

# Pranayama

Teachers Training  
Level 1 2023

Darshan of Sages and Saints  
of India



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ॐ ॐ ॐ

श्री गुरुभ्यो नमः हरिः ॐ

Om Om Om

Sri Gurubhyo Namah Harih Om

Salutations to the Gurus!

ॐ सह नाववतु ।  
सह नौ भुनक्तु ।  
सह वीर्यं करवावहै ।  
तेजस्वि नावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहै ।  
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

oṃ saha nāvavatu saha nau bhunaktu  
saha vīryaṃ karavāvahai  
tejasvi nāvadhītam astu mā vidviṣāvahai  
oṃ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ

May that Truth protect us together. May it nourish us together.  
May we both gain great vitality. May our learning be brilliant.  
May we never argue. Om peace, peace, peace.

1. The importance of darshan
2. Seeing the Divine
3. Being seen by the Divine

## A. Darśan

A COMMON SIGHT in India is a crowd of people gathered in the courtyard of a temple or at the doorway of a streetside shrine for the *darśan* of the deity. Darśan means “seeing.” In the Hindu ritual tradition it refers especially to religious seeing, or the visual perception of the sacred. When Hindus go to a temple, they do not commonly say, “I am going to worship,” but rather, “I am going for *darśan*.” They go to “see” the image of the deity — be it Kṛṣṇa or Durgā, Śiva or Viṣṇu — present in the sanctum of the temple, and they go especially at those times of day when the image is most beautifully adorned with fresh flowers and when the curtain is drawn back so that the image is fully visible. The central act of Hindu worship, from the point of view of the lay person, is to stand in the presence of the deity and to behold the image with one’s own eyes, to see and be seen by the deity. *Darśan* is sometimes translated as the “auspicious sight” of the divine, and its importance in the Hindu ritual complex reminds us that for Hindus “worship” is not only a matter of prayers and offerings and the devotional disposition of the heart. Since, in the Hindu understanding, the deity is present in the image, the visual apprehension of the image is charged with religious meaning. Beholding the image is an act of worship, and through the eyes one gains the blessings of the divine.



# The Seven Bhumikas

Seven stages of Janan) from the Nirvana prakarana of Yoga Vasishta

1. *Śubhecchā* (longing for the Truth): The yogi (or *sādhaka*) rightly distinguishes between permanent and impermanent; cultivates dislike for worldly pleasures; acquires mastery over his physical and mental faculties; and feels a deep yearning to be free from *Saṃsāra*.
2. *Vicāraṇa* (right inquiry): The yogi has pondered over what he or she has read and heard, and has realized it in his or her life.
3. *Tanumānasa* (attenuation – or thinning out – of mental activities): The mind abandons the many, and remains fixed on the One.
4. *Sattvāpatti* (attainment of sattva, "reality"): The Yogi, at this stage, is called *Brahmavid* ("knower of Brahman"). In the previous four stages, the yogi is subject to *sañcita*, *Prārabdha* and *Āgamī* forms of karma. He or she has been practicing *Samprajñāta Samādhi* (contemplation), in which the consciousness of duality still exists.
5. *Asaṃsakti* (unaffected by anything): The yogi (now called *Brahmavidvara*) performs his or her necessary duties, without a sense of involvement.
6. *Padārtha abhāvana* (sees Brahman everywhere): External things do not appear to exist to the yogi (now called *Brahmavidvariya*); in essence there is a non-cognition of 'objects' as the separation between subject and a distinct object is dissolved; and tasks get performed without any sense of agency (doership). *Sañcita* and *Āgamī* karma are now destroyed; only a small amount of *Prārabdha* karma remains.
7. *Turiya* (perpetual *samādhi*): The yogi is known as *Brahmavidvariṣṭha* and does not perform activities, either by his will or the promptings of others.

