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1. Episode Title: Episode 62 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 3, Episode 62)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: This episode explains how actions (karma) are performed through the body and the qualities of Nature (prakruthi), emphasizing the importance of understanding that the soul is not the doer. It delves into the concept of ego (ahankaram) and how it binds the soul to the results of actions, preventing liberation. Krishna's teachings guide individuals to recognize the role of Nature's qualities (sattva, rajas, tamas) in actions and to relinquish the false sense of doership to achieve freedom from the bondage of karma.

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 3, Episode 62, Karma Yoga, Prakruthi, Nature, Gunas, Sattva, Rajas, Tamas, Ahankaram, Ego, Soul, Body, Actions, Doership, Bondage, Liberation, Krishna, Arjuna, Knowledge, Spiritual guidance, Dharma, Self-realization

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana!

Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord),

`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` (I repeatedly bow to Sri Rama, who removes all calamities, grants all prosperity, and delights the world.)

Bhagavad Gita chapter 3 provided `upade:sas` (teachings) to humans about the proper way of doing work. Work gets done with the support of two things. One is `sari:ra` (the body). Second is `jna:na` (knowledge). If knowledge does not support, then the body cannot do anything. In a case where knowledge is no longer supporting it, the body is called dead. If you want knowledge alone to complete the work, it doesn’t work that way. It needs a tool to work. That is body. Body is the tool. Knowledge is the underlying essential.

Knowledge is like the electricity that runs a fan. A fan runs and gives air. However, fan blades don’t rotate by themselves. It runs only when there is electricity passing through. Electricity by itself doesn’t give air either. It gives air only when there is a necessary apparatus set up. If we observe this carefully, we can apply this in the case of the body. The body is a tool that works. Knowledge is like the electric current that is supplied from `a:thma` (the soul). Hence, there are two things: one that works and the other which makes it work. How should these both work? This is what Sri Krishna is explaining in chapter 3.

The body must work but the knowledge provided should be free of ego. It should not feel that it is the doer. This feeling is called `bha:vana` (internal feeling). `Bha:vana` (internal feeling) is one thing. `Ba:hyam` (external act) is the other thing. `Bha:vana` (internal feeling) is internal. `Ba:hyam` (external act) is the body that’s working. There are differences in the way work is done. The reason for these differences is the passages that the work is done through. Let’s look at the electric current example. To pass, it needs wires to go through. The wires have certain powers; 720 / 360 etc. They have various capacities. Accordingly, there is a difference in the amount of current that can flow through them. Also, the electric current makes the tool work differently based on the type of tool it is. Should it make the fan rotate to circulate air? Should it make it give out heat? Should it give a cooling effect? Should it display images? Or should it give out only sounds? Each device has some purpose that it’s made for. There is a passage that carries the current needed to flow through for getting that work done.

Similarly, the soul which releases the current of knowledge also has ‘wires’ such as `manasu` (mind), sense organs etc. The tool that does the work is the body. Each body is assigned a specific purpose. Analogous to how there is a separate device for purposes like displaying images, producing sounds, circulating air, releasing heat or for cool air. Each one has a different work. Similarly, each body has a different work. That body must do that work. You cannot say I will do some other work. If the device that is made to be only producing heat is expected to work as an air cooler, it can’t. If it tries to do it, it will take the lives of people around there. If the device that is made for only cooling air is expected to produce heat, it can’t. That is not its work. Whatever work is ordained for a body, that is what it must do. That is how our mechanism works too.

There are several types of bodies. Bodies of humans, animals, birds, trees etc. In the bodies of humans, there are types such as different colors, heights, weights etc. These are all like the external devices. These devices are made of `pancha bhu:thas` (five elements of Nature). All the devices are made of `pancha bhu:thas` (five elements). It doesn’t matter if it is AC, heater or anything else, it is made of the same elements. However, there is a different purpose to each. Similarly, the underlying cause for their formation is different `karma` (actions/deeds). This `karma` (actions/deeds) doesn’t change. We know what `pancha bhu:thas` (five elements) are: Earth, fire, water, air, and space. Each and every body is made of them. To make those bodies work, there is a mechanism like a transmitter that enables them to work. What is it? `satthvamu, rajassu and thamassu` (goodness, passion, and ignorance).

