

1168 When measured only by *siddhis*, the greatness of a *Jivan-mukta* will be known wrongly. *Muktas* will shine whether with *siddhis* or without them. [Therefore] those who admire *siddhis* cannot know [the real greatness of a *Jivan-mukta*]. Know thus.

Sadhu Om: A certain mathematician who had won a Nobel Prize, had a six-year-old son who had difficulty in memorizing the nine-times table. One day the small boy asked his father whether he could repeat the nine-times table. When his father repeated it correctly, the boy was wonder-struck and exclaimed with pride, "Ah, how wise is my father! That is why the world honoured him with a Nobel Prize! Really he deserves that prize!" Worldly people who will approve someone to be a Jnani only if he is seen to perform siddhis, are not better than this boy, who approved his father's award only because he was able to repeat the nine-times table.

1169 The world is full of fools who belittle the greatness of a *Jnani*, which exists and shines far away [beyond human comprehension], by imagining [that they see in Him] many *siddhis*, which are seen only by their completely unfit and petty deluded mind.

Michael James: Fools think that they are glorifying a Jnani when they imagine that they see so many siddhis in Him. In fact, however, they are only belittling Him, because the siddhis which they see are a mere mental imagination, while His true greatness lies beyond the mind.

1170 Know that attributing greatness to the perfect one who abides as Self because of the *siddhis* [which He may seem to perform], is [like] praising the greatness of the fully shining sun by merely glorifying the wondrous beauty of an atom of a bright ray which enters a house [through a hole in the roof].

1171 He who, while continuing to live a life in the body and world, has known the body and the world to be [nothing but] consciousness [or Self], will delude others as if He were bound by the body and world. [Therefore] who can know [the real nature of] a *Mukta* from His face [that is, by seeing His mere outward appearance]?

Sadhu Om: "... He [who abides as Self] does not know anything other than Self; [therefore] who can and how to conceive what His state is?" says Sri Bhagavan in verse 31 of Ulladu Narpadu.

52 The Greatness of Silence

(*Mauna Matchi Tiran*)

1172 The one letter – which is pure, which bestows the glory of true knowledge [*mey-jnana*] and which is the source of all letters which have a rising [in the form of sound or light] – is that which always shines of its own accord [or as Self] in the heart! Who is able to write it?

Sadhu Om: On 30th September 1937 a devotee named Somasundara Swami requested Sri Bhagavan to write “one letter” [or ezhuttu] in his notebook. Sri Bhagavan graciously replied by writing a two-line verse [kural venba], in which He said, “The one letter [or ezhuttu] is that which always shines of its own accord [or as Self] in the heart! Who is able to write it?” Subsequently when Sri Bhagavan explained the nature of that one letter, Sri Muruganar recorded His explanation in the above verse, in which he incorporated Sri Bhagavan’s kural venba as the last two lines. Later still, Sri Bhagavan translated His kural venba into Sanskrit and Telugu. In the Sanskrit version He said, “The one letter [ekam aksharam] uninterruptedly shines of its own accord in the heart! How can it be written?”. Finally, on 21-9-1940, Sri Bhagavan converted His kural venba into a venba [a four-line verse] by adding two more lines at the beginning, in which He gave the reason why the verse was composed:

That [which is worthy to be called a] letter [aksharam] is the one letter [or ezhuttu]. You have requested [me] to write that one letter [aksharam] in this book. The one letter, which is imperishable [aksharam], is that which always shines of its own accord [or as Self] in the heart! Who is able to write it?”

The word ‘aksharam’, which is used three times by Sri Bhagavan in this verse, means both ‘letter’ and ‘that which is imperishable’, and hence the first sentence may alternatively mean, “That which is imperishable [aksharam] is the one letter”.

The one letter mentioned in this verse is Self itself. Its real form is only Silence [mauna], which is the correct definition of Jnana. The Self-consciousness ‘I-I’ shines transcending light and sound. Since it shines devoid of sound as the mere sphurana, it transcends sound, and thus it transcends language. Moreover, since Self is the self-shining pure consciousness [prajna] which is beyond all kinds of gross and subtle lights, it transcends light, and thus it cannot have the form of a written letter, since all visible forms come within the range of light.

The first expression of the true consciousness of the supreme reality, Self, is the sphurana ‘I’. The Pranava ‘Om’ is only the sound-form of that reality, which rises later as a secondary expression of it. But since that which shines as the reality of the sound ‘Om’ is only Self or ‘I’, Sri Bhagavan sang in verse 13 of Sri Arunachala Akshara Mana Malai, “O Arunachala, reality of ‘Om’, unequalled and unsurpassed! Who can understand you?”, and He used to say that, even prior to ‘Om’, the natural name of the reality is only the consciousness ‘I’, which transcends both sound and light. Refer here to verses 712 and 713 of this work.

Therefore, since Self, the foremost reality, is one [ekam] and since nothing exists other than it, Sri Bhagavan asks who can write it, and how or where it could be written. Thus, though the devotee who requested Him to write “one letter” in his notebook, Sri Bhagavan taught the whole world that which shines of its own accord in the heart cannot in any way be thought of, spoken or written, and that all one can do is to be it and to know it as it is in the heart.

1173 If it be asked, “[What is] the [true] divine language, which is the source of all languages, which is real and which possesses the greatest clarity?” That language is only Silence [mauna], which the Lord [Sri Dakshinamurti] who is the

embodiment of knowledge [*jnana-swarupa*] seated at the foot of the banyan tree, taught.

Michael James: Verse 10 of the appendix to Guru Vachaka Kovai – Urai should be included here (see note to verse 1027). In this verse Sri Bhagavan says:

Silence [mauna] is the form [literally, state] of Grace, the one [single, non-dual, unequalled and incomparable] language which is [always] surging within.

A devotee once wrote an article about Sri Bhagavan entitled ‘Where Silence is an Inspired Sermon’. Seeing this, Sri Bhagavan wrote the above one-line verse giving a definition of Silence. “Silence is unceasing eloquence... it is the perennial flow of ‘language’ [the true language of Grace]”, says Sri Bhagavan in Maharshi’s Gospel, Book One, chapter 2.

1174 Since that great *Brahman*, which cannot be revealed even by countless commentaries, is revealed only by the Silence of the Guru, who is rare to attain, know that the commentary of that Silence alone is the best commentary.

1175 The ‘I am the body’-sense [*alaya-vijnana*] is the supporting base for the world, which appears as if very real. The imperishable foundation stone for the *alaya-vijnana* is Silence [*mauna*], the ancient primal reality.

Sadhu Om: *Sri Muruganar explained that, since the world appears in a moment [kshanika] and disappears in a moment, the word ‘kshanika’ is used in this verse to denote the world. He also explained that alaya-vijnana is the body-consciousness which continues in the body until the death of the body, that is, that it is the mind, whose form is the ‘I am the body’ sense [dehatma-buddhi].*

The base on which the world and body appear is the mind, the ‘I am the body’ consciousness, and the base on which the mind appears is Self, the pure consciousness, which is Silence. Therefore the indestructible Silence alone is the base for all kinds of knowledge.

1176 Instead of arguing by the sharpness of the intellect [*mati*], which [rises and] subsides, “It [the reality] exists”, “It does not exist”, “It has form”, “It is formless”, “It is one [non-dual]”, “It is two [dual]”, the Silence of existence-consciousness-bliss [*sat-chit-ananda*], which is the ever-unfailing experience, alone is the real religion [*mata*].

Sadhu Om: *Using the sharpness of the petty and transitory intellect, whose nature is to rise and subside, to argue about the existence and the nature of the eternal supreme reality, is not true religion. The ever-existing experience of Silence, in which all such arguments have been given up, alone is the true religion. Refer here to verse 34 of Ulladu Narpadu, and to verses 989 to 993 and 1235 of this work.*

1177 When *Jnana* has not risen by the divine life of Silence, the glorified and transcendent primal religion [*adi-mata*], taking possession of the heart, will the sense of difference [*bheda-mati*] be removed in the least even by thoughts of delusive caste and religions practices?

