

God is in our land



A U T H O R



PUTLI TRUST, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India.

God is in our land

Other literary works of	the author and their pivot points
1. Siva Gnana Bodham - Sasthra This is an interpretation of a Saiva Sasthra (Sasthra - scripture based on wisdom), Siva Gnana Bodham.	from the Indian philosophy, in simple terms. Soothra means equations.
2. Siva Puranam - Sthothra This is an interpretation of a Saiva Sthothra (Sthothra – Devotional scripture), Siva Puranam.	7. Layman's notches - Patra This work is about what a layman can understand and work on philosophy, Indian philosophy to be more precise. It also talks about some social and political issues.
3. A bon voyage - Matra This work is a testing scale of the divinity that exists within a layman (and within everyone). Matra means 'a testing standard'.	8. Journey of life - Yatra Yatra means the journey with a destination point. Our life should also be a Yatra – a journey towards a specific destination. When we come across the milestones of right understanding, we can be sure that we are on the right way. This work deals about such right understandings of life.
4. Glimpses of Light - Netra This work emerged from the views of spiritual eye or perceptions. Netra means eye.	9. Moral Tablet - Mithra This is just like a friend – a true friend, giving valuable and simple advice or morals which would fit all humans for all times.
5. Thus Spake India - Hothra Hothra means a religious ritual done before the fire. This work is a spirited religious ritual done before the fire of Unbeaten Truth.	10. On the way - Gothra This is the author's autobiography. It will be in accordance with the social and religious backgrounds of India. Still, the lessons that appear in this work are common to all.
6. India - Soothra This work holds some intricate explanations and spiritual equations	

Author's preface:

Bow to the Divine Mother! Bow to the Beloved Master!

Let me introduce myself. I am from Tamil Nadu, India. I am not a writer basically. But as a momentary writer, I was made to touch the basics, i.e. spirituality. Let me come to the point of this book.

This work is written, as per God's will, to remind everyone's Godliness, to point out the goal of religion, to highlight culture's noble role and to show up India's individuality that encompasses all of these.

The objective of this book is simple. The ways that lead to the objective are also simple. But the effect is precious and permanent.

The problem is, we people always go for complexities to gain some petty and temporary benefits. There is a story: Once, a sage met a spiritual master and proudly told him that he spent so many years in penance to attain some unique powers. The master enquired the sage about the special powers he attained. The sage gave a live demonstration. He walked into a nearby stream and just

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walked on it. He went to the other side and came back, all the way walking on the water. The sage asked the master, ‘did you see that?’. The master took pity on him. The master replied: “Oh, Is that what you gained for your years long penance? It can be done by anyone in just five minuits with the help of a boatman.” We too are doing the same thing in our life. We are spending our valuable time and efforts for gaining some temporary and petty pleasures.

This book has the notion of reminding our simple goals in life. Though it was written in 2001 itself, it took a long time to come out to the public. My mother used to say, ‘Don’t be in a hurry to deliver your message. You should wait for the right time, right place and right audience.’ I think all these accrued now. God set the mission, set the people and set the stage to perform. My mother said: “The dissemination doesn’t always need to happen before a huge crowd. Bagawat Gita is said to only one attentive person - Arjuna. Now, the Gita has gone to all corners of the world.” I see all those who read this book as ‘Arjunas’. It doesn’t mean that I am the master. I am also a Arjuna – one among you. We all have one common Master – God. Those who are present here too have your roles in spreading the message of this book. God will guide each one of us in His own way.

This is the right time to quote the following words of my Master Sri Paramahansa Yogananda:

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“Each human being is unique; no two can be exactly the same. Think of yourself in this way: ‘My personality is the gift of God. What I am, no one else is. I shall be very proud of my divine individuality. I shall improve myself and don a personality of goodness.’ If you play your part well, you are just as good as the soul who plays the part of a king or a queen. And so long as you play your role well, you will be attractive and loved by all. Your part well-played is your passport to God.”

Thiruchittrambalam

(Salutations to the lotus feet of the Supreme Indweller)

Publisher's Note:

He is a young writer. Right from his childhood he is after true spirituality and a serene social structure. He had read many books on this and observed the truth as follows: 'The Truth is the same for everyone; it's the same in everyone. But, the distance we travel mentally from it varies from person to person. That's why, there prevail thousands of revelations about the Truth. When the distance of the mind reduces and completely nullified, we realize that we are not distinct from the Truth'. He says: 'Confusions are not created by the doctrines; they are created by those who wrongly understood the doctrines.' He supports true secularism. He was inspired by the teachings of Sri Paramahansa Yogananda and took initiation from his Master's Yogoda Satsanga Society (YSS) of India.

Though he had penned more than ten books, the one which he wants to promote and to get translated in other languages is 'God is in our land'. The word 'land' in the title, doesn't refer to any geographical

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region; it refers to the intuitive inner space of each and every being. Swami Amaranada Giri of YSS held this book on his laps in a YSS meeting held at Solan, Himachal Pradesh on 19th September 2017, during centenary celebrations of YSS. The author considers this event as the blessings of his Master and as the highest recognition that this book could ever get on this earth.

He himself had translated this book into his mother tongue Tamil. This book got released in the World Tamil Conference held at Cambodia in the year 2018. Later, he got this work translated into other languages like Chinese, Spanish, French, etc.

He also has a Trust organisation by name PUTLI to spread the work ‘God is in our land’. He expands the Trust name as follows: ‘P’ stands for Purity; ‘U’ stands for Uniformity; ‘T’ stands for Truthfulness; ‘L’ stands for Love; ‘I’ stands for the realization of the true ‘I’.

He says: ‘When **P**urity is established in mind, it results in **U**niformity of thoughts, words and actions. This harmony is known as **T**ruthfulness. When it is felt and expressed spontaneously, we call it **L**ove. This love (which is based on Purity, Uniformity and Truthfulness) is the representation of the omnipresent ‘**I**’, which is God.

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He had his Masters in Business Administration. He is a family man; a simple being. He wants to see a 'scams and abuses free' nation filled with unity, unbroken culture and unexploited nature; he wants to see the above throughout the world. He wishes that India should act as a role model to the world in preserving and enjoying the world peace. By practicing one's own religion truly and correctly, one achieves purification of mind and thus realizes the brotherhood of all souls despite linguistic, sectarian and religious differences. He strongly believes that through this common sense of brotherhood and love, one can attain unwavering peace in the self and also can encourage the universal peace. His books are written only on this context in various dimensions and depths, over a period of two decades. The condensed version of common morals which he calls 'the moral tablet', tries to support the universal peace through the attainment of individuals' peace. He has a web site (<http://putli.live>) to spread the message 'God is in our land' and the moral tablet in many languages.

– The Publishers

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Thiruvannamalai

(Jan 12, 2001 - Jan 15, 2001):

I had a strong urge to visit Thiruvannamalai this year. I had just recovered from a terrible viral fever and some mental setbacks.

