

April 2018



The Ramana Way

A Monthly Journal published by
Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning
Bengaluru

SARVA SEVA

Your opportunity to offer all sevas for a day at the Ramana Shrine Bengaluru.



SEVAS INCLUDED

The sevas included would be

- Vedaparayana
- Puja morning
- Puja evening
- Cleaning of the shrine
- Garden and flower decorations
- Prasadam
- Music offerings of the day (whenever it happens on that day)
- Talk of the day (on days when there are talks)
- Maintenance of the Shrine for the day

Choose your special day/days:

- Your birthday, anniversary or those of dear ones
- A day that is special for you in the Ramana calendar – like Jayanthi, Aradhana etc

Attending the evening puja:

- It would be wonderful if you could personally attend the evening puja of that day with your family and friends at 7.30 p.m. and collect the prasadam. If not, prasadam will be sent to you by post.

Amount: Rs.3000/-

RENEWAL OF ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION FOR RAMANA WAY

Annual Members whose membership numbers will commence with SA/SB/SC/SD are requested to renew their membership at the beginning of each quarter – January/April/July/October respectively.

We request members for the quarter and those who have not renewed last year to kindly send in their renewal amount of Rs.240/- at the earliest.

THE RAMANA WAY

A Monthly Journal since 1981

Celebrating Ramana Rasa Anubhava



Editor: Dr. Sarada
Associate Editor: G. Kameshwar
Assistant Editor: Dileep Simha

*Brotherhood based on equality is the supreme
goal to be attained by human society*
- Ramana Gita X, 10

Journal started by:	Sri. A.R.Natarajan, Founder President, RMCL
Printed & Published by:	Sarada Natarajan on behalf of Ramana Maharshi Centre For Learning, Ramana Maharshi Heritage Building, Post office Road, Sanjaynagar, Bangalore - 560094 Ph:(080)23514930, (080)42061951 Direct Fax:23512640
Managing Editor:	Revathi Sankar +919448853748
E-mail:	office@ramanacentre.com, ramanaway@ramanacentre.com
Website:	ramanacentre.com, ramanamusic.com
Printed by:	Aridra Printers, Bangaluru.
Designed by:	M. Muralidhara Hegde
Annual Membership:	Rs. 240/-, Price per copy Rs. 20/-
No. of pages:	62

Contents

Celebrating Ramana Rasa Anubhava

<u>Editorial</u>	Dr.Sarada	5
<u>Know Yourself</u>	A.R.Natarajan	11
<u>'The Talks' as Guidance to self-enquiry</u>	N.Nandakumar	17
<u>Ulladu Narpadu</u>	G.Kameshwar	22
<u>Aksharamanamalai</u>	Dr.Sarada	27
<u>Ramana is the Way of Ramana</u>	Shyam Sunder	32

Experiences

<u>Ramana Musings</u>	Chadalavada Vijaya Kumar	33
<u>They who served</u>	Sarada Akka	35

Moods and Might of Music

<u>Song of Grace</u>	Revathi Sankar	39
<u>Growing up with Mami</u>	Divya S and Smt. Sapna Ganesh	42
<u>Sri Ramana Sahasranamvali</u>	A.R.Natarajan	45

RMCL – Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning

<u>News and Dates</u>	Revathi Sankar	47
---------------------------------------	----------------	----

Editorial*Dr. Sarada*

As long as we believe that we are the actors, the doers, so long there is the need for self-enquiry. As long as the sense of doership is alive in us, so long there is need for self-enquiry. Suppose we are convinced that we are not the doers? Is there no further need for self-enquiry? The need may still be there. As long as we continue to believe that we are the possessors, as long as the sense of possession is alive, so long there is need for self-enquiry. What if I have been able to come to a point of understanding that nothing actually belongs to me? Despite this the need for self-enquiry would be there. As long as we are in the grip of the belief that we are the experiencers, so long there is the need for self-enquiry.

Let us look at the first of the three, the sense of doership. The sense of being an actor, a doer is the grossest manifestation of identity. It is gross in that it is easily visible. It is quite evident to us that we are acting all the time, at least when we are awake. Hence it should be possible for us to identify when we act with the sense of doership. Therefore, to tackle this illusion of doership is indicated as the primary level of spiritual practice. Although we say that this is evident and visible, the fact is that any kind of self-attention does not come without practice.

One is so used to paying attention to the external that it may take repeated attempts at introspection to arrive at a point where one becomes aware of one's sense of doership even as it rises. To begin with one may recognise that one has acted with the pride of being the doer only after the action is completed. Our mind then is like a monkey which aggressively comes and snatches away what we are holding, unconcerned about our retaliation. It is in control and not I.

Gradually, as one becomes more and more attentive to the stain of doership in every action, one would grow alert to its presence. The more one is aware of the rising of the thought that 'I am doing this', the less it would arise. It may now be said to be like a cat that is trying to get to some biscuits on the table. It sees whether someone is watching and if it finds that someone is doing

so, it will wait for a moment of inattention before slinking in and running away with the biscuits. It is less aggressive. Its presence is very much there, quieter, subtler, but there.

As attention continues to focus on the false sense of being the doer, the very sense of doership weakens. The need to be the doer begins to fade away. The recognition that there is a Supreme, all knowing and loving Doer grows. Doership is then known as a futile mental exercise leading only to agitation and bringing about no concrete benefits whatsoever. Then the mind becomes subservient to the Supreme will. It accepts the flow of events with a great sense of peace.

Such a mind reminds us of a dog in Ramana's Hall. It is a practice known to all familiar with Ramana's life that any eatables that were offered to him would be distributed equally then and there to all present. On one such occasion the devotee who was distributing the eats was being closely followed by a dog who was longing for his share. However, the devotee gave his share to him only after giving it to all the humans in the hall. After doing so the devotee finally gave a share to one more dog who was also in the hall but had been waiting silently all this while. Observing the whole happening Bhagavan looked at the second dog and said, 'He knew he would get his share'.

The sense of doership would be effectively countered when we accept that everything happens in accordance with the Divine Will. The first step would be to accept divine providence. This is the first teaching given by Ramana to the world at large in the form of a written reply to his mother when she first came to plead with him to return home. Therein he clearly indicates that in accordance with the destiny of each individual, the Supreme One, who is responsible for the fulfilment of the destiny, remaining in every place, moves the individual in the appropriate manner to fulfil the destiny. Hence, that which is not destined to happen will not happen despite every effort and that which is destined to happen cannot be stalled by any effort. Therefore the best course is to remain silent.

If we are in a position of maturity to accept this statement of Ramana, nothing further needs to be said or done. We would

remain silent in the knowledge that actions are not controlled by us any more than the results of actions. When everything happens according to destiny what remains for us to do? Devaraja Mudaliar has asked Ramana whether the inexorable sway of destiny holds good only for major events and episodes in one's life, say, parentage, place of birth, education, marriage and the like. Or does destiny control everything, even the movement of one's hand or the blinking of an eyelid? Ramana says it is the latter. He affirms that everything that happens to the body is in accordance with destiny.

Then where does our freedom lie? Ramana says that it is only internal. Our freedom lies in accepting this truth and remaining at peace, in silence. We are free not to be touched by the flow of events over which we have no control in any case. We are equally free to believe that we are in control and to try to act according to our free will. We are free to worry about our actions and their results and to experience the impact of the ups and downs of the results of our actions as well.

Why do we prefer to be tossed about by the storms of fortunes instead of diving down into the depths of loving acceptance and the resultant abidance in silence? This is because we seek to be in control. We want to mould our lives as per our wishes. We believe implicitly if not explicitly that it is possible to be in control of our lives. Given half a chance we would like to mould the lives of all those around us as well. We also believe that what we wish or plan for ourselves is the very best, better even than what God can plan for us. Therefore it is that we wish to have the power of action. It is not that we consciously seek this power. Yet it is implied in everything that we do.

The very fact that we plan for the future is the primary indication of our faith in our own powers of action. Not only do we wish to write the scripts of our own lives, we automatically wish to write the scripts of all those who are directly connected with us. As life is one immense web where everyone and everything is interconnected, in effect we wish to write the story of the entire universe. Say, I wish that my mother should live a healthy life until she is 90 years of age. In this wish of mine, I am writing the script of mother's destiny wherein she will live upto that age and will also

live healthily. Of course, I would want my mother to live happily as well. I would by no means wish that she should live in sorrow. This means I would be writing a script in which my mother does not have to face any bereavements, she would not lose any of her near and dear ones. She would also not see her near and dear ones going through any turmoil. Thus I have written a script for the longevity of all my mother's near and dear ones and for their material comforts as well.

As the basis for all this, I would have also written a script that I myself will continue to be around till my mother is 90, that I myself will be in a state of health good enough to enjoy the fact that my mother is around and is healthy. I would also be writing that I should be in a state of mind conscious and sane enough to recognise that my mother is around and is healthy and happy. If I am not going to be around when my mother is 90 of what use would it be to me to wish for her to live until she is 90? If I am going to be ill and in pain and unable to think of anything other than my pain, of what use would it be to me if anyone else is around or not? If I am going to be in a state of unconsciousness or dementia when I am unable to recognise anyone else, of what use would it be that I wish for the continuance of anyone else or of any other circumstance?

