

Chapter- 1

Introduction

We come across a number of authentic religious Hindu scriptures but among them *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* is most popular. Each and every religiously conscious individual all over the world is acquainted with this book. *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* has been translated in different languages. There is a number of striking reasons behind the popularity of the *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā*. I think *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* has a number of unique properties due to which it occupies a central role in the religious, ethical and philosophical world. Though *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* is popularly known as a Hindu religious text but this is only one-sided picture of this book. *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* is principally a religious book no doubt but it possesses so many aspects and none of them can be ignored. One of the important aspects of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* is the ethical aspect. It is religious as well as ethical at the same time. It gives priority upon the duty of an individual living in a society. One of the prime purposes of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* is to establish well-being (*lokasaṃgrah*) for the whole society. It provides a fundamental and unique ontology upon which the whole ethical as well as religious theory is based. So *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* is also a sound philosophy at the same time. *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* is generally considered as the gist of all the *Upaniṣads* (*Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā su upaniṣadsu*). So, to go through the *Gītā* is to go through the *Upaniṣads*, fundamental religious and philosophical text of Hinduism. But it is worthy to note that though in one sense it is the sum and substance of the *Upaniṣads* yet it is something unique and original. *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* is considered as the highest philosophy since it is *Brahmavidyā*. So far as the Indian tradition is concerned, we come across different philosophical schools.

But among them *Vedānta* Philosophy is looked upon as the superior most philosophical schools. It is considered as the superior most since it considers *Brahman* as the ultimate reality. Likewise, *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* regards *Brahman* or God (*Kṛṣṇa*) as the ultimate reality. That is why *Gītā* is considered as *Brahmavidyā*. (*Brahmavidayām*) According to *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā*, *Brahman* is the only ultimate reality and the whole world is nothing but the manifestation of the *Brahman* (*Kṛṣṇa*). In this context it is important to point out that apparently the ontology offered by *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* is similar to that of the *Advaita Vedānta* of *Śaṅkarācārya* but there is a significant difference underlying them. In the *Advaita Vedānta* propounded by *Śaṅkarācārya* priority has been given to the *nirguṇa Brahman*. It advocates *nirguṇa Brahman* is the only ultimate truth but the *saguṇa Brahman* is not ultimately true. It is nothing but the creation of *māyā*. In fact, the whole world, *Śaṅkarācārya* holds, is the creation of *māyā* out of *nirguṇa Brahman*. So far as the ignorance or *māyā* is concerned the world, creation is true and as the creation, the effect is true the creator, the cause of this world, the *saguṇa Brahman*, the God is also true. But beyond the ignorance or *māyā* the world is false and consequently, the creator, the God or *saguṇa Brahman* is also false. But *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* holds that the God, or the *Kṛṣṇa* or *saguṇa Brahman* is considered to be *Puruṣottama* an ultimate reality. The whole world including the *nirguṇa Brahman* is subordinate to *Kṛṣṇa* (*Puruṣottama*). *Brahman*, according to *Gītā* is nothing but the spark or the *Puruṣottama* (*Kṛṣṇa*). From this metaphysical presupposition proposed by *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* another fundamental difference underlying the philosophy of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* and the philosophy of *Advaita Vedānta* necessarily follows. In the philosophy of *Śaṅkarācārya* God or *Īśvara* is ultimately considered as false. Therefore, ultimately there is no room for devotion (*Bhakti*)

in the philosophy of *Advaita Vedānta* propounded by *Śaṅkarācārya*. But the supreme priority and importance has been given to the God, *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* in the philosophy of the *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā*. Consequently devotion (*Bhakti*) occupies a central role here, in the philosophy of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā*. In fact our whole life should be moved centering God. All our activities should be surrendered to God.

