

20 The Nature of the Ego and of Self

- 154 The nature of the ego is similar to that of an elf, being very enthusiastic, rising in many wicked ways by means of innumerable imaginations, being erratic in behaviour, and knowing only things other than itself. But the nature of Self is mere Existence-Consciousness.

21 The power of *Vasanas*

- 155 Some *jivas* suffer, being often thrown back into the eddying stream of *samsara* by their *vasanas*, which are like mischievous boys not allowing them to cling fast to Self, the bank [of *samsara*'s stream].

Sadhu Om: Small creatures, trying to climb out of the dangerous eddies of a stream, are sometimes pushed back again by mischievous boys; this is used as a simile for those jivas who, while trying to cling to Self-Attention, find themselves being constantly pulled back by their vasanas into samsara, the eddying stream of worldly thoughts.

22 The Ego-Knot

- 156 The reason for our mistake of seeing a world of objects in front of us is that we have risen as a separate 'I', the seer, due to our failure to attend to the vast perfection of Self-Consciousness, which is our Reality.

Sadhu Om: When our unlimited Existence is mistakenly confined by identification with the limited body, our own Self appears as the world and God, which seem to be entities separate from 'I', the seer. However, these separate objects appear only in the view of the ego, and not in the view of Self. This same idea is also expressed in verse 158.

- 157 The false, deceitful and self-blinded ego-knot, believing the body to be real, lusts after various allurements which are all fancied like the blueness of the sky, and thus it tightens itself.
- 158 It is only the sight which is blind to the unlimited Self, having veiled itself as "I am the body", that also appears as the world before it.
- 159 The life of the filthy ego, which mistakes a body both as 'I' and as 'my place', is merely a false imagination seen as a dream in the pure, real, Supreme Self.
- 160 This fictitious *jiva*, who lives as 'I [am the body]', is also one of the pictures on the screen.

Michael James: Compare verse 1218.

Sadhu Om: The jiva, our false being, is a mere projection upon the screen of our true Being, Self. In a cinema picture showing the scene of a royal court, the king is seen viewing his court; just as he appears to be a seer, though in fact he is one of the insentient pictures [i.e., the seen], so also the jiva appears to be a seer viewing the world, though in fact he is also one of the insentient pictures projected on the screen of Self. Refer to verse 871 and note.

23 The Might of the Ego

- 161 Only when the ego is destroyed does one become a Devotee; only when the ego is destroyed does one become a *Jnani*; only when the ego is destroyed does one become God; and only when the ego is destroyed does Grace blaze forth.

Sadhu Om: *Since the rising of the ego is the root of all pride, it is the only obstruction to our being a truly humble slave and servant to God, and therefore its annihilation is the only true sign of a real Bhakta [Devotee] or Karma Yogi. Since the ego is itself the root and the primal form of ignorance, its annihilation alone is the Supreme Jnana. Since the ego [i.e., the feeling 'I am the body'] is the cause of the feeling of separation from God, its annihilation alone is the true Yoga [i.e., union with God]. Since the ego is the root and the primal form of wretchedness, its annihilation is the only true manifestation of blessed Grace. It is thus shown that the aim of all the four Yogas is the annihilation of the ego.*

162 He who has destroyed the ego is alone the true *Sannyasin* and the true Brahmin; but, hard indeed is the complete destruction of the heavy burden of the ego borne by those *Sannyasins* who feel “I belong to the highest *ashrama*” and by those brahmins who feel “I belong to the highest caste”.

Sadhu Om: *The true Sannyasa is the renunciation of the ego and the true Brahminhood is the realization of Brahman [i.e., the Self], and thus both the words Sannyasin and Brahmin mean one who has destroyed the ego. But as ashramas [orders of life] and varnas [castes] pertain only to the body, only those who identify themselves with their bodies can feel that they belong to the highest ashrama [known as Sannyasa] or to the highest varna [known as Brahminhood]. Such feelings naturally create pride and strengthen the ego, and therefore the higher the ashrama or varna, the heavier the burden of the ego, and the harder its eradication.*

163 One who sees otherness and multiplicity cannot become a *Parppan* merely because he has learnt the four *Vedas*. But one who sees his own [ego's] death is the true *Parppan*; the other one [i.e. the caste Brahmin] is inwardly shamed, being despised by the Wise.

Michael James: *Parppan literally means 'a seer', that is, one who knows the truth, but it is commonly used to mean a caste brahmin.*

164 The complete eradication of the ego is indeed very hard when even in the case of Kannappa, whose love for Lord Shiva was so great that he plucked out his own eyes and planted them on the Lord's face, there remained [until that moment] a trace of body attachment [i.e. ego] in the form of his pride concerning his beautiful bright eyes.

Sadhu Om: *At times Sri Bhagavan used to reveal some information which was not given by the scriptures and Puranas such as:*

a) *how, in the Bhagavad Gita, Sri Krishna began His teachings with the doctrines of Ajata and Advaita, but then condescendingly came down to various stages of Dwaita, and how He carefully used words which, though suited to Arjuna's limited grasping power, also gives room for well-ripened aspirants to discover, even now, the motive behind those words.*

b) *how at first, Sri Dakshinamurti answered His disciples' doubts with wise and convincing replies before he took to his method of teaching through Silence.*

c) *the following variation on the story of Kannappa: Kannappa was proud of his eyes, which were very beautiful, so, according to the divine saying, "I will forcibly deprive my true devotee of all his possessions so that his mind may always cling to me", Lord Shiva tested Kannappa by making him offer even his treasured and enviable eyes to the Lord. Thus even his slight attachment to his body was removed and he was absorbed in Shiva.*

As this information about Kannappa's attachment to his beautiful eyes was not revealed by the Puranas, but only by Sri Bhagavan Ramana, we can infer that He is none other than Shiva, who faced Kannappa at that time.

This information about Kannappa, which continues in the next verse also, was gathered by Sri Murugunar. The information about Sri Krishna's teaching was recorded in verse 101 of this same work, and also in Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi, talk, nos. 264, 364 and 611. The information about Sri Dakshinamurti's verbal teaching has not been recorded elsewhere so the reader may ask Sri Bhagavan's early devotees for the full story.

Editor's note: *These words were written more than twenty years ago. Since that time the story of Dakshinamurti has appeared in The Mountain Path, 1982, pp. 11-12. It will also appear in a few months in Padamalai, in the chapter of 'The Guru'.*

165 The real glory of Shiva *Bhakti* is the salvation of the devotee from the damnation caused by the delusion "I am this filthy body". This is the reason why Shiva accepted Kannappa's eyes when he offered them.

