

॥ सार्थ उपदेशसारम् ॥

.. upadeshasAram English
translation, Essence of Advice ..

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Original Tamil upadesha undiyar of
Shri Ramana Maharshi
With English Translation and Notes by
B. V. Narasimhaswami
Author of Self Realisation

The Genesis of Upadesha Saram

There is an old legend that a group of Rishis once lived in the forest together, practising Vedic rituals by which they acquired supernatural powers. By the same means they hoped to attain final Liberation. In this, however, they were mistaken, for action can only result in action; rituals can produce powers, but not the Peace of Liberation which is beyond rituals and powers and all forms of action. Shiva, determined to convince them of their error, appeared before them as a wandering sadhu. With him came Vishnu in the form of a beautiful lady. All the Rishis were smitten with loving desire for this lady, and their equilibrium was disturbed and their rites and powers were adversely affected. Moreover their wives, who were living with them in the forest, all fell in love with the strange sadhu. Incensed at this, they conjured up an elephant and a tiger by magic rites and sent them against him. Shiva, however, slew them easily and took the elephant's skin for a robe and the tiger's for a wrap. The Rishis then realised that they were up against one more powerful than themselves and they bowed down to him for instruction. He then explained to them that it is not by action but by renunciation of action that one is Liberated.

The poet Muruganar was writing this legend in

Tamil verse, but when he came to the instruction given to the Rishis by Shiva he asked Bhagavan, who was Shiva Incarnate, to write it for him. Bhagavan accordingly wrote the instruction in thirty (verse thirty was composed by Muruganar) Tamil verses. He himself later translated these into Sanskrit, and the Sanskrit version was daily chanted before him together with the Vedas and continues to be chanted before his shrine; that is to say that it is treated as a scripture. He refers to the various paths to Liberation, grading them in order of efficiency and excellence, and showing that the best is Self-Enquiry.

Reproduced from
The Collected Works of Ramana Maharshi

श्री रमण महर्षीकृतम् उपदेशसारम्
English Translation and Notes by B. V. Narasimhaswami

कर्तुराज्ञया प्राप्यते फलम् ।
कर्म किं परं कर्म तज्जडम् ॥ १ ॥

Karma must ever yield its proper fruit,
For thus it is ordained by God, Himself,
Supreme Creator. Then is Karma God?
No, for it is itself insentient.

कृतिमहोदधौ पतनकारणम् ।
फलमशाश्वतं गतिनिरोधकम् ॥ २ ॥

Of Karma the results must pass away,
Yet it leaves seeds which in their turn will sprout

And throw the actor back into the flood
Of Karma's ocean. Karma cannot save.

ईश्वरार्पितं नेच्छया कृतम् ।
चित्तशोधकं मुक्तिसाधकम् ॥ ३ ॥

But acts performed without attachment's urge
And solely for the service of the Lord
Will cleanse the mind and indicate the way
Which leads at length unto the final goal.

कायवाङ्मनः कार्यमुत्तमम् ।
पूजनं जपश्चिन्तनं क्रमात् ॥ ४ ॥

Worship, reciting of God's Holy Name,
And meditation, mainly are performed
By body, voice and mind, and they excel
Each other in the order here set down.

जगत ईशधी युक्तसेवनम् ।
अष्टमूर्तिभृद्देवपूजनम् ॥ ५ ॥

If we but recognise this Universe
Of eightfold form as form of God, Himself,
And serve in adoration all the world.
This is of God most excellent worship.

उत्तमस्तवादुच्चमन्दतः ।
चित्तजं जपध्यानमुत्तमम् ॥ ६ ॥

Constant repeating of the Holy Name
Is more than praise, at length the voice will sink
To silent repetition in the Heart,
And in this way is meditation learnt.

आज्यधारया स्रोतसा समम् ।
सरलचिन्तनं विरलतः परम् ॥ ७ ॥

Better than meditation that recurs
In broken fits and starts is that which is
A steady ceaseless flow, like to the course
Of falling oil or a perennial stream.

