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The Vision

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

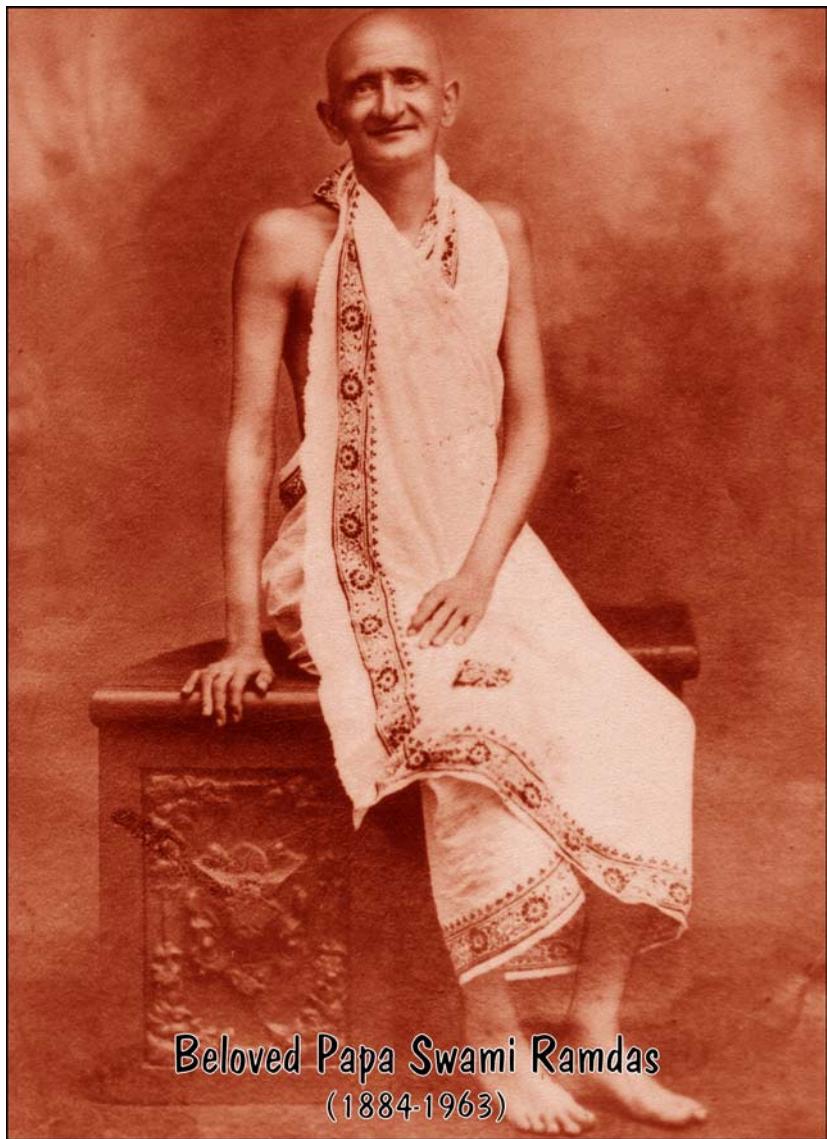


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Beloved Papa Swami Ramdas
(1884-1963)

Om Sri Ram jai Ram jai jai Ram

ॐ श्री राम जय राम जय जय राम

Om Sri Ram jai Ram jai jai Ram

CHANGE TO UNIVERSAL SELF

LIFE in tune with God
 Is life imbued with equal vision.
 The canker that eats into the heart
 And disturbs its balance
 Is the love of self and its brood.
 Expand love to all alike,
 And the individual self
 Will change to universal Self.
 Now the music of life is filled
 With the symphony of the Eternal;
 Then the splendour of God in you –
 Love, compassion and peace –
 Shall shine on all with the same glory.

- Swami Ramdas

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THE VISION

A Monthly Magazine

Anandashram

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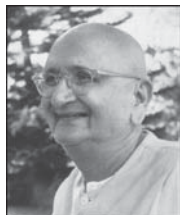
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UNITY OF MANKIND

By Swami Ramdas

(Beloved Papa's 130th Jayanti will be celebrated on the 15th of April. On this day The Vision fervently prays for His blessings on all devotees for their speedy spiritual progress culminating in realising their oneness with Him.)



