

# Saranagati



SARANAGATI  
SRI RAMANASRAMAM

NOVEMBER 2019  
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Michael Highbarger



# Saranagati



NOVEMBER 2019  
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IN THIS  
ISSUE

Dear Devotees,

In this issue, we begin a new biography of a devotee who spent more than two years in Bhagavan's presence up until his Mahanirvana in 1950. Thelma Rappold took copious notes throughout her stay at Ramanasramam in the late 1940s and compiled them into a large manuscript which is only now being published for the first time. See this issue's *In Profile: Thelma Rappold, In Search of Bhagavan* starting on p. 3.

Starting on p. 6, *Putting Bhagavan into Practice* continues to explore ways of making Bhagavan's vichara more accessible in our daily lives. And on p. 8, we repeat the story of the Schroff family in memory of Hilda Kapur who passed away on the 11th October at the age of 89.

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

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## Calendar of Upcoming Events

- 12th November (Tues) Full Moon
- 17th November (Sun) Punarvasu
- 1st December (Sun) Karthigai Festival commences
- 10th December (Tues) Karthigai Deepam Day
- 11th December (Weds) Full Moon
- 14th December (Sat) Punarvasu

- 10th January (Fri) Full Moon
- 11th January (Sat) Bhagavan's 140th Jayanti
- 14th January (Tues) Pongal
- 20th January (Mon) Chinnaswamigal Aradhana
- 20 - 26th January Nochur Venkataraman Discourses
- 2nd February (Sun) Punarvasu





## IN PROFILE

### Thelma Rappold: In Search of Bhagavan

In September 1947, the American Thelma Benn crossed the Hudson aboard the S.S. Falcon en route to Southampton in the first leg of a long dreamed of pilgrimage to India. It was a trip that would change her, marking the end of one life and the beginning of another.

Thelma had never crossed the Atlantic, much less seen Asia, but she had saved enough money that she hoped would enable her to remain in India for several years.

Once in the UK, her stay was brief. In between the sights, she wasted no time in booking a passage

to Bombay, taking the help of some South Indian exchange students on their way home to Madras.

On October 13, 1947 at Liverpool, Thelma boarded the S.S. Empire Brent and embarked for Bombay, sailing via Gibraltar, Alexandria, the Suez Canal, Port Said and Colombo, Ceylon. Her intention was clear: to find a spiritual teacher which she felt only India could offer her. She carried a typewriter along with her to record day by day the unfolding sojourn. On the 5th of November, she makes her first entry from India:

*Dreams of many long-years-standing began to unfold this morning as the S.S. Empire Brent eased its way into Bombay harbour at dawn. India has always been the home of spirituality and the land of Self-Realization. May it also become the land of Realization for me.*

Thelma Benn had no idea what was in store for her, but her determination led her forth with great confidence into the broads of the subcontinent. She travelled by train to Delhi and Agra, and soon found herself in holy Kashi:

*Benares ranks in reverence and affection with the people of Hindu faith as Mecca does with the Mohammadans. Benares stands on the left bank of the Ganges in whose sacred waters pilgrims from all parts of India bathe, to wash away their sins. The whole life of the city is closely interwoven with the [observances] and ritual of Hinduism. Shrines, temples and palaces belonging to great Hindu nobles rise tier above tier from the water's edge, crowded with ghats, the minarets of the mosque of Aurangzeb towering overall. The holiest spot in the city is the Bisheshwar or Golden Temple, dedicated to Lord Siva and crowned by a dome and spire of copper covered with thin plates of gold. The Durga Temple is remarkable for its simple and graceful architecture. The temple of Annapurna is embellished with delicately tinted sculptures. The most esteemed ghats are those of Dasashwamedh, Panchganga and Manikarnika. According to legend, when Aurangzeb destroyed the original Vishwanath Temple, the image of Lord Siva was rescued and thrown into the well, thus making the water from this well much sought after by pilgrims.*

Longstanding connections with the Ramakrishna Mission led Thelma to contact Swami Pavitrananda who gave her cautions and advice in her search for a guru. He suggested writing to Sri Ramanasramam for permission to visit. He sent her to Belur Math, head





Math of the Ramakrishna Center five miles outside of Calcutta, and once there, she found herself in the capable hands of Swamis Chidananda, Viragananda, Atmabodhananda, Abhoyananda, Nirvananda and the President, Swamiji Virajananda, all of whom in their well-intentioned way, mentored her. She took advantage of the monastic schedule, spent her free time in the temples and apprenticed herself to the many spiritual hints offered her. Her well-wishers again urged her not to overlook South India and among other places, the town of Tiruvannamalai.