I had the *Darshan* (Seeing the Deity in temple) in the late hours of 12th. The next day morning I went to Baghavan Ramanashram. Baghavan Ramana was a great soul who neared God through his logical and strenuous constant meditative queries on self. Here we can see lots of foreigners, the true seekers of the Truth from all corners of the world. Then I started to walk around the mountain. It is called *Giri Valam*. It comes around 14 km. and takes about 5 hours to complete one circle. The next day was *Pongal* - the festival thanking the sun. In the *pongal* day, I had some trekking experience. On the way to the top, I had *chakkarai pongal* (sugar gee rice - the item of the day) from a young saint and a group of people who celebrated *pongal* in the mountain. The saint advised me to stay for the next day. He said that there is going to be an important festival the next day. The special feature is that those who attend this festival are said to be relieved from the wheel of birth and death cycle. Most of the pilgrims are brought to this place by intuition or by order. A few of them make this place

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their permanent abode. To name a few of the recent times- Bagawan Ramana, Seshadri Swamigal and Yogi Ramsurath Kumar. Many miracles happen here to remind us of an Eternal Superior Being.

This particular mountain is said to be mystical. This mountain is proved to be older (over 200 crores years) than the Great Himalayas and is having many undisclosed mysteries. In fact a matter was raised in the Indian Science Council held at Delhi in January, 1949 to the effect that Thiruvannamalai is the oldest mountain in the world. It has been found that this mountain was a burning fire once upon a time.

And the temple here is representing the fire element of the universe. Similarly we have other ecological or environmental temples for the other four major elements of the nature namely Space, Air, Water and Earth. This is the belief of the Hindus - rather the belief of the world, since all people all over the world come here and worship the mountain and the temple. On a special occasion in the month of *Karthigai*, a huge fire is set ablaze on the mountain top. It is one of the most famous festivals here in which lakhs of people from all over the nation gather. As per the saint's advice I extended my stay for one more day, I decided to spend my time inside the temple. This time the crowd was more than it was in the previous days. I slept till 3 am under the sky. The auspicious special prayers started in the early morning around 3 am and continued till 8 am. Only those who are present can feel it. It was beyond words. Though the crowd was heavy, everyone liked everyone's presence. It is the day in which *Swamy* with *Ambal* and His

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devotee *Sundhara* walk through the streets of Thiruvannamalai. The Ecstasy in the faces of the dancing idols (indeed they danced as those who carried them danced and it is a majestic dance!), the incomparable costumes, the drums, the trumpet, the *Brahma thalam* (a kind of cymbal -big metal plates that give - 'ching.. ching' sound) all kept everyone in ecstasy. Then, around 9 am, I came out and started my return travel. I had a real break. I had my breakfast in a very small tea stall - it was a hut actually. There I saw a wonderful picture of waterfalls on one side of its wall with the following words:

"Spread the news that God is in our land".

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- A groundwork

This kept ringing till I reached my home and even after that. "Spread the news that God is in our land". It seemed it was meant for me - the enthusiastic special occasion followed by the waterfalls message prompted me to take more meaning to the words. It looked important to me. But I was totally blank. I am not an enlightened person. I am an ordinary man. How am I going to do this? Why should I do this? I hadn't known how to proceed with. My health condition and confused state of mind prevented me to put any step further. It was a check mate, I couldn't move any side! I was forced to sit in home. Then I realised that I could do nothing without giving an answer to this voice. It started ringing again. Though I hadn't had any infrastructure, I let this go on.

It will not be right, if I say I don't know anything about God. Everyone, including those who say 'there is no God' has some idea or experience on God - positively or otherwise. So, I decided to give a whole-hearted try. Here, I am speaking about it with the help of our scriptures, spiritual masters and the confidence given in Thiruvannamalai.

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Scriptures say that God is Omnipresent. God is not constrained to any geographical region. If someone says that God resides in only a specific region, it can't be true. Here it is opt to quote a phrase from Isha Upanishad. **“The entire universe belongs to God: He lives in every smallest bit of it.”** So, the term ‘our land’ doesn’t refer to any single nation. It refers to the whole creation.

Still, as per history, India holds an important place in the realm of spirituality. What so special here?

Terms like God and salvation are highly personal. "For those who believe, there is no need for an explanation. For those who do not believe, there is no explanation".

I planned to visit some select spiritual places in India. I thought I could do this through some tour packages offered in the tourism industry.

I once again went to Thiruvannamalai with known persons on 20th February. We visited many places and stayed inside the temple premises for the night of *Shiva Rathri*. This time, I had a lesson from a Tamil poem painted inside the temple premises. It said : "Your heart itself is the temple. When you win over all the culprit senses, you can see God over there." It implies that God resides in everyone. Everyone is the land of God!

I looked confident as I was given something to start with!

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After a few days, in my home, I went upstairs and laid down in the open terrace and was looking at the sky.

In the evening times, when I am free, I use to do this. I would look at the blue sky and watch it as it gets darker. A star would raise its head from the upper west side. Right on the top, we have one more star. Then I bend my head back to check the third one. It would look like a calm ocean having distant ships here and there lighting for the night. The breeze adds joy. What is God? What is our land? I carefully avoided the definitions from the surface.

Constancy. No ups and downs. No wavering. Eternity. All that is eternal is said to be God or having Godly qualities. This is the layman's definition for God. God means deathless, endless. I am not referring materials here. Because no material is eternal including the sun and the stars. As per the scientific calculations, they all are going to vanish some day or vanished already. The eternity stands out of geographical and time boundaries. So, 'our land' becomes an intuitive concept which may include everything. It no more refers to a particular geographical region in our message. If it does, the message becomes biased. Now, we got 'God' and 'our land'. The Eternity within ourselves. This Eternity is known as Sathya (The Truth -The Ever Existing).

When we talk about eternity, it can not be associated with any other quality or feeling of an immature human - they tend to change, hence cannot be viewed along with the all inclusive but still untouched Eternity. The eternity itself is the quality - the eternity

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that remained, remains and continues to remain no matter what. I confirmed this quality of God from scriptures. The other qualities of God, as given in the scriptures are: Blissful, Embodiment of Love and Wisdom, One, Pure, Stable, Beyond duality, Beyond three *Gunas* (three mental traits: Sathva-virtuous, interiorized, Rajas-adventurous, more concerns about the society and Thamas- materialistic, instinctual).

Scriptures also say that God is ever new. Though, He is constant, changeless – He is ever new. He is ever new in the sense, He is unbound by the pinnacles of time. He is above time, space and substance. He is all-inclusive and He permeates in all particles of His creation. He is one and the same to every being. Call Him in whatever name you like – He is one and the same, eternal.

This definition made me cancel my travel plans. I decided to travel inside rather outside to find means for spreading the message 'God is in our land'. But one thing I must tell you. Of course, it was only after visiting a sacred place, I got a message to ponder. This land - India - is so special because, here, the Constancy or God is felt as a familiar, simple Being - not as an unknown, complicated concept, far above the sky. For the majority, God is a part of life. The seeking of God has been the hereditary quality of India. India has at least one truly God realized being at any point of time. Even the people, who are not aware of this, are influenced by this nation's characteristic. This is the special thing about India. That's why Yoganandaji closed his physical eyes in United States with the following words: "Where

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the Ganga...Himalayan caves and the men dream God,
I am hallowed, my body touched that sod."