We are inheritors of immortality. Our life at the source is universal and so free from all limitations. It is not conditioned by the apparent diversity. It is ever free, infinite and eternal. It is always glowing with the light of supreme knowledge, power and joy. We are the revelations of this exalted Life that informs, inspires and vitalises all existences. Being the shapes and forms made up of the same five elements, we are physiologically one. Intellectually and emotionally we are gifted with the same potentialities and are, therefore, psychologically identical with the omnipresent, cosmic mind. As the fundamental principle of the great Truth, in which there is no duality, which is the basis and support of these outer manifestations – a still, silent and immutable Spirit

beyond the implications of name, form and movement – we are absolutely one without a second.

The Indian philosophy explains in emphatic certitude that ignorance is the only cause of disharmony prevailing in the life of mankind – ignorance of the true nature of Truth underlying the visible expressions of it. So knowledge is rightly held to be the means for dispelling the illusions of the fettered life. When the individual realises the eternal, infinite and unconditioned qualities of his being, the chains of creation fall from his soul. The mantle of obscurity and ignorance slips down and he stands revealed in his illumined vesture of knowledge, power and joy. The ego-self of a dim and cramped consciousness is sublimated into the infinite splendour of the Divine Self, liberated into an all-comprehensive consciousness. The individual is verily an embodiment of a cosmic and ultra-cosmic Reality. This Reality is indivisible – supreme oneness is its one attribute; hence there is nothing besides It.

Therefore, viewed from the awareness of this transcendent Truth, wars, exploitations, racial animosities, religious disputes, social inequalities, the tyrannies of wealth, authority and selfish power are

clearly seen as the maledict offspring of sheer ignorance. We dwell on the same earth, breathe the same air, nourish ourselves with the same produce of nature, are imbued with vitality derived from the same central source of all power. Truly, a subtle link of intimate kinship in all the outer aspects of life and a deep-rooted consciousness of unity in the inner realities of it are the whole truth about the riddle of the individual and cosmic revelation.

When you are raised to this exalted and all-inclusive consciousness you cannot but exclaim:

“The entire Earth itself is my father or mother country and all beings on the face of it are my brothers and sisters. The great Spirit that lives and moves in me is also animating and activating all beings and creatures in the world. For me the racial, national and sectarian distinctions have no significance. I belong to the world. I feel for all. I love all and I cheerfully sacrifice my time, energy and thought for the service of all. Knowledge of my Divine essence and origin has set me free...

“...The walls of national boundaries have no existence in my eternal, all-pervading life. The irresistible inundations of my universal vision envelop

all the world. The evil tendencies: hate, greed, lust and wrath are foreign to my resplendent being, thrilling as it does with compassion and goodwill for all beings of the human race. My very hands stretch forth, elongate and widen infinitely to close around and clasp the entire humanity in one ecstatic embrace of love. Love is the light and glory of my soul which is one with the Soul of the universe. This is my unassailable status in the cosmic phenomena.

“I look upon the spirit of international jealousy and competition, the insensate ambition for material power and glory that has now seized the hearts of warring peoples on this earth, as a demoniac exultation from the degenerate human nature. I know that this spirit can be suppressed, crushed and destroyed by the omnipotent power of universal love, which is the pristine quality of my supreme Divine nature. I join with all my being the outstanding spiritual luminaries of the day in their arduous and selfless endeavours for awakening mankind to a consciousness of unity and friendship. I have realised that I am not a citizen of any one country; I am the child of the Divine Parent of all beings and creatures and, therefore, I am a citizen of the world.”

WORDS OF BELOVED PAPA SWAMI RAMDAS

God – The Source Of Real Peace: If we leave God out of calculation, we will not live a life of peace. If we want real peace, we must think of God, talk of God, do all our actions in the name of God and live in God. There is no peace in the world because people have forgotten God. Once a friend asked Ramdas why there is so much misery in the world. Ramdas' reply was that the world has lost faith in God and that if only the world remembers God, there would be a better state of affairs. Actually we could bring heaven on earth.



Japa Must Be Continuous And Done With Whole-Hearted Love For God: Ramdas' experience was that he did not do any meditation in the early stages of his spiritual discipline. He was repeating only the holy name of God and as a result of it all restlessness of the mind ceased and he began to get superconscious experiences by the power of the Name itself. One day when he sat for meditation, he lost himself in that consciousness

and felt his union with God. So he found the repetition of the holy name of God was an all-sufficient spiritual discipline. The repetition can take the soul to the highest spiritual realisation. The devotee who is given to the constant repetition of God's name need not observe any other discipline. But it must be borne in mind that the repetition must be continuous and done with whole-hearted love and devotion for God. If these conditions are fulfilled, the devotee may be perfectly sure that he will have the vision of God and realise Him in all His aspects and enjoy ineffable bliss and peace.

