

## **MUSICAL SAINTS OF INDIA**

### **[EXCERPTS FROM A MUSICAL DISCOURSE ON BHAKTA JAYADEVA & GITA GOVINDAM]**

More than a billion followers of this Divine Way of Life desire and aspire to follow this ancient form of self-discipline leading to self-unfoldment. The four VedAs, the 108 Upanishads, 108 PurANAs, BrahmasutrA, Bhagavad-GIta, the two great epics rAmAyaNa and MahAbhArata and a host of divine works, more often than not, tend to baffle the uninitiated. The past and, the (regrettably) continuing attempts, by a few, of dividing the large SanAtana Dharma family, with archaic, wrong and opportunistic interpretations of the caste system [which was originally formulated by the great seers for effective functioning of the society, more as a tool for effective division of labor], and erroneous (mis) interpretation of varnAshrama dharma [primarily ordained for orderly evolution and for exhausting of the vAsanAs to reach the goal of self realization by evolving through the various stages of a man's life] were all, to some extent responsible in pushing many an ignorant and oppressed members of this great family unto the fold of a few fanatics of other religions promising 'recognition and respect' by conversion.

Contextually, when Kali Yuga began, the Nitya Suris, the permanent sevaks in the heavenly abode, questioned the Lord Supreme as to a solution to stem up from the deterioration in Dharma. He comforted their angst by extolling that He would make things easier for ordinary mortals to help in their attempts at Self-Realization and will offer them a very simple path to become one with HIM. Of the nine types of Bhakti enunciated in the BhAgavatam, the finest and simplest, in the words of the Lord, was and is 'nAma Sankeertanam'. He said He would facilitate that easy sAdhana and propagate it by taking several incarnations in the form of musical saints and seers. In my earlier sankeertanams, I have given brief narratives on this aspect, as also on the mythical beliefs and stories of the dialogues between KrishNA and NARada, Sukha Brahman and King Parikshit and a host of others, prompting all of them to request the Lord that they too would like to be re-born as mortals to be with the Lord Supreme and to mix among the weak and frail to take them to the path of the Sadhana (nAma

Sankeertanam). Due to paucity of time, I would like to jump to our topic for the day.

Sri Veda VyAsa, the divine writer of MahA BhArata and Srimad BhAgavatam was not content to remain in the heavenly abode and requested the Great Lord that he would like to be born as a mortal with the vAsana or memory of the Lord supreme specifically to sing His praise in the most important of the Nava rasas, the SringAra Rasa. Rasa is literally the Taste or Flavor of something. I will come to this subject later when we talk of Jayadeva's mahAKAvyam, the legendary gIta Govindam otherwise known as Kavi Prabandham. Some of the meanings of the sanskrit word Prabandham are 'a continued narrative or discourse' or 'any poetical composition or literary work'.

VyAsa took three births, the first in 12<sup>th</sup> century, as Bhakta Jayadeva and offered to mankind the immortal *gIta Govindam*, a SringAra MahAKAvyam, highlighting Premabhakti to the Supreme Lord KrishNA. It is believed to be the brief rainbow of BhAgavatam in 24 Ashtapadis (each prabandham or song with eight stanzas, although some of them have less or more than 8 stanzas). Mythical belief entertains that VyAsa was born again in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, as MahA VidwAn Kshetrayya or Kshetragnya and reportedly composed about 24,000 padams/songs in praise of Lord KrishNA in SringAra mode; and once again, as YatirAja NArAyaNa Teertha in the 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century and offered the immortal *KrishNAleela Tarangini* once again on KrishNA and mostly his sringAra leela. There is a little bit of controversy whether Kshetrayya was first or NArAyaNa teertha preceded him. It is somewhat irrelevant at this level. This part is more mythological than historical. Let us look at the immortal work *GIta Govindam* and see the published life history of Jayadeva, a little later.

Jayadeva's dramatic lyrical poem *gIta Govindam* is a unique work in Indian literature and one of the finest sources of religious inspiration in medieval and contemporary Vaishnavism. Despite its origin in eastern India, it spread throughout India within the next few centuries, first quoted in temple inscriptions in Gujarat, far west, within a century. They form part of the most important devotional music, sankeertanam, in Gujarat, Orissa, Bengal and the four southern states in India. Rajput paintings, and Kerala

dance forms were inspired by gIta Govindam as early as in sixteenth century. Critical acclaim of this mahA KaVya has been very high with thousands of scholars and commentators globally, barring a rare exceptional criticism by a 17<sup>th</sup> century esthetician Jagannatha in his 'RasagangAdhara' condemning the kAvya as nothing more than erotic expressions of two people in love.

Most of the interpretations from scholars and saints in the sankeertana {Bhakti} tradition emphasize that the frank eroticism is not simply the love between a gopi called Radhika and the cow herd KrishNA but it is an allegory of the human soul's love, JeevAtmA's pining, for, ParamAtman, the Supreme Lord God. Learned and popular audiences throughout the world have placed this poetry at a pedestal appreciating it as the emotional lyricism in variations on the theme of separated lovers' passion.

Rabindranath Tagore, in his gItanjali, verse 73, wrote:

*"Deliverance is not for me in renunciation; I feel the embrace of freedom in a thousand bonds of delight"*

The renowned Goethe wrote in 1802 on the German commentary and rendition of gIta Govindam by Van Dalberg, "what struck me as remarkable are the extremely varied motives by which an extremely simple subject is made endless". Hundreds of global commentaries, treatises by great Indian scholars and spiritual masters and admired notations by 'orthodox' musicians have all showered nothing but praise to this compendium of 24 songs. Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, the doyen of the Carnatic music system, wrote '.....sung in the temples of Kerala as part of daily worship, gIta Govindam is considered by Hindus as the devotional poetry of the highest order'.

The three states in India, which use this MahA KAvyam lot more than the rest of the world, are Orissa, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. The essential aspect of Orissi (otherwise known as Odissi) dance form and the regular prayer offerings to Lord Jagannatha of Puri are from gIta Govindam. Daily prayer recitals in most of the Vaishnavite temples of Kerala and Kathakali dance performances are based on GIta Govindam. The most important element of

Bhagavan Nama sankeertanam and lyrics for RAdhA Kalyana Paddhati (or tradition) in Tamilnadu are derived from this immortal lyrical masterpiece.

It is true that the literal translation of the magnum opus, gIta Govindam, from Sanskrit to other language versions, can somewhat embarrass a prudish audience. The Rasa of a verse, song or dramatic scene or a musical performance is the flavor of the pervading emotion - **SthAyiBhAva**. Sanskrit poets and critics alike came to realize the unique power and esthetic potential of intimate passion (**ratiBhAva**) in the aspects of pain and pleasure. The mood that emerges from passion was expressed in the antithetical modes of 'separation' (**VipralambhasringAra**) and 'union or consummation' (**sambhogasringAra**). To experience this mood in the interplay of its two modes was considered the esthetic joy. Jayadeva created the religiously potent atmosphere of the GIta Govindam by exploring the poignant mood of separation within the broader play of divine passion in consummation. Passion is subject to subtle interpretation and is transformed into erotic mood when a poet distills essential qualities from the confusion of spontaneous emotion and then patterns them according to universalizing rules of composition. The theorists dictated that the gestures exposing a character's mental states must be subtle, expressive to arouse a sensitive audience but never so crudely detailed that they stimulate wanton desire. This restraint, practiced by MahAkavis, functions to make potentially erotic and even pornographic subject matter the material for esthetic and religious experience. The discipline of esthetic perception is a way to enjoy KrishNA's graceful love. Each signature verse of Jayadeva is a variation on the idea that the emotional states of Radhika (the longing soul - the JeevAtma) and KrishNA (the ultimate One - the ParaAtma) have constant power over one another through the medium of the poet's lyrical presentation.

There is no need to spend the limited time expounding the mythical evolution and identity of the Cosmic Cowherd Lover KrishNA. To Jayadeva, KrishNA or Kesava (the long haired one, also known as the destroyer of Kesi, the demon who came as a horse) is none else than the Supreme Lord Vishnu. That is why he begins with the magnum opus 'DasAvatAra Ashtapadi, which, however, has 11 stanzas - ten of them describing the ten incarnations, which include the Haladhara, the plowman

Balarama, and the Buddha, the enlightened one and not KrishNA as an avatAram! The refrain in that song is 'KesavAdruta meena sareera or Buddha sareera et al., and KrishNA was not treated as an incarnation but as the Creator with Cosmic Permanence.

Who is RAdhA or Radhika as Jayadeva calls her? Just a cow-herdess or gopika or gopi and why the special mention? In Vedic and PurAnic literature, RAdhAs and other forms of the root >rAdh have meaning of 'perfection', 'success' and even 'wealth'. Lord of Success, Indra was referred to as 'RAdhAspati'. Other references to Lord Mahavishnu as the Lord of Success and freely used by Jayadeva as 'Jaya Jayadeva Hare' - the victorious Hari, and 'RAdhAspati' are found in many places in astral mythology. The word RAdhA occurs in the Atharva Veda, Taittiriya BrAhmana and Taittiriya Samhita.

*Charlotte Vaudeville*, a long time admirer and researcher of BhAgavatam, in her article 'Evolution of Love Symbolism in Bhagavatism' draws parallel to Nappinnai, appearing in GodhA's magnum opus ThiruppAvai and also in NammAlwar's references to Nappinnani, the daughter-in-law of Nandagopa. Nappinnai is believed to be the source of RAdhA's conception in PrAkrit and Sanskrit literature although their characteristic relations with KrishNA are different. In the ritual dance called Kuravai, KrishNA dances with his wife Nappinnai while KrishNA's relationship with RAdhA is a secret, erotic temporary one.

*Sattasayee* of Hala (7<sup>th</sup> c), *Gowhava* of VAKpati (early 8<sup>th</sup> c), *VenisamhAra* of Bhatta NArAyaNa (800 AD), *DhwanyAlokalochana* of Abhinavagupta (10<sup>th</sup> c) *KAvyamImAmsa* of Rajasekara (late 9<sup>th</sup> c), *Damayanti katha* (10<sup>th</sup> c) and *Yasastilaka Champukavya* (AD 959) all make references to RAdhA and KrishNA well before Jayadeva's time.

There are elaborate references to RAdhA in Brahmavaivarta and Padma PurANAs and the 'Chaitanya' movement strongly follows these purANAs to establish RadhA as the consort of Lord KrishNA, the ParamAtman.

To complement KrishNA's role as the NAYaka and the embodiment of erotic mood - SringAra murtimAn, RAdhA is the dramatic heroine -

Nayika and is identified with passion - Rati - the emotion or BhAva through which erotic mood - sringAra rasa develops. She is the medium which provides the emotional means for a sympathetic audience - rasikajana - to enjoy the extraordinary experience of KrishNA's springtime love. Through her suffering during KrishNA's desertion, partly due to her ego {or ahankaram} and partly due to NAYaka's hard-to-get routine, as described by her to her friend Sakhi and by Sakhi to KrishNA and KrishNA to Sakhi, RAdhA is transformed into a powerful consort, appropriate to share KrishNA's Love.

*Let us hold it here and transform the whole version into one of spiritual Love, Prema Bhakti. Without Rati and Rasa, there is no creation, no charm, and no attempt to exhaust the vasanas to reach the ParamAtman and to attain the ultimate Union. Sakhi, the friend, helps the Nayakis, all of us, to immerse ourselves unto the Supreme NAYaka. All JIvAtmann longing for the union with the ParamAtman require the most important medium, Guru or Satguru. Sakhi fulfills the role here.*

This is the message beautifully portrayed by Jayadeva, VyAsa re-born, in this KAvyam. If a prudish dispensation or an examination with pre-conceived notions, proffered by ego, reduces this greatest philosophy into a pornographic portrayal, the loss is not that of the creator of this monumental work but that of the interpreter.

Having said that, a detailed and honest explanation of the literal translation of this great sringAra mahaKAvyam, to a mixed audience such as this, is like walking on the edge of a sharp sword - AsidhArAvratam. A passing spiritual interpretation with sprinkles of the sringAra references might still accomplish the tall task. KrishNA and RAdhA are referred to by the standard forms of address for a dramatic hero and heroine. Most of the epithets can be transformed to philosophical modes.

The form of the gIta Govinda defies categorization in any classical genre of Sanskrit literature. The lyricism and dramatic movement of the poem may be based on some non-classical form, but the complex structures Jayadeva uses, to integrate religious, erotic, and esthetic meaning, suggest that his inspiration for the Poem came from KAlidAsa's classical epics

KumArasambhava and Meghadoota. GIta Govindam is best characterized as a dramatic lyrical poem. It is expressed as a cycle of songs interspersed with recitative metrical forms of classical Kavya verses functioning as independent grammatical and esthetic entities. Some of the descriptive verses stand out as exquisite paintings that stand on their own. Some contain dense descriptions and complex ideas. AlamkAra or classical ornamentation is used to expand meaning. Alliterations (anuprAsa) and end-rhymes (antAnuprAsa) occur occasionally. Subtle forms of metaphor known as Upama (for which KAlidAsa was well known - UpamA KAlidAsasya, Bharaver arthagowravam) are sprinkled through out. It would not be incorrect if we were to assert that Jayadeva was the first over the last 9 centuries to have set contrasting metrical patterns, aksharAvritta (syllabic meter) and tAlavritta (two types of moric meter) with mAtrAs (beats) with GaNAs (measures such as four beats chatur gana etc.). The inscriptions in many parts of India even denote that he set them to then prevalent RAgAs and the tAlams for these 24 exquisitely beautiful songs. In fact, GIta Govindam pre-dated SangIta RatnAkaram by about two centuries!

As I move along, attempting to sing these 24 Ashtapadis, I shall briefly mention the context and summary meaning at the commencement of each ashtapadi, and very briefly touch upon some beautiful passages, for fear of keeping a tab on the clock and also that I walk on fire between the actual meaning or graphic description of the romantic mood and the philosophical interpretation for this spiritual audience.

Jayadeva's life history would require at least several hours of elaboration as it is sprinkled with interesting and spicy anecdotes. Here again, I am constrained and would limit this to an overview. There are several sources, many contradicting each other rather than complementing one another.

The most widely known version on the life of Jayadeva is in Hindi Bhaktamal or Bhaktamala rewritten by NArAyaNa Dasa in mid-17<sup>th</sup> century from the original Hindi verses by Naabhaaji daasa. *Chandradatta* based his *Sanskrit Bhaktamala* on NArAyaNadasa's version. Kumbhakarna and Sankaramisra wrote commentaries. The best-known Bengali version is Vanamalidasa's Jayadevacharita. I shall attempt in the coming weeks to

write and post on the sankeertanam web page a more detailed account of the life history of Jayadeva albeit the possibility of a controversy on some aspects. The sargas 39 to 41 in Chandradatta's Bhaktamala provide a reliable account of the life history.

What was known as Utkala in north and Odra in southern parlance is now known as Orissa. Jayadeva was born in a small town known as Bilvagam or Kindubilva or Kinduli near Puri in the 12<sup>th</sup> century to devout parents Bhojadeva and Ramadevi (some books mention that his parents were NArAyaNa and Kamalabai). Bindubilva is in Orissa while Kindubilwa is in Bengal and this is yet another controversy. The child Jayadeva was a prodigy capable of singing from a very young age the kalyANa gunAs and stories of Lord KrishNA to the delight and wonderment of the villagers and his parents.

Thiruvaimozhi says 'Aadi Aadi agam karaindhu Isai PaadippAdi kaNNeer malgum'.

Jayadeva started living the life of an ascetic, after mastering the Veda sAstra purANAs, in the outskirts of the town. On another part of the town was this Devasarma, a devout Brahmin, who prayed to Lord Jagannatha of Puri for a child and had a deal with Jagannatha that his first child would be offered to Lord Jagannatha Himself! When the beautiful Padmavati was born, the parents were delighted, but also distraught that they had to offer her to the temple> True to their word, they raised her up with samskaram, and when she came of age, took her to the temple dressed like a bride and offered her to Lord Jagannatha. Padmavati stayed in the temple that night, Lord Jagannatha came in the dream of the Chief priest and asked him to take Padmavati, an amsam of Sri and NArAyaNa, to Jayadeva living like a hermit on the banks of the river Kinduli.

Next morning Deva Sarma, his wife and the priest took her to Jayadeva and narrated the story and the dream. Jayadeva started laughing, ' Oh Deva Sarma, your prarthana, promise and the priest's dream are good to listen but crazy to follow up. Look at me. I am looking like a beggar sustaining on alms and forest food. Your daughter looks so beautiful and is fit to marry a handsome man matching her qualities". After hours of



argument, Deva Sarma and his entourage left Padmavati at the doorsteps of Jayadeva's parnasala after advising her 'he is your husband by the design of the Lord. How you will convince him is your responsibility. Good luck'. Jayadeva started pleading with Padmavati with all the hitopadesam to go back to her parents. Padmavati told him, 'either you accept me as your wife or allow me to do seva as a servant without disturbing your routine. I have no choice and my place for the rest of my life is here and around you in this forest'.

In today's world, some of you might dispense it as 'emotional blackmail'.

Well, finally, convinced by the soft natured Padmavati, Jayadeva went back to the town, and to the delight of every one married Padmavati. Their spiritual union brought out the best in Jayadeva. A devout follower of philosophy and Vedic scriptures turned into the most renowned romantic poet (SrīngAra MahAkavi) and the 'gIta Govindam' was born. Jayadeva started singing and Padmavati would dance to his music in front of the sanctum of Puri Jagannatha for his prabandhams. After he finished 18 ashtapadis, a miracle happened while he was composing the 19<sup>th</sup>. I will come to that later while I sing that ashtapadi.

Jayadeva completed the 24 Ashtapadis and the Lord accepted them. The ruling king Lakshmana Sena (1116 AD) of Nadia, Bengal was a great patron of arts and had himself composed highly devotional poetry. Initial encounter with the King was unpleasant when the king was jealous that the whole kingdom was praising Jayadeva's songs and no one was singing his own compositions. The anecdote was that when the King brought both the compositions before Lord Jagannatha, He decided the superiority of GIta Govindam, and the King took Jayadeva as his spiritual advisor. Jayadeva and Padmavati lived a long and happy romantic life in the service of Jagannatha and Jayadeva accepted Padmavati as his Guru due to a divine incident that happened. I will narrate that later.

Two anecdotes are worthy of mention here!

1) At the instance of Lord Supreme, Jayadeva started giving discourses on BhAgavatam in the King's court. He re-narrated BhAgavatam in his own

style with music. The beauty of BhAgavatam is that it combines the Brahmagyanam and the anecdotes of the incarnations easy enough to attract the uninitiated. At the suggestion of Jayadeva, the King assembled a court of great scholars, saints and musicians. Just when they were about to commence the court, a Brahmin entered, announced that he had come from 'Gokulam' and challenged Jayadeva that he dared attempt re-narration of BhAgavatam in his own style and called it 'audacity' that he attempted to re-write the greatest work of VedavyAsa. He demanded the palm sheaves and announced that he would, himself, sing/read Jayadeva's rendition to point out the fallacies to the public! Jayadeva prostrated before him, offered to be his disciple and sought his guidance. The visitor told him, 'by your false modesty, which you have exhibited so far, the world was duped, and I am not going to fall for that'. So saying, he started looking at the sheaves and started singing. The crowd was mesmerized and suddenly realized that Lord Shiva was in the audience (with ParAsakthi) to listen to this recitation of Jayadeva's work! Jayadeva prostrated before the Brahmin with eyes welled up when Shiva said. 'Oh, JanArdhana, JagannAthA, enough of your constant mischief and tests. Bless Jayadeva who was the originator of the BhAgavatam and I now notice that even you could not sing your leelas better than him!'

Lord KrishNA laughed and said that just like he enjoyed Sukha's BhAgavatam, he wanted the world to know that Jayadeva's work was superior and that he enjoyed it thoroughly, hence his drama.

2) The second and most important anecdote mentioned by all historians and commentaries is related to the 19<sup>th</sup> ashtapadi, and the versions vary. However, the background is the same:

Jayadeva started composing the tenth sargam 'Chathura Chathurbhuja', the four quickening arms.

*In this, Jayadeva narrates the condition of Krishna when Krishna approached RADha soliciting her love and proximity giving her the best of amorous words, 'AthrAntare masruNaroshavasAth....'*

Jayadeva identifies with Krishna in his emotion and repeats the refrain line "Priye' ChAruseele' with ecstasy and completes six stanzas. When he

finished the seventh stanza, he looks at what he wrote and is shocked at his own expression,

*“ smara garala Khandanam mama Sirasi mandanam, dehi pada pallavam udhAram. Jwalathi mayi dAruNo madana kadanAnalo, harathu thad\*u pAhitha vikAram, priye’ chAruseele’...”* It meant, *“ RAdhe’, place your foot on my head, a sublime flower destroying poison of love! Let your foot quell the harsh Sun, burningits fiery form in me to torment Love!*

Jayadeva tore the palm sheaves and highly distraught that he committed a sin in writing that the Lord was seeking a cowherdess to place her foot on His head! He told PadmAvati that he was leaving for the river for a dip and meditation. Seeing him leave towards the river, PadmAvati returned to the kitchen to complete her routine. Within a few minutes, Jayadeva returned and asked PadmAvati to bring the palm sheaves, completed the 19<sup>th</sup> ashtapadi and asked that lunch be served. After the lunch, he said to PadmAvati that he had some work at the temple and that he would return later.

A few more minutes later, Jayadeva returned with a sad face and walked in without having a word with PadmAvati. After a few minutes of prayer, asked that the lunch be served! PadmAvati said that she could understand his behavior, that she finished the remains of the lunch that he left over a little earlier and there is no more food left. Confused, Jayadeva asked as to what happened. When PadmAvati explained that he came earlier and finished the ashtapadi, Jayadeva jumped to look at the palm sheaves. The exact stanza he wrote earlier and that he tore off before going to the river was re-written in a new palm sheave. Jayadeva realizes that it was none else than Lord Krishna himself who came and gave the most sought after appearance - Darsanam - to the divine PadmAvati and ate her food. Jayadeva cried in ecstasy, fell at the feet of PadmAvati and completed the ashtapadi with the last stanza with the words, ‘jayathu PadmAvati ramaNa jayadevakavi. BhAratee BhaNithamithi gItam’.

*Jayadeva realizes then that PadmAvati was blessed to have the Supreme Lord’s presence and she was an amsam or an incarnation of the Lord Himself.*

The astapadis are sung at the Puri temple. The 19<sup>th</sup> ashtapadi is sung at the Ratha Yathra festival at Puri to unite the Goddess of Wealth and her Consort, Cosmic Lord - Lakshmi and Jagannatha. It is sung in Guruvayoor in sopana style as part of the daily worship. They were set to Carnatic music for use in Sankeertanams and the latest version is reportedly at the instance of Paramacharya, Chandrasekharendra Saraswati, the Kanchi Pontif of the Sankara Order. Due to the structure, the singers have always taken the liberty to sing them in the ragas of their choices. Today, I will be singing a few in the south Indian Sankeertana traditional raagams and the rest have been composed in different ragAs of Hindusthani system for the day.

Popular belief is that the 12 sargams in GIta Govindam are after the 12 skandams in BhAgavatam. Gayatri maha mantra has 24 aksharas - Gayatri is sakala Veda Saaram and an external manifestation of the Brahmaswaroopam and hence the 24 songs or prabhandams in gIta Govindam starting with the Dasaavataara mahima.

### Synopsis of the twelve sargams:

The naming of the twelve sargams of GIta Govindam aptly describe the moods of the Lord in love play. Look at the titles of the sargams:

1. The Joyful KrishNA (SaamOdha DhaamOdhara:)
2. The Careles KrishNA (akIEsa Kesava:)
3. The Bewildered KrishNA (Mugdha Madhusoodhana:)
4. The Tender KrishNA (Snighdha Madhusoodhana:)
5. The Lotus-Eyed KrishNA longing for Love (SaakAnksha PuNdarIkAksha:)
6. The Indolent KrishNA ( Kunta Vaikunta:)
7. The Cunning KrishNA ( Naagara NaarAyaNa:)
8. The Abashed KrishNA ( Vilakshya Lakshmi Pathi:)
9. The Languishing KrishNA ( Mandha Mukundha:)
10. The Four Quickening Arms ( Chathura Chathurbhuja:)
11. The Blissful KrishNA ( Saanandha DhAmOdhara:)
12. The Ecstatic KrishNA ( SuprItha PeethAmbhara:)

### **Sargam 1: The Joyful KrishNA (SaamOdha DhaamOdhara:)**

1 (A 1): Dasaavataara mahima

1 (A 2): Vishnu mahima mangala geetam

1 (A 3): Vasantha ruthu varnana

1 (A 4): Sakhi narrates to RAdhA that KrishNA is having a nice time with all the Gopis.

### **Sargam: 2: The Careless KrishNA (aklEsa Kesava:)**

(A 5-6): RAdhA realizes that her ego (that she was the only one entitled to the total love of KrishNA) is crushed and feels miserable. Lying on the forest floor, highly irate, she tells Sakhi, "Look here, even if he behaves like this and is having affairs with a bunch of gopis, my heart goes for him. I cannot forget his handsome figure, his greatness, the finest of romantic times we had enjoyed. Can you see that we are united again?"

### **Sargam: 3: The Bewildered KrishNA (Mugdha Madhusoodhana:)**

(A 7): KrishNA comes to know that RAdhA has left in anger and leaves the other gopis and starts regretting his action.

### **Sargam: 4: The Tender KrishNA (Snighdha Madhusoodhana:)**

(A 8-9): Sakhi goes to KrishNA and explains to him about the suffering of RAdhA - virahathaapa varnanai.

### **Sargam: 5: Lotus-Eyed KrishNA longing for Love (SaakAnksha PuNdarIkAksha:)**

(A 10-11): KrishNA tells Sakhi, "I will be remaining here waiting for her; please calm her down and bring her here". Sakhi goes to RAdhA and describes the viraha that KrishNA is going through and asks RAdhA to go to him.

### **Sargam: 6: The Indolent KrishNA ( Kunta Vaikunta:)**

(A 12): Seeing the emaciated plight of RAdhA, Sakhi goes to KrishNA and requests him to go to RAdhA's place.

**Sargam: 7: The Cunning KrishNA ( Naagara NaarAyaNa:)**

(A 13): KrishNA has not arrived yet; the moon has come up; RAdhA pines that she cannot handle the viraha any more.

**Sargam: 7: The Cunning KrishNA ( Naagara NaarAyaNa:)**

(A14): 'What can I do? Some Gopi is having a nice time with My Gopala! - pralambam.

**Sargam: 7: The Cunning KrishNA ( Naagara NaarAyaNa:)**

(A15): 'What can I do? Some Gopi is having a nice time with My Gopala! - pralambam.

**Sargam: 7: The Cunning KrishNA ( Naagara NaarAyaNa:)**

(A 16): 'Look at me! That Gopi does not suffer all the pain I am going through now' Overcome by jealousy, RAdhA cries miserably.

**Sargam: 8: The Abashed KrishNA ( Vilakshya Lakshmi Pathi:)**

(A 17): RAdhA manages to suffer through the night; KrishNA did not come until morning; KrishNA comes early in the morning, begs for her pardon and tries to pacify her. RAdhA fumes back and literally throws him away.

**Sargam: 9: The Languishing KrishNA ( Mandha Mukundha:)**

(A 18): Sakhi tells RAdhA, 'Oh RAdhA! You are stupid. Is this the way to behave? What do you think of yourself? In case, he does not forgive you and if this is the 'good bye' what will happen to you? What use is your youth, beauty, qualities and of course your great passion for him? Everything is now in the dumps. What is the use of your existence? I do not

know. I will make one more attempt. May be, he might forgive you and come back. If ever he does so, don't be such a stupid woman'.

**Sargam: 10: The Four Quickening Arms ( Chathura Chathurbhujaja)**

(A 19): KrishNA comes back in the evening, quietly sneaks in, watches the condition of RAdhA and gives her the best of amorous words and solicits her love and proximity. Saying so, he leaves the place.

**Sargam: 11: The Blissful KrishNA ( Saanandha DhAmOdharma)**

(A 20): Another sakhi who has been watching this counsels RAdhA, ' Look at you, lucky woman. By sheer luck, he came back, sang in your praise, begged you, gave you sweet private talk, sought your pardon, practically, touched your feet. I have never seen such a thing happening to any one - the most eligible and handsome fellow for whom the whole world is willing to do anything to be by his side. If you make one more stupid mistake or delay, you are the loser. Dress up and go, run to him'.

**Sargam: 11: The Blissful KrishNA ( Saanandha DhAmOdharma)**

(A 21): RAdhA beautifies herself, carefully approaches KrishNA's abode and waits coy outside the nikunja griham. KrishNA also waits at the next-door inside hoping RAdhA will be walking in any minute. Sakhi watches this drama and gives one push to RAdhA not to goof up, gather courage, shed the reluctance and run to him.

**Sargam: 11: The Blissful KrishNA ( Saanandha DhAmOdharma)**

(A22): Kalyana Ashtapadi: RAdhA is all ecstasy. Runs to KrishNA with expectation and nervousness. KrishNA feels so delighted at the turn of events. Jayadeva describes the Union - in spiritual terms, this is the state at which the Jeevatma sheds its ego and runs to unite with ParamAtman at the advice of the Guru.

**Sargam 12: The Ecstatic KrishNA ( SuprItha PeethAmbhara)**

(A 23): All the Sakhis who were overtly and covertly watching curiously were shown signals by RADhA and quietly vanish. KrishNA understands the hints from RADhA and they have a nice time together.

**Sargam 12: The Ecstatic KrishNA ( SuprItha PeethAmbhara:)**

(A 24): RADhA is embarrassed that her dress, jewels and the whole alankaram are not in place and she accuses in a coy manner, with false-anger, 'Look Gopala, you are responsible for this state of mine. Better dress me up and take me out so that my friends do not ridicule me. KrishNA, laughingly and happily does what RADhA wants him to do.

Each one of his poems is a masterpiece. Let us look at the conclusion of the First Ashtapadi from Jayadeva:

Listen to the perfect invocation of poet JayadEvA  
Joyously evoking the essence of existence!  
You take the tenfold cosmic form , Kesavaa .  
Triumph , Oh Hari , Lord of the World ! [Sargam 1 Verse '15']

Sri JayadEva kavEritdhamudhitham udhAram  
SruNu Sughadham Subhadham BhAva saaram  
Kesava dhrutha dasavidha Roopa  
Jaya Jaya JagadhIsa HarE !

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*Thiruvaiyaru Krishnan*  
*June 21, 2003*