

## Review

# Relevance of Bhagavad Gita to the postmodern era

Professor .N. Lakshmi Aiyar

HOD, Dept. of Hindi, school of Humanities & Languages, Central University of Rajasthan.

Accepted 4 October 2019

Bhagavad Gita is not only the Holy religious book of the Hindus but it possesses eternal value and universal unity in its applicability as it contains the entire message to the world. Its message continues to be as fresh and inspiring today giving bliss to each and every one. It is the Holy guide to the entire universe to rectify the errors, to self-analyze the sins committed by us. It depicts the essence of ancient traditional texts of India, the Vedas, and the Upanishads. Today we are living in a society full of conflicts, caste clashes and communal riots, jealous of each other, egoism, temper, revenge, complex, terrorism, fatalism, exploitation of women, which ruin the entire world and men lost their human values patience, nobility, affection, love, only craving for money. Reading and learning, practice of the principles of Gita is the need of the hour because it gives solution to almost all problems, conflicts of life. The paper discusses about the human values, social morals, duties errors committed by human being and rectifications described in Gita. The setting of Geetopadesha is the battle field of Kurukshetra where Pandavas (Sons of Pandu King) and Kauravas (sons of Dhritrashtra king) were ready to fight. Krishna becomes charioteer of Arjuna whom he has raised the pedestal of a teacher known as 'Parthasarathy'. It also analyses about the characters of man and gives a clear vision for self-analyzing teaches dos and don't's in life. It also gives about the knowledge of the yoga and its divisions acting as a symbol of universal unity. It also says to avoid the conflicts in life study of Gita is the need of the postmodern web era focusing the traditional literature of India.

**Keywords:** Solidarity, JEEVAN, PARAMAN, AHIMSA, customs, traditions, reconciliation, reconditioning, Vedanta approach Vasudeva Kutumbakam 'YOGA.

**Cite This Article As:** Aiyar N.L (2019). Relevance of Bhagavad Gita to the postmodern era. Inter. J. Eng. Lit. Cult. 7(7): 214-219

## INTRODUCTION

The beginning verses of Gita is a reference to the Vedic text which clearly explains that "Arjuna got teachings from Sri Krishna who himself is Lord Vishnu and Gita has been written by saint Vyas in the midst of the epic Maha Bharata. It is the Holy celestial songs consist of 18 chapters. Before chanting Gita this shloka(holy verse) is spelt in India.

Paarthaaya Pratibodhitaam Bhagavataa  
Naaraayaneyna Swayam

Vyaasena Grathitaam Puraana Muninaa  
Madhyemahaabhaaratam  
Advaitaamritavarshineem Bhagavateem  
Ashtadashaadhyaayaneem  
Amba Tvaamanishandadhaami Bhagavadgeetey  
Bhavadvayshineem

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guide to the entire universe to rectify the errors, to self-analyze the sins committed by us. It depicts the essence of ancient traditional texts of India, the Vedas, and the Upanishads. Today we are living in a society full of conflicts, caste clashes and communal riots, jealous of each other, egoism, temper, revenge, complex, terrorism, fatalism, exploitation of women, which ruin the entire world and men lost their human values patience, nobility, affection, love, only craving for money. Reading and learning, practice of the principles of Gita is the need of the hour because it gives solution to almost all problems, conflicts of life. Because of rapid growth of scientific technology, what's app, twitter, Facebook, e mail, internet, mobile, man has become the victim of loneliness and complexes, not mingling with the society but through scientific connectivity he feels that he is practicing the breakup of relations. Through Yogabhyasa (practicing Yoga), the physical illness will be removed but the internal conflicts, the tyrannical features of the human beings will be eliminated by the study and reciting the verses of Gita.

### The ancient guide to lead the happy life

The essence of life its importance the characters of the human beings are deeply explained. How to lead the life happily? It was taught hundred years back in Bhagavad Gita.

The setting of Geetopadesha is the battle field of Kurukshetra where Pandavas (Sons of Pandu King) and Kauravas (sons of Dhritarashtra king) were ready to fight. Krishna becomes charioteer of Arjuna whom he has raised the pedestal of a teacher known as 'Parthasarathy'. Arjuna surrenders himself unreserved to the mercy of Krishna and implores him to guide him as his conscious doesn't allow him to do the war with his kith and kin Arjuna symbolizes the Jeeva or the atman (Self-conscious) who needs guidelines to run his chariot of worldly conflicts through Paraman the Lord. Arjuna overcomes with all desires and attachments and surrenders himself and desirous to learn only the Jnana or Truth by God.

