



The Vision

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

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Beloved Papa Swami Ramdas (1884-1963)

Om Sri Ram jai Ram jai jai Ram

ॐ श्री राम जय राम जय जय राम

Om Sri Ram jai Ram jai jai Ram

I BECAME FREE

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

— Swami Ramdas

Vol. 90**December 2022****No. 03****CONTENTS**

From The Editor	-	5
Sannyas And After	- Swami Ramdas	8
Words Of Beloved Papa	-	11
Words Of Pujiya Mataji	-	16
True Renunciation Leads To		
Eternal Happiness	- Swami Satchidananda	19
Karma Yoga And Karma Sannyas-	Swami Ramdas	24
Necessity Of Vairagya	- Swami Ramdas	27
Dear Children	-	31
Epistles Of Swami Ramdas	-	32
In Memoriam	-	33
Beloved Papa's Sannyas		
Centenary — Concluding		
Programmes	-	34
Anandashram News	-	38

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FROM THE EDITOR

s known to all, the Sannyas Centenary of Beloved Papa Swami Ramdas is being observed since the 27th of December 2021 and will conclude on the 27th of December 2022. This momentous occasion is an appropriate opportunity to deeply ponder over the true meaning of Sannyas as explained by Beloved Papa.

The life of a Sannyasi, as normally understood, is different from that of others. As per the traditional norms, a Sannyasi or a renunciate is one who seeks to experience spiritual union with the Self. A renunciate, after formally renouncing the world, generally dons ochre, saffron or orange-coloured robes as a symbol of non-attachment to worldly desires, and may either take to a Parivrajaka (itinerant) life by moving about independently or join an Ashram to live a life of dedication to the ideal of selfless service. After initiation into the order of Sannyas, which can only be done by another saint or Sannyasin, the renunciate receives a new name, which is also a means to constantly remind him or her of the ideal.

In the case of Beloved Papa, he did not follow any traditional norms. He merely followed the guidance

received from within and adopted Sannyas in a unique way. According to him: “Sannyas is principally a state of internal detachment from the objects of the senses. The external garb is only a symbol of inner transformation.” He firmly believed that formal Tyaga or external renunciation is only a means to an end. Hence, later on, when he felt that the external garb wasn't necessary, he could spontaneously discard the ochre ones. He used to say that prior to taking Sannyas, he was only identifying with a small circle called the family, but after Sannyas he could expand the love-circle and embrace the whole Creation. So, it was not renunciation but expansion.

Through his life and teachings, Beloved Papa taught us that along with strict adherence to the vows, expansion from the individual to universal is a must. Two years of rigorous Tapascharya, with the help of Ram Nam and deeply plunging within to feel the presence of the indwelling and all-pervading Reality, led him to the goal of everlasting Peace and tranquillity in a very short time.

For the sake of Sadhakas, he was prompted to take to a life of a wandering monk relying completely on God and God alone, and the text, IN QUEST

OF GOD, guarantees that a life lived in constant remembrance of God cannot but lead to Universal Love and Service.

This month's issue of THE VISION carries Beloved Papa's words of wisdom on Sannyas. □

— Editor



When your heart is full of God, naturally there is no other thought in it. That is renunciation: to have no desire for anything in the world. Just as a great pond beside a river can be filled by opening a channel between the two, so also when you unite your mind with God, His power, love and grace will pour into you, and your mind will be full of joy, free from all desires. That joy fills you through and through from within. The river of God with which you have to connect yourself is not without. It is within you. You have only to open the channel and you are flooded with joy.

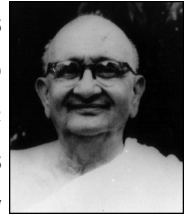
— Swami Ramdas

SANNYAS AND AFTER

By Swami Ramdas



Sannyas, as Ramdas understands it, is a means to an end. It signifies a complete detachment from the objects of senses and a total indifference to worldly activities. The mind must be free from the hankering for sense pleasures and the body liberated from actions done with a view to gain any fruit or reward. This constitutes renunciation, which is essential for fixing our mind on God and God alone.



The life thereafter is lived only for realising Him — to attain the Supreme state of perfect peace and joy. Uninterrupted or unbroken communion and contemplation of God alone can enable the soul to know its identity with the Divine. It is only then that the heart of the seeker will be filled with Divine love, compassion and peace.