In mid-January, she left Howrah Station and travelled by the Puri Express to Orissa where she took refuge once again at the Ramakrishna Mission, beautifully situated on the Bay of Bengal. By the third week of January she was in Madras and a few days later, at Pondicherry in the Aurobindo Ashram. She met Aurobindo and the Mother and got some basic training in Ashram life, even taking up volunteer duties.

One day after several weeks at the Aurobindo Ashram, she befriended Dilip Kumar Roy who had some influence in the Ashram and was able to open doors for her. But the most significant connection he helped her to make was with a visitor from Tiruvannamalai. The day was 21st February, *Darshan Eve*, amid the crowd gathered for the celebration that was to take place the next day. Dr. Syed, a friend of Dilip Kumar Roy and a Ramana devotee, arrived at the Aurobindo Ashram. Upon meeting him, Thelma was impressed by his stillness and presence. His words roused deep interest in her as to what lay further down the road, namely in Tiruvannamalai. This propitious meeting was so influential that it took her only three days to pack up her life in Pondicherry, bid her farewells to the many friends and acquaintances she had come to know during the previous month, and board the charcoal-powered bus for the bumpy seven-hour overland journey to Arunachala.

She had a good feeling about her decision and got confirmation on the way. Over dusty roads, while lost in reverie, a face appeared in her dream-like mid-day slumber.

Arriving at the Tiruvannamalai bus terminal, a coolie loaded her luggage in a *vandi*, a two-wheeled



horse-drawn covered cart to carry her the rest of the way to Ramanasramam.

Raja Iyer, the Ashram postmaster and receptionist, greeted her at the gate and took her to the Ashram dining hall. Lunch had finished long before, but Raja insisted she have food and served her a full meal. This was her first time eating in the South Indian style from a banana leaf. She admired the walls of the dining hall decorated with pictures of the Maharshi and other great souls.

Raja told her that this was Bhagavan's resting hour but suggested they go to him anyway. Thelma was unprepared for what was to follow, feeling perhaps inappropriately dressed. But entering the darshan hall, her apprehensions proved unfounded:

*One look and those great oceanic eyes stopped all motion. He penetrated every atom of my being. My tongue lost its power of speech, even thoughts were momentarily at a standstill.*

No one was in the Hall apart from Bhagavan and his attendant. Thelma stood and stared, but was unable to utter a single word. Her written account continues:





*What just happened? He alone knows! I just stood there as if transfixed to the spot until Raja suggested it was time to go. The most startling thing once I came down to earth was that it was Bhagavan's face that had appeared to me so vividly during one of the catnaps on the way from Pondicherry. How exhilarating to know that the search for a guru has now ended and that I am here to stay for a long time, regardless of the primitive surroundings and glaring physical difficulties ahead. To be able to drink in Bhagavan's presence is all that matters now. The most wonderful part is that we are allowed to spend almost as much time as we like in Bhagavan's presence, thus giving absorption a free hand.*

Raja Iyer then took her to one of the Ashram guestrooms for a much-needed rest. After tea at 2.30 pm, everyone assembled in the meditation hall, the men on one side and the women on the other. Bhagavan sat on the sofa at one end of the hall with an attendant at his side. At 4.45 pm after reading the outgoing mail, he went for a short walk. While he was away, a place under the pandal outside the meditation hall was made ready. At 5.30 pm the Vedapatasala boys chanted the Rudram and Bhagavan's verses to Arunachala. At 6 pm, the ladies went to eat their dinner in order to be out of the Ashram by 6:30 pm. Mrs. Osborne, meeting Thelma for the first time, offered her Dr. Sujata Sen's cottage which was to be vacant until she returned from Madras.

Thelma took stock of all she was experiencing, taking in the setting and her very exotic surroundings. Her entry from 27th February reads:

*The Pondicherry Ashram is the most modern and Westernized Ashram in all India. Sri Ramanasramam goes to the opposite extreme. It has been referred to as the "Jungle Ashram" which it truly is. It is operated strictly according to old orthodox customs. It is located at the foot of Arunachala. On one side is located the Palakkottu jungle hermitage where sannyasin-devotees live, mostly on alms from the village. On the other side of the Ashram, except for a small dobhi hut and a few wayside shrines and samadhi tombs, is open country. Between the two small trails spread out fan-like in many directions, leading to the simple homes and thatched huts of the many householders, as well as other earnest seekers, who have come to offer themselves at the feet of Bhagavan. Ashram guestrooms are open only for a few days after which each must make his own arrangements in the little community that has clustered near Bhagavan. To come here means leaving one's home with all its pleasures and conveniences to live a primitive life. One can easily be content with the bare necessities of life in exchange for the rare and blessed privilege of being with a great Rishi like Bhagavan.*

From the first day, Thelma is intent on being present for early morning meditation and takes to life in the darshan hall, surprised that she feels no need to talk to the Maharshi, finding that being in his presence is sufficient:

*It amazes me how he sits absolutely quiet and motionless, yet his eyes are so penetrating. When I have questions, I do not verbalize them, because it isn't necessary; the questions are answered almost immediately. Our means of communication is a mind-to-mind connection. —*

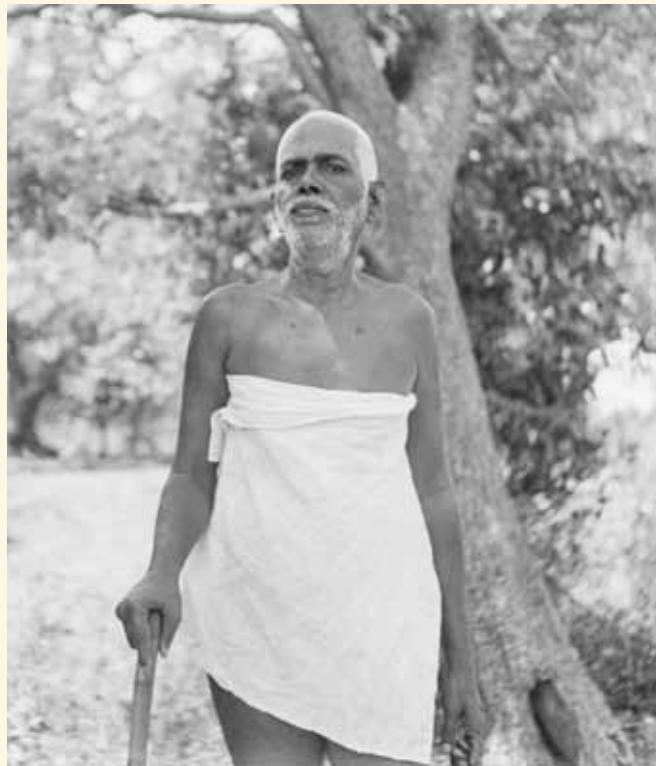
*(to be continued)*

## Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai: Desika Padigam §9

பருவர லாற்றும் பற்றுடை வினையின்  
பரிசென விளைந்திடும் ஊத்தைக்  
கருவர லாற்றுக் கழி படர் வருத்தம்  
கனவினும் நனவினும் கருதி  
வெருவரல் அடைந்து விதிர் விதிர்ப் பெய்தி  
மிக மிகக் கலங்கிடும் உள்ளத்  
தெருமரல் ஒழித்துத் திருவருள் புரிவாய்  
தேசிக ரமண மா தேவே.