Lord Krishna the teacher to Jeeva (Arjun) delivered a discourse containing 18 chapters which focus about all the stages of the human life. It leaves message to the living people and also reveals the eternal truths raising the social, religious, ethical, human values in the society and proudly known as 'Kal jayee kruti' and 'pancham Veda'. Its significance and importance proclaimed by almost all the philosophers of the world.

### Bhaja Govindam & Gita

The pioneer of Adhwaitawad Aadi Shankaracharya glorifies Gita as

भगवद् गीता किञ्चिदधीता गङ्गा जललव कणिकापीता

सकृदपि येन मुरारि समर्चा क्रियते तस्य यमेन न चर्चा ॥2॥-  
भजगोविंदम

**Bhagwadgita kinchidaggeta gangajallav kanikapeeta  
Sakrudapi yena murari samarcha kriyate tasya yamen  
na charcha**

Let a man read but a little from Bhagavad Gita drink just a drop of water from the Ganges, worship but once Murari. He then will have no altercation with Yama (God of Death).

And

गेयं गीता नाम सहस्रं ध्येयं श्रीपति रूपमजस्रम्।

नेयं सज्जन सङ्गे चित्तं देयं दीनजनाय च वित्तम् ॥27॥  
भजगोविंदम

Geyam geeta naama sahasram dhyeyam sripati  
roopamajasram

Neyam sajjana sange chittam deyam deenajanaaya ch  
vittham

Regularly recite from the Gita, meditate on Vishnu in your heart, and chant His thousand glories. Take delight to be with the noble and the holy. Distribute your wealth in charity to the poor and the needy.

### The Prime motto of Gita

What is the prime motto of Gita? Universal Unity. Sri Krishna the Lord says

सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि।

ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥6.29 ॥

Sarwa bhootastamaatmaanam sarva  
bhootaanichaatmani

Ikshate yogyuktaatmaa sarvatr samadarshanah

He who sees the eternal God in all creatures is known as Samadarshi. He treats everyone equally as he sees God everywhere. This vision is most important to the present society which is full of communal, religious clashes. For learning Gita, there is no age bar, and everyone can read daily. It is the essence of Vedas, the Upanishads.

**Gita: The Ocean of Knowledge:** What is the message Gita give to students? The researchers? How to acquire and spread knowledge of truth?

The man who is full of faith, who is devoted and

dedicated to it and who has subdued all the senses, obtains this Knowledge ; and having obtained Knowledge he goes at once to the Supreme Peace. The three qualities that are necessary for an individual to be assured of the Knowledge Divine are enumerated here. Faith, devotion and self-control are the three imperative necessities to be acquired before one hopes to evolve to a diviner stature. Faith (Sraddha): It implies to students. With much concentration, dedication, hard work if you study deeply the subject focusing 100% concentration you will definitely achieve success.

Shraddhaavaan labhate jnaanam tatparah  
samyatendriyah  
Jnaanam labdhvaa paraam shaantim  
achirenaadhigacchati // 4.39 //

श्रद्धावाँल्लभते ज्ञानं तत्परः संयतेन्द्रियः।  
ज्ञानं लब्ध्वा परां शान्तिमचिरेणाधिगच्छति॥4.39॥

When we attain complete knowledge with full concentration and dedication, our heart is filled with silent satisfaction of achievement. No words to describe the bliss. Such persons are referred to as 'Poorna Gnani '(a perfect scholar). For him, orthodox Brahmin and the lower caste chandal both are same. In that noble vision, he treats friend or foe equally , scold or praise , no difference, pleasure, or pain .such yogis never react .Such people are dear to me .O! Partha they are completely detached from the worldly desires. Eradication of Caste and spreading of equality: The vision of a true scholar is described as the one who is known as samdarshy(man of unique vision) see the entire universe as one. For him a learned scholar, the cow, the elephant, dog, and all others are exactly same and equal since he feels God is Omni present.