“*yat karoṣhi yad aśhnāsi yaj juhoṣhi dadāsi yat*

yat tapasyasi kaunteya tat kuruṣhva mad-arpaṇam” (B.G.¹ 9/27)

In the philosophy of *Śaṅkarācārya* the *mārga* of *jñāna* (knowledge) is considered to be the only means for attaining *mokṣa*, the supreme goal of our life. *Śaṅkarācārya* is of the opinion that our ignorance is the sole cause of our bondage. Ignorance can be eradicated through the knowledge alone. This is why knowledge is considered as the only means leading to our ultimate goal. But *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* argues that though ignorance is the sole cause of our bondage yet liberation cannot be attained through knowledge alone. Knowledge has a great role to play no doubt but unless and until the compassion and the kind helping hand of God is united with it, our knowledge, it cannot operate. Keeping this in view *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* has given importance upon knowledge and *bhakti* both.

Another unique nature of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* is that its outlook is broad and comprehensive. It is a well established fact that the ultimate goal of *dharma* is to restore peace, discipline and wellbeing for the whole world. It ensures a peaceful society in the world. But we all know that today a group of fundamentalists is destroying peace and discipline of our society in the name of religion. Very often people of one religion comes

¹ B.G. refers to *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā*

in conflict with the people belonging to the other religion. One religious group are seen to kill people belonging to other religious group. Muslims are seen to destroy the temples of Hindus and Hindus on the other are seen to destroy the mosque of Muslims. Even the inter religious conflict cannot be ignored. One section of Hindu directly comes in conflict with other section of the Hindu and some time they kill each other. So, it is the religion which ensures the peace, discipline and wellbeing in the society and again it is the religion which can destroy the society. In most of the cases people of one religion consider their own religion as the only true religion and the problems comes. The followers of *bhaktivāda* think that their path is the only right path and all other paths followed by other religious groups are false. In the same way the followers of *karma yoga* consider their path to be the only true path and the rest ones are false. And thus, religious problems arise leading to the damage of the whole society. But *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* shows the right path to resolve the religious conflict and thereby restore peace and discipline in the world. All the fundamental paths suggested by the different religions have been beautifully integrated by *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* . It shows that either it is the *karma yoga* or the *jñāna yoga* or the *bhakti yoga* or even the *rāja yoga* all of them are highly important, none of the *yogas* can be undermined. One *yoga* or the path is not contradictory to the other paths, rather all of them are complementary to each other. One path without the help of the other paths are handicapped and therefore in-operative. One path becomes operative and forceful only when the other paths are conjoined with it. The different paths suggested by different religions are something like the different organs of our body. All the organs of our body are important. Our body remains healthy as long as all the parts or organs of it are co-operative. Our hands, for example, help our legs and the vice versa. Our mouth, tongue,

teeth and the hands taken together help to take food and supply the same to our stomach. So our stomach is living due to the help of all these organs. But all these organs are active since the stomach helps to digest the given food and supplies the energy to them. Thus, all organs of our body are complimentary, likewise different paths of religion are complimentary. Therefore, there is no point of religious conflict. Keeping this in view Śrī Ramkrishna beautify Says" *jata mat tato path*" and *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* says

“ye yathā mām prapadyante tāns tathaiva bhajāmyaham

mama vartmānuvartante manuṣhyāḥ pārtha sarvaśhaḥ” (Gītā- 4/11).

One of the important reasons due to which I have taken my research project on the Ethics of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* is that it is the direct teaching from the mouth of God himself. We know that God is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient. So whatever is said and taught by God Himself must be free from error. The teaching of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* therefore is considered to be most authentic. To error is human. This implies that whatever is taught by human being is not absolutely free from the possibility of mistake. Most of the religious scriptures other than the *Vedas* and *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* are considered to be the teachings of the human being. This shows that they are not as authentic as the *Vedas* and the *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* . Here one may point out that though the other religious scriptures are the teaching of the human beings but they are not ordinary people like us, they are truth-seers, *ṛṣis*. Therefore their teaching are also equally authentic like that of God Himself. But I think this is not acceptable. If we look into the teachings of the different religious scriptures then we can see that teachings of at least some of the scriptures directly contradict the teachings of some other scriptures. So, both of them cannot be true at the same time. Here we come across some of the attempts to resolve this

