

Moral Values from The Bhagavadgita

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ABSTRACT

*Parthaya prathibodhitham bhagavatham Narayanena swayam
Vyasena grathitham purana munina madhye Mahabharatham
Advythamrutha varshineem bhagavatee mashtadashadhyaini
Mamruthva manu sandadaami Bhagavadgeethey bhavadveshineem*

Gita which:-

Lord Narayana himself preached to Arjuna,
Saint Vedavyasa compiled in the midst of Mahabharatha war,
showers of Nectar for harmonious living,
Eighteen chapters of worthy message,
Releases mankind from the bondage of material life on this earth.
To the Goddess! Bhagavadgita

My Honours, Respects. . . .

Arjuna the first listener of Bhagadgita, from the voice of the Lord Krishna, brought out many changes in many spheres of psychological understanding. The Gita emerged from the heart of lord Krishna” Lord Krishna says “Gita is my heart”. He taught many things to Arjuna when Arjuna felt in the opposite army the people were present in Gurus, Ancestors, kings and relatives- in this context Lord Krishna told that the people in front of Arjuna are the people who were already dead. Physical appearance which is not permanent and made Arjuna to keep in dilemma. Lord Krishna also told that if Arjuna won’t kill the other people and he also specifies that they were already dead. At this occasion Lord Krishna taught skills of understanding, maturity, value of life, proper approach towards the goal and the difference and between body and the soul. All these teachings came in the form of ‘‘Bhagavadhgita’’.

“Bhagavan” means Lord. “Gita” means song. Gita is a song of God of which we can tune in any form we like. In that song there are many tunes which can compose to make our life a song to sing with joy and happy. These tunes makes our life harmonious.

Origin of Gita:- The Gita requires a little preliminary introduction. The scene is laid on the kurukshetra (the field of actions). There were two branches of the same race fighting for the empire of India about six hundred years ago. The pandavas has the right, but the kauravas has the might. The pandavas were five brothers, and they were living in a forest. Krishna was the friend of pandavas. The kauravas would not grant them as much land as would cover the point of a needle.

The opening scene is the battlefield, dharmakshetra (the field of righteousness), and both sides see their relatives and friends- one brother on one side and another on the other side; a grandfather on one side, grandson on the other side ___ when arjuna sees his own friends and relatives on the other side and knows that he may have to kill them, his heart gives way and he says that he will not fight. Thus begins the Gita.

Who is a perfect man? A man with good behavior, discipline, proper understanding, perfections in daily life, in small acts of life, reveal a person in inner being. A perfect man must also have good realization. To have the good personality in life, one should follow certain values.

What are values? By values are meant the practice of those principles and patterns which bring perfection in life. Values make life perfect and truly valuable. Values are thus, those virtues which we think as desirable and worthy of inculcation (from the view present of personal and collective good). In other words, before we seek to cultivate values, we perceive them as possible facts or potential values and after we become established in them, they become actual facts for us. They also become natural to us.

Bhagavadgita- A repository of values:-

The importance of Bhagavadgita is best known by the remarks of warren Hastings, the first Governor General of India, in his introduction to the first ever English translation of Bhagavadgita by Charles Wilkins published in 1784.

He wrote:

‘Works as the Gita would live long after the British dominion in India has ceased to exist.’

Gita deals with the practical problems of life. It teaches how a man can perform his duties in the society and how to lead religious life. The Bhagavad-Gita begins with an ethical problem (Arjuna's dilemma in fighting a righteous war), and in the process of solving this problem, it works out a noble and wholesome philosophy of life.

Whatever be our profession or personal life, we should be enthusiastic in all our endeavors. Our mind should be very calm and tranquil in the midst of all troubles while practicing moral and ethical values. We should have inexhaustible strength to lead capable life. We should lead unselfish life. Gita is the source of inspiration for everyone to lead a meaningful life.

1. Face life with courage

Gita is a manual to face many challenges in life. Lord Krishna teaches how to face problems in life. The very first words of Sri Krishna echo this idea;

O Arjuna! Yield not to unmanliness! It befits thee not. Abandoning this petty, faint heartedness, rise up, O dreading here!'

