

Path to Dharma



தர்ம நெறி



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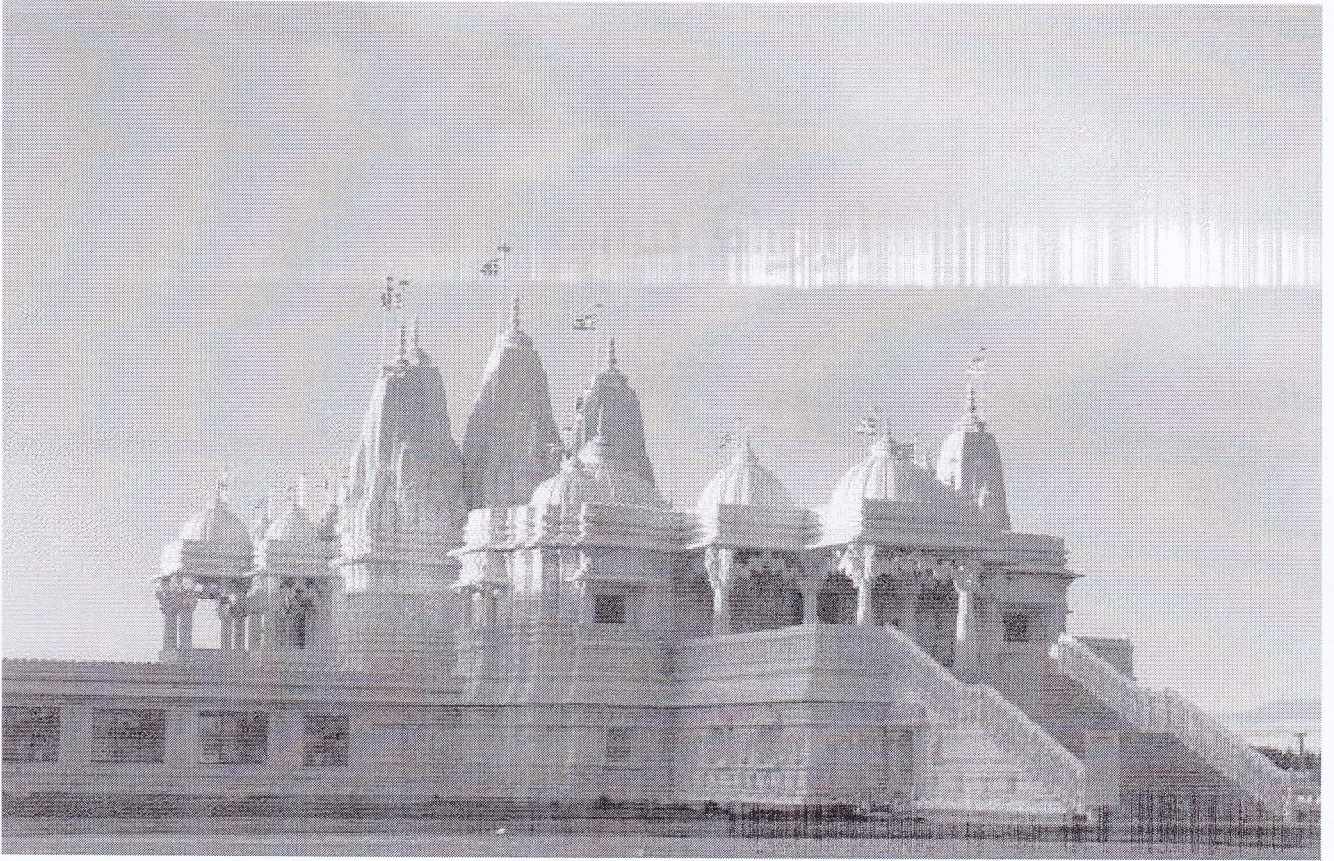


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News Letter

31

செய்தி மடல்



Kshethra Vinayaka Temple, Sri Munneswaram, Chilaw, Sri Lanka.

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கேதத்திர (வயல்) விநாயக ஆலயம்,
ஸ்ரீ முன்னேஸ்வரம், சிலாபம், ஸ்ரீ லங்கா.

Author: B.S.Sarma ,
Sri Sankar Publications

July

2010

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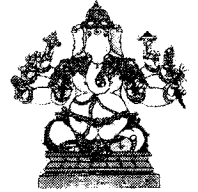
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Sri Sankar Publications



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Editorial

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The periodical ,Path to Dharma', monthly magazine published by Kshethra Vinayaka Temple, Sri Munneswaram, Chilaw, Sri Lanka, is providing present the 31st issue this month.

I am certainty frank to the readers of 'Path to Dharma', magazine, who are truly concerned and provide guidance me in getting out this periodical of this standard.

