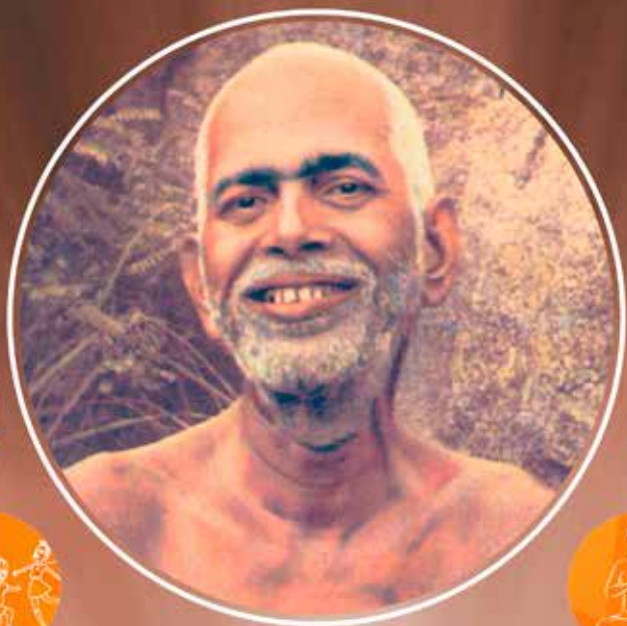


July 2019

The Ramana way



A Monthly Journal published by
Ramana Maharshi Centre
for Learning
Bengaluru

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

THE RAMANA WAY

A Monthly Journal since 1981

*Celebrating
Ramana Rasa
Anubhava*



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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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RMCL – Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning

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Editorial*Dr. Sarada*

What is the purpose of action? The purpose of action is to attain a goal.

Why do we wish to attain a goal, any goal? We wish to attain a goal because we believe that the attainment of the goal will give us happiness. Do we believe that happiness lies in any object? No, not at all. We believe that happiness lies in the attainment of the object and such attainment becomes my goal. Happiness does not lie in money but in my possessing the money. Happiness does not lie in food but in my eating the food. So our goal is to possess an object. Such possession, we are convinced is the source of happiness. We only wish to possess that part of the object that will give us happiness. We wish to eat delicious food but do not wish to possess the negative aspects, if any, of that food. We wish to pluck a rose but not be pricked by a thorn. Given half a chance we may wish to possess many things without earning them and working in order to earn them.

Our goals are to possess objects which we believe are the sources of happiness. And our lives are an endless pursuit of goals. Happiness? It may be appearing to come off and on. Yet surely if we do possess happiness we should not be so perpetually occupied with the pursuit of something that we already possess or possess in plenty. So the question comes back to us as to whether happiness really comes from the attainment of goals.

Ramana says happiness is our nature. The pursuit of goals makes us subject ourselves to the illusion that happiness lies outside and needs to be attained. Hence the pursuit of goals actually drags us away time and again from our own nature that is happiness. All the scriptures declare the same truth. Do we believe them? Do we believe Ramana? 'Hard to believe' we say, 'Is this at all possible?'

'See my life,' says Ramana. Vermin eat his thighs, blood and pus are oozing out. He is in bliss. Urchins throw stones at him. He is in bliss. He is given a space under a mango tree to stay in. He is in bliss. He is staying in Virupaksha Cave, the owners of the Cave begin to levy a fee on those who come to see him, he comes and sits out in the open, he is in bliss. His mother comes to plead with him to return home, he is in bliss. His mother Azhagammal is almost dying from typhoid. He is composing a song of prayer to Arunachala to save her. In the midst of this most moving plea to keep Kaalan, Death, away from mother he enquires, 'What is death if scrutinised?' He is in bliss. When Echamma brings to him a telegram stating that her daughter Chellama has died during childbirth tears flow from his eyes too. Yet, it is certain, he is in bliss. He is one with every being, one with their joys and their sorrows too, more than anyone else can ever be. At the same time it is visible to all that he is ever in bliss.

What is the bliss that Ramana ever radiates through his glance and his smile? A young girl watched him some months before his Maha Nirvana. She thought to herself that no one could have such a benign smile while suffering such excruciating pain. She thought it was an act put on by Ramana. She watched him continuously with all the intensity of her adolescence. There was absolutely no change in him. She had to concede there was some mystery. What is the mystery of his being ever in bliss?

It is no mystery, says Ramana, for bliss is natural. It is not special to me, he says, if it were it would not be the truth. It is universal, common to all and available at all times. If we ask him why we don't experience it he answers that it is because we are constantly moving away from our true nature. This is what Ramana says. He doesn't so much say it as he emanates the bliss from his eyes, from his smile, from his stillness, from his gait, from his movements, and from every word he speaks, from every event in his life. One may not know about his life, one may not have read a word of his teachings, one may not even know his name, yet can anyone who so much as casually glances at his eyes deny the bliss that radiates from them?

Despite all this are we ready to accept that the Self alone is the repository and the source of all joy? Why go so far? We do not even see that what we are seeking in every goal is only happiness. To accept this is the first step. It is not the object that we seek, any object. It is only the joy that springs from the experiencing or possessing of the object that we seek. How often do we remember this? When we look at a delicious dish and want to eat it, do we remember, 'It is not the tasty dish that I want, it is the joy that I believe comes from eating it that I seek'? When we wish to hear a melodious song do we recall, 'It is not the song that I want, it is the joy that I believe comes from hearing it that I seek'? When we wish to talk to a dear friend do we tell ourselves, 'It is not the friend that I want, it is the joy that I believe comes from my friend that I seek'?

How often do we remember, 'It is joy that I want. It is joy that I want. It is joy and joy alone that I seek'? Only if we do so, then the question of the next step would arise. Once I am convinced that I need happiness and happiness alone then I will genuinely start looking at everything in my life from that perspective. Further, it would then be easy to turn to the source of joy, or so we think. However, we seem to be constantly pulled away from the source by numberless distractions. So it would be important to know and remember what is not the source of joy as well. This is in order to be wary of it and not get carried away by it.

And what is not the source of joy? Anything that is external is not a source of joy. Why is it so? It is so because anything that is external to us will pass away, it is bound to be transient. When it goes away it leaves us saddened. That is why Ramana says in Upadesa Saram that action cannot lead to the goal because its fruits are transient. When the fruits of action are temporary, how can action lead to the goal of life, which is to remain in unalloyed bliss? Action, which invariably seeks something external, is not the source of joy.

Then it would become clear to us that if we want joy we should not be seeking it in anything external. If we are very sure about this we would also want to know what is meant by 'anything external'. That which is not I, which comes to me at some time,

which I may possess for a short while and which would sooner or later leave me and go away, may be said to be external to me. We know that all our possessions are external to us. We know that even our kith and kin are external to us. We know that anything outside the body is 'external' but are we aware that the body itself is only 'external' to the 'I'?

How can the body be external to us? Why not? Do we not happily leave the body behind on the bed and roam around the world freely in our dreams? Do we not take on a dream body to enjoy all our dream experiences? Then how can we say that this body is not external? We may come back into the body at the time of waking but how would that be different from coming back into our house after an outing? Just because we come back home every night would the house become internal to us? Can we say 'My house is within me'?

Actually, anything that we can think of is external because it becomes the object of our thought, it is not the subject. We can drop any thought if we wish to, can we not? We may sometimes find it difficult to drop a particular thought but eventually we drop that too. Again, it is with effort that we hold on to chosen thoughts. If they were our very nature how could they go away? Ramana says simply that all thoughts are objects to the 'I'-thought who is the subject. So it is clear that no thought can be a source of joy for us, not a constant source of joy in any case although it may apparently give us some joy for a short time.

Ramana also tells us that the 'I'- thought is the central thought, that all other thoughts are dependent on the attention of the 'I', they rise and fall with the attention of the 'I'. Hence upon paying attention it would become amply evident to us that thoughts are external to us. Is the 'I' – thought the core of our being in that case? It may seem to be so yet it too is clearly external because it comes and goes daily. When we go into deep sleep the 'I'-thought is not there, it disappears. It appears again only on waking. So who is the I who is a witness to my deep sleep? That I alone is 'internal'.

Awareness of the 'I' that remains when the mind has also disappeared is the true source of joy. Until the point of this awareness one would keep taking the enquiry deeper. As Sri A.R.Natarajan writes, "There are some who wish to escape from the complacent satisfaction of their routine lives. Somehow they have the good sense to see that there is no end of the road in action, that one can never know peace of mind unless they are prepared to look at the basic structure of their lives. To all such persons Ramana and his path of Self-knowledge through self-enquiry is very appealing."

Recognising again and again that happiness cannot spring from any object, one would draw attention inward to the subject at every point and from there to the source. For instance, when one thinks one is happy because of seeing something one would stop to enquire into the source of the joy.

Enquiry reveals that the joy of seeing is not in the object that is seen but in the seeing. This is because the seen is dependent on the seeing. If there were no seeing how could the seen be a source of joy? Where is the seeing? Not in my eyes but in my mind. When that is the case, it is equally true that the joy of seeing is not in the thought of seeing but in the knowing of it. If there was no knowledge of the seeing how could the seeing be a source of joy? Thus the joy is neither in what is seen, nor in the process of seeing but in the knowledge 'I am seeing something which gives me happiness'. The joy is not in the thought but in the thinker. Wherefrom does the joy in the thinker arise if not from the thought? Evidently from the source, the Self. What is the source of the thinker? What is the source of the 'I'-thought? Wherefrom does the 'I'-thought arise? 'Whence am I?'

As Ramana said in his very first spoken instruction, given to Ganapati Muni in 1907, 'Find out from where the 'I'-thought emerges and merge at its source, that is tapas'.



THE NEW DAWN**A. R. Natarajan***THE MAD RACE AND SELF KNOWLEDGE**

Everyone in the world is frightfully busy doing something or the other or thinking about this or that. This is a non-stop affair. The so called entertainment provided by the mass-media also continues this process by keeping the mind busy with its identifications of what is seen or heard on the movie screen or the TV. Having spent a tiresome day when one hits the bed for rest does he have it? No. More thoughts are there in store. This time it is through dreams, which could be as real as 'real life situations' in dreams so that one screams in fright or cries in sorrow. Then God's compassion gives a little rest to everyone from all this ceaseless madness. Rest is forced on the individual. There is a lull. Neither the thinker nor his ambitions, dreams, and so on are there. All thoughts have stopped for they are the thinker's thoughts. The mind is no doubt at rest in deep sleep. But it is not by choice, not by any act of the individual but by some divine plan.

Many are content to live this way, happy with their daily gains, with their small fenced in world of attachments and passions which are no more than storms in a tea cup. These persons miss the bus of life.

However there are some who wish to escape from the complacent satisfaction of their routine lives. Somehow they have the good sense to see that there is no end of the road in action that one can never know peace of mind unless they are prepared to look at the basic structure of their lives. To all such persons Ramana and his path of Self-knowledge through self-enquiry is very appealing.

Self-attention is possible only to the extent to which one is able to set aside one's ceaselessly chattering mind. The mind is engaged in thoughts without respite because it does not know

*An excerpt from the Publication of RMCL of the title - 'The New Dawn'.

better. It has its pet objects with which it plays like a child with its toys. One needs to create a counter weight by imbibing the spirit of enquiry, which is the essential human spirit. The torch of enquiry which has been dampened by an unquestioning mind is to be rekindled by asking the basic question, "Whose thoughts are they anyway?" They are of course mine. But who is this 'I'? This seemingly simply question holds the key; it is the open-sesame, for the transformation of life. For a new and right direction would then be given to one's mental energies. What was being dissipated on the periphery would now be gathered together on the single 'I' thought.

With such questioning one is already on the trail of understanding the mind. The subject, the individual about whom one has no knowledge, because no enquiry was set afoot, would now be the focus of interest. With more practice of the shifting of mind's energies, shifting of its interest and attention inward towards itself would enable one to stay with this question of questions, who am I really? D'horse my thoughts, am I a big zero? Am I nothing or everything? This question has its own magnetism if you allow it to take hold of you. For one would have caught mind's power by the scruff before it has fragmented itself into thoughts. This is a point which Ramana has been dinning into us. Enquire into the subject. Let your attention be exclusively on it. Faith in his words is an invigorating tonic, the very elixir of life.

Should one stop with this questioning? Ramana tells us that this is but a half way stage. One has to pose to the energised mind a further question about its source or place from which it originates. This questioning takes the form of 'Whence am I?'. The purpose of this question is to expose us to the truth that what one has taken to be the subject is not really the true subject. Is the mind as we know it now the reality about one's existence? Or is it a mere fragment of that reality? These are doubts which could well be entertained. They are understandable since we are looking within, turning the mind inward.

Ramana assures that if one's attention is held on to this question then the sense of separateness, by the superimposition of a separate 'I', would be lost in the vast silence of the true

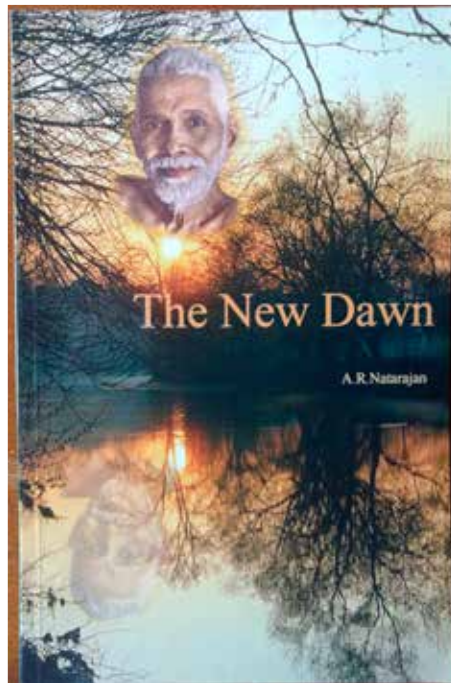
subject referred to as Self, Brahman and Heart. The individual 'I', which could be compared to a river, would have reached its ocean home when the mind submerges there. This happens because the individual 'I', which is linking one with the body and the world, partakes the conscious nature of the Self. It has a scent of it. Ramana would compare it to a bubble in the ocean which too is only water. When the bubble bursts it loses its separateness and becomes one with the ocean from which it had surfaced.

Self-knowledge, knowledge about the true subject dawns because the Ramana path is holistic. The unitary nature of the Self is never lost sight of and attention is held from the beginning exclusively on the subject.

The Ramana way cuts at the root of time as a factor in sadhana. The time factor means the past, present and the future, time being divided into three. I was like this before; I want to be like this in the future; so I must do something in the present to become different, to change, to begin a new chapter. But this will not work since the sadhana would be a movement in time and not out of it. One is always the pure one, one is ever auspicious, ever joyous. When one is Self-attentive one's attention is on each moment which is fresh. A complete transformation takes place because one is totally focussed on the "NOW". It is not the process of 'Becoming' something different but simply 'Being' aware of one's true nature as pure and joyous. The load of the past is off one's back. The future does not beckon. Where is its lure when each moment is complete?

When one has reached the heart by Self-attention a new life blossoms. Life would then be heart-based. There would be not more seeking. What is there to seek when one has anchored oneself in the overwhelming bliss of the Self? All movement of thought and action would be spontaneous. It would begin when needed and end when its purpose is done. The mind would be rid of its back and forth movement. The vast silence of a mind totally attentive to the moment would fill one with peace.

This experience, without an experiencer, of enveloping bliss, is a benediction flowing from Ramana's constant presence which makes the fruition of one's sadhana possible. His grace is there in many ways; through his gracious touch, through his eyes bathed in love, and through his indescribable silence. He captures the deluded mind, and directs it back from its wayward wanderings, to its source, to that haven of peace and silence.



The 'Talks' as a Guidance to Self Enquiry

N.Nandakumar

Talk 52. (Excerpt).

D.: What becomes of the jiva after death?

M.: The question is not appropriate for a jiva now living. A disembodied jiva may ask me, if convenient. In the meantime let the embodied jiva solve its present problem and find who he is. There will be an end of such doubts.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: The "I-I" has no going or coming.

Talk 52. (Excerpt)

D.: What is dhyana?

M.: The word dhyana usually signifies meditation on some object, whereas nididhyasana is used for enquiry into the Self. The triads persist until the Self is realised. Dhyana and nididhyasana are the same so far as the aspirant is concerned, because they involve trinity and are synonymous with bhakti.

D.: How should dhyana be practised?

M.: Dhyana serves to concentrate the mind. The predominant idea keeps off all others. Dhyana varies according to the individual. It may be on an aspect of God, on a mantra, or on the Self, etc.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: During sadhana the sadhaka taking up Self Enquiry is to feel no self-importance as the triads like jeeva, world and Ishwara, continue. For the sadhaka, self enquiry is the same as dhyana. This helps in surrendering the sadhana to the Self or Guru. 'The Self has reminded me of self enquiry, so I began. The Self has asked me to end it here.'

Talk 52. (Excerpt)

D.: How should dhyana be practised?