Life has not only to be illumined in its inner consciousness but it must also be imbued with Divine splendour in all its external expressions and movements. So all disciplines, prayers, meditation and dedication, are gone through with the sole

object of transcending the physical and the mental, the animal and the human planes, into the Divine plane by the experience of which the soul obtains an all-round spiritual achievement. In this illumined state there is neither renunciation of the world nor the enjoyment of it. The Sannyasin aims at attaining this highest all-comprehensive wisdom and salvation.

The beauty and magnificence of this Supreme realisation of God are evident in the life of one who is thoroughly egoless, always absorbed in a supernal light, love and joy, and remains so in all situations and conditions. He is in the world, but not of the world. He acts and at the same time acts not. He identifies himself with all beings and creatures and so his love flows out towards all alike. His eyes are radiant with the vision of Truth and he beholds himself manifest as all objects in the universe.

Such a one has no particular mark, garb, or denomination to single him out. He is free from all bondages, conventions and rules of any order, sect, creed or religion. He is a universalist. Once this goal is reached, all the chains that bound him either to the worldly life, or to the life, later adopted, of self-discipline, automatically fall away from him. His

purity is now not a relative acquisition, which is maintained by the observance of any rule, vow or control, but it is a natural state born of the realisation of his pristine spiritual beauty, sanctity and peace.

So Sannyas, or any other method of approach to God, employed by various seekers of Truth, is only a means by adopting which the soul seeks liberation from the thralldom of lust, greed and wrath, and experiences the fullness and glory of its integral spiritual life and being. □

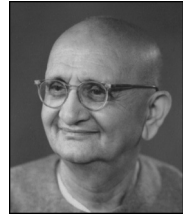


There are two ways of approach to God. One is by way of both internal and external renunciation and the other by only internal renunciation. The former is the way of the Jnani and the latter is the way of the Bhakta. Suka, Shankara, Jada Bharata are of the first type and Janaka, Eknath, Tukaram are of the second type. An aspirant can follow either of the two paths.

— Swami Ramdas

WORDS OF BELOVED PAPA SWAMI RAMDAS

Renunciation signifies giving up what you had held dear in the world through a burning aspiration for the realisation of your Self — God. It is not a state which is



forcibly achieved, but it is the spontaneous result of yourself turning utterly to the Divine. When the one thought of God saturates your mind, naturally all other desires will disappear from it. Then the world and its objects lose all attraction for you. Your link or attachment to them gets broken. Now, you at once feel an inner freedom from the bondage of the flesh and all its cravings. In fact, for the time being, you turn your back entirely from the world of change by facing the Supreme Light of lights — God. The external form which such a renunciation takes is a mere symbol or expression, of the inner transformation and illumination. The perfection of spiritual experience consists in rising above all forms and standards, by realising the Divine in all aspects of life. This is really a state beyond renunciation and enjoyment. It is an all-round divinisation.



Sannyas is renunciation of the ego and its desires. The highest consummation of life is your attainment of the immanent and transcendent God-head in all His visible and invisible, thinkable and unthinkable, mutable and immutable, static and dynamic aspect.



Renunciation should be mainly internal. External renunciation comes to a few at the call of God when they are chosen for a special mission to be performed in spreading His message in the world.



When the mind turns utterly towards the Divine and revels in His beauty, power and glory, it is then that the spiritual evolution of man reaches its summit. This great goal can be attained also by total dedication of one's life and activities to Him. Here the path to be followed is Bhakti-Yoga, i.e., union with God through devotion and self-surrender. In the case of the Bhakta renunciation is internal and not external. His heart is ever attuned to God. God is all-in-all to him. The devotee lives only for His sake. His thought, work and action are completely saturated with love and devotion to Him.



Sannyas is not a thing to be received from, or given to, anybody. It is a dedication of our entire being to the Lord and His service. It is a spontaneous wave of aspiration rising from within our own heart. So, receiving initiation from any external Guru can make the disciple only an apparent Sannyasi, struggling through tedious and painful courses of Sadhana undertaken because of the established rules and regulations, observed all through with the growing ego-sense at the base of it.



There are so many who have taken Sannyas and have not found Him. At the same time, there are many who are living in the world as householders and have found Him. It is not any external condition that helps God-realisation. The internal state is most important. You may live and move in the world but still be not of the world. Your heart must be with God. In India there were so many great saints who were living the family life and were yet revered as saints of a high order.



The Gita teaches us that we should not run away from the activity allotted to us by the Divine. Only,

we must do such actions without 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 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.



