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"Srimad Bhagavatam"

Discourse by Master KPK on Sunday, the 22nd of May 2016, at Visakh.

(for private circulation to WTT members)

Canto 4:

Bhagavatam is a scripture which greatly purifies the ones who read or listen to it when one reads. Veda Vyasa, the author of this Scripture, has written in the Scripture itself that Sunday evening is the most auspicious time to relate to the Divine through the Scripture. In Bhagavatam, it is said that the Divine principle can be related to through a form or even as a formless principle.

From the beginning to Canto 3 to now, we have been discussing the story of the creation. We discussed how the intelligences exist in the creation and also in us. By recollecting them, they cooperate with us more and more. Then any hindrances in life can be overcome very easily. Before the discourse, I am singing some important stotras from Bhagavatam which praise the Lord and his qualities. Singing such stotras gives us wonderful experience of the Divine.

We should remember that to completely experience the Divine, we should gradually forget ourselves. We should lose ourselves in Divinity. This state is described as nakedness in sometimes. It is mostly misunderstood as physically naked. Nakedness, here, refers to state in which one does not remember oneself in Divine presence. There are certain Seers who remain so deeply associated with Divine that they even do not remember that they have a body. As a result, they do not even wear clothes. Their nakedness is much deeper than what we see.

One should strive to become a knower. A knower is one who knows that everything is Divine and sees Divine in everything. Such a one ever rejoices in Divine presence. Sukha Maharshi who discoursed Bhagavatam to Parikshit said "There is no non-God state. There is no non-God time. There is no non-God form. There is non-God name." That is how the Divine principle is to be realized and experienced. We are reading this Scripture for that realization. It is not for time pass. So we should remember that. Now we will go back to the story.

We discussed how Sati took to the path of Yoga, lifted herself up to Ajna, left the body and let the left over body to be immolated by the fire of Yoga. This happened in a place where Yagna was being conducted by Daksha. After Sati immolated herself, Rudra Ganas (the soldiers of Shiva) who followed Sati got angry and they got into a fight with the forces who were

supporting Daksha. Sage Bhurghu wanted to protect the Yagna and so he supports Daksha. We discussed the symbolic understanding of this fight between the forces of Rudra and forces of Daksha. There are certain intelligences who give us objective experience and keep pulling us into objectivity through mind and senses. They try to oppose any attempt that we make to go inside. The forces of Rudra try to help us to relate to the Divine. For us to follow the forces of Rudra, we need to have dedication towards the path.

At the onset of these events, Narada goes to Shiva and tells what happened. It is not that Shiva does not know. He knows everything as and when it happens. Narada goes and tells because he wants to create a cause for Shiva to act upon the situation. Narada also tells that all his soldiers too lost in the fight against devas present there. Shiva knew that this would happen and that is why he cautioned Sati but Sati did not heed his advice. Shiva gets very fierce on hearing what has happened. He pulls one plait of hair out of many plaits that he has and throws it. Veerabhadra was born out of that plait. He was very dark in complexion. He had thousands of arms, each holding a different type of a weapon. He too had 3 eyes like Shiva. We should understand that Veerabhadra is one of the avatars of Shiva.

Veerabhadra bows down to Shiva and asks “What should I do?” Shiva says “I appoint you as the commander of all my forces. You should go and destroy the Yagna being performed by Daksha and kill him. That is your mission.” Killing Daksha should be understood as eliminating the ego of Daksha. Shiva tells “You need not worry of anything else. You need not heed if anyone tries to stop you.” Veerabhadra is a very fierce incarnation of Shiva and he is best suitable for this work. He circumambulates Shiva and quickly marches towards earth to the place where the Yagna was being performed. His movement along with the forces appeared like an incoming sandstorm to Daksha and those present there. All of them were shocked as they knew of no reason of what that could happen.

This incident can be related to the experience that one has during death. Veerabhadra is the form of death. When death approaches, one feels darkness surrounding him. It means his awareness is fading because awareness is regarded as light within. Now the body is getting prepared to being burnt. The being inside feels the heat and is pained by it. The description of death is given very clearly in Scriptures like Bhagavatam to remind us that normal death is very painful and we can avoid it by taking to a Yogic path.

The death of a being is similar to the dissolution (pralaya) of creation. It is like a minor pralaya to the being. It happens every time when one leaves a body. Gradually one loses consciousness mostly out of fear. A Yogi leaves the body once he knows that the time for his departure has come. An ordinary being loses consciousness but still remains because he does not know how to exit from the body. As Daksha is not a Yogi, he starts experiencing this process of death.

There are persons who witness the death and there are persons who die. We know how Master CVV and Master MN departed knowingly and also telling others. We too should try to reach a state like them. Master CVV has instructed us on what is to be done to reach that state. So it is upto us to follow his instructions or not.

Prasuti, the wife of Daksha, speaks then. She tells to Daksha “this is the consequences of what you did to our beloved daughter. I have cautioned you earlier but you did not pay heed to me. You have now caused anger to Shiva and no can stand before the anger of Shiva. What you see now is Shiva in his fiercest form.” Though she knew that nothing can stop Veerabhadra and she knew that Daksha would be killed, she still tries to convince Veerabhadra into not killing Daksha. But Veerabhadra does not stop because he has an order from Shiva.

Veerabhadra and his commanding army started destroying the arrangements at the place of Yagna with full force. The havoc caused by them is symbolic of the distress that experiences at the time of death. All the entrances and exits to the place of Yagna are destroyed. We too have 9 openings in the body and they start malfunctioning at the time of death. Bleeding might happen through some of the openings. Respiration becomes weak and one might require ventilator to stay put. The pillars of the structure were destroyed by the army. It means that the spinal cord loses its functionality and that person cannot stand anymore. They destroyed the part of the Yagna place which was designated for discussion of various aspects of wisdom. It means the memory and the thinking ability of the person is lost. Doctors then declare the person to be mind-dead or in coma. The kitchen part of the Yagna was destroyed which means that the person cannot eat or gulp anything. Many lose the interest to eat many days before death. If in old age, someone loses taste and interest to eat, it is an indication of incoming death. Even if he tries to eat, digestion becomes very difficult.

The Sages who were came to that Yagna left immediately. In the 3rd Canto, we discussed how the Sages preside over certain organs of our body. They leaving the place of Yagna indicates that the body is loses all the abilities which were bestowed by their presence. Very bad odour spread around the place. This means that the inner and outer purification has almost stopped and hence bad odour is felt around the body. The excretory activity stops.

Bhrughu, who supported Daksha, was caught by a Rudra Gana. Veerabhdra caught hold of Daksha. Others who supported Daksha were also caught by other soldiers. All of them were tortured. This part is given here briefly. For more details, we should refer to Shiva Purana. In Shiva Purana, how they were tortured and the symbolic understanding of that torture is given. The whole story relates to our human body and experience of death.

Finally, Veerabhadra kills Daksha with a sword by removing his head. The whole army started many loud noises in celebration. Here separating the head from the rest of the body is symbolic

that the immortal being is separated from the mortal body. Generally, one loses consciousness before this separation happens. For Yogis this separation is not required because they are separated naturally and leave the body when time comes.

The rest of the Devas who were hurt in the process go to meet Brahma, the creator. The next part of the story we will discuss in the next class.

So Daksha was removed of his ego. Later we see how Daksha is reborn and he becomes a great devotee of Shiva. The creation continues through Daksha again from then on.

-Swasthi