

Mahābhārata is the autobiography of sage Vyāsa

(Taught by Mr. Munindra Panda on 15-June-2014 (Sunday) and note taken by Lopamudra)

The great book *mahābhārata* can be described as the autobiography of sage Vyāsa. What he experienced in his own life that he depicted through this epic. Being the witness of all the events occurred in front of him, he codified those in *mahābhārata*. To understand this point in detail, let us analyze some live incidents of his life. the life of sage Vyāsa in *Mahābhārata*. At a very crucial moment of the country, when he was asked by his mother to give an heir for the throne, that time he advised that ‘This is not the appropriate time to produce children from the widow queens of *Vicitravīya*’. That time mother *Satyavatī* responded ‘You being my son are supposed to carry out my order not to advise me, your mother who is shouldering the responsibility of this country’. There *Vyāsa* had no alternative than accepting mother’s instruction thinking that this is the course of *prārabdha karma*. That time he again reminded to mother ‘due to inappropriate time and condition, there is a chance of getting physical disability in the children’. Mother *Satyavatī* replied, ‘You being the great sage on this earth, how there can be a child born from you with physical deficiency’. That’s how here the great sage *Vyāsa* had to bend in front of the stubbornness of *Satyavatī*.

Similarly he advised his own son *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* and grandson *Duryodhana* to rule the country according to *dharma* (righteousness) but they also did not listen to his advice to follow the same. Then *Vyāsa* realized ‘In this world everybody is born to experience the pleasure and pain according to their own *prārabdha karma*. But are these experiences just the intrusion of *prārabdha karma* or one has to put self effort (*puruṣārtha*) to undergo those experiences through wisdom? By going

through the experiences propelled by *prārabdha karma*, in the name of enjoyments one only suffers, but the same experiences can be bliss by converting into knowledge through the wisdom. That is the explanation of three natures of *ātmā* (soul), *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*. Every living creature has to experience their life. This is *sat* (truth) of life. But those experiences dragged by the *prārabdha karma* are the sole cause for all the sorrows of life. If one can come in contact with those experiences through the third eye called wisdom, then all of those occurrences can be converted into knowledge. This is *cit* (consciousness and knowledge) aspect. By continuing in such way the entire life will become bliss. Sage *Vyāsa* very well realized that ‘Being the slave of *prārabdha karma*, very few have the capability to listen the words of the wisdom. Then what will happen to those experiences which I have undergone in my life? Each experience of my life has to be codified as a piece of knowledge’. That turned out to be the epic of *Mahābhārata*.

Similarly, if we can witness all the experiences in our life without the presence of ego then those will be a new *Mahābhārata*, a book of knowledge. Every day we are undergoing new experiences, we are meeting individuals with different mindsets and we are having several conversations. Can we convert all those thoughts into knowledge? If we can witness all our favorable and unfavorable experiences as it is and can convert all the thoughts into knowledge, then it will be *Mahābhārata*.