

Shrimadbhagavadgita: The Effervescent Guide for All Millenial Psychological Problems

Paper Submission: 10/05/2020, Date of Acceptance:25/5/2020, Date of Publication: 30/5/2020



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Abstract

The teachings of Shrimadbhagavadgita were applicable not just to Arjun but are relevant in current times as well. Using its copious nectar of deep knowledge and unparalleled wisdom, the Bhagavadgita presents mankind with strategic solutions to all current fundamental problems. In this competitive and materialistic world, mental illness and psychological issues are continuously hindering our progress and leading us towards internal conflicts and depression. This is when we most need a source of inspiration that will help us and guide us through these dark times into a stable and positive frame of mind. In these troubling times, Shrimadbhagavadgita can be like a guiding light in darkness, helping mankind to reach a brighter time. Today when biological threats to humanity like the prevalent coronavirus have caused irreparable bioecological and economic damage, lockdown and quarantine have become our biggest shield weapons. But like all battles, this lockdown is not easy and comes at the price of depression and mental breakdowns arising due to prolonged isolation. Hence it can be said that Shrimadbhagavadgita is like a cohesion of various psychological and mental affirmations that can help us battle our own internal conflicts and overcome stress, anxiety, depression in a strategic manner. Lord Krishna symbolises every psychologist, teacher, friend or family who tries to help us through our mental battles and does not let us give up and put down our weapons in front of our own internal enemies. His teachings are as precious today in fighting the coronavirus battle as they were in the time of the Arjun.

Keywords: Shrimadbhagavadgita, Psychology, Stress, Depression, Anxiety, Karma, Internal Conflicts.

Introduction

Using its copious nectar of deep knowledge and unparalleled wisdom, the Bhagavadgita presents mankind with strategic solutions to all current fundamental problems. The teachings of Shrimadbhagavadgita were applicable not just to Arjun but are relevant in current times as well.

Today when biological threats to humanity like the prevalent coronavirus have caused irreparable bioecological and economic damage, lockdown and quarantine have become our biggest shield weapons. But like all battles, this lockdown is not easy and comes at the price of depression and mental breakdowns arising due to prolonged isolation. At such times the Shrimadbhagavadgita teaches us to focus only on what we can control which constitutes our "karma", and not worry about what is beyond our control, the "Phal" or the future result. In these troubled times of a global pandemic, our biggest "karma" is to maintain cleanliness, sanitation and isolation, while wholeheartedly supporting all the "Real Arjuns" of this battle, the doctors, police and sanitation workers who are selflessly fighting this fight on all our behalf.

In today's materialistic and everchanging world, man has reached incredible heights in almost all fields like technology, science, or medicine. Despite all these achievements mental illness and psychological issues are continuously hindering our progress. We are unable to free ourselves from our internal mental demons succumbing to a vicious cycle of self destruction. In a rat race to success, monetary and peer pressures outweigh logic and reasoning, thereby leading us to a spiral down towards unstable mental health and depression. This is when we most need a source of inspiration that will help us and guide us through these dark times

into a stable and positive frame of mind. In these troubling times, Shrimadbhagavadgita can be like a guiding light in darkness, helping mankind to reach a brighter time, just like its stated.

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत।

अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम्॥¹

Dharma here refers to organisation and systemisation and not caste system or religious segregation. This merely refers to the fact that whenever there is a dearth of systematic organisation in community, God guides us to more empowered state, thereby establishing his presence. Amongst all the mental illnesses faced by man, self doubt is the strongest, as it appears at every step of his life. Self doubt and internally conflicting mental delirium do not let us make any conclusive decisions and lead to self pity, stress and depression. The biggest drawback is that we are unable to decide "what to do and what not to do". Shri Krishna has explained this mental debate as :

भूमिरापोऽनलो वायुः खं मनो बुद्धिरेव च।

अहंकार इतीयं मे भिन्ना प्रकृतिरष्टधा॥²

These self doubts and mental deliriums can engulf everyone from a school going child to an elderly, a pauper to a prince, a meagrely waged man to a wealthy businessman, a student to a professor, working men to working women. No class, community or gender is spared by these mental issues. They start with simple episodes and slowly encompass our entire lives thereby rendering us incapacitated and irrelevant. Even the most strong willed and psychologically embodied are seldom able to withstand the force of mental incapacitation. Just like our Bhagvadgita mentions:

यततो ह्यपि कौन्तेय पुरुषस्य विपश्चितः।

इन्द्रियाणि प्रमाथीनि हरन्ति प्रसभं मनः॥³

Even the mighty and courageous Arjun was enveloped by self doubt and internal conflicts.

