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Vijayawada Gurupujas - 2010

"Ambarisha Upakhyanam" Discourse 3 (7-3-2010)

Fraternal greetings to the brotherhood.

We were discussing the story of the great devotee Ambarisha. He was blessed by Vishnu who gave him the wheel of Sudarshana. And he got the thought of doing a grand ritual "Dwadasi Vratam" for a year and when he was about to complete it, sage Durvasa came to him as a guest and he had to wait for him to complete his bath and come. But as the time of ending his fast came, he was advised by the elders who were present there to take some water but not food as that the fast is ended and ritual is complete. All this we have discussed yesterday and today. Now we move to the next part of the story.

As advised by elders and gurus, Ambarisha prays to Lord Vishnu and takes some water to end his fast.

Next Sloka.... Explanation:

Immediately after he takes water, Sage Durvasa comes out of meditation and comes to that place after taking a bath. Seeing Ambarisha he could recognize that Ambarisha ended his fast by taking some fluid. Durvasa was a great Sage so he could recognize it very easily just by the smell of fluid. Then he gets angry and puts up a frown face. As we read in the morning, he was of fiery nature and if anything happens against his wish, he gets angry. His blood circulated at a faster rate and his body started vibrating. Also his hunger at that time contributed some more to his anger. Then he says in anger that this king Ambarisha has pride of his power and wealth. "He called me for lunch but before I came he took something to end his fast. He does not have any respect for the Sages. He is not a devotee of Vishnu and all his devotion just a glamour."

Sage Durvasa was talking everything against Ambarisha in his anger. "He will suffer the fruits of this deed of his. I will show this king and also to everyone in this land that no can do anything if I get angry. Who can stop me?"

Sage Durvasa was greatly respected everywhere he went. So he was expecting the same everywhere he went. This feeling causes a fall in anyone. Same is our case. Due to the respect

on us, anywhere we go someone may come to pick us up out of their respect. If we take this for granted, then the Lord will put us to test. One time when we travel with a huge luggage taking for granted that someone would come to pick us up, the Lord puts us to test by creating a situation where no one will come that time to pick us up. It is not a sin if someone does not come to pick us up. It is no rule either. But due to our expectation, we take it in that manner that they have disrespect towards us and show anger towards them. Same is the case now with Sage Durvasa.

Though Ambarisha has committed no sin, due to his expectation, Durvasa takes that situation in a wrong manner. Though he was a great Sage, he fails to understand the situation. Why did it happen so? It is all due to the maya (illusion) of the Lord. It is due to this illusion that one feels that he exists. It is important for experience and fulfillment. Anyone can fall in this illusion. No one is an exception. The 3 logos of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva also fell in this illusion. Please remember the Vishnu we are speaking of as the Lord is different from the Vishnu in the 3 logos. The four Kumaras also fell in illusion. The Seven sages also were no exception. Same is the case with Durvasa now. No one in this creation can claim that he is beyond the maya. Only the Lord is beyond maya because the maya itself emerged from him.

So I always tell though all the people around you are ready to help you, do the work you have to do all by yourself. Let them do what they want to do for you. Do not expect anything from them. Do not associate your work with others. Do it yourself. Those who are weak inside, try to find fault in others for their failure. Remember that you are responsible for both your success and failure.

In the early days when Master EK started doing service activities, there were very few members who used to help him out in his activities. There were many who used to take help from him but he never expected anything from anyone. He never used to wait for anyone to get things done.

Whenever Master EK and I used to travel anywhere we had only 2 suitcases. Before I took his suitcase into my hand, he used to lift it up. Then when I asked that I would carry it, he would give it to me. He used to do the same every time. Then once I asked Master “Why do you do this every time?” Then he replied “There are 2 reasons

- 1) It is not necessary that you may travel with me anywhere I go. So I should be used to carry my luggage myself.
- 2) It is no rule that you may like to carry my luggage always. I give it only if you wish to do it. I do not want to burden you though you do not wish to carry my luggage.

Now coming back to the story...

So Durvasa gets angry and his eyes become red. It appeared as if fire was being emitted from his eyes. Then in that anger, he creates a demon with all kinds of weapons and directs it towards Ambarisha. It was of huge size. Ambarisha could see Vishnu even in that demon.

Immediately, the wheel of Sudarshana appears and kills the demon in the split of a second and moves towards Sage Durvasa. It does not kill him as he is a sage but it wants to teach him a lesson. He runs for his life. He goes in a big. It follows him. Then he goes to the crust of the earth and it follows him there too. With great fear, he dives into water. It follows him there too. Then he stops for a while and it also stops. No one can stop Sudarshana. It can go anywhere and it won't stop until Durvasa learns his lesson.

There is one advantage to a devotee. Any bad karma that he does, the Lord ensures that the karma gets cleared immediately. We can see in the lives of many devotees who suffered mighty problems. It is all quick clearance of their past karma. So the fruits of a wrong deed of a devotee are handed over very quickly. So Durvasa's karma is getting cleared immediately.

So after roaming everywhere, Durvasa goes to Lord Brahma and takes refuge in him. He asks Brahma to save him. Then Brahma tells him "I cannot stop the wheel of Sudarshana. It is beyond my control. It can destroy anything that comes in its way. I am no exception." So Durvasa gets the answer to the question he posed earlier. (Who can stop me if I get angry?)

The wheel of Sudarshana comes down as the wheel of time at the beginning of creation and everything including the 3 logos come after it. It is under the control of the omnipotent divine principle which is beyond all the 3 logos. We may call the divine principle by different names as discussed in the morning but the principle is more important than the name. In the bhagavtam scripture it is called Vishnu. So we take it Vishnu for now.

Brahma says "the wheel of Sudarshana controls everyone in this creation and everyone has to follow it. The creation came out through me under the control of this wheel. So I cannot help you in anyway. It is beyond my control."

So Durvasa next goes to Lord Shiva and asks him for help. Then Lord Shiva tells him "All this creation rotates continuously in this wheel of Sudarshana. All the beings are created, involve, evolve and dissolve in the divine principle which happens through this wheel of Sudarshana. It is just our illusion that we exist. The divine does everything and we are just vehicles for him and do our part in this creation. I cannot help you. It is beyond my control". Shiva advises Durvasa to go to Lord Vishnu.

Then he goes to Lord Vishnu and asks for help to stop that wheel of Sudarshana. Durvasa says "I am too small for your magic. I did a mistake in my pride and anger. Please save me." He says so and falls on the feet of the Lord.

Then Lord Vishnu says “I reside in the hearts of my devotees. I always look for the welfare of my devotees because devotees in the devotion do not look after themselves. They are highly important to me. You are a doer of great penance and you do not know the devotion he has. In times other than penance you may forget me but a devotee of mine always remembers me. There is no one greater than a devotee. He may not appear to be so great but he is.”

One may be doing many rituals but what happens in non-ritual time. There is no divine principle to you if you do not recollect. The case of a devotee is different. To recollect the Lord at all times is his normal state. That is why I gave the quote “To be spiritual is to be normal.” He does not worry of time or place whether it is holy place or not because the Lord exists to him always. Every place and all times are divine to him.

So says Lord Vishnu “How a calf goes after a cow always; I go after my devotees all the time. I never leave them.”

A devotee never worries about the comforts for his body because to him the body is given by the Lord and he takes care of the body. If one thinks what will happen to my family and profession if I involve myself in divine activities, he cannot do anything. A devotee is never worried of all this. Please remember that the Lord takes care of your family and profession better than you if you are involved in divine activities. It's my personal experience.

So Lord Vishnu says “You did a great mistake by saying Ambarisha is not a devotee, in your anger. I always stay in his heart. As a result he knows me and I know him. Others do not know about our relation. You did great penance and attained me but all your penance did not come to your help now because your mind is at fault. Your mind forgot me and as a result your penance and powers that you have do not come to your help now. Ambarisha always remembers me and as a result he is always protected though he is unaware of the protection. So you correct your mistake where you did it. I cannot help you. Go to Ambarisha and ask him for help. Only he can help you.

Immediately Durvasa goes to Ambarisha and asks him for help. He was about to fall on Ambarisha's feet but Ambarisha does not allow him to touch his feet because Durvasa is a great Sage. Before Durvasa could tell anything else, Ambarisha turns towards the wheel of Sudarshana and starts praying to it. Ambarisha was seeing Vishnu even in the wheel of Sudarshana.

He prays “You are responsible for everything in this creation. Please cool down and excuse this Sage.” He then starts praising it.

These slokas called as “Sudarshana Prarthana (Prayer)” are very important. It would be good if one can hear them and read them out whenever we have time because it is the wheel of time

and we all move in it. There are 5 slokas. At last he pays his respect to Sudarshana and pleads to excuse the Sage. After all this, Sudarshana cools down.

Sage Durvasa blesses Ambarisha and tells him “You are great devotee of Lord Vishnu. There is nothing spectacular in Sudarshana following me for showing my anger on you. It’s all due to your devotion. There is nothing to stop you in this creation.” So at last Durvasa praises Ambarisha and his devotion towards the Lord.

After all this, Ambarisha offers food to Sage Durvasa. He did not eat until he came back. He was just taking fluids. As per the Bhagavtam Scripture it took 1 year for all this to happen in our time scale. So such was the greatness of Ambarisha.

Durvasa before leaving says “Your story will be read by everyone in the human as well as divine planes.” and takes his leave. Even after all these praises, Ambarisha just recollects the Lord and thinks it to be the play of the Lord. After this incident, he coronates one of his children as the Emperor and leads the remaining life in the presence of the Lord.

So we completed the story of Ambarisha in this gurupujas though it has taken some extra time. Try to listen or read this story again and again. Try to by heart it. As I told you earlier, Vishnu feels happy if his devotees are prayed to more than praying himself directly. It is very important that we read the stories of great devotees regularly to get good inspiration and stabilize ourselves in the Lord. It helps in your upliftment.

Swasti - the auspicious end.