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1. Episode Title: Episode 19 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 19)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The nature of Arjuna's grief and its significance, Understanding the concept of good and bad actions, The importance of seeking guidance in times of confusion, Krishna's teachings on spiritual wisdom and realization, The distinction between a krupana (miser) and a brahmana (wise person)

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Arjuna, Krishna, grief, compassion, dharma, yoga, krupana, brahmana, akshara (eternal truth), good deeds, spiritual guidance

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), Knowingly or unknowingly, a flame burns on touching. Regardless of whether it’s a little boy, an elderly person, a wise one, or a fool. Just as how a flame definitely burns irrespective of who you are, any work performed knowingly or unknowingly, if worthy, definitely shows its impact.

Typically, offering logs into a holy fire altar results in ho:ma (sacred fire ritual) or yaaga (sacrifice), and the great reward of performing yaaga follows. However, throwing them elsewhere does not result in a pious yajna (sacred offering). Earlier, on Bhogi, the day before Sankra:nthi (harvest festival), people would gather a few logs, burn them, and gather around for warmth and respite from the cold.

Although the act of offering oblations into the ho:ma kunda (fire pit) is physical, it becomes yajna when an intense feeling is added to it. It also reaps huge benefits for that person, having a divine impact. Think of a person running; although running for fitness, if he runs around or towards a temple, it will bring divine blessings upon him. They call this a:nushangika sukrutha (a good deed performed unintentionally).

We did something for ourselves and for our own purpose, but because it was a good deed, it led to a greater outcome. Sometimes, things we do unknowingly or knowingly can turn out to be beneficial to us. Likewise, in Bhagavad Gita chapter 2, Arjuna was grief-stricken and could not decide whether to wage war and kill his own family. Arjuna’s grief and desire to know what is right led him to take shelter of Sri Krishna.

Sri Krishna’s teachings to him became a yo:ga (spiritual practice) with which one can free himself from material bondage. Not everyone’s misery can become yo:ga. Not everyone’s sorrow can become yo:ga. However, Arjuna’s misery has become a yo:ga. Arjuna visha:da yo:ga (the yoga of Arjuna's sorrow) is the name of the first chapter of Bhagavad Gita.

Arjuna’s sorrow was slightly different; in the beginning of chapter 2, whether to fight with Drona and Bheeshma became a yo:ga. This yo:ga led to Sri Krishna preaching Bhagavad Gita and many yo:gas like Sa:nkhya yoga. Just like holding on to a branch or a rope during a free fall can save a person’s life, similarly, Arjuna knowingly or unknowingly uttered to Sri Krishna, "shiṣhyaste: haṁ sya:dhi ma:ṁ tva:ṁ prapannam" (I am your disciple; please instruct me).

No one can save me except for you - please tell me what is good for me? This question arising from misery became a yo:ga and made him eligible for something incredible. There are two words Arjuna used in that question. We will now try to understand them.

In response to a question of whether to fight or not, why did Sri Krishna preach hundreds of slokas (verses)? What was the need to preach to the point of exasperation from Arjuna? These are the questions that may arise within some of us. Sri Krishna could have simply instructed Arjuna what to do instead of preaching so much. This went on until Arjuna finally said, "sthitho:smi gatha sandehaha" (I am stable, my doubts are removed now).

Why did Krishna preach for so long? It is because Arjuna unknowingly uttered a few important words in his questions. That is why, with or without knowledge, we should speak good words. That is why, with or without knowledge, say some divine words. With or without knowledge, talk about holy places, their significance and importance. Unknowingly, this will lead to good outcomes.

When you listen to mindless chatter from different types of social media and then apply it to life, things become chaotic and disoriented. Instead, learn something spiritual; it would be beneficial to chant during a rainy day. It is because of this that our elders taught us sthothra:s (hymns), which can be sung at any time of the day.

Back in those days, our elders, until the last minute of their lives, remembered these hymns, poems, etc., which they learned in childhood and mumbled them at all times, while they were at any work, while bathing, getting dressed, or while getting ready. In those days, even in the villages, during leisure, people indulged themselves in practicing chanting of poems from Bha:gavatha (Bhagavata Purana) or Bha:ratha (Mahabharata).

Unknowingly or fortuitously, these good deeds lead to a virtuous life and also add to our good karma. In this way, Arjuna unknowingly uttered two precious words in the 7th verse. What are they? "ka:rpanya do:sho:pahatha svabha:va" (I am overwhelmed by pity and confusion). This is the first important word.

The second one is "yachchre:yas sya:n nischitham bru:hi thanme:" (Please tell me what is good for me). What is good for me, or for a person who is in my situation? If it has been decided somewhere, please guide me. "sre:yas of yacchre:yaha" (the good).

We must know the inner essence of these two words [ka:rpanya and sre:yas]. Although we casually utter words like ka:rpanya, krupana (miser), and shreyas (good), they are not normal words. They hold utmost importance and usage in the Vedas. They were used in Upanishads.

Kar:panya is an amazing word. A person who has it is a krupana. There is a mention of this word in the Upanishad called Brihada:ranyaka. It appears in the dialogue between ya:gnavalkya maharshi (sage Yajnavalkya) and the king. Who is a krupana and who is a brahmana? The king asked these two questions.

The great Maharshi gave a wonderful reply to Ga:rgi, a female spiritual thinker who had immense knowledge of Vedas. Even though there were many sages and great people in the assembly, he replied to Ga:rgi as she asked him a question. There is a bit of history to this incident. The noble king, with interest and enthusiasm in spiritual topics, held such events where many learned scholars would come for discussions.

There were many debates and people were duly rewarded. They would take one topic and discuss it through questions and answers. In one such event, everyone was convinced that the sage ya:gnavalkya was the best among them as he answered all their questions. At that moment, Ga:rgi came forward and expressed her interest to ask him a question. The Maharshi duly agreed to answer her question.

However, Ga:rgi put forward a condition. “If you answer me with prejudice that I’m just a woman and inferior to you, let your head be broken into a thousand pieces.” It was a direct warning from her that he needs to be careful while dealing with her. After this, the discussion went on. She asked him many questions. The great Ya:gnavalkya gave wonderful answers to all her questions.

Who is a krupana? Who is a brahmana? asked Ga:rgi. To which great Yajnavalkya answered, "yo: va: e:thad aksharam avi:dithva: ga:rgi asma:n lo:ka:th pri:thi sa kripanaha" (One who leaves this world without realizing the eternal truth is a miser). "yo: va: e:thad aksharam vi:dithva: asma:n lo:kath pri:thi sa bra:hmanaha" (One who leaves this world after realizing the eternal truth is a wise person).

One who leaves this world after realizing akshara (eternal truth) is on sre:yo: marga (the right path). However, one who spends the entire time given to him on entertainment without realizing the akshara thatthva (truth) is a krupana. It is the krupana who truly deserves sympathy. Earlier, there was a discussion of what “akshara” means; we will discuss it later.

Whoever understands Akshara Thaththva, undestroyable eternal truth, is a bra:hmana - whoever doesn’t is a krupana, says Ya:gnavalkya. It means there are only two things that one needs to learn. What are they? First, tha:tthvika sa:ksha:thka:ra (realization of eternal truths) with the help of prajna (wisdom). Second, not attaining tha:tthvika sa:ksha:thka:ra because of indulging in endless pleasures.

It is imperative for everyone to live their life fully to the end. At some point, everyone’s life has to end. As per current standards, one is expected to live a maximum of a hundred years. However, in ancient days, people lived a minimum of a thousand years. Some even crossed 50,000 or 60,000 years! How many years a person lived is not the question now. However long or short is one’s life, one needs to acquire that knowledge that will save him from rebirth.

If he leaves his body without knowing this, he will be caught again in the cycle of birth and death. He will be reborn as an animal or wild animal on land or water, or a bird, which can be a herbivore or a carnivore. Nobody knows what he will be reborn as; it could be a tree, stone, insect, or anything. Even after coming to an elevated stage, if he falls down again, there is no one more to be pitied than him - he is a krupana.

This is how Ya:gnavalkya Maharshi defines krupana in that assembly. Let us further delve into the word and progress. Jai Srimannarayana!

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