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1. Episode Title: Episode 32 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 32)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The significance of Vedas in imparting knowledge, Understanding the essence of Upanishads and Vedanta, The relationship between Bhagavad Gita and Vedas, The concept of eternal truth (sath) in the context of existence, Krishna's teachings on the nature of the soul and reality

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Vedanta, Upanishads, Arjuna, Krishna, eternal truth, sath, knowledge, existence, Maha Bharata

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), today we delve into the profound teachings of the Vedas, which serve as a treasure-trove of knowledge, providing mankind with essential understanding of all entities.

The term Veda (knowledge) refers to that which gives knowledge to those who are worthy of knowing. It outlines the dos and don’ts, clarifying what is to be done and what isn’t, specifying responsibilities and prohibitions, and describing what is worth pursuing and what is not. The Vedas explain everything, guiding us on how to lead a normal life, and are therefore also known as physical science. They provide insights into the nature of life, termed as thatthva jna:na (knowledge of reality), which the wise ought to know.

The part of the Vedas that elucidates what is eternal versus temporary, what brings eternal bliss versus temporary happiness, is called Upanishad. This section is also referred to as Vedanta, the most critical and beautiful part of the Vedas. Such knowledge is not accessible to those who lack eagerness to learn. Our Elders say that Vedanta jna:na (knowledge of Vedanta) or Upanishad jna:na can only be attained by an interested aspirant who seeks it from Elders.

Where does this knowledge appear within the Vedas? It can be found anywhere - at the beginning, middle, or end. Some claim it is only at the end, hence the name Vedanta (Veda + antha, meaning end), but there is no rule stating it must be exclusively at the end.

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SLOKA WORD -

kasmai de:va:yah avisha: vidha:ma:ha

SLOKA MEANING -

To whom do we offer the results of our work?

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This mantra reveals thatthva jna:na (knowledge of reality) and is found within the Vedic texts. Thus, Vedanta is not limited to the ending; it exists throughout. What is thatthva (supreme governing entity)? Who do we worship other than the One who provides us this world full of life as our abode?

The answer to this question exists somewhere in the Vedas, indicating that Vedanta can be found at the end, in between, or at the beginning - it can exist anywhere! Vedanta is what one must know; it reveals truths and the essence of thatthva. This is what we call Vedanta or Upanishad.

The summary of all these Upanishads is the Bhagavad Gita. There are 1131 branches in the Vedas, each containing the Upanishad part, which reveals essential truths. Bhagavan Sri Krishna recognized that it would be challenging for us to learn all of this. Therefore, He took the responsibility of consolidating it into an easily understandable format and presented it to us as the Bhagavad Gita.

Like a skilled pharmacist gathering various medicinal leaves, grinding, boiling, filtering, and creating a concentrated essence, Bhagavan Sri Krishna also brought together the essence of Vedanta or Upanishads in an understandable form as the Bhagavad Gita, using Arjuna as an example.

Thus, the course of the Bhagavad Gita progresses similarly to the Upanishads while presenting truths. Among the Upanishads, the Chandogya begins to expound thatthva (eternal reality) by stating…

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SLOKA WORD -

sade:va sowmya idamagra a:si:th e:kame:va advithi:yam

SLOKA MEANING -

In the beginning, there was only that which is true, one without a second.

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It starts with sade:va (that which is true). Sath (truth) is the only key entity. It illustrates that the same entity manifested as idam (this). What does ‘this’ refer to? It refers to everything we see today with different names, forms, and shapes, as various activities spread out in various ways - i.e., this world.

Sade:va! It gradually grew to this when sath expanded itself, similar to a tiny seed growing into a large, wonderful tree, manifesting in various forms and shapes. Just as the seed and the tree are the same, sath is also the cause of this world. Thus, it is a mantra that teaches about the causal entity.

It is a sruthi (Veda) named ‘sade:va sowmya…’ What does sath mean? Sath means that which does not change during all three divisions of time - past, present, and future.

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SLOKA WORD -

thraika:lika aba:dhyathva

SLOKA MEANING -

That which does not undergo change across all three times.

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Interestingly, because Sri Krishna employs the same method to explain the intended thatthva, He uses the same process, stating that they are all like thatthva, which does not undergo any change at thrika:la (all three divisions of time).

So beautiful…! What is He saying here [chapter 2, verse 12]?

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SLOKA WORD -

na thwe: va:ham ja:thu na:sam

SLOKA MEANING -

There is never a time that I did not exist.

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He is saying the same here as well.

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SLOKA WORD -

na chaiva na bhavishya:ma sarve: vayam athah param

SLOKA MEANING -

There was never a time when we did not exist, nor a time when we will cease to exist.

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It’s never the case that I don’t exist, that you don’t exist, or that they all don’t exist. This means we all exist during all three divisions of time, indicating that our nature is sath. He is using the same process as the Upanishads to teach us.

What did the Upanishad state there [Chandogya Upanishad]? Because it says ‘sath’, it starts by stating ‘that substance called sath…’. Such reference is called indirect reference. If the same is shown directly, it is called direct reference.

The Upanishads use indirect reference, stating that sath always exists. Sri Krishna does not reference it indirectly; He speaks directly, depicting Himself as an example.

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SLOKA WORD -

aham ja:thu na:sam ithi na

SLOKA MEANING -

There is never a time that I don’t exist.

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He is presenting the same in a direct manner. We must have all heard the following:

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SLOKA WORD -

bha:ratham panchamo: ve:daha

SLOKA MEANING -

The Mahabharata is the fifth Veda.

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The four Vedas are Ruk, Yajus, Sama, and Atharva. This means that the essence of Vedic truth is clearly shown here. If the Mahabharata is considered a Veda, then just as the Upanishads relate to the Vedas, the Bhagavad Gita relates to the Mahabharata.

All the words used in the Upanishads to explain parama:thma (the supreme soul) are present in the Bhagavad Gita. All those words depict Him. The ultimate consequence of any word is parama:thma.

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SLOKA WORD -

sarve: ve:da: yathpadama:mananthi

SLOKA MEANING -

All the Vedas speak of the ultimate reality.

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The essence specified clearly by all letters existing in the Vedas is the word Om. The same comes a little later in the Bhagavad Gita.

What does Om mean? He shows Himself as the meaning of Om.

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SLOKA WORD -

o:m ithye:ka:ksharam bramha vya:hran ma:m anusmaran

SLOKA MEANING -

Say Om; the essence you must see when you say it is Me.

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Because when we utter any word, we must also understand its meaning. When asked for a word’s meaning, we should identify the object it denotes, not its translation in another language.

For example: what is a ‘pilli’? It is a cat (in Telugu). What is a cat? It is ‘billi’. What is a ‘billi’? It is punai. Providing the word’s translation in different languages doesn’t qualify as giving its meaning.

If you can clarify the word’s meaning, i.e., the object it reflects, regardless of the language, only then does it mean that you have understood and described the word. All words ultimately reach and merge into God. All words that describe thatthva (truth) reach God.

The Chandogya Upanishad uses the word sath. The Upanishad itself states that the word ‘sath’ also arrives and reaches Him. All words like sath, jyo:thi (light), bramha (ultimate reality), akshara (imperishable), a:ka:sa (space) - where do they all meet? What is the underlying thatthva of all these words?

When such questions arise…

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SLOKA WORD -

divyo: de:va e:ka na:ra:yanaha

SLOKA MEANING -

The one radiating, possessing the power to easily manifest the universe is the thatthva named Narayana.

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The word used is vise:sha shabda (specific word), a term that describes only one. Other words are like pronouns; they can denote anyone. For example, the word ‘he’ can refer to anyone based on context. It is a pronoun used generally.

However, when you say Narayana, it cannot refer to anyone else. The Vedas clearly state that all such words used to refer to anyone ultimately converge in a unique thatthva named Narayana. The same thatthva is referred to as sath in the beginning.

Just as sath converges to Narayana, and because Sri Krishna embodies Narayana here, the word aham (I) is used as an example to refer to Himself, explaining the atma (soul) thatthva. Thus, Sri Krishna begins the scripture with:

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SLOKA WORD -

na thwe: va:ham ja:thu na:sam

SLOKA MEANING -

There is never a time that I did not exist.

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Initially, it may be a little difficult, yet let’s try to carefully understand and relish this. Jai Srimannarayana!

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