

Bhagavata Jnana Yagnam – Inaugural ceremony - a report

Pujya Acharya Sri Prem Siddharth commenced the Bhagavata Jnana Yagna organized by Arsha Vidya Vahini, on the evening of 8th of February at the Sri Satyanarayanawamy Devasthanam, Ashok Nagar with the inaugural ceremony, in an atmosphere filled with devotion and celebration.

Pujya Acharya's tryst with Srimadbhagavatam dates to the early days of his life when the stories of the Bhaktas in Srimadbhagavatam impressed his young mind deeply to write a book on their unparalleled devotion - titled "Bhagavata Nilotpala". This bond thickened when He blessed us with divine discourses on Brahma Stuti from the 10th Canto 14th Chapter of Srimadbhagavatam on the eve of Guru Pournima. Krishna Prema showered on us again when Pujya Acharya revealed the teachings behind the Nimi Navayogeswara Samvadam from the 11th Canto of this great treatise at Bhimavaram.

మందారమకరందమాధుర్యమునఁదేలు,
మదుపంబుజోపునే మదనములకు
నిర్మలమందాకినీ నీచికలఁదూగు,
రాయంచనునె తరంగిణులకు
లలితరసాల పల్లవ ఖాదియైచొక్కు
కోయిల సేరునే కుటజములకుఁ
బూర్ణేందు చంద్రికా స్ఫురితచకోరక
మరుగునే సాంద్రనిహారములకు.

నంబుజోదర దివ్యపాదారవింద,
చింతనామృతపానవి శేష మత్త
చిత్తమేరీతి నితరంబుఁజేరనేర్పు
విసుతగుణశీల మాటలు వేయునేల.

*A honeybee reveling in the honey-sweetness of Mandara flower, would he seek grass flowers?
A royal swan swaying in the pure breezes of the Ganges, would he go to the oceans?
A nightingale relishing the juices of smooth young leaflets, will he approach rough leaves?
A chakora bird blossoming in the moonlight of a full moon, would he go to dark places with thick fog?
A mind that ever contemplates on the lotus feet of the Lord and intoxicated by that nectar of Sri Krishna Bhakti, In what way will it learn to seek another intoxication in this world?*

Sri Bammara Pothana's Andhra Mahabhagavatam

Our minds had tasted that heady nectar of Sri Krishna Bhakti in earlier discourses and the earnest prayers of every devotee were answered when Pujya Acharya decided to shower his grace by unveiling the Vedanta-bodha that Srimadbhagavata has hidden in her folds as a part of this Bhagavata Jnana Yagna, where He would speak on the entire Srimadbhagavatam in the light of the Vedic teachings. The 8th of February was eagerly awaited by the devotees because all of us knew the magic of Krishna Katha that would engulf our minds in devotion and seamlessly imbibe the deeper Vedantic teachings.



The evening began with Bhajan by Sri Sankeerthana Srinivas, accompanied by the voices of the devotees who were waiting to go into the trance that Bhagavatakatharasam will lead them . It was due to the devotion in Sri Srinivas's voice and the mischievous smile on Lord Sri Krishna's statue that adorned the stage, that the Bhaktas sang, rapt with devotion. Amidst such celebratory Bhajan, Pujya Acharya was welcomed by the temple priests with a Purna Kalasam and Vedic chantings.



When Pujya Acharya adorned the stage, his kind gaze drenched the hearts of the devotees. They felt a deep sense of happiness and fulfilment that they are at the Guru Sannidhi again after Guru Pournima Jnana Yagna, to embark on yet another voyage that will lead them closer to realizing their Self, as he looked at each of them lovingly, accepting their Pranaamam and blessing them.

The inaugural ceremony commenced with Jyoti Prajwalanam by Sri P.Venkateswarulu, MD, Kakatiya Cements, who provided great support in organizing this Jnana Yagna, and the members of Sri Bharati Tirtha Swamy Seva Samakhya who extended their co-operation for the success of this Event. The dignitaries offered Pujya Acharya garlands and sought his blessings before leaving the dias.



The first lecture of the Srimadbhagavata Jnana Yagna commenced by offering salutations to Lord Sri Krishna, Sri Vyasa Maharshi and Saraswati Devi for the Nirvighna Parisamapthi of the Jnana Yagna.

Pujya Acharya then explained the types of Vidyas as instructed by the Upanishads – Para and Apari Vidya. While the Para Vidya speaks on the Akshara Brahman, Apari Vidya instructs on the disciplines for gaining the necessary Adhikaram or qualification to be able to understand and assimilate the Para Vidya. ***Without Apari Vidya, Para Vidya is impossible and without Para Vidya, Apari Vidya is incomplete.***



Having explained thus, Pujya Acharya mentioned that the Puranas are a part of this preparatory disciplines of Aparā Vidya. Purana – Pura api Navam – that which is ageless and is ever-relevant and new, is a Purana. The Puranas speak of Sarga (Creation), Pratisarga (Secondary Creation), Vamsha (the lineage of Rishis) Manvantara (the reign of Manus) Vamshanucharita (Of Kings and their lineage). Of the Ashtadasa Puranas, Srimadbhagavatam is the Mahapurana as each sloka is pregnant with the Vedic wisdom and Vedantic knowledge.

Pujya Acharya explained the Glory of Srimadbhagavatham (Bhagavata Mahatmyam) as in the Padma Purana that begins with the sloka

***Sacchidananda roopaya vishwotpatyadi hetave
Tapathreya Vinashaya Sri Krishnaya vayam Numaha***

Where the Swarupa lakshanam of the Lord as the Sat Chit and Ananda is revealed and that being the essence- Asthi, Bhaathi and Priyam - of the entire creation. He is praised as the material and efficient cause of the creation. The destroyer of the Tri taapas, we prostrate to the feet of Lord Sri Krishna. Explaining the import of this sloka, Pujya Acharya highlighted that it is the natural instinct of the Jeeva to pray to the Lord; it is not taught by anyone, but arises from within. It is this tendency to pray that needs to be increased as we should realize that if we contemplate on Jagat sans Ishwara, it will only result in sorrow. Whenever one thinks of the Jagat, he should first contemplate on Narayana and place him ahead of the Samsara, then the distance between the Samsara and the mind will increase – slowly the mind matures from seeing the creation as Narayana's to seeing the creation as Narayana manifest – this is "Samadarshanam" as spoken by Gita Acharya.



Offering Pranamams to Lord Krishna and Suka Maharshi, the Guru of Srimadbhagavata, Pujya Acharya ended the first day of the 55-day Bhagavata Jnana Yagna. Harathi was offered to the Lord Krishna and devotees left after partaking the Prasada along with the blessings of Pujya Gurudev.

HARIH OM