Sadhu Om: The state of inequality caused by differences such as high and low can be removed permanently and completely only in Silence, the state of Self-abidance, and it can never be removed even in the least by any number of reformations made in religious and caste practices.

1178 Just as the many rivers which run and merge into the [one] great ocean [are all of the nature of water], so all religions – which flow only towards the ocean of Siva, the abundant consciousness-bliss [*chit-ananda*], as their target – are Siva-*mayam* [of the nature of Siva]. Therefore, there is no place for differences [in the ultimate goal of all religions].

1179 Since, when one dives within having as [one’s sole] aim the liking [to know] thus, ‘Who am I who notices the differences in the tenets [of the various religions]?’ the ‘I’ [the individuality or *jiva*] dies and becomes non-existent leaving only the ever-existing Self [which always shines devoid of differences], in that Silence can the sense of difference remain?

1180 “If the sense of difference will not remain in that Silence, can the opposite sense [the sense of non-difference] alone remain?” – if it be asked thus, [the answer is that] the sense of non-difference [*abheda-buddhi*] glorified by the knowers of reality is only the loss of the sense of difference [*bheda-buddhi*].

Michael James: When Jnanis speak of the experience of non-difference, what they mean is only the non-experience of difference, because in the state of Silence no differences exist to be experienced. However, having read the term abheda-buddhi [sense of non-difference] in the scriptures, many people wrongly imagine that the Jnani knows all the differences but experiences non-differences in those differences. Refer to verse 931 and 932, where this wrong idea is refuted.

1181 The gross [or defective] questions and answers are [seemingly] real in the language of duality [*dvaita*], but when known [correctly], those questions and answers do not exist even in the least in the perfect language of non-duality [*advaita*], which is Silence.

Michael James: The above four-line verse is an adaptation of a verse in Panchadasi (2-39). The same idea is also expressed by Sri Bhagavan in the following two-line verse.

B27 Questions and answers exist only in the language of this duality [*dvaita*]; in non-duality they do not exist.

1182 When scrutinized, the true conversation going on without interruption between them [the Guru and the disciple], who are having the joy of shrewd questions [and answers] which reach perfection, is only reaching and abiding there [in the mind-free state of Silence] where, if they reach and abide, both their minds will unite.

Sadhu Om: *The aim of a conversation in the form of questions and answers between a Guru and a disciple is to enable the disciple to reach the perfect state of reality. But since questions and answers can exist only in the realm of duality, they can never take one to the non-dual state of perfection. Therefore, the true and perfect ‘conversation’ between a Guru and a disciple [guru-sishya samvada] is only their reaching and abiding in the state of Silence, in which both their minds have united and become one.*

The perfect way in which a disciple can ‘question’ and learn from the Guru is to abide in Silence, for the real Sadguru is always ‘answering’ and teaching through the non-dual language of Silence. If the disciple does not abide in the thought-free state of Silence, he cannot correctly understand the Jnana-upadesa taught by the Guru through the language of Silence. Only in that state of Silence will Brahman be truly revealed. “Silence is ever-unceasing eloquence; it is the most perfect language. It is a perennial flow of the language of Grace. Words obstruct the language of Silence [mauna-bhasha]. Oral lectures can never be so eloquent as Silence”, says Sri Bhagavan. [Refer to Maharshi’s Gospel, Book One, ch.2, from which this quotation is paraphrased].

53 The Pure Silence (Suddha Mauna Tiran)

1183 Know that Self, which is to be enquired into and attained in the heart as the state of happiness through the requisite *tapas* [or Self-attention], is only the state of Silence [*mauna*], which is experienced by removing the delusive and worthless knowledge of differences [along with its root, the ignorance or wrong knowledge ‘I am this body’].

Sadhu Om: *Self, which is the fruit to be attained through enquiry or vichara, is only the Silence devoid of the wrong knowledge ‘I am the body’.*

1184 The state of the experience of the one non-dual Silence [*eka advaita mouna anubhuti*], which is attained as the experience of the unlimited true knowledge [*mey-jnana*], is only the shining [of oneself] as the empty space devoid of the false imagination which is the rising of the wicked ego-mind.

Sadhu Om: *Silence is only the state in which the ego or mind, which is merely a false imagination, has been destroyed.*

1185 Since the Silence of Self, which shines through the pure mind [the pure existence-consciousness which is devoid of all thoughts], alone turns out to be the gateway to Liberation, even though they proceed along any path which is agreeable [to them], that gate alone is the final refuge.

Sadhu Om: *Through whatever path one may proceed towards the state of Liberation, one can finally enter that state only through the gateway of Silence – the gateway of egolessness or mindlessness. Sri Bhagavan used to say, “Through whatever road one*

may approach the town of liberation, in order to enter that town one must pay the toll-gate fee. That toll-gate fee is the destruction of one's ego or mind.”

1186 Attending unceasingly and with a fully [concentrated] mind to Self, which is the non-dual perfect reality, alone is the pure supreme Silence; on the other hand, the mere [unthinking] laziness of the dull mind is nothing but a defective [and tamasic] delusion. Know thus.

Sadhu Om: Laziness or sluggishness of the mind is not true Silence. Self-attention alone is true and pure Silence.

1187 Know that the inner Silence – the undecreasing strength of unceasingly praising and worshipping, without worshipping, the Feet of Lord Siva by the beautiful Supreme Word [*para-vak*], which is the pure unrising speech [that is, worshipping by Self-attention, the non-rising of the ego] – alone is the true and natural worship [of the reality].

1188 Only those who have known their reality to be Siva [the Self], are those who are soaked in the perfect and natural state of Silence. [Therefore] having removed the ‘I’-sense in anything other than Siva [that is, having given up one’s identification with all adjuncts such as the body], abide without action in Siva.

1189 The glory of the state of Silence – in which one has merged and died in the real principle [*mey-tattva*], God, who is the egoless Self, by enquiring ‘Who am I, the false first person?’ – alone is the nature of the observance of self-surrender [*sarangati-dharma*].

Michael James: The true practice of self-surrender is for one to subside through the enquiry ‘Who am I?’ and thereby to merge and abide in Self, the state of Silence which is devoid of even the least rising of the ego, the first thought ‘I am this’. Refer also to verse 482.

Sri Muruganar: Note that the idea of this verse, namely that Silence, which is the goal of Self-enquiry, alone is the truth of perfect self-surrender, is also expressed by the great Vaishnavite Saint Nammazhwar in the following verse of his: “Not knowing myself, I lived as ‘I’ and ‘mine’ [as if ‘I’ were this body and these possessions were ‘mine’]; O Lord of heavenly beings who is worshipped by gods, I am You and my possessions are Yours.”

1190 According to the *prarabdha* [of the *jiva*], the Supreme makes the *jiva* act until it [the *prarabdha*] comes to an end. Efforts made will be a failure due to *prarabdha*; even [in spite of] obstructions, it [the *prarabdha*] will bear fruit. [Therefore] to remain silent [without trying to oppose one’s *prarabdha*] is best.

Sadhu Om: This verse expresses the same upadesa which Sri Bhagavan gave to His mother in 1898, when she was pleading with Him to return to Madurai, namely “According to the destiny [prarabdha] of each person, the Ordainer, being in each place, makes them act. That which is never to happen will not happen, however much effort is

made; that which is to happen will not stop, however much obstruction is made. This is certain. Hence, to remain silent is best.” This and the next verse may be read along with verses 150 and 151.

