

Bagawat Geeta, Class 58 – Chapter 4

Shloka # 12:

लोकान्तेषु देवा इन्द्रादिवृद्धास्तदा
लोकान्तेषु देवा इन्द्रादिवृद्धास्तदा 4.12

People in the world offer scarifices to gods, desiring the success of their works. For, in this human world, quick is the success born of works.

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, up to shloka # 12 Sri Krishna talked about Avatara's. He began the chapter by glorifying Vedas. Once Sri Krishna stopped, Arjuna raised a doubt. Answering him Sri Krishna explained how an Avatara happens. And thereafter Krishna said that even by this avathara gyanam one can get

Liberation although most of the people are not interested in Ishvara gyanam, they are only interested in karmas which will produce material result; He said most people are not interested in moksha; rather most are interested in karma. To obtain moksha is not Bhagawan's decision, rather it is our decision to make. Most people are interested in material goals only. With this Avatara rahasyam is over.

Now Sri Krishna is entering Gyana-Karma-Sanyasa teaching. Arjuna is not interested in doing his duty as a Kshatriya on the battlefield. Rather, he wants to take sanyasa. Arjuna is afraid of Karma. Sri Krishna wants to take the fear of Karma from Arjuna. As long as a human is alive one has to perform Karma. We cannot live even a moment without action. The types of actions we perform may be different. You will always have one job or another. Sri Krishna says you cannot escape Karma. Only death can cease karma. Even the smallest of atoms is active as is the huge Sun. Both at micro and macrocosmic level

there is constant action and it is inevitable. Now with Karma there are always side effects. Karma means responsibility, tension, and the end result may not be always the way we desired. Because of this there is also mental disturbance. Sri Krishna says we must accept Karma as a part of life but we also need to find solutions for the side effects. This is much like some of the drugs we take. I should remain in action without being disturbed. To accomplish this one method is adopting Karma Yoga. Here Sri Krishna also talks of Gyanam as another solution. With Gyanam one is not affected by action or its results. Citing example of the ooze coming out of a Jackfruit, Swamiji says this white ooze sticks to your hands. People apply oil in their hands so that the ooze does not stick. So also Gyanam is the oil that prevents Karma from sticking to us. And this is the topic of this chapter as well.

Sri Krishna says look at me and my life. I have gone through a lot including failures. In spite of my activities I remain untouched by action or results of my karma.

Sri Krishna as creator also had a lot of duties. He was a creator, sustainer and destroyer. I also designed a way of life for human beings to lead and it is in a manual called the Vedas. It teaches a life of harmony for both the individual as well as society. Such a life style is the Varna Ashrama Plan. **It has Varna**, the four fold division of society. This division allows social harmony and growth in individual, community, nation and cosmos.

Ashrama, describes the four stages of life of an individual that is: Brahmacharya, Grihastashrama, Vanaprastha and Sanyasa ashrama.

In this shloka Sri Krishna talks of Varna Ashrama.

Swamiji described Ashrama as follows:

Brahmacharya: This is the life of a student. In this stage he learns about the human goals. One goal is a material goal of

how to earn a living. The second goal is a spiritual goal for inner growth. One goal is outward facing while other is inward facing. A balance has to be struck between outer and inner growth.

Grihastashrama: Life as a householder. This is the implementation stage of the learning from Brahmacharya. It is a Karma Pradhana life. Activities are extrovert in nature. Hinduism also supports material growth and is not just a religion of escapism, as some would have us believe. All desires are fulfilled in a legitimate manner. Background should be spiritual. His desires will gradually be refined. It is a stage full of activity. Pancha Maha Yagna is usually practiced in this stage to purify the mind. Pancha Maha Yagna was detailed in Chapter 3.

3) **Vanaprashta:** is a stage of turning the mind inward. This is an Upasana Pradhana Ashrama. Inside or outside his house he will turn inwards.

4) **Sanyasa Ashrama:** He takes Sanyasa either in the house or leaving the house. Either way he will dissociate mentally. He will handover everybody's responsibility to Ishwara. He is in a more detached state of mind. This is a Gyana Pradhana stage.

Through these four ashramas the individual has catered to Self and Society. This is like a tree that gives fruits for the benefit of others but also produces seeds to ensure its own propagation.

This is known as ashrama vyavastha.

Shloka # 13:

Figure 4.13

The fourfold class-system according to the divisions of Prakrti's constituents and works, has been ordained by Me.

Though I am its author, know Me to be the immutable non-agent.

Varna Vyavastha:

Broadly there are four varnas. They are Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra. While these are the four divisions there are three perspectives on how they are based.

The first basis is Character or Guna or Svabhava. Thus there is Guna Brahmana, Kshatriya etc.

Second is based upon profession or Karma. Thus we have Karma Brahmana, Karma Kshatriya etc.

The third is based upon birth or Janma or Jathi. Thus we have Jathi Brahmana, Jathi Kshatriya etc. Swamiji clarified that Jathi is not the same as caste.

Guna Perspective:

What character makes what?

Guna Brahmana is one in whom Satva dominates, or it is Satva Pradhana. Rajas and then Tamas follow it. Satva pradhana represents tranquility and intellectual efficiency. It has been detailed in chapter # 14 of the Gita. Rajo Guna is a state of hyper activity. Tamo guna is a state without Satva or Rajas or during sleep. It suppresses inner and outer activity.

