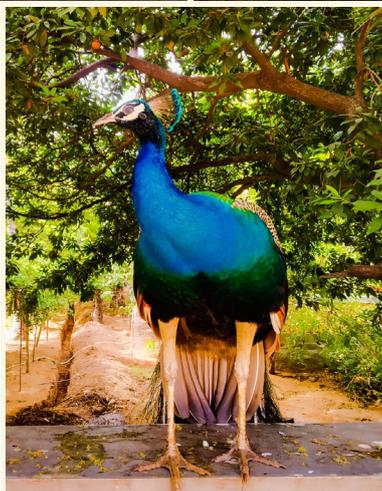


Saranagati



SARANAGATI
SRI RAMANASRAMAM

JUNE 2021
VOL. 15, NO.6



D. Thiyagarajan



Saranagati



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IN THIS
ISSUE

Dear Devotees,

The month of May ends with the Ashram still in lockdown and many known to the Ashram having fallen ill from Covid.

The Ashram is very quiet with only a skeleton crew of staff members here to maintain basic functions. Devotees are largely confined to their houses in Ramana Nagar and are being urged to stay indoors. Evenings on the street in front of the Ashram are eerily quiet and empty of people and vehicles.

In this issue, we continue with Eleanor Pauline Noye's account of her years with Bhagavan.

For videos, photos and further news of events, go to <http://www.sriramanamaharshi.org> or write to us at saranagathi@sriramanamaharshi.org.

In Sri Bhagavan,
The Editorial Team

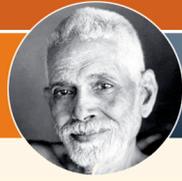
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Calendar of Ashram Events

3rd June (Thur) Maha Puja
13th June (Sun) Punarvasu
22nd June (Tues) Cow Lakshmi Day
24th June (Thur) Full Moon
10th July (Sat) Punarvasu
23rd July (Fri) Full Moon

24th July (Sat) Guru Purnima
6th August (Fri) Punarvasu
21st August (Sat) Full Moon
1st September (Weds) Bhagavan's Advent Day
3rd September (Thur) Punarvasu
20th September (Mon) Full Moon





IN PROFILE

Eleanor Pauline Noye (Part II)

The experience of meeting Bhagavan in the early summer of 1939 was for Eleanor Pauline Noye nothing short of a miracle. The reader will recall from the first segment that Eleanor had been debilitated and could hardly make the trip from America. It was as though her life depended on it and yet what little strength she had left in her before meeting Bhagavan was almost not adequate to make the journey. As it turned out, during her first encounter with Bhagavan, she was cured of her affliction and ‘slept soundly for the first time in years’. By all accounts this was miraculous. Of course, science has an explanation, too.

Somnologists studying the brain of a perfectly healthy person during laboratory sleep deprivation experiments find that with intense lack of sleep, the brain’s chemical distribution begins to resemble a person suffering from schizophrenia. This results, as one would expect, not only in severe fatigue but marked behavioural changes. Eleanor’s unease and physical debility were directly related and by the time she set off from the US, her health was at an all-time low.

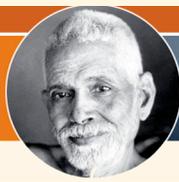
Once reaching Ramanasramam, however, things changed dramatically. Eleanor was surprised to discover that on her first night, she could sleep. The following day, her energy and mood were buoyant, unlike anything she had experienced in a long time. What was it about Bhagavan that brought about such a change in her?

Perhaps coming into the presence of one free of entanglements mirrored for her what clarity was. Eleanor only needed to see what a truly sound mind and body looked like, to see someone who embodied the freedom she so desperately longed for. The worries and concerns that had plagued her for so long seemed altogether empty of substance, of any enduring reality. When face-to-face with the Absolute, with someone clear-sighted and free of agitation, she let go of the vexations and lamentations that had been her daily companions. ‘His inner peace is radiated to us all,’ she later reflected.

