

The life of a cow, of a horse, and of an elephant are at a lower level. These lower forms are being looked after by the human being who is at a higher level. Sometimes these forms are also being worshipped by the human beings. The reason for this is that they live a life which is *sathwic*.

When we look at the other categories of animals like lions and tigers, we see that man hates them and even tries to kill them. It is essential for us to understand the inner meaning and significance of our trying to kill some animals while we respect and adore another class of animals. The *sathwic* qualities of a group of animals represented by the cow, and the *rajasic* qualities of a group of animals represented by the tiger, are responsible for this difference of approach.

We know that of all the animals in this world, to take birth as a human being, is a very difficult matter. Having attained this difficult human birth, we should not behave, at any time, like an animal. We should think and take note of this aspect. The reason for this is mainly the kind of food that we take. The kind of food that we take determines the kind of behaviour that we develop. If a tiger enters a herd of cows, then the cows cannot survive and live.

So also, as in that analogy, in the heart of man there are good and *sathwic* qualities comparable to the

## 10. Man Should Not, At Any Time, Behave Like An Animal

**D**o you know why you have been given a human body? Is it to take it to all the corners of the world? No, that is not the purpose. You have been given this body so that you may demonstrate, with its help, the truth of the statement that the body is intended for doing good to other human beings.

### *Divya Atma Swarupas!*

It is for us to recognise that the compassion that all the living beings deserve from us forms the essence of our being able to get a vision of the *Atma*. The greatest thapas is the bringing together of the compassion that is present in all beings. The sacredness of life that has been given to a human being is at a very high level.

qualities of a cow. If into that group of good qualities, we send in food represented by the *rajasic* qualities of the tiger, it is impossible for the good to survive any longer. If you put seeds in a land which is not fertile, the seeds are not going to sprout. So also in a man who has *rajasic* qualities in his heart, the kind of *sathwic* qualities like *puja* or compassion cannot thrive. It, therefore, becomes necessary for man to do such things by which the field of his heart can be purified and cleansed. Therefore, man in this life must take courage and move forward in his journey of life.

Krishna has taught in the *Gita* that the purity of *karma* is extremely important. The kind of work we engage in will determine the kind of fruits that we get. The kind of food that we eat will determine the smell of the belch that follows. The quality of bread that we will be able to prepare depends on the kind of flour we use. God never does things which do not have a good reason behind them. God never utters words which have no meaning. Whatever He does, sees, and says carries with it an inner deeper spiritual meaning.

There is a small example for this. The two armies of the Kauravas and of the Pandavas were standing on either side. On the side of the Pandavas, there were seven units of armies. On the side of the Kauravas, there were eleven units of armies. It is not as if Arjuna

was ignorant of the number of units on the Kauravas side and the number of units on the Pandava side. Knowing this fully well, Arjuna requested Krishna to take his chariot and put it right in the middle of the two armies. When Krishna asked him for the reason for his behaviour, he replied that he wanted to determine with whom he should really fight, if he should fight at all.

When we examine this in the context in which he made this statement, we realise that he made this statement after he had gone with the intention of fighting. Krishna prepared the chariot and Arjuna prepared all his weapons including the Gandiva, and they were all set for the battle. After reaching the battlefield, why did he change his mind? Was it his weakness or did he become despondent? He began asking the question as to who will benefit from the battle and who will get prosperity from the battle. He realised that the very people for whose sake he was fighting the battle will probably be killed, and so he felt that the battle had no purpose. The kings want to rule over people and build up the prosperity of the people and the kingdom. If the people are going to be killed in a battle, where is the question of prosperity and a kingdom? After the entire family and group of people are wiped out, for whose sake was he going to establish a kingdom and rule over it? Some people have described

this as *moha* or attachment to his kith and kin, and they named the chapter *Vishada Yoga*.

This cannot be described as a period of internal controversy or discussion within himself. He has entered this argument within himself to decide between truth and untruth, between propriety and impropriety. He discussed within himself the aspect that the Kauravas have been ruling unjustly, and the fact that they have been having untruth and impropriety on their side, and did not, himself, want to undertake the same impropriety and untruth. There were certain distinctive features and distinctive qualities on the side of the Pandavas, therefore, God was also on their side.

Here it becomes clear to us that Krishna was on the side of the Pandavas because of their good qualities. If we look at this situation in a somewhat superficial manner, then we will see that because Arjuna was thrown into this despondent and confusing situation, an opportunity had risen for Krishna to preach the sacred text of the *Bhagavad Gita*. If Arjuna did not fall into an introspective and despondent situation like that, Krishna would not have had an opportunity to preach the sacred *Bhagavad Gita*.

Just as we know that pleasure is an interval between two pains, so also in the interval between two situations,

sometimes good comes about. Krishna here plays the part of a typical human being, and by making Arjuna behave as a typical human being, Krishna created a situation whereby the *Gita* could be expounded. Man's life is transient. It is momentary, and in this context Arjuna had a chance to recognise the permanent truth. The Pandavas were held up as an example by which the sacredness of the heart of a devotee could be understood. Sometimes, as a result of difficulties, the devotees have their hearts merged in sorrow. This results in their ego and other bad qualities in their hearts, coming to the surface and troubling them. To get such ego, jealousy, and bad qualities out of the heart of devotees, God sometimes undertakes certain programmes.

On one occasion, Arjuna performed the *Aswamedha Yagna* and let loose the horse. According to the rules of that *Aswamedha Yagna*, if a horse was let out and someone else captured that horse, then the owner had to fight with the person who had captured the horse; and if he lost the fight, he had to forfeit his kingdom to the victor. The Mayuradhwaja Raja caught the horse, and he was fully aware of the then code of conduct regarding the horse. Krishna and Arjuna went in search of the horse, and they found that the horse was captured by the Mayuradhwaja Raja. Krishna and

Arjuna were contemplating whether to undertake a fight with Mayuradhwaja. Krishna told Arjuna that Mayuradhwaja was no ordinary man and that he was a great devotee of his, and it is not easy for Arjuna to fight with him. Arjuna stated that according to the code of conduct he had to fight with the person who captured the horse.

Then Krishna commanded Arjuna to fight the battle. Arjuna fought with Mayuradhwaja in many ways; but it was not possible for him to defeat his opponent and even his principal weapon, the Gandiva, was damaged in the process. As Arjuna was asking Krishna for help, he too was preparing for the fight. Mayuradhwaja was no doubt aware of Krishna's greatness, but the code of conduct required that Mayuradhwaja engage in battle, and so Mayuradhwaja took out each one of his weapons and sent them at Krishna after uttering the sacred name of Krishna. The arrows were so hard and so powerful that Krishna started running hither and thither. Arjuna started shouting to Krishna that he should use his sacred *chakra*; but Krishna replied that against Mayuradhwaja, neither Arjuna's Gandiva nor Krishna's *chakra* will have any effect.

Arjuna did not take this matter seriously. He thought that Krishna was only joking and that Krishna

was really not intent on fighting. Arjuna thought that if Mayuradhwaja was really a devotee of Krishna, would he undertake to fight against Krishna? He thought that Mayuradhwaja was not a true devotee.

Krishna wanted to demonstrate to Arjuna that Mayuradhwaja was indeed a very ardent devotee. So Krishna and Arjuna disguised themselves as two brahmins and came to Mayuradhwaja's house. According to the tradition, it was the duty of the householder to receive the guests and honour them, and in this aspect there was none better than Mayuradhwaja. As soon as Mayuradhwaja saw the two brahmins coming, he himself threw away the King's garb and wore clothes typical of the brahmins. He brought water and washed the feet of his guests and honoured them suitably. Mayuradhwaja requested them to be his guests. With a view to making Arjuna realise the depth of the devotion of Mayuradhwaja, Krishna had been planning this meeting for quite some time. When Mayuradhwaja asked Krishna and Arjuna to accept his hospitality and be his guests for food, Krishna replied, "We do not have the time to accept your hospitality. We have come here with a specific problem and require your help. While coming to your house, my son has been swallowed by a tiger and, at this time, only half the body of my son has been swallowed and the other half

is outside. A formless voice said that if the body of my son was to be freed, I will have to get half the body of King Mayuradhwaja as a meal for the tiger and then, I was told, my son would be set free.”

As soon as Mayuradhwaja heard of this, he saw an opportunity to be of some service to his guest. He knew very well that immortality comes out of sacrifice, and he was prepared to sacrifice his body. He knew very well that the human body was given to him so that he might be able to help others. He knew that the human body would drop off some day or the other, and so he was prepared to sacrifice his body to satisfy others. He called his wife and son and asked them to cut his body into two halves with a sword. His wife and son thought that Mayuradhwaja was preparing to fulfil a sacred task and so they also prepared to cut the body into two halves. Arjuna and Krishna were watching this situation without even batting their eyelids once.

As they were watching intently, they found that the left eye of Mayuradhwaja was shedding a tear. Finding that the situation was developing, Krishna wanted to test him even further and said, “What is the value of the gift which is given with sorrow and tears in one’s eyes? I do not want such a gift. A gift must be given freely and willingly.” Mayuradhwaja, who was

undisturbed and sitting peacefully with closed eyes, opened his eyes and said that he had no sorrow in giving his body. If, at all, he had any sorrow, both eyes should shed tears. Why is it that only one eye is shedding tears? You must consider and understand why tears are coming from only one eye. It is not as if Krishna did not know the truth behind this. He only wanted to show Arjuna the depth of the devotion of Mayuradhwaja. Mayuradhwaja replied and said, “Oh, Lord, this body is going to be cut into two parts and the right part is going to be gifted to you for a sacred purpose. The left part is crying and shedding tears because it will then be thrown away and simply become food for the crows. It is crying because it is going to be thrown away in such an unsacred manner.” As soon as Arjuna listened to these words, he started to repent and realised that this was a lesson taught to him and that there were more ardent devotees of Krishna than himself.

The world is full of devotees of varying types. If it was in the aspect of devotion, Mayuradhwaja would place at the feet of the Lord everything that he possessed. If we look at it from the angle of a householder, we have seen that he will honour any guest that came to his house by giving him anything. If we look at it from the point of view of the proper code of conduct of a ruler, Mayuradhwaja was one who would observe this

fully. He was fully prepared to fight and establish the code of conduct. Mayuradhwaja was thus one who was always prepared in any sphere of activity whether it was worldly, material, or spiritual, and was ever ready to sacrifice and do anything. In order to proclaim this aspect of performing one's duty in different spheres, Krishna brought this example to the world and to Arjuna.

Having passed through a period of slavery for several centuries and having attained our independence by our own struggle, if we become unmindful of our traditions which are 5000 years old, and if we are not able to understand the sanctity of the ideals that were established by the examples shown by Krishna, there is no wonder that we are in such an unfortunate situation as we are in today. Krishna was one who taught that one should be prepared to sacrifice everything for the sake of justice. Krishna taught this in the form of *Vedanta*. Krishna's teachings and ideals were not such that while teaching that if you get a slap on one of your cheeks, you should be so considerate as to show the other cheek, yet you go ahead and produce an atom bomb in practice for the destruction of the world. This irreconcilable situation between preaching and practice did not belong to Krishna. Holding an atom bomb in one's hand, people keep on shouting for peace. The kind of peace which they want cannot be attained, even

if they go to the moon. All the time preparing for war and heading for agitation and revolution, we just talk of peace in the world. This is not the kind of philosophy which Krishna stood for or taught.

Krishna was one who undertook to bring under one rule, the eighteen different kings and kingdoms that were existing at that time. That was the ideal which Krishna stood for. Who was the king under whom Krishna brought all the different kingdoms? It was Dharmaraja. Krishna did not want to become the king himself. If we really pay heed to the ideals of Krishna or what Krishna did, we will not be in the unfortunate situation today when the country is divided into many parts.

### ***Boys and girls:***

Recognise the ideals of this country and *Dharmarajya* that it stands for. Use all your physical and mental strength to get back this sacred *Dharmarajya*. I hope and bless you that this should be possible.