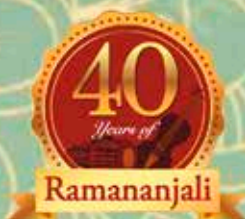
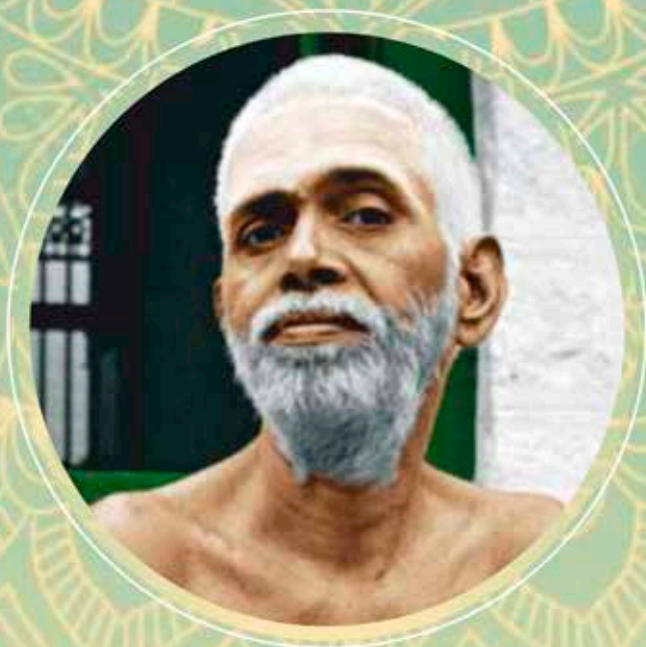


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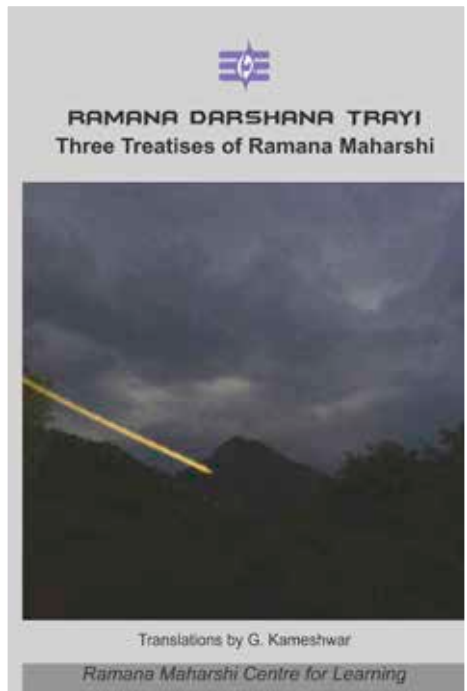
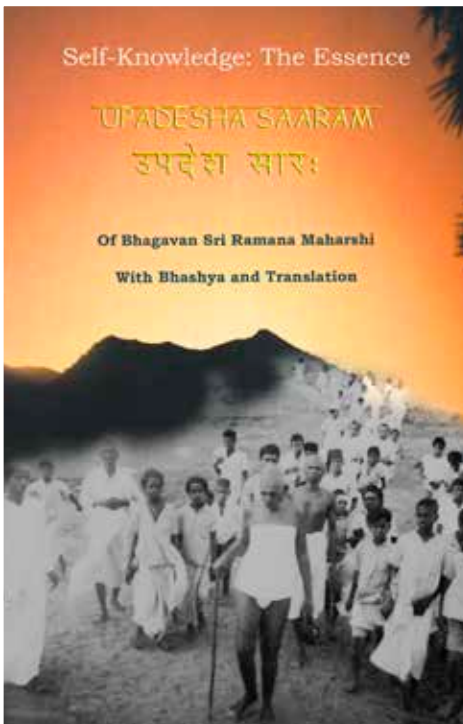
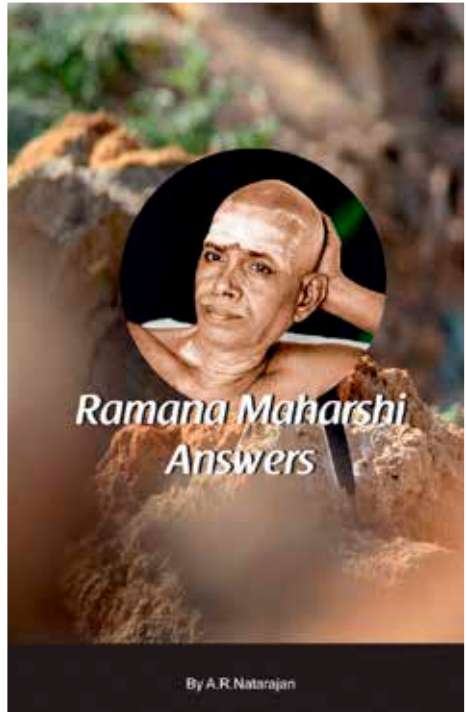
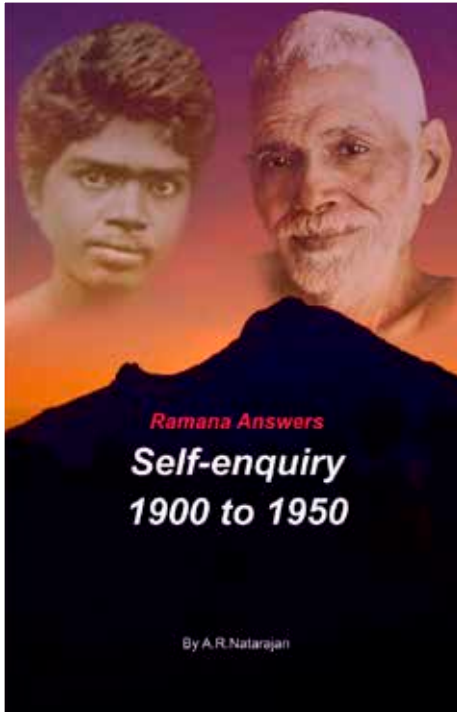


# The Ramana way



A Monthly Journal published by  
Ramana Maharshi Centre  
for Learning  
Bengaluru

# NEW Publications



# THE RAMANA WAY

*A Monthly Journal since 1981*

*Celebrating  
Ramana Rasa  
Anubhava*



Editor: Dr. Sarada

Associate Editor: G. Kameshwar

Assistant Editor: Dileep Simha

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

*- Ramana Gita X, 10*

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**Editorial***Dr. Sarada*

There are two paths to reach and taste the delicious mango, one is called the way of the ant and the other, the path of the parrot. Using these examples our efforts to get back to our own true nature are described as being of two kinds. There is one that is slow and laborious and fraught with dangers on the way. The other is swift and direct. The ant climbs up the tree and across the branch to reach the fruit. The parrot, however, flies directly to the fruit and tastes its sweetness. The ant may fall down any time on its climb up the tree. If it does, it needs to start climbing all over again. What of the parrot? It swoops directly on to the fruit, literally landing on it. The question of its falling does not arise. Once it decides which fruit it is planning to eat, it flies to it, has its fill and leaves.

Can we all fly to the Self as a parrot to a fruit? Or should we climb up slowly like the ant? We may say that depends on whether we happen to be an ant or a parrot. Ramana says not so, rather, it depends on the path that we choose. We could choose the path of the ant which is a step by step method or we could choose the direct path of self-enquiry that is like the flight of a bird to its destination. How can we know that we are a bird? How do we know that we are capable of practicing self-enquiry? Only by flying or at least by trying to fly can we recognize that we are birds. Only if we sincerely try to practice self-enquiry can we say whether the path is or is not suitable to us.

It is possible that self-enquiry may appear to be difficult or one may say even impossible to begin with. A baby parrot does not fly but it is not incapable of flying. The little parrot stays in its nest, yet it does not go hungry. On the other hand, it is fed regularly by the parent birds. Even so, when we are mere fledglings on the path, Ramana himself, the Sadguru who is both father and mother feeds us the sweet taste of the Self. It may be the experience of many practitioners of the Ramana Way that one seems to reap rich benefits with even little practice to begin with but the going appears to get tough as one progresses.



Yes, it could well be the story of every little bird. Let us say there is this little parrot nestling comfortably in its nest in the very hollow of a mango tree. Does it know about the mangoes on the tree? Or of their sweetness? It only knows it gets hungry from time to time. Out flies the mother parrot from the hollow in one swift, seamless move into the vast skies and in she swoops into the hollow with a tasty titbit from the ripe mango fruit. The baby bird simply has her mouth open and a tasty bit of the mango fruit drops into her mouth and fills her stomach. Each time she is hungry, mother is always ready with a tasty bit of the fruit. For the baby bird, it is the mother bird and not the tree that is seen as the source of food.

As the little bird grows up a bit, she is able to move up the hollow, climbing near the hole and looking out into the vast wide world. The familiar smell of the mango fruit fills her with a sense of comfort but she does not know the source of the fragrance even then. So far as she is concerned it is only her mother who feeds her. So the little one is busy enjoying the sights that she sees, drinking in the different sounds that she hears and taking in various smells as well. The new and wondrous world begins to occupy her so much that she may even forget that she is hungry. The mother parrot does not forget to feed her though. She knows that the young one is not ready for flight as yet.

Then, one day, the young parrot's wings grow strong but there is fear in her heart. There is also the comfort of the home, of being taken care of. Yet, she must fly and the mother parrot would encourage her to do so. She points to a slightly far away tree and says, 'Look! That tree has the tastiest mangoes. You can fly to that tree and taste them for yourself.' 'Mother, why don't you bring me those mangoes to taste?' 'Because you must find them for yourself. That is the best way,' says the mother firmly.

