



The Vision

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



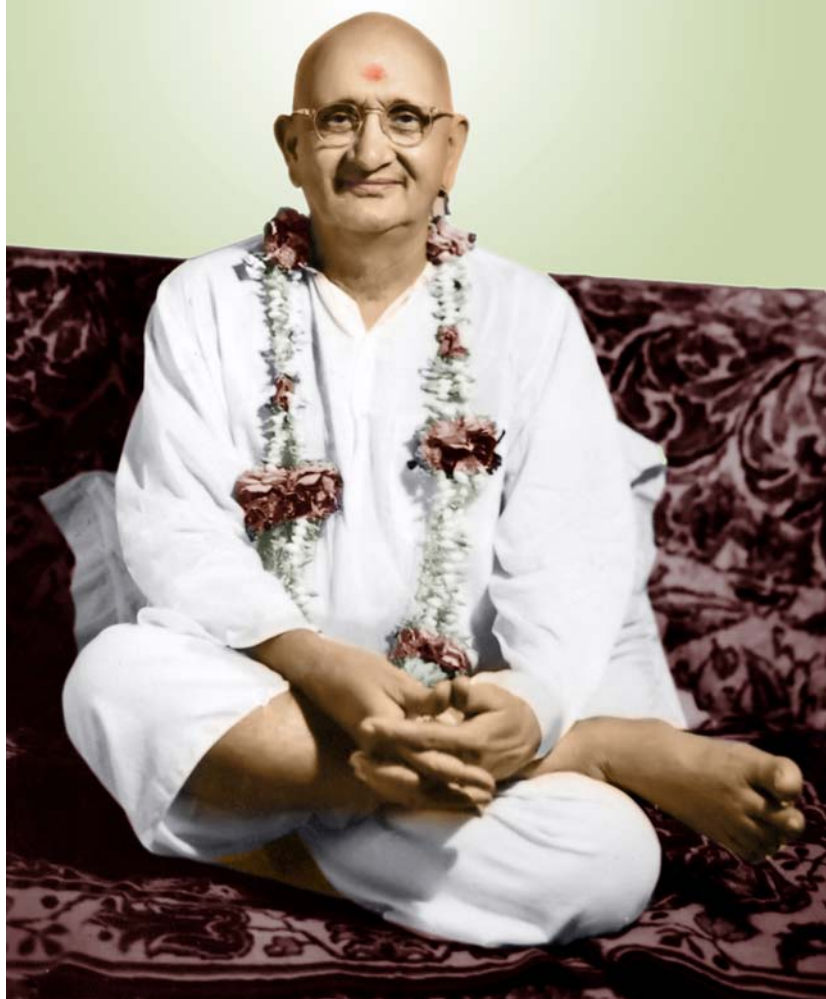
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**Beloved Papa Swami Ramdas
(1884-1963)**



Om Sri Ram jai Ram jai jai Ram

ॐ श्री राम जय राम जय जय राम

Om Sri Ram jai Ram jai jai Ram

THE POWER OF NAME

SING on His name with love and joy,
And sweetness will permeate your being.
Look up to Him in all your trials,
And you will have inner courage and light.
Know He dwells in all and He is all,
And you will be blessed with the vision
That you and He are one.

- Swami Ramdas

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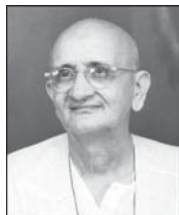
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EFFICACY OF MANTRA INITIATION

(Compiled from various articles of Swami Ramdas)

Initiation from the Guru gives a new birth to you. While a mother gives you physical birth, the Guru gives you spiritual birth – a birth in which you realise eternal peace and bliss. The Name automatically comes to your mind without any struggle if you get initiation from a saint who has realised God. He takes the responsibility for your repeating the Name constantly.



When Ramdas first started on the path, he found that he was getting a certain measure of peace by the repetition of the name of God which he himself had chosen. Later he received the Mantra from his Guru and started repeating it. The result was remarkable. The mind not only became still and calm but also continuously bathed in an ocean of peace. Then he found the difference between repetition of a Name chosen by oneself and repetition of a Mantra given by a Guru. From this you can make out that a Mantra given by a Guru is more powerful than the Name which you have chosen for yourself. This does not mean that God's name is less powerful than the

Mantra. What is important is, receiving the Mantra from a saint. It may be said that a Name repeated before initiation leads the aspirant to his Guru who will give him proper initiation. So the struggle necessarily leads the devotee to a saint from whom he receives the initiation and his spiritual backing, with the result that the progress of the aspirant on the path to God-realisation becomes steady, sure and rapid.

When the Guru gives you initiation, he imparts spiritual power to you with the Mantra. You miss this otherwise. After we receive initiation from the Guru we must feel the presence of the Guru within us, as the Guru and the Truth within are not different. The Guru has come as a person in human form outside us to give us the necessary guidance, awaken us and make us turn our mind towards Him within us.

The Name is compared to a bridge that connects both the banks of a river. The banks represent the personal and impersonal aspects of the Divine. By becoming a votary of the Name you have the vision of the personal God on one side and knowledge of the Impersonal on the other. But you must get the taste of the Name, and not take it mechanically. The mind

must be attuned to the Name. All the attributes of God must flash before our mind when we take the Name, because the Name is the very embodiment of God. When the mind is attuned to the Name and tastes its sweetness, it is as good as tasting God Himself and we attain liberation in this very life.

GURU MANTRA

By Mataji Krishnabai

It is said that the Divine Name is such a powerful instrument that its initiation cannot be given to everyone. Even among those of you who have got initiation, only few can practise repeating it. If we have such a powerful Name on our lips, our vision will also expand so as to embrace the whole universe.



Ram Nam can save us from all perils and you should keep Ram Nam ceaselessly on your lips and then all would be well. The very fact that you have got the Mantra means Guru's Grace is showering on you. You have only to be aware of it. Be it any Mantra, so long as it is given by a Guru, it will protect us from all harm.

MANTRA INITIATION

By Swami Satchidananda

It is absolutely necessary for those who are seekers of God and on the path of devotion that they should receive initiation of a Mantra from a God-realised soul with the necessary guidance. They should also chant the Mantra with all love and devotion aspiring only for God-realisation; and not for gaining anything worldly. Their progress will depend upon the intensity of their aspiration and the zeal and enthusiasm with which they chant the Mantra through maintaining a ceaseless remembrance of God who should be looked upon as the Absolute Truth, all-pervading infinite and eternal, who has manifested as the entire universe and who is seated in everybody's heart. Along with this practise the seeker should also expand the circle of love by which the care and concern of more and more of His creations should find a place in his/her bosom. In other words devotional practise should not be divorced from love and service to all.

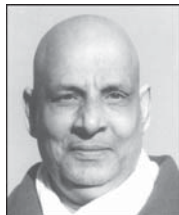


May those who take such initiation be serious in their Sadhana and thus draw the blessings of their Guru and attain God-realisation which alone is the goal of human life.

THE GLORY OF MANTRA DIKSHA

By Swami Sivananda

Initiation into the Divine Name or the solemn Mantra Diksha is one of the holiest and most significant of the sacred rituals in spiritual life. To receive the Guru Mantra from a realised saint and Sadguru is the rarest of good fortune and the most precious of the Divine blessings that may be bestowed upon the aspirant. The full glory of this Mantra Diksha, specially when it is given by a realised soul, can hardly be imagined even fractionally by the initiated who has not yet got a proper idea of what the Mantra and Mantra Diksha really imply. The process of Mantra Diksha is one of the most ancient in this sacred land and is the grandest jewel in the treasure of our peerless culture. The sacred Mantra or the Divine Name is a vital symbol of the Supreme Divinity directly revealed in the innermost depths of Divine communion to the sages of Self realisation in the hoary Vedic and Upanishadic times. These symbols are in the nature of unfailing keys to give access into the transcendental realms of Absolute Experience. Mantras are potent givers of direct experience of the highest Reality, handed down to us



from those far off ancient times. Mantras have been carefully handed down to us down the centuries, generation after generation, right up to the present modern age of materialism, by the long succession of saints, through the system of Guru Parampara.

