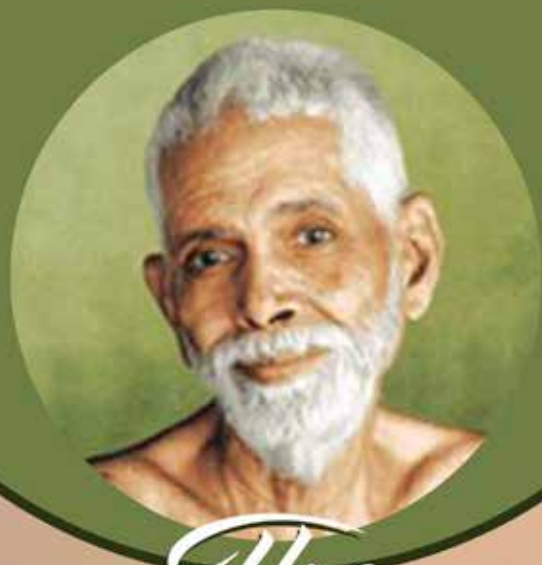


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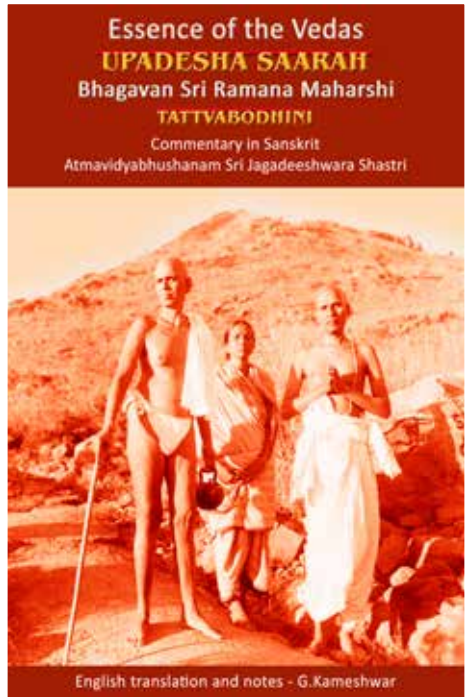
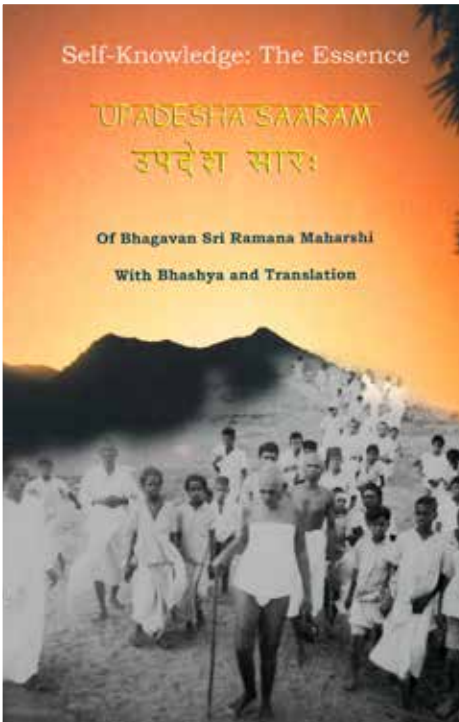
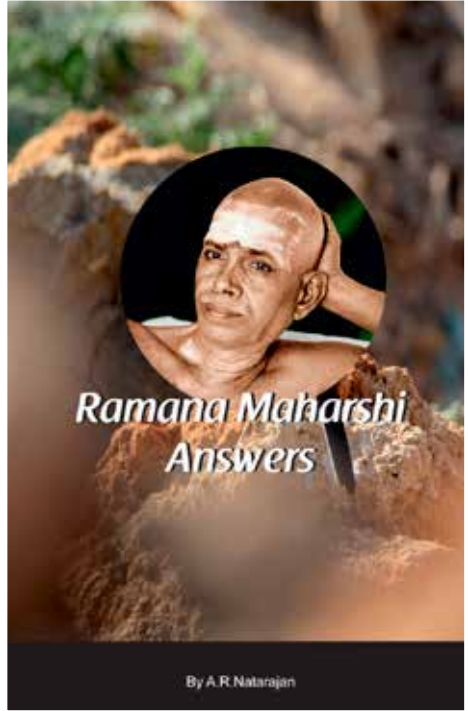
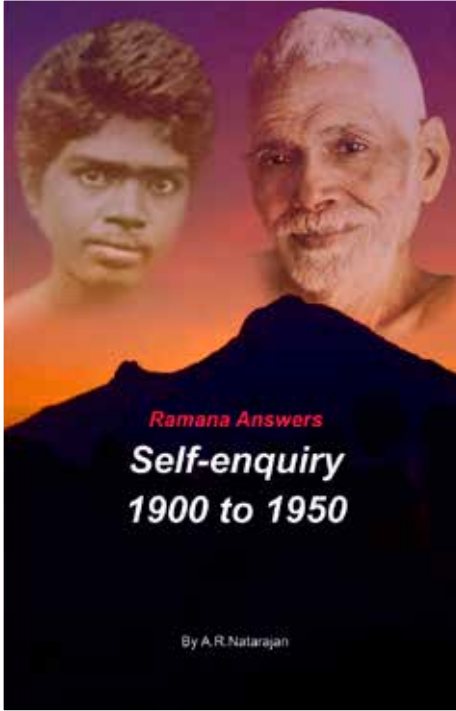
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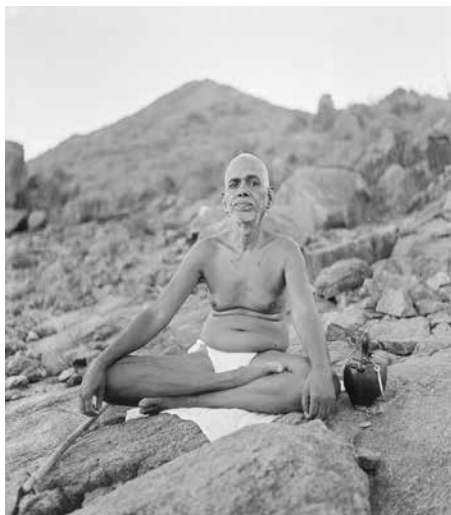
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NEW
Publications



THE RAMANA WAY

A Monthly Journal since 1981



Celebrating 'The Ramana Way' - 40 years

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

- Ramana Gita X, 10

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A young boy stood at the gates of Time and waited, waited to meet Time. He came, he who is called Time, he who is also called Death because Time means beginnings and Time also means endings. He saw this sweet, innocent child waiting for him and asked him to seek a boon. The young one asked him, 'Teach me your secret. I want to know the meaning of Time, the meaning of Death'. Time lured him with many promises just as we are lured by the rise of every thought after thought. Each and every thought rising in our mind holds out some promise or the other which we willingly follow, a promise that is never here and now, a promise that will always keep us within the maze of Time, searching for ever. Such is the lure of Time. But the boy would not budge from his resolve. 'I do not care for any of these,' he said, 'because, at the end of enjoying each of these experiences, even if they are all enjoyable, I need to come only to your doorstep. Hence, I have come now, tell me your secret.' Time was thrilled and initiated the boy into the Truth behind Time.

This happened in an age and time that does not find a record in the current annals of Time. As Time is bound to wipe out records and memories as well, the secret that was revealed by Time too is all but forgotten. Therefore, he came again, the boy of undauntable courage, the courage to face Death and question the meaning of death, the courage to explore and discover the secret of death. He came not just to do so but to share this secret with the entire world and free it from the shackles of Time. As this was the purpose for which he came, he began the enquiry when he was a boy of twelve.

His father lay dead and he enquired within himself, 'Father lies here as if asleep. Yet everyone is crying saying he is dead. What then does death mean?' Further, when the body was cremated and burnt to ashes he asked to himself, 'If my father was this body would they have burnt it down? If the body had been my father, would he not have protested and asked them not to burn him? And how could he have withstood being burnt? The body

was not my father. My father's I has left his body. My I is still within me.' As a boy of twelve he recognized that what is consumed by Time is the body. The body is subject to the ravages of Time, but the I is not.

It was a few years later, as a young lad of sixteen, that he again encountered Death. This time he faced his own death, he faced Time by asking the question 'Who am I?' This he did by enquiring experientially into the question, 'What is that dies?' He allowed the body to assume the attitude of death, holding it absolutely stiff as if rigor mortis had set in. So the body was as good as dead. He held his breath and did not allow the movement of it. So the breath was as good as non-existent. When all this was dead who was there to observe and record this? That was not thought because he had remained wordless in silence. Although he did not consciously seek to silence his thoughts, in effect he did so by not 'speaking' any word, not even the sound 'I' within himself. There was no expression, no feeling, no word, there was no thought. The mind too was as good as dead.

It was without the movement of the mind, without the movement of thought, word and deed as it were that he experienced what remained, what stood apart from all these as 'I'. Hence that could not be touched by Time as it had no movement in Time whatsoever. While it transcended Time, it included Time as well. It included the body while transcending it. It included the mind while transcending it. He experienced this in a flash, in a moment outside the realm of Time as it were, as he described it later. And having himself walked out of the domain of Time into the kingdom of Timelessness, he opened the portals of that land of freedom for one and all.

He, Ramana, not just opened the gates of kingdom of Timelessness so that everyone may enter, he also laid a royal road leading to those gates. This road is called self-enquiry. To travel this road one must escape the lure of Time each and every time it crops up. One must not follow any thought as each and every thought is merely an embodiment of Time. Each and every thought has a beginning and an end. Each and every thought is an embodiment of the past merely pointing to the future. And

each time we follow a thought we are trapped in the world of Time surrounded by innumerable thoughts.

But we need not be alarmed, writes Sri A.R.Natarajan, for, "Self-enquiry is the direct and simple means to arrive at the thought-free state. For it quickly turns the mind inward. Through constant vigilance against marauding thoughts, through persistent self-enquiry one pushes within. As the taste of inner happiness is felt increasingly, the hankering after sensate pleasures weakens and the folly of the old ways is seen in clear light."

Every time a thought arises, each time that Time attracts our attention by rising in the form of a thought, if we are ready to turn around and ask every time, 'For whom is this thought? The thought is for me. Who am I?' then, says Ramana, Death will disappear. Time will disappear altogether, revealing behind his melting shroud the vast expanse of the Self.

Sarada Natarajan

From the Editor's Desk 1990 to 1995

We bring to you excerpts from editorials in the second four years when the journal had become the full-fledged 'The Ramana Way'. The editorials have appeared in the book 'The Surging Joy – Of Self-discovery'.

- Editor

THE DANCE OF 'I'

A child asked her mother one day, "Amma, who is that child Lord Nataraja is stamping on, won't the child's mother feel bad?"

And all those around wondered how the mother would reply, without disturbing the compassion in the question, yet, without compromising the Lord's grace. The mother had no problem though. She answered easily, "The child was very ill and the mother prayed to the Lord, my dear. Then He danced upon the child and the child was full of health. The child was bad and mean before, but when the Lord danced on him, he became pure and full of love. The child was cursed to die and after the dance he was filled with immortal life. The Lord danced on the child to transform him, to give him back to his mother as a wonderful new person. Have you not seen the face of the child? In the best of images the face of the child has as much joy as that in the Lord's smile, the joy that the Lord gives him through His dance, through the impress of His feet. And do you think the Lord is heavy because He seems so large on the child? The wind is so much larger than us, so much more powerful, is it not? But when the wind blows it cools us. The huge river in which we dip seems to swallow us but really it cleanses us. So the touch of the Lord may be gentle, we cannot imagine how gentle and loving it would be. Yet again, my child, do not think that all pain is bad either. The rose bush is pruned by the gardener so that it may bear the best of blooms. The surgeon cuts the body to remove that which is disease and will eat away into all health. A mother may practically starve a child who has diarrhoea and vomiting. These seemingly disciplinary and pain inflicting methods are for the higher good, are they not? So, even if the child was pained by the Lord's dance the mother would bear it, knowing that after the pain would come infinite joy"

We are often like the anxious child, worried that when the Lord stamps out our individuality we would die, we would be in distress. We are afraid that as a culmination of self-enquiry when the Self engulfs us there would only be a void. And like the wise mother the Sadguru reassures us time and again that what awaits us is fullness, no void. The wonder of the Self is that it is perfect stillness like the ocean depths, like the mountain heights. Yet it is not dull - it is a dynamic stillness, a magnificent universal dance. When we see a table can we perceive the dance in it ? It seems so dull - so unmoving. So also the rock and the mountain. But then there is no stillness at all in the universe. Within every molecule of the table are atoms that dance. Within atoms are neutrons and protons that dance. And every particle is in eternal motion. This is the vibrant dance of the universe, the form of the Self-of the Lord. And as the Heart, in every being, the Self dances as 'I', as 'I', as 'I'. It is a sphurana - a throb - which Bhagavan describes as a dance.

"Ever as 'I' in the heart you dance. Hence are you called the Heart.

-Arunachala Pancharatnam, V.2, Sri Ramana Maharshi

Where movement is ordered in harmonious rhythm and grace that is dance. It is because of this that every aspect of the universe may be said to be dancing. For it is co-ordinated movement, never random. Always a marvellous pattern, as in the cycle of birth, life and death. And this pattern repeats itself in the individual as in the world, in the smaller as in the bigger- moon revolves round the earth, the earth round the sun. New galaxies are born and grow and are destroyed. Individuals too follow the same pattern and within the body millions of cells are born, they grow and decay. On a daily basis too this pattern, this rhythm occurs in our lives. Daily in sleep we die, it is as good as death - for there is no awareness of the world, or the body, or even a sense of 'I'. Immediately on waking, the sense of 'I' is born, as it were. We become aware of ourselves, the body, the world. Through the waking and in dream this picture of life is sustained and then dissolves again in deep sleep.

But for all this movement to be perceived there must be an unmoving substratum, a picture screen that stays fixed while the movie moves, a stationary platform that makes it possible to register the movement of a train. The unchanging that can register

all change. And that is the Self. For, unless there is silence who can discern the melodies that rise in it or know them to be such? If one has never visited a place before can one say that it has changed? It is because the perceiver remains constant that changes are perceived and registered. So the Self is silence in which the universe is heard, the Self is infinite in which things start and end, the Self is stillness in which all things move and dance and become quiet again. This part of the verse is easy to understand, we can accept this of the Self. But Bhagavan says the Self dances in the Heart as 'I', as 'I'. If the Self itself dances then what is the substratum for its dance? Why, it is itself the substratum too! The beauty of this description of the Self by Bhagavan lies in this very dissolution of opposites by merging them, the transcendence of paradoxes by uniting them. We tend to impose relative qualities on the Self. We say it is bliss. But it is not a bliss that is the opposite of sorrow, which can be sensed only when we know sorrow. It is inclusive of sorrow, and joy and transcends both. Similarly, we think of the Self as silence and stillness but it is also music and dance, voice and movement. Yes, it is all these and none of these. So let us by no means imagine the state of Self-awareness to be negative, to be passive, to be dull. It is positive, it is a fullness that is active and dynamic and it is ever fresh. In fact, it is the mind alone that knows dullness. As it moves away from Self-attention it becomes increasingly dull. As it becomes purer, as it reflects more and more of the Self's brilliance, the mind too becomes increasingly sharper and clearer.

Can we ever think of joy as being dull? Sorrow can be dull, pain can be dull, but joy? The very word is so alive. And the Self, Bhagavan says, is bliss ever fresh, ever renewed. Dullness must wither away even in its proximity. Joy is dynamic - joy conjures images of flight and laughter, of dance and song. But joy must also be peace. True happiness must be complete, it must be full. The joy of the Self is total - thus there would be no more seeking, no more striving, an absolute, perfection would be experienced. In this sense it is silence absolute, it is majestic stillness.

It seems rather difficult to imagine what this state would be like. Difficult? It is impossible, for all imagining is with the mind. That is why the Buddha, it seems, refrained from describing

'Nirvana' lest it too should become a mere concept. Bhagavan, however, describes it, and repeatedly, as being fullness, most blissful, consciousness, the very basis of existence and here as the marvellous throbbing dance of the Heart. Why? Because to remember this is an important aid to enthuse inwardness. On the one hand is the recognition of the triviality of all our pursuits, on the other the magnitude, the marvel of the Self. When we are sufficiently convinced of both then the practice of Self-abidance would be unswerving. Hence it is helpful to remember the qualities of the Self in order to strengthen the search.

This description serves as a telescope - a peep into the promised land. It is not the same as to be there, as to have arrived - but certainly gives impetus to the journey. Thus with a desire for the highest, if we turn attention constantly to the dance of the 'I' in the heart - then ours would be the surging joy of Self awareness, the unalloyed bliss.

YOU ARE CALLED THE HEART

"As on a screen a wondrous picture,
On you, fair Mount, is all this world
Formed and sustained and then withdrawn.
Ever as 'I' in the Heart you dance,
Hence you are called the Heart.

-Arunachala Pancharatnam, V.2, Sri Ramana Maharshi

The current generated by the dynamo passes to the switchboard, the switch is clicked on and myriads of lights come to life, with splashing, gurgling colours and music. It is a whole creation, a world of fantasy: the Brindavan Gardens with its colour lights and musical fountains, as if just created, is freshly manifest to the excited observers.