The young parrot flies but with some hesitation and hence does not reach the tree but turns back to its own tree. The mother bird does not feed her though. She insists that the young one must learn to fend for herself. Sad and hungry the young bird wonders why mother is suddenly harsh. When the little bird is asleep, the

mother parrot feeds the young one so that she may have the strength to face the next day. The young parrot wakes up fresh and full of strength and wonders why she is not hungry anymore. But before she can ask any questions mother asks, 'Ready for your flight?'

The young parrot tries again but somewhere just before the mango tree is another plastic tree and as it appears easier to reach, the young one lands on that tree instead. She tries pecking at the fruit but in vain. Still hungry and tired and worried that she must get back home, she manages to fly back. She is so full of her own endeavors that does not know mother has been near her all along. Mother asks as if unknowingly, 'Good, you made your first flight! I am so proud of you! Did you taste those sweetest mangoes?' 'No mother. I could not even peck those fruits, let alone taste them,' pouted the young bird. 'Did you go to the tree that I pointed to?' asked the mother. 'Somewhere near that tree was a tree that seemed to have even more luscious fruits,' said the young parrot. 'That's not the real tree,' said the mother. 'O! How will I know the real one?' 'Follow your sense of smell,' said the mother.

This got the young bird so excited that she even forgot about her tiredness and went off to sleep. She woke up nice and bright again the next morning as the mother had fed her when she was asleep. She flew out of the hollow of the tree quickly and sat on a nearby branch. Then she took a deep breath and she could smell the luscious fruits and she flew straight towards the scent. Her attention was so fully in the scent of the fruit that she forgot that she was flying, she forgot about the distance to the tree, she forgot about everything but the scent until she landed right on the most luscious mango and pecked into it and tasted the juicy fruit.

However, in her excitement about having made it and her need to tell everyone about this wonderful experience, she didn't eat much but flew back quickly, proclaiming her joy even as she flew. The mother knew, of course, but waited for the young one to talk about her great achievement. That night too, the mother fed her in her sleep.

The next morning the young parrot flew straight to the fruit tree with great confidence and ate her fill. She rested a while on

the tree, quite at peace with herself. And then she soared into the sky, now testing her powers to fly. She flew from tree to tree hardly noticing which tree it was. Today she spoke less even to her mother for she was full of her own joy. Mother knew she had eaten her fill but that little bit of extra energy would do her good, so she fed her in her sleep once more.

The young parrot was now an adult, she could fly well and as she flew around she realized there were many fruit trees around her and some much nearer than the tree to which her mother had sent her. She wondered a little about this and as she flew home, she got the marvelous scent of the most delicious mangoes. She followed the scent and landed on a mango on her own tree. She tasted that fruit and found it tastier than any she had tasted so far. And she saw her mother watching her. Both of them smiled knowingly at one another. The mother's secret was out. 'Feeding me all my life would not have been a big task for you mother,' thought the daughter as she looked lovingly at the mother, 'but your purpose was to make me reach my fullness, to make me as you are.'

Perhaps we are like the little parrot, still testing our wings, still confused between the plastic fruits and the real fruit, still trying to avoid flying all the way to where the mother asks us to go. Then we get the vital clue from the mother, 'follow the scent'. There is the scent of the Self hidden in every thought as 'I'. When we hold on to this scent and follow it, it leads us directly to the Self.

Nonetheless, we may be so excited about our first few bites into the fruit of the Self that we may spend more time talking to the world or to ourselves about it in our thoughts. Hence the task is not yet fully done.



The sea of love welcomes,  
those who would wet their feet,  
swim in it, or drown.



Finally, as we make more and more flights to the fruits that we seek, we realize that the fruits are everywhere and the very tree which is our home has the best of fruits. We recognize then that the purpose of the mother bird is to make us fly with ease directly to the fruit at any time. There is no question of hunger any more.

Yes, in the 'direct path', the flight of the parrot, in this too there is effort until we have strengthened our wings, until we have understood that the fruit is ever available, everywhere. We need to venture out of the comfort of the given identity, to venture out of the nest. Because being in one's nest all one's life can never equal the freedom of flight, can it? We have to become convinced that we must fly to our fruit, we must fly into or dive into the Self. Without a doubt the first few flights will require courage and perseverance. Our efforts at self-enquiry will have to continue with continuous resolve. We need to stop getting attracted to what appear to be the easily accessible fruits and aim for the Self alone. We need to diligently hold on to the scent of the 'I' to the exclusion of all else.


When we are told that the path of self-enquiry is 'direct' it does not mean that there is no effort involved. The effort is intense in fact. Yet, it is certainly different from the way of the ant. It is not like climbing a ladder or a stairway step by step, 'as the bird flies' is the shortest route to the goal. The path is direct right from the very beginning. Besides, every time we have to reach the fruit, we simply fly directly to it. Furthermore, it brings us the recognition that the reaching of the fruit is hardly because of our effort. It is by the very power of flight that we reach the fruit. And this power to fly is natural, it is not something that we acquire. It is natural for a bird to fly, the wings of the bird are meant for flight. We may think we are putting in an effort to fly but what we would be really doing is to let go of the initial fear of flight. Once we have begun to fly we would realise that the flight is natural to us, it is in truth effortless. Everything about life is perfectly natural and effortless. Effort is a mere thought.

Once we have connected to the Self through the flight of self-enquiry we will know for certain that the Self is most natural and that abidance too is natural. All effort was only to let go of our fear of losing identity. To be the Self no effort was needed. In fact,

the thought of effort is itself one of the holds of identity. Making effort while holding on to the source or the scent of the source by holding the 'I'-thought is like the young parrot forgetting even that she is flying but being guided entirely by the scent of the mango. At that point all thought of effort also would cease. In this total cessation of thought, the Self would be revealed.

Muruganar Swami writes, 'Fish in water and birds in air move and leave no paths behind'. Ants may have a trail by which they climb to the fruit, but does the bird have a path by which it flies? Or can one trace the path after the bird has flown to its goal? This is the path that Ramana opens out to us, the direct path, the pathless path of flying to the Self. And what to say of the love of the mother bird who has absolute faith in us and is eagerly yet patiently waiting for us to take flight and taste the best of fruits that she knows of?

As Sri A.R.Natarajan writes, "Ramana is the Sadguru who put on the human garb to bestow on seekers the awareness of their own hidden treasure, their own state of natural happiness. The direct path of self-enquiry taught by him is simplicity itself if only we are ready to put aside our complicated and background ridden mind... The fruits of one's effort and in fact the effort itself is possible only because of Ramana Sadguru's grace. He is ready to bestow his own state of steady Self-abidance to those who single-mindedly value it."

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Sarada Natarajan". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned in the lower right quadrant of the page.

**THE NEW DAWN\****A. R. Natarajan***THOSE SOVEREIGN FEET**

Filling them with delight they watch over their loving devotees, whose delusion is immolated in the vast fullness of final realization. Angrily banishing the suffering caused by the empty and futile attachment which masks the heart, they are the holy feet of our Lord.

***Muruganar***

The power of Ramana's feet, its boon-giving capacity is being experienced every second by a growing number of blessed Ramana devotees and disciples. Boon giving because our desire loaded and beggarly minds keep asking, nay pestering Ramana for this or that in the confidence and certainty that he would fulfill those desires. Repeated experience has made one aware of the power and compassion of Ramana's sovereign feet to which one has been drawn.

Those who are familiar with 'Subbaramaiah's Reminiscences' may recall the innumerable instances related by him when the rescue acts would commence immediately after the dispatch of a telegram or a letter seeking Ramana's help. Every tale of woe would evoke a sympathetic response from him. Just to cite an instance from the same book, Subbaramaiah had come to the Asram in accordance with his practice to do so during the vacation for the college where he was a lecturer. However, on that particular trip a constant worry kept troubling him because his son-in-law's health was causing anxiety. Ramana not only made gracious enquiries about his son-in-law's health but also advised him 'whenever you are prone to depression and melancholy you remember me'. Those words remained imprinted in Subbaramaiah's mind as a 'talisman against all the ills of his life'. Needless to say that this advice holds good to each and every devotee.

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

The immanence of Ramana has been felt and is being felt the world over. Everyone is aware in his own heart about the munificence of Ramana as the Supreme Lord. One may be unable to express it like a mute person unable to express his joy. But there it is. The boon giving and protecting aspect of Ramana, his 'Godhood' or 'Sivahood' if one may call it so, is evidently seen in the lives of the devotees. In this context one might refer to some verses from 'Ramana Gita', which are extracted below:

"Of Bhagavan thus happily endowed with a wealth of auspicious qualities, Amritanatha, the sannyasi, humbly enquired about the limitless glory of realised persons. Bhagavan who is always rooted in the Self replied thus: The glory of realised persons is beyond imagination. They are like Siva. They are the very forms of Siva. They have the power to grant boons".

Another aspect of his Sivahood is that the glory of his feet transcend all time and space. As a result prayers from any corner of the earth or even the very thought of him would set in motion, automatically, the required protection. Some devotees have got specific assurances from Ramana about this 'automatic divine response' of his. Few of these instances would help to bring home this point.

It was the practice of devotees to get together during Ramana Jayanthi celebrations at Sri Ramanasramam every year. One year Subbaramaiah could not be present. Devaraja Mudaliar gently admonished him for failing to attend the Jayanthi and added "I believe that Sri Bhagavan expects us, His children, to gather at His feet especially on such occasions". Sri Bhagavan smiled and said: "The feet of Bhagavan are everywhere. So where can we gather except at His feet?"

We have another instance of one of Ramana's biographers, T.S.Anantha Murthy who sought and got an assurance from Ramana in this regard. Anantha Murthy records the instance of his departure from the asram after a week's stay. He addressed Bhagavan in English "I have enjoyed great peace in your presence. Permit me to return to Bangalore. May I know if I can receive your

help when I reach Bangalore? I pray for your benediction.” He recalls, “The benevolent sage was till then reclining on the sofa.... He sat up vertically on the sofa and with a kind but loud tone he said in English as follows: ‘What? Is there Time, place or Distance for me?’ After putting this question to me, he reclined on the pillows of the sofa and closed his eyes. His words and gestures were charming, instructive and benevolent. They indicated perpetual compassion and love of all who pray for his aid. His gracious words are ringing in my ears, even after thirty-four years”.

