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1. Episode Title: Episode 133 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 133)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The importance of self-effort and its connection to divine support, Understanding the limitations of human control, The role of God in our actions and efforts, Lessons from the Ramayana regarding reliance on divine grace, The consequences of ignoring God's influence in our lives

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, self-effort, Krishna, Lakshmana, Rama, divine support, human control, grace, prasadam, Arjuna, decline, elevation

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), Generally, humans tend to feel… ‘I know everything. I don’t need anything from others.’ ‘Why should I listen to others? I can achieve everything on my own!’ ‘One can achieve anything with self-effort!’ We usually see such overconfidence from those who believe in their own ability and effort alone. It is not wrong to trust your own ability. It is needed actually! In fact, it’s the self-effort that’s behind any success. However, if one can remember that the basis for self-effort is God, then it progresses well. Otherwise, it is unclear where our efforts lead to!

Why? God (Sri Krishna) in Chapter 2.61 says -

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SLOKA WORD -

yuktha a:si:tha mathparaha

SLOKA MEANING -

execute your activities while staying focused on Me

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When we release a bird freely into the sky, we cannot predict which way the bird will fly. However, if we tie a string to its leg, hold the other end of the string, and release the bird, then irrespective of where the bird goes and how long it flies, we can draw it in anytime and keep it steady. If we release a flying kite without support, we cannot predict where it will end up, where it might get stuck, or get torn flying into a tree. If we were to hold its line and fly it, then we can enable it to showcase its beauty while flying high. We will be able to reel it in and set it aside anytime. This can be achieved via a capable person’s hands.

We know how the kite cannot be controlled if released without any support. Faculties such as senses, mind, and intelligence are similar. If someone thinks, ‘I will try to control these on my own. I will make it happen,’ then maybe some are able to do it without trusting in God’s support. We don’t know, but it is not advisable.

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SLOKA WORD -

math paraha

SLOKA MEANING -

focus [them] on Me

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They can be easily controlled only when one tries to control them while staying focused on God. Why? Because they are operated by Him. Nature follows His instruction, so does the indwelling soul. Are we able to inhale the air as and when we choose to? [Some might say] ‘Yes, I do it on my own.’ Maybe that’s why during the Coronavirus pandemic, many scrambled for pure air in the hospital! ‘I need air! My oxygen levels are down to 80, 85, 60, 70. Need to use the cylinder. Connect it. Breathe in the air, increase the levels 90, 96!’ If we were in control, why did the people struggle for air then? Is your body under your control? Will the body listen to you? How about the mind? Is the life energy in your control at least? If so, why did thousands of people die? Why is everyone scared for their life lately? Why is everyone conscious of their health in recent times? If they were to listen to us… None of them follow our intent.

When we operate within limits, they appear to be in our control temporarily. We then misconstrue that we control them. That is incorrect. In reality, we do not. Some might say, ‘Human effort must also be there.’ ‘We should do our part and we also need His grace.’ Even Lakshmana (in Ramayana) said the same to Rama. When it was time to go to the forest, Lakshmana did not dare to say anything at the outset. After speaking to Kaikeyi, Ramachandra went to bid goodbye to His mother Kausalya. He told His mother, ‘Mother, this is not the time to rule the kingdom; instead, it is the time to move to the forest.’ She then cried and felt sad. She sobbed and said, ‘Why did this happen… Rama?’

Lakshmana Swamy felt a gust of energy then. He immediately became aggressive. ‘Mother, why do you speak of unnecessary things? That old man who is beyond his prime said something. One who is senile does not have a fully functioning brain. He listened to things from people here and there. He decreed an order that is neither beneficial to him nor to the kingdom or to anyone. It is incorrect, and I will stop it. You [Rama] ascend the throne! What do you think? What are my arms and muscles built for? They’re for You! Why do I wield this sword? It is to protect You! Every inch of me is being taken care of only to support You. There is no one who can oppose me! You take the throne.’

Rama, hearing this, smiled and said, ‘Glad to hear you say this. We plan for certain things while other things happen unexpectedly. Those that occur unexpectedly are God.’ Lakshmana retorted, ‘No way! Ignore God or anyone else. Only wimps talk about God or other factors. Those that lack in strength or skill take God’s excuse and blame Him when things don’t go their way. I do not believe in such things unnecessarily.’

So what will you do? ‘I trust in my self-effort. I will show my prowess,’ said Lakshmana. He said, ‘With my power, I will take on God. I will override it.’ Rama was surprised. He said, ‘O! fool. What you imagine to be your own strength is endowed by and also its success is ensured by God Himself.’ Therefore, thinking that half effort is by yourself and half is by God, or… ‘We should do our part; only then God will support it!’… ‘O fool! These are meaningless conjectures.’

Imagine a moving car; who is the reason behind its movement? If someone says, ‘Fuel must work a bit and we have to do our part as well’… Can you drive it if the fuel tank is empty and you sit in the car, change the gears back and forth, try to accelerate it by moving the steering wheel? Will it move? Dwelling in you, God alone provides strength from within. God inspires thoughts. God alone drives your senses. The strength to carry an activity is also from Him. When everything is from Him, where is the question of partial effort from you? Where is that coming from? That does not exist. God empowers you to do everything.

Rama convinced Lakshmana that day. Some people tend to say, ‘It’s our effort. With it, we can achieve anything.’ In reality, God is the cause behind our effort. If we ignore Him, what happens to your effort? If He says, ‘Son, I will stop supporting you for a bit and see how your effort progresses’ and moves away… [During COVID-19] the doctors and the hospital fully packed the infected and deceased, including their face, without any loophole, asking their relatives to pay respects from afar and take the deceased away from the other side. When does this happen? When indwelling God says, ‘You do your own effort. I will step away for a bit.’ He is the one who is making all things happen from within.

One must recognize this. Put your trust in Him. If you trust in yourselves, the senses, mind, and intelligence inside can lead us astray in an unpredictable way. We end up becoming servants to them. They will drag us into a downward spiral. We should trust Him; He is an able charioteer. He will therefore ensure that this chariot (body) stays fit. He will guide us on the right path and will lead us towards victory. Therefore, we must rely on Him. This is what Sri Krishna mentioned in Chapter 2 of Bhagavad Gita.

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SLOKA WORD -

tha:ni sarva:ni samyamya

SLOKA MEANING -

Only the one who can focus his mind on Him …

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SLOKA WORD -

vase:hi yasye:ndriya:ni

SLOKA MEANING -

…only those who can do that will attain proper knowledge.

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SLOKA WORD -

prajna: prathishttitha: bhavathi

SLOKA MEANING -

Others will be devoid of that proper knowledge.

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How should one do it? Will He stop the functioning of senses? Or will He stop internal functions? He will not do any of it. He will try to transform whatever you are used to doing. How? If you are used to eating, He will not ask you to stop eating. Earlier, you would think, ‘I am eating; it’s for my sake. It’s for my taste.’ These thoughts are what He will transform. To a mind, thoughts are important. So He will try to transform these.

When you changed from mathparaha (focused on yourself) to, like He said, tathparaha (focused on Him), then whatever you prepared was offered to Him. Once it is offered to Him, the name it is known by changes. Now it became something that He gave to you. It is now prasadam (blessed food) from Him. It is now His grace. Now you are taking that. Since you are used to eating, you are taking it in. But you are taking that which will not worsen your ego, pride, or arrogance. Instead, you are augmenting the food intake by treating it as prasadam. It’s given by Him.

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SLOKA WORD -

the:na thyakte:na bhunji:tha: ha

SLOKA MEANING -

You should eat. But know how much, what, and how to consume it.

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SLOKA WORD -

Isa:va:sya Upanishad

SLOKA MEANING -

Treat it as something He bestowed and allocated for you.

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You then enjoy it to your content. Now nothing bad can happen to you. You are getting the food you are used to along with the beneficial pure ingredient. Then, the ‘dirt’ within will slowly be cleansed. To remove filth blocking the drainage, one must mix a cleansing material with water to burn and flush it out. It flows inside, removes blockages, melts and clears the debris, and makes it flow out. It will then clear the opening.

Similarly, if we can ingest whatever we consume as Bhagavath prasadam (blessed food), then eventually it will remove past imprints, cleanse them, and make sure there is no further accumulation of ‘dirt’. Then the mind, senses, and intellect will obey you.

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SLOKA WORD -

vase:hi yasya indriya:ni

SLOKA MEANING -

Some might say, ‘What you said is fine, but I will do what I feel like. I will do what pleases me. I will act according to my wishes. I will achieve what I need to.’

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In the 2nd chapter, Arjuna asked Lord Krishna, ‘If I act without any focus on you, what will happen? If I want to achieve things with my own effort, what will happen?’ To that question, Lord responded with a beautiful answer in three slokas (verses). He presented them in an order. Just like there is an order to elevate oneself, an order exists for decline too. To elevate and grow is a slow and incremental process. While the decline happens with just one act.

To move a rock up the mountain, it needs to be pushed slowly all the way to the top. It’s very hard. But if we take away our hand’s support, it barely takes half a minute to roll down. It will crush anything that’s in the middle of its path. Even if you are in its path, it will crush you on its way down. We should know that order of decline. Only if we know it, we will be able to observe that order. That is why starting from verse 2.62, Sri Krishna explains the order of decline. We will learn more about it further. Jai Srimannarayana!

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