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1. Episode Title: Episode 58 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 58)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The nature of the soul and its unchangeable qualities, Understanding the importance of duty and societal benefit, Krishna's teachings on overcoming sorrow and ignorance, The significance of following the wisdom of elders and scriptures

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Arjuna, Krishna, soul, dharma, ignorance, sorrow, societal benefit, teachings of elders, spiritual knowledge

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), Bhagavad Gita is a spiritual science, physical science, and a logical science. It is also scientific and a psychological science that transforms the nature of a person and motivates him to do his duty. The Lord ensured Bhagavad Gita can be used in many different ways. That is why Bhagavad Gita remains a standard even today after thousands of years.

We are trying to learn about it in a stha:li pula:ka ny:aya (inferring the whole by understanding a few parts). This scripture is also related to nya:ya (laws and rules), meaning it is a logical scripture. They clarify a subject, tell why, the reason behind it, and provide an example for it. They gave them a few names like paksha (aspect), he:thuvu (reason), and drushta:ntha (example).

To alleviate Arjuna from sorrow and inspire him to do his duty, Lord Krishna is clarifying a:thma (soul) thatthva (truth) jnana (knowledge) and the qualities of this body. Our Elders never did anything according to their discretion. We can do so in regards to things that are visible. For example, fruit is visible. If it has germs on it, we know not to eat it. Recently, they showed somewhere that as they peeled the skin of an orange, it had hundreds of germs. Even those who eat meat don’t feel like eating it when they see it. They feel disgusted and can’t eat it when they see it like that.

Because this is clearly visible, we can avoid it by concluding that it is not good for us. But telling about the things that are invisible like the chaithanya (awareness), or jna:na (knowledge) or knowledge possessing a:thma (soul) is very difficult. In fact, we are unable to understand even if we are told about those things that are visible. We are unable to see viruses. But some folks who were able to see it drew it like a ball. They put a few thorns on it and called it ‘coronavirus’. They said it is so dangerous, it will damage your taste and smell, make you fatigued, make you sick, and take your life.

What do we do then? Try not to get it. How? Follow three precautions to avoid getting it:

1. Wash your hands

2. Wear masks, don’t touch your mouth or nose

3. Maintain at least a 6 ft distance between one person and the other

How many people are following this today? We wear a mask half-heartedly because we are supposed to wear it, pulling it up and down, touching everywhere though we are advised not to touch it. We wear it just for the satisfaction of the people who are advising us. They ask us to wash our hands frequently for sanitization. As we cannot see that part, let’s leave that topic. We are advised to wash our hands if we touch anything. We are touching everything, not sure how many times we are washing our hands. It is advised that we maintain a 6 ft distance between people. Wherever we look, people are in crowds close to each other.

We are not saying this to criticize someone. This is about something we can see. We are told the consequences for it. We are seeing our friends or relatives falling prey to it, still, we are not willing to follow the precautions. This is something we can see. Now to tell a person about something which we can’t see, a:thma (soul), and make him follow some rules, how difficult would it be? In how many different ways should that person be told?

One more irony is that all these rules (for corona) are for a particular sect of people who they feel are subordinates and can be easily ordered! The ones who can be easily ordered are schools and students. They said schools must be closed, and to send students home. If possible, teach them online; it doesn’t matter whether they learn something or not. Why? It is because of them, lives are being endangered, the virus is spreading, etc.

What we have to think about is opening hotels and eating places next to garbage… and when people eat in such polluted and dirty places, there is no restriction on them. They are not being shut down nor are they advised not to eat in such places. Those are being kept open, and theatres are kept open. But small children and their education were made scapegoats. We don’t understand the purpose of this.

All these we are able to see, still, it is so difficult to make people follow the rules. But we don’t see a:thma (soul), jnana (knowledge), or dharma (right practices). To make people follow some rules naturally in regards to them, we can understand how much more difficult that would be. When we hear Sri Krishna’s words in Bhagavad Gita, we may feel why He is saying the same thing so many times repeatedly. The Lord is not saying the same thing; there will be something different each time He says it. The question is, will we be able to recognize the difference or not?

