

36. He sings ever

KRISHNA is the One Name signifying all Names, the One thought comprising all thoughts, the One deed encompassing all deeds. Utilise this festival which commemorates the advent of Krishna for developing *bhakti* (devotion to God). *Bhakti* is defined as the means of discovering the Divine Reality within each being. Four steps are laid down in the scriptures to help man succeed in this effort: discrimination between the permanent and the impermanent; withdrawal from the process of catering to the senses; positive control of the feelings, thoughts and pursuits; incessant yearning for liberation from all bonds.

Bhakti is the urge which manifests as all these four endeavours. But, that word is applied to all sorts of desires and disciplines, so widely and so indiscriminately that it is identified even with epicureanism! *Bhakti* is derived from *bha* or *Bhagavaan* or God. It directs man to have God ever in mind and to cultivate love for God within him. It advises him to rid himself of egotism, to curb sensual desires. And to rise to the height of one's aspiration and achievement.

Bhakti leads man on to the Wisdom arising from the realisation of the unity called God. Just as childhood grows into old age and gets fruition thereby, devotion grows into wisdom, that is, *bhakti* grows into *jnaana* (spiritual wisdom). There are some who deny the need for *bhakti* and assert that *jnaana* can be won without the preliminary stage of *bhakti*. But, *bhakti* is as necessary and as inevitable a process as childhood.

Devotion is the most precious treasure

Devotion fosters the highest virtue; it is the most precious treasure; it is the truest path, the only way to God. Man must live in *bhakti*, for *bhakti*, through *bhakti*. For, *bhakti* is love of the purest and the noblest variety. Such love is the breath that sustains life, that supports the soul in the effort to merge in the Super-soul. The years of life spent without the light of love are years of ruin, of dust and disease. One could as well be dead, and decay for ever.

Love can transform man into a Divine Being; it helps him manifest the Divine which is his core. Love can tame even the most ferocious of beasts. It prompts man to fill even the world with joy and to partake of that joy. It implants a deep distressing thirst for that exultation, that elevation of the spirit. The *Avathaar* (divine incarnation) of the Lord as Krishna and the career of Krishna on the earth were for the propagation and promotion of this Principle of Prema Divine Love), by precept and example.

Prema (the highest. Love) transcends the ego; it is pure; it is sweet, it is sacred and sanctifying. Prahlaadha had that *prema*; so, whatever befell him---pain, grief, torture, disgrace---he bore them all, for he was unaware of anything except God whom he had enshrined in his heart. Meera too was so hungry for God and so agonised by separation from Him that she was always singing only of His charm, His might and His mystery.

God is the nearest and dearest kinsman for man

You must yearn to be blessed with that earnestness, that dedication and that devotion shown by Prahlaadha and Meera. That alone can give you the Supreme Bliss. But, now, though many declare their desire to earn that state of mind, their efforts are all towards exhibitionism and elaborate self-aggrandizement! Those days, the *saadhana* (spiritual discipline) was silent and subdued; now, it is all loud and lavish. *Bhakti* reveals to you that God is in every one; so, the

Love that surges in your heart towards God must flow towards all, for, all are embodiments of the self-same Divine.

God is bound to you by the closest bonds of Love. Parents might fall out; brother might take up arms against brother; sister might slip away without recognising sister; children might not revere or even recognise their parents. Those are but 'social or economic ties,' they might declare. But, God will never desert you or deny you, or turn away from you.

God is the nearest, the dearest, the most loving, the most eager companion, comrade and kinsman for man. This is demonstrated fully in the acts of Krishna, as related in the Mahaabhaaratha and the Bhaagavatha.

Creation posits a Creator; nothing can happen without the Will to make it happen. Before the beginning -of things, there must be some Will that willed them to become. It can only be He that has become all this, whatever be the name or form that these have assumed. That Will is Love, it is Wisdom. It is Power, It is Bliss. Each one of you must 'insure your lives' with That. Like other Insurance institutions, this One cannot suffer loss or liquidation. It can never fail or falter. Pay the premium regularly as per the rules and you can claim the '*amount*,' and receive it.

Peace will dread the company of the egotist

The premium you have to pay is the 'Love' that springs from your heart towards all beings. Liberation from pain and grief, the Bliss everlasting, is the 'amount' you get. Or, we can picture the process as a Tree; which yields fruit at the end of a long process of cherishing care. Truth is the seed, faith in the Self, faith in the loving care of God---these are the roots that hold it firm and, feed it; the recitation of the Name, singing of hymns and psalms, meditation on the glory that encircles and elevates---these are the showers that feed the Tree. Bliss is the fragrant flower; *Jnaana* (the wisdom that liberates) is the fruit.

When man neglects this duty to himself 'he suffers grief. He is denied peace and security; he is restless and afraid, peace will dread the company of the self-centred egotist, the hard calculating miser, the sharp heartless demon. It keeps close to the stage, the generous giver, the virtuous earner, the wise seer. You must long to be of such type that peace can approach you and award you its presence.