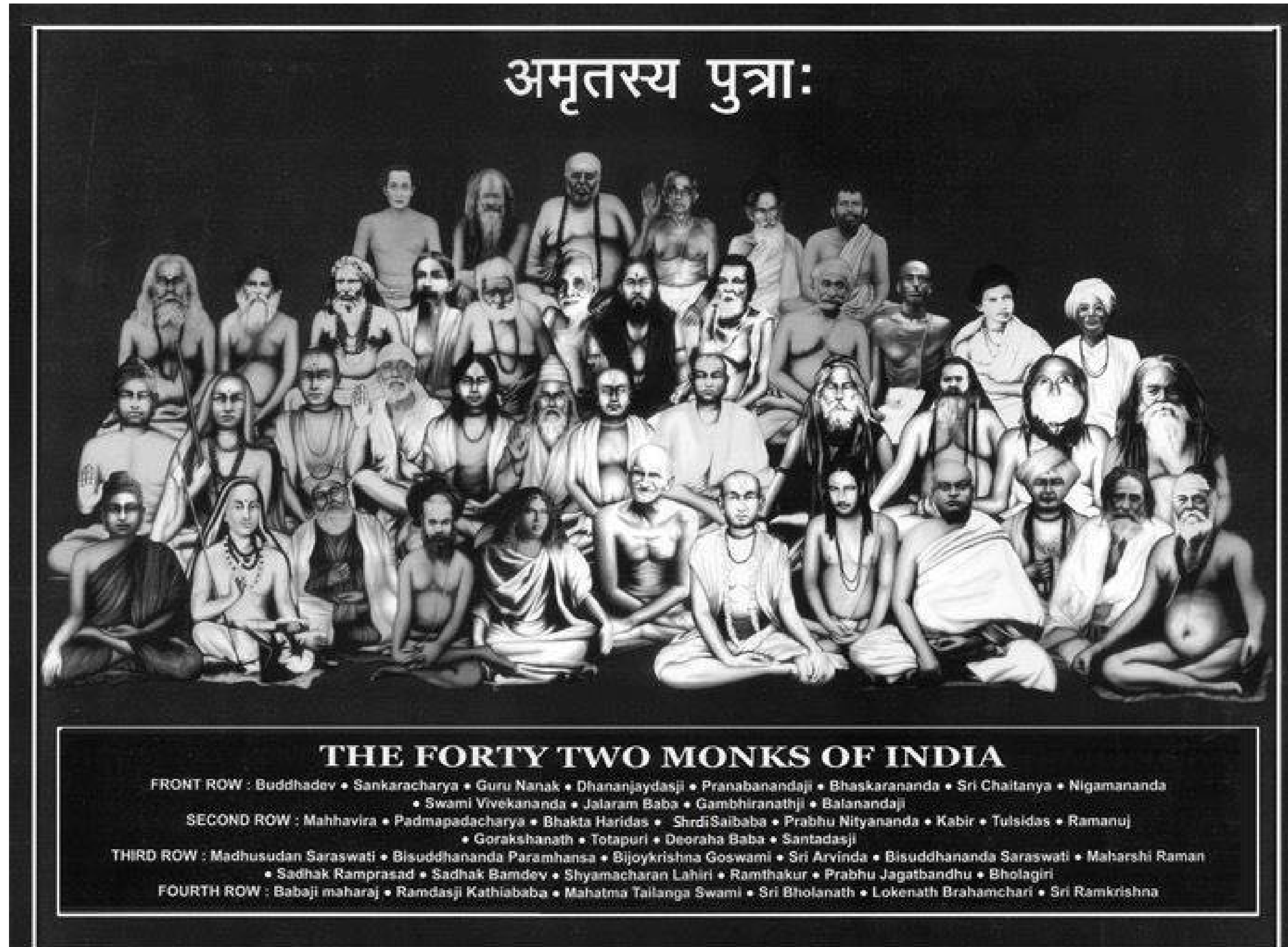


# Darshan of Sages and Saints of India





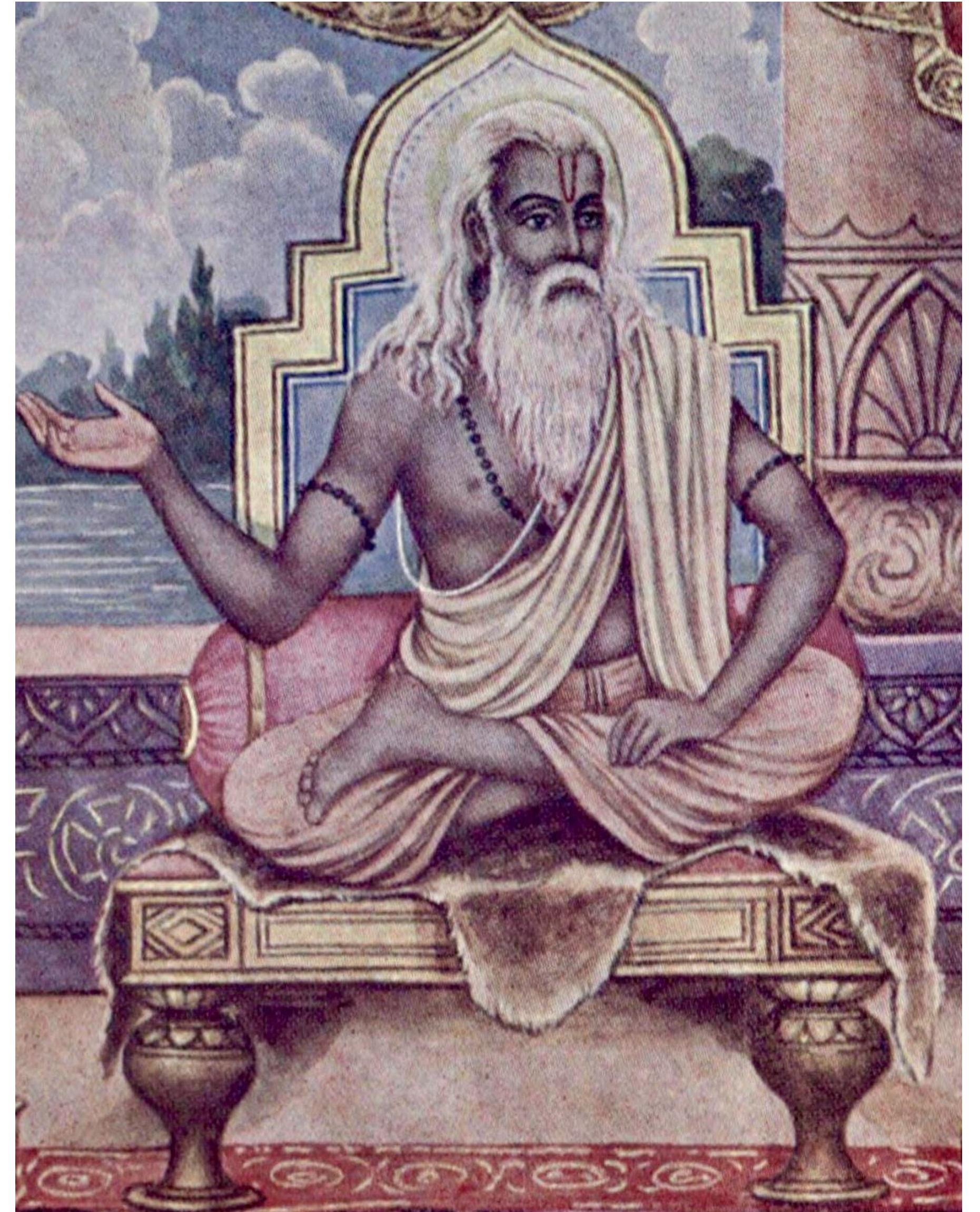
# Darshan of 42 Monks of India





# Vyasa

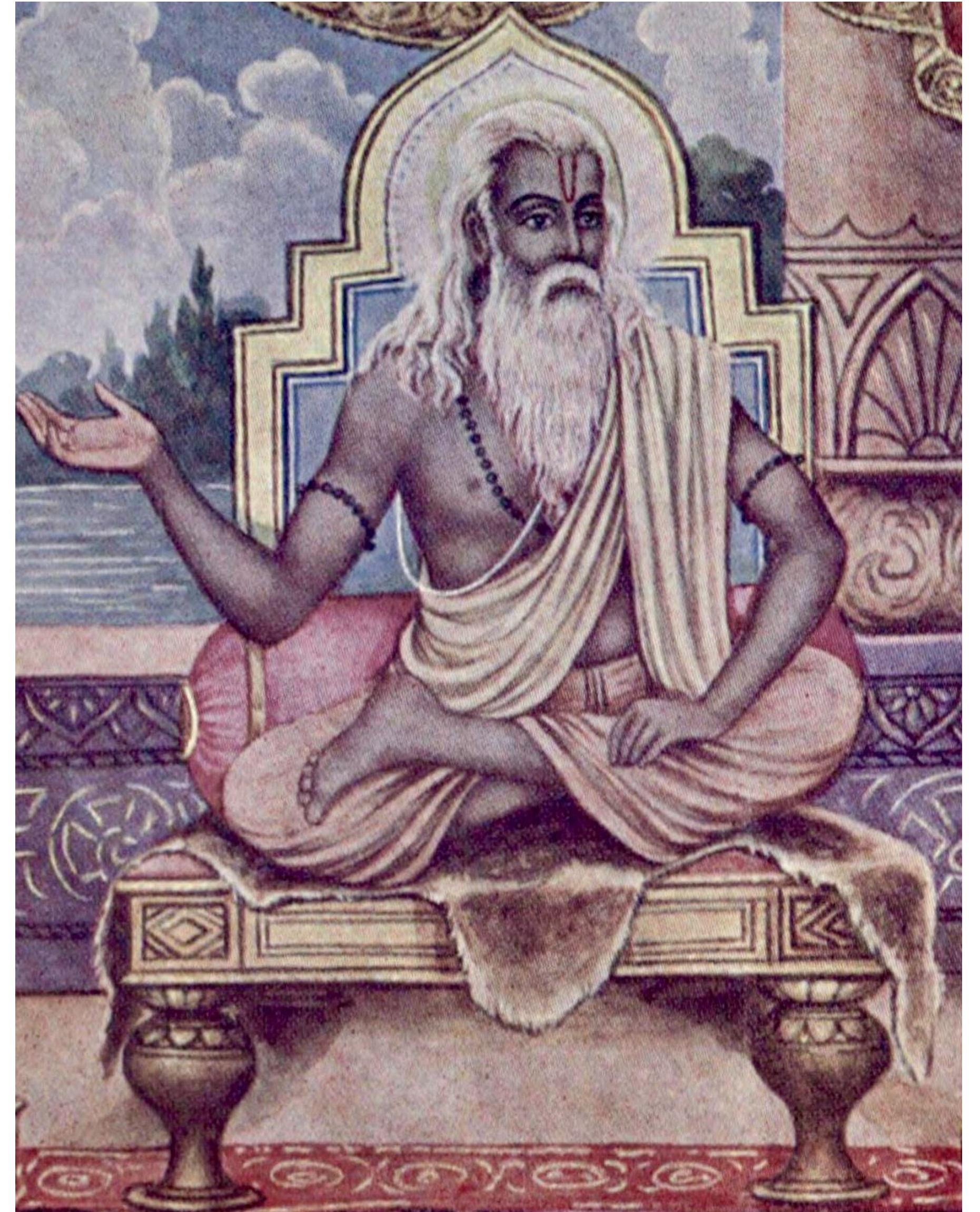
1. **Krishna Dvaipayana** (**Sanskrit**: कृष्णद्वैपायन, **romanized**: *Kṛṣṇadvaipāyana*), better known as **Vyasa Vedavyasa** "the one who classified the **Vedas**")
2. He is traditionally regarded as the author of the ***Mahabharata***. He is also regarded as a compiler of a number of significant scriptures.
3. As a partial incarnation **Vishnu**, he is also regarded by tradition as the compiler of the **mantras of the Vedas** into four **Vedas**, as well as the author of the eighteen **Puranas** and the **Brahma Sutras**.
4. He is one of the seven **Chiranjeevis**.





# Maitreyi

1. **Maitreyi** "Wise one" 🙌 was an **Indian philosopher** who lived during the later **Vedic period** in **ancient India**.
2. She is mentioned in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* as one of two wives of the Vedic sage **Yajnavalkya**; she is estimated to have lived around the 8th century BCE.
3. In the Hindu epic *Mahabharata* however, Maitreyi is described as an **Advaita** philosopher who never married.
4. In ancient **Sanskrit** literature, she is known as a *brahmavadini*
5. Maitreyi appears in ancient Indian texts, such as in a dialogue where she explores the Hindu concept of **Atman** (soul or self) in a dialogue with Yajnavalkya in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*.
6. According to this dialogue, love is driven by a person's soul, and Maitreyi discusses the nature of Atman and Brahman and their **unity**, the core of **Advaita philosophy**.
7. She is considered a symbol of Indian intellectual women.





# Patanjali

1. **Patañjali** was a sage in **Ancient India**.
2. Very little is known about him, and while no one knows exactly when he lived, from analysis of his works it is estimated that it was between the 4th and 5th centuries CE.
3. He is believed to be an author and compiler of a number of **Sanskrit** works.
4. The greatest of these are the **Yoga Sutras**, a classical **yoga** text.





# Agastya Rishi

1. **Agastya** was a revered **Indian** sage.
2. In the Indian tradition, he is a noted recluse and an influential scholar in diverse languages
3. He and his wife **Lopamudra** are the celebrated authors of hymns in the **Sanskrit** text *Rigveda* and other Vedic literature.
4. Agastya is considered to be the father of **Siddha medicine**.
5. Agastya appears in numerous **itihisas** and **Puranas** including the major *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*.
6. He is one of the seven most revered **rishis** (the **Saptarishi**) in the Vedic texts and is revered as one of the Tamil **Siddhar** in the **Shaivism** tradition, who invented an early grammar of the old Tamil.





# AdiGuru Sri Sankaracarya

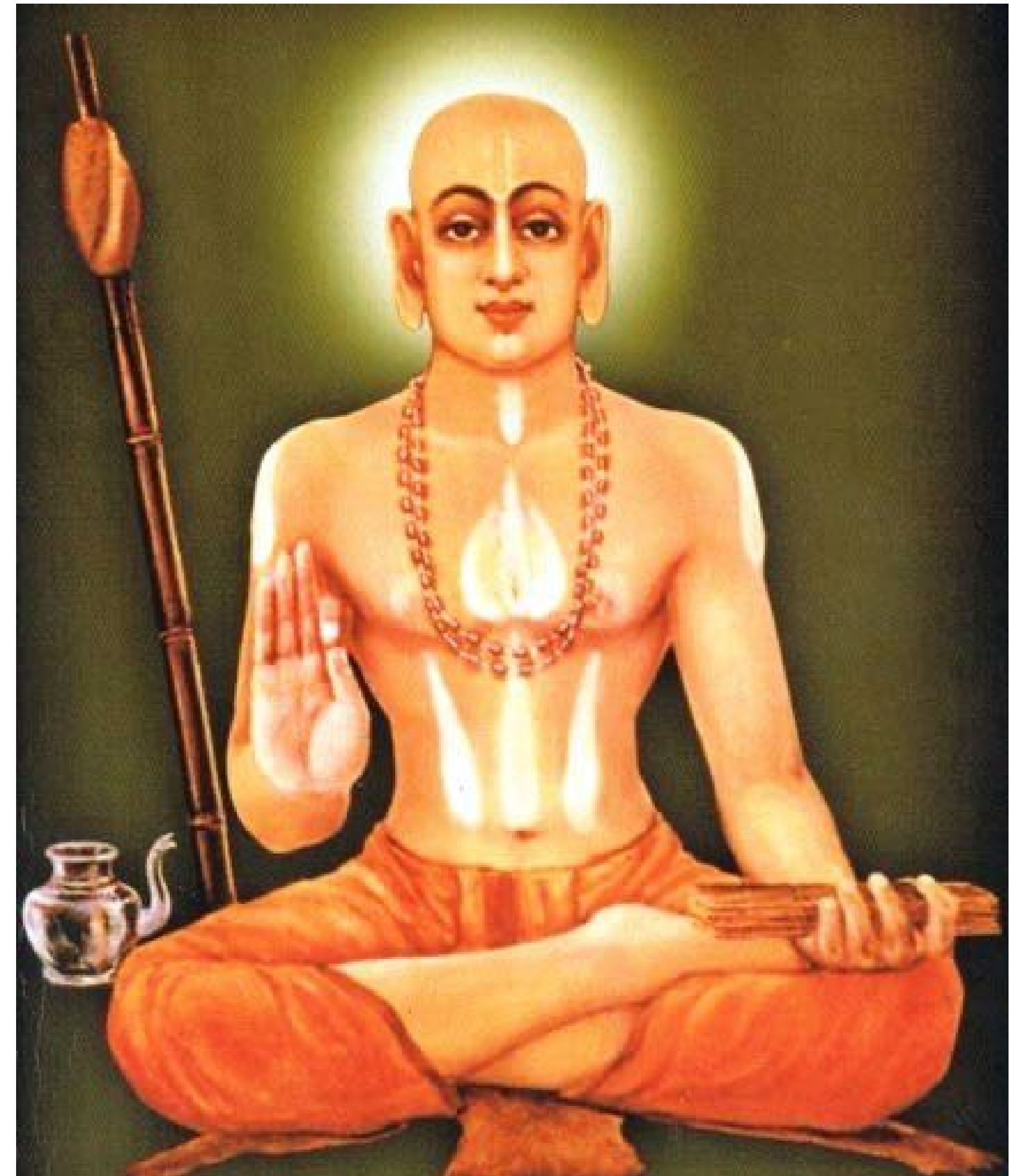
1. **AdiGuru Shankaracharya** First **Shankara**', was an **Indian Vedic scholar** and teacher (*acharya*).
2. His works present a harmonizing reading of the *sastras*, with liberating knowledge of the self at its core, synthesizing the **Advaita Vedanta** teachings of his time.
3. Due to his later fame, over 300 texts are attributed to his name, including commentaries (*Bhāṣya*), introductory topical expositions (*Prakaraṇa grantha*) and poetry (*Stotra*).
4. Authentic are the *Brahmasutrabhasya*, his commentaries on ten principal) Upanishads, his commentary on the **Bhagavad Gita**, and the **Upadesasahasri**.
5. The authenticity of Shankara being the author of **Vivekacūḍāmaṇi** has been questioned.
6. The central postulation of Shankara's writings is the identity of the Self **Ātman** and **Brahman**.