In this context, one may also refer to the statement made by Ramana in the early years of his stay on the Arunachala hill. A sadhu living on the hill was so struck by Ramana’s authentic greatness that he wished to know who Ramana really was. He specifically asked him to identify which of the great gods he was. ‘Are you Hari, Sivaguru (Subrahmanya), Yatiswara (Siva) or Vararuchi?’ Ramana’s reply was an emphatic confirmation of his inner presence in all life. It reads thus “In the recesses of the hearts of all, beginning with Hari, the pure intellect shines as the Self, as Arunachala Ramana. When the mind melts in love for him, the subtle eye of pure intellect opens and he reveals himself as pure consciousness”.

One might say that a majority of persons or nearly all of us relate to Ramana as the Omnipresent Supreme Lord.

If one stops there it would be a pity. For Ramana is the Sadguru who put on the human garb to bestow on seekers the awareness of their own hidden treasure, their own state of natural happiness. The direct path of self-enquiry taught by him is simplicity itself if only we are ready to put aside our complicated and background ridden mind. Then it would be easy to understand the implications of the Ramana path for spiritual practice. We would readily see that what matters is the ‘Now’ the need for cutting off the time factor in practice. It is the present moment and attention to that which is important because all experience is only in the present. The experience referred to is the experience of natural happiness during practise. If one gets out of that state due to lure of the past which separates the object from the subject then one has

to switch attention back to the source of the mind for being restored to natural happiness. The ultimate experience of Self-abidance and its overflowing bliss is of the same nature as that which one experiences if self-enquiry is properly understood and practised.

The fruits of one's effort and in fact the effort itself is possible only because of Ramana Sadguru's grace. He is ready to bestow his own state of steady Self-abidance to those who single-mindedly value it. In his role as the Sadguru Ramana becomes the destroyer of the boon seeker, of the ego, whose desires are insatiable. By his grace one would be 'Born Anew' to a life lived with a pure mind immersed in the fullness of consciousness.





## The 'Talks' as a Guidance to Self Enquiry

N.Nandakumar

### Talk 79.

An engineer asked: "The animals seem to conform to their own natural laws in spite of their environment and changes. Whereas man flouts social law and is not bound by any definite system. He seems to be degenerating whereas the animals are steady. Is it not so?"

M: (After a long time). The Upanishads and scriptures say that human beings are only animals unless they are realised beings. Possibly they are worse also.

*GUIDANCE RECEIVED: If the intellect becomes subtle without understanding compassion, it can misunderstand freedom to mean freedom from social, natural and divine law (God's Will). This will lead to man becoming worse than animals. That intellect which understands that the social, natural and divine laws are only pointing to the oneness of all starts seeking that oneness. Self-realisation reveals directly what the social laws, laws of Nature and God's Will indirectly point to the law abider - the Self consumes the individual, world and God.*

*Q: I see that a great intellectual is not able to accept the law of karma or divine will when his own son suffers from a mental illness from childhood. He calls the explanation of karma by Gandhiji, Sri Ramakrishna and Sri Ramana as cruel. How to convince another that these laws are applicable to all?*

*S: For whom is this anxiety to convince another? The Self includes both believers and non-believers of the divine will. It points to the oneness behind atheism, theism and agnosticism. Self-enquiry can be practiced by atheist, theist and agnostic.*

*Q: I am totally surrendered to the divine will and yet God is not giving me the peace of the one Self.*

*S: Total surrender has no claimant or opponent.*

### Talk 80.

A very devoted and simple disciple had lost his only son, a child of three years. The next day he arrived at the Asramam with his family.

The Master spoke with reference to them: "Training of mind helps one to bear sorrows and bereavements with courage. But the loss of one's offspring is said to be the worst of all griefs. Grief exists only so long as one considers oneself to be of a definite form. If the form is transcended one will know that the one Self is eternal. There is no death nor birth. That which is born is only the body. The body is the creation of the ego. But the ego is not ordinarily perceived without the body. It is always identified with the body. It is the thought which matters. Let the sensible man consider if he knew his body in deep sleep. Why does he feel it in the waking state? But, although the body was not felt in sleep, did not the Self exist then? How was he in deep sleep? How is he when awake? What is the difference? Ego rises up and that is waking. Simultaneously thoughts arise. Let him find out to whom are the thoughts. Wherefrom do they arise? They must spring up from the conscious Self. Apprehending it even vaguely helps the extinction of the ego. Thereafter the realisation of the one Infinite Existence becomes possible. In that state there are no individuals other than the Eternal Existence. Hence there is no thought of death or wailing."

*GUIDANCE RECEIVED: Bhagavan points out that death is sorrow and death of one's offspring is said to be the highest sorrow. Death of a healthy mental condition of one's offspring is also a great sorrow. It is overcome only by having compassion for all beings subject to this sorrow of death. So far as one takes name and form to be real, sorrow of death awaits as name and form are subject to the disease called birth. Ego and its off-shoot - thought - is the first birth at the root of this sorrow. For whom is this thought? Even a hazy apprehension of the thought-free Self leads to the extinction of the ego. This whole area of birth and death is transcended and the infinite Existence reveals itself. There is no theory of karma to accept or raise aversion to in that infinite Existence.*

### **Talk 80.**

(Bhagavan addressing the devotee-disciple who has lost his three year old son)

"If a man considers he is born he cannot avoid the fear of death. Let him find out if he has been born or if the Self has any birth. He will discover that the Self always exists, that the body which is born resolves itself into thought and that the emergence of thought

is the root of all mischief. Find wherefrom thoughts emerge. Then you will abide in the ever-present inmost Self and be free from the idea of birth or the fear of death."

*GUIDANCE RECEIVED: Till one addresses the common problem of all living beings called death, one cannot find real happiness. Here, Bhagavan is pointing out that the question of "death" arises only to the one who is "born". At the root of all "born" parts - body, breath, mind, intellect and ignorance - is the "I" - the ego. In self enquiry, Bhagavan asks that ego which raises to see whether it is "born". He asks the ego to abide in its source, the Self beyond birth and death. This Self is the common solution available to all living beings as every living enjoys the happiness of the Self in deep-sleep where there is no mind. If the solution were particular to an individual and made his possession, to the exclusion of others, such happiness cannot be natural or real.*

#### **Talk 80. (Excerpt).**

A disciple asked how to do it (abide in the ever-present inmost Self).

M: The thoughts are only vasanas (predispositions), accumulated in innumerable births before. Their annihilation is the aim. The state free from vasanas is the primal state and eternal state of purity.

D: It is not clear yet.

M: Everyone is aware of the eternal Self. He sees so many dying but still believes himself eternal. Because it is the Truth. Unwillingly the natural Truth asserts itself. The man is deluded by the intermingling of the conscious Self with the insentient body. This delusion must end.

D: How will it end?

M: That which is born must end. The delusion is only concomitant with the ego. It rises up and sinks. But the Reality never rises nor sinks. It remains Eternal.

*GUIDANCE RECEIVED: Within the ego of the seeker, there are vasanas (subtle thoughts that the seeker cannot see). These block the abiding in the inmost Self. In self enquiry, these vasanas (sub-conscious) are brought to the area of consciousness and annihilated one by one till the ever-present, inmost, eternal Self stands revealed. Bhagavan says that self enquiry is like setting fire to the forest. Like all animals come running out of a forest set on fire, "Who am I?" brings out each vasana out as conscious thought to be let go.*

---

**Saddarshanam***Master Nome*

AhassphuTam tat-tvam-aslti vedah  
 tathApyasamprApya parAtma niShTAm |  
 bhUyo vicAro mati-durbalatvam  
 tat-sarvadA svAtmatayA hi bhAti || 32 ||

**Aha. The Veda has made clear (clearly opened)  
 “That**

**you are,” thus.**

**So, still, abidance as the Supreme Self is not to be  
 completely attained.**

**More inquiry is weakness (feebleness) of the mind  
 (weakness of conviction).**

**That always, as one’s own Self, indeed, shines.**

N: The first word is “Aha.” In English, this may indicate an exclamation due to having found something. Here, though, the interpretation of this Sanskrit word, “aha,” should be an exclamation that signifies reproof and expresses a critical attitude. In this case, such pertains to a critical discernment. A sharp discrimination is about to follow.

“Thus” signifies that the previous words, “That you are,” are a quotation. Sri Ramana says, “The Veda has made clear (clearly opened)” the Knowledge of “That you are.” “Tat tvam asi,” the Vedas declare. “So, still, abidance as the Supreme Self is not to be completely attained.” That declaration, by itself, and even contemplation in the mind about it do not necessarily bring about the Realization of the Self.

The Maharshi says, “More inquiry is weakness (feebleness) of the mind (weakness of conviction).” What is the conviction that should be present in full strength but is weak in the case upon which he comments? It is that “That always” meaning Brahman always, “as one’s own Self, indeed, shines.” If we think that Brahman is not our Self, the teaching, “Tat tvam asi, That you are,” serves to remedy this fault. If we think that we are not the Self, the inquiry, “Who am I?” remedies that false conclusion, which

is ignorance. In this exceedingly nondual verse, the Maharshi discards the contemplation, or meditation, upon “That thou art,” which is the well-known mahavakya, or great saying, in Vedanta, and he even dismisses the inquiry, “Who am I?” because we are always That.

The verse should not be interpreted as ridiculing the inquiry “Who am I?” that he has already expounded. The verse is not meant to ridicule the statement of the Vedas, “That you are,” which is a statement of pure Knowledge in the form of instruction, often reiterated by Adi Sankara. Even in the Maharshi's own teaching, he has made use of the mahavakya. Indeed, it appears in one of the verses to Arunachala, the “Necklet of Nine Gems.” Arunachala is realized as “That thou art.”

So, what is the emphasis in this verse? He does not ridicule either meditation or inquiry, but, rather, this is a statement of keen discernment of the highest wisdom in which one's own Self is only That. Therefore, who stands in need of meditation? Who stands in need of inquiry? There is no such one. There is no such “I.” That, his state, which is the state of pure Being, is not to be reached by meditation or by inquiry. It is not to be reached at all, because That alone is. There is no other or “I.”

The verse may also be regarded as a critique of thought based meditation, in contrast to transcendence. In addition, the inquiry should result in the strong conviction of the Reality, and the need to repeat the inquiry “Who am I?” is a sign of “weakness of the mind.” If there were strength of mind, or sufficient introversion, the repetition would not be necessary. In light of the preceding verse, the first interpretation that there is no one but the Self ever at any time is preferable.

In the highest Truth, what is this talk of the instruction, “You are That,” and meditation upon the same? What is this talk of inquiry? Even these things, which are the highest forms of spiritual instruction, are based on the need for spiritual instruction. In the Truth, which alone is, there is no such instruction, no such practice, no one bound, no one aspiring, no one practicing for Realization, and no one liberated. That is the highest Truth. This pithy verse by the Maharshi extols it.

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## Essence of the Vedas – Upadesha Saarah - Tattvabodhini

G Kameshwar

*Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning has been blessed with the honour of publishing several gems on the life and teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi. One of the shining gems is the latest publication 'Essence of the Vedas- Upadesha Saarah – Tattvabodhini'*

*We offer prostrations to the abundantly gracious Shrine of Sri Ramaneswara at Sri Ramanasramam whereat were placed the first few copies of this new publication.*



*The first copy from Sri Ramaneswara's Shrine was received by Dr.Venkat S.Ramanan, President, Sri Ramanasramam and the second copy by Sri K.V.Subrahmonyan. The book is dedicated to Sri V.S.Ramanan.*



*The public online release of the book was graciously done by Sri Ramanacharanatirtha Nochur Venkataraman and Sri V Ganesan, at Yoga Nikaya, Thally, Hosur through the YouTube Channel 'Voice of the Rishis' on the 2nd of October, 2020.*



*This book includes the Sanskrit treatise 'Upadeśa Sāra' of Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi, along with Tattvabodhini, a Sanskrit commentary by Atmavidyabhushanam Sri Jagadeeshwara Shastri, a great scholar of Vedanta and one of the foremost disciples of Sri Ramana.*

*English rendering of the treatise and commentary, along with explanations and notes, is by G. Kameshwar.*

*We are bringing in 'The Ramana Way' in few parts, the introduction to this work of devotion by Sri G.Kameshwar.*

*-Editor*

## **Introduction – Part 1**

### **About Upadesha Saarah**

'Upadesha Saarah'<sup>1</sup>, of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, is a sublime treatise of Vedanta, conveying the essence of the Upanishads, shining as the Tiara worn by the Goddess of Self-Knowledge. Composed first in Tamil under the title 'Upadesha Undiyaar', the work was rendered in Sanskrit poetry as 'Upadesha Saarah' by Bhagavan Himself. He also, later, composed the treatise in Telugu and Malayalam languages.

The genesis of 'Upadesha Undiyaar' would be well known to readers of Ramana literature. Bhagavan Ramana composed the 'Upadesha Undiyaar' on the earnest request of Sri Muruganar. Muruganar was a great Tamil scholar who attained the highest spiritual goal of Self-Realization by the grace of Bhagavan Ramana. And his state of supreme bliss found expression as some of the finest poetry in Tamil spiritual literature.

One of his works is 'Ramana Sannidhi Murai'. In this composition, there comes a portion that describes the *leela-s* of Lord Shiva. One of the *leela-s* describes the Rishis of *Daruka* forest, who are ever intent on the performance of *yagnas*, having complete faith in '*Poorva Meemamsa*', or '*Karma Marga*'. They believe in the supremacy of Vedic rites, and the inherent power of these rites to provide the desired fruits. Lord Shiva, out of supreme compassion, decides to show them the correct path and therefore appears in front of them. Upon seeing Lord Shiva, the wives of the Rishis get distracted. Enraged, the Rishis try to kill Lord Shiva by propitiating a demon from the sacrificial altar. Lord Shiva makes short work of the demon and quells the pride of the Rishis. Thereafter, on the earnest request of the Rishis, He gives them *Upadesha* about the Supreme Truth.

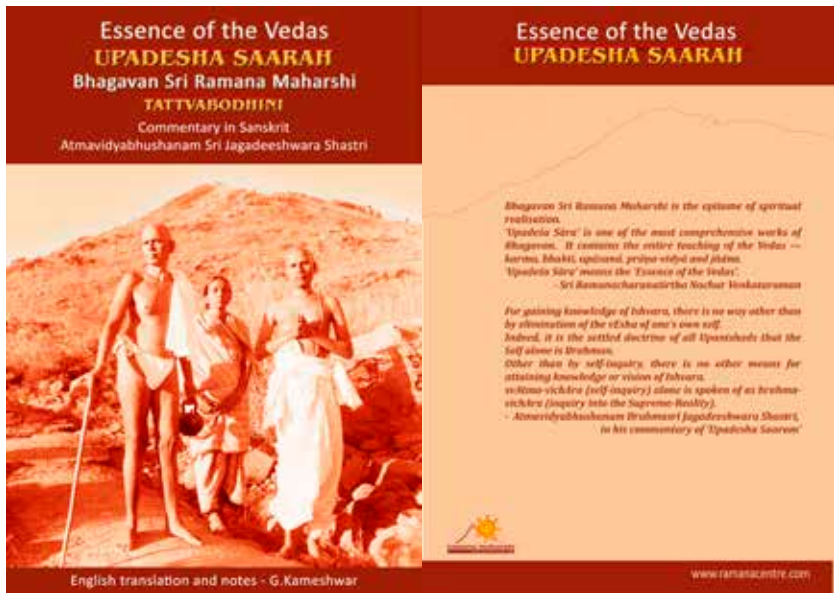
When Muruganar reached this point of the treatise, he turned to Bhagavan Ramana and sincerely requested Him to spell

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<sup>1</sup> Also referred to as 'Upadesha Saram'

out the Upadesha. Bhagavan Ramana yielded to Muruganar's entreaty and composed 'Upadesha Undiyaar', the crest-jewel of spiritual teachings. In thirty terse, lucid, pithy, Tamil verses, the Supreme Truth was laid bare in all its resplendence.

It is this Tamil work that Bhagavan himself rendered in Sanskrit as the treatise 'Upadesha Saarah', which is also known by the name 'Upadesha Saaram'.



The book can be purchased from Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning by reaching the number **+918042061951** or emailing to **publications@ramanacentre.com**.

## The Present and the Presence

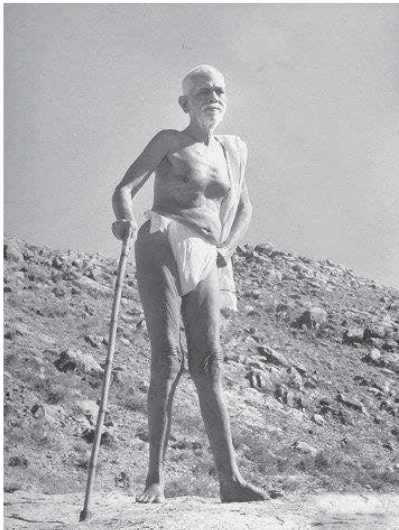
*Alan Jacobs*

*We at the Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning, Bangalore, have had the singular joy of Alan Jacobs being with us on more than one occasion and of his addressing the devotees as well.*

*As I listen to his lecture of which we are carrying some excerpts in the previous issue and in this one as a homage to him, I can hear the absolute conviction. It has the crystal clarity of thought of one who has walked the path of, to use his expression, 'very persistent, courageous, heroic, determined sadhana'. And again, as he continues, seeing this effort, Bhagavan the inner guru enters. Having entered, he has claimed Alan Jacobs as his very own.*

*-Editor*

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya



We have to realise that we are in ignorance living as ajnanis. While the jnani, as Bhagavan was the supreme example, in my view the supreme example of any jnani who has ever walked on this planet, the jnani has tremendous power of pure consciousness awareness. It is purified as he demonstrated over and over again. His powerful gaze, when it was focused on a questioner would actually give that fortunate individual an inkling of the real Self. It would invoke what he was striving for, he had a taste, he

knew what he was aiming. He could read their thoughts, he could see their inner condition, he knew the exact right words to choose in answering their question in order to aid them on their quest...



We could spend a few moments just looking at what he called the prescribed practices. Ramana was unique in the sense that he never told other people what they should do. In fact, he warned against spiritual teachers who told people what they should do because this forms a shadow between themselves and the real Self. What he did was he answered questions which devotees gave to him and then made suggestions. He didn't say 'you must do this', they were suggestions. Of course invariably they were taken up. Coming from him they were as good as his commands.

So, the prescribed practices were fundamentally in his own words – there are only two ways to conquer destiny or be independent of it:

One is to enquire for whom is this destiny and discover that only the ego is bound by destiny and not the Self and the ego is really non-existent.

Then he said the other way is to kill the ego by completely surrendering to the Lord, by realizing one's helplessness and saying all the time 'Not I but Thou, O Lord!' and giving up all the sense 'I' and 'mine' and leaving it to the Lord to do whatever he likes with you.

Complete effacement of the ego is necessary to conquer destiny. Whether you achieve this effacement through self-enquiry or bhakti marga path. Those were his own words. So, we see the self-enquiry his great infallible weapon of Atma Vichara is stated first followed by total surrender as the certain means to become present in the presence of the Self, the Self which is equated to Sri Bhagavan himself.

We can briefly look together at what is involved in self enquiry. Many devotees find difficulty in commencing self-enquiry. They think or they find it not easy. So, to commence



we must have a great yearning and a strong wish to begin. We must pray for grace in this respect. Self-enquiry starts with the mind turning inwards at a 180 degrees and with powerful concentration probing inward beneath the skin to find the source of the 'I' thought or the ego. There are no answers. It is merely the action of probing within to try and find the source of ego which does the work. And this begins the clearance of these malign vasanaas.

Many or most find the right side of the chest is an effective doorway to enter the interior and eventually reach the spiritual heart where the source of the ego dwells. So, it is advisable to individually increase our power of concentration without thoughts interfering. It has been measured that most persons' span of concentration is approximately 4 minutes. This can be increased by practice.



Gazing at a portrait of Bhagavan for as long as one can is a very effective means of increasing our power of concentration. Or looking at a lit candle focusing at the wick for as long as one can or take a spot on the wall or if you have a diagram of the Sri Chakra. These are very powerful mandala means for moving the concentration span further than 4 minutes perhaps to 6 minutes, 8 minutes, 10 minutes, 15 minutes. Is there a limit? And developing a very refined laser beam of concentration.

*\*\* To be continued \*\**

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## My Favorite Verse

*Sri V.S.Ramanan*

*We are continuing our homage to Sri V.S.Ramanan, the former President of Sri Ramanasramam, by carrying once again his articles in the 'Ramana Way' during the year 2008.*

September 2008

Sri Ramanasramam

My Dear Sarada,

All fellow devotees are aware of Bhagavan's Arunachala Pancharatnam. The fifth verse is:

tvayyarpitamanasA tvAm paSyansarvam tavAkrutitayA  
satatam

bhajatEnanyah prltyA sajayatyarunaAcala tvayi suKe magnah

unniDattil oppuvitta ullattAl eppozhudum  
unnaikkaNDellAmum unnuruvAy – anniyamil  
anbuseiyum annOn arunaAcala velgum  
inburuvAm unnil AzhndE

He who, with Heart to you surrendered, Beholds for ever  
you alone,

Sees all things as forms of you, And loves them as none  
other

Than the Self, O Aruna Hill,

Triumphs because he is immersed in you whose being is  
pure bliss.

Bhagavan, as ever, only says here what He Himself did. Mostly, His Life and His Silence are the Teaching, but at times, out of His boundless compassion for us, He puts them in words. His words, as we all know, have a unique, matchless power. This fifth and final sloka of Sri Bhagavan Ramana's 'Arunachala Pancharatnam' is the gift of a rare jewel to His devotees. While every word of Sri Bhagavan is a myriad – faceted diamond, I single out this verse

because it seems to sum up His Teachings and it is suitable for all sadhakas. It exhorts us to surrender our minds to the Sacred Hill Arunachala. Mind is said to be the cause of bondage and liberation of me, that is, when there is mind it is bondage and when one is free from mind, one is truly and fully free.

A man who has surrendered his mind is by that very fact a jnani, for jnana, by definition, is transcendence of mind which is ego, avidya, samsara, bondage. As a Vedantic dictum has it, when one's vision is illumined by jnana, one sees the world as Brahman. Here too, having offered up our mind totally to Arunachala Brahman, we see everything as Arunachala that is Brahman. Is this not the final efflorescence of jnana?

Sri Bhagavan wants us to worship Arunachala with undivided devotion or love, for what is devotion if not finding everything in the One who is loved? Eka bhakti alone is bhakti. Here there is a grand fusion of jnana and bhakti. The fusion becomes truly complete when we merge in Arunachala which is the very form of Bliss.

Total surrender to Arunachala is our goal for Arunachala is Ramana is Self.

- I often chant Pancharatnam.

Affectionately, Sundaram



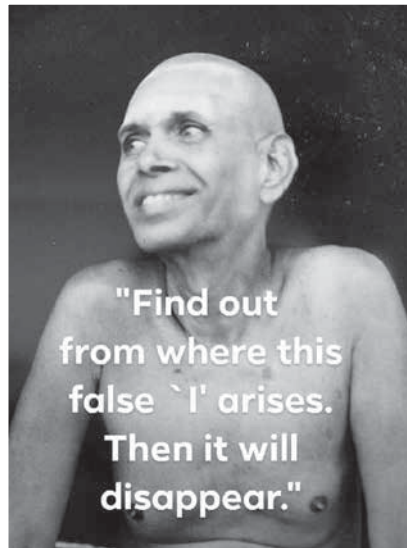
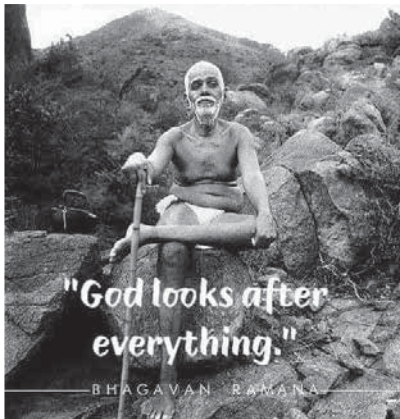
Arunachala, making me still,  
disperse the clouds of fate,  
and free will.

## Ramana is the Way of Ramana

*Shyam Sunder*

Pure awareness is the Self which is Sat-Chit-Ananda."

- Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi.



"Liberation has to be gained in full-awareness because the reality itself is pure awareness."

I experience I am. I experience I know I am. Thus, Ramana way is completely positive.

It is never for self-escape. Thought causes self-escape hence thoughtless(wordless) Self-awareness is required.

For pure awareness ask pointing at seen-

Can this feeling be left unnamed?

Pointing at seer-

Can this feeling be left unnamed?

Selfness is to live as egoless Self, not as ego self.

Our self is with ego, God's self is egoless hence Existence-consciousness-bliss.

Ramana means that when he says- "Be as you are."  
As basically everyone is existence-consciousness-bliss,  
Nothing can stand apart from the Self.

"Awareness - another name for you."

Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi.

Stillness is essential because seer and seen are not separate from us, from being.

Self abidance means living as being, not as a seer, as mind.

If we live as seer, as mind we are constantly moving outside, towards seen. That is a big obstacle.

"Do not think that you are.

Be."

"Do not meditate.

Be."

"The Self is simple being.

Be."

- Ramana Maharshi

Being is always there but it cannot be realized without stillness.

We never stop to see who we are. "All that is required to realize the self is to be still."

Otherwise we are all the time realizing seen which is not separate from us.

"The Supreme being is one and it is the Self."

- Ramana Maharshi



## **Epitome of Bhakti Yoga**

*Accounts by Sri M. Valleesan and Dr. Kala Rani Rengasamy*

*Compiled by Dr. Sarada*

Misery were I to die, leaving you, bless me that I,  
Leave you not when life leaves, Arunachala!

-Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi,  
Arunachala Aksharamanamalai

As they move closer to the evening horizon of life, this becomes the prayer of every devotee, to breathe the last breath with the thought of the beloved Arunachala, of the Master Ramana. It is also certain that Ramana will be there beside the devotee in those moments, holding the hand as it were and leading to the highest good. This desire in the hearts of devotees arises of course because of the need to continue to be with Arunachala Ramana for ever. It also stems on account of the deeply ingrained faith that whatever one thinks of in one's last moments, one attains that very thing. For, Sri Krishna Himself has declared in the Bhagavad Gita that it is so.

Based on this faith a devotee approached Bhagavan Ramana one evening as he was returning from his walk on Arunachala. The devotee prayed to Bhagavan, 'Please bless me that my last thought when I leave my body should be of you.' Bhagavan looked at him with great compassion and asked a counter question, 'Is the last moment different from this moment?' The devotee, however, did not get the import of Bhagavan's question and repeated his prayer to which Bhagavan nodded assent.

In fact, it is said again by Sri Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita that what one is thinking of or meditating upon constantly, that alone will arise as one's thought in the last moment. That is why each moment is of the greatest significance. We find, therefore, that the lives of those whose thoughts are filled with Bhagavan culminate only in that very thought. The narration of the last

moments in the lives of devotees reads always as a natural and often magnificent fruition of all the other events of devotion that fill their lives. This is not on account of any conscious effort on their part to make it so. For, such a conscious effort may or may not really bear fruit.

We understand this from a conversation that Major Chadwick had with Bhagavan. Referring to the faith that the last thought while dropping the body is the most important one, he asked, 'Bhagavan, what if I think of you and jump in front of a moving truck and give up my life? Then I will automatically be united inseparably with you, will I not?' To that, however, Bhagavan countered, 'Who can say how many more thoughts will arise between the moment you think of me and the moment you jump in front of the moving truck?' Thereby Bhagavan indicated that living in the continuous thought of him is the answer. Then every moment of life and the last moment too will flow automatically from that single-minded devotion.

The last moments of one of the devotees of Bhagavan, who recently attained the lotus feet of Bhagavan, are a moving illustration of the glory of a life lived in Bhagavan and melting into him totally. His son Valleeswaran narrates the last moments of his father:

"It was Monday 07-09-2020...he was unwell for the previous 2 days taking medication ...evening around 7.30 pm me, my wife, my brother and my sister in law were sitting in his room when he called out to me. When I went to him, he said 'My inner voice says that I may not survive for more than two days.' We were taken aback! But he reassured us saying, 'Don't worry about me.' At the same time he was firm. He said, 'Don't call for a doctor, don't



give me medicines, it will be of no use. My time has come.' There was no fear, no concern, just a statement of fact."

"My aunt from London had sent a get well soon voice message for which I recorded a voice reply message. My father simply and sweetly said, "May Bhagavan Ramana bless you all. sarvE janAh sukhino bhavanthu. May all be well with everyone."

"On Tuesday 08-09-2020 at 3.00 a.m. he informed me, 'It is a matter of a few hours for me now. Death is waiting for me.' My wife picked up Bhagavan Ramana's photo which was always in front of him in his room and took it close to him to show the photo to him. Again, his beautiful, simple statement was, 'I know. I am always thinking of him.' There was nothing further for us to say or do."