The formal Tyag or external renunciation is only a means to an end. After the aspirant has realised

his oneness and identity with God as an impersonal, all-pervading and eternal Truth, he rises above this experience to the realm of Para Bhakti which grants him complete and all-comprehensive vision and realisation of God — both in His personal and impersonal aspects. He beholds the entire universe with all its beings and creatures as the manifestation of God. Verily, for him all beings and things appear as His embodiments. This exalted state is described by saints and sages as Vijnana. The nature of a devotee who has attained this beatific vision is that of a child. He is ever free, cheerful and loving, shedding his grace upon all who come in contact with him. Verily, he is the very personification of Divine knowledge, infinite love and immortal bliss. So, it is clear that Sannyas or Tyag is only a stepping stone to the realisation of a state of Divine perfection in which all pairs of opposites disappear. Transcendence from all relative standards and conceptions of life is a necessary condition of that supreme achievement. Now, God reveals Himself in every part of his being — in all his thoughts, feelings and movements. □



WORDS OF PUJYA MATAJI KRISHNABAI

Real Sannyas has to be internal. Sannyas does not mean mere donning of Gerua cloth.



Moreover, when one takes Sannyas, people start worshipping and admiring him and falling at his feet. Thereby they pass on to him the burden of all their sins. If you are really fit and ready for Sannyas, you wouldn't have had any doubts on that score and asked if you should take Sannyas or not. Beloved Papa himself discouraged people from taking Sannyas and he would not himself give Sannyas to anyone. The only exception was the case of Swami Satchidananda whom Papa asked to adopt Sannyas. Papa used to say that real Sannyas was internal and was not a mere show of wearing a particular cloth. To attain Papa's Universal Being within us it is immaterial if one takes Sannyas or not.



In the beginning, my Papa who is Eternal and Infinite existed as emptiness — Void — everywhere. He felt like enjoying His own Eternal Being. As soon as Papa felt like this, He projected forth out of His

Eternal Infinite Being this vast Creation. He became Purusha and Prakriti and also Shiva and Shakti. He created the forces of creation, preservation and destruction. As Prakriti, He manifested Himself as all the names and forms in the world. Since then, He had been appearing in the world from time to time as the different teachers to instruct us how to attain His eternal Being and partake of the Eternal Bliss.

In the same way, the eternal and infinite Papa appeared in the world as Beloved Papa Swami Ramdas to teach us how to attain Him even by living in the world. By first leading the life of a householder himself, Papa taught us how to do our Sadhana at home. For about two years before He adopted Sannyas, Papa practised severe austerities, fasted on many occasions, reduced his diet to mere two potatoes which he boiled himself. All the time while doing his Sadhana, Papa did not renounce his work — he was running a handloom and printing and dyeing establishment. Though, as a result of His Sadhana, his mind was going more and more within, he kept on working till the last moment, thus not neglecting any of his duties. At the same time, his Ram Nam went on unabated; even while working, walking or doing anything, he continued to chant

Ram Nam. Thus, Papa Himself practised Nam, Dhyān and Seva and taught us how we too could attain His Eternal Being by pursuing that path. Papa made me also walk on this path.



Take Papa's own case. Nobody ever gave him Sannyas — he used to remark that he had adopted Sannyas himself and that it was on his own initiative. Saying that nobody had ever given him Sannyas, Papa would also never ask anyone to adopt Sannyas. The only exception was in the case of Swami Satchidananda. Here, Papa asked him to adopt Sannyas and gave him the Gerrua clothes. The actual step of adopting Sannyas was taken by Satchidananda himself.

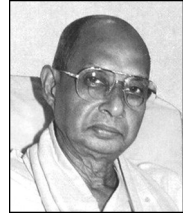
When others came to Papa and asked him to give them Sannyas or, at least, permit them to take Sannyas, Papa would decline to oblige them telling them that adopting Sannyas was something one should feel inspired to do by Ram from within. In a couple of cases, the utmost Papa did was to touch with his hands the Gerrua cloth brought to him, in response to their request. □



TRUE RENUNCIATION LEADS TO ETERNAL HAPPINESS

By Swami Satchidananda

What is renunciation? Renunciation is a necessary stage in the life of a spiritual aspirant. In a state of intense dispassion, the aspirant wants only



God and gives up everything that stands in the way of his spiritual progress. Presuming that his possessions are responsible for his being earthbound, he gives up all that he possesses and also gives himself up to God. This is a natural development in the life of a Sadhaka and proportionate to his progress the earthly possessions drop off from him by themselves without any serious effort on his part. His effort then is only to keep his mind centred on God constantly and never to lose communion with Him. Such a Sadhaka, in a very short time, reaches his goal — the realisation of his oneness with God in His Nirguna and Saguna aspects which gives him the experience that everything is God and that because he is one with God, he is everything.