Every wish of mine presumes that I have control over the positive continuation of all other circumstances. Whenever I think of a lack in my present situation and wish that it would be different, I assume that everything else is going to remain the same. Right now, I am wealthy and have a problem. If that problem is solved, I will be happy, I think. What if that problem is solved but another arises? What if I lose all my wealth in the meantime?

But why should we think of negative possibilities? Is it not morbidity to envisage the happening of 'bad' events? This is what we would be led to believe. On the other hand, is it not morbidity to never be happy with what is given but always wish for something that is not?

There was a devotee of Ramana who lost her nine year old son in a fire accident. The accident had taken a toll on every member of the family. She, her husband, her two daughters, her

husband's brother and the little boy were all in hospital. All the others survived, the boy died. She did not even know that the son died and that his last rites were performed by friends. She did not get to see him for the last time. She came home, to a new rented place as the old one had got burnt down, to learn about her son's death. The first thing she said was, 'The Lord was very gracious. He gave me my son to enjoy him for nine long years. Can I complain if now the Lord has decided to call him back to Himself?' It was only later that her eyes became moist and she said, 'I miss him nonetheless and shall continue to do so.'

Can we have such total acceptance of the Lord's script? Can we entirely drop our need to write our own scripts for our lives? If we do, will it not make us lazy? If we wait for things to happen of their own accord and in their own time, would it not be a laid back attitude, an excuse for our own laziness and tendency to procrastinate? If we truly believe that everything happens by the Lord's will, would it be possible for us to be lazy if He wills it otherwise? Yet, so that we may not have the outside chance to make it appear as if we are using this as an excuse, we are asked to engage in action to the best of our ability and to offer all fruits of our actions to the Lord. Further, we must not wish for any particular fruits at all.

This may appear to be easy but is not really so. Who is interested in action anyway? Are we not seeking only the fruits of our actions? We may say that we are performing actions in a detached manner. Yet the real test comes when the results fail to show up or when they are in fact contrary to what we would have sought through our actions. If we have really practised offering the fruits of all actions to the Supreme, would there be any agitation even when we perform the actions? Would there be any worry about the outcome of our actions? Would there be any disturbance in us when the results actually come?

Would there not be great joy in every action when it has become meaningful in itself and not for the sake of the result that it is going to produce? Would there not be full attention to every action because attention is not dragged away to the result of that action, to the desire that prompts the action, to the fear that the action may not fructify in the desired result? Would not such attention itself

reinforce the joy in the action manifold times because attention is the movement of the Self itself and the source of all joy?

Yet, despite all this, could sorrow still touch us? Though we know that the Lord alone is the Supreme Doer, though we accept that His is the script of our lives, an all-knowing and all-loving script, could we still be sad when a 'painful event' happens? If such sorrow does rise in us, it would be because the sense of being the doer may have gone, but the sense of being the possessor or the experiencer of the event may still remain. If that is the case, as we started out saying, self-enquiry is the answer.

Ramana says that until one is identified with the body one is bound to experience misery in one form or the other. I may understand that I am not the doer. I may even understand that there is no need for me to be the doer because the one who is the Doer is the Supreme One. Surely the actions of the Supreme would be far better than mine in every sense of the term. Yet, even though I understand this, I may not understand that in the first place I am not the one who understands all this. Am I the one who experiences the sorrow? Who am I?

Further still, if I do not experience sorrow but am in a state of mental equilibrium, would I have reached my goal? Would I have fulfilled the purpose of my life? Would I not still continue to be the one who possesses such detachment? Would I not still be bound by the fetters of identity? How do I free myself from these? The answer, says Ramana, lies in enquiry and enquiry alone. As Sri A.R.Natarajan writes, "Ramana says that the most efficacious means for the control of the mind is the constant questing of the validity of our assumption about our identity by asking the question 'Who am I?' Provided one lets this doubt take over at all possible times then the true answer would be found from within, from the depth of one's being." Beyond the boundaries of the subtlest of identities the vehicle of self-enquiry takes us, manned as it by the divine power of grace.



Sarada Natarajan

KNOW YOURSELF* *A. R. Natarajan***INTRODUCTION (Contd.)**

Ramana says that the most efficacious means for the control of the mind is the constant questing of the validity of our assumption about our identity by asking the question 'Who am I?'. Though the form is that of a question no answer, by way of denial 'I am not the body' or affirmation 'I am the Self', should be made. For they are mere concepts within the mind's framework. Provided one lets this doubt take over at all possible times then the true answer would be found from within, from the depth of one's being.

The other tool suggested by Ramana is to ask, 'Whence am I?' Individuality comes on waking and goes while sleeping. Hence one should enquire about the mind's origin. Such enquiring would make for source-awareness so essential for merging in the heart.

When one pays attention to the subject 'I' using these twin weapons one acquires the capacity to be alert against thought intrusion. One notices quickly, if not immediately, the straying of attention away from the thinker. The warding off of thoughts is a preliminary necessity. When it is followed by sustained attention on the 'I', the mind becomes in-turned and quiet.

It is important to remember that once the mind is inward turned by attention to the subject then one should switch over from the intensive positive attitude, which sustains such attention, to complete passivity. "Being still" is what is needed. Along the way the repeated merging of the mind into the heart itself acts as a spur for further effort. For "what one has experienced and knows to be the truth can neither be denied nor forgotten".

The mind partakes more and more of consciousness till it gradually acquires the capacity to stay steadily at the source. Then the mind becomes silent. Mind as we know it would be dead.

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

The externalizing of the mind and its swinging between action and laziness would end. Instead it would be internalized, pure and uncontaminated by thought. It would then reflect consciousness without distortion. Thoughts will rise when needed and subside when their job is done. Action would be complete and perfect. It is a state of wakeful sleep for one is free of thoughts as in sleep and alertly active as when awake. When one becomes Self-aware, joy inundates as a ceaseless throb in the heart.

Many, due to lack of experience of that state, are worried about being free of thoughts. It may be made clear, again, that the functions of mind, memory, reasoning, inference etc. would be very much there and that too with heightened powers, due to absence of distractions. The examples of the liberated ones of the past, who were abiding in that state of silence, should also help in getting rid of this fear. Ramana himself is an example of this, for he did whatever he did with an infectious enthusiasm, from the cutting of vegetables to clarifying the innumerable doubts of the seekers of truth.

One has also to consider what would be the supplementary practices to help to quicken the process. Ramana recommends 'watching the breath with the mind'. Such attention if constant has the immediate effect of quietening the mind for both the mind and breath originate from the heart. As the mind gathers enough strength to stay with the 'I', breath regulation by watching the breath would serve the purpose of a brake for a car or reins for a horse. However, Ramana does not recommend it as an exclusive method, for breath regulation may have the effect of lulling the mind. The danger of the mind being lulled into sleep is quite on the cards for the mind is either active and full of thoughts or asleep when it is without thoughts. However, what is needed is conscious effort to turn the mind within and make it stay inward till it is merged in its source.

Where does grace of the Sadguru come in? Is it all a matter of the individual's effort only? Quite certainly 'No'. By Ramana's grace alone one is attracted to the direct path of self-enquiry incessantly stressed by him. In this path there is nothing to occupy the mind, no rituals, no scope for philosophical dialectics, no

unsaid or hidden nuances. It is all an open book. The mind revels in complications. To opt for a way which does not provide for avenues of relish to the mind cannot happen except by his grace. Also, in the inner journey, grace is very much in operation. Effort can be made only upto a point when inwardness is established. Thereafter, it is Ramana's grace which 'swallows one alive' and opens up a new dimension of living. It is Ramana's guidance from within that sustains in many dead-end situations and enables one to overcome listlessness and loss of interest. "Grace is thus the beginning and the end. Introversion is due to grace, perseverance is grace and realisation is grace".

Ramana would also advise that one should proceed with spiritual practice in the confidence of its assured success. "Others have succeeded. Why not you? Why stultify yourself by anticipating failure?" He would say that spiritual unfoldment is only a matter of discovering what is already there, the spiritual heart and the natural state of silence. Since this state is one's own and not given one is sure to become aware of it when diligent practice and the Sadguru's grace interact.

Many think that the abandoning of wife and children, giving up of jobs, renouncing of the world and the like are preconditions for attaining the goal. Where is the time for spiritual practice in the busy work-a-day world? It is a full time task and duties leave no time for it. Ramana would never encourage such false logic for the world is in the mind. What needs to be tackled is the mind which one cannot leave behind. One can always make self-enquiry an undercurrent, sow the seed of doubt about the truth of our assumed identity. It is all a matter of proper use of the meditation time, and of idle-time.

Ramana would say that one who wishes to bathe in the sea cannot say he would prefer to wait till the waves subside. Can such a person have a sea bath at all? He has to resolve to bathe in it as it is. He has to learn by himself or by proper instruction to duck under each wave till he acquires the skill to duck at a stretch wave after wave. Then the restless ocean holds no fear for him for he knows how to handle it.

