

it. His friends wondered what he was so keenly looking for, and questioned him. He said that he could see a beautiful idol of his chosen deity in the piece of granite. His friends could not understand how a gross unimpressive rough piece of stone could contain a form of his chosen deity. The sculptor then started chiseling the stone. His steady, systematic and dedicated effort resulted in the stone being converted into an arresting statue of the Lord, and all this without any other input from outside. In other words, removing the unwanted particles brought out what was lying hidden in the piece of stone.

Similarly, by removing the dirt - the negative tendencies in us - we become embodiments of all the virtues. What is this dirt? Self-centredness, desire, anger, possessiveness, malice, jealousy, greed, infatuation, hatred, vengeance, attachments etc. When the process of cleansing (spiritual practices) starts, the person begins to show signs of being contented, sober, humble, compassionate, soft, broadminded, selfless, simple, loving and helpful to all. Such a life gives him fullness inside and values outside. This trend slowly widens his circle of love and finally he embraces the whole universe as his own.

- MUKTANANDA

*Om Sri Ram gai Ram jaijai Ram*

ॐ श्री राम जय राम जय जय राम

*Om Sri Ram gai Ram gai gai Ram*

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### LIFE

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THE long winding creeper of my Life  
 Grew and grew through countless aeons  
 Taking many a turn and curve.  
 Now at last it has blossomed.  
 Full bloom it now bears -  
 Fragrant with immortal joy.  
 Its loveliness is beyond compare  
 Beauty, splendour and grace  
 Exhale from its being;  
 Its every filament is filled  
 With the sweetest sap of Love.  
 Now joy, light and love  
 Sing in tune to one Life -  
 One eternal refrain.  
 This is life.

- Swami Ramdas

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<i>A Monthly Magazine</i>		
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## BE SELFLESS AND FEARLESS

*By Swami Ramdas*

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A spiritual aspirant should note that the way of the divine transformation lies in becoming perfectly selfless and fearless. Such a momentous change in his life is born of inner illumination and freedom. It does not depend upon the course of action he might follow in his attitude towards the external world. The paths of action are varied. Violence and non-violence are mere names for one who has realised the Truth. His life flows spontaneously along any line of action, divinely guided and inspired. His life is a sacrifice, a selfless offering to the eternal Beloved.



Often the aspirant is perplexed as to the conduct of his life when he views the apparent contradiction in the teachings of Great Souls. All the Great Ones strive to lead the struggling soul to a state of spiritual consummation in which the ego sense is completely absent. They lay emphasis upon the attainment of a spiritual condition wherein God is realised to be all in all and the individual sense is a pure myth. The aspirant should follow any path which suits his temperament,

so far as his relation with the world is concerned. He must know that he is a willing and cheerful instrument in the hands of his Beloved for the service of humanity. God and humanity are one.

The progress of a spiritual aspirant on the Divine path can be determined by the understanding he has developed regarding the so called death. Death and destruction are necessary changes in the external aspects of nature. The Self is immortal. So to be afraid of death is to deny the Self. His body must go one day or other. Its dissolution is inevitable. But the sole aim is to utilize all its powers, so long as it is alive, for achieving the Supreme Goal, viz: the realization of Truth and the consequent dedication of his life to the welfare of mankind.

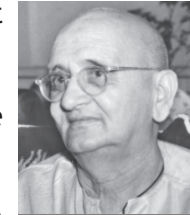
Let the Divine within you be your guide. Feel that the great Presence is in you and about you. Behold his light everywhere. Be brave and ready to lay all that you are and all that you have at the altar of his service. Live selflessly, act selflessly, and be filled with the joy of the Eternal. Be a flame of the expression of the universal Reality. Shed your fears and doubts. Be fixed like a rock in the awareness of your deathless nature and earn everlasting peace, power and freedom.

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### BELOVED PAPA SWAMI RAMDAS ANSWERS

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**Question:** Can you talk to us about Ahimsa?



