

Baghawat Geeta, Class 111: Chapter 8, Verses 1 to 5

Starting chapter 8, Swamiji said, this chapter is primarily based upon the last two shlokas of chapter 7. In Chapter 7, in the last two shlokas, Sri Krishna introduced some technical terms without explaining them. They were: Karma, Brahma, Adhyatmam, Adhibhutam, Adhidaivam, and Adhiyajnam. He also mentioned remembering god at the time of death.

The last one naturally creates a curiosity in Arjuna's mind as to why Sri Krishna should talk about Ishwara smaranam at the time of death. He feels there must be some significance to it. Arjuna, in fact, has a total of seven questions. They are regarding the six technical terms and remembering god at time of death. Chapter 8 is dedicated to answering these seven questions. In answering these seven questions Sri Krishna also introduces saguna ishvara dhyanam. Here, Sri Krishna highlights Sadhana Upasana. In the middle of the Gita upasana is discussed. So, the chapter begins with Arjunas questions.

Shloka # 1:

Arjuna said, "O Krishna, what is Brahman? What is Adhyatmam? What is Karma? What is Adhibhutam? What is Adhidaivam? What is Adhiyajnam? How should I remember you at the time of death?"

Arjuna asked the following questions:

1. What is Brahman?
2. What is Adhyatmam?
3. What is Karma? While dictionary meaning of word is action, what does it mean here?
4. What is adhibhutam?
5. What is adhidaivam?

Please answer these five questions.

Shloka # 2:

Arjuna continued, O Madhusudhana, please answer:
8.2

Arjuna continues, O Madhusudhana, Please answer:

6. Who or what is Adhiyagna?

6.b. How does Adhiyagna reside in the body; a side question.

7.a. What is significance of remembering god at time of death?

7.b. How can one remember god at time of death?

Even living beings can't remember god, how can I remember god at time of death when all my faculties are fading? Is there a technique? Please teach me Sri Krishna?

How are You to be remembered by committed people, by integrated people and by people with self-control?

There must be a tremendous control over the mind required to remember the Lord at the time of death; therefore how can self-controlled people remember God at the time of death? This is the 7th question regarding antahkala smaranam.

In the shloka, in the word Madhusudhana, Madhu also means karmaphalam. Therefore, Madhusudhana is destroyer of all karmas or one who gives mokhsa.

Shloka # 3:

Arjuna continued, O Madhusudhana, please answer:
8.3

What is that Brahman? What is the inner self? What is work? O highest spirit! What is said to be the elements? What is said to be the divinities?

Sri Krishna now answers the questions.

Q 1.What is Brahman?

The imperishable principle aksharam paramam (the highest) is called Brahman.

Why use paramam? Without it the word aksharam can also mean alphabet or a letter. So Brahman is the most supreme aksharam or the ultimate imperishable. The word Kshas means imperishable. In Mandukya Upanishad too, Brahman is called aksharam. What is this imperishable principle? Consciousness is the only entity that is not perishable. Matter is subject to decay and death. AP (apara prakriti) is perishable while PP (para prakriti) or Chaitanya tatvam is not. The very word Brahma means brihat tamatva or a superlatively big entity. Sri Krishna does not elaborate on Brahman as he has described it as Para Prakriti in chapter 7, shloka's 4-10.

Chapter 8 is also called Aksharam Brahma Yoga as the teaching starts with it.

Q 2. What is Adhyatmam?

The all-pervading consciousness also exists in the individual body as well. Within body it is called Adhyatmam (obtaining within body). Samashti consciousness is called Brahman while same consciousness in a body is called Adhyatmam or inner essence consciousness. Adhyatmam is Jivatma while Brahman is Paramatma. Consciousness is the same; two different words are used, because of two different terms of reference. Citing an example, a man is, from wife's point of view, a husband; from a child's point of view, a father; a mother's point of view, a son.

How can one and the same person be called father, son, grandfather, husband, brother etc? This is called shabda prakriti nimittam. It means, the point of reference, when it differs the name also differs.

Thus, consciousness is called paramatma; consciousness is also called jivatma, depending upon macro and micro point of reference. This answers second question.

“Elements” constitute perishable existence; the divinities are the Spirit. Thou, best of men! in the body I alone am related to sacrifices.

Q 4. What is Adhibhutam?

Any object that is experienced is perishable. All elements, the sun, moon, stars, rivers etc are all physical bodies and are, as such, perishable. **The material world is known as adhibhutam.**

Q 5. What is adhidaivam?

It is Hiranyagarbha or total consciousness with total mind and thus total knowledge with a subtle body. And that hiranyagarbha alone is called a presiding deity from the standpoint of every organ, so the presiding deity of the eye is surya devatha; and the presiding deity of the ears is dig devatha. **Thus we have presiding deities for every organ; all these presiding deities put together is called hiranyagarbha; that hiranyagarbha is called adhi daivam.**

Q.6: What is adhiyagna?

I myself, or God himself, am adhidavam. What is Ishwara? As per Tatvabodha, it is consciousness associated with Karana prapancha. The whole universe in potential form is Shakti or Maya. Shakti plus consciousness is Ishwara.

Sri Krishna says I am that Ishwara. I am the seed of the universe. And they say after the pralaya, when everything is destroyed, it is said that then on a banana leaf Sri Krishna floats.

What does the water and the banana leaf represent? It is nothing but the seed form of the universe, and Sri Krishna represents the consciousness principle; Consciousness plus potential universe is called Ishwara. In scientific terms consciousness plus basic energy is Ishwara. So with this, the

At the end, whoso departs giving up his body, and remembering Me alone, proceeds to My status; of this there is no doubt.

In Shlokas 3 and 4 Sri Krishna has answered all six questions. Now he answers question # 7. The answer to this question is elaborately discussed till shloka # 28. In this answer he is introducing Ishwara Upasana as well. Ishwara, here is Saguna Ishwara. This god can be meditated upon. This Saguna Ishwara upasana gives two results depending on one's motive and attitude.

Thus we have:

- 1) Sakama Saguna Ishwara upasana and
- 2) Nishkama Saguna Ishwara Upasana.

Saguna Upasana is for material benefits in this world, heaven or in another birth. It can also bestow miraculous powers. Many upsakas are sidhas. Upasana gives some people extraordinary powers. Such siddhas say, on a given day the deity enters them and he (siddha) is able to predict events and suggest parihara. Hundreds of sidhis are enumerated in the puranas, in bhagavatham, related to knowing the past, knowing the future etc., Countless sidhis are mentioned; all are the result of Sakama Saguna Ishwara Upasanam.

Nishkama Saguna Ishwara Upasana: This upasana does not result in material benefits. It provides spiritual benefits.

Thus, one devotee prays: Oh Lord I am remembering you not for artha; not for kama; not for punyam; I am not interested in anyone of them; because I know they are all perishable in nature. I have got only one goal; and that is the spiritual goal called moksha or in religious language, God himself is my goal. I want to attain oneness with you.

This upsana requires Vairagyam. This Nishkama Upasana has two directions:

1. One practices the upasana for a long time. He then becomes qualified for Gyanam. Gaining this gyanam in this life itself, he attains moksha, which is called sadyo mukthih.

Note: **sadyo mukti** means Infallible knowledge about one's own identity with Brahman.

2. A person continues in saguna upasana but is not able to come to nirguna upasana. He continues saguna upasana. At time of death he asks for moksha. He then goes to Brahma loka and gets gyanam there. This is Krama mukti.

Take away:

1. Thus we have presiding deities for every organ; all these presiding deities put together is called hiranyagarbha; that hiranyagarbha is called adhi daivam.
2. The material world is known as adhibhutam.
3. And therefore what is karma? Srishti karanam is Karma. Thus, present creation is a result of past creation.
4. Scriptures say creation is not an accident. It is an incident caused by previous factors (karmas).

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