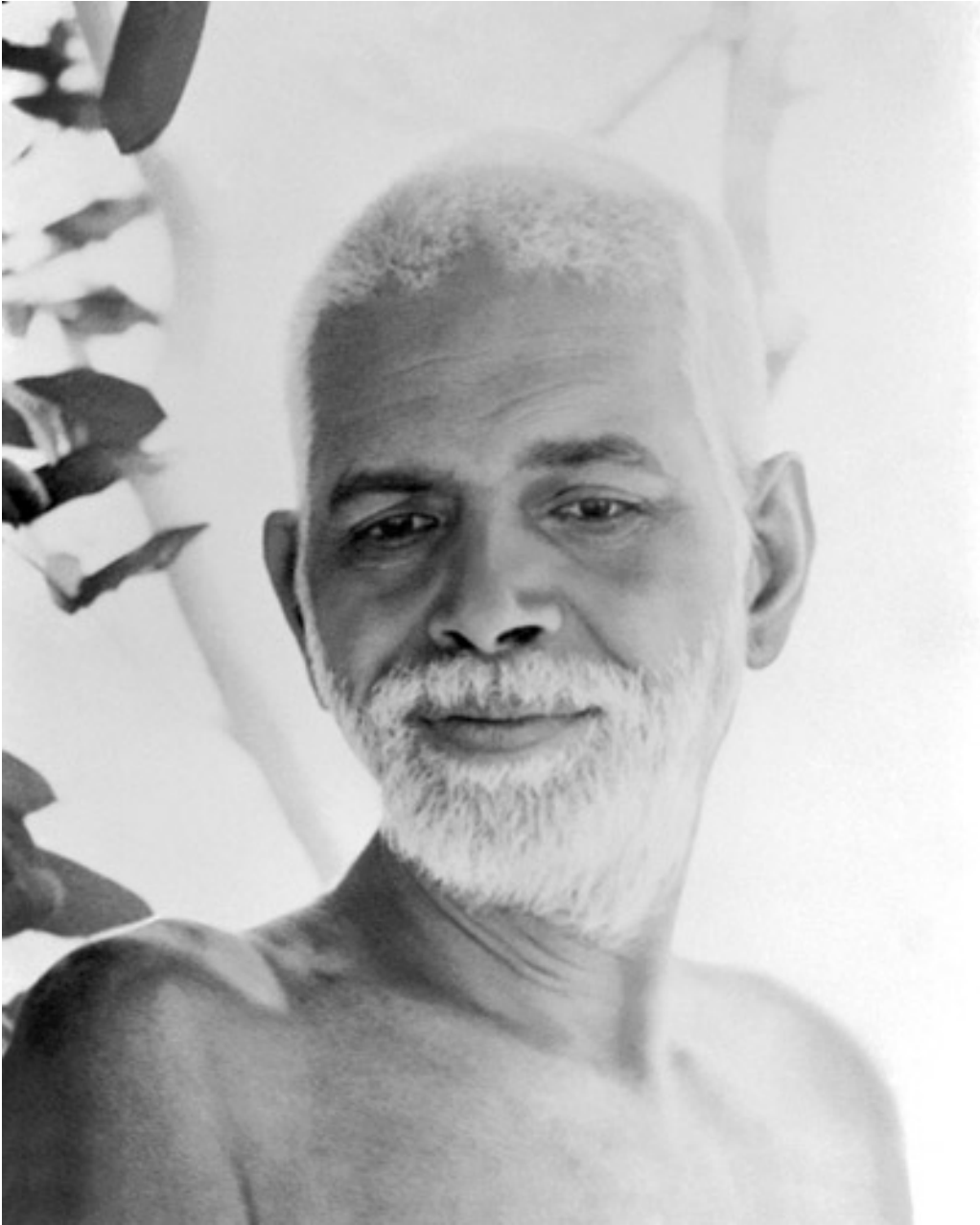


# DEVIKALOTTARAM



85 VERSES CHOSEN AND  
TRANSLATED BY BHAGHAVAN SRI  
RAMANA MAHARSHI

## **Sri Ramana's Introduction to Devikalottaram**

This work is one of the *upa-agamas* and explains the supreme wisdom to be attained by mature souls and their mode of life expounded by the Supreme Lord Siva to Devi Parvati. It is the essence of all *agama sastras* on matters of spiritual knowledge. This is verily the boat which can rescue the mortals struggling hard, sinking and rising, in the sorrowful ocean of samsara - the endless cycle of birth and death - and take them by the direct path to the shore of liberation. Let all earnest seekers after Truth, instead of groping in the dark, bewildered, and losing their way, adopt the aid of this direct path and reach the supreme state of bliss and peace.

