The Garland of Guru’s Sayings
THE GARLAND OF GURU’S SAYINGS

GURU VACHAKA KOVAI

Translated by Prof. K. SWAMINATHAN
from original in Tamil by Sri MURUGANAR

SRI RAMANASRAMAM
TIRUVANNAMALAI
INDIA
PUBLISHER’S NOTE

Professor Swaminathan’s English rendering of Guru Vachaka Kovai of Sri Muruganar has been serialised in The Mountain Path from 1964 onwards. The second edition of the Tamil work published in 1971 added several new stanzas to those in the first edition brought out in 1939 by Sri Ramana Padananda. Further, the elaborate commentary of Sri Sadhu Om, published by the Delhi Ramana Kendra in 1980, carries useful notes and explanations in simple Tamil, which established the claim that this Treatise provides the most precise, systematic and authoritative exposition of Sri Bhagavan’s teaching, explaining step by step the theory, the practice and the experience of jnana, the Truth supreme which is Being as Life Eternal, Pure Awareness, Perfect Bliss.

Thus, the most comprehensive collection of the Maharshi’s sayings is Guru Vachaka Kovai (The Garland of Guru’s Sayings) composed and strung together artistically by the poet Sri Muruganar. In this massive Tamil work of 1282 stanzas (1254 being Sri Muruganar’s handiwork and 28 the Maharshi’s), each stanza presents, in a well wrought and finely polished setting, a pearl that fell from the Master’s lips. Not only are these stanzas arranged in the most logically effective order, under 231 chapters, but most of them were seen and approved by the Master, who supplied some links and re-statements of his own to emphasize a point or tighten up or clarify the argument. The value of The Garland of Guru’s Sayings is not merely in its literary appeal to Tamil readers. The collection equals the Talks in comprehensiveness and authenticity. The Talks are informal and present the Maharshi’s teachings against the background of the questions posed by enquirers. The Garland focuses the light on what the Maharshi said regardless of when or why he
said it, and the sayings are strung together in a manner which is intellectually satisfying.

It has been well said by Sri Sadhu Om that Sri Muruganar is the main architect of *The Ramana Prasthana Traya* (Trinity of Scriptures). He elicited *Upadesa Saram*, he helped in giving final form and a coherent structure to *The Forty Verses on Reality*, and he himself composed the bulk and finalized the arrangement of the stanzas in *Guru Vachaka Kovai*, a systematic and detailed exposition of the Master’s teaching which carries Sri Bhagavan’s *imprimatur* and which provides, for the Tamil reader at any rate, a perennial source of literary enjoyment.

In finalizing this translation and seeing it through the press, the translator and the publishers acknowledge with gratitude the valuable assistance of a devotee, who, in the course of *satsang* with Sri Muruganar, acquired an immense reverence towards him.

The Ashram has great pleasure in offering this *Garland* as a centenary tribute to this great poet who lived and wrote as the bright shadow and the authentic voice of Sri Bhagavan.

Sri Ramanasramam

15.8.1990

T.N. VENKATARAMAN

President, Board of Trustees
INTRODUCTION

Born to Sri Krishna Iyer of Ramanathapuram in 1890, the child was originally named Sambamurti. However, his official name was C.K. Subramanya Iyer. He, who in later years would sing and pour out verses in torrents, could hardly speak and was almost dumb till the age of five. Having lost his father early in life, he lived in Coimbatore and received his education there. He grew up in an atmosphere of Tamil learning and evinced a deep love for his mother tongue; consequently he specialised in it and soon became a highly accomplished scholar in this ancient and vibrantly alive language. He was a Pandit-member in the lexicon committee presided over by Dr. Chandler. Having studied the Tirukkural thoroughly he followed its precepts meticulously in his life. Out of love for Tamil he changed his name to Mugavai Kanna Muruganar (see v. 13 of The Garland), corresponding to his original name. Not only was he a noted scholar, but also a spiritually oriented nationalist and he was greatly influenced by Gandhiji’s liberation movement. His first volume of poems was “Swatantra Gitam” (‘Songs of Independence’). He first came to Sri Bhagavan in 1923. This darshan and the intense gaze of Sri Bhagavan transformed his being. When thus he came under the spell of the Master, all lesser lights were absorbed in the radiance of His Presence and he never again wrote on any theme other than the glory and the sayings of the Master. Sri Muruganar himself tells us what happened when he came to Sri Bhagavan:

   With blazing, bright, unwinking eyes
   He gazed and drunk in my whole Being.
   Swept off by such enchanting beauty
   His utter slave I have become.1

---

To sing His praises, to praise His Presence and to explain His teachings the poet uses words which, whether richly sensuous or austerely intellectual, are invariably appropriate, while his repertory of metrical form is astounding in its vastness, flexibility and power. Like some great temple complex, with its shrines and towers, its water tanks and groves, the immense output of this extraordinarily gifted poet constitutes a massive and worthy monument to the Master, whose mighty message Sri Muruganar manages to convey, because he is himself a consummate and humble scholar, poet, saint.

Sri Muruganar’s self-effacement was total and he sat immortal in the shadow of Ramana’s Feet. He passed away on August 28, 1973 amidst the chanting of the devotees in praise of Sri Arunachala and Sri Ramana.

Sri Ramanasramam                        K. Swaminathan
29.9.1990
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THE GARLAND OF GURU’S SAYINGS

1. Invocation to the Guru

1  To save from dire despondency  
   Those who yearn for, and yet are, far,  
   Far from the goal of final Freedom,  
   This Lamp of Guru’s wisdom lit  
   To put to flight the illusion of ‘I’  
   And ‘mine’, shines as the very Self.

2  While I lay writhing in the body  
   Mistaking it for me, the gracious,  
   Silent guru took pity on me  
   And made me see that I was not  
   This form inert, decaying, but  
   Imperishable true Awareness.  
   With His twin Feet I crown my head.

3  The Sage accomplished who reveals  
   With clarity and certitude  
   The ultimate Truth which reconciles  
   All the discordant creeds and doctrines,  
   His Feet my head wears as a crown.

2. Name and Genesis of this Treatise

4  Not my poor mind unlit by any  
   Vision of Truth, but Master Ramana’s  
   Bright, eternal wisdom, is  
   The flame that shines clear in this Lamp  
   Of Being Supreme.

5  The gracious Master, the embodiment  
   Of the one bright, true Being-Awareness  
   Uttered many sayings for dispelling  
   Ignorance. Some of these I treasured  
   In my memory and repeat  
   Here in this treatise.
6 In the non-dual state, wherein
Abiding Ramana made me his,
Where he and I together shared
A common being, I learnt the Truth
Supreme, transcendent, which I hope
Here to expound a little.

7 My God, my Guru, Ramana cleared
My mind of the dense ego-cloud
And graciously revealed to me
The Truth transcendent. ’Tis this vision
Splendid that with loving care
I weave into this Garland fair.

3. This Treatise but Restores

8 The Self supreme stands ever as all
Things everywhere, one does not reach it.
This Lamp of Being supreme only
Reveals what IS, free from all waves
Of Dharma and kama.

9 The Self, pure Being that shines as Bliss,
Is the sole home of all the worlds
Here and hereafter. Prompt and proper
Restoration to the Self
Is what this treatise offers, not
Ways dubious to some distant goal.

4. Author’s Humble Apology

10 “Garland of Guru’s Sayings”, this rhyming
Treatise was not thought out or sung
By me, this half-wit. Venkata,
The pure one, thought-free sang, it seems,
And so it came to be.
11 For what I have not with my mind
Composed, why humbly apologise?
Responsibility for this
Whole treatise rests with Him, the Master
Known in the pure heart’s blissful silence.

5. Dedication

12 She gave me birth and gave me thus
Freedom from ignorance, bliss eternal,
To this most innocent mother of mine,
To her dear memory is this treatise
Duly dedicated.

6. The Author

13 Some sayings of the guru, Kanna
Muruga stored and strung together
As a garland bright of Being supreme.
His Eye of grace, at his Master’s Feet,
Had found the meaning, beauty and bliss
Of all this universe.

[This stanza is a tribute from an admirer of the poet, whose
original name was Krishnaswami Subramanyan. Krishna =
Kanna. Subramanyan = Murugan. Muruganar is the honorific
plural of Murugan.]
PART I

THE QUEST

Invocation

14  The ocean-girdled maiden Earth’s
Hard, long penance has borne fruit,
Pure Being, glorious Siva Himself,
Embodied in human form as Guru
Ramana of flawless wisdom
Has come to us. Let us in the heart
Cherish His sacred Feet.

15  One of the benedictions fits
This Garland of Guru’s Sayings, which
Seeks to dispel delusion. That
One word is I, the Self, abiding
In every being as the Heart.

16  Awareness pure, true Being shining
In silence, Self-experience of
The real I behind the false,
Conceptual ‘I’, is God transcendent,
With His Feet we crown our heads.

17  To those who look within, the highest
Good gained by the Master’s grace
Is wakeful sleep, the turiya state,
The undying flame, the sweet, uncloying
Fruit forever fresh.

18  Heart free from liking and disliking,
Form comely with the comeliness
Of perfect wisdom, He, my Master,
The goal of all true goodness, has
Destroyed my ignorance and fear.
His Feet are my last refuge.
1. Actuality of the World

19   From cause alone proceeds effect.
The big world, which the scriptures say
Is only names and forms, proceeds
From Pure Awareness which is real,
Clear as the berry in one’s palm.
Hence you may say this big world too
Is real.

20   Considering that the primal cause
Of all three or all seven worlds
Exists unbroken, all these worlds
Have also some reality.
But when this form derivative
Is viewed as infinite and eternal,
The ground, the whole, Awareness pure,
Seems to be non-existent, void.

[The universe is conceived as three (upper, middle and nether)
worlds, or as seven celestial and seven subterranean worlds.]

21   For those who take the world appearance
As real and enjoy it, it is
The Lord’s creation. But for those
Who, free from fear, have known the Truth,
The undeluded Self, it is
No more than a mere mental image
Projected by desire.

22   The world of trivial names and forms
Perceived by the five senses is
A mere appearance in the Self,
Awareness pure. It is the sport
Of maya, of images projected
By the mind, itself a thought
Arising in Being-Awareness.
23 Seers who know the Self as pure
Awareness know that nothing but
The Self exists. They cannot treat
As wholly real the world that has
No being in the sight of God supreme.

24 Like the hopeful parrot hovering
Round the silk-cotton tree’s red flower,
You yearn, my friend, for the world of sense,
Mistaking it for something real.
If seeming be the same as being,
Then, sure, the mirage in the desert
Would be water.

25 From your true being as Awareness
Alienated and deluded
Do not pursue appearances,
Deeming them as real. They
Are false, since disappear they must.
But your own being as Awareness
Is real and cannot cease to be.

26 The world by the illusive mind
Perceived, is not, by the mind’s source,
The Self, perceived. How can it, then,
This poor world, claim reality?

27 Be not afraid of this base, trivial
Samsara which, like dreams in sleep,
Appears in nescience. A dark shadow
Caused by the mind’s desires it cannot
Stand the true, loving splendour
Of Pure Awareness.

28 Ye who in fear shrink from the world,
Know that the place has no existence.
Fear of this phenomenal world
Is like being frightened by a rope
Mistaken by you for a snake.
The Quest

29 The world appears distinctly only
In wakefulness and dream with concepts
Filled. In concept-free, all empty
Sleep, one sees no world; so then
Conceptual is the world’s whole substance.

30 The world we see so clear is only
Thought-projected. If sometimes
The world appears before us dream-like
In *samadhi* thought-free too,
It is only the persistent power
Of images already formed.

31 Even like the spider spreading out
Its web from its own mouth and then
Withdrawing it into itself,
The mind, which brings out blossom-like,
The world, ingathers it again.

32 When the mind through the brain and senses
Outward turns, the names and forms
Are from within thrust out. And when
The mind at rest abides within
The Heart, they enter and lie buried
There again.

33 By names and forms the universe
Is split into objects. When
These names and forms are whisked away,
Pure Being, *Brahman*, abides. Concealing
God with these conceptual
Names and forms, the poor fool is
Deluded into seeing a world
Of which, alas, he is afraid.

34 The mind bewildered, which mistakes
The body for oneself, conceives
The transient world of names and forms,
Makes it seem real and lovable,
And promptly entraps one in the strong,
Illusive bondage of desire.
35 The empirical world of jostling names
And forms is false and has no real
Existence in bright, full Awareness.
Like a ring of fire formed in the dark
When one whirls fast a glowing joss-stick,
’Tis an illusion, mind-created.

36 O wordly-minded fool who cannot
Understand the proper teachings
Of great sages, this whole bloated
World beheld by jaundiced eyes,
When closely scanned, is but a trick
Played by your own vasanas, nothing more.

37 One ever-present Pure Awareness,
This alone has true existence.
The world perceived and measured by you
Is but illusion, jaundiced yellow,
Caused by the ego’s concepts false
And treacherous desires.

38 As yellow fades and disappears
In sunlight, this world disappears
In Pure Awareness. Hence it is
Not of the Sun-God’s making. Rather
’Tis picture seen in the peacock’s plumage,
An image of the lady, Mind.

39 Seen in the light of Self-experience
All this phenomenal world is mere
Appearance, like the sky’s deep blueness.
What the deluded, body-bound ego
Perceives ‘out there’ is mind-created,
Nothing more.

40 This villainous vast world so false
That cheats and churns the minds of all,
How did it come to be?
By nothing else but by the fault
Of falling from the Self instead
Of clinging firmly to It.
41 This earthly life kept fuelled by Desires and dislikes, this empty Dream in maya-slumber dreamt, Seeming so real while asleep Proves empty nothing on waking up.

42 When in Awareness pure supreme The mind is merged and lost, then all Three drives – desiring, doing, knowing – Are seen as but conceptual movements In the one Self’s abiding Being As Awareness, and hence slip Away and bind no more.

43 Siva, supreme Awareness-Being Alone abides, the ground, the screen. The world of triads is but the picture Moving on the screen, the play Of Sakti, supreme Awareness-Active.

44 The world, like snake in rope, thief in A stump, mirage in air, has no Real existence. Seeming to be, Mere appearance is its nature.

45 As several ornaments appear In gold and share its glitter, all beings Moving and unmoving appear In Self alone and shine as such. Apart from Self nothing exists.

46 By This world That world is concealed. And This world is by That concealed. Names and forms one sees, or else One sees pure Being-Awareness-Bliss. Looking at a granite dog, One sees the dog or else the stone, Not form and substance both together.
47 The world that hides the Self is but
A dream. When the phenomenal world
Is hidden by the Self’s bright light,
Awareness pure, the Self, abides.

48 This whole illusive world of triads
Seeming unmistakably real
Is nothing but the Self supreme,
Nothing but the form of Sakti,
Play of Awareness, whose eternal
Ground and substance is the Self.

49 Like the bright flame by smoke concealed,
Awareness is by names and forms
Concealed. When by Her Grace light comes,
The world is seen as bright Awareness
Too, not a mere cloud of names and forms.

50 To seers established in Awareness
Pure, the basis of all knowledge,
All these worlds are but the Self
And hence as such are real. How
Can the ignorant understand
The True Being behind them all?

51 Only those who have utterly
Renounced the world and all attachment,
And rejoicing in Self-luminous
Awareness have minds pure and free
From maya’s power, only they know
The true sense in which the world is real.

52 If one with mind turned towards Awareness
And concentrating on Awareness,
Seeks the Self, the world made up
Of ether and other elements
Is real, as all things are Awareness,
The one sole substance of true Being.
This world which seems to be a sea
Of sorrow is transformed into
An ocean filled with Bliss transcendent
If one’s defective vision is
Corrected and one sees it fresh
With the clear eye of true Awareness
As the form of the Supreme.

Still, waveless Being-Awareness-Bliss
Alone is what the true seer sees
And is. Since seer and sight are one
It follows surely that this world
Is also Being-Awareness-Bliss.

The nature of this mind-created
World, now seen in dream-light dim,
Is truly known only in that
Bright Being-Awareness which transcends
The mind’s illusion.

Fond, foolish mind, deluded daily
By dreams woven out of your own stuff,
If but you knew your own true strength,
Say, could this world exist outside
The one Being-Awareness-Bliss?

The void world, variegated, vast
Sprang from one sole, eternal Bliss,
As from one egg the multi-coloured
Peacock. See this Truth, abiding
As the Self alone.

Those who have sought and gained the goal
Of true Awareness do not see
This world as variegated forms.
The whole world filled with crowds of objects
Is for them but the gracious play
Of one sole Sakti, one sole power,
The Power of Pure Awareness.
The perfect *jnani* who is free
From the inveterate body-bound ego
And now abides as true Awareness
Perceives this world as but Awareness
Bright, his own sole Being. It is
An error then to view the world
As something other than Awareness.

With mind turned inward, drown the world
In the great Void, dispel illusion.
Beholding then the Void as void,
‘Destroy’ the Void by drowning it
In the deep ocean of Self-Awareness.

If you abide at Heart established
As Being-Awareness, which shines also
As this world, then this world becomes
One with your Self, its frightening, false
Duality having disappeared.

He who sees this phenomenal world
As all Awareness, Self-Awareness,
This sage indeed enjoys with all
Five senses fully his own Self.

2. Unreality of the World

Some assert, “This world before
Our eyes lacks permanence, ’tis true.
But it is real while it lasts.”
We deny it, saying, “Permanence
Is a criterion of Reality.”

Some argue, “Though divisible
And split up into parts, the world
We know so well, how could it be
Unreal?” We refute it, saying,
“Wholeness too is a criterion
Of Reality.”
[Reality is that which is permanent, immutable and self-luminous.]

65 The wise can never deem as real
A world divided and destroyed
By Time’s wheel. Whole, eternal, perfect,
Ever-shining and transcending
Time and space, such is the nature
Of Reality.

66 Siva eternal, peace serene,
Perfect, common to all alike,
Is the one sole Reality.
The evils in the world are concepts
Formed by the false, scattered knowledge
Of the divided mind.

67 The worlds have no being apart
From Awareness which is but the Self.
It is nescience dense and dark
Which makes the body-bound ego see
The world of names and forms as alien.

68 Mind of mine, wearied and worn out
By the world’s ways, search hard henceforth,
Discover and weigh well and speak
The truth; whatever is perceived
By the false body’s senses, how
Could it be real and not false?

69 The world perceived by the poor jiva
Lapsed from its own Being true,
Buried in darkness, and believing
That it is but the body, alas,
This world thus seen is non-existent;
Yes, it is indeed unreal.

70 The goings-on of the empirical world,
True-seeming and beguiling in the mind’s
Borrowed light, are nothing but illusions
In the bright light of Pure Awareness.
3. Allurement of the World

71 How piteous is the spectacle
Of people wandering in the world’s ways
Aimless, frisky like a goat’s beard
And chafing at the discipline
That leads to permanent freedom.

72 One wonders why they plough with thought
And toil so hard to cultivate
The treacherous field of sense, hankering
For a tiny grain of pleasure,
Neglecting the Heart whence thought arises,
The nursery ready to reward
With plenty a little labour of love.

73 For the Lady Mind, the wedded wife
Of the radiant Sun-god Self,
To forsake the joys of light
And go astray seeking the deep
Darkness of the world, what is it
But the frenzied folly of infidelity?

[The Moon-mind should be content to gain light from the Heart-sun, not go seeking light from the earth through the senses.]

74 The real bliss of mukti cannot
Come unless the world’s allurement
Disappears. To try to thrust
Reality into the world,
A mere appearance, is mere folly
Like an infatuated lover foisting
Chastity upon a prostitute.

4. Aridity of the World

75 Only mad folk perplexed because
They deem the false world to be real
Find joy in this illusion.
The truly wise find joy in nothing
But Awareness which is Being.
Those well established in the Self, True Being, will never pursue the world’s Vile ways. For such descent into The false allurements of the world Is yielding to the animal weakness For sense-pleasure.

What does one gain, you well may ask, By giving up the wealth immense Of worldly pleasure and seeking only Mere Awareness? The benefit of true Awareness Is the unbroken prevalence Of peace within the heart, the bliss Of one’s own natural being.

Not in one single thing on earth Can happiness be found. How could The muddled mind delude itself And think that happiness can be Derived from objects in this world?

Fond, foolish people may find joy In pleasure at the moment. Soon It palls and leaves but pain behind.

_Jivas_ suffer in the hot dry Desert of the world, the dream Born out of the whirling _vasanas_ old. Shady refuge from the triple Fire of desire raging here, They find beneath the spreading Bodhi tree, _turiya_, Self-Awareness.

5. Playing One’s Roles in the World

Knowing your true identity And ever in the Heart abiding As the Self supreme alone, Play perfectly your human role, Tasting every pain and pleasure In common with all creatures.
82 Though after examining everything
They have attained the ultimate Truth,
The wise put on no strange behaviour.
Therefore let your outward conduct
Conform to that of your own people.

[Compare verses 26 and 27 of The Supplement to The Forty Verses on Reality.]

6. Illusory Appearance (Vivarta)

83 Lord Ramana has, to reassure us,
Mercifully revealed “vivarta”
As a true tenet, setting aside
All other doctrines.

[“Ajata” (‘the Unborn’) was Sri Bhagavan’s final teaching based on personal experience. However, for the benefit of those who lacked this experience he expounded (in the first of The Forty Verses on Reality) “vivarta”, the doctrine of illusory appearance, as of a snake perceived in a rope or of the “dance” or movement in Being, as ripples in water. See verse 100 below.]

84 All that the mind perceives once lay
Buried within the heart. Know well
That names and forms are an old tale
Retold, old latent vasanas now
Becoming manifest.

85 The Self becomes itself the world
Of multitudinous names and forms.
Hence it is not a mere efficient
Cause which creates, preserves, and then
Destroys the world.

86 Don’t ask, “How did this error rise,
Why this ignorance that the Self
Itself is as the world transformed?”
Seek rather and find out to whom
This happened, and the error will
Persist no more.
What is the Self’s self-transformation
As the world? A coil of straw
Appearing as a snake? Look hard,
You see no snake at all. There is
No transformation, no creation, none,
No world at all.

Consider well. A thought it is
That from itself creates a snake-form,
Sustains it, fears it and at last,
When full light comes, destroys it.

[The snake, like the world of names and forms, is seen in
dim light, but is recognised as the rope in the full light of
self-enquiry. The seer of names and forms and the world that
is seen are both conceptual.]

Seed, sprout and plant in sequence coming
Seem to be the same. And yet
The effect seems to destroy and so
Replace the cause. The contradiction
‘Twixt one and many, change and sameness,
Is but the mind’s conception.

The Self is all true Being-Awareness,
The world perceived as ‘other’ is
But a perverse misunderstanding.
The rope itself being the seer,
Awareness, would it see some being
Other than itself, some snake?

Did the Self lapse from its own wholeness
As Being, you ask, “How else did this
World come to be?” It came from
Ignorance False. The Self can never suffer
Any change at any time.

Experiencing the unbroken oneness
Of pure space, one sees no separate
Pot at all. From the seeming movement
Of the seeming pot, it is folly
To infer some movement of the space
Within the pot.
In plenitude of Self-Awareness
Body and world as other than Self
Are seen no more. Because of their
Apparent changes, it is folly
To say the Self is mutable.

Vast, whole, immutable, the Self
Reflected in the mind’s distorting
Mirror may appear to move.
Know that it is the image moving,
The true Self never moves or changes.

How can the dark, delusive sense
Of separateness affect the Self
Which is non-dual? It is the mind’s
Divisive vision which sees difference.
Awareness knows no separateness
At all.

From true Being, infinite Awareness,
The \textit{jiva} cannot as an ‘I’,
A separate self, arise.
It is only from a separate flame,
Conceptually cut off, that sparks
Can fly and fill the universe.

Only the mind, by \textit{maya}’s might
Deluded, and looking outward sees
The body. The true Self knows no body.
To call the Self of Pure Awareness
The body’s owner or indweller
Is an error.

It is only when the ‘I’ functions
As the body that the world
Of moving and unmoving objects
Appears “out there”. In the absence
Of another, to call the Self
A “witness” is an error.
[The Self is neither the body’s owner nor the world’s witness. The \textit{jiva} is both.]

99 Without the body, the world is not.
Without the mind, the body is not.
Without Awareness, there is no mind.
And without Being there is no Awareness.

\section*{7. Doctrine of No Creation \textit{(Ajata)}}

100 To meet the needs of various seekers Master Ramana did expound Various doctrines. But we have Heard him say that his true teaching, Firmly based on his own experience, \textit{Is Ajatavada.}

\begin{quote}
\textit{Ajatavada} = Doctrine of no birth, or creation. The Self is immutable. Birth, death and the world process are all appearances.
\end{quote}

101 This Truth supreme alone is what The Lord revealed to Arjuna At first. But finding his friend’s mind Bewildered, reeling, Krishna later Spoke of other doctrines.

\begin{quote}
[In chapter II of the \textit{Gita} the ultimate Truth is taught. The later chapters provide approaches and approximation.]
\end{quote}

\section*{8. Why Diverse Theories of Creation}

102 By their diverse cosmogonies What do the Holy Books intend? Not telling how the world began, But starting the enquiry, “What is True Being, the primal cause of this World-appearance?”
9. Part Played by God

103 The Self unchanging hidden behind Maya throws up into the mind’s Sky the strong rope of the three states, Mounted on which the jiva plays His tricks, sustained by what he knows not.

104 The God supreme, who gave to maya Her sovereignty, appears to us, Poor extroverts, as if Himself Were subject to the treacherous tricks Which she with His permission plays.

105 “Him all things obey,” means only That they behave, as various Beings, sentient and insentient, Stir, move and act in the mere presence Of the thought-free sun arisen In the heavens.

[Compare the passage from Who am I? – “Without desire, resolve or effort, the sun rises; and in its mere presence the sun-stone emits fire, the lotus blossoms, water evaporates, people perform their various functions and then rest.”]

106 In the mere presence of the eternal Sun, the lodestone spits out fire; The lotus bud blossoms, the water-lily Closes, and all creatures move Or rest according to their nature.

[The “lodestone”, magnetic oxide of iron, like a convex lens, was used to ignite cotton-wool.]

107 From His mere potent presence flows His fivefold function: as the needle Near the magnet trembles; beneath The moon the moonstone exudes water; The lotus blossoms and the water-lily Closes.
[God’s five functions are: Creation, preservation, dissolution, veiling and grace.]

108 In the sheer presence of the Lord Himself free from all trace of thought, Jivas set out on numerous paths Of action, work away, and wearied Turn inward and return to freedom.

109 The goings on in the world do not Affect the sun; the properties Of earth, water, fire and air touch not The infinite ether. Even so, Men’s actions do not reach or move The mind-transcending Lord supreme.

10. The Three Prime Entities

110 Inward in the heart enquiring Keenly “Who am I?” the seeker Vanishes and Siva alone Shines clear. When the avid beholder Does not exist, it would be madness To say that the world beheld Exists.

111 When in this wise both I and world Are gone, Siva as bright Awareness Shines alone. This flawless Truth Of one without a second, how Or by whom is it to be known?

[Advaita is not a doctrine to be understood, but an experience to be enjoyed.]

112 If, like the Lord, the world and I Were real, His wholeness would be flawed. Unless we grant that God could be Divided, the world and I can never Claim reality.
113  If the glossy \textit{jiva} could
Exist and function on its own
Apart from Being, the sages’ ultimate
Teaching that the \textit{jiva}’s actions
Are all Siva’s would be a concept
Merely, not authentic truth.

114  When the projector’s light is lost
In broad daylight the pictures vanish.
Even so, when the mind’s borrowed light
Is lost in Pure Awareness, the false,
Grand show of \textit{jiva}, God and world
Disappears.

115  Though thus Reality is one,
All schools concede at first three primal
Entities, God, \textit{jiva} and world,
Because the outward-looking mind
Discursive, cannot straightaway face
The unity of Being.

116  The Lord’s compassionate grace it is
That dark oblivion hides from view
Our countless former births each filled
With griefs we suffered and inflicted.

117  Memory of the tale of troubles
This present birth has brought on us
Embitters our whole life and makes
Forgetfulness a thing to long for.

12. Individuality (\textit{Vyakti})

118  \textit{Vyakti} and sakti owe their being
To the wandering mind’s conceptual power.
But in the Self’s Reality
Beyond the mind’s bewildering play
They have not and have never had
Existence.
Ascribing individual being
To realised muktas is sheer folly.
Their being is universal Being.
The separateness seen in that pure
Sky is but the shadow cast
By the separateness of lookers-on
Still bound.

In the hearts of seekers Awareness
Only stands as true, sole Being,
And attachment to the body
Is no more. How can we then
Declare that this one or that one is
A peerless seer? Are seers but
Bodies and so more than one?

You who go round in eager search
Of this Great Soul and that Great Soul
To look at, are not all Great Souls
Your Self to reach and know and be?

So long as one retains a trace
Of individuality,
One is a seeker still, and not
A true seer effort free, even though
One’s penance and one’s powers may be
Wonderful indeed.

Without Self-knowledge which transcends
All individuality,
Vain, vain are wonder-working powers.
Who would seek these maddening gifts
But those who have not known their true
Identity as the Self?

The seer consummate, formless, is
The sum of all the wonder-workers
That are known. His are the many
Miracles that happen, His,
Dakshinamurti’s, His who stands
As witness of them all.
13. Wrong Identification

Like one who takes a crocodile
For a boat and with its help
Tries to cross a river are those
Who while they pamper the trivial flesh
Claim also that they are earnest seekers
Of the living Self.

Give up the thought that this frail body
Is the Self. Pursue the Self
Which is eternal bliss. To seek It,
While cherishing the perishable
Body, is like trying to cross
A river using a crocodiles
For a raft.

Forgetting Being-Awareness-Bliss, the Self
Which is too subtle for speech and thought,
And toiling hard for the body of flesh
Is like trudging up and down a tall
Steep sweep in order to water some coarse
And worthless weed.

[The body is to be maintained as an instrument for a higher
purpose, not as an end in itself.]

Those who desire and like and live
The trivial life the ego knows
Reject as if it were unreal
The natural life of infinite bliss
Within their own hearts ever present
For their enjoyment.

Those who forget the harm the false
World there before us does, and cling
To it as real and comfortable,
Mistake, alas, a floating bear
For a boat, only to be crushed and drowned
In the sea of births.
The Quest

129  As one mistakes the goings and comings
    Of the vehicle as one’s own,
The fool, not knowing his true Being
    As the Self, suffers the shocks
    Of the jiva’s poor samsara life.

130  When will the fool, who thinks the body
    And the world are permanent and clings
    To them, find peace? Only when this
    Folly leaves him and he trusts
    And like a limpet clings to That,
    The Self within. Thenceforward he
    Shall never more know pain.

131  Those, who enjoy the ego’s life
    Of false phenomena perish and die.
The state of grace, supreme Awareness,
    The life lived in Self-Being, this
    Alone is bliss worth seeking.

14. The Pandit

132  Why do people call me learned?
    What is the mark of real learning?
    Learning that all garnered knowledge
    Of things is empty ignorance
    And that true knowledge is the search
    For the Knower.

133  He, who by questing inward for
    The Knower, has destroyed the ego
    And transcended so-called knowledge,
    Abides as the Self. He alone
    Is a true knower, not one who has
    Not seen the Self and therefore has
    An ego still.
Those who, learning to forget
Completely all objective knowledge,
Turn inward firmly and see clearly
The Truth, abide serene. Those who
Try to recall forgotten things
Pine bewildered, fretting over
False phenomena.

Poor fellow, you who are so proud
Of your omniscience, when you are questioned,
“You who know all things, do you know
Who you are?” you collapse disgraced,
Discomfited. O man of genius,
May this your ego-mind dry up
As dust and perish utterly.

When knowledge marred by doubt and error
Disappears in true Awareness
Clear and pure, one thus established
Firmly in Self-Being, free
From falsehood, has crossed over to
The further shore of the river of knowledge.

He who, his ego gone, knows as it is
‘I’, the First Person, subject substantive,
Combined with “AM”, the predicate of Being,
He alone is the true, honest knower.

May the poet, who might have debased
His tongue by uttering praise of mortals,
Feel penitent, resolve henceforth
To sing of God’s greatness alone,
Never of man’s vile estate,
And live a noble life.
If, gaining by the grace of God
The gift of poetry, one fails
To dedicate it to the Lord
But uses it in praise of men,
One makes the Goddess poetry
A prostitute.

True poetry springs only from
The calm heart’s clarity which follows
The elimination of the ego
By inward search and finding out
That none of the five sheaths is I.

16. Futility of Mere Learning

Books of guidance all prescribe
Freedom from thought as the best way
To find freedom. This, the heart
Of every art, being known, of what
Avail all the arts?

When those whose conduct is not godly
Take up the study of Vedanta
And sacred books, they but defile
Vedanta, radiant, pure itself.

The burden of the learning borne
By folk who dally in fleeting flesh
Does not serve to starve the ego
Or draw one inward to the Heart
Where ever-present grace abides.
Is not this burden purposeless
Like the goat’s ever-restless beard?

Unless by one means or another
Mind dies out and certitude
From true self-recognition comes,
The knowledge which mere learning brings
Is like the horse’s horn unreal.
145 Of the ever-unsteady ego, eddying
Like the wayward wind, the source,
The still Heart, is alone the final
Home of rest. The arts provide
But bustling battle fields in between.

146 Those keen and skilled in self-enquiry
Who, giving up the exhaustive Veda
And *Agama* books, search inwardly.
Only they gain clarity
And shake off, root and branch, desire
For trivial objects.