Renunciation alone has produced saints — renunciation, not necessarily external but renunciation

of sense of possession and sense of 'I' and 'mine'. After their attainment, they may possess everything and live like others, at the same time without a sense of possession — 'I' and 'mine'. The first acid test of renunciation, according to our Master, Beloved Papa, is that one should be prepared to beg for food from amongst those known to oneself.

Saints tell us that though they themselves had to take the extreme step, others need not have to go through such hardships. In fact the hardships appeared to be hard only for the onlookers. Those who were actually passing through the so-called hardships never felt so, as their mind was fully absorbed in God and they were above body-consciousness.

How it transforms: A marked change in the life of a householder in the year 1922 brought about such a transformation that he progressed unimaginably fast on the spiritual path and, in a very short time, rose from the human to the Divine, from an ignorant person to sainthood and thus a blessing to humanity. This was the renunciation of Vittal Rao who later blossomed as Beloved Papa Swami Ramdas. He was so much absorbed in God-thought that everything worldly fell off from him.

After taking to the order of Sannyas and for a few years, Beloved Papa was moving about in

different parts of the country without possessing anything, without knowing where he could get his next meal, where he could lay his head and rest for the night. He was not conscious of his external conditions or discomforts, for, his consciousness had gone beyond his body. He never felt he was undergoing any hardship. He felt whatever came to him was from God, whomsoever he met was God Himself and whatever happened was by God's will. Thus everything in His life was divinised. Then where was the question of feeling of sorrow or hardship?

Sincerity in his renunciation and after-effects of the momentous transformation not only took him to the supreme heights of God-realisation, drowning him in the peace and bliss of God, but also transformed thousands and thousands of spiritual aspirants, giving them the support and guidance and leading them to the highest goal. He was all bliss and peace because he was continuously in tune with God and radiated that peace and happiness to one and all who came in contact with him. His heart-pourings and expressions of his lofty experiences inspired earnest aspirants everywhere — awakening them to the Reality, leading the more advanced ones to the supreme goal. This continues even after Beloved Papa shuffled off his mortal coil and will continue. This is the result of one

individual's renunciation. Beloved Papa's life and teachings only confirm that true renunciation and unconditional surrender lead us to God and grant us everything, ultimately eternal happiness.

A few years ago one devotee, who used to be very intimate with Beloved Papa, once asked: "Papa, some years ago you renounced everything — all possessions and comforts — and as a result you are now blessed with a big Ashram and all sorts of comforts. I would also like to renounce everything provided I will be assured of such comforts and possessions after a few years."

Beloved Papa laughed and replied. "When Ramdas was wandering as an itinerant Sadhu, he never felt that he had renounced anything. When he was trying to keep his mind centred on God constantly, many things fell off from him by themselves and his only aspiration was to realise God. He had absolutely no thoughts of the future. He wanted only God. Therefore he 'got' God. Because God is everything, he got everything. He possesses everything without the sense of possession. Everything belongs to God".

From the talk of the devotee as stated above, it is clear that he was prepared to renounce everything only if he was assured of a comfortable life and all possessions a few years later. It means his eye was

on 'a comfortable life and a big load of possessions' and not on God. This cannot, therefore, be called renunciation.

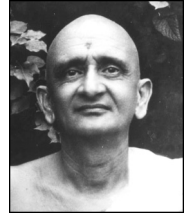
Renunciation is a word not very palatable to householders. The very sound of it frightens them of the immediate deprivation of their worldly possessions. The general tendency of householders is to applaud others when they take to Sannyas, and discourage and dissuade in all possible ways if any of their own family members shows even a slight inclination to renounce the family ties or take up serious spiritual studies/practices. They unfortunately, by the illusory power of God, think only of the immediate impact but do not care to foresee the distant future. They do not realise that it is only the perishable that the seeker tries to renounce and that too for gaining the Imperishable. Of course one who renounces does so spontaneously, without calculating the pros and cons of his action. He cannot but renounce, for, when he is ripe, things fall off by themselves. He has no anxiety about his future as he is fully in the hands of God.

So, no one needs to be afraid of renunciation. Though it appears to take away everything perishable, it is only to give you the Imperishable. May everyone imbibe the lofty ideals of renunciation and attain eternal happiness! □

KARMA YOGA AND KARMA SANNYAS

By Swami Ramdas

When a Sadhaka devotes his entire life to God-realisation, he turns away from the world of his old associations. He is seized by a spirit of renunciation. He puts on orange-coloured clothes, that is he assumes Sannyas. The orange robes help the Sannyasin in two ways. When he takes to a wandering life and has to live on alms, the garb enables those who would feed and clothe him, to know that the Sadhu lives only for doing Sadhana to attain God. The Gerrua is really a spiritual mendicant's garb. Secondly, the coloured cloth also reminds the Sadhaka, every moment, that his life has been totally surrendered up to God, and that no unholy thoughts should dwell in his mind and no tainted action should be done by him. This was how the cloth was helpful to Ramdas in his itinerant life, and this was also how it reacted on his mind.



It cannot be gainsaid, however, that there is great danger also in putting on the robe of Sannyas. The person who wears Gerrua is looked upon by

the layman as a great saint and he is treated with considerable respect and reverence. The result is that the Sannyasi begins to feel that he belongs to a higher order of beings. Then he puts on airs, and thinks himself to be superior to others. In many cases Ramdas has noticed that the Sannyasi wants to be respected and treated by others in a special manner. Such a distorted and unhealthy influence of the cloth, while one is still in the stage of a Sadhaka, prevents him from making any progress on the spiritual path. His ego gets bloated, day after day, and his Sadhana either gets slowed down, or is entirely given up. Eventually the person turns to be a bogus Sannyasi and brings disgrace to the cloth he wears — a cloth which was and has been worn by great illumined and world renowned saints and sages like Sri Shankaracharya, Ramanujacharya, Madhvacharya, Vivekananda, Swami Rama Tirtha and others. Very often we find that the same thing which is the cause of one's liberation acts also as a force that hurls one into a worse bondage. So those who wear the Sannyasin's robe should be aware of abusing its sanctity. They must live up to the ideal which it symbolises and of which it is an insistent reminder.

As for Ramdas, in the later stages, finding that the orange-coloured cloth was proving to be an obstacle to his attainment of an all-comprehensive spiritual perfection, i.e. a stage of Karma Yoga, as distinguished by the Gita from Karma Sannyas, God divested him of the Gerra and gave him the white cloth in return, so that he can move freely amongst all people from the highest to the lowest, without either feeling a sense of superiority himself, or causing them the least embarrassment. He can now, like a child, freely move and mingle with all his friends and devotees of either sex. This is a privilege he prizes more than the greatest honour or reverence he might receive from the world.

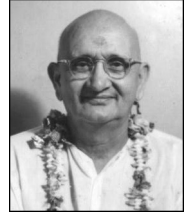
Karma Sannyas implies rejection of the world as Mithya, an illusion. God is taken by the Sannyasi to be only a silent, immutable and impersonal Reality. The Karma Yogi, however, besides knowing this, also holds that the world is an expression of God, that all beings are His forms and all activities are His Lila. While therefore, the first is a partial spiritual experience, the latter is decidedly the complete, integral realisation. □



NECESSITY OF VAIRAGYA

By Swami Ramdas

Spiritual practice becomes possible only if it is backed up by Vairagya. Mere external Vairagya will not do. Inner Vairagya must be there. That is born of sincere,



wholehearted aspiration to realise God. When the heart aspires, the Indriyas do not function in the manner they did before. They function harmlessly without hankering after objects. They cooperate with you in your quest. When you have intense Vairagya the practice of meditation and concentration becomes fruitful. Otherwise there will be a tug-of-war within you, a protracted struggle in which the Indriyas seek to go outwards and your mind strives to go inwards.

It is this problem that Arjuna posed before Sri Krishna: 'I intellectually understand you, but I cannot practise it because my mind is as restless as the wind. How can I control it? How can I fix it on one point within myself?' Sri Krishna said:

*Asamsayam Mahabaaho Mano Durnigraham Chalam
Abhyaasena Tu Kountheya Vairaagyena Cha Grhyate*

‘It is true, Arjuna, mind is difficult to control; it is restless. But there is a way to do it — through Abhyasa and Vairagya’.

If there is no Vairagya, the spiritual aspirant cannot succeed in realising the Truth. This Vairagya is mainly a state of inner renunciation — a condition of the mind.

