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1. Episode Title: Episode 112 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 3, Episode 112)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: Analyzing the nature of sin and virtue based on divine instruction, understanding Arjuna's dilemma regarding his duty as a warrior, exploring the root causes of actions against one's will, Krishna's explanation of desire (kama) and anger (krodha) as powerful internal enemies, and the origin of these emotions from rajoguna (the quality of passion).

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 3, Episode 112, Arjuna, Krishna, sin, virtue, dharma, duty, kama, krodha, rajoguna, desire, anger, divine instruction, warrior's duty, self-control, internal enemies, Kuresha, Mahabharata, spiritual guidance, human nature, action, consequence, moksha, liberation.

3. Main Content:

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

In Chapter 3 of Bhagavad Gita, Arjuna asked Krishna a question: "Who is behind me, making me commit all the sins?"

Firstly, what are sins? How does something I do become a sin? Sins are those where I violate Your instructions. Sins are only those that I do against Your wish. Sin is not a special activity. An activity by itself does not become a virtue or a sin. Any activity that is done as per His instruction is punya (virtue). Any activity that is done which is against His will is papa (sin).

`yatvath priyam thadiyah punyam apunyamanyath` (whatever is dear to Him is virtue, anything else is not virtue), says the great Kuresha. Whatever is in alignment with God’s instruction, that is punyam (virtue). Whatever is not in alignment with God’s instruction, that is papa (sin). You may like or dislike something. He does not have anything to do with that.

When needed within a nation’s military, a soldier must shoot if he is instructed to do so. He need not say that it is ‘papa’ (sin) to kill someone. He will not get punished for shooting. If a common man hits someone, the person gets punished [by law] and gets sent to jail. However, if someone serving in the military attacks traitors as necessary, he gets felicitated with various awards like chakra, vira chakra, parama chakra, etc. (Awards in the Indian Army). He gets promoted but does not get punished. He becomes a punyatma (soul with virtues).

One may feel, “How can the act of killing become a punya (virtue)?” The task he signed up for is such. He has been given diksha (initiation/vow), enrolled for protecting the nation. So, that is what he should be doing. Hence, it does not become a mistake. As long as someone is doing what they are supposed to be doing based on their job, it does not become a mistake or a sin.

“We should not hit anyone.” “We should protect everyone.” Thinking so, if someone hosts and takes care of an enemy during war, believing it to be punya (virtue), the enemy will take his life. That is one person’s life but he would be allowing entry to someone who puts the entire nation at risk. He would become the cause for it. So, if he thinks of letting go of the enemy, he would be committing a dangerous sin. If he could bring the enemy into restraint, he would be doing a great punya (virtue). So, do we say killing is a sin or a virtue? Wise people decide if something is a sin or a virtue depending on the person and the situation.

Arjuna is in a similar situation. “Take part in the war.” `tasmat yujyasva vigata jvaraha` (therefore, fight without fever/sorrow). He said this earlier as well. “Wage war. That is good for you.” “How can I take part in the war?” “I am going to have to kill all of them with my arrows. Isn’t that a horrible sin?” “Won’t I suffer in hell?” “Won’t the system of society get wrecked?” In Chapter 1 and to an extent in Chapter 2, this is how Arjuna began to give a ‘discourse’ on Vedanta! That is not right. What should he do? He should do as per the instructions. What is God’s instruction? Wage war! For him at that time, his responsibility was to wage war. He was in a role of protecting, i.e., a military man. Isn’t that the duty of someone in the military? For someone in agriculture or business, their work is different. However, Arjuna was not in that role. Because he was a soldier, his responsibility was to wage war and kill his enemies. All that you do in that regard is punya (virtue).

“Sri Krishna, this is right! I understand what You are saying.” “Somehow, I am not able to do it. It is against Your instruction.” “So, it is becoming a sin. What is the force driving me from behind making me commit the sin?”

`attha ke:na prayuktho::yam pa:pam charathi pu:rushaha` (then by whom is this person driven to commit sin)

`purusha` (one dwelling in the body, a being). It is not necessary to talk about other beings now. The current context is about human beings. So, let’s take it as human beings. `purusha` or `purusha` (both mean the same).

`attha ke:na prayukthaha` (driven by whom)

`anichhannapi` (not wanting to do it at all)

One who is standing in the water does not wish to get pushed by the flow. No, but he gets swept away. What is the reason? Generally, when needed, we want to sit quietly. However, right when it is supposed to be quiet, we cough or sneeze or [the phone] rings. Something else needs attention. What all we don’t want to happen, that’s when they all happen. Why? Nobody wants it that way. Who wants to make a mistake? No one. However, mistakes happen.

`bala:d iva niyo:jithaha` (as if compelled by force)

He doesn’t even do it unexpectedly. These things happen as if someone is holding a knife against us if we don’t do them. We are all familiar with this. Early in the morning, if we want to perform japa (chanting) or tapas (austerity) or prayer, etc., the minute we close our eyes, all that we don’t need to think of in the world comes into the frame. What is the cause? What is the main reason for that? This is a wonderful question from Arjuna. What’s the reason for me doing things that are not liked by You? I don’t desire that. I want to act in a way that You like. I came all the way to You. I asked for You as well. I knew that armies were being assembled. I knew that it would mean that there are people on both sides. That is why, despite Duryodhana seeking 10,000 fighters, we felt all that we need is You alone. Thinking that way, we have set forth for the war. I came here. I was holding the bow and arrow. I even drew the string. However, I threw down the arrows as well as the bow. I did not mean this to happen. Then, why did this happen? I stood up to fight with all masculine power. `rathopasthau upavisat` (sat down on the chariot seat). I ended up trembling in retreat. What is that power making me do what I shouldn’t be doing, i.e. that which is against my dutiful responsibilities? This is what his question was.

Sri Krishna is giving a great clarification to that in verse 3.37.

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SLOKA WORD -

sri: bhagavan uva:cha

ka:ma e:shah kro:dha: e:shaha

rajo:guna samudbhavaha |

maha:sano: maha:pa:pma:

viddhye:nam iha vairinam ||

SLOKA MEANING -

The Blessed Lord said:

It is desire, it is anger, born from the quality of passion (rajoguna).

It is a great devourer, a great sinner. Know this to be the enemy here.

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`vairi` (enemy). He is a powerful enemy. Who? `kama eshaha krodha eshaha` (this is desire, this is anger). He is named kama (desire) and he is named krodha (anger). Where did these two come from? `rajoguna samudbhavaha` (born from the quality of passion). They are two children born to rajoguna (the quality of passion). They look like children but their behavior is dangerous. Mosquitoes are very tiny but their behavior is unbearable and dangerous.

Who is this kama (desire)? Who is this krodha (anger)? `kama eshaha krodha eshaha` (this is desire, this is anger). He is called kama (desire). The other is krodha (anger). Where did the two come from? `rajoguna samudbhavaha` (born from the quality of passion). They are two kids born to rajoguna (the quality of passion). They are kids but they look like thunderbolts. What do they do? One is named `mahasanaha` (great devourer). Another is named `mahapapma` (great sinner). We are saying ‘one’ and ‘another’ but there aren’t two there. It’s just one. What is it? It is `kamaha` (desire). When it gradually matures, or dries, the underlying cause becomes visible. `rajoguna samudbhavaha` (born from the quality of passion). Both originate from rajoguna (the quality of passion). We are again stating them as two in number, but it’s only one. There is a gradual maturation in it.

When a fruit is not ready, it is called unripened. After some time, the fruit becomes ripened. The unripened one and the ripened one - are they the same or different? They’re different - are they? No, they are the same. Are they the same or different? They are the same and they are different. We should know how they are the same, yet different. How can we say they are the same? From the perception of `jati` (class), they are the same. How can we say they are different? Based on the difference in their state. Based on the difference in the form, we say they are different. When do they become different? They don’t exist in the same time-frame. It does not become kama (desire) and krodha (anger) at the same time. At one point in time, it’s love. Later, it matures! Analogous to the unripened and ripened fruit – When unripened, it is `kaya` (raw fruit). The same gradually changes color and becomes `pandu` (a ripened fruit). Then, we changed the name. The same one, due to the change in state, has different names. Similarly, that which is born from rajoguna (the quality of passion) is called kama (desire). The same is called krodha (anger). Even more mature, it is also called `paga` (rivalry). Progressively more, it is called `kasi` (intense hatred). They are all names of the same. Where do they originate from? `rajoguna samudbhavaha` (born from the quality of passion).

Based on the state, the resulting activity differs. A raw fruit is relatively sour. When it ripens, it becomes sweeter. At a state where it is more raw, it tastes astringent. The same, depending on the change in state, is astringent, sour and in another state, it is sweet. We see these three states. Similarly, being born from rajoguna (the quality of passion), no matter how strong you are, there is one thing that can forcibly push you. What is it? That is kama (desire). When it ‘ripens’ and changes, the same is called krodha (anger). Both are the same. When it is in the state of kama (desire), it is called `mahasana` (a great devourer). A gourmand is always fond of ‘eating’. It is born from Kumbhakarna. Kumbhakarna eats only once in 6 months. However, kama (desire) wants to eat every second! Not only does it want to eat, but as it is fed, the desire gets even deeper. It is never satisfied. We eat. We ate yesterday, the day before, the day before that, the previous year, the year before. We have been eating from our childhood. We have been eating for so long. Can we take a break? Can we decide to not eat for a few days? We can’t. We want to eat more and more. If we are not fed on time, we get so angry that it makes us want to eat the person next to us! Isn’t it amazing? Kama (desire) is simply a gourmand. What about krodha (anger)? It has another quality. It is `mahapapma` (a great sinner). It makes us do every bad thing possible. When its state changes, the repercussions also change. Sri Krishna is explaining these to Arjuna. He is moving us ahead further.

Jai Srimannarayana!

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