

Sri Datta Vijayananda Teertha Swamiji
Benedictory message

The devotees of the United States have proven with conviction the immense power inherent in the words of Sadguru, the impossible task it can achieve, and the intense transformation it can create. During his visit to Dallas this past year, His Holiness Sri Swamiji had mentioned that it would please him if at least 18 children would memorize within a year all the 700 verses of the Bhagavad Gita.

It gives me indescribable joy to learn that upon that one word which dropped from the lips of Sadguru, over 40 children have already memorized the entire Bhagavad Gita.

Bhagavad Gita is a universally beneficial scripture relevant to all, without distinction of caste, creed, religion, or age. It serves as a beacon of light to everyone, regardless of time, place, or circumstance. It is Guru in the form of letters, which raise one from being human to becoming divine. It is a charm that instills dedication to duty and transforms one into a Karma Yogi. It is an exemplary work that stands as a witness to the constant battle raging in life between good and evil, and ever guarantees the victory of virtue.

Why did Lord Krishna specifically choose as His setting, the region of Kurukshetra for teaching the Bhagavad Gita to Arjuna? There is a popular folklore in northern India, which explains this. This tale spells out why Sri Krishna Paramatma chose to teach the world this highest philosophy.

The battle between Kauravas and Pandavas was fixed. To accommodate such a great war, a huge tract extending over hundreds, nay thousands of acres of land was required. The task of identifying such a field for combat was assigned to Sri Krishna. Sri Krishna set out on his chariot, looking for an appropriate site. As he neared the present day Kurukshetra, he felt a little tired. He stopped the chariot, fed the horses, and rested in the shade of a tree. The area was an agricultural land.

It was midday. The sun was spitting fire overhead. At a distance, Krishna saw a farmer ploughing his field. He appeared exhausted. A short distance from him, the farmer's wife was preparing a meal for the farmer. Their young child played nearby. Sri Krishna was gazing at the scene. Suddenly a black cobra speedily approached, stung the child, and slithered away. It was a dreadfully venomous snake. Within moments the venom spread, the child's body turned black, his mouth foamed, and he died. The child's parents were unaware of the incident. Sri Krishna could not intervene since everything was over within seconds. He felt curious to see how the situation would pan out.

The farmer's wife placed the meal in the basket and looked for her son. She saw the dead child. The mother suppressed her sorrow, closed her eyes for a moment, and internally surveyed the situation. She thought, "If I wail now, my husband will know

that the child is dead. He is exhausted from toiling in the field. Once he learns of the dead child, he will not eat for days. That will jeopardize his life. It is best that I do not weep now. I will feed my husband first, before allowing the grief overtake me." Thus firmly resolve, the woman placed the basket of food upon her head, and walked towards the father.

Curiosity was kindled in Sri Krishna, who has been witnessing the scene unfold. The farmer's wife announced to her husband that the meal was ready. The farmer washed up and approached the wife, asking her to bring the child so that the three of them could eat together. The wife suppressed her grief with difficulty and told him that he was busy playing and would not come, and that she had already fed the child. The farmer, unaware that his child was dead, ate a hearty meal, washed his hands and feet, and settled down to take the nap he deserved. After a while, he awoke to the pitiful cries of a woman. He opened his eyes and found his wife weeping holding their dead son. The farmer was beside himself with grief and bawled loudly, making his lament heard in all directions.

Sri Krishna Paramatma stirred from his spot. Appreciative of the wife's astute adherence to duty, he removed the venom from the child's body and brought him back to life.

During an unimaginable crisis, this sacred place prompted the woman to follow her duty. Therefore, Sri Krishna divined that this was the appropriate location for the teaching of the Bhagavad Gita. He believed that the upadesha given at Kurukshetra would establish Dharma in the hearts of men for eons to come and that his precepts would forever be preserved on earth. It is for this reason, using Arjuna as his excuse, Bhagavan Sri Krishna taught the world Bhagavad Gita at this sanctified spot now as Kurukshetra.

If one delves deeply into the essence of this story, one will comprehend the magnificence of the Bhagavad Gita and the benefits that mankind derives from this study.

I pray that all the children who have learned the Bhagavad Gita, the elders who have taught it, and the parents who gave their support should forever receive the blessings of Sadguru Sri Sri Sri Ganapathy Sachchidananda Swamiji, who is none other than the Lord Sri Krishna himself.

Krishnam Vande Jagadgurum
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Sri Datta Narayana Smaranam
Sri Datta Vijayananda Teertha Swamiji