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"Srimad Bhagavatam"

Discourse by Master KPK on Sunday, the 10th of June 2018, at Visakh.

(for private circulation to WTT members)

Canto 4:

Bhagavatam has a special place among all the Scriptures. To understand and experience the other Scriptures, one needs to read them and contemplate on them at mental and even Buddhic levels. Whereas Bhagavatam is a Scripture which directly grants us the experience. The splendour of the Divine principle is most beautifully given in this Scripture. It enables us experience the Divine which is all permeating in all names, all forms and all situations. Its objective is to take you to a state where you see anything and everything as Divine. You may call it by any name. Some called it TAT. Some called it Brahman. Some called it Krishna. Some called it Shiva. Some called it SAT-CHIT. So, you may call it may any name but they all refer to the one essence. All the stotras that we have been chanting before the discourse praise the Divine as an all permeating principle. They describe how the Divine is all permeating. They describe that all permeating Divine principle can also take to any form.

In the story of Prudhu, we discussed that the Lord appeared before Prudhu in the form of Vishnu and granted him a boon. Prudhu had nothing to ask because for one who is experiencing the Divine in all, there is nothing left to ask. He just asks the Lord to bless him to remain in Divine presence for all times to come.

Prudhu also tells "O Lord! You are like a father who knows what is best for his child and grants it to him. So, what is the point in me asking you for something." We too should understand this truth. Does the Lord not know what is best for us? So, once we are in alignment with him, he will anyway take care of us. So, what is the point in asking? Also compared to the Divine, we are ignorant ones. We know very little compared to the omniscient Lord.

Master EK always used to say "Keep working relating to the Divine. Do not ask with an ignorant mind." If we ask out of ignorance, we might be asking what is not good for us. We really do not know what exactly we want. In fact, why to think of "What you want", think of "What you have to do". The path of desires will never lead you out of this cycle of lives and deaths. Try to follow the path of action. Our education should be oriented to teach us what is our duty and not what is to be desired. The present-day education system hardly orients people

to their duties and responsibilities. It orients them more to go after their desires. Following desires leads to unwanted consequences and it is a never-ending cycle.

I will tell you a story which happened. Once me and Master EK went to Hyderabad and we stayed there in the house of my father-in-law. It was raining heavily for most of the time we stayed there. As we couldn't go out, Master EK started telling certain aspects from Bhagavatam and I was listening. In the middle, Master EK showed me a paper which described an incident between him and his Master. There was a prelude to it which I should tell first.

One of the persons who has been associating with Master EK borrowed a vehicle (2-wheeler) and used it for few days and returned it. When he took the vehicle, it had tank full of petrol but when he returned it, it was empty. A few days after that incident, the person who borrowed that vehicle suffered a big loss in his business. So Master EK was thinking why it happened so. This is the prelude and at that time, this incident happened between Master EK and his Master. Master EK was told by his Master "The loss that person had incurred is nothing compared to what he had done. He has misused the association by taking the vehicle and not even filling the fuel before returning it. Tell all those associating with you in my name that if they misuse the resources of fellow members, they will have to face consequences". Then Master EK asked "What you said is fine but why am being made to deal with all such people?" Then he got a reply from his Master "It is because you desired for it. You desired to serve fellow beings and consequently you have to deal with them." So that is how even good desires can lead us to consequences. That is why based on his experience, Master EK tells us to just keep working without asking for anything.

There is already enough past karma that each one of us has to work out. So do not think that we will have nothing to do if we do not desire or initiate anything. That past karma will take you to your duties. Just fulfil them without creating further consequences. Even if you stop initiating things now, lot of work still happens through you because it will take time for all your past karma to be cleared. If you keep creating more and more karma, then it is a never-ending process. Unless all your past arrears are cleared, you cannot go beyond the causal plane.

So, remembering that Divine is omniscient and that he will take care of what is best for us will enable us to move away from desires and gradually clear all our karma. Past karma might require you to go through some discomforts. Accept them and go through them without trying to escape them. That is what we see in the lives of devotees. They accept anything without complaining. They just surrender to the Divine and observe everything happening around them. That is what Prudhu tells here.

The Lord now replies to Prudhu. "By my grace, you got into the path of devotion and pursued in the path". One cannot enter the path of devotion just by himself. One needs the initial spark or

instinct to come from the Divine. It happens because of Divine grace. To test whether one is graced by that instinct or not is to simply check whether one gets goosebumps while reading the stories of great devotees. If one is moved by such stories, it is an indication that he entered the path of devotee naturally by Divine grace. Without that grace, if one tries to become a devotee, he cannot. That is why one should not force others into this path. That person may be very close to you and living in the same house but still you cannot ask him to follow this path. He will automatically follow the path when the spark in him is ignited by Divine grace. Everyone is initiated as per his own schedule. You follow your own schedule and do not try to decide someone else's schedule.

The Lord tells further "One who enters this path gradually reaches a state where his devotion becomes stable and immutable. That is when one can overcome my maya (illusion) in creation."

For most of us, devotion is not stable which means that we relate to the Divine only at certain times and not at other times. For a devotee with stable devotion, everything becomes Divine. He sees nothing in this creation other than Divine. He remains with the Divine in all situations. He does not differentiate between a temple and another place because he remembers that Divine is all permeating. He relates to the Divine through anything and everything. When he drinks water, he sees the Divine in the water, in the glass, in the process of drinking and so on. Such a state of devotion is what Bhagavatam speaks of and the devotees that Bhagavatam speaks of are ones who reached that state. Such devotees are never disturbed by any kind of situations in their life. Only such devotees stand above the illusion in this creation. It is because they moved exceptionally close to the Divine.

As long as one remains with the Divine, one stands above maya. To relate with the Divine in all forms, one can relate to the existence-awareness present in every form. Existence is the basis to everything, which is Divine. The awareness animates everything in this creation based on existence. So, this dual of existence-awareness present in everything is what we need to relate to.

The Lord tells "You keep fulfilling your duties coming to you as per the Divine plan". Each one of us has taken to a form to fulfil certain duties. We should stick to them alone. The Lord will take care of you if you are fulfilling all your duties to the best of your abilities. That is what can be clearly observed in Rama's life. He did nothing but fulfilling his duties. He did not do more or less. We too should try to follow the same. That is what Lord Krishna tells in Bhagawadgita. If a work comes to you, do it. You cannot escape from it. Do not get deviated by other things like name and fame which might come to you. If you remain oriented to your work, then you receive help from unexpected sources. Then you need to work with even more resolve. You need to be dedicated to your duties without getting distracted.

The Lord tells "for a devotee like you, whether it is heaven or hell or liberated state, it does not matter". For one who sees the Divine in all, where he is does not matter. For such a one, whether it is the Himalayas or a crowded market place, it is the same.

Finally, the Lord blesses Prudhu to remain as he is now because he has already become a stable devotee. That ends this part of the story. Next Prudhu will give certain teachings to the beings of the creation and then we have the teachings of Lord Sanath Kumara to Prudhu. We will continue with them after I return from my tour of Europe.

-Swasthi