

November 2018



The Ramana Way

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Bengaluru

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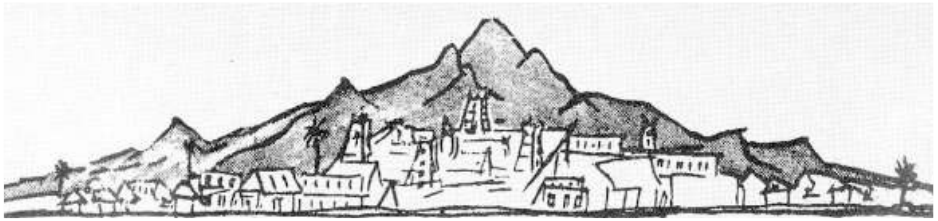
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THE RAMANA WAY

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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Editorial*Dr. Sarada*

We believe that surrender is an easy way. What do we intend to surrender? Ramana asks us to ponder whether anything belongs to us in the first place for us to surrender it. He gives the story of a man in days long gone by. The man was travelling on business from his village to another through a forested path. It was a day's journey and he knew he would get nothing to eat on the way. So he had carried a big lump of jaggery as his afternoon meal. As lunch time approached he settled down to have his meal but remembered that he had not offered his daily worship to Lord Ganesa without doing which he would not eat. As Lord Ganesa is amenable to being shaped as we please and from any material of our choice, the man placed his lump of jaggery on a stone in front of himself and invoked Ganesa into the jaggery. Thereafter he offered his daily prayers. Finally the point came in the worship wherein food offerings had to be made to the Lord. Now the man was in a fix. What could he find in that forest which he could offer to Ganesa? He suddenly remembered that the idol of Ganesa was made of jaggery. He pinched a bit of the idol and offered it to the jaggery Ganesa.

Our surrender, says Ramana, is like pinching a jaggery idol and offering the same jaggery back to the idol. Having usurped the property of the Supreme and claiming it to be our own, we then have the temerity to offer it back and laud ourselves on our spirit of surrender to top it all up!

We often say that we offer our body, our belongings and our mind to God and this we call 'surrender'. But what belongs to us? Does our body belong to us? In what way can we claim that it is ours? We have not created it. Do we sustain it? Can we ensure that the heart will pump? Can we ensure that the digestive systems will do their tasks? Can we keep the brain functional? Can we even rest assured that the next breath will come? If the body belongs to us would we willingly gift it to death to be consumed by the flames of the funeral pyre? When the body does not belong to us in the first place how can we claim to surrender it? In that case, what do

we mean when we say that we are surrendering the body? Do we mean that we are surrendering our false claim that it is ours? Does it mean we are surrendering a thought, the thought that the body belongs to us?

If we claim that we are offering our thoughts in surrender we still need to ask, 'What belongs to us? Do our thoughts belong to us?' Well, if we think they do (which is also only a thought), let us offer them to the Lord in surrender. If we decide to offer our thoughts, then the question would arise whether we should offer our thoughts in their entirety, once and for all. Doing so would imply that we should offer the very need to think. Otherwise, we would have offered all thoughts till date and thereafter we have to come up with a plan whereby the further thoughts would be surrendered from time to time. Would we offer all thoughts as a lot every day at the end of the day or would we offer each thought as it arises?

In each case there may be one more dilemma to be faced. What if we have 'bad' thoughts? Can we offer these too to the Lord? How can we offer something that is bad? If we can't then we must put in an effort to keep all our thoughts good so that we can offer them to the Lord.

If I decide to purify my mind in order to make it a fit offering to God, such a decision would be mine and it would not be surrender. Say, I decide to be on my own until I purify my mind and postpone my surrender until my mind is pure. Finally I succeed in making all my thoughts pure and am ready to offer them all to the Lord. But what about all the impure thoughts that I would have had along the way? Where would all those thoughts have gone? Out into the blue? If that is the case how can I claim that I continue to possess all the good thoughts and can offer them to the Lord? Do I continue to possess an earlier thought once I have moved on to a new one? If I do not, which one do I offer to the Lord? If I continue to possess my earlier thoughts even when I have moved on then what do I do with all the bad thoughts that I have had along the way? Can I offer them too to God? If I can't then how will my surrender be complete?

So at any point of time I have to be ready to offer all my thoughts to God, the good, the bad, the ugly and the indifferent ones as well.

There is a most touching anecdote that happened in Ramana's presence. One evening when Ramana was seated outside the hall near the well and a few devotees were present, one man who had come for the first time told him with great emotion, 'Swami, I am the greatest sinner. There is no sin that I have not committed. My condition is hopeless. Pray, save me!' Ramana who appeared to have a distant glance till then leaned forward, looked at the man intensely and asked, 'What guru dakshina will you give me?' All assembled were amazed. 'Never has Bhagavan asked for anything' they thought and began to follow the proceedings with keen interest. 'Whatever you ask for', said the man. 'Well then, give me the fruits of all the good deeds that you have done', said the Master. The man laughed. 'You ask me for something that I do not have. I do not remember having done anything good at all in my life'.

'If you do not wish to give me the fruits of your good deeds, you may go your way,' Ramana answered. The man was confused. After a little thought he said, 'If without my knowledge I have done something good in my life I now give the fruits of all those deeds to you without any hesitation'. 'Good', said the Master, but that was not all, 'Now give me the fruits of all your bad deeds.' The man was aghast. His whole body began to tremble. 'You do not know the enormity of my sins. How can I give the fruits of those deeds to you?' 'If not, you may take care of yourself,' he was told. He pleaded but the Master was relentless. The bargaining went on awhile. Finally Ramana leaned back, turning away from the man. Having no other recourse, cringing, weeping the man stuttered, 'I give the fruits of my sins to you'. Then with immense grace Ramana looked at him and said, 'Now you have no good in you and you have no bad in you. You are as you are. Remain thus'. A great peace prevailed.

What can one say? What need one say? And yet, one has said all this to dwell on the truth that surrender is not 'easy' as it may seem. It is not 'difficult' either. To look at something as 'easy' or 'difficult' is only an attitude of mind. Attitudes of mind have no

place either in surrender or self-enquiry. So why waste our time in weighing the paths? Self-enquiry is not 'difficult' as it may seem either. If surrender is 'easy' so is self-enquiry as it is no different from surrender. In fact self-enquiry is true surrender as it is the readiness to surrender every thought even as it rises by asking, 'For whom is this thought?' The answer comes 'For me'. There and then the thought has been withdrawn into the 'I', it no more has any separate standing, it is known to be non-existent apart from the 'I'. Further, the 'I'-thought is also surrendered with the question 'Who am I?' As there is no answer, no one to answer, it becomes evident that the 'I' is a mere notion. The Self alone is.

Once one has 'tasted' the Self through abidance one would know that 'offering thoughts' to it is as much a fallacy as offering the body. Even more is it the pinching of a jaggery Ganesa and offering the jaggery back. For what is thought other than consciousness? Just as all images in a movie are nothing but light all thoughts are nothing but images of the light of consciousness. To surrender a thought to the Self is nothing but surrendering consciousness to consciousness. Both surrender and self-enquiry serve their end when they make us recognise the fallacy in the very process.

Is there any difference at all between surrender and self-enquiry? In surrender one begins with faith in the Supreme, a Supreme who one does not recognise is one's own Self. However, there is doubt too, the doubting of one's capacity to do anything and hence a readiness to surrender. Unless one recognises one's limitation and incapacity why would one surrender? Once one has surrendered the separate entity ceases to exist and the Supreme would naturally shine as the Self. In self-enquiry one begins with doubt, doubt about one's own identity. Yet here too there is faith. All through the enquiry there is faith in existence. Once one has merged in the source the Self alone shines.

The two paths appear as such because one does not pay intent attention to one's own practise. Because of the absence of the enquiring spirit we see differences to begin with and continue to superimpose these differences on our spiritual practices as well. We fall a prey to the mind's tendency to divide, to judge and

to imagine that it has come up with the best solution. Cow Lakshmi did not surrender to Ramana because she thought it was a better option. She did so because she was completely in love with him and saw nothing apart from him. She surrendered because she did not have a mind that divides, she had only love.

Humphreys has described that during his visit to Ramana at Virupaksha Cave in 1911 he found that often little children would climb up the hill in the morning, simply sit in Ramana's presence silently the whole day and climb down again in the evening. Was this prompted by surrender or was it the force of self-enquiry working within them? Did they think about it? Did they analyse it? Did they judge it?

