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1. Episode Title: Episode 65 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 65)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The methods to summarize scripture, the importance of belief in the three ultimate realities, the limitations of human senses in understanding the soul, the role of inference and scripture in understanding spiritual truths, the characteristics of the body and soul, and the teachings of Krishna regarding atheism and duty.

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Arjuna, Krishna, atheism, dharma, ultimate realities, inference, prakruthi, ji:va, parama:thma, soul, body, teachings, spirituality

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), There are certain methods to conclude the summary of a scripture. Also, there are certain ways to decide if a certain aspect must be told in a specific way in a specific context. Bhagavad Gita is a:dhya:thmika grantha (spiritual scripture) that is taught to an a:sthika (believer), one who believes in Vedas. One who believes in Vedas believes in prakruthi (nature), ji:va (soul), and parama:thma (supreme soul, God). These three are called thaththvas (ultimate realities). Together, they are called thaththva thryam (three ultimate realities). It is said that a:sthika is one who believes in the three ultimate realities and walks the path defined by Vedas.

Each of the three are different thaththvas, and hence their characteristics are different. Prakruthi is a separate dravya (substance). Ji:va is a different thaththva. Parama:thma is a different thaththva. Generally, when we speak of a:thma (soul), people ask to demonstrate a:thma with an example in order to believe it. It sounds good. However, if we must use an example, from where do we reference it? We must show examples relating to the thaththva that you want to believe. However, we do not have the ability to see that which is related to the thaththva. Our senses do not have the capability.

For example, our ear cannot recognize all types of sounds, even in the general context. There are certain types of mosquito repellents. When turned on, a sound is produced that only mosquitos can hear. They say that mosquitos get tired of it and leave. People say sound is measured in unit decibels. It is said that if the sound is less than 5 dB, we cannot hear it. Also, it seems we cannot hear any sound that is above 20 dB. Anything above or below those limits is not audible. That’s the range of our sense organs. Every sense organ has such certain limitations. Thus, we cannot recognize certain things. Our sense organ does not have the ability to hear something.

When our sense organs can’t even recognize all the characteristics of visible material, how can we ask for a demonstration from a:thma thaththva to believe it!? The demonstration has to use matter from prakruthi. Whatever can be shown must be from prakruthi. However, prakruthi is a different thaththva. Ji:va thaththva is a different one. How can it work if we take an example from one thaththva to prove another thaththva? People ask to show something from somewhere about parama:thma so as to believe it. We can only show something to you that is part of prakruthi. It’s not possible to show anything ‘from’ a:thma (thaththva) or in any other way. Parama:thma is a different thaththva altogether. If we must demonstrate that different thaththva (Parama:thma), how can we use anything from prakruthi to do so?

So, it’s not possible in any way to show that it (soul) is like something else. Then, how do we know about it? That is why Veda has become essential for us. That is why the assumption that goes along the path proven by Veda has also become essential. It is known as anuma:na (inference). Hence, it was necessary for our people to accept both anuma:na and shabda (Vedas). Veda states that they (3 ultimate realities) exist. We must learn through them. This is one method. They recognize the thaththva thrayam (three ultimate realities). They accept the three ultimate realities. They try to conform everything else in the same direction [of the three ultimate realities].

In them [Vedas] or in any other scripture that’s available elsewise. There is a method to establish - ‘this is what was told in that [scripture]’. Why are we discussing this now? Because, in Bhagavad Gita… Sri Krishna, who began to guide Arjuna, also gave required information necessary for atheists and their ability. Why would He do that? It is possible that one may raise such a question. What did we learn earlier in the three verses 2.26, 2.27, and 2.28? That even for one who is an atheist it’s not necessary to cry when faced with challenges while performing duties. Sri Krishna stated this in those verses.

One may question, “Why would Sri Krishna refer to him (atheist) here?” If you question like that ‘dhruvam janma mruthasya cha’ (certainly, the one who dies will be born again) would mean, the same one who died will come back alive. In that case, he would be named something different [ghost etc]. If he moves around us, it’s dangerous to us. That is why, the compilers of these great scriptures have established certain methods in order to make a conclusion on a certain aspect [in a scripture]. They are termed tha:thparya nirna:yakamulu (factors leading to conclusive decisions). They are of six types, and hence known as shad vidha tha:thparya nirna:yaka lingamulu (6 kinds of factors that lead to and support the conclusions). Lingas mean the identifiers. Based on these, we reach tha:thparyam (the conclusions).

What are they? Upakrama upasamha:rou (the beginning and the end of a scripture must be in line with each other). Both must ‘meet’. [The first of the 6 is] upakramo:pa upasamha:rou. The second is abhya:sa (repetition): Whatever he wants to say, he must begin and conclude with it. And the same must be touched at certain intervals throughout the work. This is called abhya:sam (repetition or reminding). This is termed abhya:sa: Not just that, there must be something new, apur:rvatha (novelty), in what is being explained. Additionally, what do we attain as a result of all this? Let’s say we work hard and finally learn all these. What is the result of knowing it? There must be some phalam (result). There should be clarity about the end result.

Next is artthava:da: upapatthi: cha (the need for acclaim and reasoning). Artthava:da, he needs to acclaim that which he states as the end result. Because he must create ruchi (interest), and praro:chana (motivation). What can he do to motivate? He must say something of the sort, “So and so person has tried this, that made him happy.” “Someone else has not done this. So, they did not attain the right state.” Thus, he must strengthen it by speaking about a few related incidents. Keeping aside if there is truth in it or not, our people narrate Sathyana:ra:yana Vrat stories - 5 or 6 of them. To create interest in the vrat (vow), to increase the number of people performing the vrat... to secure the life of people who organize it with assured income... they have included 5 stories.

What is narrated in those 5 stories? One who performed the vrat has earned good profits in their business. One who did not do it suffered great loss. One who performed this had a peaceful journey. One who did not believe it got into some kind of loss due to an accident. These are the types of stories in it. This is known as, ‘exploiting sentiment’. It forcefully entices a person by appealing to his heart (manas). Getting them into it with fear, or another way. “Oh! Is that how he got all the benefits? I also want benefit/profit.” So he steps into it. “Oh! Is that how he got into losses? I don’t want to incur losses.” So he does not miss performing it. They have to be persuaded to perform it out of fear or some other reason, or some kind of hope. Many people perform it out of that hope. Not thinking if it’s right or not, if it exists in pura:na (ancient texts) or not, or if those stories fit in at all.

In fact, if God is truly God, He would never hurt His ‘children’. Rewarding one for performing it [the vrat]... or amputate his legs, hurt his business by drowning his ship, put him into losses, get him into an accident if one does not perform it. HE does not do these. You all have children, you look after them. If your children do not obey your word, would you kill them? If he does not abide by your word, would you chop his legs? If he does not repeat what you said, would you cut his tongue? Who does such kind of things? It’s not something a mother and father would do. It is something that a businessman would do. Or something that a ra:kshasa (demon), a cruel one, or a vampire would do. Why would God do such a thing? This technique is known as invoking fear. This is also one type of artthava:da. These are narrations of stories that can imprint the intended message in the heart of a person. They can be termed as artthava:da. All artthava:das may not be necessarily true. The goal is to deliver the message to the heart but one need not take them literally.

However, the stories in the vrat are playing a ‘great’ role. Let’s keep that aside. Artthava:da - this is also one aspect of reaching conclusion. Upapatthi: cha (reasons for it). “Due to this reason, it happens this way. Due to this reason, it does not happen this way.” This is how it must be concluded. All these are used in reaching conclusions about something. Upakramo:pa samha:rou, abhya:sa: apu:rvatha: phalam, artthava:da: upapatthi: cha. Upakramo:pa samha:rou is one of them. This is one lingam (identifier). Upakramo:pa samha:rou, abhya:sa, apu:rvatha, phalam, artthava:da, upapatthi cha. These are the six. They decide the general dictum. If we can coordinate all these six in Bhagavad Gita, we can realize that the three verses [2.26, 2.27, and 2.28] are outside of the current context. That is why, the decision of the wise is that we remember the three verses as those being addressed to atheists and not for anyone else.

We must not pick up something from the midst of somewhere and conclude it in a way that appeals to us. If you speak that way, it will be analogous to reading the entire Sri:mad Bha:gavatham, yet declaring that it states, “There is no God.” Does Bha:gavatham say so? Yes, there is one instance where the scripture reads so. However… Who said it and to whom? Examining the context, it is what Prahlada’s father, Hiranyakasipa tells him. In that case, that is what it would say there. Can we take it as the summary of the scripture? No. Therefore, ja:thasya hi dhruvo: mruthyuhu (for one who is born, death is certain)… beginning with attha chainam (this body is not eternal)… avyaktha:di:ni bhu:tha:ni (the unmanifested and manifested beings)… vyaktha madhya:ni bha:ratha (the manifested beings are in between)… avyaktha nidhana:nyaiva (the unmanifested will eventually perish).

These three verses are delivered, keeping in mind the atheist. Bhagava:n Sri Krishna, with the responsibility of satisfying an atheist… to ensure he also understands the topic, explains it to Arjuna. There is no need to cry. Don’t cry for the soul or for the body. This is how He starts. What did He start off with? aso:chya:n anvaso:chasthvam (you grieve for those who should not be grieved for)... prajna:va:da:mscha (and you speak words of wisdom)… gatha:su:n agatha:su:n (for those who are dead and those who are not dead). He used two words in verse 2.11. gatha:su:vu (those that lose pra:na, life force), agatha:su:vu (those that do not lose pra:na, life force). Those that lose pra:na are bodies. Those that do not lose pra:na are souls. Pra:na never leaves the soul. Soul is always attached to pra:na, maha:pra:na (great life force) with it. Therefore, it (maha:pra:na) is always within (a:thma). If it leaves [the body], it leaves only with [a:thma]. Therefore, it is termed agatha:su. No matter what you do with the body, you cannot hold pra:na with it [forever]. Even if a doctor tries to ventilate a body, it may hold on until the ventilation is in progress. Whenever it’s removed, it [pra:na] leaves [the body]. Hence, it is termed gatha:su (the body).

So far, He tried to clearly specify and clarify the quality of the body and the soul. Now, He takes the responsibility of clarifying the unique attribute of the soul. It [soul] is something that we cannot define as such. It is therefore a:scharyakara (very amazing). He moves ahead to explain about it. Let’s also gradually try to understand this. Jai Srimannarayana!

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