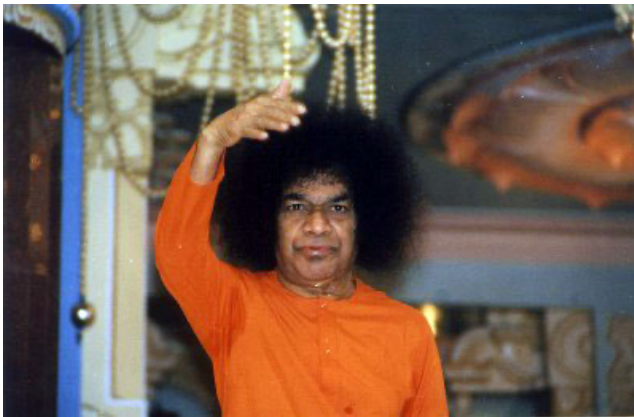


Stories and Insights on Decisions of Rama and Krishna

Before the Kurukshetra war, Arjuna went to Krishna to seek His help. Duryodhana also went to Krishna. Krishna saw them coming. He closed His eyes and acted as if He was sleeping. He wanted to teach the world the difference between the two. When He was awakened, He found Arjuna sitting at His feet. Duryodhana was full of ego. He thought, 'I am a king. How can I sit at the feet of Krishna?' He took his seat behind the head of Krishna. On opening His eyes, Krishna saw Arjuna, who was sitting at His feet. Krishna asked, 'Brother-in-law, why have you come?'

Duryodhana was filled with jealousy. He reflected, 'As soon as Krishna got up, He started talking to Arjuna and not to me.' He did not realize that it was only natural for Krishna to see Arjuna first because he was sitting at Krishna's feet. Arjuna got up and offered *Namaskar* [salutations]. Krishna knew that Duryodhana was sitting behind. He asked Arjuna, 'What do you want?' Duryodhana came closer and said, 'Krishna I have also come.'



Krishna said, 'So both of you have come. I have two things to offer. On one side I am alone. On the other side there is My entire army. Do you want My army or Myself?' Being apprehensive that Arjuna might ask for the army, Duryodhana came forward and said, 'Krishna, I want your army.' He said, 'Duryodhana, I give you My army, you can go.' Arjuna told Krishna, 'Swami, I do

not want anything except You. I will be happy if I have You alone.'

Right from the beginning the Pandavas believed in 'God first, the world next, and self last.' The belief of the Kauravas was 'I first, the world next, and God last.' So for them God was last

Lord Krishna as an Envoy in Hastinapura

To prevent a war between the Kauravas and Pandavas, Krishna played the role of an envoy. Duryodhana felt that the Pandavas were successful because of the support of Krishna and hatched several plans to get hold of Krishna and do away with Him when He came to Hastinapura.

Vidura was aware of these plans. Krishna entered the assembly of the Kauravas along with Vidura. The blind King Dhritarashtra addressed Krishna and said, 'The Pandavas and the Kauravas are cousins. When they are children of two brothers, you should have the same attitude toward them. Why are You prejudiced against the Kauravas? Why do You love the Pandavas?' Krishna replied, 'Dhritarashtra! You are not merely suffering from physical blindness, mentally also you are blind. I shower My grace on those who take refuge in Me. The one who is close to a fire gets both warmth and light. The Pandavas have been close to the fire. They are getting the wisdom and the grace in the form of light and fire. The Kauravas are staying far from the fire.' Here fire refers to *Jnanaagni*, the fire of wisdom.

The Pandavas were near and dear to Krishna. To whom can you compare them? In our body the head is very important; next the shoulders, the stomach and the legs. The body consists of these four parts, but it is useless without the heart. Krishna told Dhritarashtra, 'Oh blind king, I am giving the analogy of a body with reference to the Pandavas. In this body, Dharmaraja may be compared to the head, Arjuna to the shoulders, Bheema to the stomach, and Nakula and Sahadeva to the legs. In it, Krishna is the heart. Without Krishna, there are no Pandavas. Without the Pandavas there is no Krishna. That is the kind of mutual relationship between them. They are mutually interdependent.'

Krishna made this declaration in the open court. The Pandavas were so dear to the Lord. As there was protection for the Pandavas from Krishna, though they had lost the kingdom and everything else, Krishna was able to get back the kingdom and everything else and confer joy on them. Success comes to those who have the protection of God. When Dhritarashtra asked Sanjaya who would win the war, Sanjaya answered, 'Where there is Krishna, the Yogeshwara, and Partha with bow and arrow, there justice will prevail and there will be victory. This is my firm conviction.'

The Pandavas firmly believed in *dharma* [righteousness] and God. The Kauravas went and prostrated at the feet of their mother, Gandhari, before the start of the war. She had blindfolded her eyes and was not able to see them. She caressed Duryodhana and blessed him. She observed, '*Yatho Dharmah Tatho Jayah*' (where there is *dharma*, there is victory). But they had no righteousness on their side. Even their mother blessed them in that manner. Their wickedness was responsible for

this. They went to their preceptor Dronacharya and offered *Namaskar*. Dronacharya declared, 'Where there is *dharma*, there is Krishna; where there is Krishna, there is victory.' Thus, both their mother and their preceptor blessed in these terms. Neither the mother nor the preceptor blessed them with success. The Kauravas relied on their wealth and the power of their arms. But there is need for God's grace. Along with God's grace, there could be wealth, position, power, and knowledge.

Earn God's Grace

My Dear Students! Pursue your studies. But together with education earn the blessings of your parents. In addition, earn the grace of God. Despite all his knowledge, authority, power, and prowess, what happened to a warrior like Karna? He lacked God's grace. Earn God's grace. That is true spiritual education. Along with spiritual education, you may pursue worldly education. A basic requirement for all this is good character. Morality alone helps one in several ways. If your conduct is not good, society will not respect you. If one is in power, society may respect one. Once power goes, the man will be an object of derision. You may not have any power, but morality will confer on you honour and respect.

The Power of Lord Rama

To recognise the power of the Divine, here is an illustration from the Ramayana. Rama and Lakshmana went to protect the *Yaga* performed by Sage Vishwamitra. There were demons who wanted to undo the *Yaga* performed by Vishwamitra. Mareecha was one of them. He was the son of the ogress Tataki. As soon as Rama espied Mareecha, with one arrow He dispatched him far away. Mareecha recognised then the power of Rama. He firmly believed that Rama had the power of Divinity. From that moment he gave up his demonic quality.

When he was in this state, Ravana came to him to seek his help for kidnapping Sita. Ravana said, 'I want to kidnap Sita. Rama and Lakshmana are there. Become a golden deer and divert their attention'. Folding his palms, Mareecha told Ravana, 'Oh King of Demons! You have so much confidence in your physical power. Rama is not an ordinary man. I have experienced His prowess. You have lost your senses. Do not embark on this enterprise. You can never achieve victory over Rama.' In several ways Mareecha sought to advise Ravana. There is a saying, 'When destruction is impending, one's intelligence will be perverted' (*Vinasha Kale Vipareeta Buddhi*).

Ravana was in a rage. He said, 'Mareecha will you obey my command or shall I sever your head?' Mareecha thought within himself, 'When I become a golden deer Rama may kill me. If I go against Ravana, he will kill me. Death is certain either way. Instead of meeting with death at the hands of Ravana, it is better I die at the hands of Rama'. Mareecha did not like to be killed by the wicked King Ravana. That is why Mareecha took the form of the golden deer.