God in scriptures

The poem we saw inside the temple premises was scripted by Thirumoolar, who is one of 18 *Sidhars*. *Sidhars* are those who had acquired *Sidhis*. The one who had conquered his body bound consciousness is said to have attained *Sidhi*. Such persons also have powers like walking on water, floating in the air, magnifying oneself to any size, reducing oneself to nothing. But they used their powers to awaken the people in divine consciousness. They were very simple and didn't care about food, shelter, dress and even about their names! *Sidhars* are said to have the power to manifest themselves in any form anywhere. They rendered poems with deeper mystical meaning that hardly a few can understand. All these poems confirm that God is in every one of us.

They encourage us to feel Him inside, to work hard to find Him inside.

There is a story. A spiritual master was selecting a few of his students for advanced training on self realisation. Those days, students were selected by the masters in their own way and only the successful students were promoted to the next level. He called two students. He gave each one a mango and asked them to go and eat the mangos in some secret place without anyone's knowledge. The first one came out of

the ashram and found a ditch over a corner. He jumped down into it and looked around. After he was convinced that no one was seeing him, he finished the mango in a minute. Then he triumphantly climbed up and approached the master and said, "Guru Dev, I ate the mango in a place where no one could notice me." The master smiled at him and said nothing. The other one came out of the ashram and looked for a solitude place. He couldn't. He hurried to the inner jungle. He sat under a tree and tried to believe that no one was there. But he was not sure. The tree and the other creatures were watching him any way. He decided to go further. After sometime, he reached a place where there were no trees. He couldn't find even a trace of any living being there. He took the mango near to his mouth. "Stop! Someone is watching you!," told a voice inside. He looked up. The sky and the sun were smiling at him. He hid the mango and got into the most interior place of the forest. There he settled down in a cave. It was full of darkness; he couldn't see even his own body. He took out the mango and prepared himself for the first bite. "Hey, I am here, can't you listen to me?" He could no longer hope to find a place where no one was present. He ran back to his master and fell at his feet. "Master, I tried to find a place where no one could notice me. But I couldn't. Where ever I go, I feel that I am constantly being followed by someone who is very close to me." The master smiled at this student and said, "You are selected." The one who has faith in God feels that he is constantly being watched by the Omnipresent. For him, He is everywhere.

Scriptures say:

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The physical cosmos is made up of five basic elements. The Space, Fire, Air, Water and Earth. The human physical body is also made up of the same five elements: Space (emptiness), fire (the heat of the body), air (air in the body), water (blood and other glands) and earth (flesh and bones). These elements along with other subtle parts are governed by the thought force. All these are activated by the Spirit. It is this Spirit that operates these elements inside and outside. It is only because of this Spirit, we feel the body and the world. If it is not there, there is no body, no world either. The Spirit is said to be omnipresent, eternal, and constant, without a name and form. Vedas say that this Spirit is God. This Spirit is ever conscious in its blissful and peaceful state. Our ultimate goal is to feel this Spirit. Till we find this we are said to be in the hazardous birth and death cycle experiencing births and deaths based on our past performance. Since it is the same Spirit that governs you and me, I could feel the pain in you and could smile when you are happy. If it be the other way, it means I am building walls around myself, it means I am going away from God. In this way, the outside world and the inner world are linked.

That's why Upanishads say "The Hindu suffers when the lives around him suffer. (*Himsaayam Thooyathe Yasa: Sa: Hindhuri Thyabitheeyathe*)" According to *Advaitists*, the *Atma* (Soul) and *Paramatma* (God) are one and the same. *Atma* assumes all the 'features' that *Paramatma* possesses. The process of realising this is the very purpose of human life. "The *Atma* is Effulgent, as the Sun is, by its very nature. People say that they 'see' the *Atma* or Its Effulgence. But, there is

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no seeing It. Since It has no second, nothing is outside It. It is neither seen nor can It see. It has no organs of sight or smell; nor has it any part, which when coordinated can perform any function". This lesson is given in Brihadaaranyakopanishad.

We could see many people who are unaware of *vedhic* and other philosophical terms, but still love everyone with a clean open heart. According to scriptures, they are much closer to the Eternal Peace than those who know everything in the scriptures by lips and still lack humility and purity. Knowledge without humility builds the iron wall of ego - the worst enemy in the path to God.

We have the undisturbed peace within ourselves which is beyond any ups and downs. As the wars, pollution and violence disturb the peace of the universe, our materialistic ego, lust and envy kill the inner peace. The religious associations are working for both – for external peace and inner peace. Any social reform, any development that does not focus on both, will fail to serve its purpose in full. Man's life is unstable. One cannot always be happy or sad. Upanishads say that Man's ultimate goal is to escape from all dualities and to reach the state of eternal peace/joy. Till we find the temple of peace within ourselves - within our land, we have to keep going in the journey - life after life.

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After a few years, I saw the message again along with the name of the author of this phrase. Later I got the full rhyme from the web, as follows.

“And they’ll know we are Christians by our love, by
our love,

Yes, they’ll know we are Christians by our love.

We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in
hand,

We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in
hand,

And together we’ll spread the news that God is in our
land.”

- Peter Scholtes

When Peter Scholtes invited his society to spread the news that ‘God is in our land’, he actually wanted to implant love and devotion among the people. He didn’t try to acknowledge the presence of any specific personality as God. He also tries to define an ideal Christian. The Christian is the one who is full of love in heart.

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After having glanced the verses, the next day, I went to Sri Kabaaleeswarar temple in Chennai as per my mother's order and heard this loud chanting (in Tamil) there. "Hail to the Lord of the South Land – Hail to the Lord of all lands"

Peter Scholtes said it in the 20th century. Here in the Indian peninsula, the Tamil Saivite seer Maanikka Vaasagar said something similar to that in the third century. He said authentically that God is in the land of south.

A very little about Maanikka Vaasagar (285 AD – 317 AD): His devotional hymns, collectively known as Thiruvasagam, are the reflection of the ultimate surrender. The way he had said 'good bye' to this world was a mystery. He disappeared in the temple of Chidhambaram. We have some other devotees in the history of India who dissolved their physical bodies this way – in the mystical way.

Back to the phrase. This has got a deeper meaning. The ordinary meaning is: Shiva, the Lord resides in the land of South. Lord Shiva stands as the center of devotion in the land of South. His miracles in the land of South have been explained in *Thiruvilayadal Puranam*. The Shiva temples here are countless and time immemorial with magnanimous sculptures and rituals strongly depicting the Grace, Supremacy and Majesty of God and stand till today. Those who come here with devotion feel the presence of Lord. Those who felt it said, 'Hail to Lord Shiva of the land of south'. They also know that the Lord can not be destined to a particular locality and

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characteristic. They said next, ‘Hail to the Lord of all lands’. Those who are blessed with devotion on Lord see Him everywhere – in the south, north, east, west and all around. This is the usual meaning that everyone derives from the stanza.

