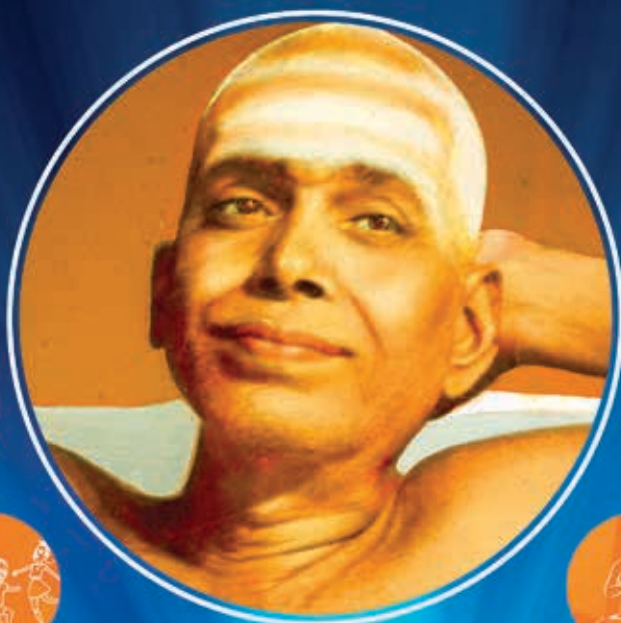
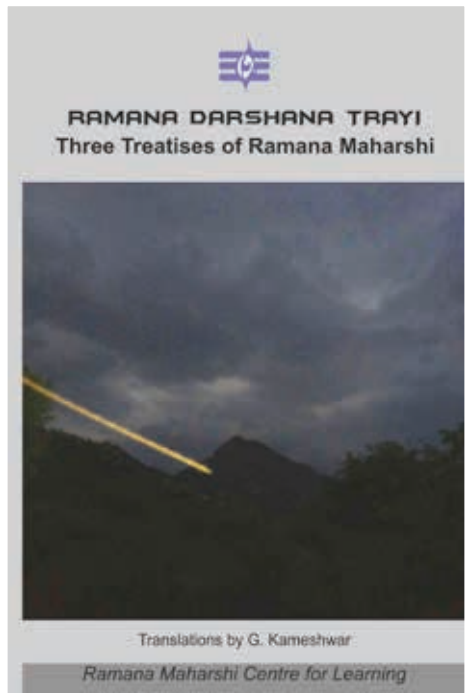
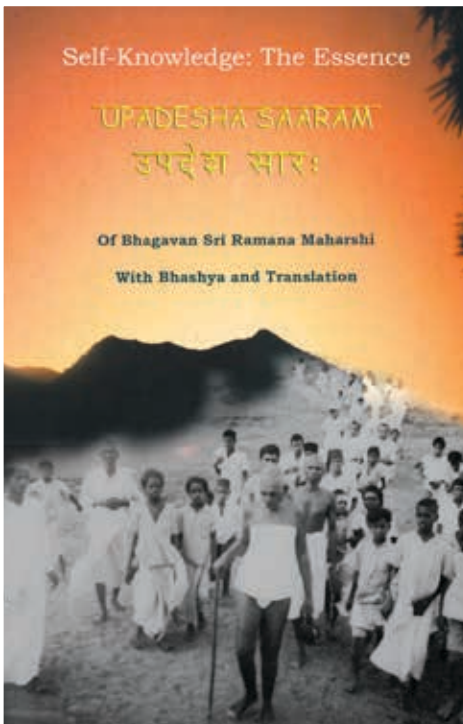
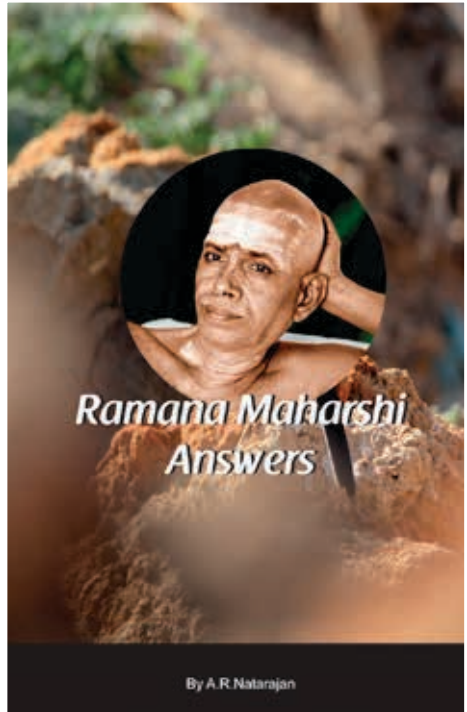
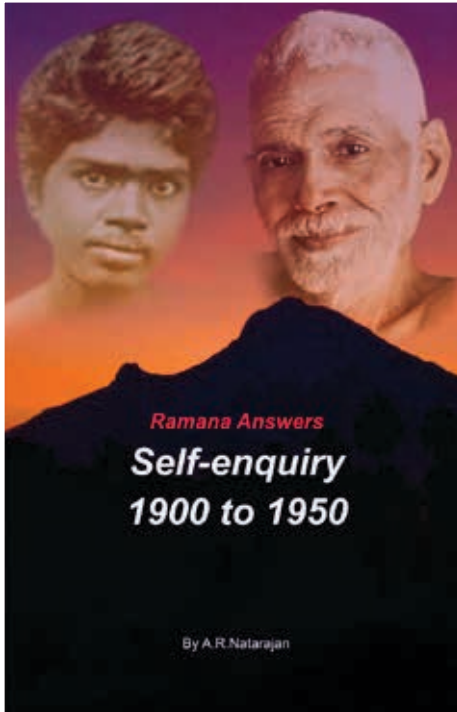


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The Ramana way



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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

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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
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Editorial*Dr. Sarada*

To restore human dignity is the most urgent need of the hour. We have been brought to our knees by the ravages of Nature working through the tiniest of organisms. Recriminations and accusations are abounding. The mindless pursuit of material wealth as the highest goal of life has landed us in these extremely troubled waters. The fear of losing life itself now lurks large. The fear of losing one's dear ones is knocking at the door. The fear of losing a lifetime's saving, and with it everything that one has lived for until now, is a dark possibility. In this extremely painful hour when the world outside is ominous and world within us has become incapable of providing joy and solace, where do we turn?

Even in this darkest hour one look at Ramana is enough to remove our gravest misgivings and help us turn back to ourselves with faith. Just a few moments gazing into his eyes are the balm to our wounded minds. What is the magic that radiates from there? His being and his life show us the pinnacle of human existence, its extraordinary beauty and meaningfulness to itself and to the whole universe. Ramana embodies the clarion call of the voices of wisdom from time immemorial. He also embodies the assurance that the answer called out in those voices is available here and now for us, for every one of us.

His stance, his attire and his life declare beyond doubt the immeasurable grandeur and joy of being. Totally independent of all else in the world is this magnificent joy. Indescribable and infinite is its bounty. And, unbelievable but true, it is ours for the asking.

In case we have lost faith in the voices of wisdom that have brought us this truth time and again, or in case we have not had opportunity to hear those voices, Ramana lives this truth before our eyes for us to see and believe. As a boy of sixteen he leaves home at the call of Arunachala. On arrival he throws away into the tank what little money remains with him, his clothes and even the sweets that remain uneaten. No dependence on what he has carried to provide him with anything whatsoever. The joy of

Being is his, ever. That is Arunachala in its physical manifestation. Whatever the Being provides is more than enough always. Food, clothing, shelter are accepted in the manner given from time to time. There is no asking for anything. His bliss is not just his, it is contagious. It pervades all who come to him even now as then.

This is the human legacy that awaits us. We may not have cared for this legacy up until now but today our situation is very different. Yes, the mighty human world today is reeling under the impact of the tiniest of organisms. Many meditations have arisen from this impact. One of the apparently ironical fallouts is that thrown into isolation perforce, unable to come to terms with being in their own company for hours and days, many have also understood the need for and the value of meditation. Perhaps the most important revelation that the recent events has brought is the fact that we are all connected. We never imagined, did we, that life is one connected thread? Wise ones have intuited this and shared the knowledge with us. Scientific research on which we may prefer to swear today has also reached the same understanding through the process of reason. Everyone and everything in this universe is connected.

Those on whom this recognition has dawned have tried and are still trying to persuade us to fulfil our greater responsibility to the entire universe. They have begun to point out how mankind's increasingly selfish and irresponsible behaviour is probably putting the whole of Earth and all her children at great risk. They are bringing to light in more ways than one how the human race has become callous and is destroying the earth's environment. We find recent records of how many other living beings are returning to their natural habitats once the human invasion has receded.

There has been much focus on needs such as cutting down pollution, developing empathy, recognising as Ramana says, 'What you give to others you give to yourself'. Yet, overnight is the human temperament going to change? Will human greed be completely reversed once we have faced and conquered the present trauma? Looking back at history the probabilities are not very high that selfishness will be wiped out on account of the present experience. It is only until the cards are down that we may remain united.

No doubt for some of us the lessons learnt may be long lasting. Yet, given the propensity of the human mind to primarily protect and satisfy itself, there is a strong likelihood that a majority of the human population will return to its predisposed and habituated ways of life. It is often stated that the deep detachment that comes to a woman suffering from labour pains or that which comes to anyone who has had a recent death in the family does not last. So if we have been blessed with introspection now, we need to start strengthening the inward movement right away and keep working at it lest it fade away. Let us look at our situation again and introspect repeatedly till the seeds of understanding go deep into our minds and sprout as the fruits of wisdom.

