

# Taitreya Upanishad, Class 4

Greetings All,

**Chapter 1, Shikshavalli.**

**Paragraph # 1:**

Continuing his teaching of the Upanishad, Swami Paramarthananda said, Taittiriya Upanishad is written in prose. The first chapter that we are getting into is called Shikshavalli and it has 12 anuvakaha's. Anuvakaha means a paragraph. It can also sometimes mean a chapter. Shikshavalli's first and the last or twelfth anuvakaha's are both shantipatha's.

The content of Shikshavalli occurs between these two shantipatha's. The entire chapter # 1 is Sadhana pradhana and relates to preparation of the seeker. It does not have any Vedantic teaching. Many Sadhanas are mentioned for preparation. The Sadhanas are:

1. Kayika Karmani: Here the physical body plays a role. It is also called Karma Yoga or Pancha Maha Yagnaha. All these are required to purify our mind and beat Tamoguna or laziness. Tamoguna exists at the intellectual as well, however, physical activity makes one alert.
2. Vachika Karmani: Many karmas are prescribed at the verbal level. They include: Japam, Parayanam, etc. Parayanam is chanting of shlokas. It can be performed knowing the meaning or not knowing the meaning of the shloka. Chanting, knowing the meaning, is considered more effective. Japa is repetition of a mantra several times. Some mantras are chanted even 108 times. In Parayanam, however, one does not repeat the mantra.

There are two types of Japas.

1. Gyana Yogyatha Sidhi Japas and
2. Gyana Sidhi Japa.
3. Manas Karmani: These are mental activities. The organs of speech and organs of body are not involved in this activity. It is a purely mental activity or Upasana. Five Upasanas are mentioned in Shikshavalli. They are, however, not practiced anymore as such they are only of a theoretical interest to us.

Thus, the three karmani's, two Japas and five Upasanas are all part of Shikshavalli.

### **Paragraph # 2:**

The second paragraph starts with the word Shiksha, which gives the name to the chapter. Mere chanting or parayanam of scriptures is sacred. During chanting we are in touch with the Mahatmas who created them. Among parayanams, Veda parayanam is considered the highest. All others are smriti's. Vedas come from God. In this paragraph Veda parayanam is glorified. It is very important to chant the Veda parayanam correctly. There are rules established on how one should chant. There are sign rules used for chanting. This science of chanting is called Shiksha Shastram or science of phonetics or proper pronunciation. Mundaka Upanishad talks about 6 Vedangas. They are Shiksha (Phonetics), Vyakarana (grammar), Chandas (Prosody), Nirukta (Etymology), Jyotisa (astronomy) and Kalpa (sacrificial lore). The rules for pronunciation described in Shiksha shastram are six in number. They are: 1) Varna, 2) Swara, 3) Matra, 4) Balam, 5) Sama and 6) Santanaha.

**Varnaha:** It tells us how every letter of the alphabet is pronounced. It describes from which part of the body the pronunciation comes out. Eight parts of the body are recognized. Based on this the alphabets are categorized as vowels (swaras) and consonants (vyanjan). Consonants are categorized according to source of body part from which sound emanates. Thus we have: Kanta, Talu, Murdha, Danta, Oshta,

Nasika, etc.

**Swaraha:** This describes the accent or intonation or pitch of sound usually as high, medium or low. The pitch is very important in Vedic chanting and is usually marked in the text. The pronunciation is very important as the wrong pronunciation can change the meaning of the word.

Narrating a story in this context, there was a Devapurohita named Vishwarupa. Secretly he liked asuras. Indra got angry with him because of this and killed him. Vishwarupa's father Twashta wanted to revenge his son. He wanted a son who would kill Indra. He performed a Yaga and got a son named Vitrasura, an Indra Shatru. Instead of him killing Indra, Indra killed him. The father was very upset about this. He learnt that the chanting of Indra Shatru was performed in wrong manner. It was chanted as a Bahuvrihi Samas. The difference between Tatpurush and Bahuvrihi samas is the pronunciation. Here Tatpurush became Bahuvrihi and came out, as "I want a son for whom Indra is the killer". Thus, due to a wrong pronunciation his son was killed. It is for this reason that Veda mantras are not chanted en masse or even from a book. These situations can lead to wrong chanting of Vedas resulting in results that may be different from the originally intended one. In mass chanting errors are covered up by others. Such errors are acceptable for Nish Kama Karma mantras but not for Kami kama mantras.

**Matra:** The measure or length of a vowel. Consonants are uniform and are of ardha matra. For Swaras (vowels) there are three measures: Short (hrishwa), Long (dirgha) and very Long (plutha). A Plutha can be three or more matras long.

**Balam:** The stress or effort involved in uttering a letter. Some require more emphasis such as the difference between Ka and Kha. Effort comes from two sources, the mouth (abhyantra prayathna) and throat (bahya Prayathna). Abyantras are of five types while Bahya antra are of eleven types.

**Sama:** The pace or speed of chanting. It should not be slow or fast, usually medium pace is suggested. Sama is governed by certain rules. It is considered Chanting only when one can chant from memory. One has to learn the chant from a Guru. To memorize one must chant regularly. While performing Brahma Yagya, a part of Pancha Maha Yagya, one can chant fast. However, in a ritual chanting one has to chant the letters clearly and at a medium pace. When teaching some one to chant it should be done at a slow pace.

**Santanaha:** Continuity of words. This is a combination of words and letters. Chanting rules do not allow splitting and joining as one likes. Compound words can't be split. During teaching one may split but later, it must be compounded. When you combine, the word can change.

Thus: Sham Naha Mitra becomes Shannomitra. These rules for combining are called Sandhi rules and are very important.

Usually one learns chanting from a Guru by imitating him. The above are the six factors to be followed in chanting Vedas. One should avoid Veda chanting, as wrong chanting may give adverse results. For Chitta Shudhi non-Vedic mantras can be chanted as well.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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**Baghawat Geeta Class 72,**

# Chapter 5, Verses 10 – 13

Greetings All,

## Shloka # 10:

ॐ नमो ब्रह्मणे नमो ब्रह्मण्यै देव्यै वसुधै कर्मणे  
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय 5.10

**Reposing all works in Brahman, he operates without attachment;  
he is not stained by sin as a lotus is not by water**

Continuing his teaching of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, we saw in the beginning of chapter 5 that Sri Krishna talked about the two lifestyles of Pravrithimarga ( Grihasthashrama) and Nivrithimarga ( Sanyasashrama) and that one has freedom to choose any one of the paths. Sri Krishna himself prefers Grihasthashrama as it is less risky and one can change over to Sanayashrama later, if one wishes. In Sanyashrama one cannot revert back to Grihasthashrama.

Now, Sri Krishna takes up the topic of Sadhanas. Sadhanas are applicable to both ashramas. First, one has to obtain Gyanayogyatha and then one has to go to Gyanam. Gyana yogyatha can be obtained only by performing Karmas. Three types of Karmas are available to a person to follow. They are:

Kayika (by body),

Vachika (verbal) and

Manasa(mental) Karmani.

Physical body or mind can perform Puja. Shankaracharya has written several manasa Puja shlokas. Mental visualization is manasika puja. Chanting is Vachika Karma. Karma alone purifies a person and gives him Chitta Shudhi. After that one comes to Vedanta Vichara and then comes to Gyanam. So, follow karma yoga and purify the mind; then follow scriptures and

acquire knowledge and then obtain Gyanam and be liberated.

Mechanical performance of Karma is not enough. The attitude while performing the karma is very important for purification. **Karma performed with proper attitude is known as Karma Yoga.**

Karma Yoga purifies. What makes a Karma, Karma Yoga? The following make Karma, a Karma yoga:

1. The Karma should be dedicated to God as a Samarpanam. This will bring a change in personality. It is a Sankalpa that converts Karma into worship. What ever I do, I will do with purity, wholeheartedly, and do my very best for God.
2. When remembrance of God is there in the karma, it becomes a Puja.
3. Nishkama karma: means our attitude towards results of our karmas should be one of dedication to God or Samarpanam. Sandhyavandanam, going to temple, Japas, Pancha Maha Yagna, are all exclusive Karmas for purification. They are dedicated to God and meant for Chitta Shudhi. The results of these karmas will not disturb me.
4. Sakama Karma: Examples of this include when one is working for a salary or building a house etc. The activity here too should be dedicated to the Lord and one accepts the results as a prasadam. That is why the monthly salary check or a new sari is placed in front of God. Therefore, the karma is performed as an Ishwararpanam and the results of the karma are taken as Devaprasadam.

In this manner in both Nishkama and Sakama Karmas, the anxieties over actions go away. My life goes on smoothly as there is no violent reaction. I accept everything as God's gift to me. I accept everything as my karmaphalam, as what I deserve and not as what I desire. Everything is accepted as prasadam.

Sri Krishna says give up anxiety over future (Sangam Tyaktva). This is Bandha Tyaga. The sign of a devotee is that he is calm at all times.

What is the benefit of all this?

Such a Karma Yogi will not be affected by papam even if there are some defects in it. Karma Yogi has no papa bhayam. His life is like a lotus leaf in water that is not tainted by the water. The karma yogi too, amidst all his responsibilities, is not tainted by society.

