

# Thus Spake Gnanananda

(Courtesy: Gnana Inba Veli )

A Person who wishes to scale the summit must indeed climb his way up step by step. Gnana or Self-realization is the final culmination of yoga and is not independent of it.

One is bewildered by the variety of goods that are spread out for sale in a market. A man must decide what he ought to buy from the market and acquire the means for buying it. In the art of living, a man must first choose his goal and set about to reach it.

Even as a farmer who wants to reap a rich harvest must toil hard, plough the hard soil, make it soft before the seeds are sown, protect the young crops from extraneous growth of weeds and keep off the cattle, a spiritual seeker who aspires to the summum bonum of life - God-realization - must seek the company of God's chosen seers, listen care- fully to their advice and tread the path shown by them. There is no short-cut to Self-realization.

It is difficult to conceive the reality of the Atma in the consciousness of one's mind even as it is to see a shadow in a dream state.

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A man cannot become rich overnight. It is only by ceaseless efforts over the years that he can save up money which will make him rich. Even so, a spiritual aspirant must struggle hard and unremittingly to attain to the highest abode of the Kingdom of God. One must set sail when the wind is favourable.

If one were to ask how long should one engage in sadhana, the answer is through as many human lives as have gone by in unrelieved ignorance of the reality of Being. But with this difference, that these lives are fashioned in a way which is conducive to a divine life which comes about by cleansing oneself of the three impurities and living beyond the clutches of the two pronged karma. In this state which lasts through countless lives, a sadhaka would be the recipient of divine Grace 'and in course of time realize his real nature and attain eternal bliss.

Sri Thandavaraya Swami says that it takes as many years of practice of living in an inward looking state as one has lived in an outward looking state.

To the degree that you turn away from attachments to the unreal your inner vision of Reality develops. If by a steady practice of this kind the mind comes under control and becomes aware as consciousness - Self - you can abide as the Ocean of Bliss though living in the bitter body

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The effulgence and glory of the sun is hidden from a blind man. Identifying the body with the soul leads to spiritual blindness and shuts one's vision from the radiance of the soul.

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It is not possible to separate the shell, flesh and the seed of an unripe tamarind. But when it is ripe, the flesh can be easily separated from the shell and the seed from the flesh. This phenomenon underscores an essential truth in that to those who are afflicted by agnana, the body and the atma appear to be one;

but when they gain true knowledge or gnana they would realize that they are not the body but the Self-within and thereby live in eternal bliss.

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Take a coconut. This is covered by dense coir strands and a hard shell. If you remove the coir strands and break the shell you witness a white limitless space. The enjoyment you feel in the limitless is akin to breaking a coconut. If you remove the dense coir which may be likened to Maya and intuit the Reality enclosed by the shell (the body), you will witness the Atma Swarupa (the Reality) and rejoice in it.

Camphor when lighted casts a radiance all around but is itself consumed completely leaving no trace of it behind. Even so, is the nature of the mind which witnesses the effulgence spreading before it. To actualise the effulgence is gnana.

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A man caught in a great flood would either like to reach the banks or swim along with the swift current. If he tries to stand still in the midst of the flood, people will think he is out of his mind. Even so, one must have a goal in life to the attainment of which one must strive. There are three impurities attaching to a man's life. These have their source in the body, world and the life principle. That which attaches to the body is 'Kama', while that which attaches to the world is 'Maya' and the third which attaches to the life principle is 'Ahankara'. One must cleanse oneself of these impurities. This is the chief merit in human life.

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Unalloyed gold is recovered from the dross with which it is mixed by repeatedly melting it in a crucible.

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One who wants to see God must be patient, loving, tender of heart, practise charity, think lofty thoughts, cease making disparaging remarks about others, be of loving service to the Guru and give oneself to Atma Vichara.

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Lust and anger are insuperable impediments to spiritual realization and afflict a spiritual seeker as leprosy, the body. Those who have fallen a prey to the twin unmitigated evils are legion.

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Many people think that to perform tapas one must wear a saffron robe and retire to a forest and subsist there on fruits and leaves of trees. But tapas can also be encompassed by holding steadfast, in the midst of pain suffering and by protecting all sentient beings from harm

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Pain and insult only touch the body and not the life within. The swarupa of life is Brahmanandam. Even as the vast sky is not caught up in the swirling dust below, we are not touched by pain or insult.

