

GOSPEL OF SRI RĀMAKRISHNA - PART 19

SWĀMI DAYATMANANDA

ॐ जननीं सारदां देवीं रामकृष्णं जगदगुरुम् ।

पादपद्मे तयोः श्रित्वा प्रणमामि मुहुर्मुहुः ॥

Jananim Sāradam devim Rāmakrishnam jagadgurum।

Pādapadme tayoh shritvā pranamāmi muhurmuḥuḥ ॥

ॐ तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनं

कविभिरीडितं कल्मषापहम् ।

श्रवणमङ्गलं श्रीमदाततं

भुवि गृणन्ति ते भूरिदा जनाः ॥

Om tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

kavibhir īḍitaṁ kalmaṣāpaham ।

śravaṇa-maṅgalaṁ śrīmad ātataṁ

bhuvi gṛṇanti te bhūri-dā janāḥ ॥

Swami answering questions received from devotees:

This week we have one question. Since Eighteenth of this month, there is an Adhikamasa declared. Some devotees want to know what is Adhikamasa, and why it got that name and what can or cannot be done in this particular month. Regarding that, I will speak. First of all, according to Hindu astrological science, not only astrological but astronomy also, Hindus prepare Panchanga (Almanacs). There are two varieties of Almanacs. One, prepared according to the movement / revolution of the moon (Chandrayana) and the other is according to the movements of the Sun (Souryayana). Now, this is an astronomical event. We know the Sun is moving, the

moon is also moving, rather revolving, and the Earth also is revolving. Now, according to Hindu Astronomy, the speeds at which the moon revolves, or the Sun revolves, always there is a slight difference. Every month this gap goes on. Imagine two people, they started a running race, there is a target. So, one person reaches it within thirty days, but the other person has taken thirty-two days. So, if you understand this, the Sun is always moving slightly faster and the moon is moving slightly slower. So, every year, approximately, there is a ten-day difference between the movement of the Sun and the movement of the Moon. And approximately, every three years, about twenty-nine months, full thirty-days difference will come between the movement of the Sun and the movement of the moon. Now, the whole year is divided into twelve months whether it is English calendar or Hindu calendar or any calendar. Three hundred and sixty days approximately, and before I go further, this explanation has no relationship with the leap year. This is purely a Hindu calendrical reference. So, every year, the Moon is lagging ten days behind the Sun. Approximately, every three years I said, about twenty-nine months or so, the Moon is exactly thirty days behind. As we also know that the Sun, according to Hindu Almanac, enters into a particular Rashi and that there are twelve Rashis for twelve months. According to the Sun's entrance into each particular Hindu month (not English months), like Chaitra, Vaishaga, Jeshta, etc. and every month, there would be a calculation of a Rasi like Dhanur Rasi, Mesha Rasi, then Tula Rasi, Kanya Rasi, Kumbha Rasi, etc. Sri Ramakrishna was born in Kumbha Rasi. **Kumbha Rashiste Bhaskare Shukle Pakshe Dwithiyam thithau!**

So, every month the Sun enters into a particular constellation called Rashi, and the Sun gets a particular name. That is why we say there are twelve Adityas (means Suns). When the same Sun gets twelve different names every single month, according to the entrance of that particular Rashi. So, the Sun has got twelve names. Now, as I was explaining earlier, the Moon's movement has to be synchronized with the Sun's movement. Now, the Sun is thirty days ahead and the Moon is still lagging behind (slow movement). So, it required another month to catch up with the Sun. And so, this Moon has completed his twelve months but still lagging behind. He takes an extra month to synchronize with the movement of the Sun and these thirty days of this month is called Adhikamasa (means extra month or extra time) of thirty days required for the Moon to keep up with the movement of the Sun. As we know, Hindus have given each month a particular name. When this moon reaches its last month and still requires another thirty days, we cannot give the moon another name of the month like Chaitra. Therefore, the last month where the moon has to catch up with the Sun, will be practically sixty days with the same name but that is not very comfortable for our calculations. We want to keep the months exactly twelve, not thirteen. And mind you, approximately every three years, this occurs. Second, it can occur at any time of the month, not necessarily one fixed month. So, this is called Adhikamasa. And when this Adhikamasa comes, whatever special festivities like Durga Puja, etc. have to be done, will be usually postponed to the last month instead of the first thirty days, the last

