

### 30. Genuine kinsmen

Pandiths, scholars in Bhaagavatha lore, have spoken to you so far on many sweet and wholesome topics taken from that great and inspiring work. The teachings of the Bhaagavatha are the mainstay of all *bhakthas*, the strength with which they walk the path of God. If only the culture of India, which is based on the *Vedhas* and expounded in the Raamaayana and the Bhaagavatha, is practised with a true understanding of its value, people can ensure for themselves perpetual joy or bliss. Grief is the illness; it has to be cured. The medicine is prescribed in the *Vedhas*; it is taught in the *Shaasthras* and *Puraanas*; it has to be discovered and taken in; then the experience of *Aanandha* will certainly follow. Of this, there is no doubt.

*Samskrithi*, the word for culture and cultivation, is derived from the word, *samskaara*, which means the dual process of removing the dust and dirt of vice and planting the virtues of *Sathya*, *Dharma*, *Shaanthi* and *Prema*. *Samskaara* is also the name for certain obligatory rites of initiation and purification prescribed by the *Vedhas* for the spiritual upliftment of man. Their number is forty-eight in all; but, they could be reduced to ten and, if needed, even to one; the final and fulfilling One, of recognising one's identity with Maadhava or Shiva or *Brahman*. *Nara* (man) is but Naaraayana (God); *Jeeva* is *Brahman*, seen through the limitations of primal ignorance.

#### Forms of devotion revealed by Bhaagavatha

Though the tongue of the penitent might repeat the *sloka*, "*Paapoham paapakarmaanaam*," (I am a sinner, committing sins) the inner Dweller, as the real You, will not agree to the description and that self-condemnation! Hence, you turn round in anger when you are accosted as a sinner (*paapi*). In your heart of hems, you know that you are the Pure, the Full, the Eternal. You are the limitless, timeless, spaceless *Aathma*, the changeless, characteristicless Self. That *Aathma* persists in your dreams, in deep sleep, in the varied activities of the waking stage. It persists during childhood, youth, middle age, old age and senility. It is the entity which declares itself as I: I slept, I dreamt, I awoke, I was a child, I am too old to walk erect, etc. My eye, my word, my idea, my plan, my resolution, my experience, you say; thereby, you announce that you are not any of these. You are separate from these, but yet, you are involved with them. How to experience the *Aathma*? The *Vedhas* say, "*Sathyam vadha; Dharmam chara*." (Speak the truth; practise righteousness).

What is *Sathya* and what is Dharma? The Raamaayana and the Bhaagavatha reveal this knowledge, through story and example, so that any one, however poor or illiterate he may be, can understand it and practise it and benefit by it. So it is enough if these are taken to the door of every home in this land. The Bhaagavatha will reveal the fortune of Nandha and Yashodha who reared the Lord as their own child; the supramental Love that bound the simple cowherds of Brindhaavan with the Lord; the deep self-abnegating devotion of Raadha; the reverent affection that Uddhava had towards the Lord; and a variety of other forms of devoted service which brings God nearer to man. If you revolve these relationships in your mind and ruminate over the sweetness, it is freed from inferior impulses and your faith in the Supreme deepens.

#### Remove the dirt of envy from the mind

You will have to re-live the Bhaagavatha in your own experience; become a Nandha or Yashodha fondling the child Krishna; become a Gopee yearning for the company of the Lord, as

the soul craves for the Supersoul, as the river craves for the sea; become one with the cows whom He tended, or the boys with whom He played, or the *Murali* (flute) which He breathed through to give the world the music that captivates. Mere reading the Bhaagavatha is not enough; seeing the picture of grand banquet in the cinema will not appease hunger. Eat a meal and it is appeased.

*Samskaara* means first removing the dirt from the mind. Know that envy is the stickiest dirt! You must be happy when others were happy. Raama is said to have been happy when others were happy; the Raamaayana says that He was then as happy as if, the event that made the other man happy, had happened to Him. That is the true test. Krishna speaks of Arjuna as *An-asuya* (envy-less). What a great compliment! Therefore, He proposed to teach him the mysteries of spiritual discipline. Dhroupadhi is extolled as an ideal wife, for she served her five masters, who were the five vital airs or *Praanas*, without the least trace of envy or pride. Sathyabhaama has become famous for jealousy and there are many stories current about Krishna's attempts to put down this vice and teach her humility.

Have Love towards the Lord, but do not become depressed with envy when others also love him or get attached to Him. The Kuchipudi Party acted the musical dance-drama '*Bhaamakalaapam*' here very nicely and artistically. They demonstrated both the love and the jealousy of Sathyabhaama. Try to have Love without the canker of jealousy.

You come often to Puttaparthi; you hear the *pandiths* expounding the scriptures; you observe Me and My activity; what is the benefit you derive? How have you improved by all this? Have you succeeded at least in recognising your *thaamasik* and *raajasik* habits and tendencies? Recognising them as deleterious is the first step in removing them. Have you become more and more *saathwik* (serene and poised) as the years go by, or are you the same dull or perhaps, fiery individual? If you must know the Lord, you must love the Lord and live the good way. Hatred or even indifference will result only in misunderstanding. Develop close association with Him and He will reveal Himself to you.

### **Grace is won by suffering only**

Walk in the path laid down in the Raamaayana, and Mahaabhaaratha and the Bhaagavatha. Proceed along that path, inspite of halts and handicaps, inspite of the approval or disapproval of kith and kin, of praise or blame from society. What exactly is praise or blame? Words, sound waves coming from across the air; waves that strike your ear. Let them strike only the outer ear. Do not welcome them in.

The other speaker said that the lament of Dhroupadhi in her helplessness brought her the grace of the Lord. Yes, grace is won by suffering only. The Incarnation of the Lord comes upon the world when *Adharma* (unrighteousness) becomes rampant. Therefore, *adharma* has to be suffered so that one may have the joy of welcoming the Lord in human form. You can experience the *swabhaava* (nature) and the *swaruupa* (form) of the Lord through the experience the *avathaara* confers. That is the greatest gain. If the place you must reach is very near, you can just step across; if the distance is more, you may need a vehicle, bullock-drawn or horse-drawn; for longer distances, you may require a car or a plane. But, the Lord is nearest to you. Slide ajar the door of delusion; part the curtain of ignorance; open the closed eye; He is right there, before you! The fog of sensual pleasure is hiding Him from you. Switch on the light; the darkness disappears and He becomes visible.

### **Know your genuine kith and kin**

Revere Knowledge as you revere your father, adore Love as you adore your mother, move fondly with Dharma, as if it is your own brother; confide in *Dhaya* (compassion) as if it is your dearest friend; have *Shaantham* (calmness) as your better half; treat *Sahana* (fortitude), as if it is your own beloved son. These are your genuine kith and kin. Move with them, live with them, do not forsake or neglect them.

Arjuna asked Krishna how the ever-restless mind could be controlled. Living with these kinsmen is the best recipe. That is the best atmosphere to ensure the discipline and detachment needed for mind control. Mere prayer will not do. You will have to swallow and digest the morsel that is put into the mouth; repetition of the name of the dish is of no use. Hearing discourses and nodding approval or clapping in appreciation are not enough. The mother feeds lovingly, but the child must take it in with avidity and relish. When this earthly mother has so much love, who can estimate the love of the Mother of all beings, the *Jagathjanani*.

You heard the Bhaagavatha, portions of it, today. All the teaching you need for liberation from grief and worry, you can get in that one book. Read it every day, bit by bit, page by page and ruminate over the lessons you find there. Gradually, you will earn detachment from worldly sense objects; the book will take you in hand and lead you Godward. It is a better guide than many of the so-called *gurus* who ply their trade today. They welcome you with great gusto and proclaim the excellence of their wares, condemning those of the others and set about the profitable task of hooking you as a disciple, so that they may extract funds from you or fame through you. Like shopkeepers clamouring for customers, manufacturers of patent medicines competing for customers, they try to sell their prescriptions to you, before you discriminate and escape.

### **The four-storeyed mansion**

Whichever the book, whoever the *guru*, whatever the *peetam* (institution), the goal is the same. The path is the ancient one, laid down by the saintly pioneers. Or, you can picture it as a four-storeyed mansion, the ground floor being *karmayoga* (union with God through action) and the succeeding ones being *bhakthi*, *jnaana* and *vairagya* (devotion, spiritual knowledge and non-attachment). When it is just a nascent fruit, it is karma. That is, the activity that all are capable of, and so it is the first step in *saadhana* as well. When it matures and is rendered free from egoism and greed, it becomes worship, and so, it leads one on to the second floor, *bhakthi*. When it is ripe and sweet, that is to say, when the bhaktha (devotee) achieves complete self-surrender, then, it is the acquisition of *jnaana*; when the fruit drops from the tree, it marks full detachment (*vairagya*); the fourth floor of God's mansion is then reached.

*Prema* (divine love) is the motive power in *Karma Yoga*; it is the very breath of *Bhakthi Yoga*. It is universal and infinite, in *Jnaana*; it sees the Lord everywhere and in everything, when *vairagya* has been achieved. The Bhaagavatha is saturated with the sweetness of *prema*.

