



Reach

Oz Mountain, Growee, NSW

SAYINGS AND TEACHINGS

Sri Ramakrishna on God's Existence

You see many stars at night in the sky, but find them not when the sun rises. Can you say that there are no stars in the middle of the day? So, O man, because you behold not God in the days of your ignorance, say not that there is no God.

Source: *Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna*, Advaita Ashrama, 1998, p. 3

Sri Sarada Devi on Life

Such is life, here today, gone tomorrow! Nothing goes with one, except one's merit and demerit; good and evil deeds follow one even after death.

Source: *Teachings of Sri Sarada Devi*, Ramakrishna Math, Madras. p. 4

Swami Vivekananda on God

That very thing which we now see as the universe, will appear to us as God (Absolute), and that very God who has so long been external will appear to be internal, as our own Self.

Source: *Teachings of Swami Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, 2008, p. 2

From the Devi Mahatmya or Chandi

This entire Mahatmya of mine is the surest way to invoke my presence.

Source: Text generated by Google AI, 3 September 2025

IN THIS ISSUE

1. News from Australian Centres

- ◆ Adelaide
- ◆ Brisbane
- ◆ Canberra
- ◆ Melbourne
- ◆ Perth
- ◆ Sydney

2. Bhakti Yoga: 'Incarnate Teachers and Incarnations' and 'Mantra: Om, Word and Wisdom'

— Swami Vivekananda

3. From the Devotees: 'Impressions' and 'Be'

— Uma Srinivasan

We welcome you all to the Vedanta Movement in Australia, as epitomized in the lives of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda, and invite you to involve yourselves and actively participate in the propagation of the Universal Message of Vedanta.

1. NEWS FROM AUSTRALIAN CENTRES 11 JUNE TO 10 SEPTEMBER 2025

ADELAIDE

16 East Terrace, Kensington Gardens, SA 5068

Email: vedanta.adelaide@gmail.com

Contacts: Swami Manyananda +61425762436

Dr Raman Sharma on (08) 8431 9775

URL: <http://vedantaadelaide.org>

Daily Activities

- The Centre functioned from 7:30am-12.30pm and 4.00pm-8.00pm. Aratrikam was performed from 7:00-7:30 pm followed by bhajans, devotional reading and meditation.

Regular Activities

- The Centre observed *Ekadasi* with *Ramanama Sankirtana* every lunar fortnight.
- Swami Manyananda conducted a class on the *Vedanta Sara* or 'Fundamentals of Vedanta' every Wednesday from 11:00 am to 12:00 noon.
- Swami Manyananda also conducted a class on the *Bhagavad Gita* on Sundays from 11:00 am.
- Every Saturday, Swami Manyananda took classes on the *Durga Saptashati* from 4:00 pm.
- On Sundays Swami Manyananda conducted classes on the *Vivekachudamani* from 5:30pm to 6:30 pm.
- The reading of *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* by a devotee and discussion lead by Swami Manyananda, on emerging points, was held on alternate Saturday evenings before aratrikam.
- Bala Sangha or spiritual classes for children were held on Sundays from 4pm to 5 pm. It is conducted by Swami Manyananda and volunteers, and includes mantra chanting, meditation, yoga, singing, reading from spiritual texts, value-based lessons and arts and crafts. The programme concludes with refreshments.

Celebrations

- Guru purnima* was celebrated on Thursday, 10 July 2025. The evening program started with aratrikam and included puja, bhajan, a talk on *Guru purnima* by Swami Manyananda, pushpanjali and distribution of prasad.



Guru Purnima at the Vedanta Centre in Adelaide

- Krishna janmashtami* was celebrated on Saturday 16 August 2025. The evening program included aratrikam, bhajans, reading, pushpanjali, and distribution of prasad.



Krishna janmashtami at the Vedanta Centre in Adelaide

BRISBANE

96 Vedanta Drive, (next to 2 Poppy Crescent),
Springfield Lakes, QLD 4300

Email: info@vedantabrisbane.org

Contact: Swami Atmeshananda (07) 3818 9986

URL: <http://vedantabrisbane.org>

Daily Activities

- Meditation and the chanting of hymns were conducted between 6:30 am and 7:15 am.
- Aratrikam, bhajans, and readings from *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* were held between 6:30 pm and 7:15 pm.