24 The Ego's Play

166 When properly scrutinized, God's ordinance amounts to this: If the ego rises, all things rise; if it subsides, they all subside.

Sadhu Om: *Refer to the last paragraph of Who Am I?*

167 The delusion-bound ego-life, led by all creatures in the three worlds, is nothing but the dance of ghouls who possess corpses in a cremation ground.

168 Listen, here is a great wonder; people who cannot even think unless empowered to do so by the Supreme Power [*Chit-Shakti*] are performing karmas with great eagerness and zeal!

169 This is much like the zeal of the cripple who declared, "If someone will only lift and support me, I will meet the host of enemies single handed, lay them low, and raise a pile of corpses here".

Michael James: *The above two verses are condensed and summarised by Bhagavan in the following verse.*

B2 The futile activities of those madmen who, not realising that they themselves are activated by the Supreme Power, make efforts thinking, "Let us acquire all the *siddhis*", are like [the efforts] of the cripple in the story who boasted, "If anyone will help me stand, what worth will my enemies have before me?"

Michael James: *This verse also appears as verse fifteen of Ulladu Narpadu Anubandham.*

170 If, of their own accord, even the Wind God could not stir, nor could the Fire God burn a wisp straw, how can an ordinary *jiva* do anything at all with its separate ego-strength?

Michael James: *These analogies are based upon a saying in the Kenopanishad.*

- 171 Having its Self-Knowledge veiled by illusion, being bound by the fruits of sinful karmas, and suffering, having lost sight of the Supreme, the ego's play is a mere mockery, like the sculpture of the Supreme which appears to carry the temple tower.
- 172 Would passengers, if wise, carry their luggage on their own heads, while travelling on a train which hauls, under steam-power, the heaviest loads like wisps of straw?
- 173 Similarly, since, by its very nature, the Supreme Power alone sustains all things, it is wise for men to leave the burdens [cares and anxiety] of their life on that Supreme Power, and thus to feel free.

Michael James: Refer also to Who am I? for the above two sayings. The above three verses were summarised in the following verse by Bhagavan:

- B3** Look! While God is bearing the responsibility of the whole world, it is a mockery for the false *jiva* to think that it shoulders these responsibilities, like the sculpture which appears to carry the temple-tower. Whose fault is it if a passenger in a train, which is hauling a heavy load, suffers by keeping his luggage on his head instead of placing it on the rack?

Michael James: This verse also appears as verse seventeen of Ulladu Narpadu Anubandham.

Are there not among us some aspirants who, seeing the sufferings in this world, make efforts to reform it or even to heavenize it? But here Sri Bhagavan exposes the foolishness of such aspirants and advises them to surrender to God all their cares, both for themselves and for the world, and to remain quiet!

- 174 One's fear and quaking of one's body while one is entering *samadhi* is due to the slight ego-consciousness still remaining. But when this dies completely, without leaving even a trace, one abides as the vast space of mere consciousness where Bliss alone prevails, and the quaking stops.

Sadhu Om: The annihilation of the ego is alone the realization of Self, so when an aspirant's attachment to his body is being removed through enquiry, he [i.e. the ego] will feel that he is going to die, hence some aspirants experience during their sadhana a fear of death and sometimes even a physical shaking or great heat, and so in this verse Sri Bhagavan clears the aspirant's doubts and explains these phenomena.

- 175 The only worthy occupation is to thoroughly absorb the ego by turning Selfward and, without allowing it to rise, to thus abide quietly, like a waveless ocean, in Self-Knowledge, having annihilated the delusive mind-ghost, which had been wandering about unobstructed.
- 176 The truly powerful *tapas* is that state in which, having lost the sense of doership, and knowing well that all is His Will, one is relieved from the delusion of the foolish ego. Thus should you know.

Michael James: The last sentence may also mean, 'Therefore, acquire such tapas'.

25 Treason Against Self

- 177 To be deluded and without Self-knowledge, and to thus see all the worlds and the *jivas* therein as different from oneself, is truly doing treason against Self, that vast Space of Consciousness in whose view nothing is other than Itself, and which absorbs everything into Itself.

Sadhu Om: *The rising of an individual 'I' [ego or jiva] is the reason why Self is seen as many things. Therefore, since it seems to spoil the true Oneness of Self, the ego's rising is considered to be treason against Self.*

26 Heaven and Hell

178 O men, do not argue and quarrel amongst yourselves about the reality of heaven and hell. As long as and as far as this present world is real, till then and to that extent heaven and hell are also real.

Sadhu Om: *Many of us take great interest in arguing about the reality and existence of other worlds such as heaven and hell, and whether or not they are mere mytho-poetic imaginations. Sri Bhagavan, however, points out that all such arguments are based on a false premise, namely the reality of our own existence. "As the eye, so is the sight": Hence, believing oneself, the seer, to be real we conclude that the world, the seen, is also real. But only when, through Self-Knowledge we find the seer to be unreal, can we truly know that this and all other worlds are also unreal. Until then we have no true premise on which to judge the reality of this or of other worlds, and, therefore, it is right to concede the same degree of reality to all worlds, whether seen or unseen, as we give to the seer of them.*

179 If those geniuses who assert, "Yes, this world and body which we see do really exist," would sit and scrutinize [this matter] with me, I would certainly point out to them, "Yes, not only does this world really exist, but also do other worlds such as heaven and hell!"

Sadhu Om: *Even scientists have nowadays come to understand that the things which we perceive through the five senses cannot be said to exist objectively in the same manner as they appear to us, and that, because the senses cannot reveal things as they really are, it is wrong to believe the senses and to decide the world exists as we see it.*

In this verse, although those who assert the reality of this world are ironically called geniuses by Sri Bhagavan, why, instead of advising them that the world is unreal, does He join them in saying that it is real? There are two reasons why even Jnanis, who have realised the world-appearance to be illusory, say that the world is real:

1) *The Jnani never sees Himself as an unreal and insignificant jiva, but only as the real, unlimited and pure Awareness. Since His outlook is that of Brahman, He will say according to the saying "As the eye, so is the sight" – that the universe is real.*

2) *If the truth were told that this world and the others, such as heaven and hell, are all unreal, the ignorant, who do not know the Absolute Truth [due to the power of their vasanas, in the form of worldly desires], would lose all fear of doing evil actions and all interest in doing punya karmas [meritorious actions]. So, it is in the best interest of the ignorant that they should be told that evil actions done in this world will take them to hell and virtuous actions will take them to heaven.*

Therefore, while the modern mind takes the present world and the incidents happening here to be real, it is definitely wrong for anyone to believe that all the worlds and incidents mentioned in the Puranas are unreal, or for anyone to say that we may regard these things as mere 'mytho-poetic' imaginations.