A most tremendous transformation begins to take place in the innermost core of the conscience of the initiated or the receiver of the Mantra. The initiated is himself unaware of this fact because of the veil of ignorance or Mula Ajnana that still covers him, even as a poor man sleeping soundly in his humble cottage at night, carried silently and deposited upon a royal couch in the Emperor's Palace, remains completely unaware of his transfer, because he is still in deep sleep. But, nevertheless, this transformation starts with initiation, and like unto a seed that is sown in the earth, ultimately culminates in the grand fruit of realisation or Atma Jnana. To reach fruition, even as the seed has to pass through a process of developing into a seedling, a plant, a sapling and then a full grown tree, even so the Sadhaka, after receiving initiation, must make earnest and continuous effort in the form of spiritual Sadhana if the Diksha is to become blissfully fruitful as Self-realisation. This part is the Sadhaka's

sole responsibility in which task he will doubtless receive the help, guidance and grace of the Guru in the measure of his firm faith and loyalty to him. As a pearl oyster patiently and eagerly awaits the drops of rain when the star Svati is in ascendancy, receives the drop and converts it in itself, through its own efforts and processes, into a very valuable pearl, the Sadhaka eagerly and devoutly awaits Mantra initiation from the Guru, receives the sacred Mantra from him on the rare auspicious occasion, cherishes it and nurtures it in himself, and by his effort or process of Sadhana transforms it into a tremendous spiritual power which breaks the fort of Avidya or ignorance and opens the door to the blissful Immortal Experience.

Initiation puts you in possession of the direct means of attaining the grandest and the highest thing which can be attained, attaining which you obtain everything, knowing which you know everything and gaining which nothing more remains to be gained. Initiation leads you to the full knowledge and experience that you are neither the mind nor the body, that you are Satchidananda Atman, full of Light and full of the highest Bliss. May the Grace of the Sadguru, the visible God, bestow upon you all the highest fruit of Self-realisation.

SPIRITUAL INITIATION

By Swami Nikhilananda

It will be useful here to briefly discuss spiritual initiation, according to Hindu tradition, and also the part a preceptor plays in unfolding a disciple's spiritual life.



Spirituality is awakened by the transmission of light from the living, through the living, to the living. The transmitter is called the Guru or teacher, the method of transmission is known as initiation, and the person to whom it is transmitted is called the Shishya or disciple. Spiritual truth is the living truth co-existing with and inherent in God Himself. Initiation is the descent of God through a human channel and is bestowed upon a living disciple. This bestowal may be designated as grace. No doubt God, in His real nature, transcends name and form and is present everywhere. But He must attune Himself to our receptivity so that our minds can receive Him. This is a law of the spiritual world demonstrated even by God-men like Krishna, Christ, Chaitanya and Ramakrishna, who in spite of their Divine nature accepted human teachers, as it were, to set an example for the common man. God

is the real Guru, but He uses a human instrument to manifest His power. The purer the channel, the clearer the manifestation of the power.

The human teacher must possess qualifications to discharge his task. The Upanishads emphasize that knowledge and realization of Brahman are the primary qualifications. Knowledge, which belongs to the domain of intellect, is necessary to dispel the disciple's doubts. Furthermore, the Guru must be sinless and free from worldly motives. He should act as a friend of those who, with humility, seek his help. An ocean of infinite compassion, he wants the welfare of the disciple, and helps, unnoticed and unheralded, in unfolding his spirituality, as the spring unfolds leaves and blossoms after the cold and bleak months of winter. No wonder these qualifications of an ideal teacher are fully found only in God-men, who visit earth from time to time. The right teacher always appears at the proper time to help the qualified pupil.

Spirituality can be literally handed down like any physical object, if the teacher possesses it and the student is capable of receiving it. A thought can be as vivid and real as a tangible thing. An aspirant can be initiated by a look or a touch or by mystical words. The imparting of a mystical word, called the Mantra,

is the usual method of initiation. Real Mantras are not created by the human intellect. They exist in the cosmic mind of God and are revealed to a qualified teacher. "In the beginning was the Word." Different Mantras are adapted to the different aspects of the Godhead and the needs of the pupil. Through some Mantras the pupil can commune with God's impersonal aspect, through some with His personal. Some Mantras stimulate a disciple's love of God, some his knowledge, and so on. Holy Mother (Saradamani Devi) said: "The Mantra purifies the body. One becomes pure by repeating the name of God given by the Guru." The Mantra is to be regularly repeated by the disciple with concentration and devotion. It has an intrinsic power of its own. It kindles the spark of spirituality in the disciple. A disciple asked the Mother whether the mere repetition of the holy word taught by a qualified Guru really helped the aspirant, if he did not possess intense devotion. "Whether you jump into water or are pushed into it," she replied, "your clothes will be soaked, isn't it?" The Mantra is generally chosen by the Guru who sometimes in its selection takes into consideration the feelings of the Sishya.

