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1. Episode Title: Episode 50 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 50)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The nature of the soul and its eternal existence, Understanding birth and death from a spiritual perspective, The connection between souls and bodies, The impact of human actions on the environment and other beings, The teachings of Krishna on the essence of life and existence.

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, soul, birth, death, karma, ji:va, nature, environment, spiritual guidance, Arjuna, Krishna

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), We are discussing a:rya jushta jna:na (knowledge accepted by Elders) as instructed by Sri Krishna in Bhagavad Gita, chapter two.

In 2.20, the Lord described the characteristics of ji:va (soul). We say so many people are born here and so many others have died somewhere. Birth and death are two words. What do they mean? Many people have a big doubt. You say that souls are not born, but look at the increase in population. Previously, it was said the Indian population was 3 crores. Now it has increased to 135 crores! However, you say souls are not born. Do souls take birth or not? No, they don’t. Do they die or not? No, they don’t. Then why does the population increase? That’s the irony.

If we pour water on a plate and tilt it to one side, it feels as if that side is full of water and the other is empty. Similarly, if tilted to the other side, it feels as if that side is full and this side is empty. As long as there is water on the plate, depending on which side we are tilting the plate, it feels as if new water is coming from somewhere to one side and the other side is empty, but we know there is no such thing. We should note that the ‘increase’ in population is happening in a similar way. Souls are never born. They get connected with bodies and then lose that connection after some time. The connection of the soul with the body is termed as birth. Soul leaving bodies is termed death. Souls always exist and bhu:thas (elements) always exist.

How is that? Let’s talk about something we all know. Earlier, there were a large number of trees. Trees also have soul in them, right? In every tree, there is a ji:va (soul), not one but many. Our body also has many ji:vas. A microscope reveals hundreds and thousands of living cells within a single drop of blood. Each one has a ji:va. There are crores of such ji:vas in a body, but there is only one monitor or leader whom we refer to as “I”. All the cells in the body work and do their duties properly under his supervision. They never say, “I won’t listen to you, I won’t do it.” If they say that, that means the person has a fever! One cell didn’t follow instructions, formed his team, and started revolting against the leader; hence there was a strike in the body. We can’t bear that when it happens. Sometimes we may get a fever or fall ill… sometimes we may lose our life or at other times we may fall sick and then later recover. This happens when they don’t listen to us; otherwise, we will be fine. We will be living with… and going through our life's journey with crores of ji:vas in us. That same applies for trees as well.

This is a body. There are crores of ji:vas in it and a leader for all of them. Even in a tree body, there is a certain “I”, who feels “I am a mango, I am a coconut, I am a custard apple, I am a chikoo, I am a guava, etc.” Whatever [fruit] it is… There is someone [leader cell] who thinks of it as him and is referred to by a name. Along with him is a congregation of several ji:vas (member souls) spreading through the body as his life substance. He [leader soul] imposes his characteristics on all the member souls based on his karma (actions). Hence, all of them smell of guava, etc. Whatever characteristics we built due to our karma, we have imposed the same [to the member souls]. Thus, we think of ourselves by a specific name. The same goes for trees and animals as well - be it fish, hens, goats, pigs, or any others.

In the past, the human population was only 3 crores. At that time, the population of the rest of the species was very high. The population of insects, trees, and animals was high and everyone lived in their domains. After man became greedy, degraded in thought, and devoid of knowledge of what is right or wrong, he started cutting down all the trees. He started killing anything that moved, all the different types of animals, and eating them. Our hearts break when we hear how many lakhs of animals are slaughtered like that every day. Man is separating so many ji:vas from their bodies. It is fine if he separates them, but in addition, he is not giving them an opportunity to take birth again.

For example, in hens, they use technology to make sure hens don’t lay eggs or even if they do, the eggs don’t hatch. If man allowed the eggs to hatch, hens could have increased their race on their own. Now using artificial means, man made sure they don’t lay eggs or the eggs don’t hatch. These are called broiler hens. What will happen to the ji:vas who are supposed to be born in them? If we left them on their own, there would be some ji:vas in the bodies of hens, goats, fish, etc. Man is cutting all the trees and transforming forests into concrete jungles. What will happen to the ji:vas who are supposed to be in those trees? We are preventing them from entering their destined bodies. And humans have no control. That is, we have opened the doors here and closed the doors there. So, whoever is supposed to be born there is coming to us.

The population is increasing because ji:vas who are supposed to be born in animal bodies like dogs, hens, fish, goats, trees, or insects like flies or mosquitoes, are unable to take birth there or get new bodies there. Since they have to go wherever they can to get bodies and there are plenty of opportunities to get new bodies as humans, they are being born as humans. They need to get a body and they are getting bodies as humans. We may recall the Y2K dilemma. Western countries were concerned that all their computer programs would crash. So they ‘imported’ everyone from across the world, especially from India, who had the slightest knowledge of computers. However, 5 to 6 years later, they felt these people weren’t qualified. Hence, not needing them, sent them back. At first, it was a ‘boom’ for those folks, followed by ‘doom’. We know of situations where they had to leave everything as is and return all of a sudden. Just like the water which flows wherever there is opportunity, these souls also got ready to take bodies wherever there was opportunity.

So the souls supposed to be born as animals, trees, and insects took birth as humans. Therefore, there are animals roaming around in human form. There are insects and wild animals who are born as humans. Today we see so many atrocities being committed by humans. Aren’t they all human beings? Can humans do such things? Can such a thought process exist in humans? We don’t know. Yet it is there! It means he should have been in some forest as a wild animal. Instead, he was born as a human. The human population increased because we kept the doors open here so they took several bodies as humans… but maybe they were actually destined to be a different species altogether! Ji:vas didn’t increase but they occupied more space [in the human plane].

Just as we tilt a plate to one side, we feel water is unevenly spread; the flow of ji:vas meant to go elsewhere came towards the human race. Hence the human population has grown to 7 billion. However, the count of ji:vas has not increased. It remained constant. We don’t know how many there are. In nature, everything else is in the same proportion as it should be, except they change places and formations. If there is a big flood somewhere, water is not being ‘created’ there. The water which was supposed to be at some other place came to this side. Hence, a drought occurred in one place and a flood at another. Similarly, if water flows to another place, a flood occurs there and a drought results at some other place. To maintain a stable situation everywhere, man has to work very hard. Or man shouldn’t be doing impious acts. We are not able to ensure people avoid sinful acts. So, we see these imbalances as of late. We notice the domination of the human race and how humans prevent any other race from living in their natural state.

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SLOKA WORD -

na ja:yathe:

SLOKA MEANING -

[ji:vas] are not born

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In 2.20, the Lord is giving an upade:sa (instruction). This instruction is not given to deceive Arjuna. It is not meant to be an entertaining speech for someone who just finished his lunch. Nor was it given because others instructed Him to do so as he had no other work. The Lord is not talking about ma:ya thatthva (illusion), but rather the real thatthva (truth). Because the aim of this teaching was to relieve the sorrow of the one who is in sorrow and to provoke thought in the one who stopped thinking, Sri Krishna took up the task of stating actual truths the way they are.

Lord is summarizing what the Ve:das (sacred texts) have declared - thaththva (eternal truths) to mankind via Arjuna. Therefore, He says…

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SLOKA WORD -

na ja:yathe:

SLOKA MEANING -

ji:va is not newly born

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SLOKA WORD -

na mri:yathe:

SLOKA MEANING -

ji:va don’t die either

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He can neither be born nor die today, tomorrow, or yesterday.

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SLOKA WORD -

bhu:thva: bhavitha: bhu:yaha bhavitha

SLOKA MEANING -

he is eternally this way

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If he wasn’t there until now and will come into existence now, we can call him bhu:thva. Or if he is not there now and will come into existence tomorrow, we can call him bhavitha. If he was there once and came into existence again, we can call him punaha bhu: bhavitha. There is nothing like that with ji:va. He is nithya (always existing), ajaha (no death). Sri Krishna explains this very clearly in verse 2.20. Let's try to understand it. Jai Srimannarayana!

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