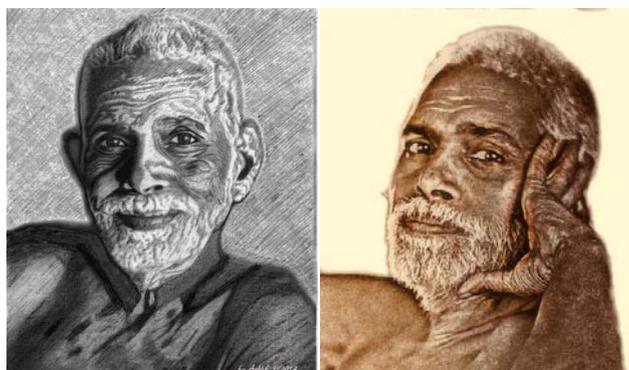


An Overview of the Life of Sage Ramana

Om Namo Bhagavate Shri Ramanaya



*Pictures of Bhagawan are drawings of Dr Ashok Narayan.
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Om Namo Bhagavate Shri Ramanaya

Sage Ramana is ever present. It is HIS grace that we get an opportunity such as these monthly Satsangs to listen and reflect on Bhagawan and the teachings.

I will set out Sage Ramana's timeline and then we shall learn of his life as narrated by a few of his contemporaries and devotees at Arunachala as well as his childhood friends.

There were some 75 of them who feature in the Ramana Periya Puranam written by Bhagwan's younger brother's grandson V Ganesan. I shall draw upon this one gem of a resource for most of what I have to say today.

For some of us, to learn about the life of Bhagawan may be just a few key strokes of effort to bookmark the pages for a visit sometime later. For some these could be books inviting to be read but yet not opened. Or it could be YouTube or videos of HIM but not seen, whether in part or full. But for all of us, it is ordained as to when, where and how we receive HIS grace. Now let us delve a little into HIS life and FIND Him in us.

Bhagawan's timeline in HIS mortal frame

1879: He was born on 30th December, at 1 A.M in Tiruchuzhi and named Venketraman. His father Sundaram Iyer was a Government Pleader and his mother Alagammal, a housewife. They were three boys and one girl in the family, with Venketraman being the second child. A blind lady living nearby saw a flash of light at the time of his birth.

1890: He studied at Dindugal School after his elementary schooling in Tiruchuzhi.

1892: On the death of his father, Sundaram Iyer, the family was split with his mother (Mother henceforth) and the two younger siblings moving in with a relative in Tiruchuzhi while Venketraman and his elder brother moved to Madurai to live with one of their uncles.

1893: Swami Vivekananda address the Parliament of Religions in Chicago, USA. Young Venketraman was aware of this and had seen books of Vivekananda in his house but had no idea of their contents as they were all in English.

1896: Young Venketraman hears of Arunachala and the place called Tiruvanmalai and hence his first spiritual initiation (Nama Diksha) as it stirred something within him. He subsequently read of the Periya Puranam and the 63 Tamil Saiva Saints (Nayanmars) and would spend hours in the Meenakshi Temple of Madurai and be in a spiritual trance in front of idols of the Saiva saints.

1897: Venketraman moves to Arunachala (Tiruvanmalai) after the death experience – actually as many now say “immortality experience” and leaving home for good. He signs a parting letter and refers to his body as **“This”**!

1899: The young ascetic now moves to the Hill, Arunachala. He stays in various caves up the Hill, but mostly in Virupaksha Cave, using Mango Tree Cave as his summer residence.

1902: Now known as the Brahmamana Swamy, he has a few followers. 'Who Am I?' was compiled by devotee Sivaprakasam Pillai in that year.

1903: Kavyakantha Ganapathi Muni proclaims that the Brahmamana Swamy is Bhagawan Sri Ramana Maharishi on hearing the true meaning of the nature of “Tapas”

1908: (January to March): Stays at Pachaiamman Koil (with Ganapati Muni and others) and again goes back to Virupaksha Cave.

