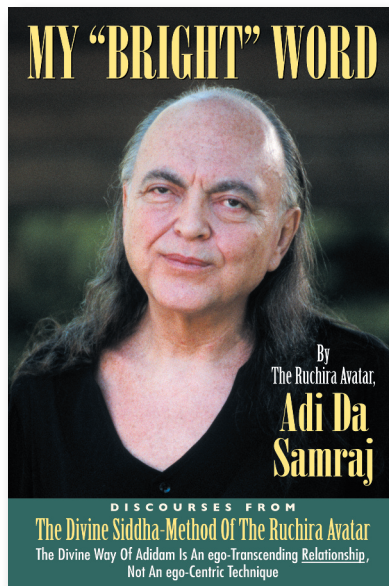




DO YOU UNDERSTAND? Avatar Adi Da's First Discourse

*A selection from the Reality-Teaching
of His Divine Presence, Avatar Adi Da Samraj*

An excerpt from the book



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DO YOU UNDERSTAND?

Avatar Adi Da's First Discourse

An excerpt from "Understanding"
A Discourse given by Avatar Adi Da Samraj
on April 25, 1972

1.

On April 25, 1972 (the date of this Talk), Avatar Adi Da Samraj (for the first time) formally invited people to approach Him, at His Ashram in Los Angeles. Thus, it was on this date that His Work as Divine World-Teacher truly began. Before this time, previous to the formal establishment of His Ashram, He had Taught only a few individuals who had begun to respond to Him as Spiritual Teacher. . . .

At the beginning of the occasion on April 25, 1972, Avatar Adi Da first sat in silence for perhaps an hour, Transmitting the Sublimity of His Own Divine Heart-“Brightness” to those who were present. Then He Spoke.

A VATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Are there any questions?
No one replied, so Avatar Adi Da Samraj Spoke again.

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Everyone has understood?

QUESTIONER: I have not understood. Explain it to me.

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Very good. What have you not understood?

QUESTIONER: Well, you asked if everyone understood, and everyone seemed to understand except me. Would you explain it to me?

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Explain what?

QUESTIONER: Well, you could start with the word “understanding”.

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Yes. There is a disturbance, a feeling of dissatisfaction, some kind of sensation that motivates a person to go to a teacher, read a book about philosophy, believe something, or do some conventional form of Yoga. What people ordinarily think of as religion or Spirituality is a search to get free of the sensation, the suffering, that is motivating them. All of the usual paths—Yogic methods, philosophical investigations, religious beliefs and observances, Spiritual techniques, and so on—are forms of seeking, grown out of this sensation, this underlying suffering. All the usual

paths are, fundamentally, attempts to get free of that sensation. That is the traditional goal. Indeed, all human beings are involved in the search—whether or not they are very sophisticated about it, whether or not they are using specific methods of Yoga, philosophy, religion, and so on.

When that process of seeking begins to break down, then you no longer quite have the “edge” of your search left. You begin to suspect yourself. You begin to doubt the process of your search. Then you are no longer fascinated with your search, your method, your Yoga, your religion. Your attention begins to turn to the sensation that motivates your search.

When you begin to consciously observe that root-motivation, this is what I call “understanding”. When you begin to see the root-form of your own activity—which is your suffering—that self-observation becomes self-understanding. When (through the great ordeal of Real Spiritual life) such self-understanding becomes absolute, most perfect—such that there is utterly, absolutely, no dilemma, no form in conscious awareness by which to interpret existence, such that there is no self-contraction, no fundamental suffering, no “thing” apart from Consciousness Itself—That is the Most Perfect Realization of “radical” (or “gone-to-the-root”) self-understanding. It is only Love-Bliss-Happiness.

The religious and Spiritual traditions of humankind variously refer to the Ultimate Enjoyment as the “Self” (with a capital “S”), the “Heart”, “God-Union”, “Enlightenment”, “Nirvana”, “Heaven”, and so on—but, in Reality, the Ultimate Enjoyment is simply Consciousness Itself (or the Divine Conscious Light Itself). There is no “thing” apart from Consciousness Itself. You are not some “piece” of Divinity seated “inside” the body, which must somehow get released from the body and go back to its Spiritual Home and Source. There is no such entity. The Home and Source is also the Very Nature of the presumed “entity”. There Is Consciousness Itself—and the apparent “entity” is arising within Consciousness Itself.

When Consciousness Itself Knows Its Own State (or Real Nature)—even in the midst of conditions, even where there is life—That is most perfect “radical” self-understanding. When (no matter what event appears) there is only the Enjoyment (or Realization) of Consciousness Itself (not transformed or modified by events), when no arising event seems to imply a change in the Nature of Consciousness Itself—That is most perfect “meditation”. When there is Most Perfect Self-Abiding as Consciousness Itself—That is Divine Liberation. Such can be the case only when there is most perfect “radical” self-understanding.

2.

There is a fundamental self-contraction in the process called “Man”—and that contraction seems to change the quality of Consciousness Itself. The contraction itself creates (or seems to imply) the identification of Consciousness Itself with the self-contracted sense—the sense that you are this form, this body, this mind. And, in making

such an act of identification, that form, that body, that mind differentiates itself from other forms, other bodies, other minds—other beings (or selves). Then the rest of life is spent attempting to overcome that self-generated sense of contraction, by exploiting the movement of desire.

Through the movement that is desire, people are constantly seeking to create a connection, a flow of life-force, between the self-contracted identity and everything from which it has differentiated itself. The usual philosophy, religion, Yoga, Spirituality—all your strategies (even your simple psychological strategies, your lifestyles) have this same basic form, this same basic purpose. They are all attempts to restore the flow of life-energy between this contracted, separated one and everything from which it is differentiating itself. Thus, all ordinary activity is founded in this dilemma, this self-created contraction.

Traditional Spiritual life is a search in this same form. There is dilemma—and there is the Spiritual method, which is an attempt to overcome this dilemma. When you begin to see the dilemma that motivates your strategic method, then that seeing is self-understanding. As long as you are merely seeking, and have all kinds of motivation, all kinds of fascination with the search, this is not self-understanding—this is dilemma itself. But, when the dilemma is understood, then there is the clear noticing of a structure in conscious awareness—the activity of separation. And, when that activity is observed more and more directly, then you begin to see that what you are suffering is not something happening to you but it is your own activity.

It is as if you are pinching yourself, without being aware of it. You are creating a constant background-pain. And, worse than the pain, you are creating a continuous modification—“mind”, which conscious awareness (mistakenly) identifies as itself. The more you observe all of this, the more you stop pinching yourself, and (therefore) the more you (spontaneously, and intelligently) abandon your search. You simply see your root-motivation and your actual suffering. You are no longer able to immunize yourself against that suffering. The suffering does not go away—until, at some point, conscious life becomes a crisis. Then you see that your entire motivation in life is based on a root-activity that you yourself are doing. That activity is avoidance, separation—a contraction at the root, the origin, the “place”, of conscious awareness.

In the beginning of this crisis, you are aware of the self-contraction only as a sensation, a sense of dilemma, a search. But the more directly you observe the self-contraction, the more clearly you recognize it as your own activity. At first, you see the activity, the strategy, the life-technique, of avoidance. Then you begin to become aware of what that activity is excluding, what it prevents, what it is always eliminating from conscious awareness. What is always being excluded is the condition of relationship.

Ordinarily, you are not aware of relationship—and you are also not aware as relationship. You are only living the drama of separation. But, when you become directly aware of (and, thus, responsible for) the root-activity of separation, then you are spontaneously established in relationship as the Real condition of life. Relationship is always the condition of conscious awareness. When the self-contraction is most

fundamentally understood, then there is only relationship, and no obstruction. Ultimately, even the feeling of relatedness is transcended in the Inherent Feeling of Being. When such transcending is most perfect, then there is Most Perfect Feeling-Awareness. That Most Perfect Feeling-Awareness Is the True Divine Heart, Reality Itself. That Most Perfect Feeling-Awareness Is That Which Is Always Already the Case.

The True Divine Heart is Always Already Active, Always Already Accomplishing the thing that desire constantly seeks but never finally Realizes. The True Divine Heart is Always Already Non-separateness (or unqualified relatedness), Always Already Conscious Force (without obstruction). But the life of desire is always based on the presumption (and activity) of separation. In the usual human being, separation has already occurred—therefore, desire tries to heal the feeling-sense that arises as a consequence of that separative activity. But no ultimate “success” is ever achieved via the means of desire, even so-called “Spiritual” forms of desire. There may be temporary releases, distracting fascinations—but desire never escapes its own dilemma, because desire does not deal with the dilemma. The search is concerned only with desire and the objects of desire. But beneath the search is this root-contraction.

3.

Only the Divine Heart Itself Is the Radiant Continuum of Satisfaction, the Unobstructed Flow of Divine Spirit-Power. Only the Divine Heart Itself Always Already Knows Perfect Satisfaction, Perfect Desirelessness—because the Flow of the Divine Heart-Current is Always Already Accomplished. Always Already Accomplished—not accomplished as the result of any motivated action.

