



RAMĀ ŚAKTI MISSION

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Mother has given the upadesha without observing the traditional doctrine of competency. Such gift of upadesha is a characteristic of motherly compassion. But as disciples and devotees, whose aim is to realize the highest, you should endeavour to attain competency and to become a recipient of the Guru's Grace.

Vasana-bound jivas come as spiritual seekers also. Hence the Guru, whose only desire is to see the spiritual uplift of the disciples, imposes on them strict disciplines. Those who sincerely long for release from samsara, willingly and lovingly observe the disciplines so imposed. In the case of others, their own minds resist the disciplines. Mind deceives the non-vigilant sadhaka. Deceived already by the mind, the sadhaka tries to deceive his own Atma- Sakshi. This is what prevents him from receiving the Guru's grace.

Brahmananda a saint, sings like this:

*There is no real happiness without Hari bhajan,
Why wander thou, O man! Aimlessly.
Go thou to Kashi, Dwaraka and Gaya,
And all pilgrim centres of the four corners;
Yet alas! The impurities of the mind cannot be wiped out.*

*Thou may fancy that by putting the religious mark on thy forehead,
Tying a tuft of hair and besmearing the body with the sacred ashes,
Thou may pass for a pundit; but it is all an illusion.
With all this, thou cannot have the peace thou cherisheth.*

*Thou may read and recite the holy texts,
Vedas and puranas and waste away thy whole life in discussions
And disputations and people may shower praises on thee
With no real reason.*

*Thou art in this world only for a short while.
Says Brahmanand: Free thyself, O man, from all desires and
Concentrate thy mind on God's Lotus Feet.*

Hari bhajan, here, does not mean only formal pooja or singing of sankirtan. It is constant adoration of God through devotion, sublime bhava and pure actions. Whether you are engaged in worshipping the deity, or singing the praises of God in group, or in the performance of your allotted duties, you should have the pure bhava. Humility should adorn you. When ego dominates, you are far away from the presence of God, even though you may be expounding a scripture. Conceit is a denial of God.

Progress in spirituality does not consist in mere external observances. One's mind must move towards purity. The mind must come under control. What one learns by study of the holy books and from contact with the saints and the Sadguru, should be brought into practice in daily life. Your outlook, aspiration, conduct and the whole mode of life should conform to the high spiritual ideal. Earn the merit of dharma. Indeed, dharma itself is the reward, the remuneration, you have to earn by your life of purity and illumination. In the highest metaphysical sense, dharma means God-realization itself.



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To remember always that the body is perishable and to remain identified with the Divine is the perspective of illumination. That is also the devotional approach. The idea of separateness from God and the notion of a particular selfhood, breed egoism, vanity and passions. One may have good virtues in his possessions and many attainments to his credit; yet they all get obscured by the veil of egoism.

As and when the ego begins to rise in any violent form, curb it then and there, either by discrimination, or by prayer, or by both. Preserve the lamp of knowledge lighted by the Sadguru, against all undivine influences. When discrimination is awake, one achieves success in the world as well as in spirituality.

Here is a story about the horrors of egoity and the way of redemption from it:

There lived a kazi, a religious head of the Muslim community. He was also known among the people as Hajji, meaning, the one who has gone on Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca a number of times. As a staunch adherent of Islamic faith, the Kazi considered himself a person of great merit because of his regular annual visits to the holy Mecca associated with the Prophet.

This thought developed into a superiority complex. Instead of becoming humble and holy as a devout Muslim should, the Kazi became full of conceit. Instead of thanking God for enabling him to visit Mecca every year he went on trumpeting his own glory by telling each and every one that he had never left a single year of his holy pilgrimage to Mecca.

Where 'I' gains importance, there, devotion cannot flourish. One is the denial of the other. The Kazi became old and now he could recollect with pride that he had completed sixty years of his annual pilgrimage to the holy city.