*B.S.Sarma,
Kshethra Vinayaka Temple, Sri Munneswaram, Chilaw, Sri Lanka.
July.2010*

Suggestions and opinions from the readers

Dear Mr.B.S.Sarma,

It is actually a commendable endeavour to propagate the prominent principles of Hindu Dharma in a universal outlook. This monthly periodical has been written with matters related to various aspects of Hinduism which every person would like to know by answering the questions placed by interested readers.

It will be still better if some articles, discussions and other similar matters are dealt with in an elaborate manner, for the benefit of the readers who may like to know the principles of Hindu Dharma, with an improved format and style

I aspire that 'Path to Dharma' will have a prominent place among the Hindu devotees who like to improve their knowledge in Hindu Dharma and related matters..

With best wishes,
Mr. K.Mohanadas, Canada.. 24th June, 2010

Dear Mr.Sarma,

I receive ' Path to Dharma' magazine regularly every month. Thanks for sending me the ' Path to Dharma' magazine, by e-mail, which I go through again and again to be aware of the real concept of Hindu Dharma ,dealt with, in a very effortless approach for any reader to appreciate.

You are actually helping in a huge way to the Hindus who are concerned in knowing our religious construction.

With kind regards,

N. Maheswaran, U.K.
29th June.2010

Quatations

“The man who realizes ‘It is the Supreme Life that shines through all life’ does not waste words. His pleasures and his love are then all in the soul. He becomes the most enlightened among the philosophers”
- Mundaka Upanishad III-(1)-4

"Verily, that which is Dharma is truth.
Therefore they say of a man who speaks truth, 'He speaks the Dharma,'
or of a man who speaks the Dharma, 'He speaks the Truth.'
Verily, both these things are the same."
-Brh. Upanishad, 1.4.14

"This body of ours is a temple of the Divine."
- Kathopanishad

“Good and evil of this world of duality are unreal,
are spoken of by words, and exist only in the mind.”
- Bhagavatam, XI, ch. XXII.

“Let the scriptures be the authority in determining what ought to be done and what ought not to be done”
-Bhagavad Gita (Ch. XVI, 24)

"our body is a temple"
-Saint Thirumular

“It (the self) is not born, and It does not die; nor is it ever that this One having been nonexistent becomes existent again. This One is birthless, eternal, undecaying, ancient; It is not killed when the body is killed “.
- Gita Ch.2 Verse 20

“Of the unreal there is no being; the real has no nonexistence.
The nature of both of them, indeed, has been realised by the seers of Truth”. -Gita Ch.2, Shloka 16

“As after rejecting (discarding) wornout clothes a man takes up other new ones (clothes),
likewise after rejecting wornout bodies the embodied one (soul) duly attains new ones”.
- Gita Ch.2 Verse 22

“Since death of anyone born is certain, and of the dead (re-)birth is a certainty,
therefore you ought not to grieve over an inevitable fact”. -Gita Ch. 2 Verse 27

“There are these eternal principles, which stand upon their own foundations without depending on any reasoning, even much less on the authority of sages however great, of Incarnations however brilliant they may have been. We may remark that as this is the unique position in India, our claim is that the Vedanta only can be the universal religion, that it is already the existing universal religion in the world, because it teaches principles and not persons.”

- Swami Vivekananda in ‘The Complete Works of Swami
Vivekananda, III, Topic ' The Sages of India'

“The Rig-Veda,” says Max Muller, “is the most ancient book of the world. The sacred hymns of the Brahmanas stand unparalleled in the literature of the whole world; and their preservation might well be called miraculous.”
-History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature

1. What are the prehistoric religions that exist in the world?

Three religions present today in the world, that have come down to us from time prehistoric are Hinduism, Zoroastrianism and Judaism.

2. What Sidereal day?

Sidereal day is approximately four minutes longer than solar day. Sidereral year is one day more than solar year because earth's rotation around the sun amounts to one extra revolution with respect to stars

3. What is meant by four levels of languages?

There are four levels of languages describing four domains of Vedic experience.

According to the rishis (seers) the mantras are the living body of the luminous inner truth of which they recite, a truth and the meaning which does not disclose itself to the hectic intangible mind as easily as to the more receptive inner audience of unrestrained awareness unfolded through meditation.

- i. Language of communication or everyday speech. The gross physical level of articulate speech (Vaikhari).
- ii. Language of ritual, the rhythmic sacrificial language of chant. Language as 'thought', which is not yet spoken (Madhyama).
- iii. Language of illumination, of vision. The level of luminous, 'flashlike' intuitive 'seeing' speech (Pasyanti).
- iv. Language of eternity, of imperishable silence. The silent, unbounded, absolute level of speech (Para).

