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“Srimad Bhagavatam”

Discourse by Master Parvathi Kumar - Canto 1 – Discourse 6

[For private circulation to WTT members]

In the last class, we discussed at length how the deeds of Sri Krishna, if recollected or memorized in a song form, would help the aspirants who practice Self realization or Yoga, also known as Bramha Vidya or (realization of THAT) and their minds will be filled with pleasantness. In the initial stages, while practice happens, obstacles like despair, sadness, anger, indifference emerge. In order to overcome these hindrances, as we cannot do it ourselves, as it is difficult to cross our nature with our own nature, if we think of Sri Krishna, the tremendous energy, energy of attraction radiating through Krishna will purify our nature and enable us to move forward in the Path. So whatever practice one does, to sing the deeds of Krishna is a good solution according to Bhagavatam. We talked about this already. We learnt that God replaces the hindrances. We also learnt about the meditation of “Chakrayudha”. We will recollect it once more.

The circle (sphere) around us as far as the earth appears to touch the sky is to be imagined. Now—a-days, unless you go out of the town into an open place, you do not get to see the horizon. In the town, because of the houses the circle (sphere) becomes limited. Those who live in a wider open place do have a broader range of mind. That is the reason men go on top of mountains. If we look from the top of a mountain, we will be able to see much greater distance. If we can see such a wider scene, it definitely enhances our mental circumference. That is why man from the congested place, wantonly, move to a distant wider place where he can see the beauty of nature with the 5 elements.

You can see around as far as your eye can perceive and it is limited. You cannot see beyond that. But if we want to see beyond that, we have to imagine. I always tell that imagination is essential. What kind of an imagination we should have? This earth globe is filled with five elements of nature. We must imagine as if we are sitting on this globe. Then there is no limit for that blue sky around us. That alone appears in whatever direction you see, above or on all sides. Then your circumference expands. So while meditating, even if we live in small houses like a frog in the well, in the imaginative world, we should go out of the house, either on the top of Mount Kailash or Mount Everest or any mountain and look at the sky which is very wide and spacious. Then your circle (sphere) is reaching the horizon where the earth merges with the sky. That is one of the reasons why man was given the power of imagination. The value of imagination is that.

God gave us imagination not to think about our neighbor, or about those whom we dislike and thinking that what they would be thinking about us. This kind of stupid and worthless imagination is useless. When you are alone you can think of wonderful fancies. This kind of imagination in meditation enables the circle to grow bigger and bigger and your heart feels the blissfulness of it. While the mind is always filled with conflicts and problems of life, the heart does not experience this sublime happiness. Even at home there is difference between sitting inside the room in our house and sitting on the terrace because the ceiling in the room has a limit while on the terrace it is limitless. We feel elated when the circumference around us is limitless.

When Master EK got the book on Master CVV published for second time, one person from our brethren drew a picture for cover page of that book. In that, Master CVV was sitting on the top of the globe, and other planets around him and limitless sky above. First time when the book came, Master EK saw the picture, came to my room and showed it to me and said, “How beautiful it is!” What is the beauty in it? Not that our Master was kept on top of the globe, but in your meditation if you can think that you are sitting on the top of a globe, that experience that is felt by the artist, is impressive. Master EK was overjoyed for that. Mahatmas feel happy when they see such things.

If you can look at something beyond the physical eye’s perception, that perception is said to be “Sudarshanam”. That becomes the meditation of Sudarshan Chakra. Imagine a large circumference around you as the Lord. In it every object, a tree, an animal, a human being, even a house should be seen as the forms of God. The smallest thing as well as the whole is God Himself. This kind of meditation increases the circumference of your mind and you get absorbed in meditation. Otherwise your heart gets filled with narrow thoughts and gets disturbed. It wavers around restlessly without peace. Like a rat in the cage it flutters. Without having any rest or respite, it goes around. So if you want to come out of this cage, imagination should be done. If meditation is done this way, it is called “Chakrayudha Dhyanam”. This is how you directly align yourself with creation and hence aligning with the Lord who is in the form of creation. During this meditation, gradually the Lord in his full splendor emerges out of the layers of creation and appears before you. It can be even visualized to begin with. Meditating upon the form of the Lord (as Cosmic Person) is given as an important practice in Bhagavatam. When creation started, Virat Purusha emerged first and from Him emerged all other forms. We were granted that glorious form which stands for ever. So elders asked us to meditate that form. In it we see the Conch, Chakram (the Wheel), the Club and the Lotus.

To meditate upon God daily is equivalent to doing Puja daily. Great devotees like Annamayya belong to that category. He said “To see you and to listen to you in all is equivalent to worshipping you”. Through this outer world, you will be able to see a Divine world in that meditation. Wise people use this meditation to curtail their “Karma”. Sudarshana Chakra can break any Karma. Only thing that is required is Sraddha (Please note that there is no exact equivalent word for Sraddha in English – ‘Interest, Dedication and Sincerity’ signify ‘Sraddha’ to a good extent.). That should be established in us. That is why we should read the story of

Ambarisha. He performed this meditation and he was protected by Sudarshana Chakra all the time.

Similarly Emperor Bali could see the Lord even in the toughest of the moments. Many of our desires get unfulfilled. Everyone feels that his own misery is the greatest one. To him, the misery of others appears small. Even if we get pricked in the foot by a thorn, that is a big thing for us. We do not react so deeply even if our neighbor's hand is broken. That is our status.

So we can liberate ourselves from these problems through the meditation. This does not need any chanting of sacred hymns. It is meant for all. It stabilizes in you depending upon your interest, dedication and sincerity. In order to get such a Sraddha, you have to narrate, read or listen to the stories of God. Sraddha increases our memorizing capability. We remember those things on which we have more interest. We remember problems always because we are more interested in them. So no other way is helpful to us than the recollecting of the stories and deeds of God. Do not get into the logic of those stories to begin with. If the thing is understood properly, logic automatically gets dropped. Interest leads to taste which unravels everything.

Taking bath in holy rivers and visiting holy places also helps to develop interest. Sraddha also increases even in the service of great people and their presence. When you meet a great person, you should first touch his feet.

Those who go on pilgrimage must necessarily read Scriptures and sing hymns on the Lord. You should sing in praise of God with devotion. You should see the Lord as the doer in all. This helps to liberate you from the bondage of Karma. The behavior of each individual is different. To see their behavior is one way and to see as the play of the Lord is another. The Lord works through all beings as pulsating awareness and pulsating prana.

Our pitiable situation is that we have more people whom we do not like. The number of the enemies keeps increasing all the time. A friend can become an enemy but an enemy can never become a friend. We look at things with distinguishing characteristics of what we like or which we dislike. We never look at God who is present in them. Meditation of Chakrayudha enables us to see the play of the Lord through everyone.

We have the story of Pundarika. The father of Pundarika was a great scholar and a devotee of Lord Krishna. Pundarika has all the vices. His mother asks his father whether he could not change the behavior of his son as he is in a position to advise people but strangely he is subjected to criticism by others. He says it is all the play of Krishna and only the Lord can transform him and no one else. For him, everything appeared as a play of the Lord. Later the son undergoes a great transformation. So no one can change another. Out of love, we try to change people but it happens only when that spur emerges from within.

If you see everything as the deeds of God, you will be above sadness. Reading these things is not that we will start practicing everything immediately, but they are eye openers and we get some

inspiration by knowing these things. We keep reading Bhagavatam regularly so that we get an inspiration to continue practicing. If a trial is done regularly, it becomes a habit. When this becomes a habit, other habits fall.

If anyone is narrating the stories of Krishna's devotees, Krishna comes to hear them and he lives in the hearts of those who listen to those stories. That is why Sage Sutha tells that stories of Krishna should be told and heard. What is Krishna? Krishna is the all permeating consciousness. So narrating stories of Krishna is nothing but narration of the splendorous works of THAT all permeating consciousness. To be able to meditate on Krishna and to be able to align with him within is almost impossible with our wavering mind. So if you read the stories of devotees of Krishna, Krishna himself will grace you and stabilise his active presence in you.

Krishna says "I stay more in the hearts of devotees than in the hearts of Yogis or Rishis because the devotees are simple whereas Yogis or Rishis may have many technical complications. It is the same even with us. We prefer to move with simple persons than complicated persons. Devotees are the ones who stay in complete alignment with the Lord, anywhere they are.

So try to read the story of a devotee every day. It is better if you can read it together with your family. If the man does not have time, at least the lady can read. In fact, a lady has more opportunity than a man. Master DK says that a lady has more experience and less analytical nature and she also has more time. A man has dominant intelligence, ego, logic and other vocations while in a lady these are not dominant. She should utilize this opportunity. Even if she reads a story of a devotee daily, it has lot of good effect on the whole family. There are lots of stories of devotees available to us in our literature.

When I was in my 10th year, my father used to read the story of Parikshit to my mother in the night after 9. I used to sit with them and listen. I felt overjoyed and since then I developed immense interest in God and devotion. When we listen to the stories of Parikshit, those poems give us goose bumps. I used to listen to them without a break of even one day. It went on like that for many years. From it came an inspiration. The stories of the great devotees evoke a spur in us. You can read the stories of 12 Alwars. Do you know how wonderful they are? In them are the stories of Vasudeva and Madhwacharya. By reading those stories inauspicious events turn auspicious and we develop stable devotion. There are many stories of devotees from Maharashtra, Bengal, Karnataka, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh. In Madhya Pradesh they are many unrecognized devotees. There is book by name "Bhakta Vijayam" which has many stories of devotees. You can read it.

Narada said devotion means Ultimate love. When you are in devotion, Rajas (dynamism) and Tamas (inertia) dissolve into Satwa (poise). It is very difficult if try to overcome them on our own. In all three qualities, poise is the only one which is very useful to us. Dominating Rajas or dominating Tamas cause us ego and bondage. Satwa reduces the ego. There is no place for desire and hatred when poise prevails. If the mud water becomes stable, the mud settles underneath.

Then water becomes pure on the upper level. The mud is formed because of us. If we want the mud to go down, and make water pure, water must be stable. Then only water appears in its purity. If water is pure and stable, we will not feel that the water is there. If you shake the water, then waves are seen.

So our mind also turns like a mirror, if it is stable. Stability loses its unstable nature. Tamas is mud and Rajas is movement. If there is no poise, the remaining things are these two only.

We must develop a habit to read Bhagawadgita in the morning and Bhagavatam in the night. If we go to bed with an impure mind and be in that state for seven or eight hours, how can the mind be clear? If you watch a movie before going to sleep, how can it give you a stable mind? Especially now-a-days movies give us no inspiration. You can watch them at some other time of the day but not before going to sleep. Concluding the day in divine association is very important. There happens lot of transformation in oneself in one year, if the conclusion of the day happens in association with divine. It is my experience and I guarantee it to you. The feelings with which we go to bed, we wake up with the same feelings next morning. Similar is the case with death and birth.

When that transformation happens and devotion in you goes to the next level, more activities can be done with inspiration. There will be no fatigue. More inspiration, more the body cooperates. So for inspiration, the conclusion of the day is very important. Ego will recede. Ego means localized consciousness (I AM feeling). A person who does not want to mingle with people, who tries to exclude many is called an egoist. And generally an egoist does not know that he has ego. You can check for yourself. If you are not willing to include everyone and if others are not comfortable to approach you, the cause is your ego.

Ego is static. Only when attached with dynamism, it gets elevated. Even nature is static. Only when associated with divine, it becomes dynamic. The 3 qualities emerged from nature and ego emerged out of the 3 qualities and later came the beings into creation. All these are static without the presence of the divine principle in the background. The Lord is the ONE that gives value to the 9 zeros following him. When the individual consciousness dissolves into the divine consciousness, ego falls. One cannot overcome ego on his own. It happens when you read the stories of devotees and remain in alignment with the divine.

We have a long list of Karma. When we perform “Chakrayudha Dhyana”, all that Karma gets neutralized. You cannot meditate directly. There are many preceding steps. Firstly you require Sraddha (immense interest), then comes devotion by studying the stories of devotees, then comes inspiration to practice and finally meditation happens when you are able to see the divine in all. They are not exclusive steps. You start with one and the rest emerge and they together develop further.

Sage Sutha says that the body should be utilized to follow the Dharma (the eternal law). What is Dharma? Dharma is to live for the welfare of fellow beings. You should serve others in such a

way the Lord would be pleased. The Lord would be pleased if you serve with intent of offering. The wealth (Artha) that you earn should be in line with Dharma. If you feed your body with the money that you earn and the body is used to serve others, then also it is in line with Dharma. If the welfare activities that you take are not result oriented, then the activities continue even after your departure.

Bhagavatam says “Stay in alignment with the divine and you will always stand in Dharma.” You need not know any of the principles of dharma. We also see that in the lives of great devotees, a higher Dharma operates which is different from the law that is normally applicable in creation. The normal law does not apply to them because they work only for the welfare of others.

Sage Sutha says that the Lord may not grace all those who are completely in Dharma. Bhishma, Karna, and Drona were in Dharma. Even today, after more than 5000 years, we still discuss their greatness. We talk of the charity of Karna. Bhishma stood for the word that he gave to his father, all his life. Drona stood by the Dharma towards his king. There is lot of difference between that Dharma and this Dharma.

There are Avadhutas who eat, putting the food in mud. Can we eat like that? We fall sick next day. Ramkrishna did his ritual by drinking water from impure lakes. Whatever they did was dharma because they were always with the divine. He used to eat a Puri (a food item) which was eaten by a dog first. If we eat like that, we get diseases that dogs get. Shirdi Sai Baba never took bath, they say. What kind of dharma is that? The Lord is the ultimate. When you stand in alignment with him, whatever happens through you becomes dharma.

There is one quality that humans have, which is Imitation. We try to imitate the person we like. There are some who try to imitate their parents, their teachers, movie stars, political leaders, sports persons and so on. So when we read the stories of devotees and start liking them, we try to imitate them. It is one of the reasons why it is advised to read their stories.

Dharma is of 2 varieties – One for worldly welfare and other for personal welfare. If a person follows the dharma relating to personal welfare, in him may grow the qualities like desire, hatred, malice, and jealousy. When one follows the dharma relating to worldly welfare, no such qualities emerge.

When you are in complete devotion and surrender yourself to the Lord, you need not worry of the dharma (law), Artha (wealth), Karma (desire) and Moksha (Liberation). Everything will follow when you are with HIM. You get all the required inspiration from within. All learning happens from within. Many activities happen through you effortlessly.

There are many ways to reach divinity but the path of devotion and surrender is the most simple among them.

Devotees are devoid of ego. A devotee would be prepared to do anything and everything. He does not see whether the work is line with his status. He does not consider any work to be undignified. White collared jobs can be done by many but other jobs can be done by devotees alone. My father used to wash the food plates in Ramakrishna Ashram. In our house warming ceremony, when the food preparation got delayed, Master EK went into the kitchen and cooked food. That is the quality of a devotee. Master EK does not think “I am the Master here. Why should I cook?” The Lord grants his presence to only such ones.

Doubts are more when there is more ego. Generally questions are born out of nature but not for an answer. In devotion, ego as well as doubts disappears.

A devotee knows that the Lord is the doer in all and he envisions that same. We will not be able to do everything that we want to do and we may be doing something which we did not want to do. What does it mean? We are not in control of everything. That is why it said “Turn to East and bow down.” So pray to the Lord “My Lord! I surrender myself to you completely.” Then your life would become splendorous.

So Sage Sutha in his first part of answer itself gives the complete essence of Bhagavatam and with this we can say that Bhagavatam is complete essentially. So, first start with reading the stories of devotees and everything will follow.

-Swasthi.