The Great Siddhas are those extremely rare Adept-Realizers (of whatever Real degree) who Function as the True Divine Heart in relation to living beings. And that Function is the unobstructed Flow (or Transmission) of Spirit-Force. The pressure of the Presence of a Great Siddha Awakens and constantly Intensifies the Flow of Spirit-Force in living beings. All obstructions tend to fall away in the Presence of this Spirit-Force. Where the Spirit-Force Moves, either there is devotional surrender in Its Presence or there is the flight from Its Presence. The Great Siddhas Communicate the Living Force of Reality. They Live It to living beings. They simply Live their State of Enjoyment (or Realization) with other beings. And those who devote themselves (with greatest intensity and profundity) to a Siddha-Guru will tend to Realize that one’s characteristic State.

4.

QUESTIONER: I have to go, but I have one more question. You said the Great Siddhas live as the Heart. What about the mind? Do they live as the mind also?

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: What is it?

QUESTIONER: Do they live as the mind as well? It is connected with the heart.

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: What mind?

QUESTIONER: What mind? The mind that they exist in. There is only one mind.

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: There is? Which?

QUESTIONER: Of course their brains are functioning, too—right?

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: What is the point you are trying to make?

QUESTIONER: Well, I asked you a question about the mind.

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Yes. What mind? The brain?

QUESTIONER: Yes, the brain.

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Ah, well, that is something very specific. Are you talking about the brain or the “One Mind”?

QUESTIONER: Well, there is only one mind, of course.

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: You are talking about the mind now, and not about the brain?

QUESTIONER: Well, I was asking you what is the relationship between the mind, the brain, and the heart.

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Are you talking about the physical heart?

QUESTIONER: Not necessarily.

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Well, which?

QUESTIONER: You can answer however you like.

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: I do not have any need for the answer. What, specifically, are you asking?

QUESTIONER: Well, actually, you answered me—because I wanted to see what you wanted to say.

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: No, that is not what you wanted to see. Do not play games. I am not here to entertain. All these little dramas you are playing have no place. I have no interest in them, and neither have you. I am not here to lay something on you. I am not concerned with that. If you want to discuss something with Me for a real purpose, that is something else. But, if you want to play at polemics, and idle cleverness . . .

QUESTIONER: That is not what I want.

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: No, no—that is what you want.

QUESTIONER: Do you think that is what I am trying to do?

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Yes.

QUESTIONER: Why do you think that?

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: What is all of that? [*pointing to the man's facial expression*]

QUESTIONER: What is what?

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: What has all of that [*pointing again to his facial expression*] got to do with anything? Hm? You are very upset. What are you upset about?

QUESTIONER: I am not upset at all.

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Something here is upsetting you. I would like to talk about that. That would be worth talking about.

QUESTIONER: I do not feel upset.

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: You do not feel the least upset?

QUESTIONER: No.

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Very good.

QUESTIONER: If what you say of me were true, why would I have come here tonight?

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: I think you have good reasons for being here, but I do not think that is what is being dealt with at the moment. Before your good reasons for being here can be dealt with, you must overcome the social dilemma that being here represents to you. Your entire conception of Spiritual life, the thinking associated with Spiritual life that you bring here, is (perhaps) somewhat threatened by what I am saying. Well, that is not a problem—that is something to notice. But everyone has to get beyond merely being threatened by others. And, before you can get beyond that, your sense of being threatened must be acknowledged. The obviousness of all of that must be acknowledged—the obviousness of your strategy, your cleverness, your inability to be direct, to love. You must acknowledge that you are creating mental and emotional artifices. All of that must be understood. If you have understood that, what is there to defend?

I could sit here and have a discussion with you about the mind, the brain, the heart. But what does all of that have to do with anything? We could talk about the shape of

clouds. But what is going on? What is this sensation, this feeling—that you have, that everyone has?

QUESTIONER: What sensation are you referring to? I am not sure what you mean.

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Exactly. What is the sensation that you have at this moment, your awareness?

QUESTIONER: I am sorry, I do not understand what you are talking about. You are saying that awareness is a sensation?

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: What exactly is the nature of your awareness at this moment?

QUESTIONER: I do not know how to answer that. But I know it exists. I am aware of it.

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Of what?

QUESTIONER: My awareness.

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: You are aware of your awareness?

QUESTIONER: Yes.

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: And is it always truth, sublimity, and beauty?

QUESTIONER: It just is, brother—it just is!

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Good.

QUESTIONER: Yes!

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Then why are you so uncomfortable?

