

**Kaivalya Navaneeta**  
The Cream of Emancipation

An Ancient Tamil Classic  
By Tandavaraya Swami

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**Publisher's Note**

We have great pleasure in offering to the devotees of Sri Bhagavan and the student of Vedanta in general, a valuable little classic. This was one of the works very frequently referred to by the Maharshi.

In the absence of any mention in earlier literature on Vedanta in Tamil we can assume that 'Kaivalya Navaneeta' was probably written at least five hundred years ago. It was translated into German and English by Dr. Charles Graul, DD of the Leipzig Lutheran Mission and we have in the Ramanasramam Library a book containing these German and English translations and published in 1855, both in Leipzig and London.

We have not come across any other English translation so far.

We are confident that this great little book will prove to be of immense help to all sadhaks.

The Publisher

Introduction

The Kaivalya Navaneeta is a widely known Advaita classic in Tamil. Navaneeta means butter. Kaivalya or Revala is the state in which the soul exists, isolated from all connection with the body etc. From the vast ocean of milk (the Upanishads etc.) the great teachers have drawn the milk of wisdom and filled it in pots (ancient texts). Tandavaraya Swami, the author of Kaivalya Navaneeta says that he has extracted the butter from the milk. Those who have obtained this (being fed on the butter of divine wisdom - Brahma Jnana - and being eternally satisfied) will not roam about feeding on dust (non-real objects of sense).

The two sections of this work are called 'The exposition of the Truth' (Tattva Vilakkappadalam) and 'Doubts cleared Away'(Sandeham telitarppadalam). They explain the basic philosophical principles and clear doubts which are likely to arise in understanding these principles.

V. A. Devasenapathi

**Kaivalya Navaneeta**

1. Prostrations to the Holy Feet of the Unique Lord who like ether remains as sole witness in the hearts of all beings, whether they are swayed by desire for wealth, lands, and women, or are free from such desire, and who shines as the towering peak over the seven successive spiritual heights, which are in themselves exalted over all other planes (of mind), or in Nannilam, the holiest of the seven holy places!

5. I adore the feet of the Holy Master who shines forth forever as the wide Expanse which has no beginning or end or interval, and I proceed to tell you the true nature of the Absolute Being, to explain bondage and liberation so that even those who are too dull to learn the scriptures, may understand.

7. After adoring my Master, Venkatesa Mukunda, who is himself ever-free, and who made me his own, I write this Kaivalya Navaneeta divided into two parts, the first of which contains a clear exposition of the Truth, and the second clears away all doubts arising from the former.

## **The First Section**

### **The Exposition Of The Truth**

8. The Sages say that there are four prerequisites for realisation of the Truth:

1. Viveka: discrimination between the temporary (therefore unreal phenomena) and the permanent (therefore the Reality, i.e., the noumenal);
2. indifference to the enjoyment of pleasures here or hereafter;
3. the group of six qualities and
4. the longing for Liberation.

9 and 10. The six qualities are sama, dama, uparati, titiksha, samadhana and sraddha. Of these, sama is control of mind; dama is control of the senses; uparati is cessation of activities (relating to caste, creed, family etc.); titiksha is control of passions, and includes endurance; samadhana is, according to the sages, the settling down of the mind to reflect the Truth, as revealed (by the scriptures and the sages); sraddha denotes faith in the master and the scriptures; such are the meanings of the six terms of this category.

14. After eagerly saluting his Master, he stood up and sobbed out his heart, saying "O Lord! I have suffered long the torture of worldly life, which is after all so false! Gracious Master, save me by tearing off the cords which bind me to the five sheaths, so that my heart may be at peace!"

19 and 20. "Look here, my son! He who has forgotten his true nature is alternately born and dies, turning round and round in the unceasing wheel of time, like a feather caught up in a

whirlwind, until he realised the true nature of the Self. If he comes to see the individual self and its substratum, the Overself, then he becomes the substratum, i.e., Brahman, and escapes rebirths. Should you know yourself no harm will befall you. As you asked I have told you this."

51. The question then arises: Whereon does the superimposition rest when the substratum is completely hidden? And how can there be any superimposition if the substratum is not hidden? "(The answer is:) The substratum is twofold, general and particular, of which the general substratum remains continuous and unbroken. Transient superimposition is particular.

52. In the world, the common substratum 'This is' can never be veiled; but only the particular identity - 'This is a rope.' Similarly with the jiva, ignorance does not veil the substratum - 'I AM'; but it veils the specific knowledge - 'I am Brahman'."

72. By the Lord under the sacred banyan tree! I speak the truth; You are the unchanging Witness of the gross, subtle and (casual) ignorance, the waking dream and sleep states, and the passage of time - past, present and future, which endlessly rise and fall, like waves in the ocean of bliss.

80. In the example; 'This is that Devadatta,' the man who was seen in another place and on another occasion, and also known as Devadatta, is this man who is seen in this place and on this occasion. Although the time and place are different, a little consideration reveals the man to be the same.

