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1. Episode Title: Episode 106 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 106)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The ideal state of one's intellect (buddhi), enhancing intellect through yoga, the importance of equanimity (samathva buddhi), understanding regret (nirveda) in spiritual growth, the relationship between the body and the soul, the significance of self-criticism (atma ninda) in personal development.

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, buddhi (intellect), samathva buddhi (equanimous mind), nirveda (regret), moha (delusion), a:thma (soul), spiritual growth, self-criticism, oxygen analogy, eternal truth (thaththva)

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), in chapter 2 of Bhagavad Gita, Sri Krishna discusses the ideal state of one's buddhi (intellect). The Lord is addressing people who desire to strengthen their intellect. How should you enhance your buddhi? You must enhance it through yoga. You must enhance it as yoga. He says, karmasu kau:salam (performing duties as yoga is for the wise).

What does it mean to have good buddhi (intellect)? What is the way to possess it? In fact, why is it even necessary? Buddhi is like a lamp (di:pam). For someone in a dark room, if they need to move about and do activities, they need a lamp, right? If they desire to know the objects around properly, they need to increase the brightness of the lamp. That’s what we are desiring.

Let’s take a more obvious example. For someone who was COVID positive and in the hospital, what did people consider most essential in recent days? Why did they want to book a hospital bed? Why did they get so scared of the second wave? Oxygen. They made many attempts to procure it and blamed the government in various ways. The governments worked very hard to procure it and make it available to all. They are also advising to start preparing for the next wave and to ensure oxygen is universally available. Oxygen is essential. If you want to stay in this body, oxygen is needed. Ensure O2 levels are at least 95 when infected with COVID. What would happen if it dropped below? People have bought specific meters (pulse oximeters) for that purpose. The demand for them has increased tremendously. Every few minutes, they check their oxygen level using them. Is it at 85, 96, or reaching 100? Why? Because a reading above 96 indicates we are fine and can live comfortably. If that level goes down, then we may die any minute. Isn’t that so? This is the reality we all confronted recently. Hence, we took that as an example.

This is a visible example. Based on this, we will tell you about something intangible. While we are in this body, what is the ‘meter’ we should check? Are we performing our activities with our mind set on the highest goal or not? Are we doing them without focusing on temporary results? That is samathva buddhi (equanimous mind). Are we enhancing samathva buddhi or not? Having an equanimous mind is what having buddhi means. Thinking, “I know this. I know that. I read this. I read that.” That is not buddhi. The more samathva buddhi one has, the wiser they become. When samathva buddhi wanes, moha (delusion) grows. The more that moha grows, the more the samathva buddhi diminishes. Intellect continues to exist, but it runs behind temporary results. If it goes in that direction, it is analogous to oxygen dropping below 80. If samathva buddhi increases and moha decreases, it is analogous to oxygen increasing above 96. So simple! Try to enhance samathva buddhi, an equanimous mind.

When will it increase? Sri Krishna is saying in verse 2.52 that first you need to have a sense of nirveda (regret). Nirveda is that sadness resulting from not attaining what has to be attained and what is rightfully yours, even when there is a chance to attain it. It is similar to the situation when someone’s oxygen is falling below 88, despite having an oxygen cylinder and mask nearby. With readily available oxygen, he can make use of the mask but doesn’t put it on. He struggles for breath with a working mask in hand. He can simply wear it. He doesn't put it on and is struggling for breath. If someone puts it on him, he will be so relieved. Then he will feel, ‘Alas! I should have put it on earlier, I should have known.’ That is nirveda or atma ninda (self-criticism). Blaming oneself for not attaining what is worthy is nirveda.

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SLOKA WORD -

yada:the mo:ha kalilam buddihi vyathi tharishyathihi

SLOKA MEANING -

When the intellect can gradually come out of this sheath of delusion, improper attachment.

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Then you will feel nirveda. Why does one feel nirveda, despair? Because we didn’t pay heed to that tathva (reality) and the benefits of it which were worthy of knowing. Previously, we had an opportunity to recognize both [tathva and body]. “However, instead of recognizing this tathva, I am getting attached to that which degrades me and causes suffering.” “Alas! I wasted so much time.” You would feel that, right?