Spiritual Discipline A Must: Stillness of the mind alone can enable you to realise the presence of God within and without you. The practice of concentration is essential. Reading any number of books cannot grant us that mental peace which spiritual discipline can. We must strive to make the mind dwell upon God by thinking of Him and His attributes, and by offering ourselves entirely to Him in thought, word and deed. If we do this by taking His holy Name, we shall be able to obtain the peace that we aspire for and retain it for all

time. Of course, there will be setbacks now and again because a short-time practice cannot enable us to have permanent peace.

So what we have to do is, we must persistently go on remembering God by taking His holy Name. From this it is clear that mere reading of books is not the way. Reading can give us the understanding of the great goal we have to reach, but to achieve it we must have recourse to some mental discipline.

Sri Ramakrishna gives a beautiful example, which throws light upon your question. A man takes up a cookery book and reads it. It describes how one has to get certain articles for preparing food – potatoes and other vegetables, sugar, milk, bread, butter, etc., from the market and how the food has to be prepared. The person reads the instructions over and over again day after day. Will he be able to appease his hunger? What he has to do is, having learnt the instructions well, to lay aside the book, go to the bazaar, get the things, prepare the food and eat. So also, reading religious books is essential to know what you have to do. But you must practice what you have learnt instead of merely reading the books again and again.

WORDS OF PUJYA MATAJI KRISHNABAI

Do not think it is so difficult to practise Nama, Dhyana and Seva. Don't you have the name of your loved one on your lips constantly? When, for example, you utter the name of your child, immediately his image comes up in your mind. You take special joy in uttering his name and calling him. Call Papa as you would call your beloved child, take the Guru Mantra with the same joy and fervour as you would the name of your child. Take another example: When you say the word "milk", don't you immediately bring to mind the whiteness, purity and sweetness of milk? So, also, when you take the Guru Mantra you must bring to mind the Guru's eternal attributes.



Guru is God Himself, who has come in a human form to teach us. Now, if we human beings are to be taught how to attain God, we can be so taught only by one who is of our own form and speaks as we do. God has so devised this vast creation of His that no other creature on earth can teach and guide man except man himself. So, Papa (God) assumed the forms of so many Gurus to teach us how to walk on the

path. All Gurus are one and the same as they are all God Himself who has come in their forms to teach us. Only their disciples fight among themselves claiming that their Guru is better than another's Guru. But, even these quarrels are like those of children fighting among themselves, saying "My mother is greater than yours." As for the Gurus themselves, there is no difference whatsoever among them. When we worship our Guru, we worship God only.

(Speaking about her spiritual experiences) Though Papa was always impressing on me to do Nama, Dhyana and Seva simultaneously, at first I never attempted the latter two but concentrated all my attention on Ram Nam and did not do anything else but that. But, as I went on chanting Ram Nam more and more, it gave me strength to do Dhyana, to dwell my mind on Papa's divine attributes like 'Thou art Eternal, Thou art Infinite, Thou art seated in the hearts of all' and so on. Then, both Nama and Dhyana gave me the strength to serve everyone, looking on such Seva as that of Papa Himself. With the lips I chanted the Name, with my mind I thought constantly of Eternal, Infinite Papa and with the hands I served those around me, serving each one according to his or her need.

We should be careful to serve others only according to their need. We should serve them to the extent they want our service – neither less nor more, respecting their own wishes in the matter. We should not hurt their feelings by imposing ourselves on them even in the name of service. When we get established in Nama, Dhyana and Seva, we come to identify ourselves with the whole universe and derive the same joy in serving those around us as we would in serving our beloved Guru. The mind then becomes empty of all thought – it becomes as empty as the space between the road you see outside and the sky above. Then you attain Sakshatkar in no time.

After Papa gave me the ultimate experience of my oneness with His Eternal and Infinite Existence, when Kundalini shot up like a brilliant flame from my forehead (between the eye-brows) to the top of my head, He made me identify myself with the whole universe. Just as you identify yourself with your eyes, your nose and other parts of the body, Papa made me identify myself with everyone and everything in the world, looking on them as parts of my own body. Thereafter, serving anyone was like serving my own body – there was nothing extraordinary about that.

You do not seek credit or praise for feeding yourself, do you? It was in this light that I served all. But, for all that, Ram Nam is the first step. Once you take Ram Nam constantly, everything else follows.

WORDS OF PUJYA SWAMI SATCHIDANANDAJI

Pray For One-Pointed Love And Devotion: The more intense your aspiration for realisation of God becomes, the less intense will be the desire for anything worldly. So, take Ram Nam more and more and pray to Him to give you one-pointed love and devotion. Automatically love for the worldly things will drop off, just as light, when brought into a dark room, drives away darkness.



Identify Each Thought With Beloved Papa: To get over worries and anxieties, you may try to identify each and every thought with Beloved Papa. This practice can be made effective if you send forth a prayer on these lines: “Oh Lord, you are everything, including the so-called desirable and undesirable thoughts that well up in my heart. Why do you come in those ways? Why don’t you free me from all thoughts and enable me to get fixed in Your Real nature.” If you commune with Him in this

manner constantly, you will be freed from the onslaught of the negative thoughts. Periodical congregational worship will serve as a booster to one's spiritual progress.

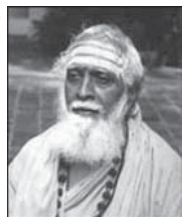
Become Conscious Of God's Presence: When you have Ram Nam or any name of God on your tongue, you should feel that the Lord Himself is with you. It is not that God is not with you at other times. But while chanting the Name you become conscious of God's presence within you and without you – everywhere. Try to intensify your aspiration to feel His presence constantly.

Desire Is Our Worst Enemy: Man's nature is the same whether it is in the East or the West. People forget the purpose for which they joined organisations and are carried away by the desire for power and pelf, the strong weapon of Maya. God must have brought about such situations only to make the disciples understand that spiritual attainment is not a joke and one has to give up all desires if one wants to progress. Desires are our worst enemy. They are so latent in us that we are made to feel that we are desireless, but some unguarded moments bring them out so forcefully that they cannot be resisted. God's grace alone can save us from such pitfalls and God unfailingly guides sincere aspirants.

GOD'S COMPASSION

By Swami Shantananda Puri

Dr. Shanti was a gynaecologist of repute in Ludhiana. Once she had to go on tour to Roorkee (U.P.) and stayed in a hotel for a night. That night the manager of the hotel woke her up at midnight and told her that a pregnant woman in the neighbouring charity house (Dharamsala) was in severe labour pains and was in need of urgent medical help. When the doctor went and examined that woman, she found that the child which was struggling to come out of the womb had no legs and it had only two small stumps of flesh projecting from the waist downwards. The woman was dressed in tattered rags and had very few possessions. Dr. Shanti was moved to compassion and pondered for a few minutes, "If I deliver the crippled child alive, it will only be a lifelong liability for this beggar woman. I can easily throttle the neck of the child with the forceps and declare that the child was born dead. At the most, the woman may be subject to grief temporarily." On second thought it flashed in her mind, "Who am I to play with the life of the child? I am sure that God has His own reasons for bringing a crippled child into this world. What all He



does is for the ultimate good of mankind. Nobody can claim to be more compassionate and merciful than God Himself. May His Will be done.” She got the child delivered safely. Even though the Manager of her Hotel came forward to pay some fees, she waived it off and went back.

Years rolled by; Dr. Shanti retired from service and settled down with her family at Delhi. One day she was forced by her granddaughter to escort the latter to an entertainment programme where one Mr. Robin was to entertain the audience with jokes, humorous stories, mimicry etc. Mr. Robin was a brilliant looking attractive young man, twenty-five years old. He was brought in a wheel-chair as he had no legs. He was accompanied by a white-haired old lady dressed in a white sari. The performance was excellent and gripping. Mr. Robin had an international reputation for his wit, humour etc. and he had been the talk of the town at Delhi for months. He imitated famous actors like Amitabh Bachchan and Rajnikant and also Ministers and other politicians so well that the entire hall was resounding with applause. The children rolled with laughter at Robin’s humorous stories which were all original. Nobody knew how quickly the three hours of entertainment were over. Dr. Shanti had never seen the like of it in her entire life.