Refer also to The Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 3, verse 26.

27 The Terror of Hell

- 180 Only those who do not know the nature of misery are terrified of the tortures of hell. But if one understands what misery is, one will know the way to end it, and will certainly attain one's natural state of Bliss.

Michael James: A thorough scrutiny will reveal that the nature of misery is the rising of 'I', the ego, since no misery is experienced in deep sleep, where there is no rising of the ego. The way to eradicate misery is therefore to not allow the rising of the ego, which can only be prevented by vigilant Self-attention. Hence, the enquiry "Who am I?" is the only means to end all misery.

28 The Conquest of Hell (Naraka)

- 181 The *Puranas* say that Lord Narayana has killed the demon [of misery], Naraka Asura. This demon is none other than the one who lives as "I am this body, the source of misery". One who seeks Naraka Asura's [i.e., the ego's] source, and thus annihilates him, is truly Lord Narayana Himself.
- 182 The Deepavali-bath, which is taken by all people on the fourteenth moon in remembrance of the conquest of Naraka, signifies the bath of *Jnana*, which is taken after destroying the ego Naraka Asura, by searching for his source.

Michael James: Deepavali or Naraka Chaturdasi is an annual festival celebrated in India on the fourteenth day of the waning moon in October or November. In this verse Sri Bhagavan explains the significance of the oil bath which is customarily taken by people on the morning of that day in remembrance of the conquest of Naraka-Asura by Lord Narayana [Maha-Vishnu].

The above two verses were summarised in the following verse by Sri Bhagavan:

- B 4 He who kills Narakasura (the ego) with the Wheel [i.e. weapon] of *Jnana*, by enquiring, "Where is the source of Narakasura who rules over Narakaloka, this wretched body, as 'I'?", is Lord Narayana; and that day [of the ego's destruction] is the auspicious day of the fourteenth moon.
- 183 Deepavali signifies the great Self-Effulgence which shines after destroying the reflected light [i.e. the ego], Narakasura, who was ruling this filthy body, which is the form of hell, as 'I'.

Michael James: Deepavali means the "Festival of Lights". The above verse which explains the significance of the "Lights" [i.e. the firecrackers used on that day] was rewritten as follows by Sri Bhagavan with only a slight change in the meaning, but in poetry which was clearer and more beautiful because of the precision of each syllable.

- B5** Deepavali signified the shining of Self after the destruction, through enquiry, of the greatest sinner, Naraka [the ego], who took the abode of this filthy body, which is the form of hell, as 'I'.

29 The greatness of *Aham-mukha* (Self-Attention)

- 184 While Self, the Source and Reality of the ego – which can only know objects other than itself through its senses – alone should be clung to, all an aspirant's efforts to concentrate on other objects [which are all second and third persons], are just like ignoring something while trying to grasp its shadow.

Michael James: There are two possible translations of the next verse:

- 185a For the extroverted intellect – which suffers greatly, knowing through the senses only the objects of form and quality before it – the means to abide in Self is to begin enquiring inwardly, “Who am I?”
- 185b For the extroverted intellect, the means to abide in Self is to begin enquiring inwardly “Who am I, who suffer greatly, knowing through the senses only the objects of form and quality before me?”
- 186 O miserable and extroverted people, failing to see the seer, you see only the seen! To dissolve duality by turning inwards instead of outwards is alone Blissful.

Sadhu Om: The terms “inward” and “outward” can be used only in reference to the body, but as the body is itself a mere imagination, such terms should not be taken literally. The reason for the use of these words is that the aspirant, in his ignorance, feels his body to be ‘I’, so on being told to “turn inwards” he should understand that he should “turn Selfwards,” that is he should turn his attention towards what he feels as “I”. In truth, Self is neither inside nor outside the body as it alone exists beyond all limitations such as time and space.

- 187 O mind, it is not wise for you to come out [in the form of thoughts]; it is best to go within. Hide yourself deep within the Heart and escape from the tricks of *Maya*, who tries to upset you by drawing you outwards.

Sadhu Om: The beginning of the verse may also be translated as, ‘ O mind, it is not wise for you to expose yourself to name and fame...’

- 188 [O mind,] do not waste your life in roaming outside, pursuing wonders and courting enjoyments; to know Self through Grace [Self-enquiry], and to thus abide firmly in the Heart, is alone worthwhile.
- 189 Since it is only the notion of duality that spoils Bliss and causes misery, to avoid yielding to the attractions of that notion and to thus arrest all *chitta vrittis* is alone worthwhile.
- 190 O people, not knowing that Shiva is dwelling within you, you fly about like birds from one holy place to another [seeking His *Darshan*]. Consciousness, when abiding still in the Heart, is the Supreme Shiva.

Sadhu Om: To seek Shiva Darshan outside of oneself requires movement, but it is revealed here that to be still is the only true means of seeking it.

- 191 The ship would be destroyed by the storm if its sails were spread outside, but it is safe when its anchor is sunk deep into the sea. Similarly, if the mind were sunk deep in the Heart instead of being spread outside, that would be *Jnana*.
- 192 To arrest the mind – which tries to rush outwards – securely within, is the truly heroic act of the ripe aspirant who wants to see the Supreme Lord in the Heart.

Sadhu Om: The end of this verse may also be translated as, ‘to see the Supreme, who is Lord of the Saints.’

- 193 When the mind [i.e., the ego’s attention] which wanders outside, knowing only other objects [2nd and 3rd persons] – begins to attend to its own nature, all other objects will disappear, and then, by experiencing it’s own true nature [i.e. Self], the pseudo-‘I’ will also die.

Sadhu Om: This verse clearly teaches that if the mind [i.e. the first person, 'I'] tries to attend to itself, not only will the 2nd and 3rd persons disappear, but the mind itself will also die. We are thus given here a complete description of the enquiry 'Who am I?' that is, we are told the method, what happens during the practice, and what result it will have.

