Baghavad Geeta, Class 163: Chapter 12, Verses 16 to 20

Shloka # 16:

12.16
He who has no desires, who is pure, who is dextrous, who is impartial, who is
free from fear, who has renounced every undertaking-he who is (such) a devotee
of Mine is dear to Me.

In the second part of the 12th chapter of the Gita, beginning from the 13th shloka, Sri Krishna talks about the characteristics of the highest bhaktha, the highest bhaktha being one who has gone through all the five levels of bhakthi yoga; and the final level of bhakthi yoga being nothing but Gyana yoga. And therefore the one who has successfully gone through all the five levels of bhakthi yoga will necessarily be a Gyani, who was called an sthira pragyaha in the 2nd chapter. Last, we were discussing the 16th shloka.

Anapekshaha:
he is not emotionally dependent on any external factors; the one who is emotionally
self-sufficient; the one who can freely give love to other people; but the one
who does not seek love from others; if they love him wonderful; if it is otherwise,
their problem; as far as he is concerned, his source of love is himself alone;
he has got an UPS system of love; an uninterrupted love supply: ULS.

Suchihi: Similarly he
is suchihi; suchihi means a master

of his own mind; he does not allow any thoughts to arise, which will disturb
his mental health.

Dakshaha: means one who
is efficient in all situations. The one who does take appropriate action in every situation. A
samsari usually swings between two extreme situations. When there is a problem
he gets carried away and acts impulsively; his actions are often unjust and
inappropriate; he does not use his discriminative power; the other extreme is whatever
be the situation; this person puts up with the all the problems that he faces;
he allows other people to exploit him; in the name of goodness and compassion.

Vedanta never says: you should allow yourselves to be exploited by others. Vedanta never says you should be a victim of injustice in the name of compassion and forgiveness; it does not advocate putting up with nonsense, inaction and passivity.

So one is, I become a door mat and the other is, I punch everybody's nose; these are the two extremes; one I can call reaction; the other one I call inaction; Vedanta says: reaction is also wrong; inaction is also wrong; what is required is appropriate action; you need not put up with nonsense; but that does not mean that you should impulsively take action; think very well; give enough time; if somebody has committed some wrong action; allow him to defend himself; We have no right to punish another person without asking for an explanation; even the worst criminal is allowed to defend himself in a court, because everybody is innocent unless otherwise proved. Therefore, just because I have got power over someone, I cannot depend on one sided report and based on one-sided report; I cannot punish another person, I have to

enquire; I have to ask and if punishment has to be given, as Sri Krishna tells Arjuna; O Arjuna, Duryodhana requires punishment; you have to give it.

So Daksha means without being carried away by Ragaha and Dveshaha. It is appropriate response unclouded by Raga Dvesha.

Ahimsa should not be abused; abuse of ahimsa is also wrong. If Duryodhana requires punishment, you should give it after proper enquiry; and if Duryodhana can be corrected through non-violent methods that should be tried. Give a chance to a non-violent remedy first; and only when non-violent remedies fail; you have a right to make use of violent remedy and if violent remedy has to be used; you have to use it. And this capacity to think well and without any impulsiveness; taking appropriate action is called dakshatvam.

In last class we also discussed Udasinaha as the one who is always impartial; gathavyathaha; the one who is not concerned about future; and sarvarambhaparityagi; the one who has given up all binding actions is called a parabhaktha. And such a bhaktha is dear to me; all this we saw in last class.

Shloka # 17

12.17
He who does not rejoice, does not fret, does not lament, does not hanker; who gives up good and bad, who is filled with devotion-he is dear to Me.

One who is free from extreme emotional reactions, (elation and depression) in favorable and

unfavorable situations. Sri Krishna says the response should not cloud our
intellect. The greatest wealth we (humans) have is Viveka Shakti,
discriminative power. Thus when King Dasaratha told Rama he has to go to
forest, Lakshmana became violent and furious; his intellect was clouded and he
wanted to kill his father. Rama with great effort calmed him down.

One should have awareness
as to when my discriminative power is being lost; the feeling I am losing control
on myself. We should, then, postpone our response; we need to access our inner
space to know I am off –balance.

So that I may take rest; so that when a person is driving the car and he is having some giddiness: they say that if you feel giddy; keep the car on one side; park for sometime; but he must have sufficient self-control to keep the car on one side; if it has gone beyond his control; he gets into accidents. So he does not have that much control to continue driving; but he has got sufficient control; to keep the car on one side; Similarly when I am driving in my life, often we get emotional upheavals but I should have sufficient balance; but now my mind is not sufficiently in control, then let me be careful of what I am talking. If I feel like blasting someone and phoning someone; do not phone up now; if you feel like sending a violent email; postpone it; that much balance if you have; you are master of your mind. Nobody says you should be free from emotional disturbance; Sri Krishna only says be aware of it when it comes and learn to be careful; and that is called not being carried away by harsha and shokha.

