

श्रीरमणचत्वारिंशत्

śrī ramaṇacatvāriṃśat

श्री काव्यकण्ठ वासिष्ठगणपतिमुनि कृतम्

śrī kāvyakaṇṭha vāsiṣṭhagaṇapatimuni
kṛtam

Forty Verses in Adoration of
Sri Ramana

by

Sri Kavyakantha Vasishtha
Ganapati Muni

English Rendering
S. Sankaranarayanan



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Publisher's Note

The Forty Verses in adoration of Sri Ramana by Sri Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni, after being out of print for a long time was published as a revised edition in 1999, incorporating certain special features. Still there has been a persistent demand for a fuller treatment of the text in English with a comprehensive commentary. This translation and commentary of Sri S. Sankaranarayanan, a disciple of Sri Kapali Sastriar and a devotee of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, is intended to satisfy this need and assist the devotees in the better understanding of Bhagavan's divine personality.

The original plan of the poet was to write one hundred verses on the Maharshi, and a notebook was prepared accordingly, but at the time of the Muni's passing away in 1936 the verses totalled only forty. These forty verses were copied and arranged by Bhagavan and published in the same year.

In the present edition, the Tamil rendering has also been included. The facsimile of Bhagavan's writing of the Sanskrit verses are given here as an appendix, enhancing the spiritual value of the publication.

17-4-2004

Aradhana Day

Foreword

One early morning, in the Pachaiammam Temple at Tiruvannamalai, Sri Vasishtha Ganapati Muni and other disciples were all sitting in front of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi who was, as usual, sitting, completely in drawn. The Muni saw a sparkling light come down from the sky and touch the forehead of the Maharshi six times. This vision made the Muni realize that the Maharshi was none other than an incarnation of Lord Subrahmanya. Immediately the poet in the Muni blossomed forth in eight verses in the beautiful *śārdūlavikrīditā* metre. Later on as occasion demanded, the Muni composed many verses adoring the Maharshi and these were collected along with the initial eight verses as Sri Ramana Catvāriṃśat, “Forty Verses in Adoration of Sri Ramana”. These forty verses were daily recited in the presence of Bhagavan during his lifetime and continue to be recited every morning at his Shrine. The verses describe both the human and the divine characteristics of the Maharshi, making no distinction between him and Skanda. As these verses deal with an *Avatara Purusha* and *Jivanmukta* and are composed by a great spiritual stalwart of no mean attainments, each verse acts like a Mantra in invoking the presence of the Maharshi and is a veritable boon to every sincere aspirant.

I am grateful to Sri Ramanasramam for entrusting me with the work of providing a comprehensive translation and commentary in English of these forty verses to fulfil the long-felt need of those aspirants all over the world who do not know Sanskrit.

I dedicate this cardinal work in Sri Ramana literature to the memory of my grandfather, the late Sri Harbour Narayana Iyer, one of the oldest devotees of Sri Bhagavan, who was closely associated with him even from the Virupaksha Cave days.

29.2.2004

S. Sankaranarayanan

श्री रमणचत्वारिंशत् śrī ramaṇacatvāriṁśat

Forty Verses in Adoration of
Sri Ramana

वन्दे श्रीरमणर्षेराचार्यस्य पदाब्जम् ।
यो मेऽदर्शयदीशं भान्तं ध्वान्तमतीत्य ॥

vande śrīramaṇarṣer ācāryasya padābjam ।
yo me'darśayad īśaṁ bhāntaṁ dhvāntam atītya ॥

இருளுக் கப்பாற் சுடரும் இறைவனை எனக்குக்
காண்பித்த ஆசார்ய ஸ்ரீ ரமணமஹர்ஷியின்
பாதாரவிந்தத்தைப் பணிகின்றேன்.

I bow down at the Lotus Feet of the Master, the
Seer, Sri Ramana who showed me God shining
beyond the darkness.

The Seer is one who sees the Reality, the Truth.
He has the vision. Not only he sees, he has the
power to make others see in the same way.

The metre is *madalekhā*.

श्री रमणचत्वारिंशत्

1. कथया निजया कलुषं हरता
करुणानिधिनाऽरुणशैलजुषा ।
खगवाहनभाषिततत्त्वविदा
वृषवाहनमौनरहस्यभृता ॥

kathāyā nijayā kaluṣam haratā
karuṇānidhinā'ruṇa śaila juṣā ।
khaga vāhana bhāṣita tattva vidā
vṛṣa vāhana mauna rahasya bhṛtā ॥

தன்னரும் மொழிகளால் கல்மஷங் களையோன்,
இன்னரு ணிதி, அரு ணசல முறையோன்,
அன்ன வாகன னுரைபொருள் உணர்ந்தோன்,
மஹேசன் மவுன மறைபொருள் தரித்தோன்.

Treasure house of compassion, he resides at the foot of the Aruna Hill. By his own conversation, he removes the turbidity. He knows the essential truth of the expositions of the one who rides on the swan. He carries in him the secret of the silence of the one mounted on the bull.

This verse, along with the nine following verses, in the *totaka* metre, forms a whole composite unit. All these verses, coming from the pen of Sri Vasishtha Ganapati Muni, his illustrious disciple, the poet par excellence, describe the unique qualities of the Master, both human and divine. The tenth verse ends up with the declaration, "*ramaṇena sanātham idam bhuvanam*" — "this world has found in Sri Ramana its refuge, Lord and Protector."

Ever since the sage of Arunachala stepped into Tiruvannamalai (*aruṇaśailajuṣā*) more than hundred years ago, he did not move out of it; he continued to live there till the last, in the state of Self Realisation that sprang upon him when he was at home and still in his teens.

Like the many *siddhas* of yore who are reputed to be still in the caves of Arunachala, helping mankind unknown to the world, the Maharshi also as the simple Brahmana Swami might have led a life of serene seclusion somewhere far away from the maddening crowd. But out of his boundless compassion (*karuṇānidhinā*) towards the denizens of the world, he chose to live on normally, a man among men in the world, even after liberation (*jīvanmukti*), as a shining example of the godhead incarnate in a human form.

vṛṣavāhana is Siva who has the bull as his vehicle. As Dakshinamurti, he imparts all knowledge in silence. Sri Ramana carries with him the secret of that silence. In his Brahmic state, he reminds us of his father Dakshinamurti, abiding at the foot of the banyan tree and manifesting the principle of Supreme Brahman by his exposition in silence. "*brāhmyām sthitau tu pitaram vatamūlavāsam samsmārayantam*", says Sri Ramana Gita.

khagavāhanabhāṣitatattvavidā – *khaga* means a bird. Here it denotes the swan, the bird of discrimination, which has the proverbial faculty of separating milk from water. *khagavāhana* is Brahma whose vehicle is the swan. He creates the worlds by his spoken Word. His word brings forth all the worlds into existence. His *bhāṣita* or expression is the Vedas, the revealed knowledge. The essential principle of the Vedas is in *Pranava*, *Omkāra*, the meaning of which is imparted to Brahma himself by Lord Subrahmanya who is identified with Sri Ramana by the poet. Later on in this text itself we find the following lines: *omkārārtham upādiśo bhagavate vāṇīmanohāriṇe* — “you taught the meaning of Pranava to Brahma.”

The Maharshi was for most of the time indrawn, steeped in the silence of the Self. He was like a waveless ocean plunged into its own depth. But that did not preclude him from having a casual conversation (*kathā*), interesting talk, recital of past happenings, autobiographical incidents, etc. The very vibrations emanating from his soft-spoken words, uttered with tenderness, concern and consideration, however casual they might be, instantaneously cleared the whole atmosphere of all turbidity and confusion. *kaluṣaṁ haratā* – All the muddled thinking, confusion, agitation and doubts vanished from the minds of those who surrounded him. In his presence, the mind became clear, calm and receptive to his benign influence.

2. गणराणमुखसूरिसभागुरुणा
 गुणसञ्चयरत्नमहोदधिना ।
 घनगूढसहस्रकरेण यथा
 तनुकञ्चुकगुप्तमहामहसा ॥

gaṇarāṇmukhasūrisabhāguruṇā
 guṇasanñcayaratnamahodadhinā ।
 ghanagūḍhasahasrakareṇa yathā
 tanukañcukaguptamahāmahasā ॥

கணபதி முதலாங் கவியவைக் குரவன்,
 குணமணித் திரளுறு விரிகட லனையன்,
 முகிலால் மறை வுறு பரிதி போல
 உடலால் மறைவுறும் உத்தம வெளியினன்.