This problem of duties and worries of the world can also be handled by learning to leave things to the care of the Sadguru. As one progresses in self-enquiry faith in the omniscience and omnipotence of Ramana grows. One begins by giving Ramana a particular power of attorney, when things go out of hand, and then a general power of attorney as the trust becomes complete. But one has to be clear about the implications of 'surrender'. One has to unquestioningly accept the unfolding of events, in the knowledge and certainty that Ramana knows best. Such confidence is never misplaced for he takes over completely the responsibility of guiding one along. The burden is Ramana's and he can well shoulder it.

One finds a lot of interest in the question of reincarnation. May be the underlying fact is the fear of reconciling oneself to the idea of the ending of one's existence. Since one identifies oneself with the body, the death of the body is so terrifying. What happens at the time of death? The mind gathers the life-force and attaches itself to another body either subtle or gross before leaving the present one. The karmic purpose of birth is for the fructification of the desires and attachments remaining in seed form. So long as the mind is not merged steadily in the heart, birth and rebirth are inevitable. If one wishes to be free from this cycle one has to work for and attain steady Self-awareness. To do so is to find the true purpose of life, which is to enquire into the question 'For whom is the birth?' and find its answer in the freedom from its continuum.

A related question of fate and free-will would also figure quite often in the conversations of seekers with Ramana. Here too Ramana would go into the root of the question, by asking one to find out the one to whom fate and free will relate. Thus one is taken back to the search for true identity. He would also recommend a way out of destiny's barbs and arrows, by suggesting that it can be overcome by surrender to the guru. Once one is able to accept the happenings of life as just, even the labelling of events into 'good' and 'bad' stops. Who can know better what is 'good' and what is 'bad' than the Sadguru himself? We do not know the total karmic picture while he does. Therefore, our judgement is fallible and short-sighted but his is clear sighted and in our best interest.

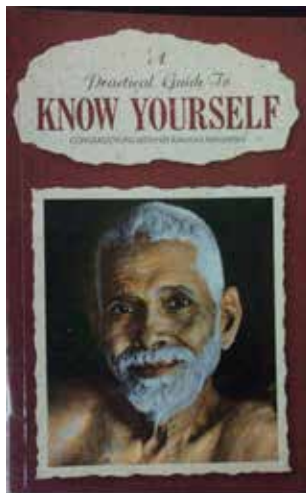
Many would be interested in miracles. Should a jnani exercise these powers? Why do some jnanis perform miracles while others don't? Ramana classifies miracles into two categories – those which are natural to jnanis and those which are the product of the mind, which are performed to dazzle, to obtain name and fame. Those performing miracles of the second category are the unfortunate ones. Even a magician knows, while performing his tricks, that they are illusions. But a miracle worker, on the other hand, would himself be deluded into believing the reality of the illusion he creates. For, these siddhis are not means to Self-knowledge and one would remain ignorant despite possessing these powers. What needs to be remembered is that Self-awareness is the true miracle. As for the natural miracles of jnanis, they may or may not display these powers, depending on the divine plan. But it makes no difference. For it is equimindedness which marks out the jnani.

What was Ramana's way of communicating his teachings? For many years when he was staying in the caves of Arunachala he would hardly speak. There was no need. In the immensity of the silence in his presence the seekers' doubts would be clarified. Even in later years the silence was so compelling that there would be the necessary response in the seeker's mind. However, there were always occasions when Ramana would clarify by cryptic and direct answers. But before doing so he would generally give a piercing look of grace which enabled the questioner to grasp the full implication of the message. One could say that even now when he is not in the body, the power of the look has not diminished. One can feel it and benefit from his speaking eyes in his photographs. The light which radiates from those eyes stills the mind and helps in resolving the problems during practice.

Ramana would also emphasise the need for remembering the inner presence of the guru. From the age of innocence he had himself received the guidance of Arunachala, the sacred hill, regarded as the embodiment of Lord Siva. Likewise, as the inner guru Ramana's guidance is open to all who can turn within and be sensitive to his presence.

As one reaps the benefits, the joy of the path, one often ponders how the enormous debt due to Ramana can be repaid. He is the fullness of consciousness. What can one give him? Ramana himself has been queried on this. In reply he referred to a Tamil Vedantic work, 'Kaivalya Navaneetam' which says that the best gift of the disciple to the guru would be to become Self-aware himself.

One might well ask "Of what use is self-enquiry? What do I lose if I don't practice it? What do I gain by diligent pursuit of it?' The answer lies in having a good look at our present life. Are we happy? Are we happy all the time or are we tasting continuously the bitter-sweet of life? Is our mind under our control? Can we relax and switch off thoughts? Are we free from their pestering demands? Where is the much yearned for peace of mind? Are we puppets of fate or its masters? Don't we want to be free from all this endless activity which gives no time even to stop and stare? Each one knows in his heart of hearts the true answer. Hence the search for the way out which the Ramana path offers. For it is practice and experience oriented. As one travels along the way one learns to appreciate its beauty. The goal and methodology are clear. The goal is the discovery of one's own true identity, to abide in the natural state. The means to reach it too is so explicit. Steadily, the fetters of the mind, the bondage to time is broken. Then we are that dynamic silence, that abundant joy.



The 'Talks' as a Guidance to Self Enquiry

N.Nandakumar

Talk 22. (Excerpt)

D.: Is it not killing life to prepare meat diet?

M.: Ahimsa stands foremost in the code of discipline for the yogis.

D.: Even plants have life.

M.: So too the slabs you sit on!

D.: May we gradually get ourselves accustomed to vegetarian food?

M.: Yes. That is the way.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: The Self-Luminous Self exists by itself. A body or any non-self depends on "another" for its existence. To argue whether eating plants or vegetarian food is also killing life is kutarka or vitiating argument. In the area of sadhana (spiritual journey) one should consume, or, provide to the body, that food which creates less attachment to the body. That energy from sattvik food too is to be used for spiritual effort like right living and Atma Vichara which will lead one to realise the Self-Luminous Self. The truth that there is no non-self and everything, including the stone slab outside and bone within, is full of life - the Self - is realised.

How does Bhagavan say that Jnani is not affected by the food he eats?

S: In the Jnana where stone slabs too are full of life, "eating" is itself eaten by that Jnana. A completely surrendered one too does not "eat" or "do" and will not be affected by "energy generated" or "result of action".

Talk 23. (Excerpt).

Mr. Evans-Wentz continued another day: "May one have more than one spiritual master?"

M.: Who is a Master? He is the Self after all. According to the stages of the development of the mind the Self manifests as the

Master externally. The famous ancient saint Avadhuta said that he had more than 24 Masters. The Master is one from whom one learns anything. The Guru may be sometimes inanimate also, as in the case of Avadhuta. God, Guru and the Self are identical.

A spiritual-minded man thinks that God is all-pervading and takes God for his Guru. Later, God brings him in contact with a personal Guru and the man recognises him as all in all. Lastly the same man is made by the grace of the Master to feel that his Self is the Reality and nothing else. Thus he finds that the Self is the Master.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: The purpose of taking birth is to LEARN. Every little bit of life learns. At one point, the limited being aggregates the whole of the "outside" as permeated by one being - God. The inside identities naturally get aggregated into one - devotee. All identities become subsumed by this "I am a devotee" identity. At this point of learning - aggregation of the outside and inside - it is ready to take the one Master or One Sadhana as the Guru - one's all in all. Such a Guru guides the disciple to aggregate the "outside" and "inside" into the One Self within. The Self being ever-present, one realises that the "outside worlds" aggregated as God and Guru as well as "oneself within" are only the Self. Ishwara, Guru and Atma are only the Self.

I find the modern intellect talking of having gone beyond all identities without the "aggregation" of inside and outside. Some act as teachers thus misleading many.

S: Enquire, "For whom is this worry?" All aggregation happens by the "One All-Pervading Power". Such intellectual teachers or disciples too will be made to learn. You enquire, "Who am I?"

Talks as a guidance to Summa Iru. BE STILL.

Talk 23. (Excerpt)

D.: Does Sri Bhagavan initiate his disciples?

Maharshi kept silent.

Thereafter one of the devotees took it upon himself to answer, saying, "Maharshi does not see anyone as outside his Self. So

there are no disciples for him. His Grace is all-pervading and He communicates his Grace to any deserving individual in silence."

D.: How does book-lore help in Self-Realisation?

A.: Only so far as to make one spiritually-minded.

D.: How far does intellect help?

A.: Only so far as to make one sink the intellect in the ego, and the ego in the Self.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: The Self being beyond the reach of senses, breath and thought (mind, intellect and "I"), BE STILL is the experience of the Self, BE STILL is the initiation of the Self and BE STILL is abidance as the Self. Self enquiry is the direct effort to BE STILL.

How does Bhagavan say that Jnani is not affected by the food he eats?

S: In the Jnana where stone slabs too are full of life "eating" is itself eaten by that Jnana. A completely surrendered one too does not "eat" or "do" and will not be affected by "energy generated" or "result of action".

Talk 23. (Excerpt).

Mr. Evans-Wentz continued another day: "May one have more than one spiritual master?"

