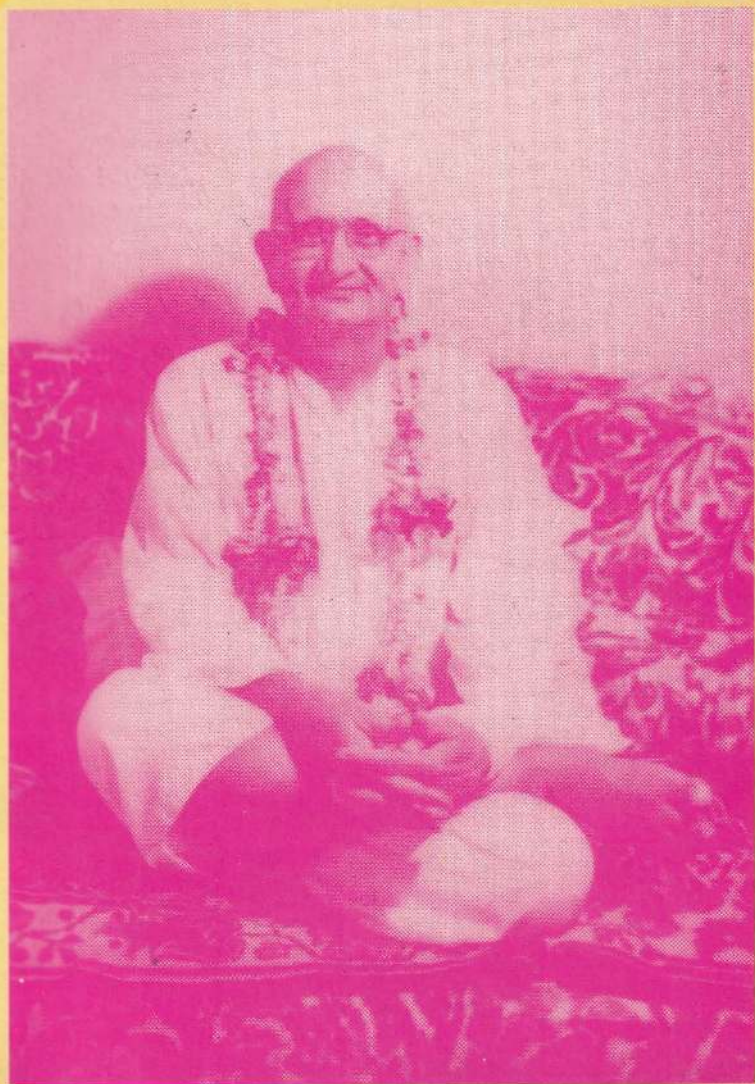


INSPIRING TALKS OF SWAMI RAMDAS IN SRI LANKA



ANANDASAGARA

INSPIRING TALKS OF SWAMI RAMDAS IN SRI LANKA

Anandasagara
Colombo 4

INSPIRING TALKS OF SWAMI RAMDAS IN SRI LANKA

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OM SRI RAM JAI RAM JAI JAI RAM

It was in the year 1954 that our most Beloved *Param Pujya* Papa Swami Ramdas along with *Pujya* Mother Krishnabai and *Pujya* Swami Satchidanandaji blessed our land with their visit. The nectarine words of Beloved Papa showered during the various programmes on the said visit still ring out with all its freshness.

To make us more firm and steadfast in our spiritual pursuit, by taking up chanting of His holy and all-powerful *Ram Nam*, the all-merciful almighty Lord of the universe, caused the setting up of ANANDASAGARA at Colombo, the inauguration of which is being performed by *Pujya* Swami Satchidanandaji today. On this most auspicious and joyous occasion, we have pleasure in releasing the book INSPIRING TALKS OF SWAMI RAMDAS in Colombo covering the speeches delivered by Beloved Papa during the 1954 tour. The said talks touch upon all that is needed to lead a purposeful, successful and blissful life. In these talks, coming as they did at the conclusion of Beloved Papa's epochal world tour, the master has summed up the entire philosophy of his life epitomised as devotion, potency of *Ram Nam*, Divine Love, Universal Service, *Guru Kripa*, purity, richness of the Bhagavad Gita and above all, humility by seeing the Lord in all as all.

The object with which the world tour was undertaken is given in the address Beloved Papa delivered in Bombay on the eve of his departure, the text of which appears on the next page.

May the aspirants derive full benefit from these priceless teachings

OM SRI RAM JAI RAM JAI JAI RAM

12th February, 2001

Anandasagara
Colombo 4

Speech delivered on 15th August 1954 by Swami Ramdas at "Ivorine", the residence of Sri Natverlal G. Parikh, Bombay, on the eve of departure to Europe.

It was thirty years ago that Ramdas was first taken up by God and made to do everything as He willed. From that time onwards, Ramdas has been going round India, propagating the message of love and peace to all people who come in contact with him. But now it is His will that Ramdas should go outside India and move about in the world so that he can meet more of His manifestations in order that he may see in them also the same Beloved One he sees here, and has been seeing all along during his tours in different parts of India.

Now, the object of his going to foreign countries, as willed by the Divine—Ramdas uses the word 'foreign' as it is a common usage, but in fact there is nothing foreign to him as the whole world is his home—is to propagate the ideal of Universal Love and Service. Ramdas can spread this message only in one way; and that is by beholding his Beloved in all, so that his love may flow out and inundate the entire world, removing all man-made distinctions and enabling us all to stand united as one world family. It is one Truth that pervades everywhere and all humanity is the expression of that Truth. Ramdas is going abroad to show all how it is possible to achieve this exalted experience. Everyone must realise that the Divine is within him.

The trouble today is due to the fact that the world has forgotten the Divine dwelling within every one of us—the Divine who is all-pervading. The Divine is called the *Atman*—the all—pervading Reality. Hence we must lay emphasis on that aspect of our life which is all-pervading. Then it is that we shall attain real inner freedom and peace and, thereby, real outer harmony in the world. People of the West as well as the East are now immersed in things superficial and they do not care to dive deep. It is ignorance on the surface and wisdom deep down. "Straws on the surface flow; for pearls you should dive below." That precious pearl is within you

and the characteristic of that pearl is pure bliss and peace. The more we attune ourselves to the immortal and changeless Spirit within us, the more we become happy. We all know by experience that we do not get happiness by clinging to external things. The immortal Spirit which is all bliss and peace can alone grant us true freedom.

Ramdas is going abroad to preach this Truth. The authority for Ramdas to do so is God's will. He goes there not as a big Swami, but as a humble child. First, Ramdas will tell them that he sees them all as manifestations of his Beloved and he will mingle with them quite freely. All human beings in the world are forms of his Beloved. In that spirit Ramdas will move among them. They will understand that this child has come to them from the East fully surcharged with the message of the ancient Sages and Saints in order to make all of them understand what India stands for, and then enliven their hearts with the consciousness of their immortal nature and make them love each other so that peace and harmony may prevail allover the world. There will be no room then for strife, disorder and war that bring devastation and disaster to humanity.

People say that another war is likely to break out, but Ramdas feels no such thing will happen. By the power of God, worked through His prepared instruments, the tide of war will be stemmed and ultimately the war mentality in the world will disappear. Every one in the West is stricken with fear of an approaching war. A war of nerves is going on. This fear has seized them and they are trembling. But God's power is supreme and that power will work for changing this war mentality and bringing about a state of harmony and peace on earth.

Bearing this humble message Ramdas is going to visit the various countries in the West and the East, with the good wishes of you all. Before he finally decided to go abroad, he wrote to all the great Saints of India and he has received their gracious blessings. What more does he want, now that he is fully armed with their benedictions and encouraging words? Ramdas is going like a child, as willed by his Divine Master.

Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram

Let your heart be ever
filled with the sweetness
of Rammam

All joy and peace to
you

Hearty Blessings

Ramdas.

13-4-57

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AT THE SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, COLOMBO

3rd December, 1954.

Sri Ramakrishna— an *Avatar*

Beloved forms of Ramdas' Eternal Master and Mother, You are verily, for Ramdas, the manifestations of the Divine. As such he is addressing you a few words, not to teach you, but only to express his overflowing feelings at finding himself in this holy atmosphere, for which he is deeply grateful to Swami Prematmananda and the management of the Ramakrishna Mission, Colombo. We have assembled here under the divine auspices and grace of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Sri Ramakrishna had liberated millions of souls from the bondage of ignorance and he is doing the same even now, and will do so for ever. Ramakrishna is an *Avatar*, occupying the same rank as Buddha, Krishna, Rama and Jesus. You should not consider him to be an ordinary mortal who was illumined with light, love and wisdom of God. He had descended on earth specially for the uplift and liberation of mankind. What he teaches us is that we should free ourselves from ignorance and realise that we are *Brahman*.

His Teachings

Brahman is the undifferentiated, all-pervading, static, divine spirit and existence. We should gain this knowledge in order to be free from the bondage of *Karma* and attain a state of beatitude in which we enjoy eternal bliss and peace. Ramakrishna taught us that we should follow the path of devotion, and by constant remembrance of and meditation on the Divine, surrender ourselves to Him and be free from the ego-sense, realising our identity with Him. After realising that we are the static, all-pervading *Brahman*, we are to realise the presence of the Divine everywhere and behold the whole universe as the expression of *Brahman*. Ramakrishna himself passed through intense *Sadhana*, though there was no need for him to do any *Sadhana*. Whatever he did was for our sake, so that we might follow the path, which he chalked out for us, in order to realise God in all His aspects. God is not merely the static *Brahman*, but he is also the universal manifestation and the dynamic power active in the

universe. So we should have not only *Atma Jnana* but also the *Viswarupa Darshan*. Lastly, our entire life should be dedicated to the universal Mother or *Shakti* who is activating all the creatures of this world. So long as we retain even the smallest ego-sense, we are separate from that Divine existence. It is not in *Samadhi* alone that we can be in tune with the Infinite. We can realise God and feel His presence always, in all walks of life and in all activities, and know that all the movements and forms are His. It is easy to sit silent and concentrate the mind upon the Divine and lose ourselves in Him. But when we are caught in the world, we lose that consciousness and are affected by the conflicts of the opposite forces, with the result that we forget the Divine. Even when we are active and moving in the world, we must be conscious of the unity of life and be free from the sense of diversity, both in the Spirit and also in the manifestations. We must be one with all existence in the various forms. In the *Bhagavad Gita*, God has taught us that we have to see Him everywhere and in everything. Just as a thread passing through the beads of a rosary makes the beads into one rosary, so also we must be able to see all the forms as the expression of one indwelling Spirit. This simile has been improved upon by a Maharashtrian saint who says that the Divine is like a gold wire on which are strung gold beads. So the manifestation is He and the unmanifest Reality is also He. As unmanifest He is the calm, static and silent Spirit, and in the manifestation He seems to be moving and changing. So in both aspects the manifest and the unmanifest it is the one supreme God who is all-comprehensive, all-inclusive and at the same time all-transcendent. This supreme Godhead has to be realised by us, and how this was done by Ramakrishna has been shown in his life and teachings.

Our Duty

It is not merely that we have to read books and adore him, but we must imbibe the spirit of his teachings, draw lessons from his simple life, and walk in his footsteps. By doing so we shall purify our hearts and behold the Divine within and without. This was his message to us all and it is still reverberating and will continue to do so eternally. He often hammered upon those who came in contact

with him that the object of human life was to realise God. Without this aim, we are just like animals. He always talked about the necessity of *Vairagya* for developing *Bhakti* or devotion for God. *Vairagya* is a sense of detachment from sense-objects. We see only diversity outside and we are attached to the objects, but not to the indwelling Spirit. God has definitely told us that He is seated in the hearts of all beings and forms. Whenever we see any form, we must see not only the form but also the indwelling Reality. This is true vision and it liberates us from the sense of diversity and makes us realise the oneness of all existence. This is the message of our Rishis. It is not merely in particular places or in solitude that we should practise this vision of life, but also in the market-places and busy thoroughfares. We must feel the Divine presence always about us. This is called *Sahaja Samadhi*.

Sahaja Samadhi

There are so many kinds of *Samadhi*. The other states of *Samadhi* are changing, they come and go. *Sahaja Samadhi* is the normal state. This is constant. You are moving in the Divine and are one with the Divine at all times. Your eyes behold Him everywhere and your love flows out towards everybody equally. There is none whom you dislike, because there is no sense of duality. You see yourself alone everywhere. As you see yourself in a mirror you see the whole universe as the expression of your soul and that soul is not the individual soul but the universal or cosmic Soul. It is cosmic consciousness. That is what you have to develop by devotional practices, by singing God's name, by going to temples and having the contact of saints. If you surrender yourself to God, you get by His grace the knowledge of *Brahman*, and you can then see the universe as the manifestation of the Mother. That is the aim of our life.

We must be serious in our endeavour to realise the Divine and fully dedicate ourselves to the Divine Mother and do everything according to Her will. Our will and power is all false. We think we are doing everything by our will and power. This is totally untrue. Those who know the truth tell us that we are unnecessarily worrying

about things. All these experiences come to us through the grace of great souls like Ramakrishna Paramahansa. Ramakrishna came down to the earth to show what it is to become a God-man. We should not merely worship God as Spirit, but we must become one with Him. This is *Atma Jnana* and is the basis of universal vision. The Bhagavad Gita has shown us what *Viswarupa Darshan* is. It is to see everything in the world as the expression of the Divine. This is a sublime vision in which there is no distinction or diversity. There is nothing existing different from ourselves. When Ramakrishna was worshipping the idol of Kali in the temple, he used to take some flowers to adore the image, but instead of putting the flowers on the image he would put them on his own head. That means he himself became the Mother and wherever he turned his eyes, there the Divine Mother stood revealed. It is the Divine Mother who is moving the whole universe. It is She who creates, preserves and destroys. Shiva and *Shakti* are the two aspects of the one Supreme Reality. In the *Tantric* Philosophy, Paramashiva is Shiva and *Shakti* combined. He is at once both and beyond both. In the Bhagavad Gita, the all-transcendent Godhead is described as Purushottama. In *Vedanta* the same thing has been spoken of as *Brahman* and *Maya*. *Brahman* and *Maya* together form the one supreme Being which is beyond *Brahman* and *Maya*. So in all these philosophies we find the same truth in different words. That is the supreme summit of spiritual experience to be attained in this very life, so that we may be entirely free from the fetters of desires.

God's Name is the Path

The easiest way to attain this beatific vision, Ramdas can tell you, is the repetition of God's holy name. Ramdas has read in the teachings of all the great sages and saints of India, about the glory of the Divine name. Sri Ramakrishna and the Holy Mother also have been telling us to repeat God's name and do *Japa*, because it is so very easy. We need not have any paraphernalia to repeat God's name. We can utter it at all times and at all places. After practising various types of discipline, Sri Ramakrishna found the repetition of God's name most efficacious and suitable. Saint Tulsidas says that God's

name is like a light that you keep on the doorstep. You can get light inside as well as outside. So if you have the Name on your tongue, you will have the divine light within you and also everywhere about you. Such is the power of the Divine name. He who has uttered the Divine name constantly can alone know its sweetness and power. Ramdas can vouch for the power of the Name, but you should repeat it without desiring anything from God, As soon as you repeat the Name, you start getting bliss. It is not that anything can be attained after repeating the Name for some time. The attainment is immediate. This is what Ramdas felt. The sweetness of the Name is such that it will not leave you. Ramdas went on drinking the sweetness of the Name until the drink and Ramdas became one. After that, the repetition automatically stopped and he was filled with ecstasy which has remained with him ever since, without any effort. People ask him why he stopped repeating it. Ramdas tells them that the repeater has disappeared. There is nothing but joy, and this joy has been with him for the last thirty years. He has been going about telling everybody to repeat the name of God constantly.

All the names of God are equally powerful. You may repeat the name Shiva, Rama, Krishna or any other Name you like with full faith and devotion, and you will see that the Name will purify you and free you from all desires and attachments. When you sit for meditation, you find the mind wandering here and there. This is because the mind is not pure. Purity can come only when you repeat God's name constantly. When the mind is restless and agitated, you cannot know who you are. You think you are only a bundle of flesh and bones. But when your mind has been purified and made still by the practice of meditation you come to realise that you are the immortal Spirit.

Now you have all been singing God's name. The vibrations created thereby were merging our mind in them. By hearing the sound of the Name, the mind gets absorbed in it. It forgets to run about because it is imbued or intoxicated with the sweetness of the Name. All the *Vasanas* and desires within us are uprooted, and so the mind becomes calm. For progress on the spiritual path, *Satsang* or contact

of great souls is an important thing. You must see them, hear their nectarine words, follow their advice and take God's name. This will liberate us from all desires, elevate us and give us the joy of the Eternal. This is possible only by contact of saints, and by taking God's holy name. If these two things are done, you are saved. The object of all *Sadhana* is only to keep God's name continuously on our lips. No *Sadhana* can itself take us to God. It is only a means so that we may repeat the Name continuously and have unbroken remembrance of God. When remembrance leaves us, the ego-sense takes hold of us and the mind becomes restless. As soon as there is remembrance the ego-sense disappears and we are in tune with God. Ramdas will stop this talk by invoking Sri Ramakrishna's blessings to help you all attain this supreme goal. May he grant you continuous remembrance of God and may he bless you with the supreme vision, experience and realisation!

AT THE SINDHI COMMUNITY CENTRE, COLOMBO

4th December, 1954.

Devotion and Self-Surrender

Beloved Friends, Ramdas is going to speak to you now on devotion and self-surrender. You all know that this precious human life is granted to us by God only for realising Him. The aim of human life and all lives in the world is to attain immortal happiness and peace. This immortal happiness and peace can be achieved only by realising God, because God stands for immortal bliss and peace. The very nature of God is pure joy. If you realise Him, you attain that pure joy. This consummation or attainment of supreme bliss is possible only in human life, which has been endowed with all the qualities necessary for achieving this goal. So it behoves everyone of us to strive to attain this.

The Path of Devotion

The question now is how we can attain this. How can we realise God? This can be done only through one-pointed and unqualified devotion for God. Devotion takes us near Him. It makes us aware of

His presence within us and everywhere about us. So the first thing necessary is that we should open some kind of relationship with Him, looking upon Him as our father, mother, or friend and our all in all. If we do this, it will be possible for us to approach Him gradually until we find Him, see Him and realise our identity with Him. So what is needed is an intense aspiration to realise Him. By realising Him alone we can free ourselves from unhappiness and have true and lasting happiness. Our devotion to Him should be such that we should aspire only to have Him and nothing else.

Generally, devotion is practised by people, who call themselves devotees, for getting many worldly things from God. Of course, they are also devotees. You should know, however, that whatever we get from God is perishable and therefore incapable of giving us real or lasting happiness. Real happiness can come to us only when we have God who is eternal. God says He will give us whatever we pray for, but those things will not help us to have true happiness and freedom. If we want Him, He is prepared to become ours. So our aim should be to have Him and Him alone. Our prayer to Him should be that He may bless us with His vision only and enable us to be with Him, to feel His presence always with us and know that He and we are one. In that state of perfect fusion with Him, we enjoy eternal bliss and peace which are born of our identity with Him, transcending all earthly ambitions and aspirations and rising above the individual sense.

It is the individual sense that makes us think that we are merely bodies subject to birth, growth and decay. We are not individual entities, but the immortal Truth ever in tune with God. It is usual with us, whenever we are in trouble, to pray to God to free us from it. Some years ago, Ramdas came across a poem by a devotee who knew apparently what it is to pray. He prayed to God, "Oh God, do not grant my prayers." People generally ask God to grant their prayers, but this devotee prayed that his prayers may not be granted. We, in our foolishness, pray for so many things that are not good for us. We should ask God to give us only what He thinks best for us. In this alone lies our salvation, freedom and peace. If we deny ourselves the supreme privilege of human life to attain and realise God, and

waste it in pursuit of transitory sense-pleasures, we shall have to repent for it in the end. Our aim day and night should be to realise God, to get eternal happiness and freedom.

Right Prayer

So what we have to pray to God is that He should grant us one-pointed devotion for Him, so that we may lose ourselves in Him and attain our union with Him. This will release us from birth and death and give us liberation. God has thousands of attributes. We have nothing to do with those attributes. We of course, sing about Him and His greatness. His predominant characteristic, which appeals to us and which is our mainstay, is His compassionate nature. When we approach Him with our heart full of restlessness and tumult, fed up with the external pleasures in which we are caught from day to day, and when we open out our heart to Him, asking Him to free us from the tangle of this worldly life and grant us that beatitude in which we can ever be in His presence, and enjoy pure bliss and peace, formed of His union and vision, He will surely grant our prayer. If we go to Him in this spirit of surrender and complete dedication and offer ourselves to Him so that His grace may enliven our heart and enlighten our intellect, He will grant our prayer. It depends upon how we approach Him.

You have been singing the name and praises of God. There are some songs which melt the heart of a devotee when he approaches Him in that spirit. Those songs were sung by great sages and saints, and by those songs they taught us how to pray to God and in what spirit we should approach Him. That prayer which is offered from the core of our heart is always listened to by God, because He is the friend of the helpless. He is more loving to us than our mother, because His love is unlimited. If we approach Him in a spirit of complete surrender, He will take us up just like the mother when her child approaches her in a miserable condition. God is our father and mother. If we approach Him in all sincerity and with intense longing, He will shower His grace on us and liberate us from ignorance, granting us the supreme blessedness of union with Him. When we are one with Him, we shall have no more cares and anxieties and all that we do

will be done spontaneously and cheerfully. It is not that we are free from activities in this state. He makes us do actions and we shall feel we are doing everything by His will. It is the Divine power that pervades the whole universe and activates us. When we surrender ourselves to this Divine power which we call *Shakti*, She takes us unto Herself. Then we come to realise that it is not by our will that we are doing anything but by Her power. When we live such a life, Her protecting hands are always with us. We shall be as safe as a child in the hands of its mother. God is all compassion, all mercy, all goodness and all love. If we realise God as such and feel His presence everywhere about us, we have attained our goal. Nowhere shall we find anything except Him.

Need for Humility

We have lost our contact with Him. Therefore what we have to do is to contact him again. In this connection Ramdas remembers a Hindi saying, "*Jal me meena pyasi.....*". "The fish is in the water and it says it is thirsty. Hearing this I cannot but laugh". We are ever living and moving in God who is happiness and supreme bliss. Yet we say we are unhappy. Why are we unhappy? Because we have lost the awareness of that supreme Spirit which is the basis of this universe. The whole universe is filled with His presence. To realise this truth we should surrender ourselves to the Divine Mother and Master, who is our all in all. How does the fish feel thirsty even though it is in the water? As long as it moves erect in water, the water does not get into its gills, but when the fish bends, it can drink the water. So long as we do not bend feel we are doing everything ourselves and are proud we cannot have the experience of the joy in which we are living and moving. When we give up this pride and surrender ourselves to the Divine Mother, the ego-sense disappears and we shall enjoy bliss and peace. The intellect within us is arrogant and becomes the cause of our pride. If we bend down in all humility before the Divine, we shall have His vision and we can enjoy the bliss which is our birthright as human beings. If we become aware of the Divine within and see the whole universe as the expression of the Divine, our life becomes blissful. Otherwise, we are caught, as it were, in a cage and are

miserable. Some kind of ignorance has seized us and we know that to free ourselves from this ignorance is the aim of life. Therefore devotion to God is the simple way by which we can completely free ourselves from this ego-sense and realise that this universe is filled with one Divine Existence.

God's Protection

This vision is possible only through devotion. God says that He is not with the Yogi, not with the Tapaswin in the forest, but with the devotee who sings His glory and greatness with all love and devotion. So if we, in all humility and devotion, take His name constantly and sing His glory, we shall find Him and attain union with Him. By attaining union with Him, our ego-sense will disappear and we shall behold the Divine every-where. This vision is our ultimate goal. Our life will then be like that of a child, pure, innocent and flowing. There will be no cares or worries, because we shall be wholly under the protection of the Divine. Our heart will be filled with compassion, love and mercy. The devotee, who has entrusted himself completely to Him, will be protected in mysterious ways. We have got many instances of such protection. The instances of Draupadi, Prahalada and many others are before us.