problem. It is said that though the teachings of some of the religious scriptures appear to be contradictory but in reality they are not antagonistic, rather they are complimentary. Truth is multifaceted. One and the same thing may be perceived in different ways from different angles. The photograph of one and the same object taken from different angles appear as different. Here, the object is one and the same but the pictures taken are different. Likewise, truth is one and the same but when one and the same truth are viewed by different persons from different stand points then the view of one person becomes different from the view of others. Keeping this in view Jaina philosophy teaches of *syādvāda*. So far as our discussion is concerned it appears to be convincing. But our close outlook shows that the problem does not fully dispose of. It is true that the other religious texts which are written by the *ṛṣis* are not ordinary people like us but the level of the knowledge of all the *ṛṣis* are not one and the same. In this context I think it is very important to note what is said by Rishi Aurobindo. Aurobindo describes the *Gnostic* beings. But he points out that all *Gnostic* beings are not of the equal nature. Aurobindo observes that truth has its different layers, high and low, all of the *Gnostic* beings have knowledge about the ultimate reality called *Brahman*. But all of them are not equally knowledgeable, some of them belong to the lower level and some of them belong to the higher level of truth. In order to substantiate the view of *syādvāda* and *anekāntavāda* the Jaina school says of a beautiful story of some blind persons. Some of the blind persons touch the different organs of an elephant and come to the different conclusions about how the elephant actually looks like. The blind person who touches the trunk comes to the conclusion that the elephant is like the python. The blind person who touches the leg of the elephant thinks that it is something like the pillar. Again, the person touching the middle part of the elephant says that it is something

like the wall. In this way controversy arises among the blinds. But a person having a normal vision sees that all of them are saying the same truth. So, there is no point of controversy. But our close observation shows that this story itself implies two things. First the observation of the blind person and the observation of the person having normal vision are different. The views of blinds are partial. They are considering one of the parts of the truth to be the whole. But the person having the normal eye sees the whole truth. I think the story in fact substantiates my own view. Different *ṛṣis* are like the blind persons. They are truth-seers in the sense that they are really seeing the truth, the *Brahman*, as the blind persons are really touching the different organs of the elephant. But the *ṛṣis* like the blind persons are not seeing the whole truth. The whole truth is perceived by the omnipotent God alone as the person having the normal vision perceives the whole elephant. Since *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* is the teaching of the mouth of God Himself, so it is most authentic. *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* cannot be put into question, it is free from all errors and absolutely immune from doubt.

Another striking feature of the teaching of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* which attracts my attention is that it is highly rational. Teaching of at least some the religious texts are dogmatic and is principally based on blind faith. But *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* through and through is rational and scientific. It is worthy to note that some of the teachings of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* also appear to be dogmatic and based on blind faith. I think it appears so due to the limitation of our outlook and lack of proper knowledge.

Another striking feature of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* is that its teaching is highly controversial. Owing to this controversial nature different commentators have produced different commentaries on it giving different interpretations. At least some of the

interpretations are directly contradictory to each other. *Śaṅkarācārya* for example observes that the principal teaching of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* is the teaching of *jñāna mārga*. *Rāmānujācārya* on the other shows in his commentary on the *Gītā* that the most fundamental teaching of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* is the teaching of *Bhakti mārga*. But *Bal Gangadhar Tilak* agrees with none of them. *Tilak* In his epoch-making commentary on *Gītā* called *Gītārahasya* beautifully shows that neither the view of *Śaṅkarācārya* nor the view of *Rāmānujācārya* is true. He says that the principal teaching *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* is the teaching of *karma mārga* or *karma yoga*. Thus we see that the teaching of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* is the subject of controversy. The controversial issue always draws our attention. Where there is controversy that is always the scope of serious thinking and reading.

Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā has taken its birth from the very mental conflict of *Arjuna*. The whole *Gītā* is a sincere attempt to resolve the conflict of duties of *Arjuna*, the disciple and friend of *Śrī Kṛṣṇa*. We know that conflict of duties is the parent giving birth to ethics. Ethics always aims to resolve moral conflicts. In that sense the whole *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* is serious and genuine study of ethical problems. Conflict of duties is a common phenomenon we come across every now and then. Sometimes this conflict of duties appears to be a Himalayan problem to all of us. We cannot find out any proper solution to that conflict. In some of the cases we manage to find out some solutions but later on we realise that those solutions were completely wrong. *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* is the real moral teaching which resolves the conflicts of duties of *Arjuna* and ultimately shows the real path leading to the ultimate truth. The problem of *Arjuna* is not uncommon. Same type of

problem we come across in our day today life and hence the teaching of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* is highly essential for each and every individual living in our society.