thirty days. So, that is the explanation to synchronize the slow movement of the moon along to the movement of the Sun which is slightly faster and bring them to start exactly at the same point. Next circulation, that is called Adhikamasa (Thirty days) because the Moon takes thirty days more to catch up with the Sun. So, that thirty days is called Adhikamasa. And it has another two names: one name is called (according to one Aditya) Narayana because Bhagavan Narayana is manifesting to us to create, sustain, and destroy. The entire creation due to the Sun, if there were to be no Sun, no life, no light, no sustenance, no nourishment, every other light – moon, stars, etc. everything depends upon this sunlight. That is why every twelve months, the Sun has got a special name. One of the names is Narayana. So, we call him Suryanarayana. So, this particular month is also called Suryanarayana's month. And it is also called Purushothama masa. Purushothama means Narayana. Suryanarayana masa is the second name. Adhika masa, Suryanarayana masa, or Utthama purusha masa, Purushothama masa, or it is also called Mala masa (Mala means impurity). The general rule is one should not do anything auspicious like entering into a new house, entering into a temple, or celebrating something good, these things it is said we should not do in that Adhikamasa. And it is a time when Suryanarayana is very famous. That special month is called Suryanarayana masa. Now, another way of understanding is Bhagavan Narayana has got many auspicious qualities and this Narayana in the form of the Sun enters into any particular Rashi, he manifests more of certain auspicious qualities (mangala karaka guna). So, throughout the twelve months, with twelve names, twelve rashis, Bhagavan Narayana manifests every month some particular qualities appropriate to that month. But then, when this Adhikamasa comes, all the twelve months' great qualities are manifested within these thirty days. Therefore, it is a very auspicious time for spiritual activities – Japa, Dhyana, or Stotra, Nama sankirtana example, Vishnu Sahasranama, Lalita Sahasranama, Gita or Upanishad parayana, Ramayana parayana, and especially Sundarakanda parayana, etc. they give a very extra special result, that is our faith according to our Dharma Shastras. Second, one can also undertake certain things like special pujas, etc. because thirty so-called extra time is given to us. Truly speaking, there is no extra time. Twelve months is strictly twelve months, whether it is called Adhikamasa or not. But this is just to synchronize the movement of the moon to the sunlight, that is all. And our Panchangas (Almanacs) are created according to the movements of the moon which is called Lunar Calendar or it is called Solar calendar according to the movement of the Sun. So, there are some people who follow the Lunar and we, in the Ramakrishna Order, follow the Lunar Calendar. And there are a few people, not the majority, but a minority, who follow the Solar Calendar. So, for the people of the Lunar Calendar, this problem, or this opportunity of thirty more days, will be coming. This is the explanation. Adhikamasa means we do not get thirty extra days but the moon because of its movement, it takes thirty days more to catch up with the Sun and then synchronize, then only calendars can be properly done, whether it is English calendar or anything, twelve months. Every three years or so, this extra month, so called Lunar month comes, and that is named as Malamasa or

Purushotthama masa (masa means month). Some worldly auspicious activities like marriage, like entering into a new home, etc. they say should not be done but one should use it for extra spiritual practices which will be very good to counter this mala or impurity. This is the brief explanation according to the astrological calendar.

Of course, I have to confess that I do not know much about these astrological calculations, etc. All that I know is Bhagavan Vishnu is sakala graha janaka. He is the progenitor of all the Grahas. And ordinary people are scared of these grahas; some grahas are very good, some grahas like Shani and Rahu are supposed to be very inauspicious because they bring more suffering, etc. and that is a terrible superstition we have to go through. Purandara dasa says to us, when a devotee takes refuge in the Divine Lord who is the creator, the Janaka of all the Grahas, what can these puny grahas do against the infinite power of the Lord? Therefore, Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother, and all of us say, following their teachings, that if you take God's name, everything is absolutely fine. For people who are not that superstitious, suppose somebody had to get married, there is no choice for whatever social, physical, or external reasons, whatever reasons, can they get married? Take God's name and get married. Nothing will happen because if something has to happen, it is not because these grahas got power over us, it is our poorva janma karma phala, and God is the distributor of that karma phala. So, if we take God's name, out of His grace, anything you may do, it will all turn out to be very auspicious. But if you are still a bit superstitious, try to avoid them. Only in cases where it is not possible to avoid, do some extra japa, do puja of God, and everything will be washed away. What is my point? **That Grahas do not influence us as most people have superstition.** The Grahas only indicate according to our karma phala, what is going to happen and not the other way around. But it is a beautiful opportunity, and I have to add – it is very good to undertake spiritual practices. Why only in Adhikamasa? That is called Shubha dhina on which God is remembered. And that is called Ashubhadhina when God is forgotten. So, we the devotees must have more faith in God, less faith in these Grahas, and do whatever we want to progress in our spiritual life. But you know, people have got superstitions, “Oh! You did this one in the Adhikamasa, you should not have done. That is why it is not...”. It is totally an illogical wrong explanation. The true explanation is if something is to happen, Adhika or no Adhika, it is going to happen. But because we do not know, we are seeking some lame excuses. Every day, let no day pass without taking God's name. That will overcome the influence of any other Graha, including Shani graha. Shani graha is only the bond slave of Bhagavan; it cannot do anything. Then, why some people suffer under Shani graha? It is not because of Shani graha but because of purva janma karma phala. And every suffering is a gift of God, as Holy Mother says. It can only take us to God. This is according to my understanding of what is Adhikamasa.