विद्याविनयसंपन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि।  
शुनि चैव श्वपाके च पण्डिताः समदर्शिनः॥5.18॥

Vidyavinaysampanne brahmne gavihastini |  
Shunichavashvpake cha panditah samdarshinha ||

Gita is not just a scripture for intellectual appreciation. It is a positive pragmatic code to regulate man's life and to answer all situations. 'Look upon friends and foes alike'. Ignore both apology and honor, be indifferent to praise or blame. Such persons are dear to me.

समः शत्रौ च मित्रे च तथा मानापमानयोः।  
शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु समः सङ्गविवर्जितः॥12.18॥

तुल्यनिन्दास्तुतिर्मौनी सन्तुष्टो येनकेनचित्  
अनिकेतः स्थिरमतिर्भक्तिमान्मे प्रियो नरः॥12.19॥

samah shatrou cha mitre cha tatha  
maanaapmaanayoh|  
sheetoshna sukhaduhkeshu samah sangvivrijtah

Alike to foe and friend, and also in fame and ignominy, alike in cold and heat, pleasures and pains, destitute of attachment,

Tulyanindastutirmourni santushto yenkenachit  
Aniketah stiramatirbhakti maanme priyo narah||12.19  
(12<sup>th</sup> chapter.verses 19)

(Taking equally praise and reproach, silent, wholly content with what cometh, homeless, firm in mind, full of devotion, that man is dear to Me).

Society needs such people today.  
Gitacharya was strict to certain principles .He says confidently that do your own duty with perfection and dedication. The term refers "Swadharm" own religion or own duty also.

श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।  
स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः ॥ 3: 35 ॥  
Shreyaan swadharmo vigunah pardhartswanushtitah  
Swadharme nidhanam shreyh pardharmo bhayawah ||

It is far better to perform one's natural prescribed duty, though tinged with faults, than to perform another's prescribed duty, though perfectly. In fact, it is preferable to die in the discharge of one's duty, than to follow the path of another, which is fraught with danger

The reciters of Gita never get afraid of death. They are ready to invite death. Such a mindset they develop. Gita reciters, adorers believe that soul will not die as body may take changes but soul, is-eternal.

vaasaamsi-jirnaani-yathaa-vihaaya,-navaani-grihnaati-  
naroaparaani  
tathaa-shariiraani-vihaaya-jirnaanyanyaani-samyaati-  
navaani-dehii .12. Chapter 9, Verse 26

Just as a person casts off worn out garments and puts on others that are new, even so, the embodies soul casts off worn out bodies and takes on others that are new

देहिनोऽस्मिन्यथा देहे कौमारं यौवनं जरा ।  
तथा देहान्तरप्राप्तिर्धीरस्तत्र न मुह्यति । 2 chap-verse13

Dehinosminyatha dehe koumaram youvanam jara  
Tatha dehaantarpraaptirdheerstatr na muhyati ||

Life is a continuous experience and people should ever be optimistic. In Gita, Lord says wise men lament neither for the dead nor for the living. The 'soul' passes

unchanged in the present body into three changes (childhood, youth and decay).

Gita completely supports the workman ship. We have to work hard but we should not have expectations and ambitions. Our duty is to work. It is a moral for the social service minded people. We have to work leaving selfish thoughts and live for others. Work with dedication without expectations and results.

Karmanyevaadhikaaraste maa phaleshu kadaachana |  
maa karmaphalaheturbhuvu maatesangotsvakarmani ||9.  
Chapter 2, Verse 22

A person has the right towards action alone and not towards the fruit of action.. The Gita says work and worship are the same. We have to create a humanistic social order.

Sri Krishna's advice here is a call to the man not to waste his present time in imaginary fears about the future but to bring out the best in him and live fruitfully every present moment of his life. Thereby the future will take care of itself and provide the Karma Yogins with supreme achievement. Referring about sage of steady wisdom

dukhkeshwanudwignamanaah sukheshu vigatasprihah  
veetaraagabhayakrodhah sthitadheer munir uchyate //  
2.56 //

He whose mind is not shaken by adversity, who does not hanker after pleasures and who is free from attachment, fear and anger, is called a sage of steady wisdom.

### Teachings of Gita to the Universe

Don't be angry: Be kind to all. Desire gives rise to anger. If we lose temper or show angry on others the loss is only for us not to others. When we are angry what happens

krodhaadbhavati-sammohah-sammohaatsmritivibhramah  
|  
smritibhramshaad-buddhinaasho-  
buddhinaashaatpranashyati

Brooding on the objects of senses ► attachment ► desire  
► anger ► delusion ► loss of memory ► loss-of-  
reason ► utter-ruin

How to become great men ? The answer is  
yad yad aacharati shreshthas tattadevetaro janah  
sa yat pramaanam kurute lokas tad anuvartate // 3. 21 //

Whatever a great man does, that, others follow; whatever he sets up as the standard, that, the world follows. Common people are more influenced by the living examples of great men than by the abstract teaching of the scriptures. So the message is follow the

works of great men, Take them as your role model.

### Classification of People and Self analysis

Geetacharya classifies people as per their character. ie. Gunas! The characteristics. We have to analyze ourselves. There are three kinds of people. How these three types are categorized? The Sattwiki, Rajasi and Tamasi .The Sattaviki people or neutral by nature are the noble ones.

Luminous, free from evil and unblemished: Under the influence of Sattva the mind is steady and will constantly reflect on the Self. Though Sattva is thus the most Divine mental attitude, still it binds us and limits our spiritual nature. They never have attachments, neutral by behavior.

तत्रसत्त्वं-निर्मलत्वात्प्रकाशक-मनामयम्।

सुखसङ्गेन बध्नाति ज्ञानसङ्गेन चानघ॥14.6॥

Tatra satvam nirmalatvatprakashak-manamayam  
Sukhsangen badnaati gnansangenachangha

Now the characteristics of Rajas are described. The second category is Rajo guni... the greedy, hypocrites with strong desires and passions and ambition and utter selfish moving with pride self-boasters- the egoists, self-centered, sycophants .Today we suffer from this type of people in almost every nook and corner sitting in the higher posts like V.Cs, collectors, doctors, engineers, professors.....destroying other's growth ,behaving in an arbitrary manner like dictators suppressing the merits of the fellow men.

Know Rajas to be of the nature of passion, giving rise to thirst and attachment; it binds fast, O Kaunteya, the embodied one by attachment to action. When the influences of Rajo Guna predominate, the mind gets full of passions.

रजो रागात्मकं विद्धि तृष्णासङ्गसमुद्भवम्।

तन्निबध्नाति कौन्तेय कर्मसङ्गेन देहिनम्॥14.7॥

Rajo raagatmakam viddi trushnasangsamudbhavam  
Tanni badnaati kounteya karmsangen dehinam

The third category is the Tamasi. The Tamasi gives importance to the body. He prefers to be lethargic and lazy and likes to sleep always. Without doing any hard work, they want to snatch others name and fame. To attain promotions without any hard work, crow-catching ...bullies We find such people in the present day sitting in the highest cadres too. Tamas to be born of ignorance, deluding all embodied beings, it binds fast, O Bharata, by mis-comprehension, indolence and sleep. Such a person

practically lives in sleep; he has neither any goal in life nor any nobility in action

तमस्त्वज्ञानजं विद्धि मोहनं सर्वदेहिनाम्।

प्रमादालस्यनिद्राभिस्तन्निबध्नाति भारत।।14.8।।

Geeta characterises Asuras (the demonical features of men) and Devas(the divine features) too.What are the features of divine people and demonical? He elaborates the following ethical qualities, if pursued sincerely, will contribute to the discovery of the Divine in oneself. Harmlessness, truth, absence of anger, renunciation, peacefulness, absence of crookedness, compassion towards beings, un covetousness, gentleness, modesty, absence of fickleness.

Gitacharya says

यजन्ते सात्त्विका देवान्यक्षरक्षांसि राजसाः।

प्रेतान्भूतगणांश्चान्ये यजन्ते तामसा जनाः।।17.4।।

Yajante saattivika devanyaksharakshansi rajasaah  
Pretaanbhootgananshchanye yajante tamasa janah

And he explains about divine nature of people as

tejah kshamaa dhritih shauchamadroho naatimaanitaa  
bhavanti sampadam daiveem abhijaatasya bhaarata //  
16.3 //

तेजः क्षमा धृतिः शौचमद्रोहो नातिमानिता।

भवन्ति सम्पदं दैवीमभिजातस्य भारत।।16.3।।

Vigor, forgiveness, fortitude, purity, absence of hatred, and absence of pride - these belong to the one born in a Divine State, O Bharata. The twenty six qualities described above give a complete picture of the man of Divine State. They serve as a guide to all those who are in search of a right way of living and endeavor to become perfect. The second category people

दम्भो दर्पोऽभिमानश्च क्रोधः पारुष्यमेव च।

अज्ञानं चाभिजातस्य पार्थ सम्पदमासुरीम्।।16.4।।

dambho darpo'bhimaanashcha krodhah paarushyameva  
cha  
ajnaanam chaabhijaatasya paartha sampadamaasureem  
// 16.4 //

Hypocrisy, arrogance, self-conceit, anger and also harshness and ignorance, belong to one who is born in a demoniacal state, O Partha.

