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"Srimad Bhagavatam"

Discourse by Master KPK on Sunday, the 08th of March 2015, at Visakh.

(for private circulation to WTT members)

Canto 3:

We were discussing the 3 types of Bhakti (devotion). Kapila was telling how important it is for one to remain in poised devotion. Rajasika Bhakti and Tamasa Bhakti will not help in transforming oneself and instead of releasing one from bondages, such a devotion might actually cause more and more bondages.

One should worship for the Divine and not to get some desires fulfilled and not for publicity. Devotion should be for transformation of oneself, cleansing of impurities within oneself, leading a better life and moving closer to the Divine. If there is no change happening in you, then your devotion is not poised. Just appearing as a devotee to the outside world by going to temples, doing rituals, becoming member of some Spiritual organization, etc. is all useless unless the primary purpose of moving closer to the Divine is happening. Devotion does not come just because you are in a temple or if you become a member of some Spiritual organization. Remaining in Divine alignment at all times is the only way. If you remain with him, he takes care of you completely. Life becomes effortless and splendorous if you are with Divine. It is not wrong to worship the Divine to fulfill your desire or to solve your problem but that way there is no end to your desires or problems. You worship the Lord when you have a desire or problem and forget him once that is fulfilled. Even during worship, you are more with the desire or problem than with the Lord. You should realize the Lord is bigger than your desire or problem. If you are with HIM, you get what you need and your problems are solved effortlessly. In Tamasa Bhakti, due to laziness, one does not worship properly even to fulfil one's desire and as a result the desire too is not fulfilled.

In poised devotion, you gradually move to Buddhic plane. When you look at the world from that plane, you realize that there are lot of impurities around you and they are to be removed. It will be like a pig living in gutter. If you surrender yourself to the Lord, then he takes away all the impurities gradually. In poised devotion, one progresses in the path, one will get enhanced capabilities, one serves his fellow beings seeing the Divine in them. You will be recognized in the kingdom of God. If you look for recognition in the outer world, then there is no use of such devotion.

One who is in poised devotion, relates to the Divine whenever he finds free time. He sings in the praise of Lord whenever possible. This is one test to check whether one has poised devotion or not. That is how great devotees like Tyagaraja, Annamayya, Ramadasa and so on sang in praise of the Lord whenever possible. They did not avoid their duties. They fulfilled their duties and related to the Divine rest of the time. If you go back one or 2 generations, ladies at home used to sing stanzas of Bhagavata or some songs in praise of Divine while cooking and performing other activities at home. They used to rejoice in Divine thought even while performing their duties.

Another thing is one in poised devotion feels happy when he is in worship or singing a song in praise of the Lord. You need not sing, you can hear some song in praise of Lord and check whether you are happy hearing it. One in poised devotion tries to spend more and more time in Divine alignment. Even while doing some work, he remains in touch with the Lord.

Also one should hear and recollect the Divine qualities as much as possible. Then such qualities start accumulating in you. Such recollection of Divine qualities makes your life an auspicious one, a splendorous one and a blissful one.

At the same time, unnecessary qualities in you are gradually eliminated. If you have the habit of indulging in some chit chat at a particular time of the day and you start utilizing that time in reading stories of the Lord or some Scripture, then gradually your bad habit of wasting time in unnecessary activities fades away. So recollecting Divine qualities or Divine stories has a very good effect on oneself. It is a simple practice which one can adhere to for transformation.

We can actually learn certain qualities from animals by observation. The mosquito constantly strive to bite you. It won't rest until it reaches the target. We should emulate that quality in our practice. Similarly ants have the qualities of working as a group. Ants do group work excellently. We should learn group work from ants. If you observe carefully, you can learn good qualities from ants and even fellow human beings. We generally see the bad qualities in a person and look at that person in bad light. By seeing only bad qualities, such qualities start getting into us. If you start commenting on such qualities of others, then get into you even more quickly. It is like licking their impurities with your tongue. It is just the law of attraction. Similarly relating to Divine qualities imbibes qualities of Divine in us.

Already the other persons are suffering from their unwanted qualities. Why do you need to look at them and attract them into you? Is it necessary? Can you not relate to the good qualities? It is tough to relate to good qualities because there are already unnecessary qualities in you and they always try to see similar qualities. To overcome this, we are advised to worship the Lord and relate to Divine qualities as far as possible. Free time should be used for this purpose. But most of our free time goes in useless activities and now a days television is the biggest hindrance. Unknowingly people switch on television and start watching it and most of the content in

television is useless and most of it is negative. I am not telling you not to watch television but there should be a limit to it and avoid negative content.

A poised devotee always recollects the Divine qualities and sees the same qualities in others as well. It is very difficult to stay in such a state. Our mind always takes us in the opposite direction. It analyzes and criticizes all the time. It is possible to transform this mind only by relating to Divine qualities. Your personality becomes a Divine personality.

Where there is causeless devotion, there will be natural peace and calm around that person. Your devotion is for enhanced experience of happiness and service towards fellow beings. It should not be to fulfill your objective desires. Also remember that the Lord is more interested in the one who does not ask anything. If you go to the Lord with a big list of desires, he will let some happen according to your karma and orientation and rest does not happen. But there is no relation with the Lord in such a devotion. If your devotion is causeless, then you develop a relation with the Lord and he will take care of you like a child. The parents will not leave a child just because the child does not ask anything. In fact there is more care towards such a child because he does not ask anything. The same applies to the relation between the Lord and devotee. He will take care of such a one because he knows that that one is only concerned of others and not about oneself.

So one of the important tenants for poised devotion is see the Divine in all. Then there will be no more likes and dislikes. There is only ONE in all. Sage Veda Vyasa tells "Whosoever comes to you, you should see Narayana in that person." Whenever someone visits your house, he should be seen as the Lord visiting to your house and you should offer something to eat. We go to many places to eat but are reluctant to offer when someone comes to our house. That should change.

So by seeing in this manner, we remain in Divine alignment. To be able to see the Divine in all is very difficult because we have opinions on others and that opinions come to our mind first and we fail to see the ONE. If you see the ONE first, then you remain stable and poised and relate to that person without getting affected by your opinions. In this manner of seeing the Lord in all, you get instructions through the simple words of others, even children. Otherwise you hear normally.

One who lives in this manner, such a one is very useful to the surrounding life. Wealth which keeps you happy and people who constantly take care of you, gather around you. You get a red carpet treatment wherever you go. It is all due to the arrangements made by the Divine. Such a one sees such arrangements as Divine arrangements and he is very little bothered by the arrangement. If you get into the arrangements and start expecting, then you lose Divine alignment. The Divine takes care of a true devotee because a true devotee does not care for himself and he is only interested in caring for others. It is said to be Divine state because the Lord too does not want anything for himself and his only objective is welfare of creation.

In this process gradually you feel the Lord moving around you. You start having subtle feelings of Divine presence. That presence gives you blissful experience. One can also remain in solitude at times for such experiences. You can go to some beach alone and relate to the space around. You can experience the nature.

In the next step, gradually conversation starts happening between the Lord and devotee. Until then it was only the devotee relating to the Divine. Now it will become 2-way. The Lord starts giving you instructions on what to do and what not to do. He decides your schedule. You start moving as per his plan. He becomes a personal guide to you. Hearing all this, we are excited and want it to happen but it does not happen so easily. You should strive for it, years and may be even lives.

If you follow those instructions sincerely, you gradually become THAT. You realise yourself as THAT. So these are steps of Bhakti Yoga and Bhakti should be Satwika Bhakti. In that devotion, one stands above the dualities.

Such devotees do not work to fulfill their desires. They do not initiate anything on their own. They go or do when a necessity arises. Anything they do is for the welfare of others. Rest of the time, he remains with the Lord. This type of Bhakti Yoga is considered highest among paths of Yoga. Such a one always remains with the source above the 3 qualities. If you remain in 3 qualities, you keep getting thoughts which keep you busy all the day. It is a turbulent flow of thoughts. Normally, we are above the 3 qualities only in sleep. It is also possible in an awakened state through the path of Yoga. Otherwise you keep revolving in the vehicle controlled by the 3 qualities and as a result you are tired. Due to that, you sleep. Yogis do not sleep. They only take rest. That too rest is only for the body. They even keep the body to rest and move out of it and do some work at night times.

Now Master EK gives us some more explanation.

Satwa (poise) quality is required for the being to relate to Divine. Rajas (dynamism) is required to keep oneself strongly oriented in the path. Tamas (inertia) is required to take care of the body because the body is important to progress in the path. You cannot practice the path if the body does not cooperate with you. If these 3 qualities work in this manner, then we gradually we move to a state above the 3 qualities.

One who stands above the 3 qualities takes a Divine lighted form. If you want to know about that form, one should read Dhruvopakhyanam in the 10th Canto of Bhagavata where Vishnu appears before Dhruva. How did Vishnu appear to Dhruva? Dhruva, when ascended and reached Ajna, could see a form of bright light which comes out from the Brow Centre and appears before him.

The form appeared very similar to Dhruva himself. That means the Divine is present in you as yourself and when he appears before you, you feel that he is very much similar to you. It is said that in Vaikuntha, the abode of Vishnu, everyone appears like Vishnu. They have such a relation with Vishnu. They do not appear different from Vishnu. So a devotee gains such a Divine form.

All those are advanced states but we should first check if we have interest in the Divine. Only then you start practicing. Then transformation starts happening. If what is unwanted is removed, then the original state remains. Also your practice should become fierier as you progress. Then what happens is what we discussed until now.

As discussed, we should keep reading the stories of Divine interest and recollecting the Divine qualities from time to time. Chanting of stotras should help us in recollecting the Divine qualities. If you just chant mechanically without hearing, there is no use. If you hear attentively, it will give you lot of happiness. It gradually purifies your body, mind and senses. Then you can align with Buddhi. This is one of meanings of the stanzas when you chant Aditya Hridayam. It has been included as a part of Ramayana. It helps us to relate to the Sun energies. When we invoke such energies into us, all impurities are eliminated. Many deep subtle meanings are present in the stanzas of Aditya Hrudayam but we do not recognize them while chanting because we just chant mechanically.

By having poised devotion, one attains a Divine form. Though the Divine principle is formless, we should remember that it can take to a form as well. Virat Purusha (Cosmic Person) is the form of the Divine principle. Formless principle is called Brahman or THAT. Form is there for us to relate easily. It is tough to relate to a formless Divine principle. So we have both forms of worship, one is worship of Brahman, the formless Divine principle and the other is worship of the Cosmic Person. Some may follow the former path while others may follow the latter. Both are true but latter is easy to begin with. Many start with it but get deviated by getting stuck with one form. So while worshipping a Divine form, one should remember that all forms are Divine.

Now Kapila gives Bhakti Yoga in some more detail in the form of 10 steps. Until now, he gave it in brief. He told that by following this path, one attains a Divine form. Originally we were all images of the Lord but we lost the identity. This path helps us to regain our original state as Divine.

We will continue in the next class.

Swasthi