There is basic difference between the Western ethics and the Indian ethics. Western ethics is different from Western religion but Indian ethic is organically related with *dharma* or religion in the eastern sense. Sometimes it is really very difficult to determine which one is ethical and which one is religious issue. Secondly, Western ethics is principally theoretical, it is one type of intellectual exercise which has been described by Swami Vivekananda as intellectual gymnasium. But Indian ethics is theoretical as well as practical. Here *charchā* (theory) and *charjā* (practice) always go hand in hand. Therefore, they are always blended together. The ethical teaching of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* also is theoretical as well as practical. The whole teaching of the *Gītā* is meant for our life. The principal aim of both of the Hindu ethics and Hindu *dharma* is to show the path leading to the supreme goal, summum bonum. Both of them prescribe four *puruṣārthas* -- *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kāma* and *Mokṣa* for all people living in the society. It is generally understood that the first three *puruṣārthas* are meant for this life and the last one is meant for the afterlife. Some of the Western thinkers due to their misconception criticize Hindu ethics and religion as impractical. They argue that Hindu ethics and Hindu *dharma* have nothing to do with our practical life. The only purpose of them is to ensure the well-being (*mokṣa*) for our afterlife, in that sense they are not practical. But a little reflection on this issue clearly shows that their objection is not true. In most of the cases Hindu religion and ethics have given equal stress on both of our present life and life after death. This fact is understood from the fact that our *śāstra* prescribes for *puruṣārthas*. *Kāma* and *artha* are directly connected with our present life. *Kāma* has not been undermined in our *śāstra* but it is

important to note that any type of *kāma* has not been encouraged by our *śāstra*. The *kāma* prescribed by our *śāstra* must be at par with *dharma*. Our *dharma* draws boundary (*lakṣmanrekḥā*) for our *kāma*. The *kāma* within the boundary drawn by *dharma* is encouraged by our *śāstra* but the same violating the same boundary has been highly prohibited both by our ethics and religion. Our *śāstra* prescribes four stations (*āśrama*) of our life-- *Brahmacharya*, *Grāhastha*, *Vānaprastha* and *Sannyāsa*. Out of the four *āśramas* it is only the *grāhastha āśrama* where there is the room for *kāma*. In this station of life man is allowed to marry and enjoy their conjugal life. But it is important to note that in this station even enjoyment of the *kāma* is restricted by the boundary imposed by our *śāstras*. Boundless gratification is not allowed. Our *śāstra* has given the passport for sexual enjoyment only for the purpose of regeneration. In this context another *puruṣārtha* called *artha* becomes relevant. Sometimes our *kāma* or desire cannot be materialised without the aid of money or *artha*. So *artha* is needed. But again, earning of the *artha* by any means is not permitted by our *śāstra*. *Artha* must be earned following the moral and religious path. Here comes the necessity and justification of another *puruṣārtha* called *dharma*. *Dharma* here does not mean only the religion rather it means the morality as well. Thus it is seen that our present life has not been ignored by our *śāstra*. Our *śāstra* gives equal importance upon the present life as well as the life after death. Though it is generally said that the last *puruṣārtha* called *mokṣa* is meant for the life after death but this is not perfectly true. *Mokṣa* or *mukti* according to our *śāstra* as of two kinds --*Jīvanmukti* and *Videhamukti*. The former one is meant for this life. Hindu *śāstra* shows that this life is full of sorrow or sufferings. Gautam Buddha says *sarvam dukham*, birth is suffering, life is suffering and the death is also nothing but suffering. So, our whole life is full of suffering. But our *śāstra* shows the

path following which we can be free from the sufferings even in this life. This state of life which is free from suffering is called *Jīvanmukti*. It is the ethical and religious philosophy of the *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* that shows the right path by which one can be free from all sorts of sufferings. *Gītā* beautifully points out that in fact it is not the outside world that gives rise to suffering rather it is our mind which is the real source of all sorts of suffering. Keeping this in view *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* gives stress upon the treatment of our mind. The external thing cannot be the source of suffering because it is the same thing that gives joy to some persons but gives suffering and sorrow to others. One and the same music gives pleasure to one person who loves it but gives troubles to others who do not love it or if the person is seriously ill. So, it is our mind setup which is the real cause of sufferings. Keeping this in view the *Gītā* wants to convert our mental setup and makes us *sthitaprajña*. *Sthitaprajña* is one having a balanced (equitable) mind. The mind of a *sthitaprajña* remains balanced in all situations either it is the success or the failure, either it is the pleasure or pain. In this context *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* says to Arjuna--

“Yoga-sthaḥ kuru karmāṇi saṅgam tyaktvā dhanañjaya

siddhy-asiddhyoḥ samo bhūtvā samatvaṁ yoga uchyate” (Gītā -2/48).

The equitable state of mind is something like the bullet proof jacket or like the umbrella. At the time of raining, we take the help of umbrella while we are outside our house. Umbrella saves us from raining. Similarly, our equitable mind saves us from sorrow and sufferings. A bullet proof jacket saves one from the bullet targeting him in the same way our equitable mind saves us from the sorrow and sufferings of the world.

In fact, *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* ensures the attainment of our ultimate goal, liberation or *mukti* in this life and the life after death. It shows the path following which *jīvanmukti* as well as *videhamukti* can be attained. Here a question arises so far as the *jīvanmukti* is concerned. We all know that another name of this life is sorrow and suffering. We continue to suffer as long as we live. We cannot be free from the untold troubles from our life. As long as we have body there must be the suffering of old age and different types of disease. As long as we have our minds it continues to give as various types of mental troubles. In this situation how liberation or *mukti* from these sufferings can be attained in this life? Thus the possibility of *jīvanmukti* is a subject of doubt and question. But *Gītā* shows that *jīvanmukti* is a fact, it is quite possible. From the examples given above it is understood that though there is raining outside of our house yet we can save ourselves from the rain if we can take the help of umbrella. In the war there is bullet but yet we can save us from it with the help of bullet-proof jacket. *Gītā* says that our equitable mind setup is something like the umbrella or the bullet proof jacket which saves us from the sorrow and the suffering of the world. Keeping this in view *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* teaches Anjuna to be *sthitaprajña*.

The history of the integration of religion and action in our day-to-day life in the traditional Indian culture is immense. Yet, just as the Vedas are mentioned as the oldest scripture in the world, so the Vedic civilization is identified as the key period in the development of religion and action. The vastness and depth of Vedic literature is capable of capturing the culture of the entire human race. There is everything in the *Vedas* – this satirical statement is true in real sense because not only religious sense of justice but also socio-political and economic sense of discipline and sense of duty can be found mixed-up here. No matter how much the present society has improved, no matter how many branches

of technology and scientific thought have been spread, it still gathers its vital energy from that Vedic tradition. But at the same time, it is also true that, it is very difficult task to enter into the essence of Vedic literature and take its true essence. A big change has been taken place in the cycle of time. Today in our life there is a great lack of patience and time. Man has now placed his biological and material needs at the forefront, so he has no time for religious activities (*dharma*). The rational mind is more interested in rejecting religious matters as irrational, unscientific and fictitious which lead to the moral degradation of the human race day by day. If this attitude is allowed then oneday our society will turn into hell. This degradation of morality and order can be checked only through proper implementation of true moral and religious teaching. The teaching of *Bhagavadgītā* is one of the classic examples of such teaching. Religion or *dharma* is not only an outward act but also a spiritual act of mankind which helps man to move towards humanity, and true progress.

My project is to deal with ‘Ethical philosophy of *Śrīmad Bhagavadagītā*’. *Bhagavadagītā* is a well – Known religious book and also a great moral discourse. The dialogue of *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* and Arjuna have a great ethical value. It is the essence of Vedas. It is a book conveying lessons of philosophy, religion and ethics, but to understand the essence of it we should go through it very carefully. All men and women, irrespective of *varna* and *āśrama*, possess the right to study the *Bhagavadagītā*. Only qualification which is necessary for study the same is the faith. The *Bhagavadagītā* represents the intrinsic philosophic truth that different people have different capacities to follow ways of attaining perfection, because here (in the world) we have seen both laymen and intellectuals. The

main three methods suggested by *Bhagavadagītā* for transcending one's limitations and attain *Mākṣa* are *jñāna – mārga*, *bhakti – mārga* and *karma – mārga*.

Jñāna (Knowledge) presupposes non – attachment to worldly objects. *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* tells Arjuna – “Do your work abandoning attachment for the fruit of works”. *Jñāna – mārga* of *Bhagavadagītā* also lays special emphasis on *bhakti – mārga*. *Bhakti* requires sincere surrender to God. The sincere prayer of a devotee is never left as unresponded. That's why *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* says – “I am the deliverer of those whose thoughts are fixed on me, straightway of *Pārtha* from the ocean of the mortal world.” (B.G. 12/8)

The path of devotion is actually the path of emotions and through *bhakti* we offer our emotional urges to the divine.

Now the third way to perfection is “*karma – mārga*” or path of duty. Through divine service we can reach the highest truth. *Karma – mārga* of *Bhagavadagītā* is also known as *niṣkāma karma* or disinterested action which is otherwise called *karmayogā*.

Without any expectation of receiving rewards if one performs *karma* for the sake of “*sevā*” or “*lokasaṁgraha*” then it is called *niṣkāma karma*. It advocates renunciation of fruit of action but not renunciation of action. The motive of *niṣkāma karma* is to realize the highest goal. Desireless action does not refer to inaction, it refers to action with the intention of ‘union with God’. So, it is our highest *dharma* to devote ourselves for desireless action. Religion never gives priority to individual material interests but rises above such interests and triumphs over humanity. One should remember that self-interest is always opposite to service, fulfilment of the interest of the society.

The *Śrimad Bhagavadgītā* is the song of life sung by God himself. Action determines the course of life but the outcome of action is beyond our control. People here are always trying to be selfless, but this effort problematic. All kinds of greed and violence easily subdue the minds of people, yet people have been trying to save their inner-nature by resorting to religion. Through ‘*dharma*’ human being seeks to elevate his moral qualities. A strong combination of humanity, religion and morality has made the world fertile for ages, but there is no shortage of examples where morality and religion have been sacrificed.

Śrimad Bhagavadgītā is closely connected with our day-to-day life. It is integrated with practical utility; it is something like the touch-stone. Whatever comes in touch with the touch-stone turns into gold. Similarly, however comes in touch with *Bhagavadgītā* turn into a different personality. Through the touch of it a *bhogī* becomes a *yogī*, a *sakām karmī* turns into a *niṣkāma karmī*, an *āsura* into a *śūra*. Keeping these in view *Bhagavadgītā* has been described by Mahatma Gandhi as the dictionary of the solution of all the problems of our day-to-day life. Here, someone may raise a question in which sense *Bhagavadgītā* is useful for each and every individual living in our society? We all know that *Bhagavadgītā* in fact centers in and around a *kṣatriya* family which has been bifurcated into two groups *Pāṇḍava* and *Kauravas*. So, here, the story is the story of a particular family and the teaching rendered by *Bhagavadgītā* is meant for that particular family, particularly Arjuna. Arjuna was *kṣatriya* by *varṇa* and a renowned warrior. The teaching has been given by *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* in the field of *Kurukṣetra*, the field of war to a warrior. So, at best these teaching may be meaningful to the warrior who are in the battlefield but we most of the common people living in society first of all are not *kṣatriya*

and secondly, we are not warrior. So, how the teaching of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* is relevant to each and every individual, the common people of these society? This question no doubt is a serious question. But if we deeply ponder over the whole teaching of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā*, then we can understand that really *Bhagavadgītā* is highly essential for each and every one of us irrespective of caste, creed, and gender. In fact, the war used in *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* is highly symbolic. Arjuna is not a particular individual here he is the representative of all of us. *Kurukṣetre* stands for the whole society and war stands for all our activities. In reality we all are warriors engaged in the war of our life. Our whole life it-self is a battle. Kauravas and pāṇḍavas are also symbolic. Both of the kauravas and the pāṇḍavas live within each and every individual. We have two kinds of properties within us. One is devil properties (*Āsurī pravṛtti*) and the other is divine property (*Sura pravṛtti*). *Kauravas* or Duryodhana stands for *āsurī pravṛtti* and *Pāṇḍavas* or Arjuna on the other stands for our *sura pravṛtti*. We all feel that a conflict (battle) is constantly going on between these two kinds of properties within us. In every now and then we ran through the conflict of duties which is nothing but the battle or war held between our two contrary properties. Suppose one of my neighbors falls in serious troubles since his son is in hospital in a serious condition. Huge amount of money is necessary for the treatment of his son. The neighbor comes to me and begs for one million rupees fortunately that amount of money is at my hands. In that situation the divine properties underlying me (Arjuna) tell me to give the money to my neighbor accordingly I proceed towards my almirah but in the next moment my devil properties (Duryodhana) pull me from backside and abstain me from doing the same. Inevitably, I fall in the conflict of duties. Here comes the relevance of the teaching of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* in our day-to-day life. In the battle of *Kurukṣetre*

Arjuna runs through the conflict of his duties and ultimately his conflict was resolved with the teaching of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā*. In the same way our conflict of duties may easily be resolved if we follow the teaching of *Bhagavadgītā* in our life.

In *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* we see that *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* Himself becomes the charioteer of the chariot of Arjuna. This implies that each and every one of us should make *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* or God as the charioteer of our life. An efficient driver plays an important role. As long as we are in a vehicle a careless driver may destroy our whole life within a moment but an efficient and careful driver lead us to reach our destination safely. God or teaching of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* stands for an experienced and careful driver which leads us to reach to our ultimate destination. The ultimate destination or the goal as it is suggested by our *śāstra* are two one is the attainment of *mokṣa* and other is the establishment of the wellbeing or *lokasamgraha* in the society. Both of these two goals will be fulfilled if we implement the teaching of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* in our practical life. It is the teaching of the Gita that makes our life meaningful. The religious teachings in fact, essentially are the teachings of *vidhi* and *niṣedha*. The teachings of the *vidhi* are the teachings of what should be done and the teachings of the *niṣedha* is what should not be done. These *vidhis* and the *niṣedhas* are something like the punctuation marks. A sentence or our language becomes meaning full by virtue of punctuation marks. Punctuation marks used in sentence are the indicators of how much pause we have to take in a particular case. If a sentence or a language does not follow the instructions given by the punctuation marks, then the that sentence or language becomes meaningless. If the same sentence or language follows the same it's becomes meaningful. The same is true in the case of our life. Religion gives us some important injunctions. Religion instructs us where we have to take pause and were not, more clearly

to say which actions have to be performed and which are not. It also advises and teaches the particular technique for doing action in our life. The principal teaching is the teaching of the *yogā*. It teaches us to convert all our actions into a *yogā*. This *yogā* stands for a particular technique prescribed by *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā*. In this context *Bhagavadgītā* beautifully says, our day-to-day experience shows that the technique of our action plays an important role. All the individuals of our society are trying their best to be successful in the battle of their livings. All of them are doing all most same type of activities but only a very few of them becomes successful. The difference between them actually is the difference of the technique followed by them. *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* teaches the best technique of our action which turns all our action into *niṣkāma*, which is otherwise called, *yoga*. If one takes the help of a heavy and raw log of wood to cross over a river then undoubtedly, he will be drowned. But if the same log following a particular technique is turned into a boat, then he will successfully cross the river and safely reach to his destination. In the same way all our *sakāma karmas* bind us into bondage and give birth to sufferings. But if our same actions are converted into *niṣkāma* one following the technique (*kauśala*) taught by *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* then it led us to the state of *mokṣa*.

sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śharaṇam vraja|

ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpēbhyo mokṣhayiṣhyāmi mā śhuchaḥ|| (B.G. 18/66)

Thus, we can understand that the teaching of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* is importance essential for each and every individual of our society.