

The Realisation of Nisargadatta

~ An excerpt from *I Am That*
Talks with Nisargadatta Maharaj

Questioner: Are we permitted to request you to tell us the manner of your realisation?

Maharaj: Somehow it was very simple and easy in my case. My Guru, before he died, told me: 'Believe me, you are the Supreme Reality. Don't doubt my words, don't disbelieve me. I am telling you the truth—act on it.' I could not forget his words and by not forgetting—I have realised.

Q: But what were you actually doing?

M: Nothing special. I lived my life, plied my trade, looked after my family, and every free moment I would spend just remembering my Guru and his words. He died soon after and I had only the memory to fall back on. It was enough.

Q: It must have been the grace and power of your Guru.

M: His words were true and so they came true. True words always come true. My Guru did nothing; his words acted because they were true. Whatever I did, came from within, un-asked and unexpected.

Q: The Guru started a process without taking any part in it?

M: Put it as you like. Things happen as they happen—who can tell why and how? I did nothing deliberately. All came by itself—the desire to let go, to be alone, to go within.

Q: You made no efforts whatsoever?

M: None. Believe it or not, I was not even anxious to realise. He only told me that I am the Supreme and then died. I just could not disbelieve him. The rest happened by itself. I found myself changing—that is all. As a matter of fact, I was astonished. But a desire arose in me to verify his words. I was so sure that he, could not possibly have told a lie, that I felt I shall either realise the full meaning of his words or die. I was feeling quite determined, but did not know what to do. I would spend hours thinking of him and his assurance, not arguing, but just remembering what he told me.

Q: What happened to you then? How did you know that you are the Supreme?

M: Nobody came to tell me. Nor was I told so inwardly. In fact, it was only in the beginning when I was making efforts, that I was passing through some strange experiences; seeing lights, hearing voices, meeting gods and goddesses and conversing with them. Once the Guru told me: ‘You are the Supreme Reality,’ I ceased having visions and trances and became very quiet and simple. I found myself desiring and knowing less and less, until I could say in utter astonishment: ‘I know nothing, I want nothing.’

Q: Were you genuinely free of desire and knowledge, or did you impersonate a *jnani* according to the image given to you by your Guru?

M: I was not given any image, nor did I have one. My Guru never told me what to expect.

Q: More things may happen to you. Are you at the end of your journey?

M: There was never any journey. I am, as I always was.

Q: What was the Supreme Reality you were supposed to reach?

M: I was undeceived, that is all. I used to create a world and populate it—now I don’t do it any more.

Q: Where do you live, then?

M: In the void beyond being and non-being, beyond consciousness. This void is also fullness; do not pity me. It is like a man saying: ‘I have done my work, there is nothing left to do.’

Q: You are giving a certain date to your realisation. It means something did happen to you at that date. What happened?

M: The mind ceased producing events. The ancient and ceaseless search stopped—I wanted nothing, expected nothing—accepted nothing as my own. There was no ‘me’ left to strive for. Even the bare ‘I am’ faded away. The other thing that I noticed was that I lost all my habitual certainties. Earlier I was sure of so many things, now I am sure of nothing. But I feel that I have lost nothing by not knowing, because all my knowledge was false. My not knowing was in itself knowledge of the fact that all knowledge is ignorance, that ‘I do not know’ is the only true statement the mind can make. Take the idea ‘I was born.’ You may take it to be true. It is not. You were never born, nor will you ever die. It is the idea that was born and shall die, not you. By identifying yourself with it you became mortal. Just like in a cinema all is light, so does consciousness become the vast world. Look closely, and you will see that all names and forms are but transitory

waves on the ocean of consciousness, that only consciousness can be said to *be*, not its transformations.

In the immensity of consciousness a light appears, a tiny point that moves rapidly and traces shapes, thoughts and feelings, concepts and ideas, like the pen writing on paper. And the ink that leaves a trace is memory. You are that tiny point and by your movement the world is ever re-created. Stop moving, and there will be no world. Look within and you will find that the point of light is the reflection of the immensity of light in the body, as the sense 'I am.' There is only light, all else appears.

Q: Do you know that light? Have you seen it?

M: To the mind it appears as darkness. It can be known only through its reflections. All is seen in daylight—except daylight.