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ॐ श्री राम जय राम जय जय राम

Adoration of the Lord

The greatest acquisition of human life is Divine love. Divine love is the love for the Lord seated in the hearts of all beings and creatures. This love is attained by the devotee in the first place only through the realization of the Lord in his own heart. The Lord is the master of the worlds. He pervades the entire universe. He is the supreme ruler of all the planes and spheres of existence. Since He is everywhere and all, to behold Him in all beings and love them all, is the true adoration of the Lord. In this vision of love, the apparent good and evil have no significance. This love is based upon equality and a consciousness of universality. Divine love is absolutely pure and crystalline. It does not see distinctions, and so has no likes and dislikes. It flows from the heart of the devotee, and floods the world embracing and absorbing all alike, just as the light from the sun shines equally on all. It sheds its sweetness on all to the same degree. The devotee who has realized this exalted love is spontaneously blissful in all his activities, since these are permeated through and through with love! The real joy of the eternal is conceived in the womb of Divine love. Divine love expresses itself in cheerfulness, contentment, self-sacrifice, forgiveness, compassion, and peace.

This love is absent in that heart in which, in the place of the supreme Lord, ego has installed himself. The ego is the cause of soul's bondage and misery. The moment the soul realizes his supreme and divine nature by union with the Lord in his heart, he becomes the very lustrous moon emitting always soft and soothing rays of Divine love. The ego obstructs the free flow of the Divine life in the human being. So to earn the supreme blessings of this glorious love, a one-pointed devotion to and adoration of the Lord of the universe is the way, the means, and also the goal.

Adoration of the Lord signifies a loving remembrance of Him at all times, and this remembrance can be most easily effected by taking constantly the Lord's Divine Name.

(*The Divine Life*, pp. 138–139)

ॐ श्री राम जय राम जय जय राम

*Avatar*s Release a World-redeeming Spiritual Force

A question is raised whether an *avatar* and a God-realized soul possess the same power and vision and carry out the same mission in this world. Surely, so far as the knowledge of God is concerned, both are on the same plane, but in the field of action the *avatar* brings down the light and power of the supreme Truth to a greater mass of humanity than a God-realized soul does. The *avatar* embodies not only the inner perfection of the Spirit but also exercises all the power and glory of the Divine: whereas a God-realized soul throws the light and power upon a smaller portion of humanity and works under certain limitations. It is rightly said that the God-realized soul can be compared to a well and an *avatar* to a river in flood: while the former can satisfy the thirst of a few who seek the well, the swollen river spreads out its water all over the country allaying the thirst of innumerable beings and creatures. So in the spiritual awakening of humanity the work of an *avatar* is decidedly more extensive and far-reaching than that of a God-realized soul.

Moreover there is a clear assertion made by the *avatar* that he has descended on the earth with the special mission of liberating mankind from ignorance and bondage. A God-realized soul does not make such a declaration. We see that the great *avatar*s like Krishna, Christ, Buddha, Mohammed, and Zoroaster are saviors of humanity and redeemers of all fallen souls.

Again if we study their teachings, we find *avatar*s have a message for the whole world. They preach universal love as the highest attainment which alone can establish unity, harmony, and brotherhood in the world.

Some people would have us believe that the *avatar*s never existed and that their lives have only an allegorical meaning

and relate the inner transformation of a soul from ignorance to higher divine nature. This opinion also is not true. All the *avatar*s, after whom the principal religions of the world are founded, are historical personages. Their historicity is denied because it is hard for some people to accept that God who is infinite and impersonal could manifest Himself within the limitations which the assumption of a physical body imposes upon Him. God, who is all in all, is at once limited and unlimited, finite and infinite, personal as well as impersonal. Encased in relative and perishable bodies as *avatar*s, God has through them exhibited omnipotent powers. They have done miraculous things which, judged by the unalterable laws of Nature, are impossible. Some may doubt whether the miracles did happen at all. They even go to the length of opining that they are sheer concoctions. This view cannot carry much weight with those faithful devotees who, after a sufficient advance on the spiritual path, have experienced the wonders of the inner life. They know that in the realm of the Spirit nothing is impossible. In the light of the writer's unique realizations, he can boldly declare that a person inspired by the spirit of God can reveal miraculous powers. Apart from the power of performing miracles which *avatar*s possess, they release a world-redeeming spiritual force by which they transform men steeped in ignorance and sin into veritable angels of purity, wisdom, love, and peace. Whoever comes in contact with them even in thought and meditation becomes illumined by their light and power. *Avatar* is God Himself in human form.