My Dear Students! The Ramayana, the Mahabharata, and the Bhagavatam teach the lesson that desire, anger, and greed cause destruction. Fix your faith on God and not on the things of the world. When you have faith in God, your discrimination will be perfect. You will be guided by your conscience, which will always lead you properly. In *Vedantic* parlance, this conscience is called '*Chit*'. God is '*Sat-Chit-Ananda*'. '*Sat*' means Being, '*Chit*' means Awareness. Where the two are combined, there is Bliss. That is the meaning of BABA: Being + Awareness + Bliss + *Atma*.

My Dear Students! You are all aspirants of bliss. You should enjoy bliss. You must combine *Sat* and *Chit* to realize *Ananda*. Without *Sat*, there can be no Divinity. Without Divinity there is no bliss. So always think of God.

Source: Discourse 17, *My Dear Students Volume 2; Divine Discourse delivered on September 17, 1992, at Sri Sathya Sai Hostel, Prasanthi Nilayam*

Arjuna—The Candidate

The *Bhagavad-Gita* is renowned the world over as the most universal and valuable of all the practical religious texts of the world. It was taught by Sri Krishna to Arjuna because Arjuna had all the excellences required by the *Shastras* to receive the teaching regarding the Ultimate Truth of the Universe and of the individual. The *Shastras* lay down four essential requisites in the candidate for the Highest Wisdom:

Nithyanithya vasthu viveka

(Discrimination of the eternal and the fleeting)

Ihamuthra Phalabhoga Viraga

(Renunciation of the fruits of this world and the next)

The precious six [inner wealth]: Sama, Dama, Uparathi, Thithiksha, Samadhana
and

Sraddha, Mumukshuthwa

(Yearning for Liberation)

The very first chapter of the *Gita*, describing the reactions of Arjuna when he saw the armies of the Kauravas ranged before him, clearly shows that Arjuna had the discrimination to distinguish between the lasting and the not so lasting. His choice for Krishna, who had refused to take up arms and wield any weapon, in preference to the Yadava legions shows this. He had studied the *Vedas* and the *Shastras* and derived full benefit therefrom.



Arjuna says, "I desire no victory, neither kingdom nor pleasure. Of what avail is the kingdom for us, or enjoyments, or even life? (1, 31)." This is renunciation of happiness in this world, an utter disregard for the fruits of his legitimate activity here in this world. Again, in 1, 35 Arjuna says that he does not desire to slay, even

for the sake of the sovereignty of the Three Worlds what to say of the mere Earth. This shows that he does not care for even Heaven, the *phalabhoga* (experiencing fruits of one's actions) in the upper regions. The *Shastras* say, "*Dwaavimoupurushou loke, Sooryamandala bhedinou, Parivraadyogayukthascha, rane cha abhimukho hathah*", meaning: 'Two persons break through the ring of Solar Glory: the recluse who was mastered *Yoga* and the hero who dies fighting on the battlefield.' Arjuna knows that victory is not the supreme goal; he discards *preyas* (short-term pleasure) in favor of *shreyas* (lasting fulfillment), good fortune in favor of *Moksha*. So he has the *Vairagya* qualification, too.

Now about the six virtues, *Sama* etc. His statement, *Narake niyatham vaasah*, 'destroyers of the family sink down into hell' shows that he was aware of the *Atman* as separate from the body. His question, *Kim na rajyena?* 'Of what avail is the kingdom?' proves his *Sama* (balance). His question, *kim bhogaih?* 'Of what avail are enjoyments?' reveals *Dama* (self-restraint). "*Yadyapyethe na pasyanthi...*", he says, meaning, 'They do not realize the guilt for their minds are powered by avarice', thus demonstrating that he had no *lobha* or greed. His declaration, *Tan me kshematharam bhaveth*, "If Dhritarashtra's sons, weapons in hand, should in battle slay me weaponless and unresisting, that were happier for me", reveals his *titiksha* (forbearance).

