



RAMĀ ŚAKTI MISSION

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By ego is meant, the sense of separative selfhood. God is the only Self in all and is therefore the significance of 'aham'. But, apart from God, the jiva assumes an individual status, a personalistic 'I' confined to the body. This is ego. The ego is, therefore, the denial of God, the distortion of Truth, the veil over knowledge, the enemy of peace and the root cause of all miseries of man. God is the Existence, 'Sat'; therefore, nothing can exist apart from God.

God is pure consciousness, 'Chit'; therefore all are conscious in and through God. God is the supreme power that creates, sustains and dissolves the universe. Therefore, all powers and faculties are a manifestation of God's power. If you remember this truth always, where is the place for a separative notion of 'I', the ego! Where is the room for mental passions! Where is the occasion for the rise of dualities, delusions and illusions in your consciousness!

Under the spell of avidya, the jiva has forgotten his spiritual kinship with God. From this forgetfulness 'vismrithi', proceeds the notion of being separate from God. From the idea of separateness shoots up the notion of a particular selfhood, the 'I'. This 'I' becomes active in the emotive plane of mind as well as in the outer field of conduct.

When the ego is active in the emotive plane of mind, one becomes identified with violent passions. The celebrated eightfold forms of pride, 'Ashtamadas', are the manifestation of the gross ego, 'sthulahankara'. When the ego is active in the field of conduct, evil, sinful, unrighteous and selfish activity flows from man, producing misery not only to him, but to the world also. The world outside as well as the perpetual battle within is generated by the ego in its clash with other egos.

One should be awake to the knowledge of God's glory; or should gain the intuition of the Atman; or should be intensely conscious of his own littleness, ignorance, wretchedness and wickedness. In these three conditions, egoism cannot flourish. The seeker (mumukshu), the aspirant (sadhaka), the disciple (shishya) devoted to the Guru, who sincerely tread the path of sadhana, alone can feel how terrible and troublesome the ego is. When a sadhaka is thoroughly convinced that all his miseries are because of his own egoism, he will have intense yearning for deliverance from the thralldom of the ego. This yearning is called mumukshutwa. Therefore, it follows that if one has no spiritual yearning, the indication is that he does not know that the egocentric life is a miserable existence.

How can such a man know the peace of God, the thrill of devotion and the happiness of a life of resignation! Once you experience that rare peace which comes to you when you are detached from the ego, never again will you sacrifice that peace for the sake of worldly ends. Peace is your real nature. The obstacle to that peace is ego.

The term 'ego' has various shades of meaning. It stands in a unit of individualized consciousness, for a mode of the anthakarana, for the self-exalting pride of the arrogant world ling, for the seer in relation to the seen and for an assumed attitude towards God. In its purest state, ego simply disappears, or is fused with the Absolute. As a mode of



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the anthakarana, the ego is concentrated ignorance, because anthakarana itself is born of avidya. Being a product of ignorance and of the nature of ignorance, ego can be destroyed only by knowledge.

This knowledge is not book knowledge. It is not shabda jnana. It is not knowledge of an object, vishaya jnana. It is self-revealing Consciousness. It is knowledge not associated with any object. It is knowledge of your own infinite nature. This knowledge is within yourselves. Only the Grace of the Guru unveils it. All other knowledges are acquisitions of the ego. But Atma Jnana eliminates ego itself. Ego and Jnana cannot co-exist. Aham jnana is intuitive in nature. Aham, in this case, signifies the Reality. Ahankara (ego) is the false notion that body is the 'I'. Both are contradictory in nature.

So, both cannot shine simultaneously as darkness and light cannot exist together. Ego veils the Knowledge that is dormant in you. There is no simile that can adequately communicate the idea of total darkness caused by the ego. Dark clouds obscure the light of sun, yet this does not bring in total darkness. Denser than the darkness of amavasya, is the darkness of the human intellect bewildered by the ego. Overwhelmed by love, greatness and holiness of the Guru, the seeker surrenders himself to the Guru, takes initiation from the Guru and humbly follows the Guru's injunctions. In this state of surrender, submission and obedience, the disciple opens himself to Grace and then the Guru's power begins to operate itself in him in various ways.

But in course of time when the power, the position and the praises come to him, he forgets the Guru, the Guru's instructions, the Guru's Grace and his own unworthiness. The ego now fully dominates his consciousness. But little does he know that when ego comes in, Grace recedes and the gates to moral fall and degradation are wide open.

The Guru's grace is like the sun. It is upon everyone. Guru does not withdraw the Grace, because Grace is identical with His nature. But you can either open yourselves to Grace or shut off the light of the Grace, by your own conduct.

When you are devoted to the Guru, when you obey Him implicitly and tread the righteous path, you become a recipient of Grace. You forget the Guru's greatness and the invaluable favour He has done you, when you exalt yourselves, disobey the Guru and walk on the forbidden path, you estrange yourselves from Grace. This is the law.

There are two occasions when one isolates himself from God and His Grace: One is, when too much of ego dominates one's thoughts, words and acts; the other is, when one indulges in acts of adharma in utter neglect of God's law. When the ego is very powerful and violent, one not only isolates himself from God, but also is cut off from the rest of the fellow souls. He is forced to live alone in his own illusory paradise, devoid of peace and divine comfort.

The ego assigns to itself a position of superiority. When that position is challenged, or taken away, he revolts. He gets wild, loses discrimination, departs from sanity and does not know what he does. He ends up in frustration, tension and turmoil. Instead of humbling himself before God, he has too much arrogance to resist the Will of God and in the process, creates a hell for him within himself.



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The devotee has no ego. He considers himself the humblest of all, lower than even a blade of grass or dust even. He is the servant of the servants of God. He seeks neither name, nor fame, nor power, nor position. In this process of self-abnegating surrender, his ego drops off, and he rises to a state of inseparable oneness with God. When you are free of ego, you are a tool in God's Hand. Creative thinking opens in you; your words carry a rare power which can bring faith to the faithless, impart solace to the grief-stricken, which can move even the indolent to constructive activity. All your actions become righteous, expressive of God's Will and Plan. Peace and happiness become your experience.

Confusion in thinking, rudeness in utterances, adharma in actions and misery in experiences, are because of the presence of the ego in the thinker, the speaker, the doer and the enjoyer. Power and authority shine only in those who are devoid of ego, for they alone reflect the will of God.

When these are given to egoistic persons, these become instruments of suffering, suffering for themselves as well as for the world. Ego came even to sentinels of Vaikunta – Jaya and Vijaya. At once the higher law worked and there was a reaction, which came in the form of a curse from the Sages, the Manasaputhras of Brahma, and the sentinels had to take birth in the mortal world. This event proves that ego cannot flourish for long without bringing about the downfall of the jiva.

It is to achieve liberation from the ego that one takes refuge in Sadguru and does all forms of sadhana. When you have a perfected Sage to guide you, all your worries, problems and fears must end. Yours is to surrender completely and obey Him implicitly. Obey and then see what happens. Sadguru is not a person, though he has a human form like yours. He is the Absolute.

He alone can destroy your ego and awaken you to God-Vision. If you have no mind to leave the ego, there was no need for you to surrender to a Guru and enter the path of sadhana. But if you want freedom from ego, then there is law to be obeyed and conditions to be fulfilled. The law demands that one's obedience to Guru should be total, unreserved and with full devotional reverence.

Disobedience is a vice that has taken root from childhood onwards and grown as a habit. It can be traced to parental neglect. The child, who is disobedient to his parents, will carry that habit to his school and will not obey his teachers as well. Later, he is disobedient even to Sadguru. Ego and disobedience grow together. If you are obedient to the Guru, His Grace will never allow you to become egoistic.

Under the benign influence of satsang, in the sattvic state of mind, in the absence of provocative environments, and during contemplative pursuits, you may be temporarily detached from the ego. But say not that you have no ego. The gross ego, the manifested forms of the violent ego, may not be there. But the subtle ego is always there. Until the subtle body perishes in the fire of Brahmic experience, subtle ego persists.

The emotive modes are subtle in nature. Ego is the subtle mode. It appears, troubles and binds the jiva in various ways. To study the subtle mental activity and to detect the



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ways of the ego, your perception should become very keen. How can you develop such a perception without regular practice of sadhana?

Even those who do rigorous sadhana find it hard to get rid of ego; then what to speak of those who are not earnest in sadhana, or who do no sadhana at all. Mysterious is the cropping up of the ego. When Guru's Grace reveals thoughts, you think: 'these are my thoughts. Guru has not taught me these.' When actions are inspired by God, you assert, 'I have done these things; by my power has these been achieved.'

Ah, terrible indeed is the ego. Saints are desireless. But in their lamentation to God they have prayed: Oh God, let not the wind of ego blow over me. The only boon they sought of God was constant loving remembrance of God. His Name and His Glory.

The ego is a spurious offshoot, a strange combination of chaitanya and jada (spirit and matter). In its chaitanya aspect, it signifies the Atman; in its jada aspect, it is only a vritti pertaining to the idea, 'I am the body'. When you grow in devotion denying yourselves and surrendering yourselves, you are eliminating the jada aspect of the ego.

When you contemplate the Mahakavya, when you expand in love and consciousness, you are approaching the chaitanya aspect of the ego. When, finally the jada aspect is completely annihilated, ego shines in its pure state as identical with the Atman. It becomes illumination, Jnana. Or, by getting fused with Brahman, it becomes Brahman.

The ego mode by itself is not harmful, as body is not harmful to you, but you should know the mode as the mode. It is your identification with the ego that causes bondage. In other words, it is the superimposition of the ego on the body, the reflected consciousness and the Witness that perpetuates bondage.

The petty 'I' cannot remain by itself. It has to cling on to something, either a thought, or an emotion or the body. This 'I' is cunning and crooked. It is not you. It is a mental formation. It is a shadow. It should be summarily rejected if you desire any progress on the direction of God.

When the 'I' shines by itself without identification with the upadhis, it is the ego. The ego which identifies itself with the Absolute (soham), the ego that identifies itself with the servant of God (dasoham) and the ego that identifies itself with the body (dehoham) are three forms of the ego. The first two are pure. The last is impure.