

Oct 13, 1984

Ramakrishna Loka

*Present at the Loka were Mahayogini and her elder brother Steve with his wife Julie. Also Satchidananda, Jai Narain, Mahalakshmi and Sri Lakshmi.*

*Julie and Mahayogini had brought their guitars. After the meal there was music and a little singing, with guitars providing continuo background to Ambikananda's discourse.*

'Satsang is very important. You have to change, to throw away the old rubbish garments and put on new. You have to be in the fitting; you must throw away the old ugly thing that is not required. Your body is to be fitted into this. When people sit there, their eyes see thousands of things, not the One Thing they should see. They can't see their minds manifesting divinity because tamas and rajas are suppressing sattva. Remove these two carpets and walk barefoot. Otherwise you will have to wear shoes...

'Music is a part, then you form a harmony. Our Master [Sri Ramakrishna] was a master of harmony, not only in music but also in religion. The harmony of religion was his work. This is God's work; ordinary beings can talk and talk, but who will listen if they don't get their power from God? "*It is Thou that singest the song, Thou that clappeth Thy hands, man only thinks he is the doer.*"<sup>1</sup> You must be in that harmony and in that tune. Devotees are like strings of a guitar; four strings - Om Tat Sat Om. All sounds come from OM, so we have to de-mist ourselves completely in this hidden God, in this light, this self-effulgence.

'Music, the God and the musician - all this depends on the velvety soul. A soul may look like velvet, but when you touch it, it's prickly, like a nettle. But a soul should be not only velvety but shiny. At the kirtan<sup>2</sup> I saw some of the devotees with hair so shining it seemed on the verge of manifesting light. If such people can have the right company, then one can eradicate the bad tooth, and only the wisdom tooth is left. The devotees are there, but the room is dark, the sound is dark. You can't see light in the voice, it's prickly velvet.

'The carpet is a symbol, but the flying carpet of Sri Ramakrishna is meditation, when the mind flies, the body "burns"; there is no desire of power, and then you join quick to the Master. And it's the Master that flies to you - the devotee makes one flight and the Master makes hundreds of flights, coming down from heaven to earthplane. Otherwise God is hidden inside, under the carpet, inside you. Who are you? Are you aware of who you are? Ramana Maharshi taught meditation with "Who am I?"<sup>3</sup> That is the greatest realization.

' So the mind flies, and the subtle body flies; and still you don't know. Then you have to get rid of these flying bodies - causal, astral, mental, dreaming - the five *koshas*<sup>4</sup> [sheaths]. These bodies may be a hindrance, but in some ways they can be a help to progress, like the five pitches of a string. They give the key but are not the instrument. Start playing from these, and you can compose your own song on a high level.

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<sup>1</sup> GSR song

<sup>2</sup> Previous Saturday, at Raja Ram's place]

<sup>3</sup> Ramana, the sage of Arunachala, used this repeated question to teach realization.

<sup>4</sup> Swamiji was talking from earliest times about these *koshas*, sheaths or subtle bodies that enclose the *jivatma* or individual soul, as explained in his exposition of *Taittiriya Upanishad* at a kirtan at Brahma's [Pingala's] asram 1970/71.

'Some of you devotees are far from God, far from the liquid form of God, the sea of immortality. Such devotees are on the beach, or even haven't reached it yet. Now God comes down from on high, and when He drops on the water He becomes like a boat. Didn't Jesus walk on the water? So God becomes the boat of safety in the ocean of existence. Now the devotees are coming. "Let's enjoy our life," they say, and they bring a picnic down to the beach. Jesus and Sri Ramakrishna sat among their devotees, ate and drank with them,

'Some devotees are raw, some are baked,<sup>5</sup> some fry their bodies in the hearth of God and give them as *prasad* to the Lord to partake of their devotion. Such devotees are changed by the touch of God's presence. And now the room becomes electrified, filled with divinity. Everything becomes different; God is manifesting here. So keep the company of the holy for the presence of God, if you want to see God. Keep the company of the real starvers on the beach of immortality. Now you cannot die; now by keeping every day close to this, we who were raw, get slowly ripened by the heat of that Sun. We get peace and breadth of vision, of mind. So when you come here we make you up a little bit more, make up your eyes like lotus eyes. The lotus lives in mud but is not contaminated, so [we give you] lotus eyes, lotus feet, lotus hands.

'God comes down to earthplane, and as soon as God comes down man starts to cry, seeing God in spiritual experience. Why does he cry? God comes down with the Goddess; the Power of God is the Mother, and Mother sheds tears when Her children come, but not because of pain. Why cry? I can't explain why - "*Some weep, some laugh, some dance for joy ... drown me deep in the sea of Thy love.*"<sup>6</sup> There is initiation on the throne of immortality. Dance in samadhi.

...

'You have to have strength - strength of mind. When the will becomes active it acts like a dam to protect the water. This is the water of God's grace. This water doesn't give you a cold, it is not ordinary water. Among holy things it is most holy, among loves it is love supreme. If you don't change in this birth you will have to go through five births to get all this. So become better than good, become the best. The state after that is the *turiya* state, beyond good and bad, beyond holy and unholy.

'God comes down and does us a favour to help us out of this maya mesh. He helps us to help ourselves. So man must revere everything about Him because everything about Him is God, every single action. Even the rubbish of God is still God. The dust of His feet gives salvation and forgiveness. Blessing comes down from the dust of His feet. Wherever He looks is blessed.

'The mind is like a bird. It can either fly to a certain height or it can just spread its wings and glide. There is something very special, very beautiful, about that state, and the music of the mind is like a gliding bird. Any instrument will do, anything that touches on that mind will have a divine tune coming, even if you only have one string, or just a clapping hand. Didn't Sri Ramakrishna say we should clap our hands and sing, and the birds of sin will fly far away?

'I see with my mental love - there's a mental body of love, a love that has crystallized in this body and become form - gross, coarse, but really the soul of that is candy, it's not just 'treacle tart'<sup>7</sup>. That's perfect, nothing lower will do. That's the *Neti neti*<sup>8</sup> plectrOM of a picky-choosy bliss of Vivekananda.

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<sup>5</sup> like seeds that will not be reborn - GSR

<sup>6</sup> GSR song

<sup>7</sup> ref GSR

<sup>8</sup> 'Not this, not this' – the reductive path of knowledge, *jnana*.

'Holy company can be very blissful if you get the right man. Sri Ramakrishna wanted to share with his own. People came to him from all walks of life - doctors, barristers, learned men - but he said, "I want my own people to share with, people who can understand what it means."

'God has eyes everywhere. In trance He follows the line of His vision and goes on the path of light. That's why He follows light. Whenever someone is meditating with great love, wherever God is, whatever part of His realm God may be in, Jana or Maha plane, He will come down and visit the devotee. And not alone but with the Goddess, the family, and the devotees. God is never alone. God seeks His devotees, lives with His devotees. That's His company.

'Holy company must be genuine. One should not keep the company of the worldly. If a holy man keeps the company of the unholy, a doubt arises. There are one or two exemptions, those who have a mission. But even among the holy in kirtan you can sometimes see how they chit-chat. He who has organized everything can also un-organize it. He who has made people come can make people go. When you're flying on the plane of the absolute, it's no good to come down and mess about.

'So perhaps it's better not to have meditation in kirtan. Meditation is positive awareness in God, a state of mind, a stillness and a quietness that fills and overfills until tears come, until hair stands on end in horripilation. This is called IT SELF. There's no greater word than this: neither man nor woman but ITSELF. From this thing everything comes. It was always, and ever shall be, Changeless Reality. This is one of the greatest secrets. God likes secrecy, He likes hide-and-seek. You didn't know there were gems in the sea, you didn't know that Sri Ramakrishna dwells within you. This hide-and-seek is Mahamaya; so pray to Mahamaya.

'Coal is kept close to the hearth, close to the glowing embers. Likewise, man must lose his identity as coal and gain the hearth, the blazing glow, insatiable, that which words cannot express. Word becomes vision, vision becomes blurred and loses its "sightedness". So the devotee has to have a silent eye, he has to swallow his tongue.

' "The flight is from alone to alone." With just a trace of nirvikalpa samadhi,<sup>9</sup> a slight trace before the final mergence. If this divinity is not there you must bring it in, otherwise it's the agony of the frog and the snake<sup>10</sup>. There's no 'cobra' in it - the cobra will quickly swallow any frog - there's no cooperation of Brahman in it. Your kind of cooperation is just a watersnake, not a Kundalini cobra.<sup>11</sup>

'Man can raise his consciousness, but he prefers to remain within his senses and dies there, thus becoming subject to the round of birth and death. So choose your company, because we will be together again and again. When you are holy you have to keep the company of the holy. Good earth is to be cultivated, and good people cultivate devotion in mind and heart. Indifferent to heat and cold or thirst they carry their own water. And man is like a kind of water - by thinking of God this water can become a little wine-y (as Jesus turned water into wine). But man drinks too much wine of a worldly kind, he must get back to the everlasting wine.

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<sup>9</sup> High state of awareness where the ego and samskaras have been dissolved and only Consciousness remains

<sup>10</sup> The watersnake can neither swallow nor disgorge the frog from its mouth. The cobra swallows it at once. GSR

<sup>11</sup> *Kundalini* is visualized as a snake coiled three times round the Lingam in the Muladhara, basic chakra, in dormant state. Aroused, it rises to the Saharara.

‘God is in His name. So let there be quick chanting of the Name, essence of divinity. So God “becomes” into the consciousness of the devotees. Then if you're not ready He hides Himself again. There's withdrawal, but you get a quick flash. Then it's back to normal again because you're not ready in this life. The world of divinity has nothing to do with this world.

‘Opening the curtain of darkness a glimpse of divinity is given – a fragrance of oleander, jasmine, sandal paste - and this in itself stills the mind of the devotee. His mind is stilled in the essence of divinity. He has lost consciousness of the world. The vision of God takes that person and makes him cross the three world-seas - Bhu, Buva, Swaha - as if God has come with an aeroplane. “Anytime we'll have a little charter flight<sup>12</sup>, a cheap flight together. Not too too high!” But you feel the essence, you smell the marigold garland. The smell makes you conceive God. You can see. It might be a hallucination, but it's beyond the world. You have to see for yourself.

‘I like to sit with a guitar and ponder the Name of God. Singing the Name of God on your own, like a beggar on the road, sitting by a tree, “*blest indeed is the wearer of the loincloth*”<sup>13</sup>. ... Sometimes you can play with just one string - too many instruments can cover that Thing. You can play for hundreds of deities – Durga, Sarasvati - but all are One.

‘God sends His messengers. Durga Mai has come in vision in the form of one of our devotees. But we are just a tender spring flower in the vast field of God. Nothing has blossomed yet, no one has seen the blossoming here. In the time of ice there will be more. But it will also be hard. If you receive a rose you must be careful of the thorn.

‘So those who are initiated are very fortunate. Some are ready; some are very close. There are many ways of *diksha*<sup>14</sup> - waving the lamp, keeping the virgin wallet in your heart. Don't let anyone use or abuse it. These are the leaves that will enable you to cross the ocean<sup>15</sup>. God dwells in His name; He works through His devotees.

‘God appears as a shadow in the picture. Think of that picture shadow and meditate on light.

[To Steve:] ‘Put flowers before Sri Ramakrishna's picture.’

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<sup>12</sup> A reference to the *Shirdi Sai Charters*?

<sup>13</sup> GSR song

<sup>14</sup> Initiation. Giving of mantra.

<sup>15</sup> cf. the leaves inscribed with Rama's name enabled a devotee to cross the ocean