\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

1. Episode Title: Episode 109 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 3, Episode 109)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The importance of performing one's own prescribed duties (swadharma) and the dangers of neglecting them for others' duties (paradharma). Krishna's teachings on the superiority of swadharma, even if imperfectly performed, over well-executed paradharma, emphasizing the spiritual and practical benefits. The concept of offering all actions to God (karma yoga) as a means of spiritual progress and protection from errors. Distinguishing between bhakthi (devotion through self-effort) and prapatthi (total surrender to God's will) and their implications for divine protection. Arjuna's fundamental question about the internal force that compels individuals to act wrongly despite knowing what is right.

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 3, Episode 109, swadharma, paradharma, karma yoga, dharma, duty, responsibility, Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra, Droṇāchārya, Krishna, Arjuna, bhakthi, prapatthi, surrender, devotion, divine protection, self-effort, divine will, Jadabharata, markata kishora, marjara kishora, internal compulsion, evil power, material nature, 3.35, 3.36

3. Main Content:

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

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

It is always beneficial for a human to perform work suitable to his stage. That is called swadharma (one's own duty). Whatever work done that does not suit his stage is called paradharma (another's duty). There are many stages for a human being. Depending on his birth, one is called a bra:mhana (Brahmin), kshathri:ya (Kshatriya), vaisya (Vaishya), or su:dra (Shudra). They are called with different names. Scriptures declared work that is suitable for each. Should we do those or stop doing those? Some think that all those activities are not necessary. However, remember that we are not allowed to stop doing those activities. When one is a bra:mhin (Brahmin), all the activities assigned for a bra:mhin (Brahmin) must be done first. If you are additionally a social activist, you should do those societal activities along with them. If you are also a businessman, you should do the corresponding activities along with them. However, if you stop doing the activities that came to you from birth and start doing other activities… It is called practicing paradharma (another's duty), activities not for you.

Sometimes, you may not be able to lead life with swadharma a:charana (practicing the activities of our stage). Swadharma (one's own duty) for a bra:mhin (Brahmin) is to learn Ve:das (Vedas), or scriptures, and teach others. Sometimes, he may not be able to sustain life with only that. If he is unable to sustain appropriately, he can resort to additional means. He can practice a kshathriya dharma (duties of a warrior) along with bra:mhana dharma (duties of a Brahmin) - but still not quit the original. While practicing his original dharma (duty), he can add more to it. We know Dro:na:cha:rya (Dronacharya). He is naturally a bra:mhin (Brahmin). So, his duties are to read and teach scriptures. However, he could not take care of his children with that. He was forced to take up kshathriya dharma (duties of a warrior). However, he did not give up the bra:mhana dharma (duties of a Brahmin) that was ordained upon him. To practice kshathriya dharma (duties of a warrior), he had to enter the warfield. If you are unable to support the bodily requirements, then you can add something more to it [swadharma (one's own duty)]. However, you should not quit doing your original duties. This is one aspect we must remember.

If you want to sleep while driving a car and want to sleep, how can that work? Why did you get in the car? To drive it. There are cars now with a ‘cruise’ feature. If you set it to cruise with certain miles/hour, it will automatically drive. While it is true that it drives by itself, you still can not fall asleep. It is your responsibility to steer it properly at a turn, or signal, or somewhere else. It takes on some effort from you, yet - you cannot simply set it up and fall asleep. Then, you won’t get up again. You will attain a permanent state of sleep! Your responsibility is to drive the car while you are in it. After you get down from the car, it is up to you if you want to play, eat, sleep, etc. You can decide. However, when you are there to drive the car, your responsibility is to only drive. You must work. Carry out your responsibilities. That is called swadharma (one's own duty).

In Bhagavad Gita (Bhagavad Gita), verse 3.35, Sri Krishna says…

-----------------------------------------------

SLOKA WORD -

sre:ya:n svadharmo: vigunaha

paradharma:th svanushttitha:th

svadharme: nidhanam sre:yaha

paradharmo: bha:ya:vahaha ||

SLOKA MEANING -

It is better to do one's own duty, even if imperfectly, than to do another's duty well. It is better to die in one's own duty; another's duty is dangerous.

-----------------------------------------------

Sometimes you may feel that it is not a great work. But still… You may say that you will do the other work very well. You may be able to do other activities. But still you are not supposed to do that while ignoring your duty. It is not allowed. You may think that you can do the other activities very well. Still, you are a person made for a specific duty. It is preferable to do it despite having to sacrifice life for it. Why? When you are in a human body, it is right for you to keep doing activities relevant to your stage. You should not quit those activities to seek higher knowledge. This is what He says. It’s not right to quit one’s work and adopt other means. Some people want to try to attain liberation, resorting to other means, while neglecting their ordained responsibilities. In chapter 3, Sri Krishna instructs that this is not right to do.

There are some reasons for it. One is that it is easier because he is used to working. The body is formed to work. So, it is comfortable when put to work. Earlier, we alluded that engaging in [required] bodily activities is like the downhill flow of water. Because it is convenient, risk-free, beneficial and God’s instruction. All these [factors] are in it. So, you should work. Because it’s God’s instruction, do your work while submitting it to Him. He said the same in many chapters. thath krurushva madarpanam (do that as an offering to Me) mayi sannyasya (surrendering to Me). He says it in every chapter. Hence, when doing work, don’t do it thinking that you are the doer and it is for you. Jadabharata (Jadabharata) is shown as an example of someone who thought that way. He had to take another birth unnecessarily because of this. Submit to God. Realize that things are happening because of Him. Do your work believing that God is using you as an instrument and is getting work done through the soul and the body. This is nishprama:da (risk-free). Why? When you believe that it is one form of God’s instruction… If there is any error or fault for some reason in the work you do, or if you fell from it… Because you are doing it as His instruction, He will provide an opportunity to resume it properly. If you feel that you are the doer, He will only watch.

There is an interesting saying. If you are a bhaktha (devotee), God becomes a prapanna (one who has totally surrendered). If you become a prapanna (one who has totally surrendered), He becomes a bhaktha (devotee). What does this mean? Becoming a devotee or surrendering is something we should be doing. How does God surrender or become a devotee? We may have such a doubt. Acha:rya:s (spiritual teachers) in the lineage said this is wonderful news. What is it? If you are a bhaktha (devotee), God becomes a prapanna (one who has totally surrendered). If you are a prapanna (one who has totally surrendered), He becomes a bhaktha (devotee). What is the summary? What is bhakthi (devotion/holding on)? Bhakthi (devotion/holding on) is to hold onto something. What is prapatthi (surrender/letting go)? Prapatthi (surrender/letting go) is letting go. Simple! There is a long explanation of what that means. Let’s not delve into that now. What we need to remember is… As a devotee, if you make efforts to hold onto something, God becomes prapanna (one who has totally surrendered). Meaning, “Okay, you think you are doing. You are holding onto things. You can protect yourself.” “You are taking on a means. Then, I will watch.” He stays passive, leaving [everything to you]. Letting go is called prapatthi (surrender/letting go). Holding onto something is called bhakthi (devotion/holding on). If you are a bhaktha (devotee), then He becomes a prapanna (one who has totally surrendered). Thus, He steps aside. This is also referred to with an example of how a markata kiso:ra (baby monkey) behaves. The baby monkey desires to protect itself by holding onto the mother. The mother monkey lets go of the responsibility, i.e. protecting the baby.

However, if you become a prapranna (one who has surrendered)… Meaning, if you believe that you are not the doer and let go saying… ni:vethappa nithaparamberuga! (I do not know anything else but You) ni:ta munchina: pa:la munchina: ni:ve gathi (drown me in water or milk, You are the means). If you can think this way, He becomes a bhaktha (devotee). Meaning, He holds you. This is referred to with an example of a ma:rja:ra kiso:ra (baby cat). When transfering from place to place, a mother cat holds the baby cat even though it knows how to walk. However, a baby monkey is not that way. It makes an effort for its own protection. The baby cat depends on the mother. So, the mother holds on to it. So, should God hold you? Or should you hold God? You should not be the one holding God. What strength do we have? What skill do we have? What knowledge do we have? If we think we are holding God, we are set for destruction. If we leave the responsibility to Him, and allow Him to grace us… Yes. He will take the ownership of protecting and saving you. He becomes a bhaktha (devotee). This is a beautiful process. If you say, “You don’t need to be bhaktha (devotee) or prapranna (one who has surrendered). I won’t be a bhaktha (devotee) or prapanna (one who has totally surrendered).”... “I will take care of myself.” Yet, God is showing proper direction even in that case. He says to at least adopt an easier path and walk it. If you want to walk by yourself, do it. However, at least know the path. If we want to walk in an unknown path, it's good for us to receive guidance from someone who is familiar with it. Is there a pit, or quicksand, or stones somewhere along the way? He explains all this. That will let you reach the destination easily. This is what God does.

You are in a body. It is made with certain rules. We talked about this earlier. A cat’s body and a human body are both bodies. But a cat, with eyes, can see at night. Whereas a human, with eyes, cannot see unless there is light. There is a substance called opium. It is a dark drug. If a human being takes it, it causes drowsiness. However, if it is given to a cat, it causes hyperactiveness. It is the same substance. However, the structure of the body is different. It works in different ways for the two. The same goes for human beings. Every human being is unique by nature. One is not the same as the other. We should remember this. Everyone who is educated knows this. However, when arguing, some claim ‘Aren’t we all the same? We all have blood running in our veins, etc.?’ No. Every individual is unique by oneself. There are some common things and some specific things. The common thing for everyone is to work. Do it. Realize your body, group, stage in life, race, country, and situation in your place. Work according to all of them. This is called swadharma (one's own duty). Not doing these becomes paradharma (another's duty). For a thatthva ve:ttha (one knowledgeable in realities)… It is his swadharma (one's own duty) to do karma yo:ga anushta:n (practicing karma yoga). If he renounces karma yo:ga (path of action) and resorts to jna:na yo:ga (path of knowledge) or ra:ja yo:ga (path of meditation/royal yoga), that is paradharma (another's duty). paradharmo: bhaya:vahaha swadharme: nidhanam sre:yaha (Another's duty is dangerous; it is better to die in one's own duty). So, do your work properly. Do it knowing that you are working for the Lord. This way is always beneficial. This is what He explained so far through verse 3.35.

After this, Arjuna asked a question. Sri Krishna! What you said is really good. I want to follow what you said too. However, as if I am being pushed by a certain bhu:tha (evil power)… I am drawn toward something that I don’t like, or not capable of or not appropriate. Who is that pushing me from behind? This is the question that rose in Arjuna. We have many great thoughts. However, at the end, like a dog’s tail that curves back up, we want to do the same wrong deed. Who is it pushing us from behind? [Arjuna to Krishna]: “I don’t think you will push me like that.” “I know You are the great One. I know that I am in a body and that I should practice karma yo:ga (path of action).” “What is the power that is leading me toward bad deeds in this prakruthi (material nature)?” “What is it? Please tell me.” He asked in verse 3.36. Giving an answer to this, Sri Krishna closes this chapter. Let’s continue to learn.

Jai Srimannarayana!

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*