

Dr K.SUBRAHMANIAN
(1928-1998)

A Tribute

Sri Raman Kendram
Hyderabad
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CONTENTS

	Page no.
Preface	i
Foreword	iii
On Himself	1
The person	45
Teacher and administrator	57
The Writer	65
With Paramacharya	70
On Sri Bhagavan	76
Sri Ramana Kendram	90
The Final days	103
Some incidents	112

PREFACE

It is said that a Guru's love for his disciples transcends the love of parents for their children. The reason given is that in the latter case, there could be a trace of selfishness on the part of the parents – the expectation that the children will take care of them in old age. The Guru's love is not sullied by any such expectations.

The members of Sri Ramana Kendram, Hyderabad experienced such sublime and uplifting love from their Guru, Dr. K.Subrahmanian. He was their friend, philosopher and guide in the truest sense of these terms. Each person who came into contact with him felt totally owned. The strength and comfort that the devotees of the Hyderabad Kendram palpably experienced in his presence was solely due to the fact that his love was Divine.

The spiritual dimension was the greatest aspect of Dr. K.S' personality. If this was not easy to comprehend by ordinary people, the splendour of his human dimension was there for all to see. Simple living and high thinking was his way of life. His writing and speeches are still cherished by many. His scholarship was breathtaking.

His teaching and administrative abilities won all round admiration. His accessibility and approachability were extraordinary. He was a sthithapragna of the highest order.

Religion for him was a matter of experience rather than of expression. His was a Bhagavan centred life. For him Ramana was not only way, but also the goal. Silently and steadily he filled the hearts of the devotees of the Ramana Kendram, Hyderabad with Sri Bhagavan. They ever will be beholden to him for every thing they received from him.

He merged with the Arunachala on 11 January, 1998. It is one year since he left our midst. There is no doubt however that he is taking care of his beloved disciples from 'up there' .

This small booklet is our humble, but heart-felt tribute to his memory. We know too well though, that no book can do justice to this exceptional personality.

11 January, 1999

Devotees of
Sri Ramana Kendram

FOREWORD

“ As magnet draws iron, draw me to yourself O Arunachala ! Hold me fast ! Be one with me “

These were Sri Bhagavan’s words in *Akshara Mani Malai*. Just as Arunachala drew Sri Bhagavan, Dr. K.Subrahmanian, Dr.K.S to us, has drawn the devotees into his web silently and has made them see the greatness of Sri Bhagavan, I, for one, was attracted to him when I heard him speak about Sri Bhagavan in Ramalayam in Nallakunta, Hyderabad. There was no turning back after that; I entered the ‘tiger’s jaws’ as it were !

Dr. K.S. was a true gem in every sense of the word. He was my dear friend, guide and Guru. When he established Sri Ramana Kendram in Hyderabad, there were hardly a handful of devotees attending the meetings. This number has swelled to hundreds now and is still increasing ! This is indeed testimony to Dr.K.S ‘ phenomenal role in spreading Bhagavan’s message in this part of the world. He nurtured the Kendram very diligently and prepared the devotees to follow the path shown by Sri Bhagavan, silently and without show and fanfare.

When I look back, I remember with great joy of the time I spent with him discussing Sri Bhagavan and accompanying him wherever he went. All through the week, he attended Ramana Satsangs in the houses of various devotees, in far flung areas of the twin cities, tirelessly. The devotees eagerly looked forward to his presence and speech and he never liked to disappoint them. His concern and love for the devotees were immense. His speeches were captivating; every word he uttered would sink into our minds in an atmosphere of pin-drop silence. When one enters the Gandhi pavilion in Andhra Mahila Sabha, where the Kendram meetings are held, one feels a remarkable sense of peace. So charged is this hall with Dr. K.S moving speeches !

Dr. K.S emulated Sri Bhagavan in all ways. He shunned publicity. He gave his time freely to all. He strongly disliked seeking any funds or donations for the Kendram. Those who moved with him can never forget the sweet manners and utter humility. Though he is with us no more, his thoughts fill our minds constantly and we feel blessed to have been fortunate to have known him.

Sri Ramana Kendram, Hyderabad has done a very good thing by bringing out this book in memory of this true child of Sri Ramana.

J. Krishna Murthy

11 January, 1999

Chennai

ON HIMSELF

K.Subrahmanian, better known as ' Dr. K.S ' to the members of the Sri Ramana Kendram, Hyderabad was born on 28, April, 1928 in the small village of Peria Agraharam near Polur in Tamil Nadu. His early childhood was spent in the hill station of Kodaikanal. Like most children he spent his time playing marbles and spinning tops; he was also notorious for playing pranks along with his younger sister, Saroja !

We reproduce below Dr. K.S.' own account (written in 1992) of his early childhood, how he came into the Sri Bhagavan's fold and the people who were instrumental in getting him there.

I made no vows, but vows were made for me.

I was born into a family of Ramana Devotees. My mother, who is now 80 years old, saw Sri Bhagavan for the first time in 1921 when she was ten years old. She got married when she was fourteen and she lived in Tiruvannamalai for two years between 1926-27 when my father worked as a mathematics teacher in the town Municipal High School.

During their stay in Tiruvannamalai, the young Viswanatha Swami, a great devotee of Sri Bhagavan, used to live on bhiksha. My mother would offer bhiksha to him whenever he came and clapped his hands standing before the house. My father got to know Viswanatha Swami when he was very young.

In this period, my father also met Nayana several times and became very close to him. He was a great admirer of the Sanskrit scholar and during the last twenty years of his life, he would never go to bed without reading some verses from Nayana's great work, *Umasahasram* . He once accompanied Nayana to Chidambaram and translated Nayana's speech in Sanskrit to English. The meeting was held at Annamalai University, Chidambaram. My father also used to meet from time to time Sri Seshadri Swami.

My father met the Maharshi some time in 1927. The first time he met Sri Bhagavan in the thatched shed which was Sri Ramanashram in those days, my father asked a question for which he was very sorry in the later years of his life. He used to say, " I do not know why I asked that question. I was young and was slightly skeptical and therefore I put that question. I never thought that the Maharshi would answer my question. But he looked at me most graciously and answered my question. I am

thrilled even today when I recall that event” . The question which my father asked was this: “ There are so many sadhus wandering around with a loin cloth on. How am I to know who is a genuine sadhu and who is bogus one ?” Sri Bhagavan said in reply, “ He is a real sadhu in whose presence you get an indescribable peace without your making any effort.” That reply was the beginning of a life of devotion to Sri Bhagavan by my father. My mother visited Sri Bhagavan many many times, but she never asked a question, even once. Whenever she left the Ashram, she would go, prostrate before Sri Bhagavan and take leave of him. Sri Bhagavan would either nod his head or say, “ Sari” (OK)

Maharaja of Nabha

My father and mother left Tiruvannamalai in 1928 for Kodaikanal where they lived till the time of my father’s passing away in 1962. He worked as a mathematics teacher in the Presentation Convent European High School from 1928 upto 1961, except for the seven years when he worked as tutor to the Princess of Nabha. The Maharaja of Nabha was a man of extraordinary courage, patriotism and deep scholarship. He revolted against the British and as punishment he was brought from the State of Nabha in Punjab to Kodaikanal. He was not allowed to move out of the municipal limits. My father used to talk to the Maharaja about the Maharshi and the Maharaja was deeply impressed with the life and teachings of the Maharshi. The Maharani was also greatly influenced by the Maharshi. There was no restriction on the movement of the Maharani. Once she expressed a strong desire to meet the Maharshi and she was taken to the Ashram by my father. She spent a couple of days in the Ashram. She used to tell others later that the peace that she enjoyed in the presence of Sri Bhagavan was something that she had not experienced earlier or later. The Maharaja had sent along with my father a typewriter for the Ashram. That was the first typewriter that was used for typing letters to the devotees. Mouni Srinivasa Rao, who was looking after the Ashram correspondence, was the first person to make use of the typewriter presented by the Maharaja of Nabha. In 1944, when the Maharaja wasn’t too well, he asked my father to go to Sri Ramanashram and seek the blessings of Sri Bhagavan. My father went to Sri Ramanashram and spoke to Sri Bhagavan about the Maharaja’s condition. Sri Bhagavan listened with great attention but did not say anything. The Ashram authorities gave prasad to be handed over to the

Maharaja. When my father handed over the envelope containing the prasada to the Maharaja, he opened it. After looking at the prasada, the Maharaja became silent. Then he said in a choking voice, “Krishnaswami, the Maharshi is most gracious to me. He has intimated to me that I am not going to live long. He has given me notice.” My father has taken aback and asked him why he thought so. The Maharaja said, “The Ashram authorities sent the prasada through you. You see that in this envelope there is no Kumkum. There is only vibhuthi. It is an indication that my end has come. Sri Bhagavan has graciously told me that my end is near. I consider myself to be very lucky. I can prepare myself for the exit”. My father was visibly upset. The Maharaja said, “There is nothing to be upset about. What is to happen will happen.” The Maharaja passed away four months later, leaving behind the Maharani and the children. The year was 1945.

Coming in to the Ramana fold

Presentation Convent, the school that my father worked for, used to prepare children for taking the Cambridge University examination. The school was run by Irish nuns and almost all the children were European girls. My father was the only male teacher for a number of years. In the 50s, one more male teacher was appointed to teach Hindi.

As the winter vacation was during Dec-Jan every year, my parents would go from Kodaikanal to Tiruvannamalai to attend the Jayanti function. My father used to take English vegetables grown in Kodaikanal to the Ashram, for the Jayanti celebrations. After attending the Jayanti, my parents would go to my father's village Melvayalamoor, which is about 20 miles from Tiruvannamalai. I was taken to Sri Bhagavan when I was two years old. My two younger sisters and I used to be taken almost every year to Sri Ramanashramam for the Jayanti celebrations. In our case we could say we were seen by Sri Bhagavan first. We were conscious of seeing him much later.

My uncle, who looked after our lands in Melvayalamoor, was also a great devotee of Sri Bhagavan and Nayana. Both in my house and in my uncle's house, there was always a picture of Sri bhagavan in the puja room. If not every day, almost every week, there used to be some discussion or the other about the life and teachings of Sri Bhagavan. From childhood I was brought up in a Bhagavan - charged atmosphere.

Viswanatha Swami visited our house and stayed with us for several days together on numerous occasions. Later, when I was teaching at Madras Christian College, he stayed with me a couple of times. He used to spend much of his time talking about the glory and grandeur of Sri Bhagavan and Nayana. He taught us a number of devotional songs. He had a melodious voice and could sing beautifully.

Hearing from my father, uncle and Viswanatha Swami that Sri Bhagavan used to read the letters written by devotees to him, as a boy I used to write to him occasionally, seeking his blessings. As there was no High School in Kodaikanal, my father sent me to study at Sir P.S. Siva Swamy Iyer High School, Tirukattappally. I studied there for four years between 1941-45, from III Form to VI Form and stayed in the hostel attached to it.

My experiences

Talking to Sri Bhagavan

In 1941, I was taken by my uncle to Sri Ramanashramam. We had bought some mangoes and my uncle said that I should put them on the small stool near Sri Bhagavan's sofa. I went into the old meditation hall along with my uncle and put the mangoes on the floor and prostrated before Sri Bhagavan and sat near the window that overlooks Sri Bhagavan's samadhi. My uncle sat next to me. When I was looking at Sri Bhagavan, Sri Bhagavan asked my uncle, " who is this?" My uncle said, " He is my brother's son. He is studying in III Form." Then Sri Bhagavan said, turning to me, " so you are the person writing letters to me." I has a strange feeling of awe, coupled with great joy. I said in a low voice, " Yes." Sri Bhagavan said " Does your father send money to you so that you can write letters to me?", and laughed. I wasn't quite sure whether Sri Bhagavan was being sarcastic or made the remark in a light vein. I sweated for a while, continuing to look at him. As it was early in the morning, there were only two or three devotees in the hall. When we came out of the hall after some time, my uncle, who had been a frequent visitor to the Ashram for several years, said, " You must consider yourself very lucky. Sri Bhagavan usually does not ask ' Who is he?'. It is a rare thing".

In 1945, after completing my S.S.L.C., I applied for admission to American College, Madurai. Before going to Madurai, I went to Sri Ramanashramam. As usual, on the day I left for Madurai, I went to Sri Bhagavan, prostrated to him and took leave of him. Surprisingly, Sri Bhagavan asked, “ where?” I said very feebly, “ To Madurai”. Sri Bhagavan asked, “What for?”. I said “ I have applied for admission to a college”. Sri Bhagavan again asked, “ Which college?”. I wanted to say “ American College “ , but instead said “ Madura College”. Sri Bhagavan smiled and said, “ Sari”. I could not get admission in American College as my application had been received very late. Eventually I got admission in Madura College Madurai. What I had said to Sri Bhagavan happened; it was not something that I had anticipated. This was the second and last occasion I spoke to Sri Bhagavan. Otherwise, I was always a listener.

