

SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

Original in Bangali

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TRANSLATION

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ign of regaining normal conscious state again, he offered way for ever at the lotus feet Sadhanas, his rosary etc., — tering the Mantras :
of all auspicious things ! O three-eyed One ! O the fair-Narayani ! I bow down to

Master's Sadhana reached its Ruler of the universe, the man, the embodiment of spirit-an attained perfection in all

with the Master for about five She now, as before, engaged and the Master's mother, spent shared the same bed with the continual Bhava-Samadhi night suddenly merged in the Nirvi-signs of death were manifested sudden occurrence of such Holy Mother could have no sleep. did not come down to normal long time, she was alarmed, and disturbed the sleep of Hriday an end when Hriday came and for a pretty long time. Coming dhi broke, and also of the dis-p every night, the Master made with his mother at the Nahavat. d four months with the Master amarpukur probably some time

Shodasi Puja, there is another version of this work. It is contained in the Holy Mother, entitled *Mayer-Katha* as saying that the Puja took place at Dakshineswar. In that case it Mini-Kali puja of June, 1872, and not

CHAPTER XXI

EPILOGUE TO THE STORY OF THE MASTER'S SADHANAS

[TOPICS : 1. The Master's desire for Sadhana abates with Shodasi-pooja. 2. Reason for this 3. The practice of the religion of Lord Jesus 4. His vision of the true form of Jesus 5. His views about the Buddha 6. The Master's faith in the Jaina and the Sikh religions 7. Re-statement of the Master's extraordinary experiences. 8. Experiences about himself 9. Experiences about spiritual matters in general 10. Opinions of three scholarly Sadhakas on the Master 11. The time of the coming of these scholars 12. The Master's crying out to see his devotees of the inner circle.]

1. The Master's vow of Sadhana was completed with the worship of Shodasi. The holy fire of passion for God-inebriation was burning constantly in his heart for twelve long years, keeping him tirelessly engaged in the practices of various spiritual moods without allowing him any rest even after the completion of the Sadhanas of a particular mood. With the worship of Shodasi, it now ceased to burn, having received the Purnahuti or the completing and final oblation. And what else could it do? For, was there now anything left, which he might call his own and which he had not already offered as oblation to it? He had long ago sacrificed to it all the desirable things of the world—wealth, honour, name, fame, etc. He had offered as an oblation to its terrible flames, one after another, his heart, vital forces, mind, intellect, memory, egoism, etc. The only thing that had still remained with him was the desire to see the Mother of the universe in various relations and forms by travelling along different paths of Sadhana. That desire also he had now offered to the fire. What could it do now but subside?

2. Knowing the eagerness of the Master's heart, the Divine Mother had bestowed on him first the blessing of Her vision and afterwards brought him into contact with persons of extraordinarily noble qualities, with whose help he could tread along various scriptural paths, so that he could compare his first vision of Hers with the ultimate results of all the Sadhanas. So what could he ask of Her now? He also saw that the practices prescribed in the

sixty-four Tantras had all been practised by him one after another ; that all the disciplines connected with the five moods of the Vaishnava faith prevalent in India had also been gone through by him according to scriptural injunctions ; that, following the eternal Vedic path and being initiated into Sannyasa, he had had the vision of the formless and attributeless Divine Mother ; and that, by Her inscrutable play, he had had the sure result of Sadhanas according to Islam, a religion which had come into existence outside India. So what could he now ask the Divine Mother to show or tell him ?

3. A year after, the mind of the Master again looked forward to the vision of the Divine Mother through another path. He had by that time become acquainted with Sambhucharan Mallick, who used to read the Bible to him. Thus he came to know of the pure life of Jesus and of the faith he had founded, and the desire to follow the Sadhanas of that path arose in his mind. Scarcely had that desire arisen in his mind when the Divine Mother fulfilled it in a marvellous way and blessed him. He had, therefore, no need to make any special effort for it. The event happened thus : The garden house of Jadunath Mallick is situated to the south of the Kali temple at Dakshineswar. The Master used to go there now and then for a walk. Jadunath and his mother had great devotion to the Master from the time they had seen him first. Therefore, even if they were not present in the garden at the time of the Master's walks there, the officers would open the door of the parlour and ask him to sit and rest there for some time. There were some good pictures hanging on the walls of that room. One of those pictures was that of the child Jesus in his mother's lap. The Master used to say that he sat one day in that parlour and was looking intently at that picture and thinking of the extraordinary life of Jesus, when he felt that the picture came to life, and that effulgent rays of light, coming out from the bodies of the mother and the Child, entered into his heart and changed radically all the ideas of his mind ! On finding that all the inborn Hindu impressions were disappearing into a secluded corner of his mind and that different ones were arising, he tried in various ways to control himself and prayed earnestly to the Divine Mother, "What strange changes art Thou bringing about in me, Mother?" But nothing availed. Rising with a great force, the waves of those impressions completely submerged the Hindu ideas in his mind. His love and devotion to the Devas and Devis vanished, and in their stead, a great

faith in, and reverence for, Jesus and his religion occupied his mind. He began to see Christian worshippers offering incense and light before the image of Jesus in the Church, and his mind entered into the spirit of their longing for the Lord as expressed through their earnest prayers. The Master came back to Dakshineswar temple and remained constantly absorbed in the meditation of those inner happenings. He forgot altogether to go to the temple of the Divine Mother and pay obeisance to Her. The waves of those ideas had a mastery over his mind in that manner for three days. At last, when the third day was about to close, the Master saw, while walking under the Panchavati, that a marvellous god-man of very fair complexion was coming towards him, looking steadfastly at him. As soon as the Master saw that person, he knew that he was a foreigner. He saw that his long eyes gave a wonderful beauty in his face, and that the tip of his nose, though a little flat, did not at all impair that beauty. The Master was charmed to see the extraordinary divine expression of that handsome face, and wondered who he was. Very soon the person approached him, and thereupon from the depth of the Master's pure heart came out with a ringing sound, the words, "Jesus the Christ! the great yogi, the loving Son of God, one with the Father, who gave his heart's blood and put up with endless tortures in order to deliver man from sorrow and misery!" Jesus, the god-man, then embraced the Master and disappeared into his body and the Master entered into ecstasy, lost normal consciousness and remained identified for some time with the omnipresent Brahman with attributes. Having attained the vision of Jesus thus, the Master became free from the slightest doubt about Christ's having been an incarnation of God.

4. When we were visiting the Master long after this event, one day he raised the topic of Jesus and said, "Well, boys, you have read the Bible; can you tell me what is written in it about the physical features of Jesus? How did he look?" We said, "Sir, we have not seen this mentioned anywhere in the Bible; but as he was born a Jew, he must have been very fair in complexion, with long eyes and an aquiline nose, to be sure." When told so, the Master said, "But I saw that the tip of his nose was a little flat; I don't know why I saw him like that." Though we did not then say anything about what the Master said, we thought, "How could the form seen by him in ecstasy tally with the actual form

of Jesus? Like all the Jews he too must have had an 'aquiline nose.' But we came to know, shortly after the Master passed away, that there were three different descriptions of Jesus' physical features; and according to one of them the tip of his nose was a little flat.

5. Knowing the Master to have been perfected according to all the main religions prevalent in the world, the reader may wonder within himself what his idea about the Buddha was. It is therefore but fair that we record here what is known to us about it. The Master regarded the Buddha as what the Hindus in general believe him to be. He always offered his loving worship and reverence to the Buddha as an Incarnation of God and believed that the Incarnation of Buddha continued even then to be manifest in the image at Puri of "the three gems" in the forms of Jagannath, Subhadra and Balaram. When he heard that the glory of the above-mentioned holy place was that, by the grace of Jagannath, it obliterated all feelings of difference and thereby all distinctions due to caste, he felt an intense desire to visit it. But he gave up that idea (IV.3), when he came to know that he would not survive a visit to that holy place. He understood, with the help of his spiritual insight, that the will of the Divine Mother was against his going there. We have already spoken of the Master's firm faith in the purifying power of the waters of the Ganga, which he looked upon as being Brahman Itself in the liquid form (Brahmavari). He had an equally firm faith that the mind of a man attached to worldly objects becomes immediately pure and gets fit to grasp spiritual ideas when he takes food offered to Jagannath. When compelled to be in the company of worldly people for some time, he took, immediately afterwards, a little water of the Ganga and the "Atke" Mahaprasad, the cooked rice offered to Jagannath, and asked his disciples also to do the same. Besides what has been said above about the Master's faith in the Buddha as an Incarnation of God, we came to know also of another fact in confirmation of it. When the great poet, Girishchandra Ghosh, the highly devout follower of the Master, published his drama, *Buddhacharita*, depicting the divine play of the Buddha, the Master witnessed it staged and said, "It is certain that the Buddha was an incarnation of God. There is no difference between the faith founded by him and the Vedic path of knowledge." Our conviction is that the Master came to this conclusion through his spiritual insight.

had an aquiline nose. The Master passed on Jesus' physical features of his nose was

described according to the reader may know. It is known to us about the Hindus in general worship and reverence and believed that he manifest in the form of Jagannath, the glory of the face of Jagannath, and all distinctions.

But he gave up the idea that he would not be satisfied, with the help of the other was against the Master's firm belief in the Ganga, which held the form (Brahma) of a man attached to the Ganga gets fit to grasp Jagannath. When he was there for some time, he saw the Ganga and reached to Jagannath, which is what has been said as an Incarnation and confirmation of it. The highly devout *hacharita*, depicted as it staged and incarnation of God. It was by him and the fact that the Master thought.

6. The Master heard from the Jains and the Sikhs, in the latter part of his life, many things about the Tirthankaras, the founders of the Jaina religion, and about the ten Gurus (from Nanak to Govinda, the founders of the Sikh religion). He had much love and respect for them all. Besides the pictures of deities, there were a stone image of Mahavira the Tirthankara and a picture of Jesus on one side of his room. The Master adored them too every morning and evening, burning incense before them both, as he did before all the other pictures. But, although he thus showed great love and reverence for them, we did not hear him describing any of the Tirthankaras or any of the ten Gurus as an incarnation of God. About the ten Gurus of the Sikhs, he used to say, "They are all incarnations of the Rishi Janaka. The royal Rishi Janaka, I have been told by the Sikhs, had a desire in his mind on the eve of his liberation, to do good to the people. He, therefore, was born ten times as a Guru, from Nanak to Govinda, and having established religion among the Sikhs, became eternally united with the supreme Brahman. There is no reason why this saying of the Sikhs should not be true."

7. When he became perfect according to all Sadhanas, the Master had a few unique experiences. Of these experiences some were concerning himself, and some were about spiritual matters in general. Although we have already made mention of some of these experiences, we shall deal here only with the principal ones. While dwelling constantly in the divine state of Bhavamukha (the threshold of relative consciousness) at the end of the period of his Sadhanas, he seemed to have had a vivid consciousness of the meaning of those experiences. Although the Master had them with the help of his Yogic vision, we shall give here a rational explanation of them.

8. Firstly, the Master had the conviction that he was an Incarnation of God, an Adhikarika Purusha, all of whose spiritual efforts were for the sake of others. Comparing the Sadhaka life of others with his, he could see a great difference between them with the help of his reason. He saw that an ordinary aspirant practised one spiritual mood all his life and that when he realized the vision of God according to that mood, he had complete satisfaction in his mind, and that marked the end of his Sadhana. But his own case was quite different. He could not remain content until he had practised disciplines according to all moods and faiths, and besides, it required

only a very short time for him to attain success in the practice of any of the moods and faiths he happened to adopt. An effect can never be produced but by a cause ; a search on his part for the cause of the above-mentioned fact led him to profound meditation and showed him the reason given above. It showed him that his condition was unique because he was an especial incarnation of God the Almighty, who is ever free, ever pure and ever awakened. It made him realize further, that all his extraordinary spiritual practices had brought a new light to the spiritual world, and that he had to undertake them all not for the fulfilment of any personal want of his but for the good of others only.

He was convinced that, unlike the Jivas, he would not attain liberation. It does not take one long to understand this even with the help of ordinary reasoning. How can there be any talk of liberation for one who is eternally non-separate from God, being an especial part of Him, who is always free, pure and awakened and who has no want or limitation at all? As long as God's work of redeeming the Jivas continues, he will have to incarnate himself from age to age and do that work. So how can he have liberation? The Master used to say, "An administrator has to run to wherever there is any disorder in the estate." This was not the only thing about himself that the Master knew with the help of his Yogic vision. Pointing to the north-western direction, he told us over and over again that he would have to come in that region on the next occasion. Some¹ assert that he gave out the time of his next advent and said, "I shall have to come on that side (north-western direction) after two hundred years. Many will be liberated then. Those who do not get liberation at that time, will have to wait very long for it thereafter."

The Master came to know in Bhavasamadhi the time of his passing away long before it happened. One day he said to the Holy Mother at Dakshineswar in an exalted spiritual mood : "When you will see me taking food out of the hands of anyone and everyone, passing nights in Calcutta, and taking the food a part of which has been already taken by someone else — know that the time of my passing away is near at hand." The aforesaid words of the Master proved to be literally true. On another occasion he told the Holy Mother in a mood of spiritual exal-

¹The great poet Girishchandra Ghosh and others.