

GOSPEL OF SRI RĀMAKRISHNA - PART 23

SWĀMI DAYATMANANDA

ॐ जननीं सारदां देवीं रामकृष्णं जगद्गुरुम् ।

पादपद्मे तयोः श्रित्वा प्रणमामि मुहुर्मुहुः ॥

Jananim Sāradam devim Rāmakrishnam jagadgurum।

Pādapadme tayoh shritvā pranamāmi muhurmujuh ॥

ॐ तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनं

कविभिरीडितं कल्मषापहम् ।

श्रवणमङ्गलं श्रीमदाततं

भुवि गृणन्ति ते भूरिदा जनाः ॥

Om tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanaṁ

kavibhir īḍitaṁ kalmaṣāpaham ।

śravaṇa-maṅgalaṁ śrīmad ātataṁ

bhuvi gṛṇanti te bhūri-dā janāḥ ॥

We are meditating on the glory of Mother Durga. We are taking the book “Devi Mahatmyam”, “Chandi” or “Durga Saptashati” as the basis. This is the most wonderful book. In my last classes, I have been discussing the antar-Artha (symbolism) of the first story. As I mentioned, this book has three stories: one about Madhu and Kaitabha; the next one we are going to discuss is Mahishasura and the third one, Shumba and Nishumba. And this book has also got four extraordinarily great hymns which we will discuss in today’s class, a little bit of sample only because it takes many classes to complete the whole thing. We would like to continue the Gospel. But I would like to give you sufficient background knowledge to be able to decipher.

So, in our last class what did we discuss? Before that, every time we open this book, Chandi or Devi Mahatmyam, we have to remember four points. What are the four points? God with the help of Mahamaya had created this universe. This samsara is nothing but suffering and troubles but at the same time, it is also the vehicle of Mukti. Therefore, our scriptures advocate the pursuit of spiritual life and reach Moksha. That is the essence of every scripture. But this is the fourth point. For attaining Moksha, we need the grace of the God and the grace of God can be obtained only by the grace of the Divine Mother who is the creator, sustainer and destroyer of this universe. These four points, if we understand, we have understood the entire summary of all the scriptures. So, what did we talk about in our last class? The story of the destruction of Madhu and Kaitabha; how they were about to destroy Brahma and his creative power. Who is this Brahma? Brahma means Vedas. Vedas means Vedanta. Vedanta means Upanishads. Upanishads means 'each soul is potentially divine'. The goal of human life is to know who we are and become free called Moksha. And there are many paths to reach this Moksha, or this Self-Knowledge. But they are all divided into four important categories: Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Raja Yoga and Jnana Yoga. Sri Ramakrishna especially emphasizes Bhakti Yoga - surrender to God, surrender to Guru and surrender to especially, the Divine Mother. So, what is the essence of this Madhu Kaitabha vada? We are all Brahmas. Brahma means that we are all potentially divine. Brahma's job is to create. We are all Brahmas; our job is to re-create ourselves as we are, not as we understand it now. But what is the problem? Obstacles come. Our inherent potential power to do sadhana is sleeping. That also by the will of the Divine Mother. We would like to progress; something is obstructing. And the first obstruction that comes to us is through this slavery to dualities. sIta, Ushna, Sukha, Dhukha but most importantly, we are terribly slaves to sIAGana, stuti. We would like to be admired always; everybody should say good things about us; Madhu - that will be sweet for us. Anybody, even truthfully tells us about our defects, we become very angry and thereby, we destroy ourselves. Once when we realize, and we are going to realize at some point of time, then we find we are not after all so strong that we can conquer this long cultivated habit of looking for praise and avoiding criticism. These two represent, as I said, all the dualities. Dukha, we do not wish; Sukha we want. SIta we do not want; Ushna we want. Defeat we do not want; Victory we want. We want to be loved by everybody but we do not want to love anybody, that is not possible. So, we come to know we are weak and then we understand this is all under the control of a tremendous power called Universal Mother, Mahamaya. Incidentally, this Mahamaya is also called our own mind or universal will of which our mind is a tiny part. So, if we can call this universal Mother, recognize her as our own mother, and just say, "O Mother! Please take pity upon me and let me come to you (Vidya maya)". And she will take pity, what does she do? She removes the obstruction which is sleeping. The sleeping potential awakens in the form of Viveka, vairagya, Shama damadi shatka sampathi and mumukshutva through manushya deha, and mumukshutva, and favorable spiritual circumstances. Then, we fight or the Divine Mother fights on behalf of us, drives away asuri samskaras and then our creative power becomes

unobstructed and we reach the goal. There is a beautiful hymn in the very first chapter by Brahma, tvam svaha, etc. I will talk about it at the end of this class.

So, the Divine Mother in the form of the Tamasic sleep (Tamas means ignorance) departs, bestowing her grace upon us.

Ya Devi sarva bhuteshu nidra rupena samsthita

We are not talking about the physiological phenomena called sleep. That is also very necessary. Sleep is one of the most important ingredients of health. If anybody cannot sleep, he cannot be awake, he cannot even dream properly. Our inner potentialities become awakened and then we rise above the sensuality and are able to realize our true nature, that is Aham Brahmasmi all through, by the grace of the Divine Mother. That is the essence of what we discussed as the inner symbolism of the first story, the destruction of Madhu and Kaitabha.

Now, straightaway we will enter into the second story. This story is concerned with the killing of Mahishasura. Asura means demon. Mahisha means buffalo. What does this Mahisha really stand for? Terrible egotism (Ahamkara). Is Ahamkara bad? Not really. There are two types of Ahamkaras - Vidya Ahamkara, what Sri Ramakrishna used to call Pakkwa Ahamkara (ripe ego) and Kaacha ahamkara (Unripe ego). You recollect Shiva's vahana is bull. Again what does that bull represent? Remember all our Gods and Goddesses, their weapons, their vehicles and the beds they sleep in, everything has an inner symbolism. If only we have the wisdom to open our eyes: the bull that Shiva rides, he subdues the unripe ahamkara then only, instead of saying 'I am Jiva', that is called unripe bull, the bull rides us and we do not ride the bull. But when we have sufficient strength, then we conquer our ego. The ego will still be there but instead of saying, "I am a Jiva", say "Chidananda rupah Shivoham shivoham". That is called Pakkwa ahamkara, vidya ahamkara and man says, "mano buddhi ahamkara chitthani naham chidananda rupah shivoham shivoham". That is the symbolism. Incidentally, [I must have mentioned, I don't remember], the snakes that adore are the Yogashakti. Shiva is the Yogishwara and Yogeshwara. So, this is the symbolism. Here, Mahishasura like a buffalo, what is the nature? Very strong first of all. And he will not care for even death. That is the first thing. This egotism is the real problem. That is why Sri Ramakrishna says in the Gospel, in answer to a question, "When do I realize God?", he makes a pun on that word "I". He says, "When your i dies, you will realize God." What is that "i" which can be destroyed? That is called Kaacha ahamkara, unripe ahamkara, mano buddhi ahamkara, etc. So, this is the story of the rise of egotism, the growth of egotism, and finally, the destruction of the egotism. Again, we have to remind ourselves, we cannot do it. Why? Because this ego is not kept by us. It is kept by the Divine Mother. Only She makes the law, She can also break the law. Only She can destroy. If we only surrender ourselves to Her. But this egotism is not one. It has different manifestations and it has tremendous helps, etc. Egotism comes in many forms, guises, shapes and sizes. Babies have egotism, just touch them, scold them, they will be facing the corner and say, "I will not come" even

if they are hungry. A mosquito has its own egotism. But the biggest egotism is to feel I am a great spiritual sadhaka. Holy Mother used to say this, “Ochre cloth can be the biggest form of egotism. I am a sannyasi. I am a Swami. What! Everybody is bowing down to me, this person or these few people, they do not care to bow down? I will bring down all the curses of the devil upon them.” This terrible egotism. That is why when someone asked Holy Mother, why are you not wearing ochre cloth? She replied, “Baba! This white cloth is best. This ochre cloth immediately brings about, I must sit on the highest seat, everybody must rise when I enter, everybody must bow down when I get up, everybody should get up. Until I depart, everybody should be looking at me with folded hands.” All these kinds of unspiritual thoughts will arise. Now, every single second, the ego is going to change its form, its shape, its power and its manifestation. That is why Hindu scriptures tell us Kama (Lust), Krodha (Anger), Lobha (Greed), Moha (Delusion), Madha (Pride), and Matsarya (Envy), these are different and separate enemies but different manifestations of one and only Egotism. When there is Kama (Desire), if it is frustrated, it becomes Krodha. That is why in Bhagavad Gita, the Lord says,

काम एष क्रोध एष रजोगुणसमुद्भवः ॥

महाशनो महापाप्मा विद्ध्येनमिह वैरिणम् ॥ 37॥

kāma eṣha krodha eṣha rajo-guṇa-samudbhavaḥ

mahāśhano mahā-pāpmā viddhyenam iha vairiṇam

In another place, he also adds Lobha(Greed). He says,

त्रिविधं नरकस्येदं द्वारं नाशनमात्मनः ।

कामः क्रोधस्तथा लोभस्तस्मादेतत्त्रयं त्यजेत् ॥ 21॥

tri-vidham narakasyedam dvaram nāshanam ātmanah

kāmaḥ krodhas tathā lobhas tasmād etat trayam tyajet

So, Kama takes the form of Krodha, Krodha takes the form of lobha. Lobha produces Moha, Moha takes the form of Mada. Mada manifests sometimes as Matsarya (envy). Very interesting thing! If somebody’s friend is having better either beauty, physical strength, job, money, or anything better, even better sofa, better children, better car, etc. immediately, this multi-headed cobra raises its head but very silently. We smile, “O My friend! How glad I am to see you.” But inside, we are burning. That is the power of this envy. That is why Swamiji says, “Mind is restless because by nature, it is restless. Then it is drunk with desire. It is possessed by the demon of pride and it is stung with the scorpion of envy”. These are the manifold forms. They could be small,

they could be of middle strength, or they could be 100% strong. What do they do? In Bhagavad Gita Second chapter,