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The rose is beautiful, fragrant and very soft to the touch. Everyone is fond of a rose because of the qualities it possesses. But the rose itself is surrounded by thorns. Even as one plucks the rose by carefully removing the thorns, one must learn to meet the trials and tribulations of the earthly existence with patience, and worship God with unflagging faith and conviction.

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We should do our duty with an inner conviction that we are only instruments and not the doer nor the person who induces another to act.

Do not delude yourself into thinking that you are the doer. We must firmly believe that we in the world are the instruments of the Lord. It is only after taking many births that the Jiva which turns into pure gold by sadhana, comprehends its real nature and the truth that the universe is a phantasm. It is only when a child gains admission to a class in a school that it can progress towards graduation. Even if he abandons school in the middle, he can resume study at any time. This is what is conveyed by the phrase in the Gita "Yoga brashtah Abhijayate - (Chapter 6, verse 41)". The sage Suka, prays of the Lord, "Lord, please grant that I always remember you wherever I may be born". When he took birth again he was born as Saint kabir. Jeevan Muktas are born in this world for Loka Sangraha, to redeem humanity.

### **SADGURU GNANANANDA**

Indeed, the player, the thing played upon and the play itself are nothing but God. Seek to efface the sense of 'I' and 'Mine'. It is only then you will realise God's true nature and reside in happiness.

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One should live in silence without any desires, without thoughts and without any will of one's own.

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So long as there are 'vasanas', the sense of attachment to the body will persist. 'Vasana' is like an old creditor. So long as we do not declare ourselves insolvent, we shall be afraid of the creditor who will pursue us. When once we come to realize that there is nothing that we need and so become non-attached, we are truly 'insolvent' of world- liness and the vasanas will then desert us and cease to afflict us. It is difficult to jettison the vasanas that cling to one but with ceaseless practice, one can reach Vasanakshaya.

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Parvati the consort of Lord Siva, begged of her Lord to build a house for her on the snowy heights of Kailasa, the abode of Lord Siva.

He remonstrated with her that she was not destined to own a house. However, when Parvati persisted in her request, the Lord bade the celestial carpenter to build one. On an auspicious day there was the usual grahapravesam to which all were invited. After the celebrations were over and everyone had taken leave after each one was honoured according to his deserts, Ravana who had come to attend the celebrations still tarried behind to ask of the Lord what he had in mind to ask. When the Lord looked around to

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see whether there was anyone still left to be honoured, He saw Ravana who came forward and requested the Lord to gift him the house that had been built.

The Lord turned to Parvati and, exclaimed "Did I not tell you that you were not destined to own a house?" So saying He gifted the house to Ravana and returned to the snowy Kailas. One cannot avoid one's destiny.

Parvati was grief-stricken that she could not live even for a few days in the house Her husband had built for Her. Lo! this thought was the reason why she was born as Sita. Ravana knew the Avatara rahasya of Sita, and so he wanted to make Sita stay in the house for a few days. So he brought Sita to Lanka but Sita stayed in the Asoka Grove there, steeped in sorrow. It is the thought, the Sankalpa, that causes birth.

When Sita Devi came to realize that she was really Parvati and had only been brought to Lanka because of Her desire for a house, she was rescued by Lord Rama and both returned to Ayodhya.

Lord Siva who had taken birth as Rama, made Nandi, the bull, to be born as Hanuman and be of service to Him. So, indeed it was that Hanuman was steeped in Bhakthi for Sri Rama. This version you will not find in any book. This is Antharanga Ramayana.

Sri Rama is the Atma, the Manas is his consort Sri Sita. This manas was kidnapped by Ravana, and Sita had to leave the beautiful Ayodhya behind and go to Lanka. Sri Rama rescued Sita from Lanka and took her to Ayodhya and was crowned king there. This is the story of Atma Rama. This AtmaRama resides always in our inner most being.

Those who are after superhuman siddhis, use the Kundalini sakthi which is activated by pranayama, to attain these siddhis. Those who have realised that Siddhis or occult powers are obstacles to spiritual realization and have thus renounced all desire for such siddhis, practice Pranayama for actualising Jeevatma Paramatma Aikya Bhava.

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God pervades the whole creation. He is the witness and treats everything alike. To know Him, one must have a pure mind. A pure mind purifies the lotus of the heart and gives birth to Gnana.

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The mind is a monkey. Even if a monkey is given all the fruits and eatables, it will jump from one place to another.

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A devotee asks the Swami: "How is one to attain peac mind ?".

