**Episode 44 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 1, Episode 44)**

**TOPICS:** The unique way God works, the purpose of His repeated incarnations, the power of **Hrishikesha**, and the transformation of **Arjuna's** mindset through **Sri Krushna's** love and guidance.

**TAGS:** **Bhagavad Gita**, **Sri Krushna**, **Arjuna**, **Hrishikesha**, **Dwapara Yuga**, **Bhakta Vatsalya**

Jai Srimannarayana!

Priya Bhagavad Bandhus,

God does not work the way we do. He does not communicate with people as depicted in movies, with a magical appearance, "Oh, dear devotee, I am pleased with your penance. I will grant you a boon, ask for it." He need not work that way. He accomplishes things through His will.

thadaikshatha bahusya:m praja:ey: ya:

simply with a wish, an intention, He does everything.

sathyathyakcha: bhavath

niruktam cha anirukstam cha nilayanam cha anilayanum cha

satyam cha: anrutham cha

satyam abhavat yadidam kimcha:th

If He desires, the entire animate and inanimate existence will appear and dissolve in a second. One day He wished to teach us a lesson. He allowed the manifestation of Coronavirus, let it spread globally and helped us all come to a realization. However, will this realization sustain or resemble a dog’s tail, always reverting to its original state? Only time will tell. If we mend our ways, then we are fortunate and God’s efforts are successful.

However, it is unlikely as we think we can outsmart Him. Hence, God ends up incarnating repeatedly. Alas! We don’t know how many times He incarnated to date, but why does He do this?

na: hitham vakratha:m dhruvam, na jaha:thi

the crookedness of a dog’s tail will never straighten

The dog’s tail is straight as long as it is tied to a stick; it again curves as soon as the stick is removed. People follow rules only when a lockdown is in effect. Once lifted, they are prone to abusing guidelines again. The world experienced this. Man’s mind is fickle, hence, God incarnates multiple times and makes tireless efforts. **Sri Vishnu Sahasranama Stotra** refers to God as **anirvinnaha:**. 'Nirvinna' means disappointment. He does not have this quality. God is ever optimistic. He is not a pessimist. He gives us chance after chance, even if it means by dint of fear. God works constantly and tirelessly.

He looks forward to give us ultimate knowledge. He puts efforts into creating an amicable environment to do so. This has been occurring since time immemorial. God’s efforts are unrelenting. Therefore, at the end of **Dwapara Yuga**, he felt responsible to provide a sheath in the form of **Bhagavad Gita** to all those who desire to enrich themselves in **Kali Yuga**. Does **Bhagavad Gita** work for everyone? If one is given an umbrella in the rain, not everyone will use it. Some may prefer dancing in the rain. Some may prefer to just gaze at the rain, even if it disrupts their schedule. Some would use the umbrella to carry on with their duties. For such people, an umbrella becomes essential.

It’s for those who are determined to do their duties despite any obstacle, without any rancor, that He wanted to give a tool. This sheath cannot be in a physical form. We also can design a physical sheath or tool. That protective shield must be composed of knowledge. Hence, in the end of **Dwapara Yuga**, He provided us with **Bhagavad Gita** and left. He utilized **Arjuna** as a means to deliver it and then left. He delivered it to all of us through **Arjuna**.

Referred to as **Hrishikesha**, He did so in chapter 1 and elsewhere in **Bhagavad Gita**. **Hrishikesha** is one who rules senses. God alone can reign over everyone’s senses. God is Numero Uno! There will never be hundreds of Gods. Out of ignorance, some claim that there are many Gods. We must pity them. God is always only one. However, aren’t there many others such as Agni, Indra, Rudra, Varuna, Vayu, etc.? They are all referred to as **devatas**. **Devatas** work for God in His system in different authoritative positions. On account of their past pious **karmas**, few are privileged with these positions and are blessed to do this activity. They are termed as **devatas**. They are not Gods, they are **devatas**. God is only one. Some people incorrectly term these **devatas** as demi-gods. Demi-god is not an appropriate word to describe **devatas**. They are not eligible to have ‘God’ as part of their name. They have to be termed ‘**devata**’ irrespective of language. God is the only one who can regulate the entire existence. He is **Hrishikesha**.

What does He do? He ensures whoever is meant to do whatever task at a respective time, completes it. Thus, He enables the appropriate setting so that we may reform ourselves. If we utilize the given opportunity, we can enhance our state. Otherwise, we will continue to move with the same flow. In chapter 1, He controlled everyone in those times with His power of **Hrishikeshatva**. He controlled the senses of **Kauravas**, **Pandavas**, and others, including animals. They all have life, they all have senses. Don’t they? He has also controlled insects and worms. We notice flies going around us. They have sense organs as well. Therefore, He controlled flies and mosquitoes too! Thus, they were under His spell so as not to interrupt the conversation between **Arjuna** and **Sri Krushna** by biting them! He controlled every living entity so that nothing could disturb what needed to be done. Except for **Arjuna**, whose senses He permitted to operate just enough enabling him to work.

When the war-cry resounded, both the **Kaurava** and **Pandava** armies on the battlefield were under His spell. They were under prolonged stupor, a coma-like state. **Arjuna** wished to see the two armies on the battleground. He wished to see both armies in a single frame. He wanted to see those who were on his side and who he should fight against. Therefore, he commanded **Sri Krushna** to position the chariot to the center of both armies. This commanding tone came naturally to **Arjuna**. However, it must not be a command. It must be a request. Why? Because, it is God Himself across from him. Do you command Him or urge Him? Alas! **Arjuna** didn’t even know that. He commanded that his chariot be positioned in between the two armies. **Sri Krushna** obeyed. **Arjuna** was going through gradual transformation of feelings. Firstly, his readiness to commence war had to be gradually altered. Secondly...

dha:rtha ra:shtrasya durbuddhe:he yuddhe: priya chiki:rshavaha

verse 23

Dhrutarashtra is evil minded.

I want to see him and all the other evil-minded people on his side

Look at the words he used. To that point, he was looking at them as evil-minded people. We must notice the gradual change in **Arjuna’s** perception later. His perception of them being evil-minded, changes. In the 26th verse, he refers to them as teachers, uncles, nephews, grandfathers, and fathers. **Arjuna** is now seeing these ‘evil-minded’ ones as his relatives. Thus, we begin to notice transformation in his perception. Actually, it is not wise for a warrior to be thinking this way.

**udaattam** is the word used. Need to check the right meaning of it.

In fact, **Arjuna** is a great leader. Can he have such unwanted thoughts? No! Why was this happening? There was a steering in thoughts from within. Firstly, He sounded the conch, reinforcing courage and valor. Immediately, he felt inspired to look at both sides. He felt like passing an order. “Position the chariot between the two armies so I can see them all!” Wherever there is a mention of **Hrishikesha**, it is accompanied with a change in **Arjuna**. His behavior transforms. The kinds of words he uses undergo a change. If we can observe the kind of change in him, we can clearly understand the work of **Hrishikesha**. In **Bhagavad Gita**...

Transforming **Arjuna’s** heart this way... Making him ultimately turn his back on war completely... Making him surrender to God... Making him feel completely in despair... Making him desirous of being Lord’s disciple... Taking him to a state where he felt incompetent unless instructed by Him... **Sri Krushna** blessed **Bhagavad Gita**, as if teaching **Arjuna**, to all those who believe that the world does not run by his/her will and that it runs with the grace of God. It is revealed to guide one how to carry out his responsibilities. We must notice this.

What did **Arjuna** say? He gave a great order.

senayor ubhayor madhye: rattham stthapaya me:chyutha! ||

position the chariot in between the two armies

The one commanding here is a human being. The one who received the command is the supreme Lord Himself. There is no rule that He must obey the order. It’s fascinating to see the way He gradually transforms **Arjuna’s** state of mind by first obeying his order exactly as given. This can be observed in the 24th **sloka**.

**senayor ubhayor madhye: stthapayithwa: rattho:ththamam ||**

Notice what the order was and how it was followed. The order:

senayor ubhayor madhye: rattham stthapaya me:chyutha! ||

The way it was obeyed:

senayor ubhayor madhye: stthapayithwa: rattho:ththamam ||

He executed the order exactly without any discrepancy. When we command taxi drivers with such a tone, it is usually not obeyed. They refute, demanding respect, with a harsher tone, maybe even ready to fight! God, the supreme commander of the entire existence, duly obeyed the orders of one insignificant human being, **Arjuna**. This reveals how much he loved **Arjuna**. We must notice this. What is it termed? **Bhakta Vatsalya** (love towards His devotees). It is also called **asrita vatsalya** (the love towards those who take shelter of him). We can see the ego of **Arjuna** and love of God. Lord is an abode of boundless love. Let’s continue to notice this and move ahead.

**Jai Srimannarayana!**