# Madhvacharya

1. **Madhvacharya** was an philosopher, theologian and the chief proponent of the *Dvaita* (dualism) school of *Vedanta*.
2. Madhva called his philosophy *Tattvavāda* meaning "arguments from a realist viewpoint".
3. As a teenager, he became a *Sanyasi*.
4. Madhva studied the classics of *Hindu philosophy*, particularly the *Principal Upanishads*, the *Bhagavad Gita* and the *Brahma Sutras (Prasthanatrayi)*.
5. His greatest work is considered to be the *Anuvyakhyana*, a philosophical supplement to his *bhasya* on the *Brahma Sutras* composed with a poetic structure.
6. Madhvacharya was a critic of *Adi Shankara's Advaita Vedanta* and *Ramanuja's Vishishtadvaita Vedanta* teachings.





# Ramanuja

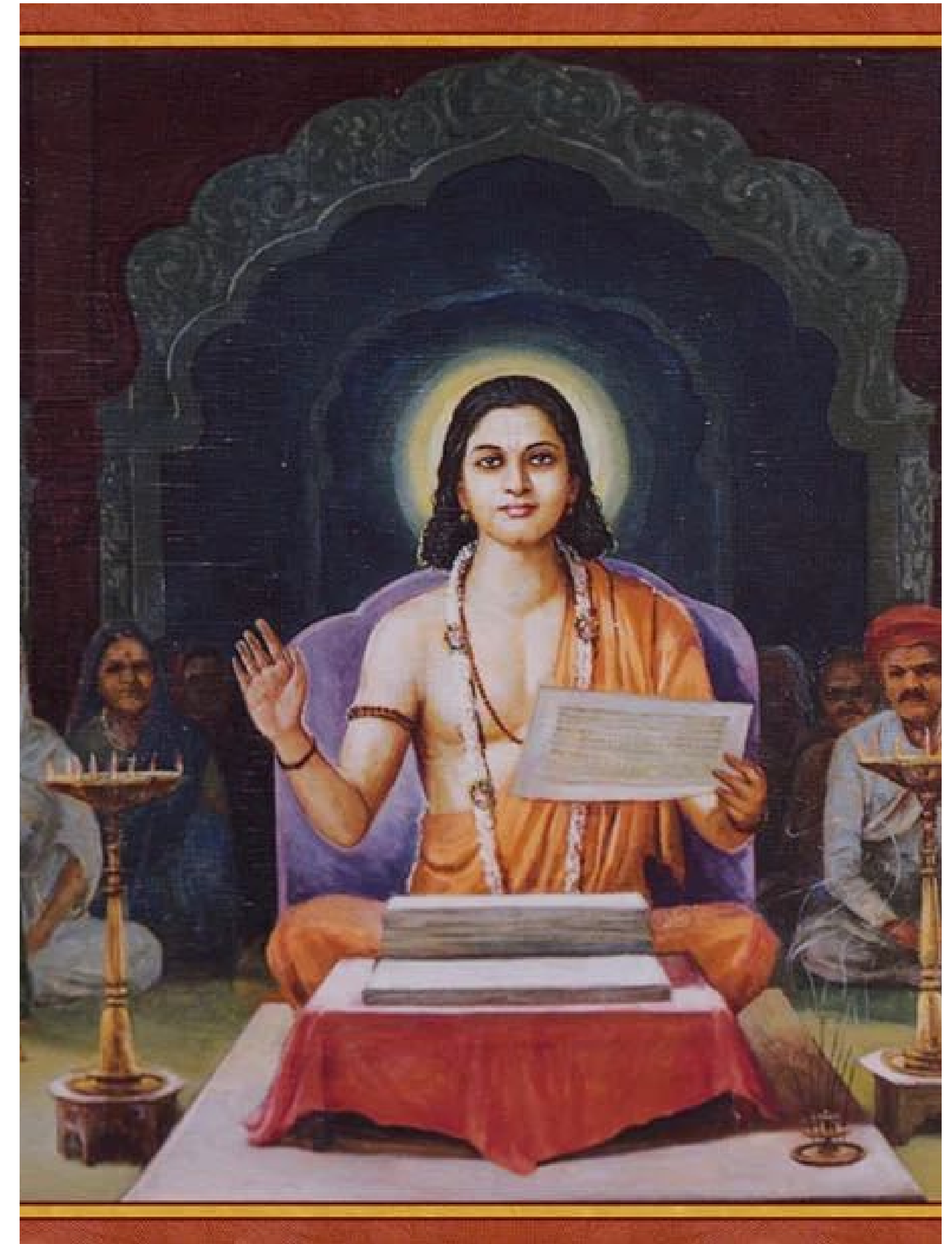
1. **Ramanuja** c. 1077 CE – 1157 CE was an Indian Hindu philosopher, guru and a [social reformer](#). He is noted to be one of the most important exponents of the [Sri Vaishnavism](#) tradition within [Hinduism](#).
2. His philosophical foundations for devotionalism were influential to the [Bhakti movement](#).<sup>[8][10][11]</sup>
3. Sri Vaishnava tradition holds that Ramanuja disagreed with his guru and the non-dualistic Advaita Vedānta, and instead followed in the footsteps of Tamil [Alvārs](#) tradition, the scholars [Nāthamuni](#) and [Yamunāchārya](#).
4. Ramanuja is famous as the chief proponent of [Vishishtadvaita](#) subschool of [Vedānta](#).
5. His [Vishishtadvaita](#) (qualified [non-dualism](#)) philosophy has competed with the [Dvaita](#) (theistic dualism) philosophy of [Madhvāchārya](#), and [Advaita](#) (non-dualism) philosophy of [Ādi Shankara](#), together the three most influential Vedantic philosophies of the 2nd millennium.
6. Ramanuja presented the importance of [bhakti](#), or the devotion to a [personal God](#) ([Vishnu](#) in Ramanuja's case) as a means to spiritual liberation. His theories assert that there exists a plurality and distinction between [Ātman](#) (soul) and [Brahman](#).
7. He also affirmed that there is unity of all souls and that the individual soul has the potential to realize identity with the Brahman.





