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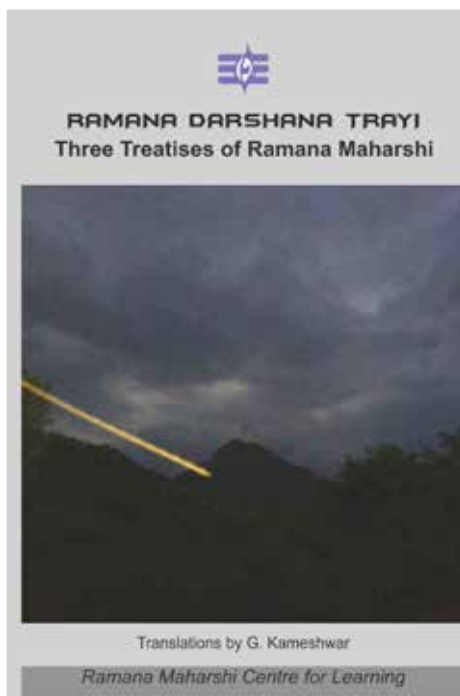
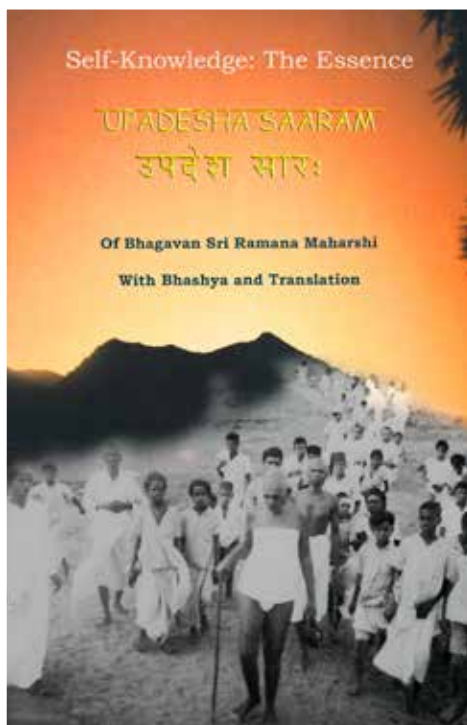
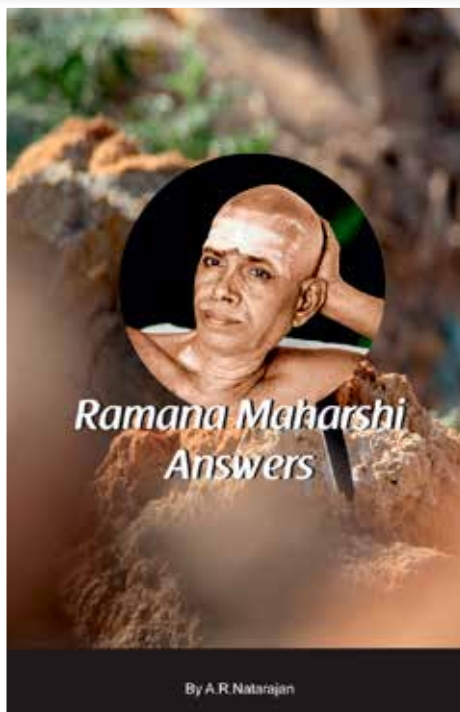
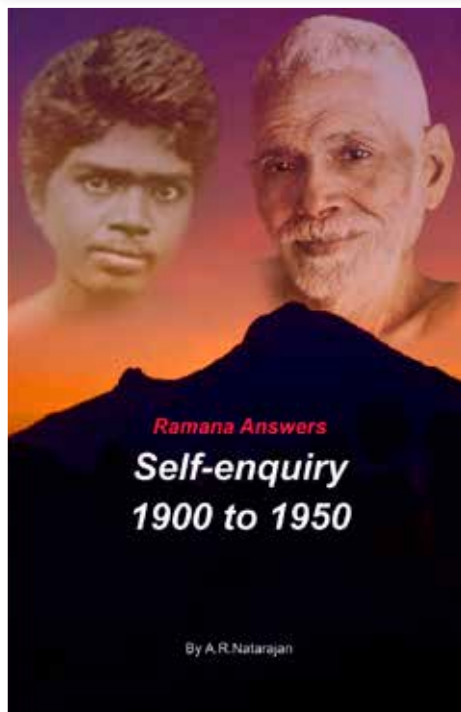
The Ramana way



Ramana Bliss

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THE RAMANA WAY

A Monthly Journal since 1981

*Celebrating
Ramana Rasa
Anubhava*



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*Brotherhood based on equality is the supreme
goal to be attained by human society*

- Ramana Gita X, 10

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Editorial*Dr. Sarada*

The New Year has been born not so long ago. There was much celebration for the birth of this year. Much mirth and much hope accompanied the coming of the year. Best wishes were shared. But how many, if anyone at all mourned the death of the previous year? Did anyone weep that 2019 was dead and gone when 2020 was born? If not, why not? Do we mourn the death of every year, the death of every month, week or day? Why don't we do so? We see it as a natural end and a natural beginning. Day will not go on forever, nor will the night. We don't expect them to. How is it that we expect human life to go on forever? Why do we mourn death no matter when it comes upon a human being? Are we wary of all endings?

We are not sad that the foetus is no more in the womb once it has been born as a baby. We do not expect the baby to remain an infant forever either. On the other hand, we would be upset if the baby did not change and grow. Yes, this we call growth. We do not see the change from one stage of the baby to another as an end. We always see it as a new beginning and we always rejoice.

Sweets are prepared in the house for every stage in a baby's growth. When the baby turns over on the stomach, when the baby begins to creep, when the baby begins to crawl, when the baby crosses the threshold, when the baby sits, when the baby stands, when the baby walks... each is a moment of wonder and happiness for the family. Does anyone feel sad that the baby can't be rocked in the cradle anymore? Does anyone complain that the sweetness of the crawling baby has gone away once the baby has begun to walk? Does anyone cry bitterly when the child begins to speak because they miss the sweetness of the earlier incoherent prattle? Looking back at what was before does not bring tears to ones eyes, it is not painful. In fact, lifelong the parents and the family carry sweet memories of every stage of the baby's growth. These memories are cherished. One can go back to them with joy.

Surely many endings are acceptable, even looked forward to. Although the students passing out of school may cry on the day of the farewell party none of them would want to come back to school. All of them look forward to doing well in the examinations and going forward into promising avenues of higher education and therefrom to good career opportunities. On the other hand there are some endings that bring sorrow and some that bring deep grief. These endings may sometimes be unexpected, like the breaking of a friendship or the ending of an upward movement in one's career, the ending of life itself in an accident or a sudden illness. Or else the end may be more or less expected as in the case of those who are aging or ailing for a long time. If the condition that precedes the end is painful, the end may be looked forward to, it may be seen as a release from the pain. If this is not the case then the end itself would be seen to be painful.

Whenever one is deeply attached to an existing situation the ending of it brings pain, even if the end is known to be inevitable. And inevitable every end is. If something has a beginning, it must necessarily have an end as well. Every cell in the human body begins to grow as soon as it is born and then to decay. Everything in the universe is in a state of dynamic existence, everything is continuously changing. And what is change but death? When a situation changes, the earlier situation ceases to exist. When Spring comes Winter is dead. When Summer comes Spring is no more. When Autumn is born, Summer has evaporated and disappeared and when Winter comes Autumn has bid goodbye for ever to the world. The next Spring and Summer and Autumn and Winter will come of course but they are not the same as the earlier one that went away. When leaves of a tree drop away in Autumn new leaves do grow back again. Yet they are not the same old leaves. Those are surely dead and gone although the cycle continues with the coming of new leaves and new seasons.

Ends are inevitable as long as there are beginnings. Ramana points out in his 'Upadesa Saram' that the fruits of all actions are impermanent, they cannot last forever. Nothing lasts forever. Is this a curse? Do we really want things to last forever? Today no one is worried if technology renders something obsolete overnight and one has to discard the earlier version of a gadget. In

fact, if something or someone lasts forever it may not necessarily be a boon. There is a Greek legend of the Goddess Eos who fell in love with a mortal prince Tithonus. The Goddess sought the boon of immortality for her lover and it was granted. They then got married and believed they would literally live 'happily ever after'. However they discovered to their utter dismay that she had only sought immortality and not eternal youth for her husband. So he aged and aged and aged but could not die though he longed to do so. He continues to age till date and will do so till eternity.

So it is not endings that we dread but only the ending of something that we wish should continue. It is not an end per se that brings sorrow but an end that comes where continuity is expected and wanted. The pain, therefore, springs not from the coming of the end but from the desire and the attachment, from the need to hold on. And if this is clearly seen as the source of pain the answer to that pain can be nowhere other than in letting go. If we must escape from the pain of death that seems to be the most final of endings and from the sorrows that other endings bring, we must be prepared to let go. We must be ready to let go of our desire, of our attachment. How do we manage this?