"At about 5.15 a.m. me, my wife and my mother-in-law, who were at his bedside started chanting 'Arunachala Siva Arunachala Siva ...'. He asked my wife to clean his ears and his eyes. She then poured some Tulasi water and Ganga water into his mouth... Slowly he breathed his last peacefully listening to the chant of Arunachala Siva Arunachala Siva..."

Who is this devotee, the wonder of whose last moments of life surely make one long to know more about the life itself? He is Sri V.Mahalingam who was captured in Bhagavan Ramana's net of Grace practically six decades ago in the early 1960's. In the Hindu tradition the 60th year of one's life is celebrated in a special manner. It is said to be the completion of one full cycle of life and the start of another cycle of sixty years to complete the Vedic span of 120 years. Out of the little less than 100 years that he lived (08-12-1921 to 08-09-2020), Sri Mahalingam lived in devotion of Bhagavan Ramana for practically a full cycle of sixty years after he first heard of him and was drawn to him irresistibly from that very moment. Here is an account by Sri Valleesan about his father's first meeting with Bhagavan:

"My father, along with his office friends (Mr. A K Iyer, Mr. M C Menon, Mr. K C Subbiah), had once attended a Ramana Jayanthi celebration in 1964 at the Sarojini Nagar Ganesh Mandir



Delhi, presided over by Professor K. Swaminathan. The Professor explained Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi's teachings to them. The Professor had also gifted to them photos of Bhagavan as well as some books. From the next Sunday onwards, they gathered for puja in the Professor's flat.

The Satsang was a program of 2 hours with Veda Parayanam, Archana, Arunachala Siva recitations etc. The Professor spoke about Bhagavan's teachings every Sunday."

Dr.Kala Rani's parents, Sri Guruswamy and Smt. Seethalakshmi soon joined this ardent group of devotees in attending the Satsangs. Most of them were working in the Meteorological Department and got to know about Bhagavan's teachings from each other. Kala Rani describes her memories of Sri Mahalingam thus:

"My association with Mahalingam uncle must have crossed 50 years. From my age of 5 I knew him as a very active member of Delhi Ramana Kendra. Mahalingam uncle told us how he and his friends were drawn to Bhagavan after attending a Jayanthi celebration and hearing Professor Swaminathan's talk. He told us, 'I started performing puja replacing the priest in order to reduce the expenditure'. Gradually Satsang expanded to the houses of other devotees in different colonies. "

Describing the ardour of Sri Mahalingam, Dr.Kala Rani continues:

"As these houses were in different parts of Delhi from the East to the West and the North to the South literally, it was not very easy for devotees to go there even on the day of the Satsang. But uncle made it a point to go twice. A few days before the Satsang, Mahalingam uncle used to visit the devotee's house where the Satsang was going to be held. This was both to understand the location himself and to help the other devotees to reach the house with greater ease."

"How interestingly he used to describe the way to reach that particular house! I as a child very much enjoyed his great

enthusiasm and have a vivid memory of how he explained the route with appropriate gestures. If at all the other devotees needed any convincing to attend the Satsang, which they really didn't as Bhagavan had cast such a spell on each one of them, but if they did then I am certain that Bhagavan worked through the infectious enthusiasm of Mahalingam uncle."

"Probably the Name 'MahotsAhAya namah' in the Ramana Ashtottaram which uncle was chanting so regularly, which means 'Prostrations to One of Supreme Enthusiasm', seeped into him in a deep manner. We can further see a measure of his joy and love for Bhagavan and the Satsang from the fact that uncle was not deterred by the fact that some of the homes where the Satsang was held did not have an appropriate photograph of Bhagavan to which puja could be offered. In those instances, Mahalingam uncle used to carry the photo to that house for the Satsang without any hesitation."



"In this way Mahalingam uncle made Bhagavan, who was in fact as unmoving as Arunachala itself, literally into an 'Utsava Murthy', that idol of God in the temples who moves around in the processions.

This happened until Bhagavan decided to take root in one place at Delhi in the lovely meditation hall that is now at Ramana Kendra.

The work for the building of the Kendra was spearheaded by Professor uncle and by Natarajan uncle who was then the Secretary. But one may well say that each and every devotee contributed in full measure to the realization of this dream."



Sri Mahalingam's son Valleesan says:

"After Pranaprathishta of Bhagavan's portrait in Delhi Kendra on 1.9.1974, morning and evening pujas were performed in the Kendra itself. My father and my mother, Smt. Neela Mahalingam, would never miss the Sunday Satsang till the late eighties. My mother, who was very well versed in Soundarya Lahari, Thirupugazh, Abhirami Andhadhi and other famous devotional hymns, used to sing songs on Ramana and by Ramana in the Satsangs. By Bhagavan's Grace, Ramana Kendra Delhi has grown from strength to strength and is what it is today."



Kala Rani recalls:

"Mahalingam uncle also served as a committee member of Delhi Kendra for many years guiding the successive generations of devotees and sharing with them both through his words and his own example, the vision and principles on which the Ramana Kendra was established."

Thus, Sri Mahalingam remained devoted to Sadguru Ramana in thought and deed. Ramana is seen by many to be the embodiment of Subrahmanya who symbolises the Guru principle.

Surely Sri Mahalingam had love and devotion for Muruga as well as he named his son 'Valleesan', the Lord of Valli. At the same time, he did not fail to repay his debt of gratitude to the elder brother of Muruga, Lord Ganesa. For, was it not Ganapati who had first revealed Sadguru Ramana to him? Was it not at a Ganesa Temple that Sri Mahalingam had first heard of Bhagavan Ramana and become fixed at his feet? So we find Valleesan saying:

"The colony where my father lived, Mayur Vihar-II, Delhi (established in 1986) had no place of worship. The people there had to either go to Sarojini Nagar or Irwin Road. So, my father claimed that Bhagavan ordained him to establish a Karunya Mahaganapathy Temple with the help of other devotees, in his colony, and made him perform the pooja and also worship HIM. This temple has also grown prosperously."

We find that his enthusiasm for life and to share Bhagavan with one and all continued unabated till the very end. His son Valleesan shares some of the letters that friends have sent after Sri Mahalingam dropped his body:

*"Anmlga tenraIay ANDANDu vAzhndu* – Living long and blessed as the wind of inwardness

*arumai ramaNarin baktanAi uLam mahizhndu* – With devotion to precious Ramana heart filled with bliss

*anaivaraiyum inmu gattODu aravaNaattu* – Taking all into his embrace with a smile on his lips

*ahattilum puRattilum tUyavAzhvu vAzhnda uyarnda mAmanidar...* – Within and without in purity did live this - great man... - Meena Venki, Delhi."

"Great soul, great personality, greatest devotee of Karunya Maha Ganapati and Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi. My humble pranams to my Guru. He will ever live in our heart - Raghupathy, Delhi."

"When I think of Maali mama I must put on record the three absolute things that he exposed me during my Delhi days. They were:

- 1.Karunya Ganapathi
- 2.North Indian Baraaths(Wedding Galas)
- 3.Ramana Maharshi

The portrait style calendar that was in Maali mama's house was my first gaze to witness Ramana Maharshi's silent smile or in my words 'Aananda Punnagai'. Post then it was never just a gaze whenever I witnessed the picture of Ramanar with my physical eyes or in my memory, but a deep- rooted journey.

Knowing my interest towards reading, he offered me a book on Ramana Maharshi's life and teachings.

Later, though I knew a bit more on Mahaan Sri Ramanar through other sources, for me it is always Maali mama who flashes in my mind whenever I witness the silent smile of Ramanar anywhere.

Even in my last Rendezvous with Maali mama (during my Delhi visit), the most scintillating experience came through when I was looking at that divine portrait of Ramanar in Maali mama's house.

For me Maali mama is my primary channel to experience the soulful silence of Ramanar.

Arvind Bharathi, Chennai.”

The last letter encapsulates the spirit of Sri Mahalingam and the power of his devotion which had come alive in the portrait of Bhagavan in his home. For, it is the experience of every devotee that the picture of Ramana which is worshipped and beheld with devotion becomes in manifold ways more vibrant and literally begins to reveal its true presence and power.

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## **Ramananjali 40 - Led with Love and Knowledge**

*Prathiba Sundaresh*

Ramananjali 40 – the 40th year of the very first performance of Ramananjali is being celebrated now. How thrilling it must have been, that very first performance. I can well imagine although I was not present. For, I may say that Bhagavan Ramana entered my life through an Upadesha Saaram competition during Bhagavan Raman's birth centenary celebration when I was in my 8th grade. Yet, it was through Ramananjali that He pulled me completely and made me His devotee forever. I still remember the day I attended the Ramananjali program held at Sheshadripuram College during Ramanavami festival in Bangalore. It was that rich beautiful music of Ramananjali with the orchestra that blew me away and transformed me completely. So I am convinced that when Ramananjali enters anyone's life it is the pull of Ramana.

In fact, they had already started Ramana Bala Kendra classes at our school much prior to that but I was dilly dallying if I should join the class or not. Once I heard Ramananjali music I was so blown away that the same weekend I joined the Ramana Bala Kendra class and there was no looking back after that. It was a total transformation for me. Even to this day every time I listen to those Ramananjali songs, it creates a soul stirring experience and helps me to tun inwards towards Bhagavan Ramana instantaneously. It was Bhagavan's grace that he has made me hold Him in the most traumatic periods of my life through Ramananjali music.

Can I pinpoint to my most favourite song in Ramananjali? It is almost impossible. Ever since Ramananjali music first came into my life and I was blown away, I have a similar experience every single time I listen to the songs. Every Ramananjali concert has given me a great experience. It feels like every song is my favorite. I love every song, but the Ramananjali title song is my most favorite even to this day. I get goosebumps, it creates vibrations every time I listen to it. What a beautiful music set by Sulochana mami and innumerable composers and music directors.

Although I love every lyric and every Ramanajali song, Ramana Pada Pancharatna has a very special place in my heart.

