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1. Episode Title: Episode 5 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 5)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The nature of misplaced compassion and its consequences, Understanding the concept of A:rya, The significance of timely action in duty, Krishna's teachings on overcoming sorrow and confusion

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Sankhya yoga, Arjuna, Krishna, compassion, A:rya, ana:rya, Dravidians, yukta-ayukta viveka, eternal knowledge, Ramayana, Hanuman, Si:tha

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), We are discussing Bhagavad Gi:tha, Chapter 2. After Bhi:shma’s demise, Sanjaya explains the situation at the beginning of the war to Dhruthara:shtra. That is, on the 11th day of war, Sanjaya recounts the happenings of the first day of war. He is detailing Arjuna’s despaired heart on that day, and Sri Krishna’s effort to help him overcome it.

Seeing Arjuna in the agony of sorrow, Sri Krishna questioned him [in verse 2, chapter 2]. If a mirror is stained, we cannot see the reflection correctly. Our heart is like a mirror. If tainted, it loses the ability to reflect things. That is, we cannot understand what ought to be understood, clearly. We lose our natural strengths as well. They get buried. It clouds our heart. This happens at certain times. When a man is overtaken either by grief, or is bustling with enthusiasm - he loses himself.

In case of being overcome by sorrow, he loses the ability to think what to do next. In case of being flooded with enthusiasm - he also loses himself. However, there is a slight difference. In the first case, he becomes sort of disabled – unable to take any action. In the second case, he works at a multi-fold level. Let us say the reason for sorrow is that somebody spoke harsh words. The mind is then disturbed. Due to that disturbance, man loses his natural ability. Or if somebody praises a person, then he becomes bustling with energy. He jumps forward to work with multi-fold productivity.

If somebody extols the virtues of a person, that person’s excitement knows no bounds. There are some misers who are not interested in donating. Even a miser becomes excited when praised. Or if in a group of people with everyone making donations to a cause, he too feels anxious for recognition and pledges to donate. Not only a pledge, he may actually donate as well. Encouragement given to do noble things is good. Conversely, if somebody keeps pulling a person down by his words, he can even lose his fighting spirit in the midst of a war.

People refer to such a situation as salya sa:rathyam (the demotivation of Karna) - from Karna’s life. When his charioteer Salya kept deriding him, it demotivated him a lot and eventually led to Karna’s downfall in spite of his might. Encouragement given to do a noble deed is very good. Sometimes, this enthusiasm comes from the societal environment that the person is in. Or, it could stem from the teachings of knowledgeable Elders, teachers or a:cha:ryas (spiritual guides). It inspires a generous and helpful nature in the person, and sidelines any of his naturally existing shortcomings, thus making him useful to society.

In such cases, where the inspiration is from knowledge-giving Elders, it tends to be permanent. On the contrary, if the person feels sorrow at an inappropriate time, this becomes dangerous. Sri Krishna questions Arjuna about such a situation in the second chapter.

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SLOKA WORD -

శ్రీ భగవాన్ ఉవాచ -

కుతస్త్వా కశ్మలమిదం, విషమే సముపస్థితమ్ ।

అనార్యజుష్టమ్ అస్వర్గ్యమ్, అకీర్తికరమర్జున! ॥

SLOKA MEANING -

Sri Bhagavan said -

"What is this, Arjuna? Why are you grieving at this inappropriate time? This behavior is not suitable for a noble person."

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What is this, Arjuna? Why are you grieving at this inappropriate time? ‘Kasmalam’ means a blemish or an affliction. What type of affliction are you suffering from now? It is lack of discrimination (yuktha:yuktha-vive:ka-ra:hithyam). You are unable to distinguish between what needs to be done and what needs to be avoided. That is your mental blemish. It is making you lose sight of who you are and what your duty is. This is vishamam (inappropriate) – an inappropriate place for such grief.

We discussed this example earlier – If somebody goes to a dining area for sports, that is vishamam – inappropriate. Or if somebody in an athletic arena is simply engrossed in eating, that too is vishamam – inappropriate. “Arjuna! This is a battlefield. So, grieving here is vishamam – inappropriate.” You came here prepared for war, sounding your conch indicating readiness to fight. Everyone is set to start the war. At this moment, you are overtaken by sorrow exclaiming that you will not fight! This is wrong.

Such a situation results in three types of harm – What are these three?

1. ana:rya jushtam (not suitable for a noble person)

2. asvargyam (not leading to heaven)

3. aki:rthi-karam (bringing notoriety)

First, this behavior is not a:rya jushtam. Secondly, it is asvargyam. You think by waging war, you will not attain heaven after death. Or since the enemies also waged righteous war (dharma-yuddham), they will be eligible for heaven as well. “If both I, and my opponents - who were tormentors all along - achieve the same heaven, how is this justified?” You are filled with some sort of jealousy. That too is wrong. This untimely grief will result in you not attaining heaven – asvargyam.

You might think at least some fame might result if people think “generous Arjuna had left his enemies unharmed in the war, pitying them.” That would be a wrong notion. Nobody will sing your praises like that. On the contrary, people will blame you for not protecting dharma (righteousness). Thus, it will not lead you to fame either.

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SLOKA WORD -

అనార్యజుష్టమ్ అస్వర్గ్యమ్, అకీర్తికరమర్జున!

SLOKA MEANING -

"This behavior is not suitable for a noble person, does not lead to heaven, and brings notoriety to you, Arjuna!"

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Sri Krishna spoke of these three flaws [resulting from untimely sorrow]. We need to understand the first flaw in detail, ana:rya jushtam. He says Arjuna’s such behavior will not please A:ryas (noble people). This term ‘a:rya’ is grossly misunderstood. He is saying - “If you refrain from waging war, it will not please A:ryas.” In other words, A:ryas will be delighted only if you wage this war. Here waging the war means – subduing wrong-doers and protecting good people. That will please Elders.

Sri Krishna refers to them as A:ryas. We all learned during our childhood in schools, terms like A:ryans, Dravidians, etc. We learned that A:ryas mean dwellers in the northern side of India. Dravidians are dwellers of South-India. In further lessons, we learnt that these people originated from Egypt or Babylonia and migrated gradually along the banks of rivers and conquered the people of India… and that their skin color is light… and that A:ryas are responsible for setting up the caste system… the remaining people of India are called ‘ana:ryas’ or Dravidians, who were subdued by A:ryas… A:ryas imposed their views and suppressed Dravidians.

We all studied such lessons in our books. Hence, we think A:ryas are the ones who conquer and suppress other people. Indeed, that is far from the truth. The term ‘A:rya’ is a very misinterpreted one. The word ‘A:rya’ by itself, is a noble one. However, the idea we are made to believe about that term A:rya, is incorrect.

Who are A:ryas? It is wrong to say that the tribes who migrated south around 7,000 – 8,000 BCE are called A:ryas. Then who are A:ryas? We see this term – “A:rya” – in our ancient literature extensively as well. In Ramayana, mother Si:tha (supposedly from the A:ryan race) referred to a monkey, who hailed from South India – from the so-called ‘Dravidian’ race as “A:rya!”

“O Hanuman! You are A:rya, saying that you will punish these demons [as retaliation for causing me misery]. Is this appropriate?” In this case, is Hanuman an A:rya? Or ana:rya / Dravidian? Let’s get this straight. A:ryas do not mean the people who came from elsewhere. Irrespective of whichever region a person belongs to, whatever be his skin color, whichever caste he belongs to… if a person adopts good practices / way of living and is impartial in all aspects… tries to spread good knowledge to the people around him… is always willing to learn from knowledgeable elders… such a person is called an A:rya. A person without these qualities is ‘ana:rya’. This is the definition given by our learned elders.

We should not be influenced by concepts given by Westerners regarding this term ‘a:rya’. Let me explain the context to you [of the incident narrated in Ramayana]. Ra:vana was killed in the war. Hanuma:n was sent to Si:tha by Rama to convey a reassuring message - “Lanka is now ours. O Si:tha! You need not fear any longer.” Hanuma:n goes to mother Si:tha and conveys that message. On hearing that message, Si:tha was overjoyed. She says to Hanuma:n – “You have indeed done a great favor. How can I show my gratitude to you?”

Hanuma:n replies – “You have been tortured mentally over past 10 months in Lanka by these rakshasis (demons). Simply give me permission to teach them all a lesson. I will make them suffer much more than what they did to you.” Mother Si:tha responds, – “No, Hanuma! That is not right!” They are just employees following instructions given to them by their employer, the King. Whatever they have done is not wrong. It was their job. Ra:vana employed them just to do that job. They had been doing their job properly, as instructed. If anything, they need to be given incentive. Instead, you want to hurt them. That is not how an A:rya like you should act.

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SLOKA WORD -

का:र्यम् करुणमार्येण

SLOKA MEANING -

"You are a noble one, the one who can distinguish what is appropriate and what is not."

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An intelligent person - a very knowledgeable one. You are one who can distinguish what is appropriate and what is not. It does not befit you to ask like this. In this context, Mother Si:tha addressed Hanuma:n as ‘A:rya!’ Thus, that term refers to Elders (knowledgeable) – irrespective of their species, caste or religion. They know what is good, they encourage good deeds; they stand up for what is right and good. Blessings from such learned people are to be sought by everyone.

God says - “So, dear Arjuna! If you say you will not wage war at this time, that will not be appreciated by A:ryas.” Hence such an act will be labeled ‘ana:rya jushtam’. Saying so, Sri Krishna is inspiring Arjuna to realize himself and take up his duty. He will subsequently start teaching how Arjuna can carry out his rightful duty in the second chapter. We will get to know how He does that, as we continue. Jai Srimannarayana!

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