



RAMĀ ŚAKTI MISSION

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In the path of bhakti, the devotee, from the very beginning recognizes only one reality, God. God dwells within himself and in every one and pervades the entire creation. No vritti other than God-thought is uppermost in him. He looks upon himself as a servant of God. In modern times, people are repelled by the term 'servant' even in relation to the Almighty. They consider 'dasya bhava' as an inferior attitude. They look down on bhakti as emotional effusiveness. Those who have approached God through bhakti and dasyabhava alone know how sweet, how exalted, how ecstatic, how deeply grounded in wisdom, is the attitude of a servant towards God. The barrier between the Jivatman and the Supreme Being, is ego. This is the mightiest obstacle to God-communion. Even ascetics, yogis and sannyasis who have repaired to Himalayan solitudes, find it very hard, even after years of penance, to shed the ego. The bhakta therefore adopts the attitude of a servant of God, resigning his ego and personal will to God. His is only an instrumental ego, which is there just to carry out the will of the Supreme. In the path of jnana, the attitude adopted is that of identity. Without purity of mind, neither soham nor dasoham attitude can arise. Sree Krishna instructs Arjuna on the doctrine of spirituality. Devotion springs up, discrimination dawns, dispassion comes, the inner path gets illumined and the quest becomes inspiringly blissful, only when the mind is purified by dharmanishta.

To be an uncompromising witness to one's own mistakes and misdeeds, to be a stern critic of oneself, to rectify one's errors in conduct, to resolve to be righteous: this is the very first step on the direction of God. For attaining the vision of God, there is no moral force higher than this, available to man. By observing 'Thitheeksha' one should be tranquil and equal-minded in diverse life situations. Happiness and misery are two types of situations one has to encounter in life, without losing the balance and buoyancy of mind. To bear all afflictions and miseries with courage, serenity, right understanding, and patience, without caring to redress them, without worrying and lamenting over one's lot in life and without bearing any ill-will towards any one for one's Miseries: this is 'thitheeksha'. Lead a pure and benevolent life, inflicting no misery on others, a life of unfettered spirit and unclouded cheer of mind. Beware of the ropes of attachment as you function in a sphere of duties and personal affinities. Attachment is bondage. Spiritual life is the higher life of non-attachment, a life in the awareness of God, a life centered and anchored in God. God is within yourselves. He is the supreme treasure. If one does not know the exact location of the treasure hidden underneath the earth, he may not discover it, even if he spends the whole lifetime in excavating the earth. The divine treasure is within. But to find it, one should apply the collyrium of Gurukripa in one's eyes in order to discover that treasure. The knowledge which pierces the veil of illusion, comes through the Guru's sacred Word, which is the essence of the elixir of Brahmic experience. He who is devoted to the Word, understand the essence of the Vedas without studying them, perceives the subtle truth of dharma without studying the moral codes. Superior to education, intelligence and scholarship, is the wisdom of experience. The Word initiates you into the wisdom without allowing the mind to wander and get lost in the wilderness of scriptures.

Communion of hearts is of paramount importance in the transmission of Brahma Vidya through Upadesha. That is to say, the Guru should have the divine urge to transmit



RAMĀ ŚAKTI MISSION

wisdom and the disciple should have the spiritual thirst to receive wisdom. The Guru's uppermost concern should be the disciple's spiritual awakening, and the disciple should have intense longing for liberation. Zeal and spiritual ardour should characterize the spirit of both the instructor and the listener. The Guru and the disciple should meet in the spiritual plane as it were, the former by Self-abidance and the latter by Self-surrender. Their mind should become one. Then a single instruction from the Guru is enough to demolish the castle of illusion which the disciple has built in his mind.

The mind competent for Brahnavidya is of such a nature that it is attracted towards God as naturally as a needle towards a magnet. The mind should be God- faced. The world-faced mind, identification with the ego and perception of diversity constitute the nature of a person who has lost his inward balance, who has slipped away from his true center. Such a person sees everywhere the reflection of gunas and not the presence of God. He is clever in detecting the defects in others and remains blind to his own defects. Renunciation of ego constitutes the inner sannyasa of a God-seeking householder. His mind is withdrawn from enjoyment. Fire of dispassion blazes forth in him. Yet, his is a hidden pursuit. He does not display his mental state. He is not ostentatious in his devotion. He preserves his bhava in his secret relationship with God. Adept in duties, he is alone with God.

By the power of Upadesha, practice of meditation and steadfastness in anushtana, the mind becomes pure. One sign of this purification is that the character is built within. Old habits and vices give way to self-control. Mind and conduct are inter-related. They act on each other. When the mind is pure, conduct (acharana) too is pure. So also, if the acharana is impure, the mind too gets contaminated. It was only after 12 years of Gurukulavasa, brahmacharia and tapasya of self-abnegation, that one entered Garhasthya or embraced Sanyasa. They had strong minds, a regulated life, disciplined conduct and luminous character. Men were adepts in yoga practice. They were keen on anushtana. They had immense spiritual power. The women were pathivrathas. For the wife, husband was both guru and God. By serving the husband, the wife developed spiritual consciousness. She had a vision of the higher life. She upheld dharma. She was an efficient mother who knows the art of bringing up the children along the path of truth and dharma. Religion, noble traditions, culture, civilization and domestic harmony were safe in her hands. In contrast to this, both dharmas, the dharma of the wife and the dharma of the husband, have declined now. Morality has been eclipsed. Weak minds, purposeless living, broken homes, disrupted marital relationship, disintegrating social order, these characterize the modern age. Men do not have anushtana and consequently no adhyatmic and moral force. Modern education too is only a bread-winning education, and it pays no attention to spiritual value and mental culture.

Adhyatmic power alone can transform character, purify mind, spiritualize perspective and convert life itself into a mode of yoga. God is the supreme spiritual fire. The iron vessel becomes red hot when put in the fire for a long time. Similarly, when tuned to God, the mind too assumes the nature of the divine. A radiant character emerges out of spiritual disciplines.



RAMĀ ŚAKTI MISSION

Saint Purandharadasa sang:

*No one is your own in this world, O Man!
As a bubble on the surface of the water,
Now appearing, now disappearing,
So is this samsara illusory. Other than Thee, O God ! there is no saviour.*

Valmiki was awakened to the awareness of the vanity of earthly pleasures, the illusoriness of mundane affinities, the inexorable nature of Karma and the supreme purpose of human life, all by the blessed contact with that apostle of bhakti, Narada.

There was a Pundit well versed in the ancient lore. He was proficient in argumentation, disputation, and logical reasoning. Once he happened to notice a pumpkin yard and was astonished to see how big pumpkins were hanging from a thin and tiny creeper. He felt it was an ugly phenomenon. As he proceeded further he saw a gigantic tree with its fruits too small in size. Then a thought occurred to him: All that God has done is perfect; but this certainly is an anomaly in His Creation, a tender creeper such big fruits and a giant tree bearing small and insignificant fruits! With this thought uppermost in his mind, he took rest under the shade of that big banyan tree and soon fell asleep. After some time suddenly he was awakened by a small fruit which fell from that tree and He said to himself: What would have been my plight if God has created proportionately big fruits for this big tree! Were a pumpkin-like or still bigger fruit was to fall on me, what would have been my condition! Yes, faultless and perfect is the creative plan of the All-Wise Providence. From that moment onwards he stopped all arguments and disputations and plunged into adoration of God. Some are there who do not learn even after receiving blows from Nature, who cannot understand even after observing. But in the case of this pundit, his learning and intelligence helped him to understand the glory of God. Instead of indulging in too much of discussions and disputations, one should silently plunge deep into one's own self in order to contact the Divine. One should tread the path prescribed by the Sadguru.

Devotion to Saguna, sankirtan, japa and practice of the presence of God, prepare the mind to reach the higher stage of meditation. The mental waves must subside. Then alone meditation is possible. Even in philosophic enquiry, it is the deeper side of chittha which is involved, and not the surface-mind of gunas. After choosing the Ideal and the altar, one should dedicate himself to it. That is devotion, in whatever aspect it is known: Pathibhakti, Matrubbhakti, Pitrubhakti or Gurubhakti. Pundalika's ideal was 'Matru-Pitru Bhakti'. For him there was no God other than his parents. For a pathivratha, husband is God. In whole-minded devotion and dedication, the ego melts away and knowledge shines forth. God is Jnanamurthy, the Embodiment of Wisdom. By developing ecstatic devotion to Him, one naturally comes to experience the highest wisdom.