1911: FH Humphreys- first Westerner meets Bhagawan with many to follow later

1912: Bhagavan's First Jayanthi celebration was held at Tiruvannamalai

1915: 'Song of the Appalam' written by Bhagawan for the sake of his Mother

1917: Bhagavan composes 'Arunachala Pancharatnam' in Sanskrit, Mother settles at Skandashram and Ganapathi Muni composes 'Sri Ramana Gita'

1927: Bhagavan composes 'Upadesa Saram' in Tamil, Telugu, Sanskrit and Malayalam

1939 (September 1): Foundation laid by Bhagavan for the Matrubhuteswara Temple, the name being suggested by Ganapathi Muni.

14 April 1950: The clock stops at 8.47PM and Bhagawan attains Mahasamadhi. A slow moving meteor like star rises above Arunachala Hill and moves north-west and was seen by many people, even as far as Mumbai.

That evening, my mother who was pregnant carrying me, vividly remembers seeing this in the skies while on the terrace of a house on Burkit Road, T’Nagar in Chennai. At her age of 85 years, she says it is ever so fresh and etched in her memory.

The lad Venketraman

We learn that Bhagawan while spiritually inclined from his early days did not read any scriptures. As a Brahmin boy, we do know he had his sacred thread and given the orthodoxy of those times, he would have performed thrice daily his Sandhya Vandanam. We also know that he had a tuft and earrings as was the norm in those days.

He was tall and of sturdy frame and at the age of 16, was strong with long limbs and a sportsman excelling in swimming, wrestling and football. He was known to literally sleep like a log that his friends would play pranks on him carrying him while asleep and dropping him off in places far from where he went to bed!

As for his schooling, there was no display of any academic brilliance or retentive memory. It was largely pedestrian with a growing dislike for rote learning and studies. Young Venketraman's school education was entirely in his native Tamil. He had started learning English as a second language on entering High School. While his Tamil was fluent and unremarkable in his school days, nothing extraordinary was ever noticed.

Friends were few but very close were they. He was known to share from the young age of two years, inviting girls and boys with whom he played to have some milk with him at home. In later years he would recall the names of visitors seeing them after 60 years or more!

His was the case of an unmanifest energy, a spiritual energy that enveloped him till he went home to HIS FATHER, Arunachala at the age of 17 years and whence it grew to be what we know of HIM today.

Bhagawan's Shruthi was set to the scale "Arunachala"

In our classical Indian music, the shruthi- the drone, is a constant. If silence is the bedrock on which sound is made, shruthi is the constant tune on silence for our vocal or instrumental music to build upon. We tune to the shruthi. Ramana tuned to Arunachala.

The shruthi that constantly hummed in Bhagawan's ears was "Arunachala, Arunachala" but he paid no heed to it and thought everyone else must be hearing it too like the sound we hear when we place a conch or large shell to our ears!

But some time in 1896 or early 1897, when he heard the word Arunachala mentioned by a distant relative who was returning from there, the 'shruthi' became the divine thunder of a call from HIS FATHER! Note that Arunachala is five syllables like Om Nama Siva and hence significant to Tamils.

The Journey in Earnest

We read of his leaving home, taking three Rupees for his rail fare and not paying his brother's college fees with the note below in Tamil for his brother and host family:

"I have in search of my father and in obedience to His command started from here. This is only embarking on a virtuous enterprise. Therefore none need grieve over this affair. To trace this out no money need be spent.

Your college fee has not yet been paid. Rupees two are enclosed herewith.

Thus_____”

We learn of the mysterious co-passenger from Madurai, a Mohammedan, who gives him directions from Tindivanam to Tiruvanmalai; the pawning of his gold earrings en route for four Rupees to take the train again and the doors of the temple flying open in welcome for him at Tiruvanmalai.

We read of a barber shaving off the tuft of Venketraman and the discarding of the coins into the pond barring a loin cloth and the heavenly downpour that rendered unnecessary the obligatory bath after visiting a barber. We read in awe his endurance of mind over body in Pattalalingam shrine, the vermin and insects burrowing through his thighs and a mortal frame reduced to mere bones in a state of Samadhi.

