

# Saddharshanam, Class 6

Greetings All,

**Shloka # 7:**

**Apart from the body made up of five sheaths, does the world shine? Let people explain. Without that five fold body who can perceive this world?**

Continuing his teaching and refreshing our memory of last class, Swamy Paramarthananda said, in all these shlokas Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi is continuing his campaign against Ahamkara. This requires a big effort, as Ahamkara, which is a hero today, is actually a villain. Ahamkara has been hero for many lives. All our struggles are to support and nourish Ahamkara. Now Vedanta asks you to change your attitude. This is difficult for both student and teacher. Even if the student agrees, superficially, he still thinks in terms of improving Ahamkara, not eliminating it. Ahamkara can now claim to have studied Vedanta. So teacher's goal is to attack Ahamkara. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi's effort is focused on Ahamkara enquiry to pull it down. It is a Mithya and can be pulled down only by enquiry. Even as darkness cannot withstand light, so also Ahamkara cannot withstand enquiry.

Ahamkara in Dharma shastra is different from Ahamkara of Vedanta. In Dharma Shastra, Ahamkara means pride and superiority and its absence is humility.

**In Vedanta, however, it means the sense of individuality.**

Even a humble person can have Ahamkara. A humble Agyani still has individuality. This Ahamkara is "I" or individuality that is born out of identification with Pancha Kosha. Because of it Pancha Kosha becomes my localization. Virtues of Pancha Kosha are my virtue. Their humility is my humility. To say I am humble is philosophical Ahamkara as I am identifying with

virtue of Anatma. Identifying with virtues and weaknesses is Ahamkara. This Ahamkara is born out of wrong identification, which is ignorance. Ignorance is the oil that sustains the Ahamkara flame. You dry up this oil by Knowledge. When ignorance goes, Ahamkara also goes.

### **Shloka # 8:**

**The entire world is of the form of sound etc. The existence of sound etc. is illumined by the functions of the sense organs. The existence of sense organs is in the control of the mind. Therefore, we say that the world is made up of the mind.**

We have a vast universe in front of us. It is almost limitless. Scientists have not yet found its limits. It is also expanding. The Lord created it. Even though this vast universe exists, only a very small segment falls in my range of experiences. Universe experienced by me is very small. The “experienced” universe alone binds us and not the vast existing universe. In some part of the world if something happens, I do not know it nor do I respond to it. I am a Jivana mukta with respect to them.

Therefore it is not the existing universe that disturbs me rather the one experienced by me. This experienced universe produces Raga, Dvesha and Asuya. It is this experienced universe that burdens me. We always look preoccupied. What is the preoccupation about? It is about my wife, husband, children, home etc. that bothers us. Therefore Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi says experienced universe (Jiva Srishti) is the bondage and not the existing universe (Ishwara Srishti)

The experienced universe is there due to Ahamkara. Prameya (experienced universe) is there due to Pramata (Ahamkara). To tackle this binding universe go to Ahamkara, which is its reverse. The Ahamkara determines the quality of the experienced universe. If Ahamkara is Satva, the experienced universe is also Satva Pradhana. Duryodhana and Dharmaputra

went back to check on the world. After returning, Dharmaputra said people were all wonderful, while Duryodhana said they were all treacherous. Thus, quality of Ahamkara determines quality of experienced universe.

Don't struggle with universe rather tackle Ahamkara. Swami Chinmayananda told a story. A boy was disturbing his father. Father tore up the newspaper and asked him to put it together. The boy brought the paper back after a short time. When asked how he did it so fast, he said in the back of the page was a picture of Tendulkar. He assembled the picture quickly. The world is also a jigsaw puzzle. Reverse the world and it is Ahamkara. Tackle Ahamkara. This is the essence of the shloka.

Details of shloka:

Universe is experienced in a five-fold manner. They are through Sound, feeling, form, taste and smell ( Shabda, Sparsha, Roopa, Rasa and Gandha).

How to prove the existence of the world? Existence is proved only through operation of the five sense organs. World is called Prapancha or that which exists in five fold segments. Each segment is distinct and present. Eye cannot hear sound. Thus, each segment reports separately. Existence of world is dependent on sense organs. Thus, for a totally blind person, form and color don't exist.

Existence of sense organs depends on the mind. How? Sense organs can serve only when backed by the mind. Suppose in middle of a class if mind strays somewhere, even the ears don't listen at that time.

Sense organs are under power of mind. When mind is withdrawn, sense organs don't sense. Existence of world is dependent on sense organs. Sense organs are dependent on mind. Thus, existence of world depends on mind. They are interconnected, like two sides of one coin. This mind is called Ahamkara. The sense of individuality is located in the mind. Two methods are

used to clarify this:

1. Technically: Ahamkara is mind with reflected consciousness. (RM Reflected mind+ RC Reflected Consciousness).
2. Practically: Mind alone is the “I” sense because only when mind is active individuality “I” is alive.

In waking and dream, the mind is functioning. I have individuality as localized “I”. Therefore Samsara is also there in both states.

In Sushupthi, when mind is temporarily dissolved, “I ” is gone, my bio data is dissolved, Ahamkara is dissolved and world is also dissolved. Mind and Ahamkara are synonymous. Therefore Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi concludes that universe is a product of the mind. Therefore, it is a product of Ahamkara as well.

#### **Shloka # 9:**

**The world arises and sets with the “I” thought. Therefore, this world is illumined by the “I” thought. The Reality is the abode of the birth and death of the “I” thought and the world. It is One, complete and without birth and decay.**

It is further explanation of previous shloka.

Since Ahamkara and universe are interconnected, one proves the other. So, both arrive simultaneously and both disappear simultaneously as well. In Jagrat and Swapna states Ahamkara rises, as does Universe. In Sushupthi both of them dissolve.

The world that arises in front of you, it is you who allowed it to rise. By the same logic Samsara dissolves with Ahamkara. Elimination of Samsara means elimination of Ahamkara.

In deep sleep both dissolve. Unfortunately it is a temporary and dormant state. God has created this state to give us a taste of Moksha. Thus, Moksha equals sleep. Everything, Papam,

punyam etc. are all gone in this state. The moment you wake up they all comes back. Enquiry, however, resolves them permanently.

The question comes, if Ahamkara is resolved, will it be suicidal?

Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi says Ahamkara is the villain. Once it is destroyed the real hero, Atman, emerges. The real "I" emerges. Removal of Ahamkara is not suicidal. Many philosophers say Advaita is suicidal. You are only removing Pseudo "I".

What is the real "I"?

The real "I" is the eternal principle, consciousness, non-dual, and division-less one. It is free from Punarapi Jananam and Punarapi Maranam. It is free from birth and death. It is Poornam while Ahamkara is always wanting or Apoornam. The real I is the substratum in which Ahamkara and world dissolve. Subject and Object are resolved in the real "I".

### **Discussion & Take away:**

The question was asked how does one practice Devarpanam? Many answers were given, all interesting one's. I was taken by Dr. Katta's answer. He said Swamiji has answered this question in the past. Swamiji says, pick one activity for Devarpanam. Say, before eating any food commit to performing Devarapnam. Practice this one activity, every time you eat, for a month or two till it becomes second nature. Then pick another activity to emulate. This way soon your daily activities will all become Devarpanam. Do consider adopting this idea.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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# Saddharshanam, Class 5

Greetings All,

**Shloka # 5:**

**“ Arguments that this is real or false, sentient or inert, sorrow or joy, are to no purpose. The state free from all thoughts, without “I” notion and the world, is supreme state desired.”**

Continuing his teaching on Saddarshana, Swami Paramarthananda said, even though Brahman is Adishtanam of everything, Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi says Jiva Vichara is most important. Jagat and Ishwara Vichara do not address Ahamkara directly.

Therefore, even after years of enquiry, Ahamkara may continue to be strong, as Samsara continues even after study of scriptures. This is because the study has not attacked Ahamkara. Samsara is located in Ahamkara. The existence of Samara means Ahamkara is still there. So, the study may not have attacked Ahamkara. As per Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi all studies are useless unless Ahamkara is attacked.

Only in Jiva Vichara is Ahamkara falsified and dissolved. With this Jagat and Ishwara also fall. The result of this enquiry should be a division-less state where Ahamkara is absent. All problems belong to Ahamkara or I. The desirable state is one in which there is no division (first person, second person and third person; Pramata, Prameya and Pramanam; Jiva, Jagat and Ishwara). In this state, it does not mean perceptuality is absent. You still see the world, however, there is no more factual division. Division is understood as Mithya. They are understood as Nama and Roopa. I see only water, not the wave and the ocean anymore. The world is not seen as real. It is

that state of wisdom in which the world is not seen as a separate thing. One does not see localized Ahamkara or finite I. Subject Object division is falsified. Such a state of Gyanam is Paramam. It is a state of Advaita Gyanam. In the state of advaitam, one is in a state of experience. State of experience is always a temporary one and the experience will be replaced. Advaita Anubhava is false as Dvaitam is present in potential form. Any experience is temporary and displaceable by next experience. But advaita is the gyanam that I am non-dual at all times and that divisions are all mithya appearing and disappearing in me. They cannot disturb my Advaita Gyanam. I am ever non-dual. Knowledge alone is supreme, as it will not be disturbed by anything. Just as I am sure that two plus two equals four so also this knowledge is clear and undisturbed. Anubhava advaitam is mithya.

