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1. Episode Title: Episode 27 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 27)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The importance of an introduction and conclusion in scriptures, Understanding the significance of the Bhagavad Gita, The role of spiritual teachings during times of sorrow, The impact of life events on spiritual interest, The nature of karma and its implications for the soul

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Arjuna’s Vishadam, Upadesham, Shokam, Grace, Dhrutharashtra, Sri Vishnu Sahasra Nama, Garuda Purana, Archiraadi Marga, karma, soul, spiritual guidance

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), for any scripture, there is pu:rva pi:tika (introduction) and uththara pi:tika (conclusion) - an introduction and ending. The main scripture is in between these two. Since Bhagavad Gita is a wonderful scripture, there is also upo:dhghatham (introduction). It has pu:rva pi:tika and uththara pi:tika. We need to know where the actual scripture or sa:sthra (scripture) starts.

From sloka 2.2, Dhrutharashtra u:vacha (Dhrutharashtra said), to sloka 2.11 is pu:rva pi:tika or introduction. The sa:sthra concludes with sloka 18.66, sarva dharma:n parityajya (abandon all forms of religion). Uththara pi:tika is after sloka 18.66 to the end of the scripture. It is not considered part of the scripture.

We might have heard of Sri Vishnu Sahasra Nama (Thousand Names of Lord Vishnu). It starts with the sloka shukla:mbara dharm (the one who wears white garments). From there through Dhya:nam (meditation), kshi:rod:hanvath prade:se (in the place of the ocean of milk), is pu:rva pi:tika. The actual Sri Vishnu Sahasra Nama starts from ‘viswam vishnur vashatka:ro’ (the one who is the universe, Vishnu, and the one who is invoked). It ends with two slokas ‘shanka bru:nnandaki chakri’ (the one who holds the conch, the one who holds the discus) and ‘vanama:li’ (the one who wears a garland of forest flowers). Afterwards, Uththara Pi:ti:ka is from sloka ithi:dham ki:rthani::yasya onwards.

The significance of the scripture or the benefits you get by reading it, who should read it and when, all those rules are covered in that. Pu:rva pi:tika prepares the ground for the scripture. Bhagavad Gita also needs an introduction. For us to listen to something good, our manas (mind) should be aligned with it first.

Why should I listen to this? What will I get out of this? Is it necessary? Such questions usually arise in the mind. Initially, efforts should be made to arouse interest in the readers so they feel - “we should listen to this and understand.” Pu:rva Pi:tika comprises all those efforts. Once that interest is aroused, whatever is disclosed later will be established firmly in the reader's heart.

Common people generally don’t like to listen to discussions about de:va (God). When discussing money, position, jobs, powers, etc., they are interested and think spiritual topics are unnecessary. If a loved one suddenly passes away, then we get shocked. He was fine until yesterday. He was talking until now, how can this suddenly happen? What exactly happened inside? Whoever we thought as a person is right there but now, not talking? Why? What is the actual truth? All these thoughts occur at such a time - not before.

Before, even when someone discusses these topics, we don’t like to listen or think about it all. When one gets separated from their loved ones, then the heart becomes tender. The heart which was hard earlier begins to melt. At this time, only whatever needs to be told has to be told. That is why during the 11, 12, or 15 days after the soul leaves the body, in the days of Apra Karmas (post-death rituals), activities are done for the benefit of the soul. Our elders recite and explain Garuda Purana and Archiraadi Marga (the path of light).

All these discuss Ji:va (living being), his existence, qualities, and other details. What he acquires if he does good deeds and the state achieved on performing bad deeds, etc. Is this the first body for the soul? Where does he go after leaving the body? What type of body will he get? What will he experience in that body? All these are explained in detail.

At that time, we like to listen to spiritual topics as one begins to think “why did this happen, what will happen to me?” Recently, since the COVID pandemic, even if loved ones or relatives got the virus, people were afraid to go near or visit them. If by misfortune they were hospitalized and passed away, people were reluctant to take the body or perform final rites, not caring for the bodies of loved ones.

Now the situation has improved, but in the beginning, it was very bad. It was shown that way in the media and people reacted similarly. Even for a relative’s body, most people said - “don’t bring the body home from the hospital, ask them to do whatever they want with the body.” Why? The fear of the virus which killed that person - “if I also get it, and lose my life, what will happen then?” Everyone started thinking at that time about ‘I, my body, my life, death, etc.’ Even those who were averse to thinking of such things started fearing for their lives. We are seeing this presently.

Through experience, we realize that this body will be left behind. Some mechanism from inside is making us walk, talk, work, and think. We don’t know about that mechanism, but know that it is the one making everything work from behind. When should we start thinking deeply about it? When such a situation arises. All these days, our mind was averse to thinking about these. However, since the mind is showing interest in spiritual topics, now is the time to teach them as the heart has started to melt.

For example, once wax melts, it transforms into proper form when sealed. Previously, our folks used to mail parcels called VPP (Value Payable Post). They would cover the goods with a cloth and melt some red lakka (lac), lacquer, to stamp it. Normally, if you put a stamp on lakka, it won’t stay as it is very hard. Our manas is also hard like lakka. But in some fearful, happy, or sad situation, or when experiencing great loss, our heart starts to melt.

If one carefully observes when it melts and places the proper seal at that time... The heart which melted will not stay that way. It will get hard again. Even the lakka becomes soft, when melted and put on the parcel, but it gets hard again. Even this heart, depending on the situation, becomes soft and then hard again. So we have to imprint the proper seal when it is malleable. How do we know what that proper seal is?

Our Elders, rushis (sages), spoke about our body, soul, its activities, karmas (actions), and Va:sanas (impressions), the records which get accumulated with activities. Whatever we do, records get accumulated. Whatever we see, hear, or do creates a record. We all know about computers. Once we start it until we shut it off, all the work we do, and keys we press - tab, space, enter, delete, and others - will be recorded somewhere in the computer. If someone quickly does something, deletes it, and then even ‘empties the recycle bin’, it will be recorded somewhere.

There are a few departments that do investigations. If needed they can retrieve what you have deleted and look at it. We are discussing this to understand that just like computers, whatever we do will be recorded internally somewhere. Those records are called karmas. Based on these, the soul will reach some state and will go to some place. That place might be good, bad, favorable, or unfavorable. It might give us happiness, sadness, or some passive state. We are granted a human life, solely to understand this.

Hence, we need to examine such situations which cause the heart to soften and discuss soul and God. Some folks talk about Garuda Purana, others talk about other things. If they receive the grace of a proper guru, they will discuss the blissful state named Archiraadi Marga. This is necessary for a human being. The same goes for Sri Vishnu Sahasrana:ma or Bhagavad Gita.

The entire first chapter and 11 slokas of chapter 2 are an introduction for Bhagavad Gita. The actual Bhagavad Gita scripture starts after sloka 2.11 and concludes with sloka 18.66. Hence, that sloka is called the last sloka, or Charama Sloka (final verse). After Lord’s upade:sa (teaching) ends there, there are still a few slokas, but they are all uththara pi:tika, epilogue. Now, we have come to a point where the scripture actually starts. Jai Srimannarayana!

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