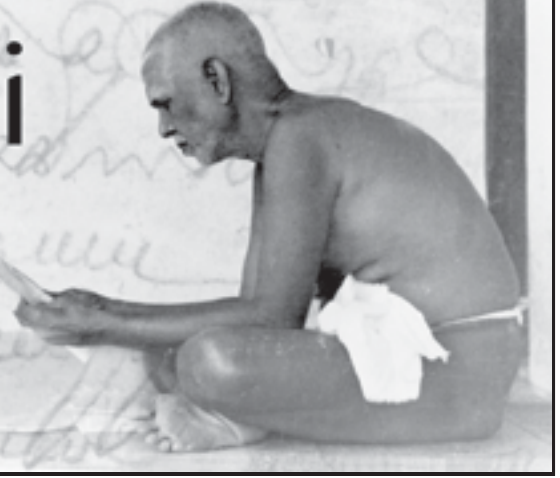


The Maharshi



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Sri Ramana A Guru For All Ages

In a statement made to a court commission sent to question Sri Bhagavan, he said in the course of the examination: “Siva always remains in three forms: (1) as Parabrahman, (2) as Linga (here as the Hill) and (3) as Siddha (Brahma Rupa; Linga Rupa; Siddha Rupa).” – Talk No. 492

ABOUT this Siva Siddha who resides eternally on the holy hill, the *Arunachala Purana* states:

अस्त्युत्तरेस्मिन् शिखरे दृश्यते वटभूरुहः ।
सिद्धवेषस्सदैवास्ते यस्य मूले महेश्वरः ॥
म्यस्यच्छायाति महती सर्वदा मण्डलामृतिः ।
लक्ष्यते विस्मयोपत्रैः सर्वदा देव मानवैः ॥

On the northern peak of the hill there is seen a banyan tree where the great Lord in the form of a siddha eternally sits. The immense shade of the tree constitutes a charmed circle of immortality. Its expanse of foliage represents the entire universe, including men and gods.

It is believed by some that Bhagavan was that eternal Siva Siddha manifesting in human form to guide sincere seekers on the path to deliverance. The large banyan tree that he once saw and attempted to reach before he was stung by a hoard of wasps was believed to be that very tree on the northern peak of the Hill where the Arunachala Siddha sits. Against Sri Bhagavan’s advice, several devotees went there in search of this tree but could never find it. In the end, Bhagavan, perhaps to

discourage other curiosity seekers, said it was not a physical tree but a supernatural one. It is believed that if the Maharshi had not been prevented from reaching this banyan tree his physical presence would have been lost to the world, having reverted to his inaccessible form as the Siva Siddha.

If the Arunachala Siddha sits under that tree at the northern peak he would naturally be facing south, looking down upon the world, just like Sri Dakshinamurti, who as youthful sage sat under the banyan tree in mouna nidra and taught the elderly rishis in silence. This silence, according to Bhagavan, is the highest form of teaching and the most potent form of initiation.

And Bhagavan Ramana’s most powerful teaching was given in silence. For those who could not receive it, he taught with gentle, direct words that expounded that ultimate state. We can say that Arunachala Siva Siddha in His mercy manifested on a human level in the form of Sri Ramana to teach the supreme path to earnest seekers and alleviate the sufferings of mankind.

But is the eternal Arunachala Siva Siddha the same as Sri Dakshinamurti, “the Primal Guru”, as Bhagavan called him? And are the Arunachala Siddha and Sri Dakshinamurti and Sri Ramana in reality one and the

same? If we are to accept at face value the invocatory verse that Bhagavan wrote for his Tamil translation of Sri Sankaracharya's *Dakshinamurti Stotram* then there appears to be little doubt that Bhagavan experienced complete identification with not only Sri Dakshinamurti but also Adi Sankaracharya:

That Sankara who appeared as Dakshinamurti to grant peace to the great ascetics (Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatkumara and Sanatsujata), who revealed his real state of silence, and who has expressed the nature of the Self in this hymn, abides in me.

Since there appears to be a spiritual thread that weaves together the Arunachala Mountain, the Arunachala Siddha, Sri Dakshinamurti, Adi Sankaracharya and Sri Ramana, can we not conclude that in July of 1896 this Self-same Siva shone forth as pure awareness in a sixteen-year-old boy from Madurai. Then, six weeks later, on September 1st, He drew him to His slopes where He reigned as King of the Yogis for fifty-four years, embodying the eternal state of Arunachala Siva in order to vouchsafe His grace and teachings and to provide hope, guidance and genuine spiritual experience to sincere seekers of Truth.

Identifying Bhagavan Ramana with the eternal Siddha who resides on the slope of Arunachala, with the youthful sage Sri Dakshinamurti and with Sri Sankaracharya is not something new. Early on Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni revealed it in his *Gurupurampara-stotra*:

*dakshināmūrti sarambhām
śaṅkarācārya madhyamām
ramaṇācārya paryantām
vande guruparamparām*

Obeisance to the line of preceptors with Dakshinamurti in the beginning, Sankara in the middle and Ramana in the end!

In *Talks*, Bhagavan has called Adi Sankaracharya an incarnation of Siva:

“Sri Sankara, being the avatar of Siva, was full of compassion for fallen beings. He wanted all of them to realise their blissful Self. He could not reach them all with His Silence. So he composed the *Dakshinamurti Stotra* in the form of a hymn so that people might read it and understand the Truth.”

An even greater confirmation regarding Sri Ramana as the Primal Guru, Sri Dakshinamurti, can be found in what Sri Muruganar told Sadhu Om, who subsequently wrote about it in the following short article.

“When in Ancient days even Sri Dakshinamurti the Adi-guru, guru of all gurus was able to reveal the truth of that one Self only through silence, the speechless speech, who else can reveal it through speech?”

—*Ekatma Panchakam*, V. 5, By Sri Ramana Maharshi

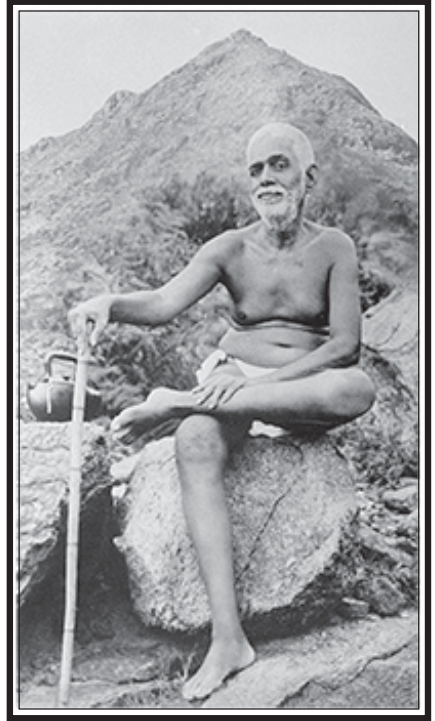
“In this connection, Sri Bhagavan once told the following story to Sri Muruganar. When the four aged Sanakadi *rishis* first saw the sixteen year old Sri Dakshinamurti sitting under the banyan tree, they were at once attracted to him, understanding him to be the real Sadguru.

“They approached him, did three pradakshinas around him, prostrated before him, sat at his feet and began to ask very astute and pertinent questions about the nature of Reality and the means of attaining it. Because of the great compassion and fatherly love (*vatsalya*) which he felt for his aged disciples, the young Sri Dakshinamurti was overjoyed to see their earnestness, wisdom and maturity. Hence he gave apt replies to each of their questions.

“As he answered each consecutive question, further doubts arose in their minds and still they asked on. Thus they continued to question Sri Dakshinamurti for one whole year, and he continued to clear their doubts through his compassionate answers.