(*The Divine Life*, pp. 152–154)

ॐ श्री राम जय राम जय जय राम

Beauty in the Eyes of God

Question: There is a Japanese theory that flowers and plants have a wish to contribute to external beauty. If we cut off a branch or pluck flowers with the idea of making the plant perfectly beautiful, then it joins in the happiness.

Ramdas: Nothing of the kind. That is beauty in the eyes of man. There is a beauty of nature, that is, beauty in the eyes of God, only when the plants are left as they are. The plants have been given certain branches and certain directions of growth according to the will of God who is the source of all beauty. Everything is beautiful in His eyes. What is beautiful for Him may not be beautiful for the human eye because man's sense of beauty is different, and therefore he cuts and shapes them as he likes, only to cater to his own ideas of beauty. We must see as God sees. Then only we shall appreciate beauty as it is. The sense of beauty differs with different people. That is not the real sense of beauty which is God's, according to which He has created this universe.

Question: There is a problem for the gardener. He loves the plants very much but he has to prune them sometimes very drastically, cutting almost everything down because when the plants are cut that way, they will grow quickly.

Ramdas: It is not so much for beauty that he cuts them. If they are cut, they may give better and bigger flowers.

(*Ramdas Speaks*, vol. 2, p. 37)

ॐ श्री राम जय राम जय जय राम

Bhakti is the Adoration of God

Bhakti is an intense longing and love for God which enables the aspirant to keep up a constant remembrance of Him, thus purifying his emotions and elevating his thought to the consciousness of the Reality. *Bhakti* is the adoration of God, who dwells in his own heart and fills the universe, and surrender of all his actions to Him. Here a fit of renunciation seizes him—a mental recoil from the unrealities of life that had so long enthralled him. Through the exercise of an awakened intellect he now begins to discriminate the real from the unreal—the eternal from the non-eternal.

(*The Divine Life*, p. 114)

Bhakti means making God the supreme ideal of life. For the *bhakta* there is no other thought but of Him, and no other ambition but to attain Him. His mind runs towards God through a ceaseless flow of remembrance. The *bhakta*'s heart is ever agitated with the waves of hope and aspiration for the vision of God. His restless nature, besides urging him to dwell constantly in the thought of God, directs his steps to the feet of saints and drives him from place to place on visit to noted shrines. As the child away from its mother is stricken with anguish and sorrow for the sight of her, so the *bhakta* insistently weeps with the longing for the *darshan* of God. He finds life dry and tasteless until he meets his supreme Beloved. The more he meditates and contemplates upon the great attributes of God, the more he begins to feel his own littleness and unworthiness, and prays to his Beloved to elevate, enlighten, and purify him, so as to make him fit to be accepted as His child and servant.

For the *bhakta*, God is the very embodiment of love, compassion, forgiveness, and grace. He visualizes his God in the recesses of his own heart. He surrenders completely in thought, word, and deed to his Beloved, and adores Him with

an unflinching devotion. By a constant meditation of the Lord, the *bhakta* imbibes into his own being the Divine attributes, ultimately reaching a status of perfect union and oneness with Him. Compassion, mercy, and love now illumine the nature and therefore all actions of the *bhakta*. He becomes the very image of God, for the impurities and weaknesses having been removed by the grace of the Lord, he stands revealed as the very sun of Truth, radiating all around him the rays of love, kindness, and peace.

Now the greatest virtue that shines forth in all its splendor in the *bhakta* is forgiveness. As God has forgiven him, so he forgives all in the world who wrong or have wronged him. He ever returns good for evil, both in thought and action. He is self-sacrificing to a degree. He is ever willing to serve and toil for others, to give them solace and relief. He loves all with an equal vision, be he friend or foe, rich or poor, good or wicked, high or low, wise or ignorant. He endures peacefully ignominy and persecution and gives himself away in every manner for the good of others. He is ever contented, ever pure, and ever cheerful. He is unassuming and humble in all he does. He recognizes God as all in all. He experiences God seated in his heart as causing, by His power, all movements in the world. He beholds and feels God's presence everywhere. Verily, he always lives and moves in God and is the very being of God.