**Papa:** Ahimsa is a quality of the heart more than any physical restraint. The mind must be free from hate. A man who does not hate, but always loves everybody is really observing Ahimsa or non-violence. Externally, a man may appear to be harsh, but inwardly he may be all-loving. So, Ahimsa is a quality of the heart and it is developed by tuning our heart with God. When one is free from lust, jealousy, malice and wrath, he has attained true Ahimsa or utter freedom from hate. His life is then leavened wholly with love, all his actions bear the stamp of love. He means well and never ill, in all that he says and does. He becomes forgiveness itself. He has in him no thought of revenge or retaliation. He does good even to those who do evil to him. He bears all things patiently and calmly, without grumbling or blaming. One who has developed this nature by the grace of God is truly non-violent and is a God-man.

**Question:** Why should animals not be able to realize God?

**Papa:** God has not gifted them with reasoning faculty whereas man has been granted that unique privilege. Man has the intellect, which discriminates between right and wrong, true and false, ignorance and knowledge, and thereby enables him to distinguish the real from the unreal. This discriminative faculty is lacking in animals. They go only by instinct and impulse. If we are actuated only by such impulses and instincts, we shall be no better than animals. If we use our reasoning faculty and decide before we undertake any action, whether it is right or wrong, and thereby avoid wrong, we shall be acting wisely and can march onwards. This kind of judgement is not possible for animals. So animals are not able to progress towards the state of complete freedom from the thralldom of desire and action and rise to a consciousness in which they can experience the self-existent, immortal and perfect joy within. It is rightly said that a man who uses his reasoning faculty is a Purusha – man, if not, he is Pashu – animal.

**Question:** What part have the animals to play in their relations with man?

**Papa:** The question had better be put the other way, that is, what relationship should man have with animals? Man must be kind and good to them and help them in their onward evolution by loving them, looking after them with all care, and then enabling them to rise to the higher state of life like the human. It has been found that life evolves from a lower state to a higher one and gradually reaches the highest which is God. So animals are at a certain stage which marks their evolution to a higher state of life. Higher than the animal state is the human state, and higher than the human is the Divine. So we must help their evolution to a human life. The way is to love them and take care of them with all tenderness and give them the best of our company, because in human association they are bound to rise from a lower to a higher state.

**Question:** When an animal in the company of man develops the consciousness of right or wrong according to the human standard, instead of its own, is that of importance?

**Papa:** Surely, it is of importance because, in its own way, it sees things right and wrong from an utterly selfish standpoint. Whatever it gets for satisfying its hunger, sense-needs, etc., it thinks to be right, and

whatever comes against, it takes to be evil and fights it. But a true human being is not like that. He is ready to sacrifice his own pleasure in order to give joy to another. This nature is found only in human beings and not in animals, except it be as between mother and offspring, because even the animal is willing to sacrifice its own interest in favour of its offspring. The animal does not do so with regard to those other than her own young ones.

Man is a nobler animal. He can sacrifice himself for the good of others whenever he sees suffering, whether the sufferer is his kith and kin, or beyond the circle of his family. He is on a higher plane than the animal and so his company surely elevates the animal, just as a savage in the company of a civilised man learns what civilisation is and evolves himself unconsciously. When a civilised man comes in contact with a saintly person, he evolves to a higher spiritual state in which his vision is still more expanded than before. He looks upon everybody, even those beyond the circle of his family, with great love, and serves them as he serves his intimate relations and friends. In that way, every individual, whether animal or human, gradually evolves to a higher consciousness which is one with the Divine Consciousness.

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### WORDS OF PUJYA MATAJI KRISHNABAI

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A Sadhaka should be in constant introspection over his own thoughts, words and actions. Others outside do not have to tell him. He can, if he turns the spotlight within, judge for himself how and where he has erred. All forms of selfishness should be rooted out from his heart and mind.



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Whatever you do, think for yourself if it will mean making the others around you miserabale. If so desist from doing it.

\*\*\*

Papa attaches the highest importance to service of one's parents. In fact, service of one's parents is service of the Guru also. The only way you can get over bad times is by rendering sincere and loving service to one's parents and other elders at home. That will help to avert any calamities that might otherwise confront you.