QUESTIONER: You keep seeing that, so there must be something.

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: What is this attitude that you are using—right now, in this moment? I am not “concerned” with it, you see. I do not want to put you down for it. But I want to get to it, because it is the primary quality in all your comments to Me. Are you aware of it—how you use your body, your eyebrows, the tone of voice, your manner of expressing yourself?

QUESTIONER: What is wrong with that?

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: I am not saying there is anything wrong with it.

QUESTIONER: Well, then, why are you making any mention of it?

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Because you are using it to communicate to Me. It is your communication.

QUESTIONER: Well, so what?

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: What is this attitude? What is that? That is an attitude, isn't it?

QUESTIONER: Well, obviously, it is me.

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: What is the purpose of it? What are you doing with it? What is its nature? You have communicated differently at other times. Sometimes you laugh, sometimes you cry.

QUESTIONER: Yes.

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: All right. You are not laughing or crying now. You are doing this! What is it you are doing?

QUESTIONER: I am in the process of communicating with you.

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Why in this particular form?

QUESTIONER: Because that is the form I choose to use.

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Yes. And it does not have any resistance in it at all?

QUESTIONER: Well, it has a resistance. Yes, it has. I feel that there is a lack of communication going on.

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Okay. That is what I am talking about.

QUESTIONER: When I am communicating with somebody or somebody is trying to communicate with me, if I feel there is a lack, sure I feel a resistance.

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Exactly. That is what I am feeling.

QUESTIONER: You feel it too, huh?

AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Yes. And, if there were simple, direct communication between us, it would be unnecessary for you to have that sensation and to communicate it to Me as you now feel you must. But what is actually coming through in your remarks to Me is that fear, that resistance, that upset about the nature of this communication. And that is exactly what I have been talking about tonight. It is exactly that contraction, that resistance, that limiting of Free conscious awareness, that is your suffering. Following upon that contraction are all the thoughts, illusions, memories, experiences, searches. But

that contraction, that resistance, is always first. Such is the root-activity that everyone is living. Wherever you go, wherever you are, you can feel that underlying sense, that underlying resistance, that underlying discomfort, that underlying unpleasantness—that failure of love, of energy, of presence. That is exactly what I am talking about.

The sensation of which you have now become aware is the very quality by which the self-contraction is always experienced. The manifestation of the self-contraction may be very elaborate. It can take on all kinds of forms, but the sensation you are now feeling is the contraction I am talking about. It is not unique to you. I am just pointing out how it is functioning in you at this moment. But you are no different from anyone else. Everyone is suffering the same tendency and activity. And its results are always the same. Everyone is suffering exactly the same thing. Each person has a different life-method, a different style, a different complex of life-experience, and so on—but the fundamental activity of self-contraction is common to everyone.

At first, the awareness of that sensation is only periodic. Then the awareness of it becomes continuous. Then you become capable of observing its actual structure, of understanding it as your own activity—as a deliberate, present-time activity that is your suffering, that is your illusion of separateness. The capability to consistently observe, understand, and transcend that deliberate, present-time activity is what I call “radical self-understanding”. To (thus) understand oneself most fundamentally is to penetrate the egoic process that structures all perceived events, all of your experience. And the primary—even the most obvious—effect of the root-activity of self-contraction is the loss of the conscious awareness of relationship.

That is exactly what was happening in the last few minutes. There was the sense of an obstruction in your relating to Me. But, when that sense of obstruction is no longer there, when the self-contraction is no longer taking place, no longer meditated upon, no longer a cause of disturbance, when there is simply unobstructed relationship, then there is no dilemma. Then there is no conflict, no problem, no separateness. Instead, there is only Happiness. And, when (ultimately) that Happiness is Realized Most Perfectly (and, necessarily, by Grace), then there is the Infinity of Liberation, the Perfect Consciousness of Truth, the Siddhi of Reality Itself.

Liberation, Truth, Reality is always simply that Fundamental Happiness—that unobstructed, spontaneous, moment to moment existence as unqualified relatedness (or Non-separateness). This, truly, is the meaning of what people call “Love”. It is simply the Force of the Heart Itself, Reality Itself—Which is Unobstructed, Unqualified Existence. It is simply the State That Is Always Already the Case.

What I call “the True Divine Heart” (or “the Heart Itself”) is Consciousness Itself. In India, this has been called “Atman”—the Real Self (or Very Nature) of the apparent individual. The Atman is not a separate organ or a separate faculty. Rather, the Atman is identical to What is called “Brahman”—the Formless, Absolute, Omnipresent Divine Reality.

The Heart Itself is Very Consciousness, Absolute Bliss, Unqualified Existence. The Heart Itself is Most Perfect “Knowledge” of Unspeakable Real God. Everything secondary—mind, body, brain, any function at all—is contained within the True Divine Heart, like an event in a universe. Within that universe is the appearance of living beings. Naturally, if you speak of the physical body (or of the psycho-physical entity), there is the physical heart, there is the physical brain, and there are many other functions—gross functions and subtle functions. But all of these functions are “contained” in that Perfect Consciousness, that Unobstructed Reality—the True Divine Heart Itself. From the “Point of View” of the True Divine Heart, there is no dilemma in the fact that “things” seem to appear, no misunderstanding of their appearing, no threat implied by their appearing. All of this is a form of Love-Bliss-Happiness. . . .

When the self-contraction has utterly ceased to be what patterns your state, then it becomes possible for you to Most Perfectly Realize the Very (and Self-Evidently Divine) State of Reality Itself, Which Is the Very (and Self-Evidently Divine) State of all beings and things—Prior to conceptualization and the ordinary drama of your life. From that Most Perfect “Point of View” (Which is Always Already Free and True), perhaps something meaningful can be said about the structure of the conditionally manifested worlds—but, from that Very “Point of View”, nothing is either gained or lost by the existence of the conditionally manifested worlds or by the description of those worlds. When the principle of suffering is understood and transcended, something can be said—but such speech is not actually necessary.

A man came to Bodhidharma and said something about his mind that was similar to your remarks. The man sat in the presence of Bodhidharma, trying to attract Bodhidharma’s attention. He did this for a long time, without success. Finally, in desperation, he was moved to hack off his arm, which he presented to Bodhidharma. He held his arm up to Bodhidharma—who, at last, turned to him. Bodhidharma was willing to have a brief discussion. But Bodhidharma was not upset, excited, or particularly interested in the bleeding and mortal condition of this seeker. The man wanted to know something about his mind. He wanted to be liberated from his perpetual disturbance of mind. Bodhidharma said, “Show me your mind.” In other words, “Show me this mind that you say is upset, that you want to understand, that you claim to possess.” According to tradition, that was sufficient to Enlighten the man. He saw that what he was upset about, what he thought he was suffering or owning, had no tangible existence. There was not, in fact, any “thing” that he was suffering or owning. He was simply obsessed. His suffering and his mind were present-time self-creations. All Bodhidharma did, or served to do, was to bring about the spontaneous understanding of what the man was constantly presenting as himself, as his own state. That enabled a sudden turnabout.

The traditions are filled with such meetings between questioners (or seekers) and their teachers. It is always the same story. The individual has some very elaborate search going on, some very elaborate structure of mind that he or she always presents and

wants to defend or overcome. But, whatever the particular characteristics of a person's egoic game, everyone is always communicating one thing. It is your own mind-form, your own self-contracted state. That is what people always present to one another and to life. By the "performance" of your self-contracted state, you destine yourself to certain consequences in life, certain experiences. Thus, your state also becomes your activity and your destiny.

What I am here to Offer to everyone is the process whereby the present-time and chronic modification of Consciousness Itself—this compulsive state, this root-activity that becomes dilemma, seeking, and suffering—is undermined by means of "radical" self-understanding. The Way that I Offer requires this crisis in conscious awareness—the crisis in which unconsciousness is undermined, the crisis in which your ordinary, common state is utterly turned about.

The Way that I Offer is necessarily a crisis. It is not some kind of ego-possessed artifice. It is not a defense of your limited condition. It is the process whereby all such artifice or defense is utterly transcended.

In the Christian tradition, "Spiritual death" is spoken of as the basic event. The process of True religion is conceived as a sacrifice, a cross. In the East, the process of True religion is understood to require the crisis of satori or the self-purifying ordeal of sadhana. The Way that I Offer to all necessarily requires the crisis, the turnabout, the utter transcending of the ego-pattern that you are (otherwise) helplessly living out. And, if that crisis does not take place, then there is no Real Spiritual life. There is simply the same thing there has always been—the same obsession with conditional forms, the same suffering, disability, dilemma, the same disappointment (or whatever emotional quality is manifested in the individual case).

When there is absolutely no defense left, when the bottom completely falls out, when there is nothing whatsoever left to stand on—That is Liberation. As long as there is something left to defend, something with which to resist, as long as there is something still left to "die", then the same state persists—the same suffering, the same search. When it is all "dead", when the greatly feared event has already occurred, then there is no longer the thread of seeking or the defense of its hidden dilemma. ■

An excerpt from the book
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by
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