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1. Episode Title: Episode 107 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 107)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The importance of self-criticism and its role in personal growth, Understanding the concept of nirveda (regret) and its impact on learning, The lessons from celestial beings about humility and self-realization, The significance of focused knowledge (vyavasa:ya:thmika buddhi) in achieving success, The journey of self-discovery and the role of guidance in spiritual practice.

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, nirveda, self-criticism, humility, self-realization, vyavasa:ya:thmika buddhi, Krishna, celestial beings, Agni, Va:yu, Indra, a:thma, knowledge, wisdom, transformation.

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), In Bhagavad Gita verse 2.52, Sri Krishna gave us a good method, nirveda (regret). With nirveda, you will attain yoga (union).

If someone asked a question to a person who thinks he knows everything, and if that person couldn’t answer properly, he feels, “Alas! I have studied for so long and thought I knew everything.” If he feels that regret in his heart, he will try to learn about that topic thoroughly. We have many examples like this.

For someone who thinks he can do anything, when unable to even move a blade of grass, the resulting sorrow in him is called nirveda. Once, all the de:vathas (celestial beings) were each thinking… ‘There is no one greater than I. I waged war! I have killed all these a:suras (demons).’ All the de:vathas, including Agni (fire), Va:yu (air), Varuna (rain), and Indra (king of de:vathas), started boasting about themselves.

The war had just concluded. Lord Vishnu had helped them win. As soon as they won, they started boasting about themselves. Lord Vishnu felt sorry for them and felt it essential to teach them a lesson on a:thma jna:na (self-knowledge). Lord Vishnu became a radiant beam of light in the sky, known as Yakshaha. Thus, he was glowing in the form of yaksha (a celestial being). The celestial beings were unable to understand what that was.

Since Agni was the youngest of all, Indra called Agni. He instructed, ‘Hey Agni, go and find out who this yaksha is.’ Agni went to the yaksha and asked arrogantly, ‘Who are you?’

[Yaksha] I will tell who I am, but first tell me who you are.

[Agni] You don’t know who I am when you look at me?

agnir va:ha:r aham asmi ja:tha ve:da va aham asmi (I am always radiating heat. Not only that, I can burn down anything.)

[Yaksha] Oh, you have such great power?

[Agni] Of course. Why is there any doubt?

[Yaksha] That’s nice. Please burn this small blade of grass.

The yaksha put a small blade of grass in front of him.

thad upapreya:ya sarvaja ve:natham nasa sha:kha dhagdhum (Try to burn this blade of grass.)

Agni tried with all his might, but couldn’t even fade the green color of the grass. He hung his head in shame. Until then, he was sitting with others and proclaiming, ‘All this is because of me. I am great. Our victory is because of me.’ The one who had been boasting like this until now, how could he face them? Hence, sathatha e:va nivavruthe (he went and sat somewhere in the back), hiding from the others.

Indra wondered why Agni hadn't returned after such a long time. He called Va:yu to find out about the yaksha. Va:yu was very enthusiastic. He felt, ‘Indra should have sent me first, instead of insignificant Agni.’ He arrogantly went to the yaksha.

[Va:yu] Who are you?

[Yaksha] I will tell you, but first tell me who you are.

[Va:yu] va:yurva aham asmi:thya bravi:th ma:tharishva va aham asmi:thi (You don’t know who I am? I make the air move everywhere. Without me, no one can live.)

[Yaksha] What can you do? What is your strength?

[Va:yu] I can blow away whatever comes in my way.

[Yaksha] Oh really? I don’t know about that, but can you move this blade of grass?

Va:yu used all his might but couldn’t even move that single blade of grass. He felt embarrassed and hid his face in shame.

sathatha e:va nivavruthe: (he retreated) Indra is the leader of de:vatha:s. Everyone had been sent, but in vain. Hence, Indra himself went to the yaksha to find out about him. He felt, ‘Why all of them? I myself will go find out.’ As he was the leader of celestial beings, Lord Vishnu didn’t want to insult him in front of everyone. So the yaksha stopped being visible and used only speech to communicate with Indra.

‘Victory is not a result of all your effort. The reason for victory is something else.’ Thus, Lord Vishnu made them realize that fact. When you assume you are capable of something and realize you are not, the resulting feeling is nirveda. Only when you feel nirveda, you will think, ‘Who am I? Because of whom did I win? Because of whom did I get this opportunity? Who is that?’ A desire to know all these arises in one’s heart.

Until one feels nirveda, whatever is said will simply enter one ear and exit through the other. A bodybuilder who thinks there is no one as strong as he, if he gets hospitalized with corona and is on a ventilator, then he will understand the importance of oxygen, doctor, good medicine, etc. Until that time, he doesn’t realize it. Until that time, he will be boasting about himself wherever he goes. Then, he feels nirveda and thinks, ‘Though I am so strong, even I became like this. Even I became so helpless.’

When he experiences nirveda, he feels the curiosity to approach and take guidance from someone. Sri Krishna is clarifying this in verse 2.53.

sruthi viprathipanna: the: yada: stthasyathi nischala: | sama:dha: vachala: buddhihithada: yo:gam ava:psyasi || (When you listen carefully, your mind becomes steady and focused, and then you will attain yoga.)

Lord has said this earlier,

vyavasa:ya:thmika buddhi e:ka bahu sa:kha:hi anantha:scha buddhaya avyavasa:yina:m (Whoever has decisive single-focused knowledge will get good results. For the ones who don't have it, their intelligence is multi-directional. They will not achieve anything.) He called them avyavasa:yis (indecisive) prior to this.

Vyavasa:ya:thmika buddhi is also called yoga. The sa:dhana (dedicated practice) is also called yoga. When he practices this way, it will result in a:thma sa:ksha:thka:ra (self-realization). He rises beyond the body and attains himself. Or he can attain the Lord.

In the first 6 chapters of Bhagavad Gita, Sri Krishna doesn’t mention attaining God. In the first 6 chapters, it is said that to attain the ultimate goal, first realize a:thma (self). First find out who you are. Initially, that much is enough. Once you properly know yourself and realize someone is directing you… Who is the one who is doing that? What does it mean to ‘direct’ you? How to understand that? If you know it, what should you do? All these questions arise.

That will come later. He will start explaining that from chapter 7. However, in the first 6 chapters of the scripture, there is no mention of God, Supreme Soul, realization. Only self (soul) realization is mentioned. Hence, let’s limit ourselves to that [for now]. That is known as ‘yoga’ here. However, the term yoga is used in many contexts.

In Sanskrit, certain words have many meanings. Only if we know which word to use in a particular context, will we gain a proper understanding of it. Otherwise, we get lost. We will just be carried away in that current. Yoga is also one such amazing word. Yoga has yo:gaha (union), sannahana (connection), upa:ya (means), dhya:na (meditation), sangathi (association), yukthishu (reasoning)… We can use the term yoga in all these contexts.

Sri Krishna used yoga in different contexts to mean different things. He is saying, thada yo:gam ava:psyasi (then you will attain yoga), here in verse 2.53. The yoga here means the stage where you can have a:thma sa:ksha:thka:ra (self-realization). Who should attain a:thma? A:thma itself. How can a:thma attain itself? It’s like seeing yourself. How would that be? It means to fully realize a:thma jna:na (knowledge of the soul) in complete clarity.

What do you mean by obtaining a:thma jna:na? Ji:va (soul), or a:thma, is somewhere inside [the body]. However, over it, there is a shield. A:thma is always safe in the body. We need to realize this. A:thma is inside in the form of jna:na (knowledge). This is the first level. It is encapsulated by a layer called manas (mind). This jna:na has to transform into wisdom.

The resulting nischalatha (steadfastness) from listening should occur in intellect. On top of manas, there are instruments called indriya:s (senses). These senses work through the visible body. This is what it means by knowing ourselves. We are safe in this external armor called the body. We should know this.

We say that we do activities stimulated by the recorded karmas (actions), yet we can’t see where they are located. In general, we can’t see manas, indriya:s, a:thma, etc., through any modern scientific instrument. However, scriptures say that the past karmas, responsible for our coming into this body, are stored in different places. Sri Krishna discusses this also as we proceed a little further.

However, as we need to know it now and can’t yet step that far ahead, let's discuss it now itself.

indriya:ni manaha buddhihi athya adhishta:na muchyathe (The senses, mind, and intellect are places where karma is stored.) Indriya:s (senses) are one of the places where karma is stored. Manas (mind) is one store, buddhi (intellect) is another. This whole body is a store. Karma gets stored in all these places.

As the impact of karma increases, jna:na (knowledge) of the a:thma gets buried behind karmas. It becomes difficult for a:thma to recognize itself. It’s like sending a young boy to the market to get something. Once he comes out, suppose he meets a few of his favorite friends. He starts talking to them, playing with them, and forgets the purpose for which he came.

Once we come into the body, we get lost in indriya:s, manas, body, and the surrounding environment. We forget the purpose we came for and get involved in other things. That’s the actual problem. What happens because of that? Whatever new activity we do creates new records and increases the burden [of karmas] in them [manas, indriyas, buddhi, a:thma].

This is like soot getting accumulated on a glass chimney around a lamp. As the lamp keeps burning, more and more soot gets accumulated on the chimney. Similarly, the indriya:s which are already loaded with karmas accumulate more karmas. Manas and buddhi also accumulate more karmas. Just as more dirty water accumulates in quicksand, all these karmas get added to the body. Right now, we are in that situation.

What do we desire? We want clean water to enter the ‘body’ and to gradually eliminate the waste. What should we do for that? First, we should listen to the Wise. Sri Krishna is clarifying that in verse 2.53.

sruthi viprathipanna: the: yada: stthasyathi nischala: | sama:dha: vachala: buddhihi thada: yo:gam ava:psyasi || (When you listen carefully, your mind becomes steady and focused, and then you will attain yoga.)

Only then, you can know with clarity who you are. Here, the term yoga means knowing yourself clearly - i.e., a:thma avalo:kana (self-observation) or a:thma sa:ksha:thka:ra (self-realization). What do you need to do before this? Sruthi (listening), listen. You have to listen.

With listening, we must undergo proper transformation. How should we listen? What kind of transformation is needed? What should we know about a:thma sa:ksha:thka:ra? Let’s proceed further, learning about these. Jai Srimannarayana!

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