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1. Episode Title: Episode 108 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 3, Episode 108): Understanding Swadharma and Paradharma

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The episode delves into the concepts of swadharma (one's own duty) and paradharma (another's duty) as explained by Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita. It discusses the challenges of self-effort versus divine dependence and the underlying influence of ra:ga (attachment) and dwe:sha (aversion). The discourse also explores the nature of reality, distinguishing between the dream world and the external world, asserting that both are real and purposeful creations of the Divine for experiencing karma. It defines 'satya' (real) as that which is 'arthakriya:ka:ri' (purposeful) and emphasizes the body's role as a tool for fulfilling ordained duties. The teachings highlight the importance of adhering to one's swadharma and the dangers of attempting paradharma while in the body.

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 3, Episode 108, Swadharma, Paradharma, Krishna, dharma, karma, ra:ga, dwe:sha, reality, dream, jagath, satya, anitya, asatya, arthakriya:ka:ri, body, soul, atma sakshatkara, self-realization, divine dependence, duties, purpose, Upanishads, Vedanta, 3.35

3. Main Content:

Jai Srimannarayana! Priya Bhagavadbandhus (Dear devotees of the Lord), We hear from some dha:rmik (righteous) people, advocates of righteous living, about swadharma (one's own duty) and paradharma (another's duty). We observe that these words are explained in various definitions. Sri Krishna used these words in Bhagavad Gita.

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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 delights the world.

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Sri Krishna explains in verse 3.35 – While explaining about the enemies of one who practices self-effort, He uses these words. “Dear! You cannot achieve things the way you desire.” “The underlying ra:ga (attachment) and dwe:sha (aversion) drive you!” This is what He began with. Despite your determination, you cannot escape, by yourselves, from their effect on you. He explains the reason. The flowing speed of their effect is stronger. No matter how great a person you are and the amount of hard work you do… The power of your efforts is very less. He said, “So, don’t depend on yourself. Depend on Me.”

We might say… “What’s all this headache?” “We are the ones who must put in all the hard work.” “And we should believe that He is the One doing it.” “It seems we should be working hard and think that He is the cause for all that’s happening.” “It seems we put in sweat and blood but that result is not for us! It’s for Him.” “What is all this?!” “We will stop doing everything. We will perform dhya:na (meditation).” “We will work on yo:gam (divine union), or atma sakshatkara (self-realization).” There are some people in the world who think this way.

Whom is He teaching Bhagavad Gita for? It’s not an upadesha (teaching) for someone who can benefit with some kind of employment. It’s for one who desires tattva jnana (knowledge of realities). It’s for one whose perception is tatvik (concerning realities). It’s for one who can think of the soul in this life. It’s for one who wants to move ahead in the journey of improving its state. That is the purpose of this teaching. It’s not for children who are in first and second grade to only read the verses. It’s not for such a purpose. Or it’s not meant for any benefit for politicians who work on converting from one religion to another. It’s a teaching that He delivered for the benefit of everyone in the world.

Is it right for a person to work or to quit? What is the right thing to do between the two? You are in a body. The body is a tool that is made for working. When you are in the body, how can not using it become the right thing to do? You should use it properly. You should learn about the challenges while using it and then use it. It’s wrong to say you won’t even use it. In that case, you won’t be fit to be in it. There will be something after leaving this body. But you should not do that while you are in the body. You can do so after leaving [this body].

Some people say Vedanta (the conclusion from Vedas) is that the world is all a dream. How do you know that? “Yes, it is a dream. It is temporary. It is like a bubble. We should come out of that dream.” Who says this? One who is in the dream cannot say that it is a dream. The speaker is the one who has come out of the so-called dream. However, you say there is nothing but a dream. Then, what are they saying? If you say that the one who is in the dream is speaking about the non-existence of the world… Then, whatever he is saying is also part of the non-existence. He is in a dream and is having another dream! A dream in a dream. How can we trust that as real? How can one think of the world as a dream? Sri Krishna said it is not [a dream]. Upanishads stated that it is not [a dream].

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SLOKA WORD -

ya e:shu supthe:shu ja:garthi

ka:mam ka:mam purusho: nirmima:naha

SLOKA MEANING -

He who is awake in those who sleep, creating desired objects, person by person.

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The dreams you have when you sleep are also caused and formed by Someone. Dream is a result of His creation. Why? It is a jagath (world) that is created for you to experience some samskaras (tendencies in your mind). The external jagath (world) is created for another set of experiences. That is also real for experiencing certain karmas. This is also real for experiencing certain other karmas. That is for some types of karma. This is for other types of karma. That is swapnika jagath (dream world). This is bahira jagath (external world). That is real. This is real. That is not created by you. This is not created by you. That is created by Him. This is created by Him. That is made for a soul’s experiences. This is also made for a soul’s experiences. This is a set up for experiences at the personal level. The external world is set up for experiences at collective level. He is the doer for both. sa karta (He is the doer). He is the real doer. It is because of Him that both of these were created.

How can we say that a dream is asatya (unreal)? Yes, we can call it anityam (temporary), because it is not with you all the time. However, we cannot say it is asatya (unreal). Why? Because there is something resulting from it. “Can something from the dream be seen externally?” No. But, there are some outcomes of a dream. What are the outcomes? After waking up, don’t you tell someone that you dreamt of something? That is one outcome. Don’t you express that you were scared of whatever you dreamt of? That is another outcome. Or do you not express that it was such a beautiful dream and you didn’t even want to wake up. That is one outcome. It may be positive, negative, or passive. It was useful for experiencing something. That is the purpose. It took a form such that you are able to talk about it. That is one purpose. There is no dream without a purpose. You may say, “I could not remember the dream after I woke up but it was so good when I was having it.” It was useful for forgetting. That is one purpose. Whatever may happen because of it, that is the purpose. It is called artha (purpose). It was useful to make an artha (purpose). It became arthakriya:kari (purposeful). Satya (real) is defined as that which is an arthakriya:kari (purposeful). It may not be nitya (permanent).

A seed is useful for being sown. It gets useful to occupy a certain portion of land. It becomes useful for blowing some air. It becomes useful for taking in some undesired air. It becomes useful for leaves, fruits, and flowers. If it doesn’t, it becomes useful for shedding. It becomes useful for you to wipe off something. Even if it doesn’t solve any of those purposes, it becomes useful to at least be shown as a tree. That is also a purpose. artha (purpose) + kriya: (serve) + ka:ri (useful). arthakriya:karitvam satyatvam (that which was useful to serve a purpose is called satyam). This is what Vedanta shastra (scripture) proves. When you wake up after a dream, aren’t you reacting to it? You might say that you forgot what the dream was. Maybe to say that it was a bad dream or a wonderful dream. Or to say that you didn’t sleep properly because you had a bad dream. Isn’t it useful for those reactions? This is also artha kriya:karitva (being useful to serve a purpose).

A tree that’s outside wasn’t there before. It’s here now. Hence, we can say that it is not nitya (forever existing). In fact, we can establish nityatvam (eternally existing) to it as well. A dream too! You can say it is not nitya (forever existing). At least, when you were dreaming, it existed. We were the witnesses. It was useful for witnessing. It was useful to talk about. Therefore, it is not nitya (permanent), but satyam (real). It is anitya (temporary), but not asatya (unreal). Similarly, anything you see outside can be called anitya (temporary) because it keeps changing. However, it is not asatya (unreal). There are some purposes. The world outside is not just for one person alone. It is formed for the collection of creatures. We should know this. This is true for anything. Anything will be useful for some purpose. In our life, there is nothing that is not useful without a purpose. Our body is the same way. All the activities done by the body are also the same way. They are formed for serving a purpose. It [body] is formed for a karma anubhava (experiencing past karma). It is the dharma (duty) of the body to be continuously engaged in work.

svam (object)

One is an object. One is the owner of the object. We use two words to denote them. An object and the owner. An object is called svam (object). God or nature has given us an object [the body]. This is svam (object). Meaning this body is svam (object). The work we do with this body is called dharma (duty). Meaning swadharma (one's own duty). Whatever work we must do whilst in the body is called swadharma (one's own duty). Other than the body is called atma (soul), meaning us. Whatever we must do for us - is called para (different) - different from that of the body. There are some tasks for it. They are its dharma (duty). That is paradharma (another's duty). There are some tasks done for the body. There are some done for the soul. Are you currently with the body or separate from the body? If you are separate from the body, then those tasks are called atma dharmas (duties of the soul). What needs to be done with the body is called sharira dharmas (duties of the body). The body is called svam (object). The work that must be done with it is called swadharma (one's own duty).

It is wrong to do paradharma (another's duty) while in the body. Let’s say you are working in an office. If you work somewhere else while being employed here, that’s wrong. You are a citizen of a country. It’s criminal to work as a spy for some other country. While you are in the body, you should work for the body and with the body. That is swadharma (one's own duty). Whatever should be done for atma (soul), which is different from the body, becomes paradharma (another's duty). What needs to be done for atma (soul) is atma sakshatkara (self-realization). When you are in the body, you must practice sharira dharma (ordained duties with the body). With this current body - are you a human, animal, insect, bird, tree, etc.? Let it be any type of body. We should reflect on the human body. We need not think of all other bodies. The others work as they are supposed to. Amongst humans, where do you stand? Depending on the race, group, state, etc., there is work to be done. Observe this and work. That is when it becomes swadharma (one's own duty). If you forget it or do something else, it becomes paradharma (another's duty).

swadharme: nidhanam sre:yaha (If you feel it's not right for you or even if you lose your life while doing your swadharma, it’s still good for you). However, if you are here and try to practice atma dharma (duty of the soul), that becomes paradharma (another's duty) and is dangerous. Why? This is shreyan (beneficial). While you are here, doing work with it is useful. Even if you claim that you can do that other work better, it is still not right. paradharma:th svanushttitha:th (despite your ability to do it well, it is of no use for you). It is a waste. Bhagavan explained verse 3.35 for giving us clarity on swadharma (one's own duty) and paradharma (another's duty). Let’s learn.

Jai Srimannarayana!

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