ध्यायतो विषयान्पुंसः सङ्गस्तेषूपजायते ।

सङ्गात्सञ्जायते कामः कामात्क्रोधोऽभिजायते ॥ 62॥

dhyāyato viṣhayān puṁsaḥ saṅgas teṣhūpajāyate

saṅgāt sañjāyate kāmaḥ kāmāt krodho 'bhijāyate

क्रोधाद्भवति सम्मोहः सम्मोहात्स्मृतिविभ्रमः ।

स्मृतिभ्रंशाद् बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात्प्रणश्यति ॥ 63॥

krodhād bhavati sammohaḥ sammohāt smṛiti-vibhramaḥ

smṛiti-bhranśhād buddhi-nāśho buddhi-nāśhāt praṇāśhyati

A seven-fold step to destruction; all because of one primary enemy which is called egotism. So, that is what Mahishasura represents. Briefly, in this second story, it is slightly different which I will point out a little bit later on. There was a demon called Mahishasura. He was a very strong person, very stubborn, of indomitable will and he represents demon (asura means demon), as we see in the sixteenth chapter of Bhagavad Gita - Daivi sampath, asuri sampath). Unfortunately, the Gods represent daivi sampath. But they forgot their daivi nature, became intoxicated with power, position, and luxury like Toynbee points out. When these Romans who conquered everybody became the masters of the world, they became arrogant, forgot their strength, became slaves to luxury, even fruit had to be put into their open mouths. Naturally, they became weak, and these illiterate uncouth hoards, tribes just came and then conquered them very easily. They in turn, became the masters. In turn, the same thing happened to them. Then, other hoards came. What is my point? My point is Mahishasura is extremely strong. But strength is good if it is used properly. But this fellow conquered all the devas. What does it mean? He never practised dharma, he trampled upon dharma and he wanted to do whatever he wanted. He wanted to have the greatest power, position, luxury. He started tormenting everybody. Then, the Gods as usual, very funny, whenever they are trampled down, they go and fall at the feet of Brahma, Shiva, Vishnu, and this time the Gods came together, they pooled their energies and they gave all their powers, and then the Divine Mother sprang. And then, She fought. Of course, the power of Mahishasura, though misused, was also coming from the same Divine Mother. So, "fought" means what? She need not, like a physical person, take a weapon and do it. She just has to withdraw, like how she put Vishnu to sleep, she had also put this Mahishasura to sleep, he became tamasic but ultimately, he lost. "lost" means what? Was he destroyed? Nobody can be destroyed. The soul can

never be destroyed. But the encrustations of Tamas and Rajas can be destroyed. So, that is what happened. The Divine Mother wanted to kill him. There was a battle, and then what happened? This person called Mahishasura came to fight with the Divine Mother. That means he wanted to fight with his own inner potentiality. How could anyone do that? Because we cannot fight against our true nature, however long we might forget it. So, he tried. Then, Divine Mother wanted to kill. As I said, this person was an expert in changing his shape. Then, he gave up his animal nature and became a man.

When Mother cut off his head, he became an elephant. When Mother cut off elephant-head, he became a lion. When the lion's head was cut off, he again appeared in the form of a half-buffalo and the head was a human head. And then, Mother cut off the head. That was the end of the story. That means, multi-headed cobras, all heads have been killed. Even in the last moment, this Mahishasura appears as, his head is human head but the rest of his body is buffalo head. You will see, every time Durga Puja is done, the image of Mahishasura there. What is the symbolism? There are many animals, they have animal heads and they have animal bodies. It is very natural for them to behave like animals. That is the Divine Mother's will. But here are human beings, here are the celestial beings. They forget their celestial nature, humans forget that they are human beings. Outside he will appear as a human being, inside he is nothing but pure animal. In fact, our body is nothing but an animal body. There is absolutely no difference between our body and any animal's body.

āhāra-nidrā-bhaya-maithunaṁ ca

sāmānyam etat paśubhir narāṇām

But there is a vital difference. Within the animals, they have very little discrimination. They have discrimination but it is very confined to only physical survival, propagation of their species. Most often, it ends there. But I also have to add there are certain animals who also are highly developed souls fallen into that state, like Jadabharata. Even when he became a deer, he was completely, fully conscious of what he was, and why he lost that divine stature, and so, next birth, he pretended to be a Jada, a foolish person, an idiotic person. But there are animals who are highly intelligent, who have very well developed viveka and many are also seen to be great spiritual sadhakas in that form so that they will not be bothered by this Coronavirus, bhakta virus, and people's virus, etc. Anyway, ultimately, Mahishasura fights with the Divine Mother, that means there is something very important here. If you are fighting with somebody, whom are you going to think about? Are you going to think about Tom, Dick, and Harry? Or are you going to think about the person with whom you are dueling? You will be completely focussed upon only your opponent? If Mahishasura is fighting with the Divine Mother, it is like a baby got angry and tried to fight with his own mother. Please remember this important analogy - the Mother seems to be angry, she pretends to be angry, and then goes on fighting. After all, if the mother gives one blow, the child may die also. But she pretends that she gives her biggest