There is one *Sloka* in the Bhagavad Gita which describes beautifully how God protects those who are depending upon Him:

“To those people who worship Me alone, thinking of no other, to those ever harmonious I bring full security.” We can tell you from our own experience how this *Sloka* has been fully demonstrated and verified in our life. Ramdas' new life, in which he gave himself up entirely to the Divine, started 33 years ago, and thereafter the Divine took him up and since then Ramdas has been feeling he is a child of God and he is made to do everything by His will. In that state of self-surrender Ramdas feels happy in all situations and conditions. Because he knows they are brought about by the Divine Master and Mother God who is all compassion, all mercy, and all kindness. He is verily an ocean of joy and love. We have such a great Master and Mother for our refuge. Where is the cause then for our anxiety? The whole universe is for you the Divine and nothing but the Divine.

Your heart is always flowing out with love equally to the whole creation, because the whole creation is the form of your Eternal Beloved. This is the realisation we should aim at.

Take Refuge in the Name

There are so many desires worrying us day and night. In this condition there is only one refuge and that is God, and the easiest path to approach Him is the path of devotion. Devotion or *Bhakti* is intense longing for God above everything else. In that spirit we should remember Him and take His holy name. His name is the boat that takes us across the sea of life. This has been declared to us by all great sages and saints. We can keep the Name on our tongue and our heart in tune with God all the time. This practice of taking God's name continuously will enable us to remember Him without any break and we shall gradually develop the consciousness of His presence within us. We should not run after worldly ambitions and transitory pleasures. These things do not contribute to our real happiness. We must free ourselves from these and pray to God to give us strength to remember Him constantly. When our mind is completely absorbed in Him, no desires will harass us.

Desires are like so many scorpions stinging the mind. They sting us constantly and we become most miserable. All great saints like Tukaram, Eknath, Jnandev, Namdev, Kabir and many others have told us with one voice that God's name is the most simple way to remember God. By taking God's name, we shall be drinking nectar, because the Name is nectar. Name itself is God and God is Bliss. Therefore the Name is also Bliss. So it follows that when we take the Name we enjoy Bliss.

AT THE VIVEKANANDA SOCIETY HALL, COLOMBO

5th December, 1954.

Guru and Guru Kripa

Beloved Manifestations of the Divine, Ramdas is going to speak to you today on the greatness of *Guru and Guru Kripa*. *Guru* is the supreme liberator of a bound soul. As long as we have not come in

contact with a divine personality, there is no hope of our being liberated from the bondage of nescience or ignorance. We go to temples, read scriptures, visit places of pilgrimage, but by doing all this we cannot hope to be free from ignorance. We may achieve some merit as a result of which we may get some material benefit, something worldly, such as success and prosperity in life. But if we want to be free from the cycle of births and deaths and attain supreme knowledge of the Self and union with God, it is absolutely necessary that we should be blessed by the *Guru*.

Power of Grace

The very name 'Guru' signifies that he is one who can dispel darkness and bring light into our hearts. Darkness is our forgetfulness of the Reality. In order to awaken us to the consciousness of the Reality and turn our mind towards Him, Guru's grace is essential. The Divine touch of the *Guru* alone can remove our ignorance and lead us on the path of Truth and ultimately enable us to realise the Truth. You know that when you are in search of Truth there are so many obstacles on the path. Mainly it is the mind that creates the obstacles. When you want to think of God and meditate on Him, you find it difficult to do so. Your mind is running away and thinks of worldly objects. It is this that prevents you from having steady meditation. But you may depend upon it, that any effort you may make and any struggle you may pass through will not enable you to control the mind, unless the mind is dominated by the influence of a living divine personality whose touch alone can infuse strength in your mind for concentration.

Examples of *Guru Kripa*

The contact of great souls who have realised God is therefore essential for your salvation. If you are a real seeker of God, then surely you will come in contact with such a great saint. When you get his contact you must feel that you are not only blessed but are also saved. Ramdas can give you the instance of Swami Vivekananda in whose name this society has been formed and in whose name this building stands. How did that ordinary boy, who was then attending college, become Swami Vivekananda? You all know that it was by

the contact of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. He used to go to see Sri Ramakrishna and gradually came under his influence. Thereafter he was attracted more and more to Sri Ramakrishna until at last he was so much influenced by the great sage that his life turned completely towards God. He became the disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, who gave him all the spiritual wealth which he had gathered during the years of his hard and tremendous austerities. The supreme grace of Sri Ramakrishna illumined the heart of Swami Vivekananda and removed from it all impurities. Swami Vivekananda became a world-renowned personality. He carried the message of *Vedanta* to the four corners of the world. He taught that everything is *Brahman*.

Vedanta teaches us: "*Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma*". This is the message of the *Vedanta* and it behoves everyone of us to realise this. This is possible only by the grace of the *Guru*. Without a *Guru* there is no salvation. Krishna, Buddha, Shankara, Ramanuja and many other great saints and sages of India also got illumination only through the grace, through the contact, through the influence of a *Guru*. So it has been enjoined upon us by all great saints that we should, in the first place, contact a saint and be influenced by him so that we may become mere instruments in his hands. When *Guru*'s grace descends on us, we feel that, he dwells in our heart, and when we feel conscious of that, the ego-sense disappears. We then see the whole universe as the manifestation of the *Guru* or God. This is the state we have to attain by the grace of the *Guru*.

What the *Guru* does

We must first believe in him, contact him and be under his influence. Physically he may be far away, but we can feel his presence with us, because *Guru* is the all-pervading Truth, eternal and impersonal. He and God are not different. He is the supreme knowledge, power and wisdom. This is what the *Guru* is. Such a *Guru* is in our heart. He is not different from us. But there must be somebody to tell us that he is within us. *Guru* comes, teaches us and gives us the knowledge or experience that comes to us later. Ramakrishna Paramahansa gave the experience and knowledge of the Self to Swami Vivekananda. So also, by *Guru*'s touch, or *Guru*'s

look, or even by the transference of thought from the *Guru*, the disciple is at once awakened within to the consciousness of his real nature and being. You know Sri Shankara has composed a song in which he says, "*Satsangatwe nissangatwam.....*" We should not run after the material things of the world, which are perishable and which we shall not be able to take with us when we depart. We are here to attain *Moksha* or liberation from the thralldom of desires so that we can enjoy immortal bliss. How can we get this? It is possible only through the grace of a realised soul. A realised soul alone can kindle another soul. Going to temples alone will not do. Reading books alone will not do. Our aspiration must lead us to the feet of the *Guru*, or bring the *Guru* to us and liberate us. Therefore, it is a tradition in India that we should surrender ourselves to a divine personality. When Ramdas was in Europe, he met many Christians who asked him whom they should accept as their Master. Ramdas told them that they might accept Christ as their spiritual Master.

AT THE HINDU COLLEGE, COLOMBO

6th December, 1954.

Under the auspices of Hindu Association of Ceylon.

Bhagavad Gita

Beloved Embodiments of Ramdas' Divine Master and Mother, Ramdas is going to speak to you today on Srimad Bhagavad Gita. It is in the fitness of things that he should speak on this subject, as today is the Gita Jayanti day. The Gita is a great scripture that came into the world because of Lord Krishna's grace on Arjuna. The discourse of Lord Krishna comprises 18 chapters. The Bhagavad Gita is all-comprehensive, because it is the essence of all the Hindu scriptures like *Vedas*, *Upanishads*, *Srutis*, *Smritis*, *Puranas* and *Itihasas*. All these scriptures have been churned, as it were, and this butter-like essence has been drawn from them and presented to us for our guidance, so that by following the teachings embodied in it, we may reach spiritual perfection the realisation of God in all His aspects. The Bhagavad Gita teaches us the synthesis of three *Yogas* *Jnana*, *Bhakti* and *Karma*. God has been presented to us in the

Bhagavad Gita as an all-comprehensive Being, as the supreme Purushottama, who is at once the omniscient existence, infinite love and almighty power. The three *Yogas* relate to our approach to the Divine by means of these three attributes.

Omniscient existence of God can be gained only when we attune our intellect to the infinite, all-pervading, static *Brahman*, which is our real existence. After this experience, we have to behold the whole universe as the expression of that *Brahman*, and to love all beings and creatures in it equally. Thirdly, and as a result of that devotion, we have to surrender ourselves completely to the divine power active in this manifestation, so that our ego-sense may be completely eliminated both by the knowledge we have gained through self-realisation, and by dedicating ourselves to Him in our active dynamic life.

Three Sections of the Gita

Ramdas found by a close study of the Bhagavad Gita that it can be divided into three sections. The first section treats of *Jnana Yoga*, the second of *Bhakti Yoga* and the third of *Tantra Yoga*. Before we can realise God in all His comprehensiveness, we have to realise the basic Spirit underlying the manifest life. The human body, as it is seen, is not everything. There is a substratum for this manifest life. That is the supreme Spirit, eternal, calm, silent, nameless and formless. We have to realise that Self first, through purification of the mind, concentration and meditation. Then alone we can proceed further to know God in His integral form, expression and being. So in the first section, *Jnana Yoga* has been taught as the first step towards realisation of God. Thereafter we shall be able to develop a state in which the whole universe will be seen as the expression of the Self. This you will find in the second section, where the universal vision has been described. It is taught here that you have to realise the infinite love dwelling in your heart and give it to the entire creation. This is said to be devotion. The third section teaches that by surrendering ourselves to the Divine Mother and eliminating the ego-sense completely we get the experience of the *Karma Yoga* or *Tantra Yoga* the realisation of the supremacy of the divine *Shakti* in the manifestation that we see before us.

The Message of the Gita

God is dynamic and static and at the same time beyond both. He is the all-comprehensive and all-transcendent complete Godhead. This is the Purushottama who has been presented to us in the Bhagavad Gita, for realisation. Lord Krishna Himself is the embodiment of the Purushottama. He is not merely a silent, all-pervading witness, but a dynamic power and force, revealed in a particular form for the redemption of humanity. This great scripture can save people from the thralldom of ignorance and ego-sense and elevate them to a status which baffles expression. God is described in the Bhagavad Gita as the vast manifestation before us and the power active in this manifestation. It is said in it that we must perform actions as if we are not performing actions at all. We must see action in inaction, and inaction in action. This seems to be a very puzzling message for us. It is difficult to understand how we can be active and inactive at the same time. It was in this spirit that Arjuna was asked to fight in the battlefield. He was to fight in such a way as if he was not fighting at all. This is possible only when we know the supreme Godhead as, at once, *Purusha* and *Prakriti*. *Prakriti* alone is active. Our body, and our vital, mental and intellectual being are all activated by the Divine *Shakti*. The *Purusha* is a silent witness, unaffected, dispassionate and detached. He is the all-pervading Self. We are doing nothing as the all-pervading Self, but only as *Prakriti*, made up of the five elements, senses, mind and intellect. We are activated by Divine *Shakti*, which makes us do everything. Divine *Shakti* alone is responsible for everything that happens in this world. When we know this, our ego-sense will be wiped off completely. Now we know God as at once dynamic and static *Prakriti* and *Purusha*. When we have fully realised this through the knowledge of the *Atman* and utter surrender of ourselves to the divine *Shakti*, then it is we know that we are doing and not doing at the same time. This is the message of the Gita.

The Secret of Karma Yoga

The secret of the Gita teaching is that it makes us live a life of freedom. There are in the Bhagavad Gita two paths pointed out to

us. One is *Karma Yoga* and the other *Karma Sannyasa*. The Lord says *Karma Yoga* is better, because by practising it we can do whatever is enjoined upon us to do for the world, and still remain unattached like the lotus leaf that remains in the water and still untouched by the water. As *Purusha* we are not doing anything, but as *Prakriti* we are doing everything. Arjuna wanted to run away from the battlefield. He thought that by abstaining from war he could avoid committing sins. He was highly perturbed, as war involved the killing of his relations and friends standing on the opposite side in the battlefield. The Lord then told him that there was no need to flee from the battlefield, and taught him the secret of *Karma Yoga* which made him feel as if he was not fighting at all.

The Gita, therefore, teaches us that we should not run away from the activity allotted to us by the Divine. Only, we must do such actions without the ego-sense. We must become instruments in the hands of the Divine *Shakti* and cheerfully and willingly do actions without being affected by them. The results of our actions have nothing to do with us. We are simply to act at the command of the Divine Power and remain at the same time as an unaffected witness. This path is superior to that of *Karma Sannyasa*, renouncing the actions that we are expected to do. No action can bind us. But what binds us is the sense that we are doing everything. Actions by themselves are neither sinful nor meritorious. When we are free from the sense of doership we are made to do actions for the good of humanity, because our vision then is universalised. We can then have no likes and dislikes. We shall not be affected by the external contacts and our love will flow out towards everybody equally. We shall find joy in the very doing of actions. In that state, work becomes worship. The root itself becomes the fruit for us. The actions flow out of us from that divine source which is pure bliss. And anything that comes out of bliss must be bliss itself.

From the static *Brahman* rises this *Prakriti* which is only another aspect of *Brahman*. So it is said that the world is the manifestation of *Ananda*, because it has risen from *Ananda*. Our actions, our words, and whatever we do must be nothing but the waves of *Ananda*. This

is realised when we are completely free from the ego-sense, at all times, whether we are active or not active, whether we sit silent in meditation or are engaged in work. In meditation what happens is that our individuality merges in the infinite Existence within us and we realise that we are *Brahman*. But when we are active in life we are caught again in the likes and dislikes and the mind gets disturbed. Therefore we are asked to behold the Divine everywhere. Then only we shall be free from the pairs of opposites and be able to work without being affected. *Karma Yoga* is the principal path which the Bhagavad Gita teaches us and it is based upon the knowledge of the Self and the Universal Vision, and lastly based upon our utter surrender to the Divine will and power. We feel ourselves as instruments of that power and whatever we do is done by the will of the Divine. "Not my will but Thy will be done." We are then doing everything not for fulfilling our own plans but the plans of the Divine, which serve to bring joy and peace into the world. We can, therefore, never do harm to anybody, and our life will flow on only for the good of the world.

The Easiest Sadhana

Jnana we have to get, no doubt, and that cannot be got easily. The first thing necessary is, of course, the contact of a *Guru*. The *Guru*, in his grace, must make us practise certain disciplines in order that we may attain *Brahma Jnana*. When we are walking on the path, the principal things we have to do are (1) *Nishkama Seva*, or selfless service, and (2) *Upasana* or worship. *Upasana* is to sit near God. We must practise some discipline by which we can feel His presence and therefore feel that we are near Him. The easiest way is the repetition of God's name and leading a pure and selfless life, in order to help those who are in suffering and who need assistance from us.

We must do all work in a selfless spirit, not with a view to get anything in return, but only to get our heart purged of all the evil desires that are lurking within. We must not consider that we are doing good to anybody, nor take pride in thinking that we have done good. We must do things in a spirit of devotion, as worship of God. Then, such work helps us to attain purity.

To feel the presence of God, we have to keep Him constantly in our thoughts. In that way alone we can remove from the mind all undesirable thoughts and ambitions that come in the way of our attaining perfect purity of mind. This is what is called *Upasana*. As already said, this is done by the repetition of God's holy name. We can keep the Name always in our mind. When we are sitting in the prayer room, in front of our idols, we get some joy while engaged in the worship. But there is another way by which we can always keep the remembrance and feel the resultant joy. This is the repetition of God's name. If we keep repeating the Name during our leisure hours, that practice will enable the mind to be free from all restlessness and agitation and become still. This will lead to right meditation and illumination.

So long as the mind is restless and agitated we cannot realise our true nature. But when it becomes still we come to know that we are the supreme Self. The pure and still mind is nothing but pure Spirit. The mind can become still by concentrating upon the sound of the Name. There is no need for any form. The easiest is the *Upasana* of the sound or *Shabda Brahman*. You know the universe came into being when there was a sound in the static *Brahman*. That sound was OM. Hence it is held to be the most primary form of *Shabda Brahman*.

**AT THE SAIVA MANGAYAR KALAGAM, WELLAWATTE,
COLOMBO.**

7th December, 1954.

Divine Mother

Beloved Manifestations of the Divine Mother, Ramdas is a child sitting before you to talk to you about the glory of his Mother. For him the whole universe stands as the expression or embodiment of the Divine Mother and you are all, therefore, to him the veritable forms of his Mother who has accepted Ramdas as Her confiding child. You know that, if we wish to realise the supreme purpose of this life God we should, in the first place, surrender ourselves to the Divine Mother. It is by Her grace alone we shall be able to approach

and realise the Divine as the all-pervading, infinite Spirit, whom we call God. It is by Her grace alone that all the impurities of our mind can be washed away and it is by Her grace alone that we can be awakened to the awareness of the divine Spirit within us. Again, it is by Her grace alone that we shall be able to rend the veil of ignorance and come face to face with the immortal Spirit dwelling within and without us. This is the experience of all great saints and sages. We have got a shining example in our minds and that is of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa who was a votary of the Divine Mother. By his life he has shown us that we must surrender ourselves to Her, and unless we do so there is no hope of our liberation from the fetters of ignorance. So what we have to do is to pay our adorations to the Divine Mother, who has come down to us in so many forms as Saraswati, Lakshmi and Parvati. These are the three aspects or three forms of one Divine power, by whose grace we can get liberation and realise *Brahman* or the all-pervading, static spirit of the Divine.

Women Saints in India

Now Ramdas will tell you the names of some women saints who have achieved the highest spiritual eminence. We have our Gargi and Maitreyi of the ancient times, and in the Middle Ages we had a galaxy of women saints such as Mirabai, Muktabai, Sakkubai, Janibai, and so many others whom we do not remember. Then you will find, in recent times, Sarada Devi in Bengal, who was an ideal woman; and coming down to the present times, there are some illumined women saints who have been a blessing to thousands of people who contacted them, heard their speeches and followed them. They are Ma Anandamayee, Godavari Mata, Rama Devi, Mother Mira of Sri Aurobindo Ashram and, last but not least, Mother Krishnabai of Anandashram. So these are some of the great women saints who have raised India's glory in the whole world. If people repeat the names of these saints, that itself will be a sort of meditation for them. Such repetition would become a Sankirtan, because these saints are the shining beacons before us, leading humanity to the divine goal.

Surrender to the Divine Mother

Ramdas is the child of the one Mother who has assumed these forms. You should look upon all beings as the expressions of the Divine Mother. She is the *Shuddha Shakti* or *Parashakti*, beyond the *Dwandwas*. We are so much caught up in *Aparashakti*, and therefore we are in a state of duality and bondage. By surrendering ourselves to the Divine Mother, who is all love and compassion, we can, by Her grace, get our ego-sense completely obliterated and realise that by Her will and power alone the whole universe is active. When we have realised this, our life becomes safe and blissful, and we become conscious of the static, all-pervading, silent *Brahman*. To know this we have first to propitiate the Mother, Divine *Shakti*, by constantly taking Her name. Her name and God's name are not different. They cannot be separated. God and *Shakti* are always united and go together. When we utter God's name it is as good as taking Her name. The name of God or the *Mantra*, which Ramdas was repeating, was given to him by his *Guru*. The *Mantra* was "Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram." 'Om' stands for *Nirguna Brahman*, 'Sri' stands for *Shakti*, and 'Ram' stands for *Saguna Brahman*. So all the three aspects are there in that *Mantra*.

From the very beginning Ramdas has been looking upon God in these three aspects: the Divine Mother, the Master and the *Purushottama* beyond. As servant of the Master he used to obey Him. As Divine Master He was guiding him. As Divine Mother He was protecting this child in all conditions of life. If we are under Her protection, we shall never go astray. She will always protect us and see that we do not fall. This consciousness was with Ramdas all the time, and the Divine Mother was always protecting him. She is the creator, protector and destroyer of the world. Surrender to Her is the only way by which we can free ourselves from ego-sense and get Her guidance. Otherwise, we shall be subject to fall on account of the many temptations. The only power that will protect us and lead us to the immortal state of bliss and peace is the Divine Mother. We must become Her children. The child and the Mother will ultimately fuse into one.

Sex Division is False

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa was absorbed in the thought of the Mother and ultimately he knew he was the Mother Herself. When flowers were placed before him for the worship of the Mother, he would put the flowers on his own head. We are all expressions of the Divine Mother. The notion of the so-called sex division in the world is really false. At least Ramdas' vision does not recognise the existence of sex distinction, because God has given him the vision to see everything as the Mother. You must have heard the story of Mira Bai, who went to see a saint. The saint refused her permission to see him on the ground that, being a *Purusha* (man), he was not prepared to see a woman. Hearing this, Mira Bai wondered how there could be another *Purusha*, as she knew of only one *Purusha* who was Lord Krishna, and all the other forms in the universe were, for her, forms of the Mother. This was a great revelation to that saint. If you make any distinction of sex, you will be caught in diversity, and become unhappy and miserable, being subjected to all kinds of low desires. If you transcend this duality, which can be done only by looking upon everybody as the expression of the *Shakti*, you can attain peace and tranquillity.

How to lead a Pure Life

Before Ramdas closes his speech, he will tell you how to lead a pure life. This is a very difficult task because, for him, you are all expressions of the Divine Mother. Ramdas sits before you and talks to you as a child of yours. Now, for him to offer you advice, as to how to lead a pure life, is an awkward responsibility, as he does not know how to assume the position of a teacher suddenly from that of a child. That a child should be the teacher of its own mother may seem to be strange. Ramdas can only learn from the Mother and be guided by Her every moment of his life. Under Her protection he went over the whole world, and everywhere he found the Divine Mother looking after him. Ramdas is looked upon as father, mother and master, but he says that he is only a child of the Divine Mother, and how can he do anything which is not in consonance with the vision that God has granted him?

When Ramdas went to Ramana Maharshi, the Maharshi looked at Ramdas, and Ramdas felt a tremendous change in him. Ramdas was filled with peace and joy beyond description. So by mere sight a saint can raise an aspirant, but not by teaching. By teaching we cannot create such an impression. The saint looks at everybody as the manifestation of the Divine. He sees God is everybody, If one is a real *Guru*, he will see Divinity in the disciple and thus make him or her advance on the path. Perhaps that is the way by which God wants Ramdas to awaken the divine light and joy in the hearts of all. If he says anything in order to teach them what they should and what they should not do, he feels a sense of difference which is not the right thing for him. He is incapable of having any kind of attitude towards anybody except that of a child. What advice has he to give? Sometimes he used to give advice, but now you are all forms of his loving Mother and what more can Ramdas tell you than this? He can only say that the Divine Mother is all in all. Keep Her remembrance always and surrender yourself to Her, and your life will be made sublime. When our ego-sense has disappeared, we see only one power existing everywhere. In fact, the ego has no existence. It is only an assumption. We are not to attain anything new, but are only to realise our true nature. When our vision is clear we see everything as it is; just as a man who is stricken with jaundice sees everything as yellow, though actually it is not yellow, and when he is free from the disease he sees all things exactly as they are. When our ignorance goes by the grace of the Divine Mother, through our complete surrender to Her, we see the whole universe as nothing but the expression of the Divine Mother. What we see in the ignorant or diseased state is not actually what the world is. The world is the manifestation of the Divine Mother. We see this only when we are free from ignorance.

Ramdas will tell you one instance. Some years ago he went to Pandharpur in the company of another *Sadhu* during his wanderings from place to place. We reached the place late in the evening. It was getting dark. We saw an old mother in the street and enquired of her where we could stay. She addressed us as "Mother" and asked us to follow her. On the way she started telling us the glory of the Divine Mother, and we could understand that she saw the whole world as

the form of the Divine Mother. On the way we passed through a Devi's temple. This mother fell prostrate in front of the temple in a state of high emotion. Hers was indeed a grand vision.

Repeat God's Name

Ramdas' last word to you is that from his own experience he can say that he got this ineffable vision, which has filled him day and night with untold ecstasy, on account of the power of God's holy name. All of you can repeat God's name constantly, and by doing so all impurities of the mind will be washed away, and you will get the vision of the Mother everywhere as also of that supreme, static *Brahman* or Shiva, and you will all become the very expression of that supreme God who is at once Shiva and *Shakti*.

AT THE SRI SHIVA SUBRAMANIA SWAMI TEMPLE, COLOMBO.