One night, the Kazi had a fantastic dream. He saw in his dream vision a strange world with two highways branching off from one junction, one leading to the heaven and the other to the hell. At the junction stood a serene figure, a holy angel of God, as though commissioned to supervise the direction and destiny of the transmigrating jivas.

The Kazi of our story assured of his own merit and eligibility for admission to the paradise was walking along the direction of the heaven, when the angel stopped him and interrogated: Where are you going? To heaven, replied the Kazi. To heaven? Asked the angel in amusement and surprise, what merit have you earned for getting to the heaven?

I have visited the holy Mecca 60 times in my life time on earth. This religious pilgrimage, I hold, guarantees heaven for me, replied the Kazi.

Pilgrimage is, of course, meritorious, said the angel in reply, but you have denied to yourself the merit by developing conceit and egoism. Instead of pleasing God, you have nourished your own ego by gloating over your visits to Mecca and talking highly of your holiness to one and all. Have you any other merit of good work to your credit?

Pausing for a short while, the Kazi said in reply, yes, all my life, I have regularly offered five times of namaz (prayer) every day, without fail. That is true, said the omniscient angel, but in this case also, no merit accrues to you, for you have done the namaz, not with your heart set on Allah, but with the idea of posing as holy and great before the eyes of men around you.



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Normally you require only five minutes for your Namaz, but when anybody would happen to call on you during your prayer time, you would deliberately extend the period of prayer to 15 minutes, just to make a show of your devotion. So your Namaz too has not reached Allah. You have not earned any merit. Hence you have no right to enter the paradise. Hell awaits you.

This was something which the Kazi could not bear. He burst into tears and suddenly the dream broke and the Kazi saw himself on the bed in his house. It was the midnight hour. The surrounding world was all asleep. The Kazi alone sat up in his bed, lost in thought. The whole dream scene, the strange world, the highways to heaven and hell, the holy angel and his words, all shone in his mind very vividly. Instead of dismissing the whole affair as a hallucination, the Kazi deeply pondered over the implications of the dream vision. An awakening came to him. His own follies became clear to his understanding. One cannot say when the body will fall. Any moment the inevitable may happen. Before that, I must attain heaven. What is the way for salvation? These thoughts occupied his mind.

Within his own mind, the Kazi now resolved: I must be sincere hereafter in my religious pursuit. Pride, ostentation, falsehood and crookedness are hindrances on my path and must be given up. What can I gain by telling the people about my religious devotion? I must do my duty and please Allah. To instruct the people on religious matters is my sacred profession; but if I am egoistic what effect can my words produce on the minds of the listeners. Ego indeed is my enemy.

With this chain of thoughts revolving in his mind, the Kazi now prayed to Allah from the depth of his heart to free him from ego and to reveal God's glories to his consciousness. A great transformation came upon the Kazi. He became truly humble and holy. Pride and egoism left him. He became indrawn and introspective. He eventually became a real Kazi, a man of God.

Repentance and prayer are two great purifying forces. They reclaim the mind from indulgence and sin and make it glow with the splendour of tapas. Genuine and heartfelt repentance removes dark stains of ignoble deeds from one's chittha; becoming the fire of penance, it glows with divine light.

Repentance is accompanied by intense moral ardour and a firm spirituality through prayer. Meditation is a higher stage. It requires great purification for the mind to ascend the plane of meditative communion. But prayer is easy of practice. Heart gets enlivened through prayer. Prayer links the mind to the Unseen. Divine comfort comes to the jiva through prayer.

There is actually no set prayer, for prayer is not a formula. All prayers, in their natural form of purity, are spontaneous outpouring of the human heart. The forms of prayer change in accordance with the nature of needs. Nevertheless, for purification, for strength to overcome weakness and to stick to the righteous path, for the grace of devotion and enlightenment, for forgiveness of transgressions, all should pray regularly and sincerely to God.

Make God your own, enter into an intimate relation with Him and pray from the bottom of your heart and the fountain of joy bubble forth from within you.