

## Relevance of Bhagvad Gita in Contemporary Scenario

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### Abstract .

Human beings all over the world are in the grip of certain worldly affairs. They don't have much time to think about their own self and God. They always brood over their karma. They don't believe in the theory of karma. *The Gita* has a universal appeal of karma and action and this can be applied to people of all for all time to come. *The Gita* is an integral part of Indian culture and it plays an imperative role in the lives of Indian people. Whatever has been said in four Vedas, the *Gita* is the essence of all these four Vedas. Its main message for all human beings is total submission to Almighty. This is similar to what John Milton said in his sonnet "On His Blindness". Milton says that there is no need to brood over whatever wrong is done to a man. He says that we should not complaint to God. He further suggests that we should submit to the will of God. Man is always lived in tension, anxiety, confusion, suppression, pain and in doubt. *The Gita* has the solution of all these diseases. In my paper, I shall try to analyse the relevance of the *Gita* in contemporary scenario. *The Gita* is not a book of religion but it is a store house of spiritual knowledge.

**Key-Words:** Bhagvad Gita, Soul, Pain, Human, Moral, *Mahabharata*.

The *Bhagavad Gita* is a symbol of absolute knowledge. The cycle of birth and death is always the same as it was in centuries ago. With the advent of science and technology there is no change in man's taking birth and death. It is believed that one has to bear pain and enjoy pleasure according to one's karma of the past. Death is inescapable. Man is always in great dilemma. He is fighting with his own self but can't get any solution. Alexander pope in his poem *Know Then Thyself* also explains that man is always in confusion has no solution of his problems. His life is filled with tension and unhappiness. The teachings of *Bhagvad Gita* have a message of leaving self-centredness and total surrender to the Almighty. It is believed that *Bhagvad Gita* is not only a book of Hindus but also for entire humanity irrespective caste, creed and religion. The epic conveys its message through its teachings to the modern man. The complete text of the *Mahabharata* is pregnant with the teachings of the *Gita* and it has the solution of all the questions. Human beings are a bundle of good and bad qualities. The characters of *Mahabharata* are the mixture of good and evil qualities. One can learn from these characters what is right and wrong. Regarding this Bimal Krishna Motilal in his essay titles *Moral Dilemmas: Insights from Indian Epic* has observed: "The moral dilemmas presented in the *Mahabharata* were in some sense universal, for most of them can be effectively used even today to illustrate argument in moral philosophy." (5)

For centuries the great epic the *Gita* has been serving people by inculcating in them a deep sense of commitment, devotion, action and belief. It also leads them to the path of salvation through spirituality and karma. In this context C.P. Varkey has very rightly remarked in his book titled *A Pilgrimage through the Mahabharata*:

*The Mahabharata* has succeeded in shaping the culture of India and her people in the past and continues to do so now by its emphasis on the gospel of dharma. This gospel runs through the ups and downs, twists and turns of the complex movements of the epic. Equally highlighted are the lessons that hatred breeds hatred, the greed and violence lead inevitably to ruin that the greatest victory for a man or a woman is the victory over self. (8)

The epic *Mahabharata* has been forming the culture of India and its people from the past to the present time through its theory of karma and dharma.

The *Bhagvad Gita* is a part of the great epic the *Mahabharata*. This epic is a purely spiritual record. It helps the entire humanity to attain the goal of self-realisation and enlightenment. *Bhagvad Gita* is an allegory. It describes the fundamental truths of life through the story of the *Mahabharata*. It is believed that good and evil are inherent part of man's nature. This is similar to what William Golding has observed in his novel *Lord of the Flies*. He gives the examples of small children who have fallen on an island and become enemy of one another for power and leadership. When we become too ambitious for attaining any goal there will be downfall of that person. But through the *Gita* one can analyse what he should do. It is also said that the *Gita* is the supreme text of all texts on this earth because of its universal message of real spirituality. Regarding this S. Radhakrishnan in his "Introductory Essay" of *The Bhagvad Gita* has observed:

With a long history of spiritual power, it serves even today as a light to all who will receive illumination from the profundity of its wisdom which insists on a world wider and deeper than wars and revolutions can touch. It is a powerful shaping factor in the renewal of spiritual life and has secured an assured place among the world's great scriptures. (2)

The moral and spiritual teachings of the *Bhagvad Gita* is relevant today. This text is a treasure full of spiritual knowledge and an ocean of bliss and a guiding force for every human being. It is like an encyclopaedia that has pierced human soul to the core. Regarding the spirituality and greatness of *Bhagvad Gita*, Henry David Thoreau in his book titled *Walden* has remarked:

In the morning I bathe my intellect in the stupendous and cosmogonical philosophy of the *Bhagvad Geeta*, since whose composition years of the gods have elapsed, and in comparison with which our modern world and its literature seem puny and trivial; and I doubt if that philosophy is not to be referred to a previous state of existence, so remote is its sublimity from our conceptions. . . . The pure Walden water is mingled with the sacred water of the Ganges. (192-93)

It is believed that the *Bhagvad Gita* is not a book of religion, it is a moral light full of morality that erases the darkness from the minds of the entire humanity. Whenever anyone is in despair he can find solution of all his problems in the *Gita*.

