

GOSPEL OF SRI RĀMAKRISHNA - PART 9

SWĀMI DAYATMANANDA

ॐ जननीं सारदां देवीं रामकृष्णं जगदगुरुम् ।

पादपद्मे तयोः श्रित्वा प्रणमामि मुहुर्मुहुः ॥

Jananim Sāradam devim Rāmakrishnam jagadgurum।

Pādapadme tayoh shritvā pranamāmi muhurmu huh ॥

ॐ तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनं

कविभिरीडितं कल्मषापहम् ।

श्रवणमङ्गलं श्रीमदाततं

भुवि गृणन्ति ते भूरिदा जनाः ॥

Om tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

kavibhir īditaṁ kalmaṣāpaham ।

śravaṇa-maṅgalaṁ śrīmad ātataṁ

bhuvi gṛṇanti te bhūri-dā janāḥ ॥

Swami answers questions from Devotees:

Welcome to this Kathamrita Class. First, I will deal with the questions that were put by the devotees from our last class. First, I am going to deal – ***Are there any commentaries on this Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna?***

Yes. So far as I know, there are two books – one is known notes of Revd. Sri Yatiswarananda ji Maharaj had delivered some talks on Gospel in Germany more than fifty years back. Those notes are with me and some devotee had noted them down, printed and published as an E-Book which I am going to send you soon. Second – one of our past presidents, Swami Bhuteshanandaji Maharaj had also taken wonderful

classes and I was very fortunate, I was a novice at that time, just joined the training center at Belur Math and Swami Bhuteshanandaji Maharaj started taking classes on Sunday for the first time, on the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna at Belur Math, every Sunday at 3PM. Those talks have been transcribed, have been published, I think if I am not mistaken, in two volumes. They are available in our book stall. The title of the book is **Sri Ramakrishna and His Gospel by Swami Bhuteshanandaji Maharaj**. This is the most comprehensive commentary and most wonderful commentary I have come across. I do not know any other books exist in any other language. But certainly, I know so many people have taken classes on it. I myself have taken for more than two years, almost twenty-seven years, twenty-nine years ago in U.K. I do not think the recordings are available anymore of those classes. But many Ashramas, many Swamis are talking on this Gospel. They are available in the form of audio, maybe you can get in YouTube also. So, that is the answer to that question.

Then, coming back – *what is one's Swadharma?*

I can tell you in two parts. Our real Swadharma, Swa means one's own; dharma means nature. To realize God and to become free from this trammel of samsara, that is every one of the human being's dharma. That is the true meaning of Swadharma. But how do we realize our own nature? For that, whatever we are – what is our gender? Whether we are householders, sannyasins, single and unmarried, what is our age? And whether I am working still to earn my living or retired? So, depending upon exactly wherever we are, for example, if someone is fifty or above fifty, slowly they have to withdraw their minds from too much of attachment to external obligations; it is painful, but it must be done. This is what Sri Ramakrishna used to say that after fifty, one has to turn one's attention inward. And our Hindu dharma also tells this is called Vanaprastha Ashrama. So, slowly we have to practice every single day, how to be more and more detached towards the world and develop Bhakti (Love for God) by following the instructions of one's own Guru or scriptures or as we are discussing already, following the five commandments of Sri Ramakrishna. By the way, I sent a few days back, my articles on the **Five commandments of Sri Ramakrishna and the Ten commandments of Holy Mother and asking ourselves a question, "Am I devotee of God?"** Please go through it. And that contains the essence of all scriptures, not to speak of the essence of Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna. And you go on understanding and trying everyday to practice. This is my second part of the answer.

Third part, I will tell you something – once a great Swami, one of our Senior Swamis was asked, "How to progress in Spiritual life?" and this by the way, answers the third question – *How to make one seer of Jug to contain ten seers of milk or whatever, grain or whatever it is*. So, obviously, a small vessel (utensil) cannot contain more than what is meant to contain. So, the only obvious way is to make the utensil bigger. So, how to make this utensil bigger? So, the senior Swami had outlined four steps –