3. What are the 18 parvas (main chapters)in the Mahabharata?

The division of the Mahabharata into 18 parvas (main chapters) is as follows:

- Parva 1. Adi Parva (*adi* means first-*The Book of the commencement*) sub-parvas :1-19 , contents ;How the Mahabharata came to be narrated by Sauti to the gathering of rishis at Naimisharanya. The recitation of the Mahabharata at the *sarpasattra*, of Janamejaya, by Vaishampayana at Takṣaśilā. The history of the Bharata race is narated in detail and the parva traces history of the Bhrigu race in detail. The birth and early life of the Kuru princes.
- Parva 2. Sabha Parva (The Book of the Assembly Hall) sub-parvas :20-28, contents ;Maya Danava erects the palace and court (*sabha*), at Indhraprastha. Life at the court, Yudhishtira's Rajasuya Yajna, the game of dice, and the eventual exile of the Pandavas.
- Parva 3. Vana Parva *alsorefered Aranyaka-parva, Aranya-parva* (The Book of the Forest) sub-parvas :29-44, contents ;The twelve years of exile in the forest (*aranya*).
- Parva 4 Virata Parva (The Book of Virata) sub-parvas: 45-48, contents; The year in incognito spent at the court of Virata.

- Parva 5. Udyoga Parva (The Book of the Effort) sub-parvas: 49-59, contents; Preparations for war and efforts to bring about peace between the Kurus and the Pandavas which eventually fail (*udyoga* means effort or work).
- Parva 6. Bhishma Parva (The Book of Bhishma) sub-parvas: 60-64, contents; The first part of the great battle, with Bhishma as commander for the Kauravas and his fall on the bed of arrows.
- Parva 7. Drona Parva (The Book of Drona) sub-parvas :65-72, contents ; The battle continues, with Drona as commander. This is the major book of the war. Most of the great warriors on both sides are dead by the end of this book.
- Parva 8. Karna Parva (The Book of Karna) sub-parva :73, content ; The battle again, with Karna as commander.
- Parva 9. Shalya Parva (The Book of Shalya) sub-parvas :74-77, contents ; The last day of the battle, with Shalya as commander. Also told in detail is the pilgrimage of Balarama to the fords of the river Saraswati and the mace fight between Bhima and Duryodhana which ends the war, since Bhima kills Duryodhana by smashing him on the thighs with a mace.
- Parva 10. Sauptika Parva (The Book of the Sleeping Warriors) sub-parvas: 78-80, contents; Ashvattama, Kripa and Kritavarma kill the remaining Pandava army in their sleep. Only 7 warriors remain on the Pandava side and 3 on the Kaurava side.
- Parva 11. Stri Parva (The Book of the Women) sub-parvas :81-85, contents ; Gandhari, Kunti and the women (*stri*) of the Kurus and Pandavas lament the dead.
- Parva 12. Shanti Parva (The Book of Peace) sub-parvas: 86-88, contents; The crowning of Yudhisthira as king of Hastinapura, and instructions from Bhishma for the newly anointed king on society, economics and politics. This is the longest book of the Mahabharata (*shanti* means peace).
- Parva 13. Anushasana Parva (The Book of the Instructions) sub-parvas :89-90, contents ; The final instructions (*anushasana*) from Bhishma.
- Parva 14. Ashvamedhika Parva (The Book of the Horse Sacrifice) sub-parvas: 91-92, contents; The royal ceremony of the Ashvamedha (Horse sacrifice) conducted by Yudhisthira. The world conquest by Arjuna. The Anugita is told by Krishna to Arjuna.
- Parva 15. Ashramavasika Parva (The Book of the Hermitage) sub-parvas :93-95, contents ; The eventual deaths of Dhritarashtra, Gandhari and Kunti in a forest fire when they are living in a hermitage in the Himalayas. Vidura predeceases them and Sanjaya on Dhritarashtra's bidding goes to live in the higher Himalayas.
- Parva 16. Mausala Parva (The Book of the Clubs) sub-parva :96, content ; The infighting between the Yadavas with maces (*mausala*) and the eventual destruction of the Yadavas.
- Parva 17. Mahaprasthanika Parva (The Book of the Great Journey) sub-parva :97, content ; The great journey of Yudhisthira and his brothers across the whole country and finally their ascent of the great Himalayas where each Pandava falls except for Yudhisthira.
- Parva 18. Svargarohana Parva (The Book of the Ascent to Heaven) sub-parva :98, content ; Yudhisthira's final test and the return of the Pandavas to the spiritual world (*svarga*).
- (Parva 19.) KhilaHarivamsa Parva (The Book of the Genealogy of Hari) sub-parvas :99-100, contents ; Life of Krishna which is not covered in the 18 parvas of the Mahabharata

4. What is Tirukkural in short?

The three sacred scripts namely the Tirukkural, the Tiruvasagam and the Tirumandiram in tamil language are considered universal and immortal. There is a famous saying that 'The Tirukkural is the life, the Tiruvasagam is the heart, and the Tirumandiram is the soul of Tamil culture'.