### **Shloka # 11:**

शरीरेण मनसा बुद्ध्या चैव कर्मभिः कुरुते कर्मयोगिनः  
शरीरेण मनसा बुद्ध्या चैव कर्मभिः कुरुते कर्मयोगिनः 5.11

**With body, mind, intellect and mere senses, Yogins perform work without attachment, for the purification of the Self.**

Here Sri Krishna says Karma yoga can be performed at any level such as Kayika, Vachika or Manasika according to one's convenience. Even patram, pushpam, phalam and toyam are all acceptable. Our Vedic religion alone offers so many options to us. Bhakti is also important. Thus, everybody can perform Karma yoga.

Kayika karmas are physical actions. Vachika karmas are verbal actions such as nama-japa and parayanam.

One of the benefits of kayika karma, is beating laziness. One of the worst enemies of the human being is laziness and kayika karma helps us overcome this laziness. Manasika karmas include meditation, upasana, manasa japa and puja. Budhi karma includes understanding Gita and the scriptures with help of Indriyas.

Kevalaihi in the shloka means we tend to claim success as our own while failure we tend to disown. This can lead to arrogance. Even in success we must remember that it is due to

the organs given to us by God. Be humble even in success, exhorts god. Do all activities without stress and in calmness. All these sadhanas are meant for Atma or Chitta Shudhi. In this shloka Atma means mind.

Because of the many meanings of scriptures there is a special way to learn scriptures. It is called the Mimasa method that is used to extract the meaning of the scripture.

Karma Yoga is only to purify the mind it cannot give us Gyanam.

### Shloka # 12:

कर्मफलं त्यक्त्वा योगी योगसंन्यासिनाम  
योगिनोऽपि भवति शान्तिरसंन्यासिनाम 5.12

**Giving up the fruits of works, the Yogin attains disciplined peace; the non-Yogin, attached to fruits by the force of cravings is bound.**

Both Karma yoga and Gyana yoga will give us peace of mind. The mental peace resulting from Karma yoga is relative while the one obtained from Gyana Yoga is permanent. It is like a first aid versus a permanent treatment. The first aid is important, but it is limited. It indicates the need for more aid.

In the shloka Yuktaha means Karma yogi. Karma Yogi obtains peace of mind. Money can never gives us peace

of mind. Material objects can give us physical comfort but not mental comfort. Dropping concerns for karma phalam or the anxiety about future will certainly help in this area. Planning for future is useful as it makes me more efficient. However, worry about future will make me inefficient.

It is the same with the past. Regrets about past become a burden. On the other hand, if I learn lessons from the past, it makes me more efficient in the present.

Therefore, the karma Yogi is one who uses his past and present intelligently.

Ayukthaha means one who is not a karma yogi. He does not know how to use his past and future. Such a person tends to be pessimistic or fatalistic. He is always anxious about the future. He does not realize that everything in life is a risk. True security lies only in surrendering to God. Our real insurance is God and he alone. The Kami is a shackled Samsari. Therefore, Arjuna, become a Karma Yogi.

Shloka # 13:

सर्वकर्मफलं त्यक्त्वा त्तपस्योऽस्युपवसति  
सुखी भवति न च तस्मिन् कश्चिदकारि ॥5.13॥

**Mentally renouncing all works, and self-controlled, the embodied being happily sits in the nine-gated city, neither working nor causing others to work.**

With shlokas 7 through 12 Sri Krishna has completed the various stages of Sadhanas. The Shloka's 13 through 21 are all about Gyana Yoga. Swamiji says most of the people are not aware about Gyana Yoga. Many think one does not have to study scriptures. Sri Krishna now says without study of scriptures one cannot get knowledge. It is a choiceless choice. Thus, Gyana Yoga is the central theme of chapter # 5.

Gyana yoga is a systematic study of Vedantic scriptures for a length of time under a competent Guru. We should note that Dharma shastras too do not deal with knowledge.

Vedanta alone asks questions about who am I? What is our goal in life? What is God? Thus, Vedanta deals with the five topics of Jiva, Jagat, Ishwara, Bandha and Mukti. Once **one goes through Gyana Yoga, you discover that I am not the body, I am not the mind but I am the consciousness. It is the "I" or consciousness that is functioning through the body. "I" am transacting through the body-mind thought complex, but I am**

**not the body mind complex.** When the body dies my transactions stop. In sleep too our body stops transacting. We know sleep is not my end, but it is only end of transactions.

Therefore, "I" am the consciousness who is behind the body. The body may end, but "I" do not die at all. Not only I-am-the pure-consciousness, I am akarta and abhokta; I do not perform any action at all.

Like the light on the hand, the light cannot move, as it is all pervading. Similarly the Gyani discovers the fact that I am the action-less Atma. Therefore, all the actions are transferred to the body mind complex; **it is a shift in the identification; and therefore instead of claiming the actions as mine,** I hand over the actions to the body-mind-complex; the body-mind-complex will have to act in the world and it will have to reap the result also. It is the body mind complex that acts, not the "I".

Thus, the Gyani renounces all actions. How does he renounce the actions? Shankaracharya quotes this shloka often. It is one of the very important shlokas of the Gita. So, how does he renounce the action? He renounces through knowledge and detachment. He does not physically renounce the action. Actions will continue at the body and mental level. He, however, does not claim the actions as his actions, because he is detached from the body mind complex and therefore he says I do not act rather in my presence the body-mind-complex acts. Previously I said I act, but the new perspective is that, in my presence, the body-mind-complex acts. It is also a fact that the body-mind-complex cannot avoid action.

Thus, the Gyani renounces through knowledge. Physical immortality does not exist. "I am not the mortal body" is the true knowledge. Once I know the immortal Atma and I know the body is mortal then my biggest fear is gone. With this fear of death gone, the mind becomes light.

This knowledge removes the weight in my mind. He remains a man of control without involving in any action directly or indirectly because he does not perform any action. In his presence the body mind complex acts.

**Take Away:**

1. Only Karma performed with a proper attitude is known as Karma Yoga.
2. Once one goes through Gyana Yoga, you discover that I am not the body, I am not the mind but I am the consciousness. It is the consciousness that is transacting through the body-mind complex.
3. How does one renounce the action? He renounces through knowledge and detachment. Through a shift in identification he becomes detached from the body mind complex and he does not claim the actions as his actions.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

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## **Taitreya Upanishad, Class 3**

Greetings All,

Continuing his introduction to the Upanishad, Swami Paramarthananda said, in the last class he pointed out that among many Upanishads ten are most important due to Shankaracharya writing commentaries on them. All of them are

chosen from the Vedas. Taittiriya Upanishad is from Yajur Veda. Yajur veda has two branches. Krishna Yajur and Shukla Yajur veda. Katho and Taittiriya Upanishads are from Krishna Yajur Veda. Ishavasa and Brihadaranyaka Upanishads are from Shukla Yajur Veda. Taittiriya Upanishad occurs at the end of of Taittiriya Aranyakam. This Aranyakam has 10 chapters. The last 4 chapters are philosophical ones. The famous Suktanamaskra or Aruna Prashna occurs in Taittiriya Aranyakam. Last four chapters 7,8, 9 and 10 of the Aranyakam are called Taittiriya Upanishad. Shankaracharya has commented on chapters 7, 8 and 9 only. He did not comment on the last chapter 10 called Mahanarayanam. Taittiriya and Ishavasa Upanishads have an uniqueness to them. They are used for pararayanam due to their swaras or intonation. They were preserved in the sampradaya of chanting. Mundako and Keno upanishad's were not preserved in the sampradaya of chanting. Brihadaranyaka Upanishad also has swaras but they are not very popular.

Two reasons are given as to how the name Taittiriya Upanishad has come about.

**The first story** comes from the Puranas or is of mythological origins and is considered more a symbolic one. Once there was a sage by name of Vaishampayana and he had a great disciple by the name of Yagnavalkiya. Yagnavalkiya was a brilliant student. On one occasion he insulted one of his classmates. Vaishampayana came to know about it. He knew Yagnavalkiya had a big ego. He wanted to punish him. He asked Yagnavalkiya to return all the Vedas taught to him. Yagnavalkiya vomited all the food he had eaten and in that vomit all Vedas were surrendered as well. He lost all the wisdom he had learnt. In the vomit was also all his well-digested knowledge. A bird also digests its food and feeds that to its young. All the Rishi's who were with Yagnavalkiya thought it would be a great idea if they could become birds and eat his vomit, so that they would get the wisdom very quickly. So all Rishi's converted themselves to Tittiri birds (partridge) and they ate

up his vomit. The Tittiri bird is small but it can consume a lot of food. Thus, all the Rishi's gained wisdom. It is said that because the vomit was mixed with some blood it had become dark or "Krishna", hence this knowledge is known as Krishna Yajur Veda. Later, Yagnavalkiya learnt the Vedas from Surya Bhagavan and he created the Shukla Yajur Veda. All the Rishi's who got their wisdom from the vomit, taught others the Krishna Yajur Veda and thus the Veda spread.

The symbology in this story is that Yagnavalkiya's vomit was like teaching the students a second time. Brilliant students usually grasp information very fast or the very first time. Others, slower students, need more time. It was not unusual for a teacher to ask his brilliant student to teach the slower students or his Co-brahmachari's. So, Yagnavalkiya is supposed to have taught the students who were also very eager to learn. The Tittiri bird also symbolizes a desire to learn quickly. Thus, like a Tittiri bird they received their teaching.

**The second story** is a simpler one. There was a Rishi named Taittiri. It was an Acharyas name not that of a bird. He was from Yajur veda paramapara. Hence, the name of the Upanishad.

This Upanishad has 3 sections that were commented upon by Shankaracharya. He did not comment on the fourth section. The last or fourth section (chapter) is the Narayanavalli and it is usually chanted while welcoming a Sanyasi. Each of the three chapters or sections is named after the very first word used in the chapter.

Thus, chapter 1, beginning with word Shiksha, is called Shikshavalli.

The chapter 2 begins with Brahma and is called Brahmavalli.

Chapter 3 begins with Brighu and as such is called Brighuvalli.

Fourth chapter is called Narayanavalli but it is not studied.

First and third chapters are not dealing with Vedanta. Vedanta occurs only in chapter 2 and is the most important one. Shankaracharya's commentary on this chapter is very famous. Chapters 1 and 2 are about preparation for gaining Gyanam and deal with Karma Yoga and Upasana.

These two subjects are discussed in chapters 1 and 3. Between these three chapters they have two shanti pathas. First chapter has a Shanti patha and chapters 2 and 3 together have another shanti patha. The invocation Sahana Vavatu comes from this shanti patha.

### **Shikshavalli or chapter 1:**

#### **The Shanti patha:**

**May Mitra be propitious to us. May Varuna bless us. May the blessings of Aryama be with us. May the grace of Indra and Brihaspathi be upon us. May Vishnu, the all pervading (wide-striding) be propitious to us. Salutations to Brahman. Salutations to Thee O Vayu! Thou art the visible Brahman. Thee alone shall I consider as the visible Brahman. I shall declare: Thou art the "Right"; Thou art the "Good". May that protect me; may that protect the speaker. Please protect me. Please protect the speaker.**

Through shanti patha students are asking for Gyana Yogyatha prapthihi. All of my organs must be in a fit condition to receive knowledge. The 17 organs (The karmendriyas, Gyanendriyas etc.) should also cooperate. During Sravanam my gyanendriyas must be active, not Karmendriyas. I must obtain Karana Yogyata prapthihi. Each organ has a Devata. I invoke these devatas so that they keep my organs fit. Various Devatas are mentioned in prayers. Prayers ask that there be no obstacles. Parthibandha Nibhadhyathi.

In this shanti patha following seven gods are invoked. They are:

**Mitra:** God of exhalation (outbound breath)

**Varuna:** Apana: God of inhalation

**Aryama** or Surya: God of the Eyes.

**Indra:** God of the hand.

**Brihaspati:** God of wisdom, intelligence and communication. The ability to communicate and ask questions is important. Precision and brevity in communication is required.

**Urukrama** or Vishnu: Is God of the feet or the ability to move and sit. Urukrama means one with big strides.

**Vayu:** is the Hiranyagarbha Devata or the Total subtle body. It is not visible. The visible part is Prana or Vayu. Samashti Prana is Vayu. It is total Sukshma shariram.

He is the Mangala Karta perceptible through the breath in our nostrils.

Students invoke these seven gods for auspiciousness, strength and Mangala Karta. This prayer includes prayer for fitness of teacher as well. It prays for teacher's organs and memory as well.

**Naha:** Student and teacher.

**Namaha:** Prostrating to Hiranyagarbha Tatva as it includes all Devatas or the Totality.

Hence, we worship the Pancha Maha Bhutas of Prithvi, Jalam, Vayu, Agni, and Akash Tatvam. All are worshipped during Sandhya Vandanam as well.

You are the perceptible God. I want to spread the good news.

**Ritum:** Living a life according to my studies. Not being a hypocrite.

Satyam: Since I should act according to my knowledge, my knowledge should be the right understanding. My knowledge should be right. It should be Right knowledge in keeping with Shastra, Reasoning and my Experience. When these three sources of knowledge are right, I have right knowledge. **Satyam is Right knowledge.**

Ritum and Satyam are embodied in Hiranyagarbha. All these are prayers for Yogya Prapthihi.

Prathibandha Nivriithi: means May god protect me. Let the obstacles go away. May God bless the Guru (Vaktaram) as well.

The Shantihi is chanted three times for removal of obstacles. These obstacles are Adhidaivika (of divine origin), Adhibhautika (originated in the physical, material beings) and Adhyatmika (created by ourselves).

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Foot Note:

### **Karmendriyas:**

#### **1.pāyu – the excretory organ.**

Is the organ of excretion. Associated with the mooladhara chakra and the earth element.

#### **2.upastha – the sexual organs**

This is the generative organ.

#### **3.pāda – the locomotion organ**

Legs are the locomotory organs.

#### **4.pāni – the organ of apprehension**

Hands are the most complex organ of action as they can express, feel and touch.

#### **5.vāk – the speech organ**

**Gyanendriyas:** are the five sense organs :1. ghrāṇa – nose  
2.rasanā – tongue 3.cakṣu – eye 4.tvak – skin 5.śrotra – ear

### **Panchamahabhootas :**

- 1) Prithivi (earth) corresponds to the mooladhara chakra
  - 2) Apas or Jala (water) corresponds to the Svadhistana chakra
  - 3) Agni (fire) corresponds to the manipura chakra
  - 4) Vayu (air) corresponds to the anahata chakra
  - 5) Akasha (ether) corresponds to the vishuddha chakra.
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## **Bagawat Geeta, Class 70: Chapter 5, Verses 3 to 7**

### **Shloka # 3:**

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ५.३ ॥  
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ५.३ ॥

**Know him to be a perpetual renouncer who neither shuns nor seeks, O mighty-armed! One who is above such contraries is really liberated from bondage.**

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said that the teaching of previous three chapters was that there is no choice between Karma Yoga and Gyana Yoga. The Spiritual Sadhanas are:

- Gyana Yoga for liberation and
- Karma Yoga for preparation of mind.

All forms of sadhanas including Patanjali's yoga of meditation come under these sadhanas. Even Bhakti Yoga, depending on the type of practice, comes under one of these two sadhanas. When Bhakthi yoga is understood as pooja, or any type of saguna dhyanam it will come under karma yoga. When bhakti yoga is performed as a Shastric study, it becomes Gyana Yoga, a higher level of Bhakti Yoga. Thus, Bhakthi yoga is common to both

karma yoga and gyana yoga. Lower level of bhakthi yoga is called karma yoga. Higher level of bhakthi yoga is called Gyana yoga; there is no exclusive bhakthi yoga, separate from Karma yoga and Gyana yoga. Therefore, all the sadhanas will fall within these two alone.

Regarding life style, Sri Krishna says, there is a choice. We can be in society and follow both sadhanas or be out of society and follow both sadhanas. There is even a third choice in lifestyle. One can follow karma Yoga as a Grihasta then become a Sanyasi and follow Gyana Yoga. This third option is the one preferred by the Vedas.

The question is asked, how can one follow spirituality in Grihasthashrama where there are so many distractions? Sri Krishna says, in itself there is nothing wrong with Grihasthashrama. **The primary problem for a Grihasta is Raga and Dvesha.** We have expectations about everything, our children, wife, house, friend etc. One has an ideal in mind and when others do not meet that ideal, one is disturbed. We need to manage our Raga Dvesha. Such a person is a Nithya Sanyasi.

The advantage of Sanyasahrama is that the Sanyasi has no attachments. Therefore, he usually has a light mind. Even a Grihasta can enjoy a light mind if he does not have Raga and Dvesha.

Citing king Janaka as a model of Grihasthashrama, once the king was with his Guru amidst other Sanyasis. The Sanyasis looked down upon the King, as he was a Grihasta. The Guru wanted to teach the Sanyasis a lesson. He created an illusory fire in the ashram and immediately all Sanyasi's ran to protect their possessions. When they came back they found the king still sitting alone listening to the Guru's teaching. Swamiji says, wearing a saffron robe does not guarantee Sanyasa. Therefore, even a Grihasta can be a Sanyasi internally.

Swamiji clarified that Sri Krishna is not saying that one should not have Raga Dvesha. Human beings will have likes and dislikes. Even Gods have their likes and dislikes. See how Sri Krishna loves his flute and Saraswathi Devi loves her Veena and Sri Ganesha loves his carrier, the Mouse. Preferences in life will be there. Our personality is actually defined by our preferences or likes and dislikes. Sri Krishna, however says, do not become a slave to Raga and Dvesha. If you can fulfill them fine, if not convert it into a non-binding desire. What is a non-binding desire? Citing through an example, it is not unusual for a parent to dream of a child becoming an IAS officer. They try everything to help the child in this process. However, in the end, the child could become a Sanyasi. Sri Krishna says, have dreams; but be ready to face whatever happens; this is called management of ragah-dvesha. If you have this capability you are a Sanyasi.

O Arjuna, one who has managed the Dvandas (pairs of opposites or Raga Dvesha), he will definitely attain Moksha even in Grihasthashrama. Even such a person will have to follow Karma yoga and then come to Gyana Yoga.

**Shloka # 4:**

अज्ञानां न विद्वानां न योगिनां न संन्यासिणां  
 न शक्यं कश्चिच्छान्तिं प्राप्नुयान्मोक्षमात्मनः॥५.४॥

**The thoughtless, not men of discrimination, affirm that Samkhya and Yoga are different. Properly resorting to either of them, one wins the fruit of both.**

Sri Krishna concludes by saying that both ashramas are equally efficacious. He calls Grihasthashrama as Pravriti marga and Sanyasashrama as Nivriti marga. Sri Krishna has combined the four ashramas into two. Thus, Grihasthashrama includes Bramhacharya and Sanyasashrama includes Vanaprastha. Both ashramas are good and neither is superior. Only an ignorant person will say that one of them is superior or that they are

not equal. A wise person will certainly not say such a thing.

There is in Grihasthashrama a guru shishya paramapara as there is one in Sanyashrama as well. And in fact, among all the Upanishads, the most important portion is called **tatvamasi prakaranam**, where the teaching of tatvamasi comes. This teaching usually took place between a father and son. Thus, the scriptures talk about the Grihasthashrama Gyani parampara, as well as Sanyasashrama Gyani parampara. That these two paramparas existed indicate that you can get Gyanam in any of the ashramas.

In both ashramas Gyanam is possible. Sri Krishna advises that one should take the ashrama most suitable to one's inclinations and Prarabhda Karmas.

Many factors influence the type of ashrama one chooses. But once a choice is made one should follow the requirements of that ashrama implicitly. It is very important that finally the inner transformation occurs. Gyanam is also the goal of a Grihastha Sanyasi.

### **Shloka # 5:**

संख्यया योग्या च कर्मयोगेणैव मुक्तिर्वाप्यते  
संख्यया योग्या च कर्मयोगेणैव मुक्तिर्वाप्यते 5.5

**The status won by the Samkhyas is attained by the Yogins also. Only he perceives who perceives that Samkhya and Yoga are one.**

Here again Sri Krishna reinforces the same ideas.

Samkhya Sanyasi's do attain moksha following Karma Yoga and then Gyana yoga. Purificatory sadhanas are many including the Sanyasi's Danda. A sanyasi does not have sacred thread he uses a danda instead. A danda puja is also performed daily. Both Sanyasi and Grihastha attain moksha through purification.

While both ashramas are equally efficient each has its plus and minus points exactly like having your own house versus a

rented house. The one who sees this fact, that person alone, sees that other people have wrong perceptions.

Sri Krishna says all this so that Arjuna does not run away from the battlefield. Arjuna, on the other hand, somehow or the other wants to run away. There is a tension between the two. If Sri Krishna says sanyasa ashrama is superior then Arjuna will run away; therefore he says that the one who sees both as equal, he alone has got the right vision.

**Shloka # 6:**

संन्यासः कर्मणोः परमो हि सुखदायकः ।  
संन्यासोऽपि योगो योगोऽपि योगिनः ॥5.6॥

**Indeed, renunciation, mighty armed! Is hard to win without Karma Yoga. With Yoga, the silent sge attains Brahman without much delay.**

Sri Krishna now adds some new information. He has already said that both ashramas are equal and efficient. This is like asking which subject is better, physics or chemistry? All sciences are equally important. Now, if I have to choose one of them it is because of my mental make up and inclination. One of them may be more conducive. Some places are humid and others very dry. Some may prefer one or the other. In this context, a prepared mind is better for Sanyasa. An unprepared mind may feel very lonely in Sanyasa. There will be nobody to ask him how he feels.

Citing an example, an Indian couple was residing in a small town USA. The lady was a housewife and was often left alone. Due to loneliness she gradually became clinically depressed. Her house was a not a silent ashrama rather it was the silence of an Shmashana (cremation ground). After some time they came back to India. Here, now, she feels much better although it is very noisy.

So, to enjoy Sanyasahrama one needs a level of mind that is



Artha and Kama. One may have to climb the corporate ladder initially, but at some point he must change to spirituality. In his last stages attention should be given totally to spirituality. Pray to God that just as a mango ripens and once ripe, falls, while initially I am stuck with worldly things, later I should be able to detach and become spiritual. This is called Yoga Yuktatvam. What I am is more important than what I have. If one can understand this itself one has become a Karma Yogi.

Vishudhatma in the shloka is one who depends less on external factors. Dependence is Samsara. Independence is moksha. Thus, less dependence psychologically is Vairagyam. Thus, detachment is purity. Raga Rahit Atma is same as Vishudhatma, which is same as Vairagyam.

**Take Away:**

We have expectations about everything, our children, wife, house, friend etc. One has an ideal in mind and when others do not meet that ideal, one is disturbed. This is Raga Dvasha. We have to overcome this.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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# **Taitreya Upanishad, Class 1**

Greetings All,

## Introduction:

Starting his teaching of the Upanishad, Swami Paramarthananda said, as a general introduction he wanted to recollect from his previous discussions on Upanishads. Basic scriptures are called Vedas also known as sources or instruments of Knowledge. They are four in all. They are further divided into two parts. First part is known as Veda Poorva while second part is known as Veda Anta.

Veda Poorva, also known as Karma Kanda, is dedicated to a wide variety of karmas or rituals. All these karmas are broadly classified into three categories. They are:

1. Kayika Karamani: Physical body plays a big part in them.
2. Vachika Karmani: Are in the form of Japas and Parayanams.
3. Manasika Karmani: It is purely through meditation.

All these karmas are also known as Upasanas. Scriptures prescribe these three karmas for obtaining different types of karmaphalams. Therefore, these three karmas are also known as Sadhanas or means of obtaining different aims in life. Karma Kandas also calls them as Sadhana Trayam. These Sadhanas can produce end results called Sadhyams for our benefit. While there are many goals, these goals have been classified into three or the Sadhya Trayam. They are:

- Upadhi Prapthihi: Goals of improving our organs of pleasure, better health, better sense organs, improved mental faculty (intelligence and memory) etc. Thus, the Samidadhanam required to be performed by a Brahmachari is for improved memory and intelligence. It is also for improved emotional health, (shantihi), for intellectual health (shradha) etc. Overall purpose is to improve instruments of living and enjoyment or improving oneself.

Now, once you feel further improvement is not possible, due to

age, health etc., then one can pray for another good body in the next birth as well. This too is Upadhi prapthihi.

- Vishaya Prapthihi: Is to improve objects of enjoyment. Thus, to obtain a good family, wife children, friends are all wishes that fall in this category. Each of these is important else life can become miserable.
- Lokaha Prapthihi: The environment of interaction between Self and objects should be favorable. It should be peaceful. It means improve present atmosphere or replace existing atmosphere. An atmosphere of violence, anger, hatred etc., is after all not very conducive for happiness.

All above are the Karmas or the three means and their respective three ends. Even if a person is lucky to enjoy all of the above three, such a Satvik person will learn from Life's Lessons. Important lessons learned are that all three goals are wonderful, however, inherent in them are deficiencies or Doshas. While these Doshas are relatively good (Preyaha) they are not absolute good or Sreyaha. Thus, there are three Doshas or Dosh Trayam. They are:

1. Dukhamishritatvam: This includes desire for acquisition, preservation and loss. All three of them can also cause pain.
2. Atripthihi: They will not give us total satisfaction. You will always crave for more. You will tend to compare and there will always be someone with more than you.
3. Bandhatvam: When we have them and use them, we soon also become dependent on them. One becomes attached or addicted. You become more dependent without your own knowledge.

Most of us do not think of these Doshas. Many of us do not worry about it. A slum person prefers his slum even if a better place is offered to him. He will rent the new place and come back to his slum.

However, some people start exploring some goals that are free from these Doshas. To such intelligent people, Vedas say, there are such goals, but they cannot be obtained from Karma Kanda. Karma Kanda only deals with Preyaha. If you want Sreyaha you have to go somewhere else. Such an intelligent seeker is called a Mumukshu. Others are called Bubhukshu. Karma Kanda cannot serve a Mumukshu. Mumukshu has to go Vedanta for this.

So, what is this defect free goal? That defect free goal is Brahman or Moksha. It is not mired in dukha, atripthi and bandhaha.

Where is this Brahman and how to acquire it? Vedanta says you can never obtain it because that defect free one is in the form of the "Seeker" in you. You are that. I also have a very difficult time swallowing the idea that I am that defect free Brahman. Everything I have, has defects, including my body, mind and intellect. They all have limitations. All my experiences, so far, have proven my limitation. Even my children tell me that I was a terrible parent. In this context I have a big doubt if I am a defect free Self. There is a very big gap between what I think of myself versus what Vedanta thinks of me. I sometimes feel like dropping the Gita, Upanishads and the Guru.

If I am born in a culture where Shraddha in scriptures is important, I will not drop the Upanishad. A boys Upanayana ceremony lasts four days and on the last day the Brahmachari worships Shradha Devi. To such a person the Shradha comes that the Vedas cannot go wrong. I develop deep faith in the Vedas. So, I need to question my conclusions. I have taken it for granted, "I am finite". I need to re-analyze my conclusion. Therefore, I have to start a Self Enquiry to verify if my conclusion is valid or not. For a long time human beings thought the Sun went around the Earth. Then came a person who said that the Earth went around the Sun or that we are not in a Geo-centric universe. This scientist was harassed and

rejected.

When I enter into Self Enquiry, I find, I don't have the instruments for such an enquiry. Just as we have a telescope to study the stars and a microscope to study bacteria, I don't have an instrument to study the Self. Here I am enquiring into the Enquirer. Regular instruments are not useful for such an enquiry. Such regular instruments are also known as Pauresheya Pramanani because they are extrovert in nature and not useful for such an enquiry.

I need a special mirror, one to reveal my real "I". This is known as Shabda Pramanam or a verbal mirror. When somebody tells you, "you look jaundiced" (yellow) it is a Shabda Pramana or a Shabda mirror. When I try to study the Upanishad by myself, I find they use peculiar methods that are different from objective science. Shastra has to use words to reveal my Self.