M.: Who is a Master? He is the Self after all. According to the stages of the development of the mind the Self manifests as the Master externally. The famous ancient saint Avadhuta said that he had more than 24 Masters. The Master is one from whom one learns anything. The Guru may be sometimes inanimate also, as in the case of Avadhuta. God, Guru and the Self are identical. A spiritual-minded man thinks that God is all-pervading and takes God for his Guru. Later, God brings him in contact with a personal Guru and the man recognises him as all in all. Lastly the same man is made by the grace of the Master to feel that his Self is the Reality and nothing else. Thus he finds that the Self is the Master.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: The purpose of taking birth is to LEARN. Every little bit of life learns. At one point, the limited being aggregates the whole of the "outside" as permeated by one being - God. The inside identities naturally get aggregated into one - devotee. All

identities become subsumed by this "I am a devotee" identity. At this point of learning - aggregation of the outside and inside - it is ready to take the one Master or One Sadana as the Guru - one's all in all. Such a Guru guides the disciple to aggregate the "outside" and "inside" into the One Self within. The Self being ever-present, one realises that the "outside worlds" aggregated as God and Guru as well as "oneself within" are only the Self. Ishwara, Guru and Atma are only the Self.

I find the modern intellect talking of having gone beyond all identities without the "aggregation" of inside and outside. Some act as teachers thus misleading many.

S: Enquire, "For whom is this worry?". All aggregation happens by the "One All-Pervading Power". Such intellectual teacher or disciple too will be made to learn. You enquire, "Who am I?"

Talks as a guidance to Summa Iru. BE STILL.

Talk 24. (Excerpt).

D.: Thoughts cease suddenly, then 'I-I' rises up as suddenly and continues. It is only in the feeling and not in the intellect. Can it be right?

M.: It is certainly right. Thoughts must cease and reason disappear for 'I-I' to rise up and be felt. Feeling is the prime factor and not reason.

D.: Moreover it is not in the head but in the right side of the chest.

M.: It ought to be so. Because the heart is there.

D.: When I see outside it disappears. What is to be done?

M.: It must be held tight.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED.

Tapah kshapita sarvaangaaya Namah. Spiritual effort reduces all instruments of perception - senses, breath, mind, intellect and ego - to pure Consciousness ("I-I"). Even the instruments of mind which generates thought and intellect which generates subtler thought of cause-effect, comparison-order, good-bad, coarse-abstract, should be eliminated by tapas. When the ego has no instrument of action/perception, including the intellect, to identify with, it experiences the "I-I". To hold that "I-I" is to be still with effort. This effort (ego) too is made weak and absorbed (kshapita) in Talks as a guidance to Summa Iru - BE STILL

Talk 24. (Excerpt).

D.: If one is active with such remembrance (of the "I-I" beyond thought and reason), will the actions be always right?

M.: They ought to be. However, such a person is not concerned with the right or wrong of his actions. Such a person's actions are God's and therefore they must be right.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED. "Dharma" or "reason" is probably the substrate or validation for one's actions till one reaches the "I-I" beyond thought and reason. The Summa Iru or "I-I" validates one's actions by completely absorbing all non-self into the Self - "I-I". Holding that "I-I" is the sadana which offers all of one's actions (Kaya, vacha, manah, Indriya, buddhi, ego and as part of Prakruti) to God. Then, as Bhagavan assures, "such a person's actions are God's and therefore they must be right". In fact such a "person" or "doubter" merges into the "I-I" beyond thought, reason and all doubt about right and wrong.that "I-I".

Talks as a guidance to Summa Iru. BE STILL.**Talk 24. (Excerpt).**

D.: (I have been experiencing the "I-I" beyond mind and reason) Why then the restrictions of food given for such?

M.: Your present experience is due to the influence of the atmosphere you are in. Can you have it outside this atmosphere? The experience is spasmodic. Until it becomes permanent practice is necessary. Restrictions of food are aids for such experience to be repeated. After one gets established in truth the restrictions drop away naturally. Moreover, food influences the mind and it must be kept pure.

The lady told a disciple later: "I feel the vibrations from him more intensely and I am able to reach the 'I' centre more readily than before."

GUIDANCE RECEIVED.

Till one is established in the True Self, one should repeat the experience of holding the Source through practice of Self Enquiry, direct holding of the "I-I". The sadaka should make use of the best of times and places of Guru Sannidhi and PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE.

Ramana Darshana Trayi – Ulladu Narpadu (Part 1)

G Kameshwar

We bring you here the Introduction to ‘Ulladu Narpadu’ ‘Forty Verses on Reality’ of Bhagavan Ramana by G.Kameshwar. This introduction precedes an English verse translation of the treatise . This in turn is one part of the book ‘Ramana Darshana Trayi’ published by Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning in 2016. The book also contains English verse translations of Arunachala Aksharamanamalai and Upadesa Undiyaar. These two have been translated with poetic rhythms which match the original and can be sung in the same lilting tunes. Before presenting G.Kameshwar’s introduction to Ulladu Narpadu, we bring you here Master Nome’s Foreword to the book as well.

- Editor

FOREWORD

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

If one can only realize that which Sri Bhagavan reveals, he will happily find that the one Self alone exists, eternally. That which Sri Bhagavan knows and that which He reveals is that which He is. Revealing the ever-existent, Sri Bhagavan clearly, perfectly expresses the ineffable and thus graciously bestows the inconceivable knowledge of the truth of the Self. Devotees who adhere to His instruction find lasting happiness and transcendent peace by abidance as the Self.

Here together are three Sri Ramana scriptures. Each contains all that one could possibly need for the Realization of the Self.

With deep devotion and great care, Sri G. Kameshwar has translated into English the three profound sets of spiritual instructions composed by Sri Ramana contained in this publication. He artfully presents these sacred works in English as verses and songs that are replete with delightful rhythm and rhyme yet retain the joyous profundity of these essential teachings. When disciples or devotees bring forth such inspired writings, it is the shining within of Sadguru Ramana that accomplishes the entirety of it.

Ramana Darshana Trayi is a very welcome addition to the treasure trove of Sri Ramana literature published by Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning and a blissful blessing for all who wisely take the precious opportunity to read it and absorb themselves in the truth revealed by Sri Bhagavan.

Master Nome
January 30, 2016

Ulladu Narpadu translation – An introduction

The Treatise

Among the various literary works of Ramana Maharshi, uLLadu nARpadu has pride of place. Containing the essence of core Vedanta, this treatise is based on the experience of Bhagavan, and is at times referred to as Ramanopanishad. While this treatise is in Tamil verse, Bhagavan himself translated these verses into Telugu prose under the name Unnadi Nalupadi, and into Malayalam verse under the name of Saddarsanam. This treatise was also translated into Sanskrit verse under the title ‘Sat-Darsanam’ by Kavyakanta Ganapati Muni, the great Sanskrit poet-sage. And these translations have also been elaborated by Commentaries written by learned scholars.

The background to the original composition is like this.

During the times when Ramana was residing in various parts of Arunachala hill, different spiritual aspirants would often bring various works of Vedanta and request him to give a succinct summary of these, or to explain some specific verses. Bhagavan would often render the explanation in the form of Tamil verses. He also wrote some stray verses (tani pADalgaL) on the request of devotees. Bhagavan has said that he has composed any number of verses in this manner. However, since there was no attempt at preserving the verses, most of those verses are not available to us now.

In 1922, Bhagavan came down the hill to settle near the Samadhi-shrine of Azhagammal, Bhagavan’s mother. It was around this time that Muruganar came to Bhagavan. Muruganar was a Tamil scholar par excellence and a co-author of the Tamil lexicon. Upon reading Bhagavan’s Aksharamanamalai, his heart was immediately given over to Bhagavan, and he came and surrendered himself at Bhagavan’s feet, once and for all. A poet par excellence, he

was to Bhagavan Ramana what the ancient Tamil poet-sage Manikkavachagar was to Lord Siva. Such is his piety and poesy that he has composed over 30,000 verses on Bhagavan and his teachings, along the lines of the Nayanmars¹ of yore.

Muruganar took serious interest in the Tamil verses composed by Bhagavan and started to compile and classify them. In the beginning he put together a collection of 21 stray verses of Bhagavan. These were the verses that Bhagavan had written in response to questions raised by different people, at different points in time, in different contexts, based on different doctrines, philosophies, treatises etc. Seen together, they were not strung together as one treatise. Muruganar was keen that Bhagavan suitably rewrite these verses, and write additional ones, so that the whole could be woven into one web of wisdom, one scripture. With this in mind, he approached Bhagavan, and said²:

“Bhagavan! In order to throw light on the Truth-Reality and the means to attain it, for the sake of guiding devotees, Bhagavan must grace us by composing some more verses, such that they add to the existing 21 verses, and can be strung together as a treatise of forty verses. In Sangam³ literature, there are many works such as ‘innA nARpadu’, ‘iniyavai nARpadu’, ‘kAr nARpadu’, ‘kaLavaZi nARpadu’ etc⁴. In like manner, if Bhagavan’s grace bestows a few more verses, a treatise under the title ‘uLLadu nARpadu’ can be put together for the benefit of devotees!”