One way to combat our attachment to things, events and people is to recognise the inevitability of change, of endings. We can see that even 'good' things change for the good. The flower dies and changes into the fruit, the fruit into the seed, the seed into the plant, the plant into a tree. When the tree falls and gets buried under the earth it changes to coal and then to diamond. Every end is a beginning. What is the end to the caterpillar is the birth of the butterfly. We call it metamorphosis. We do not call it death. But is not even death only metamorphosis in a way? Why should we bemoan it?

We may say this or anything else but does this really enable us to accept death? Can it erase our fear of death? Can it soften the blow of separation from a dear one when face to face with death? Our meditations on death may not help us abide in peace unless we apply these through enquiry in our daily lives, unless we become conscious to our own weakness of clinging on to things. Further, unless we experience consciously our own Self that transcends death.

We can see that though everything is constantly changing for us nothing ever changes. The body changes every minute but we happily believe we are living with the same body ever since we were born. The people around us change but we think we are connecting to the 'same' people when we reconnect to our school friends or college mates. We rejoice in telling each other how we have 'not changed'. Our own ideas, feelings, thoughts, perceptions, understandings, keep changing ever so often, yet we imagine we are the 'same person'.

Indeed our very thoughts are changing with greater speed than that in which light travels. Are we at all aware that no thought of ours is constant? Are we aware of the rising and setting of thoughts? Are we aware that we die with every setting thought and reborn with the next one? When I am angry I am an angry person, am I not? But if I become calm the next minute, I would no longer be an angry person. I would then be a calm person. The angry Sarada would be dead and gone. The calm Sarada would have been born. Again, this Sarada too may die and a sad Sarada may be born.

From moment to moment I am born into a different mood, a different thought, born as a different person. Which one of them is I? Which one's death should I mourn? How can I mourn the death of one Sarada or celebrate the birth of another Sarada when I do not even countenance these changes in myself? What can I know of death and how can I deal with it when I do not know who it is who is living this life in the first place? Whose sorrow is it? Whose fear is it? Who am I?

If we fail to ask ourselves this question with repeated intensity, if we wish to live in pretence of continuity how can we get to accept change? If, on the other hand, we become alive to the truth of every moment, surely 'letting go' of any moment of the past should not pose a major challenge. To clarify this path Ramana tells us in his 'Forty Verses on Reality' that the present is the only time; the past and the future are only in the mind. The past was present when it was current, he says, the future coming will then be present. Yesterday was today when it happened and tomorrow will also be today when it comes. Even if we get into a machine that allows us to get into the past or travel into the future, when we land in yesterday or in the next century, at the point of time when we land there will it not be the 'present' there?

So Ramana says that when we speak about someone who is 'dead', that person is present amidst us. By our very speaking of that person in the present do we not make that person present? If we were to completely forget someone who is dead would that person continue to be alive for us? Could there be any sorrow on account of that person's absence? Or, if we completely forget someone who is dear on account of amnesia or Alzheimer would there be joy on account of the person's presence? Hence Ramana points out that it is vain to discuss the past and the future without knowing the present.

How to know the present? It is only possible by surrendering the entire past. When the entire past is surrendered then nothing remains to connect to the future, so the future too is surrendered automatically. We are holding on to the past through our false identity 'I am so and so'. The moment this is surrendered, the entire past will vanish along with it. Again, in his 'Forty Verses on Reality' Ramana gives us an invaluable clue. He says that if on account of fear of death we take refuge in the Conqueror of Death, Lord Siva, then our puny thought of 'I' will be dissolved, it will die. Then we will become immortal. How can fear of death arise thereafter?

In this context in satsang Sri Nandakumar quoted Talk No.28 in 'Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi':

D.: If 'I' also be an illusion, who then casts off the illusion?

M.: The 'I' casts off the illusion of 'I' and yet remains as 'I'. Such is the paradox of Self-Realisation. The realised do not see any contradiction in it. Take the case of bhakti - I approach Iswara and pray to be absorbed in Him. I then surrender myself in faith and by concentration. What remains afterwards? In place of the original 'I', perfect self-surrender leaves a residuum of God in which the 'I' is lost. This is the highest form of devotion (parabhakti), prapatti, surrender or the height of vairagya.

You give up this and that of 'my' possessions. If you give up 'I' and 'Mine' instead, all are given up at a stroke. The very seed of possession is lost. Thus the evil is nipped in the bud or crushed in the germ itself."

In his composition, 'Prayer for Mother's Recovery', Ramana prays to Arunachala to save his mother Azhagamma from her delirious fever of typhoid that had brought her to the verge of death. But his prayer is truly to release her also once and for all from the repeated cycle of births which automatically frees from death. He begins this song by addressing Arunachala as, 'alayaa varu piravi attanaiyum maatra malayaa ezhunda marunde' – 'O medicine who has arisen in the form of a Hill to put an end to the endless waves of births!' He hails Arunachala as the medicine to cure endless births. It is only later in the song that he calls out to Arunachala as 'Death to Death'. And finally he puts his own special stamp on the song by asking 'What is Death if enquired into?'

One may surrender completely and cross beyond the boundaries of death. Or one may enquire into the nature of death as Ramana himself did and discover that death is only a thought. Indeed death is only one aspect of the cycle of Time and Time itself does not exist except in the mind. Ramana first enquired into death when he was a boy of twelve, when his dear father Sundaram Iyer lay dead before him. At that point through enquiry he reached the understanding that the body could not have been his father. If it had been his father no one would have set fire to that body in the cremation grounds. If that body had been his father, how could it have withstood the heat of the fire? Would it not have objected and said, 'Don't burn me!' The body did not protest. It could not protest because it had no life in the first place. It was insentient always. Something had resided within the body and had left the body. The young boy Ramana thought, 'My father's I has left his body but my I is still within my body'.

He was a boy of twelve then and like a lad of twelve, left behind meditations on death and went about his play and work in a natural manner. At sixteen Death visited him again, this time in the form an intense fear of his own death. How did he enquire into his own death? By enacting it as the absolute truth of the moment. One may say that he surrendered to the fact of his own death, he did not seek to escape it in any manner. At the same time, he enquired with the blazing light of inwardness, 'This body is dead. It will be burnt and reduced to ashes. But with the death of the body am I dead?' His body lay stiff, there was no movement, no sound,

no breath, not even the thought 'I' within. Yet something shone within him aware of the entire process. In a flash he knew that he was this deathless spirit, the Self that included and transcended the body and was untouched by death.

Later Ramana was to encounter death again when he was staying at Virupaksha Cave. This happened near Tortoise Rock when he was walking back to the cave one noon with a few devotees. Suddenly he saw 'a white curtain enveloping everything'. He sat down. His breathing stopped. His body became blue. The devotees embraced his body and began to weep and lament. He remained aware of all this, connected to the throb of 'I-I', the Self. Suddenly he felt the life force revive strongly from the spiritual heart and spread through the body. The body regained its normal hue. Breathing recommenced. If the earlier experience was 'enactment' of death, this was physiological death. He established through this experience that 'death' made no difference at all to the state of one abiding steadily in the Self.

Sri A.R.Natarajan writes, "The difference between a jnani and the practitioner of Ramana's path is not in the nature of one's experience but in the steadiness of that experience. By repeated inward plunges of the mind into its own source it gradually acquires the capacity to stay within... The dawn of Ramana's grace is felt in greater vigilance against marauding thoughts, in the restoration of faith in self-enquiry and search for the source of mind. Gradually the power of the Self to draw the mind to itself would be felt, until one is irresistibly 'That which is ever existing, the blissful Self'. The pure mind would be aware of the dance of the Self, as a surge of joy felt as 'I', 'I', in the heart."



THE NEW DAWN**A. R. Natarajan***THE BATTLE BETWEEN THE PAST AND THE PRESENT**

One wonders whether there is such a thing as past at all. Yet the past stays with us, as our constant companion since the residual memory of the experience continues and gives direction and momentum to our actions and thoughts in the present. Therefore we are in no position to say 'let the dead past bury its dead'. It is alive as the strong motivational force in one's thinking and action. One can therefore say that the past is the mind and no one can say good-bye to it unless one discovers the true nature of the mind and its natural silence.

In contrast the present is the moment when experience is happening, not when it is recollected after it is over. Here too total action in the present is possible only when the mind is delinked from the past. Living in the present therefore is a dimension that is outside the experience of most seekers of the truth.

The vast majority of people seem to be unconcerned with a way of life which is not bound to the past. They first make a division between subject and the object and locate happiness in the objects. There is no knowledge of the subject 'I' and no concern about this ignorance. The true nature of the subject is never questioned. Many move along the thought-world propelled by the tendencies, desire and fear ridden, anxious, for many a fondly cherished hope may well be denied. Unaware of the spring of happiness within they are content to lead a superficial life hugging their trivialities.