- 1191 It is not possible for anyone to do anything opposed to the ordinance [*niyati*] of God, who has the ability to do [anything and] everything. [Therefore] to remain silent at the Feet [of God], having given up [all] the anxieties of the wicked, defective and delusive mind, is best.
- 1192 If we scrutinize [what] the method [is] to end [for ever] the movements of the wavering mind or ego, which is [like] a reflection in [wavy] water, [we will discover that] the method is for one to remain silently attending to oneself alone, and not for one to attend to that [the wavering mind], which will make one slip down from the state [of Self].

Sadhu Om: *The only method to still the wandering mind permanently is for one to attend silently to oneself [the first person, ‘I’], and not for one to attend to the wandering mind, which is nothing but a bundle of ever-changing thoughts pertaining to second and third persons. However, do we not nowadays hear that many would-be gurus are advising aspirants, “Go on watching the thoughts of the mind,” as if this were a true method of spiritual practice [jnana-abhyasa]? Since all the thoughts of the mind are nothing but worthless second and third persons, to attend to those thoughts is a useless method which is recommended only by Vedantins who lack true experience. To reveal that this method is of no use for permanently stilling [i.e. destroying] the mind, Sri Bhagavan says in this verse, “The [correct] method is for one to remain silently attending to oneself [the first person] alone, and not for one to attend to the wavering mind [which is a bundle of second and third person objects]”. Refer to pp. 101 to 102 of The Path of Sri Ramana – Part One for a fuller explanation.*

In verse 17 of Upadesa Undiyar Sri Bhagavan says that if one vigilantly scrutinizes the form of the mind, it will be found that there is no such thing as mind at all. This teaching is misinterpreted by some people to mean that one should attend to or watch the mind, that is, the thoughts pertaining to second and third person objects. However, it should be understood that whenever Sri Bhagavan recommends us to scrutinize the mind, He does not mean that we should attend to thoughts pertaining to second or third persons, but only that we should attend to and scrutinize the first person or ego the root-thought ‘I’. If we thus attend to the thought ‘I’, it will automatically subside and disappear, whereas if we attend to other thoughts, they will multiply and wax in strength. Therefore, in the present verse Sri Bhagavan reveals that if we attend to the thoughts of the wavering mind, we will be slipping down from our natural state of Self-abidance, in which no second or third person can be known.

- 1193 Those who have perfect knowledge say that the state of true knowledge [*mey-jnana-samadhi*], in which one remains without ‘I’ [the ego], alone is *mauna-tapas*. In order to experience [that] silence [*mauna*], which is devoid of the body-thought [the feeling ‘I am this body’], clinging to the Self in the heart is the *sadhana*.

1194 The pure Silence which shines forth when the ‘I’-sense [the ego] is lost by [one’s] abiding in the heart, knowing one’s own real existing state instead of going outwards cherishing and attending to other things, alone is the limit of *Jnana*.

Michael James: The state of Jnana is that which is devoid of any limit and beyond all definitions. If at all a limit or definition is to be given for Jnana, it is only the pure Silence which remains shining after the ego is destroyed.

1195 Since, just as the activities seen within [and by] a dream-person become laughable and non-existent in the outlook of the waking person, even the activities of the *jiva* [such as his birth and death], which are an imagination [seen by him] within himself, become non-existent in [the true awakened outlook of] Self-knowledge, all [of those activities, including his bondage and liberation] are unreal [and are a mere play of *maya*].

1196 When the pure gracious Supreme reveals the nature of Self, he who was in the dark room [of *ajnana*] will merge in the Silence of Self-abidance, drowning in *Siva-bodha* [God-knowledge or existence-consciousness], which is the beauty of the reality.

1197 Know that Silence – which is the perfect knowledge of the form of Self and which shines within when the ego reaches the heart by rejecting all the juggleries of thoughts [*sankalpa-jalas*], which are rarely rejected – alone is the glorious Supreme Word [*para-vak*].

Sadhu Om: This verse reveals the true import of the word ‘para-vak’, which was used by Sri Bhagavan in verses B12, 706 and 715.

1198 Only those who have not keenly listened to the Lord’s language of Grace [Silence], which is the Supreme Word [*para-vak*], [which shines forth] when the wandering mind subsides, will say that [the sound of] a flute is sweet, that [the sound of] a *veena* is sweet, or that the prattling speech of their own babbling children is very sweet.

Sadhu Om: Since the Sadguru’s language of Grace – the para-vak or Silence which shines forth in the heart when the wandering mind subsides and is destroyed there – bestows immortal and perfect bliss, it is sweeter than even the sweetest sound in this world.

Because the Sage Tiruvalluvar wrote the Tirukkural in order to give advice to all sorts of people according to their own level of maturity, in verse 66 [in the chapter concerning having children, which comes in the section dealing with the life of householders] he said, “Only those who have not heard the prattling speech of their own children, will say that [the sound of] a flute is sweet or that [the sound of] a veena is sweet”. But merely because Tiruvalluvar said thus, we should not at all come to the conclusion that hearing the prattling speech of one’s own children is the sweetest of all experiences. Since hearing the prattling of children can give one only a transitory pleasure, Sri Bhagavan addresses aspirants who are engaged in the highest spiritual practice and says in this verse that the sweetness of the supreme Silence of the Sadguru,

which is ever shining within the heart, is greater and more real than the sweetness of the sound of one's prattling children.

However, readers should not conclude from this verse that Tiruvalluvar was one of "those who have not keenly listened to the Lord's language of Grace, which is the Supreme Word, [which shines forth] when the wandering mind subsides", but should understand that, since he himself never had any children, he composed that verse only for the sake of householders who seek worldly pleasures.

1199 If the noise of thoughts [*sankalpas*] rising [incessantly] within does not subside, the ineffable state of Silence will not be revealed. Those whose thoughts [*vrittis*] have subsided within, will not leave the strong and perfect [state of] Silence even in a big battlefield.

Sadhu Om: *Just as the sweet sound of soft and melodious music cannot be heard in a place where there is a great noise such as the hubbub of a market or the roaring of the waves of an ocean, so the sweet silent teaching [mouna-upadesa] of the Sadguru, which is ever going on deep within the heart, cannot be heard by ordinary people because of the noise of the millions of thoughts which are incessantly rising in their minds. On the other hand, because of the strength of His Silence, even the great noise of battlefield will remain unknown to a Jnani, who has annihilated the mind by destroying all thoughts or sankalpas. Because the ajnani attends only to the hubbub of thoughts, he does not notice the ever-shining Silence within, whereas because the Jnani attends only the Silence within, He does not know even the greatest noise which may be going on outside.*

1200 Tell me, is not the vocal silence observed by those who do not engage in Self-enquiry [*jnana-swa-vichara*] and who do not know the real goal, which is the Silence [that shines forth] when the ego, 'I am the fleshy and filthy body', subsides and reaches the heart, a [mere] mental endeavour [*chitta-vyapara*]?

Sadhu Om: *The effort of those who merely observe vocal silence instead of engaging in Self-enquiry or Self-attention, which is the real state of Silence of mind, is useless.*

1201 The life of Self – the true knowledge [*mey-jnana*] which shines forth devoid of the ego-sense due to the drowning [of the ego] in its source when the madness of desire for the petty, illusory and delusive sense-objects has been completely destroyed – alone is that which can [truly] satisfy the mind.

1202 Those whose hearts are surging with joy by experiencing the ever-new ambrosia [*amrita*] of Self, which shines brightly in the pure Silence, will not be spoilt in the world by experiencing the petty sense-objects, which give a little mad pleasure caused by mental delusion.

1203 The reality which is very clearly known by Sages as the goal [*siddhanta*] of all *Vedas* and *Agamas*, and the observance of reality [*sat-achara*] recommended by all *dharma-upadesas*, is [nothing but] Silence, the state of supreme peace.

