

## 40. Krishna's life and message

*Sweeter than sugar, tastier than curds,*

*Extremely sweeter than honey,*

*Is the chanting of the Divine Name.*

*Recite, oh mind, the Nectarine Name*

*Of Shri Krishna for ever.*

*EMBODIMENTS of love!* It is easy to criticize or belittle the *leelas* or infinite potencies of God. But it is very difficult to comprehend the truth about the Divine. The omnipresent Divine is present both in Truth and untruth. He is present both in *Dharma* (righteousness) and *Adharma* (unrighteousness). He is present in good and evil. With regard to such an all-pervading Divine, how can anyone determine what is good and what is bad?

From the earliest times men have been proclaiming what is Divine. That the Divine has a form and possesses innumerable auspicious qualities was declared from their experiences.

The cosmos functions on the basis of three types of actions. Creation, sustenance and dissolution are the three processes. The truth of this phenomenon cannot be denied by anyone at any time or place, whether he is a *Vedhaanthin* or a scientist, an engineer or a man of the world. While this has enabled people to describe the Divine, it has not served to demonstrate God. But they were able to indicate the means by which one can experience God.

### **Experiencing the power of the Divine**

A distant star like the *Dhruva nakshathra* (Pole Star) can be pointed to some one by reference to some nearby physical object like a tree. Likewise the *Vedhas* and Scriptures, while not demonstrating the Divine, have helped to indicate the path leading to the realisation of the Divine.

The spectacle of a dense forest confers delight. The sight of all tall mountain excites wonder. Seeing the torrent in a river one rejoices. All these are evidences of the power of the Divine.

The stars shine. The planets revolve. The sun blazes forth. The wind blows. All these are signs of the Divine at work. When you see the spark of a fire, you can infer the nature of fire. If you know the nature of a drop of water, you can understand the nature of Ganga. Likewise, if you understand the nature of the atom, you can understand the nature of the entire cosmos. Recognising this truth, the Upanishaths declared: "The Divine is subtler than the atom and vaster than the vastest."

The human is indeed a manifestation of the Divine with numerous potencies. It is the Divine that shines effulgently in every human being. But, because of his attachment to the body, he is unable to develop attachment to the *Aathma* (Spirit).

Recognising the omnipresence of the Divine in all things, the quest for Truth should be undertaken. What is the Truth? Where is it? How to search for that which is everywhere? A distinction must be made between an apparent fact and the unchanging Reality. In daily life the sun appears to "rise" and "set" everyday, but in reality these apparent phenomena are due to the movement of the earth round itself and round the sun. Likewise what is apparently true about

you, as is inferred from external observation, is not the real you. It is the effulgent Divine within you.

The spiritual quest involves the churning of the heart by meditation. The qualities like compassion emerge from the heart. The human heart, which should be an ocean of milk, has been turned into an ocean of brine now infested with creatures like hatred, lust and greed.

### **Krishna's leelas**

The childhood episodes relating to Krishna have an esoteric meaning. For instance, when his mother, Yashodha, chided Krishna for eating mud (as alleged by Balarama), Krishna replied: "Mother am I a child, or a silly brat or a crazy fool to eat mud?" In this way Krishna, even though he was a child, was affirming His divinity indirectly. The Divine teaches profound lessons to mankind in this indirect manner. God's actions should be understood not by the external events but by their inner meaning. Moreover, many changes in the ordinary ways of living are necessary to understand the ways of God. Aadhi Shankara indicated in the Bhaja Govindam song how even a brief experience of the Divine by a devotee fills him with ecstasy. This bliss can be got only through the *Aathma*. The experiences of the gopikas and gopalas of Brindhaavan during Krishna's early years at Gokulam have been misunderstood and misinterpreted. Krishna was in the village for five years only. It is absurd to suggest that a five-year child behaved in an objectionable manner. After going to Mathura Krishna did not return to Repalle.

### **Awareness of the Divine will confer bliss**

To ascribe anything improper to the pure and Divine life of Krishna is sheer blasphemy. The true nature of the Divine has to be fully understood. Divinity is the all-pervading Cosmic Consciousness present in all. The nature of this consciousness should be understood. It is *chith*, which illumines every object in creation. *Chith* illumines what exists and thereby makes it cognisable. Existence is *sath*. Cognisability is *chith*. The combination of *sath and chith* confers *thrupthi* (satisfaction derived from enjoying the object). This *Aanandha* is thus the very nature of every being. The Divine pervades everything inside and outside. Awareness of the Divine will confer bliss. But few are able to realise this.

Once, an individual, unable to bear the difficulties in his family, left hearth and home. Later, after earning some money he set out to return to his house. A young son, who was in the house when the father left, was so grief-stricken over the father's absence that he died after sometime. Before reaching his village, he took shelter in a choultry during a storm. There he had a dream in which he saw himself as a king in a palace living with six princely sons. He was enjoying the dream. A peal of thunder woke him up. He wondered what had happened to all the beautiful things he had been enjoying so far. He realised that it was all a dream. There was no trace of the six sons.