They say that for a devotee, there is no sleep. This is a different context. Why is there no sleep for him? Once you know about God, there is no sleep. Why? Once you understand God and reach Him, one will continuously be absorbed in the exquisite beauty of the Lord. It seems his eyes will not blink. There are a few games that have been released recently. If kids start playing them, it seems they forget to eat or sleep, and even their surroundings. Wherever he is, he is only focused on the game. We are talking about a small game here. However, if a man can reach God and see Him, looking at the Lord’s exquisite beauty, he won’t be able to turn his eyes away and will not be willing to even blink his eyes. Hence, he will have no sleep there.

Why does he [a devotee] have no sleep in the other case? Here, after knowing about that great tathva (eternal truth), he feels, “I still didn’t attain it. I should have attained it long ago.” “Despite having the opportunity, I am unable to attain it.” Pining for it this way, he won’t be able to sleep. Hence, lack of sleep is always there in both cases for a devotee. They say this in jest.

Whoever pays attention to that tathva properly, whose intellect matures properly, for such a person, when he wants to get out of this dirt of moha (ignorance), he regrets - ‘I did not hear the upadesas (teachings) about this from the Wise, though they were accessible to me. I wasted so much time.’ What we have to attain is ours. It is the jiva’s (soul’s) right to attain it. God is the one who is naturally related to us and who will help us attain it. Once we know this, we feel, ‘why didn’t I attain it still?’. With this deep longing in the heart, the feeling is nirveda.

Hence, srothavyasya shruthasya (about what should be heard and what has already been heard), he feels sad about ignoring what he should have listened to. The more he feels nirveda, or regret, the more he can assimilate the topics [about tathva]. The dryer an object gets, the easier it is to grind it into powder. The more he feels nirveda and deep longing, the more he can assimilate certain topics about what he has to attain [i.e. tathva]. This is what the Lord tells us in verse 2.52. One should feel nirveda first.

However, a lot of people say we should not have atma nirveda (self-regret), but should have self-confidence. If we know what atma is, who it belongs to, and its nature, then it is good to have confidence in it. That is the higher goal which we discussed previously. We should focus our attention on that big goal. We should have attained it long back. However, we couldn't attain it for millions of lives, and in this life also, we are away from it. Then how can we not feel nirveda? We should feel it.

There is a short funny story. There was a priest in the olden days, when there were no online pujas. He went to a house for puja. He loved ‘old’ jaggery. The lady of the house put half a kg of ‘old’ jaggery among the puja items. After finishing the puja, he told his young disciple to bag the old jaggery. However, before the disciple could pack it, a pet dog that was untied took the jaggery. The priest was furious and hit the young disciple, who started crying. The lady of the house enquired why he was crying.

[Lady] Why did you hit him?

[Priest] Look, he didn’t pack the jaggery.

The lady thought that the priest liked jaggery and so she got him more.

[Lady] You only lost half a kg; I will give you one full kg.

After taking it, the priest hit the disciple again.

[Priest] Stupid boy, if that half kg was there, it would have been 1.5 kg!

[Lady] Why are you hitting him for this simple reason? If you want, I will give you one more kg.

So, she brought him another kg. The priest hit the boy again.

[Priest] If you didn’t miss the initial, it would have been 2.5 kgs by now!

Even if the lady offered 100 kgs, he would lament that it would have been 100.5 kgs! Because of the longing to gain the other piece, however much he gets, he won’t be satisfied. This is negativity.

However, from the positive angle, once he hears about atma tathva (soul truth), and wants to attain it, and when intellect develops accordingly, he regrets that he had wasted his intellect on mundane topics, feeling, ‘why did I focus on these? Why did I act on these? Why couldn’t I hear about [atma]? Why didn’t I act towards that? Why did I lose it, being so far off?’ That regret will always make him feel nirveda.

With this nirveda only, manas (mind) becomes mature. Once manas matures, it can facilitate clear understanding of what needs to be known. What is it that he should understand and how should he understand it? Sri Krishna begins to elaborate on this. Let’s try to listen. Jai Srimannarayana!

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