\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

1. Episode Title: Episode 40 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 40)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The significance of thithiksha (endurance) in life, Understanding the importance of duty and responsibility, Krishna's teachings on facing challenges and grief, The relationship between happiness and sorrow in the context of duty, The concept of amruthaththvam (eternal bliss) and its eligibility.

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, thithiksha, Arjuna, Krishna, duty, endurance, grief, amruthaththvam, responsibility, happiness, sorrow

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), Bhagavad Gita is a scripture which has emerged to teach the ideal lifestyle to humans. This is the ‘theory’. Sri Ramayana is the ‘practical’. It [Bhagavad Gita] is followed and practiced there [in Ramayana]. The practice is recorded and offered to us as Bhagavad Gita. There [in Ramayana], Sage Valmiki described the way to practice. Sage Vyasa assembled it as Sri Krishna’s upadesa (teaching) called Bhagavad Gita in Mahabharata. We should listen to Ramayana to follow it. We should listen to Bhagavad Gita for knowledge. One gives knowledge, and another demonstrates practicing it. They are analogous to two eyes of a human. They must both have the same goal. There are two eyes. However, if they see two different things, a doctor should be consulted. Even though there are two eyes, the visible entity must be the same. Similarly, we should know that both Ramayana and Bharata make one wonderful literature instructing on [a single objective] ideal lifestyle.

Swami speaks about thithiksha (endurance) in Bhagavad Gita chapter 2, verse 14. Thithiksha means endurance or having patience. Thithiksha energizes one to carry on with one’s work. It teaches one how to carefully understand and withstand any issues when working. Sastra (one that instructs, the Vedas) states in smruthi scriptures…

-----------------------------------------------

SLOKA WORD -

na jathu kamath na bhayath na lobhath dharmam thyajeth

SLOKA MEANING -

One must not give up duties because of increased desires, fear, or worry about losing something.

-----------------------------------------------

ji:vithasya:pi he:tho:ho (even if one is losing life), one must not give up one’s duties. Desires, fear, greed, or situations leading to loss of life all pertain to the body. Because of attachment to bodies, we become ready to even sacrifice responsibilities to ensure the body is not in pain. That should not be the case. One should never give up exercising duties under any condition.

-----------------------------------------------

SLOKA WORD -

na thyajeth

SLOKA MEANING -

Cannot be given up.

-----------------------------------------------

This is the order of the smruthi, part of the Vedas. What must we do when such a situation arises? Remember that such situations are all pertaining to deha (body). Your dharma (duty) is to perform duties that enable you to attain a higher state by getting rid of acquired karma. The body is given as a tool for that purpose, but it is not a permanent resource. Thus, even if it requires hurting it, you must exercise your duties. However, we generally do not hesitate to give up our responsibilities if they put the body in pain. Sri Krishna is advising Arjuna to get accustomed to thithiksha (endurance). One should learn to withstand and move ahead in life.

In fact, why should I do all these? To attain what? Let’s say I tolerate everything and move ahead. You are saying it’s not necessary to be worried or tolerate grief. What do I get out of all that endurance? Is there any experienceable physical benefit? No, it’s the grief that I experience and will be left with. I will be put in the difficult situation of having lost relatives. I will be left with having done all the hard work. This is the direct physical consequence of the war; it is loss and grief. Nothing else. Are you telling me that there is some indirect benefit of this? I am going to be killing Drona and Bhishma, my ‘gurus’. I will only accrue sin for doing such a thing. Hence, there is neither direct benefit nor indirect benefit. Also, is it mandatory that I do this? I can simply skip this and go away and stay in the forest. Is it also mandatory that I tolerate the pain or loss? It is not necessary, right? If we all go to the forests and somehow make a living, they will all go to the kingdom happily. There is no need to fight. Everyone can live happily, right? There won’t be any suffering.

“Tell me what is the special benefit for tolerating [the result of this war]?” asked Arjuna. Sri Krishna gives the answer in chapter 2, verse 15.

-----------------------------------------------

SLOKA WORD -

yam hi na vyatthayanthy e:the: purusham purusharshabha!

SLOKA MEANING -

Whoever can accustom themselves to be tolerant…

-----------------------------------------------

sama duhkha sukkham dhi:ram so::mruthaththva:ya kalpathe: (whoever accepts happiness and sorrow equally) will attain amruthaththvam (an ever-lasting boon). So, where is tolerance? Is o:rimi (tolerance) something that should be exercised in the body or in the manas (mind)? It is in the manas. The body will respond to situations. Earlier, He [Sri Krishna] said that matra sparsas (sense perceptions) cause joy and sorrow, cold and heat, etc. How can we behave like a statue, not reacting or responding to those? Is it possible? If someone touches a hot substance, isn’t there an instant reaction in the body to the heat? If you touch a deep frozen item, doesn’t it give you the chills? If one doesn’t experience ice or fire, can we think of the person as someone alive? He is not in the body; he has left the body. A dead body can therefore be placed in an ice box or burnt. It doesn’t respond. Do we praise ‘him’ for having tolerance? It just means he is no longer in the body.