Achara

Shraddha

NishTa

Dhyana

Achara means once you have read or you have been told or someone instructed you, you have come to know you have to do certain things every day. For example, allot some time and do Japa, prayer, worship, study of holy scriptures, listening to holy scriptures, satsanga, etc. Allot definite time and go on doing with an iron will, whether you like it or not unless you are completely down with physical disability. So, this is called Achara. And it is also possible that in the beginning because we have not developed the taste for God, sometimes we may feel not interested. Certainly, we do not get so much of joy in repeating God's name or practicing spiritual disciplines. But with an iron will, we have to do them, whether we like or not like brushing our teeth every day. So, if we go on persisting in practicing this Achara, in course of time, slowly, a kind of devotion comes to it. We develop tremendous amount of clinging / attachment. This is the psychology. If we go on doing something, hearing something, we somehow develop an unconscious attachment to it. And there comes a time when it will not be possible for us to leave any of those practices. And if we do not happen to do anything that we have set ourselves to do, we feel a kind of dissatisfaction (unhappiness) as though we are unclean, we have not taken bath. That stage is called NishTa. NishTa means it has become a habit and it has possessed you and you are unable to give it up. Of course, I am talking about spiritual practices. And if this continues for some time, then Shraddha comes. What is Shraddha? Tremendous faith that what I have been doing is the most precious and the only thing worth doing by any human being and God will be highly pleased with whatever I have been doing and this tremendous faith that I am pleasing God and I am progressing in spiritual life goes by the name, Shraddha. There is no English equivalent translation. We have to say, very deep faith as if that is the only truth. So, this is the third stage. If we go on doing it with this, then God's grace will come and that is called the stage of Dhyana which is next to Samadhi. Slowly, the practices have acquired tremendous meaning and with more enthusiasm, we go on practicing them and in course of time, we reach that state of Samadhi / God Realization / Having the vision of God / many names we call it by. So, these are the steps how to make one seer worth of jug or utensil... we cannot really contain more than what it is capable, but we have to increase the jug itself, enlarge the jug itself and who is the jug? Our own heart. So, if we do these four things – Achara, NishTa, Shraddha, then God's grace comes, and we will realize.

The last question is – *Is it God's grace? Is it our Sadhana? Which is the most necessary thing?*

This is a very important question, but the simple answer is, it is only God's grace which produces desire in us to practice spiritual disciplines and he has given us the equipment meaning a proper human body, human mind. And therefore, if we go on

using to the best of our abilities, this instrument (body and mind complex), that is what we call Sadhana or Self-effort. So, self-effort, divine grace produces desire and self-effort. Self-effort increases God's grace. God's grace increases our self-effort. So, both are two sides of the same coin. But without God's grace, it is not possible. Ultimately, everything is the Grace of God only. That is why even the great Advaita teachers, like Sankaracharya, at the beginning of his voluminous book – Vivekachudamani, states categorically:

दुर्लभं त्रयमेवैतदेवानुग्रहहेतुकम् ।

मनुष्यत्वं मुमुक्षुत्वं महापुरुषसंश्रयः ॥ ३ ॥

durlabham trayamevaitaddevānugrahaHetukam |

manuṣyatvaṁ mumukṣutvaṁ mahāpuruṣasaṁśrayaḥ || 3 ||

Three things are obtainable only by the grace of God, by no other way. What are those three things? A human body, and the desire for God realization, and favorable conditions including holy company. Everything from the beginning to the end is the grace of God. Ultimately, it is the grace of God, but he has given us some equipment, we have to use it. So, this is the answer even to both Sadhana or grace, how to make ourselves more and more capable of receiving God's grace. With this, the questions have been dealt with.

Continuing the discussion on the Five Commandments of Sri Ramakrishna:

In our last class, we have been talking about the Five Commandments of Sri Ramakrishna. These five commandments are the very essence of the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna. And the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna is the essence of Bhagavad Gita. Bhagavad Gita is the essence of all the Upanishads. And the Upanishads are the very essence of Vedas. That is why we call the Upanishads as Vedanta (Veda's Anta, End or Essence).

In our last class, we have taken the first commandment of Sri Ramakrishna. What is it? To sing and to take the name of God with greatest devotion that is possible. That is the first commandment. In other words, God Realization is the only goal of life. And for that, one has to take the name of God and with all one's heart, with all one's capacity, go on remembering, singing, etc. And Sri Ramakrishna was echoing the teaching of especially, Bhagavatam. There, in the Bhagavatam, there is the story with which we are all familiar. The story of one of the greatest devotees of God called Prahlada. His father was Hiranyakashipu. And Hiranyakashipu was also one of the greatest devotees of God. But he had chosen to realize God through the path of negativity / hatred / enmity. So, Hinduism is such a great religion and if I say this is the greatest religion, it is not fanaticism. Hinduism, that means our Vedanta / Vedas