Regular Activities

- Sundays: (a) Yoga classes were held from 8:30 am to 9:45 am. (b) *Srimad-Bhagavad Gitā* class (10:00 am—11:00 am). (c) Bala sangha and Yuva sangha (10:00 am—11:00 am) during school term as a 4 week course). (d) Hindi language classes (fortnightly) from 9:00 am to 10:30 am.
- Tuesdays: (a) A class on the *Brahma Sutras* was conducted from 11 am to 12 noon, (b) In the evening, Yoga classes were conducted from 6:30pm to 7:45 pm.
- Wednesdays: Interviews with prospective applicants for no interest loans through NILS (No Interest Loan Scheme) were conducted at the Centre by appointment. People who were doing it tough, avail themselves of loans of up-to \$2000 repayable through their government payments. This is an initiative of the Wesley Mission's, Good Shepherd Organization.
- Fridays: (a) The Centre's volunteers cooked food for the needy. An average of 300 meals per week is packed into containers and frozen. They are distributed free of cost through the Westside Community Centre; Gales Community Centre; Serving Our People (SOP), and HomeBeyondHome. Many needy people come to the Centre and avail themselves of the free meals.
- (b) The Centre's food bank distributed groceries to the needy. An average of 10 families per

week received grocery hampers along with cooked food and free bread.

- Saturdays: (a) The Maa Sarada's kitchen prepared and sold food at a reasonable cost to people. An average of about 120 persons availed themselves of this service. The kitchen was efficiently managed by volunteers.



Ma Sarada's café at Vedanta Centre, Brisbane

- (b) A Justice of the Peace (JP) was available at the Centre from 10 am to 11 am.
- The chanting of the *Ramanama Sankirtana* was held fortnightly at the Centre on *ekadashi* days (7:00 pm — 8:00 pm).
- A monthly satsang was held at the Centre on the 3rd Sunday of each month. The programme consisted of chanting, bhajans, a talk on a special subject and serving of lunch prasada.
- Swami Atmeshananda conducted *Vivekachudamani* classes for the Vedanta Group at Too-woomba on the first Wednesday of every month (6.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.) at the Too-woomba Council Library .
- A monthly class was held on Thursdays to study the *Vivekachudamani*, online, from 7:30 pm to 8:30 pm. This was organized by Shakti Group, Gold Coast, Queensland.
- On the last Saturday of every month, the Vedanta group on the Gold Coast studied the *Bhagavad Gita* from 5.30pm to 6.30pm
- A class on the *Ashtavakra Gita* was conducted

at 101 Sharpless Drive, Springfield Lakes, on a fixed day of the month.

- Devotees took turns in decorating and worshipping Sri Ramakrishna's image every week at the Sri Selva Vinayakar temple, South Maclean, Qld.
- The Centre, in association with the Namdhari Sikh Association, conducted 'Kirtan and Langar' on the last Sunday of every month. After meditation and singing of kirtans, the Sikh brethren cooked and served delicious meals to anyone who could come and partake of it.

Celebrations

- *Guru purnima* was celebrated on 10 July 2025. After chanting and formal worship led by Swami Atmeshananda, Swami Mahabodhananda spoke on the significance of the Guru. Devotees participated in the singing of bhajans and partook of prasad at the end of the programme.
- *Krishna janmashtami* was celebrated on 16 July at the Centre. The function included chanting, formal worship, and bhajans by Swami Atmeshananda. Swami Mahabodhananda gave a talk on the life and teachings of Sri Krishna. Devotees were served dinner prasad after the programme.
- On 22 July 2025, Swami Ramakrishnananda's birth anniversary was observed. The programme included readings from his life, followed by devotional music.
- Swami Advaitananda's birth anniversary was celebrated on 22 August 2025. The life story of the Swami was read and hymns were sung.

Other Activities

- The International Yoga Day festival was held on 21 June 2025. The activities of the day included Surya Namaskar, pranayama, meditation and a talk on Ayurveda by Rohini Rao, a qualified Ayurveda Physician.
- The Springfield Central State School (Primary) invited Swami Atmeshananda to lead a meditation session (half hour) for teachers on 25 June 2025.
- A morning of music and dance was organized on 29 June 2025 at the Centre. Subramanya



International Yoga Day at the Vedanta Centre, Brisbane



Morning of Music in Brisbane

Shastri gave a melodious flute concert with Dr. Arthavan on mridangam and Nahendran Subramaniam on violin. Mrs. Gayathri Vijay and her students performed a Bharatanatyam dance. At the end of the programme, the Namdhari Sikh Association served the audience with Langar (lunch).

