

## CHAPTER VII

“When decline descends on the Dharma which has been laid down, I incarnate as the Naraakaara, from the state of Niraakaara, in order to revive it and protect it and save the Good from fear,” said Krishna. Now this statement might cause some misgiving. You may ask: Will not common people, then, conclude that Dharma is something liable to decline and decay? Will they not condemn Dharma as neither Nithya (unaffected by time) nor Sathya (truth)?

Well, you will grasp the importance of the task of protecting Dharma only when you consider its origin and purpose. God created this Jagath (world) on His own initiative and He ordained various codes for its upkeep and smooth running. There were rules of correct conduct for every being. These form the Dharma.

The word Dharma is derived from the root, *Drh*, meaning ‘wear’; Dharma is that which is worn. *Desa*

(country), the *Deha* (body) of Lord, is protected by the Dharma it wears; it also gives it beauty and joy; it is the *Pithambara*, the Holy Apparel of Bharath. It guards both honour and dignity; protects from chill and lends charm to life. Dharma preserves the self-respect of this land. As clothes maintain the dignity of the person who wears them, so, Dharma is the measure of the dignity of a people.

Not only this country, every single thing in the world, has its own special Dharma or uniqueness of Duty, and Nature. Each has its distinctive clothes! Dharma rules the group and the individual. Take the five elements, the components of *Prapancha* (created world). Of these, water has movement and cold as its Dharma. Combustion and light are the Dharma of fire. Each of the five has its unique Dharma. Humanity for man, animality for animals, these guard them from decline. How can fire be fire, if it has no power of combustion and light? It must manifest the Dharma to be itself. When it loses that, it becomes a lifeless bit of charcoal.

Similarly, man too has some natural characteristics that are his very life-breath. They are also called *Shakthis* or Abilities. They can be identified as ‘men’ only so long as these abilities are found in them. If they are lost, they are no longer ‘men.’ To preserve and foster such qualities and abilities, certain modes of behaviour, lines of thought, are laid down. Dharma will not decline if these *Aacharas* (discipline) and *Vicharas* (discrimination) are kept up. Dharma is not imported from somewhere outside, nor can

it be removed. It is your own genuine nature, your uniqueness. It is the thing which makes a man out of an animal. How to observe Dharma? By being ‘yourself.’ If a thing breaks loose from its Dharma and behaves as the whim dictates, then it is doing *Adharma* (unrighteousness).

This *Sahajadharma* (innate or natural dharma) of man was overpowered in course of time. Those who supported it, encouraged it and derived joy from it, declined. So, in common parlance, it was said to have been ‘destroyed,’ though it is something that cannot be destroyed. It is only like the weed overpowering the crop. So the ‘establishment of Dharma’ is only weeding the field. Now in this Iron Age of Kali Yuga, Dharma has become a mere matter of words. Dharma is not just the magical manipulation of words. This must be clearly understood. What has to be spoken is Truth. What has to be acted is Dharma.

“*Sathyam Vada* (speak truth), *Dharam Chara* (act righteously)” —has been the clarion call of the Upanishads, the repositories of Indian culture. These glorious teachings have been forgotten today. It has been turned upside down, in fact. “*Dharmam vada*,” (Speak Dharma) is the order of the day! This is the first step in the decline of Dharma, this descent from deed to word, and belief that a thing is done when it is only uttered! This is *Adharma*, in fact.

But that which is not practised cannot possess strength. The crocodile’s strength depends upon its being in water. The strength of Dharma depends upon its being practised.

It becomes weak when it is taken out of “practice” and thrown on the sands of words. Sathya (truth) is a matter of speech, it gets strength when it is practised in speech. It is difficult to practise it in action. “Strength” has two meanings here: Animal strength and Dharmic strength. Bheema had physical strength, but as his elder brother, Dharmaja, was by his side, Bheema’s strength became Dharmic. The Pandavas were saved by their adherence to Dharmic strength. But for that, they would have suffered defeat even in the very beginning. The Pandavas, without Dharmaja, whatever their resources, would have been an easy match for their opponents. Just ponder over that. How were the Kauravas destroyed, in spite of their vastly superior resources? They did not have Dharmic Strength! All that they could rely on was sheer animal strength. The day when Dharmaja and Bheema, those who had Dharmic strength, moved into the forest, *Adharma* penetrated into the land of the Kauravas.

So, the Dharma that has now been exiled into the forest has to be restored to the villages and towns in order to establish plenty, prosperity and peace to the world. From the reign of *Adharma*, the world has to enter the era of Dharma. Special effort is called for when you cultivate a crop, no effort is necessary when weeds and wild grass are allowed to grow. The valuable crop of *Sahaja Dharma* has to be cultivated with all care and attention. When Dharma is practised, *Adharma* will decline by itself. No special exertion is needed for putting it out of action. Therefore,

*Dharmasthaapana* means in this present context the growth of the practice of Dharma.

What does it mean when people say, “The Sun has set”? Only, “It is not visible to us.” So too, simply because Dharma is not evident, you cannot say it has gone out of existence. How can it go out of existence? If it goes, it cannot be Truth or Dharma. Dharma, since it is associated with Truth, is indestructible. To make the Dharma that has become hidden visible once again, that is real *Dharmasthaapana* (revival of righteousness). What Krishna is doing is exactly that.

Using Arjuna as an instrument, He is bringing to light the codes of conduct and modes of thought which are laid down as Dharma from the very beginning and once again enforcing their practice. This is referred to as *Dharmodधारana*. He is reviving something that is lost. This is not work that can be carried out by ordinary men. So, the Universal Basis, the Universal Lord has Himself to assume the task. He alone is *Sarvasaktha* (My will must prevail over all obstacles). He is teaching the world through Arjuna.

If Arjuna was an individual like others, he could not be the recipient and transmitter of this great Teaching. So, you must infer that Arjuna was really a great man. He is a hero who has defeated not merely the outer foes, but even the inner ones. Weak hearts cannot grasp the Geetha and put it into practice. It is with this full knowledge and this high

purpose that Krishna selected Arjuna as the vehicle and showered on him His Grace.

Once, while Krishna was conversing intimately with Arjuna, He made this statement: (Note the overpowering Grace that Krishna showed!)—“Arjuna, You are My closest Bhaktha (devotee); not only that, you are My dearest Friend. I have no friend so dear as you are. That is the reason why I taught you this supreme, secret Teaching.”

Reflect on this. Many in the world are only self-styled Bhakthas. The Lord has not accepted them as such. To get the title from the Lord Himself is great good fortune and that is the highest credential. The Bhaktha must melt the heart of the Lord and get from Him the acknowledgement of Bhakthi (devotion). If the title is taken by oneself, it gives paltry satisfaction, not genuine joy—*alpathrpthi*, not *Aatmathrpthi*. Arjuna was the only person who got the title from the Lord Himself. So you can understand how pure-hearted, how deserving, was Arjuna. You might say a hundred things about yourself. You might advance this claim and that. But you must show acknowledgement from the Lord. Without that all your talk is empty boast. Bhakthi must be won by implicit obedience. But that alone is not sufficient. That is why Krishna used the word, *Mithra*, (Friend) also. The Friend has no fear, that makes him a more perfect recipient.

Now we shall resume the trend and go back to the Geetha. When Arjuna listened to Krishna’s words, he

developed a headful of doubts. He became agitated; not only he, but all men nowadays are worried by doubts. Moreover, in the complex spiritual field and the field of knowledge concerning Godhead, there are two interpretations possible: the outer and the inner. Ordinary men accept the outer and those who have some experience of the Lord, seek to know the Inner.

As the saying goes, “like the mole in the eye, the stone in the shoe, the thorn in the foot, the faction in the home,” is this “doubt in the brain.” When such doubts assail Arjuna, who is the representative Man, it means they are Humanity’s own doubts. They can be solved only by Madhava (God), who is beyond and above Humanity. That is why Krishna is ready by his side to remove any doubt and plant joy in the heart.

Now, what exactly is the doubt? Krishna was born at the end of the Dwapara Yuga. Surya and Manu are persons of the past. How then could these two meet Krishna? It cannot be physical relationship, for many generations separate Krishna from the other two. Krishna is Arjuna’s contemporary. How did Krishna teach this Yoga to Surya? To sit quietly listening to unbelievable stories is itself a sign of poverty of intellect. Every moment, Arjuna’s uneasiness increased. This was observed by Krishna, who is everywhere and in everything. He said, “What is the cause of the restlessness that I notice in you? Tell Me,” and prodded him with a smile.

Arjuna was glad he got a chance. “Madhava! I do not understand your words. They confuse me so much that I am losing a little of the faith that I have in you. But I pray, excuse me for asking this, please solve my doubt, I cannot stand it anymore.” Arjuna pleaded with folded hands.

Gopala (Krishna) was glad and He asked him what the doubt was. Arjuna then said, “You said that this Yoga was taught to Surya and to Manu. Of what distant past are these two? And to which age do you belong? Did you teach them while in this body? That is unbelievable. For this body is only four or five years older than mine. You are not more aged than that. When did You teach them without my being aware of it? And the Sun? He is greater than You, many times greater. He is there from the very beginning, from a past which is beyond our imagination. I cannot believe it; no, not even the most intelligent person can prove it as true. Let it be! You may say, ‘This is not the Body, and this is not the Yuga; it was while I was in another Body and during another Yuga.’ That makes it still more strange. For how can anyone remember what happened in any previous birth? If you say that it is possible to have the memory, then it must apply to me also, is it not? The Sastras declare that only a few Divine beings keep such things in memory. The mortals cannot hold them in remembrance. Well, I may accept that you are Divine. But I have to accept that Surya, the Sun is also Divine. How can two persons equal in Divine status teach and learn from each other? When You teach and he learns, he becomes Your disciple, is it not? You must then

be taken to be superior to Surya. Let us take it to be so. I accept that you are the Lord, God Himself. That creates further difficulties for me. For why should God be bound by birth and death and activity? When you assume the five-foot human form, is it not a limitation on the Limitless? From that infinite limitless Universal why should God incarnate as the limited particular? Howsoever I argue within myself, I cannot solve this doubt. Your words are meaningful for you only. They do not convey any meaning to me. My head is confused. Give me some guidance, some convincing reply,” prayed Arjuna.

Krishna laughed within Himself, recognising that the appropriate moment had come. He said, “Arjuna! What exactly do people mean when they say the Sun has risen and the Sun has set? It is so far as their vision is concerned. That is all, is it not? The Sun does not rise, it does not set. I am also like that. I am not born, nor do I die. Men of ordinary intellect consider that I am born many times and that I do many deeds during each birth. Whenever there is the need for the uplift of the World, I become manifest assuming a Name and a Form, that is all. So I am conscious of all My appearances, all My manifestations. I am Almighty, I am *Sarvajna* (All knowing). Not only I, even you, know everything. But your *Jnanashakthi* (urge to know) is overwhelmed by *Ajnana* (non-knowledge, ignorance). I am Jnana (wisdom) itself and so, I know everything. When the Sun is seen in a mirror, He does not lose either his status or his glory. He is unaffected, his glory is undiminished. So

also I am reflected in Prakruthi (nature); and that does not diminish any of My Glory or Status. I remain as Almighty and as Sarvajna as ever. I am unborn, immortal. Humans are born as a result of the merit and demerit of previous births. Perhaps you think that this holds true for Avathars also. No. No. Yours is *Karma Janma* (birth due to natural means as a result of karma). Mine is *Leela Janma* (Divine birth as a play of God). Prayers of the good are the cause of My Janma (birth). The misdeeds of the wicked are also the cause!”