All this we now know as part of the gospel of Sage Ramana.

We also learn how he was rescued from urchins who threw stones and filth at him; the services of Seshadri Swami to protect the now named Brahmana Swamy; the frequent moves from one hideout (if one can call it as such) to another and his refuge after many moves to Virupaksha Cave on Arunachal Hill

This too we now know of his early life in Samadhi, peace within.

The Tugging of a Mother's Heart Strings

To talk about the life of the Sage, we must by necessity include his Mother divine. Rattled by his disappearance, we can as parents imagine how her heart strings must have tugged to find him in flesh and form. After many false leads, she does find him at Virupaksha Cave on the slopes of Arunachala in Tiruvanmalai.

After three days of relentless pleading and seeing her plight, an old lady who is now a regular around the Brahmana Swamy, reproaches him and says:

“Why don't you give a reply? Either accept or decline! We have been observing this lady cry for three days and you don't even reply!”

Relenting, Bhagwan wrote:

“The Ordainer, prevailing everywhere makes each one play his role in life according to his karma. That which is not destined, will not happen despite every effort. What is destined to happen is bound to happen. This is certain. Therefore the best course is to remain silent.”

To remain silent is to surrender. This is Bhagawan's first sermon – Upadesa.

By way of a little digression here, in later years Bhagwan would say that words are the great grandchild of abstract knowledge, from which rises the ego or mind and thence thoughts and words.

He would remind devotees that if words can produce an effect, how much more potent should be teaching through silence! A venerable Lord Dakshinamurthy, a Lord Shiva indeed is what he IS.

Orthodoxy and the Transformation of Mother

Mother was steeped in Brahmin orthodoxy. Hence she would take innumerable baths because a dog had made contact with her clothes or brushed her or someone had inadvertently touched her 9 yard saree she was wearing!

It took some courage on the part of Kavyakantha Ganpathi Muni (more on him later) to advise Mother that if a realised soul, a true jnani touches her, all pollution and sins drop from the body. From then on, whenever his mother approached Bhagawan, he would know the reason and would give a mischievous smile and say:

“Some dog must have touched her!”

Over time, Bhagawan eased his mother from the grip of these prejudices. There are other stories too on this which we shall soon see.

Arunachala Swaroopam, Not Untouchables

In practical ways, Bhagawan transformed Mother. Her orthodoxy was such that she refused to give food to ‘others’ than her ‘own’ before she had eaten. Once a group of hungry woodcutters passed by and pleaded with Bhagawan for some food. So he went inside and asked his mother to feed them. But she had not yet had eaten and hence was reluctant to giving the food. Looking at her, Bhagawan asked her to feed them as they were all ‘Arunachala Swaroopam” meaning they too were all Arunachala in human form and hence there should be no seeing of differences.

It should be noted that Bhagawan never used untouchables or caste or religious differences at all and that everyone and everything was Iswara Swaroopam or the manifestation of the Self.

The Appalam Song

Appalam was one of Bhagawan’s favourite and Mother wanted to make these for her son. So he used the Appalam (pappad) as a metaphor to teach her Vedanta.

“Let the ego be crushed in the quern of Self-Enquiry, seasoned with Satsang, good company and flattened, fried in the ghee of Brahman and eaten by the Self.”

The song asks how should one’s soul be ripened. How should ego be pounded? The answer lies with the enquiry: “Who am I?”

Refrain:

Instead of wandering this earth, wearied by longing for peace
follow the incomparable Word of the sadguru pointing to Truth,
roll-out the Papads and see for yourself !