If we have a mind that judges and weighs, we must remember that it trusts its own powers of enquiry. Better then to make it enquire into its own validity and power, into its own nature. Else it may trick us into believing that it is surrendered. On the other hand, it is equally important to back our self-enquiry with absolute faith in grace. Else we may get caught in the intellectual arrogance of having understood, of having the superior power of enquiry. As Sri A.R.Natarajan writes, "One's battle with the past as experience, and attachment born of it, would be lost but for the continuous strength flowing from Ramana's guidance and strength giving compassion.... Ramana's grace, which is there all along the line, is bound to pull one through."

Finally, 'For whom is the surrender?' 'For me' 'Who am I?' 'For whom is the enquiry?' 'For me' 'Who am I?'



The New Dawn**A. R. Natarajan***THE MEDITATIVE WAY OF LIFE**

In the past those who wished to give themselves to a wholly meditative way of life, would retire to monasteries in order to be far from the madding crowd and remain in exclusive contemplation of God. Ramana has opened for us a new path where it is possible for one to be in the thick of life, with all its stresses and strains and at the same time be able to lead a way of life when one is never out of meditation. One's awareness of the presence of God would not be distracted by thoughts or action. However, nowadays the lifestyle is so hectic that we find it hard to believe in this possibility despite Ramana's assurance.

Often one would have to get up early, have a quick breakfast and travel long distances to reach the work spot. The less affluent would have to jostle with fellow office goers in buses and suburban trains. In the office, a tough schedule awaits them. The employer is sure to demand his money's worth. Even if you are self-employed, sustaining competition and technological obsolescence could well be nerve racking. To add to this, there is the continuous ringing of the incoming phone calls and the need for making outgoing calls. The return journey from the office, when one is dead tired, can be quite tedious, given the mental and physical fatigue of the day. Back home, we have the needs of the family to cater to, socialize and relax.

Therefore to talk of a meditative way of life in a situation where it is tough even to find a little time for meditation may seem too utopian. Hence the general belief that a meditative way of life is too much of a luxury or that one has to renounce action, and withdraw from the stresses and strains of daily life in order to be able to do it.

It is against this backdrop of skepticism that one has to understand Ramana's statements that such a way of life is natural and his further assertion that "One's busiest hours are not

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

different from meditative time spent in solitude” or that work and meditation are only two sides of the same coin. Therefore one has to go into this question and reconcile the seeming chasm between Ramana’s words and our present experience.

For this one must find the time to reflect on the core truths of the Ramana Way. The first truism to which Ramana draws our attention is that all thought and action is aimed at happiness for oneself. The second point which Ramana makes is that happiness is natural and therefore available to everyone. It is not the exclusive property of anyone in particular. While the naturalness of happiness is a proposition about which no one has any doubt, the snag is that what one is seeking and searching for in life is not happiness, but pleasure and its concomitant, the avoidance of pain.

The reason for this has been explained clearly by Ramana in the very second verse of his ‘Upadesa Saram’. In this verse he points out that action must lead to further action drowning us in the sea of action because no action of ours is complete and got over with. The actor’s mind carries in a seed form, the memory of pleasure, which came from the action. This pushes one further in that direction for more of it. The lure of the more is like the hunter’s horn for the deer. Each action done in this fashion would never free one from enslavement to action. The difficulty is further compounded by the fact that all our actions are done with a strong sense of doership, with definite result orientation.

What then is the solution? The solution offered by Ramana is at various levels. The first one is to dedicate the action to Iswara, and to perform it as a given assignment without any desire for personal benefit from it. Here one might note that Ramana does not recommend this as a solution but only as an alternative to our usual kind of action. According to him this type of action purifies the mind and enables one to search rightly, to be engaged in enquiry, which will free one from the binding nature of the present action.

Digressing, one might go back to the very first verse of ‘Upadesa Saram’ in which Ramana points out that the results of one’s actions are dependent on the Ordainer’s laws and have no necessary correlation to the effort done with the pleasure motivation. Recognition of this fact might make it easier for one

to regard work as an offering to God and derive the benefits from such actions in the spiritual ripening of the mind.

Another point stressed by Ramana is a truth, which is outside our present experience namely that happiness is inherent. We have always assumed that what we need is outside of ourselves, in relationships, in ideas, in the various roles, which one is called upon to play in life. If happiness is really within and inherent, and is one's own nature, the search for it outside may be not better than the search of the musk deer seeking its scent all over the place ignoring the fact that the scent is emanating from its own navel.

The question would naturally arise, how does one search for happiness? How does one perform action which is self-fulfilling, in which there is no carry forward of the momentum of action? Here Ramana throws such light that only the blind cannot see the validity of each and every step, which constitutes the Ramana path. Let us follow the path, step by step, understanding the significance of each step.

The only instrument we have is our mind. Therefore Ramana emphasizes that understanding the mind holds the key to natural happiness. What is this called the mind? Have you ever gone into this question? Perhaps not. Is it a concrete entity like our body? Ramana remarks that because there are thoughts we infer that they must be emanating from the mind. If one enquires one will find the mind to be a rapidly changing thought flow of numerous, varied, complimentary and contradictory thoughts with breaks which are also as rapid as the thought movement itself. Unnoticed but always present is the linking thought, the 'I' thought. All thoughts are for the thinker but we are so much caught up in the movement itself that the existence of this core thought goes unnoticed. Another fact which can be observed if you are on the job of understanding the mind is that it is the individual's attention which causes a thought to surface and when such attention switches to another focus of interest, a new set of thoughts surface and the previous one subsides. From this a clear conclusion follows. It is that the individual, the thinker, alone matters for the whole thought world is centered on his attention. The numerical strength of thoughts has to be negated by a proper weapon in order to face the 'I'. In this 'Face to Face' with 'I' lies the key to the understanding of the mind.

In other methods of meditation one is seeking to control the mind for a given period which is set apart for meditation. Here the goal is different. It is to deal directly with the meditator who is the mischief-maker. It is his shifting attention, which causes the thought flow, in which he himself gets mixed up in a trice as it were.

The Ramana way with its focus on understanding the mind enables the removal of obstructions, which must necessarily exist in the absence of such knowledge. Anything that is understood ceases to be a problem. The problem is seen to be our inability to stay focused on the centre of the mind. To prevent this clouding of attention by an army of thoughts Ramana provides an infallible weapon, self-enquiry. When thoughts surface in meditation, as indeed they will, more so in the beginning, one has to enquire 'For whom is this thought?' There can be only one answer to this doubt. 'To me'. That thought will die and there will be a gap before another surfaces. The words used advisedly are 'enquiry' and 'doubt'. For though it appears like a question it is only the mode in which this doubt is felt. It is only an enquiry based on an attitude of doubt. The doubt is whether the mind is what we have taken it to be, a separate entity. Take away the thoughts and see what is left.

No one needs worry that this process would be endless because thoughts seem to be on us in an unending succession. Ramana says it is like laying a siege to an enemy's fortress. Thoughts would starve to death for want of the individual's attention.

Then what about the survivor, the 'I' thought? Can it survive if its dependence on and association with other thoughts is cut off? The answer to this query depends on understanding certain basic differences between this 'I' thought and all other thoughts. Besides being the common thought it is the first thought to arise on waking. The first person pronoun 'I' must arise, before the second person 'you'; and third person 'They' can arise. If it surfaces on waking or, more accurately, if one wakes up only because thoughts have surfaced then the doubt arises as to what had happened to the thinker in deep sleep. The 'I' would be seen to be only the waking 'I', not one that exists in all states of one's daily existence. In dream it could be different. In deep sleep it is not functioning. The characteristic of 'I' would be seen to be having a daily rising from some source and daily setting into it. As

Ramana would say in deep sleep the mind gathers other thoughts, like the hen gathering its chicks under its wings and going to roost at night. 'Whence am I?' would be the doubt.

The question that would arise next is 'What is the nature of this source?' The answer is that it must be a conscious source; a source of strength, for one awakes after sound sleep rejuvenated and energised. The 'I' thought is also conscious because of the source from which it arises. But on rising it gets fragmented by its attention being scattered on innumerable thoughts to which it keeps paying attention. When this fragmentation ends through self-enquiry, the 'I' thought merges in its source automatically. Then one functions through an undivided, integral, mind which is pure because it is unpolluted by thoughts.

The Self-experience and awareness of one's own state of natural happiness would be sporadic in the beginning and gradually increase with practice of inwardness. It is a tussle between one's habitual past experience of deriving pleasure from objects and the new experience of being aware of one's own inherent happiness. Gradually the inner pull wins. For it is ambrosial and nectarine. At last one's mind ceases to stray among objects and stays merged in the source, which according to Ramana is the divine current in each of us.

One's battle with the past as experience, and attachment born of it, would be lost but for the continuous strength flowing from Ramana's guidance and strength giving compassion. It is a demanding assignment and one would often be ready to give it up. Ramana's grace, which is there all along the line, is bound to pull one through.

Thereafter all action is done holistically. There will be no carrying forward of pleasure memories from the action, for one is self-fulfilled. There is no need for the more. The cup of happiness is not only full, but is overflowing always. This is happiness not pleasure for; it is not one of the two sides of a coin like pleasure-pain, happiness and sorrow. The mind is ever at rest. At the same time whatever action needs to be done will be done flawlessly and perfectly as would be evident from Ramana's life itself. This undercurrent of consciousness would permeate all thought and action. One's way of life would become unhurried, reflective and harmonious. One would be a harbinger of peace and infectious happiness, which he would radiate 'sun like' always.

The 'Talks' as a Guidance to Self Enquiry

N.Nandakumar

Talk 31

D.: Do not we go to Heaven (swarga), etc. as the result of our actions?

M.: That is as true as the present existence. But if we enquire who we are and discover the Self, what need is there to think of heaven, etc.?

D.: Should I not try to escape rebirth?

M.: Yes. Find out who is born and who has the trouble of existence now. When you are asleep do you think of rebirths or even the present existence, etc.? So find out whence the present problem arises and there is the solution also. You will discover that there is no birth, no present trouble or unhappiness, etc. All is That; All is Bliss; we are freed from rebirth in fact. Why fret over the misery of rebirth?

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: It is learnt by science that real learning takes place in dreamless deep-sleep. Bhagavan is referring to that deep sleep where the experiencer had no sensory or thought experience or of better birth (swarga, better comforts), rebirth or even the present birth. When one lets a thought go and enquires, "For whom is this thought?" one goes to the Source of all learning and all existence - the Self.

Talk 32 DROP EXPERIENCES. HOLD THE CURRENT.

A visitor: The saints Sri Chaitanya and Sri Ramakrishna wept before God and achieved success. Is that not the path to follow?

M.: Yes. There was a powerful force (sakti) drawing them on through all those experiences. Trust in that huge power to take you on to your goal. Tears are often considered a sign of weakness. These great persons were certainly not weak. These manifestations are only passing signs of the great current carrying them on. We must look to the end achieved.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: While learning from the great lives, one should take the essence that they always held on to the current of "I-I" which they called by the Nama in which they worshipped that powerful force. In one's own inner journey, there may be many "out of the ordinary" (sensory, emotional or of the mind) or "spiritual" experiences that may manifest. One should not get carried away but should hold the Self, the current 'I-I', by enquiring, "For whom is this spiritual experience?"

Talk 33 BRAHMA SATHYAM JAGAT MITYA...

A visitor: "The Supreme Spirit (Brahman) is Real. The world (jagat) is illusion," is the stock phrase of Sri Sankaracharya. Yet others say, "The world is reality". Which is true Maharshi?

M.: Both statements are true. They refer to different stages of development and are spoken from different points of view. The aspirant (abhyasi) starts with the definition, that which is real exists always; then he eliminates the world as unreal because it is changing. It cannot be real; 'not this, not this!' The seeker ultimately reaches the Self and there finds unity as the prevailing note. Then, that which was originally rejected as being unreal is found to be a part of the unity. Being absorbed in the Reality, the world also is Real. There is only being in Self-Realisation, and nothing but being.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: It may be argued that if one power can make a simple bacteria to simply breathe in carbon-dioxide and breathe out oxygen for over a billion years to create higher forms of life, it is even now creating better life every moment, though we do not know it just like the bacteria. This can be argued out by the same intellect which takes nuclear weapons and mass killings in schools, amongst other things, as a real degradation of life. Even those who see the one power constantly improving life will eventually see that a modification or improvement is only a better prison. Unless one holds the "one power" underlying these changes, there is no peace. That is why the Acharya has said that the changing world is illusion and the one underlying current is real. When all changes are put aside and the one source is held, one realises the Self. The changing creation, even though perceived by the instruments of perception, and the instruments of perception themselves including

the intellect and ego, stand absorbed in the one current of "I-I". In that "I-I", there is no seeing, no breath, no thought, no good or bad and no birth or death of ego, there is only being.

Talk 33 TURN INWARD.

A visitor: "The Supreme Spirit (Brahman) is Real. The world (jagat) is illusion," is the stock phrase of Sri Sankaracharya. Yet others say, "The world is reality". Which is true being... (Bhagavan's second suggestion)

... M.: Again Reality is used in a different sense and is applied loosely by some thinkers to objects. They say that the reflected (adhyasika) Reality admits of degrees which are named:

(1) Vyavaharika satya (everyday life) - this chair is seen by me and is real.

(2) Pratibhasika satya (illusory) - Illusion of a serpent in a coiled rope. The appearance is real to the man who thinks so. This phenomenon appears at a point of time and under certain circumstances.

(3) Paramartika satya (ultimate) - Reality is that which remains the same always and without change.

If Reality be used in the wider sense the world may be said to have the everyday life and illusory degrees (vyavaharika and pratibhasika satya). Some, however, deny even the reality of practical life - vyavaharika satya and consider it to be only projection of the mind. According to them it is only pratibhasika satya, i.e., an illusion.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: In Ulladu Naarpadu verse 7, Bhagavan says that the world and the mind arise and fall SIMULTANEOUSLY however, it is the mind that lights up the objects with its raising consciousness. For that world consciousness (mind) to raise and subside, there is a Consciousness as substrate that does not rise and fall. That is the Poorna BAti - the Self. Here, world was not created five billion years ago. Nor was it made inhabitable by a bacteria working relentlessly for over a billion years. The world and mind rise and set SIMULTANEOUSLY (Yugapad Srishti). Every moment, the world rises along with the projecting mind and subsides with the Inward turned mind. The world is only PRATIBHASIKA SATHYA - shining due to the projection of the mind. For one who understands

this teaching of Bhagavan, Self Enquiry is natural. The only question to ask is, "For whom is this projected world appearing?"

Q: But I believe that the mind that can project the whole creation and consume the whole creation merely by "outward-turned" or "inward-turned" mind is only that Ishwara Mind.

S: Then you can take that by asking the sadhaka to turn inward, Bhagavan is asking us to take support of the inward-turned Ishwara to reach the Self of Ishwara, here and now.

Talk 34. HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT YOU ARE SELF-REALISED? - YOGI RAMAIAH'S ACCOUNT OF HIS EXPERIENCES

Sitting in Maharshi's presence brings peace of mind. I used to sit in samadhi for three or four hours together. Then I felt my mind took a form and came out from within. By constant practice and meditation it entered the Heart and was merged into it. I conclude that the Heart is the resting place of mind. The result is peace. When the mind is absorbed in the Heart, the Self is realised. This could be felt even at the stage of concentration (dharana).

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: It is the light of the Self that allows one to know that one is Self Realised - mind naturally absorbed in the Heart. This - that resting in the Heart and absorption is Realisation - is clearly revealed even during sadhana. It is also learnt that the Self has been the real teacher through each tiny understanding that one had picked up, ever.

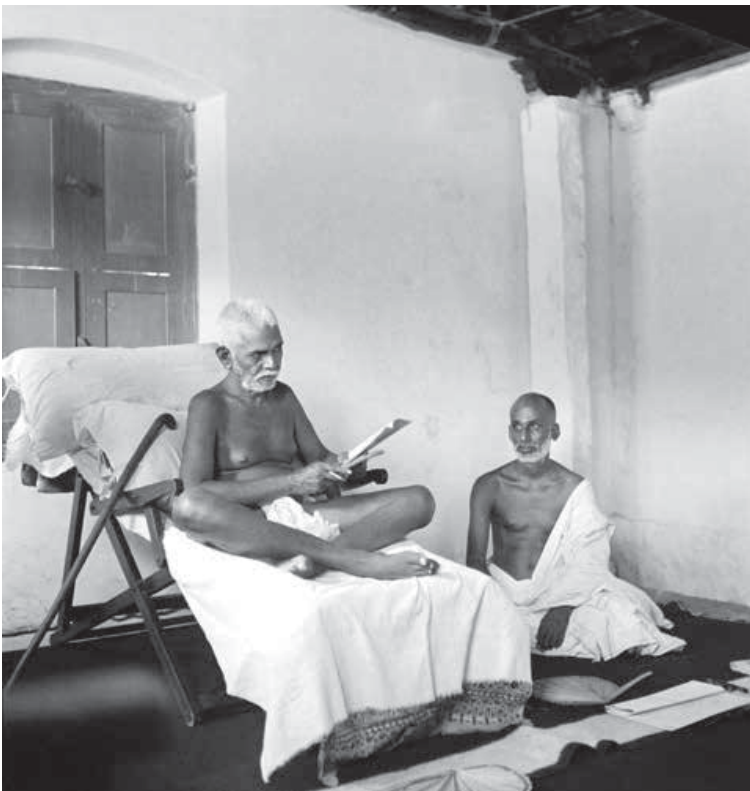
Talk 34. (Excerpt) SELF ENQUIRY TO A SANNYASI - YOGI RAMAIAH'S ACCOUNT OF HIS EXPERIENCES.

I asked Maharshi about contemplation. He taught me as follows:- When a man dies the funeral pyre is prepared and the body is laid flat on the pyre. The pyre is lit. The skin is burnt, then the flesh and then the bones until the whole body falls to ashes. What remains thereafter? The mind. The question arises, 'How many are there in this body - one or two?' If two, why do people say 'I' and not 'we'? There is therefore only one. Whence is it born? What is its nature (swaroopa)?

Enquiring thus the mind also disappears. Then what remains over is seen to be 'I'. The next question is 'Who am I?' The Self alone.

This is contemplation. It is how I did it. By this process attachment to the body (dehavasana) is destroyed. The ego vanishes. Self alone shines. One method of getting mind-dissolution (manolaya) is association with great ones - the yoga adepts (Yoga arudhas). They are perfect adepts in samadhi. Self-Realisation has been easy, natural, and perpetual to them. Those moving with them closely and in sympathetic contact gradually absorb the samadhi habit from them.

GUIDANCE RECEIVED: A renunciate, in Indian tradition, deliberately leaves the body and it's relationships as not "I". So, Bhagavan makes the renunciate burn the body in the Jnana Agni. What is left is the mind. Unify it as "I". Then enquire, "Who am I?" Satsang or association with the Jnanis helps the sadhaka to gradually absorb the Samadhi habit from them. Vichara within, Satsang on the outside.



Ramana Darshana Trayi

G Kameshwar

In recent years RMCL has been focussing more on reprints of existing publications. The mantle of contributing to new material has now fallen on Sri G.Kameshwar whose translations have been published as this work 'Ramana Darshana Trayi – Three Treatises of Ramana Maharshi'.

The present work is an English song rendering of Arunachala Aksharamanamalai, a song rendering of Upadesa Saram, both of which can be sung in the same tune as the Tamil original, and a free verse rendering of Ulladu Narpadu. As each of these three poems of Sri Ramana Maharshi is in itself potent medicine to cure all ills, these lyrical translations are undoubtedly invaluable treasures to those who wish to savour them in the English language.

In the recent issues of the Ramana Way we have been carrying sections of the introduction to Ulladu Narpadu in this book which would also be indicative of the value of the publication. We are now carrying G.Kameshwar's translation of 'Ulladu Narpadu' from the publication 'Ramana Darshana Trayi'.

- Editor

uLLadu nARpadu – Forty Verses on 'That Which Is'

Treatise

Dependent on the present
Stand past and future.

During their currency
They too are in the present.

The present alone is.

Without knowledge of the present
Attempting to know about the past and future
Is akin to attempting to count
Without (knowing) the number 'one!' (15)

Without us
 Whither time and space?
If we are the body form
 Then we will be confined
 Within space and time.

But are we the body?

Then, now, whenever
 We are the same.
Space: here, there, wherever,
 We are the same.

Sans time, sans space, Self ! (16)

For both,
The Self-aware and the non-aware,
 The body is verily 'I'.

For those who know not the Self,
 'I' amounts to their body.

For those who cognize the Self within their body,
 'I' is the Self shining without bounds.

Know,
That this is verily the difference in the self-identification
Of the two. (17)

The world is a reality
For those who have not awareness,
 As also for those who do.

For those who do not discern the truth
 The reality is confined to the world.

For those who are truly aware
 The reality is the basis of the world,
Formless shining.

Know,
That this is the difference between the two. (18)

Shri Arunachala Padikam

G Kameshwar

Eleven Verses on Arunachala Of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi

Verse-5

*talaivanee yennaik kaLaviniR koNarntun
RALilin nALvarai vaittAi
talaivanin Ranmai yennavenpArkkut
talaikuni cilaiyena vaittAi
talaivanAn valaimAn Ranainika rAten
RaLarvinuk kazhivunA TiTuvAi
talaivanA maruNA calavuLa mEtO
tamiyanAr tanai-yuNar taRkE*

Word split, and meaning:

talaiva: Chief, Headman, Lord, God

nee enai kaLavinil koNarntu: Having brought me, clandestinely, stealthily

un tAlil innAL varai: At your feet, up until this day

vaittAi: You have placed

talaiva: Chief, Headman, Lord, God

nin tanmai enna enpArkku: To those who enquire as to what indeed is your reality, your true nature, your Self

talaikuni shilaiyena vaittAi: You kept me like a statue, head-bowed

talaiva: Lord

nAn valaimAn tanai nikarAtu: In order that I do not suffer like a deer that is trapped in a net

en taLarvinukku azhivu nATiTuvAi: Do seek to put an end to my distress/fatigue/sorrow/weakness

talaivanAm aruNacala: O Lord, Arunachala!

uLam EtO: Whatever is your wish (the desire in your heart)

tanai uNartaRku: To understand (that prompting of your heart)

tamiyan yAr?: Who indeed am I, this lowly, forlorn one?

Verse rendering:

Chief!
Having brought me
 Clandestinely;
At your feet
 You have kept me,
Till this day...

Chief!
To those who ask about
Your Self
 Your true nature
You made me (silent)
 As a statue
 Head bowed.

Lord!
In order that I suffer not
 Like a deer in a net,
Do seek to put an end
 To my sorrow, weakness, fatigue.

Lord of mine, O Arunachala!
Your heart to decipher
 Who, indeed,
 Is this forlorn one?

Prose rendering:

O Lord Arunachala! You abducted me, unknown to anyone... While you have brought me in stealth, you have keep me basking in the shade of your lotus feet, right till this day! O Lord! For those who ask me about your true nature, you have made me respond like a silent statue, head bent. Lord! Please bestow your grace on me and put an end to my helplessness / sorrow, so that I do not suffer like a deer that is trapped in a net. O Arunachala, who are God Himself! Your heart's thoughts, your sweet will and wish, who indeed is this lowly / lonely one to even begin to comprehend?

Notes:

The verse continues in the mood of a supplicant, conversing with his supreme benefactor. Ramana addresses Arunachala as his Chief / Lord / Supremo. He says that Arunachala has, on His own, given Ramana the experience of Self-Abidance at His lotus feet. The idea is that the Lord's feet is enshrined in the devotee's heart – and so Ramana is referring to the state of Self-Abidance, Heart-Abidance. Indeed, Ramana has been granted supreme union with the Lord Himself.

Ramana points out that Arunachala has done this whole thing clandestinely. Now that Ramana has been granted this supreme state of Self-Abidance of Arunachala, he finds himself dumbstruck if any person asks him about the real nature of Arunachala. That reality is beyond mind and speech. It is absolute bliss that is beyond time, space, matter. And so, if anyone were to ask Ramana about the true nature of Arunachala, the true nature of the Self, then Ramana finds himself at a complete loss of words. He finds himself stilled. He is like a statue. And the Lord's glory is so great, that Ramana bows his head.

He is also anxious that he should be permanently established in this Reality. He prays to Arunachala that he should not slip back into the ego-world of self-identification with the body-mind complex, which would be falling into a trap of torture – like a deer being caught in a hunter's net.

However, as a supplicant he can only pray. What the Lord decides to do, is His own sweet will and wish. Who is the forlorn devotee to double guess or comprehend the mind of the Lord!

Upadeshasaram*Ujwal Jagadeesh****satswabhavatO vastu kEvalam******They are the same in their essential nature as the heart.***

A Spanish American devotee, Mercedes De Acosta, was at Sri Ramanasramam in November 1930. At that time she was a Hollywood socialite and script writer for films. Twenty four years later she wrote a book titled “Here Lies the Heart”, where she refers to Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi as “The only completely Egoless, world detached and pure being I have ever known”

She once asked Ramana “Does one who has realized the Self lose the sense of ‘I’?” “Absolutely”, replied Ramana

Question: Then there is no difference between yourself and myself, that man over there, my servant. Are all the same?

Bhagavan: All are the same, including those monkeys.

