The Spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam in The Bhagavad-Gita

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Abstract

Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam is made up of three Sanskrit words: 'Vasudha' means the 'Earth', 'Eva' means like or emphasizing, 'Kutumbakam' means large extended family. In our actions, we must not think only about 'I', but about every human being and so the entire world becomes our family. It is a duty beyond 'I'. When we see the whole world as one family there will be peace and joy everywhere. There won't be any room for jealousy and conspiracy. When we see others as our competitors, we try to go ahead of them at any rate. The family model told in Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam can overcome social evil. The family of the world should be based on respect, sacrifice, and togetherness. Family life gives you happiness. It also gives you solace. Peace is a prerequisite for personal development and family is the place where peace is achieved. So, for a world to be one family, we must cultivate peace, truth, togetherness among every human being.

The Bhagavad Gita reflects the spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam in many verses. The Bhagavad Gita clearly states the ideal as being able to see everyone in oneself and oneself in everyone. When this feeling takes place, our attitude becomes broad towards society and we start looking in broad spectrum as a result chaos and sabotage comes to an end. This is the need of the hour to adapt this thinking to maintain peace and harmony in the whole world. In this paper the author has tried to convey the message of The Bhagavad-Gita to spread peace, love, harmony and tranquility among members of society to reduce stress, selfishness, ego and hatred. So that a family concept may emerge among people and they may rejoice the beauty of life.

Keywords: *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam ,tranquility, togetherness, peace, family, happiness.*

Introduction :-

अयं निजः परो वेति गणना लघुचेतसाम् ।
उदारचरितानां तु वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम् ॥ (महोपनिषद्, अध्याय ६, मंत्र ७१)

अर्थ - यह मेरा अपना है और यह नहीं है, इस तरह की गणना छोटे चित्त वाले लोग करते हैं। उदार हृदय वाले लोगों की तो (सम्पूर्ण) धरती ही परिवार है।

The phrase *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* is made up of three Sanskrit words, Vasudhaa (earth/world), iva (like) and kutumbakam (large/extended family). The verse finds mention in Maha Upanishad (VI. 71); and is further referred to in the Hitopadesha and other literary works of India.

The 2023 G20 Delhi summit (Hindi: 2023 G20 दिल्ली शिखर सम्मेलन) is the upcoming eighteenth meeting of Group of Twenty (G20), a summit scheduled to take place in Pragati Maidan, New Delhi in 2023. India's presidency began on 1 December 2022, leading up to the summit in the fourth quarter (September 9-10) of 2023. The motto of G20 Delhi Summit 2023 is One Earth, One Family, One Future; (Sanskrit: वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्, lit. The World Is One Family).

Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam is a Sanskrit phrase found in Hindu texts such as the Maha Upanishad, which means "The World Is One Family". Vedic tradition mentions "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" meaning all living beings on the earth are a family.

Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam is made up of three Sanskrit words:

'Vasudha' means the 'Earth'

'Eva' means like or emphasizing

'Kutumbakam' means large extended family.

In our actions, we must not think only about 'I', but about every human being and so the entire world becomes our family. It is a duty beyond 'I'. When we see the whole world as one family there will be peace and joy everywhere. There won't be any room for jealously and conspiracy. When we see others as our competitors, we try to go ahead of them at any rate.

The family model told in Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam can overcome social evil. The family of the world should be based on respect, sacrifice, and togetherness. Family life gives you happiness. It also gives you solace. Peace is a prerequisite for personal development and family is the place where peace is achieved. So, for a world to be one family, we must cultivate peace, truth, togetherness among every human being. We can stand out many problems by following the meaning embodied in the phrase. Also, we can easily pass the taste of time. Share and care is the core philosophy behind the phrase. It is one of the principal ideas of Indian philosophy. The entire universe is one and so what is mine is also yours. This one is not made up of narrow-minded conduct. For those with a noble mindset, the entire world is one family. In this way, we complete each other. Everybody must be happy and live in harmony.

Now a question arises how to develop this kind of thinking to see the whole world as one family? Because in one family there are so many differences in thinking patterns. There are several point of views regarding aspirations, desires and what not. The whole world consists of several caste, colour, religions, sex, class etc. how to see them as one?

This is my own and that belongs to another (stranger)' – is the calculation of the narrow-minded for the charitable-hearts however, the entire earth is but a family'.

– (Hitopadesha 1.3.71)

Delivering lectures on *vasudhaiva kutumbakam* is easier than living with this concept. But it may be possible by studying our scriptures like Upnishad, The Bhagavad-Gita, Gita, Vivek Chudamani and so on. Because if we study these scriptures, we find the knowledge about our real self.

Outwardly we are looking different in terms of our body, name, position, possessions etc. This gives us the illusion of duality and we are bound to think, how to live with the concept of vasudhaiva kutumbakam? The answer lies in our scriptures. Where the concept of oneness is defined. We are different outwardly but who is inside, is the same. We call it by different names such as energy, soul, spirit, power and so on. When we go through many scriptures we find the real answer.

Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam is the ideal of that person who is udaracharita—one who is large-hearted and generous in nature; in other words, one who realizes the interconnectedness of the world.

Yogapedia explains vasudhaiva Kutumbakam : In context, the verse vasudhaiva kutumbakam describes the yogi who has reached the highest level on his spiritual journey and no longer has attachments to material things.

The Bhagavad Gita clearly states the ideal as being able to see everyone in oneself and oneself in everyone.

In Ashtavakr Gita rishi Ashtavakra explains about our real self to King Janak saying,

"Deh hoon main nahin
Deh meri nahin
Hey Janak jisne jana
Hai yogi wahi
Deh se todo tadatmy aur dekh lo
Tum abhi se sukhi shant aur mukt ho."

"Roop jhootha hai
Sachha nirakar hai
Jaan le jo vo
Bhav sindhu ke paar hai."
"Kshobh se tum pare

Tum apeksha rahit
Bodh ho yaad rakho
Ye nishtha sahit."

"Na jane kitne janm tumne ab tk liye
Chhod kar ant mein tum sabko chal diye
Dhan kamaya bahut bhog kitna kiya
In sabhi bhog karmon ne tumhein kya diya"

Above-mentioned lines indicate that you are not this body, you are soul inside that is permanent while this body is temporary. It will perish one day or the other but the soul remains forever.

The same views have been echoed in The Bhagavad-Gita where Lord Krishna explains the nature of Soul, our real identity.

I would like to share some verses of The Bhagavad-Gita which are very useful in applying the concept of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*. By studying these verses one can easily understand the essence of this line. In this regard some verses from The Bhagavad-Gita are as follows:–

Lord Krishna says to Arjun,

- " This soul never dies. Weapons cannot cut it nor can fire burn it, water cannot drench it nor can wind make it dry. – (Chapter 2.23)
- For this soul is incapable of being cut; It is proof against fire, impervious to water and undriable as well. This soul is eternal, Omnipresent, immovable, constant and everlasting. – (Chapter 2.24)

- This soul is Unmanifest; It is unthinkable and it is spoken of as immutable. Therefore, knowing this as such you should not be sad." – (Chapter 2.25)

When one thinks about this, the whole world comprises different species but the power inside them is the same. It is permanent.

- " Know that to be imperishable, by which all this is pervaded, for none can bring about the destruction of this indestructible substance." – (Chapter 2.17).

This knowledge gives us the insight to see everyone as one. Duality comes to an end. Oneness with the universe begins. And conflict, sabotage, chaotic conditions stop. Only peace and bliss remains, that is the ultimate goal of every exercise we do.

- "All actions are being done by the modes of Prakriti (primordial matter) . The fool whose mind is deluded by egoism, considers himself to be the doer. – (Chapter 3.27)
- He, However, who knows the truth about the respective spheres of *gunas* (modes of prakriti) and actions holding that it is the *gunas* that move among the *gunas* (objects of perception) does not get attached to them." – (Chapter 3.28)

When one gets to know that I am not the doer, his ego shatters and he resides in the real self where no discrimination is possible, oneness comes naturally.

