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1. Episode Title: Episode 122 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 122)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The concept of sthitha prajna (one with a steady mind), the stages of self-realization, the importance of detachment, the role of desires in the mind, and the teachings of Krishna and Goda Devi.

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, sthitha prajna, Arjuna, Krishna, self-realization, detachment, desires, Goda Devi, Thiruppavai, Prahlada, gopikas, vasi:ka:ra, jna:na, a:thma

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), In Bhagavad Gita, chapter 2, we are trying to learn about sthitha prajna (one with a fixed steady mind).

This topic spans 4 verses as a response to Arjuna’s question to Sri Krishna. These are verses 2.55 through 2.58. Sri Krishna demonstrates how a sthitha prajna is, and how his attitude is at physical, verbal, and mental levels.

Beginning at the initial stage, verse 2.58 describes the personality of a seeker in the first stage. Verse 2.57 describes how he transforms in the second stage after he practices a bit. Verse 2.56 describes how that is in the third stage after he practices a bit more. Verse 2.55 describes the final stage where he completes the practice stage and attains the result.

Firstly, He described the ripened mature stage followed by the previous stage and so on. Because scriptures described in this manner, Sri Krishna perhaps followed the same. Because Sri Krishna explained in this manner, our Goda Devi also teaches us the same process in Thiruppavai (30 poems encapsulating the essence of Vedas) during the phase of awakening the gopikas (milkmaids representing qualities of a seeker).

Let’s keep that aside. In 2.55, firstly, He describes the ripened state, i.e. what is it like when [one’s] knowledge is fully blossomed.

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SLOKA WORD -

prajaha:thi yada: ka:ma:n sarva:n pa:rttha! mano:gatha:n

SLOKA MEANING -

One who abandons all the imprints of karma (past deeds) from his mind so thoroughly that they never return to the mind…

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When does he abandon like that? If he develops interest in a:thma (soul), then he will be able to abandon them. It is analogous to how someone who eats tasteless food abandons it after tasting a properly cooked meal.

If we provide deliciously cooked dishes to someone and get him used to its taste, will he be able to have ragi (coarse flour) or gruel or something of that sort that he was earlier having? One who is used to eating smooth rice will have a hard time eating mudi biyyam (brown rice). That’s how tough it feels, even worse.

If one develops interest in this, the rest will not be appealing. If one knows this is great, the rest will leave [the mind]. [Imprints of] desires from the past will all be erased.

If a friend whom we strongly admire comes to our home after a long time, how do we feel? Despite being habituated to timely sleep and food routines, as you talk to him, the impact of your friendship with him makes you forget hunger, sleep, and everything else. Nothing else feels happier than talking to him.

We know of many such experiences in the world. If one is focused on something, as he keeps thinking about it, nothing else enters his mind. If we pour plain water into a glass filled with solidified ghee (clarified butter), what happens to the water? Water will not seep through at all.

However, if water is poured into a glass filled with milk, water mixes with milk. Just as even a single drop of water does not stay in a glass filled with solidified ghee and flows out of it, when you fill the mind with stable knowledge about the root support of the greatest, most admirable word ‘I’ and the underlying jna:ni (knowledgeable), cause of all your movements called a:thma, everything else becomes light and unworthy.

Nothing else will enter the mind. Even if something enters somehow, it will not be able to stay in the mind as it gets ‘pushed’ out. Sri Krishna advises us to groom our mind this way. When does that happen? It happens when interest in a:thma develops and ra:ga (attachment) towards the rest decreases.

The decrease in attachment is called vyra:gyam (detachment). This must happen within. What is it like?

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SLOKA WORD -

drusta: anusravika vishaya vithrushnasya vasi:ka:ra samya: vyra:gyam

SLOKA MEANING -

It is said in yoga scriptures that when we look at something and a desire develops for it, or we hear something and a desire develops for what’s heard about, these are what are called va:sana:s (impressions) that fill the mind.

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It’s not the object, but it is the interest in experiencing the object. This is what we must remember. This is what fills the mind.

A desire for them has developed. Work on erasing this thrushna (desire). Then, it’s vithrushna (detachment). The state of a person where ra:ga (attachment) towards those undesired vishayas (objects) is shed off is called vasi:ka:ra avastha (state of mastery). He has then developed complete command over his resolve.

He is meditating on a:thma. He gained command over a:thma. He is thinking of a friend. He gained command over the thought about his friend. Hence, any other thoughts will not enter his mind. Even if you try to teach him something sitting right next to him, he may nod his head but nothing will enter.

Because it [that thought] is filled [in his mind]. Like we discussed earlier, water flows out when we are trying to pour it into a glass filled with solid ghee. Similarly, when he is filled with vithrushna (detachment), then everything else will leave [the mind].

You may have heard about fasting on e:ka:dasi (the 11th lunar day of each of the two lunar phases). Some think it’s about not eating food. They do that anyway. If it is the love for the Lord that causes lack of interest in food and thus fasts, then it’s useful.

Some people worry today even thinking about the upcoming e:ka:dasi on the following day. Despite eating today, he is simply worried about e:ka:dasi on the following day. He is weak because he thought about it. So, the next day he is tired.

“Why do you seem dull?” He says, “e:ka:dasi”. He didn’t stop eating. He may have had more than sufficient milk and fruits in the name of e:ka:dasi. However, he hasn’t had the usual meal. Hence, he says he hasn’t eaten anything and feels weak despite what he has had.

The reason is the unfulfilled desire towards the usual meals even after having eaten everything else. He feels like he hasn’t eaten. He feels weak and sad. In fact, that kind of state is not e:ka:dasi fasting.

You are not feeling that way daily as you are having your usual meals. Instead, it is better to actually have a proper meal if you believe that will not tempt you later for it. Or knowing that God is greater than anything and thus filling your mind with Him, if you are not distracted towards it (food) at all, then what will you do?

You will think of ways to meditate on God by singing in praise of Him, or by staying in sathsang (association with devotees) with devotees who enhance the experience by singing and dancing in joy. Then, whatever service you do for Him gives you happiness but anything else that even touches your tongue can make you angry or upset or sad for having disturbed you for that second.

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SLOKA WORD -

yuga:yutham nime:she:na

SLOKA MEANING -

If you go away from our sight for even a second, it feels like a yuga (age)!

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They feel that the entire world seems to be simply nothing. They feel like it’s raining everywhere, unable to move. This happens when you firmly decide what it is that you want in your mind.

If you have what you desire and the desire for anything else is erased, then you have attained vasi:ka:ra (mastery) in what you wanted. Now, Sri Krishna is describing to Arjuna the state of vasi:ka:ra in jna:na (knowledge) in your mind.

If you can fill your mind with a:thma, and fill it with jna:na of a:thma heard from the wise, then vithrushna (detachment) with the rest happens. This is vasi:ka:ra dasa (state of mastery). It is a great state where a:thma is vasamu (you dwell on it constantly).

There are some in history who have practiced and attained this state. This is not only theoretical. There were great ones like Prahlada. Even while drinking water, Prahlada would think of God. He would not think of anything else. Nothing else would stay in his heart.

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SLOKA WORD -

navive: da:thmano: ga:thram thadgathe:na anthara:thmana:

SLOKA MEANING -

Father (Hiranyakasipu) got the child (Prahlada) thrown into water tying him up with stones. He drowned fully along with the stones. However, his mind was not in a state to notice the water that surrounded him. He was always in union with Vishnu in his heart. He [Vishnu] protected him. Whatever was happening to him did not affect him. The Lord took care of it. So directly!

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If we think such a state is hard to attain, that’s different. However, there is an example for us. In the end, after Lord Narasimha appears, tears Hiranyakasipu apart and kills him, he was asked to wish for a boon.

He [Prahlada] asks Lord, “Swami, the manner in which people forget even You being lost in their interest in worldly matters,”

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SLOKA WORD -

thva:m anusmaratha sa:me: he: ma:pa vishaya:n e:cchathu

SLOKA MEANING -

“Bless me to have such sraddha (adoration) in You.”

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Lord said, “Prahlada! there is nothing new to give you. You already have that.” He declared. “Whatever you do, eat, play, sing, move around, you meditate upon Sri Hari (Lord) and nothing else.”

Na:ra:yana manthram, Sri:manna:ra:yana manthram. This manthra (sacred chant) is all that filled his mind and nothing else. This is called the state of vasi:ka:ra. This can be observed in Prahlada.

This can also be observed in gopikas. Whatever they saw gave them the experience of seeing Krishna. This is out of love. The same can happen when one has hatred for someone. It was so in the case of Kamsa. No matter what he heard with the sound of ‘ka’, he thought of Krishna.

They [gopikas] also saw Krishna when they heard ‘ka’. The great one named Namma:lwa:r among a:lwa:rs is also the same way. “I am getting trapped in his ‘frauds’, becoming ‘useless’, incapable of anything”.

“I will no longer even think of Narayana.” Out of ‘dispassion’, he isolates himself from everyone in the town and sits in a corner of a broken wall in the outskirts, to escape from hearing even an address like ‘Jai Srimannarayana’!

At the same time, someone traveling from another town wanted to rest. He placed his luggage exactly on the other side of the same wall of the house and settled saying ‘Narayana’! He did not want to hear the name of Narayana, and thus ‘isolated’ himself.

However, he heard the same name. Because he has the name within [his mind], he heard it. If one doesn’t have it in their mind, it doesn’t matter what anyone does or says, he won’t hear it.

So, having filled it in the mind, impacted by it and passionate about it, not thinking of or distracted by anything else whilst surrounded by them [other things], not caring about them, what it means by ‘not caring’ is not neglecting any work.

Prahlada did everything his father asked him to do. Yet, despite working [among other things], they don’t get carried away by their ‘taste.’ There are examples of people who are like that.

However, the state explained by Sri Krishna in verse 2.55 that begins with prajaha:thi is called vasi:ka:ra dasa. This is the final stage, the ripened stage, in the process of self-realization.

Arjuna exclaimed that this is really hard. Sri Krishna then says if he can’t reach that final stage, He will explain the previous stage. He describes this to Arjuna in verse 2.56.

Jai Srimannarayana! Jai Srimannarayana!

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