# DEVIKALOTTARAM:

## JNANACHARA VICHARA PADALAM

(The Knowledge that Transcends Time Revealed to Devi)

### Prefatory Verse (by Kannudaya Vallalar)

Of all the births, the human birth is the rarest.  
Of all the disciplines, non-killing is supreme.  
Of all the Gods to meditate upon, the three-eyed One is the best.  
Of all the scriptures, Devikalottaram is the greatest.

### Invocation

Meditate in the heart upon Lord Ganesa<sup>1</sup> — the silent, non-dual, universal witness — who is the nectar of divine bliss and is full of grace. He shines as the bountiful flowering of aspirants who follow the path of spiritual wisdom revealed in *Devikalottaram*, which was revealed by Lord Ishwara to Goddess Ishwari.

### Devi:

1. O Lord of all celestial beings, I yearn to know that path of supreme wisdom and the codes of conduct by which one can attain liberation, so that all the people in the world may attain salvation. Out of your compassion, I beg you to teach them to me.

### Ishwara:

2. O Queen among women, so that everyone may attain knowledge, I shall clearly explain to you today the highest wisdom and the methods, though difficult to describe, by which discerning seekers of wisdom can attain liberation free from any blemish.

---

<sup>1</sup> In the Tamil original the word *kari* means ‘elephant’ and denotes Lord Ganesa as per tradition, but can also mean ‘witness’, which refers to the Universal Self in the advaitic parlance.

3. O Lady of fair countenance, understand that one who is not able to realise the truth in his heart by this knowledge of spiritual wisdom known as *Kala Jnana*, can never attain it even by studying the hundreds of crores of *sastras*<sup>2</sup> spanning the heavens.
4. Therefore let the wise man be fearless,  
undoubting, free from desire, earnest, resolute  
and persevering in jnana,  
as explained here.
5. O Divine Mother, claiming nothing as ‘mine’, filled with compassion, give protection to all living beings so that no creature fears you. Yearn for liberation and be absorbed in yoga<sup>3</sup>. Study this work, *Devikalottaram*, and follow wholeheartedly and steadfastly the single path shown within it.
- 6-7. He who is able to bring his mind under control is Brahma, Siva, and Vishnu,<sup>4</sup> he is Indra, King of the devas, he is the six-faced Skanda<sup>5</sup>, he is the guru of all devas<sup>6</sup>, he is the supreme yogi who has performed every austerity; he alone is (truly) learned, for he has achieved the supreme spiritual goal, whose mind is no longer unstable like air but is held firm.
- 8-9. The means by which this mind, which is restless and moves about quicker than the wind, can be brought under control, is indeed the means to liberation and is good for those who seek the permanent Reality. It itself is pure consciousness and the state of firmness. It alone is the righteous duty to be observed by discerning seekers. It alone is the pilgrimage to holy waters.

---

<sup>2</sup> One crore equals ten million; *sastras*: ‘scriptures’.

<sup>3</sup> The union of *jiva* and *Para*, of the individual self with the Universal Self.

<sup>4</sup> Creator, Destroyer (who shows the path to salvation) and Sustainer (of the world), respectively.

<sup>5</sup> Siva’s son, chief commander of the celestial forces.

<sup>6</sup> Brihaspati.

It alone is charity. It alone is austerity. Know that there is no doubt about this.

10. When the mind moves even a little, that is samsara<sup>7</sup>. When the mind abides firmly and motionlessly (in the state of the Self), that is mukti<sup>8</sup>. This is certain. Therefore know that the wise man must hold his mind firm by supreme Self-Awareness.
11. The happiness attained in this solitariness is the highest, boundless bliss. What learned person will not revel in that Supreme Reality, in which there is absolutely no action? Tell me.
12. Being rid of worldly knowledge and having acquired pure wisdom, formless and all-pervading, in which there are no sense objects, the great hero is sure to achieve everlasting moksha, even if he does not consciously seek it.
13. The consciousness (*chaitanya*) associated with the aspect 'I am' is called *sakti*. The universe shines by its light. The whole of creation is *sakti's sankalpa*<sup>9</sup>. The state free of all (such) attachments is the pure state of wisdom.
14. The Void<sup>10</sup> which is without parallel, which is the effulgence of pure wisdom completely devoid of visible phenomena, and which consists of the aspect 'I', is considered the seed of liberation. The experience of that impels one to start on the path of union with the Supreme.

15. Do not waste time meditating on forms of the Lord, the various

---

<sup>7</sup> Worldly bondage.

<sup>8</sup> Liberation.

<sup>9</sup> Thought.

<sup>10</sup> In the Sanskrit original, *mahasunya*, meaning 'great Void' is used.

*chakras*<sup>11</sup>, the *nadis*<sup>12</sup>, the deities associated with the lotuses<sup>13</sup> (of the chakras), sacred syllables or mandalas<sup>14</sup>.

16. Those who seek everlasting liberation,  
should not engage in repeating various sacred syllables (*mantras*), in breath-control (*pranayama*), breath retention (*kumbhaka*) or concentration (*dharana*).
17. (Neither) is there room for performing *puja*, paying homage, chanting, meditation and the like. Hear it from Me: the highest truth acclaimed in the Vedas can be known only through jnana. There is absolutely no need to know anything outside oneself.
18. For those whose minds are constantly externalized and clinging to external objects, the seeds of bondage invariably take root. If the outward-wandering mind is turned inwards to stay in its natural state, one overcomes suffering in the world.
19. Unite with that one totality, which is all-pervasive, which has no within or without, up or down, midway or sideways. It assumes all the forms in creation and yet is itself formless. It is self-luminous and can only be known by Itself.
20. Since whatever a person sees, thinks of,  
and seeks to accomplish by his actions influences his destiny,  
let him meditate on that which is beyond perception,  
and even imagination.

---

<sup>11</sup> The various spiritual centres or plexuses positioned along the spine up to the top of the head through which *kundalini sakti* rises.

<sup>12</sup> Special nerves inside the spine through which *kundalini* is transported to the various centres.

<sup>13</sup> The chakras are conceived of as lotuses with varying numbers of petals and specific deities, which preside over them.

<sup>14</sup> Spiritual spaces inside the body, presided over by the Sun, Moon, and Agni (Fire).

- 
21. In reality there is neither cause, nor effect, nor any action,  
nor does anything actually ever happen.  
There is neither a world and nor a dweller in it:  
the individual and his attachments are in fact non-existent.
22. The Universe has no external support<sup>15</sup>, nor is it cognized from  
without. The *yogi* (with his mind turned inward) merges with  
this whole by making every object in the world one with it.  
Know this.
23. The one who fails to meditate on this great all-pervading  
Void<sup>16</sup>, formless and vast like the sky, gets entangled in *samsara*  
like the silkworm caught in its own cocoon.  
Understand this.
24. Living beings<sup>17</sup> of whatever sort undergo misery  
again and again. Hear it from me:  
In order to avoid all this suffering and sorrow,  
one should meditate ever on the great Void!
25. Good conduct, various rituals and the disciplines associated  
with them have been prescribed<sup>18</sup> in order that knowledge  
might be born in the seeker. One should abandon all paths  
which are based on external supports and meditate solely on  
that Reality which is beyond the world.

---

<sup>15</sup> *Niralamba*: the unconditioned Reality which exists without any support. The one who frees the mind of all external supports becomes *niralamba*.

<sup>16</sup> *Mahasunya*.

<sup>17</sup> *Yoni* has the sense of 'the form of the birth one takes'. Each yoni will endure some form of suffering.

<sup>18</sup> The actions prescribed include internal and external worship of Siva. The various ceremonies prescribed in the *agama sastras* for worshipping Siva in form (*saguna*) are included in good conduct.

26. Only the valorous who, with the arrow of *sunyabhava*<sup>19</sup>,  
have pierced through all the regions  
from the highest to the nethermost,  
are considered Knowers of the Void.
27. The mind, hankering after the things of this world,  
is more restless than a monkey. If one controls it and one is  
established in the state of *sarvasunya*<sup>20</sup>,  
one will attain liberation directly.
28. The fullness of Consciousness<sup>21</sup> is none other than the true  
meaning of the word 'I'. Though quite other than the sense  
'I am the body', it is not different from the basic principles  
of which the world is made. It is the all-pervading Reality.
29. O my Beloved, this complete Wholeness pervades all creation  
within and without like formless space. Those who are  
submerged in this blissful state become the Supreme Bliss  
themselves. See, how wonderful!
30. The outgoing-mind dissolves of its own accord  
when deprived of anything to hold on to,  
just as a fire dies down and goes out  
when deprived of fuel.
- 31-32. Turn away from confusion, delusion, ignorance, dreaming,  
sleeping and waking; for the Supreme is different from the gross  
body, different from the subtle *prana*, from mind, intellect and  
ego. Meditate on that Consciousness<sup>22</sup> and become one with it.

---

<sup>19</sup> The thought-free state. In *sunyabhava* the individual is only aware of his  
conscious being while everything else is as though empty — without existence.

<sup>20</sup> State devoid of all sense objects.

<sup>21</sup> *Purna chit*.

<sup>22</sup> *Chaitanya*.



33. The mind often strays  
into day dreams or falls asleep.  
One should be vigilant and turn it back to its pristine state  
again and again.
34. When once the mind becomes steady,  
it should not be disturbed in any way. There is no need to  
think of anything else. One should fix the mind firmly in that  
state (of Self-Awareness) and keep it still.
35. The mind always clings to some (external) support (i.e., sense  
objects). One must remove all such attachments and supports.  
As the mind has the tendency to wander, one should make it  
motionless. Once still, one should not disturb it in the slightest.
36. At the time of the dissolution of all beings<sup>23</sup>,  
only a blemishless sky will remain.  
One should meditate on one's own form as all-pervasive  
and pure as that blemishless sky.
37. By stilling one's mind,  
restless like the wind,  
one fulfils life's highest purpose,  
the aim of all spiritual study.
38. In meditation, neither focus the mind on what is up, down,  
in the middle<sup>24</sup> nor within.  
By avoiding internal distractions (thoughts),  
one frees the mind of external distractions.

---

<sup>23</sup> *Bhootas*. According to Hindu cosmology, a great deluge will bring about the destruction of all created things.

<sup>24</sup> These spatial metaphors may be understood as follows: 'up': heavenly pleasures; 'middle': earthly desires; and 'down': lower urges.

39. If the mind becomes drowsy, awaken it.  
If it wanders, retrieve it.  
When you reach the state where there is  
neither drowsiness nor movement, remain there.
40. When the mind is left with nothing to cling to,  
does not clutch to anything  
and is completely free of changing states<sup>25</sup>,  
this is the sign of liberation.
41. Dispelling all attachments  
and fixing the mind firmly in the Heart,  
pure, clear awareness arises.  
Persist in the practice of that awareness.
42. Those who meditate on the Supreme Void<sup>26</sup>  
and become established in it through constant practice,  
will reach the supreme abode  
which is beyond birth and death.
43. Gods and goddesses, demi-gods and spirits,  
merits and demerits and their fruits,  
knowledge of causes and effects  
— all these lead to bondage in *samsara*.
44. All dependencies are said to lead to the pairs of opposites  
(happiness and misery, good and bad, profit and loss, etc.); it  
is when one turns away from them that the highest realization  
results. One who realizes thus is a *jivanmukta*, liberated while  
alive. On discarding the body he becomes a *videhamukta*.

---

<sup>25</sup> Such as sleep or distraction.

<sup>26</sup> *Paramshunya* is the original Sanskrit term.

45. A wise man should not willingly give up the body even out of *vairagya*<sup>27</sup>. With the cessation of the *prarabdha karma*<sup>28</sup>, the body will automatically drop away of its own accord.
46. The Consciousness which shines as 'I' in the lotus of the Heart is pure and perfectly still. By destroying the ego, this Consciousness bestows the supreme bliss of liberation. Be assured of this.
47. By constantly meditating with great devotion:  
'I am that Siva who is completely free of all limitations',  
one overcomes all attachments.
48. One should give up  
all notions of country, caste and *asrama*<sup>29</sup>,  
and ever contemplate the Self,  
one's own true state.
49. I alone Am. No one belongs to me; nor do I belong to anyone.  
I see no one who can call me his;  
neither do I see anyone who is mine.  
I alone Am.
50. Know that the one who experiences the firm conviction,  
'I am the Supreme *Brahman*, Master and Lord of the Universe!'  
is the real *mukta*<sup>30</sup>;  
all other experiences lead to bondage.

---

<sup>27</sup> Dispassion.

<sup>28</sup> Result of accumulated actions.

<sup>29</sup> Various callings or stages in life such as householder, ascetic, renunciate, etc.

<sup>30</sup> Liberated one.

51. The day one is able to see oneself with the inner eye  
as other than the body,  
all desires vanish,  
and perfect peace is gained.
52. He who is described in the scriptures as the unborn,  
ever-existent Lord, I am He, the *Atman*,  
who is forever beyond form and attributes.  
Let there be no doubt about this.
53. I am Pure Awareness, immaculate, perfectly liberated and  
forever present everywhere. I am unlimited. One can neither  
grasp me nor lose me. I am not determinable by logic or  
reasoning. I am free from sorrow. I am always *brahmamayam*<sup>31</sup>.
54. I am the Self which is Consciousness Absolute<sup>32</sup>, self-evident  
and deathless, and entirely beyond this insentient body  
bounded by its covering of skin (and occupying the space)  
between the top of the head and the soles of the feet.
55. By thinking, 'I am the Lord of all creation, moving or  
motionless, I am the father, mother and grandparents of the  
universe', aspirants for *mukti* meditate upon Me, who is that  
great *turiya* state<sup>33</sup>.
56. I am the one who is worshipped through sacrifices and penances  
by all celestial beings beginning with Brahma (the Creator), the  
sought after heavenly damsels, humans, *yakshas*, *gandharvas*,

---

<sup>31</sup> Of the nature of *Brahman*.

<sup>32</sup> *Chidrupam*.

<sup>33</sup> The substratum of the waking, dream and sleep states.

*nagas*<sup>34</sup> and other groups of superhuman beings.  
Know that everyone worships only Me.

57. Through various austerities and charities,  
everyone worships only Me.  
Know that all this vast creation is nothing but Me,  
the Infinite One.
58. I am neither the gross, nor the subtle, nor the causal body.  
I am the kinsman of the universe. I am of the nature of  
transcendental knowledge, I am the eternal One,  
I am the Lord, the taintless One. I am not bound by the three  
states (of waking, dream and sleep) but transcend all creation.
59. Beginningless Consciousness is unborn, whole, formless, pure,  
and beyond the world. It resides forever in its natural home in  
the cave of the Heart. It is beyond any comparisons and  
completely unattached. It cannot be comprehended by the  
mind, nor can it be seen or felt by the senses.
60. Repeatedly see, 'I am He, Brahman, the eternal, omnipresent  
Reality'. Meditate thus at length, for whoever abides  
imperturbably in this truth will themselves become the  
Supreme Brahman and attain immortality.
61. Noble Lady! I have expounded to you the nature of the  
knowledge needed to gain liberation.  
Listen now to the conduct  
to be adopted by seekers:

---

<sup>34</sup> *Yakshas*: semi-divine beings who can assume any form at will and are believed to live in trees, forests, caves and jungles; *gandharvas*: beautiful celestial beings who live in the sky and possess great powers; *nagas*: semi-divine beings who have the form of a snake, (half-snake, half-human) and dwell in subterranean or sub-aquatic abodes.

62. O Queen among women, know that bathing in holy waters, repeating holy names, performing daily *homas*, worship, and oblations with fire as well as other disciplines following lengthy study are not required.
63. *Niyamas*<sup>35</sup>, the worship of deities in holy places<sup>36</sup>, *nama archanas*<sup>37</sup>, *pitru karmas*<sup>38</sup>, pilgrimages, and the observance of vows, none of these are required for the one who aspires to the highest knowledge.
64. He does not reap the fruit of actions, good or bad.  
Important dates and special observances  
followed by the world are not for him.  
He is absolved of every kind of action and code of conduct.
65. Let the aspirant give up conventional usages,  
religious practices and caste duties  
since they are but  
chains of bondage for him.
66. Even if the seeker acquires supernatural powers (*siddhis*<sup>39</sup>),  
such as visualising what is buried beneath the earth,  
and can demonstrate them,  
he should reject them entirely.
67. All these powers only bind one to ego and individuality,  
tempting one to a lesser path. The supreme joy of liberation  
does not lie in any special power, but in Infinite Consciousness.

---

<sup>35</sup> Guidelines of comportment concerning eating, dress, etc.

<sup>36</sup> Such as the 55 *Peetas* of the divine mother.

<sup>37</sup> Worship of deities by reciting sacred names.

<sup>38</sup> Oblations and rites carried out for the sake of one's ancestors.

<sup>39</sup> Some aspirants may indulge in severe austerities and arduous practices, master various techniques and even attain supernatural powers. However, these are to be shunned as they do not lead to ultimate peace.

68. One must engage in yoga (abiding in the Self) in all circumstances, without allowing any special event to affect one adversely. If doubts and delusions arise in the form of desire to worship in holy places and temples (due to pre-existing *vasanas*), reject them immediately.
69. Listen to me, Lady!  
Know that only the wise man who never harms any form of life, whether insects, worms, birds or plants, is a person seeking true knowledge.
70. One should never uproot any tree or plant (for use in worship) nor even merely pluck its leaves. Neither should one harm any living thing out of anger. One should not pluck even one flower mercilessly.
- 71-72. The worship of Lord Siva should be done using only flowers that have fallen from trees of themselves. One should never indulge in black magic, curses<sup>40</sup>, hypnotism, arousing evil spirits, spells causing enmity between people<sup>41</sup>, and so on. The worship of stones, wooden objects and similar articles should be avoided.<sup>42</sup>
73. Having given up the *mudras* which are used for worshipping the *devatas* in holy places and temples and other related practices, one should get rid of the *vasanas* which may have accumulated on account of such practices in the past, and cling only to the Self, the all-pervading real Consciousness.

---

<sup>40</sup> The Sanskrit term is *marana*: causing death or pain through the use of certain *mantras*.

<sup>41</sup> The Sanskrit term is *vidveshana*: causing mutual hatred between friends.

<sup>42</sup> The Sanskrit term is *kasthapashana*.

74. Maintain a neutral attitude towards all things; do not get infatuated with anything; maintain equanimity whether in happiness or suffering; be the same to friends and enemies; treat alike a piece from a broken clay pot and a piece of gold.
75. A yogi should not be swayed by desires  
or yield to gratifying the senses and should be free  
from the delusion of treating things as 'mine' <sup>43</sup>.  
He should revel in the Self alone, free from fear and desire.
76. Equanimity must always be maintained,  
whether praised or slandered; equal conduct<sup>44</sup>  
must be observed towards all creatures and there should  
be no discrimination between the Self and non-Self.
77. Disputes<sup>45</sup>, worldly associations  
and quarrels should be avoided.  
Not even spiritual disputations<sup>46</sup> should be indulged in,  
whether good or bad.
78. Jealousy, slander, pomp,  
passion, envy, love, anger, fear and misery  
should all disappear  
gradually and entirely.
79. If a man is free from all the pairs of opposites and always lives  
in solitude (established in himself alone),  
he gains perfect wisdom even while in the present body,  
and shines forth with great effulgence.

---

<sup>43</sup> The Sanskrit term is *mamakara*, meaning 'mine'.

<sup>44</sup> *Sama drishti*.

<sup>45</sup> *Kalaha*.

<sup>46</sup> *Sashtra goshti*.



80. Liberation is attained only by true knowledge. By *siddhis* such a result is unattainable. However, deluded aspirants become enchanted with worldly enjoyments and supernatural powers and strive after them.
81. Know that a pure and flawless person  
will experience the Supreme Brahman  
and attain liberation  
whether he has supernatural powers or not.
82. The body is constituted by the five elements<sup>47</sup>  
and Siva dwells there. Hence all manifestations,  
right from the indivisible, all-pervading Siva,  
down to the earth<sup>48</sup> are forms of Shankara<sup>49</sup>.
- 83-84. My dearest one, earnest seekers who see the Enlightened One  
and worship Him with mind, speech and body in unison, and  
who offer Him with heart-melting devotion, sweet-smelling  
sandal paste, fruits, flowers, incense, purified water for bathing,  
clothes and food, will attain liberation. Know that those who  
worship that *Jnani* will reap the fruit of his righteous deeds and  
those who slander Him will reap the result of such sins.
85. I have revealed the truth about the supreme knowledge and  
the conduct pertaining to it, as you have asked. This entire  
path is indeed *Kalottara Jnana*<sup>50</sup>. Tell me, O Lady, if you want  
to ask anything more.

This treatise as translated by the ever-liberated Sri Ramana, provides the supreme beacon-light for the wise.

---

<sup>47</sup> Earth, water, fire, air and ether.

<sup>48</sup> Siva, the highest *tattva*, and earth, among the lower.

<sup>49</sup> One of the names of Lord Siva.

<sup>50</sup> The knowledge to be revealed at the final stage.