

15. God's Grace Can Burn Away Mountains Of Sins

As the ointment on the eyelid does not touch the eyeball: As the grease in the food does not touch the tongue: As the Lotus does not touch the mud out of which it comes: Atma, does not touch anything that surrounds it.

Prema Swarupas!

Atma is not made out of another material as the pot is made out of mud. As curd is a transformed produce of milk, *Atma* is not a transformation of anything else. *Atma* is above all organs. It does not have its origin in any of the organs. It is only with the help of *Buddhi*, which is free from *rajasic* and *thamasic gunas* that we can realise the *Atma*. The bliss of *Atma* can be experienced only through *Buddhi*. For one who has started on a journey to reach a particular village, the journey will come to an end only when the destination is reached. In the same manner, for an individual who is searching for *Atma*, the search will come to an end the moment he experiences *Atma*. For *Atma*, there is no connection with any kind of work. Sometimes, between the moon and us, clouds come and cause some obstruction. In order that these obstructing clouds may be blown away, it is necessary to have some breeze. In the same manner, between *buddhi* and *Atma*, which can be compared to the moon, some clouds come in the form of bad ideas or *gunas* and in order that we may blow them away, some *karma* or action is required. By following these actions, we can realise the aspect of the *Atma* with the help of *buddhi*.

There are two kinds of *samskara* or reform. One is based on the *gunas* and the other is based on *dosha*. The *gunas* are like giving water to a fruit-bearing tree. The second is like removing the bad qualities and is comparable to removing dust from the surface of a mirror. Looking at ourselves only after cleaning the mirror, is the special feature in the second type of reform. When there is dust on the mirror, we cannot see ourselves clearly in the mirror. Removing of the impurity is the work that is required. Giving water and manure to a fruit tree in order to get the fruit may be referred to as the *Upasana Khanda*. To regard the daily work that we do as being related to God is the aspect of *Karma Khanda*. The act of giving sacred love and *prema* to God and thereby seek him has been referred to as the *Upasana Khanda*. The process of removing the impurities from our mind and thereby seeing *Atma* with the help of *Upasana Khanda* and *Karma Khanda* is a very essential process. This creates a form for the *Atma* and gives us bliss of realisation. Such a form appears with a distinctive beauty and character. This divine beauty has no particular form and yet can attract everyone.

The *gopikas* experienced this beauty of the form and suffered when they were separated from it. In its company, they were thus in a state of great bliss. The *gopikas* demonstrated how ordinary people can take this path and enjoy the bliss related to the experience of the *Atma*. Pothana, the Telugu poet, has described this aspect of the *Avatar*. He described Krishna's face as being comparable to the moon and his eyes as being comparable to fish. His shoulders were compared to the snakes. His waist was compared to that of a lion and his feet were described as being similar to the lotus. When Krishna was thus being described, the snake, the fish, the moon, the lion and the lotus felt somewhat embarrassed. The moon wondered if there could be any comparison between him and the

effulgent face of Krishna and was ashamed by the comparison. He ran away and hid himself in the sky. The fish told themselves that there could be no comparison between them and the star-like eyes of Krishna, and with this feeling they went and hid themselves deep under water. Krishna's shoulders were soft and broad and the snakes wondered how such shoulders could be compared to them. Blushing, they went into hiding in the ant hills. The lion too thought that there could be no comparison between its waist and the beautiful waist of Krishna; and being thus embarrassed, the lion went away to live, in hiding in a forest. The lotus flowers also felt that there could be no comparison between them and the nice, soft feet of the Lord, and with such a feeling, they went under water. The same thing was described by Vyasa in a slightly different way. He said, "Two lotus flowers and two elephants were standing and playing. Between these two elephants, there was a big lion sitting. On this lion, was a big tank and in the midst of this tank, there was a big mountain. On this mountain, there was a moon; and in the moon, two fish were playing with each other. Round the moon were dark bees constantly humming around." This description of Krishna by Vyasa is similar to the one given earlier; and in this, the two feet have been described as two lotus flowers and the two hips have been described as two elephants. On these two elephants stands the lion-like waist, and on the waist there is a stomach, which can be compared to the tank, and on the tank is the mountain in the form of the chest. The moon, which is the face, is above the chest; and the bright shining eyes are the two fish playing with each other in this face. The dark curly hair is compared to the bees humming round the face. The poet looks at the hair as if the dark-complexioned bees were coming to take the honey that is contained in the smile on the Godly face. The *gopikas* looked at this beautiful form and realised that this cannot be ordinary beauty. They came to the conclusion that it can only be beauty

associated with divine bliss. However much you may search, you will not find in their actions or thoughts anything related to the aspect of *gunas* or attachments. In Krishna, who is *Paramatma*, such qualities are not to be found at all. *Paramatma* who is above the *gunas*, sometimes comes down to the level of the people with *gunas* so that he may teach them certain things.

I will give another example for this in a manner which is easily understood by all the young students. One may be a highly educated person. Yet, at the time of initiating his son into education, he will write the alphabets with his own hand for the sake of his son. At that time, we need not wonder why such a highly educated person is writing down the alphabets. In order to teach a young boy who does not know them, he has to come down to that level and do so. In a similar manner, the all-knowing and all-powerful *Paramatma* sometimes takes a human form in order to teach various aspects to the ignorant human beings. But it is not an easy thing to reach the divine Lord. For a human being, there is a deep and significant meaning here. Even for cultivating the love of an ordinary human being, you will find that you will come across several difficulties and troubles. Thus, there is no surprise, if to acquire the love of God, you meet with many difficulties and obstructions. Because of this, the *gopikas* said that they were finding a lot of trouble in the process of acquiring the love of God. The same thing has been described by Vyasa by saying that if you want the love of God; you must give up love for other things. When you give up your love for other things, it is easy to acquire the love of God and you will not find any trouble at all. When you are bound down by several other forms of love, you will meet with a lot of difficulties if you want to acquire the love of God. This process has been described as surrender. When some insects look at a bright light, they are attracted by

the brightness and even lose their lives. The deer, which are attracted by music, come close and get trapped. The bees, attracted by the honey inside a lotus, get trapped. In a similar manner, when you want the love of the Lord, you should be fully prepared to completely surrender yourself to the Lord. You should have no attachment to your body or pay any attention to your own honour or respect. You should completely detach yourselves from all these. Only then, can you get close to the Lord. Your mind should fully concentrate on the Lord. Until we rise to this high level of surrender, we should participate in divine and sacred activities like *bhajan* or *dhyana* and develop the aspect of *prema*. When you are in a state of bliss, and when your love of God fructifies and bears fruit, then his grace will be on you. The *gopikas*, underwent several troubles, passed through several births, in order to get close to the Lord and earn his grace.

We should understand to some extent the amount of agitation which the *gopikas* went through when Akrura came to take away Krishna. Akrura made Balarama and Krishna sit on a chariot and was taking them away to Kamsa. The *gopikas* felt that the name Akrura was not appropriate to him and that he was, contrary to what his name indicates, really cruel. They were wondering how he could take away their Lord causing them so much trouble.

Because of the sorrow of this separation, the *gopikas* went and caught hold of the horses and tried to prevent the wheels of the chariot from moving. Looking at the sorrowing *gopikas*, Krishna somehow wanted to please them, and he pretended to tell the charioteer that the chariot be taken back. At this, the *gopikas* were very happy and all the *gopikas* came behind the chariot. Taking advantage of this situation, Krishna softly signaled to Akrura to quickly go forward. The *gopikas*

