

Dharma

Dharma is a unique Vedic statement with immense hidden meaning. The word Dharm is derived from the root Dhru – which means that supports, protects, sustains, holds, – “Dhrayathe yat dharmaha”.

Dharma is that principal which protects sustains the cosmic law and order. There is no single equivalent English word, which justifies the full and complete meaning of Dharma. So a combination or a set of words are used to explain it. Righteousness, Morality, Religion, Sathyam, Charity, Character, Law abiding, Duty bound, Luck, Punyam, Swabhavam (abiding in real nature) etc.

Dharma has to be understood according to the context in which it is used

1. Dharma is the first of four Purusharthas (human goals): Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. The Artha (security) and Kama (Entertainment) are the goals for experiencing in this life. Dharma in this context is called Punyam and it is a goal for the next life. According to Law of Karma, every action invariably produces a result (Phalam) – either favorable or unfavorable. The Karma Phalam thus generated can be experienced partly or wholly in this life or carried forward to the next life. The Phalam that is experienced in this life is called Drista Phalam (visible result). If it is favorable result, then it is sukam and if it is unfavorable, then it is Dhukkam. The Phalam that is generated but not experienced in this life is transferred to the next life. This is called Adhrista Phalam (Invisible result). The results of noble activities of this life are accumulated to be experienced in the next life are registered as Punyam. Similarly the results of evil activities of this life

are carried to the next life as Papam. This concept is very important for Hindus who believe in Punarjanma.

“Arthae Gruhe nivartante Smasane mitra bhadhavaah

Sukrutham Dhuskrutham chiva Gaccantham anu gacchathi”

“At the time of death, all wealth is left at home.

Only thing that the departed carries with him is the Punyam and Papam one accumulates in this life”

So the accumulation of punyam in this life is the goal of dharma purushartha.

2. Dharma maintains and protects universal harmony. Whenever Dharma declines and Adharma escalates, the cosmic harmony suffers. Unless the Universal harmony is re-established, serious consequences ensue.

The process of establishing dharma is two fold:

1. Parithranaya Sadhunam (Sista Rakshana) – By promoting dharmic population by spreading values through teaching.
2. Vinasaya Dhuskrutham (Dusta Sikshana) – Converting the adharmic people to dharmic people through teaching if that fails to eliminate them.

By the above two methods dharma is re-established. Lord Krishna accomplished these goals by giving out Gita and also by eliminating the wicked.