Deep within a womb the child grows, takes shapes, moves and is 'created'. Deep within the ocean, the oyster nurtures a pearl in its heart, giving it the lustre of created preciousness. Deep within the earth the seed gives out a tiny root and a tiny shoot, a tender plant, a growing shrub, and stands as a mighty tree. From the unseen depths of glacial snow, a trickle of water separates itself

and flows downhill gathering speed, force and tributaries to be worshipped as a mighty river. An amoeba divides itself and from one comes two, the two in turn each divide and from two come many. When an amoeba splits itself more amoebae are created; when a sun splits and cools, a galaxy is created, and so earth and life and all of us perhaps.

Creation - both mysterious and magical. The process of creation always fills one with wonder and awe and curiosity - a strange mixture of emotions, but true. For, we immediately wish to know, to explain the basis, the process of creation. 'How was this created?' we always wonder. Bhagavan explains the secret of creation thus:

"Even though both the mind and the world Rise and set together,
It is the mind which lights the world."

-Forty Verses on Reality, V.7, Sri Ramana Maharshi

Bhagavan points out that creation, for each one of us, is a matter of perceiving the world with the mind. Everyday on waking we perceive the world and so the world is 'created' on waking. In dream, with our minds we create another world altogether and in deep sleep there is no world at all. So, the world is created by the mind, but the mind itself - a conglomeration of thoughts- is created by the 'I'- thought in as much as the 'I'- thought is the root thought to which all other thoughts are linked. So, Bhagavan further clarifies:

"When the 'I'-thought rises, all this is perceived,
When the 'I'-thought subsides, all this subsides,
Therefore all these are but forms of the 'I'-thought.
Tracking it is the way to victory over everything."

- Forty Verses on Reality, V. 26, Ramana Maharshi

The 'I'-thought is absent in deep sleep but rises as one awakes. This rising of the 'I'-thought from its source, the Self, is the beginning of 'creation' and its immediately linking itself to thoughts of 'you' 'they' and the whole world, brings in the whole gamut of creation. It is like the switch deriving energy from the dynamo of the Self and in turn lighting up a whole 'fantasy world' like the Brindavan.

Hence the key to the mystery of creation and to life itself is to track the 'I'-thought back to the source from which it daily rises unawares, to track it back to the Self.

* * *

As the mother goat suckles, the young kid drinks the milk, tail wagging vigorously in delight. And then it frisks and plays around, filled with new energy. The infant waves his hands and legs in glee, making important conversation using high pitched vowel sounds, mother's milk still dribbling from the corners of his toothless grin. The leaf feeds on sunlight, draws water from the root, and creates food for the plant. The caterpillar feeds on the leaves, grows chubby, wraps itself in a cocoon and breaks out in the rainbow colours of a butterfly. The army of ants marches steadily away with the housewife's sugar ration, transporting it grain by grain to its cosy anthill, to nibble at in leisure. Bees swarm to place in the safe deposit lockers of their hives the honey they have sipped from fragrant summer flowers. And everywhere, in its million forms, life sustains itself in apt ways.

While the biological mechanisms thus keep themselves ticking, the mind (which is what creates awareness of the body and world in the first place) observes, and feeds itself on the observation. As the body, so the mind has its own special brand of food, in the shape of names and forms. These the mind is constantly gulping in, chewing on, digesting and, sometimes assimilating:

"Born of forms, rooted in forms,
Feeding on forms, ever changing its forms, Itself formless,
this ego-ghost
Takes to its heels on enquiry."

- Forty Verses on Reality, V.25, Sri Ramana Maharshi

The 'ego' or the 'I'-thought is the crux of the mind. All thoughts are connected only to this 'I'-thought, their root. Because all thoughts have to be necessarily only for me, or for the 'I'. In this sense, the 'I'-thought sustains the mind, a conglomeration of varied thoughts. But the 'I'-thought cannot exist in isolation. It is constantly linked, consciously or otherwise, but certainly linked, with some other thought, like 'I see', 'I think' and so on (which

is what Bhagavan describes in the above verse as feeding on forms'). If it is robbed of this sustenance, if it is isolated from all other thoughts, the 'I'-thought becomes weak, it readily surrenders its thought- fortress, the thought-walls fall. Then the 'I'-thought rushes to its real stronghold, the Self.

In reality, the 'I'-thought has no consciousness, no power of its own. It only reflects the Light of the Self from which it daily rises on waking, awakening with itself the entire world and awareness of it, and sustaining this awareness and itself through continuous reinforcements, of concepts. When deprived of thought- food, unable to survive the isolation, the 'I'-thought goes back to the Self and abides there. Then awakes a true awareness of the source of all things, the Essence by which all is sustained. As ornaments are made from, and sustained only by gold, gold is their truth and apart from it they cannot exist, even so the many forms of the world cannot exist apart from their Reality, the Self. They are sustained only by the consciousness of the Self, explains Bhagavan. He emphatically clarifies

"Because we see the variegated world,
A single source, with unlimited powers has to be accepted.
The seer, the seen, the canvas and the light
Are all only He, the One."

- Forty Verses on Reality, V. 1, Sri Ramana Maharshi

* * *

The flower blooms, five curled petals, like a delicate, open palm, each petal pale pink at the heart, shading into deep magenta at the edges. For a week the flower nods to every passing breeze, brimming with the gaiety of life. Then she fades, droops, dries and drops away, her seeds perhaps fallen on the ground below to rise as a new plant or wind carried, bringing blossoms to some other nook. And she is no more, that flower. There are others like her, many others, all lovely in their own way, all blossoming and nodding to the breeze as she once did, perhaps some born of her even join in this breeze-dance, affirming the perpetual continuity of life. But she is gone forever, she will not return.

That is death's finality. As birth goes on continuously, as renewal and sustenance carry on their work, so with unbroken rhythm, death tolls. Death, the dark stranger one is ever afraid of bumping into, an appointment which every one must keep, yet, not knowing when. Perhaps he is just around the corner, perhaps he has boarded the train to our city, perhaps he appears very distant still... But he is never far away, if one but cares to look, one can always find him anywhere, everywhere. Wherever there is Life, there he too awaits, for he is Life's mysterious partner.

Mysterious - for, though one may see Death everyday he remains still a stranger, leaving one wondering on what wings he arrives, noiseless, silent. Where is his country from which no traveler returns? Does he swoop down like an eagle on its prey or does he gently hold one by the hand and walk away? There is none to recall his face. And though there is the occasional one who is half in love even with him, he is mostly dreaded. His brother, Time, the more familiar face, is disturbing enough, not to mention Death's painful messengers - age, disease and accident.

For a million who dread him, there is one person who turns around and looks him full in the face. And this one person knows and smiles and says. "So, you are death, you are no stranger but a familiar face. And yet, you have no face, in fact, you don't exist at all." And under that steady gaze, Death himself does die.

How can Death have a familiar face! Yet, why not? Though every creature dies but once, and even cowards are said to meet death only a thousand times through life, the 'I' dies every day. That is to say the 'I' in every one experiences daily birth and daily death.

This appears to be, no doubt, a crazy notion, until we examine for ourselves Bhagavan's clear explanation of death's meaning. Having himself faced and conquered death as a boy of sixteen, he asks

"What is death if scrutinised?"

- Curing Mother's Fever. V. 2 Sri Ramana Maharshi

What constitutes the scrutiny of death? First of all, 'For whom is this death?' If I should ask myself such a question, my answer would be, 'For me'. But, who am I? What is this 'I'? If this

'I' is attentively observed it will be discovered that it is a feeling of existence combined with a sense of identity. 'I am Sarada' - 'I am' or I exist, as 'Sarada', a given identity. But what happens to this identity in deep sleep? In deep sleep one is not aware at all of one's identity. For all practical purposes the 'I' is as good as dead then. Where does it dissolve into to rise again only on waking? If one consciously traces the 'I'- thought to this source into which it sets daily, one has discovered the meaning of death and life. For, when one becomes aware of the source of the 'I' -thought and abides there, then one has discovered one's own true immortal Self. When this 'I'- thought surrenders to the Lord, shining as the Self in all beings, that is, when the 'I'-thought dies, or dissolves consciously into its source, the Self, then what remains is immortality:

"For those who, out of fear of death,
Take refuge in the conqueror of Death,
The first to die is the 'I' -thought.
Then, by nature they are immortal,
Can they ever again be assailed by the fear of death?
- Forty Verses on Reality, Prayer V.2, Sri Ramana Maharshi

* * *

The waters of the ocean rise as vapours, condense into dark, rumbling clouds and pour down in sheets of rain, illumined by lightning, dancing to thunderous rhythms, swell the rivers, plainwards flowing, majestically silting deltas, to be swallowed once more by the roaring sea. Or, touched by the cold fingers of polar atmospheres the vapours don the garb of glacial ice, break into the sea as mammoth icebergs, drowning Titanics, till they melt softly into warmer waters. Moon drawn, the wave rises, decking itself with white foam, and tossing its head on the damp sand castles of the shore, washing off names spelt out by happy toes, till, energy all spent, it disappears again into the sea.

The 'I'-thought rises on waking, thinking itself to be a separate entity. It sustains itself through the day by associating itself with myriad thoughts, all linked with the sense of identity, the sense that 'I am so-and-so'. And, tired by perpetual conceptualisation, into the Self again it dissolves in the quiet ignorance of deep sleep. The whole saga of creation-sustenance-destruction unrolls within

every individual, every day. The rising of the 'I'-thought is creation, for, it brings with it an awareness of the whole world, of course, in relation to itself. Consequently, the setting of the 'I'-thought, its disappearance in sleep, is death. Then there is neither awareness of the 'I', nor of the world. And we have said that 'I'- thought's sustenance is by 'feeding on forms', feeding on various thoughts.

But this tells only a part of the story. What is sustained by the multiplicity of thoughts is only the sense of separateness. The 'I'-thought maintains only its identity aspect by clinging to other thoughts. But what is it that sustains its very existence? Certainly the other thoughts do not constitute or support the existence of the 'I' thought. When their existence itself is dependent on the 'I'-thought, how could they, in any real sense, sustain its existence? Can the building sustain the foundation, or the film the screen? The 'I'-thought is truly sustained only by the energy of the Self, which continues as Existence even in sleep when the identity is absent. Only, one is not conscious of this Sustaining Power to which the 'I'-thought daily returns to recharge its batteries.

As ice is frozen water, water choosing form, rising from water, sustained by and melting into water; as the wave is the ocean, so the 'I'-thought, with its whole world, is born of the Self, sustained in the Self and dissolves into the Self:

"The body is within the Self.

And yet One thinks one is inside the inert body,

Like some spectator who supposes

That the screen on which the film is thrown Is within the picture"

-Five Stanzas on the One Self, Vs. 3 & 4, Sri Ramana Maharshi

"Consciousness, the Self is Real

The many forms cannot exist apart from it.

Can the different ornaments exist by themselves? Are they apart from gold?"

- Forty Verses on Reality, V.13, Sri Ramana Maharshi

To trace the 'I'-thought back to this 'Real' source of the Self and abide there is to die as the wave and be as the Ocean, it is conscious immortality.

* * *

TO BE CONTINUED

From the Founder's Pen: 1990-1995

Meditations

We bring excerpts from Sri A R Natarajan's articles published in The Ramana Way in the last four decades. This set of excerpts have been selected from the articles that were later published by Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning as the book 'Meditations'.

WHO IS THE MEDITATOR?

D: On what should we meditate?

B: Who is the meditator? Ask the question first. Remain as the meditator. There is no need to meditate.

- Talks 205 Page 174

Meditation has come to mean different things for different people. The mad rush for meditation classes and for tuition on meditation is indicative of the belief that in meditation one has a means of escape from the sorrows and tensions of daily life. As it is generally understood, meditation means exclusive contemplation on a particular sacred form, name, sound or all these together in some measure. It is hoped that this single thought stream would enable one to have peace of mind, to progress spiritually and ultimately to be free from the bondage of karma.

Meditation is mental - the meditator and his thoughts. Those who take to the spiritual path are quite earnest and often steadfast in their meditative practices. Even so, the fruits of meditation seem to be elusive because neither is there waning detachment nor is there that deep peace of mind which makes life harmonious and happy. One has to examine why one is faced with frustrating failure leading to dryness and loss of interest in serious spiritual endeavour.

Ramana would lay the fault at the door of our inability to understand the nature of the mind. Based on his direct experience which Ramana shares with us, he has given certain leads which

*These articles have been published in the book 'Meditations'.

could be applied in practice to experience the natural state of meditation. In this state, there is only meditation, the beatitude, the fullness of peace and bliss. The meditator, a separate entity, is not there to meditate when we arrive at this stage and are able to stay steadfast in it. There is, as Ramana says, 'No need to meditate'. For, where is the one who meditates?

How does one arrive at this state? In nearly all meditative practices there is an object of meditation considered holy. Hence we find the devotee querying as to what one should meditate on. In Ramana's reply one notices that Ramana straightaway shifts the attention of the questioner from his concern about the object of meditation to the subject, the meditator. Ramana has explained the reason for this in various ways. All the thoughts in their seed form lie nascent in the sense of doer-ship. Though there are hordes of thoughts only some of them come up on waking, depending on the individual's response to the objects at a particular point of time. The first thought to arise, and the thought which is always there during waking, is the 'I' -thought or the thought 'I am so and so'.

After this first thought arises some other thoughts arise. These are those thoughts on which the attention of the 'I' -thought is bestowed. Consequently there are thought-clusters with a central core thought and the other thoughts on which, for the time being, the attention of the 'I' - thought is bestowed. This thought cluster keeps changing based on contact with outer stimuli. Though the thought content of the mind is in a flux always and is different at different points of time, the thinker for whom the thoughts exist is continuous and central to all thoughts. Logically one could say that a good look at the mind indicates that there is a part of the mind, the 'I', which does not change whereas the other thoughts keep coming and going. There are also thoughts which never rise at all because the circumstances are not propitious for them. Ramana takes care to explain in great detail this basic difference between what he calls 'Aham Vritti' and the 'other vrittis'.

One vital point which also requires to be stressed is that unless the attention of the 'I' is given to the other thoughts, they die as it were of neglect. They are not in the horizon of the mind.

It is because of this that the variations in the content of the mind take place. To illustrate, on waking, attention may be on those thoughts required to get ready for the day's job, to be followed by thoughts connected with the work on hand. They in turn would yield to thoughts on recreation, enjoyment and so on. When the attention of the 'I' is not on them, the other thoughts recede to the background and will have to await the attention of the 'I' in order to surface again.

It will be seen from this analysis of the mind's nature that what matters is the 'I'-thought. The rest of the thoughts, being dependent on it, can be safely ignored.

'Why is this 'I'-thought so important?', one might ask. It is because the 'I-am' portion of it is a pure reflection of the consciousness from which it springs. As such it illumines whatever it pays attention to. When its attention is fixed on itself it leads one back to that fullness from which it has originated. If we can hold on to this core 'I' -thought alone, our attention would be on the essence of the mind and the befuddling caused by attention to other thoughts would end. Hence Ramana suggests in this quote that we should go into the question of who is the meditator and remain as the meditator. Questioning who the meditator is, is the 'Who am I?' enquiry in another form. It is the first question to be asked, for it is the most vital question. The need for more questions would arise only if attention strays away from the meditator to the objects of the meditator's attention.

Some of the devotees would complain to Ramana that turning the attention on to oneself is difficult as there does not appear to be anything concrete to meditate upon. Ramana would point out that this kind of problem arises because of our deep rooted attachment to forms which makes an object of meditation an imperative necessity. Actually non-objective meditation or enquiry into the subject is the 'easiest'. Lack of familiarity and experience would give the contrary impression. If, however, through persistent effort, attention is shifted from the object to the subject, then the joy experienced by the inturned mind would egg one on in the inward journey. Clinging to the 'I', to the meditator, consciously,

turns the externalised mind within. If at this stage one can ward off sleep or one does not lapse back into thoughts, the mind plunges into its source. The meditator, the separate 'I' -thought, is lost in the fullness of existence.

IT IS YOUR BUSINESS

Ishta Devata and Guru are aids - very powerful aids on the path. But an aid to be effective requires your effort also. Your effort is sine qua non. It is you who should see the sun. Can the spectacles and the sun see for you? You yourself have to see your true nature.

- Talks 28 Page 30

Spiritual life is an interplay of grace and effort. What are their relative roles for the success of spiritual endeavour? We find the Maharshi stressing at every opportunity, effort, vigilant and ceaseless effort. The reason for this is not far to see. For, one is already 'neck-deep in grace'. A spiritual aspirant can be sure of one thing - the constancy of the Satguru's grace. It need not be asked for, since it is already given unasked. Yet, we find devotees pestering Ramana for grace and getting repeated assurances about it from him. This is understandable, for the actual working of grace is intangible. One is unaware of its operation. Major Chadwick once asked Ramana why there was no evident change in him in spite of his being in his physical proximity as an inmate of the Asram. Ramana pointed out that 'though the change would undoubtedly be there it was not felt because it was not measurable'. Guru's grace is there all along the way, aiding effort by sustaining and strengthening the spiritual mood. It cannot be present sometimes and absent at other times since it is 'directed' by the Satguru, whose very nature is grace. In a manner of speaking, therefore, one can take for granted the invigorating flow of Ramana's grace extending protection and guidance in one's moments of despair and in every situation.

Since grace is always available in abundant measure to those linked to a Satguru, what has to be focussed on is the effort required, the other factor in the search for truth. It is only through

effort, through meditation, through self-enquiry that one awakens to the flow of grace. Hence Ramana says that grace is vouchsafed only for those who put in the necessary effort. Grace is active for them.