### **The reality in both dream and waking states**

He reached his home in the morning. On seeing the husband, the wife broke into tears. On the one hand she was happy over the husband's return. On the other, she was filled with sorrow over the passing of her son. The father asked her: "Where is our son?" She replied that he passed away, unable to bear the separation from the father. The man was stupefied. He did not feel sad or happy. He stood transfixed like a statue. The wife asked: "How is it you are not moved by the loss of the son whom you loved so much? What is the reason?"

He then related to his wife the remarkable dream he had experienced the previous night. In that dream his six sons had died. "Am I to grieve over the loss of those six sons or over the loss of this one son?. For whose sake should I weep? They were my children in the dream state. This son was my child in the waking state. What was present in both the state is the reality. All other things are transient." This realisation came to him.

If people today wish to achieve spiritual bliss, they have to follow three principles: First, they must know what has to be known. Second, they must give up what has to be renounced. Third, they must reach the goal that has to be attained. By observing these three, bliss can be realised. What is it that has to be known? What is this world? How long will I live? We see many passing away. Coming and going are continually happening. When the transient nature of the physical world is understood, bliss will be realised.

Next, what is it that you have to give up? The delusion under which what is unreal is considered real and what is real is treated as unreal. People consider that they are in the grip of Maaya and that they are caught up in misery. Misery has no limbs to hold you. It is you who are hugging misery. This is due to your ignorance. When you get rid of this ignorance you will experience bliss.

### **We have to go back to our source**

What is the goal you have to reach? You have to go back to the source from which you came. You have come from the *Aathma* and you have to return to the Aathma. This is what the Upanishaths sought to convey when they declared: "*Asatho maa sadhgarnaya*" (Lead me from the unreal to the Real). Where there is truth, untruth exists as its shadow.

"*Thamaso maa jyothirgamaya*" (Lead me from darkness to light). What is darkness and what is light? Light alone exists. Darkness is only the absence of light. Discovering the light leads to the elimination of darkness.

"*Mrithyor-maa Amritham gamaya*" (Lead me from death to Immortality). Birth and death are incidental to the body alone. Your Self has neither birth nor death. What is born (the body) dies. Death relates to the body and not to the Aathma. The Aathma is eternal. It is the truth. You have to acquire this awareness to experience lasting bliss. To experience permanent bliss one has to develop firm faith in God.

### **The distinction between Krishna and Raama**

Today we celebrate the birthday of Krishna. Where was he born? In a prison. What were his possessions? Nothing. Born in a prison, he was taken to the house of Nandha and then he went to Mathura. He owned nothing. But he became the greatest figure in the world. What does this show? Worldly possessions are not the secret of greatness. Krishna's greatness consisted in his permanent state of *Aanandha* (bliss).

If you recognise the distinction, between Krishna and Raama, you will appreciate better the nature of Krishna. Krishna always smiled at the outset and carried out his task later. For Raama, the deed came first and then the smile. Krishna made women cry. Raama wept for the sake of women. Raama went into the battle only after having a strong cause for it. Krishna first provoked the conflict and then determined its outcome.

The Krishna principle revels in delight. The Raama principle is based on the concept of *baadhyatha* (obligation).

The Raamaayana is intended to promote the reign of Truth and Righteousness on earth. The Krishna *Avathaar* was intended to give a perennial message to the world. He sought nothing for himself. He kept nothing for himself. He gave away everything to the people. He slayed his maternal uncle, Kamsa. He installed on the throne Kamsa's father Ugrasena. He did not covet the Kingdom. He befriended the Paandavas, defeated the Kauravas and crowned Dharmaja as the emperor. He did not make himself king. He was a king without a crown. He was the king of kings. He had no kingdom of his own. But he ruled over the hearts of the millions. It is this profound truth that is proclaimed by the *Krishna-thathva* (Krishna principle).

If you enquire deeply, you will find that every *Avathaar* has incarnated to convey a special message and carry out a particular mission.

### **Krishna's divine power**

The gopikas used to complain to Yashodha about Krishna's pranks. But whatever Krishna said in fun or did as a prank was based on truth. Krishna never indulged in untruth even by way of a joke. But those who could not understand the inner meaning of His statements used to accuse him of lying. This kind of misunderstanding has been a disease in all *yugas* (ages).

When a gopika complained to Yashodha that Krishna had entered the house of a cowherd at night and played some mischief, Krishna pleaded before his mother how he could have gone out anywhere when he was sleeping beside her. The truth was that Krishna was in both places because of His Divine power. Krishna displayed any number of such baffling miracles. (Bhagavaan sang a series of songs about the complaints of the gopikas to Yashodha against Krishna). Against each complaint Krishna had a convincing alibi. Indirectly Krishna was revealing His divinity. Krishna explained to His mother the ways of the Divine in a way she could understand.