However a seeker of truth recognizes that knowing everything about the world, objective knowledge, without knowing the one to whom all knowledge relates is futile. One must be ready to dive deep to understand the true nature of the subject. Ramana has made it clear that the only way to know the true nature of the subject would be to search for the source of the mind. One has to hang on to the 'I' or cling to it by single-minded attention to the core of the mind. One might say that this is 'stage 1', success of

*An excerpt from the Publication of RMCL of the same title.

which is marked by the mind being passive and undistracted. This mind which is quiet and at the same time alert needs to be kept active in pursuit of itself by further questioning about the source of this 'I'. Then a natural merging of the 'I', the essential nature of which is consciousness, takes place. The mind then merges in the Self, in the sense that the divided mind with its external pulls would be replaced by a pure and silent mind.

Then a different kind of experience comes about; an experience without the experiencer, just the pure mind's awareness of its own happiness. Natural, spontaneous, unbound bliss fills one's being. This experience may be termed as Self-experience for it is non-dual and inherent.

The jnani's mind remains firmly rooted in this vast silence without the least tendency to move away. The difference between a jnani and the practitioner of Ramana's path is not in the nature of one's experience but in the steadiness of that experience. By repeated inward plunges of the mind into its own source it gradually acquires the capacity to stay within.

One is often pushed out of this state of joy by the mind, which is linked to the past, to the known, to objective happiness. One might notice during meditation that the mind is sometimes literally itching to move away to its known field, thoughts and more thoughts.

All the problems of the seekers on the Ramana path lies in this half way stage when one is losing his anchorage in the ego, but has not yet been able to steadily abide at the source of the mind. Ramana has pointed out that the search for the source of the mind is the most intense activity requiring undistracted and total attention of an integral mind. Whereas normally, the intensity of one's mind varies from lazy wool-gathering to complete attention. Therefore there is every possibility of one being taken off guard, taken for a ride. The vagabond mind used to straying, needs consistent and persistent inward effort to be focused on the inward search.

The spiritual path is not a bed of roses even for a very earnest seeker. Like the rough and smooth of the external life in the world, here too there are many on and off moods. One day, one may be floating in joy and on another day one could well be down in the dumps. We have the 'dark nights of the soul'. This difficulty is heightened on the Ramana path because one has to

find the truth, not away from life, but in the very thick of activity. In any activity there is always danger for the seeker unless one is constantly able to relate the action and the thought to the mosaic of love for Ramana. There should be no seeking of or finding any enjoyment from the action or the thought.

This is precisely the time when one has to totally depend on Ramana's grace through constant prayer. One must hold on to the remembrance of his mighty power to shield the devotee from becoming a victim of his self-chosen erroneous ways when he is off guard. At this stage the tears of suffering of a seeker can be assuaged by Ramana, the 'Master of Maya', who alone can scatter 'maya, dark and intense'. Each of Muruganar's sacred verses has the power to turn the tide, by instilling confidence in Ramana's protective might. One of these verses from 'Ramana Deva' can be recalled and repeated in one's own mind often when confronted by the deep-rooted malaise of attachments born of repeated thinking in a particular direction.

True, I am vile, you immaculate.
But I have reached your feet and stand before you
Lord supreme, you can transmute
All that you touch into yourself.
Such is your glory. Then it is your duty,
Blue-throated friend within me dwelling
Ramana, mighty Lord, your duty,
To turn me into Shiva and make me shine.

For the courageous, the persistent, Ramana-dependent seekers, the crossing of the mental barrier, the delinking with the past is bound to happen. New vistas of vast spaces of the mind and heart are sure to open up.

The dawn of Ramana's grace is felt in greater vigilance against marauding thoughts, in the restoration of faith in self-enquiry and search for the source of mind. Gradually the power of the Self to draw the mind to itself would be felt, until one is irresistibly 'That which is ever existing, the blissful Self'. The pure mind would be aware of the dance of the Self, as a surge of joy felt as 'I', 'I', in the heart.

The 'Talks' as a Guidance to Self Enquiry

N.Nandakumar

Talk 63. (Excerpt).

D.: One of the stanzas says that the scriptures so scrupulously studied in the earlier stages are ultimately of no use. At what stage do they become useless?

M.: When their essence is realised. The scriptures are useful to indicate the existence of the Higher Power (the Self) and the way to gain it. Their essence is that much only. When that is assimilated the rest is useless.

But they are voluminous, adapted to the development of the seeker. As one rising up in the scale finds the regions one has passed to be only steps to the higher stage, and so on, the steps ascended become purvapaksha successively until the goal is gained. When the goal is reached it remains alone, and all the rest becomes useless. That is how the sastras become useless. We read so much. Do we remember all that we read? But have we forgotten the essentials. The essential soaks in the mind and the rest is forgotten. So it is with the sastras.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: Scriptures point to the Self. So far as they are seen, read, recoded in the brain and introspected with the mind, one is using the instruments of perception - eye, brain, breath and mind. The Truth is clear only to the extent these instruments are clear. When I again read these messages which are written in Brahma Muhurtam in the evening, with a tired brain/ mind I cannot assimilate the meaning of these words. Direct perception of the Self-Luminous Self alone is the purpose of all scriptures and they drop off when that direct perception is realised.

Q: Why do you rank breath above the brain and below the mind?

S: Brain needs breath for its existence. Breath can be regulated by mind. Dreams and introspection reveal that mind can exist independent of breath.

Talk 63. (Excerpt).

M: The fact is that man considers himself limited and there arises the trouble. The idea is wrong. He can see it for himself. In sleep there was no world, no ego (no limited self), and no trouble. Something wakes up from that happy state and says 'I'. To that ego the world appears. Being a speck in the world he wants more and gets into trouble.

How happy he was before the rising of the ego! Only the rise of the ego is the cause of the present trouble. Let him trace the ego to its source and he will reach that undifferentiated happy state which is sleepless sleep. The Self remains ever the same, here and now. There is nothing more to be gained. Because the limitations have wrongly been assumed there is the need to transcend them. It is like the ten ignorant fools who forded a stream and on reaching the other shore counted themselves to be nine only. They grew anxious and grieved over the loss of the unknown tenth man. A wayfarer, on ascertaining the cause of their grief, counted them all and found them to be ten. But each one of them had counted the others leaving himself out. The wayfarer gave each in succession a blow telling them to count the blows. They counted ten and were satisfied. The moral is that the tenth man was not got anew. He was all along there, but ignorance caused grief to all of them.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: Even if one has everything else, unless one realises the Self, there is fear and unhappiness lurking. Elsewhere, Bhagavan says, "Without knowing the Self what is the use of knowing anything else? Once the Self is known, is there anything apart from it to know?". Knowing which all else is known. Knowing which, the root of all problems - ego - is rooted out. Being which alone is undifferentiated happiness.

Q: What happens when we leave the Self and raise as ego, identifying with ignorance, intellect, mind, breath and senses?

S: Bhagavan says, "Being a tiny speck he wants more and gets into trouble". From the Supreme to beggary.

Talk 63. (Excerpt).

M: Again, a woman wore a necklace round her neck but forgot it. She began to search for it and made enquiries. A friend of hers, finding out what she was looking for, pointed out the necklace round the seeker's neck. She felt it with her hands and was happy.

Did she get the necklace anew? Here again ignorance caused grief and knowledge happiness.

Similarly also with the man and the Self. There is nothing to be gained anew. Ignorance of the Self is the cause of the present misery; knowledge of the Self brings about happiness.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: Ignorance of the Self is the cause of the present misery; knowledge of the Self brings about happiness.

Q: Is it that I rise from the Self in ignorance and suffer unhappiness by seeing the Self through the instruments of intellect, mind, breath and senses?

S: For whom is this thought? Is there ignorance/sorrow or knowledge/pleasure in the thought-free Self? When you clearly perceive the rope, is there a snake?

Talk 63. (Excerpt).

M: Moreover, if anything is to be got anew it implies its previous absence. What remained once absent might vanish again. So there would be no permanency in salvation. Salvation is permanent because the Self is here and now and eternal.

Thus the man's efforts are directed towards the removal of ignorance. Wisdom seems to dawn, though it is natural and ever present.

The visitor, while taking leave, saluted the master, and said, "It is said that the victim in the tiger's mouth is gone for ever." The reference is to a passage in 'Who am I?' where it is stated that a disciple can never revert to the world after he has once fallen into the field of the Guru's gracious look as surely as the prey in the tiger's jaws cannot escape.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED:

Q: Since each thought has a "previous absence", Bhagavan is

asking us to let go of thought and hold the "I" which is present even in the "previous absence" of thought here and now, is it not?

S.: This has to be practiced till the ego which has a "previous absence" is erased completely and that which has no "previous absence" or "subsequent emergence" - the fullness of the Self - is naturally abided in.

Talk 65.

A visitor: Is the jagat (world) perceived even after Self-Realization?

M.: From whom is this question? Is it from a Jnani or from an ajnani?

D.: From an ajnani.

M.: Realise to whom the question arises. It can be answered if it arises after knowing the doubter. Can the jagat or the body say that it is? Or does the seer say that the jagat or the body is? The seer must be there to see the objects. Find out the seer first. Why worry yourself now with what will be in the hereafter?