30 The Kingdom of God

194 God does not reside in any place other than the Heart. It is due to illusion, caused by the ego, the 'I am the body' idea, that the Kingdom of God is conceived to be elsewhere. Be sure that the Heart is the kingdom of God.

Sadhu Om: Because we limit Ourselves, and believe the tiny, unworthy body to be 'I', it becomes necessary to think that there is, apart from 'I' some glorious and almighty God, living in a wonderful and faraway Kingdom of His own, who creates this vast universe. In truth, however, since soul, world and God all sprout out and appear from 'I', the Source, both God and His Kingdom should be known to be Self. Refer also to the saying of Christ, "The Kingdom of God is within you". [Luke 17:21]

195 Know that you are the perfect, Shining Light which not only makes the existence of God's Kingdom possible, but also allows it to be seen as a wonderful heaven. To know this alone is *Jnana*. Therefore, the Kingdom of God is within you.

Sadhu Om: We are taught here that the worlds exist because 'we' exist, and that they are known because 'we' know our own existence as 'I am'. In short, our Sat-Chit [Existence-Consciousness] is the cause for the existence of the worlds and for the knowledge about them.

196 The unlimited Space of *Turiyatita* which shines suddenly, in all its fullness, within the Heart of a highly mature aspirant during the state of complete absorption of mind, as if a fresh and previously unknown experience, is the rarely attained and true *Shiva-Loka* [i.e., Kingdom of God], which shines by the Light of Self.

31 Siva (The Supreme)

197 Having eradicated the ego, which was wandering like a ghost in delusion, and having destroyed the duality of the sentient and the insentient, the soul which is thus drowned and well soaked in the light of the pure and blissful *Sahaja Samadhi*, is the Supreme Shiva.

198 When the ego, the feeling of being separate entity, is removed, *chittam* remains as *Shivam*, the Supreme *Chit*, having merged within the Heart as "I am Consciousness Itself", and having thus destroyed all the false and dense mental conceptions.

Sadhu Om: The syllable tam in chittam represents ignorance [tamas or darkness]; so when this tam is removed, pure chit alone remains. Refer also to verse 244.

199 That eternal and subtlest Being which pervades and transcends all is God, the Supreme *Shivam*, which is realised when the widely-scattered mind is resolved into its Source, having had its impurities removed and having been well refined.

32 The Oneness of Hara and Hari (Shiva and Vishnu)

- 200 It is generally said that He who gives *Jnana* to *jivas* is Hara, and that He who gives them heavenly pleasure is Hari. But since the unshakeable *Jnana* is itself God and the Highest Bliss, know that Hara and Hari are not two but One.

33 Shiva and Shakti

- 201 The primal and unique Self – the Source and Heart without which *Para-Shakti*, who functions in the form of mind, cannot have even the slightest existence – is the pure Shiva who shines in Chidambaram.
- 202 The Eternal Bliss, after reaching which the mind will cease wandering outwards, is Shiva, the mind-enchanter [*mano-ranjitam*] who is the Heart that gives the ever-fresh experience of *Jnana*.
- 203 The *chittams* of well-ripened aspirants are themselves the *gopikas* who were charmed with love. Know that the Heart which removes the ego's pride, just as the flame destroys the moth, is the *gopikas'* Beloved One [Sri Krishna].

Michael James: The gopikas are the girls who lived and played with Sri Krishna on the banks of the Jamuna.

34 Shiva Puja (Worshipping Shiva)

- 204 A peaceful attitude, together with a 'silent-flow' of mind towards undeviating abidance in Self, *Sat-Chit*, is the best worship of Shiva.

Sadhu Om: When the mind wanders outwards, away from the Source it is actually disgracing Self, and so its undeviating abidance in the Self [its 'silent flow'] is here said to be the true worship of Self.

- 205 Saint Markandeya survived death by conquering even Yama, and lived beyond his destined time. Know, therefore, that death can be overcome by worshipping Shiva, the death-killer.

Michael James: In the story of Saint Markandeya, Shiva killed Yama, the God of death, and it is therefore said that by worshipping Shiva, death can be overcome. The true worship of Shiva is Self-abidance, as stated in verse 204 above, and since Self [Shiva] is beyond birth and death, by abiding as Self one conquers death and attains immortality.

- 206 Having obtained the non-dual view that all the eight forms of the universe, which are [mere] mental conceptions, are forms of God, to worship them properly is also a good Shiva-puja.

Sadhu Om: The eight forms of the universe are space, air, fire, water, earth, the sun, moon and jivas. The non-dual view is obtained only after realising the oneness of Self, and until then an aspirant must rely upon his mental imagination to try and see and worship the eight forms as the forms of God. Such worship, relying upon the imagination, may be taken as good Nishkama Karmas [i.e., desireless action], which helps to purify the mind and to thus point the way to liberation, as taught by Sri Bhagavan in verses 3 and 5 of Upadesa Saram. However, since this worship is mere mental activity it cannot be counted as the highest and true Shiva puja mentioned in verses 204 and 205 above. Only the Jnani truly sees that the eight forms are not other than Self [God]. So, He alone can truly perform Nishkama Karmas or Shiva-puja.

Refer to Maharshi's Gospel, Part I, chapter 3, where Sri Bhagavan states, "An Atma-Jnani alone can be a good karma-yogi".

35 The Truth of Namaskaram

207 The significance of the imperfect *jiva's* Namaskaram [prostration], when he places his proud head beneath the feet of the Guru or God, is that his ego-sense, "I am the body", is to be crushed by Self-Knowledge.

36 Idol Worship

208 O you that ridicule idol-worship, having not discovered through heart-melting love its secret, how is that you [daily] worship the filthy idol of your body as 'I'?

Sadhu Om: It is generally believed that idol worship is to mistake an idol as God and to treat it accordingly, offering it a bath, cloth, food, and all hospitality; but to mistake a body as Self, and to treat it accordingly, is also a form of idol worship. Indeed to treat and love a body as 'I' is the primal mistake which leads to all other forms of idol worship. So it is clear that we are all idol-worshippers, even if we take pride in scorning those that worship temple idols. As long as one takes one's body as 'I', there is no wrong in also worshipping an idol as God, and until one feels that it is wrong to treat one's body as 'I', one should not be scornful and criticize others for treating an idol as God. If one first roots out and destroys the 'I am the body' notion, one is then in a position to criticize idol worship, if such criticism is necessary [in the light of Jnana such criticism will of course be clearly seen as unnecessary].