7th December, 1954

Saguna Upasana

Beloved Devotees of the Lord of the Universe, It is our supreme delight today that we have assembled here under the auspices and benign presence of Lord Shiva Subramania. Before Ramdas begins to talk to you upon the subject of *Saguna Upasana*, let us pray, pray in all humility, to the Lord to shower His grace upon the world and bring unity, peace and harmony in it.

Need for Images in Worship

We all know that God is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent. As such, it is difficult for us to approach Him unless He assumes a human form. So He has assumed for our sake a *Saguna Swarupa*. He is worshipped in thousands of temples all over India and Ceylon in particular forms or images. In these temples the Supreme Lord is worshipped in the form of an image. So these images are not merely, as you see, made of metal or stone. They are the very personifications of the Divine, full of splendour, power and joy. So, whenever a devotee goes to the temple and stands before the Lord in the form of the image, he addresses Him as the Lord of the universe and he prays to Him for pure devotion or for so many things that he requires in

this worldly life. By the grace of the Lord he gets what he wants; that means his prayers are fulfilled. In fact, when we place full faith in God, he grants us our desires.

What we should rightly ask Him is not the perishable objects of the world, but one-pointed devotion to Him so that we can have His *Darshan*. Through His grace we get *Jnana* or the realisation of our oneness with Him, and thereby attain immortal happiness, freedom and peace. Without knowing God in His essence, in His all-pervading consciousness, we cannot attain liberation or *Moksha*. God in the temple is the concrete expression of the universal Truth or Reality. Therefore His *Darshan* means to behold Him in the entire universe. Of course, before He grants us this *Nirguna Darshan*, He grants us *Saguna Darshan*. There are so many devotees of God who have seen Him in person before them. Ramdas has read the lives of saints in India. There were so many among them who not only worshipped God in the temples as their Beloved, but also made Him talk to them and made Him eat the food offered to Him. So the images in the temples are not lifeless and formless, but full of *chaitanya*, full of Divine radiance and power. This life and radiance is infused in the image through the faith and devotion that flows out towards Him out of the hearts of the devotees. It is the faith of millions that makes the Lord manifest in that image.

Saguna Worship leads to Jnana

You know, whenever you are worshipping the image of God, you look upon the image as the very manifestation of Divinity. In the first stage of worship, you all know, we superimpose upon the image our own *Atman*, and then worship the image as the manifestation of the *Atman* or God. This is called *Avahan*. After the worship is over, there is what is called *Visarjan*, i.e., we take back the superimposed *Atman* into ourselves. Gradually, as we go on worshipping with this faith and devotion, we feel that the image is seated in our heart. So the external form of worship is changed into the internal form of worship. This is called *Manasapuja*. It is then that, in our meditation, we behold the image of the Divine within our hearts. It is by the grace of this Divine within us that we get *Jnana*. Because, as we find

Him within ourselves, all the impurities of the mind are washed away and we become absolutely pure. When the mind becomes pure, we know that we are not the body, but the supreme Atman. So the *Saguna* worship leads to the realisation of the Self. What we have to do, therefore, is to bear in our bosom the image of God and have His name on our tongue. Then our body becomes the temple of God. Thereafter, singing His glories and chanting His name become a blissful experience to us. Then our eyes will also be illumined with the light of God and we can behold God everywhere in all the manifestations. Verily, we behold the entire universe as the one huge image of God. God is in us, is everywhere and is in everything.

So, *Saguna* form of worship is an essential step for our spiritual evolution. The personal form of God is easy to be concentrated upon, easy of *Darshan* and easy of having a relationship with. He becomes our father, mother and master and ourselves His children and servants. In this kind of relationship with Him we are able to increase our devotion to Him from day to day, until His grace comes to us and purifies us, and He accepts us as His true, loving and confiding children. He becomes our sure, unfailing protector and helper. He becomes, as some saints have described Him, our adamant armour. Because, you feel His presence everywhere and are sure that you are protected by Him in every way and in all situations. So God now is, for you, at once personal and impersonal, divine protector, father, mother, friend and helper.

Even after attaining *Jnana*, even after having His vision everywhere in the universe, the devotee maintains his relationship with God as a personal Being, and always enjoys the bliss of His close proximity, paternal care and benevolent grace.

Chant His Sweet Name

In the early stages, in order to get this protection and have the consciousness of His presence always with us, it is necessary that we should always remember Him, by taking His holy name. You may chant any name of God you hold dear. God's name is sweeter than nectar, because He is supreme bliss. When such a Name is always on our tongue, we shall be tasting nothing but divine nectar. When

you go to temples, of course, you feel the presence of God there, because you are before the image of God; but Ramdas appeals to you that even when you are outside the temple, you should keep your mind ever in tune with Him, by singing to yourself the glorious, all-powerful, sweet and holy name of God. You know Swami Vivekananda was a great devotee of Shiva. Those who were closely associated with him said that he was constantly repeating Shiva, Shiva, Shiva. He taught us that by uttering the name of Shiva, gradually we become the very manifestation of Shiva. This is the height to which the repetition of the Name and worship of God lead you. God is so gracious and kind that He converts His devotees into His own likeness. This supreme state of complete liberation and oneness with Shiva, the impersonal, can be achieved through the worship of Him in your bosom. By His grace the devotee reaches spiritual perfection.

With these words Ramdas closes the speech, after praying again with you all to the Lord of the worlds to shower His grace upon all human beings and awaken them to the consciousness of His existence, and make them His true devotees and thereby bring about unity, harmony, goodwill and peace in the world.

AT THE SINDHI COMMUNITY CENTRE, COLOMBO.

9th December, 1954.

Self-surrender

Dear Friends,— Ramdas is going to talk to you today on self-surrender. You know that the greatest obstacle on the path of the spiritual aspirant is pride. Pride causes the fall of man. We have in the world people who are proud of learning, proud of riches, proud of fame and name. They are attached to these things to such an extent that they go about telling people that they are this and they are that. This kind of conceit and pride is the greatest hindrance in the path of a spiritual aspirant. He should efface himself completely. He must feel that he is nothing and God is everything. In the Bible we have read 'It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven'.

God chooses the humble

Unless we are meek, God will never reveal Himself in our heart. Heart is the place where God resides and not the head. Head is full of conceit, full of intellectual pride. This pride is uppermost when we have forgotten God. Before God we are nothing. So let us humble ourselves before Him and feel that we are nothing and He is everything. Then it is that He manifests Himself in our heart and fills us with divine radiance, peace and joy. You know what was the fate of Ravana. He was ruined because of the pride. Look at Kamsa. He was also similarly ruined. Sisupala, Duryodhana and Hiranyakasipu also met with the same fate. They brought about their own destruction by pride. Whereas, the names of Vibhishana and Sudama are permanently stamped in the hearts of devotees, who draw inspiration by the very thought of these great souls.

Then again, from the lives of saints, we find that they were not often born in rich families, but in very humble circumstances. God chose to reveal Himself in their hearts because they were very humble and meek. People are proud of so many things. Even a devotee sometimes becomes proud when he can write books about God or talk well about Him or sing His glories. This pride becomes a hindrance to him on the path. So we must be free from all kinds of pride. When we do anything which the world applauds, we should feel that it is by God's power alone that we are able to do anything at all, and so all the credit goes to Him and not to us. If we feel proud of having done a great thing, we slip down, we are disturbed in our meditation and our spiritual practices end in failure. Whenever we do something great we should feel that God made us do it, and see that pride does not arise in our heart. As soon as pride comes, we should know we have lost contact with God. The head must bend down before we can see God in our heart. In this connection Ramdas is going to tell you a story.

Story of Hiranyakasipu

You all have heard about Hiranyakasipu. He was very proud of his power. He was considering himself as God. His son Prahlada was a devotee of Hari and was taking His name always. Hiranyakasipu asked his son to give up repeating that Name and take his own name instead. 'I am God', he said to Prahlada, 'Do not repeat the name of Hari. Take my name.' But Prahlada was so devoted to Vishnu that he would not listen to his father. For this Hiranyakasipu persecuted him and gave him no end of trouble. Prahlada bore everything patiently and went on with his devotion to Vishnu.

Hiranyakasipu was very powerful and wanted to fight with and conquer the Devas. Whenever the Devas saw him coming to attack them, they were running away due to fright. Being victorious wherever he went, Hiranyakasipu walked about with his head high and could never bend it before anybody. After defeating all the Devas he went to Vaikuntha to fight with Vishnu. Everyone in Vaikuntha, including Vishnu, fled and hid themselves, with the result that Hiranyakasipu could not find anybody there. Then he searched for Vishnu in all the three worlds and could not spot Him. He returned to his kingdom victorious and more proud of himself than ever.

Narada heard this story. He went to Vishnu after Hiranyakasipu had returned to his place. He saw Vishnu seated on the throne. Narada gave a hearty laugh and asked Vishnu why He ran away and hid himself out of fear. "You did, perhaps, well in running away. Hiranyakasipu could not find you out even after he searched all the three worlds. But where did you hide yourself?", asked Narada. Vishnu said with a smile, "I was hiding myself in Hiranyakasipu's own heart. He was searching for Me in all the three worlds, but could not find Me though I was all the time in his heart". Narada asked, "How is it that he could not find you out there?" Vishnu said, "How could he find Me in his heart unless he bent his head? If he had done so he would have certainly seen Me. He was too proud to bend his head". Vishnu knew for certain that Hiranyakasipu would not bow down his head. So he was safely hidden in Hiranyakasipu's heart. So if you want to see God in your heart, you must bend down before

Him, giving up your pride. If you are proud and keep your head high, you will not see God.

This story has a great lesson to teach us. With humility it is that you can find Him and not when you are proud. Pride keeps us away from God. Humility brings us nearer to God. Humility enables us to destroy the ego-sense and the feeling that we are greater, better or higher than others.

Sri Ramakrishna's Humility

Ramdas will give you another instance. It is about Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. He was a humble devotee of Mother Kali. He never posed that he was a great devotee. He was childlike in all his talks, actions and ways of life. Once Keshab Chandra Sen went to see him. He had heard about the fame of Sri Ramakrishna. In the course of his talk, Keshab Chandra Sen said he had recently enacted a religious drama in which he had taken the chief part. Sri Ramakrishna quietly listened. A disciple of Keshab Chandra Sen said that Keshab played his part very well and everybody applauded him. They were planning to enact another drama. Keshab Chandra Sen jokingly asked Sri Ramakrishna if he would like to take a part in it and if so, in what role. Without a moment's hesitation, Sri Ramakrishna replied, 'I shall take the part of the dust of your feet'.

What was the result of his reply? Sudden stillness and silence. All who were there descended to the level of dust. The men of pride became automatically humble. By humbling themselves, saints humble others. When we reduce ourselves to the dust, we realise the glory of the Spirit within.

Examples of Jnandev and Tukaram

Jnandev was born of very poor parents and when his parents died he even had to go a-begging along with his brothers. They were repulsed from every house and had to suffer a lot of persecution at the hands of the people. Tukaram was a petty shopkeeper. He lost his business and was living on alms given voluntarily. But he was taking God's name day and night. He was engaged only in singing about God and talking about Him. Similarly, Jnandev found solace in constant meditation. They were pure and humble devotees of God.

Even today, after hundreds of years, thousands of devotees in Maharashtra dance in ecstasy singing, "Jnandev, Tukaram". These great souls have become immortal. They are worshipped as God. What about the men who were proud of wealth, property, fame and name? Where are they now? Who remembers their names? Millions of such people simply come and go, Verily, the great souls, who are freed from pride by constantly remembering God, have attained immortality.

If you want to attain this blessed state and wish to leave a permanent stamp on this earth, be a devotee of God. Surrender yourself to Him. Remember God constantly by repeating His holy name. Give up all pride of anything that you have or that you are in the world. Realise God in your heart. Behold Him every- where. Then you will become a blessing to humanity. Your very name will raise holy emotions in the hearts of people and yield joy and solace to many. Your life will be elevated, enlightened and liberated from ignorance and bondage. Pride is the bane that eats into the vitals of our being. Let us not be proud of anything. Let our life be lived for the service of God. He will surely protect us and guide us in every way. He will lead us towards the supreme goal of life. His protection can come to us only when we are humble.

Lesson of Cardinal Wolsey

You have heard of Cardinal Wolsey. He was a Bishop in England. He was given a lot of wealth and land by king Henry VIII who wanted to get the Bishop's sanction for the seven or eight marriages he had. Such marriages were not permitted by the Church, and the Bishop gave sanction for them because the king gave him wealth and other things. Now, instead of serving God, the Bishop began to serve the king. But when the king was renouncing the last queen and wanted to marry another, Wolsey could not stand it. He told the king that he was wrong. The king got angry with the Bishop, confiscated all his property and put him in prison where he was given only bread and water. The Bishop keenly felt his miserable state and repented before God, saying, "Had I but served My God with half the zeal I served my king, He would not in mine age have left me naked to mine

enemies.”

If we serve God, He will protect us always and we shall have no reason for regret at any time. So, let us humble ourselves before the Almighty Lord of the universe and become His servants. Although we have to work in the world, let us feel at heart that we are His servants and He is our master and thus keep the ego-sense away and be free from pride, which is responsible for our unsteady, irregular and difficult progress on the spiritual path. When we sit for meditation, our mind wanders. Even when we try to do good to others, we are not able to do so. What stands in the way is pride. People pride themselves, saying ‘I am so and so, I did this and I did that.’ Sometimes people come to the *Ashram* and say, “Swamiji, I am so busy, I cannot stay longer this time. I shall come again in a week’s time.” Ramdas would reply, “Many people have told us like that, but they could never come as promised.” So, do not think, “I will do this”, “I have done that” and so on. Feel and say always, “God willing, I shall do this,” and thus free yourself from pride that vitiates your life and creates confusion.

How to cultivate Humility

A man who is humble has the highest virtue. A man who is proud has no virtue at all. When it rains, water does not collect on the top of the hill, but in the low valleys. So, virtues are not found in the person who is proud but in the humble. Humility is the greatest virtue. Humble people are very dear to God. How can we cultivate humility? By contacting saints. Saints are free from pride, free from ego-sense and free from the thought that they are something big. They are humble, pure and childlike. Our nature develops according to the company we keep. If we constantly have company of saints, our nature becomes like that of a saint. You know that in some forests there are sandalwood trees. In course of time, other kinds of trees that are near the sandalwood trees turn into sandalwood trees. So, in the constant company of saints, we become like saints. Therefore association with saints is very important. There, we learn how true humility comes to us when we constantly think of the Lord of the universe. In His presence, we are nothing. When we forget Him, our

ego asserts itself and pride comes in. When we remember His glory, His greatness, omnipotence and omnipresence, then we feel ourselves very little. We are nothing. So let us constantly remember God and think of His infinite nature, His all-powerful existence. Hitler, where is he gone? What about Mussolini? Where are they all gone? If you remember God constantly, pride will not approach you. The glow-worm goes about at night, feeling it has bright light. As soon as it dawns, we do not know where the glow-worm is.

Hanuman went to Lanka taking the form of a fly and fooled the demons. Let us therefore feel small and enter the kingdom of heaven, which is the realm of immortal joy and peace, and become one with it.

Let us remember the story of Hiranyakasipu, and not forget it.

AT THE SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, COLOMBO.

12th December, 1954.

To the Children

Inauguration of *Bhajan*

Beloved Children, Ramdas is today specially addressing the children. In the first place, Ramdas has been asked to inaugurate today the *Bhajan* in this hall to be conducted every Sunday from now. First, you may all assemble here in the morning, and after *Bhajan* for a short while, go to your religious training classes. Ramdas prays to the Almighty that by His grace the congregational *Bhajan* may be carried on with all success every Sunday. Ramdas fully expects that all of you children will, with whole-hearted devotion, sing together the names of God and create a holy and pure atmosphere which will enable you to attain perfect purity, peace and bliss. You know that God is our father and mother. So we cannot live this life by forgetting Him. By remembering Him constantly, our heart becomes pure and we live the true life, which will yield us peace and happiness. By His grace we shall be able to honour our parents, obey our teachers and respect the saints and thus purify our life and make it really successful and happy. Therefore, Ramdas asks you to grow

up into real devotees of God, take His name constantly and live your life in a spirit of perfect service to Him.

If devotion comes to us when we are very young, it is easy to think of God constantly and progress towards Him, and finally realise His presence always with us, and by such presence elevate, enlighten and make our life blessed. You have to take the great examples of children like Prahlada, Dhruva and Nachi-ketas, who attained God-vision by devoting themselves to Him. God gives us His vision when our hearts are pure. This mental purity is achieved by constant remembrance of God. So Ramdas advises you that, when you assemble here in this hall every Sunday, you must put your heart and soul into the prayers that are held here, and join whole-heartedly in the chanting of God's name. After the *Bhajan* is over, you will be going to your respective classes where you are given religious instruction, and training in singing of God's glories, and in other devotional practices.

Lastly, Ramdas will tell you that you should live among yourselves in perfect friendliness, love and mutual help. This can be done by engaging yourselves in devotion to God and remembering Him constantly by taking His holy name. Ramdas is asked to repeat the *Mantra* or the name of God before you, so that all of you can join together and chant the same Name. Ramdas would like to know which *Mantra* or which Name he should repeat for you. (The children wanted three different Mantras.) As you want three different Mantras, Ramdas will repeat all of them one by one, in which you should also join: "Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram, Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram, Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram; Om Namah Shivaya, Om Namah Shivaya, Om Namah Shivaya; Muruga, Muruga, Muruga." Ramdas asks you to repeat constantly any one of the three Mantras which you think suitable for you, and for which you have got love and devotion. It does not mean that by repeating this *Mantra* you should not repeat other Mantras. All Mantras and Names are of one God. This you should not forget. The one Supreme God has become Rama, Shiva and Muruga. So do not see any difference in these Mantras.

AT THE VIVEKANANDA SOCIETY HALL, COLOMBO.

12th December, 1954.

Under the auspices of the Rama Gana Sabha.

Saguna Upasana

Beloved Forms of Ramdas' Eternal Beloved Ram, Ramdas is speaking to you today about *Saguna Upasana* or the approach to God by the worship of His form. In the Bhagavad Gita, it is clearly said that the path of *Nirguna Upasana* is very difficult. So we have to adopt the worship of some form of God in order to attain Him. We must be devoted to any one form of God, either of Krishna, Rama, Shiva or Vishnu. What we have to do is to be whole-heartedly and in all sincerity devoted to Him. If our devotion for Him is genuine, He gives us His *Darshan* in the form we worship Him. Then we see Him not only outside us but also within our hearts. Our mind has two defects and they are *Vikshepa* and *Mala* restlessness and impurity. When He is seen within our hearts by His grace, our heart and mind become perfectly pure.

The Role of the Guru

When the mind becomes pure, God within us directs us to a spiritual master. We call him *Guru*. Verily, *Guru* is none other than God Himself in that form, because in order to grant us *Jnana* or *Moksha*, a *Guru* is absolutely necessary for us. *Moksha* can be granted to us only by the *Guru*. He alone can drive away the darkness from our heart and grant us the knowledge of the Self or *Brahman*. When we approach him with a pure heart and mind, he advises us and that advice is stamped on our mind, and gradually works out in such a way as to destroy our ego-sense and make us realise the Self. The process is *Sravana*, *Manana*, *Nididhyasa* and *Sakshatkara*. *Sravana* is hearing *Guru's* advice, *Manana* is constant reflection over the advice so given, *Nididhyasa* is to get fixed in the Supreme Truth. By this process, the veil of ignorance or the *avarana dosha* will be destroyed. Now it is that we realise that we are *Brahman* or the Supreme Self. This is called *Sakshatkara* or *Jnana*. This *Jnana* we get through *Saguna Upasana*. All the saints in the world, particularly

in India, had progressed on the path only after first having recourse to the worship of a divine form of God. You know, Rama-krishna Paramahansa was a worshipper of Mother Kali. Through the grace of the Mother he got the contact of a *Guru*, and through the grace of the *Guru* he got *Jnana*. This is true of all the saints and sages in India

Image Worship common to all Religions

So, in the early stages of our progress towards God, the worship of the image of God is essential. This is equally true of all the religions of the world. Christians worship the image of Christ. Buddhists worship the image of Buddha. Jains worship the image of Mahavira. Moslems, though they do not worship any form, have God's name always on their lips. The name of Allah and the form of Allah are not different. We approach God in three ways. All these three ways amount to worship of His forms. We should not think that an image is His only form. The sound of His name is also His form. And light is also His form. Those who are worshipping light are taking it to be God, and reach God through light. You know, Zoroaster worshipped God as sun and light. Or, you can take God as sound. He is called *Nada Brahman*. If you simply utter Om or Ram or Shiva, and concentrate your mind upon the sound issuing from the utterance, your mind will get merged in the sound and, transcending the relative, will reach the Absolute. So it is necessary, in order to rise to the height of the *Advaitic* realisation, that we should hold on to some form, sound or light of God. Therefore it is found that in all houses, where people are religiously inclined, there is either an image or picture of God, before which they sit, worship and sing His names and glories.

Sing God's Glories

What is it which pleases God most? It pleases Him most when we sing about Him with all love and devotion. The sound of God's name is very sweet. When we sing with all love, we find that our heart is filled with inexpressible joy and peace, and before our eyes stands the image of the Divine. In this stage we are lifted to a height where we enjoy supreme ecstasy. You know the famous and world-

renowned Devarishi Narada. He was singing God's name continuously and feeling himself to be ever in Vaikuntha before Lord Vishnu. Prahlada was singing the name of Narayana and was feeling His presence always with him. He had the vision of Vishnu. So also you will find so many other devotees in India like Tyagaraja, Tukaram, Ekanath, Jnandev, Tulsidas, Kabir, Guru Nanak, the Alwar saints, etc. All of them had *Saguna Upasana* and were singing in beautiful poetic language and enthralling music the glories of the Divine, and were able to capture the heart of God and make Him grant them His *Darshan*. God has gifted us with the musical talent. We must use it only for singing His glory and praising Him. God says, "I am not available easily to *Yogis*, *Tapaswins* or *Jnanis*, but I dance before those devotees of Mine who sing of My glories with all love and devotion." Therefore we must put our heart and soul in it when we sing the glories of God. By such devotion our life must mingle and become one with the Divine existence and life.

Virat Darshan

We must not only be blessed with *Saguna Darshan*, but we must also have His *Virat Darshan*, that vision which he granted to Arjuna during the Mahabharata war in Kurukshetra. Arjuna saw the whole universe as one gigantic image of the Lord. Likewise we have to see every form, every being and everything in the universe as the expression and the embodiment of God. *Saguna Upasana* leads us to a *Guru*, and the *Guru's* compassion and grace leads us to this universal vision which baffles all description. Then we shall have simultaneously all the four kinds of *Moksha* described in the *Shastras*, namely, *Sayujya*, *Samipya*, *Salokya* and *Sarupya*. All these *Mokshas* are not to be enjoyed separately but together at the same time. We are one with God, we are near God, we are in the same place as God and we have the same likeness as God. This is the supreme goal which this human life must reach, and then we shall become perfect in spiritual attainment, spiritual experience and realisation.

**AT THE HINDU COLLEGE, BAMBALAPITIYA,
COLOMBO.**

13th December, 1954

“Saraswati Hall” Opening Function

Beloved Friends Declaring this beautiful and spacious hall open, Mother Krishnabai and Ramdas, in the first place invoke the choicest blessings of the Lord so that this hall may be instrumental in giving education to the youngsters who badly need such a hall for their education. We have been asked to give a name to this hall. May this hall be called from this time onwards, “Saraswati Hall”. It is in the fitness of things that this hall should be called by that name, as Saraswati is the Goddess of Learning, and it is from Her that we have to draw inspiration in our educational career. Through Her grace alone we shall be able to understand things properly and to learn the arts and sciences in the proper spirit and grow into useful citizens of India, Ceylon and all the world. Ramdas, in this connection, cannot forget to mention the munificent donation made by the friend, who was responsible for the construction of this beautiful hall.