Other methods will only give us an intellectual and in-direct knowledge. Other methods tend to objectify. Description of the Brahman is not one of an object rather it is one of my own Self. If not, Student will say he has understood but not experienced the Brahman. This knowledge and experience dichotomy (or division) does not occur in Brahmagyanam. The student should not come to a definite conclusion. Therefore, a Guru alone can make the Upanishad speak to you. What is the method used by the Guru? He uses six factors in the primary teaching also known as Tatparyam. It is " You are what you want to be in life". It will teach that you are a secure and immortal being. This teaching has to be provided consistently, again and again until the student nods his head in understanding.

### **Take Away:**

There is a very big gap between what I think of myself versus what Vedanta thinks of me. It is very difficult to believe

that I am that defect free Brahman.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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# Bagawat Geeta, Class 69, Chapter 5

Greetings All,

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda started Chapter 5 today. He said in chapters 2, 3 and 4 respectively, Sri Krishna spoke about two topics. He spoke about Sadhana and Lifestyle. Recapping those teachings Swamiji said:

1. **Sadhana:** Regarding Sadhana he made it clear that everyone has to go through Karma Yoga Sadhana and Gyana yoga sadhana. There is no choice. Karma Yoga is the means towards Gyana Yoga and Gyana Yoga is the means towards liberation.

Karma yoga is a means and Gyana Yoga too is a means while moksha is the end. You can have a choice between means and a choice between ends but not a choice between a mean and an end. One can choose between pants or shirts. Here, there is choice. Choice is only between similar. Thus, one can't choose between a pant and a shirt. Similarly, one cannot choose between Karma Yoga and Gyana Yoga. Once you choose an end, it means the means is a given.

Citing an example, getting into a bus is meaningful only when you have chosen not only the bus but also the destination. You cannot choose the bus without choosing the destination. We are not getting into the bus for a joy ride. Similarly, if you have chosen a destination, you have to choose the means as well.

Citing another example, suppose I go to a doctor for stomach pain and the doctor prescribes a tablet. I cannot get away from not taking the tablet. If I chose the end of removing the pain, I have to choose the means as well. Therefore, choosing the means and end is complementary; one choice will validate the other choice and the other way around as well. Thus, Karma Yoga is the way to come to Gyana yoga. Gyana yoga is the way to Moksha.

Citing another example, it is just like a person occupies both the father status and son status. With regard to his son, he is the father and with regard to his father, he is the son. From Karma yoga's perspective Gyana Yoga is an end. From Moksha's perspective Gyana Yoga is the means.

After explaining quite a bit by Sri Krishna, Arjuna is still not clear. His confusion is with respect to sadhana. This is an area of confusion to many people.

There are people who think karma yoga and gyana yoga are alternative means of liberation. Many still think and talk about different paths to liberation. Thus, if you are an active person, you attain moksha through karma and if you are an intellectual person, you attain moksha through Gyana yoga.

Even Shankaracharya struggled to clarify this confusion. He too says karma yoga cannot lead you to liberation, it will take you to Gyana yoga and Gyana yoga will lead to liberation; this is one part of the teaching;

Then there is second part of teaching with regard to the lifestyle. A person can lead two types of lifestyles, one is

life of activity in society and the other is life of seclusion or life of work and life of withdrawal.

or Life in society and life in seclusion.

## **2.Life style:**

Sri Krishna described two types of lifestyle. One is a person who is active in society and other is one who leads a life of seclusion.

Active in society is known as Grihasthashrama. While one leading a life of seclusion is known as Sanyasahrama. In olden times, after Gurukula, both lifestyles were open to a person. A lifestyle is also called a Nishta. Sri Krishna points out that every person has a choice in lifestyle. One can be a Grihastha or a monk. Whatever lifestyle or ashrama one adopts in both of them you have to have follow Karma yoga and then follow up with Gyana Yoga.

Grihasthashrama Dharma is Karma Yoga for householders. Sanyasahrama is Karma Yoga for monks. Both have their rites, pujas and rituals prescribed.

Grihastha will have a sacred thread while a Sanyasi has a danda. Grihastha has got rituals, prayers, pujas and parayanams. Sanyasi too has rituals, prayers, pujas and parayanams. The type of parayanams may vary.

For a grihastha Vishnu Sahasranama and similar mantras are emphasized. For the sanyasi,

Upanishad, Bhashyams, etc. are emphasized.

For a grihastha, saguna ishvara namas are given, like Namashivaya, Narayanaya etc.; for a Sanyasi, Upanishad mahavakya mantras are given for japa, or Omkara japa, and other similar mantras are also given. For both, puja is a requirement. All these are necessary to develop a mental conditioning required for reaching Gyana yoga. A sanyasi

should qualify himself to enter Gyana yoga. A grihastha also has to qualify himself to come to Gyana yoga.

Sri Krishna asks all to follow their Svadharma.

Once ready, both should come to Gyana Yoga. Thus, in sadhana, there is no choice. In lifestyle, however, there is choice. Each lifestyle has plusses and minuses. For Gihastashrama the plus points are he is able to perform Pancha Maha Yagna, perform noble services for society, he has security through his children, family and wealth. The minuses are that he has equal responsibilities. He has to raise his children, provide education, marry off his daughters etc. He has to face the fears and anxieties related to raising a family.

In Sanyasa ashrama, however, there is no responsibility, no wife, no husband, no children and you need not bother about anything. If you get hungry, ask Bhavathi Bhiksham Dehi; somebody will give Bhiksha. So, while there is no responsibility there is also no security.

So, every ashrama has got it's plus and minus points. Therefore, Sri Krishna says, take to any ashrama and pursue both the sadhanas and get liberation.

After listening to all this Arjuna wanted further clarification. He wants to know about the Nishta, when there is a choice. **Decision-making is always difficult. This is so, because we don't want to face the consequences of our decision.**

Arjuna's mind at the moment is voting for Sanyasa. He does not want to kill. In crisis, he wants to escape with Sri Krishna's blessings. His question is which is better, Grihastha or Sanyasa? Sri Krishna is going to talk about Sanyasa Yoga.

**Shloka # 1: Arjuna said:**

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १ ॥

श्रीकृष्णः श्रीकृष्णः श्रीकृष्णः श्रीकृष्णः श्रीकृष्णः 5.1

**The renunciation of works, Krishna, and again, their performance you praise. Tell me for certain which of the two is better.**

In spite of Sri Krishna's clear teaching, Arjuna asks: Sri Krishna, you glorify both ashramas. You have glorified life of activity (grihasthashrama). You have also glorified Sanyasa Ashrama, life of seclusion. The two are contradictory. So, Sri Krishna, tell me, which one is better of the two? Both are opposites. I cannot follow both, life of seclusion and life of activity, at the same time.

In fact, the grihastha is supposed to be the pillar of the society. He is the one who nourishes all the other three ashramas because all the three ashramas live on Bhiksha. Thus, a brahmachari has to live on Bhiksha; a vanaprasthi has to live on Bhiksha and a sanyasi also has to live on Bhiksha alone. So, if the three ashramas have to receive Bhiksha, somebody has to give it. So, he is the one who gives Bhiksha.

Some other monastic religions glorify Sanyasa. Ashrama is a place of spiritual sadhana. Ashrama can happen in family life too. Such a person is unaffected even in his family life. Janaka Maharaja is often cited as an example of a Grihastha Gyani.

Thus, says Swamiji, it is not a choice between Sadhanas rather it is a choice between lifestyles.

Shloka # 2:

**Sri Krishna said:**

श्रीकृष्णः श्रीकृष्णः

श्रीकृष्णः श्रीकृष्णः श्रीकृष्णः श्रीकृष्णः

श्रीकृष्णः श्रीकृष्णः श्रीकृष्णः श्रीकृष्णः श्रीकृष्णः 5.2

**Both renunciation and Karma Yoga promote the supreme good;**

**but of the two, Karma Yoga is superior to the renunciation of works.**

Sri Krishna says, both ashramas are equally good for both sadhanas. In Vedanta the term Dvanda is used. It means everything in creation has a good and a bad aspect to it.

Both ashramas are equally good for following karma yoga sadhana and Gyana yoga sadhana. Karma yoga can be efficiently followed in grihastha ashrama; but for Gyana yoga the obstacles for Grihastha are many while you require an undistracted life. The many duties of grihasthashrama are all seen as obstacles. Therefore, in grihastha ashrama, karma yoga can be ideally followed;

In sanyasa ashrama, karma yoga cannot be ideally followed because he does not have the resources to do a lot of karmas; there is no money with them; he cannot do any good karma; he has to manage with limited activities, like japa, puja, susrusha, etc. Therefore, there are certain advantages in following some sadhanas and some disadvantages in following other sadhanas. However, in both, you can follow the sadhana and attain liberation; therefore in both ashramas one can follow the sadhana and attain liberation.

Shastra also talks of the ashrama that fits a type of person. Sanyasa requires a particular mental make up that is not an easy one. Sanyasa ashrama is dangerous for an unprepared person. Sri Krishna, says, for majority of people life of activity is safer and ideal. In Vedas there are rules when one goes from Brahmacharya to Grihastha. From Brahmacharya one can also go to Sanyasashrama with Guru's advice and Shishya's acceptance.

The greatest risk of sanyasashrama is that you can't go back. It is an irreversible process.

So, Sri Krishna says, Grihastha Ashrama is a better choice for majority. He says Gita is for general public, while Upanishad

is for evolved one's. While Upanishad prefers Sanyasahrama, Gita considers Grihasthashrama as the best. We should keep in mind that in Gita, both the Teacher and Student were grihastas.

