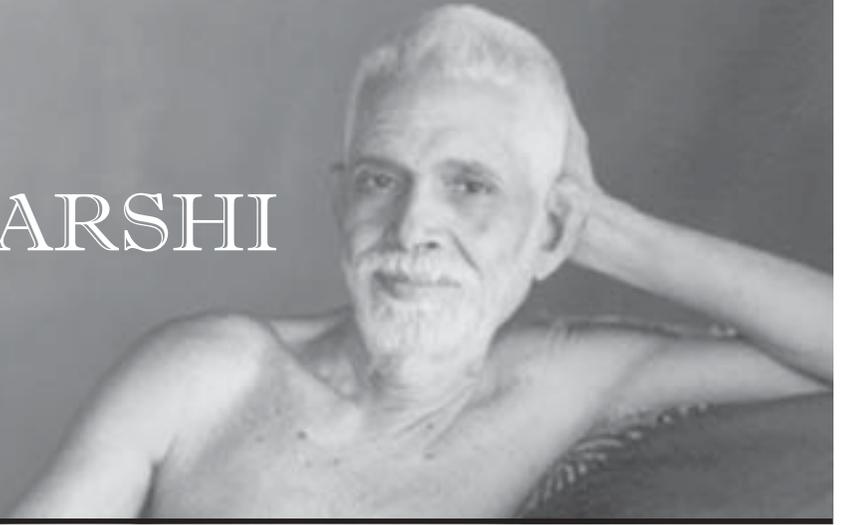


THE MAHARSHI



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My Pilgrimage to Sri Ramanasramam

By Eleanor Pauline Noye

In the 1930s, Eleanor Pauline Noye began her spiral descent into despair, ill health and hopelessness. Throughout these difficult years she clung to an inexplicable faith that in India she would be restored to her former self. In spite of ill health and depression, she embarked on a journey that brought her face to face with her 'Lord of Love'. Upon arriving in the Ashrama in 1939 she was caught in the web of the Master's love, regained her health, peace of mind and soared into the eternal expanse of freedom and joy. On her first visit to India she stayed at the Ashrama for ten months; subsequently, she made a second trip, arriving several months before the Master's Mahanirvana in 1950. Her joy of being with the Master, walking amidst a crowd of devotees directly behind him, is captured in the Archival Films. She kept in touch with the Ashrama from her California residence till her last days, in the mid 1970s.

Returning to the Master

I changed my plans. Instead of going back to America by the next boat, I took the train, leaving Calcutta for Tiruvannamalai. Queer to say, I felt as though I were going home! The tender way Bhagavan greeted me, as I stood before him, will live in my heart always. I wept with joy knowing I was thrice blessed in being able to return to him. As I basked in his Eternal Sunshine in those silent hours of communion I was filled with his Grace.

It is a privilege to have some meals with the Master; to eat the food that he has handled is in itself a blessing. He would rise at dawn and help cut the vegetables, very often helping also to prepare special dishes that were delicious. The devotees prepared special food for me, and it was wholesome and good. Bhagavan was always considerate to everyone, he wanted to be sure there was plenty of ev-

erything; and the rich and poor received the same kind attention, as also the animals; no distinction was ever shown. One day I saw Bhagavan stoop down and pick up three grains of rice. That simple act taught me much more than what I could have learnt by studying ten volumes on domestic economy which is so essential in present day life but is so difficult to practise. Each day brought new lessons and Blessings. He grew nearer and dearer to me as time passed and my only wish was to be by his side.

Silent Adoration

The monsoon was on, the air was fresh and clean and all the earth seemed radiant. Whenever it rained Bhagavan's attendants put a white cloth on his chest to protect his body from the cold weather. He looked like a sweet child wearing a bib, and with all his wisdom and greatness one is struck by his childlike nature. At other times he looks like the King

of kings; His poise and dignity are outstanding. When some times at night he would throw a shawl over his head, he looked like the Madonna. I would stand outside in silent adoration. Again, at other times he looked like a devoted father, smiling upon his children. I loved to watch him as he walked up the hill, just when the sun was setting. And it was my greatest delight when I could go with him.

One morning I picked a lovely rose; my first thought was to give it to the Master. A devotee said, "What a beautiful rose!"

I replied, "Yes, it is for Bhagavan." I sat in the hall, wondering if I should give it to him. After a few minutes I laid it on the small footstool near his sofa, and he said, "What is that?"

I replied, "Only a rose."

