



RAMĀ ŚAKTI MISSION

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During Santa Tukaram's time, people in his own village criticized him, reviled him and insulted him in public. He had to suffer poverty and also persecution at the hands of insolent members of the upper caste; yet never even once did he forget God, or complain to God about his lot. His heart overflowed with love of God. Divine name was always in his heart and on his lips. His prajna was established in God. His remembrance of God went on gaining momentum and his devotional fervor and spiritual zeal went on increasing day by day, moment to moment. He never cared for the world, for its honours and its pleasures.

Emperor Shivaji, who had profound veneration for the saint, sent costly clothes and jewelry to his house. Tukaram's wife, who had never seen in her life such costly clothes, now put them on with an air of celebration. When the saint came home, seeing his wife and children enjoying the gifts of the King, felt sore at heart, for did they not forget the Beloved Lord for the sake of worldly things? He reminded them that everything other than God is perishable, and that God alone is their Friend, support, shelter and the loving parent. What need is there for them to depend on human beings and worldly things, when the all-merciful Lord is with them? This was the saint's attitude.

Bhakti endows one with infinite patience, infinite forbearance. Tukaram was placed in charge of a sugar cane field as a watchman. Such was the egoless nature of the saint that he saw all men, birds and beasts as expression of the One supreme Being. Sugarcane grew aplenty and the owner of the field was pleased with Tukaram's services. He therefore gave a bundle of sugarcane to the saint. While he was on his way, carrying this bundle, Tukaram was accosted by the urchins and the saint freely gave them what they wanted, namely, sugarcane. Taking advantage of the saint's simple nature, the boys now deprived him of his possession. Only one single sugarcane was now left with him. Tukaram's wife, seeing the whole scene from her house, got terribly wild, and when he reached home, she forgot herself with anger and beat him with that single cane which he had on his shoulder. The cane broke into pieces and that saint of unsurpassed equanimity simply laughed and said: You are indeed clever – two for your children and one for you. Who was great, Tukaram or his wife? Whereas the former attained to Vaikunta, the abode of Bhagawan Vishnu, the latter could not leave her love for this perishable world.

Ekanath Maharaj of Paithan in Maharashtra, was another great saint. He too was a householder. He was the very soul of hospitality and looked upon his guests as God Himself. Wherever bhaktas live, there the critics and scoffers too live. Some grew jealous of the saint's reputation as a person of supreme serenity. One of such persons wanted to somehow make the saint angry and hired a goonda for this purpose. The goonda visited Ekanath's house at the meal time and was warmly welcomed. There were other guests too.

Now, the Grahini, Ekanath Maharaj's wife, was serving. At that time, the goonda seated himself on the back of that noble lady. Imagine how any lesser person in the place of Ekanath would have behaved at the sight of this intolerable impertinence. But the saint calmly said to his wife: Take care that you do not stand erect lest your son Hari should fall. The saint's wife, who was equally noble, replied: Please do not worry, I am used to his pranks.



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What an astonishing mental state, what a sublime bhava and what a grand vision it is, to remain calm even in such extreme provocation! Only a supreme bhakta is capable of such forbearance and such serenity.

Ekanath had no body consciousness. In his vision, he saw only God and His sport. In the splendor of that vision, his mind had attained to such a state of remarkable imperturbability.