QUESTIONS

You Must Answer Before You DIE!

By

AiR

Atman in Ravi

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If we live but don’t know why,

We don’t find out before we die,

Then this life, that was a gift,

Won’t fulfil the purpose,

but will just drift.

PREFACE

Most of us live and die but we don't ask the question – Why? We just exist! We don't want to invest time in asking essential questions which are actually needed to lead a fulfilling and blissful life.

There are so many critical questions that we must answer before our journey of life is over.

- What will happen to us after we die?
- Who created this universe?
- How can we be happy all the time?
- Why do bad things happen to good people?
- What is the ultimate goal of life?
- Who is God, where is God, what is God?

There are so many questions which we are ignorant about and somehow, we believe that ignorance is bliss. We blissfully live in ignorance till we die.

Isn't it time to stop and ask questions? We may not find answers to all the questions, but if we sincerely investigate,

there are chances that we will realize the Truth.

Surely, there is no way to realize the Truth without asking questions. Years pass by and we fail to go on a quest, a search for the Truth. The time is now. We should make a list of questions that we must answer before we die and we have to be at it. We shouldn't stop!

Sometimes, when I seek something and don't get the answer, I just think of a stone cutter hammering at his rock, one time, ten times, one hundred times and it seems like nothing is going to happen. But he doesn't stop. He gives it another blow and another, until as if by magic, the stone cracks into two. Then I wonder, was it that last blow that did it or all that went before?

We should keep on trying over and over again. We must never quit. When we ask questions, investigate, read, research, discuss, and introspect, we will ultimately realize the Truth.

Let's start our quest, now!

If our life must reach its crest,
Then we must go on a search and quest.
We have to pass many a test,
But we must start...
Get out of our nest!

CHAPTER 1

WHAT IS LIFE?

Shouldn't we be thinking about our most important treasure?

1. We are alive, but what is the life inside us?

Have you ever wondered - what is this life inside us that keeps us breathing even when we sleep? We wake up after a few hours and the body which seemed unconscious starts walking and talking and we feel that we are alive. This state is different from death where we don't wake up. What is this energy, this power, this life, that keeps us alive? We can see that there is a life inside us, just as we can observe that there is no life in the table or the chair that lies in front of us. But what is this life that is inside our physical body? When we look at our mobile phone, we see that there is a battery inside it which needs to be charged when it is dead. But there is no battery inside us. The hair dryer has a power cord that fits into a socket to get power, but we notice that there is no wire from our body that fits into any socket. We then look at our car and it zooms, but after some time, it stops because there is no fuel. As soon as we fill gas, our car resumes its journey but we don't even have a petrol tank to put fuel to make our body move. What is it that keeps this body alive? What makes the heart, beat? What causes circulation, digestion, and excretion? The power inside the body makes it function like the most amazing human machine that one could ever imagine. Have you ever stopped to wonder what keeps you alive? Where did this life come from? Till when will it last? There is no doubt that there is a power inside us but the question is, 'What is this power that keeps us alive?'

2. Are we just a fusion of two biological cells?

Ignorant are those who think that life happens when a sperm fertilizes an ovum. A zygote is formed which develops into an embryo and finally takes birth as a human body after about nine months. While this is the biological explanation of how life starts, the questions that are left unanswered would be, 'Are we just a fusion of two human cells?' and 'Are we just the result of a chemical equation?' If that is the case, then life could be manufactured in a laboratory just like a machine is produced in a factory. But we know this cannot be done. We still have not been able to decode the mystery called - life. Unlike an operation in any factory where a product is manufactured, the creation of life seems to be controlled by a factor unknown to man. That is why every time a man and a woman attempt to copulate, there is no guaranteed conception of a child.

It is said that millions of sperms attempt to fuse with the ovum and this is beyond human comprehension. This is not the end, rather the beginning of a magic show inside the womb. The zygote is barely visible to the human eye but life seems to have already commenced in that tiny cell structure. Nobody has been able to exactly pinpoint when life actually enters a newborn baby. Is it at the time of birth when the child arrives out of her mother's womb into the world? If that is the case, then who was kicking inside the

womb? Medical science has progressed significantly and can monitor several critical parameters of a child that is alive within, but the question that still remains unanswered is, 'When did that life enter?' Obviously, we are not just a bundle of cells, rather we have a life. For instance, if unfortunately, the child is stillborn, the doctors declare the child as dead. There is no life, in fact, there is no child. What actually makes the child, is that magical life which energized the body to grow within the womb.

3. When was life actually created in us?

There is a lot of controversy about the exact time when life actually enters us. Various scientific studies and experiments show that the embryo shows some signs of life after four months of conception and therefore, scientists believe that it is at this point, life actually enters the embryo. Others, like Mother Teresa, strongly advocated that the moment a successful fusion happens, a life is created. Thus, she strongly objected to the idea of aborting a child even at an early stage where the child doesn't seem to be alive.

There is no doubt that life enters a child at some point in time but there is no clarity as to when this actually happens. Nobody has been able to prove this and the question still remains unanswered. We celebrate our birthday but that is only our entry into the world. It may

not be our true date of birth as we do not know the exact date and time when life truly commences its journey inside us.

4. Who created life in us?

When we use a Samsung mobile, we know that it was manufactured by a Korean company, just as we know the American iPhone was manufactured by Apple, but who creates life? Is it possible for such a complicated creation like a human being, not to have a Creator? We are not just a physical body but also a mind, memory, and intellect put together by the energy that makes it come alive. But who makes this? There are many theories like the Big Bang which propagate that everything happened due to a big bang. But who caused the big bang? Some people believe that life evolved from apes as advocated by Darwin, but then how did life come into an ape?

Obviously, there is a Creator of life, but who is this Creator? The world refers to the Creator as God and gives Him names and forms. But the question that remains unanswered is - Who created life in us?

5. How long will I be alive?

The life expectancy currently is supposed to be between seventy to eighty years. This means that an average human is alive between seventy to eighty years on this

earth. Everybody is not blessed to have the same life expectancy as the Japanese are said to be blessed with. They live for over ninety years, unlike some Africans who are not lucky enough to cross even fifty.

This often depends on the health standards and the well-being of the human body and mind but even in these countries, some human beings die when they are just one day old while some live for over a hundred years. Who controls this decision as to how long a human being should be alive on earth? This is unknown to man. There is no guarantee of our life span on earth. There is also no clarity regarding the circumstances that will become the cause of our death, when and how this life inside us will depart - all this is unknown to us and it is beyond our control. Of course, there is no doubt that every human being has to die one day and the life inside us is definitely going to leave us some day, but who controls all this, is still a mystery.

6. Where exactly is this life?

The human body is a creation that is marvellous and amazing to the extent that it baffles humanity. It is said that a human body has about 37 trillion cells and what amazes us is that there is life in each of these cells. If we remove these cells from the body and keep them on a table, they will lose life and become dead cells. What causes life to flow into these trillions of cells? There are over 200 different

types of cells but the Life Energy flows in all.

The Life Energy continues to flow through 100 billion neurons that run through the brain and nervous system. It is the same energy that creates the thoughts in our mind and we are said to think over fifty thoughts per minute, which can be over 50,000 thoughts per day. Just take the Life Energy out and the mind stops thinking. The Life Energy also gives power to the millions of retinal cells that create eyesight, just as it empowers skin cells to feel and sense what we touch. It is the same Life Power inside us that creates a magical 576 megapixels camera called the eye. While it is so very powerful, we don't realize that it is absolutely useless without the Life Energy. The Life Energy in our body facilitates us to smell over one trillion different types of smells. It is the same Life Power that pumps six litres of blood through sixty thousand miles of blood vessels.

Without the Life Power, we would not be able to take the 23,000 breaths we do every day that keep us alive. There would not be those one lakh heartbeats that it causes every day. The energy our brain produces when we are awake is powerful enough to light a small electric bulb, but we don't realize this. There is so much power in us that with the energy that the heart produces every day, one can drive a truck for over 30 kilometres. It is the same power that pumps over one and a half million barrels of blood in a

lifetime. Have we ever stopped to understand what this life power is, that creates magic in every part of our body? Somehow, we have become so busy with other things that we have not stopped to question what life is all about. We live and die and we forget to ask questions about all these mysteries of life. We finish our life journey without understanding the essence of life, the gift that is so unique. Shouldn't we rather answer questions about life?

What is it we know about life?
We live in stress, we live in strife.
But if we don't seek and we don't ask,
We will be living with a mask.

CHAPTER 2

WHAT IS THE REALITY OF DEATH AND THEREAFTER?

Why does most of humanity live in the constant fear of death?

1. What exactly is death?

Death happens when life ends. In a human body, there are certain critical parameters which keep us alive. We breathe and the heart pumps blood and along with this, the brain functions and so do the other critical organs of the body. If some organs stop functioning, we can still be alive but once we are dead nobody on earth can put life back into us. We often hear of the term 'brain dead' but what does this mean? It means that the person's brain has stopped working but the person is still breathing and the heart is still pumping blood. Sometimes we hear of a person having heart failure and they are supported by an artificial heart or a pacemaker. There are times when the brain and heart are OK but the person needs to be put on a ventilator, to pump oxygen into the body. While science has advanced and all these life support systems are improving day by day, we have still not reached anywhere close to stopping death from taking place. Death happens and the person ceases to live. All the organs stop functioning and doctors and medical professionals become helpless and pronounce the person dead. Every human being on earth is mortal. The physical body has to die as it ages and though science boasts of so much progress including cell replacement, we know that death is beyond our control.

2. What happens at death?

A person was alive and was talking, walking, breathing, eating, and living. Upon death, his body turns cold and the person cannot perform any action. There is no blood circulation in the body and in fact, the body starts to decay and stink. We see that the Life Energy within the person has escaped. There is no breath and this is death. The person continues to look like the same person who was alive but none of the functions of the human body continue after death. The sense organs cannot sense anymore, the action organs stop functioning and so does the mind. The person becomes completely still because there is no Life Energy within a dead body and after some time, the body becomes like a stone. Sadly, the blood, organs, flesh, and tissues - all start decaying once dead.

In ancient Egyptian civilization, people used to create mummies of the dead bodies. Several spiritual saints have been embalmed to retain their body. But while the body may be saved from decay and deterioration, there is no chance of putting life back into a dead body. We see that the body is normally cremated or buried and eventually it turns to dust. The five elements of the body - earth, water, air, fire, and space are dissipated and what one is left with - a handful of ashes.

3. Who actually dies?

We are quite confused about death. In fact, the confusion starts with the question about ourselves - who we actually are. Are we the physical body that dies or the mind that thinks or are we the Soul? While we will investigate that later, it is good to mention that when a person dies, everything about the person dies except the person's memories.

If a person named John Fellows dies, then it means that the person who was alive is no more. His body is no more, his mind is no more and his ego that always said, "I am John Fellows" is also dead. John Fellows, at death, also ruptures all his relationships as he is no more alive. Spiritual people believe that John's Soul is still alive and some believe that John's mind will be reborn. It is not dead but has only moved on at death. However, one thing is certain that the physical body has actually died. Along with the physical body, its name, its identity, its possessions, and relationships, all come to an end. It is unknown whether the mind dies along with the body or not. It is almost certain that the Soul or Life Energy never dies, it departs or moves on at death.

4. What does it mean when people say, "He departed?"

When we say John departed, expired, passed away or

moved on, what do we mean? We can see John lying on the floor dead. Under what logic can we say that John has departed? If John has departed then who is lying dead in front of us? If this is only John's body and not John, then where is John? Will John ever return? Of course not! John will never return. But what about John's mind and Soul? Who actually dies? The Life Energy that was inside John leaves him causing death and there is no breath. The mind is the subtle part of the body which cannot be touched and felt but we know at death it ceases to live. But the mystery continues about John’s true identity. When we see John is dead in front of us but we say that John has departed, this is a dichotomy.

5. Why does everybody fear death?

We all fear death because first of all, what lies beyond death is unknown. This fear of the unknown causes a lot of anxiety and stress to the ageing population. Kids don't fear death, nor do kids worry about other consequences of death, but those who have built relationships and have created wealth and possessions, fear death because they know that at death, everything that belongs to them will no more be theirs. They will have no control over their business empire, money, and assets. Even their loved ones will no more belong to them. All these together make the subject of death, the most fear causing entity. Most of humanity lives with the fear of death.

The reality of death continues to be a mystery and we live and die without solving the death puzzle. We all fear death due to the loss of the known and the fear of the unknown, but we don't investigate the Truth about life and death, and most of us die taking the mystery to our graves. It is not so difficult to resolve most of the doubts about life and death, but we need to contemplate life and death. We must make an effort to ask questions, investigate the Truth and then realize what life and death truly are.

6. What happens to the body after Death?

After death, the body disintegrates. The air inside the body escapes, the water evaporates and the space that the body occupies, shrinks. This happens when the fire that keeps the body temperature warm leaves and the body becomes cold.

Because the body becomes the earth or ashes, it is said that from dust a body is formed and to dust, it returns. The body is made up of five natural elements which go back to their individual state and merge with the source at death. Putting it all together, the body becomes 'nothing' at death. It actually disappears from the surface of the earth leaving us to wonder, 'Are we this human body that will become nothing at death?'

7. Where does the mind go after the body dies?

The gross physical body breaks down into its five constituents but what happens to the subtle body, the mind, and the ego? It is said that only the gross body dies. The subtle body is the driver of the gross body and thus it is responsible for all of its actions.

It is believed that while the physical body completes its journey, the mind doesn't. The mind has to redeem its good and bad deeds either before the body dies or by taking another birth after the death of the physical body. This theory gets support from several recent studies where newborn minds are able to remember their past lives. How is this possible? It is only if the mind is reborn that this may happen. Young children who are able to recite large volumes of scriptures or play musical instruments are said to do so by instinct. It is now believed that instinct is nothing but the mind that is reborn. Those who believe in the universal law of Karma, the law of action and reaction, believe that this is the only way for the universe to continue generation after generation. Thus, while at death the body definitely disintegrates, the majority of humanity believes that the mind takes another birth in some form or the other.

