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"Srimad Bhagavatam"

Discourse by Master KPK on Sunday, the 12th of June 2016, at Visakh.

(for private circulation to WTT members)

Canto 4:

We discussed about the killing of Daksha in the last class, at the end of Daksha Yagna. He was killed by Veerabhadra who was sent to Shiva. Though this part is given in a detailed manner, we discussed it briefly to finish it in the last class. There are things that need to be detailed before we proceed with the rest of the story. We will now go into details now because finishing Bhagavatam is not our objective. Our objective is to understand the subtle wisdom given through the Scripture and as a result expand our consciousness. Without that expansion of consciousness, this activity of Scripture reading is not fruitful. In fact, any work that nature allocates to us, it is for the sake of expansion of our consciousness and that is why we are advised to do any work with dedication and interest so that we gain the intended experience and expansion of consciousness happens. Finishing the work is not an objective. There is no experience once the work is done. One gains experience is only during the work and our dedication determines the extent of experience that we gain. So we go in detail so that we gain deeper experience and wisdom that the Scripture intends to grant us.

Here the intention of killing of Daksha symbolically means destruction of Daksha's ego and uplifting the being. Shiva wants Daksha to be saved from the evil of his pride and arrogance and that is done by removing his head and killing him. Shiva himself grants Daksha the next life and from then Daksha loses pride and gains humility and becomes a devotee of Shiva. So this is a story which tells us that Shiva helps to eliminate our individualistic ego and make us realise our Divine oneness. This story can be related to each one of us. The Lord waits for a very long time for us to change but he finally he gets into action if one is not able to do it by himself.

Shiva has lot of patience. He is said to be Saturn to Saturn and waits for a long time for the being to enter the right path. When the being is not able to change by himself, then Shiva eliminates and gives that being a new life showing him the right direction. That is what happened with Daksha here.

Now we will start discussing in details when Veerabhadra was anointed by Shiva to kill Daksha. As Daksha is already killed in the previous class, we can now go slowly and discuss the subtle meanings in the story for some classes.

Each being has a lifetime in one body. The devotees and Yogis remember that they will have to depart from the body after entering it. The others who are mostly egoistic forget that they have to leave the body one day. Many do not even realize that the journey of a being does not end with this life. It is an eternal journey and consequences of every action comes with you, into the future. So whatever you do not has a bearing on your future journey. There are few who realise this truth and act accordingly.

We have descended 7 planes in the process of involution until we reached earth and we have to climb the 7 planes in the path of evolution and realise our Divine existence. If you act irresponsibly in one life, it leads to lot of problems in the next life. If this goes on, then the being keeps going down and down without retreat. That is when the Lord intervenes because he wants to uplift the being from that state of no retreat.

In previous Yugas, people used to accept the punishment when they commit a mistake. That is to ensure that the consequence of that mistake is not carried forward into future journey. There used to be people who used to go the king and concede their mistake and request the king to punish them. That is because people knew that their journey was eternal and they cannot get away with a mistake even though nobody knows that it has been committed.

Once, there were 2 brothers who had Divine aspiration and they decided to sit in penance to experience the Divine. A few hours passed by and the younger one started feeling hungry. So he looked around and found a fruit brought by him brother. His brother was in deep penance and so he eats that fruits without disturbing him. He sits back in penance. He, then, starts feeling that he was wrong in taking something which belonged to his brother without his brother's consent. It amounted to stealing. He could not continue penance with such thoughts and he disturbs his brother and tells him. His brother simply says that it is fine and he did not mind. The younger brother was not convinced and wanted his elder brother to punish him to neutralize the karma that was committed. The elder brother said that he had no right to punish someone even if they committed a mistake and he said "If you still insist on punishment, we will go to the king of the land and only he has the right to award punishment to anyone in his kingdom. So they go to the king and explain the situation. The king said that he too would pardon the younger brother because the elder brother has done the same. Still the younger brother wanted punishment as per the law of the land. So the king asks his law ministers to check the law and give an appropriate punishment. The ministers checked and informed that the law punishes such acts with chopping of hands. The king was aghast and did not want that punishment to be given. When the younger brother came to know of the punishment as per law, he was immediately ready for it. He wanted to take that punishment. Everyone feels sad but the punishment was given. So his hands were chopped off. The younger brother was then relieved and wanted to continue his penance. The elder brother says, "We will take bath in the river and continue our penance." They both take a

dip in the river and when they come out, the younger one gets back his hands. The elder one then says "You were so prepared to accept your mistake and take punishment that your karma is already neutralized and you deserved your hands back." This is a symbolic story but the subtle meaning given by the story should be realized.

Hence, we should remember that there is protection in punishment. The Lord punishes at times to protect and uplift the being. It should not be understood just as a punishment. One should not try to escape that punishment in an intelligent manner. Then it takes into further problems and tangles until no intelligence can save you. So repenting and accepting an appropriate punishment is important. That is why Jesus keeps saying "Repent" for any mistake that you have done. Do not try to somehow support your mistake citing some reason. Accept it and repent for it. Then that related karma is neutralized. Here Daksha's karma was neutralized by this removal of his head by Veerabhadra.

So here Veerabhadra begins his journey to earth as instructed by Lord Shiva. When he walked on earth, the ornaments on his legs produced sound which was very fearful and his spear could cause fear to anyone who sees it. When he arrived at the place of Yagna, it became very dark suddenly. The darkness is symbolic of the time that one is going to lose his life. Anyone who is about to die experiences this darkness in and around. On seeing that darkness, Daksha started to fear because he was feeling that darkness even within. The people who were there realized that this darkness is due to sandstorm like activity that has picked up with the arrival of Veerabhadra.

Veerabhadra is an embodiment of death. His dark form is symbolic of the withdrawal of light (consciousness) from the body. The being who is about to die experiences lot of darkness and he cannot see anything around.

Veerabhadra was ordered by Shiva to take off the head of Daksha and nobody can stop him from doing that. When Daksha realizes that Veerabhadra is there to kill him, he requests Vishnu to save him but Vishnu says that he cannot. Vishnu says that he has to accept the punishment for the sins that he had committed and that is the only way forward.

Here on one side there was darkness approaching and on other side, there lot of dust circulating around. These two are symbolic of Rajas (hyperactivity) and Tamas (inertia). Rajas is doing too many unwanted things and Tamas is not doing things which are to be done. This Tamas in the body appears as darkness when one is about to die. Rajas is felt like hot air and dust which will cause lot of pain to the being at the time of death.

Shiva did not react for all the deeds that Daksha did in the past. But now that Daksha's act has lead to the self-immolation of Sati, Shiva did not remain patient anymore. Daksha has touched upon the lowest point and it is meaningless to remain patient to his acts further.

Prasuti, the wife of Daksha tells "Shiva is the creator as well as the destroyer of the whole creation. Nothing can remain when he decides to destroy. So, none can save you. Your sins have brought you here and your death is before you now. All the experiences that you have now are suggesting of your impending death." Generally if we see, when one is about to die, there are lot of painful experiences that one goes through unless one knows how to depart willfully or one has lead a highly disciplined life. Many people are admitted to hospital by their dear ones in their intension to save the being but most of the hospital experience can be considered as extended hell. Very few people have the courage to accept death when is about to come without trying save themselves. Even the family members want to somehow save the person and they do everything in their capacity but anything they do, the experience is horrible to the person. So Daksha was having such horrible experiences within. The horror in the experience multiplies when one knows that one is about to die. Some are lucky enough to die without knowing that they would die but when someone knows that he would die and is waiting for that event, he goes through hell of an experience. Leave death aside, even events which we are expected to happen but get prolonged give us fearful experience. If the son is expected to arrive at home at a particular time but does not come, as the time passes the parents start fearing and lot of unwanted thoughts go through their mind. Such events are enough to cause fear. Just imagine when knows that he is about to die and is waiting for that event? What would be happening inside to such a one?