There is no doubt that at present in every which way humanity is forced to feel humbled, even ashamed. Along with the fear and desperation at being unable to effectively fight the ravages wrought by the disease, there is a deep sense of sorrow at the deprivation of the human mind. The question arises as to what is the human worth and value. In this hour of deep despondency Ramana restores to us our faith in the human possibility, the possibility of attaining to that experience which can restore harmony, peace and limitless energy to the entire universe. The greatest wonder is that even one human being can bring an absolute turn around in the entire scenario that we are facing today. There is the oft quoted statement of Mahatma Gandhi 'Be the change that you wish to see'. But Ramana makes it simpler still. He says, 'Be'.

Though we see the life of Ramana laying bare the glory of Being before our very eyes, we fail to understand how simple 'being' can bring about the change, the fulfilment that we long for. We are as yet unconvinced that it can help the human situation or that of the earth at large. Isn't this strange? We have found beyond doubt that the illness of one person can now not just make all of us ill but can go to the point of practically wiping off the human race if we are not careful. If that be the case, why do we fail to understand that the health of one person will also result in the health of many or all?

The solution that Ramana is offering is that of total health. This health is not merely physical, it is not just social, it is not

even limited to the mental realm but surpasses and transcends all these. It is a health that is not subject to change, not subject to the vagaries of the environment, a state of health which once attained cannot be taken away by any circumstances.

All other achievements are constantly accompanied by the fear of their reversal. Whether it is physical, material, emotional or intellectual well being, the fear of losing this vantage position is always a lurking shadow. On the other hand, let us look at the insurance package that Ramana is offering. This package covers not just the individual and the immediate family but the entire universe. This package is not for a year or two but for all time to come. It is not merely a package for covering the possibility of ill health and disaster. It is a health scheme, a well being scheme that bestows the supreme well being for no fee other than our wanting it. This is the plan for experiencing and remaining in one's own being that is ever untouched by any object whatsoever and therefore by any illness or calamity whatsoever.

If we are not ready, though, then we prefer to evade the issue. We argue that remaining in the bliss of being is of course good for us but then it would be a selfish pursuit bringing no benefits to the world at large. When we reason thus we would make out that we are all living perfectly altruistic lives with no care at all for our own personal selves. How true is this? How much are we actually living for 'the world' and 'for others'? Can we touch our hearts and say that we are not living for satisfying our own needs, our own desires?

Be that as it may, yet, if we are earnestly looking for the good of the whole world and to our best contribution to this good then here undoubtedly is the answer. Even after knowing how a mere physical illness can move from one individual to the whole world why do we doubt that the most powerful experience of the Self of one person can transform the universe?

Once, Kunju Swami sweetly addressed a group of youngsters. This group had been very playful at Sri Ramanasramam and their elders were naturally worried about the inappropriateness of their playfulness in that place. This was not made known to

Swami before he addressed them but he started of his own accord, 'At Arunachala it does not matter whether one plays or laughs or eats or sleeps. No matter what one does while at Arunachala the contagion of Jnana, the contagion of Self-Knowledge will latch on to the people here'.

'You people talk of contagious diseases,' Kunju Swami continued, 'they are merely physical atoms of those diseases that are passed on from one person to another. At Arunachala there are 'atoms of knowledge' ['jnana anukkal' he called them]. No one who sets foot here can escape them.' In the present world context we could call it the immensely potent virus of Self-knowledge.

Ramana, in his 'Marital Garland of Letters to Arunachala' has addressed Arunachala as the 'mountain medicine'.

"You gave me delusion's cure, I shall be confused no more,
Shine as the medicine mount, Arunachala!"¹

Again, in his Eleven Verses on Arunachala he says:

"...there is on earth a medicine rare which kills without killing anyone who thinks of it but once. Know that this rare medicine is the mighty Aruna mountain, this and nothing else."²

So the cure for our malady is available, readily available. The first question is, 'Do we want to be cured?' Are we looking for a permanent remedy or do we prefer palliatives? Are we worried that in the process of curing our headache this radical remedy will render us headless? But if we have the courage to go in for this treatment, knowing full well that we will all be rendered headless sooner or later in any case, then the next question arises, 'How do we get access to this rare medicine?'

Arunachala is easily accessible to all. Ramana says that we need to but think of it once, that is all. It will cure us of our primary malady, our delusion that 'I am the body' and thereby of all other maladies that come along with it. This is clearly enunciated by Ramana in the very opening of the 'Marital Garland':

1 V76, Arunachala Aksharamanamalai, English translation G.Kameshwar, Ramana Darshana Trayi, Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning, Bangalore

2 V11, Decad on Arunachala, English translation K.Swaminathan, Five Hymns to Arunachala and Other Poems, Ramana Kendra, New Delhi

“Arunachala thought, those who have in their heart,
Their ‘I-Notion’ you uproot, Arunachala!”³

What does it mean to ‘think of Arunachala’ or to meditate on Arunachala in the heart? In the invocation of the book ‘Self-Enquiry’ it is said, ‘Is there any way of adoring the Supreme which is all, except by firmly abiding as that!’ So the true way of adoring Arunachala is to remain as Arunachala, as the Self.

How does one remain as the Self? When Gambhiram Seshayya asks, ‘Master! What is the means to gain the state of eternal bliss, ever devoid of misery?’ Ramana says, ‘Apart from the statement in the Veda that wherever there is a body there is misery, this is also the direct experience of all people; therefore one should enquire into one’s true nature which is ever bodiless, and one should remain as such. This is the means to gaining that state.’⁴

“May I lose attachment, to my body-bag of elements,
And behold forever your splendor, Arunachala!”⁵

This is the only real remedy to our current malady and to all our future maladies as well. It is for us to take this magic potion into our hands and drink to our fill. And, as Sri A.R.Natarajan writes, Ramana is ever waiting to pour us this drink of elixir:

“Seen and unseen he does his job of guiding his disciple’s mind back to the source through his massive silence and his radiant, spear like look. The beauty of this is that he does not reserve his grace only for the fit and chosen. For everyone who is spiritually hungry, for everyone who is ready to surrender to his guidance, he is on call all the twenty-four hours of a day.

The spiritual face of one who has turned to him will be growing in its radiance, in the flowering of a way of life which is steeped in solid silence, in overwhelming bliss.”



3 V1, Arunachala Aksharamanamalai, Ramana Darshana Trayi

4 Self – Enquiry Vichara Sangraham of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai

5 V75, Arunachala Aksharamanamalai, Ramana Darshana Trayi

THE NEW DAWN**A. R. Natarajan***THE HUMAN SIDE OF RAMANA**

*Arunachala, blazing fire of knowledge
Burn away the dross
Illumine my sweet mother
And absorb her at your feet.
What need would there be then for cremation?*

Bhagavan Ramana

The year is 1913. The scene is the Virupaksha Cave. Ramana's mother Azhagammal is on the threshold of death. Raging typhoid has brought her to the brink of it. At that time, she had not come to stay permanently with her son, the universal guru Ramana. That happened three years later. She had not yet become his disciple opening herself to his guidance. The crisis could have happened anywhere. But Arunachala chose to bring her to Virupaksha Cave at this crucial juncture to receive the care and protection of her ascetic son. So we have this poignant scene of a dying mother and a son Ramana, whose sole refuge was Arunachala.

In this situation Ramana turned spontaneously to Arunachala who was everything to him, mother, father, guru and master. We have in Ramana's prayer for his mother's recovery one of the most moving pieces of poetry expressing his love and gratitude to his mother and reminding Arunachala of his responsibility to make his mother Self-aware before death claimed her body.

This prayer is not only special in this sense but it also raises many fundamental questions for us to ponder over and to reflect about their true import. Who is born? Who dies? What is death of the body? What is death of the mind? What did Ramana mean when praying to Arunachala to make his mother's body a temple of God? While considering these issues one has to remember that according to Ramana one's true birth is only when one becomes steadily aware of one's own nature as fullness of consciousness, as the Self.

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

But we will not go into these questions now. For the human side of trans-human Ramana is best seen against this backdrop. There is so much misconception about how a jnani lives after his enlightenment, that one may fail to see that he is also the role model of human love as well. Ramana, the man among men, was also more tender than one's own mother in all his relationships. Used as we are to give and take in each relationship, even with people whom we love, it is impossible for us to comprehend the overflowing, uncaused abundance of Ramana's love. One needs to be stone-hearted so as not to be moved by his loving care to each and everyone who has the rare blessing of coming within the ambit of his grace.

In this scene we have Ramana appealing to his guru Arunachala to save his mother from certain death. For one thing Ramana had lost his individuality in Arunachala and had therefore become totally dependent on its grace. Ramana knew only too well that Arunachala was the embodiment of Siva, the Yogi of Yogis, the ever enlightened one. Consequently he was certain that all siddhis (powers) were waiting on this perfected jnani. Also Siva has the reputation of being 'conqueror of death'. The lord of death dreads most Siva's powerful kick when he forgets Siva's protection of those who have surrendered to him unreservedly and totally.

Apart from that the guru is a friend at all times including of course in the hour of dire need. One's greatest obligation is to one's own mother. For, she has nurtured the body in her own womb and has given birth to it. In this context, human birth is significant because it is an opportunity to become Self-realised. Therefore we find Ramana referring to his mother as 'sweet mother'. We find him requesting Arunachala to ward off death till such time as mother's body becomes a temple of God by her attaining jnana as a result of grace.

One finds this unlimited love of Ramana in all other relationships as well. Whenever he referred to his father Sundaram Iyer, he would recall his humility, his handsomeness and his generosity. When his classmate Rangan came to him for help to save his family at the time of its economic impoverishment, Ramana readily put him at ease and blessed his efforts to get a

suitable job. When a devotee N.N. Rajan's wife fell sick with small pox, Ramana not only made daily enquiries about her health, but also advised as to how her pain and suffering could be alleviated. Whenever any devotee came to offer his respects to him Ramana would first send him to the kitchen insisting that he should have a proper meal.

His love is best seen in his role as Sadguru. For those who are steadfastly practising self-enquiry his guidance is available at every twist and turn of one's spiritual practice. In his mother's case, on the day of her illumination, in May 1922, Ramana was physically present with her for twelve hours. He was guiding her mind back to the source by keeping his left hand on her head (the mind's centre) and his right hand on her heart (the source of the divine current in each one). This was done to ensure that his mother's mind merged into her heart in order that her body may truly be a temple of God.

What Ramana does in his love for his devotees is best described in Muruganar's words:

*A rare, unlooked-for guest he came;
Right in he came, of his own accord,
This Venkata, Lord of my own self,
And ate up the whole of my fond mind
As if it were uncloying nectar.*

Seen and unseen he does his job of guiding his disciple's mind back to the source through his massive silence and his radiant, spear like look. The beauty of this is that he does not reserve his grace only for the fit and chosen. For everyone who is spiritually hungry, for everyone who is ready to surrender to his guidance, he is on call all the twenty-four hours of a day.

The spiritual face of one who has turned to him will be growing in its radiance, in the flowering of a way of life which is steeped in solid silence, in overwhelming bliss.

The 'Talks' as a Guidance to Self Enquiry

N.Nandakumar

Talk 68. (Excerpt).

The professor turned to the lady seated just a little further away from him and interpreted in Hindi to her.

She: What is the difference between meditation and distraction?

M: No difference. When there are thoughts, it is distraction: when there are no thoughts, it is meditation. However, meditation is only practice (as distinguished from the real state of Peace.)

She: How to practice meditation?

M: Keep off thoughts.

She: How to reconcile work with meditation?

M: Who is the worker? Let him who works ask the question. You are always the Self. You are not the mind. It is the mind which raises these questions. Work proceeds, always in the presence of the Self only. Work is no hindrance to realisation. It is the mistaken identity of the worker that troubles one. Get rid of the false identity.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: To "Keep off thoughts" is meditation. To follow thought is distraction. When one keeps off thoughts naturally and without effort (work) that is realisation. If doubt still arises how work (universal meditation/distraction) will go on, Bhagavan assures that it will go on in the Presence of the Self. One is the Self, the Presence, witnessing "work/ meditation" go on automatically.

Q: Is Bhagavan giving two types of liberation - the Self alone IS and the Self is an unaffected witness - according to the maturity of the two seekers?

S: It is according to the responsibility. Some would have been given to meditation of the infinite (Bhuma). Such a one has the responsibility to see no "other". For one genuinely concerned about the rest of the creation, Bhagavan gives the responsibility of unaffected witness.

Q: I still can't understand what you mean by responsibility of the one meditating on the infinite?

S: The one meditating on the infinite would have benefited from non-attachment to many finite objects and groups. Naturally, their responsibility is to be free of all finite objects and groups. For instance, such a one has no right to complain that Ishwara has been unjust or praise that Ishwara has delivered justice.

Talk 68. (Excerpt).

The Professor: Is not the state of non-consciousness close to Infinite Consciousness?

M: Consciousness alone remains and nothing more.

D: Sri Bhagavan's silence is itself a powerful force. It brings about a certain peace of mind in us.

M: Silence is never-ending speech. Vocal speech obstructs the other speech of silence. In silence one is in intimate contact with the surroundings. The silence of Dakshinamurti removed the doubts of the four sages. Mouna vyakhya prakatita tatvam (Truth expounded by silence). Silence is said to be exposition. Silence is so potent.

For vocal speech, organs of speech are necessary and they precede speech. But the other speech lies even beyond thought. It is in short transcendent speech or unspoken words, para vak.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: We hear of heat therapy, radiation therapy, spirit flow correction therapy etc. Bhagavan is giving us the Mowna therapy where the energy of the "I-I" directly corrects the darkness of ignorance within the ego of the sadhaka. All goodness follows like the season of Spring. Naturally.

Will the teacher of Mowna not get egoistic about removing the darkness of ignorance in others?

S: For whom is this thought? Self Attention removes the difference between healing oneself and healing others. Self Attention removes the difference "I" and "mine/others".

Talk 68. (Excerpt).

D: Is there knowledge in Realisation?

M: Absence of knowledge is sleep. There is knowledge in Realisation. But this knowledge differs from the ordinary one of the relation of subject and object. It is absolute knowledge. Knowledge has two meanings:

(1) vachyartha = vritti = Literal meaning.

(2) lakshyartha = Jnana = Self = Swarupa = Secondary significance.

D: With vritti one sees knowledge.

M: Quite so, he also confounds vritti with knowledge. Vritti is a mode of mind. You are not the mind. You are beyond it.

The Lady: There is sometimes an irresistible desire to remain in Brahma-akara-vritti.

M: It is good. It must be cultivated until it becomes sahaja (natural). Then it culminates as swarupa, one's own self.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: Thought (vritti) is knowledge that can be seen (objective, limited). Self knowledge is free of the limitation of division as subject and object. Brahmakara Vritti is the one thought that has replaced all objects. Bhagavan is guiding the sadhaka to hold this till the ego loses its feeling of separateness from the Brahmakara Vritti. Many a sadhaka is asked to hold the Sphurana "I-I". Who is the one feeling the Sphurana? The Bhakta merges into the Sphurana by losing separateness and abides in the Heart of the Sphurana. The Vichari enquires, "For whom is the Sphurana?" "Who am I?" is called Brahmaastra.

Q: Why is it that Sadguru Ramana teaches us to ask "Who am I?" alone from the Ishwara within?

S: To this quest Ishwara answers with no objects or objective thought but by revealing His Heart.

Talk 68. (Excerpt).

Later Sri Bhagavan explained: Vritti is often mistaken for consciousness. It is only a phenomenon and operates in the region of abhasa (reflected consciousness). The knowledge lies

beyond relative knowledge and ignorance. It is not in the shape of vritti. There are no subject and object in it.

Vritti belongs to the rajasic (active) mind. The satvic mind (mind is repose) is free from it. The satvic is the witness of the rajasic. It is no doubt true consciousness. Still it is called satvic mind because the knowledge of being witness is the function of abhasa (reflected consciousness) only. Mind is the abhasa. Such knowledge implies mind. But the mind is by itself inoperative. Therefore it is called satvic mind.

Such is the jivanmukta's state. It is also said that his mind is dead. Is it not a paradox that a jivanmukta has a mind and that it is dead? This has to be conceded in argument with ignorant folk.

It is also said that Brahman is only the jivanmukta's mind. How can one speak of him as Brahman (knower of Brahman). Brahman can never be an object to be known. This is, however, in accordance with common parlance.

Satvic mind is surmised of the jivanmukta and of Iswara. "Otherwise," they argue, "how does the jivanmukta live and act?"

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: The moment one entertains the existence of finite thought alongside the infinite Consciousness, all sorts of explanations, using finite thought, become necessary and valid in explaining that thought. It is called as the satvic thought or that which does not act on its own or is in repose in the Source - the infinite Consciousness. Such a witnessing "I" thought merely witnesses the sensory waking world, witnesses thoughts/ thought forms in the waking-dream world within and witnesses blank in the waking-sleep world. Self Enquiry takes one beyond the need for thought-based explanations. Even the Ishwaratwa assured in Sri Dakshinamurthy Stotram - Unaffected Witness - is not sought. Bhagavan asks the sadhaka to seek the Self alone in self enquiry.

Saddarshanam*Master Nome*

Another Q.: Is the illusory belief in an ego, an individual, just another form of the mind?

N.: Of what is your belief in an ego constituted?

Q.: Awareness of thoughts.

N.: If it is an awareness of thoughts, when thoughts stop, does the ego disappear?

Q.: It seems to.

N.: Then, how does it return?

Q.: I don't know. It comes back when a thought comes back.

N.: The thought must come back for someone.

Q.: It comes back for me.

N.: Who starts thinking these thoughts? Is it that the unborn, infinite Self starts to think these thoughts, or is it somebody else?

Q.: Somebody else.

N.: That is the culprit. You need to find him. When you say that you have thoughts, that could be said to be the effect of the ego, but it is not proof of the ego's existence. Who is the "I"? What makes up the "I" who says, "I have a mind, I have my experience, I have my thoughts, I am aware, and sometimes I am unaware." Who is that? What is his nature? It cannot be the body. The body is much further down the road, so to speak.

Q.: Whoever that is, he is one step up from any thought or object, and he is aware of these.

N.: But he is lost or becomes entangled in those thoughts or objects, does he not?

Q.: Yes. He believes in them.

N.: He becomes sunk in them, mixes himself up with them, and feeds on them, but who is he? What is his real nature? Pull away the thoughts and the body and see what is left of him.

Q.: There is nothing there.

N.: You must become very sure that there is nothing there. All the wise sages and scriptures declare your nature to be the infinite Brahman, pure Being – Consciousness - Bliss, the Unborn and the Immortal, the Perfect Fullness, which never undergoes any kind of entanglement, let alone any kind of suffering. This is the Perfection. Then, there is this fellow who is rummaging around in the thoughts. Whenever he shows up, problems of some kind or another happen, and, whenever he disappears, everything is just fine. So, you must deal directly with this mischief - maker, and the best way of dealing with him directly is to inquire into his very nature. Who or what exactly is he? If you say that you cannot see him, just be thorough in your not-seeing.

Q.: He is very slippery.

N.: He seems as if he is slippery, like trying to hold a fish in your hands; it slides out. When, though, you actually inquire, he is not even slippery. The experience is more like walking straight into a mirage to find out whether there is any water in it in which to drown. There is nothing slippery about it at all.

bhAvEhamah sarvamidam vibhAti
layEhamo naiva vibhAti kincit |
tasmAd aham rUpam idam samastam
tan mArgaNam sarva jayAya mArgaha || 26 ||

On the becoming of the “I,” all this shines (appears).

On the dissolution of the “I,” not anything, indeed, shines (appears).

Therefore, of the form of “I” is this completely.

That search is the way (path) (Or: the search for That is the way) for victory over all.

N.: If “I” arises, everything arises or appears. Everything includes all duality, all the triads, the world, and the mind. If the “I” subsides, or dissolves, everything disappears. “Therefore, of the form of “I” is this completely.” All of the “this,” in one’s experience is just this “I” in another guise. It rises with “I,” and it ceases with “I.” Its apparent existence, its seeming appearance, is utterly dependent on “I.” So, it is only “I” conceived as “this.” One “I” is both the “I” and the “this.” Therefore, laying out the path, Sri Ramana declares that the search to know the nature of the “I,” “is the path for victory over all.”

What is the significance of “victory”? It means Liberation, which is freedom from all bondage associated with anything whatsoever. If there is “I,” there is something by which that “I” can be bound. If the “I” subsides, due to realization of the true Existence, there is no “I” and there is no “this.” Where there is no “this” and no “I,” who is to be bound and by what?

Whichever way you might move through the experiences that can be described as “this,” from the subtle thoughts of the mind to the forms of the world, in the end, you must come around to knowing yourself for Self-Realization, or Enlightenment, or Liberation, as we call it. That which is to be accomplished at the end should be done even at the beginning. Understand all “this” to be “I.” Know the root of the “I.” Know the nature of the “I.” This is the formless path to realize the Formless. There is nothing objective in it, and, therefore, no possibility of any remaining bondage.

Everything experienced, of whatever kind, every kind of limitation, and every kind of object, is dependent on “I.” “I” becomes, “I” arises, and everything else appears. If the “I” dissolves, nothing appears. Only Being-Consciousness-Bliss remains. The entirety of duality, the entirety of maya or samsara, is entirely dependent on the “I.” So, loss of the “I” by any means is most important and most blissful.

“Of the form of ‘I’ is this completely.” If all the “this” aspect of your experience is dependent on “I” and is never experienced apart from the “I,” we know that the “this” really has no existence whatsoever. If it is an utterly dependent existence, it has no self - existence. It is just the “I” in the guise of “this.” You, yourself, appear as “I,” and then, as “I,” you, yourself, appear as all “this.” Dissolve the “this” into the “I” by knowing its nature, and dissolve the “I,” by knowing its nature, into the original, unborn, uncaused Being-Consciousness-Bliss.

“Of the form of ‘I’ is this completely.” You have never experienced anything but yourself. Now, know your Self as you truly are, not as “I,” and all rising and ceasing cease. “That search is the way,” or “The search for that is the way.” For what is the search? The search is for “I.” This is the path to the vision of Reality. It is the way to attain Liberation from all of the imagined bondage. Sri Ramana proclaims that it “is the way for victory over

all.” It is a spiritual victory, in which bondage is permanently put to an end forever. It is victory over illusion. It is victory over birth-and-death. It is victory over all attachments.

If you want to renounce attachments, the way to be victorious in renunciation is to know the nature of the “I,” to know the renouncer. “I” vanishing, all “this” vanishes, and attachment is utterly gone. If you desire victory over suffering, understand the nature of the “I,” the sufferer. Searching for the nature of the “I,” the sufferer, the individual, vanishes, and the “this” aspect, which is the suffering, also vanishes. The very potential to suffer vanishes. This is victory over all.

That which rises will set. If something is born, it will perish. How can you attain victory over death? In the Vedas, such victory over death is mentioned and illustrated by various stories. What is this victory over death? It is the Realization of your unborn nature. With the rise of “I,” there is duality. With the rise of “I,” there is birth and death. Where there is no rise of “I,” where even the potential for an “I” has been eliminated, there is no cause for birth or rebirth. That is victory over death in the immortal, blissful Existence that you are.

Then, there is no maya, or illusion. “Victory over all” is a grand spiritual victory. When all is conquered, there is nothing left of the conquered. It is a unique kind of victory. Your aim is to attain happiness, and that aim has been pursued for so long. You reach the attainment of happiness by knowing the nature of the “I,” for, with its individuality vanishing, its real nature as the Bliss - Consciousness, which is pure Being, remains. It is this victory to which we refer when we say, “Jaya Guru.”

Q.: If there is the appearance of anything outward in the mind, I should notice the root cause of such as the ego.

N.: In your own experience, from the subtlest thought to a sensed object, does anything exist independent of the “I” that knows it?

Q.: Ultimately, the knowing part does not seem to come from what I believe in.

N.: That is true. The light, the knowing, derives from pure Consciousness, but pure Consciousness has neither an “I” nor a “this.”

Q.: But once it is differentiated?

N.: Once it seems differentiated, you seem to occupy a separate identity. Then, “this” is also perceived. Sri Bhagavan points the way inward to be free of this differentiated delusion. See that all of “this” is only “I.” It rises and sets with “I,” depends upon “I,” and is never apart from it. It is only the “I” in the guise of “this.” So, it is “I” and “I.” All is just “I.” Trace this “I.” The known is absorbed in the knowing, the knowing is absorbed in the knower, and the knower is only pure Consciousness and not an individual at all. From here, there is no separate knowing, knower, or known.

Q.: Because Consciousness doesn't have any attribute.

N.: Consciousness has no “I,” and it has no “this.” The Self, or Being, is not born. In infinite Consciousness, there is no “I.” The “I” has not come to be. Likewise is it with “this.”

Another Q.: Is the “I” that knows a pseudo-subject? The pseudo-“I” does not know what is.

N.: It is a pseudo-subject that is composed of two parts. One part is the Reality, the identity, which is the Light of Consciousness. That is of the real Self. The other pseudo-part of it is the assumed individuality that marks it off as a knower.

Q.: Yes, because there is only one subject.

N.: If there is only one subject, and it is the infinite Reality, it is all, in all, at all times, without any change.

Q.: There is no “this,” then.

N.: “This” is not.

Q.: I understand.

N.: Our bondage, our sorrow, and our difficulty, at any time, are due only to the ego-notion. Wake up from the ego-notion. This enables you to be completely transcendent of “this,” whatever it may be in the world. We are not bound by anything, and there is no cause for our suffering or sorrow. Therefore, the Gita says, “The wise do not grieve.”

Upadeshasaram

Ujwal Jagadeesh

Bandha muktyatItam param sukham

The state of bliss beyond description, transcends bondage and liberation

Bondage and freedom are opposites. One who is bound desires to be free, because one thinks happiness lies in freedom. Ramana in a verse of Arunachala Ashtakam says even the bird which flies freely in the sky attains peace only when it comes back to rest in it's nest. Between bondage and freedom, what is the source of great joy?

Ramana Maharshi narrates a story of Sundaramurthy Nayanar from Periyapuranam.

Sundaramurthy was born in the sacred place Tirunavalur in Thirumunaippadi region in the Siva Brahmana caste called Adi Saivam, to a Siva priest named Chadayanar alias Sivacharya and his wife Isaijnaniyar. He was named by his parents as Nambiyarurar.

The king of that place, Narasinga Muniyar was fascinated by the charm of this boy who was playing in the street and requested that he would take care of him in his palace. The boy was given the best of education and comforts. When he came of age, his marriage with the daughter of a relative by name Chatangavi Sivacharya was decided upon, and invitations were issued to all relatives for the function. On the day of the grand marriage when Sundaramurthy was seated on the wedding seat in the decorated pandal according to the usual custom, drums were sounded and the arrival of the bride was awaited.

Just then, an old Brahmin approached the pandal, and announced, "Sirs, this boy is my servant. I have with me the deed of service executed by his grandfather in my favour." Sundaramurthy replied, "Oh! Mad man, Enough! We are hearing for the first time that a brahmin is the servant of another brahmin. Go, get away!" The brahmin replied, "I am neither a mad man nor a devil. I am not offended at your remarks. You have not understood me at all. Stop this childish talk and come and serve me." Sundaramurthy

then said, "Show me the deed." "Who are you to decide after seeing the deed?" said the old man. "If the people in the audience see the deed and agree that it is true, you should begin to serve me." Sundaramurthy got very angry, pounced upon the man to snatch the deed from him and tore it into pieces. The old man caught hold of Sundaramurthy and began shouting. The marriage guests got agitated, quickly separated the two and finally decided that the case could be sorted out in the old brahmin's village of Thiruvennainallur. Accordingly the brahmin walked ahead and Sundaramurthy and all the other brahmins followed him.

As soon as they all reached the Council of brahmins in the other village, the cunning old brahmin filed his claim petition before them to the effect that the boy Nambiyarurar tore up the service deed in his favour executed by his grandfather. The brahmin said, "Sir! What he tore up is only the duplicate copy; the original deed is with me" and the old man took it out from the folds of the cloth around his waist, and showed it to them. The document read as follows: 'I, Adi Saiva by caste and Arurar by name, residing in Thiruvennainallur village have executed this deed of service gladly and out of my own free will, undertaking to do service by me and by my successive descendants, to Pitthan (mad man) residing in Thiruvennainallur village. (Sd.) Arurar." The witness to the deed were those very councilors and they all identified and confirmed that the signatures were their own.

The councilors asked Sundaramurthy to verify if the handwriting in the deed was his grandfather's. The man pretending to be a brahmin said, "Sir! This is a mere boy. How can he identify his grandfather's writing? If there is any other paper available containing his grandfather's writing, please send for it and compare." They all agreed, and the relatives of Sundaramurthy searched, and produced a paper containing his grandfather's handwriting. The councilors compared the two papers and confirmed that the writings in the two papers were identical. They told Sundaramurthy, "Boy! There is no way of escape for you. You have lost. It is your duty to do service according to this old man's orders." Sundaramurthy was stupefied at this and said that he would obey the order, if fate had decreed that way.

They had compassion on the boy, and had still some doubts about the brahmin, and questioned him, "Sir! This deed

says that you belong to this very village. Can you show us where your ancestral house and property and all that are?" The brahmin pretended surprise, and said, "What! You are all of this village, so learned, so intelligent, so elderly – does not even one among you know my house? How surprising are your words! Come with me then!" So saying, he led the way, and they all followed. They saw the brahmin enter Siva's temple called 'Thiruvarul Thurai', and they were stupefied.

Sundaramurthy thought, "The brahmin who made me his servant has entered the temple of my God Parameswara! What a wonder!" So thinking, he followed alone eagerly the footsteps of the brahmin and entered the temple with great desire and shouted, "Oh brahmin!" At once Lord Siva appeared in the company of Goddess Parvathi, seated on the sacred bull, and said, "My son! You are Aalaala Sundara, one of my pramatha ganas (chief attendants). You were born here as a result of a curse. You requested me to have you as My own, wherever you might be, even during the period of the curse. I therefore made you my servant here."

As soon as Sundaramurthy heard those words of the Great Lord he was overjoyed like the calf that heard the mother-cow's call. With his voice trembling with emotion and eyes filled with tears of joy, he prostrated, and sang of him as Pithan, 'Mad man' as per his command.

Sundaramurthy through this divine play realized his divinity and ever being in servitude of his Lord, ecstatically sang the Lord's glory traveling to various sacred places. These songs are the expression of the bliss that transcended both bondage and freedom. Ramana says this state of great bliss can be experienced by each one of us by realizing our divinity here and now.

bandha muktyatitam param sukham |
vindatlha jlvastu daivikah ||

The one who is aware of his divinity, while in the body, is in a state of bliss beyond description, transcending bondage and liberation. This is here and now.

Some moments of Vichara - 3

G Kameshwar

(This is in continuation of the article carried in the previous issue. In that, a Satsangha in the form of a Facebook post and related comments were shared. The post was 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.

This post was followed by a conversation in the form of comments. The conversation was among friends of the author, classmates from engineering college. Here, in this second part of the Vichara, we continue with sharing some excerpts from the comments that followed the post)

*

Comments, continued:

Sathiya: Here's the excerpt from Sri Ramana that I alluded to. It is from 'Talks with Ramana Maharshi', Talk number 17. Here goes:

(‘D’ refers to Mr. W. Y. Evans-Wentz, an English research scholar of Oxford University, who had come on a visit, with a letter of introduction from Paul Brunton. ‘M’ refers to Ramana Maharshi.)

D.: God being immanent in all, one should not take life of any kind. Is society right in taking the life of a murderer? Can the State do so either? The Christian countries begin to think that it is wrong to do so.

M.: What is it that prompted the murderer to commit the crime? The same power awards him the punishment. Society or the State is only a tool in the hands of the power. You speak of one life taken away; But what about innumerable lives lost in wars?

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

D.: Quite so. Loss of lives is wrong anyway. Are wars justified?

M.: For a realised man, the one who remains ever in the Self, the loss of one or several or all lives either in this world or in all the three worlds makes no difference. Even if he happens to destroy them all, no sin can touch such a pure soul. Maharshi quoted the Gita, Chapter 18, Verse 17 - "He who is free from the notion of ego, whose intellect is unattached, though he annihilates all the worlds, he slayeth not, nor is he bound by the results of his actions."

D.: Do not one's actions affect the person in after-births?

M.: Are you born now? Why do you think of other births? The fact is that there is neither birth nor death. Let him who is born think of death and palliatives therefore.

Sathiya: Dear **Murali**, Let's postpone the discussion to f2f someday we meet.

Muralidharan: Yes **Sathiya** . I am sure I can take you for granted and hence the plain speak. As I said earlier, the question remains unresolved as are the ills of the society. I remain essentially an observer unconvinced entirely of any one position. Points best discussed in person as suggested by you.

Sathiya: **Murali**, plain speaking is perfectly fine with me. We cannot explore truth without that.

Sathiya: I will leave with one point to ponder. We need to distinguish between the societal path (I want to change the society) and the spiritual path (I want to understand how the universe operates). The Non-Self/Ego has a great role in the societal path while it has no role (in fact, the path seriously begins only when you set it aside) in the spiritual path. Because the Non-Self/Ego is involved, the societal path involves views, positions and related intellectual mongering, and it is all about placing constraints (Do not kill, etc.).

The spiritual path is about understanding the truth of the universe; there are no constraints whatsoever; Views, positions, etc. have no place as they are only hindrances.

If every human being steps out of the Non-Self/Ego and takes to the spiritual path, automatically there would be no wars, no killings - and note: this peaceful living will happen in spite of the fact that no constraints are placed - No one has a need to say, "Do not kill." On the other hand, in the societal path, if you enforce the "Do not kill, else you will be punished" (punishment is another can of worms) rule in all forms (no wars, no State hanging of murderers, etc.) you are only bound to increase confusion. The abundance of Non-Self/Egos out there is sufficient to cause chaos. Spiritual greats would never utter "You have to do this or should not do this" kinds of statements. In their statements, Bhagavan Ramana and Mahaperiyava (with their full view of how the universe operates) are certainly not recommending killing; they are only trying to say "Do not go in the route of placing Non-Self/Ego based constraints." If you see the question placed to Bhagavan Ramana, the questioner starts with an intellectual view/position: ""God being immanent in all, one should not take life of any kind." In his reply, Bhagavan Ramana is essentially trying to say, "Don't place such a constraint; the universe doesn't operate that way." You can't say "kuRai ondrumillai" and also say "Killing is wrong."

All my statements earlier are from the spiritual point of view.

There is another important hidden point in Bhagawan Ramana's reply and this verse from the Gita he points to:

"He who is free from the notion of ego, whose intellect is unattached, though he annihilates all the worlds, he slayeth not, nor is he bound by the results of his actions."

Nowhere is it said that one has to be fully Self-realized in order to act as mentioned; one only has to operate from outside the Non-Self Ego, which is not hard. This means that each one of us has the ability to operate in that Non-Ego mode even without being Self-realized. If one understands and deeply absorbs this, tremendous spiritual changes are possible.

Kamesh: To add some confusion to this clarity... There is a force in operation that is beyond our understanding. It works on its own, on you, through you, despite you, because of you. You may , at times, recognize its workings, although not understand it. The complexity it handles is indeed infinitely impossible to figure out. When you traverse the 'journey of deductions' (tyaagam), the noise of the non-self starts reducing, and you will be able to go with the Force, more and more, without needing to 'carry the luggage on your head while traveling in that train'.

That Force is the power of the real Self, call that by any name.

In Adhyatma Ramayana, every character is He. But is seen with absolute clarity as Rama, for there is zero non-self in Him. And the Force is Sita.

Good morning, and a happy new year. Wishing all of us 2020 vision :)

Jay Shankar: Thank you **Sathiya, Kamesh** and **Muralidharan...** this was a good calming discussion. I was travelling and spent some time with CV who was articulating the same (without seeing this post or comments).

This does show that FB can lead to good discussions.

It also shows that imbibing any part of Adhyatma Ramayana will lead one along a good path

Sathiya: Jay Shankar, Kamesh, Muralidharan Thanks for the discussions and the pointer to Adhyatma Ramayana. I will read Kamesh's treatise.

Power of the Word

Sanjay Lohia

Your effort is bondage

- Make no effort either to work or to renounce. Your effort itself is bondage.
- What is destined to happen will happen. If you are destined to work, you will not be able to avoid it. You will be forced to engage in it.
- So leave it to the higher power. It is really not your choice whether you renounce or retain.



Getting T'here

J.Jayaraman, Granthalaya, Sri Ramanasramam

Yes. Getting t'here to hear

To start to see where a

Mere isness is

With a 'meum' and "mera" ¹

Memories

When Seen as oily grease

Riding on

An asparsh² breeze

Arises the dawn

'Reflecting' on

The samashti³ Silence when

We as vyashti:

Causal's sprout

Our backpack: the self-made
doubt

The hita⁴shatru: noose

That maya the magic fuse

As agyaan

Makes use

To fake of the unborn,

Death!

And toss in vain

Seeking brahmic bliss' gain

Using its tongue of transient
speech

To reach that mauna:

The triputi's His(s)¹¹

Its bhuma wealth as well
sauna¹²

An "is" ever beyond

A "cont(r)actual" ¹³ reach.

¹ hindi. "mine"

² asparsha = uncontactable, as formless it lacks edge.

³ the cosmic consciousness, the experiencing taken as a whole, ie foreground=background experience= in singular

⁴ hita shatru: betrayer from the beginning of friendship

^{11.1} the triputi is His= suttarivu, the knower-knowledge-known triad, belongs to, is an emanation from, the Unmanifest Maya.

^{11.2} the triputi's hiss = the bite of duality morphing Traffic and Sunset into wheelers and wave components (vyashti).

Morphing a mere appearance of shadowy multiplicity into a horror movie of bhedas, differences.

¹² the brahman is itself the sphurana, spanda, as well as a sweaty sauna kept steaming on interpretation, speech.

^{13.1} = a contra actual reach:

Touching, "making" contact, ie imaging as an event is contra to the Omnipresent which has no edge for any sensor to "make" contact

^{13.2} = a contractual reach.

the intellect propped by memory has no Shylockian claim to a contractual lien on imaging even its origin.

^{13.3} = a contactual reach.

the formless lies ever beyond a contact-type relationship with Intellect, buddhi, suttarivu, aham-vritti, "I-thought".

You are my Light

Charumathi Neelkanth

I would like to narrate to you an instance of Bhagavan's grace taking care of my sister-in-law (my husband's sister). She grew up at Tiruvannamalai with my father-in-law's elder brother who had adopted her as they had no children of their own. Of course this meant that she would go to the Asram almost every day for darshan of Bhagavan. From her childhood she had a great desire to be well educated. As she had grown tall even when she was a girl of twelve her parents stopped sending her to school thereafter. In due course she got married. Unfortunately she lost her husband when she was very young. After she became widowed she somehow managed to continue her education to some extent and she got a good job as well.

Just at the time when she was to join duty her father (by adoption), Appu Sastri, who I had earlier mentioned was at Tiruvannamalai, was struck by a paralytic attack. She was in a dilemma whether to take up the job or to serve her ailing father. Finally after some emotional conflict she chose the latter. She never could get a job thereafter. She then tried to claim the gratuity amount that was due to her husband. But the papers were not being cleared. She sold all her jewels and spent all the savings she had giving bribes to people to get her the amount but it was all in vain. Finally by Bhagavan's Grace someone referred us to a particular government official. I went with my sister-in-law to meet him. He was kind enough to say that something could be done provided we could produce the original letter pertaining to the gratuity amount to be received. She then recalled that if such a letter had come it should have to Sri Ramanasramam as that was the address she had given, saying she was care of Ramanasramam. The letter should have come in 1949. When we met the said government official the year was 1964.

As she would regularly visit the Asram every day even after Bhagavan's mahasamadhi everyone in the Asram was familiar with her. So my sister-in-law went and met the Asram authorities and told them about her situation. They assured her that they never destroyed any of the old correspondence to the Asram and that

they would surely search for the letter and hand it over to her if they found it. Surely it was Bhagavan's Grace that they did find the letter, they gave it to her and she got her gratuity amount of Rs.90,000/- which was indeed a handsome amount in those days. It was without doubt Bhagavan who took her to the right person when the time was ripe for it and also made her remember that the letter would have come to the Asram. Thereafter the whole process of getting the gratuity sanctioned was also Bhagavan's doing. My sister-in-law then divided the amount equally for her grand children and kept it in fixed deposits in the bank to be used for their higher education. In this way her unfulfilled desire for her own education and her love for the pursuit of academics came to fruition by Bhagavan's Grace.

In my own life I now recall an extremely traumatic event. This happened in 1952. Many had warned my father that giving me away in marriage at that juncture would not augur well for him. However he was adamant as he was convinced that this alliance had Bhagavan's blessings. Immediately after the marriage when he went back to his office he found that his workers had run away after robbing him of all the cash that he had kept there. He did not file a case against them. He said, 'Maybe I did not pay them enough, that is why they have taken what was due to them.' However, his business was practically ruined. It was difficult for him to take care of the upkeep of the family.

In this scenario I had my first child and then almost immediately became pregnant for a second time. My father took me to his place for the delivery. But all my relatives there taunted me that I had no concern for my father's financial condition and had come as one more big burden on him. What did I know about family planning or not becoming pregnant a second time? There I was, in the ninth month of my pregnancy with not a friend to turn to. My father did not say anything but all the others including my own mother would scold me severely for being an additional burden to him. In that condition one day I developed high fever.

As I lay in bed in that condition I began to feel that there was no point in living any more. 'Why should I live when even my mother feels I am a burden on this earth?' I thought. I began to pray fervently to Bhagavan to 'take me away' to 'take me to himself'. I was weeping bitterly and praying in this manner when

I fell asleep. Suddenly Bhagavan actually appeared before me in my dream as vividly as I would have seen him in front of my eyes. I can hardly say it was a dream. On seeing him I continued my desperate plea to take me away with himself.

Bhagavan said with great compassion, 'You must not think about going away. If you die do you know who will be disconsolate?' 'Who will worry about my going? Everyone will be relieved that the burden is no longer there', I replied. 'Not so,' said Bhagavan, 'Your father may grieve for ten days. Or your brother may weep for a few days. Thereafter they will get reconciled to the fact of your absence and carry on with their lives. But your mother who has borne you for ten months in her womb can never overcome her grief. She may be appearing to blame and curse you on account of the circumstances. But don't have any doubts about the fact that it will be impossible for her to bear the loss. Is it right on your part to give her such grief? You may not be able to give her any joy now but should you give her great suffering? So do not think of dying until your mother is alive, take the thought away from your mind.' He said this and left.

He spoke to me so naturally. On hearing this from Bhagavan I did not think of death any more. 'I want to die but Bhagavan wants me to live so I must accept his decision. As Bhagavan has said in Upadesa Saram the fruits of our action are given by God. So let things take their course,' I thought. I must say I recovered from my fever as well.' She laughs sweetly as if to say 'That's obvious otherwise I wouldn't be here to tell the story'. Then she continues, 'That was the last time Bhagavan spoke to me. Prior to that no matter what the problem was, no matter what was troubling me, if I went and stood in front of Bhagavan and if he looked at me it would be as if everything was wiped away from my mind. While going I would be so full of sorrow. While returning the mind would be light. 'Is that what was troubling me?' would be the question in the mind'. She said this, reiterating what she had said a little while earlier.

'People would say they wished to visit various places. 'We want to go here, we want to go there' they would say. They would want to attend weddings and festivities. But I had no desire to go anywhere in the world except to the Asram. Where else could one experience such great peace?'

*** To be continued ***

Living Free
Dr.Ambika Kameshwar

It's hard times
For everyone
But hang in there
dear friend
With Prayers in our heart
And Faith in God
Let's make the effort
To Transcend
Maybe The Master
Wishes us to know
That this experience
is indeed for us to grow
Breaking free of the shackles
With which we ourselves bind
Let's march towards a new dawn
Leaving our past behind
now is the time
To become truly free
And to realise indeed
That All is He

In The Master's Service
Ambika Kameshwar

Sri Ramana Ashtottara Shata Namavali

Sri Viswanatha Swami

31. TAPAKSAPITA SARVANGAHA

One whose every limb is emaciated by Tapas.

The state in which Ramana was when he arrived at Tiruvannamalai is aptly described in Tiruvacagam which says “There is no consciousness of the body, only awareness of the passage of night or day. The fullness of bliss alone exists. In the first two years after his arrival while staying at the Aruchachaleswara temple, at Gurumurtam, and the Mango grove, Ramana remained in a state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi. He had no consciousness of the body. Due to total neglect at that time his body had become mere skin and bones. Sivaprakasam Pillai has described this intense tapas of Ramana in his ‘Ramana Caritra Ahaval’.

Om tapakSapita sarvAngAya namaha

32. PHULLAMBUJHA VILOCANAHA

With eyes of lotus in full bloom.

Since he was immersed in nirvikalpa Samadhi Ramana’s body was neglected. Yet to the surprise of all his face radiated charm and grace poured forth his eyes. This has also been described by Sivaprakasam Pillai in his ‘Ramana Caritra Ahaval’.

Om phullAmbuja vilOcanAya namaha.

33. CANDRIKASITA HASA SRI MANDITANANA MANDALAHA

Whose beautiful face is lit up by the cool moonlight of a smile.

Just as moonlight removes the darkness of night and heat of the sun, Ramana’s smile ends the darkness of the mind and sufferings of the world. Ramana’s face had a natural beauty of its own which was enhanced by his smile. It would still the mental waves of those present. Many poets who have enjoyed the wonderous smile have praised it to their hearts’ content. While Ramana was observing mauna it was only the charm of his smile and gracious glance which filled the devotees with happiness. The song beginning with ‘Ahattamarai Malar Midurai’ describes how by

a mere smile Ramana awakens one to the awareness and bliss of Self-abidance.

Om candrikAsitahAsa Srl maNDitAnana maNDaIAya namaha

34. CUTAVATYAM SAMASINAHA

Calmly seated in the Mango grove.

Ramana was residing for some time in the mango grove adjacent to the famous Samadhi temple of Gurumurtam. Since he was in the lofty state of Self-abidance it is said he was seated as the embodiment of calmness. It was here that on discovering that he was now a sadhu at Tiruvannamalai, Ramana's uncle Nelliappa Iyer came to meet him and persuade him to return home. Of course the attempt proved futile. Here Ramana enjoyed the mango fruits first tasted by squirrels and bats and called it their 'prasadam'. He said such fruits were the tastiest always. Ramana read the Malayalam text Adhyatma Ramayana in order to help his devoted attendant Palaniswami with his daily reading of it. He also explained the verses to Palaniswami.

Om cUtavATyAm samAsInAya namaha.

35. CURNITAKHILA VIBHRAMAHA

Who has conquered all illusions.

Not only was Ramana in a state free from any kind of illusion but he also gave the experience of that state to all those who came to him.

Om cUrnitAkhila vibhramAya namaha.

36. VEDA VEDANTA TATTVAJNAHA

Aware of the essence of Veda and Vedanta.

Veda and Vedanta repeatedly affirm the Self to be Existence, Knowledge and Bliss. Ramana discovered this state for himself and remained steadily in it.

Om veda vedAnta tattvajnAya namaha.

37. CINMUDRI

Symbol of Knowledge.

What the Vedanta describes as 'Not This', 'Not This', cannot be described in words by anyone. It can only be experienced by being 'That' in a state of true silence of the mind, mauna. It is easily grasped by ripe practitioners of the spiritual path. This is called 'Cinmudra' or the symbol of Knowledge. The primal Guru Dakshinamurti taught the highest knowledge to Sanaka and others through his potent silence. Ramana has made us understand the significance of his teaching through silence.

Om cinmudriNe namaha.

38. TRIGUNATIGAHA

Transcending the three mental qualities.

All creation is subject to the sway of three mental characteristics, rajas, activity, tamas, sloth, and sattva, equipoise. Ramana had transcended all these three mental characteristics. The 'I'-thought has to arise first before any mental movement starts. It is only in that state in which the 'I'-thought or ego does not arise that one is free of such mental modes. Those abiding in that state are praised as 'Jivanmuktas' 'Sthita prajnas' and 'Gunatitas'. Their minds are a void and hence no 'gunas' of the mind can touch them.

Om triguNAtigAya namaha.

39. VIRUPAKSA GUHAVASAH

Dweller in Virupaksa Cave.

The Samadhi of Virupaksa Deva is situated in the Arunachala Hill. The one with the third eye, Virupaksa, is one of the names of Siva. Ramana lived in this cave for approximately sixteen years from 1900 to 1916. It is only from this cave that his supreme state of Knowledge began to spread widely. Many advanced seekers of Truth have reached his feet at this place and found the fulfilment of their sadhanas. Gambhiram Seshayyar, Siva Prakasam Pillai, Ganapati Muni, Humphreys and Mastan are a few of the names that come to mind immediately. He himself has composed a verse on the cave in which he refers to it as 'mother' as it gave shelter to the devotees.

During the years at Virupaksha Ramana composed the Five Hymns on Arunachala which includes the Aksharamanamalai. The prayer for Mother Azhagamma's recovery when she was delirious

with typhoid and the Appalam Song composed as an instruction to her once she returned to stay with him in 1916 are also invaluable treasures composed during these years.

Ramana Dasa Sadananda in one of his compositions describes the sight at Virupaksha Cave as one for Gods to see where natural enemies like the snake, the mongoose and the peacock, or dogs, monkeys and wild cats all stay together in amity. A picture of this moving sight has been painted then by a lady devotee, Rajammal.

Om virUpAksa guhAvAsAya namaha.

40. VIRAJADACALAKRITIHI

Radiantly still.

When Ramana was staying in the Virupaksa Cave his potent stillness would be transmitted to the visitors who would also partake of it. Many have witnessed even monkeys and other animals being absolutely quiet in his presence.

Om virAjadacalAkritaye namaha.



How Bhagavan Captured Us

By Smt. Sulochana Natarajan

Even though we had gone to Sri Ramanasramam once before in 1955 on the occasion of Karhigai Deepam the first 'real' trip we made to the Asram, specifically going for Bhagavan's darshan and presence as it were, was in July 1956. This most memorable trip was by car in the company of Sri Devaraja Mudaliar who graciously accompanied us.

That was the first taste we got of being in the company of one of the senior devotees of Bhagavan and what a taste that was too! In later years we were to be blessed by association with many of Bhagavan's senior devotees, 'old devotees' as they used to be called then. Every single moment of such association was a treasure as they never failed to bring the fragrance and presence of Bhagavan most tangibly before us. Throughout the journey, the car drive of about four hours from Salem to Tiruvannamalai, Sri Mudaliar was narrating incidents and anecdotes from Bhagavan's life which threw direct light on his teachings. For me, I must honestly say, it made a very gripping narrative, but ARN was moved beyond measure. He was thrilled to the core and it was evident that Bhagavan had completely taken him over.

Very soon Bhagavan was to play His next significant card. He had marked out ARN not only to love Him and live His path, but as His bonded slave to serve the Asram and the Ramana Movement as well. This Leela of Bhagavan too began to unfold as soon as we stepped into Sri Ramanasramam. Devaraja Mudaliar introduced ARN as ITO, Salem, to Sri T.N.Venkataraman, then President of Sri Ramanasramam. From that very moment ARN and TNV became the thickest of friends who would stand by each other through everything.

From that moment ARN was also deeply committed to Sri Ramanasramam and to TNV and his family as the chosen representatives of Bhagavan. There would certainly be times when he would differ from them, but no matter what his personal opinion

on an issue, he would unfailingly stick by the President's decision as the final word. Indeed we have often wondered whether we are two families or one!

We were allotted Room No.1 in Morvi Guest House. Morvi 1 and 2 were the only rooms in the Asram then. It is amazing that although we used many other rooms during our stay at the Asram in the intervening years, on his last three visits to the Asram, ARN insisted on getting back to Morvi 1, the room where his first meeting with the Master's physical presence at the Ramaneswara Sannidhi in the Asram happened.

Sri Mudaliar knew that I could sing. So he invited me to join him and another devotee to chant the Tamil parayanam along with them. This would happen at 10 a.m. inside Bhagavan's Nirvana Room. I still believe that was a very special blessing from Bhagavan and an important preparation for my entry into Ramana Music. Sri Mudaliar gave me a copy of Siva Prakasam Pillai's 'Ramana Pada Malai' a booklet which later inspired me to compose the 'Ramana Pada Pancharatnam' in 1996 on the lines of the Tyagaraja Pancharatnam. Since then I have had the great blessing of joining in the Tamil parayaam on several occasions inside Bhagavan's Nirvana Room where His Presence is very palpable.

After that significant visit to Sri Ramanasramam along with Sri Devaraja Mudaliar, our visits to Asram became frequent. As ARN was posted to Salem, it was easy for us to drive down at the slightest excuse. This felicity continued even in 1957 when ARN was posted as Departmental Representative, Chennai. We shifted residence to Raja Annamalaipuram to a ground floor flat in front of the present Sankara Netralaya. Every Thursday evening with about ten other ladies from the locality I used to conduct Bhajan Satsanghs.

Weekly twice in the evening we would attend the Arathi at Ramakrishna Math. Every Second Saturday morning and Sunday mornings ARN and I would go for meditation to Mylapore Ramakrishna Math. On the second Saturdays we used to do some shopping after our meditation session and be back home

by lunch. In fact we continued this practise for many years until we got involved in the Ramana Movement. Thereafter our schedule became so packed with Ramana activities that shopping and such became one of the least priority items on our agenda. But even though ARN took me shopping every weekend in those days to fulfil my desire, he was naturally of a very detached temperament. Even in our early years of marriage very often he would take me window shopping to some of the most sophisticated shopping arcades of the time. If I chanced to fall in love with some object there, he would tell me gently yet with great conviction, 'All that we see need not and cannot be possessed by us. In fact, joy need not be linked to possessing something. Just by seeing the beauty of a thing we can partake of that beauty and enjoy it.'

While at Chennai we had the good fortune of meeting Professor K.Swaminathan and ARN started attending the Sunday evening meetings at Ramana Bhakta Sabha conducted by Professor. I too joined him at the Satsangs. I joined the daughters of Professor, Mahalaxmi, Shanta and Dharma, in setting to music Bhagavan's Aksharamanamalai. This was my first experience of composing music. Yet, as we worked on it jointly I did not perceive then my own capacity to set songs to music. ARN and our entire family's long and elevating association with one more senior devotee of Bhagavan, the Professor, began thus.

Our frequent visits to Asram continued. During one of those visits, in 1956 or 1957, after I sang for the arati following the puja at Ramaneswara Mahalingam, a senior devotee called to me saying Tamil, 'Ey kutti! Inga vaa' (Hey little girl! Come here.) I did not know who he was but since respect for elders had been inculcated in me, I quickly obeyed him.

He had evidently noted that I was singing some Karnatik Music compositions from my repertoire during the pujas in the mornings and evenings at Bhagavan's Shrine of Grace. He asked me whether I did not know any composition that had been set on Bhagavan. I answered in the negative. He said, 'Come, I will teach you.' He at once took me outside and seating me beside himself on the pyol near the Shrine, began to teach me the song,

‘Ariya taramamo’ which was his own composition on Bhagavan. The refrain of this song means ‘Is it possible for us to comprehend the glory of Arunai Ramana?’

Indeed could I have at that time even had a wild dream that my learning this song was to be the seed of the huge garden of giant trees which is what Ramana Music is now? How can we ever know the glory of Ramana? This senior devotee of Bhagavan also taught me the most magical song ‘Sharanagathi’ (I surrender to you). Bhagavan thus set the mood in which the entire world of Ramana Music was to be born and sustained. Soon thereafter I came to know that the loving devotee who taught me these songs was Manavasi Ramaswami Iyer, who had composed scores of songs on Bhagavan, the crown jewel among which was ‘Sharanagathi’. Hence he was also known to Ramana devotees as ‘Sharanagathi Thatha’.

What great good fortune was mine to have learnt the songs directly from him, and with what great care and attention to each and every nuance, he taught me the songs. In that trip he also taught me ‘Tarkaatarulvaay dayapara’ which means ‘Protect me well O King of Compassion’. For nearly a decade thereafter these were the only three Ramana songs that I knew and sang at all Ramana satsangs and festivals. Now I am so eager that each and every devotee should know about the vast bounty of Ramana Music that is available running to nearly 2000 songs in different languages. . Surely, that very force which revealed the beauty of Ramana Music to me will also, in the ripeness of time, reveal it to the whole world.

*** To be continued***

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

“WELCOME RAMANANJALI” – LONDON

Our second stop in the tour was London. We had not been able to obtain entry permits to U.K. before departing from Bombay due to shortage of time. Anxious well-wishers had warned us that we would most probably be bundled off in the next flight from London and would not be allowed to enter the country. Even as we landed at the Heathrow airport, the loudspeaker was announcing a welcome to the Ramananjali group. Sri N.V.Raman, First Secretary to the Indian High Commissioner, was himself waiting to take us in. Yet another ‘impossibility’ made possible by Bhagavan for us!

[How did Bhagavan make this happen? In an apparently most natural and casual manner like all his miracles. Before Ramananjali left on the tour Smt.Sulochana Natarajan was wished well by her relatives. One among them was her cousin’s wife, Smt.Radha Ramani. She mentioned that her uncle was working in the Indian High Commission in London. Just before leaving India a request was made to her through a long distance call, as there was no mobile technology in those days, to ask her uncle whether he could get us an entry into U.K. There was no time to get back to her about the end result of the request. But we knew when we were welcomed on landing at London and Sri Raman was himself there to receive us.]

Sri C.J.Barai, a devotee, had toiled night and day to make the visit a success. Attending to his work from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., he would spend all the remaining time in arranging for the visit. Many were the sleepless nights spent by him in planning for the trip. His son, Dilip Barai, was also very kind and helpful, even taking time off from work to help us find our way around London.

The first performance of the group at the 'India House' was presided over by Dr.Singh, the High Commissioner, who praised the teachings of Sri Bhagavan in the highest terms. Every minute of the program was enjoyed by all. Mr.Singh exclaimed "It was excellent!" Then, seeing the look of surprise on our faces, added with firm sincerity: "I mean it".

The next two programs were at the Kenneth Black Memorial Hall, Wimbledon (here, after the concert, puja was performed to Bhagavan) and at the lovely Polka Children's Theatre, Wimbledon). The ever smiling devotee, Mr.Robert Gill, had kindly given this hall for the 'Ramana Music' concert.

[The manner in which we reached Kenneth Hall was a minor adventure. Our usual means of travel in the U.K. was part of the way by suburban trains and part by bus. Having reached the bus stop we were waiting and waiting and waiting for a bus which never came. All the buses seemed to be going in the opposite direction. Finally when a bus did come, we were told that we were standing in the wrong stop, the right stop was right opposite to us! By then it was too late for us to wait for another bus and we requested a cab driver to take us to the hall. We were 8 of us but the driver noticing our predicament bundled us into his car asking us all to keep our heads down. How were we to keep our heads down when we were literally seated on each others' laps! Yet, whenever he called out 'heads down!' we would do our best to obey. And in this way we got to the hall in time for our performance.]

The highlight of the U.K. programmes was the one given on the evening of the 25th at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Auditorium in West Kennington, London. Sri Mathoor Krishnamoorthy, the dynamic Registrar of the London Centre for the Bhavan, gave a big

helping hand. Many earnest devotees of Sri Bhagavan attended these concerts, giving the group encouragement and support.

“MEETING OF HEARTS” – TORONTO

After landing in J.F.Kennedy Airport, New York on the 26th May, a huge banner with the letters ARUNACHALA ASHRAM greeted our eyes, and an enthusiastic voice cheering repeatedly “Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi Ki Jai”! could be heard, followed by a hearty chorus, which we happily joined. From that moment on, Arunachala Ashrama, New York & Nova Scotia, took charge of all the arrangements. In particular, Sri Arunachala Bhakta Bhagawata, Dennis Hartel, Evelyn Kaselow and Darlene Delisi took maternal care.

The 27th of May found us at Toronto. Mr.& Mrs.Devaraj, Mr.James Hartel (brother of Dennis Hartel) and Mrs. Fran Hartel were a fountain of love, care and attention. Our rehearsal that afternoon was to be televised, but the technician having some problem had to call the producer. It turned out that the producer was Mr.Chadrasekar, a good family friend. Seeing the uniqueness of our programme he felt that it must be televised in the best possible manner, at the Studio itself!

Sri K.Venkataraman helped in arranging the evening’s programme. The audience was very moved and in particular, Dr. Ram Desai (Professor, Department of Economics & Political Science, State University of Buffalo) was in tears throughout the concert. In a voice choked with emotion he told us about his visits to Sri Ramanasramam from 1945 onwards. In 1950, having obtained a scholarship in the States he told Bhagavan about it and asked for permission to accept it. When Bhagavan gave permission, Mr.Desai expressed sorrow at having to leave Bhagavan’s presence. Bhagavan’s ready answer was: “Bhagavan is in America also”. Relating this incident, Mr.Desai said: “Only today I have realised what Bhagavan meant, so tangibly having experienced His presence this evening.” The golden opportunity we had of meeting such sincere and loving devotees and bringing happiness to them, filled us with joy and made every moment of this wonderful tour worthwhile.

Letter from to the Asram: Dr. Ram Desai,
Professor Dept. of Economics & Political Science,
State University of Buffalo, U.S.A.

“About two weeks ago I had the utmost pleasure in having the Ramananjali group, along with Sri Ganesan, at my house for a dinner. We had a wonderful time together. Mrs.Sulochana Natarajan and Mr.H.K.Narayana sang a couple of songs dedicated to Bhagavan. I murmured to myself: ‘How marvellous and great it would have been to write this in a letter to tell Bhagavan that the family from the Ashram had visited me!’ I am grateful for the two cassettes: Ramana Bhajans and Ramana Amudam: quite often in the evening I listen to the tapes.”

Visiting Niagara Falls, the following day, we witnessed this awesome force of Nature which was in itself a thrilling experience. It actually made us aware of the tremendous power of the Lord. When such force and the entire Universe is controlled with a smile by Ramana, the miracles of this tour, the impossibilities which turned into actualities, are but child’s play for Him!

We were delighted to be at the house of Dennis Hartel’s parents. Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Hartel, who with great love served us lunch. That night’s Dinner was at Dr. Ram Desai’s house and he himself had lovingly prepared “Uppuma” for us.

That evening the title song of the Ramananjali group was composed. At Sri GAnesan’s suggestion the words were composed and the tune was set by Sri Rajeswara Rao – thus the title song was born! The entire group working together enthusiastically, giving suggestions, in the atmosphere of a devotee’s house was in itself a thrilling experience! Returning from Niagara, the shooting of our TV programme began at 12.30 a.m. in Toronto and it went well. That night it was difficult to say whether we were more tired or more happy!

*** To be continued ***

News & Events

Revathi Sankar

Sivaratri was celebrated at the Ramana Shrine through whole night puja, cultural performances and talks.

Jananeem Prithveem was a dance drama by artistes of BSRMRC including story telling, Bharatanatyam and puppet theatre. The presentation was led by Guru Smt.Rupa Hemanth and the story teller was Smt.Aparna Atreya. The rapt audience included children who had come in to perform after them who watched spellbound.

A special feature of the puja was the nonagenarian Sri H.A.Shankaranarayana performing the abhisheka along with the child Pavan Kumar.





Talk by Sri Venkatesh Deshpande and Bharatanatyam by Srinivasan Rajendran and troupe



Special Programs in May

As we are not aware of the lockdown situation resultant from the COVID 19 situation we are not announcing any programs in the Shrine in the month of May.

Devotees are requested to see the calendar and call our Centre for information after the end of the lockdown period.

President

Declaration

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I, Dr. Sarada Natarajan, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Place : Bangalore
Date : 31.03.2020

Sd/-
SARADA NATARAJAN
Signature of the Publisher

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

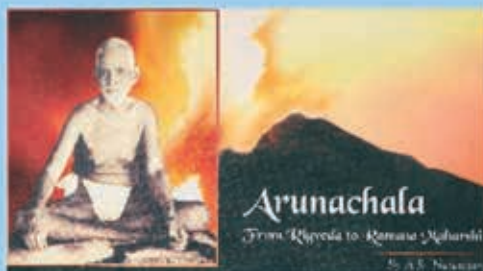
Original : Muruganar

Translation: David Godman

Investigation into Truth

104. In the perspective of those whose attention is externalised Parameswara [the Supreme Lord], who empowered maya with authority, will appear as if he too is subject to the treacherous authority that powerful maya exercises.

105. In the same way that the manifold classes of sentient beings and insentient objects get involved in various movements through the mere presence of the sun, which rises in the sky without any volition [sankalpa], the actions of the world take place through [the mere presence] of the Lord.



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.