“Finally, however, Sri Dakshinamurti understood that if he gave more answers to their questions, more doubts would arise in their minds and hence there would never be an end to their ignorance (*ajñana*). Therefore, suppressing even the feeling of compassion and fatherly love that was welling up within him, he merged himself into supreme silence. Because of their great maturity (which had been ripened to perfection through their year-long association with the Sadguru), as soon as Sri Dakshinamurti thus merged himself, they too automatically merged within, into silence, the state of Self.

“Wonderstruck on hearing Sri Bhagavan narrate the story in this manner, Sri Muruganar remarked that in no book is it mentioned that Sri Dakshinamurti ever spoke anything. “But this is what actually happened.” replied Sri Bhagavan.



dakṣhināmūrti sarambhām śaṅkarācārya madhyamām ramaṇācārya paryantām vande guruparamparām
Obeisance to the line of preceptors with Dakshinamurti in the beginning, Sankara in the middle
and Ramana in the end!

“From the authoritative way in which Sri Bhagavan thus replied and from the clear and descriptive way in which he told the story, Sri Muruganar understood that Sri Bhagavan was none other than Sri Dakshinamurti himself.”

So there it is – a confirmation of the eternal existence of the one who many of us consider our Lord and Guru. The same Guru who arrived at the Holy Hill of the Beacon Light 120 years ago by our standard of time, and the same Guru who eternally exists to guide us all to our final destination, the Self Supreme.

The following article by Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan seamlessly weaves together the lineage of Sri Dakshinamurti, Sri Sankara and Sri Ramana as the successive incarnations of the divine Sadgurus (world teachers) down through the ages.

This is followed by an article written in 1952 for the *Call Divine*. Major A. W. Chadwick provides us with the rationale behind Dakshinamurti’s manifestation as Sri Ramana Maharshi. He also relates many practical insights that only a sadhaka sitting at the feet of the Master for fifteen years could.

Dakshinamurti, Sankara and Ramana

By Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan

SIVA, as Dakshinamurti, is the world-teacher, who sitting underneath the banyan tree, teaches the supreme truth through silence. He is pictured as a youth dispelling the doubts of aged disciples without the aid of words. But all cannot comprehend the language of silence; nor is it given to all to go to the

banyan tree where the Lord is seated. So, the need arose for Sankara-Incarnation. Sankara came as the *jagad-guru* (world-teacher); only, here, instead of the *jagat* (world) going to the *guru* (teacher), we have the *guru* coming to the *jagat*. In the short span of thirty-two years that constituted Sankara’s earthly life,

a revolution was effected in the then known India through almost incessant travel and unsparing exertion on the part of the Master. It seemed as though the Lord rose from his seat under the banyan tree leaving off His silence, and moved and mingled with the multitudes in order to enlighten and save them. In the place of the unmoving (*acara*) Daksinamurti, we have Sankara moving (*cara*); and in the place of silence (*mouna*), we have auspicious speech (*sankari-vak*). This change or transformation was required to meet the challenge of the time the Sankara-Incarnation took place.

Our age, the era of machinery and speed, has its own problems. One finds almost everyone moving without purpose. A good volume of talking goes on every minute - much of it without sense. In such an atmosphere of speed and sound it is no wonder that silence and stasis are often mistaken for spirituality. This age demands on the part of a world-teacher neither absolute silence nor much speech, neither total stasis nor constant movement. We had such a teacher in Bhagavan Sri Ramana who was both *acara* (unmoving) and *cara* (moving) who taught both through silence and speech.

Leaving Madurai as a boy of sixteen, Sri Ramana went to Tiruvannamalai and never left that sacred place thereafter. His movement was confined to the environs of the Arunachala Mountain. To his devotees he was the moving Arunachala. For many years after his arrival at Tiruvannamalai, he did not speak; people used to refer to him as the mouna-swami (silent ascetic). But his silence was not part of any discipline. He found no use for words. When at long last he was discovered, and a few ardent seekers of Truth approached him for instruction, he did speak. In short, Sri Ramana played the roles of Daksinamurti and Sankara to suit the exigencies of our age. If Sankara may be described as the later Daksinamurti, Sri Ramana, it seems to me, may rightly be regarded as the later Sankara (*apara-Sankara*). In the *Gurustutih*, composed by Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni, the following lines occur:

*dakṣhināmūrti sarambhām
śaṅkarācārya madhyamām
ramaṇācārya paryantām
vande guruparamparām*

‘Obeisance to the line of preceptors with Daksinamurti in the beginning, Sankara in the middle and Ramana in the end!’

