



## SWAMIJI ANSWERS

**Q) Desire is said to be the greatest impediment to one's spiritual advancement. Ka:ma de:va is supposed to be the causer of the desires in all the beings. In that case why should Ka:ma de:va be referred to as a de:va i.e. Demigod, instead of mentioning him as a demon?**

H.H.) Desires are of two kinds. They are material desires and spiritual desires. The material desires entangle us in the bonds of karma. That leads to our transmigration through bodies of various species according to our karma. The material desires are binding. Whereas the spiritual desires i.e. the desire to attain the Lord frees us from all sorts of miseries and leads us to liberation from, this hellish material existence and the miserably cycle of birth and death. The A:lvars had such spiritual desires. Such desire is called as A:thma Ka:ma. The *Bruhada:ranyaka* Upanishad says "aka:mo: a:pthaka:mo: va: a:thma ka:ma uda:radhi:h." which means an a:thma ka:mi i.e. one who desires to attain the Supreme Lord is definitely greater than a aka:mi (i.e. one who has no desires) and a a:pthaka:mi (one whose every desire is fulfilled). Even the desire to attain the Supreme Lord arises by the mercy of Kama deva, hence he is called as a demigod and not as a demon.

**Q) Could you please tell us the means to attain happiness, bliss, good fortune, prosperity and selfless service to the Supreme Lord?**

H.H.) If you are determined to attain all these read the 8<sup>th</sup> chapter of Bhagavad Gita. The Supreme Lord Krishna has revealed the means to achieve all the above mentioned. If you can strictly follow the instructions mentioned by the Lord in that chapter you will definitely attain all that is desired by you.

**Q) I am a businessman and I am interested in spiritualism. I have been**

**studying the philosophical books of different spiritual institutions from the past few days. Saints of different schools of Indian philosophical thought advocate various Manthras and Sadhanas as a means to attain liberation. All of them claim their path to be the most efficacious and seem to establish the inadequacy of the philosophy or the means to liberation, adopted by the other schools of thought. This is leading to confusion and contradictions. As a layman and as a neophyte I am totally confused and due to this I am unable to follow any particular school of thought or practice any particular sadhana. Could you please tell me the means to overcome my confusion?**

H.H.) You are fortunate, as the Supreme Lord has bestowed the thirst for spiritual knowledge in you. If one reads the philosophy of the different schools without the help of a good Guru and without being well-read in any particular school of thought one naturally tends to get confused. It is impossible to learn philosophy correctly or to practice ones spiritual life properly by merely studying spiritual books. One has to take shelter of a Spiritual Master, even Lord Krishna has said the same to Arjuna in the 34<sup>th</sup> verse of the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter of Bhagavad Gita. That is the first step in one's spiritual life. Hence it is better to seek the shelter of a bonafide Spiritual Master.

Bhagavad Ramanuja was the first a:cha:rya to successfully refute the philosophy of the Ma:ya:va:dis i.e. the atheists and to establish a comprehensive school of theistic thought. All the other bhakti cults have their source in His philosophy. So our advice to you is that you should approach a Spiritual Master who talks about the reality of God, reality of yourself other than God and also the reality of the World (The Nature) around you, who accepts that all the feelings and emotions of humanbeings are also totally true. Then proceed.

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