Sadhu Om: *The ultimate goal which is taught in all the Vedas, Agamas, dharma-sastras and other scriptures is only the state of perfect Silence [pari-purna-mauna], which is*

nothing but the destruction of the mind [mano-nasa]. Refer to the work Who am I? where Sri Bhagavan says that all scriptures finally conclude that in order to attain liberation one must quell the mind.

1204 The complete giving up of all [the other three *purusharthas*] beginning with *dharma*, is the glorious state of peace, which is the nature of liberation [the fourth *purushartha*, the only true *purushartha*]. [Therefore] completely giving up [all] thought of the others [the three false *purusharthas*], cling only to Silence, the knowledge of the supreme Self, which is Siva.

Sadhu Om: *The true purushartha or goal of human life is the peaceful state of liberation, which can be attained only when one completely gives up the desire for the other three so-called purusharthas, namely dharma, artha and kama. Therefore, one should give up even the thought of those other three purusharthas and should steadfastly abide in Silence, the supreme state of Self-knowledge, which alone is liberation. Refer here to verse 8 of this work.*

54 Supreme Devotion (*Para-Bhakti Tiran*)

1205 When one has completely surrendered oneself at the Feet of Siva and has become of the nature of Self, the [resulting] abundant peace, in which there is not even the least room within the heart [for one] to make any complaint about [one's] defects and deficiencies, alone is the nature of supreme devotion.

Sadhu Om: *If one has surrendered oneself completely to God, it will be impossible for one to pray even for liberation. Refer here to verse 7 of Sri Arunachala Navamani-malai.*

1206 In the heart which exists and shines as the true and perfect bliss, having become a target to the Grace of God, can there be the petty deficiencies of mind, which are a sign of the fleshy ego-sense [the feeling 'I am this fleshy body'], which is ignorance?

1207 Only so long as there are other thoughts in the heart, can there be a thought of God conceived by one's mind. The death of even that thought [of God] due to the death of [all] other thoughts [including the root-thought 'I'], alone is the true thought [of God], the unthought thought.

Sadhu Om: *Only so long as there are other thoughts in one's mind, can one think of or meditate upon God. But the true thought of or meditation upon God, which is the "unthought thought", is only that state in which all other thoughts, including the first thought 'I am this body', have died through self-surrender.*

Only after the rising of the ego or thinker, the first thought 'I am the body', can other thoughts rise about the world and God. After the rising of these thoughts, since one then feels that God is different from oneself, one can only meditate upon Him as an object of thought. But when the ego, the root-thought 'I', dies through self-surrender, not only will all the thoughts about the world vanish, but even the thought of God, which has the same

reality [sama-satya] as the other thoughts, will also disappear. This state, which is devoid of all thought of world, soul and God, and in which one shines as the thought-free supreme reality, alone is the true meditation or Brahma-dhyana.

1208 If you ask, “Tell me, why is ‘being still’ [the state of mere being described in the previous verse], which is devoid of even a single rising thought, called a ‘thought’ [or ‘meditation’]?”, know that it is because of the shining of the ever-unforgettable consciousness of the reality [‘I am’].

Sadhu Om: *Thinking and forgetting are a dyad [dvandva] or pair of opposites. Since the ever-unforgettable consciousness of reality [‘I am’] shines perfectly in the state of ‘being still’ – the state of Self-attention or Self-abidance – that state is sometimes referred to as a state of ‘thought’ or ‘meditation’ [dhyana]. That is, since the reality is not forgotten in that thought-free state, it is loosely described as a state of ‘thinking of’ or ‘meditating upon’ the reality. It is only in this sense that Sri Bhagavan described the state of Self-attention as ‘thought of Self’ [atma-chintanai] in Who am I? and in verse 482 of this work.*

1209 The love that wells up within, in the place [the heart] where the clear peace is attained due to the light [of *Jnana*], which surges forth when the delusive mind, which is filled with the poisonous darkness [of *ajnana*], is destroyed and when the heart becomes open like the space, alone is the true love [*mey-bhakti*] for Siva.

1210 Only those fortunate ones who live always depending only upon Self [which is the true form of God] as the best refuge, will attain their own reality. For others, liberation, that unending gracious Supreme Abode [*param-dhama*], is unattainable by any means whatsoever.

1211 The true devotees who in all ways remain subjected [*adhina*] only to Self [God], [alone] are *tadiyars* [those who belong to the Lord]. Know that only for them [those true devotees], in whom there is unceasing love, will the Supreme Abode [*param-dhama*], which triumphs as transcendent, be a complete attainment.

55 The Attainment of *Jnana*

(Jnana-Siddhi Tiran)

1212 Though *siddhis* are said to be many and different, *Jnana* alone is the highest of those many different *siddhis*, [because] those who have attained other *siddhis* will desire *Jnana*, [whereas] those who have attained *Jnana* will not desire other [*siddhis*]. [Therefore] aspire [only for *Jnana*].

1213 One who has attained Self [*atma-swarupa-siddha*] is one who has attained all other [*siddhis*] together, since that one [Self-attainment or *atma-siddhi*] is the highest *siddhi*. Just as [all] the planets are within space, [whether] manifest or unmanifest, all of them [all the *siddhis*] will be in one who has attained Self-knowledge [*atma-jnana-siddha*].

1214 If by diving deep one reaches the bottom of the heart, the sense of baseness [the feeling ‘I am a petty *jiva*’] will leave and perish, and the life of being the Lord of

jnana, at whose Feet even the king of heaven [Indra] will bow down his head, will come to be lived [by one].

56 Brahman
(*Brahman Tiran*)

1215 The blissful silent real principle [Self or *Brahman*] alone is the stage or base for *Maya* – who is the great power of consciousness [*maha-chit-sakti*], which is not other than the real perfect principle – to play [her] game for ever, having the three principles [the world, soul and God] as [her] playthings. What a wonder it is!

Sadhu Om: From this verse we should understand that, apart from Brahman, Maya has no real existence of her own. The three principles, the world, soul and God, are the playthings with which she enacts her illusory game [maya-lila] of creation, sustenance and destruction. But the game she plays with these three could not take place if it did not have Self or Brahman, the perfect reality, as its base. The truth that Self ever remains as the base on which Maya plays, is what is indicated by Saktas when they figuratively depict Goddess Kali dancing on the lying body of Lord Siva. What is to be understood here is that the appearance of the world, soul and God, and of their creation, sustenance and destruction, are all an unreal play of Maya, who has no reality of her own. It is with the teaching given in this verse that the first chapter of part two of The Path of Sri Ramana begins.

1216 If they see the many moving pictures, they do not see the one unmoving screen, the base. Those who see the unmoving screen do not see any of the pictures. This is the nature of a cinema theatre.

Michael James: When pictures are projected on a cinema screen, they in effect hide that screen. Likewise, when the pictures of names and forms – the world, soul and God – are seen, they in effect hide their base, the Self or Brahman. Therefore, just as the screen is seen as it is only when the pictures are not seen, so Self is seen as it is only when the world, soul and God are not seen. Hence, if the world, soul and God are seen, Self will not be seen, and if Self is seen, the world, soul and God will not be seen. Refer also to verses 46, 876 and 877, where the same truth is expressed.

1217 In a cinema-theatre, without the unmoving screen there cannot be any moving pictures. When scrutinized, that one unmoving screen is different from the moving pictures on the screen.

1218 The screen, the unmoving base, alone is *Brahman* [or Self]. The soul, God and worlds are only the moving pictures on that unmoving screen. [Therefore] know that all that is seen [on that screen] is an illusion [*maya*].

Michael James: The above three verses reveal that the world, soul and God can be seen only when Brahman is not seen, but that without Brahman there cannot be any world, soul or God, and that, though Brahman is thus the reality or base on which they appear, it is different from them. Hence this verse concludes by drawing the inference, “All that is

seen (i.e. the world, soul and God) is an illusion". Compare here verse 160 and 1047 and 1049.

