

## CHAPTER XI

**H**ow can such coddled comfort-loving persons attain Moksha (liberation)? If a Guru is not able to secure such disciples, why should he deplore his fate? It is strange that there are Gurus who lament when they are not able to attract such disciples towards them! Opium eaters, ganja smokers, are unfit to be Gurus. They are cheats. How can those who spend all their energies in securing the wherewithal for their living be Gurus? How can those who seek to fulfil their sensual fancies be Disciples? These are *Dhana* (Money) gurus, those are *Mada* (Pride) disciples! To consider such as Gurus and Sishyas is to drag those holy names into the dust of disgrace.

Who, then, is the genuine Guru? It is he who teaches the path of destroying Moha or Delusion. And who is the genuine Sishya or Disciple? It is he who seeks to control

and conquer the outward fleeing mind. The Gurus of today shout every day from platforms what they stuffed into their heads the previous day under the midnight lamp. Their performance is only like regurgitating the food once swallowed, and nothing more. They talk like parrots reproducing what they have learnt by rote. Even children know that greed and anger have to be mastered. But in these people, greed and anger, envy and hatred, lust and pride pop up their devilish heads through every little word that they utter, every little deed they do. If those who claim to be Gurus do not themselves master these propensities, how can the unfortunate disciples who resort to them succeed?

If the Guru is supremely self-sacrificing, saturated with selfless *Sarvajana-samaana* (sympathy based on equal treatment to all), seeking to sustain Sathya, his soul suffused with strength-giving thoughts, striving to secure sorrowless lives for all, leading a sweet and simple life, satisfied only by the chance to show others *San-maarga* (Noble Path) and *Sath Guna* (Noble Qualities)—then, perhaps only a few disciples will gather around him. They will impose upon him faults that sully him and cast doubt upon his integrity and genuineness! But the Guru will be as serene as ever, for he suffers no loss. The loss is all for the Sishyas, who let go the great chance.

Of one thing, be certain. So long as the delusion that one is the body is not cast aside, God cannot be realised; however far one may wander, whatever the number of Gurus one might select and serve. Stick to that delusion and all the

*Dhyana* (meditation), all the *Japam* (repetition of name of God), all the waters of all the Holy *Theerthams* (Sacred Waters, pilgrim centres) that you bathe in, cannot win success for you! All your effort is as useless as trying to bale out water with a vessel riddled with leaks.

Householders who carry out their duties are any day preferable to such Sadhus. They follow their Ashrama Dharma and they tread the correct path in unceasing remembrance of the Lord and so these householders realise the Goal. If the nature of the Gurus and Sishyas of today is to be considered, volumes can be written. But that will be using precious time for unessential discussion. So we shall revert to our main topic.

For, even to dwell on the sacred Guru-Sishya bond of Krishna-Arjuna in the same breath with the relationship of the present day “Gurus” and “Sishyas” will be a sacrilege. They are unique, incomparable, the supreme pair, unapproachable by any other. They have to be taken as the ideal by all aspirants and teachers. Arjuna bowed in humility and carried out sincerely the precepts of the Guru. Krishna fostered what was really beneficial to Arjuna. He paid full consideration to what will really promote the reputation, the *Atmananda* (Bliss of realisation of the Self) and the Dharma of Arjuna. He tended him and fended him, as the very breath of His Life. That was the type of Guru the Lord was for him.

Krishna is Paramatma (Creator). Arjuna is *Jivatma* (embodied being). Krishna is *Purushothama* (Lord of All,

highest of the Purushas). Arjuna is *Narothama* (Best among men). That is the reason why they are the ideal Guru-Sishya. Others are Guru-Sishya only in name. Self-willed Sishyas and power-drunk Gurus are simply wasting their lives in vain pursuits. Krishna is an ocean of Prema (Love). He watched over Arjuna as one watches over the eye or the heart. He taught holiness and transformed into holiness. He loved and was loved beyond compare. That makes the guru a genuine guru. And Arjuna? He too is no ordinary being. His *Thyaga* (detachment, surrender) is unapproachable. Whatever the crisis, he stuck to Krishna’s command and Krishna’s word. He wore the comradeship with the Lord as the armour that will save him from all harm, as the very body in which he dwelt as something which he must foster, strengthen and guard. Though a mighty force, he was ready to efface it when necessary. This is how Guru and Sishya should be bound together.