There are many persons who pass for Vairagis, because they have given up their homes. But they have not given up the Samsara of the mind. Their mind is not free from attachments. They are not Vairagis in the real sense of the term. Having realised the hollowness and ephemeral nature of life and pleasures, the real Vairagis are no longer drawn to them. Their minds recoil from things outside. That recoil is Vairagya. That comes when you seek the Eternal with all your heart. It is truly said that through Vichara you get Vairagya. When you know that tuning your life with the Eternal is the only way for real happiness and peace, then naturally the external objects do not attract you. And it is easy for the mind to be drawn inward in meditation. Then the mind will disappear and you know who you are in reality — the all blissful Truth or Atman.

‘I have given up this thing and that thing. I have given up my job’ — it is not by these that you can realise the Truth. Free the mind from longing for the objects of the senses by one-pointed, concentrated, intense longing for God-realisation. The fire of that longing must be kept burning bright in your heart till all desires of the world are reduced to ashes. Then you have real Vairagya; and so long as Vairagya is there, the mind does not cling to the things of the world. It gets absorbed in the Self — is lost in contemplation and meditation. Who meditates? The mind meditates. Atman does not meditate. The object is to still the mind. Stilling the mind is not easy when it is running about. When the mind ceases to be, then you realise you are the Atman. Look without seeing, hear without listening, eat without tasting — that is the thing you have to attain through longing for God. It does not come to you if you merely wish for it. It is the result of intense longing for God — Bhakti. Such is Bhakti, a devotion which keeps away all thoughts except of God. Now you have rejected the unreal and identified yourself with the Real. Your connection with the unreal is lost when you identify yourself with the Real. It is a necessary or inevitable

corollary. Thereafter, you make no distinction between the eternal and the non-eternal, the manifest and the unmanifest.

A tremendous control over the mind is necessary. He is a hero who has conquered the mind and has eliminated it by realisation of the Atman. The worst temptations cannot attract him. That is why Sannyasins are made to wear cloth dyed in orange or Gerrua colour. The colour of the cloth represents flame, the flame of renunciation. A Sannyasin is one in whom all craving and desires are burning as a flame. A Buddhist monk uses cloth of yellow colour — the colour of the dead body. He considers himself as a walking ‘dead’ body. He is dead to the world. He is dead to the passions even as a dead body is no longer swayed by passions or attachments.

We are too much conscious of the world, too much conscious of the things outside — either attracted or repelled by them. But the Vairagi has no craving for anything in the world. He seeks only the Eternal. That is the main purpose of his life and he is engaged day and night in that pursuit. □



DEAR CHILDREN

Vivek — True Counsellor

In the kingdom of Dehapuri, Mind was the ruler and Vivek was the minister. The king had six friends. They were Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Moha, Mada and Matsarya. The king, Mind, in the company of these friends, engaged himself in all sorts of evil ways and made Dehapuri subject to all vices. When the minister, Vivek, advised the king to go on the proper path, the latter would not listen but would obey the false friends. Things gradually got worse. One day, the king was found heavily drunk rolling in the streets. Another day, he was found unconscious in a gutter. The minister, Vivek, rescued him. Later on, the king realised his folly in following the advice of his six false friends and in not paying heed to his minister's counsel. He was able to realise this only after experiencing great misery. Now he repented for having wasted his life so long and resolved finally to break off his connection with the false friends and act only as Vivek advised.

Lastly, the king, Mind, as a Sannyasi in Gerrua clothes with his head shaven, Mala on and a Kamandal by his side, was sitting calm and serene. From a

distance, the old friends, Kama, Krodha, etc., were looking at him, not daring to come closer. They had realised very well that when the king was under the control of Vivek, they had no influence over him. □



EPISTLES OF SWAMI RAMDAS

Beloved Ram,
 ...The goal or God, or your immortal status, is ever with you and in you. Even when Ramdas' first year's itinerant life was started, he had nearly reached the summit of God-realisation. In the course of his wandering life he came in touch with thousands of Sadhus and Sannyasis who were continuously running from place to place in quest of that peace, which eternally dwelt in their own hearts. They were wondering, one and all, as to how Ramdas had realised that never-failing joy and peace although his life as an itinerant Sadhu had been so short when compared to their own. The secret was, that Ramdas, through a ceaseless repetition of the Divine Mantram, side by side with the concentrated meditation on the all-pervading, eternal, ever-blissful, indwelling God, had attained freedom and peace even before his advent into the world as a mendicant.