The feeling of contentment is a very valuable possession In keeping with a Tamil saying which conveys the idea one should feel over-joyed, by considering even the little one has, as an endowment of immense fortune, one must free oneself of all desires. It will be useful to recall con-tinually to the mind the Tirumantiram verse which says that even if one is with God (who is the bestower of all riches), one should be without desire.

By practising right food habits, by undertaking fasts and vratas, one will be able to control desire even if it is, only for a time. These practices will not only enure to one's good physically, but also to the good of the heart; thus gradually leading one to conquer desire. In the state of desirelessness one will experience that one has transcended the feeling of Jiva-bheda, Jada-bheda and Iswara-bheda. One will then reach a stage of realization of oneness with all sentient beings, and be able to see God within oneself and in all God's creations. The sadhaka's inner vision will then open and he will reside in Shanti. Those who come in contact with such a sadhaka will also be benefitted by the peace emanating from his presence. It is the quality of Shan tam that attracts like a magnet, the Divine.

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Since Lord Krishna declares in the Gita (Chapter X) that "Among the Indriyas, I am the mind", it is clear that Lord Krishna dwells in the mind. The highly poisonous cobra is called "Nalla Pambu" in Tamil which translated literally is "good snake". There is an esoteric significance in the fact that the Lord who is all good, dwells in the mind which is vicious.

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Even as a bullock which refuses to be tethered to a cart, is forced, by stages, to submit to the discipline, the mind must be disciplined daily and in stages to devote itself to the attainment of the summum bonum of life. Very soon it will dwell in it. Lord Krishna refers to this in the Gita (Chapter VI). If the mind which wanders abroad in search of sense enjoyments begins to savour a little of the peace and joy which dwell in one's heart, it will by itself return and Reek the life's goal.

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When there is an increase in oxygen, the fire which feeds on it burns with redoubled vigour. This example will serve to illustrate the fact that it is the thought rising in the mind that fans hate, desire and ego-consciousness. By pursuing the thoughts to their source and annihilating them (by means of a steadfast determination to root out all thoughts which are anatma in nature) and engaging in dhyana, the dark- ness within oneself will give place to light.

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A devotee asked the Swami "How is the mind to be brought under control?". To this question the Swami answers: 'Suppose I ask you to go round the temple holding a cup brimming with oil and hand the same over to me on return, and I adjure you that you will be victorious if you do not spill the oil, you will find that your thoughts are all directed to seeing that the oil does not spill. Think that the cup is your mind and the oil it holds are the thoughts. Just as you ensure that the oil does not spill, you must see to it that your thoughts do not wander. After ensuring this you must engage yourself in dhyana, If you do this you will succeed. You must not abandon your dhyana in the middle even to attend to an important work.'

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There are many ways in which the mind can be controlled and quietened. One way is Vairagya which connotes a state where you cease to be attracted by the material and sense allurements of this world and the upper worlds. God is real and eternal and all the others, ontologically speaking, (such as the mind, buddhi, indriyas, body and the phenomenal world) are unreal and evanescent. This truth can be realised by an enquiry into their imperfections

Once you realize this truth, you will not be attracted towards things that ceaselessly run and never reach a meaning.

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One may ask whether control of breath is necessary. Retaining the breath within the heart in a proper way is called 'Pranayama'. The mind can be controlled only so long as breath is retained. If one controls the mind by inquiry, then breath will also be controlled. It is the control of the mind which is called dhyana.

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A devotee asks "If the vision of the two eyes is focussed on to the middle region between the two eye brows, this causes pain to the eye. What is to be done?"

Focussing the vision of the two corporal eyes between the two eye brows, and the incorporal eye on knowledge, and fixing your attention on your goal, is called dhyana. Unless there is such an integration, mere focussing the eyes between the eye-brows will only cause pain to the eyes. Until a perfect integration is achieved, you should do the exercise only for a short time and return to it. The time you engage yourself in this exercise should be slowly increased. If you practise it as suggested, you will not experience any pain.

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One must still one's mind. When a blinding storm rages some branches of a tree may break and the fruits fall before their time. But the tree itself stands resolute braving the storm. Even so, we must not feel dispirited when : difficulties overtake us. We must brave the storm of life.

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When Arjuna- confesses to Lord Krishna that he is unable to still his mind, the Lord tells him that by practising control of the mind continually, and with a steadfastness of purpose, the mind could be made quiescent. He tells Arjuna not to despair but practise it continually with Vairagya discarding the Jiva-bheda and in full realisation that everything is soaked in Brahman, and assures him that it can be achieved.

