

## Manmanābhava Swami Dayananda Saraswati

*Continued from last issue*

THIS is called *sr̥ṣṭi*, creation. LOOK at the creation now. It is not that someone created it. The entire *jagat* was there, undifferentiated and that is Īśvara. Differentiated Īśvara, is also Īśvara. What was, what is and what will be is Īśvara.

In this manifestation, the individual is also a very significant component. When we talk of *Dakṣiṇāmūrti* as the Lord, the Lord is incomplete without the individual who is looking at the Lord. The Lord is one, but just for our understanding he is presented with eight components. It is an eight-fold model. The five elements, *sūkṣma*, subtle and *sthūla*, gross: *ākāśaḥ* (time is assumed with space), *vāyu*, air; *agni*, fire; *āpaḥ*, water and *pṛthivī*, earth, plus the sun representing all luminous bodies, the moon for all planets, and the eighth factor in this eight-fold form, *aṣṭamūrti*, is the significant person, you, who is looking at the Lord. You have to include yourself for the Lord to be the Lord.

You are the significant person because everything else is unlike you. If you examine the meaning of the word 'I', it does not take much time for you to understand that you have no comparison, so how can you have a complex? Comparison leading to a complex is only between things that are similar. You cannot sit by a rock and say, "You are impervious to sun, rain, people. I am jealous of you." A classical musician who spent all his time learning music, found that when he performed, people generally slept. If he compares himself with a rock-star who attracts large crowds, he can have a complex. He can have jealousy, anger and frustration, but not while sitting by a rock. Everything is unlike you. You are the only significant person in this world. You are the only subject; everything else is an object. All that is here is objects of your consciousness—the whole *jagat*. That is why consciousness is unlike anything else. And this is why god cannot be an object of consciousness. God has got to be that consciousness, and everything. What 'is', is Īśvara. In this, there is the total and the individual; that is the manifestation. If you look at yourself through your body-mind-sense complex, which gives you individuality, that is the truth about you. In the total, Īśvara, there is the individual, another individual and so on. This is called *nanā*, differentiated creation, and it is all intelligently put together.

Among the various laws, there are certain genetic laws and karmic laws. They work in tandem because it is all one phenomenon. You look at it through a particular model and say that it is a genetic flow. If you ask "Why?" then there is a karmic connection also, according to *śāstra*. You do not separate the laws from their outcome, because if the outcome is not there, you cannot even discern the law. You discover the law because there is an outcome of it. Otherwise, how are you going to understand the law? Each individual is different. *Karma* is a part of that. When you look into it, it becomes a very important law. You can

never discern the law without the outcome. Even if the *śāstra* tells you something, you cannot assimilate it unless the outcome is experienced by you.

We see ourselves missing the bus and getting the bus. These outcomes we see. *Śāstra* tells us that there is a law of *karma*. We accept that and can assimilate it, because in the outcome, we see the law. Whether you study the physical order, the biological order, or psychology, etc., they are all orders. In physics, if you find in the dual behavior of a particle, that it is a wave now, that is the order, as far you know now. There is no contradiction because you are trying to understand 'what is'. What 'is', is *Īśvara*. Therefore, the study of all the orders is *bhagavat-darśanam*, the vision of god. That is why when you discover or understand something there is such a joy. The quality of it is not comparable with any other pleasure, because you are having a clearance of your ignorance, which separated you from all-knowledge *Īśvara*. With reference to a particular fact, there is ignorance or no ignorance. When there is no ignorance, there is joy. You are in harmony with *Īśvara*. Even a joke you understand when there is clearance. That is knowledge. Any understanding puts you in harmony with *Īśvara*.

What 'is', is *Īśvara*. Alienation is ignorance. Subject-object are both *Īśvara*. Let us take an object like music—rock, classical or any other music. Then there is a person, you, significant you. Music is the object; you are the subject. You sit there judging the music, then you give yourself to the music. Then there is no subject-object, just fusion. The subject-object are not standing opposed to each other, and because there is fusion, there is joy. Subject-object is *Īśvara*, nonduality. All within the non-dual whole, the wholeness is experienced, whether it is the joy of knowing, *vidyānanda*, or the joy of fusion with an object, *viśayānanda*, or some clearance and joy from *prāṇāyāma* or meditation, *yogānanda*, there is only one *ānanda*, *īśvarānanda*.

Here is where your growth lies. How much you allow *Īśvara* to be in your life, how much you are in harmony with *Īśvara*, is your growth as a person. Being in harmony with *Īśvara* is not being in harmony with one single person, because everything is *Īśvara*. It is not a single person that you have settle account with. You have to settle account with the whole world, and only then will you settle account with *Īśvara*. How do you settle account with the whole world?

The world is not that simple. When I admire the rose, holding it in my hand, the thorn pricks me. This is how it is. Some will say that the thorn is evil. No, the thorn is part of creation; it is there so that a goat will not eat the rose. The plant wants to keep it for some time, until it withers away. It is part of its survival mechanism, its intelligence. There is no evil. The word 'evil', the way of looking at something as evil, is the only evil in the world. This is because of some inner

problem. One has to create that evil so that one can deal with it. There is no evil; there are only causes and effects. Using words like, 'evil', 'beggar', etc., only shows a person's insecurity, how vulnerable he is. One has to come out of this survival pattern of living. These are all words that give one some kind of shell behind which one seeks some security. This is not security, because you are out in the world; you have to breathe fresh air.

There is an order in psychology. The moment you say that something is evil, there is no order. If someone is born evil, who is to blame? It is all in order. Once you understand that there is order, you can relax, because in the appreciation of order there is the presence of Īśvara in your mind. You can understand that Īśvara's presence is purely cognitive, because the presence is there already. Absence is only due to your disowning or not seeing. Therefore, it is cognitive. The moment you say that any particular emotion is in order, you are recognizing the presence of Īśvara. That is what Bhagavān says in *manmanābhava*, let your mind recognize the presence of me in any situation. The emotional order is a very critical order because all our problems are emotional. People who do not deal with emotions and want to transcend them should understand that they have a lot of emotions to process. They are afraid to touch the Pandora's box. If you understand the order, then you are not afraid of anything. This is an order that is more critical, more important, because it is connected to the order of *dharma*.

## **Dharma**

I have no word to translate into English the word '*dharma*'. *Dharma* has a vast manifestation. It is present every moment in your life. *Dharma* is Īśvara's manifestation. Interaction with the world is governed by *dharma* every moment of your life. The presence of *dharma* is there. If you transgress, there is *adharma* and if you conform, *dharma* is there. If you conform to *dharma*, it is very much there and you are not separate from it. *Dharma* is Īśvara, and therefore, you are in harmony with Īśvara. If you are transgressing, it is because you are already alienated. There is guilt and hurt, which is alienation. The joy of living is gone.

Therefore, *manmanābhava*, may you be that person whose mind is with Īśvara. That is the literal meaning. *Manmanābhava* implies that the presence of Īśvara is already there, and has to be recognized. The recognition should be such that presence cannot not be lost sight of. Suppose, physically you want to go away from space, where will you go? Space is non-separate from Īśvara. At least from this place you can go to another place, even another order of reality, as you do in a dream. Leaving this place-time, you create your own place-time in which the time series is different. It does not have the relativity that you have here

based upon the speed of light. There, you create another time series and place; that is possible and is within the order of Īśvara. Why should there be this particular dream? It is all within the order. The dream is controlled by the order of Īśvara just as the physical universe is. The presence of Īśvara cannot be missed by anyone who is awake to Īśvara.

A certain critical area of Īśvara's manifestation, where one is likely to miss Īśvara, is the area where there is conflict between desire-produced pressure and *dharma*. *Dharma* is universal, and anything universal cannot be created by a human being. So knowledge of *dharma* is there in every person. Consider one value, like hurting. I do not want to get hurt; no one should hurt me. Who doesn't want this? 'Who' includes all life forms. A cow does not want to get killed. It wants to survive. That is innate in creation. It is the order of Īśvara. Every living being is given this instinct for survival, and survival implies not getting hurt. This is universal. But the cow does not seem to have the knowledge that you do not want to get hurt. It does not look at it as a value. If it did, then it would have regret after hurting somebody. It has no guilt because it knows that it should not get hurt, but does not seem to know that others do not want to get hurt either. That is why the cow is called *dharma-adharmābhyāṃ vimuktaḥ*, free from *dharma* and *adharmā*. *Paśupati* is called *vimukteśvara*, the lord of the *vimuktas*, where *vimukta* means an animal, *paśu*.

I do not want to get hurt; no one wants to get hurt; this knowledge is complete. That is why non-injury is the highest *dharma*, *ahiṃsāparamo dharmah*. Īśvara is manifest in the form of *dharma*. *Dharma* is not 'outside', but is manifest where it has got to be, right in your mind. That is the basic knowledge of yourself. You are a cognitive person, basically, not an agent. First, you are a knower; open your eyes, and you become a seer. No will is involved and no decision is involved. Just by opening your eyes, you become a seer. If there is a sound, you are a hearer, if your ears are open. You are a knowing person, a cognitive person, and in that person this knowledge of the universal value structure is given. This knowledge is there by common sense.

For human interaction you require a mechanism that will allow you to say, "No" when you have to. All the impulses are there, the desires are too numerous, and the pressures created by them are too great, because every human being is insecure until the person understands that he is the source of all security. There is a long way to go to know that, and until then, he is insecure and incomplete. His desires have got to be fulfilled in order for him to feel that he is 'somebody'. These kinds of desires produce a tremendous amount of pressure called *vega*—the pressure of desire, the pressure of anger. Anger is not the problem; it is the pressure, the force that is created by desire that is the motivating power. It moves mountains. It can be positive or it can go against *dharma*, which is innate

to the cognitive person. This is what we weakly refer to as conscience. It is really knowledge of *dharma*, which can become highly assimilated knowledge.

There is always pressure to cut corners when one does not have an assimilated value, so the advantage of conforming to *dharma* has to be assimilated. What do I lose when I go against *dharma*? That assimilation has to take place. What I gain is very clear—money, power, and advantage. “The one who is able to neutralize this pressure is successful<sup>11</sup>.” The pressure is a motivating force, but it turns into a harmful thing, for others and yourself, when it drives you to go against *dharma*, against *Īśvara*, and against yourself. Dharma is sensed by all of us, without exception. It is universal. You have knowledge of *dharma* in your mind, where you require a mechanism to regulate your actions, because you have freedom. The pressure created by desire is so great that you can abuse and destroy, so the brake mechanism has to be within yourself. That is the knowledge. Because you are a cognitive person, you have freedom to do, not to do, or do something differently. Therefore, you can say ‘yes’, or ‘no’. This capacity and freedom being there, the mechanism has to be there. That is how we are all able to live; that is how you can leave your house and come here. *Dharma* does not always transpire because of law and order. We control ourselves because we have a mechanism for that.

Dharma is not only a mechanism given to you to stop you from doing what you feel like doing when it is harmful to yourself and others, but also, to make you reach out and grow into a compassionate person. That *dharma* is given to you to help you grow into a huge human being. It is all-knowledge and it has an object which is not outside of you. The object of each value is inside you, and is not anything other than *Īśvara*, even though there is really no object at all. *Ahiṃsa* is not an object; compassion is not an object; love is not an object; giving is not an object. They are all the nature of *Īśvara*. *Dharma* is a critical manifestation of *Īśvara*, manifest in the mind of every human being, innate to the basic person who has this knowledge of *dharma*, *Īśvara*’s manifestation. It is in every human being, providing a basis on which to make his or her choices. The alienation from *Īśvara* is going against *dharma*. When you go against *dharma*, you are there very much; you have fallen victim to your own pressure. What was given is a privilege—to desire, to do, not to do. When one succumbs to the pressure caused by desire and it turns into passion, it makes the person go against *Īśvara*, against oneself. What kind of joy can one have when one goes against oneself? *Vaidika-dharma* holds *dharma* as a *puruṣārtha*, an end to be accomplished by a human being. *Dharma* is a manifestation of *Īśvara*, not a mandate of god. The difference is the difference between the aggressive and the objective.