8. What happens to us after we die?

Will I die? Will you die? If you were John Fellows, then

John Fellows would die but you, who were alive in John Fellows, will never die. It is up to us to believe who we are. If we think we are the body, then definitely we die and the story is over. If we believe that we are the mind, then the only way to reconcile is to realize that we have to be born again to redeem our good deeds and sins. However, very few who realize the Truth, are liberated from the body-mind complex at death. Therefore, what happens to us after death, depends upon our state of self-awareness and self-realization and differs from person to person.

9. Will we be reborn after death?

At death, the ones who do not contemplate, suffer. Though they think that they are the body and there is no rebirth, they can't escape rebirth because the universal law ensures that we have to be born again. If we think we are the mind, then we will be reborn as per our Karma. Just like when we plant mangoes, we reap mangoes and not pineapples, so the mind also reaps the rewards of all the actions that are performed in the body that just died. If we think that we are not the body and we are not even the mind, then there is no Karma for us because we have not taken ownership of any action. We are liberated at death and if the grace of Lord is upon us, we will become one with the Lord.

Therefore, death leads to different consequences for different people depending upon their life philosophy. We

will suffer if we think that we are the body or mind and we will be reborn as per our Karmas but if we realize the Truth that we are the Life Energy or the Divine Soul, then we will be liberated from the cycle of death and rebirth.

This will only be possible if we find answers to life's most important questions while we are alive.

> **Of course, we know, we must all die,**
> **But what is death and why do we cry?**
> **We don't know anything, we believe the lie…**
> **We just fold our hands and look up at the sky.**

CHAPTER 3

DOES GOD EXIST?

Isn't it strange that while most of humanity prays to a God, we don't really know the Truth about God?

1. What do we mean by GOD?

Different religions define God in different ways. Some religions give name and form to God, while some believe their God to be a saint. There are many who even believe that their God is a statue. 'God is the Creator of this universe' - all religions may differ in other aspects but they all agree on this one. They all believe that their God created the universe. Obviously, it is one God that is looked upon differently by different people.

God is not a statue, God is not a saint. God is not a picture that anyone can paint. We must understand what God truly is. God is a Power - a Universal Power. God is beyond human comprehension. God defined, is God denied. God is beyond definition. While we don't know in reality - who God is, or what God is - there is no doubt that God is. You and I are the proof that God exists. God is in the Sun, the Moon, the stars, the birds, the animals, and the flowers. All these are manifestations of God.

Everything that we see, touch, and experience is ultimately created by God. Without God, this universe wouldn't exist. We human beings are alive because of God. We come from God and we go back to God. He has not only created the universe but He is the one who preserves it. It is with His grace that the universe exists, the sun shines, earth revolves, day and night happen, seasons

change, and the world appears to be an ideal abode of innumerable living beings.

2. In reality, who is God?

God exists. There is no doubt about that but nobody can define God. God is a Power that is omnipresent - present everywhere, omnipotent - all-powerful and omniscient – all-knowing. Just like there is life in every cell of our body and there are 37 trillion cells in our body, God is everywhere. There is no place where God is absent, but we cannot see God. However, we can realize God if we open our real eyes. Unless we know who we are, we can never realize who God is. The human mind in normal circumstances is unable to realize God.

We look at a gold ring and think it is a ring. Similarly, we look at a chain or a bangle as different pieces of gold jewelry. We don't realize that this is not a ring, chain, or a bangle, this is essentially gold. If we take out gold from these ornaments, nothing remains. If we take out the gold from the ring, there is no ring but somehow we only see it as a ring. This ignorance stops us from realizing what God is. God is the very source, the very cause of everything that is created. God is the raw material of the universe. God is the Life Energy that keeps us breathing. God is a Power.

3. Where is God?

The question should rather be - Where God is not? For God is everywhere! Just because we don't see God, it doesn't mean that God is absent. A blind man may tell you that there is nothing because he cannot see anything, but this is not the Truth. Just because we are spiritually blind, it doesn't mean that there is no God. God is everywhere, but just like air is invisible, God is also not visible. For those who realize God, they understand that chirping of the birds, the swaying of the trees, the warmth of the sunshine, and the roaring of the seas - are all manifestations of God's presence. Unfortunately, we as kids have been taught that God lives in temples, churches or mosques. We are told fairy tales or myths like that of Santa Claus and how God is an old man with a white beard sitting up in the clouds. Therefore, whenever we pray, we have a habit of looking up at the sky. But does God actually live in the sky? God is in the waters, God is on the ground, and there is no place in the universe where God cannot be found. God is everywhere. In fact, if you take out God from a living creature, the creature dies and becomes nothing. This tells us that it is God's presence that creates life. God is in every creature, be it tiny or a big beast but unfortunately, we are unable to see God.

4. Is there any proof of God?

Just like the ring, bangle, and chain are proof of the existence of the gold, similarly, you and I are proof of God - is that not enough? Gold is the cause and ornaments just effects of it. Likewise, God is the cause of our existence. That is proof enough that this universe was created by a Power and despite several theories, ultimately, there has to be a power that caused any of the theories to happen. There needs to be someone who is in control of the universe. The universe does not exist by random acts. It is a well-organized system that is managed by several universal laws. These laws are both created and controlled by a Power, the Law of Gravity makes sure that everything is firm on the ground. If there was no power controlling this law, everything would be flying around and banging into each other. There is a Law of Cycles that creates day and night constantly, just like summer is followed by autumn, and winter by spring. Who creates these laws and these cycles? While we cannot see the Creator or the Controller, all these are inferred proofs. We infer that God exists and he controls not just the earth and the universe but the entire cosmos.

5. What about those who don't believe that God exists?

There are some people who are atheists. They refuse to accept the existence of God. They do not want to discuss,

reflect or understand God. They live and die in ignorance. There are some others who are agnostics. Neither do they believe in God nor do they disbelieve. They think that there must be some power somewhere, but it is not necessarily God as the world understands God to be. They are confused and prefer to live in this confusion. These people, who do not believe in the existence of a Power called God, live a life without a clear and meaningful philosophy. They exist till they die but they don't understand who they are and why they are here.

However, most of humanity today accepts that a Power exists. Some call this Power - God and some address it by some other name but while we have not been able to define this Power - who it is, where it is and what it is, we, by and large, accept that it is - that it exists.

God is not a statue, God is not a saint,
God is not a picture that anyone can paint.
Still, we pray to one that has a form and name…
God is a power that no human can frame.

CHAPTER 4

HOW DID THIS UNIVERSE COME ABOUT?

Is it possible for such an amazing world to just happen by itself?

1. Did this whole universe appear from nowhere?

Once an atheist walked into the office of a spiritual scientist and asked him, “Where did you get this beautiful table globe from?” It was a globe made up of marble and layered with gold. It was truly magnificent. The scientist answered, “I don't know where it came from. One morning it just appeared on my table.” His atheist friend got upset and said, “If you don't want to tell me where you got it from, just say so but don't tell me that it just appeared.” The spiritual scientist smiled, and said, “You insist that the beautiful table globe must have come from somewhere, but you believe that this humongous earth appeared from nowhere. How is that possible?” Obviously, the world and everything in it must have a Creator, a Producer, a Power and because we do not know who He is, where He is and what He is, we cannot deny the fact that He is. We cannot deny that there is a Power that is the Creator of this universe. It could not have possibly appeared from nowhere. Even if there was a Big Bang that caused it, some Power must have caused the big bang. Even if there was some other theory on the creation of the universe, some Power must have been responsible for that. This magnificent world could not have appeared from ‘nowhere’.

2. Who created this universe?

We do not know who created this universe, but somebody did. We may not know who is the great-grandfather of our great grandfather's great-grandfather, but somebody is. Just because we don't know who He is, it doesn't mean that there is no Creator or God. This universe is definitely the creation of a Power, a super Power, beyond our imagination and comprehension.

3. What materials were used to create the Universe?

We know that porcelain is used to make our coffee mug, steel is used to make our spoons and forks and gold is used to make our jewellery, but do we know what materials were used to make the mountains and the seas, the flowers and the trees, the butterflies and the bees, and you and me? Obviously, there must be some material but what is that material and where did it come from? We are ignorant and we do not know the essence of creation. Was all this created from something or is all this a manifestation of the Divine Power?

4. What is the scientific theory today on the Universe?

For thousands of years, science and spirituality were at loggerheads and science refused to believe the theory that everything was energy. Many decades ago, the German scientist, Albert Einstein coined the mass-energy

equivalence formula, $E=MC^2$ which basically means that energy can convert into mass. While this theory was coined and accepted, only recently in a scientific experiment using a sophisticated microscope, scientists discovered what is now known as the Wave-Particle Duality. This experiment proved that a particle could become an energy wave and an energy wave could become a particle. Both were interconvertible. This meant that while you seem to be sitting in front of me, in reality, you may just be trillions of energy particles that look like you. With this scientific discovery, science and spirituality agree that the human being that looks like flesh and bone may, in fact, be nothing but energy.

While we are all busy trying to discover cosmetics for the skin, we have not bothered to spend time to discover what lies within. We live in this universe but we have not discovered the Truth about how it came about, who created it and what it actually is. We are so busy building towers on the ground that the origin of this universe we haven't found. Shouldn’t we stop and ask questions, investigate our findings to realize the Truth?

How was this world and
everything created on earth?
Who created man and woman who give birth?
Even if it all happened in one big bang
Who was the one who caused this clang?

CHAPTER 5

DO WE HAVE TO PAY FOR OUR SINS?

Can we escape from our bad deeds and will our good deeds not be rewarded?

1. Is there a Day of Judgement?

Some religions believe that at the end of our life, there will be a Day of Judgment. There will be a time when God will review our good and bad deeds and deliver a judgement, duly rewarding and punishing us accordingly. However, one must consider who will face this Day of Judgement. The body dies and returns to dust as it disintegrates into nothing and it cannot be reconstituted to face the Day of Judgement.

Even when alive, the body may act but it acts on the directions of the mind, therefore, the actual doer is not the body but the mind. It is the mind that is set to face the Day of Judgement. It is unclear how the mind of a dead person would face the Day of Judgement and therefore, there is another belief that the mind is reborn to suffer the sins or to celebrate its good deeds. One thing seems certain, there is some kind of judgment for the deeds of our life. This is evident because we, obviously, cannot escape from our bad deeds and sometimes we wonder why bad things happen to good people. It seems that they are redeeming their own actions, and therefore, it seems to be a Judgement that causes this.

2. Who will face the Day of Judgement?

Most people are still unclear about who will face the Day of Judgement. The body cannot face it because it will be dead

and gone. The mind is the subtle part of the body and it is unclear how an intangible, invisible mind can face the Day of Judgement. Will it face the Day of Judgement after it is reborn in a new body or is it the ego, 'I' that will face such a day? What is the ego without the body and the mind? Some even say that it is our Soul which will face the Day of Judgement. They do not realize that the Soul is not a part of us but only provides Life Energy for us to live. It is not responsible for our actions, either good or bad. Therefore, who will face this Day of Judgment or rather still, is there a Day of Judgement at all?

This makes some people believe in the Law of Karma. It talks of redeeming the consequences of our actions in an afterlife, post rebirth.

3. Reward or punishment? How will it happen?

There are eight billion people residing on earth. How all of our actions are recorded and how we will be rewarded or punished, seems to be a situation beyond man's imagination. What kind of computer would be required to monitor and execute the actions of eight billion people? Some believe that each individual has its own monitoring mechanism and it is self-executed as per the Divine Law. The fact is that nobody really knows how this reward and punishment is executed and it's only man's presumption or assumption, but there is no guarantee.

4. Will I be reborn to redeem my good or bad?

At death, our good or bad deeds are not nullified, as death is very sudden. Therefore, there is an incomplete account to be redeemed and this leads us to believe that death is not the end but just a bend where the physical body dies but we continue to live to face our past actions.

How is it possible to face the reward or punishment, without a physical body? Thus, it seems logical to believe that we will be reborn.

> **There is a Cosmic Law, don't forget.**
> **What we give is what we get.**
> **So we must know that if we sin,**
> **We will suffer, we will never win.**

CHAPTER 6

IS THERE A WAY TO ETERNAL HAPPINESS?

Do we have to suffer and be miserable?

1. Why do we shuttle between being glad and sad?

Human beings are not always happy. We shuttle between being glad and being sad, but somehow we enjoy this merry go round passing happiness and sorrow in circles. Why? We have certain expectations and when those expectations are fulfilled we become happy, but when they are not we become sad. Obviously, all expectations are not fulfilled, and our life becomes like a yo-yo, going up and down, being happy and being sad. It's not that we want to be sad but somehow we are unable to live without desire and thus, disappointments follow us.

2. Is it not possible to be happy always?

Who doesn't want to be happy all the time? In this pursuit of happiness, we desire, we get disappointed and become unhappy. It is possible to be happy always if we eliminate desire and remain in a state of contentment and fulfillment. Somehow we are not able to do this as we naturally crave and desire due to our senses that we are gifted with, along with a wandering mind. Together with the mind and senses, we desire and become disappointed. Thus we become unhappy. If we realize the cause of misery and overcome desire, then we can overcome disappointments and unhappiness.

Further, those who realize the Truth that we are not the body and mind, they escape unhappiness and are in a state

of eternal bliss. Because, while the body may suffer and the mind may become miserable, they distance themselves from the body and mind and remain in a state of eternal happiness.

3. How can we escape from physical pain?

Can any human being escape from physical pain? It seems impossible. Every human body from birth to death constantly experiences pain. It may be a physical hurt or accident, it can be some pain in our muscles or bone or the agony that we experience when we burn ourselves, however slight the burn may be. The human body experiences all kinds of pain, but the question is how can 'WE' escape from physical pain? The only way for us to escape from physical pain is to realize that we are not the body. The body may experience the pain but we must distance ourselves from being the body. We may have a car accident. The car is smashed but we are not hurt, that is our car but not us. When we realize that we are not the body - that is the only way to reduce the impact of physical pain. There is no way of completely escaping physical pain because unlike the car which is separate from us, although we are not the body, we are embodied Souls. The realization can do away with a lot of physical pain but cannot eliminate it completely. We can achieve a state where there is physical pain but we don't suffer. We use pain killers to kill the pain.

4. How can we overcome emotional misery?

What makes us miserable? Most of the time our mind is captured with negative emotions like fear, worry, anger anxiety, hatred, revenge, and jealousy. These and other negative emotions make our mind miserable. But we are not the mind, we are the observers of the mind. If we become strong in this realization then the mind may experience misery but we would not. We observe everything happening as if it was a drama being enacted on a stage called the earth in a show called life. If we realize that we are just observers, then we escape from the misery of the mind. We are actors and we know - it is just a show, we come and we go, and there is no need to live with sorrow.

5. Is it possible to be liberated from suffering permanently?

Liberation from suffering happens for those who realize the Truth that we are not the ego, mind and body. It is not an easy task because the mind and ego, do not permit the realization but once we realize the Truth then we are liberated permanently.

Once there was a king who died without a successor. Everybody was worried - they wanted royal blood. And so, they went to the old grandmother of the king and asked her, "Can you help? There is no royal blood." She said, "Well, there was a grandson -

another grandson of the king's grandfather. And he has a nephew somewhere… He was not doing too well." She gave them a tip, and they went searching for the royal blood. Finally, they found this very far distant relative of the king living as a beggar near the post-office. And then, they went and saluted this beggar and said, "You are royal blood. And you must come and you must take over the kingdom because you have to be king." And so this beggar was taken and cleaned and tutored and coached to be king. It took several months before he learned because after all, he was a beggar. After a few years, he started ruling the kingdom. After several years, one day he happened to open a cupboard and the beggar's old, tattered clothes fell out. And he remembered, "Oh, I was a beggar. And now I am the royal king." He told the minister, "I want to go back and see how things are there, near the post-office." And so the next morning before sunrise, he was there in his beggar's clothes at the post-office. People were surprised, "Oh here comes the old beggar. We thought you are dead. Where did you come from?" And with a beggars can and a stick in his hand, he went on collecting pennies from door to door. And then at the end of the day, he was done with it. He had told the minister that after sunset he wants to come back to the kingdom. In the evening, he jumped back into the carriage and was back in the kingdom.

What do we learn from this beggar who was now a king? When he went back and was a beggar for a day, even for a moment did he think that he had become a beggar? No. He knew very well that he was king. In fact, he had worn the

beggar's clothes on top of the royal silk shirt and the silk shirt was rubbing against his chest, and his thoughts were of a king. Even when he went back he never lost the feeling that he was king. Such is the state of a fully liberated person. Such a person is liberated from suffering completely, as they never forget who they truly are.

6. What is the way to eternal happiness?

Happiness is different for everybody. Some people are happy sometimes, but it is difficult to be happy all the time. The first peak of happiness is - Achievement, but people on the peak experience the peak and valley effect – the peak of joy and the valley of sorrow. Some people evolve from the first peak of Achievement to the second peak of Contentment and Fulfilment. This peak sees people happier as they live with Fulfilment -

F - Full Satisfaction and Contentment

U - Universal Connection

L - Living with Meaning and Purpose

F - Faith, Hope, and Trust

I - Inspiration, Energy, and Enthusiasm

L - Liberation and Freedom

L - Laughter and Love

M - Making a Difference

E - Emotionally Positive

N - Noteworthy Success and Achievement

T - Tranquility and Peace

It is only those people who evolve to the third peak who experience eternal bliss and joy. This peak is the peak of Liberation and Enlightenment, where one is liberated from misery and sorrow.

Before we end our journey of life, it is our challenge to explore the three peaks of happiness. We must question ourselves and find answers that will give us eternal peace and joy, that will help us escape from misery and pain. But we must be able to ask the right questions and find the answers before our journey is over.

> **There is a way to joy and peace,**
> **There is a way to make suffering cease,**
> **We must stop swinging**
> **from the future to the past,**
> **Living in the NOW makes happiness last.**

CHAPTER 7

CAN WE ESCAPE FROM MISERY AND SORROW?

Is suffering gifted to all those who live?

1. What is the cause of misery?

Misery is caused when our expectations are not met. Every living human being has desires but all our desires are not fulfilled. When the desire is not fulfilled, we become miserable, just as we become happy when they are fulfilled. Man, in quest of happiness, expects his desires to get fulfilled but every time he is disappointed, he becomes miserable. Therefore, the cause of misery is desire, because if there were no desires there wouldn't be any disappointment or misery. There is no doubt that desires are directly responsible for the misery, sorrow, and unhappiness in our life.

2. Why do we desire and crave?

Although desires lead to disappointment and misery, we still desire and crave because we are gifted with a mind and five senses which together, create desire.

The eyes see, the ears hear, and the nose smells. The tongue creates a craving just as the skin desires through its touch. These senses are triggered by the craving of the mind to become lust and passion. The greater the desires are, the greater the disappointment and bigger the misery. As long as we have senses and the mind, we have no choice but to desire. The one who transcends the mind and senses can overcome desire and misery. This is very difficult and

practically impossible but there are a few people who are fortunate to live with dispassion and discrimination. With a lot of discipline and desire for liberation in rare cases, people are able to transcend the mind and the senses and by doing so, they are able to overcome the desire and the corresponding disappointment and misery.

3. Can we live without passion?

If we can switch off our senses and program our mind through spiritual realization, then we can overcome passion. A human being, when born on earth, is gifted with desire and passion. In fact, the world considers a person without passion and inspiration to be a walking corpse. It is considered that passion is a blessing not realizing that it is the greatest cause of misery.

4. How can we escape from suffering?

Although everybody who is born must suffer before they die, the Buddha, the enlightened one, analyzed the cause of suffering and the way to overcome it. He analyzed that the world is full of suffering and it is caused by desire. We can overcome desire by practising detachment and dispassionate living and following a method that will liberate us from a cycle of death and rebirth.

He believed that not only will we suffer in this life, but also we will be born again in an afterlife and that will continue,

cycle after cycle to suffer to die. He called escape from suffering - *Nirvana*. *Nirvana* is also known as *Moksha, Mukti,* Liberation, Salvation or Enlightenment. When we realize we are not the body and the mind but the Divine Life Energy, then we do not suffer, nor are we reborn because at death we are liberated. Of course, we will suffer till death but even that suffering will be bare minimum because we realize that we are not the body or mind that experiences suffering.

Isn't it important for us to find a way to escape from misery and sorrow? It may not be easy, but it is better than suffering again and again. It is better to be liberated from this cycle of constant suffering and misery.

Is there a way to escape from pain?
Living in misery just in vain?
If we realize we are not body and mind,
A life without pain we will find.

CHAPTER 8

WHO ARE WE - EGO, MIND OR BODY?

Will we ever know who we truly are?

1. Are we this physical body?

If we were to peel a physical body, we would see that it is made up of skin, flesh, muscles, bones, and bone marrow. If we were to virtually remove all of these and keep them on the table, every cell of our body could be accounted for, but not 'ME'. 'I,' who was alive, would escape during this virtual experiment. If somebody wanted to stitch back the body as it was, with expert surgeons and equipment, maybe they could, but they still cannot put me back inside the body. I am nowhere to be found. Therefore, while I have a body, I am not the body. I have five sense organs, five action organs, and certain other critical organs that are alive in the body, but I am not the physical body. That is why I say, "This is my hand," "My heart failed," and "My bone got fractured." Who is it that is talking of the physical body? That is me, one who is not the physical body but who has a physical body.

2. Are we the mind - the subtle body?

While I am not the physical body, many people think that I am the subtle body or the mind. The subtle body inside, is made up of the mind, the memory and the intellect. None of them are visible, but we know that they exist. I have a mind, I am not the mind. I can watch my mind wander as it observes the various sense organs seeing, hearing and touching, but the moment the mind wanders, it loses the

grip on the senses. But I, as the observer, know that I have a mind. It is the same mind which stays awake and dreams as the body sleeps. When the mind sleeps, I experience a deep sense of bliss. Thus, while I have a mind or the subtle body, I am not the mind.

3. We know we exist. Who is this 'I'?

Is there any doubt that we exist? Don't we know that we are alive? You and I don't need proof that we are alive and we also know this, but we don't know who we are. If we are not the body and we are not the mind, but we are, we exist, then who are we? Are we the ego that constantly creates this feeling of 'I' and it talks of 'MY' and 'MINE'. "My head is paining," "My legs are tired," "This house is mine," and "This car is mine." Are we that ego? By now, we are absolutely clear that we have a body but we are not the body. We are also clear that we are not the mind. While we are clear we are not the body or mind, we are absolutely sure that we exist. This is our biggest challenge to find out, in reality, who we are.

4. Are we the Soul?

If we look at our mobile phone or laptop, we see that it is made up of hardware and software. Without the software, it would just be a useless device. However, the software by itself cannot do anything. It needs the instrument to load

the applications. Both are needed, isn't it? Yes, both are needed but without a power source, the instrument will not work.

Our body is also made up of the hardware - the gross body, the software - the mind, and a power source. In our case, unlike in any machinery, the power source is invisible and intangible. This power source or Life Energy is the Soul, Spirit or *Atman*.

A lot of people agree that other than the body, mind, and ego there seems to be the Divine Soul or Life Energy. Some people call it the Spirit, *Prana* or *Chi.* The Soul is grossly misunderstood. We even think that there are good Souls and bad Souls. We don't realize that the Soul is the energy which gives us life. The Soul energy is in every living creature but are we the Soul or are we energized by the Soul? A light bulb is energized by electricity, but the electricity is not a part of the bulb. The bulb emits light only with electricity. Without it, it would be dead. So are we. We are alive only because of the Soul or Life Energy but what we don't understand is - are we the ego, the mind, the body or are we the Soul?

5. Who are we?

Seekers who go on a quest for the Truth are sometimes lucky to realize that in fact, we are the Soul, not the ego,

mind or body which we seem to be. Because we live in ignorance, we suffer and we die. Very few of us are blessed to realize that we are not this body, we are not this mind nor are we the ego that thinks that we are the body-mind complex. The Truth is that we are the Soul, Spirit, *Atman* or the Life Energy.

The ultimate goal of human life is to realize the self. Self-realization leads to the Truth. But most humans, over 99% people, do not realize the Truth before they die. We cannot 'discover' who we are, we have to 'realize' this Truth. Thus, the term 'self-realization' means - when we realize what we are not, then we can actually realize who we truly are.

There are various methods of realizing who we are. One must go on a passionate quest if one is committed to realizing the Truth of who we truly are.

Am I the ego, body or mind?
Who am I? - This Truth I must find.
You can't kill me with any knife.
I am the Divine Energy called life.

CHAPTER 9

MIND - FRIEND OR FOE?

Can we actually find the mind?

1. What in reality is the mind?

Generally, the mind is considered to be a subtle part of the body. The body is the hardware and the mind is the software. Along with the power supply, the body-machine works. It is considered that the mind not only thinks but feels, discriminates, and decides. It also registers everything in the memory and recalls it when needed.

The mind doesn't sleep when the body sleeps, instead, it goes on a fantasy trip - it dreams or it shakes us up in a nightmare. While this is the common understanding of the mind, in reality, it is not so. The mind is only a thought-factory, like a popcorn machine. It constantly manufactures thoughts. It is said to think over 50 thoughts a minute, which can be over 50,000 thoughts a day - this primarily is the mind.

2. What is the inner instrument?

The mind along with the intellect, memory, and the ego forms the subtle body or inner instrument. While the mind thinks, the memory is that part of the instrument which records everything that happens in our life and stores it. If we want to recall something, we take help of the memory.

Another part of the subtle instrument is the intellect. This is the faculty that discriminates and decides. It is a very

important part of life as it differentiates the Truth from the myth. It makes our choices and develops the willpower to decide our destiny. Most people get confused and think the mind, the intellect, and the memory to be the mind, instead of it being the inner subtle instrument.

3. What is the difference between the mind, intellect, and memory?

There is a distinct difference between the three aspects of the subtle body. The mind has the simple function to think, the intellect has the faculty to discriminate and decide. The memory is that part of the subtle body that records and recalls. All the three are distinctly different and they are all not the mind, but the subtle instrument or the subtle body, together known as our Inner Instrument.

4. Is the mind a genius or a rascal?

Now that we know what exactly the mind is - is it the king of our subtle body or a monkey that creates a nuisance? The Truth is that the mind is our biggest enemy as it constantly produces thoughts that make us unhappy. It jumps from the past to the future and doesn't let us remain peacefully and blissfully in the present.

Most of us think that the mind is a genius when in reality it is a rascal. We think that the mind is the intellect and the memory, which it is not. In fact, we have to transcend the

mind to realize the Truth of who we are and to be liberated from misery and sorrow. We must kill the mind before the mind kills us. It is unfortunate that most of us do not know what the mind is.

5. How do I control the mind?

The mind is constantly thinking. It is producing thoughts and it has an MTR (Mental Thought Rate) of about 50 thoughts per minute. This is practically a new thought every second. The only way of controlling the mind is to reduce the MTR and control the mind from constantly thinking up to 50,000 thoughts a day

Have you ever seen a fish full of life? It becomes impossible to catch that fish. While a fish that lacks oxygen or one that is about to die can be effortlessly caught, so is it with the mind. We have to tame the mind. We have to transform it from a monkey to a monk, one that is constantly jumping from thought to thought to one that is in silent contemplation. This is the only way to control the mind. Unless we realize that we are not the mind and understand that in reality, it is a rascal, we will not be able to tame the mind. We must observe it, and try to control it so that it does not make us stressed, anxious and miserable.

