

# Interview with Sri Nannagaru

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by Janet Attwood

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**Janet: Welcome Sri Nannagaru - Thank you for being here. Would you please tell us a little bit about your life?**

**Sri Nannagaru:** Thank you. I was born in West Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh. For the last 30 years I am teaching about Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharishi's teachings and his life. I went to England twice to spread the message of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi. I travelled through Andhra Pradesh and some parts of Maharashtra to teach there - to explain the teachings of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi. I was much influenced by his life and the teachings.

We constructed a Ramana Ashram in our part and we constructed three Ashrams also here in Tiruvannamalai: Andhra Ashram, Sri Nannagaru Ashram, and Siva Sannidhi. We are running a journal, a Telugu fortnightly - Ramana Bhaskara.

I did some social work also in the name of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi - social work and also founded Nannagaru Charitable Trust. We also helped many financially backward students in education and in healthcare and to construct houses, also under the auspices of Nannagaru Charitable Trust. And we gave many

donations to deserving people, especially to students and to old people and we are also helping old age homes and under the auspices of Nannagaru Charitable Trust every year, we are spending approximately-6 lakhs towards deserving persons.

My life is intended to spread the message of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi and I'm helping so many people to receive the message of Ramana Maharshi and trying my utmost to make the people peaceful and educated and to be educated. We are teaching in the name of devotion, the value and importance of education. How to grow in spiritual life? How to be happy in the day-to-day life? Besides Ramana's teachings, we are teaching, so many other things also - social behaviour,



impersonal behaviour, intelligent behaviour. We are helping so many devotees to the correct life and correct path to achieve freedom.

**Janet: Thank you. Can I ask you what do you feel about the present world situation? About the world? What do you feel about it right now?**

Sri Nannagaru: The present world situation is not good. Because of caste, religion - now there is no spirituality in the world - only religion. Religion is entirely different from spirituality. In the name of caste, in the name of religion, in the name of patriotism and in the name of blacks and whites, in the name of continents and in the name of religious fanaticism ... we are not creating a better world, we are not creating a peaceful world, we are not helping human beings to live peacefully in the present world.

Everyday life is becoming more tension filled; everyday there is a greater lack of mental health and moral health. In the present world there are also so many social problems. I think most of the politicians, politicians are common everywhere in the world, in the name of patriotism, in the name of religion, in the name of caste, in the name of blacks and whites are creating unrest to ensure their own ends, their own selfish ends. And suppose we love the world, we love the people, only one world, one religion, one God - that should be our aim.

Only one thing - truth is one, reality is one. So many religions call God in their religious names - some people, Rama, some people Allah, some people Jehovah - all are one. But politicians, most of the politicians in the world are creating troubles and are creating disturbances to gain power and to attain and meet their selfish ends.

**Janet: The world is facing a huge crisis in the environment, health, violence, terrorism - can you give simple, specific solutions to these problems?**

Sri Nannagaru: People - Generally people have no health consciousness. So many people are not accustomed to intelligent behaviour. Food habits are not good. People are not observing health rules. Health rules are essential. We can buy medicines with money but we can't buy health with money. We can build temples with money but we can't buy God with money. We must create health consciousness in the people; we must create the value of health consciousness, the importance of health consciousness.

Teaching - Health teaching is very essential nowadays. Habits, peoples' habits are not good - the habits are destroying the health of so many individuals. We have to create health consciousness mainly with patience; we have to create health consciousness in the people of the world and food habits, day-to-day behaviour. They must be above smoking and alcohol. Smoking also, there are so many smokers in the world. Smoking is more dangerous than alcohol - 20 alcohol bottles are equal to one cigarette - about smoking and alcohol drinking we must slowly educate the people. We must explain to them to give up alcohol and smoking and anything that is bad to their health.

Especially we have to create a consciousness of health. People are losing so much money because of their health problems. Nowadays in the family budget so much is spent towards health, and that much money is not necessary to maintain health if people behave properly and intelligently. They

should do meditation, and some kind of exercise or at least some walking. Without money, without going to hospitals, we must maintain health.

Our body also is a teacher. You must take food in moderation and exercise also. There should be moderation in food, moderation in sleep, moderation in talk - middle path is necessary. You need not go to extremes. As well as moderation in food and moderation in sleep there should be moderation in talk also. These three things will help us to maintain health properly, to live peacefully and to die peacefully, happy death - not an unhappy death - a happy death. If you are keeping our health properly we may die healthy, healthy death.

Generally actions are necessary - action is good, reaction is not good. Most of the people are



arrogant, ignorant people - they don't know how to behave in day-to-day life, how to deal with others. They will have no respect to non-violence, no respect for the value of truth, no idea about the non-violence. Especially to reach the heights of knowledge, to reach the depths of knowledge, non-violence is necessary. People are accustomed to violence because of their arrogance and self-centred behaviour, ego-centred behaviour, money-centred behaviour, power-centred behaviour. So day-by-day, day after day, many of people are adopting wrong means to achieve their ends.

One of the wrong mean is violence, to achieve their selfish ends. Violence is the most dangerous, not only to individuals, not only to nations, but also to the whole world - to the whole of humanity. You must teach the value of non-violence, the value of truth, the value of moderate behaviour. And we explain through media, or through journals every day, through written expression or spoken expression, we have to explain, we

have to give much publicity about the value of non-violence, about the value of truth, about the value of proper behaviour. About the value or means to achieve our goal. Because of arrogance, because of selfish ends, because of money, because of power, people are accustomed to violence. Lack of spiritual life, materialistic people - most of the people, not only selfish people, most of the people is selfish people. If reality is added to their selfishness, then violence is gone.

Nowadays, terrorists are growing rapidly and terrorists are career-based - most of the terrorists are paid. If the governments are strong, if the governments are sincere, if the governments are honest, if the government is working towards the welfare of the people and if they're working towards the

backward classes. If they provide employment, if they provide basic necessities for a man's life, generally, slowly and steadily terrorism may be reduced.

Many unemployed, uneducated people are joining in terrorist activities. Most terrorists are paid people. They are accustomed to think terrorism is job-oriented. In some countries, some elected governments, some elected representatives of the people are also encouraging terrorism, directly or indirectly, to meet their cruel, selfish ends. And to their countries imperialism and to widen their country's borders - some governments also are using terrorists as their tools to their political ends and selfish ends. If you slowly and steadily give employment to educated people, and if governments are honest and sincere to correct terrorism then it will end one day or another.

**Janet: How can people become more peaceful? What is your solution?**

**Sri Nannagaru:** Peace is very essential to human beings. I give utmost importance, the utmost importance to undiluted peace and to unbroken peace. Peace is above power, peace is above money, peace is above everything that is related to the world. If there is no peace, no wealthy man or healthy man-they're not in a good condition. Peace is above money, peace is above power, peace is above everything.

Peace is essential; peace is a must, not only to everybody, to every religion, to every part of the world - to the whole of humanity. Without peace we can't progress in any branch of life. Especially to maintain economic wealth, economic prosperity or, if you want to live happily, if you want to live comfortably, peace is essential. Peace is above - worldly wealth is not - the whole world is not equal to peace. Body comfort - the body requires comfort, the mind requires peace. Peace, if there is no peace in the individual there will be unrest, there will be disturbances, there will be chaos in the whole world.

Individual peace, individual happiness is essential, it helps society also to get peace and to maintain the peace of the world. Without peace there is so much waste of money, so much waste of energy. Peace ... lack of peace, lack of mental health ... we are doing so many useless things. If you want to progress in spiritual, educational, industrial field or political fields - peace is the basis of all these things. Peace is a must, without peace we can't do anything, without peace we can't grow in spiritual life - peace is great and great - all above the Material world.

The whole world's wealth - not only in India - the whole world's wealth - the whole world's material wealth is not equal to peace. If you want peace you have to come out from ignorance, if you want peace you have to come out from wrong identification. If you want peace you have to come out from wrong thinking. If you want peace you have to come out from wrong habits. If you want peace you have to come out from wrong behaviour - peace is essential. We cannot buy peace in the market; we have to grow peace in the heart. We have to grow it in the mind.

And if you are doing some social work, if you are doing some useful work to Society it will help us to attain peace, to gain peace and peace is essential to truth-realisation, to God realisation, peace is essential to freedom also.

**Janet: Nannagaru if someone came to you and said to you, 'I have no peace, help me'.**

Sri Nannagaru: Yes, yes I understand, I understand. It is a good question, it is a proper question, it is a useful question, it is the best question I like. It is to be answered. So many people are coming to me, from India and abroad also. So many seekers of truth, so many people with a lack of peace are coming to me. Everyday 200 devotees come to me, whether they are spiritual people or materialistic that is not the question here.

So many people are coming to me with whatever purpose - everyday 200 people, they come and sit near me, they come happily, and sit here beside me, very close to me. And my vibrations are working towards them. If they sit for some time, for five minutes or ten minutes, automatically, naturally, normally, they're getting peace. They are getting slowly and steadily enlightenment also - they are very comfortable - in my presence, they are very comfortable.

Some others are coming to me only for peace, only for their mental health. Peace helps to mental health, to mental wealth. My peace of mind, my satvic temperament, my behaviour, my lovely behaviour helps so much to get peace in their day-to-day life. If man, if one man is walking in the right direction, if one man in the proper way, if one man has some glimpses of the truth, has glimpses of the reality from that person, peace and happiness, everything, from that person, vibrations will come from that holy person, towards the people, towards the seekers.

Certainly, certainly, especially in my case, in my presence, so many thousands of people, not hundreds, so many thousands of people are getting peace in their day-to-day life. Without their effort also they're getting peace, they're getting mental happiness, they're getting mental health also without their individual effort, without their self-effort also, in my presence they are getting peace, naturally and normally, they come and sit... one hour is equal to one minute in my presence to the devotees.



**Janet: Nannagaru when people are far away from you what do you tell them for their peace? How do you tell them to find peace?**

Sri Nannagaru: Thank you. In my presence they taste the peace, they enjoy the peace, after leaving my presence they know the importance of peace, the value of peace and then they try to get the peace their own. And if they want to get the peace their own two things are essential. They must practice right thinking, right behaviour, right talk, righteousness, dharma in day-to-day life. After



they leave me they certainly try to get peace of their own - slowly and steadily works in their minds the value of peace, the worth of peace and slowly they try through their behaviour (through their impersonal behaviour) through their non-violent behaviour, through their ... seekers of truth, slowly day after day, day-by-day they get the peace, they slowly attain the peace and steadily attain the freedom also by practice of righteousness, by practice of dharma by practice of satvic way.

After they are in my presence they are very happy, they enjoy peace so much, after some time they try to attain the peace of their own - to achieve the peace - through peace to freedom. Without attaining the peace, without practising the truth man cannot achieve freedom. Peace ... they individually, they personally try to the best of their ability to attain peace, to achieve peace, through peace to freedom, through peace to truth-realisation. And after knowing the importance of peace they behave properly, and their thinking, their individual behaviour also is high up.

They do useful work to society; they do some unselfish work also. They do some practical work towards society, practicality. Theory - in my presence they learn some theory and after that they try to translate the theory into practice - and practice makes them perfect, as slowly they reach their end - namely, a peaceful life.

Janet: What importance do our thoughts and our mind play for peace? How important are the thoughts that we think?

Sri Nannagar: According to our Rig Veda, according to our Veda; Vedas are a source for Hinduism, according to Rig Veda one thought is there, 'Let noble thoughts come to us from every side'. Let useful thoughts come to us from every side. Thought is very essential, good thought - if you want to do some good work, if you want to speak right speak, noble thoughts are essential. Action and speech spring from thought. If you want to attain good thoughts and noble thoughts, helpful to attain truth-realisation. That is very essential, good thoughts, noble thoughts are very essential. They guide us to truth, they guide us to freedom, they show the way to freedom.

This is a very important question, you must be far away, you must be very careful about ugly thoughts. You must be very careful about ugly thoughts, about unholy thoughts. Thoughts rule life - mind is a bundle of thoughts - thoughts rule life. If you want to cultivate good thoughts, noble thoughts, divine thoughts you have to make friends, you have to ... the main thing is, the essential thing is holy company. Holy company one thing and another thing is holy books - books like the Bible, the Bhagavad Gita, and the Quran - the holy books. Especially we should not read ... we should read only books written by, discoursed by truth-realised souls. Our speech, our word, our thought, our action, must be one, should be one. If our word, speech and thought are one, God's Grace will come, Divinity will help us to attain divinity and reading the good books - we should not read unrealised souls, we should not read the books written by merely worldly people.

If the book is written by a holy man, if the word is spoken by a holy man you must give respect to them. Because world, the holy man mind, the world is the same. So, first thing holy company, next thing good literature written by enlightened souls, spoken and discoursed by enlightened souls, and do something ... and you have to meditate on God - formless God, with form or without form. We

have to remember God always; you have to remember God constantly. His name also you have to remember. God's name and God are one and the same. If you want to cultivate good thoughts, noble thoughts, remembrance of God, reading of holy books. Books, friendship with holy people, some useful work to society, some service to backward classes, economically backward classes and handicapped people and if you cultivate love towards people, devotion to Almighty, certainly noble thoughts are bound to come to us.

**Janet: What is enlightenment and what is the practical value of Enlightenment for man and women today?**

Sri Nannagaru: Enlightenment is the destination of humanity. If one man gets enlightenment it helps the whole world. Enlightenment - every enlightened person, every realised person, they can't do an ugly thing - they can't do. They can't do useless things. All enlightened people are identified with the whole humanity. They love the humanity truly, faithfully. From enlightenment only comes, peace, happiness. What is needed to man everything comes - everything comes to man what is needed to him from enlightenment only.

Enlightenment - if there is no enlightenment there will be no knowledge, no peace, and no happiness. An unenlightened person may also get some diluted peace, some diluted happiness however only enlightened people get undiluted happiness, unbroken peace. The enlightened-person is practical, every enlightened person is practical, and every enlightened person is in touch with ground realities.

They love sincerely and properly, they love the world truly, wisely also. Enlightened people, enlightened man's love only is real love, his world only is real word, his thought only is useful thought. Enlightened people are very essential to humanity, they are essential to society. Enlightened people are essential to society - they're rivers, enlightened people are rivers. From rivers canals flow, tanks flow, everything flows to irrigate lands. So also all enlightened people are like rivers. If the water is useful to society so also enlightened man is must to society.

Every enlightened man is responsible, is accountable to the world. If he is not accountable to the world, if he is not responsible to the world he is not an enlightened man. Suppose if a man wants to get fame, if a man wants to get name, if a man want to get popularised in the world he is not an enlightened man. In the name ... social work is one thing, enlightenment is one thing.

In the present day, not only in India, but throughout the world, all teachers, all spiritual teachers they have some knowledge of text books, they are not doing tapas they are not doing penance. They want so many people, they want publicity - so many people want popularity and publicity - name and fame.

If the enlightenment is real if the enlightenment is proper, if he is really established in truth, in God, enlightenment, he does not crave for power or for money or for anything. If a thing in the world, anything in the world is attracting an enlightened man he is not an enlightened man. All enlightened people are above the world.

Without their effort, without their thought without their knowing they help us so much, so much, so much. To elevate the people spiritually, morally, courageously, they elevate the people, to uplift the people, and educate the people without knowing, they don't know they are educating the people.

They educate the people towards the enlightenment, towards higher living and they encourage (without knowing them) hi their presence - their hearts should be purified and so like him they want also to get enlightenment.

Every enlightened man is a big lamp, not 1,000 bulbs only, but lakhs and lakhs of bulbs -every enlightened man - they give so much light. They are not bulbs, small bulbs, they are not little bulbs. They are like ships, they carry so many people from ignorance to knowledge - they are not small boats - they are big, big ships. They have no personal life, they have no individual life, and they have no ego sense. They are completely practical.



They can't run away from the ground realities, they are part and parcel of the world, they live freely with humanity, they live freely, and they mix freely with humanity. They don't need tom-tom, they don't need publicity. But it is very difficult; it is very, very difficult to understand an enlightened soul.

To reach the goals - to reach the goal it should be, by the grace of an enlightened soul, by the grace of a Guru, Guru means truth-realised, God realised, all-pervading realised, deathless-being realised is Guru. He who is truth-realised, God realised is only an enlightened man. Enlightenment is essentially the goal of humanity also.

Enlightenment means completeness, enlightenment means peace, perfect peace, permanent peace, unbroken peace, undiluted peace.

Enlightenment - every man, whether he knows or not, is trying to get enlightenment. Whether he knows it or not is a different thing. Because the world is so unhappy, so many people are unhappy, the world is unhappy - why? Because they don't know their real nature, they don't know who they are, and they don't know what their real heart is, what is there in the heart? Because of lack of



knowledge and lack of enlightenment, not only the world but individuals also are unhappy and full of tension and thus lack peace.

So many diseases are coming, blood pressure, the tension, heart complaints. In the future, diabetes patients, heart patients, BP patients will grow in the future - grow, grow - will grow in the future, why? Lack of understanding, lack of peace, lack of proper exercise, lack of mental health. In the coming world, in the future world, diabetes, blood pressure and heart complaints, so many diseases will grow slowly in the near future. The main thing is ego-centred behaviour, sense centred behaviour, and money centred behaviour - because of lack of peace, lack of understanding, lack of love towards humanity.

In future they will get so many diseases related to the body, not only related to the body but related to the mind also - mental diseases, physical diseases also will come. In future, not only heart complaints and diabetes and body related diseases also come – not only - but mental health patients (lack of mental health) patients also will come. So many people, so many lakhs of mental health people also - that population also will be increased in future, will be increased no doubt!

Certainly physical ill health, mental ill health people will be increased in the world because of lack of right thinking, lack of right behaviour, lack of right understanding, lack of social responsibility, lack of rest. And physical diseases and mental diseases also will grow in the near future - not only in India but throughout the world especially in economically advanced countries also - mental illness will grow in the near future.

**Janet: Nannagaru, in five years, in ten years what do you see for the world?**

Sri Nannagaru: I like the hardworking people and you must give respect to work culture. It is the selfless work that lifts us, materially and spiritually also - unselfish work is essential unselfish work will help not only for the individual but for humanity also. I want practical oriented ... you can't run away from the ground realities, practicality is essential. You must try to translate noble thoughts into practicality and try to translate the noble thoughts into day-to-day life and teaching especially, teaching is most essential. So many religious institutions are also doing something, social work, but lack of teaching. If you understand it properly, if you understand clearly the teachings of an enlightened soul, we help the world in evolution; you will be the instruments of God you will help in God's work and be absorbed in the Almighty.

*Archival Courtesy: Baby garu, Hyderabad*