Swamiji classified them as follows:

SRT: Thus in Guna Brahmana it is Satva (S), followed by Rajas (R) and then Tamas (T).

RST: In Guna Kshatriya it is RST. Here one is active, but selflessly.

RTS: Rajo Guna dominant backed by Tamo Guna. He is also active but is very selfish. This is Guna Vaishya.

TRS: Tamo Guna pradhana. Most of his time is spent in sleeping. Unskilled, mechanical person. This is Guna Shudra.

Profession or Karma perspective:

1. Karma Brahmana: All intellectual work. Teaching, research, spiritual and non spiritual etc.
2. Karma Kshatriya: Maintenance of law and order, defense etc.
3. Karma Vaishya: Producing wealth, Industry, Trade and business.
4. Karma Shudra: All activities that help all three above. Unskilled work.

Thus karma Brahmana need not be a Guna Brahmana. A Karma Brahmana selling Gita books may be more a Karma Vaishya.

Jathi Perspective (by birth):

- Jathi Brahmana. He can also become a Karma Kshatriya.
- Jathi Kshatriya
- Jathi Vaishya
- Jathi Shudra

Thus there are many permutations and combinations of these Varnas.

From Jathi (birth) perspective all four Varnas are considered equal. Thus, birth does not provide any superiority. All jathi's should be equally respected.

From Karma Perspective as well all professions are equally important. None is superior. Purushasuktham shows the four parts of the body of God as representing the four Varnas.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Bagawat Geeta, Class 57

Chapter 4 Sloka 10

freed from attachment, fear and anger
absorbed in Me taking refuge in Me
many purified by the fire of knowledge
My Being have attained.

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absorbed in Me taking refuge in Me
many purified by the fire of knowledge
My Being have attained.

Freed from attachment, fear and anger, absorbed in Me, taking refuge in Me, purified by the fire of knowledge, many have attained to My Being.

In Verse 10, Krishna talks about the spiritual disciplines followed by the people of the past. He talks about the various stages that one goes through.

Obsessed with the thought of Me (God). Keeping Godhood as the primary goal of life. It is an obsession born out of intense yearning; the obsession is Godhood – the primary goal. From the Vedantic angle, Godhood is nothing but our own higher, superior or healthy nature. Vedanta presents God as an external goal but ultimately Godhood is my own secure, healthy, full, contented self symbolized as God. So, that they are tired of their own mental sickness in the form of raga, dvesha, kama, krodha, that they want to convert that sick mind into a mind of compassion and a mind of love and security. This inner conversion is called attainment of Godhood.

This is not an easy task. No doubt your effort is a must, but it should also be backed by Ishvara anugraha. This is

indicated in the words भक्त्युपायः taking refuge in Me or surrendering unto Me. With determination, there is appropriate use of freewill. स्वतन्त्रता corresponds to our freewill and भक्त्युपायः corresponds to Ishvara anugraha.

Once these two are there, you are ready for the journey but what is the direction? भक्त्युपायः you should learn to handle these inborn weaknesses that are in the form of raga, bhayam and krodha.

According to Vedanta, the world is neither a source of joy nor a source of sorrow. I, myself, am the source of joy and sorrow. An intelligent person will understand that the problem is within them and this leads to having raga and dvesha being managed. भक्त्युपायः one who handles (raga and dvesha); not a slave of likes and dislikes. The first direction is to manage raga-dvesha. Convert all desires into non-binding desires. Consequent to this is भक्त्युपायः wherever there is attachment, there is fear. KrodhaH is the result of obstructed desires. The anger is directed at the person who has thwarted the desire. Anger is also directly proportional to the attachment. Raga-dvesha-krodha-bhayam all go together. The first stage in spirituality is learning to handle them. This can be handled by the wisdom of knowing that I am a contributor not a controller of future events.

If this understanding is not there, the next method is devotion or surrendering to the Lord. Oh Lord, the future is not in my control. At least give me sufficient strength to face the inevitable. As Krishna has said in Chapter 2, Verse 27, 2nd line: An intelligent person is prepared for the inevitable or choicelessness. Take the help of the Lord.

Either rely on yourself through wisdom or rely on God through surrender to handle intense attachment/hatred/fear/anger. The one who has mastered this is called भक्त्युपायः |

Once the mind is purified and is no longer a slave of these

four, it is only a pure mind. It is not yet a wise mind. Karma yoga can only give you purity but not wisdom. So, having handled the raga-dvesha of the mind, you have to separately work for knowledge. Krishna calls this **अपेक्षित** because this is a type of austerity. To come regularly to Gita class, to remember, study and progress, etc. requires austerity.

By the practice of **अपेक्षित** , **अपेक्षित** got completely purified. Handling the raga-dvesha is only partial purification. Handling the kama-krodha is also only partial purification. You have to remove the basic impurity of self-ignorance for complete purification. Krishna says that by the practice of jnaana yoga, they rid themselves of the final layer of impurity. Grosser method is used to remove the grosser impurity and subtler method for removing the subtler impurity and the subtlest method to remove the subtlest impurity. It has to follow the stages in order.

The grossest impurity is raga-dvesha, the first layer called malam.

The subtler impurity is extrovertedness, the second layer called vikshepa.

The finest impurity is ajnaanam, the third layer called aavaranam

Malam is likes and dislikes.

Vikshepa is the wandering mind which is subtler.

Self-ignorance is the subtlest one.

We have to use three processes in the appropriate order to remove the three different types of impurities.

Karma yoga removes malam.

Upaasanam removes vikshepa.

Jnaana yoga removes aavaranam.

Therefore, many people have totally purified themselves by finally practicing the jnaana yoga. By removing all the impurities, they found they discovered that "I minus impurities" is God. God plus impurity is I, the jeevaatma. Jeevaatma minus impurity is Paramaatma. Paramaatma plus impurity is jeevaatma.

So, Arjuna, you also have to go through these four stages:

Spiritual goal must become top priority. The material goals need not be eliminated but they should be remembered as subservient to spiritual goals. This is setting direction in life.

Resorting or taking the help of the Lord in this grand journey because you can never travel this individually. Surrender to the Lord.

Purification of the mind by reducing the impact of raga-dvesha-bhaya-krodha.

Study the scriptures and gain self-knowledge.

Arjuna, many have done this and you can too.

Chapter 4 Sloka 11

Who who in whatever way Me approach them so even reward I My path follow men 0 Partha in all ways.

Who who in whatever way Me approach them so even reward I My path follow men 0 Partha in all ways.

In whatever way people surrender unto me, I reciprocate with them accordingly. Everyone follows my path, knowingly or unknowingly, 0 son of Pritha.

Krishna gives the suggestion that spiritual goal must be the primary goal but He says that He doesn't want to impose this goal upon you. Not everyone may be interested in spirituality or in attaining moksha. Krishna says "I suggest and recommend to you that moksha is a worthwhile goal". Krishna's philosophy is "As a person seeks, so I will bless him".

॥ ॐ ॥ let any seeker approach Me with any desire. Let a person seek anything and I will help him. The only condition is for the desires to be legitimate and the means of accomplishing them to also be legitimate. Enjoy life following the rule of dharma. In fact, enjoyment is part of life and then to finally grow out of it. Otherwise it can lead to suppression.

भगवान् भक्तों को भगवत्पदार्थ प्राप्त करने के लिए I will approach them only with the object they desire. As Vivekananda has said, to a hungry person, the Lord should approach with food. Let a poor person seek money. And for a moksha seeker, Bhagavan will give moksha.

Why do I bless them with all these goals?

Because **ॐ** **ॐ****ॐ****ॐ****ॐ****ॐ****ॐ** all my devotees approach me through appropriate effort (like puja, karma, japa, upasana).

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Chapter 4 Sloka 12

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॥ those who long for ॥ of actions ॥
 success ॥ sacrifice ॥ in this world ॥ gods
 ॥ quickly ॥ because ॥ in the human ॥ (in the)
 world ॥ success ॥ is attained ॥ born of action.

In this world, those desiring success in material activities

worship the celestial gods, since material rewards manifest quickly.

Krishna says I have presented two paths in the Vedic scriptures.

The first path is karma maarga – a life of activity; a life of effort where you go through certain processes. The second path of jnaana maarga is presented in the final part of the Veda (called Veda-anta).

Krishna presents both paths which produce the end. The difference in the result is that all the results of karma are finite in nature and it's full of defects.

Accomplishment is a pain, preservation is a greater pain, and the final loss is the greatest pain. Any amount of accomplishment will not give satisfaction; they will become more dependent on the external factors. These are all defects of karmaphalam.

Krishna says in this sloka, **कर्मफलमात्रं प्रापन्त्येवाहं** many people are interested only in karma phalam, the finite results or dharmaarthakaamaa. Both the finite and infinite are available for human beings but the intelligent ones choose the infinite whereas the unintelligent or mandaH chooses the finite. Krishna says **कर्मणोऽप्यसौख्यं** they seek finite results. And once you choose karma phalam, the Vedic rituals are elaborate. It specifies that you should go to that temple, you should offer this item and on certain days; numerous conditions and if you fulfill all these conditions, you may get the result (it's not definite).

कर्मणोऽप्यसौख्यं they go after varieties of Deities. Why?

कर्मणोऽप्यसौख्यं because the karma phalam is quicker compared to jnaana marga. In jnaana marga, jnaana phalam is quicker – the result of knowledge is very quick (getting knowledge is very easy) but preparation for knowledge

is a tough job. Like a wedding which takes place in one day but the preparation for it starts months ahead. Similarly, jnaanam only requires one statement. "I am what I am seeking". Drop seeking and own up your true nature. This alone is Vedanta. But for this statement to work, (Swamiji recites Chapter 6, Verse 45, 2nd line:

ஐயம் தீர்த்துக் கொடுக்கும் ஐயம் ஐயம் தீர்த்துக் கொடுக்கும்: |

ஐயம் தீர்த்துக் கொடுக்கும் ஐயம் ஐயம் தீர்த்துக் கொடுக்கும் || 45||

you have to start from many janmas before.

Krishna says ஐயம் தீர்த்துக் கொடுக்கும் ஐயம் people are not interested in purification which takes a lot of time. They are interested only in the limited fruits of action.

ஐயம் தீர்த்துக் கொடுக்கும் Chapter 4 Sloka 13

ஐயம் தீர்த்துக் கொடுக்கும் ஐயம் ஐயம் தீர்த்துக் கொடுக்கும் ஐயம்

ஐயம் தீர்த்துக் கொடுக்கும் ஐயம் ஐயம் தீர்த்துக் கொடுக்கும் ஐயம் 4.13ஐயம்

ஐயம் தீர்த்துக் கொடுக்கும் the fourfold caste ஐயம் be Me ஐயம் தீர்த்துக் கொடுக்கும் has been created ஐயம் தீர்த்துக் கொடுக்கும் according to the differentiation of Guna and Karma ஐயம் thereof ஐயம் தீர்த்துக் கொடுக்கும் the author ஐயம் also ஐயம் Me ஐயம் தீர்த்துக் கொடுக்கும் know ஐயம் தீர்த்துக் கொடுக்கும் nondoer ஐயம் தீர்த்துக் கொடுக்கும் immutable.

The four categories of occupations were created by me according to people's qualities and activities. Although I am the creator of this system, know me to be the non-doer and eternal.

Krishna says by following the prescribed lifestyle, a person can accomplish both material and spiritual end. Normally, spiritual and material ends are diagonally opposite but Bhagavan says the He has designed a unique lifestyle by which a person can accomplish both the spiritual end and material ends. This should be such a lifestyle that a person must be able to fulfill materialistic desires. Vedic lifestyle

encourages one to fulfill their desires. While fulfilling these desires, it presents certain disciplines to be followed. If you fulfill your materialistic desires following the Vedic discipline, the beauty is that you gradually grow out of these materialistic desires without suppression. And in that place, you discover the spiritual desire as the most natural one. And you discover this desire to such an extent that the pursuit of spiritual desire will not be considered as a denial of materialistic desires. So, when you come to spirituality, you will not miss anything in life. This gradual conversion must take place. Such a life design is the Vedic life design called varnaashrama dharma.

Bagawat Geeta, Class 56

In the beginning of Chapter 4, Lord Krishna talked about the glory of the Gita as vedasaarah and that He alone taught the Vedic wisdom in the beginning of creation and is teaching the same Vedic wisdom now, in the name of Gita.

Upon hearing this, Arjuna has a doubt due to the teacher being the same with a great gap in time. Lord Krishna introduces the topic of avatara to answer this question. He says “I am the original Vishnu who gave out the Vedic wisdom then, and that Vishnu is now in the form of Bhagavan Krishna”. Not only is the Lord teaching now but he says I am aware of the fact that I am Bhagavan. I alone have taken all the janmas as Matsya, Kurma, Varaha, etc. I have now taken Krishna shariram. I know all my previous avataras, therefore I am Bhagavan Vishnu’s avatara.

Both the avatara and the jeeva-janma take a body. However, there are fundamental differences between the two in the

Cause, Nature and Purpose.

The Cause: Jnaanam is the cause of Ishvara avatara. Ajnaanam is the cause of jeeva-janma.

The Nature: The Lord's shariram is directly born out of maya. Jeeva's body is not directly born out of maya but through the intermediary process of the five elements.

The Purpose: Jeeva arrives to exhaust his prarabhda punya-paapa. Ishvara arrives to uplift the world.

Lord Krishna points out these three differences. The third difference of purpose is in Verse 7.

Chapter 4 Sloka 7

Chapter 4 Sloka 7

When the dharma declines and the righteous decline, I manifest Myself, O Bharata, in order to raise up the righteous and destroy the unrighteous.

Whenever the dharma declines and the righteous decline, I manifest Myself, O Bharata, in order to raise up the righteous and destroy the unrighteous.

Whenever there is decline of righteousness, O Arjuna, and rise of unrighteousness, then I manifest Myself.

Whenever there is a decline in dharma. Dharma, as seen in Chapter 3, means cosmic harmony or rhythm. If you take the whole universe as a body, the cosmic orderliness is called cosmic health. At the cosmic level, if there is harmony, it is called dharma. And this harmony alone protects the universe. Dharma alone is the health of the world. It alone sustains the world. Once the orderliness is disturbed, the whole cosmos will be destroyed and we will not be able to survive. And if this inbuilt system doesn't work, Bhagavan will have to interfere.

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For the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked and for the establishment of righteousness, I am born in every age.

We should note that the adhaarmic people can be destroyed in two ways.

One method is by converting them from adharmā to dharma by sama, dana, bheda. When you convert a person from adharmā to dharma without doing himsa, you have destroyed the adharmic person. The second is by destroying the adharmic person itself. Bhagavan tries this first, giving them sufficient opportunity to change. Krishna goes as a messenger to

Duryodhana and suggests to compromise with the Pandavas but he refuses. This means that sama, dana and bheda have failed. Therefore, Krishna said **समो दानो भेदो विजयते** (from Chapter 2, Verse 18). Arjuna, destroy them!

Krishna says, `0000000000 00000000` and `00000000000000000000` |

Bhagavan established dharma in a different way. A kshatriya and a brahmana can establish dharma, each in their own way. A kshatriya promotes the dharmic people and punishes the adharmic people. A brahmana sustains dharma by teaching which is the better form of promoting dharma. Punishment is only temporary and will not promote dharma permanently. The ultimate promotion of dharma is for a person to have value for dharma. To know the long term effects of violating dharma requires a sensitive mind. Sensitive mind is developed only by teaching not by advising. A kshatriya protects dharma by protecting the dharmic people and punishing the adharmic people. A brahmana protects dharma by teaching. Bhagavan's avatara has done both. Krishna protected dharmic people like Dharmaputra and destroyed adharmic people like Duryodhana. This was Krishna's kshatriya job. Then he taught Gita, or taught dharma. This is why he said ऽः॥०१॥ | This is the reason that among the 10 avatars, Rama avatara and Krishna avatara are considered the most important ones. Teaching dharma is involved only in these two avatars. Rama taught by living dharma and Krishna, by teaching dharma. Ramayana is Rama ayana means the way of life led by Rama.