In the globally prevalent pandemic times, it is normal for all leaders to be under immense pressure and stress to make the right decisions for their people. These decisions will not just have future political implications but also lead to complete structural re-organisation of the global scenario. It is natural for anyone to be extremely stressed and self doubting in these times. In these times the Bhagvadgita teaches us to rise above our internal conflicts and focus on the whole situation from the bigger perspective

न च शक्नोम्यवस्थातुं भ्रमतीव च मे मनः॥⁴

Fortunately he had a great teacher and friend like Shri Krishna who helped him understand the depth and reality of these controversial internal conflicts and guided him to see the bigger picture , which was the need of that hour .

सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति गुणा प्रकृतिसम्भवाः।

निबद्धन्ति महाबाहो देहे देहिनमव्ययम्॥⁵

In present millennial materialistic times, in our race for monetary success with limited available investments, we sometimes turn a blind eye and start adopting the "all that sparkles is gold" philosophy,

whereby we lose sight of righteousness and compassion. We are unable to decide between various options in life and we are unable to see past the self doubt already infecting us. Even a school going child with various subject streams to choose from can fall under societal pressures or have anxiety disorders due to the prevalent underlying mental incapacitation. In such times, Shri Krishna's philosophy helps us slay the demons of self doubt and conflict and stand by our decisions :

तानि सर्वाणि संयम्य युक्त आसीत् मत्परः।

वशे हि यस्येन्द्रियाणि तस्य प्रजा प्रतिष्ठिता॥⁶

(तथा)

यस्त्विन्द्रियाणि मनसा नियम्यारभतेऽर्जुनः।

कर्मैन्द्रियैः कर्मयोगमसक्तः स विशिष्यते॥⁷

Scientifically speaking, mental conflicts and depressions of all kind fall under "behavioural psychology " . According to Einjek and his colleagues, we respond to stressful situations in two ways:

1. Where he wants to change the present scenario. These include attempts like Fight the situation, Flight from the situation, resolving conflict.
2. Where he starts mentally recreating the situation. These include stress, worry, pressure, self empathy, internal conflicts.

Even in today's coronavirus prevalent pandemic times, as fear seeps in our heart and causes a global panic, our response can be to either fight or flight. This is where the Bhagvadgita teaches us to strongly stay our stand and fight with all our might without giving up and yielding our weapons. This includes taking care of not just ourselves but the entire community, helping whoever we can in this time of need. We as a nation and as Humans cannot give up on us or on our humanity because of stress or fear.

In Bhagvadgita, even a mighty warrior like Arjun was withdrawing from the battle field due to self doubt and peer pressure as :

विसृज्य सशरं चापं शोकसंविग्नमानसः⁸

तथा

दृष्टेवं स्वजनं कृष्ण युयुत्सुं समुपस्थितम्।

सीदन्ति मम गात्राणि मुखं च परिशुष्यति॥

वेपथुश्च शरीरे मे रोमहर्षश्च जायते ॥⁹

In this Arjun denotes the youth of today, who is devious of starting new tasks, and upon starting is ready to give up at the first signs of any obstacles, Such people are easily affected by pressure or stress and are extremely prone to internal conflict. In such dubious and competitive times , Bhagvadgita is the answer to all self doubt and internal conflicts that arise in every young or old person in his various stages of life. This can help the new millennial generation realise that life is more than just high pay packages and an envious lifestyle, but even a simple and wholesome life can give you internal peace if you know what to look for.

श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।

स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः ॥¹⁰

It was stress and depression only that caused Arjun to falter in this battle plans and let go of bow and arrow and yield all weapons in mid war.

गाण्डीवं संसते हस्तात्त्वक्चैव परिदह्यते ।

न च शक्नोम्यवस्थातुं भ्रमतीव च मे मनः ॥¹¹

Just like a teacher encourages and empowers a small child who gets stage fright and starts shivering on stage, Arjun was counselled and encouraged by his very able chariot companion, guide and friend Shri Krishna . If not for Shri Krishna and his counselling, the history and mythology today would have been very different. His proficient counsel is what constitutes the Shrimadbhagvadgita.

कुतस्त्वया कश्मलमिदं विषमे समुपस्थितम् ।

अनार्यजुष्टमस्वर्ग्यमकीर्तिकर्मजुन ॥¹²

क्लैब्यं मा स्म गमः पार्थ नैतत्त्वयुपपद्यते ।

क्षुद्रं हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ परंतप ॥¹³

Shri Krishna with his efficient ways tries to empower Arjun to regain his lost strength and mental agility. This is exactly what is needed in today's frivolous times. Teachers, guides and mentors across all schools and offices need to encourage and counsel their peers to help them get over their mental conflicts. Stress affects people of every age and race. There is nobody who can escape from the clutches of stress, given the present fast paced world.

We are all running towards achieving a goal, materialistic of financial. In this race we are continuously stressed thinking about how to attain that goal and once achieved we become obsessed with how to maintain it. In these situations, Shri Krishna says: "Stress typically describes a negative concept that can have an impact on one's mental and physical well being".

Lord Krishna being the orchestrator of the world, has easy solutions to these worldly problems:

योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहं¹⁴

Ironically, we often waste our present thinking about the future, and in turn end up having a dim future itself. In such situations Lord Krishna guides us to dwell only in the present and not stipulate about what we cannot control.

अहमात्मा गुडाकेश सर्वभूताशयस्थितः ।

अहमादिश्च मध्यं च भूतानामन्त एव च ॥¹⁵

In the circle of life, we start stressing over small infidelities that we cannot control. In these times, Lord Krishna tells us to concentrate on just our "Karma" and not apprehend about the result. If we accept this philosophy and inculcate it in our daily habits, stress and its surrounding mental illnesses will not be able to affect us as we will be free from the worldly expectations or results.

प्रसादे सर्वदुःखानां हानिरस्योपचायते ।

प्रसन्नचेतसो ह्याशु बुद्धिः पर्यवतिष्ठते ॥¹⁶

मतः परतरं नान्यत्किंचिदस्ति धनंजय ।

मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रो मणिगणा इव ॥¹⁷

Lord Krishna's teachings do not just help us understand world affairs in this life but also help us understand how our spirit moves on in the afterlife. He describes the human spirit to be eternal and transcending , with just the mere body getting old and destroyed to rejoin its constituent elements. His teachings can help someone overcome stress and depression caused due to loss of loved ones.

वासंसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय नवानि गृह्णाति नरोऽपराणि ।

तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णान्यन्यानि संयाति नवानि देही ॥²⁰

असक्तबुद्धिः सर्वत्र जितात्मा विगतस्पृहः । नैष्कर्म्यसिद्धिं परमां

संन्यासेनाधिगच्छति ॥¹⁹

एतान्यपि तु कर्माणि संगंत्यक्त्वा फलानि च । कर्तव्यानीति मे

पार्थ निश्चितं मतमुत्तमम् ॥²⁰

Caught between worldly needs of money and power, men can often lose focus from their true karma. Explaining this Lord Krishna says:

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते न फलेषु कदाचन । मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते

संगोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥²¹

नियतं कुरु कर्म त्वं कर्म ज्यायो ह्यकर्मणः । शरीरयात्रापि च ते न प्रसिद्ध्येदकर्मणः ॥²²

In debilitating times, indecisiveness can trigger stress and mental illness. Lord Krishna through Arjun, conveys the message to the entire mankind that indecisiveness and mental delirium are internal conflicts and can be easily resolved by oneself if we focus on the bigger picture and concentrate on just doing our karma. This is specially important for the future entrepreneurs who shape the world.

योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि संगं त्यक्त्वा धनंजय ।

सिद्धयसिद्धयोः समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥²³

Hence it can be said that Shrimadbhagvadgita is like a cohesion of various psychological and mental affirmations that can help us battle our own internal conflicts and overcome stress, anxiety, depression in a strategic manner. Lord Krishna symbolises every psychologist, teacher, friend or family who tries to help us through our mental battles and does not let us give up and put down our weapons in front of our own internal enemies.

Through his teachings, we can overcome even the toughest mental demons and rise stronger than ever imagined. Maybe someday, he himself will come down and bless us in his heavenly avatar helping our human race evolve above all mental and psychological grievances.

Conclusion

In the end I want to add that it's my belief, my shradha and the confidence of our prayers which inspires me to say that God will come and save all of us from this pandemic with His holy teachings:

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।

अहं त्वां सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥²⁴

Aim of the Study

To explore and ascertain the relevance of shrimadbhagvadgita in overcoming mental and

psychological issues pertaining to the modern society.

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