



RAMĀ ŚAKTI MISSION

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Night-long vigil and fasting constitute the features of the observance of Sivarathri. Vigil signifies unbroken remembrance of God. Worship, repetition of the Name, congregational bhajan, prayers, Meditation, etc are the means to this remembrance. Holding on to the awareness that God is the abiding presence within and without, and that He is the witness to your thoughts, words and actions, you should live in His presence. This is remembrance. If you know this truth of God's presence as Sakshi, blessed you become. Then, you will be incapable of evil in thought, look, speech, behaviour and action.

Sivarathri comes but once in a year; but Mother used to observe every Ekadashi with similar vows of total fast and night vigil. Fasting, with Mother, was total abstinence for not only food, solid and liquid, but even from taking in water. The beginning and the ending of fast would be by a religious act of sipping a few drops of the sacred Tulsi Theertha. Nobody in the neighbourhood knew that Mother was doing any sadhana at all. Even observance of rigorous acusterities like fasting, night vigil, etc. was hidden from their knowledge. You will be surprised to know that even Bhagwan never knew anything about Her sadhana, until She covered eleven years and six months of Her twelve year sadhana phase. He had no idea that Mother was on total fast during Ekadashi. He also did not know that Mother was in the habit of meditating in the still hours of night. He would fall asleep the moment his head touched the pillow. It was like disconnecting an electric current. Seeing him asleep, Mother would sit up and meditate. It would so happen on certain days that dhyana would last throughout night and as the dawn broke, Mother would begin Her day's domestic chores. Mother did not feel the burden of duty or the rigour of tapas, since Her heart was overflowing with love for God. Yes, love is the source and secret of boundless energy and enthusiasm.

You must know that there was no one to give company to Mother in Her Observance of the night vigil, except the Beloved of Her heart, God. People feel loneliness when they are alone. The reason is, they are not aware of their relation to God, who is with them always as the eternal Sakshi within, as their own deepest Self. Love of God alone provides comfort and companionship of God in the stresses and strains of life.

During the vigil, throughout night, Mother used to remain indoor only, either in Her bedroom, or sometimes used to take a stroll in the verandah upstairs. Upon emergence from meditation, Mother would sometimes stand near the open window and gaze at the infinite sky, contemplating on the glories of God and the wonder and beauty of His creation. Such contemplation took Mother's mind to mystic absorption, and losing body-consciousness, Mother would remain absorbed several hours with eyes open. Once it so happened that when Bhagwan woke up from sleep at midnight, he saw Mother standing near the window. Coming near Mother he found Mother motionless, Her eyes remaining open. Bhagwan did not know anything about Mother's state of mind, state of Her contemplation or Samadhi. So he asked Mother the next day as to what She was doing at night near the window. What answer could Mother give except a smile that dissolved the question itself. Bhagwan would not pursue further.

During those last six months which witnessed Mother's intense sadhana which culminated in the Nirvikalpa Samadhi, Mother gave up sleep altogether. She also reduced Her food to a single orange a day. Her body became slim and emaciated; yet the people in the neighbourhood



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observed that Mother's body shone like a blazing column of fire radiant with lustre of Tapas and possessed of amazing energy. It was during that period of total fasting that one day My mother came on a visit to us. She had brought with her large quantities of home made sweets and dainties. But seeing Me not eating them, she was pained. In the beginning I offered some excuses, but later on she came to learn from My brother that I was on fast. Imagine the feelings of a mother who, with great love for her daughter, brought large quantities of choice sweets and delicacies, only to learn that the daughter was on fast! Which mother on earth will like to see an ascetic in her daughter, averse to pleasures of the world and rigorously observing austerities in life! My mother was not an exception, and in her innocence, she thought that I could be persuaded to break the fast by Bhagwan. She approached Bhagwan and said: See, have you not observed that She is not eating anything? Her body has become very slim. Why should She fast, after all? I have come across many people doing sadhana, but they never observed any fast as this. If you ask Her to break the fast, She will surely obey. Please do it. Of course, Bhagwan could appreciate a mother's anguish, but he had by then understood something about the nature of Mother's sadhana also. He knew Mother had come for a great divine mission. He therefore lovingly explained to My mother the significance of My sadhana and Tapas, how even in such a state of total fasting and other forms of rigorous austerities maintained excellent health and jubilant energy and performed all the domestic duties.