37 Vibhuti (Holy Ash)

209 When the fictitious ego, who has accumulated tendencies from the beginningless past, is burnt by the Fire of *Jnana*, that Reality which alone remains within is the Sacred *Vibhuti*. This you should know.

Sadhu Om: Vibhuti represents Self, which alone shines after the ego's destruction.

210 The Supreme Lord having taken the form of the Guru, lights the Fire of *Jnana* through His Supreme Speech [*Para Vak*], proclaiming without words the One Syllable, and thus burns the ego within the pure heart of His disciple. The *Vibhuti* He gives is the restoration of Self.

Sadhu Om: Vibhuti is prepared by burning cowdung in an airtight oven. In Saiva Siddhanta the jiva is generally known as the 'cow', so the cow-dung used here symbolises the jiva's vasanas, which when burnt to ashes, leave only Self.

211 Those who wear such *Vibhuti* are unequalled in all respects in this world. Such *Vibhuti*, which is Reality, the thought-free and wonderful *Jnana*, is eternal divine wealth.

212 Those who love and worship this *Vibhuti*, which is Reality, will become this *Vibhuti* itself. Therefore, having destroyed the ego, ever remain as this *Vibhuti*, which is Self.

213 When the insentient ego turns inwards through Self-attention and dies, the Fire of *Jnana* burns in the Heart and consumes all the three worlds in its blazing red flame, which is the significance of the red *kumkum*.

Michael James: The three worlds are heaven, earth and the nether regions.

38 Shiva's Divine Bull

214 The reason why the *Puranas* describe the bull taken by Shiva as His vehicle and similar creatures [taken by other Gods] is to gradually cultivate in us a habit of viewing all manifest forms as God, their Substratum.

39 Shakti and Shanti (Power and Peace)

215 Nothing is impossible for Power of Self, which is the power of the Almighty's Grace. Some people say "It is possible only through the power of sword and shield", because of the dirty nature of *Maya*, the notion "I am the filthy body".

Sadhu Om: This verse explains the success achieved through the divine power of non-violence during India's fight for freedom.

216 Those that say that Power and Peace are different do not know them rightly. What prevails internally as Peace is expressed externally as Power.

B 6 What is experienced as Peace while [the mind is] inward turned, is experienced as Power while [it is] outward turned. Only *Jnanis* who have deeply enquired and realised [the true nature of Self prevailing during both introversion and extroversion] know that Peace and Power are one and the same.

Sadhu Om: There is a saying, "Which is more difficult, to build a dam and control the flood, or to breach the dam and release the flood?" To arrest the mind, which by habit wanders outside with great force, and to keep it peacefully within the Heart, the Supreme Power of Grace is needed; but to release the mind, and so allow it to create [i.e., to conceive] and see innumerable worlds externally, only a slight allowance of that Supreme Power is needed. Therefore, the powers of creation and sustenance are but a tiny reflection of that Supreme Power of Peace within. If an aspirant can understand this, he will surely no longer feel any delight or wonder in acquiring the eightfold siddhis and the power to create and sustain whole universes.

217 The power to punish others in many ways can be found in one who has cultivated a noble character and virtuous behaviour; but having the greatest forbearance is the only true sign of having really achieved Godhood.

Sadhu Om: Rather than possessing outward powers to punish others, the true and greatest power is to be inwardly at Peace, and thus to be able to bear with and forgive others. Thus this verse confirms the ideas of the previous verse.

40 Mahat and Anu (The Greatest and the Smallest)

218 When the opposite poles of a large magnet and a small one are joined, the small one, by gaining the greater power of the large one, becomes one with it and shares the same properties.

Sadhu Om: In this verse a simile is used, without it being explained. The large magnet is a simile for Mahat [i.e., God or Self], the small one is a simile for Anu [i.e., jiva or ego], and their opposite poles

are God's feet and the jiva's head. Joining their opposite poles, therefore, means that the jiva bows down and places his head beneath the Feet of God, and thus loses his individuality by merging in God, and becomes God Himself. That is, when the petty ego merges with Self through self-surrender it shines as the Supreme Self Itself.

41 Desire for Siddhis

219 To greedily beg for petty *siddhis* from God, who is ready to give Himself, the All [*Sarva*], is just like begging for stale gruel from a philanthropist who has the heart to give everything that is asked for.

220 One who longs for *siddhis* after arriving in the world of *Atma-Siddhas*, the unlimited Space of Self-Consciousness, is just like the one who wants sour and stale gruel after reaching Heaven, which provides divine elixir, the food of immortality.

Sadhu Om: *The phrase 'Atma-Siddha-Loka' [the world of Atma-Siddhas] may be interpreted in a number of ways; its principle meaning must be Self, as all Atma-Siddhas are Self and nothing but Self, and in their view there is certainly no loka or world other than Self.*

It may also mean the physical presence of the Guru or Atma-Jnani, in which case this verse is a reference to those unfortunate souls who, despite being blessed with the company of Bhagavan Ramana, left Him due to their greed for siddhis. "After arriving in Atma-Siddha-Loka" may alternatively mean, "though the ego dwells under the mercy of the ever-attained [Nitya-Siddha] Self".

221 In the heart in which the flame of Supreme Devotion blazes forth, all *siddhis* unite together. But such a Devotee, whose mind has completely become a prey to the Lord, will never feel a liking for them.

222 If an aspirant treading on the path of Liberation develops a liking for *siddhis*, his ego will wax and hence his bondage will become denser.

B 7 Absolute stillness of mind alone is the attainment of Liberation. This being so, tell me how can those who yoke their mind to *siddhis* which are unobtainable without mental efforts, drown in the Bliss of Liberation which is the complete cessation of mental activities?

Michael James: *Refer also to The Call Divine, vol. IV p. 401. This verse is in Collected Works as verse sixteen of Ulladu Narpadu Anubandham.*

Sadhu Om: *This verse reveals that without 'chitta-chalana' [i.e., mental activities] no siddhis can be performed. However, the siddhis which are apparently performed by a Jnani, whose mind is dead, are different because they are caused by the Will of God, and the Jnani therefore feels no sense of doership [i.e., He does not feel that He Himself performs them]. Hence, we should know that a Jnani performs siddhis without any mental activities, and that one who, on the other hand feels "I am doing, I will do, or I can do siddhis" is certainly not a Jnani.*

223 O man, the most wonderful *siddhi* is that you, who are really pure formless Self-Consciousness, take the body with its legs and hands as 'I' and go dancing about as if real; [compared to this] even the eight kinds of *siddhis* are no real wonders.