Similarly,
na dveshti na kankshiti; na dveshti means freedom

from dvesha; na kankshiti means
freedom from ragaha. So na
dveshti; na kankshiti means
freedom from binding raga
dvesha; freedom from
binding expectations; Here also we should be careful; Nobody can be totally
free from expectations; everybody has expectations; such as what I would get
through my business; and how my children should grow up; and what my health
should be in my old age; we all have expectations; it is natural. Sri Krishna himself
tells in the 4th chapter; that Raga Dvesha is natural.

You
can easily see raga dvesha playing out when you go to a buffet lunch or dinner.
Varieties of dishes are there; and everybody is given a plate, each one rushes
to his own raga dvesha; one straight
away goes to gulabjamun; another goes to roti; another goes to idli; another
goes to bun; another goes to something. In fact, even Gods have Raga Dvesha as
seen by their preference for their favorite foods such as Payasam, Vada etc.

That means gods also have ragaha. Therefore Vedanta says: have expectations; but be prepared for their fulfillment as well as their non-fulfillment; because only you can plan for the future; you can contribute to your future; but you cannot control your future; And since future is not under your control; you should be prepared for the non-fulfillment of the expectation. That is why we have a well-known saying: Hope for the best and be prepared for the worst. This farsightedness, this mental preparedness, this is a shock absorber. Having

that quality is here referred to as: na dveshti na kankshati. So he is free from binding raga dvesha.

Shubhashubhaparityagi:

One who has given up punyam and papam. shubham means punyam and ashubham means papam because from vedantic angle; punyam and papam both are bondages only; no doubt punyam will give svargaloka phalam; higher lokas and enjoyment. But even that is considered to be bondage.

Since punyam is finite in nature; after sometime it will get exhausted; leaving us high and dry; so we say punyam is a golden shackle while papam is an iron shackle; both are shackles. It does not mean one should not perform punya karmas. They should be performed for Chitta shudhi, Gyanam and Nishta.

Such a bhaktiman is dear to me, says Sri Krishna.

Shloka # 18:

12.18 He who is the same towards friend and foe, and so also in honor and dishonor; who is the same under cold, heat, happiness and sorrow, who is free from attachment to everything.

Shatrau mitre ca samaha: One who has the same attitude to friend and foe. A Gyani does not have any enemy. Hence Dharmaputra was called Ajatashatru.

Thus there are two sets of people; some look upon the Gyani as

their friend; and
some look upon Gyani as their enemy; and the friendly people may do favourable
things for Gyani; and the inimical people may harm the Gyani. And whatever be
their responses or action; Gyani's response is samah. And what do
you mean by samatvam; Gyani does not develop raga or dvesha towards them; He does not hate a person
who is inimical to him; and he does not get attached to a person just because
the other person is friendly.

Then does that mean that the Gyani will put up with the nonsensical action of the enemy. Even though Gyani does not have dvesha towards an inimical person; it does not mean that the Gyani should put up with his wrong actions. So Gyani will strongly criticize an action which is to be condemned; and if an appropriate step should be taken, he will take, but even the worst step is taken; without even an iota of dvesha in his mind; The aim is not the other person should suffer; the aim is not in suffering; but the aim is that the other person has to be corrected. In fact, he feels bad that he has to correct him through violent methods. Remember the example of a mother punishing a child, Mother is never going to happily punish; even when she punishes in the heart, love alone is there.

Tatha manapamanayoh:

And
that is why when the Lord kills the asuras; they generally use the word mokshaha; instead of
vadham;thus we have puthana
moksha. What is the
idea conveyed; moksha
means
through punishment, the Lord is removing the impurity of those people; moksha does not mean vedantic moksha; just because

Lord kills puthana, puthana will not
get moksha. Remember, puthana will get
moksha only through atma gyanam;
there moksha
means
freedom from that papam
because Bhagavan does that
with compassion and love and not with a tinge of retaliation, hate or anger in
mind.

Manapamanayo:
One who is equanimous even during honor or dishonor. As honor goes higher so
does dishonor; both are not under our control. Even Gods faced Apamana.

Similarly, one who is equanimous with respect to manam, honor and dishonor. This is another problem: wherever honor comes; there is a possibility of dishonor also. And when you are an ordinary person, dishonor will not be felt very much; but when the honour goes higher and higher; the dishonor also becomes more intense; And whether you like or not; honor and dishonor are not under our control; So any person can spread stories; and any person can cavil; and I cannot shut the mouth of other people. Thus Rama faced apamana; Seetha faced apamana; Sri Krishna faced apamana. Even Gods have faced apamana; therefore we can never totally avoid that; and therefore we have to be mentally prepared. And the one who swallows both of them; honor and dishonor and yet maintains his equanimity is a parabhakta.

Shitosnasukhadukheshu: One who treats heat and
cold, sorrow and joy, all pairs of opposites (gain/loss, union/separation) all
with equanimity; knowing life is a series of Dvanda, one who accepts dvanda
samaha.