\*\*\*

Does any school allow its children to simply come to the classes, sit for some time and go away without

passing a single examination? The Ashram is Papa's school. You come here to learn Universal Love and Service. What is the use of coming here year after year and staying here for months at a stretch if you do not imbibe even the rudiments of Universal Love and Service? How can you prepare yourself to appear for "Papa's examinations" when you have not gone even beyond 'A', 'B' and 'C' alphabets?

\*\*\*

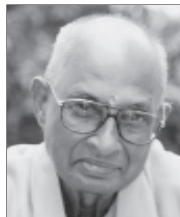
The Guru Mantra can be of immense help not only to lend strength and power to the Sadhaka to quell the Asuric forces within him but also to liberate him from even the pull of Daivic forces and to ultimately rise beyond both good and evil to the Supreme.

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#### PUJYA SWAMI SATCHIDANANDAJI ANSWERS

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**Question:** How can I intensify my sadhana through Japa? Is anything else necessary?



**Swamiji:** When you continue your Sadhana – chanting His holy Name constantly – contemplate on Him as the Absolute Existence, beyond all names and forms, who has

manifested as the entire universe and as one seated in our heart, and dedicate everything you do as His service. Your heart will be gradually purified and it will be rid of all thoughts, except God-thought. From the state of your mind, you can make out whether you are progressing or not. Later, the God-thought also disappears, making the mind perfectly still, for longer and longer periods. It is in this state of stillness that God reveals Himself. It is said that when such experience comes, one is not conscious of the body and the outside world. The mind having become still and the ego having disappeared, the experience of our oneness with the Eternal Infinite Existence alone remains.

**Question:** After reading Beloved Papa's words that Ram Nam is sweet, I have been wondering as to when will it taste sweet to me?

**Swamiji:** The sweetness of Ram Nam does not come easily. It comes only after long and intense practice. The nature of the sweetness is such that the mind craves for further enjoyment of the same. So, if Ram Nam is chanted for some time, the mind, losing all its restlessness, enters a state of stillness again. Only when one has enjoyed the sweetness of the Name,

one will wish to have it again. Till then one has to go by faith in the words of the Guru. By repeated efforts and regular practice, one can enjoy the sweetness for longer and longer periods until the mind loses itself in the Name.

**Question:** As Ram Nam will purify me from within, how am I to react to the situations outside so that they do not become detrimental to my spiritual progress?

**Swamiji:** Incessant chanting of Ram Nam gives us constant remembrance of the Divine. With this background, peace and tranquillity is maintained. But, suddenly something happening outside makes us forget God and we react to the situation very unfavourably – either by getting angry or by becoming depressed. To avoid this, we should try to maintain our equilibrium by practising not to react to any situation immediately.

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### WHY DO GOOD PEOPLE SUFFER?

*By Swami Tejomayananda*

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“Why do good people suffer or why do bad things happen to good people?” This question seems to be very common these days. It seems as though good people get the brunt of all suffering,



while evil-doers enjoy life. But if we observe closely, we see that everyone undergoes suffering in some form. Keeping this in mind, our question becomes meaningless. Just because a person is good does not mean there would be no suffering in his/her life.

But what do we mean by ‘good’? In Sanskrit, ‘sadhu’ is the word used for a good person. Sadhu comes from the word ‘saadh’, meaning ‘to accomplish’. If we work for ourselves and achieve great things, there is nothing laudable about it, but if we help others to achieve their goals, then it is an accomplishment. If someone is good to you and you reciprocate, that is common courtesy. But if someone is harming you, and despite that you continue to wish that person well without expecting anything in return, it is real goodness. A sadhu bathing in the river saw a drowning insect. He saved it from drowning and was stung in return. Again, the insect fell back into the river and the sadhu pulled it out of the water and placed it under a shady tree. On seeing this, a person asked the sadhu, “Why did you do that?” He replied, “The insect did not give up its nature, so why should I?”

How can we achieve this goodness in our lives? To reach any target, we must first have a goal. Similarly,



for achieving goodness, we must have a standard of goodness which is known to us, because only then can we rise up to the required levels. As long as we see differences in the world around us, true goodness will not manifest. This can be achieved only when we become aware of our oneness with others. An example will illustrate this point better. Every organ of my body is part of one whole. If the finger goes into the eye, there is instant forgiveness, because of the complete identification with the finger.

Now that we know what is good, let us see what suffering is. Objective suffering befalls all people, good or bad. Situations leading to suffering could have their roots in past actions. Objectively, the existence of pain or any other physical handicap cannot be denied, but the degree of sorrow, this leads to, is entirely subjective. Riches or positions of power do not guarantee happiness. People become miserable over small matters. If a person claims that he is good and is suffering, while the dishonest person is flourishing, we can be very sure that the person is not good. For a good man, the real suffering is to do something against his convictions. Suppose a pure vegetarian is faced with a situation of remaining hungry or eating beef,

the chances are that the former option would be more acceptable.

All our spiritual practices cannot eliminate suffering, but they protect the mind and make suffering acceptable, just as on a rainy day, we cannot stop the rain, but can protect ourselves from getting wet with an umbrella. Bhagavan Krishna says, "A good person never suffers." By some logic we feel that suffering and enjoyment is related to past actions. If we observe at the subtle level, we find immediate results of our actions. The moment a good thought enters our mind, we feel elation, and similarly a wicked thought causes agitation.

Real suffering is when we lose our goodness. Compromising with goodness is the greatest suffering. Even though superficially it may appear that evil doers are flourishing, it should not be an excuse to compromise. The problem arises when one does not have an ideal or when one is not able to live up to one's ideal. But the greatest problem is when one believes that the ideal is not worth living up to and has lost its utility. Remember, a good man will stand by his convictions, because "If you do not stand for something, you will fall for everything."

*Source: <http://www.speakingtree.in>*



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**DEAR CHILDREN**

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One day a man saw an old lady, stranded on the side of the road, but even in the dim light of day, he could see she needed help. So he pulled up in front of her Mercedes and got out. His Pontiac was still sputtering when he approached her.

Even with the smile on his face, she looked worried. No one had stopped to help for the last hour or so. Was he going to hurt her? He didn't look safe; he looked poor and hungry.

He could see that she was frightened, standing out there in the cold. He knew how she felt. It was that chill which only fear can put in you.

He said, 'I'm here to help you, ma'am. Why don't you wait in the car where it's warm? By the way, my name is Bryan Anderson.'

Well, all she had was a flat tyre, but for an old lady, that was bad enough. Bryan crawled under the car looking for a place to put the jack, skinning his knuckles a time or two. Soon he was able to change the tyre. But he had to get dirty and his hands hurt.

As he was tightening up the lug nuts, she rolled down the window and began to talk to him. She told

him that she was from St. Louis and was only just passing through. She couldn't thank him enough for coming to her aid.

Bryan just smiled as he closed her trunk. The lady asked how much she owed him. Any amount would have been all right with her. She already imagined all the awful things that could have happened had he not stopped. Bryan never thought twice about being paid. This was not a job to him. This was helping someone in need, and God knows there were plenty, who had given him a hand in the past. He had lived his whole life that way, and it never occurred to him to act any other way.

He told her that if she really wanted to pay him back, the next time she saw someone who needed help, she could give that person the assistance they needed, and Bryan added, 'And think of me.'

He waited until she started her car and drove off. It had been a cold and depressing day, but he felt good as he headed for home, disappearing into the twilight.

A few miles down the road the lady saw a small cafe. She went in to grab a bite to eat, and take the chill off before she made the last leg of her trip home.

It was a dingy looking restaurant. Outside were two old gas pumps. The whole scene was unfamiliar to her.

The waitress came over and brought a clean towel to wipe her wet hair. She had a sweet smile, one that even being on her feet for the whole day couldn't erase. The lady noticed the waitress was nearly eight months pregnant, but she never let the strain and aches change her attitude. The old lady wondered how someone who had so little could be so giving to a stranger. Then she remembered Bryan...

After the lady finished her meal, she paid with a hundred dollar bill. The waitress quickly went to get change for her hundred dollar bill, but the old lady had slipped right out the door. She was gone by the time the waitress came back. The waitress wondered where the lady could be. Then she noticed something written on the napkin.