If we have sincere interest and pay attention to it, then we can definitely grasp the meaning of it. Sri Krishna says that being ignorant of soul-related knowledge, if you stop performing actions, learned people will not appreciate it. Learned people are jna:nis (wise individuals); they gave us a set of rules regarding how one should behave. We may like some, and we may find a few difficult. A few of them may appear to be benefiting us, while a few may appear to be causing us loss. But what it does to you individually doesn’t matter (whether it gives you gain or loss, whether you like it or dislike), but what society needs is more important.

What is beneficial to the general mass of the population, which needs to be told, that is what Krishna does in Bhagavad Gita. If you enforce a ‘lockdown’, personally it is a great inconvenience and causes losses to an individual, but because it is good for society at large, are we not saying that it is good to follow it? This is related to a very small issue in the visible spectrum. A:thma (soul) is quite inscrutable. That thaththva (truth), the supreme entity responsible for the existence of our bodies. To make someone get the right perspective about it is so difficult. But once we know about it, we will become blissful. We will be able to live in the manner and walk in the path taught by our Elders/learned people, and they will be happy to see our progress. We can become a:ryajushta:s (noble persons).

Krishna is telling Arjuna, "What you are about to do is ana:rya jushta (ignoble), so don’t do it." Why? In verse 2.25, Krishna says a:thma (soul) is avika:ryo (unchangeable). An interesting aspect here… Avika:ra means one which cannot change. He could have just used avika:ra. Instead of saying avika:ra, He said avikarya:ha, he added ya:h in the end. Why did He do that? To say that it doesn’t have the capability to undergo any change. Every object has some (inherent) capabilities. A betel leaf doesn’t have the capability to cut wood. A knife, sword, or axe may have that capability. You can’t take a betel leaf and try to cut a stone or wood. The leaf doesn’t have the capability to cut, and the stone or wood doesn’t have the capability to be cut by it.

We have discussed these two in the previous verse related to acchedya:ha (indestructible) and the verse before it. Here also, the Lord is saying in the same way; a:thma (soul) is avika:ryaha (unchangeable). What it means is that the soul is not capable of it. He is explaining it through a good anuma:na (inference). A:thma is avika:ryaha, soul is that which is not capable of undergoing any change. Why? Because it is avyakthathva:th (not a visible entity). Why? It is like I:shwara thatthva (supreme entity God). He gave a suitable example to clarify that.

What about the body? Sarira (body) is vika:ryaha (changeable), undergoes changes. There is no doubt about this. In yesteryears, we were different; today we look different. Someone who was a young boy a few years back has become old today. We ourselves can see this change. Hence, the body is vika:rya:ha (changeable); it undergoes change and has the capacity to change. As the body is vyakthathva:th (visible), this visibility makes something capable of change. Ghatavath (like a pot).

Sri Krishna says a:thma is avyaktho:ya (invisible), achhinthyo:ya (unimaginable), avika:ryoyamuchyathe (unchangeable). Because of the above reasons, thasma:d e:va vidithva: e:nam (therefore, whoever knows this clearly) has no reason to cry - na:nu so:chithuma:rhasi (there is no need to cry). There is no need to cry for souls or bodies, whoever it might be, it might be yours, Bhi:shma’s, Dro:na’s, or anyone else’s. Krishna is making an effort to alleviate Arjuna’s sorrow by talking about the qualities of body and soul. The Lord also makes it clear that it is explained by Elders. He says that he need not listen to it just because He is explaining it. I am stating that which is declared in sa:sthra (scriptures). The same is explained by Elders. I am teaching the same which is approved by Elders.

Regarding what is invisible, we have to believe what they say. If one day you see that thaththva (truth), supreme truth, and if it negates this, maybe then you need not follow it, but till then you have to follow it. Saying that, Sri Krishna is inspiring Arjuna to wage the war and proceeds further to explain the same in a different way. Jai Srimannarayana! Jai Srimannarayana!

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