M.: Dhyana serves to concentrate the mind. The predominant idea

keeps off all others. Dhyana varies according to the individual. It may be on an aspect of God, on a mantra, or on the Self, etc.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: Dhyana is to hold on to one idea which may be an aspect of God, or a mantra or the Self and put aside all other ideas. Self Enquiry is to hold the "I" within all, including the Dhyana Idea, and put aside other ideas.

Talk 53. (Excerpt)

A young man, Mr. Knowles, came for darsan. He had read Paul Brunton's two books. He asked: "The Buddhists say that 'I' is unreal, whereas Paul Brunton in the Secret Path tells us to get over the 'I-thought' and reach the state of 'I'. Which is true?"

M.: There are supposed to be two 'I's; the one is lower and unreal, of which all are aware; and the other, the higher and the real, which is to be realised.

You are not aware of yourself while asleep, you are aware in wakefulness; waking, you say that you were asleep; you did not know it in the deep sleep state. So then, the idea of diversity has arisen along with the body-consciousness; this body-consciousness arose at some particular moment; it has origin and end. What originates must be something. What is that something? It is the 'I'-consciousness. Who am I? Whence am I? On finding the source, you realise the state of Absolute Consciousness.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: All controversies of the waking state are transcended by Bhagavan by going to the root. Are there two "I"s? Is there a waking "I" where one is aware of oneself and a deep-sleep "I" where one is not aware of oneself? Who am I?

Talk 53. (Excerpt).

D.: Who is this 'I'? It seems to be only a continuum of sense-impression. The Buddhist idea seems to be so too.

M.: The world is not external. The impressions cannot have an outer origin. Because the world can be cognised only by consciousness. The world does not say that it exists. It is your impression. Even so this impression is not consistent and not unbroken. In deep sleep the world is not cognised; and so it exists not for a sleeping man.

Therefore the world is the sequence of the ego. Find out the ego. The finding of its source is the final goal.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: Bhagavan is turning conventional education on its head. Education is based on the construct that the human being learns by sensory impressions. Bhagavan is teaching that the world, the senses and the learning-intelligence arise only after the rising of the ego. Waking state itself arises only after the rising of the ego. Education has its source and goal in erasing of this false ego. Find its source, says Bhagavan, and the source and goal of the world is found.

Talk 53.

D.: I believe that we should not inflict suffering on other lives. Should we then endure the mosquito bite and submit to it also?

M.: You do not like to suffer yourself. How can you inflict suffering on others? Just keep off mosquitoes since you suffer by their stings.

D.: Is it right that we kill other lives, e.g., mosquitoes, bugs?

M.: Everyone is a suicide. The eternal, blissful, and natural state has been smothered by this life of ignorance. In this way the present life is due to the killing of the eternal, pristine Being. Is it not a case of suicide? So then, everyone is a suicide. Why worry about murders and killing?

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: The moment that one desires to take birth, one has apparently killed the eternal pristine being, committed suicide and caused immense pain to another being called mother. All other pains and killings are by-products and escapes from the root error. For whom is this desire for birth?

Talk 53. (Excerpt).

In the course of a later talk the visitor said: "The world sends impressions and I awake!"

M.: Can the world exist without someone to perceive it? Which is prior? The Being-consciousness or the rising-consciousness? The Being-consciousness is always there, eternal and pure. The rising-consciousness rises forth and disappears. It is transient.

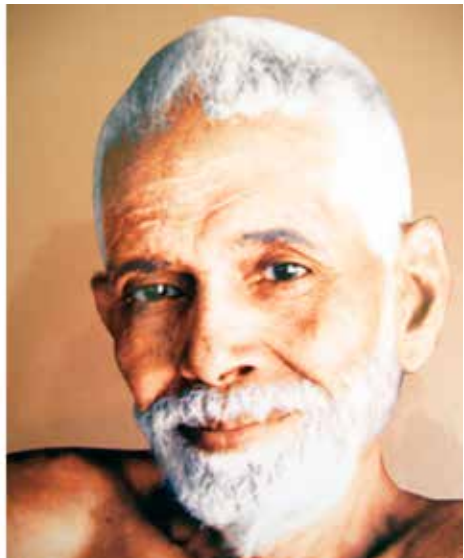
D.: Does not the world exist for others even when I am asleep?

M.: Such a world mocks at you also for knowing it without knowing yourself. The world is the result of your mind. Know your mind. Then see the world. You will realise that it is not different from the Self.

D.: Is not Maharshi aware of himself and his surroundings, as clearly as I am?

M.: To whom is the doubt? The doubts are not for the realised. They are only for the ignorant.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: The world seen is the cross to be borne. We as devotees of Bhagavan bear that cross by surrendering to Him. Bhagavan is assuring the sadhaka that there is no cross to bear. The gross world arises from the subtle - the mind. The subtle cross of the mind arises from the ego. Take the ego-cross to its Source. All crosses vanish. In this talk, the questioner is not talking as a devotee as he doubts the Maharshi. So, the Maharshi points out that the cross of doubt is for that questioner to bear.



Saddarshanam*Master Nome*

The same power drives the mind inward and outward. The duality appears only in the outward-turned mind. There is no outer in the inward. The within-ness is pure Consciousness, which is non-dual and undifferentiated.

Q. As we discuss it and I try to hold this “thing,” it starts to lose its form. This is just by trying to figure out where this “thing” is that imagines all this.

N.: When it looks for itself that is the mind turning in on the mind.

Another Q.: Like a computer, the mind works with a set program. A thought comes, and there is a limited, objective appearance. Then, this computer virus comes in and breaks up the program. A plus B does not equal C anymore. It has no answer. When it has no answer, the program is shot.

N.: Obviously, you speak from experience with your computer. (laughter)

Q.: It can't find the answer. There is no more “it” to go further.

N.: All right. That is one way of looking at this. To combine your analogy with the verse composed by the Maharshi, the Self, or the Supreme, which lends its Light, is like the source of the electricity that runs the computer, regardless of the programs.

Q.: So, someone pulls the plug.

N.: Rather than view inquiry as that which scrambles the program, it is better to understand that it undoes entirely the ability to create the program. Inquiry does not scramble the mind or give the mind such a mysterious question that the mind is blown away by the riddle of it all. That might be a particular spiritual experience at one point, but the questioning of “Who am I?” eliminates the very idea that there is such a thing called “the mind.” For the purpose

of practice, it is said that the mind is turned inward, but what actually occurs when the mind is turned inward? Bhagavan has expressed it, "The mind is to be turned back within the mind." It does not mean that the mind is doing. The idea that the mind is active has already been taken care of in the first line, in which he says that it is the Supreme that lends its Light, which includes its power, to the mind. No doer ship is being ascribed to it.

Another Q.: It doesn't turn itself inward.

N.: It is not an entity to do so, but we cannot say the Self is active. The ideas that something needs to be done and that we are going from one place to another are part of the mind that is being dissolved. The answer to the question comes by experience and cannot be very well explained, except by using some temporary, expedient answer, such as, "The mind does it," "I do it," or "The Self does it." None of those answers are really accurate, in terms of the Truth, for the mind is inert and illusory, an individual "I" is only delusion, and the question of action or motion of any kind is impossible for the Self.

Sri Ramana wisely says that the mind is turned inward. It goes to That which is before itself, interior to itself, or we may say that it goes into its own core. Then, what happens? There is union. Union of what with what? That which seemed to be the mind unites with the illuminating Consciousness that was originally perceived as its core, as its background, or as the Light that illuminates it. It attains union with That. Whatever comes into union with the Absolute, though, loses its individuality, its separate identity, and any kind of differentiation whatsoever. From the Union, or Absorption, is "the seeing of the Lord," or "the Wisdom of the Lord," and not otherwise. How do you see the Supreme? You see the Supreme only by the mind's dissolution, which is its utter absorption.

Another Q.: When the mind dissolves, are the tendencies dissolved?

N.: Because the vasana-s, the tendencies, are activities or components of the mind, all of them are destroyed. Elsewhere, the Maharshi has said that the method for Self-Realization consists

primarily of the destruction of vasana-s, tendencies. In this verse, Sri Ramana does not expressly mention the tendencies. He uproots the very existence of the mind that could hold these tendencies, that could think of them, and that could think of them repetitively so that they appear. That very mind is dissolved, for it is turned back to look at its origin.

Q.: So, I do not necessarily have to address the tendencies head-on.

N.: He does not say that.

Q.: But by the mere fact of meditating or turning the mind inward, it actually dissolves the mind. That will work without addressing tendencies.

