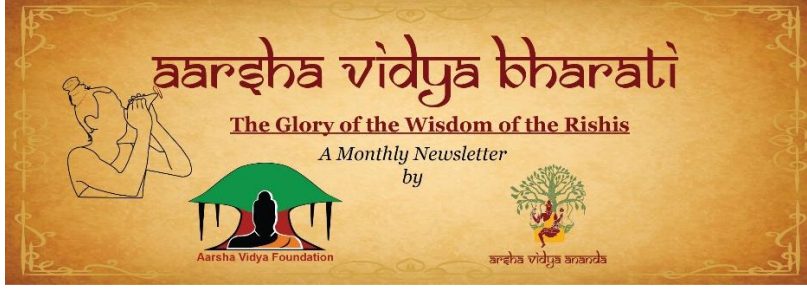

Aarsha Vidya Bharati - Aug 2021

A monthly newsletter that will bring you more happiness, more wisdom and more freedom



This is one of many articles from our monthly newsletter. Access the [Aug 2021 issue](#) or read any of the [articles](#).

Bhagavan Sri Krishna and our Bhakti

By Swamini Brahmajnananda & Varsha Shankar

On Janmashtami, his birthday, *Bhagavān* Krishna will be welcomed into millions of homes with puja, chanting, his favorite snacks, handmade clothing and jewelry, flowers, agarbatti, bhajans and so much more. There will be singing, dancing, little footsteps drawn with rice paste, matkis (clay pots) decorated and dahi handis (pots of yogurt) broken! A joyous celebration of his life and an expression of gratitude for his teaching. *Bhagavān* Sri Krishna is an *avatāra* of *Bhagavān* Vishnu whose time on earth marked the end of the *Dvāpara yuga* and the start of the *Kali yuga*.

To volunteer to chant or listen for **Sampurna Gita chanting** on 30th Aug online, 5.30-8.30 pm please contact by 10th Aug info@discoveratma.com

He was born a boy child in Mathura on the Ashtami (8th) Day of the Krishna *pakṣa* (second fortnight) of the *Bhādrapada* month. In the year 2021 of the Gregorian calendar, Krishna Janmashtmi will be celebrated on the 30th of August.

We hear stories of his life and they seem so colorful! We imagine our dear Krishna with a knowing smile and twinkling eyes. Dressed in yellow with a peacock feather tucked in his turban. As a young child he was the mischievous darling of Gokula – breaking pots, stealing butter and getting away with it all. He played the flute and everyone – even the animals and birds – would stop to listen.



He also escaped death even as a just-born infant (and multiple times as a child), and killed numerous asuras who threatened him and those around him. He was a prankster, beloved of the gopis, a renowned warrior, a shrewd tactician, steadfast friend and strong ally. He was Arjuna's charioteer in the Mahabharata war, a master war strategist on the side of the Pandavas and the Jagatguru who gave us the teaching of the Bhagavat Gita.

We love him and yet it is hard to fully fathom his multiple facets. Sometimes we feel we cannot understand him in entirety and prefer to focus on one aspect or another. When he is painted as a womanizer, we are at a loss. How do we understand his 16,108 wives and raas with the Gopis? We turn to some episodes in the *Bhāgavatam*.

Krishna saw all the gopis surrounding him, lost in the music of his magic flute, in the middle of the night and asked them to return home. The gopis felt that Krishna had rejected their love as their eyes glistened with tears in the light of the moon. They spoke together and one by one. 'You tell us to attend to our husbands, to our elders and to our children. We came here not to listen to a discourse on how a woman should behave. We have come to you knowing that you will never abandon us. We have been told that you are the Eternal one who has assumed a human form. We know nothing of



the *śāstras* and the nuances of Dharma. Learned ones say that you are the path to *mokṣa*. We are doing only what the wise are doing. Krishna this love of ours for you has been there birth after birth; it must be, or else the intensity of our love cannot be explained. Once our minds have been led towards your feet, they can think of nothing else and every action of ours is guided only by the thought of you. Please have compassion on us and accept our love’.

Krishna who was an incarnation of Narayana, who was *parambrahma*, who had no desires to be fulfilled, pretended to be an ordinary human being and allowed the gopis to make love to him. He sang and danced with them and each one thought that he belonged to her only. But later, to teach them a lesson and free them from their pride and possessiveness he suddenly vanished and they were in despair. After many sobs and prayers, Krishna returned to the banks of Yamuna. When one of them asked – Which type of love is the best and why? Krishna replied – There are four kinds.

The first type of love is that in which those who love and expect love in return are selfish, bent on their own comfort and happiness. The second type of love is like the love of parents for their children - those who love though there is no love given in return. Such people are compassionate, kind and full of affection. The third type of people are incapable of returning the love that is offered to them. The fourth type are people to whom no love is offered. There are four types of this last kind - *Ātma-rāmas* are people who are self-contained, whose only joy is to revel in the knowledge of Brahman. They neither want love from others nor are they desirous of giving it. The second type are the *Āpta-kāmas*, those whose every desire has been satisfied, who have no need for love. The third type are people who only take but are ungrateful and do not have it in them to give anything. The fourth type is a ‘*gurudrohi*’, one who has betrayed the affection of the elders and behaves disrespectfully.

King Parikshit listening about the Rasa said to Sage Shuka, ‘How could Krishna, the *sampūrṇa avatāra* of *Bhagavān* Narayana himself who had been on earth for the sole purpose of establishing Dharma, who was meant to set an example for others, how could he make love to the wives of other men? Was it



not Adharma although he was an *Āpta-kāma*?

Shuka the sage replied, ' You are looking at it like an ordinary human being. If an ordinary human being had done it, it would be adharma. But the love of the women for Krishna was Bhakti for the Lord which everyone has. Their bhakti was rewarded in the only manner which could be understood by them, that was physically. Isn't oneness with *Bhagavān* all that we desire? The gopis were so devoted to Krishna that he decided to reward them even on this earth and he granted them oneness with him on that moonlit night. It seemed like a lustful revel but it was only the utmost realisation of Bhakti that the gopis experienced. Because of the yogic power of Krishna, when the gopis returned, the people at home were unaware of the absence of their women and soon the night became, to each one of them, a beautiful memory which they relived again and again.

Sanātana Dharma offers us the freedom and joy to relate to *Bhagavān* however we most want and need - as a lover or a husband, a son, a father, a mother, a friend, a teacher. Jai Sri Krishna!

Reference: Srimad Bhagavatam - Kamala Subramaniam

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