Besides imparting the Mantra, the Guru teaches through instruction, personal example and silent

influence. The relationship between such a teacher and student is eternal and cannot be severed by death. He stands by the pupil both here and hereafter and does not cease guiding him until he is liberated from the bondage, delusion and suffering of the world. He is the pupil's father – more real than an earthly father who gives birth only to the physical body – for it is he who gives him spiritual birth.

The knowledge of God which the teacher transmits is, according to the Upanishads, dearer than a son, dearer than wealth and dearer than all precious things of the world.

Anyone who has a sincere longing for the higher life and is ready to work for it can approach a teacher. According to the Bhagavad Gita, the student should have unbounded faith in his teacher. Full of humility, he should put intelligent questions to him. Religious instruction, according to one of the Upanishads, becomes fruitful only when it is obtained from a teacher.

Spiritual experience involves, as already mentioned, the descent of God and the ascent of the soul, the grace of God and the right effort of the seeker. The meeting of a competent teacher and a

qualified pupil is an unusual phenomenon. An Upanishad says: “Many there are who do not even hear of Atman; though hearing of It, many do not comprehend. Wonderful is the expounder and rare the hearer; rare indeed is the experiencer of Atman taught by an able preceptor.”

NAMA IMPARTED BY A SADGURU

By Sri Gondavalekar Maharaj

The question is often raised if one may begin to repeat a Nama of one's own choice, or must one be first initiated by a Sadguru and assigned a specific Nama which he should then repeat.



Nama is self-existent and complete in itself and needs nothing else to make it perfect. And yet, Nama imparted by a Sadguru certainly is something very special, distinctive, in that it is reinforced by his spiritual strength and support and consequently there is no scope for pride of doership to rise in the Sadhaka's mind. When a Sadhaka repeats Nama imparted by a Sadguru, he gradually develops a relish, a zest for it and in due course, derives a sense of fulfilment and satisfaction. It is therefore highly

desirable that Nama should be obtained by initiation from a spiritual master, a Sadguru. However, till we meet a Sadguru we must keep on repeating the Nama of our choice; for, this itself will expedite our meeting the Sadguru.

It is, however, not easy to come across a Sadguru, to recognize him and to have faith in him. Therefore we should, till then, steadfastly repeat the Nama of our choice. It is common knowledge that ants don't need to be invited to a lump of sugar; they like it and are themselves in search of it. Similarly, if you do what the saints like, namely, maintain constant awareness of God's presence and keep up ceaseless repetition of His name, the Sadguru will himself search you out and hasten to shower grace on you.

It may happen that the Sadguru initiates you in the Nama that coincides with your own choice; it is then possible that you may feel that the Sadguru has given you nothing new, for you were already repeating the same Nama. Now, being initiated by the Sadguru has the distinctive merit that it precludes the rise of ego, for the Sadhaka thereafter does Nama-smarana at the Sadguru's behest, and not on his own. This elimination of ego is most important, for even a

vestige of pride or ego may vitiate the very purpose of meditation, just as even a grain of salt suffices to turn a pail full of milk sour. It is therefore of the utmost importance completely to renounce pride of 'doership'.

GURU AND MANTRA INITIATION

By Baba Muktananda

When the Guru imparts the Mantra to you, he imparts the Mantra that he received from his Guru. That is the Guru Mantra or the initiation Mantra. The line of Gurus goes back to Shiva. Through that Mantra the Guru himself enters the disciple. In fact, when you receive the Mantra from the Guru you receive the Guru himself in the form of the Mantra, and the entire line of teachers, right from Shiva, the primal source of the Mantra to Nityananda stands solidly behind the Mantra.



Seers have divided Mantras into two classes: the inert lifeless Mantras and the Mantras that are endowed with consciousness. If you receive a Mantra from a teacher who hasn't himself practised it and realised its full potential, who hasn't attained the goal of the

Mantra, who hasn't realised the conscious force of the Mantra, it will take a very long time for the Mantra to bear fruit, and even then it will do so with great difficulty. But the Mantra which comes down through a line of Gurus is of an entirely different kind because it is endowed with life force and it passes from one Guru to another, each one of whom has realised its full value, its full potential. When you receive that Mantra from a Guru who has himself realised its full potential, the Mantra, being full of God's grace, will serve as a great blessing and bring you the same Divine state which the Guru himself is in and protect you and your descendents. If you receive a Mantra from a great teacher, that is, from a Self-realised Master, then his own power, his own inner Self, enters into you through the Mantra. A Mantra which comes through a succession of Gurus has Divine authority behind it.

