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1. Episode Title: Episode 115 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 115)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The importance of performing duties, Understanding the ultimate benefit of actions, The concept of a fixed goal in life, The significance of unwavering faith, The relationship between effort and results, The nature of eternal bliss (a:thma sa:ksha:thka:ra)

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, a:thma sa:ksha:thka:ra, Krishna, Arjuna, duty, bliss, faith, effort, fixed goal, vyavasa:ya:thmika buddhi, sthitha prajna

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), Bhagavad Gita elaborates on how we need to perform our duties. We need to know what benefit we get from it. When we perform our duties, we attain ultimate permanent benefit. What is that ultimate benefit? The one which doesn’t get destroyed is the ultimate benefit. Even if you earn a lot of wealth, it will all gradually be gone one day. If you reach high positions, even they will be gone one day. Even if one rules very efficiently, he has to let go of his post after some time. If you acquire mansions and buildings, either they will be gone or you will be gone leaving them. All these are temporary benefits. What is the benefit which stays permanently? That is a:thma sa:ksha:thka:ra (realization of the soul).

This term sounds very difficult. Why? Because we don’t know much about it (a:thma). We might wonder what will happen if we ‘see’ it? That (a:thma sa:ksha:thka:ra) means to attain a state of bliss. It is not so easy to attain that state. Sri Krishna discusses it in chapter 2, saying:

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SLOKA WORD -

thada: yo:gam ava:psyasi

SLOKA MEANING -

then you will attain yoga (union), the final result

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The Lord says, ‘It is not so easy to attain it. If all the prerequisites are met, you may attain it.’ A:thma sa:ksha:thka:ra means eternal bliss. You need not think of it as a difficult term or feel as if the world is meaningless or it is ve:da:nthic (related to Vedic philosophy). It is a state which bestows everlasting bliss which increases as you experience it. The technical term for it is a:thma sa:ksha:thka:ra. In simpler terms, we can call it yoga (union).

Sri Krishna instructed this in the second chapter - thada: yo:gam ava:psyasi.

thada: - after all this happens. After what happens? The Lord discussed prerequisite processes. He began explaining those from verse 2.41:

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SLOKA WORD -

vyava:ya:thmika buddhihi e:ka:

SLOKA MEANING -

a fixed goal is essential

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To begin with, you need to arrive at a fixed goal. You need to be clear about your goal. If you need to achieve a gold medal, that goal has to be fixed in your mind. That is called lakshya suddhi (purity of aim). If that is there, other things happen by themselves. Here, we are not desiring a gold medal. In some places, what they call a gold medal is just of a golden color but there is no gold in it. Believing that it is a gold medal, people feel very happy about it. There are a few apps on cellphones; if you earn so many points, you will get gold, silver, diamond, or platinum badges. They send a colored picture. Looking at those, people feel happy thinking they will get gold or diamond badges. There is nothing in that.

In some places, we saw organizers giving gold, silver, and bronze medals. We used to think gold medals were made of gold. When we observed it, we understood that the inside was made of some cheap metal, not even copper, but is covered with gold color. That is called a gold medal. If it is white, it is called a silver medal. If it is in some other color, it is called a bronze medal. Even for attaining temporary things like these, we focus on the goal, keep other things aside, and work hard for it. In this case, it’s not temporary happiness we are seeking. “I need permanent bliss which never decreases.” It is a decisive goal, a fixed goal.

Terms like fixed goal or a resolve are familiar. However, the term vyavasa:ya:thmika buddhi (determined intellect) is not familiar. Fix this in your mind. Try to learn about the benefits of attaining the goal. To have a fixed goal, we should first know that it is beneficial for us. To know that it’s beneficial, we should know the good qualities about it. Once he attains permanent benefit as opposed to temporary benefits, how he and others around him feel happy, how others will praise him, he should know all these. Then he should put effort into it. Just because you feel it is nice and you need to attain it, it won’t come easily. You have to put in all the efforts required. This effort is called karma (action).

If we use the technical terms from Bhagavad Gita, it feels like vedanta (philosophy) or religion. If we relate them in modern terminology, it feels like a personality development course. However, there is no other means than Bhagavad Gita to make us better. Those who are conducting contemporary courses are taking content from Bhagavad Gita and using modern terms to describe it. However, when we go to the original words of Bhagavad Gita, it seems very difficult for us as if we are drinking neem juice or something strenuous like lifting hills, and we feel disinterested. It is good to know them though.

We should perform our duties. While doing our duties, we may get compliments. Don’t get carried away by them. If you do, you won’t be able to work hard. You may get some certificates for your achievements. Once you get used to them, you won’t like it if you don’t get them (compliments). Once you get used to the compliments, if you don’t get recognition, you feel like crying. Hence, don’t pay attention to them. However, a lot of people encourage you towards them saying, ‘You need these things too. They are necessary. These are the means for you to grow.’

Putting in effort will make you grow. Praise, claps, garlands, or getting respect are not the means to grow. Why are we saying that? After getting used to them, we won’t like it if we don’t get them (commendations). If anyone doesn’t talk about us, we feel as if everything becomes void. Hence, the Lord said very clearly not to pay attention to them. All the things we said earlier like gold medals are drushta lakshya (goals with visible results), goals with ‘visible’ results. We are able to see both the result and efforts. If we have the goal of permanent bliss related to the soul, that does not have drushta phala (visible result). That is an invisible result. It is difficult to pay attention to or work towards an invisible result.

So what should we do first? Listen. What should we listen to? Teachings related to it, of the Wise. That is called sastra (scripture). We should listen to them and have faith in them. The more faith we have in them, the more it will result in clarity or nischaya:thmaka jna:na (decisive knowledge). Lord explained this in verse 2.53:

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SLOKA WORD -

sruthi viprathipanna: the:

SLOKA MEANING -

when the mind is firmly established

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For us to have that nischala (unwavering) mind - First, we have to listen and then reflect on it. Have faith in what we have reflected on. Then firmly establish in our heart what we believe in. We have to persevere till that nischaya:thmaka jna:na becomes achala (firm). Even if someone tries to disturb it, it shouldn’t be disturbed and stay firm. Then…

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SLOKA WORD -

thadha yo:gam ava:psyasi

SLOKA MEANING -

then, you will attain yoga (union)

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Developing achala, firm, faith is like building an armor on the knowledge of the goal. Faith is jna:na (knowledge), hence it is called jna. It is such strong faith which doesn’t get disturbed by any means. That is called prajna (wisdom). How is this prajna? It is stable. It is sthira (steady) or sthitha (firm). Prajna is sthitha. Sthitha prajna (one who is steady in wisdom) is a person whose knowledge is sthitha prajna (steady wisdom). The quality in an object is called vasthutha (essence) or vasthuthva. Quality in a book is called pusthakatha (bookish quality) or pusthakathva. It could be told in both ways. What is the quality in a sthitha prajna called? Sthitha prajnatha (one who has steady wisdom) or sthitha prajnathva.

If you have this sthitha prajnathva, thada: yo:gam ava:psyasi. Then, you are eligible for a:thma sa:ksha:thka:ra said Sri Krishna. After listening to this, Arjuna got a doubt in his mind. Where should this happen? In sama:dhi (meditative state), manas (mind). We discussed what sama:dhi was before. It is not a tomb; it means [qualified] manas. Why? It (knowledge of the goal) is filled in the manas. It is sum + a + dhi = unswerving + completely filled + wisdom.

We discussed an example before. The water in a glass when put in a freezer gets frozen. The water won’t move if we move the glass. If jna:na (knowledge) is like that in our manas, that manas is called sama:dhi. If we fix this jna:na there (manas), that person is called sthitha prajna. This is what the Lord said. Now, Arjuna has a doubt. If one is sthitha prajna, will he ‘see’ a:thma (soul)? If someone says, if you have a certificate, you will get a job. How can you get the certificate? You won’t get the certificate unless you have marks. To get marks, you need to have studies for which you have to work hard. For that, you have to go to a teacher. Who wants to go through all this trouble? Is there any chance we can get a certificate without all the trouble? By paying money? If we get it, we can directly go to a job.

Presently, Arjuna’s state is like that. Because he doesn’t want to put in the effort but he wants something like a:thma sa:ksha:thka:ra. Where do you get it? In forests? He wants to stop fighting and go to forests. From the beginning, he was averse to waging war. He is forgetting his duty. He doesn’t want to work hard but is desiring the result. Hence, Arjuna had a doubt in his mind. Sri Krishna instructed to become sthitha prajna, right? If he knows how sthitha prajna is, without going through the trouble of waging war, he can happily become a sthitha prajna through some recommendation. He wanted to find out who sthitha prajna is. He questioned the Lord first.

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SLOKA WORD -

stitha prajnasya ka:bha:sha?

SLOKA MEANING -

What is the speech of one who is steady in wisdom?

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We can’t understand the relation between what was told earlier and this question. We might wonder why Arjuna is asking about sthitha prajna all of a sudden. This is the reason. Let’s try to understand his question and the Lord’s answer. Jai Srimannarayana!

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