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1. Episode Title: Episode 60 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 60)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The nature of life and death, Understanding rebirth, The importance of performing one's duty, Krishna's teachings on the inevitability of change, The relationship between nature and existence

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Arjuna, Krishna, rebirth, duty, nature, life, death, change, atheism, theism

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), Hearing the word ‘Bhagavad Gita’, we recall a wonderful verse. It is verse 2.27.

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SLOKA WORD -

ja:thasya hii dhruvo mruthyuhu dhruvam janma mruthasya cha

SLOKA MEANING -

Whoever is born will die, and whoever dies will take birth again.

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This is one verse. It is a very well-known verse. Many people know it by heart. But somehow it doesn’t sound right. It is also a dangerous verse. Because half of it is good and we can understand it whereas when you think of the other half, it scares you. How?

ja:thasya hi (whoever takes birth) - mruthyuhu (death) - dhruvaha (is inevitable). Lord is using the word ‘hii’ to indicate that everyone in the world knows it, meaning it’s popular. Meaning it is well known. Whatever is born has to die for sure. Everyone knows this, where is the need to doubt it? We don't need any scripture for this. But the other half is a big question which is difficult to comprehend.

dhruvam janma mruthasya cha (Whatever is gone or dead will take birth again for sure). That's the scary part. There is no place in this world for those newly born. As people keep passing away, we thought there will be some space for newly born. But now, if there is rebirth of those who were gone, where is the space to accommodate them on this earth?

Someone said we have a 700 billion population on this planet. This is a lot and shouldn’t be the case. We need to get it below 500 billion. That someone said that they created an engineered virus for that sake. So the poor guy wanted to reduce it by 200 billion. But all his efforts turned out to be useless because of great scientists in India. Our folks found a vaccination for that virus. They inspired people to take different precautions against it. We were able to protect our people from falling prey to the virus and whoever created it was able to save their people too. But the rest of the world became scapegoats. Whoever was destined to go passed away. But however hard they worked, they couldn’t do a lot of damage.

After working so hard to cut down the population, those dead are taking birth again, how challenging is the earth!? Today there are people who kill lakhs of beings per day for food, fun, business or for other purposes. They could be killing human beings, animals, insects or bacteria. Forget about the beings like bacteria or microorganisms which can’t be seen. Creatures which can be seen, sea creatures like fish or those on the land like hens, pigs… dogs, foxes and many more. All these are killed for business or other purposes, what if all of them take birth again?

dhruvam janma mruthasya cha (all of them have to take birth for sure). If all of them take birth again, what will happen to those folks? If it sees those who killed it, wouldn’t it go after them? Are we able to see the rebirth of the same creatures? No. So, should we say what Krishna said was right or not?

thasma:th apariha:rye a:rthe (in the context of this fact which leaves no scope for anyone to stop or control) na thvam so:chithum arhasi (no need for you to cry in this matter). “Arjuna! Whoever is born will die and whoever dies will take birth.” He said this!

We have to remember one thing. Who is Krishna’s targeted audience when explaining verse 2.27? This verse is intended for an atheist, not for a theist. Earlier, we discussed that verses 2.26, 2.27, and 2.28 go a bit out of context for the sake of those who don’t believe in Vedas. Sri Krishna made the argument [in those verses] solely to state that even such people don’t need to cry.

These three verses are not meant for those who believe in God’s existence or who know the difference between atma (soul) and deha (body). They are only meant for those who believe in nature alone. If we observe nature, none of the constituent elements get destroyed. They only change their forms. In earlier days, if they had to identify a region, they would identify it with reference to the mountains and rivers there. But now we all know that the mountains are being leveled to build buildings or form roads by blasting them to pieces. Mountains are being flattened. We all know about the rivers. Rivers are drying up. Rivers are being diverted to new paths. So, how can we have rivers and mountains as landmarks? They are ‘changing forms’ means that they are ‘getting destroyed’. Does it mean they are ‘vanishing’? No. They are changing their forms.

Whatever was tall and high is being flattened to make various parts for constructing a highway. Nothing happened to it. It was tall and high so it was called a mountain. Now, it has become flat and spread to a larger area and is called a highway. Any object in nature undergoes a change in its form but doesn’t lose its existence. Roads, and buildings are destroyed, pits are dug, and the resulting material is dumped at a place. A mountain was formed at that place. Did the mountain take birth there? Did the ground die where they took the sand out? Yes! According to one definition, it is true. The old form has changed into a new form. If the old form has been changed, it is called death. If the new form comes into existence, it is called birth. Birth and death are changes of forms, not the emergence of something that did not exist.

It is called sathkarya vada (the theory of transformation) in one sense. Whatever exists already will take a form, something new will not emerge. It’s not true that something will emerge from nowhere. Veda questions, kadham asathas sajja:ye:tha? Chhandogya Upanishad says:

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SLOKA WORD -

sathve:va so:mya idam agra a:si:th e:kame:va adhvi:thi:yam.

SLOKA MEANING -

This is something that is always there. Forms keep changing.

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When the old form goes, we say it died. When a new form comes, we say it took birth. Let’s say we got some vegetables and placed them there. One guy cut them into pieces, prepared a delicious dish, and served it to everyone. Everyone ate it. Can we say that all vegetables have died? We can say that. Because we are not able to see them. But did they vanish from everywhere? No. They all have changed their forms and went into everyone's stomachs. If they have gone into their stomachs, shouldn’t their stomachs become big? What happened to it gradually after that? Some of it got digested in the stomach, whatever needed to be in the body stayed there, the rest of it went outside the body. Whatever went out that way, shouldn’t it be there somewhere in heaps? That turned into manure for plants. Then, we should be able to see it there at least, right? From roots, it went to stems and from there to leaves, from leaves to flowers and flowers it went to fruits. The fruits have become big mangoes and then become nice juices. What happened then? These juices came back to the same person and he enjoyed the juices. Same process repeats again. Same thing happens everywhere in nature.

We have to remember who this is being told for. Verses 2.26, 2.27, 2.28 were told only for the one who believes only in the elements he sees. This upadesha (teaching) was for him. Krishna wanted to summarize in these verses that even such a person doesn’t need to cry. Not just for a:sthika (theist) but for na:sthika (atheist) also, there is no need to cry while discharging your duty. For one who is performing his/her duty there is no need to cry. Lord had to say this. Why? No one can control these changes. Can you stop leaves from coming out of a stem? You can’t do it. Can you stop the leaf from getting old or a fruit from coming out? Can you stop a fruit from ripening or a leaf from falling? You can’t do that. If you burn the leaf to ashes, it will become manure and get recycled to the plants. In the whole world, the same thing goes on.

We have discussed this many times in the past, not a particle of sand or a drop of water goes out of the earth planet we live in. Nothing comes into our planet from other planets, unless he goes in a rocket and gets something from there. We have sent people to Mars or the Moon. Someone might get it from there. Someone might take it from earth and drop it on other planets. Unless someone does that, nothing goes out from this planet naturally. Oceans are full of water. It becomes vapor because of the sun, forms clouds and falls as rain. If the rain falls somewhere else, it forms rivers separating into streams. From dams, water comes through pipes into houses, it then flows out from taps and is consumed by man. From man's body, it comes out as perspiration and urine reaching into the earth. And from earth, it is absorbed and reaches the same ocean. The drops of water which came from the ocean will reach the ocean again this way. They go through many changes in the process. As they change, they lose their old form and take on a new form. When the form changes, its name also changes. Once the name changes, its function also changes. When water is in a river, its function is different, when it comes into a tap or bottle its function changes… and when it reaches the stomach, its function might be different. Once it comes out of the body it might have a different function. If it comes out of humans, nothing is done. But if it comes out of cows, it is used for medicinal purposes. Waste from other creatures also might be used for medicines, we don’t know. We don’t know where the medicines we are given are coming from. If it is packaged nicely as a strip of medicine, we purchase it and consume it. We don’t know from where and how it was prepared.

What is the summary? In this world, nothing new takes birth or dies but goes through changes in state. Forms, names and functions change. That's all. Can you control it? No. Can you control water in the oceans from getting vaporized, forming clouds and falling as rain? Then why cry for them? Can you stop the movement of the sun? No. Then why cry for them? Can you stop the plants from growing and the leaves from falling to the ground? No. These are some beings. Human beings are also one of them. The same applies for him. Gradually he also goes through changes. When you are here, you have to do your specific duties. Trees are doing their job, animals and birds are doing their job, same with insects. So you also do your duty as a human, perform your duty. Who is Lord telling this for? Sri Krishna is saying this for someone who doesn’t believe in the soul and believes only in nature, for someone who believes only in that the body is made of nature.

dhruvam janma mruthasya (whoever dies has to take birth again). The fruit which was gone from the tree takes birth as curry which is consumed by humans which becomes waste, it turns into manure and then fruit and comes back to you. Therefore…

dhruvam janma mruthasya (This is natural, it is everywhere in nature and is inevitable). No one can control this. Why cry for that? As long as you are here, do your duty. Now your duty [Arjuna] is to control all those people here. Do that! Instead, why are you crying?

thasma:d apariha:ra;rye:rthe na thvam so:chithu marhasi (Don’t cry like a weakling for this). Get up and do your duty. Motivating Arjuna for the war, Krishna is inspiring us to do our duty in the second chapter. Let us move forward doing our duty. Jai Srimannarayana!

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