

10. GOD IS PURE BLISS

*The Embodiment of Supreme Bliss,
The Embodiment of Transcendental Happiness,
The Embodiment of Transcendental Wisdom,
The One beyond duality,
The One in Eternal Bliss,
The Embodiment of Oneness,
The Supreme One, The Eternal One,
The Unsullied One, the Ever-steady One, and
The Eternal Witness.*

In the *Anandavalli* portion of the *Rig Veda*, there is a beautiful and poetic reference to *Brahmananda* or Supreme Bliss. *Brahmananda* refers to bliss that is limitless and beyond description by words; it is also something that cannot be comprehended by the ordinary mind. Unless one leads a calm, pure, noble, virtuous, peaceful, and unsullied life, one can neither understand nor experience this *Brahmananda*. Supreme bliss is beyond the physical, mundane, and transient world.

From ephemeral pleasures to divine bliss

Our ancients have categorised the various types of joy and happiness that can be experienced. The lowest type is *manavaanada*, that refers to the pleasure that humans experience in the course of their normal life, and which is connected with worldly objects, entities, and matters. Thousand times greater is *gandharvaananda* or the happiness experienced by celestial beings. *daivaananda* is the next higher level of happiness, and is a thousand times greater than *gandharvaananda*. It refers to the joy experienced by the *devas* or the demi-gods. Far greater than *daivaananda* is *Brihaspathiananda*, or the bliss experienced by Brihaspati, the preceptor of the *devas*. A thousand times greater is *Prajapatiananda* or the joy experienced by Prajapati (in ancient Indian scriptures, Prajapati is the one associated with the practical aspects of Creation). *Brahmananda* is a thousand times greater than *Prajapatiananda*, the highest joy that can be measured on a finite scale. You can see what an immense gulf separates *manavaanada* that man hungers and normally settles for and *Brahmananda* that he really ought to seek.

People use the word *Brahmananda* quite casually, without the faintest idea of what it actually means. Thus, every petty pleasure is glibly described as *Brahmananda*. For example, if a person has a nice meal, he describes the experience as *Brahmanandam*. Man does not understand what an infinite gulf separates *manavaanada* and *Brahmananda*. The pleasures that man normally enjoys is not even a tiny spec of *Brahmananda*. He does not realise that while worldly pleasures can be described in words, *Brahmananda* is indescribable.

Sandeepan Chatterjee [who spoke earlier] said that divine love and bliss transcend the bounds of space and time, and that they are beyond season and reason as well. Indeed; *Ananda* is *Ananda* at all times and under all circumstances. Since Brahman and *Atma* are synonymous, *Brahmananda* can also be referred to as *Atmananda*. Supreme bliss is verily the same as the bliss of the Self. In fact, *Ananda* is just another name for Brahman or God. Worldly happiness that man is so crazy about is insignificant compared to the vastness that is *Brahmananda* or *Atmananda*.

You are aware that air is present everywhere and that it has no specific form. Yet, when this formless air that is present everywhere fills a balloon, it acquires a form – that of the [inflated] balloon. If you go on inflating the balloon, a stage would come when the balloon would burst. The air inside the balloon then merges with the air outside to become formless and vast once again. What a great difference there is between the trapped limited air and the vast free air! Similar is the comparison between the tiny spec called *mananvaanada* and to the infinity that is *Brahmananda*.

Our ability to experience happiness is one of the many gifts of God. However, owing to his limited vision, man makes only a minimal use of his capacity to enjoy happiness. He is ever ready to settle for just *manavaananda*; this will not do. Like the exploding balloon and the merger of the air inside with the air outside, man must break out of human bondage, soaring to the level of *Brahmananda*.

Brahmananda is one of the Names of God. It conveys the idea that God is ever in a state of Supreme Bliss. Bliss is thus the Form of God, and therefore it is that God who is called *Brahmananda*.