It was through this song that Bhagavan Ramana entered the hearts of our music friends here in Nashville, Tennessee, United States and also took us all the way to India to compete in Ramanotsavam, a Global contest for Indian Theatre Arts organized by Bangalore Ramana Center in collaboration with Sankara TV in 2016.

Ramana Pada Pancharatna is selected verses from Sri Ramana Pada Malai, composed by Sri Siva Praksham Pillai praising the lotus feet of Bhagavan Ramana. It encompasses the total essence of Ramana's teachings of surrender and self-enquiry. It has been set beautifully to same 5 ragas by Smt. Sulochana Natarajan, on par with Saint Tyagaraja's Pancharatna kritis, the 5 gems for all music lovers and singers.

At this juncture it is with great joy that I share a few thoughts about Smt. Sulochana Natarajan who at the age of 12 received blessing from Sri Ramana in His physical presence. This with her immense knowledge of Carnatic music led her to become the director of "Ramananjali" and pioneer of Ramana Music movement.

To all of us who were students of the first batch of Ramana Bala Kendra she was one of our very dear teachers and we called her 'Mami'. The incredible work Mami has done in getting 2000 songs of Bhagavan Ramana, and on Him by various composers, recorded, notated, and published bears testimonial to her absolute devotion to Bhagavan Ramana.

It was the power of Ramananjali music and Mami's blessings that under the pretext of competing for Ramanotsavam Global Contest, Ramana brought me to India to truly witness the total surrender Mami had for Bhagavan. I was able to spend several hours with her during her last days physically with us.

Her whole being was filled with Ramana. Her lips were continuously chanting Ramana despite failing physical health until the last breath.



For me it was coming full circle. I had received Mami's blessings for the first time when Ramana entered my life through the Upadesha Saaram competition for Bhagavan Ramana's birth centenary celebration. Mami was my judge then. And again, just before her earthly departure I received her total blessings during Ramanotsavam competition.

Ramanotsavam was an unbelievable and unique experience for us, a group of 6 amateur singers from a small town from United States who share a common love and passion to learn and sing Carnatic music.

Even to this day when we remember our India visit for Ramanotsavam contest, it feels like a dream. It not only enriched our knowledge about music but our soul itself.

We were very blessed to meet and get guidance from none other than K.S. Raghunathan, an eminent personality who has guided several Carnatic musicians of today.

At the end of the Ramanotsavam contest, Bhagavan Ramana blessed us not only with a prize in semi-finals but allowed us to sing His song during arathi at Sri Ramanasramam. We were in ecstasy but totally humbled by the entire Ramanotsavam experience. This too was made possible for us only by Ramananjali music.

It is quite exciting for me to think of more and more people getting firmly caught in Bhagavan Ramana's net of grace through his enchanting flute, the music of Ramananjali. And I am certain that it will continue to light my life and keep me bound to Ramana through the very same enchantment.

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## Ramana's Song of Grace - 37

*Revathi Sankar*

Bhagavan Ramana says in his Sat Darshanam that everything rises from the Self and subsides in the Self. When the source of everything is only the Self, turning away from the source and searching for anything outside would be really foolish. But aren't we doing it all the time? I am not happy, I try to find it in objects, situations, people, life, art and culture, entertainment, god, devotion, what not????? Ultimately Bhagavan asks us to look within whenever any kind of movement happens as any movement away from the Self will lead to misery.

The first instructions given to Siva Prakasam Pillai about self – enquiry in 1901 was documented in the famous text entitled 'Who am I?' Later, Pillai composed a poem called 'Ramana Pada Malai' in gratitude and devotion to the Sadguru. This has been set as Ramana Pada Pancharatnam – a unique musical piece which has been composed by Smt. Sulochana Natarajan on the lines of Saint Tyagaraja's Pancharatna Kritis. Smt. Sulochana Natarajan has very carefully selected the verses from Pada Malai and set the ragas of Nattai, Goula, Arabhi, Varali and Sri which are the same as Pancharatnam. We will be meditating now on the second kriti which is the Goula raga. The fourth charana of the song goes like this

*un uL uLa ISanai viDElenRu uraippOn pAdam vAzhgavE  
anniyam pOl varinum veLi enRu araivOn pAdam vAzhghavE*

Tamil

*ninnoLagiha ISana biDadiru endu pELuvavana paadake jaya  
anyanante horage tOridarU endu nuDivavana sri padake jaya*

Kannada

Meaning –

Blessed be the Feet of the One who says 'Do not dissociate yourself from the Lord who is within but appears separate and without'.

Bhagavan has made it very clear that God is there within us. The Self is God, is everything. I remember the story of Poonjaji when he was in Tiruvannamalai. He came to Bhagavan and asked

Bhagavan whether he could show him his God, his Krishna. But Bhagavan was silent so he left the place and he went to the other part of the hill and he saw Krishna, played with Krishna, he fed Krishna, made him sleep and was with Krishna all the time.

He came back to Ramanasramam and spoke to Bhagavan Ramana. He narrated to Bhagavan what he had done all these days when he was blissfully with Krishna. Bhagavan asked Poonjaji where was Krishna now. And the reply was that he comes whenever he thinks of Krishna. Bhagavan asks 'Of what use is a God who comes and disappears?' Poonjaji gets angry and leaves.

But a few days later, his incessant japa of Krishna's name simply comes to a halt. He returns to Bhagavan seeking an explanation and a solution. Bhagavan clarifies to Poonjaji beautifully. Bhagavan asks him how he came from Chennai to Tiruvannamalai and how did he come from the Railway Station to Ramanasramam. Poonjaji answers that he came in a train from Chennai and in a tonga to Ramanasramam. Bhagavan asks him what happened to the train and tonga after he had alighted. They went their way, he did not need them any more. After arriving, nothing was required.

So Bhagavan said, sadhana is also like that, once you reach the next stage, the older one falls off. Bhagavan made him realize that God is within. Whenever you saw Krishna, it was only within yourself. Bhagavan always reminds us that God is within.

Sadhu Om Swami says that when we see God within we can see him everywhere. Muruganar Swami also says that everything comes from the Self and disappears in the Self but we see it in different forms like the ornaments and the gold. If we see the gold, then the ornaments disappear.

I pray to Bhagavan to make me also realize that God is within. To make me realize that the Self alone is and everything is only the Self. If I see the Self, then I will stop seeing any other. Bhagavan let me 'be' the Self and see only the Self always.

Lord Ramana

Thank you Bhagavan

Your attention seeking Child :) ????

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## How Bhagavan Captured Us

*By Smt. Sulochana Natarajan*

Early March 1965, just before baby Ambika's first birthday, Bhagavan moved us to Delhi. There may surely have been some pangs about leaving Bangalore. Firstly, it meant going far away from Sri Ramanasramam. Secondly, in Bangalore we had the great grace and satsang of Guruji and the proximity of the Bangalore Math to our home. Thirdly, both ARN's parents and mine were very close by at Chennai. ARN was much admired and loved in his office circles too.

ARN was such a popular Assistant Commissioner in the Income Tax Department that even though all were happy that he was going on special deputation they were sad to part from him. We were given to understand that such a crowd in the farewell party at Woodlands Hotel and in the send off at the Bangalore City Railway Station was unprecedented. The entire railway platform was filled with people who had come to see us off.

Yet, it is undeniable that there was the excitement of going to the capital city on deputation. ARN had been chosen, literally hand-picked by the then Finance Minister TTK when he came on a tour to Bangalore. He had immediately asked ARN to join as Personal Assistant to Finance Minister at Delhi. At that time little did we realise Bhagavan's play of making us involved deeply in the forthcoming Ramana Movement.

Upon reaching Delhi, we were also in touch with the Swamijis of Delhi Ramakrishna Mutt where we were given 'royal' treatment. In our twelve years there Delhi Mutt was our second home and we were often invited to lunch or dine there as well. I would also go over there regularly to listen to Bhagavad Gita lectures by the President of the Math, Swami Vandanananda.

At this juncture I would like to share the essence of the teachings that we received from Guruji. Of course, it is as I grasped

it and to the extent I am blessed with the ability to communicate it. Guruji would say, 'Begin your morning with a spiritual breakfast. Fill all your idle moments with Lord's Name and divine thoughts'.

SN: Maharaj, I don't feel the urge to do Japa. It is mechanical most of the time.

SY: Keep doing it. Sometimes we feel hungry when we eat. There are times when we eat mechanically. So it is with spiritual food. Gradually higher perception will develop. A slow transformation is taking place in you. Be careful never to think that you are better than others.

ARN: Maharaj, is it not possible to bypass the mind?

SY: Yes, it can be done, but it is very difficult. The disease is so bad that periodic injections of Advaita should be given. As Sankara says, we are neither the body nor the mind nor the senses nor the internal organs. 'We are Sat-chit-ananda', 'Sivoham; I am the auspicious Spirit' – now and then you should give yourselves such strong doses of Advaita.

SY: Strengthen the mind with good thoughts and impressions. Pray to your ishta for purity. Whom else can you approach when you are helpless? He will counteract our Karma. As Holy Mother said, in place of a blow or serious injury, we may just receive a pin-prick. Beg of Him, not of beggars. Once a fakir went to the Emperor Akbar to ask for money. The Emperor was saying his prayers. He prayed, 'O Lord, give me money; give me wealth'. The fakir started to leave the palace, but the Emperor motioned to him to wait. After finishing his prayers, Akbar came to the holy man and said, 'Why were you going away?' The fakir replied, 'You yourself were begging for money and wealth; so I thought that if I must beg, I would beg of God and not of a beggar'.

ARN: Can karma be counteracted? Or, only the power to suffer our parabdha karma (the mental impressions that have begun to bear fruit) changes?

SY: No the karma hits the shield (kavacha) first and once. Not only does one get the strength to meet it but karma itself is counteracted to

some extent. Haven't you heard that in ancient wars one arrow used to be nullified by another? Remember this. Karma can be counteracted.

Be true to your present state. You must begin from where you are. At present any awareness of the Self is only at the intellectual level – not a matter of experience. If we prematurely attempt to stop all the vrittis (mental waves), we will slide back to Tamas and mistake it for Sattva. In a higher plane of consciousness there is an understanding of Truth. It is necessary to bridge the gap between intellectual understanding and experience. Otherwise one is likely to become 'dry'.

Religious growth consists in ascent and expansion. Expand – let your heart expand. Guru Maharaj was particular that our sadhana should be adjusted to the stage of spiritual development.

Hanuman said to Sri Rama: 'Dehabuddhya tu daso'smi'; When I look upon myself as the body, you are the Master and I am your servant.....' Let him lead you. He will lead you by the hand. Prakriti is responsible for creation, preservation and destruction; take Her helping hand. Be receptive to Her grace. You are lucky.

An Avatara can give 'Kapala Moksha'. That means he can transform the contents of your mind. Grace comes unasked for. There is no knowing why it comes. But certainly all troubles will go away. In the Arati to Sri Ramakrishna we sing, 'krityam karoti kalusham; your grace cleanses us of evil deeds'.

Have tremendous faith. Without Shraddha nothing can be accomplished. Merge the Guru in the Ishta Devata and meditate. You must learn to merge your personality also in the Ishta.

You must always worship the Ishta as non-separate from you. He dwells in you and you dwell in Him: develop that idea. As Sankara says, the devotee, Guru and Ishta all merge, and the infinite glory of the Atman, the eternal Witness, alone remains.

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## Sri Ramana Sahasranama Stuti<sup>1</sup>

### 373. NITYA MUKTAH

Ever liberated.

It is the mind and its attachments which cause bondage. The mind is also the means to freedom. For as Ramana points out, one is free to identify himself with the happenings, with the circumstances and so on, or to be detached. Liberation means to live without a sense of 'I' and 'mine' which is possible only when one is totally detached.

*Om nityamuktAya namaha.*

### 374. NIRANTARAH

Unlimited, full.

The sense of individuality, the identification with a name and form straightway limits one to that particular name and form. One is freed from this egocentric life by self-enquiry, by enquiry into one's true identity. Such enquiry by in-turning the mind sets in motion the process of the ego's corrosion and its loss by merger in its source. The mental limitations then end. This happened to Ramana when he discovered his true identity by facing death and becoming experientially aware that one is the fullness of consciousness.

*Om nirantarAya namaha*

### 375. NIRVIKARAH

Without change. Free of mental modifications.

The changelessness referred to here does not relate to the body. For the jnani's body is also subject to its prarabdha, its karma. However, his mind is always in a state of equipoise, free of mental modifications. It is only desires and tendencies which cause anger, jealousy, hatred etc. When one is free from desires as Ramana was, one is always in the state of steady wisdom.

*Om nirvikArAya namaha*

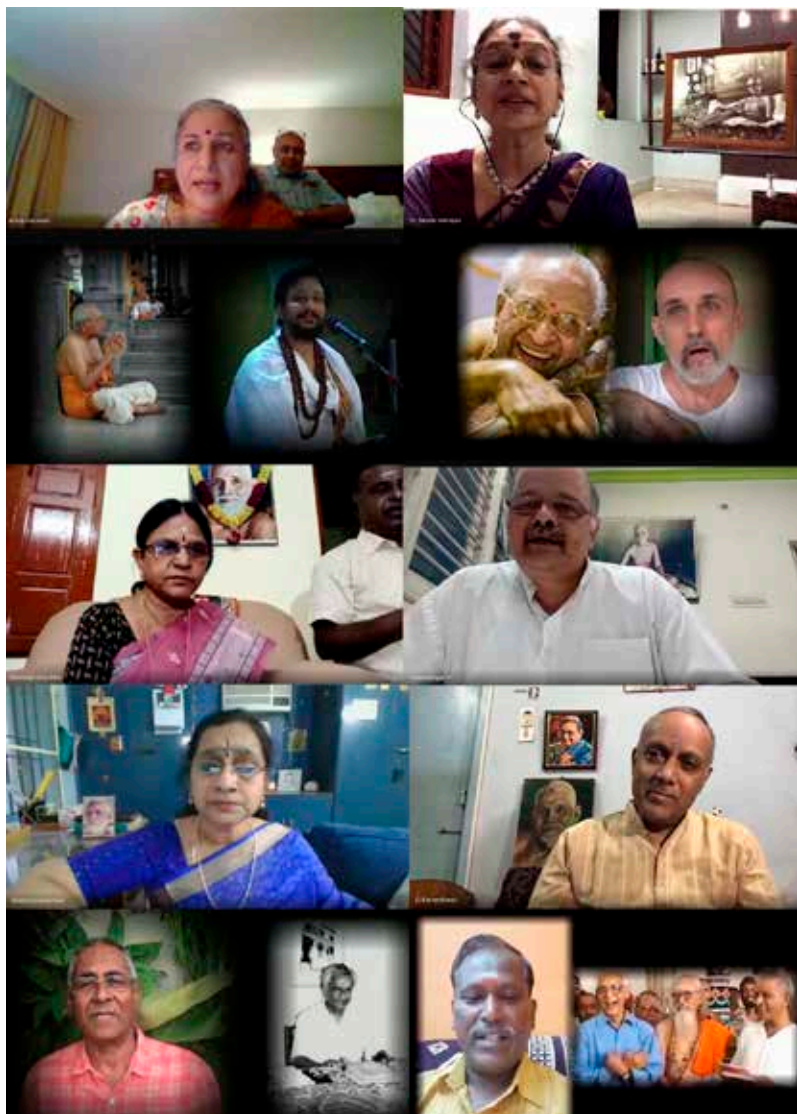
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<sup>1</sup> Thousand (1000) Names in Praise of Ramana- Sanskrit composition by Sri Jagadeeswara Shastri. English Translation and Commentary by Sri A.R.Natarajan



**News & Events***Revathi Sankar*

V.S.Ramanan Memorial Day was held online. Dr.Aruna Ramkumar had a moving sharing with the devotees. Several devotees gave expression to their love for 'Sundaram Anna' and how it was in some ways in reciprocal to the love which he readily showered on all. There were video messages as well. There were video messages as well. Ramanacharanatirtha Sri Nochur Venkataraman sent a voice message for the occasion. So also did Michael Highburger from Sri Ramanasramam.



Chanting of Upadesa Saram, Sri Ramana Gita and sharing of Ramananjali Songs formed a part of the event.



## Your Dates with Ramana

### DAILY AND WEEKLY ONLINE EVENTS

We at Ramana Centre, Bangalore are happy to announce one single sign-in Google Meet URL for all the Online Self Enquiry Sessions and Satsangs of the Centre.

This we believe will ease the sharing of URL to all like minded Ramana devotees to join our scheduled online events as listed below for each week

The URL is also available on our website [www.ramanacentre.com](http://www.ramanacentre.com)

URL: <https://meet.google.com/kwx-bdoa-gtf>

### SPECIAL MEETINGS

**1st October**, Thursday – Pournami

**2nd October**, Friday – Online release of New Book, 'Upadesha Saarah – Tattvabodhini'

**26th October**, Monday – Vijaya Dasami

**31st October**, Saturday - Pournami

**1. Daily Morning Self Enquiry satsang:** Time: 5:30am Duration: 15min

**2. Daily Night Self Enquiry satsang:** Time: 9:30pm Duration: 30min  
(9:30pm - 9:45pm Q&A, 9:45pm - 10:00pm Self Enquiry)

**3. Thursday Evening Self Enquiry satsang:** Time: 7:00pm Duration: 1hr  
Conducted by: Sri Nandakumarj

**4. Friday Evening Self Enquiry satsang:** Time: 7:00pm Duration: 1hr  
Conducted by: Dileep Simha and Dr. Sarada Natarajan

**5. Saturday Evening satsang:** Time: 6:30pm Duration: 2hr Conducted by: Dr. Sarada Natarajan

**6. Sunday Evening Satsang (in Kannada):** Time: 6:45pm Duration: 1hr 45mts. Conducted by: Dr. Sarada Natarajan

**7. Every First Sunday of the Month - Morning Satsang (in Tamil):**  
Time: 10:00 am Duration: 1hr 30 mts. Conducted by: Dr. Sarada Natarajan

If you have any queries or concerns regarding joining the Satsang, please contact: **Uma: 9538472026**

## **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 Yoga classes [Contact - Uma (9538472026)]**

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

### **On site Talk**

By Sri Sridhar Guruji,

Saturday 4:00pm - 5:30pm at RMS.

[Contact Usha Sankar (9663284111)]

### **On site Talks, Parayana and Puja**

By Sri Chandrashekar (9448839594)

Thursday 6:30 pm at RSCR



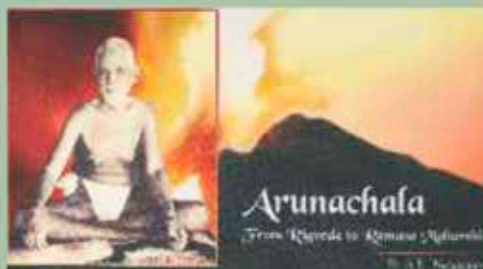
## Guru Vachaka Kovai in English

Original : Muruganar

Translation: David Godman

### Investigation into Truth

116. The particulars about the past history [of the *jiva*], which are full of [details about] the suffering he inflicted on others and the suffering inflicted on him by others in innumerable past lives, do not remain in the *jiva*'s consciousness. Know clearly that this complete forgetfulness, a veiling, is an act of grace by God towards the *jivas*.
117. Even the limited memory, which prompts in the mind the rising of thoughts about a few incidents from this one life, makes the life of the *jiva* wholly miserable. Because of this, forgetfulness alone deserves to be greatly desired.



### **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.