The difference between adopting a Mantra on your own and receiving it from a great Guru, is that in the former case it will take a long time to bear fruit while in the latter it will work very quickly. If you receive a Mantra from one whose inner power is awakened, then it means that the Mantra is endowed with conscious force.

JAPA SADHANA

By Yogi Shuddhananda Bharati

There are two kinds of Sadhanas, or spiritual practices, for attaining psychic consciousness, which is a powerful guide to Self-realisation. One is the objective Sadhana of purity of life and conduct, holy study, holy company, serving holy men, singing holy songs, prayers and chanting holy Names. The last three are called the Japa Sadhana. The other is the subjective Sadhana of mind control, fixity in the Self-centre, meditation and identification with the Divine essence. These are called Samyama. The objective Sadhana is a potent factor in God-realisation. Especially, the Japa Sadhana trains the heart for the psychic realisation, even like meditation, which trains the mind for Self-realization. “I am Japa among Yajnas”, says the Lord. “Through worship and by chanting Om, you can develop meditation on the Inner Divine”, says Patanjali. “The Name is greater than Rama”, says Tulsidas. So Mantra Japa is a powerful Sadhana for controlling the mind and awakening the inner Cosmic fire and consciousness.

The Mantras depend upon mentalities and beliefs. You can take any Mantra, Om, Om Sivam, Om Ram,

Om Rahim or Om Jehova. Om is the primordial sound, a synthesis of 'A' 'U' and 'M' meaning Almighty, Universe and the Me in the individual. God pervades all, and Om is His form. Any sign of activity in the world is characterised by this fundamental sound. The sky is, in principle, the sound Om. The Upanishad says: "Akasha Sariram Brahma; OM iti Brahma". Ether is the form of the Omnipresent Brahman; It is sound; It is Om. This Om is always murmuring in you; for, it is the symphony of existence. When the mind goes outwards, it is not heard; when the mind is gathered within and fixed on the Self, the Om is always heard; and along with it a vibrating force is felt by Yogins. That is the conscious psychic force.

Now, how to do Japa Sadhana? Take any mantra OM, or Ram, or Shivoham. Stick to it. Understand its significance clearly. Imagine that God, the meaning of the Mantra and its object, is in your heart. Think that you call or invoke Him through this Mantra. The one point is that you must not think of any worldly thing or anybody, except the Divine embodied in the Mantra. First, have God as an axiom and gradually you will be conscious of the Truth. Have a rosary, Japa-mala, at the beginning and make it a point to do 108 mantras before going to bed, at dawn, before

breakfast, dinner and supper. As you walk out, you can repeat the Mantra mentally and measure your gait accordingly. Repeat the Mantra aloud in perfect solitude, for five minutes; then sit down firmly, back erect. Count the beads, mentally repeating the Mantra for fifteen minutes at least. Whenever you are free, whenever your mind is worried or the heart heavy, take the name of God. Do this for one year; then your heartbeats will be rhythmised and your breath will be harmonised; you will feel peace and joy and the Mantra will be assimilated into your being. The psychic opening will follow the purity of your heart and the peace of your mind. Continuing this for another year, you will get the necessary concentration for meditation and the cosmic energy will wake up. Then? I need not say. THAT will speak within you and lead you on!

Swami Ramdas is an evidence of this Mantra Siddhi. There have been three more Ramdas who have been benefited by the Ram Nam. Bhadrachala Ramdas, Samartha Guru Ramdas and the Sikh Guru Ramdas. Our Swamiji Ramdas, with his lovely smile and blissful heart, directs you to Ram. "Ram is a solace to the heart", says Mahatma Gandhi. Repeat 'Ram', 'Ram' always, with every breath. You will feel and know the truth of your own Self and the bliss of God who is the Self of all.

INITIATION OF RAM MANTRA

By Swami Ramdas

Ramdas can tell you this much that from the very time he started repeating the Name, he began to feel the sweetness of it. So, he used to pray to God, 'He does not want anything else, he only wants Your name. Let Your name be ever on his tongue'. It is because it is so sweet. So it proved to be not a means to an end but an end in itself. This is the wonder about the Name which he is repeating. It depends upon the repeater, of course. Unless we are free from the low passions of the heart, we cannot taste the sweetness of the Name.



Sugar is sweet. By nature it is sweet. It can never be bitter. So the Name is by nature sweet. But when this sweet sugar is put in the mouth of a man who is having some kind of fever, he finds the taste not sweet but bitter. He throws it away. That shows the man is diseased. When we are diseased with low desires, the Name does not taste sweet to us. We must go to a doctor who can cure us of that disease. That doctor is the Guru, who by his presence removes our disease of desires and gives us this nectarine Name

and you find that instant it is sweet and sweetness comes to you as long as you are going on repeating the Name until at last you become sweetness itself; not merely the taster of the sweetness but sweetness itself. So you drink and drink and drink the Name until the drinker and the drink become one.

DEAR CHILDREN

Narayanpur is a village in Noakhali. Bapu (Mahatma Gandhi) reached there at seven in the evening. The party stayed at a poor weaver's place. On arrival at the destination, it was usual for Bapu to have his feet washed with hot water and to do some writing. Meanwhile, Manubehn, his granddaughter, would arrange for his massage and bath. He never used soap for his bath; he used instead a rough stone. Manu Di inadvertently had left it behind at the village where they had last halted. She informed Bapu about it and also said that she did not know what to do.

Bapu thought for a while and then asked her to go back and get the stone. With some trepidation she asked whether she could take some volunteer along. Bapu asked, "Why?" To which Manu Di could not give a reply as she had committed the offence. So she set out without answering him.

She was afraid while walking through the coconut and betel-nut forests, but with Ram Nam on her lips and following their footprints, she went back the way they had come.

On reaching the place where they had stayed, she got to know that the old lady living there had thrown away the stone not knowing the value of it. After looking for it for a while she finally was overjoyed to find it. She immediately returned to Narayanpur.

On arrival, she placed the stone on Bapu's lap and burst out crying. He said, "Today you have been put to test. Whatever God does, he does for our good... Thanks to the stone you have had your first test so early. You have passed..."

Manu Di then said, "Bapu, if ever I took Ramanama with all my heart it was today. My heart trembled as I went along that deserted path." Thereupon he laughed and replied, "Oh yes, one remembers the Lord only when one is in trouble!"

EPISTLES OF SWAMI RAMDAS

Beloved Ram,

...Ramdas read with delight your kind letter and your loving appeal in verse.

You know that the mothers whom Ramdas gave Mantram were in a state of mental disturbance and despondency. It is they that induced Ramdas subtly and internally, though not externally, to initiate them into the Mantram. You further know that Ramdas is merely an instrument in the hands of God who dwells in your heart and in the hearts of all beings. Everyone who comes to him is permitted to exploit him in his or her own way to satisfy the individual want. As regards yourself, you appear to need no such formal initiation, since you have not prompted Ramdas to do such a thing in your case. However, to clear your doubts, if you have any, you may accept the Mantram through this letter which is as good as personal initiation. Repeat three times "Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram", and the thing is done.

Stop calling yourself sinful. In view of the holiness you behold in Ramdas, that you should think that you are sinful even after a Darshan of him, is unbecoming. Take it that by the mere sight of Ramdas all your so-called sins are washed away. Eradicate the notion of sin entirely from your mind. Be the free and cheerful child of God, realising at the same time your oneness with Him in essence and spirit. Give up crying and

wailing. Be bold, fearless, free and blissful at all times. Know that you are the immortal Truth.

Once you have entered the kingdom of absolute joy and peace, there are no more clouds and illusions for you as guards at the imaginary gates. Don't get imprisoned in the illusions of the mind, however beautiful they may appear to be, in the sparkling effusions of poetry. Let the arrow of the mind shoot straight into the eternal Truth of your being. Illusion or no illusion, be ever calm and blissful.



