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"Srimad Bhagavatam"

Discourse by Master KPK on Sunday, the 01st of March 2015, at Visakh.

(for private circulation to WTT members)

Canto 3:

Kapila Maharshi was detailing on the aspects of 3 types of devotion to Devahuti. Devotion is of 3 types - Rajasa Bhakti, Tamasa Bhakti and Satwika Bhakti. We will try to understand these 3 types of bhakti (devotion). Lord Krishna speaks on this topics in the last few chapters of Bhagawadgita. You can refer to it as well.

The 3 types of Bhakti are in relation to the 3 qualities. All the 3 qualities are required to function in this world. We need Tamas to stop a work and to take rest. Rajas is required to have interest in work and to have the ability to work. But these 2 should remain under the control of poise. Otherwise we get tired after work. We forget things because of tamas (inertia). We are lazy towards work due to tamas. We act in a negligent manner due to inertia. In this manner, there are examples of dominating Tamas and Rajas. We are not going into that. We are only discussing the 3 qualities with respect to Bhakti now.

People may have devotion towards the Lord to fulfill their desires. Each one has a different level of devotion based on one's evolution. Hanuman is considered as a role model in the aspect of devotion. He himself doesn't know that he is in the highest levels of devotion. He forgets himself completely in that devotion.

Tamasa bhakti prevails when we do lot of rituals and practices in the name of devotion and start thinking that we are above others. We look down upon ones who do not do any rituals or practices. We also scold our relatives if they do not follow our practices. All this is due to Tamasa Bhakti. One should remember that devotion has to be voluntary. You cannot force it upon someone because Lord Krishna said that one starts walking the path only when the instinct comes from within. It cannot come in any other way. So do not feel that others are not walking the path or try to force them.

People with Tamasa bhakti also compare themselves with others a lot and they think they are only right and better than others. It is jealousy in devotion. He doesn't like when others tell him that there is some fault in his doing of certain rituals and practices. It is pride in devotion. If you get angry for such an advice what devotee are you. You should listen to whatever others tell you.

Think over it and decide to follow it or not. You should see the Lord in the other person who is advising you.

Tamasic Bhakti is where people hurt others to perform their rituals or practices. If you kill an animal as sacrifice and think that the Lord would be pleased, it is ignorance. That comes under Tamasic bhakti. Non-violence is very important to progress in the path. It is the first of the instructions given in Yogic path. If you hurt your family members for doing some rituals or prayers, what is the use? It means you are ignoring the Lord in them. Such violent practices will in fact affect you with negative energies and such energies will hinder you from progressing in the path. The Lord will never be accessible to such ones. So one should never hurt people or animals for doing their rituals or practices. It is a very important principle in the path. You should constantly check whether your behavior is affecting others in any way. You should repent if you find any mistakes. If you see the Lord in all, then there is very little chance that you would hurt anyone with your behaviour. You should remember that everyone is a Divine entity. His behavior might not be divine but that is an aspect of his personality.

Mahatma Gandhi achieved freedom for India through his strict adherence to the principle of Non-violence. No country could achieve independence in such a manner. So such is the power of non-violence.

If your words or actions hurt others, it is recorded in space. They are called Akashic records. So to neutralize that, repentance is very important. Jesus Christ gives huge importance to this aspect. Even though mistakes happen, repentance is very important which will neutralize your mistakes to some extent. Doing anything other than repenting heartily will not be useful much. There are people who do not repent for their mistake but say “Lord I will offer you something. Please pardon me.” That will not neutralize your mistake.

If you collect money or wealth for any rituals and ask or force if someone does not give, it also comes under Tamasa Bhakti. If someone gives voluntarily without asking, it can be taken. It is meaningless if you start asking and questioning for not giving. All that qualifies under Tamasa Bhakti. We have been conducting Group Livings at different places for over 50 years now. Did we ask anyone for contributions anytime? Everything came voluntarily and there was no questioning. Gurupujas were conducted utilizing whatever resources that came. That is an aspect of poised devotion.

If you think that others are not recognizing your devotion, it is also Tamasa Bhakti. Devotion is a relation between you and the Lord. It should remain very secretive. Why should others know or recognize? It should remain more secretive than the relation between a wife and husband. It should not be shared with anyone. If you keep telling others about your experiences and wish that they recognise you as great devotees, it comes under Tamasa bhakti. People with strong

religious orientation think that their religion should have more recognition compared to others. They even go the extent of hating other religions. All this comes under Tamasa Bhakti. Do not think Hinduism, Christianity, Islam and so on can only be referred to as religions. People who follow different forms of God and different Masters and think that others who do not follow their god or Master are wrong are also religiously oriented ones. A real devotee respects all religions and recognizes the ONE Divine principle followed in different religions. He does not get stuck in one form or name. He sees all religions as Divine splendor. A devotee is not limited by these forms and names because he stands above the mind in Buddhi or even higher. There are many scholars who suffer from such limited concepts because they see from their mind.

There are people who conduct rituals or activities like Gurupujas just as a competition to others who are doing some other rituals or activities. In such activities, there is no Divine alignment or surrender to the Lord. There is only comparison with others. The purpose of a Group living or ritual is to live in Divine alignment. If that is not there, what is the purpose of doing? Such activities also come under Tamasa Bhakti. If you do not like if someone tells you that someone is a greater devotee than you or if someone is doing rituals better than you, then you are in Tamasa Bhakti. Why should you be affected if you hear such things? If you are a true devotee, then you just think that the other person is also a Divine entity and it is good if he too relates to Divine. At the same time, people are sometimes disturbed when someone around him is an atheist. Why should you be worried if someone else is an atheist? He too is a Divine entity, if you see the Lord in him. He too will realise the Divine when time comes.

One in Satwika Bhakti, sees the Lord in all at all times. He recognizes the ONE Divine principle permeating the whole creation. He is not stuck in any forms or names. He sees none other than THAT. Then there are no limitations to such a one. He is not tired by any amount of activity because he does not feel that he is doing. It is because the Divine starts functioning through such a one. You realize his presence in you. A great devotee sees only the Lord and nothing else. You may be following a Master but you should remember that the form of the Master you are following, is a part of the omnipresent Divine principle. If you do not remember that, you get stuck in that form and see others Masters to be different. Devotion is to see the Divine in all and not just worshipping one form and thinking that it is only God. No true Master would want his followers to start a cult or religion in his name but that is what most of the disciples end up doing. He wishes that all his followers realize the omnipresent Divine principle. Master EK said one thing during his last days "Please do not start a religion in my name." If you get stuck in a religion, you cannot realise the truth, the Master, the Lord. That is what happened to many of the disciples of Jesus Christ.

So if one enters such poised devotion, realization and liberation would surely come. If you get stuck in forms and names and get involved in propagating them, then you are lost. Such ones see God as something other than what he is seeing around. The truth is there is nothing other than

THAT. That is what Krishna says to Arjuna “Do not see anything different from I AM. I AM all.” We generally limit the all permeating principle to ONE form and think that, that form is everything. THAT is present in that form as well but you should also remember that THAT is present in all others forms too. That is what Bhagavatam tells us all through.

When we progress in our devotion, there could be few siddhi's (powers) bestowed upon us. But we shouldn't get lost into such things. It's a big danger. One should be very cautious at that stage. When we are more with the Truth, there is no way that any other ill-powers overtake us.

One who thinks that the objects that came due to him and depend on his are his wealth is nothing but infatuation towards them. They are subordinate to us and not superior. What can be referred to as wealth? Air is the best wealth that one can have. What happens if you cannot breathe air for some time? How do you feel? If someone is not able to breathe, he is put on a ventilator. If he is not able to breathe on his own, then that life is over. Such a thing is wealth. As it is happening naturally, we do not recognize this wealth. You realize the importance when you breathing does not happen naturally. Similarly Fire and Sun are our wealth. What happens if the body temperature falls below normal? You may not live for long when that happens. Master EK is telling us that we forgot our true wealth and are craving for petty things. If you have such cravings, then you cannot get into devotion. If you crave for such things and visit many temples and think that you are a devotee, it is just a glamour. If there is no difference between you doing many things in the name of devotion and an ordinary person who does nothing in this regard, then what is use? You are just doing some labour. If chanting a stotra or doing a ritual does not give you peace and transformation within, what is the use? Everything just happens in ignorance in the name of devotion. That is what we see in many now days. Many people going to temples does not mean increase in devotion. Many of them go out of fear.

Devotion which is intended to fulfill your objective desires comes under Rajasic Bhakti (hyperactive devotion). People accumulate all of them for more and more comfort. People want to show off to others. So people worship God to fulfill all such desires. The best example that we have is Ravana who wanted everything best, present in the creation, in his house. People first think of a desire and then start doing rituals to fulfill it. That is Rajasic Bhakti. Such a devotion is linked to results. People worship seeking name and fame in the society.

Master EK is giving some more examples. There are some who worship Bala Krishna (Krishna as a child) that they should not grow old quickly. There are some men who do some rituals to attract women. There are some shopkeepers who buy and keep some Yantras in their shops to attract customers. There are some who kill animals in the name of sacrifice to get certain powers. That comes under witchcraft. Such powers exist only for some time and they do not work in front of righteous ones and true devotees. If your behavior is highly righteous and in tune with

Dharma, then you cannot be controlled by powers of witchcraft. Even Ghosts and dis-embodied souls cannot touch you. So all these are the examples of Rajasic Bhakti.

If you worship to the Lord wishing that all your weaknesses should be eliminated, then it is Satwika Bhakti (poised devotion). You can worship the Lord to grant you better capabilities to serve fellow beings. That is what we say “Master! Please rectify and develop our system so that I may serve humanity according to thy plan.”

When we are growing more in our capability, it means the divine is being expressed through us more. We need to pray that whatever are the obstacles that come in between in reaching the divine, should be removed. But not for seeking any other worldly things.

Upon completing any task or work or service, the fruit of such activity should be offered to the divine. The fruit of such a work is not for our own selves. The Lord doesn't need what we offer, he gives us back what we offer to him in a more splendorous way. So you need not worry of the result of your work. Your concern should be that the divine should appreciate our work. Divine appreciates when our work uplifts the surrounding life. So we need to improve our Satwika devotion, which will help us further in the path. Due to which our capability and awareness increases/improves. Satwika bhakti leads you to a state of permanent poise and then into a state above the 3 qualities. You can experience pure consciousness at that state. That is the step which is referred to as Dhyanana (7th step of 8-fold Yoga). That will finally lead you to Samadhi, realization of oneself as Brahman.

So trying to improve qualities of poise in oneself and moving towards poised devotion should be a constant effort. We should strive to improve constantly in that direction. The improvement should be in terms of awareness/consciousness.

Refer further to 14-17 chapters of Bhagavad Gita. The qualities were detailed a lot there.

Swasti.