147 Though ardently we study works
Immaculate, of radiant wisdom,
Yet as through meditation we make
These gains our own, we must forget
And leave behind what once we learnt.

**17. Truth of Vedanta**

148 Those who know nothing but sense-pleasure,
To ruin and destruction doomed,
Resent transcendence of the senses
And call this fresh and fruitful wisdom
*Dry* Vedanta!

[Sense-pleasures dry up and bring ruin. *Jnana* is a perennial
fount of bliss.]

149 The experience of Vedanta comes
Only to those who are utterly
Without desire. Far, far it is
From those who still retain desires.
For such the penance is prescribed
Of longing for the Lord who knows
No desire, so as to end
Forever all desire.
18. The Course of Prarabdha

150 What we experience now is only
The fruit of former actions. Knowing
This, one should not worry what
Happens to one. Whether or not one likes it,
One may not escape, one needs must eat
The food one has prepared.

151 As each one eats one’s destined food,
Siva, as witness, shines within.
He who knows himself as not
The eater but the witness Self,
He is none other than Siva supreme.

152 Like the steady shadow lurking
At the lamp-post’s foot, some people’s
Ego-darkness tarries while
They stay, unmoving, near the Master
Of boundless wisdom and their bodies
Grow old and die. Such is their fate,
Their raw and unripe state.

19. The Power of Prarabdha

153 How is it that the eight-fold siddhis
And supreme Self-knowledge do not
Come together when so desired?
It is because the world is such
That wealth and wisdom stand far apart.

[The last two lines repeat a Kural couplet where opulence and wisdom are contrasted.]

20. False Jiva and Self

154 To jump about and play vile tricks
Like a little Satan, to flit
From thought to thought, to look and see
And suffer much, this is the false
Jīva’s nature. The Self’s true nature
Is but to be and shine.
21. Strength of Vasanas

155 Flung back by *vasanas* (naughty boys)
Into *samsara*'s eddying stream,
Some creatures suffer, alas, unable
To stand firm on the bank, the Self.

22. The Ego-Knot

156 Lapsing from the Self, the seat,
The Being-Awareness vast, unbroken,
A separate ‘I’ springs up which falls
Into the error of confronting
A world perceived as something other
Than the Self.

157 Trusting to the body’s truth,
The false, self-blinded ego-knot
Lusts after various allurements,
All imaginary, like
The blueness of the sky, and thus
Tightens into hardness.

158 The mind’s eye, jaundiced by desire,
Blind to the Self from bondage free,
Mistakes the body as the ‘I’,
Hides behind the five-fold sheath,
And sees the world objectively
As something other than the Self.

159 The life of folly, lived by the filthy
Ego which deems the flesh its home,
Is no true life. It is a dream,
A passing fancy seen in the Self,
Auspicious, blissful Siva supreme.

160 The *jiya* false is but a shadow
Functioning amid the other shadows
That make up the world movie.
23. The Ego’s Strength

161 When ego ends, then one becomes
A devotee true; when ego ends,
One becomes a knower too;
When ego ends, one becomes Being supreme.
When ego ends, grace fills all space.

162 Only the hero strong, who has
Discarded the ego, body-based,
Is a true ascetic and a true seer.
Hard, hard it is for those who still
Retain regard for *asrama* or *varna*
To cast off the ego’s heavy burden.

[Varṇa (caste) and *asrama* (the stages of life) pertain solely to
the ego. The egoless person is the true Brahmin and true ascetic.]

163 One who sees otherness and difference
Cannot become a Brahmin merely
By study of the Vedas four.
Who sees his ego dead and knows
The Vedas’ import, he alone
Is truly a Brahmin. Failing in this,
One swelters within, fallen, despised.

164 Kannappa, ripe in love, scooped out
And in the Lord’s face planted his eyes.
But till he plucked and planted them,
He too retained a trace of pride
In those bright, beautiful orbs of his.
Attachment to the body dies
Hard, very hard indeed.

165 Why did the three-eyed Lord ordain
That Kannappa should pluck and plant
Those eyes of which he was so proud?
It was to save him from the death,
The deadly folly of deeming he
Was flesh inert. Such is the might
Of Siva’s grace, of love for Him.
24. The Ego’s Dance

166  Seen aright, the primal Ruler’s
    Dance, His world plan, comes to this:
    If ego rises, all things rise,
    If it subsides, they all subside.

167  The ego-life, that people lead
    In the three worlds delusion-bound,
    Is nothing but the dance of demons
    Clinging to corpses in the burning ground.

168  Here, right now, is a wonder of wonders.
    Listen. It is the bustling, hustling
    Zeal in action of folk who cannot
    Even think at all unless they are
    By omnipresent Awareness
    Made to think.

169  Much like the boast of the cripple who said:
    “Single-handed I would meet
    This host of enemies, lay them low
    And raise a pile of corpses here,
    If only someone first would lift
    And prop me up!”

    The madcaps who forget that they
    Themselves are by Great Sakti moved,
    And busily gather thaumaturgic
    Powers, are like the cripple who claimed,
    “If someone would but lift me up,
    I would scatter these foes, I would!”

    – SRI BHAGAVAN 2

170  If even the Wind God could not stir,
    Alas, the flimsiest wisp of straw
    Nor the Fire God burn it, how can one
    With one’s own separate ego-strength
    Do anything at all?

    [The reference is to the Kenopanishad and the Tamil saying,
    “But for Him not an atom stirs.”]
With knowledge by illusion veiled,
Staggering under a load of sin,
Blind and unseeing the Supreme,
The egos play their comic role
Like figures on the temple tower.

[Figures carried by the temple tower grimacing as if they carried the tower.]

The Lord sustains the universe.
The pseudo-self, which thinks it bears it,
Is like the grinning figure which seems
To carry the weight of the temple tower.
If a traveller in a cart does not
Put down his luggage in the cart
But carries it painfully on his head,
Whose is the fault?

– SRI BHAGAVAN

Sensible passengers do not carry
Their luggage on their own poor heads,
In a fast train hauling, under steam-power,
Heaviest loads like wisps of straw.

Even so, because the Power supreme
Does, as it must, sustain all things,
Men should leave their burdens of care
On that Awareness and feel free.

In meditation deep, while yet
A trace of ego lingers, fear
And trembling may sometimes occur.
But when the ego dies at last
In Pure Awareness, quaking stops.
Stillness alone prevails.

When the ever-restless fiend-mind, freed
At last from fond illusion, merges
In Pure Awareness, a waveless sea,
The ego subsides, restoring one
To health and wholeness.
To shed the ignorant ego’s fond Delusions and to realise That we do nothing and all deeds Are His, this death of the villainous Sense of doership, is true strength, The power that springs from penance pure.

25. Treachery to the Self

Traitors to the Self are those Deluded fools who do not see That all these worlds and creatures seeming So many and various, are the Self, The Self alone, held and beheld Within its own ethereal space Of Pure Awareness.

26. Heaven and Hell

Please don’t debate, good folk, whether Heaven and hell exist. As long, As much, as this our world exists, So long, so much, they too exist.

If scholars with their minds made up That these our bodies and world exist Would join us in the quest, we shall Assert that Heaven and hell exist No less.

27. Terror of Hell (Naraka)

In fear of hell they tremble who Know not that hell is the ego’s fault. Those who know what causes hell Have found the way to the heaven of Truth.
28. Victory over Naraka

181 Narayana slew Naraka,  
They say. Who acts as if this wretched  
Body were himself is Naraka.  
Whoever, questing whence this demon  
Rises, slays him is Narayana  
Himself.

182 The ceremonial bathing done  
During Dipavali, celebrates  
The victory over the demon Naraka.  
Seeking out his dwelling place  
And slaying him there, one bathes oneself  
In the pure waters of Awareness.

“The demon Naraka, who rules Hell  
With the notion ‘body is I’,  
Where is this demon?” enquiring thus  
With the discus of jnana, Narayana  
Destroys the demon. And this day  
Is Naraka-chaturdasi.

– SRI BHAGAVAN 4

183 Searching out and slaying Naraka  
Who wallowed in the putrid body  
Of flesh as ‘I’, and the resulting  
Dawn eternal of the Self,  
This is the festival of light,  
Dipavali.

Shining as the Self in glory  
After slaying Naraka,  
The sinner vile who suffered much  
Because he deemed as ‘I’ the wretched  
Home of pains, the body of flesh,  
This is the festival of light,  
Dipavali.

– SRI BHAGAVAN 5
29. Turning Inward

184 Even the knowledge sense-perceived
Of the world without has for its ground
The Self above. To search for knowledge
Somewhere else, apart from That,
Is but to grasp the shadow, not
The substance.

185 How to make the mind, which now
Looks painfully at forms and features
There without, turn inward?
By asking who this ‘I’, this mind, is,
Which sees this trivial world, and thus
Directing it towards the Self.

186 Poor seer, who suffers endlessly
Because you still perceive the object,
Not the subject, please look inward,
Not without, and taste the bliss
Of non-duality.

187 O heart of mine, it is not wise
To stay out. Safe it is
To stay within. Conceal yourself
From maya which plans to draw you out
To destroy you. Stay within.

188 Running out in search of wonders
And dancing there with pleasure, do not
Perish. Better with the light
Of grace, look, look within, and find
Certitude in being and biding
As your true Self.

189 The notion of duality
Brings pain and mars the peace
Of everyone. It is wise and proper
Then to control the play of mind
And save it from this notion’s hold.
[The notion of a separate ‘I’ destroys purity and peace of mind.]

190 You pilgrims, who without discovering What is within, proceed from place To place, ever hovering bird-like, Know Siva supreme is but Awareness, Absolutely still, abiding Centred in the Heart.

191 Not like a boat’s sail wide outspread And worn away by wind and weather, But like the humble anchor sunk In the vast ocean’s depth, the mind Should plunge and settle in the heart Of wisdom.

192 For the man of dharma seeking Experience of the state supreme, The heroic action needed is To draw in the outward-darting mind And fix it firmly in the Heart.

193 If the mind, turned outward and distracted, Starts observing its own being, Alienation ends, the vestige ego Merges in the light of true Awareness shining in the Heart.

30. The Kingdom of God

194 Because we think we are the body We imagine that Heaven exists Somewhere, afar. The pure, bright world Of Siva is not a place to go to. Nowhere but in your heart alone It is.

[“The Kingdom of God is within you” – St. Luke XVII, 21]
Providing space for that bright world
Of Siva and lighting up its marvels,
You alone are the self-luminous,
Perfect Being. To know it, know Yourself. Within you is the Kingdom
Of the Lord.

The light of Being, Bliss infinite,
Transcendent, vast, bright, seeming new,
That wells up in devotees’ hearts
When still, serene, intense, this is
Siva’s heaven so dear, so rare.

31. Sivahood

When the distracted and bewildered
Ego-mind and the last trace
Of difference having ended, life
Becomes a natural state of perfect
Purity and peace, one lives
In Siva and as Siva Himself.

When the alienating ego ends
And merges in the heart’s awareness,
All false concepts disappear.
What is known as Sivahood
Is this supreme state, Pure Awareness.

All-pervading, all-transcending,
Subtle, auspicious and eternal
Is God. When the once-wandering mind,
Merging in its own source, is cleansed,
Corrected and made clear, this state
Of Pure Awareness is Sivahood.
32. Non-Difference of Hari and Hara

200 They say that Hara gives to jivas Knowledge, while Hari gives them heavenly Bliss. But since firm Awareness is Both God and heaven, Hari and Hara Are one and the same.

33. Sakti and Siva

201 The Self, the whole, sole source of Sakti Supreme, the Power of thought, that Self, The primal Being, the Heart alone Is Siva pure, the dweller in Tillai.

[Tillai is Chidambaram where Siva is worshipped as Pure Awareness.]

202 The bliss supreme on tasting which The mind will cease from further search, The heart from which a copious spring Of ever-fresh experience flows, This Heart of Bliss eternally Enchanting, this is Siva.

203 His mind is for the devotee, The cowherd maiden, with true love Intoxicated. The Heart, which kills The ego, as the bright, red flame, Draws and destroys the moth, is Krishna, Lord of the gopis.

34. Siva-Worship

204 Know well that perfect Selfhood, peace Serene, all thought in stillness lost, Identity with Being-Awareness, This alone is pure Siva-puja.
Beyond his destined span of years
Markanda lived, defying Death.
Worship of Siva, the Death of death,
Wears out and snaps the strands of Time.

What is Siva-worship? Seeing
His bright Presence in the elements five,
Sun, moon and every living being,
Prompt response and service apt
To these, amount to Siva-worship,
Excellent and ever-fresh.

35. Meaning of Prostration

When the imperfect jiva bows
His proud head at the Feet of God,
It means the overcoming of ‘I’,
The individual self, by
Siva-Awareness.

36. Image-Worship

You who do not feel the secret
Melting power of image-worship
And so condemn it, why then do you
Cherish this flawed, crawling body,
Mistaking it for you?

[Compare Shakespeare, Sonnet CXLVI:
“So shalt thou feed on Death, that feeds on men,
And, Death once dead, there’s no more dying then.”]

37. Sacred Ashes (Vibhuti)

When the ego false, with ancient
Memories laden is burnt up
In the fire of Pure Awareness,
The remnant ashes manifest
Mere Being, true form of the Supreme.
210 The King of Grace, the sovereign seer,  
Assumes the guru’s form and kindles  
Through his unspoken word the fire  
Of Pure Awareness, which calcines  
In the Heart’s crucible the cowdung  
Of the cowering self to ashes,  
His greatest gift, the ultimate bliss.

211 Those who on their bodies wear  
Such vibhuti are the noblest  
In the wide world. For this vibhuti,  
This wondrous, thought-free, Pure Awareness,  
Is the sole infinite, true Being.  

[Vibhuti means both sacred ash and a state of Being and Becoming.]

212 Those who desire and strive for this  
Vibhuti are themselves transformed  
Into such Being. Take it, then,  
Vibhuti is the ego’s death  
And the attainment of Self-Being  
As Awareness.

213 The red auspicious mark adorning  
A woman’s forehead signifies  
The flame of knowledge which consumes  
Heaven, earth and the nether world,  
As the inert ego introverted  
Turns towards the Self and burns.

38. Riding the Bull

214 ’Tis said that Siva for His service  
Chose the Bull and other Creatures.  
This is to give us, step by step,  
The basic attitude that all  
The forms we see are forms of God.
39. Sakti and Santi

215 There is no deed too hard for soul-force To accomplish; the soul-force is the power Of love divine. To say that numbers Of weapons can do what soul-force cannot Is but the folly of reliance On the body vile.

216 The truth they know not who assert That power and peace are different things. What abides as peace within Appears to outward sight as power.

> What to inward sight is peace
> Appears as power to outward sight.
> For those who truly know, the two
> Are one and the same.

– SRI BHAGAVAN 6

217 The seeker strict in discipline Gains diverse powers of punishment. But perfect meekness is the mark Of the master of Awareness true.

40. Macro and Micro

218 When the opposite poles of two magnets, One huge, the other tiny, come Together, the small acquires and shares The power and nature of the large.

[When the jiva’s head joins the Feet of Siva the jivatma becomes Paramatma.]

41. Desire for Thaumaturgic Powers (Siddhis)

219 From Him who offers All, the Whole, The Self, why ask for some few silly Siddhis? From a generous patron Why beg for some old, stale gruel?
Who, having reached the Sage’s Feet, 
That world of infinite Awareness, 
Would pray for siddhis? In high Heaven 
Where nectar flows in plenty, who 
Would ask for old, sour gruel?

All siddhis flock together and come 
To those who are aflame with God-love. 
But then, their minds, absorbed like food 
In God’s own Feet, have no desire 
For siddhis.

If a seeker after moksha sets 
His mind on miscellaneous siddhis, 
Bondage tightens, as the roots 
Of ego swell in size and strength.

Peace of mind is moksha ever present. 
Siddhis arise from movements of the mind. 
How can those who hanker after siddhis 
Know moksha’s bliss, the stillness of the mind?

— SRI BHAGAVAN 7

That you, the Self, ethereal Being, 
Pure Awareness, should become 
A body with hands and feet, and, deeming 
It eternal, should dance about, 
This indeed, and nothing else, 
Is the great miracle.

Mukti’s splendour, the attainment 
Of our true Being as Awareness, 
This alone is real siddhi, 
Attainment. So-called siddhis, eightfold 
Powers miraculous, all belong 
To the bewildered realm conceptual 
Of foolish minds.
42. True Immortality

225 Unfailing immortality
Accrues only to those who have
Destroyed the ego whose demon-dance
Obstructs the vision of the precious
Truth that we are ever-perfect
Being-Awareness-Bliss.

226 Imagining that this newcomer,
The body, is oneself, one thinks
That one is born and that one dies.
The moment this delusion goes
One’s own true immortality
Is gained.

227 Death is nothing but the fond
Delusion that this newcomer,
The body, is oneself. When the ego,
The clinging to delusion, ends,
The ensuing bliss of true Awareness,
Being one without a second, this,
This only is immortality.

228 Believing that the body is
Oneself, one dreads the body’s death.
Enquiring “What dies? Who am I?”
One dies into the Self. How else
But through the ego’s death can one
Gain immortality?

229 True clearness, freedom from the mind’s
Ripples and shadows, this alone
Is ever-fresh immortality.
By this Awareness Pure, by this
Alone and by no other means,
Can Death, a mere delusion, end.
43. Elixir for Immortality

230 Only by courtesy is the body, 
Vulnerable and born to die, 
Called an entity substantial. 
The sole reality, the only thing 
Permanent and ultimate, 
Is Self-awareness, That alone.

[The Tamil word mey stands for truth, substance and body.]

231 When the ego irrepressible 
Returns at last to its own source 
And merges in it, the Self-awareness 
Shining clear, distilled and pure, 
Is the elixir true, assuring 
Health and wholeness ever-enduring.

44. Body-Preservation

232 The body is the prime, original 
Malady, the mother of all 
Other maladies. To labour 
Hard for body’s permanence is 
Wasting water on desert sand 
Or welcoming and cherishing, 
Not dreading, a disease.

233 Loving the false, venomous ego, 
The source of every dire disease, 
Fools for their bodies’ preservation 
Perform untiring tapas as if 
One should take medicines 
To aggravate an ailment.
Instead of resting in consummate Mouna won by tapas pure, To strive to stabilise the body Is inspissate folly, like longing And struggling hard to pile up Poverty.

For minds enlightened and mature This life of ours is false, conceptual. Prolonging it seems meaningless And without purpose.

45. Of Non-Attachment

O hero stern, intent on tapas, Do the world’s praise and worship, Its eager prayers for your favours, Please your heart? Know that these are But maya’s golden baits spread out To entangle you.

Some, fortunate through former deeds, Naturally disdain the pleasures Of this world and the next. To these Alone does true Awareness come With ease.

Knowing well that bliss serene Is found in being the Self alone, And not in this illusory life, Seek and attain the final heaven Of grace, the state of mouna, Pure Awareness.

Forsake me not, my friend Detachment, Ever let me call you mine, For you destroy the densest darkness, The darkness of desires, kindling The flame of knowledge.
Friendship even with a fiend
One cannot end. And you, my friend
Detachment, ever you ward off
Evil from me, and keep me bound
To enduring Truth. Such is your virtue.
Estrangement from you would be worse
Than all the world’s hostility.

Whatever notion may arise,
Never to let live or grow,
But to turn it that very instant,
Firm and stern, back to its source
And merge it there, this is robust,
Intense detachment.

From the mind’s fortress held by foes,
Innumerable memories, one by one
They issue. With the wonder-weapon
Of self-enquiry slay each thought
As it comes out into the open,
Till at last you have retrieved
The citadel of your own heart.

Awareness clear and pure is nothing
But seeing the world as nothing
Other than the perceiver. Mind
Indrawn and planted in the heart,
Deeming this world as a mere seeming,
Not an object, is detachment.

Even as a piece of glass acquires
Redness from a red flower near it,
Chit, Awareness Pure, becomes
Chitta, the mind, by imposition
Of sense-impressions. Remove this ta
And chitta becomes chit again,
Awareness pure. This ta then stands
For maya, mere illusion.
48. Inner Purity

245  The world’s bright objects manifold 
    Please only to bring grievous evil. 
    Unlike these, inner purity 
    Alone has beauty true. And hence 
    The wise regard and marvel at 
    The sage, the living embodiment 
    Of Truth, as God made manifest 
    Here on this earth.

246  Seeing outward beauty and not inner 
    Leads but to ruin dire. It is like 
    The moth desiring the bright flame 
    Or like the cobra mating with the viper.

49. Of Death

247  What else is death but straying from 
    The perfect state of Being the Self 
    Immortal, home of love eternal 
    And bliss supreme, the heaven of true 
    Awareness?

248  Through the guru’s grace by service earned, 
    Learn why we are born and why we suffer. 
    Alienation is the cause. 
    Cling firmly to the Self. Abide 
    There, and ennoble your life.

50. Locus of Life

249  Because the heart from falsehood free 
    Is the jiva’s true home, there too dwell 
    The vasanas. If these keep burning 
    In the brain, not in the heart, 
    Then they must die too, must they not, 
    When the brain dies?
[Here the theory that the sahasrara (brain) is the seat of the jiva and its vasanas is refuted.]

250 Since both the serpent flame ascending
And the nectar stream down flowing
Seek but the Heart, this is the fount
Of nectar from the mind divine,
And the fierce serpent’s maddening power.

[The serpent is the Kundalini.]

251 In whichever chakra one believes
The Self is present, there it seems
To be. Such is the power of thought.
But the sole centre where the ‘I’
Arises and subsides is only
The heart which we extol.

252 Whoso ignores the Heart, the home
Of every mode of being, and thinks
The ‘I’ is seated in some other
Centre, merges in that centre
For a while, but misses true
Self-knowledge, bliss eternal.

[The modes of being are the three avasthas or states: waking, dreaming and deep sleep.]

51. The Heart

253 Two different hearts are mentioned, one
For disregarding fit, the other
Fit for cherishing. The former
Is the organ of flesh inert,
The object of sense-perception
On the left side of the chest.
Pervading and transcending all,
Inside and outside both, the Heart
Known to the seers shines on the right.
For body-bound fools the heart of flesh
In the left chest alone exists.

[cf. Supplement to The Forty Verses on Reality, v. 22: “The heart of consciousness is both within and without. It is not to be conceived as something in space, confined to the right side of the chest.”]

If the jiva’s sovereign were not
Well enthroned in the spiritual Heart
Whence did the universal gesture
Come of pointing to the right chest
Whenever one refers to ‘I’?

The true Heart, indefinable
As this or that, is, as it were,
The mirror wherein all things appear,
The mere “I AM”, self-shining Being,
Pure Awareness, space supreme,
Perfect wholeness, primal stillness.

The Heart-womb is the beginning, middle,
And end of all things. This firmament
Supreme is formless. It is only
True Being as bright Awareness.

Mind’s dissolution in the Self,
The ocean of Awareness, this is
Peace eternal. The Heart’s vast space,
The love-filled ocean of Bliss supreme,
Is the true I.

You cannot know or measure That,
One without a second, perfect, whole.
This Heart thought-free and bright with bliss
Is Annamalai, my Self.

[Annamalai or Arunachala, the Hill of Dawn, is believed to be an embodiment of Siva Himself.]
260 Whoso has known this Heart will never Suffer pain or think of bondage Or duality. Illusion Gone, one with the Self, he knows Only bliss supreme.

261 Though present everywhere, the Heart Is not within and not without. The body which alone admits Of in and out is but a concept Of the thinking mind.

262 Within us is the body. The fool Who thinks he is in the body Makes the same mistake as he Who takes the screen on which the picture Is projected for a piece Of cloth shown in the film.

\[\text{Within us is the body. He} \\
\text{Who thinks that he is in the body} \\
\text{Makes the same mistake as he} \\
\text{Who takes the piece of cloth shown in} \\
\text{The picture for the screen on which} \\
\text{The picture is projected.} \]

– SRI BHAGAVAN 8

[The body is in the Self, not the Self in the body. The screen which supports the cinema is not contained in the picture. The spiritual heart is not to be taken as being in any part of the body.]

263 Hence only adepts, who have destroyed Utterly the ego body-bound, Perceive with their pure, subtle mind, Illusion free, Heart’s presence Everywhere, and attain the highest.
264  The Heart, which shines with silent grace
Divine is That, *Kaivalya*, which
Sublates as trivial all the various
States of bliss once deemed so dear.

265  Mutation and delusion left
Behind, the Heart alone abides,
Shining as pure, true Being only.
This is the world of bliss supreme
Longed for by the gods in heaven.

52. The True Guru

266  Free of the notion “I am this body,
This one or that of three or five,”
The awareness of pure Being, bright
And unattached, this is the Self,
The universal Power supreme,
Abiding in each creature’s heart.

[The three bodies: physical, subtle and causal, or the five
sheaths (*koshas*).]

267  Shining within as mere non-dual
Being, Awareness, our true nature,
This alone is the ultimate *jnana*,
The silence, unknown to the *asuric*
Ego-mind.

268  The master of such power alone
Is the almighty guru, able
By his grace to merge whichever
Creature reaches him, into
Non-dual, ineffable Self-knowledge.

269  Know well that the strong steady stream
Of *bhakti* issuing from the state
Supreme of egoless stillness bright,
Which marks the true disciple, also
Makes the genuine guru.

[The ultimate experience is common to both.]
The Quest

270 He who draws creatures towards the Self
And grants transcendent Self-experience,
Cling to him as the guru supreme,
Praised by the wise as God Himself,
Another form of the one Self.

271 The guru who tells his disciple
“Do this or that,” becomes for him
Yama, lord of death, or Brahma,
Lord of birth. He who declares
“You have done enough,” is the true guru
Bringing grace divine.

[The true guru prescribes no discipline, but the enquiry “Who am I?”]

272 Why does one need an outer guru?
Because the mind with maddening thoughts
Darts out and does not willingly
Listen to the truth proclaimed
Eternally within the heart
By Being-Awareness, one’s own Self.

273 The Self, Being-Awareness, shining
As all things and in all things
Is the true guru.

274 Heinous sinners and miscreants
Are they who fail to see as formless
Being the guru of awareness
Who, though seeming human, is
In truth the space ethereal
Of supreme Awareness.

53. Guru’s Grace

275 To those who suffer samsara’s pain,
The grievous fruit of former deeds
Done in delusion dark, the cure
That kills all grief is joy, the joy
That flows from the good guru’s grace.
276  He is the guru who, when approached
By those still suffering from the bonds
Wrought by deeds with passion fraught,
Removes their sufferings and confers
On them the bliss of moksha.

277  The alchemy of the guru’s glance
Of grace transmutes the jiva’s rusted
Iron into the purest gold
Of true Awareness. Clear your doubts,
And gain and cherish his darsan.

278  The guru whose inner light bestows
Visible light on sun, moon and fire,
Reveals the falseness of the world
And the body to those who loud proclaim
The reality of objects.

[cf. verse 7 of The Supplement to The Forty Verses on Reality.]

279  The firmament of grace, the guru,
Embodiment of steady Awareness, rids
The suffering jiva of its ego,
The poor thing of its poverty,
And firmly plants it in its own
True state of infinite Awareness.

[There is a play on the words: guru (heavy, substantial, strong),
and laghu (light, trivial, poor).]

280  The infinite and almighty Self
Shines as the Master of Awareness
And through Prime silence silences
The vulgar arguments of the poor,
Bewildered worldly wise.

281  With a glance of his two eyes the guru
Quick destroys without destroying
The ego false but seeming true,
And proves the falseness of the world
And the Self’s reality.

[As the river merging in the ocean loses form but not
substance, the ego is not destroyed but released in the Self.]
282 The guru heroic with his sword
Of knowledge slays the demon, mind.
Unless his grace ends once for all
The monkey-tricks of our truant mind
We cannot see the wondrous dance
Of true Awareness in the Heart.

283 The elephant in his dream beholds
The lion that wakes him up from sleep.
Even so the seeker in his dream-like
Waking life of ignorance sees
The guru and wakes from slumber dark.

[The guru is after enlightenment recognised as the one Self.]

284 Those on whom the guru’s glance
Of grace has fallen are like the deer
Caught in a tiger’s jaw. They are bound
To have their wretched ego slain
And know the one supreme Awareness.
They will never be forsaken.

285 The mind that has received the blazing
Sunlight of the guru’s grace
Will never more be troubled by
Triadic differences which now
Are seen to be conceptual merely.

[Triadic differences are like: (a) waking, dreaming and deep sleep; (b) *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*; and (c) perceiver, perception and things perceived.]

286 When two pairs of eyes, the teacher’s,
Who can teach through silence,
And his worthy pupil’s meet,
Spoken words are a mere waste.
That look bestows the light destroying
And surviving all things else.

[The couplet, “When two pairs of eyes meet, spoken words are a mere waste,” is a *kural* which speaks of the eloquence of lovers’ eyes.]
287 The sages say that, by the Master’s Grace, the true Being shining pure, The Vedas’ end beyond all knowing, That itself springs of its own Accord, bright as the I of I.

54. Certitude

288 Grasping aright the ineffable grace Of the guru supreme, being unentangled In the illusory world that stands in front, Abidance in mere Being Is true bliss.

289 By enquiring “Who am I?”, or else By unremitting and heart-melting Thought of God, destroying the false Deceptive ego is to gain The heart of radiant awareness.

290 By guru’s grace and this alone And by no other means can one Gain coveted peace and bliss. Therefore with single-minded zeal, Persistent ever, seek such grace.

291 For those who seek eternal life The assurance stands: the senses five Retracted tortoise-like, the mind Turned homeward to the Self and there Abiding is pure bliss.

292 Take this to heart. Your own true Being, The Self within you shining bright And steady, That alone is Real. If without a shadow of doubt You see and love God as this Self, The plenitude of bliss is yours As your own Being.
Know that these countless things are pictures
In a dream and none is real
Apart from the beholder. Shun
This phantom world of names and forms
And dwell in the pure, blissful being
Of Awareness.

Dwelling on the Self supreme, sole, whole,
Inalienable, eternal, this
Alone is, for the body-bound jīva,
The boat to cross the ocean of births.

The Pure Awareness shining in us
Ever from of yore as ‘I’, the One
Without another, this alone
Is real. Unless the jīva knows
This primal Truth, there is no release
From false illusion.

Shun the mental maya wallowing
Forever in worldly pleasures; destroy
The flickering ego and worldly vasanas;
And into Siva’s being transformed,
Shine as Pure Awareness.

Do not dwell in the desert hot
Of the non-self, eating arid sand.
Come into the Heart, the mansion
Cool, shady, vast, serene
And feast on the bliss of Self.

You who with overflowing heart
And mind intent do penance seeking
Refuge at the Feet of the Supreme,
Shun utterly the greed for powers
Miraculous and enjoy the bliss
Of Freedom, Siva eternal.
With mind held by the power of grace,
Free from forgetting and remembering,
Dwell in the infinite bliss
Of Siva’s Feet, the light intense
Of Being eternal, Pure Awareness.

Only by seeking and submitting
To Grace can man with his false ego
Ever hope to find release
From samsara’s fearful whirl.
Hard, hard it is to overcome
The force of former deeds.

55. The Left-Overs (Uchishtam)

The one bright word that passes on
The perfect guru’s Self-experience
Is the left-overs from his meal.
The pupil’s speechless firm abidance
In that experience is the eating
Of the left-overs from the meal.

[Whatever food the guru leaves on his plate is considered to be sacred and is called ‘Left-overs’ (Uchishtam).]

Offering the ego as a meal
To the silent guru, the primal Self,
The heart drinks in as his prasad
The light eternal, the experience
Of the pure “I AM”. This is the ultimate Eating of the left-overs.

[Giving up the notion “I am this or that”, one should accept as prasad from the guru the experience of pure Being.]

The lives divine lived on this earth
By jivanmuktas are the leavings
Of the gods, the gifts of grace, supremely Pure, destroying every sin.
56. Reverence for the Guru

304 The service rendered to the Guru
By the chela called and chosen by him
Should be respectful and correct,
Like a woman’s to her husband
In company.

[cf. verse 39 of The Supplement to The Forty Verses on Reality: advaita is not for practice, especially in relation to the Guru.]

305 Who meditates on Guru’s Feet,
The flawless flame of Pure Awareness,
Gains from grace supreme the gift
Of Pure Awareness, clarity
Of mind that ends all sorrow.

306 Those who live humbly dedicated
To the good guru’s Feet are blessed.
Devotion wells up in them. True
Devotion to Siva becomes
Itself the fire of Pure Awareness,
Burning up all false desires.

307 Krishna, the ocean of compassion,
Through Arjuna assures us thus:
“Come to me. If to me you come
I shall release you from all bondage
To deeds both good and evil.”

308 To annihilate recurrent vasanas
And bring to being knowledge free
From dread delusion and desire,
Know that the mantra true is but
Devotion to the Guru’s Feet.
309 Though we may serve in every way
Through thought, word, deed, Siva supreme
As He appears and moves among us
As our Guru, the highest end to seek
And gain is egoless Being,
Through merging one’s identity
With Him, our life’s Life, Lord and Master.

310 The stillness which precludes the birth
Of the obstinate ego with its brood
Of false, destructive differences
Like master and pupil, god and man,
Such *mouna* is the inner meaning
Of wise prostration to the Master.

311 When the pupil’s separate self
Is burnt away in the fierce flame
Of the sovereign presence and his abidance
In deep *mouna* becomes firm,
This firmness is the wisest mode
Of worshipping the Master.

