



RAMĀ ŚAKTI MISSION

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Love subsists in relationship. But this relationship with God which the Bhakta revels in is not a state of duality born of ignorance. In ignorance one has no knowledge of oneself and one's relation to God. Bhakta's relationship with God is a mystic state in which love for God and the knowledge of oneness with God, exist together. The I of the Bhakta is not a separative I, the ego of ignorance. It is the aham of devotion, which is there just for the enjoyment and experience of the elixir of God-love.

The sign of true knowledge and devotion is that one does not recognize any other relationship except one's relation to God. Communion with God is possible only when one attains egolessness, desirelessness and single-mindedness. Egolessness, desirelessness and single-mindedness are possible of attainment only when one awakes to the knowledge of one's affinity with God.

It is because of ignorance of one's relation to God that one gets attached to persons and things. Attachment produces only bondage and misery. When you love God, you will be able to love all in and through God. In the realm of love, there will be only freedom and no bondage; bliss, and no misery.

The jiva's trust and reliance is on material objects, persons and worldly circumstances. This should be replaced by trust and dependence on God. That will be a great step towards fellowship with God. He alone is a devotee who knows the glory of God and takes complete refuge in God. Such an exalted soul sees not anything other than God, within or without.

In the practice of the fellowship with God one withdraws oneself into one's deepest being. In activity, he is detached; amidst associations, he is inwardly alone. He maintains the perfect poise, whatever may happen in his life as ordained by prarabdha. When you walk with God through trials of life, you do not feel the blow however hardest it be. The darts of prarabdha cannot shake or shatter your faith in God. He, who measures the mercy of God by the yardstick of worldly events in life, has not known the sweetness of relationship or fellowship with God.

Giving up thoughts of self and the prapancha, one should be able to think of God without interruption. When thought rests on God constantly, you will be able to conduct yourselves in the world of duty perfectly. Uninterrupted thought of God cannot come unless the mind is transformed into a repository of noble qualities. Among qualities, selflessness, self-abnegating spirit and courage are most important. It is the selfless man who is fit to receive enlightenment, which is the experience of the non-dual Atman. Hence, self-lessness is the nearest approximation to realization.

So also, courage is the ornament of a sadhaka. Man commits sins, errors and blunders because of fear. He is the fearless man who is wedded to truth and righteousness. Fear comes from the notion of a second entity, says the scripture. Fearlessness comes with the realization of truth. A votary of righteousness is at peace with his own Self.

To illustrate the greatness of these virtues of selflessness, sacrifice and fearlessness, here is a story a story:-



RAMĀ ŚAKTI MISSION

Once upon a time, there lived a king. He was pious, virtuous and loved his people. As ill luck would have it, a devastating drought once hit his country. The drought condition persisted for years, as a result of which, rivers, tanks, lakes and wells were dried up and the people and the cattle died of famine in large numbers. The king himself was reduced to penury.

The grief-stricken king, apprehending that a great curse was upon his kingdom, held consultations with his ministers, staff, court pundits, intellectuals and other elites of the country. No one could provide a solution. Finally, as a last resort, the king approached a group of ascetics, apprised them of the situation and sought their guidance. The ascetics counseled the king to propitiate Indra, the rain god, through an appropriate sacrifice, Yaga.

The king now convened an open meeting of the citizens. After briefing them about the grave situation the country was facing, proclaimed his decision to perform the Yaga prescribed by the wise men. That Yaga, called Narmedha Yaga required a human sacrifice, narabali. Which man would be ready for self-immolation! The mention of narabali passed a feeling of horror in the minds of all. Every one hung his head in dread. The king waited. A dead silence prevailed. Finally there stood a boy of 12, a remarkable lad with bright eyes, shining face and curly hair, which marked him as belonging to a class apart. He advanced towards the king and offered himself for the proposed sacrifice, for ahuti into the Homa Kunda. To atone the sins of the entire race, that boy joyfully volunteered to sacrifice himself and thus bring in an era of prosperity to his countrymen. The king was pleased and silently admired the courage of the young boy. So were the congregation.

