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1. Episode Title: Episode 33 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 33)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The nature of the Bhagavad Gita as a scripture, Understanding the eternal existence of the soul, The distinction between the body and the soul, The role of karma in individual experiences, The relationship between the soul and the Supreme Being

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, eternal existence, soul, karma, Sri Krishna, dharma, spiritual guidance

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), Bhagavad Gita is a sastra (scripture). What does sastra mean? It is that which commands. What does it command? It declares and presents the truths that one must know. It clarifies which entities are eternal and which are not, and how we should conduct ourselves with everything.

What are all these visible elements? What are the underlying ruling tattvas (truths), the invisible entities? What is the supporting base of everything? These questions arise because none are visible to the naked eye! As they are not visible, they need to be explained explicitly. Mahānubhāva (great being), Sri Krishna took the responsibility of explaining these to us. We refer to sastra as that which proves something to be what it truly is. This is Bhagavad Gita sastra, science. It describes tattva, the truth of every entity.

Whenever we delve into a scientific topic, we must have a basic understanding of certain aspects. If we have this fundamental knowledge, we can then relish the contents happily. For example, if we were to learn physics, we must have knowledge of some basic scientific principles. If we were to learn chemistry, then we need to know some basic facts like symbols and related terminologies. If we know the terminology, we can then happily enjoy it. Otherwise, it can give a bad headache. It is the same for the science of Bhagavad Gita.

Therefore, we need a basic understanding of certain terms like ātma (soul), śarīra (body), deha (physical form), parama ātma (Supreme Soul), etc. To help us attain that knowledge, Sri Krishna begins Gita Sastra from chapter 2, verse 12. How does it start?

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SLOKA WORD -

na thwe: va:ham ja:thu na:sam na thwam ne:me: jana:dhipa:ha|

na chaiva na bhavishya:maha sarve: vayam athah param||

SLOKA MEANING -

There was never a time that I did not exist, nor you, nor these kings; and there will never be a time that we will not exist in the future.

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We must remember the three: aham (Me, Sri Krishna); thwam (you, who is in front of Me); ime (these, who are in front of us). Also, there will never be a time in the future that we won’t exist. Sarve vayam athah param (there is never a time that we won’t exist). There was never a time we didn’t exist, never a time we are not existing, and never a time that we will not exist.

He is explicitly declaring that they always exist by using two negatives - na ithi na (not existing is never the case) to reinforce a strong positive. Who is He referring to? Is He referring to His body when He said aham? Is He referring to Arjuna’s body, visible in front of Him, when He said thwam? Is He referring to the warriors’ bodies that are surrounding them when He said ime? We must think about this. We must know that the answer is ‘No’. Why?

Aham ja:thu na:sam ithi na (I was never non-existent) does not go along with the rest. Because it is evident that He was born on Śrāvaṇa (month), Bahula (waning phase), Ashtami (eighth day), and Rohini (star). How can He say that He was ‘not non-existing’ in the past? It was 6 months later that Arjuna, being referred to as thwam, was born.

Na:si:hi ithi na ja:thu (you were also never not existing in the past) would be wrong. In the same way, He says ‘ime: jana:dhipa:ha’ (these were also never not existing)? How can He say that? They were also born on a specific day! Those standing in front of Him are related as sons, brothers, brothers-in-law, maternal uncles, fathers, grandfathers, etc. They all must have been born on some day, isn’t it?

Therefore, the words ‘never not existing’ are not referring to the visible body. They are referring to the resident jīva (soul) of the body. We must remember this. He is referring to jīva and not the body. Similarly,

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SLOKA WORD -

na bhavishya:maha sarve: vayam athah param

SLOKA MEANING -

there will never be a time in the future when we will not exist.

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What it means is that they will always exist. If it referred to the body, this statement also would be false. Why? Because He eventually concluded the avatāra (incarnation) Sri Krishna being referred to as Himself. Experts who study time say that Kali Yuga (age of darkness) commenced with the end of His avatāra. Panchaṅga (Vedic calendar) states that Kali Yuga commenced 5,120 years ago.

What it means is that He also has a concluding time for His avatāra(s). When He says that ‘I will never be not existing’, is He referring to the body? He is not referring to the body named Sri Krishna. He is referring to the parama tattva (Supreme truth) of Sri Krishna. In the same way, when He says ‘you will never be not existing’, He is not referring to the body of Arjuna. He is referring to the ātma tattva (soul truth) in the body of Arjuna.

Ime: jana:dhipa:ha na bhavishyanthi ithi ja:thu na (there will never be a time where they do not exist) means that the resident ātma tattvas in them will always exist. He is clearly stating this and we must remember it. Sri Krishna separates all into three entities, Me – You – They. ‘Me’ represents parama tattva, ‘You’ represents jīva tattva (soul truth), the jīva that exists in different forms with different names limited to different bodies, hence the word ‘they’.

Many people do not know this, and so they question… What is this, why should God give us such a birth? Why is He giving us this karma (action)? Why is He letting us go through difficult times? Several such questions! That’s because they lack fundamental knowledge. What is the fundamental knowledge here?

Ātma is not something that takes birth on a day or dies another day. Ātma is not single; it is many. What it means is that we are all ātmas. We never take birth. We don’t die. We always exist. Then, what does it mean by Him creating us, why do we say He created us different from each other? Then, where do all the differences in experiences and appearances come from?

These are a result of one’s own karma, actions. Why can’t God erase it all and make us all the same? Why should He? Then, what does He do? Even if jīva has karma, he doesn’t have the power to. Ātma does not have the ability to decide and create an appropriate body for clearing accumulated karma. This process is the way to free the self and know its (ātma’s) true nature.

The process of being given a body is the way to liberation and to discover the ātma’s true nature. It does not have the decisive power to manage its karma which blocks it from knowing its true nature. Therefore, because ātma cannot do this itself, God comes forward by giving an appropriate body and necessary environment to allow the soul to clear its karma.

We must remember the example of a seed here. We sow 10 different seeds, each yielding various results. There is someone who sowed the seeds. Do we fight with the farmer because there is a difference in the yield of each seed? Why did this yield such a fruit? Why did this one yield big fruit, small fruit, mango, guava, etc.? Do we argue with him, claiming that he is partial, exclaiming ‘he has done something to give such results to each?’ No, right?! Why?

The seed does not have the ability to create an environment to let itself grow from what is in it; it does not have the ability to utilize its consciousness. Therefore, the farmer, a great being, sows it in the soil thereby letting the inner consciousness of the seed flourish. Whatever is in the seed is what is sprouting. Does the farmer have any responsibility for the result? Do we punish or praise him?

Similarly, God integrates jīva with prakṛti (nature), giving an appropriate deha (body) to enable him to consume karma through various experiences – happy and sad, various śarīras (bodies), etc. Because he (jīva) cannot create a body for himself, He (parama ātma) is being helpful and creates it.

Ubhow: yacchathi (He brings them both together). Jīva is named sat (existence). Prakṛti is named thi (nature). Yam yacchathi means to bring together. Parama ātma is called sathyam (truth) - sat + thi + yam because He creates an environment that enables one to consume what has been accumulated.

Also, karma is the cause for the differences. One doesn’t know how long one has been accumulating it. Akin to how Sri Krishna stated in ‘na thwe: va:ham’ that You, Me, and They exist in past, present, and future, jīva’s karma also has been with him since the time he existed. When did it begin (ādi)? We don’t know. It is called anādi (beginningless) because we don’t know.

Thus, He is not the one who brings all the differences. We are responsible for accumulating them by choice. He is only enabling the experiences. Thus, we need not complain about Him. He is showing the categorization in na thwe: va:ham verse. Aham (Me), Thwam (You), Ime: (They) – all exist forever. Bodies emerge one day and dissolve another day. It is the jīvas that are said to be eternal.

Bodies are referred to as gathasūvas (temporary bodies). Separately, jīvas are referred to as agathasūvas (eternal souls) and are said to exist eternally. When they are combined, we can perceive consciousness via that (prakṛti, nature in the form of a body). When not combined, we are not aware of where jīva exists. However, prakṛti spreads throughout existence.

Clarifying this, Sri Krishna, parama ātma, moves forward in elaborating Gita Sastra, the science of Gita. Let us try to learn further. Jai Srimannarayana!

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