N.: He does not address that issue in this verse. He does not say, "We do not need to address the tendencies."

Q.: Oh!

N.: He simply says, "The mind is to be turned back within the mind or interior to the mind, here." When you address a tendency, what happens? What do you do? What is it that you refer to as "addressing a tendency"?

Q.: What I have done is to look at whatever is troubling me. Instead of not looking at it, I investigate what is happening in the mind. In a way, it is not being afraid to look at it that works very well to dissolve it.

N.: Observation and examination of it work better than continuing to live by it. Then, what do you do? With or without circumstances prompting you to do so, you become cognizant that you are thinking in the manner of a tendency, perhaps acting upon it or perhaps not. Now, what do you do with that?

Q.: It depends how serious it is. If it very intense, I look at it.

N.: Which means what?

Q.: It means to really look at what is troubling me and what I believe in all this trouble. I note all the aspects.

N.: And then?

Q.: It is enough to look at it and do nothing, actually.

N.: Does that eliminate the tendency permanently so there is no possibility of recurrence?

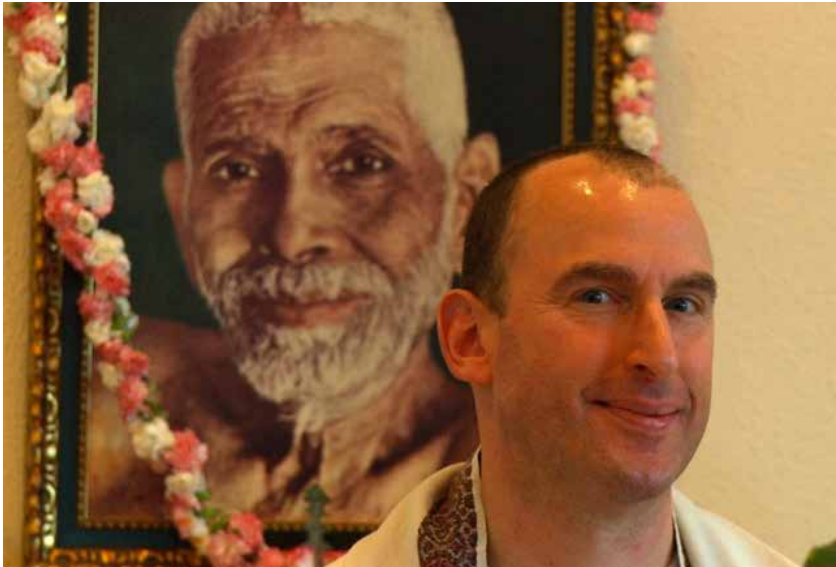
Q.: Are we actually to dissolve the contents of the mind, too?

N.: How would it be possible to dissolve the existence of the mind yet still leave the contents behind?

Q.: If we turn awareness, or the mind, inward, do we go upstream of the mind and actually dissolve the mind and its contents?

N.: Yes. It must include the dissolution of the tendencies. If, without dissolving the tendencies, you were to attempt to dissolve the mind, you might end with an intellectual insight or with a temporary experience. You would return, though, in your experience, to the state of the mind with the tendencies that were plaguing you before. This is so because your identity would still be wrapped up in them. That is why I asked you about how you “look” at tendencies. Obviously, everyone sees them, and that is how they know they experience them. So, when you said, “look at them,” I wanted to know from you, what you are actually practicing. As long as your identity has not been extricated from such tendencies, they will recur, sooner or later. Such may recur after a short lapse of time or after a long lapse of time. The tendencies may recur apparently prompted by circumstances, which is really being prompted by a manner of thinking within the mind that you associate with a particular circumstance. Once one observes a tendency, whether because it is engaging one in a particular action or because she notices the veiling or the turmoil in the mind, she can observe what constitutes the tendency. This is examination of the particular thoughts. Then, she can further trace those thoughts to the definitions that are held about herself that give rise to such

thinking, which, when repeated, becomes a tendency. In the case of attachments, examination of the superimposition or confusion regarding the nature of happiness should occur. Thereupon, inquire, and the tendency is destroyed, and the mind is dissolved to that extent. If the inquiry does not stop there, but continues further as an inquiry as to what it is that contained the tendency to begin with, both the tendency and the mind are utterly destroyed. Whatever is destroyed in pure Knowledge cannot possibly recur, whether after a short time or a long time, because the seed of misidentification is absent. If this is what you mean by “looking at it,” it is a solid approach. If not, reconsider. Do you see that, if you would inquire as just explained, the question about the destruction of tendencies, as if such were different than the destruction of the mind, would no longer arise?



Shri Arunachala Ashtakam

G Kameshwar

Eight Verses on Arunachala Of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi

Introduction

Arunachala Ashtakam was composed immediately after *Arunachala Padikam*, in 1916 CE. In 'Day by Day with Bhagavan', Sri Devaraja Mudaliar gives an account of how the two compositions of Bhagavan came about.

"Bhagavan told me that one morning, when he was sitting on the verandah in Virupaksha Cave, the words '*karuNaikyAl yennai ANTa nee*' came to him very insistently, but he took no special notice of them. It seems the same thing happened the following morning also. Then Bhagavan composed the first stanza of *Arunachala Padikam* (Eleven Verses on Arunachala). The next morning the words beginning the second stanza similarly came to him and he composed the second stanza; and so it went on every day, until the last two stanzas were composed on one day. On that day, after composing the two last stanzas, Bhagavan, it seems, started for *giripradakshina* (going round the hill). One of his disciples, Aiyaswami, brought a piece of paper and pencil and told another disciple who was going with Bhagavan, "Bhagavan has been composing one stanza every morning for some days now, and today he has composed two stanzas. More may come to him today. In case they do, have this paper and pencil with you, so that the same may be recorded." And on the way round the hill Bhagavan actually composed the first six stanzas of the *Arunachala Ashtakam* (Eight Verses on Arunachala). It seems Echamma first got the *Aksharamanamalai* (*The Marital Garland of Letters*) published and later Narayana Reddi. This Narayana Reddi came to know of the *Padikam*

and *Ashtakam* soon afterwards, and wanted to publish them. Then Bhagavan composed two more stanzas for completing the *Ashtakam*; and the *Padikam* and *Ashtakam* were published by Narayana Reddi. This is how the *Padikam* and *Ashtakam* in the *Five Hymns on Arunachala* came to be composed.”

(‘Day by Day with Bhagavan’, 26-October-1945, Morning)

Such is the beauty of these two compositions that great Tamil scholars are astonished by the march of the words, theme, meter... And it is such a joy to hear these being chanted or sung, whether we know the language or not.

The uniqueness of Arunachala *Ashtakam* is that it is considered to be a spiritual autobiography of Bhagavan. Giving a graphic description of his ‘Arunachala Experience’, the imagery of the verses is beautiful.

The first verse begins with his childhood.

Verse-1

aRivaRu kiriyena vamartaru mamma
vaticaya mitanceya laRivari tArkku
maRivaRu ciruvaya tatumuta laruNA
calamikap peritena vaRivini laGka
vaRikila natanporu Latitiru vaNNA
malai-yena voruvarA laRivuRap peRRu
maRivinai maruLuRut tarukini leerokka
varukuRu mamayami tacalamAk kaNTEn

Word split, and meaning:

amma: O Mother!

aRivu aRu kiriyena: As an insentient, intelligence-less, hill of stone

amartarum: it stands, in silence

aticayam itan ceyal: It's deeds are astounding

Arkkum aRivaritu: Beyond anybody's comprehension

aRivu aRu ciru vayatu atu mutal: right from my young years, when I
 had no knowledge whatsoever
aruNAcalam mika peritu ena: That Arunachala is something
 immensely great
aRivin ilaGka: shining, in my mind
atu tiruvaNNAmalai ena: that it is Tiruvannamalai
oruvarAl aRivu uRapeRRum: even when I was given to know, by
 someone
atan poRuL aRikilan: I did not understand it's true significance
aRivinai maruL uRuttu: Stupefying my mind
arukinil eerokka: when it drew me to its vicinity
aruku URum amayam: the moment I reached near it
itu acalamAk kaNTEn: I saw/realized it to be unmoving, still, hill,

Verse rendering:

Oh mother, what a wonder
 Standing silently
 As a hill, of knowingness nil,
 Is this (Arunachala)
 Of deeds so amazing,
 Transcending all understanding!

In my mind, shining
 From my early years
 When my knowledge was naught
 Was this understanding
 That Arunachala
 Is something of greatness amazing.

And even when it was
 That I came to know
 From someone
 That 'that' (Arunachala)
 was actually (this) Tiruvannamalai
 I still realized not
 Its significance.