6. Where is the Mind?

We all know that we have a mind. Is there any doubt about it? While a body scan will identify the heart, the kidneys, the lungs, and the brain, it cannot depict the mind. Where is the mind?

There was once a king who went to a saint with a complaint that he was restless and had lost his peace of mind. His mind was very disturbed, and he asked the great sage for help. The saint replied, "You don't have to do anything. Just bring your mind to me." The king was confused. The saint said, "Come in the morning at dawn, but remember to bring your mind with you." The king was very confused. He wondered what the saint meant when he said, "Bring your mind." How could he go without his mind? He even thought of dropping the idea, but out of respect for the saint, he went the next morning. The saint asked him, "Where is your mind? Have you brought it?" The king smiled and asked, "How can I come without my mind? It is in me." The saint told him that it is good that he realized that. The next instruction he gave the king was, "Close your eyes, and find out where your mind is. The moment you find it, inform me, and I will make it peaceful." The king closed his eyes and searched for his mind within. He searched hard, only to realize that there was no mind.

Yes, this is a fact. The mind is an illusion. It is only an activity of the brain and as such it does not exist. When the brain activity becomes very intense and we are bulldozed by negative thoughts, we consider it to be the work of our

stressed-out mind. Isn’t it strange that we thought that our mind was our best friend but actually it is our worst enemy? The mind is a rascal. It is not our friend, rather our biggest foe. But because we don't realize the Truth, we live and die in ignorance.

Friend or foe what is the mind?
It’s a rascal this Truth we must find.
It jumps like a monkey from trunk to trunk,
Till we make it a silent monk.

CHAPTER 10

WHAT EXACTLY IS THE SOUL?

What is this power, the spirit, and the energy within?

1. What is the Soul?

The Soul is the Life Energy that keeps an individual alive. In Hinduism, it is called *Atman* or *Prana* and in China, it is called *Chi.* The Soul arrives at birth and departs at death. It is invisible and intangible. It is beyond human comprehension and definition. The Soul can be equated to the electricity in a bulb that enables it to glow, without energy the bulb would be dead. Nobody can see the Soul but it manifests in every cell of the body.

2. Are there good Souls and bad Souls?

While people believe individuals have a good Soul and a bad Soul, this is not true. There are no good or bad Souls. The Soul in me is the same as the Soul in you. It is the same Life Energy that gives us life.

A child once went to a man filling gas balloons. The man was filling different coloured balloons and was tying them with his gas tank to attract children's attention. The child watched him filling gas into a blue, a green, a yellow, orange, red, and white balloon. He then asked him, "If you fill gas in a black balloon, will that go up in the sky too?" "Of course!" said the balloon seller, "It's not the colour of the balloon that matters, it's what goes inside it."

3. What happens to the Soul after death?

Death happens when the Soul leaves the human body.

There is no breath and it is termed as death. The entire body stops functioning. Nothing on earth can make it live again. This is because the Soul leaves every cell of the body. It is as if the Soul was in the 37 trillion cells that constitute an average human being. Do we know what happens to the Soul? No, all we know is that it leaves the body and merges with the consciousness that is everywhere. We infer this because we see a person alive in front of us and the next moment, the Life Energy leaves the body. Just like when we blow air into a balloon, the dead piece of rubber suddenly seems to be full of life. Now, when we deflate the balloon, where does the air go? The air merges with the air that is everywhere. So does the Soul!

4. Is the Soul reborn?

The Soul is the Life Energy provided to a human being that comprises a body and mind. The body dies and returns to dust. The Soul departs into consciousness. It is only the mind that is said to be reborn. The Soul is only the Life Power. It does not take birth again and again. It only facilitates life.

5. What is the connection between Soul and God?

On deep contemplation, one may realize that the Soul is a Power that gives life. God is also the Power that is omnipresent. Thus, it is inferred that the Soul that is inside the body is nothing but a part of the God-Power and it

leaves the body to merge with God, the power that is everywhere. Therefore, looking at it inversely, it is the God Power that is everywhere and is also inside us as the Life Energy within.

If the Soul is a very important aspect of our life, then why have we not contemplated further? In fact, the Soul is everything. It is not just the life energy within, but the God-Power that is everywhere. Shouldn't we stop to understand the Soul more?

What exactly is the Soul?
Some call it Spirit that makes our life whole.
It is the one that gives us breath,
Without it, there would be death.

CHAPTER 11

WHAT SHOULD BE OUR LIFE PHILOSOPHY?

Or shall we just drift through life?

1. What is the purpose of our life?

We are quite unaware of the subject 'life'. We don't know what happens before birth and after death. We are only aware of the period between birth and death. What can be the purpose of a human being who lives less than a hundred years? Those who reflect earnestly realize the Truth. Our purpose is to realize who we truly are and why we are here. Once we realize the Truth then our priorities will change. Till we don't realize we live a life of illusion and mistaken identity. In the end, we suffer because of our own ignorance. The purpose of our life is the realization of the Truth.

2. How do we discriminate between good and bad?

This is very tricky because what is good for somebody becomes bad for somebody else based on their culture, their religion, and their lifestyle. Therefore, there is no general definition of good and bad. It is up to each one of us to use our intellect and its power of discrimination to decide what is good and what is bad and then to act accordingly.

Further, every country has its own laws that define what should not be done just like families, societies, and religions have their own guidelines.

3. Of course, money is important but how much should we earn?

Everybody needs money to survive, for food, clothing, and shelter but because we do not understand who we are and what is our life purpose, we have gotten to believe that the purpose of life is to make money. We make our greed our need and our God, and thus we suffer. We must learn to live with contentment and define our need. We must not let our greed take charge.

4. How important is God and prayer?

To somebody who has not understood life and who has not found answers to some important questions, God and prayer are not important. Their ignorance puts God as the last priority. But for somebody who has realized the Truth, prayer becomes the most important priority of life. If you had a stone in your garden that hurt your foot every time you walk, you would pick it up and throw it away, but if you knew that it was the largest uncut diamond of the world you would treasure it beyond anything else. We must learn to value God and prayer but we cannot do it till we realize their true worth.

5. How much importance should I give to the world outside?

The world outside is just like a drama or a movie that we

see, the only difference is that in the world we are not just the observers but also the actors.

Unfortunately, we get so engrossed in the act that we do not view the world as a huge cosmic drama. We get so involved with the world outside that we lose connection with what is inside.

Our life philosophy, therefore, must be based on the quest to find the meaning of life. Most of us just exist, we don't live. If we have to open a new business, we spend a lot of time investigating the pros and cons of the new venture, but we don't consider our life so important as to contemplate further. Most people don't bother to find out who they truly are, why there are alive, and what happens to them after death. Isn't our life the most important area that we should focus on?

> **What is our purpose of life on earth?**
> **Why this life? Why this birth?**
> **We must find out why we are born…**
> **And achieve our purpose before**
> **death blows its horn.**

CHAPTER 12

HOW IMPORTANT IS SUCCESS AND MONEY?

Why is the whole world running behind achievement?

1. Is success our ultimate goal?

We have wrongly defined success as an achievement in financial terms. We pay attention to physical aspects, emotional conditions, and intellectual growth but do not pay attention to our spiritual growth.

Success is achievement, but the more important aspect is what are we trying to achieve. If we are only achieving success in our business, is that true success? Does success only mean just having a happy family? To some, success is about school and college grades. What do you consider success to be? While success can be our ultimate goal, we should define where we want this achievement. If we can achieve success in the realization of the Truth, then that is ultimate success!

2. Is money the most important aspect of life?

The world definitely thinks so. Majority of people will not even get into a discussion about this. People have concluded money to be the only priority and the most important resource of life. There is no doubt that money is important, in fact, very important! But those who realize the Truth understand that money is important only up to a point. Then we have to evolve to understand things that are far more important than money. A billionaire who was told that he has only five more minutes to live, understood

the uselessness of money when his billions could not extend his life even by a few minutes. Despite all his money, he lived with fear and insecurity without realizing the Truth about himself and God.

3. What is true success?

True success is knowing who we are and why we are here. True success is happiness, peace, and liberation from misery and sorrow. It is being wealthy in procuring those things that money can't buy. True success is spiritual achievement, being able to realize the spirit or Life Energy within. True success is overcoming the ignorance that we live and die with.

4. What will happen to our wealth after we die?

Is there any way for an individual to carry their monetary wealth with them after death? Some people, who live in ignorance, think that they can but those who realize the Truth know that they cannot. The moment we die everything that belongs to us like cash in our pockets, money in the bank, properties, gold, jewellery, cars, cease to belong to us. We earn and earn but we don't realize that what we earn, others will burn. So, should we not rather spend before our end, so that when we die the world will cry? Of what use is it to have money in the bank when there is no life left in the body? We must eradicate this

ignorance before we die. It's sad that most of humanity lives and dies in deep ignorance not realizing what true success is.

Of course, we all need money.
It is as sweet if not sweeter than honey.
But if money made us happy
the rich would be glad,
But we find that many of them are sad.

CHAPTER 13

WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF RELATIONSHIPS?

Can we live a life of solitude?

1. How important is our family?

Are families very important? We are born from our parents and after birth, they take care of us till we can be independent in all aspects. The Creator has programmed it such, but today the real value of a family is lost. Of course, each family is very different and each person in the family is not the same. What we need to value are the relationships in a family.

John had parents who never bothered about him and he was practically raised in his neighbour's house. He was fed by his neighbours, scolded by them and even taught the basics of life by them. When John became a millionaire, the first thing he did was to build a new house for the neighbours who were his mother and father in the real sense. When his parents by blood reached out to him, he responded indifferently.

While family is very important, it is genuine relationships that must be treasured and valued.

2. Should we not enjoy with friends?

Who doesn't like to have fun with friends? While it is great to do so, is that the objective of life? Building true friendships is amazing, but our friendship must grow on positive values and bonds. If because of our friends, we pick up horrible habits, how can such friendship be good? While it is good to spend time with friends, we must

realize that there is limited time in our lives, and we must budget our time just like we budget our money. If friendship could help us evolve as a human being, then one should invest all their time in such friendship.

3. Will relationships continue after death?

What are relationships? Relationships known to man are the bondings of the body and mind. Therefore, when the body dies, the relationships come to an end. But unfortunately, we live in ignorance that makes us believe that the relationships don't cease to exist. We have that concocted imagination that even after a person dies, the person lives somewhere in the skies and the relationships continue beyond death. If one contemplates the Truth, one will change the entire paradigm of life. Now, presume that somebody has realized that they are not the body and mind but the Soul, then in such a case, the relationship continues because one feels the Soulful connections even after death. The body has died, and there is no relationship with the body, but the Soul is immortal. Relationships between Souls last forever.

4. Why do we get attached to people?

Because we think we are the body-mind complex, we get attached to people who we believe belong to us. “This is my father and this is my mother.” “I love my wife, and my

children are the most important people in my life." What creates these egotistic statements? It is ignorance. The fact that we believe - 'we are the body', makes us attached to people. The moment we realize that the relationships of the body are temporary, we would not be attached. Suppose you were in a drama in which you were the wife of an actor, would you get attached to that actor? Of course not! You have your husband and children at home whom you love very much. The drama is just a temporary act. What you don't realize is that even your husband and children at home are nothing more than a temporary act of the drama. When the curtains of life are drawn, these relationships don't mean anything. However, if we build Soulful connections based on the principles of realization, we will enjoy the blissful connections that are not based on any attachment.

Therefore, while relationships are very important, we must focus on Soulful relationships which are based on universal love and a spiritual connection.

People make us happy, people make us glad,
Friends are those who stop us from being sad.
But if we get attached to people in life,
We are sure to suffer and live in strife.

CHAPTER 14

HOW IMPORTANT IS SERVING THE POOR?

Is compassion for suffering humanity important?

1. Is it necessary to serve the poor?

What is necessary and what is not, this depends upon the question - 'What is important to us?' There are people who wonder why they should help others and they think why others can't help themselves. They don't understand the basics of life. If we think we are just the body, and life just starts and ends, and our good deeds have no meaning, then we believe that there is no need to serve others. However, if we feel that the law of the boomerang exists - what goes around comes around, then we serve others with the hope that if we are in need, others will reach out to help us. If we are evolved beings, then we serve others as the Soul that they actually are, not the body they seem to be.

2. Why do we feel good when we help others?

It is a natural inbuilt feature of a human being that the best way for us to be happy is to make others happy. We, human beings are emotional creatures and when we serve others with this feeling of goodness, not only does it go out to the ones we serve but also goes within us, pulling the strings of our heart, creating the joy of compassion and love within. If you would like to experiment this, try it out. Stop whatever you are doing now and try to serve somebody, of course, without irritating them and you will find a deep sense of satisfaction. If you can go to the street

or to a charitable institution where you find people who are in need, let your compassion touch them and you will feel a sense of amazing peace and joy. Try it!

3. Will good deeds be rewarded in the future?

Several universal laws that exist are reason enough for us to believe that good deeds are not wasted. If we plant mangoes, won't we get mangoes? If we expect potatoes, then we are fools. The Universal Law of action and reaction, cause and effect, tells us that our good deeds will be returned with goodness in the future. Therefore, every good deed is an investment. The Law of Karma tells us that our current state of affairs is a result of our past deeds, just as our present actions will be the cause of our future.

4. What is the Truth behind the statement, Service to suffering humanity is prayer to God?

Those who realize that when we serve the poor and the suffering, we are not serving the body but touching the Soul within - they realize that this service is nothing less than a prayer to God. How else can one serve God? While God doesn't need our service, the only way to love God is to serve the God in the poor and the suffering. Those who look at the poor only on the surface sometimes feel that they are dirty and sick human beings that don't deserve any attention. There are some who think that they are

suffering due to their own past bad deeds. This should not be our paradigm. We must learn to see the Soul within, the life that is within those who are suffering as nothing less than God, and when we serve them, it is loving and praying to God. Serving Humanity is Prayer!

If we have never served the poor,
If compassion has not entered our door,
If we have never ever been kind,
Then we must know that we are blind.

CHAPTER 15

WHAT IS THE USE OF MEDITATION?

Do we even know the real meaning of meditation?

1. What is meditation?

The dictionary defines meditation as an act of giving your attention to only one thing at a time. Thus, it means being focused. While there is some clarity in the definition, there seems to be confusion in the real understanding of the term. Those who truly understand the mind and its thoughts, are actually able to meditate effectively. The mind thinks up to fifty thoughts a minute. While we are on one thought, like a monkey that jumps from one branch to the other, the mind jumps from one thought to another. Meditation is about reducing the Mental Thought Rate - MTR. Some people try to focus on one thought or one object - like a candle or a rock in the centre of the ocean or just on Soulful music. There is no guarantee that they are meditating. If their mind is agitated, there is no way they can meditate. Meditation is about calming the mind and letting it focus on one thought at a time, this is true meditation.

2. How does meditation help?

Meditation calms the mind and the body. This creates peace which is the foundation of happiness. Where there is no peace, there can be no joy and where there is no meditation there can be no peace. Thus, in reality, a state of meditation controls the state of bliss. Further, a meditative mind is able to focus on our issues, challenges, and

opportunities with full attention and this derives the best possible results.

3. How should we actually meditate?

There is no standard method of meditation. While it is prescribed to sit in a particular posture with the backbone erect, experts have suggested that an individual must create a meditative posture in which the body and mind are most relaxed. Of course, it should not be such that one falls asleep. Meditation is about being conscious of our thought. Often our senses - eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin disturb our meditation and it is best that they are shut from the outside world as much as possible. The mind will still jump from thought to thought. Meditation is all about taming the monkey mind and turning the monkey into a monk.

4. What is the ultimate purpose of meditation?

The ultimate purpose of meditation is deep introspection about life and contemplation on the realm beyond common understanding. It is a big challenge for us to realize that we are not the body and we are not the mind. The mind consciously distracts us from such meditation because on realization of the Truth, the mind ceases to exist. The ultimate purpose of meditation is to become aware and to be conscious of who we truly are. In such a

state we transcend the ego and mind and attain the state of *Nirvana* or Eternal Bliss.

While meditation seems to be a fancy practice, it is a basic need of humanity, and unless we learn to spend time in spells of silence we will never be able to attain peace, bliss and everlasting joy. Meditation is the key to answer some of the critical questions about life.

> **We live with confusion.**
> **We don't know the**
> **real meaning of meditation.**
> **It's not about a still body and**
> **a wandering mind,**
> **But when the mind is still,**
> **then Peace and Joy we will find.**

CHAPTER 16

CAN WE ESCAPE FROM ACTION?

What should we do and what not?

1. Can anybody escape from action?

No living being can escape from action. When we wake up in the morning we have to get up and do something - we can't just remain in bed forever. It may be going to the toilet or going to work. Every human being has to act. It is a different point that we need to act to make a living and still another point that we would get bored doing nothing, but the Creator has made it such that nobody can escape from action. We can escape action for a day or a few days, but we cannot escape action all our life. When we are in action, our entire being is involved, both body and mind are engaged in what we do.

2. Can we live doing nothing at all?

There are some people who are known to be good for nothing. They do nothing at all but still, they act. Either they beg for food or they cook their food but they are not free from action. Different people may do different things, but everybody has to do something. It is not possible to do nothing.

3. What is the meaning of - We can have freedom in action and not freedom from action?

While it is impossible to be free from action, it is possible to have freedom in action. What is freedom in action all about? Our actions are normally connected to our

thoughts and the desires that motivate them. Whatever we do apart from some of the natural actions, we do to fulfil our objectives. We start a business to make money, we fall in love so that we build a relationship with the person we seek, and we study because we want to achieve academic excellence. Most of our actions are thus result driven. We don't do something for nothing. More importantly, we get engaged in the action as the doer of that action. “I am the painter and this is my painting.” The ego gets deeply connected with the action and we are unable to detach ourselves from the action and the results thereof. This combination of the ego and desires, ultimately makes us prisoners of actions. What is freedom in action? It is doing things without expectation of any results and without the feeling of being the doer. When we act with this perspective and paradigm, although we are in action, there is freedom in action.

We do something as the instrument, rather than as the doer. We are not affected by the results but are more focused on doing our best. Therefore, although we are in action, we are free from the expectation of a result of that action.

Though there is no freedom from action, there is freedom in action. It is natural at first to have some expectation from our actions. When we greet somebody, we expect them to reply. If they don’t, we get disappointed. A person who

enjoys freedom in action doesn't get disappointed. The person, who doesn't react to whatever is happening around him, is more of an observer rather than the actor. Once the action is done, he is free from it and this is the way to happiness.

It is very difficult to achieve freedom in action because our mind automatically sets expectations for every action, and thus we become prisoners of our own action. Wise sages have advocated that we can't have freedom from action, but develop the ability to have freedom in action. This will make us live with dispassion and detachment. This is the formula of peace and joy.

Therefore, while none of us can escape from action, we can escape from the ownership of the action if we realize the Truth of who we are. Then although we are doing an action, it is not our action. Actions are happening through us but not by us, we act on behalf of a power as an instrument that moves to fulfil the directions of that power. This is not an easy state to achieve but if we want to be free from the clutches of actions and the desires that the ego seeks thereafter, then this is the way.

Whoever is alive here on earth,
Cannot escape from action after their birth.
But the one who realizes that the doer is not he,
He is the one who, from action, is free.

CHAPTER 17

WHAT MUST SCHOOLING, KNOWLEDGE, AND WISDOM ULTIMATELY LEAD TO?

What is real learning all about?

1. Is it important to be schooled in worldly subjects?

We all go through school and then college and university. How important is it? Education is very important because it develops the mind to communicate and to live. Imagine, if we do not know any language. Then how would we effectively live in the world? Education for the mind is like oxygen to the human body. It develops skills and gives us basic understanding. However, while we get schooled in many subjects, do we become a master in all of them? We don't! As we grow, we specialize in the areas of our interest and obtain masters in subjects that we want to pursue in our life. However, have you ever thought of the importance of education in your life? Most of us do not pay attention to such a subject, when in reality this is probably one of the most critical decisions that can make our future and our life.

2. Is there something more important than book-knowledge?

Education should go beyond book-knowledge. Knowledge from books is just the first level of education. Once we gain book-knowledge, we must use our intellect to contemplate and introspect. If we do not do so, then we can be taught garbage and we will accept it. It is sad that today some children are brainwashed with knowledge that is actually an incorrect philosophy, but for how long

can they be tutored with junk?

We all are blessed with an intellect that can discriminate. While education influences our mind a lot, the intellect goes beyond education and is responsible for discrimination and the choices we make. Therefore, more important than just studying at school or college is developing the mind and the intellect to not just read but to interpret and utilize the acquired skills. It is also critical to develop that knowledge and learning for the right purpose – first, for our own well-being, second, socially and then more importantly, spiritually. We all need knowledge and skills to live in a family or society and for economic reasons, but we must develop ethics and values which are more important for our ultimate evolution.

3. How is wisdom different from knowledge?

Unless we use our education and our knowledge effectively, we will not acquire true wisdom. What is the difference between a wise person and a fool?

A wise person is able to make use of his education and learning to make sensible decisions and judgement, not only using book-knowledge but also processing it through the intellect. A fool may directly act on book-knowledge without, what is called, common sense. Wisdom not only acts on knowledge but uses experience and virtues like

compassion and ethics, to make wise decisions. Knowledge may have all the facts that we acquire from our book study, but wisdom helps us use this knowledge along with our intellect. Most of us are so engrossed in knowledge that we do not acquire enough wisdom.

4. Is there something beyond wisdom?

While the world battles between knowledge and wisdom, we only touch the tip of the iceberg. Knowledge and wisdom have to evolve into a direct experience of the Truth and this is the third level - the first being knowledge, the second, wisdom, and the third, realization. Knowledge gives us information that is needed to live, socially and economically. Wisdom goes a step beyond and gives us the power of discrimination and choice that will lead to our well-being and happiness. But realization leads us to the ultimate Truth of who we are and why we are here, and eliminates misery and sorrow to lead us not only to ultimate bliss and happiness, but also a peace that surpasses common understanding. It makes us awaken our super conscious to directly experience the Truth which cannot be perceived by the mind. This happens when we evolve from the study of the body and mind to the realization of the Soul. Most people will not even understand this but this is the true and ultimate goal of life.

There is no use of being highly schooled, and all our college-training is a waste if we do not develop the wisdom to live successfully. Beyond this, all our success is a waste if we do not realize who we are and why we are here. If we live and die but don't know the answers to these questions, then what is the use of knowledge and even wisdom?

> **Knowledge and books are just a tool,**
> **But they become a priority of every fool.**
> **The one who realizes that there's another goal…**
> **He realizes that he is the Soul.**

CHAPTER 18

WHAT CAME FIRST - CHICKEN OR EGG?

Will you find an answer to the question that is unanswered from ages?

1. Do you know what came first?

Where did the chicken come from? Of course, it came from the egg. But where did the egg come from? It came from the chicken. But where did the chicken come from? This question has been there since eternity and people think there is no answer to this question. The chicken says, "I came first." But if there was no egg then how could the chicken come? The egg retorts, "Hello Mr. Chicken, how could you be born if there was no egg? Obviously, the egg came first." This question has an answer but only to those who realize the Truth. They understand the Law of Causation - for every effect, there is a cause, without the cause there can be no effect. Gold is the cause and the ring, the bangle, and the necklace are just effects. If you take out the gold, there will be no ring or bangle or necklace. These jewellery pieces are the manifestations of gold. The Creator manifests as the chicken and the egg. They both are the effects of the cause that is the Creator, and so are all the other natural creations.

2. What is the story of your great-grandfather?

You know the name of your grandfather and probably his grandfather, but try to find the details of the great-grandfather of the great-grandfather of your great-grandfather. Probably you will blank out, and you will surely blank out if you try to go to the source. What was the

beginning? How did it all start? Everything is a manifestation of the Creator, the power we call God.

3. Tree or Seed?

How did the tree come about? It came from the seed, then there were the roots, the shoots and the fruits and from the tree came the seed. But what came first? The tree came from the seed but the seed came from the tree. We have time to eat the fruits that come from the tree, but we have no time to find out what came first, the tree or the seed.

4. Why do we earn for others to burn?

We human beings are very strange because we don't know the name of the great-grandfather of our great-grandfather, but we want to leave all our money to the great-grandson of our great-grandson. It is ironical that we live in ignorance not realizing the Truth. Everything is a manifestation. Nothing is real, but we don't want to introspect to realize the Truth. We earn and earn for others to burn. Isn't it rather better that we should spend before our end so that when we die the world will cry?

We must learn to ask questions, because if we do not learn to ask questions then we will not have enough answers to lead us to investigate and realize the Truth.

Chicken or Egg what came first on earth?
What was the one that first took birth?
If you get to the bottom of the root,
You will realize the Divine Truth.

CHAPTER 19

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY?

Is your religion the only real religion?

1. What is religion?

Religion is an organized system of believing in God. There are many religions in the world and the most popular religions are Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism which account for the religion of over 70% of the world population. Each religion has its own rituals and its own scripture. Each believes that its God is the real God and is the only God. Each thinks that its God is the supreme power that created the universe and controls it. Followers of religions believe that the God other religions believe in, is not the real God of the universe. Each religion tries to promote its expansion and reaches out to people by drawing and converting them from other religions to their faith.

2. Is religion important?

Religion is very important because it is the kindergarten to spirituality. As young kids we need an introduction to God. Religion teaches us about God by giving God a name and even form so that young minds can comprehend God. Without religion how would infants grow into adults with faith, hope, trust, belief, and enthusiasm? Religion does this favour to humanity but unfortunately, it doesn't permit us to grow beyond religion and to realize the Truth.

3. Why are there so many religions?

There are many religions because of ignorance. Humanity

understands that there cannot be many Gods. But still, we think our religion is the most important and the only true religion. Further, due to ignorance, we promote some saint as a God and create new religions. Those who are in control of the most popular religions spend all their money and power to promote their religion. If people asked relevant questions and contemplated the Truth, they would realize that God is just one power and all the religions are referring to that one power. While there are many religions, the Truth is that all the religions are talking of the same God with a different name and form. It is like Indians call water as paani, in France, they call it eau, in Spanish agua, and in Arabic ma'an. It is the same water with different names. Similarly, there may be many religions but there is only one God.

4. What is spirituality?

Spirituality is the study of the spirit and the science that goes beyond religious beliefs. A person in quest of the Truth of the spirit, or the Soul, the *Atman,* or the inner Life Energy doesn't follow any religion blindly. Normally, spirituality grows from religion but goes beyond religion. It tries to realize the Truth about the self and God. It asks questions at every step so that it can reach the root of the Truth. Spirituality believes God to be a power, not one who has a name or form. Spirituality realizes we are not the body or the mind but rather, the Divine Spirit, the Soul or the Life Energy within.

5. What is the difference between religion and spirituality?

Both religion and spirituality are a quest for God - the Creator. However, religions believe in a prescribed set of rituals and belief systems. Each religion thinks that its God is supreme. Each considers its scripture to be the supreme law. Spirituality, however, is an evolved form of religion. While religion is the kindergarten to spirituality, spirituality evolves much further to the realization of the Truth. Followers of religions generally do not question their religion, but spirituality encourages introspection and contemplation that questions anything and everything.