भेदभावनात् सोऽहमित्यसौ ।
भावनाऽभिदा पावनी मता ॥ ८ ॥

Worship of God as in no way distinct
From him who worships, or in other words
Thinking that .He is I., is better far
Than any other kind of worshipping.

भावशून्यसद्भावसुस्थितिः ।
भावनाबलाद्भक्तिरुत्तमा ॥ ९ ॥

To rest in the Real Being, that transcends
Our every thought, by reason of the strength
Of our devotion to some thing conceived;
This of supreme devotion is the truth.

हृत्स्थले मनः स्वस्थता क्रिया ।
भक्तियोगबोधाश्च निश्चितम् ॥ १० ॥

To be absorbed again into one's Source (Heart)
Is Karma, Bhakti, Yoga, Jnanam, all
These things in truth. Or put in other words
Good works, Devotion, Union, Gnosis, too.

वायुरोधनाल्लीयते मनः ।
जालपक्षिवद्रोधसाधनम् ॥ ११ ॥

As by the fowler birds are caught in nets
So by the holding of the breath within
The mind can be restrained. This a device
That will effect absorption of the mind.

चित्तवायवश्चित्क्रियायुताः ।
शाखयोर्द्वयी शक्तिमूलका ॥ १२ ॥

For mind and life expressed in thought and act,
That is with thought and action as their function,
Diverge and branch like two boughs of a tree,
But both of them spring from one single stem.

लयविनाशने उभयरोधने ।
लयगतं पुनर्भवति नो मृतम् ॥ १३ ॥

Suppression of the mind in two ways comes,
Absorption and extinction; mind absorbed

Will live again, but mind which is destroyed
Will never more revive, for it is dead.

प्राणबन्धनाल्लीनमानसम् ।
एकचिन्तनाच्चाशमेत्यदः ॥ १४ ॥

When, by the means of restraint of the breath,
The mind has been controlled, then make it flow
Along a single current, that achieved
Its form will then entirely disappear.

नष्टमानसोत्कृष्टयोगिनः ।
कृत्यमस्ति किं स्वस्थितिं यतः ॥ १५ ॥

For the Great Sage for whom all form of mind
Has disappeared and who is ever one
With the Reality, there is no Karma more,
For He, indeed, the True Self has become.

दृश्यवारितं चित्तमात्मनः ।
चित्त्वदर्शनं तत्त्वदर्शनम् ॥ १६ ॥

When mind has given the sense-objects up
Which are external and has drawn within,
And has perceived its own refulgent form,
Then verily alone True Gnosis is.

मानसं तु किं मार्गणे कृते ।
नैव मानसं मार्ग आर्जवात् ॥ १७ ॥

When pondering with constant vigilance
Upon the actual nature of the mind
One finds that there is no such thing as mind;
This, of a truth, is the straight course for all.

वृत्तयस्त्वहं वृत्तिमाश्रिताः ।
वृत्तयो मनो विद्ध्यहं मनः ॥ १८ ॥

The mind is nothing but a lot of thoughts,
Of all these many thoughts 'tis the thought 'I'
That is the root. So we can see by that
The mind in truth is only the thought 'I'.

अहमयं कुतो भवति चिन्वतः ।
अयि पतत्यहं निजविचारणम् ॥ १९ ॥

Whence, therefore, does this 'I-thought' have its birth?
With vigilant and ever active mind
Seek this, and crestfallen the 'I' becomes.
The search, itself, the quest of Wisdom is.

अहमि नाशभाज्यहमहंतया ।
स्फुरति हृत्स्वयं परमपूर्णसत् ॥ २० ॥

This search pursued till 'I' has disappeared
There now vibrates the 'I-I' all alone,
The quest is finished, there's no more to seek.
For this is really the Infinite Self.

इदमहं पदाऽभिव्यमन्वहम् ।
अहमिलीनकेऽप्यलयसत्तया ॥ २१ ॥

This is eternally the true import
Of the term 'I'. For in the deepest sleep
We do not cease to be. We still exist
Even though here there is no sense of 'I'.

