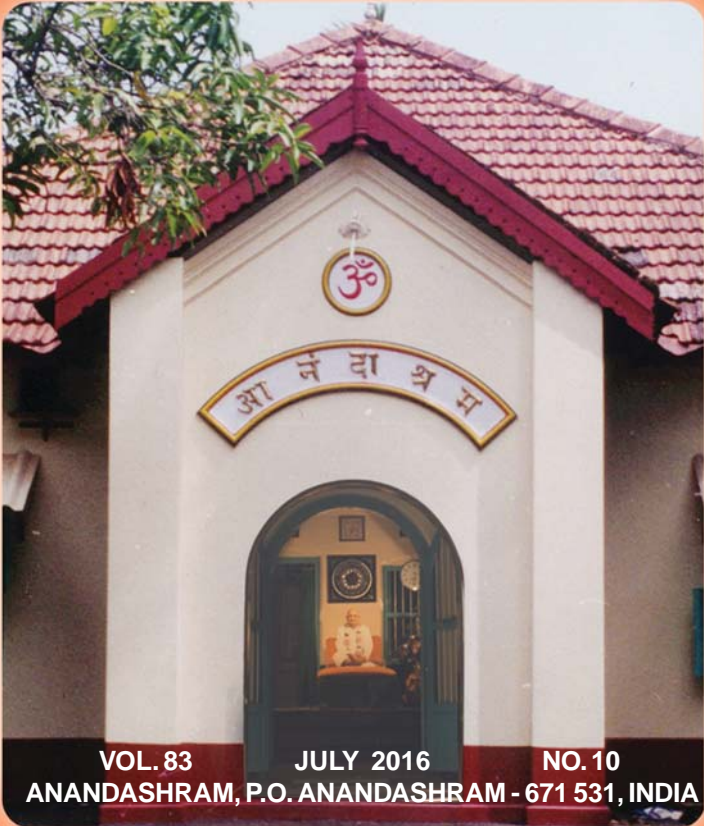




The Vision

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

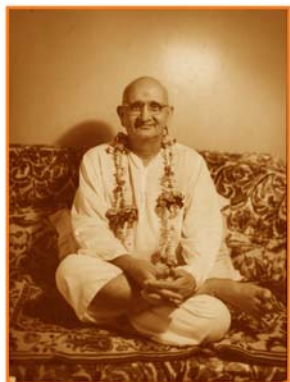
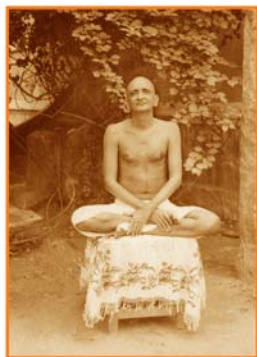


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Om Sri Ram jai Ram jai jai Ram

ॐ श्री राम जय राम जय जय राम

Om Sri Ram jai Ram jai jai Ram

I BECAME FREE

I remained apart
From life universal,
And I felt as a bird
Caught in a cage;
When "I am" dissolved
In world existence
I attained my freedom.
I soared into space
And transcended it;
I melted away in time
And rose beyond it;
I became the causeless Cause
The One without a second.

- Swami Ramdas

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GURU PURNIMA

The month of July reminds us of the Guru Purnima day when all spiritual aspirants reverentially remember their spiritual preceptor with gratitude. Guru is understood to be the awakener of the dormant spirit of the aspirant to the consciousness of the immortal Self or God. Guru is the guide and the leader. It will definitely do good if, every now and then, aspirants go through the biography of the Guru and the various stages which the Guru had passed through so as to free themselves from doubts, vacillation and confusion while on the spiritual journey.

Hence here is an occasion for all devotees to gratefully remember the inspiring life and mission of Param Pujya Papa Swami Ramdas whose teachings give thrust to universalise our vision based upon the vision of divinity in all. Beloved Papa's teachings point out the goal thus: ***“Go to the root of your existence. Realize your Self, then your whole life and outlook will be transformed. If we do not achieve this goal, we live a life no better than that of animals. Usually our whole existence is centred in the ego. The ego is crystallized selfishness. We toil day and night in order to get something only for ourselves and our***

kith and kin. Our vision is thus circumscribed. Outside that circle the world is not ours. So long as the ego is strong in us we cannot be happy. If we work, it must be for the good of all mankind. We have to universalize our vision. In that vision the ego is lost and we will then be truly happy.”

Fixed resolve, sustained faith and optimistic outlook are the bedrock on which Beloved Papa pursued his spiritual journey. They remain as a perennial source of inspiration to all the aspirants at all times.

For enabling us to steadily progress in our spiritual journey Beloved Papa not only provided us with a spiritual centre – Anandashram – an abode of bliss, but also a love incarnate Pujya Mataji and – an embodiment of self-effacement Pujya Swamiji.

Beloved Papa gives us some clues as to how we should proceed step by step by making us to contemplate on the very titles of the four books authored by him in their sequential order, namely, **IN QUEST OF GOD, AT THE FEET OF GOD, IN THE VISION OF GOD** and finally the **WORLD IS GOD**. They reveal that the first step is to move Godward by trying to remember Him who is seated within by chanting His Name with faith and devotion, then accepting

everything as willed by God, followed by looking upon every individual and incident as forms of God and finally to get stabilised in the experience that it is He and He alone who is everything and everybody.

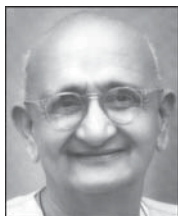
This month's issue of THE VISION covers articles on and by Beloved Papa.

– *Editor*

STRUGGLE AND INITIATION

By Swami Ramdas

For nearly a year, Ramdas struggled on in a world full of cares, anxieties and pains. It was a period of terrible stress and restlessness – all of his own making. In this utterly helpless condition, full of misery: “Where is relief? Where is rest?” this was the heart’s cry of Ramdas. The cry was heard, and from the Great Void came the voice: “Despair not! Trust Me and thou shalt be free!” – and this was the voice of Ram. These encouraging words of Ram proved like a plank thrown towards a man struggling for very life in the stormy waves of a raging sea. The great assurance soothed the aching heart of helpless Ramdas, like gentle rain on thirsting earth. Thenceforward, a part of the time that was formerly



totally devoted to worldly affairs was taken up for the meditation of Ram who, for that period, gave him real peace and relief. Gradually love for Ram – the Giver of peace – increased. The more Ramdas meditated on and uttered His name, the greater the relief and joy he felt. Nights, which are free from worldly duties, were, in course of time, utilised for Ram Bhajan with scarcely one or two hours' rest. His devotion for Ram progressed by leaps and bounds.

During the day, when cares and anxieties were besetting him due to monetary and other troubles, Ram was coming to his aid in unexpected ways. So, whenever free from worldly duties, be the period ever so small, he would meditate on Ram and utter His name. Walking in the streets he would be uttering, "Ram, Ram". Ramdas was now losing attraction for the objects of the world. Sleep, except for one or two hours in the night, was given up for the sake of Ram. Fineries in clothes and dress were replaced by coarse Khaddar. Bed was substituted by a bare mat. Food, first, two meals were reduced to one meal a day and after sometime this too was given up for plantains and boiled potatoes – chillies and salt were totally eschewed. No taste but for Ram; meditation

of Ram continued apace. It encroached upon the hours of the day and the so-called worldly duties.

At this stage one day, Ramdas' father came to him, sent by Ram, and calling him aside, gave him the Upadesh of Ram-Mantram – “Sri Ram, Jai Ram, Jai Jai Ram!” assuring him that if he repeated this Mantram at all times, Ram would give him eternal happiness. This initiation from the father – who has thereafter been looked upon by Ramdas as Gurudev – hastened on the aspirant in his spiritual progress. Off and on he was prompted by Ram to read the teachings of Sri Krishna – THE BHAGAVAD GITA, Buddha – LIGHT OF ASIA, Jesus Christ – NEW TESTAMENT, Mahatma Gandhi – YOUNG INDIA and ETHICAL RELIGION. The young plant of Bhakti of Ram was thus nurtured in the electric atmosphere created by the influence of these great men on the mind of humble Ramdas. It was at this time that it slowly dawned upon his mind that Ram was the only Reality and all else was false. Whilst desires for the enjoyment of worldly things were fast falling off, the consideration of ‘me’ and ‘mine’ was also wearing out. The sense of possession and relationship was vanishing. All thought, all mind, all heart, all soul was concentrated on Ram, Ram covering up and absorbing everything.

