

Classic Poetry Series

# Ramana Maharshi

## - poems -

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# Ramana Maharshi(09 January 1879 – 14 April 1950)

Sri Ramana Maharshi (Tamil: ஸ்ரீ ராமானந்தர்), born Venkataraman Iyer, was a Hindu spiritual master ("jnani"). He was born to a Tamil-speaking Brahmin family in Tiruchuzhi, Tamil Nadu. After experiencing at age 16 what he later described as liberation (moksha), he left home for Arunachala, a mountain considered sacred by Hindus. He lived at the mountain for the rest of his life. Although born a Brahmin, he declared himself an "Atiasrami", a Sastraic state of non-attachment to anything in life and beyond all caste restrictions. The ashram that grew around him, Sri Ramana Ashram, is situated at the foothill of Arunchala, to the west to the pilgrimage town of Tiruvannamalai.

Sri Ramana Maharshi maintained that the purest form of his teachings was the powerful silence which radiated from his presence and quieted the minds of those attuned to it. He gave verbal teachings only for the benefit of those who could not understand his silence (or, perhaps, could not understand how to attain the silent state). His verbal teachings were said to flow from his direct experience of Atman as the only existing reality. When asked for advice, he recommended self-enquiry as the fastest path to moksha. Though his primary teaching is associated with Non-dualism, Advaita Vedanta, and Jnana yoga, he recommended Bhakti to those he saw were fit for it, and gave his approval to a variety of paths and practices.

## <b> Family Background </b>

Sri Ramana was born in a village called Tiruchuli (Tiruchuzhi) near Aruppukkottai, Madurai in Tamil Nadu, South India on Arudra Darshanam day, into an orthodox Hindu Tamil (Iyer) family, the second of four children of Sundaram Iyer (1845?-1892), from the lineage of Parashara, and Azhagammal (?-1922), and named Venkataraman at birth. His siblings were Nagaswamy (1877–1900), Nagasundaram (1886–1953) and sister Alamelu (1891/92-1953). Venkataraman's father was a respected pleader.

## <b> Childhood </b>

Venkataraman seemed a normal child with no apparent signs of future greatness. He was popular, good at sports, very intelligent but lazy at school, indulged in an average amount of mischief, and showed little religious interest. He did have a few unusual traits. When he slept, he went into such a deep state of unconsciousness that his friends could physically assault his body without waking him up. He also had an extraordinary amount of luck. In team games, whichever

side he played for always won. This earned him the nickname 'Tangakai', which means 'golden hand'. When Venkataraman was about 11, his father sent him to live with his paternal uncle Subbaiyar in Dindigul because he wanted his sons to be educated in English so they would be eligible to enter government service, and only Tamil was taught at the village school in Tiruchuzhi. In 1891, when his uncle was transferred to Madurai, Venkataraman and his elder brother Nagaswami moved with him. In Dindigul, Venkataraman attended a British School.

### <b> The Awakening </b>

In 1892, Venkataraman's father Sundaram Iyer suddenly fell seriously ill and unexpectedly died several days later at the age of 42. For some hours after his father's death he contemplated the matter of death, and how his father's body was still there, but the 'I' was gone from it.

After leaving Scott's Middle School, Venkataraman went to the American Mission High School. One November morning in 1895, he was on his way to school when he saw an elderly relative and enquired where the relative had come from. The answer was "From Arunachala." Krishna Bikshu describes Venkataraman's response: "The word 'Arunachala' was familiar to Venkataraman from his younger days, but he did not know where it was, what it looked like or what it meant. Yet that day that word meant to him something great, an inaccessible, authoritative, absolutely blissful entity. Could one visit such a place? His heart was full of joy. Arunachala meant some sacred land, every particle of which gave moksha. It was omnipotent and peaceful. Could one behold it? 'What? Arunachala? Where is it?' asked the lad. The relative was astonished, 'Don't you know even this?' and continued, 'Haven't you heard of Tiruvannamalai? That is Arunachala.' It was as if a balloon was pricked, the boy's heart sank."

A month later he came across a copy of Sekkizhar's Periyapuram, a book that describes the lives of 63 Saivite saints, and was deeply moved and inspired by it. Filled with awe, and a desire for emulation, he began devotional visits to the nearby Meenakshi Temple in Madurai and, associated with this bhakti, later reported fever-like sensations. Soon after, on July 17, 1896, at age 16, Venkataraman had a life-changing experience. He spontaneously initiated a process of self-enquiry that culminated, within a few minutes, in his own permanent awakening. In one of his rare written comments on this process he wrote: 'Enquiring within Who is the seer? I saw the seer disappear leaving That alone which stands forever. No thought arose to say I saw. How then could the thought arise to say I did not see.'. As Sri Ramana reportedly described it later:

"It was in 1896, about 6 weeks before I left Madurai for good (to go to Tiruvannamalai-Arunachala) that this great change in my life took place. I was sitting alone in a room on the first floor of my uncle's house. I seldom had any sickness and on that day there was nothing wrong with my health, but a sudden violent fear of death overtook me. There was nothing in my state of health to account for it nor was there any urge in me to find out whether there was any account for the fear. I just felt I was going to die and began thinking what to do about it. It did not occur to me to consult a doctor or any elders or friends. I felt I had to solve the problem myself then and there. The shock of the fear of death drove my mind inwards and I said to myself mentally, without actually framing the words: 'Now death has come; what does it mean? What is it that is dying? This body dies.' And at once I dramatised the occurrence of death. I lay with my limbs stretched out still as though rigor mortis has set in, and imitated a corpse so as to give greater reality to the enquiry. I held my breath and kept my lips tightly closed so that no sound could escape, and that neither the word 'I' nor any word could be uttered. 'Well then,' I said to myself, 'this body is dead. It will be carried stiff to the burning ground and there burn and reduced to ashes. But with the death of the body, am I dead? Is the body I? It is silent and inert, but I feel the full force of my personality and even the voice of I within me, apart from it. So I am the Spirit transcending the body. The body dies but the spirit transcending it cannot be touched by death. That means I am the deathless Spirit.' All this was not dull thought; it flashed through me vividly as living truths which I perceived directly almost without thought process. I was something real, the only real thing about my present state, and all the conscious activity connected with the body was centered on that I. From that moment onwards, the "I" or Self focused attention on itself by a powerful fascination. Fear of death vanished once and for all. The ego was lost in the flood of Self-awareness. Absorption in the Self continued unbroken from that time. Other thought might come and go like the various notes of music, but the I continued like the fundamental sruti note ["that which is heard" i.e. the Vedas and Upanishads] a note which underlies and blends with all other notes."

After this event, he lost interest in school-studies, friends, and relations. Avoiding company, he preferred to sit alone, absorbed in concentration on the Self, and went daily to the Meenakshi Temple, ecstatically devoted to the images of the Gods, tears flowing profusely from his eyes.

Venkataraman's elder brother, Nagaswamy, was aware of a great change in him and on several occasions rebuked him for his detachment from all that was going on around him. About six weeks after Venkataraman's absorption into the Self, on August 29, 1896, he was attempting to complete a homework assignment which had been given to him by his English teacher for indifference in his studies.

Suddenly Venkataraman tossed aside the book and turned inward in meditation. His elder brother rebuked him again, asking, "What use is all this to one who is like this?" Venkataraman did not answer, but recognized the truth in his brother's words.

### <b> The Journey to Arunachala </b>

He decided to leave his home and go to Arunachala. Knowing his family would not permit this, he slipped away, telling his brother he needed to attend a special class at school. Fortuitously, his brother asked him to take five rupees and pay his college fees on his way to school. Venkataraman took out an atlas, calculated the cost of his journey, took three rupees and left the remaining two with a note which read: "I have set out in quest of my Father in accordance with his command. This (meaning his person) has only embarked on a virtuous enterprise. Therefore, no one need grieve over this act. And no money need be spent in search of this. Your college fee has not been paid. Herewith rupees two."

At about noon, Venkataraman left his uncle's house and walked to the railway station. At about three o'clock the next morning, he arrived at Viluppuram and walked into the town at daybreak. Tired and hungry, he asked for food at a hotel and had to wait until noon for the food to be ready. He then went back to the station and spent his remaining money on a ticket to Mambalappattu, a stop on the way to Tiruvannamalai. From there, he set out, intending to walk the remaining distance of about 30 miles (48 km).

After walking about 11 miles (18 km), he reached the temple of Arayaninallur, outside of which he sat down to rest. When the priest opened the temple for puja, Venkataraman entered and sat in the pillared hall where he had a vision of brilliant light enveloping the entire place. He sat in deep meditation after the light disappeared until the temple priests who needed to lock up the temple roused him. He asked them for food and was refused, though they suggested he might get food at the temple in Kilur where they were headed for service.

Venkataraman followed, and late in the evening when the puja ended at this temple, he asked for food and was refused again. The temple drummer who had been watching the rude behaviour of the priests implored them to hand over his share of the temple food to the strange youth. When he asked for water, he was directed to a Sastri's house. He set out but fainted and fell down, spilling the rice he had been given in the temple. When he regained consciousness, he began picking up the scattered rice, not wanting to waste even a single grain.

Muthukrishna Bhagavatar was amongst the crowd that gathered around Venkataraman when he collapsed. He was so struck by Venkataraman's

extraordinary radiance and beauty and felt such compassion for him that he led the boy to his house, providing him with a bed and food. It was August 31, the Gokulastami day, the day of Sri Krishna's birth, and the Bhagavathar's wife was delighted that a young Brahmin boy with the appearance of a mendicant had visited their home that day, and was only too happy to feed him. Afterwards, Venkataraman asked Bhagavathar for a loan of four rupees on the pledge of his ear-rings so that he could complete his pilgrimage. Bhagavathar agreed and gave Venkataraman a receipt he could use to redeem his ear-rings. Venkataraman continued on his journey, tearing up the receipt immediately because he knew he would never have any need for the ear-rings.

On the morning of September 1, 1896, Venkataraman boarded the train and traveled the remaining distance. In Tiruvannamalai he went straight to the temple of Arunachaleswara. There, Venkataraman found not only the temple gates standing open, but the doors to the inner shrine as well, and not a single person, even a priest, was in the temple. He entered the sanctum sanctorum and addressed Arunachaleswara, saying: "I have come to Thee at Thy behest. Thy will be done." He embraced the linga in ecstasy. The burning sensation that had started back at Madurai (which he later described as "an inexpressible anguish which I suppressed at the time") merged in Arunachaleswara. Venkataraman was safely home.

### <b> Early Life at Arunachala </b>

The first few weeks he spent in the thousand-pillared hall, but shifted to other spots in the temple and eventually to the Patala-lingam vault so that he might remain undisturbed. There, he would spend days absorbed in such deep samadhi that he was unaware of the bites of vermin and pests. Seshadri Swamikal, a local saint, discovered him in the underground vault and tried to protect him. After about six weeks in the Patala-lingam, he was carried out and cleaned up. For the next two months he stayed in the Subramanya Shrine, so unaware of his body and surroundings that food had to be placed in his mouth or he would have starved.

From there, he was invited to stay in a mango orchard next to Gurumurtam, a temple about a mile out of Tiruvannamalai, and shortly after his arrival a sadhu named Palaniswami went to see him. Palaniswami's first darshan left him filled with peace and bliss, and from that time on his sole concern was serving Sri Ramana, joining him as his permanent attendant. From Gurumurtam to Virupaksha Cave (1899–1916) to Skandasramam Cave (1916–22), he was the instrument of divine protection for Sri Ramana, who would be without consciousness of the body and lost in inner bliss most of the time. Besides physical protection, Palaniswami would also beg for alms, cook and prepare

meals for himself and Sri Ramana, and care for him as needed.

Gradually, despite Sri Ramana's silence, austerities, and desire for privacy, he attracted attention from visitors, and some became his disciples. Eventually, his family discovered his whereabouts. First his uncle Nelliappa Iyer came and pled with him to return home, promising that the family would not disturb his ascetic life. Sri Ramana sat motionless and eventually his uncle gave up. It was at the temple at Pavalakkunru, one of the eastern spurs of Arunachala, that his mother and brother Nagaswami found him in December 1898. Day after day his mother begged him to return, but no amount of weeping and pleading had any visible effect on him. She appealed to the devotees who had gathered around, trying to get them to intervene on her behalf until one requested that Sri Ramana write out his response to his mother. He then wrote on a piece of paper, "In accordance with the prarabdha ( destiny to be worked out in current life) of each, the One whose function it is to ordain makes each to act. What will not happen will never happen, whatever effort one may put forth. And what will happen will not fail to happen, however much one may seek to prevent it. This is certain. The part of wisdom therefore is to stay quiet." At this point his mother returned to Madurai saddened.

Soon after this, in February 1899, Sri Ramana moved further up Arunachala where he stayed briefly in Satguru Cave and Guhu Namasivaya Cave before taking up residence at Virupaksha Cave for the next 17 years, using Mango Tree cave during the summers (except for a six month period at Pachaiamman Koil during the plague epidemic).

In 1902, a government official named Sivaprakasam Pillai, with writing slate in hand, visited the young Swami in the hope of obtaining answers to questions about "How to know one's true identity". The fourteen questions put to the young Swami and his answers were Sri Ramana's first teachings on Self-enquiry, the method for which he became widely known, and were eventually published as 'Nan Yar?', or in English, 'Who am I?'.

Several visitors came to him and many became his disciples. Kavyakantha Sri Ganapati Sastri (literally, "One who has poetry in his throat"), a Vedic scholar of repute in his age with a deep knowledge of the Srutis, Sastras, Tantras, Yoga, and Agama systems, came to visit Sri Ramana in 1907. After receiving instructions from him, he proclaimed him as Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi. Sri Ramana was known by this name from then on.

**<b> Discovery by Westerners </b>**

It was in 1911 that the first westerner, Frank Humphreys, then a policeman stationed in India, discovered Sri Ramana and wrote articles about him which were first published in The International Psychic Gazette in 1913. However, Sri Ramana only became relatively well known in and out of India after 1934 when Paul Brunton, having first visited Sri Ramana in January 1931, published the book A Search in Secret India, which became very popular. Resulting visitors included Paramahansa Yogananda, Somerset Maugham (whose 1944 novel The Razor's Edge models its spiritual guru after Sri Ramana), Mercedes de Acosta and Arthur Osborne. Sri Ramana's relative fame spread throughout the 1940s. However, even as his fame spread, Sri Ramana was noted for his belief in the power of silence and his relatively sparse use of speech, as well as his lack of concern for fame or criticism. His lifestyle remained that of a renunciate.

### <b> Mother's Arrival </b>

In 1912, while in the company of disciples, he was observed to undergo about a 15 minute period where he showed the outward symptoms of death, which reportedly resulted thereafter in an enhanced ability to engage in practical affairs while remaining in Sahaja Nirvikalpa Samadhi. In 1916 his mother Alagammal and younger brother Nagasundaram joined Sri Ramana at Tiruvannamalai and followed him when he moved to the larger Skandashram Cave, where Bhagavan lived until the end of 1922. His mother took up the life of a sannyasin, and Sri Ramana began to give her intense, personal instruction, while she took charge of the Ashram kitchen. Ramana's younger brother, Nagasundaram, then became a sannyasi, assuming the name Niranjanananda, becoming known as Chinnaswami (the younger Swami).

During this period, Sri Ramana composed The Five Hymns to Arunachala, his magnum opus in devotional lyric poetry. Of them the first is Akshara Mana Malai (the Marital Garland of Letters). It was composed in Tamil in response to the request of a devotee for a song to be sung while wandering in the town for alms. The Marital Garland tells in glowing symbolism of the love and union between the human soul and God, expressing the attitude of the soul that still aspires.

### <b> Mother's Death </b>

Beginning in 1920, his mother's health deteriorated. On the day of her death, May 19, 1922, at about 8 a.m., Sri Ramana sat beside her. It is reported that throughout the day, he had his right hand on her heart, on the right side of the chest, and his left hand on her head, until her death around 8:00 p.m., when Sri Ramana pronounced her liberated, literally, 'Adangi Vittadu, Addakam' ('absorbed'). Later Sri Ramana said of this: "You see, birth experiences are mental. Thinking is also like that, depending on sanskaras (tendencies). Mother

was made to undergo all her future births in a comparatively short time.". Her body was enshrined in a samadhi, on top of which a Siva lingam was installed and given the name Mathrubutheswara [Siva manifesting as mother]. To commemorate the anniversary of Ramana Maharshi's mother's death, a puja, known as her Aradhana or Mahapooja, is performed every year at the Mathrubutheswara.

After this, Sri Ramana often walked from Skandashram to her tomb. Then in December 1922, he came down from Skandashram permanently and settled at the base of the Hill, where Sri Ramanasramam is still located today. At first, there was only one hut at the samadhi, but in 1924 two huts, one opposite the samadhi and the other to the north were erected.

### <b> The Later Years </b>

The Sri Ramanasramam grew to include a library, hospital, post-office and many other facilities. Sri Ramana displayed a natural talent for planning building projects. Annamalai Swami gave detailed accounts of this in his reminiscences. Until 1938, Annamalai Swami was entrusted with the task of supervising the projects and received his instructions from Ramana directly.

The 1940s saw many of Sri Ramana's most ardent devotees pass away. These included Echamma (1945), attendant Madhavaswami (1946), Ramanatha Brahmachari (1946), Mudaliar Granny and Lakshmi (1948). Sri Ramana was noted for his unusual love of animals and his assertion that liberation was possible not only for animals but also for plants: Ramana once spoke of a thorn bush gaining liberation by the Grace of a great saint. On the morning of June 18, 1948, he realized his favorite cow Lakshmi was near death. Just as he had with his own Mother, Sri Ramana placed his hands on her head and over her heart. The cow died peacefully at 11:30 a.m. and Sri Ramana later declared that the cow was liberated.

In 1939, at age 21, U.G. Krishnamurti met with Ramana Maharshi. U.G. related that he asked Ramana, "This thing called moksha, can you give it to me?" - to which Ramana Maharshi purportedly replied, "I can give it, but can you take it?". This answer completely altered U.G.'s perceptions of the "spiritual path" and its practitioners, and he never again sought the counsel of "those religious people". Later U.G. would say that Maharshi's answer - which he had originally perceived as "arrogant" - put him "back on track". "That Ramana was a real McCoy," said U.G. Krishnamurti.

Sri Ramana was noted for his belief in the power of silence and relatively sparse

use of speech. He led a modest and renunciate life, and depended on visitors and devotees for the barest necessities. However, a popular image of him as a person who spent most of his time doing nothing except silently sitting in samadhi is highly inaccurate, according to David Godman, who has written extensively about Sri Ramana. According to Godman, from the period when an Ashram began to rise around him after his mother arrived into his later years, Sri Ramana was actually quite active in Ashram activities until his health failed.

### <b> Final Years </b>

In November 1948, a tiny cancerous lump was found on the Maharshi's arm and was removed in February 1949 by the ashram doctor. Soon, another growth appeared, and another operation was done by an eminent surgeon in March, 1949, with Radium applied. The doctor told Sri Ramana that a complete amputation of the arm to the shoulder was required to save his life, but he refused. A third and fourth operation were performed in August and December 1949, but only weakened him. Other systems of medicine were then tried; all proved fruitless and were stopped by the end of March when devotees gave up all hope. To devotees who begged him to cure himself for the sake of his followers, Sri Ramana is said to have replied, "Why are you so attached to this body? Let it go" and, "Where can I go? I am here."

By April 1950, Sri Ramana was too weak to go to the hall, and visiting hours were limited. Visitors would file past the small room where he spent his final days to get one final glimpse. Swami Satyananda, the attendant at the time, reports, "On the evening of 14 April 1950, we were massaging Sri Ramana's body. At about 5 o'clock, he asked us to help him to sit up. Precisely at that moment devotees started chanting 'Arunachala Siva, Arunachala Siva'. When Sri Ramana heard this his face lit up with radiant joy. Tears began to flow from his eyes and continued to flow for a long time. I was wiping them from time to time. I was also giving him spoonfuls of water boiled with ginger. The doctor wanted to administer artificial respiration but Sri Ramana waved it away. Sri Ramana's breathing became gradually slower and slower and at 8:47 p.m. it subsided quietly." Henri Cartier-Bresson, the French photographer, who had been staying at the ashram for a fortnight prior to Sri Ramana's death, recounted the event:

"It is a most astonishing experience. I was in the open space in front of my house, when my friends drew my attention to the sky, where I saw a vividly-luminous shooting star with a luminous tail, unlike any shooting star I had before seen, coming from the South, moving slowly across the sky and, reaching the top of Arunachala, disappeared behind it. Because of its singularity we all guessed its import and immediately looked at our watches – it was 8:47 – and then raced to

the Ashram only to find that our premonition had been only too sadly true: the Master had passed into parinirvana at that very minute." Ramana Maharshi was 71 years old at the time of his death.

Cartier-Bresson took some of the last photographs of Sri Ramana on April 4, 1950 and went on to take pictures of the mahasamadhi preparations. The New York Times concluded: "Here in India, where thousands of so-called holy men claim close tune with the infinite, it is said that the most remarkable thing about Ramana Maharshi was that he never claimed anything remarkable for himself, yet became one of the most loved and respected of all."

# Bliss

`...Bliss is not something to be got.

On the other hand you are always Bliss.

This desire [for Bliss] is born of the sense of incompleteness.

To whom is this sense of incompleteness?

Enquire. In deep sleep you were blissful.

Now you are not so.

What has interposed between that Bliss and this non-bliss?

It is the ego.

Seek its source and find you are Bliss.

Ramana Maharshi

# Forty Verses On Reality 1-10

1.

From our perception of the world there follows acceptance of a unique  
First Principle possessing various powers.

Pictures of name and form,  
the person who sees,  
the screen on which he sees,  
and the light by which he sees:  
he himself is all of these.

□

2.

All religions postulate the three fundamentals,  
the world, the soul, and God,  
but it is only the one Reality  
that manifests Itself as these three.

One can say, 'The three are really three' only so long as the ego lasts.  
Therefore, to inhere in one's own Being, where the 'I',  
or ego, is dead, is the perfect State.

□

3.

'The world is real.'

'No, it, is a mere illusory appearance.'

'The world is conscious.'

'No.'

'The world is happiness.'

'No.'

What use is it to argue thus?

That State is agreeable to all, wherein, having given up the objective outlook,  
one knows one's Self and loses all notions either of unity or duality,  
of oneself and the ego.

□

4.

If one has form oneself,  
the world and God also will appear to have form,  
but if one is formless,  
who is it that sees those forms, and how?  
Without the eye can any object be seen?  
The seeing Self is the Eye,  
and that Eye is the Eye of Infinity.

□

5.

The body is a form composed of the five-fold sheath;  
therefore, all the five sheaths are implied in the term, body.

Apart from the body does the world exist?

Has anyone seen the world without the body?

6.

The world is nothing more than an embodiment of the objects  
perceived by the five sense-organs.

Since, through these five sense-organs,

a single mind perceives the world,

the world is nothing but the mind.

Apart from the mind can there be a world?

7.

Although the world and knowledge thereof rise and set together  
it is by knowledge alone that the world is made apparent.

That Perfection wherein the world and knowledge

thereof rise and set, and which shines without rising and setting,  
is alone the Reality.

8.

Under whatever name and form one may worship the Absolute Reality,  
it is only a means for realizing It without name and form.

That alone is true realization,

wherein one knows oneself in relation to that Reality,

attains peace and realizes one's identity with it.

9.

The duality of subject and object and trinity of seer, sight, and seen can exist  
only if supported by the One.

If one turns inward in search of that One Reality they fall away.

Those who see this are those who see Wisdom.

They are never in doubt.

10.

Ordinary knowledge is always accompanied by ignorance,  
and ignorance by knowledge;

the only true Knowledge is that by which one knows the Self  
through enquiring whose is the knowledge and ignorance.



## Forty Verses On Reality 11-20

11.

Is it not, rather, ignorance to know all else  
without knowing oneself, the knower?  
As soon as one knows the Self,  
which is the substratum of knowledge and ignorance,  
knowledge and ignorance perish.

□

12.

That alone is true Knowledge  
which is neither knowledge nor ignorance.  
What is known is not true Knowledge.  
Since the Self shines with nothing else to know or to make known,  
It alone is Knowledge.  
It is not a void.

□

13.

The Self, which is Knowledge,  
is the only Reality.  
Knowledge of multiplicity is false knowledge.  
This false knowledge, which is really ignorance,  
cannot exist apart from the Self,  
which is Knowledge-Reality.  
The variety of gold ornaments is unreal,  
since none of them can exist  
without the gold of which they are all made.

□

14.

If the first person, I, exists,  
then the second and third persons, you  
and he, will also exist.  
By enquiring into the nature of the I, the I perishes.  
With it 'you' and 'he' also perish.  
The resultant state,  
which shines as Absolute Being,  
is one's own natural state, the Self.

15.

Only with reference to the present  
can the past and the future exist.

They too, while current, are the present.  
To try to determine the nature of the past  
and the future while ignoring the present  
is like trying to count without the unit.

16.

Apart, from us where is time and where is space?  
If we are bodies, we are involved in time and space, but are we?  
We are one and identical now, then, and forever, here, and everywhere.  
Therefore we, timeless, and spaceless Being, alone are.

17.

To those who have not realized the Self,  
as well as to those who have,  
the word 'I' refers to the body,  
but with this difference,  
that for those who have not realized,  
the 'I' is confined to the body whereas for those  
who have realized the Self within the body  
the 'I' shines as the limitless Self.

18.

To those who have not realized (the Self) as well as to those  
who have the world is real.  
But to those who have not realized,  
Truth is adapted to the measure of the world,  
whereas to those that have,  
Truth shines as the Formless Perfection,  
and as the Substratum of the world.  
This is all the difference between them.

19.

Only those who have no knowledge of the Source of destiny  
and free-will dispute as to which of them prevails.  
They that know the Self as the one Source of destiny  
and free-will are free from both.  
Will they again get entangled in them?

20.

He who sees God without seeing the Self sees only a mental image.  
They say that he who sees the Self sees God.  
He who, having completely lost the ego, sees the Self,

has found God, because the Self does not exist apart from God.

Ramana Maharshi

## Letters To Sri Arunachala - Verses 11-15

11.

When the thieves, the five senses,  
Intrude into my heart,  
Are you not in my heart  
Arunachala!

12.

You, the only one that is;  
Who can enter but you?  
'tis your jugglery indeed,  
Arunachala!

13.

Quintessence of Om,  
Unrivalled, unsurpassed,  
Who can comprehend you,  
Arunachala!

14.

'tis your duty to give me  
Your love like a mother  
And to keep me in your care,  
Arunachala!

15.

Eye of the eye you are!  
Who can see you who sees  
Eyelessly? O see me,  
Arunachala!

Ramana Maharshi

## Letters To Sri Arunachala - Verses 1-5

1.

You root out the ego  
Of those who in their heart  
Dwell on You, O  
Arunachala!

2.

May I and You be one  
Not to be unjoined like  
Azhahu and Sundaram.  
Arunachala!

3.

Lo! Entering my home  
You did drag me out and  
In your heart-cave fettered me.  
Arunachala!

4.

For whose sake did you take me?  
Now if you forsake me  
The world will blame you,  
Arunachala!

5.

Do escape this blame!  
Why then make me think of you?  
Who can leave the other now.  
Arunachala!

Ramana Maharshi

## Letters To Sri Arunachala - Verses 16-20

16.

Magnet and iron wise  
Never cease attracting me  
And be one with me,  
Arunachala!

17.

Ocean of mercy  
In the form of a mount  
Do have mercy on me,  
Arunachala!

18.

Gem of light that shines below  
Above and everywhere,  
My baseness do destroy,  
Arunachala!

19.

Shining as my guru's form,  
My evils do destroy  
And virtuous make me,  
Arunachala!

20.

Stand by me lest I fall  
Prey to the tortures  
Of the sharp cutting snares,  
Arunachala!