And
therefore the one who is samaha;
the one who has got Gyanam as a shock absorber. And until Gyanam comes, the
only shock absorber is ishta
devatha bhakthi; only
our devotion to god in one form or the other. That alone has to strengthen us
until Gyanam comes; so these are the two shock absorbers; for the human beings.
This Parabhakta has Gyanam for a shock absorber.

Sama sangavivarjitaha:

Since he knows pairs of opposites come and go, when situation is favorable, he enjoys it, remembering it will go away at any moment. He takes everything as God's gift, remembering God may take it away at any point. This state of mind is called asangatvam; enjoyment without attachment.

Shloka # 19:

12.19 The person to whom denunciation and
praise are the same, who is silent, content with anything, homeless,
steady-minded, and full of devotion is dear to Me.

Tulyanindastuti: Criticism and glorification: are at level of words, while mana apamana are level of action. So ninda means criticism; censure; stutih means glorification. Previously mana and apamana were talked about; they are at the level of action. Here ninda and stuti are at the level of words; so mana apamana is kayikam; ninda stuti is vachikam; Why is mana and apamana, kayika; say, in a function somebody brings the garland and you stretch your head and they say it is not for you and honor the neighboring person. Therefore mana comes; apamana also comes.

So that is at the action level; this is at the vak level; this

also you cannot avoid because whatever you do; there will be somebody who criticizes. Any blessed thing you do; there will be somebody to criticize because criticism does not involve any expenditure; We have a free mouth and it is a free country; And therefore if there are people who are willing to advise you with good intentions, they will directly tell you; and whatever I can learn from others, I learn; and I perform actions according to my common sense and I completely ignore others' comments.

If there are some people passing comments on me and enjoying, I am very happy; because indirectly I am becoming a cause for others enjoyment; there are people who are spending lot of money to please other people in the society. Now here I am without spending any money I am giving happiness to others; how; by being a victim of their criticism; therefore by commenting upon me, if they get happiness; I am happy only; I should not be upset by their comments.

Santushto yena kenacit; his mind is such that it can be very easily pleased; the uniqueness of Gyani's mind is, it is an easily please-able mind; whereas the more the sophisticated the mind is; pleasing those people becomes very difficult; because they are so fastidious and so particular about everything; The more sophisticated one is; we have brought finer raga dvesha; the finer our raga dvesha; the more difficult it is to please.

And the most of the perfectionist people; perfectionist here means they are very particular about everything; perfectionism

is wonderful; they have clear ideas about how things should be. To have that is wonderful; but the problem is, if I am going to be disturbed by the slightest variation; my life becomes miserable; You can see perfectionists are generally irritated; they are never happy whatever you do; Anything you do; he is not happy; **Gyani is** a **perfectionist; he does everything properly, at the same time, he is accommodative enough to put up with all the imperfections**; And therefore the one who is happy with anything that comes.

Aniketaha; this is the
word which indicates that he is a sanyasi; aniketaha means the one
who does not have a house of his own; one who is not a householder; niketa means house;
and aniketa means the one who is a sanyasi. And then
where does he live; wherever, whoever gives a place, he stays; that place may
be a palatial house or it can be an ordinary hut; whatever is available, he
lives there; Therefore aniketaha.

How does he enjoy such a mind; his mental strength he has derived form one source. It is sthiramatiha; it is self-knowledge that has given him this mental strength. Remember; knowledge is power.

In fact, knowledge alone is power. If at all humanity is so powerful; it is only because of our knowledge; And among various types of knowledge; self knowledge is the most powerful thing; The greatest strength you derive, is from self-knowledge; so sthiramatiha means the one who has got doubtless knowledge.

It is the doubtless knowledge of aham brahma asmi; and such a Gyani is dear to Me. So with this shloka, Sri Krishna concludes the description of a wise person’s conduct or characteristic. Now in the 20th shloka, Sri Krishna winds up

this chapter.

Shloka # 20:

When we hear such a description of Gyani, we all want to be such a person; it is alluring. How can I attain such a state of mind? One has to go through five levels of Bhakti yoga to reach this state of Gyanam.

Suppose a seeker goes through all five levels of Bhakti yoga; and the **five levels of bhakthi yoga are sakama karma pradhana karma yoga; nishkama karma pradhana karma yoga; eka rupa Ishvara upasana; anekarupa Ishvara upasana; nirguna Ishvara Gyanam;** So these are the five stages; the first two stages are called karma yoga; the next two stages are called upasana yoga; the last stage is called Gyana yoga. In short, karma yoga plus upasana yoga plus Gyana yoga.

This bhakti yoga leads to immortality. It is a teaching in keeping with the Vedas, the primary source of knowledge. A Nastika is one who is outside of Vedic tradition. Gautama Budha was one such example. Buddhism rejected Vedas and it in turn was rejected by India. So every Acharya follows Vedic tradition. Sri Krishna also says, I am also following the Vedic tradition called here Dharmyam. Hence Gita is called Smriti; one that goes along with Vedas. It has Me as the

ultimate goal. May he become the greatest Bhakta.

Take away:

Gyani is perfectionist; he does everything properly, at the same time, he is accommodative enough to put up with all the imperfections.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy