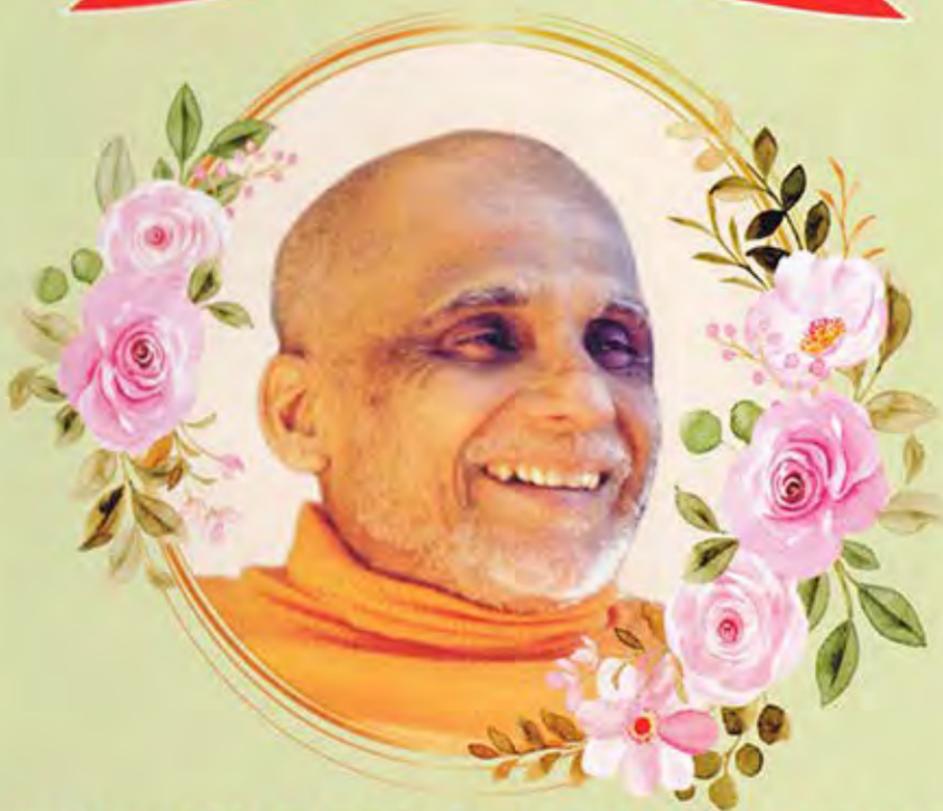




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THE GLORY AND MAJESTY OF THE ALMIGHTY

SWAMI KRISHNANANDA

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

The 25th of April 2022 marks the auspicious occasion of the Birth Centenary of Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj. To commemorate this sacred occasion, the Headquarters Ashram has decided to bring out booklets comprising the illuminating discourses of Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj for free distribution.

Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj arrived at the holy abode of Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj in 1944, and remained here until his Mahasamadhi in November 2001. Swamiji Maharaj was a master of practically every system of Indian thought and Western philosophy. "Many Sankaras are rolled into one Krishnananda," said Sri Gurudev.

Over the years, Swami Maharaj gave many profound and insightful discourses during Sunday night Satsanga, and on holy occasions such as Sri Gurudev's birthday, Sri Krishna Janmasthanami, Mahasivaratri, etc., and also during Sadhana Week and Yoga Vedanta Courses conducted by the Yoga

Vedanta Forest Academy of the Ashram. Sri Swami Maharaj always spoke extempore, spontaneously, without any preparation, and every discourse was fresh, unique, and divinely inspired. The audience was bathed in that stupendous unfathomable energy that radiated from Swamiji Maharaj during these discourses.

We are immensely happy to bring out some of Sri Swamiji Maharaj's discourses in booklet form as our worshipful offering at his holy feet on the blessed occasion of his Birth Centenary.

The present booklet, '**The Glory and Majesty of the Almighty**', consists of an insightful discourse Sri Swamiji Krishnanandaji Maharaj's on Vishwarupa Darhan as delineated in the Eleventh Chapter of the Srimad Bhagavadgita.