Michael James: *"...go dancing about as if real..." refers to the ego thinking that it performs karmas and undergoes many births and deaths.*

Sadhu Om: By referring to man as “pure”, it is pointed out that he is not any of the impure attributes such as mind; by referring to him as “formless”, it is pointed out that he is not any form such as the body; by referring to him as Self-Consciousness it is pointed out that he is not some inert matter such as the corpse-like body. But since We are able to apparently change ourselves into all these things [i.e. ego] which are directly opposed to our true nature, this is said by Sri Bhagavan to be the most wonderful of siddhis. This siddhi is made still more wonderful since We, the motionless Self, having become an ego then perform actions and undergo many births and deaths. Thus, Sri Bhagavan points out that, more wonderful than any of the eightfold siddhis, is this siddhi by which the ever-flawless Self appears to become the defective ego.

224 The attainment of Self, which is the Primal Thing, and the Knowledge of Liberation, is alone the true *Jnana-Siddhi*. All the other eight types of *siddhis* belong merely to the wavering mind and its power of imagination.

42 Immortality

225 Immortality is reserved only for those who have died into their ego, the filthy empty sense “I am the body”, which veils their immortal nature of *Sat-Chit-Ananda*, the only beloved Thing.

Sadhu Om: Some misguided aspirants take to various kinds of yogas to prevent the body’s death or at least to lengthen its life, in the false belief that that is immortality. Taking pity on such people, Sri Bhagavan here clearly defines true Immortality.

226 Because of the delusion that the alien body is ‘I’, birth and death seem to befall us. Therefore, immortality, our true nature, is achieved only when this delusion is completely removed.

Sadhu Om: Birth and death only befall the body, but taking the body to be ‘I’ we feel “I am born, and I will die”. If we wish to become immortal we therefore merely have to cast off this illusory identification with the body, and we will then realise that we are the Ever-Unborn and Ever-Immortal Self.

227 Death is nothing but the delusion that “I am the alien body”, and Immortality is nothing but the Bliss that is gained when that delusion dies through the knowledge of the non-dual Self.

228 Can immortality be obtained unless the one who takes this body as ‘I’ dies as Self, having become afraid of this body’s death and having, therefore, enquired “Who is this I?” [No.]

229 Know and accept that Immortality is only the shining of the true Clarity [i.e. pure Consciousness], without the delusion of mental modifications. Death cannot be overcome by anything other than that Pure Consciousness.

Sadhu Om: As death is the result of ignorance, it is said in this verse that it can be overcome only by Knowledge, the Pure Consciousness of Self.

43 Kaya and Kalpa

230 To name a transient and illusory thing which is born to die, as *Kaya* is simply a polite mockery. Only Self-Consciousness, which is found to be the Ultimate Truth, is permanent [*Kaya*].

Michael James: *Kaya* literally means permanent, but it has come to mean in common usage the body.

231 The real, unique Self-Knowledge, which is distilled and obtained when the repeatedly rising ego merges into its Source is the true *Kalpa* [medicine].

Michael James: Yogis generally use the word Kalpa to mean the elixir for lengthening the body's life, but Sri Bhagavan points out with this verse that the true Kalpa is Self-Knowledge.

44 The Attainment of Bodily Immortality

232 Only those who do not know that the body is the root-disease which gives birth to all other diseases will perform *tapas* to achieve bodily immortality, instead of trying to root out this disease; such people are like one who toils hard to water mere weeds.

233 Only those worthless people whose form is the poisonous and non-existent ego, which is the base of all terrible diseases, will untiringly perform *tapas* to immortalize the body, like one who takes a medicine to aggravate his disease.

234 As a result of prolonged, worthy, and well-performed *tapas*, desiring to stabilize one's individuality instead of ever-remaining in the Supreme Silence, is due to dense ignorance, like achieving poverty with great longing and struggling.

235 For those who see through perfect *Jnana*, this bodily life is unreal and merely mental, and therefore know that there is only misery and no benefit in *jiva's* prolonging their *jiva's* lifetime.

45 Vairagya (Dispassion)

236 Know that people who offer you praise and *puja* with worldly ambitions, to make your heart swell with joy, are only a golden bait offered by *Maya* to entice you, who are doing *tapas* with great *vairagya*.

Sadhu Om: If the praise offered by others gives one even the slightest joy, then like bait, it will cause one's downfall. Such praise does not, of course, bind a Jnana-Mukta, who has lost his individuality, and so Sri Bhagavan clearly addresses this verse to "you who are doing tapas".

Many aspirants, even before reaching the goal of Egolessness, are enchanted and deluded by the praise and worship of others, and forgetting the goal, they run after name and fame, and going from place to place, they give teachings, blessings, etc. To save them from such self-ruin, Sri Bhagavan graciously gives these instructions. Just as the bait, though golden, will kill its prey, so also name and fame, though seemingly worth achieving, will ruin the aspirant by strengthening his ego, and will hinder him from reaching the Goal.

237 Supreme *Jnana* dawns with ease only for those fortunate ones in whose hearts dispassion towards the pleasures of this world and the next springs forth naturally in this birth.

238 Know well that the experience of Bliss exists only in Self and never in this life of delusion, and hence achieve Self-Knowledge, which is the Space of Grace and the final state of Supreme Silence.

Sadhu Om and Michael James: Since space is all-pervading, vast, abundant, and subtle, Sri Bhagavan uses the word 'Space' – as in 'Space of Grace', 'Space of Consciousness', 'Space of Bliss' etc., - to denote the idea of all-pervading vastness, abundance, and subtlety, which are all qualities of Self.

239 O my dear friend *Vairagya* who is always enlightening me with Knowledge by destroying the dense delusion of desire, please do not abandon me who ever claim your friendship.

Sadhu Om: To stress the instruction that we should never give up vairagya, it is nicely expressed here in the form of a prayer addressed to Vairagya, which is personified as a friend, asking it never to forsake us.

240 O my virtuous friend *Vairagya*, when the proverb says, “Friendship, even with a wicked ghost, is difficult to break, once it is made”, if I break my friendship with you who has been protecting me from evil and leading me home during all my past lives, it would be worse than meeting me with the hostility of the whole world.

Sadhu Om: Since it is difficult to break a friendship, even when it is found to be harmful, it is nearly impossible to break one which is known to be beneficial. However, if a beneficial friendship were broken, especially with such a friend as Vairagya, it would be the worst calamity that could befall one.

