
AKBAR AND BIRBAL

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23:31

ERUCH: You want me to narrate the story about the lad who humbled the King. Right.

It is said that there was once a Mohammedan King who ruled over India. And he had his own notions of God the Almighty and of the Prophets of God. He had a prime minister who was a Hindu. The prime minister had his own notions you see of God the Almighty and the Prophets of God. The prime minister believed in the advents of God. He was not Prophet. The Avatar is not the Prophet. He carries the, he brings the message of God but God in human form is the one who gives the message to mankind you see. Whereas the Muslims, the Mohammedan world believe that God sends Prophets from time to time. Enjoins upon somebody you see to give his message. So that's that difference. Subtle difference you see.

So one day this King. He was the Emperor by the way. So the story runs like this that this Emperor, his name was Akbar, Akbar the great. So he chides his minister you see. The prime minister. His name is Birbal. And says, "Birbal, you are so intelligent that there is nobody to equal you in my kingdom. In my empire. And yet you are so childish in your beliefs regarding God and the Prophets." So the prime minister asks the Lord, the Emperor, he says, "My Lord, what is the childishness in my believing that God manifests time and again on this Earth as the Avatar to give His love and message to mankind? To make His love more

tangible. To make His being felt among mankind. What is the childishness expressed by us in believing this?" So the Emperor gives a hearty laugh and says that, "Oh, you my child. Though you are the prime minister yet you are a child." Says, "Our God is so mighty, so almighty that He need not come down on Earth to dispense love, mercy, compassion or make us feel His presence you see. Our God is mighty enough to make His presence felt from wherever he is. He need not stoop so low to take a human form you see. Maybe your God is not that mighty that He has to come down on earth time and again and manifest to mankind and make His love more tangible to you all."

So now Birbal tells him, "Sire, this is not the case. There is some misunderstanding. And I must tell you that there is only one God. There are no 2 Gods. Your Allah is my God. My Parabrama, Paramatma is your Allah. There is no difference whatsoever. But the difference lies in how we understand His divine play." So he says, "What do you mean by divine play?" Says, "If you can give me some time I can try in my humble way to convince you why even the almighty God has to come down time and again to redeem His own children." He says, "Can you do that?" Says, "Yes. Give me some time and I will do it for you. I'll try my best." So he was given some time. So our famous prime minister of India went out on a holiday.

So as I told you, he enjoyed a good vacation because the Emperor allowed him some time to prove his point. Well he went out and all that and refreshed himself and after a couple of months he started attending his duty. The Emperor was very happy to see him because he was a favourite minister of the Emperor. Very intelligent and the same time very honest, truthful. As soon as he attended the court the emperor remembered the promise that was given by the minister and asked him whether he had brought the proof? Of what he had said. So he said well, before he could give any proof or anything of the sort he would want the emperor you see to spend some time with him. And forget about the court work and the responsibilities that he was having and all that and just be with him for some time. Because after a gap of two months he was returning to the court and he missed the Emperor a lot and the Emperor said that well he also missed his company and he agreed to go with him.

So, the next day was fixed for an outing. Complete outing you see. And the Emperor promised to remain with the prime minister you see and to go wherever he took him. And everything was arranged by the prime minister. Just a word was given and the orders were carried out naturally. So the programme of the next day was that the emperor was to be conducted by the prime minister to a yacht and that which we call a royal boat you see at that time there were no yachts or anything of the sort you see. And let the day be spent boating you see. The great river Jamuna. I'm talking about Delhi being the capital of India at the time you see and river Jamuna is there, it flows there.

So the story runs. The next day Birbal approached the court having been to the palace and called the King. Invited the King to go with him and so forth

and King and the prime minister with the retinue now go to the river side and there of course prime minister engages the emperor into a long drawn conversation. Some philosophical conversation and all that sort of thing you see. Nothing to do with God or the advent or anything or this sort. Nothing to do with that you see. And as they approached the boat you see and he's so much, the prime minister engages him in such a serious talk you see that at the time when they step into the boat there, take their seats he casually sees his own prince there you see. He says, "Have you brought him here?" So, "Yes sire, he also must enjoy with us." And they just take the king you see to his seat there and the crowd is there and all that. And the orders are given now for the sailing. And then the prime minister engages him and he was a very intelligent prime minister you see. Engages him in different talks. The topics are all discussed and all that and all of a sudden there's a loud noise you see and chaos on the boat there.

"What's the matter?" the Emperor asks. Says, "Nothing Sire, everything will be under control very soon." What's the matter?" He says, "Nothing. Just the prince you see. Somehow or the other tried to play with the water you see and has fallen down in the river." "But we are in the mid-stream." He says, "Well, who's going to rescue him?" And he tried to pull his rope down and minister tried to pull him down you see to his seat and says, "Don't get agitated. We are all around you. I am going to jump inside the river and get him." He says, "Who cares for anybody you see now." And he just removed his royal robe and plunged himself into the water you see. The river, wanting to rescue his own son. In spite of the minister telling him time and again, repeatedly begging him not to do so because there were so many other ministers around them. So

many men, so many other aides to do anything for him. But he himself jumped into the river. In trying to rescue his own son you see. He couldn't rely upon anybody. He couldn't give the charge of rescuing his own son to the hands of anybody. The king himself jumped into the river. And he tried his best. Then the minister himself brought him out. Said, "Sire, your son is safe." "Has he been rescued?" He says, "No. Your son hadn't accompanied us." He says, "But I saw him. The prince was there in the boat." "It was just a wax replica of your prince." "Why did you fool with me like this? How dare you do it?" "Sire, it was all in an answer to your query as to why God the Almighty would want to come down on Earth Himself to redeem mankind. Is it His own children. You wield power over the whole empire which stretches from North-East, South-West. And there are innumerable subjects who would lay down their lives for you. There are ministers and aides and everybody around you who would want to just carry out your command. If you were to just let out a single word. They would have not only rescued your son but they would have rescued a whole battalion here from the river. They would even emptied the river. They would have even blocked the flow of the river for you. And made the riverbed dry for you. In order to find out a lost pearl had you lost a pearl. But you wouldn't want to rely. Wouldn't want to give the charge of rescuing your own child into the hands of your capable volunteers or lieutenants. You personally had to drown yourself. Had to come down to the river. In order to give a helping hand to your son. If a man, if a father on this Earth doesn't want to do that how much closer and dearer are the children of His to God? So He is not a weak God. He is not somebody who is

not Almighty. He is Almighty. It is through His greatness, through His strength that He deems Himself proper and fit to come down into human form. To become man time and again in order to redeem His own children through His very being in human form."

So the Emperor of course said that, "Well done Birbal. What you have said you have proved very well because I know the feelings now. I know because I have gone through this. I now can believe why God Himself must descend on Earth time and again to redeem His own children." So that's the one part of the story you see. Of Akbar and Birbal you see. You get the point?

PILGRIM 1: Yes. Oh yeah.

ERUCH: Now another part. You see after some years the same emperor you see gets the whim. To put this question you see. He says, "Birbal we have been talking you see a lot on the subject of God you see. But where is God? And what does He do?" Again the minister says, "Sire, it's such a simple question that you have asked me. That I thought that you would know the answer to it but you would want to try me. But if you have the least regard for my intelligence permit me to bring an ordinary shepherd to answer this simple question. Rather than myself answering it personally or directly to you." Says, "What do you mean by it?" Says, "The question that you have put Sire is so simple that I wouldn't want to answer it. Allow any ordinary shepherd to answer it for you." He says, "All right, you're allowed. Go ahead."

So he goes out you see and then he tutors a boy there and says. And then the story is he brings the lad to the palace you see. He's a simple shepherd. Not knowing what to do.

How to answer even to an ordinary person. He did not know the etiquette of the court anything. He's just there you see. So, the Emperor is sitting on his throne and throws out this question and says, "Son, are you in a position to answer my queries?" So with great hesitation half trembling, quaking you see he says, "Yes Sire. What is the question?" Says, "My question is, where is God? And what does He do?" So he says, "Sire I would like to answer your question but I am so much-the whole atmosphere, the whole environment is so new to me. I just don't know. I've lost my voice." He subdues his voice and says, "I'm feeling very thirsty I'd like to have some, something to drink."

The Emperor taking pity on the child you see calls for a bowl of milk and hands it over and tells the servant to hand it over to him. So the milk is brought there and there he just takes. Holds the bowl in his hand and he's bit, what do you call, frightened about the whole situation. He's trembling so to say and he does not know what to do. He just holds the cup there, the bowl and tries to see something in it. So the emperor being very kind and generous as the Emperors always are and should be, allows him sometime but then his patience got exhausted you see. He got exasperated and says, "Son what are you trying to do? The whole court is waiting for the answer. You have taken so much time. Why don't you drink the milk and answer my query?" He says, "Sire allow me some time. How can I because although I am a shepherd I am so very poor. I haven't seen so much of good milk you see. Let alone it is said that there is butter inside the milk. I am trying to find out where the butter could be? There is some butter inside the milk they say. I haven't seen such good milk let alone the butter. So I am

trying to find out where the butter is in the milk."

How he laughs you see, loudly the Emperor and looks at the prime minister and he says, "Birbal what have you done here? Whom have you brought to put this? What does he say you see?" He says, "Sir, he's so poor he has not seen good milk. Fresh milk. He's so poor he had heard that there is butter in the milk. He hasn't tasted butter. He wants to find out where that butter is?" "Tell him how to bring, how to get butter out of that milk you see. And let's not waste much time." "Sire that's the answer to your query. That's what he's saying. He's answering your query. The part of your query." "What do you mean by that?" Says, "He says just as the milk. Just as this butter is in the milk likewise God is everywhere in this creation. In anything that you feel, in anything that you know of you see. It's everywhere. It's there. You ask the query. Your query is, where is God? It's like you're getting exasperated you see with this man trying to find where butter is in this milk. It is for you to go through a process you see to find where it is. Where He is. Just as the butter. The milk is to be churned you see.

Here in India by the way we do not extract butter direct from cream. What we have to do is to churn this. First of all we'll have to get this milk converted into curd you know. You know what curd is? What do you call it? Yogurt. Yes yogurt. And then what you have to do is to churn that yogurt you see. And then from that draw out the butter. After you churn it. So the whole process is there you see. First of all you have to fix your attention you see. Get yourself through concentration focus all attention you see. Get the milk. Get the whole milk you see. Get the whole illusion so to say settled properly you

see. And then and for that what you have to do is that formula is that you have to dip something in the milk to get yogurt out of it you know. You can't form yogurt out of just milk you know. What we call here thing that curdles the milk you see, curdles the milk. What is that? What do you call it?

PILGRIM 2: Yeast.

ERUCH: Yeast. Some sort of thing you see. Here we use a certain thing that. Certain organic thing you see that will fix the milk properly. And then we churn it you see. Churn the milk and how. You know how we churn it? There is a churner you see. There is a rod there with all the. With a semi-circular thing; wooden rod and then you have to churn. Turn the rod you see and churn the milk there. With that rod is considered to be our own ego you see. That with our own ego we just. First of all we fix the whole illusion so to say. And then with the rod of our own ego we churn the whole thing you see. And then we get the butter out of it. Means through discrimination you see. Utilising our ego with certain discriminations you see. We find it out from the very. Very thing that we want to discard you see. So butter comes on floating on the top. And then we eat, relish the butter. Likewise you have put the query sir, where is God? God is everywhere. It is for you to separate it from this everywhere of yours. That's the answer to your first query.

Then the King says, "Well what about the answer? Oh he seems to be a very intelligent lad this lad." So he says, "Well what's the answer to my next query?" "What's your next query?" Says, "What does He do?" He puts that question what does he do? So again the child trembles you see with that royal command. Does not know what to do. And then with great hesitation he says,

"Sire, are you commanding me as your subject to answer this great question? Or would you want to know it as an aspirant would want to know it?" The king is taken aback with this retort. He being the great Emperor Akbar you see. His greatness now tries to manifest itself. He says, "As an aspirant I would want to know it from you." Says, "It doesn't behove an aspirant to sit on the throne and allow the master to stand facing the judgement you see. Facing the judge like that. If you are an aspirant it doesn't behove you to sit on the throne and make your master stand in front of the throne there."

So he says, "I am so sorry. Please you take the throne. I come down and ask you the question." So he is made to sit on the throne this lad, and the boy sits there much more frightened now and the Emperor stands there and says, "Sire, may I know what does God do?" So the child has been tutored by the prime minister already. He says, "Just the thing that has happened now." So he looks at Birbal and says, "What does he say?" He says, "Sir it's so simple. You were on the throne a moment before. This shepherd did not know he was in the world. He did not know whether even a square foot belonged to him. Now he sits on the throne of the Emperor you see. A moment before he was nobody. A moment after this he's the Emperor on the throne. What God does is just this."

So these are the little stories with which the mothers used to feed their children in India you see. With spiritual thoughts. So if these stories are helpful to you all well, well and good. If not they just remain stories that's all.