Mere external renunciation is of no avail... To assume Sannyas in the hope that by taking merely that step you would realise God, is perfectly wrong...


One word more about Sannyas. Sannyas is not a thing to be received from, or given to, anybody. It is a dedication of our entire being to the Lord and His service. It is a spontaneous wave of aspiration rising from within our own heart. So receiving initiation from any external Guru can make the disciple only an apparent Sannyasi, struggling through tedious and painful courses of Sadhana undertaken because of the established rules and regulations, observed all through with the growing ego-sense at the base of it.

Self-surrender, the path pointed out by all the saints and sages of the world, is the one path by following which alone a man attains the supreme status which as a human being he should aim at...

Ramadas



IN MEMORIAM

mt Sathi Nair V (aged 87), an ardent devotee of the Ashram since the late 1950s and the wife of the Late Dr. KP Krishnan Nair, was

called by Beloved Papa on the 24th of October, 2022. We pray for Beloved Papa's blessings on the dear departed soul for eternal rest and peace at His lotus feet. □



BELOVED PAPA'S SANNYAS CENTENARY — CONCLUDING PROGRAMMES

In Beloved Papa's life, Ram kindled in his heart a keen desire to realise His Infinite Love. Similarly, to hasten our spiritual progress, He also prompted us, His devotees, to take up an in-depth study of IN QUEST OF GOD (IQG) from the 27th of December 2021. With this push, He, through the one-hour Satsang Sessions via Google Meet every day and the weekly exposure through the 10-minute video sessions from January to September this year, blessed us to become aware of various dimensions from the book which were perhaps not known to us previously.

At the same time, He also made us seriously think that while it took only 2 years for him to scale the heights, we, who have been associating with Beloved Papa's teachings for the past so many decades, have

not been able to move closer to the goal yet. It also became clear to us that if we become a little more serious in our Sadhana — not merely in chanting the Divine Name, singing Bhajans, undertaking Swadhyaya and Satsang but also by watching whether we deal with men and matters from the usual level — expressed through the dominance of the sense of individuality — or from a higher level.

Swami Ranganathanandaji said: “Every experience throws the mind into a wave, small wave, big wave. We have the power to control that wave-formation. If we exercise that power, we are free persons, we are really using our higher cerebral system. If we don’t, we become like a creature of circumstances.” That means we have to be vigilant to ensure that our outer actions are in conformity with the ideal of expanding from the narrow circle to the wider circle.

We now feel this could be the purpose with which He motivated us to take up the in-depth study of IQG during the Sannyas Centenary year.

The study He has facilitated so far helps us in looking upon the text as a manual for our daily life and identifying the areas where we have to improve.

The repeated in-depth study has unearthed 198

points, which have been brought out in the form of a small booklet called STRESS TO SERENITY. This will be distributed during the inaugural session on the 24th of December 2022. Due to paucity of time, it may not be possible to go through all these points during the seven days. Hence, a filtering was done and 17 main points have been selected, which will be dwelt upon during the concluding programmes of the Sannyas Centenary.

This in-depth study has made us realise the truth that there is much more to be discovered and learnt and therefore it is an ongoing exercise to be pursued with perseverance and steadfastness.

In this context we remember the words of Pujya Mataji Krishnabai: “I wanted you all to read it (IN QUEST OF GOD) 11 times so that your mind would turn within to Nirguna Brahman. There is a special reason for Papa making me ask you to read IN QUEST OF GOD daily for 11 days. It is intended to take you within. You may not attain Papa within you on the 11th reading but you will at least have started going within. It is like entering the Ashram gates. Once you are within the gates, you have nothing to fear. Likewise, once you turn your gaze within, you have nothing to worry about.”

This Sannyas Day, the 27th of December 2022, is an opportunity offered by Beloved Papa to all of us to take stock of all that He has provided us during the Centenary Year so that the tools He has enabled all to unearth, may support us in our spiritual journey to realise His presence within, apart from leading us to peace and serenity from a life full of cares, worries and anxieties. Keeping this as the background, the concluding programmes have been planned as follows:

- Akhanda Ram Nam at Samadhi Mandirs from the 24th to the 31st of December.
- Inaugural session of the Sannyas Centenary programmes on 24th of December from 3.30 pm.
- Special Satsang sessions in the mornings and afternoons from the 25th to the 28th of December: Prayer; Bhajans; talks by HH Swami Padmanabhanandaji; Pujya Swami Muktanandaji will cover a few points in every session from the quintessence of the in-depth study of IN QUEST OF GOD; inspiring videos/PPTs; Namavalis.
- Special programmes on Beloved Papa's Sannyas Day, the 27th of December: Ashir Vachan by HH Swami Padmanabhanandaji and Pujya Swami

Muktanandaji; mass initiation into Ram Nam as a symbol of rededicating our lives; writing self-originated prayer to Beloved Papa, etc.