Tirukkural, means in tamil "Holy Kural". It is the masterpiece of the great saint, Tiruvalluvar written more than two thousand years ago. Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism were the most popular at that period. There was freedom of thought; ideas were enthusiastically and easily exchanged. It is guidance for all humanities, for all times. The people who follow its teachings shall enjoy eternal peace, harmony, health, wealth, power, grace and bliss.

The Tirukkural (Kural), contains some of the greatest truths known to mankind. Tiruvalluvar, was well versed with all the great religions and had knowledge of the philosophy of the Romans and the Greeks.

The word 'Kural' refers to a short verse of only two lines. Ten such verses make up a single chapter of the book called the Tirukkural. There are 133 chapters, so that there are 1330 couplets or two-lined verses and ten verses under each major idea that make up the Tirukkural. Each couplet contains a single complete idea.

Thiruvalluvar took up the first three of the Purusharthas (the fourfold objects of life), namely Dharma (virtue), Artha (wealth), Kama (love) and Moksha (liberation), as given by the Vedic Rishis. He provided these concepts of the fourfold objects of life in the three sections of the Tirukkural, known respectively as Arathu-ppaal, Porut-paal and Kaamathu-ppaal. He deliberately left out Moksha (liberation), because, when the first three, that is Dharma (virtue), Artha (wealth), Kama (love) are set in order, the final state of God-realisation is attained naturally. The Tirukkural leads humanity to live, as it ought to live- in moral purity, in spiritual knowledge, and in ideal health, wealth and prosperity.

5. What is the necessity of temple in Hinduism?

Even though God is omnipresent and His worship can be done in all places, it is traditional to worship God in a temple than anywhere else.

The temple is constructed chiefly for the communion of man with Almighty God. Hence an environment is created to help humans to communicate with the Divine. Holy vibrations are created as a result of performing regular prescribed worships by the devotees in the temple. Congregational worship produces an immense effect on those who take part in it. Temples provide psychological as well as spiritual needs of the devotees.

In the Vedic times when temples were not known, people used to worship fire as the symbol of the Infinite. During the post-Buddhist period temples came into being in India. From the Gupta period onwards in the history we come across gigantic temples of great architectural magnificence.

Apart serving as sites of worship, temples serve as centres of learning where the Acharyas (teachers) preach high philosophies. There are schools to teach the various branches of knowledge like literature, grammar and ethics in temples. Recitation and exposition of portions from the epics like Mahabharata and Ramayana are also conducted to impart ethical education to the assembly gathered every day. Many temples yet serve the physical needs of the devotees by

maintaining hospitals and provisions for medicine and act as socio-religious establishment to provide a means for a get together.

A temple also serves as a treasure house of fine arts of aesthetic value. A temple designed with splendour, serenity and magnificence at once lifts man to a higher sphere of the Divine.

Spiritual precisions are realised, actually practised and experienced in society for the elevation of man from the human level to the Divine at a temple.

6. Give a very brief account about Ramana Maharshi?

Ramana Maharshi (1879-1950) is considered one of the supreme spiritual teachers of modern times. Ramana Maharshi reached an insightful experience of the true Self without the guidance of any Guru (teacher) at the age of seventeen after which he remained conscious of his identity and personality with the Brahman (Absolute) at all times.

At the age of seventeen Ramana suddenly had an experience of death one day in which he realised that the body dies but the consciousness is not touched by death. "I" am immortal consciousness. "All these," he later reported, "were no idle speculations. They went through me like a influential, living truth that I experienced directly, almost without thinking. 'I' [the true I or Self] was reality, the only reality in this momentary state. All conscious activity that was related to my body flowed into this 'I'. From that moment, all attention was drawn as if by powerful magic to the 'I' or the Self. The fear of death was permanently extinguished. From this time on I remained fully absorbed in the 'Self'."

At a later stage Ramana Maharshi started to respond to the questions put to him by spiritual devotees all over the world.

Ramana Maharshi did not follow any particular traditional system of teaching, but rather presented knowledge honestly from his own experience of non-duality. The transcribed conversations of Ramana Maharshi are known among spiritual seekers the world over.

