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1. Episode Title: Episode 123 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 123)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The four stages of meditation and knowledge, Understanding the state of sthitha prajna (one with a steady mind), The importance of self-realization, The nature of true happiness and contentment, The examples of great devotees and their experiences with God

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, sthitha prajna, Arjuna, Krishna, self-realization, happiness, devotion, Maharshi Sri Suka, Namma:lwa:r, Gopikas, Prahla:da, vasi:ka:ra dasa, meditation, knowledge

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), today we will explore the four types of meditation or knowledge states as explained by Sri Krishna in Bhagavad Gita Chapter 2. He clarifies these four types while elaborating on the stages of sthitha prajna (one with a steady mind) to Arjuna.

The first stage is called yathama:na dasa (stage of making efforts). The second stage is vyathire:ka dasa (stage of outer control but inner struggles). The third stage is e:ke:ndriya dasa (stage of focus on a single goal). Finally, the ripened stage is known as vasi:ka:ra dasa (stage of being established in wisdom).

It is indeed difficult to attain even the first stage. For one who desires a:thma sa:ksha:thka:ra (self-realization) or true bliss, despite the challenges of these stages, the resulting bliss is wonderful and avina:si (indestructible). Therefore, it is essential to attempt this journey.

Sri Krishna elaborates on the four stages in sequence, starting with the final mature stage in verse 2.55:

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SLOKA WORD -

prajaha:thi yada: ka:ma:n

sarva:n parttha! mano:gatha:n |

a:thmany e:va:thmana: thrupthaha

stthitha prajnas thado:chyathe: ||

SLOKA MEANING -

Whoever has shed all other thoughts from the mind in a way that they never return, has filled it with only a:thma jna:na (knowledge of self), out of love and not by force, and is relishing only that with deep adoration, is said to have reached the state of vasi:ka:ra.

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Sri Krishna explains that those who have filled their minds with the knowledge of the self are in a state of vasi:ka:ra.

In our current world, many are taking vaccines. Some approach it with keen interest, while others resist strongly, feeling they have little choice. It is inevitable, yet some take it disinterestedly. A father advises his child to exercise daily; if the child is too lazy, it is not the father who benefits from the exercise, but the child. Similarly, when advised to take a vaccine, it is for their own good, even if they have doubts about its effectiveness.

Sri Krishna's advice to Arjuna is for his well-being and, by extension, for the well-being of all mankind. It is crucial to understand what the happiest state is and to fill our minds with that ultimate thought.

So, what is the person like who is in this fully mature state, the vasi:ka:ra avasttha (state)? It is challenging to achieve, but if attained, no matter what work we do, the focus remains on the a:thma (soul).

Earlier in Chapter 2, we find:

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SLOKA WORD -

yasthu a:thmarathi re:vasya:th a:thma thrupthascha ma:navaha

a:thmanye:vacha santhushtaha thasya ka:ryam na vidyathe:

SLOKA MEANING -

Whoever has interest only in the a:thma is happy only when he perceives the a:thma. Whenever he thinks of it, he is happy. He cannot tolerate anything else.

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Maharshi Sri Suka, who narrated the Bhagavatham, is a prime example of vasi:ka:ra dasa. Namma:lwa:r, Gopikas, and Prahla:da also exemplify this state. Sri Suka, born to Vya:sa, was a great jna:ni (knowledgeable person). As soon as he was born, he walked towards the forests, showing his deep connection with God.

When Vya:sa called out for him, Sri Suka did not respond because his mind was filled with God. God is everywhere, existing in all beings. We often suppress this divine presence within us, wanting to dominate instead. However, God remains with us to keep us alive.

When Vya:sa called out, the response came from nature, indicating that Sri Suka was so engrossed in the a:thma that he did not think about answering. This is how it is with true devotees; God responds on their behalf.

We have heard stories of great devotees like Meerabai and Sakkubai, who were so immersed in God that He would complete their tasks for them. Similarly, Hathiram Babaji was challenged to eat a room full of sugarcane by morning, but he simply meditated on the Lord, and God appeared as an elephant to clear it all away.

Sri Suka is a great jna:ni and a maha:nubha:va (great one). He is an a:thma ra:ma (one who loves the soul) and is satisfied only in the a:thma. In contrast, we often find ourselves unsatisfied, always wanting more.

When one is satisfied in God, nothing else brings happiness. The true contentment comes from the a:thma, and such a person is santhushtaha (content).

When one attains such a mature state, there is nothing else they need to do. Wherever they are or whatever they do, it is all about God if they are immersed in Him. This is the essence of vasi:ka:ra dasa.

In the play Sa:kunthalam by the great poet Ka:lida:sa, two types of hermitages are described: the divya a:srama (heavenly hermitage) and the bhouma a:srama (earthly hermitage). Those in the divya a:srama are in the vasi:ka:ra avasttha.

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SLOKA WORD -

iyam ka:nkshanthi thapo:bhiranya munayaha thasmin thapanthi ami

SLOKA MEANING -

The residents of the divya a:srama have access to everything that one renounces as part of penance to attain something higher.

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They desire nothing, living only on air, unaffected by the luxuries of the world. In contrast, people in this world desire material comforts and perform penance for them, while those in the divya a:srama have everything but seek nothing.

Sri Krishna explains this state to Arjuna, asking if he is like that. Arjuna responds negatively, indicating his attachment to family and kingdom. Therefore, Krishna describes the previous state in verse 2.57.

Jai Srimannarayana!

Jai Srimannarayana!

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