A few days after this first meeting, she tracked Bhagavan’s movements and learned that he usually came down from the Hill prior to recitation of the Vedas at 5 pm. She saw a few devotees line up along the path to enjoy an intimate moment with Bhagavan as he passed by and availed herself of the opportunity and stood along with them. As he approached, he glanced over at her and casually asked her in English, ‘Do you have more peace now?’ She replied with a hearty, ‘Yes, I do.’

With each passing day, her complexion transformed. She became more relaxed and more at ease. She had no words to describe her experience and was beside herself with gratitude for the sea-change that had come over her in his presence. With such a huge release of worry and distress, emotion sometimes got the best of





her. If she wept profusely when leaving Bhagavan in the summer of 1939, she wept all the more vigorously upon her unplanned return a month later. In this connection, Devaraj Mudaliar recalled something that Ramakrishna Paramahansa had once said: 'If you will only cry for God with a tenth of the fervour with which you cry for your spouse and children, you will see God in no time'. Bhagavan had once remarked to a devotee along similar lines: 'If you can cry tears for not finding God, he will not be able to hide himself.'

As Eleanor tearfully made ready to leave the Ashram, Bhagavan assured her that she need not grieve and that he would be with her wherever she was. Devaraj Mudaliar told Bhagavan that Eleanor had captured Bhagavan's heart 'by means of her tears'. In response, Bhagavan quoted a line from *Tiruvachakam*:

False am I; my heart too is false, and my love also is false. Yet, bound by tainted karma, I can win You by crying for You. Nectar! Essence of the sugar cane! Sweet Lord! Grant to me in grace, your devotee, the path that leads to union with Thee!

Eleanor left the Ashram feeling deep down in her heart that she should be near Bhagavan. For his part, Bhagavan had shown her during this first two-month visit that there was more to the spiritual journey than just sound health. He instructed her about the source of her long-time affliction: 'Get rid of the notion "I am impure"'. The Self is ever pure. All [your agony] is the work of the mind. If you get at the root of the mind, all these wrong notions will disappear.²

When the time came, Eleanor made plans to leave, bought her passage to the US and after a trip to Kashmir, took the train to Calcutta at the appointed time. However, at the last moment as she got ready to board the ship, she could not go. She writes:

*I changed my plans. Instead of going back to America by the next boat, I took the train, leaving Calcutta for Tiruvannamalai. Curious 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.*³

1 *Tiruvachakam*, Tiru Chadakam, 9.10; *My Recollections of Bhagavan Sri Ramana*, pp. 49-50; see also, *The Mountain Path*, Jan 2006, p. 78.

2 *Reminiscences*, G.V. Subbaramaya, p. 55.

3 *The Golden Jubilee Souvenir*, p. 479.

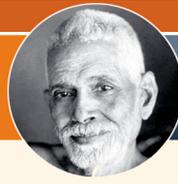


It became clear that her reasons for leaving the Ashram had been mistaken and that she need not have gone away at all. On this second visit she intuited that she should settle in for a longer stay. She again took up Ashram life which she had already come to love:

*It is a privilege to have 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 everything. And the rich and poor received the same kind attention, as also the animals. No distinction was ever evident. One day I saw Bhagavan stoop down and pick up three grains of rice. That simple act taught me 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.*⁴

4 *Ibid.*, p. 479.





In the Dining Hall

One time at lunch, Bhagavan's grand-nephew Ganesan, a feisty three-year-old, went to Eleanor who was sitting on the floor in the dining hall having her lunch. He insisted on eating from her leaf plate. The lady cooks who were all orthodox were taken aback by this flagrant breach of custom. They thus hurriedly scooped up the child, but he protested loudly as he had been quite content sitting where he was. Bhagavan saw immediately how to make everyone happy. He told the cooks to bring a plate of food with a spoon, as his insistence had not in fact been to eat from Eleanor's plate but, rather, to eat with a spoon as she was doing, something he had not seen before. When they placed his plate and spoon next to Eleanor's, he was happy again. Bhagavan looked at the youngster and said: 'See! Your wish is fulfilled!'