- During the school holidays, Muralidharan Ramakrishnan conducted a flute workshop on 7 July 2025 at the Centre. Both children and adults attended the workshop.



Flute workshop at the Vedanta Centre, Brisbane

- Swami Atmeshananda participated in a workshop on 29 July 2025 organized by the Centre for Community Health and Wellbeing, University of Queensland. At the workshop, food sharing practices in Springfield were discussed to consider a city-wide food sharing initiative. The workshop also discussed topics pertaining to food waste, overcoming barriers to food sharing and nutrition.
- Swami Atmeshananda was invited to a Prayer for Peace Vigil in commemoration of the 80th Anniversary of the Bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This event, organized by the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission, was held on 7 August 2025 at the Cathedral of St. Stephen's, Brisbane.



Sitar Recital at the Vedanta Centre, Brisbane

gious beliefs and practices by the teachers of the school. This initiative is one of the first in a series to be followed by other educational institutions in Brisbane.

- Swami Atmeshananda attended the opening of the 'Festival of Learning' at the YMCA community centre, Springfield, on 5 September 2025. Teaching staff from all schools in Springfield participated in this event.
- During the month of August, Swami Atmeshananda led teachers, from the Springfield Central State School (Primary), in meditation on Thursdays for half an hour.
- Swami Atmeshananda attended the Oceanic Palliative Care Conference on Wednesday, 10 September 2025, at the Brisbane Convention Centre. He was among the panellists to discuss the various faith practices in caring for palliative patients and after death observations.



Swami Atmeshananda at the Prayer for Peace Vigil

- A sitar recital by Mrs. Jyoti Thakar, from India, was organised on Sunday, 24 August, 2025, as a part of the monthly satsang for September. She was accompanied on the tabla by Sri Arvind Paranjpe of Pune, India. The music programme was followed by a talk by Caroline Rolender, Multicultural Health Liaison Officer, West Moreton Health on the subject 'Charter of Healthcare Rights'. All the participants were served a sumptuous lunch after the programme.
- The Queensland Faith Communities Council (QFCC) invited Swami Atmeshananda to participate in an interfaith panel at St Flannan's Catholic School, Zillmere, on 2 September 2025. Representatives of five religions were asked to respond to questions about their reli-



Swami Atmeshananda at the Oceanic Palliative Care Conference

CANBERRA

4 Brigalow St, O'Connor ACT 2602

Email: vedacanberra@gmail.com

Contact: Mr Jaishankar Venkataraman 02 6258 7612 /0433 593860

Daily Activities

- Evening aratrikam and prayers were conducted every evening at the Centre.

Regular Activities

- Talks by Swami Sridharananda, on the Mundaka Upanishad, are expected to recommence after the winter months.

MELBOURNE

5-7 Angus Ave, Ringwood East, VIC 3135

Email: vedanta.melb@gmail.com

Contact: Swami Sunishthananda +61426864750

URL <http://www.vedantamelbourne.org>

Daily Activities

- Morning meditation and prayers were conducted from 7:00 am to 8:00 am.
- Aratrikam, bhajans, readings from the Ramakrishna, Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda literature, and meditation were conducted between 7:00 pm and 8:00 pm daily.

Regular Activities

- A guided meditation session was conducted by Swami Sunishthananda on Sundays from 10:00 am to 10:30 am.
- A class was conducted on Sundays from 10:30 am to 11:30 am on the *Bhagavad Gita* by Swami Sunishthananda.
- A class on *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* was conducted on Tuesdays from 7:30 pm to 8:30 pm by Swami Sunishthananda.
- An introduction to the *Bhagavatam* was conducted by Swami Sunishthananda on Thursdays from 7:30 pm to 8:30 pm.
- A children's class was conducted on Sundays from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm.

Celebrations

- *Guru purnima* was celebrated on Sunday, 13 July 2025, at Mount Waverley Youth Centre. The program included worship and bhajans by devotees and the Children's group. Swami Sunishthananda delivered a talk on the significance of *Guru purnima*. The event concluded with the sharing of prasad.