Dr. Shanti purchased a nice bouquet from outside the hall and went backstage to congratulate Robin in person. While she was talking to Robin, suddenly the old lady by the latter's side fell at the doctor's feet and exclaimed bursting with tears, "Doctor Madam, this Robin is my son and it was you who gifted him to me. Don't you recollect that night twenty-five years back at Roorkee when you attended on me and got this boy delivered? He owes his life to you. Please bless him." Shanti was able to recollect the incidents of that night. She was stunned. When she returned home she fell prostrate before the picture of Sri Ram kept in her Puja Room and said, "Lord, you prevented me that night from putting an end to the child's life in my arrogance of a misplaced compassion. If I had perpetrated that crime, how many children of the world would have been deprived of the hours of pleasure which Robin is now able to provide and how many adults would have been deprived of the occasions to forget their world of miseries and sorrows by drowning themselves in the entertainment afforded by him. I am grateful to you, my Lord and I bow again and again before your Will rooted in wisdom, compassion and love for the entire mankind.

Source: Stories For Inspiration

ME TO WE

*If things have gone wrong
Let none of us, lift an accusing finger.
Who is to blame, is not important
Only, how shall we set the situation right.*

These thought provoking words of a Mahatma have been actualised in the life of Asha, a civic-minded woman, and her team of friends from Bangalore.

When Asha and her team observed that some people were using the footpath for passing urine right in the middle of a busy area in Bangalore, they manually cleaned the footpath in one day and also made the surrounding people aware about putting garbage in its place so that the area remains clean and hygienic.

VITAL (Value Integrated Teaching And Learning) is a movement initiated by Anandashram to motivate teachers to integrate Constitutional Values into academics through such examples from everyday life.

For more details, kindly visit VITAL's website: www.vitalforeducation.org or send us an email to vital4education@gmail.com

DEAR CHILDREN

Once a group of 50 people were attending a seminar. Suddenly the speaker stopped and started giving the participants a balloon each. All were asked to write his/her name on the balloon using a marker pen. Then all the balloons were collected and put in another room.

Now these delegates were let in that room and asked to find the balloon which had their name written on it, within 5 minutes.

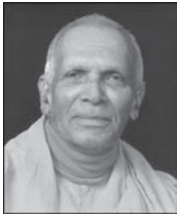
Everyone was frantically searching for their name, colliding with each other, pushing around others and there was utter chaos. At the end of 5 minutes no one could find their own balloon.

Now each one was asked to randomly select a balloon and give it to the person whose name was written on it. Within minutes everyone had their own balloon.

The Speaker then said, "This is exactly what's happening in our lives. Everyone is frantically looking for happiness all around, not knowing where it is. Our happiness lies in the happiness of other people... Give them their happiness and you will get your own

happiness. This is the purpose of human life. Is this not what we are looking all looking for?"

AN EXCERPT FROM
UNIVERSAL MESSAGE OF THE BHAGAVAD GITA
By Swami Ranganathananda



Atman remains a mystery all through. But it can be cleared. It can be realised by appropriate methods. That is the Vedantic technique of spiritual life and spiritual realisation. In the Katha Upanishad, this very expression comes (I.ii.7), Ascaryo Vakta Kusalo'sya Labdha, Ascaryo Jnata Kusalanusistah. "The teacher of the Atman must be an Ascarya, a wonderful person, the student of the Atman must also be an Ascarya'; when these two come together, that is, 'when taught by an efficient teacher, the one who realises the Atman also is wonderful'. So, you stand before this great mystery in wonder, worshipping It. What else can we do with It? We can only silently meditate upon It, worship It. We can't capture It by our mind, by our thought. That is the nature of this supreme truth which is so close to ourselves as our Self, but far away from us, from our understanding. The Upanishads repeat this

idea. It is very near to you and It is very far from you. To the ignorant, It is far, to the knowing, It is near. The whole centre of human freedom is in that particular mystery. When you realise It, you become truly free. Other freedoms are necessary; but this freedom is the freedom of all freedoms. You may have all the wealth and power, but you may be absolutely unfree, but with this knowledge of your true nature, even though you may not have many material possessions, you will be really free in the true sense of the term.

So, that is how verse 29, of Chapter 2, has brought before us this tremendous mystery, this imprisoned splendour, and the challenge to you, to me, and to everyone else, is how to release it from that genetic prison. Let it come out. Let it manifest. So, Swami Vivekananda defines religion in one scientific sentence: 'Religion is the manifestation of the divinity already in man.' It is hidden; let it manifest. What a change will come in human life and in inter-human relations, when a little of this divinity manifests in our life! That is the great teaching that is being expounded in the Gita.