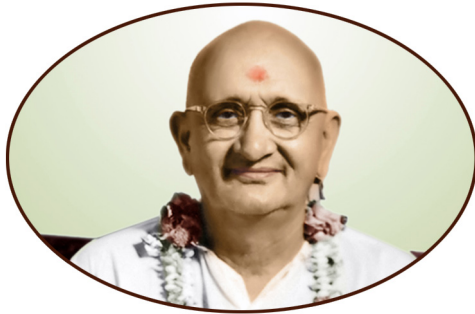
- Special Satsang session from 29th to 31st of December in the mornings and the afternoons: Prayers; Bhajans; talks by Pujya Swami Muktanandaji on the remaining points from the quintessence of the in-depth study of IN QUEST OF GOD; inspiring videos/PPTs and Namavalis.
- Ushering in the New Year on the 31st of December 2022 with Ram Nam from 9.30 pm to midnight followed by New Year's message and Ram Nam for another 10 minutes.
- Bhajan Sandhya in the Panchavati every evening from 7:15 to 8:15 pm. □



ANANDASHRAM NEWS

15,500-CRORE NAMA JAPA YAGNA FOR WORLD PEACE: The total Japa received in the third round of the 15500-Crore Nama Japa Yagna For World Peace in the month of October is 200 crores. The grand total of the Japa done so far in this round now stands at 14076 crores. □





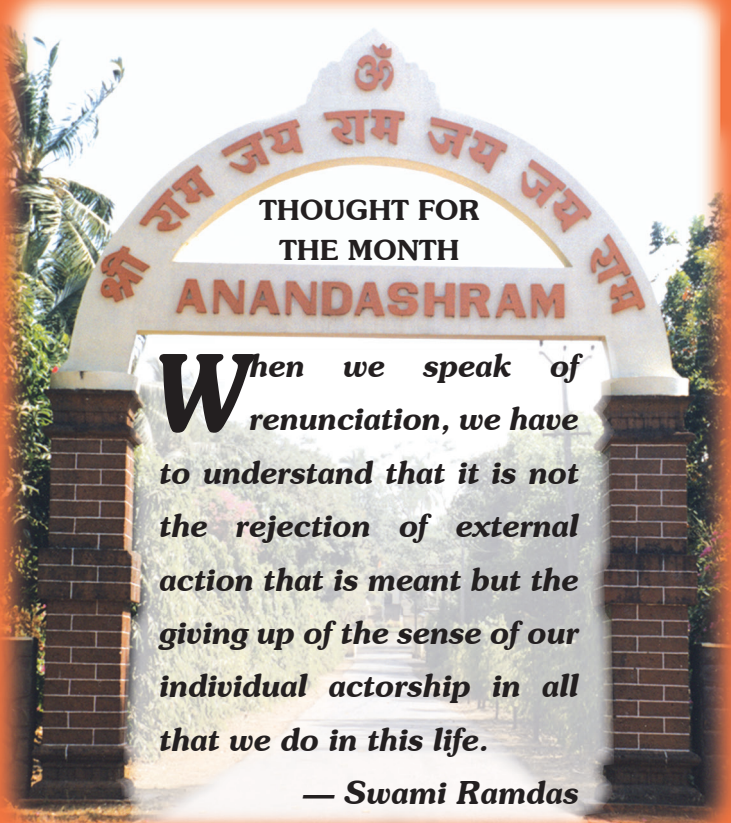
SANNYAS CENTENARY OF BELOVED PAPA SWAMI RAMDAS

The 27th of December 1922 was the momentous occasion when Beloved Papa gave up his worldly life and took to the order of Sannyas, a century ago.

The concluding programmes of the year-long Sannyas Centenary will be observed from the 24th to the 31st of December 2022.

May these programmes be instrumental in giving a boost to the spiritual practices of all.

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When we speak of renunciation, we have to understand that it is not the rejection of external action that is meant but the giving up of the sense of our individual actorship in all that we do in this life.

— Swami Ramdas

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