He said, "Give it to me." He took the rose and touched it to his forehead and cheeks. I was so deeply touched, I wept.

The 1939 Jayanti

I had the great privilege of being at the Ashram in 1939 for Sri Bhagavan's birthday celebration when, as on such occasions, thousands of people were fed. He is, indeed, a friend of the poor. A special leaf-covered shelter is erected for the occasion, so that many devotees who come for the celebration may sit in the presence of Bhagavan. One can never forget the Master as he sits there on his couch so majestically, amidst garlands of flowers, surrounded by his loving devotees, who are so happy to be with him at that time. It is a day of rejoicing and thanksgiving for everyone, even the animals.

As I walked along that night and looked at Arunachala, so silent, I was held spellbound by the beautiful sight. The brightest star in the heavens shone directly above its peak, like a great Beacon Light to tell us, as it were: 'This is the Holy Land, the abode of Bhagavan, the Lord of the Universe, whose greatness and spiritual power have drawn men from the remote parts of the earth, who come and kneel down and worship him, singing songs of adoration and praise to proclaim his glory.'

Lord of Love

When I left America I longed for Peace; there was a yearning in my heart that would not let me rest. Here at the feet of the Lord of Love, peace and happiness garlanded me and enriched my being. I know that Bhagavan led me to this haven of rest. In the words of Sri Bhagavan himself:

"In the recesses of the lotus-shaped Hearts of all, be-

ginning with Vishnu, there shines as pure intellect (Absolute Consciousness) the *Paramatman*, who is the same as Arunachala Ramana. When the mind melts with love of Him, and reaches the inmost recesses of the Heart wherein He dwells as the beloved, the subtle eye of pure intellect opens and He reveals Himself as Pure Consciousness."

To quote a letter from the Ashram: "So then, Sri Bhagavan will guide you at every step; for, has he not guided you even before you knew you were really in search of him?"

Leaving the Ashram

I had been planning to leave the Ashram for five months, but each time I thought I was going, something unforeseen presented itself. It was not his will that I should go. Bhagavan says, "Your plans are of no avail." I did not want to go but felt I should. My twin sister wrote several times and said there were matters which needed my attention; and she was very ill, although I did not know it at the time, somehow I sensed it. That was probably the reason why I felt I should leave.

As the time to leave drew near I was very sad; I knew this time I would really go. It had been eight months since I returned to the Ashram for the second time! Those last days I spent with the Master were blissful. He was so kind and tender, and when he smiled at me, tears would fill my eyes. I wondered how I could ever leave the place. When the day of parting came, I could not stop crying. In the morning, I walked on the Hill with Bhagavan and some other devotees; then again in the afternoon, when we had our pictures taken with him. As I walked down the Hill with him for the last time he alone knew what was in my heart.

The little monkeys were all lined up on either side of the hill-path. Bhagavan told them to come and say good-bye to me. He knew I loved them also. When we reached the hall, Bhagavan read a few comforting passages from Psalms, Chapter 139, verses 7, 8, 9, and 10.* He invited me to have supper with him, as ladies are not allowed in the dining hall at night. It was blessed joy to have that last meal with the Master. I shall never forget it. Just before I left I went to him for his blessing and wept at his feet, as my heart overflowed with adoration and love. He is dearer to me than life itself. May I consecrate my life to him! Then I said good-bye to the devotees in the Ashram, who were invariably kind to me.

I have tried in my humble way to tell about the wonderful experience I had when I was at Sri Ramanasramam with

the Enlightened One, but mere words can never express the peace and joy one feels in his Presence; it must be experienced. There, one truly has a glimpse of the Eternal.

As I am writing this article in 1946 (six years after I left the Ashram), I would like to say that I have felt the Master's



Presence more and more with the passage of time, just as he said I would. My devotion and faith have grown through the years and will never be shaken under any circumstances. I am very happy to say that I shall be returning soon to my Beloved Master. I hear his call!

Needless to say this was the most blessed experience of my life, my stay at the feet of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, the Lord of Love and Compassion. May I be worthy of the many blessings and the great Love he has so graciously bestowed upon me!

TO BELOVED BHAGAVAN THE LORD OF LOVE

Oh Lord of Love, Who dwells within my heart!
May I sing Thy Praise through all Eternity,
Thou, the Adorable One, the All compassionate,
Whose Loving smile illumines all the world,
Who art tender as a mother and strong as a father,
Thou, whose sublime life is an inspiring sermon,
Fill me with Thy Presence, Beloved Master, with
the Nectar of Thy Grace;
May Thy great Love and Light fill my heart to the full.

