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1. Episode Title: Episode 41 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 41)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The definition of a dhi:ra (wise person) according to the Bhagavad Gita, Understanding joy and sorrow with equanimity, The importance of endurance (thithiksha) in life, The teachings of Sri Rama as an example of thithiksha, The four key verses of Chapter 2 and their significance

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, dhi:ra, thithiksha, endurance, joy, sorrow, Sri Rama, amruthaththvam, upade:sa, chatthuslo:ki

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), Bhagavad Gita, chapter 2, verse 15 defines and declares who a dhi:ra (wise person) is.

sama duhkha sukkham dhi:ram

A dhi:ra experiences joy or sorrow with equanimity. What does it mean to feel joy or sorrow with equanimity? He who gets excited in times of joy or depressed in times of sorrow, giving in to various emotions, is not a dhi:ra. A dhi:ra is one who can tolerate anything. He is not a person without any joy or sorrow. There will be joys and sorrows. Why? Because life is like a journey, a voyage. There are going to be tides in the water as we sail through. There are high and low tides. Do we cry over the tides? We prepare ourselves with ways to navigate through them. Similarly, there are going to be joys and sorrows in life. It is also essential to face them. If one has endurance (thithiksha) or tolerance (sahanam) when facing them, then the effect of joys and sorrows will not distract him from his responsibilities. Therefore, thithiksha is a means to move one ahead in performing his duties.

As a human being, one must not give up responsibilities in his/her life. However, many people do not think this way. As soon as one is happy, he begins to think that it’s all because of him, there is no one as great as him. He exhibits a pompous and arrogant nature, singing and dancing everywhere. When slightly unhappy, he feels worried and depressed. In times of joy, people feel it’s their achievement. In times of sorrow, they feel God is not compassionate. “Even though I am a devotee, I am facing all these difficult times.” They try to blame it on Him because it costs nothing to do so! If so, why not adore His compassion in times of joy? If not, he must believe that the difficult times are a result of bad things or thoughts he committed. No! He feels that joys are a result of his work, whereas he feels that sorrows are a result of His (God’s) actions. He thinks of himself as a pure person. Therefore, he tries to blame everything on Him saying, “God is not compassionate, He does not know anything, He is not merciful, not kind, He is not taking care of me, He is ignoring me.” Thus, people try to blame everything on God. This is not appropriate. Thinking that God is jealous of him, etc. is not good.

Sorrows can be a result of anyone or anything, such as nature. There could be natural calamities like cyclones, storms, earthquakes, hurricanes, extreme heat or cold. It could be that a year is great for crops and another year isn’t. Giving credit to yourself when there is good yield or blaming Him for being uncompassionate for giving difficult times, therefore, we will leave this God. Such a thought process is not right. If you want to give credit to yourself, do it for both joys and sorrows. Welcome sorrow and joy in the same way. Or leave joy with God like you do in case of sorrow. Don’t hold it on yourself. However, one for you and another for Him?! All the credit for you and blame for Him?! This kind of state is not good for you. This is when thithiksha, endurance becomes useful. Being able to believe that both (joys and sorrows) are given by Him.

Electricity comes on and goes. The government may pledge enabling constant power to the public. The public knows and experiences the actual state of it. Are we crying out for having no current? We set up an inverter, battery, or something else and continue with our work. We are not quitting our work. We plan for ways to handle any crisis but do not run away from performing our duties. Even in such cases, we eat, we breathe, we bathe and perform sandhya vandana (prayer to the indwelling power of the Sun), we put on clothes, we do everything then, and now. We are not quitting these activities. So, don’t compromise in all other duties. This is called amruthaththvam (an eternal state). Endurance is the key prerequisite for it. Thithiksha! Endurance. Whoever has thithiksha, he attains amruthaththvam. If one can tolerate sorrow, that itself is a great quality. If he doesn’t cry over something, that itself is a great skill to have!

He (God) gives us whatever is necessary at the essential times. When one attains this knowledge, it implies that the body has become a good tool for one’s enrichment. The more understanding of this knowledge, the better one becomes. Thithiksha, endurance or patience, is not a visible characteristic. Muscles in a body are visible when one is strong. Bones are visible in a body that is weak and lean. These are all visible aspects. However, the qualities being practiced by a man are not visible characteristics. Thithiksha is also not a visible quality. It is an internal quality. In fact, endurance is a key element in Bharat’s (India’s) culture. It is a great virtue to practice. If one has this, amruthaththva is an automatic result. The more firm this knowledge, the greater the endurance. As endurance grows, the amruthaththva one experiences becomes richer. The prerequisite for amruthaththva is a sorrow-free state.

Bhagavad Gita is theory - practice can be seen in Ramayana. Because Sri Ramayana is regarded as its practical scripture guide. This Bhagavad Gita is a record of all the laws of life. That Ramayana demonstrates the practice. It can be seen in Rama and Bharata. It is demonstrated via many instances, but clear and direct with Sri Rama. Sri Rama’s father calls and informs Him that Rama will be crowned the next day. He heard it and was happy. The next morning, father calls and informs Sri Rama that he will be exiled for 14 years to the forests. What would anyone else have done? Anyone else in his place would have either cried out loud or taken his life. Or would have gathered his army, fought the one who broke the promise and conquered the kingdom. He would do something of this sort. However, Rama did not do that. Father instructed Him to take the throne. What is important is that it was an instruction from the father, not the instruction itself! Rama accepted when asked to take the king’s throne. The very next day, He accepted when asked to leave the kingdom and go to the forests. He accepted the latter instruction in the same way he accepted the former order.

ra:jyam va: vanava:so va:

When His stepmother asked, He said, “No hesitation to go to the forests - if the instruction is from father, it’s my duty to follow.” If he asks me to take the throne, I will take it. If he asks me to go to the forests, I will go. What’s the necessity for me to think differently from his instruction? Following his orders is my duty. He felt that it was his goal in life. He decided this in his manas (heart) and therefore, all consequences were fine with him. If his manas does not like it, it would have all been difficult. That’s why He said…

ra:jyam va vanava:so va:

It does not matter if it is in the kingdom or in the forests. However, going to the forests is great for me because you ordered me to do so. That is better for me. Therefore, I must go. Once we decide in the heart about something, then there won’t be any problem following it. Assume you are waiting for a car ride. No sign of it. You conclude that it won’t arrive. What do you do? You will begin walking with disappointment, wishing that you had the car. Why? Because there was a hope to travel by car and it did not happen - it put you in tears. Assume one was not even waiting for a car, one would have been fine walking. His experience would be pleasant.

We went to Muktinath in the Himalayas where Salagrama (sacred stones worshipped as the form of God) are accessible. Everyone prepared themselves to travel by foot. Everyone enjoyed the journey. There were camps in between and it was a beautiful experience. The next time we went, there was an airplane available. Some got in it, the rest had to walk. The people who walked felt it painful. They asked us to see if there is any way an additional airplane can be sourced. They said they couldn’t walk. There was no airplane the first time we went. Hence, everyone just walked and enjoyed the path. The walk was difficult then and now! However, they all enjoyed the difficult situation then. The second time, they ‘felt’ that they lost the chance of journeying by plane. Therefore, they walked every step with difficulty.

“It was father’s order that I [Sri Rama] go to the forests for 14 years. Hence, it’s my future.” He decided so in His mind. When Hanuman asks, Mother Sita introduces Herself and explains Her story to him while sitting under the tree. She says that Rama first decided in His heart to go to the forests…

manasa: gruhya:

Later, He expressed the same in words. He first accepted it in his manas (heart). Therefore, everything He did in this regard gave him happiness. Manas, the heart! Thithiksha, endurance or sahanam (patience) is built in the heart. That is why He could say…

ra:jyam va: vanava:so va:

“Mother, no matter whether it’s the kingdom or forests, both belong to my father. I am under his umbrella wherever I am.”

ikshwa:ku:nam iyam bhu:mihi

The whole earth is in father’s lineage. Therefore, it belongs to my father. Wherever I am in my father’s abode, it’s the same. If you feel the entire home is yours, it doesn't matter where you are in the house – the entrance, the exit, inside! Wherever I am, I am in the house. No matter where I am, I am exercising his order. There is no question about staying in the forests being difficult and staying in the kingdom being joyous. Both are places of happiness. Father ordered me to go and stay in the forests. Therefore, staying in forests is now a more pleasant place.

vanava:so maho:daya

He accepted it to be the time that gives Him better opportunities. Otherwise, wouldn’t one have cried out loud [in such a case]? Wouldn’t one pursue legal action in court? Rama did not do any of that. He accepted it happily. This is the ability of the heart to accept, sahana si:latha (ability to endure). Thithiksha! Because Sri Rama has thithiksha, He was happy even when exiled to the forests. Because He went happily, He is heartfully worshiped by everyone till date. He attained amruthaththvam (eternal state). We must remember this. Lakshmana Swami doesn’t have thithiksha. His brother was going, and so he went along. Therefore, he always thought about the kingdom or wondered how Bharata was doing. He would think of such things many times when in the forests. Rama never felt any change in his mental state ever.

There are four important verses in Bhagavad Gita [chapter 2] - 12, 13, 14, and 15. Sri Krishna delivered everything that He intended to in these 4 verses. These verses can together be called the chatthuslo:ki (the four verses of Bhagavad Gita). If this set of verses is understood, then the entire upade:sa (teaching) is understood. The rest is all an elaboration to reinforce this knowledge of these verses. The rest is all an upade:sa (teaching) giving various ways to explore and affirm these verses. We must try to practice it carefully, thereby progressing towards amruthaththvam. Let’s move ahead, seeking strength from God to do so. Jai Srimannarayana!

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