

SOME THOUGHTS ON SLOKA-1, CHAPTER-1

Dhritarashtra asks Sanjaya " MAMAKAH PANDAVAH CA EVA DHARMAKSHETRE KIM AKURVATHAH" (What did **MY PEOPLE** and **also the Pandavas** do in the **Holy land?**)

—
Dhritarashtra was born congenitally blind. He also acquired inner blindness by his selfishness and excessive attachment to Duryodhana. Dhritarashtra, being blind, was not eligible for the throne and hence PANDU became the king. Out of respect for his elder brother, Pandu treated him with due respect. After Pandu's death, Dharmaraja being the elder son became eligible to the throne. Dhritarashtra assisted his son Duryodhana to snatch the kingdom from Pandavas, unlawfully. Still the Pandavas successfully completed the **Vanavasa and Agnathavasa** and asked for their fair share of the kingdom.

When viewed with the above background, Dhritarashtra's inner blindness and cruelty is abundantly clear when he refers his sons as "**MY PEOPLE**" and his own brother's sons as "**also the Pandavas**" implying as if Pandavas are some unrelated strangers. When he made reference to the battle field as "DHARMA KSHETRE",

Dhritarashtra still **hoped** that the dharmic Pandavas somehow decided not to fight the war and voluntarily relinquished the kingdom to his sons.

Dr.Naidu Katta.

MOKSHA (MUKTHIHI) FREEDOM

Scriptures point out that human beings have 4 possible destinations.

1. Rebirth—(PUNAR JANMA): As a result of fructification of Sanchitha karma, beings attain

suitable bodies. This cycle continues for most people until their Sanchita Karma is exhausted. This is possible only with attainment of Self Knowledge.

2. Attainment of Swarga.(PARA LOKA PRAPTHI): Some people believe that attainment of celestial pleasures in Swarga is freedom. Sastras do talk about these to those who accumulated enough punyam, but the problem is that after enjoying the divine pleasures for a long time, the accumulated punyam gets exhausted and they need to return to take another birth.
3. Step wise freedom(KRAMA MUKTHI). Here the seeker undergoes Karma yoga, upasana yoga and gnana yoga but could not totally attain GNANAM. He gets access to Brahma Loka, gets self knowledge from Brahmaji and gets free.
4. JEEVAN MUKHTHI-Freedom while living. This is what Lord Krishna prescribes to us. Although Sastras talk about the other three, there is no proof of their existence and we can not practically experience them. It is more meaningful if we can actually experience moksha in this life ,here and now .

ONLY SELF KNOWLEDGE GIVES MOKSHA.

We enjoy a good night's sleep where our gross body and subtle body is completely resolved. We simply enjoy in the Self. Similarly, a jeevan muktha intellectually separates and as if resolves the body mind complex and rejoices in the Self .He enjoys life as a sport with out any fear, anxiety or any attachments.

What are the benefits of Moksha?

1. Quenches the inquisitiveness of knowing about your self.(GIGNASA NIVRUTTI). Getting true knowledge about one self gives the intellectual satisfaction.
2. Attainment of absolute BLISS. (ANANDA PRAPTHIHI). Self knowledge gives "Poornathvam" which makes one self

sufficient with in one self.

3. Freedom from external dependence.(PARATHANTRA NIVRUTTIHI). External dependence is temporary and it cannot give permanent security.
4. Reduction of painful experiences.(AAGHAATHA NIVRUTTIHI). Like a shock absorber, the impact of painful situations are made tolerable.
5. Improves the work efficiency . (DAKSHATAA PRAPTHIHI). When you work without anxiety for the fruits of your action,the work efficiency increases.

SELF knowledge removes the cover of ignorance and reveals the real nature which is ever pure bliss and absolute freedom. A gnani,upon attainment of gnanam,burns all the accumulated karma.With out accumulating fresh karma,he leaves this body and gets free with out taking another body. This is VI DEHA MUKTHI.

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Bagawat Geeta, Class 4

Greetings All,

Gita, Chapter # 1:

Swamiji started his talks on the Gita today. He says: Chapter 1 is an introduction to the Gita. It is a dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna. The main theme of Gita starts at Verse

#11, chapter 2. Even Shankaracharya's commentaries start from this point. The introduction in chapter 1 however is very important. It serves two purposes.

First purpose is to present the basic human problem known as Samsara. This problem is a universal one irrespective of caste, creed, race, religion and sex. It is also a problem that occurs at any time in history. We also face similar problems as Arjuna did and future generations will also face the same. The presentation of Samsara Rogaha is the basis of chapter 1. The other 17 Chapters of Gita are dedicated to specifying remedies to this problem and is also called Moksha Shastraha. Unless we know the disease we cannot appreciate the remedy.