If there is no 'vichara' grace becomes dormant. Yet again there is so much emphasis on practice in the 'Ramana Way', because what matters is the experiencing of the natural state of bliss for oneself and remaining steadfast in it. This experience has to be earned by hard practice. God, though 'kinder than one's mother', does not spoon feed one with experience. One may ask why. It is only for those who have completely surrendered their individual volition that the Satguru can take over completely. Such persons are rare. For the rest actions are performed with a dominant sense of doership. So long as one acts with the feeling that it is the individual effort which matters, the responsibility of finding out the truth also rests squarely on oneself. In fact, we are constantly engaged in some action or other since our restless nature would never let us relax in peace. One might say that Ramana is only drawing pointed attention to the necessity of putting one's will power to the best possible use, for discovering the natural state.

Since effort is of paramount importance, Ramana would gently remove all dampeners in the form of negative thoughts. The first thing which has to be tackled is the repeated expression of fear that one cannot do justice to sadhana when caught up in the turmoil of daily life. Ramana would encourage one to get over this false notion. He would point out that if only one keeps steadily at meditation, even if it be for a little while, then life would no longer be strife and worry ridden. The mental environment of one's functioning would change when the peace generated by the meditation is felt in the background of work. This happens as our true meditative nature takes over more and more.

The second negative stumbling block which one has to deal with is the feeling that spiritual life is too tough and is therefore not worth attempting. Here again we find Ramana doing his best to dispel such ideas and consequent handicaps. When someone asked Ramana whether we must give up lust and anger, Ramana

humorously replied 'You give up thoughts, you need not give up anything else'. Here one has to remember that in the 'Ramana Way' one does not discard habits and thoughts one by one. They dry up when through self-attention one learns to push within and stay at the source.

This brings one to the basic issue of the effort about which Ramana is talking. The effort referred to here is to hold on to the core 'I' - thought and to ward off the distraction of other thoughts. The mind has to be gathered together by practice. Attention presently given to other thoughts by the 'I' has to be turned on itself - 'seeing the mind with the mind'. Attention has to be sustained till peace, alert peace, prevails.

One might ask, 'How long is there need for effort?'. So long as the mind becomes externalised. Till such time as the mind has not acquired the strength to remain sunk in the heart, effort would be inescapable. One would find that along the way the mind experiences the peace and contemplation of the natural state. Then as Ramana told Cohen, one should learn to switch off the positive attitude required for effort. The consciousness behind the mind would take over, and the need for effort would cease. One would have arrived at the destination, the natural state.

HOW FREE ARE WE?

Free will is implied in the scriptural injunctions to be good. It implies overcoming fate. It is done by wisdom.

- Talks 209 Page 177

Ramana' s first spiritual instruction to his mother Azhagammal, was that the best course in life would be to accept the flow of karma. It would be futile to take up arms against what is bound to happen. What is not to happen cannot be brought about even by herculean efforts. This was in 1898. Years later, in the 1940's Devaraja Mudaliar recorded Ramana' s categoric statement that not only the major events in one's life but also the smallest things are pre-determined. From these statements one might erroneously conclude that Ramana regarded destiny as

irrevocable. If so, it would logically follow that free will has no place in the shaping of one's life. Such a view would be quite contrary to the teachings of Ramana where we find the importance of free will being stressed quite often in the context of destiny. He would say that destiny and free will co-exist as long as there is a sense of doership. One transcends them both only when through self-enquiry the feeling of doership ends.

Let us have a close look at the exact domain of destiny and the role of free will in Ramana's teachings. According to Ramana 'destiny concerns only the body'. Identified as we are with the body, it is hard to accept the idea that destiny affects only the body. For the logical implication of such a proposition is that the mind and the body are distinct and separate.

It is therefore necessary to go into this deeply. First we have to ask the question 'Why has the body come into existence at all?' The great ones do not have a karmic cause for their birth. They come for the welfare of the world and can retain the body as long as they wish. Ramana told Rangan that Yama would have to wait and take the permission of a jnani, and only when the jnani is ready to cast off his body can that event happen. As for the normal run of men, birth is part of the cosmic law, as a result of which one goes through the experiences consequent on this ethical balance sheet. It is because of this fact that we find infant mortality, the death of the young, sudden unforeseen deaths and the lingering on of the old. Many people often question God's laws and wisdom when children or the young die. Since, however, the body has come into existence as a result of karma, when that force is exhausted life becomes extinct. We find that the body, linked as it is to a particular karma which gave rise to its birth, comes to an end when that force is over. The mind may well be at the height of its powers, the body in perfect health, but its karma being over, death cannot wait.

We can also look at this from another angle. The great ones have demonstrated in their lives as to how one can completely delink oneself from one's own body and remain unaffected by its changes or sufferings. Ramana's body went through intense pain,

caused by sarcoma, for over fifteen months. Not one moment did he complain of it though the pain must have been excruciating. When asked by Major Chadwick whether he was suffering, Ramana said 'No'. But at the same time, he said 'There is pain' - the pain pertained to the body and not to him. Hence his bewitching smile and divine splendour, even on the 14th April 1950 when he chose to give up his body which had been racked with intense pain.

If the mind and body are distinct and karma refers to the body, one may ask why is it that the mind too appears to be under its sway. This is only because of its attachments. Because of the pull of the past it is unable to dis-identify itself from what destiny brings to the body and is therefore affected by sorrow or joy which karma is yielding. If one learns not to pay attention to the event, if one learns to be detached from it, then where are destiny's pleasures or pangs? This is quite obviously so, for any event can be blown up or belittled by the mind. One may go under its weight or meet the event with equipoise and calm strength. From this arises the first basic point of Ramana that one is free to exercise his will either to identify himself with the event or to be unconcerned with it. His reply to one Mrs. Desai would indicate this clearly. Mrs. Desai, quoting from the Gita, asked Ramana that if one is compelled to do the work for which he is destined, then, the question of free will could not arise at all. Ramana explained to her that it is open to each one to be 'free from the joy or pains, pleasant or unpleasant consequences of the work by not identifying oneself with the body'. Let the body experience its allotted destiny, but it is upto each one to be unaffected mentally by it by exercising free will and untying the bond of attachments.

One has, therefore, to develop through spiritual practice to this state. Even at the very threshold there is freedom. Free will can be exercised to direct action on the right lines. Were it not so there would be no meaning to spiritual injunctions and the code of ethics enjoined therein. One has to discriminate between good and bad, between what is pleasurable and what is liberating, and choose wisely. To believe that one is a helpless victim of karma is to fall into the trap of the mind's making. If only we pause to think we can readily see that it is impossible to be truly passive, to be

a mere onlooker of an event - one's own nature will assert itself in one form of action or the other. When the feeling 'I am the doer' is alive and kicking it will leave no room for rest. Exercise of free will and action are inevitable. Free will has to be channeled in pursuit of such action as would purify the mind and enable one to escape altogether from destiny's shackles.

It is necessary here to clear one point. To say that one must give a purposive turn to action should not be taken to mean that success is assured. A dispirited devotee told Ramana that he had come a couple of years earlier and had cultivated his will power thereafter but had met with a series of failures in his efforts. Ramana clarified that what will result is only the strength of mind which would enable one to react to success or failure with equanimity. He also made it clear that 'will power should not be taken to be synonymous with success'. For, success or failure is the product of destiny, whereas free-will enables one to neutralize it by insulating oneself with an attitudinal change of mind.

Destiny and free-will: their interplay lasts only so long as one does not enquire 'who is it that is bound?' and 'who is it that is free?'. Through constant vichara, ceaseless enquiry, one ends this doership notion. Then both destiny and free-will are cut at their very root as the person to whom they pertain has lost his separate identity. What remains is only the Self, ever liberated, always free.

THOUGHTS AND HAPPINESS

Visitor: I suffer in both body and mind. From the day of my birth I have never had happiness.

Bhagavan: If there should be unrelieved suffering all the time, who would seek happiness? That is, if suffering be the natural state how can the desire to be happy arise at all? However, the desire does arise. So to be happy is natural; all else is unnatural.

- Talks 633 Pages 593-94

In sleep we are happy for there are no thoughts to disturb our happiness. Surely one does not wish to sleep through even the day let alone throughout one's life itself. What is sought is

happiness when one is wide awake. But sleep is certainly a pointer to the link between happiness and absence of thoughts. Ramana says that misery is only the presence of the unwanted thoughts. A weak mind is unable to push out the thoughts which haunt it. One is forced to stay with the thoughts causing sorrow. Sometimes the turmoil of thoughts is unbearable. Thoughts are our ancient legacy following on our heels from life to life. Every action leaves a memory residue which is stored up in the Heart in seed form. Its hold, though latent, is potent for it can become alive at any time, often unexpectedly. The desired objects and circumstances keep changing but the past in the form of tendencies often pulls us in counter directions. Let us suppose that we now want to move Godward. Our thoughts in that direction would be countered by the opposite set of thoughts, arising from past sensate experiences which have been stored up in the memory. So a battle royal follows filling us with disgust and sorrow at our inability to make headway or even to make the full use of the time set apart for meditation. This extends all along the line. A dear one passes away but our attachments do not end. So, even if we want to forget, our thoughts about that person would not let us do so. This is equally true of its opposite, happiness, which is felt at other times when pleasant thoughts come, when the desired object is near or the memory of it is strong. Happiness and sorrow thus keep fluctuating and it is always a mixed bag. In the world of thoughts there can only be pain tainted pleasure and not unalloyed happiness.

The question arises whether it is possible at all to move from transient pleasure to lasting happiness within the mind's framework? It is possible but only to a very limited extent. Through association with the wise, worship of the Supreme, breath-control and other means which are suited to one's temperament, the mind becomes purified and strengthened. It acquires the capacity to ward off thoughts which cause sorrow, either by early detection of their surfacing or by a quick counter-attack of injecting the opposite thoughts. On the positive side, one is able to stay with the desired thoughts for longer spells and enjoy the happiness which flows from them. When desires are fulfilled the mind is stilled for the time being and it then reflects the inherent happiness of the Self.

While a strong mind, a purified mind, thus acquires the capacity to stay happy, this capacity is always brittle, uncertain and circumscribed by 'others' and 'events'. For, we find circumstances are sometimes so overwhelming that we may go under their onslaught. We have a record of such instances in 'Talks'. These also highlight Ramana's guidance in such situations. The Maharani of Baroda came to Ramana in great anguish seeking his blessings against the seemingly impregnable wall of adverse circumstances. Ramana asked T.P.R., who was present in the Hall, to read out and explain to her the meaning of some of the verses from Muruganar's 'Ramana Sannidhi Murai'. The songs were selected with reference to their appropriateness to her state of mind. When she slowly recovered her mental balance, Ramana pointed out to her the advantages of surrender to the guru, and coaxed her to try it out gradually. The Maharajah of Mysore held Ramana in utmost reverence having read about his life and teachings. Yet circumstances of the royal court did not permit his open homage to the Maharshi. He came for a bare fifteen minutes, all the way from Mysore to Tiruvannamalai. Ramana could readily see his need and mood. He literally poured forth his grace. Hence the Maharajah could absorb the potent silence with which Ramana's presence was saturated. Yet again, Pannalal, Administrator of Allahabad Corporation, had come seeking peace which his high office did not give. To him Ramana emphasised the naturalness of happiness. These illustrations indicate that as long as we remain in the mind's domain there is the danger of the mind playing truant and tripping us.

The real solution lies in moving on to a thought free state. When the mind rests at its source then the burden of thoughts is lifted. When a young squirrel was waiting for an opportunity to come out of its nest, Ramana remarked 'All want to rush out. There is no limit to going out. Happiness in objects, in the externalised mind. Ramana is asking us to look in the opposite direction, within, by in-turning the mind. The search for happiness without is inevitable so long as there is the wrong identification of oneself with one's body and mind. For, then one superimposes happiness on persons and events just as erroneously as an 'infatuate lover would foist chastity on a prostitute'. This ignorance has to be tackled if the mind is to be thought-free, if the right path to happiness is to be opened up.

The obstruction being the veil of thoughts, the means to be adopted should be such as would make the mind silent. Once the right means are adopted, happiness untainted by sorrow must come. For, as Ramana would always point out, happiness is natural and unhappiness is not, just as surely as good health is normal and ill health is not. The very seeking of happiness is proof of its naturalness. Else, as Ramana says in this quote, we would be content to stay in sorrow if only that be our lot. Just as one would wish to get rid of a headache and be restored to sound health, so also one would desire to end sorrow and get back to natural happiness.

Self-enquiry is the direct and simple means to arrive at the thought-free state. For it quickly turns the mind inward. Through constant vigilance against marauding thoughts, through persistent self-enquiry one pushes within. As the taste of inner happiness is felt increasingly, the hankering after sensate pleasures weakens and the folly of the old ways is seen in clear light. What begins as a rivulet swells in time into a perennial river and into the vast expanse of the ocean of bliss.

Talk 96 (Excerpt) (Continued)

Consciousness is indeed always with us. Everyone knows 'I am!' No one can deny his own being. The man in deep slumber is not aware; while awake he seems to be aware. But it is the same person. There is no change in the one who slept and the one who is now awake. In deep sleep he was not aware of his body; there was no body-consciousness. In the wakeful state he is aware of his body; there is body-consciousness. Therefore the difference lies in the emergence of body-consciousness and not in any change in the Real Consciousness. The body and body-consciousness arise together and sink together. All this amounts to saying that there are no limitations in deep sleep, whereas there are limitations in the waking state. These limitations are the bondage; the feeling 'The body is I' is the error. This false sense of 'I' must go. The real 'I' is always there. It is here and now. It never appears anew and disappears again. That which is must also persist for ever. That which appears anew will also be lost. Compare deep sleep and waking. The body appears in one state but not in the other. Therefore the body will be lost. The consciousness was pre-existent and will survive the body. In fact, there is no one who does not say 'I am'. The wrong knowledge of 'I am the body' is the cause of all the mischief. This wrong knowledge must go. That is Realisation. Realisation is not acquisition of anything new nor it is a new faculty. It is only removal of all camouflage.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: In the first portion, Bhagavan says that body and body consciousness ARISE AND SINK TOGETHER between the waking and deep-sleep states. In the second part Bhagavan says that the body APPEARS in the waking state but not in deep-sleep. The sadhaka, depending on attachment to the body, can reach the pre-existing Consciousness by discarding the camouflage of body and world as mere APPEARANCE. Self-enquiry makes direct this apparent journey through a solid creation to mere appearance to absorption in the pre-existing Consciousness. Whether one is walking or thinking

that one is walking, the enquiry "Who am I?" turns the attention away from the "solid" or "appearance" to the ever-present "I".

Q: Though I get to the thought free state by other sadhana, I feel emotionally depressed and weak. Even when I practice Self-enquiry, I come to this point and go no further. I start blaming teachers of Self-enquiry and God. I also write articles and give speeches about this incompleteness of Self-enquiry.

A: For whom is this depression? In the modern intellect, there seems to be this phase, for some, where the sadhana has removed intellectual thoughts but has not worked on turning the mind, breath and senses inward. The sadhaka misunderstands the intellectual quietude as Samadhi. When such peace becomes outward turned, it gets emotionally disturbed and dis-empowered in the sensory world. The enquiry should be continued "For whom is this depression?". Make the senses and emotions as mere appearances to be completely absorbed in real Samadhi. That is real Peace. It stays empowered irrespective of circumstances.

Talk 96 (Excerpt)

Maj. Chadwick: I try to shake off the body.

M.: A man shakes off his clothes and remains alone and free. The Self is unlimited and is not confined to the body. How can the body be shaken off? Where will he leave it? Wherever it is, it is his still.

Maj. Chadwick:(Laughter.)

M.: The ultimate Truth is so simple. It is nothing more than being in the pristine state. This is all that need be said.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: Bhagavan is teaching liberation even while the body is subsisting. The path to drop off the body is to Turn Inward. This Turning Inward helps shrug off the various sheaths apparently covering the Self. To be the Sphurana shining within the "I" thought which itself is subtle body when outward turned and causal body when inward turned without consciousness. To be the Sphurana, the pristine state, without thought of annamaya, pranamaya, manomaya, vijnamaya and anandamaya bodies itself is to shrug-off the "body". "Who am I?", will not forsake the sadhaka till the pristine state is abided in.

Q: You mean to say that all my problems in the sensory world are transcended by merely turning inward?

A: Have you not heard the song "when the dog barks, when the bee stings and when I am sad... I think of my favourite things...". Have you not heard of anger being transcended by mere observation of breath? These are temporary. However, they indicate the direction of true happiness. Hold the "I". "For whom is this thought?" Transcend all the bodies and worlds with inner-strength alone. Be the Self.

Q: Then why does a sensory action bring so much pleasure?

A: Body, breath, mind, intellect and ego all gather up concentration on that one action. When achieved, all these relax completely and the ego returns to the Source as a recoil. It is the natural happiness of the Source which is now attributed to the sensory object, out of ignorance.

Q: I was referring to the happiness I get when I listen to music for an hour or do my office work which I love, which is felt even when the work is going on, for hours...

A: Even here though the intellect, mind, breath and body may be working, the ego is relatively still. This relative stillness makes it experience the peace of the Self indirectly. That is why it is said, "Kayakave Kailasa", "Work is worship". With maturity and clarity so earned, one turns inward.

Talk 96 (Excerpt)

M.: The ultimate Truth is so simple. IT IS NOTHING MORE THAN BEING IN THE PRISTINE STATE. This is all that need be said.

Still, it is a wonder that to teach this simple Truth there should come into being so many religions, creeds, methods and disputes among them and so on! Oh the pity! Oh the pity!

Maj. Chadwick: But people will not be content with simplicity; they want complexity.

M.: Quite so. Because they want something elaborate and attractive and puzzling, so many religions have come into existence and each of them is so complex and each creed in each religion has its own adherents and antagonists.

For example, an ordinary Christian will not be satisfied unless he is told that God is somewhere in the far-off Heavens not to be reached by us unaided. Christ alone knew Him and Christ alone can guide us. Worship Christ and be saved. If told the simple truth - "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you" - he is not satisfied and will read complex and far-fetched meanings in such statements. Mature minds alone can grasp the simple Truth in all its nakedness.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: *The simple truth is: BEING IN THE PRISTINE STATE OF CONSCIOUSNESS WHERE THERE IS NO DIVISION BETWEEN THE WORSHIPPER AND THE WORSHIPPED.*

Kabir Speaks of this Pristine State... Sahaj Samadhi bhali hai. Kabir has written a beautiful mystical song 'Sadho sahaj Samadhi bhali hai.' He says, "Wherever I go, it is parikarma; whatever I do, it is puja. It doesn't matter if it is home or forest after moving beyond the duality. Don't close the eyes and the ears, don't give pain to the body; just look at eternity with open eyes and marvel at its magnificence and splendour." The whole thing is happening effortlessly and spontaneously. Kabir continues, "I am in eternal meditation after transcending the desires; I remains always in absolute communion."

Q: But I have crossed the "worship stage". I am doing Self Enquiry. If you had said that the division between seer and seen or Knower and knowledge vanishes, it is acceptable to me...

A: Though one is seeking the Self within, is not every effort by every limited being an act of worship? Self-Enquiry is indeed an effort to remove the division between the worshipper and the worshipped.

Talk 96 (Excerpt)

Maj. Chadwick later expressed a certain involuntary fear while meditating. He feels the spirit separated from the gross body and the sensation creates a fright.

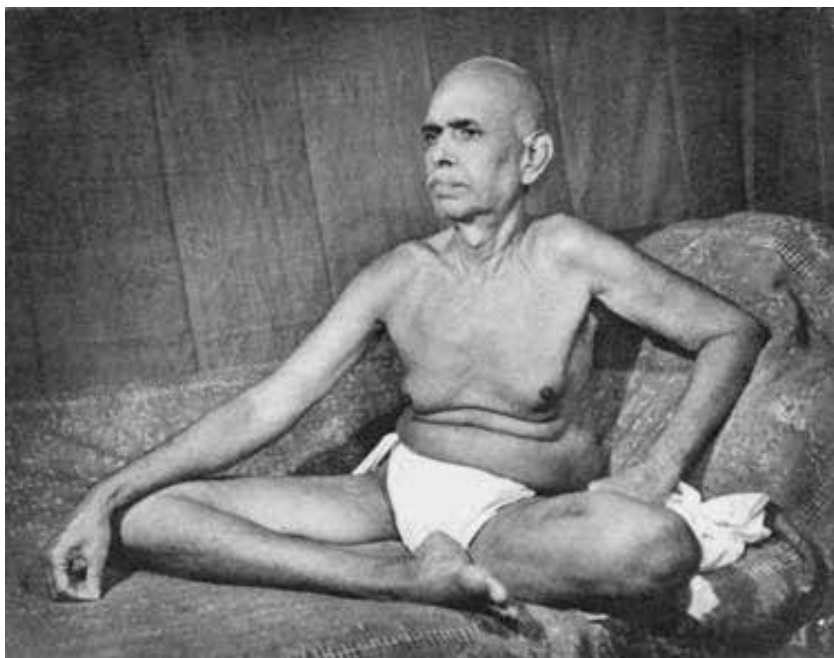
M.: To whom is the fright? It is all due to the habit of identifying the body with the Self. Repeated experience of separation will make one familiar and the fright will cease.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: *The dropping of limited nature and meeting the unlimited source of Shakti (power) and Shanti (peace) in meditation or vichara may cause fear. Repeated parichaya (getting*

introduced and becoming familiar) happens through relentless practice. Erase all fear and false power. Real empowerment and Real peace are only the Self. Abide as the limitless Self.

Q: *Can't I use my intellect to stay empowered?*

A: *It has been tried by great tapasvis like Ravana and Hiranyakashipu who sought limitless power by trying to cover all possibilities against the destruction of their ego or separate self. The Supreme defeats the intellect. Moreover, intellect and ego are powerless even in deep-sleep. Voluntary dropping of the separate identity alone is real empowerment against involuntary fear. It is real peace of the limitless Self which consumes all separations and illusory power.*



sOham-vicAro vapur-Atma-bhAve
 sAhAyyakArl para-mArgaNasya |
 svAtmaikya-siddhau sa punar-nirartho
 yathA naratva-pramitir-narasya || 36 ||

**The “He am I” inquiry, when in the “body is the Self ” state (conception),
 Is helpful for the search for (the path to) the Supreme.
 In the true Self (one’s own Self) Oneness
 Accomplishment, that again is purposeless (useless, meaningless),
 Just as the correct notion (conception) of man-ness (manhood) of a man.**

N.: If you are within the context of the conception, or state of, “I am the body,” meditation on “He am I,” or “That am I” can be helpful. For a man, the idea of “manhood,” or of “being a man,” is redundant. The fact is obvious. To think, “I am a man,” does not make one more a man. It is redundant. In the same way, to think, “I am the Self,” “I am Siva,” and “I am Brahman,” is redundant. “Siva,” “Brahman,” “He,” and “That,” are terms for the Self, and the Self is what you are. If you think that you are the body, the instruction and meditation upon “That I am” is very helpful. There is no doubt about it. Yet, when illusion is dismissed, that is, when the ignorant conception of being the body is dismissed, the positive assertions or affirmations that “I am the Self,” are seen to be like a man repeating, “I am a man.” It is not needed. Therefore, the primary approach is the negation of the false conception of an ego and the misidentification with the body. If this much is accomplished, the Truth of such statements, “Soham,” “He am I,” are abundantly clear, without any repetition of the same and without any thinking about it. There is, instead, the deeper Knowledge of your own Existence as it is.

Just as the notion of the manhood of a man is simply redundant, so, the Maharshi says, the spiritual notion is

“purposeless, meaningless, useless,” and inapplicable to the spiritual Knowledge of the Self. The statements, or the thoughts, “I am He,” “I am That,” “I am the Self,” and so forth and so on are redundant for one who has the direct, interior experience. The statements may be of help in instruction and for purposes of reflection and meditation while on the path to realizing the Self, but, once that Self is realized in the “Oneness accomplishment,” in which there is no division between meditator and That upon which one meditates, in that undifferentiated state, what would be the significance of thinking, “I am the Self?”

The state of Self-Realization, therefore, is not a state of consistent thinking along even the loftiest of spiritual lines. It is certainly not a state of thinking to the contrary, that one is not the Self and not Siva. It is a different kind of knowledge. It is non - thought Knowledge.

If you are a human being, and you know that you are a human being, thinking that you are a human being is rather purposeless, is it not? Thinking that you are a human being does not make it any more so. If you stop thinking that you are a human being, you don't become any less of a human being. Elsewhere, the Maharshi has pointed out that if there is a doubt, so that you think that you are something else, such as a cow or a water buffalo, it may be useful to think that you are a human being, but, he adds, of course, no one would think, “I am a cow or water buffalo.” It is absurd. If you think, “I do not exist,” it may be helpful to remind yourself, “I am the Self. I do exist,” but do you actually ever think, “I do not exist”? The entire inquiry and the fruit of inquiry, which is pure Knowledge, are thought transcendent. The Knowledge is quite beyond all the thoughts to the contrary, and it is quite beyond all the affirmations in the mind that are expressions of it.

Q.: It seems that meditation starts with thought as an intention.

N.: Does it start with a thought or with an intention?

Q.: With an intention.

N.: Where is the source of the intention?

Q.: Intention must come from that depth, which is the Self.

N.: So, meditation starts in the depth of the Self, which is beyond thought.

Q.: Then, thought turns its wheels.

N.: In itself, that may not be harmful if the wheels are turning in the right direction. The actual meditation of inquiry occurs at a level that cannot be described as thinking.

Q.: First there is the intention, and then something deeper takes over.

N.: When “something deeper takes over,” that actually is the meditation, is it not?

Q.: Yes.

N.: Without that “something deeper,” if you think, “Soham, Sivoam, Aham-brahmasmi,” but you do not have that depth of intention to meditate, what will it be? It will be hollow, will it not? If the actual meditation depth does occur, thinking those thoughts are not harmful. They are somewhat redundant and are not doing anything more for the meditation.

Q.: The important part is the depth of meditation. The thoughts seem to help in some way.

N.: How do they help?

Q.: They help as aids to remember the teaching, which is deep.

N.: How do you remember it? The Maharshi asked this in the invocation.

Q.: It must be the experience. It always comes to the depth of experience.

N.: Remembrance is truly the deeper Knowledge and never the thoughts. Were the mahavakyas and other declarations of Truth, such as Soham, originally uttered as thoughts or as a declarations of pristine experience? Were they not declarations of profound Realization beyond the domain of thought that was given expression so that the expressed would be realized by the one who hears it?

Q.: That is a perfect description of the Truth of the Maharshi's words and the explanations of the text.

N.: All of it is from and for the depth of real Knowledge, which is true experience. The mere repetition of the words is not of much significance. If we have the depth of Knowledge, the words are, at best, expressions. What really occurs now? Is it words? Is it thoughts? What is actually occurring for you?

Q.: It clearly is not words. Without experience, reading a spiritual book and an electrical engineering book are almost equivalent. They both rest in thought.

N.: So, spiritual literature is to be read in a different way. It is not merely the collection of ideas. The topic is always something that is nonobjective, that is, not a thing. When you read an electrical engineering book, you learn something about a topic, and hopefully it is applicable to what you are doing. When you read a profound spiritual work and come to an understanding of its meaning, you have become the author. So, if you read Sri Bhagavan's verses, and you really absorb the meaning, you are, by virtue of that meaning, absorbed. You become the Truth that has been indicated. The author, himself, stands as that Truth, so you have become the author. That does not usually happen with electrical engineering books. (laughter)

Q.: In the selection of the verses in this book, it did not matter if they were composed by the Maharshi or someone else. It is the depth that mattered most.

N.: In the text known as the Anubandham, the Supplement to the Forty Verses, many of the verses were derived from other works, such as Yoga Vasistha. Though they can be found in other works, they are still his words. When differences disappear, it is revealed that you, yourself, are the source of the Vedas. Of course, you cannot say that from the individual standpoint, but when individuality is no more and only Brahman remains, you, yourself, are the Origin. Is it possible for the Origin not to know what he, himself, has said? However, in this verse, the Maharshi elucidates the point that it is not necessary for the jnani to repeat it any more, since he is what he knows, and he cannot forget himself.

dvaitam vicAre paramArtha-bodhe
 tvadvaitam-ityeSha na sAdhu-vAdah |
 gaveShaNAt-prAg-dashame vinaShThe
 pashcAc-ca labdhe dashamatvam-ekam || 37 ||

“Duality in inquiry, but in the Knowledge of the Supreme Truth, Nonduality,” thus. This is not good (holy) speech (doctrine, advice, proposition). Prior to the search, when the tenth [man] was lost, And after, when found, the tenth-ness is one (that one only, the same).

N.: The Self is not elsewhere. It is ever existent. In the Vedanta parable of the ten fellows who crossed a stream, the tenth man was never really lost. Likewise, the Self has never actually been lost. The Self has always existed, and you have always been the Self. The ideas that you are different from the Self and that the experience of the Self has been diminished or is at a distance or is in the future or is in the past are as erroneous as the idea that the tenth man is missing. The tenth man was never missing. The Self has never been missing. If you think it is missing, count again, but count yourself this time. That is, pay attention to who you are. You will find the Self to be your only self.

The Maharshi critiques the idea that there is dualism in practice and Nonduality at the end. It is “not good advice.” It is “not a good proposition.” It is “not holy doctrine.” Nonduality is the Truth in the beginning, the middle, and the end. That which is regarded as the end is actually the starting place. The practice of the inquiry that attempts to realize the Self occurs entirely within this sphere, or the context, of the Self's Existence. You are involved in a search to find the satsang hall, and you are in the satsang hall. All of your moving about and investigating here, looking for the satsang hall, is in the satsang hall. Likewise, all of the practice, inquiry, and meditation are in the Self and by the Light of the Self. That one nondual Self is always present. It is ever existent. You can never be outside of it. It can never be other than what you are. Nonduality is the Truth, before the beginning, all through, and after the end. It is immutable.

In the story of the ten men who ford a stream and counted nine when on the other side, at no point was the tenth man lost. The tenth-ness, his existence, was the same from beginning to end. It did not increase or decrease at all. Just so is it with the nondual nature of the Self. The Maharshi instructs that the idea that there is duality in inquiry and Nonduality at the end is not good and is not holy. What is holy is directly expressive of the Absolute. This dualistic conception does not lead to the highest good, so it is not good. It is not good advice to give or to take. It is not good doctrine to follow. It is not a good proposition to consider. It is not holy speech.

Nonduality is in the beginning, the middle, and the end. Just as the tenth man was there from the start, your Self, which is the nondual Truth, is present from the start. It is delusive to say, "There will be nondual realization at the end, but I must start with where I am." Where are you? That is the question to ask. Where are you? Who are you? There is no point in saying that we must delay the nonduality of the Truth and assume duality, or illusion, to be valid for the time being. If one would take that approach, when would it ever end? One would never catch up to the tenth man.

As in the story, one has to start with counting oneself. In inquiry, you start with yourself. The inquiry is into the nature of the inquirer. "Duality in inquiry": there is no duality in inquiry. In non-inquiry, there is plenty of duality. In inquiry, from the start, it is the Light of your own Consciousness shining inwardly to know its own nature. It is a matter of your own Being reposing in itself. From the start, it is your own Existence and the inherent Knowledge of existing that form the core of the inquiry.

Therefore, your inquiry does not take you from a real duality to a real Nonduality. Inquiry dismisses the delusion of duality and shows Nonduality to be the Truth. Since inquiry depends on nothing but your Existence, it is nondual from start to finish. The old adage is that the way of the world is sweet in the beginning but bitter in the end, while the spiritual way seems bitter in the beginning, because of its renunciation, but is sweet in the end. What the Maharshi has revealed is sweet in the beginning and sweet in the middle and sweet in the end. It is complete.

Skanda Ramana – a verse explored

G Kameshwar

Once, in answer to a devotee's question as to why the marks of Lord Muruga were not visible in Ramana, Bhagavan wrote a beautiful Tamil *veNpA*.

murukan cinnangal

*vEluNTE cOtikuNa veRpuNTE annaiyaruT
pAluNTE panniranTu pAkuNTE - neeluNTE
Eykkumana mAmayiluN TEvulaki lERamaNan
RAykkukki vAzhaLaviR RAn.*

The original English translation of this verse, as given in “The Collected Works of Sri Ramana Maharshi”, reads as follows:¹

Marks of Muruga

*The javelin, the bright eastern hill, the mother's
Milk of grace, the twelve arms, the big blue
Peacock, mind-beguiling, all these are in
The measure that one lives in the world in fear
Of Ramana the Mother (in fear of Ramana's mother).*

With prostrations to Bhagavan Ramana who is none other than Lord Muruga Himself, let us explore this verse of His, to see if it yields any further or other meanings.

vElunTE is straightforward. Bhagavan says – “Yes! The *vEl* (spear) is there!” What is the function of this *vEl*? It destroys *ajnAna* – the false identification of the Self as the non-Self. We can take it that this spear represents *Jnana* (Self-Knowledge). And so, the statement may be translated as “Yes, the spear (of Self-Knowledge) exists!”

cOtikuNa veRpuNTE: In the original translation above, this is expressed as ‘the bright eastern hill (is there)’. Here ‘*kuNa*’ is taken as ‘East’. ‘*kuNa*’ also means ‘quality’ or ‘nature’. The words *cOtikuNa vErpu* can also be rendered as ‘the hill, which is of the nature of effulgence’. In other words, this can be viewed as referring to

¹ ‘The Collected Works of Sri Ramana Maharshi’, published by Sri Ramanasramam, Tenth revised edition 2007, page 145

Arunachala hill – which is Arunachaleshwara, i.e., Shiva, Muruga's father, in the form of the mountain Arunachala. So, the statement here is, "Yes! Arunachala, the hill of effulgence, is there!"

annaiyarUT pAlunTE: In the original translation, this has been rendered as "the mother's milk of grace (is there)". This 'mother' may well refer to the consort of Arunachaleshwara. She, is known known in Tamizh as '*uNNAmulai amman*', and in Sanskrit as '*apeetakucAmba*' – meaning, 'Mother, who has unsuckled breasts'. The reference here is to Parvati, who left Kailasa and came alone to Arunachala to do penance. There, she got united with the lord Arunachaleshwara and he named her *uNNAmulai* (having unsuckled breasts) for she had left her son and had come down to the earth to atone for her mistake. It is believed that Murukan also worshipped Annamalai while he was on the mission of destroying the asura Soorapadma². In this verse of Bhagavan, the reference to '*annaiyarUT pAl*' could well point to the 'milk of Grace' of *uNNAmulai amman*, the 'mother, who has unsuckled breasts'. So, the statement '*annaiyarUT pAlunTE*' could mean – "Yes! There is the milk of Grace of Mother *uNNAmulai*".

panniraNTu pAkunTE: Meaning is straightforward. "Yes! (the) Twelve hands (of Muruga), are there!". Muruga is known as 'Shanmukha' / 'Arumugan', the one with six faces. And therefore, he has twelve hands. The six faces of Muruga are said to be a combination of the five faces of Shiva, and one face of Parvati. The sixth face (that of Parvati) is known as "Adhomukham", and is believed to be visible only to the enlightened beings. By saying that 'The twelve hands are there', Bhagavan is also stating that 'the six faces are there!'. Arunachala, being Ardhanareeshwara, the combination of Shiva and Shakti, has six faces. Five faces are visible to all. We can see the five faces of Arunachala from Panchamukha shrine in the Giripradakshinam route. The sixth face is not visible to us. It can be seen only by Jnani-s. In sum, Arunachala is not just Shiva; Arunachala is Shiva plus Shakti; and therefore, is also the six faced Murugan (who is none other than Bhagavan Sri Ramana). The great sage of Himalaya, Swami Sivanananda has said: "The six faces may also be taken to indicate the six Chakras or the centres of energy in the human body which

² <https://www.wisdomlib.org/definition/unnamulai>

are known to Yogis. The twelve arms show that He alone creates, preserves, destroys, hides and blesses – in fact does everything in the world.”³ Bhagavan is saying that these twelve arms exist (everything in the world is being done by these twelve hands)!

neeluNTE Eykkumana mAmayil: The original translation renders this as – ‘the big blue Peacock, mind-beguiling (is there)’. ‘*neela mAmayil*’ can be rendered as the ‘dark-blue peacock’, or as ‘the blue, great, peacock’. ‘*Eykkumana*’ means the ‘deceitful mind’, or the ‘mind deceiving’. It is egoism, mind, the false “I”-notion. It is that which projects the illusory universe, and superimposes the non-Self as the Self. It dazzles and deceives. Muruga’s vehicle or Vahana is the peacock – this dazzling, deceiving, mind/ egoism. And by riding this, it is seen that Muruga has entirely conquered egoism/mind. And so, his peacock is the pure-mind. Bhagavan says – “Yes! The deceiver-mind (or mind-deceiving), great, dark-blue peacock, is there!”.

uNTE ulakilE ramaNan tAy kukki vAzh aLaviL tAn: In the original translation, this has been rendered as – ‘all these are in the measure that one lives in the world in fear of Ramana the Mother (in fear of Ramana’s mother).’ The sense of this translation is not very clear. Let us explore and see if this statement ‘*uNTE ulakilE... aLaviL tAn*’ yields any other interpretation. Up until this statement, Bhagavan has affirmed the existence of all the signs of Murugan – the *vEl* (spear of Jnana), the Hill (Arunachala), the mother’s milk of Grace (of Apeetakuchamba), the twelve hands, and the great blue peacock (the conquered mind). All these are ‘divine’ attributes of Murugan. Where are all these to be seen in this physical world? The answer is – ‘*uNTE ulakilE ramaNan tAy kukki vAzh aLaviL tAn*’ – All these exist in the sameness of measure as the abidance of Ramana in his ‘*tAy kukki*’. Tamil word ‘*kukki*’ is the Sanskrit ‘*kukshi*’, meaning belly / womb / cavern. ‘*tAy kukki*’ refers to mother’s womb. ‘*vAzh aLaviL taan*’ – means, ‘in the same measure, only in the abidance’. Taken together, ‘*uNTE ulakilE ramaNan tAy kukki vAzh aLaviL tAn*’ means – ‘they exist in this world, in the same measure, only in the abidance of Ramana in his mother’s womb’.

³ <https://www.dlshq.org/download/shanmukha.htm>

Perhaps this verse was composed during the time Ramana was staying in the 'Virupaksha cave', and the "mother's womb" here refers to the 'cavern of the mother', i.e., the Virupaksha cave. Bhagavan Ramana, in his composition on Virupaksha cave has referred to it as 'mother'. The verse (in translation) reads:

Virupaksha Cave

The formless and imperishable Being stands revealed in this my Aruna Hill, the embodied Presence of the three-eyed God. Since the Virupaksha Cave sustains the devotees themselves who dwell within the Heart-cave of that God, well may we call it Mother.⁴

And so, the sense is – "All the divine attributes of Murugan, can be seen in this world in the same measure, only in the abidance of Ramana in the mother's cave, Virupaksha, in Arunachala hill'.

If not Virupaksha, it could well be Skandasramam cave. The very name Skandasramam indicates that it is the abidance of Skanda Muruga. In Ramana Ashtottiram, Skandasramam is described as shONAcala-hRdbhUta – the heart of Arunachala.

Indeed, Murugan is known as Guha, the 'cave dweller'. And so, Ramana's abidance in Virupaksha cave (or Skandasramam, or any other cave of Arunachala), the cavern of the mother, the heart-cave of Shiva, is but the abidance of Muruga with all his divine attributes.

Taking all these together, a suggested interpretation of the verse is given below:

Marks of Muruga

Yes! The spear (of Self-Knowledge) exists!

Yes! The hill of effulgence (aNNAmalai / Arunachala) exists!

Yes! The milk of Grace of Mother (apeetakucAmba / uNNAmulai) exists!

Yes! The twelve arms (of the All-Doer, six-faced Muruga) exist!

4 Refer 'The Collected Works of Sri Ramana Maharshi'

*Yes! Exists the great, dark-blue peacock;
 the mind-deceiving / deceiver-mind!
 Yes! Where else in this world
 Do all these (divine attributes of Muruga) exist,
 in equal measure,
 Except in the abidance of Ramana
 in mother's womb
 (the Virupaksha cave,
 the heart-cave of Arunachala)!*

In conclusion, we can also look at another verse on Lord Muruga composed by Bhagavan Ramana, where the sense is in similar lines.

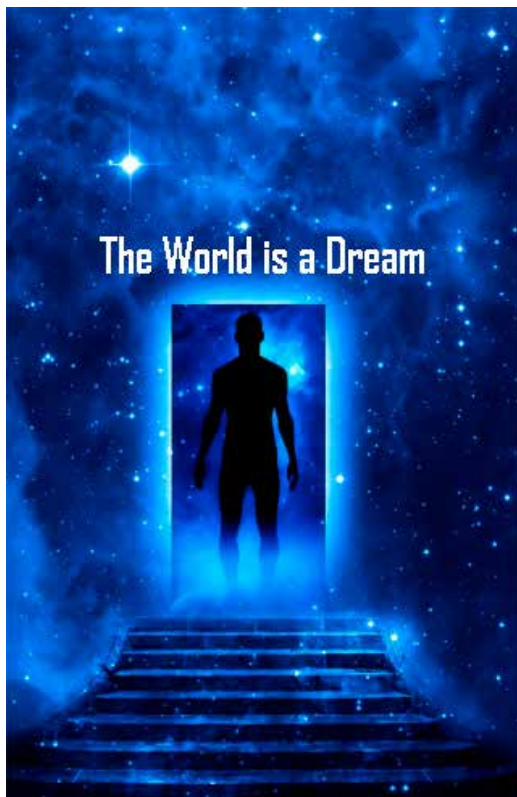
Once, TK Sundaresa Iyer, an ardent devotee of Bhagavan, requested Bhagavan to write a Tamil verse translation of a Sanskrit shloka on Lord Muruga, with the substitution of 'Ramana' for 'Muruga'. Bhagavan wrote:

*aRavOr iruLai azhippOn
 kukaiyiL uRaivOn aLattaRkoNatOn
 niRai-oLiyOn AticEy jnAnavayilOn
 guharamaNa nAtanai EttuvOm-yAm*

*Destroyer of the darkness (of ajNana) in the righteous;
 Dweller in the cave;
 Immeasurable, imperishable,
 Fullness, Effulgence,
 Skanda, the child Supreme,
 Wielder of the vEl (spear)
 of jnAna (Self-Knowledge);*

*Him
 Sadguru Ramana, Lord Supreme,
 Let us extol!*

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya!



- So long as the dream lasts everything you see and feel in it is real.
- All this talk about inconsistencies in the dream world arises only now when you are awake. While you are dreaming, the dream was a perfectly integrated whole.
- The sensations you now have get coordinated to give the impression that that world is real.

Swallowed by Ramana's Silence

Sri S.Krishnaswamy

Sri S.Krishnaswamy was the Founder Secretary of Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning and a soul mate of the Founder President, Sri A.R.Natarajan. If ARN gave the welcome address in the inaugural function of Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning, SK gave the vote of thanks. Rejoicing at the birth of the Centre, supporting its toddler steps, striding along with its youthful strides and sitting back and watching it approach adulthood, giving the necessary erudite and intuitive insights at the appropriate moments, he has been a powerful blessing in the Centre's life of four decades. Having been a co-signatory in the Centre's Memorandum of Association, he had a crystal clear awareness of its vision and mission and continued to guide the Centre for more than a decade after the absorption of its Founder President. He was blessed with an extraordinary intellect and more blessed with surrender that rendered the intellect pure and creative.

His understanding of the purpose of the Centre stemmed from his in-depth understanding of the power of Bhagavan Ramana's Presence and teachings. In a speech of his, Sri Krishnaswamy said that Bhagavan's silence, his mouna was such that it would turn the individual inside-out, consume one totally and completely wash away the very existence of sorrow. Quoting the instance of Echamma, he said that while there can be no price for truth, truth being invaluable, yet sometimes the price for truth may seem to be immense sorrow. But when one comes into the presence of Ramana and experiences the boundless bliss every price becomes worth paying. There is no way to counter destiny, he pointed out, other than to go back within to the source through the non-intellectual cognitive enquiry 'Who am I?' and to abide as the Self. He said the only way to reach God is through love, love and love. For nurturing this love, the temple is one way, music is another, he said. And he lived in that love by loving everything that he did and ever remembering Ramana as the essence of everything that he loved. In answer to his son-in-law's message of prayer SK replied from the hospital bed 'My Ramana always'.

Our Founder Secretary was absorbed into the Silence of Bhagavan on Friday, the 16th of April 2021. We bring below his speech on the 'Founder's Day 2014' in which he encapsulates his in-depth understanding of Ramana and of the Ramana Maharshi Centre.

- Editor

It gives me great pleasure in being a part of today's function - celebrating the Founder's Day. It is worth recalling the birth of an institution which is 35 years old and very vibrant and going strong under the dynamic leadership of Dr.Sarada.

It was in 1977, nearly 37 years ago, a south Indian family descended on Bangalore. People did not know that they had a mission on hand and a mandate on their shoulders. It was Mr.A.R.Natarajan and his family, the young and energetic family. One side of it was that Mr.Natarajan was being transferred as Commissioner of Income Tax – Bangalore, that was one part of it, only professionals were interested in that. There was the other part. The mandate and the mission that they had. They immediately got into action, as soon as they descended on Bangalore.

It was in the form of Satsangs in various devotees' houses. In one such house – Mr.Shankaranarayan's house, I believe I met him (Mr.Natarajan) for the first time. I had already met him as the Commissioner of Income Tax. He was a person of high personal manners and impeccable integrity. And therefore, he endeared himself to all those who knew him and all those who were about to know him. And so, by God' grace I soon got associated with him. Within a matter of two years the Satsangs got into a shape, a legal form, a society was formed and was called Ramana Centre for Learning.

The first inaugural session was in Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan and the chief guest was



Sri Chinmayanandji. Chinmayanandji was astonished – ‘Ramana Centre for Learning’ is it? Ramana is associated with silence I thought, not learning. I am surprised that, I speak, speak and speak all the time and you want me to speak on a man who taught silence.... this is something that I cannot understand - he said. I had the privilege of proposing vote of thanks and in a lighter vein I said, ‘We have a messiah for those who are hungry for philosophical education and here is a person who has conducted several Gita Yagnas. Through Gita Yagnas he has put millions of people into silence and therefore it is very appropriate that such a person should be called upon to inaugurate this centre.’ But the silence I spoke about that day is not the silence of Ramana Maharshi.

One has to understand silence when it comes to a Maharshi. I can relate my own experience. Dr.Sarada referred to my association with Sringeri Mutt. Mr.Natarajan himself had an association with the Sringeri Gurus, he had association with the Ramakrishna Monks, he had a spiritual bent of mind and therefore when he came to Bangalore, people not only accepted his leadership qualities, his organizational abilities and also his level of credibility. He had soaked himself in Ramana Literature. He was a fundamentalist in that – he had absolute clarity of thoughts, impeccable commitment to the Ramana movement and when I associated myself with him, I also started delving into Ramana Literature. Prior to that I had very scanty familiarity with it. But I knew what silence is all about.

It was in Sringeri one day across the river Tunga, that people said Chandrashekara Bharati was a Jeevan Muktha, he had come out of his Antarmukhi state and was available for darshan. I was thrilled. I thought I would never see God in this lifetime. What is the use of reading all Vedic Literature, philosophical literature? You can read any literature, get illumined by it, get entertained by it ... possible. But one thing you and I cannot do is to see God. That day when he came out and I saw him, the thrill I experienced is inexplicable. People around me were saying to me, “What Sir! What Sir!”. Perhaps they were stunned by the way I stood transfixed. You see someone and your whole system gets turned inside out, you see something coming out – you say the

Atman, you say Atmanubhava, Atma darshan, whatever you call it. Something tremendous, he was an abode of silence, complete silence, the silence that can wash away all your sufferings, all your pain, all your wrong notions of this life, wash away everything and leave you just as you are.

Suddenly I wondered what merit I had to see this person. He was 'speechless', without speaking a word, simply standing static, without any dimension, you feel he is not attached to earth. He was a Jeevan Mukta. You cannot understand a Jeevan Mukta unless you see one, unless you confront one. He simply turned you inside out. What is a Guru? Swami Vivekananda says a Guru is externalised Atman. If you want to see Atman, how can you see? How can you experience Atman? How can it come in a form intelligible to you? Our senses have limited perceptions, limited cognition abilities. One cannot imagine. This is beyond imagination, beyond thinking, beyond a thought process.

You have heard in Tripura Rahasya it says, face to face with a tiger, the mind sets aside, goes aside and you run. Instinctively you run, that is instinct, that is fear. When suffering overtakes you, you forget the entire life, all your thoughts recede, allowing you to suffer, because the mind does not want to work at that time. These are different states of silence, when you are simply silenced by terror, simply silenced by suffering. There is another way - when you are silenced by something that illumines your thoughts. Something that fills you totally with joy. All your sufferings are awash in a moment as if. Therefore, that sense of silence, that perception of silence is something that I can never forget. Now I know what exactly is silence. It is not of the spoken word. Silence is not to be associated with dullness. It is not Jada. It is not passive. It is very creative. The creative spark within you is ignited. So, let us not confuse the silence which I mentioned in the vote of thanks, the silence of a mind amazed, stilled for a while, and the silence I perceived when I was face to face with a Jeevan Mukta. That was beyond mental dimensions.

Therefore with this background of silence, this silence associated with Ramana Maharshi, then I thought there is more to

this Ramana Movement which Mr.A.R Natarajan was addicted to. That is the correct word. For example, take the case of Echammal, when she first came to Bhagavan she had a tale of tears. There comes a moment in everyone's life, for God is not in hurry, when whatever you are doing in life seems to be failing you, whatever you are doing in life does not solve your problems, whatever you are doing in life, suffering stares at you. What can you do at that point of time? Is there some inadequacy in what you are doing? What is that insufficiency? That small spark of divine light, that small help that you are seeking, who will give that to you? I am inadequate, I am insufficient I know. I am inadequate in my prayers. I am insufficient in my understanding the whole concept of God. God wants only love. He does not want anything else. He does not want any price, but suffering is the price that you pay sometimes to achieve something far greater than suffering. So, when Echammal was face to face with Bhagavan what happened was all her sorrow appeared to be trivial compared to the flood gates of joy that immediately opened. Her whole suffering was washed. It was nowhere there. Suddenly she felt that the price she had paid for this was worth indeed. This was the first incident.

How do you come to have the darshan of a Jeevan Mukta? Second, see here there is a duality. Bhagavan tells Devaraj Mudaliar that everything is pre-determined. My speaking to you is pre-determined, putting on a switch is determined, you people listening to me is also pre-determined. Everything is pre-determined. It is part of your karma, prarabdha karma. So, Devaraja Mudaliar asks, "Is there no escape from this?" This is the same confrontation between Arjuna and Krishna. Is there freedom of choice or is it determinism? Bhagavan answers both questions. Determinism – everything is pre-determined. You cannot battle it out. Bhagavan says so. So, say hot showers on your body are pre-determined, the guru can only put cold showers on that, but the hot showers will be there.

The freedom of choice, Krishna says you have is to go back to your source. Identify the non-self from the Self. This is the core of the Ramana philosophy. He has repeatedly said Who am I – enquiry. This is not an intellectual enquiry. It is some sort of a cognitive enquiry. All the 650 chemicals or 3-4 lakhs genes in

the human brain should be attuned to this freedom. The freedom being going to the source and saying this is not my self. Karma is not my path of life. I have some other part. I can only go to the source. Enquiry is the only freedom of choice. You do not have any other choice.

So, what do you do in a circumstance like this? How do you get hold of a Jeevan Muktha so that you can get rid of all your sufferings and you find your true identity? So, then it occurred to Mr.A.R.Natarajan that we should have a shrine, we should have a temple. We should have a place where this kind of vibration is created within the devotees and therefore, he tried hard to get a site for Ramana Maharshi for Learning. I am witness to the efforts that he put to get a site and put up construction there. And then the question was what kind of shape this temple should have? Should it look like a mountain or should we scoop portions of a mountain and build a temple within. Some sort of a thing like this. An architect Mr.Srinivasan from Madras came and gave this design. And it was approved and within a matter of two years the Shrine came into existence.



During the bhoomi puja and later the inauguration of the Shrine.





And then there is a long story. The Centenary celebrations were to be carried out. And it was fortunate that we had Mr.Natarajan as the Secretary of the Celebrations, and Bangalore took the centre stage in the celebrations. In the centre stage there were many things to be done.

There was a musical group that was going around all the houses during Satsangs. Satsang is nothing but association with the truth. Now, there are many methods, many modalities to reach God, to reach Bhagavan, to reach Ramana Maharshi. One is what the invocation taught you, through music. Through music you can entertain and through entertainment pass on a message. Entertain the mind and in the guise of entertaining the mind, you should deceive the mind and see that it gets a sprinkling of music, some sprinkling of God's message, some sprinkling of a method of love towards God. How do you love God? Through music.

And then the nucleus that was formed through the Satsangs shaped into Ramananjali Group under the able leadership of Smt. Sulochana Natarajan, who had a fantastic musical background. She could sing, she could compose, she could bring together people, teach them. She had many traits. Like many strands in a cable – the audio, the video etc... So, she was the musical cable of Ramananjali. Ramananjali is going to celebrate its 500th concert shortly and we are very happy about it.

Thereafter the Centenary celebrations started. As part of it we had a series of conferences, a series of workshops, a series of publications, a series of symposiums. And that is how the Ramana movement was built in Bangalore.



Afterwards his (A.R.Natarajan's) idea was to have another centre for Ramana – the Heritage Centre. As the name suggests it means one that you inherit. The inherited values should be embodied in a place where they can be demonstrated. A temple we say is a place where there is demonstration of the truth of the Vedas and Upanishads. It is a demonstration centre. You need a centre where you demonstrate the teachings of Ramana Maharshi in various methods and modes most appealing to the devotees. The

Heritage Centre came into existence after a hard struggle. We had a site which got cancelled. On that day I was in Natarajan's chamber. He broke down, he cried like a child. And thereafter he persisted. His persistence paid and we have a beautiful building, the Ramana Heritage Centre where cultural activities are being carried on. Dr.Sarada said I should speak something about Ramana philosophy, I know how limited my knowledge is about the same and it is spoken by people better equipped in that direction. Thank you.



Sri Krishnaswamy with Sri Ananth Kumar during the opening ceremony of the Ramana Maharshi Heritage Auditorium and later during the opening of the renovated auditorium celebrating the 40th year of RMCL.



Dr.Sarada: In his talk Krishnaswami Mama has presented the essence of silence, the essence of Bhagavan so beautifully and he says that he is limited in this area. He could recreate the wonder of Atma Vidya and how it is embodied in the Sadguru, the Jeevan Mukta. In the beautiful moments of his last talk at the Centre he has also given a truly fitting tribute to Sri.A.R.Natarajan, his dear friend and co-founder of the Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning.

This picture is of the last function held at the Heritage Auditorium when we had the privilege of honouring our Founder Secretary. His presence and guidance will always remain with the Centre and his goodness and love will continue to bless us.

Ramana Maharshi – Extravagant Boon Giver Book Extract

Ramana Maharshi's Miracles - They Happen Everyday

Bhagavan Ramana – Extravagant Boon Giver

Ramana Maharshi's Miracles - The Continuing Story

These are extracts from Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning's three publications about Ramana's miracles and boons reported by those blessed by his daily miracles. Faith in Ramana's power and protection grows and prepares one for surrendering to his grace. These books were published in June 1995, in September 2006 and in March 1999. All the three books have been compiled by Sri A.R.Natarajan.

TWO MIRACLES

By G.Ramaswami Pillai

Sri Ramana Bhagavan, who is known to the world as a jnani and jivanmukta of the highest order, did not work miracles but miracles happened in his presence. These miracles are many and were a matter of daily occurrence. The beauty and significance of such occurrences is not so much in the events themselves as in the manner and circumstances in which they took place. I give here two such examples.

The one that comes to my mind with utmost strength is of the recovery of sight by a mill-hand from Bangalore. He had lost the sight of both eyes by small-pox. After trying many different remedies, he was advised by someone to go to Ramanasramam, so he came here as a last resort.

Bhagavan used to take a walk in the forest garden that was then adjoining the Aram, as soon as he finished the midday meal with devotees and guests. On this particular day he had finished his lunch and was about to start off. Two doctors from Madras, Dr.Srinivasa Rao and Dr.Kriishnaswami Iyer, who were both long-standing devotees of Bhagavan, had been at the Asram

for Bhagavan's darshan. They had taken leave of Bhagavan and were about to leave for Madras. Their car was waiting for them. Just then the man from Bangalore arrived and prostrated before Bhagavan, who had not yet left his seat. He narrated his sad story. Besides his being blind, he was the sole wage earner for a large family which included his aged mother, father, besides his wife and children. Bhagavan simply listened to the whole story in silence. The two doctors who had seen the man enter the dining hall, returned to the dining hall, after having some consultations between themselves. They said to Bhagavan, 'Bhagavan, we will take this man with us to Madras and do all we can for him by your grace.' They left immediately afterwards and no one thought of him again.

Nothing was heard from the doctors or the hospital where he was treated, but about a month later, this man returned and prostrated before Bhagavan, saying with tears of gratitude that he had regained perfectly the sight of one eye.

Is this whole sequence of events not a miracle? If the man had reached the Asram just a few minutes later, it would have been a completely different story. Looking at the whole thing from the standpoint of the working of Bhagavan's Grace, we have to understand that the doctors had come the day before with a car as though in anticipation of this man's arrival and were waiting for him. It is like this that Bhagavan works his wonderful miracles.

Almost all the miracles that took place in Bhagavan's presence that I witnessed or even took part in were all most natural and normal in appearance. 'Action in inaction and inaction in action', is the only explanation for all these events that took place in the presence of Sri Ramana Maharshi.

Another equally interesting illuminating event took place when Bhagavan was in Skandasram. I was then a student, occasionally visit the Asram whenever I had the urge or felt a call. (Here I have used the word 'call' after much hesitation.) Ordinarily when I came to the Asram in those days I would go into the town for the night like all other visitors. But this time somehow I managed to

stay in the Asram. Somebody told me there would be no food there at night, since Bhagavan was then taking only one meal during the day. But I had made up my mind to stay, and so I stayed.

About 8.30 that night, one of the devotees, Ramanatha Brahmachari, told Bhagavan that he had been given half a coconut and some sweet rice during the day by some man in town who had celebrated his child's ear-piercing ceremony. He apologized for not informing Bhagavan earlier. Bhagavan said, 'Since you all have nothing for the night you can make a paste of the rice and coconut, boiled it with some water, and make a kanji (gruel), which you can all take'. We immediately made a paste and dissolved it in water and boiled it in a vessel on the furnace (like charcoal stove) that was burning before Bhagavan to keep off the rainy season chill.

When the kanji was ready, Bhagavan asked whether there was any sugar or sugar-candy in the Asram. Those were the days when anything and everything that pilgrims brought as offerings were distributed then and there without leaving anything over. So the search for sugar and sugar-candy proved futile. Even salt, which Bhagavan suggested as an alternative, was not to be found! At that moment, about 9 o'clock at night, a knock came at the door. Since I was sitting near the door, I opened it. To our great surprise, two young men, who had come through the drizzling rain, entered the verandah, one with a packet of sugar-candy, and the other with a bunch of plaintains. Bhagavan jokingly said, 'Aye! Sugar-candy has come with plaintains to supplement!' The sugar-candy was powdered and duly mixed with the kanji.

Bhagavan said in all solemnity, 'Today is the 365th day of my fast, and it is broken by my sharing this kanji with you'. When he spoke these words, we were all filled with awe, including the visitors. They were overpowered with joy and gratitude at Bhagavan's gracious love which enabled them to partake in the breaking of his 365-day fast.

Bhagavan asked them how it was that they had come at that time with the very things that were needed for the occasion. Even now it brings tears to my eyes to think of that wonderful scene.

One of the visitors replied, 'Bhagavan, it was my good fortune to come across the booklet containing the three articles of Mr.Humphreys that had been published in the 'International Psychic Gazette'. Ever since it has been my greatest ambition to see Bhagavan and have his darshan. Somehow it is only today that we have had the opportunity. We are both students of the Agricultural College of Coimbatore, and we have come as a group on a n excursion to see a Government farm near Tirukoilur. We came to Tiruvannamalai only this evening, and tomorrow morning by 6 o'clock we will take a train to Tirukoilur. Not willing to miss this God-given opportunity, we came straight here, not minding rain or darkness. We are amply paid for our efforts. We shall never forget this most memorable meeting'.

THE DOUBLE MIRACLE

By V. Venkataraman

I have heard about the daily miracles of Bhagavan Ramana in the lives of many devotees. But when they happen to oneself they evoke a deep sense of gratitude to Ramana. I wish to share two of these recent miracles which have happened in my life with the readers of the Ramana Way.

I am the great grandson of Sri Subbier, the uncle of Bhagavan. The thought that Bhagavan became 'The Enlightened One' on 17th July 1896, at the residence of my great grandfather, in Madurai always thrills me to the core. Because of this family link, I have also had the privilege of being named Venkataraman.

I can truthfully say that to me Ramana is my protector, my God and my guru. He has looked after me and my family members with utmost care. He has arranged comfortable and joyous lives for both my daughters.

The first miracle which I refer to relates to my son-in-law Ravi. He regularly visits Surat and Ahmedabad in the course of his work. He was scheduled to be at Surat on the 26th January 2001. Therefore I was shocked when I heard on the radio about

the disastrous earthquake in Gujarat on that very day. All that I could do was to pray intensely to Bhagavan to protect Ravi. Just then my daughter Kamu, Ravi's wife rang up from Bombay to inform me that Ravi was safe and well. Ravi had finished his work in Surat a day in advance on the 25th itself and since he could get reservation for his return journey to Mumbai from Surat he had returned on the 25th itself. He was not in Surat on the day of the earthquake. Where is the limit to Ramana's mercy and protection for his devotees?

The second miracle happened soon thereafter on the 4th February. My wife, my second daughter, my second son-in-law Gaurishankar, my grandsons, a friend of mine and I went to Sri Ramanasramam on the 3rd February. We started for Chennai the next day, 4th. On the highway near Tindivanam, a lorry which was ahead of our car took a sudden turn without any kind of notice or signal. The lorry hit our car on the left hand side in full force inspite of the efforts of my son-in-law, to avoid the direct hit. One of the doors was crushed. The front glass was broken into smithereens and there was extensive damage to the car. Even so none of the occupants of the car were hurt including those who were on the side which received direct impact. There was not even a scratch to anyone let alone injury. Within ten days, Sri Ramana had performed a second miracle for our family. Everyone in the crowd which had gathered wondered at our miraculous escape. They also told us that it was a notorious place noted for fatal accidents.

Just then another person arrived on the scene and advised us about what we should do next. In retrospect I have little doubt that he was a special messenger of Ramana. He took charge of the situation and arranged for a taxi for all our family members except my son-in-law. He advised my son-in-law to go with him to the nearest police station and report the accident so that we could claim the cost of the repairs from our Insurance Company. He also drove the damaged car upto Pallavaram near Chennai, since my son-in-law was in no condition to drive for such a long distance. Even as I write this a few months after these miracles, I am filled with wonder about Ramana's protection. The danger to my family was very close as it related to both my sons-in-law.

I might add that even in respect of finances, the insurance company accepted the claim and paid Rs.30,000/- as against the actual expenditure of Rs.33,000/- incurred for the repairs relating to the car.

The Continuing Story

Post Nirvana Miracles of Sri Ramana Maharshi

An extract from the introduction by Sri A.R.Natarajan

The list of miracles narrated in the book 'Miracles Happen Everyday' is quite long and gripping. Many of them relate to the period when Ramana was in the body. The question would arise about the Post Nirvana Miracles of Ramana. Ramana is the eternal one whose powers can never be dimmed by time. The story of his miracles is a continuing story. This is not merely an article of faith. For they are happening day in and day out be it saving a person and his family from certain death, to enabling one to catch a flight to see a pining daughter or to protecting one being bitten by a stray wayside dog. It would be an error to think that there may be a full-stop at any point of time in the future to this manifestation of Ramana's powers under varied and impossible circumstances.

It must be clarified that one must be clear in one's mind about the distinction between the ego-based performance of 'unnatural miracles' and spontaneous miracles which happen as a natural response of the universal love of a jnani. The very reporting to Ramana of the need for protection results in an automatic miraculous change in the course of events. Unasked too he takes motherly care in the abundance of his grace. One must remain in speechless wonder about the immensity of his all embracing love and power.

Ramana Arranges a granddaughter's marriage

Dr.A.S.Venugopala Rao

On one such occasion, I observed her standing even after everybody left the hall, as if waiting for me, I enquired:

‘Aiji (Grandma) why are you still waiting? Did you have prasadam? Shall I escort you? It is getting late.’

‘No, no, it is not that. I want a favour from you. Can you please pray for me to Bhagavan to grant a boon? My granddaughter, you know, is not yet married. She is already 26. My son is very much worried and so am I. All our efforts to get a suitable boy for her have been in vain. Please...’

‘That is okay Aiji, but why should I? You can yourself pray. You are an ardent devotee. Bhagavan does not need a mediator, no recommendation is needed for him. You pray – He will surely bless you with the boon’, I said with some sort of assertion, but internally not so sure myself!

‘That is what I have heard. But Aiya I do not know Sanskrit, neither English, nor Tamil even. How can I pray, tell me Aiya?’

‘Oh! It does not matter at all Aiji. You pray in your own language. He will listen to you. Bhagavan listens even to the whisper of an ant. Why should you hesitate? He is an ocean of mercy. So, you can yourself pray.’

The old lady was visibly moved. She sat before Bhagavan’s photo with closed eyes for a few minutes and then silently walked away. As she was about to leave, I asked her to wait, picked out a beautiful photo of Sri Bhagavan (a centenary offering), and gave it to her with the remark, ‘Aiji, please have this. You may get it framed and keep it in your puja room. This is for your daily prayer. You need not wait for Punarvasu Day only for your prayer.’ Of course, she was overjoyed and received the gift with gratitude. She was a simple old lady with no pretensions.

Yes. The miracle did happen and it was very soon too! Two days before the next Satsang the old lady came to our flat. Her face was beaming with joy. ‘Aiji what is the matter? Punarvasu is on Friday. Did you forget? It is just Wednesday today!’ I asked.

‘Oh!’ with tears of joy in her eyes she said, ‘It is not that Aiya. How can I forget? I came to tell you, that merciful Bhagavan granted my humble prayers. And so soon! It all happened like a miracle. Just a few days back, a distant relative came from Hassan. He himself enquired why Yashoda is not yet married. ‘She is pretty, smart, and she is a B.A.! Why not she marry our Rajoo, my nephew, a teacher in Government Hirgh School? It looks as if they are made for each other!’ he said. Well, Aiya it all went off so well. We took the girl for an interview – they all agreed. Even the date is fixed. It is in Shravana, soon after Ashada. It is here in Shimoga itself. You can’t miss the function. You must attend and bless the child, Aiya.’

It was my turn to be moved visibly. In fact, I was not myself so sure that Bhagavan would listen to an innocent lady’s most natural worldly prayers. The incident was an eye opener for me too and it further strengthened my faith in Bhagavan’s boundless compassion and mercy.



The Dance in the Heart - Ramananjali Nritya - IV

Ujwal Jagadeesh

We at RMCL are celebrating 40+ years of Ramananjali which encompasses the songs written by and on Ramana and its various translations made available in musical format. We are also celebrating 40 years of Ramananjali Nritya, dance to these Ramananjali Songs. As a part of this we bring to you a series of articles, including interviews with those associated with Ramananjali Nritya from its inception.

Dr. Kala Rani Rengasamy is the Director of the school for Bharatanatyam 'Sri Ramana Natyalaya'. Smt. Kala is blessed to be a devotee of Bhagavan from her childhood as her parents had great devotion for Bhagavan and were active members of Ramana Kendra, Delhi. Later, her father Sri S. Guruswamy was the Vice President of Madurai Ramana Kendram and now her husband Rengasamy, who is equally devoted to Bhagavan, is serving in that capacity. She is herself an active part of the Madurai Kendram and a Governing Body Member of Bhagawan Sri Ramana Maharshi Research Centre, Bengaluru.

A brief glimpse of the interview so far...

Ujwal: How did Ramana and Dance enter your life?

Kalarani: Actually, they both entered without my knowledge. At the age of 4, my parents took me to the dance class and Ramana too entered at the same time when we started attending satsangs at Delhi Ramana Kendra... I was 15 years old when I did my arangetram... Sulochana Auntie sang the Muruganar Song which I performed and she came for two of the rehearsals.

U: In this sense you are the very first dancer to have performed a Ramananjali dance in her arangetram.

K: I used to share whatever I learnt in dance class with Sarada and Ambika. I also taught them a few dances for their Annual days and sometimes for birthday functions.

U: So informally Bhagavan made you the first dance teacher of Ramananjali Nritya.

K: I often feel shy when they refer to me as their first dance teacher. The teaching was a spontaneous sharing between us as we were such good friends and loved to share everything. But they did perform the dances that they learnt from me in their school or at functions in their house...

U: You had shared with us your interactions with Sadhu Om Swami and how you danced in his presence at Tiruvannamalai. Did you have the occasion to meet any of the other old devotees at the Asram?

K: Yes. I was blessed to meet Muruganar Swami as well. I had danced to Sadhu Om Swami's 'Ninaithaalum inippUrude' without knowing at that time that it was his composition. Later we came to know that it was his song.



As that was the only Ramana song I had learnt, I used to perform the same for all Ramana devotees. Another day, I performed the same song in front of Muruganar Swami. Tears were flowing profusely from Muruganar's eyes. After finishing he said "Oh Kala!

It is really good. I

enjoyed it. Inda kezhavanoda paTTukku ADamATTiya? - will you not dance for this old man's songs?" Then alone we got to know about the songs written by various poets like Muruganar and others on Bhagavan.

By this blessing of Muruganar Swami, I performed his song for the Arangetram. That was the main reason we selected 'Tenum Palum'.

U: Dance demands multitasking. A Sloka on Natya Krama in Abhinaya Darpana says throat should sing the song, hands should convey the meaning, eyes should express the emotions and the feet should keep the rhythm all simultaneously. I have seen you as a multitasking personality, managing the house, kitchen, needs of the guests and visitors, also working on research required for the speech and your work as a lecturer including guiding scholars for their PhD. What is the secret of this multitasking?

K: Bhagavan's Grace there is no other reason for it. He is making us perform everything that we need to do.

U: We never fail to recognize your love, sweetness and gentleness to all. Is it the dance or Ramana which has made you so loving?

K: I would say both. But Ramana is first. Because Ramana is the one who has made us what we are. I don't know whether I have all these qualities you mentioned. I pray to Bhagavan that it should be like this as Ujwal has said it is so.

U: When we come to Madurai we perform at the Padmasri Jadav School at Nagamalai. When we had visited the children were chanting Sadhu Om Swami's Dhyana Pattu daily as a school prayer. Nandakumarji seeing this was thrilled and said "These children are getting the essence of Bhagavan's teachings at a very young age, they are all truly blessed." How are you associated with that school?

K: I am one of the board members and treasurer. Since the school is very near our house, it is very easily accessible. Teachers come to get solutions for their problems as other board members stay a little far away. Bhagavan has given me the overall responsibility to take care of the school. So we too go there to conduct our programs. I had taught them the Dhyana Pattu for an annual day and later it became the School prayer.

U: We may say Ramananjali nritya started with Kummi Pattu when devotees at Virupaksha Cave danced around Bhagavan, and many years later with your 'ninaitAlum' and your Arangetram. 40 years ago it took the form of a complete margam of Ramananjali items under Guru Kumari Meenakshi, teacher of Sarada Akka and Ambika Akka. Through the years many stalwarts like Smt. Chitra Visweswaran, Vidushi Swapna Sundari, Smt Padmini Ravi and other have danced these items. Now it is open to many youngsters and children who are drawn to Ramana through dance. The Centre has produced more than 125 Dance ballets and have performed in Madurai too. What do you feel about this?

K: Ramana has decided to grow worldwide, tanmayam shezhikka (So that his own being as Awareness might shine forth and his own power might flourish). We can see how the awareness is spreading to the whole world through these mediums. Through online portals it is reaching more people from every corner of the world. There are devotees in United States, Australia, Sydney who are getting connected. They are able to access the Ramananjali music and dance from wherever they are. The Audience can witness and enjoy the Ramananjali Dance in the comfort of their home.

Ganesan Anna in one of his talks shares an anecdote which happened with Muruganar. It was Christmas day, Kitty Osborne used to give cakes to Ganesan Anna which he used to refuse every time as it contained eggs. Once she insisted on his taking it as a special eggless cake had been brought. Ganesan Anna taking some pieces of the cake offered them to Muruganar Swami. When Muruganar asked the purpose of bringing the cake, Ganesan Anna said it is Christmas. With tears in his eyes Muruganar said, "The whole world is celebrating Christmas. See Ganesa, one day the whole world will celebrate Bhagavan's Jayanthi. Maybe I will not be alive, but you will see that." This Ramana Jayanthi which was a Global online celebrations Ganesan Anna witnessed these prophetic words and shared this story.

So Bhagavan has decided to go global with Ramananjali Music and Dance. It has reached many people and many are showing interest in Ramananjali songs. Rengasamy and I had



the great joy of witnessing the special spread of Ramananjali Nritya during the mega event that RMCL had conducted with Sri Sankara TV. How many hundreds had participated in that super contest with different styles of Ramananjali Nritya, Bharatanatyam, Kathak, Folk,

Devotional and Creative styles.

U: Yes, we enjoyed watching you as one of the judges during Ramanotsavam. What is your message to the those learning dance and Ramananjali Nritya?

K: Devotion to Bhagavan Ramana is the most important. Once we are involved in the teachings of Ramana, Nritya comes naturally. What is inside will come out, isn't it? So let us dive deep into the heart to find the real source, naturally that experience will come out as song, dance and poetry. So let us go inside. Once we practise, practise and practise to dive within, everything will happen automatically, that's what I really want to share.

U: Bhagavan says "Aye Athi sulabham", Self-knowlege is very easy and specially for artistes who are sensitive and have great concentration. But he cautions that artistes are not interested in Self-knowledge but seek name and fame. We are fortunate that Art has come to us which makes Self-knowledge so close and also the Satsang of Ramana keeps reminding us to turn our attention away from name and fame and back to the Self within. Thank you Kala Akka.

The Seed of Universal Love

Chandrika Shastry

Dear Sarada Akka,

I wonder whether you and Ambika Akka would remember me, but I believe you would remember my sister Bindu who used to be very naughty, bold and perhaps 'bossy' if a child could be said to be that. And I was exactly the opposite, quiet and shy... Yet you gave both of us the same love and attention and helped each of us flower in our own way. I must say we are blessed to have been under your guidance and care at our young age which has helped us today to pursue a meaningful life by balancing our 'spiritual' and 'material' pursuits. I am privileged to get an opportunity to pen down my memories of our golden experiences in those years.

As I traverse down 40 years in the memory lane, I have fond memories of my childhood. I and my sister were small chicks just hatched out of our shells, barely getting a taste of life. We chirped endlessly for attention. One such summer as we were playing with friends and having fun, that's when one of my friends told us that there was a dance and drama class from Ramana ashram. As we love to dance, we started going every weekend to the classes and the people were so nice to us and gave us something to eat at the end of the class which made us punctual in our attendance.

Here we are in the very first group photo of Ramana Bala Kendra taken around March 1981.



You can see Bindu right in the front and me a little behind in the third row, reflecting our temperaments as I had mentioned.

Sarada Akka, you and Ambika Akka were the ones who told us stories of gods and about Ramana Maharshi's life, stories which helped open our heart to love of God.

As the saying goes "Catch them young", we were young and clear of mind and heart. We started learning dance and enacted the life of Ramana Maharshi. Our first stage performance was when we celebrated our annual day in February 1982. All of us got opportunities to perform and maybe every one of us got some 'prize' or the other.



After that we started to perform at the Ramana Maharshi Shrine and in different schools. We performed in the Town Hall as well. Here we are dancing next to each other:



As we played several different roles, different values were inculcated in us even without our being taught in a didactic manner.

There was awareness of several states of India as we had a scene where devotees would gather from everywhere at Bhagavan's feet. This gently brought us a sense of unity.

Love and respect for all living beings was instilled in us when we played scenes of Bhagavan Ramana's oneness with all animals. You can see Bindu monkeying around in one scene and playing a timid squirrel in another.



I cannot forget our visit to Tiruvannamalai, the place where Ramana Maharshi resided.



We climbed the mountain and meditated in the caves. On one such occasion while in meditation in one of the caves our friend Jaisriram was deep in meditation and was motionless for a long time and had to be

carried by others. So, blessed he is.

We are from a middle-class family and my father's factory was closed for couple of months, that's when our Delhi trip was

scheduled. Natarajan mama was aware of our financial situation and arranged for our trip. Preparations for our trip were so grand, I remember we had new dance dresses stitched, and lamps in our hand danced for the song “Arathi Yethire Ramananige Ravi Kirananige”. This fortnight - long trip opened our hearts and made us feel like we are brothers and sisters and children of Ramana Maharshi’s family.



We were taught meditation and devotion even in our dances and our dramas. Now, as I look back, I believe a seed was planted in our hearts without our knowledge our young hearts absorbed the essence of Maharshi's teachings, "WHO AM I".



What is the purpose of life? Look within to feel the presence of God, love everyone as brothers and sisters.

With the guide from a proper guru God realization is possible. The goal of life is to become one with the ultimate. This manifests in many simple and beautiful ways in our daily lives, like being truthful, leading a simple and natural life, being happy and content with what we have, opening our hearts to all religions and treating all as brothers and sisters. To put it in two words, it is Universal love.

With all these instilled in us in our days of innocence through Ramana Bala Kendra, today we follow “Heartfulness meditation”. This is a path brought to us by a spiritual organization where we meditate on divine light in our heart. We are eternally grateful to



Sulochana Mami, Natarajan Mama, Sudarshanam Mama, Kumar Mama, and for the love and care shown by you, Sarada Akka, and by Ambika Akka.

With Love and regards,
Chandrika and Bindu
Sri Ramana Bala Kendra, Kumara
Park Center.



Arunachala Ramana Bhuvaneswari and Umamaheshwari

Namo Ramana!

It was a pleasant sunny afternoon when my sister and I were walking with our father in Lower Palace Orchards. We were blessed to see Ramana Maharshi's photo in one house. My father's kuladeivam (Family Deity) being Arunachala Siva, we couldn't resist but walk into the beautiful residence ashram of Sri Natarajan Mama who welcomed us cheerfully. Smt. Sulochana Natarajan Mami had plans to commence Ramana Bala Kendra, Bangalore Chapter. My father immediately registered my name and my sister's name. So we feel proud to be the pioneers of the Bangalore chapter.

[The Bangalore chapter was in fact the first chapter of Ramana Bala Kendra and so far perhaps the only chapter as well.]

Thus commenced our Ramana journey.



In this period, we were taught many stories, melodies, short songs and all glories of Ramana from Sulochana Mami, Sarada Akka, Ambika Akka, Sudarshan Mama and Ganesan Anna.

Every week, we used to look forward to Saturdays to attend Bala Kendra. Mami used to organise many cultural programs revealing Ramana's life story. It was indeed a beautiful platform for us to learn and be part of these events.



Even though we were not able to continue the kendra later, we still remember and revise the songs of Ramana. And in our family circle, even till date, we are asked to sing these songs.

My sister is studying scriptures and listened to the great Vedantic works like Upadesa Sara, Sad-darshanam. This has helped to understand the meaning of "Who am I". This message has to be understood by each and every individual to complete the spiritual journey.

On this great occasion of the Ramana Maharshi Centre celebrating 40 years of the starting of Ramana Bala Kendra, my sister and I offer our Pranams to the entire team of teachers for helping us get a right direction in life.

Once again, Pranams!!!

Bhuvaneswari and Uma Maheswari

How Bhagavan Captured Us

Smt.Sulochana Natarajan

The early years at Delhi were for us like that any other family. True, Bhagavan was very much the bedrock of our lives and there were the weekly Satsangs and the regular visits to Ramakrishna Asram. There was also our own daily personal sadhana. The children were growing up and there were probably the routine ups and downs of life. As I said, this was the period of life when socializing and being with friends was predominant. Before this, very soon after we had settled into our new home in Meena Bagh, in the September of 1965 there was the Indo-Pak war. Those were gloomy and fearful days. But they passed and everything was beautiful about life again.

Every vacation, both summer and winter, I would go to Madras with the children. In every alternate year ARN too would come with us using the facility provided by the Government called the 'Leave travel concession'. Even when he did come, he would stay for three weeks or a month and return, while the children and I would stay at Madras for the whole stretch of their two-month summer vacation. Of course, little Ambika did not have school at that time. My parents came to spend some time with us at Delhi in 1966. They returned end of March and I was to go with the children in May. Ambika wanted to go with them to Madras. Being just two years old then, we were not sure whether she could stay away from me for a whole month. But she insisted on going and we agreed.

My father was cautious by nature but my mother was very bold and she was confident that she could manage the child. My father would often recall that little Ambika was silent until their train had reached Agra, which is a little more than an hour from Delhi. Then she asked them simply, 'Amma enge?' (Where is Amma?) With the perfect innocence of a child, she had perhaps assumed that her mother would always be with her. My father said that at that moment it was well like a bomb exploding so far as he was concerned. For, they could certainly not go back with the child and ahead lay a long journey of two days. Those were days when

communication was only by trunk call. Even if my parents were to call me, they could do so only after they reached Madras two days later. And what if they did so? Could I come right away?

All these thoughts were running in his mind. But Ambika was told by my mother that Amma would come only after a month. What she understood from that statement we cannot say but she did not ask again for me either during the journey or thereafter. In that period both she and my mother also suffered together from the chicken pox. The most poignant moment, my father would say, came when I finally landed at Madras and arrived at home. Coming to me and hugging me, little Ambika asked, 'Amma, nee inme enna vittutu poga maattaye?' (Amma, you won't leave me and go away ever again, will you?) Perhaps that is how all of us are with God. We wander away from Him and think He has left us and gone away. But, as Bhagavan told Sundaresa Iyer, the grace is in missing Him.

The summer of 1967 was very special indeed, because it was the Kumbhabhishekam of Ramaneswara Mahalingam. What a joy it was for all of us to participate in it and what a blessing! It was indeed an unforgettable occasion. The Asram was thronging with devotees, a very rare event in those years. Perhaps this was the first such festive occasion after the consecration of Mother's temple in 1949. And it was a mammoth task for Sri T.N.Venkataraman, TNV Mama to us, who was then the President of the Asram and V.Ganesan, who had totally dedicated himself to assisting TNV mama and serving the Asram, to collect the funds required and complete the task. But Bhagavan's grace made this possible.

I think after this occasion, the next event when there was so much joy and exuberance was only during Bhagavan's birth centenary. But that celebration was nearly for two years and on a much larger scale. Looking back, we may say that with each of these major events Bhagavan brought about a natural, yet evident growth in the Asram and in the awareness among people of his life and teachings. And each event became larger and grander. But this was the first grand occasion for all of us at Asram and Sarada later shared with me that this was the first occasion of which she had a conscious memory of visiting the Asram.

Around the year 1969 ARN became deeply influenced by the teachings of Sri J.Krishnamurthy. ARN arranged for a few personal sittings with Krishnaji, as JK was known among his followers, for my brother V.Srinivasan, as Krishnaji was known to have a healing touch, something of which he himself was not conscious. But one of his close followers mentioned it to ARN and Krishnaji also graciously gave personal audience. My brother had been suffering from severe epilepsy from his early childhood. The medications that he was given perhaps, or it may be his very condition, made him extremely excitable as well. He had two or three sittings with Krishnaji who had passed his hand over his head and also told him that he was fine and there was no need to be troubled about anything.

ARN believed that this was an important turning point in my brother's life and there was a drastic improvement in his condition thereafter. How can one deny the healing influence of great souls? Through my father's faith my brother developed intense devotion to the Jagadguru Shankaracharya of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham, Chandrashekarendra Saraswati, known as Periyava. And his grace played an immense role in the moulding of my brother's life. He was practically completely cured of his epilepsy and blossomed into a deeply spiritual person, greatly respected and loved by all who interacted with him.

Coming back to ARN's journey, as I said, Krishnaji's teachings played a very important role in that period in his life and therefore, indirectly, in mine as well. One of the very significant ways in which this manifested was in the manner of upbringing of the children. ARN would insist that we never compare the children with each other or with anyone else. This was fine with me as I never felt any need to do so. As I had noted earlier, the children were well behaved and loving. Where was the need to compare them with anyone else? However, there were certainly times that I would be impatient with them, specially when they were younger, but this too was not allowed to me. No getting angry, no scolding, no being impatient, specially with the children, was ARN's policy stemming from Krishnaji's teachings. He was very attentive and sensitive by nature and these teachings made him more so in all his interactions with people.

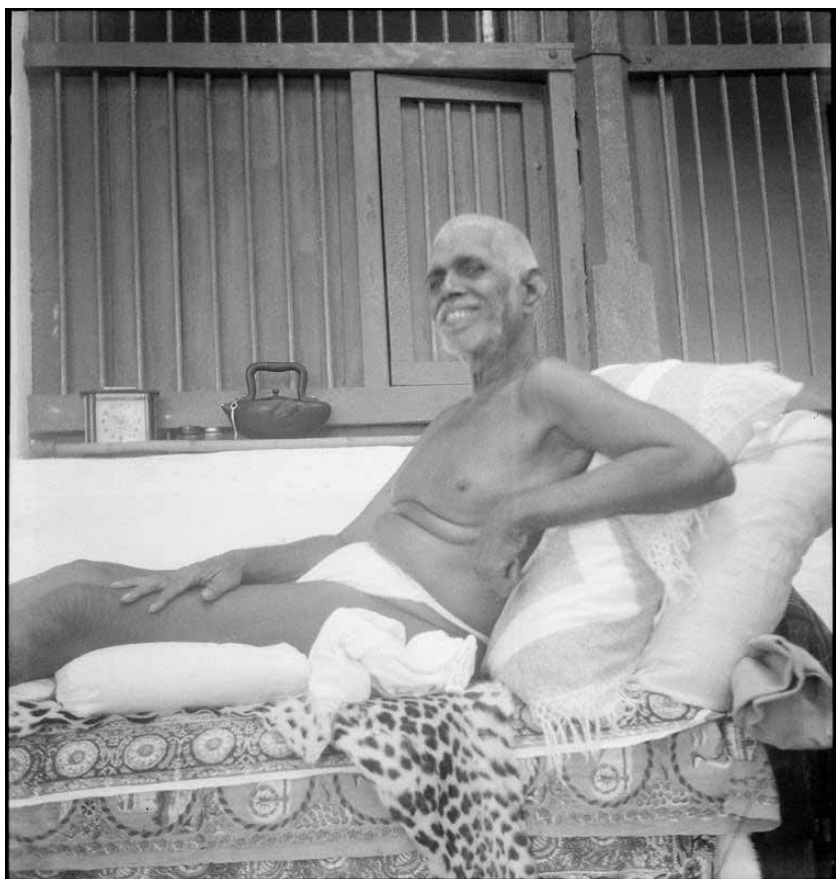
I was a traditional person and believed in the path of discipline. Hence, it was certainly not easy for me not to scold the children at all. Though they were well behaved, they were after all children and there would be many occasions when they needed guidance. At those times my natural approach would have been to use the method of discipline but I practiced what ARN believed in and would explain the situation to them expressing faith in their understanding. It was undoubtedly an uphill task for me but the approach worked beautifully for all of us. It helped the children grow with confidence. Despite this, I must say that their natural temperaments did manifest in them and Ambika was always more confident and joyous than Sarada, who was a little reticent and shy till much later in life, and perhaps a bit gloomy off and on too. In fact, Viswanatha Swami once teased her affectionately, 'Why don't you remain happy like your sister Ambika? See, she is always happy. Why are you finding that something or the other is troubling your mind? Does the sky have any problems? Your true nature is like the sky.'

Ambika's boldness could also get her into trouble though. She was unhesitant and unafraid. During the summer vacation of 1969, when she was just a little above five years of age, we had gone visiting ARN's cousin and the children were downstairs in the compound of that bungalow. Sarada, Ambika and Krishnakumar were there. It looks as if Krishnakumar was sliding down the bannister of the open staircase that led to the upstairs house. He invited Sarada and Ambika to do likewise and perhaps challenged them in play. Though Sarada refused, being far from adventurous, Ambika went along and tried. She succeeded too a few times but one time, had a fall. She broke her tibia bone.

That evening and night, until the fracture was detected and the cast in place, she suffered a lot, poor child. But once the plaster was cast, she was again her carefree self, shuffling all over the house with a cushion to support her cast and as active as ever. When her cast had to come out a couple of months later, in those days, a physical sawing was done and somehow they cut into her flesh as well. She did not bother about that either and went about with her bandage till the wound also healed. Even in later

years she has had fractured toes with which she has continued to give her dance performances as well. This I am saying just to indicate that though we brought up both the children in the same manner, each had her own unique strengths with which they were bestowed according to Bhagavan's gracious plan.

I am mentioning ARN being influenced by Krishnaji's teachings because it not only influenced his approach to life in many subtle ways, it also convinced him that the best place for Sarada to be was in Krishnaji's school, Rishi Valley, a residential school situated near Madanapalle in Andhra Pradesh.



64. AMITA VIKRAMAH

Boundless victor

The previous name praises the shanti, peace of Ramana. This one refers to his sakti, power. In the world success and failure follow each other. Everything merges in the Self from which all things rise and subside. The submerging of the mind in its source is the boundary of activity. Thereafter seeing nothing as apart from oneself, and seeing everything as oneself is the victory over everything. Ramana is termed ajita, the undefeated one, because of this. Wherever he looks, there success is assured. To abide in the natural state is to reach the pinnacle of power. That is the highest state of peace too says Ramana Gita. Peace is the inner state expressed as power when it manifests in action says Ramana. In Chapter 18 of 'Ramana Gita' Ganapati Muni extols Ramana, 'Full of power, yet full of peace, free from attachments yet loving all humanity, God manifest, yet in conduct humble'. We find a similar verse in his 'Ramana Chatvarimsat' as well.

Om amita vikramAya namaha

65. SUKUMARAH

Auspicious son

This sweet name denotes youthfulness, softness, grace and freshness. The eternally young and beautiful person is the younger son of Siva. The name also includes the primal pranava sound Om. The sweetness springs from the quality of being ever fresh, each moment being new and full of life. Because he is ever fresh, Ramana keeps his devotees also so, sings Muruganar Swami saying, 'Ever fresh he keeps my spirit, Ramana the daylight bringer.' Muruganar has also combined the picturisation of Ramana as Muruga with that of his teaching the import of Omkara to his father Siva in a verse in 'Tiru Undiyaar'. Dwelling on the same concept Ganapati Muni says, 'You taught the import of Omkara to Brahma, the consort of Vani, you taught the import of Omkara of Omkara to our father Siva, and now you have now come in human form on earth, to teach me, your brother Ganapati'.

Om sukumArAya namaha

66. SADANANDAH

Always happy

The bliss which knows no change or reduction is one's nature. True happiness cannot be that which comes and goes. One could usefully refer to verse 28 of Upadesa Saram which says conscious bliss comes when one abides as the Self, by enquiring 'What is the true import of I?'. This bliss is spontaneous, indestructible and limitless.

Sri Viswanatha Swami himself writes, "In his vicinity the mind's distractions were overpowered by an austere and potent calmness and the unique bliss of peace was directly experienced. This I would call 'Ramana Lahari', 'the blissful atmosphere of Ramana'.

Om sadAnandAya namaha

67. MRDUBHASHI

Soft spoken

His speech destroys all grief. Being the repository of bliss he transmits this to everyone who comes into contact with him. Ganapati Muni praises Ramana as soft in speech, cool in looks and as lotus-faced. Ramana's speech springs from the depths of his potent silence and is pleasing to the ear.

Deivarata, in his account of Ramana says, 'When he comes out of his inner state of his own accord, all questions put to him are answered. Sri Maharshi's voice is as melodious and soft as that of a child. It is exceedingly sweet and at times it is so low-toned that it is not even heard clearly. It must be heard with full attention. When we hear his voice we feel as if we hear a divine and subtle voice coming across the firmament.'

Om mrdubhAShiNE namaha

68. DAYARNAVAHA

Ocean of Compassion

By nature he is a limitless ocean of compassion. 'Glory to the feet of one who is the embodiment of grace' sings Siva Prakasam Pillai. In his Forty Verses in praise of Ramana, Ganapati Muni says "your love is not mental, it is your very nature". When

once Ramana was asked whether the Sadguru's grace is not an ocean of compassion he answered that the ocean has its boundaries but not so the grace of the Sadguru. The words that Ramana uses of Arunachala may well be used to describe him saying he is 'kinder far than one's own mother'.

Instances of Ramana's spontaneous love would fill the pages of all the books in the world and yet spill over. One, however, recalls a few instances, the instance of his drawing water every day from the well at Mulaipal Tirtham on Arunachala in the summer months in order to quench the thirst of the poor untouchable grasscutter women. How he tenderly nursed and cared for the lame little monkey, Nondi until he later became the king of his tribe. Ramana walked out of the way into the forest path during a giri valam in order to seek out an old farmer and partake of the stale gruel that was all that he had to offer that day. He ate 'as if it were nectar', every bit of the unroasted dosas that a poor old lady brought to him. He enquired about the welfare of the family members of the devotees. He gave audience at night to a sick dog that was chased away by day.

Om dayArnavAya namaha

69. SHRI SHONACALA HRTBHUTA SKANDASHRAMA NIKETANAH

Resident of Skandasramam, the heart of Arunachala

If one views Arunachala from the eastern side, Skandasramam would be seen as the centre of Arunachala. A devotee has described Virupaksa cave where Ramana lived for 16 years as the Heart Cave. Likewise Skandasramam to which he shifted also deserves to be called the heart cave. From time immemorial Arunachala has been termed 'the centre of the earth'. Ramana, the resident of the heart caves of all individuals, had made Skandasramam his residence. While Ramana was staying in the Virupaksa cave, a devotee, Kandaswami, noting a level ground on the hill, made it fit for Ramana's occupation. A fine spring was found near that place. Devotees built a suitable building and the place was called Skandasramam. Bhagavan stayed there for six years with his mother and devotees.

Viswanatha Swami writes, "My first darshan of Bhagavan Sri Ramana was in January 1921, at Skandasramam, which is on

the eastern slope of Arunachala and looks like the very heart of the majestic hill. It is a beautiful quiet spot with a few coconut and other trees and a perennial crystal-clear spring. Bhagavan was there as the very core of such natural beauty.”

Om shrI shONAcala hrtbhUta skandAShrama nikEtanAya namaha

70. SADDARSHANOPADESHTA

Teacher of Sat-darshana

Devotees requested Ramana to instruct them on the nature of Reality and the way to abide as that in an easily understandable manner. He composed Ulladu Narpadu based on his experience. Ganapati Muni has translated it into Sanskrit as ‘Saddarsanam’, the vision of Sat, or truth. One who has instructed through this work is ‘Saddarsanopadesta’. This name extols him as the one who has cogently explained the truth which is beyond words.

This work was composed after Ramana had shifted to Sri Ramanasramam at the behest of Muruganar Swami. Initially they were stray verses that Muruganar collected in order to string them together so as to form a cogent coverage of the subject Reality. Muruganar requested Ramana to add some verses to make the total 40 verses in keeping with the Tamil literary tradition. However, as Ramana began to write these new verses, finding that the existing ones did not fit into the strain of thought Muruganar further requested him to write new verses to complete the 40. The earlier verses were shifted to the work, ‘Ulladu Narpadu Anubandam’.

Om saddarshanOpadEshTrE namaha

News & Events

Revathi Sankar

As part of the festival in collaboration with the South Zone Cultural Centre, artistes of RMCL presented the Theatre Production 'Aruna Ramana' featuring Ramana's compassion to poor grasscutter women and to an old farmer.



The event in association with SZCC also included Bharatanatyam presentations by Ujwal, Revathi and Vincent and by Srinivasan Rajendran and troupe.



Bhagawan Sri Ramana Maharshi Research Centre held its Gnananjali Festival in Bangalore with a devotional music presentation by Smt.V.Radha and troupe, and a second staging of the dance drama 'Ramana Sannidhi Murai'.



BSRMRC's new production 'Rama Ramana' was staged at the Ramana Maharshi Heritage Auditorium. It was led by Smt. Rupa Hemanth performing the dance numbers with her students. The Centre's artistes Srividya, Vallabh and Varsha presented the scenes from Ramana's life of the blessed crow, Nondi the monkey king and the grandmother of dosas. The puppet theatre led by Raghavendra and Shubha Pranesh presented the scenes from Ramayana of Sabari, Vali vadha and Jatayu.

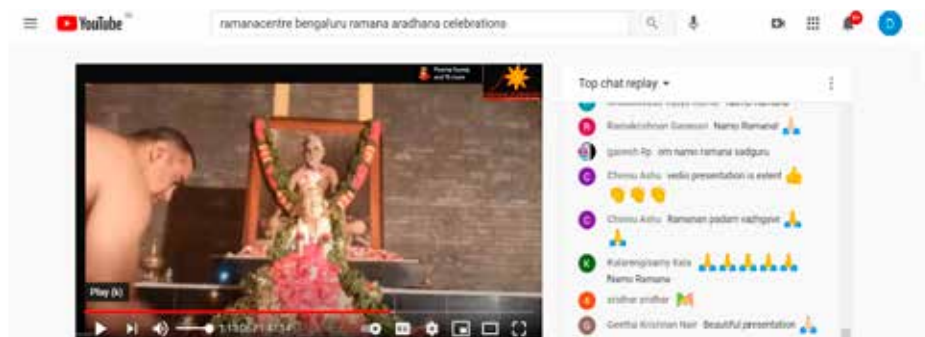
Aparna Athreya, the ace story teller, literally transported the audience to the scenes that were depicted.



Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning in its Kannada Festival presented the dance drama 'Sadananda Ramana'



Ramana Pada Pancharatnam led by Dr.Ambika Kameshwar, Smt.V.Radha and by several devotees. Ashtottara puja at the Ramana Shrine and singing of Aksharamanamalai.



Mahapuja – Mother Azhagamma's Aradhana – with singing, reading, meditation, sharings, and video clips from the dance dramas Purushottama Ramana and Ramana Prabha

ramanacentre bengaluru Ramana satsang satunday 22.05.2021



Ramana Satsang - Sunday, 6.40 to 8.30pm Mother Azhagamma Aradhana Day - Mahapuja celebrations

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Ramana Satsang - every Sunday in Kannada Mother Azhagamma Day celebrations Date - 30. 05. 2021

ramanacentre bengaluru Ramana satsang satunday 22.05.2021



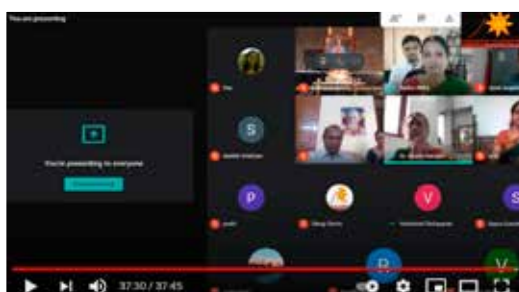
Ramana Satsang - every Sunday in Kannada Mother Azhagamma Day







Pournami Celebration - Ashtottara Puja and Pradakshina at Ramana Shrine with Bhagavan's picture by Subrahmanyam. Chanting of Aksharamanamalai by devotees and singing of Unakke Namaskaram.



Special Dates in May and June

- » 22nd, 23rd, 29th and 30th May – Mother's Day Celebrations
- » 26th May – Pournami Celebrations
- » 24th June – Pournami Celebrations
- » 26th June – Prani Mithra Day Celebrations

Special Online Dates – May and June

Below are the forthcoming online programs in the coming two months. To know the exact dates and timing of the programs please subscribe to Ramanacentre Bengaluru YouTube channel.

Ramanacentre Bengaluru – YouTube Channel (Subscribe to get detailed program)

44th National Seminar and Global Online Festival – Ramananjali 40+

Features:

- » Ramananjali Cultural Programs
- » Down Memory Lane - The History of Ramananjali
- » Special Talks and Interviews:
 - » Sri K.V.Subramonyam on Ramana Kritis
 - » David Godman on Bhagavan and Muruganar
 - » Dr.T.N.Pranatharthiharan on Muruganar's Ramana Puranam
 - » Robert Butler on Muruganar's Sri Ramana Guru Prasadam
 - » Dr.N.S.Lakshminarayana Bhatta on Kannada Ramana Geethe

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

To register for Online sessions contact

Uma 9538472026 or join on <https://meet.google.com/kwx-bdoa-gtf>

Online and On site Self Enquiry sessions

Thursday: 7:00 pm to 8.00 pm at RSCS

By Sri Nandakumar ji

Friday: 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm at RMHC

By Dileep Simha and Dr. Sarada

Everyday: 5:30 am to 5.45 am, 9:30pm to 10:00pm (online)

By Sri Nandakumar ji & others

(Chanting and Self-enquiry)

Online Satsang

Chanting, Reading, Music, Talks, Puja

Saturday: 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm at RSCS

Every Sunday 7.00 pm to 8.40 pm Kannada Satsang

Every first Sunday 11.00 am to 12.30 pm Tamil Satsang

Online and On site Music and Dance classes

[Contact - Uma (9538472026)] at RMHC

On site Talks, Parayana and Puja

By Sri Chandrashekar (9448839594)

Thursday 6:30 pm at RSCR

40 years of The Ramana Way

'The Ramana Way' – the monthly journal of Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning has completed four decades since its inception in 1981.

As the journal began as a 'Family Journal' to connect members of the Ramana Family, the vision statement of the journal was selected from 'Sri Ramana Gita'. When asked about the highest goal of human society Sri Ramana has said: "Brotherhood based on equality is the supreme goal to be attained by human society."(X, 10)

As the journal grew, the Ramana brotherhood in our Centre also expanded. Furthermore, the wonder of the Ramana Family across the world began to be revealed and different ways of sharing the life and teachings began to blossom as well. One recalls the words of Sri T.N.Venkataraman, then President of Sri Ramanasramam, when the journal was launched: "I am indeed very happy to hear that Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning is bringing out a monthly 'RAMANA' to foster brotherhood among Ramana devotees".



Guru Vachaka Kovai in English

Original : Muruganar

Translation: David Godman

Investigation into Truth

126. The Self is existence – consciousness – bliss, so subtle, it is beyond the reach of mind and speech. If, instead of labouring hard to meditate on the Self by practising Self – abidance, one wastes one's life striving to care for a body that is transient, insentient, misery – inducing and extremely gross – as though this is the ultimate goal of life – this is like the stupid act of utilising water, drawn from a well by hard labour, to cultivate useless weeds instead of valuable rice.