

Bagawat Geeta, Class 21

Greetings All,
Gita, Chapter # 2, Samkhya Yoga:

Shloka # 30:

“This embodied self (dwelling) in the bodies of all, O Bharatha Prince ! is eternally indestructible. Therefore, you ought not to grieve for any being at all.”

Shloka # 31:

“Having regard to the law of your own life, you ought not to be perturbed. A Kshatriya cannot have a greater good than a righteous battle.”

Refreshing our memory of last class, including shlokas 30 and 31, Swamiji reminded us Sri Krishna wants to remove Arjuna's sorrow caused by attachment. He also wants Arjuna to fight the Dharma Yudha. He has tried convincing him using a philosophical approach, a dharmic approach and finally a Laukika approach as well. In philosophical approach he clarifies the Atma Anatma Viveka. Atma does not kill nor is it killed. Anatma means mortality of this body has to be accepted. Atma is immortal and Anatma is mortal. One who understands this is wise. So, Arjuna, accept this fact and there will be no sorrow.

Shloka # 32:

“An open gateway to heaven has, by a happy chance, offered itself to you, O Arjuna! For, fortunate Ksatriyas alone gain an occasion to wage a war like this.”

Sri Krishna says from a Dharmic point of view as well, Arjuna should fight. While scriptures do say Ahimsa is param dharma, it is a Samanya Dharma. There are, however, exceptions to this. In Aapaat Dharma, Asatyam (non truth) and Ahmisa are allowed. This happens with government rules also where there are exceptions. It happens with traffic rules where some

important people are exempted from normal traffic rules. Samanya Dharma or Upasarga has an opposite called Apa-Vada. In Apa- Vada, killing is allowed. Only after trying Sama, Dana and Bheda that Danda or violence is resorted to.

Ksahtriya means, one who protects against Adharma. If there is adharma one can try to convert adharmic people. If that does not work then their elimination is the only way. A Doctor tries to heal a limb, however, if it does not heal, he may have to amputate it to protect the rest of the body.

Arjuna, You are a Kshatriya, so you have to fight. Maintenance of law and order is not everybody's responsibility. Only some have this right. A Brahmin cannot punish. Punishment is the Sva-Dharma of a segment of society. A Kshatriya alone has the right to punish.

Consider your own Varna-dharma , Arjuna, you should not act like a Brahmin. A Kshatriya should take to violence in particular cases. Drona is a brahmana. He is not supposed to take to war. He has a right to teach but no right to fight.

So, Arjuna, if you do not fight it is wrong. Don't look at this war as a curse, but as a way to sacrifice your life for Dharma. Thus, the freedom fighters that went to jail were considered Tyagis. There is nothing greater than a Dharma Yudha for a Kshatriya, says Sri Krishna. You should look upon this as a great opportunity. Some communities have suicide squads that sacrifice their life for their country. Here also a Kshatriya should be ready to commit suicide; that is to sacrifice his life, he does not consider it a tragedy. Among the Rajput families, when their women sent off the Rajput princes for war, they did so without any tears. They did not want you to be alive when there is a cause. Rajput princes were sent off to war with blessings by their women.

This kind of opportunity for a great sacrifice for dharma has

come in your life. If you are going to sacrifice life for Dharma you will get the heaven called Vira swarga. This is the gate to this Svarga. It is an open door. Who gets such an opportunity? Only a fortunate and blessed Kshatriya gets called for such a noble cause.

Shloka # 33:

“on the other hand, if you refuse to fight this righteous war, sacrificing both the law of your life and renown, you will incur sin.”

Sri Krishna says you have to fight this war. Suppose Arjuna says I am not interested in the war for sake of Bhishma or Drona? If you do not fight the war you will get only hell. If a person renounces his duty, it is considered Papam.

Swamiji says there are two kinds of Papam.

1) Doing what should not be done, Nishidhakarana papam. Example is one should not drink liquor.

2) Not doing what should be done, called Vihitha akarana Papam. An example is not paying taxes that are owed by you.

If Arjuna does not fight, it is an act of omission, or Vihitha akarana or pratyavaya sin. Vihitha akarana is called pratyavaya papam. Arjuna, if you do not fight this dharmic war then you will be shirking your Sva-Dharma and you will get Papam. Papam means suffering in this life or next. So to avoid Naraka you should fight. If not, you will lose your name and fame.

With this the dharmic view is completed.

Shloka # 34:

“ All will recount your ever lasting infamy! For one honored, infamy is worse than death.”

Having given his philosophical and dharmic views now Sri Krishna addresses the Laukika drishti. Some people do not believe in punyam or papam, as they are adrishtam (invisible).

Punyam and papam is only known through Shashtra Pramanam. If so, can I run away from this war?

Arjuna, you still have to fight, says Sri Krishna. You will lose your name, fame, and status in society, if you do not fight.

Swamiji says, in society everybody is worried about how other people perceive him or her. People are worried about social status, family's name, fame etc. So, Arjuna, your name and fame as the greatest warrior will be lost.

You decided to fight, and then, at the last minute you had weakness. People will talk of the Arjuna who ran away from battlefield. Maanam and Apamaanam are more important than life for many. Thus, there are students who commit suicide when they do not get a good rank in examination. So, Arjuna your Apamaanam should be considered. Human beings will spread the bad name. Having enjoyed fame, this ill fame will be worse than death.

Shloka # 35:

"Great heroes will deem that out of fear you withdrew from battle. You will fall in the esteem of those very heroes who have honored you (so far)."

How Apamaana will afflict Arjuna is now explained. Arjuna's reason for withdrawal is not clear. Society will not know his true intentions. This can only lead to spread of rumors. Citing example of journalists, Swamiji says, for sensationalism they contact people to get information and publish information, rumors, with a question mark. Public will not remember the question mark. Once a name is bad it is difficult to get it back. Then, one comes to know, that fame is hell.

Great warriors will say Arjuna withdrew out of fear. Even Karna will say this. Karna has been insulted very often as a Suta Putra and he is waiting for this opportunity. He will use

this opportunity to say Arjuna ran away because of Karna.

Shloka # 36:

“Your foes will hurl many unmentionable insults at you-foes bent on down grading your competence. What can be more painful than that?”

Sri Krishna continues with his description of Apamaana.

Arjuna, your enemies, Kauravas, will spread rumors against you that are difficult for me even to mention. They have the advantage, as they are the rulers of the state. They will belittle your skill in archery. What is more painful than Apamaana?

Giving example of the dialogue between Kaikeyi and Dasartha, in Ramayana, when Dasaratha refuses to give boon to Kaikeyi because he does not want to sacrifice Rama. Kaikeyi uses an argument that all your forefathers have kept their words. By not keeping your word you will sacrifice the name that you enjoy. You will bring a blot in the blotless family of Raghu vamsa. Fearing Apamaana, Dasaratha caved in. Example of Kamsa and Devaki was also cited. Similarly when Kamsa decides to kill Devaki when the asariri comes and tells that Devaki's 8th son will be his killer, Vasudeva uses many arguments but ultimately says your family has got wonderful name. Your name will go down as the killer of your own sister, out of a fear of a son to be born. Do you want such an apamaana. The moment the word apamaana is mentioned, Kamsa says: OK. I will try some other method. Manam, pride, is very important. Apamaanam, insult, is not bearable.

Shloka # 37:

“Getting slain, you will gain heaven; victorious, you will enjoy this world. Therefore, O son of Kunti! Stand up, determined to fight.”

If you do not want ill fame or naraka, then fight. If killed

you will get Vir-svarga. If you win, you will get back your kingdom you have wanted for the last 13 years. Either way you gain. So, Arjuna, get up. Having decided to fight this war, Arjuna, please get up. With this the third line of argument or Laukika Drsihthi is also concluded.

Adhyathmike. Dharmica and Laukika approaches have all been addressed. So, Arjuna, fight this war.

Now, Sri Krishna gives advise on how to fight. Swamji says duties are of two types.

- 1) Pleasant duty
- 2) Unpleasant duty.

That is why whenever there is a function; they will say that it is my pleasant duty to introduce the speaker, etc. The word pleasant duty makes it clear that there is another called unpleasant duty waiting. How to do the pleasant duty, everybody knows. The problem is with unpleasant duty. Therefore, how one should perform the unpleasant duty is subject of 38th verse:

Shloka # 38:

“Looking with an equal eye on pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat, strive to fight; thus will you incur no sin.”

Sri Krishna concluded his first phase of teaching and is introducing his next phase of teaching. This is an introduction to Karma Yoga. Veda is divided into two portions, religion and philosophy. Religion is a way of life; Philosophy is the right view of life. The philosophy part is over, now the religion part is coming. Veda-antha is over; Veda-poorva is coming; jnana-kandam is over; karma-kandam is coming; Brahma sastra is over; dharma sastra is going to come.

If a person has to efficiently act in the world, most important characteristic is learning to be balanced in mind;

therefore, samatvaṃ as karma yoga is being introduced in this sloka. It will be elaborated in the later verses.

With Best wishes,
Ram Ramaswamy