# Sri Jnaneswar Maharaj

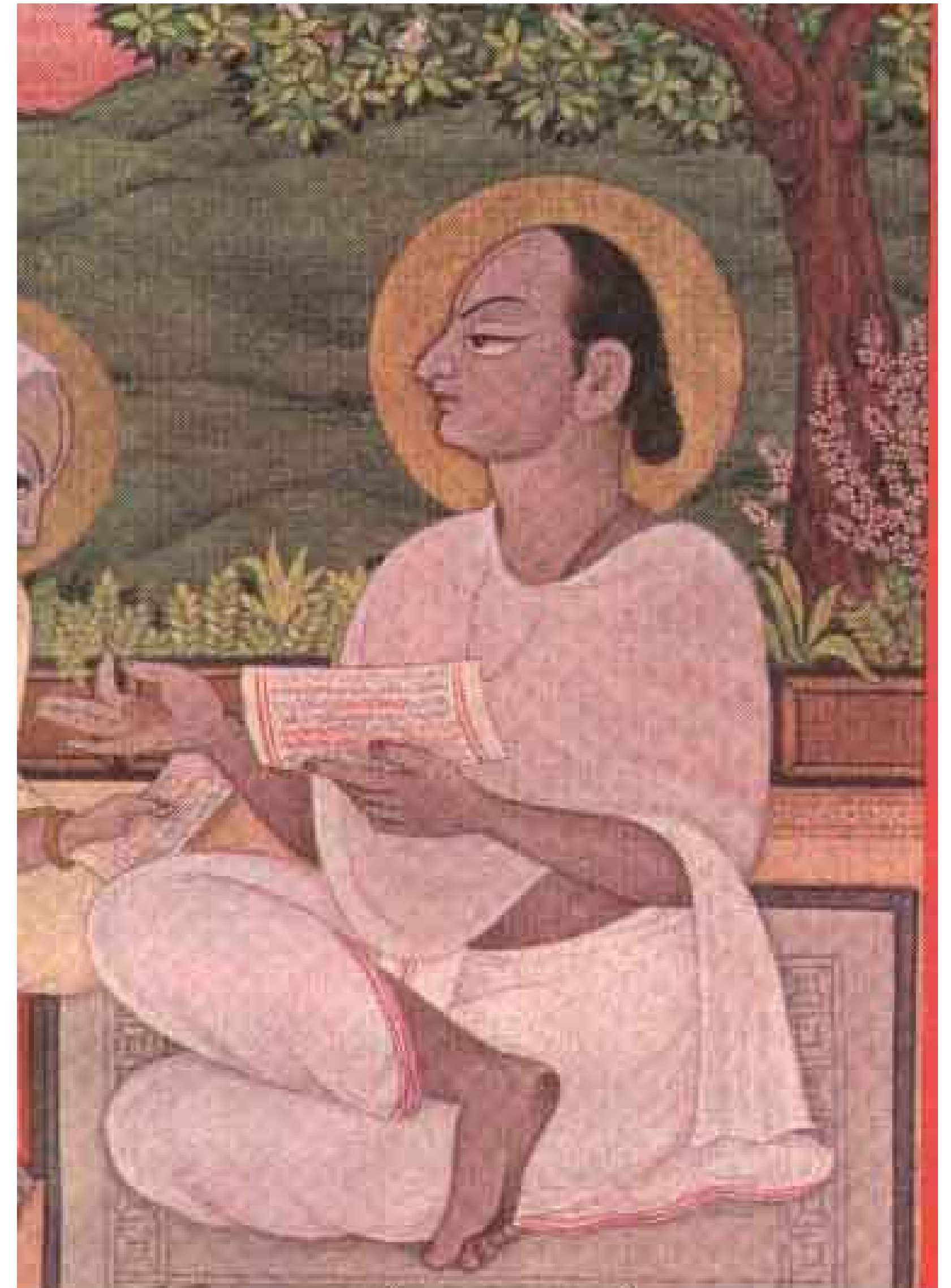
1. Jnanadev, born in 1275, is considered one of the greatest saints of Maharashtra.
2. At fifteen, Jnanadev wrote *Jnaneshwari*, a commentary on the Bhagavad Gita, considered the most significant after Shankara, a classic of Hindu thought.
3. He was a close friend and companion of Namdev and they traveled throughout India together.
4. He died at the age of twenty-one in 1296. It is said that he sat meditating on God as he gave up his physical body.





# Vallabhacharya Mahaprabhu

1. **Vallabhacharya Mahaprabhu**(1479–1531 CE), is a **Hindu** Indian saint and philosopher who founded the **Krishna**-centered **PushtiMarg** sect of **Vaishnavism** in the **Braj(Vraj)** region of **India**,<sup>[1]</sup> and the Vedanta philosophy of **Shuddha advaita** (Pure **Non-dualism**).<sup>‡</sup>
2. Vallabhacharya was born in a **Telugu Tailang Brahmin family** that had been currently residing in **Varanasi**,
3. The name **Vallabha** means the beloved or lover, and is a **name of Vishnu** and Krishna.
4. Vallabhacharya studied the **Vedas**, **Upanishads**, **Puranas**, **Shat Darshan** as a child, then travelled throughout the Indian subcontinent over 20 years.
5. He became one of the important leaders of the devotional **Bhakti movement**.
6. He rejected **asceticism** and monastic life, suggested that through loving devotion to God Krishna, any householder could achieve salvation – an idea that became influential all over India.





# Sri Ramakrishna

1. **Ramakrishna Paramahansa** (18 February 1836 – 16 August 1886), was an Indian **Hindu mystic** and religious leader who lived in the 19th century **Bengal**.
2. He adhered to various religious practices from **Bhakti yoga**, **Tantra**, **Advaita Vedanta**, as well as from **Islam** and **Christianity**, before proclaiming that the world's various religions are "so many paths to reach one and the same goal".
3. Ramakrishna experienced **spiritual ecstasies** from a young age, started his spiritual journey as a priest at the **Dakshineswar Kali Temple**, built by **Rani Rashmoni**.
4. Soon his **mystical** temperament gained him a widespread acknowledgement amongst the general public.
5. After his death, his chief disciple **Swami Vivekananda** popularized his ideas, and founded the **Ramakrishna Math**, which provides spiritual training for **monastics** and **householder** devotees, and the **Ramakrishna Mission**, to provide **charity**, **social work** and education.





