

The Secret of Success – God and Self-effort

(Excerpts from Satsang of Pujya Sant Shri Asaramji Bapu)

'Wherever there is Krishna, the Lord of Yoga, alongwith Arjuna, the wielder of the Gandiva, there is prosperity, victory, glory and righteousness; such is my conviction.'



This is the message conveyed through the concluding verse of the eighteenth chapter of the Srimad Bhagwad Gita, which consists of a total of seven hundred verses in all. This verse contains neither Arjuna's question nor Sri Krishna's answer. This, instead, is Sanjay's own opinion and belief. However, it carries the opinion of not only Sanjay, but also of all the authors of the scriptures, that victory is a forgone conclusion where Lord Krishna aids the industrious Arjuna. Krishna is Truth-Absolute, Consciousness-Absolute and Bliss-Absolute, the Supreme

Existence that gives existence, consciousness and sustenance to an infinite number of universes; while Arjuna represents the human initiative.

Once Arjuna and Hanumanji were engaged in a discussion. Hanumanji said,

'We constructed a bridge over the sea using big boulders' Lord Rama and the Vanarsena reached Lanka' Lanka was destroyed. Lord Rama fought a fierce battle against Ravana, defeated him and we emerged victorious.'

Arjuna said, 'O Pawanputra! All that you said sound reasonable, but I fail to understand why you put so much effort to construct a bridge over the sea. You should have called someone like me who would have constructed a bridge with his arrows in a few minutes.'

Hanumanji said, 'Well, I agree that you could have constructed a bridge with your arrows. But it would have collapsed under my weight alone. And you know there were so many Vanaras like me in our army. The entire army was to cross the sea. It would have created problems.'

Arjuna replied, 'The entire army could have crossed the sea. There would have been no problem at all.'

Hanumanji retorted, 'Is that so' All right. You make a bridge. If it can bear my weight, I shall accept that the whole army could have crossed the bridge of arrows.'

Arjuna started shooting arrows onto the sea. Within no time, a bridge was built. Hanumanji jumped on the bridge and started walking. The bridge started to shake. Arjuna was perturbed. He invoked the grace of Lord Krishna, the Supreme Consciousness. The bridge quivered but it did not break or collapse in the sea. Hanumanji exerted a lot of pressure but the bridge bore it all.

Hanumanji said, 'Your Bridge is really very strong! It was shaky in the beginning, but all of a sudden something transpired and it became firm and strong.'

Just then, Sri Krishna arrived there. Hanumanji said, 'Oh! You had invoked the grace of Lord Krishna. Therefore, the Lord's supreme power worked and supported the bridge from underneath. The bridge bore my weight not on the strength of your arrows, but on the strength of your faith.'

Arjuna said, 'In that case, the bridge you made was also sustained not by the strength of the boulders or any technique, but by the sheer strength of your faith and resolve.'

Sri Krishna approved of what both of them said and showing them his back, added, 'When Arjuna invoked me calling Krishna' Krishna' I had to go underneath the bridge and support it.'

In this instance it was only the bridge of arrows that Sri Krishna supported, but the Lord had taken due care of Arjuna's life as well. Therefore Arjuna's victory was not a matter of surprise.

'Wherever there is Krishna, the Lord of Yoga, alongwith Arjuna, the wielder of the Gandiva, there is prosperity, victory, glory and righteousness; such is my conviction.'

'So, this is the opinion of not only Sanjay, but that of all the scriptures and all the Rishis. The Lord's grace and man's endeavour make for victory, prosperity and righteousness. There is absolutely no doubt about this.

Some scholars attach less importance to this verse, whereas, in reality, it contains the

quintessence of all scriptures. For those, who are able to comprehend only a superficial meaning of the Srimad Bhagwad Gita, Sanjay has indicated the subtle message lying within; that is, if one comes close to and takes refuge in Sri Krishna, the supreme power that sustains the entire creation, one is sure to attain success and prosperity.

The verse says that victory comes to the side that has the benign grace of Lord Krishna and Self-effort of one like Arjuna. In reality, the Lord is there on everybody's side, but the slothful and negligent ones do not win. On the other hand, there are people who make efforts but don't invoke the grace of the Lord. Success eludes them too. Even if one is successful by Self-effort without invoking the Lord's grace, that success is marred by egotism of having done something. This ego in itself is the mark of failure. If the Lord is ignored and no efforts are made either, then that too is not desirable. But where man's efforts are supported by God's grace, as Sanjay says, victory is bound to follow.

The Existence, that we revere as God, is all-pervading and in effect, completely steady and motionless. Therefore, one who has the Lord on his side has unwavering thoughts and firm resolves. The firmness of his resolves is never disturbed by counter-thoughts. The power of God (consciousness) is with everybody, but man impairs this power with counter-thoughts. Those who want to employ their power in selfless service, in good deeds, in spiritual practices, must forsake negative and doubting thoughts. One ends up impairing one's powers by entertaining doubts about one's success. One must therefore avoid doubting one's own capabilities.

'Try and try again, you will succeed at last.'

With a firm resolve, harness all your energies to attain the Truth. Scepticism is the demon, which devours all your powers and strengths. Destroy this demon with a resolute mind. Weakness is the mother of vices like lust, anger, avarice, conceit, envy, malice, etc. And these vices in turn weaken you further. Save yourself from these vices by awakening the inner strength of your True Self. If you consider the body as 'I', you will shrivel in the face of criticism and praise will inflate your ego. But if you are resolute in the knowledge that criticism and praise are but illusory and the Self, hidden within, is the real truth; then the thoughts and counter-thoughts of your mind will abate and gradually the divine power of the Supreme Self will manifest in your heart. This is real victory.

Conquering an external enemy is a social victory. Acquiring material possessions is social success. One may defeat all of one's external enemies, one may acquire all the desired material possessions, name and fame; but so long as one does not conquer one's thoughts and desires, one is neither victorious nor successful. True victory lies in discovering the primeval source of all thoughts, That which is beyond them all. Only those endeavours are worthy indeed that are made towards attaining That Truth.