The Monsoon

The weather moderated with the arrival of the rainy season. Eleanor began to get acquainted with the seasonal rhythms of South India. She writes:

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. 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 sometimes 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.⁵

One morning having picked a rose, Eleanor sat in the hall, wondering whether she should give it to Bhagavan. After a few minutes, she laid it on the small offering stool near his sofa. 'What's that?' Bhagavan asked. She replied, 'Only a rose.' He said, 'Give it to me.' He took the rose and touched it to his forehead and cheeks. She was so deeply touched that tears came to her eyes.

Jayanti 1939

After the rainy season, Eleanor got to experience Bhagavan's Jayanti which was celebrated that year on 27th December. Thousands came for prasadam and a pandal was erected for the event:

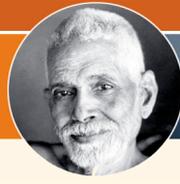
One can never forget the Master as he sits majestically on his couch, amidst garlands of flowers, surrounded by his loving devotees, who are so happy to be with him at that time. It is a day of rejoicing and thanksgiving for everyone, even the animals. As I walked along that Jayanti night and looked up at Arunachala, so silent, I was held spellbound by the beauty. 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.'

*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. 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?'*⁶

⁵ Ibid., p. 480.

⁶ Ibid., p. 481.





Leaving for America

In the spring of 1940, ten months had passed since she had taken leave of her twin sister in the US and now signs started to appear that it might be time to return home:

*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.*⁷

As the time drew near Eleanor became 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. Little monkeys lined up on either side of the hill path. Bhagavan told them to come and say goodbye to me. When we reached the hall, Bhagavan read a few comforting passages from Psalm 139: 7-10. He invited me to have supper with him, even though ladies are not allowed in the dining hall at night. It was blessed joy to have that last meal with him. 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.*⁸

⁷ Ibid., p. 481.

⁸ Ibid., p. 482.

World War II

Returning to the US by ship in the spring of 1940, Eleanor's intention had been to come back within a couple of years, but the US became embroiled in the war and travel was no longer opportune. She stayed in touch with Bhagavan through correspondence and wrote to Niranjanananda Swami and Bhagavan's attendant, Krishnaswami. Every time a letter came from Eleanor, Bhagavan seemed to be moved while reading it because she would invariably say something like, 'Bhagavan! I am writing this letter to you with tears rolling down my cheeks', and this was no exaggeration.

Nambiar in America

When the war ended in 1946, international travel resumed. That year K.K. Nambiar went to the US on business. At the Ashram, he was instructed to 'Go and meet Noye when you are there'. Nambiar followed the advice and when he was on the US West coast, he contacted Eleanor at her home in the San Fernando Valley where she lived in Los Angeles. Nambiar writes:

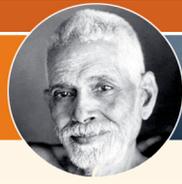
From my hotel in the centre of Los Angeles I went to Van Nuys, where Mrs. Noye awaited me with her automobile. Clad in a simple ochre-coloured frock, and looking for me eagerly, she burst into tears as soon as our eyes met. She could hardly utter any words of welcome, for such was her emotion on seeing one who had come from Sri Bhagavan. She drove me to her home where she lived with her sister and brother-in-law. We spent several hours talking about Bhagavan. We also wrote a joint letter to the Ashram about my visit to that place. After spending the day with her, I returned to my hotel in the evening. She returned my visit two days later, and we spent the evening talking about Bhagavan and meditating on him. After dinner, I took her back to San Fernando Valley. It