(*The Divine Life*, pp. 120–121)

Bhakti is the adoration of the supreme Lord of the universe beyond everything else in the world. This one-pointed adoration makes the devotee keep his mind ever engaged in the remembrance and contemplation of the Lord. The Divine idea seizes the mind of the devotee to such an extent that the most attractive objects of life cease to fascinate him. He talks, laughs, and often weeps in his madness for the Lord. As he progresses on the path of devotion he is weaned away from the petty and transient pleasures of the senses and remains, as it were, dead to them. His one passion is to see God, know God, and be entirely merged in God.

(*The Divine Life*, p. 122)

ॐ श्री राम जय राम जय जय राम

Bliss of the *Atman*

Everyone who is in the grip of struggle for the attainment of the eternal values of life knows that life's fulfillment and its ultimate fruition depends upon the immortal bliss and peace of the *Atman*. He further knows that this unchanging Truth can be his, only when the mind is withdrawn from the external attractions of the world, only when he has conceived a revulsion of feeling towards the pleasures of the senses, only when the false cravings of his soul for the unstable and ephemeral things of life have ceased and disappeared. These are the necessary conditions for the realization of the immortal peace and joy of the *Atman*.

The sages have declared: There is no higher gain in this existence than the bliss of the *Atman*. When you have once found it, you are utterly free from the clutches of mental turmoil and the fetters of death and misery. Suppose a man has come by a perennial spring of nectar at which he can quaff to his heart's content and thus satisfy the thirst that parches his soul, would he hanker after the unwholesome water of dirty ponds that brings disease and consequent pain and misery?

If you would really enjoy the blessings of a true and independent life, then by a concentrated and sustained effort seek the bliss of the eternal. Nothing else in this world can quench the flames of desire that rise and burn in your heart. Liberation is spoken of as the realization of the immortal Divinity dwelling within you. Be intoxicated with the joy that never changes, that ever exists. Joy, bliss, and peace are your quest. Independence and freedom are your goal.

If you have understood, by ransacking the depths of your desire-ridden heart, the true purpose of your life, you will surely have discovered that nothing short of the attainment of an immortal state would completely satisfy the innate aspiration of your soul: The passing glamours of life, the gilded pleasures that you pursue, are the will-o'-the-wisps that delude

the mind and throw you into the prison of ignorance and death. Therefore, seek the eternal, seek that which never dies, never changes—that which is your real spirit, the one deathless truth of your being. Do not be deceived. Wake up from the sleep of ignorance. Be aware of your eternal Self. Tear up the veil between you and your God, and know that you and He are one. Declare with all the joy that you can command: "I am the all-pervading, indestructible, beginningless and endless Truth, whose nature is perfect peace and bliss. I am the self-existent, all-powerful Reality. I am the free, ageless, birthless, everlasting Spirit. Disease, poverty, fear, and want have nothing to do with me. I am bliss—pure bliss: peace—pure peace. I am the Light of lights. I am the primeval source of all things. I am God and there is none but 'I'." Meditate thus until you are inebriated with the thought of your Divine state, until you merge and lose yourself in the limitless ocean of your immortal existence and make this blessed human life abundantly blessed.

(*The Divine Life*, pp. 70–71)

ॐ श्री राम जय राम जय जय राम

The Buddha: Truth is Inexpressible

Buddha is a veritable sun of spiritual effulgence. He came into the world more than 2500 years ago and his power and glory still hold sway on a large portion of the human race. He is a redeemer and savior of souls, just as Krishna and Christ are. His burning renunciation, his absolute purity in thought, word, and deed, his heart throbbing with love and compassion towards all living creatures in the world, his illuminating presence that brings solace and peace to sufferers caught in the grip of pain and misery, stand out in bold relief whenever we meditate upon him.

The message of non-violence and love which issued forth from his divine lips so long a time ago still reverberates and will reverberate throughout the passage of time. It is a message which brings solace to the aching heart of humanity. There is no period in the history of the world when this great message is more needed than at the present time. The world has been and is in the throes of discontent, discord, and distress, and Buddha's exhortation of love and peace can alone relieve the earth from its heavily pressing burden of ill will, hate, and injustice and the consequent agony of disaster and war. Buddha's teachings, taken in their totality, can be resolved into one illuminating short edict, namely, "Give love for hate." This brief sentence is pregnant with the greatest uplifting and divinizing power, and when it is followed with faith and surrender, it can transmute the life of a human being into one of supreme tranquility, light, and beneficence.

