

3. Man's Divine Destiny

The Divine is one without a second. "*Ekoham bahusyaam Prajaayeyethi.*" (I am One. Let me become many for the sake of progeny). Willing in this way, the Divine assumed a myriad amazing variety of forms in the universe and taught in the *Gita* the threefold paths of *Karma*, *Jnana* and *Bhakti* to enable humanity to realise the magnificence of the Divine.

Man has been engaged in exploring the infinite wonderful secrets of Nature in this marvellous creation in all possible ways. But because of the vagaries of his mind, intellect and ego, man has failed to understand the true eternal, spiritual basis underlying everything in the Universe and has lost himself in the pursuit of the external phenomenal world as if it were the only reality. In the process he has failed to realise his own true nature and has totally perverted his mind. The simple truth that everything is permeated by the One has been lost sight of.

Krishna reminds man of grievous error

It is to remind man of this grievous error that Sri Krishna declared in the 18th chapter of the *Gita* (in verse 61) "*Easwarah-sarvabhoothaanam hriddeseh Arjuna thishtathi*" (The Lord resides, oh Arjuna, in the heart region of all beings) and went on to adjure in the 62nd *sloka*: "*Thameva saranam gachcha sarvabhaavena Bhaarata*" (Take refuge in Him alone with all thy heart, oh Bhaarata). This means that if the Lord dwells in the heart of all beings, He must be residing in Arjuna's heart also! Hence the injunction, "*Thameva saranam gachcha*" means: "Seek refuge in yourself." It must be understood from this that whatever one may say or do, he is doing it only to himself and for himself.

The Bhagavad Gita begins with Dhritharashtra's reference to "*Dharma kshetre Kurukshetre.*" *Dharmakshetra* is the seat of *Atma*. "*Kurukshetra*" is the body, which is the source of all actions. It is the combination of the *Atma* and the body the *Kshetra-Kshetrajna* relationship--which explains the human predicament. By forgetting the *Atma* and involving himself in "*Deha Dharma*" (the claims of the body), man is subjecting himself to endless suffering. He grieves about things which are not worth lamenting and does not grieve for the things that ought to make him sad. This state of delusion is the result of his identifying himself with the body and forgetting his inherent divinity. If he realises that he is one with the Omni-self, he will have no cause for sorrow. He will be aware that Truth and Bliss are inherent in his spiritual reality.

When man realises that the Divine is all-pervasive, there will be no room for acquisitive selfishness or divisiveness. When Dhritharashtra made a distinction between "his" sons (*maamakaah* my children) and the Pandavas, he betrayed his spiritual blindness and the ignorance of the unity that subsumes the multiplicity in the world.

Everything testifies to the glories of God

Love for the Divine is devotion. Devotion is not something objective and concrete. It is an inner experience which springs from the heart. As you think, so you become. Hence, the heart must be filled with good feelings. The senses must be engaged in good actions. When the eyes are turned towards God, all creation appears Divine. When you wear the right kind of spectacles, you see everything clearly. But if the glasses are not correct, you get a distorted picture and your eyes are spoiled. Likewise, if your heart is filled with love of God, all your feelings are sanctified by that love. Other undesirable thoughts drop away. Devotees pray to the Lord to come and reside in their pure and tranquil hearts. Where the heart is impure there is no room for God.

In the *Bhagavad Gita*, there is a canto devoted to the *Vibhritis* of the Lord. What are these *Vibhritis*--the glories of God? Everything in the Universe testifies to the glories of God. Everything is a gift from the Divine. To the one who has unqualified faith in God, there is nothing good or evil. He welcomes everything equally. When a child is well, the mother gives it all eatables. But when it is unwell, it is given bitter medicine by the doctor.

Likewise, the man who is groping in the darkness of ignorance has to be enlightened by the discipline of wisdom. The enforcement of such discipline does not mean that the Divine is angry or displeased. There is grace even in the severity of the discipline. It is like a surgeon's knife which is used to perform a necessary operation. The devotee should look upon pain and pleasure alike as designed for his good. He will not then be affected by troubles. He will regard them as stages in the evolution of his consciousness. Pain and pleasure are inseparable twins in life. One leads to the other even as the New Moon culminates in the Full Moon. These are the manifestations of the Wheel of Time, expressions of the Divine Will.

***Ahamkara* is the root of all troubles**

Man should get rid of *Ahamkara* (the feeling that he is the doer). As long as the ego is dominant, the *Atmic* consciousness will not develop. The egoist cannot recognise the *Atma*. It is egoism that is at the root of all man's troubles. It is the kind of delusion that is based on the misconceived notion that the body is real and permanent. The truth is otherwise. From an early age one should recognise the evanescence of the body and the senses and control the desires prompted by the sense organs. Desires are insatiable. The pursuit of wealth, power and position can only end in misery. Instead, one should take refuge in God and dedicate all actions to the Divine.

Subdue desires to achieve inner peace

In spite of his precious birth as a human being, man leads a life worse than that of the animals. Animals are not consumed by envy. They do not take pride in their possessions. They have no bank balances and they have no monthly salaries. They live happily from moment to moment, content with whatever food and shelter they can get. As man's knowledge and skills have increased, his moral calibre has declined. Man has to discover the secret of good life. He has to realise that he has taken birth not for enjoyment of worldly pleasures but to realise his divine destiny by the cultivation of good qualities and by performing good actions. To indulge in demoniac actions while having the human form means degrading human nature.

Of what use are wealth and position if one has no peace of mind? A quiet conscience is man's brightest jewel. To achieve inner peace, desires have to be subdued and all thoughts should be centred on God. Engage yourselves in service activities in a spirit of dedication. Do not hanker after leadership. True service consists in helping the poor and the forlorn in the society with humility and dedication. This is real service to the Divine. "*Dhil me Ram, Haath me Kaam.*" (Rama in the heart and service with the hand). Prepare yourselves for serving the people with God in your hearts and strength in your arms!

Discourse in the Poornachandra Auditorium, 9 Jan 1988