



RAMĀ ŚAKTI MISSION

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The student life, devoted to the pursuit of knowledge, should be a life of austerity, simplicity and hard work. The whole life is a process of learning. Hence everyone is a life-long student.

A mere bread-winning education, an education which is aimed at material prosperity and social position alone, is not real education. Education should bring forth the best in man; it must make him an integrated person, a harmonized being. In this sense, education is a religious vow, committed to moral culture and spiritual perfection.

A spiritually oriented education is a continuation of the pursuit of knowledge and a continuous cultivation of character. The criterion of such knowledge is not knowledge of books alone, not the knowledge of theories and doctrines, shabda jnana. Knowledge should bestow discernment and make man act in conformity to moral law. The touchstone of knowledge is conduct.

In academic education, there is, of course, a prominent place for intellect. But this education does not confer upon the student the capacity for right discrimination and right action. By divine grace only can one discriminate between truth and falsehood, between virtue and vice, between right and wrong. God is seated in the heart of all. His power should manifest itself in the intellect. Then only the jivatman gets the powers to discriminate aright, to control the mind and to know his kinship with the Divine. When the divine vision opens, one is able to know the true nature of mind and the working of the gunas.

Spiritual discernment, viveka, is not an act of intellectual cogitation or mental reflection. It is a faculty of discriminative perception. In its nature of certitude, it is analogous to the pronouncement of a legal judgment by a judicial authority. The presiding judge listens to the arguments of both sides by the respective lawyers. Finally, he delivers his judgment, which is indisputable. So also, the thinking mind argues; it analyses and investigates. It is viveka that reveals the true nature of a thing, whether it is real or false, good or evil, right or wrong, dharma or adharma.

In the analysis, there is mental activity as apart from the apprehending intellect. But in viveka, these distinctions vanish, the mind becoming one with the intellect.

The mode of consciousness, which reveals the nature of an object or a mental state, is called the buddhi. All instructions, whether they are from parents, or elders, or teachers, or wise men, or one's own Sadguru, are an appeal to the discerning intelligence in man. In the process of listening, if the intellect is receptive and refined, the truth of the instruction is grasped. If the intellect is mature, pure and egoless, a person awakes to the reality even with a single instruction by the Sadguru.

When the chittha becomes pure, the teaching of the Sadguru reaches the level of consciousness, prajna. If there is perfect shraddha on the part of the disciple, the teaching becomes at once an illumination. This is the awakening of consciousness.

If the chittha is not pure, it means, the sense-associated mind is at play, becoming a barrier to assimilation of teaching and awakening into knowledge. Unless the barrier of this agitated mind



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is removed, one cannot achieve inwardness or concentration.

Consciousness, unassociated with the upadhis such as the mind, intellect, ego and chittha, is the Atman. When consciousness is conditioned by the upadhis, the jivabhava emerges. So long as the jiva remains identified with the upadhis, it cannot realize its affinity with the Atman. Upadhis should be known in their true nature. Then identification with them ceases. This is the function of knowledge. Therefore it is said that without first awakening into knowledge, the jivatman cannot enter into communion with the Supreme Being.

To cross the mental realm is the first task. The sense-associated mind, in its frequency and continuity of thoughts relating to the vishayas, or of intermittent reactions in the form of passions, is always in motion. This motion, this thought-flow must stop. Then only the higher activity of meditation and vichara and contemplation can commence.

This shows that unless the externalized thought-flow stops, there is no state of inwardness achieved; without inwardness and quietude, meditation or vichara cannot be embarked upon.

To stop the world-faced mental movement, another powerful and enchanting object or ideal should be offered to the mind. The whole mind should be resolved into that single thought or ideal. That object which can attract the mind and arrest mental vagaries, is the Name of God.

Replacement of worldly thoughts by the spiritual ideal is the most effective means to mind-control. The mind rebels against suppression. Suppose a small child happens to catch hold of a sharp pen-knife. If one tries to take away that knife from the child's hand by force, the child will tighten its grip on the knife and the result will be disastrous. Noticing the danger, an understanding mother adopts another method. She holds before the child's gaze a lovely toy producing a beautiful sound. The child is now attracted towards the beauty of the toy and the pleasing sound it produced. With attention absorbed in the toy, the knife drops off from the tiny hands and in no time the mother removes that knife from the sight of the child.

Man's mind is like a child. It is absorbed in its love for sense objects. If you force the mind to renounce the sense-pleasure, there will be a violent reaction. The Guru, with motherly compassion, gives the disciple, the all-powerful Divine Name. Eventually, the mind of the disciple develops a taste (abhiruchi) for the Name and devotion to God. When this taste for the Name and devotion increases, naturally, the worldly pleasures become insipid.

The Name of God is sweeter than nectar, enchanting, elevating, powerful, full of light and divine vibrations, the embodiment of truth and bliss and identical with God. He, who holds on to the Name, actually holds on to God Himself. The Name that dances first on the lips gets into the heart, to shine there as wisdom and love and assumes the form of Satchidananda Himself. There is nothing impossible of achievement through the Name of God.

Whether one knows the greatness and the meaning of the Name or not, the continuous repetition of the Name is bound to produce effect as one, who knowingly or unknowingly, touches fire, gets burnt by the fire. But he, who feels drawn to God and chants the Name with devotional fervour, quickly reaches the goal.

He who approaches a bonfire feels its heat and not he who sits far away from the fire. Similarly, he who is drawn to God through devotion enjoys the bliss of the Name and not he who is averse to devotion and spiritual practices. In reality God is always with the jivas, being seated in the



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cavity of their hearts; but in practical experience, He is far far away and beyond, because of the worldly vasanas accumulated by the jivatman. When the vasanas become extinct either through devotion or through knowledge and the mind merges in the Paramatman, the jivatman experiences not merely closeness to God, but even identity with Him.

Knowledge shines brighter and brighter as the vasanas diminish in stock and strength. Knowledge is not created or imparted. It is there in all in a latent form. But because of the thick smoke of vasanas, the fire of knowledge remains veiled, hidden and dim. It is not that the sadhakas have no knowledge at all. But how is it that they are not able to control their minds and to rise above the temptations of the world? The reason is, the taste for sense pleasures has not left them.

By cultivation of restraint, practice of meditation and by association with the wise, a certitude must come that the world of pleasures is perishable and illusory, that the real happiness is only at the Feet of God, that God alone is one's own in this world as well as in the next.

Without the aid and shelter of God's grace, the jivas cannot solve the problems of life, cannot control their own minds, and cannot find happiness here or hereafter. In the battle of life, in the internal warfare between the lower forces and the higher forces, the lord should become your charioteer, as He did in the case of Arjuna at Kurukshetra. That is to say, manifesting Himself as discrimination (viveka) He should guide you along the path of truth and righteousness and lead you to goal of union with Him.

Arjuna sat in the rear and gave the Lord the front seat in the chariot. Taking refuge in the Lord, he acted as the Lord commanded him to do. So too, surrendering yourselves to God who is seated in your own heart, you should hand over the reins of your mind to the Supreme Being, to be guided and controlled by Him. If the ego dominates, if you turn your back on God, the divine aid will not come. Without the divine aid in the form of right insight, no one can tide over the crises of life. Ego-tainted intellect cannot guide the mind and conduct. The guidance must come from God. That alone ensures security against evil, sin and moral fall.

All modifications come only on the mind, for it is the mind that reacts to the external stimuli. The guiding intelligence (buddhi) should have the capacity to restrain, to control and to properly direct, the mental movements.

(To be continued in the next bulletin).