There are many other such names, and these were mentioned in the beginning. The next in the list is

Parama sukhadam,

meaning real ecstasy. What is this *sukham* [happiness or ecstasy]? Is it connected with the body? Is it physical, sensual, or intellectual? It is beyond all these. Our ancients said, “*Tasmai Namaha.*” It means, “I offer my salutations to the Embodiment of Happiness”. Our ancients did not try to describe this supreme ecstasy but knew that God is its very Embodiment. So, they hailed God as *Parama Sukhadam*. God is the personification of Happiness that is beyond the constraints of space and time, and also human reasoning. If one is to describe this *Parama Sukhadam* or Transcendental Bliss, all one can say is that it is neither physical nor has it a form that can be comprehended. Nectar has an appearance, and its taste could possibly be described; but *Parama Sukhadam* is beyond both form and words. God is Eternal Bliss – what else can one say? He is totally unaffected by all pairs of opposites like praise and blame, [worldly] joys and sorrows, etc. He is ever supremely happy.

Kevalam Jnanamurtim,

Kevalam means that which transcend space, time, and circumstances. *Jnana* means wisdom. Thus, *jnana moorthim* means Embodiment of wisdom. What sort of wisdom is this? Can it be acquired from books? Is it connected with the physical world? Can it be acquired by *yogic* practices? *Jnana* is not of this type. It is supreme, transcendental wisdom, which is beyond this

world, beyond space, time, and beyond circumstances as well. This *jnana* is also known as *Brahmajnana* (Knowledge of the Brahman) or *Atmajnana* (Knowledge of the *Atma*). It is eternal. Whereas worldly knowledge can be acquired from books and one can compare scholars saying he is better and so and so is less learned etc., *Brahmajnana* is total, and beyond textual and academic knowledge.

God alone is the Embodiment of *jnana* – in fact, He is *Jnana* itself. *Brahmajnana* is Eternal, Total, and Omnipresent. It is the knowledge of the Self. Since the Self is in you, this knowledge also is in you. The moment you realise your True Self, you acquire this knowledge. Acquisition of this knowledge confers supreme wisdom. Since this knowledge also confers supreme bliss, acquisition of *Brahmajnana*, automatically elevates you to the state of *Brahmananda* and *Parama Sukhadam*.

Dvandvatitam

The state represented by *Brahmananda* has another name : *dvandvateetham*. It is a state that transcends all dualities like pain and pleasure, good and bad, praise and blame, merit and sin. It is a unique state of Total Oneness. The *Vedas* say:

Ekam sat viprah bahudha vadanti.

Truth is only One though scholars describe it in various ways. Truth is One, not two – that is what *dvandvateetham* implies. It means that Brahman or God is infinitely beyond duality in which man is imprisoned.

Next,

Gaganasadrisam

This means that like space, Supreme Bliss is both ethereal and all-pervasive. Who is it that is called by the name *Gagana Sadrisam*? God of course! In fact, all the words Swami has mentioned so far – *Brahmanandam*, *Parama sukhadam*, *Kevalam jnana moorthim*, *Dvandvateetham*, and now *Gagana Sadrisam* – all these are Names of Almighty God.

Tatvamasyadilaksyam

The four *Vedas* proclaim four *mahavakyas* or fundamental truths. These basic statements are: (1) *Prajnanam Brahma* or God is Pure Consciousness. (2) *Ayam Atma Brahma*, meaning that *Atma* (the Self) and Brahman (God) are one. (3) *Aham Brahmasmi*, meaning I am God. (4) *Tat Twam Asi*, meaning That thou art! All these four statements imply the same, namely, there is only God and that, therefore, man also is divine. They underscore the Unity of Divinity. Thus God is also described as *Tatvamasyadhi Lakshyam* or the Ultimate Goal [which represents Total Unity].

After this,

Ókam, Nityam, Vimalam, Acalam.

These four words also are Names of God. *Ekam* means One. Everything in this vast Universe is just God [though, may be, in ‘disguise’]. However, man is carried away by physical appearances. Thus, he perceives and experiences only diversity,

totally missing the underlying divine Unity. The diversity that man sees is purely physical and superficial. He sees only diversity because his vision as well as outlook are both entirely worldly and external.