There are the 5 elements, 5 senses, 5 organs, 5 sensations and 5 pranas which constitute our body. All these dissolve into the nature when one dies. The being does not die. When one does not know that he does not die and only the body dies, he fears death. Daksha is stuck in his body and did not realise that he cannot die. He was in ego due to his body and he fears a lot when the body is about to die.

There are higher beings who know that they are different from the body and they even know how to enter and leave the body. So when the body is about to fall, they leave the body and observe it fall. When one does not know how to depart from the body, he is pulled out with lot of painful experience. So we need to learn to find a way out of this body before it falls. The only literature which can give a solution to life and death is the literature coming from the Seers of Vedic tradition. The other civilizations might have given ways of how best to experience the objectivity and they might be lot of advanced in that but the path to immortality has descended and spread through the Seers of Vedic tradition. They have given us the path because they realized that life in objectivity is only 1/4th of the total and there is lot more to experience in subjectivity. The ones who have realized the path can depart from the body before it falls. All

the devas present in the body leave the body before it falls. That is why many of them lose their senses and sensations before death. It is because the corresponding intelligences have already left the body. The one who knows the exit way can also leave along with them.

The problem is only to the one who feels that he is the body and doesn't know how to come out of it. There is one thing which we should understand here. Everyone need not know the path of departure from the body. If one follows all the dharmas (laws) in life which are to be followed, such a one experiences a painless death even though he doesn't know how to depart. It is like giving anesthesia to the patient to give him pain free experience during an operation. So if you crave for objective desires within sticking to the dharmas of life and do not know how to depart from this body, then you are sure to have a painful death.

There are some who followed the path of Yoga and there are some who followed the path of Dharma. In both the cases, the being overcomes death without any pain. We have the example of Dharmaraja who stuck to dharma in every situation and he departed so easily that he too didn't know that he has left the body. Then we have Dhritarashtra, the father of Duryodhana, who was a Yogi due to his sincere practice of Yoga but he could not follow dharma most of the time because of his weaknesses. He knew what was right but he could not do it. After the Mahabharata war, he was still alive and Dharmaraja was taking care of him. Vidura, his brother, comes there and scolds him and tells him "why do you still live in this manner even after all your sons have died in the war? Come with me to the forest and sit for penance." Then Dhritarashtra realizes that it is better that he departs and he could depart willfully because he knew and practiced Yoga in the past. That way he could leave the body by the virtue of his knowledge that he carried about the science of Yoga. So we have both the examples. In this story, Daksha did not fall in either of the categories. So he has to die.

We need to realise that we have trace the path of return at some point. We cannot keep on going in the objectivity forever. Once we start in the path of return, whatever we did in the past, they keep coming back to us and we have to neutralize each one of them.

So Veerbhadra and his army enter the place where the Yagna was happening. All this happened on earth in a place which we call Haridwar (a place in North India). They entering the place of Yagna is symbolic that they have entered into the body of the person to die. All this is to indicate the painful experiences that one goes through at the time of death. They first destroyed the doors of the hall where the ritual was taking place. We too have doors in the body in form of 9 openings of which 7 are in our head itself. The doors getting destroyed means that the sight failing, the ears not able to hear, the nose not able to smell and so on. Then the spinal cord becomes weak and one cannot stand anymore. The army of Veerabhadra gradually destroy the hall of Yagna which are symbolic of the body parts failing gradually. One cannot eat anymore and even the excretory activity stops. All such things are told symbolically in the story.

So the hall where was Daksha's Yagna was performed was completely destroyed. The place lost its purity which means the body starts giving very bad odour. Prasuti, the wife of Daksha starts feeling sad that her husband is about to die.

We will stop here and continue in the next class. We discussed in details the experience one goes through when one is about to die and doesn't know how to depart from it. This experience is definite to those who do not follow dharma or those who do not know the Yogic path.

Now there are some people laughed when Sati was anguished at the acts of Daksha and there were some who even supported Daksha. Nandi recognizes all such ones. Nandi gives instructions to Veerabhadra on how they are also to be punished. That is the next part of the story which we will discuss next.

-Swasthi