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THEORY OF KARMA IN THE BHAGAVAD GITA

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ABSTRACT

The notion of "karma" is a concept to think about as the cornerstone of all of India.The Bhagavad Gita is the most cherished text of Indian philosophy and one of its main The "law of karma" is one of the chapters of this scripture. It asserts that every man gains from his deeds and endures by what he The cornerstone of karmayoga is niskam- karma, not simply the abandonment of karma.We need to let go of the fruit and the attachment to the behavior. Therefore, our fruit, action, or Svadharma is what we are doing. We are not interested in the outcome. According to the Gita, karma is a natural aspect of human existence. Everyone must labor. As a result, this chapter aims to examine the concept of karma from the perspective of the Bhagavad Gita.

KEYWORDS: *Svadharma, Karmayoga, Karma, Lokasamgraha and Happiness*

In this paper, I shall deal with the concept of "Karma-Yoga in Bhagavad-Gita". The Bhagavad-Gita is a part of Mahabharata; it is regarded as one of the most sacred book of the Hindus. Be it noted here that if the Gita is regarded as an excellent religious work, it is no less excellent as an ethical one. Bhagavad-Gita literally means 'The Lord's Song' i.e., the philosophical discourse of Lord Krishna to persuade the reluctant Arjuna to fight. To fight against evil is the duty of man.

To make the situation relatives and beloved friends and revered elders stand on both sides and Arjuna has to vindicate his claim, he has to follow his Svabhava and Svadharma. The Gita lays down the different paths of realization of God. Its teaching is universal and intended for all persons of different temperaments. Some are predominantly men of action and they ought to follow the path of action or karma yoga. Some are predominantly emotional and they ought to follow the path of devotion or bhaktiyoga. And some are predominantly intellectual. They ought to follow the path of knowledge or jnanayoga. Action, devotion and knowledge lead to union with God. In Bhagavad-Gita the supreme duty is action without desire. Action without desire does not mean unmotivated action but acting with a sagacious intention of submission to God. The Gita represents a unique synthesis of Action, Knolwdge, and Devotion. Man is a complex of intellect, will and emotion; he is a being who thinks, wills and feels. Intellect has given rise to the philosophy of Knowledge; will to the philosophy of Action; and emotion to the philosophy of Devotion. Karmayoga is not opposed to jnanayoga; in fact, the former is possible only when the latter is attained.

The word 'yoga' is derived from the root 'yuj,' which means 'to join,' and its basic meaning is 'staying together' 'addition', 'combination', or 'union', as well as more recently signifying the "means," "device," "method," or "thing to be done," etc. The term "yoga," "yogi," or other derivatives from the word "yoga" appear in the Gita too many times. Sometimes the term is used more or less frequently throughout the world in the sense of 'means', 'skillful device', and means 'union the thing to be done'. Moreover, it must be stated that this is one of the most all encompassing terms as it is in the Gita. The Gita has intentionally defined this word in the following way: Yoga, which is defined as a specific talent, tool, intelligent approach, or other similar thing, is referred to as "yogahkarmasukausalam." [1]

The concept of niskama karma is a composite concept because it is made up of two different concepts, i.e., 'niskama' and 'Karma' and it has been used in various senses in Indian system of thought. But in the Bhagavad-Gita the concept of karma has been used without any ambiguity in the sense of action and action is that what is done. The word 'niskama' is also a composite concept because it is made up of two different concepts as 'nihi' and 'kama'. The word 'kama' means desire or 'kama' is highly a vague concept because this word has been used in different senses in different contexts. But in the Bhagavad-Gita, it is generally used in the sense of sensuous desires. So when niskama karma translated in terms of desireless action, it should be taken mean an action done by the doer in desireless spirit. In the Gita, it has been stated that to live for a moment in the world is to do some sorts of krama. It is not possible for one to abandon action, i.e., if one has to live in the world, in the land of action, can one escapefrom action? We see ourselves that thirst, hunger and other desires do not leave us so long as our body lives. If the path of renunciation gives us the liberty of performing a disgraceful action like begging for satisfying desires, then according to

[1] *Cf A Study on Karmayoga in Bhagavad Gita, Gobinda Bhattacharjee, Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science, p. 10*

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sastras there is no inconvenience to perform all worldly actions with a desireless frame of mind. According to the Gita, all abandonment of actions made when the mental control is not perfect and all abandonment of actions is the result of ignorance. It has been stated in the Gita that the saints who have known the identity of Brahman and the atman performs all activities in the illusory world merely by their body or merely by their organs and it has also being stated that the real abandonment of actions consists in performing actions with unattached mind without entertaining the hope of reward merely as a duty and non-performance of action is not a real abandonment of action. So there is no problem of performing actions through the bodily organs with disinterested mind. Some persons raise a further objection that when the mind has become desirless as a result of the acquisition of knowledge and all desires have been destroyed. [2]

Bhagavad-Gita accepts this position that karma leaves a man of its own accord after the acquisition of knowledge. The root cause of our suffering is attachment which is a part of desire not merely a wish. According to the Gita, instead of killing desires of all kinds, one should only give up the attachment to the object of desire and go on performing all actions. Though one May be free from desires of all kinds, it is not possible that activity comes to an end. We see that whether there is desire or not, constant actions like breathing etc. Go on. Even for a single moment is an action by itself. So it is not possible for us to become free from karma after acquisition of perfect knowledge as well as the destruction of desire of all kinds. And that why it has been stated in the Gita: 'na hi kascitksanamapijatutisthatyakarmakrt', no one can remain alive without performing action. In the third chapter of the Gita , the Gita has said that there is no duty for the jnani after the acquisition of knowledge of his own. Someone says that the two propositions as the jnani is free from duty and the jnani does not escape from karma are mutually contradictory. So as the jnani has more duty for him, it is now necessary for him to perform all his duties without desire. It is true that the hope for fruit may thus be destroyed by means of knowledge. So it is true that the jnani should, after acquisition of knowledge, perform those very actions which are performed by the ignorant with a hope for fruit but looking upon advantages or disadvantages, happiness or unhappiness as one and the same with courage and one should perform it with pure reason Being indifferent in the matter of fruit according to his own authority and purely as a matter of duty.

The word 'lokasamgraha' is a compound word with two components as 'loka' and 'samgraha.' Here 'loka' means, in different contexts, either human being or the world. The other word 'samgraha' has more than one meaning ranging from keeping together, to protecting as also to regulating etc. Two meanings, one referring to mankind and another referring to various worlds. The emphasis of the Gita on lokasamgraha, Harmony of the world requires changing the whole pattern of life. All the activities of the sthitaprajna as the sole source for the benefit of the world. It has been stated that the saints who have acquired the highest knowledge are engrossed in bringing about the welfare of all created beings, all the activities of sthitaprajna are directed towards more and purifying the minds of all the persons forming a society and thereby enabling such persons to ultimately reach the perfect state he himself has reached.

Purity of motive is the basis of ethical conduct in the Gita emphasise with equal strength and force the need of the control of the senses and the inclinations, the emotions and the passions constituting the lower self of man. The Gita lays emphasis on regulating and controlling the senses and adjusting and directing them to higher values and purposes in life. The Gita says that how the path of niskama karma is only the path of discipline for achieving integrity, balance proportion and harmony in life. The basic message of this chapter is to show that the social applications of karma yoga of the Bhagavat Gita can effectively lead to all round development and progress in the social, economic, political and cultural field. Bhagavatgita has played an important role for guiding modern man in the performance of day-to- day duties. That involvement with the world is expressed by the term lokasamgraha. The term covers amplitude of social and spiritual forms of behavior and attitudes of mind. The role of the Gita has played in the lives and activities of these thinkers and its inspiration and new ideas guided their thoughts and there is a role of the Gita to achieve success in the social-spiritual, ethical revolution and political independence. These great men of India heartily worked against the social evils mentioned above and they worked for the good of all through the concept of lokasamgraha of the Bhagavadgita.

The basic message of this chapter is to show that the social applications of karma yoga of the Bhagavat Gita can effectively lead to all round development and progress in the social, economic, political and cultural field. Bhagavatgita has played an important role for guiding modern man in the performance of day-to- day duties. That involvement with the world is expressed by the term lokasamgraha. The term covers amplitude of social and spiritual forms of behavior and attitudes of mind. The role of karmayoga has played in lives and activities of these thinkers and its inspiration and ideal guided their way of lives and thoughts. The role of the Gita has played in the lives and activities of these thinkers and its inspiration and new ideas guided their thoughts and there is a role of the Gita to achieve success in the social-spiritual, ethical revolution and political independence.

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[2] *Cf A Study on Karmayoga in Bhagavad Gita, Gobinda Bhattacharjee, Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science, p. 11*

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