Let us say you have the numeral one (1). You next add a zero adjacent to it. This gives you a number that you call ten. You then add another zero and get hundred. Go on adding more and more zeroes, and you progressively get larger and larger numbers. You get hundred, thousand, ten thousand etc. In this way, with a mere string of zeroes, you can increase the number to million, trillion and so on. You can get astronomical numbers by just adding zeroes to 1. Remove this 1, and you are left with a mere string of zeroes! You may have a large number of zeroes but they carry no value. But place the number one before this string of zeroes, and you get numbers that carry value – that one makes all the difference! In the Universe, That One is God, one of whose Names is *Ekam*. God is just One, no matter by what Name you choose to call Him or what Form you wish to ascribe to Him.

Next we have *Nityam*, which means Eternal. God is not only Eternal but also Changeless. He remains so in all the three periods of time – past, present, and future – in all the three worlds, and in the presence of the three *gunas* (*satva*, *rajo* and *tamo gunas*) too. This divine constancy is described in the scriptures by saying that He is beyond *trikalam* (three periods of time), *trilokam* (three worlds), and *trigunam* (three *gunas*). Thus, God is *Nityam*, *Nityam*, *Nityam*!

After this, we have *Vimalam* – Pure. Today, contamination and pollution are everywhere. Air and water are polluted. Food too

is contaminated and polluted. What is even more serious, man's mind is polluted. God, on the other hand, is the personification of Total Purity. He is absolutely unsullied, crystal clear, and pristine pure.

Achalam. This means steady and not wavering. All objects and entities made up of the five elements are subject to changes with time; in fact, change is an inherent part of their nature. The Sun changes with time, and so does the Moon. The stars also change with time. The Earth is always in motion. You know that in a movie, sixteen frames change per second. So it is in Creation – changes all the time, everywhere, and in everything. But God is *Achalam* or steady and constant.

Calanam Acalameva Ca.

God is no doubt steady and unchanging, but He is also immanent in things that are subject to change. Even so, constancy being the basic nature of the Absolute, God is known as *Achalam*.

Sarvadhi Saksibhutam.

In addition to all the names mentioned so far, God is called the Eternal Witness. He is a witness to everything and all the time.

Names of God not given by man

Pious and noble *rishis* of the past gave so many Names to God. Keen to experience Divinity, they sacrificed everything worldly

and material, and did intense penance. Induced by his inner feelings, each sage ascribed an attribute or form of his choice to God and then gave a name to God appropriate to his conception. God is actually both Formless and Nameless – all the descriptions of God are due to the *rishis* of old. However, Names of God like *Brahmanandam*, etc., have nothing to do with worldly or physical descriptions. They transcend all these and relate to a superior plane. In this plane, God is beyond all normal and conceptual description. He is the Supreme One beyond all duality, and is described as

*Brahmanandam, Paramasukhadam, Kevalam Jnanamurtim,
Dvandvatitam, Gaganasadrisam, Tatvamasyadilaksyam,
Ókam, Nityam, Vimalam, Acalam, Sarvadhisaksibhutam.*

God alone is entitled to all these glorious Names.

The all-comprehensive nature of God's Name

Once, sage Narada came across young Dhruva who was then undertaking an intense penance to propitiate Lord Narayana. Narada said, “Dhruva, you are so young. Is it possible for you to undertake such an intense penance? How are you going to contemplate on God? In what form will you meditate on Him?” In this manner, Narada asked many questions. Dhruva smiled and replied, “O sage, the idea that I should do penance was planted by Him. The seed of thought becomes a sapling due to Him. The sapling grows into a giant tree because of Him. And He it is who also makes the tree to bear fruits. I have no doubt that the very same God will take care of me. I have not studied the *Upanishads* or other sacred texts. I know only the Name of God.” Narada

asked, “What Name will you chant?” Dhruva thought for a while and replied, “I shall chant: *Gopijana Vallabhaya Namaha.*”

Here, the word *gopi* does not just refer to the *gopikas* of Brindavan. *Gopa* means the Earth, the *Vedas*, the Word, and cows. The root-word for all these four words is *Go*. *Gopis* are those who worship and take care of these four sacred entities. They worship the Earth, they foster the *Vedas*, they are true to their word, and they also protect the cows. In essence, the *gopikas* of Brindavan did all these. God does not have any names per se, but various names are given to Him.