### Shloka # 3:

ॐ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥ श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता ॥ ५.३ ॥  
ॐ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥ श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता ॥ ५.३ ॥

**Know him to be a perpetual renouncer who neither shuns nor seeks, O mighty-armed! One who is above such contraries is really liberated from bondage.**

Now that Sri Krishna has recommended Grihasta Ashrama, is there any way one can get advantage of both Ashramas? This is a thought that can come in a person's mind. Sri Krishna, addressing this question, says, there is a method. He says one needs to handle Raga and Dvesha in Grihastashrama. Householder's life is influenced by many factors. It is said nine planets influence a householder. A son-in-law is considered the tenth planet. He is a planet over which you have no control. Whatever he does affects your daughter but you cannot do anything about it.

Thus, there are many relationship that are similar, in which you have no control. When you get married to a girl and you place a knot on one neck simultaneously you

are putting knots on many other necks as well. You are immediately related to the girl's family. All these knots are factors that can influence you but you cannot control them. Therefore, you have to learn to manage your ragah-dveshah. Whether your likes and dislikes are fulfilled or not, you have to learn to navigate through life without being affected. This requires tremendous strength; And therefore Sri Krishna says a grihastha is a sanyasi, if he has learnt to handle likes and dislikes; For one who has managed his ragah-dveshah the house itself is an ashrama That is the trick. Sri Krishna ,

however, does not say how we are to manage Raga and dvesha.

**Take Away:**

Decision-making is always difficult. This is so, because we don't want to face the consequences of our decision.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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## **Saddharshanam, Class 23**

Greetings All,

**Shloka # 39:**

**To say there is duality during the inquiry, but non-duality in the knowledge of the Supreme is not right. The tenth man's tenth-ness is one and same when he is lost before the search and when he is found later.**

Continuing his teaching, Swami Paramarthananda said, this is a very important shloka. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi talks about the nature of Advaitam. He says a clear understanding of Advaitam is required for understanding mukti, knowledge and bondage. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi points out that Advaitam is not an event produced in time or in the future. It is not even a particular state such as say a mystical state. It is also not part of an experience we work for. We need to be clear that Advaitam is not an event nor a state nor an experience. All the three are bound by time or they occur in time.

Therefore, the Advaitam or Non-duality that one obtains in Samadhi, Sushupthi or Pralayam is a misnomer. It is actually a temporary state of Advaitam. Sushupthi Advaitam is temporary because it occurs only in Sushupthi. It is the same with Samadhi as well where the state is available only in Samadhi. Temporary Advaitam is a false name for Dvaitam or unmanifest Dvaitam. All three states are Dvaitam. Thus, Advaitam in Sushupthi becomes Dvaitam upon waking. So it is for the other two states as well.

True Advaitam is a fact that obtains all the time. Vedanta says a fact has to be understood as an eternally occurring fact. This understanding is called Advaita Gyanam. This knowledge, Advaita Gyanam, is not an experience. Experience is a mental event, which will be displaced by other events. An experience is a displaceable mental event. However, Knowledge is a mental event that cannot be displaced by any future experience. It is permanently there. Thus, the knowledge that  $2+2=4$  continues, even if you are feeling happy, sad, hot or cold. It is not displaced. So, knowledge does not go with experience.

**So, what we need is Advaita Gyanam not Advaita experience.** Knowledge is always associated with fact(s). An experience may or may not be related to a fact. Thus, Sunrise is an experience. Sunrise, however, is not associated with the fact that earth is going around its own axis. While we experience the flat earth, it is not a fact. Thus, experience can be a fact or a myth.

Here knowledge related to facts is being described. Knowledge of Advaitam, since it is associated with fact, can't be displaced by a future Dvaitam. Therefore, while the Advaita Gyani continues to experience Dvaitam in waking, sleep and dream states it will not disturb his knowledge of Advaitam. This is highlighted in the expression "Aham Brahma Asmi". "I am Brahman" is to be known as a fact. Once known, this knowledge will not be displaced by any other experience

including Dvaitam.

At the time of Sadhana there is Dvaitam or bondage. At time of knowledge of Reality there will be Advaitam.

Advaitam and moksha are synonymous. "I will become free later" is the biggest mistake made by a seeker. It is not a future event. Even so, we often ask, when will I get Moksha? Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi says such a statement is not correct.

Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi gave the example of the tenth man referenced in Vedanta. Very briefly, ten boys were crossing a river. One of the ten was their leader. After crossing, to ensure all crossed safely, the leader counted them. He counted only nine. He reportedly missed counting himself. He is the famous tenth boy, who was thought to be missing but never was.

So too in life, we look for peace and security just as looking for the tenth boy (man). The boy was the tenth boy before and after the knowledge. At that particular time and moment this was a fact. By knowledge, he just dropped the notion that the tenth boy was lost. Nothing new was involved. It was just the dropping of a notion. While dropping the notion "the boy was lost" was simple, the emotional consequences of this are enormous. For Ananda, for spiritual awakening etc., we are looking for the tenth man. Shastra calls the tenth man the Brahman. After getting this man we still continue hunting for Brahman. Here Shastra tells us the tenth man is not an event. It says, "You are Brahman, You were and You will always be". Once this knowledge comes in, all future experiences cannot displace this knowledge. "I am Brahman despite my emotional condition."

The tenth man was there all the time, but was thought to be lost. Before enquiry, after enquiry and when the tenth man was attained, the tenth man never went anywhere. He was always there.

Therefore moksha is not an event. It is a fact. Advaita is a

fact. You only need the knowledge to know it.

This shloka was about discovering the tenth man the Atma.

#### **Shloka # 40:**

**When man thinks “ I do work”; he becomes bound to enjoy the fruits of action also. If the doer-ship is washed away by inquiry, the results of the three types of actions perish. That alone is liberation.**

Almost the same idea presented in previous shloka is discussed here, only this time from perspective of the individual or Jiva.

Moksha is dropping of a notion. When I say Aham, there are two parts to it. One part is Chaitanyam (Atma Amsa) and second part is Ahamkara Amsa consisting of the body-mind-complex with borrowed Chaitanyam. The Ahamkara Amsa is also called Chiddabasha. This mixture of Atma with Ahamkara is the “I”. Atma cannot say “ I” as Atma cannot perform transactions. Ahamkara itself exists due to Atma. Of this inseparable mixture, Atma is Satyam while Ahamkara is Mithya.

Kartrutvam, doership, belongs to the unreal Ahamkara Part. Doership does not belong to Atma. This mixed “ I” is performing all transactions. The same mixed “ I” attains knowledge as well. In ignorance, I am not aware of my Atma nature. So, I take myself to be Ahamkara. However, when reality is known, unreal becomes real. When waking is not known, dream is real. During ignorance, I am Ahamkara and it is real. For this Ahamkara, doer-ship is real. Therefore, all Karmas with their resulting Karma Phalams are also real. This is what makes astrological charts important.

Once the three Karmas are real, the Bhokta also becomes real, as does Samsara with its Sukha and Dukha. All this happens due to Ahamkara being considered as real. Until this truth is known, Samsara cannot be destroyed.

Therefore, Ahamkara must be made unreal. Dream can be converted to unreal when you wake up to a higher reality. Therefore Original Consciousness (OC) must be claimed as myself. This is Atma Gyanam. Falsification of Ahamkara through Atma Gyanam is moksha. Atma Gyanam is knowledge not an event or experience.

Thus, Vedanta teaches you that you are not a Karta nor the Karma nor the resulting Karma Phalam. This teaching is performed through Guru Shastra Vidya. Here, Ahamkara (or body) is not physically eliminated; rather we are falsifying the body. In spiritual awakening the body does not disappear. It is just a change in my understanding. It is similar to our understanding that the earth is round while our experience is that it is flat. This is called falsification. Doer-ship is falsified. With this falsification, all three Karmas (Sanchita, Prarabhda, Agami) are destroyed. Prarabhda experience continues and is real for the body; however, the Gyani sees it as a Mithya.

Therefore, all are falsified. This falsification of Karmas is Mukti.

This shloka is about falsification of Ahamkara and with it, all the three Karmas.

#### **Shloka # 41:**

**When there is the sense of bondage, anxiety for liberation is there. By the inquiry "for whom is the bondage?" one's own Self, the ever free, is itself established. Then where is the thought of bondage and where is the concern for liberation?**

The nature of Advaitam must be understood as well as Moksha. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi says, really speaking Moksha is not possible. Moksha is defined as removal of bondage. Vedanta says there is nothing called bondage. It is only a notion. When this is the case where is the question of removing it? Therefore accepting moksha means accepting bondage. However,

moksha means freedom just as in the Rope and Snake metaphor. There is really no snake to be removed. Reality is known once I understand that there is no snake to be eliminated. In Vedanta there is no Moksha. It is only a figurative expression for “no bondage”. Knowledge of the “absence of bondage” is figuratively called Moksha. Therefore for a Gyani there is neither bondage nor Moksha.

