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1. Episode Title: Episode 61 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 3, Episode 61)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: The importance of following prescribed spiritual paths and guidance from wise teachers; The dangers of an unregulated lifestyle and relying solely on personal experience in spiritual matters; Krishna's teachings on encouraging those in the initial stages of spiritual practice; The significance of external practices and discipline in spiritual growth; The consequences of societal decline due to the rejection of traditional wisdom and practices.

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 3, Episode 61, Karma Yoga, Krishna, Arjuna, spiritual guidance, disciplined lifestyle, unregulated lifestyle, visrunkhalatha, abhyasam, practice, vidvan, wise one, joshayeth, encouragement, thapas, meditation, dharma, righteous living, sastra, scriptures, Bhakti, devotion, thilak, sikha, anushtana, japa, rishis, sukhasana, Uttharakumara, societal destruction, traditional practices, spiritual discipline, wisdom, experience, guru parampara.

3. Main Content:

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

Bhagavad Gita is God’s upadesa (teaching), a teaching prescribed to show us the right path. It is God’s upadesa (teaching) that guides us towards a disciplined lifestyle from an unrestrained one. Unregulated lifestyle is one way. Leading life in an orderly manner is another way. Unregulated lifestyle is called visrunkhalatha (unregulated lifestyle). It means behaving as per one’s own wishes. One who behaves as per his own wishes will decline. One who lives in an orderly manner may not have perfection to begin with. However, with gradual practice… It is said, abhyasam kusu vidya (everything becomes simple to achieve with practice), everything becomes simple to achieve with practice. With gradual regular practice guided by qualified mentors, he will attain the related success.

Before we proceed, let us offer our prayers:

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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, bestows all wealth, and delights the world.

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Sri Krishna clarifies this in chapter 3, verse 26.

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SLOKA WORD -

na buddhibhe:dam janaye:th

ajna:na:m karma sangina:m

SLOKA MEANING -

One should not disturb the minds of ignorant people who are attached to their actions.

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Karma sangi (one who is attached to actions) is one who is not habituated to doing karma (action/duty) in the right manner. One who has the need for it. Not just doing karma (action/duty), but one who has the desire for results. One who needs them. He wants results and is doing the activity with the desire. He has to do karma (action/duty) and he has the desire for results. However, he lacks perfection. Vidvan (wise one) is one who has perfection in karma (action/duty), has no desire for results, and knows the right way. What is the responsibility of the wise one, i.e., vidvan (wise one)? He needs to encourage others who do not know it, even if they know a little bit. Joshayeth (encourage) means to encourage and help them move forward.

“What are you doing? Doesn’t matter how many times you are told.”

“You will never get it, even in the entire lifetime!”

You must not discourage them by speaking this way. It is important not to make them feel disappointed. You should not disappoint the people. Encourage them. You must not let them take the wrong route. Enable them to take the proper path.

Generally, especially in the topic of spirituality, there are so many paths that have emerged. How many new schools of thought! Many ways of reflection. If we question what is the basis for these ways of reflection, they would say that their experience is the only basis, nothing else… “My own experience!” How old are you and what level is your experience at? What is our lifespan? There are great beings with hundreds and thousands of years of lifespan. They didn’t bother about any of their physical desires. They desired only for the benefit of the rest of the beings. With only that goal in mind, they performed thapas (meditation/austerity). They discovered great eternal truths. They didn’t do this depending on their intellect. Ithi susruma purvesham ena sthad vyasa chakshure (They walked the path of their Elders. They gained experience in that path.) That is how they delivered the words of the essence. Putting aside and ignoring those… Not even practicing any proper lifestyle… Eating whatever and wherever and living however…. How can we recognize such people who state they have discovered better truths?

There are some officers in the military. They go through very strict and tough training. They go through various levels of training to stand, walk, hold or use a weapon the way they do. There is someone who did not go through the training, or doesn't know how to do anything. If they desire to become supreme commander, we pity such a person. There is no point in objecting to them. These days, there are many who ‘show’ the paths to eternal realities, ‘leading’ philosophies. There are many who are ‘taking forward’ many schools of thought into society. The interesting thing is that society is very tricky. There will be a few followers and believers for anyone who has to say something. It doesn’t matter what he does or how he behaves. There are people who propagate such things too.

We have come across some people recently. They said, “We worship only Ravana. He is our presiding deity of worship. Indrajith too.” “Hiranyakasipu is our presiding deity of worship. So, we pray to him.” We are seeing a few people this way. Not a few, actually many. There are followers for this approach too! Like how there are followers for those who teach good, there are followers for the wrongdoers too. However, what is the consequence of this? Society will be destroyed. The consequence is destruction.

“What is the problem with compromising on one thing?”

“Why should I sit only this way?”

“Why does it matter what way one sits? Why does it matter what way one eats?”

“Why does it matter how one roams around?”

“Whatever there must be, it should be within. The focus and dedication.”

How can one know you are qualified within if that doesn’t reflect in the way you are on the outside? If one doesn’t qualify for grade 1, how can we accept their readiness for grade 10? There is a saying that one who cannot jump up at home is trying to reach the heights of heaven. If one does not know the basics of ABCD and says he is a doctorate, what do we say of him? It’s called the lack of wisdom. Just because he is a “good” talker, if he tries to show a path to society… Scriptures say that he will be destroyed in hundreds of ways! Viveka bhrastananthu (those who lack wisdom), they will be destroyed in many ways. Vinipathaha sathamukhaha (they will be destroyed in many ways). A fruit is attached to the tree through its stalk. If you say what happens if the stalk is cut off… If the stalk cuts off, the first step of destruction takes place. It’s called adya pathanam (first step in destruction), first step in destruction. Adya pathanam (first step in destruction) does not stop there. The fruit does not go back and connect to the branch. If the peel is disconnected from the tree, the fruit is on the ground. Hence, destruction does not stop at one point.

Observe what people say these days. Many of them say, “Bhakti (devotion) is not about showing it through what you wear, it should be in the heart.” “Does it grow because of what you wear?” There are some rules that our sages put together. How should you put thilak (forehead mark)? How do you dress your hair? What should your dressing be like? How do you speak with others? What should be your attitude? What type of food can you ingest? How should you behave with others? “All these were necessary back then, are they necessary now?” Why do you ask if they are necessary? Are they blocking your work? Is your thilak (forehead mark) obstructing your work? Is the hairstyle obstructing you? Is the dressing style obstructing you? Is the food obstructing you? If it’s blocking your work, then you can think about it. If not, then what’s the problem with them?

People stopped putting thilak (forehead mark). They stopped putting on sikha (traditional hair-knot). They started to get a haircut. It didn’t stop there. They went forward with a mustache. Earlier, a mustache was something that was curled up. Now, fashion is to dress it down. It’s a trending style. Later, not knowing upwards or downwards, it started to take a different shape and spread forth. There is now no limit to the number of styles. Same with dressing. “Why should one be dressed up this way? Why not shirts?!” Started with wearing shirts. Later, it's about pancha (traditional clothes). “Why not wear pants?” Now, it’s the norm. “Why only sit and eat? What happens if we stand and eat?” Now, that’s in place. This is destruction on the go in every way. Yet, he wants to be accepted as someone who is practicing dharmic (righteous), righteous and sastric (scriptural), scriptural methods. What do we say of him?

When we see a rule that is being practiced in a dharmic (righteous) place today… We cannot guess how many hundreds of years of hard work and research is behind it. It’s not in one domain. It’s about how one talks, dresses, or about applying thilak (forehead mark) or food that’s eaten. It is recommended to start with dal and finish with buttermilk. There was so much research done about it. “Why does it matter what to eat, from where, how to eat…?” What do we tell such a person who does not know anything about it? If he brings up science and all, what do we tell him? How much of science has he seen? What is he seeing science as? Each of these surprises us. We see presumptuousness in one who is objecting to these. We also see arrogance that’s way beyond in him. We see a sense of faith and obedience in one who is practicing them. We see them being humble. We also see a helping nature in them. These recommended practices have a benefit. We don’t know what it is. So, we object to them and not practice them saying that they are not useful to us. We expect that whatever practice yields a temporary benefit is also given the same high regard. Such efforts become the cause of destruction of society. They pave the path for the end of a society.

Where have we reached today? Earlier, we would take a bath, do anushtana (daily rituals), do manasa yaga (mental sacrifice), and then japa (chanting). “What happens if we perform japa (chanting) whenever and wherever we can?” That is also explained by our rushis (great beings/sages), the great beings. When is that accepted? When you attained a certain state. Then, it’s okay if you sit in whatever way and however. You can also sit in sukhasana (comfortable position), a comfortable position. When you attain a certain state, it will be fine no matter how you sit. However, how about until then? You must practice whatever is the process and follow the rules. Otherwise, one who is preaching and the followers will all be at loss.

Therefore, in verse 3.26, Sri Krishna says… He is not asking you to encourage an unregulated lifestyle. He is not condemning the act of telling people who follow an unregulated lifestyle as being wrong.

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SLOKA WORD -

na buddhi bhe:dam janaye:th ajna:na:m karma sangina:m

SLOKA MEANING -

One should not disturb the minds of ignorant people who are attached to their actions.

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Don’t tell those in their initial stages of practicing right things that they are useless or that they will never succeed. You cannot discard them like that.

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SLOKA WORD -

jo:shaye:th sarva karma:ni

SLOKA MEANING -

One should encourage all actions.

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Encourage… If there are any mistakes in their initial stages of practice… Don’t point out the mistakes and make him repulsive. Encourage whatever little he does, he will want to do more and better. If he does one, pat him. He wants to do two. Praise him. He wants to do three. You should encourage good practices this way. You should not discourage him. Doing so, you are letting him know that it is right to practice good activities. Arjuna did this with Uttharakumara. He encouraged him at the time of utthara gograhana enabling him to take part in war. However, Arjuna today was engrossed in the same arrogance. That is why, it became a necessity to instruct him about duties. In chapter 3, Sri Krishna is taking him towards practicing right activities. Let us try to learn about it more clearly.

Vande guruparamparam (I bow to the lineage of teachers).

Jai Srimannarayana!