Guru Ramana, Siva, while waking and  
dreaming,  
I have pondered on the pain, the spoiled life  
Affliction-filled, stretching between womb and tomb.  
I am perplexed, shattered and shiver in disgust at  
this cycle of birth and death.  
Please purify this mind and grant me grace. —





## PUTTING BHAGAVAN INTO PRACTICE

### Unmasking Affliction through Ramana Vichara (part II)

*[As mentioned in the last issue, the present series attempts to address a common habit of reading Bhagavan in an exclusively theoretical way instead of putting his teaching to work in our daily lives. As Bhagavan emphasized direct experience through practice, if he were in the physical form now in the 21st century, what down-to-earth steps would he give us for our day to day lives?]*

Readers of the first segment will no doubt have noticed how references to vichara differed significantly from the language Bhagavan used. For example, Bhagavan rarely used the word ‘vichara’ without ‘atma’ preceding it. But in the first segment of this series, never once was the phrase ‘atma-vichara’ made use of. Why?

Bhagavan’s vichara is not esoteric or in any way difficult to understand but for many of us, it is nevertheless deeply challenging to practice. Reducing the steep incline of the vichara

that Bhagavan taught involves searching for accommodations that help us gain purchase on vichara’s steep slopes. If the endeavour to practice Bhagavan’s vichara feels to some of us like encountering an impenetrable steel wall, might it be possible to come up with a beginner’s vichara that would help us climb this wall? When we were young, our parents affixed two additional wheels at the rear of our first bicycle to give it stability, might we devise some training wheels for vichara practice?

Bhagavan regularly acknowledges that surrender is the greatest, and once we have reached surrender, we do not need atma-vichara. But there are those of us for whom surrender and vichara are equally unreachable. Directing vichara towards afflictions, defilements and mental states—though not something Bhagavan ever mentioned at length—is a practice that serves as an adaptation, while nevertheless preserving the spirit of Bhagavan’s vichara. Such a practice is powerful, not just in cultivating a meaningful vichara practice but in learning how more easily to conduct our lives.]

In the last issue, we concluded with the discussion of *samskara duhkha*, afflictions born of reactivity to earlier unresolved afflictions and the layering effect that such neglect can bring about. We discussed how unhealed afflictions can constellate and take on a life of their own, communicating with one another, aggravating one another. The nexus feels solid, so we give it a name. We call it ‘ego’, ‘deluded mind’, ‘small self’ or ‘manas’ and imagine it having an independent reality. Here is where Bhagavan asks us to insert our investigation. The *who* in ‘Who am I?’ is negatively positioned, is not meant to identify an entity but rather to reveal precisely that no such entity exists. Our entire lives, Bhagavan tells us, have been spent grasping at a delusion and calling it ‘self’. Bhagavan’s vichara is designed to upend this delusion. The inverse of denial, enquiry aims at bringing everything into the light of awareness. Once we are able to see and acknowledge our denial, we deprive it of its power.

Bhagavan once commented that “suffering is the way [to the] Realisation of God” (*Talks* §107). But how can suffering be the way? Is suffering not something we should avoid at all costs?

If suffering is born of wanting things to be other than they are, such wanting places us in an adversarial relationship with our life day to day. Sometimes





suffering is the only means for toppling our delusions and serves as a catalyst for digging deeper, helping us to face what is not true in us and to mourn the sense of loss that such an encounter invariably brings with it.

Mental suffering, afflictions and defilements are only bruised areas of the psyche, not monsters to be run away from, but little children crying out for our help. The old paradigm greets their cries with reactivity, judgment and resistance while vichara investigates them with non-evaluative attention. We cannot know our true Self until we identify and acknowledge our neuroses. Displacement narratives born of deficit consciousness, samskaras centred on lack and perpetual clinging to the notion of a separate self, generate insecurity. The delusion, however, seems self-confirming: a non-existing illusory self cannot be gotten rid of by force precisely because in battling it, we give the illusion strength. The illusion can take on clever forms, e.g. false humility, inverted egoism and narcissistic remorse. Inverted egoism involves being negatively focused on ourselves by obsessing on what seems to be our inherent shortcomings. Narcissistic remorse, often masked as moral shame, is the endless repenting of wrongdoings from the past. At first glance, inverted egoism and narcissistic remorse look like humility. But compulsively scrutinising deluded selfdom in a spirit of aversion, regret and hatred has the reverse effect. Heaping aversion upon defilement only increases defilement—and also increases our conceit—even if, in this instance, narratives of unworthiness seem to resemble humility.

When we investigate defilements and afflictions as mental states, the opaque ego is revealed to be only a collection of conditioned phenomena. Micro-vichara and beginner's enquiry are ways of peeling back the layers of this conditioned phenomena, probing whether or not there is anything of enduring substance in it.

If we take the investigation a step further, we inquire into the motivations behind our thoughts, words and deeds. Invariably, we learn that our assumed intentions and motivations rarely correspond to our actual intentions and motivations. As we investigate further, what once seemed solid proves fleeting. Peeling back

the layers reveals the ephemeral nature of the entity we are so invested in. It exposes false assumptions we have about who we are and why we do what we do. Arguably, this is where true humility begins. Seeing directly how mistaken we are about ourselves, our enquiry intensifies out of genuine interest. No further esoteric interventions or sophisticated psychologies are called for. Vichara's non-evaluative awareness is sufficient all by itself and offers the means for grieving inherited samskaric disruptions from the past. If surveying what is broken in us sounds disempowering, we pause to consider where genuine work is needed. Exposing what is not real and voluntarily releasing it is the beginning of any true healing. A Japanese saying goes, "We use the ground we fall on to get up again."

The reader may remember how Bhagavan likened vichara to the stick used to stir the funeral pyre: in the end, the stick is thrown into the fire as well. The stirring stick imagines itself as the one in control, a central player in the overall scheme of things, not realising that, like the other sticks in the pyre, it too is just wood intended for cremation.

In vichara, the separate self is used like the funeral pyre stick. It gets to be the centre of things, gets to lead the investigation but in the end, is consumed under the sway of enquiry, which gradually reveals its true nature as nothing more than sound and smoke.

In day to day living, we have virtually endless opportunities to put this practice to work. When we hear sharp words from our spouse, vichara helps us catch ourselves right before we go into damage control, reacting with the usual defences. Vichara allows us to savour the flavour of the blow. Hafiz once said:

*Don't surrender your heartache so quickly. Let it cut you more deeply. Let it ferment and season you as few human or even divine ingredients can.*

Bhagavan's vichara helps us gain the needed fortitude to allow ourselves to bear the brunt of what life dishes out, so that what has been injured can begin to be cut through. If till now we depended on standard defences to protect ourselves, through enquiry, we give ourselves over completely, and in such giving, begin to discover a whole new world opening up within us.—

(to be continued)





## Coming to Bhagavan: The Shroff Family

Peston D. Shroff was raised and educated in Vienna where his father, who had been a successful realtor in India, had come to settle. Peston, the youngest child, having learned German and excelled in academics, taught English as his first job and otherwise indulged a youthful passion for equestrian sports. On returning to India, he succeeded in various careers, first teaching zoology at St. Xavier's College, Bombay, as an assistant professor and later, during the war, rising to the position of Lieutenant Commander in the Royal Indian Navy. In his younger years, however, in exploring his many talents, he found he had a knack for stock trading and ventured into Bombay's share market. The

endeavour proved lucrative and almost overnight the young Shroff was wealthy beyond his wildest dreams. Favoured with success and good fortune, he married Dhun Dubash, the artistically-inclined daughter of a well-to-do family and began raising a family. But just as quickly as fortune had found him, disaster struck with the global financial crisis of the early 1930's and the Shroffs were suddenly penniless. So severe was the economic hardship that he began selling off family possessions and he and Dhun soon found they were unable even to properly feed their three children.

But it was during this period that small miracles began to visit the family. One day, a neighbourhood beggar-lady named Vhima came to the house and emptied the contents of her alms bowl on the doorstep of the Shroff home. With these coins, the family was able to buy food. It was also during these years that the Shroffs turned to spirituality. Inspired by Paul Brunton's *A Search in Secret India*, Peston and Dhun traveled to Tiruvannamalai. Arriving by the Madras Mail during the Jayanti celebrations of 1939, their first darshan of Bhagavan proved life-changing. Their affection for Bhagavan deepened in subsequent visits and by January 1945 they took the plunge and came to live at Ramanasramam.

With the war on, Peston, now an Indian Naval Officer, was compelled to come and go. But Mrs Shroff and the three children stayed permanently to enjoy the simplicity of Ashram life. Hilda, aged 15, Rhoda, 13, and Dadi, 12, having been used to an urban life, at first found the simple rural lifestyle challenging, yet the privations they faced served to

## Excerpt: The Relevance of Sri Ramana Maharshi's Teachings Today

*The Guru is both internal and external. From the exterior he gives a push to the mind to turn it inwards. From the interior He pulls the mind towards the Self and helps in the quieting the mind. That is the Guru's Grace ... The ancient path of Self-Enquiry was to be followed by the recluse in silence and solitude, withdrawn from the outer world. But by adapting an ancient path to modern conditions, Sri Bhagavan has made it a path to be followed invisibly in the conditions of modern life in the world. —*

Dr. Anand Ramanan

(from a talk at the Washington D.C. Advent programme, 1st September)





teach them surrender. In time, all were enveloped in the calm loving presence of Sri Bhagavan which, they later said, "acted as a balm for every anguished soul."

Renting Raju Chettiar's small thatched-roof cottage on Chengam Road, the family came to delight in the simplicity of their lodgings, its rustic surroundings and the majestic view of the Holy Hill. The kids took up schooling with Nilakantha Sastri, a retired inspector of schools in town, and they came to see Bhagavan mornings and evenings during Vedaparayana times.

### Meetings with Bhagavan

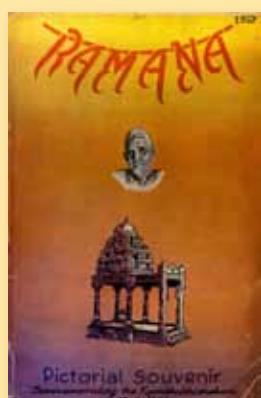
Dhun who found solace in letting Bhagavan know of family illness, occasionally sent her children to Bhagavan to deliver such news. One day the kids ran to the rear gate of the Ashram to await Bhagavan on his return from his daily walk on the Hill. "Bhagavan," they stammered, "so-and-so is very ill." Bhagavan listened patiently to learn of the condition of the stricken relative and, by a simple nod, gave the assurances they sought.

### Crying out to Bhagavan

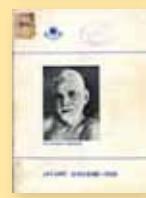
On other occasions, meetings with Bhagavan were much more intimate. Once, when young Rhoda was playing at Palakotthu together with Narayana Iyer's daughter, Kalyani, she slipped on a large moss-covered rock and fell into the water. In an effort to come to her aid, Kalyani also fell in. In danger of drowning, the two screamed at the tops of their

lungs. Rhoda began calling out in great desperation, "Bhagavan, help us! Bhagavan, help us!" The sadhus who occupied the huts at Palakotthu were away at the time but one disabled sadhu heard them and, though unable to render direct assistance, joined in sounding the alarm. Annamalai Swami, whose hut was nearby, heard the commotion and rushed to the scene. By casting forth his shoulder dhoti into the water, Kalyani was able to take hold of it, while Rhoda clung fast to her arm. By this means both emerged from the waters unscathed, in spite of swallowing mouthfuls of Palakotthu's tirtha. But in the panicked confusion that ensued, Professor Venkataram Iyer got the jumbled message that the Shroff girls had drowned in Palakotthu! He ran with all speed to the Hall to inform Bhagavan and his excited shouts through the window in Tamil raised a huge cry in the Hall. Dhun, Rhoda's mother, was seated before Bhagavan just next to Lucia Osborne. Not conversant in Tamil, she was uncertain what had been said, but knew it concerned her children and sensed that it was serious. Bhagavan, however, calmed her and told her not to worry, that everything would be all right. Meanwhile Rhoda and Kalyani, not aware of the false alarm, had taken the decision to go home and change into dry clothes before coming to the Hall. But when sighted on the road, it was insisted they go directly to Bhagavan without delay.