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<sup>11</sup> *śaknotīhaiva yaḥ soḍhuṃ prāk śarīravimokṣaṇāt*  
*kāmakrodhodbhavaṃ vegaṃ sa yukta sa sukhī naraḥ*, BG 5.23



The world of objects has two categories—*rāga-dveṣa*, objects you love to have and retain and objects you love to avoid and get rid of. You have the privilege to desire, and therefore, you have *raga-dveṣa*. There is no harm in them; they make you a privileged human being. That you can have desires is a privilege but one should not come under their spell, *tayoḥ vaśaṃ na āgacchet*, BG. A spell is the motive force you come under only when you go against *dharma*. Until assimilation of *dharma* takes place what is the deterrent? Norms in the society, punitive, discouraging laws are all deterrents. You have to be a mature person to assimilate *dharma*, and that comes only with one's own initiative. That is why *dharma* is a *puruṣārtha*. You cannot achieve it as a rule, like physical maturity. *Śāstra* recognizes that a human being has to grow to conform to *dharma* naturally, spontaneously. The growth is up to that point where you do not have any conflict, because what you like is exactly what is to be done, and what you do not like is what is not to be done. Then *dharma*, the *puruṣārtha* is yours. You are a successful person. That is *vaidika-dharma*. See the difference. Only then will you have the capacity to make proper choices and to make use of the privilege that you have. *Dharma* is *Īśvara*, and when you conform to *dharma* you become *manmanā*, one whose mind is in *Īśvara*. And for that you should have *madbhaktaḥ*, devotion to *Īśvara*.

At the end of all the discussion in the 9<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Gita, Bhagavān says, *manmanābhava*, may you become one whose mind does not lose the presence of *Īśvara*. In the awareness of such a person, the presence of *Īśvara* is not lost sight of. But unless you understand *Īśvara* properly, that is not possible. Suppose you understand that wherever you go, all that is there is *Īśvara*, where will the mind go? That is what the whole teaching is. That is the difference between an object and *Īśvara*. A given object or a person is not any other object or person. You should not reduce *Īśvara* to one of those objects. Such ignorance cannot be further heightened. Therefore, there is so much discussion by Lord Krishna to make himself very clear about *Īśvara*, “May the presence of me (*Īśvara*) be always in your awareness,” because it is possible, because that is the truth.

*Dharma* is a manifestation of *Īśvara* in your mind, not outside of you. It manifests in the form of your interactions with the world born of your knowledge of *dharma*. Because it is a manifestation of *Īśvara*, we have the expression, *rāmaḥ vigrahavān dharmah*, the Lord as *dharma* is manifest with a body, called Rama. *Dharma* itself assumes a body in the form of Rama. *Rāma* means the one in whom people discover joy.<sup>12</sup> Krishna is *ānanda-avatāra*, so his expressions are in the form of dance, music, etc. When *dharma* is there, *ānanda*

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<sup>12</sup> *ramante yasmin iti rāmaḥ*

will follow, and without *dharma*, there cannot be *ānanda*. There can be *artha* and *kāma*, objects of pleasure, avenues of pleasure, for which there is enough wealth and so on, but only with *dharma* do they yield *ānanda*. That is why Rama is first, and then Krishna.

*Bhagavān* is there in the form of *dharma*, but not only that. *Bhagavān* says, "I am in the form of your desire, as long as it is not opposed to *dharma*."<sup>13</sup> "Even if your desire is against *dharma*, in your mind *Bhagavān* is there in the form of *dharma*. In terms of desire, he is there in the desire of all living beings, which is unopposed to *dharma*. In an animal, the desire is unopposed to *dharma* because it is programmed. A human being, however, has knowledge of *dharma*, and therefore, he alone is talked about here. "In human beings, I am in the form of *dharma* and desire that does not go against *dharma*." Even if a desire is against *dharma*, like wanting to rob someone, if you do not act on the thought, then you do not go against *Īśvara*. Because you had no control over that thought, even the occurrence of that desire is according to an order and that order is *Īśvara*.

There is an order because of which there is greed, coveting and so on. That kind of thinking is because of pressure that arise due to the psychological order. Psychology works along with the order of *dharma*. Anyone one who goes against *dharma* is not intrinsically healed. There is a background which is controlled by the psychological order, which is a manifestation of *Īśvara*. We understand *Īśvara* only in this way. Like the physical order is a manifestation of *Īśvara*, the biological order is another manifestation, the physiological order is another manifestation of *Īśvara*, and the psychological order is another critical manifestation of *Īśvara*, because it is intimately connected to *dharma*.

The order of *dharma* is one side of the coin, and the other side is the order of *karma*. Therefore, even a desire, which is not in keeping with *dharma*, can be accommodated within *Īśvara*'s order as long you do not go along with it. When one goes along with that desire, it becomes *karma*—*adharma* becomes *karma*. Only then is it *adharma*, otherwise it is all within *dharma*. It is against *dharma* only in action. Therefore, the Gita says, "You have a choice only over your action."<sup>14</sup> One can argue, "Why don't we say that this wrong action is also *Īśvara*'s order?" Yes, that is also *Īśvara*, but it turns into guilt and fear, which is, again, all within the order. Therefore, there is *pāpa*, suffering, unpleasant experiences in this life, and the hereafter also. This is not an intelligent, pragmatic proposition. If you think you are gaining by robbing, then the loss is bigger than the gain; it is yourself. Everything that you want is to please

<sup>13</sup> *dharma-aviruddho bhūteṣu kāmo'smi* BG 7.11

<sup>14</sup> *karmaṇi eva adhikāras te* BG 2.47

yourself; that is the basic want.<sup>15</sup> You need to see yourself as a pleased person. How can you be pleased with guilt and fear inside? The very action has guilt involved in it. Therefore, a fancy is not taken into account. In keeping with the order, there are so many fancies occurring in your head. When you go along with one, make sure that the means of fulfilling it is in keeping with *dharma*. Therefore, *karma* becomes so important. *Dharma* is the basis and *karma* is what you choose. So you have a choice over your action; you can do it or you need not do it. That is the human choice. If that is lost, then the human status is lost. Therefore, you should be able to say, “No.” Up to this point, it is simple. Then you take it to another step.

When you are in harmony with *dharma* in your actions, then, whatever be the situation, there is *dharma* involved. *Dharma* is not merely right and wrong. It has other shades covering your life. *Dharma* is a dynamic order because life is dynamic. Situations keep on changing, but one thing never changes. In all situations, your response is appropriate or inappropriate. That is also an invariable. The appropriateness, called *svadharma*, is invariable. That this is appropriate at this place, at this time is all hooked on to *dharma*. Conformity is consideration of others. It is a high degree of sensitivity. You conform to certain conventions, which are all man-made conventions, but then, because you are doing what is appropriate, it will not cause any resistance from anyone. Therefore, you live a life of least disturbance. That is our understanding of *ahimsa*. At the time of *sannyāsa*, *ahimsā* alone is the commitment. It is a life of least disturbance to others and one’s self, which is *svakarma*.

A situation calls for a certain thing to be done, and when you do it, you feel free because you have done your *svakarma*. If you do not do the laundry in time, nothing will happen, but the load of laundry will sit inside your head. I say this because when you finally do it, you feel lighter. It is clear that the load was unloaded. *Bhagavān* says, “The human being gains success in life by doing what is to be done.”<sup>16</sup> BG ‘To be done’ also implies appropriateness and etiquette. If you have any doubt as to whether something is *dharma* or *adharma*, then ask and follow what the elders say or do. Conformity to *dharma* implies that what you do is not in any way harmful or disturbing. It includes the environment, flora and fauna also. Seeking help in knowing *dharma* is intelligent living. To be ignorant is not a special privilege of someone. Everyone is ignorant, until the person knows. *Svakarma*, whatever is to be done, whatever is appropriate, in all situations, is *Bhagavān*. If you recognize the presence of *Īśvara* by doing the appropriate thing, then you are *manmanā*.

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<sup>15</sup> *ātmanastu kāmāya sarvaṃ priyaṃ bhavati* BrU 2.4.5; 4.5.6

<sup>16</sup> *svakarmanā tam abhyarcya siddhiṃ vindati mānavaḥ* BG 18.46



*manmanā bhava madbhakto madyājī bhava mām namaskuru  
māmevaiśyaśi yuktvaivamātmānaṁ matparāyaṇāḥ* BG 9.34

To be that person whose mind is awake to the presence of Īśvara in all situations, you do your *svakarma* with an awareness of, and conformity to, the order of dharma. Then you are in harmony with Īśvara. Whether you know Īśvara or not, when you do what is to be done, you feel at home. That is because you are in harmony with Īśvara, 'what is'. At all times the 'to be done', is given. You have no choice. When you do that without conflict, there is harmony. The awareness is important; *dharma* implies all this. It is not only a universal value structure; it is also duty. Even giving is *dharma*, because it is also something to be done. In a given situation, when you are in a position to give, you give. The *Sāmaveda* tells us *dānena adānaṁ tara*, overcome the incapacity to give by giving. Being this kind of a person is not something you can decide about and be. It is a matter of understanding and living.

### The Devotee

*manmanā bhava madbhaktaḥ*

Being *manmanā* is not possible if you are a devotee, *bhakta*, of something else. If you look at the devotees in the world, they have a certain understanding of Īśvara in different degrees. They have some kind of *śraddha*, belief in Īśvara, and want Īśvara to help, but what they want is most important. If someone wants redress from his difficulties, relief from distress, he is a distressed devotee, an *ārta-bhakta*. If everything goes well, then Īśvara does not come into the picture, because this person thinks he is in charge. When things do not go well, then he invokes the grace of Īśvara, which is the right thing to do. That *bhakta* is a devotee in distress. The second kind is a devotee in distress too, but he is also an *arthārthī*, a devotee invoking grace for the success of an undertaking. He is more aware of the need of some grace. He understands that *īśvara-anugraha* is necessary for achieving his ends, *artha*. Besides the course of action that one employs for achieving a given end, one works for grace, because in between there are too many problems. That is religious pragmatism.

There is a third type of *bhakta*. He will pray when in distress, seek help, do what is to be done and invoke grace when he wants to accomplish an end. But primarily he is a *jijñāsu*, one who wants to know. The Lord says, "He is the one who wants to know me. Knowledge of me becomes his primary end." Everything else subserves that end, and that end is there all through his life. It is not that it is there at a given time and not there at other times. It is always there. If one is a *bhakta*, a *jijñāsu*, it means that all through he or she is that. No matter what kind of altar one prays to, a *bhakta* is always a *bhakta*. He is the primary person, because primarily he is related to Īśvara.

A wave in the ocean may be related to another wave because it was born of that wave. It also has a relationship to other waves as a sister, brother, friend, etc. But there is one relationship, which is not variable. In other relationships, when one is there, the others are absent—when the sister is there, the daughter has to be gone. In the invariable relationship, the *bhakta* wave is related to ocean. When the *bhakta* relates to her mother, does the *bhakta* go away, and the daughter come? No. Let us look at the mother and the ocean—the relationship is that of the individual and total. If there is a mother's mother, that mother also is individual and total; mother's daughter, individual and total. Mother's daughter related to mother's mother is not the same. She is granddaughter, but still, individual and total. Small, big, old, young are all individual and total. In other words when this relationship is recognized, the individual becomes a permanent *bhakta*. We have to create a word for this person, the one who recognizes the presence of the total pervading him or her. The ocean pervades the wave. Therefore, as an individual she is always related to the total. She can never be away from the total presence. As an individual, she is pervaded and sustained by the total. If she understands the role she has, the nature of Īśvara, the order that is Īśvara, then she is pervaded, sustained, blessed, he can say, by the presence of Īśvara, the total. This relationship is absolute because it is not variable.

A person who is basically a *bhakta* does not need to promote *bhakti*. That is the truth, but it takes *jñānam*, knowledge, to appreciate that, and that is why Bhagavān says he is a *jijñāsu* and not the more general *bhakta*. He is a *bhakta* who is not subject to spasms of *bhakti*. This *bhakta* is the basic person, the one who recognizes the relationship that is basic, that of the individual to the total. It is invariable, and remains there always, so that he has no doubt about what role he plays. A *jijñāsu-bhakta* is not a seasonal *bhakta*. A *jijñāsu* wants Bhagavān because he is available for owning, just for the asking. All that is here is Bhagavān so gaining of Bhagavān, is knowing. *Bhagavat-darśanam* is knowing. Seeing a particular form is *mānasika-īkṣaṇam* and is purely subjective. Even if Bhagavān gives such a *darśana* as his *karmaphala*, it is still *mānasika-īkṣaṇa*. Because the presence of Īśvara is always there, the gain of Īśvara is knowing Īśvara.

Such a person is unaffected by the roles. That is the *bhakta*. His *bhakti* is the cushion, so the roles' problems are confined to the roles. This is not ordinary. For that, you have to be a *bhakta*. That is the truth. Do not say you are consciousness. It does not work. That is dissociation. Because you are an individual, you have to resolve the issue with the presence of Īśvara. Between the *bhakta* who is aware of the presence of Īśvara and the role, there is always a self-aware distance, that is, a distance brought about by self-awareness. This distance is purely self-identity, not losing self-identity while playing roles.

Therefore, role-playing is not an issue. The whole life is role-playing and in every role the *bhakta* is always present. This is a *jijñāsu-bhakta*.

*Madbhakto bhava*, may you be my devotee. There are different kinds of devotees. If one is a devotee because one needs the help of Bhagavān, Bhagavān becomes an accomplice for various ends. There is nothing wrong with that, because we need grace, but we need to have knowledge of Īśvara, which is the gain of Īśvara. Therefore, *madbhakto bhava* means that one has to become a *jijñāsu*. How?

*Madyājī bhava mām namaskuru*. For a *jijñāsu*, any action enjoined by the Veda, a *vaidika-karma*, is also for gaining the knowledge of Īśvara. *Madyājī bhava*, means offer all your worship—whether *smārta-karmas* or *vaidika-karmas*, *stuthi*, *namaskāra*, etc.—unto me Any ray of glory anywhere is Īśvara's manifestation. Thus be, *matparāyaṇāḥ*, one for whom I am the ultimate end to be accomplished. We have to say 'ultimate' because there are other ends. Through all other ends, you achieve the *param*, ultimate, end. *Māmeva eśyasi*, certainly you will reach me. The various things that we do in life become yoga when that is kept in view. We need not change anything external; attitude changes, vision changes.

Then, the culmination of the various devotees—*ārta arthārti jijñāsuḥ*—is a fourth devotee called a *jñāni*, a fulfilled devotee. All are devotees. Lord Krishna says, “All are exalted [because they recognize me; they have *śraddha* in *punya-pāpa*, *dharma*], but then, the *jñāni* is myself alone.”<sup>17</sup> That is Īśvara's vision.

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