Ever abiding in the state of Mouna⁵, Bhagavan never had any sankalpa⁶ to write and would usually be unmoved by any such request. However, in this particular instance, Bhagavan acceded to the earnest request of Muruganar, and started composing a few verses each day. Muruganar started compiling and arranging these new verses in a suitable order. Many of the earlier verses were summaries of other works of Vedanta or translations of Sanskrit verses. Among these older verses, some were not in conformance

1 Naayanmaar: Tamil saints devoted to Lord Siva

2 The quotation is a free translation attempted by me. So E&OE.

3 Sangam; Ancient Tamil literature

4 innA nARpatu – Forty verses on harmful things; iniyavai nARpatu – Forty verses on sweet things; kAr nARpatu – Forty verses on internal emotions; kaLavazhi nARpatu – Forty verses on external things;

5 Mouna: state of silent mind

6 Sankalpa: desire

with the pure Advaita resonating in the new verses. Some other verses of the earlier set did not tie up neatly with the central theme of the new set. In view of this, Muruganar requested Bhagavan to revise these verses. Bhagavan, however, decided not to modify the old verses, but to write new ones instead. At end, out of the original twenty-one verses, except for one or two, most were recomposed. (Note: The verses eliminated thus were strung together separately and became a part of a supplement to uLLadu nARpadu).

In approximately twenty days, Bhagavan composed forty venpa-s and one invocatory mangala venpa. This composition was shown to the great sage-poet, disciple of Bhagavan, Kavyakanta Ganapati Muni. As he studied this new priceless necklace of Vedanta, Kavyakanta Ganapati Muni observed that there was not even a single verse that spoke of saguna upasana, the worship of Name/Form of God. At end, he noticed one verse that referred to Ishwara. This was a verse that commenced with the line *maraNabaya mikkuLavam makkaLaraNAka maraNabava millA mahEsan*. Muni then suggested to Bhagavan that this verse may be included in the invocatory part since it is customary to commence a treatise by invoking the name and protection of a deity. But then there already was one invocatory verse. Would it be right to add another one? Bhagavan and Muruganar deliberated about this and finally decided that since Atma-vichara⁷ concludes in Atma-samarpana⁸, and since Atma-samarpana leads to Atma-anubhava⁹, it was not inappropriate to take the path suggested by Kavyakanta. But then, moving one verse from the main body to the Invocation section meant that the treatise proper would become one short of forty. To replenish the shortfall, Bhagavan composed one more verse.

Thus was composed the great treatise, uLLadu nARpadu. This was composed by Bhagavan in August 1928, and first published in 1931.

The verses eliminated from the earlier set, were complemented with further new verses composed by Bhagavan, and uLLadu nARpadu anubandam, a supplement to uLLadu nARpadu, was published in 1940. This contained forty verses, and one invocatory verse.

7 Atma vichara: Self-Enquiry

8 Atma samarpana: Surrender of individual self

9 Atma anubhava: Self-Abidance

We saw earlier, that uLLadu nARpadu has been referred to as Ramanopanishad – the Upanishad of Ramana.

But then, one may well argue that the treatise is all of Prasthanatrayi of Vedanta, namely, the Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita and Brahma Sutra. Like the Upanishads, it is the ‘seeing’, the vision, of a Rshi, which emerges as the voice of Supreme-Truth-Reality. Like the Bhagavad Gita, it has the immediate presence of Bhagavan as a Teacher. And in articulation, it has the abstruseness, the terse perfection, the diamond-splendor, of Brahma Sutra.

Overall, uLLadu nARpadu is the bold laughter of Lord Muruga, son of Siva. Weaponized using the terrific power of Tamizh language, Bhagavan’s words are like the thrusts of Muruga’s spear. Flying on peacock-beautiful venpA verses, Bhagavan Himself it is, who, in the form of this treatise, comes hunting the demon, “I”-notion, of every seeker who seriously contemplates the verses of this treatise. Each word, phrase and verse is like a brilliant diamond, which throbs with different sparkle every way it is seen, driving the attention of the reader to the depth of his own heart, turning his mind backwards, making him question his very own identity, and rendering his sense of individuality rootless...

As an entry into the main translation, let us try and examine, in some detail, the two invocatory verses of the treatise.

The invocatory verses of uLLadu nARpadu

If we examine the commentaries on Indian spiritual treatises written by great sages, it is often seen that the commentary on the very first verse of the treatise is very long. For instance, one can see the commentary of Adi Shankaracharya on the name ‘Vishwam’, the first name of Vishnusahasranama, or his commentary on ‘athAtO brahma jijnAsa’, the first aphorism of Brahma Sutra. The reason is that the very first verse (or even the very first word) of a treatise usually encapsulates the main thrust and purport of the entire treatise. It stands out like a flagstaff or the Gopuram (tower) of a temple, a stamp of authority, or a knockout punch carrying the weight of the whole treatise – like Bhagavan Sri Krishna blowing the Panchajanya conch to signal the start of Bhagavad Gita and the Mahabharata battle. uLLadu nARpadu is no different.

*** to be continued ***

Aksharamanamalai*Dr.Sarada*

*tirumbi ahamtanai dinam ahakkaN kAN
teriyum enRanai en aruNAcala*

If we repeatedly take our attention back to the essence, the truth, we find in this near central portion of Aksharamanamalai Bhagavan enunciating the path of self enquiry telling us how to turn back to our very own nature which shines for ever of its own accord. In the preceding verse having told us about truth he does not leave it at that. Whenever Bhagavan tells us about the truth he also talks about the path and the exact nature of the path as well. This is his unique blessing to all. We may hear the Vedas declaring that 'You are That'.

But how do we bridge the gap between our present condition of being conditioned and the land of absolute freedom, the state of Self-abidance? Bhagavan does not wait for us to try and find out on our own. In case there is that rare person who is ripe, who on hearing of the truth is filled with intense yearning to get back to it, should such a one be held away for even a moment for want of clarity about the path? With heart welling with compassion for such earnest seekers of truth, Bhagavan repeatedly draws attention not only to the truth but to the path to the truth as well. What a rare blessing it is to find the path to the essence given to us in such a simple manner.

It is largely believed that Self-knowledge is for the few who have the right to get back to the Self and to them alone the path is to be revealed. But here Bhagavan has thrown it open to all - he has told us that each one of us can turn back to our true nature by seeing the mind with the mind. The mind has a self-reflective power. It can turn back and pay attention to itself. All other objects cannot pay attention to themselves. But we can pay attention both to objects and to the mind which pays attention to the objects. The self-reflective power is there in the mind. So Bhagavan says use this power. With the mind try to pay attention to the mind. Enquire into the source of the mind.

Bhagavan simplifies the procedure. Because we are caught up in the externalities of the mind, as we are actually in

its periphery, it feels too vast, too complex - one moment positive another moment negative. We can never know how the mind is going to move, which turn it may take suddenly. Funnily enough, we are surprised by the mind that exists within us and forget to fear things that are outside of us. At the same time, we are unafraid of the mind too. After years of indulging in constant thinking, after being swirled in the whirlpool of thoughts for eons as it were, we still have no trepidation to think. We have no fear of fear, no anger against anger.

Yet, if we need to modify the content of the mind, to control it or change it, that is a laborious process indeed. So there are steps which are taught – yama, niyama, pranayama, dharana, dhyana. Dhyana is at the end of the Selfward path and then one may enter the portals of samadhi.

But Bhagavan starts with dhyana. There are two doubts which rise in this context. One is whether all are capable of diving into dhyana at the very outset. Who can say until one has tried? And trying obviously does not mean sitting for a few minutes and deciding one is incapable of practising self-enquiry. One must try, and try in real earnest to know whether or not one would be able to pursue the path. And even if one does fail repeatedly how can one say one will not succeed in the next attempt? So if one is yearning for Self-knowledge then what option does one have other than keep trying the path? So Bhagavan says try, keep trying, ‘dinam’, keep turning within. Not just every day, but every minute, as he says in his Appalam Song, santatam, salippara, santoshamaagave, ever, untiring, joyously turn within. Tirumbi, turn within and try to see the mind.

The second question that crops up is that if Bhagavan is taking us directly to dhyana, to self-enquiry, is there no role for right to conduct in our lives? It only means as Bhagavan says that if you are ever turning the mind back to the source of the mind, where is the time to do something wrong? The question does not arise. We can get caught in the world by simply thinking of wrong things and trying to negate them. Never focus on what should not be done, says Bhagavan, only focus on what needs to be done. When you do that your attention automatically attention does not go the wrong way. So he encourages us to develop a love for that which is right. Your inner voice will automatically tell you what is wrong.

This reminds me of an incident that was narrated to me by Sri R.Venkataraman, erstwhile President of India, a few months before he passed away. He told me that when he was in his late teens or early twenties he had the darshan of Bhagavan. He had gone with great philosophers and scholars like Dr.Radhakrishnan and others. They spoke with Bhagavan all day long and had many of their doubts clarified. When it was late evening, RV said he found a rare moment when Bhagavan was alone and went up to him. He told him, 'Bhagavan so many questions have been put to you by senior members of our group and you have given them answers which have satisfied their thirst for knowledge. But I am afraid that I have not been able to comprehend any of it. Give me one simple instruction that I can follow'. Then Bhagavan told him, 'Whenever you are about to perform an action, any action, a voice within you will unfailingly tell you whether it is right or wrong. Always pay heed to that voice and always stick by its advice.' RV stated that till that moment of his life when he was narrating this to me, he had always stuck by Bhagavan's guidance.