Continuing the discussion on the Gospel

Now we will enter into our most auspicious and this is the Adhikamasa, this is the best type of class we can do – our Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna.

We are discussing the Fifth commandment of Sri Ramakrishna. What is it? **Live like a maidservant in a rich man's house.** Who is this rich man? Bhagavan himself. Bhagavan's house is this Jagat. He has created it, it belongs to Him. And we are all people who are supposed to work there. What is the work? There is only one work. We have become separated from God. Now, we have to re-unite ourselves with God. We are like lost children, lost in the forest of this world. And slowly, we have to go back to, from where we have come. Mano chalo nija niketane. And in that journey, the most important things that can help us are these five commandments of Sri Ramakrishna. In our last class, we have been discussing some salient points of what is the meaning of 'living like a maidservant'? The essence of it is, what has been expounded in seven-hundred slokas by Bhagavan Sri Krishna. What is it? Live in this world like a maidservant, that is without any attachment. At the same time, the hardest work, the most work is done only by the maidservant. Of course, she is paid. There are two types of maidservants – one type of maidservant, she is employed, she is salaried, and she takes the money; according to her work, wages are paid. This is how most people in this world live. But it is not necessary we have to be paid maidservants. We can also be voluntary maid servants called **Siva jnane Jiva seva**. That is what Sri Ramakrishna had advocated. What about people who require salaries? Yes, one can take salary at the same time, one can spiritualize, that is called Karma Yoga. So, this particular commandment is dealing with Karma Yoga. In my last class, we have discussed in some detail, what it means to live like a maidservant. In essence, do everything not haphazardly, not without interest, not without concentration, not without shraddha, but as if your very life depends upon it, you do it. But know in your heart of hearts that nobody belongs to you. The question that comes is, to whom do they belong? Only to God. Then to whom do I belong? Because if nobody belongs to me, I also do not belong to anybody. Then, to whom do I belong? I must belong to somebody – I belong to God. We all belong to God. This whole world belongs to God. **Mata me Parvati devi pita devo maheswaraH bhantavaH shiva bhaktasca swadeshu bhuvanatrayam.** bhandavaH, who are my relatives? Shiva bhaktas. Shiva does not mean 'Shiva'. Shiva means God. Narayana bhakta, Devi bhakta, Christ Bhakta, or Allah Bhakta, any sincere devotee, we are all close relatives. Why? Relatives are related to each other, they are closer to each other, they support each other, they help each other, and they help each other to progress towards God. That is the meaning of relatives. But what about the other people? They are also children of God, but they may not be so helpful to us. So, our distinction should be, who are helpful to us and who are not helpful to us. That is the only distinction – helpful, not in worldly prosperity but in spiritual prosperity. That is called living a detached life, detachment does not mean indifference. Detachment means all attachment that is turned towards God. That is the meaning of it. So, every spiritual aspirant ultimately learns that he has to live in this world with detachment. Why is it so? Because you can just experience every single day, a few days back

absolutely fine, either Covid, or heart attack, or accident, something happens, suddenly this relationship is completely cut-off.

Here, I have to insert a note – Bhagavan Shankaracharya who is so insightful in so many ways, he tells us, there are two kinds of deaths – visible death and invisible death. What is visible death? When a person dies, then everybody can notice, this person's prana has departed, and what lies here is a lifeless body, very soon it will degenerate and disintegrate. This is called Visible death. But there is another kind of death, when does it come? That is not the proper question. When does it not come? Every single second, it is coming to us. That is what we need to understand. Every single second, it is happening. How? Even by the time we started this Kathamrita (Gospel) class, already so many minutes passed, and body changed, brain changed, maybe after hearing this talk, some of your ideas also have changed, and every millisecond, billisecond, things are changing. This is not really noticed. Every change is a death of the present and the beginning of the future. That is what is called Present. There is no 'present'. Like movement of a river, time never comes to a stop, of which we take notice, or we do not take much notice. This is called invisible death. Then, the scripture warns us to be aware of both and detachment comes. One day, I am also going to go through visible death, but every second, we are nearer the (as I call funnily) chopping block, that means near death. That is why sometimes I say you do not take it too seriously, do not celebrate Birthday because every birthday is a reminder that you are one year nearer to the chopping block. I must have told you, whether in this class or anywhere – one of our Swamis and Swamis are many times, some of them very peculiar. He, in his late age, decided to write his diary. What did he do? He purchased one diary book, and everyday I want to record what important things are happening in my life. And it does not have any calendar that is January 1st, January 2nd, etc. It simply contains blank pages. Then, how did he start? He was past sixty, he calculated approximately how many years more are left out for me. Let us say, fifteen years. So, 15 * 365 days and so, he will start with that number, say 4500 or whatever it is. First day will be the 4500th day. Next day will be the 4499th day. Third day will be the 4498th day. I thought this was an excellent way of reminding ourselves how precious time is, and every day gone is a day that will never return back. There is a beautiful stotram, Śivāparādha-kṣamāpana-stotram composed by no less than Sankaracharya himself...

आयुर्नश्यति पश्यतां प्रतिदिनं याति क्षयं यौवनं

प्रत्यायान्ति गताः पुनर्न दिवसाः कालो जगद्भक्षकः ।

लक्ष्मीस्तोयतरङ्गभङ्गचपला विद्युच्चलं जीवितं

तस्मान्मां शरणागतं शरणद त्वं रक्ष रक्षाधुना ॥

āyur-naśyati paśyatāṁ pratidināṁ yāti kṣayaṁ yauvanaṁ

pratyāyānti gatāḥ punarna divasāḥ kālo jagad-bhakṣakaḥ |
lakṣmīs-toya-taraṅga-bhaṅga-capalā vidyuccalaṁ jīvitam
tasmānmām śaraṇāgataṁ śaraṇada tvaṁ rakṣa rakṣādhunā ||

āyur-naśyati paśyatām – Our longevity is getting depleted just in front of our eyes as we go on seeing, eleven hours in today is already gone, like that.

pratidinaṁ yāti kṣayaṁ yauvanaṁ – Every single day depletes one day in our youth.

lakṣmīs-toya-taraṅga-bhaṅga-capalā – Wealth is like the dancing of the waves, the lightning when it strikes on the waves (that are always moving); getting the wealth, losing the wealth, stock market is like that. Just a blink of an eyelid, money is gone.

O Shiva! Under these circumstances, you are the only refuge O Lord! Please save me immediately because if you come late, I may not be there for you to save. And one of our devotees called Yamunacharya, he adds something to this separately, of course but I am bringing it together. He says, “O Lord! Your name is that you are the savior, the rescuer, of the Anada bandhu. You are a great savior for those who do not have anybody to protect them. And in this whole world, I am the greatest of these Anatas (no natha, nobody related to me, to protect me). If you do not immediately grab this grand opportunity to come and save me, then you are in danger of losing your title of Dhinabandava. So, I am providing you, out of my great mercy, the opportunity to keep your Olympic title of Dhinanatha, Dhinarakshaka, Abhatpandava, etc. So, for your sake, I am sacrificing, I want to offer it to you on a first-come-first-serve basis. So, please come and save me so that your Olympic title will be saved for this time. Of course, the only problem is Olympic titles are taken only once in a few years. But here, every single minute this Olympic title is changing because if somebody else grabs this moment, he will get the title and you will lose the title. So, another way of saying, excepting God there is no savior at all. That is what we have to always keep in mind.

āyur-naśyati paśyatām pratidinaṁ yāti kṣayaṁ yauvanaṁ pratyāyānti gatāḥ punarna divasāḥ – the day gone, never going to come.

kālo jagad-bhakṣakaḥ – this kAla (time) is the swallower, devourer of everything in this world. The whole world is being devoured every billisecond.

lakṣmīs-toya-taraṅga-bhaṅga-capalā vidyuccalaṁ jīvitam – life is like lightning, one second and it is gone.

tasmānmām śaraṇāgataṁ śaraṇada tvaṁ rakṣa rakṣādhunā – O Lord Shiva! Therefore, come immediately, grab this opportunity, save me, and you can retain your Olympic title. Otherwise, it is not possible.

Anyway, since the topic came, I also remember Purandaradasa had composed a beautiful song, he is telling, [**kayo karunaniti**] O Lord of compassion! Come and save

me. Because if you want to protect your Olympic title [**vara birudugalu oliya bekadhare**] that you are the Lord of Ocean of mercy, compassion, [**dvaritadi kayo Purandara vitala!**] Come quickly and keep your title. Like this, our devotee poets have phrased it in their songs so beautifully, both in Sanskrit as well as here also. That is what we want to discuss now. Every spiritual aspirant has to learn if he has not learnt, that he has to live in this world with detachment. Why? Because **anything can happen to anybody at anytime at any place in any way**. Nobody will be spared of this, and we do not know where we are going to die, when and how, and the death comes unawares, and then at that time, if we do not remember God, we will be the losers. And we cannot remember God unless we practice it every day. And to practice it and to rely upon God, we have to understand nobody else can save us, excepting God. That is called living like a maidservant in this world.

So, here are practical instructions how to live like a maidservant. **First**, one must perform one's duties diligently with reverence and love. We maybe maidservants. That means we are paid people, it is not our work, somebody's work we are doing. But first of all, we have to think it is not Tom, Dick and Harry, XYZ, it is God Himself. Every house, every person, every insect, every mountain, every river, every plant, everything that is visible as well as invisible belongs to God. And remember in brackets, Covid also is a living creature, it is a virus, and that virus belongs to whom? Belongs to God. If this virus belongs to God, who has the power to control it? Only God. And if God has let it here, He also commanded the Covid, "Go and do this job. That is your job in this world". Why do you think He does it? Because according to the Karma Phala of each one of us, if any one of us do not believe in what I am saying, that person is not an Asthika, he is a Nasthika. What am I saying? To clarify, the whole universe is the creation of God, manifestation of God, none other than God. Whatever happens in this universe happens only according to His will. **Sakali tomari iccha; iccha mayi tara tumi**. Somebody is a saint, that is Your will. Somebody is a villain, is a most evil person, that also is by the will of Divine Mother. She is playing both sides of the Chessboard; she is sitting, and she is playing in two different forms, and for whose sake? For her own entertainment. That is called Leela. Hard to believe but hundred percent truth. So, why does evil come? Who has said that is evil? Why does good come? Who says that is good? It is we, puny human beings that are saying that is evil, and that is good. That is completely wrong understanding. The good, the evil, both are good because it is the good Lord who is playing, it is a divine sport. Of course, we do not understand it. So, until we understand it, and this understanding comes only after the realization of God. Until that time, we have to have faith in God and say, "Oh Lord! If some evil is happening, it is only because of your will. Excepting your will, nothing else will happen". **Karo dao ma brahma pado; Kare karoma adogami**. It is you, O Mother! Who makes somebody attain the position of Brahma. And it is you who makes some other person, of the same person, come down to the lowest level of what we call, inorganic matter, what is called lifeless matter. Truthfully, there is no lifeless matter. Everything is Brahman. Everything has life, Sat-Chit and Ananda. But for our gross

eyes, we divide – this is with life, this is without life. This is with movement, this is without movement. Scientists tell us that there is nothing which is not dynamic. There is nothing called static. Coming back, we have to pray to God, “Make me understand, O Lord! I understand it, but not really. Intellectually, yes. With whole heart, no. So, give me that power”. So, when we perform, diligently means what? Paying absolute attention and with reverence because we are serving not somebody else, not ourselves, it is the Divine Lord in the form of both myself as well as other people. How come? Every day we eat food. As an example, we think I have a body, I am hungry, and I cook food or obtain food and I am feeding myself. This is called Maya, Ajnana, bondage. What is the right thing? That this body belongs to God, this mind belongs to God, the person who is residing within, he is Jivatma, he is none other than God. It is God from outside who is supplying everything for the God inside. The God from outside in the form of the Sun, the moon, the fire, etc.

गामाविश्य च भूतानि धारयाम्यहमोजसा ।

पुष्णामि चौषधीः सर्वाः सोमो भूत्वा रसात्मकः ॥ 13॥

gām āviśhya cha bhūtāni dhārayāmy aham ojasā

puṣṇāmi chauṣhadhīḥ sarvāḥ somo bhūtvā rasātmakaḥ

In the Fifteenth Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita, I grow food, I myself enter into the food, in the form of energy (Surya Rashmi) and then I supply this food, this energy to creatures. Only plants have the ability to convert the energy of the Sun directly into food / energy. But other than plants, animals, Human beings – we all depend upon plants or each other for nourishment, what we call protein, energy, generally what-we-call food. From outside, I am manufacturing, I am supplying. But after eating, we have to convert it into energy. So, food is nothing but energy (vitamins, etc.) necessary, the petrol necessary for running of this motor-car, this living chariot. So, from inside, it has to be re-converted. And who is the re-converter? Again, in the Fifteenth says a few verses later,

अहं वैश्वानरो भूत्वा प्राणिनां देहमाश्रितः ।

प्राणापानसमायुक्तः पचाम्यन्नं चतुर्विधम् ॥ 14॥

aham vaiśhvānaro bhūtvā prāṇināṁ deham āśhritaḥ

prāṇāpāna-samayuktaḥ pachāmy annaṁ chatur-vidham

I myself manifest in every body, every pranis’ stomach in the form of jatharagni (digestive fire, acid) and digest the food taken from outside. And digestion means converting the food into energy and I myself in the form of Prana, supply it to different limbs, different sense organs so that this Gadi, **sab samay Bhagavan ka paas**

chalta rahta hai – it progresses towards God. We are all progressing slowly or faster according to our purva janma samskaras. So, that is called reverence. We have so many examples. One day a devotee was serving Sri Ramakrishna. And he had quite a number of dishes. I have to tell you this fact, of all the people in India, there is a state called Bengal, Bengalis' food is the richest food because minimum five to seven items should be there, even the poorest person. Whereas in South India, rice, rasam, and sambhar, and some buttermilk. Buttermilk is a very peculiar name. When you convert this milk into curd and buttermilk, there is neither butter nor milk there. I do not know how that peculiar name has come. So, Rice, Rasam, Sambhar if at all, then this buttermilk. In Bengal, at least five to seven good items should be there and they have this saying, **Madhurena samapayeth**. All this food goes inside. And for whom? For the vaishvanara. This devotee did not understand that. He perhaps thought Sri Ramakrishna – great man but he loves food. That is why he is having so many dishes, some thought like that came. Then Sri Ramakrishna, he can understand other people's minds just as we can see things in a glass case. So, immediately he was smiling. He was not saying anything. And this happened to be a lady devotee. And then Sri Ramakrishna mixed something from his plate and with his hand, he brought that food in the fist to the mouth. Suddenly, this lady saw a snake with a swaying hood, came out of the mouth, snatched the food literally and immediately disappeared inside. The devotee was frightened of course. Now what is the symbolism of that event? Who is the snake? That snake is called the Divine Lord in the form of Vaishvanara or Jatharagni so that Sri Ramakrishna is eating so that his body would live. And why the body should live? Not for his sake, he has specially come with a mission, for our sake. **Pranarpana jagata tarana krintana kali dor**. For helping us to destroy, to break, to axe this bond of Kali Yuga, that is Ajnana. That was his only mission in life. So, with reverence anybody is eating food, he may be an ignorant man, but he does not understand that within each one of us, living as well as non-living, only Lord Jagannatha is there, and Divine Mother is there. We have no place there. Our Ahamkara is an unnecessary appendix that should be cut out, operated upon. So, with reverence. And where there is reverence, there should not be fear. So, there should be love. Like a loving mother who feeds when she is suckling her small baby, with what love! This mother is doing, that is [I will narrate a small experience of mine, I was at Ulsoor nearly fifty years back, this temple construction was going on. And we had to employ lot of coolies, and one of them was a woman. They were working for nearly two years. She became pregnant, and she gave birth, and she had to work to earn money so she used to bring the baby and tie a small cloth to a small branch, there were a lot of trees at that time, suckle the baby and put her in that cloth. One day, I happened to go at about twelve o' clock, it was time for them coolies, they bring their own food. This lady saw; her baby was crying; the baby must be two months or three months old, so she took up that baby and she started suckling that baby. At that moment, I happened to glance at her. I saw that the eye, the Dhrshti of the mother was so much focused upon the baby with such rare love, I have seen so many mothers suckling the babies, but this was an unforgettable moment, as though the three

worlds did not exist, only that baby was existing and that baby was the life of this lady, with that motherly love!] **Ya Devi Sarva Bhuteshu Matru rupena samsthita**. This is what we see in any female creature who has given birth. That is called Tenderness, that love, manifestation of the Divine. So, serve, do every duty, not negligently, not without reverence, reverence means looking upon it as divine work, and with infinite love. Diligently means absolute concentration, focus and awareness. This is one condition.

Second, one must never forget that in this world, no one belongs to him excepting God. So, **antha kala dhalli**, when we are going to leave this body, who is going to come to the rescue? Who is going to receive us with loving tenderness and make arrangements in the afterlife? Only God belongs to us. And of course, God belongs to everybody. Excepting God, no one belongs to us. Only our Guru and only our God.

Three, without acquiring love for God and some amount of detachment, it is impossible not to be overwhelmed by attachments and cares. This is a very important point. It is not possible to develop this so-called detachment, about which we are discussing. Detachment means looking upon every work as God's work. And here, I remember something very important. It may be useful for you, so I am narrating... When I was in the U.K, there was a devotee, and she gave birth to an autistic son. Of course, the child was so beautiful, so lovely, so sweet smiling, we all fell in love whenever the mother used to bring the child. And the child moved from one hand to the other hand, every devotee loved this lovely child. Until he was about two-and-a-half or three years old, nobody had discovered that he was an autistic child, he was not talking at all. The parents got worried, and they took him to the doctor, and the doctor after some tests, declared that this child is severely autistic. Now, the heart of this devotee woman broke. She says, "What crime have I committed! I am only devoted, I have never done any harm to anybody. Why did God give me...?" She came to me. Then, of course, the usual platitudes – it is all because of poorva janma karma, and all those things I told. But it may not have that much of an effect unless we believe it very strongly. Even then, it is hard to swallow this philosophy. True but difficult to swallow. Then I told her, "You love Holy Mother, isn't it?" She said, "Yes". "Supposing Holy Mother brings this one child to you and it is an autistic child, places that child in your lap and says it is my wish that you bring up this child for my sake. I am giving you this special assignment. As my child but treat it as if it is yours. Can you do that?" What will you do? If Holy Mother asks you, requests you, of course, Holy Mother never requests, it is only commandment. God never requests. The devotee said, "Of course, if really Holy Mother comes, that is what I will do. Gladly, I will bring up". And it is true. Because God has given that child to me. It is not my child, but the problem will come as soon as we attribute, this is my child. I have given birth. And since the child is not normal, I must have committed some papa to bring into this world this kind of child. So, what will other people looking at my child think? They might smirk behind my back, of course in front everybody will show sympathy, etc. I said, "That is none of your business. You do not say that this child, even though born

out of your body, is not your child, it belongs to God. God has given this child to your care. And it is His wish, how do we know? Because He has given it to your lap. You bring it up exactly as if God will be pleased. If you bring up this child as His child, you are only doing it but do it lovingly, etc.” This is how we have to learn. Whether good children, bad children, good children – you are not responsible, similarly bad children, unhealthy children, defective children, they also do not belong to you. They have come to exhaust their karma phala, you have got them to exhaust your karma phala and by exhausting each other’s karma phala we move forward towards God. The whole world is a school and a gymnasium for us to move forward to realize God. That is the real purpose. So, one must do everything diligently, with reverence and love. What are we talking about? Without some love for God, Bhakti and without some faith in Him, and this practice of detachment is not possible. But with these two, slowly we have to practice, and slowly it becomes a habit, slowly may be one-millionth of a percent in this year, what do you see? We are progressing towards God. It is impossible not to be overwhelmed by attachments and care. Something good happens to those whom we think belong to us, we are happy. Not so good happens, we are unhappy. Both affect us, and all because we are attached to them. That means we do not think they belong to God. We think that they belong to us. It is exactly like, you know, if somebody rents you a house, you are just residing there, it does not belong to you, and the condition is, you should return that house to God or the person you have taken it from, in as good a condition as possible, when you entered into it. So, this body-mind, all these relationships, they are like working in a new town, and we have to think that it is our family, but in our heart of hearts, we have to know that we have nothing to do with it. But we have to learn our lessons, and that is why this world is created.

