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1. Episode Title: Episode 45 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 3, Episode 45)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The structural division of the Bhagavad Gita into three sections (shatkas) and the primary focus of the first six chapters on understanding the soul. The unique position of human beings, who, despite possessing advanced knowledge, often try to evade their responsibilities. Lessons from the natural world, illustrating how all other living beings and inanimate objects perform their inherent functions without attachment to results, doership, or the process itself. The critical importance of performing one's prescribed duties (karma) with complete detachment from outcomes (phala), involvement (sanga), and the sense of being the doer (karthruthva). Krishna's guidance to Arjuna, motivating him to fulfill his duty in the war with detachment to achieve the highest spiritual benefit.

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 3, Episode 45, Karma Yoga, duty, responsibility, detachment, phala, sanga, karthruthva, human nature, nature's lessons, Arjuna, Krishna, prescribed duty, selfless action, atma shatka, bhakti shatka, purva sesha, human birth, soul, body, param apnothi, sloka 3.19, dharma, action without attachment.

3. Main Content:

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

Bhagavad Gita’s 18 chapters are categorized into three shatkas (sections of six). The first set of 6 chapters is called atma shatka (section on the soul). The second set of 6 chapters is called bhakti shatka (section on devotion). The third set of 6 chapters is called purva sesha (remaining part).

In the first 6 chapters, the question "Who are you?" is addressed, and that 'you' is called atma (soul). The main goal of the first 6 chapters is to elaborate on the soul. We must properly utilize human birth for the purpose of knowing this. There are certain aspects in this section, and each chapter explains a specific aspect.

The second chapter teaches: Know that you and the body are different from each other.

The third chapter teaches: As long as you are in the body, do what is recommended.

The fourth chapter teaches: Perform karma (action/duty) supported by the knowledge of who you are and why you are given the body. The goal of the fourth chapter is to enlighten one with that knowledge.

After this, the fifth chapter teaches: Perform karma (action/duty) knowing you're not the one responsible for it. This is another chapter.

The sixth chapter teaches: What are the means one should use to perform such knowledge-supported karma (action/duty)? This is another chapter.

These are the five chapters. The first chapter describes Arjuna’s sorrow and its preface. So, these are the first 6 chapters. The summary of these 6 chapters of Bhagavad Gita is: Being born as a human, for as long as you are in the body, you should keep doing what is appropriate. This is the summary.

Why should you do so? Because you took human birth. We can divide what we see in the world into three categories. One is human beings, who have knowledge. Second is the rest of the living organisms. Third is the inanimate matter. Let’s divide it into three kinds this way. Keep human beings aside. The rest of the living organisms, moving and non-moving, are always working. All the substances with no life also ‘work’.

The living organisms are either jangamas (moving beings) or sthavaras (non-moving beings). Trees, creepers, shrubs, etc., are examples of sthavaras. All beings – from the microorganisms to everything else, except human beings – are examples of jangamas. All of them come under moving beings called jangamas. Be it sthavaras or jangamas, they live in a certain way. There are others that have no life, but they work, meaning they serve their intended purpose.

Human beings are one among these three. In these categories, it’s only for human beings that there is a need to teach. Why? God or nature provided human beings with good knowledge. Because of that ‘increased’ level of knowledge, humans tend to escape from duties. Therefore, there is a need to enlighten humans about their duties and make them abide by them.

Let’s look at other beings in nature. Honey bees go around, gather nectar from flowers, and store it in their hives. Honey is then extracted primarily by humans, as well as other beings like bears. However, a honey bee never attempts to fight with others to keep what it makes. It doesn’t think about how it is putting in so much effort to collect all the honey. It doesn’t impose karthruthva (doership) on itself. It doesn’t build any hope for owning the phala (fruit/result) of its work. It doesn’t have any sanga (attachment to the process), thinking that all this is happening because of it. Meaning, honey bees work without any phala-sanga-karthruthva (attachment to results, attachment to the process, and doership). They keep collecting and storing, irrespective of whether they or someone else takes what they collected. They continue to collect and store.

Look at the rest of the beings. Cows, for example. They graze, have water, roam around, stand still when tied up, yield milk, etc. They don’t demand care from farmers because they are providing them with plentiful milk. They don’t ask for a quota from all the milk. It doesn’t stop working. It continues to serve its purpose. It doesn’t think of itself as the doer. It doesn’t think of itself as the reason for the farmer’s livelihood. It doesn’t consider what the purpose is for itself.

Birds. They fly happily. They look for seeds to eat. They excrete some seeds, giving rise to many varieties of trees, large-sized ones, and forests as well. These forests are part of the water cycle, giving rain. Living beings are able to get life-sustaining oxygen to breathe and are able to live. Who is the reason for all this? Birds. However, they don’t ever think that they are doing such a great activity. They don’t ever think that they are the reason for the growth of all the forests. They don’t look for any benefit from the living beings who are living thanks to them. These are not simply mundane activities, yet, this is the case with any living being.

Now, let’s look at sthavaras (living beings like trees). They give flowers, fruits, breathable air, and take in unwanted air from us, keeping nature in balance. That is why we are able to live. Yet, trees are never arrogant. They do not expect anything. They do not feel that all this is because of them. We can observe this with other sthavara beings in nature. There are other sthavaras in which we do not have the ability to perceive life – mountains, rivers, valleys, etc. Rivers flow, without which, we can’t survive. However, they don’t feel that they are the ones giving water to us. They don’t feel that they are the reason for the growth of all the plantations on the earth. They don’t ever think about what they get out of all that they do. However, they don’t rest even for a second throughout their existence. They continue to work. This is what we see with sthavaras. May it be mountains, hills, or anything else. All these are ‘working’. Whatever the prescribed duty is for them, they are doing that properly. However, they don’t expect anything out of that. They don’t have any attachment. They don’t impose doership (karthruthva) on themselves. They are helping other living beings as a result of what they do.

Only human beings! Claiming all the credit for the smallest of activities! In fact, they do nothing except spoil everything else. Man imposes doership (karthruthva) on himself. He poses as if everything would cease to exist if it weren’t for him. He wants to know what he gets out of whatever he is doing. Even when it comes to paying obeisances to God, he questions the reason. If he gets some prasada (sacred offering), he will pay “respects”. Or if he gets at least a feeling that his desires will be fulfilled, he will pay “respects”. This is what is surprising about human beings.

Human beings have lost the etiquette of working without phala-sanga-karthruthva (attachment to results, attachment to the process, and doership) because of the “knowledge” one has “gained”. All other beings are lucky as they were not given this type of knowledge. They are living happily. Nature blossoms because of them, and they in turn are happy with nature. However, because human beings are holding on to the three (phala, sanga, karthruthva), they are falling and also pulling nature down along with them. We must consider how dangerous the human race is. Not everyone will listen. It must be told to at least those who want to listen.

Lord Sri Krishna found one and only one Arjuna. That is why, He sat him down and explained that one must continue with prescribed duty. What is the activity prescribed to him? To fight in the war. An opportunity or right to suppress and curb those evil forces who oppose righteous practices. That day, it took the form of a war, Bharata sangramam (the great war of Bharata), approximately 5000 years ago. He got the opportunity to exercise that right. “Hence, perform that activity.” Instead, don’t wonder, “Why should I do it? How far should I go?” “What happens if I do it? What will happen to all of them?” “All those people may die? What will happen to these people?” Why think of all these? Does a honey bee wonder if the flower will be spoiled because it is collecting a drop of nectar from it? It does not think like that. That won’t spoil the flower anyway. It cooperates with the flower. It supports the blossoming of the species of flowers. So, everything in nature is continuing to exist due to interdependence. Why are you forgetting your responsibility?

In chapter 3, He clarifies this topic to Arjuna. Don’t impose phala-sanga-karthruthva (attachment to results, attachment to the process, and doership) on yourself. Become asaktha (one without attachment). Sakthi (attachment) means attachment. Put the attachment aside, i.e., become an asaktha.

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SLOKA WORD -

tasmād asaktaḥ satataṁ kāryaṁ karma samācara

asakto hy ācaran karma param āpnoti pūruṣaḥ

SLOKA MEANING -

Therefore, always perform your prescribed duty without attachment, for by performing action without attachment, a person attains the Supreme.

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"Karyam karma (this is what I should be doing)." There is no other way. For how long? "Satatam (continuously, until the last breath)." There is no escape from karma (action/duty). "Karyam karma samachara (perform your prescribed duty)." What happens if one performs this way? Here too, one looks for the result! "Asakto hy acharan karma param apnoti purushaha (When he works with that kind of detachment, a person attains the Supreme)." One will attain the best result, instead of worldly benefits. One will attain the result that is permanent. What one currently experiences is all temporary. They come and go. However, if one does activities supported by knowledge, param apnothi (one attains the highest). One will attain a better and permanent result. Who is this for? Purushaha (the person/human being). It is not necessary to instruct this to any other living beings. It becomes necessary to tell you. Therefore, do this properly. Saying so, Sri Krishna motivates Arjuna in verse 3.19 and takes him forward. Let us also move forward. Vande guru paramparam (I bow to the lineage of teachers). Jai Srimannarayana!