



RAMĀ ŚAKTI MISSION

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The culture of a nation determines the people's aspiration, their way of life, their character, their approach to religion, their outlook on the four purusharthas, their art and their literature. Culture governs growth towards perfection. Bharath's culture, 'Bharathiya samskrithi' originated from the wisdom of the Heart and the Knowledge of inward perception. It is therefore essentially spiritual in content. The wisdom of the heart is intimate knowledge of the Divine and of the deeper verities of life. Heart signifies the inmost core of one's being. It is not a category of prakrithi. It is the seat of the Divine. It is the abode of excellences.

Thus Heart means the Reality, the abode of God and also the attributes of perfection. Knowledge of Heart therefore implies the experience of Truth, the faculty of spiritual perception and the knowledge of the great moral principles. Rising above the body and the plane of emotions and ideations, you should reach the plane of spiritual consciousness, which is signified by the term 'Heart'. The states of serenity, stability, and equanimity, the quality of courage and the experience of peace, all come to you, only when you are established in the true center, the Heart. Then alone your life reflects the adhyatmic culture of the ancient Sages.

When consciousness, 'prajna', is objectified, mind comes into operation. It takes the shape of objects. It absorbs impressions. One is then, emotionally attached to, or repulsed from, object. In this state, one is a mental being. He is a slave of emotions and desires. He is an extrovert. He remains estranged from the Heart. He moves along with the modes. He loses his spiritual moorings. He has neither strength nor steadiness.

When consciousness is inwardised, when the mind is withdrawn from the objects, when one is not emotionally involved in objects, persons, environments and life situations, only then one is a true sadhaka. He moves on the right path in the direction of God. Without getting attached to any one, to anything, to any condition or state in life, you should steadily seek and serve the Divine. Then alone you are real sadhakas. Beyond the two states of extroversion and inwardness, there is yet another state, a state in which consciousness is centered and fixed in the Reality and the man lives and functions in the world of duties, unaffected by anything external.

This is the state of steady wisdom, the state of one who has reached the spiritual plane of the Heart. So long as you find fault with persons, society, and external environment or outside forces, for your miseries, blows and failures in life, you have not even stepped on the path of sadhana. A genuine sadhaka is concerned with his own mental states, his own duties in life, his personal disciplines and his own purity of conduct. When you realize your own mistakes, repentance will come to you and you will resolve not to repeat the mistakes. When you understand your own defects in character, you will sincerely endeavour towards mental purity.

When you realize the nature of the ego, you will dread a further alliance with the ego and will remain detached from it. When you know the subtle working of your own hidden vasanas, you will remain wide-awake, holding the lamp of discrimination before you.



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When craving for enjoyment ceases through knowledge of the Atman, when the personal self expands into universal dimension, when one's life in the body and the emotions, is replaced by a life in the whole universe, then, the culture emerges with all splendour, manifesting the glory of Truth and the power of Righteousness, 'Dharma'. Culture is not custom, or manners or traditional social behaviour or institutional religion. It is not any abstract principle either.

But it is the influence of culture that reflects all the same in customs, manners, social behaviour and institutional religion. What then is the criterion of culture? When Truth becomes the guiding polestar of life, when Righteousness becomes the very law of conduct, when love for God becomes the ruling passion behind every act, one represents the immortal Indian culture, Bharatiya samskrithi.

This culture has its root in God. It has nothing to do with the petty prapanchic objects and transient vanities of life. It shines in austerity. It gains strength through self-abnegation. It is concerned deeply with rectitude and strict obedience to the Will of God. This culture is dormant in you. It must be awakened. Centuries of neglect have obscured the native splendour of this culture. Then alone you catch a glimpse of the glory of this culture when you are afire with intense aspiration and filled with feelings of reverent homage, 'poojya bhava'. The Guru gives the Name.

The disciple, established in shraddha and dharma, holds fast to God through the Name. The wonders of the Name thereafter begin unfolding themselves. Sweetness, intoxication, bliss, power, purity and inspiration, all possess him. Dryness, monotony, laziness, despair, darkness, doubt and forgetfulness are all banished once for all, from the mind in which the Name has come to stay. Once you have become the lover of the Name, Name will automatically come on your tongue. Name will protect you from all sides like a sheltering 'vyuha'. Name gives you company and comfort. Name puts you in tune with the deepest and the divine.

Whatever links the mind with the Divine, belongs to the highest phase of sadhana. Name belongs to this phase. Scholarship and devotion belong to different worlds. The former belongs to the intellectual plane; the latter is a sublime experience arising from the heart. You cannot feel God through learning. But Name gives you the joy of closeness to God. Learning should be sweetened by devotion and should find expression in pure conduct. For a learned man, a book once read and learnt, is of no further interest. But have you ever heard of a devotee getting fed up with the Name? The bhaktha cannot leave the Name; nor does the Name leave him. Name is for him the essence of all scriptural keys to the spiritual treasure house.

Once Santa Tukaram was requested to perform in his village a wonderful 'Hari Katha' (Hari Kirtan). What could be more wonderful for that devotee than the loud and ecstatic chanting of the beloved Name, 'Rama Krishna Hari'! He gladly agreed. Villagers in large numbers assembled. The Kirtan started. The Saint slipped into ecstasy and the non-stop chanting of the Name arose from his throat, purifying the whole atmosphere.

But a Harikirtan is not merely singing of the Name. There should be stories and parables and wit and humour. But Tukaram went on with the Name. Time passed. People grew restless. Some lost patience, others temper. Gradually they started



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leaving the premises. The saint had forgotten his body in a deluge of inward bliss. He continued the Kirtan all through the night.

At dawn, When Tukaram came to external consciousness, he saw a single person seated before him. Overjoyed, the saint exclaimed: 'ah my brother, at least you are here to drink in the nectar of the Name and the love for my Lord Vittala! Blessed are you!

But the person at once flew into a rage and said: 'what! The Name and the Vittala!?? Let them be with you only. I am here to get back my blanket on which unfortunately, you were standing and dancing all through the night. So saying he folded his blanket and walked off.

On another occasion, it occurred to Tukaram that he should somehow or other inculcate in the minds of the people, a love and liking for the Name. He appointed a labourer to repeat the Name of God loudly and promised him food and his day's full wages. First the labourer thought it was the easiest job. But soon he felt monotonous. Name hung heavily on him. Somehow he carried on with the dreary job for three days and on the fourth day, even a trace of him could not be seen anywhere.

It is bhakti and bhava that makes the Name sweeter and greater than everything else for a devotee. The bhakta spurns the idea of total identity with God. He wants to worship God. But whether he likes or not, love ultimately unites him with God.