teach us that it is possible to reach God by any of the emotions. There are no emotions which are not capable of carrying us towards God. But usually, we categorize all emotions into positive and negative. Loving a person is a positive emotion. And hating a person is a negative emotion. Lusting after another being is a very negative but that is called Kama and the opposite of it is Prema, like a mother loves a baby and a baby loves a mother, this is called Prema. But really speaking, the secret of these emotions is, that emotion which makes us better people, and which helps us to gradually and better way manifest our good side, our spiritual side, our divinity. That alone is worthy to be called a divine emotion, a better emotion, a positive emotion. Even if some emotion is categorized by us as positive emotion but if it takes us deeper and deeper into the bondage of this world, it is not really a positive emotion. So, please remember, any emotion, whatever people may call it, that takes us nearer to God, is the greatest good emotion and that is how we have to develop.

Coming back, this Hiranyakashipu, he had a son who was the very embodiment of true devotion to God. And the father sent him, like a loving father, to a school and the school was run by teachers who were bond slaves to his father, and they do not want to teach about God. If at all they teach, they only want to teach how to hate God, how to make God an enemy unworthy of any human goal. So, that was what they were trying to teach Prahlada. But Prahlada, on the contrary, when the teachers were sleeping at noon or absent, gathers all his co-pupils and then he is tutoring them, brainwashing them because he knew for definite in his own heart that what I am teaching these people will do the greatest good. So, that shows true love for everybody. So, the essence of what Prahlada was teaching in that Bhagavatam to his fellow-pupils is this:

sravanam kirtanam visnoh

smaranam pada-sevanam

arcanam vandanam dasyam

sakhyam atma-nivedanam

Even there also, the very first step is Shravana. Shravana means someone has to tell us, God exists, is of the nature, and he has got these names, he is endowed with these qualities, etc. Unless we hear something, we have knowledge of something, we cannot generate any desire. So, this is what is doing Shravanam.

After hearing Shravanam, go on singing the names of God. And then after this singing of God's name reinforces our memory. That is called Smaranam. And afterwards, slowly the Bhakti will come, worshipping God, worshipping the devotees of God, thinking God as the master, I am a servant; thinking God is my friend, I am a friend of God; thinking God is my father, I am His child; until it ends in a complete self-surrender which is named by Prahlada as Atma-nivedanam (Total surrender into God / Merging into God / Becoming one with God). This was what Sri Ramakrishna

was trying to tell, Sing the names and glories of God even if you pretend also, that will also work because the name of God is the most powerful. Sri Ramakrishna used to give beautiful examples: I may as well, quote here. You might have come across it. The story is this, very briefly - there was a rich man, he had a wonderful garden and one night, a thief entered into that garden with the purpose of stealing whatever he could from that garden. And there was some noise generated by him and the watchman heard that noise and they understood somebody had entered and they went in search of him. Now, there was no way for this thief to escape from that place. So quickly, probably he had no clothes on, he stripped off his clothes, there was some ashes nearby, and he put on those ashes all over his body and sat down in padmasana under a tree, as if he was meditating. And the servants were very queer people, they saw a Sadhu, a great yogi, and they were shocked, this man was not seen to enter through the gates, so he must have flown over the compound wall and a great yogi with tremendous miraculous powers has entered. So, this news started spreading. As we all know, it starts with a small bit of, piece of information, and it went on gaining volume until all the people in the kingdom heard. So, even the Zamindar came and paid his respects. And it is the custom in India, whenever they visit Sadhus, they offer some sweets or fruits or some small amount of money or whatever they could. So, from long distances, people started coming there, and pouring lots of things which this thief probably never even imagined one could get. But this made the thief think. By just pretending I am a yogi, I am getting all these things. If really, I become a true yogi, what will not I gain? Immediately, that brought him vairagya, and he became a true monk. And really speaking, I will tell you a story when the occasion comes, how another thief coming into contact with a great yogi called Bhavahari Baba, turned himself into a greatest monk. Swami Vivekananda met him in Northern India. He was enquiring of course, is there any Sadhu here, any well-known Sadhu and everybody pointed out to this great monk. Swamiji went and met him. And prostrated before him. He asked him, "Sir! I am curious to know what made you a monk". Then he himself narrated, Atma Katha (Autobiography) - "I was a thief. I came into contact and that is what transformed me". But I will tell you the details when the occasion comes. So, coming back to our subject, that even if you do not have that much of love, a small amount of devotion, a small amount of faith, start with that, we are doing so many things in life which are totally destructive and unnecessary. So, we should be able to take the name of God as part of it and earnestly pray to God, "O Lord! I do not have Bhakti. I do not have any NishTa. I do not have any good Samskaras. Out of your infinite mercy, compassion, please bestow these things upon me". And a sincere prayer brings the grace of God definitely. So, this was what we were talking about.