Even in physical science, when you look at a small living cell, to the scientist it is a marvel. A marvel of

construction, a marvel of organic activity within itself, creating, withdrawing, shaping, multiplying – it is a marvel. Even in the science of physics, it is a marvel to see that a tiny piece of matter can contain enormous energy; that is nuclear science. We can say regarding that also, Ascaryavat Pasyati. When you probe deep into nature, the wonder that you see outside becomes less, and greater wonders within nature become revealed to you. Similarly, looking at man, and that study has only just started in the West. As Sir Julian Huxley said, ‘The study of the mind has just begun.’ Shakespeare has expressed, ‘How wonderful a thing is man’, in a famous passage. This man can control this world, he can understand it, he can transcend it, what is that something in him which is such a marvel? Earlier, I referred to the term coined by Robert Browning, the British poet, ‘the imprisoned splendour’. When modern science, in its psychology and neurology, will probe deeper and deeper into man, this marvel will be revealed increasingly. The study of the brain itself is a tremendous marvel. How the brain operates, how the various cells work together, and then produce a coherent life and reaction to the world, all these are subjects of marvel. But the most marvellous is what the Upanishads are dealing with,

the infinite Atman. Behind this body-mind complex, which is so tiny, which is so contracted an organism compared to the world outside, yet within that is something tremendous, that is the biggest challenge before modern thought. Indian thought faced it successfully long, long ago. That is what you find expressed in these verses: Ascaryavat Pasyati Kascit Enam.

Source: Universal Message of The Bhagavad Gita

FROM THE LEAVES OF THE BACK ISSUES

THE VISION Vol. 38, November 1970

The Saint Who Walked With The Commons

By Sriram (Swami Shuddhananda)

Seven years it is now, though it could almost be yesterday, so green is the memory, since one of the greatest men India had produced in the last quarter of the nineteenth century joined the immortals.

People who flocked to him called him by various names – Swamiji, Papa (the endearing term by which most knew him), Guruji, Ramdasji. He himself preferred to sign as simply Ramdas (the servant of Ram) which summed up a glorious life of sacrifice, penance, service and limitless love – all in the name of and for the sake

of his 'Beloved Ram'. Thus too he addresses all the teeming multitude that came to him and on whom he looked as diverse forms of Ram Himself.

Swami Ramdas of Anandashram, who breathed his last on July 25 (1963), was unique in more ways than one. He was a glorious example of a divine personality who took birth as a man and grew in the common estate of man, to lead the life of a householder, who with intrepid courage of the highest order, broke off his worldly shackles and stormed the citadel of the Lord Himself. In his race to the ultimate destiny of God-realisation, he let nothing stand in the way – not even the piteous pleas of his wife or the frantic lingering looks of his only child and daughter who used to be the apple of his eye. History speaks of a Gautam Buddha, a Gauranga and a Vivekananda who had displayed the same measure of single-mindedness in the Quest of God. Such was Ramdas' quest that ended only when the meandering river had finally lost itself in the limitless ocean and continued to flow into it.

Of course, in some ways, he was different from the common run even in his early days, before he plunged into Sannyas and crossed the river of no return. As a

school-boy, there was nothing that held terror for him, not even the grim discipline of the Victorian Era and as a youth he revelled in the same display of fearlessness.

A rebel against convention and orthodoxy, in spite of being born in a community known for its deep-rooted traditions in working life, he broke away from tradition by taking up the cause of the underdog, the ordinary worker, even when he held supervisory posts in mills – the irresistible tendency that cost him his job every time.

Such was the nature of an ordinary householder who went by the name of Vittal Rao and lived in the coastal town of Mangalore till the winter of 1922, earning his livelihood in a dyeing and printing workshop, leading a routine existence in which the highlight was to accompany his darling eight year old daughter to school and fetching her home for lunch.

She was his constant companion and in her he vested some of his greatest gifts including a matchless command over English, love for English poetry, an ever-bubbling wit and sense of humour and above all, the never-say-die spirit. As the sense of non-attachment dawned on him and an all-conquering love for God seized his soul, she was his companion when he went

to Bhajans as well. Yet, the time was drawing nigh when she too was to mean nothing to him.