If one does not know how to detach the mind at least to some extent, it is impossible to focus the mind on God. This is the secondary result. First, it is impossible not to be overwhelmed by the ups and downs. Secondly, if we are not able to control our mind, it is impossible to think of God with a fixed mind. So, Sri Ramakrishna gives us all, devotees, clear and definite guidance – one must discharge duties with great love and care, no one can attain the state of inaction except by going through the field of action. This Samsara, this world is a playground or a place of action. What is the purpose? Through action, slowly we progress and when we progress, what is generally called action becomes really inaction. Let me explain in today’s class what I mean by that. Usually, when we do something, we call it labor. The harder, the more grief producing, suffering it produces.

First I will give a small example of this beautiful thing, there was a factory worker, on Saturday they had to work half day; half Saturday and Sunday were holidays. One Saturday morning, the factory manager comes and announces, “We have some extra orders boys. If you can work this afternoon also, you will be paid extra. But you cannot have a holiday”. This fellow here, he grumbles, “What! From Monday till Saturday afternoon I am working like a dog, and you want me to work another half day, where is the time for me? Don’t you know I am a human being? You cannot press me, I do not

want extra money. I will not work for you, let those who want work". It is voluntary of course. What does this fellow do? He will go home, pack up his backpack, grab some sandwiches, and happily go mountain climbing which is much harder than factory work. And he does not think he is wasting his time, he does not feel he is tired because this work gives him great joy. Whereas factory work is only for earning the required money, not his first love. His main love is this one. So, what am I talking about? That life does not give us the choice. Both good and bad, everything will have these things.

Another example comes to my mind, I will just take one or two minutes more. A fellow had a dog. One day, he wanted to go out. He took his dog with him, and then he tied the dog and the dog was very restless, conveying, "I do not want to be tied down to this tree". So, the owner says, "OK, Let the dog be free". So, he removes the chain. What does the dog do? Happily, lies down under the same tree on the same spot and goes snoring. Now, what is the point? What was it doing before? Lying down. What is it doing now? Lying down. What is the difference? Before, it thinks I am forced to do this because there is a chain. Now, the chain is removed, I am free, I can do whatever I like, but it does exactly the same thing. If we have detachment, that is called Freedom. Everything will be the same, but with a detached mind, when we do something and that is what we are all striving for, freedom, it will take us nearer to God.

This is what is being expounded here by Sri Ramakrishna, nobody can attain to the state of inaction. Inaction means what? Literally translated, inaction means not doing anything. It is not possible not to do anything. So long as there is a body, so long as there is a mind, it is impossible. Even sleeping is an action, deep sleep is an action. And for that, you have to do a lot of hard work. If you have worked very hard, become tired, that is the condition for you to get good relaxing sleep. If you have not done so, sleep will not come. So, inaction means you do not feel the bondage. You feel you are free, freedom brings happiness, any action that is done with love does not feel like bondage. So, if we do that with love, and that we have to develop, that is called true detachment. Detachment means attachment with love. So, if we do that way, every action will turn into a spiritual practice and soon it will take us to God. So, Bhagavad Gita is teaching us,

न हि कश्चित्क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत् ।

na hi kaśhchit kṣhaṇam api jātu tiṣṭhatyakarma-kṛit

So, for anybody, it is impossible to not do anything. Every second, we are breathing, and it is impossible to stop breathing. Only a dead body can stop breathing. So, it is not possible. Then, what to do? Do every action for love of God with complete freedom. You choose: I am not doing it as a slave. I am doing it as a loving service to God. And that is what is called 'living like a maid servant'. There are some more beautiful points with regard to the instructions of Sri Ramakrishna. Of course, Sri Ramakrishna did not directly explain these things but we can derive these meanings to ourselves – we will discuss in our next class.

Om Jananim Sāradam devim Rāmakrishnam jagadgurum |

Pādapadme tayoh shritvā pranamāmi muhurmuhuh ||

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