Master of the assembly of scholars headed by Ganapati, he is like a great ocean hoarding the gems of excellent qualities. Like the sun concealed by a cloud, he hides his great effulgence in his body which acts as an armour.

It is said that Vishnu reigns supreme in Vaikuntha surrounded by *nityasūris*: *tad viṣṇoh paramam padam sadā paśyanti sūrayah; divīva cakṣur ātatam.* "The suris, scholars, all the time perceive the supreme step of Vishnu like an eye extended in Heaven", says the Rig Veda. Around the Maharshi, there was always an assembly of scholars, seekers after Truth, the poet Ganapati

being one of them. All the scholars spontaneously looked to him as their head. He it was, who recorded and compiled their questions to the Maharshi and his epoch-making answers and this was the genesis of the great work, *Sri Ramana Gita*.

The sun is effulgent in the sky with his thousand rays, *sahasrakara*. But he can be hidden by a cloud. Likewise, the great effulgence that is Sri Ramana, is concealed and protected in his physical body, which acts like an armour, as his purpose is not to dazzle his devotees but to enlighten them, while living as one amongst them.

3. चतुरेण चलेन्द्रियनिग्रहणे
पटुना परकीयगुणग्रहणे ।
छलवर्जितमौनसमाधिजुषा
बलतर्जितभीकरकामरुषा ॥

catureṇa calendriyanigrahaṇe
paṭunā parakīyagunaḡrahaṇe ।
chalavarjita maunasamādhijuşā
balatarjita bhīkarakāmaruṣā ॥

சலிக்கும் பொறிகளை அடக்கும் உரவோன்,
பிறர்குணம் ஓர்வதில் திறமை மிக்கோன்,
மாயமற் றவிரும் மவுன நிலையன்,
தீய காம கோபந் தகைவோன்.

Skilled in controlling the vacillating senses, he is an adept in recognising the merit of others. Reposing in a concentrated silence devoid of any pretence, his strength is a threat to the terrifying lust and anger.

The senses are always fickle and vacillating. He exercises great skill in controlling them and making them one-pointed. He always sees the good in others, as to him all are the manifestations of the One Self that is *satyam*, *sivam*, *sundaram* — true, good and beautiful. His concentrated silence is not artificial; he does not cultivate it. It is so natural and therefore full of strength. It can easily be a match to challenge and combat the fearful onslaught of lust and anger.

4. जठरं समये परिपूरयता
 कठिनं व्रतमद्रितटे चरता ।
 झषकेतनशस्त्रदुरापहृदा
 कृषिमात्मविबोधविधौ दधता ॥

jaṭharam samaye paripūrayatā
 kaṭhinam vratam adritaṭe caratā ।
 jhaṣaketanaśastra durāpahṛdā
 kṛṣim ātmavibodhavidhau dadhatā ॥

உற்றபோழ் துணவு வயிற்றிற் களிப்போன்,
 நற்றவம் மலையடி யாச ரிப்போன்,
 காம னம்புகள் அணுகொணா வுளத்தான்,
 ஆன்ம ஞான மளிக்குந் தொழிலான்.

He arranges to feed the stomachs in time, while practising his austere penance on the slope of the hill. His heart is inaccessible to the arrows of Cupid and he carries on with his labour of awakening the Self.

Even in the midst of his austere penance and the impersonal character of his dealings with men and things and his general outlook on life, the Maharshi was very particular that visitors to Sri Ramanasramam should take food there. He evinced keen interest in feeding not only the hungry stomachs, but was pleased to see that any visitor, whatever his status, availed himself of the opportunity of taking a meal at the Ashram. When queried about this, the Maharshi simply said that in early life he had to continuously experience the pangs of hunger. And the food taken at the Ashram is no mere food. "It is consecrated, sanctified by the very air of the Ashram, permeated by the Maharshi spirit."

kr̥ṣi means hard labour, especially of the agricultural type. First the ground has to be prepared, the land made arable, the soil has to be tilled, manure has to be applied, the seeds have to be sown, irrigation has to be carried out, weeds have to be removed in course of time, etc.

ātmavibodha, awakening the Self is as laborious and time consuming as an agricultural operation. All the steps of cultivation have to be gone through. Sri Maharshi is constantly engaged in the stupendous labour (*kṛṣi*) of bringing about Self-awakening for the whole world.

5. भवभीकरवारिनिधिं तरता
करतामरसेन सुपात्रवता ।
स्वदृशा ऽधिकशीतलकान्तिभृता
भयमङ्घ्रिसरोजजुषां हरता ॥

bhavabhīkaravārinidhim taratā
karatāmarasena supātravatā |
svadrśā' dhikaśītalakāntibhṛtā
bhayam aṅghrisarojajuṣāṃ haratā ॥

பயங்கர பவக்கடல் கடந்து நிற்போன்,
தாமரைக் கையாந் தகுபாத் திரத்தான்,
தண்மை மிகுந்தொளிர் தனது நோக்கால்
தாண்மல ரடைவோர் திகைப்போட்டுபவன்.

He crosses across the terrifying ocean of Existence. His lotus-like hand suffices as a good utensil for his use. He removes the fear of those who resort to his lotus feet, with his gaze, very cool and lovely.

The Maharshi will be the last person to give trouble to anyone on his account. He is quite independent and looks after himself. He believes in self-help and relies on his hands for carrying out his chores.

None is afraid of himself. Fear rises only from a second person or object — *dvitīyād vai bhayam bhavati*. When one resorts to the feet of the Maharshi, immediately the cool and lustrous gaze, emanating from him, closes the gulf between him and the devotee and establishes an intimacy. In that state, there is no place for any fear.

6. नमतामतिभक्तिमतां निधिना
घनतापविधूननसन्निधिना ।
यतिधर्मततिं परिपालयता
परितश्च तमो विनिवारयता ॥

namatām atibhaktimatām nidhinā
ghanatāpa vidhūnanasannidhinā |
yatidharmatatiṁ paripālayatā
paritaśca tamo vinivārayatā ||

அன்பொடு வணங்குவார்க் கருநிதி யாயினான்,
துன்பெலாந் துரத்துந் தூயஸந் நிதியான்,
துறவுக் கோலந் தாங்கி நிற்போன்,
அறவே யிருளை அகற்றி யாள்வோன்.

A treasure to those who bow down to him with exceeding devotion, his presence drives away the intense misery. Maintaining the tradition of the ascetic code of conduct, he puts an end to the gloom all around.

For his devotees, he is an inexhaustible treasure. His very presence chases away the suffering, however intense it may be. True to an ascetic's tradition he practises an aloofness and detachment in all things; but that does not preclude him from putting an end to the pervasive gloom all around.

7. फणिनायकवर्ण्यगुणौघभृता
भणितीः प्रियसत्यहिता भणता ।
बहुमानवशादयता सुखिता-
मवमानततेरविदूनवता ॥

phaṇināyakavarṇya guṇaughabhṛtā
bhaṇitīḥ priyasatyahitā bhaṇatā ।
bahumānavaśād ayatā sukhitām
avamānatater avidūnavatā ॥

ஆதி சேஷன் இசைகுண ராசி,
தீதிலா வண்மை தேனூற வுரைப்போன்,
வெகுமா னத்தால் மகிழ்ச்சி யுறாதோன்,
அவமா னத்தால் அகம்வா டாதவன்.

He carries with him a stream of virtues, fit to be extolled by the leader of the serpents. He speaks words that are endearing, true and helpful. He does not derive pleasure in being honoured, nor is he disheartened when insults are heaped on him.

His good qualities and virtues are so many, that it requires an Adi Sesha, the king of serpents with his thousand tongues to describe them. It is a poetic way of expression to bring home the fact that his virtues are innumerable. When he speaks, he does not hurt anybody. Sarcasm and cynicism find no place there. Only words that are helpful are spoken. They are pleasing, at the same time truthful. When honoured, he is not elated; when insulted he is not pained. He takes both of them in his stride.

8. यतिनामधिपेन कुशाग्रलस-
 न्मतिना धृतिनाशितचित्तभुवा ।
 लहरीं प्रमदस्य सदा वहता
 निहतान्तरशात्रवसंहतिना ॥

yatinām adhipena kuśāgra-lasan
 matinā dhṛtināśita cittabhuvā ।
 laharīm pramadasya sadā vahatā
 nihatāntara śātrava saṁhatinā ॥

யதிகட் கதிபன், மதிக்கூர் மிக்கோன்,
 மதனனைத் திறலால் வென்று விளங்குவோன்,
 சிற்பரா னந்தப் பெருக்கில் திளைப்போன்,
 உட்பகை யாவு முதைத்த தீரன்.

Head of ascetics, his mind is sharp as the tip of a blade of grass. By his steadfastness, he has destroyed lust in the mind. He has annihilated the host of enemies inside and carries with him all the time the billow of intense bliss.

His mind is very sharp and is quick to take in and react. There is no place for lust in it, as he is undaunted in his steadfastness. The proverbial enemies present in every one to hinder their inner progress, viz., lust, anger, covetousness, delusion, pride and jealousy have been put to rout. As a result, he carries with him all the time, the billow of intense bliss.

9. भगवत्पदमन्यजनासुलभं
 स्वगुणैरधिगत्य परं जयता ।
 ममतारहितेन हितेन सतां
 निहितेन गणप्रभुणा हृदये ॥

bhagavatpadam anyajanāsulabhaṁ
 svaguṇair adhigatya param̃ jayatā ।
 mamatārahitena hitena satām
 nihitena gaṇaprabhuṇā hṛdaye ॥

அன்னியர்க் கெட்டா பகவத் பதமதை
 தன்னருங் குணத்தாற் றானுற் றவிர்வோன்,
 மமதை யின்றி மன்னுயிர்க் கருள்வோன்,
 கணபதி யால்உளத் திருத்தப் பெற்றோன்.

By his own virtues, he has won the pre-eminent appellation of 'Bhagavan', not easily available to other people. He has no sense of possessiveness, pride or 'my'-ness. Friend of the good, he is held in the heart of Ganapati.

It is normal to refer to a man of God as *yati*, *ṛiṣi*, *muni*, *sūri*, etc. Very rarely he is referred to as Bhagavan unless people see him as God, Almighty, Bhagavan himself, his manifestation on earth. It is said that the word *bhaga* is used to denote the following six qualities — entire divinity, valour, fame, opulence, knowledge and dispassion.

*aiśvaryasya samagrasya vīryasya yaśasah śriyaḥ
 jñāna vairagyayoscaiva śaṅṅām bhaga itīraṇā*

The possessor of *bhaga* is Bhagavan. No wonder the world, recognising the divine virtues present in Sri Ramana Maharshi, hails him as Bhagavan.

10. धरणीधरजाङ्गमपि त्यजता
 धरणीतलवासितमोधुतये ।
 नरवेषभृता नगरन्ध्रकृता
 रमणेन सनाथमिदं भुवनम् ॥

dharaṇīdharajāṅkam api tyajatā
 dharaṇī tala vāsi tamodhutaye ।
 naraveṣabhṛtā nagarandhrakṛtā
 ramaṇena sanātham idaṁ bhuvanam ॥

பூதலம் வதிவார் பேரிருள் நீங்கப்
 பூதர மகள்மடி துறந்து வந்தோன்,
 மானி டங்கொள் முருகனாம் ரமணனே
 தாரணி யனைத்தின் தனியிறை யாமே.

God Skanda who pierced the Krauncha Hill, has now abandoned even the lap of his mother, the daughter of the mountain, and has come down in the guise of a man, Ramana, in order to chase away the darkness of ignorance of the denizens of the earth. This world has found in Sri Ramana, its refuge, lord and protector.

One of the exploits of Skanda is that he pierced the Krauncha Hill with his arrow and broke it to pieces. The incident signifies the shattering of the inert, hard, dark matter with the ray of consciousness emanating from the Divine. Matter and spirit are not, as generally believed, antipodes.

Spirit is involved in Matter and has to be manifested from Matter. This is the story of Parvati, the *Chit Sakti*, force of consciousness, manifesting as the daughter of the inert, hard matter of the Himalayan Mountain. Skanda is the son of Parvati, Saktisuta, the offspring of consciousness, taking delight on the lap of the universal Mother in high heavens. But responding to the earnest call of suffering humanity, he abandons his high status and descends on earth in the guise of Sri Ramana to put an end to their misery.

And man recognizes God only when he comes down as man, in his own form.

11. परदेशिनेव धवलेन वाससः
 शकलेन वेष्टितकटीविशोभिना ।
 वरदेशिकेन नरवेषधारिणा
 शिखिवाहनेन गुरुमज्जगद्भवेत् ॥

paradeśineva dhavalena vāsasaḥ
 śakalena veṣṭita kaṭi-viśobhinā ।
 vara-deśikena nara-veṣa-dhāriṇā
 śikhivāhanena gurutmat jagad bhavet ॥

பரதேசி போல் இடையில் வெள்ளைக் கோவணந்
 தரித்தொளிர்நுந் தேசிகோத்தமன், மனித வேஷம்
 பூண்ட மயில்வாகனன், உலகனைத்தின் குருவாவன்.

The God whose mount is the peacock has taken the guise of a man wearing a bit of white cloth, tied round the loins, in the manner of a wandering mendicant. The world will find its Master in this excellent guide.

Paradeśi, literally means “belonging to another country”, and consequently ignorant of local customs and dress regulations. Bhagavan himself is truly a *paradeśi*, hailing from another country, a stranger to this world of mortals. He has come down from the country of immortals, Guha incarnate as man, ‘an immortal amongst the mortals’ *martyeṣu amartyaḥ*, in the words of the Veda. The verse is in the metre ‘*manjubhāṣiṇi*’.

12. अतीतगुणजालाय नैष्ठिकब्रह्मचारिणे ।
नमो मायामनुष्याय गुरवे तारकारये ॥

atīta guṇajālāya naiṣṭhika brahmacāriṇe ।
namo māyāmanuṣyāya gurave tārakāraye ॥

குணக்கூட்டத்தைக் கடந்தவனும், நித்யப்ரஹ்மசாரியும்,
மாயாமனிதனும், தாரகஸம்ஹாரியுமாங் குருவுக்கு
நமஸ்காரம்.

Salutations to the Master, the enemy of the demon, Taraka, the illusory man, to the one who has transcended the net of attributes, constantly poised in his movement in Brahman.

The superficial meaning of *naiṣṭhika brahmacāri* is 'an avowed celibate'. Brahmachari is one who has his movement in the Brahman, as his uninterrupted poise *niṣṭhā*. He is not caught in the snare of attributes *guṇajālā*, but has gone beyond them. His human form is an illusion, *māyā*. He is verily God.

The verse is in *anuṣṭubh* metre.

13. यानायात्र न केकिनां कुलपतिः स्नानाय न स्वर्णदी
 पानाय क्षितिभृन्महेन्द्रदुहितु र्न स्तन्यदुग्धामृतम् ।
 गानाय प्रमथेश्वराः सवयसो नैवात्र वीणाभृतो
 वासं शोणगिरौ करोषि भगवन् क्रौञ्चाद्रिभेत्तः कुतः ॥

yānāyātra na kekinām kulapatiḥ
 snānāya na svarṇadī
 pānāya kṣitibhṛnmahendra duhitur
 na stanya-dugdhāmṛtam ।
 gānāya pramatheśvarāḥ savayaso
 naivātra vīṇābhṛto
 vāsam śoṇagirau karoṣi bhagavan
 krauñcādrī bhettaḥ kutah ॥

ஊர்தியாம் உத்தம மயிலும் இங்கிலை;
 நீரா டற்குவான் கங்கையும் இங்கிலை;
 பருகப் பார்வதி முலைப்பா லமுதிலை;
 ஒத்த பிராயக் கணங்கள் பாட்டிலை;

வீணை மீட்டுவோர் யாவரு மிங்கிலை;
 கருத்தெது பற்றிக் கிரவுஞ்சங் குடைந்த
 கடவுளே! சோணையில் வதிவாய் நீயே?

The head of the peacock family is not here for your conveyance. The celestial river does not flow here for your ablutions. For drink there is nothing like the nectar of milk from the breast of the daughter of the Lord of the mountains. Here are no hosts of *pramatha* of equal age, carrying the *vīnā* to sing to you. O Lord! The breaker of Krauncha Hill! How is it that you have taken your abode on the red mountain?