BELOVED PAPA ON HIS EARLY DAYS OF SADHANA

It was in the year 1921, in Mangalore, that the all-merciful Lord of the universe first fired Ramdas' bosom with a keen longing to realise Him. From that time his life was undergoing a marvellous change. His one overwhelming passion and aim of life was to live for God and God alone. God's powerful Name was indelibly stamped on his tongue. Now it was that he was becoming conscious of a Divine influence working silently but irresistibly in him gradually dominating and possessing him. He felt an awakening within the very core of his being. With steady steps and unflagging zeal he now entered upon a path of rigorous self-discipline. The trials and hardships of the path did not daunt him. Repeated appeals, persuasions and remonstrances could not make him swerve an inch from this path. He was calm, earnest and determined. As time passed in prayer, fasting and repetition of God's Name, the consciousness of Divine possession and guidance assumed such predominance that at last the Divine voice within him drove him forth from Mangalore into the wide world.

What was his condition at this momentous hour? He was a dazed and helpless creature caught in the

grip of an all-powerful Being. He did not know what he was doing. He was under the full control of an almighty Power without any offer of resistance on his part – just as a baby in the hands of its mother. Verily, it was God alone who held him – a God who is at once his Divine Mother and Master, so real, loving, kind and good. Blessed indeed is the day when God made Ramdas entirely His own. O Mother and Master Divine, all glory to Thee! How tenderly He nursed and guided His new born offspring during his first year's itinerant life all over India forms the theme of IN QUEST OF GOD.

His mind was merged in a unique stillness of peace; his life was one of unreserved self-surrender; and, as regards the world, in a sense it was not there for him, that is, he was dead as it were to the world. He was travelling from place to place like an automaton as if in a dream, indifferent to – nay, unconscious of – his body and environments. All through it, God to whom he had surrendered up his life was mysteriously influencing his movements and controlling and taking care of him in every way. It was really an entire dedication on one side and a watchful, benevolent protection on the other.

He experienced that he was living and moving in a new world in which he felt that there was none other than himself and his great Master – Ram – his all-in-

all. In this wonderful vision of inexpressible ecstasy and peace he struggled to dwell always. This exalted consciousness, possessing as it did the characteristic of perfect vacancy or emptiness, was filled with an ineffable rapture of peace, silence and repose. The dual throng, pleasure and pain, good and evil, cold and heat, etc. relating to the physical body affected him not, for his mind was not there to take note of these sensations; it would always be in tune with the infinite Spirit of stillness and peace. There were occasions when under certain conditions he would be dragged down with a jerk as it were to the sense of the old world and its associations, but he would be instantly pulled up by that silent and watchful Spirit within.

In those days Ramdas' haunts were caves, jungles, ruins, riversides, grave-yards, hills and cremation grounds. The sense of fear had vanished from him entirely – danger and death had lost their terrors for him. A feeling of perfect assurance, security and protection was ever with him. The powerful Ram-Mantram never left his lips. He was uttering it like a machine.

Some friends who had met him during his first year's wandering life declared that they observed him as having been possessed by extreme dispassion. He was indifferent alike to his body and to the external world and was

found absorbed solely in Ram-smaran or God-remembrance. In brief, he could be likened to a dry leaf tossed at random as the wind of Divine will listed.

BELOVED PAPA ON HIS LATER DAYS

All differences and distinctions which, through the eye of ignorance, one beholds in this variegated world-show, disappear in this exalted and comprehensive vision of the Divine. Verily, from the fullness of his experience, Ramdas can boldly declare that world is God. This does not mean that the other worlds – the innumerable planets, stars and other heavenly bodies forming the cosmos – are not God. The entire universe is God.

In this tour (World Tour in 1954) Ramdas beheld at close quarters the world as the embodiment of the Divine. It was not merely a mental contact he had, but a deep spiritual experience of oneness with the Divine Power that pervaded this world body – the Virat. The physical proximity, leading to the spiritual communion and fusion with all beings on the globe, was the foremost significant feature of this tour.

Two aspects of existence are described and stressed, one the Spirit which is infinite and eternal, and the other the world as the body of that Spirit,

containing all beings and creatures within it. The title of the book (WORLD IS GOD) stands for the essentially-to-be reached milestone in the march of humanity towards the goal of world-union, goodwill and harmony.

