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1. Episode Title: Episode 78 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 78)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The nature of samsara (the cycle of life), Understanding the distinction between body and soul, Krishna's teachings on duty and perception, The importance of recognizing temporary experiences, The concept of dharma (righteous duty) and its significance in life

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, samsara, Krishna, Arjuna, body, soul, dharma, ignorance, perception, temporary experiences

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), In the Bhagavad Gita, Sri Krishna clarifies that the seed for the poisonous tree, samsara (the cycle of life), is of two types. He considered samsara as a poisonous tree and mentioned that it has a seed.

What is samsara? Does samsara mean mother, father, children, wife, husband, relatives, jobs, businesses, wealth, assets, or buildings? No! All these are good. None of them are bad. None of these need to be eliminated. None of these cause any harm to us. Then what is samsara? Samsara is the buddhi (intellect) that makes one incorrectly believe that discrete objects are one and the same.

What is it called? There are distinct things. First is the body. The second is that which prevents the body from becoming a corpse [as long as he is present], stays within it and enables the body to function - talk, think, see, and act - it is known as atma (soul). These two exist here - body and soul. But it does not seem that they are two. We limit ourselves to the body and consider ourselves as this body. “This is me. I am white. I am black. I am brown. I am fat.” I am skinny. I am tall. I am short. I am a man. I am a woman. I am a boy. I am a girl.

At the next level, “I am Brahmin, I am Kshatriya, I am Shudra. I am Harijan.” I am Girijan. I am something else, something else… In reality, none of these are ‘I’. If the one who is ‘I’ leaves, none of these exist. Then, all of these get the same samskara (ceremony) upon leaving the body. You see, all the people succumbing to Covid-19 receive the same samskara. Similarly, this body also gets the same samskara. At that time, everyone gets one name. What name? The name with two syllables [in Telugu] - savam (corpse). All of them are equal, whether Brahmins, Harijans, boys, old men, women, wealthy, or beggars. There is no difference. Everyone gets the same name of savam!

We are limiting our discussion to humans. In fact, we need to extend our perception beyond humans. There are other living beings who live along with humans. Sri Krishna mentioned this to Arjuna in the past. “Why are you crying that this is my grandfather, my guru, my relatives, my uncles?” Are these the only ones who are dying in the war? Are horses not dying? Are elephants not dying? Are flies not dying? Are mosquitoes not dying? Other living beings are dying, aren’t they? Why are you crying only for them [humans]? Why are you not crying for others? Are these not living beings? Just like they are living beings, these are also living beings, right? He [Sri Krishna] asked [Arjuna] not to cry for either of them.

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SLOKA WORD -

thasma:th sarva:ni bhu:thani nathvam so:chithum arhasi

SLOKA MEANING -

Therefore, you should not grieve for any living being.

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In reality, these different types of bodies are all made of pancha bhutas (five elements). It is intended for non-believers in the soul, for those who limit themselves to things that are visible. “Even they need not cry when performing their duty, regardless of bringing happiness or sorrow.” He [Sri Krishna] said this. “Why don’t you cry for others? If you cry, you must cry for them all or do not cry at all.” “Do this as your duty!” But there is ignorance in us that does not allow us to work that way. We forget that we are separate from whatever is visible. The qualities of it [body] are different from us [soul]. The purpose of [body] is different from our [soul’s] purpose. We came here [to the body] for a temporary stay. We forget this fact.

Someone is sent to a city for work. The city might be an expensive one. The experiences might be luxurious. However, he went there to perform his duty. When his duty is completed there, he needs to carefully return to his place. Let us say his duty is in a temple. In the temple, they are celebrating a festival. He is tasked to shoot [the festivities]. Let us say he works for a TV channel. In that temple, during the festivals, there is wonderful prasadam (sanctified food). There is prasadam in the morning, afternoon, evening, and in the middle. If he says, “This is so great! I want to stay here only!” He will lose his job, right? Temporary pleasures, and temporary sorrow should be ignored. When there are floods, the TV personnel go into the water, into the flow. During the war, they go to the war zone. During terrorist activity, they go into the forests. Nobody knows who is going to do what [to them]. Although that is sorrowful, they endure it and still perform their duty. In the earlier example, the prasadam in the temple brings happiness, which he also accepts and performs his duty. There is no need to be ecstatic for this. There is no need for dejection for that [floods or war]. You should always do this as your duty. When? When we have the sense that this situation is temporary, and our place is elsewhere.

However, when forgotten, danger is inevitable. This is related to the body. The soul also comes to these bodies temporarily, whether that of human or animal, or any other body. We came here only for temporary experiences and it did not manifest as per our wish. We did not desire this. Nothing comes without a reason. No matter what comes, there is a purpose and goal. That means someone gave it to us. We do not know who gave it, or perhaps we have forgotten. As soon as we arrived here, the relationship between us and whoever sent us here was broken. With that, we forgot about him.

When the baby is born from the womb of the mother, the baby cries “qua..qua..” Why does he cry? Our elders jokingly say this. Maybe it’s true, we don’t know... Bhagavatam speaks of this… When the baby is in the mother’s womb, in the 7th or 8th month, the baby has wonderful knowledge of where he came from, how he came, what he did, and what is in this world. Once he crosses the 8th month and enters the 9th month, it [knowledge] gradually fades. Once he is born, because of the influence of this Nature, his knowledge gets blocked. When the connection between him [baby] and the mother is removed, when the umbilical cord is cut, when he starts taking breath independently, when he starts nourishing himself independently, then all the old memories are forgotten. The baby cries, “I had something until now but now I lost it. What is it? Where is it?” It is said that this is the reason behind the cry. In Sanskrit, “qua” means to ask, “What and where is it?” qua gacchasi - “Where are you going?” in Sanskrit. Qua is a beautiful word in Sanskrit. When the baby cries, it sounds like “qua, qua, qua, qua,” right? That means the baby is crying. “I saw something, I heard something, I knew something, I wanted to experience something.” What happened to all that? Where have I come now? This looks like a new location. This looks like a new world. Crying like that, he pursues what he lost. He searches for that.

One person looked around him, searching for what he saw inside [the womb]. He started parithaha ikshanam (searching around), hence his name became Parikshit. He was a king. He was the first one who ruled in this Kali Yuga. This ignorance engulfs us as soon as we fall to this earth. The Wise who possess that knowledge gave us grantthas (scriptures), to pull us out of this and make us work accordingly. Scriptures preach what actions you must take to return to your previous state, and how the blockage imposed on you can be cleared. Doing this is known as following the dharma (righteous duty).

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SLOKA WORD -

dharma pa:lana

SLOKA MEANING -

Dharma means doing work, doing the work appropriately, knowing the reason why it [body] was given to us.

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We do not know why and how this was given. The Wise advise us, “Based on your situation, this is the work you need to do…” This is how and this is how much. Just do it. This is called dharma pa:lana. This is the reason we need to live. We are, however, content once we arrive here. We ignore everything else. What have we become? Bound by temporary happiness, we forget that we and the ‘place we are in [body]’ are different. We have combined both atma (soul) and anathma (body). We are considering the ones which are different and have opposite qualities, as one and the same.

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SLOKA WORD -

ana:thmani a:thma budhihi

SLOKA MEANING -

What are we thinking? The body is ‘I’ – We have reached this conclusion.

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We did not stop there.

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SLOKA WORD -

asve: svamithi ya:mathihi

SLOKA MEANING -

In fact, we own knowledge. We own that great tatva (truth) which possesses profound knowledge.

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Whatever possesses the supreme knowledge, that is ours. Yet, what happened now is, because of our assumption that this external anathma is us, we assume that everything related to this anathma is ours. When someone who was supposed to be a king goes into a forest, surrounds himself with people from the forest, and marries a girl who is one of them, he thinks that all these people from the forest are his relatives. He wants to stay with them. The baby lion, which is supposed to be in the company of lions, wanders into the crowd of goats and considers the goats to be its relatives, and like them gets frightened and absconds. Similarly, this jiva (soul) assumes everything related to this body as his.

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SLOKA WORD -

asve: svamithimathihi

SLOKA MEANING -

Buddhi (intellect) that makes him think of something as his (svam) when it in reality it is not his.

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When we sow a seed to grow a tree, the seed splits into two pieces - like a seed of chikku (sapodilla), cluster bean, where the plant emerges from. Our ignorance, our inability to make a distinction between the body and atma, is called deha atma bhranti (confusion between body and soul). This is a poisonous tree. What did it do?

samsara (the cycle of life) together, it made us slide along with it. Samsara is the name given to this ignorance. Since this is the one that wrecks us, it is called a poisonous tree.

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SLOKA WORD -

samsa:ra vishavrukshasya

SLOKA MEANING -

For this samsara poisonous tree,

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bi:jam e:thath dvidha:sththitham (this seed is of two types). What are they? anathmanya:thma budhi (assuming that we are something that we are not). Believing what is not ours as ours. This is where all the confusion starts. Bhagavad Gita is meant to release us from this ignorance. Recognize the different objects as separate. Recognize one object as one. If there is an object, recognizing that it is one object, is good knowledge. If there are two objects, you need to recognize that they are separate, not one. Sri Krishna preached Bhagavad Gita, which provided knowledge of the distinction between soul and body… to elevate humans and human society. This is for one and all. Let’s learn how Sri Krishna is teaching Arjuna and move forward. Jai Srimannarayana!

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