

CHAPTER 28

THE ENCHANTING STORY

Sage Suka commenced his momentous message to the King. He said: “Maharaja, the great Tree that Bhagavatha is, truly inspires reverential awe. It has, incorporated in it, every conceivable source of auspiciousness and joy. The Lord, Sri Narayana is the seed from which it has sprouted. The sprout is Brahman. The trunk of the Tree is Narada. Vyasa constitutes the branches. Its sweet fruit is the nectarine story of Krishna. Those earnest souls that yearn for that nectar, and pine plaintively, regardless of bodily comfort or the passage of the years, until they secure the fruit and imbibe its essence, such are real saints and yogis.

“Oh, ye ascetics and sages! This day, I am relating to you that Bhagavatha Sastra, that enchanting story of Krishna.

Treasure it in your memory and save yourself from delusion and grief. You have listened to the recitals of all Sastras already. You have also mastered all Sadhanas. But you have not known the greatest of them all. I shall now give you the sacred Name of Krishna and the Sweetness that is flowing from it. It is the sweetest name one can conceive. When it falls on the ear, the heart is filled with joy. When you recall the Name to memory, a stream of Love springs from the heart. The Bhagavatha inspires and promotes deep devotion to Lord Krishna.

“The Universal Absolute, the Birthless Formless, Unmanifest, Infinite, took on limitations of Name and Form, and concretised Itself as Avathars (Incarnations) on many occasions and manifested countless instances of Divine Intercession and Grace. Through these as well as the characteristics assumed and the ideas propagated, God saved mankind from downfall. Those who sing the story of this Glory, those who listen eagerly to the recital, those who imbibe and digest the lessons conveyed, these are the real devotees. They are the Bhagavathas, those who follow the path laid down in the Bhagavatha. Bhagavatha binds Bhaktha with Bhagavan. That is to say, the story fills you with God, and transmutes you into Divinity.

“God incarnates, not merely for the destruction of the wicked. That is just an excuse, one of the obvious reasons. Really speaking, God incarnates for the sake of *Bhakthas* (faithful devotees). The cow has milk primarily as sustenance for its calf. But it is used by man for maintaining his health

and efficiency. So too, God incarnates, primarily for the sustenance of the faithful, the devoted, the virtuous and the good. But even the faithless, and the bad, use the chance for their own purpose. Therefore, in the Bhagavatha, stories of such wicked persons intervene amidst the accounts of the Glory and Grace of God. This does not make the Bhagavatha any the less holy. When the sweet juice has been squeezed out of the sugarcane, the bagasse is discarded. When the sweetness of Divine Majesty has been tasted, the bagasse can well be thrown out. The cane has both bagasse and sugar. It cannot be sugar only. So too, devotees have to be amidst the faithless. They cannot be without the others.

“God has no bondage to time and space. For Him, all beings are the same. He is the master of the living and the non-living. At the conclusion of every aeon the process of involution is completed in the Deluge. Then, evolution starts again and as Brahma, He creates beings again. He enlightens everyone with a spark of his own Glory and fosters on the path of fulfilment every one of them, as Vishnu. He is He again, who as Siva, concludes the process by the destruction of all. Thus, you can see that there is no limit to His might, no end to His potency. There can be no boundaries of His achievements. He incarnates in countless ways. He comes as an Incarnation of a *Kala* (fragment) of His, or an *Amsa* (part) of His. He comes as an Inner inspirer for some definite Purpose. He comes to close an epoch and inaugurate another (*Yugavathar*). The narrative of these incarnations is the Bhagavatha.

“The One Divine Principle works through three Forms, as Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, in order to manipulate and complete the process of becoming a being, called *Srishti* (creation). The three are fundamentally of the same essence. There is no higher or lower. All three are equally Divine. Associated with Creation, He is Brahma; with Protection, He is Vishnu; with Dissolution, He is Siva. When He comes down assuming special form on special occasions for a specific purpose, He is known as Avathara. In fact, Manu and Prajapathi and other persons are Divine persons entrusted by Brahma with the mission of peopling the world. Everything happens in consonance with the Divine Will. So, we can assert that the saints, sages, ascetics and men both good and bad, are all Avatharas of the Vishnu Entity. Avatharas are as countless as living beings are, for, each is born as a consequence of Divine Will. But the story of the Yugavathar alone is worth perusal for the Advent is to restore Dharma and moral life. The story of all the rest is but a story of distress and despair.

“Brahma deputed Manu to proceed to the earth and to create living beings thereon. Devi, the Feminine Principle eluded him and took the earth into the nether regions. Brahma then had to seek help from Vishnu (Hari) and He assumed the Form of a Boar and brought the Earth, from the nether regions, and placed it among the waters. Later, the Earth was so incensed at the atrocities of Emperor Venu, she kept all the seeds sown, within herself and did not allow them to sprout. So, all beings were afflicted with the agony of hunger.

The earth became a medley of hills and valleys with nothing green on it. Then, the Lord assumed the Form of Prithu, who levelled the surface and added fertility to the soil and induced the growth of agriculture and promoted the welfare of mankind. He fostered the Earth like his own child and so, the Earth is called Prithivi. He is said to have built the first cities upon the earth.

“That is to say, it was the Lord’s Will that it should be done so. It is that Will which is being worked out. The Lord originated the Vedas, for the preservation of man, through the practice of morals and spiritual exercises. The Vedas contain Names that will liberate beings, and the rules and regulations that will guide. When the Asuras or the evil-minded threatened to steal the Vedas, they hid themselves in the waters and the Lord assumed the form of a Fish to recover them. He saved the Seven Sages and Manu from the same waters. This is the reason why it is said that the Lord incarnated as a Fish.

“Oh, ye ascetics! Oh, King Parikshit! Doubts may arise in your minds when you hear the story of creation and the early history of man on earth. The processes of the Divine Will are mysterious wonders. They cannot be grasped by the faculties with which you measure earthly events. Often, they may strike you as devoid of any basis but the Lord will never involve Himself in any deed without proper cause. That Will need not be explicable. It is its own prompter. Everything everywhere is due to His Will.

“To initiate Creation, there must be some attraction that will act as the urge. So, Brahma had to become two, in body and activity. The One Body was transformed into two and therefore, where there was one Will formerly, two appeared, one which attracted and the other which was drawn towards creation, the feminine and the masculine. Since the one attracted in a hundred distinct ways it was called *Satharupa* (hundred-faceted) and Beloved of Brahma (*Brahmapriya*). The other was named Manu. These two gained renown in the first stage of creation. Satharupa and Manu were the first progenitors.”