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1. Episode Title: Episode 54 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 54)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The nature of the soul and its immortality, Understanding the relationship between body and soul, The analogy of cutting and the subtleness of the soul, The limitations of physical elements in affecting the soul, Krishna's teachings on the eternal nature of the soul

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, a:thma (soul), Krishna, Arjuna, immortality, dharma, reality, karma, spiritual knowledge

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), Through Bhagavad Gita, God is teaching mankind the path accepted by Elders (those with firm scriptural knowledge and practice). The human body is given for the purpose of exercising one’s duty…that which benefits society around you. Sometimes, trying to benefit someone can also bring pain. A mother opts to punish her child who is being stubborn, cranky, not studying, etc. Though punishment is not recommended, she does so for the child’s benefit. The father also chooses the same for the child’s benefit. This is what a well-wisher does.

Sri Krishna has the desire for the well-being of humankind. He therefore uses the situation with Arjuna as a means to enlighten human beings with thathva jna:na (knowledge of reality). As part of that, He is explaining ‘souls’. He explained ‘bodies’ with an analogy of the clothes we wear. We put on a set of clothes and change into new clothes at the appropriate time. We don’t worry when changing into new clothes. Similarly, we change bodies based on karma (recorded history of one’s actions), and hence need not be worried [about the change in bodies]. He clarified this.

Soul’s nature! If visible, would be easy to explain. This is not the case, hence, God takes all the pain to explain this in chapter 2. Explaining a:thma (soul), He elaborates on why it does not get destroyed. What must happen for something to be destroyed? This is also a process like eating, drinking, watching, hitting, killing, etc. What exactly happens in the process of killing something? This is what we need to know. He is explaining it here.

When we take a knife to slice a fruit, what do we do? We insert a knife and break it apart. Then, we say it has been cut open. We need a suitable tool to cut. Whatever is targeted to be cut needs a substance that can be cut. [The fruit] It must have the quality of being cut. [The knife] It must be able to cut. One must be able to cut and the other must accept the cut. Only then, it will be possible to cut the fruit. Otherwise, it is not possible to cut it.

If you take a betel leaf and try to cut the fruit…the fruit has the quality of accepting the cut but…the leaf does not have the ability to cut it. Right? Similarly, if using a knife to cut a diamond…the knife has the ability to cut. The diamond does not have the quality of being cut by a knife. Therefore, it will not be in such a state. Why go to the level of diamond? Let’s take water or air. What happens if you pick up a sword and try to cut wind, moving air? Air cannot be cut. One may try to swing his sword from this end to another, or use a hammer and hit it. His hand will merely hurt, but air does not get broken into pieces. If trying to slice water, the same situation. Water also does not have the quality of being broken. If it is a chunk of ice, there is a possibility of breaking it. However, cutting water to slices - that never happens. Water does not have the eligibility of being cut. A knife does not have the ability to cut it. We hope you understand.

Similarly, a:thma is an object. You say you are going to be killing the a:thmas (souls). However, does an a:thma have the eligibility of getting killed? Is there any object that has the ability to kill a:thma? Killing is to break it, separate it into pieces. Breaking a fruit into pieces involves piercing it. If you need to break the floor, you need to make way into it to do so. One must chisel into a stone and break it. The instrument does the task [of breaking it]. What is the instrument that can break a:thma? This is the question. You may say we can use anything to break. Can you use a knife? Can a knife go into the a:thma? It cannot. A:thma is so subtle, very, very small. Even raising 10 to the power of -26, it cannot be reached. There is no question of separating it into any pieces. For example, fruit requires cutting it into pieces in order to be broken. A:thma is defined as niravayavi (that which does not have any parts). What do we break it into? It can enter into anything, including the very knife that we want to use for breaking it! Because a:thma is so minute.

We are able to hear what others are saying via a phone. Whatever that other person is speaking is reaching us. What are they reaching us through? Can you ‘see’ the words? They are getting transmitted. You are responding back as well. There are signals that carry these words to you. Those signals are extremely minute. How small are they? Even if sitting inside a closed room, they can enter it. How? Wherever there is a possible space, they penetrate. It could be through windows or some gap between the door and the floor. Or they can also enter through light rays. We don’t know how thin the rays of light are. Therefore, we cannot recognize them because of their su:kshmathvam (subtleness). We know this.

Is there anything that can possibly enter a:thma? nainam chhindanthi sasthrani: (weapons cannot cut it), says so in the 23rd verse:

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SLOKA WORD -

nainam chhindanthi sasthrani:

nainam dahathi pa:vakaha |

na chainam kle:dayanthy a:po: na so:shayathi ma:ruthaha ||

SLOKA MEANING -

Weapons cannot cut it, fire cannot burn it, water cannot wet it, and wind cannot dry it.

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Arjuna! Anything that is used to break, cut, or kill a:thma, must be able to first get into it. If it enters, then there is a possibility to cut it. You cannot insert any weapon into a:thma. Therefore, cutting it is ruled out. nainam chhindanthi sasthrani: Okay, maybe it’s not possible to cut it. How about burning it? Can we? No. Why? Rays of fire particles will be able to enter a:thma only if a:thma is made of a minimum of two parts. A:thma is subtler than the cells of the fire particles. Hence, it is not possible for them to enter.

If you put a stone in the midst of flowing water, the water simply flows around the stone. The stone stays as is. Whereas, what happens if you place some sand? The water particles are subtler than the sand particles, so they enter in and if the pressure is high, break them and the sand particles float along with them. Because the stone particles are thicker than the water particles, there is no chance of the opposite. Hence, they make their way around the stone and move ahead. What it means is that the water particles are thinner than the earth particles. They are subtler, smaller. Fire particles are thinner and smaller than the water particles. Therefore, the fire particles can enter the water particles.

Example: If you place a vessel filled with water on a stove, water gets heated. How and Why? Because we lit a fire and so it’s heated. Yet, isn’t there a layer of protection, the vessel, between the fire and the water? How did the fire particles get in there? We should know this. Even though the water particles are thinner than the vessel particles, because the vessel particles are strong, they do not pass through the vessel. However, fire particles are subtler than the vessel particles and are able to penetrate and make their way through the vessel particles. They then enter the water particles, ‘heating’ the water. What does it mean to heat them? The fire particles spread themselves in between the water. Therefore, it feels hot when touched. They gradually convert water into steam. As long as the vessel is on the stove, the process continues. When the vessel is taken off, the fire particles gradually leave as steam and the water cools down to normal temperature, without burning. What it means is that fire particles are more subtle than water and earth (vessel).

There are even thinner particles than that of fire. Air particles! That is why, when air penetrates accumulated fire, they spread and intensify the fire. Thus, we can deduce air particles are thinner than fire particles. Sky particles are even more subtler than air particles. Thus, the sky particles do not let air particles penetrate them, but they can in turn penetrate air. That is why they penetrate and stop the movement of air past a limit. All of this is a great process. A:thma is smaller than particles of earth, water, fire, air, and sky. Even sky particles cannot penetrate it. What can they do in that case? A:thma can penetrate them, but air cannot penetrate it. Because a:thma is smaller. Therefore, any substance made of earth, water, fire, air, or sky particles - none of them can affect a:thma. He thus declares the subtleness of a:thma in the 23rd verse. Jai Srimannarayana!

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