Resting secure in Thy Presence
And knowing whence cometh Peace,
Guidance and Strength,
May I always listen; for, in the Silence
I hear Thy Voice,
The Voice of God.

— Eleanor Pauline Noye, California

Kavayakantha Ganapati Muni Project

“Vasishtha Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni,” says Sri M.P. Pandit, “was a versatile genius whose contribution in the many fields to which he turned his attention are yet to be fully assessed.” The Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni Project aims to bring out all the available Sanskrit writings of the Muni in twelve volumes.

The first three volumes contain all the stotras written by the Muni and each is titled as *stotragranthamala* or The Book of Adoration. The fourth volume contains all his writings on the principles of existence and is entitled *tattvagrathamala*. All the sutra writings of the Muni have been compiled in both the fifth and sixth volumes, titled as *sutragranthamala*. The seventh volume contains all the commentaries by the Muni on different texts, such as the Vedas and Upanishads, and is entitled *bhashyagrathamala*. The eighth volume has his writings on Ayurveda, Astronomy and Astrology and is entitled *ayurvedajyotishagrathamala*. The ninth volume contains a treatise on the characters of the *Mahabharata* and has been titled originally by the Muni as *bharatacaritramimamsa*. The tenth volume is *Purna*, a novel in Sanskrit. It is planned to put all the miscellaneous writings of the Muni in the eleventh volume. The twelfth volume will have different indices to all the eleven volumes.

All these volumes, which will document the illustrious literary contribution of the Muni, will be published by Sri Ramanasramam. Those who wish to contribute towards this project can send Demand Drafts to Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai, earmarked as “Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni Project,” payable at Pondicherry. USA residents can send tax deduct-able donations to Arunachala Ashrama in New York.



I AM THAT I AM

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.

—Talks With Sri Ramana Maharshi, Talk No. 106

Exodus, Chapter 3

1: Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb.

2: And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.

3: And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.

4: And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I.

5: And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.

6: Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.

7: And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;

8: And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

9: Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.

10: Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.

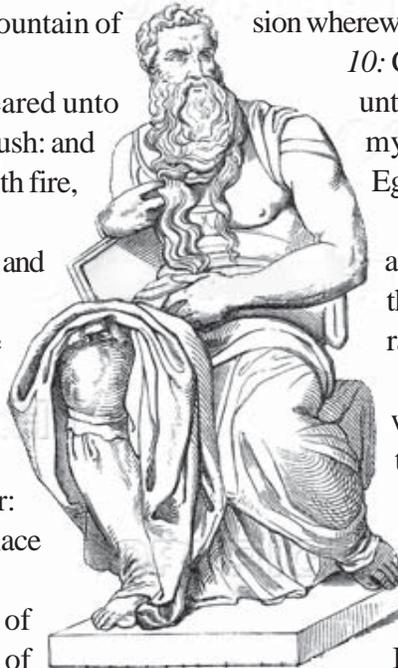
11: And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?

12: And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.

13: And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?

14: And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

15: And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.



Hearing, Reflection and One-pointedness

MAHARSHI: Ignorance - ajnana - is of two kinds:
(1) Forgetfulness of the Self.

(2) Obstruction to the knowledge of the Self.

Aids are meant for eradicating thoughts; these thoughts are the re-manifestations of predispositions remaining in seed-form; they give rise to diversity from which all troubles arise. These aids are: hearing the truth from the master (sravaṇa, manana, nidhidhyasana), etc.

The effects of sravaṇa may be immediate and the disciple realizes the truth all at once. This can happen only for the well-advanced disciple.

Otherwise, the disciple feels that he is unable to realize the truth, even after repeatedly hearing it. What is it due to? Impurities in his mind: ignorance, doubt and wrong identity are the obstacles to be removed.

(a) To remove ignorance completely, he has to hear the truth repeatedly, until his knowledge of the subject-matter becomes perfect;

(b) to remove doubts, he must reflect on what he has heard; ultimately his knowledge will be free from doubts of any kind;

(c) to remove the wrong identity of the Self with the non-self (such as the body, the senses, the mind or the

intellect), his mind must become one-pointed.

All these things accomplished, the obstacles are at an end and samadhi results, that is, Peace reigns.

Some say that one should never cease to engage in hearing, reflection and one-pointedness. These are not fulfilled by reading books, but only by continued practice to keep the mind withdrawn.