So Bhagavan says pay attention again and again to the central core which is the Self. This you can do by paying attention to the mind with the mind says Bhagavan. This paying attention is what is the key, the core of self enquiry, *tupparivu*.

*deeramillahattil tEDiundanaiyAn tirumbavuTREn aruL aruNAcala
tupparivillaa ippirappenpayan oppiDavAyEn aruNAcala*

Yes, Bhagavan asks us to turn back to the source unrelentingly, but we are afraid, our effort is weak. And it fails. What shall we do but pray for Grace? You declare that I must turn back to the Self O' Arunachala and It will be revealed. But I do not have the courage because I believe that there is a lot of joy in turning attention on to objects. I am afraid of letting them go. I have imagined that they have given me joy. I have imagined for ages ever since I can remember that happiness lies outside. Perhaps I have laid my faith in objects for several thousand lifetimes. That is what seers declare. I may have no conscious memory of it. But at least in this lifetime I know I have believed that my source of happiness is objects.

Why is it that I am unable to stop this attention from wandering after one object to another? Why am I afraid? Because

as Bhagavan has pointed out in Upadesa Saram it is my belief that I need to be happy; and I believe that objects and experiences give me happiness. Further, I believe that action helps me experience the objects of my desire. Therefore I put all my faith in action, in movement, in moving out all the time. Hence I am afraid O' Arunachala to turn within. I am trying though, trying to turn back, trying because you have asked me to so. Yet every time I try to turn to you the force of my conditioning pushes me out, back into the world of experiences that drag me hither and thither. Therefore Arul, give me faith, full faith in your fullness, faith in the truth that there is no joy, nothing to seek apart from you. Because, without this faith I don't seem to have the courage to turn my mind to the Self.

And what is Arunachala's answer to my plea?

Don't worry if you do not have the courage, he says. Just plant a little seed of enquiry in your mind and it will do its job. Very often in meditation one is gripped by the problem of the running mind, the problem of proliferation of thoughts. What do I do if I get thoughts? Bhagavan says, plant the seed of self-enquiry. Plant that seed in your mind then everything will come right. Without it there is no purpose in life. If the question comes to me as to who I am, then why would I be worried about my actions? For whom are all these thoughts? If they are for me and I do not know who I am, how can I claim that they are my thoughts? And if they are not my thoughts, my actions, since I do not know who I am, then for whose sake am I acting?

For whose sake am I going up and down, up and down? For what purpose? Even if I were to say that it is for the sake of others that I am acting, if I assume that I am performing the actions, then I should know who I am. Without the right knowledge about myself what can I do for myself? With this question 'Who am I?' taking hold of me, everything falls into place. There is no more need to question each of my actions individually and check whether they are right or wrong. Even if the need arises by the supreme Grace it turns back to the question - for whom is this? For whom? I believe that I am going to get something out of this. Who is this 'I'? Who am I?

Am I aware that I am the Self? Am I just satisfied with extending or devoting my entire life to a stranger about whom I know less than nothing? Could I give my entire life to an actual stranger?

We would hesitate to give even a small gift to a person whom we do not know. Yet we are ready to give our whole life to something without knowing who we are. Bhagavan asks 'Of what use is this life when I do not know who I am?' O' Arunachala fill me with this spirit of self enquiry through which the great seers are ever abiding as the Self, by which their great minds, speech have become glorified.

tUymana mozhiyar tOyumun meiyaham tOyave aruLen aruNAcala

What happens when the question 'Who am I' takes hold of us? What happens when we recognise that there is only the Self? There is only deivam, only the Supreme. There is nothing apart from it.

Bhagavan says with self enquiry we recognise that our body and all our experiences, everything is contained in our mind. So he draws all the experiences of the world into the mind. And then he says ask 'Who am I?' Everything comes to a stand still. Perfect silence prevails.

Not one experience remains with me, not one can I call I. And all these are generated, sustained and brought back into I. They are sustained because of I. Every thought is sustained because of the crux of I in it. It is mine, it is my experience, because I am there, the experience is there. But the attention is only on the experience and not on I am. And where does this sense of I arise from? What is the base of this 'I-ness'?

So 'tupparivu' enquiry and more enquiry. Get back to the experience that the Self alone, that deivam alone, that the Supreme power alone is manifesting alone in every one of us.

deivamenRunnai sAravE ennai sEraozhittAy aruNAcala



Ramana is the Way of Ramana

Shyam Sundar

- "The master is within. Meditation is meant to remove the ignorant idea that he is only outside."

"The guru does not bring about Self-realisation. He simply removes the obstacles to it."

-Sri Ramana Maharshi

Yes. We read Ramana's words outside but we realize their truth within. Thus he does his work inside.

- "Always think what your real nature is; do not think of anything else."

"Be as you are."

-Ramana

Instead of observing I-feeling separately, I myself should live as that in the Heart. This practice brings me near the Self to be absorbed by the same.

- "Silence is eloquence-the state of grace that rises within." "You are the Inner Self, who dances in the heart as 'I'. "Heart is your name. O Lord."

-Ramana

When I simply live as 'I' forgetting everything else, I am automatically accepted by the Heart, by Arunachala, let me say by Ramana.

- "Go round the hill once. You will see that it attracts you."

-Ramana.

Everyone is being attracted by the Heart within but very few go round It. Can we constantly go round this Inner Hill without giving importance to mind's so-called needs?

Ramana Musings

Chadalavada Vijaya Kumar

It is well known among the experienced devotees of Bhagavan Ramana, that isolating the I-thought and remaining near I-thought or witness during self-enquiry, would not have been an issue and also diving further into the source, at least temporarily, would not have posed any problem. But to merge the ego (I-thought) for a longer period of time or permanently in the source is the major hurdle for the majority of the devotees, leading to an utterly helpless situation. So much so that one is bound to be frustrated at the peculiar stage at which majority of devotees get trapped, which is neither here or there.

Bhagavan is aware of the plight of his devotees, who are at the various stages of sadhana in the practice of self enquiry. Out of his compassion and grace, he composes Arunachala Pathikam (Ten Verses on Arunachala), Arunachala Ashtakam (Eight Stanzas on Arunachala), Arunachala Navamanimalai (Necklet of Nine Gems on Arunachala), Arunachala Pancharatnam (Five Gems on Arunachala) and Aksharamanamalai (Marital Garland of Letters). If one goes through the verses of these compositions carefully, one realises that it is the pleading on behalf of the devotees by Bhagavan to Arunachala Siva. The love with which Bhagavan implores Arunachala brings tears to one's eyes.

Any one who practises self-enquiry for a longer period of time and gets stuck at a point obviously gets the feeling of disappointment due to expectation. They begin to despair as to how long this process has to be continued. Though the faith in Bhagavan does not get diminished that gnawing feeling of non-fruition of the practice would be lurking at the back of the mind as the ego is not permanently merged in Arunachala Siva. Bhagavan has clearly stated in his replies to such devotees to keep faith firm and surrender totally to that Universal power.

All of us are aware that the I-thought gets pulled to the other thoughts due to vasanas or tendencies. Bhagavan has

clarified that efforts are required to be continued till the last seed of karma gets destroyed. Bhagavan has given answers to all sorts of doubts that one gets during sadhana in the book 'Conscious Immortality' which is based on the recording of conversations with Bhagavan by Paul Brunton and Munagala Venkataramaiah.

What happens if someone believes in self-enquiry but not karma? Nothing ...one has to carry on till the questions and the questioner get merged.

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya .



They Who Have Served

Sarada Akka



The Master has recalled many of His servants this year, very dear to Him surely and dear to our Centre as well. Remembering their love for Him and for all devotees makes our hearts well up with wonderment at Ramana's Grace that had brought them into our lives. It makes us marvel yet and yet again at the glory of Ramana's creation, at the beauty of His play and the characters in it.

Most recently Rajeswary Krishnan was called by Ramana to His kingdom. She, pure of heart and word, in love with Ramana as the embodiment of Saraswathi, in the form of every aspect of learning and in particular in the fine art of Indian classical music, waited for the prasadam from the Sri Chakra puja of Matrubhuteswara Temple to adorn her forehead before she breathed her last. She has happily offered to the service and love of Ramana all her three children who have been an active part of the very first Ramana Bala Kendra of RMCL and continue to serve the Centre. She herself was aware of every little detail about the Centre and its activities, watched every episode of every television serial produced by the Centre and kept a vivid mental record of its contents. She was an avid reader of 'The Ramana Way' and gently pointed out any error that may creep in with her typical stamp of affection. She lived the name of Ramana extolled in His Ashtottaram 'Om Mridubhashine Namaha'.

Not long before this Sri S.Ranganathan was absorbed in Bhagavan at Arunachala. Very many are his great qualities but we must surely put on record that for RMCL he holds a very special place as being without a doubt the foremost among the lovers of Ramananjali music. Numberless are those whose lives have been touched and transformed by Ramana Music. Yet, Ranganathan 'Athimber' as our Centre knew him, being the husband of our dear

Sarasa 'Akka', practically lived and breathed this music.

