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1. Episode Title: Episode 35 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 35)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The teachings of the Bhagavad Gita, the nature of the soul (atma), understanding grief and loss, the distinction between body (deha) and soul (atma), the eternal existence of the soul, the wisdom of accepting change, and the importance of duty (dharma) in life.

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Arjuna, Krishna, soul, body, grief, wisdom, dharma, eternal existence, change

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), Bhagavad Gita upadesa (teaching) has begun. While the Bhagavad Gita has 700 verses, the core upadesa begins from chapter 2, verse 12, concluding with chapter 18, verse 66. Therefore, verse 18.66, ‘sarva dharman…’ is named charama sloka (final verse), the last verse of God’s upadesa.

There are verses after it, and also before verse 2.12. However, the verses before 2.12, ‘na thwe va:ham ja:thu na:sam…’ are together termed purva pitika (prologue). Similarly, there are verses after verse 66, chapter 18. They are together termed uththara pitika (epilogue). He prepared for the closing [in the epilogue]. The essence of God’s upadesa lies in between [the preface and the epilogue].

As Sri Krishna graces Arjuna with verse 12, He begins by explaining ji:va thathva (the nature of the soul). Why? Arjuna was in grief because he had to face and fight ji:vas (souls) such as Dro:na and Bhi:shma in the war. He expressed his doubts as…

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SLOKA WORD -

yadva: jaye:ma yadi va: no: jaye:yuhu

SLOKA MEANING -

"Whether we win or lose, what will happen?"

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He was thinking that it would be good if their side won. Whereas, if the other party won, all of them would have to face exile. Winning, however, means that warriors on the other side lose their life. “Oh no! I am going to have to kill them… guru:n (teachers)!” “They are all my elders, teachers, those who taught me right and wrong since my childhood.” “How can I kill such people in war?”

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SLOKA WORD -

yushibhi prathi yo:thsya:mi

SLOKA MEANING -

"How can I fire arrows against and injure them?"

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He asked Him [Sri Krishna] how he is supposed to harm those ji:vas! Sri Krishna desired to clarify to Arjuna who exactly he has to kill, or do anything else. He said… Anyone in your or the opposite army is each a union of two things, deha (body) and atma (soul). What we see is the union of the two. Ji:va (soul) is part of the union but not visible. Deha (body) is the other part of the union and is visible.

Firstly, He wants to tell him [Arjuna] that no matter what he does to them, they do not die. Therefore, He begins to reveal the ji:va’s true swarupa (form). Secondly, He wants to clarify that ji:va thathva is not one in number. He wants to clarify that Brahma Tathva (the ultimate reality) is not the only existing thathva and that ji:va thathva also exists. Ji:vas exist and are countless in number. There is a natural state to these ji:vas. He wants to reveal all of this.

Hence in verse 2.12, He separates the three: I, you, or them. I, You, Them. I am different from you. You and the rest of them are all different from each other. They all have their bodies as tools to accomplish their duties as soldiers, rulers, or anyone else. The bodies change. The indwelling residents do not change. He must first clarify that the indwelling ji:vas do not change. He must clarify that no matter what he does to them, they do not die.

[Arjuna] is in grief because he thinks they will die. If he is wise, realizing there is no death to them, his grief should subside. Thus, there is a need to tell him that they won’t die. He therefore says that neither I nor you…

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SLOKA WORD -

ime: jana:dhipa:ha

SLOKA MEANING -

"...and all of them"

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na chaiva na bhavishya:mahasarve: vayamathah param||

"Not just now, yesterday or tomorrow, there is never a time when we do not exist."

He firmly clarified the truth that everyone exists forever. He now wants to clarify that ji:va and body are not the same. The statement that ‘we all exist always’ raises a question about its validity… as one may feel that he did not exist earlier, and the others did not exist earlier. You say we always exist. What does it mean that we all always exist? One may feel… He was young some years ago, and has grown older now.

How can you say we exist forever; that there is never a time we do not exist? He [Sri Krishna] needs to clarify this aspect. The eternally existing entities are the resident ji:vas who are identifiable by a name [through the body]. The body is a different entity. There is now a need to clarify to Arjuna that bodies are different; they are not the same entities as ji:vas. Earlier, it was only clarified that there is never a time that they don’t exist.

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SLOKA WORD -

na bhavishya:ma ithi na

SLOKA MEANING -

"Ji:vas always exist."