And later when
Spellbinding / Stilling my mind
It drew me near
I saw it then
As Stillness Absolute –
A hill so still.

Prose rendering:

Look! There Arunachala stands as if an insentient Mountain. Yet, mysterious is the way it works, beyond all human understanding. From my unthinking childhood, Arunachala had shone as an immensity in my awareness. But even when I learnt from someone that it was Tiruvannamalai, I did not realise its real meaning. However, when it stilled my mind and drew me to itself and I came near, I saw that it was stillness absolute!"¹

Scan the adjacent QRL
in your Mobile QR code
scanner App to watch the
video song of Ashtakam.



1 Prose translation: By Prof K Swaminathan, 'Five Hymns to Arunachala and Other Poems of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi', published by Ramana Kendra, New Delhi, 1977

Upadesa Saram

Ujwal Jagadeesh

Atma samsthitih swAtmadarshanam

The established poise in the Self is the vision of the Self.

In the story of the ten fools, they had crossed a stream on their journey and wanted to check if all of them had reached safely or not. When each one of them counted they found only nine. While counting others each of them had left themselves out. They started worrying, crying and searching for their missing friend. The missing friend was always there even when they thought he was missing or they were searching and also when they found him back with the help of a wise stranger.

The truth is that the missing friend was none other than oneself. The Sadguru comes into our lives like the wise stranger in the story and tells us ‘what you are searching for is never lost because it is you yourself’. The cause of the grief is not the real loss of any one, but it is one’s own ignorance. So one needs to stop searching for the answer outside, but look within and find out one’s true nature. This is the ultimate purpose of our lives.

The water from the ocean evaporates and becomes vapour. Vapour rises up and becomes clouds. Clouds become dense and pour down as rain. Rain water flows into streams and joins the river. The water from the river flows unstoppably until it reaches its source the ocean. Whether it is the vapour, cloud, raindrop, stream, river or ocean its nature is water. Although each one of these looks different and is called by different names, its constituent is one. To realize the truth that water’s nature is same as its source (the ocean) in whatever condition it may be, it has to know itself. Similarly Ramana says in whatever condition or situation we may find ourselves, our nature is of the Supreme Self. The only way to know this truth is to abide constantly as our true Self.

Why are we not able to abide as our Self which is ever available? That is because we see everything as an object. Our senses are equipped to see outward and our mind is trained to grasp information from outside. For example our eyes have the ability to see various things and also recognize darkness when there is no light. We believe we have a pair eyes because we can see. What if there is nothing to see or we do not pay attention to what we are seeing? Do we cease to have our eyes? No, our eyes are present even if there is nothing to see. Similarly Ramana says it is by the pure awareness within us that we know everything including our own body. This power within makes the senses recognize the world. This power within make the mind process the information of the world obtained from the senses and respond. This power within makes the intellect aware of what is right and what is wrong.

Although this power within is the basis of all knowledge and the existence, it is independent of all these. It permeates and transcends the body, senses, breath, mind, intellect, knowledge and ignorance. Hence this power cannot be seen or realized using these above faculties. So, to know own true nature Ramana says one needs to enquire diligently into the question 'Who am I?'. When all thoughts and activities subside one realizes the self-evident light of the Self. To see the light one does not require another light. The Light lights itself. Therefore Ramana says, there are no two selves one which is seeking and another that has to be attained. To know the Self is to be the Self.

A famous Sufi fable by Attar illustrates this point:

One night, the moths gathered together, tormented by their longing to unite themselves with the candle. They all said, 'we must find someone to give us news of that for which we long so earnestly.' One of the moths then went to a castle and saw the light of a candle within. Upon returning he reported what he saw, but the wise moth said, 'he has no real information to give about the candle.' Then another moth visited the candle, passed close to the light, drawing near to it and touching the flame with its wings. He too came back and explained something of what union with the

candle meant, but the wise moth said to him, 'your explanation is really worth no more than your comrade.'

A third moth rose up and threw himself violently into the candle's flame. As he entered completely into its embrace, his members became glowing red like the flame itself. The wise moth saw from afar that the candle had identified the moth with itself and had given the moth its light. He said, 'this moth has accomplished his desire; but he alone comprehends that to which he has attained. None others knows it, and that is all'

One of the truths this beautiful fable tells us is that there is no way of knowing the Ultimate Truth, except through experiencing it by becoming one with it. The Self cannot be experienced so long as one is different from it. And when one ceases to be, when one loses oneself in the Self, when one abides in the Self, then and then alone one becomes Atma-nishTa, Self-realized.

Atma samsthitih swAtmadarshanam
Atma nirdvayAdAtma nishTatha

Since there are no two selves, the established poise in the Self is the vision of the Self.



Power of the Word

Sanjay Lohia

The jnani and the world

- Seeing the world, the *jnani* sees the Self which is the substratum of all that is seen; the *ajnani* is ignorant of his true being, the Self.
- Why worry yourself about the world and what happens to it after Self-realisation? First realise the Self. What does it matter if the world is perceived or not?
- For the *jnani* all the three states are equally unreal. But the *ajnani* is unable to comprehend this, because for him the standard of reality is the waking state, whereas for the *jnani* the standard of reality is reality itself.



Aksharamanamalai

Dr.Sarada

*toTTaruT kai mei kaTTidA eniliyAn
naTTamAvEn aruL aruNAchala*

*tODamil nI ahattODonRi enRumsan-
Dam onRiDa aruL aruNAchala*

If you do not embrace me Oh Arunachala, I will be destroyed, says Bhagavan. At every point in our life, in every way this is true because it is grace which has given us life, it is grace which sustains us, and it is grace which takes us into itself at the right point of time.

As Bhagavan says in the Arunachala Pancharatnam, *chittiramAm ihdellAm semmalaiyE nin pAlE udidamAy ninRE odungiDumAy*. This whole world picture is created, sustained and dissolved in you, Oh Arunachala. But for the touch of grace, everything is only jada, insentient, having no consciousness of its own. It is grace that makes everything shine as consciousness. And therefore if one is not aware of this presence, it is as good as being destroyed, as good as being non – existent. So Bhagavan says *toTTaruT kai mei kaTTidA enil yAn naTTamAvEn*, I will get destroyed Oh Arunachala, if you do not embrace me with your touch of grace. It is because of that grace, as Bhagavan says, that everything moves, everything is seen as consciousness, *chaitanya*. It is that grace which keeps the life breath going in deep sleep, Bhagavan says, to distinguish sleep from death. It is that grace that shines as consciousness and makes us aware of all things.

When we are separated from that awareness, we are lost. We are continuously having the sense of loss, *nashTamAvEn*. What is *nashTam*? *nashTam* is loss. We are living continuously in the sense of loss. Even though there is nothing lost, even though that which is the fullness is ever with us, we are ever living with the sense of loss. How do we say we are ever living with the sense of loss? Because we are always seeking, we will not seek once

we have gained. We seek only because we have a sense of loss. We are constantly seeking something or the other. No matter what is bestowed on us, we are seeking something or the other. So many things are given to us but have we stopped seeking? No, we are continuously seeking. If we are continuously seeking, we are continuously in a state of loss, *nashTam*, we are continuously in a state of *nashTam*.

Bhagavan says later, *IAbā nee*, you alone are the true gain, *IAbam*. So here he is saying, if I am not embraced by you I am *nashTam*, totally lost, or, I am total loss without you. I am only in the negative always, unless I am embraced by you, unless I am touched by your grace. So, Oh Arunachala, embrace me, embrace me, embrace me because, otherwise there is no meaning. It will always be a loss.

It is not as if we sometimes lose things, it is not as if we sometimes lose people. If we look at our lives we are always at a loss, always suffering loss. So, Arunachala remove me from this state of bereavement, of constant bereavement about something or the other and fill be with your presence.

I know why you are not doing this. It is because I am impure and you are pure. *dOshamil nI*, you are absolutely pure. And this *aHam* which I am asking you to be united with, it is nothing but impurity. How does this become impure, what is the impurity in this? What is impurity at all? What is impurity in water? When something other than water gets mixed with water, the water is said to be impure. When something other than milk gets mixed in the milk, the milk is said to be impure. When an external element gets mixed with something, it is called impure. When something unnatural enters then it is called impure. You are without any impurity because there is nothing apart from you. There is nothing apart from you that can ever get mixed up in you. So how can you ever be impure? *dOshamil nI*, because you can never have any impurity, because there is nothing that is different from you but this *aHam*, this 'I'-thought, this identification, I am asking you to be united with this, *ahattODonRi*.

