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1. Episode Title: Episode 14 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 3, Episode 14)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: This episode explores the underlying causes for individual differences in people, attributing them to past actions (karma) and their imprints (samskaras). It differentiates between active (ruchi) and latent (vasana) tendencies, explaining how they influence our minds and sense organs. The discussion delves into the role of the qualities of passion (rajas) and ignorance (tamas) in generating desires and aversions, and how these qualities reside within our sense organs, mind, and intellect. The episode emphasizes the difficulty of altering karmic impressions through human effort alone, highlighting the necessity of divine intervention. It also clarifies the concept of Naishkarmya Siddhi (perfection in action), explaining that it is achieved not by abstaining from work, but by completing one's duties perfectly and turning every action into an act of worship to God.

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 3, Episode 14, karma, samskara, ruchi, vasana, gunas, rajas, tamas, indriyas, manas, buddhi, atma, Paramatma, Narayana, Naishkarmya Siddhi, karma yoga, Arjuna, Krishna, duties, actions, spiritual path, individual differences, sense organs, mind, intellect, divine help, worship, success, freedom from bondage.

3. Main Content:

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

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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, grants all prosperity, and delights the entire world.)

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Reaching chapter 3, verse 4, Arjuna raised a doubt. In this world, why do some exist as karma nishta (devoted to adhering to duties), while others as jnana nishta (devoted to acquiring knowledge)? Why can’t everyone be the same and have the same capabilities? You are the one who gives these abilities, right? Wouldn’t it be good if everyone was the same?

The truth is, it cannot happen that way. Because, before entering the current physical body, the soul traveled through many other bodies. In those bodies, the soul performed different actions. Each deed creates a samskara (record) on him. These are segregated as ruchi (active tendencies) and vasana (latent tendencies). Some of them are active and some are inactive. The active records of karma (actions) are called ruchis. The inactive records of karma are called vasanas.

For example, mixing of water and some kind of powder in a big vessel. It is a different story if the powder dissolves completely. Otherwise, water floats and the powder gradually settles down at the bottom of the vessel. Just like the floating water, some records of our deeds are active. And few records settle at the bottom of our manas (mind) just like the heavier substance. These records do not surface easily. But they do exist and yield results at some point. These are named vasanas.

According to psychology, it is said that the variety of knowledge, and whatever we memorize is just the tip of the iceberg. Meaning, what we see is just the top portion of the iceberg and the submerged portion is hundreds of times bigger. Similarly, some of the karma samskara (records of actions) in us remain as ruchis, i.e., can be recollected. This recollection happens anytime. However this happens, without our knowledge, they make us experience the effects of the past karmas (actions) imprinted on us. Either in our consciousness or dreams or suddenly, at random points in time (they surface). These are named ruchis.

Some reside very deep inside us and stay in low profiles. They emerge suddenly and show their effect. Once they emerge, our sense organs are under their influence. Then these organs develop restless behavior. They start moving and behaving like fluctuating water. It’s like the eyes wanting to see something. Now, they want to do something like the mouth wanting to eat something, the nose wanting to smell something. Ruchi (active tendencies) and vasana (latent tendencies) are the reason behind the restlessness of the sense organs.

What causes these ruchis (active tendencies) and vasanas (latent tendencies)? That is, why do we remember something and not the other? The answer is underlying punya (virtuous) and papa (sinful) forms of our karma (actions). Because of the karma, the respective ruchi (active tendency) or vasana (latent tendency) pops up. These punya (virtuous) and papa (sinful) are because of raga (passion) and dvesha (hatred). Rajo (passion) and tamo (ignorance) gunas (qualities) are the underlying causes for raga (passion) and dvesha (hatred). These must be suppressed first. We cannot get rid of these rajasthamo gunas (qualities of passion and ignorance) because we do not know where they dwell. They exist somewhere inside us.

At the end of this 3rd chapter, He said:

indriya:ni mano:budhihi asyadhistanamuchathe: (These gunas exist at the levels of indriyas, sense organs, manas, mind, buddhi, intellect.)

They dwell in their designated places. But we do not know the exact location of sense organs. We know the location of eyes but not of chakshu indriya (the sense organ of sight). We know where the nose exists but not ghrana indriya (the sense organ of smell). We know the location of the tongue but not of rasana indriya (the sense organ of taste). We say that we do not know their whereabouts because sometimes eyes look all right, but the person cannot see. The person can see only if the chakshu indriya (which enables sight) is working fine. The eyeball we see is not the chakshu indriya. In our scriptures, it is said that thathh Krishna tara agravarthi (anterior to the physical eye). Similarly, certain people cannot smell anything despite a ‘long’ nose. Why? Because the buds inside that enable one to smell are destroyed. Once they are regenerated, he regains the sense of smell. This means there is a center that enables the sense of smell. It is called nasa agravarthi (anterior to the nose). Similarly, tongue for the sense of taste and the skin for the sense of touch. The enablers of these senses are called indriyas (sense organs). We cannot see indriyas but we see their releasing entry points. We call them indriyas (senses) in our daily conversations. They are not actual senses, however. There exists somewhere internally a sense organ chakshu indriyam (which enables sight). Residing somewhere here, one that enables hearing is a sense organ called the sravana indriyam (sense organ of hearing). Similarly, ghrana indriyam (sense organ of smell), rasana indriyam (sense organ of taste), tvag indriyam (sense organ of touch). All these are called indriyas (sense organs) and are in their respective positions. Manas (the mind) is also a big storeroom. Buddhi (intellect) is another huge storeroom. Samskaras (records) are present at all these levels. So, their effects are hard to get rid of. If we can locate them, we may be able to wash them off in some way. We cannot locate these indriyas (sense organs), how can we understand the manas (mind) supporting them? How can we understand the buddhi (intellect) which supports the manas (mind)? It is difficult to understand them. Hence, altering our karmic impressions is not humanly possible.

Then who will do it? The one who has complete knowledge about them. Buddhi (intellect) is again supported by atma (the soul). If the soul wants to do it on its own, it cannot handle and manipulate them. This can be done only by Paramatma (God). Narayana, also called Param Brahma (Supreme Being), is the One who can do this. No one else can do this. For this reason, we must turn each deed of ours into His worship.

What do we desire? First, we want siddhi (success). Next, freedom from all bondages. He named this state of freedom in the 4th verse, naishkarmya dasa (a state of perfected karmas). The state is named by Him as siddhi dasa (state of success). Because ruchi (active tendencies), vasanas (latent tendencies), and samskaras (records) are imprinted only when we perform certain deeds. Sometimes we may think – what if we do not perform any action? Then we stop working. Naishkarmya siddhi (perfection in action) cannot be obtained by not working.

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SLOKA WORD -

na karmaṇa:ma na:rambha:th naiṣhkarmyaṁ puruṣhaha asnuthe:

SLOKA MEANING -

(A human does not attain naishkarmyam (perfection in action) by abstaining from work at the very start.)

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Purushaha (human) naishkarmyam (completing karma, work). But not a state of no karma (no action). One who perfectly completes all his karma (actions) will attain naishkarmya siddhi (perfection in action). Naishkarmyam asnuthe: means he will attain naishkarmyam (perfection in action). How will he attain by not working? He will have a desire for siddhi (success). What does this mean? For example, a person is standing on a riverbank and wants to reach the other side. How will he go? Will he reach by meditating that he must go to the other side of the bank? No. Wishing alone will not help him reach the other side. How will he get there? He must work for it. When he completes his task (perfectly), he will reach the other side. What is the task? He must either swim or use some kind of boat or ship. Or he can also use equipment that can fly him across the river to the other side of the bank. He must perform some kind of action. While doing so, he must choose a capable means. If he chooses a stick to go to the other side of the bank, we cannot even imagine the results. If the other side of the bank is his destination, he must pick a means that will surely land him there. But not the one that will drown him in between. If he wants to be nishkriya (not doing anything), he can’t reach the other side of the bank. If one needs to travel between two villages on a bicycle, one must pedal the cycle to reach the other village. He will not reach the other village if he does not touch the bicycle or any other vehicle. If you want the cycle to become your means to take you to the other side of the village, you must learn to ride the bicycle properly and pedal until you reach the other village. That is when you have reached the destination. Therefore, if the person does not do anything, he will not reach his destination. Or if he does not do it the right way, he will not reach the destination. If he finishes only half of the task, then also he will not reach the destination. Only when the person finishes his work properly and completely, will he reach his destination. We know this.

Sri Krishna also conveyed the same in the verse:

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SLOKA WORD -

na karmaṇa:m ana:rambha:th naiṣhkarmyaṁ puruṣho: snute:

SLOKA MEANING -

(By abstaining from work at the very start, one does not attain naishkarmyam.)

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Naishkarmyam translates to ‘nishkrantha karma yogaha’ (one who successfully finished his tasks). Such a person’s feeling is termed naishkarmyam. One may think that there would be so many obstructions while working towards its completion so why bother to even start it? Or having started, he may think of giving up, upon reaching a certain point.

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SLOKA WORD -

na cha sannyasana:de:va siddhiṁ samadhigachchhati

SLOKA MEANING -

(If he gives up in the middle of something, he will not achieve victory.)

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Sri Krishna asks Arjuna, “Into which category do you fall?” You wish to achieve siddhi (success) and victory – war is the means to achieve it. But you do not wish to fight this war which means you are saying that you do not want to begin your karma (action).

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SLOKA WORD -

na karmaṇa:m ana:rambha:th naiṣhkarmyaṁ puruṣho: snute:

SLOKA MEANING -

(You will not attain naishkarmya siddhi (perfection in action).)

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But you began the task by sending a messenger, accumulated your army, decided on the location of war, gathered everyone from both sides, and you blew the conch. Which means you started the task and now you are giving up. You want to give up now.

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SLOKA WORD -

na cha sannyasana:de:va siddhiṁ samadhigachchhati

SLOKA MEANING -

(When you start something, if you give it up midway, not finishing it, you can never achieve victory.)

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So, you must fight this war at any cost. By saying these words, Sri Krishna encourages Arjuna to fight the war and while doing so, turn the karma (action) into yoga (means). Thus, He is taking us ahead.

Vande Guru Parampara (I bow to the lineage of gurus)!

Jai Srimannarayana!

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