Ramana Maharshi

## Letters To Sri Arunachala - Verses 21-25

21.

Though I beg and beg  
You cheat me and yield not,  
Assure me: Fear not!  
Arunachala!

22.

Do not mar your taintless fame  
Of giving unasked,  
Be gracious to me,  
Arunachala!

23.

O fruit in my hand!  
Let me drink your real essence  
And be drunk with bliss,  
Arunachala!

24.

How can I survive after  
Embracing you who with flag  
Raised kill your devotees  
Arunachala!

25.

You of nature angerless!  
What have I done to be  
The target of your wrath.  
Arunachala!

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## Letters To Sri Arunachala - Verses 26-30

26.

Great mount of mercy  
Glorified by Gautama!  
Glance at me and make me yours,  
Arunachala!

27.

All engulfing  
Sun of bright rays!  
Make my mind-lotus bloom,  
Arunachala!

28

It is merely for food  
That I came to you  
As a mendicant!  
Arunachala!

29

Moon of grace! Your cooling rays  
Place on my mind and reveal  
Your words of nectar.  
Arunachala!

30.

Of all vainglory strip me,  
Lay bare and enfold me  
In the glory of your grace,  
Arunachala!

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## Letters To Sri Arunachala - Verses 31-35

31

Join me quietly, there  
Where speech and thought subside  
And the sea of bliss surges.  
Arunachala!

32

O try me no more by  
Playing tricks but show me  
Your form of light,  
Arunachala!

33

'Stead of teaching me  
Jugglery to cheat the world,  
Teach me abidance in Self,  
Arunachala!

34

If you won't unite with me  
My body'll melt away,  
I'll be lost in a flood of tears,  
Arunachala!

35

If you do spurn me  
Karmas will only burn me  
How then shall I be saved  
Arunachala!

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## Letters To Sri Arunachala - Verses 6-10

6.

You who give love greater  
Than one's own mother's  
Is this your love  
Arunachala!

7.

Firmly stand upon  
My mind lest she  
Run away fooling you.  
Arunachala!

8.

Do reveal your beauty  
So the world-roaming mind  
Sees you ever and is stilled,  
Arunachala!

9.

Is this your bravery  
If you don't unite now  
With me destroying me,  
Arunachala!

10.

O why do you sleep  
When all else drags me?  
Does this become you,  
Arunachala!

Ramana Maharshi

# Sat Darshan

As in a well of water deep,  
Dive deep with Reason cleaving sharp.  
With speech, mind and breath restrained,  
Exploring thus mayest thou discover  
    The real source of ego-self.  
The mind through calm in deep plunge enquiries.  
That alone is real quest for the Self.

Ramana Maharshi

# The Self Is Known To Everyone

The Self is known to every one but not clearly.  
You always exist.

The Be-ing is the Self. 'I am' is the name of God.

Of all definitions of God,

none is indeed so well put as the Biblical statement  
'I AM THAT I AM' in Exodus (Chap.3).

There are other statements,

such as Brahmaivaham, Aham Brahmasmi and Soham.

But none is so direct as the name JEHOVAH = I AM.

The Absolute Being is what is—It is the Self.

It is God. Knowing the Self, God is known.

In fact God is none other than the Self

Ramana Maharshi

# There Is Nothing New To Get

There is nothing new to get.  
You have on the other hand,  
to get rid of your ignorance,  
which makes you think you are other than Bliss.  
For whom is this ignorance?  
It is to the ego.  
Trace the source of the ego.  
Then the ego is lost and Bliss remains over.  
It is eternal You are That, here and now...  
This is the master key for solving all doubts.  
The doubts arise in the mind.  
The mind is born of the ego.  
The ego rises from the Self.  
Search the source of the ego  
and the Self is revealed.  
That alone remains.  
The universe is only expanded Self.  
It is not different from the Self...

Ramana Maharshi

# To Sri Ganesha

Him who begot you as a child you made  
Into a beggar; as a child yourself  
You then lived everywhere just to support  
Your own huge belly; I too am a child.  
Oh Child God in that niche! Encountering one  
Born after you, is your heart made of stone?  
I pray you look at me!

Ramana Maharshi