विग्रहेन्द्रियप्राणधीतमः ।
नाहमेकसत्तज्जडं ह्यसत् ॥ २२ ॥

As I am pure Existence, I am not
The body nor the senses, mind nor life,
Nor even ignorance, for all these things
Are quite insentient and so unreal.

सत्त्वभासिका चित्कवेतरा ।
सत्तया हि चिच्चित्तया ह्यहम् ॥ २३ ॥

As there is not a second consciousness
To know Existence, it must follow that
Existence is itself that consciousness;
So I myself am that same consciousness.

ईशजीवयोर्वेषधीभिदा ।
सत्त्वभावतो वस्तु केवलम् ॥ २४ ॥

In their real nature as Existence both
Creatures and the Creator are the same,
The Unique Principle. In attributes

And knowledge only is a difference found.

वेषहानतः स्वात्मदर्शनम् ।
ईशदर्शनं स्वात्मरूपतः ॥ २५ ॥

Realization of the Self alone,
Eliminating all its attributes;
Is God-Realization of a truth,
As it is He that shines forth as the Self.

आत्मसंस्थितिः स्वात्मदर्शनम् ।
आत्मनिर्द्वयादात्मनिष्ठता ॥ २६ ॥

To be the Self that is to know the Self,
As there is no duality in Self.
This is Thanmaya-Nistha, or the state
Of absolutely being That in truth.

ज्ञानवर्जिताऽज्ञानहीनचित् ।
ज्ञानमस्ति किं ज्ञातुमन्तरम् ॥ २७ ॥

That knowledge is true knowledge which transcends
Knowledge and ignorance both equally.
And this alone is truth. For there is no
Subject or object there that can be known.

किं स्वरूपमित्यात्मदर्शने ।
अव्ययाऽभवाऽऽपूर्णचित्सुखम् ॥ २८ ॥

If one can only realize at Heart
What one's true nature is, one then will find
That 'tis Infinite Wisdom, Truth and Bliss,
Without beginning and without an end.

बन्धमुक्त्यतीतं परं सुखम् ।
विन्दतीह जीवस्तु दैविकः ॥ २९ ॥

Remaining in this state of Supreme Bliss,
Devoid of bondage and of freedom too,
Is found to be a state in which one is
Rapt in perpetual service of the Lord.

अहमपेतकं निजविभानकम् ।
महदिदंतपो रमनवागियम् ॥ ३० ॥

By ardent quest and shedding ego's veil
Realize the Self, the One that's ego-less,
And function thus; the sole right penance this.
So teaches Bhagavan Sri Ramana,
Who is the SELF of everything that is.

॥ इति रमणमहर्षिकृतम् उपदेशसारम् संपूर्णम् ॥

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॥ उपदेशसारम् ॥

कर्तुराज्ञया प्राप्यते फलम् ।
कर्म किं परं कर्म तज्जडम् ॥ १ ॥


कृतिमहोदधौ पतनकारणम् ।
फलमशाश्वतं गतिनिरोधकम् ॥ २ ॥


ईश्वरार्पितं नेच्छया कृतम् ।
चित्तशोधकं मुक्तिसाधकम् ॥ ३ ॥

कायवाङ्मनः कार्यमुत्तमम् ।
पूजनं जपश्चिन्तनं क्रमात् ॥ ४ ॥
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उत्तमस्तवादुच्चमन्दतः ।
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आज्यधारया स्रोतसा समम् ।
सरलचिन्तनं विरलतः परम् ॥ ७ ॥
भेदभावनात् सोऽहमित्यसौ ।
भावनाऽभिदा पावनी मता ॥ ८ ॥
भावशून्यसद्भावसुस्थितिः ।
भावनाबलाद्भक्तिरुत्तमा ॥ ९ ॥
हृत्स्थले मनः स्वस्थता क्रिया ।
भक्तियोगबोधाश्च निश्चितम् ॥ १० ॥
वायुरोधनाल्लीयते मनः ।
जालपक्षिवद्रोधसाधनम् ॥ ११ ॥
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इदमहं पदाऽभिव्यमन्वहम् ।
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॥ इति रमणमहर्षीकृतम् उपदेशसारम् संपूर्णम् ॥

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