Dhruva said to Narada, “I am one among the *gopis*. I am a part of the Earth, a part of the *Vedas*, etc. In short, I am one among the many created by the Lord. Who protects and sustains the many? God. That is the One I am worshipping with this chant.” Swami said the other day,

Kleem, Krishnaya, Govindaya, Gopijanavallabhaya, Svaha.

You will recall that *kleem* means earth. *Krishnaya* means water, *govindaya* means fire, and the other two words mean respectively air and space. These five words thus symbolise the five elements, which are the very personification of God. Thus, even a chant of the names of any one of the five elements amounts to calling out to God. All five words mentioned are also the Names of God and there is no particular need to chant the name Krishna, Vishnu, or Siva. It was only after the emergence of sects like Vaishnavites and Saivites that the fashion of chanting particular names like Vishnu and Siva emerged. This practice not only narrowed one’s

perspective about God but also promoted unwanted controversies. God does not have any specific name.

Become free from desires and attain Perfect Happiness

Tasmai Namah.

This is short salutation hails God as: “O God, the Embodiment of Supreme Happiness!” When are you truly happy? You feel that way when you are free from all worries and anxieties. God has no desires and that is why He is always happy. Try to be like that, free from desires, and you too would always be happy. It is desires and worldly expectations that destroy happiness. To achieve permanent happiness, you must be totally free of desires. You may or may not believe this: Swami has no worries whatsoever, and is therefore always in a state of bliss. Swami has no thoughts relating to Himself. However, because He has come with a physical form and on account of His contacts with people, He might, at times, appear to be concerned and worried. But truly speaking, Swami is beyond both desires and worries. He wants nothing for Himself from anybody at any time. What He wants is only your welfare and that is the feeling dominant in Him all the time.

The true meaning of Self-satisfaction

Suppose you want to eat a fruit. Do you want the fruit for your sake or the sake of the fruit? No. You want the fruit because you wish to enjoy it. You are attracted by a nice piece of textile. Do you want it for your sake or because you wish to give some

satisfaction to that cloth? Obviously, the latter is not true; you want the cloth for your sake. It is the same with food. In this manner, every desire you have is for the gratification of your own self. There is something in you that drives you, and that driving force arises because you are either consciously or unconsciously seeking satisfaction for yourself. However, in almost all these cases, it is the lower self that is involved; that is why one describes all such actions as selfish. In spirituality, one must focus on the Higher Self; all actions must spring from the desire to satisfy this Higher or real Self. This is true Self-satisfaction. Actions aiming at satisfying the Inner Self are not selfish in the worldly sense because they are far from worldly desires and petty expectations.

This Real Self within is nothing but the *Atma*, and *Brahmananda* is Happiness connected with providing satisfaction to the *Atma*. Apart from the names already mentioned, the *Atma* is also known as *Paramatma*, *Paratma*, *Ekatma*, etc.

The journey to God must be by way of selfless service to society

Man is a *vyashti* or an individual. He is a part of *samashti* or society. And society is a part of *Parameshti* or God. The *vyashti* must journey to *Parameshti* through *samashti*. The individual must involve himself with society in some manner or the other, and serve it selflessly. If in the name of your individuality you cut yourself off from society and give preference to the pursuit of your personal ambitions etc., you can never become one with God! Such selfishness is contrary to the spirit of unity and Oneness

that God represents. He who yearns to experience *Brahmananda* must first develop Love for God and the longing to become one with God. This longing must be translated into practical terms by first becoming one with society. How do you become one with society? By selfless service. When you serve society in a selfless manner, you will start realising that all are one.

Enlightenment can occur in a flash

The *Vedas* proclaim,

*Vedahametam purusam mahantam
adityavarnam tamasah parastat*

The *rishis* of old declared to mankind: “O man! We have seen God [in man]. He has the effulgence of the Sun latent in him but he lies in the darkness [of ignorance].” People then asked the *rishis*: “Where did you see this God? Inside or outside?” To this the *rishis* replied:

Antarbahisca Tatsarvam Vyapya Narayanassthitah.

“God is everywhere, inside as well as outside.” They then added, “Man, there is God in you. You have the effulgence of the Sun, but the darkness of ignorance is eclipsing this radiance.” The *rishis* saw God everywhere. Since God is Omnipresent, Bliss too is everywhere since bliss is God’s Form. God has no desires and that is why the state He is in is described as *Parama Sukhadam* (Supreme Happiness). If there are no desires, then one can truly experience Eternal and Supreme Happiness, which is what God is.

Absence of desires also makes God the personification of Supreme Knowledge. Supreme Knowledge exists when there is Supreme Bliss – the two go together. Thus, Supreme Knowledge, Supreme Happiness, and Supreme Bliss – all these are synonymous with God. These aspects of God are not the result of causal effects; they are intrinsic to God. The Almighty transcends reason, is beyond causality, and is also beyond both space and time. He is not bound by circumstances either.

Here is an example. You are now here in Brindavan. You are sleeping in your room and while doing so you dream that you are in Calcutta. Why did you go to Calcutta? How did you travel to Calcutta? Who accompanied you? How long did it take you to reach Calcutta? There are no valid answers to these questions because dream is beyond space, time, and circumstances such as one experiences in the waking state. Suppose you actually want to go to Calcutta. You catch a flight at 7 a.m. and in about three hours you are physically there. At Calcutta Airport you take a taxi and go to a house. What for? To meet your relatives there. Thus, in real life, there is a purpose for the travel – you wish to meet your relatives, that is the purpose. The mode of travel is air and the journey is made in the morning. The duration of the journey is three hours. The time of departure is 7 a.m. Experiences in the waking state are thus governed entirely by time, space, reason, and circumstances. On the other hand, experiences in the dream state are completely beyond all such considerations.

The dream-state experience illustrates another important point. You are fast asleep at night. At 1.30 a.m. you get up to go to the bathroom. You come back and fall asleep again. The time

now is 1.35 a.m. You drift into a dream. In the dream you see yourself growing up, getting educated, securing a job, getting married, having a son and later playing with this son. In the dream, the child cries. With a start you wake up. You look at the clock. It shows 1.40 a.m. In just five minutes of dream, you have experienced so many stages in life that take nearly forty years in real life. In the same way, if you are able to rise to the transcendental state of *turiyavasta*, you can experience God in just the fraction of a second. You may wonder, “Is this possible?” Well, can anyone explain how it is possible in five minutes of dream to go through what takes forty years in real life? No one can. In the same way, though no one can explain it, it *is* possible to experience Divinity, literally in a flash.

Here is another example. You are living in a house. Circumstances arise and you go abroad, locking up the house. You return after spending ten years overseas. You open the lock and enter the house. You then put on the switch. The room you are in has remained dark for ten years but in just one moment, it is filled with light. It took just one second to put the switch on, and in a flash the darkness is removed. In the same way, it does not necessarily take ages for the darkness of ignorance to be removed and for enlightenment to occur. Enlightenment is a process that is beyond reason and season. Why? Because God who confers enlightenment is also beyond reason and season. Intensely directing your intellect toward God amounts to flicking the switch. When the spiritual switch is flicked, Supreme Bliss can be experienced immediately. Therefore, the realisation of this exalted state described variously as *Brahmanandam*, *Parama Sukhadam*, etc., can happen instantaneously, without any apparent reason. To

have this experience, you do not have to withdraw to the forest as people mistakenly imagine; it can happen to you right here.

Offer service, and receive love!

Peace is right within you. To experience what is right within you, why think of withdrawing to the forest? Such thoughts are foolish; peace is in one place and you are thinking of looking for it elsewhere. Peace is within you! If you want to discover this treasure within you, then, as Swami said earlier, you must serve others and experience love. If you do so, then you would automatically discover peace. Enlightenment is nothing but experiencing peace and love within, and this enlightenment is nothing other than Supreme Bliss and Absolute Happiness.

