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Vijayawada Gurupujas - 2013

Rukmini Kalyanam - Discourse 1

Hearty fraternal greetings to the Brothers and Sisters who have gathered here for the Gurupujas. With an aspiration to fulfill your lives in the path of Master CVV Yoga, you have come here to participate in the Gurupujas in Vijayawada from many places.

I was informed that there may be lot of mosquitoes at this venue. So try to adjust yourself by putting some protective wear or applying some cream, without criticizing the venue. This is all a part of Yoga. In our lives, we keep facing uncomfortable situations and Yoga is all about getting adjusted to all kinds of situations, both inside and outside, without getting carried away by the situation. The important thing for us is to remain in alignment with the Lord. That should remain our priority irrespective of the environment around us.

Those apart, beautiful arrangements have been made here and the quality of arrangements shows the devotion of the organizers in organizing this event. Master would surely grace them. The more you work for the welfare of others, the more you are graced by the Master and move closer to him. If you just look for yourself, you cannot be in Yoga. If you work for the welfare of a group, Yoga happens. Gurupujas were started with an aim to inculcate this habit in each one of us. Let us all align our consciousness with Master consciousness and merge into it and continue to be in it.

Devotion is one of the primary requirements for Yoga. Sraddha (deep interest, dedication & perseverance) is another. In fact, Sraddha when inculcated turns into devotion gradually. Without devotion, ego prevails and it hinders your progress in Yoga.

Master EK introduced Shodashopachara Puja to us along with Master CVV Prayer. One who does Shodashopachara Puja daily, his values and virtues are bound to become better. Among all Shodashopachara Pujas, Ganapati Puja is most the significant because Ganapati stands as the synthesizing one among all the devas (intelligences). All the intelligences are present in him principally and all the intelligences would be pleased when he is worshipped. That is why he is chosen as the deity for primary worship before beginning any activity. It is a choice made by all the intelligences together including Vishnu and Shiva.

The story of Rukmini Kalyanam is a grand story relating to Yoga. In fact, any story of a devotee reaching the Lord relates to Yoga. The individual consciousness merging into the Universal consciousness is Yoga.

So sraddha and devotion are preliminary for Yoga. Also you should expand in knowledge which helps you to move towards renunciation. It is natural renunciation. Renunciation need not be inculcated artificially. Equanimity also establishes in you.

We have been discussing stories from Bhagavatam in Vijayawada Gurupujas for many years now. We have completed Dhruvopakhyanam, Ambarisha Upakhyanam, Kumara Sambhavam and now we are discussing Rukmini Kalyanam. The attendance for these Gurupujas is also increasing year after year.

Other important qualities required to be in Yoga are willingness, purity, courage and silence. Master DK says “To will, to dare, to know and to be silent - are required for one to be accepted as a disciple in the path.”

Rukmini Kalyanam is a grand story and it can be discussed for days together. The story is very attractive to narrate. It can also be narrated in relation to Yoga along with the story. Every story given in Puranas has a correspondence to what happens within us and this needs to be realized. Rukmini can be considered as a soul seeking the Supreme Soul, Krishna and the Brahmin acting as the mediator between them can be considered as the Master. Likewise there will always be an outside story and inside story for all the stories contained in our Puranas. While the outside story gives the dharma (eternal law) to be followed, the way of life, etc., the inside story gives us aspects relating to Yoga. We will discuss both.

I will first read all the stanzas that we detailed last year and then continue. So we will have the recap first. We are in no hurry to complete this story and so we will discuss each and every stanza in detail.

The whole story was initially given in a single stanza. Parikshit was not satisfied with it. He wanted to know it in detail. This is a quality that every devotee possesses. He is ever ready to hear stories of Vishnu. The more he hears, the more he wants to hear. Only such a one can become a devotee. The stories of Vishnu are so very tasty. To attend to all the duties and responsibilities in the morning and spending the evening in hearing the stories of the Lord has been a great aspect of Indian tradition from times immemorial. He is lucky who can adjust his timetable to have time for hearing stories of the Lord. When the Lord becomes your priority, you will definitely find time otherwise you will not find time.

Ramayana can be told in 24000 slokas or in even one sloka but there is a difference in both. The former way of studying Ramayana will bring about a complete transformation in you. It can burn away all the impurities in you. It is only that you must be lucky enough to either read it or hear it.

So Parikshit was such an ardent devotee of the Lord and he decided to spend the last 7 days of the life in hearing the stories of the Lord.

In Kali age, everyone is more interested in talking about others and criticizing others and listening while someone criticizes. It is very a pity situation that one is interested in criticism of others. It is said “The ear becomes an ornament to the head when it is keen to listen to the stories of the Lord.” If the ear is keen in hearing criticism then it is better that hearing faculty is absent. It is nothing but an illusion if you are interested in hearing criticism and you think that you are in Yoga. All inner perversions disappear gradually when you chant stotras in praise of the Lord, read or hear the stories of the Lord regularly.

There was a king by name Bhismaka who was also a Yogi. He was ruling over the kingdom of Vidharbha. He had 5 sons and 1 daughter. The name of the eldest son was Rukmi. The daughter, who was born last, was named Rukmini. The other names are not mentioned because there are not much relevant to this story. Rukmi means Golden light. Though the king named his son Rukmi, Rukmi did not stand up to his name neither did the other 4 sons.

The qualities of Rukmini were given which we discussed in detail. She had all the virtuous qualities that one could possess. Her father was bestowed with great splendor, both subjectively and objectively, after the birth of Rukmini.

As she grew up to the age of marriage, she came to hear of the qualities and abilities of Krishna through many sources and feels that Krishna should be her husband. As discussed last year, qualities and abilities should decide a marriage and not education, job, salary or physical features. Qualities are more important than abilities. If qualities are not considered at the time of marriage, there are many chances that the marriage may fail and there are many such cases in the present times. Krishna also comes to know of the qualities of Rukmini and thinks of marrying her.

Though all the relatives and friends of Bhismaka suggest that he should give Rukmini in marriage to Krishna, Rukmi does not accept the idea. Rukmi decides to give Rukmini in marriage to Sisupala. Sisupala is the friend of Rukmi from childhood.

Rukmi decides to send a message to Krishna and she comes across Agniyothana in the process. Here Agniyothana is the Master that aids in the process of an individual soul reaching the Supreme soul. Rukmi corresponds to the ego in us who prevents us from participating in divine acts. There are some who enter the Yogic path even doubting the existence of divine principle. There are some who asked me questions like: “Do you think all that was propounded by Master CVV is really true? Do you think Master MN really attained immortality by practicing Master CVV Yoga?” Such questions and doubts arise out of ignorance and are supported by ego. It is because of ego that one speaks great of oneself. Rukmi represented ego.

Ego is the primary hindrance to an aspirant seeking self realization. There is dynamic ego (Rajasic) and inertial ego (Tamasic). The former tries to do everything in a showy manner while the latter questions “Why should we do this or that? What will happen if we do not do? He has logic for not doing something.” There is also poised ego (Satwic). He is the one who feels great about doing everything in right way. So in any case feeling of “I AM” causes hindrance to your progress in the path. Some feel “I have been doing it for 30 years.” That feeling is enough to hinder any progress. We should be grateful that we are allowed to participate in activities of goodwill. Your participation in prayer or Gurupuja or some service activity is itself due to the grace of the Lord. The moment ego dominates you will not be allowed to do all these. So we should remain passive and remember that everything is happening and we are not doing. But this ego cannot be controlled by us and most of the times it dominates us without our interference. So this is where the Master helps in overcoming ego.

When I went to Europe along with Master EK for the first time, I said to Master EK “Master! It is the first landing for me in the European Continent by your grace.” Master EK immediately downplayed my

statement and said “It is not my grace but the grace of Master CVV that you and even I came here.” That is what we should do when someone praises us otherwise it brings us lot of trouble.

Here Rukmini (Aspirant) is telling Agniyothana (Master) all the ways in which Rukmi (Ego) is trying to stop her from reaching Krishna (the Lord). Every aspirant has a similar inner barrier that stops him from reaching the Lord. Unless we cross that barrier it is not possible to reach the Lord. Rukmini knew this and she also knew that the solution is to approach a Master.

Rukmini tells Agniyothana “My father cannot oppose my brother and perform my marriage. So I request you to convey my love, devotion and my will to submit my life to him, to Krishna.” Bhismaka was a man of wisdom and lets Rukmi work as per the latter’s will because he knows that the ‘Divine Will’ will prevail and not Rukmi’s. Rukimi also tells some more secrets to Agniyothana which are revealed in the later part of the story.

Agniyyothana goes to Dwaraka and meets Krishna and blesses him “May you be married very soon.” On seeing Agniyyothana, Krishna smiles like a bridegroom to be because he knows everything that happened. Krishna makes Angiyyothana sit on a chair and pay all the respects to him. So this is a situation where the Lord himself is teaching us on how to pay respects to a Grand Master. It is said here “Krishna pays respects to Agniyyothana in a manner which is similar to all the devas (intelligences) paying respects to him (Lord).” Krishna arranges a grand feast to Agniyyothana. He even washes the feet of Agniyyothana and sprinkles that water on his head. This act can be done only by Krishna and none. Krishna then asks the Brahmin purpose of his visit. Krishna knows that Agniyyothana did not visit him for some personal gain.

The Lord is very pleased with the one who prays to him and seeks him without a seeking cause. The thing is when you seek the Lord, there is nothing else to be sought because everything is in HIM and is HIM. This is the truth realized by real devotees. They are of unique category separate from the rest who worship the Lord seeking one or the other except the Lord. That is why Krishna says “I love Gopikas very much.” It is because they came to him seeking him alone. Rukmini is also one such ardent devotee of Krishna. There are also many other devotees who are very close to the Lord. If you have such a faith in Lord, the Lord will take care of everything and you need not seek anything from anyone.

Krishna praises the qualities of Agniyyothana. He is a true Brahmin with no desires of his own. He is satisfied with anything that the Lord presents to him, favourable or unfavourable.

Krishna says “I only touch the feet of the one who pleases everyone, one who is satisfied at all times, one who is at poise at all times and one who is pride-less.” He further asks Agniyyothana “Where do you stay? I like the king of the land where you stay.”

Dwaraka was an island. To save his people from the invasions of Jarasandha, Krishna built this city away from the land in the middle of sea. It is presently submerged into the ocean. The Dwaraka that we see today is not the Dwaraka of Krishna. The existence of submerged Dwaraka has been proved by underwater satellite studies recently. So to reach Dwaraka, one has to cross the waters.

Krishna asks Agnijiyotha “What has made you come to this place crossing the sea waters? Ask me without any hesitation and I will certainly fulfill it.”

Agnijyothana replies “There is the King of Vidarbha by name Bhismaka. He has a daughter by name Rukmini. That lady wishes to serve you and submit herself to you. For that she wishes to marry you and has sent a message to you through me.” Here Agnijyothana did not tell that Rukmini wishes to marry Krishna directly. He first tells Krishna that reason for which Rukmini wants to marry Krishna.

Through Agnijyothana, Rukmini conveys the following to Krishna “Lord! Just by studying or hearing your qualities, all sorrow, pains and irritations in the body disappear. Just by seeing your eyes, one does not feel like seeing anything else in this world. By serving your lotus feet, one can attain the highest states in creation. Just by recollecting your name, one forgets all the bodily attachments and floats in bliss. My mind always remains with you and recollects you all the time. I promise on thee. I am now shying away in telling my feeling towards you. Please grace me by removing all the hindrances to reach you. You steal the hearts of all the women in this world.”

Here women include all the beings in creation. The Lord is the only man in creation and we are all women before him and the ultimate aim for all of us is to reach him. There are some more subtle meanings in the above statements which I will give tomorrow morning.

In this manner Rukmini started her pleadings and describing her feelings to Krishna, through Agnijyothana. Subtly speaking, Rukmini Kalyanam is our story, the story of every aspirant. Even for devotion to sprout in us and for us to reach us to reach the Lord, the primary impulse comes only by the grace of the Lord. We think that our effort should be there but for us to put an effort, the impulse and strength has to come from HIM. Without his grace, nothing is possible.

-Swasthi