There were tears in her eyes when she read what the lady wrote: 'You don't owe me anything. I have been there too. Somebody once helped me out, the way I'm helping you. If you really want to pay me back, here is what you do: Do not let this chain of love end with you.'

Under the napkin were four more \$100.

Well, there were tables to clear, sugar bowls to fill, and people to serve, but the waitress made it through another day.

That night when she got home from work and climbed into bed, she was thinking about the money and what the lady had written. How could the lady have known how much she and her husband needed it? With the baby due next month, it was going to be hard...

She knew how worried her husband was, and as he lay sleeping next to her, she whispered soft and low, 'Everything's going to be all right. I love you, Bryan Anderson.'

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### MATURITY HAS NO AGE

*By Maithili Basrur*

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*(This is a small incident which I and my mother, Nandini Basrur, came across while travelling from C.S.T. to Wadala in Mumbai and I would like to share it with all.)*

One day, my mother and I, were travelling in the local train. We had already got a place to sit and

thankfully the train was not crowded as it usually is during rush hours. We boarded the train from C.S.T. and had to get down at Wadala. We were just chit-chatting when two small kids got into the compartment. One kid looked like he was from a decent middle class family in a neat school uniform, clean school shoes, neatly combed hair and a cool school bag whereas the other small boy who looked younger than the other boy, was dressed in a little shabby school uniform fitting his thin and lanky structure, rubber slippers, oiled hair and a tattered school bag on his little shoulders.

The well dressed boy was standing in the corridor of the train and jumping around here and there whereas the other small boy who was shabbily dressed came and sat beside my mother. After sometime, the little boy beside my mother started feeling sleepy. He again and again sat upright trying not to doze off.

My mother felt very bad for the poor little kid and asked him, “What happened child, you are feeling sleepy? Tired of attending lectures in school? Which standard are you in?”

To that the child replied, “No aunty, nothing like that. I love to attend school. I am in the 5th standard

and I study in the municipality school. This other boy with me is in the 6th standard and he studies in a very good school near my school. My father is a labourer, who works at construction sites and my mother is a house maid. She does house chores of washing utensils, clothes, mopping and cleaning to earn a living.

My father doesn't have a steady income and my mother works hard to earn a living. My mother has told me that I have grown up now and I must also help the family in some way or the other to earn a living. I stay in a hutment and there are many such hutments around my house. We get water in our locality from 12:30 am in the night to 5:30 am in the morning. After that we don't have water for the entire day. People usually fill and store the water to utilize it for the entire day but they have to sit overnight to do that work. So I do that work for them. I sit overnight from 12:30 am to 5:30 am in the morning and fill water in buckets and other storage containers in many houses. I get paid 50 rupees per month for each house. Like that, I fill water for nearly 30 houses every night. Also, this boy with me is the son of a person where my mother works as a house maid. I drop him to his school and pick him up every day as his school is near to mine

and the timings are also the same. His mother pays me 200 rupees a month. In this way I help my parents in a small way. I didn't get proper sleep yesterday night that's why I was dozing off".

My mother asked, "So when do you study and do your home work? When do you sleep?"

The little boy replied, "I sleep after morning 5:30 am till about 8:00 am. My school timings are from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm so I go home and sleep for 2-3 hours and I finish my homework and studies after that. My mother feels bad for me because I get tired but I told her that my school teacher says fruits of hard work are always sweet."

Hearing this all the people sitting around us were dumbstruck. We all were astounded looking at the maturity and sense of responsibility of a 5th grade boy. Our hearts melted. My mother gave him 2 oranges from her bag which she carried for us to eat and some people who were sitting around us gave him some money.

Looking at this, the boy panicked saying, "No!!! I don't want money! My mother will beat me up and think that I might have begged in the train. She will

ask me where all this money came from and also my dad will get angry with me! I don't want any money or anything please. My mother has told me, no matter what the situation, we will never beg but will earn money only through efforts and hard work. Please I don't want any money." Saying so, he did not even touch the money which the ladies were giving him but since my mom insisted that he must take the oranges, he took them with a big smile and thanking us got down at Sewri along with the other kid.

That boy left a permanent memory in my heart. He was only 10 years old and yet so much maturity! So much understanding and such a sense of responsibility! Someone has truly said maturity is a high price to pay for growing up. Maturity has no age. In some people, maturity comes because of consequences. Some people are given sermons for many years by teachers, parents and still they don't develop it but, for some people, life itself creates certain situations which make them mature at a very young age. Just like this small boy. Indeed, such small incidents teach us so many different things and we truly learn so much from them...

*Source: Kanara Saraswat, Jan. 2012*

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**ALAS, TOO MUCH REVERENCE...**

*By Kishore Asthana*

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The Master smiled and picked up a book bound in gold thread. It was his life story, they said. He opened it at random, looked at the illuminated letters and then smiled again. They had written down the words; but the spirit, the essence of what he was, did not exist in the book. The messenger appeared to have overtaken the message. But so it had been for all conventional religions and, sadly, so was the fate of his teaching too.

The Golden Book, also called The World, reminded him of a recipe which listed ingredients and mentioned how they should be mixed and processed, but did not give the taste or nourishment that only eating the food could provide. Yes, that was perhaps what this fancy book resembled - or just a menu card in ornate covering. Surely with the gold binding and cover, it must belong to an expensive inn.

He laughed out loud, startling the girl putting water by his side. Whatever possessed his followers to glorify him thus? Why should they think that binding his life story in expensive covers would make it any richer? If it was innately rich, even a simple cover would suffice.

He had never understood the desire of people to embellish everything they thought was rich and gorgeous. They made golden thrones for him wherever he went, forgetting the lessons of simplicity which he taught. That he refused to sit on them made no difference to the faithful. They were also doing the same thing to his life story. After he died they would probably gold plate every word he had uttered and embalm his memory in amber and myrrh.

They had done it to other Masters and their books in the past. He wondered how his words would be able to live then. Did they not understand that words and deeds were also alive, that they had a vitality and joy of their own, which suffocated and died when they were idolized? He wanted his words to be used as living things, not as holy symbols. Paradoxically, the Book also mentioned this very teaching of his. The faithful called it divine wisdom, but did not act on it.

The Master realized that too much reverence was as bad, perhaps worse than too little reverence, as far as understanding something was concerned.

*Source: The Speaking Tree, The Times of India*

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**SPIRITUAL REFLECTIONS**

*By Swami Ramdas*

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**SELF-CONTROL:** Everyone knows that if he wishes to be free from the clutches of illusion, which the material world has imposed on him, he should, in the first place, control the mind which is swayed by various harmful passions and longings. It presupposes that the man given to gusts of anger has an unbalanced mind. The man who is given to fits of jealousy has a diseased mind. Again a man possessed by greed and malice has his mind on a veritable fire. Therefore, it is well for him to turn his mental gaze within him, where dwells the eternal God of perfect peace and bliss. When he attunes his soul with this supreme Spirit, he will be released from the hold of the base passions of his lower nature. When the mind is calm and tranquil, he will live a life surcharged with divine light and peace. A man has to live a true, good and righteous life, not merely for the reward he would get for it at a future period, or in some distant worlds after he departs this, but because he derives invaluable benefit here and now. This should not be forgotten. So the equanimity of the mind achieved through self-control is an end in itself.



**TRUE SERVICE:** How great and noble is human life when it is made to flow along the channel of useful, elevating and helpful activities! Life means service. Life's purpose is this and nothing else. We can serve by thought, word and action. A thought of love and goodwill that goes from us towards others, immensely helps. A kind and healing word uttered relieves a load of sorrow from the hearts of those who are in trouble. An active aid rendered to those who are beset with pains and afflictions is a source of incalculable solace. One who lives such a life is a true devotee and servant of God. The dedication of his life to Him has this aim and significance. He becomes really God's own in thought, word and deed. No philosophy can be worth anything if it points out a goal which conflicts with this ideal of service.