Arunachala is the red mountain. Red is the colour of fire. Red is the colour of the dawn. Here in Arunachala, Siva is in the form of the element fire, while the mountain itself is said to be an extinct volcano. The dawn of illumination has broken here for so many seers and *siddhas*.

In Hindu mythology, every god has a favourite vehicle. The vehicle of Skanda is the Peacock, the symbol of victory.

The celestial river referred to is the Ganges. Skanda has a special relationship with the Ganges, as he is said to be born also from the waters of the river. He is famed as the son of Ganga, *gāngeya*.

In Arunachala, the presiding Goddess in the temple is *apītakucāmba*, the mother whose breast has not been sucked. As she has not produced both her sons, Ganapati and Skanda in the manner of the humans, she does not suckle them either. So

here in this *kṣetra* no breast feeding is possible for Skanda. When Siva dances, his hosts known as *pramatha gaṇas* also dance and sing. Those amongst them of equal age with Skanda, the poet says, play on the *vīṇā* and delight their friend Skanda.

The poet wonders how in the absence of all these accustomed comforts, Skanda has decided to abide in Arunachala. As Skanda is *agnibhūḥ*, born of the fire, and as Arunachala is the seat of Fire, perhaps Skanda has decided to stay at the place of his father, which exactly the Maharshi did.

This and the following nine verses are in the metre *śārdūlavikrīditam*.

14. एकं वक्त्रमुमाङ्गवासविरहः पाणौ न शक्त्यायुधं
मर्त्यत्वं न पताकिनी च पृतना पार्श्वद्वये नाकिनाम् ।
वेषोऽलं पुनरेष मुग्धनयनप्रच्छादने भूजुषा-
मन्तर्धानमुपैषि तारकरिपो क्व स्तन्यदायादतः ॥

ekam vaktram umāṅkavāsavirahaḥ
pāṇau na śaktyāyudhaṁ
martyatvaṁ na patākinī ca pṛtanā
pārśvadvaye nākinām |
veṣo'lam punareṣa mugdha nayana
pracchādane bhūjuṣām
antardhānam upaiṣi tārakaripo
kva stanyadāyādataḥ ||

ஒருமுகங் கொண்டாய்; உமைமடி பிரிந்தாய்;
 வேல்கை யிலிலை; மானிடம் பூண்டாய்;
 கொடியுடன் இருபுறந் தேவர் படையிலை;
 பூதலத்தே பாமரர் பார்வையை மூடுதற்குற்றவிய்
 வேடம் போதும்; ஓர் தனம் பருகியோ னிடமிருந்
 தெங்ஙன் ஒளிந்து கொள்வை? தாரகாந்தகனே!

You have only one face. You are separated from the abode of Uma's lap. There is no weapon, *śakti*, in your hand. You have become a mortal. On both sides of you there is no army of the gods with flags aloft. Enough of this guise by which you hope to conceal yourself from the artless eyes of the denizens of the earth! O Foe of Taraka, where will you disappear from the co-sharer of your mother's milk?

Skanda has six faces, while the Maharshi has only one face. His usual seat is on the lap of his mother Uma, which he has now abandoned. He has been renowned as the Immortal amongst the mortals; but now he is born as a mortal. His famous weapon, the *śakti*, the symbol of force is absent from his hands. And as the commander-in-chief of the gods, he should have the army by his side. Thus the god has disguised himself leaving behind all his usual characteristics.

The poet, Vasishtha Ganapati Muni, had been conscious from his birth that he was an incarnation of a portion of God Ganapati. He had been throughout conscious of his divine personality and so he could easily spot out his brother, Skanda,

whatever might be the disguise. It is alright for the people of the world to be deceived by the effective disguise of Skanda as Maharshi, but Ganapati had been suckled at the same breast of Uma, along with his brother Skanda and nothing could escape his eyes.

dāyāda – coparcener. Here Ganapati calls himself as *stanyadāyāda*, coparcener of the property of the mother's milk.

It has to be noted that only in Arunachala, the Mother Goddess has been depicted as *apītakucāmbā*, but in other *kṣetras* her conduct is depicted as that of any human mother.

15. केचिद्योगविदां पुरःसर इति प्रज्ञानिबुद्ध्या परे
साधुः कश्चिदितीतरे गुरुधिया केऽप्यङ्घ्रिपद्मं तव ।
सेवन्ते रमणाभिधान मनुजक्षेमाय जातः क्षितौ
द्वित्रास्त्वां गिरिजाङ्गपीठनिलयं जानन्ति देवं गुहम् ॥

kecid yogavidām puraḥsara iti
prajñāni buddhyā pare
sādhuḥ kaścid ititare gurudhiyā
ke'pyaṅghri padmaṁ tava |
sevante ramaṇābhidhāna manuja-
kṣemāya jātaḥ kṣitau
dvitrās tvām girijāṅkapīṭhanilayaṁ
jānanti devaṁ guham ||

சிலருனை யோகறி முதல்வ னென்றும்,
 சிலருனைச் சிறந்த ஞானி யென்றும்,
 சாது வெனவும், குருவென வுஞ்சிலர்
 சேவித் தடைவர் சேவடி மலரே;
 உமைமடி யுறைகுகன் ரமணப் பெயருடன்
 மனிதர் நலனுற மகியுற் றனனென்
 நிருவர் மூவர் அறிவர் உனையே.

Some serve at your lotus feet as the forerunner among the knowers of yoga, some with the idea of a great *jñāni*, others as some saint and a few others as a Master. O, one known by the name of Ramana, born on earth for the welfare of mankind! Only two or three recognise you as the God Guha, reposing on the lap of the mountain's daughter.

During the lifetime of the Maharshi, only two or three people had personal realisation of his avatar-hood and proclaimed the truth to others. Only from them the idea had spread to others that Maharshi is an *avatār* of Skanda. The poet feels happy that this rare realisation has been vouched to him and he has been fortunate to be one of the two or three people who could recognise the Maharshi's avatar-hood. The implication is that the Maharshi is much more than a forerunner amongst the knowers of yoga, a great *jñāni*, a saint and a Master. He is the Sage of the age, the *avatārā*, the descent, the God incarnate on earth for the welfare of mankind.

- 16 ओंकारार्थमुपादिशो भगवते वाणीमनोहारिणे
 तातायाप्युपदेशुमुद्यतमभूत् किञ्चित् त्वदीयं मुखम् ।
 ज्येष्ठस्याद्य सहोदरस्य गुरुतां प्राप्तोऽसि धीगौरवात्
 सुब्रह्मण्य कनिष्ठतामपि गतः सर्वाधिकः त्वं गुणैः ॥

omkārārtham upādiśo bhagavate
 vāṇī manohāriṇe
 tātāyāpyupadeṣṭum udyatam abhūt
 kiñcit tvadīyaṁ mukham ।
 jyeṣṭhasyādya sahodarasya gurutām
 prāpto'si dhīgauravāt
 subrahmaṇya kaniṣṭhatām api gataḥ
 sarvādhikaḥ tvaṁ guṇaiḥ ॥

வாணீ மனோகரனாம் பிரமற்குப் பிரணவப் பொருளை
 அறிவுறுத்தினை; நின் வதனம் தாதைக்கும் உபதேசிக்கச்
 சற்று முயன்றது; அறிவுரத்தால் இன்று நீ அண்ணனுக்குங்
 குருவானாய். இளையோனாயினும், சுப்ரஹ்மண்யா!
 குணங்களால் யாரினு முயர்ந் தொளிர் கின்றாய்.

You expounded the meaning of *Om* to the Lord, the captivator of Sarasvati's mind. Your mouth was intent on imparting something to your father too. By your weighty wisdom you have now come out as the Master of your elder brother. Though you are junior, O Subrahmanya! You have by your merits out-stripped all your elders.

Sarasvati is the repository of all knowledge. The captivator of her mind is the God Brahma. So there should be nothing unrevealed or unknowable to him. But even to him Subrahmanya had to expound the significance of Omkara, the great mystic syllable used to express Brahman. Thus he became the Guru of Brahma. He became Sivaguru, the Teacher of Siva. His tender mouth imparted some teaching to his father, Siva himself. What he told Brahma is well known, the meaning of Omkara. What he initiated his father, the great Siva, into, even today remains a mystery. That is why the poet has used the word *kincit*, something not known. Now Ramana, Guha incarnate, has become a preceptor to the Muni, Ganapati incarnate. Thus he has become the Guru of all elders, Brahma, Siva and Ganapati, though himself very junior.

