

### **The Lord on His Chariot 94-07-10**

Om. A-sa-to ma sad gam-ma-ya. Ta-ma-so-ma jyo-tir gam-ma-ya. Mri-tyor ma a-mri-tam ga-ma-ya. Avir avir ma e-dhi. Rudra yat te dak-shi-nam mu-kham. Tena mam pahi nityam. Tena mam pahi nityam. Tena mam pahi nityam.

Lead us from the unreal to the Real. Lead us from darkness unto Light. Lead us from death to Immortality. Reveal to us Thy Resplendent Truth and evermore protect us, Oh Lord, by Thy Sweet and Compassionate Face, by Thy Sweet and Compassionate Face, by Thy Sweet and Compassionate Face.

The subject of my talk this morning is: The Lord on His Chariot.

In the Upanishads and in other Vedantic scriptures, this body of ours has been called a chariot. The chariot has to be driven by horses and a chariot needs a driver. And, on the chariot is the owner of the chariot, the actual master of the chariot. The chariot can go through different directions. So the different objects we perceive through our senses are called the ways where the chariot goes. Our senses are the horses.

So this analogy is given in the Gita where Arjuna enters the battlefield in his chariot. The horses, two white horses... this description is in the Bhagavad Gita. In other places also this body is called... It is symbolical. The body is the chariot and the actual owner of the chariot is the Self. Now "Self" has two meanings. If you take this in the ordinary sense, then the chariot, the "horses" means our senses are the horses. Our senses can go in different directions. Our senses are required in our life, so our life is indeed the riding of a chariot. But the actual driver is the buddhi. Buddhi means that part of the mind, which gives directions.

Now if the driver is a good driver he can keep the horses under control and the horses cannot lead the chariot in wrong ways. The master of the chariot sits, he has, he is the master, that's all and he tells the driver: go here. Go to that place of the city, or go to another city. The master can... that is the master's role, because he is the master. But the buddhi, the driver, has to be a very intelligent driver so that he can keep the horses, that means our senses, under control.

So if the driver is an intelligent driver he can lead the horses in [a] right direction and the person can reach his desired goal. Now this can be read in a spiritual sense. In [a] spiritual sense, the owner of the chariot is atma, means Paramatman; in [the] former case it is the individual self, who is bound by maya. But Paramatman, the Supreme Self is not bound by chariots, by maya. So this verse says, if the charioteer, if the buddhi, if the driver is intelligent, that means, if the senses are in control, if the mind is pure, then this chariot, means this body of ours reveals Paramatman, the Supreme Self.

You can experience the Supreme Self even in this body. We can feel that our... the horses, namely the organs, they are... Wherever the senses go, there is the presence of the Divine. That means the Paramatman, the Supreme Self in this body is leading us to... the goal is the Self-Knowledge, the knowledge of Brahman. So it depends upon the senses. The senses have come controlled

and the objects, the objects which in maya we see as differentiated objects, this and that, but when knowledge comes then this body, this chariot of this body, becomes a divine vehicle, that means the Supreme Self, finally.

The same self which at one stage in maya was functioning as a little being... He can go to this city or that city or from this coast to that coast, but when [in] the body, the master is the Supreme Self, then this chariot, this body reveals divine objects. Finally, in the same chariot, in the same chariot, we can reach the Supreme Knowledge, namely Self-knowledge. We then... whatever we see is no longer a limited object. We see the vision of God everywhere. All our senses then have become purified. What we see with our eyes, what we hear with our ears, what we do with our hands, everything becomes divine. There is no bondage anywhere. When we are in maya, our senses are always, can lead us astray, can lead us to pleasure. But when our senses are pure and our buddhi, that this driver is an intelligent [driver], then even in this body, this chariot we can reach the highest goal.

[The] highest goal in Katha Upanishad, it is called “vishno paraman padam” the supreme abode of Vishnu.<sup>1</sup> Vishnu is a name of, name of [the] Lord. In other words, he attains Self-realization. He attains his highest goal, which is the object, spiritual objective of life, to know that everything is Brahman. And even in this body there is... the material aspect of the body, the vital aspect of the body, the psychological aspect of the body, these all disappear. This whole body becomes a divine body and a person’s activities become all divine. That is the burden of song in the Bhagavad Gita. Most of the Bhagavad Gita speaks of karma yoga. That means you have to do your work in such a way, in such a spirit of dedication, already for that your senses must have been controlled and your mind has to be pure. And then you can do work. There is plenty of work to do – not for your own little self or the little family, but for the whole world, in order to help the world, in order to... because the world in maya, those people who are in maya, with a sense of individuality and the body, or in the mind or in the buddhi, they suffer a lot. They enjoy also, but they have to suffer a lot.

So there is so much suffering in this world and teacher Sri Krishna tells Arjuna this yoga, karma yoga. “Well, this yoga was known in ancient time, but people forgot it. Now I am giving this yoga to you. It is a great responsibility. You have to... keep your senses under control and your buddhi has to be intelligent and if you can do that, then you will see that karma is not your karma, it is My karma, the Lord’s karma.” It is the Lord who is really driving. He’s riding the chariot. That means, all activities are really happening through the power of God. But [a] human being forgets that. He brings his individuality in the picture. He thinks, “I am the master. I am the worker. I am the Lord.”

“Me” and “mine” this becomes prominent. The Lord, Sri Krishna, teaches Arjuna through this: that really the Lord is me, in your body, not in your single body, but in all bodies. And there is only one Self, one Master, and that Master is Me. That Master is the One God, universal God. And I am operating all bodies. Any movement that is happening, it is through My Power. It is through My Will. And we have to realize this. To realize this in a great sadhana, is a great spiritual... spiritual practice, because the “me” and “mine” is so strong, our little

individuality centered in our body, in our mind, in our prana ~~are~~ is so strong that it is very difficult to know that the real master, the real lord of this chariot, this body is God and it is He who is operating all actions. And action, you cannot give up action. You can say, “No! I am now retired. I have plenty of bank balance. I have [a] good family, [a] good house... not merely one house, four houses! So I am happy.” Well that is your wrong perspective. Really speaking the Lord in the chariot, everything belongs to Him. All actions happen through His power. These things you have to understand through days of thinking and practice – practice of self-surrender, but then a time comes when you are successful. You then feel that it is the Lord who is the Doer, who is the real owner of this chariot, of all bodies, not merely in one body, but all bodies it is the Lord who is... [acting].

Just as a rich man, he can have many cars. He chooses in one car to go to New York. He chooses another car to go to San Francisco. He chooses another simple car to go to [the] supermarket. He is the master. He is the master of all these different cars, which he has. So the Lord, His chariot, there is no end to the chariots, which the Lord God has. God has many chariots – all bodies: human bodies, animal bodies, bird bodies and any bodies. It is a chariot, and the Lord is the master.

Think of a big tree. A big tree is a chariot! As I said, at first we read the scriptures in a common sense and we understand that. But from the common sense we have to come to a spiritual truth. Now there are...the Lord is One! The Lord is the Supreme Brahman; He is God. But He is the master of all chariots. Anything can be a chariot. Think of a big tree. A big tree is a chariot, the Lord's chariot. The big tree gives fruits and through these fruits there are numberless seeds and the seeds spread. In this way the tree, as a chariot is doing the same functions: that is, it is spreading itself through its fruits, through its seeds. There is no...you cannot count how many seeds a tree produces. But this is one play. This is one play of the Supreme Master. The Lord is in the tree. When you consider the tree as a chariot and just as a chariot goes in many directions, spreads any direction it likes, so that tree – big tree, through its fruits, through its seeds, it spreads itself.

From one tree there can be thousands of trees. See our... in our garden there are more than [a] hundred [of] these Italian cypress trees. But it came from a single cutting. Our neighbor, who is now dead, had a big cypress tree and from that we took a small limb. And that was planted in a small pot and from that small pot, it was growing and we transferred [it] to another bigger pot, another bigger pot. Eventually it became this big. Then we planted [it]. And there were so many we did not know how to do with all these trees.

Then one devotee suggested, “You plant anywhere. It will be very beautiful. If you plant [the cypress] in a garden, and all, that will look beautiful, of course. But if you plant sporadically here and there, that will be itself a beauty. It will have the sense of freedom.” So we did that, and still there are so many, so many. And now we see those trees, from one single limb so many trees have gone. And each tree is every year shedding seeds, and from that other trees can grow. In this way this, we can consider symbolically that this big tree is a chariot,

because the Lord is One. The Master is one and a Master's joy is in spreading Himself. He does not want to remain confined in one place, just as a rich man if he has many cars, many vehicles, he likes to ride [in] one car one day and another car, another day. So [too] the Master, God, Who, [through] this universe, in this universe there are many things from which He can function as a Master of a chariot.

Think of the darkness of the night. Everything is dark. We cannot see anything. But is God absent? In one of the Upanishads it is said, "Meditate on Brahman as darkness, as *tamas*" <sup>2</sup>[Source?] because from this *tamas*, from this darkness, darkness will go and slowly the sun will show, and when the sun shows, it spreads its light and heat in all directions. And who is doing this? It is the Lord. In this case this darkness has become his chariot, and through this darkness, he is driving through this darkness, just as in dream.

Dream is a sort of darkness because when we fall asleep, fast asleep we do not know anything, but then in...in deep sleep, we dream. And we can have many dreams. Strange dreams! And who is doing this? The Upanishad says it is the Lord, because when we are deep asleep, the Lord is awake. The Master of this body, the True Self, Brahman, He is awake and He is creating at His will. Unthinkable things happen in dream. In [a] waking state we cannot imagine that this is possible. Impossible! Absurd! There is no causality. Our everyday life is based on causality: time, space, and causality. We need time for movement. We need space for movement and we need causal connection. Without that there cannot be ~~no~~ [any] activities, no experience.

Now in dream, when we dream we perceive things that ~~is~~ [are] impossible from the point of view of waking. But when you are dreaming, everything is right. Things, which are impossible from the standpoint of causality, can happen. Causality breaks down in sleep. Causality breaks down in sleep for us, but not for God. So in one of the Upanishads [it] says, "This dream objects and dream experience, it is coming from God."<sup>3</sup> So you can have wonderful dreams and when you are dreaming it may be so delightful that you do not suspect that it is dream. We see everything there is causal. That is, causality has not broken down. That means it is... it is God. It is the Brahman in us, who produces these dream objects and dream experiences.

So, what you call deep sleep, or what you call when you say darkness, or *tamas*, *tamas* can be called the chariot. The Lord of the chariot is the same Lord, is the same Brahman, who is in the tree and through the tree, it is spreading through its seeds and its fruits. And when it is all darkness and He is creating dreams, for Him it is perfectly all right. Whatever we see, we see that it is quite all right.

One night I dreamt that my grandmother has come, the grandmother who loved... When I was a child, five years old, the grandmother, was a very a virtuous lady, old lady, widow, and she had... she used to do Siva puja, to worship a simple stone, she called it the Siva linga. And she used to offer some flowers and some sandalwood and she was very happy. That was her daily puja. And occasionally she would go on pilgrimage to this place or that place. Now once she had deputed me, even though I was a child... five? Maybe I was

seven. Five is too small. I was seven. “Now will you be able to do this puja, during my absence?” “Oh, yes.” I had as liking for this. I was bent to the religious bent of mind. And I said, “Yes. I will be able to take care of your Siva.” Now, some days ago, I dreamt that that grandmother has come. I was so happy to see her and she said, “I don’t want anything. I want a little rice and a little dal.” “Well, you don’t want anything? Take here... You are coming after so many days and all.” And to see this grandmother, many other friends and relations have come and the place has become very joyful in the presence of this old lady – very virtuous lady. But, her appearance is different, but it did not strike me that she is different. It is the grandmother and the grandmother is talking and is asking... “You don’t want anything, not even a place to sleep?” “Well no, I am just come. Give me a little dal and a little rice and I am satisfied.”

Very strange, but still while I was watching that dream, it was all right. So some other time ... I sometimes dream [of] some old sadhu, who has died many years ago, and he has come and he is telling me so many things. And we are so very happy that he has come again after so many years and we are not even asking him, “Well, what was your experience in the other world? Where did you go? Where did you stay?” No. [It is] as if it is quite normal. So the causality did not break down. The causality did not break down when I was watching this dream. In dream, there was another kind of causality, because it is God. It is God, who produces this dream. It is God, who, just [as] he has produced this wonderful universe, and it at every state it has causality.

When we are human beings in this world, we work under one kind of causality. But if we go to another sphere... The dream is such a sphere. When we go to dreams, whatever things happen, it does not happen out of [everyday causality], because God, God the real Master, the real Creator is not the individual self, is not the jiva, but it is Paramatman. It is His play! It is His play to create and just as I am having this kind of dream, every human being is having other kinds of dreams. Some may have very painful dreams, and others may have very joyful dreams. A poor man is dreaming that he has become a millionaire, and in dream, he is so happy.

In all these things, it is, the Upanishad says, it is because it is God, the Lord who is the charioteer. He is using these different chariots; each human body is a chariot. And through each human body different games are played, in the waking, in the dream-- and in the sleep-- different games are played. But the Master, [the] Master of the chariot is the Lord, is Ishvara, the God. Anything can be a chariot in His vision: [say] the sky. The sky, how many things are happening in the sky? The infinite sky, infinite space! Now who is the master of the space? Scientists will... would not agree. Scientists would have their own vision. But I am speaking of the spiritual perspective of life. In the spiritual perspective of life, everything is caused by God!

So the infinite space is a chariot, chariot of God, the Lord’s chariot. The Lord is in space-- here, or thousands of miles away or even more than that. Even if we speak of the atomic world there is space and strange things are happening there. But [for] those who believe in God, those who have faith in God, who are believing God is the Master of everything, the outside space and

the atomic space [are] both kinds of space with different kinds of causality. The causality, which operates in the outer space, is not the same [causality] which operates in the inner... the little atomic space. But God is One. It is God's play. He is playing in that one chariot, say -- sky. From the sky, we have sky everywhere. It is a traveling. The sky is here. The sky is there. The sky is [in] other worlds. There is that infinite sky and through the sky, God is driving His chariot.

In that way we can have the symbology of God's action. God's action, wherever God is acting, and God is acting everywhere. Our mind. Our mind is a chariot, the Lord's chariot. Every thought... to us when we are in ignorance our mind is an enemy. Our mind is bringing unwelcome thoughts. Our mind is bringing passions, temptations and we become so much embarrassed, and we curse the mind. "Oh mind, you are giving me so much trouble. You are giving me so much undesirable... Undesirable desires are popping up when I am going to meditate; the mind is not cooperating." Either the mind is sleeping or the mind is bringing unwelcome thoughts. The mind becomes an enemy, but not so in the spiritual life.

In the spiritual life, our mind becomes the chariot of God. And God is the supreme operator of the mind, even when we are in maya and mind is bringing us this awful misery, it is God's play. God has two kinds of play. One kind of play is called vidya maya and another kind of play is avidya maya. In avidya maya, our mind is our enemy. But in vidya maya, our mind is a delight.

So the mind can become a chariot of God. Each thought becomes an [a] spiritual expression, which we read in books. We read in books, different qualities, different attributes, viveka, vairagya, then purity. So many spiritual virtues we read in the books. But [when] we read in the books, we do not see how they can be real. But a spiritual... for an earnest spiritual seeker, they become real. The same mind, if you consider, the mind is a chariot of God.

And God can travel anywhere! But through the mind God can travel anywhere. In other words, whatever thought is coming, it is no longer an enemy. Whatever thought is coming, it is God's revelation. Just as we travel in our chariot to distant places, so every thought becomes a divine expression of God, the Master. God is the supreme Master and He is the Master of the mind also. When we realize that, it is God who is guiding my mind, then any expression of the mind, any thought of the mind becomes divine. Wherever the mind goes it is God, because the mind is no longer an ignorant mind. The mind is an enlightened mind.

"Enlightened mind" means you feel the presence of God in the mind so you are not afraid of the mind – the mind will bring a passionate thought. The mind will bring an unwelcome thought. No, because it is God who is the Master of the mind, and whatever He is bringing, whatever thought or idea or emotion is coming, it is God's expression. So in this way we can multiply the examples and see that God is really, really the charioteer, and anything can be a chariot! Anything can be, from the starting, [from the] beginning, and anything can spread.

Everything in this world is not static. Everything is really dynamic. Everything, it tries to spread, and this spreading, this dynamism of little objects or big objects, it is the play of God. It is the Lord who is playing, who is driving His chariot – and there is no end to His chariots. It can be a tree; it can be an ocean; it can be a mountain; it can be a human being; it can be --- anything. It can be anything where the Lord has chosen to drive. And He drives anywhere. You cannot say, “This is a forbidden place for You.” Nothing is forbidden for God! [He laughs lightly.] To us, it may be forbidden, but not for God. So that is the symbolical expression when you say that the Lord [is] on His Chariot. That spiritual perspective we have to apply.

We have to apply [this]. It may be a tree. It may be the sky. It may be darkness. It may be sleep. It may be anything, but from that anything there is this... the Lord is playing. The Lord is not absent from anywhere. This life, this life of ours – it is a chariot! God has chosen the life to travel and in one body He travels to many places, many experiences, say, sixty years or seventy years. In another body He travels eighty years, in another body, one hundred years. There is no restriction to His traveling. We cannot say. So it is all the Lord’s... the Lord’s chariot – everything.

Everything is the Lord’s chariot and the Lord is the supreme Master of all chariots. It may be living beings. It may be nonliving beings. It may be great things. It may be smaller things. The Lord is there and this we can read, we can theoretically, we can read in scriptures: the Lord is present everywhere. But spiritual experience is more than mere reading. So a person who sincerely practices these ideas of the scriptures, he can really experience how the Lord is playing everywhere – through small things, through bigger things, through higher things. It is His play, but He is One, He is not many. There is no competition. Nobody can say, “I will... I can do bigger things than You.”

The Lord does small things. He can also do bigger things, but He is the supreme Master and everything is His vehicle. Everything is His chariot. That is one way of explaining the different expressions of the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita when we read the ratha. Ratha<sup>4</sup> means the chariot and rathi<sup>5</sup> is the master of the chariot. The master is the atma, the Paramatma. And Paramatma is present everywhere and is playing everywhere and is going everywhere, moving everywhere. He who experiences this, is very fortunate and for him, the Upanishad says, “Vishnu paramam padam.”

He who realizes this, that it is God who is playing in my body -- which is a chariot, all the senses, all my senses have become purified and the Lord is playing in His chariot. And he who realizes this, he reaches the Vishnu paramam padam. He reaches the supreme goal. Otherwise, he reaches the supreme realization. No more for him is any ignorance or wandering in maya, in ignorance. He becomes illumined. An illumined person has no life and no death, because he is merged in God or he becomes a playmate of God in the language of bhakti, but he is not dissociated from God. Just as God goes everywhere, so he also, if he is a bhakta, he can also go anywhere with God. He has... death is not a problem for him, because “tad visnoh paramam padam,”<sup>7</sup> the supreme abode of Vishnu. Vishnu is a name of God. So he attains that supreme state where if he

wants the complete mержence in God, no more any birth or death, God says, "Granted." And if he says, "No. I want Your companionship; I want Your love," God says, "All right. You climb in My chariot. Wherever I go, I will take you, take you with you [Me].

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Om. Madhu vAtA R^itAyate madhu xaranti sindhavaH.  
 mAdhvIrnaH santu auShadhIH..  
 madhu naktamutoShaso madhumat.h pArthivam.h rajaH.  
 madhu dyauH astu naH pitA..  
 madhumAnno vanaspatiH madhumAm.h astu sUryaH.  
 mAdhvIrgAvo bhavantu naH..  
 Om madhu madhu madhu<sup>8</sup> [Rg Veda 1:90, 6-7]

Sweet blow the winds and the very oceans give forth blessedness. May the herbs and plants bring us health and happiness. Sweet be unto us be the nights and dawns. May every particle of mother earth be charged with blessing and may the heavens shower us with benediction. Sweet unto us be the noble forest trees. Sweet unto us be the shining sun. Sweet unto us be all living creation. Om. Sweetness, Harmony, Peace.

1. Katha Upanisad [1:3:9] in The Principal Upanisads, ed. by S. Radhakrishnan. New York: Harper & Brothers, c. 1953, p. 624.
2. ?? Possibly Chandogya Upanisad [1:3:1] in The Principal Upanisads, ed. by S. Radhakrishnan. New York: Harper & Brothers, c. 1953, p. 342.
3. Katha Upanisad [2:2:8] in The Principal Upanisads, ed. by S. Radhakrishnan. New York: Harper & Brothers, c. 1953, p. 638.
4. "Ratha." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ratha> accessed May 21, 2018. (spelling check).
5. Driver = Rathi. Sanskrit Dictionary <http://sanskritdictionary.com/?q=driver&lang=en&action=Search> accessed May 21, 2018. (spelling check).
6. Katha Upanisad [1:3:9] in The Principal Upanisads, ed. by S. Radhakrishnan. New York: Harper & Brothers, c. 1953, p. 624. "He who has the understanding for the driver of the chariot and controls the rein of his mind, he reaches the end of the journey, that supreme abode of the all-pervading." "Vijnanasarathir yastu manah pragrahavan narah, so'dhvanah param apnoti tad visnoh paramam padam."
7. Ibid.
8. [Transliteration of Rg Veda verse is taken from [http://satsangh.tripod.com/pujatexts/satya\\_baskegar.html](http://satsangh.tripod.com/pujatexts/satya_baskegar.html)] accessed June 26, 2012. Alternate version of prayer with somewhat simpler spelling <http://www.sacred-texts.com/hin/rvsan/rv01090.htm>