Guru Purnima Celebration:
13 July 2025

Guru Purnima at the Vedanta Centre, Melbourne

- *Krishna janmashtami* was celebrated on Sunday, 17 August 2025 at Hughesdale Community Centre. The program included worship, *Shyama Nama Sankirtana*, and bhajans by devotees and the Children's Group. Atharva Kulkarni, a PhD student, played the flute. The event concluded with the sharing of prasad.



Krishna janmashtami at the Vedanta Centre, Melbourne

Other Activities

- Swami Sunishthananda was invited by Marcellin College, Bulleen, to represent Hinduism in a panel discussion organized for Year 12 students on Monday, 23 June 2025.
- Swami Sunishthananda was invited by the Bengali Association of Victoria Seniors to deliver a talk on 'The relevance of Spirituality in the Modern Age' on Sunday, 6 July 2025, at Glen Waverley Community Centre.



Swami Sunishthananda at the Bengali Association of Victoria Seniors

- Swami Sunishthananda was invited by the Nanak Nivas, Melton, to deliver a talk at a satsang organized by them on Saturday, 2 August 2025.



Satsang at Nanak Nivas, Melton on 2 August 2025



Swami Sunishthananda at the Satsang, Nanak Nivas, Victoria

- 'A Cultural Fest and Youth Festival' was held on Saturday, 6 September 2025, at Oakleigh Hall, Oakleigh. The program was supported by the Office for Youth, Department of Fami-



Cultural Fest and Youth Festival Organized by the Vedanta Centre, Melbourne

lies, Fairness and Housing, Victorian Government. The Childrens' group of the Vedanta Centre presented two Power Point sessions on the theme 'Harmony in Mind and Nature' followed by cultural performances. The highlight of the evening was a sitar recital by Jyoti Thakar accompanied on tabla by Mr. Arvind Paranjape, both from Pune, India. The Hon. Matthew John Fregon, Victorian Member of Parliament for Ashwood, was the Chief Guest. Food packets were served during the interval to all attendees.

PERTH

51 Golf View Street, Yorkine, WA 6060

Email: vedantaperth@gmail.com

Contact: Sumita Chetty +61438928136

Daily Activities:

- Aratrikam was conducted each night by a person or family taking the responsibility for it.

Regular Activities

- A monthly satsang was held on 15 June 2025. The programme included readings, bhajan, prayers, aratrikam and the distribution of prasad.

Celebrations

- *Guru purnima* was observed on 13 July 2025. The programme, which began at 11:00 am included prayers, bhajans, reading from the scriptures, aratrikam and the distribution of prasad.

Visiting Monks

- Swami Manyananda, from the Vedanta Centre, Adelaide, visited the Vedanta Centre, Perth from 31 July 2025 to 2 August 2025. At Perth, the Swami conducted the aratrikam and also gave talks. The talks were held after the aratrikam on 1 and 2 August 2025. These talks were followed by the distribution of prasad.

SYDNEY

2 Stewart Street, Ermington, 2115

Email: vedasydney@vedantasydney.org

Contact: (02) 8197 7351

URL: www.vedantaaustralia.org

Daily Activities

- The shrine was open from 7:00 am to 1:00 pm and 4:00 pm to 8:30 pm seven days a week.
- Aratrikam, bhajans, and readings from *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* were conducted from 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm. The times change on special occasions.

Regular Activities

- Devotees received spiritual counselling and guidance, with appointment from, Swami Sri-dharananda and others.
- Swami Dhanyananda conducted a class on the *Vivekachudamani* on Sunday mornings from 10:30 am to 11:30 am.
- *Ramanama Sankirtana* was conducted on *ekadashi* days after the evening aratrikam.
- Yoga Classes were conducted by Sudhir Mooray on Saturdays from 9:30 am to 11:00

am and Sundays from 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm.

- A *Balak Sangha* (Childrens' Group) and a *Vivekananda Youth Group* met on Saturdays at 5 pm.
- An online bookstore is run by the Centre at <https://spiritualbookstore.org.au/>

Celebrations

- *Guru purnima* was observed at the Vedanta Centre on 10 July 2025. The programme included a talk on 'The Significance of the Guru' by Swami Dhanyananda, puja, bhajans and the distribution of prasad.



Guru Purnima at the Vedanta Centre, Sydney

- *Krishna janmashtami* was observed at the Vedanta Centre on 16 August 2025. The programme included puja, *Sri Vishnu Sahastranama* chanting, *Shyama Nama Sankirtan*, and the distribution of prasad.