Isvara (God), *Guru* (Preceptor) and *Atman* (the Self) are but different names for one and the same reality. Daksinamurti, the south-facing Deity, Sankara, the peripatetic Teacher of humanity, and Ramana the Sage of Self-inquiry are expressions of the same principle. In the introductory verse to his verse-rendering of Sankara’s *Atmabodha*, Sri Ramana declares his identity with Sankara thus:

‘Is the teacher Sankara, who grants the knowledge of the Self, other than the Self? Remaining in my heart as the Self, he who utters the Tamil today - who is he other than that one himself?’

Sri Ramana did not found any new school of thought or cult. He taught the ageless truth of Vedanta which is not sectarian but universal. Even to call that truth *Advaita* (non-duality) is only a concession to the inherent limitations of language. The Master blazoned forth anew the path of self-inquiry through which everyone can attain *Advaita*-experience. None was too low for it and none too great. Everyone can take to it, no matter what his cult, creed or caste is. Even a sceptic or agnostic, an atheist or anti-theist may follow it and come to good. As Sri Ramana’s presence was accessible to all without let or hindrance, so was his teaching meant for the good of the entire world.

As the night drew in on Friday the 14th of April, 1950, Bhagavan Sri Ramana chose to leave his body. But he has not gone anywhere. There is no departure for a *jivanmukta*. And the Master’s Mission can end only with universal salvation. Of course, he knows what instruments to choose and in which ways to fulfil his task. Those of us who have had the rare good fortune of association with his embodied form have a sacred duty to ourselves, which is to meditate on him and his teachings, and share with others the precious legacy we have received from him.

Miracle of Dakshinamurti

Who is the youthful guru
beneath the banyan tree?
Very old are the pupils who seek him.
The handsome teacher’s speech is silence.
Cleared are all the pupils’ doubts.

– Collected Works of Sri Ramana Maharshi

Sri Dakshinamurti and Sri Ramana

By Sadhu Arunachala (Major A. W. Chadwick)

BHAGAVAN Sri Ramana Maharshi has often been compared to Sri Dakshinamurti, who sits silent under the banyan tree on the north slope of Arunachala, and there is much ground for this comparison. Moreover, it is more than just a comparison. Actually, the two are identical, although their bodies may to us, bound by the limitations of time and space, seem different.

Sri Dakshinamurti has retreated to an inaccessible vastness no longer to be reached by humans, and we can only surmise that this is because he found the world unworthy and unable to understand his silent instruction, whereas in the form of Sri Ramana he was always most accessible and explained to one and all the meaning of this silence; if they did not listen, well, the seed would bear fruit on some future occasion. Nothing was ever wasted: for him there was no time and so there could be no disappointment.

Strangely enough Bhagavan (as we all used to call Sri Ramana) once found himself in the proximity of the Silent Guru. He had gone off on a ramble about the slopes of the hill when he saw a very large banyan leaf lying in his path. So struck was he by this that he set off in search of the source. At length he came within sight of an uncommonly large tree, which he thought must be the one for which he was looking. But he could not reach it, his way was blocked by a wall of sheer rock; at the same time he was attacked by a swarm of wasps whose nest he had unwittingly disturbed. Thus realizing that he was not intended to proceed, he returned. Ever after he discouraged his disciples who proposed to explore this mystery from going in quest of the same spot. "You will not succeed in any way," he would tell them. And though occasionally some would ignore his advice, nobody ever did succeed in getting a glimpse of the enormous tree.

