



RAMĀ ŚAKTI MISSION

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Shraddha (spiritual faith) and Buddhi (reasoning intelligence) are the two faculties in man, which together constitute the limbs of dharma. When the power of shraddha and the light of intelligence are joined together, dharma emerges as the guiding force in human conduct. This force shelters the sadhaka against the attack of mental modes and leads him safely to liberation. Life is a burden for the ignorant who is not conscious of his own dormant spiritual potentialities. But intelligence yoked to shraddha has the power to lighten this burden and take you across the river of transmigratory existence, 'bhava-nadi'.

Buddhi without shraddha is of no use in spiritual field; it has no intrinsic worth. But when shraddha awakens in one, his buddhi becomes luminous. It becomes pure, sharp, subtle and powerful and shines forth with various faculties. It gets the power to grasp, to discriminate, to analyse, to restrain the mental modes, to guide one on the righteous path and to lead the sadhaka towards the summit of Yoga. Shraddha is the firm inner grasp on truth. It is a spiritual certitude that the Guruvakya is true.

Shraddha links consciousness with the Divine. When this link with the Divine is established, a supply of numerous powers comes to the buddhi. Buddhi thus emerges as a powerful instrument of the Divine and divine intelligence. Intellect is an offshoot of avidya. It is included in the category of prakrithi. Therefore it cannot outgrow its own limitation. Just as a bird cannot fly out of the sky, so too, intellect cannot go beyond prakrithi. How then can the intellect apprehend the truth, which is beyond its range?

What is intellect? The principle of intellect is a compound, a combination of Consciousness (Bodha), Avarana and Vikshepa. Avarana and Vikshepa are powers of avidya. Avarana is of tamoguna. Vikshepa is of rajoguna. Avarana is the power that makes one forgets God or one's own true Self. When one's own true Self is hidden from view, one mistakes the unreal for the real, the body for the Self. This false notion is 'Vikshepa'. Consciousness element in buddhi belongs to the Reality. When avarana and vikshepa are removed, buddhi emerges as consciousness itself. Buddhi is then no longer the egoistic intellect, which is an instrument of avidya, but Awakened Consciousness itself, which reveals the Reality.

The function of shraddha, therefore, is to liberate consciousness from the twin powers of avidya. From avidya, which is beginningless, arises anthakarana. The Reality, the Chith, the Consciousness, gets reflected in the anthakarana. When consciousness gets reflected in the anthakarana, a modification arises in the anthakarana. This mode is called the 'I-mode' or the ego. The reflected consciousness, coming in contact with the ego-mode, becomes totally identified with the ego. This personalized consciousness is called the jiva.

What is clear from this is the fact that the ego is a constitutional defect in the jiva. Having been identified with the ego, the jiva cannot free himself from the clutches of the ego through his own effort. He who says that he is free from ego is in fact displaying his own deepest ignorance. He affirms his egoism.



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Until shraddha dawns, one cannot separate the intellect from the ego. With the egocentric consciousness, one cannot tread the path of Jnana. One cannot pursue even the philosophic inquiry. Ego clouds the vision. Ego is the greatest impurity. When tainted with the ego, intellect lands itself in confusion. Clarity goes. In such a state, the intellect cannot do vichara or establish itself in Jnana Nishta. What is known, as 'Budhi Yoga' is pursuit of inquiry and practice of Jnana Nishta with the help of a purified and sharpened intellect, which is devoid of ego-touch.

Therefore, intellect without ego-touch means intellect graced by shraddha. Shraddha is not a quality of the intellect or a power, which is beyond the intellect. But the power of shraddha needs a vehicle for expression and that vehicle is the intellect. He who has gurubhakthi alone develops shraddha, because ultimately, it is by the mystic touch of the Guru that shraddha dawns.

To receive the mystic touch, one should be devoted to the Guru and should open himself to grace. Atman cannot be known by intelligence. But he who has with him fully developed shraddha, awakens to enlightenment. So says the Shruthi. When Shraddha dawns, you are able to function in the level of the pure buddhi. Then you are able to detach yourselves from the ego and the emotive modes. He who can function in the level of pure buddhi, without getting entangled in ego and the emotive modes, is the true intellectual. He who is a slave of desires, who is controlled by his own mind, who cannot resist the lure of prakrithi, is not an intellectual, even though he might have mastered all the Vedas and the Upanishads. Scholarship without purity and shraddha, has no value.

By concentration of mind and development of intellect, one can have some achievements in the mundane world. But if you want to enter the spiritual plane of consciousness and realize the Supreme, you need shraddha and devotion to Guru. When intellect is endowed with shraddha, the discriminating power becomes very keen. Then you know the real nature of even the subtlest of the modes of prakrithi. You will gain subtle and sublime perception with which to realize your own defects and shortcomings.

If you do not realize your own shortcomings, how can you overcome them? How can you sincerely invoke the aid of God through prayer? How can you make efforts on the path of self-correction, self-analysis and self-restraint? Understanding one's own mistakes and rectifying them is the very first step in spirituality.

That intellect which imputes faults to others and not to oneself, which brings arguments to hide one's own evil nature, which is very clever in sitting in judgment even over the wise, which refuses to learn the lesson of humility, is a crooked intellect. It cannot open itself to grace. It is an enemy of the jiva. It is an obstacle to the dawn of shraddha. From shraddha comes reverence to Guru's words: to His injunctions, prohibitions and commands. From reverence comes to virtue of obedience with real understanding.

When you obey the Guru's behests, you are in righteousness. When you are in righteousness, you receive the grace. When grace descends, you get clarity of inward perception. Light dispels darkness of doubt, delusion and illusion from the inner path. You then begin to see the guiding Hand of God at every step. When you perceive the power of God in your life and activity, the ego will recede and eventually you will be led to mystic illumination.



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When shraddha awakens, wavering gives place to steadiness and the mind comes under the watchful gaze, guidance and control. Fickleness (chanchalatha), perversion (chupalatha) and doubt are the three forms of mental impurity. Shraddha removes these impurities and brings the mind to a state of constant cheer, serenity and purity. Shraddha brings certitude to intellect, strength and steadiness to the mind and righteousness to actions. In the absence of shraddha, it will be the ego that dominates the intellect, the mind and the action. Ego brings delusion to the intellect, passions to the mind and evil to actions. Evil action means adharmā.

Like jnana, shraddha is steady. Like jnana, shraddha too is free of doubt. What then is the difference between shraddha and Jnana? Whereas shraddha is an inner grasp on the Reality, Jnana is intimate experience of the Reality. Shraddha shows the way to Reality, but jnana is the very radiance of Reality. Shraddha guides one's conduct along the principle of righteousness, but in Jnana, righteousness becomes natural. Shraddha keeps the individual sadhaka attuned to Truth, but in the blazing spiritual illumination that is Jnana, there is no individual. Truth shines resplendent without division.

Reason (buddhi) can go only to a certain extent; beyond that, it is shraddha that leads the sadhaka. Finally, it is shraddha itself that emerges as Enlightenment, Jnana. Shraddha and buddhi becomes jointly the luster called dharma. In that luster, the path to Truth shines illumined. Holding fast to dharma you at last reach the origin of dharma itself, which is Truth.

Truth is God. Dharma is born of truth. It is the effulgence of Truth in manifestation. Knowledge and action are both dynamism of Truth. Both have the effulgence of dharma. When Knowledge remains veiled, Truth is hidden from view. When Truth is hidden from view, action becomes adharmā. Where there is immovable faith in God, there, dharma is manifest. In those who have no faith in God, dharma does not shine. In the realm of untruth also, there is a kind of boldness. It is not the courage of the righteous. It is a devilish rashness. With this rashness, one is not reluctant to do any sin.

He, who knows the Omnipotent Witness within, lives in fear of moral law. But the ignorant is in dense darkness. He is not aware of any power other than his own ego. That accounts for his so-called boldness. When you know that God abides as the Self, you will not deceive yourselves. You will be incapable of deflecting from Truth and Righteousness. The knowledge, which is not reflected in conduct, is no knowledge at all. Maintain a relationship with God. God is the unseen power. How then can you enter into a relation with Him? To get acquainted with the King, one should win the friendship and favour of Minister. Similarly, win the favour of the Guru and then only you can get acquainted with God dwelling in your heart. Atman is the King. Buddhi endowed with shraddha is the Minister. When this buddhi becomes favourable, it introduces you to Atman. Truth shines in every one; but the knowledge of Truth lays obscured, by the vasanas. Vasanas keep the mind in a state of constant agitation. From the moment you are awake, and till the moment you fall asleep, vrittis flow like a stream.

Just as when the water is dried up, there will be no river as such, so too, when the flow of vrittis stops, there is no river of illusion, 'Mayanadi'. To stop this stream of vasana



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modes, one powerful mode is created. That is the Name or the Vakya or the Pranava which Guru gives. When the practice of the Name or the Vakya or the Pranava becomes unbroken, worldly modes cease to be active; the mind becomes filled with one single idea, the idea of God.

Finally, this idea also subsides and in that silence and stillness, Truth or God reveals in all glory. Either in the state of awareness coming from shraddha, just as you safely plant a sapling in a pit, just as you raise a strong pillar by fixing it by means of cement, granite pieces etc; so too consciousness (prajna) should be fixed in the Guruvakya by means of shraddha. The evil of Kaliyuga is not outside you. It is within your own mind. That evil force, which shakes one's faith, is Kali. Kali cannot approach a genuine devotee established in shraddha.

Think not that bhakti is so easy to develop. Bhakthi is the most superior and priceless boon from God. Without bhakthi there is no bhava. Mind cannot find satisfaction without bhakti. Bhagawan Veda Vyasa compiled all the four Vedas and yet he could not get satisfaction. There was a void in his bosom. Finally it was when he composed Srimadbhagavata, glorifying God's sportive play that his mind became contented. As you go on contemplating and describing the glories of God, your mind becomes purer and purer. Then come the states of identity, ecstatic merger and ultimate union with God. Such is the supremacy of Bhakthi. Dharma, in the metaphysical sense, is the Realization of God.