312 Enquiring who this “I of mine”
May be, the pupil gains complete
Identity with the Guru-Self
And loses quite his separate self.
This ending of the ego false
Is the good pupil’s *puja*
Of the Master.

313 In Pure Awareness shines the Guru
As in the infinite sky the sun.
To merge therein without retaining
A separate ego of one’s own
Is rendering to the Guru-God
The most appropriate worship.
314  Treading the path, one finds the world
    Composed of ‘I’ and ‘this’
    Transformed into the Guru Himself.
    This steadiness of vision, this
    Awareness of his presence bright
    Everywhere is the true pupil’s
    Worship of the Master.

315  When the iceberg ego body-bound
    Dissolves in that vast ocean of bliss,
    The radiant Being of the Guru-Self,
    This disappearance in the One
    Is true worship of the Master.

316  The natural state where the flawed vision
    Of the ego does not circumscribe
    The Guru’s Presence as universal
    Being, this is the blissful worship
    Of the Master, standing out
    Like a mountain on a plain.

317  After surrendering to the Guru
    Body, mind and all belongings,
    To still regard these as ‘I’ and ‘mine’
    Is taking back a gift once given.
    Strict avoidance of this sin
    Is pure worship of the Master.

318  Extinguishing the triple fire,
    The Guru’s Feet have given us shelter.
    To abide there and control the mind
    From craving for the world of sense
    Is worship of those flowery Feet.
To search out and see through
The ego false, a mental concept,
And to abide within the Heart
Is worship of the flowery Feet
Of the silent Guru who transcends
All thought.

[The first two lines can also read: “Searching out the ego false in order to dissolve the mind.”]

Not to spread out the screen on which
The darkening ego, body-bound
But feigning to be Being-Awareness,
Projects the world-film, this is worship
Of the flowery Feet of the radiant Guru,
The Lord supreme.

**57. Guru’s Greatness**

Though you give up all faults, acquire
All merits, cast off every kinship
And practice every penance known,
You cannot gain the ultimate bliss
Until you reach the Teacher’s Feet.

Unless you have obtained the grace
Of the good guru who has subsumed
All triads in the One, you can
Have no abiding place
In the infinite bliss of *moksha*,
The ultimate goal and good.

As ‘I’ within, the world without,
As this world and the next, as boundless
Knowledge in the heart, the Guru
Shines and sustains the devotee true,
A jewel lamp that needs no kindling,
A column of light.
Free from all fear of suffering
Even like Indra in his happy heaven
They dwell on earth who yearning cling
Close to the Guru and rely
Solely on His glance of grace.

Majestic like a mountain rises
The splendour of the sin-destroying
Guru who holds royal court
In the devotee’s heart of love.
Ineffable is this mounting bliss.
Those who have known it do not speak.
Those who speak of it have not known it.

For cutting down and scooping out
The knot of nescience in the loving
Pupil’s heart, the sword of power
Which pleases too, is the natural state
Of Pure Awareness in the Master,
From the ego’s maya free.

[The knot of nescience refers to the imaginary bond between sentience and the insentient body.]

Steadfast clinging to the wisdom
Learnt, the mind restrained, withdrawn
From the false senses’ field, living
Within in the clear light of Truth,
Such practice only is true teaching.

58. Of Satsang (Association with the Wise)

Sensible people shun the company
Of empty talkers who are not content
Humbly to tread the path of dharma
And uphold in practice life’s ideals,
But proudly mouth vain words.
329 Many are the ills that flow
   From mixing with mad folks afflicted
   With turbid minds and rattling tongues.
   Best friendship is with those good men
   Whose minds are dead and who abide
   In the pure silence of Awareness.

330 Give up forthwith, O mind, the friendship
   Of worthless folks with speech perverse
   And wicked ways. Hereafter live
   In the company of sages steadfast
   In their state of moveless stillness.

331 Since every vice springs from the false
   Pleasures of swerving from the Self,
   The plenitude of virtue is
   The perfect peace of Pure Awareness
   Following the end of the ego
   Which is by such false pleasures fed.

332 Those alone are truly virtuous
   Who abide in the flawless, pure
   Awareness. Others are but base.
   Hence, gain new life by dwelling in
   The company of those who live
   In the purity of true Awareness,
   Free from all falsehood.

59. The Greatness of Devotees

333 Ripened by the matchless power
   Of Self-awareness, now the Guru
   Stands as transcendent Being supreme.
   He who, penance done, becomes
   The target of His glance of grace
   Gains greatness that surpasses speech.
Siva, well-pleased to intermingle
With His bright servants, enters in
Among the saintly throng of those
Whose faith is strong, conceals His form,
 Assumes another, and with love
 Enraptured sports.

[Siva appears in the guise of the Guru.]

The greatness of Siva’s devotees is
Immeasurable. They are greater
Than Hara and Hari both, for they,
Hara and Hari themselves, serve these
Servants whose glory the Vedas sing.

60. Of Brahma-Vidya (Knowledge of Brahman)

The only science worth our learning
Is Brahma-Vidya. Those who have known
The ultimate Truth define this science
As knowledge, not of the world we see,
But of ourselves who see it.

Awareness, which survives when all
Illusions — the mirage-like world,
He who beholds it and the sight
His eyes drink in — are quite destroyed
Without a vestige, this Awareness,
This, and nothing else is Vidya.

61. The Living Truth in Religions

Questing within, enquiring “Who
Am I, this indispensable
True living Self?” , this search alone
Is the one single stream of life
Pulsating through the many faiths
That promise life eternal.
339  As the string that holds together
The beads that else might fall apart
Is one, not many, God supreme,
Immutable and ever the same,
The light that dwells in every being
Shines as the heart of every faith.

340  Clinging to different earthen lamps,
One sole fire appears as many
Different flames. Even so, the one
Unchanging Self, to different phantom
Bodies clinging, seems to be
So many beings.

341  Had there been no utterance showing
The grand Himalaya of transcendence
Standing in the vast inner space,
The loud polemics of cults and schools
Concerning the Supreme would be
But noisy bustle in a bazaar.

[The utterance divine, the mahavakya, proclaims the identity of Self and God, as in Tat-tvam-asi, ‘An-al-Haq’, and ‘I am that I am’.]

342  Differences in mental ripeness
Have given rise to different faiths,
Each spreading its own light. ’Tis wisdom
To see in all these cherished faiths
Essential oneness.

62. Infinite Vision

343  Those who, diving deep within,
Have found the Self have nothing else
To know. And why? Because they have gone
Themselves beyond all forms and are
Awareness without form.
344 Those who have sought the Lord within
The living shrine, the Heart, and seen
Him there with vision clear, will also
Recognise Him as He sports
In this vast, wondrous temple, the World.

345 Those who have clearly seen the truth
That God shines as the Life of life
In every life behold, even in
The meanest worm despised by others,
The loved presence of the Supreme.

346 In those whose hearts are filled with grace
The mind whose form is darkness dies.
Their vision, lit with the bright light
Of real Being, now beholds
In all things everywhere pure bliss.

347 Those with physical eyes alone
See God in beautiful objects,
Yogis see Him in the heart-lotus;
Priests see Him in the sacred fire.
The truly wise have a thousand eyes
And see Him everywhere.

348 The joyous vision of the Lord
Destroys the thought that we are bodies
And all concepts trouble-laden,
Till we become an Eye of Grace,
A spacious heaven of Pure Awareness.

349 When the treacherous senses are
Subdued, thought is eschewed, and we
Stand firmly rooted in true Being,
The Awareness in the Heart, such still
Strength is Siva’s Presence.

350 The vision of Truth destroying false
Illusion, is like a swelling ocean
Of blissful grace. And in this silence
Of Self-awareness beyond thought,
There is no fall, no failure.
63. Ego-Loss

351 Scan the troublesome phantom called The ego, and you find it is A word importing nothing. If Import it has, then like the real Rope beneath the illusive snake, Its sole substratum is the Self, The one Reality.

352 When ego dies one gains the bliss Of heaven, one’s own eternal home. When ego goes, there is no loss Of Being. Hence be not afraid.

353 Those who, as food for Siva, pour Their minds into the sacred fire Of Pure Awareness and dare worship And merge in Siva’s form attain His own auspicious formlessness.

354 Don’t ask in fear and doubt, “What, what Will happen if I once for all Give up this separate self of mine?” Whoso lets go the bough he clings to Lands safe on solid earth. You are bound To reach the real Self.

355 In deep sleep where the world is not, And ‘I’ as body too is not, The Self as Being persistent shines. Hence the true I, one must agree, Is only the immutable Self.

356 The total absence of the ‘I’-thought Is the state supreme of being the Self. Because in sleep the ‘I’ is not Does anyone cease to be in sleep?
69

357  Come, think of it, the egoless state
Is one’s true Being as flawless, bright
Awareness. Search and find
The truth in wakeful sleep, samadhi.

358  The egoless state is our true Being
As Pure Awareness, the blissful peace
Of Sivahood, freedom from both
Birth and death, by all belauded
As *Brahma-nirvana* and *Kaivalya* too.

64. The True I

359  The separate ego wholly dead,
The indivisible Self as pure
Awareness brightly shines. This I
Is not the false conceptual self
Earth-bound and body-bound.

360  Natural, unbroken, ever present,
All *maya* gone, as strength of heart
Shines the pure I of *muktas* seen
In acts without the slightest trace
Of doership.

361  Those whose body-bound ego is dead
Live a life of Pure Awareness,
Rejoicing in the Self, carefree,
In peace unruffled by desire.

65. Self-Awakening

362  It’s only when one knows one’s source,
The Heart, that ‘I’, the false god, dies.
It’s only when the false god dies
That I, the true God-Self, springs forth
Direct, victorious from the depths.
About this goblin ego born
In nescient darkness and now dancing
As this vast world, start some enquiry.
Then like the bridegroom’s friend it flees
As the Self-Sun rises bright
Shattering the darkness false.

[The ego is neither chit (awareness) nor jada (matter). It vanishes on enquiry. A stranger pretending to be the bridegroom’s friend disappeared when there was an enquiry into his identity and it was made clear that he belonged to neither the bride’s nor the bridegroom’s party.]

When the ego-life dissolves
And dies in silence, then one lives
The life supreme of Pure Awareness.
When the false ego dream-like fades
Into its source, the true Self rises
Of its own accord.

Stretched, tortured on the body’s cross,
Jesus, the body-bound ego, dies.
The Passion ended, the true Self
Abides and shines as God supreme.
This is Resurrection after death.

[Kural 267 says, “Bright as gold purified in fire shine those who have gone through the fire of suffering as a penance.” Verse 973 of The Garland says, “When the knot between body and awareness goes, one shines as Pure Awareness Bliss.”]

Attainment of Kaivalya is
Resurrection after death.
Rebirth is the immeasurable
Silence of non-dual Being.
The pure transcendent Bliss experienced
In that state abides and grows
As one’s own natural Self.
367 How can the jiva sore bewildered
By failure and frustration gain
Blest freedom and relief from care?
Only by knowing that He who rules,
The Grace Supreme, is its own Self.

368 What is That forgetting which
We have fallen under the powerful spell
Of this false world? Unless we know
That, the Real, there is no chance
Whatever for the death
And disappearance of our pain.

369 He who laments the death of wife
Or children, let him turning first
Within pray, weeping for the death
Of the body-bound ego. Of all his dire
Afflictions this will be the full
And final death.

370 If you love the life that clings
To the body, then you grieve
When the body dies. Avoid this grief
By truly loving That, the Self,
For there is no pain of parting
From this true life behind all life.

67. Desirelessness

371 An object seeming from afar
Big Meru-like becomes when reached,
A tiny atom. Such is desire
Insatiable, which keeps one ever
In penury, a bottomless pit
Impossible to fill.
372  Good hearts that yearn for dear contentment,  
    To swim across this penury of heart  
    ’Tis good to gain serenity of mind  
    Rather than gather piles of tangible things.

373  The heart surrendered to the Master’s Feet,  
    Will it dance wildly as it did before?  
    Does a good wife living with her wedded husband  
    Jump about with rapturous excitement?

374  Cessation of all movements of the mind  
    Is what great Knowers call the highest bliss.  
    The way to gain this is desirelessness,  
    Freedom from all liking and disliking.

375  ’Tis certain that desire alone  
    When crossed gives rise to anger vile.  
    The origin of anger and all other sins,  
    This desire, in anger lurking, is  
    Of all the sins the last to disappear.

376  If all desires, yes even the desire  
    For the state supreme of silence beyond speech,  
    Amount to swerving from perfection,  
    Could attachment to the flawed and lightless  
    Body and its pleasures count  
    As proper conduct?

377  One who never has a thought  
    Of “I want this” and “I lack that”  
    Is happy and contented with what comes  
    To him as fruit of former deeds.  
    How could such a one descend  
    From his true state and suffer pain?

378  Only for those who have snapped asunder  
    The bonds of desire does the false  
    Phenomenal world cease to appear.  
    Snap, then, without a thought desire  
    Even for the beatified bliss  
    Of radiant silence.
Fond, foolish mind afflicted by desire
For transient pleasures in this world and the next,
If you stand tranquil, still, you’re sure
To gain the freedom, the transcendent bliss
Beyond these two worlds.

68. Freedom from Bondage

Decay and disappearance of the false
Illusion that the body is one’s self,
This alone is the true blissful
Sovereignty of the Self. The sole
Common lesson taught by all
The branches of all faiths is this,
The ego’s end.

From ignorance of the Self comes birth.
Only true awareness which dispels
The dark illusion that the five sheaths
Are oneself can bring freedom
From attachment and so end birth and death.

Great Knowers recognise no other bondage
Than the rising movements of the mind
And they find true release nowhere
But in the total death,
Leaving no trace behind,
Of every movement of the mind.

The separate self is but the mind
Drunk with and reeling under the notion
That it is bound. This very mind
When it stands steady, still, desiring
Nothing and proud of nothing
Becomes the Self supreme.
69. Self-Enquiry

384 Ending this vast, external wandering
Of the mind, enquiring “Who are you?”
And “Who is he?” ’tis best to quest
Within unceasing, eager, keen
Enquiring “Who am I?”

385 When with the keen, unceasing quest
Of “Who am I?” one penetrates
The centre of oneself, the body-bound
Ego fades away, true Being
Rises clear as I, as I,
And puts an end to all diversity,
Illusive as the blueness of the sky.

386 Once we raise the question “Who
The questioner is,” all questions based
On duality dissolve. The question
“Who the questioner is” becomes
The grand Brahmastra which destroys
The show of separateness which shines
In nescience dark.

387 Investigating who perceives this false
External world of sense, bring to an end
The frisking ego’s mischief. Abiding
As supreme awareness in the heart,
This alone is liberation.

388 The jiva searching “Who in truth am I?”
Subsides as the true Self without an ‘I’.
[The river merging in the ocean loses its identity.]

389 The method of self-enquiry is
To turn the outward-going mind
Back to its source, the Heart, the Self,
And fix it ever there, preventing
The rising of the empty ‘I’.
Without abiding in calm solitude
As the Being-Awareness shining in the heart,
To tear oneself away and look for truth
Fussing everywhere without,
Is like searching with a lighted torch
For a diver in deep water sunk.

Those who do not dive into the Heart
And there confront the Self in the five sheaths hid
Are only students answering out of books
Clever questions raised by books,
And not true seekers of the Self.

In the steady peace of the still mind
With breath within the Heart held firm
And all five senses merged in one,
In such keen insight realise
Pure, flawless Being as Awareness.

One who has wisely chosen the straight path
Of self-enquiry can never go astray;
For like the bright, clear Sun, the Self
Reveals itself direct to whoso
Turns towards it.

Forgetfulness of Self is real death.
To overcome the fear of body’s death
We needs must constantly remember
The Self. For self-enquiry then,
There is no fixed rule of time or place.
[All times and all places are suitable for self-enquiry.]

No object that in time and space appears
Can have existence independent
Of that supreme and perfect Being.
Hence no time and no place is deemed
Unfit for self-enquiry.
[Another meaning: nothing in time and space can be deemed
an object of meditation in self-enquiry.]
To confront the indifferent self
With the question “Who am I?” —
Such tireless practice inward turned
Of self-enquiry is alone
The true waging of the war
Between the gods and demons.

Every time a thought arises, don’t
At all let it complete itself.
Ask rather: “To whom do all these thoughts
Occur?” Start questing for the Self.

“To me occurs this thought. Then Who
Am I?” Dive deep into the Self
Enquiring thus. The mind will sink
Into its source, the thought subside.

If in this manner day after day
Practice is maintained, the mind
Is rendered flawless, pure, the quest
Becomes so easy that the moment
It begins the Heart is reached.

Creatures caught in a raging forest fire
Struggle for breath, but die. Even so,
All vasanas rising from the mind
Perish unable to resist
The mounting puissance of the Self.

Pursuit of the thought “Who am I?”
Destroys all other diverse thoughts and then
It is itself consumed in total silence
As the long pole used to burn a corpse with
Is burnt too in the funeral pyre.

Delusive thought now like a cloud
Conceals the boundless bright awareness
Of the Self. Enquiring “Who am I?”
Dispels the darkness and the splendour
Of the sky of Self shines clear.
As a ball of iron heated in the fire
Glows like a ball of fire, the jiva
Once impure is now ennobled
By self-enquiry and acquires
The very nature of the Self.

When the suffering fool turns inward,
Enquiring “Who am I?” the radiant
Truth is seen, confusion cleared,
And silence wells up as the bliss of peace.

The jiva’s terrible suffering is
The turbid folly of the mind
Un schooled and ignorant of the Self.
Practise unceasingly within the wise
Enquiry, “Whose is this dire suffering?
Who am I?”

By the transmuting touch of daily,
Methodical, untiring self-enquiry,
The base metal jiva shines forth clear
As Siva, freed from the mental rust,
The demon ego.

The jiva, son of God, forgetting
His real Being, cries “Alas” in anguish.
Then when he searches yearning inwards
He by experience knows the glory
Of oneness with the Self, his Father.
[cf. St. John X. 30: “I and my Father are one.”]

70. True Penance (Tapas)

What is the penance for?
Not to bring newly into being
But only to see and heartily enjoy
The wealth of grace, the bright awareness,
Ever naturally inhering
Within the heart of every living being.
409 Not to let the proud and frenzied mind
Roam suffering in the company
Of the senses, but to make it rest
In the heart with Siva, pure
Awareness, merged, this, the true
Ascetics tell us, this is tapas
True.

410 Well-considered, the distinctive mark
Of consummate tapas comes to this:
The steady, unbroken current of Awareness
That this bewildering variegated crowd
Of world-appearances is all self-made,
Concealing and revealing but the Self.

411 How do some people standing
In a sea of bliss ubiquitous
Think that they are scorched in sorrow’s fire?
Because through foolish maya, they
Fail to love the tapas they perform
As a mere duty.

[Self-enquiry is a happy journey to the goal of happiness, cf.
the last three verses of Upadesa Saram.]

412 The silence of Siva-experience,
Supreme Awareness firm, this is
True tapas, Self-abidance.

413 Birds in the air and fish in water
Dart and leave no track behind.
So none can see the path pursued
By those that journeyed towards the Self
And gained it.

414 Ending the jiva’s pranks by merging it
In the Lord’s Feet through sheer devotion
Is the Siddhanta path.
Loss of all sense of separateness
By blissful abidance in Supreme Awareness
Is the Vedanta way.
415  To recognise through reason the Supreme
And in the heart renounce the relative,
To act without the sense of ‘I’ and ‘mine’,
Is the sage’s way of life divine.

416  Here is the path by which the jiva,
Struggling and suffering now, can revel
In the bliss of Siva. Give up
All creatures, God and world as concepts,
As mere appearances in Being,
Like silver in the mother-of-pearl.

71. Awareness

417  Who in the golden temple of awareness
Sees Siva as the form of Pure Awareness
And offers Him the worship of awareness,
His awareness is the Truth supreme.

418  The only true and full awareness
Is awareness of awareness.
Till awareness is awareness
Of itself, it knows no peace at all.

419  Many and varied are the objects
Sense-perceived, like ornaments
Of gold, yet one alone, like gold,
The substance, is awareness. Pure
Gold is absolute awareness, the opening
Of the heart that shines beyond
Indicative knowledge.

420  The knowledge that ignores the Self,
The knower, and holds as true the field
Perceived, is but illusive folly.
No matter how much one has learned,
True knowledge is the merging of all
Indicative knowledge in awareness
Of the Self.
421  The one true light there is is pure Awareness. Other kinds of knowledge Clinging to it and claiming to be Real are ego-born conceptual Clouds. To trust them is sheer folly.

422  All other kinds of knowledge are Base, trivial. The only true and perfect Knowledge is the stillness Of Pure Awareness. The many differences perceived In the Self whose nature is awareness Are wrong attributions and not real at all.

423  What sort of knowledge is this wretched Bodily mental knowledge of objects? Would those who long for Pure Awareness Hanker after this? To know Pure Awareness is true wisdom. All other knowledge is mere folly.

424  What if one knows the subtle secret Of manifold inscrutable mysteries? Until one knows the Awareness which reveals All other knowledge, does one know the Truth?

425  O mind, excited as if mad, What is the source of all existing Things, both moving and unmoving, Except Awareness which itself Owes its birth to nothing else?

426  What is the reason that we say That whatever things we know Have in Awareness their sole source? Because this is the dwelling place Of the Self, which is the dwelling place Of everything perceived.
What is lifeless and unreal,
This alone needs for support
Pure Being-Awareness.
The mind, deluded and impure,
Forgets its oneness with the Self,
With Being-Awareness, and then looks
For some other object of awareness.

Not like other things unreal,
But always by its Being real,
The Self as permanent Awareness
Has no other dwelling place
Than its own radiant Awareness.

While in truth you are that Awareness,
You would not abide as such,
But suffer, since you recognise
This worldly life alone which rises
From yourself, this sole Awareness.
How shall I describe this folly?

Those who have not searched and found
The truth of their own natural Being
Will perish by alien forms deluded.
Live as one sole Being-Awareness.
All save this is false appearance,
The realm of maya.

[The delusion consists in thinking that one is the body alone, not the whole world.]

How can any treatise thrust some wisdom
Into that human-seeming heap of clay
Which keenly watches things perceived
And not at all the Self, Awareness?

Is it not because you are yourself
Awareness that you now perceive
This universe? If you observe
Awareness steadily, this Awareness
Itself as Guru will reveal
The Truth.
433 What is worth seeking and discovering
Is the truth of Self. Such knowledge comes
Only to the still, clear intellect
Not muddled by strenuous search without
But questing for the Truth in silence.

434 The sum of knowledge and its end
Is Pure Awareness, Silent Being.
All other states are but the play
Of the Awareness present in the Self
Whose natural state is Bliss supreme.

435 True natural Awareness which goes not
After alien objects is the Heart.
Since actionless Awareness shines
As real Being, its joy consists
In concentration on itself.

436 Incomparable mukti is the truth
Of Self clear-shining when, all differences
Destroyed by concentration, knowledge
Being but Awareness, becomes merged
In the Self which is Awareness.

437 Since Being is one alone and never two,
True knowing is not knowing something else.
’Tis but the clarity, the tranquil peace
Of the mind when undeluded
By the senses and so standing still.

438 Awareness is detachment, purity;
Awareness is propinquity to God;
Constant Awareness is freedom from fear;
It is immortality; it is
Everything and all there is.

439 Of this Awareness, how to measure
The enormous width and length,
The summit height and bottom depth?
Even the immortals know this only
As peace attained and in no other wise.
Nought but Awareness is the universe;  
Nought but Awareness is all life;  
Nought but Awareness is the God of Grace;  
To understand it is the goal supreme.

72. Nirvana

Look with what utter unconcern  
The serpent in the ant-hill puts away  
Its slough. Our highest duty is  
The like removal of the five-fold sheath,  
Illusive, burning, clinging to us fast.

In full enjoyment of the silent bliss,  
The gift of grace that flows from Wisdom’s Lord,  
The Lord of Self, the jiva’s nirvana  
Is casting off the five-fold sheath,  
Attachment to the body.

73. Self-Realisation

Even in the absence of this world in sleep  
A bodiless Awareness is our Being.  
Release from all the sheaths, from form and ego,  
Is realisation of our natural Self.

The false dream ends when we wake up.  
Even so, the ego dies  
When the sun, the true I, rises.  
Ego’s destruction by strong self-enquiry  
Is what is known as Self-attainment.

Though in this false world one may live on,  
The ending of both ‘I’ and ‘mine’  
In the clarity of true Awareness  
Void of every doubt, this only  
Is abidance in the bliss  
Of being That.

[Instead of “doubt”, the word may be taken to mean “sense-attachment”.]
The Garland of Guru’s Sayings

446  The primal truth clings to the heart’s deep core
And can be seen by strong, keen search alone.
Those who with a pestle’s broad round end
Probe for it rarely reach it.

[Gross outward search cannot reveal the subtle inner truth.]

74. Firm Awareness

447  Since in His silent presence concepts
Do not rise, since all three persons
Are only concepts and the other two
Persons rise only after the first,
The Self is the origin of all three persons.

[Compare verses 747, 748, infra and verses 14, 15, 16 of The Forty Verses on Reality.]

448  What rises as ‘I’ in the body is mind.
Enquiring where this ‘I’-thought was
Before its rising in the body, it sinks
Within the heart. Hence from the heart
The mind arises.

449  Apart from thought there is no jiva, God or world. With every thought
The ‘I’-thought is admixed. It is
The origin of every thought. The place
Where this arises is the Heart.

450  Those firm settled in the Heart
Know nothing save the Self, which stands
Like a screen, providing for all objects
Space and light for their appearance.

75. Enjoyment of Bliss

451  The deeper into the Heart one dives
The greater grows the bliss enjoyed,
The bliss intense of the sole Self
Which once appeared in various forms.
452 Once you are well established in the Heart
True Awareness rises bright. And then
You live like a Sun unsetting
Resplendent with the light of Truth
Enjoying the blissful peace of Siva
Eternal.

453 When the mind’s desire gets fulfilled
It gains the bliss of Self, its source.
Even so, in every earthly state
When something hated is removed
Or some desire is fulfilled
The bliss enjoyed is the bliss of Self
As in *samadhi*, swooning or sweet sleep.

454 In the false, frenzied ego-life
Created by the mind constricted
To some thought, who can enjoy
The clear, bright bliss of Pure Awareness
Free from thought?

76. Sleep

455 For those who have enjoyed the bliss
Supreme of sleep profound devoid
Of every object, it is folly
Not to cherish Pure Awareness,
And to long for some other object
As dependable relief from suffering.

456 The ignorance prevailing
In sleep, swooning and such other states
Is but the absence of those objects
Known to the frenzied ego; not
The absence of the luminous Self.

457 Regarding sleep as one among the sheaths
Is but the self-forgetful folly
Of mistaking waking as Awareness
Bright. When the notion that the waking state
Is real and worthwhile goes, then sleep
Becomes true Being, non-dual, pure.
458 It is the embryo of the separate self,
Battering the thought that he
Is the seer in dream and waking,
Which sinks confused, crest-fallen, seeing
Nothing at all in sleep.

[It is the ego, not the atman, which fancies that it sees a world
in dream and waking and sees nothing in sleep.]

459 When the ego, the basic folly, dies
And all the triads disappear,
The world as object is no more.
The Self-sun shines and there is one
Pure Eternal Day, the Night of Siva.

[On Siva-ratri, the festival of Siva’s night, the mind-moon is
absent and the Self-sun shines.]

460 When the inborn vasanas which produce
Both dream and waking disappear
The nescience of deep sleep, once deemed
The darkness dense of ignorance, shines
As the fourth state transcendent.

461 To the intellect loving wakefulness
The bliss of sleep appears a sheath,
One of the five. When the ‘I’-thought,
The puissant intellect, is dead,
The bliss abides as bliss supreme,
Sleep’s nature as a nescient sheath
Having ended.

462 If one alert, till overpowered
By sleep, enjoys Awareness Pure,
Bright, clear, one does not droop, depressed
At heart that dark forgetful sleep
Has made one wholly insensitive.
77. True Being

463 Present when we do not search
And absent when we truly see,
The petty mind’s illusive serpent
Sinks, disappears and merges
In the rope of Self-Awareness,
Which now, as sole Reality,
Alone abides.

464 As free from all desire it shines
In lustrous fulness in the Heart,
Awareness-Bliss non-dual, bright.
Beyond all differences is true Being.

465 As one Reality alone subsists
Forever and everywhere the same
Unmistakable, self-revealed,
Whatever appears in time and space
Is, apart from That, a mere
Projection of the phantom-mind.

78. Ending of Doership

466 Only for those free from all sense
Of doership the bliss of tranquil peace
Shines pure within. For the ego proud
Is the sole evil seed whence spring
All known calamities.

467 Do not perform as if they were worth doing
The actions that the worrying mind
Decides or fancies it should do.
To act as you are moved to act
By the grace of God, the Life of life,
Is the wisest form of worship true.
468  Surrendering, letting go and lifting
Both hands in worship, the chaste Lady found
Her sari growing and her honour safe
By grace mysterious, while the ruffian
Stripping her slumped down helpless.

[The Lady refers to Draupadi in the Mahabharata.]

469  Those who, seeking no security,
Lean childlike on our Mother,
Awareness Pure, reach the Lord’s Feet,
And stand steadfast in His service,
Free from maya’s urge which makes
One think “I am the body”.

470  The Lord who has supplied today
Your need will surely always do it.
Take no thought then for the morrow.
Placing at His Feet your burdens,
Live free from care.

471  Absorption in yoga and tapas
Austere in order to become
An instrument of Siva, even this
Is a blemish in the highest state
Of self-surrender in spontaneous service.

[cf. verses 29 and 30 of Upadesa Saram. The ego is no entity
and is not even an instrument.]

472  One should not even let the thought
Arise that one is but a servant.
Only in such egoless, silent
Stillness, in this mere abidance
As pure Being, shines the radiance
Of true Awareness.

473  As heart within the heart abiding,
The Lord alone makes all things happen
As ordained. Hence if we stand
Unswerving and inhering firmly
In the Self, then all things will proceed
Unerring and unhampered.
“Who plants a tree will water it.”
Those with this faith will have no care.
If He but sees the tree dry up,
Even this pathetic sight is His
Concern alone.

Since the Lord alone abides, the source
Of all, whatever is surrendered
To the Lord, the root of the whole
Big banyan tree, serves all the worlds
And all living beings.

[One waters the root, not the branches and leaves. Verse 5 of
$Upadesa$ Saram prescribes service of the world as worship
of God for $chitta$-suddhi, purifying the mind. It helps the
$sadhaka$, the devotee, more than it helps the world. Real
service of the world is ending of the ego and absorption in
God as Being-Awareness.]

79. Non-Action

Whether one is or one is not
Engaged in work, one gains the state
Of non-action only when the ego
With its proud delusion “I am the doer”
Has died and disappeared.

80. Self-Surrender

To those who wholly dedicate
Their being to the Lord, to them
The Lord gives here and now Himself.
Only those who are egoless
And so aware that they are That
Rejoice in the supernal bliss
Of pure Siva-experience.

With strength of mind gained· at the Feet
Of the peerless Lord, the ego-sense —
The form of ‘I’ — surceasing, the self-loss by
Surrender to the Lord, the Self,
This surely is the only end
Of bhakti’s manifold labours.
479  The Lord abides as everything.  
Apart from Him nothing exists.  
Hence do not try to stand apart.  
Surrender of the restless ego  
Is the sole mark of bhakti supreme  
Where blissful peace prevails.

480  “Give yourself to God”, they say.  
But is it ours to give, not His already?  
Now at least let us repent  
The theft and at His lotus Feet  
Restore what we had stolen.

481  “I have nothing as my will,  
May your will alone prevail.”  
He whose mind rejoices thus  
In the will divine has no  
Cause at all for fear.

482  In the heart where dwells the Lord  
In the loved form of Self-Awareness,  
Refusing ingress to an alien thought  
By memory wafted, this alone is  
The spirit’s self-offering to the Lord.

483  The attitude “Your will, not mine,”  
Total relinquishment of self-will,  
This is true surrender following  
The extinction of the ego vile,  
The aggressive, primal veiling power.

484  Looking within, where is that crook  
Who regards and wrongly claims  
What belongs to Him, the Lord,  
Almighty and infinite, as ‘I’  
And then as ‘mine’?

485  When the ego dies as food  
For Siva-Sakti and lies log-like  
Still, only then true self-surrender  
Is attained, for only then  
The unfading bliss of peace prevails.
From a jaggery image of Ganesh
We break off a piece and make
An offering of it to the same
Sweet jaggery god. Such charity is
Our fond surrender of our spirit
To the Lord who is all Spirit.

Unconditionally place your mind
At the Feet of Him whose heart
Holds Mother Sakti. There ends the trick
Of ‘I’ and ‘mine’, and then the bliss
Supreme of radiant Being prevails.

81. How to Treat Enemies

However hateful enemies may be,
The noble mind should never nurse
Aversion. Hatred, like attachment,
Deserves only to be eschewed.

What I despise as not-myself
My enemies despise as well.
Their insults then serve but to beat
And shape me, as the goldsmith’s anvil
Helps him in his work.

Enemies hate one’s ego, not the Self. Hence, their criticism helps us in getting rid of the ego.

The valiant hero who subdues
Hate by love is the genuine sage.