There is another mystical meaning also. The Mooladhara chakra in the coccygeal center of the human astral body is said to be the south pole. The north pole being the Agna chakra, is in the forehead. The Mooladhara chakra is said to be the residing place of each one’s divine energy. By spiritual aspirations it rises up to the forehead chakra (known as ‘Third eye’) through Sushumna Naadi (the central astral nerve in spine with Eda and Pingala astral nerves to its either side) and is identified as Kundalini. Only the name differs across the astral centers (and of course across religions). The divine energy is the same. The starting place of everyone’s Godliness is the Mooladhar – ‘the land of South’. Still, the divinity is spread everywhere across one’s being. A very important clarification here: We don’t ‘contain’ this divinity. We are just ‘connected’ to this omnipresent divinity – this way. So it has been said as ‘Hail to the Lord of the South Land – Hail to the Lord of all lands’. The divine energy rests in the ‘south’ land of everyone equally– to the theists and atheists and to all classes of people. For many it remains dormant, for a few it is awake, for a very few it is on its way to the ‘north’. For everyone, despite all differences, the divine energy is present in the ‘south’ i.e Mooladhara. That’s why it has been said emphatically ‘Hail to the Lord of South Land’.

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In Mooladhara, God is known as Pasu Pathy, meaning Lord of animals. In the Agnya (between eyebrows) as Siva Linga (as column of Light) and in Sahasrara (the crown of head) as Adianadhi – The Infinite. It is the same Energy that assumes various names and forms according to one's conscious level as all are not same in the levels of realization. It is the same air that derives various names as tornado, hurricane and breeze based on its form and speed.

The message 'God is in our land' literally denotes the Godliness that resides in each one of us. The Maha mantra '**Aham Brahmasmi - Self is the Infinite Reality**' (Brahadaranyaka Upanishad) validates this message. Those who feel God inside are the personifications of God Himself. Such beings always dwell in some part of this nation all through the times.

God in human being

“The Self is active in eyes in waking state (*Jakrat*). It is active in throat in dream state (*Swapna*). It is active in heart during deep sleep state (*Sushubthi*). It is active in the top of the skull during the state of dormant Samadhi (*Thuriya*).”
-Brahmopanishad

The all pervading Spirit is identified as soul or Self in the human being. So, the one who had known the Self is said to have known the all pervading Spirit i.e God as well. The foregoing Upanishad quote explains how God reveals Himself in a human being in his various conscious levels.

Though the quote seems to be the one meant for the path of wisdom, it holds good for the path of devotion also. These conscious levels are common to all.

Light, sound, air, water and substance fill this physical cosmos. God who is the root to everything is the root to this physical cosmos as well. In creation, light is the source to everything. It is from light that sound and all other elements have emerged. God is worshipped in the form of light. There is no temple worship without light element. There is no ritual in the absence of a light source. In human body, it is the eye that stands as the root and instrument of the light. Eye tries to demonstrate the magnitude and all pervasiveness of God. In a second, it sees stars which are billions of

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miles away. In the next second, it sees some other object which is a foot away to its physical presence. There is no organ in the body which is as fast and accurate as the eye. (Mind is even faster, but it is not a matter of substance)

In waking state, the living being gets the feeling of being, primarily through the application of eyes. That is why, the Self or divinity is said to express itself through eyes in waking state. It doesn't mean that Divinity is not expressed in blinds or through any other organs. Those who are sincere would feel Divinity in one way or the other.

There is a yoga by name Thiruvadi Deekshai, which uses the element of light (eyes) to realise the Self. There are other types of Yoga as well, by application of which one can attain realization. There is Surat Shabdh Yoga, that tries to feel the divinity through sound vibrations. There is Kriya Yoga which connects ordinary consciousness with divine consciousness through practicing subtle pranic (related to air) movements. There are meditation practices (related to Bindu Visarga chakra) which attain the supreme consciousness through controlling and directing astral glands known as nectar (related to water element). There is Hata yoga, which uses this gross body, i.e substance, to prepare the inner and outer bodies so that divinity can be felt within.

These yogic practices are very subtle and are inter-related with each other. Generally speaking, these methods are related to the path of wisdom.

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In the path of devotion also, the elements of light (arathi and jyothi darshanam as in Thiruvannamalai Jyothi), sound (japam), water (thirthadanam as in Kumbmela) and substance (Archavatara moortham - idols) are used. So, all the inner organs and major elements of the nature are used in spiritual practices to get clear mind. They help the *sadhaka* to go beyond the consciousness of matter and to feel the peaceful and blissful state of the Self i.e Spirit. The Self or God is said to be different from the matter. Then, how can matter help in spirituality?

The Self or God is not unrelated to the physical substance. The matter is just one of the expressions (probably the bottom-most) of Self or God. God or Self is all inclusive. Nothing remains away to It. The difference lies only in the vision of the Jeevas. Prahladha was able to see God in every atom of the universe, where as his father saw only gross materials everywhere. So, on Prahladha's plea, God emerged out of a pillar. This purana explains that God is inherent in every particle of the universe. The history also holds such incidents depicting the all inclusiveness or all pervasiveness of God.

When the aspirant utilizes the inner elements (as in the path of wisdom) and the five elements of the cosmos (as in the path of devotion) with the goal of tasting the Truth, Self/God realization transpires. The goal of these two paths is the same; it is realization of the Truth. When the goal and the subsequent actions are fixed for the Truth, senses stay under control; the nature becomes friendly and obliging; Self or God realization is tasted.

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Let it be anything - waking state, dreaming state, deep sleeping state or dormant Samadhi – it is the mind instrument that experiences the Self or God in a subtle manner.

We can ‘fine tune’ or ‘control’ the mind in the waking state through various spiritual practices (like Raja yoga, Gnana yoga, Karma yoga and Bakthi yoga). Without getting the mind fine-tuned, it’s hard to get higher spiritual experiences in any state of consciousness.

The diluted mind purifies itself through its own efforts (like removing the thorn through another thorn) and loses its identification as an instrument; it becomes one with its source, the Self or God. Though it is said in a single sentence, it might take several thousand lives for an ordinary being to get through in this process.

Those who got their mind purified and fine-tuned will not see any difference between themselves and the vast divinity that is spread out everywhere. As there is no difference between the space inside an empty vessel and the space outside it, they become one with the all encompassing God. They are not influenced or affected by the changes of consciousnesses (such as waking state, dreaming state, sleeping state and Samadhi state). Only the vessel gets affected, not the space inside it. So long as they stay inside the vessel (i.e body), they remain as Jeevan Mukthas. When the vessel is broken, they become Vidheha Mukthas.

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The Jeevan Mukthas sometimes voluntarily and directly dissolve the vessels in the natural elements. For example: Sri Ramalinga Swamigal dissolved the body in the Light. Ek Nath Maharaj immersed his physical body in the river Godhavari. Pattinathar merged his body in the soil of Thiruvottiur.