Question: But the monkeys are not people. Are they not different?

Bhagavan: They are exactly the same as people. All are the same in One Consciousness.

Question: Do we lose our individuality when we merge into the Self?

Bhagavan: There is no individuality in the Self. The Self is One – Supreme.

Ramana gives the example of the golden ornaments. Imagine one going to a gold jewelry showroom and seeing various ornaments like the necklace, earrings, nose rings, toe rings, waist belt and others. One may also find various sizes and patterns of these jewelry too. But what is the material of which all these ornaments are made? It is gold.

Similarly whatever the shape or size sugar candies are made, the content of each candy is sugar only. Hence Ramana says whatever the form or the name by which we identify each other, in

essence all is same, the consciousness. This pure consciousness is God, Ishwara says Ramana. This explained clearly in the "Talk 106"

On 29th November 1935, Swami Yogananda with four others arrived at 8.45 a.m. He looks big, but gentle and well-groomed. He has dark flowing hair, hanging over his shoulders. The group had lunch in the Asramam.

Mr. C. R. Wright, his secretary, asked: How shall I realise God?

Maharshi: God is an unknown entity. Moreover He is external. Whereas, the Self is always with you and it is you. Why do you leave out what is intimate and go in for what is external?

D.: What is this Self again?

Maharshi: The Self is known to everyone but not clearly. You always exist. The Be-ing is the Self. 'I am' is the name of God. Of all the definitions of God, none is indeed so well put as the Biblical statement "I AM THAT I AM" in EXODUS (Chap. 3). There are other statements, such as Brahmaivaham, Aham Brahmasmi and Soham. But none is so direct as the name JEHOVAH = I AM. The Absolute Being is what is - It is the Self. It is God. Knowing the Self, God is known. In fact God is none other than the Self.

Mercedes De Acosta in her account of her meeting with Ramana writes as below:

People would say to Bhagavan, "I would like to find God." His answer was: "Find the Self first and then you won't have to worry about God." And once a man said to him, "I don't know whether to be a Catholic or a Buddhist."

Bhagavan asked him, "What are you now?"

He answered, "I am a Catholic."

He then said, "Go home and be a good Catholic and then you will know whether you should be a Buddhist or not."

Bhagavan pointed out to me that the real Self is timeless. "But," he said, "in spite of ignorance, no man takes

seriously the fact of death. He may see death around him, but he still does not believe that he will die. He believes, or rather, feels, in some strange way that death is not for him. Only when the body is threatened does he fall a victim to the fear of death. Every man believes himself to be eternal, and this is actually the truth. This truth asserts itself in spite of man's ignorant belief that the body is the Self."

I asked him how to pray for other people. He answered, "If you are abiding within the Self, there are no other people. You and I are the same. When I pray for you I pray for myself and when I pray for myself I pray for you. Real prayer is to abide within the Self. This is the meaning of Tat Twam Asi — That Thou Art. There can be no separation in the Self. There is no need for prayer for yourself or any person other than to abide within the Self."

I said, "Bhagavan, you say that I am to take up the search for the Self by Atma Vichara, asking myself the question Who Am I? May I ask who are you?" Bhagavan answered, "When you know the Self, the 'I' 'You' 'He' and 'She' disappear. They merge together in pure Consciousness."

Ramana says that the pure Consciousness is God, which is not different from one's own Self.

ishajeevayOr vEshadheebhida |
satswabhavatO vastu kEvalam ||

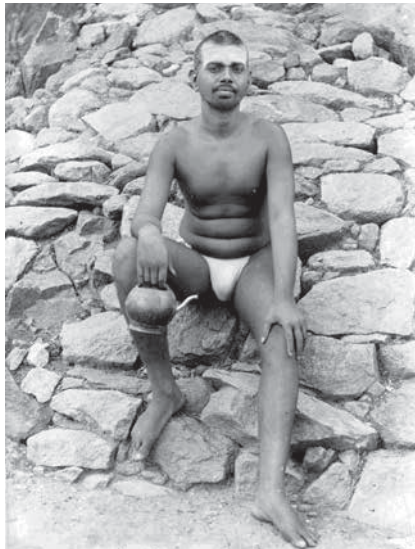
The difference between God and individual is only in name, form and intelligence. They are the same in their essential nature as the heart.

Power of the Word

Sanjay Lohia

Surrender

- If you have surrendered, you must be able to abide by the will of God and not make a grievance of what may not please you.
- Complete surrender is impossible in the beginning. Partial surrender is certainly possible for all. In course of time that will lead to complete surrender.
- He knows what is best and when and how to do it. Leave everything entirely to him.



Through the eyes of an eight year old

Pattabirama Ramanatha

BHAGAVAN and RAMANASRAMAM, IN THE EYES OF A 8-YEAR OLD BOY

The reminiscence that follows has been shared for publication in 'The Ramana Way' by Sri Rajagopal. The email to him by Sri Pattabiraman, the recorder of this reminiscence is also given below, at the start as the context of the article.

-Editor

From: Patt Ramanatha <ptramanatha@gmail.com>
Sent: Sun, 2 Sep 2018 04:33:16 GMT+0530
To: rajagopal k <rajagopal_ir@rediffmail.com>
Subject: Bhagavan

Dear Raju Ramani

I have just completed my write up on my reminiscences of Bhagavan and Ramanasramam during my young age. I have also added some of my observations as I see it today. During your visit to the USA in August, you visited a Ramana devotee in the US, who showed a lot of interest in hearing first-hand experiences of the Ashram and the Sage of Arunachala. Since then, you have been pushing me to write about my experiences and here is the result. Whether this gets published or not is immaterial, because I have only kept our own extended family in mind while writing this, so they can appreciate what was the guiding light in our early lives that has shaped our present unending search for the ultimate bliss in life. Please forward the write up to your contact in the US. Love to all.

::Balu Anna::

ARRIVAL AT TIRUVANNAMALAI

It was a very bright 7July1941 morning about 5:30 a.m. The sun had just risen and we were travelling from Pattukottai to Tiruvannamalai in a first class railway compartment. Looking

out of the window, my sister Sivakamu and myself saw a glorious mountain shining like gold and we were excitedly calling all in our family to see the “approach” of the mountain and how we were going to touch it as the train passed by it. We were stunned to see our grandmother doing *namaskaram* within the compartment and wondered why. It was later that we were told of the super sanctity of the hill and the temple at Tiruvannamalai. Little did we realise that we have already reached our destination and we had to alight in the Tiruvannamalai station. WE HAD ARRIVED.

My mother Bhagirathi Ammal was full term pregnant and considering that the child-birth may take place any moment, my father Ramanatha Iyer thoughtfully booked for our travel by first class paying out of his own pocket, because as a sub-registrar, he was not entitled to travel first class on transfer. Luck was on our side, as my mother gave birth to Syamala Ramani in the evening hours of the same day after our arrival.

This was indeed a dream of my father come true. He was an ardent devotee of the Sage of Arunachala, Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi for several years and it was his long term dream to be at the feet of the Sage for at least some years. He had been requesting for a transfer to Tiruvannamalai and it was granted at this time. No wonder then the child was named RAMANI, so we could all call her by name and remember the Maharshi ever so often. Three years later, our brother RAMANA JYOTHI arrived, also at Tiruvannamalai, giving us yet another opportunity to call the



great name any number of times every day. Perhaps it is also not a coincidence that these two siblings of ours grew up to be the most pious and religious souls in our entire extended family.

MY EARLY REMEMBRANCES

I was just 8 years old at that time, but some of the events were written indelibly in my mind during the 4+ years at Tiruvannamalai. My father's daily routine was to bike the distance of 4 km in the early morning to Ramanasramam and invariably I was his 'deputy' at the pillion. We would arrive at the first rise of the mountain path behind Ramansramam, where a huge boulder had an almost flat surface for my father to do his yogasana practice and to teach me the asanas. Invariably, we would arrive around 6:15-6:30am, when Bhagavan would have already passed by, to do his daily morning walk up the mountain along with his attendant. On his way back, he would have a greeting word with my father and an encouraging gesture to me. Rain or shine, my father never missed such a golden opportunity to have this special *darshan* every morning.

Similarly, in the evening, my father would almost never miss Bhagavan returning from his evening walk up the mountain path. I remember devotees standing in the courtyard by the side of the main hall, from where they could see the Maharshi come up from the bottom of the mountain path gradually in the high steps, as if the sun was rising, head first and gradually the whole body coming into view. On many days, we stayed behind to hear the resounding *Rudhram/Chamakam* chant of the *veda-paatasaala* students in front of Bhagavan, invariably followed by *Upadesa Saaram* and the *Nakarmanaana prachaaythaane* in salutation to the great Gurus.

Although my mother was mostly confined to the kitchen all day to feed the hungry family of 7 children and 3 adults, she would take time off to make frequent visits to Ramanasramam, mostly in the evenings. A few days after the arrival of our brother Ramana Jyothi, I remember she took the baby for the first time and laid him on a mat in the ground at the courtyard when Bhagavan was returning from his evening walk. He saw my mother and the baby and jocularly stuck out his walking stick in front of the baby with a

big smile on his face. The baby got hold of the end of the walking stick and would not let it go for some time. This was probably a premonition of things to come, as Ramana Jyothi became a highly religious and pious soul in his own right and reached the lotus feet of the Lord at a very early age.

THE PEOPLE WHO MADE AN IMPRESSION

The present President of Ramanasramam, Sri Ramanan, was in my age group and we were good friends at that time. We used to play a lot together either in our respective houses or at Ramanasramam. Buying badminton rackets and balls were beyond our reach, so we invented our own “handminton” game, the balls made of cotton cloth bundled into shape and our hands were the “rackets”. We used to have an Arunachala team and a Ramana team to play friendly matches. Seeing frequently birds, squirrels and monkeys freely come into the meditation/prayer hall and take small bites/fruits offered by Bhagavan from his hand, we tried to imitate Bhagavan and stood outside in the open with our hands outstretched with some nibbles in it. But alas, the animals never ever came near us, leave alone touch our offerings. Coming to think of it now, one has to be totally totally absorbed in *Brahman* and never have the “body me” feeling in order that the animals identify with just another fellow-being, come fearlessly close, play with and get fed from the hands of such a realized soul.

Muruganar was another great soul, who sticks out in my memory. He was staying at *Pulianthoppu* (I think that was the name)*, a small group of “houses” on the back side of Ramanasramam along the *adivaaram* of the hills. My father used to frequently go to his house to discuss with him various philosophical matters which were greek and latin to me, a boy of 8-11. The main attraction for me to accompany my father there, was to pluck green mangoes, tamarind and cashew fruits from the trees surrounding the place while the animated discussions were going on. I remember Muruganar as an elderly person with failing health, but with a brilliant glow to his face and a catchy enthusiasm in his speech and discussions.

Manavasi Ramaswamy Iyer, one of the greatest devotees of Bhagavan who made a great impression on me, was my favourite, not only because he was related to our family but also because he was more of a saint than an ordinary family man. I was told he was an illustrious chief engineer in his previous “incarnation” and rode daily to work on horseback. He was in his late 70’s when we arrived in Tiruvannamalai and immediately embraced our family into his fold, giving us shelter the day we arrived and looking after our welfare throughout our stay in Tiruvannamalai. We called him *thaathaa*. He was a prolific composer of innumerable Tamil songs in praise of Bhagavan and Lord Arunachaleswara. More importantly, he was a very strict music teacher to my sisters Swarnam and Sivakamu. He would often compose a song in the early morning, come to our house to teach the song to my sisters and make them sing it for the Bhagavan in the evening. He would not tolerate any mistakes by my sisters made in singing and even playfully “beat” them with a stick when a mistake was made. I distinctly remember him patiently teaching the song “*saranaagathi*” for over a week. Yes, he took a long week, because he wanted the “very *bhaava*” of *saranaagathi* infused in the rendering of the song.

Sub-Registrar Narayana Iyer was another great devotee of Bhagavan. During my time at Tiruvannamalai he was serving at Polur, which was about 25 kms from Tiruvannamalai, on the way to Vellore. He and his family would invariably arrive at Ramanasramam every weekend. His sons, especially one named Ramanan, were very close to me. They would spend some days with us whenever possible and we would likewise stay with them at Polur from time to time. It was during one of my stays with them, that I was introduced to swimming at a nearby huge well (*kavalai kinaru கவலைக்கிணறு*) in a paddy field, with a safety belt (*thaambu kayaru தாம்பூக்கயிறு*) tied around my waist.

There were several “foreigners” as Ramana devotees. One was Major Chadwick, who used to stand well over 6 feet. I remember him because he used a peculiar cloth band to keep his knees apart while he sat motionless and upright in the prayer hall with his eyes closed for several hours at a time. Like most foreigners, he was perhaps not used to sit “cross-legged” like

most of us in India and hence the band. We youngsters were more afraid of him because of his stature and size. One Major McIver who stayed in the Ramanasramam complex was more approachable and friendly with us, the youngsters. He used to invite us to his kutil and treat us to eats like biscuits and fruits. I remember him having a wrist-watch with his name embedded in the place of the numerals of the dial. There were many other foreigners who came to Ramanasramam for short visits, but I do not remember most of them, excepting a French lady with her two daughters who remained in Tiruvannamalai for 2 months. I remember them because, the girls were fond of playing tennis and my father used to take them with him for the tennis sessions, with me in the tow.

I vaguely remember another devotee Lady Thalayarkhan, who used to visit Ramanasramam quite frequently. Maharaja of Morvi was another famous name of a devotee, who visited frequently. I remember him particularly, because he was the one who donated a pair of WHITE PEACOCKS, which were roaming the length and breadth of Ramanasramam. He also donated generously to build a guest house near the Ashram where devotees can stay, in which I had the privilege of staying from time to time during my visits several years on. I never knew peacocks could be white in color and were mortal enemies of snakes, until I saw one day one of the peacocks was carrying and swallowing a small snake in its beak. I also remember one Sri Gopal Rao, then the General Manager of the Bank of Baroda who visited Ramanasramam for a fortnight with his family. I remember this family because I was “assigned” to take the family from Ramanasramam to Skanda Asramam on the Hill, through the mountain path. During this time, I was all the time fiddling with my new gadget, a Kodak box camera, and clicking left and right. They were particularly thrilled to see my photo of Bhagavan “speaking” with one of the white peacocks and took the negative from me so they can take copies and enlargements from it.



Bhagavan “talking” to the white peacock during his mid-morning walk thru the Ashram.



Below: My father and Sarangapani Rao, one minute after the main photo (circa 1947)

*** To be continued ***

The Sun of Knowledge and the Moon of Grace

*By Shashi Shivaram**

**Shashi Shivaram reached the lotus feet of Bhagavan on the 3rd day of Navaratri, the 11th of October. Shashi means the moon and she was ever linked with Bhagavan as the moon to the sun. Every morning as she went about her household chores she would sing aloud various songs from Ramananjali Music for at least a couple of hours. She was the very embodiment of love. She battled ill health for many years in her life to shower love on her family and the extended family of Ramana devotees as well. This article is repeated from a 2009 issue of 'The Ramana Way' carrying her reminiscences of ARN and of how Bhagavan came into her life and took over completely.*

- Editor

Remembering Ramana means remembering ARN and also the other way round. This is probably because I feel deeply thankful to ARN for bringing me and my family in a very insistent manner into the Ramana fold. Of course, even independently of Ramana I do remember ARN for his genuine affection... The strange part is that I feel so strongly bonded with him despite the fact that we hardly communicated much with each other, we did not correspond or speak on the telephone with one another nor did we meet frequently. At most, perhaps we would see each other two or three times in a year and that too mostly during the major festivals or seminars of RMCL when ARN and all others there would be extremely busy with the organisation of the various functions. Yet, even at such times, when he might be awaiting the arrival of some senior executive or perhaps the governor of the state, ARN would welcome me with a hearty smile and spend a few minutes enquiring about my well-being and expressing his joy that I had come. It was always evident that all this came right from his heart and he was absolutely spontaneous in his affection.

In his list of duties preparatory to the functions he would not only call my husband to inform him about the role that he would be required to play, but would invariably remind him to bring

me by taxi as it is impossible for me to travel by any other mode. In all the ups and downs of our lives I have felt that ARN and the members of his family are with us through and through. So closely intertwined do I feel with them that sometimes when we cannot meet or talk to each other about a particular issue I dream of them and then feel satisfied that I have shared the joy or sorrow.

When ARN first enlisted my husband as part of the Ramana Music team I must admit that I was far from happy. For one thing I was not interested in his spending any more time away from home than he was already doing. But more significantly, I was not pleased at the thought of his adoring another guru than the one to whom I had already given my heart, Sridhara Swamy of Sagar District in Karnataka. The Swamy had been a part of my life right from my infancy, I had grown up visiting His ashram every day and receiving blessings and guidance from Him at every turn of my life. How could I conceive of any other spiritual teacher taking His place? Perhaps I was so possessive that I did not want even my husband to pay obeisance to any other guru. My husband also sensed my misgivings but he did not have a choice in the matter. For that matter, neither did I, but I did not know that at the time.

ARN had brought out beautiful pictures of Bhagavan Ramana printed on tin which were known for many years among devotees as 'tin pictures', they were actually adaptations of Bhagavan's pictures that were printed on tin chocolate boxes. These did not require framing or even lamination. They came ready to be hung on the wall and it was difficult to find any reason not to put them up the moment they reached a home. Since these were produced as a part of the Birth Centenary Celebrations of Bhagavan they were distributed freely and there was no way my husband would not be given one, being a part of the team. Although he did not tell me so, and may or may not have known it himself, his heart was already drawn to Ramana and for all I know he might have himself brought away one of the tin pictures even if it was not directly given to him, as he was one of the people in charge of distributing them.

Whatever the story behind it, the picture of Bhagavan came to our house and took its rightful place in a prominent wall in the central hall. The picture probably did not come to the

bedroom because my husband was aware of my hesitation to accept Bhagavan's presence in my life, but as it turned out I had to see much more of it because it was in the hall. In fact, ours was a small rented house and wherever one wanted to go in the house, be it the kitchen or the bedroom or the bathrooms, one had to necessarily pass the hall. I must have walked through that hall hundreds of time each day and every time I would clearly feel the glance of Ramana on me. I would feel His look following me wherever I went. Gradually I began to succumb to the great love in that glance. One day I dreamt of Ramana who was resplendent and smiling. Somehow, from the very next morning it was clear to me that Ramana and my Sridhara Swami were not apart from one another. They were the same force. This put an end to all my conflicts and I began to turn to Bhagavan freely as I had turned to Sridhara Swamy from my early childhood, expressing all my needs to Him as a child to her parents.

A major bolt for me was our being asked to leave the rented house in which we had lived ever since my coming to Bangalore. In my village in Sagar we had our own home, everybody did. The concept of a rented home was alien to me. The thought that we could be asked to move out of a place that we believed was home was shocking. What made the trauma worse was the near impossibility of finding another place within our means. We had two little children too. I composed a very simple song of prayer to Ramana of just four lines, somewhat like a nursery rhyme in Kannada, which I taught to my two little boys and asked them to sing it before Him every day. The song asked Him for a little nest of our own. At that juncture in our lives we could not ever have dreamt of building our own house, but it happened in reality. Bhagavan fulfilled our prayers. We were only too eager to call our home 'Ramana' even before ARN could suggest it. When he heard about the name we had chosen for our home, he approved thoroughly adding with his full smile, 'I had named my house 'Sri Ramana' but you are indicating that even the epithet 'Sri' is not required for 'Sri' is included in Ramana and need not be mentioned separately.'

Initially being in the new house did not seem to be an advantage because it was very far from the then 'Bangalore' being in what we thought was a remote extension. My husband found it even more difficult, having been a very active part of the cultural activities in the city. But very soon, much sooner than we imagined, the city came to us. Bangalore grew by leaps and strides and our home too became a part of it with all good roads to commute comfortably.

By Bhagavan's immeasurable grace He has come to stay in our home and our lives. We had the good fortune of visiting Tiruvannamalai also many times and of course, of being a part of all the Ramana Festivals at Bangalore. We have our share of ups and downs. My health is very fragile. Yet, there is an unfailing awareness of Bhagavan's protective presence and a joyous thank you to ARN for prompting Bhagavan to invade our lives. My only prayer now is for health good enough to keep myself active and self-sufficient and to be able to visit the Ramana Shrine here and at Sri Ramanasramam once in a while.



How Bhagavan Captured Us

By Smt. Sulochana Natarajan

Smt.Sulochana Natarajan had written a series of articles in this journal in an autobiographical manner also covering the biography of her husband, A.R.Natarajan, the Founder President of RMCL. These articles were discontinued after her merging in Bhagavan in August 2016. The articles of other devotees on their interactions with her were carried in the journal during thereafter until October 2018. We now return to Smt. Sulochana's articles on popular demand. To get back into the feel of her mode of writing we will be carrying the earlier articles for the next few issues and then continuing the biography as she has narrated it to her daughters Dr.Sarada and Dr.Ambika Kameshwar.

June 2010

Bhagavan captured me and my husband by throwing his net of grace on our family generations before our birth. I sometimes wonder whether this was the reason why Kanakamma would refer to all of us as 'kottadimai', having been enslaved as a bunch.

Sri A.R.Natarajan was the grandson of Sri A.S.Krishnaswamy Iyer, then a Judicial Officer in the Madras Presidency (Govt. of India). He was a staunch devotee of Bhagavan and would visit him frequently from the Virupaksha Cave days. Sri A.S.K. (as he was familiarly known) was blessed with the role of being the interpreter (translator) in 1911 between Bhagavan and the first foreign devotee to visit him, F.H.Humphreys. This has been recorded by Sri B.V.Narasimha Swami in the first biography of Bhagavan 'Self-Realisation' and later by Sri ARN himself in 'Timeless in Time'.

ARN's parents Smt.Mangalammal and Sri A.K.Ramachandra Iyer were pious people and had been also blessed with darshan of Bhagavan on more than one occasion. In one of his visits, as Sri Ramachandra Iyer later recorded (in Ramana Stuti Bhagavan's birth centenary souvenir published by Sri Ramanasramam), in some moment of turmoil he went to Bhagavan, prostrated full length, and holding his feet asked to be saved. Bhagavan with great compassion told him, 'Everything will be well in the end.'

ARN's uncle Sri T.S.Krishnaswamy Iyer was also deeply devoted to Bhagavan and to Mahan Seshadri Swami. Sri T.S.K.'s son, Sri T.K.Jayaraman too was a devotee and he later translated Muruganar's 'Ramana Tiruvembavai' (33 verses) which was published in Sri Ramanasramam's journal 'The Mountain Path'.

While enroute to a family wedding in their native village, ARN's mother, younger brother and younger sister had darshan of Bhagavan. However, the irony is that even though all his people right from his grandfather had been deeply devoted to Bhagavan and had darshan of him, ARN alone in his entire family, who was later to be so totally in love with Bhagavan, did not have darshan while Bhagavan was in his physical body.

July 2010

Bhagavan made us ready to be captured by Him. He brought us both into families that were devoted to Him and also by showing His presence in our lives in many subtle ways. ARN never had darshan of Bhagavan while he was in the physical body, but Bhagavan entered his life in manifold manners from his very birth and specially through the devout and righteous nature of his family. ARN's maternal grandfather Justice Sir C.V.Kumaraswamy Sastry was the first Indian to be appointed as High Court Judge in the British regime.

C.V.K.Sastry educated all his younger brothers and built up their families. Both he and Lady Sastry were extremely charitable. Lady Sastry, while serving food made no differentiation between her children, her neices, nephews and the poor visitors who regularly came to seek their help. Sir and Lady Sastry were ardent devotees of the Jagadguru of Sringeri. Sir Sastry was also deeply devoted to Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa whose beautiful bust adorned his house. This picture has now come to us as a legacy. The picture was noticed by ARN as a young boy and must have had its own inscrutable influence on him.

ARN's mother grew up in this atmosphere. She would recall that in the large 'joint' family that was run by her father when a visitor came in and asked her who her mother was she would begin to list out 'this ma' 'that ma' naming her mother along with her aunts and other lady relatives. Such was the unity and harmony between

all the members of the household. Mangalammal imbibed these qualities of large heartedness and piety. She would unfailingly offer long and devout worship to the family gods every day.

ARN was born on the 29th of March 1927 at Tondiarpet, Chennai, the home of his maternal grandfather. As was the custom in Justice C.V.Kumaraswamy Sastry's family, the child was taken and placed before the diety Sri Tyagaraja Swami in Tiruvattiyur temple before going out into the world. The child was named Nataraja as the first male child of Sri A.K.Ramachandra Iyer whose Ishta Devata was the dancing Lord Nataraja of Chidambaram.

August 2010

ARN was a very devout person right from his childhood. His favourite deity was Lord Siva. He had a special small picture of Siva as his personal treasure with which he would converse from his childhood. His elder cousin Lakshmi once observed him during her stay with them and found that while all the other children of the household spent their entire vacation time in play, this young boy spent some time everyday with his Siva. At that time he had no inkling that Ramana Siva had captured his heart right then.

He loved to worship with flowers and he had one plant earmarked only for him to pluck flowers to offer to his Siva, which he did without fail after his bath and before he partook of any meal. (This practice he continued till his last day in Bhagavan's shrine at Bangalore. Only, he did not personally handpick the flowers from a single plant but had a large variety of flowers from which bowl he would choose).

He would not undertake any activity without informing his Siva and taking His permission. His grandmother, Lady Sastry, would jokingly ask him, 'Nataraja! What did your Sivan tell you today?' His faith in Siva was total and if ever he had to appear for an examination without ample preparation, much to his mother's concern, he would simply take his books to Siva, open them in His presence and study only the chapters that were thus opened.

Not that he was remiss in his studies. He had an excellent academic record. ARN had his schooling in Andhra as Sri AKR, his father was posted in Telugu districts. Later this was to give ARN the joy of interacting with Telugu devotees and conversing with them

fluently in Telugu. It was also a great help to him in translating Chalam's record of devotees reminiscences. Bhagavan's plan is ever meticulous to the last detail.

September 2010

After ARN passed his SSLC exam at Masulipatnam before the stipulated age, he joined the Madras Christian College in Tambaram as the family had shifted to Chennai and completed his Economics BA and later MA from the Madras University with flying colours.

Economics was of course to be his bread-winner taking him to his job, but who could have anticipated that it would help in a big way for him to understand and handle the administration of a Ramana institution in an expert manner? He further qualified himself in BL from the Law College, Chennai. The study of Law too was a masterly stroke by the Master as ARN would later be a great support to the then President of Sri Ramanasramam, Sri T.N.Venkataraman, not only as a friend but with the ability to have insights into the nuances of the law suits which the Asram had to contest. This enabled him to face similar situations in the Bangalore Centre also with great clarity and guided him to take the best decisions in the circumstances.

ARN was very fond of sports and played tennis regularly. He always believed that heart, mind and body should function in unison and all should be well oiled and in good working condition. Till his last day he kept a regular, though never rigid, schedule of meditation, exercise and reading. When he could no longer play tennis, he took to walking. He would also insist on driving the car at least for short distances as he said it kept his mind alert. He believed rightly that alertness is the key to sadhana and worked constantly at remaining vigilant. He loved reading and was update in information in many fields like politics, arts, sports, and spiritual news! Of course it was his love for reading that was to play a key role in his coming to Bhagavan and later it translated itself into his obsession for writing.

*** To be continued***

Ramana Sahasranama Stuti

321. DHIRODATTA GUNOPETAH

Having all the qualities of the hero of a drama.

In the drama of life, Ramana is a true hero, a man among men. Ramana would give the analogy of an actor who plays his part in a drama to perfection without himself getting involved, for a wise person who acts without any sense of doership or identification. He himself was the best example of this.

Om dhlrodAtta gunopetAya namaha.

322. DHYANA NISTHAH

Rooted in meditation.

Ramana recommends meditation without the meditator. For self-enquiry would turn the mind within and merge it in its source. Such meditation is non-objective and the attention is focused on the subject. Ramana was not only a guide on this path but also the exemplar of it.

Om dhyAna nisThAya namaha.

323. DHRUVA SMRTIH

One with photographic memory, single – minded.

Ramana was born with the thought of Arunachala's glory. Even before he could lisp the words father and mother Arunachala was remembered by him as something truly glorious. The single thought of Arunachala enveloped his whole being after his 'death experience' in 1896.

Om dhruva smrtaye namaha.

324. NAMAJJANODHARANA KRT

Uplifter of the devotees.

Men of ordinary clay would be made mighty in their chosen fields. Each one's talent would flower fully, hidden potential would show up. Only the recipients know the miracles wrought by his grace.

Om namajjanodhAraNakrte namaha.

News & Events*Revathi Sankar*

Celebrating the Founder of Ramananjali Sangeetham Smt.Sulochana Natarajan at the RASA Cultural Centre, Chennai

1st September: RMCL's new book 'Atma Vidya in Adhyatma Ramayanam' by G.Kameshwar was released. Sri Ram Mohan and Sri Vaidyanathan spoke on the occasion.

Swami Satyajnanananda of Ramakrishna Mission gave his blessings.

2nd September: Ramananjali Carnatic Music Concert by Smt.Shubha Ganesan









RMCL at Malaysia

28th - Ramananjali and Dance ballet – ‘Paripoorna Ramana’ led by Dr.Ambika Kameshwar with artistes of RMCL, at Brahmavidyaranyam, Kulim, Penang.



Dhyana Ashram & Ramana Maharshi

Centre For Learning ,Bangalore India
Presents :



Ramananjali,

- Devotional music

& Paripoorna Ramana,

i am i - a dance ballet for all ages

Featuring : Dr. Ambika Kameshwar &
Ujwal Jagadeesh.

Date : 28th September 2018 (Friday)

Time : 7.30pm

Venue : BrahmaVidyaranyam

Sungai Kob, Kedah, Malaysia

GPS (5.426284N, 100.636910E)

All are invited, addmission free









RMCL at Malaysia

29th - Workshop on Self-enquiry and Ramananjali at Divine Life Society,
Batu Caves









RMCL at Malaysia

30th – Sharing at Ramana Satsang Kuala Lumpur







RMCL at Malaysia

30th - 'Ramana Charitram' A dance ballet led by Dr.Ambika Kameshwar with artistes of RMCL, at Kanagasabai Studio, The Temple of Fine Arts, Kuala Lumpur





Special Programs in November

At Ramana Shrine, Mekhri Circle, Bengaluru

18th, Sunday

10.30 a.m. Ramananjali Sangeetham Day – Dedicated to the founder of Ramananjali Sangeetham, Smt.Sulochana Natarajan
Self-enquiry, Talk on the significance of the day by Sri G.Kameshwar,
Ramananjali Sangeetham Concert by Smt.V.Radha

23rd , Friday

6.00 p.m. Pournami Cultural Festival - Karthigai Deepam
Lighting of Ghee Deepam, Ramana Nritya, Ashtottara Puja
Aksharamanamalai and Valam

Special Programs in December

At Ramana Shrine, Mekhri Circle, Bengaluru

Shrine Anniversary Celebrations

8th, Saturday

06.30 p.m. 'Nitya Ramana' – a dance drama by Artistes of RMCL led by Dr.Ambika Kameshwar and Dr.Sarada

9th, Sunday

10.30 a.m. Self-enquiry, Sahasranama Puja,
Talk by Sri G.Kameshwar, Maha Prasadam

06.30 p.m. Deepotsavam – Lighting of lamps
Ramana Music Devotional Concert
By Dr.Ambika Kameshwar, Vocal Support Smt.Poorna Sooraj

Ramana Jayanthi Celebrations

30th, Sunday

10.30 a.m. Ramana Tiruvembavai by Smt.V.Radha
And artistes and students of RMCL
Sahasranama Puja, Maha Prasadam

Ramana Every Day

RMHC - Ramana Maharshi Heritage Centre - Sanjaynagar

RMS - Ramana Maharshi Shrine - Mekhri Circle

RSCS - RMCL Satsang Centre at South Bangalore

RSCR - RMCL Satsang Centre at Rajarajeshwari Nagar

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

Thursday: 6:00pm at RSCS

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

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

Saturday: 11:00am at RMS

Sunday: 10:30am at RMS

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

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

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

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

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

Yoga classes [Contact - Vanaja Rao (9900601012)]

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

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

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

Talks - English by Dr. Sarada Natarajan

Sunday: 11:30am at RMS

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

Sunday: 10:30am at RMS

Parayana of Bhagavans Sanskrit Composition by Ms. Savithri

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

Talks, Parayana and Puja by Sri Chandrashekar (9448839594)

Thursday 6:30pm at RSCR

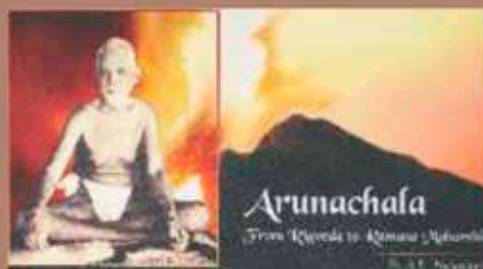
Guru Vachaka Kovai in English

Original : Muruganar

Translation: David Godman

Investigation into Truth

70. Though the world seduces us, appearing to be real in the reflected consciousness [chidabhasa] that is mind [chittam], its appearance and movement in the reality, pure consciousness [chaitanya], is only an illusion.
71. For the sake of impermanent worldly prosperity, people will gleefully wander in vain, like the pointless swinging of a goat's dewlap, but they will look contemptuously upon the conduct that leads to liberation, the eternal Self. Alas! The conduct of such ignorant people is so pitiable, the wise cannot even bear to see it.



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.