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1. Episode Title: Episode 116 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 3, Episode 116)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: This episode discusses the target audience for the Bhagavad Gita's teachings, emphasizing that it is for those with curiosity and a desire for self-improvement. It delves into Arjuna's dilemma on the battlefield, where he questions the source of his reluctance to fight. Krishna explains that this reluctance stems from kama (desire) and krodha (anger), which are products of rajo-guna (the quality of passion). The discourse highlights how these qualities, along with sattva (goodness) and tamas (ignorance), influence human behavior and lead to the cycle of karma. The episode uses examples from the Ramayana to illustrate the destructive power of uncontrolled desire (kama) through the character of Ravanasura, contrasting it with Vibhishana's righteous path.

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 3, Episode 116, Arjuna, Krishna, kama, krodha, desire, anger, rajo-guna, sattva, tamas, gunas, qualities of nature, karma, vasana bijas, Ramayana, Ravanasura, Vibhishana, dharma, spiritual guidance, self-improvement, curiosity, jidnyasa, false ego, durahankara, Vedic teachings

3. Main Content:

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

Who is Bhagavad Gita for? Who is this upadesa (teaching) for? Morals, rules, and teachings! Who are these for? They are not for those uninterested. Whoever wishes to learn or wishes to reach an elevated state from their current state, or whoever desires to improve, this teaching is only for such people. Many varieties of objects are presented in the shops on the street for the purpose of selling them. They are not for everyone. They are put up for sale to make them available for those who need them. Same with Bhagavad Gita. Sri Krishna did not teach Bhagavad Gita for everyone. There were many people there. However, he taught it only for Arjuna who had jidnyasa (curiosity). Arjuna wanted to become a better person. He had a feeling that he did not want to go to nether-worlds. He had a quest to find happiness. That is why, there was curiosity in him on whether he should fight in the war or not, or if something is right or wrong. Bhagavad Gita is not necessary for someone of this nature, wanting to live on his own terms. Bhagavad Gita does not work for such a person. It is only for those who wish to become at least somewhat a better person.

What should one do to be that way? What should one do to attain that? Firstly, one should have some knowledge. If one must accomplish a task, one needs some knowledge on the task beforehand. To ride a bicycle, one needs knowledge related to it. To drive a vehicle, one needs knowledge related to it. Any work happens only when the doer has the basic knowledge about it. There is knowledge that one needs post completion of work. There is a different goal for the knowledge that one must have post completion of work. The goal for knowledge one should have before beginning the work is different. The knowledge before beginning the work is about what the work is, how much, how, when, what, etc. Am I eligible or qualified for that work? This is also part of knowledge before beginning the work. There is knowledge post completion of the work. There is also knowledge one should have while the work is going on. Who am I working for? How am I doing it? How should I feel about it when I am doing the work? This is the knowledge one should possess after the work is completed. Initial knowledge is the basic knowledge. The later knowledge is what decides whether he attains the goal or not.

Generally, we attain the initial knowledge by learning about it ourselves or through a teacher. Let’s say the task is to shoot a video. We need the basic knowledge of cameras, the lenses, shades, the angles, etc. This is all basic knowledge of how to shoot, whether the head or front or rear, etc. Beginning from how to hold it towards how to capture shots, etc., is all primary basic knowledge. When shooting the video, there is another level of knowledge. Who are we working for? If we are working for an employer, then we understand who is the owner. We think about how to shoot the video as per their instructions, etc. This is the later part of the knowledge.

Arjuna has the initial basic knowledge. He knows who he is, who his family is, who the Kauravas standing on the opposite side of him are, etc. What he did all this time, how much struggle they went through for all the 12 + 1 years. He is aware of all of this. After all this, they came to the battlefield prepared to fight. After seeing the people standing across, he saw them as his relatives and his people. And that they are his teachers. “How can I kill them?” Everyone came prepared for the war. This side and the other side too. That side gathered their army together. This side also got their army together. The preface took place with one level of knowledge. What is the task in hand now? To fight in the war. The related initial activities also were all completed. Conches had been blown. Arrows positioned. He came forward midway. He looked at both sides. With this, he underwent some change in the manas (mind). Something came in between him and the work he is supposed to be doing. What is it? Where did it come from? This is what Arjuna had a question about in chapter 3. He asked Krishna.

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SLOKA WORD -

arjuna uva:cha

attha ke:na prayuktho::yam

pa:pam charathi pu:rushaha |

anichhannapi va:rshne:ya

bala:d iva niyo:jithaha ||

SLOKA MEANING -

Arjuna said:

By what is a person impelled to commit sin,

even unwillingly, O Varshneya (Krishna),

as if by force?

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attha ke:na prayukthaha (By what is one impelled?) I did not want to think of quitting war myself. I did not want to think of shedding the bow and arrow. I did not want to think of crumbling down in worry. I did not want to think of becoming weak. Don’t know what it is. Something was compelling me from behind, making me wonder how I can hurt all of these people. Such bhavana (feeling) is rising in me. You are instructing me to take on the responsibility of fighting in the war. However, I am not feeling inspired to do it. What am I feeling motivated for? I am feeling motivated to do something that I am not supposed to be doing. What is the reason for this? This is Arjuna’s question. Sri Krishna is clarifying that.

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SLOKA WORD -

sri: bhagavan uva:cha

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

rajo:guna samudbhavaha |

SLOKA MEANING -

The Blessed Lord said:

It is desire, it is anger,

born of the quality of passion (rajo-guna).

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Dear! This is called kama (desire). Kama is a desire that develops in a person. That which drives the desire is called raga (interest). Depending on the rise of qualities in nature, raga keeps flowing in different ways. Our body is made of Nature. We have learnt that each body is the miniature form of the entire Nature. Like Nature goes through various changes, the body also goes through changes. There is udrikthatha (intensity) in nature at times. There is udrikthatha (intensity) in the air, cold, heat, and rain. At times it is very peaceful. Sometimes, it goes into a state of no change, a sleeping state! It is said that the reason is the various dharmas (characteristics) or gunas (qualities). One is sattva (goodness), the second is rajas (passion), and the third is tamas (ignorance). When rajas (passion) is on the rise in nature, it will give rise to several udrikthathas (tractions). When tamas (ignorance) is on the rise, no matter what there is, they all go to a state of sleep. When sattva (goodness) is on the rise, we see a very calm and peaceful state in nature. The same with the body.

However, we are not in control of what rises high and when. Air, rain, heat, cold. When do they all take shape? While there are respective seasons and order in nature, nowadays, we don’t know what happens when. Same with the body. Different pravrutti (tendencies) develop at different times. Why? Because of the differences in the qualities [sattva, rajas, and tamas] within. Whenever rajo-guna (the quality of passion) rises, kama (desire) develops. Earlier, when we had seen an object or met a person, we could have developed liking or disliking. Those are formed as vasana bijas (seeds of imprints) within us. Today, when we see that object or meet that person, we might experience hate or anger. What is the reason for that? It is a vasana (seed) sown from the previous experience with that person or object. It entered us, but is not always apparent. A seed needs water to germinate… There are hundreds, thousands, lakhs, and crores of vasana (imprint) seeds that exist in us. Let’s think that they exist in the form of software. Because you would think that they must occupy some space considering their large number. That’s not the way they exist. They exist in us in the form of knowledge.

Whenever sattva (goodness) rises in us, sattvic (of goodness) ‘water’ flows. Whenever rajas (passion) rises, rajasic (of passion) ‘water’ flows. Whenever tamas (ignorance) rises, tamasic (of ignorance) ‘water’ flows. When these ‘waters’ flow through them, those respective seeds begin to germinate. When rajas (passion) rises, some imprint seeds begin to germinate. On whatever we developed kama (desire) for, they become active due to the effect of rajo-guna (the quality of passion). When they activate, you tend to think something is right for you, you will want it and attain it. This bhavana (feeling) increases. Sometimes, we know that something is good for us. However, due to the effect of indwelling pravrutti (tendency), we may not have a relation with it. Sometimes, we may know that something is not good for us. However, due to the effect of rajo-guna (the quality of passion), the desire to attain it may grow. It strengthens.

Rajas (passion), tamas (ignorance), and sattva (goodness) are three qualities of the body. They exist naturally with the body. As long as one is in the body, there is no way out of the effects of these. Veda itself says it.

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SLOKA WORD -

nahavai sasi:rasya sathaha priya:priya yo:ho apahathirasthi

asari:ram va: vasantham priya:priye: na sprusathaha

SLOKA MEANING -

Indeed, for one who is embodied, there is no freedom from likes and dislikes.

But for one who is disembodied, likes and dislikes do not touch him.

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sasi:rasya sathaha (as long as one is in the body) priya:priya yo:ho apahathi hi asthi (it is impossible to come out of ‘I like this; I don’t like that’). If there is a state without the body, then these may not be affecting him. What does it mean to not have a body? Even after leaving the current body, there will be another body that gets formed for him. What kind of body gets formed is not in one’s control. It depends on the karmic load and the portion of karma that is in the state of maturity. Accordingly, he gets that new body as soon as he leaves the current one. Our people say it’s truna jaluka (like a worm that moves on the grass). It leaves something only after it holds another. If it holds the next, it leaves the previous one. Only after holding onto the next, it leaves the current. Similarly, there must be a new body formed for him before he leaves current body. Only then, he will be able to leave it and enter the other one. This is an eternally ongoing process. The reason for this ongoing process is the seeds of karma vasana bijas (karmic seed imprints). The main one in all of these is kama (desire). The raga (interests/likes) that we have developed. The dvesha (disinterest/dislikes) that we have developed.

Sri Krishna touched on raga (likes) and dvesha (dislikes) earlier in chapter 3. He instructed us not to come under their control. How can we not come under their control? When we are sitting on a floor filled with oil, how can we expect not to get oiled? Similarly, when we are in nature filled with raga (likes) and dvesha (dislikes), how can we stay ‘untouched’ by them? How can we not be entangled in them?

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SLOKA WORD -

thayo:r na vasam a:gachche:th

thau hyasya paripantthinau

SLOKA MEANING -

One should not come under their sway,

for they are indeed one's enemies.

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He talked about these earlier, mentioning them as dangerous enemies. It is true. How do we get away from them? How do we liberate ourselves from them? How can we not fall into their control? In the same chapter, verse 30, He gave a means to this: mayi sarva:ni karma:ni sannyasya (surrendering all actions to Me). “If you leave responsibility unto Me and if you behave as per My orders, I will ensure they don’t tie you up and I will take care of you.” We have durahankara (false ego). We think, “Do I need you? Can’t I do it by myself?” No matter how great a person one is, if he thinks that he can do it, it is inevitable for him to be trapped by kama (desire) and krodha (anger).

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SLOKA WORD -

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

rajo:guna samudbhavaha

SLOKA MEANING -

It is desire, it is anger,

born of the quality of passion (rajo-guna).

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These get hyperactive due to the effect of rajo-guna (the quality of passion). They will get you under their control. They will not step back in making you do various kinds of bad activities. Both of them! To describe them, Bharatiya (Indian) literature gave us two histories. We alluded to this earlier. To explain the ill-effect of kama (desire), the great Ramayana scripture emerged. To explain the ill-effect of krodha (anger), the great Mahabharata scripture emerged. Both these scriptures were formed only for the purpose of the two qualities.

Kama (desire) is desire. It is not wrong to have desire for what is appropriate for the person. Sugriva is shown as an example of what trouble one faces when desire is not at the right place. Another example shown is Ravanasura. It was Vali and Sugriva. And another time, it is the three brothers. In the three brothers, Ravanasura is the primary one. His desire was so huge that he wanted the entire world to be in his control. “Anything great in this world must be in my control.” It didn’t matter whose or from where it was. Even if it belongs to God, he wanted to bring it to his control. This is Ravanasura. It is the peak stage of kama (desire). He is an example of how far it can take one. Ravanasura was born in rakshasa jati (demon community). No one becomes bad by community. Whatever community one is in, someone is said to be good or bad based on their pravrutti (behavior). Ravanasura has two brothers: Vibhishana and Kumbhakarna. But, they are dependent on him. The primary responsible role was taken by Ravanasura. Vibhishana tried to tell him hitam (the right thing to do). However, Ravanasura not only paid a deaf ear to hitam (the right thing) but also got into an agitated state, throwing Vibhishana out. Kumbhakarna also suggested hitam (the right thing). He also taught him great morals. However, Ravanasura shouted at him and scolded him. Because he was the younger brother, he felt he should obey him and he did so. Therefore, he also had to get destroyed. Ravanasura and Kumbhakarna got destroyed. The community is good but the nature of the individual soul was bad. Isn’t that what we talked about? Despite being from the same community, Vibhishana understood the ill side of Ravanasura. He understood the qualities of Rama. He realized what is not right for him. He realized that he needs to be on the side of Rama. He left Ravanasura. He reached the abode of Rama. He reached Ramachandra’s abode. So, Vibhishana demonstrated that one’s desire should not be to hurt and capture others. It should be for serving the side of Ramachandra and a society like that of Ramachandra. He said it and he practiced it. What is the result of that? The same Rama threw out Ravanasura and Kumbhakarna.

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SLOKA WORD -

abhyasiccha lanka:yam

ra:kshase:ndram vibhi:shanam

kruthakruthya thada: ra:maha

vijvaraha pramumo:da ha!

SLOKA MEANING -

And he crowned Vibhishana, the king of the Rakshasas, in Lanka.

Having accomplished his task, Rama was then free from anxiety and rejoiced!

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It surprised Valmiki. That’s what it did. He had to be made the king of Lanka. He was crowned. Ramachandra was happy. Vibhishana stood by the principle that one should experience only those which are to their level and stage. That is why he was able to become the king of Lanka. The kingdom was also happy. Think of this body as a Lanka. If it is ruled by Vibhishana who is a Rama dasu (humble servant of Rama), then, Lanka will also be a good kingdom. However, if Lanka becomes captive of Ravana sending away Vibhishana, if it gets to a state where desire outgrows to such a level that goodness gets compromised, then, it [desire] destroys Lanka. What is the result when kama (desire) goes beyond limits while not being attached with God? Sri Ramayanam is a great scripture explaining this moral. Therefore, kama (desire) is a dangerous one. It will make the person go out of his control. A person neck deep into water gets pushed by the flow leaving no room for his intervention. Be aware! That’s how it works on you. Saying so, Sri Krishna explains the swarupa (form) and swabhava (nature) of kama (desire) as the clarification for Arjuna’s question…

attha ke:na prayukthaha (by what is one impelled?)

Let’s gradually learn about it.

Jai Srimannarayana!

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