82. Moderation in Life

If but the few with wealth abundant
Abandoned ostentatious living,
Millions pining pitifully now
In poverty could live in plenty.
The Lord munificent produces
Enough for all, no more, no less.
Consuming more than what we need
Is the sin of wrestling by sheer force
And eating someone else’s food.

83. The Sin of Excess

Excess, the sin, makes nectar poison,
And it brings on countless curses.
Those who perceive it as an evil
Are therefore bound to end it.

84. Meekness

One’s nearness to Perfection may
Be measured by the meekness
Of one’s behaviour. When even unawares
One’s turbid ego never rises, one
Attains the height supreme of meekness
Which all the world adores in God.

[Azhvar Uyarvar: The deeper the root the taller the tree.]

Till ego-loss grows full and perfect
It is best to bow low to “others”.
For one aspiring for true greatness
It would, alas, be tragic to accept
Homage from others.

Because He serves all beings meekly,
Lovingly and forever as if bound
To servitude, therefore, the Supreme
Has earned the highest adoration
Offered daily by the world.
Beholding in all beings but the Self,
Meeker than all and even meeker
Than His humblest devotees,
By virtue of such meekness the Supreme
Achieves supremacy.

Since the minute and vast alike
Vanish beyond the mind, the Self,
Awareness true, transcendent, holds
In its embrace both vastness vaster
Than the vastest, and minuteness
Tinier than the tiniest atom.

Flimsy straw floats high atop
The flood, while to the bottom
Sinks the heavy pearl. Men
In the world are high or low
By what they are and do, and not
By where they are.

[The last two lines repeat Kural 973.]

85. What is Worth Doing

Worth pursuing is self-enquiry,
Worth enjoying is the Self’s
Infinitude. Worth giving up
Is the ego-sense. To end all Sorrow
The final refuge is one’s source,
The Self of Pure Awareness.

Worth seeking is Awareness Pure.
Worth dwelling in are the Lord’s Feet.
Worth joining in is the company
Of the good. Worth welling up
Within the heart is peace supreme.

End of Part I

(The Quest)
PART II
CONTINUED PRACTICE

1. Teaching and Learning

502 The apt speech of one firm established
In the heart prevents the devotee’s mind,
Bewildered and confused, from running waste
In the desert of the senses, and points
The way inward to permanent moksha.

503 Enlightenment can never come
Unless the heart explores with care
The essence of the teaching,
The unceasing That thou art,
Uttered by the eloquent glance
Of the guru, Siva manifest,
Dwelling in the devotee’s heart.

504 The Self-God’s chosen method
For the incessant teaching
Of the pupil perfectly mature
Is the unbroken, natural Awareness
Of ‘I, I’, the Life of life
Deep within the heart.

2. Mahavakyas

505 The essential truth and import
Of all four Vedas when churned out
Of the multitudes of words employed
To cast out ignorance,
Is the one word of Silence, sealing
Jiva’s identity with the Supreme.
506 Those high heroes seeking freedom
From the fierce heat of this false world
And yearning for the Truth supreme
Of Being-Awareness-Bliss,
Attain the glorious goal of mukti
Only through the keen enquiry
Of “thou” that for the jiva stands.

[In the mahavakya, or grand utterance, “That thou art”, the word “thou” stands for the ‘I’.]

507 It is to turn the weakling mind
Inward and thus aid this enquiry
That to the everlasting That
Is added the word art.

508 Inward investigation true,
Earnest and keen, of the term “thou”
Results in the blissful experience
Of the meaning hidden in “That” and “art”.

3. The Upanishads

509 The only service which the vain
Ego, frenzied by vijnana,
Can offer to the God of grace
Who from all ignorance is free,
Is to install on wisdom’s altar
The golden sandals of the Upanishads
Hallowed by His lotus Feet.

[Vijnana is the intellectual knowledge, which is inferior to jnana, or Self-knowledge.]

4. Worship

510 Those happy ones alone who in their hearts
Behold the Lord’s bright, holy lotus Feet
Feet Shine forth with radiant Awareness,
Their vasanas, inauspicious, foul
Having disappeared.
511 Remembering the ruinous
Effects of traits demoniac, harbour
In your heart only traits divine.
Contemplation of bright traits
Divine alone can bring redemption.

[Inwardness, self-enquiry, are the best forms of worship.]

512 Rare indeed is the non-dual \textit{jnana}.
Yet fixing firmly one’s true love
On Siva’s Feet will easily lead
One to the Grace divine, the light
Which destroys illusion dark
And reveals the Real.

513 Through love firm fixing the Lord’s Feet
Ever in the heart, one can destroy
All false desires. And then the heart,
Now blossoming wide, beholds the true
Light of supreme awareness.

514 If the \textit{jiva}’s head but merges
In Siva’s Feet, the \textit{jiva} shines
As Siva Himself. The ego-ripple dies
And gains the stillness of true Being.

515 Snapping sharp the heavy fetters
Of false desires, speed your thoughts
Towards His golden, lotus Feet.
Wasting not a moment practise
Meditation on those Feet forever.

516 Only in the heart firm fixt
In meditation deep the Lord abides.
Train then the heart until it stops
Roaming and home-coming like a stray bull
And learns to cling to Him alone.

[Roaming = waking and dreaming.
Home-coming = deep sleep.]
Give up those attachments false
That drag one to the world of sense.
If the still mind adores the crystal
\textit{Linga}, Pure Awareness, bliss,
Bliss infinite results.

Auspicious is each day; benevolent
In aspect every planet; lucky
Is each conjunction. Every hour
Is fit, fine and fresh for the bright
Unfading worship of the Lord.

Rare is the birth of faith in something.
If such faith is born, don’t let
The infant perish. Cherish it
And guard it like the cow divine.

[The cow divine, Kamadhenu, grants all wishes; so does faith
in God and Guru.]

5. Silent Worship

Enthroning in the heart the Lord supreme,
His true, unceasing, natural worship
By the mind steady, self-absorbed,
Proceeds in perfect silence.

The pure desire for Grace, free from
Other attachment, practising
The state of silence sans an object,
Such merging in and being That
Amounts to mental worship true.

6. Vanity of Argument

“Of fate and effort, which is stronger?
Which will yield? Which will prevail?”
Those who wage this war of words
Are wholly ignorant of That from which
The world and the ego both appear
And into which they disappear.

[cf. verse 19 of \textit{The Forty Verses on Reality}.]
523  Some there are who endlessly
Jump and, sweating, shout full-throated
Refuting or elaborating doctrines
Instead of biding in clear silence,
Enquiring into That which is
And in the heart enjoying it.

524  None can perceive the Sun, the Self,
By arguments. Vexatious mental
Disputes are but conceits that cloud
The light of truth and make the eyes
In dizziness swim.

525  Far from revealing Truth,
Words only darken and conceal It.
To let the Truth shine of itself
Instead of burying it in words,
Merge in the heart both word and thought.

526  Let not your intellect become
A slave to the mere sound and fury
Of controversy. Enter the heart
With mind pellucid, concept-free,
And realise your natural Being
As the Truth.

7. Maya of Measurement

527  Which is the measure measuring or revealing
The Being-Awareness shining in the heart,
Whose light alone reveals all measuring,
Measure, measurer and things measured?

[The mind which measures, time, space and things measured,
are all part of maya.]
Only so long as there is a measurer
Do measuring and things measured seem
To be. But when the measurer sees
The Self, true Being, and gets lost
In It, all other things perish
Along with him and disappear.

[In Pure Being, there is no ego, no mind, no measurement.]

8. Indirect Knowledge

The jiva’s thirst will vanish only
When the vasanas of the frenzied mind
Die and direct experience comes
Of Pure Awareness.
If mirage water could quench thirst
Then only would knowledge indirect
Satisfy the jiva’s longing.

[The jiva’s thirst is the yearning for moksha.]

True, non-dual experience
Of the Self supreme as Pure Being
Is called “Knowledge not-indirect”.
False dualistic knowledge too
Is called “knowledge”, though qualified
As indirect, even as a rakshasa
Might be called “virtuous”!

From questing inward in the heart
Comes knowledge which destroys
All false illusions. Searching books
For pure, clear wisdom is like trying
To cook and eat the picture of a gourd.

Can hunger be appeased by eating
Food cooked over a painted flame?
The end of pain, the bliss of peace,
Results from egoless awareness,
And not at all from verbal wisdom.
Never through argument, but only
By abiding in the heart as pure
Awareness, which lights up and shines
Within the mind, can one enjoy
The thrill, the throb, the bliss supreme
Of being the Self.

9. Jiva One Only

May the wise and valiant holding
That there is but one jiva alone
Grow firm established in the heart.
To meet half-way minds not mature
They speak as if jivas are many.

[“They” may mean the wise or the sastras.]

Consider well and answer please:
Who is born (and stays in bondage)?
And who has slit the web of birth
(And gained mukti)? When (as in sleep)
The ‘I’-thought has not arisen
Are there any ‘others’, whether
Body-bound or free?

[Bondage and gaining mukti are both illusions. It is not as if there are many jivas, some bound and some free.]

10. Knowledge and Ignorance

O worldly folk who long for and run after
An endless series of unenduring things
’Tis wisdom true to seek and know
That one thing, on knowing which
All other things will cease to be.
For those who see with insight keen
The subtle Truth, what is there to gain
From knowledge of gross material things?
What the imperishable inner sense
Perceives surpasses far the sight
Seen by the corporeal eye.

Knowing aright the nature of the Self
And abandoning the non-self as void,
Unreal, is wisdom true.
All other knowledge is ignorance,
And not wisdom.

None of the sports of Sakti can
Exist apart from Sakta, Self.
It is the mischief of the false maya
To regard this universe
As different from Awareness
And be bewildered.

The feeling that one is but the body
Is ignorance dark, destructive.
One sure device to cure it is
To know that this same ignorance
Cannot exist apart from true,
Indefeasible Awareness, which
Is the Self.

[The snake seems to be there because the rope is really there.
Compare verse 13 of The Forty Verses on Reality.]

Space is but one unbroken whole.
Yet foolish folk imagine it
As cut up variously (by pots
And houses). Even so, it is
But maya’s outcome strange that people
Speak of one sole Self as many jivas.
542  It is ignorant folly to behold 
The Self, the sole Reality, 
As many and varied. Hence, whatever 
Name and form you see, ’tis wisdom 
To see it but as the Self alone, 
The one true Being.

[The last two lines of this stanza repeat verse 355 of the Kural.]

543  In all this varied universe 
Of multitudinous appearances 
The inner substance is but one, 
As in the millions of til* seeds 
The one true essence is the oil. 

[*Sesame seeds]

544  In the clarity of Pure Awareness, 
The depth of peace that is abidance 
In Being as the Self without a second, 
No such duality exists 
As knowing and not-knowing.

545  There is room for knowing and not-knowing 
Only in the ego’s knowledge 
Of objects. In Awareness pure, 
Our sole Being, there is neither 
Knowing nor not-knowing objects. 
This alone is knowledge true.

546  “Know thyself”, say some. But are there 
Any who do not know themselves? 
Knowing oneself and not knowing oneself 
Are both alike sheer ignorance. 

[Compare verse 33 of The Forty Verses on Reality and verse 2 of Sri Arunachala Ashtakam.]
When abiding as Awareness pure
There is no nescience. Nescience
Is a shadow false. Awareness is
The sole Reality. The truth once known,
To talk of nescience is but nescience.
We are forever Awareness pure.

11. Illusion

Only so long as one thinks that one knows
Objects, one fancies that one does not
Know oneself. When by direct,
Constant experience of the Self
The thought of “knowing” vanishes,
Then with it vanishes all talk
Of “ignorance” too.

When the full identity is reached
That the Self is all and there is no “other”,
The various perceptions rife,
In the absence of self-enquiry
And Self-abidance, are all seen
As mere mistakes.

Even like a dream this waking world
Is but a mind-conceived appearance
In mind-space. Hence greatness lies
In firmly ending indicative knowledge
And the folly of fondness for outer objects.

Only those foolish folk who have not searched
And found the Truth supreme, the Heart,
Flounder in fear in treacherous maya.
Those who have known the bliss supreme,
The boundless flood of heavenly brightness,
Fear no more.

Madmen, alienated from awareness
Of the one, sole, non-dual, luminous Being
Mark with darkened, jaundiced eyes
Only differences, and in the desert
Behold mirage after mirage.
12. Waking Dream

553 Those who with the eye of wisdom
Search the truth of dream and waking
Find in both one same defect.
This waking world on the body based
Is, like the dream world, bound to slip
Away and disappear.

554 The deeds we do in dream touch not
Our waking life, but slip away
When we awake. Even so, our deeds
Done in this clouded ego-life
Disappear and leave no trace
When we wake up in the divine
White light of Self-Awareness.

555 The wise ones hold that dream and waking
Are both creations of the mind
Confused. Since both are filled with thoughts
And names and forms, we too conclude
They are just the same.

556 With the ego half-emerged we see
The dream world. When it spreads out full,
This waking world of nescience comes
To be.

557 When our waking movements end
And our dream life begins, the mind
Assumes, as ‘I’, a phantom body
Appropriate for this dream experience.

558 Why does coitus in a dream result
In a discharge? It is because
Such is the force of thought, which darts
From dream to waking state.
559 If dream is but a whirl of thoughts,
So too is waking life. The dream experience
While it lasts is as real as what
We take as real when awake.

560 “Dream in a moment comes and goes.
Enduring is this waking life.”
Such argument is but the trick
Played by conspiring mind and maya.

[Duration being itself a thought.]

561 Mighty is this maya-mind
Which in the false, dark void creates
All such delusions and confusions
And makes an aeon seem a moment
And a moment seem an age.

562 With intellect, the eye of wisdom,
The cause of every seeming, fixed
In the wholeness of true Being,
Drive away all dark, delusive
Differences, the two dream-worlds
Created by the ego.

563 The ignorant ego sees the two
Dream worlds, but not the Self.
When the mind starts self-enquiry and stops
Seeing differences, then jnana dawns,
And as the sun of true Awareness
Shines as the Lord’s Feet.

564 One whirls and turns, pines in sore pain
In this false dream world, till at last
The sleeper in his soft bed wakes up,
The bad dream ends, one feels relieved,
Untouched, free as the pure white screen.
Such freedom is Self-knowledge pure.
[The film-show is over. The bright lights are switched on. Our waking life is like a dream or a movie-picture.]

565 The dreamer sunk in ignorance feels
Lost, helpless in some dreary desert
And seeks and seeks and finds at last
His own home-town, and wakes up happy.
Such waking is attaining \textit{moksha}
After much suffering in \textit{samsara}.

[Both bondage and attaining \textit{mukti} are mere concepts.]

\textit{One forgets the Self and thinks}
\textit{The body is oneself and goes}
\textit{Through innumerable births}
\textit{And in the end remembers and remains}
\textit{The Self. Know this is only like}
\textit{Awaking from a dream wherein}
\textit{One has wandered all over the world.}

\begin{verse}
– SRI BHAGAVAN 9
\end{verse}

13. Different States

566 Apart from all-pervasive space
Could there be either earth or water,
Fire or air? Then only could there be
Waking, dream or sleep
Apart from flawless \textit{turiya}.

567 Only for those incapable of deep,
Firm abidance in \textit{turiya} bright,
Which pierces even darkest slumber,
Only for such are there two different
States of Being, fourth and fifth,
In the gross series, waking, dream and sleep.

[Compare verse 32 of \textit{The Supplement to The Forty Verses on Reality} which denies the difference between \textit{turiya} and \textit{turiyatita}. \textit{Turiya} is the one and only real state of Being. \textit{Turiyatita} (beyond the fourth) is imaginary.]
Only so long as ‘I’ exists –
An ‘I’ that sleeps and dreams and wakes –
Do these various states appear.
When by self-enquiry this created
Ego ends, then with it ends
All difference between states of Being.

One who has through supreme devotion
Gained one’s true Being as Awareness
Can recognise no other state
Except this one’s natural state
Of being one supreme Awareness.

[Identification with the body in waking and dream states
raises walls which seem to divide one all-pervasive space
into compartments.]

14. Deeds Good and Bad

As long as one thinks that one is
A separate being by oneself,
One has perforce through such attachment
To do deeds good or bad, and earn
And experience their results.

[Karma binds one who has a sense of separateness and
doership.]

The Lord of Life has placed the demon
Ego as a sentry strict
To make certain that the body lasts
Until one eats to the last bite
The fruit that one has earned by deeds.

The good or evil deeds we did
In former lives appear again
In this our current worldly life
As happiness or misery
And as the source whence these spring,
Friendship firm or hatred fierce.
573  Let no one seek to gain good ends
Regardless of the means employed.
If the means are evil, they corrupt
The intended good. Therefore make sure
That means are ever wholly pure.

574  Good deeds are those performed
Lovingly and with a calm, pure mind.
Deeds done in fierce excitement, deeds
Contaminated by desire,
Must be classed as evil.

15. Dyads and Triads

575  How to define the non-self, this
Phenomenal world? Created by
The mind from its true nature swerving,
Made up of sense perception only,
It reels with multiplicity.
In the Self is no duality.

576  Knowing a thing is only drawing
The boundary that limits it.
Defining, measuring, is the mark
Of knowledge. The all-transcending Self
Cannot be measured and cannot be known.

577  Because as one alone without a second
Shines the Self, there is no question
Of its “being seen”. Hence when one seeks
The seer and finds the Self, the Heart
Flies open and triads flee far away.

578  The bright Awareness, our true Being,
Is the sole Truth the Heart should cherish.
The triads we perceive should be
Despised and driven away as dreams
Created by the treacherous mind.
579  Immutable, non-dual is the Self
With nought beside Itself. It is
Both goal to gain and path to take.
Non-different are the two in fact.

580  If the deluded, difference-seeing mind
Merges and disappears forever
In supreme, non-dual Being-Awareness,
The different, fancied forms of jīva,
World and God are merged and lost
In Brahman’s Being, Pure Awareness.

581  Knowledge is manifold, say they
Who know objects but not freedom from
The dire delusion of differences.
When the senses five, driven outward by desire
Are pulled back, then true, full Awareness
Comes, and there is no “other” to be known.

16. Sense Pleasures

582  The Sage Dadhyang Atharva said
From his experience of the Self supreme:
“The natural pleasure dog and bitch enjoy,
That and no more may Indra and his queen
Gain from mere carnal union.”

583  When hunger dire the stomach pinches
Gruel and meanest rice like nectar taste.
Even so the keenest pleasure springs
Not from the inherent nature of objects
But from the intensity of our desire.

584  The only Being is Awareness
And Bliss is nothing but Awareness.
Pleasure from elsewhere is mere delusion.
Apart from the Self of Being-Awareness
Tell me how can real joy
Come from objects merely fancied.
Eagerly seizing a bare, dry bone
The foolish dog bites it with sharp teeth,
Tears his own mouth, tastes his own blood,
And gloating says, “Nothing else
Is as sweet as bone.”

Not knowing the bliss of Self-awareness
Eristic people highly rate
Sex and such-like pleasures. Living thus,
They yearn for these even when they die.

Forgetting the pure bliss eternal
Welling up in the heart for our enjoyment,
Foolish people yearn for honey-dribblets
Squeezed from objects worse than broken rice.

Instead of sporting proud and joyous
In the sea of Siva-experience, Bliss supreme,
Worthless people wallow in the mire
Of messy pleasures in the pit of flesh.

Sense-pleasures sought and found
By blind, unguarded fools are fit
Only for contempt by those
Who long to taste the rich, ripe fruit
Of Bliss supreme, immeasurably sweet.

One is food oneself. Not knowing this,
If one imagines that one eats it,
One is consumed by food and then
Becomes but food for an insatiable hunger.

[Eating to satisfy hunger and being content is natural. Pandering to the palate and eating for enjoyment makes one a slave to desire.]
The food we eat eats us. Those who know not
This truth desire and eagerly enjoy
Earthly pleasure thinking that they eat it
(While in truth they are being eaten by it.)

[Desire for sense-pleasure increases by indulgence. Instead of our eating food for keeping us alive, food consumes, alienates us from our true being, and so slowly kills us.]

As fire when it is fed with ghee
Leaps up erect, unquenched,
Desire too when gratified
Rejoices and revives in strength.

Not only the sting, but a glimpse, a thought
Of the serpent Desire is fatal. Hence
Nothing we know is more terrible than
The senses, the venomous snake
With its five-fold fangs.

17. Illusion of the Mind

Non-existent maya, this alone,
Seeming to be real and powerful, makes
Fools of even the cleverest folk
And smiles inwardly with wonder
At its own success.

[The individual ‘I’, the ego-mind, itself an illusion, not only confers reality on this phenomenal world, but longs for siddhis, thaumaturgic powers.]

When one beholds the light within the heart
What matters it if darkness reigns without?
The densest outward darkness cannot hide
The true, self-luminous light within the heart.

[The sun’s light reveals one’s shadow; one’s shadow cannot hide the sunlight.]
To say that a mosquito with wide open
Mouth can swallow up and then spit out
The sky is much less foolish than to say
That transient *maya*, void, inert,
Can bind and hold and then set free
The Self, Awareness bright.

If the Heart, the fullness of Awareness,
IS the one sole truth, is not dense *maya*
But a lie? How strange that, stung
By that false serpent, mind-made *maya,*
*Jivas* should swoon and die!

**18. Ignorance**

Looking at perfect *jnanis* who are That
And asking “How can they who eat and walk
Be That?” poor body-bound fools only parade
Their folly as if it were excellent wisdom.

The innocent girl-bride thinking that
Betrothal is full conjugal union
Is filled with joy. Even so the learned
Who have yet to turn within and taste true bliss
Claim that the verbal wisdom which they prattle
Is *advaita jnana.*

Those who from books have learnt about
The truth supreme esteem themselves
Supreme in wisdom, and fail to seek
The Knower and taste the bliss of Self,
But test and measure the silent sage.
What folly this!

Those who, lacking strength to know
Themselves as they are here and now,
Still labour hard and dig up facts
About their past and future lives
Are like the new-born infant trying
To jump and capture its own shadow.
602 Those whose minds falter as they face
   Their being at this present moment
   Would cogitate and figure out
   Their possible state at some remote
   Past or future time.

   [Don’t try to dig down to the bottom or climb up to the summit
   of the Hill, circumambulate it.]

603 What strange wisdom this of people
   Who do not care to keenly search
   And find out who they are today
   But struggle hard to know the truth
   About their being before they were born
   And after they are dead.

604 “Does Siva’s advent purify
   The mind or does He come because
   The mind has become pure?” ask fools
   Who sadly err in seeing two
   Actions where there is but one.
   To such we have no answer. Sorry.

19. Immaturity

605 Those who, with minds far from mature,
   Yearn for and wallow in sense-pleasures,
   Why would they seek, why would they join,
   The company of saints whose conquest
   Of the senses is complete and final?

20. Forgetfulness

606 Jivas afflicted, tossed about,
   Each by his own deeds, good and bad,
   Are but dream figures that arise,
   Live for a while, and then subside
   In the one true Self, the wondrous sky
   Of Pure Awareness.
Swerving from the true Self that knows
No fear, one falls into vile birth
And, like a lock snipped off the head,
Loses all worth.

[The last two lines reproduce Kural 964.]

Failing to know oneself and stand
Firm as the Self, that lofty mountain,
To drift forlorn is like the fault
Of the Tenth Man who counted others
And forgot the one he should begin with.

[For the story of the Tenth Man, see Appendix.]

If, instead of keenly questing
“Who am I?” within the heart,
The source of thought, and recognising
That as one’s being and abiding
Oned with Siva, if one swerves
From one’s true nature and so suffers,
It is but one’s own folly.

If one abides as one’s own primal
Being, true and whole, then how
Can others bring disgrace to one?
Only a lock snipped off the head
Loses all worth.

[The last two lines reproduce Kural 964.]

Seeing this mind-projected world
In sheer delusion, then taking it
As real, and swerving from the Truth
Sublime of one’s own Being as Pure
Awareness, one but proves oneself
Insane.
Undeluded by whatever else
May come and go, unwinking watch
The Self, because the little fault
Of forgetting for one moment one’s true Being
As Pure Awareness brings tremendous loss.

[All triads, knower-object-knowledge, are mere appearance.
Being as Pure Awareness is the sole Reality.]

21. Samsara

The grovelling mind which is a sequence
Of remembering and forgetting is samsara,
The world of birth and death, our bondage.
Stillness of mind with no more movement
Of remembering and forgetting is
Itself pure mukti, undeluded
By birth or death.

Samsara is but the deluded mind
Filled with the darkness of ignorance which,
Letting go one’s own true Being,
The measure and substance of all Truth,
Perceives amiss through the body of flesh
And dotes on objects merely apparent,
Like the blueness of the sky.

Beside the Self nothing in truth
Exists. But then the deep delusion
That the body is oneself makes one
Let go the solid, non-dual bliss
Of immortality and fall
Into birth and death.

[Samsara is nothing but our thought.
Those who live spontaneous and thought-free
May seem to dwell in a body bound
And moved by Fate, but they in freedom
Roam in the boundless space of true Awareness.]
22. Afflictions

617 Why should like thunderbolts afflictions fall
On God’s good servants? Not at all
To hurt those pure hearts, no, but rather
To strengthen and make steady their devotion.

618 Unshaken by Fate’s painful darts,
The excellent ripe heart knows and accepts
Them all as grace divine sent down
To fortify the mind and make it fit
For final freedom.

619 As, without grinding hard, the gem
Dug from the mine does not shine forth,
Without trials and tribulations, the flame
Of tapas true does not burn bright.

620 To roll along the streets and reach
Its stand at last, the temple rath*
Needs not only a strong linch pin
But even more the blocks obstructing
It from dashing against one side or the other.

*Chariot

23. Wonderful Maya

621 From ancient times down to this day
The One unborn alone appears
As manifold beings, seeming to be born
In four ways into seven species,
To experience both good and evil,
And then at last win moksha. How,
How wonderful is this!

[Four modes of birth: from seed, sweat, egg, womb. Seven species: God, man, animal, bird, reptile, fish, plant.]
Though we are ever That and only That, how wonderful it is
to watch the paths we tread, the pains
we take, for winning This, as if
This were something alien and remote.

24. The Harm of Praise

Because Praise aids the grievous error
That one is but the wretched body,
Not the Self supreme, all praise
Is by the wise to be rejected
With firm mind, not welcomed.

He who becomes an easy target
For other’s praise fails to defend
Himself and raises too a needless
Obstacle in the way of his sadhana.

25. Evil of Egotism

The separate ego, that reign of Hell,
Is the gross mistake to be avoided.
The face of that disgusting devil,
Who but a fool would fail to hate?

That worldly people should in the presence
Of the steadfast seer sit proud, erect,
Then yawn and snore in slumber sleep,
Such bad behaviour is the most
Shocking sight in the universe.

26. Origin of Sorrow

Our natural being is pure bliss.
And yet we writhe in the scorching heat
Of birth and earthly life, because
The mischief-making ego-mind
Fabricates the pains it suffers.
Of all the demonic qualities
The basis is the ego, the wrong
Notion that the body is oneself.
Those whose false ‘I’ is further fattened
By arrogant ‘mine’ can never, alas,
Experience peace.

**27. The Jiva** (*Separate self*)

Like one who runs out in the sun
And sweats and pants and comes again
To the cool shade, the foolish *jiva*
Rushes out into the world
And growing tired turns within
And in the heart finds rest.

Having felt the sun’s fierce heat
The wise one tarries in the shade,
And those who know the triple fire
Raging in the world will never
Leave the Heart and turn again
Towards the world.

[Triple fire: lust, greed and desire for fame.]

Even as a bird may fly afar
In the wide sky and yet must find
On earth alone its resting place,
The body and soul which rose from Being
Needs must, despite all hindrances
Come back and settle at last in Being.

Returning to the source from which
We have emerged, we are restored
To our own true Being. Enjoying there
Bright and clear our natural bliss,
Still, still, unmoving we abide.

[Compare 8th stanza of *Sri Arunachala Ashatakam.*]
Instead of being still and yearning
Free of thought for the grace of God,
What does one gain by raising up
A strenuous ‘I’? Let us forget
This demon ‘I’ and as the Self
Abide in perfect silence.

28. The Jiva’s Unreality

Not at all by one’s own effort,
But by the light of Grace alone,
Pure gift of God supreme, can one
Behold the light that shines in darkness,
The bliss of being Awareness true,
Even mid the darkness of the world.

[Siva, the Lord who dances in darkest midnight, stands for the
Awareness which sees both light and its absence.]

29. The World’s “Reality”

When one who does not know one’s own
True Being, the basis of all knowing,
Beholds the world and deems it real,
The world beheld laughs inwardly
And puts to shame this beholder.

[cf. verse 74 above.]

Only in light are objects seen.
Only in and by Awareness —
Never without it — shines the world.
All things we behold are held
Within the orbit of that knowledge
Which as remembrance and forgetting
Is reflected from the Heart.

Appearance proves that something is,
No more. It would be wrong to think
That what in it the senses seize
Exhausts its real being and substance.
If instead of looking outward
At objects, you observe that looking,
All things now shine as ‘I’, the seer.
Perception of objects is mere illusion.

If seer and object differed in being,
Seeing would be impossible.
Seeing does occur, we needs
Must know that they are one in Being.

[cf. verse 636 above. Sri Sadhu Om says: “Easy is Self-knowledge, as easy as our so-called knowledge of the world. Self-knowledge is the realisation that one is not the body alone, but the whole universe. One is the universe which one thinks that one only sees”.

30. Denotative Knowledge

Why all this earnest searching for
The bliss that shines in simple stillness?
That one may proudly crown one’s efforts
With the joy of being at last the Self
That knows no going and returning.

One ever is the Self. Then why
Does one go searching for and reaching It
As if it were something apart?
That one may see that the Supreme
Which once seemed something far removed
Is but oneself, and may thenceforward
Abide forever as That
Without a sense of separateness.

Oneself, no other, is the Self.
Deeming it different and so making
Strenuous efforts to attain It
Is like running hard to catch
One’s own shadow.
The Self, the sole Reality,
The light of Pure Awareness, shines
Clear as ‘I, I’ in the heart.
This dear, dear Being, known direct,
Alone is true, not things perceived
By the eye and the other senses.

Those who do not keenly seek
And recognise the Being Awareness
Shining incessant in the heart
Sink deep into delusive *maya*,
Thanks to the denotative knowledge
Piled up by the mounting ego.

31. Ending Indicative Knowledge

The import of the teaching “Know
The Self” is only giving up
The illusive knowledge of the non-self.
For bright like the true Sun shines
Being-Awareness as “I am,
I am” in everyone.

[Compare stanza 8 of the *Hymn to Dakshinamurti*. The
moon-mind, the individual ‘I’ (*yan*), eclipses the Heart-Sun
in wakefulness. When on waking up from sleep, one says
“I slept well”, the speaker is the Self.]

The gracious light of Self one sees not
When looking for it as an object.
But when one looks not, then it shines.
“The maiden when I look at her
Glances downward at the ground.
But when I look elsewhere she looks
At me and shyly smiles.”

[The latter half repeats *Kural* 1094.]
647  If you refrain from looking at this
Or that or any other object
Then by that overpowering look
Into absolute Being you become
Yourself the boundless space of pure
Awareness which alone is Real Being.

648  Only by the Lord’s grace won
Through self-surrender to His Feet,
And not at all by mental effort,
Is revealed the truth of Being.
So subtle, so incomprehensible, is That which Is.

649  Do not wander endlessly
Searching in vain for certitude
Through strenuous study, listening, learning.
In love surrender to the Love Supreme, the Lord, and reach
And hold the state supreme of Real Being.

32. Love

650  Not knowing that Love is first and best
Of all felt savours, people count
Love as the seventh flavour.
But the various well-known six*
Owe their own nature, power and function
To the sole, basic savour, Love.

[*Six : sweet, sour, bitter, salt, pungent, astringent.]

651  Those poor fools who have not savoured
The taste ineffable of Love
May go on talking of seven savours.
But we who have enjoyed Love’s sweetness,
We assert that this alone,
Love, is the sole true savour.

[Love alone is God (Anbe Sivam).]
To disentangle life’s hard knots
One needs must understand the Self
As Love itself. Only when one knows
This Love supreme is moksha gained.
Of every creed this is the heart,
The real teaching.

[Love supreme is identity, not desire. When kama, desire, duality ends, other faults like anger, greed, illusion, dogmatic faith and envy also end.]

The great ones who have known the truth
Lay down the rule: “Not empty-handed
But carrying some handsome offering
Go to the Masters rich in wisdom clear.”
The offering really meant is true
Whole-hearted Love.

[One should approach the sage with love and reverence, not out of idle curiosity or in order to “test” him.]

Not only by suppressing love
Spontaneous, but also by perverse
Enforcement of it, one is caught
In and consumed by all kinds of evil.

[Strong likes and dislikes are both destructive.]

See Love Hear Love. Reach out and touch
Love. Eat Love, sweet Love, and smell
Love. For Love is but the Self’s
Awareness of Itself.

[The universe is but the Self and is to be enjoyed through all the five senses as Love embodied. The world is only the form and substance of Love. Compare stanza 62 and 649 above.]

33. Embodiment as Form

The truth they know not who assert
That Truth can have no bodily form.
The person of the perfect Sage
Who has realised the Self ethereal
Is the embodied form of Truth.
657 Worship of the Formless is
For him alone who has left behind
The notion, “I am this form, this body.”
One who is still identified
Mentally with his body-form
Worships only Form, though he
May think that he is worshipping
The Formless.

[Compare verse 208 above.]

