



# RAMĀ ŚAKTI MISSION

**BULLETIN NO: 123**

October 4, 1975

To the ignorant, the world appears independently real and therefore a veritable home of happiness. Hence they are bound to the world through the chords of attachment and craving. To the discriminating, the world is unreal and inert; but to the bhakta, gifted with divine perception, the world appears as the sportive play of the Eternal Beloved. He does not see the jadavastu. Everywhere he beholds only the effulgent Consciousness. Duality has no place in his consciousness.

Duality (dvaita) is the perception of something as apart from the Self. Bhakta abides in the Self and therefore he is immune to praise and censor, pleasure and grief. God has become his very Self. His consciousness is fixed only in God. He is free of all weaknesses. His life becomes an unbroken rapture and holy communion.

During His advent on earth Sree Ramachandra, the Lord, in His instruction to Lakshmana, stresses the importance of spiritual quest through listening, reflection and contemplation. He asks Lakshmana to deeply reflect upon the Guruvakya, to establish his prajna in the reality and to steady his mind by regular and persistent abhyasa. To strive for enlightenment and liberation through such hard personal exertion, says the Lord, is the duty of the seeker.

But, during His advent as Sree Krishna the same Lord asks Arjuna in His final portion of the discourse, to surrender completely to Him and promises him that He would liberate him from all bondage.

These two instructions are not different from each other, though they look so, superficially. In one, it is Jnanopadesha that is given and the vichara path is stressed; in the other, the method prescribed is one, which suits the temperament of devotion. Faith in God and perfect self-surrender are cardinal traits in Bhakti Yoga. Reverent approach (pujya bhava) and humble disposition (dainya buddhi) are characteristics of the devotional attitude.

Saguna Brahman is as hard to realize as Nirguna Brahman. It is very difficult to experience the Nirguna, for which one has to do intense tapas, restrain the mental modes through Yoga Abhyasa and realize one's unity with Brahman in Samadhi. In a sense, Saguna is harder to realize, for even the great Yogis and many of the Rishis could not recognize Rama and Krishna as God incarnate.

But the simple devotees knew Him during His Avataric appearance through His grace. Even when God appeared as Fish, Tortoise and Boar, some sages who were ardent devotees of the Lord, recognized Him. What does this show? The knowledge in which the Avatara Tattva is realized, the knowledge that reveals the divinity of the Saguna Brahman incarnate on earth, is a pure, inward illumination, free of doubt, error, delusion and distortion. The devotee, who has gained this knowledge, is firm of mind. He is unshakably established in him. No one, nothing, can shake him. Knowledge, which has no steadiness, is no knowledge at all. It is only a mental idea.

There are two planes: the plane of jnana and the plane of mind. Jnana pertains to Truth. Because Truth is nondual, steady, omnipotent and eternal, Jnana too is firm, steady and



## RAMĀ ŚAKTI MISSION

nondual. That which wavers is the mind. Any idea or belief remaining in the mind is bound to change because mind itself is changeful.

The devotee's knowledge of the Saguna during the divine advent is of the spiritual order and not a mental belief. It is not even faith. It is pure illumination. In the spiritual order of perception, seeing is knowing, and knowing is being. This jnana can never shake. If wavering is there even in the least, one has not known the Saguna. Knowledge is steady in the Bhakta. In the wake of this knowledge, ego and desire disappear in him.

He has no desire for worldly pleasures, not even for spiritual salvation. He has seen God and that perception have transformed him into a perfect image of God. How can prakrithi now hold her sway on him? Having seen God, he has no idea of a Nirguna apart from the Saguna. Saguna itself is the Nirguna for him. But by the Grace of God, he gets the experience of even the Nirguna Brahman.

To think that Nirguna Brahman is different from the revealed Saguna Divinity, is duality. Duality is in the plane of the mind and not in the plane of knowledge. In knowledge, there is no duality. Hence, in the vision of the devotee, the Saguna Nirguna distinction disappears. He, who fails to recognize the Saguna, cannot become competent for Nirguna realization. Saguna revealed before the fleshy eyes, is God only. If Saguna, so revealed, cannot be cognized as God, how can the Nirguna revelation take place in such a mind! With the blessed vision of God, the devotee enjoys in the presence of the Saguna, supreme and unending bliss.

The presence, the darshan, the words, the touch, the Name, the Leelas, why even the very remembrance of God, sends him to rapture.

The devotee who has realized the Saguna Brahman, alone knows the sweetness of that incomparable elixir, called Bhakthi. Name tastes the sweetest for one who is filled with bhakthi. God is peace, beauty and bliss all combined. It is this nature of God that the devotee perceives in the Saguna.

Hence, the form he has once seen with his eyes gets imprinted in his chittha. World is erased from his chittha and in its place, God alone shines. With the imprint of this Saguna form in their chithas, the Gopis of Vraja even transcended body-consciousness.

The knowledge that the Saguna which one has seen, is Supreme Being Himself, should dawn. Then alone the transformation comes and one is transported into the realm of continual joy. One may be possessing an invaluable gem. But if he is not aware of the greatness of that gem, how can he have the joy of possession of that gem? Knowledge of the Saguna raised the illiterate women of Vraja and also Maruthi, a monkey, into yogic summit, and made them exemplars of supreme devotion worthy of adoration even by Sages like Vyasa, Narada and Shuka.