Hypocrisy - Pretending to be righteous but living in

unrighteous way of life. Arrogance - Pride in one's learning, wealth, social status or family connections thereby living in imagined self-importance. This leads to self-conceit. Anger - When a person of self-conceit looks at the world and finds that its estimate of him is totally different from his own he becomes angry over everything around him which leads to audacity. All these qualities arise from one's own self-assessment out of self-delusion and ignorance about the scheme of life in the world around him. This ignorance of oneself and his relationship with the world around is the cause of his revolt against his environment and the resultant eccentric actions. These types of people are called demoniac or asuric in contrast to the Daivic or Divinely described earlier.

Based on devotion God classifies the people: Four kinds of virtuous people worship God. They are seekers of wealth, the distressed, seekers of knowledge, and Gnani or the wise. The first three approach God only for gaining limited goals in the world. Distinct from these three types of worshippers, the jnani stands out with his self-oblivious, non-utilitarian worship. He has no desires for any worldly reward. His worship is wholly directed to Self-realization, to reach Brahman. Krishna expresses His deep love and admiration for the Jnani. Whatever form the devotee worships, the ultimate goal is the Lord Himself. The Lord accepts such worship, knowing that it is directed to Him only.

chaturvidhaa bhajante maam janaah sukritino'rajuna  
aarto jijnaasurarthaarthee jnaanee cha bharatarshabha //  
7.16 //

He wishes men to be

ananyaashchintayanto maam ye janaah paryupaasate  
teshaam nityaabhiyuktaanaam yogakshemam  
vahaamyaham // 9.22 //

To these men who worship Me alone, thinking of no other, to those ever self-controlled, I secure which is not already possessed (Yoga) and preserve what they already possess (Kshema).

Lord Krishna advises to use sweet words. He compares that to that of Verbal Penance. If someone is offensive in speech, we should not retaliate. Forget it for a day or two, your mind will become calm and you will never retaliate. We should enrich the society by good work. The study of Gita helps to develop character. We should think that everyone is our neighbor and do everything to help and remove the sufferings of others.

अनुद्वेगकरं वाक्यं सत्यं प्रियहितं च यत् ।

स्वाध्यायाभ्यसनं चैव वाङ्मयं तप उच्यते ॥17: 15

Anudwegakaram vakyam satyam priyahitam cha yat

Swadhyaayabhyasanam chaiva vangmayam tapa  
uchyate ||

The greatest task is to destroy all anti-human feelings. Returning to Harmony Lord Krishna recommends yoga as the means to spiritual emancipation. Contrary to the general notion, Lord Krishna states that mere physical postures and breathing exercises do not constitute yoga; they are just the beginning of one type of yoga. Actual yoga involves harmonizing all energy—material and spiritual—with the original source of energy, the energetic Supreme. Lord Krishna states that meditation (dhyana-yoga), philosophical speculation (jnana-yoga), detached action (karma- yoga), and devotional service to the Lord (bhakti- yoga) are means by which a soul can advance on the path back to harmony. But ultimate success comes only by devotional service (11.53-54); other paths are only stepping stones to the attainment of that devotion (6.47, 7.19, 3.9). Today western countries are practicing Yoga which was elaborately explained years back in India through Gita.

## CONCLUSION

The Bhagavad Gita is one of the most translated religious classics of the world. The beauty and the sublimity of the work, its eternal relevance to the problem of human life and its universal approach that helps us view the whole of creation as one must have been the inspiration. Lord Krishna systematically explains the difference between matter and spirit and provides a practical method for spiritual elevation. Lord Krishna thus helps us understand how ignorance and neglect of the spiritual dimension is the bane of modern civilization. Entire Gita stands for Global Unity to achieve "Our Sana Thana Dharma to establish Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (The entire Universe is One Family.)It should be read as text in higher education and spread to strengthen the unity.

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