# Sarada Devi

1. Rumors spread to Kamarpukur that Ramakrishna become unstable as a result of his spiritual practices at Dakshineswar. Ramakrishna's mother and his elder brother, Rameswar, decided to get Ramakrishna married, thinking that marriage would be a good steadying influence upon him — by forcing him to take up responsibilities, and keep his attention on normal affairs rather than on his spiritual practices and visions.
2. Ramakrishna himself mentioned that they could find the bride at the house of Ramchandra Mukherjee. The five-year-old bride, [Saradamani Mukhopadhyaya](#) (later known as Sarada Devi) was found, and the marriage was duly solemnised in 1859.
3. After the marriage, Sarada stayed at Jayrambati and joined Ramakrishna in Dakshineswar at the age of eighteen.
4. By the time his bride joined him, Ramakrishna had already embraced the monastic life of a [sannyasi](#); the marriage was never consummated.
5. As a priest, Ramakrishna performed the ritual ceremony – the *Shodashi Puja* in his room, where he worshipped his wife, Sarada Devi as the *Divine Mother*.
6. Ramakrishna regarded Sarada Devi as the Divine Mother in person, addressing her as the [Holy Mother](#), and it was by this name that she was known to Ramakrishna's disciples.





# Ananda Mayi Ma

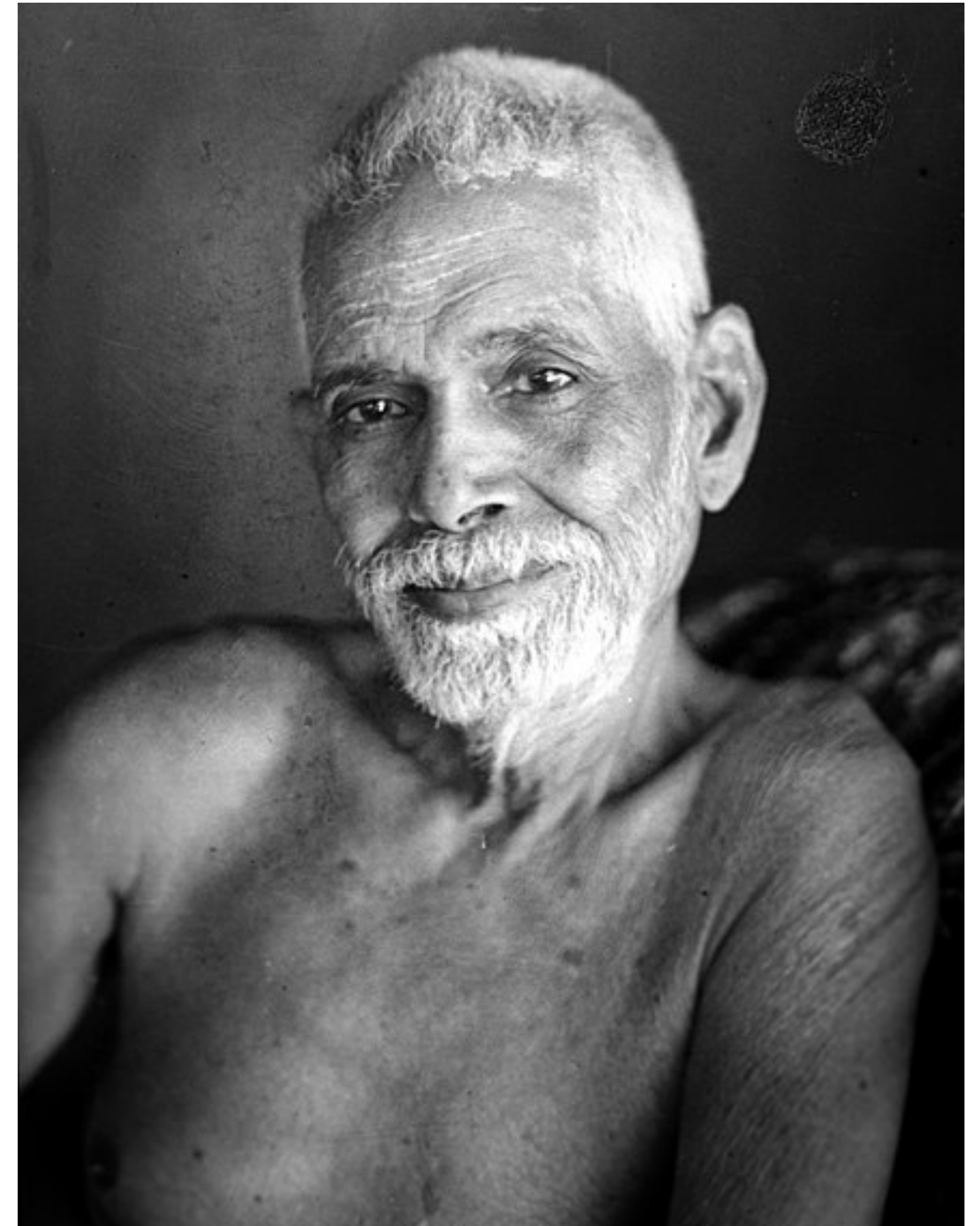
1. **Anandamayi Ma**  
30 April 1896 – 27 August 1982)
2. An Indian saint described by **Sivananda Saraswati** as *“the most perfect flower the Indian soil has produced”*