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: "The world", "the body", "outside", "inside", "waking", "sleep" are all thoughts inside "me / I". Inside me, there is only me. All these thoughts are "I". This is realised only when the "I" is realised. Bhagavan is asking us to get to the task on hand. Realise the "I". The worry about what will happen after realisation is also to be seen as the seer raising from the source, splitting oneself as two thoughts and suffering.

Q: Scientists have discovered that when the whole brain and its neural activity is "bunched up" as "one" out of love of work or relationship, there is happiness. Is it the same with the mind?

S.: Instead of "bunching up", here, it is the removal of all divisions in consciousness.

Saddarshanam*Master Nome*

Another Q.: You said that one loses the capacity to remember how to recreate the ego. Who is remembering how to do it when it appears?

N.: If you put that question to yourself, what is the answer?

Q.: I don't think that there is anybody doing that. Something that I think is going on that is not really going on is only in my thinking about it. If I ask, "Who is thinking about it?" I can't find the thinker. It falls in on itself.

N.: Become very experientially, thoroughly certain that there really is no individual "I," the utter absence of the ego.

Q.: It is fun to chase it and see if it is there or where it is coming from.

N.: It is fun to search out the tendencies and destroy them and to search out the misidentifications and destroy them. The joy of such aspiration is superseded only by the Bliss of Liberation, itself. Exercise your freedom to become free.

Another Q.: I have been inquiring as to where the sense of individuality arises. I think that is the knot that you are speaking of.

N.: Yes, yet I have not seen the knot. (laughter)

Q.: I have heard that no one has. I notice that there are a range of physical things that, at first glance, seem to be an arising point for me. There is the heart center, and that is how I know I exist as an individual. There is a throat cakra and a stomach cakra that have similar kinds of experiences. I notice the heart standing in Consciousness, and, from there, it is easy to see the Consciousness instead of an objective thing. The Consciousness must be in the direction of my identity, not that which is held with Consciousness.

N.: Consciousness is homogeneous. There is nothing outside of it to hold and nothing inside it to grasp. When you say, “center,” “cakra,” “heart,” “throat,” “these experiences,” and such, there must be an experiencer of them. Where does that experiencer arise? What is his birthplace? Infinite, homogeneous Consciousness exists, and this, Sri Bhagavan states, is the unborn Being. The body, which is not one's identity, any object of the body, and any subtle center do not say, “I.” None of them know. They are known; they do not know.

Pure Consciousness ever knows, but it has nothing to know, for it is undifferentiated. In this verse, the Maharshi alludes to something that seems to arise that is styled as “I,” which is the ego, the individual, and this becomes the birthplace, as it were, for the knot that ties the Subject to the object, the Real to the unreal, the pure Consciousness to something known. Trace this, and see what is there.

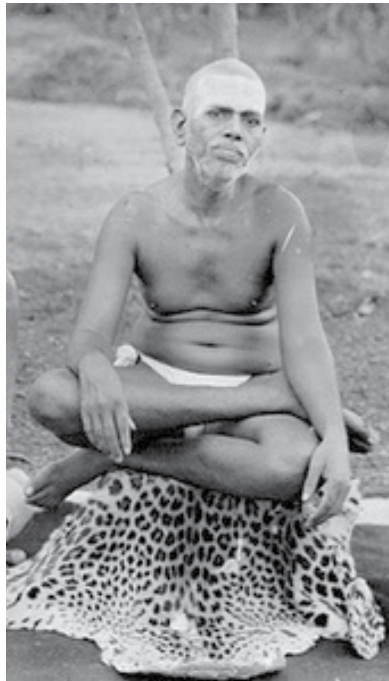
Q.: I do not have clarity. I can see the Consciousness. The Consciousness does not have a beginning. By the time I see the sense of individuality appended to something, it is already there. So far, I cannot see what is between the two. I do not know whether it is a matter of more discernment or if there is nothing to see.

N.: In order to truly know if there is nothing to see or not, you must discern finely. You should inquire deeply. You see what becomes appended, from subtle objects to gross forms, from abstract thoughts to formed thoughts. It is appended to someone. That is the very one that Sri Bhagavan asks us to inquire into, because with the rise of him, all this can arise. If he subsides, all this subsides. With a keenly inward-turned mind, search for that from which this “I” comes.

There is the original, unborn Being-Consciousness. It is innately egoless, and that which is innately egoless does not bring forth an ego. It does not bring forth anything else at all. It is just One. Or, we may say that it brings forth only itself. It does not bring forth a false sense of individuality.

You negate all the various forms of the ego in the process of practice. All of the instruction regarding ego-loss, though, aims at one point, if it can be called such. It is the supposition that there is a “you” to experience, to think of, or to know “something else.” See if you can find him. That means getting to the very Heart of the one who dives in and then comes out to report on it by saying, “I saw nothing,” or “I saw something.” That very one is to be questioned unceasingly.

The intention to dive within to find this individual is very good, but the intention will be completed only by looking at the “I” of that very one. Whether the conception is that he is there or is that he is not there, who has that conception? Who is there to realize what? You should persist in this manner so that the mind, the ego, the knot, or the subtle body, call it what you will, is utterly consumed and so that there is no scope left for him to rise again. The inquiry should be uninterrupted so that, due to continuous Knowledge, there is no space for ignorance to rise again. When you have discerned ignorance as ignorance, you do not repeat it.



Some moments of Vichara

G Kameshwar

*snAtam tEna samasta tlrthasaliE sarvA'api dattAvaniH
yajnAnaAm ca sahasramishtamakhila devAsh-ca-sampUjitAH
samsArAcca samuddhRtAH-svapitaras-trailOkya-pujyO'pyasau
yasya brahmavicAraNE kshaNamapi sthairyam manaH
prapnuyAt.*

*Bathed has he in all sacred waters
Gifted has he the whole earth
Offered has he a thousand vedic sacrifices
Worshiped has he, the whole host of Gods
Liberated has he, his forefathers, from birth-death cycles,
Venerable is he by all three worlds;
He*

*Whose mind gets anchored, even for a moment
In Brahma Vichara.*

(Laghu Yoga Vasistha, Shastra Phala Grahana Nirdesha, v 34)

In the course of last ten years or so, the world of communication has undergone a tectonic shift. Internet, social media, smart phones etc., have completely revolutionized the way we converse with each other, across the world. While it has its downsides and the general noise levels have shot through the sky, it has its upsides as well; indeed, we can now have 'satsangha' with like minded friends, wherever they may be in the world, at the touch of the screen.

As an instance of such a 'satsangha', I would like to share a post from Facebook and some excerpts from the comments (conversations) that followed. The FB post was put up by Mr Jay Shankar, where he shared a short selection from the book 'Atma Vidya in Adhyatma Ramayana', written by this author, published by Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning¹. The conversation was among friends of the author, classmates from engineering college.

¹ 'Atma Vidya in Adhyatma Ramayana: Selections on Self-Knowledge from Adhyatma Ramayana' by G Kameshwar, published by Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning, 2018

The FB post is given below. It has a few verses from 'Ramahrudayam – The Heart of Rama', the opening chapter of 'Adhyatma Ramayana'.

*

Shankar is with **Kamesh**

December 26, 2019 at 10:37 PM ·

Friends

Sharing an excerpt from the book 'Atma Vidya in Adhyatma Ramayana' by Ramana Maharshi Centre, written by **Kamesh**

Rama to Hanuman:

*O Hanuman,
I will reveal to you the true nature
of Atma, Anatma and Paramatma,
(Self, Non-Self, Supreme-Transcendent-Self).*

*O Hanuman,
Consider the sky.*

*Just as the sky is seen as three,
One, the wide endless sky;
Second, the sky that is touching the surface of waters,
Such as the sea, lake, river, pools.
Third, the reflection of the sky in these water-bodies.*

*In like manner, O Hanuman,
Is Consciousness.*

*That too is seen as three,
One, the all pervading consciousness,
beyond which there is nothing.
Second, the consciousness that is distinct from
But particularized with the Buddhi, intellect,
Third, the reflection of consciousness
In Buddhi, the faculty of awareness.*

*

(Given below are excerpts from the conversations that followed from the post above)

Comments:

Sathiya: Excellent way of explaining the three "Self"s via an example. Thanks, **Kamesh** for bringing it out simple and clean. It would be useful to follow the intellectual understanding of this with the question - What effect does this understanding have on me?

Kamesh : Dear **Shankar** thanks for sharing. **Sathiya**, the scripture is a light shown on the path or the landscape. It also sows a seed of light in the field of our mind. Then begins the battle with one's 'I'.

Muralidharan: Dear **Sathiya**, Since you raise the question, what effect on you, it will be interesting to know if you got the answer to your own question.

Sathiya : Dear **Muralidharan**

What I write here is nothing new, but let me write it anyway. :)

Each of us is a tentacle of the Universal Self that is made to forget its true nature (thus becoming a Personal Self) and tossed into the material universe with a physical form (thus starting off the identification with a highly individualistic Non-Self) and allowed to go through experiences, evolving in the process. In that placement and mode, we individually accelerate away from the Center that is the Universal Self and end up mightily strengthening the Non-Selfs. The current status of each Non-Self is (has to be) distinct.