Shloka # 6:

**As long as there is an understanding that I am with form (that is, I am the body) there will be the idea about the world and the Lord that they too have form. If the Self is without form, who will see? That vision is indeed one, Limitless and complete.**

Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi here gives further reasons for performing Jiva Vichara. He says it is Ahamkara that is coloring our perception of the world and god. The way we look at Jagat and Ishwara is dependent upon how you look at yourself. If I cannot change my perception of myself, I cannot change my world and God vision. So to change way we look at ourselves is crucial. As you look at yourself, so you look at God. If you see Self as localized then you will see world and God as localized as well. Here you see God as in Vaikunta.

Citing an example through a small incident, Swamiji said, a young girl said she liked Sonia Gandhi very much. When asked why, she said Sonia dressed very well. She is typical of many teenagers who are very conscious of their dress. She can only

see everything in terms of dresses.

We too are dependant on the Kosha (one of the pancha kosha's) that is dominant in us. I look at the world through this "I". As I look at myself, so I look at the world. The "I" is dominant. Don't try to realize god without realizing your own nature. Nirguna Brahman cannot be understood with Deha Abhimana. So one has to question the notion of "I".

One thinks of improving individuality. One wants to be a happier father, a happier mother etc. I don't want to displace it. Aim of Vedanta is destruction of fatherhood and motherhood and not to improve the father or mother. There is never a finite happy person. Our normal instinct is to decorate our ego. Decorated Ahamkara will always be sickly and dying.

As long as you retain or want to retain your ego, you will continue to have Saguna Jagat and it will give you both pain and pleasure. This is because of Saguna Ahamkara. Your notion of God will also be Saguna Ishwara; nirguna Ishwara will not appeal to you and thus mortality will continue to haunt you.

If you say I will retain Ahamkara and I will still get protection from Saguna Ishwara, that God will bring only destruction. So long as division is there, mortality exists and fear will continue.

So Ishwara has to be nirguna. You should become nirguna Atma. It is like the actor who knows inside that he is someone else in the green room. I am the formless consciousness or the one that transcends form. Idea of localized individual should go. If a person sees that he is really formless consciousness and it is a fact for him, this is nirguna atma.

Bhagawan Ramana Mahraishi does not deal with the procedure for Aham Vichara. For this one has to go Guru Shashtra Upadesha. Many followers of Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi's don't believe they have to go to Shashtra's for Gyanam. This is unfortunate.



Shatras will teach you about that one Vision. Here Jiva Jagat and Ishwara will all be one Sat darshanam. This is only possible in nirguna state. Each Jiva, Jagat and Ishwara become limitless. All three are just words for one truth. Therefore it will be a vision of poornatvam or limitlessness.

### **Shloka # 7:**

**Apart from the body made up of five sheaths, does**

**The world shine? Let people explain. Without the five fold body who can perceive this world?**

Continuing with same topic of Jiva Vichara, Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi says Jagat and Ishwara Vichara will not be meaningful until Ahamkara is attacked. Here one has to understand your self first.

As per this shloka the very perception or existence of world and god are dependent on the arrival of Ahamkara. Therefore in sleep when Ahamkara is temporarily dissolved, the first person is not there; therefore there is also no world, nor is there the cause of the world. Karya Jagat and Karana Ishwara occur only in presence of Ahamkara. Ahamkara is basis for existence of world and God. Ahamkara comes into being with identification with Anatma (body). "I" identify with the body, thus the person comes into being. He then creates God and thus division is created.

Tad Antara means with Deha-abhimana, you descend from your original nature. "I", original one, come into body and take a role. God also takes a role when he takes an Avatara. Our birth is a consequence of our ignorance while God's avatara is not.

Without Deha-abhimana there is no Ahamkara. Anatma consists of Pancha Kosha. Ahamkara rises with Pancha Kosha Abhimana. Without Ahamkara, who will see? Where is the world and god to see? Elimination of division requires elimination of Ahamkara.

Don't try improving Ahmakara. Eliminating it is your goal.

**Summary: (my understanding)**

In the Chaitnayam many forms and names manifest. The forms and names constitute Samsara and include all sentient and insentient beings in it. For some reason a form develops an "I am" sense. This is Ahamkara coming into being. With this now comes identification of this small "I" with the world around it. Through transactions with other forms (mother, father, the dog, the cat etc.) it learns to become a Samsari. In this small "I", thus, a world perception is created called Jagat. In this small "I" a vision of God is also created (Shiva, Vishnu, Allah etc.). This is the saguna Ishwara. We have to go back to our origins, to the time we became a manifestation, when we were a part of Chaitanyam and not a part of the small "I". This is the supreme knowledge. Hence the analogy of being just water (chaitnayam) and not the wave (the body) or ocean (samsara, many forms or bodies) is used.

Let me know if my understanding is correct.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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## **Saddarshanam, Class 3**

Greetings All,

**Shloka # 2:**

**“For those who, being afraid of death, have sought shelter in the conqueror of death, the notion “I’ dies first. Thereafter in them (who are) by nature immortal, where is there any room for the notion of death?”**

Continuing his teaching on Saddarshana, Swami Paramarthananda said, now in the second shloka Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi is talking of the glory of Shiva Puja. People who are afraid of death perform this puja. Lord Shiva is Mrithyunjaya. The story of Markandeya is famous in this regard. It is said that Lord Shiva actually destroyed his Devotee. This apparent contradiction means Lord Shiva destroys the notion that “ I am a devotee”. This notion is a Mithya. So, by giving him knowledge he destroys the notion that “ I am a devotee” as it is the cause of division. Devotee needs a deity. I am a Bhakta, worshipping a master. This division is a cause of limitation, finitude and plurality. Here one is limited by the other. I am a Devotee notion pre-supposes worshipper worshipped division. Wherever there is division there is mortality.

Thus: Division=Limitation=Death.

Therefore, I am a devotee is a limitation. Ultimately death is the notion that “I am a devotee”. Being a devotee causes mortality, per Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi. He says you should get out of this notion. This notion is Ahamkara. This misconception is Samsara. Once Ahamkara is destroyed the devotee deity duality is also destroyed and you are left with “I am”. The “Kara” part of Ahamkara is destroyed. “I” the consciousness and “am” the Existence alone remain. Mrithyunjaya gives this blessing. Lord destroys Devoteehood or he makes him one with himself. There is neither deity nor devotee.

Some terms used in the shloka:

Aasrit: Refugee or shelter seeker. Death is chasing every

Jiva. Every moment death is attacking some part or other of our body. The world cannot give us security. So one has to take refuge in Shiva. Even Sugriva hides from Vaali in a mountain where Sugriva cannot go. We are all Sugrivas.

Mrithyubhihi: means fear of death. Shiva is destroyer of the fear of death. Yama causes death. Shiva destroys Ahamkara. A physical weapon cannot destroy Ahamkara. It is a notion born out of ignorance. Sad-Adarshanam is cause of Ahamkara. It will go away once ignorance goes away or through knowledge. So Shiva arranges for Guru Shashtra Upadesha or Shiva himself comes as a Guru and imparts the knowledge. Bheda Nasha is moksha. Ahamkara must go then fear goes. After death of Ahamkara, the devotee is left with "I am". "I am" is existence consciousness and it is immortality. It is my own nature. Every devotee discovers his immortal nature. The basis of the fear goes away. I am afraid of... what? The "what" is now gone. The notion goes. The Ahamkara Karanam is dead. So, perform Shiva puja and you will get opportunity for knowledge. For Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi, Shiva was the local deity of Arunachala, hence his worship of Shiva. Any deity can be worshipped, says Swamiji.

### **Shloka # 3:**

**"The primary cause of the world and the " I" is accepted by all to be some Lord with immeasurable power. Here, in this picture, that One alone has become the seen, the seer, the canvas and the light also."**

Now the teaching regarding the discovery of the division-less truth begins. I should know that all divisions are just Nama and Roopa in one consciousness. Jiva is only a Nama and Roopa. Jagat is also a Nama and Roopa. Ishwara is also only a Nama and Roopa. This is Vedanta Shashtra. Reducing all divisions to Nama and Roopa can be done by analysis or enquiring even one of the divisions. Thus, analysis of the water's wave, bubble or the ocean, any one of them, will lead

to the truth. Analyze one ornament and you will understand Gold. Jiva, Jagat and Ishwara Vichara will lead to Adishtanam. Self Realization is God Realization.

Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi's approach is through Jiva Vichara. He considers it the best approach. Jiva is also Ahamkara. So study of Ahamkara is strongly recommended. Why so? The reasons are:

1. Ahamkara is most intimately available among the three. Body is closest to us. Its proximity also helps.
2. Of the three, Ahamkara is most solid. We are intensely attached to Mamakara or my love for individuality. It is a difficult one to tackle. So, it must be attacked directly. In the other two, the attack is indirect and not strong enough. In this case it may make you an informed Ahamkara. So, a direct attack on Ahamkara is best approach.

Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi gives most importance to Ahamkara Vichara. While Upanishad's spend a lot of time on Jagat and Ishwara. In his teachings, he repeatedly talks about Ahamkara Vichara. He also repeatedly talks about the goal of this Vichara. But, surprisingly he does not elaborate on the process of Ahamkara Vichara. He is silent on the process.

This silence can be interpreted in two ways. First, it can be an approval or disapproval. Citing an example of Budha, Swamiji says, some devotees asked Budha about God. But Budha remained silent. From this silence several branches of Buddhism have come into being. One said it was because of nihilism or he did not believe in God. Another said it was because God exists but cannot be expressed. A third one said he probably did not know the answer.

Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi does not elaborate on the process of Ahamkara Vichara. Some interpret it as meditation on "Who am I", repeatedly. This is an unfortunate interpretation. The

Ahamkara Vichara, as per tradition, requires a Guru shastra upadesha. In olden days Vedas were Karna Parampara. When vedas were printed, they did not mark the swaras in the texts. This has resulted in chanting the Vedas wrongly. So, one has to learn from a Guru of Parampara. Therefore Guru Shatra Upadesha must supplement Ahamkara Vichara. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi's teaching with Guru Shatra Upadesha will lay out the process of Ahamkara Vichara.

The following shlokas talk of the goal of this Vichara. The goal is to arrive at the division-less truth and reduce the division-less truth into Nama and Roopa. The division is Jiva, Jagat and Ishwara. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi reduces the three divisions to two, namely the Subject (Jiva) and the Object (Jagat). Jiva is first person while Jagat is second and third person, both. He does not mention Ishwara. Brahman is Adishtanam of Jiva and Jagat. So, what happened to Ishwara? Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi uses Brahman as a synonym for Ishwara. Nondual Existence is Ishwara. Ishwara has two meanings. They are:

1. Ishwara as one member of plurality that is Jiva, Jagat and Ishwara. Here Ishwara is only a Nama and Roopa.
2. Ishwara as Brahman or Adishtanam. Here he is Satyam.

Ishwara as an object is Mithya. Ishwara as an Adishtanam is Satyam. Further clarification of this Shloka was provided. Some word meanings are:

Idanam: Adishtanam;

Aham: Ahamkara;

Prabhu: Brahman;

Apar: Infinite power to manifest plurality or Maya Shakthi.

Saha Eka Prakashaha: That one non-dual Chaitanya is the observer while the Jiva is the observed. In dream I bifurcate

myself into Subject and Object and suffer and enjoy. How can that division-less one divide itself? Infinite cannot become finite. Reality is that It appears as if it is divided. Waker divides himself in dream only notionally, not in reality.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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## Saddarshanam, Class 2

Greetings All,

Continuing his teaching on Saddarshana, Swami Paramarthananda said, Saddarshana means Brahma Vidya. The text is so called because it deals with this knowledge. The teaching is based on the Prasthan Trayam (Upanishad, Gita and Brahma Sutra). Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi is an Acharya of our tradition. The study of this text should be based on Sruthi Yukthi Anubhava. Sruthi means Vedas, Yukthi means Reasoning and Anubhava means our daily experiences. This is the traditional method of teaching.

Shloka # 1:

**“ Can there be thoughts of the existence of objects without the existence principle? (No.) This existence named as Hrt is in the heart itself, free from thought. How can we remember that one immeasurable Existence? Its remembrance is in the form of firm abidance in It.”**

The first two shlokas are Mangala Shlokas. Mangala shloka can be divided into three types; They are:

- Ashirvadanam
- Namaskara, offering prayer
- Vastunidesha roopa or statement of truth.

Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi is using the third type of mangala shloka. Many facts are there and stated. Spiritual fact stated here is definition of Brahma-lakshanam. Brahma is the only reality as the division-less, Sat principle. Brahman is the Adishtana of Jiva, Jagat and Ishwara. Satyam, Gyanam, and Anantham (divisionless & infinite) are Brahman.

Brahman is existent Satyam. Whenever we experience an object we also experience something else too. Generally we do not talk about this second thing. Whenever you experience your body you experience body and another thing that is taken for granted. It is the life principle that pervades the body. It is known only when life goes out. **"It is the existence of the object."** It is experienced as, there is a book, a man, a child etc. "There is" is the existence principle that we experience with every object.

Thus: Man + existence=Man existence or existence experience.

If you have existence experience, it (existence principle) is possible only because it pervades every object. If existence principle is not permeating every object you cannot experience the object.

So, what is this principle?

- Existence principle is not part, product or property of any object.
- It is an independent entity but lends existence to objects.
- It is not limited by boundaries of the object and it survives even when the object ends. The surviving pure



principle is not perceivable.

The experience of existence is experienced in “there is” of the principle.

Providing some definitions from the shloka Swamiji says,

Vihaya means without inherence

San means existence principle

Santam means without existence principle

Sat pratyaya means existence and its experience

Every experience presupposes an object of experience. Thus, man-experience presupposes a man outside. This experience principle is called Satyam Brahman.

Now, Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi talks about Gyana Brahman.

The existence that permeates has to permeate “me”, the subject as well. So, every time I say, “I am” it reveals presence of existence in me. It is there in the heart of me, within my mind. In the mind, it is also available as the Consciousness, Witness or Awareness principle. When it is conscious in mind, it is called Hrid or witness consciousness. In mind there are innumerable thoughts. So, consciousness is available in association with every thought that arises in mind. Just as every person in room is enveloped in the light, the moment he or she enters the room, so also thoughts are coated with consciousness. This consciousness associated with thought is called an experience. Thus, we have, say Pot- thought, which is pot experience or Man-thought which is man experience. It is available infinitely in thoughts. In objects outside it is called Existence. In mind it is called Experience.

Every experience reveals Brahman inside. Thought consciousness is associated with every thought. The five principles governing this Consciousness are:

1. It is in every thought but it is not a part, product or property of it.
2. It pervades every thought and makes it a live experience.
3. Consciousness is not limited by boundaries of thought.
4. It survives departure of all thoughts.
5. The surviving consciousness is blankness. It alone is the experience. The surviving consciousness cannot be objectified. It is called Chinta Rahitaha. It is not connected to any thought it pervades, though it pervades it all. If connected it would die with each thought. It survives every thought. Consciousness is called Asunga.

This is called Gyana Brahma or Chit or the Existence Consciousness that pervades every thought and not limited by boundaries of thought. This existence consciousness is non-dual or undivided. Thoughts are divided consciousness is not. Objects are divided Existence is not. Thus, Existence Consciousness is not limited.

If it is one undivided principle, why call it two names, Existence and Consciousness? If you can have many names why can't Brahman have many names? Many names do not mean anything. Brahman with Objects is called Existence. Brahman with thought is called Experience. Brahman with thought or experience is called consciousness. So, when it is outside it is called Existence. When it is in mind it is called Consciousness.

The two different names are of one Brahman.

We have said, associated with object, it is Existence and associated with Subject, it is Experience. Suppose both Object and Subject are removed? What is Brahman? Here it is the Turium state, the silence. It is division-less Anantam.

Ameyam in shloka means unobjectifiable. If in division-less Brahman there can be no subject or object duality it is called

not an object of knowledge or not objectifiable. So, don't ask how to know the division-less Brahman. Satyam, Gyanam, Ameyam, Anantam are all descriptions of the Brahman.

Now Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi asks, how can it be an object of meditation if we cannot objectify it? What is Nidhidhyasanam? And, what is Atma Gyanam, Brahma Gyanam? Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi says meditation on Brahman is only abidance in Brahman without objectification.

Nishta means Abidance. What does this mean?

It means abidance in the knowledge that "I am" Brahman. This Brahman need not, should not and cannot be objectified.

What is abidance in knowledge?

Abidance is non-forgetfulness of the knowledge in and through all transactions. Firm abidance means even during transaction one does not forget.

What do you mean by non-forgetfulness? Does it mean repetition of word or thought?

It is not repetition of word or thought. It means effortless availability of this knowledge. Whenever you want it, it is your. Just like your name, you respond immediately. If this knowledge is accessible to you at all times, during all transactions, it is Brahma Nishta that "I am Brahman". This is the idea when we say Brahman is Satyam, Gyanam, Ameyam, and Anantam.

Shloka # 2:

**"For those who, being afraid of death, have sought shelter in the conqueror of death, the "I" notion dies first. Thereafter in them (who are) by nature immortal, where is there any room for the notion of death?"**

This is also a statement of a fact. This is called Shiva Puja

Mahima. Glorifying Shiva worship by talking of this puja's utility to a Samsari.

Who is a Samsari? An ignorant person who is ignorant of the division-less Brahman and as such remains in field of division that is Jiva (first person)-Jagat (second person)-Ishwara (third person).

Because he is in division or in finitude or in limitation, he fears mortality or fear itself. This Samsari is in grip of fear or sense of insecurity. Mrityubhihi means sense of death. Constant friend of Samsari is fear. Such Samsari's if they worship Shiva to get security, what will happen?

For Shiva, Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi, gives the name Mrithyunjaya or destroyer of mortality, insecurity and division. Markandeyapuranam is about Markandeya embracing Shiva Linga upon which Lord Shiva drove Lord Yama away. Markandeya thus became a chranjeevi.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

With Best Wishes,

# Saddarshanam, Class 1

Greetings All,

Starting the teaching and providing an introduction to Saddarshana, Swami Paramarthananda said, this book is a relatively small work of Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi. He was a great Mahatma who lived quite recently in Tiruannamalai. He has presented his teachings in several languages. Saddarshana was originally written in Tamil and called “Ullathu Narpathu” or the One truth in forty verses. The Tamil version is very deep. Vasishta Ganapathy Muni, a disciple of Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi translated this Tamil work into Sanskrit. This book is called Sad- Darshana or Knowledge of the Truth or Brahma Gyanam in forty-four shlokas.

We look upon Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi as a Vedanta Acharya. We don't know if he had a formal Guru or not. We know he has studied Vedantic texts very well. We also see that content of all his teachings are identical with teachings of Vedas and Upanishads. It can be said that Ramana's teachings are from Upanishads alone as such he is considered a Vedantist. Some of his followers have tried to create a cult around him saying his teachings are unique and different from traditional teachings. We should avoid falling into this trap. If we go in that direction we will miss a lot.

If, however, we look at him as one of the Vedantic Acharyas and study him in the traditional manner we will get more benefits. Then, we can also call this book a Vedantic text or a Prakarana Granthaha similar to Viveka Chudamani or Tatva Bodha.

Once we have decided this, the method of study is also decided. There is a traditional method of studying of Prakarana Granthaha called Sruthi Yukthi Anubhava. Sruthi means Vedas, Yukthi means reasoning and Anubhava means our experiences in all three states of waking dream and sleep. Anubhava does not mean mystic experience. Every Prakarana Grantha must be approached in this manner.

Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi has his own way of presenting Vedantic teachings. So, we should approach his work as a traditional Vedantic teaching.

The fundamental assessment of Vedanta is that all human problems are due to division (bheda) and duality (dvaita). This idea is beautifully presented in Isha Vasa Upanishad. One who see's non-duality has no sorrow or conflict or illusions. So, the fundamental lesson of Vedanta is:

Dvaita: is Dukha

Advaita: is Ananda

The next lesson of Vedanta is that division is duality or plurality that expresses in three-fold forms:

- "I", the Subject, is the individual experiencing this world, a victim of worldly experiences, who gets frustrated and helpless or becomes a Samsari. This localized Subject "I" or Ahmakara is the first division. This division is also known as "Jiva". It is in first person singular.
- Second is the world "I" confronts. Once I am aware of myself as an individual, next I see the World. It is intimately available to me as an object. This objective world is the second object. It is called "Jagat", the persecuting world. This is presented as "You" or as an object in the second person singular. You equals the World, includes the living and inert objects, even though we don't address them (inert objects) as You.

Inert objects are also objectifiable.

- Once I am available and the World is available, in case of human beings, a third entity enters the picture. Animals do not have this problem. Animals have only Subject and objects. So, how does the third entity come? When man confronts the world his intellect looks for a cause due to his thinking and enquiring intellect. A tree, a cow etc. does not ask for a cause. If an animal is in pain it suffers without asking. Humans, however, will look for a cause of the pain. I have to hunt the cause. This irresistible impulse is within us. So, we ask, how did the world come into being? How did we come into being and so on?

This introduces the third member called God or Ishwara or cause of the world. This God is not available in front of me for objectification or perception. He is called Adokshaya or not available for perception.

Whatever is not available in front of me is referred to as “He”, the third person. Therefore, we refer to God as Avana-indri. In the famous mantra Sahana Vavatu, Sahana means He. So this is the third person.

Recapping the divisions:

First entity is Jiva.

Second entity is Jagat

Third entity is Ishwara.

All these are called Jiva –Jagat- Ishwara.

This division is cause of the problem.

All three members of the division are interconnected.

Uniqueness of Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi’s approach is that all three members of the division are so interconnected that they

always exist together and are interdependent. A common thing connects the three legs such that if you pull one leg others are also pulled with it. We experience this in our day-to-day life. How? In the waking state the "I" is there and automatically the "World" also is there. Once the world comes into existence God as cause also comes in.

Thus, in Jagrat all three divisions exist together.

In Swapana all three divisions again exist together.

In Sushupthi "I" is dissolved and automatically the world is also dissolved. When world is dissolved where is the question of the Third person, God? In this state there is no duality or Abheda.

Swamiji says, either have all three or eliminate all three divisions. Elimination of division means elimination of all three of them, as they are interdependent. With elimination of the World and I, we may agree but Vedanta says God will also be eliminated. Vedanta apparently appears as a Nastika philosophy here. We should note that localized God is as much finite as localized Jiva.

This is the Jiva-Jagat-Ishwara nivrithi. How does one eliminate the Bheda of all three? We have to find the cause and eliminate it. Without cause elimination we will remove only the symptoms. We should try to remove cause of Bheda. As per Vedanta, division is caused by Ignorance. Ignorance is the cause. If so, Ignorance is the cause of what? Ignorance of Jiva, it is an effect. Ignorance of Jagat is also an effect. Ignorance of Ishwara is also an effect of Ignorance. If this is true then, Ignorance must be something other than Jiva-Jagat-Ishwara. Ignorance, the cause of division, is also the cause of the division-less entity.

What is the division-less entity? Whose Ignorance is the cause of Jiva-Jagat-Ishwara Bheda? Vedanta has several answers. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi's answer is that it is the Existence



principle in the division-less entity or Sat or Brahman in Vedanta. In Chandogya Upanishad, in Dakshina moorthy stotram, the question of what is the Existence principle is raised?

Existence or Is-ness is not a part, product or property of Jiva, Jagat or Ishwara. Then what is it? It is an entity different from all the three but pervades all the three of them. By pervading all three of them it lends existence to all three of them. This inherent Existence is the division-less principle, which is the truth of all the three. This division-less, one Existence alone, with nama and roopa appears as Jiva, Jagat and Ishwara. Once known, this division-less Existence is called Saddarshanam. When one gets the Saddarshanam, ignorance goes away. With that, ignorance of division goes away. With that , the division also goes away. Jiva-Jagat-Ishwara also thus disappears.

Here, when we say all three are eliminated, it means understanding them as one Sat (existence) with three different Nama's and Roopa's.

After understanding also the nama roopa bheda continues. We now realize that the bangle, chain and the ring are not three substances but they are one substance appearing as three Nama's and Roopa's. Vyavahra continues and transactions continue, but the problem will not continue. Loosing sight of understanding the division-less is the problem. Misunderstanding the division is the problem. If one understands this life is wonderful.

To arrive at this understanding where should we search for the division-less?

You can search any one of the three divisions and the underlying truth will come out. Which one of them is easy to search? Aham is always available. So engage in Ahamkara and arrive at Sat that permeates it. Once Ahamkara's nama and roopa are eliminated all three divisions are also eliminated.

Ahamkara Vichara can replace Ishwara Vichara and Jagat Vicahra, as it is the easiest one. Hence the “Who am I” enquiry, as it takes one to Ahamkara Adishtana. This is the truth.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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## Upadesa Saram, Class 11

Greetings All,

Shloka # 24:

The difference between God and individual is only in name, form and intelligence. They are the same in their essential nature as the Heart.

Shloka # 25:

When perception of name and form ceases, there is the vision of the Self. This is also the vision of God, for, God and the Self are the same.

Continuing his teaching Swami Paramarthananda says, in the previous class and previous shloka, Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi described Atma Vichara as means of falsifying the Ahamkara. This Atma Vichara is to be accomplished with Guru Shashtra Upadesha. After this Vichara, a Gyani uses the “I” in that he will be aware of the higher “I” even as he uses the Ahamkara “I”.

After Atma Gyanam he goes to the next stage. There can be a misconception in one’s thinking that there is an Atma in every Jiva. To negate plurality of Atma, Ramana Maharishi says that Atma in each individual is the same or One Atma appearing in

many forms. The same Atma is also described as Jiva Atma and Param Atma. This is the Mahavakya Vichara.

Shlokas # 24 and # 25 respectively deal with Jivatma and Paramtama Aikyam. If they, Jivatma and Paramatma, are appearing as different it is because of Nama and Roopa. Just as in the wave and ocean analogy so also with Vyashti Atma and Param Atma the Atma is same. By removing the Vesha one gets the Sva-Atma Darshanam or Paramatma Swaroopa Gyanam. The seeker understands God as himself. This is the Aikya Gyanam.

Shloka # 26:

Since there are no two selves, the established poise in the Self is the vision of the Self.

In previous shloka Ramana Maharishi talked about Atma Darshanam as seeing or knowing Atma. This can cause confusion in some. One may think of Atma as an object. As per Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi one cannot objectify the Atma. Thus, he says, there will be no new experience. I will just understand Atma as myself. Abiding in the Atma is, knowing Atma. It is not an object of experience. It is the ever-experienced consciousness. It does not require a special experience. This is called Atma Gyanam.

There is no knower or known of an Atma. If Atma has to be known who will know it?

Swamiji says:

1. An-atma cannot know Atma .
2. One Atma cannot know another Atma , as there is only one Atma.
3. Atma cannot know itself, as subject cannot objectify itself.
4. One part of Atma cannot know another part of Atma, as

Atma has no parts. Thus, I have a leg that I can touch.  
Nothing like the leg exists in the Atma.

Therefore, experiencing or knowing Atma through a process is not possible. Therefore, the ever-experienced Consciousness is the Atma. This understanding does not require objectification of Atma. This abidance is called Atma Nishta.

Shloka # 27:

Knowledge is Consciousness transcending knowledge and ignorance. After knowing that is there any difference?

Consciousness alone is Atma Gyanam. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi says "Chid Eva Gyanam". Atma Gyanam is unique. It should be carefully understood. Swamiji asked: If consciousness is Atma Gyanam, what is the problem? Answering the question he says, this question assumes that since everybody has consciousness then everybody should have Atma Gyanam. Consciousness is Anadi and Ananthaha. This means everybody in the world is a Gyani.

The statement has to be interpreted correctly. Consciousness is Atma Gyanam only when Consciousness is associated with an appropriate thought called Vridhi Aruda Chaitanyam. Thus, Consciousness associated with Pot is called Pot knowledge. Consciousness associated with Aham Brahma Asmi is known as Atma knowledge.

What is the nature of this Consciousness? That original consciousness is beyond both Knowledge and Ignorance. Gyanam generated a Vyavaharika Satyam. Consciousness is beyond it. It is Gyana and Agyana varjithaha. It is beyond knowledge and ignorance, it is actually a witness of both of them.

How is one to know this absolute Consciousness? There is no duality to know the Chaitanyam. Thus:

- 1) An-atma or Jadam cannot know Chaitanyam.
- 2) One Chaitanyam cannot know another Chaitanyam, as there

is only one Chaitanyam.

3) Chaitanyam cannot know itself, as subject cannot objectify itself.

4) One part of Chaitanyam cannot know another part of Chaitanyam, as Chaitanyam has no parts.

So, is there a division in consciousness to objectify? There is no such division. Hence one can only say “ I am Chaitanyam and be quiet.”

You are able to say, “ I am” because of Consciousness. With this Atma Brahma Aikyam is over.

Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi talked about Karma, Upasana, Bhakti ( Samadhi), Ashtanga Yoga with focus on Pranayama, and Gyana Yoga. All Sadhanas prescribed in Vedas were condensed in this text.

This Atma Vichara is the final Sadhana. Now Bhagawan Ramana MahaRishi talks about the Phalam.

Everybody has to go through all Upasanas and Sadhanas. There is no time limit to their practice. In shlokas # 28 and # 29 respectively Gyana Phalam or Moksha is now described.

Shloka 28:

A conscious bliss ensues when one abides as the Self, by enquiring, “ what is the true import of “I”?” This bliss is spontaneous, indestructible and limitless.

When one enquires into Atma Swaroopam or “who am I”, through Guru Upadesha, Atma Darshanam occurs. Swamiji emphasized the need for Guru Upadesha for this Gyanam. When Atma Gyanam occurs there is Ananda, fulfillment or peace. It is not a temporary Sukham but an infinite Ananda also called Aapoorna Ananda. This sukham is identified with Chaitanyam or Atma.

Shlokas # 29 & 30:

In previous shloka or # 28, the second line is actually one

word. Relative Sukham is opposite of Dukham. It can change, as it comes and goes. Gyana-janya Sukham is not a displaceable Sukham. A Gyani also has Prarabhda Karmas that will bring good or bad experiences to him. Even a Sanyasi experiences Prarabhda Karma in an Ashram.

The Sukham experienced by a gyani will not change. Atmananda will continue even as the Gyani's Prarabdha Karma's play out. This Sukham is absolute. It is beyond Bandha and Mosha that are relative terms. When bondage is understood it is known as Mithya. If a tiger comes in dream and then goes away too, it is all happening in the dream. The tiger belongs to the dream. In waking there is no arrival or departure. In the absolute there is no Bandha or Moksha. Both are Vyavaharika Satyam. Atmanada is the Paramarthika Satyam.

Atmananda is a sense of fullness that persists at all times. It is also called Poornatvam. The Jiva obtains this undisplaceable Atmanada.

When does he get this ananda or moksha? In most systems, one obtains it only after death. In Vedanta it is promised in this very life as a Jivanmukta. You will still have your wife or husband, children etc. but the Gyani will have no complaints. If you want this Gyananda you have to qualify for it. You should deserve it. Such a person is called Daivika or one with spiritual values. Gita Chapter # 16 describes these values or traits. One has to cultivate these values. You then become a Sadhana Chatushtaya Adhikari or as Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi calls it Daivika.

How do I get this Daivika? Performing all Karmas, Upasanas and Sadhanas followed by Guru's teachings will result in Gyananada.

Shloka # 30:

The speaking of truth of "I" is the greatest austerity. This is the teaching of Ramana

It is the greatest accomplishment in life. This Atma Gyanam or Jivatma Paramatma Aikyam is Mahat Tapaha. It is the greatest Sidhi in life. Gita Chapter # 4 describes it as well.

This knowledge is an illuminator of one's real nature. It banishes Ahamkara. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi brings out this Vedic wisdom. It contains Veda Upadesha Sara.

"In words of Ramana" can have two meanings:

- 1) Words of Ramana
- 2) That which pleases all people. A teaching to revel in.

With this Upadesha Sara is over. It is important, because, here Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi makes it clear that "Who am I " must be preceded by Upanas. Upadesha begins with all Sadhanas including Karma yoga, to lead to one becoming Daivika and then one knows one's Self. It is a Vedic teaching. It is also Ramana's teaching. It is the best of teaching of Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi.

My Note on Paramarthika, Vyavaharika and Pratibhasika Satyam: The above bhashyam brings to the fore that three types of 'reality' are admitted in the Shruti. Commonly these are known as: 1. PArAmArthika Satyam which is Brahman alone, 2. VyAvAhArika satyam, which constitutes the common world experience of samsara and 3. PrAtibhAsika satyam which is a seeming reality, actually within the samsaeric experience. This seeming reality of say, the mirage-water or rope-snake, is corrected in the Vyavahara itself and does not require Brahma jnanam for this. The Vyvahaarika satyam, of course, gets corrected upon the rise of Brahma jnAnam.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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# Upadesha Saram, Class 8

Greetings All,

Shloka 15 and 16:

**# 15: “For the exalted Yogi abiding steadily in the natural state, having destroyed the mind, is there any action left?”**

**# 16: “When the mind turns away from the objects, it beholds its source, Consciousness. This is Self –abidance.”**

Continuing his teaching of Upadesha Saram, and refreshing our memory of last class, Swami Paramarthananda said, Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi enumerated various spiritual sadhanas all of which result in Bodhaha or Gyanam. They are: Puja, Japa, Dhyana, Samadhi, Yoga and Gyanam. All of them have the one aim that one's mind should be absorbed in one's Self. Problematic mind should be replaced by a non-problematic mind. The Mithya mind should be replaced. This fundamental reality is arrived at by enquiry as discussed in shlokas 14, 15 and 16 respectively. This enquiry negates everything negatable. What ultimately remains after negating is that the mind becomes blank. It is at this time the Guru's direction is needed. He will point out that the blankness is witnessed by an awareness called Consciousness also called Chaitanyam. It has all the attributes of the Atma namely: it is Nithyaha, Akarta, abhokata, Nirvikara, Aprameya etc. This is the real me. This is Tatva Darshanam or recognizing the real me. This is known as Vichara Marga. Through this Vichara the Mithya of mind is recognized and thus removed.

**Shlokas 17 and 18:**

**# 17: “What is the mind? If one searches to find out, then,**



**there would be no separate entity as the mind. This is the straight path."**

**# 18: "The mind is only a bundle of thoughts. They are dependent on the "I" thought. Know the I thought to be the mind."**

In shlokas # 17 and 18, respectively, Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi elaborates on Gyanam.

Summarizing these two shokas, Swamiji says, this Vichara is presented in three different ways.

First enquiry is an enquiry into the nature of the mind or Mano Vichara. Here one asks "what is the nature of this mind"? Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi points out that mind is nothing other than Ahamkara. So this then becomes Ahamkara Vichara. Still later he points out that Ahamkara Vichara is finding out the Source of Ahamkara. Since the Source is the Atma, it now becomes Atma Vichara.

Thus:

Mano Vichara>Ahamkara>Ahamkaravichara>Atma Vichara>Atma.

Shloka # 17:

Animals do not have a developed mind. They don't have Raga, Dvesha, Krodha etc., We do not know if the mind is an advantage to human beings or not. In sleep there is no mind. Upon waking, it comes up again.

Swamiji says, Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi through out his teachings does not mention the role of Guru or Shastras. We have to add that ourselves.

Upon enquiry into the mind we find that there is no such thing as the mind at all. We have been bothered about something that does not exist. It is a Mithya. It is something that exists without substance like a mirage. Examples of such mirages are:

- Mirage of water
- Dream problems disappear when I wake up.
- Existence of thought. Upon enquiry we find there is no such thing called thought. Thus, while Pot is the weight-less word, Clay alone is the substance with weight. I have been taking the pot for granted. Similarly, we have also been taking it for granted that there is a mind.

Thus, materials have particles, which break into atoms, further break into subatomic particles and finally break into energy. Thus, there is no world other than energy. That this energy manifests itself as this tangible world is one of the greatest wonders of the world. A Nonexistent mind seems to exist. Anything seemingly existent should be negated. There is nothing called mind. Vichara Marga is the only appropriate Marga. The unreal is born out of ignorance. Knowledge alone can remove ignorance. The rope snake can only be removed by knowledge of the rope. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi says the mind has to be handled only by Gyanam. The ultimate solution is Gyanartham Vichara. This alone removes the problematic mind.

In the next shloka Ahamkara Vichara is discussed.

Shloka # 18:

The primary constituent or ingredient of the mind is thought. We experience mind only as thought. When we sleep, thought is dormant and mind is temporarily gone.

So, for all practical purposes, mind equates to thought. In reality, however, thought is not the mind. It is only a function of the mind. I am not just teaching. It is only one of my functions. So also it is with walking. For all practical purposes we can say mind equals thought or Manovichara is thought Vichara. Thoughts are classified into two categories:

- Objective thoughts or Idam Vriithi or thoughts about objects. Objects can be anything such as a river,

mountain, a pen etc. Vrithi means thought.

- Subject related thought or Aham Vrithi. This is about “I” the experiencer.

Idam Vrithi's are many while Aham Vrithi is only one. For each Idam Vrithi there is a corresponding Aham Vrithi.

Thus, Objective thoughts + Subjective thought = Mind.

Objective thoughts can exist only if there is a subject to relate to. Therefore, the subject is the basis for all objective experiences. Aham Vrithi is basis for all Idam Vrithi. Thus, the essence of all Idam Vrithi is Aham Vrithi. All objectives are about Aham Vrithi. Thus, all thoughts can be reduced to the “I” thought. I thought is Ahamkara.

Thus:

Mind enquiry>thought enquiry> “I” thought enquiry>Ahamkara enquiry.

Explaining shloka # 18 further, Mind is nothing but a group of thoughts. All thoughts of mind are based upon one essential thought, Aham Vrithi or the one I thought.

May you understand that the mind is nothing but the “I” thought or Ahamkara. Therefore, mind enquiry is Ahamkara enquiry.

**Shlokas 19 and 20:**

**# 19: Wherefrom does this “I” thought arise? If one enquires thus, it vanishes. This is self-enquiry.**

**# 20: When the I thought perishes, then another I, I, springs forth as the Heart, spontaneously. It is Existence in all its fullness.**

We have said Mind is Ahamkara. So Ahamkara enquiry is to be performed. Where does Ahamkara come from? What is the source

of Ahamkara? This is the real enquiry.

### **Shloka #19:**

From where does Aham come into being? On enquiry we find it comes from Atma. So it is called Atma Vichara. You enquire about the rope not the snake. It is not an enquiry into the snake, as it is not born out of the rope. Here Aham is compared to the snake while Atma is compared to the rope. Therefore, it is Atmavichara or enquiry as to what is the Atma? Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi does not explain how we should perform this Atma Vichara. We have to add that it is to be performed as per Guru or Shashtra's direction. All Upanishads require this.

For such a person, the wonder is that Ahamkara falls. Aham is a false reflected consciousness. Citing an example swamiji says, imagine a mirror. I am standing in front of it. I see my reflection in the mirror. So we now have three entities. The mirror, the reflection and I. The reflected entity has properties of me, as well as properties of the mirror. It is a hotch potch. Everything that is a reflection is borrowed from my body as well as from the mirror. If the mirror is dull the reflection is dull as well, a feature of the mirror. This third identity is called Prathibimba Purusha. If you, the person, or the mirror is not present, the third entity disappears. So it is with Atma and Anatma (mirror). While Ahamkara is the third entity (mixture of Aham and Anatma). When you remove either Atma or Anatma, the third entity, Ahamkara, disappears. This non-entity, Ahamkara, has been the cause of a lot of havoc in all of us.

A false thing becomes real. Self-enquiry dispels Ahamkara or the false thing. What is Self Enquiry? That which leads to discovery of Atma (the real I) and fall of the mind is Self-enquiry or Manonashaha. The fall occurs from the recognition that Ahamkara is Mithya. Even after the fall, the reflection still continues. But now, it no more frightens me. Be it a

convex or a concave mirror, neither bother me.

So Gyani still experiences Ahamkara even after knowing it is unreal. Ahamkara nasha is knowing it is unreal.

### **Shloka 20:**

When Ahamkara falls the chiddabasha is dismissed as Mithya. Even after reflection goes away the original face continues. The only problem is, it cannot be objectified anymore. I own up to the original Consciousness when the reflection is destroyed.

Explaining the shloka, when Ahamkara suffers destruction and the reflected face is gone. The original face still continues. The original face cannot, however be seen anymore.

One can see the reflected face, when mirror is there. Swamiji suggested that we try to discover our original face for the rest of our respective lives.

Atma cannot be made into an object. So this consciousness remains as the real I. Now, after knowledge, the consciousness shines as the real I.

Ahami means the “ I”. This is also called self-effulgent. This I is not located anywhere. It is all pervading. It is unconditionally full and infinite.

Parampurna means beyond space and time.

With Best Wishes.

Ram Ramaswamy

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# Upadesa Saram, Class 7

Greetings All,

Shloka # 13:

“Control of the mind is of two kind, its lulling and its destruction. A lulled mind will rise again but not the one which is destroyed.”

Continuing his teaching, Swami Paramarthananda says, we have seen Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi talking about the six Sadhanas. They are: Puja, Japa, Dhyanam, Samadhi, Yoga and Gyanam. Samadhi is also called Bhakthi. The first four Sadhanas were discussed elaborately. Now he is dealing with Yoga and Gyanam. Yoga represents Ashtanga Yoga. However, Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi focuses on Pranayama. The eight steps of ashtanga yoga are: Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi.

Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi focuses on Pranayama. Pranayama restrains the mind, like a cage restrains a bird. This subsiding of mind is called Manolaya (withdrawal or shanthi). However, Manolaya is a temporary restrain on the mind, it comes back after some time in even greater force. The permanent solution to the problematic mind is Mano Nasha. Mano Nasha can only happen through Gyanam. Thus:

Mano laya occurs through Pranayama.

Mano nasha occurs through Gyanam.

The temporarily suppressed mind, mano laya, comes back again as in artificial sleep. Once we come out of sleep the whole world comes back again.

The mind destroyed by Gyana Yoga will never raise its head again. Pranayama can be used but only as a first aid. First aid is important in an accident. However, after first aid, one

may still need to get further treatment. One cannot replace the other. Pranayama is not an end in itself. It is in Atma Gyanam alone that one can obtain permanent peace of mind.

Shloka # 14:

“The mind stilled by breath regulation gets destroyed by pursuing a single thought.”

Manonasha, should not be taken as its literal translation means. It does not mean a Gyani's mind is destroyed. Gyani's have very good mind with all virtues. Gita elaborates on a Gyani's mind in chapters 13 and 14 respectively. So, a Gyani possess a mind. His mind is not destroyed. If so, what is Manonasha? There are two important meanings. One is figurative and the other is philosophical (shastriya).

Figurative meaning of Manonasha: The problematic mind is destroyed and replaced by a beautiful mind. Deluded, ignorant mind is destroyed and is replaced by a healthy mind. When a mind is healthy, you don't feel its presence. When a body is not healthy, you feel the pain. You don't feel the pain when it is healthy.

Philosophical meaning of Manonasha: is the real meaning. In wake of knowledge, the Anatma Prapancha is understood. Gyani understands “Brahma Satyam, Jagat Mithya.” Mithya prapancham whether it is or it is not, does not make a difference to him. In a Gyani's mind the entire world is destroyed.

Once the world is falsified, mind is also falsified with it. Mind is after all a small part of this world. This understanding of the unreality of mind is called Mano Nasha. Gyani still employs his mind, understanding that the body, mind and the world are all Mithya. Just as it is only the clay in the pot, there is nothing called pot that exists. The Pot has only a verbal existence (nama, roopa) so also does the mind. It too has only a verbal existence that is its nama and roopa.

Using Pranayama one quits the mind and it obtains the sadhana chatushtaya sampanam. Gyanam, however, comes from the Eka Chintanam or thinking of non-dual atma. How to perform this chintanam has not been mentioned here. Thus, a cult of Maharishi Bhagawan Ramana's followers has formed around the "Who am I" meditation? This is an unfortunate conclusion. Here tradition has to be exerted. Asking, "who am I" will not help. Before, he was a turbulent Agyani, now, he becomes a quiet Agyani.

In Gita, Atma Vichara has been described. It says, go to an acharya and ask for the teaching. This is the only method of Self Knowledge. The teaching must be for a length of time. Pundaka Upanishad mentions that Self-enquiry should only be through a Guru. Even if some have got knowledge without a Guru, even they have had a Guru in past life. That knowledge is activated in this life.