The transfiguration of Vittal Rao, the common man in his late thirties, into Ramdas, the Apostle of Ram, was not achieved overnight. It came slowly but surely as he gave up one tie after another and lost himself in God-remembrance day and night. It meant countless days of fasting. It meant turning a deaf ear to the din and clamour of anxious relatives and it also meant giving up the most difficult knot on earth – that woven by flesh and blood. “Papa, please eat something”, was the refrain of the eight-year old child as she sought in vain to draw away her father from his meditation. “Papa please talk to me” was the cry that went unheard by the father chanting Ram Nam ceaselessly, to whom Ram Nam was becoming everything and everyone on earth. What were the thoughts of this God-intoxicated soul if ever he thought of his kith and kin? Swami Ramdas, in later years, when asked this question, would simply smile that rare all-embracing smile of his and say, “When Ram becomes your all, the whole world becomes your kith and kin.”

The destined change took place one morning late in December of 1922 when the family was away on a

visit. Vittal Rao, obeying the command of his Ram to whom he had already dedicated his life, burst asunder all worldly ties, left the home and hearth he had helped to nourish, and threw himself into the Unknown – the life of a wandering Sannyasin. But, then, this was no Sannyasin of the common run either. There was no goal to be sought, because it had already been won, there was no search for Truth because Truth had revealed itself to him who wanted nothing else. Unknown to the world, on the sacred banks of Srirangam in South India was born, or re-born as Swami Ramdas himself preferred to describe it, Ramdas – the Servant of Ram who donned the robes of Sannyas not for the cloth but for its colour which, he said, would remind him constantly of the mission to which he had dedicated himself. Thus began a seven-year long wandering life of this God-mad who as he trudged through village and town, spanning the entire sub-continent, gradually grew into the likeness of God Himself, seeing Him in every animate and inanimate thing, talking to Him as you would talk to your best friend and spreading His Name far and wide.

Swami Ramdas had reached the heights of realisation undreamt of by the commons, the kings and potentates, by chanting the Guru-mantra “Om

Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram” and this God’s eager messenger spread the selfsame Mantra wherever he went. A few days’ stay in a princely residence in Mt. Abu, in the course of his wandering, was enough to make the Name catch everyone down to the gardener and cook like a contagion. Wherever Ramdas went Ram Nam went with him, and when Ramdas left, he left behind the torch of Ram Nam burning bright. No count can be made today of the homes in villages, towns and cities in India which Ramdas lit up with the magic of Ram Nam. The first generation of his devotees – the men, women and youth from all walks of life – who were drawn to this wandering Sannyasin as though by a magnet – has almost passed over and their descendants continue to abide by “Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram” to surmount the vicissitudes of mundane existence.

Such was the greatest legacy left behind by Swami Ramdas of Anandashram, who made the Ashram, set up by himself on the north Malabar coast in 1931, a glowing beacon shedding the light of Ram Nam. If you ever enter the Ashram today, it is the soft refrain of Ram Nam that reverberates all around. When you sit in Papa’s room talking to Mother Krishnabai or Mataji as she is adored by all his flock, his foremost disciple and the first to be given God-realisation by him, you

stop every now and then because Ram Nam sung in chorus comes wafting across from the Bhajan Mandir outside and its magic is such that it stills all conversation.

Many are the homes in the Western countries, particularly the United States, where the torch of Ram Nam has been lit – either by Swami Ramdas himself in the course of his only world tour in 1954 or by others who came to the Ashram, heard it and went back intoxicated. A widow in Germany who lost her only son in the war today finds solace in Ram Nam, so does a University professor in the US who proudly introduced Swami Ramdas to his class by telling students, “I have brought a Man of God to you today.”

No miracles in the term accepted today are credited to Swami Ramdas though it is said that as a wandering Sannyasin, his touch had had a healing effect on many an ailing person, because Ramdas himself attached no importance to display of such powers. The greatest miracle on Earth, he used to say, was Life itself, a life wedded to Love and Service, attuned to God and lived for His sake. Yet, Swami Ramdas’ greatest miracle was the countless number of souls who knew him and talked with him as ‘Papa’. When will this Ever-Beloved Papa who is within us reveal Himself to us again?

EPISTLES OF SWAMI RAMDAS

Beloved Ram,

Ramdas got your loving letter of the 10th instant.

You can regain your witness consciousness by cultivating an attitude of perfect surrender to the Divine will in all your actions. You should devote some time, though it is ever so short, for meditation. Ramdas remembers what Sri Ramakrishna said about Sadhana suitable for those who lead a house-holder's life. Place one of your hands on the feet of the Lord and to your work with other. When your work is over for the day, keep both your hands on His feet. This teaching is significant.