If, on the other hand, you stray away from the path of love, not only men but even nature will throw obstacles which hinder your progress. For, the evil in you will manifest as obstacle in your path. They are not laid there by your enemies, but, are set there by your own feelings and impulses. Think good, feel good, act good, speak good---the path will be free and fair, easy and effortless. Think evil, plan evil, do evil---the path will be strewn with fear and failure.

Krishna taught his message by precept and example

The mind has to be cleansed for the path to be rendered smooth. Devotees do not deserve that status, merely by doling out charity or visiting holy places, or attending religious discourses; fill the mind with Love, remove hatred and envy; adopt straight thinking and planning, that alone can justify the status of devotee. Walk steadily and silently towards the goal, merging with God.

This day, being the day reminding you of Krishna and His birth in human form, it is best to remember that, He taught this Message of Love by precept and example, throughout his earthly career. The Bhaagavatha and Mahaabhaaratha are full of lessons for you in the cultivation of *bhakti*---*one-pointed* Love for God and all God's creatures. The Paandava Brothers and their

consort were devotees of this high status. When Dhroupadhi their Queen, was humiliated and publicly dishonoured by their cousins in the Royal Assembly Hall, she did not call upon her spouses, the redoubtable heroes of many a battle, armed with heavenly bows and maces; she called upon Krishna, for she knew that He was her closest kinsman, shield and sword.

Many years later, she quipped Krishna for responding rather late on that occasion, with His succour, but, Krishna asked her to repeat the words with which she called Him then; she said that she had called out, "Oh Dweller in the hearts of the *gopees* (cowherd girls)! Oh Wanderer in the floral bushes of Brindhaavan! Oh Resident of Dhwaaraka!" Then, Krishna explained that the delay was caused by the wrong address to which the prayer was directed. He said, "Your words forced Me to move on to Brindhaavan and Dhwaaraka, before I could come to where you were! If only you had cried, Oh Dweller in my Heart, I could have appeared before you at that very moment."

Develop the inward vision, taste the bliss it gives

So, you should endeavour to install Him in your heart and be ever aware that He is there. Raadha alone had that consciousness and the uninterrupted Bliss derivable from that knowledge. Cultivate that knowledge, that closeness. When you are aware all the time, only of the body and its clamour for attention, how can you ever concentrate on the Dweller within? Develop the in-look, the inward vision, and taste the Bliss it gives, 'at least for half 'a minute every day; that will surely confer on you great strength and security. Raadha prayed that Krishna must keep her in .the cool shade of His Presence so that she might be saved from being scorched in the arid desert of earthly life.

Embodiments of the Universal *Aathma!* Scriptures are endless; saadhanas (spiritual disciplines) are countless; opportunities are few; time is already overstocked. But, you can easily win the baffle of life, in spite of these handicaps, provided you arm yourself with Love, which is the essential teaching of all scriptures, the goal of all varieties of *saadhana*, the best use to which all opportunities can be put and the most profitable way of utilising the precious capital, time. The simple men and women who tended cattle in Gokul where Krishna spent His boyhood years knew no *saadhana*, learnt no *Shaasthras* (spiritual sciences), observed no vow, visiting no temple; they just kept the Name and Form of the God they moved with, ever in the shrine of their hearts. And they were saved.

Embodiments of Love! You are agitated, I know, since the world today is tossed on waves of unrest and insecurity. But, do not blame the world for it. The unrest is but the image of your own unrest, which you have projected on the world. The insecurity is fuming in your minds; the fear is raising its hood in your heart. The forces of the world, the beings in Nature are all unaffected, unchanged! You have changed; you are nervous; you are afraid, you have no peace!

Try to subsume the many in the One

You wear coloured glasses and see everything through those glasses. Correct your vision; the world will get corrected. Reform yourselves; the world will get reformed. You create the world of your choice. You see many, because you seek the many, not the One. Try to subsume the many in the One; the physical bodies of yourself and others, the family, the village, the community, the state, the nation, the world, thus progressively march on towards more and more inclusive loyalties and reach the stage of Unity, in thought, word and deed. This is the *saadhana*

of love, for, love is expansion, inclusion, mutualisation. The individual has to be Universalised, expanded into *Vishwaswaruupa* (Cosmic Form).

When you enter upon this *saadhana*, you have to suppress all tendencies of hatred, greed, envy and malice, and concentrate on expanding love towards all, at all times. You might have to encounter opposition from all sides; but, consider these as tests of endurance, of sincerity and steadfastness. Your own parents, brothers and sisters, wife and children, kith and kin, friends and favourites, countrymen and others might try to turn you aside by ridicule and threats. You might even develop dislike for God for putting obstacles in the way; atheistic ideas might sprout in you trying to scotch the faith; but, you must overcome these with courage and confidence.

The good are always the target of malice and envy, slander and abuse from the wicked. Be assured that your goodness can be made tough enough to stand these ordeals. *Avathaars* (divine incarnations) too are not exempt from the attentions of these wicked forces.

Forces of evil dig for their own downfall

Krishna had to encounter these obstacles from the very cradle, right up to the finish of His life on earth. Personal spite, false slander, unfounded abuse and defamation followed Him at every step. Demons who could not tolerate the Light and the Love that He cast around Him conspired to tarnish His Name and obstruct His Mission.' They tried to bind Him, to fail His plans and pervert His instruments. But, Truth triumphed and falsehood stood exposed and disgraced.

Truth may be clouded for some little time by the fog of slander but, victory is certain. The forces of hate will be defeated by their own wiles; they dig for their own downfall; their action results in reactions, ruinous for themselves. In the Court of Dhritharaashtra, the Kauravas planned to bind Krishna and put Him out of action, when He went to His Court on the mission of peace; but, what happened? The stratagem recoiled on themselves and they were destroyed. Krishna was unscathed by their wiles and their campaign of defamation. When the Kauravas were indulging in their campaign of slander, many devotees were greatly distressed. For example, Sahadheva, the youngest of the Paandava Brothers, welcomed Lord Krishna back to their camp, with the words, "I am not concerned at failure of your mission; I know that it is all part of your plan. But, I am overjoyed that you have returned unharmed, from that nest of demons."

Krishna is undefeatable, ever pure, ever bright and ever effulgent in renown. Those who try to fail Him are for ever tarred by their own blackness. The malignancy of those who cannot bear His Glory will cause their eternal disgrace; it cannot affect Him in the least. His Glory will increase a hundredfold with every challenge from these pedlars of slander. Wicked men tried to bring the Lord into disrepute by persecuting and torturing devotees like Prahlaadha; but, when they stood up to every challenge with joyful fortitude, they failed ignominiously. Prahalaadha gained vaster glory and the Lord's Truth was magnificently vindicated.

Even *Avathaars* have faced campaigns of slander

Persons who cannot tolerate the Glory of the *Avathaar* have indulged in such campaigns, in every Age! They have contributed to the heightening of the splendour and the spread of the message, in every age. Their activities are all instruments to the propagation of the glory throughout the world.

Even today, such things happen; but, all of you must recognise their inevitability and their fundamental falsehood, and carry on your *saadhana* in full faith and assurance, with

undiminished enthusiasm and joy. The Sai Principle, the Sai Divinity can never be affected by any slander; it can never be shaken by any tactics; its progress can never be halted. Do not pay heed to the barkings you hear.

A stray dog stops and looks at its own shadow in the stream; it mistakes the shadow for another dog and starts barking aloud. This sets all the dogs in the neighbour-hood, and later in the region, bark in unison. The reason why first dog barked is its own ignorance of fact. The reason why the other dogs followed suit is that the first dog called the tune. A huge scare is built on a patent falsehood. Thus the story goes on, adding one thing to another.

Just as devotees remained unruffled in the Age of Krishna, you too must stand firm and be unaffected. Faith must endow you with courage and calmness. The life of Krishna teaches you this lesson more than others' do not lend your ears or mortgage your minds to purveyors of scandal or lies.

Devotion to the Divine will give you prosperity

Krishna had to meet these traducers and destroy them one by one, through His life. His parents, His companions, His devotees, no one had peace from this tribe. The message of this Festival is that you must see the Truth that is covered by all the tales and legends that tarnish the Name.

Devotion to the Divine will give you bliss, and prosperity and peace. It cannot inflict pain, perturbation or personal anxiety. It fosters love and brings all together as one band of brothers. The *Avathaar* will not be affected in the least by these trivial tactics. It is love itself; so, it is always bliss, always happy in song and dance.

Krishna lived all His years singing and dancing in the ecstasy which was His very nature. He was humming a tune within Himself all the while, whether He was on flower bed or a battle field.

I too am unaffected by praise or blame. My *Aanandha* (bliss) never suffers diminution. Where there is love, there is *aanandha*; where there is *aanandha*, there is music. That is the reason why Krishna sang the Bhagavath Geetha (the Celestial song) while the clarion calls to start the holocaust were rising from the serried ranks, eager for the fray.

Love knows no fear, no untruth, no anxiety, no grief. I am love; I shower love; I share love; I am pleased with love; I bless that you have more and more of love to more and more Beings. Love is God, Love is Love---that is the message of *Sri Krishna janmaashtami*.

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Just as there are three basic energies that govern man---the physical, the metaphysical and the psychical, the Aadhi-bhowthik, the Aadhi-dhaivik and the Aadhi-aathmic---Gaayathri has three facets: Gaayathri, Saavithri and Saraswathi.

Gaayathri fosters the metaphysical, Saavithri, the physical, and Saraswathi, the psychical. These three karanas or instruments have to be cleansed and sublimated so that man can realise the goal of life.

Through the recital of Gaayathri manthra and meditation thereon, this great task can be achieved.

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