



RAMĀ ŚAKTI MISSION

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The doctrine of duty, Karthavya, has been lucidly expounded by Divine Mother in Her written works as well as in discourses. Duty, when performed, should bear fruit in the form of accumulation of merit (punya) and purification of mind (chitthasuddhi). What is merit? That, which takes us nearer to God, nearer to our divine immortal state, is merit. That, which takes us away from God, is demerit. Merit gives rise to ananda, pure inward joyfulness. This anandam is not pleasure arising from the satisfaction of palate, or indulgence in luxurious living, or in fulfillment of worldly desires. It is not the pleasure arising from contact of sense organs with the respective sense objects. There is no fulfillment through enjoyment of sense pleasure; on the contrary, enjoyment tightens the bonds and prolongs the samsaric sojourn. The sadhaka who takes recourse to the disciplines of Yoga, achieves liberation from identification with the adjuncts of prakrithi, and gets united with God.

By remembrance of God (smarana), metaphysical reflection or contemplation of the glories of God (chintana), association with the noble souls who revel in God (satsang) and by performance of duties in detachment and as a form of service to God, punya goes on increasing; but by forgetting God, by wearing out in the desire-prompted feverish worldly activity, by getting engrossed in the enjoyments and by pursuit of name and fame and social distinction, one takes oneself away from the path of spiritual welfare and sinks more and more into samsara.

Merely to be absorbed in the affairs of family and in the worldly vyvahara, is not karthavya in its real sense. Every form of our activity, whether it is in home, or in society, should become a phase of sadhana which takes us in the direction of God. Then alone it is karthavya. The sanctity of duty lies in its spiritual worth as a purifying austerity, as merit-accumulating service.

The subtle truth of karthavya has been apprehended and expounded by the Sages elaborately in the Holy Scriptures. In all such expositions, the underlying stress is on Realization, sakshatkara. This clearly shows that it is only by directing one's energies and endeavours towards God-realization that one's duty assumes the status of an adhyatmic sadhana. It requires an intelligence illumined by divine grace, to grasp the real truth of karthavya and to realize that the highest duty of a human being is to be united with God. Maitreyi, celebrated in the Upanishads, was such an illumined soul. When Sage Yajnavalkya wished to enter the fourth stage of life, namely, sannyasa (total renunciation), he called his two wives, Maitreyi and Kathayayini, to his side and offered them all his wealth. Of these two wives, Maitreyi, who had real insight into the perishable nature of samsara, desired only immortality and sought from the Sage, Atma Vidya. Her heart was set only on that exalted knowledge of Brahman which could turn away the subtle body (Linga Shareera) and liberates the jiva from the rounds of births and deaths, once for all. Here was a noble wife, a sahadharmini in the Vedic tradition, who became a disciple and sought from her illumined husband only the saving knowledge of Brahman, rejecting from her heart all worldly desires. Such is the Bharatiya samskrithi, the venerated Indian culture, preserved in this land by a succession of great souls, right up to this day.

The man who has the inmost conviction that the world and its pleasures are unreal, will steadily progress in his quest of Reality. Even though he may be devoted to his duties, he will be deeply conscious of his supreme karthavya in life. He will not be attached to the fleeting joys, nor will he be depressed by the setbacks and sorrows and struggles of life. He will cling to the Name of God, to the Upadesha Vakya of the Guru, with steadfast faith and intense yearning. The noble-



RAMĀ ŚAKTI MISSION

souled Arundhathi once asked her illustrious consort, Sage Vasishtha: O Lord, you know that I am devoted to you and am always engaged in your service. Pray, do instruct me as to how I may progress in the spiritual life and achieve the summum bonum. The Sage smiled and replied: Dear one, you have served me well with all your heart. Dwelling in nivritti bhava, you have rendered service without any selfish motivation. Never have you caused any hindrance in my upasana; never have you tried to disturb my mind and to distract it from my Jnana Nishta. Pleased am I with you. Having served me in total dedication, you have become eligible to share my Wisdom. Jnana will come to you of its own accord. Be at peace. Yes, Arundhathi proved worthy of her wifehood. She was a worthy partner in the pursuit of dharma. Through her pure love, surrender and swadharmanishta, she raised karthavya into the spiritual plane.

Divine Mother illustrated by Her own life that even in this Kali Yuga it is possible to realize the highest by remaining steadfast in one's field of duty and svadharma. The Mother of the Universe assumed the role of wifehood in the order of Garhasthya and invested it with a halo of spiritual holiness. She showed that Realization is the very base of real Garhasthya as well as the gateway to it. If we look at Her marital life, we will know how deep had been Her spiritual ardour, what real insight She had, even as a young girl. Between Her and Her husband, there was a huge disparity of 34 years. Not only that, She happened to be third wife of Bhagawan, the first two having met with untimely death. Visualize these circumstances and then look at this bride, the young girl of 14, who approached Her husband with a heart full of love and deepest reverence as though towards a Deity. Such a pujiabhava, such a penetrating divine insight that could behold and worship the Atmachaitanya in the mortal human frame, such a total dedication at the altar of pathibhakti, such a marvelous capacity to identify the husband with the worshipful Deity, such a devout adherence to duty and such superhuman capacity to blend in one's own life, the intensity of God-love and devotion to duty: these are what marks Mother out as an extraordinary divine personality. It is such a Power whom we worship. Mother is not an individual. She is the infinite Power, Shakti. No one has come up in spirituality by worshipping a human individual. By worshipping Shakti only have heroes like Sankaracharya and Ramakrishna Paramahansa become famous in this world. The technique of concentrating the mind on Shakti and worshipping Her within the set-up of domesticity, has been evolved as a science of liberation by Divine Mother.

God-realization, Brahmanubhava, is open to all, for all are one with Brahman in the essence of nature. Atman is self-existent, svathasiddha. All powers are in the Atman. But because of ignorance, these remain hidden from the awareness of the jivas. As the rays are withdrawn into the sun at the time of sunset, as the limbs of a tortoise are hidden by its thick shell, the powers of the Atman remain hidden in the jivas behind the cloak of avidya. On avidya and soul-nature, we have the authentic words of Divine Mother as follows:

Ajnana is the basis of samsara. The destruction of Ajnana is by jnana only. To apprehend the real nature of the Self and to abide as the Self: this is jnana. Attainment of jnana is the sum and substance of Mother's spiritual initiation, upadesha diksha.

Explaining further, Mother Proceeds: The essential individual, the Vyakti, is not the surface person, the ego-self. He is neither the body, nor the senses, nor the mind, nor the fields of their activity, namely the Avasthas like waking, dream and deep sleep. He is the Atman. But due to long acquaintance through numberless births, the jiva has forgotten his true Soul-nature (Atmasvaroop) and has come to identify himself with the unreal adjuncts of prakrithi like the body. Because of this mistaken identity, the real Atman appears as though non-existent and the unreal upadhis as though real. This is Ajnana.



RAMĀ ŚAKTI MISSION

In continuation, Mother writes on the samsaric phenomenon: Thus, mistaking the unreal for the real, continuing in the experience of the unreal and incessantly exerting oneself in and for it, consequently falling a victim to the dualities of happiness and sorrow, birth and death, merit and demerit etc., getting caught up in this mysterious flow of time, and flowing along with it in varying names and forms: this indeed, is samsara.

Feeling pity for the householders suffering the pangs of samsara, Divine Mother imparted to them the truth regarding the Atman. Her words are divine ambrosial shower of wisdom, which go deep into the hearts of the jivas and rouse them from slumber. Shradhha in those words, accompanied by sadhana, will lead to the dispelling of the two forms of avidya, namely, avarana and vikshepa. What is of utmost importance is devotion. God is the knower of bhava. What He takes into account, is the state of the heart, the devotional bhava of the jivas. By reflecting deeply on Mother's teaching, by contemplating on Her greatness and by extolling Her divine leelas, the mind rises to the plane of inward silence. It is in the depth of silence that the mind merges. Once the mind merges in the ocean of Paramatman, a total transformation of the vision, action and entire life-pattern, is inevitable. Such an awakened soul will no longer be entrapped by the sense objects. Having tasted the peace of God-absorption, he will direct all his mind and heart to the Lotus Feet of God. Nay, mind and heart, automatically coming under God-attraction, flow towards God. We are the blessed children who have seen the glorious saguna vision of Devi, the vision of Saguna Brahman. The impress of this experience should become a transforming influence. For this, steady sadhana is required. This is not the time for shedding tears. The heart must expand and there, the Supreme Shakti must become manifest. Renouncing affinities based on the perishable body, the Atmic relationship, the soul-affinity, should be developed in our social and family set-up. This is the way to spiritualization of homes.

Where worldly knowledge ends, there, Atma Jnana begins. Atma Jnana is innate in every one. But, because the worldly knowledge does not end in the case of the jivas, the Atma Jnana is not realized. These words of Divine Mother clearly teach how to strive for release from this prison of samsara.

Worldly knowledge is vishaya jnana. This is also vritti jnana. Worldly knowledge is the basis of empirical vyvahara. Engrossed in the vishaya jnana, the whole world remains oblivious of the bliss of Brahman. Only those who have reached the plane of Self-illumination, aham Jnana, know the bliss of communion with the Supreme. They know that all existence is one. They are ever conscious of their affinity with Paramatman. Unless the vrittis subside and become extinct, and the chittha itself is transformed into Chidsvaroopa, one cannot realize one's identity with the Paramatman.

The mind is scattered on numerous objects and desires and attachments in samsara. To withdraw this mind from sense-pursuits and worldly cravings and to fix it steadily on God: this is the way to illumination. But this is not a joke, not a child's play. The mind is filled with prapancha, filled with names and forms. These names and forms have made the mind impure, restless and opaque. In an impure anthakarana, the Supreme Self will not be reflected clearly. As in marshy mire the reflection of the sun cannot be seen, or as in a mirror covered with dust one cannot see one's image, so too, in the anthakarana, filled with worldly impressions, the image of the Self cannot be seen. Mental phenomena, manasic prapancha, are the only obstacle to Self-realization. The touch of a single passion is enough to block the dawn of Knowledge. So long as this condition persists, what one cognizes is only prapancha, not the



RAMĀ ŚAKTI MISSION

Self. This is the reason why even a Pundit well versed in the Vedas, fails to attain Atma Jnana. The main obstacle to Atma Jnana are avarana, the distractions caused by vikshepa should be first removed from the mind. When freed of distractions of vikshepa and the currents of raga and dwesha, the mind attains the state of purity; it becomes broad, luminous, clear and totally detached. It comes to the state of Nivritti. It is with such a pure mind that the veil of avarana can be rent asunder. When avarana disappears, Self-realization is attained.

For exhausting the mind of its contents of worldly names and forms, the discipline of Bhakti lays stress on the practice of the Name of God and on contemplation on the attributes of God. Name of Saguna Brahman is a powerful aid for achieving the purification of mind and elimination of worldly vasanas. It is also the prop in meditation for the mind to remain concentrated on the single thought of God. When the mind holds on to the Name and form of God with fervour of devotion, the prapanchic forms, names and impressions get automatically eradicated and the mind emerges purer. At last it merges in the Divine.