658 Abiding thought-free as the mere I AM
’Tis best to worship formless Being pure.
But till one is quite qualified for such
Worship of the Formless Absolute
’Tis meet to worship God with form.

659 Those unable to abide as Light,
Our natural Being, pure I AM,
And wallowing in bewildering action
Will through self-chosen image-worship
Transcend illusion and attain
The state supreme of being the Self.

660 O yearning heart, lover of Siva,
We offer to your God with form
Interior and exterior worship,
Remember all the time that He
Is present everywhere
As intense Awareness.

661 Through constant contact with the Sage
Who has with Siva become one
Attention centres in the Heart,
Enquiry dawns, one stands established
In the Self as Pure Awareness,
And the malady of birth illusive
Flies away.
662  If the unfailing, strict observance  
Of what the Vedas enjoin does not  
Bring you love, true, firm, intense  
For the Lord’s Feet, then know that all  
Your strenuous labour has been wasted.

663  Those who daily worship Allah  
Gain all joy and peace at once,  
Attaining calm serenity  
By putting out the raging flames  
Of anguish for life’s sins and sorrows.  

[This saying was addressed to a Muslim, hence the Name Allah  
for God. “Islam” means “surrender and peace”.

664  Uncaring what this life or what  
The life to come may offer you,  
Enduring calmly all afflictions,  
Undaunted by dire penury,  
Walk firmly, guided by God’s grace.

665  Those excellent good people whose  
Goal is abidance in the Bliss  
Of Siva’s Feet, had better live  
Lives so austere that worldly folk  
Would pity rather than envy them.

34. Five-fold Function

666  According to His Will, His Law, His Plan  
For every being moving and unmoving,  
Well and truly does the Lord perform  
Moment by moment, day by day,  
His five-fold function.

[The functions are: creation, preservation, destruction, veiling  
and revealing His grace. Calm and contented, accept whatever  
happens as God’s will.]
The moment an atom perishes
That moment a fresh atom comes
To be. Incessantly this
Happens, and it looks as if
This happened of its own accord.

[The rapid succession of many pictures looks like one continuous picture in a film. One operator makes and projects, and with draws the picture.]

35. Freedom from Doership

If you concede that all your deeds
Are Siva’s deeds, your being is
Not different from Siva’s. If
It is different and you claim
Freedom, then your deeds are yours,
Not Siva’s at all.

[Karma binds one and bears fruit sweet or bitter for one only when one has a sense of individuality and doership.]

36. Jiva’s Creation and God’s

God’s actions do not bind. Only.
Those actions bind which you imagine
Are your own. Alas, ’tis like the father
Of the dead son rejoicing, while
The father of the living son lamented.

[The story goes that two young men from a village went to Benares, where one of them died. A pilgrim from Benares brought the sad news to the village, but mixed up the names of the young men.]

In His creation mighty Siva
Has laid His plan for our attaining
Mukti. He reveals the Guru
Who can establish us in jnana
Flawless, free from all attachment.

[Suffering drives us to the Guru, who shows the way of jnana to mukti.]
37. The Process of Neti (Not this)

671 I am not this body of flesh; nor am I
The *prana*, senses, mind or intellect
Nor am I the nescience dark devoid
Of action or object, but with *vasanas* filled.

672 Since unrelated to true Being which
I am, all these objects are unreal
And lack existence; since apart
From Being-Awareness, there’s no being
At all, none of these objects, scorned,
Inert, am I.

673 Destroying through discrimination
The basic error that I am the body,
An object, and rejecting it
And the world as mere mirages false,
The Awareness that surviving shines
Alone as Being, That am I.

674 Whatever objects move and howsoever
They move, stand you apart and be
A witness of such movements.
[Be free from all sense of doership.]

38. Freedom from Vasanas

675 Don’t meditate at intervals.
Abide without a break in steady
Self-awareness. Instead of plucking
Hair after itching hair of thought
Better shave the whole scalp clean.

676 For removing from one’s heel a thorn
One takes and uses another thorn, and then
Throws both away. Cast off the thought
Of freedom after it has served
To push the thought of bondage out.
It is only till bad *vasanas* end
That auspicious *vasanas* are a help.
The final state is freedom pure,
Clear of all *vasanas*, good and bad.

**39. True Fasting**

Absence of mental craving
For sense-enjoyments is true fasting.
Abidance in the Self is worship true,
Hence, those with pure, clear wisdom
Cherish as most precious
This fasting and this worship.

**40. Diet Regulation**

With moderate *sattvic* diet grows
One’s *sattva*. Hence such diet is
A potent and sufficient help
In self-enquiry. Why, then, alas,
Run after various other restrictions
And get but more confused?

**41. True Purity**

We cleanse the body again, again,
And it gets dirty again, again.
In view of this the scriptures lay down
Rules for bodily cleanliness,
So that at last in sheer disgust
We may give up love of the body.

[This purity is non-identification with the body.]

“Marry some maiden” one is told
That so one may at last give up
The trivial pleasure of sex.
The Vedas too extol the rules
Of sacrifice that so one may
Get cloyed with all the bliss of *swarga*. 
682  Those who love, deeming they are
This putrid body of flesh that turns
In a brief while clean food to filth,
Are baser than the swine that feast
On filth as food.

Those who deem themselves the body
That soon converts clean food to filth
Are worse than swine that feed on filth.

– SRI BHAGAVAN 10

[They are worse because swine turn filth to food, while we
turn food to filth.]

42. Freedom from Desire

683  To worship God for some gain’s sake
Is worship of the gain, not God.
Total absence of all thought of gain
Is indispensable to the seeker
Of union with Siva.

684  Those who perform high penance which
Gives strength and meaning to our life
Will never make it a means for some
Delusive end. Pursuing pleasure
Through penance is like bartering
Precious gems for a mess of potage.

43. Sense-Control

685  When the inner and outer organs
Abide in stillness day and night,
True Being shines clear, which only shines
In the ineffable state supreme.

[The four inner organs are: mind, intellect, will and the I-sense.
The five outer organs are: those of hearing, smelling, seeing,
taste and touch.
All nine organs subside permanently only when the ego dies.
Hence the end of the ego is to be sought, not the control of
the organs one by one.]
Instead of plugging holes and keeping
Awareness still within, to break
The lock and spill it through the senses
Is despicable, like demolishing
The bank and draining out the tank
To devastate the land.

Self-alienated and in conflict,
Vishnu and Brahma argued vainly
With bewildered minds, and tried
And failed to scan and measure
The Column of Light. The lesson taught
By this old story is: Don’t trust the senses.

[It is only when awareness flows outward through the senses
that one parts from the Pure I-AM and develops an individual
identity.]

44. Conquest of the Senses

What is conquest of the elements?
Destroying the ego, the attachment
To the body made up of the elements five,
And scorning with contempt flaws of the flesh,
Which have nothing to do with the true Self
But are only based on the elements five.

What is true conquest of the mind?*
Death of the notion that I am the mind,
Cessation of all mental trouble and conflict
And abidance firm in Self-awareness
Void of thoughts of freedom and bondage both.

* [“Siddhis” or miracles controlling “matter” and “other
people’s mind” are not conquest of matter or mind. Ego-loss
and non-identification with body or mind is real “conquest”.
Real siddhi (miracle) is elimination of chitta (thought).]
45. Asanas

690  Which is the asana, steady, perfect, Conducive most to good samadhi? The knowledge ever strong and firm That the whole world rests on the asana Of the one Self, the firmament Supreme of true Awareness.

[Asana means “yogic posture” and also “seat”.

6. Becoming Pure

691  What is the power of yoga? The ending of all knowledge gained Through the false senses, and the stilling Of the ego-mind’s restless movements And the clear presence in the heart Of the brightness that no eye can see And the music that no ear can hear.

692  Since it was one’s own past effort That now has ripened into Fate, One can with greater present effort Change one’s Fate.

693  No matter what good deeds bring joy And what bad deeds bring pain, the might Of both you may now overcome With mind dissolved in that true Being Which is the same as your own being.

[When the mind merges in the Self, there is no more doer and no more enjoyer. Compare verse 33 of The Supplement to The Forty Verses on Reality.]

694  Even in this worldly life one’s labours bear No fruit without abundant faith. Hence till one merges in the bliss Supreme and boundless, one’s strong zeal In sadhana should never slacken.
Continued Practice

[Verses 3 and 30 of *Upadesa Saram* prescribe disinterested action and egoless behaviour as the best *sadhana.*]

695  However great one’s former sins, if one Repines not, sighing “A sinner am I” But plunges straight into one’s own Being, One reaches quick the ocean of bliss And sports in it.

696  Those who, in this very birth And with no effort on their part, By force of grace divine, attain Desire-free Awareness Pure May look like passive kittens now But in a former birth they were Young monkeys clinging hard to mother.

[The kitten is carried from one place to another by the mother cat. The young monkey clings fast to mother as she jumps from branch to branch. These two typify simple surrender and strenuous *sadhana.*]

697  They say that Fate can never bind Those heaven-bound. What does this mean? Not an iota of the past can touch Those who dwell unceasingly In the firmament of Self-Awareness, Vast, boundless, frontierless and full.

[By “heaven” here is meant Pure Awareness, not *swarga.*]

698  Fate, which like a whirlwind fierce, Tosses and twists the body-bound mind, Can cause no stir in the clear, bright mind Merged in the sky of Pure Awareness.

699  Tell me, my heart, to slay and burn The evil ego, the sense of doership, Which drags one down to the depths of the Sea of action, is there another stratagem Than meditation on the Self, The bright, unbroken wholeness Of one’s own being?
47. Breath-Control (Pranayama)

700 The world is made up of Being, Awareness, Bliss, along with names and forms.
Know that exhalation is complete
Rejection of name and form,
While inhalation is accepting
Being, Awareness, Bliss; retention
Is abidance firm as That.

701 Complete rejection of the thought
That one is the body is exhalation;
Questing inward asking “Who am I?”
Is inhalation. Firm abidance
As That is pranayama true.

702 When one now deeming oneself the mind
And wandering lost amid phenomena
Wakes up from this dream-spectacle
And remerges in the Self and stands
As That, this is the inwardness
Of yoga true.

48. Secret of Karma

Karma, bhakti, yoga, jnana
Are but enquiring “Who has Karma?
Who lacks devotion? Who stands
Alienated? Who is ignorant?”
Enquiring thus, the enquiring ‘I’
Disappears. Firm abidance
As the Self is the only Truth.

– SRI BHAGAVAN 11

703 The essential meaning of Karma yoga
Is true Self-knowledge through the quest
“Who is this ‘I’, this doer who starts
Doing karma?” Unless one seeks
And so destroys the doer-ego,
The source of action, one cannot reach
The end of action, perfect peace.
He who has found the truth about
The doer-ego, he alone,
Has once for all worked out entirely
Every *karma* ever enjoined.
Than this supremely blissful peace,
What finer fruit is there to gain
From daily ritual or hard penance?

[By self-enquiry as well as by due practice of ritual and penance, one realises the illusive nature of the ego and so gains peace. In *Talks* no. 58, Sri Bhagavan explains *swadharma*, action in conformity with one’s Self and the given situation, as true *Karma yoga*.]

Since perfect, true advaitic knowledge
Stands shining as the ultimate goal
Of every kind of *dharma* practice,
It is only the accomplished *jnani*
Who has indeed performed all *dharmas*.

### 49. Japa

Those who cannot plunge within
The silent mind and with keen search
Discover whence the ‘I’ arises
May mentally repeat some *japa*
And listen to the subtle sound Vibration.

*Those who cannot reach the source
Of ‘I’ along the path of jnana
May reach it by the inward watching
Of the source of the subtle japa-sound.

— SRI BHAGAVAN 12

Since you yourself are the *japa*-sound,
If you ask who you are and find
Your own true being, then, behold,
The *japa* once with effort practised
Now of its own accord proceeds
Uninterrupted in the heart.
Till in the seer’s awareness objects
Disappear, till firm and clear
One knows the truth of Self aright,
What use is it to mouth in vain
The words, “I am God, I am God”?

[All objects disappear as objects and become the seer himself, not “other”, when the seer ceases to be a perceiver and becomes all Being. When separate identity vanishes, one is the universal Being.]

Instead of wandering about
Proclaiming “I am God”, abide
As the Supreme. For such abidance
In the Self, not loud repeated
Noise, puts an end to sorrow.

For curing a dire malady
One must consume, not merely name,
The medicine. Even so, the bonds
Of birth won’t snap by merely muttering
“I am Siva” and so on.

50. The True Temple

Failing to penetrate the truth
That God as Awareness is the temple
Of both the jiva and the world,
We constrict and shut Him up
For solemn worship in a man-made Temple.

51. The Holy Name

When the true Being, the Heart itself,
Emerges slowly and spreads out
As awareness, countless are
Its Names. Of these the first is ‘I’.
With this first Name of ‘I’, as its True meaning, shines Eternal Being. Since ‘I’ as Being shines, the phrase I AM, too, is the Name supreme.

Of all the many thousand Names divine None is so true, so beautiful, so apt As this I AM for God abiding ever In the heart transcending thought.

[See Talks No. 106 and No. 112, where Jehovah = “I am” is extolled as the most direct Name of God (Exodus III, 13).]

All things, perceived by those Self-orientated, Thunder with the powerful voice of silence In the egoless heart’s firmament The Lord’s own Name of ‘I, I, I’.

[Compare verse 12 of Sri Bhagavan, following stanza 706.]

If, turning inward and saying ‘I’, One meditates unceasingly On this name ‘I’, it will take one To the ultimate source of the illusive ‘I’ Seemingly born of the worthless body.

The word ‘I’ seems to mean, at first, The body-bound ego. But this ‘I’ Appears and disappears. Looked deeper, the correct import Of ‘I’ is seen to be the Self, which is The ego’s ground and source.

[See verse 21 of Upadesa Saram. “We do not cease to exist even in the deepest sleep, where there is no waking ‘I’.”]
52. Bhakti

718 Who is the perfect bhakta? It is the hero who by ART (The word for Being peaceful, still) Merges THOU (mere empty word) Deep into THAT awareness, Siva Eternal, who lights up the little self. [TAT = That; TWAM = thou; ASI = art.]

719 Who is the perfect bhakta? It is the hero who destroys The ego false by merging it, The ‘I’-thought, like a water-bubble, In the unfathomable ocean, The infinite peace of Being.

720 Those with mind matured by bhakti, Relishing, drinking in, its sweetness, Deem bhakti supreme, the ever fresh Nectar, as its own reward And yearn for more and more of it. [The true bhakta does not care for occult powers or for any other fruit in this world or the next.]

721 Mukti is but the silence which Follows the aggressive ego’s end. Careless swerving from this silence Is fall from bhakti. True Siva-bhakti Is in the Self to merge the mind Entire, and be the Self alone.

53. Bhakti-Jnana Identity

722 When scanned, bhakti supreme and jnana Shine as in their essence one. Saying that one of them is but A means to the other is only due To understanding neither.
Continued Practice

[In both *bhakti* and *jnana* the individual disappears in the Self.]

723 Even those who know may sometimes seem To honour this saying and so prefer One or the other of these paths. This is in order to prevent Some seeker half-way on one path From giving it up and choosing the other.

54. Bhakti-Vichara

724 When one adopting self-enquiry Reaches the journey’s end and gains *Samadhi*’s bliss, it is solely due To the grace of God, one’s inmost Self, Life of one’s life.

725 Unless the Self, the God within, By power of grace pulls in the mind, Who has the strength through his own effort To stop the rogue mind’s outward drift And merge it in the Heart and so Gain peace?

726 Without the Guru’s grace one cannot Win the grace of God with eightfold form. And this God’s grace comes neither from Learning nor from aught else but through Devotion and devotion only.

[In self-enquiry, devotion to the Guru as guide amounts to devotion to God Himself.]

727 Whether or not God’s grace abundant Sustains you, entertain no doubt. That you, avid for freedom from bondage, Have started self-enquiry, this Is proof enough of grace.
To tell the truth, God’s grace supreme
And the keen quest “Who am I?”,
Which means abidance in the Heart,
Will work together as mutual aids
And bring one to the state of oneness
With the Self supreme.

This *maya* world-dream will not end
Unless the Self within speaks out.
The enquiry, “Who is the dreamer
Of this dream?” is prayer addressed
To Him to speak and wake us up.

It is said that meditation
On one’s own being is supreme
Devotion to all-transcending God,
Because, though spoken of as two,
They are in substance one.

The way of knowledge and the way of love
Are interwoven close. Don’t tear
Asunder these inseparables.
But practise both together holding
In the heart the two as one.

*Meditation on the Self*
*Is devotion to the Lord*
*Supreme, since He abides as this,*
*Our very Self.*

– SRI BHAGAVAN 13

If one discovers who this ‘I’ is
That seeks and gains the grace of God,
The ego dies; it merges in
The Being which is both grace and God.
And when the ego disappears
No vestige of desire remains.
Karma and maya both alike
Spring from, cling to and grow with
Ego, the first impurity.
When ego dies, the other two
Can by no means survive.

[According to Saiva Siddhanta, the three impurities that bind
us are ego, karma and maya.]

55. One-Pointed Devotion

Those whose hearts are Godward turned
As the magnetic needle to the north
Can never lose their bearings as they sail
The stormy ocean of desire.

Safe like children who embrace
A pillar and whirl around it fast,
Those who, holding Siva firmly
In the heart, live in the world,
Never fall into delusion. They
Rely on God’s strength, not the ego’s weakness.

Sustaining and pervading all transactions
Stands one Being true, supreme.
If on this Being the mind is fixed,
One can be free from carking care
Even while doing a myriad actions.

[Work is no work, karma is akarma, when there is no sense
of doership. The fire or flood in the picture does not affect the
white screen on which the film is projected.]

The rice that roams around is ground
To fine flour in the quern. The grains
That stay still on the nether stone,
Close to the axle, stay intact and sound.
56. Dhyana-Vichara

738 Meditation is the inner
   Attitude that one is but the Self
   Supreme that shines as Being-Awareness-Bliss.
   Enquiry is making the mind abide
   Firm in the Self till the false ego,
   Illusion’s seed, has perished.

739 However one conceives the Self,
   One gains it in that very form.
   The meek who are content to BE
   Free from all thought attain the noble
   Formless state of pure Kaivalya.

   [Compare verse 8 of The Forty Verses on Reality.]

740 How can the ego ‘I’ imagine
   Itself as That, when That, its source,
   Can only be attained after
   Destroying utterly this ‘I’?
   The right way is, the ego gone,
   Abiding in the Heart in silence.

741 Why is Siva, who formless shines
   As Pure Awareness, oft mistaken
   For some poor object apprehensible
   By the senses? Because of failure
   To seek enquiring “Who am I?”
   And find the Self within the Heart.

   [Compare verses 1070, 1072 and 1073 of this Garland of
   Guru’s Sayings.]

57. Meditation on Form

742 In Siva, the Self, he stands firm fixed
   Who dwells and truly meditates
   On himself as Pure Awareness.
58. Meditation on Space

743 Meditation on ethereal space
Immeasurable, indivisible,
Will bring within one’s reach those very gifts
Which one might long for.

744 Those who after meditating
On indivisible space proceed
Beyond meditation to mere Being
Gain the great glory of no more birth.
Others suffer endless births as mortals.

745 To say that someone practising
Sustained enquiry for the Self, the God
Who is all Awareness, suffered from
Mental derangement, would be like
Saying that some poor fellow died,
Alas, by drinking nectar.

[See verses 384-407 on self-enquiry.]

59. Meditation on Time

746 If you want glorious immortality,
Untroubled by thoughts of birth and death,
Think intensely of the Eternal Present,
Free from rising and from setting.

[cf. verse 15 of *The Forty Verses on Reality*. Real time is living time. The past is dead, the future still unknown. For action, the future is Now; we think before we act, of the future, not of the past.]

747 Those who saying “We are Time”
Meditate on this identity
And then give up entirely even
Such meditation, they attain
Immortality in this very world;
Others die slain by the sword of time.

[Yama, God of Death, is time. Siva, conqueror of Yama, is Being Eternal, Pure Awareness beyond time and space. “Who am I?” – “I am the Eternal Infinite, beyond time and space.” See also *Kural* 344.]
Those who abide in their true Being
Know nothing but the Self, no time;
Much less do they perceive three tenses,
Separate parts in seamless time.

60. Steady, Continuous Meditation
(Nididhyasana)

The universe out there appears
When scanned. But when not scanned, it
Disappears. Turning away from this,
Search keenly for the Self within
The Heart, and think no more of birth.

What we incessantly think of,
That we become. Hence, if we
Keenly seek the Self and think
Of nothing else, the malady
Of birth will cease and all thoughts end.

The Vedas say the ultimate goal
Of penance is perfect clarity
And peace serene. If marring this
Desire arises for some other
Fruit of boundless bliss, then stop
That practice straight.

As long as you regard a thing
As indispensable, enjoy it.
But when with mind mature you think
That you can do without it,
Renounce it promptly.

Look not for God’s grace only in
The worldly wealth that virtue brings.
This grace is present even more
In tranquil clarity of awareness
Free from all cares whose cause is but
Forgetfulness of Self.
754  Better the state of inner peace
And Self-abidance where no thought
Arises than attainment
Of the power to bring about fulfilment,
Prompt and sure, of every wish.

61. Other Sadhanas

755  If without wasting time one starts
And keeps up steady self-enquiry,
One’s life becomes at once ennobled,
One is no more this wretched body,
And there wells up within one’s heart
A sea of bliss supreme.

756  Barring fruitful self-enquiry
There is, for real mind-control,
No other sadhana whatsoever.
The mind may seem to be controlled
By other methods. But after a while
It will spring up again.

757  Through breath-control too mind-control
Results. But then this lasts only
As long as breath remains controlled.
When breath-control relaxes, then
The mind by old vasantas drawn
Wanders in the world without.

62. Aids to Enquiry

758  To check the movements of the mind
Which darts out as perceiver, object
And perception, the best method
Is to turn the mind within
And make it scan itself alone.
759 Since That which Is shines bright within
As ‘I’, the Self is but Awareness.
To search in the heart and find the Self,
The best help is the inescapable light
Of the one Self alone.

760 In the interval between two thoughts
The mind as Pure Awareness shines.
To know this as eternal Being
And firmly in the heart to abide
As such Awareness is the state supreme.

761 Incessant practice of strict disciplines
Like japa, image worship, diet
Control, drives out ancient vasanas,
And makes the mind one-pointed, strong.

762 As the movements of the elephant’s trunk
Cease when it holds an iron chain,
Even so by holding to some form or name
The weak mind finds it can desist
From its own illusive movements.

763 Only a mind one-pointed, inward turned,
Succeeds in self-enquiry. Weak,
Faltering minds, like green banana trees,
Are not fit fuel to feed this fire.

764 Seeing that desires bring in their wake
Increasing sorrow, noble ones
Renouncing all desires begin
Direct self-enquiry and attain
The infinite bliss of the Self within.

63. Completion of Sadhana

765 *Sadhana* is indispensable
As long as triads last. Their presence
Proves that the ego false, illusive,
Is yet to be destroyed.
As long as, in the gross and subtle bodies, Desire presents three separate entities, So long the illusive causal body holds Intact. And hence the series of false births Has not ended.

If by the practice of self-enquiry The ego dies, nothing henceforth is seen As alien. What was falsely known Before as objects is experienced Now as the very Self of which Advaita speaks.

Those who with egos utterly destroyed Behold the truth, experience all the world As mere appearance, for they themselves Shine as the infinite space. They stand Convinced that all is but the Self, All made up only of Awareness.

64. Meditation and Discrimination (Viveka)

Firm, perfect, flawless, bright Abidance in the Self alone Snaps all bondage to the non-self. Viveka, which sorts out the false From the Truth which is one’s being, Aids freedom from desire.

If you enquire you come to know You are not the body frail you think You are. Hence, questing “Who am I?” Dive into the heart direct And stand established firm as That.

Know that there is no resting place Save in pure, true Being alone. Liking or disliking for aught else Wholly gone, let heart and soul Abide in peace in the state supreme Of Being-Awareness.
When by clarity of knowledge
Nescience ends, the mind, thought-free,
In meditation dies, and one’s
Whole Being abides as Siva Himself,
One lives in eternal freedom.

65. Pure Being (*Summa Irutthal*)

What our Master clearly teaches
By way of great, good, powerful *tapas*
Is only this and nothing more
BE STILL.
Apart from this, the mind has no
Task to do or thought to think.

The stillness shining as pure Being
Is our true nature, the Self-state.
Only through rare, strenuous *tapas*
This “laziness” is attained. Praise those
Abiding thus as paragons of virtue.

[The Tamil word *summa* means peaceful, natural Being, stillness.]

66. The Separate ‘I’

He who, being ignorant of the truth
That he is ‘I, I’, the Self, regards
This body as himself can only
Perish with perishing flesh,
Caught in the web, the dreamlike web,
Woven by his own illusions.

The Lord supreme, as flawless, true
Awareness, stands forever, whole
And sole, not to be known as This
Or That even for worship.
For one to claim a separate being
Apart from Him is utter folly.
For a false ‘I’ to spring and leap
Away from the unbroken sky
Of Pure Awareness is the heinous
Sin of violating the true dharma
Of the unity of Being,
By dividing into two
And so destroying what is one
And one alone.

Except creating for one’s lordship
A mental world apart from God’s,
How can some other rule than His
Approach the real world that shines
As moveless Being?

Bondage is the false, ruinous thought
That one exists apart from Being,
The one true Being. Since one can never,
Never stand in alienation,
Destroy as soon as it arises
The thought of separateness.

Swerve not from your true state, thinking some thought.
But if you do, commit not the same folly.
“Do nothing that you later may regret.
Even if you did once, never repeat it.”

Pine not yearning, “When, O when,
Shall I gain the bliss of union,
Of union with the Self?”
Ever the same, omnipresent,
The state of true Awareness knows
No far or near in space.

[The last two lines reproduce Kural No. 655. The first and basic mistake is the ‘I’-thought, the thought that one has a separate existence.]

[Compare verses 15 and 16 of The Forty Verses on Reality. The Self is now here, ever, everywhere.]
67. The Basic Quest

782 Seeing whence we came, and going back
To where we came from is the way,
The best way, to remove the evils
Found nowhere else but in the place
We have got into.

[The body and the world may have shortcomings, not the
Heart, our permanent home.]

783 O mind, you wander far in search of bliss
Not knowing your natural state of Freedom.
Your home of infinite bliss you will regain
If only you go back the way you came.

[The mind should turn inward, not outward.]

784 Until you taste the bliss at the Heart’s core
The senses five will never subside.
Till these distracting senses utterly die
You will not gain true Being’s bliss.

[See verse No. 604 above.]

785 O heart of mine, instead of being
Confused by this conceptual world,
Enter within and seek the source.
Then in the realm of Pure Awareness
You experience sheer Advaita
Where the one Self as all things shines.

68. Seeker’s Conduct

786 If in an earnest seeker ’tis a fault
Even to slip from the high summit
Of pure advaitic Self-experience,
Come, think, would it be right for him
To interfere in others’ affairs?
If blind to others’ shortcomings,
One only notices their merits,
One has no chance of getting disgusted
But finds one’s whole life wholly pleasant.

“Mine is the only mind amenable
To my correction.” If one forgets
This truth and broods o’er others’ faults
One only fouls one’s own mind
More and more.

O heart of mine, the wise ones shower
Affection on you, not because
You are filled with virtue’s sweetness, but
Because they in their greatness have
Forgiven and forgotten all
Your heaped-up faults.

To err is human. When those strong
In virtue err, they do not hide it
In their pride. Instead they own
Their lapse and quickly reform
Themselves.

Since ritual practices are helpful
They are worth observing. But if they
Stand in the way of self-enquiry,
Drop them as not now good enough.

If all you wish for is fulfilled,
Think not that it is due to your
tapas. Know it is but God’s
Good grace, and cling with more and more
Love to His Feet.

Let all things happen as they will.
Never attempt to cross events.
Instead of starting this or that,
Abide within in perfect peace
As but the witness, nothing more.
When all your efforts end in failure
It means that you are being taught
The lesson that, not your own efforts,
But God’s good grace alone can bring
Success and you should seek His grace.

Those who, like Dattatreya learn
From every creature some true lesson
And keep their minds straight, unperverted,
Find all the world a gurukula
And life itself continuous learning.

69. Peace

Than peace there is no greater strength.
Than peace there is no higher achievement.
Than peace there is no nobler tapas.
Nothing but peace is life immortal.

An enemy most troublesome
Is mental excitement; it drives one
Into heinous sins; it is drunkenness,
The deep, dark pit.

70. Disciple’s Conduct

[“Once caught in Guru’s grace one can’t escape.”]
Even so, one’s duty is, awake
Or dreaming, to walk firm
Upon the path based on experience,
Taught and shown by Masters who
Stand high through gracious kindness
To disciples.

[No. 20 in Who am I? says the disciple should follow the guru’s teaching.]
One who walks firmly on the path
That leads to immortality may
Swerve through neglect or other cause
From the strict Vedic way; but never
May he transgress his Master's word.

For sinning against God one may
With Guru's grace make some amends.
But God Himself can never help
One who has sinned against the Guru.
This is what all great men have
In one clear voice declared.

Experience in the heart advaita.
Never put it into action.
You may through all three worlds express
Advaita to gain life immortal,
But never with the Guru.

Retain at heart always the sense
Of non-duality, but never express it
In action. My son, the sense
Of non-duality may apply to the three worlds,
But it is not to be used towards the Guru.

– SRI BHAGAVAN 14

71. Real Compassion for Creatures

Only he who has attained
Immortal life can save the world.
For the ignorant one to help another
Is but the blind leading the blind.

Only the mukta can save the world.
The blind cannot guide the blind.

– SRI BHAGAVAN 15
803  The *jnani* who quite egoless
    Stands steadfast as Awareness pure
    Helps others who in suffering seek
    His help by giving them this experience.
    This is true compassion. Other kinds
    Of kindness are worth little.

804  The true physician is one’s Self.
    Hence people tell would-be guru:
    “Before you start prescribing medicines
    For us, first cure yourself (of blindness)
    And then come to us.”

    [The saying “Physician, heal thyself” applies to would-be
    gurus.]

72. Rites for Ancestors

805  How strange are the world’s ways! People,
    Neglecting parents while they are
    Alive, perform with pious pride
    Elaborate rites for ancestors.

73. Service to “Others”

806  Deceiving others one becomes
    One’s own foe and hurts oneself.

807  Whatever one to “others” gives
    Is well and truly given to oneself.
    Who knowing this would fail to give
    Generous service to the world?

808  Since in all selves one same self lives
    Whatever one to “others” does
    Is really done but to oneself.

809  Though driven into the nether world,
    Mahabali gained endless glory
    By giving his all to Sridhara.
    Therefore though philanthropy
    May hurt, it is worth practising
    Even at the cost of selling one’s goods.
Continued Practice

[Sridhara, Lord of Wealth, is Vishnu who, as Vamana, begged for and took from Mahabali all his possessions.]

74. Sympathy

810 He whose word, strength-giving, frees
From fear all creatures, he who lives
In bliss perennial, being firm-fixed
In Self-Awareness, knows no fear
Even when he meets the god of Death.

811 When the strong with violence harm
The weak, the virtuous one unflurried
Comforts and protects the victim,
Letting the Lord, who pities the poor,
Deal out appropriate punishment.

[The good man is moved by sattva rather than rajas.]

812 When life has left a body none
Knows how to bring it back.
Hence no one has the right —
Whatever the cause — to take
From any creature its dear life.

813 Through wicked conduct based, alas,
On a sense of otherness, foolish people
Tend to become cowardly and cruel.
And so like angry cobras they
Strike ruthlessly to kill because
They are at heart afraid.

[From ignorance springs the sense of otherness, from this springs fear, from fear springs cruelty, from cruelty springs further fear and so on. The only way to break the vicious circle is to gain knowledge and shed fear.]

814 Great ones, strong of mind, endure
Unflinching all the blows that may
Fall on themselves. But they in tears
Of pity melt when others stricken
By sorrow or suffering come to them
For solace.
Question

815  Putting your foot in what you thought
     Was a green herb bush, you had it stung
     By hornets till it swelled up big.
     Why should you regret and pay for
     This accidental fault as if
     It were intentional?

     [This incident took place and Sri Bhagavan gave a devotee
     the answer which follows.]

     If hornets sting and cause to swell
     A foot that crushed their hidden nest,
     Should not the man regret the event,
     Accidental though it was?

     – SRI BHAGAVAN 16

75. Equality

816  Those who profess to be good people
     Should take care to avoid the fault
     Of claiming for themselves some special
     Privileges beyond what is
     Available to all alike.

817  All the rights that we concede
     To others we too may enjoy.
     But to enjoy what we deny
     To others is a sin indeed.

818  God is justice. They defy Him
     Who are in their conduct partial.
     And if they worship God, this worship
     Is wholly by their life annulled.

76. Testimony of Conscience

819  Good people may sometimes forsake
     The seeker following his own conscience.
     Then he should heed, not hush, his pure
     Inner voice and wend his lonely way.
77. Truthfulness

820 One has to blame oneself alone
If one should try to teach the Truth
Supreme to those who are immature.
These might reject the highest Truth
As false because it contradicted
What they had been told before
And had believed as true.

821 In every being one True Being
Stands as its centre, source and substance.
Hence, even to save dear life, let no one
Commit the irredeemable sin
Of breaking a word once given.

78. Detachment

822 The boat moves in the water, but
Water should never enter it.
Though one lives in the world, the world
Should not occupy one’s mind.