Earth is the theatre on which we play the game of life. It is the scene where we live and struggle to attain the supreme beatitude of life. It is the Karma Bhumi, the place where our physical body is shaped and born, on which it lives and acts, and into which it ultimately returns and dissolves. It is the Dharma Kshetra, the field in which we prepare ourselves for our ultimate destiny of liberation and realization. It is on the earth that we put into practice the loftiest principles by which we recognise our relationship with all beings. It is here that we train and fit ourselves, through self-control and discipline, for the final plunge into the infinite ocean of spiritual light, power and joy. Humanity is the heart of this world in which we live and move. Identity with humanity is identity with the universe, and vice versa.

Ramdas went out of India clothed with the authority from his Divine Master, to point out to the world the right way to world unity and peace. This unity and peace can be attained only when we realize that all human beings are children of the same Divine Father and Mother, that all humanity is the expression

of one Universal Self, that all lives and things are the forms of one infinite Consciousness – nay, that the entire world is the manifestation of God.

It is rightly said, when we realize God within us and know that our body is His body, then the whole world or the universe is also known as His body. Conversely, when the whole universe is realized as God, we know we are also He.

God has made Ramdas into a ripe fruit on His huge tree of manifest life for presentation to the world as a gift. Under His guidance, care and grace, Ramdas' life grew, budded, bloomed and fruited until at last it became ripe, sweet and fragrant. Surely all the glory for the production of such a fruit is His – Ramdas' beloved Master's.

TALKS WITH THE MOTHER AND HER SOLUTIONS FOR THE CHILD'S DIFFICULTIES

By Swami Ramdas

Q: What is the goal?

A: To attain Ram.

Q: What is self-surrender?

A: Resignation to the Will of God.

Q: How can we attain this?

A: By continued remembrance of God.



Q: What is Ram?

A: He is at once Light, Love and Bliss. He is the only eternal Truth.

Q: Where can we seek Him?

A: Seek and find Him in ourselves and in the whole universe about us. God has manifested Himself as the universe. The one supreme Paramatman, who is by nature formless, and without qualities and ever existent, has assumed the variety of forms that we see in the universe. Let us see Him in all things and beings as the One Imperishable Reality.

Q: What is the result of self-surrender?

A: Self-surrender brings pure everlasting bliss.

Q: How?

A: When the human will is given up for the Divine Will, all the responsibility of the instrument – the devotee – ceases and the consciousness of the individual ego is merged in the Divine consciousness. Then all his actions, thoughts and words emanate from the Divine Source, leaving him entirely free from all doubts, desires and bonds. In fact, the devotee becomes filled with supreme bliss, on which alone his mind constantly dwells. The ego being absent, there is nothing on

which his actions, words and thoughts can leave any impression. He is now free from all sin and sorrow. He is merely a witness, dispassionate and blissful, of the grand play or Lila of God – the universe and all that is in it.

Q: Can we see God?

A: Yes, we can see Him in His works; in His manifestation He pervades all. There is no place where He is not. Every object is none other than He.

Q: If God is one why does He appear in different names and forms?

A: The One has appeared as many for the working out of His Lila or play.

I MEET PAPA

By Mataji Krishnabai

O infinite Papa! The people at Sundari's parental home were frequently visiting your Ashram which was opened on 3rd June, 1928. From the time they saw you, one and all of them in the house were talking highly of your spiritual attainments and qualities. This they did with great affection and enthusiasm. As Dr Rama Rao was a constant reader



of Jnaneshwari, he knew to some extent the principal qualities of a saint. Whenever he was told by his mother about any saint she had met, he would plainly say that the saint did not possess the signs described in the Jnaneshwari. But after seeing you, he said that he discovered in you all the characteristics of a saint as described in the Jnaneshwari. When I heard so much in your praise I desired to have your Darshan. Moreover, Sundari was pressing me daily to accompany her to the Ashram. Since my feeling to see you grew more and more in intensity as time passed, a hazy notion developed in me that if I once went out of the house I might not return to it. So I hesitated to pay you a visit. At last, with a view only to see you and come back, I started to proceed to your Ashram escorted by the people of the house in which I lived.

O mother Papa! As I neared your Ashram I experienced a rare and inexpressible joy, similar to what a child would feel when it was about to meet its mother after a long period of separation. Thenceforward, I began visiting the Ashram for your Darshan daily in the company of friends.

O all pervading Papa! The sublimity of your presence was simply indescribable. The moment I saw you, the passions that were vexing me disappeared

and bliss established itself in my heart. At home I was never content however long I talked about you to the people therein. I was feeling a peculiar joy in relating your talks to all I met. Your very remembrance made my hair stand on end and my joy overflow.