The following (Questions and Answers) is an extract from The teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi Edited by David Godman; Arthur Osborne, Kavyakantha G.Muni, Kurt Friedrichs, Mouni Sadhu

Meditation and Concentration

Sri Ramana Maharshi's insistence that awareness of the "I" thought was a pre-requisite for Self-realisation led him to the conclusion that all spiritual practices which did not incorporate this feature were indirect and inefficient:

Sri Ramana Maharshi said: This path (attention to the 'I') is the direct path: all others are indirect ways. The first leads to the Self, the others elsewhere. And even if the others do arrive at the Self it is only because they lead at the end to the first path which ultimately carries them to the goal. So, in the end, the aspirants must adopt the first path. Why not do so now? Why waste time?

[Note: by David Godman: That is to say, other techniques may sometimes bring one to an inner state of stillness in which self-attention or self-awareness inadvertently takes place, but it is a very roundabout way of reaching the Self. Sri Ramana maintained that other techniques could only take one to the place where self-enquiry starts and so he never endorsed them unless he felt that particular questioners were unable or unwilling to adopt self-enquiry.]

Sri Ramana Maharshi said: The goal is the same for the one who meditates [on an object] and the one who practises self-enquiry. One attains stillness through meditation, the other through

knowledge. One strives to attain something; the other seeks the one who strives to attain. The former takes a longer time, but in the end attains the Self.

[Note: Although Sri Ramana vigorously defended his views on self-enquiry he never insisted that anyone change their beliefs or practices and, if he was unable to convince his followers to take up self-enquiry, he would happily give advice on other methods.]

Question by a disciple: There is more pleasure in dhyana (concentration) than in sensual enjoyments. Yet the mind runs after the sensual enjoyments and does not seek the former. Why is it so?

Sri Ramana Maharshi: Pleasure or pain are aspects of the mind only. Our essential nature is happiness. But we have forgotten the Self and imagine that the body or the mind is the Self. It is that wrong identity that gives rise to misery. What is to be done? This mental tendency is very ancient and has continued for innumerable past births. Hence it has grown strong. That must go before the essential nature, happiness, asserts itself.

Question: It is said that the Self is beyond the mind and yet the realisation is with the mind. The mind cannot think it. It cannot be thought of by the mind and the mind alone can realise it. How are these contradictions to be reconciled?

Question: Why is concentration ineffective?

Sri Ramana Maharshi: To ask the mind to kill the mind is like making the thief the policeman. He will go with you and pretend to catch the thief, but nothing will be gained. So you must turn inward and see from where the mind rises and then it will cease to exist.

Question: In turning the mind inwards, are we not still employing the mind?

Sri Ramana Maharshi: Of course we are employing the mind. It is well known and admitted that only with the help of the mind can the mind be killed. But instead setting about saying there is a mind, and I want to kill it, you begin to seek the source of the mind, and you find the mind does not exist at all. The mind, turned outwards, results in thoughts and objects. Turned inwards, it becomes itself the Self.

Question: What is samadhi?

Sri Ramana Maharshi: The state in which the unbroken experience of existence-consciousness is attained by the still mind, alone is samadhi. That still mind which is adorned with the attainment of the limitless Supreme Self, alone is the reality of God. When the mind is in communion with the Self in darkness, it is called nidra (sleep), that is the immersion of the mind in ignorance. Immersion in a conscious or wakeful state is called samadhi. Samadhi is continuous inherence in the Self in a waking state. Nidra or sleep is also inherence in the Self but in an unconscious state. In SAHAJ SAMADHI the communion is continuous.

The immersion of the mind in the Self, but without its destruction, is known as Kevala Nirvikalpa Samadhi. In this state one is not free from vasanas and so one does not therefore attain mukti (liberation). Only after the vasanas have been destroyed can one attain liberation."

Question: When can one practice Sahaj Samadhi?

Sri Ramana Maharshi: Even from the beginning. Even though one practises Kevala Nirvikalpa Samadhi for years together, if one has not rooted out the vasanas one will not attain liberation.

Question: Is samadhi, the eighth stage of raja yoga, the same as the samadhi you speak of?

Sri Ramana Maharshi: In yoga the term samadhi refers to some kind of trance and there are various kinds of samadhi. But the samadhi I speak of is different. It is SAHAJ SAMADHI. From here you have samadhan (steadiness) and you remain calm and composed even while you are active. You realise that you are moved by the deeper real Self within. You have no worries, no

anxieties, no cares, for you come to realise that there is nothing belonging to you. You know that everything is done by something with which you are in conscious union.

Question: If this sahaj samadhi is the most desirable condition, is there no need for nirvikalpa samadhi?

Sri Ramana Maharshi: The nirvikalpa samadhi of raja yoga may have its use. But in Jnana yoga this sahaj sthiti (natural state) or sahaj nishtha (abidance in the natural state) itself is the nirvikalpa state. In this natural state, the mind is free from doubts. It has no need to swing between alternatives of possibilities and probabilities. It sees no vikल्पas (differences) of any kind. It is sure of the truth because it feels the presence of the real. Even when it is active, it knows it is active in the reality, the Self, the Supreme Being.