So, this means Sravanam, Mananam, and Nidhidhyasanam from a Guru. This is called Chintanam. Through this teaching, knowledge dawns. It will inform me of: "Brahma Satyam, Jagat Mithya". The mind is always unreal. It cannot touch me, the real consciousness. This wisdom is called ManoNashaha.

Shloka # 15:

"For the exalted Yogi abiding steadily in the natural state, having destroyed the mind, is there any action left?"

Once mind is falsified, the rest of life is a peaceful one. Mind and its conditions have nothing to do with my freedom. Mithya cannot tarnish Sathyam. Quality of my mind has nothing to do with my Poornathavam.

After Atma Gyanam, conditions of Anatma cannot alter my status. It does not mean we are now careless. We will still put out the best. The physical and mental conditions have no consequence with respect to my freedom. A Gyani is not careless with respect to the body or the mind. He knows in his



heart of heart that condition of mind does not matter. This is called Jivan Mukti. So, the supreme Yogi who has reached the destination is called Utkrishta Yogi. His mind is falsified. Vyavaharika Satyam of mind does not disturb the "Atma" within me.

What is to be accomplished in life by such a Yogi? He is without the pressures of life whipping him into activity. For a normal man each activity has to be completed and then he moves to the next one. Swamiji met the father of a devotee, an old man. He very emotionally asked Swamiji's blessing that his grand daughter get married while he was still living. He was very emotional about it. So, a man gets whipped into action based upon one's emotions.

What is Moksha? As per Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi, it means, I am full and complete, with no more desires. He abides in his own swaroopam. All duties reside in Ahamkara. It can never complete its duties. One who transcended Ahamkara has obtained Moksha.

Shloka # 16:

"When the mind turns away from the objects, it beholds its source, Consciousness. This is Self-Abidance."

In this shloka the process of Atma Gyanam is described. The mind is turned away from external objects, which includes the body and mind. Once mind is turned away from the external world, what remains is the mind in Chaitanyam, without any objects or objectless consciousness remains. Blank mind is empty consciousness. It is a Consciousness without any objects. We recognize the mind is blank. The blankness is illumined by our awareness. A blank mind is one in which there is only consciousness and no other object. This remainder Consciousness, objectless consciousness, is our real nature. It has all properties of Atma (Nithyaha, Shaswatha, Purnaha, Nirvikaraha, Aprameya, Akartha, Abhoktha etc.). This has to be understood as "I" the Atma. This is understanding of one's self as the "Remainder" consciousness. This is the knowledge

of one's own real nature or Tatva Darshanam. This is the truth. This consciousness is ever self-evident. This Gyanam is further elaborated upon now.

Shlokas 14-16 is a condensed version of Gyanam.

Shlokas 17- end are an elaboration of Gyanam.

With best wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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## Upadesa Saram, Class 6

Greetings All,

Shloka 7 and 8.

Shloka # 7: "Constant , natural meditation like the steady flow of ghee or a stream of water is better than intermittent contemplation."

Shloka #8: "The meditation "I am that" regarded as more purifying than one based on dualistic thought."

Refreshing our memory of the last class Swami Paramathananda said Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi is dealing with a variety of spiritual exercises in his teachings. He discussed three of them namely Kayika, Vachika and Manasa Karmani. Thus:

Kayika relates to performing Puja.

Vachika relates to performing Japa.

Manasa relates to Dhyanam or Upanam.

Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi classifies Dhyanam or Upanam into two types. They are:

- Bheda Upsanam
- Abheda Upasanam also known as Ahamgraha Upasana. Ahamgraha literally means “self-grasping,” or “self-identification.”

Bheda Upsana: Elaborating on this upsana, Swamiji says, in this Upasana God is different from me. Upasaka Upasya bheda exists. After Bheda Upsana one moves to Abheda Upasana. Here you visualize God as myself in Soham Bhava. There is nothing wrong in this Upasana as God can be invoked in any object. Even as God is invoked in a Saligramam, or a mound of Turmeric so also one can invoke God in himself, as well. This is Abheda Upsana. It is superior to Bheda Upsana.

Abheda Upasana: is the stepping-stone for Vedanta. Here, one has to know “I am God”. Abheda Upasana is an ideal intermediary phase between Bheda Upasana and Vedanta. The transition from duality to Advaita is not easy. One should practice saying “I am Lord”. Every time puja is performed, the priest in his mantras offers puja to himself as well. The priest reminds us that there is no difference between God and me. Abheda Upsana is superior to Bheda Upasana.

Shlokas 9 and 10:

Shloka # 9:

“The repose of being poised in one’s true nature, devoid of thoughts, is the highest devotion. It comes from the strength of meditation.”

Shloka # 10:

“Sinking of the mind in the heart, its source, is Action. Devotion, Union and Knowledge.”

The possible culmination of any meditation (Bheda or Abheda) is Samadhi. Samadhi means absorption in object of meditation. I forget myself as meditator. One does not know he is meditating. This is similar to when the Waker is so absorbed in the dream world that he forgets that he is the projector of

the dream. The dream becomes real to him. This is due to a natural propensity of the mind to do so; that is absorption leading to forgetfulness. This is also called Nirvikalpa Samadhi. The difference between meditator and meditated is lost. Subject object difference is lost. Vidyanaraya defines Samadhi as forgetting that I am the meditator.

The word Susthithi in shloka # 9 means getting lost in Soham Bhava. Here the absorption is total. All Bheda Bhavana is gone. Thoughts of all divisions are gone. In Gita Chapter 6, Sri Krishna compares this state to a flame that remains without a flicker. The mind remains in Abheda Vrittihi. In this state, the flow of advaitic thought excludes dvaitic thought. Swamiji cautioned that Advaita Gyanam is different from Abheda Upasana. So, how does this absorption come about? It comes from deliberate meditation (bhavana). Just repeating "Om Namaha Shivaya" will take us into this state of absorption. By regular practice it becomes spontaneous. The Samadhi is the greatest form of Bhakthi. Puja and Japa are all aspects of Bhakthi as well. Ramana Maharishi says Abheda Samadhi is the highest form of Bhakthi. I am absorbed in the Lord and he is in me. In this context Bhakthi is considered Samadhi.

Thus, so far, Ramana Maharishi has spoken about four disciplines: They are Puja, Japa, Dhyanam, and Samadhi.

In the next shloka Ramana Maharishi explains two more Sadhanas. They are Yoga and Gyanam.

Yoga: While Patanjali's yoga is referred to, the emphasis is on Pranayama as a spiritual discipline.

Gyanam: Here the term Bodha is used in shloka # 10 for Gyanam. It means Self-knowledge.

So the six disciplines now are: Puja, Japa, Dhyana, Samadhi, Yoga and Gyanam.

For all these disciplines there is only one goal. The goal is

that the mind should abide in peace. This Shanthi-Sthithi is goal of all Sadhanas. Swamiji says, a question does come up, after practicing all these Sadhanas, how do I know if I am progressing spiritually? The acid test is obtaining mental poise or shanthi. Even when Prarabhdam brings different experiences, maintain calmness amidst the turmoil. This is progress. Otherwise, it is not spiritual progress. Do I enjoy general equanimity at all times? Manaha Swastaha (shloka 10) means freedom from stress and abiding in my heart. Mind should have peace.

Shloka # 10:

“Sinking of the mind in the heart, its source, is Action. Devotion, Union and Knowledge.”

Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi has talked about six sadhanas. They are, Puja, Japa, dhyana, bhakthi ( Samadhi), Yoga (Pranayama), and Bodhaha (Self knowledge). He discusses both Pranayama and Self Knowledge later.

Jivan Mukti is peace of mind alone. Swamiji says five of the six Sadhanas provide only a temporary peace of mind. Thus, all of them, except Bodha or Gyanam, provide a temporary peace of mind. Only with Atma Gyanam can we get permanent peace of mind.

Shloka # 11:

“ the mind becomes a quiescent by regulation of breath, like a bird caught in a net. This is a means of mind control.”

In shlokas 11 and 12 respectively Ramana Maharishi deals with Yoga. Yoga has many steps. Ramana Maharishi however highlights Vayu-rodhanam or regulation of breath. There are several types of Pranayama. They include: Puraka, Rechaka and Kumbhaka. Ramana Maharishi says Pranayama will make the mind quiet. Even science accepts this today. During stress, a deep breath brings down the body's toxic chemicals. Pranayama is highly

recommended for stress. Even Readers digest had an article on this topic. Pranyama regulates Prana and mind. The Pancha Koshas are interconnected. Is it biochemistry that changes emotions or is it the other way around? Clearly, psychosomatic diseases improve with Pranayama. When Prana is regulated Annamaya and Manomaya Kosha are improved as well.

Rodhana in shloka # 11 means regulate. Even a turbulent mind becomes quiet with deep breath. Pranayama is like a cage for a bird. Just as a cage arrests the movement of a bird so also Pranayama arrests movement of a mind. The term Jala-Pakshi Vada is used in the shloka to mean a net or a cage for a bird.

Shloka # 12:

“Minds and breaths, expressing themselves as Consciousness and Action, are only two branches of the same Primal Power.”

