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1. Episode Title: Episode 93 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Episode 93)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The role of a good teacher (guru) in guiding students, Understanding the importance of duty without attachment to results, The nature of knowledge and its application in life, The significance of curiosity and inquiry in learning, Lessons from the stories of Duryodhana and Ravana.

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Arjuna, Krishna, duty, guru, knowledge, curiosity, Duryodhana, Ravana, Mahabharata, Ramayana, karma, samathva buddhi, ahankara.

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2 - We are now at sloka 40. God is very compassionate. He is also a great acharya (teacher). Whether Arjuna liked it or not, Sri Krishna is an acharya with a will to ensure Arjuna recognizes his duties by sharing well-wishing thoughts with him. Keeping Arjuna as a means, the Lord intended to preach to the entire human race about devotion to one’s duty. The Lord is Jagadacharya (guru to the entire world).

Normally, we don’t feel like doing work until we know the resulting benefit. If we know there will be a specific benefit for doing something, then we are certainly ready to do it… if we like the benefit. Otherwise, if we are told to work without any benefit, then we don’t feel like doing it… even if it is our responsibility.

Let’s say someone who is working in an office has a job of sanctioning the plans. We took a plan to him, he looked at it and everything seemed to be fine. He needs to sign and stamp it. However, he won’t stamp and sign anything without a bribe for each service. Otherwise, the work doesn’t get completed. In fact, he was given a job specifically for sanctioning plans. His duty is to do that job. Although it is his duty, he needs a temporary benefit. Otherwise, how will it move forward? He expects a temporary benefit for that work. If we don’t give him that, then he ruins that work. Meaning, he will do whatever needed to ensure it doesn’t get sanctioned for a day, month, or even a year.

Benefit! Forget about long-term benefit, unless we get short-term benefit, we don’t feel like working. This is a natural weakness of humans. That’s why in this 2nd chapter, Sri Krishna says to Arjuna, “Whatever you must do…” “Your duty must be executed without expecting any temporary benefits.” “You should wage war. While in the war, you will feel sorrow and happiness.” “You will feel soft and firm.” “You shouldn’t pay attention to such things. You need to possess samathva buddhi (intellect with equanimity).” He named it yoga (the path of action). He said he was going to elaborate on this yoga.

He [Arjuna] asked how it would benefit him if he learned about this process.

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SLOKA WORD -

karma bandham praha:syasi

SLOKA MEANING -

“You will be free from all sorrows and hurdles resulting from your past karma if you do it this way.”

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Arjuna might think, “I can’t perceive any of this benefit, what do I do with it?” To make sure Arjuna doesn’t think this way, like a good acharya, who creates enthusiasm and curiosity… and provides knowledge to his disciple, even though the disciple has no interest in knowing, he [acharya] teaches the lesson playfully in an enjoyable manner. He makes the lesson fun and interesting, motivating the disciple for inquisitive questions. Sri Krishna also teaches Arjuna similarly.

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SLOKA WORD -

ne:ha:bhi: krama na:so:sthi

SLOKA MEANING -

“There is no loss if you initiate this effort.”

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He infuses wonderful motivation. Once upon a time, there was a great king named Janamejaya. A Guru named Vysampayana approached the king. He [Guru] said, “I want to tell you the history of your elders.” The king said, “What is it called?” The guru said, “Mahabharata.” King said, “That’s great. How long does it take?” Guru said, “Each sloka (verse) may take about half an hour.” King said, “How many slokas are there?” Guru said, “There are 125,000 slokas.” King replied, “There are 125,000 slokas and each one takes half an hour? Wow! I don’t have time. I will be back.” Guru said, “What about me? I came to tell you this. Listen!” King said, “I can’t spare the time…” Guru said, “At least tell me when you can listen.” King said, “I can consider after one month if I am available.”