'Swami Vivekananda says in the same vein,' stand up and fight ! Not one step back-that is the idea. Fight it out, whatever comes, Let the stars move from the spheres! Let the whole world stand against us!... you again nothing by becoming cowards.....you are infinite, deathless. Because, you are infinite spirit, it does not befit you to be a slave. Arise, Awake! Stand up and fight!'

2. Efficient Work

To do any kind of work we should prepare ourselves. As Gita says it is our duty to do work without expectation of any results. It means we should do the work efficiently. Lord Krishna says, "perform your duties without selfishness". One should not expect any type of benefits.

Whatever work comes across us to do, Sri Krishna says "you should do your duty, but be aware of what you are doing. Don't be egoistic or think too much about the results of your actions. Concentrate on how efficiently, neatly, lovingly you can perform your duties. As swami Vivekananda also mentioned 'Work is Worship'. Work done is a spirit of detachment in this way is equal to the worship of God.

3. Knowledge is Power

We can define the term 'Knowledge' - that life is a process of everyday learning. The Sanskrit term for a student is *Vidyarthin*—a seeker of knowledge. Sri Krishna says, 'verily there exists nothing in this world purifying like knowledge. In good time, having reached perfection in Yoga, one realizes that oneself in one's own heart'(4.38). For the acquisition of knowledge, the foremost requirement says the Gita, is *Shradha*. Swami Tapasyananda spoke out the significance of shradha: the three qualities absolutely necessary for progress in spiritual life (as a matter of fact, in any endeavour) are mentioned here(in the verse quoted above). These are 1. *Shradha* or faith, 2. Ardent practice, 3. Control of senses....*Shradha* or faith is not a superstitious acceptance of unknown and unverifiable entities and claims of individuals...Faith is as much a unique quality of the human mind as Reason.....Anything that has become a matter of faith in a man, unlike what is mere belief, works as an operative force, enthusing him to put the content of his faith to practice, and to struggle towards the realization of the ideal it presents. Ardour and sincerity are of the very stuff of faith....Faith is firm and active acceptance unlike belief or a conventional conformity which has no power to move a person to action.

Sri Krishna says, 'knowledge burns up all your weaknesses, and makes you aware of your inner strength and potential. This is what is called enlightenment'. We should perform every act of sacrifice. Among them *Jnana* Yoga –the pursuit of true knowledge or contemplation, which leads to learning, is the best one because as Sri Krishna stresses, ' verily there is nothing so purifying as knowledge in this world'(4.38). the very next verse specifies qualification for a seeker of knowledge:

'A man of deep faith (shradha) obtains divine knowledge if he is full of zeal and devotion for knowledge and has achieved mastery over his senses'(4.39)

4. The Practice of Concentration

As is the saying 'Practice makes man perfect', unless we do cultivate the habit of practising. We tend to become perfect. We need much concentration to do any work. As we disturbed by the many thoughts in this modern world, we need practice to keep our concentration on any work. With the concentration itself which leads us to interest, and with interest we get devotion to any sort of

work. One's our physical and mental activity becomes stable we get joy of pure thoughts and feelings. This peace of joy makes us to get supreme peace and contentment. The practice of concentration is the core of meditation enabling us to perform our duties like reading, playing, cleaning, serving, and so on with greater effectiveness and awareness. In Bhagavadgita Lord Krishna says, 'by keeping concentration on the forehead that is central part of the eyebrows one should practice meditation'. Sri Krishna also gives a striking example to illustrate the unperturbed and tranquil state of mind that one should cultivate in the time of meditation: "the flame of a lamp sheltered from wind does not flicker. This is the comparison which used to describe a Yogi's mind that is well under control and united with the Atman' (6.19).

5. Overcoming lust and Anger

If we have many desires we will not be in a peace of mind. We lost peace of mind if we have more desires. If physical and mental desires makes us unstable in this material world. Desires towards material things makes us to do many mistakes. we have to overcome such type of desires in this world

Lord Krishna tells Arjuna to consider them as enemies in one's life journey. He also pinpoints 'that it is lust (sexual desire) and anger which prompt man to commit wrongs'(3.37)

Sri Krishna elucidates the terrible impact lust and anger make in one's pursuit of knowledge, As fire enveloped by smoke ,the knowledge is overcast by lust. It is the eternal enemy for an aspirant of Knowledge .He also identifies the locus of this dreadful passion, to that we can ever alert to counter its awful effects. The senses, the mind and intellect are said to be its seat .With this it veils knowledge. Hence Krishna calls upon us to control the senses right from the beginning.(3:38-40)

Due to the influence of foreign culture improper behavior and values in the living conditions are declining. Standards of moral and spiritual values degrading in the culture of India. Foreign influence and its effects are most in system of Indian living conditions. Present youth, if they get the habit of learning more from Bhagavadgita they improve a lot to lead a purposeful and valuable life.

