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1. Episode Title: Episode 89 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 89)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The benefits of fulfilling one's duties, Understanding the consequences of neglecting responsibilities, The nature of the soul and body, The concept of Swarga (heaven), The importance of dharma (righteousness) in life, The impact of actions on reputation and society

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Swarga, Arjuna, Krishna, dharma, karma yoga, soul, body, responsibilities, reputation, elders

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), A person secures three benefits by carrying out his duties. When he does not fulfill his duties, there are three losses. What are the benefits?

First one: The well-wishers and elders of society will praise us if we can fulfill our responsibilities. This is what they expect from us. Everyone should do their own chores and be happy. The One who gave us this body also gave us certain things to do. Whatever chores He has given along with the body, do them properly. One must finish the tasks given by Him, for Him, right? So, finish the given task. This is what The Wise want from us. What they expect is that we understand that the soul (atma) and the body (deha) are different entities... that the soul lasts forever... and that because the body is temporarily formed to accomplish certain responsibilities of this soul for us, we must complete our work. If we understand this, it makes our Elders happy.

If we stay in here and refuse to work, it is like getting a job from an employer and reaping profits from it… yet not doing the assigned work but whatever we wish. That becomes punishable, and is not accepted by the Elders. It is a:ryajushtam (noble) when we complete our work. When we do not, it is ana:ryajushtam (ignoble). This makes the Elders unhappy. Explaining this to Arjuna, Sri Krishna said, “if you do not fight this war it is ana:ryajushtam.” You [Arjuna] do it, and I will impart the necessary wisdom. Saying this, He spoke in detail about the existence of deha (body) and atma (soul) starting from verse 12 to 31. That is approximately 18 verses.

Second one: If we can successfully complete the work that we are supposed to, which means… we should be able to understand the purpose of this body… and what He, the one who gave us the body, wants from us, and behave accordingly. How will we know this? Will He come and tell us? The answer is sa:sthra (scripture), which is an order given by Him. When we follow what our elders preached from the scriptures correctly, we will attain Swarga (heaven). We have discussed earlier what Swarga is. Swarga is a place that is resistant to changes like heat or cold, where there is no grief, but only favorable feelings, one that is never lost once attained, and it is something that when one has knowledge about it, he desperately wants it. When we analyze what it is according to our scriptures, it is known by various names such as Paramapada (Supreme Abode) or Vaikunta (abode of Vishnu). The same is named as ‘Swarga’.

When we properly fulfill our responsibilities, we will attain that Swarga. When will we attain Swarga? If we have this body, we cannot have it. If someone says we can have Swarga right away at death… would we rather be in a hospital with COVID ready for death? We want to be alive! We should be alive. We should be ‘alive’ till the last breath in this body. We should live with positivity and happiness. However, Bhagavan (the Lord) has been telling us that this is not everlasting, right? Which means someday it will be separated from us and similarly, we will be free of it. After that, what will happen to us? What happens to the body will be known to people around us. Or what happens to another’s body will be known to us.

Earlier, they used to perform samskara (rituals), qualify the body for the next stage, and dispose of it in a proper method. But these days, it is done using alternative methods. Relatives are neither allowed near the body nor to touch it or see it [due to the COVID-19 pandemic]. People are instructed to stay far away and perform all the rituals needed. The body is disposed of at once. Whatever it is. This is what the body goes through. But what we [soul] undergo is different. We know what happens to the body after death. It reunites, some way or another, with panchabhuta (five elements) of Nature from which it is formed. What happens to us [soul]? Once we [soul] leave the body, we must go somewhere. Either to such a body, or a body which is worse than this, or one better than this. Which one would we prefer to go into? Not an awful one. If we get one similar to this, that’s still ok, but a better one is preferred. If the better one is indestructible and gives everlasting happiness, that is what we wish for. This is named Swarga.

We find different interpretations of this from different sources. The great sages performed sathra yaga (sacrificial rituals) in places like Naimisaranya to attain Swarga. Although they all were great people, they performed this [the yaga] for sahasra samama:satha (thousands of years). We are not referring to that which is ruled by Indra (the king of heaven). We are talking about the desirable Swarga, where there is no grief and no return to this material plane, where happiness multiplies, and is always favorable to you. This is called Swarga. If we accomplish our responsibilities while in this body, and continue to do the same, we will obtain it.

Sometimes we win, and sometimes lose. When we lose [the election] after a tough campaign ignoring the comforts, for days and nights… we grieve for a while but… if we overcome this temporary grief and move forward with the thought of… ‘This was my responsibility which I fulfilled, but the result is His wish.’ If we transform into this state of mind, then we will perform karma yoga (the yoga of action), using our actions as a means. If we feel bad that we lost everything, we will lose every bit of happiness we have. Sri Krishna tells Arjuna, do not worry about the result of the war which you are about to wage. Be it gain or loss, win or lose. Fighting is your responsibility. If you do it properly, you will attain Swarga. You will get the benefit of following dharma, and you will overcome your sins. You can be free of your sins. Because you will gain from following swadharma (one's own duty), it will give you Swarga. Because of this deed, you will attain Swarga. So, wage this war. Mentioning this, Lord says ana:ryajushtam (ignoble) aswargyam (not leading to heaven). Do not step back. Do your duty and it will become swargyam (leading to heaven).

Third is aki:rthikaram (bringing disgrace). If you think Swarga is something obtained later in higher worlds… I neither know if it exists, nor if it is open, or if I will even end up going there. Then why should I go through these hardships? I won’t. Arjuna thought that at least people here would think good about him if he does not fight this war. Answering this, Sri Krishna says, “this is aki:rthikaram Arjuna!” It does not earn you fame, even in this world! It will defame you. One who does not fulfill his responsibilities will always be defamed. If you think what happens if I am defamed? Who wants to be defamed? No one wants to be. Even Pandavas did not want to be. Because they wanted to be known for following their elder brother’s words… when Draupadi was being insulted in public, even though they did not like it, they did not interject. Why? Because they were conscious of dharma and respected elders. They feared punya (merit) and papa (sin), results of good and bad actions. Not only that, but they did not want infamy. Because of this, they wanted to be one who stood by their brother’s words… and sat helplessly witnessing the sad event. Although they could easily physically conquer anyone in that assembly, they had to be quiet, folding their hands. Which means they fear papa, results of sinful activities, and are aware of dharma. They believe in swarga and naraka (hell). And they did not want to be defamed.

Sri Krishna tells Arjuna, if you don’t fight in this war, no one will respect you. aki:rthincha:pi bhu:tha:ni kathayishyanthithe: avyaya:m (you will earn disrespect that is too huge to fade). Everyone will think… sambha:vithasyacha aki:rthihi marana:th athirichyathe: (when ten people stab you at once, it feels much worse than death). You may feel it is only the elders who will scold me. I will treat it as a blessing. If elders scold you, it is a blessing. However, these are not trusted, wise elders here. bhaya:dranathuparatham mansinthyethva:m maha:ratha:ha (once upon a time, you thought you were ambidextrous, and could fight people very easily). You thought this, and everyone else also believed that the one who could stop everyone in this manner, was Arjuna. Back in those days, when uththara go:grahana (the incident of the capture of Uththara) was taking place, you alone stood by it and you made all the Kauravas stand by it. That time you earned a good reputation that he is Arjuna, he is savyasachi (ambidextrous) etc., Today, it is not the elders who will decide this, but the useless people because of whom you earned that fame, will say… he is useless, timid, he got scared, he ran away. He bragged so much but once he saw our army and its power, he ran away. That day you encouraged Uththara Kumara in many ways right! That day in uththara go:grahana, you said all these things to him. People will say… ‘Today, when it came to him, see how he turned out. See how he ran away, making him worse than Uththara Kumara.’

In reality, defamation and bad words will make a person feel very low. They will degrade the person and push him into grief. They will make the person useless. Society will respect only the one who stays firm on his duties. Those not sticking to their duties will be reprimanded by society. One who has perseverance and constantly works towards his goal… will be praised and respected by society. This is not the case for those lacking these qualities. That is why you will be defamed instead of being praised, if you do not stick to your duty. Saying this, He spoke about the three negative resulting effects. ava:chyava:da:nscha bahu:nvadishyathi (nothing else is more disheartening than this). Saying this, Sri Krishna spoke about the three ill effects. He spoke this in relation to the war, and further related it to how ordinary people like us should apply this in our daily lives. Then, He continued delivering Bhagavad Gita, which we will further discuss. Jai Srimannarayana!

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