1219 He who, in the picture world, thinks about and longs not only for the picture world – which moves with picture souls, which move like himself – but also for the picture God [who creates, sustains and destroys the picture world and picture souls], is only the soul [*jiva*], who is a moving picture.

Sadhu Om: The world, soul and God are mere moving pictures; they cannot be the screen, the base. The soul or man, who is one among the moving pictures, sees the world and God, the other two among the moving pictures, and suffers by having either likes or dislikes towards them. That is, many people see and desire the objects of the world and suffer with the longing to obtain them, while others suffer with the longing to see and attain God. The first kind of people are called worldly people, while the second kind are called devotees of God. However, this verse teaches that, since both these kinds of longing and suffering which people undergo are part of the play of maya, they have no meaning whatsoever and are both merely unreal occurrences resulting from the ignorance of not knowing Self or Brahman, the supreme reality which is the base on which maya thus plays.

1220 For the thought [*chitta-vritti*] which undergoes suffering by thinking itself – who is [in its real nature nothing but] the screen, the unmoving base – to be a moving picture [the soul or *jiva*], the proper thing to do is to abide firmly in the state of Silence, having completely subsided [through Self-attention].

Sadhu Om: The chitta-vritti mentioned in this verse is the soul, the ego or 'I'-thought [aham-vritti], whose real nature is only Self, the unmoving base, but who wrongly identifies himself to be a body, one of the moving pictures on the screen, and who thereby sees and desires the other pictures, the world and God.

In the previous verse, even the noble effort of a devotee who longs to see and attain God, was found to be at fault, was it not? When it is so, is it not necessary to teach that noble soul what the proper thing is for him to do? Therefore, in this verse Sri Bhagavan teaches that the best and most noble thing for the soul to do is to subside and abide firmly in the state of Silence by knowing and remaining as Self, the unmoving base on which the moving pictures of the world soul and God appear. Since [as stated in verse 1216] one who sees the screen cannot see the pictures, when one thus knows one's real nature one will not see the pictures of the world, soul and God, and hence one will attain the supreme peace which is devoid of the delusion of being mad after those pictures.

57 The Nature of Liberation (*Mukti Uru Tiran*)

1221 The knowledge of one's own true nature – which remains in the heart when even the thought of being saved from bondage is destroyed due to the complete removal of the thought of that bondage in the mind which sees itself [by scrutinizing] thus 'Who am I that am bound?' – alone is the nature of liberation.

Michael James: When the mind sees its own true nature by enquiring ‘Who am I that am bound?’, it will realize that it was in truth never bound. Therefore, since the thought of bondage is thus completely destroyed, the contrary thought of liberation will also vanish, because bondage and liberation are a dyad [dvandva] or pair of opposites, each of which has a meaning because of the other. This verse paraphrases and explains the idea expressed by Sri Bhagavan in Who am I? when He said, “Enquiring ‘Who am I that am in bondage?’, and [thereby] knowing one’s own real nature, alone is liberation”.

1222 That which is the consciousness-filled peace [*bodhamaya-santa*] which shines as that which remains [when the thoughts of bondage and liberation are thus removed by Self-enquiry], alone is *Sada-sivam* [the eternal reality]. The egoless Silence [which shines] as [the true knowledge] ‘That [*Sada-sivam*], which is the ever-existing Supreme, alone is “I”,’ alone is the finality of liberation.

Sadhu Om: Verse 40 of Ulladu Narpadu Anubandham should be read and understood here.

1223 One’s giving up of everything [by one’s remaining firmly] without being shaken from the state [of peaceful Self-abidance] on account of slackness [or *pramada*] in [that state of] peace, which surges because of one’s enquiry into Self, which is the basic consciousness on which everything [the world, soul and God] appears – alone is liberation.

1224 Unless the objective knowledge [the mind which knows second and third person objects] is completely destroyed, the attachment to the world, which is formed by the senses, which bind the soul, cannot be severed. The destruction of that [objective] knowledge by [one’s] remaining in the state of Self, which is *nishtha*, alone is the nature of liberation which one enjoys.

1225 Merely being [as ‘I am’] – having known the path which destroys attachment, the enemy which is the mother of the bondage of birth [and death], which gives room for laughter [i.e. which is laughed at by Sages], and having attained that non-attachment – alone is liberation.

Sadhu Om: “The path which destroys attachment, the enemy” is [as shown in the previous verse] to remain in Self, having given up objective knowledge, in other words, to attend only to Self and not to any second or third person objects. “Merely being” means remaining still with the mere consciousness ‘I am’ and without knowing any other thing.

1226 The saying, “The attainment of a life of pure Self-consciousness, which shines merely as existence [‘I am’], alone is the state of liberation, which is the light of supreme knowledge [*para-jnana*]”, is the firm verdict of the Seers of reality, which is the crown of the *Vedas*.

58 The Supreme Truth (*Paramartha Tiran*)

1227 There is no becoming [creation], and there is also no destruction, the opposite [of creation]; there are no people in bondage, and there are also no people at all doing *sadhana*; there are no people who seek the highest [i.e. liberation], and there are also no people who have attained liberation. Know that this alone is the supreme truth [*paramartha*]!

Sadhu Om: This verse is adapted from the Sanksrit sloka, “Na nirodha na cha utpattih na baddhah na cha sadhakah, Na mumukshuh na vai muktah iti esha paramarthata,” which Sri Bhagavan often used to cite, and which is included in the Amritabindu Upanishad [Verse 10], in the Atma Upanishad [verse 30], in the Mandukya Karikas [2.32] and in the Vivekachudamani [verse 574]. After seeing this four-line verse composed by Sri Muruganar, Sri Bhagavan expressed the same idea in the following two-line verse.

B28 There is no becoming [creation], destruction, bondage, desire to sever [bondage], effort [made for liberation] for those who have attained [liberation]. Know that this is the supreme truth [*paramartha*]!

Sadhu Om: Creation, destruction, bondage, the desire to sever bondage, the one who seeks liberation and the one who has attained liberation, all exist only in the outlook of the mind. Hence they all have the same degree of reality [*sama-satya*] as the mind which knows them. But as Sri Bhagavan reveals in verse 17 of Upadesa Undiyar, when the form of the mind is vigilantly scrutinized it will be found that there is no such thing as mind at all. Therefore, when the mind is thus found to be non-existent, the whole false appearance of creation, destruction, bondage, liberation and so on, will also be found to be completely non-existent. Hence, the absolute truth experienced by a Jnani, who has known Self and who has thereby realized the non-existence of the mind, is only *ajata* – the truth that there was never was, is or will be any creation, birth or becoming at all.

The five divine functions [*panchakrityas*], namely creation, sustenance, destruction, veiling and Grace, are all things which are concerned only with the world, soul and God, which [as revealed in verse 1215] are mere playthings of *maya*. Therefore, whatever appears as real within the range of these five functions, cannot be the absolute truth. Since bondage, liberation, *sadhaka*, *sadhana*, attainment and so on, pertain only to the world, soul and God, they are all unreal. That is to say, since the world, soul and God are the playthings of *maya*, all knowledges pertaining to them are unreal. [See Ulladu Narpadu verse 13, “Knowledge of multiplicity is ignorance, which is unreal”.] When it is so, only that knowledge which shines transcending *maya*, and which is a knowledge not of manyness but only of oneness, can be the supreme and absolute truth [*paramartha*]. The exact nature of that supreme truth can be known only by Jnanis, who firmly abide as that single, all-transcending reality. Their experience alone can be taken to be the absolute truth.

We should here recall that in verse 100 of this work it is stated that though Sri Bhagavan taught various different doctrines to suit the maturity of each one who came to Him, He revealed that His own experience was only *ajata*. In order to show that His own experience was also the experience of the ancient Rishis who gave the Upanishads, Sri Bhagavan often used to cite the sloka of which the present verse is a translation.