Purpose of Education

You know that there are, as it is said by our ancient teachers and saints, three kinds of gifts. One is the gift of devotion, the second is of education and the third of food. Education is an important thing in the evolution of human life. Without education we cannot grow up in the right way so as to regulate our lives and make ourselves useful to others. Without culture we cannot prove ourselves to be useful to our fellow-beings. We should expect institutions like this to give education not only for the advancement of the intellect but also for the expansion of the heart. It is not merely that we should hold degrees by passing examinations, but we should also cultivate the virtues of the heart so that we can have culture both intellectually and emotionally. Our heart must have compassion, forgiveness and kindness towards all beings in the world. Our intellect must be used in order to fulfil the aims which the heart has set before us. Heart and mind should be controlled by a higher power so that they can work harmoniously. That power is God. We cannot forget Him. If we forget

Him there will be a clash between the heart and the intellect, and our life will be ill-regulated and confused. Therefore we must look up to that higher Power to guide us so that He can illumine our intellect and fill our heart with holy emotions, and our life may be completely spiritualised in all fields of action.

Ramdas' Advice to Students

The Bhagavad Gita has taught us that we are not to give up actions but to divinise our actions. This is possible only when we draw inspiration from God in all that we do. So we must tune ourselves with God, who is responsible for all this vast universe before us. Education must be received in order to make our lives useful for our fellow-beings, by removing from our minds selfish tendencies which are responsible for confusion and discord in our life. So, of all the gifts, the greatest gift is that of devotion. We must have, first, belief in God. We must pray to Him daily and draw inspiration from Him. Then we should learn our lessons, so that by learning we may make ourselves really useful and helpful to others. Our selfishness must go. Through devotion and education we can widen our vision. Education itself widens our understanding and gives us the power to utilise the God-given gifts for the service of others. This is the prime purpose with which we are born as human beings. We must get education and engage ourselves in spiritual and devotional practices for the service of others. This must be the motto of our life.

You, perhaps, do not expect Ramdas to make a long speech because the other day, when he came to this very hall, he had made a long speech on the Bhagavad Gita which is the quintessence of Hinduism. So Ramdas requests you to read this scripture everyday. Even if it is only one *Sloka*, keep up the practice without a break and try to live your life according to the teachings of that wonderful scripture. Once again Ramdas prays to the Almighty Lord to shower His blessings upon this most useful institution which gives education not only to the youngsters of the Hindu community but also to the other communities, whenever it is possible to admit them and extend to them the same privileges which the Hindu children enjoy. This itself shows that it is universal in its outlook and not sectarian. If we

all mingle together in this spirit, loving and helping each other, we shall have fulfilled the purpose of this human life, which is a rare gift God has given us.

AT THE SINDHI COMMUNITY CENTRE, COLOMBO.

14th December, 1954.

Satsang and Satnam

Beloved Friends, — On the eve of our departure for Jaffna, this *Bhajan* is held here in this hall, and on this occasion Ramdas does not propose to make a long speech. He has been all these days, during his stay in Colombo, emphasising the need for everyone of us to remember God constantly, because by the remembrance of God we realise His presence within us. This is the easiest way to attain Him. Remembrance leads us to a consciousness of His existence within us. For remembering Him there is no easier way than the constant chanting or repetition of God's name, which is all-powerful and sweet. Ramdas, for himself, found that the repetition of the Name was the easiest method by which the waves of the mind could be stilled. When the mind is still, all the thoughts disappear and we realise that we are not the body or the senses but the eternal, all-pervading Spirit. We call this spirit 'God', and His nature is bliss and peace. Be conscious of Him as the indwelling Reality and knowing that Reality as yourself, attain immortality. This is the chief aim of human life.

If we ignore this quest and get entangled in this external show, we shall be subject to cares, anxieties, fears and worries. This we see from our own experience. This state of things we should avoid and our quest should be to find the Eternal life, attaining which alone we can come by real peace and joy. Now Ramdas will give the names of some of the great sages and saints of India who realised God by chanting the Divine name. In the first place, Ramdas must make mention of the name of Guru Nanak Dev who, we know, is worshipped upstairs, *Guru Granth Sahib* is a source of inspiration to millions in India, and mostly in Northern India. *Guru Nanak Dev* says that there are only two ways of approach to the Divine. If you are sincere in your quest of God, you should have *Satsang* and *Satnam*.

If you have constantly on your tongue the name of God, and you court the company of saints, then your march towards God is made easy. You need not have recourse to any other *Sadhana*. Constant remembrance of God will make you aware of His presence within you and contact of saints will grant you this remembrance. We are awakened to the awareness of the Reality, in the company of saints. Without their grace and influence we are nowhere on the spiritual path.

God's Name the Mainstay

A man who thinks that he can attain God without contacting a saint cannot have his wish fulfilled. This is very clear from the lives of all saints and sages. What the saints and sages, whose names Ramdas is going to mention, did in the first place was that they contacted saints and received from them initiation of the name of God and they started chanting that name, looking upon the person who initiated them as their spiritual master and guide. In the ancient days, according to the *Puranas*, we had great devotees like Prahlada, Narada and Draupadi; later on Namdev, Tulsidas, Tukaram, Gauranga, Kabir and Nandanar. All these saints held God's name as the chief means for the concentration, purification and elevation of the mind and for the ultimate realisation of God.

Draupadi

Draupadi was an ardent devotee of Krishna, First of all, it is absolutely necessary, as Draupadi and all others have done, that we should give our heart to God and then take His name. Then we are completely entitled to the protection of God in all situations.

We are repeating His name with our mind engaged in worldly thoughts and desires, and do not depend entirely upon God or love Him above everything else in the world. As a result of this, we do not get as much help and support from Him as we expect. You know that when Draupadi was in great trouble, she called on Krishna to come to her rescue, but Krishna did not come as she was trying also to protect herself. But when she gave up her own effort to defend herself and entirely depended upon Krishna and called on Him, He at once saved her.

Lord Gauranga

Then again we find Gauranga and Tukaram, who were all votaries of the Divine name. They were ceaselessly repeating God's name and they had visions and Divine experiences. Gauranga was simply mad of the Divine name. He was dancing in ecstasy. He electrified the hearts of those who came in contact with him and made them also chant God's name. When he was going from village to village, people from those places joined him in the chorus of the Divine name. Really, when we repeat God's name and get the joy resulting from it, we cannot sometimes contain ourselves. We stand up and dance in ecstasy. When a child gets a new toy what does it do? It dances in joy. When joy runs in your veins and takes possession of every part of your body, you dance in ecstasy.

Saint Kabir

Kabir was another votary of God's name. How did he get God's name? He was a Muslim by birth. He wanted to repeat God's name, but nobody would give him initiation. He went to Swami Ramanand, a famous saint of Banaras, and prayed to him to give him the name of God, but the Swami said he could not be initiated because he was a Muslim. It was usual for Swami Ramanand to go to the Gangas for his bath early in the morning, even when there was no sufficient light, and he had to step down the ghat. Kabir went and laid himself on one of the steps of the ghat, at the very place where Swami Ramanand used to take his bath. The Swami did not see Kabir lying down. So he placed his foot on the back of Kabir and suddenly felt that somebody was lying down there and said "Ram, Ram." As soon as Kabir heard this Name, he got up and said his work was over, because he felt he had got the initiation. From that time he started repeating the Name and got the highest spiritual experiences. He had the vision of Divinity in all forms, in all aspects, and in all ways. That means he had the all-comprehensive and all-inclusive realisation of God.

Maharishi Valmiki

You know, Valmiki was a robber. By the grace of Narada who gave him Ram *Mantra*, he was not only saved from evil-doing but

was also raised to the status of a Maharishi. He was venerated all over the world. Ajamila repeated God's name once at the time of his death. The result was that by the power of the Name he was taken to heaven. Tulsidas is never tired of praising the power of the Name in the Ramayana. If you read here and there the great praises he gives to the power of the Name, you will be simply charmed.

Saint Namdev

Namdev and another great Yogi of the time went together on a pilgrimage. On the way both felt thirsty. They found a well which was very deep and had only a small quantity of water at the bottom. They could not get at the water. The Yogi converted himself into a small sparrow, went inside the well, drank water and came out. But Namdev had no such powers. But he had unshakable faith in God, and His name was always on his lips. He turned towards Pandharpur, where his *Ishta* was residing in the temple, and cried out: 'Oh Vithal, I am thirsty. I want water.' Then a miracle happened and the water at the bottom of the well came up and overflowed. He not only drank the water, but could also take a bath in it. He did not have to become a sparrow.

Saint Nandanar

Nandanar was a Pariah by caste. He repeated the name of Nataraja before seeing or knowing anything about Him. Repeating His name, he was dancing in ecstasy. Ultimately God took him to Chidambaram and there he disappeared in the flash of light that came from God in the temple. This status has achieved by the Pariah saint by the simple chanting of the name of God. You know, of course, about Narada. Day and night he was singing God's name, and was immersed in continuous joy and ecstasy.

God is at once Master and Servant

Ramdas can multiply instances like this, because in our *Puranas* we have the lives of many saints. Therein we find that the Divine name saved people not only from worldly difficulties and dangers, but also raised them to the highest spiritual eminence, by which they realised their oneness with God not only in the personal form but also in the impersonal all-pervading form. Even after realising God

in all these aspects, they were able to feel constantly the fellowship of God with them. God used to look after them tenderly in so many ways. A devotee is under the protection and care of God. He is looked upon by the devotee as his Master, but He virtually becomes the servant of His devotees. He looks after them like the mother looking after her child. This is Ramdas' experience all these years. God has been looking after him and attending on him like a mother. This is all due to Ramdas' repeating His name. His name is wonderful in its potency, wonderful in its power. It can transform a mortal into an immortal and raise him to the highest spiritual eminence, It can convert him entirely into an image of God. So Ramdas' last word on this occasion, before he leaves Colombo, is that you should all make it a point to remember God everyday by chanting His holy name and keep your mind perfectly serene and calm and feel His presence in your hearts.

**AT THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION VAITHEESWARA
VIDYALAYAM, JAFFNA.**

15th December, 1954.

The Goal of Human Life

Beloved Devotees of God, Ramdas introduces himself to you as a humble servant and confiding child of God. In August last God willed that this child should leave India on a world tour. The object of the tour is to propagate the ideal of universal love and service. In the course of the tour he came in contact with many spiritual luminaries in different parts of the world, and also met thousands of spiritual aspirants, God also gave him opportunities to address over one hundred gatherings. Among the great saintly souls he met on this tour were Christians both Protestants and Roman Catholics Hindus, Buddhists, Sufis, and illumined personalities belonging to new spiritual universalist movements. He delivered speeches and discourses in Hindu spiritual centres, Unitarian churches, Fellowship chapels, Buddhist associations, temples and other centres in different parts of Europe, America, Japan, Hongkong and Singapore. Wherever

he went and whenever he was able to talk with friends before large audiences, he found a peculiar joy of communion with all of them and saw there was a great spiritual awakening among them.

Avatars and Prophets — Their Mission

In the state of confusion and discord at present prevailing in the world which we know is due to want of faith in the all-pervading God, who controls the destinies of humanity what we have to do is to practise universal love and service. Individual liberation and world liberation depend upon our tuning our life with the universal Spirit which we call Reality, Truth or God. It is said in the Bhagavad Gita, "Whenever *Adharma* or unrighteousness prevails, I come from age to age to establish righteousness and destroy unrighteousness". To fulfil these great and assuring words, the Lord has come down on the earth, having assumed human forms from time to time, for the redemption of mankind, whenever there was unrighteousness and chaos in the world. When people were resorting to all sorts of evil practices in the name of religion, Lord Buddha came to put a stop to such practices and to establish true religion by awakening and enlightening people in India and abroad. We have also the great Avatars, Rama and Krishna, who came to destroy evil and establish righteousness. Mohammed's advent was to found a brotherhood amongst warring tribes and bring peace and harmony amongst them. Similarly, in Palestine, when the people were victims of a false religion, and exploitation and tyranny were rampant, Jesus came in order to remove these evils, to create true faith in God and to preach love and service.

Ramdas will, in this connection, tell you the predominant features in the realisation of these great religious leaders of the world; for, each one stands for a particular kind of realisation which is a shining example to us, by following which we can gain immensely. Buddha taught us that we should rise above all desires, mundane ambitions and aspirations and go deep down within ourselves to find supreme peace. This attainment of peace, he called Nirvana or emancipation. Ramdas takes this as the attainment of *Jnana*. In the Bhagavad Gita we see, in the eleventh chapter, how Lord Krishna gave His

Vishwarupa Darshan to Arjuna. Here the Lord teaches us that we have to behold the whole universe as the expression or manifestation of the Divine. Then, coming to Jesus, we see he taught us how one should love all beings as oneself. Then again, Mohammed would have us surrender ourselves completely to God's will and realise that by His will and power alone everything happens in this world. These great spiritual Teachers and Prophets came in centuries gone by. But even in our own times we have had great spiritual Masters. We have Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Sri Aurobindo, Ramana Maharshi and others. These radiant personalities are our great guides. They have brought us the message of unity of all religions and have told us that the goal of human life is the attainment of spiritual perfection by the vision of God as the all-inclusive and all-transcendent Supreme Being.

What we should do

Now what is the part we have to play in this world? We should turn our vision inward and realise the all-pervading, static, calm and silent Spirit which we call *Atman*, *Purusha*, *Shiva* or *Brahman*. There are various ways of approach to this state of complete liberation from the thralldom of desires and from the darkness of ignorance. But Ramdas, from his own experience, can tell you that the easiest method by which he was able to still the mind and become aware of that supreme Truth within himself and everywhere about him, was the repetition or chanting of God's name holy, all-powerful and sweet. By taking God's name you establish in your mind a remembrance of the Divinity within you until at last you become conscious of the Truth within you, which makes you aware that you are not the body made up of the five elements and a bundle of sensations, but the infinite, eternal, all-pervading Truth. This inner experience develops into the outer vision by which you behold all beings and creatures in the universe as manifestations of God. In this beatific vision, all differences dissolve differences, as we find in the world, based upon caste, colour, race and nationality. Now it is that you have realised the truth of the *Mahavakya* or the great message of our Rishis: *Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma* "Verily the whole universe in *Brahman*."

Our sense of separation from God and our fellow-beings is responsible for our bondage. If we are truly aspiring for the realisation of God, we must gradually dissolve all apparent differences and realise unity. Verily, God is the parent of all human beings. God is the father and mother of us all and we are His or Her children. We must not forget this. Then our relation with each other will be one of mutual love, and there will be no hatred or discord. All the great spiritual Teachers tell us the same truth, lead us to the same goal. They teach us how to live in harmony and peace. Universal love and service form the only way for freeing the individual and the world from discord.

The Four Faiths in Japan

Ramdas is going to tell you now about what he heard from a great Buddhist in Japan. He said, in Japan, there are four spiritual faiths. They are Shintoism, Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. The quintessence of these faiths is expressed in four inspiring words. Shintoism stands for reverence for all life. Confucianism stands for enlightenment, which makes one know that everywhere the same Truth pervades. Taoism stands for perfect purity by which alone we can fill our heart with love for all beings in the world. Buddhism stands for tranquillity which is gained through the realisation of the Self and by complete extinction of all desires in us. These four words are really inspiring.

Ramdas has spoken to you these words in order to awaken you to the consciousness of your real life and existence. In order to dwell in this consciousness, you should think always not in terms of the individual, but in terms of the universal. Do all things only for the sake of God. If you do this, gradually your ego-sense will disappear and you will realise that you are the universal Spirit-changeless, eternal and infinite. This is the goal which you have to achieve.

Ramdas prays to God Almighty to shower His blessings upon all in the world so that He may awaken them to the consciousness of their real Self and life, and enable them to live together in perfect harmony and goodwill.

AT THE WOMEN'S COLLEGE, JAFFNA.

16th December, 1954.

Divine Parent within us

Beloved Children of God, Ramdas never expected he would have to speak to you today, but it has been put down in your programme that he should speak a few words. Ramdas addresses you as children of God, because we are all His children and the purpose of our life is to find Him and recognise Him as our Divine father and mother. He is all-pervading, and as the great *Avatar*, Lord Krishna, has told us, He is seated in the hearts of everyone of us. If we pray to Him, let us pray to Him as dwelling within us, so that we can feel, through prayer, His close proximity. If we think that He is far away from us, we do not derive any benefit of our communion with him. If we feel that He is dwelling within us, then this fact of nearness to Him enables us to lift our hearts up to Him and fill ourselves with His light, power, love and glory. Therefore, Ramdas requests you all not to think of God as one far away from you. He is very near you, and in that spirit you must pray to Him, sing of Him, and take His holy name. You know that by taking the holy name of God, we bring into our mind His remembrance, which makes us feel conscious of His presence, because when we forget Him we do not know that we are near Him and He is near us.

Through remembrance it is that we feel His presence with us. When a child misses its mother it feels very unhappy. But in the presence of the mother it feels happy. So also in the remembrance of the Divine we must surely feel happy and peaceful. To keep up a continuous remembrance of God is to feel His presence always with us. God is at once our father and mother. As mother, He is the Divine power active in the universe and manifest as all beings and creatures. As father, He is the all-pervading, static and calm Spirit. So He is called at once Shiva and *Shakti*. *Shakti* is the mother aspect and Shiva is the father aspect, both together forming the supreme Godhead, to whom we have to surrender ourselves by continuous remembrance and prayer.

Ramdass is not going to make a very long speech. He will now

close his speech by asking you to repeat God's name as he is doing it: "Om Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram." Ramdas prays to God Almighty to shower His choicest blessings upon you all and give you one-pointed devotion to Him, and through such devotion enable you to realise Him in your own hearts and behold Him in the entire universe as all beings, creatures and things. May He bless you!

AT THE CIVIL HOSPITAL, KANKESANTURAI.

16th December, 1954.

God-remembrance ensures Security

Beloved Embodiments of the Divine, Ramdas has come to you today to speak about God. God is our father and mother. If we are to feel that He is ever protecting us, it is necessary for us to remember Him constantly. The moment we forget Him we lose contact with Him, and the result is that we feel like children in the absence of their mother. Therefore, to be assured that there is a power over us who protects, guides and prompts us from time to time and from moment to moment, we must remember God constantly. We should not forget the fact that by constant remembrance of God alone we can have His protection. All our difficulties, troubles, worries and anxieties are transitory, and disappear the moment we become conscious that God is protecting us. In the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna has said:

"To those who worship Me alone thinking of no other, to such devotees who are ever united with Me in contemplation, I bring full security, fulfilling all their wants and taking care of them." In this world of change, we meet with various vicissitudes of life, both pleasant and unpleasant. The body is stricken with diseases and the mind filled with worries. In this state of unhappiness, turmoil and misery, there is only one way and that is to take refuge in God. It is God alone who can remove our difficulties and bring us health, peace and prosperity.

Ramdas is very glad to find himself in this hospital in which selfless service is rendered to those who are suffering from T.B. and other diseases. Ramdas is sure that those who are responsible for the

treatment, the doctors and the nurses, are doing their duties with all love and devotion. Their duties are those which God has enjoined upon them. They must not forget that they are merely instruments in the hands of God. If they remember this always, God's power will act through them for bringing relief to the sufferers. God is the great healer. We are only vehicles through whom His power works for the good of others. The patients must have implicit faith and trust in God. The easiest way by which they can remember God and feel His protection is through the constant repetition of God's name. By the repetition of the Name they can be sure that they will both physically and spiritually evolve to the supreme goal of liberation. This is definitely the easiest way. The Name will grant you the assurance within that you are under God's guidance and protection.

Do not think that you can worship God only by sitting in one place. You can think of Him by repeating His name even when you work with hands and feet. When your hands are working, you can mentally repeat the holy Name ; your work then will be holy and pleasant. Therefore we are told that whenever we give, receive, or do any other work, we must have our thoughts on God. Then all the work that we do will become divine in nature. In that state God's protection will always be with us. So Ramdas exhorts you all, not only the patients, doctors and nurses, but all those who are assembled here, that you should try to keep the thought of God in your mind always and be active in the world. That activity should be nothing but the service of God in humanity. In conclusion, Ramdas invokes Divine blessings upon you all so that the awakening within you of the consciousness of God may always remain with you and you may do all actions in a spirit of spontaneous service to humanity.

AT THE PERUMAL KOIL, JAFFNA.

16th December, 1954.

Bhakti

You are all the very manifestations of God, and as inspired by you, Ramdas is speaking to you today on *Bhakti* or devotion.

Devarishi Narada, in his *Bhakti Sutras*, has defined *Bhakti* as

the intense love which we bear to God. What are the qualities of a devotee of God? In the first place, he remembers God at all times. God's name will always be on his lips. As he chants the name of God, his mind gets more and more absorbed in Him and detached from worldly ambitions and desires, and by constant practice he gets the vision of God, finds union with God and ultimately realises God's presence within himself. In the heart he sees the very image of the Divine. The devotee thereafter beholds God in all beings and creatures. This great achievement is possible only in human life. After innumerable births of various kinds we have come to this precious human life. Indeed human life is a rare gift of God. The object of human life is only to realise God.

Right use of Life

All human beings, all creatures in the universe, are striving for happiness. But what are they doing? They are trying to find happiness in the objects of the senses. But from experience they come to know that no lasting happiness can ever be had from the objects of the senses, which only cause frustration, pain, sorrow, failure and disappointment of all kinds. If our life is utilised only for the enjoyments of the pleasures of the senses, we are no better than animals. We have been given by God the power of understanding and discrimination, so that we may do things that will contribute towards our real happiness. God has given us all these powers which are not found in the animals. These are to be used only for the realisation of God through utter devotion to Him. Real happiness lies in realising God. God is Satchidananda, which means absolute existence, consciousness and bliss. By seeing Him and realising Him alone we can get peace and bliss. Continuous remembrance of God is the only way to realise Him.

Image Worship

Great saints all over the world have taught us the way to realise God. They started with the lowest form of worship of God. We have found that, at first, many devotees worship some particular form of God in images made of metal, stone or wood. The devotee sees Divinity in those forms. You know, God dwells everywhere. But the

devotee sees God in that particular object of worship. There is nothing wrong or unnatural for the devotee to worship an image, looking upon it as the very form of God. When with one-pointed devotion you worship the image, you will find gradually that the form takes its seat in your heart and fills it so completely that you will have no other thought and no other activity than those concerned with Him and for His sake. Your whole life will be one of sacrifice and dedication to Him and will flow out in service to Him. And you will be filled with rare bliss and peace. All the low desires belonging to the flesh disappear completely. Your nature will develop into that of a child and become so pure, innocent, free, cheerful and spontaneous. In such a state God becomes your father and mother. You cannot miss Him for a single moment. Wherever you turn you see Him and find Him. Inside and out there is for you nothing but one God pervading. This is the supreme achievement for which alone this human life is granted to us. This requires one-pointed devotion for God and the resultant *Vairagya* or dispassion for the ephemeral things of the world.

Devotion Gift of Saints

This is not so easy as we imagine, but it becomes very easy when we get the grace of saints. Therefore the great sages and saints in all parts of the world tell us that the first thing we have to do on the spiritual path is to contact saints. It is the saint who brings us in contact with God. It is he who creates devotion in our hearts. He gives us the power of repeating the glorious name of God. By the contact of saints and by serving them we get their grace, and by their grace our heart is illumined with the bliss, love and light of God. It was said of Kabir, a great devotee of Northern India, that he got initiation of *Ram Mantra* from a Hindu saint. After repeating the *Mantra* with all love and devotion, he got the *Darshan* of Rama. He saw before him both the forms of Rama and his *Guru*. Then he was thinking within himself, before whom he should prostrate first. He fell at the feet of his *Guru* because it was by the grace of the *Guru* that he had the *Darshan* of Rama. So, by the grace of a saint alone our eyes will be opened and we shall be able to see God. So long as we do not see God, we are as good as blind. Therefore we must get

the grace of saints and have our eyes opened to the awareness, knowledge and *Darshan* of God.

