

18 Feb 1988 Kirtan at Buckley Rd (Steve and Julie)

Swamiji had wanted this Ramakrishna birthday kirtan to be held at the Old Vicarage, which Jai Narain and MahaLakshmi had just acquired, but the previous owner had not moved out so it was impossible. However, Swamiji remained upset at the Narains' failure for a considerable time. Nevertheless, this was a blissful kirtan in the main.

After a long passage of fine music and bhajan there was a period of OM chanting, after which Swamiji suddenly said, 'In loving memory of Swami Hari Harananda,'¹

In the course of the kirtan Swamiji said:

'Narayana is in the beginning, Narayana is in the middle, Narayana is in the end. Narayana is everywhere. There is nothing but Narayana. Some Narayana is good, some Narayana is no good, you must have discrimination. Let everyone partake. Birthday of Kashi², then birthday of our Guru Dev, Sri Ramakrishna ki jai ho. Dispel the darkness that we may become the children of immortality. That's how Swami Shivananda said, children of immortality. The immortal self. Om tat Sat. [Practise] by breathing, concentration and attention, attentiveness, to light; think of the light, meditate on the light, send the light to those who are bound, who are struggling, help them out. God alone is your own, but no one is a foreigner also. Love your brothers and sisters. It's no good to eat mango and wipe the juice from your face³; share, share the food of life. Jesus has established the Eucharist as the food of immortality, and drink of bliss.

Now we are all joined, properly, intently, without excitement, you are lucky that you're allowed to sing and play, because it's a birthday, the birth of immortality. See how Shiva Shakti does it. The beginning is very important. You are the pole star, children of immortality. And watch when Tryambaka is coming gently, the music makes you turn. No shyness, no fetters, today we celebrate, otherwise I waste my time and yours.

'You don't have to change your deity. Wherever you turn your face Me, so why all of a sudden - we are singing your songs, and we are chanting in your songs, we are borrowing there. No harm, it's Hari Narayan, keep digging and water will come. That's what Ramakrishna said. Don't jump from one religion to another unless you are very universal in harmony of religions. Little twigs have to be fenced and pegged in the beginning. We are all beginners in the path of Rudrality "so let Guru Dev peg us, and let us go to his tavern - He is very drunk, find out where he can give us a drop of His bliss elixir so we too can be drunk and get rid of our disease of worldliness

'There is one experience called explosion. Everything explodes like a bomb. But don't worry, you won't die, because you are meditating on Immortality and Reality, where there is no death. The waves are very choppy sometimes, but it's very calm also. Calmness of mind, self-control complete detachment, discrimination. That's why it's important to join together here. When we join here we like to say what is vital for your life force. If you have no life force you can be anaemic, and if you are anaemic you have to have vitamins.

'After going through a few squares during the day, you go to your bed like Guru Dev who when he goes to his bed puts the mosquito net, and then casts his glance on the lotus feet of the Divine Mother. Lotus is in water, and water is the liquid form of God, and you are also water solidified, and your tears will melt in the ocean of love which you have borrowed from that ocean, and is crystallized, becomes ice under cooling influence of love, Ramakrishna has said. And now and then you can see in your singing, your dancing in excess. Ramakrishna sometimes had divine madness 'in excess'. Today his madness is 'in excess', overflowing.

¹ A leading devotee who tragically died in June 1974.

² The son of Steve and Julie, now aged one year.

³ See GSR

‘Therefore it’s good to make a decision what you want in life. You are nor kiddies in nappies, you are adult, adolescent. You don’t have to touch fire to know fire burns; have faith in what you’re told, if your teachers at school tell you ‘do’ and ‘don’t’ . After all, you are not ordinary children, thank God. Watch television a bit, and see what the world is outside, watch television -and don’t imitate.

‘Reach supersensuous, superconscious state and then go wherever you want to float. A mudfish lives in the mud and is not affected.’⁴ But you are affected and other people are affected. You can’t deny it. When you’re weak don’t be like the camel and say, “Oh yes I am eating thorns and my gums are not bleeding.” You will not get your soul very varnished, you will go round and round Piccadilly Circus like foolish deer. So be very good, when somebody tells you, “Son, stop all this nonsense.” You want to be like the TV? Look at yourself first, in three-dimension mirror.” What an ugly thing I am, what a big tummy, I should be on a diet, I should control my greed, my lust.” Look at yourself a bit, face to face. The flight is alone to alone, so look at your face, your eyes, examine how you are. Be superstrong. Time and tide wait for no one.