Love and blessings to you and all friends there.

Ever your Self



Ramdas

IN MEMORIAM

Smt Gita Mohan, the wife of Late Sri Ramesh Mohan an ardent devotee of the Ashram from Chennai, was called by Beloved Papa on 11th February. She had

been ailing from cancer for quite some time and was in the hospital when she passed away in her sleep. By the abundant grace of Beloved Papa she could spend a few months here in the Ashram before passing away. 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 Nama Japa for world peace received in the month of February 2014 is 249 crores. The grand total of the Japa done so far now stands at 6180 crores.

SATSANG AT MUMBAI: Satsang program with Pujya Swami Muktanandaji is scheduled to be held at Mumbai on the 20th of April (Contact: Smt Shreya Udipi: 09869676862).

WATER SCARCITY: As we expect water shortage in the months of April and May, devotees are requested to avoid visiting the Ashram during the summer.

FROM THE EDITOR

Godliness expresses in the form of goodness and pure love. In our day-to-day life, we are helpful to

some persons, we love some persons, we are compassionate towards some and we tolerate some and in some cases we also sacrifice our interests for the sake of others. These human values come from the Spirit within and they are always spontaneous. That means these are inherent and concurrent in us. However, why is it that we are unable to bring these out every time we transact with the world outside? There must be something that blocks the reflection of the traits. We have been told that the traits are not fully reflected because of the opaqueness of our mind – due to fixed opinions, likes, dislikes, prejudices, selfishness and the like. If we keep on thinking of the joy we derived when these inherent traits came out in the form of actions, to a very great extent, the opaqueness will get reduced. It does not become an academic or dry exercise because it will help us to re-live what has been experienced by us before. Added to that, we should also try to think about the good things done by others. If parents care to share thoughts of this nature, based upon their own experience, with the young ones, the generation will be freed from the negativities. The individual as well as the society will stand to benefit.

– **MUKTANANDA**

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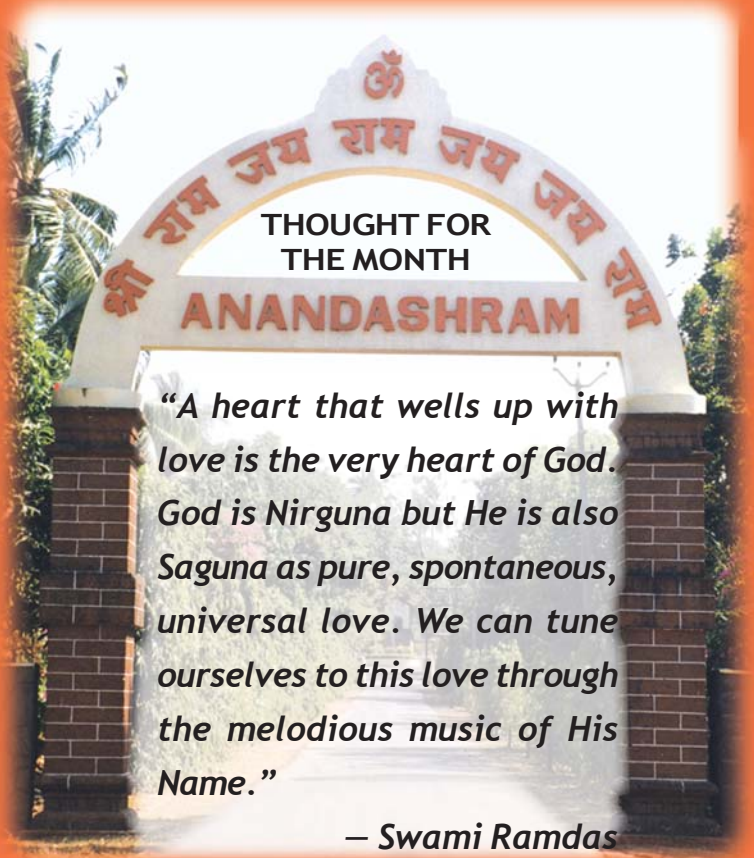
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“A heart that wells up with love is the very heart of God. God is Nirguna but He is also Saguna as pure, spontaneous, universal love. We can tune ourselves to this love through the melodious music of His Name.”

— Swami Ramdas

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