Even ordinary beings, the unrealized people, lose the physical bodies to any one of the five natural elements. The lost bodies of ordinary people are subject to stinking decay. The so called death happens rather forcibly, they aren't really prepared and are unaware of the changes and happenings in their conscious levels. They waver hither and thither till they are caught in another body (it may or may not be a human body), losing all the past memory imprints in the depths of their consciousness – all these happen without their understanding, awareness and preferences; these things happen as per the plan of *Maha Maya*, based on their past karma. They never go away from the clutches of *Maya* till they realize who they really are. This is not the case for the realized beings. They are away from the clutches of *Maya*, the Nature; they have friendly command over the *Maya*. They know where they were before – where they will be after playing their roles on earth. The realized beings are not the permanent actors on the stage of the world. They are the directors of the bewildered actors who are unaware of their roles and of their true nature; sometimes they (the realized beings) take guest roles and appear on the world stage to help the miserable Jeevas. No one could find the traces of ordinary worldly life of such Mukthas even during the times they are alive in the material bodies.

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They are all the time fixed in the consciousness of God; they are simply away from any identity that usually binds others – like with regard to the type of the body they dwell in, the gender, age, life style, etc. Such a chance of realization is possible only for humans. Human birth is such a precious thing; only here, the opportunity to feel God or Self is given.

After reading this topic for myself, I thought of removing this chapter. I thought that I was talking too much on areas in which I do not have sufficient experience. I said this to my mother. She advised me to keep this chapter as it is, saying, “You may not have the experience based wisdom; but what you had written is the truth. Don’t think that you are writing this. God wants to tell humans through you, how blessed they are for having been given the human face. Let it be, to help those for whom it is meant for.”

Temples

Here, I need to tell more about temples. It is only in temple atmosphere I got the message, the clues to the message and the purport of the message. Obviously, it made me study more on temples.

Generally, religious places vitalize one's faith and devotion in God. In addition to this, temples vitalize one's true identity - the Self or the Atman. The temples exhibit the direct link between a human and God. Temples built in accordance with Agama Sasthras, tell the truth that God is in all beings. Temples resemble the human body metabolism. The *praharas* or the outer walls of the temples point to the sheaths of the self. As per *Agama sasthra* (the scriptures for temple construction), there could be a maximum of seven *praharas* (Ref: Vaikhamsa of Vaishnava Agama). This represents the seven bodies that each one possesses – physical, etherical, mental, scientific or logical, astral, egoistical and blissful bodies. These bodies are related to the seven astral centers that every human has. For example, *Mooladhar Chakra* is related to one's physical body. The study of the seven chakras and the bodies is a different, vast subject. These chakras and bodies get in contact with the astral divinity that prevails in the temple.

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The *Raja Gopuram* or the tower at the entrance is said to be the foot of the astral divinity – the crown being the *Moolagraha* or the main place of the temple where the Atman or God resides. The towers of the temples display the plays of God. They are rich in art and beauty. The sculptures exhibit the various aspects in God's play namely creation, preservation, destruction, hiding and rendering of grace. The *kodimaram* or the wooden pole that stands before *Moolagraha* points to the astral spine of our body. The flag is raised higher through this pole on important occasions. It resembles the raising of our *kundalini* divine energy through the astral nerves across our spine. *Bali Peetam* stands before *kodimaram*. The *Bali Peetam* is the place where one sacrifices all the fruits of one's good and bad actions. It symbolically reveals the fact that such a sacrifice can happen only through the raising of one's divine energy to the top of one's spine – to the center of forehead through the mastery of mind. The Atman or God in *moolagraha* is only a witness to all these. The structure of Deity inside reveals deep philosophical meanings. Though, it is the very purpose of the temple, the Deity appears undisturbed. This reveals the fact that Self or God is neutral at all times though it is the very cause of the creation. As an exemption to this general trend, sometimes the Deity shows the proof of Its existence through exhibiting some miracles. It's nothing but the might of God.

Many temples have lesser number of outer walls. Here, only the subtler bodies are taken into account. All temples that are in accordance with *Agamas* reveal the fact that God resides in everyone as Atman. It may look complicated. But the intention of *Agamas* is to

remind all individuals of their Godliness practically through the temple structures and ceremonies. The designing of temples and the devotional activities performed personally and impersonally are to purify one's bodies through one's wisdom and devotion. The study of temple structure is again a vast subject; we have about 200 *Agamas* dealing in different types of temple structures with regard to Saivism, Vaishnavam and Saktheyam.

Some controversial activities like animal sacrifices are done in some temples. Infact, the practice of animal sacrifice is present in many religions in different proportions. *Matagh*, as it is known, is a common practice of animal sacrifice in Armenian Church. This tradition is believed to stem from pre-Christian pagan rituals. Wealthy Muslims sacrifice a large mammal during *Eid ul-Adha* (the Festival of Sacrifice), which falls during the period of *Hajj* (pilgrimage to Mecca). In Hinduism, such practices are mostly associated with either Saktheyam or with local tribal traditions. Classical Hinduism as it emerged in the medieval period de-emphasizes animal sacrifice, and even any meat processing, based on the doctrine of ahimsa (non-violence). The practice of animal sacrifice is rare and distasteful to the vast majority of modern Hindus. I too stand one with them. Other religions like Buddhism, Jainism and Sikkism that have their roots in India are totally against these animal killings.

Temples play multiple roles in addition to their spiritual realm. Temples are socio-economic-cultural centers. I am talking here only about their main role.

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How far people know about this main role is a question mark.

This is from the teachings of Swamy Sivananda Saraswathi: “The Agamas are theological treatises and practical manuals of divine worship. They include tantras, mantras and yantras. These treatises explain the external worship of God. All seventy-seven Agamas (Swamiji might be referring to the most authenticated agamas) contain teachings on (i) jnana or knowledge, (ii) yoga or concentration, (iii) kriya or action, and (iv) charya or doing. They also give elaborate details about the ontology, cosmology, liberation, devotion, meditation, philosophy of mantras, mystic diagrams, charms and spells, temple-building, image-making, domestic observances, social rules and public festivals.”

Agamas brought temple worship with the perfect blend of devotion and wisdom. They are artistic and equally scientific. Though the temple worship seemingly support the dualistic approach, it leads to the Formless One. Even the Adhvaithic seers like Sri Adhi Sankaracharya support temple worship. The highest end of devotion could be that the devotee gets merged in the Absolute. It leads to Adhvaitha. Andal Nachiyar, Thiru Gnana Sambandhar and Maanika Vaasagar tell this fact through their history. They all dissolved their bodies inside the temples they worshipped. The Forms led them to Formless. It is just not the structures and symbols that bring this realization. It is the devotion, fervor and wisdom of the devotees that bring the realization. The temples are one of the principal sources that invoke this devotion

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and wisdom. Though temple worship is said to be the preliminary teacher in spirituality; it can accompany up to liberation and even after that. That's why even the realised sages like Sri Adhi Sankaracharya, Sri Ramanujacharya, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and many Nayanmars worshipped temples till the end of their physical existence. Though the temples are designed to invoke wisdom and devotion, the devotional aspect of temples are more predominant among the common public. What I mean by devotion is devotion on God and for God. It's the intense thirst for the Truth. If one prays God for anything less, then it is a diluted devotion. The laymen have only diluted devotion, as they are caught up in the seven diluted bodies. If they worship temples or other religious places with truthfulness, then they too can purify their bodies and can get back home. This is why temples are organized. But practically speaking, most people do only customary rituals blindly that too for material reasons – they are unaware of the main motive. Less than 1% people only look for God realisation and try to worship temples in the right way.

The symbolic approach towards God realization is inevitable in all religions. There need to be a place for concentration on God. There may or may not be a stone idol inside; some have wooden cross instead; some have the pictures of revered souls or the books of the realized beings. Some may not have anything in their 'temple'. Even those who find faults with the symbols of other religions, do believe that they could feel divinity MORE in a particular place, in a particular direction, in a particular time or day and

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through the performance of particular actions (spiritual aspirations). It is nothing but symbolic worshipping.

It doesn't mean that all people can find God only in a few religious places like temples. God is everywhere. Those who do not need external help, can still worship God. But, those who see God internally shouldn't criticize those who try to seek God through external means. The fact is, almost all people depend on some sort of external means of worship in some part of their lives. Besides, these religious places are saturated with the spiritual energy of divine beings and emanate divine vibrations that touch one's inner self.

The news 'God is in our land' is meant in both ways. It can be said by an individual who sees God within. This can also be said in the land where peace, love and happiness prevail. These will prevail only when the land houses God realized beings.

The sages rooted in India have been boldly saying this to the world: "You are God. You are all inclusive. Know Yourself through Guru's Grace and your *Sadhana* (self effort). You humans are keeping the treasures of all happiness inside and are begging for petty things outside. There is nothing else to be known in any world except Self."

Though God is in 'our land' i.e. within our being, we are not able to have an easy vision of Him. The reason is our consciousness is constantly dragged towards external matters. That's why the temple poem told us to win the 'culprit senses'. If we can do that, then we too can feel God in our land. My job is to spread this news that God is in our land which actually means

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God is within our being. It is apt to quote Yoganandaji's saying here:

"Self Realisation is the knowing - in body, mind and soul - that we are with the omnipresence of God; that we do not have to pray that it come to us, that we are not merely near it at all times, but that God's omnipresence is our omnipresence; that we are just as much a part of Him now as we ever will be. All we have to do is improve our knowing."

Purpose of religions

Ramakrishna Paramahansa says a story for those who try to give a definition for God. Four blinds tried to define the structure of an elephant. The first one touched its leg and came to the conclusion that an elephant would look like a pillar. The second one touched its tail and said that an elephant is a rope like matter. The third one on touching its tusk derived that an elephant is a flexible rope. The fourth one touched its big belly refused the discoveries of all his friends. He said: "You fools, an elephant is a big pot".

This is the same to those who try to define God. Because God is not a matter of definition, God is a matter of perception. Though the blinds could be true, they are actually seeing only a part of the Infinity. So, it is a foolish thing to try to give a finite definition for Infinity. It's like the blind trying to define an object. We need the eyes of perception to see God. Those who found Him, would realise that they are none other than 'the very same elephant' that they were trying to define and reach. God is in our own land, just in every one of us.

The Self realisation is indeed God realisation. *Sath Guru Adhi Sankaracharya* says that the soul has the same attributes of God. There is not two, but one. God realisation can not happen without the realisation of

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the soul. If one has found the Self, it invariably means that he has found God as well.

We are very careful in the boundaries of the finite land, but fail to protect the land inside. We let the enemies -lust, ego, envy- to capture the temple of our land and fight externally. Only when we face the inner enemies with the same rage and bravery that we show to protect our material land, only then we would come to know that God is inside. While trying to drive out the inner enemies we should not ignore and hurt the boundaries of others. He is in everyone's heart. He is simply everywhere. The outer environment and inner environment both exhibit and represent God.

Swami Vivekananda says that the world and ourselves are not different from each other and those who find even a little variance between the universe and the self, suffers a hell. Go ahead. You would find Him in anyway. But don't hit any one down on your way. This is what Swami Vivekananda says.

‘Hitting one down’ means hurting one – not just in physical and mental planes, it also implies the assault on one's spiritual freedom. Don't impede others' spiritual faith.

According to Sri Adhi Sankaracharya, three things are hard to get. 1. Human birth, 2. Desire of Realisation and 3. The guidance of the *Sath Guru* (Spiritual Master who knows The Truth) to help one's realization. Those humans who had acquired the second precious thing also, that is the Desire of Realisation, may have to struggle a lot to see their

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Spiritual Master. We have a few such masters and their invaluable guidance. It is said that The *Sath Guru* is none other than God Himself. So, there can't be two Sath Gurus. One may hear the same news in different languages. The syllables may differ, the tones may differ, the structures of sentences may differ. But the message that all these try to convey is the same. The True Guru is the same for all and He is just within us in the form of our discriminating and reasoning power. He clears all the husks over one's soul and opens the eyes of love and wisdom within oneself. According to one's capacity and standard, He prescribes any of the standard paths. All the paths are here to remove the three obstacles: the influence of delusion, the influence of one's past and present actions and the wavering mind. The consciousness that the aspirants derive differs from person to person according to their depth of desire and the amount of efforts they put on God. One feels that he lives in the land of God (*Salokam*). One feels that one lives in the land of God and in His presence (*Sameebam*). Other feels that he lives in the land of God with the same features of God (*Saroopam*). Yet other feels that He is in the land of God as God Himself (*Sayujyam*). Thus, we all live in the land of God; we can say this way also, as God is in our land. How far we know Him is left to our own interest and efforts. Those who are serious, get closer to Him and win the mystery of life. Those who aren't interested, come and go as bubbles in the dark of ignorance. They too are rooted in the light; but they are far from it due to ignorance.

The Adhvaitha philosophy says that the land and God, the world and its Creator are not two different entities

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– there is no two; there is only one thing and the one thing is God. All are one and each one struggles to know this basic truth about one's own nature. We all stranded far away from our base and are looking to fill the gap.

God is in everyone. Though He is in many forms, He is One and is simply everywhere. Still, we all feel 'separated' from God. How to fill the so called 'gap' between ourselves and God? That's why we have religions! The religion establishes the missing connection between man and God. Some religions call it surrendering to God, some religions call it loving the Almighty, some religions refer it as merging with the Unmanifested Absolute. Some religions do not talk about God - the ultimate goal, but talk about the path. My religion stresses the merger with God - being and becoming God. Let me tell a little about my religion here. It has four standard paths: one for the worker - who wants to work and doesn't bother about the results, another for the emotional nature - who loves everything and is not bothered about definitions and philosophies, the third is for the philosopher and the other one is for the mystic who controls the animal and human instincts and concentrate on the divine consciousness. But the ultimate destination is the same and it is just hiding inside us or rather we are hiding ourselves from It! Who can show us our true nature? God Himself. He comes as a *Sath Guru* (the Spiritual Master who knows the Self) and helps us in knowing our true nature. The very basic requirement for a religion is that it should have at least one Self realized or God realized being besides its formation. Else, it will see the end for sure. Example, Akbar's Teen Ilahi.

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King Akbar might have wanted to bring harmony among people; but he is not a self realized being, hence his philosophies didn't survive after his life.

Any true religion will be dealing in any of the above paths. And common factors are those who had already seen, "winning the culprit senses – going beyond body and mind consciousness". This should not be taken as keeping a stagnant state. It is not physically shutting the doors of senses. One may act with all his heart and strength for whatever good reason – without body and mind consciousness. We should strive to realise that we are more than the body and mind. It can happen only when the mind is clean.

A song in Tamil starting with the words '*Manamadhu Semmayanal...*' reveals that there is no need to chant divine verses, if one's mind is purified. There is no need to lift the life force, if the mind is purified. No action is required, after the purification of mind. It has a reflexive meaning also – probably this could be the right way of interpretation. Chant divine verses till the mind is purified. Lift your life force till your mind gets purified. Indulge in selfless activities till the mind is purified. Keep trying in one way or the other and try to perfect your mind. This spiritual aspiration is known as *sadhana*. One needs to keep pouring the oil till the brim of the vessel. Once the vessel is filled and overflows, then there is no need to pour any more oil. It's enough if we check that the filled up vessel remains filled. But, the vessel will not get filled by any magic. Each one has to get his vessel filled by his own effort. All the realized men in the world had done this filling across many lives.

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The ordinary people come along with many holes in their vessels – lust, greed, indifferences and things like that. So, however hard they try to fill, their efforts ooze out through any hole and keep the vessel empty. But, if they continue with sincerity and faith, God helps them patch up their holes and stay perfect and complete.

This can be said in the other way also. Empty the vessel through your spiritual sadhana. The vessel is filled up with all rubbish things. One may try hard, still, dusts like lust and greed keep pouring into the vessel. Sincere efforts and above all God's Grace is required to remove these dusts completely. It's only through God's Grace, man could enter the kingdom of God. And God helps those who help themselves. God pulls the one who raises one's hands upwards and towards Him. Thus, the main goal of religion is to practice *sadhana* to deserve God's Grace through the achievement of pure mind, so that one could behold the light of the Truth in one's own being. This is the very purpose of life.

The purification of mind happens in different methods. One may indulge in doing actions; one may restrain from doing actions; one may pray with devotion; one may control the senses through yogic practices and meditation. The purpose is the same - clean the mind. When we have a clear mind and when we stop its focus on external matters, then happens the vision of the Self. We can not force everyone to follow a certain fixed path, as the very nature of our existence is based on freedom. We have been given freedom to choose our ways and needs. All that we have to do is to check

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that we are not taking the wrong courses of actions. I think it is apt to quote Martin Luther King's words here. "If you can't fly then run, if you can't run then walk, if you can't walk then crawl, but whatever you do, you have to keep moving forward." Moving forward – here denotes the progress in the Self realization.

The followers of religions clash with each other and say that they alone are right. Religion is of personal nature. It gives options to the individuals to do self-cleaning for their minds. Instead of wasting one's precious time in adding few numbers to the count of one's religion, one must work hard to be worthy of being in it. Mere participation in the gatherings of the most populous religion will not give one perfection; mere reading out of divine scriptures wouldn't give one salvation, unless one 'consumes' the lessons and 'comes forward' to work on what one learnt.

If one really wants to change, one has to apply the key given to him. The key i.e. religion or the path is personal. Admiring at the key or arguing over the key won't help. Through the right application of the key, one can unlock oneself and can go to new dimensions of consciousness. If he doesn't apply the key or if he damages the key with his ignorance and insincerity, then the problem is with himself – not with the key. So too, if one is not prepared to change himself, he curses the religion and keeps changing the keys. God sends everyone with the right key that suits one better. We have to work out our destiny and realization for ourselves with the appropriate keys given to us. Unless one desires for realization and is prepared to put

oneself on that sincerely, no religion can help him. Mere changing of the keys (religions) won't help one unless one remains truthful to oneself in the aspect of self or God realization. If one is not truthful to oneself – not prepared to change oneself for the better – then, mere changing of religions is of no use. If, just accepting a religion as one's own could grant one realization, then everyone there should be realized beings. But the fact is there are criminals in all religions. So, the real test is not with the religion but with the sincerity and struggle that one shows for one's realisation. Each religion has some unique features that suit some better. It may not suit all people in the same way as it suits those for whom it is meant for. All religions are here to lead us towards God/Self realization. If any religion couldn't serve this purpose, then it is not a religion at all. India has religions having versatile philosophies and proven paths for varying personalities and having the same goal of God/Self realization.

As Swami Vivekananda puts it, "Religion is realisation; not talk, nor doctrine, nor theories, however beautiful they may be. It is being and becoming, not hearing or acknowledging; it is the whole soul becoming changed into what it believes. That is religion."

How to see Him?

According to *Vedhantha*, there are two 'eyes' through which one can see God. The eye of love (*Premachakshu*) and the eye of wisdom (*Jnanachakshu*). The eye of love shows the wisdom of the Self. The eye of wisdom glows with the natural love. Love towards God and Experience of Self - these eyes are needed to see God. So, Brahmanubava Upanishad says, **'The eye of wisdom or the eye of love is needed to see Him.'**

Loving God implies loving all beings, as God indwells in all beings. Experience of Self means the experience of the truth that the same Atman or Self dwells impartially in all beings.

The path of wisdom and the path of love - both are internal. If God is within ourselves, then why should we go to temples, churches, mosques, *gurudwars*, *dharmasalas* and all other religious and spiritual centers? If something goes wrong inside, the soul nature of peace and bliss gets fogged in the mist of worries and fears which are caused by our own mistakes. At such times, we have no other go except to seek peace and purity through external means like visiting Sacred Places and Beings. These places have the power to clean our inner selves

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if we just could respond and open our heart to their effulgent fragrant shower of wisdom and love. We may not perceive the effect in the manner we expect, since the effect happens often behind the screen.

The external help is possible only to those who are awake internally. This is a stanza from Sri Lalitha Sahasranamam: "*Antharmuka samaaraathya: bahirmuka sudhurlaba*" meaning 'God is sought through internal means; the external means scarcely help'. This seems to bear a conflicting view – 'The external means render help scarcely'. For those who are spiritually blind, the external means are of no use. They wouldn't see anything externally as they don't have 'the light' inside. The Enlightened do not need the external help. Those who are illumined inside, see the same light everywhere; those who are not, do not see anything even if God stands right in front of them. That's why, we see different types of experiences and opinions with regard to the external means of worship. The 'blind' don't see anything; those who have smaller light, see accordingly; those who are illumined like the sun, see the whole thing. That's why Gandhiji said, "One sees God according to one's own light." So, we should try to develop our inner vision by all means. External worship render the 'means' to think over 'It' internally. If the aspirant doesn't transform the experience of external means of worship to inner faculties, there is no use in external worship.

A picture having the image of Thiruvannamalai and a yogi, along with two lamps placed at the bottom, appears in the front page of this book. What this picture depicts is: The Light set ablaze in the top of

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Thiruvannamalai gets real meaning in the lights seen in the yogi. One can not observe the reality of the light outside without the light inside. To see this inner light, the eye of Gnana (Wisdom) or/and the eye of Love (Prema) is/are required.

"The body itself is said to be the temple of God. The indwelling Jeeva (soul) itself is the Incomparable Shiva (God). Drive away the *Nirmalya* (useless ignorance) and pray with *Soham* (I am Thee)" - Mithreyi Upanishad

God is in our land - this message emphasises the inborn Godliness of everyone. To get into this land of Godliness, one ought to have a pure mind on the basis of which the eyes of wisdom and love evolve.

Now, I could see how closely these often misinterpreted terms - Love, Wisdom, Religion and God - are related to a layman's strength and existence.

The web site (putli.org) is designed to spread the news that 'God is in our land'. To spread the truth that humans are divine in nature. In this world of prejudices, I hope these pages would remind the viewers of their unresolved inner quest of the Self. The news that God is very much inside every one of us will be spread gently like aroma. The news has to be conveyed externally so that those who are receptive may try to hear it internally. I pray to the Almighty to effect the dissemination in both the ways.

India and the message

Though we had seen the ‘news’ (God is in our land) without any reference to our land – India, it doesn’t mean that the message has no relevance to India. As Sri Paramahansa Yoganandaji puts it in his ‘Autobiography of a Yogi’, “Though India possesses a civilisation more ancient than that of any other country, few historians have noted that her feat of survival is by no means an accident, but a logical incident in the record of devotion to the eternal verities that India has offered through her best men in every generation. By sheer continuity of being, by intransitivity before the ages (can dusty scholars truly tell us how many?), India has given the worthiest answer of any people to the challenge of time.”

“The Biblical story of Abraham’s plea to the Lord that the city of Sodom be spared if ten righteous men were found therein, and the Divine reply: “I will not destroy it for ten’s sake,” gains new meaning in the light of India’s escape from oblivion. Gone are the empires of mighty nations, skilled in the arts of war, that once were India’s contemporaries: ancient Egypt, Babylonia, Greece, Rome.”

“The Lord’s answer clearly shows that a land lives, not in the material achievements, but in its

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masterpieces of men. ...No nation that can produce ten men that are great in the eyes of the Unbribable Judge shall know extinction."

"Heeding such persuasions, India has proved herself not witless against the thousand cunningings of time. Self realized masters in every century have hallowed her soil."

The message God is in our land has indeed got a special significance to India, the land where the divine beings of love and wisdom dwell either physically or otherwise in all times to guide all other beings of the universe to the feet of one God. Even ordinary people are guided through their rays of love and knowledge. This layman's work is the acknowledgement for the truth above. The one who had found God is God Himself. Indeed, it is right to say that 'God is in our land', as India has divine spots of different colors sprouting the blessings and presence of God-realised souls - to guide and balance the whole human race and other beings in the limitless ocean of time and space.

The following are a few of some world's eminent personalities' sayings:

"If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered on the greatest problems of life, and has found solutions, I should point to India."

- Max Muller (German Scholar, 1823-1900)

"In religion, India is the only millionaire.....the One land that all men desire to see, and having seen once,

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by even a glimpse, would not give that glimpse for all the shows of all the rest of the globe combined."

- Mark Twain (American Author, 1835-1910)

"It is already becoming clear that a chapter which had a Western beginning will have to have an Indian ending if it is not to end in the self-destruction of the human race. At this supremely dangerous moment in history, the only way of salvation for mankind is the Indian Way."

- Dr Arnold Toynbee (British Historian, 1889-1975)

"If there is one place on the face of this Earth where all the dreams of living men have found a home from the very earliest day when man began the dream of existence, it is India."

- Romain Rolland (French Philosopher, 1886-1994)

"In India, I found a race of mortals living upon the Earth, but not adhering to it, inhabiting cities, but not being fixed to them, possessing everything, but possessed by nothing."

- Apollonius Tyanaeus (Greek Traveler, 1st Century CE)

"India had the start of the whole world in the beginning of things. She had the first civilization; she had the first accumulation of material wealth; she was populous with deep thinkers and subtle intellects; she had mines, and woods, and a fruitful soul... So far as I am able to judge, nothing has been left undone, either

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by man or nature, to make India the most extraordinary country that the sun visits on his rounds. Nothing seems to have been forgotten, nothing overlooked.”

- Mark Twain

“At the close of this century, the world would be dominated by the West, but that in the 21st century “India will conquer her conquerors.”

– Dr. Arnold J. Toynbee (British Historian)

India would conquer the world - not through weapons but through love and brotherhood. India is here not to conquer the physical world. India is here to teach everyone how to conquer one's own self.

The intention of this work is clear - to remind the godliness of all souls and to remind the beings here in my land of their opportunity and responsibility of recognizing and rejuvenating the nation's sovereign culture and true religious ideologies for the betterment of all beings. It doesn't mean that India is the only land where one can find God. Great souls are in every part of this world. But, here in India, the ultimatum of the human life is so apparent and lively through the strong influence of the divine vibrations throughout the nation. Everyone feels it in one way or the other. And these divine vibrations are for everyone beyond all differences, across the globe. Have we recognised the opportunity given? Are we making use of the opportunity? Either way, this work has the drive of making things better.

God is in our land

My suggestions, clarifications, arguments and critics are published separately under various titles such as 'A bon voyage', 'Thus Spake India' and 'Glimpses of Light'.

They all support spirituality in general and India's vitality in particular – not much difference between these two. Spirituality is India's vitality.

They talk about the roles of individuals, society and political parties. The rulers, in addition to the governance of the nation, should also take necessary steps to protect our culture by the ways of checking entertainment media, ensuring quality education and bringing true secularism. The society - educational institutions and entertainment media in particular - has a major role in bringing our good old culture to life. The industrial establishments should do their business without causing environmental pollution and imbalance in nature. The individuals should be prepared to practice the high morals of our culture in their personal lives. It's the rulers' job to monitor and effect all the above through positive (offering honors and awards to the deserving, known as *Dhana*) and negative (punishing the law breakers, known as *Dhanda*) methods.

Patriotism is not only a matter of security or a matter in times of crisis. It should be present in preserving all matters of nation's pride - her culture, religion and sanctity. Patriotism doesn't get expressed in the dry egoistic celebrations in select days. It is well expressed through the obeisance of her vital principles in everyday life. As far as India is concerned, her vital

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principle is 'freedom of soul'. An ideal patriot works for it. He stands for the Truth or the Self. He stands against all that fetters the Truth or the Self.

Thiruchitrambalam

(Salutations to the Lotus Feet of the Supreme Indweller)