

# MAHABHARATA TATPARYANIRNAYA - 1

– Prof. K. T. Pandurangi

Sri Madhvacharya considers Itihasa - Purana Prasthanas also a source of Vedanta Philosophy along with Upanishads, Brahmasutra and Gita Prasthanas. He gives utmost importance to Mahabharata as a source of Vedanta Philosophy and Vaisnava religion. This work helps the understanding of Vedanta Philosophy in two ways :

(1) It contains all essential teaching of Vedanta Philosophy (2) It helps to understand the purport of Veda and Upanishads. It is well said that इतिहासपुराणाभ्यां वेदं समुपबृंहयेत् । While Veda and Upanishads teach the theory of Vedanta the Mahabharata teaches the practice through appropriate illustrations. Therefore Sri Madhvacharya attaches great importance to Mahabharata.

For the utilisation of Mahabharata both as a source and as an aid to the exposition of Vedanta Philosophy two undertakings were necessary (i) To fix an authentic Text of Mahabharata (ii) To unearth the indepth meaning of it going beyond the mere story, episode, events and the personalities. That is to say to identify the moral and spiritual issue behind the story, episode etc. It is this that is achieved in this work viz., Mahabharata Tatparyanirya.

The work is neatly planned. The work contains thirty two chapters and has 5202 verses. The first chapter designated as सर्वशास्त्रार्थनिर्णय contains the central teaching of Vedanta Philosophy viz., विष्णुसर्वोत्तमत्व. The second designated as सुवाक्योद्धार affirms the same. Third explains the creation outside and within the Bramhanda. It mentions the Ten Avatars of the Supreme God upto Sri Rama's avatara. Chapter 4 to 9 contain the

entire summary of Sri Rama's avatara karya. The Tenth chapter describes Vedavyasa avatara. The rest of twenty two chapters give a gist of the entire Mahabharata. Some events and points of Harivamsha and Bhagavata are also included in these. Thus Mahabharata tatparyanimaya is an exposition of Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagavata and Harivamsha. As stated earlier, it is an exposition of the entire Veda and Vedanta teachings. This work is not merely a gist of the above works but an evaluation of the moral and spiritual issues involved. Sri Madhvacharya at the close of this work records that he composed it under the instructions of Lord Narayana himself.

नारायणेनाभिहितो बदर्या तस्यैव शिष्यो जगदेकभर्तुः (M.B-32-108)

Sri Narayana Panditacharya declares in Madhva Vijaya that this work is a good guide to all God loving persons.

इतिहासपुराणाब्धेः भवच्चित्ताद्रिलोडितान् ।  
ज्ञातां भारततात्पर्यसुधां कः सन् न सेवते ॥

We give below a brief summary of the contents of this great work.

## I

The benedictory verse of Mahabharata Tatparyanirnaya viz., नारायणाय परिपूर्णगुणार्णवाय etc., gives the definition of the Supreme God Narayana given in the first and second sutras of Brahmasutras viz., गुणपूर्णत्व and सृष्ट्याद्यष्टकतृत्व respectively. The first chapter which is designated as Sastra tatparya Adhyaya contains the essence of the teachings of Vedanta Philosophy viz., Supremacy of God Narayana.

At the outset the purpose of the creation and the process of the creation are explained. The creation is a kind of sport for the Supreme God. However, it serves the purpose of providing and opportunity for the Jivas to have the full expression of their original nature by under-

taking appropriate means. It also provides an opportunity for Goddess Lakshmi to assume her different forms.

सोऽयं विहार इह मे तनुभृत्स्वभाव ।  
सम्भूतये भवति भूतिकृदेव भूत्याः ॥ (St.I-5)

The God desires that those who are devoted to Him should attain the prosperity of liberation, and to enable them to achieve this end he undertakes creation.

भूत्यै निजाश्रित जनस्य हि सृज्यसृष्टौ ईक्षा बभूव । (St.I-3)

First, he himself assumes the forms of Vasudeva, Samkarsana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha, and makes Goddess Lakshmi to assume the forms of Maya, Jaya, Krti and Santi. He creates by his Pradyumna form, protects by His Aniruddha form, destroys by his Samkarshana form, and liberates by his Vasudeva form. Apart from these Narayana etc., five forms, he also assumes Kesava etc., hundred forms, Visva etc., thousand forms, Para etc., many forms and Aja etc., infinite forms. He is only one though he assumes several forms. All his forms are Purna i.e., full. He is impartite i.e., there are no internal parts of Him. He has no Prakrta Sarira, He is absolutely free from any drawback, His body is that of bliss, He is Supreme and independent, he has no limitation of time and space, He has no growth or decay. None is equal to him or Superior to him. He is Supreme. The Supreme God is introduced by such glowing tributes by Sri Madhvacharya at the very commencement of this work. This tempo is maintained all along not only in this work but in all his other works.

Sri Madhvacharya declare that this Supremacy of Lord Narayana is proclaimed in all Vedas, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Pancharatra and all other works that followed the tradition of these. He also states that this purport of the scripture is determined by Brahmastras. He quotes

from Veda, Upanishads, Brahmasutras, Gita, Mahabharata and Bhagavata good many passages to substantiate the above features of the Supreme God.

We will notice only a few of them here.

1. नास्ति नारायणसमं न भूतो न भविष्यति ।  
एतेन सत्यवाक्येन सर्वार्थान् साधयाम्यहम् ॥ (M.B.I-1-18)
2. यस्मात् क्षरमतीतोहमक्षरादपि चोत्तमः ।  
अतोस्मि लोके वेदे च प्रथितः पुरुषोत्तमः ॥ (B.G.XV-18)
3. परो मात्रया तन्वा वृधान । नते महित्वमश्रुवन्ति । (R.V)
4. नेह नानास्ति किञ्चन । (Katha. III-4)
5. पृथगुपदेशात् (B.S.II-3-28)

These quotations are incorporated in the very verses of Mahabharata Tatparyanirnaya. He is emphatic that only such Scriptures that declare the Supremacy of Vishnu are authentic and others are not authoritative. Such works that declare Siva etc., other than Vishnu as Superior are intended to mislead the undeserving.

मोहार्थान्यन्यशास्त्राणि कृतान्येवाज्ञया हरेः ।

When the God assumes Avataras in the mortal world certain human drawbacks are displayed by him. He pretends ignorance, he appears as having a human body, he appear to suffer from the injuries and death, he pretends to be in grief and without any self control, all these are intended only to mislead the undeserving . There cannot be any drawbacks for him who is Supreme. The Brahmasutras give us the correct knowledge of Brahman i.e., Vishnu. These declare that he is same in all his forms, that is to say, he is गुणपूर्ण and निर्दोष in all his forms.

(To be continued)

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