Observing Sri Bhagavan

Till 1950, I used to visit the Ashram a couple of times every year; the frequency however increased between 1948 and 1950. I attended the Kumbhabhishekam of Mathrubhuteswara Temple. It was an elaborate, solemn affair. After the Kumbhabhishekam was performed, in the evening arathi was offered to the deity in the temple and was brought to Sri Bhagavan by Chinnaswami, Viswanatha Swami and President Venkataraman . I was sitting very close to Sri Bhagavan in the meditation hall attached to the temple. It was a moving sight when Sri Bhagavan extended his hands and touched the arathi with great reverence closing his eyes.

Soon after every operation was performed on Sri Bhagavan’s cancer, I used to visit him. Sometimes I used to cry uncontrollably looking at Sri Bhagavan from a distance. As far as Sri Bhagavan was concerned, he was ever the same serene, blissful self. He behaved as if the cancer belonged to somebody else.

The last time I saw Sri Bhagavan was on 7th April, 1950, exactly one week before his Nirvana. When I heard the news of Sri Bhagavan’s Nirvana at Kodaikanal, on 14th April 1950, I did not break down, nor did I feel depressed. I felt a peace – a peace that was totally unexpected. Viswanatha Swami whom I met a month later also said that he enjoyed an indescribable peace at the time of Sri Bhagavan’s Nirvana. He was

one of the few who were inside the room at the time Sri Bhagavan merged with Arunachala.

I was taken to Sri Bhagavan as a small boy and I visited him many times later on. But I never put even a single question to him. I listened to others asking questions and Sri Bhagavan's replies to them. But I never felt inclined to ask a question even once. The only thing I used to do was to sit close to him and take leave of him after prostrating to him. Most often he would nod his head or say in Tamil, "Sari, Sari" (O.K O.K) .

Occasionally I used to think that it would be good to read Sri Bhagavan's works in his presence. I tried a couple of times but I could not read anything in his presence. I was either looking at him or meditating.

Close encounters with Sri Bhagavan

Some time in 1949, when Sri Bhagavan was still in the meditation hall, I sat at the entrance looking at Sri Bhagavan from outside. His shoulder was bandaged because of cancer. I thought to myself " I have been coming to the Ashram so often. But I have had no experience of real meditation. Sri Bhagavan has not granted me this experience. Thinking along these lines, I kept looking at Sri Bhagavan for considerable time and then closed my eyes. I do not know how long I was in that state. When I opened my eyes I found that the meditation hall was empty. Sri Bhagavan was not there on the stone couch in the meditation hall. Sri Bhagavan and the devotees must have gone past me as I was sitting at the entrance. When I realised that I have been sitting when Sri Bhagavan went past me, I was horrified. I felt how disrespectful I was. But suddenly, I realised that Sri Bhagavan, out of his unbounded grace granted me an experience whereby I was completely oblivious of my surroundings. Even today, I am unhappy that I did not get up when Sri Bhagavan and his devotees went past me. Sri Bhagavan gives us rare experiences when we least expect them.

On another occasion, when I was an 18 year old student, around 12 noon or so, I was walking towards the meditation hall. The new meditation hall was not there then; the whole place was an open ground. I was thinking of something and walking with my head down. When I neared the well, I looked up and saw Sri Bhagavan standing at a short distance and talking to a devotee. I was taken unawares as I did not expect Sri Bhagavan to be there. Sri Bhagavan who was talking to the other person, looked at me sideways. I stood still, as I did not want to

disturb Sri Bhagavan in any way. When he looked at me that way, I felt a powerful light penetrate me engulf me. I experienced a bliss that I had not experienced before. I was in that state for about 20 days.

On the 14 of August, 1949, I visited the Ashram from Madras where I was studying. Sri Bhagavan had been operated on for his cancer the second time and he was sitting in the meditation hall in the temple. People were not allowed to sit inside the meditation hall. They were asked to sit out but were allowed to enter the door facing the entrance to the Ashram. People would enter the meditation hall, prostrate before Sri Bhagavan and leave the hall through the main entrance. On 16 August, I had planned to leave for Madras in the evening. I went into the meditation hall, prostrated to Sri Bhagavan, went close to him and said I was leaving. Normally Sri Bhagavan would say, " Sari". That day he turned his face to the other side. I came out of the hall, sat for some time outside the temple and went in again. I prostrated to Sri Bhagavan and said that I was leaving. Again Sri Bhagavan turned his head to the other side. Once again I came out and sat outside. For the third time I entered the meditation hall, prostrated before Sri Bhagavan and said I was leaving. Once again Sri Bhagavan turned his face to the other side. I was puzzled. Since my train was at 8.30 in the night and as it was getting late, I decided to leave for the station. I walked towards the station and when I came near the petrol bunk which is close to Ashram, I found it difficult to proceed any further. I came back to Ashram to the surprise of all, and decided to leave the next day, after taking Sri Bhagavan's consent. The next day, I went into the hall, prostrated to Sri Bhagavan and said that I was leaving. To my joy and surprise Sri Bhagavan said, yes. To date I do not know why Sri Bhagavan did not give me permission to leave the Ashram the previous day.

Miracle

Between January and April, 1950, I visited Sri bhagavan several times as his condition was causing great concern to all. My final year examinations for B.A (Hons) were from 21st March to 31st March 1950. I found it very difficult to concentrate on my studies because of the condition of Sri Bhagavan. Sometime in Feb 1950, T.V.Krishnaswami Iyer, my sister's father-in-law, who was a great devotee of Sri

Bhagavan came and gave me the elaborate commentary Muruganar had written on Sri Bhagavan's *Akshara Mani Malai*. Nobody knew at that time whether it would be published. I read through the commentary which ran to over a hundred pages and I was deeply impressed. Mr. Krishnaswami Iyer has asked me to return the manuscript after two weeks. I sat down and copied the entire text in a few days without worrying about the examination. I felt this was more important than the examination. I also toyed with the idea of taking the examination the following year as I had not prepared too well.

The first paper was Old English. In that paper, we were given a number of passages for translation from old English to modern English. I had not studied the text thoroughly. I thought if I did not do well in that paper, I would withdraw and take the examination the following year. The day before the examination, I opened the book at random and translated the passage that I found on that page and went to sleep. The next morning when I went to the examination hall and got the question paper, I was astonished when I read the first question. It was the same passage which I had translated the previous night. I found it extraordinary that the same passage should appear as the very first passage in the question paper. That gave me enough confidence and I finished all the examinations without any kind of worry whatsoever.

Several such miracles have happened in my life but these experiences are given to strengthen our faith in Sri Bhagavan. We cannot order Sri Bhagavan to perform miracles. Miracles happen when we least expect them. The greatest miracle is this; when we surrender to him, he gives us the frame of mind that accepts everything as his will. When we learn to accept everything as his will, and do our duty to the best of our abilities, it is the greatest miracle that is vouchsafed to us out of his unbounded grace. We cannot think of him. Only he can make us think of him.

The uniqueness of Sri Bhagavan

So many things used to happen in Sri Bhagavan's presence. Babies used to cry. Children used to play pranks. Some men would ask questions. Ladies would sing. Great and small would come and prostrate to Sri Bhagavan. Whatever happened, Sri Bhagavan used to be his serene self. Sometimes he would look at people while fanning himself with a hand fan. Sometimes he used to closely watch

someone while massaging his legs. Sometimes he would smile his beautiful smile looking at a child or a poor man. Sometimes he would sit still with closed eyes, completely oblivious of the surroundings. It is amazing to think that he was accessible to all visitors, at all times, till a few years before his Nirvana. The devotees themselves decided not to go and disturb him all the 24 hours. Wherever one goes, there are darshan hours for a swami. But in this respect, Sri Bhagavan was extraordinary.

In the dining hall, he would observe whether everyone has been served and served equally. He would not accept anything that was not served to all the devotees. After every one was served, Sri Bhagavan would give a nod to all to begin eating. Then everyone would start eating. He would not waste even a grain of rice. His leaf used to be so clean that sometimes it would appear that it had not been used at all. Sri Bhagavan was most frugal and in everything he did, was perfect. At about 2:00 in the afternoons I used to watch him make his way to the goshala. I used to wonder how it was possible for Sri Bhagavan to walk in the hot sun with no footwear. He treated animals and birds with great affection and concern. Sometimes a couple of monkeys would walk into the meditation hall. Some devotees used to get agitated. Sri Bhagavan would gently call the monkeys and give them cashewnuts or groundnuts. They would go away screeching with delight. Sometimes a squirrel would scramble up his couch. Sri Bhagavan would fondle it and give it whatever was available and it would leave without disturbing anybody. Sometimes a peacock would come, inspect the hall, going from one place to the other. Sri Bhagavan used to look at it with great amusement. Finally it would go near Sri Bhagavan, who would fondle it and give it some puffed rice.

During Sri Bhagavan's life-time, outstation visitors were put in the thatched guest room parallel to the present store-room opposite the kitchen. There were no pillows or beds. There were plenty of mats. Visitors chose one of the mats and slept on them using a wooden plank as pillow. In the guest house were kept small tins. In the mornings, visitors would take one of them, collect water from a tap and go out to answer the calls of nature. Everybody would get up very early, finish their bath and go and sit in the presence of Sri Bhagavan in the meditation hall. Mourvi Guest House was used whenever a member of a royal family came to visit Sri Bhagavan. The cottages that

we have outside the Ashram came up over a period of time after the Nirvana of Sri Bhagavan. We owe them to the untiring efforts of Sri T.N.Venkatraman, the President of the Ashram.

It is foolish to think that we serve Sri Bhagavan. The Lord of the Universe does not need our services. If occasionally we do something for the devotees, it is out of his compassion for us. Serving devotees in however humble a way is service to Sri Bhagavan. Sri Bhagavan served the devotees in a unique way. He used to get up around 2 o' clock in the morning, cut the vegetables and prepared food for them, day after day, for years. He used to grind rice for idly; he used to prepare chutney etc, day after day out of love for the devotees. He is happy when a devotee serves other devotees without expecting any thing in return. If we are given an opportunity to serve a devotee in any way, it is because of the grace of Sri Bhagavan. We cannot choose to serve; we are chosen by him.

Acceptance

Since my 20th year or so, I have not prayed for anything. I cannot say that I always accept things as they happen. But I try to accept everything that happens as His will. Even in great difficulties, I cannot bring myself to pray to Sri Bhagavan asking him to set things right. However, I feel greatly concerned when others undergo difficulties. I think of Sri Bhagavan when I or others are beset with difficulties. Beyond that I do not ask him to intervene. I believe 100% that everything happens according to His will. All that we can do is to carry out what we have to do to the best of our abilities and accept whatever happens as His will. This attitude gives one tremendous detachment coupled with great strength to do one's duty. When one has such an attitude, one learns to accept one's weaknesses and strengths. No one can be good, except through His will.

Father

My father was totally devoted to Sri Bhagavan and Nayana. He never did any puja; nor was he interested in going to temples or holy places. He used to read the works of Sri Bhagavan and *Uma Sahasram* by Kavyakanta. He knew Rudram, Chamakam, the Upanishads, etc.,. He was well versed in the Sanskrit classics. He would read the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharatha* frequently. Even though he did not do any puja, he used to recite mentally *Lalitha Sahasranama*. Once when he was walking towards his school in Kodaikanal, a swarm of bees came

and covered his face and head. He stopped and started reciting the *Lalitha Sahasranama* inwardly. Wonder of wonders, all the bees left and not a single bee stung him.

Visits to Ashram

My father would visit Sri Ramanashram every year with his family to attend the Jayanthi celebrations, as the school vacation was between the end of November and the beginning of February. Whenever he did so, he used to bring vegetables from Kodaikanal. Chinnaswami was very fond of him.

Faith in Sri Bhagavan

My father had unshakable faith in Sri Bhagavan. He never bothered to go out and look for a bridegroom for either of his daughters. He used to say that Sri Bhagavan would arrange everything. T.V.Krishnaswami Iyer, who was a great devotee of Sri Bhagavan, wrote an unconventional letter to my father saying that he was interested in his son marrying my father's elder daughter. That is how the marriage took place, with the initiative being taken by the bridegroom's father. For the younger daughter again, he did not go in search of a bridegroom. One of my classmates himself offered to marry her. That was how the marriages of my two sisters took place.

My father was a courageous person who remained unruffled in very trying situations. He was least interested in money. He felt that Sri Bhagavan would give us the money that was necessary, at the appropriate time. Some of his friends used to tell him that I should not be allowed to visit Sri Ramanashram frequently, as they felt that the magnetic pull of the Maharshi would make me unfit for life in the world. My father used to say that it was a mistaken idea, and that contact with the Maharshi would make one better fitted to face life.

The Man

My father lived a very simple life. He never bought any furniture. The furniture that was in the house belonged to the landlord. He used to say that when he died, it should be possible for the members of the family to leave Kodaikanal within 24 hours. That is more or less what happened in May, 1962, when my father expired. He always showed great concern for others. As he walked, he would make enquiries of the postman,

scavengers, nurses – whomsoever he met. He was an excellent teacher and the students adored him. Whenever there was an opportunity, he would talk about the greatness of Sri Bhagavan and Nayana. He was the chairman of the Municipal Council of Kodaikanal for some time, the Hon.Secretary for the Kodaikanal Co-operative Society, Member SPCA, Secretary of the Indian Club, etc. In addition to being a teacher of mathematics in Kodaikanal Presentation Convent, he was also a correspondent of the Madras Mail. He did whatever he had to do fearlessly putting all the burden on Sri Bhagavan.

