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1. Episode Title: Episode 42 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 42)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The nature of grief and its impact on individuals, Understanding the difference between devotees and others in facing sorrow, The importance of endurance (thithiksha) in spiritual practice, Bharatha's response to adversity and his sense of responsibility, The teachings of Krishna on righteous living and duty

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, thithiksha, Arjuna, Krishna, grief, compassion, dharma, Bharatha, Sri Ramayana, endurance

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), Like everyone else, devotees also experience happiness and sorrow. They are also human, right? They also have hunger and thirst; happiness and sorrow. Then, what is the difference between them and the others? Everyone else becomes slaves to happiness and sorrow. They get swayed and crushed by happiness and sorrow. Devotees tolerate them and stand firm. Some seekers pray to God to get out of troubles and pains. They desire only happiness. However, devotees never pray that way. They don’t ask for happiness - they don’t pray to Him to take away the sorrows. “I don’t mind if it's happiness or sorrow…”

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SLOKA WORD -

divi va: bhuvi va: mama:sthu va:saha

narake:va

SLOKA MEANING -

regardless if sent to hell

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It is Your responsibility to place me where You want and make me do what You want. I am Your tool. It’s up to the owner how to use the tool. You are the owner. I am Your da:sa (servant). Therefore, I am not connected to anything - where You position me, what You do, how, etc. Make this [me] do whatever You want to. However, I am knowledgeable by nature. Hence… First, qualify me so I don’t get arrogant about my inherent knowledge, believing that I am the ultimate doer. Second, qualify me such that I can stand firm despite any happy or difficult situations. Help enhance appropriate feelings in accordance with this.

In the world, always… The main object and its dharmas (righteous duties), qualifiers, come into existence. The attributes that define the essential quality of the object are added later. Lakshyam (the object) is formed first. Lakshanas (the attributes) come later. The attributes do not form prior to the object. The objects are formed first. The attributes defining the formed object are made available later. Bhagavad Gita is a lakshana grandha (explanatory scripture), while Sri Ramayana is a lakshya grandha (objective scripture).

We can listen to Sri Krishna’s teaching on the importance of thithiksha (endurance) through to chapter 2, verse 15. Thithiksha means patience, or endurance. Endurance is a very important quality. Only those who have endurance will attain amruthaththva (eternal bliss). The lakshya grandha, Ramayana, demonstrates this aspect. There is a great one named Bharatha. He is the key brother of Sri Rama. He is a great, innocent, dharma:thma (proponent of righteousness). Dharma is one’s practice of righteous deeds. Elders’ teachings state that one must not give up on dharma in difficult times. Bharatha is indeed an excellent human being.

He spent significant time in his maternal uncle’s house. All four - Rama, Bharatha, Lakshmana, and Shatrugna - were married to Janaka’s daughters in his kingdom. Viswamithra led Rama and Lakshmana there. Dasaratha led the remaining two sons there. All four got married. They returned. After returning, Bharatha went to his maternal uncle’s house. Maybe he had a very good time there; he journeyed there quite often. Thus, he spent 12 years there.

One day, a few soldiers reached Bharatha and informed him that his minister, sage Vasishta, had urgently summoned him. Bharatha was not sure what happened. He had bad dreams the previous night. Hence, he guessed that Ayodhya had seen some danger. His heart was in a nervous state. His friends wanted to spend time with him, but he wasn’t in the right mood. They tried to cheer him up, but it did not work. Then came the soldiers with the news, “You are being summoned at once by your minister…” His heart felt something was wrong. He began his journey home with the same feeling. He entered Ayodhya, reaching home. It seemed like a graveyard everywhere! He was used to visiting his father at Mother Kaikeyi’s palace. Hence, he went there directly. It was all looking gloomy and dismal there as well. He quickly reached his mother. She was also not in a welcoming state. He bowed down to her. He asked his mother, “Father always comes to receive me when I return, where is he?” She responded very casually, “He went where anyone born ultimately goes.”

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SLOKA WORD -

surapathi bhavanam

SLOKA MEANING -

What!? Father is no more?! What happened?! How?

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What did he say as he left? He said ‘Rama… Rama…’ as he left. What happened to Rama? Where was Rama? Wasn’t he there next to father? Rama went to the forests. Why? Going to the forests means that he had done something wrong. Did Rama make any mistake? Did he steal anyone’s belongings? Did he steal someone else’s woman? Did he steal something? Why was he sent to the forests? She raised her voice, questioning how he could even think of Rama committing these sins? Then, why did he go to the forests? It was me, I sent him. Why? To give you the kingdom! He felt slapped on the face as he heard that. You sent Ramachandra to the forests so I can have the kingdom?! And that caused father's demise! He crumbled down, shedding tears. She said…

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SLOKA WORD -

Uththishto:uththishta kim se:she ra:jan

maha:yasa:ha!

SLOKA MEANING -

You are the king now! Can a king cry?