Religion prescribes certain dogmas and superstitions, but spirituality focuses on the Truth and nothing but the Truth. Religions believe in the Day of Judgement or even rebirth to redeem our actions but spirituality advocates the liberation of the Soul as the ultimate goal.

6. How can we become spiritual?

We can become spiritual when we go beyond our religion and evolve. We cannot start with spirituality. Normally, we need a religion to build a foundation of our faith in God. But somehow, we get stuck in this kindergarten of nascent belief. As children, we wear short pants but as we grow into adults, we prefer full pants but somehow, even

though we grow, we remain in the infancy of religion than evolving spiritually. We can become spiritual only if we ask questions, investigate our findings until we realize the Truth. We become spiritual when we realize that God cannot be made up of flesh and bone. God cannot be mortal. God is a power beyond human comprehension and this is the gift of being spiritual. We become spiritual when we refuse to accept or follow certain rituals. Spirituality doesn't accept superstitions. To be spiritual, means to pray to a power that is omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient. If we want to grow spiritually, we must become conscious of the power that is everywhere.

Religion makes us believe in God,
It tells each one who is our Lord.
Spirituality takes us to the ultimate goal…
That we are not the body and mind but the Soul.

CHAPTER 20

IS PRAYER AND FAITH IMPORTANT?

Do we know what prayer truly is?

1. How important is prayer?

What is prayer? We pray but we don't know what we say. We don't know who we pray to. We just pray. Prayer is communicating with the Creator - the one who gave us life, the one who created the universe. How can we underestimate the importance of prayer? We live with ignorance, without effectively praying and communicating with the Creator and this is not effective prayer. Prayer is very important if we understand what it is. It is building a relationship with God, it is expressing our gratitude and our love. How can we ignore prayer?

2. To whom should we pray?

While we pray, most people don't understand who is God, where is God, and what is God. As children, we are taught to pray to our God. A God that is the God of our religion. We are made to believe that all other Gods are 'Not Real Gods or of lesser importance and our God is the only God. Thus, we create a personal God with a name and form and pray to that God as the supreme power. Some people pray to a power without knowing who the power is. In the ancient days, people used to pray to the Sun God, Wind God, and the Water God. All prayers are to the Almighty - the Lord, our God or the Creator of the universe.

3. How should we pray?

Prayer is generally divided into three kinds. The first

prayer is where the entire body and mind prays – there is action, sound, and thought. People evolve to the second level of prayer where they are conscious of God and there is just singing. There is no action involved. The highest method is said to be the prayer where there is no sound at all, where there is both silence and stillness. Where the heart, mind, and Soul communicate. While this kind of prayer is said to be the most evolved one, prayer should be a genuine communication with the Creator. It really doesn't matter how we pray as long as we effectively communicate. True prayer is loving God, shedding tears for our beloved, the Divine.

4. What is belief? How does it happen?

Praying to a God that we don't believe in is not a true prayer. When we believe in God, we trust the Power. We live with faith, hope, and enthusiasm. This is belief. It is surrender to the Divine Will and accepting whatever happens as a gift from God. If we don't believe in God, then prayer has no meaning. But when prayer is built on a foundation of belief and trust, it becomes very effective.

5. What is the ultimate goal of prayer?

The ultimate goal of prayer is unification with God. It first starts with purification where we live a pure life with values and ethics. The second level is illumination, where

we gain the knowledge of the Truth and we realize who we truly are. The final objective of prayer is unification - where we are liberated from the body and mind and we become one with the Divine.

Everybody prays for peace and happiness but we live a life of both joy and sorrow. Prayer can eliminate our miseries. It is said that four types of devotees go to the Lord to pray– the first go to the Lord with problems. As they are worried and have no option, they go in helplessness. The second ones go to God with desires, hopes, and wishes asking the Lord to fulfil their prayer. The third pray for the realization of the Truth and liberation. And the fourth pray because they have already realized that the Divine Energy is within their own heart. They are embodied Souls and they pray to be liberated at death, seeking Divine grace so that they are not overpowered by ego, mind, and body.

While most people pray out of fear or for favours or for ultimate fulfilment, whatever be the prayer, it is the most important act of our life. Unfortunately, we do not realize it while we are alive. Very few of us are fortunate to understand the true meaning of life and effectively pray with faith building a Divine connection before we die.

We can do very little with faith,
But we can do nothing without it.
And so without prayer,
Life would be a sad exit.

CHAPTER 21

WHAT IS ENLIGHTENMENT AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Is this the ultimate goal of life?

1.What is this concept of Enlightenment and is it our life goal?

Yes, the goal of human life is Enlightenment. Enlightenment, as the name suggests, is overcoming ignorance, the ignorance that makes us suffer in misery. This is caused by the cosmic illusion or Maya. We all live in an illusion, not knowing the reality of who we are and why we are here on earth. Because we live in darkness, the overcoming of darkness is called enlightenment. This is our life purpose and goal because by not being enlightened we suffer due to the ignorance that we live in.

Our ignorance makes us suffer the pain of the body and misery of the mind and when we realize the Truth we are liberated from this. Therefore, every human being must work towards enlightenment.

2.What is the difference between Enlightenment, Salvation, *Nirvana, Moksha, Mukti,* and Liberation?

All the above are different names for one and the same thing. When we realize the self, and realize the Truth of the Divine, we are liberated from ignorance and misery. This liberation leads us to unite with the Divine at death and not return in another birth to suffer again on earth.

3.Is knowledge of the Truth enlightenment?

No. We may have knowledge of the Truth but we may not

be enlightened because we may be still enslaved by the ego mind and body. The one who has knowledge is still not liberated till he wins the war over the body-mind completely.

We are embodied Souls and we need to realize the Truth that we have a body but we are not the body. We have a mind or so it seems but we are not the mind.

4.What happens to our Soul after Enlightenment?

Most people are confused about the concept of the Soul. People think that each individual has its own separate Soul. They don't realize that the Soul is a part of the cosmic consciousness that is universal and present everywhere.

When we attain enlightenment, at death, when we are free from the body-mind capsule we merge with the Cosmic Soul and we become one with the Divine, which is our ultimate goal.

5.Can a spiritual master or Divine Soul give us enlightenment?

A Guru or a spiritual mentor or master may lead us to our destination, but each one of us has to work on our own enlightenment. It's an individual thing. It is overcoming our ignorance. It is also activating our willpower and using the intellect to make wise choices that will liberate

us. Thus, spiritual masters can bless us, guide us and lead us forward, but it is our own efforts that will lead us to enlightenment.

6.What is the way to enlightenment?

It is said that one has to live a life of discrimination, of dispassion, of discipline and the desire for enlightenment. One has to be passionate to be liberated, one has to sacrifice the world to be free to unite with the Divine. If one is attached to the world, it is very difficult to be liberated and to be thus enlightened. Further, one must always be united or connected with the Divine Power to reach this state of enlightenment. For that, one must be in constant devotion, in silence and meditation and devoting one's actions to the Divine as one is constantly educating oneself with the wisdom of spiritual Truth.

7.Why is enlightenment important?

Enlightenment is the most important aspect of life as, without it, we live in ignorance. This ignorance makes us suffer in pain and misery. Further, this makes us live as the ego and mind only to return in an after-life. All this makes it so important to be enlightened and liberated.

Once we are enlightened, we experience a state of eternal peace and everlasting joy. We are free from fear, worry anger, stress, and all other negative emotions. Our life is as

light as a feather in the air, like a leaf tossed in the sea. We just surrender to the Divine and accept the Divine will post Enlightenment.

8.How does an enlightened being live?

Once a person is enlightened, and has realized the Truth, such a person glows with a spiritual aura. Such a person is not attracted to material possessions. Such a person transcends the ordinary desires of life and seeks the spiritual ecstasy known to a very few. Such a person lives without regrets of yesterday or fear of tomorrow.

An enlightened person sees the Divine in each living being, just as he views everything as a manifestation of the Divine. This realization makes an enlightened being live with joy unknown to common man.

We live in darkness, in ignorance we are bound,
Until the Divine light in our Soul is found.
This is Enlightenment, this is Salvation,
In simple words, it is liberation.

CHAPTER 22

WHY SHOULD WE ASK SO MANY QUESTIONS?

How will these answers help us?

1. Are questions important?

Just because somebody says something, it doesn't mean it is true. We must not hesitate to ask questions to realize the Truth. What are the questions? They are aspirations to know the Truth, to find answers that may not be already known. Sometimes we have doubts and we question to clarify our doubts. Therefore, questions are very important and we should not feel ashamed or embarrassed to ask questions.

2. After asking questions, then what?

When we ask questions, we often find answers that open a new thought process in our minds. There is no sense of asking a question and returning to our original state. After we ask questions and get answers, we must further investigate to find the Truth.

If we ask questions, but still do not get the right answers, we must not stop. Like the stone cutter, we should be persistent till we break our Rock - get the answers to our questions! Realization of the Truth and the discovery of oneself happens just like this. We should keep going on and on and on.

3. Are answers the end of our search?

Answers are not the end. They are rather the beginning of

our search for the Truth. Once we get answers, we investigate the relevance of the answers. We use our intellect to evaluate which answer is correct. In school, we were taught that 'Practice makes a man Perfect.' If we question the Truth of this statement, we realize that it is false. Nobody is perfect and how much ever we do, we can only practice to make improvements. Practice makes improvement and more practice makes more improvement. Nobody is perfect except God. Unless we ask questions, we tend to believe what we are taught, which may or may not be right. So first we must ask questions and then we must investigate the answer to realize the Truth.

4. What is True Realization?

Do you believe that you have a nose on your face? You don't need to believe it. You know that you have a nose. You can touch it and feel it. But you believe that there is God. Some things that have no proof are proven through inference. You can prove that it's your mobile phone because it opens with your fingerprints but you cannot prove that the law of gravity exists. You believe that the law exists out of inference. When you throw something up in the sky it doesn't fly away upwards, but it is pulled back to the earth and you infer that the force of gravity must be pulling it. Realization is using all forms of knowledge, proof, and inference, through introspection,

contemplation, and investigation to get to the ultimate Truth. It refers to realizing something which we did not know before. You may be searching for your pen for the past three days till you realize that you had given it away as a gift three days ago. You pray to a statue until you realize that God is not made up of mud and clay. The realization makes us change our belief as we evolve in our knowledge and wisdom and sometimes even after a spiritual experience.

5. What will realization ultimately lead to?

Realization ultimately leads to liberation from misery and sorrow. The term 'realization' must be first understood. It is the realization of the Truth, it is the ultimate understanding after introspection and investigation. When we realize the Truth about the self, then we also realize the Truth about God. Who are we? Are we the body? No, the body dies and we move on. Are we the mind? The realization makes us realize that the mind is an illusion and it doesn't exist. It is just a bundle of thoughts. When we realize what we are not, then we realize who we truly are. This realization gives us eternal peace and everlasting joy. It liberates us from misery and sorrow. It ultimately helps us escape from the cycle of death and rebirth leading us to *Nirvana* or *Moksha,* Salvation or Enlightenment.

How do we achieve the state of ultimate bliss? It is by asking questions. Without asking questions, we would never investigate to realize the Truth. Therefore, questions are very important and we must not hesitate to ask questions. We must not feel ashamed to ask questions in embarrassment of seeming foolish, nor should we hold back questions due to our duty towards our family or religion. We must be bold and ask questions! Unless we ask questions, we will never achieve the ultimate goal of life - the realization of the Truth.

If questions we don't ask,
then how will we know
that this world is not real, it's just a show!
Then we will face suffering of the body and mind,
Because what the Truth is, we will never find!

AFTERWORD

WHAT WERE THE QUESTIONS I ASKED IN MY LIFE?

Answers that transformed my life

Why did I focus on just making money for 25 years?

Right from the age of 16, I was passionate about achievement and success. For two and a half decades I did everything possible to make money and more money. I thought that the goal of life was success. I also thought that becoming more wealthy means becoming more successful. Like most of humanity I lived in this ignorance for 25 years. I didn't realize that in the end nothing will belong to me. However, I was in this rat race because everybody is. Most of us believe that success can buy happiness. Each success and every million I earned gave me a kick to go for the next. It was like being intoxicated until I woke up from this dream and transformed my life.

What happened at 40?

When I crossed 40, I decided to shut down my business. I got this realization that life was not just about making money. I found more happiness in making a difference. Earlier I thought that happiness was a peak - I called it Achievement and tried to go further up. Then I realized achievement can give pleasure but not peace. I took an exit on the highway of my life and transformed my life and my philosophy. I started doing H.I.S work – Humanitarian, Inspirational and Spiritual work. I found that this gave me far more contentment and fulfillment. I started feeling like I was the happiest man on earth till one day I was

questioned by my guru, "Why are you alive?".

This changed my life completely.

What made me transform my life again?

My mentor, my master, Dada J. P. Vaswani was very dear to me. I used to show him pictures of Antarctica and Alaska and the world I was exploring. One day, he laughed and told me, "You are on a plateau. You exist but you don't know who you truly are and what is your purpose of life on earth." He spoke to me about the Buddha and several other saints from various religions. He also provoked me to think about the Truth of life and death. He guided me and led me on a quest, a search. I called it my Talaash. My search was primarily to find answers to 9 questions.

What were the 9 questions in my Quest?

I started a quest to discover the Truth. My quest was made up of 9 specific questions.

1. We all know a child is conceived and born, but how is a life created in the womb?

2. What happens after Death? The body dies but what happens to the one who was alive?

3. We all believe in God. What is the reality? Who is God?

Where is God? What is God?

4. Most people believe in heaven or hell, but where are they physically located? Can we go there?

5. Does the Law of Karma actually exist? A law that states that the actions of this life will be the cause of our rebirth?

6. Is rebirth or reincarnation real? Are we really reborn after we die? Who is reborn?

7. We talk of a Soul. But what exactly is the Soul?

8. What is the purpose of life for us human beings who live on earth?

9. What is Enlightenment, Salvation, Liberation, *Mukti*, *Moksha* or *Nirvana?* All religions talk of this being our ultimate goal, but what exactly is this?