The literal meaning of the word ‘maya’ is ‘ma-ya’ [that which is not], because when Self-knowledge dawns the activity [vritti] of maya, namely its aforesaid play, will be found to be completely non-existent. Just as the non-existent snake merges into and becomes one with the ever-existing rope as soon as that rope is seen as it is, so the non-existent maya will merge into and become one with the ever-existing and Self-shining Self as soon as that Self is known as it is. Therefore, though maya is not other than Brahman or Self, and though it is said to be beginningless like Brahman, it does have an end, since it is found to be non-existent in the clear light of Self-knowledge. Hence, we [Self], who remain shining even in the state in which maya is thus found to be non-existent, alone are the supreme and absolute truth [paramartha].

Thus, as the final conclusion of this work, Guru Vachaka Kovai, which is also known as ‘The Light of Supreme Truth’ [paramartha dipam], Sri Bhagavan reveals that Self – which always shines without beginning or end and without any change as the single, non-dual existence-consciousness-bliss [sat-chit-ananda] in the form ‘I am’ – alone is the supreme truth [paramartha]), and that everything else is a mere play of maya and is therefore completely unreal and non-existent.

However, this absolute truth cannot be understood by people who are under the sway of maya and are therefore deluded by the defect of ego. Hence, disregarding this supreme truth, they imagine many different goals such as immortalizing the body, heavenizing the earth, going to celestial worlds, attaining powers [siddhis] and so on, and believing such goals to be the supreme truth [paramartha], in the name of yoga or religion they chart out different paths to attain those different goals, they write voluminous books about their own goals and methods, and they become entangled in elaborate arguments about them. However, all such efforts are futile, since they are possible only within the range of the unreal play of maya. Refer here to verse 34 of Ulladu Narpadu, where Sri Bhagavan says that to argue about the nature of the reality, instead of merging within and knowing it as it is, is only ignorance born of maya.

1228 Since it is possible only in [the dim light of] unreality [or ignorance] to make that which exists [appear to be] non-existent and to make that which does not exist [appear to be] that which exists, but impossible [to do so] in the clear [light of] truth, in the certainty which is the truth everything is consciousness [chit].

Michael James: *A rope can appear to be a snake only in a dim light, and not in complete darkness or in clear light. Likewise, the ever-existing Self or Brahman can appear to be the non-existent names and forms [the world, soul and God] only in the dim light of ignorance [the mind-light], and not in the complete darkness of sleep or in the clear light of Self-knowledge. Therefore, since that which exists [Self or Brahman] cannot appear to be that which does not exist [the many names and forms] in the clear light of truth, in that clear light it will be realized that whatever appeared to be existent in the state of ignorance is truly nothing but consciousness, which alone is that which truly exists. That is, just as the rope alone ever exists both when it appears to be the non-existent snake and when it is seen as it is, so consciousness alone ever exists both when it appears to be the non-existent names and forms and when it shines as it is.*

1229 Know that all that is told about the soul and God – [such as] that which is the soul that has the bondage of attachment will become God when bondage is removed, just as paddy becomes rice when the husk is removed – is [merely] an imagination of the defective mind [superimposed] on Self, the form of that consciousness.

Michael James: Though scriptures at first say, “Just as paddy becomes rice when its husk is removed, so the soul [or jivatma] will become God [paramatma] when its bondage of attachment is removed,” the supreme truth [paramartha] is that there is no soul, God, bondage or liberation at all, and that these are all mere mental imaginations superimposed on Self, which is the sole ever-existing reality.

59 The Perfect Reality (Semporul Tiran)

1230 Whatever by the mind you think [or know] to be that which exists is in truth that which does not exist. That one [Self] which you cannot have in your mind [i.e. which you cannot think] either to be that which exists or to be that which does not exist, alone is that which exists [ulladu].

Sadhu Om: Since the mind is itself an unreal and non-existent entity, everything which is known by the mind as real or existent, is in fact unreal and non-existent. Hence, if Self were something which could be known by the mind, it would also be unreal, would it not? But since Self is declared by Sages to be that which cannot be known by the mind, it alone is that which truly exists and is real.

1231 Say, is it possible by the imagination [the mind] to deny the greatness [and reality] of the widely pervading and transcendent Supreme, which completely swallows within itself the defects and differences caused by the crowd of all kinds of knowledge?

1232 Know that the consciousness which always shines in the heart as the formless and nameless Self, ‘I’, [and which is known] by [one’s] being still without thinking [about anything] as existent or non-existent, alone is the perfect reality.

1233 Among the six doctrines declared to be without beginning, that non-duality [advaita] alone is without end, whereas the other five doctrines have an end. Bearing this in mind, know it clearly.

Sadhu Om: The six doctrines mentioned in this verse are the shad-darsanas, the six orthodox schools of Indian philosophy, namely the Nyaya school of Gautama, the Vaiseshika school of Kanada, the Sankhya school of Kapila, the Yoga school of Patanjali, the Purva Mimamsa school of Jaimini, and the Vedanta school of Vyasa. The doctrine referred to in this verse as Advaita is the doctrine of Vedanta, whose final conclusion is that the non-dual Self or Brahman, which transcends maya, alone is the ever-existing reality, which has neither beginning or end. On the other hand, the conclusions of the other five schools are all concerned with what is within the range of maya’s play. Therefore, just as maya is said to have no beginning but have an end, these five schools of philosophy are also said to have no beginning but to have an end, since

they cannot remain when the truth [Self] is realized and when maya thereby comes to an end. Since all doctrines other than Advaita are thus invalidated when Self-knowledge dawns, Advaita alone is the truth which exists and shines for ever without either beginning or end.

1234 When known [correctly], that which is said to be real is only one. Know that that firm, whole perfect reality alone is that which is described in many ways by *Brahma-jnanis*, who have known [it] by quietly entering the heart with a very subtle intellect.

Michael James: Though the Sages who revealed the six doctrines (shad-darsanas) of Hinduism and who paved the various different religions in the world, had all realized the non-dual perfect reality, they described it in various ways according to the maturity of the minds of those who came to them. However, mature aspirants should understand that, though the reality is thus described by Sages in many different ways, it is in truth one and non-dual.

1235 The truth of non-duality [*advaita-tattva*], which is the highest of all religions, which are so very many, alone is the silent reality, whose nature is the consciousness devoid of the insubstantial and ghostly ego, the seed of the different religions.

Michael James: Refer to verses 989 to 993, 1176 to 1179, and 1242.

1236 Those who know the perfect reality – which does not have beginning or end, which is devoid of change, cause or even object of comparison, and which is that which cannot be known by the deceptive sense of individuality [the ego] – [alone] will attain glory.

60 Transcendence of Thought

(Bhavanatita Tiran)

1237 The glory of *Advaita* will shine in the hearts of *Jnanis* as the unaffected Self after the deceptive triads [*triputis*] have disappeared, but cannot be attained by those who think [of it] by mind like [they think of] the imaginary, unreal, dual and petty sense objects.

1238 The thought-free Siva, who is Self, the real consciousness, cannot be known by those who have a mind which thinks, but only by the thought-free heroes who have a mind which, due to inner consciousness [or Self], has entered and abides in the source of thought, [their thinking] mind having died.

1239 O you [highly mature aspirants] who have intense madness for [the experience of] the greatness of non-duality [*advaita*!] [The experience of] non-duality is only for those who abide in the state of reality, having attained perfect peace of mind [which results from the complete subsidence of all the thoughts which rise in the mind]. Say, what is the benefit for backward people who do not seek direct abidance in reality.

