

Killing Bakasura

(Teachers copy)

A. The Story

Krishna and all the cowherd boys would go to the banks of the Yamuna River every day to water their calves. One day, after the cowherd boys and calves drank water from the river, they started playing along the bank. Suddenly they saw a huge animal. It looked like a duck and was as big as a hill. The beast seemed as strong as a thunderbolt, and the boys became afraid. The name of this demon was Bakasura. Baka' means duck and 'Sura' means demon. Bakasura came in form of a duck as big as hill

Quickly, Bakasura attacked Krishna with his sharp, pointed beak and swallowed Him up. But the glow from Krishna's body was so hot that the demon immediately spit Krishna out. Bakasura tried to kill Krishna by pinching Him between his beaks, but Krishna got away.

Krishna then grabbed the two beaks of the duck-like demon, and in front of His cowherd boyfriends, Krishna pulled them apart as easily as a child splits a blade of grass.

When the demon was dead, flowers fell from the sky, and bugles, drums, and conch shells sounded from the heavens.

B. What Bakasura represents

The demon Bakasura represents dishonesty, duplicity, and false behavior. As Krishna killed Bakasura, He can also help us root out our bad habit of dishonesty.

C. Dishonesty

To be honest means to tell the truth all the time. All the time – not only when it is convenient. If we do something wrong, it is better to admit it and tell the truth than to lie about it. We may be able to hide it from others but we can't hide it from Krishna. Krishna is sitting right in our heart as Paramatma, a witness to all our activities. He knows everything and we will have to suffer a reaction for whatever we did. But if we lie, we will have to suffer a reaction for lying, also. If we do our best to act properly, we won't feel like we have to lie about our actions.

Can you think of some incidents when you told lies?

Write about a time when you were tempted to tell a lie. Why would it have been better to tell the truth?

D. Let's take a look at some situations that may challenge our honesty.

If you did something you weren't supposed to do at home and your parents found out, would you admit it or lie about it so you don't get punished?

When you go to a movie or to an amusement park and the admission fee is lower for younger children, would you lie about your age so you could save a few dollars?

If you bought something at the store and the clerk gave you back too much change, would you return the extra money or keep it?

Suppose you and your friends did something you know you shouldn't have done? The grownups found out and mistakenly blamed another child who is also your friend. Your friend will be severely punished for what you did. The only way to save your friend is to admit your mistake. What would you do? Why is this difficult situation?

In all these examples, what would be the most honest action?

So, sometimes people lie; otherwise, they may have to face some punishment. People may lie to get something material or to save money. But we will never gain anything spiritually by dishonest behavior and one lie will usually lead to another. "You can fool some of the people all the time, and you can fool all of the people some of the time- but you can never fool Krishna."

The earth bears so many burdens. She has heavy mountains resting on her. Millions of people walk on her daily. Billions of animals tread on her soil. Giant skyscrapers, trains, and trucks weigh heavily on Mother Earth. In the scriptures, she says she bears these burdens happily, but there is one burden she cannot bear. She cannot bear the burden of a liar.

There is a saying, "For one who never lies, everything he says will become truth." What do you think that means?

A devotee is very truthful. By not telling lies we can be honest people, but better than that is telling the real truth. Krishna is the Absolute Truth. The best "truth" we can tell people is that Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and we are His servants. Most people think that they are their body. We know the truth – that we are the soul, not the body. By telling others about this truth we can free them from material life.

E. Deceptive Behavior

The demon Bakasura also symbolized false or deceptive behavior. Deception means to make a person believe what is not true. It means deliberately trying to trick someone into believing something false. Putana tried to fool Krishna so she could snatch Him away and kill Him. Krishna wasn't fooled by their false behavior and they were killed.

F. How can Krishna help?

1. Always be aware of Krishna's presence in our heart. Remember He is witnessing our actions.
2. Be conscientious to try to do the right thing. If our actions are for the right reason, we won't feel that we have to lie.
3. If you are tempted to lie, be strong and tell the truth. Usually the result is never as bad as we thought it may be.