17. यत्पूर्वं श्रुतिपारदर्शिधिषणो द्वैपायनोऽध्यारुहत्
 पश्चात् बोधकलाविधूततिमिरः शङ्कापहः शङ्करः ।
 तत्सम्प्रत्यखिलावनीतलजुषा माचार्यसिंहासनं
 देव त्वाम् प्रतिवीक्षते नरतनो गीर्वाणसेनापते ॥

yat pūrvam śrutipāradarśi dhiṣaṇo
 dvaipāyano'dhyāruhat
 paścād bodhakalāvidhūta timiraḥ
 śaṅkāpahaḥ śaṅkaraḥ ।
 tat samprat yakhilāvanī talajuṣām
 ācāryasimhāsanam
 deva tvām prativīkṣate naratano
 gīrvāṇasenāpate ॥

முன்னர், வேதக்கரையுணர் அறிவினனாம்
 வியாஸனும், பின்னர், ஞானத்தால் இருளையங்களைந்த
 சங்கரனும் வீற்றிருந்த அனைத்துலகின் ஆசார்ய
 சிங்காதனம், இறைவ! மனிதவுருப் பெறும் அமர
 ஸேனானியாம் உன்னை எதிர்நோக்குகின்றது.

The throne of the Teacher of all the denizens of earth, once mounted by Vyasa, whose intellect saw the other shore of the Vedas, and later by Sankara who removed all doubts and drove away the darkness of ignorance with a fragment of his illumination, now awaits you, commander-in-chief of gods, God embodied in a human form!

Dvaipāyana, literally, 'born in the island', is an appellation of Vyasa, whose fame rests in his classification of the Vedas. Later Sankara came, removed all doubts about the Sanatana Dharma, and using only a fragment of illumination, dispelled the darkness of ignorance. The total personality of Acharya Sankara is still not known to the world and neither the extent of his realisation. He did so much in his short life using only a fragment of his illumination, *bodhakalā*, in his writings to dispel the ignorance all around. In the considered opinion of the poet, only Vyasa and Sankara could be called *jagatgurus* so far. Now this title of *jagatguru* has found a recipient in the Maharshi and the throne of *ācārya* has been long vacant. It is in the fitness of things that the Maharshi should occupy it and carry on in the glorious tradition of Vyasa and Sankara.

18. धर्मै नाशमुपागते त्रिभुवने पर्याकुले पापतः
 प्रज्ञाने परितो गिरां पथि मुधा सञ्चार्यमाणे जनैः ।
 सद्भावे परमेश्वरस्य च पितुः सन्देहडोलां गते
 द्वीपः कैतवमर्त्य केकितुरग त्वामन्तरा कः सताम् ॥

dharme nāśam upāgate tribhuvane
 paryākule pāpataḥ
 prajñāne parito girāṃ pathi mudhā
 sañcāryamāṇe janaiḥ ।
 sadbhāve paramēśvarasya ca pituḥ
 sandehaḍolām gate
 dvīpaḥ kaitavamartya kekituraga
 tvām antarā kaḥ satām ॥

அறம் அழிவுற்றது; மறத்தால் மூவுலகுங் கலக்குண்டது;
 மக்கள் உண்மை ஞானத்தை விட்டு வாய்வேதாந்த
 வழிபற்றினர்; எந்தை பரமேசனும் உளனோ
 என்றையுற்றனர்; மானிடவேடா! மயூர வாகனா!
 நல்லோர்க்கரண் உனையன்றி யாருளர்?

Now, when righteousness has been destroyed, when the three worlds are in the turmoil of evil, when people vainly bandy about knowledge in terms of words, and when the very existence of the Supreme Lord, the Father, is in vacillation and doubt, who else but you could be the refuge of good people, O Peacock borne, in the mask of man!

Conditions on earth have become so bad that all right-thinking people have been longing for Divine Intervention. At this point in time, you are the descent of the Godhead, the *avatāra*. You are the saviour of mankind. You are the sole refuge.

Atheism has spread far and wide. And those who profess to know, think that by discussing in words like 'knowledge' they will attain knowledge. The age of realisation has given place to the age of polemics. Now a person like the Maharshi has to take us back to the age of Self-realisation and demonstrate to us the Existence of God.

19. वैराग्यं तव वित्तमस्तु करुणां शक्रोषि हातुं कथं
 दूष्यस्तेऽस्तु समुद्यमः पितृपदध्यानं च किं तादृशम् ।
 कामस्तेऽस्तु विगर्हितो विनमतां रक्षा च किं गर्हिता
 स्कन्द च्छद्ममनुष्य किन्तु समयं कञ्चित् समुद्वीक्षसे ॥

vairāgyaṁ tava vittam astu karuṇāṁ
 śaknoṣi hātuṁ kathaṁ
 dūṣyaste'stu samudyamaḥ pitṛpada
 dhyānaṁ ca kiṁ tādr̥śam ।
 kāmaste'stu vigarhito vinamatāṁ
 rakṣā ca kiṁ garhitā
 skanda cchadmamanuṣya kim nu samayaṁ
 kañcit samudvīkṣase ॥

வேண்டாமை உனது விழுச்செல்வ மெனினும்
 கருணைபுரியா திருக்கத்தகுமோ? நானெனும்
 முயற்சி நயமன் றெனினும் நம்பன் பதநினை
 வங்ஙன மாமோ? விருப்புனக்கு வெறுப்பே
 யெனினும் வணங்குவார்க் கருளல் வெறுத்தற்
 பாலதோ? மானிடம் உகந்த கந்தனே! இன்னும்
 காலமொன்றைக் கருதி யுளாயோ?

Let dispassion be your wealth, but how can you
 abandon showing compassion? For you, directed
 effort may be blameworthy, but can meditation on
 the feet of the Father be in the same category? Let
 desire be contemptible in your case, but would you
 on that score withhold the desire to protect those
 who bow down to you? O Skanda, masked as man!
 Do you yet bide your time?

It was the Maharshi who said in one of his
 lyrical writings:

“To be silent like a stone without blossoming
 Can it be silence true, my Lord?”

The mission of the Maharshi is to live as a
 liberated *jīvanmukta*, a man amongst other men.
 His ascetic qualities like dispassion etc., should
 not come in the way of uplifting mankind.
 Because the very purpose of his *avatāra* is to show
 compassion, preach devotion and offer protection,
 the Muni prays for the Maharshi’s speedy
 intervention.

20. दूरं याहि कुवाद धर्मवृष ते नेतः परं पङ्गुता
 दुभ्रान्ते भुवनं जहीहि परितो वर्धस्व संसत् सताम् ।
 सोदर्येण समन्वितो भुवमिमां प्राप्तो गुरुग्रामणीः
 शूरान्तःपुरनेत्र विभ्रमहरो देवो भवानीसुतः ॥

dūraṁ yāhi kuvāda dharmavṛṣa te
 netaḥ paraṁ paṅgutā
 durbhrānte bhuvanam jahīhi parito
 vardhasva saṁsat satām |
 sodaryeṇa samanvito bhuvamimām
 prāpto gurugrāmaṇiḥ
 sūrāntaḥ puranetra vibhramaharo
 devo bhavānīsutaḥ ||

விதண்டவாதமே! விலகிச் செல்; அறமெனும் ஏறே!
 நிமிர்ந்து நில்; மலைப்பே! நீ இனிப் பூதலம் நீங்கு;
 நல்லோர் குழுவே! நன்கு நீ யோங்கு; கிரிஜை மைந்தன்,
 சூரசங்காரியாங் குருராஜன், சோதரனுடன் காசினி யுற்றான்.

Get away, crooked argument! O Bull of righteousness, you will not be lame any longer. Leave the world, bewilderment! Everywhere may the tribe of good men increase! The Master of masters, the Lord, the son of Bhavani, the vanquisher of Sura has come to this earth accompanied by his brother.

