

Baghawat Geeta, Class 125: Chapter, Verses 23 – 27

Shloka # 23:

तान्नामोऽप्यन्यदेवताभ्योऽप्युपसृज्य
मया ह्यर्चयन्त्येवमुपासतेऽन्यदेवताः॥9.23॥

Those also who are the devotees of other divinities, who worship them with faith, are worshipping Me only, Arjuna! but not according to Vedic injunctions.

Continuing his talk on chapter 9, Swamiji said, from shloka # 21 to # 29 Sri Krishna is classifying bhakti into two broad types based on motive of bhakti. A Gyani's motiveless bhakti is not taken into account in this classification. He does not have anything to accomplish. He has moksha; he does not have any desire for finite things including dharma, artha, kama or moha. Therefore Gyani's bhakti is motiveless and it is not considered here. Here we are talking of motive driven bhakti. This includes **Sakama bhakti**, which is worship of God for everything else other than God. God is in heaven and everything is fine is their view. It is motivated by Preyas or interested in materialistic desires. **Nishkama bhakti** of an Agyani is also a motivated bhakti; if so, why is it nishkama? The reason is that the bhakti here is not interested in anything other than God. Therefore it is Nishkama bhakti. Here motive is desire for God.

When a bhakti says I am interested in you alone, God, remember that in Vedanta, "you" does not mean a personal God; because personal God is as finite as any other thing; So there "you" means a finite form which represents satyam, gyanam, anantham, brahma. Thus when I seek nothing but God; who represents infinite Brahman; when I become a theevra mumukshu, it is called nishkama bhakthi; of a Gyani. So this sakama, nishkama

bhakthi of Agyani's are differentiated in this portion and Sri Krishna's indirect advice is: May you graduate from sakama bhakthi to nishkama bhakthi.

And this is indicated in a symbolic language; that symbolic language you should understand to interpret these verses properly. What is that symbolic language? In the Bhagavad Gita, Sri Krishna represents the infinite Lord; the infinite one or moksha while all the other Gods represent the finite devathas; representing all the finite goals of life, like money; thus Lakshmi devi is a finite devatha representing only money aspect; similarly Surya devatha is a finite devatha representing only the power of vision; thus all the other devathas represent limited goals of life; whereas Sri Krishna represents the limitless.

Citing example of checkbook, which leaf within it is important? All leafs are equal until you write a sum on one. So leafs are same, what you write makes it important. Similarly, all rupams are finite but what you invoke is important. If you invoke Satyam, Brahman in Sri Krishna Shariram then he is infinite.

And, therefore, Sri Krishna says, instead of worshipping other finite devathas; you can worship me, myself because all the devathas are included in me. What is the reason? By the simple logic that infinite includes all finite. And therefore Krishna says any devatha, a person worships, all that worship will not go to that particular devatha; but through that devatha, it comes to me alone; Similarly, In Shivapurana it says: any worship goes to Shiva; In Devi bhagavatham it says any worship will go to devi; which one is correct; everything is correct, if you understand the principle behind it.

Any worship goes to Sri Krishna and any blessing also comes from him alone through the Devata. Next principle is also in symbolic language.

Since all Devatas represent finite powers their worship will get you the blessing of that special finite power. Thus Laxmi will give you money; Saraswati will give you knowledge etc. Therefore people go to those Devatas for their powers; hence it is considered Sakama Bhakti.

If so, to whom should one go to for infinite result? One has to go to Sri Krishna for infinite result. Per Gita, Sri Krishna bhakti is Nishkama bhakti. Other Devata Bhakti represents Sakama Bhakti. Similarly one can say the same about about Shiva Bhakti as well as Devi Bhakti.

Shloka # 23:

Those also who are the devotees of other divinities who
worship them with faith, are worshipping Me only, Arjuna! but
not according to Vedic injunctions.9.23

Those also who are the devotees of other divinities who worship them with faith, are worshipping Me only, Arjuna! but not according to Vedic injunctions.

There are people who worship other Gods but they do not know that their worship is finally coming to Me alone.

Avadhi in shloka means agyanam; in this context it means they are ignorant of the fact that all the finite devathas are included in Me and by worshipping Me, they have also worshipped all the other devathas.

Shloka # 24:

I indeed am enjoyer and master of all sacrifices; but they do
not recognize Me in truth. Therefore they lapse.9.24

I indeed am enjoyer and master of all sacrifices; but they do not recognize Me in truth. Therefore they lapse.

The same idea is further clarified. I am receiver of all forms of worship offered to Devatas. I am also providing the blessing to the devotee through the Devatas.

So I alone give the power to the finite devathas with which they bless their devotee. Seeing my physical form, people think I am the finite form; such people are deluded.

So by saying that they do not know My real nature; Sri Krishna indirectly conveys I have got two natures; what are those natures? He has two natures; one is the superficial unnatural nature and the other is essential real nature. What is the superficial unreal nature? The physical form, the finite form, is the superficial unreal nature because the Lord temporarily takes it on an ashtami day. It was not there before; and it will not be there after svargarohanam and therefore manushya vesham is unreal.

Seeing my physical human form; the deluded

people think that I am a particular finite person; but my real nature is formless; without attributes; sat chit ananda svarupam; These people do not understand that real nature. So instead of knowing my purna svarupam they take my apurna svarupam only.

Even if they worship Me they don't ask for Me. They only ask for their personal desires. Going to Bhagavan we can ask for infinite; but still our daridra buddhi comes in. Even when the Lord is willing to give the infinite, free of cost; we still only ask for perishable and ephemeral things; Bhagavan says; My hands are in both pockets; one pocket is in infinite and the other in finite; ready to give both; but people do namaskara and ask for finite things only; only one hand of mine is active; the other hand is almost paralyzed, because I have been never able to use that hand to distribute from the moksha pocket; nobody asks even by mistake; therefore Sri Krishna is disappointed; Having come to Me; having got an opportunity for asking the infinite; they do not ask out of sheer indiscrimination; sheer foolishness; They do not ask; therefore they fall into Samsara.

Shloka # 25:

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To gods repair their devotees; to the manes go those devoted to manes. The worshippers of the elementals go to these elementals. My worshippers come to Me.

So, people don't ask for moksha. But the question comes up as to why God does not give me Moksha anyway? Sri Krishna says that would not work; because of two reasons.

One reason is, in human birth, the Lord has given us free will; unlike animal birth; animals cannot choose their goals; they are instinctively programmed to pursue certain basic things; they will pursue them, and they will die; whereas human being has got a freewill that means he can choose his goal and he should choose his goal. God will not interfere in our choice; god's role is only giving us the information of what are the goals available and which goal can be reached and by which path. And if you refuse to use your choice, it indirectly means that you do not want to utilize the privilege of human birth. And if you refuse to utilize the privilege of human birth; indirectly you are declaring: Oh Lord; it is my mistake that I have come to human birth; please put me back to animal birth; that is the declaration, if you refuse to choose; therefore you can never refuse to choose whether you want moksha or not. This choice is yours alone. Bhagavan says I can assist you; but you have to choose. And therefore Moksha has to be your choice; this is one reason that God does not give moksha.

Another reason: suppose you don't desire moksha and god gives it to you; you may refuse it. So even God is helpless; he can't force moksha on you. So you have to ask for whatever you want. Worshippers of Devatas will get what they ask for. Thus, a money worshipper will get money; an ancestor worshipper will

go to Pitr Loka. “Whatever you worship, unknowingly you will become”. Then worshippers of bhutha ganas; bhuta, preta, pisacha, yaksha, etc., will end up becoming such; worshipping tamasic deities; attaining tamasic goals; worshipping rajasic deities; attaining rajasic goals.

Whereas, Sri Krishna says, those who worship Me, representing brahman, satyam gyannam anatham; representing moksha; purnatvam; shanti; they will come to Me only; Me representing Moksha itself.

Shloka # 26:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ 9.26 ॥

Whoso with devotion offers Me a leaf, a flower, a fruit, or water, I enjoy what has been thus offered with devotion by that pure-hearted worshipper.

In the scriptures, sakama bhakthi is also talked about; nishkama bhakthi is also talked about; sakama rituals are also talked about; nishkama rituals are also talked about.

For example, sandhya vandhanam is a nishkama ritual; it is purely meant for spiritual progress; chitta shuddhi; guru prapthi; gyana prapthi; moksha prapthi. Whereas

puthrakamesti yaga is meant for puthra prapthi, a sakama ritual.

Depending on result one wants there are rules to be followed during a ritual including: time, date, deity, meditation, dress, priest, dakshina etc. If you will violate a rule prayaschittam has to be performed. The higher the result expected, more complex the ritual. In this context when you want infinite result you would expect the puja should to be more complex. However, Sri Krishna says, the puja for infinite is very simple and no rules are required.

Thus, Sakama puja has many rules. In Nishkama puja, performed with motive of God alone, as a mumukshu, one who wants God as his goal; he can offer a leaf, a flower, a fruit or even water as his offering with Nishkama bhakti. He maybe an Agyani and a Samsari but he is a mumukshu. Such a person is one with a pure mind (one without desire of finite goals); when he prays, I receive his offering, although it is a simple offering, offered to me with love.

So since he has got such a nishkama bhakthi,

I receive that offering, even though it is a very inferior offering. I receive that offering, because it is offered with bhakti; it is offered with a love for myself;

So when God is the means in sakama bhakti; your love is a fake love; but nishkama bhaktha is doing puja for the sake of Lord. Therefore his love for me is the real love, and therefore I receive that love; Sri Krishna says I do not bother whether the medium that you use for offering love is flower or leaf; I do not care because through the medium, you are giving me the pure love. Therefore, I accept that.

Shloka # 27:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १.२७ ॥

Whatever you do, eat, sacrifice, offer as gift, perform as austerity, O Arjuna! do all this as a dedication to Me.

Suppose a person says I do not have pathram, pushpam; phalam; thoyam; then what shall I offer? Sri Krishna says, even if you do not have any special thing for offering to Me, it does not matter; you will be consuming things; you will have food; you will drink water; you will do some work; therefore whatever you are associated with, may you offer that to Me as an arpanam; Therefore, he says, any karma that you do; any laukika karma that you perform; even working in the office;

any work, even most mundane work that you do, dedicate it to the Lord, and it can function as a puja.

So offer every action in your life, even the most mundane ones, as a puja with bhakti. This is the greatest puja one can offer, exhorts Swamiji.

Now a question can come up, how can I offer my work at office as a puja? Remember, God is everywhere. Close your eyes during any work and offer it to God. This is a practice unique to Vedic tradition. You can worship God anywhere. Close your eyes, imagine God in your stomach and offer him the food you are about to partake as an offering. Whatever your nitya karmas, offer it to God. This requires a change in attitude. If you are fasting on Eka Dashi day offer the fast as an offering to God. It is only an attitudinal change. This is Nishkama bhakti.

Take away:

So offer every action in your life, even the most mundane ones, as a puja with bhakti. This is the greatest puja one can offer, exhorts Swamiji.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy