

Company Of The Holy Is Beneficial

(Ramana Bhaskaram January 2016. Nannagaru's speech at Jinnuru on September 23, 2015)

My dear soul mates,

Swans roamed freely in the Himalayas, many years ago. These swans have a great virtue. When milk and water are mixed and placed in a bowl, the swans drink only the milk and leave behind the water. Likewise, Sri Ramakrishna often said absorb the good in the creation and leave behind the negative. And hence, Sri Ramakrishna was known as Paramahansa.

Ganapathy Sastry referred Ramana Bhagwan as Maharishi. Bhagwan was addressed as Maharishi because he saw only the real truth. When we speak about ourselves, then we are just addressing our physical form. However, Bhagwan realised the real truth, the seat of goodness in his heart, and

hence he was called Maharishi by Ganapathy Sastry.



When we are in the company of holy people, we learn much more than being in the company of family members. This is because learned persons who are proficient in various fields visit holy people. The discussion between learned people and holy persons is a treat for all present there to partake. This is because their discussion will improve knowledge and level of understanding of people who are present there. It is like a river that expands its size as it flows down. Holy people

who are a part of the proceedings will also expand their knowledge through such discussions.

A *sanyasin* (a person who has renounced the world and donned ochre robes) must have two eyes – one is of knowledge and the other is mediation. Kanchi Paramacharya renounced the world and donned ochre robes at the age of 13. He was tutored in Bramhavidya (knowledge of the Brahman) and also in Sanskrit language. Though he left school after seventh class, he had immense knowledge in all affairs of the world. This was because many learned scholars would visit him. Just as we choose flowers for worship, Kanchi Parmacharya would also chose topics such as Ramayana, Bramha sutras and would discuss with the learned people visiting him. He would understand the teachings of the

scholars and importantly their love for the subject. Paramacharya would in turn develop such love for each one of the topics. Hence, he is known as Paramacharya.

He not only became a great scholar but also a great sanyasin. He had both knowledge and devotion for intense self-discipline.

Kanchi Paramacharya also had great compassion towards people who came to seek his help. He never denied any favour asked from him. He would direct people who asked him monetary favours to visit the office of the ashram. The staff at his ashram office was directed to part a little from the money available with the ashram to such people.

When Kanchi Paramacharya explained Bhagwad Gita, he would discuss in detail the meaning that Lord Krishna conveyed through the verse. The explanation would include tiny aspects often considered too simple to be discussed. Paramacharya would detail simple facts in such a manner that it would instantly find a place in the hearts of the listeners.

Kanchi Paramacharya received offerings from his devotees as it would be helpful to run the activities of the ashram. The activities included providing free education and other services. He showed that accepting offerings from the society was not against the vows of a *sanyasi* as it would be used again for the welfare of the society. He received offerings worth some lakhs of rupees in places such as Mumbai. However, he personally never accepted them. The office of the ashram would deal with the transactions. In fact, he would ask the donors to first find out the requirements from the office and then contribute for the cause. He was a man of total renunciation.

On a comment that Paramacharya and Ramana Bhagwan were gyanis (realised souls), the Maha Swami's (Kanchi Paramacharya) answer, which is the ultimate truth, was "there is no you and me and him in the real state. Then how is it that the two of us (he and Ramana Maharishi) still exist." Devotees would have no further questions to this answer. What the Maha Swami meant was a realised soul is always filled with unlimited happiness. There is no sense of the body, and a difference between you and me. That means a person in the absolute state is not aware of the body as he loses consciousness with the outside world as his senses that control the mind are withdrawn from the outer world attractions and made to look within. As such he experiences supreme bliss all around. He does not see a difference between one person and the other, and all that he sees is divinity around.

"When the real truth/absolute reality is just one, then why are you classifying them into two?" the Maha Swami would question. Kanchi Paramacharya spoke with such clarity in heart. In that state there is no hatred or jealousy.

Paul Brunton during his visit to India met Kanchi Paramacharya. {Paul Brunton is a British theosophist and spiritualist. His actual name was Raphael Hurst. His book *A Search in Secret India* published in 1934 under the pseudonym became a bestseller. After this he stuck to publishing under the name Paul Brunton. }

The Maha Swami told Paul Brunton that he could not spare much time in answering all his all queries as he had to look after the activities of the ashram. Therefore, he insisted that Brunton visit Ramana Maharishi in Tiruvanmalai. Kanchi Paramacharya said Ramana Maharishi would answer all queries of Brunton. The Maha Swami compelled Paul Brunton to visit Ramana Maharishi. He made all the

arrangements for the visit. He further told Brunton that a visit to South India is incomplete without a visit to Tiruvanamalai. On his insistence Brunton visited Ramana Maharishi.

Paul Burnton described his visit to Tiruvanamalai in the book: *A Search In Secret India*. In the book, he wrote in detail on “Who am I” – an enquiry in the search of the self. It was through his writings that the West came to know of Ramana Maharishi. People from the West began flooding Ramana ashram.

Akshara Mana Mala, 108 verses on Arunachala, gushed out of Ramana Maharishi like a perennial spring. The Akshara Mana Mala means a garland made of letters. Usually, garlands are made from flowers but Akshara Mana Mala was made of letters. Ramana Maharishi through the verses in Akshara Mana Mala invoked the grace of Lord Arunachala.

“O Arunachaleshwara! I am placing a garland made of letters around your neck; you also have to garland me! Garland me with your grace and your real self,” Bhagwan would lovingly tell the Lord. Here Lord Arunachaleshwara is the bridegroom and Bhagwan the bride. Through the verses he prayed to Lord Arunachala that the Lord instead of placing a garland of letters around Maharishi’s neck must shower his abundant grace on him. Whenever devotees questioned him about Akshara Mana Mala, Ramana Maharishi often said that it fed the devotees for many years.



*Kinder indeed art Thou
than one's own mother,
such is thy love, Oh
Arunachala!*

Sit firmly in my mind, lest it elude Thee, Oh Arunachala!

“Mother’s love has no equal match. A mother will not openly criticise her son but will try to mend the wrong doings of her son. In this world, mother’s love is supreme. But, O Arunachaleshwara! your grace is even greater than mother’s love. Even mother’s love fades before your unending grace, O Arunachala. “

Mother’s love will help in solving worldly desires. However, to reach the supreme self, the grace of guru is essential. When the guru’s grace touches you then you will forget everything including your breath. When the river Godavari is full and is flowing with great force, it breaches its banks and submerges houses. Similarly, when a Guru has decided to shower his complete grace on you, then your body will die as it cannot handle the unlimited grace. Therefore, a guru will decide when and where his grace should be bestowed on you. You must not make hurry.

God will not leave you after you have made an effort towards knowing him. You may forget but God will never forget your efforts. To forget and to remember are the virtues of the body. One must be prepared to receive the teachings of the guru. The mind must be prepared and must be ready to receive the teachings.

People complain that they are unable to follow Bhagwan's teachings. Bhagwan would inform such people that their mind is filled with preoccupied thoughts and has no place to receive the teachings.

Once the thoughts vanish then you can experience the complete or final state. I want to teach you and you are eager to learn. However, the disturbance in your minds is preventing this knowledge transfer and therefore you are unable to understand the teachings.

Look within yourself. How many days would you like to see only outside and be attracted to the worldly distractions? The outside world makes you believe that there is happiness out there. However, it is the heart that has to be understood. What is your heart telling you? With a little maturity, you will realise that the guru is trying to teach something good and is trying to bend your thoughts and guide you to look inside. The real guru is well seated within you. He is all-pervading. Once you condition yourself to look inside a little, the guru will slowly pull your thoughts inside. Once your thoughts are drawn inside, then the real guru will reveal completely to you. As such worldly matters are irrelevant. It is time to train the mind to look inwards.

There are many distractions in the outside world. According to Milton, "you are wasting your time searching outside as the real item is in your hearts. If you leave your worldliness aside for some time you can feel and experience it."

Most of you want salvation. But you are lost in the luxuries of the outside world. Friends, desires, habits take you far from the real state that already exists in you. With the worldly attractions dominant, how can I help you in reaching your destination? Milton in his work *Paradise Lost* describes about these in great detail and tries to save you from getting distracted from your actual goal.

Make efforts to come out of these distractions. Then you can experience the real salvation or Heaven in your own hearts. Remove all unnecessary thoughts from your hearts. Make it empty. Where will the lord reside if your heart is full?

The divine love must flow from the lord or the guru. The efforts that you make are small. All the divine love that we get is based on your behavioural pattern. Depending on your effort, the lord himself will bestow unlimited happiness on you. He will decide when to shower his grace on you. Many boast about their meditation practises. But in reality, the person who has performed such intense meditation will not know about it at all, as he is immersed in the thoughts of the lord. We must always learn to live or perform any actions without being associated with it. Never claim or identify yourself with something that you are doing.

Fear and desires lead to unhappiness. Always think carefully before performing a particular task as it may lead to unhappiness or fear or may increase desires in future.

Ponder carefully about the tasks that may bring unhappiness or fear to you in future. Try to avoid them. Be alert and never undertake such tasks or thoughts. Only a guru can explain with such clarity.

Ishwara (God) is like a judge. He keeps a track of all your activities and passes a judgement. However, a guru is different. He tries to save you. He tries to carry the results of your past actions on his head and makes efforts to impart you with the knowledge of the Self.

But in my (Nannagaru) case, I consider to be blessed as I never choose a Guru. However, the Guru Himself chose me. Just as a child is admonished at times, I have also admonished my Guru. But He has never left me. In all times, the Guru has showered his grace on me just like an umbrella that protects one from rain and sun. That is the greatness of a guru. If you choose a guru, you will keep changing a guru. However, if a guru chooses you, you can never choose another.

Rich and famous people such as Surendranath Banerjee, Devendranath Tagore of Kolkata would visit Sri Ramakrishna. Young Naren (Swami Vivekananda) would constantly remind Sri Ramakrishna that they were very famous. However, Ramakrishna who could gaze the future of Naren would always tell Naren that he would be more famous than them. This would make Naren almost believe people calling Sri Ramakrishna a madman. His contention was how could he be more famous as he was still a student? What Naren could not understand then was his guru's grace. Sri Ramakrishna could gaze the future of Naren from his eyes. Many consider Swami Vivekananda to have done more work than Sri Ramakrishna. But this is wrong. One must never forget the root cause of Vivekananda becoming so popular. How can someone speak about a child without acknowledging the mother?

Mother takes care of your health and development. But a guru foresees your future. He sets your future on the right track. He sets right your behaviour. This apart, he ensures that you have a large heart and removes obstacles that obstruct your internal growth. He always watches your progress. There cannot be a bad guru. A mother gives birth to the physical body. A guru ensures your spiritual progress. A guru always showers his grace on you irrespective of your behaviour towards him. For instance, if you pour some poison in cup and give it to your guru, He will in turn pour some coffee into a cup and give it you.

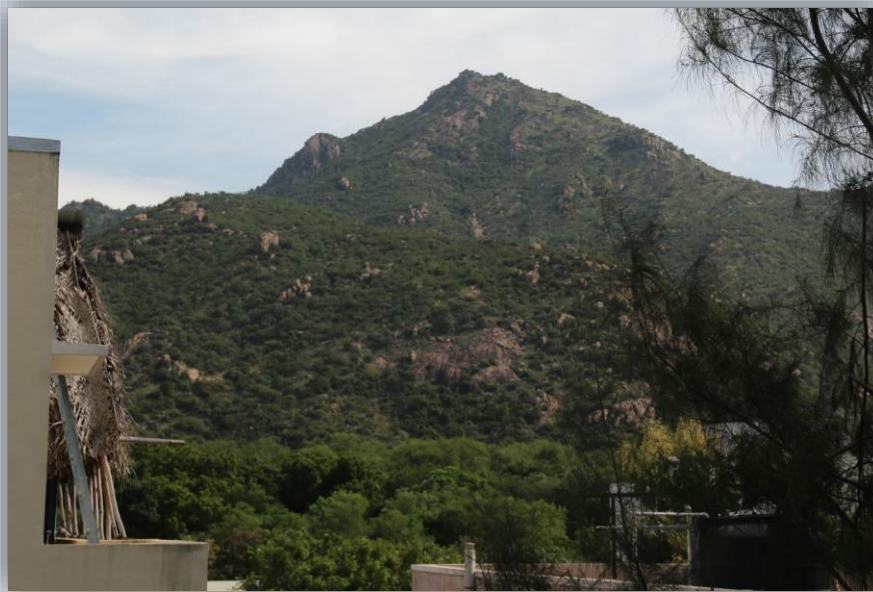
A mother may file a petition in court on sharing of property but a guru will always shower his unconditional love and warmth on you. He is compassionate. His form is filled with compassion. His form is filled with peace. His form is the real knowledge. He does not react to any incident. He will always shower his divine love on you. Even if you abuse him, his grace towards you will never cease.

Once you start realising the guru's compassion then you will realise his unconditional love towards you. Until then you cannot realise his concern for you.

Numerous efforts are made to make the mind clutter free and merge it with the heart. Each sense organ has one distraction. A hundred distractions are not required for a person to be lead away from the real goal of life. Just one is enough for the mind to get attracted to the worldly affairs. The guru therefore ensures that you do not fall prey to such distractions and turns your thoughts inside.

Bhagwan tells Arunachala "I thought I will become a big person, and people will think very high of me. But why did you make me devoid of this world? People call you God, O Arunachala, so I have come here."

Here what Bhagwan meant was that the signs of I am the body has been removed right from the root. The thought that I must become great are signs of worldliness, which are worthless. If you remove all the blades of grass from a rope then the rope will just break and fall down. Similarly, when all worldly thoughts are removed then there is no attachment with the outside world. Though you have a body, you are not aware of the surroundings. You lose your identity. You no longer identify yourself with the body. "O Arunachala you have removed the identity with body now itself, which happens only after death." This is the work of the Guru here.



Devotees would tell Bhagwan Ramana that he was leaving them behind and going away. When your body dies, then who will shower their grace on us? To this Bhagwan replied: "Where am I going? Is there a place where I am not present then I am ready to go there? There must be a place for me to go is it not? "According to Bhagwan, "the body

has life and has taken this form. Once the body dies, then it is worth nothing and would be discarded somewhere. Anything that favours me must have no death and this body that dies never favours me. The object that favours me is that which has no death. "

When this body dies, then the bond between friends and relatives breaks. But the bond with the Guru remains. The real Guru is not this body of mine that you are seeing but it is the real self that is seated in your hearts. So, the bond with the Guru never breaks.

Doctors have requested me (Nannagaru) not to speak much. They are doing their duty in protecting this body. However, I am unable to contain myself from speaking. These words that I speak are not

being spoken at random. People come here to get real knowledge. Can a silence between me and devotees bring about the understanding of real knowledge? They do not have enough maturity of thought to grasp the path to real knowledge through mere glances. They are not Sanatkumaras. {Sanatkumara is one of the four Manasputras or spiritual sons of Brahma. Lord Dakshinamurthy blessed the four Manasputras and imparted knowledge of the supreme self through silence.} However, people visiting me are not mature like Sanatkumara to gain knowledge through silence. Many have several issues at home and work place. How can I keep quiet when they come here?

Kanchi Paramacharya, while speaking in Guntur, said do not collect all the dust, which means unnecessary facts, from outside and pollute the minds of people at home. You must not talk unnecessary things. Try to maintain silence, and then even Maya (delusion) will move away from you.

Therefore, the company of elders and spiritual leaders is beneficial. In the few words that they speak if we can grasp at a few words, our lives will turn out for the better.

Tulasi Das' life changed with just one sentence. He never got any love from his parents, relatives or friends. Apart from his wife, Ratnamala, he never had any other company. Once, his wife went to her mother's place without informing him. The next day he followed her to her mother's house. Ratnamala immediately admonished him. "O Tulasi, the love you have for me, if you can shower the same love on Sri Rama then you will become a sage."

Tulasi Das agreed with Ratnamala and immediately left in the quest of Lord Sri Ram. His love for Rama was unending. He wrote Tulasi Ramayana. He became a sage. His Ramayana is filled with nectar as his love for Rama flows like honey.

There is only one real thing that has no death. Krishna in Gita says, "I am the inner ruler of all hearts and make them go through their consequences of their past tendencies." This is the truth.

These temples, rituals and offerings to various deities are all the creations of the mind. God is there and this is the truth. The outside world is created for the support of the mind.

"O! Arunachala you are in all and also present in all spheres of this world. Without your knowledge can anything happen in this creation?"

If an event takes place, the Lord is aware of it. The grace of Ishwara is there. An event occurs because of the consequence of our past tendencies. Bhagwan during his lifetime never expressed any emotions. He never discussed as why such situation occurs. All that happens in this world is due to the grace of god.

When someone would invite Bhagwan to their house, he would say "I am there in your house. Do you want me to say what is there in each room? If I am not there in your house then I can come even without you inviting me. Then why do you still ask me to come to your house?"

O Arunachala! "you mesmerised my mind and turned it to look inwards. It lost its identity and you have made me a worthless being on this earth. You have ensured the tendency to think that this body and mind are mine and I have done good deeds have not developed in me. You have removed my identity from the body without my knowledge. All the worldly tendencies have been annihilated.

Then you must also finish the task ahead. The thought that you are different, and I am different must go. You must take me to the Brahmisthiti (supreme self).”



“O!

Arunachala it is you alone who is there. This entire creation is your maze. You are all pervading and all living. So without your knowledge how can anything creep onto my mind? Unnecessary thoughts and words are coming into my mind and are slowly hurting the brain. Are such bad tendencies coming without your knowledge? Why are you behaving as if you know nothing? Even if you tell that I am not responsible for such thoughts we are not ready to believe. Therefore, you control such thoughts and impressions. It is possible only by your grace. Sometimes the influx of bad thoughts is huge. It is not possible for me to control them. Then only you can control such thoughts. The responsibility to control such influx lies on you. Show me your grace in controlling this O! Arunachala,” says Bhagwan.

- Ambica Udaynarayan