We must always keep in mind the goal underscored by the words "Whatever work one is engaged in, whatever misery one is subject to, a Jivanmuktha rest his mind in eternal silence". Jiva-brahma Aikyam is the same as Brahma Samadhi. This can be achieved by Bhakthi as also by the ajapa of Soham.

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How is one to be in a state of quiescence? This is accomplished by resting your mind and controlling the thoughts that well up in your mind. Whatever others may say, remain unconcerned, as you would in a state of sleep. Forget the past and don't think of the tomorrow. Do everything enjoined on you, without postponing it and forget it all as though it were a dream. Do not hanker after things, do not think nor recall to your mind anything; reside always in this state. Do not think of what you need today nor what you may need tomorrow. Annihilate your thoughts as a spendthrift would fritter away his wealth.

Man is a marionette activated by the two strings - of causality arising from good and bad deeds. If these two are quietened, the movement stops. If you break the chain of causality even as the links are being forged on the anvil of life, the Atma will become one with Brahman.

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In the pantheon of sixty three Saivaite Saints, there was named Sakkia Nayanar. He used to stand in front of a temple and throw stones on the Linga installed there. (Even by so doing he attained Mukthi). Even the stones appeared to him as fragrant flowers. To stitch a piece of cloth into a garment, one must have thread, a needle and a sewing machine. A spiritual aspirant who seeks to attach himself to God must possess the right manas, the word of God and his hands. These are called the Thrikaranas of mind, speech and Body. The mind must melt with love thinking of the Lord, .He must be spoken as the word of God and getting absorbed in that feeling of devotion, the hand must offer flowers of worship to Him.

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It is said that celestial beings rob one of 'Mantra Sadhanas', It is therefore necessary that one fortifies oneself against these, before one begins to perform japa. Even as cotton is transformed into yarn and ultimately into cloth, one should integrate the mind, speech and action. There are two kinds of mantras, one which confers all ephemeral benefits that one may seek, .and the other which is itself the 'Summum bonum'.

Mandukya Upanishad says that the sound 'Omkaara' is sustained by itself in a timeless continuum.

There is in man an unmistakable luminosity. We must actualise it, praise it and with its aid encompass sadhana, become the recipient of God's love and attain to the highest abode 'Moksha'.

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There is no need for Tantras, Yantras or Mantras. What is needed is inner bhakthi, Only this is puissant.

Do not dissipate your thoughts on speculation. Live with a conviction that there is a God above. Do not speak ill of the elders.

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To one who is steeped in Bhakthi, the world and its teeming life appear as God Himself in His Infinite forms. To him all happenings in the world appear as the sport of the Lord.

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Referring to Pujas being performed at the temples the Swami writes thus: Asthikas, (believers) should conduct themselves according to the tenets of the Sruti, Smriti, Agama and the Vedas. Everything else is just make-believe any hypocrisy. We do not want ostentatious pujas; what we want is the Lord's Grace.

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Sastras declare that by performing, in an attitude of faith, sraddha for our forbears, the pitru-devatas become satisfied and confer their blessings on us. But the so called advanced scientists' do not agree. However, Gnanis and Siddhas declare that what the Sastras proclaim is true. The dhurbiksham (hard times) we witness in our country is due to our not performing Sraddha properly. It is necessary to perform Sraddha to take care of our temporal and eternal good. If we fail to do it, there is an

atonement. The Sastras have laid down that it is enough if Mahalaya Sraddha is performed without fail. Let us therefore do this properly so that we may be able to remove sufferings from our midst and usher in prosperity.

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Even as some fruits look deceptively red and succulent taste very sour, there are some who have read Vedanta, posing as though they know everything and even making bold to instruct others. In actual fact, they know nothing. One's heart must melt in the very thought of God and His Grace.

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To attain Divine Grace, meditation is more important than prodigious learning. Yearning is more important than skill in discussion; tears flowing from eyes are more important than verses recited by the tongue and worship is more beneficial than research into books.

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We' celebrate Navaratri festival to invoke the grace of Ambika Parasakthi who takes on nine different forms on the nine days and ascends the Simhasana and spreads prosperity and well-being all around. On the Vijayadasami day, we celebrate the victory of the Ambika over the Asura.

In the same way, there are nine passages in every human body. It is 'only the efflorescence of the Sakthi as nava-sakthis, that make these passages function in a human body, and also make them work. Even if one is defective, man is thereby affected. Man can be healthy only when these faculties function well.