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When she referred to him as king, he felt crushed further (like red chili powder on a cut wound). He was furious and pulled out his sword. She was the reason for father’s death and Rama’s exile. That too, after having heard that she did it for his sake, he was ready to behead her immediately. He recollected his brother advising him to wait and think. “If I behead you, I will not be able to face Ramachandra.” He thinks of you as his mother and therefore will reprimand me for having killed a mother. You have done such a heinous act. I am letting you go because he thinks of you as his mother. Bharatha is performing all his duties, but with immense grief in the heart. What must he do now? Whose mistake is this? Why did it happen? Someone said, “It was Manthara who came up with this plan and executed it.” Shatrugna saw her. She, being an old woman, stood at the door with a walking stick. Like a monkey, she was wearing a chain around her neck, gifted by Kaika. She stood at the door smiling as if waiting for them. Furious, Shatrugna wanted to behead her with his sword. Bharatha stopped him.

“Brother, why? Isn’t she the cause for all the nonsense that happened here?” That’s when Bharatha said…

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SLOKA WORD -

na manthara:ya:ha

SLOKA MEANING -

not the mistake of Manthara

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Whose mistake is it then? Which servant would not want his/her owner to be happy? Which servant would not wish for his/her owner’s son to be the greatest? Her desire, therefore, is not wrong. Probably… However, listening to the advice of such people and acting accordingly to create such havoc, is this mother’s mistake. He said… Therefore, it’s Kaikeyi’s mistake.

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SLOKA WORD -

na ma:thurasya:ha:

SLOKA MEANING -

it’s not Mother Kaikeyi’s mistake

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Which mother wouldn’t desire great things for her son? Brother, why do you say that?! So, whose mistake is it? Oh yes, it is the responsibility of the king to take a decision when someone like her advises upon something. However, King Dasaratha was carried away and granted her a boon without thinking or consulting anyone. Therefore, it is the king’s mistake. “It is all Dasaratha’s sin!” Shatrugna said. No no!

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SLOKA WORD -

do:sho: na ra:jhaha

SLOKA MEANING -

not the king’s mistake

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If the king himself does not keep his word, then who in the kingdom will abide by their words? Therefore, it is not even the king’s mistake. Whose mistake is it then, Rama’s? How? Father is aged, more than 60,000 old. When someone is old, their ability to think properly may diminish. They may not be the best to make decisions. In that case, shouldn’t a wise one think whether it is right or wrong, good or bad for the public before acting on something? Simply because he ordered it… In fact, the king didn’t even explicitly order him; he simply followed her orders. So, do we say it is Rama’s mistake? No! That's wrong.

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SLOKA WORD -

na cha ra:ghavasya:

SLOKA MEANING -

it is not Rama’s mistake

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If someone like Rama doesn’t act in accordance with his father’s wish, then who in the world will? You’re saying it’s… is... not Manthara’s mistake… not Kaikeyi’s mistake… not Dasaratha’s mistake… not Rama’s mistake… Then, who is responsible for such a horrible situation?

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SLOKA WORD -

math pa:pame:va:thra nimiththava:si

SLOKA MEANING -

My sin is the main cause for Rama having to go for exile in the forests.

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My birth here caused such a grave crime like this. This is my fate and hence it resulted in a miserable state for… such thought in her [Manthara] such wish in her [Kaikeyi] such decision by him [Dasaratha] such an act by him [Rama]. Hence, it is no one else’s mistake.

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SLOKA WORD -

math pa:pame:va athra nimiththam

SLOKA MEANING -

This is Bharatha’s situation.

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That is, he is taking the responsibility of the difficult situation on himself. He tried to rectify the blame through his actions. He did not cross his dharma because things came upon him. He became a role model to the world for his patience, never turning back or hesitating on performing his duties, despite being put in a happy or sad condition. Devotees always seek this. They don’t say no to troubles. They pray to God to give them the endurance that is required to face the difficult times.

“Oh come on, wouldn’t everyone push someone around who is simply tolerant of anything? There is a tale to explain this. It seems a snake hissed at a saint. He said, “I didn’t do anything to you, why do you hiss at me? Stop it.” He then left the place. By the time he came back in the evening, the snake was in a dire situation fighting death. Why? The sage said not to hiss and so the snake obeyed. There were kids playing there and he didn’t hiss at them. They played with the snake, pulling, and pushing it here and there! The saint asked, “What happened, you were fine in the morning?” “It is a result of following your advice!”

“Oh no! I asked not to hiss unnecessarily. I did not restrict you from doing so in self-defense! Therefore, endurance is not about tolerating everything. Tolerate something if it is within the limit of your duty. When not within limit, fight it out. You must push back as necessary. We must understand this. Thithiksha (endurance) is a great tool for humans. It must be used in exercising dharma. We must never give up on our responsibilities, no matter what the circumstance. God explains this. In fact, a thief also has endurance to steal. We are not talking about such endurance in this context. We are talking about the endurance that must be exercised to… carry out responsibilities… for the well-being of others… in practicing dharma, righteous living.

Sri Krishna speaks of endurance in these aspects. If this can be firm and practiced, the resulting activities get sanctified. Bhagavad Gita after these 4 verses is all manana grandha (a guide to reinforce what has been taught in the 4 verses). Chathusslokhi (the 4 verses), are the prime part of this teaching. If one understands these 4 verses, 12 to 15 in chapter 2 of Bhagavad Gita, then one can assume he knows Gita entirely. If you know its essence, then Gita is with you. Not within your body, within your heart. To help reinforce the essence within your heart, the rest of the scripture becomes useful. Let’s learn how to reinforce this as we move ahead. Jai Srimannarayana!

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