The world is full of crooked arguments which mislead and conceal the truth. All these will go now.

dharma, righteousness is symbolised as a Bull. It is said that in Satya Yuga, the age of Truth, it stands firm on its four legs. In Treta Yuga, it becomes lame in one leg, in Dwapara Yuga it becomes lame in two legs and in Kali Yuga it stands only on one leg, the other legs being maimed. Hereafter righteousness will be put firm on its feet.

sūrāntahpura-netra-vibhrama hara, one who puts an end to the sportive play in the eyes of the wives *antahpura* of Sura. A poetic way of saying, vanquisher of Sura. Sura was a great asura whom Skanda vanquished. Here the meaning is that the *avatāra* puts an end to all evil forces.

The poet feels that as he has come down on earth from God Ganapati, the Maharshi has also come down on earth at the same time from God Skanda.

The descent of the Divine brothers holds for the world all hope and promise.

21. जन्मस्थानमवाप्य गुप्तमहमो यो भेदमाधूतवान्
भूतानां चरतां पृथग्विधधियामात्मैव यो भासते ।
देहं सर्वमिदं जगच्च विभवादाक्रम्य यः प्रोल्लस-
त्येकस्तं गुरुमूर्तिमानमत रे लम्बोदरभ्रातरम् ॥

janmasthanam avāpya guptam ahamo
yo bhedam ādhūtavān
bhūtānām caratām pṛthagvidha dhiyām
ātmaiva yo bhāsate ।

deham sarvam idam jagacca vibhavād
 ākramya yaḥ prollasat
 yekas taṁ gurumūrtim ānamata re
 lambodarabhrātaram ||

அகந்தை யுதிக்கும் உள்ளிடமுற்றுப் பேதம் நீத்துப்
 பலபுத்தி யுயிர்களின் ஆத்மாவாயிங் கிலகுபவனாய்,
 உடலும் உலகும் அனைத்தும் சக்தியால் வியாபித்து
 ஒருவனா யொளிருமவனைக் கணபதிசோதர குரவனைப்
 பணிமின்.

Having arrived at the secret birthplace of the 'I', he has cast away the differentiation. He shines verily as the Self of all animate beings having distinct and divergent conceptions. He is resplendent as the one seizing by his glory the body and all this universe. Oh ye men! Bow down to him, the brother of Ganapati, the Master, embodied.

The brother of Ganapati is Guha. He has taken the embodiment as our Master. He has dived deep into the secret source of 'I' and found the unity underlying all created beings, inspite of the apparent differences. His illuminating consciousness takes hold of the whole body and all this universe.

22. अन्तर्यश्च बहिर्विधूततिमिरं ज्योतिर्मयं शाश्वतं
 स्थानं प्राप्य विराजते विनमतामज्ञानमुन्मूलयन् ।
 पश्यन्विश्वमपीदमुल्लसति यो विश्वस्य पारे परः
 तस्मै श्रीरमणाय लोकगुरवे शोकस्य हन्त्रे नमः ॥

antaryaśca bahir vidhūtatimiraṁ
 jyotirmayaṁ śāśvataṁ
 sthānaṁ prāpya virājate vinamatām
 ajñānam unmūlayan ।
 paśyan viśvam apīdam ullasati yo
 viśvasya pāre paraḥ
 tasmai śrī ramaṇāya lokagurave
 śokasya hantre namaḥ ॥

உள்ளும் வெளியேயும் இருளோட்டும் ஒள்ளொளி மயமாம்
 சாகவதத் தானம் பெற்று, அடியார் இருளுந் துயரு
 மறுத்தே அவிருவோன்; உலகம் யாவும் நோக்குற்றும்,
 உலகிற்கப்பாற் பரம்பொருளா யிலகும் ரமண இறை
 வனாம் உலகாசிரியன் பதம் போற்றி.

He is resplendent, having arrived at the eternal status of Light which chases away the darkness inside and outside. He strikes at the root of ignorance of those who bow down to him. Even when he perceives this universe, he is beyond it, on its other shore, shining. Salutations to such a One, to Sri Ramana, the Master of the worlds and the slayer of grief.

Like any other human being, he sees the universe and partakes in its dealings. At the same time he is stationed beyond it and so is able to remove its sorrows. As he is all the time stationed in the Light Eternal, darkness and ignorance are dispelled immediately.

The following ten verses are in the metre *naramanoramā*.

23. प्रसरतादितः शुभविलोकितम् ।
रमण ते सकृत्फलतु मे कृतम् ॥

prasaratād itaḥ śubhavidokitam ।
ramaṇa te sakṛt phalatu me kṛtam ॥

ஓர் கால் ஈண்டுன் சீர்நோக் குறுக
எறபணி, ரமண நற்பயன் பெறுக.

O Ramana, cast thy auspicious glance on me, once. May my action bear fruit.

No action, by itself has got the power to give the result. Only Divine Grace bestows the result. And the Grace is quickly brought about by the auspicious gaze of Bhagavan, even when it is directed only once.

24. रमण जन्मिनामयि भवान् गुरुः ।
अभिद् आशयस्तव महानुरुः ॥

ramaṇa janminām ayi bhavān guruḥ ।
abhida āśayas tava mahān uruḥ ॥

உயிர்களனைத்தின் குருநீ, ரமண!
உயர்ந்தே யகன்றதுன் உலைவிலா வுள்ளம்.

O Ramana, thou art the master of all those who have taken birth. Great and vast is thy intention, which does not differentiate.

Sri Ramana takes in his fold all those who have taken birth in this world and guides them as Master without making any distinction amongst them.

25. जगदहं परः स्फुरति मे त्रयम् ।
सदभिदं गिरा तव विसंशयम् ॥

jagad ahaṁ paraḥ sphurati me trayam ।
sadabhidaṁ girā tava viśaṁśayam ॥

உலகுயிரிறைவர் உளபொருண் மயமாய்
இலகும் உன்வாக்கால் எனக்கிலை ஐயமே.

Undoubtedly, by thy word, the universe, 'I' and the Supreme, these three sparkle in me as undifferentiated Existence.

This realization has been effected by the potent and powerful word of the Maharshi, which springs forth from his own direct realization.

26. त्वदुपदेशतो गलति संविदा ।
मयि निरन्यया सदहमोर्भिदा ॥

tvad upadeśato galati samvidā ।
mayi niranyayā sadahamor bhidā ॥

உன்மொழியாலெனில் அனனிய வறிவால்
நழுவின துளதின்யா னயலெனும் வேற்றுமை.

Arising from thy teaching, by the exclusive understanding present in me, the difference between Reality and the 'I' melts away.

The teaching of the Maharshi brings forth the exclusive understanding in a person. When it comes, the difference between the 'I' and Reality vanishes very smoothly, without any effort.

27. अहमि योऽन्तर स्तममलं हृदि ।
 अनुभवेम भो स्तव कृपा यदि ॥

ahami yo'ntaras tam amalaṁ hṛdi ।
 anubhavema bhos tava kṛpā yadi ॥

அகத்தினு ளவிரும் அமலனை யுளத்தே
 அகலா துறுவம், உன் அருளுள தாயின்.

Sire, if thy grace is there, we will experience in our heart that spotless one inside the 'I'.

The experience does not come by any personal effort, *sādhanā*. It is effectuated only by the Grace and compassion of the Master.

28. न करुणा गुण स्तव विदांपते ।
 हृदयतेजसः सहजभैव ते ॥

na karuṇā guṇas tava vidāmpate ।
 hṛdayatejasaḥ sahabhaiva te ॥

அருளுன் குணமிலை, அறிஞர் தம் அதிப!
 இதயப் பொறியின் இயல்பொளி யதுவே.

O, the lord of the learned, compassion is no attribute of thine. It is verily the natural splendour of the light in thy heart.

It is usual to say that compassion is the attribute of the Maharshi and he employs it for the upliftment of the disciple. This is not true. He does not make any special effort. The natural splendour of the light in his heart acts spontaneously and does the work.

29. तव तनु ज्वलत्यनघ विद्युता ।

तव दृगातता लसति भास्वता ॥

tava tanur jvalat yanagha vidyutā ।
tava dṛg ātatā lasati bhāsvatā ॥

அனகனே! மின்னொளி சிறக்குதுன் மேனி;
இன்னெனச் சுடருதுன் எலையிலாப் பார்வை

O Spotless One, thy body is ablaze like a flash of lightning. Thy extended vision shines like the brilliant sun.

The Maharshi is verily a conflagration destroying all darkness and ignorance.