Question: How can one function in the world in such a state?

Sri Ramana Maharshi: One who accustoms himself naturally to meditation and enjoys the bliss of meditation will not lose his samadhi state whatever external work he does, whatever thoughts may come to him. That is Sahaja Nirvikalpa. Sahaj Nirvikalpa is Nasa Manas (total destruction of the mind). Those who are in the laya samadhi state (a trance like state in which the mind is temporarily in abeyance) will have to bring the mind back under control from time to time. If the mind is destroyed, as it is in sahaj samadhi, it will never slide down from their high state.

Question: Is samadhi a blissful or ecstatic state?

Sri Ramana Maharshi: In samadhi itself there is only perfect peace. Ecstasy comes when the mind revives at the end of samadhi. In devotion the ecstasy comes first. It is manifested by tears of joy, hair standing on end, and vocal stumbling. When the ego finally dies and the Sahaj is won, these symptoms and the ecstasies cease.

Siddhis (super natural powers)

Question: On realising samadhi, does not one obtain siddhis (super natural powers) also?

Sri Ramana Maharshi: In order to display siddhis, there must be others to recognise them. That means, there is no jnana in the one who displays them. Therefore, siddhis are not worth a thought. Jnana alone is to be aimed at and gained.

Turiya-the fourth state

Question: Is samadhi the same as Turiya, the fourth state?

Sri Ramana Maharshi: Samadhi, Turiya and nirvikalpa all have the same implication, that is, awareness of the Self. Turiya literally means the fourth state, the Supreme Consciousness, as distinct from the other three states of consciousness: waking, dreaming and dreamless sleep. The fourth state is eternal and the other three states come and go in it. In Turiya there is the awareness that the mind has merged in its source, the Heart, and is quiescent there, although some thoughts still impinge on it and the senses are still somewhat active. In nirvikalpa, the senses are inactive and thoughts are totally absent. Hence the experience of Pure Consciousness in this state is intense and blissful. Turiya is obtainable in savikalpa samadhi.

7. Why is Sacred Fire considered important in Ceremonies?

AGNI Agni (fire) according to puranas is the messenger of the gods. Whatever and whenever a devotee has to say something to the higher powers (gods), he communicate his desire through Agni (sacred fire of homa). Agni is supposed to be the linkage with the Supreme Lord. Agnihotra, Homa or Havan is a primary and fundamental ritual during the performance of Homa sacrificing objects to the Supreme are offered in the consecrated fire.

The seven flames of the fire of Agni are mentioned in the Mundakopanisad: The Black, Fierce, Mind-swift, Smoke-coloured, Scintillating, Bright, All-shining- these are the seven moving tongues of fire. Agni is the deity associated with sacrifice. Thus Agni occupies an important place in the Brahmanas. In the Grhya Sutras, Agni is the witness of all sacraments. Agni is the chief witness of sacraments such as the marriage of Hindus.

In the Isavasyopanisad Agni is described as the witness of all deeds of the people and the destroyer of all sins. Agni is called omniscient (Jatveda). Agni destroys sins and exorcizes away demons and evil spirits. Agni is one of the most important deities of the Vedas. Nearly two hundred hymns are addressed to Agni. Agni is mentioned with reverence in the Upanishads also.

8. How is that the recital of Vedas from the early days, though not in written form has not changed till today?

The main reason is that the method of reciting the Vedas in five ways namely

- | | |
|-------------|----------|
| i. Mula, | iv. Jata |
| ii. Pada, | v. Ghana |
| iii. Krama, | |

The impressive tradition regarding propagation of the Vedas is that Veda Vyasa codified the four Vedas and taught them to his four disciples Paila, Vaisampayana, Jaimini and Sumanta. These disciples taught their knowledge to their disciples. Accordingly the Vedas came down from generation to later generations. In this procedure, this gave rise to a tradition where there was no material change in the contents.

In the first, Mula the Mantras are recited continuously. In the second, Pada they are split word by word. In the third, Krama the Padas are joined as 1.2, 2.3, 3.4, etc. In the fourth, Jata again Padas are joined and in textual order then in reverse order and once again in textual order as 1.2, 2.1, 1.2, 2.3, 3.2, etc. In the last, Ghana more complicated combinations like 1.2.2.1, 1.2.3.3.2.1, 1.2.3, etc. are used.

