

Laws of Karma

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Bhaja Govindam

Class 1 Introduction

The faculty of choice, or free will, is one of the defining features of human beings. Animals do not have any goals in life. They eat, reproduce, live for a few years, and die. However, many human beings question free will and argue that we do not truly have free will, and that we are governed by destiny alone. Even if that is one's view, we can still divide human beings into those who accept free will and exercise it, and those who do not accept it. According to the scriptures, those who do not accept free will are not very different from animals. The scriptures primarily address human beings who accept free will.

Once we accept free will, we recognize that we have many goals to achieve and we work toward fulfilling those goals. In the Katha Upaniṣad, two mantras address this topic. The entire Bhaja Govindam text is based on these two mantras. All human goals can be classified into two varieties:

- The limitless, eternal, immortal, and complete goal. This can only be one, because only one infinite is possible. One name for this infinite goal is Bhagavān/Īśvara/Brahman/Mokṣa. In the Katha Upaniṣad, this is called śreyas. All these terms are used synonymously.

- Finite goals. All other goals are finite: money, status, name, fame, political victory, relationships, position, possessions, etc. All of these are limited by time and space. They are called dharma, artha, and kāma. In the Katha Upaniṣad, these are called preyaṣ.

For convenience, I will call the finite “the world,” and the infinite “God.” The scriptures point out that those who choose mokṣa as the ultimate goal are intelligent, and they are called vivekī. Those who do not choose mokṣa as the goal are called avivekī. The scriptures seek to educate people and transform avivekī into vivekī. Whoever chooses mokṣa as the ultimate goal is called a mumukṣu.

Three sets of people: religious, spiritual, and atheistic

We should differentiate spiritual people from religious people. Both accept God. A spiritual person accepts God and chooses Him as the destination. A religious person accepts God, but does not accept God as the destination; instead, God becomes a means to an end. A third set of people does not accept God either as a means or as a goal; that is the atheistic group. The scriptures say that non-spiritual people remain in saṃsāra. This is described by Śaṅkarācārya in Bhaja Govindam.

This work consists of 30 verses, discussing various problems faced by human beings and how we make wrong choices. The aim is to change the direction of our life—converting an atheist and a merely religious person into a mumukṣu. Vedantic scriptures are relevant only for a mumukṣu.

The original name of Bhaja Govindam is Moha Mudgara. Moha means delusion. The majority of human beings are governed by moha—like moths attracted to the brightness of fire, and fish attracted to bait at the end of a hook. Human beings, despite intelligence, do not realize that a finite and perishable thing cannot give lasting security. Our intelligence is

covered by delusion. The simple message of Bhaja Govindam is: choose the infinite and discover lasting happiness.

Class 2

Bhaja Govindam is a work called Moha Mudgara, meant to remove our delusion with regard to the means and ends of life. A deluded person makes the mistake of treating the finite objects of the world as goals, which creates problems because finite objects cannot give lasting peace, happiness, and security. Only the infinite can give that. The first correction is with regard to the goal: instead of treating the world as the goal, treat the infinite as the goal. The infinite is referred to by different names: śreyas, mokṣa, Brahman, and Īśvara. Choose mokṣa or Bhagavān as your goal. Whoever has done so is a mumukṣu, a spiritual seeker.

Are we to reject the world totally? No. Instead of seeing finite things as the destination, use the world as a means to attain the end. Use every object to support your spiritual journey. Use the finite world as a means and the infinite God as the end. Currently, we often use the infinite God to obtain finite worldly ends. This is a reversal. Correcting this reversal is the conversion of a materialistic person into a spiritual person. This is the project of Bhaja Govindam.

Even after becoming a mumukṣu, we should further refine ourselves; then the Vedantic message becomes clearer. A mumukṣu can be of three types: manda mumukṣu, madhyama mumukṣu, and tīvra mumukṣu. How do we differentiate these three?

- A manda mumukṣu accepts God as the goal, but it is the last item on the list of desires. Such a person has not discerned the full value of mokṣa. Perhaps after several years, decades, or even janmas, mokṣa becomes the top priority.
- When mokṣa becomes the top priority, one becomes a madhyama mumukṣu. At this stage, mokṣa “eats up” other desires. The

mokṣa-icchā becomes stronger and can become an obsession. Eventually, there is only one priority: mokṣa.

- When a person has very high intensity, that person becomes a tīvra mumukṣu.

All three will benefit from Vedanta, but the benefit depends on the level of intensity.

Śaṅkarācārya got the inspiration to write this work after meeting a very old person in Kāśī. This person was studying Sanskrit grammar, including original verbal roots. Instead of working for spirituality, he was absorbed only in grammar. When Śaṅkarācārya met him, the man was repeating the rules from his book. “Kṛ” is the verbal root (dhātu) from which many forms are derived. There are nine forms—one each for singular, dual, and plural, and first person, second person, and third person. Each of these forms also changes based on tense: past, present, and future.

Using that person as a starting point, Śaṅkarācārya addressed all humanity and composed this text.

Śaṅkarācārya addresses the Kāśī paṇḍit as mūḍha-mateḥ—one who is confused about the purpose of life. Mūḍha-mati means a deluded person. Choose Lord Govinda as the ultimate goal of life, because He can be a permanent support, like an anchor. There is nothing in this world that is stationary; everything is affected by time. If you want to live meaningfully in this world, you must hold on to something that does not move. That stable anchor is Govinda, the Lord.

One meaning of the word go is cow. Go also means earth, and go also means the sense organs. In short, Govinda indicates Paramātmā. First seek and understand your relationship with Paramātmā. All other relationships will come and go, but the relationship with the Lord—Govinda—alone is permanent. Establish that relationship first.

Every object in creation is constantly attacked by kāla (time), personified as Yama Dharma Rāja. When Yama draws near, only the Lord can give security. The conqueror of time is the Lord alone. If you want to hold on to the Lord at that time, you must start practicing now. “O Lord, come into my mind along with Pārvatī and occupy my mind.” At the time of death, other than the Lord, nothing else can rescue us.

Class 3

Any study of material disciplines—like grammar, language, and logic—is called aparā vidyā. Knowledge that speaks about mokṣa, or liberating wisdom, is called parā vidyā. Aparā vidyā is relevant as a stepping-stone to parā vidyā. Material knowledge is the means, and spiritual knowledge is the end. One can never come to parā vidyā without the help of aparā vidyā; without language, a guru cannot teach a śiṣya. At the same time, aparā vidyā remains incomplete without leading us to parā vidyā. Both are complementary—as means and end. When I do not understand this relationship, I am mūḍha-mati.

Verse 2

Another field in which there is widespread delusion is money or wealth. There are two extremes:

1. Some people claim money is everything, giving excessive importance to money.
2. Some people say money is dangerous and one should not touch money at all.

One is overestimation; the other is underestimation. Śāstra says we should avoid both extremes and have clarity regarding the role of wealth.

Everything in creation is a manifestation of the Lord. The entire creation may be seen as involving three factors, and all three are important for human life:

1. Knowledge, revered as Sarasvatī. We respect all knowledge, both parā and aparā.
2. Power or physical health, revered as Durgā Devī. We need strength to function and move.
3. Wealth. Money alone gets converted into food, shelter, and infrastructure.

All three are important and complementary. All three must be revered and respected.

Money has a significant role to play, but we must know its role—and also what money cannot give.

The first misconception is that money is the source of human happiness. Money can provide physical comfort, which is external and connected to the body. Happiness has nothing to do with physicality; happiness is an inner condition of the mind. There is no necessary cause–effect relationship between money and happiness. If there were, all rich people would be happy and all poor people would be unhappy. But we see many rich people who are not happy, and some even take their own lives. We also see many people with little money living happy lives.

The second misconception is that money is the source of security. This can be negated with similar reasoning. Money itself often becomes a cause of fear and insecurity, because we add the “security of money” to our list of worries. Security is an inner sense and has nothing to do with money by itself.

Money and happiness have no guaranteed link. Money and security have no guaranteed link. Money and contentment have no guaranteed link. You cannot obtain happiness, security, and contentment merely through money.

According to śāstra, the primary purpose of money is to do

noble work and to maintain family infrastructure. Dhārmic karma is possible only with money. Dharma alone will lead to security, happiness, and contentment. Therefore, give up greed for accumulating more and more money in the hope of gaining greater security, happiness, and contentment. Develop an attitude of contentment. Learn to be happy with whatever you can legitimately earn. The amount is not important; learn to be content with that. Happiness is not what I possess; it is a habit I cultivate.

Class 4

Grammar represents aparā vidyā, or worldly education. We often treat it as an end in itself, but it should lead to spiritual education. The same principle applies to money as well. Money should lead to noble actions and purification of the mind. Money cannot directly lead to peace and happiness.

Verse 3

Now the topic is kāma, or desire. Desires are of two types:

1. Acquired desire (āgantuka kāma): This varies from individual to individual; it is not universal. It depends on time, space, and personality. One may like coffee and another tea. These desires can be acquired over time and also dropped over time.

2. Natural desire (svābhāvika kāma), or instinctive desire: desire for security, health, comfort, etc. These are universal. Mutual attraction between male and female in any species falls under this.

In Verse 3, Śaṅkarācārya deals with mutual male/female attraction. To handle this, we should have clarity and avoid delusion. Because this is a natural desire, we do not have a choice regarding its existence, and we are not responsible for its existence; therefore we should not feel guilty about its presence. At the same time, we do have a choice regarding

activating and nourishing this attraction.

It is perfectly acceptable to choose not to activate or promote this desire; that is called a brahmacarya vrata. It is not compulsory for everyone to take this vow. Otherwise, the desire should be activated and expressed deliberately and properly. Śāstra prescribes the gṛhasthāśrama for this purpose. If handled improperly, it becomes moha, an obstruction to spiritual progress.

The second method of handling this desire is to recognize that the physical body is made of flesh, bones, etc.—a gross personality subject to aging and destruction. Any pleasure derived through the physical body is limited. Human beings have the capacity to discover a superior, more lasting joy—spiritual joy. Through the discovery of this nitya (lasting) ānanda, kāma becomes irrelevant or effectively nonexistent—like stars that are present but not visible during daytime. This possibility belongs uniquely to human beings; animals do not have it. Humans alone can transcend this svābhāvika desire by discovering the higher ānanda. Choose the ānanda that comes from spirituality as nitya ānanda.

Therefore, use the discrimination method first and supplement it with the second method.

Verse 5

We have a limited time period to accomplish the ultimate goal; therefore, do not postpone this pursuit.

- About 50% of life is spent in sleep or a sleepy condition. In a 100-year life, this is 50 years.
- Of the remaining 50 years, about 25 years are lost because one is either too young or too old.
- That leaves 25 years. Even during that time, we may be sick, we may lose someone or something, or we may be compelled to

work and earn—so we do not find time for spirituality.

Therefore, do not postpone spiritual pursuit; the best time is the present.