Michael James: The only true benefit to be attained is the experience of non-duality, which can be attained only by those mature aspirants who through Self-enquiry seek and attain perfect peace of mind, which is the state of abidance in Self, the reality, and not by those immature people who do not even desire to follow the direct path of Self-enquiry and thereby attain the state of Self-abidance.

61 Narration of the Experience

(Anubhavam Uraitta Tiran)

1240 When we recount the experience [attained on account] of the sayings of the Guru [Sri Ramana], [it is the experience that] all that was seen as a forest of attachment [or bondage] is nothing but the ineffable space of the Silence of true Knowledge [mey-jnana-mauna] and [that] all inferior knowledge is a dream.

Sadhu Om: In this chapter [verses 1240 to 1248] Sri Muruganar describes the experience of Jnana which he attained by the Grace of his Sadguru, Sri Ramana.

1241 I have known, I have known the state of supreme truth, which is full of transcendent existence-consciousness [and in which it is known] that in actual truth there is not even the least acquiring of what is called as bondage, liberation and so on, [which all appears only due to one's] having mistaken [oneself] to be other [than Self].

Sadhu Om: When the state of supreme truth [paramartha sthiti] is known, one realizes that one had in truth never mistaken oneself to be other than Self, and that consequently one had never been in bondage and had never attained any such thing as liberation.

Sri Muruganar: 'Abiding in this state, having attained the supreme bliss which is devoid of bondage and liberation...' is a saying of Sri Bhagavan [in verse 29 of Upadesa Undiyar]. He has also said [in verse 37 of Ulladu Narpadu], "Even the contention held that there is duality during practice and non-duality after attainment, is not true ...". If the state of supreme truth is known as it is, know that even the feeling of liberation will not exist there; since bondage is ever non-existent, the nature of Self is that which is completely devoid of even the knowledge 'I am a Mukta'.

1242 Though we look at any religion and though we listen to any doctrine [propounded by those religions], we clearly see that all the doctrines of those religions definitely proclaim only one goal, which shines devoid of differences.

Michael James: In his experience of Jnana Sri Muruganar realized that, though different religions seem to proclaim different goals, all those seemingly different goals are in truth only one, namely the state of Self-knowledge, which shines devoid of differences. However, this true harmony and oneness among religions can prevail only in the state of Silence, and cannot prevail merely due to the intellect thinking 'All religions

are one', because so long as the intellect exists it cannot but see differences between one religion and another. Refer here to verses 989 to 993, 1176 to 1179, and 1235.

Sri Muruganar: *In truth, harmony [among religions] can exist only in Silence [mauna], and cannot exist [merely] due to the subtlety of the intellect. After attaining the experience of Silence [mauna-anubhava], it will be known as clearly as a fruit in the palm that all religions and doctrines are having the goal of Self-attainment, without any differences among themselves.*

1243 When entering and abiding in the Whole [*purna*], which is of the nature of consciousness [*chinmaya*], which shines there in the unerring *Vedas* as the reality, then it is impossible to see the three times [past, present and future], the three places [the first, second and third persons] and the triads [the knower, the act of knowing and the object known].

Michael James: *For an explanation about the meaning of 'the three places', refer to the note to verse 447.*

1244 When known, the subtle truth revealed [in this work] is [what I learnt through] the silent elucidation [*mauna-vyakhyana*] which was joyfully bestowed [upon me] by *Jnana-Ramana-Guru-Nathan*, who taught [me] having come out in front of me as the foremost true Brahmin.

Sri Muruganar: *Since the subtle truth of the above verses [i.e. the whole of this work] can be understood only in the experience of Jnana, what the Jnana-Guru bestowed upon me was only the essence of the experience of Silence [mauna-anubhava-sara]. The words "having come out in front of me" denote that, though the Jnana-Guru ever exists within [as Self], He took me as His own by appearing in the play of maya with a human physical body like us. Since the clarity [of understanding Sri Bhagavan's teachings] is strengthened only through Silence, it is said "the silent elucidation" [mauna vyakhyana].*

1245 In my [non-dual] outlook [in which I alone exist as the reality], you do not exist but only I; in your [non-dual] outlook [when you realize that you alone exist as the reality], I do not exist but only you; in one's own [non-dual] outlook [when one has realized the truth], others do not exist but only oneself. When [the truth is thus] known, all of them [I, you, oneself and others] are [nothing but] 'I' [the Self].

1246 Know that I am neither a possession nor am I a possessor; I am neither a slave [a devotee] nor a master [the Lord]; I do not have the dutiful sense of doership [the sense of doership that makes one feel 'I have a duty to do such-and-such things'] and I do not have the sense of experiencership; I am not at all a doer.

1247 Since Self took me as its own, appearing here as the Guru [*Sri Ramana*] in front of my objective knowledge [my mind], which was lamenting as if it were bound by *maya*, [I pay] most worthy obeisance only to my infinite Self, which blazes like the sun.

1248 Know that, in spite of [any amount of] miserable poverty which may befall [him], [this] Murugan [Sri Muruganar] will never yield to the power of illusion [*maya-sakti*] of the empty world but only to the power of consciousness [*chit-sakti*] of Supreme Ramana, who is Siva.

Michael James: In the outward life of Sri Muruganar we clearly saw how perfectly he lived up to the truth which he expresses in this verse. In spite of the countless untold miseries and hardships which he had to undergo from the day he came to Sri Bhagavan to the day he left his body, Sri Muruganar was never shaken by and never yielded even in the least to the powerful threats and temptations of the worldly maya which surrounded him.

62 The State of Equality (*Sama Nilai Tiran*)

1249 For those who remain in Self-abidance [*jnana-atma-nishtha*], which is the foremost *dharma*, there is not even in the least [any differences such as] caste, lineage or religion. There are no differences [such as these] in Self, but only for the worthless, unreal body.

Sadhu Om: The five verses in this concluding chapter all record actual sayings of Sri Bhagavan.

Since Self-abidance is itself the foremost dharma and the source of all dharmas, and since the various other dharmas or duties enjoined according to the different castes, lineages and religions exist only for the body and not for the Self, those who abide as Self need not perform any other dharma.

1250 Know that the vision of seeing equality – which is [the experience] that Self alone is the reality in all that is known [through the senses] – alone is the ‘equal vision’ [*sama-darsana*] which is lucidly proclaimed by Sages, [who have attained] true knowledge [*mey-jnana*] which abounds in equality [*samarasa*].

Michael James: The words ‘sama-darsana’ [equal vision] and ‘sama-drishiti’ [equal outlook] are generally taken by people to mean seeing all people, all creatures and all things as equal. But in this verse Sri Bhagavan reveals that the true meaning of ‘sama-darsana’ or ‘sama-drishiti’ is only the experience of the Jnani, who knows that His own Self is the sole reality behind the whole world-appearance. So long as manyness and diversity are known, inequality will definitely remain; only in the state of perfect non-dual oneness, in which is known that Self alone exists, can true equality be experienced.

1251 He [the *Jnani*] who is full of perfect peace, which is the experience of the motionless Self, which is devoid of the ego, is one whose mind is not happily pleased by praise and who is never displeased by blame.

Michael James: Refer to verse 38 of Ulladu Narpadu Anubandham.

- 1252 For the knower of reality [*mey-jnani*] – who does not wrongly imagine to be real a life of glory, which is according to *prarabdha*, in the attractive world, which appears only in the unmanifest void like the pleasure of clear water [seen due to a mirage] in the scorching sunshine [of a desert] – even a life of degradation [poverty or misery] will be [experienced as] a great joy.
- 1253 Know that all the *tapas* which the great divine Sages naturally do without selfish desires, is beneficial to [all] the people of [this] ancient world, providing [them] with beautiful auspiciousness.