In this background, you come to know about the concept of the three Selfs. You (the Non-Self, with which the Personal Self has identified) may say "Hey, I have been hearing about this concept from Rama, Krishna, Jesus, Ramakrishna, Ramana, et al, but this is not for me and let me get on with my life," and continue with the excitements of interacting with the material universe, thus further accelerating away from the Universal Self. That is perfectly

fine - nothing wrong with it. On the other hand, you may also pause and say, "Hey, this is interesting and very different; let me do something with it." This is the turning point - the point where you start the deceleration - The seed for the destruction of the Non-Self has been sown. The momentum due to past accelerations may still be moving you away from the Universal Self, but that's fine, you will be turning back at some point.

Why do I say all these? Because - the deductions one makes starting from this single concept concerning the Non-Self, the Personal Self and the Universal Self and their connections, how many of those deductions you make, and how far you go into using these deductions to change your approach to life - these are highly personal. Also, varied are the deductions that appeal to each individual being. If I come in here and elaborate on the deductions that I have made and the ones that have deeply affected me, it has the potential to confuse others - some of them can also seem downright stupid or wrong to others. I have told some of it to you when we talked in Mysore because I felt a lot of consistency between our deduction sets.

All that I can say is - If the concept seriously appeals, one should start meditating on it, come up with deductions and seriously ponder over them to lead to life changes. I feel that the Universe system has been set up to react to these changes and guide you to the right path even if you make wrong deductions.

For one thing, a deduction that is very obvious to anyone who imbibes the concept of the three Selves is that you never hate any other living being after that. You understand why each being in the universe operates in the way it does - You understand even a person who has committed a brutal, horrible, crime. Your actions in dealing with fellow beings may still be the same as before, but your attitude changes - you do not hate anyone anymore. The statement, kuRai ondrumillai (there is not a single thing that is wrong with the universe) starts making complete sense after that.

Let me stop my blabbering at this point.

Kamesh: Dear **Sathya** beautifully said. Thank you

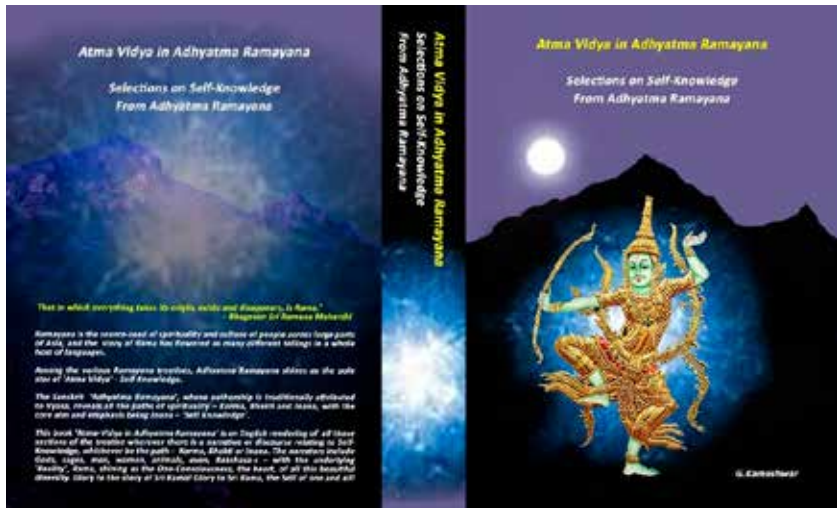
Shankar: Dear **Sathya** wonderfully articulated !!

Vaitheeswaran: Wow, Sathya! Very well articulated. We must expand this off line with other interested folks.

Muralidharan: Typical Sathya, precise because of clear thinking, scientific in accommodating all probabilities... I am completely aligned especially in 'understanding' all including horrible criminals too. And may be one word that captures this revelation through self study is EMPATHY and 'love all'. It is pleasing to read your mind in these words of blazing brilliance.

Shankar: Question.... Is *samharam* (conquest / destruction) love & empathy?

*(Thus begins the conversation...
To be continued...)*



Upadeshasaram

Ujwal Jagadeesh

avyaya abhava ApUrna cit sukham

There is nothing but Immutable, unborn, all-pervading Blissful Awareness.

There was a thief, who used to rob wealthy businessmen. One day he heard that the king of the country had invited all the sanyasis, sadhus and ascetics for a big meeting.

The thief thought, “Maybe the king is planning to give lots of wealth as charity to the sadhus, so I will see if I can get some wealth stealthily.”

So he went to the meeting in the disguise of a sadhu and hid himself amongst the group of sadhus.

The king came out onto his balcony, and he began to speak “O! Great Sadhus, I have a daughter and she is very inclined to marry a saintly person. So I am offering half of my kingdom with this girl, so someone please marry my daughter.”

As soon as he said this, people in the front row got up and left. They were sanyasis who had renounced their families for the spiritual pursuit, hence they were not interested. They had come thinking the king had called all the saints for a conference on spiritual matters. Once they heard the king’s proposal, they left.

Then the other row came forward next. The king said, “Respected Sirs, I will give three fourth of my kingdom. I will only keep a little part for myself. Please accept my daughter.”

The first person said, “My dear sir, we are saintly people and we are not sanyasis, we are married. I have a wife and I have my ashram. I do not want to marry your daughter.” All the sadhus agreed with him and said, “Since you are the king, in order to

respect your invitation we have attended your meeting. So please give us permission to leave.” And the second row of sadhus left.

Now the king came down to each sadhu in person and started negotiating with tempting gifts and offers. The thief who was moving ahead with the sadhus was watching what was happening intently.

All the sadhus present there refused the king’s riches saying that their purpose of life was fulfilled only by constantly engaging their minds on the lotus feet of Supreme Lord and they neither needed the kingdom nor the princess for the same.

The thief, who alone was left in the hall was lost in deep contemplation. He was roused from his contemplation by the king who addressed him as “O! Great saintly person...”

“You are wrong” the thief interrupted. The king was surprised. “What? Is it wrong to address you as a saintly person?”

“Yes, because I am a robber, not a saintly person. I had come here to loot the wealth that you had. But I wonder if your riches have any value! Why then have all the sadhu’s left it behind? What is the wealth that they are in search of? O! King I am sorry, I neither want your kingdom nor your daughter. Neither do I want to rob anyone any more. I would rather pursue the path of the sadhus and enjoy that boundless treasure some of them possess”. Saying so the thief who had become a sadhu, left the place.

Ramana says that treasure of bliss which is indestructible, spontaneous and limitless can be attained by understanding our real nature through enquiring into ourselves with the question “Who am I?”

Saint Thyagaraja was a prolific composer, a staunch devotee of Rama and one of the ‘Trinity’ of Karnatic classical Music. The saint lived through the reign of four different kings of Tanjavur, but declined all offers to grace their court with his presence, for he would not consider glorifying a mortal. Indeed, there is a tale which talks of the then Maharaja, Serfoji II, asking

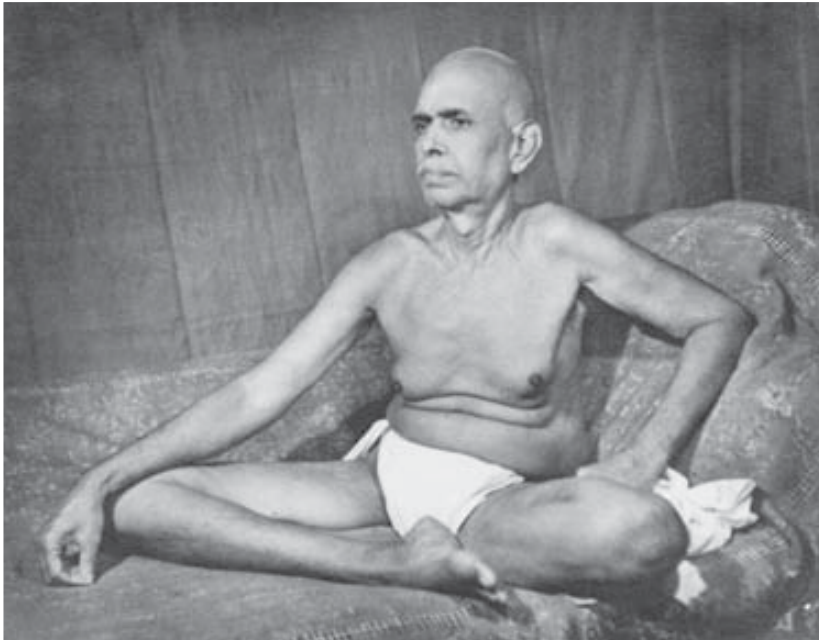
Thyagaraja to sing his praises in a song, to which the saint who had understood fully what was fleeting pleasure and what permanent bliss, responds thus,

*nidhi chAla sukhamA rAmuni sannidhi sEva sukhamA nijamuga
balku manasa*

Does wealth bring comfort or does service in the presence of Lord Rama bring comfort? Tell me truthfully, o mind!