OUR BELOVED PAPA

By Swami Satchidananda

“Find the Guru within you. True vision means the vision of the Reality within you. The man of ignorance clings to the external forms for support. So long as man does not see the Great Truth he is in search of, within himself, he can never know peace.” These words and similar ones to this effect were more frequently uttered by our Beloved Papa during the last few years (before dropping his body). Was he preparing us to stand on our own legs by turning our gaze within to realise the great Truth, and not to mourn the inevitable end of his physical frame?



On 25th July 1963, when the sun was setting, the great son of India, nay, of the whole world, was also preparing to shuffle off his purest and most ideal physical instrument which he used for the service of mankind for over forty years. For an ordinary onlooker,

that evening marked the end of a most glorious life.

Forty-five years ago (article written by Pujya Swamiji in 1963), Beloved Papa threw overboard, all at one stroke, his business, home, family and all that he called his own. He was seized by an intense aspiration to realise the Truth and it came like a strong wave that swept him completely off his feet, absolutely cutting him off from all that he possessed.

In fact, Papa's life, when we look back, appears to be a demonstration in the world laboratory to show to aspirants the various stages of spiritual progress, the wonderful power of Ram Nam, the meaning of surrender to the will of God, and the spiritual peak to which a man could reach within a remarkably short time.

Ram Nam first made him mad for God. This was mistaken by his friends and relations as insanity. Day and night, without a moment's rest, he was chanting Ram Nam. He sacrificed both food and sleep to chant the Name ceaselessly. Worldly talk would distract the mind from Ram Nam. So, he gave up all talk and went into solitude. Thus whatever stood in the way of his continuous chanting of Ram Nam he mercilessly kicked aside and wandered in ochre robes throughout the length and breadth of India without any plan, not knowing and not worrying as to where his next halt

would be, throwing himself entirely in the hands of the all-merciful and all-powerful Ram, like a dry leaf blown about here and there by the breeze. He used to say that at that time he felt he was like a baby safe in the hands of its mother.

His surrender to the will of God was unparalleled. He accepted cheerfully every situation in which he was placed as brought about by God Himself. He bore with cheer the insults hurled on him, the occasions though rare, when he had to go without any food, the unbearable cold and mosquito bites he was subject to when he was spending a night on the Ganges bank, lying on the icy cold stone with only a single piece of cloth to spread and cover his body with. Nor was he elated when he was received with honours and was worshipped like an incarnation of God.

He looked upon all as the forms of Ram and addressed them as such. Not only humans but everything he cast his eyes on, were the forms of his Beloved for him. Inspired with this vision, it is no wonder he started embracing trees, rocks and persons who stood in front of him. By looking upon them all as Ram and by giving them his beatific smile surcharged with the purest of love, he softened the hard hearts of men and even serpents.

Fear was foreign to him. He was absolutely confident that Ram would protect him in every way. Sometimes he even put Ram to severe tests. Just to enjoy the fun of seeing Ram in tigers he once entered cave after cave in the high mountains only to return disappointed as the tigers had then gone away.

Papa did not belong to any particular creed. He firmly believed that all creeds, faiths and religions were but different paths which ultimately converged on the same goal.

In his wandering life, his inner vision underwent a radical change, being moulded by his Master – Ram. The result was that in the course of a few years he realized his oneness with the Absolute Reality and the universal manifestation. The servant and the Master had now become one. He thus reached the peak of God-realization. After that he had nothing more to do for himself but to play with his Mother manifested as the whole universe, assuming for the sake of Lila the duality of child and mother.

It was in the course of such a Divine play that Anandashram came into being. During its remarkable history, it has attracted thousands from all parts of India and abroad, and rendered distinguished service in spreading the gospel of the Divine Name and

Universal Love. Thus Papa has played his part in the world drama most wonderfully. He has quit the stage without notice, leaving us all aghast. Unless we, his devotees, strive to follow his teachings and see him in our heart, we are likely to retain this sense of loss. The void must be filled up by bringing in the light of Love to illumine our lives. This is possible if only we are ready to follow even a fraction of his precepts which cover various aspects of spiritual life. He lived the life divine in absolute freedom, ever swimming in the ocean of peace and bliss. As a friend put it just when the body was turning to ashes, 'A life like his alone is worth living'.