# Sri Ramana Maharishi

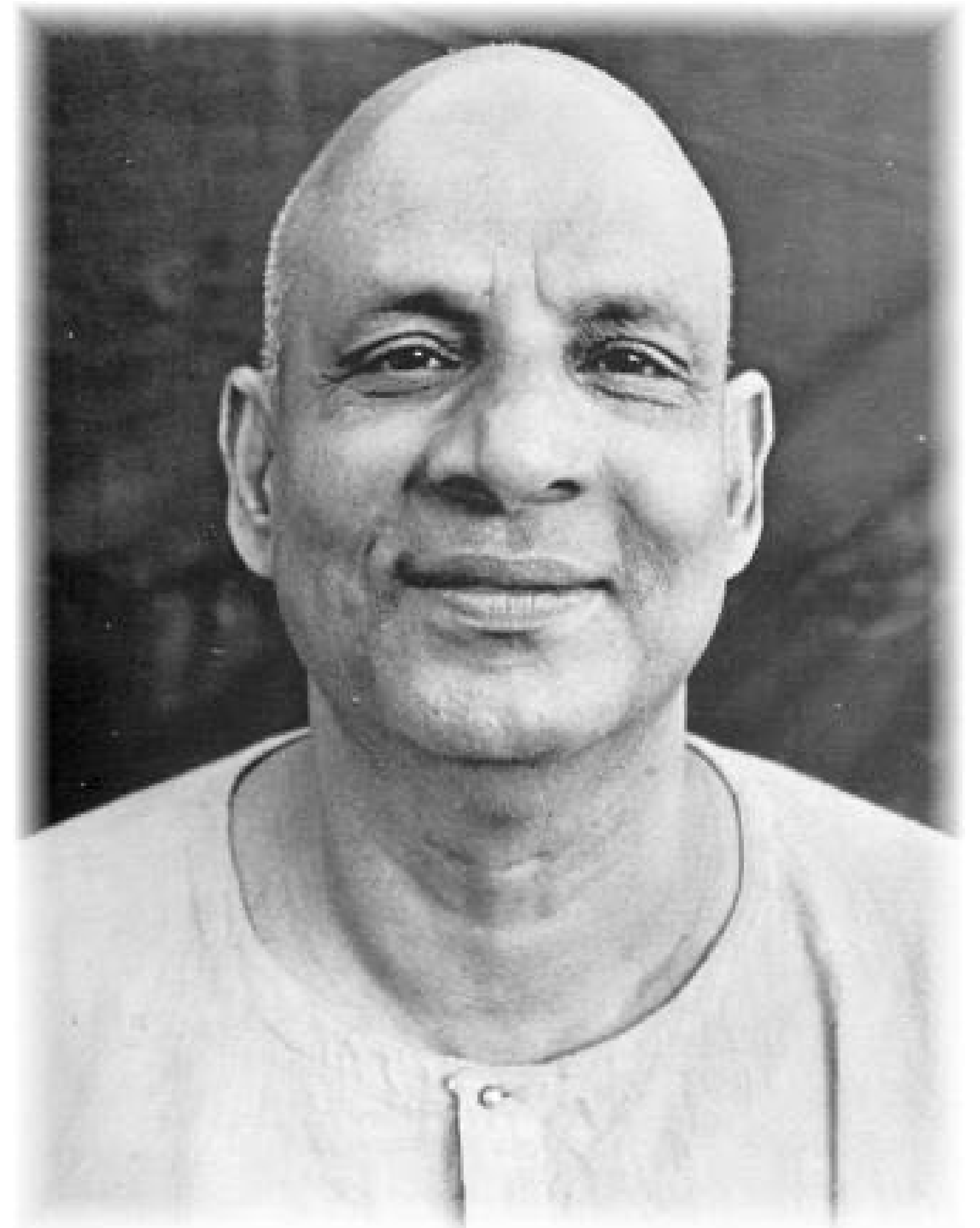
1. **Ramana Maharshi** (30 December 1879 – 14 April 1950) was an Indian sage and *jivanmukta* (liberated being).
2. He was born **Venkataraman Iyer**, in **Tiruchuli, Tamil Nadu, India**. In 1895, an attraction to the sacred hill **Arunachala** and the 63 **Nayanmars** was aroused in him, and in 1896, at the age of 16, he had a "death-experience" where he became aware of a "current" or "force" which he recognized as his true "I" or "self", and which he later identified with "the personal God, or **Iswara**".
3. This resulted in a state that he later described as Jnana.
4. Six weeks later he left his uncle's home in Madurai, and journeyed to the holy mountain **Arunachala**, in **Tiruvannamalai**, where he took on the role of a **sannyasin** (though not formally initiated), and remained for the rest of his life.
5. He attracted devotees that regarded him as an **avatar** of Shiva and came to him for **darshan** ("the sight of God"). In later years an **ashram** grew up around him, where visitors received **upadesa** ("spiritual instruction")<sup>[7]</sup> by **sitting silently in his company** asking questions.
6. Since the 1930s his teachings have been popularized in the West.
7. Ramana Maharshi approved a number of paths and practices, but recommended **self-enquiry** as the principal means to remove ignorance and abide in self-awareness, together with **bhakti** or surrender to the self.





# Sri Swami Sivananda Saraswati

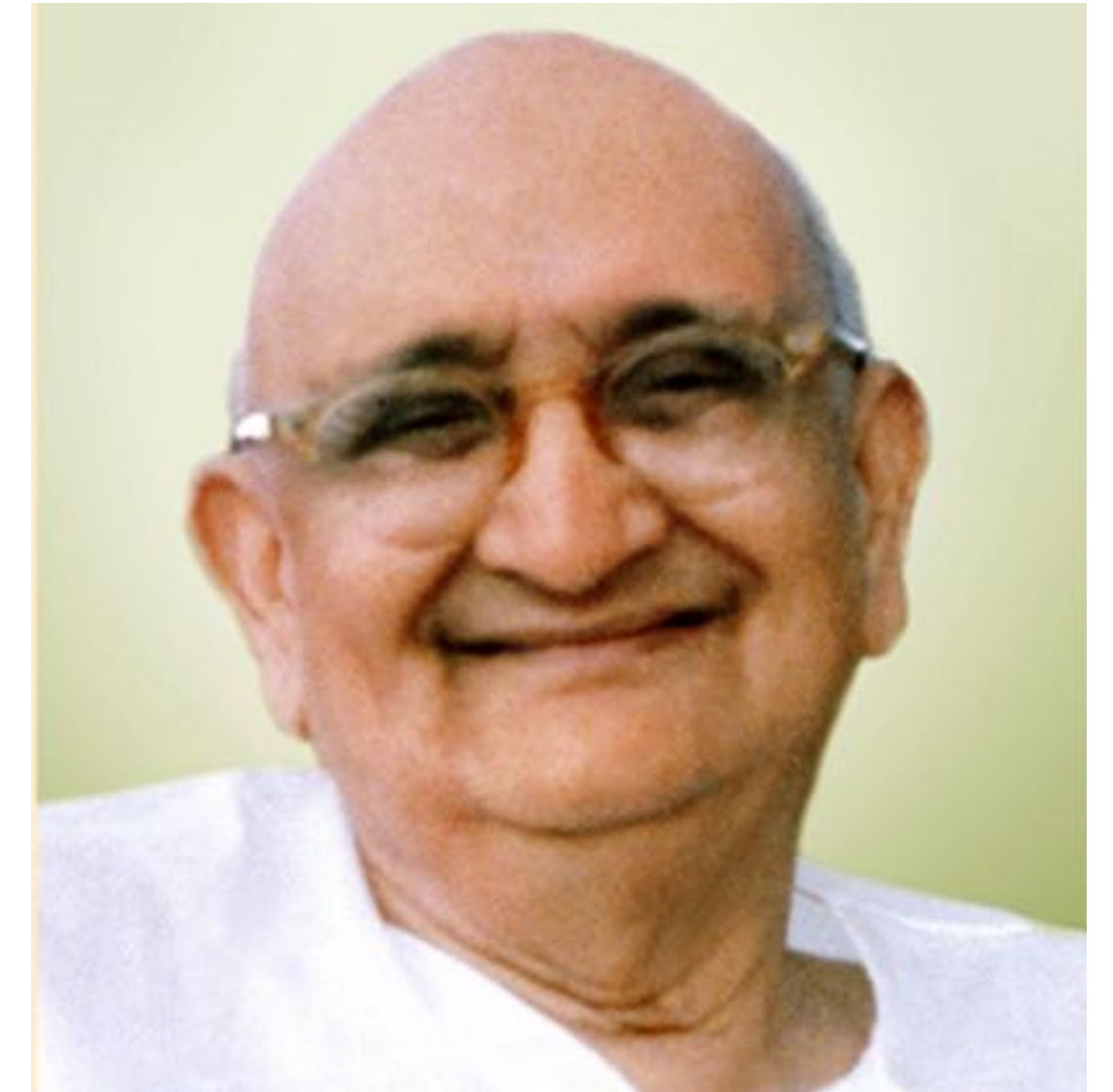
1. **Swami Sivananda**; 8 September 1887 – 14 July 1963 was a [yoga guru](#), a [Hindu](#) spiritual teacher, and a proponent of [Vedanta](#).
2. Sivananda was born **Kuppuswami** in [Pattamadai](#), in the [Tirunelveli](#) district of [Tamil Nadu](#).
3. He studied medicine and served in [British Malaya](#) as a physician for several years before taking up monasticism.
4. He was the founder of the [Divine Life Society](#) (DLS) in 1936, [Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy](#) (1948) and author of over 200 books on yoga, Vedanta, and a variety of subjects.
5. Sent many disciples across the world.
6. *“Serve, Love, Give, Purify, Meditate, Realize”*