What the Name can do

Repetition of God's name constantly will purify our minds and raise us to a level in which we realise that we are always in the presence of God. God's name is like a boat because, when we take the Name, it takes us across the sea of life. It is also compared to a bridge that takes us to the two sides of a river, because it gives us *Darshan* of both the *Nirguna* and the *Saguna*. A saint in India says that God's name is like a lamp on the doorstep which gives light inside the room as well as outside the room. So also when we keep the Name on our lips, it gives us *Darshan* of God inside as well as outside. Unless we see God within and without, we cannot have that supreme bliss and peace which all aim at, thirst for and hunger for.

Ramdas asks you to sit for a short while and with all love and devotion take His name. You will find that the Name will grant you, for that moment at least, real peace and bliss. You know, when you were singing God's name here in chorus, what peace and joy you felt inwardly. You can take God's name any- where and everywhere, while walking, sitting, travelling, on all occasions and at all times. If you have got any adoration for any form of God, let that form dwell in your heart and let the Name chanted by your tongue constantly ring in your ears. In this way you will find there will be no room for any other thought to come and disturb you. You will be doing all things in a calm, serene and cheerful spirit, and ultimately you will find that you are merged in God and that you are doing everything by His will, His power, and His inspiration.

Saint Janibai

It is not that you should give up the daily duties that are allotted to you. But you must do all your work in the consciousness or remembrance of God. Kabir was a weaver. He was repeating God's name and at the same time weaving cloth on the loom. He was saying that the cloth was woven not by him but by Rama. There was a lady in Maharashtra whose name was Janibai. She was always repeating Vithal's name. When she was grinding corn she was feeling that it

was Vithal who was doing the work of grinding and not she. When your mind is in tune with God, through the repetition of the Name, whatever is done is not done by you but by God through you. So you can have your being in God and still be acting in the world. When you are doing work with your hand, your mind may be engaged in the thought of God. Instead of wasting your time in useless talk and unnecessary activities, you should keep His name on your tongue and do your work quietly in a spirit of dedication to Him.

We have got four defects of the tongue. One is that we are talking aimlessly, wasting our time. We are slandering others or talking ill of others. We are using the tongue for scolding and abusing others. We use the tongue for telling lies also. If you have God's name always on your tongue, you can never have these defects. You will only talk when necessary and that too in a sweet and gentle way. Consequently your mind will be calm and serene and your heart will be filled with love for all beings. You will be patient, kind, loving and forbearing. When you develop these virtues, naturally your mind becomes peaceful.

Power of the Name

Ramdas has seen many people, who were given to violent passions and all kinds of evil doings, freed from them by the simple repetition of God's name. Such is the power of God's name. God and His name are not different. God is with form and without form. He can be realised through the worship of either the name or the form. A devotee goes to the length of saying, "I have got Your name, Oh God, and I do not care for Your form." Another devotee says, "Oh God, by the power of Your name I can convert the world which is full of misery into a place full of joy." Yet another devotee says, "If You put me in hell, Oh God, I will throw into it one drop of bliss which I have gained by repeating Your name, and convert hell into heaven." So we should not find fault with anybody in the world. The fault is ours in not repeating the Name and tuning ourselves with God. Even in these days there are saints and sages all over the world who are perfectly happy and peaceful, because they have no enemies in the world and they see everywhere only the Divine, and their love goes out to all alike. In this state they enjoy perfect peace and bliss.

These are the real children of God. Their contact elevates, illumines and saves those who come in contact with them. The Name saves you and enables you to save others. You light the lamp and enable others to light their lamps from your lamp. The purpose of life is to attain this immortal happiness yourself and share it with others who are in a miserable condition. So long as you have not achieved this happiness, you will be a source of misery to yourself and others. Therefore Ramdas, as inspired by you all, tells you that there is no easier way to commune with God, to realise God, and attain immortal bliss and peace than the chanting, repeating and constant invocation of the Divine name.

AT THE TIRUNELVELI YOUNG MEN'S HINDU ASSOCIATION, JAFFNA.

17th December, 1954.

True Devotion

Beloved Friends,—Ramdas is speaking to you about true devotion to God. There are various kinds of devotional practices prevailing in this world. But true devotion consists in devoting oneself only to God to realise Him, because by God-realisation alone one attains real happiness. True devotion therefore consists in aspiring to see Him, to feel His presence always. God is eternal peace and bliss. To see Him and experience Him is to have immortal bliss and peace. So our quest will be fulfilled only by realising God, By devoting ourselves to God in a spirit of dedication to Him, we experience joy from the very start and not at a distant date. Remembrance of God, out of pure devotion to Him, gives us at once peace and joy. We know that for remembering God the easiest way is to repeat His holy name. The moment we take His name with all love and devotion, we experience immediate bliss. By the power of the Name, the restlessness of the mind stops and the mind is purified and illumined with the light, love and joy of God. A great saint has said that he who has got God's name always on his lips is a Jivanmukta, because continuous remembrance of God eliminates the ego-sense and brings him to the realisation of his immortal, changeless Self. Name is a

link between the devotee and God. It brings the devotee face to face with God and enables him to realise ultimately his oneness with him.

Sign of a True Devotee

Therefore the sign of a true devotee of God is that he will always try to maintain a steady and continuous remembrance of God. He will always have God's name on his lips. In his active life he will be dealing with his fellow-beings with love, affection, forgiveness, patience and kindness. His heart will be free from lust, greed, wrath and other evils, and his eyes will be illumined with the light of God and behold only God everywhere. When he beholds God everywhere, he will be happy and peaceful every minute, because he will have transcended duality and diversity and will ever dwell in unity and oneness. Now he fully realises and experiences the principle of the Hindu *Shastras* that he, God and universe are one. In the attainment of this supreme illumination, his goal in life is fulfilled.

Ramdass' Advice

We must keep this goal in view and live our life accordingly. We must have purity in thought, word and deed, because purity is an essential condition for this supreme realisation. You know that purity in word and deed depends upon the purity of the mind. Mind can be pure only when it is filled with the thought of God, because God is absolute purity. God - thought will ever be in our mind only if we repeat His name constantly. So God's name is the one plank to which we have to cling so that we may not sink in the sea of life. This plank will take us across the sea of life to the absolute.

From Ramdas' own experience he tells you that the Divine name will grant you the highest spiritual experience and perfection. Therefore he advises you to take the holy name of God and have it on your tongue at all times of the day, whenever you are free and whenever you are doing anything with your hands or feet. In the Bhagavad Gita it is said that, of all the *Yajnas*, *Japa* Yajna is the highest and the best. *Japa Yajna* consists in having God's name always on our lips and in our mind. By ceaseless repetition the Name will get fixed in the mind, and the mind will then automatically repeat the Name. As we go on with such mental repetition, all the impurities

of the mind will be washed away and it will become still. When the mind becomes pure and still, we shall have the vision of the Divine within us. When we have found the Divine within, we behold Him everywhere without. So Ramdas' advice to you again is to take the holy name of God always.

AT THE TOWN HALL, JAFFNA.

17th December, 1954.

Under the auspices of the Hindu Sanmarga Sangham

God-Realisation

Beloved Friends, —Ramdas is going to speak to you today on God-realisation. To realise God is the aim of human life. What do we get by having the vision or realisation of God? All of us are striving to attain perfect peace and happiness. This endeavour will meet with success only when we unite our life with God and realise Him in us and everywhere about us. Now, what is the way of approach to God? All of you know very well that the path of devotion is the easiest. When we, through devotion to God, adore Him and remember Him constantly, our hearts will become pure. God reveals Himself in the heart which is pure.

Message of Spiritual Masters

All the great spiritual masters of the world are telling us, with one voice, that absolute purity of heart is essential of God-realisation. Lord Buddha wants us to be perfectly pure in thought, word and deed, in order to release ourselves from the bondage of ignorance and attain eternal peace and joy. Jesus Christ has said categorically in the Sermon on the Mount, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." Lord Krishna, in the Bhagavad Gita, says, "I am always residing in the hearts of My devotees." Prophet Mohammed has said, "He who takes the name of Allah constantly and submits to His will, will always have Allah with him." We do not see any difference in the teachings of these great masters. Their object in teaching these principles was to make us live together in perfect friendliness, harmony and peace. These teachers came into the world

at different times, when there was strife and disorder of all kinds. Therefore their message to the world was peace and harmony.

Solution to World Tangle

At the present moment, humanity is on trial. There is so much discord, dissension and unrest in the world. So it behoves everyone of us to unite together as one humanity, one world-family, one world-brotherhood, looking upon God as our common father and mother. This universal consciousness can dawn on us only when we shed all the lower impulses and desires that are lurking within. We should, in the first place, see that we are true devotees of God. We must allow His power to work in us for the good of humanity. This will be possible only when we surrender ourselves to Him. God is not far away from us. The moment we surrender ourselves to Him and give up the ego-sense, He takes possession of us and uses this human body for His service in humanity. When His love, power and joy reveal themselves in us, we shall be His true instruments for the good of the world. We shall be able to look upon humanity as one unit. The differences such as caste, creed, colour, religion and nationality will disappear in this supreme vision, because it is one God, one Spirit, who pervades everywhere and dwells in the hearts of all beings and creatures. The supreme Lord of the universe does not belong to any caste, creed, religion or country. He is our universal father and mother. As such, we have no reason to quarrel amongst ourselves on any score; on the other hand, we have every reason to love each other and live in perfect amity and friendliness.

So, when we become devotees of God, we must be devoted to such a God, the universal God. All the great teachers of the world, who came from time to time for the uplift of the world, have come from the same God. Their aim and object in coming was to establish peace, harmony and goodwill in the world. This they did by awakening within us the consciousness of God. They pointed out to us the path of righteousness and truth. We are asked to give up all our lower desires and cultivate love, kindness and compassion towards all beings. A lover of God is surely a lover of humanity. This humble servant, Ramdas, who is sitting before you, has today become

the mouthpiece of these great souls. Ramdas feels certain that these words of his will go deep down into your hearts and create that consciousness of unity and harmony all over the world and enable you to live the life divine. You are all verily the embodiments of God, because God dwells within you, and so it is easy for you to remember Him and feel conscious of Him and thereafter live, move and have your being in Him.

Before concluding this short speech, Ramdas invokes God Almighty seated in the hearts of you all to pour forth His grace and bring about peace, unity, harmony and goodwill in the world.

AT THE VIVEKANANDA SOCIETY, ANURADHAPURA .

18th December, 1954.

Aim of Human Life

Beloved Devotees of God, Ramdas is going to speak to you today on the aim of human life. Human life is a rare gift of God, the chief object of which is to realise God or attain liberation. If this precious gift is not utilised for attaining this goal, we shall be no better than animals. If we become true devotees of God, we shall be free from the tangle of action or *Karma* and from the cravings of all sense-desires. So long as our mind is thinking of worldly objects, we cannot be happy. When it turns towards God we get real happiness. What we have to do is that we must keenly aspire for God and remember Him constantly. God is always dwelling in our heart. He can be seen only when we have become pure in mind. We must aspire for Him, remember Him, contemplate on Him, meditate on Him and ultimately surrender ourselves to Him. By complete surrender to Him we shall see Him within ourselves, and our ego-sense will disappear. Such a devotee becomes the very embodiment of God. He is not only full of bliss and peace but also becomes an instrument for doing real good to the world. He is a veritable God upon earth and is worshipped as such.

God worships His Devotees

In the Bhagavad Gita, it is said that a devotee who has attained *Jnana* or liberation is verily God Himself. Lord Krishna showed to the world how He venerated those who had reached this blessed state. His humble devotee, Sudama, went to have His *Darshan* in Dwaraka. As soon as He saw Sudama, He received him, placed him on His throne and worshipped him. On another occasion, when Narada went to have the *Darshan* of Krishna in Dwaraka, he was told, at the entrance to the palace of Krishna, that Krishna was not then available for *Darshan*. When asked why He was not available, Narada was told that the Lord was engaged in His usual worship. Narada was surprised to hear this and wondered whom Krishna would worship, He Himself being the supreme God. So he went inside quietly and peeped into the room where Krishna was sitting. He saw Krishna busy worshipping the images of Prahlada, Ambarisha, Draupadi, Valmiki, Narada and many other devotees. Narada went inside and asked Krishna what He was doing. Then Krishna said, "I am busy worshipping My God, and these are images of My God."

Verily, when a devotee has surrendered himself to God, he becomes God Himself. People in the world conquer so many external things, but these spiritual heroes have conquered their minds and have given up their ego-sense, finding God within themselves. In the Bible, we read that Jesus Christ had at one time washed and worshipped the feet of his own disciples. So, it is clear now that the devotees of God are really the embodiments or expressions of God Himself. Shiva *Bhaktas* are the forms of Shiva Himself; so also all Vishnu *Bhaktas* are the forms of Vishnu. Buddha who had conquered his mind, and going deep down within himself had found ultimate emancipation or Nirvana, is worshipped by millions of people on this earth. Jesus, who was the very embodiment of Divine love, is worshipped by thousands and thousands. The reason for this is that the Divine power, peace and joy had fully revealed themselves in these great personalities. Such illumined souls are a blessing to humanity. They had made this human life, which God granted them, a vehicle through which God could reveal Himself. Therefore the

object of human life is to express the Divinity inherent in everyone of us. We must turn our mind more and more within us.

Name takes you to God

For the common man, who is active in the world, the method of constant repetition of God's name is the easiest. By the repetition of the Name, he can unite himself with the Divine within. As he chants the Name, he will gradually feel conscious of God within him. There is no easier way to uproot all desires from the mind and fill it with peace and tranquillity. So, God's name not only purifies the mind, but also brings the devotee into direct contact with God. Ramdas tells you about the glory of God's name, not only from his own experience, but also from what he has read of the experiences of great saints in India and other countries. Ramdas' advice to you, therefore, is to have one-pointed devotion to God, to have faith in Him and to repeat His holy name constantly and see Him within yourself and also everywhere. To take the name of God is not difficult. You have not to spend anything for it and you need not sit in a particular place, or have any paraphernalia. You can have the Name on your lips at all times and in all places. When you are working with your hands, you can go on chanting the Name. When you are travelling in trains or other vehicles, you can still keep on chanting the Name. After some time, you will be able to repeat this Name automatically within, when you have real love and devotion for God.

Inspiration from Saints

This love and devotion for God can spring in our hearts only through the contact of saints. It is they who infuse into us faith in God, and inspire us to take His holy name. They are more gracious, loving and kind to us than our earthly father and mother, who are concerned only about our physical welfare. But the saints are more eager to see that we become free from the thralldom of *Karma* and attain the supreme goal God. Their mission in this world is to awaken the slumbering souls from ignorance and lead them towards the Divine and make their lives blessed. Therefore, we have to contact saints, get inspiration from them, take God's name constantly, live a pure life and ultimately find God within us and behold Him

everywhere in the universe. When we behold God everywhere, our life will be filled with Divine peace and bliss. If we achieve this goal, we shall have turned this precious gift of human life to the best account. Therefore, in conclusion Ramdas advises you again to have great devotion for God, think of Him, ultimately realise Him and make your life blessed.

**AT THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION HINDU COLLEGE,
TRINCOMALEE.**

19th December, 1954.

True Devotees of God

Beloved Children of God, Ramdas is going to talk to you today how we can become true devotees and servants of God. The true sign of a devotee is that he constantly remembers God so that he may surrender himself totally to Him. By surrendering ourselves to God we are transformed within and without. This surrender enables us to realise Him within our heart, as a result of which our external life becomes a spontaneous expression of His power. Therefore devotion leads to Self-knowledge, and from Self-knowledge we get what is called supreme devotion or *Parabhakti*, by which we realise God's presence everywhere. Our mind will then be illumined with the knowledge of the Self and our heart will overflow with love towards all beings in the world.

Absolute Purity needed

What is needed is constant remembrance of God so that we may be pure in thought, word and deed. Absolute purity is an essential condition for God to reveal Himself within us. We must be free from lust, greed and wrath. We must develop what is called a *Sattwic* nature harmonious, pure and enlightened nature. We must develop in our heart qualities of compassion, forgiveness, kindness and mercy. We must look upon all beings in the world as our brothers and sisters. All man-made distinctions based upon religion, caste, creed, colour and nationality must disappear. God of all people, of all nations and

of all religions is one and the same. We are His children. Recognize Him with this relationship and love each other. The great teachers of the world taught us the same way. Buddha taught us that we should purify ourselves and have compassion towards all living creatures. Jesus Christ asked us to love all beings as we love ourselves. Krishna taught us to see the Divine in each and every- body in the world. Prophet Mohammed taught us to submit to the will of God and become His instruments so that we can carry out His will in the world. If we can only follow the teachings of these great spiritual masters we shall have no quarrel among ourselves on any account.

The easiest way to remember God is to take His holy name. You can call God by any name you like; Rama, Krishna, Jesus, Allah, Shiva or any other name that you hold dear. God is really nameless and formless. He is the all-pervading power and presence who envelops, guides and inspires us in every way. He is pure Spirit, pure Consciousness or pure Self. The great spiritual Masters who have realised God are His incarnations and expressions. These great Avatars and incarnations are the embodiments of God. They are the personal expressions of the Impersonal. So by adoring, remembering and by submitting ourselves to them we draw inspiration from them in order to elevate ourselves and realise God within.

Take God's Name constantly

To realise God or see God it is not necessary that we should give up our daily routine of life. If we are true devotees of God, we can find Him in our heart even when we are active in the world. God wants a pure heart and devotion for Him. If we cultivate true devotion for Him and through such devotion surrender ourselves to Him, we shall be able to find God within us, in any situation in which He may place us. We are entirely dependent upon Him because we have taken refuge in Him, In all our difficulties and troubles God mysteriously protects and saves us, or grants us necessary strength to face such situations. Therefore we should never deny Him and never forget Him. We must always remember Him, acknowledge Him as our Divine mother and master. The easy way as Ramdas has told you, is

to constantly keep your mind in His remembrance by the repetition of His holy, powerful, sweet and glorious name. However undesirable the thoughts coming into our mind, whatever the evil practices we are engaged in, the power of the Name is so great that it will dispel all such evil thoughts and all our actions will become pure. We shall then be able to serve others and relieve them of their distress. You know, selfishness is the cause of unhappiness. When we do our actions for the sake of others in a selfless spirit, we are really happy. Such actions can proceed from us only when our heart is filled with love. The nature of God who dwells within us is love. Therefore by constant remembrance we must realise God, who is love, in our own heart. Thereafter He becomes our sole guide, inspirer and controller. Then we become His true devotees and servants, and make this human birth blessed. A lover and servant of God is a lover and servant of humanity. For such a devotee God resides in the hearts of all beings in the world. In his mind there will be no hatred or illwill towards anybody. Thereafter, he will be enjoying everlasting peace, joy and bliss, because he knows that he is the immortal Truth, ever united and one with the Divine. Ramdas' advice to you all is that you should be devoted to God and, by taking His name constantly, purify yourselves and find him in your heart, and love all beings and creatures in the world equally without any distinction.

**AT THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY, SRI SIVANANDA
TAPOVAN, TRINCOMALEE.**

20th December, 1954.

How to win Guru's Grace

Beloved Devotees of God, Ramdas is talking to you today upon the subject "Contact of saints and Guru's grace." Before we try to contact a saint, it is necessary that we should, in the first place, know who a saint is and what his qualities are. A saint is one who has realised God. He has got equal vision, as he beholds God everywhere. From his heart flows the Ganges of Love to all in the world. He is all compassion, forgiveness and peace.

Such are the qualities of a saint. By the contact of a saint alone the soul is liberated from the bondage of ignorance. In his presence we should humble ourselves to the dust. Then only his grace will pour on us. We should not live with him to teach him how he should act. We are to obey him in every respect. His contact will enable us to shed our ego-sense and all the lower desires. So, when we are in his company, we must derive the utmost benefit by purifying ourselves and freeing ourselves from the ego-sense, and realise the state of inner freedom and peace. If we become humble, he raises us to his own spiritual status.

In these days we see so many people going to meet saints. Some of them live in saints' company for a pretty long time. But what benefit do they derive? Most of them go there not for their spiritual uplift, but to gain their own selfish ends; and those who are with saints are not living in harmony among themselves, but create strife and discord. The object of going to live with saints is to free ourselves from our low desires and passions. On the other hand, if we remain with them still retaining our weaknesses and frailties, and give free vent to them, we are wasting our life even after having their contact.

Therefore, the best way we can utilize our hours of stay and communion with saints is to liberate ourselves from all our weaknesses by loving each other and elevate ourselves to a state of equality and peace. We call ourselves their disciples, but we become their teachers. You may remember an instance in the life of Jesus when he saw his disciples fighting among themselves as to who among them was the greatest. Jesus told them that he who was the servant of all the rest was the greatest among them. There is no greater pain the disciples can inflict on their *Guru* than by fighting among themselves for precedence.

Guru's Grace essential

The *Guru's* object in life is to bring harmony and peace. Without a *Guru* there is no salvation. Even the great Avatars, Rama and Krishna, had their own *Guru*. When we read the lives of great saints and devotees of the Lord, we find that each one of them had his or her own *Guru*. *Guru's* grace is essential for our redemption. When we have met a God-realised saint, we must make use of his company

for the realisation of our Self and attainment of immortal bliss and peace. In the presence of the saint we must examine ourselves and see our own defects and try to remove them instead of finding fault with others and picking up quarrels. Therefore, our aim as disciples of a saint is to love him with all our heart, obey him in all respects and learn to love our fellow-beings with equal vision as the *Guru* does.

The *Guru's* heart is so soft that he is always eager that all those who have taken refuge in him are made free from their lower nature and perfectly happy both inwardly and outwardly. He is pouring his grace in abundance on his devotees and tirelessly instructing them as to how they should behave themselves in order to have the vision of Divinity within and without. It is not enough if we simply say we are the disciples of such and such a saint. We must follow his teachings. *Guru's* grace can flow into us only if we carry out his words and thus please him. But, unfortunately, we see today a different picture. Often we doubt whether we are right in calling ourselves devotees of a great saint. Still we take pride in doing so when we have not developed even an iota of the lofty qualities we should cultivate by our contact with the illumined personality of the *Guru*. Our duty, therefore, is to obey implicitly the advice of the *Guru*. We thereby cleanse ourselves of all our impurities, and make ourselves fit to realise the Divine within us and achieve immortality.

Out of his infinite compassion the *Guru* gives the disciple a *Mantra* which he asks him to repeat constantly. The disciple should keep this *Mantra* on his tongue ceaselessly in order to rid his mind of all base impulses, passions and desires. If he does this he will be acting, according to the advice of the *Guru* and his life will be illumined with divine peace, joy and wisdom. This is the right relationship that should prevail between the *Guru* and his disciple. Otherwise, people will simply hang on to him for nothing at all except to worry him and give him pain at every step. They will also give pain to all around.

Sri Sivananda Tapovan

We have come here to Sri Sivananda Tapovan, a sacred place dedicated to the great Swami of Rishikesh. Sri Swami Sivananda

Saraswati is a God-realised personality. He can be looked upon as one of the spiritual leaders of the age, because he has been a world figure sending out his spiritual messages to all parts of the earth for the guidance of thousands of seekers after truth. This spiritual centre has been started with many objects, mainly spiritual, but also social and humanitarian. A few minutes ago Ramdas was taken to the newly started dispensary where Ayurvedic medicines are given free to poor patients, Ramdas has been told also that small children are given instruction here. This is the valuable work which this institution is carrying on and Ramdas can see, as he has been going round here, how noble are the aims of this institution.

Ramdas has heard of and seen many Divine Life Societies started in different parts of India and abroad. They all help to awaken the ignorant to the awareness of their spiritual nature and also to inspire them to serve the poor and distressed fellow-beings. This work has been done in the name of and as inspired by Sri Swami Sivananda Saraswati. Look at the wonder! A saint, who is somewhere in the Himalayas, has been responsible for such vast and extensive activities for the amelioration of the conditions of unhappy humanity and for bringing light and peace to millions!

**AT THE SARADA VIDYALAYA, TAMPALAKAMAM,
NEAR TRINCOMALEE.**

21st December, 1954.

Sri Saradamani Devi

Beloved Children of God. Ramdas is not going to make a long speech to you. He invokes the Lord Almighty's blessings upon you all so that your hearts may be filled with true devotion for God and you may grow up into His true devotees and be blessed with health, prosperity and peace. This school has been started in memory of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, the great *Avatar* of the present age, and the name of the school is Sarada Vidyalaya. Sarada Devi, you know, was the wife of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and she is the Holy

Mother of us all. She was veritably Saraswati, as her name signifies. So you should adore her and receive inspiration from her for your educational and spiritual uplift. May her grace ever pour upon you all!