When the mind wavers, faith also falters

Everything is in you. That is why it is said,

*Sarvatah Panipadam Tatsarvato 'ksi Siromukham
Sarvatah Srrtimallope Sarvamavrtya Tisthati.*

With hands and feet everywhere, with eyes, heads, mouths, and ears everywhere, He exists enveloping all. He pervades through all these means.

Once, Krishna asked Arjuna, “How old are you?” Arjuna replied, “I am seventy.” Krishna then said, “Arjuna, do you know My age? I am seventy five!” For this body also seventy-five is coming!

[Obviously, this is a reference to the forthcoming Seventy-fifth Birthday. Perhaps, Swami was dropping a hint to those who forgot that He is none other than Krishna come again!] Bhishma was then one hundred and thirteen. At that age, he served as the Commander-in-Chief of the Kaurava forces in the Kurukshetra war. Can you think of such a thing in this day and age? People lived long those days.

When the mind is not steady but wavering, there are aberrations. Once, Krishna chided Arjuna, “I taught you the *Gita* and gave you much spiritual advice; but you don’t remembering anything. Do you know why? Because you do not consider My teachings to be important. You are indifferent to them, and that is why you have forgotten all that I taught you. Had you regarded them as important, then you would have remembered all My teachings. You have also forgotten that you and I have been together in many lives.” Arjuna felt sorry and with humility asked, “Lord, how is it that You remember everything and recall them all, while I am not able to do so?” That is forgetfulness.

*The Real You or the Inner Being
Is ever aware in all states,
Be it the waking state
Or the dream state,
Or the deep-sleep state.
It knows no forgetfulness.*

You, however, are not in the *Taraka* state, or the one of Perfect Awareness, but in the *tamasic* state, which is one of torpor. Arjuna

was baffled and asked, “How can that be Lord? I am not all that dull.” Krishna smiled and replied, “Is that so? Now tell Me; we have been together for so long; can you remember all the events? You do not. But you do remember your birthday, and also the day of your wedding with Subhadra, even though the marriage took place decades ago. Arjuna, where were you last year on *Chaturdasi* [fourteenth] day in the month of *Margashirsha* [approximately, November]?” A crestfallen Arjuna replied, “I don’t remember.” Krishna continued, “You can recall precisely the date of your marriage that took place fifty years ago but cannot remember where you were on a particular day just last year! This reflects the human tendency of forgetfulness, caused by a wavering mind.”

A short time after this conversation took place, the death occurred of Arjuna’s son Abhimanyu. But Arjuna was not aware of this. When he returned home, he wondered, “Every evening as I returned from the battlefield, my son used to receive me. Today, why has he not come?” Krishna, who was then by the side of Arjuna, knew even earlier about Abhimanyu’s death but did not reveal it to Arjuna; there was a time and place for everything and in due course, Arjuna would become aware of the news. In God’s Drama, there is a time and a place for everything. When Arjuna came to know of Abhimanyu’s death, he could not bear the shock and collapsed. He shouted at Krishna calling Him “*Vamsanaasi!*” [destroyer of the clan] for not having protected his son. Arjuna continued, “We all are now too old to have children again. With the death of Abhimanyu, our lineage has come to an end and You are responsible for it!” Krishna smiled and replied, “Arjuna, your mind is wavering. Right now you are in the grip of grief, and

swayed by emotion, are speaking without thinking. But it does not matter; this mood will pass.”

Sometime later, Abhimanyu’s wife delivered a baby but unfortunately, it was still-born. Draupadi took the dead child in her hand and said, “Alas, even this child is dead.” Sahadeva was sent to fetch Krishna. Krishna came. Draupadi placed the body of the still-born child on a plate, took it to Krishna and said, “O Krishna, have You given us the gift of a dead child?” Krishna was smiling as usual. It was Krishna’s habit to always smile, no matter what the situation. Others might be worried, anxious, upset, or in despair but Krishna was always smiling. Grief and sorrow could never touch Him; He was far beyond them. Krishna told Draupadi, “This child is the exact replica of Abhimanyu. His eyes are like that of Abhimanyu and so is the face.” Arjuna could not bear this and shouted, “Yes, the breath too is similar! Abhimanyu is dead and so is this child!!” Krishna smiled and chided Arjuna, “You are a fool, unable to understand what I am saying.” Krishna then ignored Arjuna and continued talking to Draupadi. The latter had full faith in Krishna and His willingness to do anything for His devotees.