I am asking the *dOshamil nl* to get mixed with this *aham*, this *aham* which is an impurity. Why is it an impurity? What is this *aham* that makes us call it an impurity? This *aham* is mixed with the notion that it is limited, that it is an entity. By that reason, it becomes impure because it separates itself from something else. As Bhagavan has told us, it divides itself into subject and object. So what happens? Then there is something outside of me, that something which is outside of me can always enter me and keep on making me impure at all times. So this body is said to be a bundle of impurities.

Bhagavan has kept many purifiers within the body to continue to make it function in a state of purity. Otherwise if I drink water also it becomes impure, except that which is absorbed, then that which is impure has to be evacuated, it has to come out. So there is something other than this body or outside of it that is constantly entering it. Once I have said I am this limited entity, and there are entities outside me, when they come into me, they create impurity until it is absorbed or it is ejected. So by making myself a limited entity, I have become impure and it is to say by identifying with a body, by having the *dehAtma buddhi* as Bhagavan says. That is the root of all impurity, there is no other impurity. Once we have limited ourselves to a form, automatically all impurities are added. Once this limitation is removed, where is the impurity? *dOshamil nl ahattODonRi*, When you become one with this *aham*, Oh Arunachalam, when you take this *aham* into yourself, into your embrace, then what remains is only bliss, *sandODamonRiDa aruL*.

Your Will is Mine - Ramani Manni

A tribute by Sarada

For RMCL the first family of Sri Ramanasramam has always been in many ways first family and then Asram. The erstwhile President, Sri T.N.Venkataraman was TNV Mama and Smt.Nagalakshmi, his wife was Nagu Mami. Their sons, Sundaram, Ganesan and Mani came to be addressed as 'annas' and their daughters as 'akkas'. The spouses of the 'akkas' became 'athimbers' and those of the two 'annas' automatically became 'mannis'. This is true not only of RMCL, the Asram staff too address them in the same manner and so do many of the devotees. This is because TNV along with Nagu Mami and later their family members adopted and continue to adopt all the devotees as their own family and to shower affectionate care on all.

Thus it came to be that 'Ramani Manni' was how Ramani Subramaniam was addressed by the Ramana Family at RMCL. All of us fondly remember how she lovingly played hostess to the then large troupe of Ramananjali before we took off from Bombay on the first 'world tour'. Till the end she continued to be a great supporter and fan of Ramananjali, attending every Ramananjali program at the Asram and closely following the release of every cassette and later CDs.

To me, personally, she was like a mother. She would seek me out herself the moment she knew we were visiting the Asram and enquire about my well being. When I asked her how her health was she would always say that whatever the state of health, it is to be accepted as Bhagavan's gift.

She had a childlike temperament of simplicity and straightforwardness. Once when I shared with her some of the issues at RMCL she replied, 'If you think that you have any difficulty managing RMCL think of how the Asram is managed. It is so much vaster and so many things to be taken care of here.' She brought into focus the fact that seen in the right perspective every issue is only a small one.

She would wish me with great gusto whenever she knew we were starting for girivalam. In the earlier years she would tell me, 'I would love to come for a pradakshina with you. I feel amazed by the fact that you take a full six hours to go around the Hill!'

The last time I met her was on Bhagavan's Aradhana day in the sacred presence of Bhagavan's Samadhi. I greeted her silently with folded hands as the puja was going on. She took my hands into her hands and gave me a most loving look. She too did not speak. Something prompted me to feel this was her last blessing to me. It turned out to be so.

My prostrations to this sweet mother in Ramana.

Below is the tribute given to her carried in the Asram newsletter 'Sharanagathi':

Ramani Subramanian (72), wife of V.S.Mani, Administrator of Sri Ramanasramam was Absorbed in Bhagavan Ramana on May 13. Ramani's mother accompanying her father, had the rare good fortune of having Bhagavan's darsan. Years later, her daughter Ramani was blessed to marry into that family. At the age of 22, Ramani married V.S.Mani. At Bombay, where V.S.Mani was an engineer, the couple played hosts to several Ashram inmates and family members and made a regular annual pilgrimage to Arunachalam.

When Mr. Mani took voluntary retirement in 1985 to help his father, T.N. Venkataraman in running the growing Ashram, Ramani took devoted care of her widowed father-in-law and provided constant support to her husband. A fond mother, she had to reconcile herself to her two children being sent to the distant Rishi Valley school for a sound education. Innumerable devotees, visitors, friends and relatives would visit Mangala Nivas, the President's residence and they found in her a most welcoming, genial hostess. Fluent in Tamil, Telugu, Hindi, Bengali and English she would chat and make visitors feel at home. Ramani was liked by Old Ashramites like Kunju Swami, Ramaswamy Pillai and others and she had a strong bond with Kanakammal who deepened her understanding of the unique teachings of Bhagavan.

Ramani, along with V.S.Mani, took great care of her ageing parents who moved to Tiruvannamalai and settled in Mangala Nivas where they shed their bodies. In January of this year, Ramani had the satisfaction of celebrating the 50th year of her marriage and in February the Sathabhishekam (80th Birthday) of her husband amidst family members, devotees and friends. Ever patient and silent in suffering, Ramani passed through the trials of failing health with exemplary courage. When she was Absorbed in Ramana on May 13, she earned her freedom. A large number of admirers were present at her final journey.



Crazy goes silent

G Kameshwar

Today – June 10, 2019 – my dear friend Crazy Mohan passed away. He had no business passing away so suddenly, in the peak of his life. But then that's the way he was. Spontaneous in everything. For him life was theater, where timing is everything. You may say he passed away with his boots on... He walked into the hospital today... And passed away soon after...



Mohan Rangachari, was a genius... His achievements need no elaboration... A terrific humorist – he was loved for the great dialogues he wrote for some of the best 'humor movies' in Tamil. Other than his incredible contributions in cinema and drama, he was also a poet, a painter, and a most pure hearted human being. Such humility, such humor, such easy availability – he was a golden lotus in the murky waters of the workaday world.

My friendship with him was all about Ramana Maharshi. We rarely, if at all, spoke about any other subject with one another. Whenever we spoke on phone or met in person, our Hello and Bye were substituted by the happy greeting 'Arunachala!'. He wrote a whole book of poems on Ramana, in beautiful Tamil... A biography along the lines of *Ramayanam*... He named it *Ramanayanam*. Although he had written this, he had never visited Ramanasramam. It was only later... His first (and, alas, only) visit to Ramanasramam was with me... And I was privileged to work with him and render in English a series of discussions we had on Ramana Maharshi, which we serialized in the Ramana Way magazine, and later brought out as a book titled 'Crazy About Ramana'.

'Crazy About Ramana', published by Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning, was released during the staging of the 777th show of his super-hit drama – 'Chocolate Krishna'. And that show was an opportunity for me to see him in his home-turf, backstage. A memory that stands out for me is the way he would pace

backstage, going from one side entrance to another, timing his entries and exits perfectly. To my mind, he was literally floating. Like Yudhishthira's chariot in the battlefield of Kurukshetra, he seemed to be moving on air. Indeed, for the 'Chocolate Krishna', theatre was his dharma-kshetra. And there, the feel that he exuded was like that of a tiger in a forest. Ah yes, the stage for him was what the sky is to a bird. He would fly.

It is a matter of great happiness that a selection of verses from his treatise 'Ramanayanam', was set to music by Dr. Rajkumar Bharathi, and performed as a Carnatic music concert by the renowned singer Smt. Gayathri Girish, shortly before Mohan passed on. He had the joy of seeing a packed hall, and some very renowned artistes, seeing this performance, along with him. His choice of Rajkumar Bharathi for directing the music was perfect. Rajkumar has been associated with Ramananjali music for decades now, and is also the author of the Tamil rendering of 'Timeless in Time', the biography of Bhagavan Ramana penned by Sri A.R. Natarajan.

Mohan was a compulsive creator, a supercomputer of creativity. Among other forms of writing, he constantly wrote exquisite poetry in Tamil. Every single day, he would share his 'poem of the day' with a bunch of his friends. And I was privileged to be one of them. Yesterday, he wrote a couple of verses.... These are perhaps the last verses he wrote... I am giving them below... And I am also sharing my attempt at translating that to English, with a bit of license... Normally, I would have shared it with Mohan... And he would call me happily and we would chatter-chat... So, here's to you Mohan....

His poem first...

maRkaTak (kurangu) kuTTiyE, mAa ramaNarai
niRka anumattippAi ninnuLLE - varkattin
bEtangaL pOkum piRavip piNiteerum
mOtungaL aNNA malai

vanta manakkurangu vAyulle vAtsalyam
candira vamshattu sUriyan - bantamaRuppu
muRRum tuRakka munivanAi mARaIAm
kaRRa kALavai maRa

- Crazy Mohan

My attempt at rendering it in English...

O mind you monkey baby,
Will you please,
Allow Mother-Ramana into your heart;
For all distinctions will then cease
And birth-cycle will depart.
Sing the praise of Aruna hill
Hail Aruna 'That-thou-art'.

Inside your mouth, O monkey-mind
Is motherly love;
Born of the moon, you will find
The Sun that shines above;
Renouncing all, me and mine,
A monk indeed be thou;
Your clock of knowledge, do unwind
Deception of learning, do let go.

(O mind you monkey baby,
Will you please,
Allow Mother-Ramana into your heart;
For all distinctions will then cease
And birth-cycle will depart.
Sing the praise of Aruna hill
Hail Aruna 'That-thou-art'...)

*

Our scriptures say that the mere 'thought of Arunachala' grants liberation. And here Mohan has punned on Odungal as mOdungal (mOdungal aNNAmalai)... Smash into Arunachala... He always made an impact, he did. As always, he is a smash hit!

Adieu my friend... It seems that the Gods need lots of laughter...
Go shake them up...

Sri Ramana Ashtottaram

Sri Viswanatha Swami

11. Om kamanIya suchAritrAya namaha

To Ramana, the story of whose life captures the heart, we offer the eleven flower.

His golden hue, lustrous eyes, smiling face and sweet words naturally captured the hearts of all who saw him. Even from infancy, he became one who belonged to everyone.

12. Om sahAyAmba sahAyavatE namaha

To Ramana, who was blessed by Sahayamba, we offer the twelfth flower.

When he was scolded as a boy, Ramana ran immediately to the temple of Sahayamba. He assuaged his grief and was filled with Bliss.

13. Om SONAcalamahOlna mAnasAya namaha

To Ramana, whose mind was merged in the great light of Arunachala, we offer the thirteenth flower.

Bhagavan Ramana records in Arunachala Ashtakam that he was aware of the surpassing grandeur of Arunachala even from his infancy. Even before he could lisp the words – Father and Mother. Arivaru Siru vayadadu mudal aruNAcalam miga peridena arivinil anga. This holy name ever shining in his heart indicates the bliss of the inner life Bhagavan Ramana as a child. Yet this was not known to anyone else. It was so natural to him that he did not even think of speaking about it. Was this why he did not know what Arunachala was? Arihilan adan poruL, he says. Only as a boy of 16, in 1895, he learnt from a relative that Arunachala is Tiruvannamalai. He was amazed to learn that the divinely glorious Arunachala was actually a place on earth.

How Bhagavan Captured Us

By Smt. Sulochana Natarajan

Our wedding date was fixed as Wednesday, 6th February, 1952. The marriage was a magnificent one week affair which was referred to by Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer as being like the very marriage of Lord Siva as Nataraja and Goddess Parvathi. My son-in-law G.Kameshwar is never tired of stating that not a single day had passed in my father's life without his making a reference to the 6th of February 1952. Indeed it was a momentous event, paving the way for the many momentous and magnificent Ramana events in which our family has been blessed to participate. Undoubtedly it was all Bhagavan's Hand!

Immediately after the marriage ARN took me on a honeymoon to Ceylon which is now Sri Lanka. That was my first experience on a flight on 9th February 1952 from Trichy to Colombo. Bhagavan was later to take me across the world to numerous countries as the leader of Ramananjali to sing His glory during His birth centenary. Looking back at my first flight I must confess that I was too young to have any excitement or strong emotions regarding the experience.

On our return after a day's stay at Tirunelveli ARN went back to Chennai to resume his duty. He left me at Tirunelveli wanting me to complete the 1st year Intermediate examination. After my exams, accompanied by my Mother, Mama and Mami, I was taken to Cuddalore to my in-law's place on the way to Chennai. After marriage there is the custom of taking the daughter and handing her over at the groom's residence.

From Cuddalore we went to Chennai, picked up ARN and went to Tirupatii to offer our thanks to Lord Venkateswara and to Chidambaram to offer our thanks to Lord Nataraja. As I had mentioned earlier, for both the families Lord Venkateswara was the Kula Deivam, the family deity, and Lord Nataraja was the Ishta Deivam or the favourite deity.

After returning to Chennai we celebrated ARN's birthday which was the 29th of March. My mother presented him with a panchaloha statuette of Lord Nataraja which still adorns our showcase. Our first 'newly weds' bust photograph was shot at G.K.Vale, Mount Road. For three consecutive years after that ARN would take me for a similar photo on our wedding day!

ARN had applied for Ford Foundation scholarship for MBA. He got selected and he was to go at the end of June 1952 to USA. But leave had to be sanctioned by the Income Tax Department. It was a two year course and he was not eligible to such a long duration of leave. My father belonged to the I.C.S. (Indian Civil Services) cadre and some others of the cadre were placed in important positions in the Central Government. So my father and ARN made a trip to Delhi. They did get the sanction for the extraordinary leave as it was termed but only for the period of one year.

By the time these formalities were over, the ship which was to carry the students to the US had already left Bombay port. It was arranged that ARN would board the ship at Rome. This meant he would have to fly to Rome. Both ARN and I were very keen that I should accompany ARN to the US. But none in the family had the requisite funds at that time. Finally, better sense prevailed and I was persuaded to stay back. ARN wanted that I should complete my Intermediate degree of which I had done only one year and one more remained. So it was decided that I would sit for my exams here while ARN took his exams in USA. On my part though, I was least interested in continuing my studies and going to college.

I went to Bombay with ARN to see him off on the 2nd of July, 1952. He would catch his flight to Rome and board the ship S.S.Independence to USA from there. After seeing ARN off I went to Tirunelveli to my father's place via Chennai. My father continued at Tirunelveli till September and then shifted to Tanjore. At Tanjore Sangeetha Bhooshanam Sri O.V.Subrahmanyam (father of Sri O.S.Thyagarajan, an eminent Carnatic classical vidwan of today) continued to teach me higher music. He taught me the 72 Melakarta Ragamalika. Though he only introduced me to this concept and the ragas very briefly, it became the basis for my

understanding of the 72 Ragamalika based system in Carnatic music which is currently prevalent. Such was Bhagavan's leela that He kept me here during that tenure ostensibly for financial and other reasons of convenience at that time, but looking back it was to make my foundation in Carnatic music unshakable and to give me in-depth knowledge in the field as well. Today Ramananjali Sangeetham has songs in as many as 24 melakarta ragas, some of them rare ones and a few of these have featured in Muruganar's Ramana Tiruvembavai as well. All these songs have been notated and printed in a book 'Ramana Sangeetham 3'. My tenure with OVS as a teacher in 1952 surely paved the way for this. Could one envisage or even imagine the play of Ramana and His meticulous plans to bind us to His service?



The Thousand Verses on Uma

Abhilash Narasimham

By the Divine Grace of Goddess UMA, on Sunday June 9, 2019, devotees from Sri Arunachala Ramana Ganapathi Ashramam, Kaluvarai, Vizianagaram Dist, Andhra Pradesh along with devotees from Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai have rendered a complete chanting of UMA SAHASRAM, in the New Hall (Mother's Shrine) as an offering to Sri Matrubuteswara and Sri Bhagavan. This chanting was organized by Smt.Ramana Puthri and Sri Parasara M.Narasimham, President, Ramana Maharshi Heritage and Vasista Ganapathi Muni Memorial Trust, Hyderabad with the blessings of Sri Ramanasramam. Uma Sahasram parayanam started at 10 a.m. presided by Sri Ramanasramam President, Sri V.S.Ramanan and Smt.Susheela Ramanan. Chanting was led by Smt. Vasantha Malavika, Smt. Renuka, Sri Abhilash Mungamuru, Smt. Krishna Kumari, Sri Ramakrishna Kavuri, Sri Ravindra Kumar, SriSabhahit Mama, Sri Chandramouli, Smt.Lalitha Chandramouli and Smt.Lakshmi who were joined by many devotees. This parayanam with an hour lunch break was completed by 3:30pm. All the devotees who attended this parayanam were blessed and felt divine vibrations.

UMA SAHASRAM an epic stotra Kavyam was composed by Kavyakanta Sri Vasista Ganapathi Muni (NAYana) as an offering to Divine Mother for blessing him to get in contact with his GURU, whom Muni proclaimed and named as "Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi". This composition was done from November 26, 1907 to December 10, 1907 at Choota Guha (Mango Tree Groove). During this time, every evening NAYana used to render that day's composition to Sri Bhagavan who used to live in Virupaksha Cave, after which a small shower of rain was poured as a blessing by Goddess UMA.