were struggling hard and uttering loud cries, saying, “Oh! Krishna, please stay back. You are described as the protector of devotees and as the protector of the weak. You are leaving us and going away. Is this the result of all your good qualities and virtues? In spite of what others have said about us and what troubles we went through, we never stopped praying to you. Are you not merciful to us? We have surrendered to you.” With such feelings, the *gopikas* were crying and would not return to Gokulam. They were remaining without food and sleep; and in this condition, a saint came up to them and said, “You are not able to understand the real strength of love or *prema*. This is always accompanied by many troubles and sorrows. If we want to enjoy the sweetness of the juice that is contained in a fruit, we will have to remove the cover, which is bitter, and remove the seeds which are inside and which are not edible. Only then can we enjoy the real juice.” This implies that it is only when we can give up the bodily relationships that we can earn the grace of the Lord. The moral of this lesson is that those who want the love of the Lord should have to completely give up all other types of love. If we really want to get the love of the Lord, the bad thoughts that are present in us must be pushed away. You are reading a number of books and listening to a number of discourses, but you are not paying attention to the change that should be brought about in your own heart and behaviour. We are not aiming at bringing about the change that should come in either the elders who are teaching us or in the students who are listening to the discourses. One can preach a million ideals, but what is the use if any of them are not put into practice. You are listening to the stories of Krishna and the devotion of the *gopikas* but you should examine what change this has brought about in you. the *Bhagavatha* is a text which enables us to realise the connection between the individual aspect of divinity in human beings. It is only when we make an attempt to put into practice some small fraction of what we

listen to, will we be able to claim that our *sadhana* has been purposeful.

It is not as if there were no *gopikas* who had bodily attachments. Even such *gopikas* put the path of divinity at a high level and always adopted a sacred path. It was the normal practice that Krishna visited all the homes in Gokulam. He could assume any number of forms. There was, however, no scope for any misinterpretation because, at that time, Krishna was about seven years old. On the other hand, the *gopikas* were about thirty years old. The *gopikas* had no attachment to Krishna even as a brother or as a son. They regarded him as a divine incarnation. Because of this, and because Krishna had no bad thoughts at all, he used to freely enter the houses of the *gopikas*. On one occasion, Krishna went to the house of one *gopika* rather late and by that time the husband had already gone to sleep. However, as Krishna had no hesitation at all, he banged hard on the door. Only those who want to do things in a stealthy manner do things with fear, but Krishna had no such fear and so he knocked loudly on the door. The *gopikas* used to have small peep holes on the doors and their husbands or mothers-in-law would not know of these peep holes. There is an inner meaning to this, which I will give later. When Krishna was knocking at the door in that manner, that particular *gopika* had some amount of attachment to worldly matters and she replied, "Oh Krishna! Please wait for a little while. My husband has not yet slept, and I will open the door shortly." The *gopikas* knew very well that their surrender to the Lord should be done in a very quick manner and without any fuss. The devotees of today will go to the extent of even challenging God and will pass a vote of no confidence if their difficulties are not removed.

In some of the cinemas that we see, and the books that we read, Krishna is projected as having always uttered untruth to the *gopikas* and deceiving them, thereby making them subservient to his desires. In many ways, they picture Krishna as an ordinary thief without any morals. In the *Bhagavatha*, the connection between the *gopikas* and Krishna was pictured as a sacred connection between their hearts. There was no further scope for misinterpretation. They had fully merged in each other, and there was no feeling whatsoever relating to their body; and in such a case how can there be any distortion? It is the easiest way to reach God by developing the aspect of Love. In order to get rid of bad thoughts from our minds, we must make a special effort by spending some time every day in the thought of God. Out of the twenty-four hours of each day, we are wasting almost twenty-three hours and fifty-nine minutes. You should try and spend at least a few minutes everyday in the thought of God. Cotton, bales as big as a mountain, will be completely burnt out if you put a small lighted match on to them. We may have committed sins as big as mountains; but if even one small ray of the grace of the Lord falls on you, all your sins will be burnt away. Spend your life in the thought of the Lord and in the service of the Lord.