Krishna janmashtami at the Vedanta Centre, Sydney

Other Activities

- On 24 August, 2025, His Excellency, Mr. Gopal Baglay, High Commissioner of India in Australia, informally visited the Vedanta Centre, Sydney to meet the monks.
- A musical recital was performed by Mrs. Jyoti Thakar (sitar) and Sri Arvind Paranjape (tabla), both from, Pune, India, at the Ashram on 27 August 2025.



Sitar Recital at Vedanta Centre, Sydney

- Volunteers gathered weekly on Saturdays, for the upkeep of the Centre. Activities included gardening, painting, cleaning and carpentry, among other activities.



Busy Bee at the Vedanta Centre, Sydney

Visiting Monks

- Swami Manyananda from the Vedanta Centre, Adelaide, visited Sydney, from 18 June to 21 June 2025.

- Swami Sunishthananda from the Vedanta Centre, Melbourne, visited the Vedanta Centre, Sydney, from 8 August to 11 August 2025. He addressed the devotees on 10 August, on the topic 'Significance of Sri Krishna's Advent: An Introduction to Bhagavatam'.



Swami Sunishthananda at the Vedanta Centre, Sydney

2. Incarnate Teachers and Incarnation and the Mantra: Om, Word and Wisdom —SWAMI VIVEKANANDA (From *Bhakti Yoga, The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*)

In this issue of Reach we continue serializing Swami Vivekananda's Bhakti Yoga. Bhakti Yoga was included in the 3rd volume of 'The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda'. In this issue, we present two chapters from Bhakti Yoga. In the first, called 'Incarnate Teachers and Incarnation', Swami Vivekananda argues the importance of having a human incarnation of God, as an ideal. We can only conceive a human being as perfect, just as a donkey will only be able to conceive a donkey as perfect and a fish will only be able to conceive a bigger fish as being perfect. In other words, our conception of perfection will be based on our conception of ourselves.

In the second chapter, called 'The Mantra: Om, Word and Wisdom', Swami Vivekananda describes the inseparable relationship between the word and what it signifies.

INCARNATE TEACHERS AND INCARNATION

Spiritual People are Rare in the World

Wherever His name is spoken, that very place is holy. How much more so is the man who speaks His name, and with what veneration ought we approach that man out of whom comes to us spiritual truth! Such great teachers of spiritual truth are indeed very few in number in this world, but the world is never altogether without them. They are always the fairest flowers of human life "the ocean of mercy without any motive." "Know the Guru to be Me," says Shri Krishna in the *Bhagavata*. The moment the world is absolutely bereft of these, it becomes a hideous hell and hastens on to its destruction.

The Human Avatars of Ishwara

Higher and nobler than all ordinary ones are another set of

teachers, the Avatars of Ishvara, in the world. They can transmit spirituality with a touch, even with a mere wish. The lowest and most degraded characters become in one second saints at their command. They are the Teachers of all teachers, the highest manifestations of God through man. We cannot see God except through them. We cannot help worshipping them; and indeed they are the only ones whom we are bound to worship. No man can really see God except through these human manifestations. If we try to see God otherwise, we make for ourselves a hideous caricature of Him and believe the caricature to be no worse than the original.

Human Beings Represent our Highest Conception of God

There is a story of an ignorant man who was asked to make an image of the God Shiva, and who, after days of hard struggle, manufactured only the image of a monkey. So whenever we try to think of God as He is in His absolute perfection, we invari-

bly meet with the most miserable failure, because as long as we are men, we cannot conceive Him as anything higher than man. The time will come when we shall transcend our human nature and know Him as He is; but as long as we are men, we must worship Him in man and as man. Talk as you may, try as you may, you cannot think of God except as a man. You may deliver great intellectual discourses on God and on all things under the sun, become great rationalists and prove to your satisfaction that all these accounts of the Avatars of God as man are nonsense. But let us come for a moment to practical common sense. What is there behind this kind of remarkable intellect? Zero, nothing, simply so much froth. When next you hear a man delivering a great intellectual lecture against this worship of the Avatars of God, get hold of him and ask what *his* idea of God is, what *he* understands by "omnipresence", or "omnipotence", and all similar terms, beyond the spelling of the words. He really means nothing by them; he cannot formulate as

their meaning any idea unaffected by his own human nature; he is no better off in this matter than the man in the street who has not read a single book. That man in the street, however, is quiet and does not disturb the peace of the world, while this big talker creates disturbance and misery among mankind. Religion is, after all, realisation, and we must make the sharpest distinction between talk and intuitive experience. What we experience in the depths of our souls is realisation. Nothing indeed is so uncommon as common sense in regard to this matter.

Our Conception of God is based on the Conception of Our Selves

By our present constitution we are limited and bound to see God as man. If, for instance, the buffaloes want to worship God, they will, in keeping with their own nature, see Him as a huge buffalo; if a fish wants to worship God, it will have to form an idea of Him as a big fish; and man has to think of Him as man. And these various conceptions are not due to morbidly active imagination. Man, the buffalo, and the fish all may be supposed to represent so many different vessels, so to say. All these vessels go to the sea of God to get filled with water, each according to its own shape and capacity; in the man the water takes the shape of man, in the buffalo, the shape of a buffalo, and in the fish, the shape of a fish. In each of these vessels there is the same water of the sea of God. When men see Him, they see Him as man, and the animals, if they

have any conception of God at all, must see Him as animal, each according to its own ideal. So we cannot help seeing God as man, and therefore, we are bound to worship Him as man. There is no other way.

Two Kinds of People Do not Worship God

Two kinds of men do not worship God as man--the human brute who has no religion, and the Paramahansa who has risen beyond all the weaknesses of humanity and has transcended the limits of his own human nature. To him all nature has become his own Self. He alone can worship God as He is. Here, too, as in all other cases, the two extremes meet. The extreme of ignorance and the other extreme of knowledge--neither of these go through acts of worship. The human brute does not worship because of his ignorance, and the Jivanmuktas (free souls) do not worship because they have realised God in themselves. Being between these two poles of existence, if any one tells you that he is not going to worship God as man, take kindly care of that man; he is, not to use any harsher term, an irresponsible talker; his religion is for unsound and empty brains.

Sri Krishna and Sri Ramakrishna on Incarnations

God understands human failings and becomes man to do good to humanity:

"Whenever virtue subsides and wickedness prevails, I manifest Myself. To establish virtue, to destroy evil, to save the good I

come from Yuga (age) to Yuga." "Fools deride Me who have assumed the human form, without knowing My real nature as the Lord of the universe." Such is Shri Krishna's declaration in the Gita on Incarnation. "When a huge tidal wave comes," says Bhagavan Shri Ramakrishna, "all the little brooks and ditches become full to the brim without any effort or consciousness on their own part; so when an Incarnation comes, a tidal wave of spirituality breaks upon the world, and people feel spirituality almost full in the air."

THE MANTRA: OM: WORD AND WISDOM

The Siddha Gurus and the Mantras they Impart to their Disciples

But we are now considering not these Maha-purushas, the great Incarnations, but only the Siddha-Gurus (teachers who have attained the goal); they, as a rule, have to convey the germs of spiritual wisdom to the disciple by means of words (Mantras) to be meditated upon. What are these Mantras?

Name and Form is the Fundamental Manifestation in the Microcosm and Macrocosm

The whole of this universe has, according to Indian philosophy, both name and form (Nama-Rupa) as its conditions of manifestation. In the human microcosm, there cannot be a single wave in the mind-stuff (Chitta-vritti) unconditioned by name

and form. If it be true that nature is built throughout on the same plan, this kind of conditioning by name and form must also be the plan of the building of the whole of the cosmos. "As one lump of clay being known, all things of clay are known", so the knowledge of the microcosm must lead to the knowledge of the macrocosm. Now form is the outer crust, of which the name or the idea is the inner essence or kernel. The body is the form, and the mind or the Antahkarana is the name, and sound-symbols are universally associated with Nama (name) in all beings having the power of speech. In the individual man the thought-waves rising in the limited Mahat or Chitta (mind-stuff), must manifest themselves, first as *words*, and then as the more concrete *forms*.