Mother

As I mentioned earlier, my mother saw Sri Bhagavan earlier than my father. From 1927 to 1950, she used to visit Sri Bahagavan at least once a year. She was very close to Viswanatha Swami, who used to talk to her a great deal about Sri Bhagavan and Nayana. She has several note-books filled with slokas written by Nayana and Sri Bhagavan. She used to do some puja till 1962 when my father passed away. After that, she spends much of her time in meditation. She would never go out and talk to people of her own accord. She would never make enquiries of them if she meets them. Even at home she does not talk about worldly affairs. Much of the time she spends by herself, meditating on Sri Bhagavan. After Sri Bhagavan's Nirvana, besides meditating in the old hall, she would also meditate before Viswanatha Swami. Because of her long association with the Ashram, almost everybody knows her. In spite of this, she would not ask for any special favour from the Ashram. Once in a while, she would visit some temple or the other. While she is very detached, she shows her concern for others. Whatever help she could offer to others, she would do it quietly and unostentatiously.

So long as she was in Kodaikanal, a lot of people used to come and stay in the house during summer. She would cook breakfast, lunch, evening tiffin and supper day after day during the entire summer. She never had time to go out for a walk, for relaxation. But she never complained. I always used to be struck by her self-effacing attitude and enormous patience in very trying circumstances. She always bore sorrows and sufferings with stoic endurance. She would not complain to others about anything. When she is happy, she is happy in a very subdued way. She would smile rather than laugh in a boisterous way. When my father died, she remained extraordinarily calm and did not cry. She used to ask

whether the people who had come had their coffee, lunch etc.. It was a heart-rendering sight to see her trying to console others. When my sister's husband passed away on 2 April, 1992 in Pune, even though my mother was shaken, she did not cry, but bore the whole thing in a remarkable way. She was with my sister much of the time. Her calm demeanour gave so much peace to everyone.

Even at eighty, she gives whatever physical help she can to other people. She does not ask anything for herself. She does not demand any money for any saree or anything for that matter. She is a house-holder who lives the life of a Sanyasin. She either reads books on or by Sri Bhagavan or meditates. She used to spend days together meditating after my father passed away in 1962. She spent considerable time in the Ashram between 1965 and 1969. Despite my repeated requests asking her to come to the United states, she consistently declined. During this time she stayed either with one or the other of my sisters or in Sri Ramanashram. She doesn't talk much. She may speak for about 15-20 minutes to the members of the family. She doesn't talk about Vedanta. But she knows a great deal about the philosophy of Sri Bhagavan and Nayana and lives a totally detached, exemplary life. She wouldn't even ask me to write letters to my sisters or relatives conveying this or that. If we received letters from them, she would read them and beyond that she would not discuss anything in the letter at great length. Others try to reach the state of equanimity in all circumstances. She is gifted with that.

Uncle

My uncle, V.S Srinivasa Iyer, did his Intermediate at Voehese College, Vellore and became village Municif of Vailamoor village and worked in that capacity for over 40 years. He saw Sri Bhagavan even as a student. In the early days, there used to be very few visitors to the Ashram, which was then just a thatched shed. Before he met Sri Bhagavan, my uncle had come under the influence of Kavyakanta and had taken upadesa from him. This fact is mentioned in the Sanskrit biography of Kavyakanta, *Vasishta Vaibhavam* written by Kapali sastry.

Questions to Sri Bhagavan

The first question that my uncle put to Sri Bhagavan as a young man was, " Is it true that Ravana had ten heads ? ". Sri Bhagavan replied, "

How does it help you to know whether he had ten heads or not ?”. My uncle said, “ Nayana says it is all false.” Sri Bhagavan replied, “ Nayana has studied a lot and has come to certain conclusions. What do I know ? “. On another occasion my uncle asked Sri Bhagavan when he was going round the Hill, “ Bhagavan, Nayana did tapas for the freedom of this country. Do you think we will get freedom ?” Sri Bhagavan said, “ Why do you ask me ? Am I an astrologer ?”. After some time, Sri Bhagavan turned to my uncle and said, “ Why do you worry? There is a Supreme Power which carries the whole burden. Our job is to do our wok and submit to it.”

Incidents

Once an Ashram deer was attacked by some animal and the wounds turned from bad to worse, Sri Bhagavan sat near the deer, held its face in his hand, looking at its tearful eyes. Sri Bhagavan sat like that for a couple of hours. Chinnaswami asked my uncle who was standing close, to look after the deer and relieve Sri Bhagavan. Sri Bhagavan heard this but did not make any response. Sri Bhagavan sat there till the deer breathed its last. That was the compassion that Sri Bhagavan had for that deer. Soon after, Sri Bhagavan went to hall. There is a Samadhi for the deer in the Ashram.

When the Mathrubhutheswara Temple was being constructed, Sri Bhagavan used to help the construction workers by lifting the bricks and offering them to the mason. When my uncle saw Sri Bhagavan doing this type of work, he was astonished. Sri Bhagavan said to my uncle, “ I am doing construction work”.

Once when my uncle took leave of Sri Bhagavan and said he was going to his village, Sri Bhagavan asked him, “ Are you going to Avvalurpet ?” My uncle said, “ I am going to Kaplambadi “ . Kaplambadi is beyond Avvalurpet and is nearer to my village. One can walk from Avvalurpet as well, but the distance is greater. Therefore my uncle used to get off at Kaplambadi and walk a shorter distance. Sri Bhagavan knew about Avvalurpet and Kaplambadi because my uncle must have told him about where he had to get off to go to his village. This time when Sri Bhagavan asked whether he was getting off at Avvalurpet, my uncle said that he was getting off at Kaplambadi. But what Sri Bhagavan said became true. My uncle could not go to Kaplambadi as the bus broke down at

Avvalurpet and he had to walk the distance from Avvalurpet to my village.

Whenever my uncle visited the Ashram, he made it a point to help in the kitchen. He used to do this in a quiet and unobtrusive way. On one particular occasion a large number of people came to the Ashram unexpectedly and they had to be provided lunch. One of the cooks went and told Sri Bhagavan, “ Bhagavan, we are worried because there isn't enough food. Should we cook something extra ?” Sri Bhagavan said, “ Don't worry, there will be enough.” When Sri Bhagavan said this, the cook left feeling confident that the food would be enough. My uncle was present in the dining hall along with others. Sri Bhagavan looked at almost every one that day before he started eating. My uncle said that even before eating most of the people felt full. So each one ate very little and what had been prepared was more than enough. All the incidents mentioned here were narrated to me by my uncle himself.

Absolute trust in Sri Bhagavan

My uncle would visit the Ashram atleast once in two months. To him Sri Bhagavan was everything. In his village there were, and still are, no medical facilities. One has to go to Tiruvannamalai for any medical help. But both his daughters had their confinements in the village. During the time of delivery, my uncle would go to the Ashram and spend all his time in Sri Bhagavan's presence. All the deliveries were normal and there were no complications. That was the extraordinary faith of my uncle. People used to criticise him for not being available at the time of delivery. He used to say that things would go off beautifully if he was in the presence of Sri Bhagavan. Every year he used to supply hay to the cows in the Ashram. He would buy enough to last for a year. This was his annual contribution to the Ashram.

He would take Harijans to the Ashram and introduce them to Sri Bhagavan. Sri Bhagavan used to cast his gracious looks at these innocent people. He would also arrange for the feeding of these Harijans. My uncle would never perform any important function without informing Sri Bhagavan. His eightieth birthday was celebrated in Sri Ramanashram, in the 1980's. The sacred thread ceremony of his grandsons was also celebrated in Sri Ramanashram.

My uncle had a delightful sense of humour and was also mischievous. He was not afraid of anyone. He loved to take me to the Ashram and talk to me about Sri Bhagavan and Nayana. Whenever we went round the Hill, he would talk about the extraordinary power of the Arunachala Hill. He was close to a number of devotees of Sri Bhagavan . Among them were Viswanatha Swami, Muruganar, T.K Sundaresa Iyer, Natesa Iyer and Sama Iyer. He used to invite some devotees to his house in the village. Every day he would get up around 3.00 o' clock in the morning and recite the poems of Sri Bhagavan and Kavyakanta. He was as much devoted to Nayana as he was to Sri Bhagavan. He passed away in May, 1989 at the age of 82. Profoundly influenced by Sri Bhagavan and Nayana, my uncle treated the Haijans in the village with great affection. Almost everyday he would visit their colony and make enquiries about their welfare. He was disliked for this by the orthodox Hindus, but he never worried about their criticism. Sometimes, the hostility was such that Brahmin priests refused to come at the time of certain ceremonies. On these occasions, my uncle used to go to Sri Ramanashram and perform the ceremonies. He was unwavering in his devotion to Sri Bhagavan and was exemplary in his attitude towards Harijans.

Viswanatha Swami

Coming to Sri Bhagavan

Viswanatha Swami was distantly related to Sri Bhagavan. His father lived in Dindigul and as a boy Sri Bhagavan is said to have visited Dindigul. During his student days, Viswanatha Swami was a great Gandhian. Throuout his life, he wore only Khadi.

After completing his Intermediate, Viswanatha Swami was irresistibly drawn towards Sri Bhagavan. One fine morning, Viswanatha Swami left for Tiruvannamalai, leaving behind a letter to say that he was proceeding towards the North. Tiruvannamalai is to be North of Dindigul. He arrived in Tiruvannamalai and prostrated before Sri Bhagavan. Sri Bhagavan asked him whether he had taken the permission of his parents. Viswanatha Swami said, " I left a note as Sri Bhagavan did and did not take the permission of my parents." Sri Bhagavan said, " It is all right. But please write to your parents that you are here." Viswanatha Swami did and the parents were relieved to receive the letter. One day, he received a letter from his father saying that he was coming to Tiruvannamalai. Viswanatha Swami said to Sri Bhagavan that the Dindigul mountain was

coming towards the Arunachala Hill. Sri Bhagavan laughed. When Viswanatha Swami's father pleaded with Sri Bhagavan to ask Viswanatha Swami to return to Dindigul along with him, Sri Bhagavan said, " He has come here for doing Sadhana. That is what he says. If he is doing something bad, I can ask him not to do it. When he says that he has come for self-realisation, how can I ask him to go back ? " Hearing this, Viswanatha Swami's father reconciled himself to the situation and left Tiruvannamalai for Dindigul alone.

Viswanatha Swami was related to Sri Bhagavan, but even then Chinnaswami said that if he wanted to stay in the Ashram, he should do some service to the Ashram like serving in the kitchen or serving in the dining hall, etc. But Viswanatha Swami wanted to devote his entire time to meditation and reading. He wanted to be in the presence of Sri Bhagavan much of the time. As the Ashram did not feed such people, they had to make their own arrangements. For a number of years Viswanatha Swami stayed in Palakkothu and prepared his own food. For some years after his arrival in Tiruvannamalai, he used to go out for bhiksha. Much of the time he used to be silent.

Nayana

Viswanatha Swami was also greatly devoted to Nayana, he would occasionally go off with him to different places. He spent a couple of months at Sirsi with the poet.

Viswanatha Swami knew almost all the verses that Nayana had written. He has translated into beautiful Tamil Nayana's *Uma Sahasram, Indirani Saptha Sathi, Ramana Chatvarimsat, Ramana Gita and Gita Mala*. He has also translated into excellent Tamil, *Sri Bahagavan's talks*, compiled by Munagala Venkata Ramaiah. Viswanatha Swami was proficient in Tamil, Sanskrit and English. He was also the editor of *Mountain Path* during the last years of his life. He himself wrote '*Ramana Ashtottaram*'. He was inspired to write this and Nayana personally took it to Sri Bhagavan and told him how beautiful the composition was. Sri Bhagavan translated into Tamil the invocatory verse, beginning with "Apara Sachit" and also the concluding verse beginning with *Yasthanor Arunachalasya*. It is this Ashtottaram that is recited by the devotees of Sri Bhagavan. Some do it every day and some recite it on special occasions.

The Man

Viswanatha Swami used to talk slowly and precisely. He would not exaggerate. He was greatly devoted to Sri Bhagavan. When it came to advice, he used to ask people to repeat some mantra or some stotra. Some devotees used to go to his room and meditate in his presence. He was a source of inspiration and consolation to a number of people who knew him. He was one of those present in the Nirvana room when Sri Bhagavan merged with Arunachala. He told me that that night he did not feel any grief but was enveloped by an indescribable peace.

Viswanatha Swami was a man of sturdy independence. He was not a killjoy, but had a delightful sense of humour. One afternoon, in 1979, he fell near the Dakshinamoorthy temple close to the Ashram and was taken to his room. Within a week or so he reached the lotus feet of Sri Bhagavan. My uncle looked after him during his last days.

Viswanatha Swami used to write to me fairly often when I was in the United States between 1965 and 1969. He enjoyed reading good books and listening to classical music. His handwriting was beautiful. He had a melodious voice and used to recite the works of Sri Bhagavan and Nayana beautifully. His devotion to Nayana was as great as his devotion to Sri Bhagavan.