Verse 1

Here encased in the five sheaths of organs, Mind,
Intellect and Sleep of blissful-ignorance
And different from them, grows the kernel, the self, the [abhimān](#) felt as 'I'.
Pound it with the wisdom-pestle of the enquiry "Who am I ?"
Reducing it to powder as "not I" "not I"

Verse 2

Now mix the juice of the edible-cactus Pirandai
This is sat-sanga, the company of the elevating which removes discord
Add Jeera and Black-pepper which are Shama and Dama, equanimity and self-restraint
Toss in some salt of Uparati which is non-attachment
Round it off with Heeng which is good vāsanās, the tendencies which free us

Verse 3

With an inward turned pestle of mind pound away 'I-I'
Unrelenting at its stubborn out-going disobedience
Then with the rolling pin of Shanti, roll out on the platter of evenness
The Appalams and see for yourself !

Verse 4

Taking the bottomless vessel of endless-Mauna
With the wholesome oil of the One Self of all
Fired by the flames of wisdom's enquiring
Fry the Papads without let-up
Till the questioning self reaches and remains The Source
Thus you can have the papad and eat it too !

Early Followers and Teachings

Bhagawan's school education was entirely in his native Tamil while he had started learning English as a second language on entering High School. While his Tamil was fluent and unremarkable in his school days, nothing extraordinary was ever noticed.

Palaniswami was a Malayalee living in Tiruvanmalai and had taken an early fatherly affection for the young Brahmana Swamy. Like the bull Nandi in all temples of Siva, so was Palaniswamy to Bhagawan. It was he who would bring several Hindu scriptures for Bhagawan to read, absorb with his now latent photographic memory and explain the deeper meaning of these texts at levels appropriate to the spiritual development stage of those who would seek clarifications.

Palaniswamy only knew to read Malayalam and was a very slow reader who had taken a vow to read each day just one page of the Adyatma Ramayan. Living with Bhagawan and the handful of followers around Virupaksha Cave, the others would wait for

Palaniswamy to finish his one page so that they could all have their lunch or main meal of the day together.

Sensing that others were getting hungry with the slow pace of the reading, Bhagawan offered to learn Malayalam from Palaniswami so that he could read the text for him. This is how Bhagawan not only learnt Malayalam from Palaniswami but also became fluent so as to translate his later Tamil compositions into that language. Note that Bhagawan a few years later took to writing in Sanskrit and Telugu as well.

The very **first composition** of Bhagawan was, believe it or not, dedicated to Lord Ganesha, the elephant god who we Hindus regard as the remover of obstacles. And the one who asked for this was none other than Palaniswamy. It seems someone had left a Ganesh idol in a little niche in Virupaksha Cave and hence came that request.

We get some very special insights on how Bhagawan regarded himself at that time- he was only known as Brahmana Swamy at that time. The composition says:

“Lord with a big fat belly residing in the niche, you who allowed your Father to go around begging, at least now shower your glance of grace on me, who is the Son of your Father.”

Mark this word ‘begging’ in this verse for that is what Bhagawan and those with him would do. In the early years, it was Bhagawan and Palaniswamy, each going in opposite directions and meeting from where they started and never going to the same house twice if they were served once. That way Bhagawan covered a lot of residents around Arunachala!

With the retinue of followers increasing, though small in numbers, they would walk with Bhagawan and sing in chorus ‘Samba Sadashiva, Samba Sadashiva, Samba Sadashiva, Samba Shivom” and this would alert householders to know there were people coming for food. While this practice had hardly been in place for a few weeks, some miscreants took the clue and went ahead singing these words of Bhagawan’s group and hence ensured their bowls were full leaving the search for food that much more difficult for Bhagawan’s retinue!

Bhagawan’s second composition is what is called The Marital Garland, **Akshara Manamalai** of 108 verses. We gather that Palaniswamy who could not write had noticed Bhagawan saying something and had the presence of mind to have one in the group who could write to inscribe the verses as they poured out. These verses from then on became the song for the group in their daily Girivalam with their begging bowls and with it the stamp of divine and heartfelt outpouring of love and devotion.