ME TO WE

*(Dwelling On The Values Describing
The Lord's Dearest Devotee In Srimad Bhagavad Gita)*

Beloved Papa said, “The Bhagavad Gita is a veritable mosaic of eternal wisdom. It has not left unsolved even a single problem pertaining to the conduct of human life, both in its spiritual and physical spheres. Spontaneity of life born of an egoless purity and innocence, a consciousness of immortal freedom and a condition of perfect Divine ecstasy and peace is the one supreme note and refrain of the Voice that rings through the Gita.”

In his commentaries on the last eight Shlokas of the 12th Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita, Swami Ranganathanandaji said that the way to move closer to God is to become His dearest devotee: “When we read these verses, we ask our own mind, ‘how am I fitting this description?’ The Lord says those who live like this, holding on to such and such virtues, are very dear to me. I also want to be dear to the Lord. How shall I do? Step by step let me practice these virtues. Then finally the highest dedication to the Divine will come. One’s own certificate, ‘I am God’s devotee’, will not be sufficient. ‘You are My true devotee’ That kind of God’s certificate must come to each one of us. That cannot come until we fulfil both the requirements of Dharmyam and Amritam.”

Intensely dwelling on these last eight Shlokas in Chapter 12 throws light on this theme. Let us try to understand and then emulate the values described in these shlokas through some examples from daily life.

ADVESTA SARVABHUTANAM (Absence Of Hatred/ Malice Towards None):

Mrs. Priyadas, the wife of an industrialist, got burgled of her valuables. After a couple of days, the police caught the two thieves who were in their early

twenties. Mr. Priyadas and his wife were called to the police station, and they found that the booty was intact. The police officer asked Mr. Priyadas how he would like to deal with them. Instead of feeling animosity towards them, he replied, “If they resolve not to resort to such negative activities in future, I am willing to employ them in my factory”.

IN MEMORIAM

Sri S M Shenvi (aged 83) an ardent devotee from Hubli was called by Beloved Papa on the 15th of December 2015 at his residence. He was instrumental in setting up the Satsang Samiti in Hubli. He had returned home that evening from a Satsang session and was chanting the holy and all-powerful Ram Nam at the dining table when within a few minutes he passed away. Indeed a very blessed soul!

We pray for Beloved Papa’s blessings on the departed soul for eternal rest at His lotus feet.

ANANDASHRAM NEWS

15,500-CRORE NAMA JAPA YAGNA FOR WORLD PEACE: The total Japa received in the second round of the 15500-Crore Nama Japa Yagna For World Peace

in the month of December 2015 is 244 crores. The grand total of the Japa done so far now stands at 12000 crores.

SPECIAL SATSANG PROGRAMME

By the will and abundant grace of Beloved Papa, a 4-day special Satsang programme was held in the Ashram from the 28th to the 31st of December 2015.

The sessions were based on the sequence of the books written by Beloved Papa:

- In Quest of God
- At the Feet of God
- In the Vision of God
- World is God

The points covered in the sessions were:

- Trying to understand what ‘in quest of God’, ‘at the feet of God’, ‘in the vision of God’ and ‘world is God’ means to us as Sadhakas.
- The quest can only begin when the ideal to be scaled is known. Therefore it is necessary to have a clear concept of God right from the start.
 - o God is Truth, only Reality, the Void, the Force activating all.
- The difficulties that led Beloved Papa and Pujya

Mataji to take up this 'quest' were dwelt upon to understand how various incidents in life turn us towards Him.

- The quest begins by understanding 'who I really am'!
- Papa's talk on spirituality shed light on the fact that everything is done by the One, Eternal, all-pervading Universal Power; to understand this is to understand God and that is spirituality.
- The method suggested by our Masters to remember that everything is done by Him, is to take His holy and all-powerful Name with all faith and devotion with an understanding that it is for remembering Him - meaning remembering that He is behind every thought, word and deed.
- Words of Vinobaji, Mataji and Beloved Papa were discussed:
 - o **Vinobaji:** God has not created a single human being who is bereft of a single good quality. In the form of a good quality, God exists in everyone.
 - o **Mataji:** If you see greatness in others, the same greatness is in yourselves. If you see littleness in others, the same littleness is in yourselves.

- o **Papa:** The world we live in is a school in which observation and experience offer us innumerable opportunities for self-improvement. Nay, the world itself is the Guru or God.
- Some examples from daily life were taken up.
- Anecdotes from the lives of Beloved Papa and others were dwelt upon to see how goodness expresses itself in happenings around us and that everything is happening by God's will alone.
- "Handing over" the sense of doer-ship to the Real Owner - surrendering and realising that everything is actually being done by Him alone.
- The field for serving, the resources to do so and the prompting to act are all given by Him.
- Praying to God and asking Him to make us aware of His presence at all times. Thus holding on to His feet and offering everything to Him - "at the feet of God".
- Pondering over Beloved Papa's words about how every act, whether internal or external, is happening by His will and power alone gave great clarity about the fact that there is no 'individual

will' and that everything happens by His will and through the Universal Power/ Spirit.

- Swami Ranganathanandaji's words further explained that initially it may appear that individual is different from the universal spirit, but later we come to realise that individual is merely a reflection of Universal Spirit.
- Thus surrender becomes instrumental in taking us to the next level where everything is seen as the manifestation of God - therefore 'in the vision of God'. This is possible through inward journey - turning the mind from without to within and feeling His oneness with everyone and everything. Thus we can bring in the God-dimension in all thoughts words and deeds and realise that the 'world is God'.

The 4-day special Satsang sessions concluded on this note with a prayer to Beloved Papa to enable all to retain what He gave through these sessions and to put that into practice.

A special Ram Nam session at the Samadhi Mandir was held from 9:30 pm till midnight and then the New Year 2016 was ushered in with the reading of the Prasad Message and Ram Nam.

FROM THE EDITOR

Any Mantra serves as the link between us and God. Holding on to the Mantra is the easiest Sadhana which would help us not only to expand our vision but also to take us to the Source of all sources from where all thoughts, words and deeds emanate.

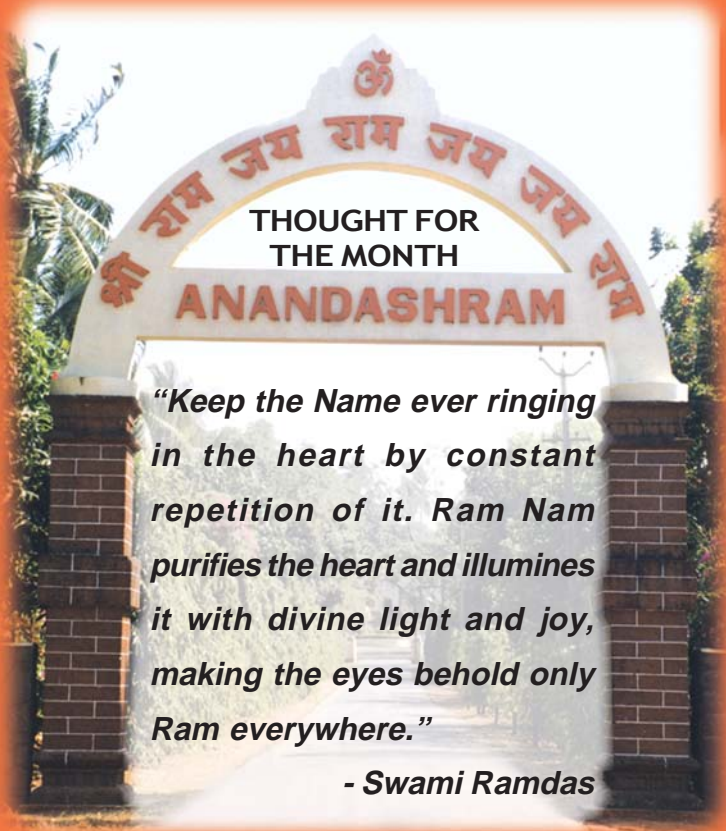
The Mantra when chanted with the right attitude becomes the link, saviour, purifier, joy-giver and protector from all harm because of its intrinsic power. What is required while chanting is that we should have immense faith and do it steadily and regularly, and with Vairagya. It helps arrest the wandering of the mind, gradually turns the mind inward, leads to detachment, then to the Source and finally gets effaced by itself.

May all of us be blessed to have these words as an undercurrent while hearing and chanting any Mantra so that our progress on the spiritual path gets hastened.

This month's issue of THE VISION highlights the various dimensions of Mantra initiation.

— *MUKTANANDA*

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***“Keep the Name ever ringing
in the heart by constant
repetition of it. Ram Nam
purifies the heart and illumines
it with divine light and joy,
making the eyes behold only
Ram everywhere.”***

- Swami Ramdas

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