

My wish was to become the Meera of Murlidhar

—DADI PRAKASHMANI

Since childhood, I used to worship Shri Krishna, and wished that I could be Meera. There was a Radhe-Krishna temple just in front of my house. As part of my daily routine, I would go to the temple in the evening and swing Shri Krishna and put him to sleep, worshipping Shri Krishna with a lot of love. I even used to feel that Shri Krishna and Shri Radhe loved me a lot. I used to read the *Bhaagwate* every day, as well as we Sindhis believe in Sukhmani and Granth Sahib, which we were taught in school. I used to enjoy listening to these and to the Ramayana, Mahabharata, etc. in our Religion period. I would always come first in the school in this subject. In fact, I loved all my academic studies, coming either first, second or third in the school, never below, so the teachers loved me very much. I spent much less time on sports and games these did not interest me. My older sisters were married, leaving just me with my parents at home. I had no interest in going out to different places, to sit and gossip with friends or to eat outside, although I did have friends with whom I studied, otherwise I didn't have any friendships that just wasted time. I never stepped inside a cinema hall in my life.

My *lokik* parents had good *sanskārs*; they were interested in religious activities and spiritual gatherings, so good *sanskārs* were cultivated in me. I cannot remember ever being mischievous or my parents ever slapping me or being angry with me, and I never quarrelled or fought with anyone at school. My *lokik* father was a disciple of Swami Gangeshwarananda, and would take me with him when he went to visit. Gangeshwarananda ji also knew how to tell horoscopes and had said to my father: your daughter will not marry but will become Meera. I had never been interested in eating or drinking, touring around, wearing good clothes, etc. I cannot remember ever saying to my mother that I want such and such a dress, or that I feel like eating this today or please prepare this or that, never. Right from childhood, my favourite slogan was: Better to die than to ask. I thought: To have desire is ignorance. Would the *gopis* ever have desires? Would Meera ever have any desire? If they never would, why should I?

Yes, I definitely had a desire to have a vision of Shri Krishna or of Vishnu. I used to have a deep longing to have a glimpse: when will I have a vision of Shri Krishna; when will I have a vision of Vishnu, I used to wonder. I believed them to be God at that time.

Shri Krishna and Shri Satyanarayan started to appear in my dreams

I came into *gyan* in 1937, when I was 14 years old, and was studying for my matriculation. We were taught all subjects— history, geography, mathematics, science, and so on— in English. Mama also used to study in that same school, and we sat on the same bench in class. Though we were classmates, I knew nothing about her, except that she was very sweet, she had very long hair and a beautiful face and that I liked her very much. For our three weeks' holidays for Dashera and Diwali, we used to go to spiritual gatherings and temples. It was very cold early in the mornings during Diwali in Hyderabad.

During this time, one night, in my dreams, I saw a beautiful garden. There was light upon light everywhere in that garden. The light was so beautiful. There were huge flowers and fruits as far as the eye could see that seemed to go on further and further. Then a stronger light appeared at a very far distance in the garden, and from the middle of that light appeared a very small Shri Krishna with a flute coming closer and closer to me, dancing all the way. The closer he came, the happier I felt. The more I looked at him, the happier I felt. An angel in white appeared in the form of an old man behind Shri Krishna. In my childhood, I had heard a story about Satyanarayana where God comes assuming the form of an old person. When I saw this angel behind Shri Krishna, I felt that I was seeing God Satyanarayan. I repeatedly looked from Shri Krishna to the old-bodied angel. Both appeared very lovely to me. Then I woke up, and was extremely happy. I had heard that if one receives a vision from God, one shouldn't speak of it; just like when a mute person eats a sweet they cannot speak of it, even though they enjoy it inside. If a person were to speak of a vision from God that they had received, God would never come again to that one, so I did not speak a word about it, not even to my mother. Even so, God did not come again. I chanted the rosary of Shri Krishna, went to the temple and called out: "O, Shri Krishna, come!" He did not come. Three days passed in this way, then one of my classmates, who used to go to Om Mandali, invited me to her house. When I arrived at her house, she was in trance and tears were rolling down her cheeks. Her name was Leela. I called to her: "Leela, Leela," but she didn't hear anything. She was lost in her own world, smiling and putting her hand up, but she didn't respond to me. I said to her mother: "Leela called me, but she is not responding when I call her nor opening her eyes." Her mother replied, "Daughter, I do not know what has happened to her. She continues to go into trance. This has been her condition for the past two to three days." I was very pleased to see the state of her condition. Just as I was about to leave, she came out of her trance, and when she saw me, she said, "Rama! come! I will help you have a vision of Shri Krishna." I replied, "To have a vision of Shri Krishna is not like going to your aunty's home! I am doing so much devotion and worship, yet have been unable to have a vision, yet you say you can make me have a vision just like that?" Then Leela said, "Now it's evening, but tomorrow morning we will go at 10.00." So, I went home and waited for the morning. Baba used to start his gatherings at 10.00 in the morning because mostly mothers were attending.

I saw the one whom I also saw in my dreams

Baba had begun *satsangs* in Bhavu Vishwa Kishore's house. Bhavu was Baba's nephew. Whenever we used to go out, we would always ask our parents' permission. That very night my *lokik* father said to me, "Daughter, now it is your holidays. Dada is conducting *satsang* where they chant *Om* and sing songs, why don't you go?" I said, "Papa, my friend also told me that one can have a vision of Shri Krishna there, and she asked me to go with her." My father said, "Okay child, you can certainly go." The next morning, I collected Leela and we went to the *satsang*.

Baba was chanting *Om* when we arrived. That sound was so nice. My eyes instantly fell on Baba's forehead. It seemed as if light was coming out of his forehead. Of course, I didn't know then who was Shiv Baba or Brahma Baba. I simply remembered how four days earlier I had seen Lord Satyanarayan dressed in white along with Shri Krishna in my dreams, and this Dada looked the same! Why did he come in my dreams? Who is he? Is this Baba Lord

Satyanarayan? I was looking at Baba as I was thinking this. As I continued to watch him and listen to the sound of *Om*, I went into trance. The same Shri Krishna, the same royal garden, the same Lord Satyanarayan whom I had seen in my dreams appeared before me. I don't know for how long I was in trance because when I came back the *satsang* was over and everyone had left. Someone had woken me up, and seeing myself alone, I felt a bit shy, though I was still in the rapture of trance. Baba was sitting in his room, and called me: "Come, child, come!" As I looked at Baba, sometimes I saw Shri Krishna and sometimes Lord Satyanarayan. Even after returning home, I continued to see these two, and couldn't sleep for many nights following. I was in such rapture that I couldn't eat or sleep. My mother was concerned about what was wrong with her daughter, but I liked to be in trance, so I would go and sit on the terrace and go into trance to see Shri Krishna in heaven. My love for this deepened. Papa also started to wonder what had happened to his daughter, but I didn't say anything except that everything was all right. This had all happened during the period of Diwali, but then the holidays finished, and it was time to return to school. I found that I had lost interest in going to school, but still had to go. When I went to school, I met Mama. I said to her: "Radhe, you go to *satsang* as well. Dada recites and explains the Gita very well." Mama agreed, saying that she had been once before, and we both determined to go there daily. Soon afterwards, I said, "Papa, I don't want to go to school." Papa looked at me sternly: "Why don't you want to go!" "I don't want to continue this study," I replied. "I want to drink the nectar of pure knowledge and give it to others. I want to be a *gopi* with Shri Krishna and Radhe and dance with them. I want to become a *yogini*." Then Papa said, "Okay, child, I want whatever you want."

Didi Manmohini was going to *satsang* before me. Didi was my *lokik* aunt and Anand Kishore Dada was my cousin; they were both going to *satsang*, and as I used to go with Didi, my parents did not mind. Later, Baba taught me to give lectures, sing songs, give courses, recite *shlokas* (verses) from the Gita, and so on. I no longer remembered anything of this world.

I said, Baba, I already belong to Shri Krishna

However, before this, one incident stands out in particular. Three of us friends were on our way to *satsang*. We were wearing coloured clothes and jewellery. Baba's house was in the middle of the market. It was a very big house, and upstairs was a large room where Baba used to stay alone. From upstairs, Baba had seen us arriving, and sent a message asking the children to come up. We became nervous as to why Baba was calling us upstairs! Baba called out to us: "Children do you want to get married to one who wears a coat and pants or to one with a heavenly dress? We did not understand this question because we did not even know what was a coat and pants or a heavenly dress." We were also surprised that Baba should be speaking to us about marriage. Then, Baba asked again: "Speak, child, do you want to marry Shri Krishna or some boy?" I said, "Baba, I have already married Shri Krishna so there is no question of marrying anyone else." Then Baba said, "If you have already married Shri Krishna, why are you wearing coloured dresses and jewels?" From that day on, I did not wear jewellery or coloured clothes.

Where did my Giridhar Gopal go?

We were in great intoxication of knowledge at that time. During the month of April, Baba handed over all responsibility to Mama and went to Kashmir with his *lokik* family from where Baba wrote a letter to Mama: “Om Radhe, they are opening a school in Hyderabad in Sindh, yet for as long you have not opened a boarding house for those children whose mothers are coming to *satsang*, I will not come back to Hyderabad.” Baba said that he would be going to Kashmir for a month, but Baba stayed there for three months. We children were crying day and night: Where did my Giridhar Gopal (Shri Krishna) go? We acted as if crazy, calling out “Baba! Baba!” and we were desperately distressed. For those months, whenever we saw Baba, Shri Krishna would appear. Shri Krishna was constantly in my eyes.

I used to teach 10 year-old children when I was 15 years old

Mama made a lot of effort to open a school. A meeting was held, and a committee was formed for it. At the meeting, it was decided that I would be the instrument to run it. After all this was completed, Mama wrote a letter to Baba asking him to return to Hyderabad. In that year, 1937, Baba inaugurated the boarding school. In those days, everyone who came to *satsang* was addressed with the name *Om*: for example, Om Baba, Om Radhe, Om Rama, Om Gopi, etc. There were about 50 children, both girls and boys. My age was then 15 years old, and I was teaching those of 10 years old. Baba used to teach me before I taught the children. Baba used to write poems and songs himself, and would teach me how to prepare the lessons, how to teach them, how to wake them up, to give them a bath, feed them and put them to sleep. Baba taught me everything.

Baba loved me so much and gave me such respect

Baba later formed a committee of four mothers and four *kumaris*, a total of eight. He did not include any of his *lokik* relatives in it. There was Didi Manmohini, Dadi Rukmani, Rup (Mama's *lokik* mother), Mohindra, and among the *kumaris* were Mama, myself, Dadi Shantamani and Sundri Behn. Baba willed all his property in the name of this committee of mothers and *kumaris*. Since my childhood, I had never exhibited anything like sulking, crying, quarrelling, fighting, stealing, disobeying parents, answering back to older people or showing ego, so Baba used to love me a lot. He never showed me a stern eye, never scolded me, nor did he ever ask me why I did something, never. Baba used to love me and also respected me.

When Baba stayed with us in Hyderabad, he would sometimes demonstrate his cleverness. There was a train from Hyderabad to Karachi at 2.00 a.m., taking three hours. Baba used to go to Karachi in that train. When we would wake up in the morning to find that Baba had disappeared, we would all get upset, calling out: “Where did you go, my Giridhar? Where did you go, my Ghanshyam? O’ Ganga, O’ Jamuna, where did my Shyam go?” (All these are the names of Shri Krishna). Then a letter would arrive from Baba saying that I will come after two days.

After the partition of India, we came to Abu.