The sweetness of Krishna is filling this Nature or objective world and Raadha is tasting it and being thrilled by it. Who is Raadha? She is Nature, the *Prakrithi*, the *Maayaa Shakthi* (power of delusion), the *Hlaadini Shakthi* (power of joy) of Krishna Himself His *Mahaabhaava* (Great State). She has stolen and treasured in her heart the *aanandha* of Krishna which manifested as *prakrithi* and so, like the owner who roams round and round the house of the thief until he gets back his property, Krishna too is ever around Raadha's residence, seeking His *aanandha*.

### **Be like the flute on Krishna's lips**

If you have the capacity to draw the Lord to yourself, He will Himself come to you and be with you. Be like the flute, a hollow reed, straight, light, with no substance to hinder His breath. Then, He will come and pick you up from the ground; He will breathe divine music through you, playing upon you with a delicate touch; He will stick the flute into His sash; He will press his lips on it. In His hand, the infinitesimal will be transmuted into the Infinite, the *anu* (light atom) will be transformed into the *ghana* (heavy solid).

One day, Krishna pretended to be fast asleep, with the flute carelessly thrown aside by His side when Raadha approached the fortunate flute and asked it in plaintive terms, "O lucky Murali! Tell me how did you earn this great good fortune. What was the vow you observed, the vigil you kept, the pilgrimage you accomplished? What was *the manthra* you recited, the idol you worshipped?" The Flute got a voice through His grace and said: "I rid myself of all sensual desire, of envy, greed, of ego, that is all. I had no feeling of ego left to obstruct the flow of His prema through Me to all creation."

Intensify the prema that is within you, as a sacred gift. Expand it so that all beings can share in it. Raamakrishna Paramahansa had that prema; when someone around him was sad, he felt sad; when some one was glad, he felt glad.: He made himself one with all, in his great prema bhaava (state of Love). Have your prema fixed on the Lord, whether your petty wishes are fulfilled or not. Do not let slip the treasure, on some silly excuse or other. When Sai Baaba confers success after success on you, you are foremost in singing "Sai Shankara, Sai Shankara;" but let the shadow or disappointment fall on you, immediately you turn round and declare, "This Sai is not God."

### **Kali Yuga is conducive to win liberation**

Your worldly 'intelligence cannot fathom the ways of Go. He cannot be recognised by mere cleverness, which is what your intelligence mostly is. You may benefit from God, but you cannot explain Him. You may benefit from electricity, and use it in a thousand ways, but you cannot explore and explain its mystery. How it works so and why it works so and not in any other way, is beyond your ken. Your explanations are merely guesses, attempts to clothe your ignorance in pompous expressions. The mistake is, you give the brain more value than it deserves. The *Parathathwa* (Supreme Truth) is beyond the reach of the brain; standing on the rock, you cannot lift it! Standing in *Maayaa*, you cannot discard it.

The present age is described in the *Shaasthras* as very conducive to liberation; for, while in past ages, rigorous penance was prescribed as the means, the Kali age in which you are, requires only *Naamasmarana* to win liberation! When the name of the Lord is remembered with all the glory that is associated with it, a great flood of *aanandha* wells up within the mind. Vyaasa himself knew this; for, when some sages once went to him to find out which *yuga* is most conducive to success in man's efforts for liberation, Vyaasa anticipated their question and repeated to himself aloud, "O, how fortunate are those destined to be born in the *Kali Yuga!*" It is so easy in this *Kali* age to win the grace of the Lord.

But, how do you profit by this luck that you have come across? How far have you progressed using the chance of these discourses and the *dharshan and sparshan* (seeing and touching)? Bring something into your daily practice, as evidence of your having known the secret of the

higher life' from Me. Show that you have greater brotherliness, speak less with more sweetness and self-control, that you can bear defeat as well as victory with calm resignation.

You read these great books, the Raamaayana and the Bhaagavatha many times, for they are now easily available at a cheap cost. But, what proof can you give for having profited by the hours that you have spent with them? To digest the food you have taken, you have to engage in some physical activity. To digest the lessons that you imbue through holy company or through the study of great books, practise them in daily life. *Manana* (recapitulation) is a very important saadhana; dwell in silence on the implications of the lessons you have come across.

Keep up the enthusiasm that has given you the patience to sit through these discourses here for the last five hours. Develop it, and seeking the company of pious men, strengthen your *saathwik* (serene and poised) tendencies and progress in the spiritual path. You have my blessings.

*Prashaanthi Nilayam, 9-10-1964*