Both Sri Dakshinamurti and Sri Ramana taught exactly the same teaching that can be fully expounded in silence. As soon as words are used we are in the realm of the relative and for Bhagavan there was no relative. It was only a fictitious appearance on Reality which is One (Advaita).

"Make an effort to be without effort," he would say. In fact don't do anything, because, actually there is nothing to do. The whole trouble with us all is this constant doing. By associating ourselves with all sorts of actions and circumstances we place apparent limitations on the Illimitable. How can speech do more than point out to us our mistake? It can tell us only to 'be', not to be this or to be that, because being this or that is back again in the realm of limitation and it is just exactly here that he is trying to make us understand that we are wrong.

And is there really any method of reaching that which is eternally and forever here and now? Yes, Sri Ramana taught Self-enquiry. Find out who is this eternal and ever-conscious being that you really are by inquiring 'Who am I?' But that was all. In other words, 'Just be yourself,' and to be yourself you must get behind phenomena to the Eternal Witness and this can only be done by Self-enquiry.

However, sometimes Sri Bhagavan would expound philosophy by the hour to clear the doubts of his many visitors, yet he always explained that this was actually quite unnecessary. There was only one thing to know and to do. Silence was best. Once when he saw me puzzling over the intricate division and recombination of the elements in an Advaitic treatise that he had told me to read, he turned to someone sitting before him and said: "Tell him not to worry over all that; that is for those people who demand that sort of thing, who want an analytical explanation of everything. Let him read the rest which he can understand."

Sri Ramana has stated explicitly that he himself never at any time did any sadhana. "Sometimes I would sit with my eyes closed and sometimes with them open - I still do. But I know no mantra or yogic exercises and would not have any use for them if I did." And it is certain that he never taught any of these things. He told us how to set about Self-enquiry and advised certain rules of life that would facilitate this, but that was all. He says in the little book *Who Am I?*: "Regulation of diet, restricting it to sattvic food taken in moderate quantities, is of all rules of conduct the

best, and is most conducive to the development of sattvic qualities of the mind. These in their turn assist us in the practice of Atma Vichara or enquiry in quest of the Self.” For the mind is the product of the food we eat, he explained; purify the food and the mind automatically becomes pure. Again: “Likes and dislikes, love and hatred are equally to be eschewed. Nor is it proper to let the mind rest often on the affairs of worldly life. As far as possible one should not interfere in the affairs of others. Everything offered to others is really an offering to oneself; and if only this is realized, who is there that could refuse anything to others?” Let me quote once again: “If the ego rises; all else will arise, if it subsides all else will also subside. The deeper the humility with which we conduct ourselves the better for us. If only the mind is kept under control, what matters it where one may happen to be?”

It all sounds so simple put like this, and yet how many of us succeed? No question here of going off and taking sannyasa, for as he says: “Renunciation is not discarding external things, but the cancellation of the uprising ego.” And this can quite possibly be done more effectively in the world and in the midst of family life. For to the determined seeker some opposition is good; it gives him something to work on and keeps him alert, just as the aeroplane needs the opposition of the air to hold it aloft.

Bhagavan was always very definite in pointing out that liberation is not some far off after-death experience. It is here and now for all of us always. Just drop the false association with limitation. Nothing new will happen, and we shall then see that we have been all along the Self that we were searching for. Sri Ramana was no missionary trying to drive people along a definite track. Did he not know far better than we that everything would come to fruition at its proper time; there was no forcing it.

A certain number of people were bound to come to him, and a few were able to remain permanently; it was just their karma. Once when a visitor was taking leave and with tears complained that he could not remain any longer, Bhagavan remarked in a very matter of fact way that if everybody who came remained, there would not be any room for anybody.

For a person who believed in reforms and all sorts of charitable activity, his advice was: “First help

yourself and then you may be able to help others. How can you possibly do any good to others when you yourself are still only seeking for the Good?” Such activity amounts to starting out at the wrong end.