There was no set purpose or motive behind Mother's religious observances like Ekadashi vow, night vigil, fasting etc. She did not expect any boon or favour from God, or any religious merit from such observances. Now, looking back, Mother can say, Her Tapas was a desireless act. But at that time Mother did not feel so, for there was no mind to entertain such sankalpa. Mother was in the role of a Sadhaka. If a sadhaka feels himself to be virtuous, or think that he is a great Tapaswi or a Jnani, or a Bhakta that only indicates egoism in him. One should not be conscious of one's own virtue. One should exude the fragrance of one's virtue as a rose wafts its fragrance. A Sadhaka's mind should be filled with the thoughts of the glories of God.

So long as you remain identified with a particular mental state, you cannot know its real nature. It is only when you advance on the path of self-purification you get the knowledge of your earlier mental condition. So to know the real nature of the mind itself, you should rise above the mind, above the gunas. Mind of gunas is a manifested form of avidya. Avidya is inner darkness. In the darkness of avidya, you cannot discern properly your mental modes, the nature of your mental activity. Beyond the gunas is the realm of Enlightenment, jnana. It is jnana that reveals the nature of the mind, the nature of the avidya itself.

Mind should become pure, steady, calm and broad. In such a state, it ceases to be the mind. It will be only pure awareness, unmixed with gunas. Therefore, devotion is a liberating force, for it is devotion that transforms the mind. When devotion becomes mature, mind gets detached from the gunas. Ultimately it merges in God.

By cultivation of devotion and observance of spiritual disciplines, one develops the spiritual force which is dormant in oneself. But when he yields to passions, the accumulated spiritual power slowly ebbs away. If you go on putting money in a Bank deposit account, your savings increase; but if you go on withdrawing more than what you deposit, and waste the money on vanities of life, you will find one day that your saving has come to nil. Similarly, by sadhana, the spiritual power grows; by yielding to passions, it evaporates. God's grace is the primary factor. All sadhana is an invocation for grace. When one opens oneself to grace, one achieves everything. Through grace, even the impossible becomes possible.



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All have some experiences of grace in their life. But people soon forget it. Genuine devotees never forget the grace bestowed on them by God. When the thought of grace comes to them, the fountain of joy opens up in them. This spiritual bliss takes the mind inward and fixes it on God. Bliss should become constant. Constancy of bliss is your very nature. Anything opposite to this is a mental phenomenon, a vikara of prakrithi. That is not your real nature. No one can take away your bliss. If bliss is not experienced, you yourselves are the cause. Find out the root cause and remove it, so that native bliss may manifest itself.

As sun gives light and heat to all, so too, God's grace is on every one. He does not withhold grace from any one, for grace is His very nature and all are one with Him. But there should be receptivity on the part of the sadhakas. Ego, mental passions and evil actions are obstructions to grace. You may go on pouring water into a vessel with pores, but it will never get filled up. All water will leak out through the pores. If you are using tap water, you have to put your vessel in the proper position below the tap. If you keep the vessel away from the tap, you cannot store water. Similarly the mind should be turned to God by discipline and devotion. Then only you can be a recipient of divine grace.

The spiritual quest, in its highest phase, is the journey of the alone to the Alone. On this inner path, in the final stage there is no place for two to move together. This signifies that there is no place for two thoughts or sankalpas in the Chittha that has reached the highest stage in God-pursuit. Even the differentiating sankalpas, I and God, should be finally resolved into a single sankalpa, God or Atman. Then alone mind becomes eligible for merger in the infinite.