blow but the baby is winning. And ultimately, the Mother takes the baby into her lap and then everything becomes absolutely peaceful. That is the most apt analogy. This is not Swami Dayatmananda's analogy. It is there in the Devas' Stuti itself. So, Divine Mother destroys his asuric nature, washes everything of this Mahishasura. That means She converts his tamasic and rajasic ego into pur sattvika ego which Sri Ramakrishna used to call the ego of a child, the ego of a Jnani, the ego of a bhakta, or like Shankaracharya, ego of knowledge - Aham Brahmasmi, I belong to Mother, I am Brahman, Brahma sakti. So, that is the end of the story here. Then, the Devas, they are very happy. This story of Mahishasura continues in the second and third chapters. And at the end of the third chapter, the various manifestations of egotism were discovered, destroyed by the grace (anugraha) of the Divine Mother. And the person realizes, he retains vidya ahamkara - I am Mother's child. I am Brahman. That is the inner symbolism. So, the Devas, the celestial beings, here we should not take celestial beings as Indira, Varuna, Chandra, please be very careful. That state is a different state. We are talking about people like what Bhagavan Krishna describes in the Sixteenth chapter of Bhagavad Gita, Daivi Asura sampathi -

अभयं सत्त्वसंशुद्धिः ज्ञानयोगव्यवस्थितिः।

abhayaṁ sattva-saṁśuddhir jñāna-yoga-vyavasthitih

So, fearlessness and the complete awareness that I belong to God, I am potentially divine, and I am struggling to manifest my divinity, so many spiritual qualities Divine Lord, Bhagavan enumerates in the Sixteenth chapter. And the people who are consciously practising those things, they are called the Daivas. That is what we have to see, not this drunken Indira, Chandra, Varuna. In puranas, you will get so many stories of Indira spoilt many wives of great rishis like Ahalya, etc. So, one has to be careful to separate these people, not mistake them but spiritual people who because of tamas and rajas, they forget God, they fall victim, soon they realize that they have fallen down, go back to the Mother, take refuge in her feet, and she bestows her grace, fights on their behalf and then wins the war for them. And then, they regain their spiritual lustre, they go forward joyfully. Now they know that they belong to the Divine Mother. So, they regained their position means what? Indira who lost his simhasana did not become Indira. The spiritual person who encountered obstruction in the form of unripe ego, in the form of kama, krodha, etc. overcomes them and then continues his spiritual sadhana, those are very near to Brahma dhvara, they obtain Brahmajnana very soon. The whole essence is that do not take pride. Take refuge in the Mother. It is only her grace in the form of sattva guna that can advance us along the spiritual path. If we forget her, she will nevertheless endow us with rajas and tamas and then, we have to struggle a great lot. Now you can recollect how Totapuri Maharaj, the guru of Sri Ramakrishna, forgot the Divine Mother, could not even realize that he progressed and attained Samadhi sheerly through her grace but he did not care to acknowledge it. But in the end, she opened his eyes. Then, he recognized what she is and joyfully went and joined, "My Mother! Sorry for forgetting you. Now I

know who I am, how I progressed, how I attained brahmajnana”. She, who can give brahmajnana can also remove it. That is what we see at the end of this talk, I will try to do that. In the Devi suktam, I can make a person Indira, I can make a person Brahma, or Mahesha or Vishnu. Everything is my divine power. Incidentally, please remember, when God creates, sustains, or destroys in the form of Brahma, Vishnu or Shiva, he does it with the help of his Yogamaya. In other words, it is the Yogamaya who is important for us, like your immediate manager upon whose grace your promotion, your happiness, your comfort in the office lies. So, this is the lesson we have to learn.

At the end of this victory over Mahishasura, in the fourth chapter, Shakradhi stuti, the most wonderful hymn comes. And then, the spiritual aspirants realize that this is the only way for us to retain our spirituality and move forward. Of course, the Divine Mother, that is what she wants. That is what she was waiting for. So, she becomes pleased and says, “Please ask a boon, my children! whatever you want.” Boon means there are no conditions. Then, the Devas, the celestial beings, the spiritual people reply, “O Mother! You have removed our ignorance. You have advanced us in our spiritual path. So, you have done whatever is needed, as a mother does whatever is needed for the baby”. The Mother was so pleased and she said, “No, no no! I want you to ask a boon.” Remember, these are not Indira or Chandra; these are celestial beings, sincere spiritual seekers immediately fall at her feet and say, “O Mother! We want one boon from you.” “What is that boon? There is a possibility that in the future also, sometimes we may stumble because we are babies and fall. And when we realize that we are helpless, then we will remember you. Just we will remember you, smriti matrena, then please come, don’t ask for this and that and other things. We are babies, our brains are small, we cannot do anything, we will only cry, “Ma! Ma!” Just like how Sri Ramakrishna says, a young one of a kitten, wherever the mother keeps it stays. But whenever it is hungry or in danger, it simply says, “Meaw”. And wherever Mother is, comes running and makes it safe. So, just by remembrance, you come and remove all our what-we-call obstacles, enemies, everything. Protect us completely like your babies. And the Mother had granted that boon. So, this is what had happened. Then, we have got a beautiful analogy - Holy Mother says, her commandments are there. Remember two very important commandments: “My Child! Remember always. You have a mother. And I am your Mother, not your earthly mother or anybody who brings you up. I, the Divine Mother, is your real Mother”. It is the first commandment, not suggestion. Commandment means it is the highest truth. Do not touch this particular switch, it carries fifty thousand volt wire - it is not a suggestion, it is a commandment. Similarly, second commandment - “You are my child. Do not forget that you are my child. And live like my child, behave like my child, not the child of a pig or a dog or an animal. You are the child of the Divine Mother, you are my child. Behave throughout life like my child”. That is what we are reminded of this one. So, this is the second story.

Now, we got the third story. I said there is something different from the first story, In the first story, the Divine Mother did not engage in battle. She simply aroused, withdrew from Vishnu who was sleeping.

She is nidra rupena samsthita; she simply withdrew. Vishnu, that is to say, the potential power of each one of us awoke - Uddhishtata! Jagrata!! Prapyavaran nibodatha!! That power awoke and then, it fought with all these obstructive forces and it destroyed them. Very interesting, the demons Madhu and Kaitabha give a boon, surprised and pleased after five thousand years of fight. That means a sadhaka is ready to fight for eternity if necessary. The other part of the mind, the asuric part of the mind was very pleased - Ask a boon. And then, Vishnu, that means our potential positive powers asked, "What else do I want? Let you be killed by me". Then, there was a fight and they got killed. What does this "killed by me" mean? That means you give up your asurica pravritti and join the divided mind; a split personality cannot be functioning properly. It is insanity. But if we want to progress in any field, not only in the spiritual field, we have to join the entirety of our mind. That is called Brahmakara Vritti. There cannot be two opposing, fighting, battling vrittis. That is the meaning of "let the whole mind become one and then progress in spirituality". Success is sure to come. That is called concentration, that is called Samadhi, that is called Brahmakara Vritti.

Now, coming back to the third story - this is a very interesting story. So, what happened? Again, the Devatas were being troubled; the sadhakas were being troubled by two demons. Both were brothers - Shumbha and Nishumbha. They represent Kama and Krodha. That is why I quoted earlier in this very talk,

काम एष क्रोध एष रजोगुणसमुद्भवः ॥

महाशनो महापाप्मा विद्ध्येनमिह वैरिणम् ॥ 37 ॥

kāma eṣha krodha eṣha rajo-guṇa-samudbhavaḥ

mahāśhano mahā-pāpmā viddhyenam iha vairiṇam

They are never satisfied with whatever food we put into their mouths. That means the more desires are fulfilled, the more we will be moving forward. We want more and more like fire that is called Anala. 'Ala' means enough; 'Anala' means not enough. So, even if a billion desires are fulfilled, the mind will never be satisfied. Like fire, when petrol is poured into it, it is not put out but it becomes even more virulent. So, this Shubha and Nishumbha (Kama and Krodha) are great obstructions. So, they conquered the devas. As usual, the Devas were thrown out, and they took refuge again in the Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara in the Puranas, here in the Divine Mother. They remembered, "Last time when She asked us to ask for a boon, we had asked 'O Mother! Whenever we remember you, please come'. So, let us remember". So, they prepared for the Himalayas and they made a wonderful hymn that says, "O Mother! You promised that whenever we remember you, you come running and help us".

Immediately, the Mother came and said, "Do not worry! I am going to help you". What did She do? This time, She became what is called Ambika. She became the Miss Universe, the most beautiful, desirable beauty of the entire universe, not only of earth but of the fourteen lokas. And then, she sat on a high place where nobody could miss her. With her terrible attractive power, each shaking step destroys, O Mother Kali! a world for e'er, as Swami Vivekananda hymns in "Kali, the Mother!". So, the Mother was sitting where She could be noticed and the servants of Shumbha and Nishumbha instantaneously noticed her, struck dumb by her beauty and they went and reported that such a beautiful lady is there, "You conquered all the Devas and you snatched away all their best things. You are the greatest emperors. You deserve this Miss Universe". Then, immediately go and convey the message that we are the greatest people, "You are the most beautiful lady in the whole world. It is but proper that you should come and marry. You choose either me or my brother because we love each other". So, this fellow came and he said very sleekshnaya, mathuraya, ghee and butter would not melt in their mouths "Master took notice of you and you have been given a choice that you can marry either of them". She says, "Oh! How grateful fortune!! How fortunate I am?! So, these greatest emperors want me? That is what exactly I also want". She was deliberately producing the sexual desire in them. They already have Kama but she was inflaming them so that that will be the destruction of both of them. "I am definitely ready but you know, women are very stupid. When I was young, when I was even more stupid than I am now, I took a vow, only a person who could fight with me and conquer me, I will only marry that person" The servant was aghast! "Is it ever possible, O lady?! They conquered the whole world, all the Gods and you are abhala (na bhala - helpless) and you are a woman and you are alone". She said, "Yes, yes yes. You are right. But you know, as you see, they are very powerful! All they need to do is come in front of me and stand, I will fall down and let them carry. End of the story." This fellow says, "What are you talking about? You do not know. If you do not come respectfully, we will drag you by your hair - kesha karshna nirduta gaurava ma gamishyasi. She said a hundred times, "I was foolish. I was foolish" to make this fellow remember, to go and report and then let him do whatever he likes. Then he said, "Simple lady, young lady, alone. What can she do?" But as soon as this fellows came, humkarenaiva basmasatkrtiH. Simply, "hum" she said and they all reduced to ashes. By that time, Shumbha and Nishumbha realized this is not such a simple lady but they lost all common sense. So, they sent many people. To cut the story short, they went on sending first, a little bit smaller chip, then a middle sized chip, then finally they sent somebody. Who was that somebody? He was called Rakthabeeja. This third story is a very symbolic story. What is Rakthabeeja? He is an asura that means his body is full of nothing but seeds of blood. If one drop of blood anybody sheds by beating him or cutting him, and if it touches the earth, instantaneously another demon will arise equivalent to him, in size, power, in intelligence, in valor, and in everything. First, the Divine Mother goes on beating him black and blue and so much blood has fallen. And thousands and thousands of asuras sprang from there. Now, she had to fight not with one but with so many. Then, the devas become very despondent but the

Divine Mother called Mother Kali who came out of Ambika's body, and said, "Kali! You stretch your tongue. I am going to beat him. Whatever blood falls, just drink". That is why we see Mother Kali with outstretched tongue, trying to hold. Naturally, he could not shed any blood, blood was coming but it was all being taken in by Mother Kali. Finally, NiraktaH, without any blood, falls down and that is how he dies. What is the symbolism? Bheeja means seed. Rakthabeeja - here rakta means kama. You fulfill one desire, and that desire as soon as it is fulfilled, comes into contact with an object (that is called the Earth), immediately equivalent if not strong desire, second desire comes, third desire comes, fourth and fifth desire come. For example, I want to eat sweet. The moment the sweet touches my tongue, immediately another desire comes, "This sweet is wonderful. I want it more". Second, "This sweet is most marvelous but not to get monotonous or bored, I want a slightly different sweet in taste, in flavor and in many other things (composition)". So, like that endless through the pancha indriyas. That is why we say, pancha pandavas are five sense organs. And the hundred kauravas are these innumerable objects of senses. Life is a constant fight between sense organs and our mind which wants to conquer the five sense organs. So, this is a fight between the sense organs and the sense objects. So, the Rakthabeeja, that means if we surrender to Mother, Mother comes and destroys all the desires except one desire. What is that? I want to be your child. So, Rakthabeeja falls; after that Shumbha dies, after that Nishumbha also dies. Then, in the eleventh chapter, the Devas who were freed completely, they go on doing the most marvelous stuti. So, this is how the three stories and four hymns will come. Now, the important thing is Shumbha and Nishumbha. What were they? As I mentioned, they are nothing but manifestations of Ego, that is to say Kama and Krodha.

Now, let us connect the three stories. In the first story, Madhu - Kaitabha means we are subject to all the dualities. We are living an animal life that is killing our inner potentiality. But in the second story, if we are somehow able to kill, "I am a great conqueror. I killed, I am a master of my own body and mind". This Ahamkara without any obstruction, now by Divine Mother's grace, but it does not understand the grace, it forgets the Mother, and it becomes terribly egotistic and displaying itself, manifesting itself in Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Moha, Mada, Matsarya and all its myriad what-we-call relatives, small desire, big desire, etc. Then, of all these desires, the most potent dangerous desires are called Kama and Krodha. Kamayasha Krodhyasha rajoguna samudbhavah

In the first story, it was Tamas that overpowered. In the second story, it was Rajas which overpowered the vidya-ahamkara. In the third story, it is the manifestation of Kama and Krodha. It is unquenchable. Here also, Shumbha and Nishumbha represent these things. If they can be killed, Tamas was killed, Rajas was killed, and manifestations of Rajas were killed. What remains? Only Sattva guna. That is the story we have to remember. So, these were killed and then, the devas, as I mentioned, those who are endowed with Daivi sampath, they became free to pursue their spiritual life

and joyfully, they went forward. But for all this, again and again we have to remember, we have to surrender. Sarva mangalye etc.

Now, the end of the story comes. This was the story, do not forget - Sumedha was narrating to the King Suradha and the Vaishya Samadhi. He narrated these three stories along with the four stotras. And then, he said, "You are remembering those who acted like your deadliest enemies, kicked you out so that they can enjoy your hard earned power, position, riches, etc. And that is our attachment to our family members. Not only enemies but family members, etc." Do we have attachment to enemies? Yes. Because whomsoever you remember more, that is called attachment. Whom do you remember more? Your friends or enemies? That is the symbolism. Then, Mahamaya is the cause for this avidya maya. Again, Mahamaya is the cause for Vidya maya. "O King! O Vaishya!! Take refuge" Then, these three people go and practise intense devotion in the form of self-surrender to the Divine Mother for three years. They even offer blood from their own body. That means, tanu, mana, dhana, everything they offer to the Divine Mother. Then, pratyaksham praha chandika - The Divine Mother appears and then says, "I am very pleased with you. So, now what boons do you want?". And then the King represents what is called a lower intelligence. He has mind control, surrender to the Divine Mother but still desires for them. He says, "I have lost the kingdom. I would like to regain my lost kingdom!" Divine Mother says, "Okay My Child! You will also come to me later on. But for the present, you have to play with these toys, in a few days, you will regain your kingdom. Next birth, you will be the greatest king. You will become Manu". So, that was how the Divine Mother pleased her one child. But Vaishya was a higher type of mind. He was a Jignyasu. He wanted to become a Jnani. As soon as Mother asked, he said, "Give me that knowledge by which I will have to never again be re-born". Of course, it was Mother's will only, She only appeared in the form of Jignya Sattva. And she gladly fulfills that, "You will never be re-born again. Because you will know that you and me are not different at all." So, that is the inner symbolism of this most wonderful, I only mentioned in the briefest way possible. Now, we have to resume.

Now, we will briefly talk about the four hymns. In the first hymn, Brahma

Tvam Swaha Tvam Swadha Tvam Hi Vasatkarah Svaratmika

The very utterance I am able to do because you are manifesting through my throat in the form of this Swara. And whatever is offered to Gods or to Pitr purushas or to anybody else, you are the one manifesting as Gods, you are manifesting as requestor or beggar, you are manifesting as the giver and you are only playing in both forms.

Sudha tvam akshare nithye tridha maatraatmika sthita

Tvam-Eva Sandhyaa Saavitrii Tvam Devi Jananii Paraa

All the Brahmanas do Sandhya-vandhana three times a day as Savitri, Sandhya, etc. and that is nothing but Gayatri, Sandhya, Savitri and all the three forms are nothing but yourself.

Tvayaitad-Dhaaryate Vishvam

This entire universe is created by you, maintained by you and again withdrawn into you:

tvayaitaddhaaryatE vishvaM tvayaitat sRRijyatE jagat|

tvayaitat paalyatE dEvi tvamatsyantE ca sarvadaa

You are Maha Vidya, Maha Maya, Maha Medha, Maha smriti. You are the Sri, you are the Ishwari. You are Hri, you are buddhi, you are lajja, you are pushti, you are thusti, you are shanti, you are kshanti. And if in anybody, whatever power is manifested, that is none other than you, excepting you. And you put Vishnu, Brahma, Shiva to sleep. You also make them awaken. It is you who controls Brahma, Vishnu, Maheshwara. And this entire universe came from them, and maintained by them. Therefore, you are the Adhi-kartri. That is the essence of the Brahma Stuti. Then, fourth adhyaya we come:

Shakradayah - that means Indira and others as I mentioned, do not take those fellows, they are sincere spiritual people.

tāṃ tuṣṭuvuḥ praṇatinamraśirōdharāṃsā

Bowing down, they hymned the Mother. What were they saying? I will only take the very important slokas:

mōkṣārthibhirmunibhirastasamastadōṣai

rvidyā'si sā bhagavatī paramā hi dēvi

Those who are seeking dharma, artha, kama or moksha, they all have to fall at your feet. You are the only giver in the form of Vishnu, Brahma or Shiva. You are manifesting through them. So, you are everything, "Oh Mother! Please protect us". Then, Mother says, "What do you want?" So, "you have done everything. Oh Mother, but if you have to give...". This is a wonderful sloka:

samsmrta samsmrta tvam no him sethaaparamapadaa

Whenever we remember you, please come. That is what Mother granted. That is what I mentioned about Holy Mother. Then, this third hymn occurs in the Fifth Chapter; Second hymn occurs in the Fourth chapter. So, the Devas said, "Mother has given us. So, let us remember." So, they go to the Himalayas and remember. That is where we get the Divine Mother, they are hymning, "You are manifesting in at least twenty-three forms. Therefore, namastasyai namastasyai namastasyai namo namah.

Ya devi sarva bhuteshu chetana, vidya, buddhi, lajja, kshanti, shama, chetana, matru roopena, daya roopena, all the qualities that we see, including branthi roopena, any thought that comes in anybody's mind is nothing but the manifestation of the Divine Mother. Then, ultimately, we come to the fourth hymn that occurs in the entire Eleventh Chapter. After Shumbha, Nishumbha, everybody was killed,

Devi Prapanna-[A]arti-Hare Prasiida

Prasiida Maatar-Jagato-[A]khillasya |

Prasiida Vishve[a-Ii]shvari Paahi Vishvam

Tvam-Iishvarii Devi Caraa-Carasya

Then, an interesting thing comes here. The Divine Mother says, "My children, remember me and I will come and save you". But there is something very interesting here. The Divine Mother says, "My Children! always be very very alert, cautious, always be careful because if your ahamkara peeps out, then you will be destroyed". Then, Mother, you have killed Madhu-Kaitabha, you killed Mahishasura, you killed Shumbha and Nishumbha. Will there be anymore? She laughed and said (it is not there in the Devi Mahatmyam, I'm describing it, adding a little bit masala), "Children, this world will never change. the world will always be a mixture of good and evil, dharma and adharma, devas and asuras, daivi sampath and asuri sampath will be there. In the future also, I will have to come again and again and again. I will be named as Bhima Devi, Durga devi and so many Brahmareti, and all these things I have to save". This is exactly the idea we get in the Bhagavad Gita Chapter 4,

Yada yada hi dharmasya...

If one God incarnates, corrects and brings the balance, that is not the eternal solution. Again, adharma will increase, dharma will go down, this play like a Brahma chakra goes up and down, up and down. Then, what is the way out? Those who are awakened take refuge in the Mother, and then they will get out of this Brahma Chakra. For them, there will be no more re-birth. So, the entire essence is take refuge in the Divine Mother. This is the only way. That is exactly what Sri Ramakrishna told all of us.

Then, I will briefly mention Devi Suktam. It is quite a big and tough hymn. Sukta means 'Su-ukta' (well-composed). Sri Sukta, Narayana Sukta, Purusha Sukta, Devi Sukta, Nakshatra Sukta, Navagraha Sukta, so many suktas are there. It goes like this..

Aham rudre-bhir vasu-bhish charami aham adityeir uta visvadevaih

Aham mitra-varuno bha bi-bharmi aham indra-agni aham asvino bha

Yam kamaye tam tam ugram krunomi tam brahmanam tam rusim tam su-medham

The essence of what I have just now quoted is: I create Rudra, I create Vishnu, I create Vishwadeva, I create Adhityas, I create Mitra, Varuna, I sustain them, I destroy them, I manifest in the form of Agni devata or Aswini devatas. But the most important point is **yam yam kamaye**, upon whomsoever I wish to bestow my grace, **tam tam**, that person **ugram krunomi**, I will make him a ferocious person, powerful personality, or even a devil. So, asuras are also the creation of the Divine Mother only. That is her play. But **tam brahmanam**, I will make him Vishnu, Brahma, Maheswara, I will give him Moksha, I will make him Brahma; **tam rusim**, I will make him one of the greatest rishis, **tam sumedham**, I will make him the most intelligent person in the world, echoing the Gayatri mantra, **tat saavidurva renyam pargo devasya dhi mahi dhiyo yonah prachodayat** (I drive their intellects, make them whatever I want)

isvarah sarva-bhutanam

hrd-dese 'rjuna tisthati

bhramayan sarva-bhutani

yantra rudhani mayaya

I play with this entire universe, where Bhagavan Krishna says, Ishwarah. Here Mother says, "I make everybody" and that is why the famous Bengali song,

Shokoli Tomari Iccha

Iccha-Moyi Tara Tumi

Tomar Kormo Tumi Koro Maa

Loke Bole Kori Ami

O Mother! The whole universe is run by your will but people not knowing, they think we are running the world. There also, he says:

Kare Dao Ma Bramha-Podo

Kare Koro Adhogami

Some people you elevate to the position of Brahma, give Brahma Jnana, some people you push them by your will. But even when Mother pushes somebody down, she never forgets that it is her own child and her pushing down the child is only a play of her. That is why all these Asuras and Devas, it is a Divine play (Brahma Leela). It is a beautiful leela. And all devotees must participate in that leela. Let happiness come, it is Mother's will. Let unhappiness come, let Mother play with this in whatever way she likes. That is what Mahapurush Maharaj, Swami Shivanandaji used to say, "I do not know why Sri Ramakrishna has kept this old body. This drum has become a very HOLY drum, HOLY means very decrypt, full of diseases, I am just making pun. HOLY means so many defects are there. He is playing with this broken drum. Let His will be done. I am very happy to be beaten by whatever". Ultimately, that is the highest spiritual

state, when we can say, “O Mother! Everything is Thy will, Do whatever you like. I know I am your child. I am quite happy, you kept me in bliss”. So, this is a small bit of understanding I have, that I have shared with you. Let the Divine Mother bless us all!

Om Jananim Sāradam devim Rāmakrishnam jagadgurum |

Pādapadme tayoh shritvā pranamāmi muhurmuhuh ||

May Sri Rāmakrishna, Holy Mother and Swāmi Vivekānanda bless us all with Bhakti.