So, how does Prana control the mind? Answering, Prana and mind are like two branches of the same tree. When one branch is pulled the other branch also comes along. Citing another example, all four legs of a table are connected to a wooden plank. If you pull one leg of the table other three also follow. So also with Prana and Manas, both are connected to one Prakrithi. Prakrithi (Maya) is the cause of Prana (Rajo guna) and Manas (Sathva Guna).

Chitta Vayava in this shloka means mind and Prana. Chitta means Gyanam.

Shakyordvayi means two branches.

Shakthimulaka means Maya or Prakrithi or main trunk of the tree.

By controlling mind, Prana is also controlled. In a very emotional state the breath changes, it becomes shallow. If both can influence each other why should we regulate mind through Prana? Controlling the grosser Prana is easier than subtler mind. From gross one goes to the subtle. When Pranayama is not possible, only medicine can help. Drugs and

liquor are all trying to control the gross and thus the mind.

Shloka # 13:

“Control of the mind is of two kinds, its lulling and its destruction. A lulled mind will rise again but not the one which is destroyed.”

Now Ramana MahaRishi enters the last Sadhana called Gyanam. Even yoga and pranayama can only make the mind quiet temporarily. After all one cannot practice Pranayama all the time. Pranayama is not the ultimate solution. It only manages the problematic mind. Only Gyanam will destroy the problematic mind. In this shloka, Mano-laya, means temporary lulling of mind. Manonasha is permanent destruction of problematic mind. Swamiji clarified destruction of problematic mind does not mean destruction of the mind itself.

Liquor, drugs and even Nirvikalpa Samadhi (where the mind disappears temporarily), are all considered Layam and they can tackle the Problematic mind temporarily. The only other method is permanent destruction of the “problematic mind”. This does not mean destruction of the mind itself. Mind is destroyed only in death. The “problematic mind” is however destroyed and replaced by a “compassionate” mind.

Laya gatham means the mind is temporarily lulled. The mind, however, continues to be problematic. The problematic mind is converted by wisdom. One sees the mind as Mithya. Once one sees the mind as Mithya it is a destroyed mind. Giving example in Tamil where seeing a wooden elephant one gets frightened, until one gets close by and sees it is not a real elephant. He sees it as a Mithya.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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# Upadesa Saram, Class 3

Greetings to all,

Shloka # 1:

“The results of action flow according to the law of the Creator. Is Karma, action, God? It is insentient.”

Continuing his teaching of Upadesha Saram Swami Paramarthananada refreshed our memory about the last class. He said this text is the essence of the teaching of Lord Shiva and it begins with a negation of the ritualistic practices that were the core belief of the Poorvamimasakas.

In Shlokas # 1 and # 2 Ramana Maharishi addresses this negation. The Poorvamimasakas have a misconception regarding Ishwara and Karma. In the first shloka misconception about Ishwara is negated. In the second shloka the misconception about Karma is negated as well.

In the first shloka Ramana MahaRishi points out to the existence of Ishwara. Vedapramanam and logic supports this. Creation is not an accident. It confirms: Ishwara Asthi.

In second shloka Ramana MahaRishi confirms that it is Ishwara alone who brings out the world as well as the Vedas for the world. In several places Jagat Karta Ishwara is mentioned. He is the giver of Vedas. Negating the proposition of Poorvamimasakas that the world is eternal and that God need not create it, Ramana MahaRishi says both the world and Vedas were brought by God.

Saying that Karma does not produce Phalam also negates their third misconception. Even the laws of Creation cannot produce Phalam. It requires a discriminating person to produce the Phalam. Karma cannot do it nor can the various laws of the



universe. Both are Jadam's. Here, Ishwara alone gives the Phalam, keeping the Karma of the person in mind.

Shloka # 2:

“ The fruits of action are transient. Action causes one to fall into the ocean of further action. It obstructs the goal”.

Here Ramana MahaRishi refutes the misconception of the Poorvamimasakas regarding Karma. Ramana MahaRishi gives us three important lessons in this regard. They are:

1. Karma cannot give us liberation. All types of Karmas including Service, devotional, meditational and ritualistic will not produce Moksha.
2. On the other hand Karma is an obstacle to Moksha.
3. Not only is Karma an obstacle, it is actually a cause of bondage as well.

Explaining each lesson further:

1. The misconception that Karma can give is liberation:
  1. The Karma Phalam from all Karmas such as Service, devotional, meditational and ritualistic are finite in nature or Anithya whereas Moksha is defined as infinite or Nithyaha. Vedas reveal this as well. They say all Karma Phalam's are anithyam. Both Mundako Upanishad and Gita say the same.
  2. Logic also reveals it. Action and Reaction are always equal and proportional. Karma always occurs in the finite as place, time and people are known. So, results too have to be finite. Sruthi reveals it as also our own experiences. Therefore Karma Phalam is Anithyam.
2. Karma cannot give us Moksha; it is actually an obstruction: Karma makes a person extrovert. Caught in activity, it leads to more activity. Karma does not give us time for introspection. Only in introspection can we think of Moksha, Gyanam, Vedanta Sravnam etc. A life

without leisure does not permit this Self Enquiry. Therefore, Karma is an obstacle to Self Enquiry. In Karma, the mind becomes restless and shallow.

3. Karma cannot give us Moksha, it is actually an obstruction and it is a source of greater bondage.

In Karma one gets more and more enmeshed in Samsara. Karma leads to more Karma. It multiplies itself. Even if you want to get out of it, you cannot. It becomes like a whirlpool, in an ocean.

As we grow older Shastras say we should withdraw from Karma to Vanaprastha. However, in reality, we are not able to so.

Thus, rebutting the misconception of Poorvamimasakas, Ramana MahaRishi say's Karma cannot give us Moksha.

Shloka # 3:

“ Action dedicated to God and done without desire purifies the mind.

It aids liberation.”

If Karma is so poisonous, can we renounce it? Shastras say we cannot

renounce it. The reasons are:

1. Our organs are made to be active. Gita chapter 3 also addresses it.
2. All human beings are born with countless desires for wealth, possessions and entertainment. We also tend to amass for our children and grandchildren. This creates Kama within us that in turn beget more and more Karma. Kama (desire) cannot be removed due to our Avidya or Self Ignorance. We do not have a choice. I would like to give up activity, but cannot. In such situations, Vedas come to help us. Vedas say even if Karma is a poison, it can be used in such a manner as to extract medicine from it. Citing example of snake venom, it is used to extract medicine for snakebite. Thus, even a poison becomes

useful.

Even the painful experiences of our lives can be helpful if we know what to extract from them. Properly handled Karma is called Karma Yoga. This converts the poison into medicine.

How to convert Karma into Karma Yoga? Ramana Maharishi says, convert all Karmas into a Puja.

Ramana MahaRishi is not saying anything new. Gita Chapter 3 also explains the process involved. Ishavasa Upanishad also addresses it.

Vedas say there are two types of Karmas. One is Sakama Karma and other is Nishkama Karma. What is the difference between the two?

Sakama Karma is materialistic Karma that produces primarily worldly benefits. These Karmas too, if offered as an offering to God, become spiritual benefits. Their spiritual benefit is however relatively small. Nevertheless, they too purify one's mind.

Nishkama Karma produces primarily spiritual benefits. These spiritual benefits are often intangible and invisible. It also produces material benefits but only as a byproduct. Nishkama Karma gets us closer to Moksha.

Both Karmas (Sakama and NishKama) must be performed as an offering to God.

Ramana Maharishi has not defined what are Sakama Karma's, as we all know them very well.

What are the NishKama Karmas? The Panch MahaYagna's are Nishkama Karmas. Swamiji will describe them in detail later.

Before starting any Karma, God is always to be remembered. One should strive to perform more and more NishKama Karmas and less and less of Sakama Karmas.

When inner growth is your primary goal, you are then considered a seeker.

When material Growth is your primary goal, even if you a religious person, you are not yet a seeker.

When I am obsessed with what I have, I am a materialistic person. However, when I am obsessed with what I want to be, I am a Karma Yogi. Such a Karma Yogi is a promoter of Moksha.

Swamiji reminded us that Ramana MahaRishi's teaching are very concise and as such should be studied with other scriptures.

Shloka # 4:

“ Ritualistic worship, chanting, and meditation are done with the body, voice and the mind; they excel each other in the ascending order.”

What are the NishKama Karmas? Ramana MahaRishi describes them at three levels:

1. Kayika Karma: Here the physical activity is the dominant, while verbal and mental are also present. Many rituals require physical activity. Puja is one such activity. All NishKama Puja performed without seeking materialistic benefit is considered the best. Regular Puja is very important for a seeker. Many people who study Vedanta do not perform Puja. Without Puja transformation does not take place. Many People who are seeking “Who am I” often forget the Puja. They say Ramana MahaRishi never did Puja. They seem to forget that he was at a different level from most of them. Puja is the best method of Kayika Karma.
2. Vachika Karma: is Japa offered to God.
3. Manas Karma: Is Ishwara Dhyanam. With Best Wishes,  
Ram Ramaswamy