Devotees have experienced the same whenever they have chanted the Uma Sahasram and are blessed to hear from many devotees about a spell of thunder showers with little hail in and around Tiruvannamalai on the night of June 9, 2019 as a blessing from Goddess Uma, Sri Bhagavan and NAYana.



News & Events*Revathi Sankar*

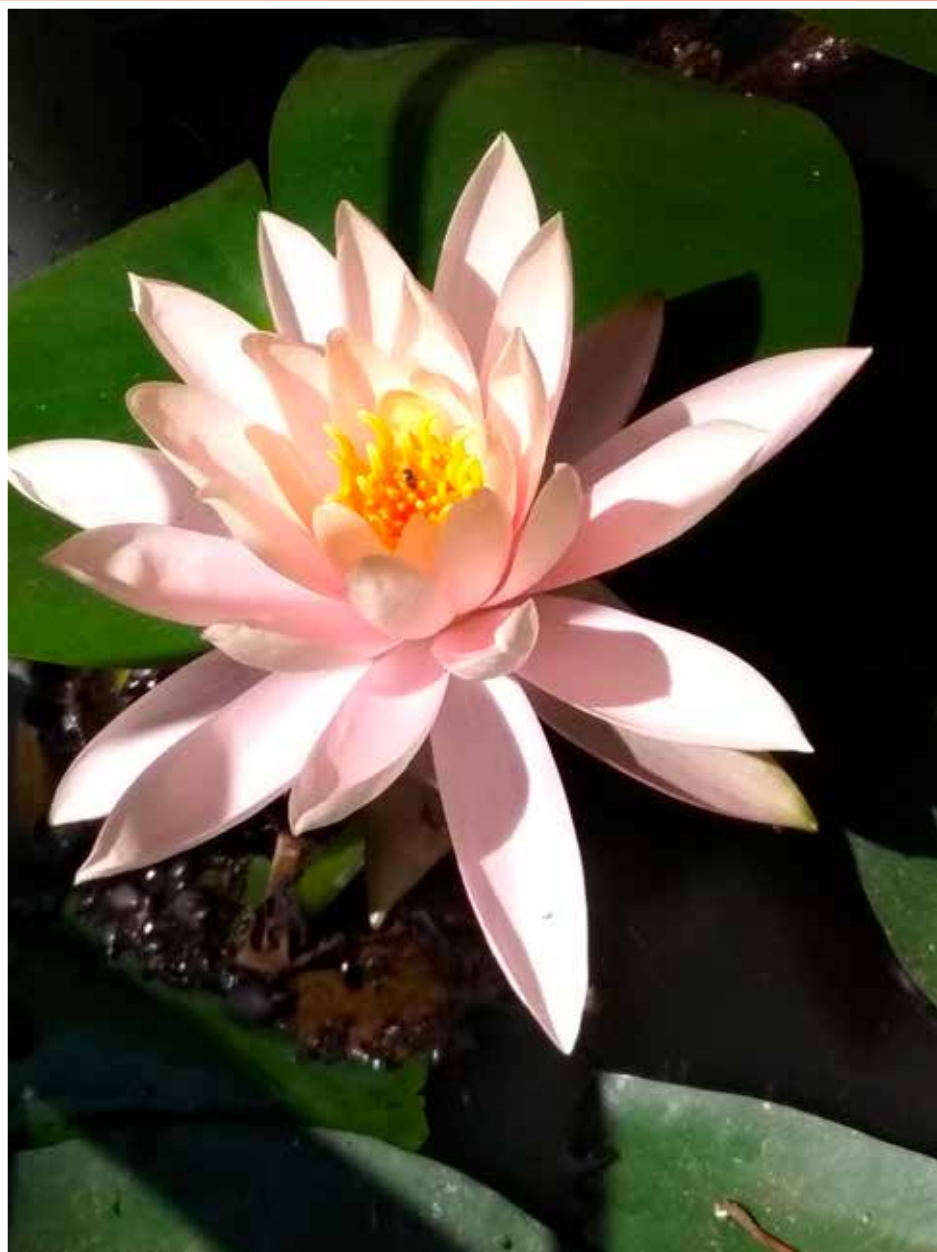
Ramana Bhajans were offered by RMCL artistes for Maha Puja at Tiruvannamalai



Sri V.Ganesan had an enrapturing sharing at the Ramana Shrine on 'The Inspiring Life of Sri Viswanatha Swami'.



Lotuses blooming in the pond at the Ramana Shrine.







Prani Mitra Day, the Aradhana of Cow Lakshmi, was celebrated at Ramana Shrine Bangalore with a talk by Sri N.Nandakumar on the significance of Lakshmi's life. A dance drama on some of the animal devotees of Bhagavan was presented by artistes of RMCL. The Chief Guest was Dr.Ashwathanarayana, MLA.









Some more glimpses of Gnana Kaandam – youthful Ramana playing in Vaigai river, conversing with his friend Sab Jaan, hearing about Arunachala, reading the Periya Puranam, the stories of the 63 Saivite Saints that moved him immeasurably... and a peep into the future...



















Special Programs in July

At Ramana Shrine, Mekhri Circle, Bengaluru

14th, Sunday, 10.45 a.m. - Enlightenment and Guru Poornima Celebrations

Chanting, Bhajans by Smt.V.Radha, Self-enquiry
'Sadguru Karuna' - A Solo Theatre presentation by Uma Sripathy

16th, Tuesday

06.45 p.m. Pournami Celebrations – Samskrithi Seva
Ashtottara Puja, Aksharamanamalai and Valam

At Ramana Mandiram, Madurai

17th, 18th Wednesday and Thursday

09.30 a.m. to 05.30 p.m. Self-enquiry Workshop in Tamil

Faculty: Sri N.Nandakumar, Dr.Sarada

Guest Speakers: Sri Pranatharthiwaran, Dr.Kala Rani Rengasamy,
Dr.Niranjan

At Nagamalai, Madurai

20th, Saturday , 06.00 p.m. Ramananjali led by Dr.Sarada

At Lakshmi Sundaram Hall, Madurai

21st, Sunday, 05.30 p.m. - Arunachala Ramana - The Theatre Extravaganza on Bhagavan Ramana's life

By Artistes of RMCL and RASA – led by Dr.Sarada and Dr.Ambika Kameshwar

Special Programs in August

At Ramana Shrine, Mekhri Circle, Bengaluru

14th, Wednesday

06.45 p.m. Pournami Celebrations – Samskrithi Seva
Bharatanatyam Presentation by Srinivasan Rajendran,
Artistic Director, Aditya Hridayam Space for Arts,

07.30 p.m. Ashtottara Puja, Aksharamanamalai and Valam

Ramana Every Day

RMHC - Ramana Maharshi Heritage Centre - Sanjaynagar

RMS - Ramana Maharshi Shrine - Mekhri Circle

RSCS - RMCL Satsang Centre at South Bangalore

RSCR - RMCL Satsang Centre at Rajarajeshwari Nagar

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

Thursday: 6:00pm at RSCS

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

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

Saturday: 11:00am at RMS

Sunday: 10:30am at RMS

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

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

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

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

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

Yoga classes [Contact - Uma (9538472026)]

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

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

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

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

Sunday: 11:30am at RMS

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

Sunday: 10:30am at RMS

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

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

Talks, Parayana and Puja by Sri Chandrashekar (9448839594)

Thursday 6:30pm at RSCR

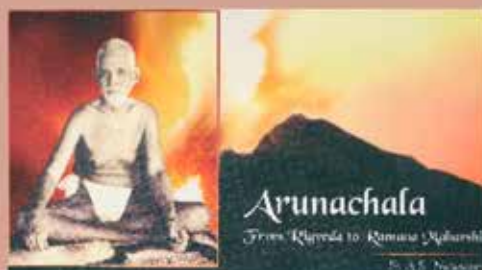
Guru Vachaka Kovai in English

Original : Muruganar

Translation: David Godman

Investigation into Truth

86. Do not question, 'How indeed has this confusion arisen – that the Self does not know the truth that it has manifested itself as the world?' If you enquire, 'For whom is this confusion?' you will find that the confusion never existed.
87. Saying that the Self has fashioned itself as the world is like saying that a rope has fashioned itself into a snake. On close examination, it is found that the snake does not exist at all. By the same token, there was not at any time a world creation in which the Self apparently fashioned itself into the world.



ARUNACHALA FROM RIGVEDA TO RAMANA MAHARSHI

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