Michael James: Since Sri Bhagavan has said in verse 30 of Upadesa Undiyar, “Knowing that which survives the destruction of ‘I’ [the ego], alone is excellent tapas...” we should understand that Jnanis are always by their very nature doing the most perfect tapas. Refer to verse 303 of this work, where Sri Bhagavan says that the mere existence of a Jnani on earth is sufficient to remove all the sins of the world, and to Day to Day with Bhagavan, 9-3-1946, where Sri Bhagavan says, “If one Jnani exists in the world, his influence will benefit all the people in the world”.

Praise
(Vazhttu)

- 1254 Glory to Arunagiri; glory to Ramana Guru; glory to the devotees who live by the one [unequalled] word [Sri Ramana’s teachings]; glory to this ‘Light of Supreme Truth’ [*paramartha dipam*], which is a fine garland [*Kovai*] of the sayings [*Vachaka*] of the Gurmurti [Sri Ramana], in giving [its] fruit [Self-knowledge]!

Sri Ramanarpanamastu

APPENDIX

Michael James: In the appendix of Guru Vachaka Kovai – Urai, Sri Sadhu Om’s Tamil prose rendering of Guru Vachaka Kovai, the following eleven stray verses of Sri Bhagavan were added, since they are verses containing instructions or upadesa. At the end of the note to each verse, it is indicated where in the text of Guru Vachaka Kovai it is to be incorporated.

- 1 Because of the outlook of seeing [this world] as an effect [*karya*] which consists of female, male, neuter and so on, a doer who creates [it] exists as the cause [*karana*] of this world. He destroys and creates this world. Know [that] doer to be Hara [Lord Siva].

Sadhu Om: *This verse is an adaptation by Sri Bhagavan of the Sanskrit verse, “Stri-pum-napumsaka-aditvat jagatah karya-darsanat, Asti karta sah hritva-etat-srijati-asmat-prabhuh-harah”, which is the first verse of Siva-Jnana-Bodham.*

Cause and effect are a dyad [dvandva], since each one has a meaning only because of the other. The purpose of this verse is to teach that, since the world-appearance is seen as an effect, there must exist a God as the cause of it. Refer also to the first verse of Ulladu Narpadu.

So long as the world is considered to be an effect, it is necessary to accept that it has a cause. But when Self-knowledge dawns, the world-appearance will be known to be nothing but Self, and the dyad of cause and effect will therefore cease to exist. When the world is thus no longer seen as an effect but only as the uncaused, uncreated and unchanging Self, God will no longer be known as a cause or doer – a separate entity – but will shine as that one undivided Self alone.

This verse is to be incorporated in the text after verse 114.

- 2 O son, the conjurer [*indrajalikan*] deludes the people of this world without deluding himself, whereas the *siddha* deludes the people of this world and [at the same time] deludes himself. What a great wonder this is!

Sadhu Om: *This verse is an adaptation by Sri Bhagavan of a verse in the Rama Gita, “Aindrajalikakarta-api bhrantan-bhramayati svayam, Abhrantak eva siddhastu svabhratah bhramayatayah”.*

The conjurer who entertains people by performing tricks in the streets knows that his tricks are not real. The siddha, on the other hand, believes that the occult powers [siddhis] which he displays are real, and hence is deluded into thinking that he has really become great. However, his siddhis are in truth no more real than the conjurer’s tricks. Therefore, though the siddha and the conjurer are equal in their art of deluding others, the siddha is inferior to the conjurer because he does not even have the clarity of mind to understand that his powers are unreal.

This verse is to be incorporated in the text after verse 224.

- 3 O my troublesome soul, you do not give rest to me, the stomach, for [even] one *nazhigai* [twenty-four minutes]; you do not stop eating for one *nazhigai* in a day; you never know my suffering. It is difficult to live with you.

Sadhu Om: *On the day of Chitra-purnima in the Tamil year Sukla [the full-moon day in April-May 1929], a sumptuous feast was served in the Ashram, as a result of which many devotees complained of uneasiness in the stomach. One devotee then quoted a well-known Tamil verse sung by Saint Avaiyar, in which she addresses the stomach and says, “O my troublesome stomach, if you are asked to forgo food for one day, you do not forgo [it]; if you are asked to take [food sufficient] for two days, you do not take [it]; you never know my suffering. It is difficult to live with you.”*

Hearing this, Sri Bhagavan remarked that under the circumstances it was unfair to blame the stomach by quoting Avaiyar’s verse, since it was only the soul or ego which had, for its own satisfaction, stuffed the stomach beyond its capacity. “On the contrary,” said Sri Bhagavan, “it would now be fair for the stomach to complain against the soul,”

and so He composed the above stanza. Because Avaiyar lived on alms and often had to starve for days together, she could justly complain against the troubles which the stomach caused her. But through his verse, Sri Bhagavan humorously instructed His disciples that those people who pamper the sense of taste by overeating have no right to complain against the stomach.

This verse is to be incorporated in the text after verse 492.

- 4 O you who make a great celebration [about a so-called birthday], [do you know] what is the [real birthday]? The [real] birthday is only that day when, by scrutinizing ‘Where were we born?’ [that is, “Where or from what did the ego, the false notion “I am this body”, rise?], we are born in the reality [Self], which ever shines without birth or death as the one.

Sadhu Om: *In 1912, when devotees first began to celebrate His birthday [Jayanti], Sri Bhagavan composed this verse and the following one.*

In verse 11 of Ulladu Narpadu Anubandham Sri Bhagavan has given an answer to the question, “Who is really born?” Likewise, in this verse He has given an answer to the question, “What is the real birthday?” Identifying the body as ‘I’ due to attachment [dehabhimana] is the birth of the jiva. But this is in fact a false birth, for identifying the body as ‘I’ is the death of our true state. On the other hand, since abiding as Self is the only true life, the attainment of Self-knowledge – which is gained by scrutinizing Self, the source of the ego – alone is our real birth.

This verse and the next one are to be included in the text after verse 603.

- 5 Subsiding [and merging into Self] by knowing oneself – [having discriminated] thus, “Conducting a birthday celebration instead of weeping over [one’s] birth [as ‘I am this body’] at least on [one’s] birthday, is like decorating a corpse” – alone is [true] knowledge [or wisdom].

Sadhu Om: *After revealing in the previous verse that Self-realization alone is the real birth, in this verse Sri Bhagavan teaches that it is ignorance to celebrate one’s false birthday, the day on which one was born in this world as a body. Even though on other days one forgets to lament, “Alas, I am born in this world by identifying this body as ‘I,’” at least on one’s birthday one should remember to lament thus and to repent for that mistake. If instead one celebrates one’s birthday with great pomp, it is like happily decorating a corpse – this body – instead of discarding it with aversion as not ‘I.’*

This verse and the previous one are to be incorporated in the text after 603.

Editor’s note: *There are eleven verses in this appendix. In Michael’s manuscript verses 6-11 have already been incorporated into the text in the appropriate places. They can be found in the notes to verses 1027, 1127, 1141, 1147, 1172, 1173.*

Michael James: *The following verse was found among the manuscripts of Sri Muruganar with a note “To be added in Guru Vachaka Kovai”, and was therefore included at the end of the appendix of Guru Vachaka Kovai – Urai. This verse is to be incorporated in the text after verse 592.*

592-a Since death [*yama-tattva*] comes in the form of forgetfulness [of Self], for the minds of those who [seek to] attain a life of immortality, the five sense objects, whose nature is *tamas* and which function together, it is more dangerous than [any] deadly, cruel poison.

Michael James: Knowing objects through any of the five senses, causes one to lose one's Self-attention, in other words, to forget Self. Such forgetfulness (pramada) or loss of Self-attention is declared by Sages to be death (see verse 394 of this work, and verses 321 to 329 of Vivekachudamani). Therefore, those who are practising Self-enquiry in order to attain the immortal state of Self, should be careful not to allow even the least room in their heart for desire for sense-objects.