Second Purpose:

Is to introduce the Guru and Shishya whose whole dialogue is the Gita.

Discussing Samsara Varnanam, Swamiji says, the diagnosis of a disease can vary from doctor to doctor. Similarly, different scriptures have different diagnosis of this problem. Our scriptures diagnose that this Samsara disease is in reality three diseases. They are: Ragaha. Shokhaha and Mohaha.

Ragaha: is the emotional and psychological attachment we have. Love is glorified in our scriptures while attachment is not. Vedanta is for Love but not for Attachment.

Elaborating on Love versus Attachment, Swamiji says:

- Attachment is based on selfishness. What do I get out of this relationship? What the other person gets is not in our mind. This selfish dependence is Ragaha. Love is based upon Selflessness. Here, I am not only interested in what I get, but I am also interested in what the other person gets.
- Attachment is always a form of Taking. Love is always a

form of Giving.

- Attachment is always conditional. So long as it helps me, I stay in the relationship. Love is not based on condition. It is unconditional.
- Attachment comes from a weak mind. Love does not come from weakness; rather it comes out of strength.
- In attachment, intellect is clouded and violation of Dharma occurs. In Love, intellect is always clear, thus there cannot be any violation of Dharma.
- Love is freedom. Attachment is bondage.

Shokhaha:

Attachment leads to shokaha. When the attached person leaves there is sorrow. When the object of dependence goes away there is sorrow. Swamiji says, it is a psychological crutch,

The object of attachment (person, object etc.) is always impermanent. At any time I may lose them. How can one prepare for this situation is the question raised by Vedanta? The Psychological depression caused is due to loss of the attached person or thing. Preparation for this has to be done well ahead of time. This preparation should be done when you are still in good health and well situated. Be far sighted, advises Swamiji.

Mohaha:

Mohaha is delusion. When Ragaha and Shokaha are there it clouds the intellect. Clouded intellect takes decisions that are wrong ones. This will usually lead to Adhrama. We may think we are making the right decision, while we are in fact making wrong ones. This then leads to the Ragaha>Shokhaha> Mohaha cycle. This is the human suffering or Samsara. How to get psychological independence is the question of Mokshaha?

Context: The Mahabharata war is between Pandavas (dharmic) and Kauravas (Adharmic). Pandavas wanted to avoid war. They tried Sama, Dana, and Bheda without success. As per our scriptures,

Ahimsa is wrong. Ahimsa is a conditional value. So, as a last resort, they took to war. Scriptures allow Ahimsa under certain conditions. It is like a Doctor performing amputation of a limb when the medicine did not work. Similarly in society when Adharma occurs, a Kshatriya may take to violence if non-violent methods did not work.

When both armies are face to face, Arjuna wants to survey the two armies. The people he sees in front are Bhishma and Drona, to both of whom Arjuna is attached. His thinking becomes clouded due to this attachment. After 13 years in exile and thinking about this he came to the conclusion that he had to fight a dharmic war. Once decided, a Kshatriya does not run from war or renounce and run away from his family. Arjuna sees his original Dharma Yudha now as an Adharma Yudha. Thus, Arjuna has Ragaha that is leading to Shokaha and further leading to Mohaha. Arjuna realizes his dilemma and turns to Krishna for his guidance. Thus Arjuna realizes or discovers the problem.

Shloka # 1:

Kauravas army is larger with many great warriors on their side. Pandavas though weaker have Lord Krishna on their side. Drithrashtra, the blind parent of Kauravas, asks Sanjaya to describe the scene at war. His inward blindness is also a metaphor for attachment. Sanjaya is given a special power of being able to see what is beyond or tele-vision. Vyasa blessed Sanjaya with this power.

Shloka # 2:

Seeing the well organized and arranged (vyuham) army of Pandavas Duryodhana approached his Acharya, Drona, his Guru in warfare and addressed him as follows:

Shloka # 3:

Duryodhana says: O Acharya you may see the huge army of

Pandavas. Drishtadyumna, son of Drupada, heads them. Your clever and cunning disciple has assembled this army and is trying to destroy me. Swamiji says Drishtadyumna was destined to kill Drona. Drona was also aware that Drishtadyumna would come after him. Nevertheless, so long as Drishtadyumna was a qualified student, Drona could not refuse him as a student.

Suggested Practice:

The difference between attachment and love is an important concept. We should all consider approaching all our relationships especially with our close ones more with Love rather than with attachment.

With my good wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Bagawat Geeta, Class 3

Greetings All,

Swamiji continued with his discussion of the invocation prayer called Gitagyana Shloka. Madhusudhana Saraswathi wrote this Shloka. While this shloka was not originally a part of Gita, it is now accepted as one. The Gitagyana Shloka has nine verses. In these Shlokas we are offering namaskara to: Bharathi, Gita/ Saraswathi, Vyasa and Lord Krishna.

Expanding on the Shlokas related to Lord Krishna, Swamiji says:

Shloka # 3:

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

contribution to family, society and the world. Krishna as a son of Vasudeva was a member of the family. As one who destroyed asuras Kamsa and Chanura he was a protector of society. He taught Gita not only to Arjuna but also to posterity. In this role he was a Jagatguru to the world.

Shloka # 6:

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

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

This sholka is again a Sri Krishna Namaskara. In this Sholka Kaivartakaha means boatman. Even in a tempestuous situation a skilled boatman can cross the river. Here Mahabharatha is compared to a treacherous river with many dangers. Pandavas need to cross this river. Human beings also face such treacherous situations in life.

Aartaha means one who is in distress. Pandavas were caught in the Aartaha and in this situation Sri Krishna was their savior.

Describing the dangers, Bhishma and Drona were like banks of the river determining its course. The river itself is compared to Jaydritha. Prince of Gandhara, Shakuni, is compared to the dangerous blue water lily; Shalya a relative of pandavas was on opposite side like a crocodile; Kripa Acharya, a great archer and teacher was there as an under current. Then, there was Karna like a turbulent wave and Ashwathama and others who were man-eating fish. Duryodhana was like a whirlpool. Pandavas crossed the river due to a skillful boatman named Krishna. Sri Krishna will also help you, if you surrender to him.

Shloka 8:

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

This shloka is again a namaskara to Madhava or Lakhmi Pati. The greatest wealth (Lakshmi) is wisdom. Sri Krishna had the benefit of this support. Swamiji says, he (Krishna) can make a dumb person eloquent. He can make a lame person climb the mountains by his grace. Swamiji says the studies of 700 verses of Gita are the mountain that we can successfully scale if we surrender to Sri Krishna.

Shloka # 9:

This shloka again is a namskara to Sri Krishna. Krishna is one who is worshipped by Brahma, Varuna, Indira and Marutha. The chanters of the Sama and all Vedas invoke Sri Krishna. The six Angas of Vedas, secondary scriptures, all chant the Lord's name in Paatha, Krama and Ghana Paatha. **Paatha is to recite the mantras in a sentence straight. In Krama Paatha, the first word of the mantra is added to the second, the second to the third, the third to the fourth and so on, until the whole sentence of the mantras is completed. In Ghana Paatha one repeats the mantras in various ways back and forth and in different patterns.**

Swamiji says great Sanyasis, with a one pointed mind, see the lord in their own mind. Devotees see the lord outside. Even though he is described as a person, the Lord is not a person. The personal God has limitations of space and time. The real God is limitless and many people are not aware of him. Thus God has a limited form for devotees and a limitless one as well. To this all pervading God, I bow in namskara.

Ending the Gita Dhyanam, Swamiji prays, May God bless us in our study of this great scripture.

GITA MAHATMYAM. (THE GREATNESS OF GITA).

This glory of the GITA is narrated in VARAHA PURANA Bhudevi(Maha Lakshmi) approached Lord Vishnu and enquired – How , one who is bound with his Prarabdha maintain constant devotion upon You?

The Lord replied that who meditates on Gita will attain that status.

Lord further asserted that where ever the book GITA is kept, and where ever GITA is studied, that place is considered as sacred as Prayaga&Kasi.

The Lord is present where Gita is studied, chanted or heard.

Gita is My supreme abode, supreme knowledge, and the essence of My indefinable state.

Gita is the essence all the Vedas and Upanishads.

That who recites the entire 18 chapters of Gita with firm devotion attains the knowledge necessary to attain freedom (MOKSHA).

If one recites 9 chapters of Gita, he/she will attain the merit of "GO DHANA) gifting of a Cow.

He who recites a third of Gita will attain the punya equal to a bath in Ganges.

He who recites one sixth will get the fruit of SOMA sacrifice.

If one recites one chapter a day with devotion, he will go to KAILASA.

If one recites one fourth of a chapter or one sloka daily will attain human birth for the duration of MANVANTARA (71 MAHA YUGAS) 308 million YEARS.

He who recites 10,7,5,4,3,2,1 or one half of one sloka will attain CHANDRA LOKA for ten thousand years.

He who leaves this body reading Gita attains salvation.

One while performing the duties of daily life , meditates on the meaning of Gita will attain JEEVAN MUKTHI in this life and VIDEHA MUKTHI when the body falls.

Even a worst criminal if he loves to hear and understand the

meaning of Gita will enjoy the bliss of VISHNU.
Those who do not recite this GITA MAHATYAM while studying GITA
will not attain this punyam.