6. Living a Pure life

To achieve anything, regular practice is required. Every individual need higher level of concentration to improve character. Yoga is the best method to attain everything in life. Through

yoga one can attain a life of purity and proper understanding .It is must for everybody to lead a life of purity.

While listening to Gita to know more about the importance of life Arjuna raises a questions of practical significance in the sixth chapter of the Bhagavadgita-He asks :

“O Krishna! Verity, the mind is fickle, turbulent, powerful and unyielding. To control it I think is as difficult as controlling the world itself” to this

Krishna replies :

Arjuna undoubtedly the mind is fickle and difficult to be checked.Yet it can be brought under control by steady practice and dispassion (6 : 36)

Steady practice (*abhyasa*) and cultivation of disinterestedness towards unimportant things (*vairagya*), are the two essential practical tools to gain control over the senses and in turn to attain higher

standards of concentration and character. In the very next verse, Krishna cautions that ‘Yoga (can also mean, success in one’s Endeavour in their context) is difficult for attainment by men of uncontrolled mind. But for those who have their minds under control, it is possible to attain, if they strive with proper means (6:36).

7. Principles of a True Devotee

There are many ways to reach God. Singing, praising and performing good deeds etc. Among all these devotion is the easiest way. As Sri Krishna says,” Devotion to God is the easiest path to divinity and the most natural to follow’ with these words he continues to say, ‘Practice whole hearted devotion to Me. Do all work as an offering to me and to please Me’. He then explains qualities of a devotee and should cultivate in order to develop true devotion to God:

- ❖ Love thy neighbor as thyself means friendliness towards all.
- ❖ Whatever work which was assigned to us; feel free to work, do not work as a slave.
- ❖ Don’t be proudish or egoistic in our attitude.
- ❖ In all circumstances we have to be cheerful and calm also called as *Shithapragna*.
- ❖ Perseverance in whatever we undertake.
- ❖ Complete surrender to God, then only we reach God whole heartedly.

- ❖ We should not hurt others through body, mind and speech.
- ❖ Being unperturbed by irritation caused by others.
- ❖ Always to maintain purity in thought and actions.
- ❖ Not being troubled when someone abuses us or becoming over-ecstatic when one praises us.
- ❖ Looking upon the whole world as our own home (chapt-12).

Conclusion:-

Gita is a repository of values. Gita is the summary of all the Vedas and scriptures. Instead of reading all the Vedas and Upanishads, it is enough to read Bhagavadgita. As the Upanishads declare we should have faith in ourselves and our approach towards God must be sincere. There is a saying "Man is what his faith is". Swami Vivekananda also revealed "You will become what you think". The quality of all actions depends upon a faith and the approach towards goal. As Gita says work done without vanity and motivated by the good of others is the best kind of work. Whatever is done with desire, vanity and for self- glorification is inferior and what is done carelessly with evil motive and thoughtlessness is useless. (chapt :12).

We should perform our duties with dedication and without craving for results. We must keep our love of interest in all the works. If "work is worship" then only we enjoy the work. We must feel free to do any kind of work without feeling that it is a burden.

True knowledge leads us to understanding of unity in diversity. It frees us from our ego-sense and brings about control over our body and mind. To follow these teachings may be difficult in the beginning but in course of time we will enjoy once with our involvement. If we get involved, that involvement leads to happiness.

Thus we get in the Gita a complete value system leading to perfection of life-where intense action combined with concentration, coupled with knowledge and love towards God is made Practicable.

Sources:-

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3. Bhagavadhgita.
4. Values in the Bhaghavadhgita, Swami Vivekananda.
5. Srimad Bhagavadgita, The Scripture of Mankind, Tr with Notes by Swami Tapasyananda