*kim svarUpam ityAtma darshane
avyayAbhavA ApUrNachit sukham*

A conscious bliss ensues when one abides as the Self, by enquiring "What is the true import of 'I'?" This bliss is indestructible, spontaneous and limitless.



Power of the Word

Sanjay Lohia

Samsara

- Samsara is only in your mind.
- The least movement of the mind is samsara and its standing still is liberation.
- Whatever draws your mind outward is samsara, and whatever puts your mind back into yourself is liberation.



It Was In June 1977

V.Arunachalam

It was in June 1977, when I had a chance to visit Sri Ramanasramam with my college mate Jayaram. We took the bus from Bangalore and reached the ashram. This was the first time I was staying in the Ashram itself and not with Mrs. Lucia Osborne. She was abroad and hence we went to the Ashram office and got a place in one of the rooms in line with Lakshmi's samadhi at the foot of the Hill. Initially there was some commotion, as a snake had been spotted, and they asked us to be careful. Wonder what we would have done, had we encountered it; anyway none of those adventurous things happened.

This was also the first time I met Sri Viswanatha Swami alone (i.e. not with Mrs. Osborne). I introduced my friend Jayaram; we did namaskarams and the meeting was more one of courtesy. On the day we were to leave back for Bangalore, that is after 2 days of stay there, Jayaram was busy taking photographs around the Ashram. I desperately wanted to meet Viswanatha Swami alone.

So, I went to his room at around 7.50 a.m. He came out, opened the door for me, bade me to sit on the bench in his room and went inside the bathroom. He finished his bath, came out in his Koupinam, and then wore a veshti. He wore some vibhuti on his forehead, and sat on his bench and closed his eyes. My bus was due around 9.30 a.m. and I had come to do a namaskaram and leave; I had not expected this. He sat like that for several minutes, very silent with eyes closed. I was impatient to get up and pack and go to the bus stop with Jayaram. In the meanwhile Viswanath Swami just sat; sometimes he coughed a bit, sometimes he rubbed his eyes a bit. And I wondered: is he really meditating? If I cough and feel irritation in my eyes and rub them, I would not be focused or concentrating. Anyway I let that pass, as more urgent matters of going to the bus stop were there in my mind.

After about 20 minutes, I stood up. The noise of my feet on the concrete floor (maybe I made a little more noise, as I wanted to

be heard), woke him up. I said rather sheepishly, "I need to leave, as my bus will start soon for Bangalore." He said ok; I again did namaskaram and left his room.

I went directly to the Old Hall to do namaskaram to Bhagavan there and then leave. In those days there was no wall in front of the Old Hall, as is there now. I did namaskaram to Bhagavan and came out of the Old Hall. I saw Viswanatha Swami standing at the door of his room and when he saw me, he beckoned me to come over. Puzzled, I went over to him. He made me sit on the bench which was outside and he sat next to me.

He said, "I don't know why I'm calling you here. Maybe it is... no, surely it is Bhagavan's wish that He made me do so. Please sit." He bade me sit next to him, and I did that.

"What type of sadhana are you following? Are you doing any Japa? Meditation? Again, I don't know why I'm asking you all this; must be Bhagavan's wish."

I told him that I did the Gayatri Japa, but was not very consistent in doing that. Apart from that I had a habit of keeping Bhagavan's photo always with me. There was also the photo of Bhagavan on the sofa in the Old Hall framed in my house. I would keep staring at the photo of Bhagavan for many minutes several times in a day. My family members had gotten used to these quaint habits of mine. I felt that the photo would talk to me (maybe I wanted it to talk to me). Before sleeping and closing my eyes for sleeping, I would look deeply into Bhagavan's eyes in the photos, try to keep only that vision and then go to sleep. After that final look, I would not open my eyes till next morning, and the first look in the morning will be on Bhagavan's photo."

I told him all this. He looked at me intently and listened patiently. I wondered if I was totally out of synch with anything spiritual with the silly things I was doing. Again he said, "I do not know why I called you. You see, Bhagavan and Arunachala are actually One. Instead of just looking at His Photo, please repeat this name that I'm giving you now."

“Om Arunachala Siva, Siva Siva Siva Siva, Arunachala Siva. Keep repeating this. Come on now, repeat after me:

1. Om Arunachala Siva, Siva Siva Siva Siva, Arunachala Siva.
2. Om Arunachala Siva, Siva Siva Siva Siva, Arunachala Siva
3. Om Arunachala Siva, Siva Siva Siva Siva, Arunachala Siva.

Now, let us repeat it together.

1. Om Arunachala Siva, Siva Siva Siva Siva, Arunachala Siva.
2. Om Arunachala Siva, Siva Siva Siva Siva, Arunachala Siva
3. Om Arunachala Siva, Siva Siva Siva Siva, Arunachala Siva.“

After that He sat in silence for a few minutes; I wondered if there were tears in his eyes; they were moist. Then he said,” Keep doing this, it will take you to deep dhyana.”

At that point of time, the above japa started within me without my volition. I don’t know from where the japa was coming, as I was not consciously saying it; it was just happening. I thought that it was my excitement about what had just happened.

I also told him that Sri Balai Puja was being done in my house in Mumbai; my grandmother used to do it. But I personally did not know anything about it. He gave me a mantram which he said was the same that my grandmother was doing; He said, “You can think of Her as your Mother and do it. No problems at all.”

I must confess that I did not remember that very well. (In my next visits he made me say that mantram of the Mother and explained it to me in detail).

“Poyttu Va,” he said. [In the typical Tamil farewell – ‘go and return’]

I got up like a Vibrant Zombie. Vibrant because of what was happening within me; Zombie because I was doing nothing. I did namaskaram to him and left for the bus stop.

All through the time, this japa of Arunachala Siva was intensely happening inside me. I met my friend Jayaram, we went

to the bus stop, took sometime to know which bus was going to Bangalore, sat in the bus, the conductor announced that we have to change the bus somewhere (was it Tirupattur?), we changed buses, reached Bangalore and reached my sister's house. All through this, the enormous current of the japa was on. I was actively doing things that needed to be done, but the intense japa was also going on.

This made me wonder: I had doubted him in his meditation, when he coughed and rubbed his eyes. Now, I've come from Tiruvannamalai to Bangalore in a bus and the japa and my attention on it was going on simultaneously, while a lot of activity was happening by me and around me. What was this? Did he want to show me a small glimpse into what can happen in a pakvi's being [a ripe one's being]? My doubts were so silly. One cannot judge such people; in fact one should not judge anyone.

The intensity of the experience was amazing. Even after returning to Bombay, while going for evening walks on busy roads and footpaths, I would imagine I am doing Giripradakshina and that Arunachala was just next to me; the Arunachala japa happening within me. This stayed for quite some days, till it slowed down. Now I have to do it with effort.

Many times I wonder, how would I have been able to maintain the same current intensity. At an airport when you see a plane take off and keep watching it as it flies into the yonder heavens, it becomes a speck of an object; you can still see it as long as your eyes are concentrated on it. Once you shift your eyes and see there again, it's gone and it's impossible to see it again; you just see the sky. Maybe sometime in Bombay, my concentration shifted and was not able to maintain the intensity of the Bhagavan given japa through Viswanatha Swami.

Maybe someday it will be become natural, and the Sphurana will happen naturally.

Namaskaram Sri Viswanatha Swami.

Namo Ramanaya.

Sri Ramana Ashtottara Shata Namavali

Sri Viswanatha Swami

20. Om Indumoulina pitrumate namaha

To Ramana, son of the crescent god Siva, we offer the twentieth flower.

Ramana himself has proclaimed that Arunachala, the Supreme is his father. In one of his songs, a prayer for curing mother's fever, he addresses Arunachala as Mother. In either case, he is the son of Arunachala.

21. Om Pituraadeshatah Shonashailam praaptaaya namaha

To Ramana, who reached Arunachala, in obedience to his Father's command, we offer the twenty first flower.

After an arduous journey of three days and three nights, partly by train and partly by walk, on the 1st of September, 1896, Ramana reached Arunachala. Walking into the sanctum sanctorum of the Arunachaleswara temple, he reported. 'Father, I have come'.

22. Om Tapomayaaya namaha

To Ramana, who is full of Tapas, we offer the twenty second flower.

There was a great fever, a great tapa, that burnt in Ramana from the moment of his Enlightenment, till he announced his arrival to Arunachaleswara. There was also a great burning in Mother Azhagamma, when she carried this Tapomaya in her womb and this burning would be relieved only by the juice of the bilwa leaves. Is not Arunachala the fiery hill of knowledge?

23. Om Udaaseenaya namaha

To Ramana, who is unconcerned, we offer the twenty third flower.

Ramana was totally unconcerned about the needs of his body. Soon after arriving at Arunachala, he threw into the Ayyankulam the little money and sweets he had with him. He also threw away his sacred thread and clothes, wearing only a loin cloth. For days, he would get no food. If at all, he did get some, it

was only stale or half cooked or the most unpalatable mixtures and often disease took its toll. But he remained totally unconcerned about his body while ever showering grace and concern on all who came to him.

24. Om Mahayogine namaha

To Ramana, who is an exalted Yogi, we offer the twenty fourth flower.

Siva is hailed as the greatest yati. Yateeswara, unconcerned about his body, smeared with sacred ash, wearing tiger skin, and snakes for garlands, the sight of the young Ramana, absorbed in the bliss of the Self, oblivious to his body looks no different.

25. Om Mahotsaahaaya namaha

To Ramana, who is unfailingly enthusiastic, we offer the twenty fifth flower.

Bhagavan has said in Ramana Gita, that this indifference that the Jnani shows to a body should not be mistaken for laziness, for a Jnani is ever enthusiastic about all things as nothing is apart from the Self.

26. Om Kushagradhiye namaha

To Ramana, of sharp intellect, we offer the twenty sixth flower.

We say that Bhagavan was unaware of his body. even of his body being ravaged by vermin in the Patalalingam of the thousand pillared hall. But who has told us this? Bhagavan has. He himself has narrated the details of his stay in each place, including amazing details like his posture in the Vahana Mantapam, like the ways squirrels built nests in the Gurumurtham and so on. As Ramana's attention was ever in the all-pervading Self nothing would ever escape his attention.

27. Om Shanta sankalpa sambrambhaaya namaha

To Ramana, who is free from the disturbance of thoughts and whose actions emerge from peace, we offer the twenty seventh flower.

Ganapathi Muni describes Ramana as being full of power yet full of peace.

28. Om Susandrushe namaha

To Ramana, of pure and auspicious vision, we offer the twenty eighth flower.

He sees nothing apart from the Self when he receives stale gruel as his first meal, after arriving at Arunachala, he drank it thinking it to be the first Bhiksha provided by Arunachaleswara.

29. Om Savitre namaha

To Ramana, the Sun, we offer the twenty ninth flower.

Ramana is the Sun of knowledge. Even in the dark, dingy Patalalingam, his lustre drew Ratnamma who vowed to serve him food.

30. Om Sthiraaya namaha

To Ramana, firmly abiding in the Self, we offer the thirtieth flower.

Ramana remained unmoving. It was only at the behest of Mahan Seshadri Swami that he was bodily lifted out of the Patalalingam and placed in the Subramanya Shrine. Then in the Vahana Mantapam too, he was unaware of the passing of night and day but found himself sometimes on a Vahana and sometimes under it. Some other power moved him. It was only at the request of Annamalai Tambiran and Palani Swami that he moved to Gurumurtham. Everything happened by that power, he remained firmly rooted in it.



How Bhagavan Captured Us

By Smt. Sulochana Natarajan

ARN was a voracious reader. He was a member of the Connemara Public Library, Madras. He came across Arthur Osborne's biography of Bhagavan 'Ramana Maharshi and the Path of Self-knowledge'. Night and day he read the book for a few days until he finished reading it. Bhagavan had completely taken him over. We went for Karthigai Deepam to Tiruvannamalai in 1955. My father was the District Judge of Vellore at that time. My parents too came to attend the Deepam Festival. We were allotted one cottage in Chalam's compound. We went for Girivalam, for the first time, with Pittukuli Murugadas and his followers singing bhajans. It was heavily crowded even at that time 60 years back.

On our return to Madras we started regularly visiting Ramakrishna Asram, Mylapore. We became well acquainted with many swamis there. We wanted to get initiated into mantra japa. We were told that only Swami Yatiswaranandaji, President, Bangalore Math, was given the right to give initiation in the South Zone. Swami Shudda Satvanandaji and Swami Kailasanandaji of Chennai Math recommended our case to Bangalore. It was a treat to the eyes to see Swami Shudda Satvanandaji performing Arati to Guru Maharaj, a very thrilling experience. The manner in which the Ramakrishna Math Swamis performed Arati, maintained the Math and the aesthetic manner in which all the affairs of the Maths are conducted made a deep impression on me. It has been my dream and striving to bring that perfection into various areas of work at RMCL.

We waited till 1956 May to get initiated. ARN took three weeks leave before joining at Salem where he was posted as ITO. In the middle of May my brother-in-law A.R.Tyagarajan's marriage took place at Madras with Seethamma, Sir C.P.Ramaswamy Iyer's grand daughter. After that event we went to Bangalore.

The day before Buddha Poonima we met Swami Yatiswaranandaji who would be ever enshrined in our hearts as 'Guruji'. In the very first meeting he showered a lot of affection on us. He was extremely happy to initiate a young couple. He noted that usually it would only be one of the two partners who would be spiritually inclined and the other would at best be a passive

support. It was indeed a very rare instance where both husband and wife were having a spiritual yearning. He asked me, 'Why do you want to get initiated?' I replied, 'We have found that all other things in this life are not enough. However much we read slokas etc. something deeper is necessary for a person to go within.' He was impressed with my reply.

We asked him what we should bring the next morning when he had asked us to come for the initiation. He replied, 'Both of you have a bath and come. Bring a few fruits as an offering to Guru Maharaj and a simple garland. That is all, nothing else. You both come, that is enough.'

Next morning, Buddha Poornima, by Bhagavan's Grace we were both initiated into mantra japa by Swami Yatiswaranandaji. We have moved with him for nine years after that. I have never heard him talk about anything worldly. He was always in a spiritual mood.

After staying at Bangalore for 2 days we went round Karnataka, little knowing that later on ARN would be posted to Bangalore itself and we would tour Karnataka several times and settle down at Bangalore as well. We could have chosen to tour any other state. However, Bhagavan was making us more and more acquainted with Karnataka. In that tour I remember our Sringeri stay very well. The Jagadguru was not there but bathing in the Tunga and visiting the Saradambal temple were deeply memorable experiences for me.

Significantly, ARN saw a picture of Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswami in the guest house where we were staying. This picture captivated him. The seed of this momentous 'meeting' between him and the Mahaswami lay buried within his consciousness for many long years. At the opportune moment, it sprouted. ARN was to be the first to write the Mahaswami's biography in English under the title 'Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswami – Mystic and Seer'. He later brought out a pictorial biography of the Mahaswami as well where our daughter Sarada was blessed to work on the photographs and design.

After the tour of Karnataka we went to Salem where ARN took charge as ITO.

RAMANANJALI 40 – A Journey back in time

By Kumari Sarada

**Excerpts from a Report on the ‘World Tour’ of Ramananjali in 1980
Published in July 1980 issue of ‘The Mountain Path’**

The Voice of Ramana in Europe, Canada, U.S.A

‘Ramananjali’ – Ramana Movement

An Excerpt from the July 1980 issue of ‘The Mountain Path’ –

The Ramanasramam Journal

A Feast of ‘Ramana Music’

A vivid resume

By

Kumari Sarada

One of the most memorable among the many unforgettable items of the last of the three-day Sri Bhagavan’s Aradhana Celebrations in May, 1980, was the music concert of the Ramananjali group. As the voice of the singers rose in full-throated joy in the rendering of Aksharamanamalai, it seemed as if the very wind which was blowing stormily outside stopped to listen to the song! It set the tone for the tour of the 24-strong Ramananjali group which took off jauntily on May 15 from Bombay on a tour of places in Europe, Canada and the United States of America, from where invitations had come for presentation of ‘Ramana Music’.

Perhaps the Ramananjali group is the single largest musical group to give concerts of devotional music in Europe and North America. It was an audacious venture for a little-known group made possible only by the total unquestioning faith in Sri Ramana.

The very history of the Ramananjali groups is a story of Sri Bhagavan’s Grace. It was His Grace which inspired Smt. Sulochana Natarajan to set to music both Bhagavan’s own compositions and the hundreds of verses composed by Sri Muruganar, Kavyakanta Ganapati Muni, Satyamangalam Venakataramaier and other eminent poet-devotees in praise of Sri Bhagavan. It was Bhagavan’s grace that infused her with tireless energy to teach

this music to earnest devotees and to record along with the rest of the group the vast volume of 'Ramana Music' in cassettes and Long Playing Records. In addition to these, she successfully led the Ramananjali group of singers in conducting 'Ramana Music' concerts on important occasions in the Ashram and in Bangalore.