Events in Sri Ramanasramam: The Organic Farm at Nallavan Palayam



In these difficult days of supply chain disruptions due to the pandemic, a steady supply of vegetables, fruits and cattle-feed grass from our farm has been a boon. With good rainfall last year, the yield is high. We are reaping the benefit of a bountiful crop of seasonal snake gourd, bottle gourd, bitter gourd, yams, sweet potatoes, groundnuts, brinjal, ladyfingers, as well as greens, lemons, sapotas, papaya, jackfruit and above all, cattle-feed grass for the gosala. —





was half past ten at night. Her sister had retired. Mrs. Noye and I sat alone in her drawing room and meditated on Sri Bhagavan. I had only a few minutes to spare, for I had to catch the last streetcar to go back to my hotel to pack up my kit and with my colleagues proceed to the Los Angeles Airport to catch the plane bound for Nebraska. Both of us sat with closed eyes, meditating on Bhagavan, whose physical body was more than ten thousand miles away. The peace that I enjoyed during those few moments was indescribable. Verily, we felt his benign presence and his peace filled our hearts. I took leave of her and retraced my way to the Van Nuys Tram Terminus. By the time I reached my Hotel at Los Angeles, my colleagues had already left for the airport. So, I hurriedly packed up, paid my dues and proceeded to the airport just in time to board the plane. I felt Bhagavan's help right through and when I was comfortably seated in the plane and was flying high above the clouds, I felt an urge to write to the Ashram about the air journey in the small hours of the morning, the sublime feeling and the peace that enveloped me at that time.⁹

Indeed, this letter did reach the Ashram as did the joint letter written by Eleanor, her sister Bettie and Nambiar. Both letters were handed over to Bhagavan who read them out in the hall. Eleanor described how throughout Nambiar's visit, she felt as if Bhagavan had been present with her.¹⁰

Returning to Bhagavan

In 1949, Eleanor finally got her chance to return to the Ashram. She had learned that Bhagavan was not completely well and made every effort to come. She took a steamer through the Suez Canal and when she reached Madras, where she overnighted before taking the train to Tiruvannamalai, she had a dream. In the

⁹ *The Guiding Presence of Sri Ramana*, K.K. Nambiar, 'United States - Mrs. Eleanor Pauline Noye'.

¹⁰ *Day by Day*, 29-10-46.



L to R: K.K. Nambiar, Eleanor and Dr. T.N. Krishnaswami, 1949

dream, she was instructed to feed two sadhus living on the beach in Tiruvanmiyur, near Madras. She didn't know it at the time but the two sadhus—Vakeel Swami (Swami Suresananda) and the Swedish sadhu, Swami Ramanananda Giri—were both connected with Bhagavan. They had constructed a thatched hut and were living on fruits and tender coconuts. As it would turn out, on this hot summer's day, they were both feeling hungry but there was nothing to eat. They would have had to walk two miles to reach the nearest village. Suresananda's biographer tells the story:

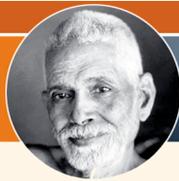
*Reluctantly the two remained hungry, but soon there was a knock at the door. A lady carrying a big tiffin carrier had brought cooked rice meals for both the swamis. She had come as a result of a dream which had directed her to serve them. The lady was Eleanor Noye, an American devotee of Bhagavan.*¹¹

¹¹ "Swami Suresananda: A True Devotee of Bhagavan", *The Mountain Path*, July 2008, p. 88.

Announcement: New Online Index of Books and Journals

Sri Ramanasramam has indexed books and journals for devotees who want to digitally access their content with a simple search. So far, all 58 years of *Mountain Path* and more than one hundred Ashram books in English are text-searchable. You can find the search interface at <http://www.sriramana.org>. More books to be added soon. —





Conclusion

Eleanor made her way to Tiruvannamalai and rejoiced in being reunited with Bhagavan after a gap of nine and a half years. Nambiar made an amateur film in the Ashram and in the footage, Eleanor can be seen among the retinue of devotees trailing along behind Bhagavan during his stroll through the Ashram.