In the matter of devotion, women are exemplary. It is the wife that drags the husband to God. God gave the gift of *bhakti* (devotion) to women and *jnana* (wisdom) to men. In court language, whereas men can go only up to the Durbar Hall [where the King holds court], women can go to the inner quarters [where women stay]. In the same way, the devotion of a woman can take her right inside God’s heart, whereas such access is not so easy for a man. Why? Because, compared to women, men have less faith in God and

correspondingly also less devotion. Women, on the other hand, have total faith. Arjuna did not believe that Krishna would do anything, but Draupadi had full faith that Krishna would restore the dead child back to life.

The Pandava brothers were all seated there, looking totally crestfallen. Meanwhile, Krishna was continuing His conversation. Arjuna was boiling inside but was unable to say anything. All of a sudden Krishna told Draupadi, “Sister, give me the child.” Draupadi did. Krishna then patted the child and the baby began to cry. The Pandavas were stunned; unbelievable, but the dead child had come back to life! They shouted with joy, while Krishna named the child Parikshit (As He had made them undergo His pariksha (test) before giving life to the child). Arjuna too witnessed the miracle. He ran to Krishna, fell at His feet, and hailed Him thus: “Krishna! *Vamsoddharaka*!! [Krishna, the Emancipator of the clan]” Krishna smiled and said, “Arjuna, just a short while ago you called Me the destroyer of the clan and now you are hailing Me as the Emancipator of the clan. How quickly you change! How fickle you are! How your mind wavers!”

*If you say yes,
Sai says yes;
If you say no,
Sai also says no.
This yes and no relate to you,
But for Sai,
It is always Yes, Yes, and Yes!*

[Applause.] One moment Krishna was called the destroyer and the in the next He was called the Emancipator. These descriptions do not relate to Krishna but the person using the terms. They

reflect the wavering mind of man. God is Unchanging and far beyond fluctuations.

Parikshit having regained life, everyone was very happy. All of them were sitting around Krishna. Arjuna moved close to Krishna and gently asked, “Lord, why did You let my son Abhimanyu die at such a young age? I did not even get a chance to see him before he died. Should death come so early? Could You not have let him live a little longer?” Krishna replied, “O foolish one! You are determining the age of a person by looking at the present body. This age that you are talking of has no meaning really. Birth and death of the body follow according to the law of nature.”

Here is an example that illustrates how one should understand the so-called early or untimely death. Suppose you go to Kashmir. You may not be aware of it but Kashmir was the home state of Kaikeyi. While in Kashmir, you purchase some woollen cloth in order to stitch a suit. After return, you put the cloth in a cupboard, lock the cupboard, and then forget all about the cloth. Ten years pass and you are about to shift your residence. You are packing things for the transfer of residence. At that time, you discover the woollen cloth that you have stored away a long time ago. You regret that you have forgotten about this nice fabric all these years. That very day, you go to a tailor and ask him to stitch a nice suit for you. Soon, the suit is delivered. You wear this brand new suit and attend a wedding party. A buffet dinner has been arranged there. You bend down a little with the plate to help yourself. Suddenly you find that your suit gives way and tears [laughter]. You feel sad. You wonder, “Brand new suit; how can it tear like this?” Yes, the suit is indeed new but the cloth is not

new; it is old.

Krishna told Arjuna, “Abhimanyu did not die young as you imagine; he was ‘old stock’. In this birth he might have lived only for a few years, but in reality, the one whom you called Abhimanyu was not young at all.” Arjuna then said, “Lord, I was not aware of such subtleties.” Krishna smiled and replied, “Yes, My dear son, life and death are both mysteries! You will not be able to understand them.”

