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1. Episode Title: Episode 62 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 62)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The nature of intellect and its role in religion, Understanding the importance of duty, The inevitability of change and its acceptance, Krishna's teachings on the responsibilities of life and war

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Arjuna, Krishna, duty, grief, change, theism, atheism, Prakruthi, A:thma, Ji:va, Sarwe:swara, na:ra:yana

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), Humans are intellectual beings. Intellect gives rise to various thoughts. When thoughts are organized in a specific manner, it is termed ‘religion’. Since there are so many people and their conduct is based on their intellect, such ways of behaving came to be called different religions. These religions are of many kinds. There should not be a question about which religion is good or which one is bad. Be it theistic or atheistic, one need not label it wrong or bad. It is not appropriate to honor a certain religion and revile another one. Why? Because it is a person’s way of streamlining his thoughts, acting accordingly… to reform and improve his life. It (religion) is a procedure by which one does not feel inconvenient… while also allowing him to live in harmony with society. If we recognize this, [there will be harmony]. A person who wants to choose a life of theism adopts a specific religion. Another person adopts a different religion. As long as the goal is to lead life properly… we don’t need to worry whether a person adopts theism or atheism. However, if the goal itself is different… when those differences grow into disparities, resulting in hatred and escalating to war… then we need to examine those religions with a critical view. Nowadays, there is a need to reflect deeply on certain religions because they are highly intolerant towards even the existence of other religions. Hence there is a need to critically view those religions. As long as everyone can live respecting the paths and beliefs of other faiths while practicing their own… while thinking that they are not a hindrance to one another, then… we need not worry about any religion or person being ‘bad’. It is said - in today’s world, huge massacres have taken place due to hatred between religions. When peoples’ thoughts wander into an unrestrained flow… it results in developing feelings of hatred, harming society. The thought process is like a water current. If we let that water flow unrestrained… it has the capacity to flood entire villages, and submerge them in the ocean. It is not that the water flow that is bad. If we don’t channelize that flow properly and simply let it flow without control, it wreaks havoc. If we channelize that same flow by constructing a dam, or making proper canals, it irrigates instead of causing damage; it bestows wealth, helping human beings and all forms of life… nourishes the flora and fauna, birds, and the soil, increases water sources and promotes fertility (of the soil). Eventually, it also has to merge into the ocean. Every drop of rainwater finally finds its way to the ocean. However, do we want to let it flow uncontrolled, causing damage… or let it multiply our wealth before reaching its final destination? This is something to introspect. What would a sensible man do? He would build structures to regulate the flow, make canals, construct containment walls and let the water flow in between. Then the water flows to different areas benefiting where needed, before it joins the ocean. Our thoughts are also similar to that water flow. No thoughts are necessarily bad inherently. There is no need to look down upon them. Only when they threaten the existence of others, do we have a responsibility to stop them. For instance, Arjuna and Duryo:dhana’s ways are different. If they could have ruled their respective share of kingdoms peacefully, they would have lived happily by themselves without bothering anyone. However, Duryo:dhana became jealous seeing Pandavas’ wealth… and cheated them through gambling, driving them to exile… not letting them live in peace even in exile attempting to kill them. After fulfilling their term of exile, when Pandavas approached Kauravas for a truce… Duryo:dhana denied their share of the kingdom and prepared for war. Pa:ndavas now have the responsibility to wage that war and put such Kauravas in their place. Take the example of our own country. There were attempts made by the Chinese to intrude unlawfully into our northern border. Fighting with them to push them back within their borders… Do we say this is wrong, violence or attacking? No. If someone says it is wrong to do so, do we call such a person a sensible human? Previous governments may have overlooked those lapses until now. Whereas, the current government is strong enough… to tighten the borders and protect the country by not ceding even an inch of land. It is an appropriate thing to do and must be done. Arjuna has a similar responsibility. When he was hesitating to fight, thinking it might be a sin to kill, worrying if the war hurts others, or if it is an oppressing or violent act… Sri Krishna took the responsibility of instructing him about his duty. If you are a theist, believe in the existence of... a:thma (soul), de:ham (body) and parama:thma (God) - and perform your duty. If you are an atheist believing that the physical body is the a:thma, nothing else… even in such a case, you cannot compromise in performing duties. Sri Krishna owned the responsibility of explaining that to him [Arjuna] in that situation. While doing so, He first proposed a:sthika va:da (the case for believers / theists). He explained in chapter 2 to some extent - from verse 12 to verse 25. Na:sthika va:da (the case for non-believers) is narrated in 26, 27 and 28 slo:kas. While it is fine to be an atheist, it is not acceptable if one avoids his duty. It is not right. You must do your duty. No need to cry. Temporary sorrow may arise. That is fine. Let us say, you bought an expensive and exquisite glassware with a beautiful flower design… and are deeply attached to it because someone dear to you guided you to buy it. Yet, it is glass. If not taken care of and it falls, it is bound to break. That is its nature. You cannot stop it. No one can stop it [from getting damaged when it falls]. If it does break one day, what will you do? Will you keep sobbing about it? No, because that is the nature of glass. It leaves a temporary sadness, due to your attachment towards it. Yes, that is inevitable. However, you cannot live in grief for the rest of your life. We need to realize this. Arjuna is in a similar situation now. He is immersed in sorrow.

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SLOKA WORD -

thasma:d apariha:rye:rdhe: nathwam so:chithum arhasi

SLOKA MEANING -

Therefore, you should not grieve over something inevitable.

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Change is inevitable. Dro:na, Bhi:shma, and all the relatives and troops whom you are facing, will also go through change. You cannot stop it. Earlier, they were small kids and played. Now they have become adults. One day those bodies will lie on their deathbeds as well. Nothing or no one can stop it. You are thinking nothing will happen to them if you don’t [fight now]. That is not true. Hence, why grieve about it or feel sad about it? Fortunately, you (Arjuna) have the privilege to set them right [by waging this war]. You should do that. Consider a rare plant which we raised. It flowered beautifully. Some plants give only one flower in a year. It is an exotic flower known as Bramha Kamalam, which yields just one flower… that too, once in 13 years, and only during the early hours of 3 AM – 5 AM. It bloomed. You were joyful on seeing this flower. However, the fact is that its petals will shed in 2 hours. Do you grieve over this loss? It is the nature of that flower. It is apariha:ryamu (inevitable). Grieving is not necessary over what is inevitable. Therefore, your mandate is to perform your duty without fail. The flower will grow later again, as the source is still there and preserved. So do not think that you are killing someone. Matter stays forever in nature. You know the subject, you are an a:sthika (believer). Even if your beliefs are na:sthika (of non-believers), you should not grieve. Better yet if you are an a:sthika. An a:sthika (theist) believes in three entities. What are they? First - prakruthi (nature). This keeps changing continuously into various forms. It is formed as a combination of many elements. One of which is Earth. Its attribute is smell. [Another is] Water. Its property is taste. The attribute of fire is color. The characteristic of air is touch. The attribute of the sky is sound. The ensemble of a few elements with their associated attributes is known as Prakruthi. The entire ‘hardware’, what we physically see around us in the world, is collectively termed Prakruthi. The transformations happening in Prakruthi are called Vikruthi. The source is Prakruthi, which is eternal. Changes keep happening all the time, in Prakruthi. We cannot control how it initiates, nor alter the way it changes. We just feel good when these changes are favorable to us. The second reality [in which the theist believes]… is the one that supports all the transformations within Prakruthi. That reality is called ji:va (life). He invokes life. Hence he is called ji:va.

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SLOKA WORD -

yesho::nura:thma che:thasa: ve:dithavyaha

SLOKA MEANING -

He is known to a good heart.

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He is one thaththva (reality). He is unchangeable no matter what we do. His swaru:pam (form) is nithyaha (always exists) ajaha (one without a specific date of birth) sa:swathaha (eternal) sttha:nuhu (unchangeable) achalaha (unmovable) sana:thanaha (permanent). This is the second reality. It exists in each and every object. 1. Prakruthi (nature) 2. A:thma thaththva (the invisible reality which gives it life like software). Hardware and software are both different. We don’t say they are one. Hardware is visible whereas software is not. 3. The [third] reality which operates this software is called sarwe:swara (the supreme being), or na:ra:yana (God). He is also called parama:thma (supreme soul), de:va (divine), or Vishnu. He has many names.

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SLOKA WORD -

de:vo: na:ma sahasrava:n

SLOKA MEANING -

One who has numerous names.

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says sa:sthra (scripture). Three thaththva:s (realities). These 3 realities are always existent. The first among those three is being discussed now.

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SLOKA WORD -

ja:thasya mruthyuhu dhruvaha; dhruvam janma mruthasya

SLOKA MEANING -

As no one can stop the changes happening in this (prakruthi), it is called ‘apariha:rya’ (inevitable).

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Hence, one need not grieve about it. You also have a mandate to follow your duty. Your duty is to eradicate the elements which are disturbing society. If you need to fight a war to eliminate this disturbance, you must proceed with it. Talks should have resolved the matter. You tried hard to resolve it with talks. I myself liaised on your behalf, [says Sri Krishna]. Sanjaya also attempted to mediate for peace. Since the route of dialogue failed, we are all pulled into this war. So this cannot be stopped now.

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SLOKA WORD -

apariha:rye ardhe: nathwam so:chithum arhasi

SLOKA MEANING -

Therefore, you should not grieve over something inevitable.

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Arise! Perform your duty. Fight the war and destroy the plague. This is the second of the three slokas that Sri Krishna told Arjuna… while saying that even if you are an atheist, it is not befitting to grieve. There is one more sloka in this series. We will learn about it in the upcoming sessions. Jai Srimannarayana!

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