

# Baghawad Gita, Class 186: Chapter 14, Verses 19 to 21

Shloka # 14.19

When the witness sees none other than the  
activities as the agent, and knows that which is superior [i.e.  
different from.]  
to the activities, he attains My nature.

Continuing his teachings  
Swamiji said today,  
Sri Krishna has analyzed the  
three gunas elaborately  
from verse No.5 to 18, and pointed out that each guna binds a  
person in one way or the other. Now, each guna demands a  
particular set up. Thus:

if  
it is satva guna, it demands  
knowledge and a set up conducive for it.

If  
it is rajo guna, it expects  
activity and an infrastructure for activity.

If  
it is tamo guna it wants to sleep  
and wants a conducive atmosphere for sleeping.

Thus  
each guna is a  
demanding guna, asking for a  
specific set up and if that set up is not provided, it throws  
lot of tantrums,  
and the creates lot of mental disturbances. And therefore, I  
can never accept

the set up as a bhokta,  
if it does not suit my particular guna and therefore there is  
a struggle. Pravrtti means looking  
for a conducive set up and while Nivritti means getting away  
from the  
unconducive set up. So, each guna  
leads to lot of pravritti and Nivritti.

This,  
favorable and unfavorable, classification is determined by the  
type of guna. So, a  
particular set up, satva will consider as favorable. The very  
same set up, rajo guna will dislike.

And therefore, as a bhokta, I divide the set up into favorable  
and unfavorable and I want to adjust and fine-tune the set up  
and therefore, I develop strong raga and dvesha; and to change  
the set up, I have to become a karta. As a bhokta I am not  
satisfied; and therefore I want to change the set up and to  
change the set up I have to become a karta. And having done a  
few things, I again look up at the set up as a bhokta and  
still find no satisfaction. And this goes on; dissatisfied  
bhokta becomes a karta and again he becomes bhokta and again  
he begins a karta; in short, he is never allowed to think of  
his higher nirguna sakshi svarupa. The three gunas keep this  
person busy with the body complex alone.

Thus  
the three gunas tie me up to  
the physical body, never allowing me to think of the  
possibility of something  
else.

Thus, the saguna physical body, the saguna mind and the saguna  
set up, keeps me so busy all the time, that I can never think  
of the Nirguna-I and this is caused by the three gunas, which  
keeps me in deha abhimana, and therefore Sri Krishna said the  
sakshi-I is tied down to the physical body and is never

allowed to think of the all-pervading Brahma svarupam; and I am made to think only of my limited ahamkara svarupam.

This  
is called the guna dragging the  
Sakshi to the ahamkara level and by  
adjusting the set up you are never going to improve the  
situation, because  
there is no such thing called an ideal set up at all.

Thus, with the three gunas constantly fluctuating, set up also fluctuates. There is constant expansion/contraction of mind (you do not have to ask itself) now satvik, now rajasic, now tamasic, and therefore this person is in eternal struggle; and this a few people understand and the only remedy is transcending the triguna ahamkara; transcending the triguna body mind complex or anatma is the only remedy.

And how do you transcend the saguna ahamkara. As I said in the last class, ahamkara can never be made Nirguna. Because ahamkara, is body-mind complex and it is made up of prakrithi and therefore the three gunas are bound to be there.

Even  
the MahaGyani will  
have a satvic, rajasic or tamasic mind. **A nirguna mind does not exist at all.** Is Gyani's  
mind is saguna or nirguna? Do you have  
doubt?

Even  
Bhagavan's mind, Maya, is trigunathmakam, thus,  
the mind will be saguna,  
body will be saguna,  
and therefore there is no question of converting anatma into nirguna or  
transcending the guna.  
Then what about the sakshi? You cannot

make the sakshi nirguna either because  
it need not be made Nirguna,  
because it is already Nirguna.

**Therefore the only remedy is switching the  
identification from saguna ahamkara to nirguna sakshi. This is  
called atmanatma viveka and knowing the fact that I am not the  
body with consciousness, but I  
am the consciousness with a temporary body. I am not a body;  
it is a temporary  
body with permanent consciousness,  
or I am the permanent consciousness with a temporary body. And  
as atma, the sakshi, I am ever  
Nirguna, I am ever  
akarta, and I am ever  
abhokta and this Gyanam  
alone is the solution.**

And

**therefore transcending the gunas is equal to atma Gyanam. And  
atma Gyanam means  
guru mukhathaha  
vedanta shravana manana  
nidhidhyasanam. You have to have shastra guru upadesha and  
know that  
I am ever the Nirguna  
sakshi.**

And

what is that sakshi chaitanyam?

It

is one beyond the three gunas,  
which includes the physical body, which includes the mind,  
which is beyond the  
body-mind complex, beyond the anatma. So consciousness is  
beyond the material body.

Now

the next question is what do you mean when we say beyond. Because we normally we use the word beyond to convey something farther in distance. If I say that particular house is beyond the car, a physical distance is understood. Similarly, we may

Misunderstand, when we say that Sakshi is beyond the body, as though sakshi is something that is somewhere in the clouds. So here beyond does not mean physically remote.

Then what is the meaning of the word beyond? It is in and through the body mind complex, but not related to or affected by the body-mind complex, just as the light principle is beyond my hand; here beyond means that light is in and through the hands, pervades the hands, but whatever happens to the hand, light is not affected.

In Sanskrit it should be translated as asangatvam. The sakshi, the consciousness, is in and through the trigunatmaka shariram; it enlivens the trigunatmaka shariram; but it is not tainted by it.

Hence the shloka that says, the diseases of the body do not belong to the consciousness; the disturbances of the mind do not belong to the consciousness, this asangatvam, is said here as param and that sakshi chaitanyam I am.

Thus, this person recognizes the consciousness

which is beyond the three gunas as himself.

And the day I know my purnatvam is not dependent on the set up, that day I stop all my struggles to change the set up. Changing the set up for practical purposes is different. If the table is in this place, and if you change to the other side, and it is convenient for working, that is a different thing, when I change the set up to improve my image, then that is called samsara, once I discover that I am purna sakshi, I do not expect a change in the set up for my improvement. I am perfectly satisfied with myself; whether the set up is satvic set up, or rajasic set up or tamasic set up. He is one who is not moved by set up.

And  
therefore drashta, an  
intelligent person changes himself, rather than set up. He discovers that  
higher I, the sakshi-I, the gunathitha-I.

And  
here, in the word is anupashyati,  
anu means in keeping with the teaching of guru and shastra. This  
discovery will never come independently, if I am left to myself, without shastra; I will  
continue my mistake of changing the set up all the time hoping that one day  
everything will be ideal. Wife will be exactly as I expect here to be, the son will  
be exactly as I expect him to be; the roads will be exactly as I want to be; he  
will be working towards the ideal set up, without questioning his pursuit. Shastra alone gives  
a jolt and asks: Did you ask or did you think whether there is some other method  
of discovery of fulfillment? And therefore that insight, the shastra and guru  
alone will give. So the intelligent seeker recognizes this

fact.

He

also recognizes the fact that all the karmas belong to the anatma; that the anatma will be eternally a karta. There is no retirement for anatma.

Retirement is what? taking up some other work and not only that, if anatma really retires, it will become sick also. Therefore, Anatma has to be eternally a karta and if you have to transcend kartrtvam, we have to come to atma alone.

Sri

Krishna uses a double negative language here. He wants to say that anatma is the karta, anatma being the body mind complex. If you put it in positive language, it will be Anatma alone is Karta. In negative language, there is no karta other than anatma. Both are the same. Anatma alone is karta, is equal to, there is no karta other than anatma. And who am I? atma or anatma? I am the atma; therefore eternally akarta and abhokta.

The

day a human being recognizes this fact; Only then, he will be free from the rat-race called life; the eternal journey of bhokta; not satisfied; therefore, becomes karta; improves the status of bhokta; improved but not totally satisfied; again becomes karta, again

becomes

bhokta, and at the

time of death also if you ask, are you satisfied: You say I am satisfied, But!

Only one small thing; Something or the other will be there.

Since the ahamkara dies with

dissatisfaction, the dissatisfied ahamkara again take birth and continue the struggle. Thus, the

never ending journey of punarapi

jananam, punarapi maranam

occurs. The struggle will end like the poori when it is in the oil, it will be

running around.

And

as it runs it expands and once it has become purnam, full, then you will find that it is atmana eva atmaiva thushta,

it will be floating there itself; it has become purnam. And that is why it is called puri; puri is shortened

form of purnam.

Similarly the day I discover I am the purna sakshi; the running about for purnatvam will stop. Thereafter also I may run around, but not for purnatvam but it is out of purnatvam. If I am acting for purnatvam, there is eternal anxiety and I cannot sleep properly. If I am acting out of purnatvam, there is no anxiety.

And therefore Sri Krishna says: The one who has discovered the sakshi, he attains Ishvara bhavam. Sri Krishna says madbhavam, he being the Lord, it is Ishvara bhavam; Ishvara Bhavam means Ishvara Svarupam. Ishvara Svarupam means purnatvam.

And

therefore Madbhavam means purnatvam, means jivan mukti.

The

most important point to be noted here is that Sri Krishna says



this purnatvam is only  
through knowledge. So the word Vetti should be underlined.  
Vetti means the one who knows; discovers  
purnatvam. And  
therefore how many paths are there for Moksha? Sri Krishna  
says even if there  
are many other yogas (karma,  
bhakti, Kundalini,..) and we are willing to accept all other  
yogas, and they  
are all for preparation of the mind; the ultimate discovery of  
purnatvam is only  
through vedanta shravana, manana,  
nidhidhyasana; otherwise  
called Gyana yoga.

Next is a very important verse. This verse is very important  
not

only in the 14<sup>th</sup> chapter, but in the entire Bhagavat Gita as  
well.

## **Shloka**

**14: 20:**

**14.20 Having transcended these three alities  
which are the origin of the body, the embodied one, becoming  
free from birth,  
death, old age and sorrows, experiences Immortality.**

In this shloka the Gyana phalam is clearly mentioned. Here  
dehi

means this jiva, this individual, with the help of the  
knowledge learns to dis-identify  
from the three gunas. Athitya means transcending;  
here transcending means dis-identifying from the three gunas;  
and the three gunas represent the three sharirams,  
the five koshas, in short, the entire anatma. Instead of  
claiming I am  
the body, I say that I have a body; gifted by the Lord for the

temporary use.

And

what is the purpose of this temporary use? Not for eating, the body is given by

the Lord to a human being only for gathering knowledge. What is that knowledge?

The knowledge is that, I am not the body and I have this body only for my

temporary use. This is called athitya. In Taittiriya Upanishad, it was said all these three gunas belong to dehasamudbhavan.

Samudbhava means karanam, and deha means body. So

dehasamudbhava

means the cause for the physical body, and cause for the body

means cause for janma, because janma

is defined as acquisition of

a new body. Therefore the three gunas have given me this body and the three gunas alone will

give me the next body also. And what type of body will be given will depend

upon the guna. Thus, Satva guna

will give a higher body. It will still be a perishable body.

Rajo guna will again

give body alone and not moksha.

Thus

all the three gunas are the

cause of the body; cause of punar janma.

Thus

the Gyani dis-identifies from the three gunas, which are the causes of repeated acquisition of bodies.

**And when a**

**person dis-identifies from the gunas and the body, he is free from all the problems, which**

**belong to the body.**

**When I identify with the body; the body's problems are my problem.** When I identify with the car, and if it is brand new car, every small scratch is like a scratch on my heart; It is my car; the conditions of the object of abhimana become my own condition. Similarly, the bodily conditions will be my conditions **when I identify with the body and therefore when the body is mortal, I say I am mortal.** Body being mortal is not a problem, as hundreds of bodies are mortal and dying daily; just read the obituary columns.

So mortality of the body itself is not problem. Death itself is not the problem, because hundreds and millions of death we are seeing and hearing about.

**The problem is my  
thinking that I-am-mortal.**

Mortality  
is not the problem; I-am-mortal is the problem. And Vedanta does not  
remove the mortality of the body; vedanta removes the  
idea that I-am-mortal. And how does it remove the idea; by  
teaching me the fact that I am not the mortal body,  
but I am the immortal-I, behind the  
mortal-body.

And  
therefore, vimuktah  
means he is free from all the problems of the body. What are  
the problems of  
the body; the first problem is janma, it is birth; birth  
itself is a problem in  
the sense, initially one has to be in solitary confinement,  
one has to remain  
in the womb of the mother, and coming out of womb is a problem  
for both the  
mother and the baby, and once there is janma, the inevitable  
consequence of maranam is the next

problem, then there are people who say: Swamiji I am not frightened of death and then they add my only prayer is that I should die instantly. I just should just pop off in sleep. So those people who say I am not afraid of Maranam, they are afraid of jara, meaning old age with all its consequent problems. I need not describe and remind you of all those problems.

The body being born, grows, decays and dies, these steps are really speaking not problems, and they are the nature of the body. Just as heat is the nature of the fire; it is svarupam of the fire, similarly, the cold is the nature of Ice. Similarly vikaraha, asthi, jayathe, vardathe, viparinamathe; the vikara, means modification is the nature of body. And a nature becomes a problem if I refuse to accept the nature of a thing as it is. Resistance to the fact is sorrow. Imagine I complain fire is hot, fire is hot, fire is hot; that is foolishness. Similarly, body's vikara becomes a problem, when I resist the vikara.

And I will resist the modification if I have got strong abhimana in the body.

**Abhimana removes my objectivity; Identification removes my objectivity.** I will say let everybody else die except people from my house, because that

is nature.

That's

why Sri Krishna warned in the second chapter shloka 2.27, when I discover the

fact that I am the sakshi; I learn to

look at my body objectively. And the moment I get the objectivity I accept this

body does not have any specialty; Therefore this body is like any other body,

therefore it has to grow and it has to go. Thus, the sakshi Gyanam gives me

objectivity with regard to my own body. Therefore old age is a fact; it is welcome;

even if it is not welcome, at least I have no resistance; And along with old age,

joint will say that I am here, I am here, and the ear will hear less, eye will

see less; buddhi is always a problem; therefore these things are natural. **I objectively see and accept. And once the**

**objectivity comes, the intensity of the problem comes down.**

**This is called**

**Abhibhava method; you do not remove the problems of the body; the body would**

**have to go through its condition. But you develop a different perspective and**

**from the new perspective problems will not appear to be a major tragedy in**

**life.** Like when the sun rises, what happens to the stars? We know there are stars during the daytime too.

But what happens; stars are as though removed,

because of the powerful sunlight. So what does the sunlight do; it does not destroy the stars, but it makes

the stars as though non-existent by making their light extremely insignificant. Similarly, I am the Sakshi Gyanam,

will

not change the physical conditions;

will not change the family members, all the prarabhda conditions will be there, but I develop a new perspective from which they are not worth talking about.

That's why they give the example of Anjaneya. Anjaneya thought that crossing the ocean is big task. But the moment he thought of Rama, the ocean became a small pool of water; the ocean did not change its size; but because of the remembrance of the Lord, he got the extra strength and from that standpoint, the big ocean became small; Similarly, all the powerful rakshasas. became mosquitoes. So, even if they bite, it is not felt.

What

preparation do you need for destroying the mosquito? You do not require any great effort. You effortlessly destroy. Therefore this knowledge gives me a new perspective; from which all the so-called problems are insignificant pinpricks. And therefore vimuktaha; they are not worth talking about.

And this is called Jivan mukti. **So jivanmukti is making the lives' problems insignificant; and changing the perspective through knowledge is called Jivan mukthi.**

And a result of this knowledge, not only the mortality of the body is not a serious problem for him; he has also owned up to his immortal nature and therefore he attains immortality. And, again, what is meant by, attaining immortality? Is it the ahamkara that attains immortality or the sakshi that attains immortality? Ahamkara or body cannot become immortal. Atma need not become immortal. **Attaining immortality is shifting my abhimana identification from the mortal body to the immortal atma. This is called Jivan mukthi.** And this is also called gunathithatvam. Therefore, Gyani is called here gunathithaha.

**Shloka 14:21**

**14.21 Arjuna said O Lord, by what signs is one (known) who has gone beyond these three alities? What is his behaviour, and how does he transcend these three alities?**

Lord's teaching inspires Arjuna. And naturally he wants to know more about that Gyani who becomes a gunathitha. And therefore Arjuna asks the Lord:

So what are the characteristics of the indicators (Lingam) of a person, who has transcended the three gunas successfully. Exactly as he asked in the 2nd chapter: Will there be any change in his physical body; whether he will be slim or fat, or will there be a halo around him; because in the pictures, you see a halo on Gyani's back. Arjuna also is curious to know whether there will be any such indications.

Second question: How does he conduct himself? How does he relate to the people? How does he interact with the people; because a Gyani also lives in the same society; therefore will there be a change in his language; Will he start talking in Sanskrit suddenly? how will he walk? How does he eat? We have all kinds of misconceptions.

We have a misconception that there should be external change such as a shaven head etc.

We should look for what is inside the head rather than what is outside.

**There is no mysticism connected to Vedanta.** Any thing mystical belongs to non-vedantic subject. Vedanta has no mysticism, even an iota of it. This confusion even Arjuna has; therefore his question as to how does he conduct himself. This the

second question: What are his Characteristics? How does he conduct himself?

And

the third question is how does he transcend the three gunas?

Is it a

physical journey, some people expect some kind of a physical journey for

moksha; going to some other loka, some people expect

a transformation in time. And some people expect some kind of a sudden flashy

event. So there is no event called liberation; there is no time-wise transformation;

there is no spatial journey, it is nothing but a clean understanding of an ever-obtaining

fact. What is the fact? Fortunately, that I am ever free. So therefore, he asks

the question. How does he transcend the three gunas? So this is Arjuna's question for

which Sri Krishna now gives the answer in the following verses.

### **Take Away:**

A nirguna mind does not exist at all Therefore the only remedy to transcend the three gunas is switching the identification from saguna ahamkara to nirguna sakshi. This is called atmanatma viveka and knowing the fact that I am not the body with consciousness, but I am the consciousness with a temporary body.

Therefore

transcending the gunas

is equal to atma Gyanam.

And

when a person dis-identifies from the gunas and the body, he is free from all the problems, which



belong to the body. When I identify with the body; the body's problems are my problem.

So  
jivanmukti is  
making the lives' problems insignificant; and changing the perspective through  
knowledge is called Jivan mukthi.

There  
is no mysticism connected to Vedanta.

**With Best  
Wishes,**

**Ram Ramaswamy**