9. What are the supreme qualities of Buddha Dharma?

Six supreme qualities of Buddha Dharma

- i. **Svakkhato** (Pali) The Dharma is not a speculative philosophy, but is the Universal Law found through enlightenment and is preached precisely. Therefore it is Excellent in the beginning (Sīla — Moral principles), Excellent in the middle (Samadhi — Concentration) and Excellent in the end, the only end that could result through fate. (Pañña — Wisdom).
- ii. **Saditthiko** (Pali) The Dharma can be tested by practice and therefore he who follows it will see the result by himself through his own experience.
- iii. **Akāliko** (Pali) The Dharma is able to bestow timeless and immediate results here and now, though no matter which means of travel, for which there is no need to wait until the future or next existence.
- iv. **Ehipassiko** (Pali) The Dharma welcomes all beings to put it to the test and to experience it for themselves.

- v. **Opāneyiko** (Pali) The Dharma is capable of being entered upon and therefore it is worthy to be followed as a part of one's life.
- vi. **Paccattam veditabbo viññūhi** (Pali) The Dharma may be perfectly realized only by the noble disciples (Pali: *Ariyas*) who have matured and who have become enlightened in supreme wisdom.

10. What is ment by Para and Aparā Vidya?

Para and Aparā Vidya are two categories of knowledge, declares the Rishi of Mundaka Upanishad- knowledge of the world and knowledge of the inner world, material knowledge (apara vidya) and spiritual knowledge (para vidya). In fact both ought to be acquired and both are equally important. Nor are they mutually exclusive. One is incomplete without the other. Chandogya Upanishad also mentions about this.

11. What are the main parts of a temple ?

The Hindu temple could be compared with a human body. The parts of a temple are identical with the parts of the human body. A Hindu temple is only a reflection of the physical form of the human body. The vimana is the head, the Sanctum is the neck, the front mandapa is the stomach, the prakara walls are the legs, the gopura is the feet and the Lord in the Sanctum is the Soul or the Jiva of the body. There are several versions regarding the comparison of the parts of a temple with the various centres or parts of a body.

The major components of a temple are mainly;

1. Garbhagruha (Sanctum Sanctorum) containing the image of God.
2. The Vimana over the Sanctum.
3. Ardhamandapa in front of the Sanctum.
4. Prakaras around the Sanctum.
5. The Gopura, the main gateway of the temple.

The macrocosm is reflected in the microcosm. The great cosmos is reflected in the human body. The Sanctum Sanctorum is the most important part of a temple.

With prescribed concentration on the image with appropriate mantras and rituals, the image becomes an object of spiritual power from which flow a stream of grace to the soul of a devotee. The hymns rendered by our great saints before the idols remain immortal by Divine grace. The Sanctum Sanctorum is structured in such a manner to preserve the sound waves. The temples are holy places where spiritual power is stored.

12. What is Saiva Siddhanta Philosophy in nutshell?

The fundamental doctrine of the Saiva Siddhanta philosophy is that Siva is the Supreme Reality, and that the Jiva or the individual soul is of the same essence as Siva, but not identical. Pati (God), Pasu (soul) and Pasa (the bonds), and the thirty-six Tattvas or principles which constitute the world, are all real. The Saiva Siddhanta system is the distilled essence of the Vedanta.

13. Briefly explain the 'Ashtanga-Yoga Sutras' of Patanjali ?

The 'Yoga Sutras' of Patanjali is the earliest manuscript of the Yoga school of thought . It has four chapters. The 1st chapter, Samadhi Pada, explains the nature and aim of Samadhi.

The 2nd chapter, Sadhana Pada, describes the means of attaining this end.

The 3rd chapter, Vibhuti Pada, furnishes an account of the supernatural powers or Siddhis that can be achieved through the Yoga practices.

The 4th chapter, Kaivalya Pada, elucidates the nature of salvation.

Patanjali's Ashtanga-Yoga or Yoga with eight limbs deals with the discipline of the mind and its psychic powers. Hatha Yoga treats of the methodology of bodily control and organizing the regulation of respiration. The finale of Hatha Yoga is Raja Yoga.

When the movement of breathing is stopped by means of Kumbhaka, the mind becomes support less.

Refining of the body and control of breath is the principle aim of Hatha Yoga.

The Shat-Karmas (six acts of purification) of the body are Dhauti (cleansing of the stomach), Basti (natural form of enema), Neti (cleansing of the nostrils), Trataka (unwinkingly gazing at some object), Nauli (churning of the belly) and Kapalabhati (removal of the phlegm through a certain kind of Pranayama). The body is rendered healthy, light, strong and steady by the practice of Asanas, Bandhas and Mudras.