In that context, we were talking about God and His name, really there is no difference, they are inseparable. Nama and Namni, the name and the object whose name it is. This psychology is well-known to all of us. For example, if you call out your son's name Narayana, immediately Narayana will respond to you. Why? Because that name, that sound is identified with that person. Similarly, when Narayana comes and suddenly

stands in front of you, you will bow, “My Narayana has come!” So, Nama, Namni are inseparably connected together. This is what we are discussing. God’s name is within the reach of God. The greatest glory of God’s name is, there is nobody who can say I am not able to take God’s name because I am poor, because I am uneducated, because I do not have any opportunity. No excuse can be given so far as the name of God is concerned. It is available to everybody like air, well to-do person, poor person, scholarly person, or whatever it is, it is said that even if you do not need to have any faith in the name of God, just repeat God’s name. God’s name is so powerful that it itself like a corrosive substance, it will destroy whatever it comes into contact with, that means God’s name will destroy all our worldly samskaras. I recollect a beautiful incident that happened in UK to my predecessor, Swami Bhavyanandaji Maharaj. One day, an English man came to him and they were discussing about some spiritual subject and the Swami told that the name of God is very powerful. The man said, “I do not believe you”. The Swami became very angry and he shouted, “You are scoundrel”. This person, for first time, was coming to meet the Swami, he was a gentleman and he was shocked. Somebody is addressing me as a scoundrel. Immediately, his face became very red, he did not know how to react. Immediately, Swami Bhavyananda started laughing uproariously and said, “Look my friend, I deliberately used this word. As soon as you heard my words (you are a scoundrel), immediately your whole personality had changed. If this word scoundrel has such tremendous power, do you think the name of God does not have any power at all?” And the result was that man became a disciple of Swami Bhavyananda. So, our Scriptures, our Saints, we ourselves are witnesses to this, God’s name is extremely powerful. It is available to everybody, even to a child, it is available. As I said, it is like a corrosive substance.

And another example that came to my mind –

Supposing somebody says, I do not believe that Potassium Cyanide has got any power. And I say, “OK. You do not need to have any faith in it. I will give you a small quantity and you just swallow it and see what happens”. Every object in this world has a power; every name in this world has a power and everyday we are witnessing it. Supposing you have encountered some person and some clash had developed, and that person might have disturbed you, insulted you, there afterwards, even hearing of the person’s name has brought about a tremendous reaction, your blood pressure might be rising, your anger would be rising, and your mind becomes agitated, all sorts of thoughts would be crowding in your brain. So, what I am trying to tell you, God’s name is available to everybody and its power is incalculable. Every Saint had sung it. And the familiar example also, all of us know. How did Ramayana come into being? We all know who the author was – Valmiki. What was Valmiki? He was a highway robber called Ratnakara. Indians have a terribly good habit of naming people, that fellow must have been one of the poorest fellows on Earth and yet his name was Ratnakara, the very ocean of diamonds, valuable stones, gems, etc. There was a squint-eyed fellow, and his parents named him ‘Padmalochana (Lotus-eyed)’, like that. Anyway, Hindus have this good side, they always give beautiful names to the children, at least

through that we can take God's name. The point is, this Ratnakara, he was living on sin. Then, some good quality must have been there in him, earned through his past lives, so what happened was, Narada took pity upon him and initiated him. What was the mantra? "Mara". Even he was not fit to receive the name, "Rama". But if you go on repeating that word, "Mara" ultimately becomes only "Rama". So, that faith was there, that if you repeat this name, that name itself will purify you and it will destroy all the sins that you have committed; that means the results of your actions. Not only that, this name not only destroys the effects of our past misdeeds, but it will destroy the very samskaras themselves so that the person will not be able to even think even the slightest injurious thought of anybody in this world. Such is the glory of Nama (Nama Mahatmiya). So, it is like a Philosopher's stone converting all baser metals into gold. And probably, many of you can remember the story, one of the incidents that happened in the life of Swamiji, One day, in a Raja's fort in Ketri, he was invited to enjoy the dance of a Nauch girl. But he refused because a woman will be a young woman, will be singing some type of songs, it is not good for monks like me to do it. He was right also. But this lady must have been extremely fortunate, she started singing that beautiful Surdas song / Bhajan which most of you might have heard. If not, please listen to it again, "Prabhu mere avgun chit na dharo" Why? "samadarashi hai nama tiharo" Your name is equal-sighted. All of us are your children. You will, like a most loving mother, you will never distinguish who is a sinner and who is a saint. A person maybe the greatest sinner for everybody else, not for his own mother. So, that song brought about such a change in Swami Vivekananda, immediately he rushed down, witnessed the performance, blessed that blessed woman and went away. So, that is the power of Nama. Saints have been singing unceasingly about the glory of God's name. So, to illustrate it, here are some stories that name is both, that name of God is both the means as well as the end. It is the means to go towards God and ultimately, Nama makes us merge in the Namni. That means we get liberation or Moksha. There is an illustration – while Sri Rama had to construct a bridge to cross the ocean, Hanuman crossed it just with the strength of Rama's name. There was a story again, when Sri Krishna was put on the balance against his name written on a Tulasi leaf, he was found to be lighter. So, this story, probably all of you know. Once upon a time Sri Krishna had many wives – one was Rukmini who was none other than Mahalakshmi; another was Satyabhama, she was younger, more beautiful but very egotistic, that was how it was depicted but extremely loving to Sri Krishna. And once, to get rid of her egotism, Narada advised her, "You do a special ritual and at the end of it, the only condition is you have to donate your husband to some Sannyasi like me". And that lady had a singularly great virtue, she was very innocent. Though egotistic, very innocent; she does not what was guile and she had great faith in Narada, and she asked, "If I donate my husband, then I am losing my husband." "No, no, no – after donating, then I will put him in a balance and equivalent to him, some gold and special jewels you can put and equivalent to his weight, you can donate to me and then take back your husband". And she believed in him and she performed the ritual and at the end of it, this last act had to be done and he was put in one side of the scale, and then

the drama starts. Whatever amount, she had vast amounts of treasures, whatever she put on the other side of the balance, it was only lighter and lighter and lighter. Ultimately, she had nothing more to put. Then she fell at the feet of Narada and said, "Please save me Sir. You only brought me to this state". Then, Narada said, "Yes, yes. There is one simple way. If you want to enjoy that, you have to understand Satyabhama considered herself a great rival to Rukmini. And she thought she was better than Rukmini. So, he said, "Go to Rukmini and fall at her feet, and she can save you". Satyabhama had no option, went to Rukmini and fell and said, "Eldest Sister! This is what happened. Please bestow your grace. Otherwise, we are going to lose our husband". Then, Rukmini said, "This moment I am coming to your house". What did she do? She just took one Tulasi leaf and wrote with the greatest bhakti, the name Sri Krishna and put it on the other side, removing everything that was there. And immediately, Krishna became lighter and then, the Tulasi leaf became the greatest weight, proving beyond doubt that name of God is greater than God himself. Of course, this is only to emphasize the glory of God's name. But God and God's name, Nama and Namni are exactly one and the same.

There was another incident in the life of Sri Ramakrishna. When Sri Ramakrishna was at Dakshineswar, once a Sadhu happened to come there. And we all know, Rani Rasmani had made a wonderful arrangement. What was the arrangement? Any Sadhu, coming to Dakshineswar can stay there for as long as that person wishes, food will be supplied, he can be boarding there and if anything else for his Sadhana is needed, by the insistence of Sri Ramakrishna, that also will be supplied. For example, Kamandalus, Japa malas, blankets, whatever they needed. One Sadhu came, he was a premi Sadhu and he had a big book, and every now and then, he will open the book, read a little, close the book. Sri Ramakrishna became curious, and with the permission of that Sadhu, he went and opened that book, and he was astonished. On every page, only one name was written, "Rama". Perhaps, Sri Ramakrishna looked and asked the Sadhu. The Sadhu smiled and said, "After all, what is the essence of every scripture in this world? It is only God. And God and God's name are one and the same. So, now, and then, I amuse myself by just opening and closing the book". But this is the essence. Don't ask, "Why he was carrying such a big book when he knew this? Well, people have a little bit of their own peculiar habits, idiosyncrasies. We cannot ask why it is so. So, the name of God is wonderful, it is great.

About this power of name, Holy Mother said, "The Mantra purifies the body. Man becomes pure by repeating the mantra of God. As wind removes the cloud so the name of God destroys the cloud of worldliness. See! what a tiny seed is the name of God. From it, in time, come divine moods, devotion, love and spiritual consummation, which is to say, God Realization". So, this is in reference to actually, one day a devotee showed a seed of a banyan tree and if you do not know, the very fruit of a banyan tree is just like a small berry. And inside that berry, there will be literally, thousands of seeds of that banyan tree. So, you can imagine how small is the seed. And if one of those seeds is taken out, put in the soil, in course of time, this huge banyan tree which

sometimes can occupy at least half-an-acre or even one acre of land. That will come. With respect to that, Mother is telling, the tiny seed of God's name can give divine moods, devotion, love, of course, Iswara Sakshatkara and Mukti. Narada Pancharatra is a grand work on Bhakti wherein, Narada says, through the path of devotion, the subtle senses come readily and naturally under control. Carnal pleasures become more and more insipid. As divine love grows in your heart of heart, then words especially, the syllable Om, has been designated as Brahman itself by the Vedas. We all know if nobody likes this word Om, it is a most marvelous word, marvelous mantra. Sri Ramakrishna also tells, ultimately, all rituals merge in the name of God. And every name of God merges itself in Om. Om is the last word and it is the greatest word discovered by our Rishis and it consists of three syllables, "A", "U", and "M". And the whole sound world, that means, the name of every single object in this world is uttered through this human sound box and they have to come, fall under these three syllables, "A", "U" and "Ma". "A" starts at the base of the throat and "M" ends when the lips touch. That means it covers the names of the entire universe. After all, this entire universe is nothing but the manifestation of God with name and form. Sri Chaitanya, he says that the Lord's name is to be always sung by one who is humbler than even a blade of grass with more endurance than that of a tree and who, being himself devoid of conceit, bestows on Earth, on others. There is a beautiful hymn that was written by Chaitanya Mahaprabhu who, many consider him as the great Incarnation of God, born in Bengal in Nadia in the Sixteenth Century and he wrote this most beautiful work, that is called Shikshashtakam – Eight verses on how to progress in Spiritual life. Therein, he emphasizes this – that anybody who wants to take the name of God, he / she is completely free. But the name will not be effective until he develops three particular characteristics or spiritual qualities. What is that?

trinad api sunichena

taror api sahisnuna

amanina manadena

kirtaniyah sada harih

'sada' – always 'Harih' – God should be praised, should be meditated upon. The name of God should be sung. What qualification are necessary?

trinad api sunichena – A person who wants to gain the greatest benefit, he must become humbler than a blade of grass.

taror api sahisnuna – then he should be forbearing. Whatever happens in his life, he must be forbearing like a tree. It is said giving an example of a sandalwood tree, when a sandalwood tree is being cut, and the saw which is cutting the tree or the axe which is breaking it down, the more the saw or the axe are cutting it down, the more the tree perfumes that axe or that saw with its fragrance, sandalwood smell. Even at the cost of

its death, it wants to do benefit only the being that is destroying. So, God's name is compared to that. One has to be extremely forbearing.

First qualification is 'humbler than blade of grass', second qualification is 'more forbearing than even a tree'. And the third spiritual qualification, the quality one has to develop is

amanina manadena – a person should give the highest respect to everything in this world but himself, should never expect any honor, any respect from anybody.