Many are drawn to the Saguna splendour when God is on earth. Having seen God, why should they do any sadhana at all? Well, the purpose of sadhana, in their case, is to ensure that forgetfulness does not supervene, to keep themselves established in unbroken awareness of God. Until the plane of knowledge is reached, there is need for sadhana.

As the cow sitting in one place, leisurely chews ruminating the cud, so too, the seekers should reflect on the metaphysical truths and the sportive leelas of God. God is the boundless ocean



## RAMĀ ŚAKTI MISSION

of glory. Who can fathom its depth! Contemplating on God, the mind merges; even aham jnana, which is the basis of higher meditation and anusandhana, melts away and the state of supernal silence is reached.

What could be then the magnitude of God's glory! Who can proclaim that glory! To proclaim, one should descend into duality. Where there is duality, there is no advaitic experience. So, it is not that one proclaims the glory of God. God alone proclaims His glory and spreads His Message through His instruments, the devotees.

So long as one does not have any idea of God's glory, one cannot have either devotion or reverence for God. But look at King Pareekshit. Through mere shravana bhakti, he attained liberation.

Renouncing all desires at a stroke, without food or sleep, yearning intensely for liberation from samsara, he remained engrossed for seven days continuously in listening to the glories of God as narrated by Suka Muni. His mind attained the state of profound concentration. And, as a result, his prajna awoke, through the Grace of the Guru, to supreme enlightenment after listening to Srimad Bhagavata for seven days.

The person, who expounds the truth of the Atman or the glory of Saguna Brahman, should be a realized Sadguru, an Anubhavi, like Sukadeva; and the person who listens to the exposition, should be a person of absolute shraddha and intense spiritual thirst, like Raja Pareekshit. Then, the teaching becomes effective. Listening with ears is not enough. This alone does not constitute shravana. Mind should become one-pointed.

What has been listened to should be reflected upon deeply. Then alone the stage of Nididhyasa is reached. Nididhyasa eventually leads to samadhi. This is the normal vedantic process of sadhana. But, in the case of Pareekshit, his mind rose to enlightenment through shravana itself. Such was the unique nature of his shravana bhakti.

What the Yogis could not attain even by a thousand years' Tapas, that liberation Pareekshit won through shravana of seven days. Is it not a wonder? Imagine therefore how intense was his dispassion, how profound was his concentration, and how deep was his reverence for the Guru and how all absorbing was his longing for liberation.

Even gods who possess the ambrosia (amrut) do not get the kaivalya state because they are attached to their celestial positions. But King Pareekshit was a prince of renunciation. He knew the ephemerality of all worldly pleasures, positions and attainments.

From metaphysical standpoint, there is no liberation as such. Atman is ever free and is identical with the Absolute. But the Jivabhava has been superimposed on the Atman. This bhava should go through jnana. When this jivabhava goes, the reality, the Atman, shines forth. From the relative standpoint of the Sadhaka, this spiritual Awakening is termed as liberation. By studying philosophy, all can say, even mukti is illusory, Atman is ever free.

But such words, which lack the force of intimate experience, have no power. Shabda jnana cannot save. You must gain the experience of Atman. The greatness of Bhakti is that it makes its votary humble from the very beginning. The thought of God and His glory is uppermost in his mind and he has no time to think of himself. How then can the ego assert itself in him? Every other aspirant, be he a jnani, or a yogi, has a definite goal to attain.



## RAMĀ ŚAKTI MISSION

But Bhakta is a lover of God. He seeks nothing, not even salvation. But such is the power of his love and self-abnegation that dispassion, concentration, meditative state and samadhi, all come to him as a matter of course.

During the advent of Saguna, the devotees gratefully remember the favour God has conferred upon them by revealing Himself to them in a blessed form. This thought makes their mind inward, pure, concentrated and shorn of all worldly cravings. Then, at last comes the state of 'Unmani' or 'Unmanavastha', a state of transcendental consciousness above the gunas of prakrithi.

Samskaras, cravings and vasanas are there in the chittha. Impelled by these, the mind flows always towards the world of objects. By dwelling on the unreal, by filling the mind with worldly thoughts, these samskaras, cravings and vasanas go on increasing. The thought-pattern should change. Mind should dwell only on the Real; the eyes should behold only the presence, the power and the play of God; the ears should hear only what is auspicious; the tongue should repeat only Divine Name and utter only noble words.

Inwardness should become habitual. By the strength of abhyasa yoga, samskaras can be built, mind can be strengthened and expansion of consciousness can be achieved. When the mind becomes pure, noble and infinitely broad, the fountain of Bhakthi bursts forth.

On a spotlessly white cloth, even a single black spot becomes conspicuous. Suppose the cloth is all black. Then, even if you wipe your soiled hands with it, or besmear it with soot, no one can see the stains on that cloth. So too, when the mind is pure, even a touch of passion becomes unbearable. Once breath the air of inward purity, you will never allow your mind to become impure again. Whatever be the path you follow, whether it is Jnana Yoga, or Bhakthi Yoga or Karma Yoga, you should win the Grace of God. It is Grace that brings knowledge and Deliverance.