## Announcement: Archival Souvenirs Available for Free Downloading



Over the decades, numerous souvenirs have been released to commemorate special occasions e.g. Jayanti, Advent and Maha Kumbhabhishekams. Including articles, photographs and testimonies of interest to devotees, such collections have disappeared from public notice owing to limited editions. The Ashram would like to make such material available for devotees and is thus uploading pdfs and audio recordings onto the Ashram website (in the sources and audio sections). The 1965 Jayanti Souvenir, 1967 Ramana Pictorial Souvenir, 1969 Ramana Jyoti Souvenir, 1974 Venkatoo 60 Souvenir and 1996 Advent Centenary Souvenir are now available for free downloading at: <[www.sriramanamaharshi.org](http://www.sriramanamaharshi.org)>





Presenting themselves dripping-wet before Bhagavan, they began to weep. In a voice choked with emotion, Rhoda made her petition, "Bhagavan, you heard my cries didn't you, you heard me calling out to you from the water?" and then broke down in uncontrollable sobs. Bhagavan eased their distress by making light of the whole incident. Inquiring cheerily of Kalyani in Tamil, he said, "What? You thought you would measure the depth of Palakotthu Tirtham?" Finally, Bhagavan's loving smile soothed the panic in the Hall, and the panic in the hearts of the two young girls, and soon all was made well again.

### Winds of Change

By such experiences with Bhagavan over the years, total faith unfolded in the hearts of the Shroff family and the cataclysm that had racked the family all those years earlier was forgotten. Yet the glory days with Bhagavan were not to last forever. One day the children's father returned to Tiruvannamalai to inform them that he had a transfer to Delhi where the family

would have to move. "Pack up, we are going to Delhi." The kids were devastated. Having grown accustomed to being in Bhagavan's presence, they despaired—as did the Lt. Commander himself—at the thought of ever being apart from him. The children wept openly before Bhagavan in the Hall, praying that he might bring about a miracle. Their father chided them for being childish but they continued to pray. The next day, as if by divine intervention, a telegram arrived from the Naval Office in Delhi, noting the urgency created by the upcoming Partition and summoning Lt. Commander Shroff to Delhi at once. In this way the children's prayers were answered and they were able to stay on with Bhagavan a little longer.

Eventually the whole family resettled in Bombay, but years later, even after their parents had departed this world and the three had grown up to have children of their own, they all continued their devotion to Bhagavan and came for regular visits to the Ashram.—

## Obituary: Smt. Hilda Kapur



**S**mt. Hilda Kapur, the eldest of three siblings, was born Hilda Shroff in Sholapur on 7th April 1930. After a huge cyclone in her youth when just a girl of nine years old, she was standing on the veranda of the family home and saw an elderly man walking towards the flat. She said to herself, "This man is coming to help us." It was not long after this that her parents began coming to Ramanasramam. When Hilda first saw a photo of Bhagavan, she recognized that the man who had approached after the cyclone had been Bhagavan. Hilda, her parents and her sister, Rhoda and brother, Dadi came to stay near the Ashram in January 1945 when Hilda

was fifteen years old. In her adult years, Hilda continued to visit the Ashram regularly, even while holding down a job and raising four children as a single parent. Her many beautiful incidents of a life with Bhagavan became family legend. After a long battle with multiple health issues, on 11th October 2019, Hilda Kapur attained the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan. —

### Announcement:

#### Nochur Sri Venkataraman's January 2020 Discourses

In consideration of Bhagavan's 140th Jayanthi falling late this year (11th January) and being followed very closely by the Pongal celebrations, Sri Nochur's English *Aksharamanamalai* discourses have been moved up to 20th-26th January 2020.