**SILENT MEDITATION:** When you sit silent and serene, all your senses at rest; in the awareness of your Divine Consciousness, you feel that you are not an individual tied down to the desires of the flesh, but a purified and enlightened being filled with a spiritual radiance which coalesces your life with God's own life. Now all the discordant notes and all the chaotic forces that are at work on the surface of nature around you bear no significance to you. You soar and fly into the

ethereal regions wherein you commune with God and attain to the knowledge of your identity with Him. Your life is a song whose harmonious vibrations seem to permeate, enliven and sanctify all that exists. You have crossed the border of mortality into the kingdom of immortality. You have achieved a position which has been yours from time immemorial; it has been truly your birthright.

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#### EPISTLES OF SWAMI RAMDAS

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Beloved Ram,

...The Lord is Infinite Love. Our body is the temple. Our heart is the throne. And He, the supreme Paramatman, is seated on this throne in all His magnificence and glory... His Divine Power or Shakti is responsible for all activity, movement and change in the universe.

...Sages point out surrender to God's will, i.e., to His Power or Shakti, as the path of Self-realisation. This surrender is effected only by the total eradication of the ego. Let us know once for all that we are merely instruments in His hands. He is the Sutradhari and we are every second being made to dance like puppets to His will. Consciousness of this truth must be with us

always. Hence we are asked to keep up His remembrance unceasingly. ...Earthly honour and dishonour, praise and blame, loss and gain, should have no importance for us. Ours is to do the work entrusted to us by Him in the field of action in which He has chosen to place us.

Bhakta is He; Bhagawan is He. As Bhakta, He pretends to be different from Himself; though Bhagawan, He pretends to be seeking Himself. Wonderful is His Lila!

Let us give up all doubts, fears and anxieties, and merge our mind in the sweet sound of His glorious name. Let us sing, with all love and devotion, His great attributes. He is our Mother. We are His children. He is our all in all. Life is sweet and blessed when it is lived for His sake. There is nothing so blissful as devotion to His lotus feet. All glory to Him and His name.

*Ramdas*

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#### ANANDASHRAM NEWS

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**RAM NAM AND SPIRITUAL RETREAT:** The Ram Nam and Spiritual Retreat for friends from Kerala and Tamil Nadu were held in the Ashram from 26th to the



28th of January 2012. The sessions were attended by quite a number of friends who took part enthusiastically in the interactive sessions. The underlying message was to bring in spirituality in day-to-day life.

The session urged the spiritual aspirants that their first effort is to know that they have been blessed with a precious gift called the positive mind. Only through such a mind one can go beyond the realm of mind. The participants also became aware that constant vigilance is required lest we might slip into the clutches of the down pulling tendency of the mind which will drag the aspirant away from the Core. What ultimately emerged was that the mind should always dwell on the positive aspect while dealing with events and individuals. This will gradually pave the way to understand that the Core is nothing but LOVE. How a devotee is led to this goal through Ashram's triple sadhana of Nama, Dhyana and Seva also figured in the session.

Bhajans, video clip, PPTs on words of Beloved Papa and other Masters enabled the participants to understand all the above points in depth.

The collective effort of all the participants to take to the inward journey gave everyone a glimpse of the blissful experience of peace and calmness, though for

a short time. The participants got the message of Beloved Papa that, to sustain this tempo resorting to periodical Satsang is a must. This led to detailed discussions on various aspects of Satsang.

As usual the recap, which was the last item, enabled everyone to relive the lively discussions. Thus ended the three day energizing experience for all the participants.

**15,500-CRORE NAMA JAPA YAGNA FOR WORLD PEACE:** The total Nama Japa for world peace done during the month of December 2011 is 176 crores. The grand total of the Japa done so far now stands at 1151 crores.

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#### FROM THE EDITOR

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Every individual is essentially and intrinsically an embodiment of all virtues. But because of the predominance of negative tendencies, these positive values remain hidden in us. Leading a life spiritual hastens the process of removing the dirt and bringing out the latent qualities in us.

The following anecdote will clarify it better: A sculptor and a couple of his friends were having an evening stroll. A piece of granite stone was lying on the side of the road and the sculptor intently looked at