Experience God and do not try to analyse Him

It is not possible for anyone to comprehend Divinity. What God does one moment may appear to contradict what He does the next moment. God’s actions are inscrutable, beyond, time, space, and human reason. As Swami often says: “No reason, no season!” It is therefore both meaningless and improper to analyse God’s actions and to interpret them. If God says ‘Yes,’ it shall be so. If He says ‘No,’ it shall be so. That is Destiny! You must accept all this and not argue. To question God’s actions would imply lack of faith.

Let us say right now you go out to the bazaar and tell people there what Swami is speaking about. You tell them that Swami is God. A man in the crowd asks you, “Where is God?” You tell him, “He is there on the stage delivering a discourse.” He argues, “That is not God. God does not exist.” You should then tell him, “If you say that God does not exist, that applies only to you and not to me. For me, God does exist. What right do you have to tell me that God does not exist? To believe in God is my right. If you

are destined not to have faith in God, that is your misfortune.” Your faith in God must be strong. If it is, God will surely respond always. If you emphatically declare your firm belief in God, non-believers would automatically shut up and walk away.

You must understand that Creation is full of mysteries. The eleven words starting with *Brahmananda* are not praises of God. Nor are they descriptions of God. In fact, they are the Names of God. The celebrated *Gayatri Mantra* has three basic parts.

Om

*Bhur Bhuvassuvah, Tatsavitur Varenyam,
Bhargo Devasya Dhimahi,
Dhiyo Yonah Pracodayat.*

First there is praise; next, there is meditation; finally, prayer – adoration, meditation, and prayer. But the hymn beginning with *Brahmananda*, goes far beyond even the famous *Gayatri*. The words *Brahmananda* etc., have nothing to do with praise – they are the very Names of God. The *Gayatri Mantra* is the gift of Sage Viswamitra to humanity. It has a basis; it can be analysed; its meaning can be comprehended. But the Divine Principle [to which the words *Brahmananda* etc., refer] is beyond human reasoning, human analysis, and human understanding as well.

God knows no sorrow, has no pain, and is beyond thought. Sorrow and grief come only to those with thoughts, while the one without thoughts is always happy. God is beyond thoughts and is therefore always in Bliss. No matter what people tell Him, Swami always responds by saying, “*Santosham, santosham*”

[meaning 'I am happy to hear that']. That is because Swami is *Parama Sukhadam*. A lady comes to Swami and cries, "Swami, my husband died". Swami replies, "*Santosham*". The shocked lady asks, "What Swami! I am telling you that my husband has died and You are saying You are happy!! Are You happy that my husband died?" Swami replies, "No matter what you say, for Swami it is always *santosham, santosham, santosham!*" Once, a person told Swami, "Our people met with an accident". Swami said, "*Chala santosham* [very happy]".

Swami is always happy. What is there to be unhappy about? Whatever has to happen according to destiny, will happen. Why then bother and feel sad about it? Life and death are natural. They are common to all and not meant specifically for this person or that. Therefore, one must calmly face the verdict of destiny and accept with equanimity whatever happens. People suffer not because of destiny but because of desires and attachments. If you have attachments to the things of the world, you are bound to experience joy and sorrow in alternation. Pleasure and pain are an integral part of the dual world.

Everything happens according to the will of God. He gives and He takes back what He wants when He wants. You might have seen railway goods wagons carrying a marking: Date of Return. It means that on the due date, the wagon has to be returned to the parent railway department. The body is like the goods wagon. When it is sent here, a return date is stamped on it though you might not be aware of it. When the due date comes, the body goes back where it came from – that is all. Thus, when there is birth

there is also death. The two form a natural pair. So, no one should give way to sorrow on account of death.

There is Bliss in every aspect of life, and God is Pure Bliss. Since God is in you, you should always be happy. You should ever be full of love. Never allow that love to become polluted or degraded into hate.

At the end of the discourse, Bhagavan sang the *bhajan*, *Prema Mudita* ...

23 May 2000.