# Papa Ram Dass and Mother Krishnabai

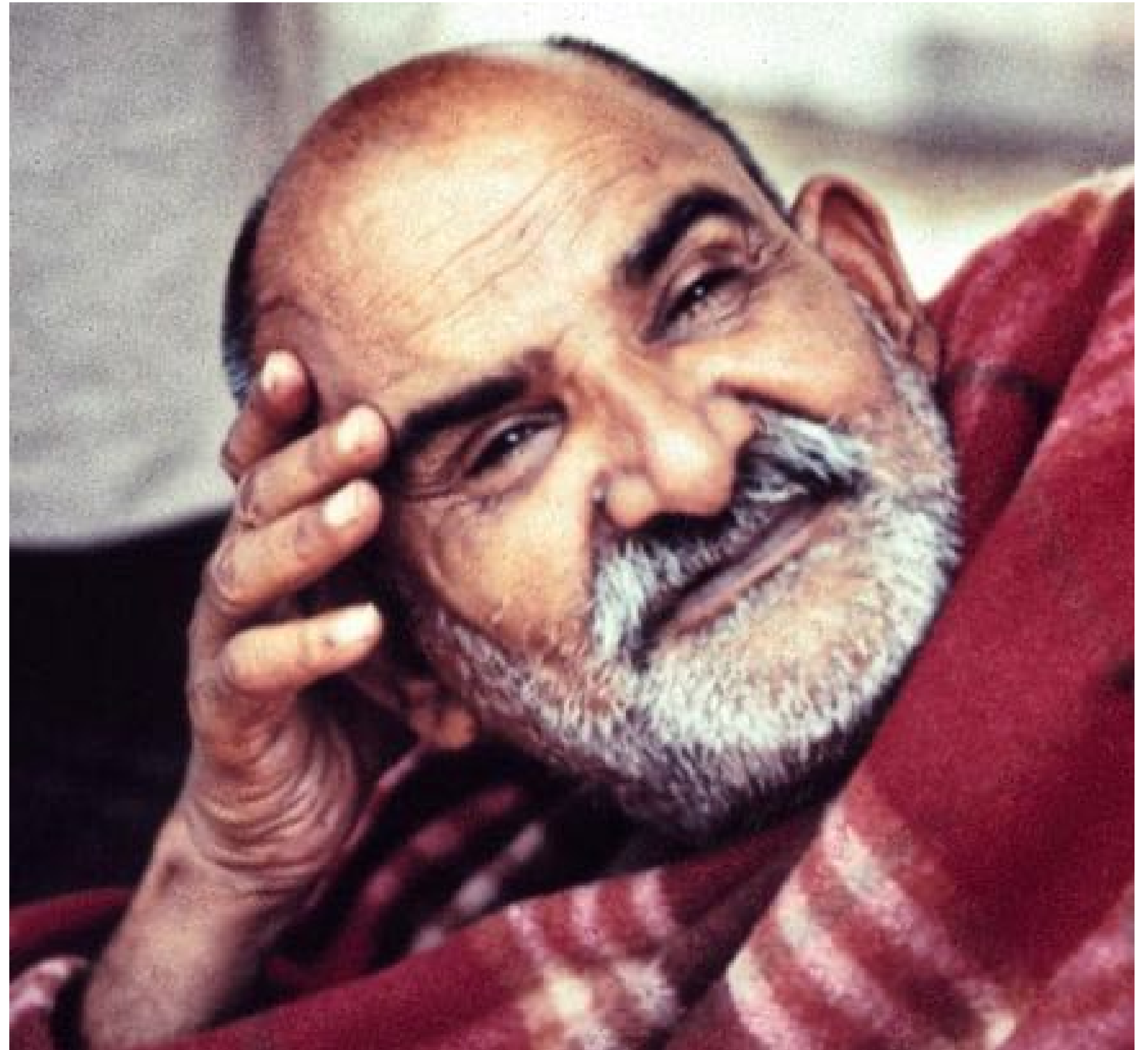
1. Anandashram came into existence in the year 1931 with Param Puja Papa Swami Ramdas as its founder saint ably assisted by Param Puja Mataji Krishnabai.
2. Saints are ever conscious of an immortal and all-blissful state of existence and their sublime transcendence, from the lower plane to the consciousness of an eternal life, is revealed in their teachings which ever harp upon the one theme of Immortality, God or Truth.
3. They hold that life is eternal and that every soul is essentially Divine. Their equal vision, having demolished all the limitations set by the lower mind, ever seeks union and oneness with the imperishable and omnipresent Spirit inherent in all the varied expressions of life. They radiate the glow of spiritual splendour even after shedding their mortal coil.





# Neem Karoli Baba

1. **Neem Karoli Baba** c. 1900 – 11 September 1973), known to his followers as Maharaj-ji, was a **Hindu guru** and a devotee of the **Hindu deity Hanuman**.
2. He is known outside India for being the spiritual master of a number of Americans who travelled to India in the 1960s and 70s.





ॐ सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः  
सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः ।  
सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु  
मा कश्चिद्दुःखभाग्भवेत् ।  
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

oṃ sarve bhavantu sukhinaḥ  
sarve santu nirāmayāḥ  
sarve bhadrāṇi paśyantu  
mā kaścid duḥkha bhāgbhavet  
oṃ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ

May all be happy, may all be free from disease, may all see goodness,  
may none suffer from sorrow.



ॐ असतो मा सद्गमय ।  
तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय ।  
मृत्योर्मा अमृतं गमय ।  
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥ हरिः ॐ तत्सत् ॥

asato mā sadgamaya  
tamasomā jyotir gamaya  
mrityormāamritam gamaya  
Om śhānti śhānti śhāntiḥ harih om tat sat

Lead me from changing existence to unchanging being,  
lead me from the darkness of tamas to the light of knowledge,  
lead me from death to immortality. Harih om that is truth.