81. Similarly, in the words 'That' and 'thou', their literal meanings excluded, the Consciousness-Principle is taken as Brahman and the Witness, whose unbroken identity is established by 'art', so that Brahman is the Self, and the Self is Brahman.

107. Just as the ether though all-pervading seems to be newly opened in a well which is newly dug, so Brahman though ever-present yet appears as if realised afresh by enquiry into the self as taught by a master or the scriptures. Therefore, O son, be at peace that we are always the same limitless Being!

108. The whole universe is as unreal as water in a mirage, silver in mother-of-pearl, the city of Gandharvas in the air, the dreamland of dream, the blue of the sky, the serpent in the rope, the off-spring of a barren woman, the horn of a hare, or the thief in the thick post. O Son! Pure Consciousness is alone real. Do not therefore forget the Self at any moment.

## **Section Two**

### **Doubts Cleared Away**

1. "Just as men dig a hole, gently plant a long post in it, fill in earth and ram it in, to fix it firmly so too, I take to clearing away doubts that your mind which has realised the Self as being the Supreme Consciousness may remain unshaken."

44. Disciple: "O Siva in the form of my Master. If these powers and Deliverance are together the fruits of tapas, then all the sages should possess both, as the ancient sages did. We have known that the ancient sages had these siddhis and were also liberated at the same time. Why do not all jnanis possess such powers as well?"

45. Master: "Of the two types of tapas, namely, tapas, for the fulfillment of one's desires, and dispassionate tapas, the former bestows the powers desired, and the latter wisdom. Each can yield its allotted fruits only. That is the law. The ancient sages had evidently performed both kinds of tapas.

46. "Sinless son, Janaka, Mahabali, Bhagirata and others got deliverance only. Did they display any siddhis? (No). Some of the sages sought siddhis only; others sought both siddhis and emancipation. These siddhis are simply for display and nothing more. They do not make for liberation."

107. Disciple: "O Master! I do not see the propriety of the statement that all beings are permeated by the single non-dual Self which is all-embracing as Being-Consciousness-Bliss. The existence of the jivas is clear because they all say 'I'; Consciousness also is clear because of knowledge which is obvious; why does not-Bliss show forth in a similar way?"

108. Master: "Son, although there are shapes, fragrance and softness together present in the same flower, each of them is cognised by a separate sense only. Otherwise they are not perceived; such is the law of nature. Similarly though the beatific qualities, Being, Consciousness and Bliss together form the Self, yet the modes vary constantly and give rise to the difference which appear as the world.

109. My son! the three qualities - Satva, Rajas and Tamas - give rise to the three modes - repose, agitation and ignorance respectively. Being, Consciousness and Bliss which are themselves glorious, always remain a homogeneous Whole yet appear different.

110. Bare existence alone is noticed in plants, minerals and the earth which look insentient and are ignorant.

There can be no happiness in the state of disturbance caused by passions, such as lust, which act like poison. But Being and Consciousness are evident in it. Being, Consciousness and Bliss together become manifest in the state of Peace which is characterised by a stern detachment (from externalities). Therefore Bliss becomes clear in a peaceful mind rid of ignorance and agitation."

168. Disciple: "How should I remain, so that I may experience what you have described as Bliss?"

Master: "If you get rid of the mode of mind which give rise to the states of waking, dream and sleep, you will remain as your true being and also experience Bliss.

169. If you ask how to control the activities of the mind, rising up from its latencies: Rule over the intellect and sense as your slaves. They will become extinct.

170. Also by gentle control of the breath which blows like bellows, the activities of the mind cease. If you are not inclined to practice this yoga, they will cease if you root out the massive ignorance of the casual body. Then too the mind stops its activities."

171. Disciple: "By what means can I root out ignorance, the casual body?"

Master: "The srutis can never mislead one. How can there be ignorance if you firmly fix their teaching in your mind; 'I am the all-perfect being in whom the worlds appear?"

172. Disciple: "How can I remain so when I engage in worldly transactions, with wandering mind?"

Master: "There is nothing apart from Me. Whatever is seen, is of Me. I am I who is consciousness which sees all this as fictitious as my dream.

173. If you always remain aware that 'I' am perfect Consciousness, what does it matter how much you think, or what you do? All this is unreal like dream visions after waking. I am all-Bliss!"

178 and 179. Such is Vidyananda. Those who study this work with devotion will realise the high state of Repose and be liberated here and now. In order that all may understand clearly Vidyananda, the true spirit of the Holy books, in Nannilam Master Narayana appeared in my samadhi and commanded me to make this Kaivalya Navaneeta perfect in every detail, and free from defect.

184. Praise, praise to the author of my salvation! He placed on his head the Foot of Narayana, the Infinite Lord, who made him his slave, and who, by means of the process of negation had destroyed what through imposition had arisen as a mere fictitious appearance, and put me in such a condition that I, with eyes of Grace, can remain for ever the Spectator.