**Take Away:**

1. Advaitam is not an event nor a state nor an experience. It is knowledge even as  $2+2=4$ .
2. True Advaitam is a fact that obtains all the time. Just as the knowledge  $2+2=4$  is there all the time.
3. Shastra calls the tenth man the Brahman.
4. We need to discover our inner tenth man.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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# Bagawat Geeta, Class 67

## Chapter 4

Greetings All,

**Shloka # 36:**

सर्वेषु कृष्णैः कृष्णैः सर्वेषु कृष्णैः कृष्णैः सर्वेषु कृष्णैः कृष्णैः  
सर्वेषु कृष्णैः कृष्णैः सर्वेषु कृष्णैः कृष्णैः सर्वेषु कृष्णैः कृष्णैः 1.36

**Even if, among all sinners, you are the very worst, by this raft of knowledge you will go beyond sin.**

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, from shloka # 36 onwards Sri Krishna is talking about Gyana phalam. In shloka # 36 he talked about the following benefits by obtaining Gyanam: 1) Sarva moha nasha, 2) Sarvatra Jivatma Paramatma Aikyam and 3) Sarva Papa Nasha.

### **Shloka # 37:**

As a kindled fire reduces all fuels to ashes, so, Arjuna !  
does the fire of knowledge reduce all works to ashes.

**As a kindled fire reduces all fuels to ashes, so, Arjuna !  
does the fire of knowledge reduce all works to ashes.**

#### 4. Sarva Karma Nasha:

Now in this shloka Sri Krishna talks about a fourth benefit of Gyanam called Sarva Karma Nasha. All three karmas, Sanchita, Prarabhdha and Agami Karmas are all destroyed with knowledge. Just as a glove insulates one from an electric shock so also Gyanam insulates one from the effects of Karma. While our karmic events don't change, our response to them now changes. The karma cannot affect a Gyani anymore. He is insulated from its effects. It is as though stopped.

Sri Krishna also compares knowledge to a huge conflagration. Everything is burnt in the fire of Gyana including karmas.

The fire for such a conflagration, however, has to be well kindled. A weak fire can be extinguished by a large piece of wood thrown into the fire. Half knowledge, compared here to a weak fire, will not help. Knowledge needs to be obtained from a Parampara Acharya. Sravanam, mananam and nidhidhyasanam are all required. Knowledge obtained in this manner, from a qualified teacher, will reduce everything to ashes.

What is the difference between Papa Nasha and Karma Nasha? Shloka # 36 talked about Papa Nasha while Shloka # 37 is talking about Karma Nasha.



Following these two yogas also means leading a religious life. Vedas have decided upon a life style for spiritual growth. Vedic culture is meant for spiritual growth. It, however, does not ignore material growth. If we follow this Vedic life we will reach this knowledge. This is called Yogaha. It is a growth of spiritual, emotional and intellectual attributes. Put in another way it is Tatva Bodha's Sadhana Chatushtaya Sampathihi. This knowledge can only occur in a pure mind. When asked how long it will take, Sri Krishna does not comment. Rather, he says, enjoy the journey.

### **Shloka # 39:**

विदुषोऽपि विदुषोऽपि विदुषोऽपि विदुषोऽपि विदुषोऽपि  
विदुषोऽपि विदुषोऽपि विदुषोऽपि विदुषोऽपि विदुषोऽपि 4.39

**The man of faith, who has mastered his senses and who is intent on it, wins knowledge. Winning knowledge, he attains without delay the peace supreme.**

In the previous shloka Yoga was mentioned as a Sadhana or a way of religious life and a qualified person was called a Samsiddhaha. In this shloka more sadhanas are prescribed.

**Shradha** is now prescribed. It is faith in the validity of scriptures until one gets knowledge. As you study the Gita you will notice that all your doubts are answered at some point during the study. Every Acharya also accepts questions.

Siddhi Grantha is a text that raises a lot of questions and clarifies doubts. This attitude of faith is called Sradha. Such a person is called Sradhavan. Such a person gets knowledge. It should be noted that Vedanta also accepts questions from current situations as well.

Another sadhana mentioned is **Tatparam** or sincere commitment to the Teacher. Explaining this, Swamiji said in the early stages of his Gita lectures he had Q & A sessions at the end of the class. However, he found, most people did not come prepared.



**The ignorant, the unfaithful, the doubting self perishes. Neither this world nor the next nor happiness accrues to the doubter.**

In the previous shloka Sri Krishna talked about positive traits. Here, now, he talks about negative traits. He describes them as follows:

1. Ignorance: with respect to the world. He says every human being has to be informed about the world to lead a normal life. Worldly knowledge is required.
2. Ashradha: Lack of faith in scriptures.
3. Samshayaha: Doubt.

Of the three Samshayaha or the doubting Thomas is the most problematic. Suppose a person is not worldly he may not get worldly ananada, however, due to his shraddha he will obtain Parloka Sukham. One who does not believe in scriptures but believes in worldly pleasures, he may not get Paraloka sukham but he will get Iha Loka sukham. However, a Samshaya Atma even with worldly knowledge will not obtain Iha loka Sukham nor Para Loka Sukham.

So Samshaya is the worst enemy. Trust in family member, co-workers, even own driver etc., is required. Trust involves risk. Trust is very important in life. It is required for Vedanta as well.

#### **Shloka # 41:**

Arjuna! works bind not him who is vigilant, who through yoga,  
has renounced works and who has slain doubts with knowledge. 4.41

**Arjuna! works bind not him who is vigilant, who through yoga, has renounced works and who has slain doubts with knowledge.**

Here Sri Krishna is summing up the sadhanas and the phalams. A person has to go through three stages of sadhana:

3. **First Stage:** Yogaha or yoga-samnyasta-karmanam. This

means Gyanam and what is the Gyanam? Remembering at all times that I am the Atma, which is an Akarta. A person gets detached from all actions. Since actions belong to the body-mind-complex, he allows the body-mind-complex to function in the world; but he does not have attachment or identification and therefore he has renounced the karma identification.

4. **Second Stage:** This stage called Gyana-sanchina-samshayam is where he negates all his doubts by gaining conviction through mananam. Gyanam means conviction; I should be convinced of this knowledge and I should study until I am convinced.
5. **Third stage:** is Atmavantam. This is thenidhidhy asanam stage. In this stage, a person is alert and remembers the teaching at all times. Through the teaching, Gyanam must be available in my day-to-day life. So, Atmavan is one who leads an alert life and one who keeps himself in this state of knowledge during all transactions. Due to his alertness, Karma cannot bind the one who has done the shravana, manana and nidhidhyasanam.

#### **Shloka # 42:**

॥ अज्ञानं ह्यज्ञानं ह्यज्ञानं ह्यज्ञानं ह्यज्ञानं ह्यज्ञानं ॥  
॥ अज्ञानं ह्यज्ञानं ह्यज्ञानं ह्यज्ञानं ह्यज्ञानं ह्यज्ञानं ॥ 4.42 ॥

**Therefore, O Bharata Prince! With the sword of knowledge slay the doubt in the heart born of nescience; resort to Yoga and stand up.**

Here Sri Krishna advises Arjuna that he should get rid of all his doubts. For purification of mind, follow Karma yoga, then for enlightenment follow Gyana Yoga. By the sword of understanding all doubts about Karma Yoga and Gyana Yoga will be destroyed. In any event, all doubts are products of ignorance. With knowledge, destroy ignorance. This you alone can do. Guru cannot do it for you. I can only support you. You are not yet fit for sanyasa yet. Therefore, be a

grihastha. Do your duty, even though it is a bitter and unpleasant one, of killing your own kith and kin. You cannot avoid it. Therefore, O Arjuna, get up, take your bow, arrow and do your duty.

With this Krishna completes this present discourse.

**Take Away:**

As per shloka # 41, try to reach a state of alertness of mind at all times. Most of the time our mind is not alert. This alert mind is also a detached mind.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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# Bagawat Geeta Class 66, Chapter 4

Greetings All,

**Shloka # 34:**

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ३४ ॥  
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ३४ ॥

Know it by means of obeisance, exhaustive questionings, service to the (teacher). Knowers who have realized the truth impart to you that knowledge.

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, in shlokas 26 to 33, Sri Krishna talked about the glory of knowledge. Now in shloka # 34 he wants to complete the topic with a description of how to acquire this knowledge. He says our normal instruments of perceptions are all extrovert and meant to reveal the exterior world. Knowledge of Self is not possible with these extroverted instruments.

Citing an example, he says one cannot see one's own eyes. To see one's own eyes one needs a mirror. So also to see one's Atma a special mirror is required. A regular mirror can only reflect the Sthula-Sharira or the gross body. It cannot reflect the Atma. For the Atma one needs the Shastra-darpanam. We also need to know how to use this darpanam. This darpanam must also be clean and free of dust or the image reflected will be dull.

This requires another assistant called the Guru. He teaches us how to use the mirror. He allays all our misunderstandings and helps remove dust like obstacles and clears the mirror.

One requires a Guru. Obtaining knowledge without Guru is an exception. There are many types of Gurus. One type is the one who initiates by giving mantras. Another guru offers inspiration. All Gurus are useful and required. However, the Guru Sri Krishna talks about is the Gyana Guru. Sri Krishna did not give mantra Upadesha to Arjuna. He functioned as a teaching Guru. He systematically taught Vedanta. He did not say he was God. He did not ask for blind acceptance. He wanted Arjuna to listen to his teaching. Learning involves active listening. Teacher reconciles every statement. Chapter after chapter Arjuna asks questions. He does not accept Sri Krishna's teaching in blind faith. He challenges the contradictions in the teaching.

Citing example of the equation  $e=mc^2$ , Swamiji says, it is not meant for japa. Each item in it namely the E, the M, and the C all have to be understood in detail. This requires many years

of learning. So also it is with Vedanta's equation " You are the ultimate reality". This is not a mantra Japam. One has to know it. Until you are convinced, the teaching is not complete. That is the reason that Sri Krishna went through each chapter until the end of chapter 18. Then Arjuna said, Oh Sri Krishna, my confusion is gone; I have now clearly understood your teaching. This is the Guru referred to here by Sri Krishna.

Describing such a Guru further, Sri Krishna says, such a Gyani, man of knowledge, must also have very good communication skills. In a shloka by poet Kalidasa from his treatise "Malvikgnamitra", the poet emphasizes that simply being a scholar is not sufficient. Imparting the knowledge to other seekers is more important and a scholar who does this is the scholar of highest order. Such a person is also called Stotriya Brahma Nishta Guru or a Gyani or a Tatva Darshi. Just as a doctor who smokes does not have moral authority to advise a smoker, a Guru must have the moral authority. A Tatva Darshi has the true knowledge and as such he can give knowledge. The method of communication used by such Guru's followed Sampradaya. Therefore, a Sampradaya Guru alone is considered fit to give knowledge. Asampradaya Guru is not accepted as a teaching Guru.

The Shishya also has to be deserving of knowledge. Milk in the wrong vessel will split. The shishya has to be a patram. The Patram's requirements are:

1. Intense desire for knowledge or Jignasa.
2. Humility or accepting one's ignorance. It is also called Vinayaha.

An egocentric person cannot get knowledge. The shishya should express his humility by prostrating before the Guru. He should ask questions. He should perform service or Seva to the Guru. This service will remove his impurities.

Swamiji says it was common for a new shishya to spend some time performing only seva to the Guru. This gave both of them an opportunity to know each other, get acclimatized and build rapport. This was a requirement before starting the teaching. This was also a time of service. During this period both Guru and Shishya are judging each other. This period could even last up to a year. Dayananda Saraswathi in his ashram would ask students to submit their notes. He wanted to see if they understood his teaching or not. It is in this manner a shishya became a patram.

### **Shloka # 35:**

ज्ञानं ज्ञानं ज्ञानं ज्ञानं ज्ञानं ज्ञानं ज्ञानं  
ज्ञानं ज्ञानं ज्ञानं ज्ञानं ज्ञानं ज्ञानं ज्ञानं 1.35

**By grasping that knowledge, O Pandava prince! You will no longer be deluded as you are now; and through that, you will behold all beings in the Self and then in Me.**

With Shloka # 34 the glorification and how to get Gyanam is over. Shlokas # 35- # 37 deal with Gyana phalam. Sri Krishna presents Gyana phalam as follows:

2. **Moha Nasha:** Arjuna surrendered to Sri Krishna due to his internal conflict in the battlefield. Arjuna was trained in Dharma Shastras. He was a man of knowledge. Yet, he is not able to resolve his internal conflict. He becomes indecisive. This conflict is caused by his attachment. He does not want to face the consequences of his action. He was not ready to accept the death of Bhishma and Drona. He also does not want to stay in the forest. This is Arjuna's dilemma. Our inability to face future because of our emotional attachments is the cause of conflict. Because of this we postpone our decisions. (Go to America or not? Marry or not? Etc.) . Some people go to an astrologer. Unfortunately two astrologers can never agree. This makes the decision even more

difficult. The reality is that a decision has to be made. So, internal conflict is a big weakness. With Self-knowledge, I am ready to face any future. I know the outcome can go either way. Still I jump into it anyway. I am ready to face the consequences. Self - knowledge gives one the strength to face consequences. You will not get into internal conflicts anymore. Arjuna, decision-making is always difficult. Self Knowledge helps you and keeps you sane.

3. **Jivatma Paramatma Aikyam:** You will have Jivatma paramatma Aikya darshanam. How? Sri Krishna says, after this knowledge you will know the entire creation rests in God. He is like space, all- pervading. You will also know that the whole world is in "You". Therefore "You" are God. Just like the wave, it was told; you and the ocean are one and the same. Both are essentially water. Therefore, Water is the essence.

Ishwara is Chaitanya. You are Chaitanya. Everything is Chaitanyam.

### **Shloka # 36:**

Even if, among all sinners, you are the very worst, by this raft of knowledge you will go beyond sin. 1.36

**Even if, among all sinners, you are the very worst, by this raft of knowledge you will go beyond sin.**

Two Gyana phalams were mentioned in last shloka. Here Sri Krishna communicates the third benefit.

3. **Sarva Papa Nashaha:** Self-knowledge destroys all your papams. Nothing else destroys papams. Destroying papams acquired through many janmas is very difficult through prayaschittams. Not only are there too many old Papams, we are also constantly acquiring new ones. Citing an example, Swamiji says, Shastra's say by leaving a young wife a man gets papam for seven Janmas. Self-knowledge,

however, destroys all past papams as well as future ones.

Even the worst sinner will cross over the ocean of papam. The Gyanam boat will help you cross over the ocean-of-sins.

**Take Away:** Our emotional attachments are the cause of internal conflicts. This makes us unable to face the future. This was also Arjuna's dilemma.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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## Bagawat Geeta, Chapter 4, Class 65

Greetings All,

**Shloka # 30:**

यत्किञ्चिन्नियम्येत्तन्निश्चयेत्सर्वकर्मणाम्  
यत्किञ्चिन्नियम्येत्तन्निश्चयेत्सर्वकर्मणाम्4.30

**Yet others, with strictly regulated diet, sacrifice vital breaths in vital breaths. All those are conversant with sacrifice, having destroyed their sins by acts of sacrifice.**

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, Sri Krishna has talked about 12 disciplines (mental discipline, pranayama etc.,) including Gyanam as a Sadhana.

First of all, these can be considered spiritual sadhanas only if God is involved in the process. Without God they are just exercises. Spiritual growth is only possible with Ishwara; hence the word Yagnaha is used. The second condition is that all are spiritual sadhana's only if their goal is spiritual and not material. These exercises often can also help us with material gains. The word Yagnaha is used only if the practice is for spiritual purposes. Thus, the two factors, motive and god, have to be present to make them a spiritual sadhana.

Shloka # 30 discussed the discipline related to food as a Yagnaha. Upvasa (Upa-Vasa) means staying near God. To do so one has to avoid sensory objects on the day of Upavasa. The word Ahara does not only mean food, it also includes other sensory objects that we come in contact with such as hearing, speaking etc., or the Pancha Indriya's. In Chapter 6 Sri Krishna discusses quantity control of food while in chapter 17 he discusses its quality control. Both need to be controlled.

So, discipline with respect to Ahara means Pancha Prana are to be disciplined. This is also a Yagnaha. Undisciplined Pancha Prana is the sacrifice for disciplined Pancha Parana.

With this shloka, all 12 Yagnahas are complete. Sri Krishna does not say that all 12 sadhanas have to be practiced. He recommends some or some combination at least be practiced.

Citing the sacred thread ceremony or Yagno pavitham is one such Yagnaha. Man is born Animal-man. He then becomes a Man-man through his spiritual life. Later with knowledge he becomes God -Man. The twice born is a deliberate person. By practice of Yagnahas one destroys impurities obstructing knowledge. Hence all Yagnahas are glorious.

**Shloka # 31:**

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १ ॥  
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १ ॥ 4.31 ॥

**They partake of the ambrosial remains of these sacrifices and repair to the eternal Brahman. The non-performer of sacrifices does not own (even) this world; why then, O best of Kuru princes! Speak of another?**

Sri Krishna says if a person practices one or more of these Sadhanas it will be helpful. Food should be taken only after the sadhana.

Thus, Shastra says one must get up before sunrise. We must welcome the Sun God when he comes up. Before that one must take a bath and perform prayer. The daily bath itself is a ritual. It has two purposes. One is to purify the physical impurities and second to cleanse all inner impurities as well. All these have to be washed. Every transaction of ours brings with it impurities such as anger, stress etc. Thus, we have the Snana mantra called Aghamarshana mantram. It is addressed to Lord Varuna, the God of water. One should at least say a prayer(s) before taking a bath. Only after the bath and a prayer should one break one's fast. Many of us do not know what is hunger; because we have never given a chance to our body to tell us what is hunger; so therefore, we are supposed to break the fast, religiously after the yagnaha and the food I take is called yagnaha shishtam. My breakfast is called Yagna Shishtam; while, lunch is called Yagna Prasadam. The Yagnaha prasadam is also called Amrithum. Swamiji recommends trying this kind of disciplined life and see how it changes us. He says you will feel that the mind seems to be light.

These are the 12 Yagnahas. All eleven of them lead to the twelfth, Gyana Yagnaha. A religious life awakens the desire for philosophical knowledge. Such a person attains Brahman. He is known as a Yogi.

Sri Krishna cautions the people who do not practice some sadhana in their lives. Scriptures do not ask us to follow these disciplines for their benefit; rather they recommend them for our own wellbeing. For an undisciplined person even





**Know it by means of obeisance, exhaustive questionings, service to the (teacher). Knowers who have realized the truth impart to you that knowledge.**

Here Sri Krishna says Gyana Yagna cannot be practiced independently. It needs external guidance. It needs:

- Shatram: that deals with the Self. My eyes can see the whole world but cannot see themselves. So we need a mirror. We need a special mirror, a verbal mirror, or a shastra-darpanam. I cannot operate it by myself. One can see one's Self only when this mirror is operated properly. For this a Guru is required.
- Guru

**Best Practices: Practice of some sadhana every day is highly recommended for a seeker.**

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy