



The Vision

A monthly journal started by HH Swami Ramdas in 1933
DEDICATED TO UNIVERSAL LOVE AND SERVICE

Vol. 88

OCTOBER 2020

No. 01



ANANDASHRAM, PO ANANDASHRAMA 671531, INDIA



Beloved Papa Swami Ramdas (1884-1963)

Om Sri Ram jai Ram jai jai Ram

ॐ श्री राम जय राम जय जय राम

Om Sri Ram jai Ram jai jai Ram

I AM THE TOOL

I am the willing tool
In the hands of my Lord.
In whatever field I serve

Whatever work I do

He sets me to it.

My life is His,

My body is His.

Dwelling within me

He guides and controls me —

My friend, comrade and protector.

— Swami Ramdas

Vol. 88**October 2020****No. 01****CONTENTS**

From The Editor	-	5
How God Came Into My Life - Swami Ramdas		8
Words Of Beloved Papa	-	11
Words Of Pujya Mataji	-	12
Words Of Pujya Swamiji	-	14
Points From In Quest Of God -		16
Papa — The Guiding Star	-	31
Dear Children	-	35
Epistle Of Ramdas	-	36
In Memoriam	-	37
Anandashram News	-	38

THE VISION

A monthly Magazine

Published by

ANANDASHRAM

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FROM THE EDITOR

 s a sequel to last month's topic, this month's issue of THE VISION also dwells on the points to look for while reading IN QUEST OF GOD, the first book of our Master, Beloved Papa Swami Ramdas. Sixteen predominant points in the book have been selected, of which eight have been reproduced in this issue. The remaining eight will appear in the next issue.

It is keenly felt that these points, which are either explicit or implicit in the narrative, answer all doubts and questions pertaining to the spiritual journey.

Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj emphasised that Sadhana and daily life should not be compartmentalised, but be integrated in such a way that the outer life becomes an expression of the inner evolution. He therefore said: "Daily life is an opportunity provided for us to exercise the spiritual dimensions gained during our inner studies, reflection, Japa and meditation. It is the testing ground, so that each day our progress is really ours. We have made it our own by having tested it, proven it and possessed it. Until it has been tested and proven, it is not our own, it does not become part of us." The book, IN QUEST OF GOD, brings out this truth through

Beloved Papa's application of spiritual dimensions in every moment of his daily life.

Keeping this in mind while reading and attempting to plumb deep into these points, it would be better to parade before our mental vision the various experiences that He has made every one of us pass through. Although at the time of undergoing the so-called "painful" or "pleasure-giving" experiences we would not have realised that all events are actuated by Him for our ultimate good, now, with the dimensions that He has kindled in us through the deep study of *IN QUEST OF GOD*, we can try to gradually realise the truth that His guiding hands have been steering every activity of our lives.

With this awareness, while reading and contemplating on the theme of the book, *IN QUEST OF GOD*, we will not consider it merely as a book authored by Beloved Papa narrating his experiences, but will see it as a manual for our own spiritual journey and realise that the Almighty Lord has given us the field — our lives — to make the spiritual values a reality in our daily dealings.

Eventually the reading should help us discover that the Power which motivates us to read and understand these salient points, is seated in the inner chamber of our being. One Mahatma said: "There

is a place in all of us that has remained innocent, uncorrupted and untouched by the world. We have to locate that most delicate place. It is a very sensitive place; it's where we feel love — where tenderness and compassion arise, free from self-interest. This place is the hole we have to fall into and disappear for ever.”

In short, the book, *IN QUEST OF GOD*, inspires us to break the shackles of our present pattern of thinking, our priorities, preferences, cravings, infatuation, and preconceived notions and steadily move towards the awareness of the ever-present Lord of the Universe in us and everywhere about us and to place ourselves totally at His feet.



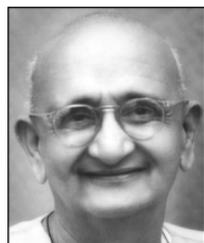
You have to realize that you are the whole and all-inclusive Truth. You get thrills of bliss when you have completely merged your individual sense in God — the Universal Consciousness. If you could maintain this Supreme Consciousness at all times you will ever live in the Eternal, and be ever in a state of perfect freedom and ecstasy.

— Swami Ramdas

HOW GOD CAME INTO MY LIFE

By Swami Ramdas

The human being is gifted with reason which can be best utilised by him to develop a keen aspiration for God, backed up with intense dispassion for sense enjoyments. Now, what is the aim of life? It is happiness. This cherished aim is fulfilled by realising God who is eternal happiness.



The pleasures I derived from the objects of the senses were not only transitory but were also accompanied by pain and grief — a fact I came to know too well. So I engaged myself in an all-round effort to divert the mind from the ephemeral objects to the eternal source of life — God.

God, who is absolute Existence, Consciousness and Bliss, is within me. Withdrawing the mind from the unreal — external things of life — I let it flow continuously towards Him through a steady remembrance brought about by a ceaseless chanting of His holy name. Constant remembrance purified and controlled my mind.

God came to me as my Guru and awoke me. I found then my God in the heart, nay, as my own Self. God is my Teacher; I speak of Him as such. He taught me many things from time to time. He is, now too, my Guide, as He was in the past. Now the mysterious grace of Guru — which awakened me in the first instance to seek God — completed its task by removing the mask of ignorance which enveloped my soul for ages, with the result that a flood of illumination poured out, permeating my body, senses and all the worlds.

God taught me how to avoid pitfalls on the path of Sadhana or spiritual discipline, and how to overcome temptations. First He made me use reason. His voice admonished me. When I became His faithful pupil and surrendered myself to Him, the Teacher and the pupil fused into one. Now I implicitly obey Him.

In this splendour my soul was lost, followed by the dawn of a Cosmic Consciousness and the knowledge of my still and all-pervading Atman or Self.

Yet another vision, more exalted, more perfect and more joyous awaited my illumined Self and this is the fusion of the Atman with the universal manifestation; in other words, I realised that the Atman and the universe are one.

This magnificent vision and experience, based on the realisation of the Absolute Self, transformed me, the human being, into the veritable embodiment of God in all His aspects.

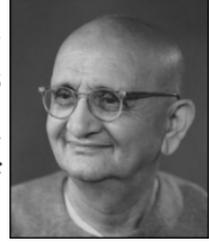
As my soul stepped from the animal into the human, it now stepped from the human into the Divine — the Purushottama, a spiritual-cum-physical evolution — the grandest finale — the supreme fulfilment of God's will to reveal Himself in all His sublimity in this human being. Verily, God is the seeker and God is the sought. This is His inscrutable Lila. Truly, my soul and God — Jiva and Brahman — are one. All victory to Him!

Yet the highest spiritual possibilities are not exhausted. The sweetest and dearest relationship with Him — near and personal — which I maintained all along the initial struggle and aspiration, has at present become real, intimate and permanent. He is now my constant companion as a careful Mother and beneficent Master. In the face of man, beast and bird — nay, of all creatures and things also, I behold Him — my Beloved. Again all victory to Him!



WORDS OF BELOVED PAPA SWAMI RAMDAS

A keen aspiration coupled with simplicity and humility is essential for a Sadhaka. Until he realizes God, he will avail himself of every help in his march on his path.



To say 'I am Brahman' is very easy but to act as Brahman is very, very, difficult. By mere saying so you cannot realize you are Brahman. Saints and sages have taught by their example how to reach this exalted state. Ramdas warns all spiritual aspirants not to delude themselves into thinking that they have attained Divine perfection while they are still stumbling on the path. Ego must be dead along with all its desires. Brahman must be the dominating and the only real factor in the life of the Sadhaka. His life must totally be filled with the light, peace and joy of the Brahman. He must act, live and move, as Brahman. He must walk, work, eat and do all actions as Brahman. If you have achieved this consummation of the Divine quest then you are a thousand times blessed, your purpose of human life is fulfilled. If not, go onward steadily and surely intensifying day by day your thirst for God until you know that you are He.

WORDS OF PUJYA MATAJI KRISHNABAI

Papa's (God's) Eternal Being is all void and we can become one with such a Swaroop of Papa (God) only if we ourselves become thoroughly empty within and without.



Papa (God) has implanted in each one of us body-consciousness so that we may enjoy the fruits of His own creation.



As I went on doing what Papa had asked me to, I began to identify every article I saw, be it a flower, a piece of cloth or any other article, with its Source, namely, Papa (God), and to tell myself: "What a beautiful thing Papa (God) has wrought!" Gradually, as Papa's (God's) thought filled me through and through, the Void that pervaded all around me permeated my mind also. There would then ensue long spells of void or utter blankness of mind between two thoughts.



Nirguna, Nirakara Papa (God) has manifested as the entire universe with innumerable names and forms. He is seated in your heart, and in everybody's heart. The mind reaches a state of stillness or void

like the space between you and me or between the road and the sky above. That emptiness pervades you within and without. Then, you get Sakshatkar in no time. Think of the Swarup of Papa (God) when you chant Ram Nam (any Name of God). Also pray to Him to reveal Himself in your heart. Try to love everybody as all are different forms of Papa (God) and regard all that you do as His service. Thus you can be in tune with Papa (God) by chanting Ram Nam, by contemplating upon Him and by doing all your actions as His service. This way you will progress soon.



One gets the desire for attaining Papa's Nirguna Nirvikar Swarup when the Kundalini reaches the 4th stage. The devotee even gets to know what that ultimate state of realization would be like the vast space around us and between us and so on. Just bring some thought into your mind and as soon as that thought ends, there is a pause before you think of another thought and the mind is blank in this period. That blankness is 'Papa'. The vacant space between you and me is Papa. So much is He all-pervading, and such an all-pervading Papa is seated in your heart.

WORDS OF PUJYA SWAMI SATCHIDANANDA

My practice in those days (during the latter part of his Sadhana days) was that when I saw anybody, I should see the Consciousness in him, pervading every



atom of his body and I took it that the body was active only because of the Consciousness, which is real and not the body. This Consciousness is also called the unifying Spirit that connects up all the forms in Prakriti into one unit like the thread that connects up all the beads in a rosary and makes it a single unit, which we call 'Rosary'. I was charmed by Saint Jnaneshwar Maharaj's statement that Purusha is the gold thread connecting all the gold beads, which are the innumerable forms of Prakriti. Thus he says that Purusha and Prakriti are not different. This practice gave great joy. Yet I lacked the feeling I was completely free or liberated. There was something more to be experienced and get abolished.

I often used to repeat: "O Lord! You are everything. All the emotions, all the thoughts, all the feelings are You only, as there is nothing but You.

You are also beyond everything.” Whenever the thought of a person came to my mind, I took him to be not an individual but a part of the universe, which is the manifestation of God. From early morning whatever I saw, whatever I touched, I used to say within myself: “This is also Your form, O Lord!.” Thus everything was identified with God. This made me speak less as the mind was busy engaged in identifying everything and everybody with God, and trying to be conscious of the Purusha pervading the entire body of that person or object. So I was cool and calm enjoying the communion with God in each and every form I saw.



Repetition of God’s name and bringing into the mind the glories and attributes of God, making it completely free from all desires and gradually sinking down and losing oneself in the Divine Consciousness, this is the purpose of all spiritual discipline.

— Swami Ramdas

POINTS TO LOOK FOR WHILE READING IN QUEST OF GOD

In the book, IN QUEST OF GOD, Beloved Papa has elaborately dealt with many salient points which help us in our spiritual journey. It would greatly help us to delve deeper if we consciously keep them in mind while reading. As mentioned in the Editorial, here are 8 points from the 16 predominant points to look for while reading the book. The remaining 8 will appear in the next issue:

Understanding The Great Void — Ram — God

As everyone knows, Beloved Papa introduced the indwelling and all-enveloping Reality in the first chapter itself as the Great Void. This indicates that our spiritual journey should begin with a clear-cut concept of God whom we aspire to know and realise.

Our common sense says that everything needs a base for its existence:

- A building needs a site, though we do not generally become aware of the site after the building is constructed.
- In order to read these words, the white background serves as the substratum which is also not often recognised.
- A pot needs mud or any other raw material to be made into a pot. But seldom do we recognise the

base material when we look at the pot.

- We can dance or move about only on a solid base; but we do not see the stage or the the ground on which such movements take place.

Similarly, Chaithanya or dynamism is possible only on a static base. And the base does not undergo any changes irrespective of the different characteristics of the contents. God is therefore the Inner Witness watching and accommodating all thoughts, objects, situations without being affected in the least by any of them. That is why in some of the Shlokas or hymns, God — The Great Void — is likened to ‘Gaganam’ meaning Space. Everything is pervaded by space, but it is not pervaded by anything. It is existing within and without. It is undivided and continuous. When a pot made out of mud is broken, the pot-space is absorbed in the infinite space and becomes undifferentiated. Similarly, that which is the Base of an individual dissolves into the Cosmic Base, the Supreme Self, which is our True Being. In BRAHMA JNANAVALI Sri Shankara says:

*Niradharasvarupo’ham Sarvadhara’ham Eva Ca
Aptakamasvarupo’ham Ahamevahamavyayah*

I am without any support, and I am the support of all.

I have no desires to be fulfilled.

I am the very Self, indestructible and changeless.

TRUST Him!

Belief, as we understand, is applicable at the primary stage of the spiritual journey; however, during trying times, belief alone will not help much, here Trust plays a crucial role.

Trust is not merely a process of conceptualisation at the mental level, but it is handing over ourselves completely to the Lord by accepting everything that happens as for our ultimate good.

This difference becomes explicit through the following anecdote:

A tightrope walker started walking on a rope tied between two tall towers. He was walking slowly, balancing a long stick in his hands. He had his son sitting on his shoulders. Everyone on the ground was watching him with bated breath. When the acrobat reached the second tower, everyone clapped, whistled and welcomed him. They shook hands with him and took selfies.

He asked the crowd, “Do you all think I can walk back on the same rope now from this side to that side?”

Crowd shouted in one voice, “Yes, yes, you can.”

“Do you trust me”, he asked?

They said, “Yes, yes, we are ready to bet on you.”

He said, “Okay then, can any one of you allow your children to sit on my shoulder; I will take the child to the other side safely.”

There was stunned silence. Every one became quiet. Nobody came forward to volunteer their child for this exercise.

This shows that the audience believed him, but they did not trust him enough when it came down to ‘me’ and ‘mine’. Thus, trust is a lot deeper than belief. Trust requires total surrender. This is what we lack in our pursuit of God. Whereas Beloved Papa had it in spades and therefore could emphatically state: “If there is one Being on whom we can put absolute trust, or on whom we can depend at all times and in all conditions, it should be the Supreme Truth. Man’s fall from his Divine state is due to his lack of faith in an ultimate Reality. Sterling faith is closely associated with selfless love. The heart is the seat of love, so also the seat of Truth, and Truth and love being one, faith means undoubting confidence in the greatness of Truth.”



Surrender

Self-surrender is the acceptance of the Divine will as supreme and thus handing oneself over to the Lord, in thought, word and deed, without hesitation. If we realise that the 'I' sense is utterly false, and that it is God's will and power alone that is responsible for all movements and changes taking place in the entire universe, then we know what self-surrender really is. This state of consciousness can dawn in us only when God-thought runs in the mind in a ceaseless and continuous stream. So, constant remembrance and meditation of God automatically leads to self-surrender.

What comes in the way of one's achieving it is the ego sense. Therefore, ours is to surrender our little 'I' to the Cosmic 'I', relative life to the Absolute life. In other words, we have to let the Cosmic 'I' rise like the phoenix from the ashes of our cremated ego. Surrender is not a verbal assertion; it is not a mental acceptance, but a state of consciousness.

Presently the sense of individuality is arrogating the sense of doership within us by saying 'I am doing', 'I am this', 'I am that'... etc. We do not realise that we exist because of the Life Force — God within us.

If the Life Force is not there, the sense of individuality will not exist even for a second. Life is the expression of the Atman. Though seemingly two, they are one.

In the state of surrender, the body becomes a willing instrument in the hands of the Divine, the mind is enlightened with Divine radiance, and the soul unites and identifies with the Supreme Spirit.

It is to be remembered that unless we link our life with the Divine Author of our being, our life is in vain.



The heart of a devotee who has placed himself in the hands of God is unruffled, serene and perfectly at peace, and like the summer sky, no clouds of cares and anxieties cross over it. This state is the one true achievement of life. When your mind turns inward and loses itself in the infinity and immortality of your Real Being, then you know the sublimity of this realization.

— Swami Ramdas

Universal Vision — The Aim

Essentially, humanity is one. Under the influence of ignorance, we create a sense of diversity and see distinctions and differences among the members of the human race though we possess a natural affinity to each other.

The Life principle that activates all beings is the same. We all breathe the same air, walk on the same earth, and are equally entitled to the enjoyment of the amenities which nature provides. The earth yields its rich gifts to all alike. The differences between man and man on the material plane are, in truth, unnatural and improper. For, the component parts and composition of human bodies and the qualities inherent in them are not diverse and conflicting.

If we look with the pure vision that belongs to an enlightened mind, we do not see any clear-cut line of demarcation that isolates man from man, one set of people from another or one nation from another. We are indeed parts of a stupendous whole. We are units that form the world-community or family. So, we should live and act as members of a world-brotherhood or federation.



Meditate And Chant His Name

In order that the mind does not wander while chanting, some sort of fencing is necessary, meaning the mind should be engaged in dwelling on God whose Name we are chanting. This process of engaging in God-thought is meditation. The two should go on simultaneously.

Each one of us can read for ourselves, if we examine our mind, as to what we are thinking and desiring; whether there are cravings, desires, hankerings, etc. in it or is the mind really in tune with God? So many people admit, “I am repeating the Name, but mind is wandering. What can I do?” The cause is, we think we are doing the Sadhana or chanting His name. We must be humble enough to admit that God is doing it — we must not merely say it orally but feel so. We must become consciousness of this fact that God is making us repeat His name. Our sufferings are due to the assumption that we are doing everything. So, we are asked to surrender: “I am nothing. O God! You are everything. I do nothing. O God! You do everything.” We must pray to Him so that we may remember Him. Then our ego will slowly leave us.

So, while repeating the Name, we must feel we are repeating the name of God who is in our heart; we must become conscious of God within us. Then if we repeat the Name with faith, love and devotion, gradually we become conscious of God's presence within, without and everywhere. That is the result of remembering God through repetition of His name. If there is not that remembrance, the repetition is mechanical.

It must be remembered that here meditation means constant remembrance of God, and chanting His name is an aid to sustain this experience.



Repetition of Ram Nam simultaneously with meditation on the great Ideal is perfectly right. But the remembrance must flow in the mind without break like the stream of oil poured from one vessel into another. This must continue until you lose yourself entirely in the infinite Reality, and rising above body-consciousness, feel one with all lives and existences.

— Swami Ramdas

Constant Dialogue With Him

What is there sweeter in the world than to hold communion with our Eternal Beloved? He is our never-failing companion and friend. He resides in the inner chamber of our heart and is also present everywhere about us. He is the soul of our soul, the life of our life. In the absolute sense, we and He are one. If this love of intimate comradeship with our Beloved does not inspire our life, even if we have all other things, our life is lived in vain. See the Beloved in the face of all beings and creatures. Verily, He has become the whole universe. Wherever we turn, there He is. The bliss of His presence is inexpressible. Why run away from Him and seek to attain peace in aloofness? Allow our life to mingle with His life, that is the universal life. He is a calm, serene, changeless Spirit and, at the same time, He is a world player. He dances in the hearts of all beings and creatures. He is at once wisdom, power and love.

Steadily we have to practice concentration of thought on God, until we feel His nearness; until we become aware of His presence; until we have the vision of Him everywhere about us; until we realize our oneness with Him.

So, as the first step to having the feeling of His nearness, we have to develop a constant dialogue with Him. As Vinoba says: “When he (Arjuna) made Krishna his charioteer and entrusted to Him the reins of his horses, he had got ready to give into His hands the reins of his mind also. Let us do likewise. Let us not think that, unlike Arjuna, we do not have Krishna to guide us. Let us not get caught in the fallacy that Krishna was a historical person. Everybody has Krishna residing in his heart as the indwelling Self. He is nearer to us than the nearest. Let us bare our heart, with all its impurities and weaknesses, before Him and say, ‘O Lord! I take refuge in you. You are my sole guide, my master. Show me the right path and I shall follow it.’ If we do so, Arjuna’s charioteer will be our charioteer too. We shall hear the GITA from His own lips and He will lead us to victory.”

In Shloka 7 of Chapter 8 of SRIMAD BHAGAVAD GITA, the Lord says:

*Tasmāt Sarveṣu Kāleṣu Mam Anusmara Yudhya Ca
Mayy Arpita-Mano-Buddhir Mam Evaishyasy Asamsayah*

“Therefore, at all places and at all times, constantly remember Me and fight the battle of life. With the mind and intellect absorbed in Me, you shall doubtless come to Me.”



Everything Is His And Nothing Is Ours

When we come to this world from the womb of our mother, we do not bring anything. That is why when we leave the world, we cannot take anything with us. The Great Provider — the Mysterious Power — who brought us into existence, has provided whatever we need for our basic living as well as a comfortable life through two institutions namely Mother Nature and the society.

The material cause as well as the efficient cause (intelligence) stem from Him only. In other words, raw material is provided by Him through Mother Nature as also the needed intelligence to the human beings to convert raw material into creature comforts, are all provided by that POWER alone.

The fact that “nothing is ours” will become clear when we try to trace the origin of everything. For example: Let’s explore how our cotton clothes come into being. Mother Nature provides cotton through ripened pods on cotton plants. Intelligence in a human being in the form of scientific curiosity and creativity sets the process in motion: the removal of the cotton from the pod, carding, thread making, weaving, colouring and dyeing and finally stitching clothes that we have ready for use. The Lord said

in the BHAGAVAD GITA that He is the intelligence of the intellect; He is the Inspirer, the Originator, the Creator. Not only is He the Inspirer, raw material, He is the process of manufacture, He is the person manufacturing, He is also the person selling and purchasing. Everything belongs to the Lord who dwells in the hearts of all creatures and things. Attachment to any external object narrows our vision, fosters egoism and gives rise to the false notion that we are separate from God, i.e., from the Universal Life and Spirit. The whole universe is permeated through and through with God. The visible and invisible worlds are all He. There is nothing and none but He. All, all are He.