823 In the flood the hollow pitcher
Sinks, but not the solid log.
The world’s ways bewilder minds
Attached to them, not those detached.

824 If one is free at heart from any
Attachment, one may well engage
In various actions, and yet run
No risk of bondage, for the mind
With Siva filled shines steady and clear.

825 The tamarind fruit grows unattached
To its dry shell. Even so, the wise
Renounce at heart and quite forget
The wondrous charms of this false world
Which only ruins those who trust it.
826  A superstructure raised without
A strong foundation soon collapses
In disgrace. Hence earnest seekers
First ensure by every means
Their own stern self-discipline
Through devotion and detachment.

827  If firm and clear one holds at heart
The true Self-Being, one shines pure,
Free from attachment, like the sky
Without its former azure veil.

79. The Greatness of Renunciation

828  Slippery is the renunciant’s path.
The slightest mental lapse brings ruin.
Whoso would tread this perilous path
Should keep strict watch no traitor thought
Breaks burglar-like into his mind.

829  Even the strongest willed aspirant
Knows not how long his life will last.
Hence when you feel the body and world
Turn sour, renounce them all at once.

830  As from the tree the ripe fruit falls,
The seeker when his mind matures
Renounces family life as saltless
Insipid gruel, unless indeed
Cruel Fate comes in between.

831  This variegated universe
We see appearing all around us
Is a mere dream we dream within
Ourselves. Those who know this and watch it,
Uninvolved, destroy the treacherous
Veil of maya. Others know not
How to see through Illusion’s tricks.
832  *Jnanis* true who have experienced
The non-dual Self of Pure Awareness
Stand unbewildered by these many
Varied phenomena, holding them
As only dry, false, empty phantoms.

833  Seeing how transient is the world
Lord Buddha gave up wealth and kingship.
When one has seen how false and fleeting
Is what is present to the senses
How can one still be worldly-minded?

834  Courageous ones who know no fear
Find and renounce the world as worthless,
And so gain wisdom true. Others
Are foolish folk by falsehood blinded.

835  Renouncing this phenomenal world
Which seems to, but does not, exist
We gain (the great ones say) the Self,
The Awareness shining all unseen.

836  After we have renounced whatever
Can be renounced, That which abides,
And cannot be renounced, is True
Being shining in the Heart,
The fount, the flood of Bliss.

837  Those who have made the hardest sacrifice,
That of the ego, have nothing more
To renounce.

838  Because the Saint’s pure mind as Siva
Eternal shines, it wants nothing at all.

839  The mighty sage who walks about
Possessing, yet desiring, nothing
Puts to shame (how wonderful)
The generous monarch who gives much
But must stop giving at some time.

[The sage’s wealth is inexhaustible.]
80. True Renunciation

The householder who realises
That he is not the body family-bound
Is a more advanced renunciant than
The ascetic who feels proud at heart
That he has given up all attachments.

81. The Whole Mind

Only because of different *vasanas*,
Auspicious or bad, as the case may be,
The mind is dubbed as good or evil.
Those who know know that the mind
Is ever the same and neither good
Nor evil in itself.

The false division of the mind
As my mind and as yours, this is
The origin of bondage.
One single mind alone there is,
The clarity and strength of one
Supreme Awareness.

There seem to be as many ‘I’s
As there are bodies. But in truth
They are all one ‘I’, the Self alone.
Become yourself the one integral
Being-Awareness and behold
All ‘I’s together as one Self.

82. Destruction of the Ego

Probing with keen and steady mind
The illusive, sorrow-laden ego,
Wear away the knot that binds
Body and spirit. There can be
No real bliss, no peace serene,
Save in the heart where this knot has been
Cut asunder.
By practice of self-enquiry sharpen
The weapon divine of silence. With this
Dig out, uproot and cast away
The weed, the ego. Thus can be
Released the fount of bliss serene.

Save the destruction of the idea
That “I am the body”, make no other
Strenuous effort. This body-sense
Is the sole cause of every kind
Of bondage, pain and sorrow.

What is moksha, bliss supreme
Attained by few? And what is noble
Renunciation? What is Death
That brings on immortality?
What the highest achievement?
All are but this one thing, the ending
Of the foolish, false illusion
That “I am the body”.

This one thing alone is shravana,
Manana, nidadhyasana,
Grace, silence and the state supreme,
Peace serene, devotion, penance,
Gift-giving, dharma, yoga, all.

Gift-giving, penance, sacrifice,
Dharma, yoga, bhakti, heaven,
The highest virtue, peace, truth, grace,
Silence, Death-experience without
Dying, renunciation, the bliss
Of freedom, everything is but
The ending of the attitude
That the body is oneself.

– SRI BHAGAVAN 17
Many and various ornaments,
Differing in name and form, are all
Made of the one common substance, gold.
Even so, in every kind of dharma
The sole stuff is self-sacrifice.

[Ego-sacrifice is the destruction of the idea that one is one’s body.]

The mighty hero who has renounced
Possessiveness, the sense of ‘mine’,
The painful path of greed, proceeds
Through self-enquiry to destroy
Utterly the ‘I’, the ego,
And thus at one stroke gains the fruit
Of every noble dharma.

Instead of proudly rising up
As a separate ‘I’ and marring God’s True perfection, to shrink within
Is the sole penance and discipline
Needed to attain the heaven
Of jnana, Siva’s Presence.

Because the ego would reduce
The full perfection of the Self Supreme, the wise say, its destruction Shines as the most true and flawless Worship of the Lord.

Mad people who instead of being
Food for God think that they can feed
On God will through their ego be Devoured as prey by Death.

[Devotion for selfish ends, trying to ‘use’ God, leads only to Death.]

Unless the world appearance seen
By the senses and the villainous ego Rising with it die and get
Absorbed in Siva whose being shines
As pure Awareness, none can detain
The state supreme, the Self.
Can the poor restless mind behold
The still, bright Being of the Self?
Unless the ego-sense, the knot
Binding matter and awareness, snaps,
The Truth is unattainable.

The ego rising in between
Awareness and matter has blotted out
The Self of Peace, *Kaivalya*, bliss
Absolute, is unattainable
Unless this Vrtra is first slain.

[Vrtra is the demon of drought slain by Indra.]

Which is the auspicious New Moon?
That day when the borrowed light
Of the jiva’s mind-moon dies and gets
Merged in the true, bright, original
Sunlight of the Self.

Through death alone and by no other
Means can *moksha* be attained.
But what is death? It is not killing
The body (poor thing), but killing
The sense of ‘I’ and ‘mine’.

[The culprit to be killed is the ego, not the body, the chair he sits on.]

Those who have utterly destroyed
Desire for this illusive, vast
Panorama of the world,
They alone can live like Siva.
True bliss proceeds from the clear, pure
Experience of the soul re-born
And from no other source.

If you ask me, “What is that
Grand death that has nothing to do
With birth, and puts an end to death
Which leads to endless births?” I say
Death of the dark shades, ‘I’ and ‘mine’.
861 The true quest “Who am I?” alone
Destroys the body-bound ego’s life.

862 Losing the false ego in awareness,
And firm abidance as awareness
Is true clarity.

863 Without the body-bound ego’s death
There’s no experience of true Being.

864 He whose false ego has been merged In
Being-Awareness, he alone
Ceasing from all initiative
Abides within the heart in peace
Serene and natural bliss.

83. True Being

865 In the wonder-World created
By scheming Maya’s power imperious
The ego false arises. Only
When this ego dies is born
Experience of the Self supreme.

866 When the sense that “I-am-the-body” dies
All troublesome illusions and confusions
Vanish once for all.
Within the heart explored appears
As “I, I” the non-dual Self
Of Pure Awareness.

867 The Lord who seems not to exist,
He alone exists. We individuals
Who seem to exist do not exist
At all. The experience of this
Our complete non-being is
What they call the highest knowledge.

[Become a Zero and be a hero.]
Sahaja samadhi, natural abidance
In sattva stillness, is the beauty
Of tattva jnana, experience of Being.

84. Who is the Witness?

’Tis a foolish fancy to ascribe
The role of “witness” to the Self,
The luminous Sun, the mighty sky
Of Pure Awareness. In the Self
Immutable there is no room
For maya’s darkness void. The Self
Is one sole whole without a second.

When I say “I see the world”
What do I really mean: I mean
“The world perceived and its perceiver
Both appear in that pure I
Whose being is the plenitude
Of true awareness, flawless, bright.”

[Compare verse 7 of The Forty Verses on Reality: “The Self which
neither rises nor sets is where the world and jiva rise and set.”]

The sense perception which persuades us
That the phenomenal world is real
Perverts the truth. The senses which
Perceive and the perceiver are,
Like the phenomena they perceive,
Mere appearance, no more.

[The spectator of a film in a film is not real though he seems
to see the film.]

He who has seen the Overseer
Will shine himself as Self supreme,
Ending the sense of difference
Between the seer and the Overseer
And regaining his own real Being.
The Overseer is free from bondage; 
He reigns supreme over the heaven 
Of Pure Awareness. What is seen 
He sees as only forms of his 
Own being. He has the power through grace 
To govern all he sees, because 
He sees all things as but himself.

Seen through the eye of our true being 
Which is Awareness Pure, supreme, 
What we call “birth” is but the folly 
Of thinking that one is the body 
Which forms a poor part of this entirely 
False phenomenal world.

In ego-free integral vision 
All things exist but as the Self, 
The Being supreme. So in a dream 
The various crowded forms appear 
Many and different, though they are 
Nought but the dreamer’s self alone.

[The jiva who perceives and the world perceived by him are 
both appearances in the waking dream of our phenomenal 
existence.]

Until the snake-illusion goes 
Its ground, the real rope, will not 
Be recognised. Until the world 
Of false phenomena disappears, 
The Self, its ground, will not shine clear.

Only when the world-illusion goes 
Does the blissful light of Self arrive. 
Life lived in this bright, blissful light 
Is our true, natural life. Other ways 
Of life are full of trouble and fear.

End of Part II

(Continued Practice)
PART III

EXPERIENCE OF REALITY

1. Direct Knowledge

878  The Self alone is the true Eye. Only of the Self one has Direct immediate knowledge. But minds averted from the Self Look through the senses at a world Other than the Self and think it can Be known directly.

879  The Self that shines as the infinite Eye Can never see phenomenal triads. Its gaze, the blazing flame of Pure Awareness, burns all other things To its own fiery brightness.

880  True Awareness is the infinite Eye Which sees no other, no duality, No good and evil, subject, object, Time, space, seed and fruit of seed.

2. Eternal Awareness

881  The whole, sole fruit of the inward quest Is removal of the ego false. It would be wrong to say that one “Attains” the Self, the entity Ever present, ever clear.

[To make room, we remove lumber; we don’t bring in space, says Bhagavan.]
882 As in the Tenth Man’s story, he
Is present all the time, the Self
Shines ever bright, direct, as pure
Awareness. When our ignorance false,
Forgetful is removed, we gain
No new thing, but firm certitude.

[For the story of the Tenth Man see appendix.]

883 Is it only when gold ornaments
Are melted into a shapeless mass
That they become gold? Are they not gold
Even when the forms are there? Know clearly
That world, *jiva* and God, the three
Mind-shaped entities, are made up
Of the one sole Being-Awareness.

884 A woman with a necklace round
Her neck imagines it is lost,
And after long search elsewhere touches
Her own neck and there finds it; even
So, the Self is here within.
Probe for it there and find it.

885 Except the path of self-enquiry,
Probing the mysterious I-sense,
No other effort, such as *karma*,
However strenuously pursued,
Can take one to the fount of Bliss,
The treasure shining in the heart
Forever as the Self.

886 If *samadhi*, the unequalled state of bliss,
To be experienced through hard penance hereafter,
Is something real, it even now exists;
It now no less than then exists.

887 If now that state is non-existent
But later comes into existence,
It cannot be our natural state
And hence will not abide but go.
Whole is That and whole is this.
Whole is the sum when two wholes combine.
Whole too is what remains
When whole from whole has been removed.

[That: Brahman; this: the manifest world. This verse is the translation of a Sanskrit sloka from Isa Upanishad.]

That is the Being supreme, and thou
Too art the Being supreme. The teaching
“That thou art” is also the Being Supreme. Apart from that sole shining
Whole forever abiding, nothing
New exists to come and go.

[Compare verse 29 of Upadesa Saram. There is no such thing as attaining moksha. The ego’s death is moksha. The Self is always free.]

Apart from the non-dual Self,
The Whole, all other things dependent,
Both that and this that constitute
The empirical world, lack even the slightest
Trace of Being. They are all mere
Phenomena or appearances
Conceived in It. This is the sole,
The final Truth.

Because the sages say that It
Abides as one though It appears
As many, because from Time’s beginning
All beings are only that sole Being,
Union with that Awareness true,
This alone is moksha.

When the seeker tries to realise
The non-duality of the Self,
Fumbles and fails again, again,
And finally his efforts stop,
It is then, just then, that in his heart
Shines the Self as true Awareness.
3. Nirvikalpa Samadhi

893  ’Tis not not seeing the varied world
     Without that is the mark
     Of real nirvikalpa.
     When mind is dead and never again
     Comes sense of difference, this alone
     Is firm, true nirvikalpa.

     [Kevala nirvikalpa samadhi is absorption in the Self while the
      body remains inert like a log of wood; it is transient, Laya, a
      pot sunk in water and able to come out of it. Sahaja nirvikalpa
      samadhi is permanent merger in Awareness: a salt doll losing
      its form and dissolving in water, nasa, destruction of the mind.]

894  I AM. Abiding in this natural
     State of pure Being is true samadhi.
     Freed from the limiting sense
     Of being this, that or the other
     Stay as that boundless Infinite.

895  The ancient sages say that silent
     Samadhi, the ultimate goal of jnana,
     Is the wholly egoless state.
     Till you attain the silent stillness
     Of being That, your aim and effort
     Should be to destroy the ego.

896  Unlike the ego, which rises and sets,
     The true Self abides forever the same.
     Turn your back on the false ego,
     And so destroy it, and then shine
     As the one Self alone.

897  Poor heart of mine that feels forlorn
     Thinking that you are the jiva, you are
     Doomed to grief if you imagine
     That you are That. There is not this ‘I’
     In the final state supreme.
     There is only the sole Self, the Heart.
When we with mind serene and still
Experience pure unbroken Being,
That is samadhi. In this state
The mind, abiding as the Self
Supreme, shares God’s own Being.

[The mind is a wave, a movement in the water. When it is still,
it is only water, the Self.]

Listen how to reach and BE
The truth which is the ground and substance
Of all knowledge, Pure Awareness.
To draw the mind away from objects
And drive it in to probe itself
Takes one straight to the goal within.

Awareness moveless and unbroken
Amounts to attaining Sivahood.
For, is not mere Awareness,
Being Without a knower to be known,
The purest form of Siva?

What is that primal ground whose Being
Is mouna and the bliss supreme
Declared by sages as the ultimate
Inescapable goal of jnana?
It is the radiance bright in which
“In here” and “out there” merge as but
One sole Awareness.

[When identity with the body is transcended, the Self as
Being-Awareness fills the universe.]

The primal ground whose being is silence,
That I am. Why take the trouble
Of thinking “That am I”?
Meditation is stillness; it is
Extinction of the ‘I’. When ‘I’
Is gone, where is the room for thought?

[Repetition of phrases like Aham Brahmasmi (“I am Brahman”), Soham (“That am I”), Sivoham (“Siva am I”),
is not self-enquiry. The quest “Who am I?” leading to the
extinction of “I” is true self-enquiry.]
4. Changelessness

903 Wise men and noble, tell me, please,
How real is this changing world?
Are the rising and the setting
Of this phenomenal universe
Real changes that occur
In the Real? Or are they mere
Appearances that come and go?
What is your firm and final view?

[Verses 903 to 907 repeat and re-inforce the thought in verses 63 to 65. The Reality is ever changeless. The changes and variety of birth, growth, decay, death, names, forms are the creation of our mind and senses. They do not affect the real Being which is changeless.]

904 On the flawed body’s birth and death depend
The rise and setting of the world.
To attribute these changes to the Self
Of Pure Awareness is sheer folly,
Like the notion that the clouds
That come and go are changes
In the sky itself.

905 Is there a greater folly than
The aching folly of supposing
That the Self, the ‘I’ of Pure Awareness
Which does not see this changing world
At all, is subject to some change.

906 The troubles that result from change
Can never touch the Self at all,
As changes and flaws in earth and water,
Fire and air, do not affect
The element ether which pervades
And transcends them all.
One same woman is thought of
By various persons variously
As wife, mother, sister-in-law,
Niece and so on. But does she
Suffer the least change of form?

[Jiva, world and God, different forms and names, are all phenomena. The Self is one and changeless and appears as many and various.]

5. Solitude

Of all the many qualities
Desirable in an earnest seeker
Of imperishable moksha, none
Is more essential than love
For the bliss of solitude.

[Compare verse 912. By solitude Sri Bhagavan means freedom from all attachments. The seeker after moksha should rejoice in freedom from vasanas, from thoughts, memories and expectations.]

6. Non-Attachment

O heart, ’tis by the mighty power
Of your presence that all tattvas
Meet in mutual love and sport
And dance away. But even so,
You stand aloof and as a witness
Watch the show, yourself unmoved,
Firm fixed in your true Being.

No matter what, however big or small,
May come to one or go away from one,
’Tis wisdom to stand quite aloof and yet
Supporting all, instead of being a wisp
Of weak straw fluttering in the wind.

[The Self is like the screen on which a film is projected, supporting but untouched by the flood or fire in the picture. Compare verse I of The Forty Verses on Reality. The Self is the supporting screen, the spectator, the light and the film.]
911 Within, without, and through and through
All objects, the ethereal sky
Is present and is yet by none
Bound or affected. And unless
One knows oneself as the pure Self
Transcendent, one cannot but get
Caught in the world’s illusive bonds.

[In the absence of Self-knowledge, it is impossible to live in
the world a life of non-attachment.]

912 Since only the old vasanas should be
Deemed the real bondage, they
Deserve destruction. The great ones
Who have destroyed the mind, the home
Of all vasanas, may guiltless live
The life appropriate to any
Varna or asrama.

7. Destruction of Mind

913 Unsteady and wavering minds find only
Failure and frustration always.

914 The restless mind moves with a speed
That shames the God of Wind. To starve it,
So that it, like a cripple, stays
Totally immobile is to attain
Actual immortality.

[The seer’s mind, like a cripple, sees but does not move. To
observe birth, death and other events remaining unmoved and
aloof amounts to tasting immortality, i.e. identification with
spirit instead of matter, time and space.]

915 It is true wisdom to pluck out
Before they grow too strong the weeds
Of lust and anger and greed, and keep
The mind serene and self-contained
Like a vast ocean deep and calm
Untroubled by a single ripple
Raised by any wind.
916  It is true wisdom to restrain
The mind from flowing out into
Any of the senses five,
The home of every sorrow and pain,
And to contain and keep it still,
Like a once-roaring ocean lying
Now becalmed and tranquil.

917  As in the sky with thick clouds covered
No eye can see the glorious sun,
One fails to see one’s own Self
When the mind-firmament is darkened
By a dense cloud of thoughts.

918  He who has vanquished thought, he only
Sits like an emperor on the neck
Of the majestic elephant, jnana.
Know for certain that the mind’s
Movements alone give rise to birth
And every cruel pain and sorrow.

919  The calm and clear awareness where
There is no movement of the mind
Is firm samadhi, moksha-like.
Try earnestly to free the mind
From traitor thoughts and so experience
Calm and clear awareness, purity of heart.

920  Even as the ego does not die
Unless the Self’s glance falls on it,
The painful dream of this phenomenal
World will never disappear
Unless the mind meets glorious death.

[This glorious death of the ego occurs through confrontation
with the Self.]
None can confront and overcome
The mind. Ignore it, then, as something
False, unreal. Know the Self
As the real ground and stand firm-rooted
In it. Then the mind’s movements will
Gradually subside.

[Vali gained from every opponent half the latter’s strength.
Rama had to slay him without confronting him face to face.
The mind should not be treated as ‘you’, the second person.
It should be simply ignored, while attention should be fixed
on the Self. The first and indeed the only real Person.]

You who are totally ignorant
How to still and kill the mind,
Yet try and fail and feel frustrated,
The straight way is to recognise
That the world seen and he who sees it
Are but the Self alone.

As bracelet in gold, as water in a mirage,
Or as a city ramparts in a dream,
All things that are perceived exist
Only in the Self. To deem them
As alien from the Self is folly.

8. The Defunct Mind

I shall with certainty assert
That even when the mind as thoughts
Has ceased to function, it remains
A temple of Awareness-Bliss
Hidden till then behind the veil of Time.

[The Self, the atman, is eternal Being as Awareness-Bliss.
When the stream of thoughts starting with the thought “I
am the body” has ceased and the mind is dead, Being is
experienced as universal Awareness-Bliss. Time (the body’s
life) veils Eternity. Compare verse 20 of Upadesa Saram and
verse 12 of The Forty Verses on Reality. The atman is purna,
fullness, not the void, sunya. This contradicts the Buddhist
doctrine of anatta, the non-existence of the atman.]
What is pure Sivahood? It is the one Eternal Being ever ours which shines As plenitude of Bliss unbroken Without a trace of false duality Like now, then, here, there, being and non-being.

9. Omniscience

Since save the Self there is no real being, Supreme omniscience is the Pure Awareness Which shines as one unbroken wholeness, Not knowledge of what occurs in time Past, present and to come.

[Relative knowledge, knowing objects, events, “sciences” (Kalas 64 in number), should be regarded as apara (inferior). True omniscience is Pure Awareness. As verse 26 of The Forty Verses on Reality says, relative knowledge is the product of the ego, which is the source of primal ignorance. Omniscience is being all things and seeing nothing beside the Self.]

For those whose mind has not completely Subsided, the false knowledge theirs already Has only served to pile up sorrows. Gaining more such so-called knowledge Only deepens illusion’s darkness, And helps not life at all.

[Being the Self and seeing all things as the Self is real omniscience, not knowing more and more about things.]

Only he who fondly thinks he sees The world that falsely seems to be there While the Self alone exists, Only to him the flood of relative knowledge Is omniscience. To the jnani Beyond illusion, all such knowledge Is mere hallucination.
929 Only he who deems himself a “knower”
Feels depressed he knows so little.
But even so-called omniscience must
No less than little knowledge perish
(In the light of true Self-knowledge).

930 Only for those who fondly think
They know something, the Vedas praise
The Lord as all-knowing,
But if we Realise the Truth, the Lord who is
The plenitude and wholeness of all being
“Knows” nothing.

931 “The mukta like the rest of us perceives
The world in all its vast variety
And yet he sees non-difference in it”,
So people say. This is not true.

932 Those who mistakenly perceive
The variegated universe believe
The mukta too is a perceiver like them
But he is not the perceiver.
[Compare verse 119 above:–
Ascribing individuality
To realised muktas is but learned folly.
In the pure sky of Being their separateness
Is only for lookers-on still bound.

The sage is the universal Being-Awareness, not the body
which perceives the world, nor the witnessing mind which
perceives the perceiver.]

933 Because one thinks that knowledge is
Knowledge of objects there in front,
One feels one knows so little.
When One quests within for the true Self
This little knowledge is sublated
By whole, bright, Pure Awareness.

[When light is bright, the snake disappears, the rope remains;
the picture disappears, the screen remains.]
’Tis the one Self which is mistakenly Perceived as this vast, varied universe. True omniscience is direct experience Of this non-dual Self and nothing else.

The things seen by us in a dream Appear within our mind alone. In Self-experience while awake To see the unity of all In this one Self is true omniscience.

When one avoids delights delusive, Shuns desire for worldly knowledge And uproots the difference between Siva and jiva, there shines forth In blissful brightness the pure meaning Of Sivajnana.

10. Transcendence of Turiya (Turiyatita)

The sage whose ego is extinct Is freed from the three seeming states Of waking, dreaming and deep sleep. All that remains for such a sage Is turiya, the most noble state, First, last and all-transcendent.

The one true state, pure Being-Awareness, Is turiya which is all-transcending And non-dual. The three transient States are mere appearances Whose sole ground is the Self.

If the three other states were real Then indeed would Pure Awareness, Waking sleep, become the “Fourth”. Since in turiya those three states Are seen as false appearances, The Fourth is also that beyond The Fourth, turiyatita.
Counting waking, dreaming and deep sleep
As real states, one speaks of Waking Sleep
As turiya, the Fourth. But this
Is the sole real state of Being.
The three are false appearances.
The Fourth is also that beyond
The Fourth, turiyatita.

– SRI BHAGAVAN 18

940  This true and laudable awareness,
Turiya, may be aptly named
Grand Sleep that knows no waking,
Or Eternal Wakefulness untouched
By slippery sleep.

11. Wholeness and Movement

941  With movement must come separateness.
Brahman, Pure Being, the state transcendent,
Is perfect stillness, and to call it
Wholeness-movement is like calling
A river in the ocean lost
A river still.

[Vritti or movement gives rise to form and hence to a sense
of separateness. Brahmakaravritti or wholeness-movement is
thus a movement in, not of Brahman.]

12. Severing the Knot

942  The severance of the knot is proved
By this one, bright, clear mark: the mind
In perfect equanimity,
Lifted above the blows of pain
And blandishments of pleasure, shines
A limpid lake serene.
Unmindful of what is past and what
Is yet to come, a mere spectator
Of what goes on before one’s eyes,
One recognises in such joy
Serene the severance of the knot.

No matter what thoughts may arise,
None can exist without the Self.
Knowing this for certain, the wise man
Is free ever from the fear
Of lapsing from the natural state
Of oneness with the Self.

13. Fulfilment

Whatever experiences are gained
By anyone from any object
Anywhere, what are they all,
When truly understood, but fragments
Of one Self-experience only.

When the Self is realised, the mind,
Unable now to raise its head,
Is swept into and joins the Heart.
Since thus the Self is Pure Awareness
Transcending thought, to call it “bliss”,
The opposite of pain, would be
Wrong and misleading.

When through enquiry one has thus
Known and enjoyed the Self as true
Being transcending even bliss,
How, for whose sake, and for what pleasure
Can this great Master entertain
The least distraction of desire?
No scriptural injunction binds
The seer who has destroyed the dark Illusion of doership. And yet,
If jnanis too perform some acts
Prescribed, they do so only
To preserve the vaidik dharma.

Those who with ego dead have gained
Being, transcending bliss, have nothing
Further to attain, no effort
To be made, no deed to do,
For life’s fulfilment they have reached.

When one abides in one’s true state
As effortless Eternal Goodness
One has no further work to do.
All deeds accomplished, such a one
Enjoys the perfect peace of bliss.

The mighty masters who have gained
The plenitude of Self-experience
Know nothing other than the Self.
How can the split, deluded mind
Measure the bliss supreme transcending
Phenomenal duality?

14. Non-Existence of Suffering

The Heart, the Being true that shines
In every creature, is an ocean
Of pure bliss. Therefore suffering
Is like the blueness of the sky
A mere illusion in our mind Lacking all reality.

[Ananda, Bliss, alone is eternal Being, the sole Reality.
Suffering is a false creation of the ego-mind.]
Our real Being, the Sun that never
Can see the darkness of illusion,
Knows no trace of pain or suffering.
Misery is what one brings upon
Oneself by fondly thinking that
One is the body, not the Self.

Blissful, auspicious is the Self,
Our real Being. One who knows this
Sees in life no trace of suffering
Or pain. Misery is what one brings
Upon oneself by foolishly thinking
That the body, not the Self,
Is one’s true self.

Not seeing oneself as the One Self
One always suffers fear and anguish.
Destroy the “I-am-the-body” thought
And in Self-knowledge firmly-fixed
Abide in real non-dual Being.

The goal, the Truth, is Self-Awareness.
Reaching it is annihilation
Of the painful illusion of birth.

[The last line may also mean: Of the folly which gives birth
to pain.]

15. The Pervasiveness of Deep Sleep

Do not lose hope and feel dejected
Because deep sleep has not pervaded
The dream-state. When in waking one
Attains deep sleep’s non-dual bliss
It spreads into the dream-state too.

[No special effort is needed to remove body-consciousness
in the dream-state. When through self-enquiry it disappears
in waking, it will automatically disappear in the dream-state
also.]
958  Till one attains non-dual bliss
One must while waking persevere
In self-enquiry, and till this bliss
Spreads to the dream-state and pervades it,
Persist in this enquiry.

Unbroken self-enquiry leads
To “deep sleep” in the waking state.
Till this non-dual bliss pervades
Alike the waking and dream states,
Persist in such enquiry.

– SRI BHAGAVAN 19

16. Waking Sleep

959  Ye who in the world’s snare caught
And pierced by pain’s sharp arrows suffer
Anguish, and yearning go in search
Of moksha, sleep with full awareness
Is true imperishable bliss.

960  Those who, unlured by the false senses,
Abide in the heart-lotus, they
In waking sleep enjoy the bliss
Of true Awareness which is moksha.
Others but slumber lost forever
In the illusive world’s dense darkness.

17. Non-Dual Awareness

961  When through “Namasiyava” the ego
Bums and dies, the steady flame
Of bhakti shines as the triumphant,
True, clear light of Self-experience
Which is named “Sivoham”.

[Sivoham=“Siva am I”.]
When earnest self-enquiry strikes
The mind against the flint-stone heart,
The bright sparks shine, one sees the light
Of true Awareness whose name is
*An-al-Haq* or “That am I”.

[The *mahavakya* of Islam is *An-al-Haq*; that of the Bible is
“I am that I am”. Compare with verses 341 and 663 above.
All religions spring from the Self-experience of the Seer and
lead to the Self-experience of the seeker.]

Firmness in non-dual *jnana*,
This alone is courage true.
Even victory over every foe
In this false phenomenal world
Is traceable to fear.

[Duality is the source of fear and hence the ultimate cause of
the desire for and exercise of power]

Knowledge absolute is free
From all the differences created
By the false, deluding ego.
The gracious stillness, the awareness
All-transcendent, is the state
Supreme experienced by the Great.

**18. Grace**

If towards the Lord you take
One single step, then with much more
Than a mother’s love He takes
Nine steps towards you to accept you.
Such is the Guru’s Grace.

That Which Is forever shines
In Grace as ‘I’, the Self, the Heart.*
Can That be blamed for lacking Grace?
The fault is theirs who do not turn
Within and seek the Self in love.

[*The Tamil word *Ullam* means both “We are” and “Heart”.*]
Mind inward turned and ego dead,
There shines the Self, the Being-Awareness,
And though transcending form and feature
Appears as Guru. Thus does God,
The Self, bestow as Guru His Grace.

[God, Self, Guru and Grace are different forms of the one Reality.]

The heart of one who has experienced
Such grace now shines as pure, true Being,
Since the ego-knot ‘twixt spirit and matter
Which caused delusion and confusion
Has been destroyed beyond revival.

We are surrounded on all sides
By the nectarous flood of Grace.
And yet we suffer from delusion
Like some fool standing in the midst
Of mighty Ganga afire with thirst
And not knowing how to quench it.

Why should God’s glance of Grace which falls
On all alike seem to avoid
Some “sinners”? The universal Eye
Avoids no creature. We are blind,
For we look outward, not within.

19. Sat-Chit-Ananda (Being-Awareness-Bliss)

When the intellect withdrawn
From questing after outward objects
Returns to its own natural home,
The Heart, our Being-Awareness-Bliss,
Restored to us, abides forever.

When the mind which is Awareness
Stops its movements, then it sees
Itself as Being. The bliss enjoyed
When Being with Awareness blends,
Is it other than the Self?
973  When body-bound ego dies,
The *jiva* once to matter wedded
Shines now as mere Awareness which
Abides as Being only, and hence
The Bliss eternal of the Self.

974  Unbroken Self-awareness is
The true, bright path of devotion or love.
Knowledge of our inherent nature
As indivisible Bliss supreme
Wells up as Love.

975  The ego false and transient makes
The transient world seem real and lasting;
And if it dies, the Self abides
As the sole Being and ground
Of this phenomenal universe.

976  The ignorant ego-demon thinks
That living beings have awareness;
And if it dies, the Self abides
As the sole Awareness and the ground
Of the awareness in all creatures.

977  The miserable, proud ego thinks
That bliss is found in pleasing objects;
And if it dies, the Self abides
As the sole Bliss, the ultimate ground
Of every joy wherever found.

978  “Enjoying Bliss is better than
Being Bliss,” the dualists argue.
But the Bliss of Self is not like sugar
An inert object. We are Bliss.

979  Though we speak of Being-Awareness
And Bliss as of three different things,
They are but one in Self-experience,
As water pure when tasted feels
Liquid, sweet and cool at once.
20. Being

980 Pure Being, our Self-nature, That
Alone exists eternally.
Apart from That, all objects we
Perceive are clusters of illusive
Appearances that come and go,
While That, unmoving and unchanged,
Abides the same forever.

981 There never is non-being for
The Self which is Awareness Pure.
When relative knowledge ends, when false,
Conceptual duality is no more,
The Self whose Being is Awareness
Does not cease to be.

982 In our true Self, which is supreme
Being-Awareness, we conceive
A little ‘self’ and so create
A world of ignorance in which
The Self supreme seems non-existent.

983 He who does not delude himself
As the beholder of outer objects,
But knows his real status as
The mighty Self supreme, rejects
The eightfold siddhīs and attains
The plenitude of blissful peace.

