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1. Episode Title: Episode 70 – Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 3, Episode 70)

2. Topics & Tags:

TOPICS: Understanding the concept of doership and where responsibility for actions should be placed. Analyzing the role of Prakruti (Nature) and its three qualities (gunas) in influencing actions and the body. Exploring the importance of recognizing the true nature (tattva) of the body and the self to achieve detachment from karmic results. Explaining how the interaction of internal and external gunas drives actions and the cycle of karma and rebirth. Krishna's teachings on how to avoid attachment to actions by understanding the underlying principles.

TAGS: HH Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 3, Episode 70, Karma Yoga, Prakruti, Nature, Gunas, Sattva, Rajas, Tamas, Doership, Responsibility, Attachment, Detachment, Karma, Vasanas, Rebirth, Tattva, Krishna, Soul, Body, Action, Consequences, Non-sentient, Consciousness, Dissolution, Instinct, Tendencies

3. Main Content:

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

Chapter 3 of Bhagavad Gita qualifies and explains the bha:vana (process of reflection) that one should have. In the three verses 3.27, 3.28 and 3.29, God says…

Because the body is the primary doer of the activities, we must leave the doership on it. Or, because God is the underlying cause of all that’s happening, the doership must be left with Him. It should be left on this or that side. If you leave it with God, He will own the responsibility. Or if you leave it with prakruthi (Nature), you will be free from that responsibility. Do one of the two. This is the summary of chapter 3.

In chapter 3 it is explained… We see prakruthi (Nature) right in front of us. We see the body. We see the products of natural elements forming the body like food, water, air, etc. We can clearly see all of this. This [body] is growing and shaping because of them. Recognize that they are the direct cause. Because of changes in them, different activities and works happen. Thinking this way, you can leave the responsibility on that side. He conveys ‘leaving of responsibility on prakruthi (Nature)’ in verses 3.27, 3.28 and 3.29.

After recognizing this fact, we develop further understanding about prakruthi (Nature) - that it is ache:thana (non-sentient). It is not knowledgeable. We are knowledgeable. How can one that is not knowledgeable govern the knowledgeable? If you can think of this and recognise it to this extent, then He says that the underlying thatthva (reality/underlying principle) is He. “Leave the responsibility with Me,” He says in verse 3.30. Let’s look at how this is said in those verses.

In verse 3.27…

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SLOKA WORD -

prakruthe:h kriyama:na:ni

gunaih karma:ni sarvasaha |

ahanka:ra vimu:dda:thma:

kartha::ham ithi manyathe: || 3.27

SLOKA MEANING -

All actions are performed by the qualities (gunas) of Nature (Prakruti). One whose mind is deluded by ego thinks, "I am the doer."

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Prakruthi (Nature) has certain qualities. We talked about these earlier. Sattva, rajas and thamas. Because the body is made of prakruthi (Nature), it also has the same three qualities. They don’t stay in a constant form all the time. If constant, it implies the final moment. It is called pralaya (dissolution). If the three qualities in Nature attain a constant state, it is called pralaya (dissolution). What that means is that this entire setting comes to a state of completion. These qualities don’t have a constant state. They have a changing composition going up and down like ocean waves. One is high, the others go low. If sattva rises, rajas and thamas decline. If rajas increases, sattva and thamas subside. If thamas grows, sattva and rajas shrink. This occurs constantly. This is the cause for the world’s continuing existence. Because of this, there is constant activity occurring in this world.

Similarly with the body. There are the same sattva, rajas and thamas components within it. There is activity in the body because of the ongoing change of highs and lows across these three. They happen due to the effect of the indwelling soul’s knowledge. They also undergo those changes due to their natural movements. Where’s the issue here?! The indwelling soul assumes responsibility thinking that he is the doer and that he is the cause. It adds to his karmic load. In verse 3.28 He says…

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SLOKA WORD -

thatthvavitthu maha:ba:ho:

guna karma vibha:gayo:ho |

guna:gune:shu varthanthe:

ithi mathva: na sajjathe: || 3.28

SLOKA MEANING -

But he who knows the truth, O mighty-armed one, about the divisions of qualities (gunas) and actions (karma), understanding that the qualities (gunas) act upon the qualities (gunas), does not become attached.

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na sajjathe: (he won’t be tied to it). What is ‘it’? guna karma (qualities and actions). When? guna:gune:shu varthanthe: ithi mathva: (understanding that the qualities act upon the qualities). There is satthva in [the body] here, there is satthva outside [in Nature]. There is rajas here as well as externally. There is thamas here and in Nature. The thamas here desires more of the thamas from outside. The rajas here desires more of the rajas from outside. The satthva here desires more of the satthva from outside. These interact with those..

When we are traveling, people of similar nature tend to come into groups. Those who have the habit of drinking seem to form a group. Those with the habit of gambling tend to form a separate group. Doctors come together as a group. Same for advocates. Whatever profession or nature one holds, they tend to come together and share. Similarly with nature! Satthva here desires external satthva. Rajas desires for rajas. Thamas desires for thamas. When this activity is happening, if he thinks it is him, the result of the activity is recorded on him. If he doesn’t think that way, it gets recorded in Nature.

Generally dwelling in here, when there is a feeling that you are the doer… You end up questioning why the result should go to someone else… You will desire the result of that activity. Consequently, there is an imprint of karma va:sana (tendencies from past actions) on the ji:va (soul), i.e. himself. The effect of karma va:sana (tendencies from past actions) gives rise to various ruchis (tastes). Accordingly, that sets forth the body with a certain pravrutthi (instinct). One tends to desire objects that align with that instinct. This is a never ending routine that happens with this body.

Because of the effect of gunas (satthva, rajas and thamas), karma (activity) begins. Because of the karma (activity), there are va:sanas (records) that accumulate. Because of the effect of va:sanas (records), he is re-entering here in another body. If he has higher satthva, he gets a sa:tthvic (pure/good) birth. If he has higher rajas, he gets a ra:jasic (passionate/active) birth. If he has higher thamas, he gets a tha:masic (ignorant/dark) birth. The reason for these births is his connection with karma (actions), the tendencies with karma (actions). The underlying reason for karma (actions) is his attachment with the gunas (satthva, rajas and thamas).

Why is this happening? When he is working with the body, he lacks clarity about why and how things are happening. We use a pen to write something. What is it that which is writing? Is it the pen, the hand or ink? What is it that is writing? If there is no ink, nothing can be written. Ink is the reason. However, if we pour ink directly [onto paper], nothing gets written. Unless there is a carrier like a refill, ink doesn’t flow properly in order to write something. We don’t use refills alone. We set them in pens and then write. If we set the pen, refill it, and arrange all of these properly, still nothing gets written. We must hold it and move it in the right direction. Only then something gets written.

Among these, who should we establish the doership with? The pen, ink, refill, hand, or ourselves? We can put it on any of them. If we say that we are the ones thinking about writing something properly, doership can be put on us. There is no burden on the hand, pen, etc. If one wants to write but his hand is shivering, he doesn’t leave the responsibility on the hand. He takes it on himself. Or if the pen isn’t working well, he tries to get a new pen. Or if there is an issue with the refill, he tries to rectify it. Or if there is no ink, he tries to replenish it. He does so because he knows the swabha:va (nature), and swaru:pa (form), of the pen. He doesn’t get upset with the pen, refill, ink, or hand. A wise one doesn’t get angry at any of them. Because everything works in accordance to the extent and the way its swaru:pa (form) permits. He [the wise one] understands this. He uses another means. He attempts to write with it. Or he takes help from some other writer.

When? When he understands thatthva (reality). What thatthva (reality)? That of the pen! If he understands the thatthva (reality), he will neither praise, nor get upset with anything. He will think of the process to get the work done. If he does not understand the thatthva (reality), he will either keep blaming the pen or get himself messy with ink. Or if his hand is at fault, he will blame it. There’s no use of blaming the hand, pen or the ink. It is important to focus on the activity that needs to happen. What does he do? The pen is not functioning well. So, he will replace it with a new one. If the refill is not, he will look at replacing the refill with a new one. If the ink is not the right type, he will try to get the proper ink. Or he might take the help of another person. We know this.

When does that happen? thatthva vith (one who knows the truth). In the case of a pen, he will take action because he understands the thatthva (reality) of the pen. It’s the same with any object. Likewise, he needs to know the thatthva (reality) of the body. Body is panchabhu:thmakam (made of the five elements in nature). It is thriguna:thmakam (having three qualities) [satthva, rajas, thamas]. Hence… The reason for the tendencies of the activity happening in it are the gunas and the natural elements. guna:gune:shu varthanthe: ithi mathva: (understanding that the qualities act upon the qualities). They are behaving in accordance with them, and hence, he will be able to leave the responsibility on them. He will be able to stay away from its results.

Or if he can see God beyond prakruthi (Nature)… Meaning if he knows that he is there within the visible body, and that God is one operating him… He can leave the responsibility on Him. He will be able to stay away from the gunas. Because, He is able to run everything. If he tries to handle everything, it may not be possible. guna:gune:shu varthanthe: ithi mathva: (understanding that the qualities act upon the qualities). Only who recognises this will be able to stay away from this attachment. One who is always focusing on them and leading life with them cannot do it. He explains this in verses 3.27 and 3.28. He, Sri Krishna, is trying to clearly explain topics related to the tendencies that the body acts on. Let us also try to learn.

Jai Srimannarayana!

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