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CONSCIOUS EVOLUTION AND SUSTAINABLE EXISTENCE THROUGH SHRIMAD-BHAGWADGITA

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Abstract

In the *Bhagawad Gita*, Lord Krishna very expertly guides a reader, through *Shri Arjuna*, to the ultimate consciousness. In the first six chapters of the *Bhagawadgita* Lord Krishna mainly focuses on following types of *Yoga* consciousnesses:-

- *Karma Yoga*
- *Jnana Yoga*
- *Dhayana Yoga.*

Then from *chapters 7 to 12* Lord Krishna talks about consciousness of *Bhakti Yoga*. Finally, we find the ultimate consciousness in *Bhagawadgita* in the opening *sloka* of *BHAGAWADGITA (1-1)* which talks about *Dharma* and in the closing *sloka (18-78)* of the *BHAGAWADGITA* which says regarding *Mama*. If you join both of them: *Dharma + Mama*, it becomes *Mama Dharma*. This means *My Dharma*.

So, Ultimate consciousness of the *BHAGAWADGITA* is to follow one's duties - sincerely, diligently, effectively, efficiently, without fear or favour and without looking for the profit/benefit of the duties being conducted/performed by the individuals & to do that duty as if you are doing worship to God. That is to work as if - "Work is worship." That is to perform one's *dharma* without any faults. This is the ultimate consciousness in the *Bhagawad Gita*. As per *Gita*, soul is *Atma* while Consciousness is *Brahma*.

The *Atma* is the identity of self which hold the personality, ego and attachment with various things when it is in material body. It is not those things but just a keeper of those. *Brahma* is the essence of *atma* which is the substance of only singularity that exists. Everything that we perceive is an illusion named *maya* which makes us see difference in forms and shapes of one single existing entity called *brahma*. It ultimately leads conscious understanding of the world.

Introduction

For this study the data has been collected from secondary source. The weekly episodes of Mahabharata telecasted on the TV channel have also been the constant source of motivation for this work. *Bhagawadgita* guides us to ultimate performing/devolution of duties consciously. Practically speaking the role of father, mother brother, sister, son, daughter, friend and the relations like maternal uncle, paternal uncle, teacher, religious *guru* and every type of other relationships in our life, if not played consciously will brought ultimate destructions, not only in one's family and life, but also on the planet itself. One should not flow in emotions while deciding something like the *Karana* who decided to favour his greedy friend *Duryodana* in the war. He can decide not to take part in the war. The role of a mother if played consciously by the *Kunti*, the *Karana* will not suffer so much in life neither the *Kunti* has to repel for so long and hide the things from the world and suffer the inner pain. The *Dhritarashtra* fail to perform his duties consciously to give due rights to the sons of his deceased elder brother and fell in undue attraction towards his son and ultimately brought destructions, not only for his *Kula*/family but for the common ignorant masses as well. This is what *Bhagawadgita* devoid us to do. Overconfidence of *Abhimanyu* results self destruction while calling *Karana* "son of a blind father is blind" by *Draupadi* might be avoided, as it reminds us not to hurt someone when we are in good or commanding position. Not allowing or teaching the kids of low reputed families by the so called Gurus reminds us of the partial treatment faced by some of the most talented students, filled them with anxiety and hatred throughout their life thereby producing the most revengeful men of the history. Putting *Draupadi* on Gambling is no longer a conscious decision and nor the decision of playing Gambling on the part of *Yudhishtira*.

The decision without seeing the ultimate physical truth on the part of *Kunti* regarding distribution of newly wedded *Draupadi* physically among the five brothers had not only put the self respect of *Draupadi* on stake but also makes her life ridiculous. While *Duryodhana* doesn't take any decision consciously in his life using his own wisdom and rather depends upon his Mama *Shakuni*'s advice which also brought destructions to his *kula*. No conscious, timely decision has been taken by any one of the great warriors including *Dhritarashtra*, *Dronacharya*, Ganga Putra *Vishma Pitamah*, *Shukrachariya*, *Kripachariya* etc. during the open *sabha* to stop the wrong decisions of playing a gamble match, putting woman's self respect on stake and even on demolishing/ playing with the modesty of a women. Only the conscious decision was taken by the *Krishna* to save the dignity of women at the right time. Apart from that the four *Pandavas* not listening to the advice of *Yaksha* and not able to decided consciously and hence lost their lives.

In *Bhagawadgita* ultimate consciousness is consciousness of *Krishna*. This may seem simple, but that's because we have the benefit of knowing and accepting that *Krishna* is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. At the time of *Krishna*'s appearance, it was commonly held that *Visnu* is the Supreme Lord in all respects. This is because it is from *Visnu*'s body that the universes manifest. It is from His body that *Lord Brahma* manifests, and it is His expansion that maintains the universe and accompanies the living entity within their heart.

According to *Bhagawadgita*, *Krishna* is the origin of *Visnu*, He is the origin of all manifestations of Godhead. Even though all *Visnu tattva* expansions are Supreme, eternal and fully independent, They serve *Krishna* in the performance of their activities by acting on *Krishna*'s behalf, but as themselves.

To me it seems that to be conscious of this, is to be *Krishna* conscious, and to see *Krishna* in His two armed form is the rarest of *darsanas*. *Krishna* explains this to *Arjuna* after changing from His four-armed *Visnu* form to His two-armed form as *Krishna*.

Only by undivided devotional service one can enter into the mysteries of understanding *Krishana* (Bg 11.54).

To be conscious of this is the highest. It surpasses *Devi* consciousness, *Siva* consciousness, *Brahman* consciousness, and even *Vishnu* consciousness. It is the rarest of consciousnesses. Out of many thousands of people strictly following *Vedic* principles, (almost no one nowadays) only one or two will attain transcendence, and out of all those who achieve this very rare and difficult feat, hardly one will know *Krishna* in truth.

The *Bhagawadgita* guides us to perform our duties with utmost care. e.g. the father should made his offspring's independent so that they can be able to learn and live there life on their own. Too much attachment on the part of parents towards their offsprings makes them weak and they might not survive in hard times. So one should live and decide consciously in their life; as our decision and actions has direct influence/ impact on the individuals and the society as well. Almost every aspect of life have been explained in *Bhagawadgita* and it refrain the humans of doing certain things which otherwise proven to be fatal for them.

The question arises here: are soul and consciousness the same? What does the *Bhagawadgita* say about this?

When *Lord Krishna* stopped time while preaching "*Gita*" to *Arjuna*, how did *Lord Veda Vyasa* get to know about it and put "*Gita*" in written form?

How could *Vyasa* know about the *Bhagawadgita* when it was recited by *Lord Krishna* to *Arjuna*? Apart from these two, could only *Sanjaya* have known about it?

The *Bhagavad-Gita* excels in its theory (*siddhanta*) of evolution of human consciousness. Accordingly, there are four states of consciousness :-

World-consciousness: Generally, human beings identify themselves with their kith and kin, clan and caste, cult and creed, religion and nationality. This limited individual ego-self (*vyasti-bhava*) is not our true identity. It binds us with prides and prejudices, religious superstitions, academic proficiency, economic supremacy, intellectual arrogance, fanaticism and vainglory. This world of '*I*' and '*Mine*' is the creation of human mind. This is due to ignorance towards the ultimate truth.

"Ultimate consciousness" is the "truth" underlying all reality. This is obviously difficult to understand, because the assertion appears to have too many moving parts. *I* mean, what is "*truth*", and what is "*reality*"?

But first, you have to know that the "ultimate consciousness" is an "other dimensional unknowable" as it has no attributes. So how do we know it even exists? We know that it exists because there are numerous documented records of people who have not only experienced it, but given us "experiments" or techniques by which we can experience it for ourselves! In fact, the whole of *Indian Yogic system* as well as *Puranic system* leads us to this.

More precisely the Consciousness = "a person's awareness or perception of something".

The *Mandukya Upanisad* describes 4 different types of consciousness i.e.:-

1. *Waking(jagarat),*
2. *Dreaming (swapana),*
3. *Deep Sleep (susupti) and*
4. *Pure Consciousness (turiya).*

Thus *Bhagwadgita* ultimately teaches us that the decisions if not taken consciously at the right time brought ultimate destructions and miseries in the end. The teaching of *Gita* if followed practically will ultimately give rise to the conscious planet in which sufferings are least. Human life will become better with minimum contradictions to the universe structure. So the role of *Bhagawadgita* is the real and ultimate in attaining the conscious world, as it teaches that even a small decision if not taken consciously will be dangerous for everyone. In whatever the role we are we must decide consciously.

In *Chapter 5, Verse 2* it is said that the renunciation of work and work in devotion are both good for liberation. But, of the two, work in devotional service is better than renunciation of works.

While in *Chapter 5, Verse 3* it is narrated that One who neither hates nor desires the fruits of his activities is known to be always renounced. Such a person, liberated from all dualities, easily overcomes material bondage and is completely liberated.

Chapter 5, Verse 4 speaks that only the ignorant speak of karma-yoga and devotional service as being different from the analytical study of the material world [*sankhya*]. Those who are actually learned say that he who applies himself well to one of these paths achieves the result of both.

