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"Srimad Bhagavatam"

Discourse by Master KPK on Sunday, the 26th of February 2017, at Visakh.
(for private circulation to WTT members)

Canto 4:

We are discussing the story of Dhruva. Dhruva wanted to worship Vishnu, gain his grace and reach highest of planes of existence. With a strong will, he leaves his house and meets Sage Narada on the way. Narada tests Dhruva in many ways to check the strength of his will. Dhruva requests Narada to show him the right direction in the path he wants to tread. On hearing the words of Dhruva, Narada is very much pleased and decides to initiate Dhruva. He realises that it is the will of the Lord that Dhruva has taken to this path with such a strong will.

Generally if one tries to enter the path with a weak will, it is very difficult for that person to sustain in that path for long. One may get such a will when one sees others following the path. It may also happen when one goes to some holy place or meets a holy person. The will fades away with time and especially if one finds something in the objectivity which is more attractive, he will lose this immediately. So, will to reach Divinity is very difficult to sustain. It is because that will did not come from the depth of our being. The will should be so strong that one should feel that there is no purpose to live other than to live in Divine alignment. Before accepting any disciple, a Master does a rigorous check on the will and aspiration of the being. That is what Narada did before accepting Dhruva as a disciple. Narada wanted to know why really Dhruva wanted to enter the path. If Dhruva's reasons were petty, Narada would not have accepted but though the initial cause was petty, it transformed into the ultimate cause of Divine realisation.

(Master is once again reading the complete conversation between Narada and Dhruva as given in the Scripture).

Narada continues "It is the Lord himself which granted you with this will and he himself will lead you unto himself."

Here Narada is telling Dhruva that he is graced by the Lord. Master EK writes in one of his books "It is by the sheer grace of the Lord by which the soul tends to the return path." So, if the will comes from the Lord, then the being is sure to progress in the path of ascent. Such ones do not leave the path at any cost, whatever may come. That is what we see in the lives of all devotees. They never deviated from the path how many ever difficulties they face in life. There

is continuity in their progress. That continuity is ensured if there is Divine grace. That is the secret here. Even a child like Dhruva can attain the highest because of Divine grace. It is not an ordinary grace. Dhruva not only attained highest of planes but he was also made the cause of the formation of this planet as a result of which he attained lot of fame as well. Such is the grace of the Lord. That is why anything can happen if the Lord graces.

Though it is not given here, it is quite possible that Dhruva must have done lot of worship even in his previous lives and so in this life, he was finally graced by the Lord. That life is in the previous creation. In the 1st Canto of Bhagavatam, Narada himself tells about his previous life in the last creation where he reached a state of complete Divine alignment and as a result he was born as Narada in the present creation. Narada was not some random being born just like that. He did tremendous practice in his previous lives to reach that state. Here, Dhruva reached certain state in his previous life and it is time for his realisation. That is why the Lord sends Narada himself to initiate Dhruva.

We should remember that not everyone can become a devotee just because he wants. It requires Divine grace for one to become a devotee. For grace, you need to worship the Lord with no expectations. As long as one worships the Lord expecting something in return, he is not a devotee. Once the Lord is pleased that one has reached a state where one wants nothing other than Divine alignment, he graces such a one. From that day, he becomes a devotee. He will have no idea other than Divine. He will have no other priorities in life.

So Narada tells Dhruva that his Dhruva's will is due to the grace of the Lord. The Lord is a true initiator while the Master is just a medium of the Lord. Narada here is a medium of the Lord to initiate Dhruva. A Master cannot claim ownership over a disciple because he is just a medium. A Master might initiate many disciples but only those who are graced by the Lord will attain the ultimate. Others will have to wait until the Lord graces. Master CVV initiated many into his path of Yoga but not all have reached a status similar to that of Master MN or Master VPS. So, Divine grace is very important for fulfilment. Until that comes, we have to wait worshipping the Lord. Once the grace comes, progress is continuous and very quick.

In this story, Dhruva was graced by the Lord. Narada realizes that it is now his responsibility to initiate Dhruva. He tells Dhruva to remain in Divine alignment at all times.

Narada further tells "There are many who live their lives as per dharma and trying to fulfil their responsibilities in the right manner. Though they are living as per dharma, they are still living for themselves. They do not get into problems but still they are not fulfilled because they are just living for themselves and as result that bondage still exists." We should remember that though you are doing everything right, as long as there is a cause behind your acts, you are bounded to the results. The results do not cause you any problems but still your life is not

fulfilled. Narada tells that for one to remain in Divine alignment, this kind of living is not sufficient. To remain with the Divine, one should not only live as per dharma, one should also live for the welfare of others. Service should happen with no expectation and by seeing the Lord in all. Seeing the Divine in those who you are serving is also important. If not, service is not fulfilling. There are many service missions that are running but they are not attaining fulfilment because of 2 reasons mainly, one is the feeling that they are doing good through service and other is that they do not remember that they are serving the Lord through others. Service keeps happening, others are benefitted but you remain where you are. There is no progress and fulfilment in life until you serve with a Divine intent. If the intent is just show off, then it is of no use.

This ultimate message of Bhagavatam comes again and again. The message is to see the Divine in everything, everyone and every situation. It is useless if Divine relation is restricted to prayer or ritual. Divine is everywhere and should be seen so.

Narada's first instruction to Dhurva is that he should see the Divine in all. There are people who use the words like "Sai Ram", "Narayana", "Master", etc. to call anyone. The objective is to see the Lord or Master principle in others. Saying so is fine but the intent is important. Are you able to connect to the Lord in the mind when you see the other person? If not saying so is useless. The intent in the mind is most important whether you say it out or not. Whatever you see, you should connect to the Lord in the mind.

Narada instructs Dhruva further as to how one can relate to the Lord within. He gives the steps of Yama, Niyama, Pranayama, so on upto Dhyana. He tells a way of how one can relate a beautiful form of the Lord within. So there are 2 practices given here. One practice is when we are at work and with open eyes. Another practice is when one sits alone with closed eyes. The first is important initially because the 2nd is difficult in initial stages. It takes time for the inner practice to stabilise. The outer practice enables inner practice. First begin with seeing the Lord in everything around. Then gradually you can move within. We may be given many idols and pictures of the Lord. Those all are just representatives of the Divine principle. They are not everything. They are just some examples. There can be many forms and names that can be used to relate to Divine. So you choose a form but do not limit yourself to it. Worship of a form is to stabilize the mind to align with the Lord within. And there is no form in this creation which is non-God. Accept every form as Divine and reject nothing. Accept every name as Divine. As everything is Divine, one cannot have likes and dislike. If you dislike something, it means you are rejecting the Divinity in it. So we should reach a state above dualities. We can observe these qualities in devotees. They don't see anything other than Divine.

We see in the story of Prahalada that he sees the Lord even in a lion, snake, etc. That is too high for us. Atleast begin with what we see daily. Devotees see the Lord even in times of great

adversity. That will be very difficult for us. If you see the Divine in the other, then the other sees you to be agreeable. That is how devotees could tame even wild animals. We cannot do all that now. Begin with simple things and then move up gradually. Nothing around you should disturb you.

The preliminary problem for us is agreeability. The more civilized you are, the less agreeable you are. We tend to have lot of things which we do not like in the name of civilization. We do not agree if someone is not civilized according to us. It should not be so. Let the other person be as he likes. You just see the Divine in him.

In rituals, we are asked to offer fruits, flowers or leaves. It can be anything but see the Divine in whatever you are offering. Then it becomes a true offering. If you fail to see the Divine, it does not matter even if you offer gold. The Lord is very much pleased if you offer a small leaf with devotion and seeing the Divinity in that leaf. When you eat something, remember that it is Divine and you are offering it to the Divine within. Then whatever you take will not disturb your constitution.

All this is about the practice to be done when we with eyes open and moving in the world. The practice to be done inside is also given in a detailed manner. We will discuss that in the next class.

-Swasthi