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Worshipping the Lord in His manifested form within one's "heart will efface all thoughts welling up in one's mind.

You should first integrate your mind, word and thought, make it one-pointed and visualise your Ishta-Devata as standing before you. Having done this, you should perform japa by repeating the mantra which signifies the particular Devata. It is advisable to do this in solitude in a room.

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Some people will say that God resides within ourselves, Though a cow is full of milk, it is only from its udder that we get milk. Even so, if we have before us a form of God for daily worship and impress the form within our hearts, we could direct our thoughts to the form and from thence, come to realise God.

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It is impossible to conclude whether the Sakara characteristic of the Lord is superior or His Nirakara characteristic. Lord Krishna extols both these in the Gita. It is difficult to think of a formless Reality, as the mind naturally associates itself with forms. The formless is contained in the form and the form in the formless. It is only by devotion to the Reality with the Form that one may transcend the latter. Though a student enters school with the object of graduating from it he can only start from the Standard I. In stages he will be promoted to the final class.

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Ramalinga Swami gal (a great Saint) used fa reside in Vadalur in a Reddiar's house. A lamp used to, burn always in the room in which the Swami stayed. Oil for the lamp used to be kept in a vessel. One day the Reddiar who had to go out of the village, gave instructions to his son to place a vesselful of water for the Swami's ablutions and fill up th oil the vessel used for keeping oil. The boy, not recognising the vessel used for keeping oil poured water into that vessel and placed another vessel, filled with oil.

The Swami did not notice that the vessel usually containg oil for the lamp was filled up with water and poured the water from this vessel to keep the lamp burning. The lamp kept on burning throughout the night even with water. On the next day, the Reddiar came back and noticed that the vessel containing the oil was full and asked the Swami whether the lamp was burning throughout the previous night. The Swami who replied in the affirmative soon realized that the Lord had transmuted water into oil to make His Bhakta's belief true.

Just as when we call someone by his name he hastens to us leaving everything behind, the Lord will also come running to our succour if we devoutly pray to Him.

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It is only the sweetness of the sugar lump that matters and not its shape. Even so, the form in which we worship God is of no consequence but only the eternal principle of sweetness of the Lord permeating the form, which we ought to recognise.

A log of wood conjures up different things to different people. To a housewife it is firewood, to a carpenter it is an article of furniture, to a sculptor a beautiful image. It is the principle of the wood that permeates the mind's eye in all these cases. Likewise, it is the immanent transcen-dental principle of the Atma Swarupa that permeates the phenomena of the world. It is to this truth that one must, with the grace of the Guru, turn.

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The Universe is sustained by the twin eternal principles viz. Sivam and Sakthi. The sun is Sivam, and its effulgent and puissant rays are the Sakthi. It is the rays of the Sun that descend and scatter light and warmth on the cold earth below. The Sun in its majesty stands aloof in the celestial sky. Sivam is like cotton and cloth the Sakthi. There is no cloth without cotton. It is only cloth that is useful to people. Cotton by itself is of no use. Cotton by itself does not clothe the body. Transported into a different key, Sivam and Sakthi are Love and Grace.

The Parabrahma Swarupam is the embodiment of Love. The grace that is of Sakthi manifests 'itself as Prakriti in the efflorescence of the world we see around us.

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Sweetness is inseparable from sugar. Those who have unburdened their cares at the feet of the Lord, live and have their being in the Lord. It is only by clinging to the Lord's feet that one can cross the ocean of samsara. Let us cling to the feet of Lord Siva who kicked Yama.

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An elephant has two sets of teeth; only one is visible to the outside world namely, its tusks. Even so, though. Avatara Purushas like Lord Krishna have assumed the human form and appear to be intensely human, are beyond the reach of the enticement of karma and reside in eternal beatitude.

Though a lamp sheds its soft light all around, the space underneath the lamp itself is in darkness. As the saying goes, nearer to the temple farther away from God. Even so those who are very near to an Avatara Purusha, do not really know him for what he is, whereas, others in far off places who are enveloped by the radiance issuing out of his soul recognize his greatness and gratefully acknowledge his help.

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Once Sri Sankaracharya was afflicted by a terrible snalady caused by black magic. His Guru Sri Govinda hagavat Pada advised him to go to Tiruchendur and pray to Lord Subramanya, who he said would cure him of the disease. Sri Sankaracharya accordingly went there, and while praying to the Lord saw a serpent with a raised hood at the feet of the Lord. The Acharya at once realized that it was his own Guru, an Avatara of Adisesha, who had appeared there as a serpent to intercede on his behalf to the Lord. The Acharya sang in praise of the Lord in a metre popularly known as 'Bhujangam' which is suggestive of the movement of a snake.