Eleanor's comments about this third visit came only in subsequent correspondence. Bhagavan's departure from this physical world was deeply painful for her but she also knew that her guru was something far beyond the physical form:

*Years ago when Sri Bhagavan lived on the hill a disciple asked him who he was, Bhagavan replied: 'Within the sacred Lotus heart of everyone, From mighty Vishnu up in Heaven serene, to low down mortal man, the Self, as Pure Awareness, shines Supreme, who is Arunachala Ramana Himself. And when thy mind in love for Him doth pine and melt, and reach the inmost heart, wherein He dwells as thine Own Self, the Lord, belov'd, lo, then, thine inner eye would open, and as pure Awareness, Him reveal.'*¹²

In 1953, Eleanor reflected on the blessed final days she spent with Bhagavan:

Words cannot express the infinite love and tenderness we experienced during those last days beside him. He seemed to clasp us to his bosom as a mother clasps her child. As we beheld his

12 *The Call Divine*, August 1953 p.48.

utter submission, one could not help but think of Lord Jesus before the crucifixion. Sri Bhagavan treated his body as something apart from him. As the body grew weaker his face became more radiant, his eyes shone like two stars. He was ever abiding in the Self, the Sun of Pure Consciousness. He made this remark a few days before he passed away. 'They say I am dying, but I shall be more alive than before.' Now he is all-pervading.

She continues:

*Sri Bhagavan never asked anything for himself but was always looking after the comforts of his devotees, and he did this to the day he passed away. He insisted upon giving darshan twice daily and thousands walked past the room where he lay. A brilliant meteor moved slowly across the sky and disappeared over Arunachala, just as Bhagavan was released from his physical form at 8 47 p.m. on the 14th of April 1950 (Tamil month of Chitrai, Krishna Trayodasi), but it was not the end. He has no beginning or end. As the devotees chanted 'Arunachala Siva', the curtain was drawn on one of the greatest souls that ever trod this earth. Sri Bhagavan is indeed a blessing to all mankind. But what tribute can a candle pay to the sun? 'What we best conceive, we fail to speak.'*¹³

*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!*¹⁴ —

13 From *The Koran*.

14 *The Call Divine*, August 1953 p. 48.

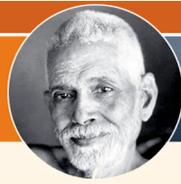
Events in Sri Ramanasramam: The Ashram Vaccine Programme



With twists and turns owing to supply issues and lockdown travel restrictions, the Ashram's vaccine programme is now back on track. The Government has started door-to-door vaccine camps in Tiruvannamalai and Government medical staff are going door-to-door to register residents for the vaccine. Many who are wanting to be vaccinated worry about travel restrictions and how to come and go to the nearby Government hospital where vaccines are being administered. But travel is allowed for vaccine appointments. Thus far, the Ashram has fully vaccinated 275 staff and devotees in Ramana Nagar and only a few staff members remain to be innoculated.

To date, India has successfully vaccinated 11.8% of its population with at least the first dose given to 16.1 crore people (up from 1.18 crore on 27th Feb). A full 4.2 crore or 3.1% of the population is now fully vaccinated. Before the second wave, vaccine totals were at a steady 30 lakhs per day with a peak of 45 lakhs on 5th April. Recently vaccine totals dropped below 10 lakhs per day owing to supply issues and lockdowns. The new initiative hopes to eventually scale up to 100 lakh doses per day. This ambitious goal, if achieved, would outpace vaccine programmes anywhere in the world and could accomplish the aimed-for goal of vaccinating 70% of the population by early 2022. [For vaccine inquiries in Ramanasramam, please contact the dispensary at: <srmdispensary@gmail.com> or phone: 91-9600325724]. —





Global Online Satsangs and Bhagavan's 71st Aradhana

With India still in lockdown and with international commercial flights to India restricted, the Ashram is making every effort to upgrade its technological hardware to allow for regular high-quality broadcasts of events from the Ashram. At the moment, all live streaming is on hold given the current government restrictions for gatherings. But when the time comes, the Ashram will resume its thrice-weekly Tamil Parayana live streams. In the meantime, Ramana kendras around the globe are taking up the baton and carrying on with live Ramana satsang functions.

On 30th May, for example, the Connecticut Satsang Group, which regularly broadcasts their Saturday meetings, did a large online programme for their annual *Saranagati Satsang*. See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W9AV3BX7Rns>.

Before the strict lockdown began in Tamil Nadu on 10th May, Sri Ramanasramam kicked off an online global event for Bhagavan's 71st Aradhana starting at 5.30 am IST. The Ashram remained closed and only a few staff members attended the function. The celebration began with the chanting of Bhagavan's verses followed by Milk Offering at 6.45 am, a pre-recorded interview with Katya Douglas

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

SARANAGATI SATSANG

Dear Devotees,
You are warmly invited to join us for our annual **SARANAGATI SATSANG**, which will be based on the theme of **"SURRENDER"** and how Bhagavan's devotees have surrendered.

Saranagathi will be celebrated virtually on YouTube Live this Sunday, May 30th, 2021

6.00 P.M. to 9.30 P.M. IST from 8.30 a.m. to 12.00 p.m. EST.

In Sri Bhagavan, Connecticut Satsang Group

Please join by clicking this link
<https://www.youtube.com/c/SriRamanasramam/live>

(Kitty Osborne) <<https://youtu.be/xY6Y9z9p50M>>, followed by Rudrabhishekam and Vedaparayana, songs by devotees and *arathi* and, at 9.45 am, final arathi to Sri Ramaneswara Mahalingam. For video, go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_RsPViw1s10>.

That evening, carefully scheduled programming began in France, UK and Arunachala Ashrama, NY. The N. America string of events included Ramana Kendras in D.C., Toronto, Ottawa, Ohio, Michigan, Houston, Austin, Tampa Bay, an International Satsang in Spanish, N. Carolina, Georgia San Francisco, LA, Seattle and San Diego, concluding with Arunachala Ashrama, NY.

The penultimate event was a talk by Dr. Anand Ramanan, President of Sri Ramanasramam, who spoke at 8.45 pm EST (6.15 am IST, the following day). See <<https://youtu.be/yU9Zs2eqrD0>> —

[For videos of events, see: <<https://youtu.be/v5U16rvhv48>>; <<http://www.youtube.com/c/ArunachalaAshrama>>; for live-streams, see <www.youtube.com/c/sriramanasramam/live>.]





Mask Use in the Second Wave (Part II)



Though the second wave in India continues, an effective lockdown is in place and conditions are sure to improve soon.

In the last segment, we looked at how mask use is key for regulating the spread of COVID-19 and

we talked about SARS-CoV-2's high *reproduction ratio* or R_0 . If mask use helps in slowing transmission through the collective, it also protects the individual by minimizing the probability of infection, and the intensity of infection when it occurs.

Some will argue that masks are not 100% effective. This is true. But even poorly designed masks can make a big difference. Here's why.

Virologists talk of viral load or the number of viral particles in an infected person's blood. The higher the number of viral particles that enter the system at the time of exposure, the sooner the onset of symptoms. But if the viral load at the time of exposure can be reduced through mask use, then the onset of symptoms will be delayed, and the intensity of symptoms reduced.

The body has a threshold of viral particles in the blood before it gets overwhelmed by a disease. When a virus enters the body, it begins to replicate and when its number reaches a given threshold, disease sets in.

Suppose the body's threshold for a given virus is 950,000 viral particles and that each particle replicates every 5 hours and that the initial exposure is 15,000 viral particles. Then after 5 hours, there will be 30,000 particles; after 10hrs a total of 60,000; at 15hrs/120,000; at 20hrs/240,000; and at 25hrs/480,000. Finally, after 30hrs, the threshold will have been crossed and the

person will fall sick. But supposing—all else being equal—the person is wearing a mask at the time of exposure. Let us suppose that instead of 15,000 viral particles entering the body through the mouth or nose, only 50 particles make their way through the gaps where the mask rests on the face. The scenario will be much different: at 5hrs/100 viral particles, 10hrs/200, 15hrs/400, 20hrs/800, 1,600, etc. To cross the threshold, more than 14 replication periods will be required. In other words, in this hypothetical scenario, it would take about 90 hours, or nearly four days for symptoms to manifest.

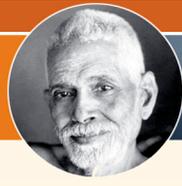
The difference between 30 hours and 4 days can be significant for the body which needs every available minute to mount a defence. The more time available, the more antibodies the body can manufacture, each tailored to fight the infection. When sickness sets in, there will be a reduced probability of a severe disease progression.

All this relates to vaccines which cannot be a 100% guarantee against infection. Give the body a jump on antibodies through vaccination, however, and when it is exposed to COVID, the antibody count will likely be high enough to stave off infection. Even when the viral load is too high to prevent infection, a vaccinated person will mount a more successful defence and thus likely be spared permanent injury or more dreaded outcomes.

Mask use and vaccines are thus the means of giving the body time to learn to live with SARS-CoV-2 which, it would seem, is here to stay. In the not-too-distant future, experts tell us, everyone will have antibodies to COVID, either from vaccines or from direct infections, or both. If one could somehow avoid catching a cold or flu ever again for the rest of their life, they would still not be able to avoid catching SARS-CoV-2 which, as we saw in the last issue, is much more infectious than any flu or cold. Besides, if no effective cure for the common cold has been discovered to date, no one should bank their hopes on a cure for COVID.

Mask use is thus the means to self-protection until we gain the immunity through vaccination required for living safely in a world where coronavirus spread is as broad as that of the common cold. —





Obituaries

[We regret to announce the demise of numerous devotees this month (mostly due to COVID), and offer brief glimpses into their lives in this collection that, to date, exceeds the tally for obituaries in any single issue.]



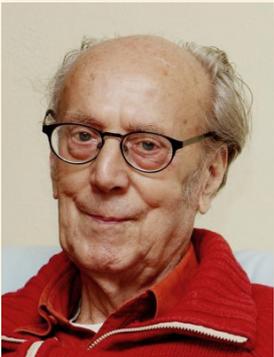
Sri Sethu Ramanan (1953-2021) was the great-grandson of Bhagavan's uncle Nelliappier. Ever amiable and helpful, he visited the Ashram each Jayanti and Aradhana to do service. He was working in a printing press in Chennai and for some time printed the Ashram's Tamil publications. Upanayanam of both his sons was performed in the Ashram's Morvi Guest House. —

Smt. Lakshmi Venkataraman (1945-2021) was granddaughter of Lakshmana Sharma, pioneer of Nature Cure in S India and the Sanskrit scholar, who translated Bhagavan's Tamil works into Sanskrit under Bhagavan's guidance. Lakshmi was also related to the late Capt. Narayanan. Lakshmi built a house nearby and despite severe vision impairment, visited regularly and brought out a book of her grandfather's works. She was known for her cheerful, gentle disposition. —



Sri S. Krishnamurthy (1948-2021) known as SBI Krishnamurthy as he had worked in the local SBI bank and helped in handling Ashram accounts. He was the great-grandson of Parvatham, Bhagavan's mother's younger sister. He came to Tiruvannamalai in 1969 and initially stayed in the President's compound. His father Subbiah was the boyhood friend of TNV (Venkatoo), the sub postmaster at the Ashram and later served as the Ashram storekeeper. —

Smt. V. Lalitha Rajeswaramma (1931-2021) was daughter of Apithakuchamba and granddaughter of Gambiram Sessaiah. Bhagavan used to ask her mother to sing and Bhagavan listened with great devotion. In her visits, Lalitha observed that Bhagavan only took two iddies with groundnut chutney at breakfast. She was blessed to have Bhagavan's darshan on numerous occasions including on the day Bhagavan attained Mahanirvana. —



Sri Jiri Vacek (1931-2021) was active as a teacher of yoga, mysticism and non-dual philosophy in the Czech Republic. His spiritual practice was based on Bhagavan's teachings. He authored the encyclopaedia of yoga and mysticism published in a series entitled *The Highest Yoga and Mysticism*. His articles were published in various Czech and foreign journals. He translated into Czech a number of works, not least of all, by and on Bhagavan. —