People who never came to him have often said that his was a negative philosophy, but this is only ignorance of the truth. He was a dynamic force himself and he never advised the inaction of inertia. “Do, but do not associate yourself with the doer. Be the witness always,” was his message. Things will undoubtedly go on, and as long as we imagine ourselves to be the body we will naturally believe that we perform its various activities ourselves. It is absolutely useless to sit back and say: “I am not the body, so there is no need to do anything;” this is only a catchphrase of intellectualism. We do not really believe it to be true, so it only reveals our hypocrisy. When we do actually know the Truth we shall never talk like that. For the real sannyasin, he has said, there is no difference between solitude and active life, as he does not regard himself as the doer in either case.

Sri Ramana’s message is for one and all; and so no one, whatever his occupation, need say that he has no time. For his teachings are to be practised now and always, whatever we may be doing, whether working or resting, eating or sleeping.

At the end of *Catechism of Enquiry* [*Self-Enquiry*], it is said:

It is within our power to adopt a simple and nutritious diet and with earnest and incessant endeavour to eradicate the ego, the cause of all misery, by cancelling all mental activities born of the ego (i.e., the idea ‘I am the doer’). Can obsessing thought arise without the ego, and can there be illusion apart from such thought?

And in these few words are summed up the whole of the teaching of the great Sage of Arunachala, who was in fact none other than Sri Dakshinamurti in mortal form. And even now, though Sri Ramana has left his body, where is the difference? Does he not exactly come up to the definition of Sri Dakshinamurti as given by Sri Sundararaja Sarma in his commentary on the Slokas of Sri Sankaracharya? Sri: Maya Sakti, Dakshin: perfect, Amurti: formless, or ‘the ever perfect, invisible power,’ as one might term it.

The first verse of the *Dakshinamurti Stotra* by Sri Sankaracharya declares the same:

*I bow to Sri Dakshinamurti in the form of my Guru;
I bow to him by whose grace the whole world is found
to exist entirely in the mind, like a city's image mirrored
in a glass; though like a dream, through Maya's power
it appears outside; and by whose grace again, on the
dawn of Knowledge it is perceived as the everlasting
and non-dual Self.*

But of a truth the Self is one. When we have reached that state of knowledge, when we live in the Self alone and see the world for what it is, we too shall find that both Sri Dakshinamurti and Sri Ramana are and ever have been enthroned in our hearts. Let us pray earnestly that the dawn of that day may be near at hand.

**120th Anniversary of
Sri Ramana Maharshi's
Advent at Arunachala**

In Queens, New York City
Saturday 10 September — 11:00 AM

Arunachala Ashrama
86-06 Edgerton Blvd., Jamaica Estates,
New York 11432 / Tel: 718-560-3196
Email: ashrama@arunachala.org

Sri Ramana Jayanti Retreat in Tampa

Thursday, December 29th – Sunday, January 1st

This year's four-day retreat will have periods of meditation, chanting, readings, presentations, satsang and quiet time for reflection and relaxation, and will once again be held at the Franciscan Center of Tampa, Florida.

Participants are requested to arrive by Wednesday evening to attend the Thursday morning inauguration ceremony for the replica of Sri Ramanasramam's Old Hall constructed in Tampa.

If you would like a registration form emailed to you, please write to: rohithk vaidya@yahoo.com

Or call: (813)-766-0145

The retreat center's capacity is 65 attendees, which will soon be met. We therefore recommend all genuinely interested individuals to request a registration form, complete it and immediately return it. The final registration date is November 30th. Details related to the cost for lodging and food will be provided along with the forms.

For more information, please contact:

rohithk vaidya@yahoo.com / (813) 766-0145 or dennis@arunachala.org / (718) 560-3196

The program will be held at:

The Franciscan Center, 3010 N. Perry Avenue, Tampa, Florida 33603

Website: <http://www.franciscancentertampa.org/>

Ramana Satsangs in the USA and Canada

Regular satsangs with recitations, songs, readings and meditation are conducted in or near some cities throughout the USA and Canada. Some of them are weekly. If you would like to locate a group near you, please contact the individuals listed on our website at www.arunachala.org/satsangs/