



RAMĀ ŚAKTI MISSION

BULLETIN NO: 148

May 9, 1976

Shraddha and devotion keep the mind tuned to God in all the stress and strain of life. This is called remembrance, 'smarana'. When remembrance is maintained without interruption, the mind cannot be attracted by the sense objects or assailed by the vasanas. Thus guarded against the vasanas and worldly temptations, the mind makes for inwardness. If the mind strays away and flows towards the world of objects, what is established thereby is the absence of devotion and shraddha.

You, householders, have to live amidst family affinities and obligatory duties. Temptations, scope for attachments, situations that make one forget God; these are in plenty when you live in the world. Holding Mother's teaching as the lamp, you should go ahead, developing adhyatmic force through devotion and anushtana. The dharma of Garhasthya is the base of a strong social structure. Home must become a temple, a hermitage and a spiritual laboratory, all combined. Centred in home, your spiritual life should become a springboard to universal vision. Bearing this in mind, you should live unattached, with your mind always fixed on God-remembrance.

Family affinities are temporary. They have no validity beyond the grave. Affinity with God alone is real, here and hereafter. Knowing this, strengthen your bond with God. When you love God, you will be able to love all without being bound by attachment. Regard your children as the trust property of God, as souls born for the service of humanity and attainment of liberation, and look after them with all care. Help them develop faith in God, noble samskaras, spiritual temperament and a sterling character and make them ideal sons and daughters. Let them shine as ornaments of Bharath Matha.

Even if you forget everything else, never forget God. When you constantly remember God and repeat His Name, your prajna will be awakened. When the prajna is awake, you will be imbued with sense of duty, 'karyonmukha'. You will get the strength to discharge your duties, to observe dharma, to do meritorious actions, to do sadhana and to love all alike. Spirituality brings super-efficiency in the field of duty. Laziness and dullness are traits of tamas. They are a negation of spirituality.

True life begins with the discovery of God. God alone can wipe out the stains of sinful conduct and liberate the jiva from all earthly bonds. God's love is infinite and unconditional. When the jiva repents, prays and resolves for a noble life, God overlooks his past life of neglect and leads him on to perfection.

Once there lived a rich man in a village. He had a son. Being the only son, the father brought him up with love and tender care. But as ill luck would have it, the son fell into evil company and developed all vices.

Half of his life span was wasted on pleasures of life and finally his body became a prey to all kinds of diseases. Sleep left him. A victim of worry, sorrow and physical agony, he now looked back, and with a horror realized the magnitude of his folly. Repentance came to him. How to get redemption from the diseases and accumulated sins became his burning concern. Seeking the way of divine grace, he set forth wandering from place



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to place, until at last he met a holy man, a Sadhu. The Sadhu was giving a spiritual discourse on Bhagavad Gita.

The charama sloka of the Gita, "Taking refuge in Me alone be at peace. Give up all other concerns. I will liberate you from all sins. Fear not", as expounded by the Sadhu, went deep into his heart. After the discourse was over and the audience dispersed, he approached the holy man and opened his heart to him. He made a clean and thorough confession of all his misdeeds and begged of the saint to show him the way of redemption.

The Sadhu was amazed at the truthfulness, frankness and utter sincerity of the man. He was moved to compassion and with the idea of leading him to the presence of God, the Sadhu handed over to him a stick painted black and a flag of the same black color fastened to it and said: 'Look, holding this flag in your hand, go forth on a homeless wandering, visit all sacred places and take the darshan of God in all sacred shrines. Repeat the Name of God constantly. Whenever you take a dip in the holy river, dip this flag also. When all your sins are destroyed, this black flag will turn white.

With implicit faith in the Sadhu's words and the longing for redemption burning in his heart, the Sowkar's son started on his pilgrimage. Seeing the sudden change in him, his old associates mocked at him by saying, what madness has come upon you to undertake this pilgrimage!

The ideas of punya and papa are all imaginary. This life is for enjoyment only. Death is the end of everything.

But his mind remained firm. Taking God's Name, he proceeded. He visited numerous shrines of God and bathed in many a holy river. Prayer, Nama smarana and pilgrimage became the very mode of his life. Thus 12 years passed. One day, as usual he finished his bath in the river, dipped the flag and found that it still remained black, when a doubt crossed his mind. He thought: Who knows whether the Sadhu's words would ever come true! I have done the japa for 12 years, visited all the shrines and bathed in all the holy rivers; still alas! The flag remains black. Could all my prayers be in vain?

Though doubt thus sprouted in the mind, God did not allow that to grow. If doubt had grown, he would have even discontinued the sadhana, strayed from the path and fallen into the abyss of frustration. It was the anushtana of 12 years that secured for him this divine grace which operated mysteriously.

As soon as the doubt crossed his mind, the piteous lamentation of a woman in distress fell into his ears. He rushed towards the direction of the sound. There he saw a woman being molested by a band of robbers. With his physical strength as well as the power of penance, he fought with the robbers and rescued the poor woman. He then addressed the woman: Oh mother, who are you? Where do you live? I will take you safely to your house. Have no fear. The woman was young and charming, but his mind did not flirt on beholding her form.

On the contrary he regarded her as a mother and showed her the respect due to a respectable woman. He had attained the steadiness of a yogi. With the heart full of



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gratitude, the woman took the stranger to her house. The woman's husband on hearing about the great help rendered by him, gladly offered him a suitable reward.