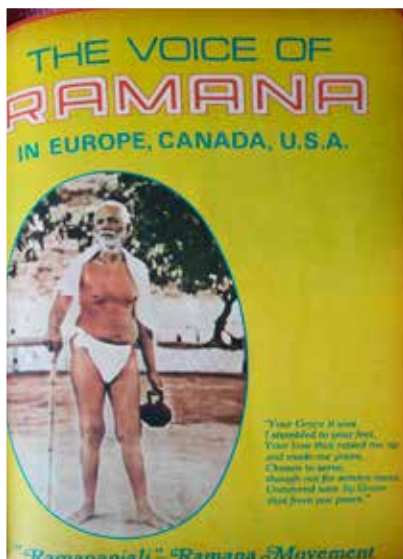
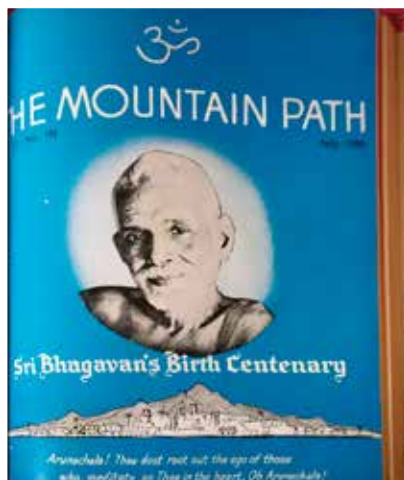
'The World Tour' - A Story of Grace

This flood of 'Ramana Music' elicited eagerness in devotees abroad to make the Ramananjali group undertake a global tour. The pinnacle of Sri Bhagavan's grace was most clearly witnessed in this 'impossible' tour. Every 'impossibility' turned into a 'possibility' as our Bhagavan went ahead of us making all arrangements, clearing all obstacles.

Our minds were filled with doubts. Would it be possible to meet the enormous expenses? Where were we to get sponsorship for the U.S. visit, that too in record time? Would the Government of India support this important project? Our worries were only a reflection of our human weaknesses. In fact we shouldn't have worried. With Bhagavan at the helm of affairs, we ought to have realised that everything would be taken care of and that too perfectly.

The President, Board of Trustees, Sri Ramanasramam, Sri T.N.Venkataraman, gave us every encouragement. From the word 'Go' he was for the project, wholeheartedly appreciating its usefulness for the 'Ramana Movement'. Other Trustees, Sri Tandavarayan, late Muthiah Chettiar, and Sri Vaikuntavasar also gave enthusiastic support. The Govt. of India too, through the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, and the Department of Tourism and Civil Aviation, gave a helping hand. Swami Dayananda of the Chinmaya Mission, readily gave the necessary sponsorship through Sandeepani West. Joan and Mathew gave invaluable advice and kept our enthusiasm alive. Willingly and readily the devotees from all over the world contributed the necessary funds. The American Consulate of Madras gave the Visas for all the 24 persons in a day, something which we were told is utterly impossible.

****to be continued***



News & Events*Revathi Sankar*

Ramana Jayanthi at Rajarajeswari Nagar – RMCL West Bangalore -
A dance ballet Ramana Vaibhava was presented.





Ramana Jayanthi at Sri Ramanasramam – the first of the 40th year performances of Ramananjali



Yaathirai Kaandam was presented at the Ramakrishna Mission Boys Home at Mylapore, Chennai











Ramana Vaibhava was enacted for the 75th year celebration of Divine Life Society in Bangalore. The occasion was graced by Swami Padmanabhananda





RAISE – one more great ‘yagna’ – a cultural feast by 350 students from Govt. School Geddalahalli – produced and presented in the august presence of Padmashri V.R.Gowrishankar, CEO and Administrator, Sringeri Sharada Peetham, at the newly renovated Ramana Maharshi Heritage Auditorium, Sanjaynagar, Bangalore



Ramana Maharshi
Centre For Learning
Presents


Founder's Day and RAISE Annual Programme 2019-20
(RAISE - Ramana Art-Form Interventions for Self-Awareness and Excellence)

Cultural Presentations by nearly 350 Students of
Govt Model Primary School, Geddalahalli

Date : 23-1-2020, Thursday
Time : 11:00am – 1:00pm
Venue : Ramana Maharshi Heritage Auditorium,
Post Office Road,
Sanjaynagar, Bengaluru – 560 094

Chief Guest : Padmasri V. R. Gowrishankar,
Chief Executive Officer and Administrator,
Sringeri Sharada Peetham

ALL ARE WELCOME.



















Day one of the 43rd National Seminar and Cultural Festival – the Swami Virajananda Endowment lectures by Sri Dileep Simha and Mata Amritamayi and the Bharatanatyam dance features by Ujwal Jagadeesh and Revathi Sankar











Special Programs in February

07 **Punarvasu** Celebration

06.00 pm **Ramananjali** at Ramanalayam, Chromepet, Chennai

08 **Pournami**

06.45 pm at Ramana Maharshi Shrine, Mekhri Circle

Ramana Music by Sri. Venkateshmurthy & Sri. Ramesh Jamadagni

08 Saturday **ARN Day – Thai Poosam**

06.30 pm Ramana Kendra, Alamelumangapuram, Chennai

‘In One and Every One’ – ‘Onraanavan Palavaanavan’

A musical feature by Dr.Ambika Kameshwar

16 **Natyopasana**

06.30 pm at Ramana Maharshi Heritage Auditorium, Sanjaynagar

‘Atma Darshana’ – A journey into the Self through the idiom of Bharatanatyam

By the students of Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning

21 Friday **Maha Sivaratri**

07.00 pm to 06.00 am at Ramana Shrine, Mekhri Circle

23 Sunday **Father’s Day** – Homage to Sundaram Iyer

11.00 am at Ramana Shrine, Mekhri Circle

Nadopasana – a musical offering by students of Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning

Special Programs in March

09 Monday 6.45 pm **Pournami** and

Commencement of **Laksharchana** at Ramana Shrine, Mekhri Circle

10 Tuesday 10.30 am and 06.30 pm **Sthapana Day** and Laksharchana

11 Wednesday 10.30 am and 6.30 pm Laksharchana continues

12 Thursday 10.30 am Laksharchana concludes

18 Wednesday **Mani Shadakshari Memorial Day**

4.00 pm Kannada Seminar at Ramana Shrine, Mekhri Circle

28, 29 Saturday, Sunday **Self-enquiry at Arunachala**

At Aruna Apeetha Ramana Nilaya, Tiruvannamalai

30 Monday Ramana Maharshi **Summer Camp-1** commences At Ramana Maharshi Heritage Campus, Sanjaynagar

Ramana Every Day

RMHC - Ramana Maharshi Heritage Centre - Sanjaynagar

RMS - Ramana Maharshi Shrine - Mekhri Circle

RSCS - RMCL Satsang Centre at South Bangalore

RSCR - RMCL Satsang Centre at Rajarajeshwari Nagar

Self Enquiry session - English by Sri. Nandakumarji (080-42094073)

Thursday: 6:00pm at RSCS

Friday: 6:30pm - 7:30pm at RMHC

Saturday: 6:00pm at RSCS (Special Talk by K.G. Subraya Sharma)

Saturday: 11:00am at RMS

Sunday: 10:30am at RMS

Everyday: 6:00am at RSCS (Chanting, Meditation and Walk)

Self Enquiry session - Kannada by Sri. Dileep Simha (9448374818)

Tuesday: 6:30pm - 7:30pm at RMHC

Music and Dance classes [Contact - Uma (9538472026)]

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday: 5:00pm - 7:00pm at RMHC.

Yoga classes [Contact - Uma (9538472026)]

Monday - Wednesday - Friday: 6:30am & 6:00pm at RMHC

Talks - Kannada by Sri. Sridhar Sarma, disciple of Sri Nochur

Saturday 4:00pm - 5:30pm at RMS. [Contact Usha Sankar (9663284111)]

Talks - English by Dr. Sarada Natarajan/Venkatesh Deshpande/Dileep Simha

Sunday: 11:30am at RMS

Bhajans - by Smt. Radha, Revathi, Uma and Ujwal

Sunday: 10:30am at RMS

Parayana of Bhagavans Sanskrit Composition by Ms. Savithri and Smt.

Ratnamma

Saturday: 11:00am - 12:00pm at RMS

Talks, Parayana and Puja by Sri Chandrashekar (9448839594)

Thursday 6:30pm at RSCR

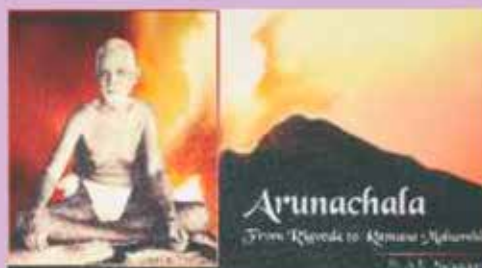
Guru Vachaka Kovai in English

Original : Muruganar

Translation: David Godman

Investigation into Truth

100. Though Guru Ramana, who appeared as God incarnate, expounded numerous doctrines, as befitted the different states and beliefs of the various devotees who sought refuge at his feet, you should know that what we have heard him affirm to intimate devotees in private, as an act of grace, as his own true experience, is only the doctrines of *ajata* [non – creation].
101. The truth of this pre – eminent state [*ajata*] was taught to Arjuna by Lord Krishna in the beginning [in chapter two of the Bhagavad Gita]. Krishna spoke of other doctrines in the following chapters because of Arjuna's bewilderment [that arose from] his inability to assimilate it.



ARUNACHALA FROM RIGVEDA TO RAMANA MAHARSHI

This book covers a vast panorama of over four thousand years from the Rigvedic seers to Ramana Maharshi. Arunachala, the seemingly insentient hill, and the golden hued Ramana are embodied fire of Knowledge. The purpose of this book is to rekindle in every human heart this smouldering fire now doused by ignorance.