In the second chapter, he gives clear proof of his *mumukshuthwa* (intense desire for liberation). *Sreyo bhokthum bhaikshyam*, 'I shall live on alms', is what he says. He has realized in a flash the evanescence of worldly joy and grief and he is on the threshold of *sanyasa*; he has entered upon *dharmajijnasa*, 'the discussion and study of *dharma*, what exactly it is, how it has to be practiced,' etc. And he is confused. He approaches Krishna as a *Shishya*, a disciple, a pupil. No wonder Krishna had in him a worthy pupil whom He could teach the great lesson of Liberation.

—Based on an article by Br. Bulusu Appanna Sastry
Sanathana Sarathi, June 1967

Significance of Ganesha Worship

Bhagavan Baba in the following discourse in 1984 on Ganesha Chaturathi day explained why Lord Ganesha is worshiped first before any religious ceremony.

'Vinayaka' means one who removes all obstacles in the way of fulfilling any action. Vinayaka also demonstrated the truth that his Divine parents (Parameshwara and Parvati) were the two to whom he owed his birth and existence and whom he should seek as his redeemers. This is the reason he is described as Vinayaka and Vighneshwara (The Lord who removes obstacles). He is also called Ganapati—the Lord of all the *Ganas* (the host of spirits). There is an inner meaning for this name.

Ganapati is known for his supreme intelligence. It is because of this intelligence that he can keep under his control the vast array of spirits (*ganas*). Only the person who has an acute power of discrimination (*sukshma buddhi*) can realize this nature of Divinity.

Saint Thyagaraja enquired whether one needed refined intelligence to recognize the Lord. How could a monkey (Hanuman) cross the ocean? How could Lakshmi attain the Lord? How could Yashoda bind Krishna? How could Bharata enjoy the glory of Rama without satiety? All this was due to the power of supreme devotion to the Lord. There was nothing greater than devotion to Rama, declared Thyagaraja.

Ganapati, who was endowed with supreme intelligence that enabled him to understand the all-encompassing nature of the Divine, subjected himself to a test by which he could impart to the world this intelligence.



Parameshwara invited His two sons, Vinayaka and Subrahmanya, to go round the world, and He said that whoever completed the trip first would get a fruit. Immediately, Subrahmanya mounted his peacock and set out on the race zestfully. Ganapati, who was cast in a big mold and had as his vehicle a mouse, was apparently no match for his younger brother. How could he hope to go round the world? Seeing Ganesha complacently sitting there without joining the race, the Divine parents asked him why he had not yet started on his trip. They urged him to get busy.

But Ganapati continued to enjoy what he was eating and seemed to be in no hurry to make a start. A little while later, seeing that Subrahmanya was approaching the place, Ganapati circumambulated his parents and sitting before them claiming that he had gone round the world. Parvati asked him: "Without going round the world, how can you claim you have done so merely by going round us?" Ganesha replied: "Oh Mother, the whole earth is permeated by both of you. If I go round you, is it not equal to going round the whole world? What is the purport of statements such as: *Isavasyam Idam Sarvam* (All this is inhabited by the Lord), *Vasudevah-sarvam idam* (Vaasudeva is everything)? You are omnipresent and to go round You is equivalent to circling the Universe," he said.

Parameshwara presented a fruit to Vinayaka and said: "Because you have a keen intellect, you shall be the master of all the spirits." It is for this reason that Vighneshwara is worshipped by one and all before performing any auspicious function, whether it is entering a new house or performing a marriage ceremony or any other religious function.

It must also be noted that the Lord's family is an ideal one, maintaining harmony and peace despite the antagonistic elements present amongst them. The vehicles of Shiva (the bull), Parvati (the lion), Ganesha (the mouse), and Subrahmanya (the peacock) are in their natural state inimical to each other. But living in the presence of the Lord they shed their enmity and live at peace. Harmony in the Divine family shows that where there is Divinity there is peace and amity. Hatred and jealousy arise when the Omnipresence of the Divine is forgotten or ignored.

