

Verses Addressed to the Mind

For about 18 years, starting in 1984, Pūjya Swāmī Chidānandajī gave the early morning talk in the Samādhi Hall whenever he was in the Āśram. The last extended period that he was here was in the months of January, February, and March, 2002, and he did something different during that period. He gave a series of talks on the book by Samartha Rāmdās, the *guru* of Śivājī, entitled, *Verses Addressed to the Mind*.

There may, or may not, have been any significance in him giving those talks right before he fully retired, but there were two main themes of interest in those lectures. First of all it was Rāmdās speaking to his own mind. Second, the principal advice he gave to the mind was to repeat God's name.

That Rāmdās was addressing his own mind points out a fact to us that we often overlook. We can speak to our mind, direct it, guide it, cajole it, because we are not the mind. Indeed we are not the ego, because just as we say, "My clothes, my body, my mind," we also say, "my ego," meaning it is something separate from us. Also, when Rāmdās spoke to his mind, he spoke not only as something separate, but as something capable of directing the mind. In other words, the ultimate truth about ourselves may be unknowable, because it can never be an object to us, but it is not just some mirror, it has the ability to do everything, including instruct our mind.

But then, we want to know ourselves, have confidence in it. Therefore, Rāmdās's method was to repeat God's name. Some people suggest meditation, which is akin to repeating God's name. Others recommend study of the scriptures, direct enquiry. But these latter methods suggest to our mind that what we are can be an object to it. That can never happen. How then can we discover who we are? The answer is repetition of the name. We repeat the name, we don't look for ourselves as an object, and ultimately the mystery reveals itself. It reveals itself as who we deeply feel ourselves to be right now.

So as our thoughts are on Pūjya Swāmījī this week which leads to the first year anniversary of his *mahāsamādhi*, we remember one of his last principal messages to us. We have the ability, indeed the duty, to direct our minds, and finally to experience that which is directing the mind. Repetition of God's name is the method urged by Rāmdās.