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1. Episode Title: Episode 59 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 3, Episode 59)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: This episode clarifies the true meaning of Vedanta and karma, emphasizing that Vedanta promotes responsible action rather than renunciation of duties. It discusses the importance of performing one's ordained duties (karma) without attachment to results, contrasting the approach of the knowledgeable (jnani) with the ignorant. The discussion highlights the dangers of seeking shortcuts in spiritual practice and the necessity of working diligently for the well-being of the world (lokasangraha). It also stresses the responsibility of the wise to guide the less knowledgeable without causing confusion or deviation from their duties.

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 3, Episode 59, Vedanta, karma, duty, renunciation, tyaga, jnani, ignorant, attachment, results, lokasangraha, well-being of the world, Krishna, Arjuna, nishiddha karmas, ordained duties, forbidden activities, shastra, Upanishad, buddhi bhedam, spiritual guidance, responsibility, diligence, Bhagavad Ramanujacharya Swami

3. Main Content:

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

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

Bhagavad Gita is a Vedanta grantha (scripture on the essence from Vedas). Generally, most people think Vedanta establishes the world, and life, as illusionary. However, Vedanta is not stating that the world and life are illusionary. It teaches us about the responsibilities we have in this world. People who don’t know about it say that Vedanta makes a person powerless and inactive. However, in fact, Vedanta Shastra (scripture of Vedanta) has what makes a person rightly active, and it does so. Bhagavad Ramanujacharya Swami clarifies this topic properly as he puts forth Sri Krishna’s opinion for us. Chapter 3 is a good example. Arjuna does not want to wage war and sits back. Sri Krishna encourages him to fight in the war… He teaches him that if he desires the well-being of the world, he must perform his duty. He gave Himself as an example. He also provides examples of great beings while telling him the way to carry out responsibilities.

There is only one difference. What is it? One who is knowledgeable gives up the attachment with results. He performs his duties. However, one who is not knowledgeable gives up performing duties but hopes for results. This is dangerous. You want the result but you do not work. How can that be possible? Nowhere in shastra (scripture) it is mentioned to relinquish karma (actions/duties).

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SLOKA WORD -

kurvanne:va iha karma:ni jiji:vise:th sathagum sama:ha

SLOKA MEANING -

One should desire to live for a hundred years, only by performing actions.

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Upanishad clearly orders.

kurvan e:va (continue to keep fulfilling your duties)

However, what is the way you must do it?

thyakthe:na bunji:tha (you must have the spirit of tyaga, renunciation)

Generally, when people hear the word ‘tyaga’ (renunciation), they assume it’s about renouncing karma (work). However, it is never mentioned anywhere in shastra (scripture) to renounce karma (actions/duties). It recommends renouncing some kinds of karma (actions/duties) - nishiddha karmas (forbidden activities). These are those which harm the world. Karmas (actions/duties) are categorized into two: ordained duties and prohibited activities. Whatever is prohibited, one should not do. Ordained duties, one must not relinquish. It does not matter if the person is jnani (knowledgeable), or... pandit (scholar), upasaka (worshiper), bhakta (devotee), or a self-realized one! No one is allowed to relinquish karma (actions/duties).

However, what else can he relinquish? He can relinquish the results of the karma (actions/duties). Renunciation should happen in the heart, not at physical level. You must keep working on the physical level but not have a desire for it in the heart. This is the only difference.

When we were young, we learned a skill called shorthand… There was a teacher who taught shorthand. He could write 140 words per minute. There are certain speed levels. Such as 80 words / min, 100 words / min, 120 words / min. 140 words / minute is considered a high speed. The master is an expert in it. When writing shorthand, one uses strokes. Every word has a certain stroke combination. For the word ‘brighter’, there is a stroke that will read as brighter. Or strokes that read out “bright-er.” Despite being highly skillful, he could write the strokes in longer format. While teaching too, he explained at that level on how to write it. Students would ask for shortcuts saying there is a single stroke instead of many. That is not useful at this point of learning. Once your hand gets used to the turns and twists of the strokes, then it’s okay to think about trying advanced strokes. You cannot think of shortcuts in the earlier stages. He mandated everyone to write full length strokes. Only then, one would receive a passing grade. If we show one shortcut in one place, he would learn ten other shortcuts. If that happens, the functioning system gets corrupted.

In farming, there are two types. One is the laborer's type and the other owner’s type. In the laborer’s type, the laborer has set timings. He has a set time to reach and start work.. “I need to step into the field at 9:00am. These days, it’s 9:00am.” Earlier it’s early hours. They have official hours that start after breakfast. He needs a coffee break at 11:00am for 15-20 mins. Next comes lunch at 1:00pm for 40-45 mins. Later at 5:00pm, they leave the plow wherever they are. Nowadays, it’s all tractors, not manual. If it’s the owner, would he do it the same way? Because it’s his farm, he arrives in the early hours. He watches everything properly and works carefully. He tries to ensure he gets the best results. If needed, he skips lunch or snacks. He doesn’t even think of them. He wants the work to be done properly. Because it’s his work. His focus is only on that. This is the owner's way of working. The level of focus when an owner works on the task, ensuring nothing is put at risk… Ensuring every minute detail is paid attention to… Everyone must work in the same way in life as well. Despite being intelligent and having everything… You must do things properly, as it is necessary to teach others to reach the same state. Otherwise, if you don’t, and others take you as an example to avoid their work, yield suffers. When yield is low, the land is under-utilized. In that case, overall productivity declines. That results in an overall difficult state for everyone. The cause was that you did not do your own work. Hence, you will surely end up paying your part of the resulting effects despite thinking of your great success in many things. Because the impact of it is on you, the benefits of good deeds you did also gradually come down. Because you quit doing your work, thinking you have acquired jnana (knowledge)… And become the reason for their knowledge-loss, you will experience bhrasthata (a fall/degradation).

There is a difference between falling down and coming down. We must remember the two words. If you want to rescue someone who has fallen into a pit, you can come down. You should not fall down. One who comes down will get down after making necessary arrangements to come back up. Hence, he will be able to pull up and save someone who has fallen. However, if he falls down, he not only fails to help the other come up, but he can’t come up either.. Leave alone that he can’t help one who has fallen, he won’t even be able to come up himself. He thought himself to be one who is above! One should not get into such a state.

chiki:rshuhu lo:kasangraham (wishing for the well-being of the world)

[Lord] says in verse 3.25 that it is very important to wish for everyone’s well-being. You can’t expect a case where everyone’s well-being is neglected with only you taken care of. It’s never that way. It’s always together with everyone. If a portion of the machine thinks “it doesn’t matter to me what happens to this small part of the machine…” The disturbance in the small part disturbs the neighboring part… That in turn disturbs the surrounding parts and the entire machine breaks down. We know this. Thus, no one is allowed to relinquish karma (actions/duties). Neither the wise nor the ignorant.

Pilots, despite being very intelligent, go through a check-list before takeoff. He knows. He could just state that everything is ready simply by visually inspecting everything. No pilot does that. He does not relax thinking that he has already done these checks earlier. When the aircraft is about to take off, he goes through a list of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5… 30… 40… 50. He meticulously checks and ticks each one. He ensures everything is proper. Only then, he takes off. If he presumes he can handle anything and takes off - and then a problem arises? God knows what happens to him. The passengers who trusted him end up losing lives. Thus, everyone must follow whatever rules are prescribed. We must wish for lokasangraha (well-being of the world), and practice karma (ordained duties). There is only one difference. We alluded to this earlier. One who is ignorant of all this desires for results. One who is knowledgeable does not desire for results. This is the only difference. In terms of practicing karma (actions/duties), everyone is equal.

Sri Krishna did not stop there. He is taking Arjuna forward in the 26th verse.

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SLOKA WORD -

na buddhibhe:dam janaye:th

ajna:na:m karma sangina:m |

jo:shaye:th sarvakarma:ni

vidva:n yukthaha sama:charan ||

SLOKA MEANING -

A wise person should not create confusion in the minds of the ignorant who are attached to actions. He should encourage them to perform all actions, by himself acting with devotion.

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na buddhi bhe:dam janaye:th (do not create confusion in the mind)

“These are for the wise. These are for the ignorant.” What happens if this is done? “Are you wise? Am I not? You are a human and so am I. I have the same blood running like you.” “You eat with a mouth and I eat too in the same way. What’s great about you?” “Why do you get that and I get this? What’s lacking in me?” He [the wise] should not be in any special position allowing a common man to get disturbed and deviated by that. If he thinks he can relinquish karma (actions/duties) because he has jnana (knowledge), the other one who does not have jnana (knowledge) also might do the same. “Physical expression is not so important. It’s important to have it in mind.” “I have complete belief in mind. I don’t need to express / act on a physical level.” He stops working. You are causing buddhi bhedam (confusion/division in his mind). You are making him feel that the things necessary to be done are unnecessary.

na buddhi bhe:da janaye:th (do not create confusion in the mind)

he is not fully knowledgeable

ajna:na:m karma sangina: (ignorant, attached to actions)

He has a need to do karma (actions/duties). He needs the results of karma (actions/duties). He is in the initial stage. It’s our responsibility to make sure he is not confused. He completed work to a certain extent. In that process, like a kid who is learning to walk, falls at times… If the mother leaves the child because he falls no matter how much she helps, would we be walking now? If the mother stops feeding the child who spits out his food, would we be eating now? That’s why…

jo:shaye:th sarva karma:ni (encourage all actions)

However much he does, encourage him for that and try to enable his progress. This is what is expected from a wise person. Saying so, Sri Krishna is teaching Arjuna about his responsibility and takes him forward.. Let us also move along.

Vande guruparamparam (I bow to the lineage of gurus)

Jai Srimannarayana!

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