



# RAMĀ ŚAKTI MISSION

**BULLETIN NO: 176**

17th April 1977

The seeker of Brahman should have certain noble qualities. Then only instruction becomes fruitful in him. This was the reason why the Sages of yore used to test their disciples. Imparting Brahma Vidya to one who is egoistic, whose conduct is loathsome, is like giving a rod of fire to a monkey. It will lead only to destruction. The undeserving, by his bad conduct, brings a blot on the whole institution of Brahma Vidya and the venerated tradition of the Rishis. The pure of heart, the humble, those who possess a refined intellect, those whose conduct is pure, alone are eligible to receive enlightenment and become great reflectors of the fame of Bharat's immortal spiritual heritage.

Ancient householders, who kept aloft this torch of wisdom, were all ideal men and women, possessed of noble virtues, persons of ideal conduct. Their homes were hermitages of peace. Ideal home is the foundation of an integrated society. Great Brahmacharis and sannyasis are products of noble Garhasthya. Children born of such parents who are devoted to God, who are votaries of truth and righteousness, whose conduct itself is the path of dharma, become great bhaktas, jnanis and tyagis. Those who are attached to women and wealth, who crave for name and personal glory, can never move in the direction of God.

In olden times flourished the venerable system of education, 'Gurukula'. Gurukula was not only a spiritual institution that taught the Vedas, the shastras and the puranas and spiritual sadhanas, but was also a seat of learning that imparted secular knowledges as well like astronomy, astrology, medicines, archery, etc. Whatever is the education that was imparted; the relationship that existed between the teacher and the student was a sacred bond of pure love.

There was a Gurukula presided over by an eminent Ayurvedic physician. Many students from various parts of the country went to this Gurukula to learn the Ayurveda system of medicine. It was the custom in those days that the students lived with the Guru, not only learning at his feet, but also serving the Guru whole-heartedly, attending to the duties of the hermitage. Service brought out the best in human nature, inculcated humility, developed a supreme reverence for knowledge. The idea implied in such service was that no knowledge would shine unless the Guru blesses and the disciple won the Guru's grace. Education was not merely a process of accumulating knowledge at the Feet of the Master but was also a process of cultivating character and qualities worthy of the noblest culture.

A batch of students of the above Gurukula finished their career and one by one, prostrated before the Guru, took his blessings and left for home in order to pursue independent practice in medicine.

Among these students there was one boy, the youngest of the lot, who was a remarkable student. By virtue of his devotion, obedience and intelligence, he attracted the special attention of the teacher. Finding him to be a fit person to receive the higher esoteric knowledge in the Ayurveda, the master told him, your course of study is not over. You have still to learn. Stay here and continue your study. When the time comes, I shall be imparting to you secret vidyas.

The boy had great love for his teacher and he knew for certain that the master had only his welfare in his mind. Medicine is a vast subject and he was only glad to learn more at the feet of



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his venerable guru. So he implicitly obeyed the master and engaged himself in the duties of the hermitage, in the service of the aged pair - the Guru and his wife.

One day, as was his practice, he went to the nearby river for bringing water to the hermitage, when he chanced to meet some of his old friends, the classmates of Gurukula. They had by then not only set up independent practice as Vaidyas, but had well settled in life, become rich and earned social distinction. Recognizing their old friend and learning from him that he was still in the Gurukula engaged in the service of the guru, they scoffed at him and said: O foolish one! Have you become so dull-witted that you still continue in the Gurukula doing such menial jobs? See, how we have prospered in our practice. Better leave the place and start your practice like us. The humble Brahmachari, whose delight was only the service of his master replied, I am happy in serving my teacher and spending my days in study. I know that if I go away without his permission, my education will not be fruitful. When my guru finds that my study is over, he will surely send me with his blessings.

Those rich friends, the Vaidyas, who were seated in a horse-driven carriage departed, considering the Brahmachari to be a fool. The Brahmachari quietly returned to the hermitage. The conversation with his erstwhile classmates at the Gurukula was re-echoing in his mind. What one hears, reads, speaks, thinks and does, all influence one in one's mental make-up. That is why Mother stresses good association and purity in thought, speech and action, are essential for spiritual advancement. Mind is prone to impressions. Impressions deposited in the chittha are vasanas which direct the mental tendency and outer actions. Until mind is transformed into pure consciousness, every sadhaka should be extremely careful in choosing his association. The association which causes unrest, doubt and distractions should be shunned. Shraddha in the Guru's words alone leads one on the right path.

After a few days, Brahmachari's zest and mental cheer was found to have been eclipsed. This change was noticed by the guru also. What is in the mind will come out in words and actions. Face is the index of the chittha. Once the brahmachari approached his teacher and submitted: Sir, you had told me that you will be imparting to me secret vidyas. Much time has since passed; may I now go home and start my practice? The Guru replied: Of the two esoteric vidyas which I wanted to give you, one has already been imparted to you. Now the other remains. The time for giving it has not yet arrived. I have been watching and waiting for that moment.

The instruction to continue his stay in the hermitage was implied in the teacher's above words. Now the Brahmachari fell to introspection. What could be that vidya which the teacher had taught him? He had no idea that he had received such a vidya. The thought now haunted him. Once when he went to the river for ablutions, the sight of a dead deer greeted his eyes. At once a medicinal herb flashed across his mind. Indeed, he remembered, that was a secret vidya which his teacher had imparted to him. In order to test its efficacy, he went to the nearby jungle, picked up that particular herb and tried it on the animal. To his great astonishment, the deer sprang into life and whisked away into the forest.

Filled with joy, with an air of triumph, the Brahmachari returned to the hermitage. He has mastered the vidya of restoring life! What other vidya could be there superior to this, for him to learn, wondered he. He had nothing more to learn, he concluded. He must somehow leave the hermitage for good. This thought worked in his mind. Formal leave-taking was out of question. The guru will not give him permission to go. So he must take the decision and act. Thus,



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making up his mind, without telling either the Guru or the Gurupatni, the Brahmachari ran away from the hermitage.

A clouded mind cannot see the way to welfare. Even the good intention of the loving teacher was doubted. The Brahmachari now set up his practice in the village. Years of disciplined life in the Gurukula and service rendered to the Guru, had its own merit and as a result of this, initially, all cases of treatment turned to be a success and the new Vaidya's reputation started spreading.

It was at that time a tragedy hit the ruler of that country. The King died of snake-bite. Palace physicians and eminent doctors from various parts, failed to revive the King. A gloom descended on the country. Now the new Vaidya of our story volunteered himself to revive the king. But there was a condition imposed on him. Already several doctors have tried their treatment on king, but to no purpose. In case the new physician failed to bring the king to life, he must be prepared to lose his head. The Vaidya was confident of himself and his wonder drug. He took out the herb and tried it on the king, the team of doctors witnessing the performance. To the sheer surprise of every one lo! The king, opening his eyes, at once sat up. Burst of joy drowned the whole palace. The Vaidya was publicly honoured. At the express request of the King, he continued to stay in the palace as the state guest.

After a couple of days, a virulent reaction came to the body of the king. All over his body, not excluding his face, horrible scars started appearing and the king's physical appearance became abominably ugly. He could not even come out of his chamber and see anybody. Death seemed to be far better. Disgusted at this new development, the king now got wild at the physician and passed orders that the latter should be executed in case he failed to make the king whole. In utter despair and fear, the physician pleaded for time. He did not know what to do, what antidote should be administered to the king to nullify the reaction. Now the thought of his merciful Guru came to his mind, a thought tinged with repentance. He wronged his Guru, but still, he had hope that the Guru would forgive him and instruct him on the antidote, perhaps the second vidya he had promised. Escorted by a palace official, the vaidya hastened towards the Guru's place. Guru alone in the world, thought he, would be able to save him from the jaws of death. With a heavy heart he entered the premises of the hermitage, poignant memories of Guru's love and his own blissful life with him, crowding up his mind. The place looked like a grave-yard. A terrific silence reigned everywhere. There, he got the heart-rending news that both the Guru and the Gurupatni, the aged couple, had left for the other world!

The great moral you should learn from this story is that no knowledge will be fruitful without the grace of the Guru. Personal endeavour for acquisition of knowledge is essential; but it is grace and grace alone that opens the door to enlightenment. Grace is the saving force. Success, eternal fame and infinite peace are rewards of divine grace.