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1. Episode Title: Episode 52 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 52)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The nature of grief and its origins, Understanding the imperishable nature of the soul, Krishna's teachings on the body and soul relationship, The significance of knowledge in overcoming sorrow, The analogy of clothes and bodies in the context of life and death

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Arjuna, Krishna, grief, soul, a:thma (soul), karma, knowledge, imperishable, de:ha (body), sari:ra (body), vasthra (clothing), ajam (without birth), avyayam (imperishable)

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), Grief is that which comes to a human being upon invitation. It is that which manifests when one’s intellect declines. One can be free from grief when one gains valuable knowledge through Elders or learning on one’s own. The Upanishad states, "tharathi so:kam a:thmavith" (one who knows the nature of the soul will not experience grief).

Arjuna was experiencing grief in performing his duty. Sri Krishna taught Bhagavad Gita to alleviate Arjuna’s sorrow. We also experience grief while doing our duties in fear of losing any possessions, or attaining something undesirable, or for failing to attain the desirable, or for not getting rid of anything undesired, or for something unnecessary coming our way. One may experience different degrees of sorrow. How much should we care about such sorrow? Should we limit it to the level of the body, or at the level of the soul? If we attain a:thma thaththva jna:na (knowledge of the soul), we can tolerate any kind of discomfort to the body. We need not cry over anything unnecessarily.

In 2.21, in the process of educating Arjuna on his duty, Sri Krishna questions him about who can kill another. He teaches him that all souls act as per their own karma.

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SLOKA WORD -

veda:vina:sinam nithyam ya e:nam ajam avyayam |

kattham sa purushah pa:rttha! kam gha:thayathi hanthi kam ||

SLOKA MEANING -

Know that which is ought to be known. What must he know? Know that you will never perish. This is what He is stating, the summary.

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The ji:va (soul), i.e., each one of us, never dies. Why is he avina:si (imperishable)? Because he is nithya (ever existing)! Anything that is nithya is imperishable. The sky is nithya. Does anyone say that the sky has perished? No! Anything nithya is imperishable. Earth, air, water, fire - they do not perish. If not seen here, they are somewhere else. They reached somewhere else. We must remember this fact.

The a:thma (soul) does not perish. Why? He states that a:thma is nithya, ever existing. What type of being is he? How do we know him? It is enough to know him as ajam (without birth) and avyayam (imperishable). Ajam means one who doesn’t take birth. Avyayam means one who has no deterioration. The body gradually deteriorates. One who may be 6 feet tall shrinks down to 3 or 4 feet in old age. This means that the substances composing the body are gradually reaching their sources. The respective constituent elements of the body reach their sources. The body also reaches its source which is matti (earth).

How about ji:vas (souls), all of us? Where should we reach? It should not be a place that makes one ignorant. It should not be a place that’s known for ignorance. It should be a place where there is glory of knowledge. When this is the goal, we travel there. We, therefore, do not cry over this. There is no such concept as ‘killing’. Therefore, understand this.

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SLOKA WORD -

ajam avyayam

SLOKA MEANING -

that with no birth and no deterioration

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The ji:va is by nature knowledgeable, without deterioration. However, it ‘deteriorates’ because of karma. He gets enveloped into a ‘deteriorated’ state when loads of karma dominate him. His [original] state becomes visible to the extent that his karma is relieved, i.e., as karmic influence is reduced. As a lamp is cleaned, the clarity of its light increases accordingly. However, we cannot see the diya (lamp) if smoke accumulates into thick soot. This is what we must remember. The soul is never in a gradual decline. The accumulated soot makes people think the light of the lamp is fading… a diya keeps glowing even if the sooty smoke blocks our vision. Because it (lamp, i.e., body) is ache:thana (inanimate). It is made out of ache:thana substance. The ji:va is che:thana (conscious). Diminishing knowledge does not apply to him.

The sun, for example, exudes light. When he supplies it to us, we say it is our daytime. When he is not facing our side, he is giving the same to a different area. He is not idle even for a moment. We get tired after working during the day and take rest later. Does the sun sleep?! Does he diminish? It is said that he diminishes after many millions and billions of years, something we cannot perceive. Exquisitely, a:thma’s jna:na a:kruthi (knowledge form) is eternal and also does not change. Hence, it is avyayam, that to which vyavam (deterioration) is not applicable.

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SLOKA WORD -

ajam avyayam e:nam yaha avina:sinam nithyam ve:da

SLOKA MEANING -

It has two qualities, ajam and avyayam. It is indestructible, and thus recognized to be eternally existing.

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So, why do you say that you will be killed or worry that he will be killed? What does it mean to kill or get killed? Can a ji:va ever die? You are the indwelling ji:va. Can you exhibit your ability outside of a body? No. To teach him the knowledge of the soul, Sri Krishna separates the characteristics of the body and demonstrates it. He thus explains what is the nature of a:thma.

He is elaborating the same in another beautiful method. He compares bodies with clothes. He uses an example of clothes to help us understand. Bhagavad Gita, chapter 2, verse 22…

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SLOKA WORD -

vasa:msi ji:rna:ni yattha: viha:ya nava:ni gruhna:thi naro::para:ni |

thattha: sari:ra:ni: viha:ya ji:rna:ni anya:ni samya:thi nava:ni de:hi: ||

SLOKA MEANING -

Just as a human being sheds worn-out clothes and accepts new ones, in the same way, the soul leaves the worn-out body and accepts a new one based on karma.

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It’s a great verse, one heard often. If not during someone’s lifetime, then at the time of death. Maybe people think it is applicable only at such times and not at other times. Hence, they recite it in such situations, and not otherwise. It’s a great verse though.

What do we do? We wear clothes to protect the body. Afterward, the clothes may get soiled or wet. What do we do then? We wash and dry the current set of clothes, putting on a fresh dried one. Do we stay in the same soiled set of clothes… or a torn set of clothes? We don’t know why, it’s a trend these days to wear intentionally torn and stitched clothes. It has become a fashion. Elders believed that wearing purposely torn clothes is not auspicious. It is inauspicious for those wearing and for others around. We must realize that putting on fresh and neat clothes can negate that inauspiciousness.

Anyways, clothes protect us when worn - they then get soiled after some time. We then put them away and take on a new set of clothes. We have done this countless times since entering this body. The number of days in this body is less than the number of times we have changed clothes. People wear one outfit in the morning and probably change to another in the afternoon, and another in the evening. Some “cool” people change into new clothes for every instance. They feel that what’s used once must not be used again. When bought to be used only once, it is named ji:rna vasthra (worn-out clothing). He purchases it to use it only once. So, he sheds it after using it once. Does he cry because he has to shed it after having it on for the whole day? He doesn’t. He puts on new clothes happily!

Thus, you are not sad about having to change to new clothes after the old is soiled. Similarly, for you, the indwelling ji:va, the body is also a vasthra (protective cloth).

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SLOKA WORD -

vas thra

SLOKA MEANING -

vas, that which is on you; thra, that which protects you

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We are not worried about changing these vasthras, getting a new one. We happily accept them.

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SLOKA WORD -

vasa:msi ji:rna:ni yattha: viha:ya

SLOKA MEANING -

leaving them

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SLOKA WORD -

nava:ni gruhna:thi

SLOKA MEANING -

accepting new

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SLOKA WORD -

naraha

SLOKA MEANING -

human being

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SLOKA WORD -

apara:ni

SLOKA MEANING -

another new body

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SLOKA WORD -

thattha: sari:ra:ni: viha:ya ji:rna:ni

SLOKA MEANING -

in the same way, leaving the body that is worn out after using

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SLOKA WORD -

anya:ni samya:thi nava:ni de:hi:

SLOKA MEANING -

gets a new proper vasthra (body) based on the karma as decided by Him, by nature

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He then gets a new body and is named de:hi (the one who possesses a body). What he shed was sari:ra (body), what he wears is de:ha (body). As soon as wearing it, he wishes to acquire things and add to it. That which is able to accept what’s added to it and thus grow, is termed de:ha. Once the accumulation is done, each part gradually begins to deteriorate. That surface which is in the state of deterioration (si:ryathe:), hence it is termed sari:ra.

Rohit Nannegari - why was this frame deleted? | Two names for the same body - de:ha in the growth phase and sari:ra in the deteriorating phase. Simple! When someone’s body is young and growing, don’t ask – “how is your sari:ra?” Ask, “how is your de:ha?” That’s when it is auspicious to him. It indicates a blessing of wellness.

This is what we must realize. When de:has (bodies) are ready to shed by themselves or when they are shed, it’s not necessary to cry. Just as we are ready to change clothes, we must be ready to change the body. What it means is that we must not cry about it. We must not cry about the deteriorated body or the ji:va having left it. The ji:va is happy with a new vasthra, a protective layer (body). Why cry?

Sri Krishna is thus consoling Arjuna and giving us hitham (a message that is beneficial and favorable) for us. Let’s learn further… Jai Srimannarayana!

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