The guru returned exactly after a month. The king was afraid at the sight of the Guru, concerned about the time that he might demand for the lesson. The king wasn’t willing to give any time for an appointment. Somehow, the Guru was able to get an appointment with great difficulty. Guru said, “I want to tell you about your elders, only them, no one else. What your grandfather has done, what your great grandfather has done, what their grandfather did. Learn about your elders… It’s for your own good.” King said, “Oh no! I don’t have so much time.” Guru said, “How much time can you spare?” King said, “Tell me how concisely you can explain it?” Guru said, “Okay, no need to hear 125,000 slokas. Can you listen to at least 1,000 slokas?” King said, “That’s difficult. 1,000 slokas is 500 hours, which is difficult.” Guru said, “Can you listen to 100 slokas?” King said, “That is also difficult, sir.” Guru said, “Can you listen to 10 slokas?” King said, “10 slokas, half an hour each means I need to sit for 5 hours. That is also difficult, sir.” Guru said, “Tell me how much time you can spare?” King said, “It would be great if you can complete this in 15 minutes…?” Guru said, “Wow. I want to tell you about your own elders for your own benefit and you can only spare 15 minutes?” “I don’t even need 15 minutes. I just need half a minute. That’s all.”

King said, “Thank you so much. I will double the payment for this. Please tell me quickly.”

Guru said,

dvao mo:dha purushou loke:smin

“In this world, there are only two ‘great fools’. I came here to tell you about them. I am leaving now.”

King said, “What are their names? Where do they live? What do they do?” “How can you leave like that without telling me anything?” Guru said, “You don’t have time, right?” King said, “That’s true, but I need to at least know their names. In case they come to me, I need to know.” Guru said, “You want me to tell you? Do you have time?” King said, “Just tell me that and that’s enough.” Guru said, “Duryodhana, Dasa:ananu.” “One is named Duryodhana and the other is named Dasa Kanththa. I am leaving now.” King said, “Please wait, sir. What’s the rush? Please tell me where they live. I see fools everywhere in the world. Why did you specify only these two? How did you identify these two?” Guru said, “You want me to tell you? You don’t have time, right?” King said, “Just answer that one question. I will squeeze some time here and there.”

Guru said,

go:graham vanabhangam cha dhrushtva: yudhdham muhurmuhuhu

“One person witnessed go:grahanam (cattle capture), yet waged war. Another witnessed vanabhangam (forest destruction), yet waged war. That’s why they are considered great fools.”

King said, “What does that mean - waging war after witnessing go:grahanam? What is go:grahanam?” Guru said, “You don’t have time, right?” King said, “Please tell me, sir! What is go:grahanam?” Guru said, “Go:grahanam means capturing cattle.” King said, “Where did they take them from, sir?” Guru said, “They were taken from the north side, right!” King said, “From which town, sir?” Guru said, “In Viratnagar.” King said, “Who, sir?” Guru said, “Arjuna, etc. came and took them.” King said, “Why did they take them, sir?” Guru said, “Kauravas came there. That’s why.” King said, “Why did Kauravas come there, sir?” Guru said, “To expose their ajnathavasam (incognito exile).” King said, “Why did they perform ajnathavasam, sir?” Guru said, “After their 12 years of aranyavasam (forest exile), only then they did ajnathavasam.” King said, “Oh, they did 12 years of aranyavasam? Why did they do that?” Guru said, “After the match, according to the wager, they had to go to the forest.” King said, “What games did they play?” Guru said, “They gambled - maya judam (a game of dice).” King said, “Maya judam? Why did they play?” Guru said, “Sakuni, etc. made them play.” King said, “Why?”

In this manner, the great Guru made the King ask questions, provoking further inquisitiveness… and recited the entire history of Bharata. The one who could only spare half a minute was able to spend his entire life listening to that. The Guru converted him in such a way and preached to him clearly what he was supposed to know. He is a perfect Guru. He is Vysampayana Maharshi. He said all this and explained the entire Bharatham.

Guru said, “Go:graham vanabhangam cha.” “That’s why Duryodhana witnessed go:graham and became a fool.” King said, “There is a second one, right? Who is that?” “He witnessed vanabhangam and became a fool. Who is that?” Guru said, “He is Dasanana, referring to Ravana.” King said, “Why did vanabhangam happen to him?” Guru said, “Because Hanuman burned down and ruined the entire forest.” King said, “What was the reason behind Hanuman burning the forest?” Guru said, “That’s what he needed to do after his tail was lit on fire.” King said, “Who lit Hanuman’s tail?” Guru said, “Ravana lit it.” King said, “Why did he set it on fire?” Guru said, “Hanuman advised him for his welfare. Ravana didn’t care for it, got angry, and lit the tail.” King said, “Why did he [Hanuman] have to advise Ravana?” Guru said, “Because Ravana kidnapped Sita, and it was necessary to advise Ravana.” King said, “Why did Ravana take Sita? Where did he keep her?” Guru said, “He kept her in Lanka.” King said, “Where did he bring her from, placing her captive in Lanka?” Guru said, “He brought her from Panchavati.” King said, “Why was Sita in Panchavati?” Guru said, “During their [Rama, Sita, Lakshmana] vanavasam (forest exile), that’s where they reached.” King said, “How did they get there?” Guru said, “After 12 years of travel, they built a small house there.” King said, “Wow, 12 years! How many years did they stay there?” Guru said, “They stayed for [total] 14 years.” King said, “Why 14 years?” Guru said, “Because Kaikeyi wished for it.” King said, “Why did she wish for it?” Guru said, “To give the kingdom to Bharata.”

Like this, the Guru explained the entire Ramayana. The great king who claimed that he didn’t have any time for the guru… that guru taught Sri Ramayana, which has 24,000 slokas, and Mahabharata, which has 125,000 slokas. The guru made it possible for the king to listen to both. He is the one who is a good Guru. What did he do? He made the selected person curious about the content, provoked inquisitive questions, and in turn, answered them. This is what a good Guru does. Sri Krishna is Jagath Guru (Universal Guru). He is the ideal for all Gurus.

Arjuna was in a quandary, whether to wage war or not, and impatient - wanting to simply hear something quickly and leave. He [Sri Krishna] provoked curiosity within him and preached wonderfully in detail… all there is to know about atma (soul) tatva (truth). What is the body, what is atma, what the characteristics of the body are, what the characteristics of atma are… and why we need to know about these. We need to work with the body. We need to have the knowledge of atma. How should we have the knowledge? How should we do the work with the body? What is the relationship between both? The supporting nischaya-aatmika jnana (decisive knowledge) is called buddhi (intellect). If this is towards atma, it is called sankhya (knowledge).

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SLOKA WORD -

sa:nkhye: budhihi

SLOKA MEANING -

“If it is towards work, it is called yoga (the path of action).”

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Why do we need to know about this?

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SLOKA WORD -

karma bandham praha:syasi

SLOKA MEANING -

“To destroy the shackles of karma.”

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What happens if we don’t know about this? Let’s say I am able to realize the knowledge about these topics but I die before I attain the result. What is the use? All the knowledge will be lost in vain. Anticipating that Arjuna might say this, Sri Krishna preaches the benefit upfront.

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SLOKA WORD -

ne:ha:bhi: krama na:so:sthi

SLOKA MEANING -

“There is no loss if you initiate this effort.”

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SLOKA WORD -

prathyava:yo: na vidyathe:

SLOKA MEANING -

“Even if you don’t learn about this holistically, there is no loss or harm.”

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SLOKA WORD -

svalpam apyasya dharmasya

SLOKA MEANING -

“No matter how little you know about this.”

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SLOKA WORD -

thra:yathe: mahatho: bhaya:th

SLOKA MEANING -

“Liberates us from ahankara (arrogance) that has intense negative effect.”

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This jnana (knowledge) [liberates us] - if we know about this buddhi! I will tell you about this, listen! Sri Krishna thus motivated Arjuna and preached a wonderful sloka. This 40th sloka is worth remembering for all of us. Jai Srimannarayana!

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