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1. Episode Title: Episode 3 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 3, Episode 3)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: This episode provides a comprehensive summary of Bhagavad Gita Chapter 2, as explained by Yamunacharya Swami, focusing on the imperishable nature of the soul and the perishable nature of the body. It details Krishna's arguments to Arjuna regarding the necessity of righteous action (dharma) and the consequences of inaction, including the three sins of being unacceptable to the wise, not leading to heaven, and resulting in infamy. The discussion also covers the concept of `asanga karma` (action without attachment) and the characteristics of a `sthittha prajna` (person of steady wisdom). Furthermore, the episode outlines the interconnectedness of Bhagavad Gita Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6, explaining how they elaborate on karma yoga, jnana (knowledge), mind regulation, and `atma samyama yoga` (self-control).

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Chapter 3, Chapter 4, Chapter 5, Chapter 6, Yamunacharya Swami, Ramanujacharya, Gita:rttha Sangraham, Gita Bhashyam, Arjuna, Krishna, Soul, Atma, Body, Deha, Imperishable, Perishable, Dharma, Righteous action, Warfare, Sins, Ana:rya jushtam, Asvargyam, Aki:rthikaram, Karma, Asanga karma, Action without attachment, Sthittha prajna, Steady wisdom, Jnana, Knowledge, Karma yoga, Jnana yoga, Atma samyama yoga, Mind control, Self-control, Spiritual practice, Sadhana, Ignorance, Moha, Bhagavadbandhus, Invocation, Devotion.

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord),

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SLOKA WORD -

a:pada:m apahartha:ram da:tha:ram sarva sampada:m

lo:ka:bhi ra:mam sri:ra:mam bhu:yo: bhu:yo: nama:myaham

SLOKA MEANING -

I repeatedly bow to Sri Rama, who removes all calamities, bestows all wealth, and is the delight of the world.

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Bhagavad Ramanujacharya’s guru, Sri Yamunacharya Swami, graced the essence of Bhagavad Gita Chapter 2 in one verse. What is it? The chapter has 72 verses in total. The first 11 verses, along with the entire previous chapter, Chapter 1, have come about only to describe Arjuna’s sorrow. The rest followed from verse 12 onwards. Therefore, approximately 61 verses of scripture compose Chapter 2. What is the established subject in them?

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SLOKA WORD -

nithya:thma: asanga karme:ha go:chara: sa:nkhya yo:ga dhi:hi

dvithi:ye: stthithadhi: laksha: pro:ktha: thun mo:ha sa:nthaye:

SLOKA MEANING -

In the second chapter, the eternal nature of the soul, the desire for action without attachment, and the characteristics of a person of steady wisdom are explained to remove ignorance.

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Yamunacharya Swami teaches it in the scripture known as Gita:rttha Sangraham (Summary of the Meaning of the Gita). What does it say? Firstly, `nithya:thma` (the soul is imperishable). `De:ha` (the body) is perishable. Krishna had to show Arjuna the difference between the two. An army of Kauravas and others stood across from him. If he fights in the battle, is it the body or the soul that’s going to get hurt? Arjuna had to learn about this. He must know that the soul doesn’t get destroyed. He must know that the bodies get destroyed. When it’s your relative’s bodies going through destruction, it’s difficult to face. Isn’t it? Even if whatever they are doing is harmful to society. The soul is indestructible despite being in the body. Yet, if the work being done through the body is harming the world, then it is `dharma` (righteous practice) to stop that from happening. Therefore, you must wage war. Just because you are fighting the war, the indwelling soul does not get destroyed. In the case of the body, it will not be alive forever despite any efforts. It will be shed today or tomorrow. He had to explain these qualities to Arjuna in a way to have them engraved in the heart. This took approximately 17 verses. Beginning with the 12th verse and through the 30th, He clarified this using different logics and reasonings. He explained both the eternity of the soul and the transience of the body. Therefore, there is no need to worry about these. You can certainly wage war with no hesitation. Even if you don’t believe that is a different body, you need not turn back from the war. He explained that in verses 26, 27, and 28. Even a non-believer of `a:thma` (soul) need not worry when having to perform their responsibilities. This was explained during the same time when the soul’s nature was being described, from `ja:thasya hi dhruvo: mruthyuhu` (for one who is born, death is certain) onwards, for three verses.