Krishna used to visit the houses of the cowherds and drink curds and milk. The symbolic meaning of this action is Krishna's preference for *sathva*, represented by the pure white curds and milk.

Krishna explained to Yashodha the reason why he preferred the butter in their homes to the butter offered by Yashodha. The hearts of the gopikas were pure and filled with selfless devotion to Krishna. Their devotion was superior to the maternal affection of Yashodha, which bore a taint of selfishness. Krishna told Yashodha: "I am attracted to the hearts of those who are pure and selfless."

### **Follow the footsteps of the Lord**

Krishna had always eluded the gopikas after playing his mischief. But once, out of compassion for them, he wanted to provide a clue by which they could trace him. One day they all lay in wait round their houses to catch Krishna. Krishna went into a house stealthily, broke a pot of milk and quietly hid himself. The gopikas found that he had broken the pot and tried to trace him. The milk white steps which he had left revealed to them his hide-out. Then, Krishna revealed to them the spiritual truth that if they cling to the feet of the Lord they realise Him. "Follow my footsteps and you shall find me," Krishna told the gopikas.

In the Bhaagavatham, the lessons you learn are according to the state of your mind. To understand the glories of the Lord as related in the Bhaagavatham, you have to enjoy the *leelas* (frolics) of Krishna and realise their inner meaning. For instance, the real meaning of the story about Krishna taking away the clothes of the gopikas while they were bathing is that to realise

the Lord they have to abandon the attachment to the body, which is the vesture of the Spirit. These stories should not be treated in a spirit of levity or profanity.

### **Krishna dedicated the flute to delight Raadha**

In the case of Raadha, Krishna churned her heart and gave here the nectar of Divine bliss. Raadha had no attachment to any of her kith and kin. (Svaami sang sweetly a song of Raadha expressing her grief over separation from Him). Krishna appeared before Raadha before she gave up her life and blessed her. God will give anything for the devotee including Himself. No one can equal Him in the sacrifice He will make for the sake of the devotees. Krishna asked Raadha what she wanted at the last moment of her life. Raadha said: "I don't want anything except to listen to the music of your flute once before I pass on." "Sing, Oh Krishna, speak to me to fill my heart with bliss," sang Raadha. "Distill the essence of the *Vedhas* and make it flow into the eternal music of your flute, Oh Krishna." Krishna took out His flute and played on it and when Raadha closed her eyes, He threw it away. He never touched it again. He dedicated the flute to give delight to Raadha.

Thus, all the mysteries of Krishna served to relieve the distress of the devotees. Krishna used all His powers to serve the devotees. When the purport of the Bhaagavatha stories is properly understood, one can realise the pussiance of the Lord.

In the life of Meerabai, for instance, when the Raana's sister gave to Meera a cup of milk containing poison, Meera drank it as an offering to Krishna. The result was Krishna absorbed the poison and left the sweet milk alone for Meera.

By making an offering of all that you eat to God before taking it, the food gets purified and sanctified.

The gopikas were illiterate and totally innocent. But their love for Krishna was unalloyed and exclusive. Even while engaged in their daily activities, their thoughts were centred on Krishna. Hence they experienced indescribable joy.

### **Proclaim the message of unity**

Devotees should cultivate unity, transcending all barriers of caste, creed and nationality. (Svaami then related the story of Suguna who was oblivious to her hand getting burnt because she saw the figure of Krishna in the flame of a lamp. Svaami sang a song expressing the delight of the gopikas on seeing Suguna in the state of Divine forgetfulness).

Krishna's mystery and miracles are beyond words. He was all things to all people. He is the indweller in the heart of everyone. There is no room for religious differences. Students should resolve themselves to restore the pristine glory of Bhaarath by leading ideal lives. Proclaim the message of unity to the whole world.

Before concluding My discourse, I would make an announcement to the students. In view of the ever-growing number of devotees coming to Prashaanthi Nilayam Svaami is not in a position to devote individual attention to students. Those who wish to get married and settle down in life, might happily do so and come to Bhagavaan for His blessings. Svaami will not perform any marriages in the Nilayam. But the Kalyana Mandapam can be used for marriages if they desired. Svaami will perform, however, mass marriages and mass Upanayanams. Svaami's grace and love will be available to you wherever you may be. You may get married, lead a worldly life as householders and serve the nation.

Today is Gokulaashtami, the day celebrated as Krishna's birthday. But it is not this celebration that is important. What is important is the adherence to Krishna's teachings. Krishna is not different from His teachings. The Geetha is Krishna and Krishna is Geetha.

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*Develop Prema (Love) towards the Lord, the Parama-Prema (Highest Love) of which He is the embodiment. Never give room for doubts and hesitations, for questions, to test the Lord's Prema.  
Baba*