Viswanatha Swami attended most of the weddings in our family. He was considered a member of the family. He would talk to us about the life and teachings of Sri Bhagavan and Nayana in his inimitable style. Sri Bhagavan would ask Viswanadha Swami to get some book from the bookshelf or would sometime ask him to read out a passage to a visitor in the hall.

Viswanatha Swami and I used to go for long walks in Kodaikanal. His knowledge was encyclopaedic and one learnt a lot about a variety of things by being in his company. His devotion to Sri Bhagavan was total. But affection and respect for Nayana was unmistakable. He used to talk as much about Nayana as about Sri Bhagavan. He loved to recite the beautiful slokas of Nayana and Sankara.

Incidents

It was Viswanatha Swami who told me the following incidents Related to Sri Bhagavan..

Once Sri Bhagavan was asked what he would ask Lord Siva if He appeared before him on His bull prompting him to ask for a boon. Sri Bhagavan is reported to have said, “ Do not try to deceive me. You have no form. I don’t want to be tempted by your question. You are the form less Self in all. “

Sri Bhagavan was totally indifferent to his body. During the last days of Sri Bhagavan’s life, *Tripura Rahasya* was being reprinted in Tamil. Sri Bhagavan used to go through the proofs of all Ashram publications. As Sri Bhagavan was very ill, Viswanatha Swami thought it better not to strain Sri Bhagavan by asking him to read the proofs. He himself read the proofs without mentioning it to Sri Bhagavan. Sri Bhagavan said, “ What is the problem? It is the body that is ill. I am all right. Get me the proofs.” Proofs were sent to Sri Bhagavan subsequently.

Once when Sri Bhagavan had blisters on his hands, Viswanatha Swami asked him to stop grinding chutney everyday. But Sri Bhagavan said that the blisters did not bother him and continued to grind chutney daily. One morning Viswanatha Swami went much earlier than Sri Bhagavan to the kitchen and did all the work that Sri Bhagavan used to. When Sri Bhagavan came to the kitchen at his usual time, he found that his work had already been done. On enquiry, he found out that Viswanatha Swami had done his work. That day Viswanatha Swami tried to avoid meeting Sri Bhagavan. He did not go to the meditation hall. He also avoided the usual root that Sri Bhagavan took. However, Sri Bhagavan that day did not take his normal root and Viswanatha Swami found himself facing Sri Bhagavan. Viswanatha Swami was taken completely by surprise. Sri Bhagavan asked him why he had done his work in the morning. When Viswanatha Swami said that he could not bear to see Sri Bhagavan grinding chutney with blisters on his hands, Sri Bhagavan said, “ In the early years I used to go for biksha. Now I am getting free food in the Ashram. That is why I do some work or the other in the kitchen. Today you have done my work. I have not done any thing. Please give your dhoti. I will wash it for you today.” When Viswanatha Swami heard this, he was moved to tears. From then on, he never interfered in Sri Bhagavan’s routine.

When it was reported to Sri Bhagavan that Viswanatha Swami was asking for biksha, and when some people felt that he should be allowed to eat in the Ashram, Sri Bhagavan sent for him and asked him how he

went about asking for biksha. Viswanatha Swami said that he accepted biksha in both his hands, would eat it and drink water out of a small tin can he carried with him. People who listened to Sri Bhagavan enquiring Viswanatha Swami on his asking for biksha, thought that Sri Bhagavan would rebuke him. Instead, Sri Bhagavan said, "Going for biksha is a wonderful thing. It reduces one's ego and makes one really humble. What you are doing is right. But why do you carry a small tin? That is unnecessary. You can drink water with your own hands." When people heard this they were taken aback. Even my own mother has offered biksha to Viswanatha Swami in his early days, when my father was in Tiruvannamalai, working as a teacher.

Muruganar

Muruganar was close to Viswanatha Swami and also my sister's father-in-law, T.V. Krishna Swami, who was a great devotee of Sri Bhagavan and an admirer of Muruganar. I always saw Muruganar in the company of one of them. I never talked to him alone. Muruganar was a gentle, self-effacing person and he never talked much. A couple of months before he passed away, I went to see him in his room in the Ashram along with Viswanatha Swami. He was very feeble, but radiant. I sat in his presence for about half an hour. He did not say a word. He kept looking at me and I kept looking at him. I felt some indescribable vibrations and the mind was calm. After half an hour I took leave of him silently. He smiled but did not utter a word. After he passing away, for about three years, whenever I went to the Ashram I used to be given the room where Muruganar spent his last days. Adjacent to Muruganar's room lived Viswanatha Swami.

Muruganar was inspired by Sri Bhagavan and wrote hundreds of poems in Tamil describing the various aspects of Sri Bhagavan. The two outstanding characteristics of Muruganar were his gentleness and humility.

Muruganar has written a beautiful and exhaustive commentary on Sri Bhagavan's *Akshara Mana Malai* in Tamil. It was Muruganar who was instrumental in getting a number of poems written by Sri Bhagavan. For example, *Upadesa Saram*, *Ayye Athi Sulabham*, *Arunachala Deepa Tattuvam*, etc., were written by Sri Bhagavan in response to Muruganar's request. It was also Muruganar who put together in the present order, the poems written by Sri Bhagavan on different occasions

on the Self, and these form what is now called *Ulladu Narpadu or Reality in Forty Verses*.

My late brother-in-law Sri T.K.Jayaraman, like his father, was a great admirer of Muruganar. He had studied the works of Muruganar and during the last two years of his life, he translated some of the moving poems into English at the request of V.Ganesha editor *Mountain Path*. These were later published in the *Mountain Path*.

THE PERSON

Sri Dilipkumar Roy is reported to have made an observation after Sri Bhagavan's passing that he and many others had moved about and conducted themselves with Sri Bhagavan as if he were just one amongst them. Sri Bhagavan never allowed them to feel that they were in the presence of the very Lord Himself. The feelings of many devotees are similar in nature with respect Dr K.S.

MULTIDIMENSIONAL PERSONALITY

Dr K.S. was great in many ways . He was a great scholar; he was a great speaker; he was a great writer and columnist; he was a great teacher; he was a great human being and above everything else, he was a great man of God. However, this greatness sat very lightly on his shoulders and it is to his credit that nobody felt threatened by his presence.

The splendid personality of Dr.K.S. had multiple dimensions and his capacity to conceal his lusture was unbelievable . He once said that while many of the great cities of the world flaunt their beauty, London hides its. One has to seek and probe its interiors to understand and appreciate its beauty. Dr.K.S. himself was like the city of London. Even people who had association with him for a long long time were not aware of all his different dimensions. His was a very self effacing personality. It is not known to many that he refused to apply for the post of Professor in CIEFL. The Director of the Institute, Dr. Ramesh Mohan, had to take the help of Prof.Srinivasa Iyengar to induce Dr.K.S.to append his signature on the application form so that the rest of the formalities could be taken care of by the Institute. He always desired to be a simple teacher. During his two year stint at Shillong, he applied to the JK School in Madras for an ordinary teacher's post. But the school authorities wanted him to be the Principal; Dr.K.S.declined the offer.

The Magnet

Free accessibility to people; concern for others and their well-being; Compassion towards all; ability to see 'good' in every being; utter lack of body consciousness are all attributes of Dr.K.S. bordering on the Divine. One was reminded of Sri Bhagavan at every instant of his or her association with Dr.K.S.

He had the extraordinary ability to 'accept people as they are' without any qualifications or stipulations. He drew every one like a magnet and the people who came in contact with him felt they meant something special to him. This was yet another phenomenon which had a striking resemblance to the relationship between Sri Bhagavan and his devotees.

Dr.K.S. was childlike in demeanour and reminded one of the legendary Suka Maharshi, the ever pure and perfect. During his stay in England he used to often run into a scholar in a vegetarian restaurant. They soon became good friends and used to discuss philosophy and the *Upanishads* for hours. The scholar was so impressed with Dr.K.S. that before leaving England for his home town, Geneva, he invited Dr.K.S. to visit him in Geneva enroute to India. Dr.K.S. agreed, but after the completion of his course he decided to return directly to India. It was then he received a letter from the Geneva friend reminding him of the promised visit. But Dr.K.S. could not find the time and so tried to excuse himself from making the trip. But the Geneva friend did not take a 'No' for an answer and instead sent him a ticket from London to Geneva – adding that his wife was also keen on meeting him. He further stated that he would do all that was needed for Dr.K.S.' onward journey to India from Geneva. Dr.K.S. had therefore to go to Geneva.

In Geneva, the scholar and his wife were extremely hospitable and affectionate to him. Their discussions were on varied subjects, carrying on late into the night. Dr.K.S. marvelled at his host's wide and deep knowledge. It also happened to be Christmas Eve then and the lady of the house invited Dr.K.S. to supper. Dr.K.S. noted with surprise twenty vegetarian dishes laid out on the table and found all the dishes to be excellently prepared. Dr.K.S. was delighted at her skill in preparing the dishes. It was virtually a sumptuous feast he partook that evening.

After supper Dr.K.S. was shown a room to rest in and as he was entering the room, the host said "Mr.Subrahmanian, before you retire please

keep your pants outside". Dr.K.S. was puzzled by the strange request and sensing his feelings, the host quietly added, "Your pant's button in the rear is missing and my wife wishes to mend it."

On hearing this Dr.K.S.was deeply touched. Tears spontaneously welled up in his eyes at the motherly affection of the hostess to a stranger. While narrating this incident to the devotees Dr.K.S. quietly observed, "Such is Sri Bhagavan's Grace".

Such tasks are not performed by ladies to perfect strangers. It is possible only when a person is spontaneously owned. Dr.K.S.was owned by all people.

His resolve

Dr.K.S.was a gentle, but firm person. He had great inner courage borne out of complete faith in Sri Bhagavan.

In 1978, Dr.K.S. was invited by the East- West Centre in Honolulu to attend an international conference on English Language Teaching. He sent a copy of the invitation to the U.S. Consulate in Madras and requested them to send the Visa; the consulate responded by asking him to come to Madras and appear for an interview. The furious Dr.K.S. wrote a letter to the Consulate, saying that as he was an invitee of the U.S. Government (East-West Centre) such formalities should be dispensed with and should be Consulate insist on his personal appearance he would rather turn down the East-West Centre's invitation than face the ignominy of an interview . Dr.K.S. followed this with scathing letter to the U.S.Ambassador in India telling him that the American Consulates in India should stop treating Indians as third class citizens in their own country . A week later, the visa arrived by post and Dr.K.S. spent four months in Hawaii. On his way back to India, he visited Taipei and spent a week there.

Yet another instance was when he had to take his family to the USA when he was in that country working towards his Ph.D. Because of the limited income, the normal practice adopted by students was to create a temporary and artificial bank account with outside help, to convince the American Consulates here in India that they could support their family. Dr.K.S. did not follow the beaten track. He wrote to the authorities stating that he was confident that the scholarship amount he received was adequate to support his family. The same confidence was exhibited

by his wife when she was interviewed at the American Consulate in Madras. Needless to say, the required visas were obtained and the family were able to join Dr.K.S. in Bloomington. This firmness and courage were permanent attributes in all his dealings –official, journalistic and even spiritual.

Concern for others

The concern he had for the well being of everybody around him was extraordinary. At the end of every satsang, he made sure that the devotees, especially the ladies and the elderly had transport to go back home in.

He made an observation once that if a small village is electrified, it would receive considerable publicity in the newspapers. The sun lights up the whole universe, but seeks no publicity or appreciation. Dr.K.S. himself was like the sun. He helped many and helped them silently. It is no exaggeration to say that even the recipients were not aware of the help he rendered them.

Dr.K.S. was quietly persuasive. When he went to Honolulu in 1978 to participate in a conference at the East-West Centre, one of the delegates, hailing from Taipei insisted that Dr.K.S. should visit her country. Dr.K.S. complied with the request and went there and stayed in the house of the delegate. The delegate's daughter was a small, pretty child and when they became friends she showed Dr.K.S. her pet – a tiny bird in a beautiful cage. After admiring the bird, Dr.K.S. asked the child as to how she would enjoy life in a cage. The girl was silent for a while and then quietly went out. She returned a little later and reported that she had released the bird. Dr.K.S.wryly commented that he had probably been sent to Taipei to free a bird.

Dr.K.S. was not a grave philosopher living in his own world withdrawn from his surroundings. He took an immense interest in life. A teacher by profession, he was educating himself, learning about things, both big and small. Unlike most people he learnt to ride the bicycle only after his children were born. His young children, whenever they saw him on his bicycle, used to shout, "Hey run for your lives! Appa is on the road!". Dr.K.S. would always laugh heartily at this.

Dr.K.S. always seemed to thirst for knowledge. He learnt languages like Telugu, Malayalam, Hausa, Bhasa Indonesia and German after the age of

thirty five. At the age of forty he joined the Music College at Secunderabad and learnt Carnatic music along with small children. He would be amused at the way the children would silently laugh at him whenever he went off-key. The teacher was impressed by his passion for music and they became good friends.

His humour

At the Madras Christian College, 'Subbu', as Dr.K.S. was affectionately called then, took an active interest in all college activities. He was the Secretary of the Teachers Association for a year later served as the Secretary of the Association of the University Teachers of Madras for a period of two years. On all college day functions, he used to take part in the plays; on one occasion, he even appeared as a Woman ! He brought the house down when he rendered ' Twinkle Twinkle Little Star' in Carnatic style. Dr.K.S. had a delightful sense of humour. During his stay in England he travelled extensively in Europe. When asked how he survived as a vegetarian, he used to reply, " I had bread and cheese in the morning. And in the evening I had cheese and bread!" When presenting a paper at a seminar, he began by saying , I'll try to make this talk as short as I am !". In the late 70's when Padma Subrahmanian, the Bharathanatyam exponent came to the CIEFL to give a series of talks, Dr.K.S.was asked to introduce her. During one talk , in order to demonstrate a point she was making , the dancer requested Dr.K.S., who was sitting in the centre of the stage, to move to the side. Later, when asked what he thought of the talk, he replied with a twinkle in his eye, " It was a moving experience!".

He was always a source of entertainment. The minute he arrived at a relative's wedding there would be shouts of, " Mani Mama has come ! Mani Mama has come!" Soon he would be surrounded by children of all ages and he would regale the crowd with jokes and anecdotes and the marriage hall would be thundering with laughter. His children remember the envy of their cousins who would always make the same comment at the end of such sessions, " How lucky you are to have such a father!"

'Busy-ness is a sign of deficient vitality' said Stevenson. In this context, Dr.K.S.was a man of tremendous vitality. He achieved so much in so many spheres. However, he never appeared to be hurried or flustered; everything he did was marked with a quiet dignity.

Lord Sri Krishna is referred to as the Purnavatar. Dr.K.S. can be called the complete man. He was a true Stita Prajna. He took the good and not so good things in life with the same equanimity. While he grieved at the sufferings of others, he bore his own grief quietly and unknown to others. He was a wonderful human being indeed in everyway – the ideal son, ideal husband, ideal father, ideal teacher and the ideal citizen.

While he scaled all the heights one envisage for a person in his position, the peaks he reached in the spiritual field are of the most sublime dimensions.

In a letter addressed to a devotee in September, 1989, Sri Balarama Reddy wrote, “..... that K.S’s visit to the hospital to see your wife brought about an instant miracle is proof positive that he has become a perfect channel of His Grace”.

There cannot be a better way of summing up Dr.K.S. He was a perfect channel of Sri Bhagavan’s Grace. People who were not fortunate enough to have had a darshan of Sri Bhagavan in his life time, could see him in Dr. K.S.

TEACHER AND ADMINISTRATOR

After completing his B.A.(Hons.) from Madras Christian College, Dr.K.S. joined the same college as lecturer in 1950 and served the institution as a faculty member in the department of English for twelve years. In 1959 , he travelled to the U.K. on a British Council Scholarship to do a course at the University of London.

It was Professor.V.K. Gokak, Jnanapith Award winner and the first Director of the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages (CIEFL) , Hyderabad who was responsible for inducing Dr.K.S. to join CIEFL as lecturer in the Department of English Literature. He left for the U.S.A. on a Fullbright Fellowship in 1965 and returned to the institute in 1969 after obtaining his Ph.D degree in Comparative Literature from Indiana University. Concurrently, he also obtained an M.A. in Linguistics.

Dept.of Correspondence Courses

In 1973, he setup the Department of Correspondence Courses and was appointed it’s first head. To begin with, the Department offered a Post

Graduate Certificate in the teaching of English. The course was meant to improve the quality of English language teaching in the country, and was made available only to practising teachers. Later, the programme was made available to all candidates who possessed an M.A. in English.

The Certificate course was followed by new ones – Diploma in the teaching of English and then an M.Phil. Thousands of English teachers and post graduates in English benefited from these courses as they were exposed to new trends in the teaching of English and interacted with the experts in the field. Apart from meeting the demands of the Correspondence Course Department, Dr.K.S. also taught on the regular programmes run by the Institute. A number of scholars obtained their M.Litt. and Ph.D degrees under his guidance.

Shillong

To cater to the needs of the North Eastern region of the country, a Regional Centre of the CIEFL was started in Shillong in the year 1973, and Dr.K.S. was appointed its Officer In Charge. He served the institute in this capacity for three years between 1973-76. During this period, Dr.K.S. travelled extensively in the North Eastern region and came into close contact with Sri K.A.A.Raja, the then Lt. Governor of Arunachal Pradesh and Sri Rustomjee, the Chief Secretary of Meghalaya.

Back in Hyderabad

On his return from Shillong to CIEFL, Hyderabad, Dr.K.S. rejoined the Department of Correspondence Courses and was given additional duty of being the Co - Ordinator of studies of the English Division. This position was later renamed the Deen of Studies English.

Dr.K.S. was designated a Professor in CIEFL in the year 1974 and he was nominated by the President of India as a UGC National Professor for the period 1983-85. Prof.K.R. Srinivas Iyengar drafted Dr.K.S. into a review committee to explore the possibility of enlarging the scope of the correspondence courses across the country.

Through the personal initiative, the institute was able to obtain funds from the Government of India for a separate building to house the Department of Correspondence Courses. He conducted several seminars on the teaching of English literature in the institute and he also made it a point to attend such conferences wherever they were held in the country.

Administrator

Dr.K.S. was not only an excellent teacher, but he was also a great manager. He was very gentle but firm in all his dealings. Though a strict disciplinarian, he took a keen interest in the well being of his staff members. He was very kind to those who discharged their duties with sincerity and commitment. He would stand like a rock behind such functionaries. He knew how to mould the minds of people and how to give solace to the needy with his simple but spiritually powerful words and deeds. He showed paternal affection towards his staff and in several cases went out of the way to help them solve their personal problems. His help was available without asking and many a time, the recipients were not even aware that they had been helped by Dr.K.S. He consulted with his staff periodically to determine their problems and solved them. It is this concern for people that prompted him to get in touch with Sri O.Swaminatha Reddy, the then Chairman of Andhra Bank to arrange funds for a Housing Society for staff of CIEFL. But he never took credit for any good work that was done, he would say, " You do the work. All credit goes to you. If anything goes wrong, I will take the blame". He meant it and made it his motto throughout his career. While his forthright ways might have upset some people at times, the wisdom of his actions was always recognised.

It was Dr.K.S. who insisted that departmental Heads in the CIEFL should be changed every two years to ensure acquisition of administrative experience by all , including the relatively junior members of the staff. This was at that time seen as an unorthodox, yet innovative practice.

Teacher

A Student of Dr.K.S. remembers him thus:

" When I think of Professor K.S. as a teacher I am reminded first of those Sanskrit classes which he conducted during 1977 at CIEFL. The Upanishadic invocation with which he started each session was the informing principle behind all his teachings: saha naavavatu, saha nau bhunaktu, saha veeryam karavavahai. He always thought of both the teacher and the student as protected and nourished by the Brahman and as engaged in a joint pursuit and so there was no question of hate between them (maa vidvishavahai)

Whatever Professor K.S. taught – whether it was Grammar, Literature or Literacy Criticism – his Presentation was always lucid. It was his passion for lucidity, coupled of course with his unfailing humour, which made him such a successful teacher, and that not only in a formal classroom.”

Dr.K.S. was a teacher par excellence not only to the students in the classroom but also to the students of life in general. He never preached, he taught through example and his instructions were always suggestive, laced with wisdom and humour.

Acceptance of people as they are and life with all its vagaries and vicissitudes was constantly stressed by Dr.K.S. He repeatedly said that Grace did not mean that life would be without problems. Grace meant that the person concerned would have the strength to face the difficulties in life.

His own children have the following to say, in this regard: “ Probably the best lesson our father taught us is acceptance in life. By acceptance he did not mean taking things lying down. He meant doing things to the best of one’s ability and accepting failure and success stoically. He would often say that praying to God did not necessarily mean that life would be a bed of roses. Prayers would only give us the mental strength to face whatever God gives us . He would often say, ‘Never bargain with God. He knows better than you what is good for you’.”

With respect to a man’s conduct, he always said that nobody should feel threatened by one’s presence. The softness of his speech and his principled refraining from dictating to others in any manner, made people very comfortable in his presence. The same was true in respect of his own children. To quote them again, “inspite of the immense interest in life, he never insisted we get involved in his many activities. He always made it a point to praise our strengths and comment on our weaknesses in a manner that helped us deal with them positively. He maintained that we do our best and not worry about the result. There was never ever any pressure from Appa, only from professors and friends who felt that we had to do better than the rest because we were K.S’s children.

His advice regarding issues related to money was humorous and yet very sane : “Money does not remove your suffering. It allows you to suffer in

comfort". He often pointed out, " God provides for your needs and not for your greeds".

THE WRITER

" I write to inform and not to impress", said Dr.K.S. on the occasion. This is hundred percent true. Master of English that he was, Dr.K.S. could have written in the most flowery English, but he did not have a penchant for the florid. His objective had always been to impart, explain and share. He never had to prove anything to anybody. This attitude of his was always reflected in his writings. He often used to ask children to read what he had written to assure himself that even ordinary readers could understand his message.

Dr.K.S. began writing for newspapers very early in life. While he was in his early twenties, he became the Kodaikanal correspondent of the Indian Express. But it was the two columns that he wrote in the later part of his life that brought him recognition.

BYM

"Between You and Me" and "Know Your English" were his weekly columns in the Hindu which were most eagerly looked forward to by readers in and outside the state of A.P. The column " Between You & Me" was not only educative, but also highly entertaining. His delightful sense of humor was reflected in this column in almost every line.

Dr.K.S. was always forthright in expressing his views and spared no one when he did not agree with what they had said or done. There were occasions when he pulled up even Union Cabinet Ministers for their indiscretions in speech. To their credit it must be said the 'higherups' wrote back to him explaining their point of view. It must also be said that the column " Between You & Me" proved not only highly popular but also the turned out to be a very effective outlet for public grievances. Many people used to write to Dr.K.S. to report to him the troubles that they were having with the various public utilities, services and other facilities. Typically, these involved the Railways, Telephones, Insurance claims, Electricity, Postal Services and so on and so forth. It is no exaggeration to say that if a grievance appeared in the " Between You & Me" column, the matter was attended to very promptly by the authorities concerned and that K.S. was kept informed about the actions taken. There were several instances where the response by the

department concerned was amazingly fast. Dr. K.S. made sure that all these actions were suitably reported and he used to warmly thank and congratulate the officers concerned.

Dr.K.S. always made sure that the good things done in public life were reported in their true perspective and due credit was given to people for such acts. He was always of the view that the media in general painted society in dark and ugly hues. He did his best to rectify the situation as much as he could.

KYE

“ Know Your English” was a column sought after not only by the young, but also by the elderly. The lucidity with which he explained the nuances of the English language was highly informative. The Oxford University Press (India) brought out some of these columns in two volumes.

Other writings

His love for children made him bring out the *Mahabharatha* in simple English . He wanted them to understand the ancient history and traditions of our country.

While his writings on secular matters were informative and educative , his writings on spiritual matters were uplifting and ennobling. He served on the editorial committee of *Mountain Path* a publication of Sri Ramanashramam for many years. His writings on Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi and various other spiritual matters were profound in thought but easy to comprehend. A collection of these writings was brought out in book form under the caption the *Uniqueness of Sri Bhagavan*. This book carried a foreword written by Sri Balarama Reddy, a senior devotee of Sri Bhagavan.

Dr.K.S. had great regard for Sri Kunjuswami, a long time devotee of Sri Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi. His *Reminiscences of Sri Bhagavan* and his ashram life written originally in Tamil were rendered into English by Dr.K.S. This English translation was published by Sri Ramanashramam. Out of love and reverence for his venerable mother, Dr.K.S. translated into Tamil considerable portions of that very popular Ashram publication “*letters from Sri Ramanashramam*” written by Smt. Surinamma. This translation typifies the spirit of all his writings. His endeavour had always been to explain, enlighten, elevate and entertain.

Dr.K.S. loved to write and he constantly encouraged those around him to put pen to paper.

WITH PARAMACHARYA

Mrs.K.S. and her family were very close to the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham and the Paramacharya. In fact, Mrs.K.S. was named Kamakoti by her parents and it was Dr.K.S. who changed it to Subhashini. While visits of her family members to the Kanchi Peetham were fairly frequent, Dr.K.S. himself was a fairly infrequent visitor. His reverence for the Paramacharya, however was very high.

The Dream

In May 1970, Dr.K.S. along with family visited his brother-in-law, Sri V.S. Laxmanan, in Madras. This brother-in-law was a businessman and at that time he was doing extremely well. During this visit, Dr.K.S. had a dream, in which the Paramacharya suggested to him that he should advise his brother-in-law to put an end to all his business activities and devote the rest of his life to the service of Paramacharya. Dr.K.S. was puzzled by the dream, but was hesitant to talk about it as his brother-in-law was at the peak of his career then. That same evening, it so happened, that Dr.K.S. and his brother-in-law found themselves alone in the house as all the family members went out to see a movie. During the course of their conversation his brother-in-law himself broached the subject that was upper most on Dr.K.S' mind. Sri V.S.Laxmanan mentioned that he felt like giving up all his business affairs and leading a peaceful life. It was then that Dr.K.S. narrated his dream to his brother-in-law. Just around that time, a leading film producer, Venous Krishna Murthy who was a friend of the family turned up. On coming to know about the dream, he suggested to Laxmanan that he should go to the Paramacharya himself and ask him what course of action to take. Since his brother-in-law had a severe back problem at that time, Dr.K.S. along with the ladies of the family went to Kanchi. Dr.K.S. was introduced to the Paramacharya by Mrs.Laxmanan and the sage wanted to know whether he was a medical doctor or a Doctor of Philosophy. When Dr.K.S. told him that he was not a medical doctor, the Acharya replied, "So you are a Professor!" At that point in time, Dr.K.S. only a Reader and he informed the Acharya so. But the Acharya repeated the word 'Professor' three or four times. The Acharya then began to question Dr.K.S. about the works of John Keats and Oliver Goldsmith. The

Acharya asked him to explain what Keats meant by the line ' Beauty is truth, Truth beauty'. When Dr.K.S. finished explaining, the Acharya remarked that the same idea is captured in our '*Satyam Shivam Sundarm*'.

In due course, the topic of conversation turned to the dream and the Acharya asked Dr.K.S., " What else did I tell in the dream?" When the later had given a detailed account of what had been said in the dream, the Acharya said: " If that is what I said, let him do exactly that." Sri V.S. Laxmanan, heeding to his Master's call, wound up all his business activities that year.

The Vellore meetings

Dr.K.S. paid another visit to Kanchi Peetham around 1984; this time with his brother-in-law Sri V.S.Athmanathan who is a resident of Vellore. Dr and Mrs.K.S. and Sri Athmanathan's family paid their respects to the Paramacharya in the morning and they visited him again in the evening. In the evening, a pooja was being performed and Dr.K.S. happened to occupy a seat in the very front row. The rest of the family was in the rear. Observing that the Paramacharya was all alone in a nearby room, a niece of Mrs. K.S. suggested that they should go and have darshan of the Paramacharya. As Mrs. K.S. and her niece were walking towards the Paramacharya's room, other family members also joined them. After they had paid their respects and were about to take leave, Mrs.K.S. wanted to prostrate to the Paramacharya. He motioned her to stop and made some silent gestures. Mrs. K.S. was greatly puzzled at her not being permitted to offer her salutations. The family could not understand the Paramacharya's gestures immediately and only after a few minutes did it become clear that he was asking for Dr.K.S. Mrs. K.S. despatched her nephew to locate and fetch Dr.K.S. to the Paramacharya's presence. The boy however could not locate him immediately and the family was in a fix. People standing outside the small room, waiting to have the Paramacharya's darshan were getting restless and giving vent to their vexation. The Paramacharya however, was insistent that Dr.K.S. should be fetched. Somehow, the nephew succeeded in locating him and both wife and husband prostrated to the Paramacharya who blessed them with all affection and love.

If so happened that soon after their return to Hyderabad, Dr.K.S. suffered a mild heart attack and had to be hospitalised. Mrs. K.S. got in touch with her brother in Vellore seeking his help to obtain the blessings and protection of Paramacharya. He got in touch with Kanchi Peetham and requested for the

Mahaprasadam of the Paramacharya and the brother flew to Hyderabad with it. By God's grace, Dr.K.S. recovered from his illness.

A few weeks later when the Vellore brother-in-law paid a visit to the Kanchi Peetham and was saluting the Paramacharya, the holy sage made enquiries about Dr.K.S. through gestures. Again this brother of Mrs. K.S. could not understand the sage. The Paramacharya pointed to a mango which was lying in front of him and showed his finger again enquiring as to the welfare of a person. It dawned on him that the Paramacharya was enquiring about Dr. K.S. He felt greatly ashamed about his failure to inform the Paramacharya about the recovery of Dr.K.S. He prostrated again and again in penitence. When he recounted this incident in great detail over the phone, Dr.K.S. was overwhelmed and wept coming to know of the extreme love the Paramacharya had for such an insignificant being as himself.

ON SRI BHAGAVAN

In 1978, Dr.K.S.' mother found that her son was spending much of his time, writing and talking about various subjects. She began to wonder when Sri Bhagavan would direct him to talk about HIM. The answer came a year later. Once the Ramana Kendram took root in Hyderabad, Dr.K.S. desire to talk and write about varied subjects withered. Between 1979 and 1998, all his talks revolved around one subject – 'Sri Bhagavan and his teachings'.

The speeches

His speeches were outpourings of his immense love and devotion for Sri Bhagavan. They became the means for sharing his Ramana anubhava with fellow devotees. Dr.K.S. spoke from the heart and captivated the hearts of the devotees. His speech transcended the language barrier. It was full of emotional appeal. More often than not, at the conclusion of his speech, many in the audience would be shedding silent tears. When one listened to him speak about Sri Bhagavan, one felt elevated, purified. It was like taking a dip in the Ganges. He had the capacity to completely transform the hearts of the listeners.

Dr.K.S. often emphasized that Sri Bhagavan's life was his message and philosophy. He used to say that one incident in his life could convey what a hundred books on Vedanta cannot attempt to explain. A sage like Sri Bhagavan appeared once in a few centuries, he would proclaim. The extraordinary thing about Sri Bhagavan, said Dr.K.S., was his ordinary -ness. Sri Bhagavan was accessible to all, all 24 hours of the day, and this he felt was

unparalleled in the spiritual history of mankind. As a boy of 16, Sri Bhagavan arrived in Tiruvannamalai and did not leave the place even for a day.

It was thrilling to hear Dr.K.S. draw attention to the subtle points in Sri Bhagavan's attitude, for example, to Arunachala. He would repeatedly mention that Sri Bhagavan has never mentioned anywhere, even once, that he (Sri Bhagavan) thought of Arunachala or loved Arunachala. It was always, "You made me think of You Arunachala! You brought me to your feet; You made me love You, how can I ever be grateful to You Arunachala!"

Loving Sri Bhagavan

He would say, "It is not possible to understand or know Sri Bhagavan. One has to love him to know him and only he can make us think of him or love him" This line of thinking was a constant refrain in his speeches. However many times he repeated the same concept, one never tired of listening to him. It was as though, by these repetitions, he was etching grooves in our hearts, so that Sri Bhagavan's Grace could be channelised through them. Dr.K.S' own attitude to Sri Bhagavan was exactly the same as that of Sri Bhagavan's attitude to Arunachala. This total identification with Sri Bhagavan's bhava, was a unique feature in Dr.K.S.' speeches and one instantly realised that one was sitting at the feet of a genuine, ripe bhaktha. The ambience created in the small hall at Andhra Mahila Sabha was surcharged with his bhakthi. His graphic description of the events in Sri Bhagavan's presence brought Sri Ramanashram to Hyderabad; it is no exaggeration that there were moments when each listener felt that he was sitting at the feet of Sri Bhagavan in the old meditation hall. These were truly indescribable moments.

Human dimension of Sri Bhagavan

One can say that no one brought out the human dimension of Sri Bhagavan as well as Dr.K.S. did. Dr.K.S. observed that Sri Bhagavan was not a dry vedantin; that he was not a killjoy. He cried with his devotees and shared their anguish when they were overtaken by calamities. Sri Bhagavan did not offer philosophy to an anguished soul. By words or gestures or his look of infinite Grace, he often soothed their troubled psyches. Similarly, he also shared their joys and often cracked jokes with them. Devotees were never made to feel a sense of awe in his presence. Everyone felt as comfortable as they would in their mother's company. Nothing was too big or too small to be brought to his notice. Dr.K.S. wanted us to always remember this aspect of Sri Bhagavan and asked to emulate this, at least in a small measure to begin with, in our dealings

with the society. He used to emphasize that being religious did not mean being insensitive to others' needs and feelings. One should not think one can progress in sadhana by being indifferent to, say, the daily burdens being borne by one's spouse or other members of the family. " Do not demand that a comfortable atmosphere should be created by all others so that you can pursue meditation or Dhyana or japa. Others should not even be aware that you are doing any of these things, if you earnestly want to succeed, " he would say. The sincere seeker benefited enormously by following these practical tips of Dr.K.S. for sadhana.

Surrender

The aspects of Sri Bhagavan closest to Dr.K.S.' heart were his thyaga, his vairagya. What touched him most was the total surrender of the 16 year old boy to Arunachala. The manner in which the lad through his sacred thread, the sweets given by Muttukrishna Bhagavata's wife and the remaining money and entrusting his life totally in the hands of Arunachala moved Dr.K.S. immeasurably. How the boy took only one piece of his dhoti for his kaupina , was something that Dr.K.S. never tired of mentioning. Relating the incident when Sri Bhagavan said that the first Bhiksha of Arunachala was offered to him, after he had starved for one whole day, in the form of stale rice in a rusty tin, and how it tasted like nectar, Dr.K.S. would exclaim, " What Thyaga ! What surrender ! Bhagavan did not expect to be given a 5 – star treatment just because he surrendered to Arunachala. This is true surrender. We should keep in mind that by becoming Sri Bhagavan's devotees, we can not expect only goodthings happen to us. Bad experiences will also be there; they are unavoidable. But one thing is certain, Sri Bhagavan will give us the strength and the frame of mind that will accept the good and the bad alike. You can't say you have surrendered and yet make demands on him !" By such profound words of wisdom, Dr.K.S. prepared the devotees for genuine spiritual pursuit.

Grace

The favourite topics taken up by Dr.K.S. during his speeches were Grace and Silence. He drew attention to the fact that even to think of God, one needed His Grace. Even the feeling that one is not receiving Grace, he said, was due to Grace! Grace is the means and end of sadhana. Sri Bhagavan's words that 'Grace is always flowing' should be constantly remembered, especially when one is undergoing troubles." To his knowledge, no other saint except Sri Bhagavan has proclaimed this: "Grace is not limited to only those who come here. Grace is for all, at all times." Dr.K.S. often quoted Sri Bhagavan's only

desire,” Arunachala, grant me a flood of Love for Your lotus feet; I seek nothing else!”

Akshara Mana Malai

Akshara Mana Malai, the sweetest of Sri Bhagavan’s compositions merited a special place in his speeches. He went into raptures while explaining the various shades of meaning conveyed by each word. He said that praying for Grace is the single theme around which this beautiful garland is strung. He encouraged the recitation of *Akshara Mana Malai* by the devotees, whenever possible.

Silence

Sri Bhagavan’s silence was an aspect that fascinated Dr. K.S. He considered Sri Bhagavan to be an avatar of Dakshinamoorthy. All his speeches would begin with the famous verse ‘ Gurave Sarva Lokanam’, in praise of the Lord of Silence, Dakshinamoorthy. He would often remind us, “ The silence of Sri Bhagavan was not merely the silence of the tongue. It was silence of the mind”. This silence has the power to reveal, whereas words only veil that. The state of silence is the true advaitic experience; where is the ‘other’ for the Gnani to communicate with? He experiences only the One Self. It is not a state that can be explained. It has to be experienced. Sri Bhagavan was in this state of Brahma Nishta every second of his 54 years of stay in Arunachala. Devotees who were fortunate enough to be in his presence were granted a glimpse of this state by a mere look by Sri Bhagavan.

Dr.K.S. had once delivered a lecture titled’ The Language of Silence’ in an international conference in Hawaii. Drawn by this strange title, a number of people attended the lecture. This spiritual ideal of communication through silence, unique to Indian Philosophy was fascinating to the international audience. A Chinese lady was so captivated by the talk that she became an ardent admirer of Dr.K.S. She even invited him to visit her home in Taipei. An interesting incident connected with this incident was included in the chapter on *the person*.

Kavya Kanta

His love of Sanskrit made Dr.K.S. an ardent admirer of Kavya Kanta Ganapathi Muni. He would quote extensively from Kavya Kanta’s compositions, like *Uma Sahasram*, *Ramana Chatvarimsat*, *Ramana Geetha*, etc. He always ended his speech with the recitation of a verse from Chatvarimsat (40 verses in praise of

Bhagavan). He would relate a number of stories in the life of Sri Bhagavan which brought out the special place that Kavya Kanta had in Sri Bhagavan's esteem. Dr.K.S. held that Kavya Kanta was truly the last great Sanskrit poet that India has produced. Kavya Kanta's patriotism and the various spiritual activities he had launched for securing freedom for India were often covered in his speeches. Dr.K.S. would quote the moving verse from *Uma Sahasram*, where this poet/saint states, " I want your Grace, Mother, not for my sake, but for the good of the nation- Desakusalaya, Prarthayathi sakthim".

Gandhiji

Similarly the Father of Nation also occupied an exalted place in his esteem. On countless occasions, he pointed out the appropriateness of holding the Kendram meetings in the Gandhi Smarak building of the Andhra Mahila Sabha with its walls adorning beautiful pictures of Gandhiji, depicting various stages of the Freedom struggle. Dr.K.S. informed the devotees that Gandhiji had great respect for Sri Bhagavan; whenever anyone in his camp felt troubled in mind, he would invariably ask him to visit Sri Ramanashram and recoup his faith. Mention was often made of the famous remark made by Sarojini Naidu regarding, Sri Bhagavan and Gandhiji, the two mahatmas in her life. She said that whereas one mahatma never left them in peace, always launching them on some satyagraha or the other, the other always provided an abode of indescribable peace!

Lord Rama

Dr.K.S. had great love and devotion for Lord Rama. During the Sunday Satsang immediately following Rama Navami, his entire speech would be devoted to Lord Rama. In his inimitable style, with a sweet voice dripping with bhakthi, Dr.K.S. would recite a number of slokas from Valmiki Ramayana. What a treat these lectures were ! Rama's humility, his magnanimity, his concern for dharma would be elaborated in a touching manner. With a voice choking with emotion, he would exclaim, " What humility ! What Karunya ! What kruthagnatha(gratitude)! The Lord of this Universe showed such humility, should we not follow a little of His example ?"

Even more moving was the way he related Kuchela's story from the Mahabharatha. Not an eye in the audience remained dry when he talked about the utmost humility shown by Lord Krishna while receiving and entertaining His classmate, leading a very poor life. Dr.K.S. transported the listeners to new spiritual heights during these lectures.

It was the good fortune of the Ramana Kendram, Hyderabad devotees to have listened to his great soul, week after week for many years. He talked exclusively for the Ramana devotees. He refrained from any publicity. He would keep a very low profile even in the Kendram. He never wanted to dominate the proceedings. Before getting up to speak he always ensured that all those who wanted to speak, had spoken. His speeches had a transforming, elevating quality. He has left his permanent foot prints in the hearts of the devotees. Many in the audience kept a faithful record of his speeches; some others have captured his glorious talks on audio tapes. May be one day, his talks can get published, benefiting the Ramana devotees.

Unique is Sri Bhagavan and so are his devotees. Sri Bhagavan is egoless and so the embodiment of all virtues. His devotees reflect his different facets. If Sri Bala Rama Reddy represents his serene silence, Dr.K.S. reminds us of his sweet speeches.

Sri G.S.N. Sarma of Vizag wrote on hearing Dr.K.S. speak on Sri Bhagavan,

“ It was my great good fortune to have the pleasure of seeing you physically, listening to your unique discourse on Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi and talking to you. I have listened to many spiritual discourses but not the like of those here in Visakhapatnam delivered by you. Not only your simplicity, humility and piety but also the simplicity and unpretentiousness of your English struck me most. Anyone who knew the ABCD of English could very easily follow your thought-provoking discourses. I have been wondering ever since then how difficult it is to speak and write such simple English. I can never forget those three days in my life which I always preserve in my cherished memory. We all owe a deep debt of gratitude to Sri D. Bhaskara Murthy for having brought you to Visakhapatnam.

The speeches of Dr.K.S., like his written works, are marked by simplicity, profundity of thought, gentle humour and intent to inform and elevate.

Being the natural teacher that he was, he could convey very complex concepts in a simple manner. He chose his words in such a way that even the most ordinary of the listeners could understand what was said. It is not an exaggeration to say that even when he was reciting Sanskrit verses, the meaning used to be fairly clear to even those who had no inkling of the Sanskrit language. It was because he used to pace and separate the words in such a way that the meaning became self explanatory.

Though he occasionally spoke on other spiritual subjects and scriptures, he confined his speeches by and large to Sri Bhagavan and His Works from 1979. Barring a very few, he declined most invitations to speak on subjects which were no longer of interest to him.

While speaking on Sri Bhagavan, he went into raptures and many a time he was too overcome with emotion to carry on. This was the reason he could not accept an invitation from Sri Balarama Reddy to deliver his endowment lectures on 'Sri Ramana and Adi Sankara'. Sri Reddy understood the position and said "Blessed are the people who break down while speaking about Sri Bhagavan".

SRI RAMANA KENDRAM

The making

The creation of Sri Ramana Kendram at Hyderabad is probably his greatest contribution and blessing to the devotees in Hyderabad .

On the 19 July 1979 , Dr.K.S carried a portrait of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi to the Hindi arts college, Vidyanagar to start Sri Ramana Kendram, Hyderabad . He inserted an advertisement in a local paper inviting the Ramana devotees of Hyderabad to form a group to carryout a weekly satsang. Gradually devotees came in numbers attracted by the inspiring talks of Dr. K.S in English and those of Sri Bhadri Raju in Telugu.

In the beginning Dr. K.S used to even sweep the floor himself to keep the room clean for the devotees . He soon became the chief attraction and the devotees loved him for his endearing ways and magnanimity.

In the early days, the satsang took place on Sundays between 4.30 PM and 6.00 PM. Later, the hours and the venue were changed. On 5 April, 1981, devotees began to congregate at the Gandhi Centenary Hall on the premises of Andhra Mahila Sabha College for Women between 9.00 and 10.30 A.M.

The Kendram satsangs have been held for the last nineteen years without a break. This is indeed remarkable and bears eloquent testimony to the tremendous spiritual power of Dr. K.S. He used to reiterate that he was like any other devotee of the Kendram; and that the only important person and Head of Sri Ramana Kendram was Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi. He used to preface his talks with the statement that people in Sri Ramana Kendram speak only because they are asked to speak and not because they know more than others. He encouraged the devotees to speak and made them relate their experiences. He always, however preferred silence to speech. The Lord Dakshinamoorthy, who taught

through silence, was his ishta and he desired that at least one Sunday in the month should be devoted to silence and for meditation. The third Sunday of every month has been earmarked for silence in the Kendram . There are many devotees in the Kendram who prefer this Sunday compared to the rest because of the bliss of meditation they enjoy, undisturbed by the spoken word.

His gentleness, humility and unostentatious behaviour captivated the devotees and the lives of many have become Bhagavan Centered through the silent influence of Dr.K.S .

Dr. K.S himself had the following to say about Sri Ramana Kendram and its formation:

“ I always found it difficult to discuss Sri Bhagavan with others as I felt I was too small even to talk about him. I kept my experiences to myself. I never spoke about them with others. Even in the Ashram , I never used to move with the staff. Only after 1969 I got to know some people personally and talked to them occasionally. In 1979, when the authorities of Sri Ramanashramam asked me to celebrate the birth centenary of Sri Bhagavan in Hyderabad, I got a news item published in the Deccan Chronicle. I asked devotees of Sri Bhagavan to gather in the Hindi Arts College, Vidyanagar on 19 July 1979 to discuss how best to organise the birth centenary celebrations at Hyderabad. About 20 people gathered on that day. One of them suggested that we start a Ramana Kendram in Hyderabad and that we should meet every Sunday in the evening for about an hour. It was also suggested that it should start from the following Sunday. So Sri Ramana Kendram, it can be said, was started on 19 July itself. I was asked to speak every week and ever since 1979, except on days when I was away from Hyderabad or when I was unwell. I have been speaking every Sunday. I did not want to speak about Sri Bhagavan in public till my 50th year and I have not stopped talking about him since. I feel grateful to Sri Bhagavan that I did not speak about him when I was young. Also, we must always keep in mind that Sri Bhagavan can be understood only in silence. He was Dakshinamoorthy, who communicated an extraordinary peace, not through long talks but through his profound silence. We cannot choose to be either silent or talkative. He chooses the devotee for a task he assigns, out of his grace”.

Kendram practices

Simplicity in the conduct of Sri Ramana Kendram was stressed from the very beginning by Dr. K.S. He discouraged ritualism and elaborate and ostentatious processess. He was not even for the distribution of prasadam in the Kendram. However, considering the fact many devotees – especially elderly people – came to the Kendram from far off places. Dr. K.S permitted the distribution of plantain as prasadam – in deference to the wishes of the devotees.

The fact that the Hyderabad devotees are received with affection in Sri Ramanashramam is solely due to the personality and stature of Dr K.S. The uniqueness of the Hyderabad Kendram stems from the fact that, by and large, there has been no hierarchy in this centre – either organisational or spiritual. The office bearers of the Kendram change every year. The Ramana brotherhood that has been forged here is suffused with mutual love and tenderness. This has been entirely due to the subtle influence of Dr.K.S. He has been the centre and circumference of the Hyderabad Raman Kendram.

Dr. K.S and the devotees

Even senior devotees of Sri Bhagavan like Prof. Shivamohan Lal and Sri Mahapatra Dave took to Dr. K.S. On a particular occasion, when Dr. K.S could not make it to the Satsang at his residence in Secunderabad, Sri Dave commented, “ Today’s Satsang is like Ayodhya without Rama “.

The love and concern Dr. K.S had for the devotees was legendary and had to be seen to be believed. In the formative years of the Kendram, Satsang meetings used to take place every day in different corners of the city. On Mondays, the meetings were at the residence of Sri P.Mohan Rao situated beyond Charminar. The Tuesday meetings took place at the residence of late Prof. Shiva Mohan Lal in Tarnaka. It was the turn of Sri Doshi, in Himayat Nagar, on Wednesdays. The Thursday meetings were held at the residence of late Sri Dave in Jeera, Secunderabad. The venue for the Friday meetings was the residence of Dr. K.S in CIEFL. Sri C.V.K Murthy played host to the Satsang meetings on Saturday in his Kanchan Bagh residence. The Sunday meetings, of course, were held in the Sri Ramana Kendram premises. Dr. K.S made it a point to attend every meeting unmindful of the distance involved.

Attending these meetings, day after day for years together in such far off places is not possible for ordinary people. Dr. K.S, the Divine personality that he was, could attend these meetings without fail for many years. In addition to the Friday evening satsang meetings, he conducted meditation sessions at his residence in the mornings. Devotees greatly cherished this opportunity of meditating in his presence and used to brave the distance and cold to attend them.

Dr.K.S had a great regard for Kavyakantha Ganapathi Muni and he desired that the Poet-Saint should be given his due place of honour in the Kendram.

Even when his health was failing and it became difficult for him to sit through the couple of hours in the Kendram, he made it a point to attend the Sunday meetings. In the later part of 1997, there were daily satsang sessions at his residence. It is possible, that knowing the future course of events, he wanted to shower all his blessings on the devotees of the Kendram in full measure before leaving the world. His concern and compassion was such that despite his delicate health, he spent considerable time with the devotees after the Sunday meetings, listening to them, counselling them and spreading cheer all round. He gave his time freely and unstintingly to all those who sought it.

Dr. K.S proved himself to be a true friend and benefactor of the Kendram and its members. If anyone failed to attend satsang meetings continuously he would make enquiries about his welfare or personally go to the devotee’s home to find out the reason and extend necessary help. When Sri Bhadri Raju passed away suddenly on 25.6.1982 with Sri Bhagavan’s name on his lips. Dr. K. S was to there at his house throughout the day. The following Sunday (3.7.1982) when Dr. K.S rose to speak about the devotion of Sri Bhadri Raju he broke down completely and could not continue. Such was his love for his fellow devotees. He told the devotees later that he could keep his composure even when his own father passed away but was unable to do so now.

Visitors

Senior devotees like Sarvasri Shiv Mohan Lal, Mahapatra Dave, Dr. Melkote, Smt Vajreswari (Nayana's daughter), Prof. Ramachandraiah, Sri Ganesan, Dr. Raja Rao, Rani Prabhavathi, Sri Harindranath Chattopadhyaya and many others spoke inspiring to the devotees of the Kendram on Sri Bhagavan. Notable among them was Sri N.Balaram Reddy who had till then never felt the need to leave the Ashram, but yielded to the affection and regard he had for Dr. K.S. He stayed for seven memorable weeks (from September to November in 1983) in Hyderabad and surcharged the devotees with intense love for Sri Bhagavan. After he left, Dr. K.S remarked at the Kendram meeting, "Now the Kendram is fully established. It can run by itself, without any body's help".

Sri Balaram Reddy never tired of talking about the great work done by Dr.K.S in the creation of Sri Ramana Kendram, Hyderabad, He always felt that the Hyderabad center is a unique Kendra and called it a Sadhana Kendra. This uniqueness he attributed totally to the greatness of Dr.K.S.

Sri Ramana Jyoti

Dr. K.S was the founder and first editor of *Sri Ramana Jyoti*, a bilingual monthly journal in English & Telugu devoted to Sri Bhagavan. The journal was started by him in September, 1981 in deference to the persistent requests of Sri R.J Doshi. It was first published in English in cyclostyled form. The Telugu component was added in 1983.

Dr. K.S desired that the journal should deal exclusively with Sri Bhagavan and provide a 'touch' of Sri Ramana Maharshi to all those who read it. He patiently heard the Telugu articles and translations when they were read out to him and made very apt corrections. As in the case of the Kendram office bearers, he desired that the editor of the journal should change from time to time. He stepped down from his post in October 1985 and requested Sri Sri Rama Murthy to take charge. The democratic methods of Dr. K.S were of the highest plane. "We need Sri Bhagavan. Sri Bhagavan does not need us"- is the spirit with which he wanted the journal and the Kendram to be run.

Programmes

Dr. K.S actively participated in all the programmes of Sri Ramana Kendram which included poor feeding and the distribution of clothes to the needy in the winter months. The spirit of giving was greatly encouraged by him and feeding the poor was done as an act of internal cleansing.

The arrival of Sri Bhagavan to Tiruvannamalai on the 1 September, 1896 was considered a very sacred day by Dr. K.S. This occasion, like the Jayanti of Sri Bhagavan, is observed as a festive event and Dr. K.S introduced the practice of devotees bringing to the Kendram some prasadam which is distributed to all. The festive atmosphere on these two days used to be heightened with Dr. K.S personally serving the devotees.

He made it a point to visit the sick and suffering devotees and desired that the devotees of the Kendram should also do so. He attached particular importance to these visits. The

devotees whom he visited greatly cherished these visits and one could discern visible signals of improvement after his visits.

Another unique practice of Dr. K.S was to pen individual letters carrying quotations of Sri Bhagavan to devotees. These letters brought great relief to the recipients. Many devotees who received these letters have said that the content of the letter were so relevant to their particular situation at the point of receiving the letter. When he was in Sri Ramanashramam, Dr.K.S , used to enclose Ashram Prasadam along with his letters.

The love, affection and admiration that the Hyderabad Kendram members have for Dr. K.S borders on worship. When Dr. K.S suffered a heart attack in November 1990, he was admitted in the Andhra Mahila Sabha Hospital in Hyderabad. His brother-in-law came from Vellore to visit him. He is reported to have said that while he could take him to vellore and provide all mediacal amenities in CMC there, he could not, however, reproduce the love and affection of the Hyderabad devotees had for Dr. K.S.

For many in the Sri Ramana Kendram, Hyderabad Dr.K.S is Sri Bhagavan Himself. Today, the Kendram attendance continues to be at the same level as in his life time. Considering the fact that many devotees used to come to the Kendram with the sole purpose of listening to Dr.K.S., what is happening today is a miracle. The Sankalpa (if it can be called that) and the strength of the personality of Dr.K.S, are the soul sustaining factors of the Kendram.

THE FINAL DAYS

Dr.K.S. was diagnosed a diabetic in his early forties; when he was doing his Ph.D at Indiana University. But till his sixtieth year, he didn't take serious note of it. He ate with relish ice creams, chocolates, mangoes and most other edibles that he was directed by doctors to avoid. He never called himself a 'diabetic'; he used to say, ' I am a very sweet person and I can prove it'. It wasn't until his uncle Srinivasa Iyer extracted a promise from him in 1989 that he began to abstain from sweets. But by then the disease had begun to take its toll on Dr.K.S. aging body. His eyesight which had always been weak, began to further deteriorate and he was also the victim of two heart attacks. He, however, didn't let these setbacks dampen his spirits. It was possible for him to do this because he had overcome body consciousness. He never worried about his physical comfort in his constant endeavour to help his fellow-beings in every possible way. The manner in which he put the welfare and happiness of others ahead of himself, even in his delicate state of health, was amazing. The concern he showed for others was beyond the realm of possibility for ordinary mortals. Despite continuous medical attention, there was perceptible deterioration in his health.

His son Sri Upendran was away in the U.S.A. with his family for about four years from 1993. While Dr.K.S' problems related to his eyes persisted in one form or the other during this period, the body also grew weak. Notwithstanding his

growing weakness, the discourses at home and at Sri Ramana Kendram were continued. As squatting on the floor became difficult, Dr.K.S. gave his talks sitting in a chair. He never encouraged devotees to make enquiries about his health. If anybody made such an enquiry, he deflected the question by making enquiries about the welfare of the family of the person who made the initial enquiry.

In 1996, he went to Chennai to have his eyes operated on. Due to some mishap, he went into an unconscious state in the operation theatre. Once he regained consciousness, he was in a state of amnesia for five or six days. During this period he could not recognise even his wife of over forty years. The remarkable thing however was when a photograph of Sri Bhagavan was shown to him, he smiled and said "Bhagavan". By God's grace, Dr.K.S. could tide over the crisis and regain his normalcy.

On his return to Hyderabad, the satsang activities at home and Sri Ramana Kendram were resumed. In fact, the frequency of the meetings increased. In the later part of 1997, at his instance, the satsangs at his residence became a daily affair.

Although his Kendram activities remained the same, one could detect signs of changes in the man. He was becoming more and more indrawn and his conversations with devotees were becoming shorter. The devotees, sensing this, made sure that Dr.K.S. was not inconvenienced in any way and minimised their talks.

In the month of November 1997, he consented to go to Sri Sailam along with the devotees of Sri Ramana Kendram, Hyderabad. This, despite the fact that he was not able to take a couple of steps on his own. The pilgrimage was a delightful one for all those who accompanied him; it will remain etched in their mind. In retrospect, it can be said that he was giving his love and blessings in abundance to all those who approached him, before leaving the world.

During this period, he was also conditioning his wife, from early 1997, about a possible future which didn't include him. He was gently hinting to her that his mission in the world had been completed and that he was ready to depart. He repeatedly assured her that she and his mother would be looked after by his son and that she need have no apprehensions at all.

It was clear to many that he was only waiting for the return of Sri Upendran from USA and it was his sheer will power that was making him retain the body. His son's family returned to Hyderabad on 11 December, 1997. He was delighted to

have his near and dear around him. For him the wait was over and he was yearning to shed the burden of the body.

When a devotee met him in the end of December, 1997, he was told by Dr.K.S. that he would have his eye operated on 12 January, 1998. His son tried to correct him by saying that he would only be going to the hospital on that day. However, the statement was repeated by Dr.K.S. again and it proved to be prophetic.

On the 5 January, 1998, he suffered a stroke and he was admitted in a private hospital. The doctors were not optimistic of a recovery. A couple of days later he went into deep coma. The family members of Dr.K.S. and the devotees kept vigil day and night in the hospital.

Three Significant events happened while Dr.K.S. was in coma. Years ago, while in Vellore, he had asked his brother-in-law to have a small idol of Lord Dakshinamoorthy sculpted for him. His brother-in-law promised that he could get it done in a few days time. The days, however stretched to years. The idol finally reached the brother-in-law in December, 1997 and he informed his sister, Mrs.K.S., who happened to be in Chennai at that time, and asked her to collect the idol from Vellore before leaving for Hyderabad. She, however, was unable to as she had to rush back to Hyderabad. Her brother followed her to Hyderabad, carrying the Lord of Silence who was so dear to Dr.K.S. The idol of Dakshinamoorthy was placed in the room where the satsangs took place in the residence of Dr.K.S. where his final days were spent.

The second incident was of profound significance too. In a conversation that took place between him and a friend sometime earlier, Dr.K.S. mentioned that it was not necessary to take Sanyasa to progress in the spiritual field. Mrs.K.S. was present during this conversation. During the stay in the hospital, to enable an intravenous injection to be administered, an adhesive tape was fastened near his shoulder. When the process was completed, Mrs.K.S. tried to remove the adhesive tape but could not do so despite repeated attempts. The sacred thread of Dr.K.S. got entangled with the adhesive. The sister of Dr.K.S. also tried to remove the tape and failing to do so used a pair of scissors to cut the sacred thread. The moment this was done, Mrs. K.S. felt that Dr.K.S.had taken sanyasa and at that very instant felt in her innermost being that all her attachment to Dr.K.S. in the earthy sense, had totally vanished.

The future was clearly indicated by the third incident. The prasad sent by Sri Ramanashramam was received by the family that week. When the Vibhuti and

Kumkum were being applied on the forehead of Dr.K.S, a bilva leaf, included in the prasad dropped on his chest. It was a clear sign for Mrs. K.S. that the end was near.

Since he was in the Intensive Care Unit of the hospital, the restrictions imposed by the hospital staff were making it difficult for the devotees to see Dr.K.S. The family decided to move him back to the residence once it became clear that there was not much that the hospital authorities could do for him. They decided that his final days should be spent in a sanctified atmosphere with the recitation of sacred hymns and kirtans. A private nurse was engaged to attend to him.

After being moved to the residence from the hospital on Thursday, 8 January '98 , Dr.K.S. was given nasal feeding and all other traumatic treatment was discontinued. *Akshara Mana Malai, Arunachala Siva* and other invocatory verses on Lord Siva were chanted almost round the clock.. The family members were graciousness personified and they made sure that all the devotees who wanted to visit him were able to do so. In addition to the recitations by the gathering of devotees in appointed hours, the family had its own prayer sessions. The atmosphere that Dr.K.S. would have loved to have around him was created and the quiet dignity of the proceedings touched everybody's heart. A tranquil and serene atmosphere prevailed in the house and there was an aura of peace all round. There was no grieving of the kind one would expect in such circumstances.

All the relatives and dear ones of Dr.K.S. reached Hyderabad and were with him in those final hours.

The residence of Dr.K.S. was full with the devotees in the evening of 11 and the atmosphere was suffused with devotion and reverence for Dr.K.S. The chanting and recitation went on upto 6.30 P.M. The evening feed was given around 7.00 P.M. Most of the devotees dispersed but a few stayed back. Dr.K.S.merged with Arunachala at around 9.00 P.M.

In deference to his wish, his eyes were donated to the eye bank. In the early hours of 12.1.1998 doctors from the eye bank arrived and did the needful. Dr.K.S' statement made to a devotee came true. His eye operation did take place on the 12th after all!

In his unique, but silent way Dr.K.S. conditioned all his dear ones to accept the inevitable with courage and equanimity. 'Grace is always flowing' was his favourite quote of Sri Bhagavan's and he frequently used this quotation in his letters to the devotees. When he was in hospital in coma, his children

repeatedly asked the unconscious Dr.K.S. “What Grace were you talking about Appa? We don’t see it flowing now. Tell us, where is it flowing?” On the day before he was discharged from hospital when asked this question for the umpteenth time, he picked up his daughter Manaswini’s hand and placed it on his heart. The children understood it as his way of saying that grace is already within us and not without.

The children of Dr.K.S. used to make fun of their father about his talks on silence. Dakshinamurthy came in for special attention. They used to tell him that he was the only person they knew who gave two hour talks on silence. Their observation, “Little did we realise that his love for Dakshinamoorthy would turn him into one during the last one week of his life”, is the most poignant summary of the final days of Dr.K.S.

SOME INCIDENTS

Dr.K.S.’ spiritual experiences are not known to many. On rare occasions he mentioned about certain incidents which were out of the ordinary. However, he made them seem natural and common place.

Unfailing Companion

During the early days of his trip to England, Dr.K.S. felt very lonely. On a particular day, when he found himself depressed, he walked in to the library and went to the section of new releases. The first book he picked up was *The Saint and Other Stories* written by Somerset Maugham. When Dr.K.S. opened the cover, he found himself looking at the smiling photograph of Sri Bhagavan. He was thrilled on seeing the picture and he felt that Sri Bhagavan was telling him that He would be with him always and there was no need to be depressed.

Divine intervention

Dr.K.S.came to Hyderabad in 1962. He used to commute on a motor cycle in those days. He met with an accident one day and his leg was badly injured. He did not inform anybody in the house about the accident and chose to treat the injury himself with a balm. There was no improvement; in fact the leg became infected. He went to Gandhi Hospital and was admitted as an in-patient. The Doctor in attendance ordered a penicillin injection and instructed the nurse that a test dose be given first. Notwithstanding the Doctor’s instructions, the nurse was preparing to administer a full dosage. The needle was inserted and the syringe was about to be pressed. Just then, the Doctor, who ordered the injection, was passing that way enquired if a test dose had been given. When

the nurse said 'no', he insisted that a small dose be given. The moment the medicine entered the body there was an allergic reaction and antidotes had to be given immediately. Had the full injection been given, the consequences would have been fatal. The Doctor's intervention has to be construed as nothing but Divine Intervention!

Who stopped the car?

When he was travelling with his family in USA in his car to attend a Quaker's meeting, the brakes of the car failed. The car started sliding down. On the right side of the car was a deep precipice and the car was moving towards it. Dr.K.S. felt that his family was in danger. He first asked his children and wife to slowly open doors and jump out of the car. They were able to do so. As the back wheels hung over the precipice, the car came to an inexplicable stop. Dr.K.S. got out of the car. A passerby stopped and sensing what had happened took them to the meeting. He returned with a truck and succeeded in pulling Dr.K.S.' car on to the road. How did the car stop but for Sri Bhagavan's Grace ?

Ashram prasad

Dr.K.S. was hospitalised in November 1990 when he had had a major heart attack. It was curfew time in Hyderabad. Further, the Department of Telephones and Telegraphs was on strike. Mrs K.S. desired that the news of his illness should be conveyed to Sri Balarama Reddy and also the Kum Kum from Sri Chakra Puja be obtained from Sri Ramanashram. Sri Kesava Reddy and a fellow kendram member went to the General Post Office late in the night hoping that somebody might be working there. They were disappointed to find that the strike was total. The next day Sri Kesava Reddy brought to the Hospital the required Kum Kum saying that he received a parcel from Sri Ramanashram containing the desired prasad.

The child wonder

Uniqueness of Sri Bhagavan was a compilation of various articles written by Dr.K.S. and published in several journals including the beautiful Ashram publication *Mountain path*. In the course of the compilation, when he thought he had collected all the published articles, his grand daughter Ananya, then a crawling baby, managed to bring from his book rack three issues of *Mountain Path* which contained his articles on Sri Bhagavan that he had failed to include. Dr.K.S. himself was wonderstruck!