In the beginning of the chapter, He explained that he would accrue three sins if he did not fight the war: `ana:rya jushtam` (unacceptable to the wise), `asvargyam` (not leading to heaven), and `aki:rthikaram` (resulting in infamy).

`ana:rya jushtam` (unacceptable to the wise): None of the Wise will accept this. All the Wise do have `de:ha:thma vive:kam` (knowledge of the soul and the body). They wish that we all act with that knowledge. If we do not act with that knowledge, they are not happy. They feel sad and pity us. You are behaving bereft of that knowledge. The attitude to turn away from the war will not make the Wise happy.

The second one is `asvargyam` (not leading to heaven): He thought that he would attain heaven by turning his back on the war because he would then not accrue the sin of killing people. That is not the case. You will indeed incur sin. You are thinking you will attain heaven but that is not going to happen. He explained these in two verses, 31 and 32. Your attitude of turning your back on this war is a blocker to heaven. He clarified this.

The third reason He mentioned was `aki:rthikaram` (resulting in infamy): Nobody will say that Arjuna is very compassionate as he did not fight the war. They would say you are a coward, useful for nothing. “His boastful words reached the skies when there were no warriors around.” “When it was time for the war, he turned his back.” Thus, there will be no one flying the kites of fame. “You will be only blamed.” `nindanthaha thava sa:mardhyam` (They will blame your strength). `thatho: dukha tharam nukim` (What could be more painful than that?). He asked! He explained this in five verses. In verses 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, He said that turning your back on war will not bring you any fame. `ana:rya jushtam` (unacceptable to the wise), `asvargyam` (not leading to heaven), `aki:rthikaram` (resulting in infamy). Because He explained that he would accrue three sins. He also explained why they accrue sin and why it is essential to be relieved from them. To do so, the scripture went along until verse 37. Until the stage was preset with this, Arjuna’s mind was not in a state to understand his responsibility as a human being, as a soul when indwelling the body. That is why Chapter 2 explained `nithya:thma` (eternity of soul).

Next, `asanga karma i:ha` (desire for action without attachment). `iha` (desire). What should he desire? He should desire `asanga karma` (action without attachment). We all know that `karma` (activity) is the activity we do. `Sangam` (attachment) is the feeling that I am doing the activity, it is happening because of me, and the result is all mine. These are the three feelings that tie him up to the work that one is doing. This is called `sankalpam` (resolve/intention). One should carry out `karma` (action) without that `sangam` (attachment). It is never right to stop doing `karma` (action). He said, `karmanye:va:dhika:rasthe: ma: phale:shu kada:chana` (You have the right to perform your prescribed duty, but you are not entitled to the fruits of action). How is this `asanga karma` (action without attachment) done? From verse 38 to verse 53 of the scripture, He explained how and why `asanga karma` (action without attachment) must be done. During this, some might do `karma` (action) without leaving the `sanga` (attachment). That is, they desire for something or want to attain something out of it. Not only do they do it, but also encourage others to follow the same. “This is what you should do as well. You should do this if you desire that and all.” God has in fact condemned such people, who are corrupting the system and encouraging others also in the same direction. Because anyone could get attracted to temporary profits. If a temporary happiness is awaiting, anyone would want to experience it. So, three verses 42, 43, and 44 regulate people who are encouraging that direction. `ya:mima:m pushpitha:m va:cham pravadanthi` (those who talk this way) are `avipaschithaha` (fools). He clarifies that those who talk this way lead people in the wrong direction.

Next, there was a question about `sthittha prajna` (one having proper knowledge in a firm and stable state). To answer that, He begins at verse 55 and concludes at the chapter’s last verse 72. `sthittha dhi: laksha: pro:ktha:` (the characteristics of a steady-minded person are explained). How does a `sthittha prajna` (person of steady wisdom) conduct himself? Why does he behave that way? Why does he reach that state? How does he reach that state? He had to explain all this in Chapter 2. `dvithi:ye: pro:ktha: thunmo:ha sa:nthaye:` (In the second chapter, it is explained for the removal of ignorance). To relieve Arjuna from `mo:ha` (ignorance), He explained all of these. Saying so, Yamunacharya Swami gave the summary of the essence of Chapter 2 in one verse. This is the summary of what we have gone through so far as Chapter 2 of the scripture.

In this Chapter 2, there are some aspects. One is `karma` (action). It must be performed. Everyone must do so. Be it a common man, or a `jna:ni` (learned person). He may be in the beginning stages, or in an intermediate stage, or in a ripened stage. Whoever it may be, no one is allowed to stop doing their `karma` (action). Everyone must definitely do it. However, when you are doing `karma` (action), don’t just do `karma` (action), transform it as `karma yo:ga` (yoga of action) and do it. How do we transform it and why should we do so? We must know this, shouldn’t we? Chapter 3 has come into picture for that reason. Chapter 4 tells us about the underlying `jna:na` (knowledge) that tells one why he is doing something. That `jna:na` (knowledge) is called `jna:na` (knowledge). `Karma` (action) must go on, taking the support of `jna:na` (knowledge). He clearly and carefully explains these two in that chapter. This is called `jna:na` (knowledge). One must perform `karma` (action) transforming `jna:na` (knowledge) as `yo:ga` (a means). If one wants to do that, He has already explained `karma` (action). He explains that `jna:na` (knowledge) in Chapter 4. Next, He explains how one must regulate `manas` (the mind) while performing `karma` (action) and how to behave in life. This is explained in Chapter 5.

Coming to Chapter 6, one must do `sa:dhana` (spiritual practice) of what he has learned. Isn’t it? One cannot be satisfied with just knowledge. If one speaks out, “eating food satiates hunger” repeatedly, does it satisfy him? It’s okay if he does not. He must have the food itself. Only then, his hunger is met. So, He had to teach a means to attain what a `ji:va` (human being/individual soul) must attain. Named as `a:thma samyama yo:ga` (yoga of self-control), it explains how you can attain regulating `manas` (the mind). Where should you sit, how should you sit, what should you do? `Manas` (the mind) keeps getting distracted. How can you regulate it? All these details are explained in the name of `a:thma samyama yo:ga` (yoga of self-control) in Chapter 6. Thus, He clarifies `karma yo:ga` (yoga of action), that `karma` (action) which must be done while an `a:thma` (soul) is in a body, that which is given as the summary of Chapter 2. He details each part, and then consolidates them. He explains how one must realize when all of it is put together. What is the benefit of understanding it that way? Yamunacharya Swami explains that this is what was taught.

Bhagavad Ramanujacharya composed `vya:khya:nam` (commentary) on Bhagavad Gita. It is called `Gita Bha:shyam` (Commentary on the Gita). When he was composing it, he used Yamunacharya Swami’s verses as the supporting foundation. It is clear in his commentary that he was penning it in such a way that it does not deviate from it. In fact, because of that composition, we never see anything that does not fit together. The pre and post fit the context and are in-line with each other. We can see how each chapter fits with one another retaining the oneness of all statements. We can see how the whole of it is in sync with every statement. If that is not there, the scripture cannot give us comprehensive understanding/knowledge. All these aspects are in this. Let’s attempt to carefully learn them one after another. Let’s enter Chapter 3 of Bhagavad Gita.

Jai Srimannarayana!

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