With these 9 questions in my mind, I set out to the mountains with just one objective - I must find answers to these questions. I had nothing else on my mind.

What did I do in my quest? How did I search for answers?

How should I find answers to the 9 questions that were my Quest - my search? They were the questions that every religion had answers to but each had their own take. Each

religion spoke of God, but it seemed like there were several Gods. This didn't make sense to me. I started reading all the scriptures of all the different religions.

I left the world and retreated into the mountains. For the first time, I did this alone. I was in the Himalayas just as I was in the Swiss Alps. But I spoke to nobody for days and weeks. I would read every scripture I took - the Bhagwad Gita, the Upanishads, and the Vedas. I carried the Bible and the Quran. I also carried the text of Guru Grant Sahib and several Buddhists scriptures. I was determined to find the answers. I became an expert scanner. There were several books by several spiritual philosophers and saints that were supporting my search. It was impossible for me to read every book fully but I scanned through all the scriptures and religious books.

What did I find? My quest led to certain findings. There is a God and there is no doubt about that. But, who is God? Where is God? What is God? It was not clear. The Hindus believed in their own personal Gods. They have 33 million Gods. The Christians believed in Jesus Christ and some of them in the Holy Trinity. The Muslims pray to Allah, but sometimes (although they are not supposed to), they pray to prophet Mohammad. It was all very confusing. I wanted to go beyond religion to find answers to the Truth. I retained my focus on the 9 questions I set out to answer. I did not want to be distracted. I had some realizations.

What were the 4 doors to realization?

I realized that the only way for me to realize the Truth was to pass through the 4 doors. The first door was discrimination. I could not believe everything that I read was true. Some things were true but others were not. We are all blessed with an intellect and we must use this power to discriminate between what is right and wrong. This was the first door to realizing the Truth. I started using my intellect as I was committed to finding answers.

The second door to realization was dispassion or detachment. As long as we are attached to things and people, we cannot realize the Truth. I tried to break away from all my passions with only one goal in mind. This was not easy, but I was committed. I moved on to the third door.

The third door is discipline. Without the discipline of the body and its senses, the mind, and its cravings, it is impossible to realize the Truth. I tried hard to discipline the body and mind, moving towards the ultimate door with faith, forbearance, and focus.

I found that the ultimate door to realization was the desire for God and liberation. Unless one truly seeks God, one will be drowned in superstitions and rituals. One is so brainwashed by what they have been taught, that their

intellect does not work. They don't discriminate and blindly believe. But the true lovers of God seek God and question everything that comes in front of them or stops them from God-realization. They go beyond and they realize the Truth.

What is the real meaning of yoga?

While the world thinks that yoga is exercise or physical gymnastics, the true meaning of yoga is something else. Yoga means union with God. I found that this was important as part of my search. Why?

We human beings are often lost in what is known as Maya or illusion. We think that this world is real but it is not. It is just like a dream. Finally, nothing matters. We come without anything and we go without anything. What matters is that we must be liberated and in union with the Divine. Unfortunately, we are not!

Observe your SIM card. It is always connected to a network. Without the network, there is no signal and there can be no communication. Yoga is like that, we need to be constantly connected. We must not disconnect.

There are 4 types of Yoga: the Yoga of Action, of Devotion, of Education and Meditation. Whatever we do, we must be in Yoga or in union with the Divine. Our actions must be as if we are an instrument of the Divine. Our devotion

should express our true love for the Divine. Our education must be in search of answers to the Truth. Meditation is making the mind still and thereby building a connection with the Divine. In my search, I, therefore, realized that being in Yoga was very important. Otherwise, I would be lost in the illusion of this world.

What were the 3 steps to the ultimate destination?

In my quest, I found that there were 3 steps before we arrive at liberation. They are Purification, Illumination, and Unification.

Purification is about removing all the impure thoughts, beliefs and baggage that we carry. Our life is filled with impurities. We have bad habits and desires, cravings and a host of negative emotions. We live with hate, fear, worry, jealousy, anxiety, stress, revenge and are unable to live with Faith and Hope. The first step is to purify our lives, to remove all the toxic elements and to cleanse our life. Without this cleansing process, I realized that I wouldn't find answers to my questions.

The next step is Illumination. It happens after our life becomes pure. Then one escapes from the darkness of ignorance. Suddenly, things unseen become visible and a spiritual light falls upon all those realizations which were earlier hidden. Without Illumination, it is difficult to go to the final step .

The final step is Unification. After Purification and Illumination if the grace of the Divine is upon us, then there is Unification. The energy within unites with the spiritual energy and liberates us from all misery and suffering.

All these discoveries helped me move forward in my search or quest. If I did not pass the 4 doors and understand yoga, I would not be able to answer many of the questions. Although I was moving forward rapidly, I found an enemy was stopping me from realizing the Truth. Who was this enemy?

Who is the enemy of Realization?

Most people find it difficult to believe that our own mind is the biggest enemy and that it stops us from the realization of the Truth, but I found this is true. Our mind is a rascal, it's like a monkey that keeps jumping from thought to thought as it thinks a new thought every second, up to 50 thousand thoughts a day. It doesn't let us contemplate the Truth. In fact, it is the enemy of realization. Today, I realize that if there is one thing that holds people back from knowing the answers, it is our own mind. Therefore, we have to transcend the mind.

How does one transcend the mind?

The first thing is that we must realize that the mind is

different from the memory and the intellect. Somehow, we think that the mind, the memory, and the intellect are all part of the mind but this is not true. I learned that the mind is the thought factory. Its job is to produce thoughts. This production of thoughts itself makes us drown and we are lost. If we want to find answers, we must activate our intellect. When we do so, we then transcend the mind and go beyond it. In fact, we control the mind and make the monkey mind into a monk making it quiet and controllable. The mind, which would otherwise live in the worries of the past and fears of the future, is tamed as it is transcended. This is done by our intellect when we passionately go on a quest and realize the Truth.

Without killing the rascal mind and taming the monkey into a monk I realized that it would be impossible to find answers to the questions that I was seeking. Once I tamed the mind, was I through or was there anything else to overcome? I found another enemy - the ego.

What is the Ego? And why does it stop us from realizing the Truth?

The ego blankets us in ignorance that refuses to believe that we are not the body and mind. It persistently generates an egoism that is self-centered and limits our realization of the Truth.

There is something in us that causes the "I"-ness and the

we switch to that, making it a priority rather than realizing the Truth.

The third roadblock is shame. My Guru explained that sometimes, in the fear of shame and in the worry about what others may think or say, we just stop the pursuit of the Truth.

These three main enemies of realization, create hurdles on the path of realizing the Truth. All these three – Duty, Lust, and Shame can stop us on our journey of realization and we must beware of these three.

What was my 'Aha!' moment?

One day I was on a flight AF-192 from Paris to Bangalore after a spiritual retreat. I had many learnings and I thought that I had many answers but somehow, the entire picture was not clear. That day, on an eight hour flight, I was alone and decided not to eat anything as it would disturb me. I was committed to getting somewhere. I took all my findings and put them on the table like I was working on a giant jigsaw puzzle. Then I put the pieces together.

I am not the body.

I am not the mind.

I am the Divine Energy.

I will never die, and at death, I will be reborn.

"My"-ness and the "Mine" -ness. This is the ego. This is my house and that is my business is the claim of the ego. It says that this is my wife, these are my kids and it gets attached to people and possessions.

I realized it much later that the ego along with the mind becomes the biggest problem. The ME – "Mind + Ego"

It makes us believe that we are the body and the mind when in reality we are not. Eliminating the ego by transcending it was also a key challenge in my finding answers to my 9 Questions.

What are the three main enemies of realization?

My Guru taught me that there were three enemies of realization. They were Duty, Lust, and Shame. I was shocked to hear this from my Guru but he explained. He said that because of duty, we sometimes, don't go forward in our quest and it ties us down to complete our duty. As we try to fulfil our duty, we get caught in the illusion of this world and we are unable to progress on the path of realization.

The next deterrent as per my Guru was lust. Lust is very powerful. It stops us from contemplation. It holds us in the desire and passion that lust creates. We don't realize it but our intellect gets paralyzed due to lust. We lose the power of reasoning and become blind. Our passion is so wild that

God is a power - omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent.

I went on and on till most of the pieces in the puzzle fell into place, and I found a few missing slots.

I was trying to answer my 9 questions and I got stuck. I prayed in silence as I tried to switch off my monkey mind. Then I realized something that I had read and noted. At death one of the two things happen. If we think we are the mind, we are reborn but if we realize that we are not the mind but the Soul - the Divine Life Energy, we are liberated. This was escaping me as I was finding the pieces of the life-jigsaw-puzzle that faced me in the flight. But suddenly I had the 'AHA!' MOMENT. Wow! I got all the answers to my questions. I had realized what I was seeking for years. I put the fragments of my realization together.

What was the Realization and how did my life change after the realization of the Truth?

This question can be a full book but to answer it briefly, knowledge of the Truth is not realization. Once we realize the Truth, it's still knowledge until we transcend body, mind, and ego. Then we can consider that we have realized the Truth. I got the realization that I was not the body, the mind, or the ego. I was the Divine Soul, a part of the Cosmic Energy that manifests as everything on earth.

This realization in one wave answered all my questions. There were no more questions to answer. My life completely changed after 31 August 2014, the day of the flight. I had once transformed my name from Ravi V Melwnai to RVM but this was not just my second transformation. It was a metamorphosis. It completely changed me. Ravi V Melwani or RVM was dead, was no more. I was AiR, Atman in Ravi. I stopped signing cheques, gave up all active business and work. I set up a new mission to realize God and help people realize the Truth and God. Since that day I have tried to live my realization. I can't say that I am doing a good job or the perfect job but I am trying. I have to deal with some enemies, my own body, mind, and ego, but this is the Truth.

To be liberated from misery and sorrow is not easy but I have done it. I don't live with any fear, I am fearless, even fearless of death or of loss of any personal or material possessions. My life is a life of *Ananda* - heavenly bliss and peace. I live doing God's work, as an instrument. I live in *Dhyana* - meditation, *Bhakti* -devotion, doing *Karma yoga* - the will of God and *Jyana yoga* - continuous study of the Truth. My life is dedicated to help others realize the Truth, and nothing else.

Before I end, I must share a very interesting question and answer conversation that I read. These questions and

answers summarize, the most essential questions that we must answer before we die. Therefore, if we are able to understand the conversation of Yaksha and Yudhishthira below, it will answer most of our life's questions that we must be aware of.

Yaksha Questions

'Asking Questions' is the first step to a spiritual journey, a journey that leads to the ultimate goal of life – Liberation or *Moksha.* Great sages in the past have started their journey of realization by asking questions about their fundamental existence and thus have insisted that seekers ask questions and investigate to realize the Truth about life and God. There is a very interesting exchange of such questions and answers from the *Mahabharata,* where Yama (the Lord of Death) in the guise of a Yaksha poses various difficult questions to Yudhishthira. Yudhishthira gives the most fitting answers to those questions. This episode is known as *Yaksha Prashna* in Mahabharata. The mythological tale thus goes…

One day while the Pandavas were in exile and living in the forests, Yudhishthira felt thirsty and so Sahadeva went to fetch water from a distant lake. When he reached the lake and was about to take water from it, he heard a voice, "Beware! Don't touch the water before you answer my questions." Sahadeva did not pay heed to the warning. As soon as he touched the water in

the lake, he fell dead. When Sahadeva did not return, Nakula went in search for him. The same thing happened to him and thus one by one, all the four brothers met the same fate.

Finally, Yudhishthira went in search of his brothers and reached the lake only to find all his brothers dead. Then Yaksha appeared in the most terrible form and warned him not to make the same mistake as his brothers. Yudhishthira humbly prostrated himself before Yaksha and agreed to answer all his questions. Yaksha asked Yudhisthira many questions about life and death.

Below is the interesting conversation between Yaksha and Yudhishthira which deals with many profound questions about life and existence and which gives an insight into the deepest spiritual wisdom.

1. Who am I?

You are neither this body, nor the senses, nor the mind and the intellect. You are pure consciousness, the consciousness which is the eternal witness to the Divine Power.

2. What is the purpose of life?

The purpose of life is to realize our true consciousness and be free from the bondage of birth and death. This is *Moksha.*

3. What is the cause of birth?

Unfulfilled desires, lust, cravings, and the fruit of actions, are the causes of birth.

4. Who is free from the bondage of birth and death?

The one who has realized the true self. Such a person is free from the bondage of birth and death.

5. What is the relation between impressions in the mind and birth?

Like the impressions in the mind, so is the birth. If the impressions are animal-like, then birth will be in the realm of animals, and if the impressions are like human, then the birth will be in the human realm.

6. Why is there sorrow in the world?

Greed, selfishness, and fear are the reasons for sorrow in the world.

7. Then why did God create sorrow?

God created the world and man through his thoughts and actions created joy and sorrow.

8. Does God exist? What is God? Who is God? What is His form? Is He male or female?

There is no effect without a cause. This universe is a proof of the existence of a cause. You exist, so He also exists. In

spirituality, that supreme cause is known as God. He is neither male nor female.

9. What is His form?

He is omnipresent - present everywhere, omniscient - knows everything, omnipotent - can do anything. He manifests in everything beautiful. He is in all that is conscious. He is everywhere.

10. That formless God, what does He do?

The Lord creates, preserves, and the Lord can destroy the world.

11. If God created the universe, then who created God?

God is unborn, eternal, and causeless.

12. What is destiny?

Every action, every act has a consequence. The result can either be good or bad. This result is destiny. Today's efforts are tomorrow's fate.

13. What is the secret of joy and peace?

Truth, ethics, love, and forgiveness are the secret of joy. Abstainment from lies, misconduct, hatred, and anger is the way to peace.

