

# YOGAKSHEMAM *Newsletter*

Bulletin of Yogakshemam (association law 1901)

January/Feb. 2003

Edition : English website

N° 10

## **Sri T. Krishnamacharya's informal talks**

### *Characteristics of spiritual guides*

All our sacred books and all those who expound the hidden contents therein, din into our ears about the significance of devotion that will lead us to God. A simple method has been prescribed to cultivate devotion, viz., to seek the company of those who will ever be immersed in the thoughts of the Almighty and experience the presence of God within. They may lead life like us but remain uninfluenced from the worldly pleasures. They will be uttering God's names, enjoying God's vision and making those associated with them, to be humble, polite and affectionate towards all.

Where holy men meet, there will only be sublime talks and discussion, saturated with the qualities of mercy and benevolence of the Lord. A mortal who has bathed himself in the dust from the feet of such devotees is indeed privileged. So, these messengers of God, though spending their time amidst daily activities, will be thinking only of God and singing His praise. It is through such divine souls that God showers His grace on those who approach them. The holy men will enable their associates to chant God's names constantly and derive mental peace.

Why does man chase after vanishing pleasures and wastes his time?

(Excerpts from my notes, T.K. Sribhashyam)

## **Invocation to Peace**

Lord, make me an instrument of your Peace

Where there is hatred, let me bring peace  
Where there is discord, let me bring union  
Where there is offense, let me bring forgiveness  
Where there is despair, let me bring hope  
Where there is darkness, let me bring your light  
Where there is sadness, let me bring joy

Excerpt from a prayer of St. François

### **Summary :**

- **Editorial: Sri T. Krishnamacharya's informal talks** - Sri T.K. Sribhashyam
- **Andal's Thiruppâvai (Poem 6)** – Sri T.K. Sribhashyam
- **The Indian view of atomic time** - Sri T.K. Sribhashyam
- **Râmânuja, a great social genius**
- **Technical sheet – Biliary lithiasis** – Doc. Nancy Carpentier and Sri T.K. Sribhashyam
- **The spiritual teacher** - Sri T.K. Sribhashyam
- **Training courses and seminaries**
- **Svastha : the shower** – Doc. Gopalakrishna Rao
- **Great love can achieve anything** – Indian tale
- **News from the Sri T. Krishnamacharya Endowment Trust**
- **Devotion and the Christian religion (end)** – Isabelle Ott
- **Yoga Yâjnyavalkya – answer to readers** - Sri T.K. Sribhashyam
- **Indian Recipe : Kheer** – Saad Khan

January 15 represents a very important day in the Indian calendar: it is the winter solstice. This date marks the beginning of Devâyana (the path towards God); it is also the day when the door of Paradise opens up. Yogakshemam has chosen this day to open its door to the Net:

<http://www.yogakshemam.net>

A big thank you to the webmaster Dominique Amsallem, as well as to Cornelia Heyde.

## Ândâl's Thiruppâvai

### *Excerpts from an exclusive commentary by Sri T. Krishnamacharya*

*Thiruppâvai, in Tamil, the language of Tamil Nadu, is a poetic composition that has the power to lead to devotion. Thiruppâvai is a call for women to dedicate themselves to devotion.*

*Poem 6: Listen damsels! Birds are chirping musically in their nests at the onset of dawn. The white conch in the temple of eagle's King is roaring. Won't you listen? Krishna sucked the deadly poison from the devil's breast; kicked the treacherous cart deftly and wrecked it; and on the serpent alighted in the milky ocean He set sleeping. Monks and yogis kept this Krishna in their mind. Arise gently and mutter the name Hari.*

*Lord's name pierces the ear and mind as a rumble and delights you as well as all. It awakens and enthuses as a roar to assemble and to join for the both. Listen and consider, our damsel.*

Ândâl wants all of us to listen to the signs of dawn even as we are in the bed and realise that dawn has set in: the clattering of birds, the roar of conch or the bell from the temple and the soft chanting of saints and the utterance of name 'hari', the destroyer of evil.

From the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> poem, Ândâl brings forth the divine awareness. In this poem, the signs of dawn are one such divine awareness. In this poem, she wakes up those who are new to Divine Awareness.

"Eagle's king" is Lord Krishna or Nârâyana because the royal eagle is his vehicle. The roar of the white conch is the roar of *pranava* or OM, because the sound blown from it is that of OM (refer to *pâñchajanya* in Yogakshemam Newsletter N° 8). "Devil's breast" symbolises the ego (my, mine, our ours etc.), which are related and inherent in the materialistic world. The Lord frees the devotees of this deadly poison of egoism. Likewise, He shatters to pieces the treacherous cart, which symbolises our passion and envy. Monks and yogis meditate on Nârâyana.

Ândâl reminds us that by listening to these sounds and signs of dawn, like the blowing of conch, the chants of priests and the songs of birds piercing our ears, we wake up with a mind engrossed in the Lord.

### **Sri T. Krishnamâchârya's commentary:**

In the first five hymns, Ândâl gives a preface to the goal to be achieved for Lord's experience. In the next ten hymns, she awakens in us the God's experience. Divine Love, the person to be loved (here the Lord), the opportune time to enjoy and the directives of spiritual masters are the pre-requisites for devotion and God awareness.

Ândâl says that just like one would not venture to bathe alone in a flooded river, so too one should seek companions to bathe in the ocean of Lord's bliss. Moreover, since Lord is simple, magnanimous and beautiful, He cannot be enjoyed all alone. Just like a tasty food can be enjoyed only when it is shared with others, so too Lord's experience.

Even if all of us have the same intensity of Love for God, His Bliss does not have the same effect on all. While some become breathless, others become speechless, some others fall into a trance. So, it is advisable to be alone when one experiences God's awareness.

Monks and yogis are metaphorically referred to as birds with the two wings of knowledge and devotion. Even if our soul is described as a bird, it is yet to develop the wings of knowledge and devotion, which would help it to fly higher and higher and join *paramâthma*, the Supreme Soul.

Sri Parâshara Bhatta, one of the greatest Vaishnava saints sang: "Oh! Mother, Your Lord at times, alike father gets enraged, with an intention to exhibit His kindness to the creatures, full of vices. What a wonder! Is there any one in this world who has not committed a vice? By such appropriate favourable words and other manoeuvres, you take us to the Lord, overlooking our vices. That is how

you become our 'mother'." This is the reason why in all Vishnu temples you see Āndāl sitting next to Lord Vishnu.

God gave forty years each to live to a man, a dog, a donkey and an owl. However, man stole twenty years each from the latter three. For forty years, he toils, till sixty he carries family burden like a donkey, after which he shouts at others till eighty like a dog and later remains virtually immobile like the owl.

### **The Indian view of atomic time**

- Sri T. K. Sribhashyam

(Source : *Srimad Bhâgavatham, Canto III, Ch 11*)

*The term "atom" used here to facilitate comprehension does not represent the one used by modern physics, divided itself into sub-particles.*

The material manifestation's ultimate particle, which is indivisible and not formed into a body, is called the atom or *anu*. It exists always as an invisible identity, even after the dissolution of all forms. The matter body is but a combination of such atoms, but it is misunderstood by the common man. Atoms are the ultimate state of the manifest universe. When they stay in their own forms without forming different bodies they are called the unlimited oneness. There are certainly different bodies in physical forms, but the atoms themselves form the complete manifestation.

Atomic time is measured according to its covering a particular atomic pace. That time which covers the unmanifest aggregate of atoms is called the great time (*maha kâla*).

The division of gross time is calculated as follows: two atoms make one double atom, three double atoms make one hexatom. This hexatom is visible through the sun's rays. The time duration needed for the integration of three hexatoms is called a *truti* which is the time occupied in the integration of eighteen atomic particles. It would be equivalent to 1687,5<sup>th</sup> part of our second.

Truti = 0,0005925 sec.

100 truti = 1 Videha ( 0,0592592 sec)

3 videha = 1 lava (0,177777 sec)

3 lava = 1Nimesha (0, 533 sec)

3 nimesha = 1 kshana (1,6 sec)

5 kshana =1 kashta (8 sec)

15 kashta = 1 laghu (2 min)

15 laghu = 1 danda (30 min)

2 danda =1Muhurtha (60 min)

3 muhurtha = 1 prahara or 1 yama (3 hours)

4 prahara = 1 dina (1 day = 12 hours) or 1 râtri or 1 night

8 prahara = 1 nakshatra (24 lunar hours)

15 nakshatra = Paksha (15 days and night)

2 paksha = mâsa (month of 28 days)

4 paksha = 1 rtu (1 season)

3 rtu = âyana (3 seasons or 6 months)

2 âyana = 1 varsha or samvatsara (1 year)

100 varsha = 1 shatamâna

and so on...

### **Râmânuja, a great social genius**

*Sri T. K. Sribhashyam*

Apart from questioning whether God exists at all, some go to the extent of even seeking evidence for certain outstanding and marvellous events which had happened in the lives of God's messengers when they were engaged in their Divine mission. The scriptural texts as well as the chronicles left by scholars should be taken as authentic.

Besides such testimony there were incorporeal voices through which such luminaries were asked to carry out certain tasks.

Sometimes, God, in the form of sanctified idols in temples, used to convey, directly or through the priests, His approval of the proposals of these guides. On some occasions God's accord was sanctioned through dreams.

Râmânuja, besides establishing an alternative system of philosophy to advaita, revealed himself as a great social reformer. In his supreme sympathy for people who desired to reach the goal of salvation, he showed the path of self-surrender. He has thus been acclaimed as a great religious social genius. Many are the sacrifices he had made to promote devotion.

One of the extraordinary noble deeds that Râmânuja performed was to lead the low caste men into the temples. In the stupendous work, he was involved in spreading the gospel of God, which included hard journeys to distant places; he obtained assistance from these men of ordinary level. During his tour in Mysore, Râmânuja, in appreciation of these laymen's service, gave them the title of "thirukkulattar" (or blessed descendants) and allowed them the privilege of entering the holy temples.

Another breath-taking incident was when he paid a visit to the house of a devotee whose wife, finding that there were no food articles in the house (her husband had gone seeking alms) was even prepared to "accommodate" a merchant who was making overtures to her, and obtained abundance of commodities. After food Râmânuja took rest in their hut. The couple adored the saint for his compassion. They later called on the merchant to offer him the holy water and rice grains (a form of benediction from spiritual masters) that Râmânuja gave them. Partaking it the merchant felt a revolution within him. His attitude changed and he prostrated before her. He was later led to Râmânuja, who took him as a disciple.

## **Technical Sheet : Pathology and specific pedagogical indications for Yoga**

- by Doc. Carpentier Nancy, medical doctor, in collaboration with her teacher Sri T.K.Sribhashyam  
- Free hand translation

### **Sheet No. 4:**

#### **Biliary lithiasis or Gallstones (continuation)**

The asana are listed in alphabetical order .:

#### **Favorable Asana:**

Apâna Asana  
Ardha Matsyendra Asana  
Ardha Sethu Bandha Asana  
Baddha Kona Asana with Shîthali  
Bhujanga Asana, lift up while breathing out  
Danda Asana  
Gomukha Asana  
Jatara Parivriti  
Maha Mudra  
Maritchya Asana  
Parigha Asana  
Parvatha Asana, flexion mouvement  
Paschimathâna Asana  
Sarvânga Asana Variations  
Shalabha Asana, lift up while breathing out  
Shîrsha Asana  
Suptha Pâda Angushta Asana  
Suptha Parvatha Asana  
Urdhva Prasutha Pâda Asana  
Uthitha Pâda Angushta Asana  
Vajra Asana, flexion mouvement

#### **Favorable Asana after cholecystectomy :**

Apâna Asana  
Baddha Kona Asana with Shîthali  
Danda Asana  
Gomukha Asana  
Jatara Parivriti

Parigha Asana  
Paschimathâna Asana  
Sarvânga Asana Variations  
Suptha Pada Angushta Asana  
Suptha Parvatha Asana  
Urdhva Prasutha Asana  
Vajra Asana, flexion mouvement

**Favorable Prânâyâma :**

Kapâlabhâti  
Shîthali  
Ujjâyi Anuloma

**Favorable Prânâyâma after cholecystectomy:**

Kapâlabhâti  
Ujjâyi Anuloma

**Contra-indications for yoga practice :**

*The teacher has to take into consideration the general health as well as the contra-indications for yoga practice specific to his student*

Adhomukha Padma Asana  
Dhanura Asana  
Nâva Asana  
Ushtra Asana  
Viparîtha Shalabha Asana

**Therapeutic Food Measures:**

It is necessary to maintain some rules of dietary discipline in the three possible scenarios:

1. For the person who keeps his/her gallbladder with gallstones.
2. For the person who has kept his gallbladder after dissolving stones impervious to X rays by treatment with bile salts.
3. After cholecystectomy.

As long as the stones are present, any heavy meal can trigger a painful episode of cholecystitis. There is always a risk that a gallstone is blocking the bile duct, presenting a medical surgical emergency.

Anyone who has had the opportunity to dissolve his stones, should not forget that he does not have a normal secretion of bile salts. The imbalance will encourage a recurrence of stones without a definite correction of the diet. After cholecystectomy, there is obviously no more risk of cholecystitis. But by eating too much fat can appear: hepatic steatosis (fatty liver), diarrhea, and migraines, overweight...

Here are the general dietary rules:

The main effort will focus primarily on the amount of fat intake per day. The consumption of meat should be minimized (no more than 125 grams per day.) Preference should be given to meats lower in fat: fish, chicken, veal. Cooked eggs and cooked meats (deli) should be avoided. Cheese with more than 20% fat in slices or pieces must be excluded as much as possible. Better avoid gratins. Preferably cook with oil rather than butter. Fried food is also discouraged. Consuming a large quantity of cooked leafy vegetables (like spinach, chard, escarole ...) helps remove excess bile. They are known for their effect on the bile duct.

This is also the case with some fruits such as apples. It is advisable to eat them between meals. It is essential to drink plenty of plain water and be very moderate in alcohol consumption. There is no restriction on starchy food.

### **The spiritual teacher**

Just like a boat helps us crossover a river from one bank to another, so too does a spiritual teacher. He helps us crossover the river of life (*samsâra*) amidst all hindrances. But the boat does not take us beyond the banks. So too, the spiritual teacher does not take us to God. It is for us to continue our journey to reach Him.

Just as the ladder helps us claim to heights, but stays in its own place, so too the spiritual teacher helps us climb to higher realms, but stays in its own place so that other pilgrims can make use of him. It is for us to walk over the ladder and continue our pursuit.

In our journey towards God or Spiritual Truth, all our efforts would be fruitless if we do not follow and respect the spiritual teacher's advices. In India service to spiritual teacher is next only to Service to God. Just as a tired man takes shelter under a tree and sleeps soundly, without caring for any possible danger from the tree, so too one should take shelter in the teachings of the spiritual master.

### **Training courses and seminars**

16.3.2003 – “Comment maîtriser ses émotions par la voie du Yoga”, Paris, France. Contact: Patrice Delfour +33 1 30 88 50 94

17.5.2003 – «Comment maîtriser ses émotions par la voie du Yoga», Grenoble, France. Contact: Estelle Lefebvre +33 4 76 36 21 68

14/15.6.2003 – «Wie der traditionelle Yoga die spirituelle Suche unterstützt“, Sri T.K. Sribhashyam. Fischerhude bei Bremen, Germany. Contact: Cornelia Heyde +49 2406 65203

6/7.9.2003 (in French) and 25/26.10.2003 (in German) – „Prânâyâma et Dharana selon l'enseignement traditionnel de Sri T. Krishnamacharya », Training program of the Swiss Yoga Federation. Contact: Armand Vitali +41 79414 95 60

### **Svastha: the shower**

*Doctor Gopalakrishna Rao – Bangalore  
(Ayurvedic medicine practitioner)*

The shower is considered a way to purify body and spirit in all cultures where it is integrated with daily activities. This is not the case of the bath. Since antiquity, the shower is also a way to refresh and to relax. But modern man thinks that the fact of applying creams and perfumes can fill the same role as the shower. Thus, he wears more and more perfume.

Physical activity stimulates the production of transpiration and sweat, allowing the skin to fill one of its basic functions. Physical inactivity and sedentary lifestyle inhibit this function and the application of perfumes makes the situation worse.

The food wastes are eliminated through urine, feces, sweat and exhalation. It is as essential to eliminate urine and feces as it is for sweat. The elimination of sweat cannot and should not be inhibited in any way to avoid consequences on health.

According to Ayurveda, the shower awakens digestive activity, reduces physical fatigue, removes dullness, increases physical strength, reduces thirst and refreshes the senses of perception and the mind. Moreover, it strengthens the joints.

Shower can be taken with cold water or hot water. The cold shower stimulates nerve endings, whereas a hot shower stimulates the functions of elimination, because it is anti-spasmodic. Ayurveda recommends a hot shower in autumn and winter and a cold shower in the spring and summer. However, Ayurveda does not recommend a hot shower on the head and face, except when they are first 'impregnated' with oil. Moreover, Ayurveda advises against cold shower for children. Remember that cold shower has a vasoconstrictor effect, while the hot shower has a vasodilator effect.

According to the principles of healthy living advocated in Ayurveda, the shower is taken in the morning upon waking, after urination and bowel movement. Often a shower gives the urge to go to toilet because of its antispasmodic action. It is important not to refrain from doing so!

Ayurveda gives more specific guidance for certain diseases. We find, therefore, the shower with a herbal tea or a decoction of herbs or minerals or with water mixed with a medicinal oil for a shower ... The shower for young children is mixed with herbal tea of arnica, calendula, chamomile or certain soothing herbs.

A shower is not limited simply to pouring water on the body. A shower has four phases: thorough wetting of the body, rubbing the body with natural fibers, with or without soap, again pouring plenty of water and drying of the body with a cotton towel rubbing the body's front and back side.

The shower is not recommended immediately after a meal as well as in the following situations: conjunctivitis, ear infections, dysentery, vomiting, flatulence, indigestion and acute heart disease.

## **Great love can achieve anything**

*Indian tale*

Once upon a time there was a fine stag who ruled a herd of deers in a forest. It had a beautiful wife. The doe was very devoted to her husband and helped him in all matters of life.

One day, the stag was caught in the trap of a hunter and the doe was very frightened as was the stag. All the friends of the stag left him. But the doe remained steadfast next to him and waited for the hunter to come.

As soon as the hunter came, she fell on her knees and begged, "Sir! please make a nice bed of leaves for me and my husband and then kill me first and then my husband and you can have a nice feast." The hunter was so amazed and surprised by her love, that he went to first free the stag before he prepared the bed of leaves, and in a split second, the stag and the doe ran after being free.

## **News from Sri T. Krishnamacharya Endowment Trust**

*Philosophical debate at Mysore Sanskrit College*

Like every year, a philosophical debate was held at Mysore Sanskrit College by Sri T. Krishnamacharya Endowment Trust. Its representative presented three awards to the best students and a scholarship for each of the disciplines of Indian philosophy. In 2003, the debate *ex tempore* in Sanskrit was held on Wednesday, January 29. The candidates were informed about the topics only fifteen minutes before the start of the tests. The audience actively participated in the session of questions and answers. Students of sixteen traditional institutions of Karnataka participated. One of the oldest students of Sri T. Krishnamacharya and Mysore Sanskrit College, Sri Swamiji Rangapriya, chaired the debate.

## **The concept of devotion in the Christian religion (end)**

*Isabelle OTT, Pastor, President of the Synodal Council*

### **Community and spiritual guidance**

Membership of a church community is not absolutely necessary for salvation in the eyes of Protestants. It is nevertheless a privilege and makes it possible to accompany the spiritual progress of the church's members, thanks first of all to the sermon, which may be flanked by Holy Communion, as well as to care of the soul and spiritual guidance.

### **Perfection (or fulfillment)**

Conversion, the first step on the road to spirituality, is followed by regeneration. With no strings attached, God's free love irresistibly draws the believer towards a new life which will be crowned by sanctification. Through sanctification, our whole lives are imbued by the presence of God – at work, in relations with others, with our partners and families, in political commitment, how we manage money, leisure, etc. Everything is illuminated by Christ and transfigured by the Holy Ghost. Protestant Christians dedicate their lives to sanctification because they know they are accepted by God and feel inspired and supported by the Holy Ghost. Sanctification is a gesture of gratitude which fits into daily existence. Inspired by Christ, this perfection takes the form of loving God, oneself and others, in particular those who suffer hurt and humiliation. The ultimate aim is a life in God, which the Christian lives in God and which God lives in him (according to the Gospel according to St. John, chapter 4, verses 20 to 26).

### **Conclusion:**

While Protestant spirituality tends to stress the auditory, the Orthodox tradition for its part gives pride of place to the kinesthetic and Roman Catholic devotion gives priority to the visual. In other words in this respect, as in many others, the various Christian religions complement each other and show how much they need each other.

Piety could be compared to language, because like language, it evolves; people who have grown up in the same tradition of piety communicate with each other subtly. Piety, like a mother

tongue, is a matter of emotivity. A spirituality for the third Millennium would seem to invite us to be at ease with several forms of piety or “languages”. So it is important to have a sound knowledge of our spiritual roots to enable us to visit other traditions and learn the ritual languages by means of which the faithful address God. Otherwise, we will remain limited in the same way as people who know only their mother tongue are limited in today’s world.

## Yoga Yâjnyavalkya – reply to readers questions

- Sri T. K. Sribhashyam

We are so much used to studying the five *yama* and five *niyama* according to Pâtanjali (Pâtanjali Yoga Sutra) that many readers are surprised to read in Mireille’s article that Yâjnyavalkya describes the ten *yama* and the ten *niyama*. I would like to reply to your questions and describe the ten *yama* and ten *niyama* prescribed in Yoga Yâjnyavalkya.

In the first two chapters of Yoga Yâjnyavalkya, we find the description of the ten principles of *yama* and of *niyama*. While *ahimsa*, *satya*, *asteya*, *brahmacharya*, *daya*, *âjjava*, *kshama*, *dhriti*, *mithâhâra*, and *shaucha* are the ten *yama*, *tapas*, *santoshâ*, *âstikya*, *dâna*, *îshvara puja*, *sidhânta shravana*, *hrî mati*, *japa* and *vrata* are the ten *niyama*. Naturally, these have to be followed in action, in speech and in thought.

*Ahimsa* is not creating afflictions in others. *Satya* is doing well to all the beings. *Asteya* is transmitting and applying the teachings of *rishi* (the first teachers of Veda). *Brahmacharya* is discarding interrelations between the senses and the objects of experience. *Daya* is the protection of all the beings that surround us. *Âjjava* is considering the *pravratâka* and *nivartâka* as equal. *Kshama* is accepting the pleasure and displeasure with equanimity and considering with equanimity those who provided us pleasure and displeasure. *Dhriti* is mental stability free from the influence of others. *Mithâhâra* is feeding the body with the minimum of food and avoiding the excess. *Shaucha* is cleaning the body and the mind from impurities.

Coming to *niyama*, *tapas* is keeping the body perfectly clean internally and externally. *Santoshâ* is the maintaining of the characteristics of happiness all the time. *Âstikya* is respecting the principles of *dharma* (the basis of moral and human ethics, the natural law of the universe) and *adharmâ* (the opposite of dharma).. *Dâna* is respectful offering one’s gains according to one’s social and familial set-up. *Îshvara puja* is sincere offering of prayers etc., according to one’s capacity. *Sidhânta shravana* is studying of sacred scriptures. *Hrîmati* is respecting women and not putting them to shame. *Japa* is repetition of *mantra* or god’s name. *Vrata* is following strictly the rules of *dharma* and *artha* (material wealth gained whilst respecting the requirements of dharma) in the quest of the knowledge of *âtma*.

The more you study Indian philosophy the more you will come across the principles of Yama and Niyama. Yoga mentions only a few.

## The page of Srimathi T. Namagiriammal (Wife of Sri T. Krishnamacharya)

### Kheer

#### Ingredients (for 4 – 6 persons)

½ cup (125g) Basmati rice

8.5 dl milk

5.0 dl full cream

250g – 300g sweet condensed milk

4 tbl.sp sugar

12 pods green cardamom (crushed)

30g almonds cut in sticks

30g raisins (optional)

5 drops Kewra (screw pine or pandanus\*) water (optional) or rosewater (optional)

Pandanus or Kewra trees bear highly fragrant flowers similar to that of roses. It is used to flavour both sweet and savory dishes

#### Garnishing:

10 pc whole almond nuts or non-salted pistachio nuts (slivered)

Or 125 mg powdered saffron.

Soak basmati rice in water for 30 minutes. Drain the rice and put it in a liquidizer/blender with milk. Run the liquidizer for a short time so that the rice is coarsely grinded. Cook the milk, rice and cream in a large pan for about 10 minutes on a medium heat while constantly stirring with a flat wooden spoon. Add sweet condensed milk, sugar and cardamom to the kheer. Cook it for another 6-10 minutes. Add almonds and raisins (optional). The main trick in cooking kheer is constantly stirring to avoid letting kheer sticking to the bottom of the pan. Pour the kheer in a platter dish. Garnish it with slivered almonds or pistachio nuts. Potato peeler knife is useful to sliver nuts for garnishing. Alternatively kheer can also be garnished with saffron. Mix saffron powder with 1 teaspoon warm water. Spread the saffron water evenly on the kheer. Serve cold.

*During his stay in Northern Pakistan Sri T. Krishnamacharya's food consisted mainly of Kheer prepared by his Sufi Master. I thank Mr. Saad Khan from Islamabad for having provided us the secret of this delicious, refreshing and nourishing recipe.*

*Sri T.K. Sribhashyam*