*The Bhagvad Gita* is a part of great epic the *Mahabharata* which is the story of animosity between the members of the Kuru dynasty. *The Gita* is a discourse between Lord Krishna and prince Arjuna before the beginning of the war. Before the commencement of the battle, prince Arjuna loses his self courage to see his brethren and wants to go from the battle field. To see all this Lord Krishna counsels Arjuna that the cycle of birth and death is inescapable. He must

come out from all this worldly emotions and attachments and fight for his kingdom and offer his services to humanity.

Nithyananada in his book titled *Bhagvad Gita Demystified Vol.1* has very rightly remarked about the relevance of *Gita*:

. . . the questions asked by Arjuna are the same questions that we ask today and the answers of Krishna are relevant even today. The questions are the fundamental quest of the individual and the answers are the eternal Truth. The Truth is neither old nor new; it is eternal. . . . The doubt that Arjuna has raised is even more applicable to the modern man. . . . We have become more complex than our forefathers. . . . (661)

When Arjuna like many other warriors loses his self courage and wants to retreat from the warfront, Krishna explains him the theory of dharma. He says that the cycle of birth and death depends on one's karma. Death is only a step ahead in the cycle of life. Regarding this a very famous metaphysical poet John Donne in his poem *Death be Not Proud* says that 'death is neither powerful nor mighty'. Further he says that death is merely a sleep and after that sleep soul wakes eternally.

Lord Krishna explains that one can cross the sea of pain, suffering, emotion, feeling through self-service and meditation. Krishna tells Arjuna that a true warrior should do his duty without any personal attachment. He doesn't think about his own profit or loss.

The epic ends with a message of Krishna telling Arjuna that he should do his duty and to fight with Kaurvas and do his duty for selfless service. Krishna explains Arjuna that a selfless person doesn't fall in the web of sensual pleasures of this world and any type of material happiness. He further explains that a person is never satisfied with material happiness within himself. He shouldn't be distracted by any kind of misery. He should always remain peaceful and control his anger and animal instincts. A good person is always rewarded for his good deeds and hard work. Lord Krishna gives the example of gold saying that as gold becomes pure by melting into the fire and in the same way soul is purified through pain and suffering.

Stress, confusion, pain, suffering, exploitation, depression, greed, anger and addiction trouble human beings throughout their lives. The *Bhagvad Gita* has given solution to all these problems. In this regard Swami Swami Sadashiva Tirtha in his book titled *Bhagavad Gita for Modern Times: Secrets to Attaining Peace and Harmony* has remarked:

*Bhagavad Gita* discusses the celebration of the Divine bliss of God as it applies to a personal relationship with God in each person's daily life. How does a sincere person balance worldly and Divine spheres? How can one be a helpful servant in the midst of obstacles and stresses? This is one of the great values of the teachings of the *Bhagavad Gita* that remains as relevant today as in ancient times. (1-2)

The *Bhagvad Gita* has a universal appeal and it is beyond all religions. It is a storehouse of eternal truths. It connects man to God. A man should offer his selfless services to God. The teachings of the *Gita* make us spiritually, materially and mentally strong. The teachings of the *Gita* were relevant centuries ago and these teachings are more relevant today because our life has become complex and challenging due to various stress and pressures of modern life. The *Gita* has all the solution of all the problems of modern life. Regarding this Haresh Bakshi in his book *Shrimad-Bhagavad* has very rightly observed:

Arjuna symbolizes the entire human race in conflict as to (i) the right action (ii) real human nature and (iii) the means for perfection of action in life. These

conflicts make the Gita relevant in today's world suffering from destructive forces of ego, lust, greed and ignorance. These forces have become stronger over time, and so the relevance of Srimad Bhagavad Gita has, in fact, increased with time. Through the themes of the Gita, Krishna addresses the fundamental causes of human suffering, and methods of transformation. He does so by expounding the eternal truths. At the time when the dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna took place there were no religions per se. Therefore, the Gita is truly relevant for everyone at all times. It is five thousand years old and yet quite contemporary. (19)

To conclude it can be said that success of a man depends on his hard work and self-confidence. A man doesn't get confused what the others think about him. He has to follow the path of created by him. But he is always in doubt and doesn't have full faith in him so he chooses the path paved by others. If anyone wants to tread on the path created by him he must have mental strength. A successful person works hard without caring the failures and he struggles hard to attain his goal of life. Our education gives us knowledge to lead our life in a better way. But the teachings of the *Gita* give us an insight to search the treasure of realhappiness within himself. The teachings of the *Gita* will completely transform a man into a good human being. Such person can help others to reach out of this sea of worldly confusion and pain.

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