But without accepting it, the Sowkar's son walked off. Straightaway he went a river. He had his bath. As usual, he dipped his flag and lo! To his great astonishment, it turned white mysteriously. The flag's sudden transformation was an enigma to him. He thought over and over again, but could not find the reason. Finally he went in search of the old Sadhu, his Guru and met him. After making due prostrations to the Guru, he humbly sought the reason for the miraculous change of the color of the flag that day. With a smile, the Sadhu replied:

My son, firstly you have to your credit, a penance of 12 long years, taking the Name of God and visiting His shrines. Secondly, you saved a woman and her honour even at the risk of your life and thus earned a great merit. Thirdly, even though the woman was young and beautiful, you considered her as your mother and thus did not allow your mind to be polluted by any sinful thought. Fourthly, even though the woman's husband gladly tried to honour you with a suitable reward, you did not remain there to accept it and came away abruptly and thus maintained strict 'aparigraha', the ethical discipline of yoga. The fruition of all these, accounts for the miraculous change in the color of the flag. With all your sins washed away, you have become pure.

When youth, wealth, power and indiscrimination (aviveka) are all united together in a man, he finds his way to ruin. This is what happened to the Sowkar's son also. But due to merits of his previous life, repentance came to him and that earned the grace of God. By God's grace only he met the Sadhu who guided him on the path to purity.

Repentance does not come to all. Real repentance itself is a kind of awakening. Once it comes the jiva does not repeat his old folly. His mind is set once for all towards the ideals of purity and sinlessness.

When repentance, sadhu sanga and yearning for pure life bless a person, he enters a new phase of life, a life of penance, of anushtana and meek submission to the will of God. His religious life begins then. Every action has a reaction. This reaction is in two forms: one is in the form of reward from without; the other is in the form of a change coming on the mind itself.

The pleasant situations of life which brings one happiness are rewards of good actions; the painful ones which bring misery are that of bad ones.

God, the Nirvikara Chaitanya, takes no note of either sin or merit, for He is present in all beings and is same to all beings. But by sinful actions, the jiva estranges himself from God's grace. The contaminated mind cannot perceive the presence, the power and the glory of God. Nor can it reflect the auspicious qualities of God. Hence that itself is sin which contaminates the mind.

The more one indulges in sinful way of life, the denser is the darkness of the mind, and thicker becomes the veil of ignorance. Such a state of mind filled with tamas or ignorance, is symbolized by the black flag given by the Sadhu. Before the awakening and transformation took place, the mind of the Sowkar's son was all dark.



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Though repentance, sadhu sanga and penance together contributed to mental purification, still there was an obstacle difficult to be removed. That was, every time he took a dip in the holy river, his thought and concern was whether the flag would turn white and whether he had become pure. Any self-centered thought is a hindrance to yoga and purification. One must forget himself in the love for God. That is the state of utter purity. That is also emancipation.

Where there is the expectation of reward, even though the reward may be of a spiritual nature, there is bound to be impatience; there is also scope for doubt and despair if the reward is not forthcoming. With faith in the Guru's word and patience as the constant virtue, the Sadhaka should concern himself with the Sadhana. The fruition is bound to come. Sadhana itself yields bliss.

God's grace landed the Sowkar's son in a situation wherein he could give up his thought of personality. For saving the woman in distress, he risked his own life. That was a great sacrifice. With it, his clinging to personal self vanished and he became fit for Grace.

The sattwic state of chittha which reflects the passionless poise of the Atman and the qualities of God is symbolized by the white color of the flag.

Noble actions and spiritual disciplines earn merit. But if the emancipation is to come, the personal ego should disappear. In karma yoga, it is achieved through 'swartha tyaga, the renunciation of self; in devotion, through overwhelming love for God and constant thought of God; and in Jnana Yoga, by identification with the Supreme Self.

When purification comes, the external gaze that rests on form, qualities and personality, is replaced by the divine gaze. The divine gaze perceives only the presence of God, His power, His beauty and His qualities. Though this mystic perception or divine gaze had not come to the Sowkar's son, he had with him the pure bhava as a result of Nama smarana of 12 years. It was because of this pure bhava that he could address the woman in distress as 'mother'. There was one more thing. He was the woman's savior. The place where they met was a secluded place.

Yet no sinful thought crossed his mind. That was a high state of moral purity. In society, one may behave as a gentleman and dare not commit any sin. It is the fear of society that restrains him and not the fear of God or the moral sense. A man who fears God is certainly advanced in sadhana, for he knows that nothing can be hidden from God. He cannot think nor do any evil.

People quote scriptures to cover their own misdeeds. They say that it is God who prompts their intellects and therefore they are not responsible for their actions. Strange indeed is this argument. To know that God is the prompter and the doer is jnana itself. If you have this Jnana, you will be incapable of doing anything evil even in private.

Mere words do not constitute knowledge. One should have the third eye opened. He should have intimate spiritual experience of the glory of God. There is a light coming from God which reveals the true nature of a thing. This is Jnana. It is in this light of jnana that one knows the true nature of avidya, of ego, of mental modes etc. When



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jnana dawns, there is no identification with the prakrithi. Then only one realizes that it is the Divine Power that does all the work. The agent becomes the instrument.

Dwelling in ignorance, yet speaking like the wise, the hypocrite only displays his inner darkness when the time of action comes. His knowledge evaporates at the hour of trial. He succumbs to his own vasana. If one succumbs to his own vasana, what does it prove? It proves that discriminative knowledge has not yet dawned on him. Knowledge and slavery do not co-exist.

When you take refuge in God, God's power, in the aspect of Atman, becomes manifest.. With this power, you will be able to isolate the vasana waves, to restrain your mind and to guide your action along the path of righteousness. Knowledge coming from divine grace, alone can save.