30. कबलितं मनस्तव विभो हृदा ।
त्वमसि सन्ततं विलसितो मुदा ॥

kabalitaṁ manas tava vibho hṛdā ।
tvamasi santataṁ vilasito mudā ॥

உன்னுளம் மனத்தை விழுங்கிய துடையாய்!
உவகைபூத் தென்றும் ஒளிர்வை நீயே.

O Lord, thy mind is made a morsel by the heart.
And thou art constantly radiant with Bliss.

All the mental activities are swallowed by the heart. There is no mind, only the heart reigns in constant Bliss.

'manasi śūnyam ahaśśaśi sannibhe' — "There is emptiness in the mind. It looks like the moon in broad daylight, lustreless", says *Ramana Gita*.

31. भुवनभूपते भगवतः कृते ।
भवसि पाचको यमवतां पते ॥

Bhuvanabhūpater bhagavataḥ kṛte ।
bhavasi pācako yamavatāṁ pate ॥

அகிலத் தரசாம் இறைவற் காகநீ
பாகம் புரிவாய், புனிதர்க் கரசே

O the head of ascetics, for the sake of the Lord, the sovereign of the worlds, thou hast become the cook.

As the *Avatār*, as God incarnate on earth, he undertakes the work of the creator and helps the evolution.

32. नरपशूनिमा नहमि ताडयन् ।
परशिवौदनं वितनुषे पचन् ॥

narapaśūn imān ahami tāḍayan ।
paraśivaudanaṁ vitanuṣe pacan ॥

அகந்தையிற் றாக்கிப் பாகமு மாக்கி
ஜீவராம் பசுக்களை சிவனுக் கீவாய்.

Striking at the 'I-thought' of these human beasts, you cook them and hand them over to the Supreme Siva as food.

The Supreme Siva cooks everything in the cauldron of the cosmos. He is the energy of evolution, Time the Transformer, *mahākālā*. He destroys in order to create. His cosmic actions work out the gradual unfoldment of divine possibilities in man. On his behalf, Sri Ramana undertakes to help the process of evolution. He

lashes out at the 'I- thought' of the people who are no better than beasts, helps in their enlightenment, transformation and evolution and makes them ripe for divine consumption. The *Avatār*, the descent of God, is intended to quicken the process of the Divine's work on earth.

33. तिमिराणि न केवलं वचोभिः
 करुणापाङ्गविलोकितैश्च नृणाम् ।
 हृदये प्रसरन्ति मर्दयन्तं
 भगवन्तं रमणं गुरुं नमामि ॥

timirāṇi na kevalam vacobhiḥ
 karuṇāpāṅgavilokitaiś ca nṛṇām |
 hṛdaye prasaranti mardayantam
 bhagavantam ramaṇam gurum namāmi ||

வாக்கால் மாத்திரமன்றிக் கருணைக் கடைக்கண்
 ணோக்காலும் மாந்தரிதயத் துலவும் இருளை அறவே
 தகையுங் குருவாம் ரமண பகவானை வணங்குகின்றேன்.

I bow down to Bhagavan Ramana, the Master who destroys the darkness spreading in the hearts of men, not solely by his words but also with his sidelong glances of compassion.

Usually words are used for communication. But his sidelong glances laden with compassion without any accompanying words are more than enough to dispel delusion. His direct gaze is very powerful, of course. But his *katākṣa* is full of mercy, soothing and healing to all.

The metre is *aupacchandāsikam*.

34. भवजलनिधिं गाहं गाहं चिरादलसालसान्
 पदजलरुहद्वन्द्वद्वीपं श्रितांस्तव सम्प्रति ।
 रमणभगवन् कल्याणानां निकेतन पाहि नः
 सदय दयया सित्तै भक्तानपाङ्गविलोकितैः ॥

bhavajalanidhim gāham gāham
 cirād alasālasān
 padajalaruha-dvandva-dvīpaṁ
 śritāṁs tava samprati |
 ramaṇabhagavan kalyāṇānām
 niketana pāhi naḥ
 sadaya dayayā siktair bhaktān
 apāṅgavilokitaiḥ ||

பல்காலாய்ப் பவக்கடலில் மூழ்கிமூழ்கி மிகமிகத் தளர்ந்து
 இப்பொழுது நின் பதமலரிணையாந் தீவுற்ற அன்பர்களா
 மெங்களை, நலன்களின் உறைவிடமாம் ரமணபகவன்!
 அருளாள! கருணை கசியுங் கடை நோக்காற் காத்தருள்.

Plunging again and again into the ocean of births and deaths, at long last, thoroughly fatigued, we, thy devotees, have, now taken shelter under the haven of the pair of thy lotus feet. O Ramana, Our Lord merciful, the abode of all auspiciousness, protect us with thy sidelong glances, moist with compassion.

In the ocean of *samsāra*, births and deaths follow successively. Plunge after plunge takes place without any rest or respite. Finally the struggling soul, after a lot of experiences, thoroughly exhausted, has arrived at thy feet, its haven. The Maharshi full of compassion resurrects the soul with merciful glances and leads it to happiness.

This and the following two verses are in the metre *hariṇī*.

35. यदि न जननी स्तन्यं दद्याच्छिशोर्बत का गतिः
 यदि पशुपतिः क्रोधं कुर्यात् पशोरवनं कुतः ।
 यदि पदजुषामाचार्यं त्वं निहंसि न संशयं
 भ्रमशतपराभूता एते तरन्तु भवं कथम् ॥

yadi na janānī stanyam dadyāt
 śiśor bata kā gatiḥ
 yadi paśupatiḥ krodham kuryāt
 paśor avanam kutah ।

yadi padajuṣāṃ ācārya tvam
 nihaṃsi na saṃśayaṃ
 bhramaśataparābhūta ete
 tarantu bhavaṃ katham ||

தாய் முலையூட்டாவிடில், அந்தோ! குழந்தையின் கதி என்னாம்? பசுபதியே கோபித்தால் பசுவின் (ஜீவனது) பாதுகாப்புப் பிறிதெங்கே? ஆசானே! அடியார்களின் ஐயத்தை நீ தகையாவிடிற் பற்பல பிரமைகளாற் பரிபவமுறும் நாங்கள் பவத்தைக் கடத்த லெவ்வாறு?

If the mother does not suckle the child, alas, where will it go? If the herdsman gets angry, how is the protection of the herd possible? If thou, O Master do not dispel the doubts of those who gather at thy feet, how can they, mortified by a hundred misapprehensions, be able to go beyond the worldly life?

The Maharshi is like the mother to all the devotees. He cannot neglect them. He has to cherish and nourish them with the milk of knowledge. Lord Siva is Pasupati, the Lord of the beings. The beings are known as *paśus*, as they only see *paśyati* and not perceive. But Pasupati has to bind the *paśus* with his *pāśa*, Cord of love.

Maharshi is the master of all who resort to his feet. He has to clear their misgivings and help them ford the miseries of worldly life.

36. विशदहसिते पूर्णा शान्तिः सुधाकरसोदरे
 स्थिरपृथुलयोः पूर्णा शक्ति र्दृशो रतुलार्चिषोः ।
 हृदयकमले नित्या निष्ठा बहिश्च सरत्प्रभे
 रमण भगवन् को वा मौनी समस्तव भूतले ॥

viśadahasite pūrṇā śāntiḥ sudhākara sodare
 sthirapṛthulayoḥ pūrṇā śaktir dṛśor atulārciṣoḥ |
 hṛdayakamale nityā niṣṭhā bahiṣca saratprabhe
 ramaṇa bhagavan ko vā maunī samas tava bhūtale ||

நிலவுநிகர் தூயமுறுவலிற் பூரணவமைதி தோன்றும்;
 நிலைத்து விரிந்து நிகரிலா ஒளிவீசங் கண்களிற் பூரண
 வாற்றல் தோன்றும்; புறத்துங் கதிர் பரவும் இதய
 கமலத்தே நித்தியநிலை தோன்றும்; பகவனாம் ரமண!
 நினக்கிணை மௌனி இந்நிலத்து முளனோ?

In thy transparent smile, fraternizing with the moon,
 there is fullness of peace. In thy steady wide eyes of
 peerless lustre, there is fullness of force. In the lotus of
 the heart, whose lustre flows outside as well, constant
 is the poise. O Ramana, my Lord, who else steeped in
 silence, can be equal to thee in this world?

