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1. Episode Title: Episode 103 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 103)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The importance of practice in life, Understanding the duality of body and soul, The responsibilities of a ruler, The significance of duty over personal feelings, The concept of karma and its implications for humans, The need for patience and critical thinking in spiritual understanding

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Arjuna, Krishna, duty, karma, responsibility, soul, body, practice, equanimity, spiritual growth

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), Bhagavad Gita is a scripture related to practice. We need to know what to practice and secondly, what to implement in our lives. Knowledge of something is theory. Its implementation in our lives is called practice. We need them both. We need to first know, followed by practice. Practice was demonstrated first. Later it was documented. Sri Ramayana is a scripture of practice. Bhagavad Gita is a theoretical text. The different concepts are described here (in Bhagavad Gita). They are demonstrated (by the wise) in that (Sri Ramayana).

Human life should be led by focusing on a noble and the best goal, ignoring the intermediary trivial results. It is important to move towards that (goal) not being held back by any trivial results. This is the message in the second chapter. Sri Krishna is trying to convey this to Arjuna and ensure he comprehends it. Initially, when Arjuna denied waging the war, He (Sri Krishna) could have simply commanded him to fight, but he chose not to do that. Arjuna was in sorrow. It had to be eliminated. Sorrow is temporary.

When they (Pandavas) had to stay in the forest for 12 years and live incognito for a year, they went through a lot of hardships. They decided to win back their kingdom even if they had to wage a war. Even during the negotiations, they discussed the same. When they were going through hardships, they were determined to win back their kingdom. 12 + 1, 13 years were spent, negotiations were complete (unsuccessfully). The preparations for war were complete. Everyone had assembled. Now Arjuna doesn’t want to fight. Why? All the folks around him looked like kith and kin. He felt, “What am I going to accomplish by killing all of them?” He decided that he didn’t want to gain the kingdom by killing his family in the war.

In reality, what is more important, gaining the kingdom or taking on responsibility? He (Arjuna) is a king. He belongs to a dynasty of rulers, and he also has the responsibility of ruling the kingdom. For such a person, it is his responsibility to rule the kingdom and remove any faults in the administration. As part of removing those faults, he might receive praise, blame, gains, or loss. Today, we are witnessing some incidents. The rulers want people to be happy and healthy, so they enforce certain rules. Some (rules) are commended and some are criticized. Regardless, the ideal ruler should not and will not be swayed. When he is commended, he doesn’t jump up and down arrogantly. It is natural that someone or the other will blame the ruler. He might get criticized at the assembly or through other means such as mass media. However, they (ideal rulers) don’t focus on that. They have a goal to rule the kingdom in a certain way. They just go towards that goal. That’s all. Whatever is required, they continue to do it and move forward. Regardless of the favorable or unfavorable experiences, they do not and should not focus on them. This is the message Sri Krishna is intending to convey.

“Since you are the ruler, your ultimate goal is the well-being of the people.” You are entrusted with that responsibility. Without desiring it, you are now required to wage war. You have an opportunity to punish those committing mistakes. A punishment should not be based on whether he feels bad or you feel bad, or whether he will be at a loss, or you will be at a loss. You need not look into all these. Whatever you must do, you should continue to do it. Your responsibility is only to fulfill your duty, and it is not right to evaluate the profit and loss. This is what a human being should know. A responsible person knows this. Even Arjuna knows this. Because he lived in those times (Dvapara Yuga), he might have already been aware of this. However, sometimes, he succumbs to the impact of the circumstances. Despite the person being wise, sometimes, he succumbs to despair and gets into trouble. Arjuna is also faced with a similar situation. This needs to be eliminated. Arjuna needs to be transformed into a duty-oriented person.

A human being is only given an opportunity of human life to perform his duties. To get a human life, a subset of karma (action) is chosen, and a body is provided. This is done by someone - call it God, Nature, etc. From the moment the jiva (individual soul) begins his journey at the stage of a cell, whatever is to be done in that body is already perfectly programmed. Progressively, he collects everything which is required to accomplish his tasks, grows his body, and emerges. After that, he eats and (the body he resides in) grows. What he needs to do is, he needs to eat food that supports the execution of all his karmic records. He needs to establish an environment relevant to that state. However, he is not aware of that karmic record. Based on his birth, his karma is predetermined. Sometimes as part of the journey, he faces certain situations and continues to move forward. Today, Arjuna’s responsibility is to wage war. Initially, they did whatever they had to do but now they are ready for the war.

What happens if you do what needs to be done? Whatever karma was allocated to you for this body gets reduced. Your burden (of karma) reduces. If you are able to do your job properly following the right process, not only does it remove the karma, which is assigned specifically to this body, it also removes the karma which is stored in the backlog. Scriptures say that only a human has the capability to do this. That’s why our elders said, “durlabho manusho dehaḥ” (rare is the human body). For animals and other beings, they do what they must do and eliminate the karma specific to only that body. Done. The case closes there. That’s not the case for humans. They not only can eliminate karma specific to this body, but also can eliminate karma stored in their backlog on performing their duties.

What is the process? You need to know how you have arrived, and who you are. We are humans. What does human mean? Human means 1) body, 2) indwelling jiva (soul) which ‘lives’ through the body. Learn about these two. Learn about jiva and engage the body in work. When you engage the body in work, there may be favorable and unfavorable conditions. Be patient. Lord started the second chapter by preaching tolerance. He started by saying, “tān tiṣṭhīkṣasva bhārata” (be patient, O Bharata). You must also listen to this with patience. That’s why we have started this. We also need some patience to listen and understand this concept. We have arrived at the current state because of several crores (millions) of births. How is it possible to understand the summary within 5 minutes? That’s why we need some patience and some critical thinking. We need to listen, we need to repeat it in our minds, and we need to practice it constantly. This is called anusmṛti (remembrance). Only then will we be able to perform what we need to perform and achieve what we need to achieve.

He began Bhagavad Gita by describing ātma (soul). We discussed that a human has two parts. One is a soul, which is invisible and runs the body, and the second one is the visible body. Let’s say this body is hardware and the soul is software. The software is not visible. We can only see the hardware. They are useful only if they work together. Otherwise, they are not useful. He (Sri Krishna) preached about software initially. It is called saṅkhya buddhi (knowledge-based intelligence).

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SLOKA WORD -

eṣa te'pi hitaḥ saṅkhye buddhiḥ

SLOKA MEANING -

This is your knowledge-based intelligence.

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Now, He also needs to preach about yogic intelligence (yoga buddhi). It is nothing but preparing the hardware to use the software. Let’s say the software is very powerful but hardware is a low-end model. If you install the latest software needing terabytes in an old 1980s computer with a capacity of 10-15 megabytes… Something requires terabytes and this is configured for megabytes, how will it function? We need to upgrade the hardware accordingly. (In humans) This upgradation is called yoga (union).

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SLOKA WORD -

yogetu imāṁ śṛṇu

SLOKA MEANING -

Listen carefully.

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yoge buddhiḥ yathā bhavati aham tat vakṣyāmi śṛṇu avahiṭhaḥ manaḥ

“I told you about ātma, now I will tell you about how to perform the work with this body - and how to leverage the knowledge from this ātma.” Thus, He started preaching this in the second chapter, followed by the concept of samatvaṁ (equanimity). As we work, we will encounter ups and downs. What should we do? We should accept them both equally. Accept both profit and loss. Accept the loss just the way you would accept the profit. Or reject the profit just the way you would reject the loss. It’s okay either way. This is called yoga.

This is not easy to practice unless one has - buddhi kuśalatā (skillful mind). In verse 2.50 He says,

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SLOKA WORD -

buddhiyukto jāhāti ha

SLOKA MEANING -

Whoever is equipoised by results of profit or loss,

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ubhe sukhṛta duṣkṛteḥ

only he is considered an intelligent one, who has a skillful mind. What should we do with the results? This needs to be specified. From verse 2.51 onwards, He explains the procedure to do the work, and what to expect while doing it. It is important to properly use the body and ātma. This is the essence of Bhagavad Gita. He moves forward and further clarifies this concept. Let us move forward as well and try to understand it. Jai Srimannarayana!

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