

Feb 12-13, 1983

A visit to Ramakrishna loka

Gayatri, Jai Narain and Mahalakshmi were at Ramakrishna Loka for a weekend with Swamiji, receiving darshan, hearing music, meditating, listening to his teaching and, at the same time, enjoying an endless succession of meals and snacks.



Swami Ambikananda prepares a meal for his devotees at Ramakrishna Loka.

On this occasion Swamiji had prepared a delicious meal as always. After the meal he spoke over cups of tea:

‘The mind can be a mirror, and sometimes it reflects the dark fortnight.¹ The goblins of the mind are in your coat like little fleas to chew at your peace. So you have to put on a protection, you have to dwell within, to put up a veil so no one can see you, and you see no one. Keep your mind on what you are doing, and analyse this goblin. It's a little doll like some children see at night - children who see things like fairies or goblins. All these things are another distorting mirror, due to body consciousness and complex of mind.

‘ You must feel light - the weight of the body is too much. Sri Ramakrishna tells us to work with a spirit of detachment, but a person can't attend to this if he has a barrel of karma, and more to come. If you are attracted by dress, appearance and so on, remember that the only beauty is love controlled fully for love's sake. Love everyone because "I dwell in them", not because of face, garments, *allure*. This is a dyke leading to a steep fall. First be detached from the things of the world, then get attached to the one who is panting for you, like Sri Ramakrishna is panting, soul living for soul.

‘So go beyond the sandalwood of human birth², give up literature.³ Say: "I am so corrupt, I want to be jailed at your feet." Then peace will come. If there is a hole, darkness will pass through, step after step in maya of darkness, because the heart is full of tangled karma of desires. The mind is the key, the key of the monk. Develop the thought that eliminates and rejuvenates - it also illumines.

‘Please feed this fire here. If a man gives love to a fire, it burns away his sin without burning him.’

¹ The ‘dark fortnight’ in Hinduism is the second, less auspicious half of the lunar month.

² A reference to Sri Ramakrishna's parable of the woodcutter who came to a sandalwood forest following a sage's directions, but was told to ‘go beyond sandalwood’, and by doing so he came to greater treasures, to mines of silver and gold and diamonds.

³ This was directed at the writer, who still wanted to further his career as an author.

Later he said:

‘Thank God for finding us this place, for bringing us this time to enable us to come out of the sheath of darkness. The sheath may be black, but the soul is stainless. God has brought us here to unsheath the sword from the scabbard and cut through with love, and to cling to the hand of peace. I am ready to sail; my passengers must be ready too. So time wasted is all elements wasted - sunshine wasted, water wasted - by not breaking through and blossoming into flower. Our Guru Dev Sri Ramakrishna is great, he is a sword that has conquered, if you tread in his path. Sri Ramakrishna is nothing but Mother's light, and he spreads it out. His tongue is nothing but Mother's ideas: *"I speak as Thou makest me speak."* The best meditation is on the agony he passed: the adult child crying on the lap of his Mother.

‘God is so inconceivably inside - that's why people withdraw to remote secluded places. [*sings*]
‘Cherish my precious Mother Shyama/Tenderly within, O mind,/May you and I alone behold Her,/Letting no one else intrude./O mind, in solitude enjoy Her,/Keeping the passions all outside;/Take but the tongue, that now and again,/It may cry, Mother, Mother.

‘But what is the tongue without thought? What is thought without heart? *Jnana*⁴ is a dry heart. What is truth without practice, without living it? There is nothing like living truth. The world may be dark, but one or two people are lit within, A devotee is a flower. Every flower is beautiful; a gathering makes a bouquet of devotees. God is among his flowers of devotees.

‘Do not let your feet lead you astray; control and withdraw outgoing tendencies for stillness of the mind. Hold before you the form of the deity - hands, feet, etc - as *light*. It is best to sit at the feet of those who have done this with great yearning. God sees devotion, the devotion that springs out of the heart. Continuous thought of God is another form of light. Send love to humanity, the world at large. But first get love, then distribute. Otherwise there will be ego in it.

‘Concentration is to fix the frame unmoving. You have to be still in breath, in thought, in heart. *Kumbakha*, when breath is stopped, is the pranayama of love, beyond death, *para Yama*. You come from immortality, you go back to immortality. The body is a little shell for distribution to others, for enlightenment. The language of light reflects in the mind. If the mind is very clean you can follow easily. If you don't meditate, you can't understand the language of light. Love is a great scholar. Strugglers and bound depend on *sadhana* to learn and hear. The language of light sheds light, gives light, enlightens others. Sri Ramakrishna's experience is exposed Reality.

‘‘God is the biggest fish, He can easily swallow you. But if you want to catch Him, be very quiet and determined, and show some of your determination to Him. Be deaf. If you want to be quick go direct to meditation. Lock up your joints. If you want wages, you get them every Guru day [Thursday] after seven days, but you can't claim without waiting the seven days. Love is the wages, heavenly wealth. But *"all my heavenly wealth I have given to Her."*

‘My poems are “God's Merry Go Round in the Heart”, not literature but tangible experience:

‘Light shapes itself to us

Wave upon wave

Finally becomes ovoid of shape

‘Light seeks its giver.

Reality lives in tears...

‘Thy head the sun of the world

Thy dream the moonlight of night

Thou holder of peace and a man's soul...

⁴ The path of Knowledge

*'Eternal dark virgin in human form.
Goddess of beauty in dark hidden...*

*'Many kept secret in dark of love and light of Herheart.
None fully know Her till now, all can say barely and daily "Ma", that nectareous word.
Whoever has ever said that has pleased Her much beyond saying.
"Ma, Ma" is equal to light, is equal to ecstasy.*

*'From the tears of Thy eyes to my tongue tip, I beg you, keep me not in darkness,
Please carry me as a flower in Thy head.*

'Jail, jail, jail, I deserve to be a good prisoner of Thee

'Mata Kali Sarada Ma-Ta-Ka-Li-Sa-Ra-Da...

*'God reflects in a pure mind. Pure mind and pure heart is same.
'A celibate child married the source of love (Mother liked that one particularly)
'Image melting into light, light into image.*

*'You have to experience truth, not just by reading. Your own experience - what a cool ice sweetness,
icecake.*

*'God is a soul to realize soul. God is a tongue to taste.
'If scripture is not practised we get tangled.
'Here we eat, drink and make merry, here also we get drowned.
'Bliss permeates everything - it's subtle, a boat loaded with consciousness.
'You have to be a bit mad for realization...*

'The soul must be a speaker, not the tongue - an instrument of thought - so watch the mind. The mind withdraws from the pursuit of Reality. It feeds on the senses, the lower objects of the three lower planes. Truth was, is, and will be, the same changeless Reality...

'You can work in darkness, but you must not live in it, just as darkness must not dwell in you. Everyone has come to dispel their darkness; don't add gloom to gloom... Become a child. Reduce age to childhood, but grow in devotion, like Sri Ramakrishna who grows in love and devotion but remains as a child. Quickly go through the squares you have to go through and learn from them. Don't be deceived.

' "The macrocosm and the microcosm are in the Mother's womb".⁵ Come out of this world, live in a bigger world of infinitum. There's no need to know about God's shadow that he sends here and there. God's seed sprouts where God plants with His own toe.

*' "Piercing" is when the soul bursts forth and comes out through the third eye. "Shine forth, O Shining One..."⁶ Others stay cocooned. Just as a shade protects the blinding light, so darkness helps to manifest the glory of light - a phase, an overcast moment. So meditate on light, on shade, and shed tears. Shade is like a rose, it gives fragrance but has an *uphadi* [condition] of thorns. Disintegrate into dust and go back to Mother Bhu⁷ after you've understood the body and what it is for. Bhu Mata gives crushed and rotten seeds another chance to bring forth fruit for Annapurna.*

'A peep in the vacuum enables a man to see light through the hole - but if there is darkness then darkness goes through from here to there. When God is pleased He releases the soul from the heart and lets it swim, not confined to the body, like a mermaid in the ocean.

⁵ GSR song by Ramprasad.

⁶ GSR song

⁷ Mother Earth.

‘Meditate on the Gayatri mantra. Let the soul become Gayatri - the Sun - and darkness is the body. Body as darkness, soul as light.

‘Everything is God, but in God is more God. The mass of light is God. We are sparks of that mass. God is a medicine for the body - think of God for good health. If you don't think of God you will be a prisoner of the senses. Think of God and you will be put in a vase and the devas will worship [you]. But if the yogi is off track the devas will push him further off the track.

Quietness at kirtan is good, isn't it? When a soul is quite still, everything reflects in it - if the soul is clean. Ordinary souls are tangled, confined in the family department. The mind has tightened more, not released, because they can't give it up. They have to have great self-effort. Even though you undo the *menottes* [handcuffs], then there's a complex of exposing to light and body of God. Two things bind: genital and eyes. You follow your sight and are led astray, depending on detachment and maturity. So cover your eyes stained with the senses. If you starve your senses it can't hurt. Otherwise they chew you, swallow you, and are born in you again.

‘An ashram is a place in which to be fully centred, no outside thought at all - otherwise you could lose the path. God is the destination, so why go somewhere else? Give a chance to the inner voice, let Him guide. He might give you a glimpse, and then run away for 40 years - which is nothing in infinitum. So you must have this patience, and seek no return. Put money in the bank of your heart. Don't calculate about rubbish money - you will ruin your life. If you have got money it will make you heavy, you will find it hard to levitate after death.’

During this entire period Swamiji sang Vivekananda's 'In search of God' many times. He said later:
‘Lust is a carnivore, it eats flesh. Control must come from within. Otherwise it won't leave you till death. If you master that you can live anywhere. Control means “convert to goodness”. See your neighbours as God. Seek an intimate relationship, mutual. Then you will perceive with the eye of purity, reading the world like a newspaper. So worship God on the hard side. You must hanker and hunger. Small-minded people will beg, but the conceit of God will not be satisfied till they carry *Atmarama* on their head - that's their pride.

‘The same woman takes a man away from God and brings him towards God - it depends on the man. So keep going forward. If something doesn't work, don't stop - keep rubbing and it will spark sometime. You have to be a witness of yourself, watching the mind playing. Then it will stop and start to help you - see GSR. This is just unlocking the padlock, releasing the knots, giving freedom. As long as you're sincere God will give the experience that's beneficial for you.

‘The kirtan God is a harbinger, an author, and also interpreter, and also reader - all you have to do is to assimilate, and ruminate, and practise. Take your heart and offer it as a flower to God - even a beggar's heart can be golden - or else you will get nowhere. Offer to God what belongs to God.
"Dance then, O mind..."

‘Be dehypnotized. Everyone is under the power of the snake charmer.
If you can, put a stop, a break, on the genital, and offer love, work, everything to God...
Feel God in the forehead... in *Ham -Sha* - the two-petalled lotus of the 6th chakra.

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‘People come here to step over themselves, to suppress this body and stand on the other body. For this you need an altar. Expose your head, your face, eyes, taste, etc, on the block. People should be reborn. We thank Bhu Mata for providing all the ingredients - Sun, earth, water, air, fire. We establish a universal ashram from nothing.

‘The body is water, the soul floats above it. Once the jar is broken it becomes one with the air. God is there. So make an act there, and there will be reaction. But you must make an act. Bhaktas are

farmers. God is the landlord. Balancement of elements leads to soul food. You can offer the best unpolluted fruit - the soul. Give God what belongs to God.

‘If a person has no meditation, work is no good. You must learn first, then reproduce. God can be attained in a flat in London. But you have to be strong in your body. Good scenery is to remind you that God is beautiful.

‘Sweeten your tongue so that He can test it.

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