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1. Episode Title: Episode 127 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 127)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The stages of sthitha prajna (steady mind), understanding attachment and aversion, the qualities of a realized soul, the importance of detachment in life, the nature of happiness and sorrow, the concept of vyathireka stage, and the significance of stable knowledge.

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, sthitha prajna, Arjuna, Krishna, attachment, aversion, Jada Bharatha, detachment, knowledge, meditation, vyathireka, dhyana, sacrifice, Ka:lika Devi

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), Sri Krishna is explaining to Arjuna about the stages of sthitha prajna (steady mind) in Chapter 2. The most advanced stage of that is the vasi:ka:ra (one who has control over the senses) stage, which the Lord describes. Arjuna feels he is not in that stage and asks Sri Krishna to describe the prior stage.

Whoever doesn’t feel sad in his manas (mind) despite encountering sad situations, and whoever doesn’t feel excited in his manas when encountering joyous situations, he is sthitha prajna.

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SLOKA WORD -

a:pada:m apahartha:ram da:tha:ram sarva sampada:m

lo:ka:bhi ra:mam sri:ra:mam bhu:yo: bhu:yo: nama:myaham

SLOKA MEANING -

I bow repeatedly to Sri Rama, who removes all obstacles and bestows all wealth.

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[Sri Krishna] Are you in this state [of sthitha prajna]?

[Arjuna] How is it possible not to feel that?

[Sri Krishna] Happiness and sorrow are linked to the body. Out of love for the body, you feel like protecting it from whoever harms the body by resisting them somehow. You also feel that your body should always exist. That state has to change. You should become vi:tha ra:ga bhaya kro:dha (freed from attachment, fear, and anger). Then you will become sthitha prajna.

Arjuna doesn’t have that stage either.

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SLOKA WORD -

e:tha:nna hanthu michchami ghanathopi madhusu:dana

SLOKA MEANING -

I do not wish to kill them, even if they kill me, O Madhusudana (Krishna).

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Arjuna said this in the beginning of the second chapter itself, that he loves his grandfather and guru… and whatever happens, he is not going to fight them, which means he has ra:ga (attachment). Not only that, he is averse to the situation which encourages war. He is also afraid that after he leaves the body, he might go to hell, which he doesn’t like. Not only that, he is angry at the people who brought about this situation. He has all these feelings. He doesn’t have that state at all.

Sri Krishna said, you should have a mature stage like Jada Bharatha. If you have that, it means at least you have attained the second highest stage. We learned that Jada Bharatha is a great and powerful personality. If anyone worshiped him, he wouldn’t feel happiness or respect towards the other person. If anyone troubled him, he wouldn’t be annoyed or feel like retorting.

There is a beautiful incident about Jada Bharatha. Once a few folks took him to offer him as bali (sacrifice) to Ka:lika Devi. Initially, they thought of offering some other person as bali. When offering as a sacrifice, that person should have all the body parts intact. That person had a finger missing. They felt that they can’t offer him as a sacrifice as a body part, his finger, is missing and drove him away. But since arrangements had been made for the sacrifice, they had to replace that person to be sacrificed. When they looked for someone, they found Jada Bharatha. They looked to see if any of his body parts were missing. They found him healthy and with all the body parts intact. They tied him up to take him. Jada Bharatha didn’t even try to free himself when they were tying him up because he didn’t have ruchi (interest) in anything related to the body. Even when his body encountered sorrowful situations, he didn’t think of freeing himself from it. Hence, dhu:khe:shu anudvijna manaha (he didn’t have any negative feelings in his mind).

They took him and tied him up in front of Ka:lika Devi. They applied some colors on him and tied neem leaves on him. They danced and got drunk. However, Jada Bharatha is a great brahma jna:ni (realized soul). They were making these sacrifices for some inferior benefits. These sacrifices are usually done by only such folks. Whoever has knowledge about God will not indulge in animal or human sacrifices. Whoever does those sacrifices is not interested in God for sure. Such people pray to the inferior devathas (celestial beings) who are called ga:na:pathyams. The people in the forest who were there were also like that. They took this boy and tied him there. There was some time left before they could sacrifice him. There was a big commotion there, with everyone drinking and dancing.

Just when they were about to use the knife and offer him as a sacrifice… They were offering him to bhadra ka:li devi, who is a de:vatha (celestial being), superior to Ka:lika Devi. Ka:lika Devi felt, ‘If they give this person who has surrendered to God in sacrifice to me and if I accept it, I will lose God’s grace, hence, I cannot accept someone like him.’ At the time of the sacrifice, Ka:lika Devi appeared there, punished those who were harassing Jada Bharatha, made them free him, offer obeisances, and give Jada Bharatha all respects. Jada Bharatha didn’t become ecstatic when things turned out this way.

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SLOKA WORD -

sukhe:shu vigatha spruhaha

SLOKA MEANING -

He is free from desires even in happiness.

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This is the e:ke:ndriya (one who has control over the senses) stage. [Sri Krishna] You wanted to become sthitha prajna. You thought that if you become sthitha prajna, you could forget about the war and sit in dhyana (meditation) somewhere. This is what a sthitha prajna is like. Only he would be called a knowledgeable one. Do you have this [mental] state?

[Arjuna] No, I am not in that state. There is no chance for that level of mananam (constant reflection of proper knowledge). Can you tell me the state prior to that which is easier for me to implement?

[Sri Krishna] OK. We said that the stage prior to this is vyathire:ka (the stage of separation) stage. At least attain that.

[Arjuna] Tell me how a person in vyathire:ka stage would be? How would he talk?

Sri Krishna is responding to him about how he talks in verse 2.57.

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SLOKA WORD -

yassarvathra anabhisnehaha thath thath pra:pya subha:subham

na abhinandathi na dve:shti: thasya prajna: prathishttitha

SLOKA MEANING -

One who is not attached to anything, who does not rejoice or hate upon obtaining good or bad, is a person of steady wisdom.

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He is trying to keep his jna:na (knowledge) nischala (stable). We spoke about two states of jna:na in the past, you might remember them, achala (unmoving) and nischala. What is the state of water in a glass when put aside undisturbed? It would be nischala, steady. However, once you touch it, it moves. If you tilt it, it spills. This is like nischala jna:na. What is the state of water when it is achala? It is like frozen water. If you move the glass, turn it upside down, or tilt it, water doesn’t spill. That is achala stage. The stage before the achala stage is the nischala stage. Sri Krishna is comparing this nischala stage to the vyathire:ka stage. What is that like?

yassarvathra anabhisnehaha (he is not very attached to anything)

thath thath pra:pya subha:subham (when performing karma yoga, perfected actions as a means, we get some benefits and some losses). What do we do then? If we encounter something we like, we feel like saying, ‘oh, this is so good.’ If we are distanced from something we like, we say, ‘oh, this is not good’. Don’t we say that? Abhinandana (appreciation), dve:sham (hatred). We have to observe why he appreciates or hates something. If someone gets us an apple, we say to the person who gave it, ‘the apple is very good.’ It means ‘please get it tomorrow also.’ Why do you say that? It may not look good if you don’t say it. What do you mean by it won’t be good? He won’t get it tomorrow because he might feel unappreciated. Then he won’t get it again. It means you have ruchi (interest) in the fruit. Because you have ruchi, you will praise the person who brought it [apple]. Because you praise him, he will be happy and get one more for you.

Let’s say he got you something else. You scolded him for bringing something like that. Because you don’t have ruchi towards that, you scolded him not to get something like that again. In the world, as we perform tasks with this body, we encounter favorable and at other times, unfavorable things. As it is our duty, we should accept both. Let’s say someone joined a job in the military with great enthusiasm. If they posted him in a place like Hyderabad where he could get some additional benefits, he would be happy. All comforts would be there. If they posted him in Ladakh on the China border, there would be inconveniences and fights every day. There, he would be angry and might feel like answering back to the officers. If they transfer him from that place to Hyderabad, he would thank them for doing him a favor. Because if he gets transferred again, he wants to go to a good place like this again. He wants to be on good terms with the other person.

Why is he feeling abhinandana and dvesham? Because he has set feelings of like and dislike towards a few things. Who is the one liking and disliking something? It is the body that favors and dislikes something. Arjuna is feeling the same. If he wages war, all the relatives of his body will perish. [Arjuna] Their bodies will get hurt with arrows. They will lose their lives. Hence I don’t like it. If I don’t wage war, people will praise me. If I wage war, people may criticize me. He wants praise, not criticism. He wants relatives and doesn’t want their death. He prefers not performing the task as opposed to performing it. If he is in such a state, he cannot progress [towards sthitha prajna].

You may face favorable or unfavorable circumstances. Sometimes you may fall back, but you have to try again. yassarvathra anabhisne:haha (all this is a result of the love you have towards it). What if you don’t have that love? Let’s say someone brought mangoes. You didn’t thank him or show him any appreciation. If you showed appreciation, he would feel like getting them again. You didn’t do that and continued doing your work. He won’t get it tomorrow as he might feel you didn’t recognize his efforts. You wanted to talk to him out of your attachment to the fruit. Out of the attachment to the pleasure which you get when you enjoy the fruit. If you don’t appreciate him, he won’t get it. You should feel, ‘it is fine. I have what is mine.’ You should feel it is immaterial whether he gives it to you or not. When you feel that way, you won’t feel like criticizing or praising. If you are doing that, it means you are attached to it [fruit]. Then you are not sthitha prajna. You are not the one who has a:thma dhya:na (focus on the soul), but one who has daihika sukha dhya:na (focus on pleasures of the body). Hence your prajna (good knowledge) is not stable though it is nischala (undisturbed) until moved. It is like the water in the glass which is stable if you don’t touch it. However, if you touch it, they are spilling over and moving.

[Sri Krishna] Do you have that stable state?

[Arjuna] No, I still don’t have that.

[Sri Krishna] OK. If you don’t have it, try to attain it.

[Arjuna] That’s difficult. Let me know if there is any stage prior to that.

[Sri Krishna] OK, I will tell you. The one prior to that is yathma:na dasa (first stage). He said he will explain that in verse 2.58. Let's learn about it in detail and go further. Jai Srimannarayana!

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