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1. Episode Title: Episode 12 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 3, Episode 12)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: Arjuna's confusion regarding the paths of action (karma yoga) and knowledge (jnana yoga); Krishna's clarification on the two distinct spiritual paths; Identifying individuals who are exempt from performing actions (karma); The characteristics of a person focused solely on the Self (atma rati, atma tripta, atma santushta); The universal necessity of performing actions for most individuals; The method of performing actions as a service to God to achieve liberation; The impartiality and clarity of God's teachings; The importance of performing one's duty without attachment for spiritual elevation.

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 3, Episode 12, Karma Yoga, Jnana Yoga, Arjuna, Krishna, dharma, duty, knowledge, action, jnana nishtta, atma, soul, Self, samskara, moksha, spiritual paths, impartiality, divine teachings, Bhagavan, yogis, papa, punya, rajas, tamas, sattva guna, liberation, spiritual guidance, Are You Exempt from Doing Karma?

3. Main Content:

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

Generally, people in the world are at various stages. The same content is grasped differently based on their samskara (imprints), impressions, and qualifications. In Chapter 2, Sri Krishna clearly advised Arjuna on the process of performing duty. However, Arjuna didn’t understand it clearly. Hence, in the beginning of Chapter 3, Arjuna questions, "You ask me to do karma (actions), but you say buddhi (knowledge/intellect) is superior. Then, you should encourage me to be in jnana nishtta (focused on knowledge). Instead, why are you encouraging me to do karma with this body where buddhi (intellect) gets driven by indriyas (senses)? For sure, it is confusing me!"

va:misre:naiva va:kye:na buddhim mo:hayasi: (You are somehow making me lose my focus and confusing me.)

I feel that You are somehow making me lose my focus and confusing me. Please clarify so that I can make a decision and practice accordingly. He [Arjuna] seeks this clarification in verse 1 and 2. Sri Krishna answers his query. God’s upade:sa (edification/teaching) begins from verse 3 of Chapter 3.

SLOKA WORD -

Sri: Bhagava:n uva:cha

lo:ke:smin dvividha: nishtta: pura: pro:ktha: maya::nagha! |

jna:nayo:ge:na sa:nkhya:na:m karmayo:ge:na yo:gina:m || 3

SLOKA MEANING -

The Blessed Lord said: In this world, O sinless one, a two-fold path was declared by Me before: the path of knowledge for the Sankhyas (those who analyze the Self), and the path of action for the Yogis (those who perform actions).

“Whatever I told you in the earlier chapter is not at all confusing, but you misunderstood.” Not all have the same comprehension capabilities. In Chapter 2, I have told precisely what one can do as per one’s practice. However, you couldn’t perceive it properly. Whom did I exempt from practicing karma (action)? Everyone has to do karma (action). That is what I said. Right? Yes, a few are not required to do karma (action).

SLOKA WORD -

yasthu a:thma rathire:vasya a:thma thrupthascha ma:navaha |

a:mthanye:vacha samthrustaha thasya ka:ryam na vidyathe: ||

SLOKA MEANING -

But for the person who rejoices in the Self, who is satisfied with the Self, and who is content in the Self alone, there is no duty to perform.

The above said is true… Only for those being a jnana nishtta (focused on knowledge) – qualified naturally by birth or by the effect of samskaras (imprints/impressions) or God’s grace. How can we identify such a person? Such a person will have no interest in anything mundane. He will be inclined only towards atma (the Self/soul).

a:thma rathire:vasya (one who rejoices in the Self)

Not only that, we get satiated when we eat something or drink water or watch something, etc. Yet, no satiation occurs from experiencing the mundane.

a:thma thrupthascha ma:navaha (the person who is satisfied with the Self)

He is satisfied only when applying effort in knowing, thinking, listening, or talking about atma (the Self). Only then, he is satiated. He is a:thma thruptha (satisfied in the Self).

a:thma rathihi (interested only in aspects of the soul)

a:thma thrupthascha (finds satisfaction only in aspects of the soul)

On the other hand, we may not be happy at times even after a fulfilling experience. However, that person about whom we are talking about is a:thmanye:vacha santhushtaha (experiences joy only with the Self). He experiences joy only with atma (the Self) and nothing else. A person in that state will not have any materialistic needs – he need not toil for food. He doesn’t need to earn money or study or be employed or try to be in the good books of someone for sustenance. Hence, such a person will have no duty to perform.

thasya ka:ryam na vidyathe: (there is no duty for him to perform)

Because such a person needs nothing but experience of atma (the Self), nothing else gives him joy or satisfaction. Only experiencing atma (the Self) encompasses all joy for him. And he strives continuously to experience atma (the Self) and nothing else. Other experiences neither give him satisfaction nor joy. Also, he has no liking for them. Such a person doesn’t need to do karma (action).

However, you are not like that. Why? Because, you are aware of people who are standing in front of you in the battlefield. You don’t want to cause them any harm. You want to satisfy the people standing in front of you. You don’t want to satisfy the atma (the Self). You are feeling that they will suffer if you fight with them. Else, you are feeling that some of them might lose their lives in the battlefield and go to the other worlds. Or, you are feeling that your ancestors in the higher worlds will fall [to the lower planes] due to the misdeeds of the people here. Can you realize the number of ways you are thinking with regard to the mundane world? Notice how your thought process is flowing in that direction. So, there is no a:thma rathi (rejoicing in the Self), a:thma thrupthi (satisfaction in the Self), a:thma samthustti (contentment in the Self) in you. You are not atma (Self) centric at all times. If all these are focused towards atma (the Self) only, then

thasya ka:ryam na vidyathe: (there remains nothing for him to do)

But, it’s highly impossible for any human being to attain that state on this earth. There may be one or two such great souls like Sri Suka Maharshi or Nammalvar. However, it is highly impossible to find such people. For such an individual, there is no need of karma yoga (path of action). He need not achieve anything from it. Because attaining that state implies that all pa:pas or punyas (results of karmas of virtues or sins) are subdued. Implying the underlying factors, rajas and thamas (qualities of passion and ignorance), that provoke them are also subdued. Which in turn implies that sattva guna (quality of goodness) is naturally enhanced. Then, he becomes mentally immune to any external influences. One who has reached this state, doesn’t need to do anything.

However, you have not reached that state. Hence, you must follow whatever is suitable and assigned to you without any lapses.

lo:ke:smin dvividha: nishtta: (in this world, two kinds of focus/paths)

One set of people who have focus on or those whose…

a:thma rathi (interests incline toward the soul)

a:thma thrupthi (satisfaction comes only by aspects of the soul)

a:thma santhushti (joy is experienced only by aspects of the soul)

This is one category of people. There might be very few – one or two or three – in that category. What is the other category? Other set of people are those with a tendency to perform activities influenced by the punya and papa karmas (actions of virtue and sin). This is the second category. People in this category have to keep on doing their delegated activities. Their activities are in accordance with the results of pa:pa and punya karmas (actions of sin and virtue). However, one should know the process of how to perform [activities]. This was what was explained in the previous chapter. There is a way to perform [activities] as a service to God. Then, we can erase the mountains of sins entirely.

asmin lo:ke: (being in this world)

dvividha: nishtta: (two kinds of focus/paths)

pura: pro:ktha: maya::nagha! (previously, I have already revealed this, O sinless one!) – previously, I have already revealed this to the adhika:ri (one who has eligibility). I know the background of these eligible ones very well. Hence, I definitely give them knowledge of what and how much they need to know. What is the reason?

maya: pro:ktha: (for I have revealed)

for I am impartial towards all, merciful towards all. Fair towards all. Hence,

maya: pro:ktha (it is I who elucidated)

How one should be in the beginning stages of karma yoga (path of action). How one should be during the ripening period of karma yoga (path of action). How one is in the totally ripened state of karma yoga (path of action). And how one is who doesn’t require any karma (action).

naiva thasya kruthe: na:rttha: (he gains nothing by action)

na kruthe:na iha kaschana (nor does he lose anything by inaction)

thasya ka:ryam na vidyathe: (there is no duty for him to perform)

Such person will not benefit in any way by doing karma (action) nor will he be at loss otherwise. People in the other category, have to perform karma (action). That is for one type of eligible person and the other is for another type. I have never advised a person to adopt both ways. I never asked any one person to omit and perform karma (action) as both are conflicting statements. One advice is for one who has a certain yo:gyatha (ability/qualification). The other advice is for one who has another yo:gyatha (ability/qualification). That’s what I have explained. That too, I ‘pro:ktha’ (explained/revealed). Whatever I explained, shouldn’t disturb your mind in any way. That is how clearly I told you. The Supreme Lord doesn’t have defects such as

bhrama (misconception)

prama:da (lack of concentration)

vipralipsa (desire to deceive others)

asakthatha (inability to express what He perceives)

So He can very clearly tell what needs to be told. There is nothing that He does not know. I said very clearly. That too, I told you,

anagha (O sinless one)

Because you are a candidate eligible for moksha (liberation). You must work but it is your duty to do work in a manner that doesn’t bind you. As you have that eligibility, I am with you to correct you, elevate you. However, a few are even below that state. So they have to do the work differently. For you the way of doing activities is different. For those better and with mellowed jnana (knowledge), there is a different way of doing. I told you earlier what you have to do as per your stage. What did I say?

jna:na yo:ge:na sa:nkhya:na:m (the path of knowledge for the Sankhyas)

sa:nkhya:na:m (for those interested in the philosophy of the soul)

jna:na yo:ga (path of knowledge) is for those interested in a:thma thaththva (truth of the soul).

karma yo:ge:na yo:gina:m (the path of action for the Yogis)

yo:gina:m (those who are fit for all types of action) – For such people, their practice should continue with karma yoga (path of action).

pura:pro:ktha: (which was already told long ago)

I reiterated the same in Chapter 2 clearly.

bhagavad a:ra:dhana buddhi (the intellect that sees every act as worship to God)

Every act when performed as worship to God becomes yo:gam (union with God/spiritual discipline). People who follow it are called yo:gis (practitioners of yoga). I advised you that this is how you should perform your duties. As we proceed with Bhagavad Gita, Sri Krishna clearly explains the same. Let us learn how He takes us forward with His clarification.

Vande: guruparam para:m (I bow to the lineage of teachers)

Jai Srimannarayana!