The idea — ‘I am the doer’ — is entirely false. In fact, ‘I’ and ‘mine’ is a false super-imposition of ignorance upon us. There is nothing here to shrink from, or be attracted to; love and hate have nothing to do with the Witness. Sinners, we are not. We are the pure, the ever-pure, spotless, self-effulgent, all blissful and peaceful, Eternal Atman.

— Swami Ramdas

Everything Happens Only By His Will

There is the Spirit within us that makes us talk, walk and do everything. People think that they are moving their limbs by their own will and power. There are so many movements and changes going on within this body, such as the functions of the digestive organs, blood circulation, growth of the hair, etc. We cannot say these things are done by us. The same power, which is responsible for the movements inside our bodies, is also responsible for the outer movements. You see that the wind blows, the sun gives light, trees grow, birds fly and sing. All these and many more movements and changes are going on about us. They are not movements caused by any separate units of power working accidentally or by chance, or due to the fortuitous concourse of atoms. If it is so, we can very well deny the existence of a spiritual power that permeates the universe and causes all the movements in it. But this is not so. There is an all-pervading Force or Energy that makes us talk, walk and perform all actions. If we recognise this Universal Power and know that that Power is responsible for all that we do, our ego will disappear, we shall be one with the Universal Life and Truth,

and we shall be supremely free and happy. So long as there is ego in us, we feel we are doing things ourselves, we are caught in a trap. To get released from this self-made trap, we are asked to resign ourselves to the will of God. Divine will is nothing but the power of God active in nature, active in us. By surrendering ourselves to the Divine Power and will, we set free the supreme bliss and peace which is now locked up through the assertion of the individual will.



Y*ou must remember constantly the greatness, glory and magnificence of God. When you forget Him, the ego rises. Continuous remembrance of God means keeping down the ego. If you surrender to God, you will live from moment to moment and He will guide you. You will not then be calculating and planning for the future. Even if you make plans, they must be subject to the Divine will. If your plans are fulfilled, God fulfilled them. Plan always for the good of others. In fact, if you make others happy, you are really happy.*

— Swami Ramdas

PAPA — THE GUIDING STAR

Nashik-Shirdi

n the 18th of August (1999) night, carrying the blessings of Beloved Papa, Pujya Mataji, Pujya Swamiji and all the inmates of the Ashram, this child left for Nasik by train, where he was received by our dear Sriramji's sister Radheben's sons Sanjay and Ashok. It took us over an hour to reach their home by taxi. As mentioned earlier, this child had no idea of the places to be visited in and around Nasik. But Beloved Papa, through the hosts, had chalked out a detailed programme and carried it out most beautifully.

The first place we visited was Shirdi where Sai Baba, as you all know, is the presiding deity. We remembered Beloved Papa's exhortation on Guru, where he says that Guru and God are one, that Guru is God in human form and at the same time He resides within also. No wonder, even though Baba is no longer in body, His presence is felt by all devotees at all times and He takes care of the welfare of His devotees. Especially in times of crisis, when devotees cry for Baba's help, Baba comes in inscrutable ways and rescues them. There have been many, many such instances in the lives of the devotees of Baba.

This child's association with Baba dates back to his early childhood. As Baba was the Ishta Devata of his Poorvashram family, Pujas and Bhajans for Baba were regularly held at home. That could be the reason why Beloved Papa chose Shirdi as the first place to be visited in this Yatra.

After a couple of hours' drive from Sanjay's house, we reached Shirdi. The temple was being renovated. It is a massive structure. The arrangement is such that even when large crowds visit the temple, people can move in an orderly fashion, without any confusion. The excitement and anticipation of the fulfilment of a long-cherished desire of having Baba's Darshan welled up as this child stepped into the temple premises. At the sanctum sanctorum, there is an imposing and inspiring Murti of Baba. When this child placed his head at the Peetham, he felt that Baba was intently gazing at him and showering his grace on him, and he felt thrills of joy.

We then went round to some of the holy places connected with Baba's life, like the Gurusthan under the Neem tree, Chavadi, Dwarkamayi Masjid, the grinding stone used by Baba, the place where Baba used to take bath, and the place from where Baba

gave the Udhi Prasad. In all these places, the presence of Baba was felt very intensely.

The next place of visit was an Ashram of Upasani Baba at Sakori. Immediately this child remembered a couple of stories relating to how Sai Baba helped his ardent devotee, Upasani Baba, to realise that Guru is not merely the form seen outside but also is seated in everybody. Beloved Papa also used to emphasise that loving and serving all, means loving and serving one's Guru. But many of the Sadhakas get attached to the physical form of their Guru and they refuse to see the same Guru-factor in other forms. Upasani Baba was one such Bhakta. Every day he was very particular about serving food first to Sai Baba, and therefore used to carry the food from Sakori to Shirdi. One day when he was thus carrying the food for Baba, a dog intercepted this path and attempted to eat the food being carried by him. Upasani Baba got angry and pelted stones at the dog, which hit him resulting in profuse bleeding. Not giving any importance to this incident Upasani Baba rushed to Shirdi to be in time for Baba's meal. When he reached and stood before Sai Baba, he was shocked to see wounds on the body of Baba from where blood was oozing.

Baba looked at Upasani Baba and lovingly told him that in order to reduce his strain, Baba came to him on the way and wanted to have the food but Upasani Baba chose to pelt stones at him. Upasani Baba realised that Baba had come to him in the form of the dog. He prostrated before Baba and promised to develop the vision of seeing Baba in every form.

Again, a few days later, when Upasani Baba started for Shirdi as usual with food for Baba, an old man who was in rags approached him and begged him for food. Upasani Baba flatly refused to serve food and told him that only after Sai Baba had touched the food, would he give it to others.

When he reached Baba, Baba lovingly told him that he had visited him at his very doorstep so that he would not have to walk all the way to Shirdi with the food; but this time also he was turned down. It suddenly struck Upasani Baba that the old man who pleaded for food was none other than Baba; and how he lost sight of the fact that Baba resides in the hearts of all.

Baba teaches his disciples to broaden their vision through such Chamatkars.

— ***Muktananda***



DEAR CHILDREN

Sacrifice, The Litmus Test Of Spiritual Progress

 little boy sat with his parents in their cozy home. He said to his mother, “Mama, you have the kindest, prettiest face in the world! I wish I could look at it forever!”

As he uttered these words, his glance fell on her hands. They were twisted out of shape, badly deformed. “Why Mama!” he exclaimed. “Yours must be the ugliest hands in the world! I can’t bear to look at them!”

The father took the little boy on his knees. “Let me tell you a story,” he said gently. “Once upon a time, there was a little baby who was sleeping peacefully in his cradle when the cradle caught fire.”

“What happened to the baby?” asked the boy.

“The nurse who was supposed to take care of the baby, ran away in alarm,” the father continued. “But the mother saw the fire and rushed to save the baby. She found that it was impossible to lift the baby through the surrounding flames without hurting him. So, she beat the fire out with her own hands. Her hands were badly burnt. It took months before they could heal. Even then, they were left badly scarred.”

“What a brave mother!” the little boy exclaimed.

“Do you know who she was?” the father asked.

“She was your mother! Her disfigured, scarred hands were the ones that saved your life!” said the father.

The little boy turned to his mother with tears, touched her eyes and kissed her hands, again and again. “Mummy, these are the prettiest hands in the world!” he said, through his tears.

Indeed, there is nothing more beautiful than a mother’s love!

Source: More Snacks For The Soul



EPISTLE OF RAMDAS

Beloved Ram

...When the Name begins to work in the mind, automatically peace settles upon it. All actions proceeding from this calm state of mind become naturally pure and therefore beneficent. ... A constant watch upon our actions is still necessary; lest we might do such acts as would throw us into forgetfulness of God. Let us not fret over situations that God has given us. It is a mistake to think that by mere change of situation or activity we can attain to peace.

...Ramdas, by His will, now stays in a newly built

Ashram, called “Anandashram”. As usual, Ramdas is swimming in a veritable ocean of love and joy. His kindness and love are boundless.

Ramdas

*



IN MEMORIAM

Param Pujya Sri Kesavananda Bharati Swamiji of Jagadguru Shankaracharya Samsthanam Edneer Math in Kasargod attained Mahasamadhi on the 6th of September 2020.

Pujya Swamiji had been heading the Math since 1961 as the Peetadhipathi.

His close association with Anandashram dates back several decades. During many of his visits he rendered soul-stirring Bhajans, which are reverentially remembered. When we think of Pujya Swamiji, what comes to mind is his innocence and child-like all-loving nature.

Though not in the body, Pujya Swamiji’s life and mission will continue to inspire and guide innumerable aspirants on the spiritual path.