Siva Prakasam Pillai, a scholar in his own right, having learnt of the young Brahmana Swamy came with a very simple question, the fountainhead of all questions, ‘Who am I’? Bhagawan answered an initial set of 14 and a further 14 with these 28 making up the core of the book we all wish to be absorbed in over time, this being **Who Am I?**

Gambira Seshaya was another close devotee and ardent student who would bring books to Bhagawan, pose questions and meticulously write down the answers. It is to

this man we owe the treasure captured from Bhagawan's teaching as encapsulated in the book **Self Enquiry**.

Kavyakantha Ganapathi Muni and The Definition of Tapas

We owe it to Kavyakantha Ganapathi Muni, a child prodigy versatile in Sanskrit, the Vedas, Upanishads, astrology and mathematics and his relentless search for God that the erstwhile Venketraman nee Brahmana Swamy become known the world over as Bhagawan Sri Ramana Maharishi.

Ganapathi Muni had vowed to proclaim that the Vedas, Upanishads and all Hindu scriptures are just exaggeration of poetic minds if he fails to discover God at Arunachala, the final place of his search. Seated in a small cave, he had commenced his penance when after a few hours with the sun at its peak, he was jolted to run up Aurnachala Hill. There he finds the young Brahmana Swamy and falls flat at his feet and pours out his heart and his unfulfilled quest of discovering God and the true nature of what is Tapas.

The response from the young swamy is so compelling that the Muni immediately concludes that he is now before no ordinary being, but a sage, a Rishi whose wisdom is that of a great Rishi and hence a Maharishi. Learning from someone standing nearby that the young swamy was named Venketraman, the Muni, himself a great scholar, proclaims that he now stands before Bhagawan Sri Ramana Maharishi.

As to the nature of Tapas, Bhagawan said:

"If one watches from where the notion "I" arises, the mind is absorbed into THAT. THAT is Tapas. When repeating a mantra, if one watches the source from which the sound is produced, the mind is absorbed in THAT. THAT is Tapas."

You would notice that I used the words 'Bhagawan said'. Let me explain a little on this now. Hitherto, the early followers around Bhagawan had assumed that the young swamy was on a vow of silence and would not speak. Hence they wrote down their questions and the answers were either written on a slate or charcoal or scribbled on sand. It was only Ganapathi Muni who had persuaded Bhagawan to speak and hence we owe it to the Muni as much that subtle concepts were clearly innunciated therefore.

It must also be said that Bhagawan had a great admiration of the scholarly Muni and would engage with him on deep discussions on a variety of texts. Being a Sanskrit scholar (and author of very popular play by the age of 10 or so), the Muni had outlined a particular Sanskrit metre and Bhagawan responded with a few verses in Sanskrit. There is no clue as to from where he derived the nuances of Sanskrit, let alone composing verses that are regarded as profound as those in the Upanishads.

We must also note that Bhagawan being a very quick learner and given his retentive memory started translating his own verses in other languages of the south, mainly Telugu and Malayalam given their closer affinity to Sanskrit even though they were distinctly different from his native Tamil.

A Few Other Contemporaries of Bhagawan

Any discussion of the life of Bhagawan would be incomplete without some recollections of those of his contemporaries living around him, be it in the caves of Arunachala or down at the base of Sri Ramanasramam after its formal inauguration.

As I said earlier, the Ramana Periya Puranam features 75 of these people, including Mother. Let me now mention a few people here, both men and woman, rich and poor, caste and outcaste given Bhagawan only saw the unifying Self in all and not those divisions and differences.

Perumal Swami was a rough rustic who had a dislike of Mother, took Bhagawan to court, lost his case and finally took refuge at the feet of Bhagawan. Such was Bhagawan's compassion that he took even those who had hurt his mortal frame as he was always abiding in the Self and free of body, mind and hence ego.

Ramanathan was a puny lad from a Brahmin family and given Mother's orthodoxy he was allowed by her to help her in washing, cleaning and cooking. It was not uncommon for Mother to call out this young man, in many ways a surrogate son to her, "Ramanatha, Ramanatha" to which Bhagwan would say "The Japa of my mother has started again!"

Masthan Swami was a practising Muslim who came into the fold of Bhagawan. A weaver by profession, he had the privilege of weaving Bhagawan's loin cloth and towel. He had this to say of his very first encounter with Bhagawan:

"HE was seated like a rock. His unswerving gaze was filled with grace, compassion and steady wisdom. I stood by his side. After giving me a look, he opened the gate of my heart in the very first encounter. Just one look from Bhagawan and I stood like that for eight hours absolutely without fatigue and filled with total absorption and peace. There was no need for any questions since by his look he made us like himself."

Divine Mothers in the Sage's Life

There were divine mothers many in the life of Bhagawan apart from Goddess Meenakshi in Madurai and his own birth Mother.

Mudaliar Patti (grandmother), nearly totally blind had once accidentally stepped on the plantain leaf on which food was being served for Bhagawan. She was severely admonished by those around at that time saying given her blindness what purpose did it serve her being with Bhagawan. To this Patti had replied that it does not matter that she is unable to see for what matters is that Bhagwan sees hers and showers HIS grace!

Patti was one of the early elders who would cook a meal for Bhagawan and hence she was very dear to Bhagawan. Though totally blind, she insisted on seeing Bhagawan after his first operation in 1949.

Bhagawan on seeing her said "Patti, I am alright. My body is alright". But the old lady was not satisfied and ran her hands over Bhagawan's body from head to foot. And then

Bhagawan asked "Are you satisfied now?" Till her very end in 1949, she would cook a meal for Bhagawan.

It was **Ratnamal** who force fed the immatiated lad found in a state of Samadhi in the Pattalingam shrine at the Arunachal temple.

Meenakshi Ammal gave the young recluse his first bath in 18 months applying oil to his matted hair, picking off the grit and stones.

Desurammal was another who would cook for Bhagawan and his many followers in the caves. She was daring enough to ask for initiation with a mantra from Bhagawan and he obliged saying "**Unnai Vidaathu Iru**" which in Tamil means remain without leaving your SELF.

At the age of 90, in the last days of Bhagawan in April 1950 she had come to see HIM. She was not allowed in but one Kunju Swami, an old timer there recognized her and informed Bhagawan and immediately he had said "**Desurammal! Bring her here, bring her inside!**". Seeing his condition, she wept and Bhagawan consoles her saying "**Naan Eppodhum Un Bhagawawan Thane**" which means "I am always your Bhagawan".

Ecchammal had faced numerous personal tragedies and served Bhagawan till her very end. It is known that Bhagawan would wait for her food even if the Ashram cooks had made the meals.

Tiruchuzhi Friends

We can go on to learn more of the life of Sage Ramana from those coming to him from distant shores, starting with Frank Humphreys, Paul Brunton and many others. But for now, I would like to finish today going back to three people in Bhagawan's Tiruchuzhi days.

Meenakshi was a neighbour in their toddler years. She did not have a happy married life but all the while she kept worshipping Bhagawan in her heart. Her family situation was such that she could not visit him at Sri Ramansramam. She was bedridden in the 1940s and Bhagawan appeared where she was! Sitting by her bedside, he touched Meenakshi. She was in coma, but regained consciousness at his touch and cried gratefully, "My God, My Lord! Ramana, you have come to bless me!" With these words she departed.

Lakshmi was another neighbour who also shared milk with Bhagawan. Her life too was a tattered one of pain and suffering. She had made the effort to visit Bhagawan and virtually unrecognizable in a crowd of 200 people, she moved up and demurely asked "I do not know whether Bhagawan recognizes me". Prompt came the reply "Why not? Are you not Lakshmi? Did we not drink milk together?"

Vilacheri Ranga Iyer grew up with Bhagawan both in Tiruchuzhi and later in Madurai. He was Bhagawan's best friend and the two shared many common interests centred around sports. A few years after Bhagawan's move to Virupaksha Cave in 1903, Ranga

had made a visit to meet his childhood friend. Throwing all protocols to the wind, Ranga greeted his old friend with his customary punch to Bhagawan's shoulder!