The Stotram of the merciful Acharya is a great treasure given to us. Those who recite these verses daily will be rid of all diseases and acquire riches and peace, be blessed with a long life, and in the end be delivered from rebirth. This is our conviction.

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It is said that knowledge is of six different kinds. True knowledge which is the seventh transcends the other six. It is transcendental knowledge which perceives the other six. In short it is the knowledge of God. One can attain this knowledge only with the Guru's Grace.

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One may ask why a Guru? One is apt to think that by reading spiritual texts one may realize God. Even if the Lord Narayana appears in person with the conch, sankha and Gada in His hands, a person who is steeped in ignorance and material vasanas is apt to think that it is a play and designed to cheat him. Duryodhana, who witnessed the Lord's. Viswarupa, is a classic example.

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A preceptor who confounds spiritualism with occultism indeed misses the incomparable sweetness of the former and is like a goat which devours the sugar-cane leaves and leaves the sugar-cane behind. A real spiritual preceptor who has dwelled deep into the esoteric message of the Mahavakyas and lovingly imparts it to his disciples is like an elephant which gobbles up the sugar-cane and ignores the sugar-cane leaves and bids its young to do likewise.

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A Jivanmukta who finds himself in the midst of teeming life and the world's allurements does not partake of it but lives apart from it as he is totally indifferent to their blandishments even as butter which has been churned out of butter-milk does not mix with it or dissolve in it but floats on top of it.

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From the standpoint of a Gnani, life is mostly a shadow play. Do not fall a prey to worldly riches. Love all sentient beings as manifestations of the Lord.

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A person who transcends the three gunas performs actions without cupidity, hatred or anger. He does not

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pause to cogitate what the results of his actions are. He will only consider his actions as his duty. Lord Krishna has pointed out in different parts of the Gita, this stage of man's spiritual development:

"The Vedas deal with three Gunas. Be thou free, O Arjuna, from the triad of the Gunas, free from the pairs of opposites, ever-balanced, free from (the anxieties regarding) acquisition and preservation and established in the Self". (Ch. 2, verse 45)

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The Swami's reply to an invitation: The Swami commends your thoughtful invitation to him for his birthday celebrations (Thai Krithikai). However, the Swami is surprised at your thought that he is not present at the place you have invited him to come. Those who truly and sincerely love him, will readily realize that he is present there, here and everywhere.

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A pair of sandals offers complete protection to the feet of a traveller, from brambles and thorns that lie strewn on his path. An umbrella protects him from the torrid heat of the noon-day sun. It is not necessary to spread a carpet of leather or erect a canopy covering the whole sky to achieve these purposes.

Even so, the Guru's Upadesa and spiritual instructions protect and insulate a true devotee who wishes to tread the spiritual path, from the onslaughts of conflicting doctrines and philosophies.

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The word denoting religion in Tamil means path. All religions are essentially the same. You must therefore follow the tenets of your religion. The final conclusion of all religions is that we should realize the highest good by the best means.

Although we may reach the destination by any path (both the path strewn with brambles and the other a high road), yet our religion leads us on the high road to the destination. In other words, this is Swadharma. The path strewn with brambles is the other (Para-dharma). We must therefore follow the tenets of our religion.

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A hotelier prepares dosais, iddies etc. from the same rice paste.

Even as a sweetmeat vendor prepares delicacies of differing shapes and hues from the same ingredients, viz, sugar and flour, and serves the same to each of his customers according to his taste, the world religions proclaim the same Truth which is one and indivisible.

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The one becomes two and more and causes confusion. Even if there are differing points of view in Advaita, Dvaita and Vishishtadvaita, you must realize that the primal power which informs all, is One. All Gnanis belong to the same persuasion.

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A milkmaid comes along the road carrying on her head the milkpot brimming and frothing with milk. She walks with laughter in her eyes, without a care in the world and a passerby stands stupefied to see her walking along with a pot full of milk with such easy abandon and lilting gait as if she did not carry the precious burden on her head. The truth is that the milkmaid's attention is rivetted on her milk pot and she would not by any chance, let it slip. Even so, a Gnani who is immersed in Sahaja Samadhi, lives in God though outwardly he lives in the tantalising world.