984 The strong one who in Being abides
Knows neither fear nor doubt.

[Where there is no “other”, fear and doubt can never rise.]

21. All is Brahman

985 It is our Being, Pure Awareness,
Which appears as relative knowledge
Mirroring various false phenomena.
To those who have known and reached the Self,
The Whole Awareness, all objects are
But that one Self alone.
The ever-abiding Self alone
 Exists. Apart from that supreme
 Being-Awareness nothing exists.
 Whatever in that Siva-state
 Appears is but the Being supreme,
 That and nothing else.

Whether true or false, and whether
 Knowable or unknowable, and whether
 Pleasing or unpleasing, all,
 All are Brahman, nothing else.

Faith, neglect; thought, thoughtlessness;
 Liking, dislike; knowledge, ignorance;
 High, low; laudable, despicable;
 All, all are Brahman, nothing else.

22. Harmony

Since mouna is the end of wisdom
 And the very nature of Vedanta,
 All creeds conform and serve as means
 To true, unique, bright, clear Advaita.

If some mean, narrow minds in anger
 Should invent a brand new creed,
 This too belongs to Siva who shines
 As the embodiment of pure,
 Irrefragable Awareness.

Whatever creed you may believe in,
 Turn inward with true faith, live up
 To it, instead of setting out
 To hate and attack the faith of others.

Giving up sundry controversies
 ‘Twixt dvaita, modified advaita
 And pure advaita, choose the best,
 Self-knowledge. Make your tapas ripe,
 Meditate on God and win His grace.
While mind exists, creeds too exist.
When mind turns inward in Self-quest
And gets caught up in the heart, no creed
Can in that peace serene survive.

23. Childlikeness

Among the millions of mankind
Only the child-like sages free
From movements of the ego-mind
Are cherished with consistent care
By our universal Mother-Father.

The great ones, free from the mind’s movements,
Are truly happy, never leaving
The Mother’s lap and playing there,
Fed amply with milk of Bliss.

24. Union with the Atman

The state non-dual where there is
No ‘I’ or ‘He’, the ego-mind
Having slipped away and one has merged
In the true Self, this heaven of pure
Awareness is the glorious crown
Of union chaste with Siva.

What scope is there for speech or breath
In silent union where the two,
The ‘I’ and ‘He’, have merged in one?
When ‘I’ is gone,
As when two pairs of lover’s eyes
Have met and mingled, of what use
Are spoken words?

[The last two lines of the Tamil stanza reproduce Kural no. 1100.]
Only those who have experienced
This union with the Self can know
Its bliss. How else is one to know it?
And those who have the experience know
Nothing but That, in stillness lost
Like honey-bees with honey drunk.

Even by those who have enjoyed it
This bliss can only be experienced
And not thought of. The ego-mind
Destroyed in that transcendent bliss,
They know not how they won this silence.

25. The Grandeur of Awareness

The ego’s relative knowledge, which
Perceives the world as something other
Than the Self, is but ignorance.
When the ego dies, there shines
The pure non-dual light, Awareness
True, the source of knowledge.

Being alone shines and rejoices
As Awareness. Hence till all thought
Merges in absolute Being-Awareness,
The poor conceptual mind can never
Know true Being, supreme Awareness.

’Tis only till the sun appears
In the eastern sky that the proud moon
Shines o’er the earth. ’Tis only till
Real Awareness comes and kills
The ego false that the jiva’s mind
Bravely struts about.

The sage in whose heart-firmament
Forever shines the Self, the Sun
Unrising and unsetting, finds
The mind of no more use than this
Wide world finds the moon in broad daylight
At high midnoon.
The mind’s light which reveals the false Phenomenal world is but reflected As in a mirror. The true, bright Self-luminous light is Being-Awareness, The Heart from which the mind arises.

26. Cosmic Consciousness

The state in which no “other” is seen, No “other” heard, no “other” known, Know that this and this alone Is cosmic consciousness.

Non-dual infinite Awareness Where the error of seeing, hearing, knowing Various objects has been destroyed, This is the purest bliss serene.

27. The Sky of Awareness

Ye who in eager search of Truth Roam o’er the world looking for saints, When you examine what they teach As definitive, it is only The empty sky of Pure Awareness.

Seekers hurrying round the world In search of teachers find at last That their paternal gift is only The marvellous sky of mere Awareness.

The last, eternal resting place For those who are tired of seeking bliss Here, there, everywhere, what is it But the marvellous turiya space Revealed by sages who with Siva’s own Bright, flawless Being-Awareness shine.
1010  The high experience gained by him
Who to the end persists in firm
Self-abidance, casting off
Desire as a snake moults its skin,
What is it but the bright, immense
Void of Pure Awareness.

1011  When *jnana*’s fire destroys the *jiva*
And all its countless concepts false,
The glorious light of Pure Awareness
Spreads o’er the whole cremation ground.
It’s like a forest vast and dense
Which catching fire burns all at once
Into one huge, enormous blaze.

1012  When the false notion “I am the body”
Dies, what abides is what’s worth having,
The vast, bright, silent void, the Self.
Why is it so? Because in truth
The only state free from all pain
And all desire is pure Self-Being.

1013  Without the Guru’s grace which kills
The ego, root of all defects,
None can know the unsurpassed
Opulence of the spacious, bright
Firmament of Being-Awareness.

1014  Those who have seen the opulence
Of *jnana*’s blissful firmament
Shine in silence as Siva Himself,
Having left behind the endless births
That follow the false identity
With ‘I’ and ‘mine’. 
1015  This void immense, the firmament
Of jnana is the marvellous ground
And source of the dynamic Power
Supreme, whose function is creating
And sustaining the whole world of objects
For us to taste, smell, see, hear, touch.

28. The Inner Space

1016  The inner light self-luminous
Shines all the time as I, as I.
To go from place to place in search
Of That is like looking in midnoon,
Torch in hand, for the bright Sun
Which hides the full moon from our sight.

1017  The ‘I’ is false; ‘this world’ is false;
The seeing of ‘this world’ by ‘I’
Is false. The primal ignorance
Of maya which creates the triad
Is also false. The sole reality
Is the bright, marvellous inner space*,
Being-Awareness.

[* Chitrambalam is the Hall of Wisdom, the human heart,
where Siva dances His eternal dance.]

1018  The final fruit of life lies far
Beyond the reach of those for whom
The Self-Awareness which sustains
These moving, vast and varied worlds
Seems non-existent. They are bewildered
By what the senses five perceive
And what they deem as real.

[The white screen is hidden by the pictures projected.]

1019  Who can experience and enjoy
The perfect, flawless glory bright
Of inner Self-Awareness, who
But those sages shining Siva-like
With pure, transparent minds?
1020  This being so, Inner Awareness
Being itself Siva Supreme,
The Truth beyond all human speech,
The great Sage Ramana, Siva Himself,
Made known to me the Self, this Being.

1021  At one self-moment and in one
Self-place the self well pleased to meet
The Self revealed the self to self
And recognised the self as Self.

[The jiva can never know the Self. When the separate self disappears, the Self abides as Pure Awareness. Bhagavan made the Truth known to Muruganar by destroying the distinction between time, place, guru and disciple, and revealing Siva or Pure Awareness as the sole Reality.]

30. The Atman

1022  The ego which reveals the world
Conceals itself. But when it turns
Inward questing for its source,
The Awareness which shines in the heart
Brightly as I, as I, That is
Our eternal Being.

1023  When the villainous mind, instead
Of being bewildered by the objects
Appearing there without, looks inward
Questing “Who am I?” and rests
Firmly in its ground, the Self,
This is our true, authentic Being.

1024  Whatever asrama he is found in,
Whatever varna he is born in,
The jnani is in one Self-Being.
Self-Being is the one true state.
All other states are false.

[ caste and stage of life have nothing to do with the jnani, who is an atiyasrami. ]
1025  Self-Being alone is the true state,
The state of Love, for Truth is Love.
All other states such as God-like life
In heaven above are mere illusion
Like mirage-water mind-created
For more and more beguiling.

[The last four lines may also mean:
  All other states are lotuses
  In the sky, mind-made like mirage-water
  Forever more beguiling.]

1026  Being is by its nature Bliss
Supreme. It is the treacherous mind’s
Fond, eager search all day for pleasure
In alien objects which ensures
The loss of our inherent Bliss.

[In thought-free sleep we are happy. If while awake we are
egoless and thought-free, we shall enjoy the Bliss which is
our very Being.]

1027  Having found that Self-relish is
The highest Bliss, the wise abide
As Self alone. But those who know not
That the sole, certain bliss supreme
Is in the Self alone, they stay
Forever worldly-minded.

1028  Those who cannot see that Bliss is
Their own Self-nature roam bewildered
Like the musk-deer in the forest.
Those who have known the Self aright,
Instead of wandering in the world,
Abide in their own natural state.

1029  Bliss is the very nature of the Self.
Self is the infinitude of Bliss.
All Being is but Bliss.
Knowing this firmly, in the Self
Abide enjoying Bliss forever.
31. The Puissance of the Self (*Atman*)

1030 The mighty seer whose Self-abidance
Has once for all destroyed desire,
Is Siva whose weapon of wisdom quelled
Proud, invincible Yama; he is
The sun dispelling envy’s darkness.

1031 He who angrily confronts,
Drives back into the heart and there
Destroys the puissant and malignant
Demon who through six senses sees
And sustains the universe, he is
Kumara, the Sun-God, bringer of Bliss
Supreme.

[The ego is the demon, Surapadma, who through the five
senses and the mind, creates and enjoys the world.]

*He who has known the truth*

*And stands firm-fixed in knowledge,*

*Having killed through knowledge all desires,*

*He is himself the fire of knowledge,*

*Indra, wielder of the thunder-bolt.*

*Yama to Yama, God of Time,*

*And Siva, death-destroying hero.*

– SRI BHAGAVAN 20

32. Nature of the Self (*Atman*)

1032 You who regard the body, which
Is but a picture, as yourself,
Can a picture think? *Jiva* it is
That both thinks and refrains from thinking.
Hence we are *jiva.*
1033 The jiva which once thought it was
The body, and now knows it is
Something different, functions hence
As the body in which another jiva
Dances. This other jiva within
The jiva is our true Being.

[See verse 1051 below.]

1034 Not only when a world is present
(In waking and dream), but when
No world is present (as in sleep)
You shine as the bodiless Being. This
Is your true nature as the Self.

1035 Whether the world perceived is real
Or else conceptual and unreal,
You, the Knower, are there, are you not,
As Awareness present. Such Being
As Pure Awareness is the Self.

1036 The Being which is Pure Awareness
Beyond both knowledge and ignorance is
The Self. In this high plenary jnana,
Which is the very Being of the Brahman,
Ignorance can have no place.

1037 Not only is That free from any
Trace of ignorance. It is all
Pure, perfect jnana and sole Being.
If it were not true Being as Awareness,
How could vijnana, the discerning
Intellect, be born of it?

[Compare verse 12 of The Forty Verses on Reality.]

1038 Awareness is not a quality of the Self.
The Self is without qualities.
Awareness is not an action of the Self.
The Self does nothing.
The Self, our Being, IS Awareness.
That which unaided shines within
As “I AM, I AM” without a break,
The strong, true Being free from all
*Upadhis*, this Awareness pure
Is our firm, authentic nature.

The true Self is the light of pure
Awareness. How to know it as one
Knows an object? When the ego
False has disappeared and we
Abide in peace within, the Self
Shines of itself spontaneously.

Without an ‘I’ no triad can
Exist. Yet we as Self are none
Of all these triads. We as Self
Only provide the ground and basis
For all triads.

[An ‘I’ is present in every triad: seer, seen and seeing. But this
‘I’ is the ego, not the Self. However, there can be no seeing
with out Being. The Self is Being, the ground of seeing and
all other actions, the Reality behind the apparent seer, seen
and seeing.)

The Self eternal, perfect, whole
And sole, cannot be known. It is
Non-dual. *Yoga* or reunion
Is Being Awareness, and not knowing
Something. Our true Being
Is itself Awareness.

The ground on which appear all pairs
Of opposites, like gross and subtle,
Void and full, depressed, exultant,
That sole Being, infinite Awareness,
That am I.
The Garland of Guru’s Sayings

1044 The ego false in its multitudinous Goings on appears to do Deeds good and evil and to suffer Many mind-created pains. But the ground, the sole support Of all this fuss, is one true Being Which is Awareness.

1045 With the natural light “I AM, I AM”, Attached to no particular body, But bright and clear, self-luminous, Like the Sun, the Heart-Heaven shines. This is the Self eternal.

1046 The true light of Awareness pure, Subtle, egoless, non-objective, Silent, which tires the mind and baffles It till it admits “I know not”, This is Being-Awareness, this The Self.

1047 The Self is true Awareness ever still, Unmoving like the screen.

1048 The world of seer, seeing and the seen Is the moving picture thrown on it.

1049 Like the indispensable sruti Sustaining and pervading all The seven notes, or like the moveless Screen on which so many movies Move, the Self, unflawed and moveless, Abides as That which is.

1050 Through all phenomena upsurging And making what is false seem real, The Self alone, sans names and forms That come and go, abides forever Everywhere the Being supreme.
1051  The inner Ruler who within
Each living being lives unknown,
Uses each body as his own,
And ceaseless, tireless moves it, He
Is the immortal Self.

1052  The Self is not the ego, the restless
Carriage-wheel which rises, falls
And suffers all the time. It is
The true, unmoving central axle.

1053  Whether phenomena appear
Or wholly disappear, it is all
The same to Self-awareness. When
All things have merged in the upsurring
Plenitude of Siva pure,
What still abides is but Self-being.

1054  When on being scanned the treacherous
Ego dies and disappears, the Self,
The clarity of Pure Awareness,
Is what the Upanishads proclaim
As the true meaning of God’s Grace,
The glorious vision of Siva as He dances.

1055  Brahman, the One without a second,
Has for His Being primordial bliss,
No blank though seeming void,
The plenitude of Being Awareness,
This is the sole Reality.

[Compare verse 12 of *The Forty Verses on Reality*.]

1056  The seers say where the ‘I’-thought is
Wholly absent, there is *mouna*,
There the Self. This Self, this *mouna*,
Is God, the *jiva* and the world.
The Self creates, perceives and is
The world.
Like the ether, the sole substance true
In all things known, the Self alone
Is God, the jiva and the world,
The state transcendent, ultimate abode
And Siva supreme.

33. The Grandeur of the Self (Atman)

Since in the grandeur of absolute Being
The seer becomes the world he sees,
The Self is the sole Reality.
When the ego which “sees” has disappeared
The ensuing silence bright, the state
Of Pure Awareness, is the Self.

The Self, the home of blissful Awareness,
Is an ocean vast of peace serene.
And he whose mind turns inward and dives
Deep within it, gains the infinite treasure
Of its grace.

Great is the Self. Greater than That
Nothing exists. And hence we know
No other thing, nothing at all,
Which we can buy paying
As its price the Self.

[The warning is against gaining thaumaturgic powers (siddhis)
at the cost of the Self.]

Here in this earthly life there is
No greater good than gaining
The grandeur of the Self supreme.
To gain it and enjoy it, search
Within and first destroy the ego
False and worthless.
1062 The ever-present Self, the radiant 
Gem, this is the rarest, richest 
Treasure. Look within and find 
And hold it fast. Your penury, 
The grand illusion, source of every 
Trouble on earth, will vanish forthwith.

1063 Not knowing the value of this treasure, 
Their own by birthright, people perish 
Through mere sloth. The great ones who 
Have found the clue and traced and gained it, 
They enjoy eternal bliss.

1064 Instead of calmly questing “Who 
Am I?” thus gaining and then being 
The Self which is Awareness, why, 
Why should one alienate oneself 
From That and in the treacherous field 
Of the senses suffer torments?

1065 Though one should win at one stroke all 
The eightfold siddhis people yearn for, 
All one’s learning is just wasted 
If one fails to undo the primal knot 
And to reclaim the one sole, perfect 
Jewel, the Self.

1066 True wealth is but the gracious silence 
Of steady, unswerving Siva-awareness. 
This bright, rare treasure can be gained 
Only by those who earnestly 
Strive for extinction of all thoughts.

1067 As the pearl-fisher single-thoughted, 
Weighted with a stone, dives deep 
Into the sea and grasps the pearl 
Most precious, and rejoices, dive 
Into the Heart with stern vairagya, 
Gain the Self-treasure, and so end 
All suffering and sorrow.
In that flawless state of Being
The Self, without a sense of ‘I’
Or ‘mine’, the still abidance in
And as Awareness Pure, this is
The noblest victory worth winning.

34. The Self Supreme (*Paramatman*)

The Awareness pure, unflawed, of Being
Is the transcendent state wherein
Both mind and breath find bliss.
This state of grace supreme surcharged
With peace serves also as the medicine
Which to the sick, restless mind restores
Healthful peace.

Only those who deem themselves
The body false and transient, not
The Self, the real, eternal Being,
Have visions sometimes of various gods
And think of these with a thrill of joy.

By worshipping the non-Self one
May gain all sorts of benefits
Unreal. But that true, permanent
State of Awareness which is Sivahood,
This life eternal, no lesser god
Can give.

“I saw the vision ... now it’s gone”,
Say those who know not that they are witness
Alike to what they don’t perceive
In sleep and to what when awake
They do perceive.

The gods whom earnestly we worship
Appear and disappear by turns.
The natural Awareness which abides
Ever unchanging, clear and certain,
Is the real god supreme.
This thing here, that there, whatever
Objects we confront, the true being
Of all of them is the pure, bright space
Of Awareness shining as the Self.

Knowing that all the things we point to
As this and that are mental concepts,
The Truth that shines in perfect stillness
Deep within us all, the real, mighty
Being-Awareness is the Self.

To search amid bewilderment
Some other truth than the Truth supreme,
The Truth of Self,
Is the foolish barber’s vexed exploring,
Instead of swiftly sweeping out
The rubbish on the floor.

To those who dwell within the Heart
Loving the Self, bliss comes upsurging,
Mounting ever higher, as love,
Siva, grace, awareness, peace or moksha.
Bliss is the real nature of the Self.

35. Freedom from Fear

Even the high gods know fear because
The foolish mind sees differences.
Wisdom it is to reach through neti
The true Self and, in this non-dual
State supreme, abide forever
Free from fear.

[Neti, “Not this”, a phrase used to negate everything except
the Self.]

Only when the Self is gained
Is permanent, perfect, blissful peace
Attained. In this Self-sovereignty
Non-dual, heaven-like, all-pervasive,
No desire and no fear can exist.
36. Advaita (Non-Duality)

1080  Whether in the pot or in the house
     Space is ever one and the same.
     Like space, awareness is but one.
     And so the Self, though manifest
     In various forms as god and jīva
     Suffers no change in substance.

1081  Are there two different entities
     As jīva and Siva? Say, is there
     Any real difference between
     The slave-doll and the master-doll
     Both made of one sweet nectar?
     [Compare verse 24 of Upadesa Saram.]

37. Atheism

1082  He who doubts his own existence,
     He alone, O God, would say
     That You are non-existent. How
     Can he who truly knows himself
     Deny as non-existent You
     Who are the same true Being-Awareness?

38. True Faith

1083  For those with faith God does exist
     As Awareness in the heart.
     He never is in minds impure.
     If with mind purified one looks
     Within straight, undeluded, He
     Shines clear, bright, joyous as the Self.

1084  Who merits truly the high title
     Of astika or believer? Only
     The Buddha, the Awakened One,
     Who sees within his own pure mind
     Being-Awareness as the Self.
39. Eternal Freedom

1085  The darkness of illusion never
      Touches the seer who knows his true
      Identity as Awareness Pure,
      Vast as the sky, bright as the sun.
      Only the blind, who think they are bodies
      Suffer from dark ignorance.

1086  Self-enquiry, gaining jnana,
      These things are only for the jiva
      Caught in delusion. The non-dual
      Self, eternally free, can never
      Be bound or flawed by imperfection.

1087  Will the Self, which as true Being
      Fills the universe entire,
      Be ever bound by this mirage
      Of maya? Quake not as if you’re bound.
      Be calm. Think clearly. See the Truth.

1088  Why do you suffer in vain believing
      That you are bound and hemmed in by
      The body? Even in sleep, when you
      Are free from thoughts of separateness,
      Your being abides intact and whole.

40. Authentic Living

1089  Life you desire. But how to live
      You know not. Thinking that this sinking
      Deep in this void, vain, illusive
      Waking-dream is “life”, you proudly
      Claim you “live”. Pierce this illusion,
      Go, grasp the Truth, eternal life.

1090  Shun anger and desire; destroy
      Illusions false that cause confusion,
      Behave at all times with detachment
      Calm. This is authentic living.
      To this hold fast.
Abiding as Self-being, living
A life that is a steady flow
Unhindered of true love welling up
In the heart, this is the bright, joyous
Sivahood, which ends forever
The inveterate, false, deceitful ego.

The seers who have placed at Siva’s Feet
All their life’s burdens and now live
Lives sublime of calm detachment
And shine in radiant purity,
They alone possess true beauty,
They alone enjoy true bliss.

That Heart which truly knows the Self
Is full of love whence Bliss supreme
Wells up forever. There desire,
And its shadow, sorrow, have no place.
Such a life whose nature pure,
From Being flows serenely calm.

The only goal worth seeking is
The bliss supreme of Self-Awareness.
Constant remembering and abiding
As That within the heart amounts
To plenitude of life.

Such a life of Grace alone
Is life lived in full, real Being.
This worldly life of false phenomena
Full of fear is sinking deeper
In illusion, not authentic living.

Those whose five senses turn no longer
Towards the world which once seemed real,
Those who have learned to live without
Their minds being moved by the illusive
Universe of forms, they need
Perform no penance.
Those whose ego has quite subsided,  
Who having transcended pleasure and pain  
And seeing the world as but the Self,  
Now live the life of Grace, they need  
Perform no penance at all.

41. The Formless

If I have form, the Lord, the source  
Of Being, appears with form. But if  
I am bodiless, formless, then there is  
No awareness of another. How  
Could one say that God has form?

[Compare verse 4 of The Forty Verses on Reality.]

Though devotees’ prolonged, repeated  
Meditations give to Siva  
Countless names, forms, attributes,  
His Being in truth is only formless,  
Pure Awareness.

[In Chapter XI of the Gita, Sri Krishna tells Arjuna to see all  
forms he likes as His own forms.]

The speech transcendent uttered by  
The heart in perfect stillness shining  
Is worship true of real Being.  
The light within and not the sky’s  
Blueness, name or form, exalts  
Aright the mighty, primal Being.

[Speech transcendent or paravak is the silent experience of  
“I AM”, the Bliss of the Self.]

The hymns by these Self-seers sung  
Praise but the Self supreme, the Heart,  
Which is the heart of every Scripture,  
And no particular name or form.
1102 A wonder strange is this, the marriage
Of the moon and sun; for the mighty, upraised
Foot of dancing Siva marks
The joy of self-enquiry; the Master’s
Loving quest for the servant; the mutual
Attraction between heart and mind.

[The mind-moon is held by and dances round the Heart-sun.]

1103 It is folly to waste one’s life in running
In all directions searching different
Goals. Learn to practise firm abidance
At the Feet of Siva supreme,
The eternal and auspicious silence,
Which alone can still the ego’s
Restlessness.

1104 Those whose awareness has subsided
In the heart and they alone
Can know the flawless state of Being.
For others Being seems to come
And go, to be remembered while
Awake, forgotten while asleep.

42. Sahaja Nishta (*Those in the Natural State*)

1105 The sage imperturbable who dwells
Within the body knows no difference
Between work, meditation and sleep.
Even as a man who is fast asleep
Inside a cart is not aware
Whether it moves or stands, or whether
The beasts are from the cart released.

As for a sleeper in a cart
It’s all the same whether the cart
Moves, stops or has its bulls released,
So for the sage who is asleep
Within the body, work, meditation
And sleep are all the same.

– SRI BHAGAVAN 21
[Compare verse 31 of *The Supplement to The Forty Verses on Reality*. To the beholder he seems to be the body. In truth he is the world.]

1106 The sage’s pure mind which beholds
As a mere witness the whole world
Is like a mirror which reflects
The foolish thoughts of those who come
Before him. And these thoughts are then
Mistaken to be his.

1107 Those with a sense of doership
May sometimes notice in the sage
Whose *sahaja* state transcends even *sattva*
Signs of *rajas*. Do not then
Doubt his state. The fault is that
Of the beholders.

1108. *Jivanmuktas* are great ones
Who shine forever as Being supreme.
If one but wrongs them the sin and blame
Will be a burden heavy to bear
Birth after birth.

1109 Like a dog that knows no difference
Between an oil-press and a *linga*
And licks them both, some ill-bred creatures
Treat a sage as if he were
No better than their wretched selves.
*[Linga – symbol of Siva, featureless form.]*

1110 If a dog looking at the sun
Barks, it does not hurt the sun.
Even so the insults of the low
Touch not the sage whose powerful light
Of wisdom shines bright like the sun.
43. The Sthitaprajna *(Steadfast Awareness)*

**1111** Who is the sthitaprajna, sage
Of steadfast wisdom? Only he
Who, knowing no difference between
Being introverted and being extroverted,
Shines and lives forever in one
Steady state of Being-Awareness.

**1112** He who through heart-awareness true
Shines egoless as Siva, the Self,
He is the perfect sthitaprajna
Still, silent, from all movement free.

44. After the Knot is Cut Asunder

**1113** As sense-misled the ignorant man
Perceives the world as a collection
Of various objects, so the sage
Whose knot is cut asunder sees
Only the ground, the one Awareness,
Present and shining everywhere.

[The knot is the illusive nexus between awareness and matter, Self and body. Compare verse 24 of *The Forty Verses on Reality*.]

**1114** He is the sage, the eternal Sun
Self-luminous, in whose presence this
Phenomenal world so variegated
And wonderful wholly disappears,
Unseen as other than the Self.

**1115** The sage, exulting in the Self
And firm-fixed in the heart, regards
The universe as neither mere
Illusion nor as something other
Than the Self.
1116  The whole world which we are aware of
       Is by the Sage seen as Awareness
       And nothing but Awareness only.
       And knowing that there is no being
       Except Awareness, he abides,
       Rich in bliss, as Self-awareness.

1117  Those whose minds are merged and lost
       In one *advaita* plenitude
       Will never be bewildered by
       This false phenomenal life. In that
       Blessed state supreme of Being
       Pure Awareness, That exists
       Alone without an ‘I’ or ‘this’.

1118  The sage whose knot of doership
       Has snapped finds no more “duties”
       To discharge. In his Awareness
       There is no other, no objects, hence
       No doubt and no delusion.

1119  Held only by the light of Being
       The sage’s mind may as of old
       Seem to taste, smell, see, hear, touch,
       And yet by strength of self-enquiry
       Is from the world cut off.

1120  Those who live within the Heart
       The life of Pure Awareness find
       No happiness in the trivial pleasures
       Of the senses. Is not that still, silent
       State of Being the one boundless
       And unbroken bliss supreme
       Of Brahman?

1121  The river that in the heaving ocean
       Has merged will never lapse again
       To separateness. No more will he
       Who has reached his Being as Awareness
       Forget the Self and be reborn.
1122 Mortals with forgetful minds
Are born to die and die to be
Reborn. But those whose minds have died
Into true Being supreme abide
There high above both birth and death.

1123 He who has seen himself as Being
As Awareness sees the eternal Siva,
He has seen the death of terrible
Duality. He has seen his own
Natural state of turiya pure.
Birth is what this great one sees not.

1124 If once the primal knot is cut
Never again can one be bound
For this is one’s true natural Being.
This is the state divine, this is
The power supreme, this peace serene.

45. The Power of the Great Ones

1125 When he who has seen the Self within
As God supreme now walks abroad
Free from attachment, know that God
Himself beside him walks to guard
Him from all harm.
[The last lines may also mean: God Himself before us walks
to guard us from all harm.]

1126 He who, his mind being dead, now stands
As Siva Himself dwells equally
In every creature as its life.
By constant dwelling on the clear,
Bright form of such a mukta one
Discovers straight the light of truth
Shining within oneself.
1127  The glance of deathless sages who
    Live radiant like a hundred suns
    Saves those who bask in it and makes
    Them too immortal, giving them soon
    Their own supreme awareness.

1128  Sages who rejoice in Siva’s
    Radiant bliss alone convert
    Into a fertile field divine
    That arid desert, the mind with its
    Mirage of hot desire.

1129  The sage whose heart with peace serene
    Is overflowing, fills with bliss
    The minds of those who come to him.
    Is not his face cool, radiant, joyous,
    A full-blown lotus round which gather
    Honey-bees?

46. Service to the Great Ones

1130  He who obeys the gracious wishes
    Of a great sage and serves him gains
    Freedom from the bonds of maya
    And wealth of grace, and lives a life
    Rich with all its aims fulfilled.

47. Ending of Vasanas

1131  Free wholly from the thought that one
    Is but the body, hence even in dreams
    Free from bewilderment of mind,
    Such is the sage whose vasanas
    Have been extinguished once for all.

1132  Inferior creatures, beasts and birds,
    Live with their minds in endless movement.
    He lives a truly human life
    Whose mind unmoved by any thought
    Shines in being’s stillness.
The sage whose vasanas are extinguished
May seem to undertake and do
Many mighty tasks, but he
In fact does nothing at all, like someone
Who with mind wandering far away
Sits for hours amid a crowd
Of listeners to an ancient tale.

[The sage’s actions are disinterested; they are done with no sense of doership.]

One whose vasanas are not dead
May sit still and yet work away
Busily doing a lot of things,
Like one sleeping in his bed
And dreaming that he climbs uphill
And falls head down into a pit.

Like one who absent-minded hears
A tale, the sage with vasanas dead,
May seem to act yet never acts.
The mind with vasanas alive
Works busily while doing nothing,
Like someone lying still in sleep
And dreaming that he climbs uphill
And tumbles down.

– SRI BHAGAVAN 22

48. Jivanmuktas (Liberated while Alive)

Even if the sense of doership
& Is dead, “How could one call the sage
A mukta freed from all the bonds
Of karma? Do we not see him eating,
Engaged in work, bearing a body
Of flesh, accepting prarabdha,
And suffering pain?” If you ask this,
The answer is, “True, in your sight
He seems to suffer, you see him suffering,
But did he tell you that he suffered?”
[Compare verse 33 of The Supplement to The Forty Verses on Reality. Once Bhagavan remarked: “The body is like a wireless receiver which only seems to speak and sing.”]

1137 The sage enjoys as his own being
The bliss of all transcendent Being.
The error lies in these ignorant folk
Seeing him as a body that suffers.

1138 From doership freed and steadfastly
Serving the Supreme, the sage
Seems to earn both merit and guilt.
The merit goes to those who praise him,
The sin to those condemning him.

1139 If one asks, “How can deeds get done
When doership is lost? Do we not see
Deeds done by muktas?” , the answer is,
“They being egoless, it is God
Himself who dwelling in their hearts
Performs these deeds.”

1140 The actions of a jivanmukta
Done in trance-like stillness free
From any sense of ‘I’ or ‘mine’,
Are like the swallowing of some food
By a sleeping child while still asleep.
[The child neither ‘eats’ nor ‘enjoys’ the food he swallows.]

1141 As the porter hired to carry luggage
Puts it down at journey’s end,
The sage is happy at the time
He has to shed the body’s burden.

1142 Can a poor little insect drowning in
The deep sea raise its head and save
Itself? And can the body-bound ego
Raise its head above the flood,
The silent tide of Pure Awareness?
1143  Can the whole, egoless mind lit up
By the bright glory of Self-being
Be ever bewildered by the sights
Of this phenomenal world? Can these
False phantoms multitudinous
Materialise in the clear, marvellous
Space of transcendent, Pure Awareness?

1144  What is this highest glory, what
The state of jivanmukti, to be
Yearned for and striven for and gained
By the poor jiva born to die?
To know and be the Self, and so
To end the rampant ego which
Sprang from forgetfulness of one’s
True Being.

1145  When doership gone the doer dies,
All three wives, his karmas, stand
Widowed, helpless. Can one alone
Escape this fate and still retain
The status of a wife?

[It used to be said that prarabdha (now current) clung to the
sage, while he was freed from sanchita (accumulated) and
agami (accruing). Bhagavan says that he is free also from
prarabdha.]

Just as none of a man’s wives can remain
Unwidowed on his death, so when the doer
Dies all three forms of karma end.

– SRI BHAGAVAN 23

1146  The body born of prarabdha
May not escape its prarabdha.
True. But having snapped the knot
Between matter and awareness, he,
The jivanmukta, has now gone beyond
Prarabdha’s reach.
If someone questions, “Since the body came into being only by and for prarabdha, will it not fall when prarabdha ends?” The answer is, “Tell me truly, in whose sight and for whom does this physical body seem to continue to exist?”

A man dead drunk, inebriate, blind knows not whether his clothes are on or off. Even so the sage whose being is bright awareness knows not whether his body, an object, false, inert is present or else absent.

The sage self-realised knows not whether the transient body comes and stays, or dies and leaves, even as the senseless drunkard knows not what happens to his clothes.

— SRI BHAGAVAN 24

As a brown silk garment burnt to ashes seems to be, yet is not, a garment, the jivanmukta’s body flawless, ego-free, is but the form apparent veiling his true life.

As only a serpent knows a serpent’s spoor, so only a jnani knows Ajnani’s nature. Others can but misunderstand it, never know it as it truly is.