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Now, He must clarify how they exist forever. To explain this, He begins with an example. He begins describing the changes that happen to the body and clarifies that such changes do not apply to the ji:va. As a child, one refers to himself as ‘I’. Even as he grows older and older, he continues to refer to himself as ‘I’. As an old man, he refers to himself as ‘I’. Whoever is referring to himself as ‘I’ is utilizing a tool termed a body to perform his work. He is not the one changing, but his tool is going through change.

The body is changing from one state to another; the change is visible. Right? It changes from being a child-type body to a youth-type body. Does anyone young cry about not having a child-type body? Actually, people explicitly state the increased age and celebrate birthdays giving treats to everyone, enjoying the day. They aren’t crying about it. He transforms from a youngster to an old man. That is also celebrated.

The indweller hasn’t changed, but his body has. He says, “you know, as a child…I was so good” or “when I was young, I would do great things… now I have grown older.” As he gets older, he recognizes the age of the body. While all other birthdays are celebrated, the 60th birthday celebration is special and is called sashtyabdi. The 70th birthday is named sapthadi. The 80th birthday has yet another name! The 83rd is named sahasra chandra! One is not sad to grow older. He is celebrating and happy.

He is clearly expressing that he is attaining something again and again, but not saying that he is changing. The body which he feels as belonging to him is the one going through change. He is not crying about this change. An unwise one cries about it. A wise one does not do that. A wise one is happy about the change. You can see that some people are happy about it [as they celebrate birthdays].

He wants to explain that change is natural for a body, and it’s not appropriate to cry over it. He explains this in verse 13.

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SLOKA WORD -

de:hino:smin yattha: de:he:

kauma:ram yauvanam jara:|

thattha: deha:nthara pra:pthihi

dhi:ras thathra na muhyathi||

SLOKA MEANING -

"The one who dwells in the body is not affected by the changes of the body."

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He refers to this body as deha and refers to the indweller, us, as dehi. The one in this deha is named dehi. Deha is defined as that which gradually accumulates material from outside and grows accordingly. It is called upacheyam (that which gradually accumulates things and grows). It [body] is gradually changing for him.

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SLOKA WORD -

yattha: kauma:ram yauvanam jara

SLOKA MEANING -

"Initially, there is a baby body changing into a child body followed by an adolescent body and finally an old age body."

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All this change is happening, isn’t it? He is not crying over these bodily changes - he is taking the body through a certain transformation. Similarly, we need not cry when leaving this body and moving to another.

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SLOKA WORD -

thattha: deha:nthara pra:pthihi

SLOKA MEANING -

"Even as you move from this body to another."

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dhi:raha thathra na muhyathi

"A wise one does not cry." Someone unwise enough would cry over it. “Oh no! I have lost my childhood. I want it back!” Who would say something like this? One may say so for the sake of expression via a poem, as an outpouring wish to escape from difficulties during later stages of life. A wise one, however, does not cry recollecting old times. He will happily accept what has come through. Dhi:raha!

dhi: (wisdom) Dhi:ra is one who uses and enjoys buddhi (intellect). na muhyathi (he does not ever get confused). He knows it. It is natural that one leaves the current body and goes to another.

Let’s take an example. Someone asks, ‘Is your father there?’ The response, ‘No, he is not at home.’ What does that mean? If he is not at home, he is somewhere else. He may be outside, or at work, or has left for some other place. In the same way… After gradually transforming from one stage to another in this changing body, a tool formed for his use… if he is not in this anymore, it implies that he is somewhere else.

Therefore, a ji:va always exists.

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SLOKA WORD -

deha:nthara pra:pthi

SLOKA MEANING -

"He left this one, implying he has made another one his home."

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He is never going to be non-existing. Bodily change is natural. No matter what you do with the body, it is impossible for it to remain as is. It is against nature. Therefore, it is inevitable to leave it and it is also inevitable to enter another one. “Even if you decide not to kill them in the war today, they have to leave their bodies at some point.” “If they leave it in the right way, it is a celebratory event for them.” “If you become a reason for that, you should feel happy as well, not cry about it.”

Thus, to relieve Arjuna’s grief, Sri Krishna begins explaining that deha (body) and the indwelling ji:va (soul) are not the same. Let’s move further as He elaborates. Jai Srimannarayana!

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