A LIVING EMBODIMENT OF COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS

By Swami Sivananda Saraswati

Swami Ramdas is one of the rarest flowers of representative Indian spirituality. His life is now a practical demonstration of the scriptural description about the blissful, carefree and unconcerned activity of a Jivanmukta. His picturesque and chequered earlier life, his enterprising, daring and reckless later life of Nivritti and his grand, sublime and joyous state today, are all proofs positive of the declarations of the great scriptures like the Upanishads and the Gita.

We find in him personified the supreme truth that one who has transcended his little self, comes to behold the Supreme Spirit alone everywhere and in everything. He realizes his identity with this Cosmic Spirit. Ramdas says in one of his letters that this state came to him through Bhakti, Vairagya and Satsang. Elsewhere he states that the ultimate supreme factor is Divine Grace. Swami Ramdas is truly a living monument of the Lord's Grace.

His spiritual experiences and realisations have made him a saint of Sama-Drishti. He sees the Lord alone in all beings and is thus rooted in equal vision. It is to such a type of soul that the Lord refers when He says in the Gita, "Vasudevah Sarvamithi Sa Mahatma Sudurlabhah." His realizations have confirmed him in his beliefs in the fundamental oneness of all faiths and creeds.

God is all-love, goodness, compassion and beneficial activity. Sainthood is the realization of the identity with such a Being, and as such the love, the goodness and service that arise from such sainthood will irresistibly seek expression upon this earthly place. Thus we find Ramdas ever immersed in joyous, blissful service of the Lord in all. His Anandashram is a veritable mart of Divine Bliss. He wants each and everyone to

plunge into that infinite source of joy wherein he himself is blissfully swimming. To this end he advocates two methods – a continuous remembrance of the Lord and the practice of beholding Him everywhere. To thus remember Him and feel His presence, the most potent method is the repetition of the Divine Name. Swami Ramdas is a staunch advocate of the Divine Name. He also insists upon regular Sadhana of self-control and surrender. He himself exemplifies the highest form of surrender. He demonstrates the fact that Para-Bhakti and Jnana are one. The highest Vedanta and the most indescribable love are combined in Ramdas. Both of these have become manifest as the loftiest type of Vishwa Seva.

May all emulate his lofty, sublime life! May all attain the highest indescribable experience of Adwaitic awareness!

RENUNCIATION OR RECLAMATION?

By Guardian Malik

When I received an invitation to contribute to the Souvenir, the purpose of which is to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of the Sannyas of Swami Ramdas, at once the silent voice within me set a poser to me: “Was it renunciation on his part, or was it reclamation

of him on the part of someone else?” And thus the following train of thought started on its zig-zag way.

To all intents and purposes, it was only twenty-five years ago, that Swamiji renounced the world – that is the worldliness of the world, but not the world. And rightly too, for, to have given up both would have been like throwing away the baby with the tub!

But, surely, he could not have done all this overnight, because to almost everyone the sense of possessiveness clings like a leech. He must have been, therefore, prior to it, performing some sort of an operation on himself to get rid of the disease. In other words, earlier, he must have disciplined himself for long in the school of self-denial. And so, the seed of sannyas was sown in him far back, only its flowering and fruition were visible much later to himself and to his fellow-men.

But who sowed the seed in his heart? And when? These are mysteries which have often baffled the attempt of many an enquirer to resolve them. Some of these would say, however, that the seed was embedded in his soul when he first, in the primeval past, set out on his endless voyage to witness the wondrous creation of God. He had forgotten all about it; so at some stage of his journey, either through his contact with a gardener of souls, or in his wholehearted

response to a particular experience or event, he was suddenly reminded of its existence. Perhaps, this is what Plato meant when he said that “all knowledge is reminiscence”. And then he began earnestly to tend it, removing from its sides the dark and dusty accretions of the ages. So the process of renunciation has gone on like the peeling of an onion, layer by layer.

All this happened from his own end. But what was happening from God’s side? As Swamiji advanced steadily in the practice of sacrificing one by one the million facets of the small self, He began to reclaim him more and more for Himself, as His very own. Swamiji had been, no doubt, always His, but passively; henceforth, they loved each other consciously and completely.

So, what appeared on the surface to be giving up something, ultimately was transmuted in the secrecy of starlight into substantial gain. In the measure Swamiji renounced the wealth or the world, he found the Mint-Master of the world! Verily, there is nothing like loss as such in the economy of divine existence.

As a mystic singer of Bengal says: “O Beloved, where are the tears which I have shed so often and so overwhelmingly in my life? ‘These have blossomed,’ replied the Beloved, ‘into lotuses in my garden’.”

Renunciation, therefore, is an act of joy. No true

aspirant, consequently, wears a long face when called upon to give up something material or mental, psychic or vital. Why? Because he knows that in giving up these he is only giving up the ever-haunting ghost of his true Self. And, pray, who would weep at getting gold in exchange for brass?

Renunciation, thus, is the best investment. It earns us as a dividend, the Divine Himself, and not merely an occasional scrip on His Bank of Bounty. To renounce, therefore, is to be reclaimed by, or to reclaim what is one's inherent right – God.

THE COMING OF THE GURU'S GRACE

By M M Thakore

It was in the beginning of the year 1937 that I first heard about Beloved Papa in a strange way. A friend of mine brought the book IN THE VISION OF GOD and requested me to read it. He had not then read the same and could not tell me anything about the writer. I returned the book to him without reading it with the remark that there are many sundry writers on this subject who write without experience and merely create confusion of thought in the reader. He took away the book for being returned to the book-seller, but brought it back to me in a few days at the

request of the book-seller who said that if I did not like the book after going through it, he would accept it even in a used condition. This offer was irresistible and its results miraculous. Whenever I recollect this incident I become convinced that one need not be in search of a Guru. The Guru will not merely find him out but may even force his presence upon him even against his will at the proper time.

After going through the said book I carried on correspondence with Beloved Papa and in July 1937 had the good fortune of having his Darshan. When I prostrated at his sacred feet he greeted me with his bewitching smile and the encouraging remarks, "Ramdas was anxious to meet you."

At our next meeting there was a large gathering assembled for Bhajan. To my surprise Beloved Papa rose from his seat, came to the verandah where I was standing and catching hold of my coat button in a very loving manner enquired of me as to how I came to know of him. I narrated to him all that had happened and concluded by saying that it was all pure and simple accident. At my last remark Beloved Papa looked into my eyes as if to convey that I had not yet understood him and in a slow tone said, "Remember, nothing in this life happens by accident". I at once realised that His Holiness wanted to

convey to me a deep and ever-lasting lesson in this apparently simple and unostentatious manner which was that one must consciously surrender to Him. I was reminded of an almost identical expression used by Bhagwan R'amana Maharshi a few months ago in response to my prayer for blessings. It was to this effect, "You believe you have come here of your own accord, but in reality some other Force has brought you here. Trust that Force and it will lead you to your goal." To know and to feel the working of this Universal Force results in unconditional and spontaneous surrender to Him. This was the lesson which Papa wanted to convey to me in his apparently simple expression, "Nothing happens by accident".

ME TO WE

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

Intensely dwelling on the last eight Shlokas in Chapter 12 of Srimad Bhagavad Gita explains how an aspirant can become the dearest devotee of the Lord. Let us try to understand and then emulate the values described in these shlokas through an example from daily life:

*Advешta sarvabhutaanaam maitrah karuna eva cha
Nirmamo nirahankaraha sama dukha sukhah kshami || 13 ||*



NIRMAMO (Absence Of ‘My-ness’): Once, when Papa was staying at a rest-house in Kasaragod, some friends provided him with a lota, deer-skin, mats, a country-umbrella, a lantern and some books to read. One night, a stranger visited him and asked for all the articles in the room. Papa readily gave him everything, and was left with only one kaupin (loin cloth).

The next morning, when people came to see him, Papa was sitting on the floor with this kaupin on.

“Who robbed you?” the people asked.

“God came in another form and (desired to have all those things, so) Ramdas gave them to Him,” replied Papa.

In no time, all the things that the stranger had taken from Papa were replaced anew as if nothing had been taken away. God takes away and God provides.

DEAR CHILDREN

When Papa was travelling by train with some Sadhus, a ticket-inspector asked them (as well as many others from other carriages) to get off as they did not have tickets. He led them all near a gate and made them stand in a line.

The first in the line of the Sadhus was a young Sannyasi with a jata or tuft of matted hair. Every now and then, while checking the tickets of the exiting passengers, the ticket-inspector would turn around and, clutching this Sannyasi's jata, would shake his head violently. After a while, he turned towards the Sadhus with the intention of handling them roughly, one by one.

Papa was the second in the line of Sadhus, and when his turn came, he felt much relieved. Coming up to Papa, the ticket-inspector caught his hand in a firm grasp and looked at his face. There he discovered a most welcoming smile, bright and beaming. At once he let go Papa's hand, and, drawing himself back a few steps, seemed to have given himself to some thinking. Soon after, he asked all the Sadhus to go

out of the station. Accordingly, one by one, all the Sadhus left the station.

This incident might have been God testing the Sadhus to see if they would lose their self-control under provocation.

Papa intensely felt that when an adversary approaches you in a violent mood, if you meet him with a smile, instead of with fear or hatred, the violent approach fades away.

Love can surely conquer hate. Love is a sovereign antidote for all the ills of the world.

EPISTLES OF SWAMI RAMDAS

Beloved Ram,

...The only prayer of a Bhakta to God is made in this strain: "O God, keep Thy sweet name always on my lips; may my heart be ever filled with Thy Prem!"

...To love Him with all our heart is the supreme joy of this life. Let us exclaim with rapture, "O Sri Ram, Thou art mine, and I am Thine, for ever and for ever."

Nowadays, Ramdas can scarcely stand on his legs without his starting on a dance. Sri Ram's Prem is tingling in every vein of his body; and Ramdas dances, lost in ecstasy. The mere sound of His name sends thrills of joy through Ramdas. Sri Ram is 'Prem'.

...Your kind and loving letter to hand. You are He. You are He. ...Ramdas and Ram are one, not two. So, Ramdas is in the hearts of all. All hearts are His. Ramdas dwells in Him. O, the mystery of mysteries! Thou art all and Thou art One.

Ramdas

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 May 2016 is 250 crores. The grand total of the Japa done so far now stands at 13235 crores.

PUJYA SWAMIJI TO VISIT BANGALORE: Pujya Swamiji is scheduled to be in Bangalore from the 24th to the 29th of July. The programmes are as follows:

- 24-07-16 Satsang at Chitrapur Mutt in Malleswaram
- 25-07-16 Satsang at Jayanagar
- 26-07-16 Program at Unnati
- 27-07-16 At the Samiti Mandir in Ramasandra.
- 28-07-16 Program at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan

For more details, please contact Sri Umesh (9945150293), Sri Krishna Muthy Sagar (9449032237) or Sri VishvaPradeep (9900667175).

LIST OF ASHRAM PUBLICATIONS

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In Quest of God	50												

(*) denotes books out of print.

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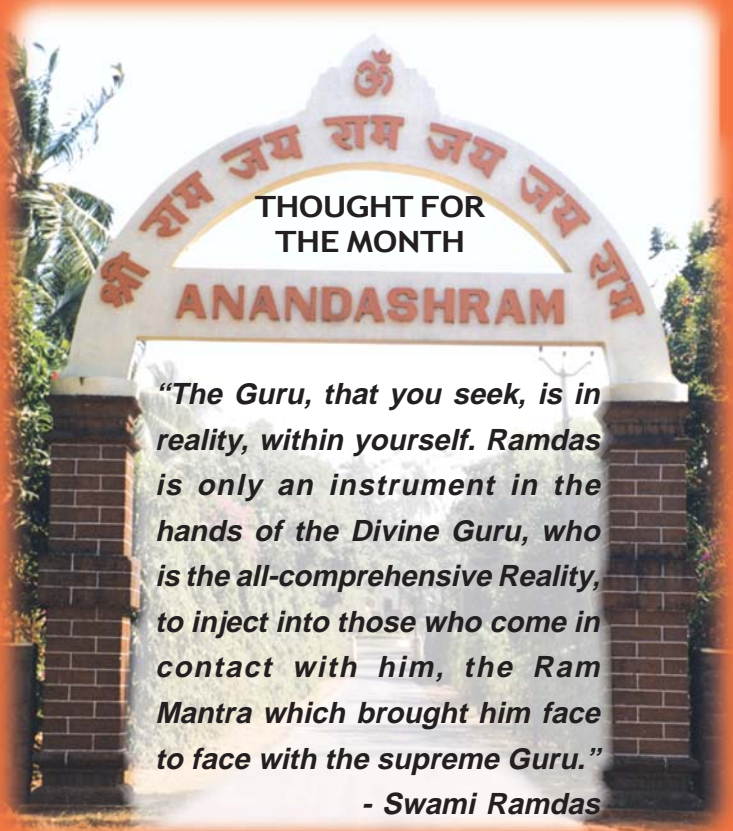
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