The Lord who is the embodiment of Prema realised the sincerity of the Disciple and estimated his attainments and then detailed to him the benefits and glory of Atma Jnana. “*Kauntheya*” (Son of Kunthi [Arjuna’s mother]), He said, “By means of Jnana, you can see in yourself and in Me, all things. Then, duality and the consequent delusion will disappear, as darkness disperses before the rising sun.

“Arjuna, I know well your past and the background of your birth. Yours is no ordinary birth. You are born with Divine (*Daivi*) accomplishments and heritage. I alone am aware of it, no one else. Since you are unaware of it you are

now condemning yourself as a sinner who kills kith and kin, teachers and elders!

“Even if you have sinned, are not sinners saved? Repentance is enough to transmute sin into sanctity. The Lord graciously accepts contrition and pours His Blessings. The Rathnakara who was engaged in acts of sin until the moment when wisdom dawned, became a saint through repentance. He became the sage, Valmiki is it not? His story is proof of the value of contrition. You may ask, is it enough if one is free from the effects of sin? Should not the effects of *Punya* (good deeds) be also given up? Why, one *has* the freedom to give up merits of *Punya*, though one may not have equal freedom to give up the demerit of *Paapa* (sin). The roaring forest fire reduces to ashes everything in its way. So too, the mighty conflagration of *Jnana* will consume and destroy all sin and all *Punya*.

“To acquire this sacred spiritual *Jnana*, one thing is essential: *Sraddha*, steady faith in the *Sastras* and the Teachers, and in the acquisition of *Jnana*. Without earnestness born of faith, no task however tiny can be accomplished by man. Therefore, you can yourselves see how essential it is for earning *Jnana*. *Sraddha* is the incomparable treasure chest of *Sama* (control of senses), *Dama* (self-control, patience), *Uparathi* (mind control by withdrawing senses from sensory objects), *Thithiksha* (vigilance, fortitude) and *Samadhana* (mind control by poise), each one a coveted possession.

“*Sraddha* is only the first step. You must have been yearning to imbibe the teachings I am imparting. This is very necessary. Along with these, you must also be vigilant; do not yield to sloth. Again, you may fall into company that is not congenial or encouraging. To escape the evil influence of such company and to strengthen your mind to avoid it altogether, mastery over the senses is required.

“Do not admit doubt into you. Want of faith or steadiness is not as destructive as the venom of doubt. In its operation and consequence, it is like the tubercular bacilli. It is born in *Ajnana* and it penetrates into the cavity of the heart of man and breeds there. It is the parent of disaster.

“Therefore, destroy this demon with the sword of Self-knowledge or *Atma Jnana*. Arise, Arjuna! Engage in activity as if duty bound, have full faith in My Words, do as I bid with no thought of the fruit therefrom. Be a practitioner of *Nishkama Karma*. By that renunciation, you will get established in *Jnana*; you will win Liberation from change, from birth and death.

“Give up the idea that you are the doer and that you are the beneficiary. You can do this by dedicating both deed and fruit to the Lord. Then, no sin can affect you, for you are not the doer and the deed must perforce be holy. Like oil on the tongue, collyrium on the eye, lotus leaf on water, the deed is *with* you, but not *of* you. Whatever you do or hear or see, you remain unaffected, devoid of deeds, innocent of listening or seeing. The joy derived from the

external world opens the gateways of grief; it is fleeting. But you are eternal, the very source of Bliss, above and beyond all this, the *Atma Swaropa* (Inner consciousness, God) itself. That is your genuine nature. You are unrelated to these activities that are called deeds and these consequences which you now mistake as real. You are not the doer, you are just the Witness, the Seer! All your perplexity has arisen from the delusion that you are the doer, from your ego and the sense of ‘mine.’ Know the Brahman. Take up the tasks but renounce the consequences. Giving up the fruit of activity is far superior to the giving up of activity itself. Karma Yoga is far superior to Karma Sanyasa.