Similarly, *Chapter 5, Verse 5* says, One who knows that the position reached by means of renunciation can also be attained by works in devotional service and who therefore sees that the path of works and the path of renunciation are one, sees things as they are. *Chapter 5, Verse 6* guides us that unless one is engaged in the devotional service of the Lord, mere renunciation of activities cannot make one happy. The *sages*, purified by works of devotion, achieve the Supreme without delay. *Chapter 5, Verse 7* says One who works in devotion, who is a pure soul, and who controls his mind and senses, is dear to everyone, and everyone is dear to *him*. Though always working, such a man is never entangled. *Chapter 5, Verse 8-9* suggests that a person in the divine consciousness, although engaged in seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, moving about, sleeping, and breathing, always knows within himself that he actually does nothing at all. Because while speaking, evacuating, receiving, opening or closing his eyes, he always knows that only the material senses are engaged with their objects and that he is aloof from them. *Chapter 5, Verse 10* says that one, who performs his duty without attachment, surrendering the results unto the Supreme God, is not affected by sinful action, as the lotus leaf is untouched by water.

Chapter 5, Verse 13- When the embodied living being controls his nature and mentally renounces all actions, he resides happily in the *city of nine gates* [the material body], neither working nor causing work to be done. *Chapter 5, Verse 14* the embodied spirit, master of the city of his body, does not create activities, nor does he induce people to act, nor does he create the fruits of action. All this is enacted by the modes of material nature. When, however, one is enlightened with the knowledge by which nescience is destroyed, then his knowledge reveals everything, as the sun lights up everything in the daytime.

According to *Bhagawadgita* out of many thousands among men, one may endeavor for perfection, and of those who have achieved perfection, hardly one knows *Me* in truth (*Bg 7.3*). The extremely rare and exclusive consciousness is also being offered to us by *Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu*, now we can choose what we do with the opportunity.

One can also find the Ultimate Consciousness in *Sanjaya's* final statement in the *Gita* which can be viewed from three standpoints:-

Taken literally, we can see that *Sanjaya* wanted to very subtly inform *Dhritraashtra* that the *Pandava* army would be victorious, because the world's foremost warrior, *Arjuna*, and *Shri Krishna*, the lord of all *yogas*, were on the opposing side of the *Kauravas*. There was not even a tiny chance that the *Kauravas* would win the war.

So the ultimate consciousness in *Bhagawadgita* is *Krishna* Consciousness. *Krishna* clearly instructs us to become conscious of *Him* and do our prescribed duty. The failure of duty on the part of *Dhritarashtra* as a king and as a head of family results in fatalities. Whereas, *Gandhari* fails to teach her children the lesson of morality and doesn't interfere strictly in any wrong decisions taken on the part of *Duryodhana* and allow her brother *Shakuni* to interfere in to the matter of states and family. While *Duryodhana* was happy to chose/ demand an army of ten thousand trained men from *Krishna* in spite of *Krishna* itself due to the lack of conscious decision on his part.

The first major call for becoming aware about *Krishna* comes in BG 3.30 where *Krishna* asks *Arjuna* to offer all his work to *Krishna* and do his duty (*of fighting as a Kshatriya*) with complete awareness and knowledge about *Krishna*. As the *Bhagawadgita* progresses, the call for awareness about *Krishna* becomes clearer and stronger.

In BG 4.23-4.24 the call for becoming absorbed in *Krishna* while doing the prescribed duty is very clear, infact *Krishna* mentions that this is the only way to achieve the highest goal of human life. Then in 5.29 again *Krishna* repeats how to know *Krishna* and what is the result of this knowledge. In Chapter 7, verse 1, the call for becoming aware of *Krishna* is even stronger where *Krishna* asks *Arjuna* to attach his mind to *Krishna* (*Mayi asakta manah Partha*). Then again in 7.17 *Krishna* says that a person who has full knowledge about *Krishna* is "special" (*visisyate*) and he is very dear to *Krishna* (*mama priyah*).

In BG 8.7, *Krishna* very clearly instructs to offer our mind and intelligence to *Krishna* (*mayy arpit manoh buddhir*), which means we should very deeply deliberate on *Krishna* and *His* activities. While Chapter 9 gives several references where *Krishna* again instructs to become conscious about *Him*, for example in verses 9.13-9.14, *Krishna* briefly mentions about persons who are fully aware about *Krishna* and how they are always protected by the divine nature, then again in Verse 9.22 *Krishna* mentions that *He* personally takes care of such people.

I can go on and give several references from subsequent chapters of *Bhagavadgita*, but I will stop here and would like to conclude with what *Krishna* mentions in the conclusion of his instructions in BG 18.65 and 18.66.

Bg 18.65

*man-manā bhava mad-bhakto
mad-yājī mām namaskuru
mām evaiṣyasi satyaṁ te
pratijāne priyo 'si me*

Translation:-

Always think of *Me*, become *My* devotee, worship *Me* and offer your homage unto *Me*. Thus *you* will come to *Me* without fail. *I* promise *you* this because *you* are *My* very dear friend.

Bg 18.66

*sarva-dharmān parityajya
mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja
ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpebhyo
mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ*

Translation:-

Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto *Me*. I shall deliver you from all sinful reactions. Do not fear.

Thus, it is very clear that the supreme consciousness in *Bhagawadgita* is the consciousness/awareness about *Krishna* and his position as the Supreme Person and the greatest well wisher of all living entities.

Krishna has nothing to do with the material world directly; everything is done through His expansions as *Visnu*, *Siva*, *Brahma* and their consorts.

Apart from that there are some simple rules about becoming fully conscious in our decisions making and that is to first understand how we do things. If we do not know how we do things, how can we know how conscious decision making will work for us? Though the ancient verdict of *Bhagawadgita* explains these entities in the form of individual consciousness and the universal supreme consciousness, it is both inside and outside, it moves not and yet it moves. The only thing that exists is the consciousness. The *guna* only make us think that we are the container but we are not. We are only the consciousness being blocked by the *gunas*. Consciousness pervades the entire body. While pleasure and pain are part of body consciousness and hence are physical. Pure consciousness is that which is- *sat* (eternal), *chit* (full of knowledge) and *ananda* (full of joy). The original consciousness lies beyond my both gross and subtle body. As the consciousness enters the **body, mind and intellect** the identifications shifts from the consciousness to the container, which is the body, mind and intellect. This is how duality fools us. The moment identifications shift to the container it starts associating itself with the qualities of the container. The consciousness shifts to the body, mind and intellect and this is known as *maya* illusion. This is where the *sattvic*, *rajasic* and *tamasic gunas* come in to play. All the limitations and the blockages of the *gunas* begin to be associated with the consciousness. Remember the glass is only an appearance. Only the water is real. In the same way only our consciousness is real and the container, our **body, mind and intellect** is also only an appearance. In all it exists undivided and yet appear divided. Our body makes things appear divided. As the glass starts floating we identify the journey of life and karma comes in to play. We say this happen to *me* and *I* am doing this or that because the identification has shifted to the attributes of the container. Our *gunas* then dominates us and everything we do. So we cannot just decide to destroy our container. We need it to journey through life. This is why we need the knowledge of *Brahman*, the universal consciousness.

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Glossary

- i. Ahamkara: The 'I' maker, the ego-self, egoism.
- ii. Ahimsa: ('a', "not"; 'himsa', "violence") Non-violence, non-injury.
- iii. Ajna Chakra: The Spiritual eye.
- iv. Ajnana: ('a', "not"; 'jnana', "knowledge") Ignorance
- v. Akasha: Ether, space.
- vi. Aksara: Imperishable.
- vii. Amrit: The Divine Nectar, ambrosia, elixir.
- viii. Ananda: Bliss, Absolute Happiness, Supreme Joy
- ix. Apana: the life-force that goes down.
- x. Apra (Prakriti): Lower Nature, immanent.
- xi. Arjuna: The third Pandava brother. The word literally means 'bright' or 'silver', pure in nature.

- xii. Avidya: ('a', "not"; 'Vidya', "wisdom") Individual delusion that creates ego consciousness, ignorance of one's true nature.
- xiii. Avyakta: Unmanifest
- xiv. Bhagavad Gita: Song Celestial, Song of the Spirit.
- xv. Bhakti: Worship, Devotion, Love of God
- xvi. Brahma: God as Creator in the Hindu Trinity; Other two in the trinity being, Vishnu, the Preserver and Shiva, the Destroyer. Brahma is NOT Brahman.
- xvii. Brahavidya: The Study of 'Consciousness'. It is referred to as "the supreme science" or "the science of the Supreme."
- xviii. Buddhi: The Pure Discriminative Intellect. Chakra(s): Subtle center(s) of energy in the cerebrospinal axis of the body.
- xix. Dhyana: Meditation, contemplation
- xx. Dhyana Yoga: The Yoga of practice of meditation.
- xxi. Gita: Song
- xxii. Guna(s): The three attributes, fundamental qualities, tendencies or modes of expression, born of Prakriti (Cosmic Nature). 'Guna' literally means 'a strand of cord or rope' through which Prakriti holds in bondage all embodied beings. (Yogananda, 2005, p. 907)
- xxiii. Guru: Teacher. The word means 'dispeller of darkness'; ('gu', darkness and 'ru', 'that which dispels').
- xxiv. Gurukulum: School, academy of learning.
- xxv. Jnana: Knowledge
- xxvi. Jnana Yoga: Realizing the Absolute through Knowledge.
- xxvii. Kalpa: Cycle of time.
- xxviii. Karma: Action, work, deed. Derived from the Sanskrit root word 'kr', which means , 'to do' or 'to make'. Karma Phala/Phalam: Fruits of Action, the results of action.
- xxix. Karma Yoga: The path of selfless action.
- xxx. Manas: Mind, Sense Consciousness
- xxxii. Prana: Life-force, breath, vital-air.