Vyādhi refers to a physical ailment affecting the sthūla śarīra, and mental hurt also obstructs the pursuit. When conditions are reasonably supportive, pursue spirituality.

Class 5

The main teaching so far is that whatever we have in our lives is only a temporary gift. The Lord has the right to take it away from us. Since it is a temporary gift, the Lord does not expect us to claim ownership as “mine.” We should use these gifts for spiritual growth. If we do so successfully, whenever the Lord comes to take them away, we will be comfortable returning them. If this is not clear, it is delusion. Viveka, or wisdom, is remembering this constantly. We should use this wisdom to gain mokṣa. This is the essence of Bhaja Govindam.

Verse 5

In this verse, Śaṅkarācārya refers to the love we receive from people. Any love we receive in the world is conditional love. Unconditional love is not available in the world, except from Bhagavān and a jñānī. In a family, if a person contributes to the well-being of the family, that person enjoys a certain status. Suppose that person ceases to be a contributor; then the quality of love undergoes subtle change. If the person becomes a burden, the quality of love can change further. Love varies from contributor to non-contributor to liability. There is no absolute love coming from anybody. If I expect unconditional love, or if I mistake conditional love for unconditional love, that is moha. I am expecting something from the world that it is not capable of giving.

Verse 6

These are bitter truths, and many people get disturbed by reading Bhaja Govindam. People, money, and anything I hold on to are temporary.

The next delusion is with regard to our own physical body. My body is valuable, but do not overestimate it or become overly attached to it. Use the body to obtain knowledge and wisdom. Convert the body into a disposable śarīra. When prāṇa departs, the body is reduced to a corpse; even the closest person is afraid to keep the body at home for long.

Verse 7 (not in all books)

This verse deals with delusion regarding money. We think money is the cause of happiness. If money and happiness always occur together, then one might infer a cause–effect relationship. But money is not only a potential source of comfort; it is also a source of distress and pain. In a rich family, discussions begin about assets, wills, inheritance, and so on. Money can create havoc. Do not overestimate its value. Money should be used for noble work—for citta-śuddhi, jñānam, etc.

Verse 7

When we were babies, we were not interested in bhakti, Bhagavān, temples, etc. We did not know the value of prayer. When a person becomes a youth, there is a natural attraction to the other sex. Then there is little time to pursue what is truly worthwhile.

Class 6

One of the biggest delusions is that spiritual pursuits can be postponed to the later part of life. There are two problems with this attitude:

1. We do not know how long we will live. Therefore, postponement is a delusion and a mistake.

2. If a person is immersed in materialism, a sudden shift to spiritual pursuit is not easy. Therefore, interest and training in spirituality should begin early. The proportion of time may differ at different stages, but we should gradually transition toward greater spiritual pursuit.

Verse 8

Śaṅkarācārya deals with delusion regarding family in this verse. The jīva already existed as a jīva in pūrva-janma; the mother does not “create” the jīva. The mother is responsible for the present body, which is only a temporary residence for a few years. If you separate yourself from the body, you do not have parents at all. If you consider all your janmas, you may have had millions of parents. You cannot take any one set as “the” parents absolutely.

Verses 9 and 10 are skipped for now.

Verse 11

Delusion is caused by youth, wealth, and the people around us. In youth, we become arrogant. We are proud of wealth and health. Many people admire us, and that makes youth even more arrogant. Work for something that Yama cannot touch.

Verse 12

Human beings tend to keep postponing spiritual study. For beginning spirituality, now is the auspicious time. Time and seasons come and go.

Verse 9

Suppose Śaṅkarācārya’s effort succeeds and you are awakened. You cannot know by yourself how the spiritual journey should be undertaken; a guru is required. Slowly you will find that you have all the qualifications required for mokṣa. When ignorance is removed, you discover the Lord within yourself; previously, ignorance covered this fact.

Verse 10

This points out how knowledge leads to liberation or independence. Dependence on the external world is purely because of ignorance. When ignorance is removed, kāraṇa and kārya go away; saṃsāra is gone. Three examples illustrate that when the cause goes away, the effect goes away:

1. Desire forces a person to work for the fulfillment of desire. This is possible only when there is youth and strength. When youth is gone, strength is gone.

2. The reason for a reservoir is water. When the water is gone, the reservoir is meaningless; when water is gone, where is the question of a reservoir?

3. What keeps people around me? Money keeps people around me. When money is gone, I may not have people around me.

Therefore, destroy delusion, seek the Lord, approach a guru, and gain jñānam. Jñānam destroys ignorance; then you become a free person.

The first 12 verses are compared to 12 flowers. These 12 verses were composed by Ādi Śaṅkarācārya, the master of all śāstras and the embodiment of compassion. The remaining verses were composed by his disciples.

Class 7

The second portion of Bhaja Govindam consists of verses composed by Ādi Śaṅkarācārya's disciples.

Another title for Bhaja Govindam is Moha Mudgara—like a hammer destroying our delusions by repeated striking.

Human beings often become deluded by taking the means as the end. For example, money and the physical body are only means, but often we take them as the ultimate end. The physical body is a means to accomplish enlightenment, but we treat it as an

end and spend our life beautifying it.

Throughout the first portion, one point emphasized is that we can discern the following truths:

1. Nothing is fully predictable; the future is unpredictable.
2. Even if some factors are predictable, because of limited power we cannot control all factors.
3. Even if we manage to keep factors favorable, we can never sustain them permanently.

Instability is the intrinsic nature of everything. Therefore, when we are surrounded by unstable things, we cannot feel stable. As long as a human being depends on an unstable setup, that person will have constant insecurity. Emotional security is not possible when we depend on an unstable setup.

What is “emotional insurance”? We think that by relying on the world, relatives, and friends we gain emotional insurance. But we do not gain lasting emotional security, because friends may die, relationships may change, and conditions may shift. Only one thing can give permanent emotional security, and that is Govinda. Even if everything—money, friends, relatives, job, etc.—goes away, I have something to fall back on, and that is Govinda. Use God for permanent security.

Each disciple of Ādi Śaṅkarācārya offers a verse to the guru. This forms the second part of Bhaja Govindam. Before each śloka, the name of the disciple appears. Some ślokas highlight virtues to nourish; others highlight human weaknesses.

Verse 13

In this verse, Padmapāda emphasizes the virtue of sat-saṅga (satsaṅga), association with mahatmas, and gradual disassociation from those who pursue only artha and kāma. It is not wrong to pursue artha and kāma, but they are uncontrollable, unsustainable, and unpredictable. Therefore,

we should gradually shift emphasis from artha–kāma to dharma–mokṣa.

Sense objects and sense pleasures are viṣaya. Attachment to sense pleasures binds us. Padmapāda questions those who are attached to sense pleasures: “What is this inexhaustible passion? Why can we not pursue something superior?” If we hold on to sense pleasures, we will not have lasting security. We must approach sādhu-puruṣas and learn.

Class 8

Our scriptures speak of four goals of human life: artha (wealth), kāma (sense pleasures), dharma (moral values), and mokṣa. Dharma serves two purposes: first, it provides mental peace and health; second, it prepares the mind for spiritual enlightenment. Mokṣa is spiritual liberation.

In the early stages of life, our mind is not mature enough to understand the significance of dharma and mokṣa. Therefore, we are often obsessed with artha and kāma. The Veda allows this, but expects us to understand the limitations of artha and kāma and to mature into dharma and mokṣa. Artha and kāma need not be totally eliminated, but their importance should reduce, and the importance of dharma and mokṣa should increase. This gradual change is indicated by the four āśramas. The easiest and most effective way is to maintain regular contact with a jñānī.

Saṃsāra is shifting from one perishable to another and getting “burnt” in the process. We should cross over from the perishable to the imperishable to avoid saṃsāra. Satsaṅga constantly reminds us not to depend on perishables and teaches us independence.

Verse 14

Sotakācārya (Toṭakācārya), a great disciple of Śrī Ādi Śaṅkarācārya, composed this śloka.

Shifting priority from artha–kāma to dharma–mokṣa is not easy. We develop a strong addiction to money; the world constantly tells us money is important. Our obsession with money and sense pleasures is built up over years. Therefore, external transformation may be easier, but bringing a corresponding change in the mind is difficult. Internal transformation is difficult, but it is more important.

Renounce obsession with artha and kāma; if one has not renounced this obsession, one is not mature enough for enlightenment. External appearance can be a show for society. Toṭakācārya warns: one may cheat society, but one cannot cheat the Lord. Give importance to internal transformation.

A sannyāsī has only three supports: guru, śāstra, and Īśvara.

Jainism accepts tapas as the most important sādhanā for liberation.

Verse 15

This verse is attributed to Hastāmalaka Ācārya. He wrote Hastāmalakīyam—twelve verses that present the essence of Vedānta. He is called Hastāmalaka because he could “see” the Ātman clearly, like one can clearly see a gooseberry (āmalaka) in the palm of the hand.

People may not always have an opportunity for satsaṅga and learning from mahatmas to understand the limitations of the world, because much of the world is obsessed with money and pleasure. Another opportunity is life itself—especially experiences of loss, including losing objects and people we hold dear. An intelligent person learns from these losses. Every loss indirectly teaches that nothing in creation is stable. The ultimate source of love and care is the Lord, and that Lord is within ourselves.

Class 9

Gradually change priority from an artha-kāma-pradhāna life to a dharma-pradhāna life. To accomplish this, there are many methods. Many scriptures guide us, and Bhagavān teaches us through life experiences. Despite all these methods, if we refuse to learn, we make the omnipotent Bhagavān “impotent,” as it were—because we refuse His teaching.

Verse 16

Our śāstras speak of four āśramas, and each āśrama involves transformation of human life:

1. External: the dress code itself changes. The dress for a brahmacārī is different from that of a gṛhastha.
2. Internal: equally important.

Of these two, internal transformation is primary. External transformation is for convenience and is secondary. A sannyāsī is supposed to dedicate life to spiritual pursuit. A sannyāsī who changes clothes but not inner attitude gives the wrong message to society. This also creates tremendous strain for the sannyāsī.

The purpose of sannyāsa āśrama is to provide time for reflection and freedom from preoccupation. A sannyāsī limits preoccupations by limiting four factors:

1. Possessions (we must plan to protect and maintain them)
2. Obligations (every duty causes mental preoccupation)
3. Relations (every relationship causes mental preoccupation)
4. Transactions (every transaction causes preoccupation)

Sannyāsa āśrama reduces all four and is meant for total spiritual pursuit.

Verse 17

Five basic principles of Vedantic teaching:

1. Lasting peace, security, and happiness are possible only through mokṣa.
2. Mokṣa is possible only through spiritual knowledge.
3. Spiritual knowledge is possible only through systematic education with the help of guru and śāstra.
4. Systematic spiritual education is possible only if one has a prepared mind.
5. A prepared mind is accomplished through various spiritual exercises like japa, rituals, dānam, etc.

For lasting peace and security, there is only one path—mokṣa. Many paths exist only for preparing the mind.

Prepare, learn, know, and be free.

Verse 18

Spiritual pursuit requires reduction of possessions, obligations, relations, and transactions. Among these, possessions often create the most preoccupation because possessions lead to more possessions, and then they must be cleaned, repaired, maintained, etc. Try to simplify life. External clutter leads to cluttered thinking. You do not require “more and more” to be happy.

Class 10

Verse 18

External possessions have no direct connection to mental peace and happiness. Peace is connected with what we are, not what we have. External possessions can provide physical comfort, but physical comfort does not guarantee mental peace.

Verse 19

This verse was written by Ānandagiri, who also wrote sub-commentaries to many of Ādi Śaṅkarācārya's commentaries.

Inner transformation is the primary goal of life because:

1. Inner transformation itself can give peace, security, and happiness even without external transformation.
2. External transformation cannot be fully achieved by a human being because world-forces are too many. We cannot change most of them; the external world cannot be totally changed.

For inner transformation, the śāstras prescribe the four stages of life. Initially one takes to active life; through karma one purifies the mind—this is pravṛtti mārga. After purification, one withdraws from excessive involvement; through enlightenment one gains mokṣa—this is nivṛtti mārga. A change in lifestyle is not compulsory. One need not withdraw physically to a forest; one can withdraw mentally and dedicate oneself to spirituality.

Do not give excessive importance to external circumstances. If the mind is no longer dependent on an unpredictable, uncontrollable, and unsustainable creation, and instead depends on stable Brahman, that person is secure and safe. Mental stability is possible only by holding on to something stable. Without mental stability, peace is not possible. The only stable “thing” is Brahman. You need not renounce the world, but do not depend on the world.

Verse 20

Three basic disciplines for mokṣa:

1. Scriptural study, because you must know the teaching. You need not study all scriptures; the essence is available in the Bhagavad Gītā.

2. At least sip Gaṅgā water. This is symbolic; pilgrimage requires tapas. A pilgrimage represents forgoing comfort. Tapas is deliberate self-denial to establish mastery over the sense organs. Mokṣa is emotional freedom from all addictions.

3. At least once a day, worship the Lord. A house can be made into a temple through regular pūjā. (The spirit of the teaching is that a dhārmic home becomes protected through devotion and discipline.)

Verse 21

Nityanātha wrote this verse.

Every human being has one common problem: saṃsāra. Saṃsāra means moving from one setup to another, from one condition to another, from one situation to another. We have been doing this since birth. Even death is not the end, because everyone is reborn. Being repeatedly born and repeatedly dying is the human condition. It is extremely difficult to get out of this cycle of time. Only one “reality” is outside this cycle: Brahman.

Class 11

In this section, the author mentions the importance of Īśvara kṛpā. Spiritual pursuit is not easy because obstacles arise from oneself, from known external factors, and from unknown external factors. Therefore, human effort must be reinforced with Īśvara kṛpā. Effort and grace are like the two wings of a bird; a bird can fly high only when both wings function. Similarly, spiritual pursuit succeeds when there is both effort and grace. That is why we pray: to protect ourselves from obstacles.

Verse 22

Here the disciple speaks about the glory of a yogi or an enlightened sannyāsī. He is on a spiritual path leading to truth beyond puṇya and pāpa. A sannyāsī gives up possessions,

obligations, relations, and transactions (PORT). We may pity such a person, but he is full of inner riches, even though he is “poor” from the standpoint of worldly possessions and transactions. Society pities him, but he pities society. His mind is ever fixed upon self-knowledge. Voluntary poverty is simplicity. The world measures richness and poverty in terms of possessions.

Verse 23

“Who are you? Who am I? Who is my mother? Who is my father? From where do all these people come, and what is their nature?” A body is simply a name given to a bundle of flesh and bone. By inquiring into the nature of the world, reflect that the world is name and form, and that name and form are changing and unstable. If I hold on to this unstable nāma-rūpa, how will I get stability in my life? This world is like a dream. The world is like a decorated cardboard chair—use it for decoration, but do not sit on it.

Verse 24

On inquiry, the whole world is reduced to name and form. The differences we experience are differences only in name and form. There is only one ultimate substance, which is Ātman or Brahman. Here the author refers to this ultimate reality as Viṣṇu. When you focus on superficial differences, it leads to rāga, dveṣa, etc. When you focus on advaitam, there is no conflict. Focus on non-difference rather than superficial differences.

Verse 25

We look at the world through “private eyes,” colored by our likes and dislikes. We divide the world into favorable and unfavorable. People become friends and foes. Constantly, every moment, we generate friends and foes around us. This becomes an endless dilemma. Therefore, do not waste your energy and life fighting with people and patching things up. If you want

to attain mokṣa, spend more time in spiritual sādhanā.

Verse 26

Obstacles may come from outside, but you cannot run away from internal obstacles. The internal obstacles are:

1. Kāma: obsession or passion for the external world, making the mind extrovert.
2. Krodha: disturbs the mind; the mind is not available for spiritual pursuit.
3. Lobha: greed to possess more and more.
4. Moha: delusion—expecting security from insecure objects; expecting permanence from impermanent things.

Inquire into your real nature and discover the secure Ātman within yourself.

Class 12

Verse 27

The entire spiritual sādhanā is described in the first two verses: remove kāma, krodha, lobha, and moha by following karma yoga, and know the Ātman through jñāna yoga. Those who do not know this are tormented in the world of mortality. Even higher lokas involve mortality. Wherever there is mortality, there is insecurity and pain.

Verse 28

This verse talks about four fundamental sādhanās:

1. Pārāyaṇam of scriptures. Scriptural knowledge is not compulsory for everyone. The Vedas should be chanted with utmost care; therefore, it may be preferable not to do Veda-pārāyaṇam casually. Instead, do pārāyaṇam of non-Vedic scriptures and stotras.

2. Dhyānam or upāsanam: meditate upon the Lord.

3. Sat-saṅga (satsaṅga): develop interest in satsaṅga; remain in touch with informed guides.

4. Dānam: charity; a percentage of income should be allocated to charity.

According to our facility, capacity, and capability, we can follow any of these, in any order.

Verse 29

Many people dedicate their whole life to earning wealth and then using it exclusively for sense pleasure. When we draw joy from Rāma, it is real and elevating. When we indulge in sense pleasures, addictions arise, leading to overindulgence and various diseases.

Such a person keeps accumulating things and takes ownership of as many things as possible. But we cannot own anything; everything is a temporary gift from Bhagavān. Whatever we have is a temporary gift—use it, and return it with gratitude when it is taken back. Using is our aim; owning is not our aim. Even though death will end all ownership and everything we “own” will be snapped away, we often fail to understand this.

Verse 30 & 31

What is the goal of life? Many people think sense pleasure is the ultimate goal. But the goal of life is not indulgence in sense pleasure or increasing the number of things we own. Constantly discriminate between what is nityam and what is anityam. Use discretion and fix your goal properly.

Practice prāṇāyāma, which improves both physical and mental health. Choose any name of the Lord you like for japa. This can lead to samādhi, absorption in that mantra. Complete absorption is samādhi. Be alert and committed to these disciplines: breathing control, sense control, inquiry,

practice of samādhi, and constant alertness.

Verse 32

Two important general disciplines:

1. Necessity of a spiritual guide: be humble and accept the guidance of someone who knows. Surrender to that teacher. Real bhakti is seeking guidance and following it. Establish a systematic educational program to receive the teaching and follow it.

2. Making oneself fit to receive the teaching: mastery of indriyas and mind. Before beginning the journey, ensure that the indriyas are disciplined. This leads to the discovery of one's higher nature, Ātman. Whatever one seeks in life—immortality, purity, fulfillment—Ātman alone can provide. This is freedom from saṃsāra.

Self-management and the guidance of a guru together lead to fulfillment and independence.

Concluding verses

When Śaṅkarācārya was in Kāśī, an old man was repeating a grammar rule of Pāṇini. Language is a means, not an end. Śaṅkarācārya and his disciples point out that life is not meant for grammar alone, but for enlightenment. After this teaching, the man recognized his folly, became free of his delusion, and decided to change the direction of his life.

Spiritual sādhanā can be started at any age, as long as one starts at some point.

Follow nāma-smaraṇam until you find a guide. Liberation will not come directly from nāma-smaraṇam alone, but it creates the ideal condition for further sādhanā.

Swamiji's 2026 New Year Message – Self-Knowledge (Ātma-vidyā)

Self-knowledge is the central subject matter of our scriptures, the Vedas. The Vedas are broadly divided into two parts. The initial portion deals with Dharma Śāstra—guidelines on how to live our lives in harmony with the world. The final portion, known as Vedānta, presents spiritual teachings primarily in the form of the Upaniṣads.

There are several Upaniṣads, most of them structured as dialogues between a teacher and a student. The Upaniṣadic students discerned the fundamental problem of humanity. This problem is martyatvam—mortality, or being subject to the principle of time. Because of time, everything is constantly changing. These changes bring both favorable and unfavorable conditions, and unfortunately, their nature is unpredictable and unknown. As a result, life often feels as though it is moving in darkness. We feel that we are not fully in control of ourselves or our future, which creates a constant sense of vulnerability. Anxiety and stress regarding the future of ourselves, our friends, and our family naturally follow. All these are consequences of change.

In the first part of life, we experience stress and anxiety. As life progresses, old age arrives along with various diseases, ultimately leading to death. These are the most explicit expressions of mortality. Over time, stress and anxiety intensify into fear and panic. Stress, anxiety, and fear are universal problems, all rooted in mortality. Another word for this condition is saṃsāra. Although we live with this

problem daily, we rarely attempt to solve it. The students of the Upaniṣads recognized this problem clearly and sought a remedy.

The remedy discovered by the Upaniṣads is the recognition of the opposite of mortality–immortality. This immortal principle is called Ātma, and the knowledge of this truth is known as Ātma-vidyā. Ātma-vidyā enables us to face mortality without stress, fear, or panic. Many Upaniṣadic teachings are presented through dialogues between a teacher and a student to communicate this knowledge.

In the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, there is a dialogue between Yājñavalkya and Maitreyi. Yājñavalkya informs Maitreyi of his decision to take sannyāsa and renounces all his material possessions. He asks his wife Maitreyi to share it with his other wife. Maitreyi, however, asks whether wealth can give immortality. Upon learning that it cannot, she chooses knowledge over possessions and asks for Ātma-vidyā.

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad, Naciketā seeks this same knowledge from Yama Dharma Rāja. Yama tests Naciketā by offering wealth, pleasure, and even a kingdom. Naciketā rejects all these, recognizing that none of them can solve the problem of saṃsāra. Pleased with his discernment, Yama teaches him Ātma-vidyā.

Śāstra explains that we have both changing and unchanging aspects in our personality. Our personality is divided into four layers:

1. Outer layer – the visible sthūla śarīram (gross body)
2. Middle layer – the subtle, invisible inner personality
3. Karmic layer – the causal body (kāraṇa śarīram), which carries the results of past actions

These three layers are subject to arrival and departure. At the time of death, we shed the outer layer. At the time of pralaya, the total dissolution, even the subtle and causal layers resolve.

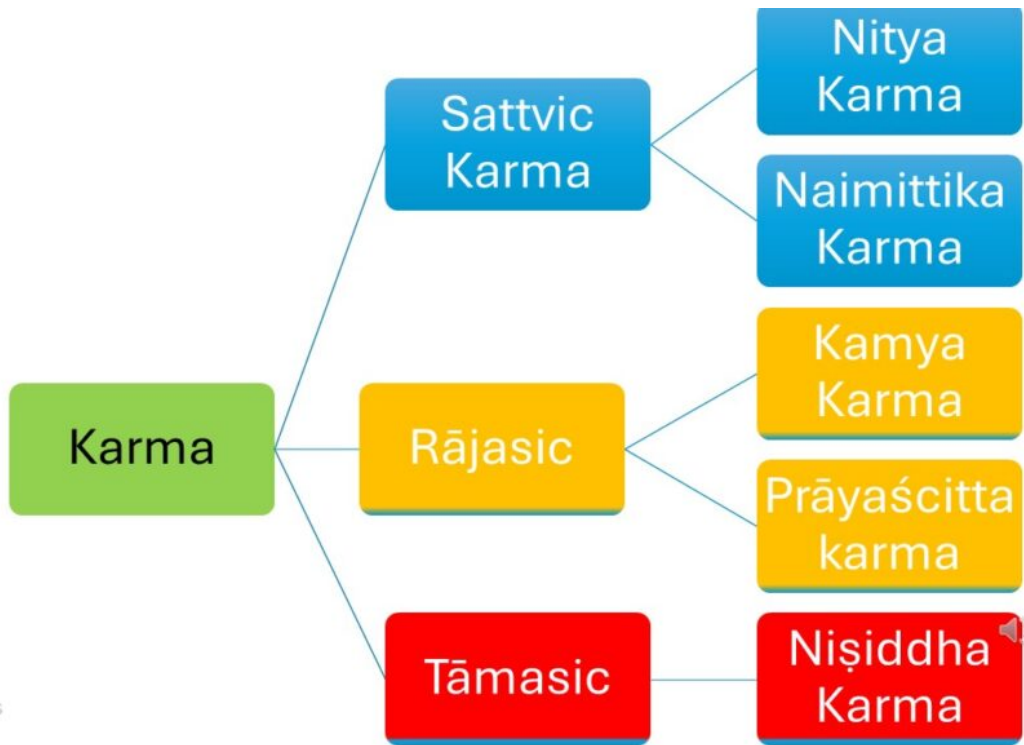
Behind these changing layers lies the core, the Ātma. The three changing layers are called anātma, while Ātma is immortal and unchanging. Ātma is our true and higher nature. Through spiritual pursuit, we discover this truth and remain anchored in it. One who is firmly established in this knowledge is called a mukta puruṣa.

If I am anchored in immortality, I am no longer disturbed by change. Degeneration, disease, and death—the three “D’s”—belong only to the anātma. When we accept the mortality of the anātma while remaining established in the Ātma, the problem of saṃsāra is resolved. This freedom is called mokṣa, and it is open to everyone, not only to the elderly.

Let self-knowledge (Ātma-vidyā) be our primary goal and New Year resolution for 2026.

Niyatha Karma 2

In this second video discussing the concept of Karma in Vedanta, I detail Niyatha Karma – tapas (Austerity), DhAnam (Charity) and Pancha MahA Yajña (five essential practices) – as described in Bhagavad Gita. Bhagavan Krishna tells us in Bhagavad Gita that we should not renounce these niyatha karma. The slides used in this video:



Tapas

- Moderation; avoid overindulgence
- Austerity; spiritual discipline
- Conviction, not compulsion

DhAnam

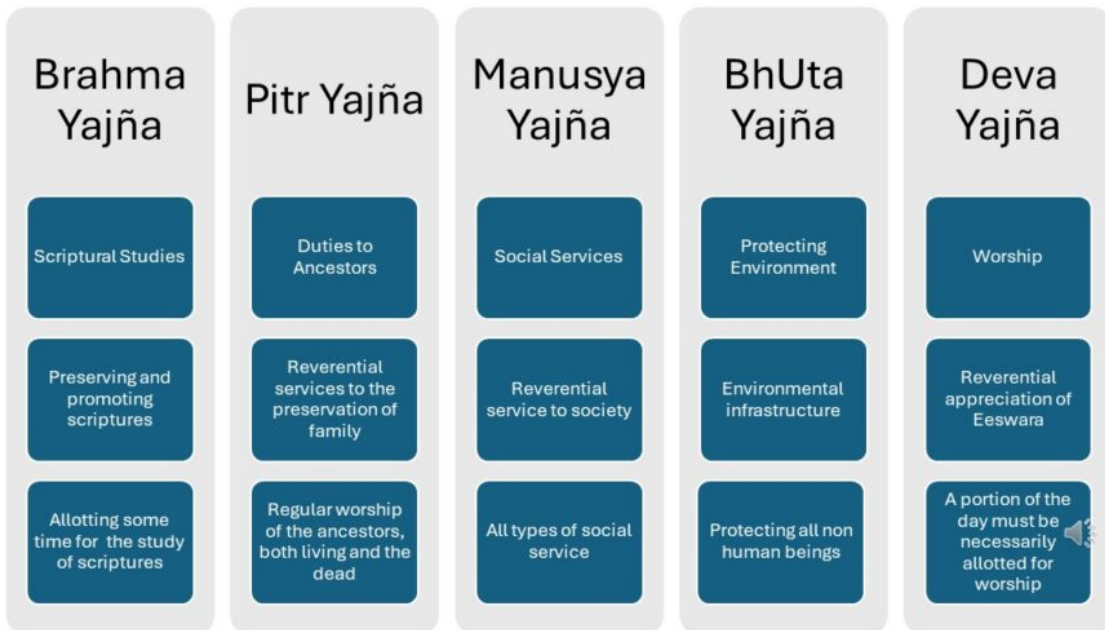
- Charity
- Sharing Wealth, knowledge

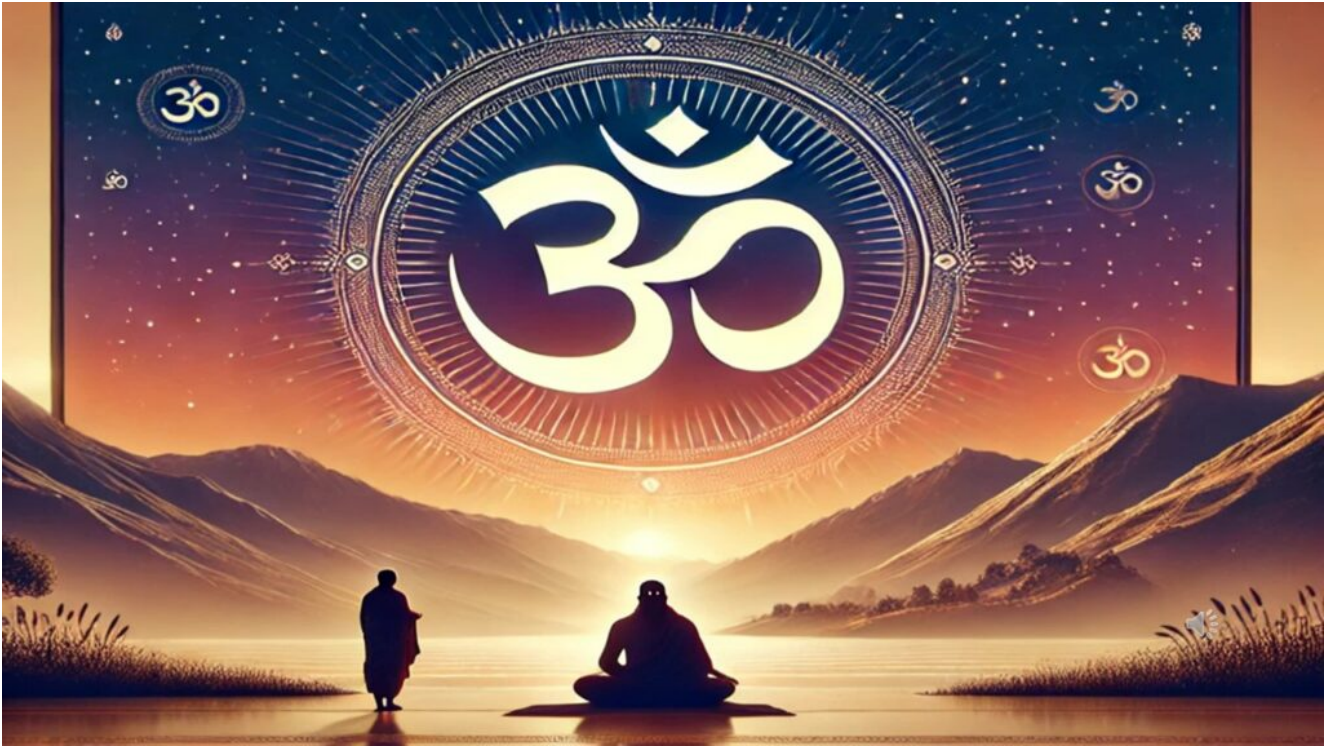
Yajña

- Pancha MahA Yajña



Pañcha MahA Yajña (Five Essential Practices)





Bhagwat Geeta, Class 186 – Chapter 14 Verses 19 and 20

Each guna binds a person in one way or another, because each guna requires a particular set up. Satva guna requires a setup conducive to knowledge and tranquility, rājo guna requires a setup conducive to activity and tāmō guna requires a setup conducive to sleep. A particular set up that is favorable for sattva guna, is not favorable for rājo guna. As a boktha we divide the set up into favorable and unfavorable, developing strong rAga and dveSha. To change the set up, we become a kartA. But the setup is never satisfactory, so we constantly try to change the setup. But we never own by our infinite nature. SaguNa body mind complex keeps us so busy that we are not allowed to think of nirguNa sakshi. The three guNas constantly change, requiring constant change in the setup, resulting in a person being in eternal struggle. The

only remedy is transcending the three gunas and ahamkara. AhaMkAra can never be made nirguNa as the three guNas are bound to be there. NirguNa mind does not exist, as mind is subject to the three guNas. The only remedy is to switch the identification from SaguNa ahaMkAra to nirguNa consciousness.

Consciousness is beyond the body, but it is not physically beyond. Consciousness is not affected by body mind complex, even though it is in and through the body. This is similar to light is in and through an object, but it is not affected by the object. The disturbances of the mind do not affect the consciousness. I am that consciousness, beyond the three guNas and not affected by the body mind complex. The day I know that my pUrNatvam is not determined by the setup is the day I am free. An intelligent person changes himself rather than changing the setup.

AnAtma is the doer. To emphasize this, Lord Krishna says that there is no doer other than anAtma. Only when we recognize this fact, we will be free from the struggles of life. This is jivanmukti and this can be obtained only by knowledge or jñānam.

Verse 20

Having gone beyond these three gunas which are the cause of rebirth, a person becomes free from birth, death, old age, and sorrow and attains immortality.

Three guNas represent the three bodies, five koshas and the entire anatma. This body is a given by the lord, for gathering the knowledge that I am the body, but I have the body for temporary use. The three guNas have given me this body, they will also give me my next body. The three guNas are the cause of repeated acquisition of bodies. When a person disidentifies form the body, that person is free from all the problems belonging to the body. Body is mortal is not a problem; but I am mortal is problem. Vedanta does not

remove the idea that the body is mortal but teaches that I am not the mortal body but the immortal I, the atma behind the mortal body. The body being born, growing, decaying and dying are not a problem; it is the nature of the body. It becomes a problem for sorrow when I refuse to accept that nature. ShAkShi jñānam gives me objectivity with regards to my own body. Once this objectivity comes, the intensity of the problem comes down. The body will have to go through the condition, but you develop a different perspective and the events of life may not appear to be a tragic events. This is similar to the sunlight making the stars as though they do not exist.

Jivan mukti is making life's problem insignificant by changing the perspective through knowledge. As a result of this knowledge, the mortality of body is not a problem. We can attain immortality by shifting the identification from the mortal body to immortal atma. This is jivan mukthi and also called guNatheetha.

Verse 21

Arjuna asked – Oh Lord! With what characteristics does a person who is beyond these three guNas appear? What is his conduct? And how does he go beyond these three guNas?

Arjuna is inspired by the Lord's teachings and asks three questions:

1. The first question is what are the characteristics or indicators of a person who has transcended the three guNas? Will there be any change in his physical body? Will there be any extraordinary powers?
2. The second question is how does he conduct himself and interact with other people?
3. The third question is how does he transcend the three guNas? Is it a physical journey?

Bhagwat Geeta, Class 156 – Chapter 12 Bhakti Yogaha, Verses 3 to 5



The 12th Chapter begins with a question from Arjuna. Arjuna asks whether saguna dhyānam or nirguna dhyānam is superior. Saguna dhyānam means meditation up on the Lord with various features. Nirguna dhyānam means meditation up on the lord with no features. This question is wrong because the idea of superior comes only when you can choose. According to Krishna, there is no choice between saguna dhyānam or nirguna dhyānam as everyone has to go through both. Everyone needs to do both. What saguna dhyānam can give, nirguna dhyānam cannot give, so both are compulsory. They cannot be simultaneously practiced. Everyone should start with saguna dhyānam, purify the mind, go to nirguna dhyānam and get moksha. Krishna says that saguna dhyānam is superior, but nirguna dhyana devotees will reach him. The benefits of saguna dhyānam is not material wealth, but transformation of inner personality.

Verses 3 and 4

Having restrained the sense organs, being even-minded towards all, and being interested in the welfare of all beings, some (devotees) meditate upon the imperishable (Brahman) which is indefinable, unmanifest, all-pervading, incomprehensible, immutable, immoveable, and eternal. They attain Me alone.

There are people who follow nirguna dhyānam as part of jñāna yoga. In these three verses, Krishna is elaborating jñāna yoga, which is nirguna dhyānam nidhithyasanam. Nirguna eeswara is:

- Avyaktam: Not perceptible to any sense organs. The universe is made up of five elements and our five sense organs recognize each one of them. When we close the five sense organs, and then meditate upon nirguna Brahman. Brahman or nirguna brahman is inconceivable, imperceptible, incomprehensible and indescribable or in one word unobjectifiable or Aprameya. Nirguna Brahman is everywhere. Saguna Brahman is finite and can move from one place to another. But nirguna Brahman is infinite and formless and all-pervading and cannot move from one place to another. Nirguna Brahman is free from spatial limitation.
- kūṭastham: Brahman is free from sixfold modifications caused by kala tattvam – time. kūṭa is also the anvil, the base used by iron smith for hammering iron. Up on the anvil, the smith places the hot metal and shapes the metal. The metal undergoes change, but the anvil remains changeless. Nirguna brahman is like kūṭa or anvil that does not change. Changeless substratum is required for all changes. All lifestyle events shape our personality, but the witness principle, the Brahman remains changeless.

How can we meditate up on a featureless Brahman. Krishna says one must qualify oneself for such meditation.

The preparation for nirguna eeswara dhyānam is fourfold qualifications are sādhana catuṣṭaya sampatti or:

- Discrimination
- Dispassion

- Discipline
- Desire

Sādhana catuṣṭaya Sampatti is described in these verses.

Krishna has said that nirguna eeswara is not objectifiable, that eeswara can exist in only one way. The un-experienceable principles is experienter alone. Therefore, nirguna dhyānam is mediating up on myself, the atma or meditating up on the meditator. Therefore, the mediator must be non-extrovert at the time of nirguna dhyānam.

- Mastering indriya grama or group of five sense organ
- Maintaining equanimity under all circumstances. The mind must be free from raga dwesha – likes and dislikes.
- Being committed to the well beings of all creatures; universal love; Expanded mind; Mind must be sensitized to feel the difficulties of others and interested in their wellbeing.

Verse 5

Difficulties are more for those people whose minds are committed to the pursuit of the unmanifest Brahman, for the goal of unmanifest Brahman is attained with difficulty by the people of bodily attachment. jñāna yoga is difficult because the destination of the formless one is difficult to reach; a highly refined mind is required. jñāna yoga requires sravanam, mananam and nidhithyasanam and nidhithyasanam is jñāna yoga. The difficulties of people committed to jñāna yoga is many. Because the destination of the formless Brahman, is difficult to reach. The common obstacle is deha abimana or strong attachment to one's own physical body and we are busy maintaining and improving the body. Stronger the body attachment, the more difficult jñāna yoga.

Bhagwat Geeta, Class 154 – Chapter 12 Bhakti Yogaha, Verses 1 to 2

The 12th Chapter gives a comprehensive essence of Vedas. The first part (the first 12 verses) of this chapter deals with Bhakti Yoga as a means of moksha. This chapter removes many confusions regarding bhakti yoga. Second part (13 to 20th) Bhakti Yoga palam or moksha is discussed in the second part – 13th to 20th verses.

Bhakti yoga is not a particular sadhana, but the range of spiritual sadhana culminating in Moksha. There are three sadhanas of bhakti yoga:

1. Karma Yogaha. Krishna divides this into sakama and niṣkāma karma. In both of these, a person is extroverted, dependent on the world. This is an obstacle to jñāna yoga.
2. Upasana Yogaha
3. Jani Yogaha

These three sadhanas should be practiced only in the atmosphere of eeswara bhakti, therefore these three yogas are called bhakti yoga.

Krishna subdivides these three into five levels; karma yoga is subdivided into level one and level two; and upasana yoga is also divided into level one and level two. jñāna yoga is the fifth level.

In Karma yoga level one Krishna wants to accommodate all materialistic people.

- In the first level of karma yoga, we practice karma yoga for selfish activities, but accept the results as prasadam from the lord. This attitude will purify the mind. In this level, karma yoga is pursuing worldly pleasures but with two conditions.
 - First condition is you pursue worldly pleasures only by legitimate means.
 - The second condition is attributing these acquisitions as eeswara parasadam. Claim everything as eeswara prasadam.

This first level of karma yoga is sakama karma yoga, where we have desire only for taking.

- In the second level, the karma yoga practiced for sharing. This is niṣkāma karma yoga. This will give purity at a faster rate. In sakama karma, we measure our success based on how much we have taken, in niṣkāma karma, we measure success based on how much we have given. This will give purity at a faster rate.
- In the third level, or first level of upasana yoga, Eka roopa Eeswara dhyānam. This Krishna calls this as abyāsaḥ yoga.
- In the fourth level or the second level of upasana yoga is aneka roopa Eeswara dhyānam. This helps in expanding the mind. Both third and fourth levels come under saguna Eeswara dhyānam.
- Once a person has completed the four level, that person is eligible for jñāna yoga. jñāna yoga consists of three levels:
 - Sravanam, systematic study of scriptures for a period of time under a competent guru.

- Mananam, resolving all doubts.
- Nidhithyasanam: Converting the intellectual knowledge to strengthen emotional personality; dwelling on the teachings of scriptures.

Karma yoga is important for the purity of mind, but it has the disadvantage of extroverted, which is an obstacle for jñāna yoga. In upasana yoga, I invoke the Lord inside and therefore upasana yoga is invertedness. All these five levels put together is Bhakti yoga.

In the last eight verses, Krishna discusses the character of a person who has successfully completed these five levels. Krishna calls him para bhakta, and there is no difference between him and the Lord.

Verse 1

Arjuna asked: Who are the best yogis among them – the ever-steadfast devotees who meditates up on You as described before and those who meditate upon the imperishable unmanifest Brahman?

This Chapter begins with a question from Arjuna, based on the previous chapters. Arjuna asks who is superior – saguna bhakta or nirguna bhakta?

Saguna eeswara can be eka roopa eeswara or aneka roopa eeswara. Nirguna eeswara is not perceptible to anybody. There is only way to meditate to nirguna eeswara that is to see as the subject itself as there is no subject object division in nirguna brahman.

Arjuna is asking indirectly who is superior – saguna eeswara or nirguna eeswara?

Verse 2

Lord Krishna said – Fixing the mind upon me with great faith, those ever-steadfast devotees who meditate upon Me are considered to be the best yogis by Me.

The real answer to Arjuna's question is that the question is wrong; for a wrong question, there is no right answer. Comparison is possible only between two similar items. There is no question of choice between two dissimilar items. Saguna eeswara and nirguna eeswara are not comparable.

Saguna bhakti is the means and nirguna bhakti is the end. Saguna bhakti is the steppingstone and nirguna bhakti is the goal. There is no choice between the two. Without saguna bhakti, nirguna bhakti is impossible, without nirguna bhakti saguna bhakti is incomplete.

Krishna does not want to tell Arjuna that the question is wrong. But he says saguna bhaktas are superior and nirguna bhaktas attain me. There is no question of choice.

Three Gunas

Bhagwat Gita

Three Gunas to Monitor One's Spiritual Progress

In Chapter 14 of Bhagwat Gita, Lord Krishna defines and describes the three gunas: Sattvic, Rajas and Tamas. In subsequent chapters, Lord Krishna classifies many of our daily actions and sadhanas into these three types.

