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Editorial

The basic and most important unit of the society has been the family from the beginning. For the empowerment and development of the country, first of all it is necessary to pay attention to the moral, social, economic and cultural dimensions of basic institutions like family. Balanced development of the family is very important for the development of the society. Therefore, if we want to have a complete and balanced development of the country, then we need to lay maximum emphasis on the basic institution called family. It is necessary that we should not make any discrimination between son and daughter in the family and we must explain this to our sons and get them involved in their activities. Even today, those who belong to the old belief believe that a woman cannot get any freedom, she cannot go anywhere alone, she cannot roam anywhere alone, but today's youth refuse to accept these values.

Some people also say that the importance of the walls in the house, the same importance is given to the education of the boys in the society. But how is a house made? Who are in the base of the house? The base of the house is our daughters, our girls, that means they are related to the roots. If our root becomes weak in the society, then our house or house cannot be strong at all. There is a need to understand this social context in reality.

The extent of favoritism is reached when we see discrimination in small tasks. Some people think that a girl is someone else's wealth, what job she should do. That's why some parents discriminate between boys and girls and this discrimination is visible somewhere in our behavior, in feeding and dressing. This is sheer injustice. God has given the same brain to boys and girls and today girls are proving it by bringing better results.

Girls stay at their parents' house for only a few days, so it is our duty to pay deep attention to their education, upbringing, only then we can fulfill the concept of a strong society. God has made us the trustee of our children so it is our duty to treat all members equally with full justice because both boys and girls have same power, same soul. So we should give them equal opportunities for development.

The basic objective of women empowerment is the development of women and communication of self-confidence in them. Women empowerment is important for the overall development of the society. Empowerment of women is the most important social phenomenon because they are the creators. If you empower them, make them strong, encourage them, it is better for the society. Women and men are the basis of creation and human society. Both complement each other. These are the wheels of the chariot of life by which the journey of life runs

smoothly. The role of both has been equally important for stability in family and society. The basis of change and development in a society depends on the mutual interaction of men and women, walking step by step and equal mobility of both. A chaotic situation is created in social life when any one side lags behind. The history of mankind is witness to this that where women have been neglected, the development of the society has been stunted. The role of women in creation of creation, education of children, upbringing of family is much more important than that of men, thus her position becomes central in the society. Therefore, without the progress of women, there can be no upliftment of mankind and society. As far as India is concerned "Yatra Naryastu Pujayante Ramante Tatra Devta" means where women are worshipped. The deities reside there. With this ideal any Indian woman can feel pride in comparison to the western woman. The ideal of learning in Saraswati, the ideal of wealth in Lakshmi, the ideal of valor in Durga, the ideal of purity in Ganga, even the ideal of creation in the form of Jagad Janani we find only in India.



Professor Akhilesh Shukla
Chief Editor

CONTENTS

| | | |
|-----|--|----|
| 01. | Analysis of the concept of victim logy with special reference to domestic violence | 09 |
| | Akhilesh Shukla, Aanchal Shukla | |
| 02. | Ecofeminism and Environmental Movements in India | 17 |
| | Rani Tyagi | |
| 03. | Socio-Economic Conditions of Elderly Women Slum Dwellers | 21 |
| | Archana Mishra | |
| 04. | Public Health and the Disputed Issue of Subsoil Water in Colonial Bombay City: 1860-1900 | 26 |
| | Madhu Kelkar | |
| 05. | Rock Art of Keraha: A Critical Study | 33 |
| | Neha Singh | |
| | Pritam Kumar | |
| | Mahesh Chandra Srivastava | |
| 06. | Socio-Economic Inequalities in Chhattisgarh | 39 |
| | Shashi Kiran Kujur | |
| | Upendra Kumar Sahu | |
| 07. | The Study of Augmented Reality Advertising and growing trends in India | 46 |
| | Rita Khatri | |
| 08. | Drug Abuse and the Criminal Justice System | 50 |
| | Ajay Kumar Dwivedi | |
| 09. | Theory of basic structure in reference to the amendment of the Indian constitution (An observation) | 55 |
| | Om Dutt | |
| 10. | A Comparative Study on The Anthropometrical Variable of Volleyball and Basketball Players of Senior Secondary School | 63 |
| | Mohammad Muqarram | |
| 11. | Effect of Anxiety and Achievement Motivation in Sports Performance | 68 |
| | Alok Kumar Pandey | |
| 12. | Significance of projection | 72 |
| | Mohammed Imran Khan | |
| 13. | Tourist places in Meerut District: an over View | 78 |
| | Poonam Chaudhary | |
| | Aanchal | |