- Sri TN Ananthapadmanabhan, an ardent devotee of the Ashram from Chennai, was called by Beloved Papa on the 2nd of September 2020.

- Adv. T Ramakrishna, another ardent devotee of the Ashram from Chennai was also called by Beoved Papa on the 3rd of September 2020.

We pray for Beloved Papa's blessings on the departed souls for eternal rest and peace at His holy feet.



ANANDASHRAM NEWS

15,500-CRORE NAMA JAPA YAGNA FOR WORLD PEACE: The total Japa received in the third round of the 15500-Crore Nama Japa Yagna For World Peace in the month of August is 190 crores. The grand total of the Japa done so far in this round now stands at 8566 crores.



12TH MAHASAMADHI DAY OF PUJYA SWAMI SATCHIDANANDA

On 12th of October 2020, we observe Pujya Swamiji's 12th Mahasamadhi Day. Pujya Swamiji was the personification of humility, forbearance and Guru-Seva. May this day be instrumental in reminding us of these noble ideals that he epitomised, and may he bless us to live up to the teachings of our Guru.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS IN ENGLISH

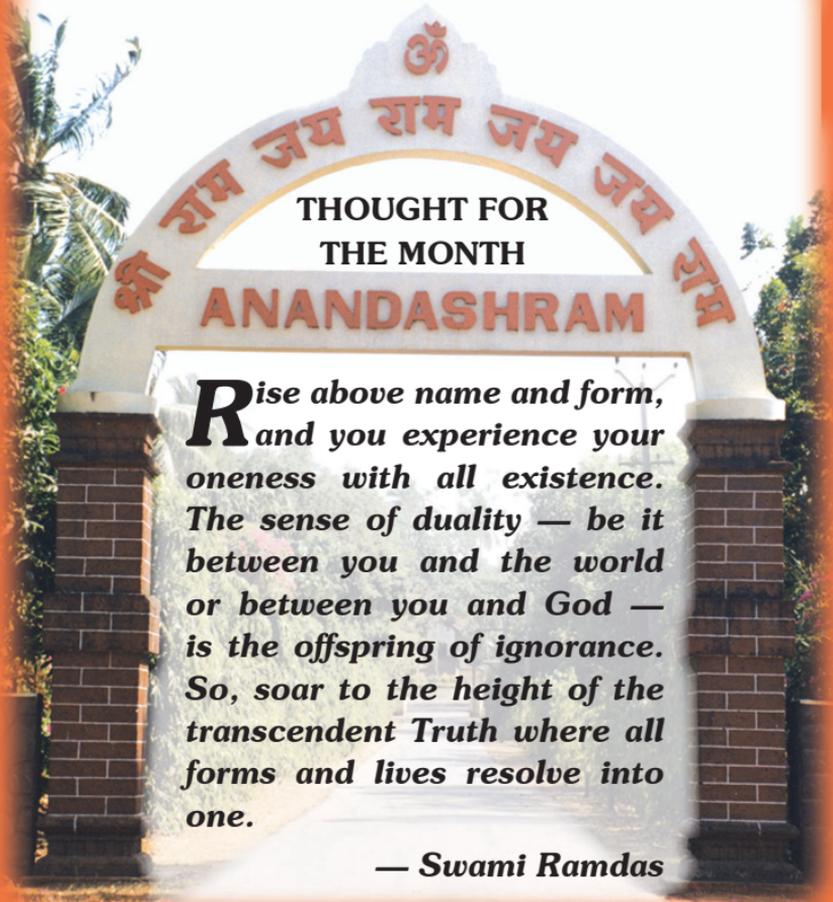
Sr.	Book Title	Price (Rs.)
1	Ashram Seva	30
2	At the Feet of God	85
3	Call of the Devotee	130
4	Dive Deep and Soar High	120
5	Gita Sandesh	110
6	Glimpses of Divine Vision	60
7	God Experience, Vols. 1 & 2 (Set)	240
8	Gospel Of Swami Ramdas, Vols. 1 to 3 (Set)	750
9	Guru's Grace	150
10	Hints to Aspirants	100
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12	In the Vision of God	285
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31	The Silent Sage	60
32	Thus Speaks Ramdas	60
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R.N.: 3047/57 || Registered: KL/KSZ/8/2018-20
License to post without prepayment of postage
Lic. No. KL/PMG/NR/WPP/1-1/KSZ/2018-20
Date of Publication: 01/10/2020



Edited and published by:

Swami Muktananda on behalf of
Anandashram Trust, Kanhangad.

and printed by him through: Prakash Offset Printers, Mangalore.