He would recount with tears of joy the particular song which he had drunk in for the day. Muruganar's Sannidhi Murai was deeply embedded in his heart, perhaps right from the very inception of Ramananjali. My parents, Smt.Sulochana Natarajan and Sri A.R.Natarajan, my younger sister Ambika and I would surely visit the Ranganathans home practically every



time we visited Chennai in those early years after the birth of Ramananjali. 'Mami' as my mother Sulochana was affectionately addressed, and the two of us sisters would sing 'Santaa tan pozhilgal' 'Vandadaindavar' 'Endai Ramanan' and other songs from Muruganar. The immense joy which these songs gave to Athimber, Sarasa akka and others of the family made an impression on my young mind that these must be very valuable compositions indeed. It reinforced my love for Ramananjali music.

Ranganathan Athimber would attend without fail both the Ramananjali and the Pada Pancharatnam whenever they were offered at Sri Ramanasramam. About the latter he had nothing but wonderment and praise to convey. About Ramananjali, along with his joy he would invariably share his critical comments about the program too. Most important among these would be his observation on the importance of rendering as many compositions in their original language as possible rather than their translations although people may be eager to hear songs in their own languages. He would not fail to greet every team member individually and enquire about their welfare. During the Ramananjali Global Online Competition, he too participated in the singing of the song sent by his daughter Aparna as an entry. Such was his enthusiasm. All of us remember him with love and will continue to feel his strong guidance correcting us wherever necessary.

When we were at Arunachala a few months back, we got the news that one of the most silent devotees had merged into eternal silence. Prasad, Krishna Prasad, would find the quietest

corner of the Hall that vibrated Ramana's silence, get seated, often in vajrasana, and be lost in meditation. Though he has been associated with RMCL and its activities for nearly three decades or more very few would know him by name because of his silent temperament. Though silent most of the time he had a ready wit and would easily break into joyous laughter whenever he did get into conversation with the devotees.



He would serve in any manner, whether it was carrying furniture from one place to another or painting the flower pots before a major event like a seminar. He and his wife Lalitha would be there at the Centre's bookstall during every seminar. They would attend every workshop on self-enquiry not because they had anything new to learn but just to be with the devotees and serve them. Such a silent presence. How is it that we miss it? And yet before we think we are missing him we feel he is there, in every workshop, silently meditating in the corner of the shrine and then joining at tea with his full laughter and joy.



He served by not just standing and waiting but by actively sustaining the satsang Centre at Kumta – Dr.M.D.Naik. Of him it was written in 'The Mountain Path':

"Dr. Manjunath Devappa Naik was born in Kumta, Karnataka in March 1935. He excelled as a young student and completed his medical studies in Bombay. He was a devotee of Bhagavan since his youth and the medical facility he established in Kumta was named 'Ramana Clinic'. A community leader who earned the respect of all around him, Dr. Naik built up the Ramana Seva Sanga at Kumta where he often gave discourses on Bhagavan. Dr. Naik visited Ramanasramam every year for 45 years and often brought Ramana devotees with him from Kumta, leading them in pradakshina around the Holy Hill. During

Bhagavan's Birth Centenary Celebrations he brought a contingent from Kumta to participate in the Interschool competitions.

He translated Arthur Osborne's Ramana Maharshi and the Path of Self Knowledge into Kannada and founded the Kannada magazine Ramana Sandesa. Later in life, he bought land in Kumta and constructed the Ramana Mandiram. His last visit to Ramanasramam was Deepam Day last December and his last celebration at the Mandiram in Kumta was April 4th 2017."

Every year after Deepam on his journey back from Arunachala to Kumta he would make it a point to drop in at RMCL and bless our work here. He has invited Ramananjali twice to Kumta and Honnavar. The second time we also performed the dance ballet 'Sri Ramana Leela' over there.



Ramana's Song of Grace - 23

Revathi Sankar

We are meditating on the songs of praise by different devotees on Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi. We have been talking about one of the first devotees who has received spiritual instructions from Bhagavan Ramana, Siva Prakasam Pillai

Siva Prakasam Pillai's Pada Malai has been extracted as Ramana Pada Pancharatnam – a unique musical piece which has been set to music by Smt. Sulochana Natarajan on the lines of Saint Tyagaraja's Pancharatna Kritis. Smt. Sulochana Natarajan has very carefully selected the verses from Pada Malai and set the ragas of Nattai, Goula, Arabhi, Varali and Sri which are the same as Pancharatnam. We will be meditating on the same.

The first charana of the song goes like this

*nAnArena pAr aniyam viDenDru navilvOn pAdam vAzhgave
tAnAy viTTAl tuyar pOm ennum SANTan pAdam vAzhgave*

-Tamil

*nAn yArendu gamanisu anyava tore ennuva pAdake jaya jayA
tAnAgi biTTare dukha harivudemba sAntana pAda beLagali*

-Kannada

Meaning –

Blessed be the Feet of Him who teaches “Seek ‘Who am I?’ and leave the rest.”

Blessed be the Feet of Him, the Peaceful One, who says that sorrow will go if one ignores it.

Bhagavan shows us that for any problem the best solution will be self – enquiry. Even in the above verse, he has answered to Siva Prakasam Pillai, as to find who you are and leave the rest. If you find who you are, you will be happy and why should you see anything else at all?

There is one instance where a person has a doubt and asks Bhagavan.

Devotee : Have you seen God?

Ramana : Why do you seek to know?

Devotee : If you have seen God I would like you to help me to see God.

Ramana : You say 'I wish to see God'. First tell me who you are.

Devotee : My name is Devadatta Sharma

Ramana : That is your name. But who are you?

Devotee : I have already told that I am Sharma. I am a Brahmin.

Ramana : That is an indication of your caste but who are you?

Devotee : I am a lecturer in a college.

Ramana : That is your profession. But who are you?

Devotee : I am a human being.

Ramana : That is your birth – womb. But who are you?

Devotee : I am a man.

Ramana : That is your gender. I would like to know who it is that desires to meet God?

Devotee : It looks as if I do not know myself.

Ramana : When you are not in a position to understand yourself, how will you be able to understand God? If you want to realize God you must be aware who you are and who it is that desires to know God.

If you see the above conversation, it is very clear that Bhagavan is always asking us to see who we are. The only thing we have to do is know ourselves. We are actually living in a strange world now. We give ourselves to a stranger, that itself is scary, then when that stranger introduces a world full of strangers, that is even scarier. But we submit ourselves to that stranger. Don't we have to know who that stranger is? Don't we enquire about strangers who come into our circle, then how is that we have given ourselves to this stranger – the mind and lead our lives? Obviously, it will end up in sorrow. That is why we are not happy. When we get back to our own place, the heart, without the intrusion of any stranger, then we will surely be happy.

Bhagavan also tells us '*aniyam videndru*', leave everything else. What is everything else here? In the above conversation it is clear that our name, our body, our profession, our caste, our birth womb, anything which we say is ours is not us. So, all that we have to leave. It may be frightening to even say we have to leave all these things. But if we get back to the Self, this will happen automatically and all this we will have but we will not be attached to any of it.

And the very easy method of getting back to the Self is given by Bhagavan Ramana. He says, whenever a thought about anything arises, enquire 'for whom is this thought' and the answer you get is 'for me'. Then ask who this 'I' is. This is the path of self-enquiry. Whenever the mind wanders bring it back to the source by questioning it and merge there. This is self enquiry.

Bhagavan bless me with the practice of self enquiry, so that I may reach the Supreme state as soon as possible.

Thank you Bhagavan
Your attention seeking Child :)

Growing up with Mami

Divya S. and Smt. Sapna Ganesh

Divya



We didn't choose to be here. Bhagavan has chosen us to be here. It is a joy to be here in Bhagavan's presence. Bhagavan chose our family to come to RMCL in 1998, that is 18 years back. I studied in RMCL, I grew up in RMCL, I did everything in RMCL, I am here only because of RMCL.

I used to work with Mami for documentation. She used to give me the notations of songs, those needed to be scanned and the invitations which she had collected from 1970's. She has maintained everything in detail and she used to tell me that all these need to be scanned and kept in the computer. She would ask me how best we can do it. I didn't know much about computers when I came to RMCL in the beginning. Akka taught me how to do scanning. The first thing I learnt in RMCL was scanning. And Mama gave me the work of scanning 'The Call Divine'. I scanned all the volumes of Call Divine. Later Mami asked me to scan all the invitations. Then I started scanning those things and she was so happy. Unfortunately I got a job outside of RMCL. I say 'unfortunately' because I didn't want to be away from RMCL even for a minute. But due to some family circumstances, I had to work outside RMCL. When I went out to work, Mami asked me, whether I won't come to RMCL. I said I will surely come. I had my job in the night shift. So Mami asked me, 'When will you come? If you are working night shift, when will you have time? Don't you have to take some rest also?' I said, 'I will take rest and I will come for at least sometime'. So I could manage the work in such a way that I used to come at around 11.30 – 12.00 and then do the documentation work. She used to give me work for about a week's time. I used to finish work this way about 3 hours, I used to work, go to my job at 5.00 and come back in the night, take rest and come to RMCL by afternoon. After 5 years, I left my office and I could come regularly and I worked with her. I also worked in one audio visual editing

with her. She was very happy, at that time I didn't have a job for a year or so. She said I will give you some stipend for what you have worked. I said, 'Whatever blessing you give that is enough'. She gifted me a pearl set for that, I am still using it and I so proudly say that it was given by Mami for my job. It was a pleasure to work with her. Everyone says you get ego when you get money, fame, but I pray to Bhagavan to not give me any kind of ego, when he has kept me in a better position than before. It is true that you get ego when you get money and fame. I realized this when I went out of RMCL. I see people race for money and fame in this world. But in RMCL, I learn that this is the ego which is rising in me. Whenever it rises, with the presence of Bhagavan, this is realized.

I used to tell akka, I miss RMCL a lot. Akka used to tell me, Bhagavan is there everywhere. He has assigned to you to work outside RMCL, so you should work happily there. I am holding on to that mantra and I am working outside. I am happy that I can come here and work whenever I get time. Thanks a lot for giving me an opportunity to share my experiences with Mami.

Sapna Ganesh



I am here to speak about the documentation work which I did under the guidance of Mami. Mami was a perfectionist. She was so into it that even if there was no power and no lights, even in the dark she could get the notation of the song from the respective cupboard. She was so perfect and so organized. She has organized it so well in different cupboards mentioning songs of different languages, written in different languages. Not only in organizing; she was also perfect in remembering it. We don't have such a memory as Mami had. Some people may organize well, but they forget where different things have been placed. Some people remember well, but may not know how to organize. Mami had a combination of both. It is impossible for anyone to replace Mami. I cannot even express the way she organized things, let alone organize anything like her. She used to ask me to scan a few documents and ask for three copies. She used to keep these in

different places also, One in Chennai, one at home and one in the office. If there were any doubts in the scripts, she used to check it in the script and if any changes were to be made she used to do it then and there so that the work would be done, never postpone any job at any point of time.

I used to come for the Seminars and help Mami for the decorations and the stall. She was so happy when I said I am joining RMCL as a staff member. I remember my first day so well. She said, 'Welcome to the Ramana Family'. We worked so much in sync means, sometimes she would not communicate verbally, if she didn't find me on my day off, she would keep the work on the table, written in detail as to what I have to do. I would finish the work by the time she came and she would be so happy.

Sometimes, people in the office would send me to Mami to get the scripts as they were scared to ask her for that original copy. I also would go to her in fear but Mami would give it to me without hesitation. She used to warn me saying that was the original script, I had to scan it, make a photo copy of the same and give it back to her. She trusted me so much for which I really feel happy. She taught me how to do my job also. She used to check all my scanned documents and sometimes if there was an error in the naming of the file, she used to note it down and give it to me. Every file of hers was kept under lock and key but she trusted me to scan all the documents and give it back to her. Sometimes people in the office used to say you have finished doing this work, when I went and asked Mami, she told me that which you have scanned is English notation, this is Kannada. She knew very well what task she had planned for me.

Time is one factor which she followed so perfectly. If I had not had lunch, she used to say, go eat and come. Her 10 minutes rest means, exact ten minutes. She used to be a perfectionist in time also. I used to wonder, she used to keep writing always. I used to feel astonished about her passion to do Bhagavan's service, documentation of everything that she has done at that age without even taking rest. Till today, even without her physical presence also we are able to find everything without much effort. This is because of her time and energy which she spent on this work of Bhagavan all her life. It is for us to now maintain what she has done and to take it forward from here.

Sri Ramana Sahasranama Stuti¹

302. DURACARA NIVARTAKAH

One who turns people away from wrong conduct.

Though Ramana did not prescribe any system of do's and don'ts his emphasis on the purifying nature of self-enquiry and its pursuit would wean one away from wrong deeds. Wrong conduct being only the result of a lack of discrimination, one would gradually turn away when the discriminative way of life emphasized by Ramana is practiced.

Om durAcAara nivartakAya namaha.

303. DAIVIKAH

The divine person.

Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni had visions in which he repeatedly saw Ramana as the human form of Lord Subrahmanya, traditionally regarded as the foremost teacher of Self-knowledge. Others saw him as the embodiment of Arunachala, regarded as the form of Siva. Ramana was a gnani, and as such he was not different from Iswara, the ordainer of the world.

Om daivikAya namaha.

304. DRAVIDAH

One born in Tamilnadu.

Ramana's birthplace was Tiruchuzhi, near Madurai, in Tamilnadu.

Om drAviDAYa namaha.

305. DVIPANTARA VIKHYATA VAIBHAVAH

One whose name and fame has spread beyond the shores of India to various countries.

When Paul Brunton first had the darshan of Bhagavan he was inspired by his magnetic pull. He became Ramana's instrument in writing the book, 'Search in Secret India' covering some chapters on Bhagavan. This was the starting point of the spread of Ramana's name in Western Countries.

Om dvIpAntara vikhyAta vaibhavAya namaha.

¹ Thousand (1000) Names in Praise of Ramana- Sanskrit composition by Sri Jagadeeswara Shastri. English Translation and Commentary by Sri A.R.Natarajan

306. DVITIYA TITHI SAMBHUTAH

One who was born on the 'Dvitiya' day.

In the Hindu almanac the fortnights are divided into 'Sukla' the bright fortnight leading to the full moon and the dark fortnight 'Krishna' ending in the new moon. The counting is made in reference to this. Ramana was born on the second day of the fortnight leading to the new moon.

Om dvitIya tithi sambhUtAya namaHa.

307. DVAITA BHAVA VIMUKTADHIH

Free of dualities.

When one operates at the mental level there are dualities, arising from the separation of the subject and object, the seer and the seen. When one goes beyond the mental limitations and abides as the Self, the division between the subject and the object ceases. There is only the subject which includes the object. This is the state in which gnanis like Ramana function.

Om dvaita bhAva vimuktadhiye namaHa.

308. DVAITA ADVAITA MATATITAH

One who is beyond the philosophical thoughts of dvaita, dualism, or advaita, non-dualism.

In dvaita philosophy God and the individual are separate and always so. In contrast advaita postulates the identity of the individual and God essentially. Unless one has the unitary experience the discussions would be only theoretical. Ramana had crossed the barriers of philosophy and dialectic discussions based on it.

Om dvaita advaita matAtItAya namaHa.

309. DVAITA SANTAMASAPAHAH

Who removes the dualities.

Opposites are inevitable in the mind. By giving the direct path of self-enquiry Ramana has given a weapon to destroy the mind, or a method for merging the mind in the source. Such merging ends dualities.

Om dvaita santamasApahAya namaHa.

News & Events

Revathi Sankar



























Special Programs in April

At Bangalore, Ramana Shrine Mekhri Circle

7th, 8th 10.00 a.m. to 6.30 p.m. Self-enquiry workshop (Kannada)

14th, 15th Ramana Aradhana Cultural Festival

14th Saturday

11.00 a.m. Sahasranama Puja and Prasada

14th Saturday

07.30 p.m. Ramana Pada Pancharatnam

08.45 p.m. Aksharamanamalai chanting

15th Sunday, 11.00 a.m. Self-enquiry

11.30 a.m. Ramana Sangeetham – a musical feature

By Smt.Poorna Sooraj

29th Sunday, 6.45 p.m. Poornima, Full Circle

Ramana Music by Japamalasara

Aksharamanamalai and Girivalam of Shrine

At Bangalore, Ramana Maharshi Heritage Auditorium, Sanjaynagar

27th Friday 6.45 p.m. Valedictory – Summer Camp 1

29th Sunday, 10.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m. and 4.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.

World Dance Day – Spiritual insights through Indian classical dance

Special Programs in May

At Bangalore, Ramana Shrine Mekhri Circle

20th Sunday, Mother's Day Cultural Festival

11.00 a.m. Self-enquiry

11.30 a.m. Ramana Nrityam – A Bharatanatyam feature

By Ujwal Jagadeesh

29th Sunday, 6.45 p.m. Poornima, Full Circle

Ramana Nritya by Revathi Sankar and Uma Sripathy

Aksharamanamalai and Girivalam of Shrine

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 - Saturday: 5:00pm - 7:00pm at RMHC.

Yoga classes [Contact - Vanaja Rao (9900601012)]

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

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

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

Talks, Parayana and Puja by Sri Chandrashekar (9448839594)

Thursday 6:30pm at RSCR

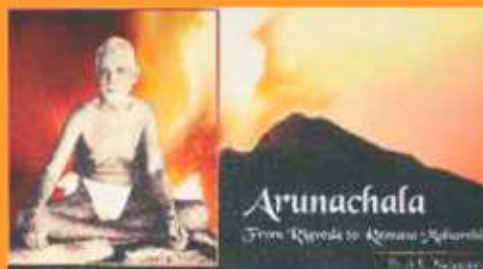
Guru Vachaka Kovai in English

Original : Muruganar

Translation: David Godman

Investigation into Truth

56. Foolish and deceitful mind, you who every day become greatly deluded upon seeing as different from yourself the dream [of the waking state], which occurs as wholly yourself! If you realise your true nature as it actually is, will this world be different from that reality, being – consciousness – bliss?
57. Just as the yolk of the egg of the many – hued green peacock is only one [in colour], the original state of this insubstantial world, which appears to be distorted into teeming multiplicity, is pure and unalloyed happiness. By abiding in the state of the Self, know this truth now, even while that Self, appearing as an effect, takes the form of the world manifesting through the power of maya.



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.