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1. Episode Title: Episode 6 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 6)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The role of gurus and their guidance, Understanding Arjuna's cowardice, Krishna's teachings on duty and action, The importance of overcoming weakness, The nature of true humanity and responsibilities

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Arjuna, Krishna, duty, cowardice, humanity, responsibilities, Upanishads, Sri Rama

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), Gurus or a:cha:ryas (teachers) are those who teach us what our duties are. God inspires and protects such a:cha:ryas. That God incarnated as Sri Krishna. One of God’s deeds is to bring a capable yet strayed person back on track and carry out righteous activities for society through that person. Hence, Bhagavad Gita chapter 2 starts with Sri Krishna inspiring Arjuna to carry out righteous deeds.

Arjuna slumped in the battlefield, not wanting to fight the war. He felt compassion towards the unworthy Kauravas. He thinks that hurting Kauravas will make them sorrowful. He will be deprived of happiness after winning the kingdom. Why? Because if he vanquishes them in the war, with whom will he share his joy? He will be deprived of joy as there will be none around with whom he can share his happiness. That was the thought process of Arjuna. This thought process made the capable and efficient Arjuna incapacitated and inactive. This condition is called ‘kli:batha’ – ‘klaibyam’ (cowardice).

Sri Krishna’s efforts are to free Arjuna from this kli:batha via His upade:sa (teaching) to him in Bhagavad Gita chapter 2.

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SLOKA WORD -

klaibyam ma:smagamah pa:rttha!

naithath thawy yupapadyathe: I

kshudram hrudaya dourbalyam

thyakthva: u:tthistta paranthapa ||

SLOKA MEANING -

“O Arjuna! Do not succumb to this cowardice! This is not befitting for you. Cast off this weakness of heart and arise, O scorcher of enemies!”

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Sri Krishna addresses Arjuna, “You are a paranthapa!” The word paranthapa has two meanings. First - the one who subdues and conquers wrongdoings of another, however valorous and mighty that person might be. One who suppresses (thapa) and defeats the evil deeds of others (para) is a paran + thapa, paranthapa. Arjuna has such capabilities and has proved it many times. Whether Indra or Agni de:vatha (gods), if their actions were wrong or if he had to do a task, he did it successfully and proved himself. He became a paranthapa! Not just this, he has another quality also. He is paranthapa.

The second meaning of paranthapa is that param (ultimate truth or goal) is that which is worthy of knowing. In Thiruppavai songs, Goda Devi says ‘parai’ – ‘parai kolva:n’, ‘parai tharuva:n’. In Tamil, ‘param’ is called ‘parai’. Vedas dictate that the goal of life is to attain this ‘param’. You are that person whose thoughts are attuned towards achieving this param. You are the able one who can delineate the reality to realize that goal. You are a param thapa! How come you are in this state now? ‘klaibyam ma:smagamaha!’ Don’t be possessed by ‘klaibyam’. Else, you will be fit for nothing. You can neither enjoy life here nor in the higher worlds. You will become a loser. Thus, Sri Krishna advises Arjuna.

A person possessed by ‘kli:batha’ (cowardice) will neither be happy nor will keep others happy. Also, he won’t be able to tolerate others’ happiness. For example, old people without teeth can’t chew or munch on snacks or chips. They can’t watch others munching. That very sound irritates them. Recently, during our stay in Nadigaddapalem, a group of people in their 70s and 80s visited our a:sram (ashram). We were distributing nuts to the devotees. Because nuts are hard to bite, we gave them an orange which is soft to chew. “You gave them nuts. Give them to me too,” demanded the old man. We asked, “You don’t have teeth. How will you eat them?” He said, “So what? We will eat it somehow. We can find ways to eat them. If required, we will grind and consume them. It's ok. Give them to us.”

Not ready to accept reality - they can’t take up the usual activities. Kli:batha is also similar. He can’t be happy nor let others be happy. He becomes fit for neither. How come you have become a prey to kli:bam? That too in this place [battlefield].

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SLOKA WORD -

klaibyam ma:smagamah pa:rttha naithath thawy upapadyathe:

SLOKA MEANING -

“Do not succumb to this cowardice, for this is not befitting for you.”

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You were in this state once before when you were under a curse. One day Arjuna had gone to visit Indra, the king of de:vathas. Urvasi, the beautiful damsel, wanted to conjugate with him. But, she belonged to the de:vatha clan and was Indra’s partner. As Arjuna respected Indra as his god-father, he felt Urvasi was like a mother and thus, rejected her. Angered, Urvasi cursed Arjuna to become a eunuch. Hearing this, Indra felt bad. He felt it was not appropriate for Arjuna to live his whole life as a eunuch since he was so capable and helpful - born as his amsa (part). Hence, Indra reduced the time period of the curse given by Urvasi to one year. He also let Arjuna choose the time when to live like a eunuch. This curse became a boon when the Pandavas were in exile, especially for Arjuna. During the year of exile while staying in the residence of King Virata, Arjuna disguised himself as Bruhannala, a dance teacher to teach the king’s daughter. Thus, for that one year, he experienced the curse of Urvasi. The curse helped him.

Those days are over now! You are no longer in exile. Stop acting like a eunuch Bruhannala. You can’t declare that you won’t fight in war and simply collapse to the ground. This is not the right attitude!

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SLOKA WORD -

naithath thawy yupapadyathe:

SLOKA MEANING -

“This is not befitting for you.”

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You were freed from this condition the moment your exile ended, said Sri Krishna. Arjuna asks, “What should I do now?”

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SLOKA WORD -

thyakthva: hrudaya daurbalyam

SLOKA MEANING -

“Leave the weakness that has enveloped your mind.”

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“Leave it, uththishta (get up), do your duty.” Thus, Sri Krishna was addressing Arjuna, asking him how he was inflicted with this cowardice. You should not be in this state.

Facing a similar situation, Hanuman thought, “I won’t live anymore! All this happened because of my act! I came here in search of Sita, but I can’t find her! If I go back now and tell them, Rama and Lakshmana... along with Sugriva, all the Vanaras, Bharatha, Shatrughna, their mothers, the ministers… the whole of Ayodhya and Kishkindha will be destroyed!!” Unnecessary thoughts, extreme thoughts! Even you are in the same state! Bringing up all ‘big’ topics! Talking about ancestors, their abode, their befallen state! Why talk about all these? Forgetting and holding off from your duty... It doesn’t benefit you speaking of overly complicated topics now. Now, you must do the duty ordained to you.

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SLOKA WORD -

thyakthva: uththishta: paranthapa

SLOKA MEANING -

“Leave this and be prepared to jump into action.”

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Be prepared to jump into action! Uththishta, uththishtattha ja:gratha prapyavara:n nibodhatha: (wake up and act accordingly) dictates the Upanishads to the whole human race. Stop unnecessary thoughts. Stop futile actions. Identify your duty. Wake up and act accordingly!

Because it is tough to perform the duties of a human being, it’s like walking on a double-edged sword. One must carefully comprehend and act accordingly. Hence, our Elders say, it’s easier to be a de:vatha (god) or a tree or an animal or a bird. However, it is very tough to be a human being. You might question, “How is this so? We are all humans!?” That’s the catch… We’ve all been gifted with this human body, but do not have the conduct of a human being.

It is analogous to dressing up an inefficient person in a cop's uniform and giving him a gun. Can one become a police officer simply by wearing the uniform? Can one become a great warrior simply by holding a gun? He could be so frail that he would be frightened and run away by a small gust of wind. How dangerous is it? There is every chance for him to be attacked, robbed of his own weapon, and get killed. Just dressing up won’t help. It is of help only when one knows what to do.

We all got this human body because of the effect of some good deed in our past lives. However, now, we are unable to attain the state of behaving as a human being. Hence, we are inflicted with pandemics such as Corona, etc. Yet, many are taking advantage of this situation due to lack of humanity. People from various fields are exploiting the situation in their own way and making money. This is all because of a lack of humanity.

Our sages defined what it means to be a human being.

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SLOKA WORD -

mathva: karma:ni si:vyathi

SLOKA MEANING -

“Know what’s good, implement and conduct accordingly.”

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1 - Know about oneself

2 - Know one’s responsibility in the family

3 - Know one’s responsibility in the community

4 - Know one’s responsibility towards other beings and nature

5 - Know one’s responsibility towards the Supreme Lord who controls the whole Universe

Know about these five, coordinate and act accordingly. You must think from all five angles and act accordingly. A true human being is one whose conduct in life is driven by converging the responsibilities at all the five levels, such that none of them, neither society, family, nor he are troubled or compromised. His mindset would be considered incomplete if he misses even one of these levels.

Focusing on only one category and neglecting all others disqualifies him as a human being. A few worship only Nature, not believing in God… Some love only God and neglect society and Nature… Some care only about society and ignore other aspects. While others love only their own body, claiming they don’t care about anything else. Neglecting even one category will not make it whole. It's incomplete. Hence, all five categories should be taken care of.

Take care of your body, keeping it healthy. Safeguard your family and be comfortable. Love society and live together. Understand Nature and other beings and let them live peacefully in their respective places. Realize the presence of the Supreme and live your life accordingly. A human being is one who can blend all these factors and live in a way not causing discomfort or disturbance to any. That is called mananam (reflection).

A:lo:chana (thought process) is where thinking aligns in this way. A:charana (action) is where such a:lochana is brought into action. Living life as a human being is to synchronize a:lochana, right thought process, and a:charana, corresponding action. This is very difficult. Hence, God dedicated one entire incarnation, Sri Rama avatha:r (incarnation), to show mankind how difficult it is. He is a good human, the best one, the best among the best, purusho:tthama (the supreme person). He led life learning and following the limits, marya:da purusho:tthama (the ideal human being), Sri Rama! Hence, we worship him even today.

If you too can be one who follows limits and lives accordingly, society will worship you more than God Himself, despite being a human being. You need not go behind de:vathas (gods). All de:vathas will run behind you. You need not strive to get into others’ good books to earn their mercy. Instead, everyone will run after you to get your mercy. Hence, even today, we are building temples for Sri Rama because he is a perfect human being.

Lord gave this upade:sa (teaching) to mold us into real human beings. We need to give up this ‘klaibya’ (cowardice) to transform into real human beings.

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SLOKA WORD -

klaibyam ma:smagamah

thyakthva: hrudaya dourbalyam

SLOKA MEANING -

“Leave this obnoxious weakness in mind.”

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Uththishta (get up)! Be willing to do your duty. Act now! Thus, Sri Krishna is giving this upade:sa to remind Arjuna of his duty... to make us all duty-oriented… Let us learn how, further. Jai Srimannarayana!

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