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1. Episode Title: Episode 39 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 39)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The importance of relationships in human life, Understanding the concept of endurance (thithi:ksha), The nature of bodily relations and their temporary nature, The significance of practicing dharma despite challenges, Krishna's teachings on the transient nature of experiences

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, thithi:ksha, endurance, dharma, relationships, joy, pain, experiences, Arjuna, Krishna

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), Since time immemorial, mankind has become accustomed to depending on relationships to lead life. Animals do not have such relations. Birds too do not have such relations. Other species likely do not have such relations either. However, only for human beings, relations are formed as a big ‘network’. For other animal species, the only reason a bond is created is to reproduce! The male and female mate and stay bonded until the offspring is born. When they raise the offspring to an independent state, they separate.

evariki va:re: yamuna: thi:re (they live on their own paths)

This is how every other species lives. Generally, hens move around with their chicks. The mother hen takes the responsibility of guarding its chicks only until they become independent. Afterwards, the chick and the mother hen part ways. All species act in the same way. However, humans are the only ones that have a big network of children, parents, maternal relatives, paternal relatives, children’s relatives, and other extended relatives. No other species has such a setup. The actual reason for this is to enable a structured social lifestyle for mankind. One must utilize the bonds to conduct good practices. Good conduct is known as dharma. One needs encouragement when practicing dharma. Hence, relatives should be the ones who encourage practicing dharma. They should not be in a state of encouraging bad practices. If relations support such a good cause, then there is no problem with them. Relations can then be regarded as a good thing.

Even in such cases, people face difficult times having to depart from what they like and to associate with what they dislike. That is why a human being needs o:rimi (endurance). Sri Krishna named this endurance as thithi:ksha (endurance) in Bhagavad Gita, chapter 2, verse 14.

What do they do, the relations of the body? All relations resulting from the body are called bhu:tha bhowthika (physical) relations. The body is made of pancha bhu:thas (five elements of nature). The others that are made of the same pancha bhu:thas are called bhowthikas, formed due to the relation with the body. They are nothing but other bodies. There are links between them such as brother, sister, aunt, uncle, nephew, and other relations. What causes these bhu:tha bhowthika relations? They are formed due to the bond with pancha bhu:thas. They are not formed directly by pancha bhu:thas. They are formed via su:ksha amsas (subtle forms), micro forms of pancha bhu:thas. The micro forms are called thanma:thra-s or ma:thra-s. It’s okay to use either name.

Sri Krishna says in verse 14 of chapter 2…

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SLOKA WORD -

ma:thra:sparsa:s thu kaunthe:ya!

SLOKA MEANING -

The touch of the senses, O son of Kunti!

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We experience the touch of ma:thras (senses). The touch of these ma:thras gives sorrow and joy.

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SLOKA WORD -

si:tho:shna sukha duhkhada:ha|

SLOKA MEANING -

Cold and heat, pleasure and pain.

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The sensation of si:tha (cold) gives sorrow in winter and joy in summer. The touch of something cold in summer and touch of something hot in winter gives joy. The touch of something cold in winter and touch of something hot in summer gives some pain. Sometimes, they may not be favorable in those seasons. Si:tha and ushna (heat) become the cause of joy and pain. What causes them?

ma:thra sparsa:ha (the touch of the senses)

They are caused by ma:thra sparsa:, i.e., due to the touch of the pancha bhu:thas. A seed gives rise to a tree, right? Let’s say that the seed is a ma:thra sparsa to the tree. So, ma:thra sparsas are those micro forms of pancha bhu:thas that have the ability to give birth to many like them.

Sa:sthra (scripture) says that the soul travels with a su:kshma sari:ra (subtle body). Even when he exists in his body, he has su:kshma sari:ra, the subtle body. As long as he is in su:kshma sari:ra, the respective bhu:thas respond to it. When he exits from the body, termed as de:ha:nthara pra:pthi (leaving the body) we discussed earlier, he leaves with the su:kshma sari:ra. The su:kshma sari:ra records actions as they are.

What does the su:kshma sari:ra have? What is it made of? There are five indriya:s (senses), sensory organs. The sensory receptor for sound is sravane:ndriya. The sensory receptor for touch is thwagindriya. The sensory receptor for form (sight) is chakshurindriya. The sensory receptor for taste is rasane:ndriya. The sensory receptor for smell is ghra:ne:ndriya. There are thus five sense organs. There is also manas (mind) along with them, the controller of all these five sense organs, so they do not act independently. There are five su:kshma amsas (subtle forms) of pancha bhu:thas that hold all these. All these five exist as a small capsule. Ji:va (soul) resides in this capsule. This capsule goes out from one body to another; ji:va travels along with them everywhere he goes.

Sri Krishna explains this in chapter 15. The su:kshma sari:ra has pancha bhu:tha thanma:thras. This one alone is enough to give birth to crores (millions) of the same type. Take a bean seed. The seed is very small. If we cultivate it with care, it gives birth to many beans. Each one has 5 or 6 seeds. If we sow one bean seed, it gives birth to lakhs (hundreds of thousands) of seeds. Every seed has the power and ability to emerge as a tree, isn’t it? If we carefully sow the seeds, the entire earth can be covered with a bean plantation. One seed!

Take one seed from the plant that the seed grew into. It also has the same potential. Isn’t it fantastic? We don’t know the origin of the first seed, how many lakhs of other seeds it has traversed through! We don’t know how many lakhs of years it has traveled or how many more lakhs it will travel. However, it has completeness – potency. The seed has it. It can therefore also be named as ma:thra:, thanma:thra:. Similarly, the su:kshma sari:ra holding the ji:va made of five pancha bhu:tha thanma:thras…

Sound thanma:thra (subtle form of sound)

Touch thanma:thra (subtle form of touch)

Form thanma:thra (subtle form of sight)

Taste thanma:thra (subtle form of taste)

Smell thanma:thra (subtle form of smell)

The su:kshma sari:ra composed of these five thanma:thras holds the ji:va. It moves the ji:va from one body to another. Ji:va does not have a direct relation with any bhu:tha (element). Ji:va directly does not touch the soil, does not smell it. However, he experiences the qualities of the bhu:tha through the bhu:tha’s thanma:thra, the respective sensory receptor. The thanma:thra is like a bridge. If the bridge is in good condition, it experiences the bhu:tha - either favorable or unfavorable. A favorable experience results in joy. An unfavorable experience results in pain.

si:tha - ushna - sukha - dukhada:ha (cold, heat, pleasure, pain)

ma:thra sparsa:ha (the touch of the senses)

The ji:va’s connection to the gross body is through the ma:thras and then through the senses. If we can carefully control the ma:thra sparsas, the resident ji:va wouldn’t even need to know what is happening to the gross body. This su:kshma sari:ra stays with the ji:va for longer. All connections that are formed through the gross body are temporary. They come and go. They sometimes give joy and pain.

a:gama apa:yinaha (come and go)

anithya:ha (not eternal)

There is no rule that what comes stays eternally or what goes never returns. Or nithya (eternal), i.e., the business or activity of something coming closer and going farther is eternal. Therefore, it can be said in two ways…

a:gama:pa:yino: nithya:ha (the coming and going is eternal)

a:gama:pa:yinaha anithya:ha (the experiences are not eternal)

There is no rule that the experiences resulting from them stay the same, therefore anithyaha. Their business of coming closer and going farther from an experience will always be there, therefore nithya:ha. What do we do in such cases? Bear it. There is heat from the sun. What are you doing then? What can we do - Summer! There will be heat. We use an electric fan, or a hand fan, or turn on the AC and tolerate it. It’s raining. What do you do? Bear it. Because it’s not going to rain forever. It pours for a while and ceases later.

There are floods that washed away cars and more. What do we do? We cannot keep crying about it. What do we do in a storm? You try to tolerate it, taking shelter on a second or third floor, unsure and nervous. You wait until it subsides. If the building doesn’t collapse before then, you come down and begin your daily routine. What if the weather returns the next day? You should deal with it then. Therefore, there is always the process of something coming and going. There is no rule that something stays forever.

a:gama:pa:yinaha anithya:ha (the coming and going is not eternal)

We tolerate it when we encounter it. The attitude is termed thithi:ksha (endurance). Thithi:ksha is very essential. He (Sri Krishna) did not speak of this in the beginning. Why? Because one can understand what thithi:ksha is and its importance only when one realizes that ji:va is different from the body. Therefore, He now speaks of thithi:ksha after attaining that knowledge.

Are we restraining ourselves from anything because there’s rain or heat? Are we stopping eating? Are we stopping breathing in and out? So, don’t stop anything else! Don’t stop performing your duties because there is something painful or joyful on the way. It should not become an excuse for picking up or letting go of your dharma (defined duty). Whether you do your work or stop should not be based on it. You should keep doing what you need to. Occurrences will keep coming and going.

You make a friend while traveling by train. He is very sweet with you. When the train arrives at his station, he will get down. You will get down at your stop. The flight crew in a passenger aircraft shows their respect and concern for you, “Good morning sir, what can I do for you sir?” However, that’s only until you disembark. Once you are off the plane, both parties go their own independent ways. What are you doing in such a case? Are you planning to spend your lifetime with them because they were so good with you on the plane? No.

Therefore, they (relations) are all like companions on a train or plane journey, or friends you encounter in a theatre, or on the road. Like the waves in the ocean, their movement (back and forth) is eternal. Similarly, relations are the same way.

tha:n thithikshasva (tolerating them is always the right thing to do)

Their entry and exit in life cannot determine your dharma. You cannot ever stop exercising your dharma. The experiences, relations, bonds, and resulting pains and joys, should never become means of separating you from dharma. Therefore, Arjuna, you cannot turn your back on your duty. You must follow through.

tha:n thithikshasva bha:ratha (learn to tolerate)

Sri Krishna explains how essential it is to exercise one’s duty. He details the pre-requisite, i.e., how one must have endurance. He clarifies these in Bhagavad Gita chapter 2, verse 14 and continues onward. Jai Srimannarayana!

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