So, [Sri Krishna] what are you asking me to become by exclaiming thithiksha?! Are you saying that I reach that state [leaving the body dead]? No! The responses to touching fire or ice are changes in the body. You don’t need to be affected because of them. This is what Sri Krishna is saying. ‘You’ implies the jiva (soul). Jiva has a responsibility. The responsibility must be exercised using senses throughout the body. This must not change. He says that you must carry them out (responsibilities).

Anyway, what do I gain out of performing these duties, giving up happiness? This is Arjuna’s question. He is trying to get out of war. Arjuna’s heart is probably consumed with desire to skip his responsibility. “What do I gain by doing this?” asks Arjuna! Swami [Sri Krishna] is answering this. Whoever is accustomed to tolerance will attain amruthaththvam, an eternal gain. He is declaring this. One who is tolerant will attain amruthaththvam. When?

-----------------------------------------------

SLOKA WORD -

sama duhkha sukkham dhi:ram

SLOKA MEANING -

Whoever welcomes anything coming his way will certainly attain amruthaththvam.

-----------------------------------------------

This is what Swami [Sri Krishna] is explaining. What it means is that one is sad for having to stay away from something only when he has taste for the happiness it gives. Let’s say an officer has deputed you to a place on a task. Why did he go to the place? Not to enjoy the beauty of the place but to work on the designated task. He needs to focus only on the task if that is the purpose. While he is working on the task, he may come across the beauty of the place, such as waterfalls, etc., relishing the beauty. That’s fine. Will he cry when he is having to leave the place because it is so beautiful? Did he go to the place for that purpose? No, right? He went on a duty as part of his job. When he understands that the travel to the place is due to his job, he will relish the beauty of the place while he is there. However, there is no need for him to cry over missing it when he must return. The entire labor force is working this way, isn’t it?

Therefore, your focus should be on ‘why’ you are there and not on ‘what’ is there. You got the deha (body) for exercising your dharma and experiencing karma. What is important is to exercise dharma, not the relations and the resulting happiness and sorrows. If from day one you are not focused on them, they will not give you happiness, sorrow, pleasure, pain, etc. You will be able to realize that whatever you are facing is for your sreya (benefit). You will be able to experience pleasure and pain. You will be able to tolerate them in whatever way they are. It means that you will not be affected when they are with you or not. You will be able to perceive them equally, sama drusti (equal vision). Because you are focused on your duty. If you are not focused on your duty, you will notice [and feel affected by] them. Your duty is to practice dharma, make sure it is practiced by others, and to remove any hurdles on the way to it.

Therefore, a wise person is one who receives sorrow equally as joy in the process of performing prescribed duties. A soldier in the army of a country is on duty to protect his nation. Therefore, he will not care about the temporary pains and pleasures of climbing trees, walking on snow, or swimming through rivers. He will move ahead with focus on protecting his nation. Thus, he gets joy. Didn’t he experience any pain when crawling, climbing, or crossing? He did. However, he tolerated them. This is what Kunthi Devi prayed for Sri Krishna. For what?

-----------------------------------------------

SLOKA WORD -

vipadaha santhunaha sasvath thathrathathra jagath guro:h

SLOKA MEANING -

You are leaving us as soon as happy times are here.

-----------------------------------------------

You were with us in the difficult times protecting us all throughout – like an eyelid to the eye. Today, when these difficult times have come to an end, you are saying ‘aunt, I will take leave now.’ Our goal is to be with you; it doesn’t matter if things are difficult or easy to handle. If difficult times are the only means to be with You, then let us always have the difficult times. Sri Mad Bhagavatam describes this prayer of Kunthi Devi. Therefore, you must accept sorrow at the appropriate time. When in a state of pleasure, don’t think of it as permanent. What it means is that you must happily accept and experience sorrow. A dhira (wise person) is one who habituates himself with this, with that thithiksha. Such a person becomes eligible for amruthathvam (eternally lasting bliss). Others will not attain amruthathvam. Sri Krishna declares and clarifies this to Arjuna in chapter 2, verse 15 of Bhagavad Gita.

-----------------------------------------------

SLOKA WORD -

sama duhkha sukkham dhi:ram

SLOKA MEANING -

Whoever accepts happiness and sorrow equally will attain amruthaththvam.

-----------------------------------------------

Let’s continue further to understand in more clarity. Jai Srimannarayana!

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*