



RAMĀ ŚAKTI MISSION

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The protagonists of personal effort and self-reliance fancy that even Realization of God can be had without the help of a Guru! This view is not correct. A guru is essential for spiritual seeking. What is the role of the Guru in one's spiritual life? Can one do sadhana and reach the goal without guidance by the Guru? These questions have to be answered.

To install the intellect in the Truth, to prevent the sankalpas from becoming vikalpas, to remain a witness to one's own mental movements (kalpanas) and to make Vedanta a living experience and not dry intellectualism, there is need for the guidance and grace of the Sadguru.

Truth means God, the goal of one's spiritual pursuit. The goal is beyond the range of intellect. Hence the only illumination available for the seeker is the Guru's Upadesha and the Teaching. To install the intellect in the Truth, therefore, means to remain firm in the conviction that the Guru's Word is truth. This firm conviction should find expression in the pattern of the disciple's thinking, in his outlook on life, in his behavior, in the very mode of his conduct in all life-situations.

Once an Idol is installed for worship, it is not to be moved thereafter. Similarly, once the disciple receives the authentic Upadesha of the Guru, he should remain unshakably established in it. Upanishads do not lead to fixity of consciousness in the Reality. The Vakya must be charged with the experience of a living Master and should be received by an earnest disciple endowed with shraddha.

Sankalpas mean ideations that arise in the mind. Ideations should be pure, firm and expressive of resolute will. Sankalpas direct actions. Even behind the creational manifestation, there was the divine sankalpa of Brahma. So also God's advent on earth as the Incarnation is in accordance with His divine sankalpa.

Little minds are moved by petty desires which result in selfish pursuit. But great minds have magnanimous and pure sankalpas which produce mighty deeds in this world.

When doubts and distractions weaken the sankalpa and it finds an outlet through the senses to the world of objects, it becomes a vikalpa. Vikalpa indicates mental weakness. To strengthen the sankalpa is the secret of Tapas. To prevent sankalpa from becoming a vikalpa, the sadhaka should have his inherent strength awakened by the Guru's guidance and grace.

Asuras too had sankalpas and they too did intense tapas. But their sankalpas were not pure. Their sankalpas had no sanction of the moral law and the divine grace. Hence ruin came upon them.

For the sake of uninterrupted anushtana, for undertaking worthy projects, the sadhaka should make his sankalpas pure and strong and wedded to the divine will through an attitude of loving surrender to God. Then alone mighty actions flow and enduring accomplishments follow.

All sankalpas that arise in a Sadhaka should be viewed from the background of the basic sankalpa generated by the Sadguru by means of spiritual initiation, upadesha. This basic sankalpa pertains to one's true nature and one's affinity with the Supreme. When you are



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established in this basic sankalpa, you will get the power to remain detached even from other sankalpas that arise in you and thereby to be free of egoistic sense of agency and the pride of achievements in life.

The most impure sankalpa is the notion that body is the Self. From this impure sankalpa grows the entire tree of samsara. All passions and lower thoughts originate from this impure sankalpa. By strengthening and stabilizing the pure sankalpa, the sadhaka should overcome the evil effects of the impure sankalpa. That is one aspect of sadhana.

When the pure and the basic sankalpa remains eclipsed by oblivion, offshoots of worldly vasanas which are in the chittha, begin to appear on the surface of the mind. They are called 'kalpanas'. Kalpanas are distractions in meditation and they also give rise to absent-mindedness in duty. Kalpanas should be seen from the position of a detached looker-on, and should be deliberately isolated. For this also, the sadhaka needs the grace of the Guru.

Kalpanas are disturbing movements in the mind. When they become strong and violent, they become passions. Passions express themselves as evil deeds (adharma). If you have developed the power of observing and negating the kalpanas, passions will never be able to overwhelm you. They may appear, but you will be able to get over them by the grace of the Guru. A sadhaka should be alert, vigilant, prayerful and persevering. So long as he has not gone beyond prakrithi, he is in the danger zone.

When kalpanas and vikalpas do not arise, only sankalpas remain. By Tapas, they become stronger, producing mighty results. A stage arrives, when even sankalpas leave the mind and the whole mind is resolved into one powerful basic sankalpa. Even though this basic sankalpa pertains to the truth of the Mahavakya, it is not a state of Enlightenment, Jnana. Even the basic sankalpa should disappear. Then alone the infinite Brahman shines forth as the unbroken Aham, which is Jnanaswaroopa. What is to be understood from this is that it is the Guru's grace that leads a spiritual aspirant from the whirlpool of the world to the peace of God-realization.

Vedanta becomes dry intellectualism, if the truths of the Vedanta remain only at the level of the intellect and are not carried to the level of conduct. Knowledge which is devoid of anushtana and acharana (practice and conduct) is barren. It is not knowledge at all. Those earnest sadhakas devoted to the Guru, remain steadfast to the path of anushtana indicated by the Guru. Without guidance by the Guru, one cannot learn the technique of inner quest; without the grace of the Guru, knowledge will not dawn. He who has a Guru alone knows, says the Upanishad.

It is not to the inert body or to the wavering mind that the Guru imparts instruction on Truth. The instruction is for the jivatman. The Jivatman's true nature is Satchidananda. But somehow he has forgotten it. The Guru reminds him of this truth, the truth of his relation to God, and restores him to his original status.

A prince brought up by a shepherd thinks that he is a shepherd. But as he attains manhood, there comes a trustworthy man who informs him of his true kinship with royalty. Immediately his mentality and behaviour change. The royal blood asserts itself now. A heroic spirit of a Kshatriya possesses him and he sets out on his mission of winning back his rightful throne. In this parable, Jivatman is signified by the prince who has forgotten his royal status. Attainment of manhood is competency for spiritual upadesha. Trustworthy man signifies the Sadguru. As soon as the Guru imparts Upadesha, the jivatman endowed with shraddha awakes from slumber. A new vritti arises in him. His whole mind is afire with aspiration. Kshatra veerya



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signifies the Atma Bhava shining with the manifested powers of truth, justice and righteousness and moral purity. His whole outlook and life-pattern now change. Knowledge of Brahman is the royal throne which he ultimately wins.

The sweet elixir-like water of the coconuts is hidden within its hard exteriors. Only by removing the exteriors can you get at the sweet water. So too, Satchidananda Atman is hidden within the panchakoshas. One has to penetrate these sheaths of prakrithi through vichara or devotion to God, in order to arrive at the inmost reality. The power to penetrate these material vestures comes from initiation by the Sadguru.

Dawn of Enlightenment does not depend upon the years of sadhana. It purely depends on the competency, namely, purity of the anthakarana. As the dry gun powder catches fire immediately, so too, the pure mind awakes to enlightenment the moment the Guru imparts the Upadesha. Such is the glory of the Guru's Word.

Spiritual insight opens when you open yourselves to divine grace. One should constantly remember God, hold on to His holy Name, reflect on divine attributes and have staunch faith in Him. Then, by His grace, an awakening is bound to come. In this state of awakening, intellect glows with discerning intelligence and one gets the power to discern and isolate even the subtlest of mental movements.

To be free of body-consciousness and for cessation of identification with the mental modes, Nama Smarana is the most efficacious sadhana. Name has tremendous power. Name is God Himself. Name implies Form and Form implies Name. Both are aids in the remembrance of God and in the invocation of His sannidhya Shakti. Remembrance eventually rises to the level of smriti, which indicates the dawn of illumination. In the plane of Jnana, repetition stops and the jivatman now enters the state of communion with the Supreme Being. The Supreme is beyond Nada, Bindu and Kala.