The aspirant may be kritopasaka or akritopasaka. The former is fit to realize the Self, even with the slightest stimulus; only some little doubt stands in his way. It is easily removed if he hears the truth once from the Master. Immediately he gains the samadhi state. It is presumed that he had already completed sravaṇa, reflection, etc. in previous births. They are no more necessary for him.

For the other, all these aids are necessary; for him doubts crop up even after repeated hearing; therefore he must not give up aids until he gains the samadhi state.

Sravaṇa removes the illusion of the Self being one with the body, etc. Reflection makes it clear that Knowledge is Self. One-pointedness reveals the Self as being Infinite and Blissful.

—Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi, No. 249

109th Anniversary of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi's

Advent at Arunachala

You, your family and friends are cordially invited to join us in celebrating the 109th anniversary of Sri Ramana Maharshi's arrival at the holy Arunachala Mountain.

Sunday, 4 September 2004

The program will begin at 11:00 a.m.

and will include puja, talks and bhajans, followed by prasada (meals).

In Nova Scotia

The Program will be in the
Arunachala Ramana Mandiram
1451 Clarence Road
Bridgetown, Nova Scotia B0S 1C0
Tel: (902) 665-2090

In New York City

The Program will be at
Arunachala Ashrama
86-06 Edgerton Blvd.
Jamaica Estates, Queens, New York 11432
Tel: (718) 560-3196

Sri V. S. Ramanan, President of Sri Ramanasramam, India will address the gathering at the New York Ashrama. For accommodation, please call.

Letters and Comments

Psychological Work

A few weeks ago Ramana gave me a short glimpse of the Self for the first time in my life. Since that day I'm "back on the way." He made me realize that there is nothing more important in life than the Self, and that all my effort should be directed towards this goal. I feel deeply attracted to the teachings of the *Ribhu Gita*, but I have some questions and doubts regarding this topic:

What's your view on the importance of psychological work on a spiritual path? Many western spiritual teachers seem to stress the importance of such work as a preparation for the Advaita Path, which requires maturity. On the other hand, reading Advaita texts like *Ribhu Gita* one gets the impression that one should leave all psychological work behind, to give no importance to the unreal, in order to abide in the awareness of the Self. The latter corresponds to my own insight, which was granted to me by this deep experience a few weeks ago. I still see a contradiction between these two — between the direct path of Advaita Vedanta and the necessity of psychological work as a "preparation" for that direct path. Are there any circumstances under which it is suggested or necessary to do psychological work?

—German Devotee

Those who sincerely follow the teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi have at their disposal a means to bypass "psychological work" and be free from identifying with the mind, which is the source of all problems. Bhagavan has said, "Where psychology ends, there philosophy begins." He said this when a visitor commented that the West looks upon the mind as the highest principle.

The mind is not the highest principle; it is but a tool, an unwieldy one for many. It is a bad master, but a good servant; a raging fire fed by thoughts; a thief who steals away our essential peace and happiness.

It is true that a steady mind and a balanced emotional life is an asset to a spiritual aspirant. In fact, for all people of all ages it is beneficial. But the values of modern society have turned the mind of mankind to interests and activities that dramatically deviate from our essential nature of purity and oneness. The mind of man is disturbed, confused and longs for peace. Psychology at-

tempts to heal the mind and settle the disturbing emotions.

When once the aspirant understands the nature of the mind, understands that our greatest glory manifests when the mind or ego ceases to exist, then there is no need to analyze its qualities and dwell on its modes, or to heal it. He or she should simply try to see what the mind is, and like a thief when sought, it will disappear. Ask, "Whose mind is it?" Seek within for the answer and the mind will vanish, along with all its problems. Peace and perfection will reign.

The novelty of Bhagavan's teachings is that it cuts through the maze of the mind and takes us straight to the Self. We should not strive for anything less.

—Editor

Pranayama and Kundalini

The reason I write is that I am experiencing something that I am curious about.

I have been doing breathing exercises and kundalini work as per traditional methods. This is used in the light of Ramana's words. I use it to get to the silence.

I have been doing kumbhaka. I hold the breath and send energy up from the base chakra to the crown. I have always sat as awareness in the centre of my head during this. A few months ago I made efforts to sit in the spiritual heart. When I do go deep into the silence the reference to the body drops.