14. What is the most significant part of the epic Mahabharata?

The most essential part of the epic Mahabharata is the ***Bhagavad-Gita***. It is a impressive exchange of ideas between Lord Krishna and Arjuna on the battle-field, just prior to the beginning of the great war. Lord Sri Krishna turn out to be the charioteer of Arjuna. Sri Krishna made clear the essentials of Hindu religion to Arjuna. Just as the Upanishads hold the cream of the Vedas, so does the Gita holds the cream of the Upanishads.

15. What is the meaning of the mantra "Gannanaam twa gannpatim havamahe".. and where is this mantra mentioned?

The mantra "Gannanaam twa gannpatim havamahe" is seen in Rigveda 2-23-1 .The full hymn is;

*Ganaanaam Twa Ganapati m Havaamahe
Kavim Kaveenaam Upamasra Vastamam
Jyeshtha Raajam Brahmanaam Brahmanaspatha
Aanashrunvanna Oothibhi Seedha Saadanam*

In is hymn "Gannanaam twa gannpatim havamahe", the word 'Gannanam' means who is Supreme, amongst all the matters of universe, which is God. the word 'Gannapatim' means he who is Supreme Lord of the matters of the universe that also, God.

"*twa*" means you, that is, God, '*havamahe*' means accept which really means accept the worship. Idea of the mantra is one should always worship the God who is Supreme commander of the universe, who is omniscient and Almighty.

The full Meaning of this hymn is as follows: We invite You, the Lord of spiritual faith (of Lord Shiva). You are the wisest among the wise, the best to be given as a standard of comparison. You are the senior Lord, Lord of the *Vedic manthras*, listening to our prayers. Please visit our home with prosperous things and be seated here.

16. What are the names of the 100 sons Dhritarashtra the Kaurava brothers ?

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1) Duryodhana . (Suyodhan) | 51) Paasy . |
| 2) Dussaasana . | 52) Vrindaaraka . |
| 3) Dussaha . | 53) Dridhavarma . |
| 4) Dussalan . | 54) Dridhakshathra . |
| 5) Jalagandha . | 55) Somakeerthy . |
| 6) Sama . | 56) Anthudara . |
| 7) Saha . | 57) Dridhasandha . |
| 8) Vindha . | 58) Jaraasandha . |
| 9) Anuvindha . | 59) Sathyasandha . |
| 10) Durdharsha . | 60) Sadaasuvaak . |
| 11) Subaahu . | 61) Ugrasravas . |
| 12) Dushpradharsha . | 62) Ugrasena . |
| 13) Durmarshana . | 63) Senaany . |
| 14) Durmukha . | 64) Dushparaaja . |
| 15) Dushkarna . | 65) Aparajitha . |
| 16) Vikarna . | 66) Kundhasaai . |
| 17) Sala . | 67) Visaalaaksha . |
| 18) Sathwan | 68) Duraadhara . |
| 19) Sulochan . | 69) Dridhahastha . |
| 20) Chithra . | 70) Suhastha . |
| 21) Upachithra . | 71) Vaathavega . |
| 22) Chithraaksha . | 72) Suvarcha . |
| 23) Chaaruchithra . | 73) Aadithyakethu . |
| 24) Saraasana . | 74) Bahwaasy . |
| 25) Durmada . | 75) Naagadatha . |
| 26) Durvigaaha . | 76) Ugrasaai . |
| 27) Vivilsu . | 77) Kavachy . |
| 28) Vikatinanda . | 78) Kradhana . |
| 29) Oornanaabha . | 79) Kundhy . |
| 30) Sunaabha . | 80) Bheemavikra . |
| 31) Nanda . | 81) Dhanurdhara . |
| 32) Upananda . | 82) Veerabaahu . |
| 33) Chithrabaana . | 83) Alolupa . |
| 34) Chithravarma . | 84) Abhaya . |
| 35) Suvarma . | 85) Dhridhakarmaavu . |
| 36) Durvimocha . | 86) Dhridharathaasraya . |
| 37) Ayobaahu . | 87) Anaadhrushya . |
| 38) Mahabaahu . | 88) Kundhabhedy . |
| 39) Chithraamga . | 89) Viraavy . |
| 40) Chithrakundala . | 90) Chithrakundala . |
| 41) Bheemavega . | 91) Pradhama . |
| 42) Bheemabela . | 92) Amapramaadhy . |
| 43) Vaalaky . | 93) Deerkharoma . |
| 44) Belavardhana . | 94) Suveeryavaan . |
| 45) Ugraayudha . | 95) Dheerkhabaahu . |
| 46) Sushena . | 96) Sujaatha . |
| 47) Kundhaadhara . | 97) Kaanchanadhwaja . |
| 48) Mahodara . | 98) Kundhaasy |
| 49) Chithraayudha . | 99) Virajass . |
| 50) Nishamgy . | 100) Yuyutsu |

Dussala (only sister of Kaurava brothers,)