Holy days like Vinayaka Chaturthi should be celebrated only to remind ourselves of such sacred truths and to sanctify our minds and lives accordingly. They should not be treated as holidays for feasting and merry making. Ganapati should be worshipped so that all the *Ganas* become friendly and helpful to us. Thyagaraja sang that if he has the Lord's grace (*daiva-anugraham*), all the *grahas* (planets) will be in his grasp. We must purify our hearts so that the Lord may shower His grace on us. All education, all mastery of the scriptures, and all kinds of worship will be of no avail if the heart is not filled with qualities like love, compassion, and forbearance.

Source: *Sanathana Sarathi*, Oct. 1984

I Still do Crave

Long have I trekked through Time's alleys;
My raft I've rowed over billowy vales;
Long have I suffered with beggars and kings;
But, never could I know to whom I belong!

A runaway prodigal son have I been,
Drinking deep the fountain of fire;
I met Thine eyes, so mellow with Love;
I heard the Voice of ambrosial lyre.

Thy robe's cool and feathery brush
Soothed the burning wounds I had;
A touch of Thy Feet opened the gate
Of Joy, unconfined by Time and Space.

Thirsty for ages and ages on end,
At last I've come to the Nectar Spring;
But weak and worn, I still do crave—
Gather Me in Thy arms, O Lord!

—Bijaya Kumar Mishra; Cuttack
Source: *Sanathana Sarathi*, Nov. 1974

The Synthesis

Everyone's life is governed by three urges: (1) *Acharya* or Action, (2) *Vichara* or Thinking, and (3) *Vikaara* or Emotion. In the ideal human life, all these three get sublimated and are cultivated as means for self-realization. They are the *Yogas*, known respectively as *karma*, *jnana*, and *bhakti*. Most *Jnanis* and *Yogis* do not concern themselves with human misery, nor do they preach the ways of overcoming it. Godmen on the other hand are immensely interested in the elevation of man and the redressal of his sorrows. Jnaneswar evolved a unique means of solving the problem of human misery that may be called *Jivan-yoga*, as different from *Karma Yoga*, *Jnana Yoga*, or *Bhakti Yoga*. This *Yoga* is a harmonious synthesis of the three traditional *Yogas*.



According to my understanding, after years of intimate contact and conversation, discussion, and observation of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, the Truth propagated by

Jnaneswar is the core of Sathya Sai Baba's Message to humanity today. I request you to pay special attention to this significant fact. When do the three *Yogas* get synthesized? The answer in the words of Jnaneswar is, "When one worships the Easwara dwelling in the hearts and offers Him with love and compassion blossoms of service." Then, the devotee gets boundless joy. Here, in one breath, so to say, *jnana*, *bhakti*, and *karma* are taught as the one means to attain boundless happiness, the true fruition of life.

Bhagavan lays stress on this same synthesis. Faith in the omnipresent and omniscient God, the Indweller in all hearts, in all beings, is the basis for worshipping Him in all; this is true religion—service done as worship. Mere faith cannot be named religion. He who kills a goat as an offering to God may have 'faith'; but the act cannot be religious. Even human lives are offered to deities, in 'faith'. That cannot be religion, the act of bringing God and man together. Again, there are people who are as gentle and good as the Pandavas when they visit a temple or holy place, on pilgrimage. But once they come back and resume their normal avocations, they become as selfish and harsh as their opposites, the Kauravas! How can we call such people religious? Many a war has been fought to spread or support religion; how can the faith that revels in bloodshed be called religion?

So, the crucial point is that unless one admits the existence of God in all hearts and conforms his behavior and actions to this faith, he cannot be called a religious person. This Universal Truth is stated in numerous places in our *Upanishads* e.g., "*Eshawasyam idam Sarvam*", the world is filled with God. Realization of this truth would remove barriers between different religions and make them all facets of one and the same religion, of Universal Love. This realization alone can open the eye of wisdom and lead us to the vision of God in all.

We have several saints who teach us to love God as Father, Mother, Friend, Master, and so on. But the faith and devotion that Sri Jnaneswar and Baba are preaching embraces the Universal God and has to be prized far higher, as it leads to the betterment and welfare of society. In this religion, service of man becomes the worship of God. It raises all activities that come to one's lot to the level of *Bhajan*, *Kirtan*, *Puja*, and so on.

I must say that of the numerous saints and seers I have come across in my life, none has made such deep impact on me as Sri Sathya Sai Baba, whose mission and message is Universal Love. The divine attributes that are indications of Divinity are *Chamatkara*, *Sakshatkara*, *Nirahankara*, *Upkara*, and *Sanskara*. Usually, a saint has only one or two of them. But Baba manifests all of them. His miracles "*Chamatkara*" that he calls "Visiting Cards" are well-known and manifest His Omniscience, Omnipresence, and Omnipotence. His giving spiritual guidance, help, and experience (*Sakshatkara*) has been acknowledged by large numbers of devotees. Baba is asking nothing for Himself (*Nirahankara*) nor accumulating anything for Himself. All that He does is for the good of the humanity (*Upkara*). His sole objective is to confer good on other. Important is Baba's mission of "*Sanskara*" or transforming the heart of

mankind, particularly through the value-oriented education program. This system of education will lead to the moral, cultural, spiritual blossoming of the child's personality and give it a balance of growth of scientific knowledge as well as spiritual wisdom.

~T. S. Bharde
Sanathana Sarathi, Nov. 1976

Single-use Plastics

Swami Says...

Nature (Prakrithi) is your school, your laboratory, the gateway to liberation, and the panorama of God's manifold majesty. Seek to know the lessons it is ready to teach; all things in Nature are as Brahman as you are. So, any act is Divine; any work is Divine worship; build the mansion of your life on the strong foundation of the faith that all this is Brahman.

~Sathya Sai Baba
Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 10, October 4, 1970

Tidbit: Do you know how much single-use plastic you purchase every day and have around your house? Try to reduce the use of single-use plastics.

What are single-use plastics?

These are products that are to be disposed of right after use. Although single-use plastics are considered convenient, sanitary, and efficient, most are not biodegradable; and their use has increased significantly, resulting in massive accumulation of plastics in the environment, raising substantial environmental and health concerns.



Examples of single-use plastics: Plastic bags, plastic straws, plastic stirrers, balloons, plastic cotton buds, coffee cups and lids, plastic cups, plastic containers, plastic cutlery, and plastic plates, Ziploc bags, disposable cutlery, takeout containers and associated cutlery in a

plastic bag, cold coffee cups, plastic bags, small drinks.

Composition: Mostly made from fossil fuel-based chemicals (petrochemicals). Most of the monomers used to make plastics, such as ethylene and propylene, are derived from fossil hydrocarbons.

Impacts: None of the commonly used plastics are biodegradable. Therefore, they accumulate in landfills or the natural environment rather than decompose. The only way to permanently eliminate plastic waste is by destructive thermal treatment. Plastic debris has been found in marine environments and is being found to contaminate freshwater systems and terrestrial environments as well as environmental contamination with synthetic fibers. Even the production of plastics emits greenhouse gases at every point in its life cycle, from the initial process of drilling for the oil and gas that make up its building blocks to the incineration that often occurs at the end of a plastic product's life.

According to the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development), the world doubled its plastic production between 2000 and 2019. By 2040, the growth in use and production is expected to rise by 70 percent, compared to 2020 (reference: <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/single-use-plastics-101#why>)

Although recycling helps reduce plastic wastes, all plastics cannot be recycled. The OECD estimates that about 91 percent of plastic isn't recycled at all.

State responses: Some states have instituted bans on some plastics like plastic bags, straws, clamshells, and stirrers. Some states like California have also banned key uses of plastic microbeads in all cosmetics and cleaning products. For more information see <https://www.britannica.com/procon/single-use-plastics-debate#ref390797>

The best way to reduce plastic waste is to reduce the use of these plastics.
Choices we can make:



1. Use your own grocery bags and produce bags for shopping.
2. Carry your own water bottle. Avoid buying bottled water or drinks.
3. Carry your own coffee mug/cup.
4. Avoid plastic straws.
5. Choose bar soaps and shampoo bars where possible; this avoids the use of single use plastics.
6. Take your own carryout container for leftovers and freeze leftovers from restaurants in your own containers.
7. Avoid individually packed goods like snack packs. Buy in bulk if possible.
8. Use reusable sandwich bags or containers for your sandwiches.
9. Avoid the use of Ziploc bags to store food, particularly after an event; if you do use them, you could wash and reuse them a few times. Encourage folks to bring their own carryout containers.

Visit *Sai Sarathi* on the web at SaiSarathi.com

Sai Sarathi welcomes submissions of articles, transcriptions of talks, and student stories about Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, His teachings, and personal experiences at His lotus feet. We also welcome SSE student projects and announcements for regional events.

To submit text or photos, please email them to "editor@SaiSarathi.com."

Thought of the MONTH

Krishna

There are many subtle truths relating to an incarnation that cannot be easily understood. Merely to describe the various sports and exploits of Krishna as a child is only a pastime. God's ways are infinite and inscrutable. No one can determine or dictate to God how He should act. He can transform anything in a moment. It must be clearly understood that Krishna was such a manifestation of the Divine. The name Krishna must be properly understood. "*Krish*" + "*Na*" = Krishna. This means that He is one who cultivates (*Krish*) the heart. "*Karsh*" + "*Na*" is another derivation, which indicates that Krishna is one who attracts—*Karshathi-ithi-Krishnah*. Krishna attracts people not only by the matchless beauty of His form. He attracts people by His music, His dance, His sports, and His words. Krishna, by His winsome ways, could turn the anger of the Gopis toward him because of his pranks into an enjoyable joke.

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 27 (1994)

Thirst for Krishna, for seeing Him, hearing Him, His Flute, for installing Him in the heart, in the mind, for grasping His reality through the intellect - this thirst is the healthiest, the most conducive to peace. Devotion to Krishna is the chain by which the monkey mind can be fastened and subdued. Transmute all the desire with which the senses torment you into the thirst for Krishna and you are saved.... Krishna draws the mind away from sensory desires, that is another way in which the draw operates. He pulls the mind toward Him, and so they are pulled away from everything else, for everything else is inferior, less valuable. He satisfies the deepest thirst of man, for peace, joy, and wisdom. That is why He is *Meghashyama*—dark blue as the rain cloud. The very sight of the rain-laden cloud is so refreshing. He is lotus-eyed, lotus-palmed, lotus-soled; the lotus is reminiscent of cool, calm, deep lakes of limpid water, the water that quenches thirst. When Krishna-*thrishna* is quenched, the highest ananda (bliss) is attained; there is no more need, no more want, defect, or decline. The urge to drink inferior drinks that only feed the thirst disappears when once the sweetness of Krishna *nama* and Krishna *bhava* (name and thought of Krishna) are tasted.

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 6 (1966)

Krishna also changed the hearts of many people through love. It may be asked: "Is it not Krishna who killed Kamsa?" Not at all. This is the text-book version. In truth, it was Kamsa's own heated *bhrama* (delusion) that killed him. He was always haunted by the fear of Krishna. His death was a result and a reaction of that fear. Men's thoughts determine their destiny. Hence, men should cultivate good thoughts and eschew all bad feelings.... God has no dislike for anyone. He envies no one. He has no ill-will toward anyone. Nor does He have favorites. The grace one gets is the result of

one's own feelings. [For] God, he alone is a true devotee who recognizes that his sufferings are the consequence of his own bad thoughts and actions.

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 27 (1994)