The External Word (OM) and the Internal Idea (Sphota) Represented by it

In the universe, Brahma or Hiranyagarbha or the cosmic Mahat first manifested himself as name, and then as form, i.e. as this universe. All this expressed sensible universe is the form, behind which stands the eternal inexpressible Sphota, the manifest as *Logos* or Word. This eternal Sphota, the essential eternal material of all ideas or names, is the power through which the Lord creates the universe; nay, the Lord first becomes conditioned as the Sphota, and then evolves Himself out as the yet more concrete sensible universe. This Sphota has one word as its only possible symbol, and this is the {Sanskrit} (Om).

And as by no possible means of analysis can we separate the word from the idea, this Om and the eternal Sphota are inseparable; and, therefore, it is out of this holiest of all holy words, the mother of all names and forms, the eternal Om, that the whole universe may be supposed to have been created. But it may be said that, although thought and word are inseparable, yet as there may be various word-symbols for the same thought, it is not necessary that this particular word Om should be the word representative of the thought, out of which the universe has become manifested. To this objection we reply that this Om is the only possible symbol which covers the whole ground, and there is none other like it. The Sphota is the material of all the words, yet it is not any definite word in its fully formed state. That is to say, if all the peculiarities which distinguish one word from another be removed, then what remains will be the Sphota; therefore this Sphota is called the Nada-Brahma, the *Sound-Brahman*.

Now, as every word-symbol, intended to express the inexpressible Sphota, will so particularise it that it will no longer be the Sphota, that symbol which particularises it the least and at the same time most approximately expresses its nature, will be the truest symbol thereof; and this is the Om, and the Om only; because the three letters (A.U.M.), pronounced in combination as Om, may well be the generalised symbol of all possible sounds. The letter A is the least differentiated of all sounds,

therefore Krishna says in the Gita --"I am A among the letters". Again, all articulate sounds are produced in the space within the mouth beginning with the root of the tongue and ending in the lips--the throat sound is A, and M is the last lip sound, and the U exactly represents the rolling forward of the impulse which begins at the root of the tongue till it ends in the lips. If properly pronounced, this Om will represent the whole phenomenon of sound-production, and no other word can do this; and this, therefore, is the fittest symbol of the Sphota, which is the real meaning of the Om. And as the symbol can never be separated from the thing signified, the Om and the Sphota are one. And as the Sphota, being the finer side of the manifested universe, is nearer to God, and is indeed that first manifestation of divine wisdom, this Om is truly symbolic of God. Again, just as the "One only" Brahman, the Akhanda-Sachchidananda, the undivided Existence-Knowledge-Bliss, can be conceived by imperfect human souls only from particular standpoints and associated with particular qualities, so this universe, His body, has also to be thought of along the line of the thinker's mind.

This direction of the worshipper's mind is guided by its prevailing elements or Tattvas. The result is that the same God will be seen in various manifestations as the possessor of various predominant qualities, and the same universe will appear as full of manifold forms. Even as in the case of the least differentiated and the most universal symbol

Om, thought and sound-symbol are seen to be inseparably associated with each other, so also this law of their inseparable association applies to the many differentiated views of God and the universe: each of them therefore must have a particular word-symbol to express it. These word-symbols, evolved out of the deepest spiritual perception of sages, symbolise and express, as nearly as possible, the particular view of God and the universe they stand for. And as the Om represents the Akhanda, the undifferentiated Brahman, the others represent the Khanda or the differentiated views of the same Beings; and they are all helpful to divine meditation and the acquisition of true knowledge.

3. From the Devotees (‘Impressions’ and ‘Be’) By Uma Srinivasan

Poem 1

‘Impressions’

Withdraw for a moment, voiced *Vairagya*
Do no harm, advised *Ahimsa*
How dare you ignore me! Leered
lusty *Kama*.
Don’t you shut me out, yelled
angry *Krodha*.
Let me sneak in, begged greedy *Lobha*.
Aren’t you deluded! Guffawed *Moha*.
I rule, argued arrogant *Madha*.
You are jealous, hissed *Matsarya*.
Fie feisty mob!
Work out your karma! Counselling
sage *Dharma*.

Poem 2

‘Be’

Dreams vanish
behind time
thick as fog,
impenetrable
by thoughts of life
lost to memories of Then. Now
what remains are brittle bones
in crumpled skin
hidden behind silky skein
unwilling to say farewell
to a life loved and lost
to a cesspool of clingy thoughts.

Soar above sorrow
Glide away from greed
Be

The stillness of seagulls
suspended in mid-air
The sparkle of stars
Light years away.
Be just be.

Be aware. Be aware.