**Episode 14 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 1, Episode 14)**

**TOPIC:** The nature and purpose of Brahma Vidya, Yoga Shastra, and Upanishad as explained in the Bhagavad Gita.

**TAGS:** **HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami**, **Bhagavad Gita**, Chapter 1, **Arjuna**, **Sri Krishna**, **Brahma Vidya**, **Yoga Shastra**, **Upanishad**, **Vedas**, **Bhakti**, **Devotion**, **Love**, **Fear**, **Kamsa**, **Maricha**, **Yajna** (sacrifice), **Rama**, **Vishwamitra**, **Upa:sana** (meditation), **Tattva** (truth/reality), **Karma Bandham** (karmic bondage), **Vibhooti** (omnipresence), **Virata Rupa** (cosmic form), **Vishwarupam**, **Narayana**, **Acharya** (spiritual teacher)

**Jai Srimannarayana!**

**Priya Bhagavad Bandhus,**

When enquiring about great topics, people say, “Oh, this must be a **Brahma Vidya** (implying it’s very difficult)!” If it’s an easy task, people say, sarcastically, “Is this a **Brahma Vidya** or what?” This implies that understanding a **Brahma Vidya** is not a simple task and is only achieved by tremendous effort. Perhaps.

In our **Vedas**, we have a few **Brahma Vidyas**. They help fulfill the purpose of life by ensuring we are kept away from recurring sorrows, keeping sadness at bay, enabling us to clearly realize our form and our nature, to regain our natural ability, and guiding us on what to say, what to see, what to think of, and how to think. **Brahma Vidyas** teach us all of this. They are named as **upasana**, methods of meditation.

**Upasana** refers to uninterruptedly visualizing the desired goal in our heart. This constant visualization should be out of love. It can result from two causes: fear or love. When we know something is going to kill us and we become scared of it, we feel it is around us whenever and wherever we are. Just like **Kamsa**, who always imagined **Sri Krishna** around him. Whenever the letter “ka” was used, he would see **Sri Krishna**. In the case of **Maricha**, whenever he heard the letter “ra”, it seems he would see **Sri Rama** with bow and arrow drawn, ready to shoot. When He joined **Vishwamitra** to protect the **yajna** (sacrifice) at the age of 12, **Sri Rama** aimed His bow at **Maricha**, released an arrow, and struck him. Since then, he saw nothing but **Sri Rama’s** image. This is out of fear.

**rakaradini namani**

whenever any word beginning with “ra” was used, he would see **Sri Rama**, out of fear. Similarly, 'kaka' **radini namani** - whenever any word was used beginning with the letter “ka”, including his own name, **Kamsa** would see **Sri Krishna**. This was because he was scared of **Sri Krishna**.

This condition of uninterrupted visualization can result from love as well. When lovers are separated, they always think about each other. They feel as if their partner is right in front of them, as if they are directly conversing. This is out of love. A child, when he is away from his mother, always recollects his mother’s words. A mother remembers her child whenever she cooks, regardless of the dish, because of the love for her child. This is out of love.

Both love and fear can make a distant object seem directly in front of a person as if he/she can see it clearly. In the context of God, this love is named as **bhakti** (devotion). This has been explicitly explained in our scriptures.

**tailadharavada vichhinna smrthisanthana rupa premarupa: bhaktihi:**

Just like when pouring oil from the hand, it flows without a gap, in a single stream. Or when through a wick, without any interruption, drop by drop it goes on to illuminate the lamp. Similarly, when the stream of thoughts illuminating knowledge within is filled with love, this is termed **bhakti** (devotion).

Only for this kind of devotion, God appears for us. If He appears only for this kind of devotion, then what should we do? When we recognize His beauty, His happiness, and His virtues - when we recognize our inherent bond with him – when we realize He is ours and we are His... ...each one of these has the ability to let us experience Him uninterruptedly, with love.

If one wishes to feel this way, then **Vedas** suggest that one should worship Him in a specific way in each situation. We can imagine our heart to be a lotus, and see God with mesmerizing eyes in that lotus. Let the beauty of those eyes absorb you. Or imagine Him decorated with all kinds of ornaments, with enormous eyes sitting in a beautiful lotus flower in the midst of the solar family. This is another type of **upasana** in which one visualizes Him as the ultimate **tattva**.

Different types of **upasana** (worship), are done in different locations. It also mentions how to perceive the world around us when we exercise this kind of **upasana**. Because we are living in this world, we can see the world around us and connect the unseen **tattva** with the things we see around, dedicating ourselves to that **tattva**. We see honeycombs. Honeybees come to them. Honeycombs hang on a tree or some other place. They collect honey from everywhere around and deposit it drop by drop so that it gives enjoyment. Similarly, when we think of the entire world as one big tree, and when we recognize that God is like beautiful honey... ...just like the different honey bees that collect it, there are various divine powers that allow us to experience the many divine attributes of God. How do we perceive this? The flow of thoughts during this perception is one kind of worship. This by itself is named as a **vidya** (an art). **Vedas** teach us many such ways of **upasana**. These are all called **Brahma Vidyas**.

They mention thirty-two **Brahma Vidyas**. Why should we know about all these? The supreme **tattva** running the world, and that which is our goal, has extraordinary virtues. All those virtues are for our benefit. If we know them, this helps us develop devotion, then we can start worshipping with that emotion. Then, when **karma bandham** (karmic bondage), is broken, **upasana** helps one become eligible to reach that **tattva** directly and remain there eternally. We can inculcate such thoughts accordingly. This is another **Brahma Vidya**. To briefly summarize, a **Brahma Vidya** helps us inculcate devotion towards the goal and enables us to reach it.

This was described by **Yamunacharya Swami** as '**bhaktiyeka gocharaha**'. This is why the words '**Brahma Vidyayam**' are used at the end of every chapter in **Bhagavad Gita** along with '**Yoga Shastra**', and '**Upanishad**'.

When we read **Bhagavad Gita**, the glory of the God is described a little at a time in the first six chapters, and in great detail from the beginning of the seventh chapter. When we learn this, love towards Him automatically evolves. **Arjuna** was also in the same situation as us in the beginning. When **Arjuna** saw the **virat rupa** (gigantic form of God encompassing the entire existence), he felt tremendous love towards Him.

**karishye: vachanam thava**

He was then ready to do anything instructed. This is **Brahma Vidya**. **Bhagavad Gita**, itself, is a great **Brahma Vidya**, a monumental **Brahma Vidya**. **Brahma Vidya** denotes immense knowledge. **Bhagavad Gita** is meant to teach us even greater knowledge in a beautiful way. This is also named as '**upanishad su**'. What does **upanishad** do? It has no effect on people who do not care about these things. For people who have tremendous dedication to achieve something, whatever may come their way, it helps them by revealing hidden secrets.

**Bhagavad Gita** is such an **upanishad**. What does it convey?

**narayana param brahma**

To tell us that it conveys this, it is said '**upanishad su**'. Every chapter clearly describes **Narayana tattva**. People wonder how that is possible? They say, “we read **Bhagavad Gita**, back and forth, top to bottom and all possible ways, but 'Narayana' is not mentioned!” It's true. The word 'Narayana' need not be explicitly used. However, when we observe the **tattva** described in it carefully, especially when we see the tenth and eleventh chapters, they are only about **Narayana**.

We spoke about the word **Narayana**. When all the things that exist are considered as '**naras**'... The one who holds all these in Him acts as a base and is called '**Nara ayana**', '**Narayana**'. He is the one who is inside all these things and supports them. Thus, **nara** and **ayana**, **Narayana**. The same is described in the tenth chapter where He states how His presence in an object made it supreme among all its kind. The tenth chapter is a huge chapter. It is named after the detailed description of His **vibhuti** (His omnipresence). This describes how He became the base of all objects by residing in each of them.

In the eleventh chapter, after describing God's greatness, **Arjuna** asks, “can you show me? If you deem me capable please show me and then I will believe.” It meant that he did not believe it until then. Because he asked, **Sri Krishna** thought He should show it to him, and revealed His **virat rupama**. **Arjuna** was astonished, seeing the entire universe rotating within different corners of **Sri Krishna's** body! However, he could not understand where the beginning was, where the ending was, or where the center of everything was. He could not even figure out where he himself was! **Arjuna** was overwhelmed and requested, “I am not able to see this, **Sri Krishna**. Please revert and show me the form that I am used to!” When he saw the **vishwarupa**, He could not understand anything. The tenth chapter describes the essence of **Narayana** and His Omnipresence.... the One in many. The eleventh chapter describes the many in the One.

All the **Vedas** describe this. However, this knowledge can only be obtained by resorting to a teacher of great wisdom, with immense interest and learning it only from their preaching. That is why they are named as '**upa nishad**' (**upa** = near, **nishad** = knowledge). To convey this, at the end of every chapter, '**upanishad su**' is said. This **Bhagavad Gita**, revered as '**Yoga Shastra, Brahma Vidya, Upanishad**'. However many times, in whatever way we listen to it, it remains forever new. Let us also experience this.

**Jai Srimannarayana!**