

Note:-These are personal notes made from Master Parvathi Kumar's Bhagavatam Speech recording, translated from Telugu and do not reflect Master's words entirely. Please use them for reference only. Not for publication.

“Srimad Bhagavatam”

Discourse by Master Parvathi Kumar - Canto 1 – Discourse 5

[For private circulation to WTT members]

Considering Sage Sutha as their Guru, Sounakadi Munis request Sutha to tell them that which is most auspicious. Sutha prays to the Lord and his Guru by recollecting Sage Sukha, Veda Vyasa, Nara & Narayana and Bharati (Goddess Saraswati) and start giving the answer to the question asked by Sounakadi Munis. In the last class, we studied up to 55 poem.

(Master reads the next few poems before continuing with the explanation.)

In just one piece of prose (sentence) Sage Sutha gives the synthesis of Bhagavatam to Sounakadi Munis. Now we will elaborate and try to understand that sentence. It is to be understood properly because the secret of Bhagavatam is imbibed in that sentence, in its completeness. We are again and again taught to realize the absolute divine principle in this book in order to taste it to the full extent. By practicing it, we can realize THAT by whatever name you call it Satya Darshana (realization of truth) or Atma Darshana (realization of self/soul). It is given in different ways for the splendor of it. We get a chance to achieve it through practice and perseverance. This prose piece gives us exquisite descriptions and the highest truths. Elders omit the prose part and focus on poems only but from prose we can grasp many secrets given in Bhagavatam. So Master EK gives detailed explanation for this sentence.

In this sentence, all the ingredients required for the practice to be done to realise THAT are given. If this is practiced in the prescribed manner recollecting the Lord, the self (soul) is realised and devotion is inherited.

Remember! Anyone who is doing some practice in a continued manner, time and again they get into emotions irritation, anger, laziness, hatred, malice, jealousy, displeasure, dejection, etc. because of Rajas (dynamism) and Tamas (inertia) qualities present in them. As you practice more and more, they come out of you. This is an important thing. One may not be able to bear when these things come out. One behaves having overpowered by these emotions. With wonder, they feel why these things are coming when they are trying to realize God in them. This is because there are several things in them which stand in the way of realization. We do not even know that they exist in us.

While practicing, they come out and cause us despair, anger, irritation and many problems. The secret given in Bhagavatam is to recollect Krishna and his stories while practicing. It is because

there is an astonishing thing in Sri Krishna's recollection. Unknowingly our hearts are relieved with a sweet touch that flows from His eyes. That is why; the devotees of Krishna forget the surroundings in his recollection. Devotees like Sakku Bai, Meera Bai and others; they forgot the mundane life easily in the adoration of Krishna. In the worship of Krishna that captivating experience is there. So singing and listening of songs on Krishna is very important. Devotional songs of Krishna give solace to heart. It rekindles enthusiasm and devotion is inherited and becomes natural. That secret is told here. That will avoid obstructions.

One should have a good taste for music. All need not sing as it may not be pleasing if everyone sings but listen to those who sing gracefully. Those who hear intently can sing very well in future. This is another secret. Though we would like to sing, first we must listen carefully. Hearing should be so engrossing that the feeling must unite with the 'Raga' (tune) and 'Bhava' (meaning). Many who do great deeds get enthralled in music. When ever your mind is in irritation, listen to music for some time; it will take away the ailments of the heart and reduces the burden by making it feel light. So we have to practice listening to devotional music.

Those who do not like music cannot like "Samaganam". You are not initiated into Samaveda (3rd among Vedas) if you do not have liking for "Samaganam". Initiation into Samaveda means to experience the eternal rhythm of inhalation and exhalation. This is the eternal song of Soul/Self. Without this experience, you are not eligible to know Thy Self. So devotion and music are intermingled with each other. Without music there is no devotion. Without devotion there is no music. So the devotee sings songs in praise of God like Tyagaraja who sang songs like "Rara ma intidaka" [Please come to my house], "Nee daya rada"[Don't you have compassion for me], "Brochevarevarura" [Who will show mercy on me except you?] When you listen to these songs, a dialogue will start between you and THAT in you. To converse with God there is no other way than to listen to devotional music. Same is the case with Annamacharya's songs and Ramadasa's songs. We should be fortunate to listen to these. Those who cannot listen to songs lose the chance of getting solution to the problems they face. No doubt about that.

Listening to these songs lessens the burden off our minds and as we are in stuck in mental place, pleasing the mind is equivalent to pleasing thyself. This peacefulness is not attained with by reading Veda Sutras because we do not know the meaning of them. Understanding the meaning and reading of them is next step. First we should focus on devotional songs. They are in all the languages. One must listen to the songs of his own language and identify with God. Otherwise all the weaknesses in us always pull us down and disable us from this pursuit. We cannot sustain the taste in it.

Food if you cook tastefully, you can eat with relish. If the nutritious food is not cooked deliciously, we cannot eat for more days. However good it is for health, it is difficult to take balanced diet without any taste. So this taste is utilized in eating food for your health. Why do you take food daily? There is taste as well as nutrition quality. Tasteless food cannot be taken with relish. Some years back we tried eating tasteless food but could not continue. There is a

negligence to eat tasteless food without oil and salt. We develop dislike for food if we have to take lemon water, fresh vegetables instead of regular dishes like Idli, Dosa, etc. This aversion to food leads us to avoid eating which results in us becoming weak. In the same way in order to be in alignment with the Lord and to develop a taste for it, recollecting Krishna is given as the best means, according to Bhagavatam.

One cannot conquer mind with mind. How can you conquer mind with mind? Can you beat your right hand with your right hand? You can beat your right hand with left hand and vice-versa. It is foolish thought to win the mind with the mind alone. The mind that is in the control of senses and it cannot control itself not to do certain things. So hatred, despair and obstruction are increasing. Instead of thinking about these things, to be with Krishna is the best way, according to Bhagavatam. If you want to avoid these impediments, it is not possible. They do not leave you. In the recollection of Krishna, the energy that you get will enable you to get rid of the impediments that you face. Mad thoughts tend to come to your mind despite your dislike. They are sure to come. Krishna's recollection is the only solution to this. Whatever is an impediment earlier turns out to be God Himself. Slowly other things get dropped down one by one. This is what is called 'Renunciation'. Just as darkness goes away when light comes, these leave as God settles in you. When fire burns an object, it destroys the qualities of that object. Recollecting the Lord loosens these fastened threads.

We think more about a thing which we wish to leave. That which we dislike comes to our memory more and more. We might forget which we like but we always remember that which we hate. We might not remember those whom we love always but we always recollect those whom we hate. So Rishis found a psychological key to overcome these impediments. The way of Rishis is to do what is to be done but not to think of what ought not to be done.

While recollecting Krishna, you cannot remember any other mundane object. That is the specialty in having devotion towards Krishna. Krishna has attraction which is a special quality that is not in other Gods. Just as our senses are alluring, Krishna also through the magic of his music can attract our Chittam, mind and senses. As you keep recollecting Krishna, slowly everything appears like him only. Everything is Krishna. There is nothing else. So renunciation naturally occurs to such a one. If you can see THAT in all, you are said to be Knowledgeable, otherwise not.

On November 23, 1922 Sri Aurobindo experienced the same. When he was in jail he was blessed with this experience. Earlier Master Devapi came and gave his presence to Sri Aurobindo. He was told, "Do not think that this is a jail and also about these people who are punishing you. Consider all this as Krishna". Then Aurobindo started the practice and started seeing Krishna in everything. He saw Krishna in the iron rods of his Jail, in the gate keeper and in the small room where all activities like eating, sleeping, toilet are to be done. He saw Krishna even in his excretion activity. This feeling made him see everything like Krishna. Jail people were astonished and started liking him. This is the path of Bhagavatam. Read the book, "My Alipur

Jail Experience”. It is available in English and Telugu. We are so indolent that we do not turn our minds to reading books. When we read such books we understand the greatness of those saints. This happened in the twentieth century. This is not something that happened 1000s of years ago. So they reduced his punishment and sent him home. It is not so easy to happen as it was the time of British rule in India. In the present days also there are great devotees like Shri Aurobindo. We must read their stories. When we read the stories of great people, we must understand what the turning point in their lives was. Since then Krishna was there in his mind. This is what is called knowledge.

Krishna’s stories are nothing but the deeds of the Lord in this creation because the whole universe is his form and he is the embodiment of every object in creation. So the form is His and the behavior also is His. This is an important point given in Bhagavatam. We should not think whether others are giving us happiness or not. As we see the Lord in them, we get happiness.

In Bhagavatam it is stressed that we must hold God’s feet and it leads us to Dharma.

We have four Pusushardhas (Aims of life for a person):

- Dharma – law/righteousness
- Ardha - cause/motive/wealth
- Kama - pleasure/desire
- Moksha - liberation

(The meaning varies as per context)

It is said that Ardha and Kama must be directed by Dharma. But Bhagavatam does not say that the practices in pursuit of God should be based on Dharma. Mahabharata speaks about Dharma as the primary aspect. But in Bhagavatam, you are asked to align with God first and Dharma naturally follows after as your mind sets on God deeply. So worshipping God leads you to the path of Dharma.

According to Bhagavatam, first comes God and then Dharma. If you keep on worshipping God, dharma automatically comes to you. With the worldly pleasures you cannot observe Dharma completely. “If others are like that (not following dharma), why should I be different?” this question crops up in your mind. This is because our mind compares us with those who are lower to us and feels that we are ok but the mind does not compare with someone higher. This is human nature. Most of them always support their stand and feel satisfied but they do not probe into themselves and do not try to find faults in themselves impartially. One who is able to identify his faults and corrects them is the one who can travel forward in the right direction. An egoistic person can never find his faults. It is because he is under the impression that what ever

he is doing is right. So he does not realize his mistakes and does not know why he is suffering so much.

So when one prays to the Lord and recollects him all the time, he will move forward in the path of Satwa(Poise). If one grows in poise, the other two qualities of “Rajas and Tamas” (dynamism & inertia) get reduced. Ego is supported by dynamism and inertia. As poise grows, ego gets subdued. By doing prayer to God, poise becomes natural. Dharma is always associated with poise. So if we have devotion to God, Dharma will be with us. So it is not correct to say that God is with us as we are with dharma because we may not be able to stick to dharma all the time.

In Mahabharata, Dharmaraja was the only one who stuck to dharma and no one else. So as Dharma is dependent on God, if you can practice to see God in everyone, Dharma is with you. Other things like Ardhra and Kama, come with Dharma. So you have all the four “Purushardhas” without any other effort. The state in which you are is itself Moksha (State of liberation). You need not struggle hard for liberation separately. This is because when you are seeing God in all, listening to God in all and doing everything for God; When you have the strong feeling that you are with God, That state itself is “Moksha”. So the secret of Bhagavatam is that you are getting Purushardhas without any extra effort.

So the first thing that Sutha is telling us is:

One must practice to see the world as the beautiful manifestation of Krishna Himself. Listen to the stories of Krishna. Listen to the songs of Krishna. Listen to the life history of Krishna.

The Second instruction is:

Krishna said in Bhagavad-Gita who he is. He showed who he was in eleventh chapter as “Viswa rupa Darshanam”. In tenth chapter he showed how he pervades the whole creation. He showed how the creation came into being with the blend of three qualities. It was self evident to Arjuna that he was the Absolute one; the Super Soul. So to see that Krishna always is given as the second instruction.

If listening to the stories of Krishna, singing songs of Krishna, and experiencing the presence of Krishna by doing these things is the first prescribed method, the second way is to see Him in everything. These are the two teachings in this prose piece.

One who is with God need not work hard for the sake of any desires, money, or dharma. As all dharmas are where God is, there is no worry about the fulfillment of all four Purushardhas. We do not think about gaining something by doing some work. The work you do is God Himself. It is for God that we are doing every work.

Usually in this world result is the most important thing. This is the greatest obstacle for liberation. Not having any worry in your mind is a state of liberation. Some feeling or other always worries us. It may be about money, it may be about family, it may be about children, or

one's own health, the health of his people, or about their welfare. If these botherations are there in mind, that is the state of bondage. If some one is there who is not worried about any thing in life and he is above all these botherations that state is the state of liberation. Those who see THAT in all are in the state of liberation naturally. Any feeling is dangerous whether of happiness or sadness.

What is the root? God. In Vedam, the divine principle is called 'Tatwam'.

Tat= THAT

Twam= I AM

I AM THAT I AM. What is visible around you is only you. You are THAT. Those who remember that "I AM THAT I AM", knows that there is nothing that does not belong to him. Such a one, as he loves himself, loves everything as he does not believe in the existence of two but only One.

As the divine principle is called in Veda as **Tatwam**, in Upanishads, it is called '**Brahmam**'. Brahmam means THAT from which the creation came out. Brahmanam means to create. As Brahmam did bramhanam creation took place. Each one of us has his own creation; family, profession, house, and so on. Just like our creation comes out of us, the whole creation came out of THAT. Our creation makes us cry, whereas HE enjoys his creation as HE sits on it and not in it. We are in our creation but not above it. So he is everything. Scientists call him the '**Paramatma**' (Super soul/basis for all beings). Devotees call him '**Bhagavan**'. 'Bhagamu' means place of birth. THAT from which everything is born is called Bhagavan. He is called in Bhagavatam '**Antaryami**' (all pervading one). We construct a house and live in. Similarly, the Lord created everything and lives in everything as pulsation and consciousness. All the behavior and acts done by the beings is due to his presence in them.

God does not behave through the beings though he lives in them. Then who is behaving through us? God! How is this possible? It is like electricity which makes a bulb shine, an amplifier to produce sound, in a t v it shows pictures, and so on. Electricity does not stick to any instrument. Is the instrument working or electricity working? Electricity gives its presence while the instrument does its work. The instrument came out of nature. Many forms come out of nature and the Lord permeates them all. With the same presence, each form works different and gives a different experience.

Is electricity doing the work? No! It is not doing. Is electricity not doing the work? No! It does not work without electricity.

The Lord says "I am not doing anything." Then what are you doing? "I am giving my presence. That is why nothing sticks to me." He enters everything but does not do anything. That is why he is also called 'Purusha'. He gives his presence and the forms created by nature, by the blend of

the 3 qualities, behave differently. In this form, where are we? We are THAT. We descended from THAT. We are more identified with our form and behavior. We are neither form nor behavior. We enter into it and help this machine work like this. This awareness should be there. Sometimes the amplifier makes disturbing noise. If the electric connection is removed, it neither makes noise nor works. In the same way in some person's, the mind makes the restless noises due to the presence of divine. The mind or instrument is making noise. Not you. So you must have the right identity. We say this is 'Mine' but not 'I'. We say 'this is my leg, this is my heart'. This is what is called Self study or self introspection. We must contemplate whether we are instruments or consciousness. When these two things are intertwined, there may be many smells in the instruments. The smell of the instrument does not touch the person who enters into it. Krishna demonstrated it to us. He said "The whole creation came out of the nature that came out of me, by the virtue of the 3 qualities. I stand as the basis for nature and everything came out of nature."

Similarly, everything that comes from us emerges out of our nature. If you also think that you came from THAT, your attachments with these things get reduced slowly. This is possible easily with the practice of seeing the Lord in all. So it is essential to see the Lord in all. If you get irritated or bored with this activity, we must make it peaceful by hearing to devotional music.

Sutha said that we have to follow God according to Varnashrama Dharma. Varnashram Dharmas were born from the nature of the bodies.

Some people can do only physical work properly. Their intelligence will not permit them more than that. No one can put as much physical effort as they can. So they are made to do physical work and they are protected. Those who can do physical labour are called Sudras. Some people transported things from one place to the other place making things available to people. They are good in this kind of activity so they are called Vysyas. It is foolish to think that one is greater than the other. It is just a difference in the nature of their bodies.

Those who are capable of fighting battles and wage wars and protect the country are called Kshatriyas. Some only have intelligence but cannot do any of the above jobs. So they teach and they are called Brahmins. In every person these four qualities exist but what quality is imposing in them, they turn out to be like that finally. So the Varnas are based on the human body's nature and in course of time they became hereditary which is a distortion. A person should do that profession in which he is interested. It should not be forced on any one against his wish. Everyone must have this liberty. The education to everyone should be in such a direction that one takes up the work that he likes and is good at.

Vidura and Parasurama did not enter the battlefield though they were born Kshatriyas. If we take up the profession which we do not like there will be conflict, in the mind. Everyone should take up the work according to his nature. Here earning money is not important. Brahmin, Kshatriya,

Vysya and Sudra; everyone earns money but the thing is each one should be doing a job of his nature. That is important.

Suppose we are not much interested in spiritual practices but you are into it to gain some greatness, it will lead you to a conflict. Do not do it for some fame. It will lead you to despair. Your mind is bent on watching a TV show and you come here just to gain a good name, you might not enjoy it. One must not come with sadness. You decide what you want. By fortieth year you decide what you want to become.

You can do Spiritual practices while working as per your nature. There are people who did Spiritual practice being a butcher, being a cobbler, and being boatmen. Nothing wrong in it. They are all Rishis. There are Rishis in Sudras, Vysyas, Kshatriyas, Brahmins. Rishi is a person who can see both inside and outside. That is what is called “Antareekshanamu” (To be able to see inside). That is “Antaryami Darshanam” (To see the all pervading God in all). If a king comes to do penance by leaving his kingdom, his mind is filled with thoughts of his kingdom. So we should not leave our duties for the sake of doing some Spiritual practice.

The life history of Thyagaraja, the great musician is an example to listening to his inner urge. His brother wanted him to yield to the king’s demand and sing in his presence, for the sake of money but Thyagaraja was not willing to do. He went into wilderness and asked his own mind to answer to his call and sang a song “Nidhi chala Sukhama Ramuni sannidhi Seva sukhama” [Is money more enjoyable than the presence of Rama?]. It is question that he poses to his mind. Then finally he felt Rama’s presence and serving Rama is more enjoyable.

We should remember that earning money is not the only aim in life. Every person comes with a life purpose and that purpose should be recognized and followed. Even the parents should recognize the life purpose of their child and guide him accordingly. Parents should not force their aspirations on their children; otherwise the child would fail in his life.

This is grand secret given by the Lord in Bhagawadgita. We can be liberated by being in the presence of the Lord. All need not do fire ritual, some puja, meditation, Pranayama, etc. in order to be liberated. The practice can be as per our nature. Ultimate aim is to be in the Lord’s presence and recollection. It does not matter what you do. Do you remember him or not is the only factor. Nothing else is required. Just remember him all through the day in any way you like. Anyway in your sleep, you are with him.

While in recollection, many ideas may come out of inspiration and they can be acted upon. One may feel like doing a ritual, meditation and so on. If another person sees the first person doing some ritual or meditation and he also starts doing it, without any inspiration and interest, it is just useless. So the first thing required is constant remembrance of the Lord. It is the foundation in the path of Bhagavata.

Here a meditation called Chakrayudha Dhyana is given (Chakra = Wheel, dhyana = meditation, Chakrayudha = weapon in the form of a wheel). What is the wheel here? It is the wheel of creation. It is also called Sudarshana (Sudarshana = good vision). It is Sudarshana if seen properly; if not, it is just a wheel. Vishnu presented Sudarshana to Ambarisha. That is the boon Ambarisha got for his devotion.

Ambarisha was the emperor of all the continents. He became the emperor of the whole world because of his great devotion for the Lord. Ambarisha, though being the king for a vast kingdom did not forget Vishnu even for a moment. So Ambarisha was given the most powerful wheel Sudarshana. What does it mean?

Every person has a wheel (circumference) around him. Keeping ourselves in the centre, if we meditate that the whole circumference is filled with God; it becomes a protective wheel. All the forms within this circumference also must be viewed as God. This is Chakrayudha Dhyana. If you do this practice sincerely, you become as great as Ambarisha. Ambarisha practiced it and was granted Sudarshana by the Lord.

When Durvasa came there and speaks ill of Ambarisha, he also appeared like Vishnu to Ambarisha. When Durvasa created a demon, it also appeared as Vishnu to Ambarisha. So when he saw Vishnu even in the demon, Sudarshana emerges and killed the demon, without his effort. Nothing can stop Sudarshana, the powerful wheel. When he saw the demon, Ambarisha did not think of the Sudarshana wheel he already has, he thought of Vishnu. He saw Vishnu in everything, even in the demon and the wheel. He never descended from that state.

After killing the demon, the wheel goes after Durvasa and he starts running. He goes to Brahma, Shiva and finally to Vishnu but with no respite. As he did not get protection from even Vishnu, he came to Ambarisha for his mercy. Ambarisha asked the wheel to stop by saying "If I am a devotee of Vishnu, if you have love and grace for me, please stop." It will not stop even when Vishnu asks it to stop but it stops by the words of Ambarisha. Prahalada, Ambarisha, Sukha, Narada, etc. are all such devotees of Vishnu. Their stories are given to us in Bhagavatam. So this Chakrayudha Dhyana is one practice that is given to us.

So get up in the early morning and see everything around you as Vishnu. If your mind is on God, other things are not important. If your mind is bent on God whether you chant Stotram or not is immaterial. Without remembering the Lord, whatever you do is useless. Nothing will change without remembering the Lord. Remembering the Lord will bring about the necessary transformation in your nature. Nothing else can change your nature. Rituals may be done out of the inspiration that comes by remembering the Lord all the time. If rituals become routine, they are useless.

If you see Vishnu in every thing within your circumference, he is with you. God will be touching you in every direction. He will be talking to you through everyone. You will experience him all the time.

We will learn more about this Chakrayudha Dhyana in the next class.

-Swasthi