SRIMAD BHAGAVATAM

CHAPTER 6, VOLUME 5

<u>Rşabhadeva GIVING UP HIS MATERIAL BODY</u>

<u>PREFACE</u>

The contents of this chapter is in continuation from the previous chapter No.5. The previous chapter deals with the profound advices which Rsabhadeva conveys to His sons. Thereafter, He renounces His household and travels around on the surface of the earth just like an Avadhoota.

Rşabhadeva knew for Himself that He was that Supreme Being and He took His bodily form by way of manifestation. Therefore, while reading the contents of this chapter one must keep in mind that we cannot compare Him with any other human beings as far as His material body was concerned. Though He was capable of exercising His yogic powers, as any other yogi would have done, He never preferred to use His powers to protect His body. His physical body just moved and ended on a particular day on its own. These are explained in a profound manner.

No one can equal or should try to copy such Supreme Personality as far as His deeds go when these deeds are conducted remaining in that Supreme position. One must only follow the meaningful advices given by them, as well as such examples set by them for the people to follow. If this simple principle is properly understood, this chapter can be a window towards achieving the highest levels of spiritual advancement.

rājovāca

na nūnaṁ bhagava ātmārāmāņāṁ yoga-samīrita-jñānāvabharjita-karmabījānām aiśvaryāṇi punaḥ kleśadāni bhavitum arhanti yadṛc-chayopagatāni.

(rājovāca) King Pareekshit said to Sri Suka Brahma Rishi:

(bhagavaḥ) Hey the great saint! (ātmārāmāņāṁ) For those persons who enjoy the bliss within themselves, (yoga-samīrita-jñānāvabharjita-karma-bījānām) whose seeds of fruitive deeds have burnt into the fire of knowledge achieved through their yogic practices, (aiśvaryāṇi) the prosperities (yadṛcchayā upagatāni) reaching to them unexpectedly (na nūnaṁ) can never (arhanti) lead them (punaḥ kleśadāni bhavitum) once again towards the miseries of worldly life.

<u>Note</u>: King Pareekshit is putting a doubt before Sri Suka Brahma Rishi in the context of the life of <u>R</u>sabhadeva. Though <u>R</u>sabhadeva had immense and unparalleled yogic powers He never used them or even tried to manifest them, as we have seen in the last chapter. In His younger age He used His yogic powers to ensure rains when Lord Indra refused to shower rains. This was for the public good and to prove to Lord Indra that the person in the form of <u>R</u>sabhadeva was none other than Shri Hari Himself.

King Pareekshit is asking that since these yogic powers can never bind such persons like Rşabhadeva to the worldly life, because of such persons' elevated position, why Rşabhadeva never even attempted to use them for His benefit.

Sri Suka Brahma Rishi replies to the King in order to remove his doubts.

rṣir uvāca satyam uktaṁ kintv iha vā eke na manaso 'ddhā viśrambham anavasthānasya śaṭha-kirāta iva saṅgacchante. tathā coktam —

(rșir uvāca) Sri Suka Brahma Rishi said:

(satyam uktam) You have said it right. (kimtu) However,
(iha eke) even after achieving such exalted position, (vai)
some people (anavasthānasya manasaḥ) because of the
inconsistent nature of the mind
(addhā viśrambham na sangacchante) do not take any chance and
do not trust that mind,
(śaṭha-kirāte iva) as the mind is just like the hunter who might
cheat at any time.
(tathā uktam ca) This is what has been conveyed by the
ancestors as well.

Stanza 3

na kuryāt karhicit sakhyam manasi hy anavasthite yad-viśrambhāc cirāc cīrņam caskanda tapa aiśvaram

(manasi) As the mind, (anavasthite) by its own nature, remains unsteady ever (na kuryāt) one should not develop (sakhyaṁ) friendship with it (karhicit) at any time. (hi) That is because, (yad-viśrambhāt) by trusting such a mind (tapaḥ) the power of penance (cīrņaṁ) earned (cirāt) over a period of long time (aiśvaram) even by Lord Shiva (caskanda) had slipped away once. <u>Note</u>: The incidence being referred to in the above stanza is when Lord Shiva happened to see the assumed form of Mohini by Lord Vishnu. At that time Lord Shiva could not control His mind. Therefore, no one can predict as to when the mind will get involved into the material objects as it is natural for the mind to get wavering. That being so, however great a person may be and whatever yogic feats a person might have achieved, he cannot afford to give any concession to his mind. This is the reason why **Ŗ**ṣabhadeva turned away from the prosperities of His yogic feats and never turned his mind towards them. He was firmly fixed within Himself and enjoyed the bliss of being one with Shri Vasudeva.

Stanza 4

nityaṁ dadāti kāmasya cchidraṁ tam anu ye 'rayaḥ yoginaḥ kṛta-maitrasya patyur jāyeva puṁścalī

(jāyā) If the wife, (nityaṁ) who is consistently and fully (kṛta-maitrasya) trusted (patyuḥ) by her husband, (puṁścalī) turns unchaste (chidraṁ) she shall give opportunity to other men (Sometimes this can also lead to danger to the life of the husband).

(iva) In the same manner, (yoginaḥ) if the mind of a yogi,
(kṛta-maitrasya) which is trusted by him fully, (kāmasya) gives place within it to material desires (tam anu) that mind shall not only seek after material pleasures but shall aso invite (ye) many (arayaḥ) enemies for the yogi (dadāti) and give place (chidram) and opportunity for them all.

<u>Note</u> : Through the following stanza the descriptions about those enemies are being described.

kāmo manyur mado lobhaḥ śoka-moha-bhayādayaḥ karma-bandhaś ca yan-mūlaḥ svīkuryāt ko nu tad budhaḥ

Stanza 6

athaivam akhila-loka-pāla-lalāmo 'pi vilakṣaṇair jaḍavad avadhūta-veṣabhāṣā-caritair avilakṣita-bhagavat-prabhāvo yogināṁ sāmparāya-vidhim anuśikṣayan sva-kalevaraṁ jihāsur ātmany ātmānam asaṁvyavahitam anarthāntara-bhāvenānvīkṣamāṇa uparatānuvṛttir upararāma. Shri Suka Brahma Rishi continues:

(atha) Thereafter, (akhila-loka-pāla-lalāmaḥ api) Ŗṣabhadeva,
though being the Supreme Personality of all the divine beings entrusted with the responsibility of the sustenance of the world, (jaḍavat) remained in this manner just like an idiot (avilakṣita-bhagavat-prabhāvaḥ) without exhibiting His real powers of being the Ishwara (Supreme Controller) (avadhūta-veṣaḥ) and moved around like an Avadhoota,
(vilakṣaṇaiḥ) putting on different kinds of postures and extraordinary behavioural patterns

(bhāṣā-caritaiḥ) and with the mannerisms and language of an ancient native.

(evam) In this manner, (yogināṁ sāmparāya-vidhim anuśikṣayan) He advocated the method of giving up the material body as a real yogi should do through His own practical life (sva-kalevaraṁ jihāsuḥ) and decided to give up His own physical body.

(ānvīkṣamāṇaḥ) Thus He started perceiving in a continuous manner (anarthāntara-bhāvena) in which there was nothing distinct as a separate entity (ātmani ātmānam) in Jeeva Atma (the individual living being) other than that Supreme Being (the intrinsic, ever permanent Being),

(asamvyavahitam) and thus having removed any sort of veil became a single entity with that Supreme Being removing thereby all the distinction of being a worshipper and the worshipped.

(uparatānuvr,ttiḥ) Through these methods He overcame from the fruitive deeds in totality (upararāma) and reached the ultimate and exalted position of the top most order.

Stanza 7

tasya ha vā evam mukta-lingasya bhagavata rṣabhasya yoga-māyā-vāsanayā deha imām jagatīm abhimānābhāsena sankramamāṇaḥ konka-venkakuṭakān dakṣiṇa-karṇāṭakān deśān yadrcchayopagataḥ kuṭakācalopavana āsya kṛtāśma-kabala unmāda iva mukta-mūrdhajo 'samvīta eva vicacāra.

(tasya bhagavataḥ ṛṣabhasya dehaḥ) The body of Bhagavan Rṣabhadeva, (evaṁ mukta-liṅgasya ha vai) which had removed its identity in this manner even from its subtle stage, (abhimānābhāsena) because of the apparent concept (yoga-māyā-vāsanayā) that these bodies are the outcome of the powers of the Maya Shakti (in the case of Bhagavan Ŗṣabhadeva it is because of His yogic powers),

(imāṁ jagatīm saṅkramamāṇaḥ) travelled around throughout this world (yadṛcchayā upagataḥ) and in its natural course reached

(dakşiņa-karņāţakān deśān) the southern part of Karnataka (koṅka-veṅka-kuṭakān) like Konkan, Venka and Kutaka.

(vicacāra) The body continued its travel (kuṭakācalopavane) through the sideways of the forests of the mountains of Kuṭakācala (unmāda iva mukta-mūrdhajaḥ) like a ghost or demon spreading its scattered hair over its head (asaṁvītaḥ eva) totally naked (āsya kṛtāśma-kabalaḥ) and while doing so stuffed tightly pieces of stones mouthful.

<u>Note</u>: There are two distinct situations one must understand here. When the liberated persons continue their travel with their bodies they are aware that their material bodies which are perceived as real out of ignorance can in no way bind them with it. However, in the case of Bhagavan **R**sabhadeva what is special, He being the Bhagavan Himself, is that His body is the consequence of Yogamaya (His own yogic powers). When the spinning top is swung into motion it circles around for some time till the tempo of its motion slows down and comes to an end. Thereafter, it falls down motionless. In the same manner the body keeps moving in whatever be the perceptional factor till it falls down motionless. This characteristic is what is known as the conceptual appearance.

Stanza 8

atha samīra-vega-vidhūta-veņu-vikarṣaṇa-jātogra-dāvānalas tad vanam ālelihānaḥ saha tena dadāha. (atha samīra-vega-vidhūta-veņu-vikarṣaṇa-jātogra-dāvānalaḥ) Thereafter once, there was a fierce forest fire because of the rubbing of the bamboos due to the force of the blowing wind, (tad vanam ālelihānaḥ saha tena dadāha) and the flames of that fierce forest fire engulfed the entire forest and burnt them along with the body of Bhagavan Ŗṣabhadeva.

Stanza 9

yasya kilānucaritamāsramatītam upākarņya koṅka-veṅka-kuṭakānāṁ rājārhan-nāmopaśikṣya kalāv adharma utkṛṣyamāṇe bhavitavyena vimohitaḥ sva-dharma-patham akuto-bhayam apahāya kupatha-pākhaṇḍam asamañjasaṁ nija-manīṣayā mandaḥ pravartayiṣyate.

Sri Suka Brahma Rishi continues his discourse to King Pareekshit:

 (rājā mandaḥ) The foolish king (koṅka-veṅka-kuṭakānāṁ) of Konkan, Venka and Kutaka (ahan-nāmaḥ) by name Arha, upon listening to the great life history (yasya kila) of Bhagavan Ŗṣabhadeva (āsramatītam anucaritam upākarṇya) after hearing about them from the discussions other people had among themselves,

which were unique and uncommon when compared to the life histories of other normal human beings who were all great in their own vocations,

(upaśikṣya) shall study about whatever Ŗṣabhadeva did in his life,

(kalau adharme utkṛṣyamāṇe) and during the times of Kali when the non righteous activities shall increase manifold,

(sva-dharmam apahāya) shall leave aside his own prescribed duties which he is supposed to follow in the real sense,

(akuto-bhayam) and without any fear of indulging in such non righteous ways of thinking (bhavitavyena vimohitaḥ) because of his previous deeds of sins, (pravartayisyate) shall propagate and preach (nija-manīṣayā) as per his own convenient way of interpretation and analysis (without actually understanding the right principles for which Bhagavan Ŗṣabhadeva stood for and lived through His life),

(kupatha-pākhaṇḍam) such methods of wrongful ways of aims of life which is impious, false, and contrary to the principles prescribed by the Vedas, (asamañjasaṁ) and useless for all purposes.

Stanza 10

yena ha vāva kalau manujāpasadā deva-māyā-mohitāḥ sva-vidhi-niyogaśauca-cāritra-vihīnā deva-helanāny apavratāni nija-nijecchayā gṛḥṇānā asnānānācamanāśauca-keśolluñcanādīni kalinādharma-bahulenopahatadhiyo brahma-brāhmaṇa-yajña-puruṣa-loka-vidūṣakāḥ prāyeṇa bhaviṣyanti.

(ha) Oh what a pity ! (yena vāva) Because of the above reason. (manujāpasadāh) some people who can be considered in the category of the lowest among the human beings (in the matter of their intellect and way of life), (*deva-māyā-mohitā*^h) shall get attracted towards the illusions of the world (kalau) during the times of Kali, (sva-vidhi-niyoga-śauca-cāritra-vihīnāh) leaving aside the cleanliness and other disciplines prescribed for them to follow as per the Vedic principles, (*nija-nijecchayā grhnānā*h) shall accept all sorts of wrong habits, according to their own whims and fancies, (asnānācamanāśauca-keśolluñcanādīni) like not taking bath, not washing their mouth, not at all maintaining cleanliness, not trimming their hair etc., (deva-helanāni apavratāni) and shall pursue the path of condemning the Supreme Being (Ishwara) because of their wrong habits,

(upahata-dhiyaḥ) and shall turn into persons devoid of their intellect (adharma-bahulena kalinā) at the time when Kali enforces its non righteous influences more and more on the people,

(prāyeņa bhaviṣyanti) and because of all these factors, in due course of time, such persons shall develop (brahma-brāhmaṇa-yajña-puruṣa-loka-vidūṣakāḥ) the habit of derogating the Vedas, Brahmins, Yajnas, Ishwara, the world etc.

Stanza 11

te ca hy arvāktanayā nija-loka-yātrayāndha-paramparayāśvastās tamasy andhe svayam eva prapatiṣyanti.

(te ca hi) All such people mentioned in the above stanza shall, therefore, (nija-loka-yātrayā āśvastāḥ) follow such methods of life, which have been set forth by themselves,
(andha-paramparayā) and follow the path of superstitious and blind beliefs (arvāktanayā) introduced newly by them, which have no approval by the Vedas or which are not based on the Vedic principles. (svayam eva prapatiṣyanti) All of them shall also fall on their own (andhe tamasi) into the darkness of the miseries of hell.

<u>Note</u> : On reading and understanding about the activities of Bhagavan Rṣabhadeva a doubt can arise in one's mind that the manifestation of Rṣabha has created useless situation for the people of the world. Then what was the purpose of Rṣabhadeva's manifestation and his life? The poet goes on to explain that there is no need for any kind of doubts like these.

Stanza 12

ayam avatāro rajasopapluta-kaivalyopaśikṣaṇārthaḥ. tasyānuguṇān ślokān gāyanti —

(ayam avatāraḥ) The manifestation of Bhagavan Ŗṣabhadeva and His life history (rajasā upapluta-kaivalyopaśikṣaṇārthaḥ) are exclusively meant for the benefit of those who are overwhelmed by the characteristics of Rajas (false pride and ego) and his instructions are meant to be for the deliverance of those persons. (ślokān gāyanti) The great men always sing in glory of the life of Ŗṣabhadeva (tasya anuguṇān) in conformity with the objectives mentioned herein above.

Stanza 13

aho bhuvah sapta-samudravatyā dvīpesu varsesv adhiguņyam etat gāyanti yatratya-janā murāreh karmāni bhadrāny avatāravanti

(sapta-samudravatyāḥ bhuvaḥ) In this earth, which has seven oceans, (dvīpeṣu) and in that among all the islands (varṣeṣu) and among all the places, (etat) this place known as the Bharata Varsha (adhiguṇyam) is the most beneficial place.
(aho) It is really a good fortune to have happened that way. (yatratya-janāḥ) That is because the people inhabiting in this part of Bharata Varsha (gāyanti) sing the glories (bhadrāiy) of the most pious (karmāṇi) and the most endearing pastimes (avatāravanti) of all the manifestations including that of Bhagavan Ŗṣabhadeva (murāreḥ) which are all that of Shri Hari Himself.

Stanza 14

aho nu va**m**śo yaśasāvadātaḥ praiyavrato yatra pumān purāṇaḥ kṛtāvatāraḥ puruṣaḥ sa ādyaś cacāra dharmaṁ yad akarma-hetum

(aho) Oh what a wonder ! (vaṁśaḥ nu) As far as the dynasty
(praiyavrataḥ) of Priyavrata is concerned (avadātaḥ) it is very
pure (yaśasā) because of the fame it had achieved.
(yat) That is because (yatra) it is in this dynasty
(purāṇaḥ pumān) that the very first Supreme Being, Sri Hari,
(kṛtāvatāraḥ) manifested.
(ādyaḥ puruṣaḥ saḥ) He, being the cause of everything, Himself
(dharmaṁ cacāra) observed and shown to the world the
methods to be pursued (akarma-hetum) for the purpose of

deliverance.

Stanza 15

ko nv asya kāṣṭhām aparo 'nugacchen mano-rathenāpy abhavasya yogī yo yoga-māyāḥ spṛhayaty udastā hy asattayā yena kṛta-prayatnāḥ

(aparaḥ kaḥ) Which other (yogī nu) Yogi (other than Bhagavan Ŗṣabhadeva Himself) (anugacchet) is capable enough to follow
(mano-rathena api) even within his mind (kāṣṭhām) the position (asya) of this Ŗṣabhadeva, (abhavasya) Who never had any connection with this material world ?
(yena) It was only Ŗṣabhadeva (udastāḥ) who rejected all the yogic feats (asattayā) as the ones without any substance
(kṛta-prayatnāḥ) whereas all other yogis seek for themselves as their greatest achievements (yoga-māyāḥ) such yogic feats (yaḥ) and many others (spṛhayati hi) also eagerly desire to achieve such yogic perfection.

iti ha sma sakala-veda-loka-deva-brāhmaņa-gavāṁ parama-guror bhagavata rṣabhākhyasya viśuddhācaritam īritaṁ puṁsāṁ samastaduścaritābhiharaṇaṁ parama-mahā-maṅgalāyanam idam anuśraddhayopacitayānuśṛṇoty āśrāvayati vāvahito bhagavati tasmin vāsudeva ekāntato bhaktir anayor api samanuvartate.

Sri Suka Brahma Rishi continues his discourse to King Pareekshit:

(iti ha sma) Through the above stanzas (viśuddhācaritam īritam)
I have explained to you in detail the most pious history
(rṣabhākhyasya) of Bhagavan Ŗṣabhadeva,
(parama-guroḥ) Who is the greatest teacher
(sakala-veda-loka-deva-brāhmaṇa-gavām) for all the Vedas, the
entire universe, all the divine beings, the brahmins, the cows
(all the life forms) (bhagavataḥ) and Who is also the Supreme
Being.

(viśuddhācaritam) This history and the great deeds of Bhagavan Ŗṣabhadeva (puṁsāṁ samasta-duścaritābhiharaṇaṁ) mitigates all the miseries of the human beings.
(anuśṛṇoti āśrāvayati vā) Anyone who regularly listens to or make others listen (parama-mahā-maṅgalāyanam idam) these most pious history of Bhagavan Ŗṣabhadeva (upacitayā anuśraddhayā) with great and consistent attention (avahitaḥ) and with total focus of his mind (samanuvartate) shall develop continuously and consistently (anayoḥ api) (both the listener as well as the professor) (ekāntataḥ bhaktiḥ) unique and unflinching devotion (bhagavati vāsudeve tasmin) on Bhagavan Ŗṣabhadeva, Who is the repository of all the prosperities and knowledge as well as the purest form of Sattva characteristic. <u>Note</u> : Through the following stanza it is being explained that it is this development of unflinching devotion on that Supreme Being is the greatest aim of life.

Stanza 17

yasyām eva kavaya ātmānam aviratam vividha-vrjina-samsāraparitāpopatapyamānam anusavanam snāpayantas tayaiva parayā nirvrtyā hy apavargam ātyantikam parama-puruṣārtham api svayam āsāditam no evādriyante bhagavadīyatvenaiva parisamāpta-sarvārthāḥ.

(kavayaḥ) Those who are really intelligent (snāpayantaḥ) bathe themselves (avirataṁ anusavanaṁ) continuously and consistently (yasyām eva) with the essence of their devotion alone towards that Supreme Being, the Bhagavan, (vividha-vrjina-saṁsāra-paritāpopatapyamānam ātmānam) and thereby keep themselves totally away from the difficulties being faced in this worldly life. (tayā eva parayā nirvṛṭyā) By doing so as a matter of practice

and habit they achieve deliverance which is the greatest aim of anyone during their lifetime (svayam āsāditam) and which is achieved by them automatically because of their devotion and the resultant happiness.

(bhagavadīyatvena eva) However, such devotees, because of their devotion as mentioned above, attain such a position that they belong to that Bhagavan Himself.

(parisamāpta-sarvārthāḥ) Because of this reason they feel that they have achieved absolute completeness, by belonging to that Bhagavan Himself and being in close proximity with

Him, they possess as such everything they wanted in their lives by remaining in that position.

(no ādriyante eva) Therefore, they do not show any respect for the deliverance from this material world or give any importance to the same, which they had already achieved because of their devotion as mentioned above.

<u>Note</u> : The ability to get the vision about the Bhagavan is very simple. However, the attainment of deliverance is very very difficult. That being so, there can be a doubt that more importance has been given above to the devotional aspect, which is comparatively more easier. Therefore, the poet is explaining the clarification for the same through the following stanza.

Stanza 18

rājan patir gurur alam bhavatām yadūnām daivam priyah kula-patih kva ca kinkaro vah astv evam anga bhagavān bhajatām mukundo muktim dadāti karhicit sma na bhakti-yogam

(rājan) Hey King Pareekshit ! (bhagavān) Bhagavan Shri
Krishna (patiḥ) was the protector (bhavatāṁ) of your family (yadūnāṁ) as well as of the Yadavas.
He remained in the position of (guruḥ) an advisor, (daivaṁ) respected personality, (priyaḥ) close friend, (kula-patiḥ)
supervisor and controller, (kiṅkaraḥ vaḥ) and at other times just a servant.
(alaṁ astu) Let it be so like that. (aṅga) But hey King! (mukundaḥ) He, being the provider of liberation/deliverance, (muktiṁ dadāti) gives the same (bhajatāṁ) to those who are His devotees.
(na) But, not (karhicit sma) even once He gives or bestows (bhakti-yogam) devotion. <u>Note</u> : The Lord gives deliverance to His devotees. But, He never grants by Himself devotion to a devotee. This devotion is a matter of development of relationship with the Bhagavan. This has to be developed as a matter of sustained and continuous practice and total commitment towards Him. Therefore, the devotional service is considered far more superior than even the deliverance. Once that relationship is established the devotee reaches a stage whereby even deliverance is unimportant for him. In fact he never desires anything else other than remaining in that relationship alone.

Now, Sri Suka Brahma Rishi concludes the history of Bhagavan Rṣabhadeva and pays his obeisances to Him.

Stanza 19

nityānubhūta-nija-lābha-nivrtta-trṣṇaḥ śreyasy atad-racanayā cira-supta-buddheḥ lokasya yaḥ karuṇayābhayam ātma-lokam ākhyān namo bhagavate rṣabhāya tasmai

(yaḥ) Bhagavan Ŗṣabhadeva (nityānubhūta-nija-lābha-nivṛttatṛṣṇaḥ) was constantly aware and experiencing Himself about His real identity of being that Supreme Controller (the Bhagavan) and because of that experience He was free from all material desires.

(atad-racanaya) He was always above the bodily concept of life and very clear that He was not the body.

(karuṇayā) Because of His compassion (ākhyāt) He explained and demonstrated through His own life (lokasya) to the people of this world, (cira-supta-buddheḥ) whose intellect were immersed in deep slumber (śreyasi) in the matter of self

realization, (ātma-lokam) the real knowledge about the self thereby (abhayam) removing the fears arising out of this worldly life.

(tasmai) Unto that (bhagavate ṛṣabhāya) Bhagavan Ŗṣabhadeva, the One Who is complete in all respects and the repository of all knowledge, (namaḥ) let us pay our obeisances.

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This completes the sixth chapter of Volume 5 of Srimad Bhagavatam.

Hari Om