241 Whatever thought may rise, not to let it live or grow, but to destroy it then and there, without the least slackness, by merging it back into its Source, is powerful and intense *Vairagya*.

Sadhu Om: Formerly, we were taught by the Scriptures that Vairagya is to feel aversion for our desires and to reject them, but now Sri Bhagavan teaches us that true Vairagya is to maintain a vigilant Self-attention by which every thought, instead of being allowed to rise and develop, is turned back and merged into its Source.

242 If, by the wonderful weapon of Self-enquiry, you would continue destroying, one by one, all the innumerable foes – the *vasanas* rising in the form of thought – as and when each of them comes out of the fort – *chittam* – the enemy’s fort will finally be in your hands.

Sadhu Om: All the vasanas, which have the collective name of chittam, have their abode in the Heart [refer to Ulladu Narpadu Anubandham verse 19, Arunachala Ashtakam, verse 7, and verse 249 of this work], so the enemy’s fort which we will capture is nothing but our own home, the Heart. The destruction of the enemy is nothing but Mano-Nasha, the destruction of our own mind.

The above two verses are both to be found in prose form in Who am I?

46 Jnana and Vairagya

243 If the world that is seen is found to be not apart from the seer, that is *Jnana*. *Vairagya* is clinging fast to Self and rejecting this world with detachment viewing it as merely void.

Sadhu Om: Though the world is seen both by the Jnani and the ajnani, the Jnani does not see it as being other than Himself. If, on the other hand, one sees the world as being apart from oneself, one is an ajnani and one is only at the stage of practice, in which case one should view the world as an illusory appearance to be rejected. This practice is vairagya, which is necessary to gain Jnana. Refer also to Who am I?

47 The Nature of Chittam

244 Just as a clear prism appears to be red when it is near a red flower, so *Chit* appears to be the *chittam* when it is near [but not truly associated with] the dirty worldly tendencies. The *chittam* will remain and shine as the Supreme *Chit* alone, if the syllable ‘-tam’, which represents the impurity, *Maya*, is removed.

Sadhu Om: The prism remains ever colourless and its red colour is only apparent. To remove the red colour, it is sufficient if the flower is removed, because the prism will then be seen to be colourless as before. Similarly, Chit truly remains ever pure and the impurity of Maya is only apparent. This apparent association of the ever-pure Chit with Maya is known as 'chittam' and to remove '-tam' [i.e., Maya], which is merely attention wrongly focussed on 2nd and 3rd persons, it is sufficient if attention is focused on the 1st person, because the 'chittam' will then be known to be the ever-shining Chit, Shiva.

48 Chitta Suddhi (Purity of Mind)

- 245 The beauty of external objects induces pleasure but does great harm; inner purity, however, is not like this, so it alone is the true beauty. [This is why] wise men adore the One who is pure in heart and say with wonder, "This is God in human form".
- 246 Great disaster will result if, instead of seeking inward beauty, ones seeks only outward beauty. Such [foolishness] is just like the moth which loves the beauty of the flame, or the cobra which loves the female viriyan snake.

Sadhu Om: The viriyan is a very venomous snake, so if a male cobra loves a female viriyan, he will be courting his own destruction.

49 Death

- 247 To stray from the immortal Self, which is the Primal Thing, the Source of all, the Home of Love, the form of Bliss, and the Space of Supreme *Jnana*, is Death.

Michael James: 'To stray from the immortal Self' means to rise as an ego.

- 248 By approaching the Guru and serving Him faithfully, one should learn through His Grace the cause for one's birth and for one's suffering. Knowing then that these are due to one's straying from Self, it is best to abide firmly as Self [since this is the means to avoid such Death].

50 The Jiva's Dwelling Place

- 249 The *jiva* dwells in the Heart, which is beyond mental conception, and his *vasanas* also dwell there. If, instead, the *vasanas* dwelt above, in the brain, would they not be destroyed when the brain [i.e. head] is cut off?

Sadhu Om: Kavyakantha Ganapati Sastri was once arguing with Sri Bhagavan, saying that vasanas dwell in the sahasrara [i.e. the brain], but Sri Bhagavan replied that if that were so, the vasanas would be destroyed and moksha would be attained when a person was beheaded. Moreover, the vasanas must dwell with their possessor, the jiva, whose home, the Heart, must be within the trunk of his body and not within the head, since when a soldier's head is cut off in battle, his body may continue showing signs of life for some time. Sri Bhagavan, thus concluded that the Life-Centre, which is the dwelling place of the jiva and his vasanas, is the Heart and not the brain.

- 250 Since the flame of *Kundalini* rises upwards [from the base of the spine – the *mooladhara*] and the Nectar flows downwards from the brain [the *sahasrara*], the target is the Heart, the Life-Centre.

Michael James: *In the waking state, when world and body-consciousness are felt, the I-consciousness is spread throughout the body, but when Self-attention is practised the I-consciousness begins to withdraw itself. This withdrawal takes place through the channel known as Sushumna Nadi, which stretches from the base of the spine [the mooladhara chakra] to the brain [the sahasrara chakra]. This rise of the I-consciousness through the Sushumna Nadi is known as the rise of Kundalini which is described as a serpent only for the dull beginners in yoga [see Vichara Sangraham, The Compilation on Self-enquiry, Chapter 7]. The I-consciousness having been withdrawn and gathered in the Sahasrara, will then flow down towards its Source the Heart, and the thought-free vacuum thus left in the Sahasrara is felt as bliss. This bliss is known by Yogis as the Nectar and it is felt to be flowing downwards as the I-consciousness descends towards the Heart.*

- 251 Whoever contemplates upon whatever centre, as if Self were dwelling there, it will appear to that person, due to the mind's power of concentration, that Self is experienced in that centre. Yet, the true centre of Self is only the Heart wherefrom the 'I-thought' rises and where it sets as a place of refuge.

Michael James: *The phrase 'whatever centre' may include any of the six imaginary yogic centres or any other point in the body which may be chosen for the practice of concentration.*

- 252 Leaving aside Self, the Heart, with which one is connected in all [the three] states, if one concentrates upon any other centre [as if one were dwelling there], one will only be absorbed in a delusive *laya* and one cannot thereby know Self and be saved.

51 The Heart

- 253 The Heart is said to be of two different kinds, one to be ignored and the other to be considered. The first kind, which is perceptible through the senses, being on the left side of the chest, is inert.

Sadhu Om: *Since the pulsation which is the sign of life is caused by the fleshly organ on the left side of the chest, people generally conclude that it is the Heart which is the Life-Centre or Seat of Self in the body. Sri Bhagavan here denies this opinion and teaches the place of the true Heart.*

- 254 The Heart which pervades both inside and outside the body, shines on the right side of the chest, according to the experience of *Jnanis*. Know that it is only for fools that mistake the body for Self that the heart is in the form of a fleshly organ on the left side of the chest.

Sadhu Om: *See also: "The wise man's Heart is at his right, but a fool's heart is at his left" [Ecclesiastes X-2].*

It is well known to those who understood Sri Bhagavan correctly that, although He said that the Heart is on the right side of the chest, He never advised anyone to meditate on that point in the body. It is unfortunate therefore that some devotees of Sri Bhagavan, having not reflected over verse 22 of Ulladu Narpadu Anubandham – "That [Heart] is both inside and outside, yet it exists beyond [the limitations of] both inside and outside" – used to meditate upon the right side of the chest and also recommended others to do so. Because the teaching in verse 261 and 262 of this work have not been recorded in any of Sri Bhagavan's other works, and because these two verses have not been adequately translated and made available in any language other than Tamil, such a wrong interpretation persists even now and people still continue with this wrong practice. Verse 3 of The Five

Verses on the Oneness of Self, which also appears in this work as verse B 8, should be referred to and understood here.

- 255 If Self, the Lord of the soul, did not indisputably reside on the right side of the chest, why do one and all have the habit of touching only that place [to denote their self], whenever they say 'I'?
- 256 The indescribable Heart is the mirror in which all [i.e., the entire universe] appears. The One Single Consciousness, the Space of mere Being, alone is the Primal and Supreme Thing, the Silent Whole.

Michael James: *“That One Single Consciousness, the Space of mere Being” means the unalloyed and simple Consciousness “I am”, and not “I know myself”, and, hence, it is called “mere Being”. Refer to verse 26 of Upadesa Undiyar, “Knowing Self is being Self”.*

- 257 Heart, the Source, is the beginning, the middle, and the end of all. Heart, the Supreme Space, is never a form, It is the Light of Truth.
- 258 The death of the mind drowned in the Ocean of Self-Consciousness is the eternal Silence. The real 'I' is the Supreme Heart-Space which is the great Ocean of Bliss.

Sadhu Om: *This verse says that the mind drowns in the Ocean of Self-Consciousness [Chit], which is the real 'I' [Sat] and the Ocean of Bliss [Ananda]. Hence, the subtle manner in which this verse is phrased gives the implication that WE are the Ocean of Sat-Chit-Ananda.*

- 259 You [the mind] cannot cognize Self, which is the perfect unbroken Existence and the One without a second. The Heart, *Sat-Chit-Ananda*, which is the same thought-free Self, is Annamalai.

Sadhu Om: *Since even the gods Brahma and Vishnu were unable to know the top or bottom of Arunachala [the blazing column of Self-Consciousness], It is named, in Tamil, Annamalai, which means “Unattainable Hill”. Thus, when even the gods cannot cognize Self, the mind cannot do so either; that is to say neither the gods nor the mind can know their Source unless first they merge into it and lose their individuality [i.e., unless, by remaining as Self, they cease to be gods or mind].*

- 260 He who knows that Heart will never be ruined; having lost the sense of bondage, He becomes the Supreme. He is free from the thoughts of duality and He alone enjoys, without delusion, the real Bliss.
- 261 Though the Heart is said to be both inside and outside, it truly exists neither inside nor outside, because the appearance of the body, which is the base of the difference 'inside' and 'outside', is itself a mental conception.
- 262 While the body is [in fact] in Self, one who thinks that Self [or Heart] is within the insentient body is like one who thinks that the screen – which is the substratum of that cinema picture – is contained within the picture.

Michael James: *The translation of B 8, which appears here in the original Tamil text, is the same as the translation of verse 262 above, but in its Tamil original Bhagavan has improved upon the style of the previous verse. This verse also appears as verse 3 of Ekatma Panchakam (The Five Verses on the Oneness of Self).*

The screen is the substratum on which all pictures appear and disappear and in a similar way Self is the substratum in which the picture of this whole universe including the body is contained. It is,

therefore, incorrect to say that Self is within the body. Sri Bhagavan uses this simile to drive home the point that, just as the screen is real and the pictures are unreal, Self is the Reality and the pictures of the mind, body and universe are unreal. How, therefore, can the Real be contained in the unreal?

Suppose a pot made of ice were immersed deep in the sea, would it not be wrong to say that the water is contained only within the pot? In fact, the water is both inside and outside, and even the pot itself is only water. Similarly, the Realised One knows that Self alone exists, and that there can be no question of It existing inside or outside the body, since the body and the whole universe are nothing apart from Self. This undiluted truth exists even in the state of ignorance, though the ignorant are unaware of it. 'Inside' and 'outside' are only in reference to the body, so when the body is found to be unreal, how can the limitations of 'inside' or 'outside' be applicable? Therefore, Self, the Reality, should not be conceived as being in any way contained within the body.

263 Therefore, only the *Jnani* – who has seen the death of the ego which is in the form of the notion 'I am the body' – will, with His sharp, subtle, and divine outlook, which is completely freed from delusion, see the Heart everywhere and attain greatness.

264 The Heart, where the Supreme Silence of God's Grace is shining, is the only state of *Kaivalyam*, in the Presence of which the rare pleasure of all the heavens are revealed to be nothing.

Michael James: *Kaivalyam is the state of Supreme Oneness.*

Sadhu Om: *Sri Bhagavan used to compare all the pleasures available in the celestial worlds, including even Brahma Loka, to the tiny specks of moonlight which fall on the ground through the dense foliage of a large tree, whereas the Jnani's experience of Bliss is like the full moon-shine in an open space.*

265 The Heart, which shines pure after the eradication of wavering [tendencies] and veiling [delusion], and which remains as the One Truth, is the Supreme *Atma-Loka* for which even the gods of heaven are longing.

Michael James: *Atma-Loka simply means Self, and it is here called a 'loka' (i.e., world) in order to compare the Bliss of Self with the pleasures of celestial lokas. Since even the gods in the celestial lokas (such as Swarga Loka and Brahma Loka), though they are enjoying the greatest pleasures, are still longing for the Bliss of Self, these celestial lokas are worthless.*