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"Srimad Bhagavatam"

Discourse by Master KPK on Sunday, the 20th of July 2014, at Visakh.

(for private circulation to WTT members)

Canto 3:

Kapila Maharshi was giving a step wise approach to practice in the path of Devotion. We were discussing the steps to practice in the last class. We will continue now.

When Yoga practice is done with a fiery aspiration, it will result in dissolution of all the desires. With fiery aspiration (Tapas) means there should be sincere adherence to Yama and Niyama regulations given by Patanjali.

First is Ahimsa which means non-violence. It should be not only in deed but also in thought and speech. If you cause harm to others in one way or the other, there is no way that you can progress in the path.

Next is Satya which is truth. It is alignment of thought, word and deed. So whatever you think should be followed in speech and deed. If there are some thoughts which are bad and should not be spoken, then ensure that they are constantly filtered so that they do not come even into your thoughts.

Next is Brahmacharya which is purity of sex. It is to be used only for the purpose of procreation which is one of duties of taking to a human body. Once that duty is fulfilled, that energy should be used for the higher purpose of Yoga. If this pro-creational energy is wasted, there is not enough energy left for Yoga practice. This energy is very important for the formation of the etheric body. This energy should be channelized and utilized in the right manner. It is like building a dam to stop the flowing water and using that accumulated water for irrigation purposes and growing of crops. This utilisation should begin to happen at a young age and not at an old age where there is no more flow of this energy. It is like building a dam on a river where no water flows. What is the use? So Brahmacharya should be taken up at a young age.

Next is not to have thieving instinct. If you steal someone's wealth using your intelligence, the karma belonging to that person is transferred to you and you have to face his karma apart from your karma. In this manner, if your karma keeps increasing, there will be very little scope for Yoga to happen. This is called Astheyam.

Next is Aparigraha which is not to have possessive instinct. It is not to accept gifts or anything for free. Never accept anything for free. If you are accepting something from someone, you should first check if you are entitled to it and then accept it or not. If you keep receiving, all that accumulated in your balance sheet as debt. If you keep offering, it is credited to your account. So all this is Spiritual accounting. Accepting free is also debit and stealing is even worse. So do not accept anything just because it is free, it is truly not.

So all these 5 come under Yama. They are regulations related to the surroundings around you. It relates to your behaviour with the outer world. They help you release from the outer world. So the more you practice, the more you are liberated from objectivity.

Coming to Niyama. This is related to your personality.

First is cleanliness. There should be complete cleanliness in the objectivity. If you sweat a lot, you should bath atleast 2 or 3 times a day. A lot of cleansing happens with the touch of water. And bath should be from above the head as far as possible. Where there is no cleanliness, Kali enters through such means. That is what we can observe in the story of Nala. Cleaning of hands and legs should happen frequently. The clothes you wear after a bath should also be clean. This is objective cleanliness.

Next, there should be inner cleanliness.

First thing is your mouth should not smell. It is place of Agni and Varuna. So wash your mouth well after eating anything. If a normal wash does not help, brush your teeth and clean even your tongue. Brushing is not only for teeth but also for overall cleanliness of the mouth. Also try to avoid eating items which leave lot of smell in the mouth and if you eat, clean it well. Do not use mouth fresheners, it is dangerous. The smell may not come out but the dirt is still present in your mouth.

Also do not eat stale items. There is no life in such food and it is like eating dead food which is useless. The rule is do not eat cooked food after 3 to 4 hours of cooking. So avoid preserved cooked foods. There may be some items which last longer like mango pickles due to the addition of oil which acts as a preservative. Also those items dried in sun have a longer life than other items. You can refer to the chapter food in the book "Mithila" for more details.

Though we discussed all this many times, we generally cross these lines and hence this recollection helps in re-alignment.

Next comes cleanliness with regard to thoughts. Your thoughts should be pure for Yoga practice. If you are getting impure thoughts, take a head bath immediately. Apart from food, you also take energy through your eyes and ears. If you hear too much of noise, it weakens you. So try to avoid such places where there are continuous noises. So you also eat through your eyes and ears and you should be careful

in this regard. What you hear and see should also be clean. Also you should not stay in places where there is bad smell. Ensure that your surroundings are clean without any bad odour.

When you follow these 7 steps, happiness comes to you naturally which is the 8th one. Your mind becomes cheerful. Happiness cannot be bought, it has to come naturally. With such a mind, if you study the Scriptures and study yourself, then the secrets are revealed to you. That is the 9th step which is called Self-Study.

The 10th step is remaining in Divine alignment that is seeing the Lord in all. We have been recollecting this step all along in Bhagavatam discourses from the beginning.

With these 10 steps, your mind attains stability. That step is Asana which means a stable and comfortable posture. A stable posture to the body is possible only when there is stable mind.

Next step is Pranayama. Firstly prana should be regulated. There should be a discipline to it. There are 5 pranas. Two are our inhalation and exhalation which we call Prana and Apana. Then there is Udana prana which ensures the outward thrust in the body. It helps in maintaining shape of the body. Then there is Vyana prana which fills the body and Samana which maintains equilibrium among the 4. You can refer to the book "Pranayama" for more details. (Pranayama is a Telugu book written by Master KPK. An English version of it is still not available.)

Our breathing should be slow, soft, deep and uniform. Some breathe very fast and in a harsh manner with a sound. It should not be so. You should not even hear the sound of your breath. Then you hear the subtle sound SO-HAM. Let your mind move along with your respiration. This kind of breathing practice should be done 24 minutes a day. If you have sufficient time, this time can go upto 72 minutes, 3 times a day. This practice is given in the book "Spiritual Astrology" under the title "Pranayama", in a brief manner.

When this practice happens regularly, there will be a very good alignment between the Prana and mind. So the mind will not go anywhere outside unless necessary. Otherwise it keeps roaming in the outer world. For this we are given a story.

A man does penance and when the creator appears before him, he asks for a special being (genie) who does everything he wants him to do. The creator grants him that boon but warns him that if no work is allocated to that person, he will eat you. That man thinks that he has lot of works and there is no worry. So that genie comes and this man starts asking many things which were fulfilled in no time and that man had nothing to allot to that special being. The genie wanted more work but nothing is left to be done. The man could not allocate any more work and that being came to eat him. That man started running and comes across a person who was doing penance and he asks him for help. That man also has a similar genie and he knows how to keep the genie engaged. That man tells him not to worry and gives him an

idea to ask that being to keep going up and down a tree until there is any other work to be done. So that genie in the story is our mind and it needs to align with the respiration to keep constantly engaged without eating us.

Respiration is not something which we do but it happens. When we align our mind with respiration, we realize that even work happens through us and it is not being done by us. Everything is done by nature which is realized only when this alignment with respiration happens. Krishna reveals this secret in Bhagawadgita but we do not know it until it is realized.

In this process, we reach the source of respiration which is the centre of pulsation in the heart centre. At that point, the inhalation and exhalation become one. There you touch the air of Samana by the merging of Prana and Apana. Then the mind becomes even more stable.

Then you join the Udana which lifts you upto Ajna from Heart centre. It is the lift up through the Sushumna. Only when you reach that state, there is wisdom that comes from within. Whatever knowledge is required to the fulfillment of the Divine plan through you is taught to you from within. There is also a sound and light show. There are many beautiful subtle experiences. Once you reach Ajna, you touch upon Vyana. This upward lift is called Pratyahara. It is the 5th step of 8 fold Yoga. Until you reach that step, there are no real subtle experiences.

So Pranayama is the regulation of Prana which happens when you touch upon Samana prana with the merging of Prana and Apana. Then there is absorption happening with the uplift with Udana prana. It is called Pratyahara.

Once you reach Ajna and remain stable there, it is called Dharana which is the 6th step. Such a one realises that he is wearing a body and not the body up keeping the being. It is like we wearing the clothes and not clothes keeping up the body. Such a one gains complete control over the senses, mind, body and Buddhi. He is then like a king. It the Hamsa (Swan) becoming Rajahamsa (Royal Swan). He sees a very bright light at a higher centre and he tries to align with that light and to reach it. That step is Dyana which we call Meditation.

When this meditation happen constantly, a bridge is formed from the higher side to the Brow centre where you are watching it from. It is what is called "Higher Bridge beginning".

Then there is even further step of reaching the Head centre, Sahasrara, where you forget yourself and only the Lord remains. It is a state of Samadhi which is the last step of Yoga.

All Divine visions happen only when you reach Ajna. In the stories where it told that Brahma appeared in Tapas or Vishnu appeared in Tapas or Shiva appeared in Tapas, it means they have reached Ajna. They do not appear outside.

So Yoga is such a long process. We should start working out the initial steps and gradually we proceed. There should be a beginning first. If you start in this life, you may not reach the 8th step in this life but atleast you progress gradually and in every life, it comes back to you to proceed even further.

We will discuss the next step of practice given by Kapila in the next class.

-Swasthi