May the abundant blessings of the Almighty Lord, Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj be upon all.

—The Divine Life Society

THE GLORY AND MAJESTY OF THE ALMIGHTY

A powerful religious impulse permeates the Ninth, Tenth and Eleventh Chapters of the Bhagavadgita. The religious consciousness reaches its culmination by certain specific stages in these central chapters. The presence of God becomes a more intimate affair than it was in the earlier stages. God does not any more remain merely as a Creator, a transcendent Father, capable of attainment, perhaps, after the shedding of the physical body. In the Eighth Chapter, and even in the earlier ones, we do not seem to have been given any hope of God being capable of contact in this particular life. It seemed that the chances are remote, and even when it looked that there is some possibility, it also appeared that this possibility is only after death, and not in this life.

But God is not a future reality, He is an Immediate presence. The awe-striking distance that the soul maintains between itself and God converts God into a future possibility and not a present

existence. Every one of us must be having an idea in the mind that God can be contacted only tomorrow or the day after, after some years, or perhaps at the end of several births, and not just now. This difficulty is purely psychological, and it is based on a notion that the soul has of its own independent structure. However much we may be told that God is All-in-All, it does not easily become possible for the mind to accept that there is a timeless immediacy in God's Presence even in this particular life itself. God is a 'Here' and a 'Now'.

We cannot imagine what is timelessness. When we conceive of God, or the attainment of liberation, we consider it as a fag end in the time series, and the notion of time does not leave us. The idea that we are in space and time has become part and parcel of our consciousness and existence. And, if we are in space, and God also is in space, there is therefore a distance between us and God. And if we are in time, we cannot extricate the presence of God from the time series; God becomes a future possibility, and not an immediate realisation. Not so, is the fact emphasised here. God is the Supreme Inclusiveness which enfolds into its being all souls, all things, all individuals, everything that exists, in any manner. There is nothing on earth or in heaven which is not

finally rooted in God's being, so that nothing can ever be, if God is not to be.

We cannot be a present being and have God remain a future existence; that would be a fallacy of argument. If God were a future existence, we too would become future beings and not have a present life. But we are sure that we are presently existing, that we are here just now. Yet, we cannot feel that God is just now; we adore Him as a future attainment. This is the effect of the time-consciousness which worms itself gradually into our being, so that we cannot think except in terms of space and time.

But the Bhagavadgita tries its best to teach the eternity of God, and not merely a durationless extension of God's existence. Whatever was, whatever is and whatever shall be—all this is engulfed in God's Infinitude. He is the Cause of all causes, and a Cause existing not outside the effect but inseparable from all effects. In a way we may say that God is the Cause as well as all the effects. He is the Creator and also the creation. Knowing this truth, blessed souls adore Him and worship Him, sing His names as the one Absolute (Ekatvena), as the manifold universe (Prithaktvena), and as every particular thing in the world (Bahudha). Omni-faced is the Supreme Being. He is Immortality (Amrita)

and Death (Mrityu), Existence (Sat), as well as Non-existence (Asat).

Every speck of space, every atom of matter, can be regarded as a vehicle which reflects one face of God. To think God would be to drown one's self in an indescribable completeness whereby one loses one's presence, the individuality evaporates like mist before the blazing Sun. But if there is any desire in the mind to worship God for personal purposes, if there is a desire to go to heaven and enjoy the delights of celestial life, it should be noted that even meritorious deeds have an end. They exhaust themselves when the force of *karma* is depleted, and there is a reversal of the agent of action to the state from where it arose. There is a return to the earth even after one reaches heaven, and so it is an unreliable satisfaction. But those who are capable of tuning their minds in an undivided manner to the All-inclusive Almighty Being, they lack nothing. There will be no necessity to go to heaven for enjoying delights or pleasures. Whatever is required will be provided to them, then and there, by the law of God. This law works in such a way that it is the height of spontaneity of fulfilment. One need not have to ask the law to operate in any particular manner. It works of its own accord.

The great promise that is given in one of the verses in the Ninth Chapter is that God will provide us with everything that we need. Not merely that, He shall take care of everything that belongs to us, and protect not only ourselves but also whatever are our needs. Even thousands of fathers and mothers cannot equal God in compassion and concern, in love and affection, in goodness and kindness. The love that God has for man is a millionfold greater than the love that man can imagine in himself in respect of God.

This mighty law of God operates in this manner because of His being present everywhere, at every time. If He had been a limited being confined to space and time, He would have taken time to act, and would have to cover some distance to travel for the purpose of executing a deed. God does not travel, because He is not in space; and He does not take time to act, because He is eternity. This is the difference between the operation of God and the actions of other beings. Even the words 'instantaneous action' are a poor apology for the magnificent manner in which God works. Our language is ridden over with spatial concepts and temporal ideas. So, even the highest notion that we can entertain in our minds is shackled by spatiotemporal limitations. It is not

given to us to contemplate God as He is in Himself. We can only approximate ourselves, we can only try our best to touch the bare fringe of His being, but the true glory of God is beyond comprehension.

In the Tenth Chapter, the presence of God as a superb glory in every form of excellence is described with particular instances quoted as illustrations. Anything that is supernal, whether in knowledge or power, anything that is superhuman in the way of its action, should be considered as a force or expression of God. There are things in this world which lie beyond human control and understanding. Everyone knows what these things are. Natural laws operate in a superhuman manner, and there are occasions when phenomena manifest themselves in the world, which speak of the existence of powers over which man has no control and of which man can have no knowledge. These excellences of tremendous might and glory are the *vibhūtis*, the majestic manifestations of God.

God is Supreme Majesty, indescribable glory, unimaginable bliss and joy, by the very thought of which we would run into a state of rapture and ecstasy. Anything which stirs the soul from within can be regarded as a manifestation of God. There are things even in this world which stimulate our

souls, whereby our entire being seems to well up into action, and we do not then merely think as intellectuals or feel as minds; we are transported above ourselves, we are thrown overboard and freed from the limitations of body and mind. Very rarely do we have such experiences. In utter agony and utter joy we have satisfactions of this type, which go beyond the body-mind limitations. When God touches us, we cease to be human beings and we do not think as intellects or minds at that time. And it is impossible to describe in language what would be that state when we are magnetised by the glory of God. We melt away into nothing, we cease to be, as if we are possessed by a supernal beatitude.

For those who have not passed through such experiences, these raptures are only words without sense. They might convey some grammatical dictionary meaning, but the spirit of it is lost when the soul is not active, and God is present only when the soul is awake, for God is the Soul of the universe. And when the Soul speaks, it is God summoning. Such glories are visible even in this world. In mighty incarnations, sages, saints and seers, and in the various natural phenomena, anything that stuns us, transports us, strikes us with wonder, as a miracle, and attracts us wholly, from which we cannot turn

our eyes away, that which absorbs us entirely—such a thing is a ray of God’s manifestation.

When we hear all these things, we do not know what to say and what to think in our minds. We stand stupefied at this glory and mystery behind creation; stupefaction is the only word, nothing else can describe our condition. Our minds cease to think, and our feelings do not any more operate. We do not know at that time whether we are alive or dead, whether we are or whether we are not. Such a condition we get into when we are prepared for God’s vision. These descriptions of divine glory, which are delineated in the Ninth and Tenth Chapters, excite the curiosity in the deepest spirit of Arjuna’s aspiration, and leave him wondering if he could have a vision of these glories. Here commences the Eleventh Chapter of the Bhagavadgita.

“What do you mean by this grandeur that transports us in this manner? Who is this Almighty, and how could we have a realisation, an experience of this Divine Glory?” The great Teacher is standing there; Krishna is before Arjuna; and the disciple implores the great Master, “Is it possible for a person like me to have a vision of this Glory, a direct experience of that which you have been describing up to this time as the be-all and end-all of all

things?” Surrendering himself wholly to the great Incarnation, the disciple speaks, “If you consider me fit enough to have a vision of this Glory, may I be endowed with this blessedness. Deign to shower this Grace upon me.”

It is in the Eleventh Chapter that the poet of the Bhagavadgita bursts forth into expressions which try to convey in a highly enrapturing language the phenomenon which revealed Itself before the seeking soul, Arjuna. Words have to be employed as vehicles in the description of this Glory because we have no other instruments available in the world. All explanation is through words. So, even the highest poetic genius has to employ images which belong to the world of perceptions.

We speak of God as Light, but we cannot imagine any light which is greater than the light of the Sun; for us that is the supreme light, and the inclusiveness which God is, the infinitude which is God’s being, has also to be explained in a similar manner, by imagery and comparison. Imagine thousands of Suns rising and splashing forth simultaneously in the sky, dazzling the eyes of the beholders. No one has seen in one’s life what it is to see thousands of Suns at one stroke. These, again, are words for us with no significance. We

cannot even dream what it would be to see several thousands of Suns coming together and blazing in the eastern horizon. We can only console ourselves by thinking that we understand what it is. Even the great immortality that we are thinking of is a shadow, as it were, cast by the super-immortal being of God, says the Veda.

Not merely is God this supernal Light which blinds the eyes of the soul, but God is infinitude, again something which we cannot understand. What is infinitude? Every blessed thing is there transformed into its originality, not in its crude, distorted, reflected form, as we see it here today. The originals of things get revealed in the Supreme Being of God. These are the archetypes of all things. Philosophers tell us that we are all shadows here, moving in the world of phenomena. Every one of us has a reality beyond ourselves. Even our own realities are not here! We are above in a noumenal existence, while this phenomenal universe is a conglomeration of shadows and reflections of the true archetypes. God is not a totality of shadows, a bunch of finite particulars. God does not become complete by a bringing together of all the individuals conceivable in the world. You and I and everything imaginable put together do not make God, because these visibles are

all shadows, unrealities in the end, and a multitude of unrealities do not go to constitute one reality.

We are far below the level of understanding what all this can be. Our minds are not made in such a way as to be able to grasp what these originals could be like. Our souls are our originals; the body and mind are reflections. But when we think of ourselves, we think only of bodies and minds; our real soul is beyond our comprehension. The soul that is in ourselves; the soul that we really are is the original in us, and that is the representation of God. God is present in us as the soul in us, and not merely as a particular expression of name and form in space and time. That is why when the great vision is described in the Gita, we are told that perfection was seen everywhere in that Glory. One does not see ugliness and suffering, which are consequences of the finite vision which wrests one particular from another, and does not read the meaning of anything with relevance to all other things. The vision of God is the vision that God Himself has in respect of the whole of creation. To see God is to see through the eyes of God. And that would be a veritable realisation of the Soul of the universe.

Here the perceptive faculties and the cognitive processes cease to function. It is not the intellect

that understands or the feeling that feels God's presence, it is the bursting forth of the intuitional integrality, by which what is intended is a totality of grasp of the whole of the cosmos at one stroke and in simultaneity, and not as a succession of phenomena. We do not count one thing after another thing as we do here in this world when we try to see a series of objects. We cannot see with our eyes all things at once. Even when it appears that we are seeing many things at one time, we are really seeing one thing after another thing in a series, in a time process, as if they are extended in space. But, as we observed, God-vision is a timeless, spaceless experience. And, therefore, it is not a visualisation of many things one after another in a series, as in an arithmetical computation. It is a timeless grasp of the eternity of Being, where everything is a here and now, and not afterwards or somewhere else. Everything is just here, and everything is just now. Here is the abolition of space and a transcendence of time. Our spatial and temporal body-mind-complex vanishes, melts away into the supernal menstruum of the Absolute. Such was the vision which the great Lord condescended to bestow upon the seeking Arjuna.

What one feels at that time is, again, poetically portrayed in the great hymnology which fills the

whole of the Eleventh Chapter. It does not actually mean that one will be speaking something there. The poet of the Gita has to express himself in language, and so he uses a poetic style to demonstrate the feeling of the soul at the time of this divine possession and experience, at which time it becomes giddy with God-Consciousness. The soul does not utter words in human language. It shudders from the roots and shakes at the very bottom, and it does not think and feel but melts away gradually into the awe.

This process of the evaporating of the soul-consciousness into the Consciousness of All-Being is the significance behind the exuberant description of the prayers which Arjuna seems to have offered when he was blessed with the Divine Vision. The functions of the individual cease automatically, and completely. Neither does one speak, nor see, nor hear; nor is there any particularised sensation. All the empirical faculties are brought together into a concentrated oneness and get gathered up in the soul within instead of operating separately as in ordinary perception. The whole being is centred in one indivisible splendour of the soul, and it is the soul that flies to the Supreme Soul. And even as the soul that beholds this vision does not express itself in any language but indescribably transforms itself

into the All-in-All God, so, too, God does not speak in a language, in the words that we utter through our mouths. Yet, a response from this Mighty Being seems to come in answer to the prayer of the soul that beholds the vision, and the Almighty speaks in a transcendental language of the unity of everything with everything else.

The feeling or the notion in the individual that it does anything at all is a fallacy, and here in the context of the Mahabharata, where the Bhagavadgita occurs, Arjuna is told that the war has already taken place, it is already concluded, victory has already been won, there is nothing more to be done by anyone. The individuals are just instruments. "In a timeless comprehension, I have done everything that is to be done, in the firmament of infinity and eternity." To Arjuna, to us, from the point of view of time, the Mahabharata might appear to be a future event that is yet to take place. But to the Omnipresent Absolute, which has neither time nor place, it has eternally taken place and its results are decided once and for all.

It is added that everyone cannot have this vision. It is not that merely for the asking it suddenly comes, unless the asking comes from the soul. Our little charities, a few good deeds and some studies

that we make are inadequate for the purpose. God is not a cheap substance that one can purchase for a few dollars or pounds. Impossible is this vision; even the gods crave to have this blessing. Any amount of learning or scriptural lore is insufficient for this fulfilling attainment. All the austerities that we may perform, all the efforts that we can think of from our side cannot promise us this blessedness of God-vision.

Then what is the solution? How do we get it? A whole-souled surrender of the self is the way. Unless the self melts away into the All-Self, this vision is not going to materialise itself. Any individualistic austerity, or, for the matter of that, any performance whatsoever which retains the individuality intact, even in the name of religion or spiritual practice, will go counter to the requirements of this great realisation. The condition is this: In our spiritual practices, do we long to maintain our individualities? Though it is true that we are spiritually engaged or religiously conscious, are we secretly hugging our own ego or personality? If this is to be there, the vision is far off. Whoever performs works for His sake, whoever regards Him as the Supreme Soul, and bears not enmity to anyone, looks upon all things with an equal vision, with no difference

of high and low, or even better or worse, whoever wholeheartedly considers this wonder as the only goal of life, and everything else as merely an accessory or an antecedent to this great Realisation, one who is possessed with this spirit of aspiration which transfigures the whole of one's being in the love of the One God, one who seeks God, and God alone, and nothing else, in the highest sense of the term—to such a person God-Vision will be an immediate experience. Inasmuch as there is no isolation or individuality in God, to have His experience or Vision, one must also be free from the individuality of the self.

It appears that God alone can behold God. God experiences; God realises God. It is not that man, as a man, maintains himself as man, and then reaches God. It is not you or I that can attain God, but God-vision bursting itself within itself, and God looking at Himself in God. It is a mystical enigma, a secret available only to sincere souls, and everyone is blessed with this beatitude of experience when the heart is sincere.

God is Supreme Majesty, indescribable glory, unimaginable bliss and joy, by the very thought of which we would run into a state of rapture and ecstasy. Anything which stirs the soul from within can be regarded as a manifestation of God.

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