Lord Krishna further explains,

- "Just as the extensive and all-pervading air (which is born of ether) always remains in ether, likewise know that all beings (sprung as they are from My thought) abide in Me." – (Chapter 9.6)
- One who acts under the influence of desires, disobeying scriptural injunctions, neither attains perfection nor happiness, nor the Supreme Abode. – (Chapter 16.23)
- "I am the supreme goal, supporter, Lord, witness, abode, refuge, disinterested friend, origin and end, the resting- place, the storehouse (in which all beings are merged at the time of universal destruction), and the imperishable seed." – (Chapter 9.18)
- "I am equally present in all beings; there is none hateful or dear to Me. They, however, who devoutly worship Me abide in Me and I also stand revealed in them". – (Chapter 9.29)
- "There is nothing else besides me, like clusters of yarn-beads formed by knots on a thread, all this is threaded on Me". – (Chapter 7.7)
- "I am the self seated in the heart of all beings; so I am the beginning and middle and also the end of all beings." – (Chapter 10.20)

The following points from The Bhagavad-Gita can change the attitude and one can see the whole world as one family. Let's have a look over them.

- Everyone is playing his role on this earth.
- Vision of no discrimination.
- I am not doer.
- *Sambhav* (no discrimination) towards everyone.
- Due to ignorance we discriminate.

- Emergence of knowledge removes ignorance and one can see the consciousness in everyone that breaks differences and leads to oneness.
- I am a pure soul and everyone has the same soul. This knowledge removes darkness and light of soul emerges.
- The whole world is made up of five elements,viz., air, water, earth, fire and ether. They are common. Hence no difference exists in reality. But outwardly difference exists due to ignorance.
- Three elements are subtle and difficult to understand ,viz.,mind, intellect and ego.
- All these eight elements are common in everyone.
- *Sambhav* gives the knowledge to see everyone as one. Because in every one the supreme power resides. (Chapter 10.20).

Above-mentioned shlokas give us knowledge about oneness. Nobody is separated. We are parts of the same power (Chapter 9.6), that is eternal. This knowledge gives us the insight to see everyone as one. There is no 'you' and 'me'. We all are consciousness. This thinking gives us the power to see the world beyond discrimination and then the concept of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* takes place in a real sense.

Conclusion:-

To sum up, we can say that if we apply this spiritual knowledge in our educational institutions for teachers as well as for students, discrimination based on caste, colour,creed,class,gender will come to an end because through these labels, we discriminate, however, our constitution has given us the right to equality irrespective of caste, creed, colour etc. Our latest National Educational Policy (NEP-2020) is also recommending this type of education that can promote emotional intelligence, global mindset, ethics and moral values rootedness and pride in India and it's rich diverse culture.

In this regard IIMs and IITs have started promoting this knowledge through the Bhagavad-Gita by establishing a cell in their institutions. Various lectures are being organized to instill this spiritual knowledge in students. Persons like Vivek Bindra, founder of global ACT (Global academy for corporate training) Gaur Gopal Das , a former electrical engineer, now a monk in ISKCON are promoting this knowledge in our educational institutions. This knowledge will enhance emotional intelligence in all stakeholders including teachers, management, parents, students etc. Today's students will be responsible and accountable citizens tomorrow by adopting this type of education.

So it is our pious duty to study our scriptures like The Bhagavad Gita so deeply, apply all the instructions given by Lord Krishna ,viz., Nishkam Karmyog,samatva yog,yog and meditation and develop the sense of oneness with the universe. Surely we will be able to see the whole world as one family. There will be peace and harmony everywhere we are eagerly searching for. When we come to know 'who am I?' we get liberated and it is said education is that which liberates, the ultimate goal of education.

As Mahatma Gandhi said, "By education I mean all round development of body, mind and spirit."

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