Three or four months ago this kumbhaka started to go into nirvikalpa samadhi, I think. I had to catch myself from hitting the floor. I have been always sitting in a chair. Sitting in the lotus position is supposed to help one from hitting the floor, but my spine is straighter in a chair. Recently I have been meditating on a bed without the support. I have been scared of hitting the floor or possibly going into nirvikalpa samadhi around people who do not know what this is about. So I have been holding onto physical awareness.

A few months ago during breath retention, my whole mental body would disappear. I would be almost disorientated as there was no me, or mind — just the body. In a traditional American Indian ceremonial room, I was sitting in a half lotus position during my kundalini and breath sadhana. I bent forward with my head on the ground and then inhaled as I straightened back up. I was like someone hit a restart button on a computer. I opened my eyes and had no idea how long I was out, where I was sitting in relation to the doors (as it is a teepee structure with two

doors and is uniform on the inside).

I am getting an electrical-type shock around the right side. It comes and goes. It has been happening for around two months now. Hence my concern. I have had numerous phenomena happen over the years, but nothing that has lasted like this. I have tried to close my heart chakra with visualizations, but this does not seem to help relieve the problem.

Could it be because I am holding onto the body in meditation? I am not sure. Maybe it has something to do with energy work? But it seems to be localized in the spiritual heart that Ramana talked about, and is mentioned in scripture. The American Indians call it the “First Assemblage Point of Awareness.”

I am hoping you have some words for me concerning this. Maybe you know someone who is advanced and knowledgeable, concerning this sadhana of mine.

—Namaste, Canadian Seeker

As a friend, I must give you a warning. If you are doing pranayama, not in the manner prescribed by Bhagavan, and not under the guidance of a qualified yogi or teacher, you must be very cautious. It can result in an unbalanced state.

Read what Bhagavan says on pranayama. The focus must always be on the Self, or the ‘I-consciousness’, not on chakras, visualizations, kundalini, etc. Please be cautious. Bhagavan has given us a simple and straight path. It is a safe one too. By turning to Him, he will guide you.

—Editor

Atlanta, Georgia Devotees Celebrate Sri Ramana Maharshi’s 125th Birth Anniversary

Besides the usual Ramana Satsangs, the Atlanta-area devotees arranged two special events to commemorate Sri Bhagavan’s 125th birth anniversary.

Srimati Mangalam Kalyanam sent the following report: “On Saturday, March 19, 2005, by Sri Bhagavan’s Grace, the Ramana Music Concert, which was organized as part of the 125th Jayanthi celebration, went on without a hitch. Srimati Usha Balakrishnan sang for about two hours and was accompanied on the Mridangam by Sri Ram Sriram and on the violin by Sri Deepak Murthy.

The concert was performed in the auditorium of the Hindu Temple of Atlanta and was well attended — about sixty-five members attended the whole concert; others drifted in and out.

Srimati Usha combined classical carnatic songs with songs on Sri Bhagavan, and captivated all with her wonderful talent and devotion.

On July 23 and 24, Swami Dheerananda (Resident Acharya, Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Centre) came down from Washington, D. C. and gave two illuminating discourses on “The Glory of Sri Ramana Maharshi.” They were well attended, with about fifty-five devotees on the first day and about seventy-five on the second day.

Ramana Satsangs

Satsangs with recitations, songs, readings and meditation have been going on in a few places near or in large cities. Some of them are weekly. If you would like to attend any of these, please contact the individuals below for more information.

Atlanta Area — Mangalam Kalyanam (678-423-7324 / smoothcutter@hotmail.com)

Boston Area — David & Anna Klegon (617-928-1487 / dklegon@rcn.com)

Connecticut Area — Prashanth & Shobana (860-691-1862 / vprashanth@msn.com)

Dublin, Ohio — Abilash & Madhavi (614-789-9058 / mungamuru@hotmail.com)

Miami, Ft. Lauderdale Area — David & Janet Rubinson (954-755-4758 / arunahill@earthlink.net)

San Francisco Area — Swaminathan & Sangeeta (510-979-1679 / nachiketas@hotmail.com)

Washington, D.C. Area — Prakash & Mamtha Adishesan (703-257-5589 / adishesan@worldnet.att.net)

Ottawa, Canada — Anantha Padmanabhan (613-733-8250 / padmanabhan_ananth@hotmail.com)

Toronto, Canada — Krishnan & Padma Sastri (905-849-6005 / psastri@hotmail.com)

Vancouver, Canada — Zoya Malek (604-921-9692 / zoyaonline@yahoo.ca)