14. How to get the intellect in control?

Desires and wishes create distress for the intellect. Overcoming desires is the triumph of the intellect.

15. What is true love?

To see oneself in everybody is true love. To see oneself everywhere is true love. To see oneself as ONE with everyone is true love.

16. Then why man doesn't love all?

Whoever cannot see himself in all, cannot love all.

17. What is attachment?

Demand in love, expectations, and authority is attachment.

18. Who is wise?

The one who possesses and uses the intellect.

19. What is an addiction?

Attachment.

20. Who is a thief?

The attractions of the senses which overcome and deceive the senses, are the thieves.

21. Who is asleep while awake?

The one who doesn't know the Soul is asleep while awake.

22. What is temporary like the water on a lotus leaf?

Youth, wealth, and life.

23. What is hell?

The realm of the senses is hell.

24. What is freedom?

Detachment is freedom.

25. What is the cause of bad luck?

Pride and ego.

26. What is the cause of luck?

Company of the wise and goodwill for all.

27. Who can get over all sorrows?

One who is ready to renounce everything.

28. What gives suffering after death?

Sins committed in secret.

28. On what should one contemplate day and night?

The momentary happiness of the material world.

29. Who wins over the world?

One who has faith and is Truthful.

30. How is it possible to be free of fear?

Through dispassion.

31. Who is free?

One who transcends ignorance.

32. What is ignorance?

The absence of knowledge of the Soul, is ignorance.

33. Who is free from sorrow?

One who is never angry.

34. What is that which exists and doesn't exist?

Maya or the Cosmic illusion.

35. What is *Maya*?

The impermanent world with name and form.

36. What is the ultimate Truth?

Brahman or God, the Creator!

Yudhishthira gave appropriate answers to Yaksha's questions. Pleased with his replies, Yaksha said that he would bring one of his brothers back to life. Yudhishthira requested that Nakula be brought back to life. When asked, "why?" he replied that Nakula was the son of his father's second wife Madri. He being the eldest son of Kunti wished that the eldest of Madri's, Nakula should also be alive. Yaksha was very pleased with his answers, and so he brought all the brothers of Yudhishthira back to life.

POEM

Ask why before you die
Seek answers don't just cry
Don't just accept what people say
Resolve to find out the Truth today

Who are you and why are you here?
Why this birth? Who got you here?
Are you just meant to live and die?
Is there a purpose? Find out why

What is death, what is the end?
The body dies, it is just a bend
I never die, I will live on
But where will I go, will I be reborn?

Where is God and who is He?
Is it he or is it she?
I want to find where is heaven and hell
I am seeking answers, who will tell!

Am I the body, mind or Soul?
What is it that makes me whole?
Am I the ego, who says I?
I want to find out who am I

What is this thing called life?
So much joy and so much strife
Is it real or just a show?
Where we come and then we go?

Who created this earth, who created the sky?
Was it just a bang, oh my!
How could all this just come about?
There must be a Creator, there is no doubt!

Is there a law that keeps a track?
Whatever we do, it will come back
Or will we escape from all our sins?
And have no rewards for all our wins

What causes us to be happy and to be sad?
Is it true that desires are bad?
Can we be happy with joy and peace?
Removing cravings, the big disease

Is our mind our friend or foe?
Will it help us cross the shore?
Is it a monkey that makes us blink?
And does it make us in ignorance sink?

What exactly is the Soul?
Where is it, what is its role?
It is the energy that gives us breath
Without it, there would be death

Why should we ask so many questions?
Is it necessary to take all these lessons?
Or should we just laugh and have fun?
And spend our days till life is done

If we don't find the real Truth
If we don't get to the bottom of the root
If we don't answer before we die
Then we will suffer and we will cry

Yes there are questions that we all must ask
Before we die this is one task
Though we know still we must find
That's our life-purpose, the Truth to unwind.

By

AiR
Atman in Ravi

About the Author – AiR

AiR – Atman or the Soul in Ravi, is an embodied Soul whose only mission in life is to help people realize the Truth and God.

He was born in Bangalore on October 15, 1966. At a very young age, Ravi V. Melwani mastered the craft of business and became a very successful businessman who revolutionized retailing in India with the stores KidsKemp, Big KidsKemp, and Kemp Fort.

After making millions, he realized that life is not just about making money. He shut down his business at the age of 40, transformed his life to RVM, living by the RVM philosophy – Rejoice, Value Life, and Make a Difference. He started doing H.I.S. work – Humanitarian, Inspirational and Spiritual work. His mission was to 'Make a Difference' in this world before his journey was over.

As a part of the humanitarian initiative, a charitable hospital and charitable homes were set up with an aim to provide free medical treatment and care to the poor,

needy. Today, over 700 homeless and suffering people are served and cared for in destitute homes and provided with free shelter, food, clothing, and medical care.

A School of Inspiration was set up that inspired the lives of many people through motivating talks, inspirational books and videos, and thought-provoking quotes.

A Shiva Temple was built in the year 1995 in Bangalore, which is now known as the Shivoham Shiva Temple. AiR now believes that religion is just a kindergarten of Spirituality, and we all have to go beyond religion to truly realize God.

One day, his Guru provoked him to introspect: What is the purpose of life? Is life just meant to seek pleasures and to live and die without any purpose? What happens after death? Will we be reborn? Where is God? Several questions like these took him on a quest, a search for the Truth. He gave up his life of Achievement and Fulfillment in search of the final peak of life: Enlightenment.

After a few years of intense search in retreat, deep in the mountains, he realized that we are not this body. We are the Soul, the Atman. He changed his name to AiR –Atman

in Ravi. He metamorphosed to AiR and gave up his entire life as RVM and started living as an instrument of God doing His Divine Will. This led to several realizations that formed his new mission of life – to help people Realize the Truth.

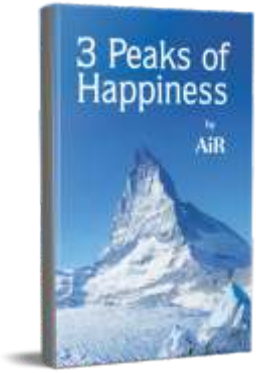
Since then, AiR's life has been dedicated to reaching out and helping people to eradicate the ignorance that we live in. Truth is Truth but our mind does not realize that. With AiR's own realization, he has published several books, written bhajans, blogs, quotes, poems and taken up several other initiatives that can direct people towards the Truth. AiR's Vision is to make a difference in people's lives by triggering them to ask questions, and then to investigate, and eventually, realize God. He believes that unless people ask questions, they will never start a quest and even if they start the quest unless they really investigate, they will not realize the Truth. This Truth cannot be learned in a school, college or university, it must be realized. AiR has dedicated his life to helping people realize the Truth and God.

Books by the Author – AiR

1. Talaash – A search for the true meaning of life. Discover your true self

'Talaash' means Search or Quest. This book by AiR is his personal journey to realize the truth where he shares his realization that we are not the body and the mind that we seem to be. We are a power. The Divine life force is known as Soul, Spirit or *Atman*. This search and quest by AiR made him transform his life. It is a quest that made him realize the truth. It might be just that book that inspires you to liberation.

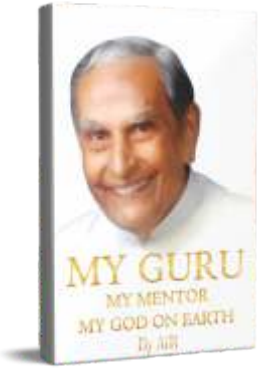
2. 3 Peaks of Happiness



3 Peaks of Happiness by AiR is a simple book that talks about the quest of all humanity. Everybody wants to be happy. But is everybody happy? No. The reason is we are stuck on the first peak of happiness – Achievement. 20% of the people are lucky to climb the second peak of happiness – Fulfilment, which comes

from contentment. But there is a third peak beyond. The third peak of happiness will liberate you from the prisons of misery and sorrow and give you eternal Joy and Bliss.

3. My Guru, My Mentor, My God on Earth



My Guru, My Mentor, My God on Earth is a book by AiR in which he shares his experiences with his Guru who was not just his Guru and Mentor, but also his God on Earth. We all need a coach, a teacher to help us understand, guide us to live life and this book "My Guru" will inspire you to find your Guru or to make your relationship with your Guru more fulfilling and meaningful.

4. I will Never Die. Death is not "The End"

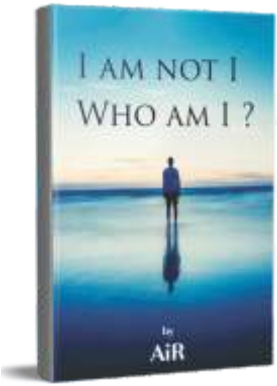
In the journey of his life, AiR realized many truths. One of the truths was that he would never die. The body will die, but the one who lives in the body never dies. We are not the bodies that we wear;

we are the ones who wear the body. Death is not the end. It is a bend to transcend. This book reveals the truth about Death.

5. Death is Not "The End". Death is "Liberation"

Death is Not "The End". Death is "Liberation" – the second book in the series of books on death by AiR – touches upon the secret of the Kathopanishad, which talks about what happens at death. One of two things happen – if we think we are the body and mind as a doer, we are reborn. But if we think we are not the body and mind, but the energy, we are liberated to eternal joy and peace.

6. I am not I. Who am I?



I am not I. Who am I? – is a very interesting book by AiR, which talks of his quest and realization that we are not who we think we are. We have a house, but we are not the house. We have a car, but we are not the car. We have a body, but we are not the body. We may have a mind, but we are not the mind. Who are we? Realize the truth.

7. The Mind is a Rascal

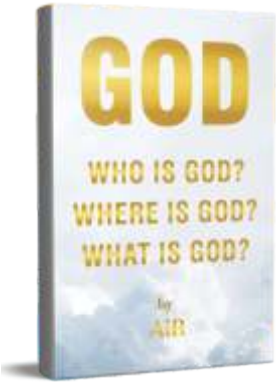
Can you believe that the mind is a rascal? You always thought that the mind is king – it is everything. But just try this. Sit quietly for an hour, and try to find the mind. Where is it? You will find the mind doesn't exist. This amazing book by AiR will teach us that the mind is our enemy. It is the one that makes us suffer. It is time to find the rascal and to kill it. How do you do it?

8. A Cosmic Drama

This book authored by AiR challenges us to think that whatever is happening in life is not real. It is nothing but a drama. The earth is a big stage, and we are all actors who come and go. There is no need to worry and cry till we die. If we understand the truth, we can enjoy the show called life.

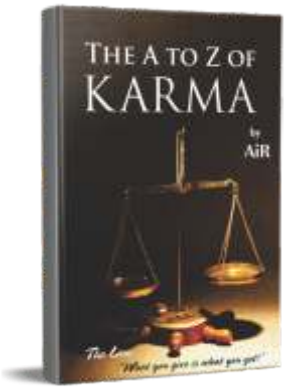
9. Who is God? Where is God? What is God?

Well, this might seem to be a simple set of questions, but



nobody really knows the answers. We all know that God exists. We pray to a God as per our religion but what is the truth about God? Has anybody seen God? Where is God? This simple book will change your perception and belief about God and bring you closer to this Power called God. It will help you realize God.

10. The A to Z of Karma



Most people are aware of the concept of Karma – the Law. What you give is what you get. But not everybody knows the A to Z of Karma, that we can actually transcend Karma, escape from it and achieve Moksha, Nirvana, Liberation or Enlightenment. This book reveals the secret – of eternal joy and peace - a life without any misery or suffering.

11. Who Are You & Why Are You Here?

'Who are you and why are you' here is a simple book which challenges us to discover the secret of our life. Most

of us think we are the body-mind complex, but in reality, we are not. The body will die and return to dust. Where is the mind, we cannot find. Who are we in reality? And beyond that, what is the purpose of life on earth. This book will give you all the answers.

12. The 4th Factor

Man thinks that he can achieve anything. He believes that there is nothing in this world he can't do. But, he doesn't realize that his efforts and equipment are not enough to decide the results of his actions. Sometimes, he does his best but things don't work out the way he wants. He then realizes the importance of the 4th Factor, a factor that makes the possible, possible and without its consent even the possible becomes impossible.

13. Be Happy in the NOW!

Every human being on earth wants to be happy. There is nobody who enjoys pain. People want to achieve happiness but they fail to realize that happiness is the journey itself, not

the destination. Then, what is the secret of eternal joy, bliss, and peace?It is being happy in the NOW. Every time we let the suffering of yesterday take charge of our life, we destroy the joy of today. When our thoughts anxiously jump into what may happen in the future, we lose the tranquility of the present moment. We seem to be like helpless monkeys jumping from one branch to another, from yesterday to tomorrow. And in the bargain, we lose the gift of being happy in the present. With this book, AiR hopes to inspire people to live life moment by moment, if they really want to be happy.

14. Questions you must answer before you die

COMING SOON

15. Suffer No More

16. Success is not Happiness. Happiness is Success

||Om Namah Shivaya|| ||Shivoham||

Visit Google play or Scan the QR Code to download the AiR - *Atman* in Ravi App.
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Ask *Investigate* Realize

QUESTIONS
You Must Answer
Before You DIE!

Death is certain. Nobody can escape it. But many people depart from the world without asking the key questions about life .

Who created this universe?

What is Enlightenment?

Does God exist? Where is God?

Who are we? What is this life within us?

What is going to happen after death? Will we be reborn?

What about all our wealth, possessions, and relationships after death?

There are many questions about God, life, and death that we must answer before we die. There is no way to answer them after death.

Life is short, we hardly have a few thousand weeks to live.

Let us not let life escape us, and with it, the unanswered questions that will make us find out the true purpose of our life.

Let's start now!

Let's find answers to the questions we must answer before we die.

by
AiR
Atman in Ravi

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Ask Investigate Realize

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