The moon is born from the ocean of nectar and
 his rays pour nectar, *sudhākara*. The smile of the
 Maharshi also arises from his immortal state,
 clear, cool, transparent and shining. The gaze is
 steady and wide with the fullness of force. There
 is always poise in the heart and its influence and
 light spreads outside, all around.

37. देवी शक्तिरियं दृशोः श्रितजन-ध्वान्तक्षयाधायिनी
 देवी श्री रियमम्बुजाक्ष-महिषी वक्त्रे सहस्रच्छदे ।
 देवी ब्रह्मवधूरियं विजयते व्याहारगूढा परा
 विश्वाचार्य महानुभाव रमण त्वां स्तौतु कः प्राकृतः ॥

devī śakti riyam̐ dṛśoḥ śritajana-
 dhvānta kṣayādhāyinī
 devī śrī riyam ambujākṣa mahiṣī
 vaktre sahasracchade |
 devī brahmavadhūr iyaṁ vijayate
 vyāhāra-gūḍhā parā
 viśvācārya mahānubhāva ramaṇa
 tvāṁ stautu kaḥ prākṛtaḥ ||

அடைந்தோரிருளைக் களையுங் கண்களிலே தூர்கை;
 அம்புயக்கண்ணன் மணிஷியாஞ் செந்திரு முகமலரில்;
 பிரஹ்மவனிதையாம் பரை ஆடுவள் வாக்கினிலே;
 பிர பஞ்ச குருவாம் ரமணபிரானுனைப் பாமரர்பேசிடவோ!

In thine eyes is present Goddess Durga, accomplishing the destruction of the ignorance of the people who resort to thee. In thy face, resembling a thousand-petalled lotus, is present Goddess Lakshmi, the queen of the lotus-eyed Vishnu. This Goddess Sarasvati, the consort of Brahma, holds her sway as *parā*, the secret hidden in speech. Master of the universe, O, the

Illustrious One, Ramana, how can an ordinary man extol thee?

The three great goddesses Durga, Lakshmi and Sarasvati act through Bhagavan. Durga destroys all evil forces, puts an end to all the miseries and dispels the darkness and ignorance. She takes her station in the eyes of Bhagavan and acts through his penetrating gaze. Lakshmi has her play in his face. As the face resembles a full-blown lotus, full of ethereal beauty and charm, the consort of Vishnu has taken her permanent abode there. She spreads concord, harmony, beauty and charm all around.

The speech is divided into four states – *parā*, *paśyanti*, *madhyamā* and *vaikhari*. Before a word is spoken, it has to be articulated. Even before articulation, it is found as the seed of conception. It is in the subtle form of silence. It is known as Para. The next stage is *paśyantī*, the word is seen in inner vision. All the Vedic Riks are from *paśyantī vāk*. The mantra is seen by the inner eye and carved out of the heart of the Rishis — *hṛdā yat taśṭhān mantrān*. The intermediate state when the vision is translated into speech is *madhyamā*. The spoken, articulated word is *vaikhari*. In the case of the Maharshi, Sarasvati manifests as *parā vāk*, the unmanifest seed of sound, the secret womb of silence.

The verse is in the metre *śardūlavikrīditam*.

38. सोऽहं जातो रमणभगवन् पादयोस्ते दविष्ठो
 यद्यप्यस्मिन् महति समये शक्तिलास्ये प्रवृत्ते ।
 सूर्यस्येव ज्वलितमहसो दूरगां नाथ शक्तिं
 विश्वस्याग्र्यां तव मम मनो वीतदुःखं तथाऽपि ॥

so'ham jāto ramaṇabhagavan
 pādayos te daviṣṭho
 yadyapyasmin mahati samaye
 śaktilāsyē pravṛtte |
 sūryasyeva jvalitamahasō
 dūragām nātha śaktim
 viśvasyāgryām tava mama mano
 vītaduḥkham tathā'pi ||

ரமணபகவன்! சக்தியின் லீலை தொடங்கியுள்ள இவ்வுயர்
 தருணத்திற் கணபதியாம் யான் நினது பதவிணையினின்
 றுந் தொலையுற்றே னெனினும், நாத! வெகுதூரஞ்
 செல்லுஞ் சுடரொளிச் சூரியனது போன்ற நினது சீரிய
 சக்தியை நம்பி என்மனம் துயரற்றிருக்கின்றது.

Though in this great moment, when the play of
 the Force has started, O Ramana, my God, I happen
 to be far away from thy feet, even so, my Lord, I
 am not sad in my mind, as I believe in thy foremost
 Force far reaching like the brilliant light of the sun.

The sun is shining in the high heavens. Even
 so the earth receives its rays. Once the Maharshi

has accepted the devotee, wherever he might be, the grace acts. Distance is of no consequence.

The verse is in *mandākrāntā* metre.

39. तद्भागधेयमसमान मनेकमौनि-
 वासार्जितं क्षितिभृतः खलु लोहितस्य ।
 अङ्गीचकार भगवान् रमणो महर्षि
 रन्येषु सत्सु यदिमं बहुषु स्थलेषु ॥

tad bhāgadheyam asamānam anekamauni-
 vāsārjitaṁ kṣitibhṛtaḥ khalu lohitasya ।
 aṅgīcakāra bhagavān ramaṇo maharṣir
 anyeṣu satsu yadimaṁ bahuṣu sthaleṣu ॥

வேறு பல தலங்களிருக்க இவ்வருணகிரியை பகவான்
 ரமணமஹர்ஷி தேர்ந்தது, பலமுனிவர்களின் வாசத்தால்
 அதற்குற்றதோர் உவமையிலாப் பேறென்பது உறுதியாம்.

When there are so many other places, the fact that Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi accepted this place is verily the good fortune, unparalleled, the Red Mountain had earned by the residence of many silent sages.

The Red Mountain is a great hallowed place. So many silent sages have chosen it for their residence to carry out their austerities. On this

account, the hill had earned a lot of merit, *punya*. This *punya* has borne fruit as the great Maharshi himself accepted the place for his residence.

This and the next verse are in the metre *vasantatilakā*.

40. शान्तिर्नितान्तमधिका परमास्य शक्ति-
 वैराग्यमद्भुततमं करुणा तु सान्द्रा ।
 ज्ञानं निरस्तकुहनं मधुरं च वृत्तं
 नृणां निदर्शनमयं रमणो महर्षिः ॥

śāntir nitāntam adhikā paramāsyā śaktir
 vairāgyam adbhutatamaṁ karuṇā tu sāndrā ।
 jñānaṁ nirastakuhanaṁ madhuraṁ ca vṛttaṁ
 nṛṇāṁ nidarśanaṁ ayaṁ ramaṇo maharṣiḥ ॥

மிகச்சிறந்த சாந்தியும், அனைத்தினுமுயர் சக்தியும், விந்தைமிகு துறவும், நிறைகருணையும், கள்ளமிலா ஞானமும், இனிய சரிதையும் வாய்ந்த ரமண மஹர்ஷி மாந்தர்க்கோர் சான்றாவார்.

His peace is very much plentiful, force supreme, dispassion most wonderful, compassion intense, knowledge devoid of pretence and conduct sweet and nice. This great seer Ramana is an example to men.

The Maharshi has all these godly qualities, demonstrating to the world that it is possible for a man to have them. He is an example for men to emulate.

उपसंहारश्लोकः

नारसिंहिर्गणपति वसिष्ठो रमणं गुरुम् ।
चत्वारिंशन्मितैः पद्यैः स्कन्दांशं स्तुतवानृषिम् ॥

nārasimhir gaṇapatir vāsiṣṭho ramaṇam
gurum |
catvāriṁśanmitaiḥ padyaiḥ skandāṁśam
stutavān ṛṣim ||

ஸ்கந்தாம்ச முற்ற தனது குருவாகிய ரமண மஹர்ஷியை
வாஸிஷ்ட நரஸிம்ஹ சாஸ்திரியின் மகவாங் கணபதி
நாற்பது பாக்களால் ஏத்திய தோத்திரமாம்.

Concluding Verse

Ganapati, of Vasishtha clan, son of Narasimha, thus adored in forty verses the Master, the Seer Ramana, a portion of Skanda descended on earth. The metre of the verse is *anuṣṭubh*.