So, if a person has developed these three qualities, then his teaching the name of God will be extremely effective. That is what it really means. Then, one disciple of Sri Ramakrishna is asking Holy Mother, "Is it of any use to be merely repeating His name without intense devotion?". If there be no devotion to God and God's name, is it not mechanical repetition? Holy Mother, she gave a beautiful example, "Whether you jump into water, or pushed into it, your cloth will get drenched, you will also get drenched. Is it not so?" Exactly in the similar manner, repeat the name of God whether your mind is concentrated or not. It means whether you are really having devotion and love for the name of God or not. It will be good for you if you can repeat the name of God for a fixed number of times daily. Then, another devotee is asking Sri Ramakrishna a very legitimate question, "Sir, I would like to take God's name. But unfortunately, I do not get any joy, any happiness, any pleasure, any delight. What shall I do?" So, his question is how can I take delight in God's name? Master, "Pray to God with yearning heart that you may take delight in His name. He will certainly fulfill your heart's desire. One should constantly repeat the name of God. The name of God is highly effective in this Kali Yuga. Clap your hands while repeating God's name and the birds of your sins will fly away". And Sri Ramakrishna himself used to do it even though there was no need. He was a great realized soul, even there was no need for him for any more Sadhana. But to set an example is one reason. My understanding is he used to derive joy at dawn, at dusk, not to speak of at other times, he would clap his hands and take Gaya, Ganga, Gayatri, Gopala, and all these names he used to take. Ecstatic devotion develops if a person takes the name of the Lord. The eyes overflow with tears of joy, words are choked in the mouth, and all the hairs of the body stand erect thrilled with joy. Of course, not at the very beginning but slowly, gradually that will be the effect. And Holy Mother's special teaching is "Japat Siddhah". By repeating the name of God, with or without devotion, slowly it will purify us and bring us great delight, and one day we will find ourselves that we have all the spiritual qualities that are needed.

Today's class, I will end with a beautiful illustration from the life of one of the disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. Sri Ramakrishna had many devotees, he had also what we call, both men as well as women, both rich people and poorest of the poor, also very learned people (Pundits) at the same time, very illiterate people disciple also. One example is Latu Maharaj (Swami Adbhutananda). What I am referring to, her name was Gopala's Mother. This lady's life, I will tell you in detail on some other occasion,

she was a child widow, in those days there was no chance of getting married at all, second time. So, most of the people used to live a very harsh life. That was their fate; the way society treated. But this lady must have been born with extraordinary good samskaras, she developed early, she was a child widow, tremendous love for Gopala (Krishna in the form of baby). And every day, she used to get up at three o' clock, do continuous japa until 6:30, 7:00, then take bath, go to the temple nearby, and her brother was a pujari there. Where she was staying, there was a small Krishna temple. She would assist him in doing the rituals and come back, again do Japa until twelve o' clock or so. Then, she will cook very simple food, eat a little bit, and take one or two hours rest, again get up at three o'clock and until six o' clock, she would go and attend Arathrikam in the temple and again come and do Japam until ten o' clock or so. Then, eat a little bit. This Japa went on for thirty three years continuously and at some point in her life, after about twenty years or so, she was thirty years or so, she happened to hear about Sri Ramakrishna, she and owner of the garden where she was staying, who was also a widow, both of them happened to meet Sri Ramakrishna. And immediately, this lady had become a great devotee of Sri Ramakrishna and very soon, she had a vision of both Sri Ramakrishna and Sri Ramakrishna turned into Gopala and then, she came to Dakshineswar carrying her Gopala on her shoulders. Then, this Gopala started entering into Sri Ramakrishna and coming out, giving her the knowledge that what you call IshTa Devata is none other than Sri Ramakrishna. After a few days, this Gopala started entering into the bodies and outside bodies, going in, coming out of Sri Ramakrishna's disciples and devotees. And after some time, she attended a Chariot Festival and there, she saw her Gopala, her Krishna in everything. Whole world appeared to be permeated by Gopala. That day, she had what we call Vishwaroopa Darshana of Gopala. And Sri Ramakrishna, very sharply afterwards, he certified and told her, "You have achieved everything. You do not need to do anything." So, this is the most marvelous story of Gopala's mother and very beautifully depicted in Sri Ramakrishna, The Great Master – it is a book written by Swami Saradananda. It is not mere biography, but it is a most beautiful elaborate commentary both on the events in the life of Sri Ramakrishna and also explanations for them in a most spiritual way. So, today I will stop here; we are all very fortunate that we are able to attend this Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna and next class, I will be taking one-by-one, the other commandments of Sri Ramakrishna and go into little more detail. Meanwhile, I sent Anuja, these articles that I have written – **Five commandments of Sri Ramakrishna, Ten commandments of the Holy Mother, and "Am I a devotee of God?"** Three articles combined. Those who are interested, please go through them because once you go through them, that will tell what I am going to discuss in a slightly elaborate way. But in essence, not going through everyone of them sentence by sentence.

Om Jananim Sāradam devam Rāmakrishnam jagadgurum।

Pādapadme tayoh shritvā pranamāmi muhurmuḥuḥ ॥

May Sri Rāmakrishna, Holy Mother and Swāmi Vivekānanda bless us all with Bhakti.