Let us dig deep and listen to their conversation. After all Bhagawan was still Venketraman to his friend and Ranga said:

"Even the evening before you left Madurai, we were playing football. I am supposed to be your closest friend. Why did you not tell me that you were going away the next day?"

"Ranga, did I travel like a normal traveller with baggage and all that? It was a supreme force which drew me that day to Arunachala. Where was the room for any formalities to be observed?"

Seeing his once strong and sturdy friend reduced to a skeletal frame, Ranga was moved. Here was a man in worldly life face-to-face with an immortal Self. But worldly people have their Samsara and hence problems! Ranga was no exception here. Sensing that Ranga was not travelling well in life, Bhagwan says:

"Hey Ranga, what is bothering you? Have you given enough to your family to live on, while you are away here?"

Sensing the unease of Ranga, Bhagawan nails it and says:

"So you have some financial problems! Is it enough if you get ten thousand Rupees? Will it solve all your problems if you get ten thousand Rupees?"

A few days later, Ranga took leave of his friend and went to Chennai. He managed to get a sales job, selling trucks and buses and earns a commission of exactly ten thousand Rupees! A great amount of money in early 1900s!!

It was rare for Bhagawan to give any prasada of any kind, but Ranga was blessed to get some Vibhuti (sacred ash) while leaving for Chennai. This prasada becomes the panacea for all of Ranga's family woes- curing his daughter of a snake bite while another regains life after a fall into a well. Another daughter deemed insane is cured by Bhagawan just reading Ranga's letter with pleas for HIS help!

On one of Ranga's visits, Bhagawan rekindled their youthful days and took Ranga for a swim at 3 AM. In water, Ranga remembered the powerful kicks of his friend Venketraman whose kicks now were so feeble that they felt tender like a rose petal. When asked how could this have happened, Bhagawan says:

"Is it so? Maybe spiritual perfection changes even the body."

They were old friends after all and there was nothing taboo between them. Ranga asks:

"Bhagawan, why does your head shake all the time and why do you need a walking stick?"

“Why? Can you imagine a violent, wild, mad elephant entering a small thatched shed? What would happen to the hut is what happened to this body. It will go to pieces.”

At the very beginning of this evening, we heard that Bhagawan’s father was a pleader (lawyer) and hence legal papers at home would have been a normal thing. But you may not have known that little Venketraman had helped himself to a large collection of these papers to make paper boats and set them off in the waters closeby!

Though Sundaram Iyer loved his children, he was livid with rage and ordered his wife to undress her son Venketraman, shave his head and send him out of the house with just a loin cloth and never to return!

Ranga, the repository of all things that friends share and knew of each other could only tell Bhagawan that perhaps this was meant to be. On his first visit to Virupaksha Cave, Ranga recalled saying:

“Venketraman, do you remember your father predicted your ascetic state many years ago?”

Prophecy, the Ordainer and destiny may all be difficult words to understand their true meaning. What words in ink were lost forever by Sundaram Iyer in those legal papers drowned as boats we may never know?

But what we can indulge in is to say that the drowning of papers was ordained so that a large force would rise to lift us all higher than ever before through the life of Sage Ramana in our quest to know ‘Who am I?’

What we must not fail to note is that the letters in the name RAMANA when re-arranged become MARANA, which means DEATH in our Indian languages. Remembering this is what is called SMARANA!

Was HIS name also pre-ordained with HIS central message that we be centred on the SELF, (the REAL, TRUTH, SATYAM, ATMA, BRAHMAN which all mean the same)? HIS life and teachings therefore are about how we could lead to the MARANA (death) of the EGO so that we are CENTERED on our true SELF that the REAL alone shines!

Sage Ramana is that infinite SELF, Arunachala. The hill Arunachala is the silent Ramana.

Om Tat Sat.

To tune into the teachings of Bhagawan Sri Ramana Maharishi, please visit:
http://www.sriramanamaharshi.org/resource_centre/audio-2/

The books and resources of Sri Ramanasramam including their website is acknowledged.
