

# The Saint, the *Jivanmukta* and Ramji

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**Arlindo:** A *jivamukta* or a *mahatma* is still a *jiva* while alive. His sense of identity has shifted from being a conditioned *jiva* to being the unconditioned self/pure consciousness. To be a *jiva* is equal to be operated by one's *vasanas*. Life in *mithya* is but *vasanas* in operation. *Jnanis* and saints are both just following their nature, their *vasanas*. Conflicts and arguments are part of the experience of *jiva*-hood. But a saint is not necessarily a *jnani* or a *jivamukta* (a *jiva* with firm self-knowledge.)

The *jivamukta* lives in the world of duality while holding the firm knowledge of non-duality. Duality produces diversities of all kinds. All apparent differences, including the ones of ideas and preferences, will sooner or later surface in a relationship because wherever there are "two" there is a potential for conflict and disagreement. But in the case of the *jnanis* these small conflicts are not owned, and therefore they don't stick to them. You may see them apparently angry one moment and apparently loving the very next moment. They know *mithya* to be *mithya*!

But since in *mithya* everything is constantly modifying and changing, the *vasanas* of the *jivamukta* will also be subjected to a great deal of modification as further *nididhyasana* naturally takes place. Self-knowledge and *moksa* have a huge impact on one's *vasanas* and *samskaras*, and almost invariably the new set of modified *vasanas* of the *jivamukta* will be harmonized with *dharma*. As a result, to a certain degree the *jivamukta* will live an apparently less and less conflicting lifestyle and a more and more saintly life.

But the most important point to be understood is that regardless of how pure a saint or a *jivamukta* may be, a *jivamukta* with firm self-knowledge, with extensive knowledge of the scriptures and with the ability to teach Vedanta in its purity, is *Isvara's* greatest gift to humankind. Sainthood alone will not save you. Only knowledge will do, and self-knowledge needs to be properly taught in its purity by a qualified teacher.

Besides his great knowledge and wisdom, what I greatly admire about my teacher (Ramji) is his courage to totally expose his *jiva* with no reservation – no pretension! Every time I see him doing that before the camera (sometimes almost like a child), I feel more respect and love for him. Is there anything more honest and noble than to accept and love your *jiva* (*Isvara's* gift) so openly and fully? Is there a freedom greater than not having anything to omit or hide? Only then freedom is really free!