The sages silent, firm abidance as Self-awareness which succeeds the ego’s death, Brahman’s own state of bliss supreme, the total absence of another, this experience none can understand.
For one who has destroyed the ego,  
And is awake as Being-Awareness,  
What remains to be accomplished?  
Nothing other than the Self He sees.  
Who can comprehend His blissful state?

– SRI BHAGAVAN 25

49. Jnanis

1152 Beyond the reach of words extends  
The sage’s greatness. None but he  
Can know his state of Being, vaster  
Than the sky and than the mountain  
Firmer. To experience it  
Yourself, you should first shed your own  
Body-consciousness.

1153 The sage who has realised the Self  
Direct, immediate, as the rich  
Plenitude of Being, the formless  
Light revealing every form,  
He is the sovereign Lord and Master  
Of the three worlds of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva.

1154 The sage abiding in Self-being,  
Asleep and yet awake, immersed  
In the still, deep, immutable ocean  
Of bliss supreme, will never lapse back  
Into this ruinous world and suffer.

1155 The learned man who, letting go  
The Self, the real Being, sees  
And cherishes this dream, this false,  
Illusive world, may be a scholar.  
Something different is he  
Who has gained the clarity of Knowing  
The Self; he is a Knower.
However thoroughly explored, The scriptures only tell us, “Search And find the Self within yourself.” Why does one look into a mirror? But to see clear and bright one’s own True face and in one’s heart rejoice.

Holding in their hands the mirror, The scripture which declares “The Self Alone is to be known”, many Alas, study with care the text And commentaries; only few Seek the Self and gain true life.

Far different from the scholar learned In books of wisdom is the Seer. Those who seek freedom from the bondage Of ignorance had better leave Scholars alone and enter the presence Of Seers established in the Self Supreme.

The Seer has realised the Being Whose gracious light sustains the world. For those long lost and groping in The darkness of ignorance, a word Of his will prove a veritable Staff of strength, the path, the goal.

50. The Jnani’s Actions

If inaction is the mark of jnana Then the inaction of the helpless Leper would be jnana. The real State of jnana is to rise Far above all liking and disliking And act without a sense of doership.
1161 What need is there for any thinking
For those who in the thought-free bliss
Of Self-awareness live their lives?
All they experience is bright stillness.
In this state supreme there is
No “other” and nothing to gain.

1162 Well knowing that mere Being is
Their real nature and abiding
In the thought-free state sublime,
Sages may do a thousand deeds,
And yet they are non-doers; they
Never mistake themselves to be
The doers of those deeds.

1163 Having through strenuous dharma gained
The natural state of being the Self,
The sages may or may not follow
The rules of outward discipline.
But either way their conduct has
A certain beauty.

1164 The mukta, bodiless, vast, but seems
To move about as one embodied,
Like Vishnu, who in three steps
Covered the universe, he measures
The heaven transcendent of supreme
Awareness.

1165 The doer of actions is a person
Made up of ten external senses
And a fourfold inner organ,
The Seer who stands apart, detached,
From all these means and instruments
May seem to act, and yet he is
Verily a non-doer.
1166  Enjoying what comes of its own
Accord, envy-free, transcending
All duality, ever at peace,
Alike in victory and defeat,
The seers are not by actions bound
Even when they seem to act.

Contented with whatever comes,
Free from duality and envy,
The even-minded Seer may act,
And is not bound.

– SRI BHAGAVAN 26

51. Self-Abidance

1167  Those who would by external marks
Measure a Seer’s worth may look
In vain and turn back baffled. How
Can they with eyes of flesh
Behold the light that shines within
The sage’s heart?

1168  Wrong, perverse it is to judge
A jivanmukta’s greatness by
His siddhis. With or without siddhis
He shines the same. They know him not
Who at siddhis gape and wonder.

1169  The world is full of madmen who
Trivialise the Seer’s true grandeur,
Their poor, bewildered mind attempting
To comprehend the mukta’s bright,
Transcendent Being, and imagining
Several sorts of siddhis in him.
1170  To judge by miracles the greatness
Of a Seer Self-realised
Is like measuring the sun’s intense
Brightness by the pretty pattern
Wrought by a stray, pink beam that shines
Through a tiny hole in the roof.

1171  The Seer that knows that both the body
And the world are but Awareness
Lives a life oned with the world’s.
To others he appears as living
In a body in a world.
None should at face value
Take a mukta.

52. Might of Mouna

1172  True Being, Pure Awareness, That,
That, the one source of every sound,
Spontaneous in the Heart forever Shines
Who can write That down.

[The last two lines repeat a couplet by Bhagavan on
“Akshara” a word which means “a letter in the alphabet” and
“the imperishable”. Compare verse 712 on ‘I’ and verse 713
on “AM”.

1173  What is the word divine, the source
Of every utterance true and clear?
The silence through which, ‘neath the banyan
Tree, the Lord, embodied Wisdom,
Taught of yore.

[Siva, as Dakshinamurti, the first Guru, taught through
silence.]

1174  Innumerable expository
Treatises cannot explain
The infinite Being of Brahman. Yet
The rare, true, Guru’s silence does
Reveal It. Hence such silence is
More eloquent than any speech.
Of this true-seeming, transitory World the ground is body-awareness. Of this awareness the firm, solid, Unchanging ground is primordial Silence.

What is true religion? It is not Speculating with the inconstant Mind and endless speaking: “That Is Being. No, that has no being. That has form. No, that is formless. That is non-dual. No, it is dual.” It is the silence, the experience Of deathless Being-Awareness-Bliss.

[Compare verse 34 of The Forty Verses on Reality.]

Until the life of silent Grace Pervades the mind and wisdom dawns, Thousands of rituals based on caste And creed cannot destroy the sense Of difference and duality.

All rivers flow towards and merge Into the ocean. Even so, All creeds have for their common goal Self-loss in Sivahood, the still, Deep ocean of Awareness-Bliss And hence there is no room for difference Between religions.

Diving within enquiring “Who Am I? Who sees between the creeds Some differences?” the Self alone Abides and the poor ‘I’ fades out. In that still silence can there be A sense of difference?

In that great Silence there is no Sense of difference. But is there then A feeling of non-difference? No. The non-duality extolled By Seer’s is nothing but the absence Of all sense of difference.
If we look deep, these troublesome Questions and answers both belong But to the language of duality. In mouna, the transcendent speech Of non-duality, they have No place at all.

In the language of duality
Alone are questions and answers.
In non-duality they are not.

– SRI BHAGAVAN 27

The true, uninterrupted speech Between the keen enquiring pupil And the illuminated Teacher is But both abiding in that state Where two minds merging become one.

53. Pure Mouna

What is the bliss supreme attained By keen enquiry, what the Self Experienced in the Heart? It is Pure mouna wholly free from false Dualistic knowledge.

Shining as the bright void, devoid Of concepts by the villainous ego Raised, this is the experience true Of infinite Being-Awareness, the one Non-dual bliss of mouna pure.

Since mouna shining in and through The pure mind thought-free is the sole Entrance into mukti’s realm, Whatever path one may pursue, The final door is only mouna.
Uninterrupted and whole-minded
Concentration on the Self,
Our true, non-dual Being, this
Is mouna, pure, supreme, the goal;
Not at all the lazy mind’s
Inertia which is but a state
Of dark illusion.

The interior mouna, steady, firm,
Which praises Siva in silence bright,
The speech divine beyond all words,
This stillness is true, natural worship.

He who in Siva has discovered
His own true Being, he alone
Regains the state of wholeness, mouna.
Identified with nothing else
But Siva, abide forever in Siva,
Free from action, free as Siva.

The substance and the power of full
Surrender is but this mighty mouna,
Where by enquiring who this ‘I’ is,
Who this ego false, one dies
And merges in the Being true
Of God impersonal, the Self.

[Compare Nammalwar’s verse:
Not knowing myself,
I used to think of ‘I’ and ‘mine’.
I am You and You are mine,
God of Heaven whom all gods praise.]

The Lord controls the doer till
The fruits of former actions are
Exhausted; until then no effort
Can change the course of things ordained.
’Tis wisdom then to rest in mouna.

[This stanza contains Sri Bhagavan’s message to Mother in
response to her entreaty that He should return home.]
None can oppose what is ordained
By God omnipotent. ’Tis wisdom
Then for the false, weak, villainous mind
To cast off every care and rest
In mouna at His Feet.

The ego image moves reflected
In the mind’s waves. How to stop
This movement, how regain the state
Of stillness? Don’t observe these movements.
Seek the Self instead. ’Tis wisdom
To gain and abide in mouna.

The Seers declare that mouna pure
Is firm abidance in egoless, true
Awareness. For such thought-free mouna
The means is clinging to the Self
Within the heart.

When one refrains from looking out
And noting outward objects, but abides
Within the heart in Self-awareness,
The ego disappears. The mouna pure
That then shines forth is jnana’s goal.

The goings-on the dreamer saw
In dream are, when the sleeper wakes,
Found laughable and false. Even so,
The jnani in his wisdom finds
All his life’s goings-on
Mere concepts and appearances.

When Grace supreme reveals to him
Who lay in darkness his true Being
He is overwhelmed by Siva-bliss
And in pure mouna disappears.

When the ego shaking off
All tricky concepts finally
Merges in the heart, the mouna,
The plenitude of Self-awareness
Blissful, bright, this, this is what
The sages call transcendent speech.
[cf. Sri Bhagavan 12, and verses 706, 715 above: Bhagavan defines paravak (transcendent speech) as the stillness whence the ‘I’-sense rises, the silence whence the sound of mantra rises.]

1198 “Sweet is the lute, sweet is the flute, Sweeter still one’s children’s prattle,” Say those who have not with mind serene Listened for and heard God’s Word Of Grace, transcendent speech, pure mouna.

[The Kural extols the householder’s joy in his children’s prattle. Thiruvalluvar knew well enough and praises in its own place the bliss of Pure Awareness.]

1199 Unless the noise of thoughts subsides One cannot know the ineffable bliss Of mouna. Those who have seen the end Of mental movements never swerve From mouna firm even in the midst Of clashing arms in the battle-field.

1200 True mouna is the state of being Self-awareness in the heart When the false, foolish sense that one Is but the body is no more. Mere verbal silence undertaken Without enquiring “Who am I?” Is no better than a mental trick.

1201 When the mad craving for false, trivial Objects is no more, and the ego Is in its source absorbed and lost, The life of Self-Awareness true That now shines forth is bliss supreme.

1202 Those in whose heart pure mouna shines And the perennial, blissful nectar Of Self-Awareness overflows Will never look at or get lost in This world and its false, trivial maddening pleasures.
1203  The Truth the sages clearly saw
As the end and goal of all the scriptures,
The conduct taught by every dharma,
Is nothing but this mouna pure,
The state supreme of peace serene.

1204  The glory of mukti, peace serene,
Is that one gives up utterly
Dharma, artha and kama. Give up
All thoughts of other ends, pursue
Mouna alone, Siva Himself,
The Being supreme.

[The other values are neither efficient means nor ultimate ends. Self-enquiry, establishing one in the peace and bliss of one’s true being, brings all other good things in its wake. Compare verse 8 above.]

54. Supreme Bhakti

1205  The mark of bhakti true, total
Self-surrender at Siva’s Feet,
Is perfect peace without a thought
Or word of prayer or plaint.

1206  In the heart which grace divine
Has filled with radiant bliss, can there
Be room for any trivial care,
The symptom of the ignorance which
Is knowledge for the body-bound ego?

1207  Only so long as other thoughts
Persist will there be conscious thought
Of God. When all thoughts cease, including
Thought of God, this thought-free state,
This Pure Awareness, is true thinking.
One well may ask “How can mere Being
With not a single thought arising,
How can this stillness be termed thinking?”
The answer is: Then, then alone
The power of Pure Awareness, sole
Reality eternal, shines
Unforgotten, bright and clear.

When, the dense darkness of ignorance gone,
The heart’s wide open firmament
Is filled with peace serene, clear, bright,
An inner fount of love up springs
Which is devotion true, the pure
Auspiciousness of Siva Himself.

The fortunate ones who in the Self
Abide forever, they alone,
Have realised the Truth. From others
Far indeed is that eternal
Home of grace supreme.

True devotees are they who are
Forever to the Self alone
Devoted. Only they enjoy
Eternally the bliss supreme
Of all-transcendent, highest heaven.

Though many and various are the siddhis
Mentioned, jnana-siddhi tops them all.
Those who have the other siddhis
Yearn for jnana. Those who have gained Jnana wish for nothing else.

Those who have attained the Self
Have gained at once and once for all
All other gifts. For as in space
The universe exists, in these
Self-knowers dwell, seen or unseen,
All siddhis and all powers.
1214 If one dives deep within the heart
One feels no more that one is but
A poor, weak mortal. The sovereignty
Supreme of jñana has such power
That at its feet even Indra, King
Of Heaven, bends low his head.

56. Brahman

1215 Jīva, world and God, the three
Prime principles are pieces for maya,
The Great Power of Being,
In her eternal game of chess
Played on the board which also is
The self-same still and blissful Being.

1216 He who sees the many moving
Pictures fails to see the basic
And unmoving screen. And he
Who sees the unmoving screen sees not
The pictures moving on it. This is
What happens in a cinema show.

1217 If in the cinema-hall there is
No unmoving screen, there can be
No moving picture. But observe,
Even when there is no moving picture,
Apart and different from all pictures
Stands the screen.

1218 Brahman is the unmoving screen,
The real ground. God, jīva, world
Are moving pictures. Know that all
The objects we perceive are mere
Appearances, the play of maya.
The jiva, who is but a figure
In the moving picture, along with
Other picture-figures like Himself, beholds the picture-world,
Conceives the picture-God, and pines
Frustrated in the picture-world.

[Compare verse 161 above.]

The Self is the unmoving screen,
The ground of Being. We think we are
But moving pictures and so suffer.
Meet it is that all these movements
Of the mind completely cease
And we abide in perfect silence.

57. Mukti

When one enquiring “Who is bound?”
Shakes off the thought of “being bound”
And so the thought of “being released
From bondage”, That which in the heart
Remains as one’s own natural Being,
That and that alone is mukti.

That which alone abides and shines
As Pure Awareness, perfect peace,
Is Siva eternal. Egoless silence,
The state supreme of Being That,
This is mukti’s plenitude.

[Compare verse 40 of The Supplement to The Forty Verses on Reality.]

Firm, steady abidance in
The peace serene gained by the quest
For Self, the Awareness, the sole ground
Supporting all appearances,
And consequent relinquishment
Of all objects as unreal,
This alone is mukti.
1224 Unless there is a final end
Of so called “knowledge” of things out there,
One cannot gain release from bondage
To the sense-created world.
This “knowledge” being destroyed by firm
Abidance in the Self, then what
Remains is mukti, bliss supreme.

1225 The foe Desire is the sole cause
Of our laughable bondage to birth
And death. Know, use the means to end
Desire. Pure Being, free from all
Desire is mukti, this alone.

1226 The Veda’s crown, the final Truth
Discovered and revealed by Seers,
Is this: the luminous state supreme
Of mukti is life lived in the clear,
Bright light of Self-Awareness which
Alone is Being, Pure Being.

58. The Truth Supreme

1227 There is no creation, no destruction,
No one bound, and none at all
For freedom yearning much and striving
Hard; none attaining mukti.
Know this to be the Truth supreme.

There is no creation, no destruction.
None bound, none seeking, striving,
Gaining freedom. Know that this
Is the Truth supreme.

– SRI BHAGAVAN 28

[Compare verses 100 and 1215 above.]

1228 ’Tis maya false alone which makes
The real seem unreal, the unreal
Seem real. In clear, pure Being
No such tricks find place. In ultimate,
Certain Truth, all things are only
Awareness.
Experience of Reality

1229  “As rice from paddy is dehusked
The *jiva* is from bondage freed
And thus the Self is gained,” they say.
All such talk of bondage and freedom
Is but the sick mind’s concept rising
From Self, the sole Awareness.

59. True Being

1230  The things you think of as existing
Do not exist. But That of which
You know not if it does exist
Or does not, That alone exists.

[The Self is the sole Reality. It is all Awareness and cannot
be “known”.]

1231  Can the poor mind deny, condemn
The all-pervading and transcendent
Being supreme, which can absorb
Within itself and so sublate
All kinds of knowledge, each imperfect
And each from others differing.

[The white light absorbs and sublates the seven colours.]

1232  When one is still and does not think
“Does it exist or does it not?”
Then That which without form or name
Shines forever as “I am”, That,
That Awareness, That alone
Is real Being.

1233  Of the six *darsanas* with no
Beginning, one alone, *advaita*,
Has no end. The other five
Must end when *maya* ends. Let this
Be clearly understood.

[Of the six systems of Indian Philosophy (*darsanas*), *advaita*
Vedanta alone postulates *Sat-chit-ananda, Brahman*, Being-
Awareness-Bliss, as the sole Reality transcending the realm of *maya*.]
1234  Reality is one and, only
One. This permanent and perfect
Being, only this has been
Variously described by sages
Who with keen minds have searched the heart
And there experienced it.

1235  Many and various are the creeds.
Crowning them all *advaita* stands
Supreme, as silent, Pure Awareness,
Destroying and surviving the unreal
Ego, the deadly seed from which
Grow all these differences ’twixt creeds.

1236  The highest goal is gained by those
Who know That which the ego-mind
False, treacherous can never know,
The sole true Being with no beginning
And no end, no change, no cause,
No parallel, no other.

60. Transcendence of Thought

1237  While brightly shining in the hearts
Of sages who have left behind
All treacherous triads and now abide
As That alone, *advaita’s* grandeur
Cannot be by the mind perceived,
Like this false, trivial, dualistic,
Thought-created world.

1238  Siva, who is Pure Awareness
Transcending thought, is only known
To seers heroic who with minds
Extinct abide thought-free within
The heart, and not to those whose minds
Are still engaged in thought.
Aspirants hurrying eagerly  
Towards advaita’s lofty heaven,  
Only those established firm  
In true Self-being and bliss supreme  
Are welcome there and feel at home.  
To weak backsliders diffident  
To take the path direct and sharp  
Of what use is advaita, say.

61. Describing the Experience

Describing what the Master taught  
And we experience: the dense thicket  
Of desire, the world of sense  
We knew of old, was nothing but  
The silent heaven of Pure Awareness  
Beyond speech; all that trivial knowledge  
Was what we in a dream perceived.

I know, I know now, the transcendent  
State supreme of Being-Awareness.  
I know too that in real fact  
I never was bound or released,  
Although deluded I once felt  
Alienated from the Self.

[Compare verse 29 of Upadesa Saram and verse 37 of The Forty Verses on Reality.]

All faiths men hold, all doctrines  
They declare, we have discovered now,  
Point certainly and uniformly  
To one goal only, the experience  
Of this luminous Being.

When one abides in plenitude  
Of Pure Awareness, the Being bright  
Praised by the Vedas ever true,  
One sees no more the differences  
Of time, space, seer, seeing and things seen.
1244  This subtle arcanum that I utter
Came to me when considered well
As comments on His mouna teaching
Transmitted by the sovereign Master
Ramana graciously appearing
Here before my eyes.

[The Self within appears in human form as the Guru.]

1245  In my sight ‘I’ only am
And ‘you’ are not. In your sight
‘You’ only are and ‘I’ am not.
In the sight of the Self the Self alone
Exists and nothing else.
In truth I, you and all are nothing
But the Self.

1246  No one owns me. I own nothing.
I am neither slave nor master.
No duty binds me. I am neither
Doer nor enjoyer.

1247  As if by maya bound I cried
In pain. And then before my eyes
Appeared in Guru’s form, the Self,
And governed me. To that bright Being,
The Self, are due my grateful thanks.

1248  To Siva Ramana, supreme Awareness,
To Him alone this Muruga
Is subject. Never, no matter
What painful penury may afflict him,
Never again will he be bound
By this world’s illusive power.
62. Equanimity

1249  No caste or family obligations
Bind those established in the primal
*Dharma* of pure Self-awareness.
’Tis for the body false and worthless,
Not for the true Self, that all these
Many and various rules exist.

1250  The awareness that the one sole substance
In all that we perceive is but
The Self, the experience of this oneness,
Is the harmonious vision bright
Praised by the sages who have known
True, all-embracing unity.

1251  The egoless seer established firm
In Self-awareness and peace serene
Is neither elated by high praise
Nor ever pained by scorn.

1252  As in fierce noonday heat appears
A cool mirage, so in this false
Illusive world, Fate oft produces
Prosperity and adversity. The sage
Is neither elated nor depressed.

1253  The sages want and pray for nothing.
But their very being is spontaneous
Penance serving to bring to all
The people of the world the wealth
And welfare that they may wish for.

End of Part III

(Experience of Reality)
Invocation

1254 Long live Aruna Hill. Long live Guru Ramana. Long live This garland of His sayings. May This Lamp lit to reveal transcendent Truth prove fruitful and spread far And wide the Light supreme.
APPENDIX TO VERSES 608, 882

The story of the Tenth Man is a traditional illustration for the all too common amnesia of the Self. The story goes that ten young men, travelling together, had to cross a river in spate. On reaching the other bank they feared that one of them had been washed away. In order to make sure that all of them had got safely across the members of the party counted and recounted and reached the total of nine as each one forgot himself while counting. Now convinced that one of them was drowned, they sat down lamenting. Just then a traveller came along, asked them what the matter was and discovered the cause of their mistake. He now made them walk past him one by one, giving each a blow as he passed in front and told them to count the strokes. They were now able to see how each one had forgotten himself while doing the counting. The story can also be applied to a person playing many roles in his life but forgetting the entity behind all the roles. We are — before, during and after we are this, that or the other.
GLOSSARY

A

Advaita: Non-duality, i.e. the oneness of Brahman, jiva and world.
Advaita jnana: Experience of this oneness, complete absence of ego, a separate self.
Agama: The Veda; scripture accepted by any sect, Saiva, Vaishnava or Jaina.
Agami: Actions of this birth whose reward will come in a future birth.
Aham Brahmasmi: Mahavakya of Yajur Veda. It is interpreted by the three Schools as follows: Advaita: “I am Jivatma which is identical with Brahman.” We are in moksha, we don’t know it yet. Visishtadvaita: “I become Brahman at the moment of death.” Moksha is in Vaikuntha. Not here. Dvaita: “I am Brahman” is uttered by Brahman. Not us. It should not be uttered by us.
Ajata: Birthless, unborn, not created, self-existent.
Akshara: A letter of the alphabet; also the Imperishable.
Allah: Supreme Being. Arabic Name of God.
An-al-Haq: “I am God.”
Ananda: Bliss.
Anatta: The Buddhist doctrine which asserts the non-existence of a separate self.

Anna: Food.

God

Mutuality

Dharma

(Moksha)

Cross

Apara: Lower.
Arjuna: (White), candid, frank, friendly. The Hero of the Mahabharata.
Artha: Meaning, purpose, object of desire.
Arunachala: Sanskrit Name of the Hill. See ‘Annamalai’.
Asana: Yogic posture; also a seat.
Asrama: Stage of life; a place where hermits and sages live.
Astika: A believer.
Asuric: Demonic.
Atiyasrami: One who has transcended the four stages of life.
Atman: Self.
Avastha: A state of being: waking, dreaming and deep sleep.
Azhvar Uyarvar: A Tamil expression which means that he who plumbs deep rises high. (Deep meditation leads to high experience. The deepest the root, the taller the tree. The humble are exalted.)
B

Bhakta: Devotee.
Bhakti: Devotion.
Bhakti-vichara: Enquiring into the nature and scope of bhakti.
Bhakti: The Four-faced Creator, the First Person of the Hindu Trinity.
Brahman: Pure Being. The Self, or the supreme Reality.
Brahmakaravritti: See note to v. 941.
Brahma-nirvana: Final Self-realisation.
Brahmastra: The ultimate weapon.
Brama-vidya: The knowledge of Brahman
Brahmin: The highest caste in Hindu society; (Sanskrit: Brahmana).

C

Chakra: A yogic centre in the body.
Chaturdasi: The fourteenth day of the waxing or waning moon.
Chela: Disciple, pupil.
Chit: Awareness. (Also, Name of Siva, the Dancer in Space at Chidambaram.)
Chitta: Mind, memory.
Chitta-suddhi: Purity of mind.

D

Dakshinamurti: South-facing image, Siva teaching through silence. The Name is also divided as Dakshina-amurti and taken to mean ‘Form less Power’.
Darsan: Seeing a holy person or image.
Darsanas: The six systems of Indian philosophy.

Dattatreya: A sage for whom all creatures, human and others, sentient and insentient, were guru and a source of teaching. Therefore, the entire universe was a gurukula to him.

Dharma: One of the four values of life; that which sustains life; reciprocal relationship, mutual trust.

Dhyana: Meditation, contemplation.
Dhyana-vichara: Enquiring into modes and nature of dhyana.
Dipavali: The festival of lights celebrated on the chaturdasi of Thula (Libra), corresponding to October / November and to the Tamil month of Aippasi.

Draupadi: In the Mahabharata, the wife of the five Pandavas brothers.

Dvaita: Duality; teaching of Madhva. See ‘Aham Brahmasmi’.

G

Gopis: The milkmaids of Vrindavan, devotees of Sri Krishna.
Guru: Spiritual teacher, preceptor; man of gravity.
Gurukula: Guru’s abode, school.

H

Hara: A Name of Siva.
Hari: A Name of Vishnu.

I

Indra: Chief of the Devas, Master of the thunderbolt.
Islam: Surrender, peace.
Jada: Inanimate, lifeless.
Japa: Repetition of a sacred word, syllable or Name of God.
Jiva: Living person, life.
Jivatma: The individual self.
Jivanmukta: One liberated when alive in body.
Jivanmukti: Liberation while still alive in body.
Jiva’s nirvana: State of being blown out, extinguished. (Death of the ego.)
Jnana: The knowledge or awareness of identity with Brahman.
Jnana-siddhi: Attainment of jnana.
Jnani: One who has attained jnana.

Kalas: Arts, sciences, 64 in number.
Kama: Desire, one of the four values permitted when not opposed to dharma.
Kannappa: A devotee of Siva who plucked out his own eyes and gave them to Siva.
Kaivalya: Absolute oneness, perfect purity.
Karma: Action, deed; also result of action.
Karma yoga: The path of actions performed without attachment.
Kevala nirvikalpa samadhi: is absorption in the Self while the body remains inert like a log of wood.
Koshas: or sheaths, are coverings five in number encasing the Self namely: annamaya (food, body); pranamaya (breath, life); manomaya (mind); vijnanamaya (intellect); anandamaya (bliss of sleep).
Kumara: Younger son of Siva.
Kundalini: Serpent-power abiding in the nerve-plexus at the bottom of the spine.
Kural: A Tamil metre consisting of two lines. See ‘Thiruvalluvar’.

Laya: Dissolution, merging.
Laghu: Light, trivial, poor.
Linga: Symbol of Siva. Featureless form.

Mahabali: A king who granted the dwarf Vamana’s (Vishnu’s) wish for the space he could cover in three steps. With two steps Vamana covered heaven, earth and the nether world. Mahabali offered his own head for the third step and gained eternal fame.
Mahavakya: The four key sentences proclaiming the truth of Brahman, one taken from each Veda:
(I) Prajnanam Brahma = Awareness is Brahman (Rig Veda).
(2) Aham Brahmasmi = The Self is Brahman (Yajur Veda).
(3) Tat tvam asi = That thou art (Sama Veda).
(4) Ayam atma Brahman = This Self is Brahman (Atharva Veda).
Manana: Thinking deeply over what has been heard from the guru.
Manas: Mind.
Mantra: Sound forms used for meditation, worship and prayer.
Markanda: Sixteen-year old devotee of Siva who overcame Death and remained young for ever.

Maya: Illusion; the power in Brahman which enables manifestation

Meru: Mountain of gold. Abode of the gods.

Moksha: Liberation. Release from the cycle of birth and death.

Mouna: Silence, stillness of the mind.

Mukta: Liberated person.

Mukti: Liberation.

N

Namasivaya: ‘Obeisance to Siva’, the five-syllable mantra.

Nammalvar: Vaishnava Saint-singer, (the name Nam-alvar means ‘Our Alvar’. He is almost a pure advaitin.)

Naraka: Hell, the nether world. The demon ruling Hell.

Narayana: Vishnu.

Nasa: Destruction.

Neti: “Not this”, denial. The strength and wisdom to say “Not this nowhere”. Negative capacity.

Nididhyasana: Meditation. Steady, continuous.

Nirvana: Final emancipation.

Nirvikalpa samadhi: A temporary sense of identity between the individual and the universal Self. Freedom from any movement of the mind.

P

Pandit: Learned person.

Paramatma: The supreme Self.

Paravak: Transcendent speech.

Prana: The vital breath.

Pranayama: Regulation of breath.

Prarabdha (karma): Part of one’s karma to be worked out in this life.

Prasad: Grace; food offered to God and given to devotees.

Puja: Ceremonial worship with flowers, water, etc.

Purva: Fullness, plenitude.

R

Rajas: The principle of activity; one of the three primal qualities.

Rakshasa: A demon.

Rama(chandra): A divine incarnation of Vishnu who is the Hero of the Ramayana.

Reality: Permanent, immutable and self-luminous Being-Awareness.

S

Sadhaka: Aspirant; one who practises spiritual disciplines.

Sadhana: Spiritual discipline.

Sadhu: Ascetic, sage.

Sahaja: Natural (state).

Sahaja nirvikalpa samadhi: Permanent merger in Awareness.

Sahaja-nishta: Firm abidance in the natural state of Being-Awareness.

Sahaja samadhi: Samadhi attained naturally and present always.

Sahasrara: The highest yogic centre; it is situated in the brain.

Saiva Siddhanta: Established doctrine concerning Siva and jiva.

Sakti: Power, energy, the Divine Mother.
Glossary

Sakta: A worshipper of Sakti.
Samadhi: Absorption in the Self.
Samsara: The cycle of birth and death; worldly life.
Sanchita (karma): Karma accumulated in former lives.
Sastras: Scriptures, sciences.
Satsang: Association with the good.
Association with the Truth (Sat).
Sattva: The principle of purity, light, goodness; one of the three primal qualities.
Sattvic: Pure, bright, good.
Sheath: See Koshas.
Shravana: Hearing of the truth from the Guru.
Siddhanta: Conclusion reached after enquiry or discussion.
Siddhi: Thaumaturgic power. Attainment.
Siva: The auspicious One, The Supreme Lord.
Siva-ratri: The new moon night on which Siva is worshipped (February/March).
Siva-Sakti: Life-force. Sri Ramakrishna said: ‘A snake is a snake whether still or moving.’
Sivoham: The sacred formula ‘Siva am I’.
Sloka: A verse in Sanskrit.
Soham: The sacred formula ‘He am I’.
Sridhara: Lord of Wealth. See note to v. 809.
Sruti: Basic musical note underlying other notes.
Sthitaprajna: Steadfast Awareness.
Summa Irutthal: Freedom from thought or action.
Sunya: Void, blank.
Surapadma: A demon.
Swadharma: Duties in accordance with one’s caste and station in life.
Swarga: Heaven, world of enjoyment.

T

Tamas: The principle of inertia, one of the three primal qualities. Darkness, ignorance.
Tapas: Penance, austerity, purificatory action.
Tattva: Entities like bodies, thoughts and principles. Truth, essence of a thing.
Tattvajnana: Knowledge of Reality.
Tat tvam asi: The mahavakya ‘That thou art’.
Tillai: Name of Chidambaram
Tiroda: concealing, disappearing
Thiruvalluvar: The author of the Kural, a work consisting of 1330 kuras and divided into 3 parts covering the subject of Virtue, Wealth and Love and corresponding to Dharma, Artha and Kama, three of the four goals of life prescribed in Sanskrit literature. Thiruvalluvar is venerated by the Tamil people as a sage and law-giver. He was a weaver by birth, a poet and philosopher.
Turiya: The fourth state, beyond waking, dream and sleeping states.
Turiyatita: The state beyond Turiya.
U

Uchistham: The ‘left-overs’ of a meal. The left-overs of the Guru are sacred.

Upanishad: Metaphysical treatise leading to the experiencing of Reality.

Upadhi: Mask, superimposed veil which conceals or colours the substance; limiting adjunct; avidya for the jiva and Maya for Iswara (the divine Principle immanent in the universe.)

V

Vaidik: Pertaining to Veda or Hindu Scriptures, Spiritual.

Vairagya: Non-attachment.

Vali: See note to v. 921.

Vamana: Dwarf incarnation of Vishnu.

Varna: Colour, form, quality; one of the four castes among Aryans and later Hindu society.

Vasana: Mental habit, predisposition, subtle desire to repeat an action.

Vedanta: The sequel, or end, of the Vedas; the metaphysical doctrine up holding both pure advaita and modified advaita.

Vedas: Authoritative Hindu scriptures four in number.

Vedic: pertaining to the Vedas.

Vibhuti: Sacred ashes; manifestation.

Vichara: Enquiry.


Vishnu: The second Person of the Hindu Trinity; embodiment of sattva; the preserving power; the omnipresent One.

Vivarta: The doctrine of illusory appearances. See also note to v. 83.

Viveka: Discernment, sifting; seeing difference.

Vritti: Movement, modification of the mind. See also note to v. 941.

Vyakti: Individuality.

Y

Yama: Lord of Death.

Yoga: Union. The process of union of the individual self with the universal Self. The four kinds are Karma, Bhakti, Raja and Jnana.

Yogi: Adept in yoga practice.
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Om Sri Ramanarpanamastu