Swami Paramarthananda has translated Bhagwat Gita for use by his students. Many students use these translations, published by chapter in book form, to chant the verses when attending Swamiji's Bhagwat Gita classes. In the introduction to Chapter

14, Swamiji has presented and analyzed the three gunas in a chart form. In subsequent topics, he presented the classifications of some karma and sadhana in chart forms.

Based on Swamiji's teachings of Bhagwat Gita, I somewhat expanded these charts to include teachings from Chapters 16, 17 and 18. The first chart defines the three gunas and the subsequent charts classify actions and sadhanas into these three gunas. I believe these charts give guidance on how to understand the three gunas, classify actions into the three gunas and try to improve the quality of actions. According to the scriptures we can improve the quality of actions by eliminating tamasic actions, reducing rajasic actions and increasing sattvic actions.

Please note that my knowledge of Sanskrit is very limited, and these charts may reflect that limitation.

With Regards

Ravi Chandran

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Bhagwat Gita			
Three Gunas			
Based on Swami Paramarthananda's Teachings			
Topic	Sattva	Rajas	Tamas

<p>परिभाषा (Definition)</p>	Chapter 14, Verse 6	Chapter 14, Verse 7	Chapter 14, Verse 8
	Prakasatmakam	Ragatmakam	Mohanatmakam
	Pre-disposed to acquire more knowledge; addicted to introspection	Tend to act more; clings on to possessions and desires for things not yet possessed	Eternal conflict, delusion and procrastination; not sure about the needs
<p>बन्धनप्रकारः (Mode of bondage)</p>	Chapter 14, Verses 6 & 9	Chapter 14, Verses 7 & 9	Chapter 14, Verses 8 & 9
	Causes attachment to knowledge; addicted to knowledge	Causes attachment to activity; addicted to karma (activities)	Causes attachment to indifference; bound to negligence
<p>सिद्धिचिह्नं (Sign of predominance)</p>	Chapter 14, Verse 11	Chapter 14, Verse 12	Chapter 14, Verse 13
	Increase of knowledge	Increase of activity, greed, restlessness and craving	Dullness, inaction, negligence and delusion
<p>मरणान्तरं (travel after death)</p>	Chapter 14, Verses 14 & 18	Chapter 14, Verses 15 & 18	Chapter 14, Verses 15 & 18
	To higher lokas	To middle lokas	To lower lokas

<p>फलान् (consequence in this life)</p>	Chapter 14, Verses 16 & 17	Chapter 14, Verses 16 & 17	Chapter 14, Verses 16 & 17
	Punya & Knowledge	Sorrow & greed	Ignorance & delusion

Bhagwat Gita

Classification of Actions

Based on Swami Paramarthananda's Teachings

Topic	Sattva	Rajas	Tamas
<p>विश्वास (Faith)</p>	Chapter 17, Verse 4	Chapter 17, Verse 4	Chapter 17, Verse 4
	Worship of satvic deities	Worship of rajasic deities	Worship of tamasic deities
	Mental worship	Verbal and physical worship	Violent worship
	Spiritual motive	Materialistic motive	Destructive motive
<p>भोजन (Food)</p>	Chapter 17, Verse 8	Chapter 17, Verse 9	Chapter 17, Verse 10
	That which is delicious, which gives longevity, health, strength and happiness	That which is excessively bitter, sour, salty, hot, pungent and which causes pain	That which is improperly cooked, without nutrition, putrid, stale, left over and impure

<p>दण्ड (Sacrifice)</p>	Chapter 17, Verse 11	Chapter 17, Verse 12	Chapter 17, Verse 13
	All activities done sincerely according to the scriptures; without expecting any results; karma yoga is satvic yoga; focus is on what one gives to the society	All activities done for fame, show and money; focus is on what one gets back from the society	All activities done involuntarily; without rules, faith, mantra or dakshina
<p>दान (Charity)</p>	Chapter 17, Verse 20	Chapter 17, Verse 21	Chapter 17, Verse 22
	Given with sincerity to a deserving person at the proper time and place without expecting any return; Charity is the end in itself	Given reluctantly for the sake of return and result	Given without respect to an undeserving person at an improper time and place

	Chapter 17, Verse 17	Chapter 17, Verse 18	Chapter 17, Verse 19
<p>अभ्यास (Austerity)</p>	Practiced with faith and without expecting any results; any worldly results should only be by-products	Practiced for the sake of show, name and fame; Results will be temporary and uncertain	Practiced with false notions and bodily torture for harming others

Bhagwat Gita

Classification of Actions

Based on Swami Paramarthananda's Teachings

Topic	Sattva	Rajas	Tamas
	Chapter 18, Verse 9	Chapter 18, Verse 8	Chapter 18, Verse 7
<p>त्याग (Renunciation)</p>	Renunciation of the results of Nitya karmas	Renunciation of Nitya karmas due to fear of bodily strain	Renunciation of Nitya karmas due to the ignorance of their value
	Continues to do karma yoga, but renounces the results		Renunciation of dhyānam and tapas

<p>ज्ञान Knowledge</p>	Chapter 18, Verse 20	Chapter 18, Verse 21	Chapter 18 Verse 22
	Sees the undivided Self in and through all the beings	Takes the Self to be distinct from every other being	Takes the body as the self
	I am the conscious principle which enlivens the body mind complex (I am the consciousness)	I am the tenant/owner of the body and am immortal; there are many immortal jivas just as me (I am the mind)	Believes in only what can be sensed by sense organs (I am the body)
<p>कर्म (Karma)</p>	Chapter 18, Verse 23	Chapter 18, Verse 24	Chapter 18, Verse 25
	Duty performed without attachment and expectations	Action done with egoism for the sake of results	Indiscriminate action done without considering the consequences
	Action done to improve my self knowledge	Action done to improve my surroundings	Actions done without any planning

दोषी (Doer)	Chapter 18, Verse 26	Chapter 18, Verse 27	Chapter 18, Verse 28
	Detached, perseverant, enthusiastic, unassuming and calm in success and failure	Attached, greedy, harmful and subject to elation and depression	Undisciplined, uncultured, arrogant, harmful, dull and procrastinating
	Does not get attached to any success or failure and uses all experiences for inner growth	Gets attached to success and failure and does not use the results for inner growth.	Does not have an integrated personality

Bhagwat Gita

Classification of Actions

Based on Swami Paramarthananda's Teachings

Topic	Sattva	Rajas	Tamas
बुद्धि (Intellect)	Chapter 18, Verse 30	Chapter 18, Verse 31	Chapter 18, Verse 32
	Clearly knows dharma and adharma, right and wrong as well as bondage and liberation	Has doubts regarding dharma and adharma, right and wrong	Considers adharma as dharma (e.g. Arjuna thought the war was adharma at the beginning of Bhagwat Geeta)

	Chapter 18, Verse 33	Chapter 18, Verse 34	Chapter 18, Verse 35
वृत्त (Will)	Sustains the functions of all organs in the spiritual path; controls sense organs by unswerving practice of yoga	Pursues dharma, artha and kama craving for their benefits	Does not give up sleep, fear, grief and indulgence
	Leads to spiritual success	Leads to material success	Leads to sensory pleasures and attachment

	Chapter 18, Verse 37	Chapter 18, Verse 38	Chapter 18, Verse 39
<p>सुखं</p> <p>(happiness)</p>	Like poison in the beginning and like nectar in the end; Happiness is born of self-knowledge	Like nectar in the beginning and like poison at the end; happiness is born of contact between sense organs and objects	Deludes the mind in the beginning and in the end; happiness is born of indolence and negligence.
	Not subject to loss; sadhana shadhushta sambanthi	Subject to loss and will go away creating a vacuum	Based on fatalism and does not use free will
	सुखं सुखसंज्ञकं सुखसंज्ञकं		

Three-Gunas - 1Download

Mandukya Upanishad, Class 30

Karika # 34:

This manifold does not exist as identical with Ātman nor does it ever stand independent by itself. It is neither separate from Brahman nor is it non-separate. This is the statement of the wise.

After pointing out in Karika
32 that from Turiya Drsihti or Turiya point of view, there
is no creation at
all, now Gaudapada says, we can't say the world is non-
existent as well; hence
it is Mithya. He says, it is experientially available but it
is difficult to
prove that it does not exist.

In this karika he shows that
proving that it does not exist is difficult. We can't prove:

The world is Brahman,

or that it is a part of
Brahman,

or that it is different from
Brahman.

We can't logically establish
that this world can be identified with Brahman, as Brahman is
Chaitanyam while the
world is Achetanam; Brahman is nirvikara while world is
Savikara.

We cant say world is part of
Brahman as infinite is beyond time and space; so world can't
be part of
Brahman.

Is world different from
Brahman? If world is a separate entity, then there should be
duality and each
will limit the other; or, both will be finite. Limited Brahman
is a
contradiction in terms. Brahman being non-dual, a world
different from it is
not possible. So, we can't establish a relationship between

world and Brahman.

So the essence of karika # 34 is that both World and Brahman are Anirvachaniyam (indescribable).

Coming to the second line of the karika, Gaudapada says, if you study the world, you will find logical problems within it as well. Thus, there are many objects in creation, each different from the other. We have assumed these objects are different. This is our assumption and we have also invented different names for these objects. Thus, one is called a book and another is called say, a table. I transact with distinct words and it works. But if you probe a little bit further, you will not be able to show the difference between table and book; leave alone Brahman.

You can never clearly say whether an object is identical or different from another object. What is the problem in doing so? How to prove the difference, is the problem. Citing an example: Say yellow is different from green color; yellow can be seen; green also I can see. Now, I introduce the concept of difference between yellow and green. What is the color of the "difference" between yellow and green? You can't say the difference is yellow or green. This "difference" is not under category of color; as such we can't see the difference, as there is no Pratyakha pramanam.

Let us take the form of

objects; say a square and a circle. Square is visible; circle is visible as well; when we say they are different, is it the "difference" in form between a Square and circle ? What is form of the "difference"? The difference is not a form; it means we can't see it.

Therefore

"difference" is neither color nor form. Vedanta says, "difference" is not part of sound, shape, color, smell, taste and texture. Hence, bheda, the difference, is not provable through Pratyaksha Pramanam. It is not a Pratyaksha Vishayaha.

Can "Bheda" (difference) be

inferred by me? Vedantin says, what can't be perceived can never be inferred.

One can infer fire only if he has known fire through his perception in the past. If one has never experienced fire before, he can't infer fire from smoke.

I am able to infer fire from smoke because I have prior knowledge of fire.

So, Bheda is not object of

Pratyaksha pramana, or anumana pramana, or any other pramana, as such it cannot

reveal the Bheda. So, there is no pramanam to establish the Bheda. So, Bheda is

a misconception to begin with. Anything without pramana is known as Mithya. Similarly,

you can never talk of Dvaitam; thus the wise understand Dvaitam is also Mithya.

(Further elaboration: Thereafter, Gaudapada

makes another more profound statement. One needs to meditate on this statement

to fully grasp the meaning. We are experiencing so many objects in front of us.

Each object is different from each other. We are experiencing plurality and we

see everything different from everything else. Therefore, we are experiencing

difference everywhere in life. Vedanta asks what is the nature of difference?

Upon enquiry, difference is also mithya. Why? We experience difference but we

cannot prove difference as a fact. Blue sky is experientially available but it

is factually not there. Difference is experientially available but it cannot be

factually proved. If you have to prove something, you have to show a relevant

pramanam or evidence. What cannot be proved by pramanam cannot be accepted as

fact. What pramanam is there to prove difference? The tradition says that no

pramanam is present to prove difference. We are experiencing difference everywhere

but there is no pramanam to prove it. All our sense organs are meant to see

sound, touch, form, taste or smell. Difference or bheda does not come under any

of these five categories. **Difference**

does not have sound, touch, form, taste or smell. Difference is a concept we

have. Since difference does not have any attributes, pratyaksha does not prove

difference. Eyes see yellow color and blue color. The difference between the color's yellow and blue is not

perceived by

the eyes but conceived by the mind. Therefore difference is never perceived but

it is only conceived. If the difference is not perceived, why

can it not be said that it is inferred like smoke and fire? Inference will not help because whatever you are inferring has to have been perceived by you before. You are able to infer the fire because you have experienced fire and smoke together. You can only infer what you have perceived before. Because difference has never been perceived, you cannot make an inference also. Therefore, no pramanam can prove difference. Difference is experienced but cannot be proved. **What is experienced but cannot be proved is mithya.**

All the objects cannot be said to be identical with or different from each other. You can never prove objects as identical or different among themselves. You cannot prove them to be identical because you experience difference. Difference cannot be proved because there is no pramanam to do the proof. In short, the world is a mystery. It is experienced but you cannot prove anything logically. The more you go deeper, the more mysterious it gets. The adhishtanam for this mysterious world is I, the Turiya atma. Experience life without asking too many questions. Every question will produce an answer that will lead to more questions. It leads to riddles. That is why it is called maya. Enjoy the world as it is. Whenever favorable conditions come, thoroughly enjoy. Whenever unfavorable conditions come, thoroughly put up with them. Move

on. Do not talk too much. "aham satyam jagan mithya" is the knowledge.)

Karika # 35:

By the wise, who are free from attachment, fear and anger and who are well versed in the meaning of the Vedas, this (Ātman) has been verily realised as totally devoid of all imaginations (such as those of Prāṇa, etc.), free from the illusion of the manifold, and non-dual.

With previous Karika, Gaudapada has concluded teaching that "Jagat is Mithya". Jagat here, in Mandukya Upanishad, means the three Padas (Waker and waking world; Dreamer and dream world; and Sleeper and Karana Prapancha). Turiyam alone is satyam while other three padas are mithya.

Now in Karikas # 35-38, Gaudapada talks of Sadhanas that helps one to grasp this teaching. In karika # 35, he talks of Sadhana chatushtaya sampathihi, Smaranam and Mananam.

First qualification: required is one should be free from Ragaha (attachments). Such a person is a Vairagi. In such a person, even Bhayam (fear) leaves him, as does Krodhaha (anger). He is one who enjoys a calm mind.

Second qualification: required is one who is a clear thinker. Only when I know ignorance is the problem, knowledge becomes relevant. Knowledge must be more relevant than karma; it should appeal to me; only then Vedantic study will

appeal to me. Then,
I see the connection between ignorance, knowledge and Vedantic study and that this study can solve this problem. One who is a clear thinker is known as a Muni.

Third qualification: One who sees the connection between knowledge, Vedantic study, Sravanam and mananam. Many think self-knowledge comes only through meditation. One must know that knowledge can come only through Vedanta sravanam and mananam. Only those people can grasp Turiya Atma as defined in mantra # 7. This Turiyam is without any division of pramata-pramanam-prameyam, and Vishva-Virat, Taijasa-Hiranyagarbha, Prajna-Ishvara. Even the microcosm-macrocosm duality is not present in Turiyam. Those divisions belong to the transactional plane. The Turiyam is totally free from the mithya world and is non-dual.

These are the qualifications for an aspirant.

Karika # 36:

Therefore knowing the Ātman to be such, fix your attention on non-duality. Having realized non-duality behave in the world like an insensible object.

Some more qualifications are enumerated in this karika.

If a person has Sadhana Chatushtaya Sampathihi, to him just sravanam will give him the

Knowledge and Gyana phalam. For a qualified student, Gyanam and Gyana Phalam will occur at the same time. For others, Gyanam may occur but Gyana phalam may evade them. Here the problem is lack of Sadhana chatushtaya sampathihi. If so, how to rectify this gap?

The gap can be covered through Nidhidhyasanam. **It is to be followed by a student who has studied Vedanta but still does not get it. So, repeated sravanam and then mananam and dwelling on teaching are required.** Here the importance is on mental dwelling on the teaching. This is nidhidhyasanam. Even after learning Vedanta, if I am still just a learned Sanyasi; then I must dwell on Turiyam Satyam all the time. As I dwell on teaching the mind becomes prepared; then gyanam comes through shanti and with shanti then comes advaitam.

When this shanti comes, do not publicize that you are a Gyani or a jivan muktaha. Live in the world as an Agyani. Only if somebody wishes knowledge, give it to him.

Thus, this karika prescribes Nidhidhyasanam.

Karika # 37:

The man of self restraint should be above all praise, salutation and all rites prescribed by the Smṛti in connection with the departed ancestors. He

should have this body and the Ātman as his support and depend upon chances, i.e., he should be satisfied with those things for his physical wants, that chance brings to him.

Here Gaudapada says another Sadhana, an optional one, is Sanyasa Ashrama. It is useful for Vedantic study; and sravanam, mananam and nidhidhyasanam. If you wish, you can take to this path. Here, one chooses, to be a monk.

Advantages of Sanyasa:

1. He is free from duties in samsara. Free from pancha maha Yagna requirements. There are no religious or social obligations. A Grihastha can't be free from any of them.
2. Deva Yagna is not required
3. Pitr Yagna is not required.
4. Manushya Yagna is not required.
5. He does not maintain a home

Only requirement is Sravanam, mananam and nidhidhyasanam.

He lives in the body, a temporary abode, during Laukika Vyavahara; otherwise, he lives in Brahman.

If he has any possessions, whatever comes through prarabhdha, he accepts it. He

basically lives, by chance. Such a person is a sanyasi; but it requires courage to lead this life.

Karika # 38:

Having known the truth regarding what exists internally (i.e., within the body) as well as the truth regarding what exists externally (i.e., the earth, etc.) he becomes one with Reality, derives his pleasure from It and never deviates from the Real.

By following above sadhanas a person will get Tatva Darshanam. It is not a physical darshanam rather he now understands Turiyam. **He sees Turiyam both within and without. He sees it in form of Sakshi Chaitanyam Rupam which is not associated with the mind. It is consciousness dissociated from mind.**

He sees Turiyam outside also. Brahman inside only makes it limited. Brahman Outside, is seen as Sat, the existence principle. Where is the existence principle evident? In which part of the world is it evident? It is evident in the is-ness of the "pillar is"; the is-ness belongs to the pillar; in the is-ness of the "gold is" etc. This is existence or Sat.

Gaudapada says, when we say a Gyani sees Tatvam, we commit a mistake. Tatvam is not an object rather it is the "I" the subject. He becomes Atma himself. Previously he said: I have a body with Atma. Now he says: I have an Atma

with a body.

This

Tatva darshanam gives him joy. He does not require any other entertainment;

knowledge itself is his ananda. He does not reject external happiness; he

accepts material happiness as well. However, he does not slip from Brahman, thereafter.

He has obtained Gyana-nishta. Worldly transactions don't pull him from Gyanam.

Citing example of an expert cyclist, he does not lose his balance even as he

performs other activities. Such a person is called a Jivan mukta. This

concludes chapter 2 where Gaudapada focused on Jagan Mithya.

Take Away:

Difference

does not have sound, touch, form, taste or smell. Difference is a concept we

have. Since difference does not have any attributes, pratyaksha does not prove difference.

The

difference between the colors yellow and blue is not perceived by the eyes but

conceived by the mind. Therefore difference is never perceived but it is only conceived.

What

is experienced but cannot be proved is mithya.

Sakshi Chaitanyam is

consciousness dissociated from mind.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawad Geeta, Chapter 11 Summary

Swamiji summarized the chapter today. He said the significance of the chapter could be fully understood only if one has an understanding of Chapter's # 7 through # 10. It is a developmental chapter based on previous four chapters. In previous chapters Sri Krishna talked about nature of God or Ishwara Swarupam.

Ishwara is jagat karanam, the cause of the universe. What type of cause is he? Is he an intelligent cause or a material cause? The carpenter, the intelligent cause, and wood, the material cause, both are required in creation of furniture. God, however, is both the intelligent cause and material cause of this world and hence called the abhina-nimitha -upadana-karana Ishwara.

Of these two causes, we focus upon one cause, that is the material cause aspect in these four chapters; and when we focus on this material cause aspect, we come

to know that the material cause alone modifies or transforms to become various effects.

Blessed and backed by the intelligent cause, it is the material cause alone that manifests as manifold effect. This we clearly see in day-to-day experiences. One gold alone evolves or manifests into varieties of ornaments; one wood alone

becomes a variety of furniture. Thus we find that cause alone manifests in the form of effect. In fact there is no effect at all separate from the material cause, there are no ornaments separate from gold, there are no furniture separate from wood; there are no products separate from the material

cause. To put in another language; one material cause alone appears as manifold effect, by assuming different names

and forms. Thus behind all the names

and forms of the product, there is only one material cause. So behind bangle

name and form; chain name and form;

ring name and form; what I am experiencing is the material cause, the gold

alone. That means, if I wish the darshanam of gold; I need not separately

attempt it; when I am seeing the ornaments; I am seeing the causal gold alone.

I need not dismiss the ornaments; and separately work for the darshanam of the gold.

When

you are seeing the ornaments, you are directly in contact with the material

cause alone, with varieties of nama rupa.

Material cause becomes various effects

backed by intelligent cause. We see this in daily experience

where gold

manifests as ornaments; wood manifests as furniture etc. There is no effect separate from material cause; there is no product separate from material cause.

Therefore

karya darshanam is

essentially the material karana darshanam only. This is a very important fact, which we should remember when we see these four chapters.

and Lord Krishna applies this principle and points out, O Arjuna, I am

the material cause of the creation; not a few ornaments or a few furniture; I

am the material cause of this whole universe, consisting of para and apara prakrti; **Which means that the universe is nothing but God**

evolved with different nama and rupa.

Therefore one gold, which is called gold in the karana avastha (potential form); the very same gold is called ornaments in the karya avastha (manifest form). **So karanam and karyam are one and the same material only; karanam is with potential nama and rupa, whereas the karyam is with the manifest nama and rupa.**

Thus, when we see ornaments,

we are in contact with both karya darshanam and karana darshanam.

O Arjuna, I am the material

cause of this whole universe, consisting of para prakriti and apara prakriti.

And therefore Sri Krishna wants to say that Ishvara and the world can never be different; when all the names and forms are resolved; like resolving the ornaments, what obtains is called

avyaktha nama and rupa; we call it Ishwara and when the very same Ishwara available with evolved nama rupa is called prapancha. So there is no difference between prapancha darshanam and Ishvara darshanam; therefore whenever I am looking at the universe, I am only looking at the Lord with infinite varieties of nama rupa. In short, the world is the very embodiment of the Lord. If I do not have this understanding, I will call it the world. But if I have the understanding, I will call it as the form or the embodiment of Ishwara. When I look at the world as the embodiment of Ishwara; it is called Vishva rupa darshanam, as the very body of the Lord; that new perception based on the new understanding; that understanding is called the divya chakshuhu; based on this new understanding; when I have got a new attitude towards the ordinary universe; that new attitude is extra-ordinary attitude; the world is the ordinary world; but we are developing an extra ordinary attitude born out of understanding. And the new attitude is that, this which I thought to be world, is nothing but Ishvarasya shariram; and therefore Vishva rupa darshanam is not an extra ordinary object; but an extra ordinary attitude towards an ordinary universe that we experience everyday.

So, Vishwa Rupam is an extraordinary attitude towards an ordinary universe. An ordinary thing, when associated with great people or things, assumes extraordinary value. It is like the Venkateshwara laddu has special significance compared to an ordinary laddu; the same laddu because of association with god becomes revered. This value is a non-physical value; it is an attitudinal value born of understanding called Divya chakshu.

Citing an example of a

friend who shows up with a surprise item. When asked, he says it is a broken guitar belonging to Harrison, a Beatle. He sees a special value in the broken guitar due to its association with one of the Beatles. What is the difference between my perception and other, of the guitar? He has a divya chakshu, as he looks at the guitar with an extra-ordinary attitude.

And therefore we should remember appreciation is two-fold, one is physical and the other is attitudinal; attitudinal appreciation comes out of training and understanding; I should know all the exploits of Tendulkar; I should have been a parama bhaktha; knowing all the statistics; how many centuries; how many runs; how many catches behind the wickets; all these statistics are there; If I study all that and if I become a baktha; then an ordinary bat associated with Tendulkar will have an extraordinary value.

Extending

this to this universe; this universe is also something ordinary because we have been contacting it all the time; I should have bhakthi for Ishvara first; which requires lot of training and having developed bhakthi for the Lord; later I should be able to associate this universe as the embodiment associated with Isvara. Then appreciation of Ishvara should be there and understanding that this world is connected with Ishwara.

It

requires tremendous intellectual drill and mental refinement because we are not seeing anything new but we are seeing something old with a new attitude. And only then Vishva rupa darshanam can be

understood properly and that is why Krishna gives four chapters of training and then in the 11th chapter we get the culmination; this is the background we have to keep in mind.

Shloka # 1-#8:

Introductory shloka: Arjuna asks Sri Krishna, how can I get Vishwa Rupa darshanam? Sri Krishna says Vishwa Rupa Darshanam is not one of the forms of God. To obtain Vishwa Rupa Darshanam a tremendous change is required in one's attitude. Vishwa Rupam can be seen only with a Divya Chashu. Divya chakshu in turn requires a mind free from Ahamakra and mamakara; a mind that sees everything as belonging to God; thus, all my relations are not my people, but belong to God.

What about the body? Even it is God's alone when we see everything as belonging to God; that is Vishwa Rupa darshanam. **This ahamkara mamakara rahita chakshu is Divya chakshu.** Sri Krishna blesses Arjuna with this Divya chakshu and Arjuna is stunned by the vision he sees.

Shloka # 9-# 13:

Sanjaya now gives a description of Vishwa Rupam. Some say, Sanjaya was reportedly given the Divya chakshu by Sri Krishna as well. The word Sanjaya means Sam Jaya, one who has conquered ahamkara and mamakara.

What is Vishwa Rupam? Lord has thousand hands, legs, stomachs etc. We have to understand the Vishwa Rupam of thousands of hands and legs means all the hands and legs of all the people previously I saw as belonging to You and I; now I see all of them as Bhagavan's only, that is why in the Rudram, towards the end it says, when I am looking at my hands, this is also the hand of the Lord only.

Arjuna, now, has appreciation of Vishwa Rupam. He goes through three stages of appreciation. First he is wonderstruck by the vision. We don't appreciate it as we are stuck in Samsara. Scientists are wonderstruck by animals and insects. Scientists are still not able to recreate the cobweb of a spider. If you are wonderstruck, the wonder belongs to Ishwara.

In Australia there is an anthill with temperature controls created by ants. What scientists call wonders of nature, Vedas call it wonders of God.

This ascharyam is described in shlokas # 15-# 22.

Then in shlokas # 23- # 30 mouth of God or Kala Tatvam is described. Here he describes all soldiers of both armies that are going to die, entering mouth of God. Kala is Srishti, Sthiti and Laya Karanam, all a part of Vishwa Rupa Drashanam. We are trained to be un-afraid of death. Death is not amangalam, rather it is mangalam for the next generation.

Arjuna saw all this, but he also saw Bhishma, Drona and others die as well. He was not free of Ahamkara.

His Divya chakshu is a borrowed one and not one acquired due to his maturity.

He could not accept death of his kith and kin. He then experiences fear of the destruction of kith and kin as he sees God devouring them and enjoying it in

the process. One with strong Ahamkara can get upset with God, seeing this

suffering. So Arjuna asks, O God, who are you?

Shlokas # 31- # 34:

Sri Krishna answers

Arjuna's question. He says, I am kalatatvam, the destructive force in the battlefield.

Therefore, Arjuna, Vishwa Rupam involves accepting God as Srishti, Sthiti and

Laya Karanam. When you appreciate totality and orderliness of creation, you

will also use free will to be in accord with Dharma, the universal order; then

there will be surrender. In a violin concert, even one Violinist can't go off

on his own, as the orchestra will be destroyed; thus, he surrenders to the

Group.

This surrender requires

maturity and

when maturity is there; the surrender is natural; Similarly if my mind is

trained to appreciate the total harmony; it is called dharma appreciation; I

cannot go off dharma; I do have a freewill but my freewill is in alignment,

This is called sharanagati; Vishva rupa darshanam makes sharanagati natural; therefore Arjuna you also surrender; follow the dharma which means you have to kill all these people; it is in keeping with the requirement of dharma.

Shlokas # 35- # 45:

Surrender is a mental thing. Alignment of freewill to Dharma is mental, expressed physically, in our tradition, by performing namaskara. It occurs in a mature mind. Shruti is everywhere. I see order, harmony and rhythm everywhere. This invisible harmony is called Dharma.

Shlokas # 35-45:

Of the three steps of ascharya, bhakti and bhayam one remains prominent. Bhayam is due to Ahamakara and Mamakara.

As long as ahamkara and mamakara are there; fear is unavoidable; fear of death; fear of old age; fear of separation; all this will be unavoidable; If I do not have ahamkara and mamakara; all these will appear as the leela of God; we all come together; leela of Ishvara; we all get separated; leela of Ishvara; we all grow old; leela of Ishvara; But when aham mama are there; they are terrible thing; therefore Arjuna is frightened; therefore he says 0 Sri Krishna I only asked for Vishva rupa darshanam; but now I am changing my mind; he says I do not want this darshanam anymore; I would like to return it.

Sri Krishna agrees that an immature mind can't appreciate Vishwa Rupa Darshanam. So he says,

confine yourself to
Eka Rupa Ishwara and reduce ahamakra and mamakara. Our culture
is designed to
reduce ahamkara. When a new house is built, first action is to
place a picture
of God, telling him, it is your house.

Next is seeing this body
also as God's. When you think this daily, one day it will come
true. Come to
Eka Rupa Darshanam.

Sri Krishna now comes to
Eka Rupa and with that Arjuna's Divya chakshu also goes. This
was given in shloka's
31- # 34:

Shloka # 46-55:

And
46 to 55 is the upasamhara
or the conclusion of this teaching; wherein Lord Krishna
points out that Arjuna
you had the rare opportunity of Vishva rupa darshanam;
because of your bhakthi; So, thus, bhakthi as a sadhana for
evolution is pointed out.

Arjuna, you had a rare
opportunity of Vishwa Rupa Darshanam due to your Bhakti. So,
Bhakti is a means
of moving from Eka Rupa to Aneka Rupa; a Bhakti, where God is
the end in itself
and this should result in Vairagyam and when vairagyam
increases;
the bhakthi becomes the ananya bhakthi.

Concluding in the last shloka, Sri Krishna says, initially
stay with Eka rupa, sakama Bhakti; fulfill your material
goals; use God to attain them. Let God be your Ishta Devata.

You will get Viveka; then you will know the ephemerality of the worldly goals; once you know the limitation; God will become the end; then eka rupa bhakthi also will gradually become anekarupa bhakthi; And ultimately you will attain Me.

Benefits of Vishwa Rupam:

1.

The first advantage is we do not hate anything in the creation; because everything is part of the Lord only; So I do not divide the world into raga vishaya and dvesha vishaya; everything has got its place; including a cockroach; including a mosquito; even poison has got its role to play and therefore dvesha becomes lesser and lesser.

2.

Then the next benefit is amanitvam; once I know everything is Lord; any glory in any part of the world belongs to the Lord alone; therefore if I enjoy any faculty, any excellence in me; in music or dance or knowledge or intelligence or beauty; I do not claim it as mine; all of them belongs to the Lord; and therefore freedom from conceit; Self-conceit or humility is the benefit of Vishwa rupa darshanam.

3.

And then the next benefit is I look upon everything as sacred; there is no secular, sacred division; there is nothing called secular; everything is sacred. Even the earth, water, fire, and akasha, all are worshipped.

4. Then the next benefit of Vishva rupa bhavana is we have

respect for all forms of worship; all forms of God; I may be attracted to one form of Lord; I may have vishnu as my Ishta devatha; but I know that any form is Lord's form; Therefore I do not look down upon Shiva; I do not compare one form or the other; all forms are OK: therefore all religions also are OK for me; sarva matha sama bhavah.

5. The benefit of Vishva rupa darshanam is the expansion of the mind; the narrowness of the mind; the shortsighted of the mind will go away; because I appreciate the totality. Therefore the totality, the more I see it; the more my mind expands.

Take away:

One

material cause alone appears as manifold effect, by assuming different names and forms.

Universe

is nothing but God evolved with different nama and rupa's.

So

karanam and karyam are one and the same material only; karanam is with potential nama and rupa, whereas the karyam is with the manifest nama and rupa.

This ahamkara mamakara rahita chakshu is Divya chakshu.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy