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1. Episode Title: Episode 112 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 112)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The importance of self-knowledge, Understanding the nature of true wealth, The teachings of Yajnavalkya on the eternal soul, The process of learning and contemplation, The significance of continuous thought in spiritual practice

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Yoga, Yajnavalkya, Maitreyi, self-knowledge, dhyana, contemplation, eternal happiness, spiritual guidance

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), Once upon a time, there was a great person named Yajnavalkya. He was a great saint and a brahma jnani (knower of the ultimate truth), possessing knowledge of the Supreme. He had two wives, Kathyaayani and Maitreyi. Kathyaayani was very interested in material possessions and experiences, while Maitreyi was very capable and intelligent.

After a few years, Yajnavalkya said, “I want to give away whatever I have earned so far to both of you. I will leave for the forests after that.”

Kathyaayani asked, “How much will you give?”

Yajnavalkya replied, “How much do you want?”

Kathyaayani insisted, “First, tell me how much you have.”

Yajnavalkya disclosed his wealth.

Kathyaayani demanded, “I want 50 percent of it.” Since there are three people, each normally gets 1/3rd.

Yajnavalkya asked again, “How much do you want?”

Kathyaayani reiterated, “I want my share.”

Then he called Maitreyi. She didn’t demand any specific amount.

Yajnavalkya inquired, “Which part do you want?”

Maitreyi responded, “I want what is valuable.”

Yajnavalkya explained, “Our property is very valuable. It yields three crops a year and is right next to the water. It gives us good profits and will sell for a high price. It’s valuable either way.”

Maitreyi countered, “Yet, you are leaving this and going away. You would forgo this only if something else is more valuable than this. So, where are you going?”

She added, “Spouses usually don’t leave even if you go to Heaven. Maybe they will leave if you go to hell. Wherever you go, they come with you.”

Maitreyi also asked, “Where are you going? You are going there as it is greater than this.”

Yajnavalkya affirmed, “Yes, that’s greater than this. These are worldly riches; I desire something eternal.”

Maitreyi questioned, “What’s the difference?”

Yajnavalkya explained, “These are worldly objects, right? Sometimes you may reap a good crop, but when there are no rains or if there are pest infestations, you may not. If the ruler imposes heavier taxes, you may not reap the benefit. In such matters, you have profits and losses, and you have to work hard too. You face difficulties in this.”

Maitreyi asked, “What about that [the more valuable thing]?”

Yajnavalkya replied, “If you can attain it, there is nothing in it that is destructible, and there will be no loss in that. It gives everlasting happiness.”

Maitreyi responded, “You want to keep the one giving everlasting happiness and want to give us the one giving temporary benefits, which has profits and losses and which gets destroyed? I don’t want this.”

Yajnavalkya asked, “Then what do you want?”

Maitreyi declared, “Whatever you are trying to attain, I want the same thing.”

Yajnavalkya inquired, “What will you do?”

Maitreyi replied, “I will go with you wherever you go. Please grace me so I attain that too.”

Yajnavalkya asked, “What about the property?”

Maitreyi said, “Do whatever you wish with it. Whatever you thought was not necessary, I don’t want it either.”

Kathyaayani was happy to hear that. She received the 1/3rd shares from each of them in addition to hers. She got the whole property and was satisfied with riches, keeping calm. Maitreyi left with Yajnavalkya.

In serving him (susru:sha), she implemented whatever upadesas (teachings) he gave her. History tells us this. One of the great upadesas which Yajnavalkya gave to Maitreyi was:

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SLOKA WORD -

a:thma: va: are: drashtavyaha sro:thavyaha manthavyaha nidhi dhya:sithavyo: mai:thre:yi

SLOKA MEANING -

Hey Maitreyi, the atma (soul) is the only thing worth seeing, hearing, reflecting upon, and meditating on.

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Yajnavalkya is telling this to his beloved wife Maitreyi, emphasizing that everything other than atma (soul) should not be counted. Like everything else is ‘thruna:yame:ne’ (like blades of grass), for Ramanujacharya…

Yajnavalkya continues, “Only the atma is worthy of darsan (experience). How? First, sro:thavyaha (you must listen). You have to listen until you understand very clearly. What if we don’t understand the lesson which the teacher taught? We question and listen to it again. If we still don’t understand, we request for repetition and listen again. Don’t we repeatedly listen to something until we understand [in academics]? Similarly, sro:thavyaha, we have to listen until it is clear to us.”

Initially, when you don’t know the meaning of it, you should still listen. When you start understanding it partly, you should continue to listen.

Go:da Devi talks in Thiruppavai about birds. As soon as they wake up, they chirp.

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SLOKA WORD -

pullum shilumbina

SLOKA MEANING -

After chirping for a while, when the sun rises, they go out to get their food individually as they can’t all go out together.

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In the evening, they come together in order, but while going, they all go individually. One bird can go one way, another goes another way; they may or may not make it back, and it is not certain if they will meet each other again. They go out and don’t know what might happen later. They may not return back if a bigger bird, cat, or monkey catches them. Hence, before they go out separately, they speak out of happiness of being together, and they try to ‘pack’ these conversations into small parcels and carry them along.

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SLOKA WORD -

ki:su ki:su enru engum anaichchatha:n kalandu pe:sina pe:chchi

SLOKA MEANING -

The sounds of waking up and then the sounds of speaking to each other.

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If they are speaking to each other, that means they are understanding [the sounds]. The sounds of waking up don’t have any meaning. They are arbitrary sounds like that of a sound when people stretch after waking up. There is no meaning to them. Meaningful words include ‘Are you ok? What are you doing? How are you?’

Even if they don’t make sense in the beginning, you have to listen to good words when the Wise instruct. Since they are meaningful words, even if they don’t specifically explain it to you, you have to listen. Listen to them as those are words that can explain ardham (meaning).

After listening this way for some time, you will know how they can be of use to you and will be able to retain it in your heart.

What should you do next? If what you have heard is for your wellbeing, you should do mananam (contemplation).

What is mananam?

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SLOKA WORD -

sruthasya ardhasya yukthibhihi manasi samstha:panam

SLOKA MEANING -

We should engrave in the heart what we heard by firmly establishing it using techniques and logic.

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This is called mananam. What happens if we do that?

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SLOKA WORD -

a:thma: va:re drashtavyaha

SLOKA MEANING -

How should we see it?

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First, sro:thavyaha (listen) even when you don’t understand it, and also after you understand it. Later?

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SLOKA WORD -

manthavyaha

SLOKA MEANING -

Reflect properly on it repeatedly.

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It is said that as you keep eating something bitter, it begins to taste good. The more you practice a tune, the better it sounds. Even if something is bitter, if that taste gives us health, we will like it.

Mananam should progress uninterruptedly, similar to how honey trickles down in the form of an unbroken stream. Similarly, whatever nischaya jnana (firm knowledge) you had on that topic in the first moment should continue to the next moment, and the moment after that like a continuous stream.

You learned about what you need to attain, right? As the thought of that ‘desirable [tattva] being beneficial to us’ establishes in our heart, then the duration of dhyana (meditation) increases.

HH’s words - concentration and density | The concentration on it and the density keeps increasing.

We will give you a better example. We want to light a lamp. What do we do then? We put a wick in it and pour oil or ghee into it. We ignite the end of the wick, and the wick keeps burning.

What was necessary for this wick to burn? If a lot of oil is dropped on it at once, it will be put out. Also, if it doesn’t get the supply of oil, it will be put out. Or the wick might burn all the way through and be extinguished.

The oil reaches drop by drop through the wick and keeps the wick lit. If a water drop falls in between these drops, this water drop also traverses up with the oil drops. The flow starts with oil drops followed by a water drop and then the remaining oil drops.

Oil drops progress like a stream; the water drop also goes along. When the water drop reaches the end, the lamp will be put out. If you light it with the next oil drop, then it will light again. What happened? This [water drop] caused a break in that oil stream. With a single water drop, the lamp goes out. If there is another water drop, the flame again goes out.

When we light a lamp, sometimes it makes a sputtering sound because of this phenomenon. This oil stream keeps the lamp burning continuously. Similarly, the thought of an object, word, or whatever we hear, reflected on, and felt as ours and benefitting… if that thought goes on in the same manner uninterruptedly, undisturbed by other thoughts… for approximately 33 minutes without a break, it is called dharana (focused concentration).

It should stay for that long. For us, it doesn’t even stay for 30 seconds, not even for 5 seconds. That thought will go and come back. If we constantly think of a custard apple, suddenly we may think of mango and come back to custard apple.

Let’s say we are seeing Rama’s form in front of us constantly. We may see someone or something we like and then come back to Rama. Yet, it is considered broken.

While using electronic devices, people use UPS (Uninterruptible Power Supply). It is arranged so that there is no break even for half a minute. We should have that [continuous thought] in us. That is called yoga (union). If this continues in you, it is called one dharana.

If you can construct the flow of such dharana, when it fills your heart entirely, then you will attain yoga or atma sakshatkara (realization of the soul), says the Lord in sloka 2.53.

Let’s see how that is by learning and understanding the verse. Jai Srimannarayana!

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