“Well, superior to both of those is Dhyana Yoga. I shall tell you why. Dhyana Yoga needs the support of Karma Yoga and so, Karma Yoga was first taught to you. Those who renounce the fruits while actively engaged in Karma are very dear to Me, they are the true Sanyasins, the real Renouncers. I have no affection for those who give up the Ritual Fire and desist from all activity except eating, sleeping and craving for sensory pleasures and behave like Kumbhakarna’s kinsmen; idling and wasting their time. I am unapproachably far from idlers. He who has not renounced the pursuit of wishes can never become a Yogi however busy he may be in sadhana. Only he who is careful not to get entangled in the senses and who is unattached to the consequences of his deeds can become a *Sarva-sanga-parithyaagi* (renouncer of all attachments).

“Dhyana Yoga is possible only on the basis of this Nishkama Karma (action). If the mind is not under control and amenable to one’s orders, it can become one’s greatest foe. So live in solitude so that you can master the senses. A horse without reins, a bull unused to the yoke and a Sadhaka whose senses are not mastered are all like a river without water. Such sadhana is a waste.

“So arise, Arjuna! Practise Dhyana Yoga (meditation). Resolve to master the senses through this Yoga and follow it steadily, systematically, regularly, at a stated time and in a stated place, without changing them as the whim takes you. A regular system is essential for this Yoga. Observe it strictly. Do not alter as fancy dictates, that will bring about dire consequences. For those who eat too much and get exhausted with the task of assimilating it, for those who eat less and suffer from exhaustion, for those who sleep too much or too little, for those who indulge in Dhyana according to ‘convenience’ (that is to say, those who do it for long hours one day because they have no other work, and do just token Dhyana the next day, because they have lots of work), for those who give free rein to the six inner enemies (Kama [desire, lust, greed] *Krodha* [anger] and the rest), for those who do not confer joy on parents, and specially the mother—more than all these, for those who entertain doubt and have little faith in the Lord, or in the Guru, whom they have chosen and installed in their hearts—Dhyana will yield no fruit at all.

“The mind of the Yoga adept should be like the steady upright unshaken flame of the lamp, kept in the windless

windowsill. Whenever the slightest sign of unsteadiness occurs, you should endeavour to curb the mind and not allow it to wander. Develop the consciousness that you are in all and the feeling of oneness that all is in you. Then you can take up and succeed in all the Yogas. Then you are free from all distinctions such as ‘I’ and ‘others,’ or as ‘Atma and Paramatma.’ The joy and grief of others will then become equally yours. You can then never harm others. Then all can be loved and adored in the awareness that they are Sarveswara (the Lord).” Lord Krishna declared that those who have attained this vision are really the supreme Yogis.

Meanwhile, Arjuna is beset by doubt and he asks for some elucidation and explanation so that he may get convinced. “Krishna! All that you have been telling me is very pleasant to the ear and I can well imagine that it must be a source of Ananda to those who attain success. But it is so difficult, beyond the reach of all. The Yoga wherein everything has to be realised as equal (*Samathwam* [equanimity]) is fraught with obstacles even for the fully equipped Sadhaka. What then am I to say to people like me who are common aspirants? Is it ever possible for us? Krishna! Is the mind so easily controllable? Alas, even an elephant cannot drag as the mind does. It is the nursery of waywardness. Its mulishness and obstinacy are also very powerful. It is a terrible shrew. It can never be caught. It will never halt at one place. It is like capturing the wind or bundling up water—the attempt to catch the mind and tame it. How can anyone enter upon Yoga with such a mind?

One seems as hard as the other; the twin tasks of controlling the mind and practising the Yoga. Krishna, you are advising an impossible task, beyond the capacity of anyone.”

The Lord broke into a smile on hearing these words. “Arjuna! You have described the mind and known its nature very well. But it is not an impossible task. The mind, *can* be mastered, however difficult the task might be. By systematic practice (*Abhyasa*) and by relentless Inquiry (*Vichara*) and Detachment (*Vairagya*)—the mind *can* be mastered. There is no task that cannot be accomplished by steady practice. Place faith in the Lord and practise with the certainty that you have the power and the Grace—and all tasks become easy.

“Therefore, whoever enters upon this sadhana (spiritual practice) with determination will attain the supreme Goal, available only for souls transmuted through several births. Remember, the person who has achieved Yoga is superior to the person who is the master of ritual Karma. So strive, O Arjuna, to become a Yogi, to attain that high and holy status. But this is not all you have to do. There is a status, higher than even this. Whoever fixes his entire consciousness in Me, whoever earnestly meditates on Me, to the exclusion of everything else, he is superior to all, he is a *Mahayogi*.

“Dhyana Yoga and Jnana Yoga both are inner disciplines. They are based on Sraddha (faith) and Bhakthi (devotion). Without these two, they are both unattainable; the pursuit itself is vain. A Sadhaka, deprived of them, is as

a wooden doll, lifeless, unaware of the goal. The basic requisite is deep-rooted Prema towards the Lord. How can you get this? By getting to know the glory, the splendour, the nature and characteristics of the Lord, His Swabhava (essential quality) and Swaroopaa (reality). That is why I am now instructing you about these. I am imparting to you fully the wisdom of the Sastras, supplemented by the wisdom of inner experience. Know that there is nothing further for you to know. Of the thousands of aspirants, there are few who strive to acquire this Jnana (wisdom). And, of these, only some one single individual achieves success. All who start do not reach the goal.

“Arjuna! Note that there is nothing higher than Me in the World. All are strung in Me like flowers on a string. The Five Elements, *Manas* (mind), *Buddhi* (intellect) and *Ahamkaram* (ego)—these eight varieties of Prakruthi (nature) have produced the Sthula-Sukshma Prapancha, the Gross and the Subtle in Creation. This is called *Apara* (lower) Prakruthi. There is another Prakruthi distinct from this. That is known as *Para* (super, above) Prakruthi. It is neither Sthula (gross body) nor Sukshma (subtle body); it is *Chaithanya* (consciousness), indwelling in the *Jivi* (individual). The *Jagath* (world) itself is its aspiration.

“The Lord first created the gross world and then as *Jiva*, He entered it and rendered it *Chith*, by His *Chaithanya* (consciousness). This is declared clearly in the Vedas. You must consider the *Apara* Prakruthi (evanescent and transitory aspect of God) to be the *Swabhava* (essential

quality) of *Parameswara* (The supreme Lord) and the *Para* Prakruthi to be His *Swaroopaa*. Dwell on the meaning of these, *Swabhava* and *Swaroopaa*, and grasp it well. The Gross is bound by the dictates of *Chaithanya*, which is *Sarva Swathanthra*, complete master, ever free.

“‘*Jivi*’ means that which assumes *Prana* (vital breath); the *Jivi* holds on to *Prana*, through his skill and intelligence. He is the *Antharyamin* (God spirit in all creation), who has penetrated into everything and who sustains everything. So, the *Para* Prakruthi is just *Paramatma* itself. All that becomes manifest with the same *Chaithanya* has to be taken as One.

“*Jada* (inert matter), *Chaithanya* (consciousness) are the two essentials for the entire Creation. They are the same as *Prakruthi*, *Purusha*. The *Chaithanya* *Shakthi* (universal power of energy), when it entertains the idea of *Bhoga* (luxury), expresses the World out of its own *Swakarma*. The *Jada* assumes the form of the *Deha* (body). Both these are *My Nature*. The *Easwara*, who causes Creation, Preservation and Dissolution through these, is I Myself, remember. There is no substance other than Me; there is no Reality other than Me. I am the Primal Cause, the Primal Substance. ‘I am One; let Me become Many’; thus I Myself resolve upon this expansion into manifoldness, called *Srishti* (creation). That resolution affected and motivated the *Maya* *Shakthi* (Power of Divine Delusion) and so the *Mahath Thathwa* (Cosmos principle) got produced. That was the first step in the evolution of *Prakruthi*.

“If a seed is planted in the earth and watered, in a day or two it will drink in the moisture and swell in size. The sprouting has not yet taken place but the first change is this. The Mahath Thathwa is a happening of this type. Next, in accordance with the will of the Lord, a sprout arises. That is called *Mahadahamkaram* (The Primordial Ego). From it, five leaves break forth, the subtle principles of the Five Elements. The entire Jagath (world) is the combined product of these eight: Prakruthi Shakthi, Mahath Thathwa, Ahamkaram and the Five Elements or Panchabhuthas.”