

## Listen and Follow

Sooner or later in the life of every seeker—and maybe more often than once—we come to the end of our own resources. We know that only God can save us. How should we look for His help? What form should we expect this help to come in?

Arjuna's way was obedience. His way out was to obey the Lord and to fight the battle. On the other hand, in the *Devī Māhātmyam* when the *devas* were defeated they appealed to the Divine Mother, and She did all the fighting for them. In the *Skanda Purāṇa* we seem to have a middle path. The defeated and humiliated *devas* appeal to Lord Śiva for a leader. And one is provided—His own son, His own divinity—that leads from within. We follow, knowing that the spear of knowledge is in His hands.

Which alternative should we follow? The truth seems to be, it depends upon the circumstances. We don't really know which one to follow until we are faced with the problem. Sometimes we are meant to obey the *guru* or the scriptures and fight the battle ourselves. It may be some bad habit we are avoiding getting rid of. We know what we should do; we don't need any other help. It is up to us to do the fighting. Other times we have struggled and struggled, but we can't see a solution to the particular problem we have. Our way out may be to leave it in the hands of the Lord.

But here is where we can realize some good news. We would have a real problem if, in fact, the Lord was outside ourselves, but Swāmījī is constantly trying to remind us that He is within, He is our Indweller. And He is not a dead God; He is an alive God, a creative God. He is always trying to express Himself through us.

So we don't really need to wonder about the proper course of action to take in any particular circumstance. We only need to listen, to be humble enough to not know. And this is the real secret of the spiritual life—not knowing, but trusting the Indweller. He will guide us moment by moment. We have to have the humility and the trust to listen and follow.