‘Television is nothing but woman and gold. Reform yourself. Get rid of all this lethargy and sickness. Shake it off. If you are weak take vitamin, consult doctor, get rid of all your condition. Discrimination, dual consciousness. Neti, neti, neti. Make sure you don’t carry anything into your bed. Whatever you are doing, think of Me. When death comes television will not help you, television will multiply your desires. So get rid, have dual consciousness. Be very good to yourself. If you’re good to yourself God will be very pleased.

‘Jesus Christ went down to Hell. He descended. Hindu also tell you nether world, where the naga is and Lord Vishnu went once to liberate, and that’s why there’s Deepavali, festival of light. So it’s for your own good what we are saying. We give you some holytechnic for your own sake. Be very discriminative, be very strong, London is not a place for spiritual practice. And look at television - the poor people in Brazil, in India. You could be in the sewage, in the drain somewhere. Why am I not born there? Some people are naked day and night. You have been to San Francisco,⁵ you have seen how Indians have become Africans, you don’t know if they are Indian or African or Jews or Afro-Jews. Or Chinese, or Mohamedan. Compare your life to theirs. God says, “I place everyone in different places and environments and company according, every step of every man is written, every hair is counted.” How many people here watch television? Everybody! And how many people pray when they watch television?’

Madeleine: ‘Do we have to pray *all* the time we’re watching television, Swamiji?’

Swamiji: ‘Yes. In case death catches you. Being a devotee you have to have a special thought to render. A devotee has to zip down and bottom up.’

Shiva Shakti: ‘You mean zip up and bottom down.’

Swamiji: ‘The life of a devotee is a special life. Press the remote to put on right channel of the mind, You take the disease of the television, you import it, you contaminate your mind, your sight, all your time – and you’re trying to become all this. How do you expect to have a good thought, how do you expect to improve? So see, compare your life, where you are, what you are doing in 1988. Take it out, take all kinds of perversity out. You people, your singing, dancing, and nearly going in trance. See how people are miserable, and see your face, how beautiful comparing to a lot of these. See how beautiful you are, and more beautiful when you come to kirtan. You are fighting inside a fort. Thank God, thank God, thank God. At least you have known Ramakrishna. You have known Sai Baba.

‘I can’t do anything unless you will it. You must will it, then I can work. If you are not willing that I marry you, then if I force you, if I bait you, if I hypnotise you, if I put a spell on you – how long will

⁴ See GSR

⁵ Ambikananda may be talking to Swargananda, who left California in 1986

that work? But true love, true love will conquer. Love without a motive, that will last, because where love is God is. And that also is supersensuous. Thank God you have got someone helping you, a morsel of food, a place to live, to stay – some even have two places. See how God has helped you all, and it's only to help you cross the ocean of samsara; he didn't give you all this to burden your soul, but so that you can help your neighbours, you can give something, help each other. So be grateful. Don't have the advice of this Man and put it in the loo. What is the point if you don't carry out?

'You are selected apples of the eye of God. He loves you. He wants to take you out of darkness to light in his realm. I am the light, He says, I am the way and the truth. You have clothing – some are naked... You have beautiful shape, beautiful form – protect these. Thank God for everything. You are not tangled yet. The devil is watching, working on your ego, all your weakness, and makes believe it is you who do all this. That blasted devil, I have seen him, and I'm warning you, he's an ugly ugly demon, ugly beast. If he tries to get me I'll flash him with colours. But the minute the light is lit, a thousand years of devilry goes in the wind. Isn't it so?

'But you have to be willing yourself, you have to live in the truth. We don't say," Don't watch this, don't watch that. You mustn't do this, that." Just go through it and eventually get rid. There's good and bad – go beyond. Don't get tangled. 'A true friend works silently, only God knows. I'm giving you all the clues. I've done everything to satisfy your hunger. But can I eat for you?

'Compare your state. Be grateful to God. We are wasting our life. It doesn't become you to behave in such a way. You are devotees, you should have discrimination. Be strong. Shake off the shackles. So if you want to help us, first you have to be willing. If you can't do anything, like Girish Gosh said, then "Give me your power of attorney" – didn't Ramakrishna say that?⁶

We don't want to bother you, annoy you, check on you – how many years now I haven't checked spiritual diaries? What is your aim in life? Realization. But will you get the realization? If you want to have a car, you can't just drive – you'll soon be stopped and fined, there is a law, a discipline, what you should do and what you shouldn't. Life is full of discipline, not just spiritual life. Honesty to self is an example to others. Do you report yourself? That's why Christianity has put confession. Be careful where you have fallen. The path is very slippery. So you have to be willing, and you have to help yourself. If you don't want to help yourself, I find it very hard to make you do something. And if I do it you get very upset.

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⁶ See GSR