

A Conversation with God by Nayantara Soni

Cast:

Dhruv – Nirav

Tanusha – Neha

Nayantara – Asha

Namita – Preeti

Ummesh – Karan

Nirav: Hey God! What's up? I mean like literally. What's up? (point towards ceiling and snickers) Get it?

God: (laughs) Yes Nirav. How are you?

Nirav: How am I? Life's tough man especially if you're me. Lately I can't get my parents off my back. All they do is nag and nag and nag.

God: Your parents .. -

Nirav: Yeah yeah I know. My parents want the best for me and I get it. I do! But it's like my best isn't their best you know.

God: It's important that you-

Nirav: Look I don't think you're following what I'm trying to say here. You have no idea what's going on in my life man. A few days ago my parents viewed my report card. (Nirav does an imitation of his mom) 'Nirav! Only 42 in Add Maths. That's just not good enough. Your brother Mike used to score close to hundreds'. Mike this. Mike that. Give me a break! What is so great about Mike huh?

God: Nirav I believe-

Nirav: Only the fact that he's the perfect son and the perfect student and the perfect everything. Sometimes I feel like just shouting, 'Hey look here. Notice me! What about me?' (pauses for a moment and looks accusingly at God). God why didn't you give me good brains like Mike? You could have at least given me good looks at least. Life's just not fair man.

God: Nirav, there are-

Nirav: Look dude I don't have time for this. I'm due on my homework because I wanted to watch that movie yesterday. Excuse me right now cause I've got a pile of trigonometry questions that needs to be attended to. And if I don't its going to be Mike this Mike that mantra again.

Asha : Hi God. Sorry I haven't kept in touch lately. I've just been so busy with my life lately. Anyways I need some help.

God: Well sure Asha, tell me what's bothe -

Asha: Ok, listen. Next week is the final exams and I just don't know if I can do it. This whole year I've been able to scrape through but that's cause there were always tips and leaks. It's just, we had a change of teachers and well they refuse to let us in on anything. Not even a single hint. I mean what's the big deal. When am I ever going to apply subjects like History and Moral to in my life?? Just give the tips already!!!

God: Asha that's really not the way-

Asha: What I'm trying to ask is just a little bit of help. Can't you help me out? I mean just throw some signs and hints in the shape of the alignment of birds flying in the sky, or perhaps in the shape of the next chapatti Didi tries to make. Maybe even the sound the lizard makes could be a message in Morse code.

God: I can't-

Asha: Oh please please please God. Anything will do, God. Just a simple tip at least, please. I mean you're God. You obviously know what's gonna come out on that test, don't you?

God: I need you to listen to what I -

Asha: Look God. I know it's wrong. I know I should have studied in the first place. But what am I supposed to do now? It's too late. I can't fail. What's everyone going to say? I really need your help. If you can somehow get the paper to leak or make it easier for me, I'd owe you my life. I promise I'll study next time, pray everyday, turn into a vegetarian and maybe even read Bhagavad Geeta once a week. Promise. So how bout it, deal?

God: (sighs) Asha you-

Asha: (Reading a text on her phone) Oh that's Sanjay. He says he has some tips. Thanks, God! You really are a life saver. See you later.

God looks in wonder at Asha as she leaves and shakes his head.

Preethi: OMG God! It's been like ages. How are you?

God: Hey Preethi. I'm just-

Preethi: OMG! You know I've just got so much running on my mind right now. It's almost the end of the year and I have this totally cool idea about throwing the party. Now I have to figure out so many things like the theme of the party, what to wear and of course the invitation list. I feel so stressed out. I really want to make this

God: You seem to have a lot –

Preethi: OMG! You know what else? We got this new boy in class last week. Wow! I have to say you did a good job making him. Seriously. Those dimples are to die for.

God: Listen Preethi, I have to say some-

Preethi: UH-HUH. Ok just listen to what I have to say for a minute please. I'm sorry I haven't been praying or reading the Geeta lately. It's just I have been so swamped and busy lately. I mean I have a life! You get what I'm trying to say don't you?

God: I just want to say that-

Preethi: I have to gain more followers on twitter and update my facebook status. Life's so not easy. I could use some help you know.

God: Preethi, maybe you-

Preethi: Oops sorry to cut this short but Pooja has some juicy gossip about the new boy. Tty!!

Karan: (chants Gayathri Mantra and mixes up the lines unknowingly) Hey God! It's me Karan. I'm in tight spot now and I need - Oh yeah, how rude of me. I forgot to ask, how are you God?

God: Thanks Karan, I have been looking for the opportunity to speak to-

Karan: (interrupts) Oh that's great. I'm glad things are working out for you. Being God sounds great! But listen, I need your help. We got in to the finals of the futsal championship. It's going to be the game of the century and everyone is really proud of us.

God: Alright, then what's the problem Karan?

Karan: Everyone's counting on me. I'm the whole reason we got into the finals. It was me that scored all the goals in the previous games. All me. But this is a whole new level man. This is the finals! I need my teammates to perform too. That's why I need your help. Can you ensure my teammates do their best during the game?

God: Karan let me say so someth-

Karan: I'm really not asking for a lot. I mean I'm doing my part. I'm working so hard. Everyday after school it's practice and then practice again and then I hit the gym to work out on my stamina and fitness, It's the same everyday. School, practice, practice and then the gym. I really need to win this game God. Look, I'm the one doing all the work here, I just need some luck from your side. Can you help me out? Can you promise me a win in the finals?

God: Karan you need to understand that-

Karan: Look the winning team gets a thousand dollars and I promise you that if you help us out I'll ensure that some of that money will be donated to a charity or some cause. I really need your help God.

God: It's great that you are doing your part but-

Karan: I'm so glad you think so. I am counting on you God. Please don't let me down. ALRIGHT, IT'S TIME FOR PRACTICE NOW. Gotta run!

God: Karan wait just a minute!

Neha: God. (calls out for God)

Short pause

Neha: I can't do this anymore. I don't understand anything. Everything seems pointless. There is no meaning. You go to school. You graduate. You go to college. You study. You graduate. You work. You save money. You get stuck in a rat race. You have a family. You pray. You go to temple. You watch tv. You follow fashion. You read the news. You grow old. Everything just seems pointless suddenly. I'm stuck. I just don't know anymore. I feel like I'm choking. I'm scared. Is this life? Is this all there is? I don't see the point-

God: Shh Shh Shh Shh Shh.

Neha: God-

God: Shhh. Listen.(silence)

Listen Neha.

(GOD STANDS UP – speaks to crowd)

When will they learn? After how many failures will they learn? Can they learn without suffering? When will they wake up? Why don't they learn? As you sow, so shall you reap.

Bargains. Deals. Complains. Is that all you have come to offer me? And what do you ask in return?

I often wonder sometimes. Why do they feel sleepy during a 3-minute prayer but are able to stay awake during a 3-hour movie? Why are they so bored when they read holy books but find it so easy to read other books? Why are places of worship getting smaller, but bars and clubs and malls expanding? Why is it so easy to worship a celebrity but so difficult to engage with God?

In the 18th and final chapter of the Gita, verse 72 when I last speak to Arjuna, I ask:

kaccid etac chrutam partha
tvayaikagrena cetasa
kaccid ajnana-sammohah
pranastas te dhananjaya

I ask Arjuna, Have you heard what I have said with single minded attention? Has your delusion born of ignorance been dispelled O Dhananjaya?

What I am really asking is have you listened? Have you listened to what I have said? You have understood, yes. But will you listen now. Will you do as I have told you to?

A wise man once said, 'Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results'. Wake up! Stop tormenting yourself. Listen to what I have said.

Knowing isn't sufficient enough for those who know already. Practice. Every day, practice what you know. That is all I ask of you. And have no doubt in me. I am here.

Lights go out. All clear stage except Neha. Lights back on. Neha is sitting cross-legged on floor.

Neha: (with eyes closed recites)

Yatra yogeshwara Krishno,

Yatra partho dhanurdharaha

Tatra shri vijayo bhutir

dhruba nitir matir mama

Wherever there is Krsna, the Lord of Yoga and Partha the archer, assured is there prosperity, victory, glory and sound policy. Where there is vision and acumen along with readiness to act with conviction there would be wealth, success and justice.

We should completely surrender to Him and take shelter in His love. God asks us total self-giving and gives us in return the power of spirit, which changes every situation.

Hari Om Tat Sat