`Satthva` (goodness) is that which provides knowledge of things as they are and makes it work. `Rajas` (passion) is that which gives rise to arrogance not giving knowledge of things as they are. `Thamas` (ignorance) is that which tries to cover the knowledge making one understand things differently than they are. All these three are the qualities of Nature. `Satthva` (goodness), `rajas` (passion), and `thamas` (ignorance) are the qualities of Nature. Bodies are made of `pancha bhu:thas` (five elements). `Pancha bhu:thas` (five elements) are nothing but Nature. `Sattva` (goodness), `rajas` (passion) and `thamas` (ignorance) are their qualities. Dwelling within, they see that the work is done through the body transmitting knowledge from the soul.

What should one do now? He should be unaffected by them. So, he must get rid of the feeling that he is the doer. Because he also does not own the mechanism of knowledge flow. Electric current does not pass through the circuits of the fan, AC etc by itself. There is someone who is running it from behind the scenes. Like the way he owns which channel it must flow through, there is someone behind the scenes running all the souls. He is named `Bhagava:n` (Lord) or `De:va` (God) or `Parama:thma` (Supreme Soul) or something else. What it is and who it is a separate topic to be put aside for now. There is something underlying though. For as long as He puts him there, he will exist. He (the soul) will transmit knowledge (in the body) the way He (God) directs. He (the soul) keeps using the tool (the body) for that period of time. If he can leave the burden to Him, then He becomes useful to him, cutting down the existing burden and not adding to it. The Divine Supreme helps that way. He (the soul) will be released from `karma bandha` (the bondage of actions). `Karma` (actions/deeds) is that which caused the differences in the devices (bodies). This `karma bandha` (bondage of actions) must go. Then, the soul will be released from here. There is the bondage of `karma bandha` (bondage of actions) that’s blocking him from being released. Therefore, he must be helped to recognise it and understand it. He must be enabled to take care so that there are no adverse effects such as not seeing things as they are, or seeing them as something else due to `rajas` (passion) and `thamas` (ignorance). He must know to try to keep a check on them and enhance `satthva` (goodness). Then, it becomes relatively easy to unbind `karma bandha` (the bondage of actions). This is what he must be enlightened with. If he can achieve this, it is then that the human body becomes a properly utilisable tool. Otherwise, it will become a tool for pulling him further down and down.

Whatever is giving rise to `satthva` (goodness), `rajas` (passion) and `thamas` (ignorance) made of `pancha bhu:thas` (five elements) is all together called `prakruthi` (Nature). He must know that this is the cause for different things in him. He has knowledge, isn’t it? The knowledge must help him understand that what is working is the `prakruthi` (Nature), not he. It should tell him that he is in the `prakruthi` (Nature) but he is not `prakruthi` (Nature). “`Prakruthi` (Nature) is a tool that’s given.” “I am also not independent.” “There is someone underlying who is running it.” “Let me leave the burden to Him.” “Then it will not bind me.” This is the knowledge he must perform work with.

He (Krishna) beautifully describes this in verse 27 of chapter 3.

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SLOKA WORD -

prakruthe:h kriyama:na:ni gunaih karma:ni sarvasaha |

ahanka:ra-vimu:da:thma: kartha:ham iti manyathe: ||

SLOKA MEANING -

All actions are performed by the qualities of Nature (prakruthi). The soul, bewildered by ego (ahankara), thinks, "I am the doer."

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Let's break down the first line:

`sarvasaha` (everywhere)

`karma:ni` (devices, i.e., the bodies which are the tools)

`kriyama:na:ni` (are working on activities)

How are they working?

`prakruthe:h gunaih` (by the qualities of Nature)

We say that bodies are made of `pancha bhu:thas` (five elements). They have `sattva` (goodness), `rajas` (passion) and `thamas` (ignorance) qualities. These qualities are natural for them. Saltiness for salt, sweetness for sugar, bitterness for neem, spiciness for a chilly, sourness for tamarind are natural. Similarly, Nature has `sattva` (goodness), `rajas` (passion) and `thamas` (ignorance) by nature. They are not brought into it from somewhere. A soul however does not have these. The soul only has knowledge. Like electricity is not cool or hot. It does not have images or rotation or sound. Electricity is different from these. However, when the fan is rotating, we say it’s the electric current that’s giving the pleasant air. Is current giving the air? We also say fan is giving the pleasant air. Is fan giving the air? It is their combination that’s giving it. Current has the power to rotate something. Because it's rotating, there is flow of air. There is a mechanism in the blades of the fan for rotation and so they do so. There is a purpose for them being made that way. Similarly, there is a purpose for this body. It is named `karma` (action/duty). Practicing `karma` (action/duty) is what one must be doing. However, when he is practicing `karma` (action/duty), he should not feel that he is the doer. “It is the body that’s doing. It’s not me.” If he has this `bha:vana` (feeling), then the result of the work done will not latch on to him as a burden.

`prakruthe:h gunaih kriyama:na:ni karma:ni` (All this work is done because of the `sattva` (goodness), `rajas` (passion) and `thamas` (ignorance) qualities of Nature, not because of me.) However, do we think this way? We become arrogant thinking that we are doing what limbs of the body are actually doing. Whatever the results of the work done are for the body but we think they are for us. To be clear, the soul is not gaining anything. It’s the body that gets the results. If someone puts his hand on ice, it gets cold. That is for the body. He puts hand on fire. It gets burnt. That is for the body. However, he assumed a relation with the body. In fact, he is different but he assumed that it (the body) is him. Hence, he feels he is being burnt (when the hand gets burnt). He feels he is getting cold. He feels he is the one doing the work. He feels he is the one experiencing it. He feels he wants this. He feels he is the reason for something getting done. He assumes all of this upon him. Is there a relation between the electric current and what happens with the devices? Because it’s not assuming it, current is ‘safe’. If the soul also does not assume that, the soul is also safe. However, we are not like that. What is our knowledge doing? It is making us tied to the bonds of the body.

Identifying oneself with the body, which he is not, is termed as `ahanka:ram` (ego/false ego). `Aham` (I) is `a:thma` (the soul). `Sari:ram` (the body) is different. That knowledge which made him feel what is not `aham` (I) as `aham` (I) is called `ahamka:ram` (ego/false ego). `anaham aham kri:yathe:` (what is not "I" is made into "I"). What happens when there is `ahanka:ram` (ego/false ego)? It becomes a layer (blocker). `vimu:da a:thma:` (His soul becomes deluded). His `manas` (mind) becomes like a layer of soot covering the light. `ahanka:ra vimu:da:thma:` (the soul bewildered by ego). The doer is actually the underlying One (God). Or it is the body. It’s not him. He is just a mediator. However, `kartha:ha mithimanyathe:` ("I am doing all this. I am the cause for all of this to happen. All of this is for me." he thinks). That’s it. His destruction begins.

What should he be doing instead? He can do it two ways. He can either put the responsibility on the body because it is the tool. Or he can put it on his underlying support who is God. You can put it on `prakruthi` (Nature) or `parama:thma` (the Supreme Soul). Don’t put it on yourself. However, we don’t put it on either of them. “If I am the one doing it, why would we put it on Him?” “I am the one who is working hard, why would I put it on the body?” “I will keep it with me.” Doing so, he is becoming prey for `ahanka:ra` (ego/false ego). His `manas` (mind) gets closed. He is becoming `vimu:da:thma` (a deluded soul). He is thus getting further tied into `bandha` (bondage). This is not right. This is what Sri Krishna is teaching Arjuna in verse 3.27. He is taking him forward; let’s also learn.

Vande: guruparampara:m

Jai Srimannarayana!

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