□□□□□□ I am born or take avatara. □□□□ □□□□ every yuga or every time it is required.

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Chapter 4 Sloka 9

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My birth and action and My divine nature thus who knows in true light having abandoned the body again birth not gets to Me comes he 0 Arjuna.

He who thus know, in their true light, My divine birth and action, having abandoned the body, is not born again, he comes to Me, 0 Arjuna.

In this verse, Krishna tells, knowing the nature of God also leads to liberation.

However, Krishna had mentioned that atmajnaanam is the means of liberation in Chapter 2, Verse 55. Which actually leads to liberation? Are there two paths? Is there a choice?

The scriptures have mentioned that there is only one means of liberation. Therefore, it must be that self-realization and God-realization are identical. Swamiji gives an example of a wave. When a wave knows its true nature, the realization is that it is water. The ocean's true nature is also water.

Therefore, whether you talk about the true nature of the wave or the true nature of the ocean, the true nature is one alone; there is only one central truth. Similarly, whether you realize your true nature which is the self or whether you realize the true nature of God, you arrive at one "sat chit Ananda svaroop".

If a person says, I have realized the self but not God or vice versa; it means he knows neither God nor the self.

Krishna says in this verse, suppose a person knows or realizes, or understands the true nature of my avatara. The true nature is that Krishna shariram is not the real Krishna because Krishna shariram is subject to arrival and departure.

Real Krishna is, as we saw in Verse 6:

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Real Krishna is **अमृत** (birth less), **अमर** (imperishable)
 real Krishna is free from birth and death; whereas Krishna
 shariram is subject to arrival and departure.

What is the real Krishna? Not the shariram but the Krishna Paramaatma behind the body. The one who knows this fact, and **ब्रह्मविद्** **ब्रह्म** the one who knows Bhagavan's sports (the divine sport is **ब्रह्मविद्या** **ब्रह्मविद्या** **ब्रह्मविद्या** **ब्रह्मविद्या** from Chapter 4, Verse 8); the one who really understands the Lord, **ब्रह्मविद्** means in His true nature.... **ब्रह्मविद्** **ब्रह्मविद्** **ब्रह्मविद्** **ब्रह्मविद्** **ब्रह्मविद्** that person does not take a body again after death; he will attain liberation. So, the knowledge of the real Krishna will lead to liberation. What is liberation? **ब्रह्मविद्** **ब्रह्मविद्** **ब्रह्मविद्** he will become one with Me. After death, he will have **ब्रह्मविद्या** or **ब्रह्मविद्या** |

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Chapter 4 Sloka 10

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ॐॐॐॐॐॐॐॐॐॐ freed from attachment fear and anger ॐॐॐॐॐॐ
 absorbed in Me ॐॐॐॐ Me ॐॐॐॐॐॐॐॐ taking refuge in ॐॐॐॐ
 many ॐॐॐॐॐॐॐ by the fire of knowledge ॐॐॐॐ purified
 ॐॐॐॐॐॐॐ My Being ॐॐॐॐ have attained.

Freed from attachment, fear and anger, absorbed in Me, taking refuge in Me, purified by the fire of knowledge, many have attained to My Being.

Realization of God has two stages.

First it is the realization of the Lord with a form.

The next is the realization of the Lord without a form.

This topic will be elaborated from Chapter 7 onwards.

The realization of the Lord with a form is in two stages.

One is appreciating the Lord with one form, as Rama or as Krishna or as Devi. We should all start with this for emotional health. Talk to God privately, as your confidante. The more you build this relationship, the more the Lord will become real. Then expand it further into realizing Bhagavan as One with the whole universe as his form. The final stage is the formless Ishvara. Every one has to go through these three stages, as they mature in their understanding.

The stages a seeker goes through is described in this sloka.

□□□□□□□□□□□□ the first stage is to have realization of God in form and follow karma yoga by dedicating all your duties to the Lord and by accepting all situations as Ishvara prasada. The first stage is to surrender to Ishvara and converting the life into worship. By following a karma yoga way of life, we will purify the mind. This will result in getting rid of certain unhealthy ways of thinking. The mental impurities are of raga, bhaya and krodha. Raga is attachment. The attachment will gradually be shifted from the risky and fluid world to the permanently and secure God. The second stage is going from world dependence to God dependence. The raga or attachment to the world has shifted to attachment to Bhagavan. Then Bhagavan dependence will be converted into self-dependence. From world dependence to God dependence to self-dependence – where you discover the Bhagavan as the very self. When raga comes down, bhayam also comes down because fear is directly proportional to the attachment. Then krodha also will come down.

Bagahwat Geeta, Class 55

In Chapter 2, Krishna gave a gist of Karma Yoga and Jnana Yoga.

In Chapter 3, Karma Yoga was elaborated.

In Chapters 4 and 5, Jnana Yoga is elaborated.

The 4th Chapter is the “jnana yoga pradhana”. There is a small diversion in the first 8 verses before diving into jnaana yoga. In the first three verses, Lord Krishna glorifies this knowledge consisting of Karma Yoga and Jnana Yoga. The very essence of karma and jnana has already been taught in Veda at the beginning of the creation and this was received by Surya Bhagavan. This same wisdom is revived again in the name Gita. Veda was received by Surya Bhagavan and Gita is received by Arjuna. Therefore, it is an ancient and time-tested wisdom making it a reliable and a valid one.

Arjuna has a doubt about the timeline between creation and his current time. The times are different by few millennia, students are different yet the teacher is the same!

Krishna says in Chapter 4, Sloka 1:

मया तदात्मनो ज्ञानं प्रोक्तं तदात्मानं तदात्मा । (मया
प्रोक्तं तदात्मानं I taught)

And now also, Chapter 4, Sloka 3:

मया तदात्मनो ज्ञानं प्रोक्तं तदात्मानं तदात्मा । (मया तदात्मनो
ज्ञानं प्रोक्तं taught by Me).

Arjuna asks “Your birth is recent but your initial student’s birth was too long ago. How can a recent person teach an ancient student?”

Krishna answers Arjuna from Verse 5 though Verse 8.

Chapter 4 Sloka 5

श्रीकृष्ण उवाच

मया कृणुमहे मां जन्तुनां जन्मसंसारिणाम् ।

मया कृणुमहे मां जन्तुनां जन्मसंसारिणाम् ॥4.5॥

श्रीकृष्ण may say My incarnations have passed away many births of
thy and 0 Arjuna know them all but I do not know all
not

तुं त्वं ज्ञेयः ० परान्तप ।

The Blessed Lord said Many births of Mine have passed as well
as of thine, 0 Arjuna; I know them all but thou knowest not, 0
Parantapa (scorcher of foes).

Lord Krishna introduces the topic of avatara in his answer to
Arjuna. The Lord's incarnation is different from a human
birth. Human birth is called janma but when the Lord appears
in creation, it is called avatara. Krishna wants to point the
differences between janma and avatara.

Swamiji elaborates on the topic of birth and incarnation
before explaining Verse 5.

The differences between manushya janma and Ishvara avatara
are:

Cause, Nature and Purpose

FIRST: the cause; at the cause level there is "kaaraNa bheda".

In the case of the birth of a jeeva, it is caused by ignorance
of the jeeva.

Because of ignorance, the jeeva has the problem of ahankaara
(ego).

Because of ego, there is the problem of karma.

Because of karma, there is the problem of punyam and paapam.

Because of punyam and paapam, there is the janma.

The birth of a jeeva is due to ignorance, so we can call this as a “fall of a jeeva”.

In the case of Ishvara, His birth takes place never because of. It is because of His omniscience. Because of the knowledge alone, Bhagavan chooses to appear on Earth. This is knowledge and compassion based. Avatara means coming down out of compassion. There is a difference between falling into a well (helpless phenomenon) and going down the well. kaaraNa bheda is the first difference.

SECOND: the nature; svaroopam is different; “svaroopam bheda”.

Since jeeva-janma is because of ignorance, jeeva continues to be a samsaari. He is a bound person, born with sorrow. He is helpless, not a master of himself. Janma is samsaaraH.

Since Ishvara avatara is backed by knowledge, it is nitya mukta svaroopam or asamsaari.

Jeeva is samsaari while Avatara is asamsaari.

Another technical difference that Krishna points out is that all the bodies are made up of matter whether it is manushya shariram or avatara shariram. But the scriptures say that there is a difference between the two sharirams. The jeeva shariram is not directly born out of prakrti or maya. Jeeva shariram is indirectly born out of maya. Maya or prakriti gets converted into five elements called pancha bhutani and these five elements get converted into paancha bhoutika shariram. Thus maya does not directly produce the body (jeeva shariram) but it produces through the five elements alone. Jeeva shariram is called paancha bhoutika shariram. From maya to bhutaas to the physical body.

In the case of Ishvara avatara, the maya does not go through

the intermediary stage of five elements. Maya directly gets converted into Ishvara avatara shariram. Avatara shariram is called mayika shariram. From maya to the physical body.

So the second difference is in the nature of jeeva shariram and avatara shariram.

Jeeva shariram is bound or samsaari shariram; paancha bhoutika shariram.

Avatara shariram is free or asamsaari shariram; mayika shariram.

This is the svaroopo bheda.

THIRD: the purpose; “karya” or “udheshya bheda”.

When a jeeva is born, it is purely to exhaust the punyam and paapam, which have been acquired in the past, called prarabdha. The prarabdha has to be exhausted. Prarabdha punyam is exhausted through sukham and prarabdha paapam is exhausted through dukham. To experience pleasure and pain, we require the body medium. It is the prarabdha that determines the type of the body for exhausting punya-paapa. The very design of the body is for the purpose of punya-paapa exhaustion. The purpose of jeeva-janma is for the depletion of punyam and paapam.

What is the purpose of an avatara? Avatara is not ignorant, not a samsaari, and does not suffer from the problem of ego. Since there is no ego, there is no question of punyam or paapam. Therefore, Ishvara does not need to take an avatara to exhaust punya-paapa.

Krishna tells an avatara’s purpose in Chapter 4, Verse 8:

ममैवावतारोऽयं लोकानुमोदकः ।

ममैवावतारोऽयं लोकानुमोदकः ॥ ८॥

To protect the righteous, to annihilate the wicked, and to reestablish the principles of dharma I appear on this earth, age after age.

Ishvara Avatara's purpose is for the protection of dharma and destruction of adharma by protecting the dharmic people and destroying the adharmic people. This is why the very nature of avatara shariram is designed for protecting the people and establishing dharma. The design is determined by the type of protection that is required. Before every avatara comes, there is a portion in the Puranas, where all the noble people pray to the Lord to save them from some rakshasa (Hiranyakashipu, Ravana, etc). Rama Avatara's purpose was destruction of Ravana. The design of the body depends upon the situation.

Ravana's peculiar boon is that he cannot be killed by anyone or anything, except he didn't include humans, out of over-confidence. So, if Ravana had to be destroyed, Bhagavan's avatara had to be human. Hence the design of the body is determined by the purpose of the avatara. When the atrocities were done by Hiranyakashipu, the design for the avatara had to fit the loop holes of his boon. He could not be killed by humans nor animals nor any weapons; and not during the day nor night. The avatara was Narasimha with sharp nails.

In summary: the difference between janma and avatara:

Cause: kaaraNa bheda – ajnaanam vs jnaanam

Nature: svaroopā bheda – samsaari vs asamsaari

Purpose: udheshya bheda – depletion of punya-paapa vs protection of dharma

Krishna tells in this sloka that since avatara is not restricted by ignorance, the avatars know the past, present and future. Krishna says that He knows all his previous incarnations. However, in the case of jeeva-janma, since ignorance limits the jeeva, the jeeva cannot know the past

janmas.

How do you know if one is avatara or janma? We really don't have a method of knowing. We accept one as avatara wherever there is scriptural support ie. Rama is an avatara as written in the scriptures. If it is not mentioned in the scriptures, we cannot prove if one is an avatara or janma. It then becomes our personal belief.

If you consider people with extraordinary powers to be an avatara; then rakshasas will also fall under this. Having extraordinary powers is not proof that this person is an avatara.

Limitations does not disprove avatara. Certain avatars showed limitations. For example, Rama, who is accepted as an avatara, had several natural limitations. It is one's personal belief to accept someone as an avatara even with limitations and not accept someone with extraordinary powers as an avatara.

One consolation is that we do not need to know if one is an avatara or not for our spiritual growth. We need purity of mind! To attain purity of mind, worshipping any form of God is good enough.

The next thing required for spiritual growth is knowledge. This requires a Guru; who need not be an avatara. Even if an avatara has to bless, the blessing can be only by becoming a Guru. Krishna can never give moksha to Arjuna by any method other than by being his Guru.

Swamiji recites from Dhyana Slokas:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ।

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ।

And

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ।

□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□ □□□□□□ □□□ □□: ||

Therefore, for **सर्वज्ञ** **सर्वशक्ति** we don't require an avatara. Nor for knowledge. There may or may not be an avatara right now. I may be willing to accept someone as an avatara. The important aspect is to purify, know and be free.

We all uniformly accept Krishna as an avatara. Krishna says, “Arjuna, I am an avatara, different from you. My cause of birth is knowledge, my nature is moksha, my purpose is **सर्वलोकहिताय** (Chapter 4, Verse 8). This is the topic of avatara given in this portion.

With this background, let's look at Verse 5.

Krishna says, Hey Arjuna, भूतान् भूतानाम् भूतानाम् | Many janmas have gone by for you. I have also taken many sharirams. The number of sharirams does not prove superiority. So what is the difference between you and me? अहम् अहम् भूतानाम् अहम् | I continue to be a free person; a भूतानाम् therefore I know all the past sharirams. What about you? अहम् अहम् भूतानाम् | You do not know your past sharirams. भूतानाम् 0 Parantapa (Arjuna).

Chapter 4 Sloka 6

अविर्भावो विवर्तमानात्मा अविनाशिकात्मनोऽपि तस्य च
 अविनाशाच्च अविनाशित्वेणात्र अविनाशिकत्वमिति ॥४.६॥
 unborn also being imperishable
 nature of beings therefore the Lord also
 being Nature My own governing
 come into being by My own Maya.

Though I am unborn, of imperishable nature, and though I am the Lord of all beings, yet, governing My own Nature, I am born by My own Maya.

Krishna talks about the nature of the avatara.

□□□ □□□ | □□□ □□□□□□□□□□ | □□□ □□□□□□□□ □□□□□□ |

I know that I am birth less Brahman; I know my nature. I know I am birthless reality and this shariram is a simple **roop** (assumed appearance) I have put on for a certain purpose. I know I am **janma** meaning **na janma** **na mara** (no birth). **amara** I am of changeless nature, not subject to decay and death; **amara** **amara** (devoid of old age and death).

amara means **amara** **amara** and **amara** means **amara** **amara** | Not only am I free from birth and death, **amara** **amara** | I am the master of all living beings. I am not a limited entity but I am **amara** – I am the master. I have not helplessly come down to this world, I have chosen to come.

How do I manage to come down? **amara** **amara** **amara** – by keeping the prakriti, the matter, the material body under my control I am born. I am surrounded by matter; just as the jeeva also is surrounded by matter. The difference, however, is that I am the master of the matter whereas the jeeva is the slave of the matter (or shariram). Both the avatara (Bhagavan) and the jeeva are surrounded by the body-mind complex (**amara**) but Bhagavan is in control of the body-mind complex whereas the jeeva is controlled by the body-mind complex.

amara **amara** I take a body. How? **amara** with the help of maya tattvam; by producing **amara** **amara** | This means that I don't require the five elements. Instead from maya I can directly convert into the shariram. This is why Bhagavan does not require the regular process of creation. Even **amara** in case of Rama avatara is not the regular process. This is why it is said that the Lord entered into the garbha. In the case of Narasimha avatara, etc., there is no question of a father or mother. From where did the body come? They appear in full-fledged form. How is this possible? It is because of direct conversion of maya, otherwise called **amara** | Therefore, Krishna says **amara** **amara** | And when do I take an avatara? See Sloka 7.

amara Chapter 4 Sloka 7

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ॐ ॐ whenever ॐ surely ॐ of righteousness ॐ
 decline ॐ is ॐ 0 Bharata ॐ rise ॐ
 of unrighteousness ॐ then ॐ Myself ॐ
 manifest ॐ I.

Whenever there is decline of righteousness, O Arjuna, and rise of unrighteousness, then I manifest Myself.

The purpose of the avatara is explained in this verse.

॥॥ ॥॥ ॥॥ ॥॥॥॥॥॥ ॥॥॥॥॥॥ | Whenever dharma declines, values decline. ॥॥॥॥॥॥ ॥॥॥॥॥॥ ॥॥॥ | And ॥॥॥॥॥॥॥ ॥॥॥॥॥॥॥॥॥ | whenever adharma increases, unrighteousness and corruption increases. ॥॥ ॥॥॥॥॥॥॥ ॥॥॥॥॥ | Then, I create myself. I choose whenever it is required.

From a scientific viewpoint, the world can be compared to human body, a cosmic body. Like a body or an organism, it functions in harmony. Any harmonious system, will have its own intrinsic protection device. Our body has built in self protection. Suppose something enters your nostril, you sneeze automatically. The sneeze is involuntary; it is intrinsically built into the system. A natural system has natural protection. This faculty will not be operative all the time (like sneezing). □□□ □□□ □□ whenever the system's harmony is disturbed, the system itself produces an appropriate remedy. The universe is a cosmic system, the Bhagavan's shariram, and whenever there is a disturbance, the world itself will find an appropriate method of defending the dharma. It will become active whenever it is required. The avatara is like the immunity system of the universe, the cosmic immunity system. Whenever it is required, an avatara will automatically happen.

Bagawat Geeta, Class 54

In the first chapter of Geeta, Vyasa chariyar revealed the human problem of samsara in the form of raga (emotional dependents of external factors), sogaha (grief or sorrow) and moga (delusion or conflict or indiscriminate). When Arjuna had this problem in the battlefield, he tried to solve this problem himself and was not successful and took the action of surrendering to the Lord. Lord Krishna accepted the role of Guru

In the second chapter, Krishna took the approach that the self-knowledge is the only solution. No other solution can solve the problem. And therefore, Krishna tried to give the self-knowledge to Arjuna. Geeta talks about many topics but Gaeta's primary teaching is atma vidhya. In this chapter, Krishna gives the entire range of sadhanas for this knowledge. In this chapter, Krishna taught the two sadhanas: Karma yoga and gyana yoga. Karma yoga is prescribed as a means of mental purity. Krishna makes it clear that karma yoga can only give preparatory knowledge. Gyana yoga involves self-inquiry through the scriptures under the guidance of a competent guru. The second chapter is the summary of Geeta.

The third chapter is elaboration of karma yoga. The fourth and fifth chapters are expansion of gyana yoga.

Krishna takes a small diversion initially to discuss two topics of chapter 4. The two topics are and glorification of Geeta and avatara ragasyam. Krishna wants to emphasize that the teachings of Geeta are vedic teachings and are beginning-less.

Verse 1

The Lord said I imparted this eternal yaga to Lord Sun. Lord Sun taught the same to Manu. Manu taught it to Iksvaku.

I have given the same teaching in the form of Veda. Krishna says Geeta is the new name for Veda. I revealed this wisdom to Surya Bagawan. This teaching can never go out of date. It is relevant even now in the 20th century.

Surya Bagawan taught this teaching to Manu. Manu taught this to the King Ikshvaku.

Verse 2

Oh Arjuna! The royal sages knew this which was thus traditionally handed down. Due to long passage of time that yaga is lost in this world.

All the raja rishis (kings) knew this teaching. Gradually people started losing interest in this teaching. Therefore, Krishna is revising this teaching in the form of Geeta.

Verse 3

That very same ancient yoga in this which has been taught by Me to you now, because you are My friend and devotee. This indeed is the highest secret.

Veda Purva teaches karma yoga and called karma kadam. Veda Anta teaches gyana yoga and is called gyana kadam. This is the oldest teachings. Krishna chose Arjuna for this teaching, because Arjuna asked for it and because Arjuna is the friend of Krishna.

Self-knowledge is the greatest secret, because what we are searching for is within ourselves. Therefore this wisdom is called uthama ragasiyam.

Verse 4

Arjuna asked: Your birth is later. The birth of Lord Sun is

much earlier. How am I to understand this statement of Yours that You have taught Lord Sun in the beginning of the creation?

Vedas are called sruthi because the Rishis heard internally; all other scriptures are called smirhti.

Arjuna says that I can understand that you are teaching me Geeta, but I can't understand how you can also teaching Surya Bagawan at the time of creation, when we both are of the same age. What is the secret of your contrary statement? If you have taught Surya Bagawan, you can't teach me. If you are teaching me, you can't teach Surya Bagawan. As an answer to this question, Krishna will discuss Avataras.