



The Essence of Bhagavadgita

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ABSTRACT: Bhagavadgita is a part of Mahabharata which is the foremost among the Itihasa's and Purana's which were written as the explanatory texts of Veda's. It depicts about ones duty to attain the Ultimate Reality (Moksha). Gita teaches us not only Karmayoga, but Jnanayoga and Bhaktiyoga also. Thus Gita takes a balanced view of this yoga's.

Key Words: Bhagavadgita, Karmayoga, Moksha, Sanatana Dharma, Sankaracharya

I. INTRODUCTION

Bhagavad Gita exhorts one to perform those duties ascribed to oneself. Sankaracharya opines that Gita comprises of the quintessence of the entire wisdom of the Vedas as a whole. Dharma is not just to be professed but to be practised. Dharma is referred to here as the sum total of all the eternal values one should put into practice in one's life. In order to attain Brahman which is unthinkable, imperceptible, unmanifest and that which transcends the thought waves, we need to cease all mental activities.

Karma

Karma is the prescription for the attainment of the cessation of thoughts [1]. Dharma is the translation of such activities with the ultimate objective. Karma once commenced, the sadhanas performed will never go in vain. That will uplift one from the cycle of birth and death. The Lord makes it clear, who is eligible to enter the realm of Dharma. Even if a one is a wretched person, with unflinching devotion towards the Lord, one can become a righteous person. Here it's worth remembering the Puranic saying, "aachara prabhavo dharm" [2]. The Lord advises Arjuna to renounce all activities and surrender to Him. Dharma is permanent faith in the Paramatma. A person becomes righteous when he surrenders everything to the Absolute Divinity.

Dharma

Dharma is the sum total of all the values that lead to the all-round progress of anyone's life and also that which sustains the Universe. It is natural that one of the three qualities dominates every human being. When Satva dominates one will revel in wisdom, when it is Rajas that dominates, one will revel in actions and while Tamas dominates, one shall be afflicted by sloth and sleep [3]. But Bhagavad Gita provides ways through which one can attain the state of yoga, according to the nature of each individual.

Man tends to be vacillating due to the predominance of rajas. Hence Gita advises people to engage in activities without the thoughts of the fruits thereof. One cannot attain peace or salvation by keeping away from duties or by inaction. But those who engage in karmas without the desire for the results become noble karmayogis. Such individuals attain the same state that the wise yogis attain. This is the essence of Karmayoga as described in the Gita. As it inspires and instructs Arjuna to perform his dutiful activities and attain the aim of life through that, karmayoga can be considered as the most prominent path of yoga which Gita propounds.

It is the human life which is the noblest among all lives. Hence our lives should progress towards a noble aim. The great saints have taught us that it is not the greatness of either the body or mind that sets our lives apart from other beings, but by the greatness of our qualified intellect and power of discrimination. The ultimate objective of one's

life is Freedom achievable through wisdom that can be equated to God realisation. This alone is the highest aim of life.

For the attainment of this ultimate state, Dharma is the prescription by the great saints. The aim is surrender to the Lord and for that the way is Dharma. While performing one's duties, one may face many obstacles. To perform duties well, one has to fight and win against these obstacles with courage. Gita can guide and lead us in such contingencies. Gita airways serves as a beacon light fit anyone in such times of confusion while performing one's duties.

In fact by the advice He offers to Arjuna who is at a confusing juncture while performing his duty, the Lord is addressing the whole of humanity and offering solutions for anyone who is confounded once before such confusions while performing one's duties. From the sloka, " imam vivasvathe....", it can be inferred clearly that Arjuna was not the first individual to receive this divine piece of advice from the Lord [4].

Vedas, the foundation for Dharma, as a collection of divine knowledge, have two sections, karma kanda and jnana kanda. Karma kanda is the section that deals with the different types of duties and actions one should perform to get purified for the attainment of wisdom. In the jnana kanda section, the summum bonum of the wisdom of the Vedas is offered. The Upanishads comprise this section. That is to say, the foundation or root of Sanatana Dharma is the Vedas and the objective or consummation of its wisdom is represented in the Upanishads. The Gita Sastra holds the essence of the Upanishads. This is made clear through the sloka, " sarvopanishado gavo...", in the Gita dhyana.

Devotion is the complete surrender before the Lord. When one is dominated by tamoguna, the thought that one is separate from the Divine stays in one's mind. Hence the Gita considers the one who is able to fix his attention on the Lord at all times as the greatest yogi [5]. Moreover to realise God, one has to fix one's mind and intellect always in the Lord. For this, the longing for the fruits of one's actions acts as an impediment.

For the realisation of God, renouncing the fruits of actions is the most ideal attitude. Imbibing divine qualities should be the aim of one's life. But for that, ego stands as a stumbling block. Sorrow, remorse, despondency, languor are all caused by ego. Man ought to perform his duties. But he should not crave for the fruit thereof [6]. At the same time, he should not ignore his duties ordained to him.

II. CONCLUSION

This kind of an attitude results in the annihilation of ego and one's mind gets freed from vacillation. This prepares one to meditate on the Absolute and attain absolute peace. Thus, viewing through different perspectives, we can understand the multifarious magnanimity of Gita Sastra. Gita is the science of wisdom. It inspires action; enlightens about Dharma; integrates different yogas. It is the quintessence of Vedanta. It is the perceptible preceptor. Gita teaches one that it is not just deliverance that human beings seek, but the other three purusharthas viz Dharma, Artha and Kama as well. In this way, this eternal Gita continues to inspire humanity through its indescribable grandeur.

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