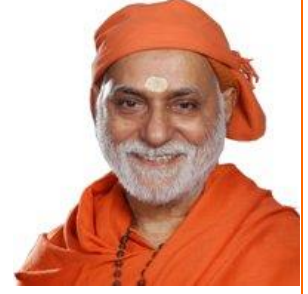


The *ashta-siddhis* and Rising Above Them

prabhāta-raśmiḥ

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Harih Om Tat Sat. Jai Guru.

I have been reading a chapter or still lesser from Srimad Bhagavatam, only the ekadasha skandam, the eleventh called the Mukti Skandha. I don't know whether you have wondered why I am reciting it. Because this is the portion I have to explain in the telecast. I don't have time to read and recite them and be able to do it with the facility and mastery that I want. So, I am using this time. Not only that, it will be one way of doing something very purifying and sublime. Maybe the people who hear my recitation will also pick up a kind of a fondness for the text in some manner to some degree or the other.

The portion I have been reading now during the past few days is on siddhis - yogic powers. Krishna says that, "People who are practicing devotion and yoga will automatically get some yogic powers. And these powers are altogether 18", he says. "The eight powers are definitely associated with me, associated with Creation". They are generally the ones spoken of.

*aṇimā mahimā caiva laghimā garimā tathā |
prāpti prākāśyamiśitoam vaśitoam ca aṣṭasiddhayaḥ ||*

These are the eight. What are they? *aṇimā mahimā, laghimā garimā.*

aṇimā means becoming atomic in shape. *mahimā* means becoming mountainous, so big, *garimā* means very weighty, *laghimā* means weightless.

Like that it goes. Sri Krishna also adds many other things. Do this, do this, and then you will hear everything and all in the Universe, you will be able to see, you will hear divine sounds wherever they may transpire, etc. etc. Finally he says, all these powers are obstacles in the path of yoga. What do you think now? Are there such powers and can

they be had is an important question. It is something like titillating the human mind with heaven, prajapati-loka etc. To the rational mind Brahma is an imaginary deity, Mahavishnu is another imaginary deity, Shiva is another imaginary deity. If the deity itself is imaginary, his residence and world also is imaginary.

But though imaginary, whenever we speak of, "Do this practice, chant Hare Rama for 3 crore times, then you will get into Vaikuntha." "Ah, let me chant". See, people start doing it. They may not know whether it is true or untrue, but even then there is a feeling that if they will do it, they will get it, etc. What exactly is the science and the rationale behind this?

There are some religio-spiritual austere processes, which it is always nice to do, and they have got a greatly purifying, expansive and elevating effect. People are differently tempered and constituted, so to make them do, you can give any kind of a promise and description ... because the promise and description are not what matter. How they influence the human mind to do something good and nice, that is the important point. Sri Krishna says that

parokṣavādo vedo'yaṁ

The Vedas have adopted a *parokṣa* style of narration. What is *parokṣa*? It is not direct. It is an indirect method. "There is a heaven. You can attain it by *jyotiṣṭoma*. Perform it." "Oh, I will attain it, I will attain it" and *jyotiṣṭoma* was done. What is this *jyotiṣṭoma* - some *yajña*, *dāna* and *tapas*. And that is always good for the mind.

After some time, the shastras say there is no point in attaining even heaven. You will have to fall from there.

"Oh, is it so"?

Initially they accepted the dictat "Perform *jyotiṣṭoma* and you will get heaven". So, they have already forged a faith in the scriptures. Afterwards they are told this heaven is useless, it is worse than earth.

"Oh, then why should I do it"?

Then what is greater? Greater is self-purification and self-knowledge.

"Oh, let me try for it".

But this deluding the deluded people with some non-existent rewards, this is one method. What matters is how what is said influences the human mind. That is meant by indirect statement. It is not a direct one but an indirect one.

Now so far as the siddhis are concerned, Sri Krishna says, to get any siddhi whatsoever, what is it that you want? You want to be atomic, extremely subtle. So, you focus your mind on the extremely subtle, subtle, subtle level. And do so thinking that "I am extremely subtle", that is, God is extremely subtle. Think about the subtlety of God, he says, subtlety of mind, "my subtlety". If you are able to fix the mind there exclusively, you will become subtle.

Similarly the other qualities like *laghimā*, *mahimā* etc. Think of me as the biggest and the hugest, then you will become huge. I am wondering what exactly is the meaning here? The meaning is only this - We are living in a *pāñcabhautika* material world -mountain, sea, sky, sun, moon, stars - all of them are within this orbit. And we have got a mind which is above matter, inside our body. This mind being above matter and energy, has got untold powers and potentials. It can act upon matter to any extent. Normally we never use the mind to that extent. But every day, it is mind that acts on matter. For example, our hand is matter, our leg is matter. Whenever we are moving our hand and leg, what is it that acts on them? The mind. Without the mind, can you move your legs and hands? You cannot. So, mind is always acting on matter and energy. In fact, mind is the only agency which can act. This mind, when focused in a centric manner, and for a long time, whatever you focus on, that it will become and produce.

yā matiḥ sā gatiḥ bhavet

So, you think of atomicness, atomicness, atomicness. "I am mind, mind, subtle, subtle, subtle", then he says, the whole body will become atomic.

If you think of something very big, you will become big. If you think of something light, you will become light, heavy, then heavy, like that. You will start hearing sounds from the heavens, you will develop the power to see to any great distance, hear from any great distance. All these are powers. And then he says, all these powers are said to be, by the great people, similar obstacles in the path of Yoga. Where do you stand now? So, two propositions I find there. One is - mind has got full power over matter. Another is - keeping the mind with you, you are not supposed to make it act on matter unnecessarily. Understand the futility of all such endeavors, and then use the same mind to think of God in the absolute and all-pervading manner. When you are able to do so, all the desires will fall. You will become so great, so huge and so potent, he says, you can reach any limit. He says,

tasya ājñā yathā mama

He derives so much of command, control, and potential, that his words and wishes are like God's own.

This much he has said. The Yogi who constantly thinks of me and whose mind is constantly fixed on me, he becomes like me. He becomes blissful, he is absolutely unaffected whatever happens. This is what happens. So the power of the mind is the fact there and then the *viveka* to utilize it in a non-disturbing and a non-harming manner. So, should you use your mind to develop powers, or should you use your mind to remain peaceful, blissful, contented and abundantly full in your mind? This is the question. I think this is the way our shastras make us think and rise above all unnecessary temptations.

Harih Om Tat Sat. Jai Guru.

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