Buddha never sought to define the ultimate Truth which all beings are in quest of, because Truth is inexpressible. It is realized only by purifying our mind, emotions, and actions; and for achieving this end he sets down certain rules of conduct which, if adopted, will lead the soul to a state of deliverance from the deep-seated ignorance with which it is enveloped. This deliverance of emancipation, Buddha calls

nirvana. *Nirvana* is the attainment of supreme inner freedom and peace in which the soul is freed from the thirst for sense objects and the enjoyments accrued from them. He teaches that by the negation or elimination of that which is transitory or unreal, the ineffable Reality can be realized. He emphasizes that absolute purity is the only sure way to *nirvana*. Compassion towards all beings is both the means and result of such a realization.

Let us therefore learn from this great World-Teacher the lesson by following which we can make our lives in every way blessed, a great force for radiating love, light, and peace towards all our fellow-beings on this earth. It is by love we find union with them. It is by love that we conquer our lower nature, baser instincts, and desires. It is by love that we ignite within us the flame of true wisdom and knowledge. It is love that makes our hands and feet engage themselves in service, without expectation of any reward, for healing the sorrows of the world. Buddha is a very embodiment of this love. May his love awaken the hearts of all beings, inspiring them to live together in perfect harmony and goodwill and establish thereby a lasting spirit of unity and brotherhood on this earth!

(*The Divine Life*, pp. 175–176)

ॐ श्री राम जय राम जय जय राम

Communion with Your Eternal Beloved

What is there sweeter in the world than to hold communion with your Eternal Beloved? He is your never-failing companion and friend. He resides in the inner chamber of your heart and is also present everywhere about you. He is the soul of your soul, the life of your life. In the absolute sense, you and He are one.

If this love of intimate comradeship with your Beloved does not inspire your life, even if you have all other things, your life is lived in vain. See your Beloved in the face of all beings and creatures. Verily, He has become the whole universe. Wherever you turn, there He is. The bliss of His presence is inexpressible. Why run away from Him and seek to attain peace in aloofness? Allow your life to mingle with His life, that is the universal life. He is a calm, serene, changeless Spirit and, at the same time, He is a world player. He dances in the hearts of all beings and creatures. He is at once wisdom, power, and love.

How beautiful are the images in which He appears! He is the essence of all grandeur and majesty. He is the smile on the face of the innocent child and the power that sits on the brow of the king. He is the love that bubbles in the heart of the saint. He is the radiance that shines upon the whole creation. Who can describe His greatness? Why talk of Him in terms of abstract philosophy, while He is the very nectar which you can drink and enjoy? He permeates your physical frame and tingles in every atom of it.

You are wise, you are well-read and you have gone through spiritual practices; you have put on the garb of sanctity, you can preach and you can pose—these are all nothing if you do not experience the blissful union with the Beloved. You can meet Him in the streets, in the bazaar, on the hills, in the cottages of the poor, in the palaces of kings, in hermitages and

jungles, in workshops and offices—at all places. He is with you. How sweet, how charming is His constant company! Why do you miss Him? Be humble. Reduce yourself to the very dust of His feet. But dwell in Him and be enchanted by His company. Lay aside your pride. What are you worth if you do not have Him? You may sit on an eminence but without Him you cannot be happy. You may own millions but without His smile beaming on your face you are poor indeed. Enrich your life by His light, love, and joy. How sweet and great He is!

Seek the Beloved. Feel His presence. He is thy own Self. Have Him at any cost. Find Him and enjoy eternal felicity. That is why you are here.

(*The Divine Life*, pp. 22–23)

ॐ श्री राम जय राम जय जय राम

Compassion is the Noblest Virtue

Compassion is the noblest virtue that adorns the heart of a human being. Real peace and contentment can reside only in that heart which feels for the sufferings of others. The heart does not stop at being merely touched by the woes of its fellow beings, but it overflows in acts of kindness and love. The heart that feels but does not express itself in selfless action is like a spring dried up at its very source.

O friend, if you would have freedom from fear and sorrow, and enjoy the supreme blessing of everlasting peace, expand freely your heart so that it might go out in waves of compassion to soothe and alleviate the distress of the world. Whenever a kindly feeling rises in you, let not selfish thoughts stifle it. If you would realize the endless bliss of immortality which alone is your real quest—although you are unaware of it—liberate the heart from its hardness by the magic touch of compassion.

Life is a short span and the pleasures you derive in it are transient and fleeting. In pursuing these shadows, you are heading towards darkness and are becoming oblivious of the exalted and ever-blissful Truth which is your real being. Through the infusion of compassion and love let your heart be illumined and purified so that you can behold yourself as all the world. A narrowed and cramped heart is the cause of misery and pain. Your liberation lies in your hands. God who dwells in you ever awaits to succor you. Seek His aid and fight with the enemies—lust, greed, and wrath—by the weapons of His grace and power. Do not forget the Divine Master. He is all compassion and mercy. Feel His presence in you and everywhere about you—in all beings and creatures. Install Him in your heart as the very embodiment of love. Compassion will then be a natural quality of your heart. The softened heart will then melt away in the sweetness of your immortal life, and all your actions will give out the veritable fragrance of kindness

and love. Now your selfless life will always yield peace and joy to yourself, and offer relief and delight to all in the world.

(*The Divine Life*, pp. 105–106)

ॐ श्री राम जय राम जय जय राम

Contemplation of God

The mind which constantly contemplates upon God, imbibes into its being His immortality, love, and joy. The saying: "As a man thinketh, so he becometh," is eminently true. The individuality conceived of by the mind as a stable and real existence, must, by means of meditation, merge in the universality of God's existence. It is the experience of every aspirant on the spiritual path that the more he devotes the mind to the exalted thought of God, the more he is absolved from its impurities.

The principle is: take in brilliant and elevating ideas, and automatically the low and groveling thoughts will be purged off. Just as the application of soap removes the dirt of the cloth turning it clean and white, or just as light dispels darkness and illumines space, so also a sustained recollection of God, destroying all the distempers of the mind, purifies and ennobles life. It is rightly said that one should not unnecessarily exert oneself for subduing the mind, but what one has to do is to dwell in the contemplation of God, and by this method not only purify the heart but also simultaneously fill it with the light, love, and joy of God.

Verily, there is no peace for man until his mind is liberated from the clutches of passion, until the wisdom of the Eternal enlightens him.

Therefore, raise your heart, mind, soul, and body to the throne of the almighty Lord within you in concentrated adoration and worship. Let the harassing complexity of life be substituted by harmonious simplicity. So regulate your life as to attain to a vision which enables you to be naturally friendly towards all creatures and beings in the world. Let humility be your shield, love your weapon, and a blissful life of service the aim and mark. Don't be satisfied with anything less than the universalization of your outlook upon life. This is the *Atma darshan* sung of by the sages of yore. It is a supreme state in

which the notion of the body, the sense of apparent diversity and the erroneous consciousness of the ego have no place. It is the vision of the pure, resplendent spirit that pervades all beings in the universe. It is a vision of yourself as the indwelling Reality in all forms and existences. It is a vision of indescribable ecstasy born of the knowledge of one eternal substratum or Soul that fills and overflows to infinity the world phenomena.

How do you reach the summit of this transcendental Reality?—by recollection, contemplation, and meditation. Give your thought entirely to God and you are bound to realize that you are God Himself. Before the glory of this attainment, all other aspirations of man are flat and childish. When you can tune your mind with the all-powerful Master of the universe and realize deathless peace, liberation, and bliss, is it worth while for you to pursue the ephemeral prizes and achievements of the world, however great and glossy they might seem? What a tremendous privilege this human birth is! Human life can have the full value set on it only when it is utilized for achieving the loftiest purpose for which it is meant.

Hence, turn your mind, day by day, towards the immortal source of your life—God. Let your life be more and more filled with Divine effulgence and love. Let your actions flow like a gentle stream singing the melodious song of Divine service. Be gifted with the sight of the sage, and behold your Beloved everywhere—aye, your Beloved everywhere.

(*The Divine Life*, pp. 72–73)

ॐ श्री राम जय राम जय जय राम

Death is False

My thought flies like a bird carrying the message of peace to all the worlds. A light goes out of my eyes that illuminates the entire cosmos. My heart responds to the rhythm of a heavenly music that resounds through all space.

The angels hover round me—the *deva*s of the other worlds—the embodiments of the omnipresent Spirit. They look human, but they are my God in so many forms. The *deva*, man, bird, and beast are all the varied shapes taken by my God. They are all sweet and good.

I see Him and am lost in Him. I hear Him and am attuned with Him. I touch Him and become one with Him. In all planes of life I am united with Him.

With outstretched arms He beckons me and I rush to Him, and I am caught in His ecstatic embrace. I shut my eyes in the intoxication of joy. "O Beloved!"—that is all I could say. O my Lord, my God, my supreme Mother, I am eternally Thine—I am Thyself.

How strange! I am Thyself, yet I am Thine. When I sit silent with eyes closed, I behold all the worlds and beyond in me, and myself in all the worlds and beyond. Whenever I am before anybody, I look at him as myself. His movements are mine. When he talks and acts, it is all myself.

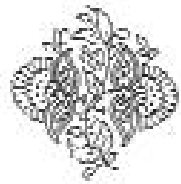
Death is false. Every particle of the body in all its states is ever intensely alive—dust or ashes. Soul, body, universe, all beings and things are all one. Matter is Spirit, Spirit is matter. All is He and His expression!

Spirit is still, but it sings sweetly and universes are born. They live in the infinite ocean of the Spirit like ice floating on water.

All minds and all bodies! You are dear to me. You are made of my substance. My substance is omnipresent, immutable Spirit. Still, there are ripples in me. They are the planets, stars, and stellar spheres, ever in motion, whirling

through the glowing etheric atmosphere. All hail, all hail to Thee!—the one Truth—the one Reality.

(*The Divine Life*, pp. 54–55)



ॐ श्री राम जय राम जय जय राम

Divine Consciousness Destroys the Ego-sense

To conquer the lower nature and reveal the glory of the Divine is the purpose of *sadhana*. The *sadhaka*, before he starts on this enterprise, is a mere tool in the hands of the ego which dominates and controls him in every way. To destroy the ego-sense is not an easy task. A supreme endeavor backed up by divine grace is necessary. The mind has to be brought into subjection and all the desires vanquished. So the *sadhaka*'s life is a life of tremendous struggle.

The *sadhaka* should, in the first place, be fired with an intense aspiration for his spiritual regeneration and the attainment of the highest goal—God. Then, contact of saints should follow. The ego, having its sway on him, refuses to yield and sets up all kinds of obstacles on his path. It often poses as the Supreme Himself and leads him astray. At the beginning the *sadhaka* finds it hard to distinguish the divine guidance from the promptings of the mere mind. The method, by adopting which he can safely progress on the divine path, is to surrender himself entirely to the all-powerful God within him by constantly thinking of Him and His attributes. It is by constant remembrance of Him alone that he develops the needed soul-force to put down the mind and its machinations and rise superior to it. Instead of being the slave of the mind, he should be the master of it.

As the *sadhaka* gets more and more into communion with the Divine, the power of the ego diminishes until the ego itself disappears when the full blaze of God-realization floods his being. It must not be forgotten that, for the *sadhaka*, to realize God is to assert his own immortal and divine Self. Just as light dispels darkness, so the divine consciousness destroys the ego-sense. The mind-stuff, which was all along the cause of ignorance and the resultant chaos, should totally cease to exist. It is now that God's mastery in the human vehicle is evident in all its sublimity. Such a *sadhaka* has become one with the

supreme Reality and his external life becomes a spontaneous outflow of divine energy, radiance, and joy. He becomes the very embodiment of divine Love. The struggle has now ended and victory achieved—a victory over all that is undivine in him—a victory that brings him a state of perfect freedom and bliss.

Whenever violent passions seek to subdue the *sadhaka* and cause a sense of frustration and despair in him, he should sit in a prayerful attitude, calm and silent, and take complete refuge in God to escape the blast. Detachment from the mind and constant watchfulness over it is the way to gain control over it. Detachment can be possible only when the heart is attuned with the eternal Self. Heroic spirit and readiness to endure pain, and grit to face failures and defeats, having full confidence in the ultimate success of his quest, should be the qualities of a true *sadhaka*. He should cling to God with all his strength, with all his heart and with all his soul. In fact the *sadhaka*'s triumph is God's own triumph.

The question is asked why God at one stroke does not lift the *sadhaka* to the realm of spiritual freedom and peace. He, as an ignorant human being, is a delicate and weak instrument. Before the fullness of the divine illumination can be revealed into it, it has to be, by a steady process, strengthened and made fit in all respects for the great consummation. God's power works in the *sadhaka*, who has resigned himself to Him, for a gradual divinization of every part of his being. The antagonistic influences are now replaced by the suzerainty and all-controlling power of God. In short, God alone rules supreme in him and absorbs him into His resplendent Being. Now the *sadhaka* and God are one and the aim of human life is fulfilled.

(*The Divine Life*, pp. 27–28)

ॐ श्री राम जय राम जय जय राम

Divine Consciousness of the Eternal and Cosmic Reality

Divine consciousness is the consciousness of the eternal and cosmic Reality. It is attained by transcending the human or individual consciousness. It is born of the soul's complete union and absorption in the all-pervading Oversoul. Here the ego notion which binds the soul to a narrow vision is totally absent giving place to an extensive and unlimited vision in which all the visible and invisible worlds are included and absorbed. The individual sense has absolutely no place in this exalted state. The person who has reached this spiritual height, though appearing to possess an individual sense is, in truth, entirely free from it. He lives, moves, and acts from the standpoint of the universal and super-universal Reality. He realizes the truth that there is only one existence and one power both as the unmanifest and manifest Reality. He feels at all times that he is one with all beings, creatures, and things in the world both physically and spiritually. He knows that all movements, changes, and activities going on in him and everywhere about him are of one single cosmic power.

What is the nature of actions performed by a person who has attained this supreme state? The same power that activates all things in the universe, is also responsible for the actions of the persons who have attained divine consciousness. The manifestation that we behold before us is a concrete expression of the divine *shakti*. The person of knowledge knows this truth whereas the ignorant one is unaware of it. The knowledge of it enables the former to become not merely a vehicle of the divine power, but also the very embodiment of it. So it is evident that actions are possible in this state. The action performed by one who has realized the Truth, is a spontaneous outflow from the divine source. Hence even in a life of great activity, the God-realized soul enjoys the bliss of immortality,

for the dynamic nature that reveals itself in action is the manifest aspect of the underlying, silent, and cosmic Spirit.

Even after reaching this great height of the all-comprehensive vision of the Reality in which all diversity is dissolved, the God-realized soul assumes a position separate from the great Truth. He calls himself the son, child, servant, or devotee of God. Here the duality is assumed, knowing that the devotee and God are truly one. Why this assumption? Because, in the sphere of activity the God-realized one prefers to play the part of a lover or servant in order to enjoy the ineffable bliss of love. Love works only on the plane of duality. All his actions, great or small, bear the stamp of love, for love is his being and love is his life, and in love he finds the fulfillment of his existence.

Based upon the realization of his oneness and identity with the supreme Spirit, the devotee still plays the part of a servant or child and acts in all manner of ways as the very incarnation of God. His touch or sight redeems the fallen soul—brings light and happiness where there is darkness and sorrow. He is the real savior of mankind.

(*The Divine Life*, pp. 18–19)

ॐ श्री राम जय राम जय जय राम

The Divine is the One and Only Reality

Ignorance or delusion, i.e., *Maya*, sets us on the belief that this body of ours is real and makes us forget the all-pervading Divine being who is the one and only reality. Living in this ignorance, our sole outlook on life becomes one continued service of this inconstant, unreal, and perishable body. Our concern then is always to find ways and means as to how best to nourish and protect this body. What best food should be given to it? What clothing should this body wear? What ornaments should adorn it? What must be put on the head, what on the feet, what must be used to cover the legs, what to dress the body with, and what rings, what bangles, what necklaces, what jewelry should it be decked with? These are the things in which we engage ourselves. The body demands fine and luxurious food to eat, rich clothing to wear, a soft bed to lie upon, and brilliant ornaments to adorn itself with. It calls for fine music for the ears, sensuous sights for the eyes, sweet aroma for the nose. O! the delusion of this body! We fidget about the whole day and night in pursuit of the requirements of this transient body. It wants a spacious, decorated, well-furnished house to live in. It wants so many things and beings to satisfy its momentary pleasures. We are every minute engaged in this mad rush of satisfying the cravings of the body; and the mind and the senses are in their full play, making havoc of our lives. In our blind pursuit we hate and get angry with our brethren, and snatch ruthlessly from them, and secure for ourselves, what our mind has set itself upon, as our want. After all, to what purpose? For a momentary gain, for a passing happiness. In this struggle, what do we experience? Misery, pain, disappointment, anxiety, care, disease, and ultimate destruction.

The all-loving, all blissful Reality—Ram—is entirely forgotten. We forget the fact that we come alone, naked into the world, and leave it at the end in the same condition. The

hoarded wealth, the loved relations, the cherished fame, the vast property, the gold we value so much, all, all we leave behind, and carry with us only a load of sin which we gather in the course of our strife and struggle to amass these worldly baubles. O! vain life, O! vain world, how attractive are thy wiles! The *Maya* is such—ignorance is such! Instead of being the servant of the all-powerful, ever-existing and all-loving Ram, we become slaves of our bodies, senses, and the mind. O Ram, how wonderful is the illusion in which Thou keepest us all! By Thy grace alone, can we free ourselves from it. O Ram, have pity on us and liberate us and take us on to your holy feet.

The world is simply a vanishing play of the three *guna*s—*sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. All forms are merely the result of the *guna*s. Therefore, we should never associate ourselves with these *guna*s and the appearances caused by them. But who has assumed these forms and the *guna*s that are Mayavic or illusive? It is the one supreme, imperishable Being, the only Reality. Therefore, let the forms and *guna*s produce on us no impression whatsoever, except that of merely reminding us of the Reality that appears to us as these forms controlled by the *guna*s. Diversity is false. Unity or oneness is Truth. Let our mind be always fixed on Truth—the only Truth. Let the mind be never allowed to dwell upon objects or forms. Let the mind be not engaged in judging or criticizing things and forms. In order to stop the wandering of the mind that runs away to think upon various objects which as different entities are all unreal and therefore disturbing, we must develop the practice of immediately associating the thought of the Reality with the thought of the object, whatever it may be. If you go on having this practice, the diversity gets merged into the real unity. *Maya* gets absorbed in the Brahman. The turmoil of the mind is gone, and, in its place, settle down, the everlasting peace and bliss, because the Reality itself denotes, and is, peace and bliss.

(*At the Feet of God*, pp. 43–45)

ॐ श्री राम जय राम जय जय राम

Divine Protection and Grace Through Unshakable Faith

When an earnest aspirant or devotee is on the path of God-realization, he meets with innumerable obstructions and difficulties, but God's mercy is so great that the adventurous soul is endowed by Him with the necessary strength and will to endure or overcome them. The mysterious manner in which the benevolent Master of the worlds guides and protects him is simply wonderful. If we examine the earlier life of intense struggle of an aspirant for self-control and attainment of the Divine, in every case, we find that the Lord did, with infinite love and kindness, watch over and protect him. In fact, the opposing or resisting forces on the path seem to be a part of God's own plan so that the aspirant by contending against them may develop the needed will-power for the subdual of the mind and its restless nature.

The moment the devotee takes refuge in God, acknowledging Him as his all in all, the moment his entire being is surrendered up to Him, the moment all his life's activities are completely dedicated to Him, the feeling or consciousness of peace, security, and freedom which he attains is verily inexpressible. Then the devotee is ever free and blissful like a child under the benign care of the Divine Mother.

What is required is a fixed faith and a steady aspiration or hunger for God. Thereafter the progress or evolution towards the vision of God becomes easy, for at every step, even when he has to conquer the worst enemies within the mind or the greatest obstacles outside, he feels that the hands of the Divine are ever holding him, infusing into him courage and enthusiasm.

Every saint, who has achieved the highest spiritual experience, lays before you that during the period of his *sadhana*, God himself saved him from many a pitfall and dangerous sit-

uation in inscrutable ways. He bears witness to the fact that God is all-powerful and His compassion and love for His devotees is unlimited. He tells you emphatically: put yourself in the hands of God and you are safe.

Life's fulfillment and the revealment of its glory, power, and victory lie in its perfect dedication to God. Man has to rise beyond himself, transcend all the lower conceptions of his nature, subdue the false impulses of the mind and conquer the vitiating influences of the ego and thus rising superior to them all, meet his supreme Beloved in his own heart and in the hearts of all objects in the world.

The Divine assurance, "My devotee perisheth never," is a promise of the utmost significance. Really, there is none who is so full of kindness and love as our eternal Mother, none so forgiving, none so tender, none so benevolent as She. Realizing this let everyone entitle himself or herself to Her Divine protection and grace, through unshakable faith and entire self-surrender. Merge yourself, therefore, in Her resplendent being, and attain to a life imbued with the consciousness of immortality, peace, and bliss.

(*The Divine Life*, pp. 69–70)

"Selections from the Writings of Swami Ramdas"
features in
The Essential Swami Ramdas: Commemorative Edition
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Foreword by Rebecca Manring
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