AT THE VIVEKANANDA VIDYALAYA, BATTICALOA.

22nd December, 1954.

Under the auspices of the Hindu Women's Association

Self-Surrender

Beloved Forms of the Divine Mother, Ramdas is speaking to you now about self-surrender. God is both the supreme Truth and the divine power. He is at once Shiva and *Shakti*. It must be understood that by His *Shakti* or power alone everything happens in the world. Without His will and power nothing can happen. To recognise this truth is to surrender ourselves to His power. In this state of surrender we take every-thing that happens to us as for our good. God is all goodness, love and kindness. Whatever He does for us is always for our good. If our attitude towards all happenings in the world is of this nature, we shall have no reason to be unhappy, because we know then that all situations are brought about by Him. Our attitude towards happenings is responsible for our happiness or misery.

Actions and events are by themselves neither good nor bad. We take certain situations as for our good and we are happy. At other times, we consider certain situations as bad and we are unhappy. When we know that all things happen by the will of the Divine, who is all love and compassion, we shall always be happy and contented. In this state of absolute peace and contentment, as a result of complete surrender to His will, our life will flow out in selfless service to all. Therefore we must do all work only in His name and for His sake. This consciousness can be with us only if we remember God constantly. The moment we forget Him, our ego-sense will raise its head and we shall feel that we do everything. If we keep up a continuous stream of God-remembrance, the ego-sense will have no place in our life. The easy way to keep up the continuous remembrance of God is to chant His name. We have got plenty of

spare time during the day which we can utilise for remembering God by chanting His name. The remembrance of God makes us conscious of His existence within us, and thereafter we shall feel his presence always with us until at last we realise the truth that we and He are one.

Supreme Freedom

In this state of realisation of the Divine, we shall behold Him everywhere. The sense of distinction between us and all beings around us will vanish. This is the great truth taught to us by the Avatars, saints and teachers of India and the whole world. This realisation grants us supreme freedom or *Moksha*, which the soul aspires for, because in that state of realisation we are free from the individual-sense and the bondage of *Karma*, birth and death. Therefore Ramdas would have you all take to the repetition of God's name always, by which practice you will be able to realise your true life and existence. Devotion to God, as Ramdas has already said, is the chief aim of human life. Devotion is developed by constant remembrance of Him. Devotion or *Bhakti* leads to *Jnana*. *Jnana* is the knowledge of God as existent within us and everywhere about us.

AT THE TOWN HALL, BATTICALOA.

22nd December, 1954.

Need for God-realisation

Beloved Friends, Ramdas is a humble child of God. When he says 'Ramdas', he refers to himself. His God is residing in the hearts of all beings and creatures. Before he starts his talks, he salutes the supreme God who is the Lord of the whole universe. Ramdas was sent out of India on a world tour by God. After going over Europe, America, Japan, Hongkong and Malaya, he has come here to Ceylon. The object of his tour is to propagate the ideal of universal love and service. This can be propagated only by one who has the universal vision of God. Universal vision is born of the realisation of God. So our true object in life should be to realise God so that we may practise universal love. Why should we realise God and practise universal

love? Because the quest of all human beings, in fact of all creatures, is happiness. This can be had only by realising God. God stands for eternal bliss and peace. So, it is when we tune our mind with Him that we attain true happiness and peace. When we have found that unchanging and eternal peace within ourselves, we learn to love each other without entertaining hatred or illwill of any kind. Thereafter there will be peace, goodwill, and harmony on earth. To establish this harmony and goodwill, great teachers had taken birth in this world from time to time.

Four Great Spiritual Masters

Mainly, there are four religions in the world Hinduism, Christianity, Islam and Buddhism. The great teachers of these four religions are Lord Krishna, Jesus, Mohammed and Buddha. The object of their advent in the world was to create harmony. Let us try to understand the teachings of each one of these spiritual masters. Buddha, by conquering the evil forces within him, reached a state of immortal peace, and thereupon dedicated his entire life to show us how we can love our fellow-beings with an equal vision. He taught us how we can be pure in thought, word and deed. He asked us to give love for hate. Only by giving love for hate, we can have harmony and peace among ourselves. Jesus came at a time when, in Palestine, there was chaos and disorder as far as religion was concerned. He taught us that we should love our neighbours as ourselves. So his message was universal love. He has said that all those who say that they love God and are devoted to God, but do not love their fellow-beings, have really no devotion for God. The true test of our love for God is our love for our fellow-beings. Then we have the teachings of Prophet Mohammed, who said that by submitting to the will of God we must free ourselves from the ego-sense and create the consciousness of brotherhood amongst us. His message was brotherhood among men. We are all children of one Divine parent, God. Now, Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita has taught us that we should see everywhere God alone, because God dwells in the heart of everyone of us. He went a step further and asked us also to behold the whole universe as the manifestation of God. So, these great

masters came to the world in different climes and at different times when people were living in disharmony and discord. If we are true followers of these great teachers, we can have no reason to quarrel amongst ourselves over anything. By following them strictly we can make our lives happy and create an atmosphere where all will be happy.

Secret of Happiness

The secret of true happiness lies in realising God and loving all beings as ourselves. Since we are living only on the physical plane, the sense of separation and diversity is confronting us with the result that we produce dissension and strife. If we unite ourselves, we shall know that we are related to each other, not merely as human beings, but as the expressions of the Divine spirit. Therefore we must consciously remember this universal Spirit, God, so that we can realise the spiritual kinship and unity amongst us. This realisation will elevate us and fill us with joy and peace and also contribute towards world peace and harmony.

The easiest way by which we can have this consciousness is the constant remembrance of God. The more we remember Him the greater will be the spiritual awakening within us. This consciousness will spread out to our outer life and activities. The more we tune our lives with God and commune with Him, the more will our mind, senses and all activities be purified. All the evil forces that are working in us will disappear. In this way our life will become really blessed. We can remember Him constantly only by taking His name.

Unity of Religions

God is really without any name or form. He is universal Consciousness, Spirit or Truth. He may be called by any name which we hold dear. Muslims call Him Allah; Hindus call Him Rama, Krishna, Shiva and Christians call Him Jehovah, Jesus. If the devotee of any one of these teachers is true to God, he will keep His name constantly on his lips and attune his life to the Divine life. All differences that are prevailing now will disappear, if this rule is understood by all. Each religion will then respect other religions. If we do so we shall be able to produce the much-needed world-brotherhood. In this consciousness of brotherhood there will be peace,

harmony and joy everywhere in the world.

So Ramdas appeals to you all to keep God's name constantly on your lips and look upon all beings on this earth as the children of one God, and cultivate mutual love and service. We see there is so much suffering and distress in the world. It behoves every one of us, who has power and ability, to use all our energy to relieve the sufferings of humanity. Of course, as you commune with God, your heart is purified and your life is blessed with the inner union with the Divine and you will be able to help humanity in their trouble. Ramdas has been to Europe and America, where he saw a community-feeling or a feeling of harmony and union among people. They are helping each other as brothers, although they are not related to each other. Therefore there is always plenty, prosperity and happiness in the material field. What we need in Ceylon and India is that we should follow their example as far as material progress is concerned, and at the same time we must cling to our religion which raises us to the consciousness of Divinity in all beings and creatures on the earth. We must shed our ego-sense, help each other mutually and see that all of us progress materially. If we do this, based upon the knowledge of the immortal all-pervading Spirit, we shall have real peace and joy. This will be joy not dependent upon external conditions and circumstances, but independent.

The peace and prosperity they are having in the Western countries are not stable because any time wars may break out among them and destroy their prosperity and everything. Only prosperity founded upon love, on the basis of the knowledge that God is everywhere, will be everlasting. We people here who have faith in God, must see that that faith is translated into action, in loving each other, helping each other and creating an atmosphere in which there will be no misery, no pain and no scarcity of any kind. Therefore Ramdas, in conclusion, requests you all to have the thought of God continuously in your mind and see that your life is purified in such a way as to make it mingle with the lives of all beings about you and thus enjoy peace for yourselves and contribute towards the peace of all human beings on this earth.

AT THE LEPER ASYLUM, MANTIVU, NEAR BATTICALOA.

23rd December, 1954.

Sing His Glorious Name

Beloved Friends, For Ramdas you are all manifestations of God, because God dwells in the hearts of every one of you. Ramdas' advice to you is that you should remember God constantly so that you may feel His presence within you. You are all under the protection of God and He is the great healer of your mental and physical maladies. Therefore Ramdas asks you to take His name constantly, as that is the most simple way to remember Him. By the repetition of God's name you will gradually be able to purify your heart and become conscious of Him in your heart. Then you will be directly aware of His grace and protection. Therefore, with all devotion, you should constantly sing the glorious name of God. Whatever name you utter, it is the name of God; it may be Shiva, Rama, Krishna or any other Name.

Ramdas has come over to see you and he is happy that you have assembled here before him. As a result of his meeting you on this occasion, Ramdas feels sure that true devotion will spring up in your hearts. You should commune with God all day by taking His name. You must also sing of His greatness and glory. God is all love, compassion and peace. He who depends upon Him is never lost. He will always protect His devotees with all love and affection. If you would like to have any name of God to be given to you by Ramdas on this occasion, you may tell him so. (They all wanted Ganesha *Mantra*). Now Ramdas will chant the *Mantra* thrice and you must all repeat it together: "Jaya Ganesha Jaya Ganesha Pahi Mam. Jaya Ganesha Jaya Ganesha Pahi Mam. Jaya Ganesha Jaya Ganesha Pahi Mam". Ramdas' last word to you is that you should have this *Mantra* always on your tongue. If you do so, you will see its wonderful efficacy and your mind will be perfectly at peace and the diseases of your body will disappear by God's grace.

AT THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SCHOOL,
AKKARAPPATTU.

23rd December, 1954.

Nishkama Bhakti

Beloved Devotees, Ramdas is speaking to you today on *Bhakti* or devotion. There are two kinds of *Bhakti*. One is *Sakama Bhakti*, that is, *Bhakti* with desire. The other is *Nishkama Bhakti*, desireless devotion. We are devoted to God for various reasons. Some of us want to get wealth, prosperity, progeny and many other material objects. This kind of *Bhakti* gives us what we ask for from God, but it does not give us real happiness and peace. The things we ask for from God are not permanent, and therefore not capable of giving us true happiness. So, what we have to pray to God, through devotion to Him, is to grant us immortal happiness and peace. This desire can be fulfilled only when we see Him and realise Him.

God is immortal peace dwelling in the hearts of us all. He is described in the *Shastras* as *Satchidananda*. This *Satchidananda* is within us and by attaining Him we get everlasting peace and happiness. So our devotion for God should be only for getting His *Darshan*, to see Him within ourselves. This is *Nishkama Bhakti* or desireless devotion, because when we are devoted to God we do not expect anything from God except Himself. God is prepared to become ours if we pray to Him to be ours. Instead of asking for Him, we ask from Him many perishable things. The object of human life is to have His *Darshan*, which we can have within ourselves only by continuous thought, contemplation and remembrance of God.

Bhakta becomes Bhagawan

The object of devotion should be to realise God in our heart and allow Him to fill all parts of our being with His light and power. This done, our hearts will be overflowing with divine love towards all beings in the world. Our eyes will see only God everywhere. Our hands will work only for the good of everybody and we shall ultimately become the very embodiments of God, completely filled with bliss, and shall ever remain in ecstasy. In this state the difference

between the *Bhakta* and Bhagawan will disappear. The *Bhakta*, by constant remembrance and surrender to God, becomes God Himself. So when you constantly think of God you become His very image. Then it is you enjoy immortal bliss and peace.

Practice of Devotion

We do not perceive Him within ourselves, because we are ignorant and impure. Just as in a muddy pond, which is disturbed, we do not see our reflection, so also when the mind is full of evil desires and is restless, we do not see the reflection of God in it. Therefore the first thing necessary on the path of devotion is purification of the mind. Purity can be attained only by remembering God. Remembrance gradually grows into consciousness of His existence. As the consciousness of Him grows from day to day our mind becomes purer and purer because His light, power and glory will be revealed in us day after day. The darkness in the mind will be dispelled by His light, until at last the mind becomes entirely free from all evil desires, such as lust, greed, wrath, malice and jealousy. Now we can say that Divine grace has come to us. Our aspiration for Him on one side and His grace on the other together produce the Divine illumination.

God's Name alone is enough

So long as we are attached to the body and external objects, we shall never know true peace and happiness. What we should do is to tune our mind with the Supreme Being, who is all bliss and peace. By constant remembrance we must rise above the body-consciousness and dwell in Him. When you rise above the body-consciousness you will feel you are one with Him. The easy way to raise ourselves from the individual sense to the cosmic consciousness is constant remembrance of God through the repetition of His holy name. The moment you take the Name you begin to feel that you have a higher existence, not merely the physical. Remembrance of God is remembrance of our true Self. We have forgotten our true Self and we think we are merely bodies made up of the five elements. This physical consciousness is the cause of our vision of diversity and the sense of diversity is the cause of our bondage and misery. So, to

dissolve this diversity and realise unity and oneness we must realise God within ourselves. Constant remembrance of God, through the repetition of His name, will enable us to realise the supreme goal of this life God. God's name is all-powerful. It will destroy all the evil desires of the mind. It will make the mind absolutely pure. It will grant you untold strength and power. It will take you to a state in which there will be no fear of death, sorrow, anxiety, cares and worries. It will enable you to realise the Supreme Spirit as the all-pervading Truth and Light. If you are really earnest in your quest to realise God, then have one-pointed devotion for Him and take His name constantly.

One God behind all Forms

Any name of God will do, because God has many names although He is one, and all the names lead us to the same universal Spirit. The forms may be different, but the supreme Truth behind all these forms is one. There are some devotees who worship Him as Krishna, some as Rama, some as Shiva and so on. He is worshipped in many names and forms, and we must know that all these names and forms are of the One who is nameless and formless and who has assumed all these forms for the sake of His devotees. So, among the devotees there should not be any quarrels or differences in regard to the names of God. They all worship the one God behind these forms. You know when we stand before the image of God, we pray to Him as the all-pervading, eternal *Brahman* or Spirit. When we have realised God as such, we shall know that all these forms that are worshipped by various devotees belong to that Spirit. The great sages and saints have realised the Truth and they tell us that we should not make any distinction among the forms of God. Through the worship of these forms and repetition of their names your hearts will be purified and ultimately you will find that the Ideal which you worship, the great Truth that you seek, is within your- self. This means, the external worship must end in internal worship.

Realise God within

You know, in the life of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, who was worshipping the image of Kali, that when he was given flowers

to worship the image he put them on his own head, because he found the image within himself. So, whatever form of worship we may adopt, we must merge our little individuality in God and realise Him within ourselves and see Him in His manifestations. This great achievement in our spiritual endeavour is possible only through complete surrender to God, through the repetition of His holy name. This is the only easy method to approach God, to see Him and experience Him in our daily life. For this purpose, it is not necessary that you should keep yourself away from the world, but you can live and move in the world by constantly remembering Him. The only condition is constant remembrance of God in whatever state or circumstances you are.

God saves through Saints

What you need is sincere devotion and aspiration for Him. Given this, God Himself will take you up, purify you and enable you to see Him. You will get the contact of saints, who will shower their blessings on you. The blessings of Mahatmas are very valuable in the spiritual life of an aspirant. When you meet a saint, in whom you have complete trust, you may depend upon it that he will take care of you, just as a mother takes care of her child, and guide you in your spiritual path. By his grace you will be able to keep the Divine name always on your tongue, after you have received the Name from the saint. Thereafter your path becomes easy. Your mind will be easily concentrated on the Name and will soon become pure. When you receive the Name from the saint, he gives with it his spiritual strength and power. Ramdas is telling you this from his own personal experience.

Ramdas was given the Ram *Mantra* by his *Guru*. After his initiation, Ramdas found that he could repeat the Name constantly without any break and by such constant repetition his mind very easily became perfectly pure and still. Then he began to feel that the Divine that he was seeking was within him. He was beginning to feel a strange peace and joy rising within his heart. This did not depend upon any external object of enjoyment. It revealed itself from within and filled him through and through. Then he knew that he

was not the body but the all-pervading, eternal Truth. When the body perishes, he knows that he does not perish. This is the realisation which grants perfect fearlessness and immortal peace.

So, only two things are necessary for you. One is Guru's grace and the other is initiation of the Divine name by the *Guru*. If you get these two things, you will have gained the purpose of this human life, namely, the realisation of the highest goal, God; and you will be able to get what you want in this life, because you are all after happiness, and happiness can be yours only after you realise the supreme Truth.

**AT THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SCHOOL,
KALMUNAI.**

24th December, 1954.

Greatness of God's Name

Beloved Devotees, Ramdas is speaking to you about the greatness of God's name. God's name is not different from God. He who has God's name always on his tongue is conscious of God's presence with him. Because, God's name makes our mind remember Him, and as God is dwelling within our heart, such remembrance draws our mind within. The power of the Name is such that it purifies our heart and enables us to feel God within us. God's name is very sweet because God is pure bliss and peace. If you have the Name on your lips you will enjoy the bliss of union with God. Just as the bee, when drinking honey from the flower, gets absorbed in it, so when you repeat the Name you will get absorbed in the Name. You can sing the name of God in any tune and attune your mind to the sound of the Name. When your mind is in tune with the sound of the Name, you will lose consciousness of the body and remain in a state of divine ecstasy. So, to unite yourself with God and feel your oneness with Him, there is no easier way than the repetition of God's name. All forms of worship and Yogas are done in order to realise God. This kind of union with God is possible only by continuous thought of God. God's name can be repeated at all places and at all times. It does not require any particular condition, rules or regulations to be observed. It can purify us whenever and wherever we repeat it.

How the Name purifies

Great saints and devotees have been telling us that by the power of the Name we can realise the highest spiritual experience. All the impurities, evil desires and passions of the mind will be destroyed by the power of the Name. Man's heart is filled with many impurities which are responsible for his state of misery and unhappiness. Unless the heart is thoroughly purified, one cannot approach God. This purification comes to him through Divine grace. What he has to do is to take His holy name with utmost devotion and find refuge in Him. The moment he hands himself over to God, God takes him up, purifies him and grants him His vision. Therefore we must trust Him in the first place, take His name and surrender ourselves to Him, and then by His grace get ourselves purified and obtain His *Darshan*.

Ramdas speaks from Experience

Ramdas is a servant of God and is going from place to place to propagate the greatness of the Name. He tells you about the greatness of the Name because it has given him invaluable benefit. When he was struggling to realise God, he found that the Divine name was the easiest way to purify the mind and realise God. If you are really earnest in having the vision of God, Ramdas would advise you to have the Name constantly on your lips, and you will surely attain Him. God's name can be repeated either silently or aloud and you may repeat any name of God, because all names are His names. God, who is nameless and formless, has assumed various forms and names. What is needed of you is one-pointed devotion for Him and earnest endeavour to realise Him. By realising God you will attain supreme happiness. You know that when we forget God and pursue the pleasures of the senses we are not happy. Real happiness can be had only by remembering and realising God.

Name gives Pure Joy

God is described as *Satchidananda* absolute existence, consciousness and bliss. Verily, God Himself is bliss. When our mind is in tune with Him, we enjoy infinite bliss. By doing *Sadhana*, it does not mean that we are going to get happiness or *Moksha* only after we are dead or at some distant future. The very act of devotion

to God and of uniting ourselves with Him gives us bliss from moment to moment. The instant we step on the path of devotion and take His name with all love and devotion, we get pure joy and peace. Therefore, those who have understood the power of the Name say that it is sweeter than nectar.

Ramdas prays to the Lord Almighty to create one-pointed devotion in the hearts of you all so that you may have His name always on your tongue and enjoy infinite bliss.

AT THE VIVEKANANDA VIDYALAYA, KALLADY UPPODAL, NEAR BATTICALOA.

24th December, 1954.

Devotion

Beloved Embodiments of God, Verily, you are all, for Ramdas, the forms of his Eternal Beloved. Ramdas is going to speak to you today on devotion. We are living in a world which is only a passing show, that is, transitory in all the manifestations. In this world of unreality there is only one Truth, and that is God. If we forget Him and live in this world, we invite misery, pain, sorrow and fear. Therefore, in our life, we should make it a point to remember God everyday. By constant communion with Him, by remembering Him, we shall have inner peace and joy.

A Story

Ramdas is going to tell you a story in this connection. Once a saint was passing through a street. On one side of the road, on the verandah of a house, a man was grinding rice on a grinding stone. He was putting rice into the hole of the upper stone and was grinding it. His object was to convert the rice into flour. When the rice grains were being crushed between the two stones, he thought within himself that he was, like those crushed grains, suffering untold miseries in this *Samsara*. At this very thought his heart melted and he began to cry. The saint saw him crying, approached him and asked, "Brother, why are you crying?" Then the man replied that he felt he was like the grains of rice which were being crushed between the two stones.

Then the saint asked him to lift up the upper stone, and showed him how, near the centre peg, some whole grains of rice remained uncrushed, while those grains which had been away from the peg had been powdered. He told the grinder, "Look here, if you remember God and feel His nearness, you will never be crushed in the *Samsara*. You must always be attached to God, love God and be devoted to God, and then you will be able to live in the world just like the uncrushed grains which are in close touch with the peg. You will remain unaffected by the various miseries which are incidental to worldly life."

Sri Ramakrishna's Devotion

Therefore, when we are living, moving and acting in this world, we should never forget God. As far as possible, we must remember Him throughout the day. The easy way to keep up a continuous stream of God-remembrance is to repeat His holy name. The repetition will develop into a consciousness of His presence within us. We have before us the great examples of devotees who remembered God throughout their lives and lived blissfully and worked for the benefit and uplift of others. Among these spiritual luminaries, we have before us the great sage and saint of Dakshineswar, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. He is an ideal example of the highest type of devotee. Even to remember him is a source of immense inspiration to a spiritual aspirant. He started life as a simple worshipper of Goddess Kali. As days went on, his devotion for Mother Kali increased a hundred fold until at last he pined day and night for the *Darshan* of Kali. Mother Kali at last was gracious enough to give him *Darshan*. Her luminous form appeared before him whenever he appealed to Her to show Herself before him. In this vision he was enjoying ineffable bliss and peace. Later, Mother Kali brought him in contact with a saint called Totapuri. He proved to be the *Guru* of Rama-krishna, because he granted him the vision of Kali as the all-pervading, infinite Spirit. He was granted the knowledge of the supreme Self. Now it was that he began to behold the Mother everywhere, in all beings and creatures. He saw the whole universe as the manifestation of the Divine Mother. He had renounced completely all desires of the flesh. He looked

upon his consort, Sri Sarada Devi, as his mother. Sarada Devi is a rare and beautiful flower of Indian woman-hood. She radiated divine love, light and peace. Paramahansa and Sarada Devi lived together in Dakshineswar.

Saint's Contact and Grace

It was then that Swami Vivekananda came in contact with Sri Ramakrishna who infused all his spiritual power into the heart of Swami Vivekananda and raised him to a spiritual eminence which is rare in the world. Swami Vivekananda carried out the great mission for which Sri Ramakrishna came to the world, by visiting the various countries of the world and propagating the great ideal of *Vedanta*. Swami Vivekananda awakened in the hearts of millions a longing for God, and granted them the strength to realise God.

So, in order to develop love for God and to keep His name constantly on our lips we must have the contact and grace of a saint. Society of saints is essential to turn our mind towards God. We must honour saints, listen to their advice and serve them in a selfless spirit. When we become entitled to their grace, then our life becomes blessed and we shall always be conscious of God dwelling in our heart. The impurities of the mind, which stand in the way of our devotion to God, are dispelled by the touch of the saint. We have to listen to their advice and act up to it. If we do so, we can live in the world and still be out of it.

Karma as Means to Yoga

Ramakrishna Paramahansa says, "Whenever you are active in the world, you should keep one of your hands always at the feet of God and work in the world with the other hand. Whenever you are free from work, both your hands should be laid at the feet of God." What he means is that you should keep your mind always in communion with God, and work in the world. This is possible, as we find various instances of people having continuous remembrance of God while still active and working. Sri Krishna, in the Bhagavad Gita, asks us to do everything in His name and for His sake. When all your actions are offered to the Lord, they become divine, because they serve to purify you, elevate you and grant you the vision of God.

In His teachings Sri Krishna holds *Karma Yoga* as a very high attainment. *Karma Yoga* means work done in a state of union with God. The easiest way to unite with God, when you are active in the world, is to take His holy name whenever you are free from work.

In conclusion, Ramdas would like to give you one suggestion, rather the final suggestion. That is, two things are essential for you on the path of God-realisation. These are: the company of saintly souls and the repetition of God's holy name. By recourse to these methods you will be able to be free from the bondage of *Samsara* and attain immortal bliss, peace and freedom.

AT THE BADULLA COLLEGE

25th December, 1954.

Under the auspices of the *Saiva Paripal Sangham*

Divine Love

Beloved Friends, Ramdas, this humble servant of God, is addressing you with a few words on "Divine Love." There are two kinds of love. One is called personal love and the other impersonal. Personal love relates to the physical part of our being and impersonal love to the spiritual part. Our life is intended to practise impersonal love, because by practising this kind of love alone we can realise true happiness and peace in this world. You all know that our aim in life is to achieve peace and happiness. Impersonal love can also be described as universal love because this love is revealed in our heart when we realise the wonderful universal Truth, Spirit or Existence, which is called God. To devote ourselves to God in order to realise Him means shedding our individual sense and knowing that we are the universal Truth or Spirit. Only after realising the Truth we shall be able to practise universal love, for it is then that our heart will be loving all people and all beings in the world alike. This is a solvent of all diversity. Our individual life is cut off and separated from the universal life and existence. If we want this life of ours to mingle or dissolve in the universal life and existence, we have to cultivate this universal love.

How to attain Divine Love

But how are we to attain this love? This is possible only when we transcend the individual sense or the ego-sense in us. The ego-sense is the cause of our unhappiness, bondage and misery in the world. As we expand our vision by communion with the universal Spirit through remembrance and meditation to that extent, we feel free within and our love goes out to all in equal measure and in the exercise of this love we enjoy supreme happiness. The selfish mind is unhappy, and where there is unselfishness there is happiness. People do not understand this truth. They think that by becoming more and more selfish they are going to be happier. But the reverse is the case. Although they know this from experience, they cannot shed their ego-sense. They strive day after day to possess more and more things of the world so that they develop a crystallised state of selfishness. Ego-sense is the cause of this crystallised individuality in us. So, what we should do is to free ourselves from this individual sense by destroying all the low grovelling desires in us which tie us down.

Message of Spiritual Masters

In the present condition of the world, we very badly need the practice of universal love. Otherwise we shall not be able to create an atmosphere of peace and harmony in the world. Therefore, love has to be practised in our daily life when we deal with our fellow-beings. This is the message which the great teachers of the world gave us from time to time. Buddha taught us that we should return love for hate. Hate must be uprooted from our hearts and then alone this love will reveal itself. Hate is born of individual sense, individual self. The individual self must go and we must realise the universal Self. Then only we can give love for hate. Otherwise not. Then it is that we find unity in diversity. Jesus taught us that we should love our neighbours as ourselves. Our self and the self in the neighbours, we must realise, are the same. Then only we shall be able to love our neighbours as ourselves. This love is based on the knowledge of the universal Self and not on the individual self. We must transcend or destroy the individual self and realise the universal Self in the knowledge of which alone we can cultivate universal love.

Then again, Sri Krishna has asked us in the Bhagavad Gita to surrender ourselves to the Divine completely and be free from the ego-sense. When the ego-sense is eliminated, we shall have the universal vision, and based upon that vision we love all beings alike. Prophet Mohammed has told us that by love alone we can unite together in the name of one God. Among the warring tribes in Arabia he brought brotherhood, and asked them to stand united in the name of one supreme Being, God. So, God stands for love. Jesus has clearly told us that God is love and he who dwells in love dwells in God and God dwells in him. He also said that God as love is dwelling in our hearts and that the kingdom of heaven is within us. When we know that God, who is love, is dwelling within us, we must feel conscious of His existence within us by continuous remembrance and meditation which leads us to a state of surrender of our ego-sense and the realisation of the cosmic all-pervading Spirit. If we realise this Truth, we cannot have illwill towards anybody. All hate will be uprooted from our hearts. We shall have no enemies in the world. We shall look upon all beings as the expression of that universal Truth. So we have to go deep down within ourselves in the remembrance of the universal Spirit and realise the oneness of life in the consciousness of the Spirit.

In this connection, Ramdas would like to remind you of the story of the man who wanted to have some entertainment, and got a number of mirrors fitted in his room to see his own reflection everywhere. The dog that came later died fighting with its reflections thinking that they were its enemies. Similarly we fight among ourselves without knowing that the Self in us pervaded everywhere and has assumed all the forms in the universe. We think that others are separate from us. We should not behave like the dog, but must be like the man who sees only himself everywhere and is blissful and happy. He has no hate or ill will towards anybody. If we go deep down within ourselves, we shall find that immortal Spirit which pervades everywhere, and in the light and knowledge of the Spirit we cannot but love each other. We shall then be a mountain of patience. This is the message delivered to us by the great teachers of the world, who actually lived this life.

Have Love for Humanity

You may do any kind of spiritual discipline, but if you have not got this love you have gained nothing. A true lover of God is a lover of humanity. There are so many who say that they love God but quarrel with their fellow-beings and neighbours. That is not true love. We must cultivate that love by which we can feel one with our fellow-beings and serve them selflessly so that we can, by such service, fulfil the purpose of this life. We want happiness and peace, but we are doing things quite opposite to what we should do in order to gain it. Whatever we do now only helps to create more discord and confusion in our life and the resultant misery and unhappiness. What we want is the expansion of our love by eradicating from our mind all evil thoughts and impurities. Love should be the keynote of our life. That is why we are asked by sages, saints and great devotees of the world that we must conquer the mind, go deep down within and find the basis of our life. With the knowledge of this basic Reality we must live this life. Then we shall not only live happily but also contribute towards the world's happiness. So love must be the dominating factor in our life and that alone can redeem us and fill us with peace and joy.

How Ramdas was led by God

Our friend spoke a little while ago referring to Ramdas' life of renunciation, which started in 1922. Ramdas can tell you that this great change came to him, not as a result of his own effort or initiative, but by the power, will and grace of God. Until this transformation came to him he was living only an ordinary life. This does not mean that he was selfish or has inflicted any injury upon others or exploited others for his personal happiness. Only he was not aware then that there was a great Reality underlying this universal manifestation and that by attaining that Reality one could become supremely happy and peaceful, free from all hate, anger and quarrelsomeness, which brought him in daily conflict with his fellow-beings. When this great change came, Ramdas was taken off his feet, as it were. He did not know what was going to happen to him. He was asked to repeat the name of God constantly, to keep the mind serene and calm, so that

his mind, the outer mind could go deeper within himself to find the truth on which his life was based. For that purpose he was made to give up everything, all attachments to the worldly life, worldly relations and possessions, and he was taken from place to place in a state which was really wonderful. In that state he had neither attraction nor repulsion for the world. The world ceased to exist, as it were, for him. His mind was merged in ineffable peace and bliss. At last he found that he was merely an instrument in the hands of the Divine and he was being led by that Power.

Having experienced supreme joy in that state, he has been going about telling everybody that, if they lived on the lower levels of life like the animals, they could never get real happiness. They must transcend all these and go deep down within themselves and realise the all-pervading eternal Spirit, which is pure bliss and peace. Till then, they can never know what true peace is. Therefore they must all strive to attain this peace by stilling the waves of the mind, freeing it from lust, greed and wrath. In this way, for nearly four years he was wandering from place to place, and during his wanderings he was made to remain for days together in caves and jungles in order that he may get the fullness of this spiritual experience which is the aim and purpose of human life. That was why he was able to love all beings alike, and he had no axe to grind in any way.

Truth is unfathomable

When you have found eternal peace for yourself, you do not have to fight with people for anything which, you think, may give you happiness. Your happiness then does not depend on any worldly thing. You have found it within yourself. That is what you call God-realisation, *Moksha* or Nirvana. What is Nirvana? It is to be free from all desires and find within yourself the Reality which you cannot define. Ramdas was greatly charmed with the passages which he found in "The Light of Asia" where an attempt has been made to express what that great truth is. It is not an attempt but a confession of the incompetence of man to define that state. In Edwin Arnold's words it is said, "Do not dip this string of thought into the unfathomable. He who questions errs, he who answers errs." That is

the indefinable which we are trying in vain to define in so many ways. You can experience it but you cannot express it. When final realisation comes to you, it is difficult to describe what it is, if you are asked to do so. We can only express it by negation and not by assertion. The same thing has been said in the Hindu scriptures. If anybody is asked to describe what the state of *Moksha* is from one's own experience, he can express it only by silence, because it is not anything that can be expressed. So also you will find in the teachings of great sages and saints that the Reality cannot be described or understood by the help of the mind.

The Great Teachers are our Guides

But in order to raise ourselves to that state, we have to follow many ways and means, as the mind cannot at once take a leap into that infinite existence. We must have some help or prop by which we can climb up to that state. Who can help us? The great incarnations of the world like Krishna, Buddha, Jesus and Mohammed have realised this great truth themselves. If we follow their teachings or even meditate on them because they are so holy we shall be able to reach that state. We must take them as embodiments of that Reality, and have perfect allegiance to them. We cannot hang on to the air and try to find out what that Reality is. If we try to approach the Truth direct, we shall never succeed. These great teachers or Avatars are the mediums of help for us. They have actually demonstrated before us how to live in that supreme state and experience.

Therefore, it is said in the scriptures that from *Saguna* worship we must go to the *Nirguna*, from the personal to the impersonal. We have got the images of Buddha, Krishna or Jesus before us to enlighten us, and ultimately they make us go beyond form and realise the supreme, nameless, formless, all-pervading Spirit, which activates the whole universe and which expresses itself as the whole universe. If we have the full realisation of the Truth, we can transcend all diversity and be living always in unity and oneness. Therefore, Divine love is what we have to practise in order to free ourselves really from the thralldom of ignorance and bondage of birth and death and attain a state of tranquillity born of the realisation of our immortal and infinite existence.

AT THE SRI KANDASWAMI VIDYALAYA, PUNDULOYA.

26th December, 1954.

God the only Reality

Beloved Devotees of God, You all know that we are living in a transitory world. All beings, creatures and things here pass away after a short time. In this vanishing show there is only one Truth or one Reality. That is God. If we have God, then we have the eternal Truth with us. When we are born, we do not bring anything with us, and do not take anything with us when we quit this life. Therefore, living as we do in this changing world we should devote ourselves to God. By remembering God alone we can get real happiness and peace. If we forget Him, we find ourselves beset with worries, cares and anxieties at every step in this life. Our real father and mother and friend is God. Therefore, we should never forget Him. We must have full devotion for Him, and trust and faith in Him.

How to win Grace

What are the conditions and qualifications for getting His grace? There is one qualification and that is pure love and devotion for Him. We are not expected to be rich, to belong to a high race, to hold a high position in life or to be learned in *Shastras* and literature. These things are not necessary to qualify us for the grace of God. It is not even necessary that we should be human beings in order to have devotion for Him. The following are instances in point:

Rishi Narada was the son of a servant woman, but he became a great devotee of Vishnu. Nandanar was born a Pariah, but Chidambara Nataraja was highly pleased with him and gave him His *Darshan*. *Guha*, a simple boatman who lived in the forest, became one of the greatest devotees of Sri Ramachandra. Valmiki was a robber. By the contact of sage Narada he was blessed with God's name, he reached the highest spiritual eminence and is known as Maharishi Valmiki. Dhruva, Prahlada, and Nachiketas were only young children, but they received the grace of God and became immortal. Then again we have the fisherwoman, Shabari, who became the favourite devotee of Sri Ramachandra, who ate at her hands the fruit tasted by her, in

her forest home. Fishermen in Palestine became the true disciples of Jesus Christ. Bhakta Sudama, a *Brahmin*, was living in a small hut in a very poor condition. But Lord Krishna looked upon him as His favourite devotee and gave him His *Darshan* and full blessings. Kabir, though a Muslim, took to the repetition of *Ram nam* and had the vision of Rama. In India there were great saints born in low families and were engaged in very humble and unassuming professions like shoe-making, pottery, tailoring and ordinary shopkeeping. There are instances of animals who had attained rare devotion for God; Hanuman among monkeys, Jambavan among bears, and Gajendra among elephants.

So it is clear from all these instances that God does not look to the learning, power, riches or any other worldly qualifications for bestowing His grace. Whatever our situation, position, race, caste, creed and other conditions may be, we can get the vision of God and entitle ourselves to His grace, provided we have got wholehearted devotion for Him and possess implicit trust in Him.

Name the Key to Devotion

All the great souls, whose names Ramdas just now mentioned, became ardent devotees through complete surrender to God attained by repeating His glorious and holy name. Those who have work all day long and have no time to do any stipulated form of *Sadhana*, can take to this simplest method of remembering God, viz., the ceaseless repetition of His holy name. When we are working with our hands, we can go on chanting His name with the tongue and, depend upon it, he who does this will have perfect peace and bliss in his heart. He will be under the protection and grace of God in every way and all his troubles will cease. God has given the assurance to His devotees that those who remember Him always are looked after by Him in every way. From the innumerable instances in the lives of saints and devotees all over the world it is evident that, in times of difficulties, God came to their rescue in a wonderful way. So our true saviour, friend and helper is God and none else in the world. Such a God we should not forget. Therefore, Ramdas advises you all that you should

constantly remember Him by taking His sweet, powerful and glorious name. You may take any name of God, because all the names are of the supreme being who is the Lord of the universe.

AT THE SHEEN GROUP SCHOOL, PUNDULOYA,

26th December, 1954.

Ramdas' Advice Sing God's Name

Beloved Devotees of God, Ramdas cannot find words to express his joy on this occasion of his visit to your place, as you have poured on him your pure love and devotion. For Ramdas you are, veritably, the manifestations of his God Ram. Truly, your hearts are filled with the purest emotions of love and devotion. It appears you are absorbed in today's function to such an extent that you have forgotten your bodies and all surroundings. This occasion reminds Ramdas of the love and devotion which the Gopis of Brindavan manifested towards Sri Krishna. Ramdas wishes that this enthusiasm and devotion should be sustained and should continue with you at other times also. It is also quite evident that due to this devotional outburst you are now enjoying infinite joy and peace.

Your joy and enthusiasm have come out from your own hearts. So you must understand that the God that you seek, the God of real happiness and peace, is dwelling in the hearts of all of you. We, who have come to you, are merely instrumental in invoking that Divine Spirit within you and making you not only aware of it but also enjoy the blissful union with it. The inherent beauty and fragrance of the lotus flower is revealed in the presence of the sun, but the beauty and fragrance belong to the lotus itself. So it is that God who is all bliss, love, purity and peace is residing in your hearts.

To be always conscious of His presence in you and to feel His constant fellowship and union, the only way is to remember Him constantly. To keep His divine remembrance always in your mind, the easy way is to chant His holy name. In this Kali Yuga, the repetition of God's name is the only way to salvation or liberation.

For taking the holy name of God there is no difficulty or expenditure, and no particular condition, situation and time are necessary. Everybody, whether of a high caste or low caste, old or young, rich or poor, can chant the holy Name. Therefore Ramdas advises you all to form an association here and meet together periodically and sing the names of God at fixed hours, according to the rules or regulations which the conveners of such an association may lay down. So, when all of you assemble in the name of God, you will conceive love and affection towards each other, and harmony will prevail amongst you all and that will bring about all-round peace and prosperity and every good which God could confer upon you.

Most of you who have assembled here today are workers in estates and factories. Ramdas advises you all that even when your hands are active in work, your tongue should be repeating God's name. Keep the name of God constantly with you. If you do this, there will be all-round happiness and prosperity for every one of you and the entire community will be receiving divine blessings and grace, just as we do from the clouds that are abundantly pouring rains on us now. May the Almighty Lord shower His blessings upon you all and grant you continued devotion for Him and stamp His divine name on your tongue permanently!

**AT THE RESIDENCE OF SRI K. KUMARAVEL,
PUNDULOYA.**

27th December, 1954.

The Goal and the Way

Beloved Friends, Ramdas has been told that he should deliver a message today because it happens to be the 33rd year of Ramdas' renunciation of the worldly life. Now he wishes to speak to you on God-realisation.

You all know that the chief aim of our life is to realise God. The precious human life is intended only for achieving that goal. All of you who have assembled here have got an aspiration to realise this great Truth. Ramdas does not say that you are not aware of the

existence of God within yourselves. You have some consciousness of it, but you must have that Truth fully revealed in the manifest life.

The Goal

Knowledge by itself does not enable us to enjoy God. It is like having the knowledge of sweets in a room. By the mere knowledge of its existence in a room we are not satisfied. That knowledge neither satisfies our taste nor appeases our hunger. We have to go to the room and eat the sweets. Then alone we get the real benefit of the knowledge of the sweets. So also, it is not enough if we merely know that the Divine is within us, but we must enjoy Him. We must bring Him out so that He may fill and permeate our manifest being and grant us perfect bliss, peace and freedom in our active life. This is important. God is within us. The divine Self is within us. He is not extraneous to us. We are already He. We have only to experience this truth. The attainment of the knowledge of Truth is called *Jnana*. Through *Jnana* we know we are the Self, and that Self and God are not different. Divine consciousness must enter into our senses, our mind, our intellect and heart and every part of our being, so that we may become perfect embodiments of the Self or the Divine. This is the goal we have to achieve.

In order to achieve this goal it is essential that we must constantly and consciously remember God within us. It is this remembrance that grants us not only the knowledge of Him, but also makes us feel and experience Him in every part of our being and in all the activities of our life. This is the supreme realisation we have to achieve. Hence, remembrance or meditation of the Truth is essential. We must not allow the mind to stray away from the central thought of the Divinity dwelling within us. God is within us and our self and He are one and the same. This consciousness must be with us at all times so that we may live, move and have our being in Him.

Not by effort

Ramdas casually read a few lines today, written by Dilip Kumar Roy, in the *Vedanta Kesari*, about his *Darshan* of Sri Ramana Maharshi. Ramana Maharshi, it appears, said that he did no *Sadhana*. The moment he left home and went to Arunachala, he felt that he

was free. He was lost in the infinite expanse of Divine existence and thereafter he lived in that state till the very last. He got this experience without any effort, because this state is not to be got by effort, but through the dawn of knowledge in a mysterious way. We may call it divine grace. Whatever that be, when knowledge comes we are lost in the radiance of the supreme Reality, which is universal and infinite and eternal, and thereafter we live in that state perennially.

This experience is known as *Samadhi* or *Sahaja Avastha*, and there is no fear for us then of being entangled again in worldly life, or of being attached to the things of the world. We are self-satisfied, contented, as we are always filled with divine peace and joy. This state, the summum bonum of life, is God-realisation, which means attainment of the Divine, not merely inwardly, but outwardly also. Our bodies then become the temples of God, or the vehicles through which God reveals Himself. Now we become the very embodiments or incarnations of Divinity. This is the goal we have to aim at.

The Way

The way to it is continuous remembrance and meditation of God within us. When He has given us the aspiration to have Him, that itself is a great blessing. We must not allow that aspiration to cool down. We must fan the flame by every means possible and intensify the aspiration to such an extent that our thought always flows to Him within us, and our mind gets merged in Him. Till then, the intensity of the aspiration must be kept up. Society of saints, reading of scriptures which will inspire us, doing works which will expand our vision and heart, and *Bhajans* and *Kirtans* which purify our emotions and elevate us and thereby gradually make us forget our body and become conscious of the Divinity within us, are some of the ways to intensify the aspiration. Now, as the body is forgotten and the ego-sense is dissolved, we feel we are not the body, but the all-pervading Self. We also behold the universe as the manifestation or expression of this Self. We now come to know that the body is nothing but the concrete expression or embodiment of the Divine, the Self within us.

Value of *Satsang*

We should not be aspiring for Him on the one hand and, on the other, living and doing things in a way derogatory to the fulfillment of that aspiration. *Satsang* is the most important thing. In *Satsang*, that intensity rises to fever heat and all the desires of the mind disappear, at least for the time being, and attachment to worldly things slackens considerably. We now feel like a bird set free from the cage. We forget the body and all our worries when we are in the company of saints, absorbed in the singing of God's name and glories. This leads to the realisation of the bliss within us, through the awareness of the Self. Through the experience of that Self, manifest also everywhere about us, all distinctions are completely eliminated and we feel one with all; because the emotions raised to a divine fervour enable us to transcend the physical consciousness and thereby sink all differences which are born of ignorance and are the cause of discord in the world owing to our feeling that we are merely bodies or individual entities. But as soon as we leave the company of saints, we are prone to relapse into the old state. We must therefore take care that we do not go back to the old ways of life. We must maintain that higher vision and experience even afterwards by continuously remembering the Divine within us and thus tuning ourselves with Him. Whenever the mind goes astray, it should be brought back and made to meditate upon the Reality.

Therefore, the question came in the Bhagavad Gita Arjuna asked Krishna about the nature of the mind and how it could be controlled. You know the mind plays tricks with us; it is always restless and forgets God. Although we sit silently to remember Him, our mind refuses to think of Him, to concentrate and meditate on Him. We must adopt some means to bring the mind under control. Arjuna asked Krishna, "O Krishna, You are telling me so many things about Truth that appeal to me, but I find it very difficult to concentrate upon the Truth residing within myself." Then Lord Krishna said, "I admit, O Arjuna, that this mind is difficult to control, but there is a way to do it. You must have *Abhyasa* or practice, which must be accompanied by *Vairagya* or a spirit of detachment from the objects of the world."

Abhyasa and Vairagya

We must tell the mind, "O mind, how foolish you are! Why are you thinking of the perishable things, when you are sitting here to meditate on the eternal Truth. Truth alone can give you real joy. Therefore, attune yourself to it." Thinking on these lines, we can keep the mind detached and free from dwelling on the perishable, the impermanent and the unreal. If we develop this attitude towards the external life, it will be easy for us to achieve concentration through practice. Otherwise, concentration becomes difficult. Without concentration and meditation we cannot realise that we are the Self, the *Atman*, the immortal Reality. Realising the Self, we see the whole universe as one image of the Self. The diversity, with which we are obsessed, disappears like the mist before the sun. So *Abhyasa* and *Vairagya* are necessary. We must draw the mind within by remembering and contemplating upon the Reality constantly.

Panacea for all ills

Ramdas found for himself that the repetition of the *Mantra* which the *Guru* gave him was a panacea for all the ills of the mind. It stopped the wavering of the mind, freed it from all undesirable thoughts, and made it perfectly serene, calm and tranquil. When the mind was stilled, he began to perceive and experience God within. It was in this condition that God bade him leave Mangalore and go on a tour. At that time his attachment to worldly objects was completely dead. He went round almost the whole of India, in the course of which he had to go into solitude and undergo severe austerities only with the object of establishing permanently this consciousness of the Reality.

Later on, he knew that this was not all. The manifest life has to be seen not as a diversified phenomenon, but as a uniform cosmic Reality. This vision and realisation were also granted to him in order to prepare him as a vehicle to reveal the message of universal love and service. God had to be realised in all His fullness and perfection; not merely as the Self, not merely as the manifestation, but both as the Self and the manifestation, and also as One beyond the manifest and the unmanifest the perfect, all-inclusive all-transcendent Godhead. After giving this fullness of divine experience, God set Ramdas to the task of conveying to the world this message. From

that time, he has been going from place to place at the bidding of his Master, and delivering this message to everybody with whom he comes in contact. He has been telling all, from his own experience, that the repetition of the holy *Mantra* is a wonderful remedy for all the diseases of the mind, such as lust, hate, greed, attachment, pride and envy.

Mind is full of evil. The mind may be made healthy and freed from evil by the repetition of God's name. The more you repeat His name, the more you become conscious of Him within you. The dark forces are conquered and the mind becomes still, pure and transparent. Then the radiance, peace and joy of the Divine reveal themselves and you become like a glass case in which a brilliant light is kept. Otherwise, you are like a mud vessel inside which a lamp is burning. The mud vessel being opaque, the light does not shine out. You must make this human vehicle perfectly luminous with the light of God.

No desires left

In this supreme state, no desires are left in us. The world is seen as the concrete expression of the universal Truth, as our own Self. When everything is our own Self, how can we desire for anything? When we see something apart from us, then alone a desire for it arises. In God-realisation where is the question of 'I' and 'You'? Where is the question of separation from one another, even physically? We see everything as the manifestation of God. If we look within, there is the one universal Spirit or Self pervading everywhere. If we look without, there is the same Self manifest everywhere. All differences, divisions and diversity are utterly false in the realm of God.

So the aspiration, which God has given, should not be allowed to cool down or dwindle to nothing. Intensify it day by day until at last it reaches the pitch where ignorance leaves you, giving place to the brilliance of the Truth which pervades your entire being, and you see the whole universe filled with the same radiance and joy. *Sarvam-Khalvidam-Brahma* "All this is verily *Brahman*." This is the great utterance of the Rishis of old. There is nothing but an ocean of *Ananda*, and in this ocean the waves or forms are rising and falling. What kind of ecstasy one should be having day and night when one

has reached this blessed state! There is no higher experience in the path of spiritual achievement than this. You rise to the very peak of spiritual height beyond which you have nothing more to attain. It is completeness. It is *Purnam*, which means fullness or perfection. There is no insufficiency or defect in it; no incompetency or, what you call, inefficiency in it. Everything is perfect and full, because there is no sense of diversity, no sense of separation. Therefore, you must rise to the peak of *Advaita*, which has been rightly held as the highest spiritual illumination and experience.

Some of the saints have preached *Dvaita* or duality. But it must be taken only as a means to reach *Advaita* or non-duality. Jesus has stated: "I and my Father are one." The Sufis say, "Soul and God are One." Buddha speaks about the only One in which all diverse phenomenal life disappears completely. Many other philosophers too have preached nothing but *Advaita* as the Goal of spiritual attainment and realisation.

Divine Doctor

Ignorance is disease. Realisation is health. We must cure ourselves of that ignorance by taking the proper remedy for it from the divine doctor. *Guru* is the Divine doctor who heals us by giving us the knowledge of the Self, of our real existence and being. What is the medicine? God's name. Let us always keep it on our tongue and it will purify us through and through, and dispelling ignorance from our heart, will grant us the knowledge of the Divine, and fill us with bliss and joy.

Since Ramdas has experienced this bliss and peace, when he sees people miserable, his heart aches for them and he goes about asking them why they should remain unnecessarily unhappy. Why should they not meditate and think of God constantly and get awakened to the awareness of Him within them and enjoy infinite peace and bliss?

There are some people who raise themselves into *Samadhi* and come down from *Samadhi*. This is not the highest spiritual experience. You must be ever in the state of perfect poise and balance, in which there is no rise or fall. This is *Brahma-Sakshatkar*. You watch the

lives of those who have reached the *Sahaja* state. They have no special time for *Bhajan* or meditation. Many people ask Ramdas when his meditation time is. Ramdas does not know. They ask what *Puja* he is doing. Ramdas does not know. He possesses a consciousness in which he does not feel he is different from the Divine Being. When there are two, there is such a thing as *Sadhana*; but when you know there is only One, who is to do *Sadhana* and for what? This is the state which we have to achieve. We must keep this goal in view and work up our life for inviting divine grace.

Bring down Grace

Your work is only to bring down divine grace. You call on God, sing of Him, and you get a strange bliss and peace. This is the result of His grace. This is the only way of approach to Him. Take His name. Pray to Him. Cry to Him. Sing His glories. Raise yourself into your higher nature in which alone you meet God. Then you will be filled with the light, power, wisdom and joy of the Divine. It is not after getting detached from the world that you should think of God. By thinking of God alone you get automatically detached. *Bhakti* gives rise to *Vairagya*. *Bhakti* is the root. *Vairagya* is the tree. *Jnana* is the flower. *Parabhakti* is the fruit. *Parabhakti* is an experience which grants us the vision of God in and as the universe.

AT THE SRIPADA COLLEGE, HATTON.

28th December, 1954.

Devotion to God

Beloved Friends, Ramdas is now going to talk to you on devotion to God. You know human life is a precious gift of God. In this rare life we should not forget God. God is our real father and mother. When we came into this world we did not bring anything with us and when we depart from this life we do not take anything with us. So nothing in this world belongs to us in reality. God alone is our real master, mother and friend. We have come from Him and we go back to Him. We cannot therefore forget Him through- out this life. There is so much misery and suffering in the world, only because people have forgotten their divine mother and father. If we remember Him

constantly, the great advantage we can derive is that our heart will be filled with peace and joy. When we attain inward peace and bliss, we shall be able to move with our fellow-beings in love, harmony and friendship. We shall not then make any distinction of caste, creed or religion.

There is only one God

You all know that there are four religions in the world. They are Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Christianity. All the great teachers, around whom these religions have been founded, preached the same truth. They told us that we should surrender ourselves to God and attain everlasting love and peace. God, whom we seek and aspire to realise, is dwelling in the hearts of of us all. We become conscious of Him when our hearts are thoroughly purified by constant remembrance. Through God-remembrance alone we can purify our heart. The easy way to remember Him is to chant His holy name. You may chant any name of God, because all the Names that are prescribed by different religions are of one God. Muslims call Him Allah, Hindus call Him Rama, Krishna, Shiva and so on and Christians call Him Jehovah or Jesus. Even though water is called by different names at different places, it does not change in nature but remains the same. In the same way, the all-pervading, eternal God is called by various names by various people belonging to different religions.

Feel Humble before God

We know God is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent. As we are repeating the name of such a God, we should bring into our mind His greatness and glory, and feel humble before Him. This humility will ultimately lead to self-surrender. When we surrender ourselves to Him, all our sins are wiped off and we enjoy infinite bliss and peace. Therefore we must utilise as much of our time as possible in remembering God by taking His holy name and praying to Him to guide us always on the path of righteousness. God cannot be ours until we are pure in thought, word and deed. This is what Lord Buddha has been telling us. Lord Krishna, in the Bhagavad Gita, says that we can realise God only when we are free from lust,

greed and wrath. Jesus Christ has told us that we have to be pure in heart and then alone we shall see God. We find the same teachings in the Koran also as preached by Prophet Mohammed.

Attain perfect Unity

Knowing that all religions lead to the same God. We must mutually love each other and live in harmony and peace, because God is not different for different people. The same God is the father and mother of all people in the world. In the light of our devotion to this universal God, we must dissolve all differences and quarrels and join together as members of one family and create universal brotherhood, which will never admit of any discord, dissension or war. We cannot unite ourselves and feel one with each other, except by our accepting the Divine parent as the creator and as the supreme ruler of the entire world. If we say that we have faith in and love for God, but do not love our brethren, we are not telling the truth. So the true test of our love for God is our love for humanity. In other words, a lover of God is a lover of humanity. If we are true devotees of God, our hearts will be purged of all evil and His power will enter into us and we shall look upon all as our brothers and sisters.

Name is the Path

To attain this supreme state of perfect unity with all life and God and to enjoy bliss, we have only to take, with all faith, the glorious and all-powerful name of God. For taking His name, you do not have to go to particular places like temples. You can have the Name always on your lips wherever you are, whether you are working in the field, estates or offices. Ramdas does not mean to say you should not go to the places of worship like temples, but you should have an independent way of communion with God, whenever you want, by repeating His name. Those of you who are working with your hands can have the Name on your lips even when you are working. Others who are doing intellectual work may take the Name when they are free from work. There is no greater purifier than the name of God. When you become pure by the repetition of God's name, you will feel conscious of God within you. The consciousness of the Divine within us comes through His grace. His grace comes to us through

the constant remembrance of Him and our utter devotion to Him. In conclusion, Ramdas invokes the Lord of the universe to shower on you all His choicest blessings so that you may constantly remember Him and by that remembrance ever remain peaceful and in every way blessed.

AT THE KATHIRESAN COLLEGE, NAWALAPITIYA.

29th December, 1954.

God and Man

Beloved Devotees, Ramdas is going to speak to you now about God and man's relation to Him. You know God is the father and mother of all people on this earth. When we consider ourselves to be children of our physical parents, we remain only on the physical plane, and in that state we think we are merely bodies. When death comes we are afraid, as we feel that by the death of the body we shall also die. In reality, we have come from God and we have to return to Him. Therefore it is necessary that throughout our life we must remember this Divine parent. By such remembrance we become conscious that we are the children of the eternal father and mother. Since we are the children of the eternal we have to be ourselves eternal also. An eternal father and mother can give birth only to an eternal child. In the earlier stages, when we pray to God as our father and mother, we take Him to be some great being outside us. We place before us an image or picture of Him and carry on our devotional practices. As we go on worshipping the image or picture before us, our mind gets purified.

At this juncture we come across our liberator God in human form, who is called *Guru*. *Guru* brings us in contact with God within us. By the grace of the *Guru* we get the awareness, knowledge and *Darshan* of God. *Guru* also takes us a step further. By his grace he removes the veil between us and God and makes us realise that we are one with Him. This realisation of oneness with God is called *Jnana*. This is the state when *Jiva* becomes Shiva. When we have realised that we are one with God, we see the whole universe as the manifestation of that God. Verily, we and God are never separate. It

is through ignorance we feel we are separate from Him. When we are free from ignorance, we know that we are not only one with Him but also that we have always been one with Him.

Once Sri Ram asked his great devotee Hanuman, who he was. Then Hanuman replied that as body he was Ramachandra's servant, as *Jiva* he was a part of Him and as *Atman* he was Rama Himself. So, essentially, our self is not different from God. This is the realisation which we have to attain by devotion to God and by keeping up our relationship with Him as father and mother. By His grace it is that we raise ourselves from our individual separate being into the transcendent state of oneness with Him. Therefore we should, in the first place, cultivate intense love and devotion for Him. If we are continuously having the consciousness or awareness of the Divine within us, at the time of shuffling off this human body we shall merge into His resplendent being just as a river mingles with the ocean and becomes the ocean itself. This is the highest achievement which we must aim at when we are on the path of devotion to God. This human life must be utilised only for this purpose. So Ramdas advises you all to keep God's name and God-remembrance always with you with the sole object of realising this goal of perfect union with and absorption in Him.

AT THE PUSHPADANA SOCIETY HALL, KANDY.

30th December, 1954.

Under the auspices of the Saiva Mahasabha, Kandy.

Purpose of Human Life

Beloved Friends, —Today Ramdas is going to speak to you on the purpose of human life. You all know that human life is a rare acquisition or it can even be called a precious gift of God. The main object of human life is to realise God. If we know this fact and yet spend our lives in trying to acquire objects of enjoyment, we are no better than animals. We shall not then have utilised the precious powers which God has given us, such as the power of understanding, etc., to any purpose. We are all striving to attain happiness. But this

happiness, we know from experience, cannot be gained by acquiring the objects outside us. Real happiness comes to us only when we have realised God's presence within us, when we have realised our real being and existence. To know this Self and to live in the Self, act in the Self and behold the Self everywhere is the main object of this life. But to attain this supreme goal is not easy, as we have developed a crystallised egoism, which prevents us from realising this truth. By the elimination of the ego-sense alone we can realise the supreme glory of the indwelling truth. Therefore, sages and wise men tell us that we should always glorify God, think of His greatness, His omnipotence and omnipresence. When we do so, we realise our own littleness and the ego-sense dwindles into insignificance. Therefore, to eliminate the ego-sense, the easiest way is to remember God and His glories constantly. As we go on remembering Him, all the impurities of the mind will disappear, as also the ego along with them. Then we come to realise that we are the eternal Self ourselves; that we and God are one as the universal Reality. It is in this state that we attain immortal bliss, peace and freedom. Our vision of that supreme Reality should be such as to attain this blessed state. Our mind must be constantly thinking of Him or remembering Him.

The easiest way to stamp on our mind His remembrance is the repetition of His holy name with all love, faith and devotion. The Name is that of the universal God who dwells within us. As we go on remembering Him by repeating His name, we become conscious of His existence within us. Our sense of separation from God gradually disappears and our attachment to particular persons and things also vanishes. Our vision becomes universal and our heart flows out with love towards all beings and creatures alike. So long as we feel separate from our fellow beings, we are separate from God, because it is God who dwells in the hearts of all beings. So a lover of God is a lover of humanity. By the realisation of the *Atman*, we shed the sense of separation from our fellow-beings, and when we feel one with them we love all beings alike, and it is then that we rise above the pairs of opposites and dwell always in a state of perfect peace and happiness.

Sama Darshan

In almost every chapter of the Bhagavad Gita this supreme state has been described by Lord Krishna. He stresses the truth that if we want to free our life from the tangle of bondage and ignorance, we must rise above the pairs of opposites and attain that state which is called *samata* or *sama darshan*, which can be had only by *Atma-sakshatkar* or Self-realisation. Therefore, it behoves everyone of us to strive to attain this supreme goal. Our desire for perfect happiness can be fulfilled only in this way. All the forces of our being and all the activities of our life must conform to the purpose of attaining this supreme goal. That is why we are asked to be kind, good, forgiving and helpful to our fellow-beings. Hatred, discord and quarrels accentuate the differences among us and stabilise in us the ego-sense which is the cause of our misery. For the attainment of real happiness we must all unite our little selves with the universal Self and melt the individuality away. This is what is described in the Bhagavad Gita, in the last chapter, as self-surrender. Abandoning all paths come to Me alone for shelter." This surrender dissolves the ego-sense in us and grants us the vision of God within and without. We know then that we are not merely individuals or bodies but the universal Spirit and existence. Worries, cares, anxieties and fears leave us completely. The all-pervading, eternal God will be ever with us, protect us and guide us in every way. He will not only dwell in us but pervade our entire being, physical, mental and intellectual.

Need for Spiritual Practice

All our spiritual practices, all our devotional efforts, should go to purify the mind in order to attain perfect peace, happiness and freedom. *Moksha* is held as the goal by the Hindus, and Nirvana by the Buddhists. They are not different. In both cases, our desires must be completely extinct and our body-notion must disappear, and we must transcend the relative and reach the absolute. The salvation held out by other religions like Christianity is also of the same kind. Now we know what we have to attain in this life. Let us, with all our heart, strive to be free from the tangle of bondage and ignorance, attain immortality and enjoy supreme peace. You may call God by

any name but He is one. All religions, all people, all countries and all races have only one God. Really, God is without name and form. He is infinite, eternal truth and existence. He has come down on the earth, for the liberation of mankind, in so many forms, We have to approach the supreme Reality through those forms and make ourselves free from bondage. We must follow the instructions and teachings which they have left behind for us. When repeating God's name we can take any name of God. He, who keeps God's name continuously on his lips, is free from ego-sense and is pure in mind. God's name has wonderful potency.

Try God's Name

If anyone of you gives a fair trial to God's name, you can find out for yourself how efficacious it is in quelling the desires and waves of the mind and taking it to the higher consciousness beyond the body-notion. Its power is so great that it can lift you to the highest spiritual eminence. It can grant you universal vision and fill you with perennial spiritual ecstasy. So Ramdas' advice to you is to have the glorious name of God always on your lips. This is the easiest way to commune with God within you. This Name can be repeated by everybody. We can take the Name which we hold dear and for which we have a particular liking and love. Ramdas is telling you this from his own personal experience. We know, mind is very difficult to control, but if you make the mind repeat constantly the Divine name, you will see that it can be very easily brought under control. It can purify and still the mind. When the mind becomes still you become aware of God's existence within you. Therefore the repetition of God's name, which is the easiest to practise, may be taken up by one and all of you. Ramdas does not say that you should not have recourse to other practices like worship, meditation and so on, but you can take the Name constantly at other times, when you may not be able to engage yourself in such other practices. The Name can be on your tongue at all times and in all conditions.

Forgetfulness of God has been the cause of so much misery in the lives of many persons. Therefore the chief object of our life should be the keeping up of a continuous stream of Divine remembrance in

our mind. Such remembrance will give us real peace and happiness. This is not a *Sadhana* by which you are to get something at a later date. You get your results or fruits immediately you start this. The moment you repeat God's name with all love and devotion, that very instant you will be drinking veritable nectar itself. God is Bliss itself. God and His name are not different.

AT THE SINDHI COMMUNITY CENTRE, COLOMBO.

31st December, 1954.

Ramdass' Message —The Divine Name

Beloved Devotees, Ramdas' parting message to you is the message of the Divine name. *Guru* and the Name which the *Guru* gave were the two great saviours that liberated Ramdas from the bondage of ignorance and granted him perfect bliss and peace. He who has always God's name on his lips is a blessed soul. God's name is sweeter than nectar. If you keep it on your tongue always, you will be drinking its sweetness and that sweetness will enter into every part of your being and intoxicate you with the Divine emotions peace and bliss.

Name The Only Saviour

Ramdass can tell you from his personal experience that, so far as he was concerned, he found that there was no easier, greater, surer and more efficacious *Sadhana* for attaining God than the repetition or chanting of His glorious name. This is definite. It is not his experience alone, but the experience of all the sages and saints of India and the world. In the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna has said that, of all the *Yajnas*, *Japa Yajna* is the highest. In the *Kali Yuga*, there is no other way for salvation than the repetition of Hari's name. That is the only saviour and he who takes the Name is sure of salvation, not at a distant date, or in another birth, but in this birth and at this very moment.

Some say that the Divine name does not taste sweet to them. When Ramdas was drinking the sweetness of the Name, friends used to come to him. Ramdas glorified the Name before them, telling

them that the Name was very, very sweet, but the friends said, "The sweetness may be for you, but not for us. We repeat the same Name, but do not derive as much peace and happiness as you do. What is the reason? How can we also find its sweet taste? What is the defect in us? What is the remedy?" Ramdas had to answer them in the words of a great saint who has composed a song on the subject. The purport of the song is: "The moment your head touches the dust of a saint's feet, all your desires for the objects of the senses will disappear, and then only when you repeat God's name, it will taste sweet to you. And as you go on repeating the Name, the joy proceeding from it goes on increasing until it fills you through and through, and you see God in your heart, your eyes shed tears of joy, and love wells up in your heart for all beings." This is the process by which we can taste the sweetness of the name of God and realise God within our own hearts.

You know that when a man is stricken with a certain kind of fever, if you give him sugar, he finds it bitter and throws it away. But when he is free from fever, the same sugar tastes sweet. So, we have a disease in the mind and that is called *Vasana* clinging to the objects of the senses, desires for the *Panchavishayas* or the five kinds of objects which the senses crave for. The desires must go. So long as these sense-desires are deep-rooted in our mind, the Name does not taste sweet. Therefore what we have to do first, when our mind seeks to find God, is to contact a saint, touch his feet and accept him as our spiritual guide and then receive the Name from him. Thereafter, we can see the marvellous effect the repetition produces in us. Our whole being will be flooded with peace and bliss. Our heart will be filled with love for all beings in the world. Our eyes will see God everywhere. The Name will free us from bondage, will give us peace and harmony in place of discord and disharmony. It will grant us light and dispel darkness. It will grant us immortality by conquest over death. Such is the glory of the Divine name!

The Ten Evils

Lord Buddha says, we are seized by ten evils. They are: three of the mind, four of the tongue and three of the body. Unless these ten

evils are eradicated, we cannot see God, we cannot have His vision, or His realisation. The three evils of the mind are envy, hatred and scepticism; four of the tongue are slandering, abusing, gossiping and lying; three of the body are stealing, killing and adultery.

These ten evils are of thought, word and deed. In order to free ourselves from these evils, what are we to do? We can take these ten evils as ten heads of the Ravana who is within us in the form of *Abhiman* or ego-sense. Who killed this ten-headed monster? You know very well Rama did it. So, in order to destroy these ten evils in us, to destroy the ten-headed demon in us, *Ram nam* is the weapon. He who repeats *Ram nam* constantly, you may depend upon it, would not have to destroy these evils one by one. This Name lays the axe at the very root of all the evils and makes us absolutely pure. It frees us from these evils, our ego-sense also vanishes, and we realise God within us, God without us and God everywhere about us. The whole universe will thereafter stand transformed before us as the very image of God. To this height of realisation the Divine name takes us. If we repeat the Name after having contacted a saint and touched the dust of his feet, then we shall see what glorious power this Name has. What a great influence it wields on us for our uplift, for the ultimate realisation of our real Self, which is the same as God!

Name is a precious jewel, which we should not lose when we have once gained it. If we take it, we must do so with all our heart, with all love and faith in its power. Sages and saints are never tired of singing the glories of the Name. We may find this out for ourselves. When we sit still and sing the Name and get our mind inebriated with its sweetness, our whole body will be permeated with a strange ecstasy in which our ego-sense and all low desires will disappear completely, and we shall be thoroughly purified. If we repeat the Name continuously, we shall be established in that state. We shall become the very image of God.

Name sweeter than Moksha

No other *Sadhana* can take you to this spiritual height. Other *Sadhanas* may raise you to Self-realisation; but they cannot infuse into you the joy of the Self permeating your entire being, entering

not only your mind and intellect but also all your emotions, senses and body. Nay, every atom of your physical frame will thrill with joy. That is why the saints approach God by taking His name, His sweet and glorious name, constantly. If you have it on your tongue continuously, you will be enjoying the sweetness of the Name without break, just as you get sweetness continuously when you keep a nectarine pill on your tongue. Such is the sweetness of the Name. Saints and devotees go to the length of saying, "Oh God, I do not even want You, but I want Your name. I am perfectly satisfied with the sweetness of Your name." The Name yields so much bliss that they do not want even the vision of God, but are contented and happy in repeating the Name. They say, "Oh God, I would wish to be born again and again in order to repeat Your name."

Moksha is not a thing to be attained. It is there already with you. But the sweetness of communion with God, through the repetition of His name is a rare acquisition. You are always liberated souls. You were never born and you never die and there is no such thing as liberating the Universal. Soul is ever free. Only you have to know it. When you know it, it is done. The sweetness you get from the Name is a different thing. By the mere knowledge of the Self you are not so happy as when you repeat the name of that supreme Reality within you. The Name brings out the divine sweetness to the surface, on the plane of the body, senses and the mind, and it sweetens your entire life. That is why the Name has been reckoned as the greatest boon in the world.

Ramdas' one task, wherever he went, was to glorify the Name and tell everybody to take the Name; Rama, Krishna, Shiva or any Name one likes. See the power it wields over you, how it elevates you, illumines you and fills you with divine peace and joy.

Ramdas' Parting Message

So Ramdas' parting message to you is that you should take to the repetition of God's name. It is not enough to praise the Name by singing songs about it. You must act according to the teachings of the great saints. You should attempt to keep the Name constantly on your lips while walking, sitting, or doing any other physical work.

Gradually, you will find that the Name takes possession of you. It is not that you take possession of the Name, but the Name takes possession of you. Then you will see how your mind refuses to wander here and there. It gets absorbed in the Name and derives immense peace and joy.

Contact of the Name is contact of God, because Name and God are not different. Name is God and God is Name. You will know it when you are repeating it, because the Name gives you unending peace and joy, immortal peace and bliss. This is the power of the Name. So you will never give it up once you have it. The mind will never thereafter run after the pleasures of the senses, like a thirsty person running to drink water from a mirage. You will find by experience that there is no real joy in sense-objects. Real peace and bliss is within you and you can have direct experience of it. The Name makes God manifest in all your activities.

Ramdas was taken from place to place all over Ceylon and he met thousands of friends and talked to them about *Jnana*, *Bhakti*, Universal Love and Service, Unity of all Religions, etc. But his prime object, the burden of his song, as it were, was to spread the message of the Name everywhere, and that has been done. That is his favourite subject the glory of the Name that was given to him by his compassionate and all-merciful *Guru*. So, have the name of God always on your lips.

OM SRI RAM JAI RAM JAI JAI RAM