Then came forward the blessed boy's parents. Showering blessings upon their darling, they said with tears in their eyes: Son, blessed, thrice blessed, art thou. Blessed has become your race. Even elders like us did not have the courage to rise to the occasion. The body that has come from earth goes back to earth. Dear one, praiseworthy is your sacrifice. Our hearts rejoice today with the thought that you shall live eternally in the heart of mankind. May your fame be everlasting. So saying, they embraced their son. At that moment there was a shower of flowers from heaven, which thrilled the whole congregation!

Arrangements were soon made for the proposed Yaga. The whole country assembled in the precincts of the spacious sacrificial hall, Yagashala. The rites were in full swing. The sacred intonations reverberated in the atmosphere. The final hour for the poornahuti came. The boy, bathed and beautifully dressed in the holy garb, stood near the blazing Homa Kunda. He was all calmness and serenity and shone with extraordinary spiritual lustre. All eyes were fixed on that young hero.

The boy folded his palms and offered his final prayer to god Indra to be pleased with the Yaga and to send the life giving shower. Prayer over, he was about to take a plunge into the Homa Kunda, when the shining one, Indra, suddenly emerged from the fire and rained blessing and benediction upon the boy. The very presence of such a valiant son like you, O beloved one, is auspiciousness itself and how can there be a famine in a country in which you live! Pleased am I with you. May your fame be immortal! All prosperity to your country. So saying, Indra disappeared. Prayers and praises arose from the entire congregation.

Soon after this, a torrential downpour came. The parched earth, the withering trees and plants, human beings, animals and birds, all seemed to have got a new life. Rivers started flowing, singing the song of ecstasy. Tanks and lakes and wells overflowed. Everywhere people rejoiced and sang the praises of God Almighty.



RAMĀ ŚAKTI MISSION

The moral to be derived from this moving story is that God is pleased with the self-abnegating spirit of His devotees. Great things are achieved by great sacrifices only. One must forget oneself in the service of God and humanity. There is no worship higher than this. In this, is the flowering of human excellence. Without human excellence, one cannot aspire to divinity.

It requires tremendous courage to immolate oneself for a noble cause. In a devotee's self-offering to God, in the patriot's dedication to the cause of the nation and in a pathivratha's loyalty to her husband, what is upheld is the cardinal virtue of self-abnegation.

The story lends itself to the spiritual interpretation also. The drought that hit the country signifies the barrenness of a human heart devoid of human feelings, love and compassion. Such a person, selfish and self-centered, cannot have peace or joy. There is an ocean of love in every one, for man is essentially divine. But when self enters, that whole ocean of love gets dried up.

The counsels of the ascetics provide the benefit of satsang, the association with the wise, as a result of which the jiva gives up the path of selfishness. Thereafter, life is lived in a selfless manner. An awakening comes. The Guru's instruction activates the buddhi tattwa and rouses discrimination.

The light that illumines the intellect is from God, who is seated in everyone's heart. When you take shelter at the Lotus Feet of the Sadguru and follow his teaching, the light from God falls on the intellect. The intellect then glows with the power of discrimination. Finer feelings arise. Man gets the power to sift the real from the unreal, to resist the impulse of desire and to stick to righteousness. He responds to the call of duty. He is ready for sacrifice. The chariot of life moves on the path of righteousness.

The Yajna Kunda represents the buddhi tattwa, activated by the divine teaching of the Sadguru. The blazing fire is symbolic of jnana. Human sacrifice, narabali, is the sacrifice of aham bhava, the ego-sense. The emergence of Indra signifies the descent of the grace of God. When divine grace descends, one experiences the unbroken bliss of communion with the supreme.

Jnana becomes firm, free of doubt, and identical with the reality itself, only when the ego is totally extinct and the vasanas are completely wiped out.

Universal love becomes capable of experience, through the realization of the non-dual Atman, the Existence-knowledge bliss absolute, as well as through unswerving devotion to Personal God of one's choice, Ishtadevatha. The Bhakta beholds the beloved in all living beings. That accounts for his equal love for all. The jnani perceives the one undivided Atman in all. Jnana is characterized by modeless inner poise and spiritual detachment. Hence the love arising from jnana also partakes of the nature of poise and detachment. Universal love arising from bhakti to Personal God is distinguished by sweetness, intensity of fervour, adoration and tenderness.