14. Give to All an Equal Liberty: A Study of Abolitionist Sentiments and Anti-Slavery Historiography in the Anti-Slavery Alphabet (1847) 85
Anirban Guha Thakurta
15. Supplementary effect of methionine on the growth and survival *Channa punctatus* 94
Umesh Shukla
16. Random-amplified polymorphic DNA profiling of isolates from dung sample of camel for sorting out distinct isolates 96
Shikha Tiwari
17. Estimation of nitrogen fixation by different genera of *Azotobacter* and *Azospirillum* and effect of herbicides on nitrogen fixation of *Azospirillum* in malate medium under laboratory conditions. 100
Vandna Krishna
18. Duration of parental care received by fawns of *Antilocapra* in captivity 106
Sonia Yadav
Raksha Modi
19. Salinity tolerance on germination and growth of chickpea (*Cicer arietinum* L.) 114
Archana Tiwari
Archana Mishra
20. Serum sodium level in men and Women belonging to different blood groups 117
Umesh Shukla
21. The Mystery of Maharaas, the Cosmic Dance 119
Patel Nilaben Alpesh kumar, Yogesh Bhatt
22. A New Dimension of Leadership: Ethical Leadership 124
Parul C. Dave
23. Impact of COVID - 19 Pandemic on Perceptions towards Physical and Mental Health 128
Bhavna L. Gajera
24. New Education Policy in reference with Physical Education and Sports 131
Minaxi Masukhbhai Patel

The Mystery of Maharaas, the Cosmic Dance

• Patel Nilaben Alpesh kumar

•• Yogesh Bhatt

Abstract- Five chapters, 29 to 33, of the Tenth Canto of Shrimad Bhagavat are known as “RaasPanchadhyayi”. The Tenth Canto of Shrimad Bhagavat is the heart of the God with Raasleela as its Pran (life). There are five Prans in the heart. This Raas Panchadhyayi is panch Prans. In the Raasleela legend only, the eligible soul can see the meeting of the individual soul with the Supreme Soul. This Canto contains the story of “Nirodhleela”. Nirodh consists in detachment from negation of the world and absolute attachment with the God. Jivatma, the individual soul, is a part of Paramatma, the Supreme Spirit. When one is blessed with the grace of God or the guru, the wind of meditation on scriptures blows away the ashes enveloping the fire of individual soul, re-igniting the fire it becomes self-illuminated and emancipator... and gets absorbed in the Supreme Spirit.

Keywords- Shrimad Bhagavat, God, Raas Panchadhyayi, Jivatma

Introduction- Shrimad Bhagavat is a unique book of true religion and transcendent Bhakti (Devotion), especially its truly devotional Ninth Canto. In this chapter Bhakti chases the form of God. But in the Tenth Canto, the God manifests Himself and performs several exploits by bringing out minds, senses, lives and souls of the devotees from the worldly pursuits and matters and absorbs them in Himself. In every body both the individual soul and the Supreme Spirit reside. So the individual soul's joy is bhakti also, and the Supreme Spirit's joy is power of the mind (chittashakti) also where the soul's inclinations appear in the form of love, and the Supreme Spirit's inclination manifests as bliss. This fusion of love and bliss creates a unique heart-throb which is called Raasleela. This Raasleela is not an ordinary act, it is the Great Union of the Jivatma the individual soul with Paramatma, the Supreme Soul accomplished after a number of birth cycles. So Maharaas is the joyous play of the ever-longing devotee with the God.

Maharaas Mystery:

Bhagvanpi ta ratri: Shardotfullimallika: |
Vikhsyran tumanshckreyogmayamupashrit: ||
(Bhatt, 10:19:1)

Fragrant flowers were emitting smell in the Sharad season, one of the six seasons of the Indian calendar. All nights indicated by Lord Krishna at the time of “pulling of robes” (cheerharan) are shining as one night. At this

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 - Research Guide

time, the God performed the RaasKreedha to satisfy his devotees. God's abundant grace is needed to know this mystery

Kathopnishad:

NaymatmaPravchnenLabhyo N Meghya N BahunaShruten |
YamevaishVrunute Ten Labhy: Tasyeshvivrunuyettanu swam ||
(Shankarhashya, 1:2:23)

According to this, one gets the power to understand the essence of Raasleela by the God's grace otherwise the Jiva, the individual soul remains infatuated in the outward illusion. One must be favored by the God to comprehend the essence of God's love. The word “go” in Gujarati means “senses”, so the individual soul who longs to quench the thirst by senses is “Gopi”. Only 'Sakhio' (females) are allowed entry in the grove. When the sense of being a Purush (soul) is wiped out and the consciousness of absolute surrender is awakened and the heart's mechanism to receive the divine grace (mahabhaav) is created then only one gets entry into the grove.

In Vraj two types of Gopis are found:

- (1) Nitya Siddha.
- (2) Saadhan Siddha.

According to Padma Puran, sages of Dandakaranya were spell-bound after darshan of Shri Ram and Sitaji. The craving was born in them to enjoy Sitaji-like pleasure of meeting Shri Ram then during the Lord's incarnation as Krishna they appeared as Gopis at the time of Raasleela.(Goswami, p. 244)

Gopi is a sacred soul purified from the cover of the illusory world. Even to witness this divine Raasleela, Naradji and Lord Shiv had to become Gopis.

“SharadpoornamniraatraliamanichandochadyoAakash
Vrijmaanvaagevansaladi...(Rajarshi-2019, p.125)

On the night of Sharadpoornam the God plays flute and the sound reaches ears of the Gopis and they are convinced that Lord Krishna is calling them.

Invoking the deity for commencement of the Raasleela, Shridhar Swami says that after defeat of Brahma and other gods, the arrogant Kaamdev came to fight Lord Krishna, and got defeated. So He became known as Madan Mohan, the one who bewitches the Kaamdev (Madan). Raasleela is an act of vanquishing Kaamdev, the Cupid. Despite the self-willed/uncontrolled play with Gopis He remained desireless and unattached. By making the innocent Gopis the efficient cause, Lord Madan Mohan performed Raasleela in order to show the helpless Jivas, wandering for a number of birth-cycles, how to attain the joyful form of the God. Raasleela is the intimate act effecting the meeting of the individual, the Jiva, with the Supreme Spirit. Kaam, the sensual enjoyment, is the most powerful of the six internal enemies (shadripu) and the victory over it is Raasleela. Raasleela is the act of kaamvijay. (Mehta, p. 477). There are two aspects in Raasleela:

- (1) Internal: Enables tasting of the divine pleasure
- (2) External: Defeats the Kaam, the tendency for worldly pleasures

No one other than Lord Krishna in the whole universe has defeated the Kaam. Therefore, the individual soul does not become eligible to witness or listen to the Raasleela with vanquishing the Kaam.

When the contented Lord's flute-notes invited the Gopis on an evening in the Sharad season, it is the beginning of the first chapter of RaasPanchadhyayi.

“Aabhmaanoogyochhepoonam no chandra
vaansalivaagevaalamni.....(Kripalu, 2006, p.175)

In the pleasant night of the Sharadpoornam when the moon is in full bloom then Shyamsundar recalls his promise to Gopis for playing with them and sends them invitation by playing the flute. The Lord's flute converts inanimate into animate, immobile into mobile, and puts the distracted into a trance. The worship of name (of the God) and sound (as God) purifies the mind. Flute is the worship of Naadbrahma (sound as God). Hearing this sound, the Gopis would leave the work on hand and would rush for the Lord's darshan without a moment's delay. How quick it is to give up dharm, arth, kaam for single minded devotion of the God, has been described in this sacred book.

When the mystified Gopis appeared before the Lord, He asked them, “Why have you come here leaving behind the domestic duties? You should go back.” When the God preached them the worldly duties, the Gopis explained the spiritual duty saying that the husband was the lord of the body but Lord Krishna was the owner of the spirit. The Gopis solicited: “You are an ocean of mercy, how can you be so hard-hearted. O Lord, accept us and extinguish the fire of our hearts.” Hearing such prayer of the Gopis, Lord took them in His refuge. Although perfect Himself, Krishna indulged in this jest with the Gopis. In the second chapter, the Raas-play commences. In course of the Raas-play, the Gopis develop a subtle pride, so to humble them, the Lord disappeared from the scene. Having attained the union with the Supreme Spirit once, the Jiva, the individual soul, does not get separated. This was just the Lord's leela. Parmatma is to be searched within. The Gopis' mystification on the God's disappearance is the absorption in the great meditation. Maharshi Patanjali has termed this as the Supreme Yoga. The absorption in the Supreme God which generally people achieve through yama, niyama etc. has been achieved by the Gopis with Premyoga.

The word Radha is not clear in ShrimadBhagavat but it has been indicated in the language of samaadhi as “Anayadaradhitonanam”. It is a profound mystery that Radha is the God's power of exhilaration. Whichever devotee, intoxicated in God's love, follows the footsteps of the God attains His power of exhilaration.(Shastri, pp. 30-35)

In the third chapter, the devotees, longing to attain the God by surrendering all worldly desires and possessions at His feet, indulge in the talk of separation from the God. It is Gopigeet where separation (from God) only nourishes the union (with Him). By the God's will only the sense of respect and pride had entered the minds of Gopis, and the God had disappeared. Proximity with the God cannot be achieved as long as sense of

respect and pride resides in the heart. Bewildered by separation from the God, the minds, bodies and souls of Gopis have fully dissolved. The song of intense passionate love of God is the GopiGeet.

In the fourth chapter, in view of the superhuman passionate love of the Gopis the God appeared in the form of the Cupid incarnate. The sweet union of the devotee with the God is not possible as long as the individual soul, the Jivatma, has egoism, the God cannot be seen even if He may be close by. The God openly acknowledged His eternal indebtedness for their love. The reason for His disappearance was to make their love brighter and richer. Thereafter the Maharaas started again. (Shastri, pp. 36-37)

In the fifth chapter, the Maharaas commences. The Gopis got arranged in a round circle. To match the number of Gopis, the God multiplied Himself from one to as many "Ekohambahusyami". Completed the universe with Naad brahma, the sound as God. This is the act of union of the Jiva and Shiv, the individual soul and Supreme Soul. In the whole circle every Gopi has a Krishna with her as companion.

Ekkaanrameekgopinisath ma... (Rajarshi, 2019, 124)

Every soul is in person with the Parmatma also in human form. When the accomplished Yogis with yogic powers can multiply into several bodies at different places and perform different actions, then it should not be surprising if the Lord of the yogis, the YogeshwarShri Krishna multiplies into several forms and plays Raas with several Gopis individually at the same time!!! Krishna also plays, along with Gopis, in the Maharass which is a special part of the joyous act of sweetness of the symptom of love. After becoming one in the great absorption of the Maharaas it is not possible to remember anything as the remembrance itself is a tendency.

The root of raas is ras. Ras is the God Himself. "*Ra So VaiSah*". One ras multiples into many in this divine play and the participant tastes the eternal ras. In this Maharaas the Gopis merged in Krishna, and the gods, sages, gandharvas watch this with rapture. The moon has also forgotten its course and has stood stand-still in the sky.

God accomplished the Raasleela with his magical power of yoga.

(Bhatt, p.289)

As a result of the Maharaas the Gopis were liberated from life. Liberation from life has three characteristics: manonaash, avidyanaash, tatvagyanodaya. As a fruit of this knowledge, they attained Shri Krishna.

Conclusion- This is the joyful essence of the exalted love of Gopis' Maharaas with Shri Krishna. Raas is the name of the aesthetic divine leela of the total ras incarnate God. In the fifth chapter the God's divine sound of flute, His disappearance before Raas, the Gopigeet, God's re-appearance, the Maharaas etc. acts are described in the human language but are absolutely Divine. Shri Krishna is the soul of all persons. Their perpetual flow of eternal joy derived from being absorbed in Soul is the Raas.

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