

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

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

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

AnAtma is the doer. To emphasize this, Lord Krishna says that there is no doer other than anAtma. Only when we recognize

this fact, we will be free from the struggles of life. This is jivanmukti and this can be obtained only by knowledge or jñānam.

Verse 20

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

Three guNas represent the three bodies, five koshas and the entire anatma. This body is a given by the lord, for gathering the knowledge that I am the body, but I have the body for temporary use. The three guNas have given me this body, they will also give me my next body. The three guNas are the cause of repeated acquisition of bodies. When a person disidentifies from the body, that person is free from all the problems belonging to the body. Body is mortal is not a problem; but I am mortal is problem. Vedanta does not remove the idea that the body is mortal but teaches that I am not the mortal body but the immortal I, the atma behind the mortal body. The body being born, growing, decaying and dying are not a problem; it is the nature of the body. It becomes a problem for sorrow when I refuse to accept that nature. ShAkShi jñānam gives me objectivity with regards to my own body. Once this objectivity comes, the intensity of the problem comes down. The body will have to go through the condition, but you develop a different perspective and the events of life may not appear to be a tragic events. This is similar to the sunlight making the stars as though they do not exist.

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

Verse 21

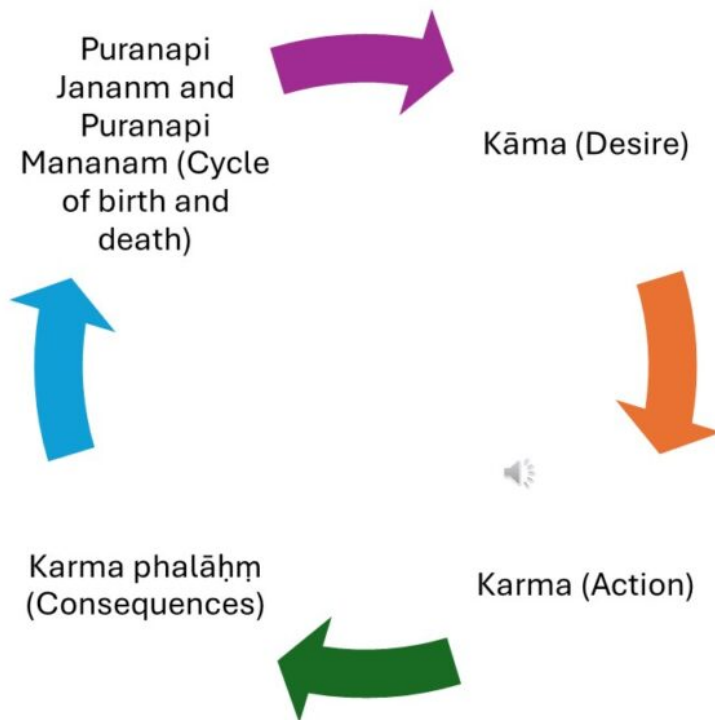
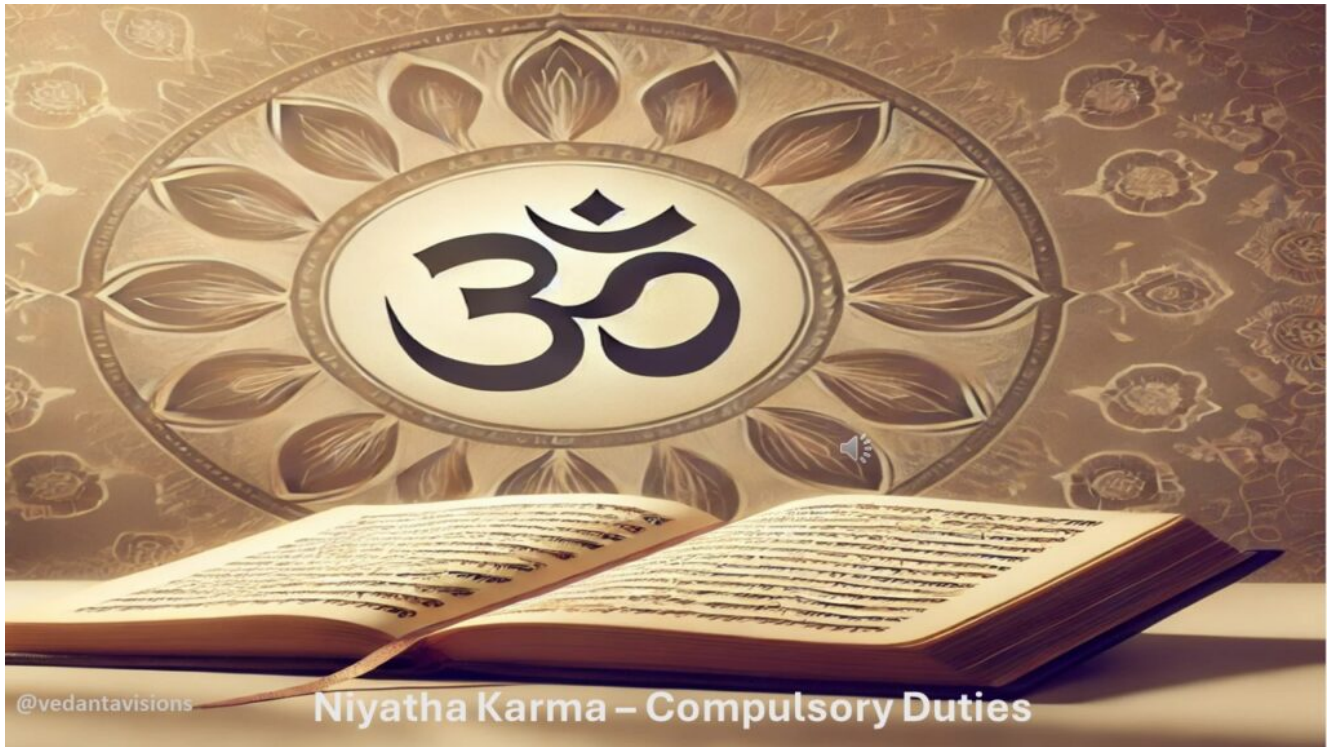
Arjuna asked – Oh Lord! With what characteristics does a person who is beyond these three guNas appear? What is his conduct? And how does he go beyond these three guNas?

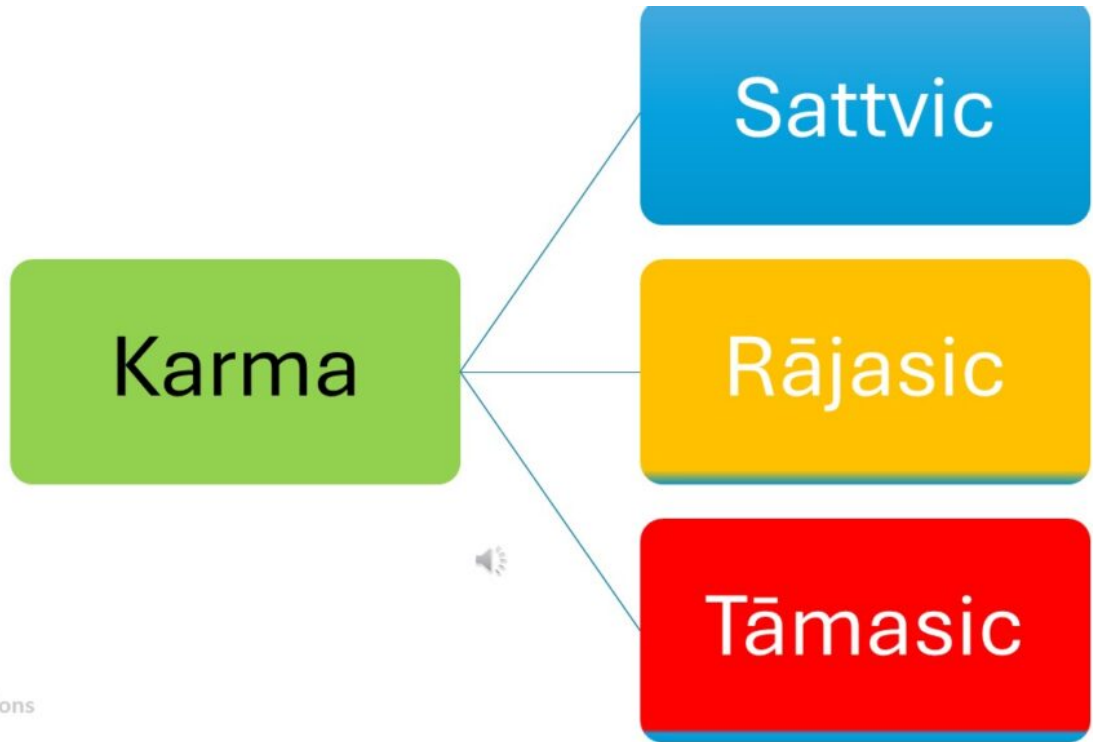
Arjuna is inspired by the Lord's teachings and asks three questions:

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

Niyatha Karma: Compulsory Duties in Vedanta / Bhagavad Gita

Charts and graphs used in this video:

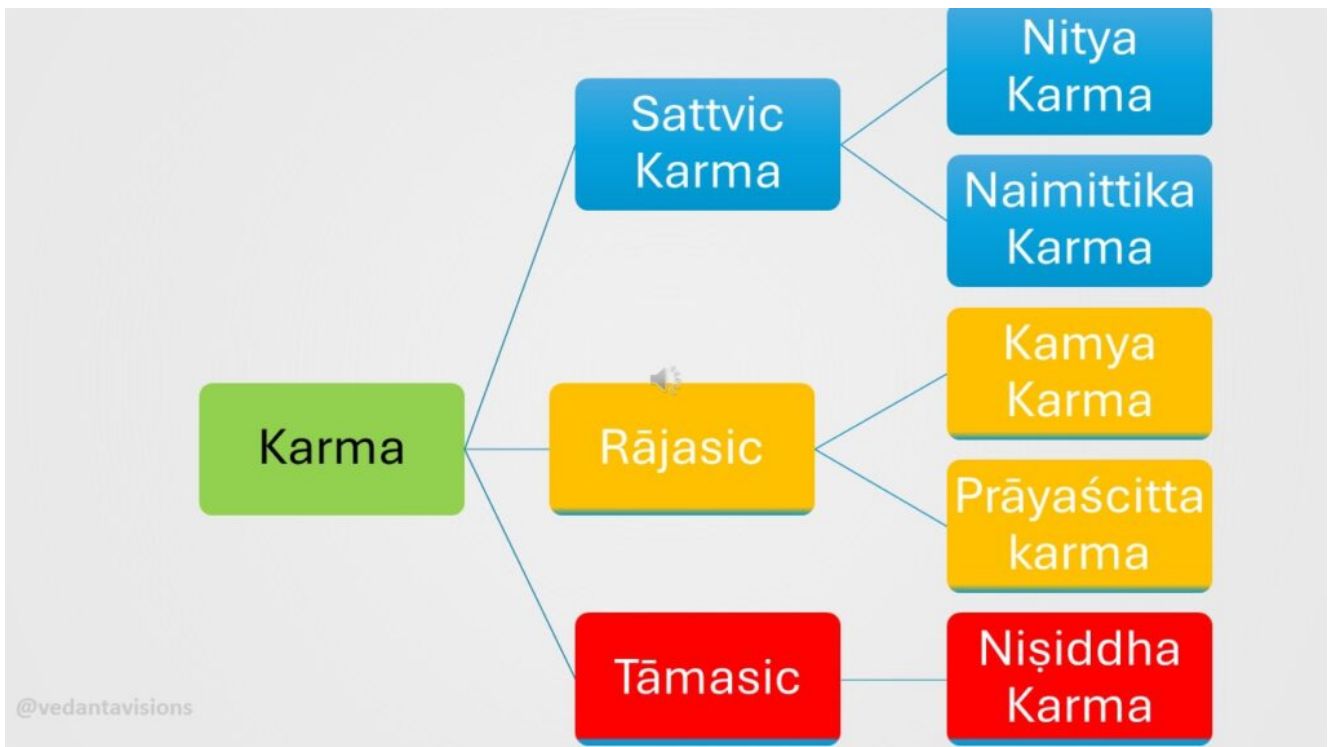
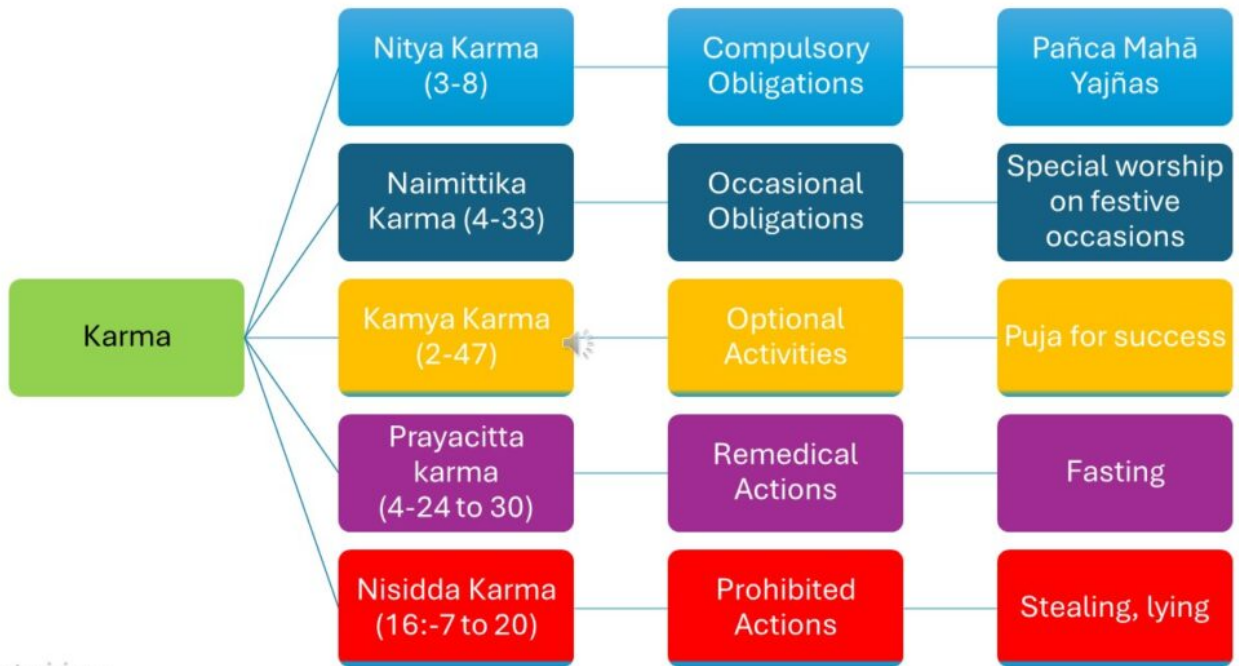




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Niyatha Karma (18-4 to 11)

- Pañca Mahā Yajñas
- Dhānam
- Tapah

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- Nitya Karma
- Naimittika Karma

- Satvic Karma



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Niyatha Karma – Compulsory Duties

Bhagwat Geeta, Class 184 – Chapter 14 Verses 10 to 13

Our body mind complex is made up of three gunas, and ahaMkAra is part of body mind complex. As a result, we can't escape the three gunas and we are forced to live with the three gunas and saguna ahaMkAra. To handle the ahaMkAra, we must understand ahaMkAra and which guna is dominant in us and how the three gunas behave. We must understand how the three gunas impact our material life and spiritual life.

Definition:

- Satvic guna is a personality inclined to learn more and more; predisposed to acquire more knowledge.
- Rajo guna is a personality that tends to act more; tends to do more; and wants to use karmēndriya more than JñAnendriya;
- Tamo guna is a personality always in doubt, not sure what to do; in eternal conflict, delusion and procrastination.

How each guna bind:

- Satvic mind has a knowing tendency and naturally addicted to introspect, which is conducive to learning.
- Rajasic mind always wants to do something or other. And for that it needs infrastructure and karmēndriya. Rajasic mind is addicted to karma
- Tāmo guna mind is not sure about what infrastructure it needs. It is attached to negligence and carelessness.

Verse 10

Sattva manifests by overpowering rajas and tamas. Rajas

(manifests by overpowering) sattva and tamas. Tamas (manifests by overpowering) sattva and rajas, Oh Arjuna!

Everything in creation is a product of prakriti and therefore everything has all three gunas, but the proportion is not uniform. Before creation, the three gunas were in equal proportion. After the creation, the distribution of the three gunas is disturbed and they are not in the equal proportion. Tāmo guna will be dominant in an inert object. Plant has a little bit more of sattva and rājo guna, but it doesn't have the capacity to learn and has a limited capacity of action like growing. Animals have more dominant rājo and sattva guna than plants. Humans have more rājo guna and sattva gunan than animals. All human beings do not have the same proportion of gunas; some of them have more sattva guna, some of them have more rājo guna and some have more tāmo guna.

For satvic person, satvic guna is dominant overpowering, rājo guna and tāmo guna. For a rajasic person, rājo guna is dominant overpowering sattva guna and tāmo guna. For a tamasic person tāmo guna is dominant, overpowering sattva guna and rājo guna.

However, a person's dominant guna (personality) can be transformed, but the rate of transformation may be different from person to person. All sadhanas in scriptures are meant for transforming gunas. Most people are born as tāmo guna predominant person (e.g. babies sleep more). Life has to start with karma and that is why scriptures prescribe karma yoga before jñāna yoga.

Rājo guna is of two types:

1. RTS: Rājo guna backed by Tāmo guna and followed by sattva guna. Such a person will be selfish for the fulfilment of his own desires. Scriptures say start with selfish activities.
2. RST: Once selfishly active, convert this order to Rājo

guna, followed by sattva guna and then followed by Tāmo guna. For this person, actions are selfless actions. The activities are beneficial to more people, not just for himself.

When the mind has become a mature mind, then convert the rajasic tendencies to satvic tendencies. Convert to a sattva guna dominant mind, followed by rājo guna and then followed by Tamo guna. RTS to RST to SRT. Inactivity to selfish activity to selfless activities to inquiry is our journey. When a person comes to the stage of inquiry, that person has already contributed to society through karma yoga and he should not have any feeling of guilt.

Progress from Guna Sudhra (less active) to guna vaishya (Selfishly active) to guna kShatriya (Selflessly active) to Guna brAhmaNa (Pursuit of knowledge).

Verse 11:

When the light of knowledge grows in all the sense organs in this body, then, one should know that sattva is predominant.

Lord Krishna is now entering the third topic, that is lingam: Indication or characteristics of gunas. How do we know which guna is dominant in us?

The five sense organs provide knowledge of external world. In a sattva guna dominant person, these five sense organs are bright, alert and have a great absorbing capacity.

Verse 12

Greed, activity, commencement of works, restlessness, and craving – these appear when rajas is predominant, Oh Arjuna!

When rājo guna is dominant, that person will always be active and not have time for inquiry. They will initiate many activities and projects Their mind is ever restless and

impatient. They also expect the same amount of speed from the people around them. Rajasic activities are very important for materialistic growth of a country.

Verse 13

Dullness, inaction, negligence and delusion – these appear when tamas is predominant, Oh Arjuna!

In a tamasic person, all the sense organs are dull. He is neither contemplative nor active. Both sattva guna and rājo guna are dominated by tāmo guna. He is negligent and careless. Does not know what he wants to do. Neither he can decide, nor will he take others advice.

Based on these lingam or indicators, we should infer the predominant guna in ourselves. Use this inference to gradually improve our character and gunas.

Bhagwat Geeta, Class 182 – Chapter 14 Verses 5

The first four verses are introductory verses, dealing with self-knowledge. Self-knowledge is liberating wisdom. The third and fourth verses discuss creation; every product in creation is a mixture of two parts – purusha and prakriti; or called brahma and maya; or father and mother; Whenever we talk of Eeswara, that Eeswara is a mixture of the two. Since the cause of creation is a mixture of two principles, the effect is also a mixture of two. Therefore, we all are also a mixture of consciousness principle and matter principle; This analysis will be the subject matter of Chapter 14.

Verse 5

Sattva, Rajas and tamas – these are the three gunas born out of prakriti. They fasten the changeless Self in the body, Oh Arjuna!

Bhagavan is a mixture of consciousness and matter principles therefore we are also a mixture of the two. The physical body is the material principle, and it is prakriti tatvam. The mind also comes under prakriti tatvam. Purusha tatvam is consciousness principle. The five features of consciousness:

- Is not a part, product or property of the body or any object.
- Is an independent entity which pervades the body and makes it existent
- extends beyond the body or object.
- survives the fall of the body or object
- surviving consciousness is not recognizable because of the absence of reflecting medium

This consciousness principle is me. Pure consciousness principle which is nirguna (attribute-less) and nirvikāra (changeless) and witness principle called sakshi tatvam or my higher nature. It is witness to all the changes that is happening. Body/mind principle by itself is inert in nature; but because it is pervaded by consciousness, it has borrowed consciousness. This is similar to hot water – water is not inherently hot, but it is hot because it borrows the heat from the fire or agni principle.

Sakshi is the original consciousness. Body mind complex is endowed with borrowed consciousness. This body mind complex (prakriti) with borrowed consciousness (chithAbAsha) is called ahamkArA. Whenever we use the word I, it includes the body with borrowed consciousness and sakshi with original consciousness. Sakshi part of mind is nirguna, nirvikāra and

Sathya chaithanyam. The AhamkArA aspect of the mind is saguna, savikāra and mithya. You should be able to differentiate nirguna sakshi and saguna ahamkArA. AhamkArA is our lower nature and sakshi is our higher nature. As long as you claim your AhamkArA, samsara can't be avoided. The only way of getting out of samsara is by transcending from lower AhamkArA nature and owning up to your higher sakshi nature.

AhamkArA is a mixture of prakriti and purusha. Prakriti has three gunas, and hence ahamkArA also has three gunas – satvic, rajasic and tamasic. Each of these gunas binds a person with consequences. That is why this chapter is called gunathrayâ vibhāga yogaha.

Guna has two meaning – property or rope. or shackle. So guna is a rope that binds you to samsara. One has to break the shackles of each guna and seek moksham.

At the time of creation, the three gunas were in equilibrium or in equal proportion. At the equilibrium stage there is no creation. At the time of creation, this equilibrium is disturbed. After creation, everyone and everything are a mixture of three gunas, but in different proportions. Even the most inert object has the three gunas, but in different proportions.

In Satvic character is jñāna pradhāna personality and intellectually motivated. This person will be internally oriented, introverted; loves silence; when this silence is disturbed, a satvic mind is upset and that creates samsara. A satvic mind travels from finitude to finitude

In a rajasic character karma pradhāna will be activity oriented; highly turned outward; likes noisy activities; a rajasic mind is upset when there is no person is around or face silence, creating duḥkam and samsara. A rajasic mind ravel from finitude to finitude.

In Tamasic guna creates inertia or suppression of both jñāna

and karma; suppresses both sattva and rājo gunas. For a tamasic character, there is no scope of progress at all. Remains in finitude and does not travel.

All three gunas creates bondage and mixed with pain and sorrow. All three gunas create dependence. All three gunas also create athripathi karathvam. A satvic person wants to get more and more knowledge. He goes on acquiring knowledge, but any amount of knowledge he gathers, his knowledge limitation does not go away. This creates intellectual samsara. A rajasic person suffers samsara in terms of activities, as he wants to accomplish more and more. For liberation, we will have to use the three gunas as stepping stone and then transcend them.

This is similar to a pole vaulter. A high jumper uses the pole to reach the top and lets the pole go when he reaches the top of his jump; if he doesn't, he will not finish the jump; but if he does not use the pole, then he will not be able to do the jump at all. So an intelligent person needs to use the pole to reach the top and then let go of the pole. Similarly, we need to embrace AhamkArA (all three gunas) to reach moksham but let go the three gunas and AhamkArA once we get jñānam.

We also need all three gunas to live our life. We need to use tāmo guna for rest and relaxation. Rajasic guna is required for karma yoga. Satvic guna is required for jñāna yoga. But we should remember our real nature is sakshi which is free from all three gunas. A one who is free from all three gunas is a liberated person.

Bhagwat Geeta, Class 181 – Chapter 14 Verses 1 to 4

In the last śatkam of Bhagavat Gita, the first three chapters – chapters 14, 15 and 16 – mainly focus on jñāna yoga.

Nethi Nethi method: Whatever I experience, I am not; by negating everything I experience, then I left out with is the experiencer, who can never be the object. Arrive at the subject by negating every object. By negating everything saguna, what is left will be nirguna atma. This chapter is saguna, nirguna inquiry. Everything that has gunas or attributes, they all are anatma or object. In this chapter, the subject Brahman is presented as attribute less. The subject matter of this chapter is I am gunathethaha and not gunathrayâṁ.

Verse 1

The Lord said – Once again I shall impart that supreme knowledge which is the greatest among all forms of knowledge and gaining which all sages have reached the supreme goal from here.

When the subject matter is subtle and deep, it must be repeated. That is the reason Krishna repeats the topic of atma jñānam from another angle.

In this verse, first greatest indicates first greatest subject matter, which is atma or brahman; the second greatest indicates the benefits. Because this is the only knowledge that gives the greatest benefit moksha. Mundaka Upanishads calls this para vidhya; In the 9th chapter this is called raja vidhya. By gaining this greatest wisdom, all the seekers attain mokśa.

Verse 2

Resorting to this knowledge, they have attained the same nature as Mine. They are not born even during creation; nor do they suffer (death) during dissolution.

By acquiring this knowledge, the seekers have attained oneness with me, dropping their jivatvam and attaining eeswaratvam. Eeswara is Poornatvam, always complete and free from insecurity. A jñāni also attains this poornatvam, always complete and free from insecurity, no regret regarding the past and no anxiety towards the future. This is jivan mukthi. After death, they attain videha mukthi, that is freedom from puranapi janam and puranabi maranam. They are not afflicted by the pain caused by mortality.

Verse 3

The great prakriti is My womb. I place the seed in that. There upon takes place the origination of all beings, Oh, Arjuna!

Having introduced the subject matter in the first two verses, Krishna is summarizing the process of creation in verses 3 and 4. In the 13th Chapter, Krishna described creation. He said that before creation, there were two principles: Purusha and Prakriti, both are anādi. The four difference between purusha and prakriti are:

- Purusha chethanam prakriti is achethanam.
- Purusha is nirguna tatvam; prakriti is saguna tatvam.
- Purusha is nirvikāra, no modification, prakriti is savikaraha.
- Purusha is Sathya tatvam, prakriti is mithya, does not have independent existence.

The mixture of purusha and prakriti is eeswara and eeswara is cause of creation. Purusha is compared to a male principle and prakriti is symbolized to female principle. This

comparison shows that the two principles put together alone can be the cause of creation. If this mixture is the cause of creation, therefore, all the products will have the features of the mixture, that is the features of purusha and prakriti. Every individual is a mixture of purusha and prakriti tatvam. If we do not recognize this nature, then we will not know how to handle ourselves.

Once the conception is complete, the purusha and prakriti principles need not do anything, and the conceived baby grows appropriately. Similarly, evolution happens. Everything originates thereafter naturally.

Verse 4

Oh Arjuna! Whatever forms are born in all the wombs – for all of them the great prakriti is the womb. I am the father who provides the seed.

Krishna says I am the universal father and Maya is the universal mother. What is the difference between the universal couples and the human couples. Human couples can produce only human children. Whereas the universal couple give birth to all species. Whatever species of living being is born, the original cause is prakriti, the Maya. We are all children of purusha and maya. Therefore, we will also have the features of the mixture.

Bhagwat Geeta, Class 180 – Chapter 13 Summary

The thirteenth chapter is the beginning of the third śatkam of Bhagavad Gita.

In the first śatkaṁ, Lord Krishna highlighted karma yoga, in the second śatkaṁ, Krishna highlighted Upasana yoga and in the third śatkaṁ Krishna is going to highlight jñāna yoga. The first three chapters, that is chapter 13, 14 and 15, are very important from the philosophical angle, as the entire Upanishad sara is given in these chapters. These chapters highlight drk drśya viveka, the knowledge that clearly distinguishes the difference between Puruṣa and Prakṛiti.

In the first verse Arjuna asks for clarification regarding six technical terms appearing in the scriptures. These topics are:

1. kṣetram
2. kṣetrajñā
3. jñeyam
4. jñānam
5. Prakṛiti
6. Puruṣa

Kṣetrajñā, puruṣa and jñeyam all refer to ātma. The words kṣetram and prakṛiti refer to anātma. jñānam remains separate. Thus, the six topics are reduced to three topics: Ātma, Anātma and jñānam.

Anātma

In verses 2 to 24, Lord Krishna describes Anātma. Anātma is Chethanam plus Prakṛithi. Whatever I experience is anātma. The entire universe will fall under anātma. Anything objectifiable is anātma. The body comes under anātma, because we experience the condition of the body. The mind also comes under anātma, because we experience the condition of the mind. The world, body, and mind along with all their different conditions is anātma. Nature of anātma:

- Made up of matter and is inert in nature. The sentiency

of the body is not intrinsic to the body but borrowed from the atma. The mind is also material.

- Full of attributes; sagunam, endowed with varieties of properties.
- Subject to constant fluctuations and modifications.

Because of the changing nature, it undergoes the condition and becomes visible and manifest. Maya is unmanifest universe.

Atma

Atma is kṣetrajña, purusha and jñeyam. If the whole universe falls under object of experience, then experienced universe pre-supposes the presence of an experience or subject. Every object presupposes a subject. Atma is Chethanam and Purusha. This unobjectifiable experiencer principle is atma. Features of I, the atma the consciousness principle:

- Not a part, product, or property of the body
- Independent entity pervading and enlivening the inert body
- Not limited by the boundaries of body
- Will continue to exist even after the fall of the body. Mortality is the feature of the body, not of the atma. Atma is immortal.
- Atma continues after the fall of the body, but not available for transactions because a medium is not available.

Atma/Consciousness can be compared to space and sunlight:

- They are all one (ekam)
- They can't move
- They are indivisible
- Can't be contaminated or polluted
- Support of everything

- Illuminates everything.

Jñānam

Dharmic values and study of scriptures is required for jñānam. Dharmic values must be assimilated in mind and a mind with dharmic values is needed for jñānam. The dharmic values are moral values and are fourfold qualifications. These fourfold qualifications or sādhanā catuṣṭaya saṃpatti are:

- Discrimination: Understanding that the world can't give security; that can come only from nithya vasthu the ever-present Brahman.
- Dispassion: Changing the priorities of life from world to Brahman.
- Discipline: Integration of the entire personality with Atma jñānam.
- Desire: For moksha or jñānam

These four are expanded into 20 terms in verses 8 to 12 of this chapter.

Verses 25 to 35: jñāna sadhanam and jñāna phalāṅṃ; Stages to obtain this knowledge and benefits of this knowledge.

- Karma yoga to remove impurities
- Upasana to remove restless mind; extrovertedness of mind, so mind will become tranquil and focused.
- Sravanam: consistent and systematic study of Vedantic scriptures under the guidance of a competent guru.
- Mananam: Raising doubts and clarifying doubts
- Nidhithyasanam: Dwelling on the vedantic scriptural teachings.

Benefits of the knowledge:

- Freedom from raga and dwesha; freedom from attachments and aversion
- Immortality of atma; not afraid of mortality
- I come to know I am neither the kartha and boktha
- Brahmatvam: I am limitless.

In simple language, jivan mukthi is the benefit. This knowledge takes from bondage to liberation.

Bhaghavat Gita Overview

In this video, I present the structure of Bhagavad Gita. This is an outline based on Swami Paramarthanand class at the beginning of Chapter 13 of Bhagavad Gita. This video is based on my notes from that class, supplemented with a few charts. This is not a teaching of Bhagavad Gita, just an overview. I hope you find this informative and that it inspires you to study Bhagavad Gita.

<http://www.advaiddam.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Bhagavad-Gita-Overview.pdf>

Bhagwat Geeta, Class 179 – Chapter 13 Verses 32 to 35

Up to the 24th verse of this chapter, Lord Krishna discussed the six topics Arjuna requested. From 25, 26 and 27, the sadhanas were discussed. From the 28th verse onwards, jnana

phalāḥṃ is being discussed.

The first benefit discussed was complete understanding of the universe. The eye of wisdom sees inherent superficial duality and this vision saves him from raga dwesha, which alone is the cause of samsara.

The second benefit mentioned was when a person sees plurality and division, finitude and mortality is inevitable. When you see the wave, you will see the birth death of wave. But when you see the water, from the stand point of water, there is no birth or death.

The third benefit mentioned is recognition of the fact that all the action belongs to prakriti and I the purusha, is the witness behind prakriti, and do not do any action. In my presence actions take place, but I am akartha.

Fourth benefit is brahamatva parapthi: I recognize I am Brahman. To assimilate this knowledge, self-knowledge is compared to waking up from a dream. When I am in dream, I feel like I am located in dream time and dream space. Within the dream, I see a variety of things that give me raga dwesha. But when I wake up, I realize the whole dream world exists within me, the waker. In the dream, I am a creature within the dream; when I wake up, I am the creator of the dream. I am not within the dream time, dream space or dream product, but they are all products of mine. This conversion requires only waking up and no additional effort. Self-knowledge is similarly waking up and realizing that I am the creator of the universe. From me alone the world emerges and from me alone the world rests – similar to the dream that emerges from me. I am the conscious principle from which this time, this space and this body are born. Just like I created a dream body, I also created this physical body. A waker is able to make this statement with regard to dream body, and Jñāni is able to make this statement with regard to his physical body. The day I am able to accept this glory, that I

am the cause (karanam) and not the effect (kariyam) is the day I can claim aham brahma asmi. Just as the dream world emerges, rests and resolves from me, the real world also emerges, rests and resolves from me, the original consciousness.

Verse 32

Being birth less and attribute less, the supreme Self is changeless. Though dwelling in the body, it neither acts nor is affected, Oh Arjuna!

Even though there are many similarities between dream and waking up, there is one major difference. When you wake up from dream, the dream world disappears, but even after you get Jñāni, the physical world continues to appear. When you wake up from dream, the dream does not continue, but when you get self-knowledge, the world continues to exist. But the Jñāni has the knowledge, that the world is like dream and anything happening in the world, does not affect the Jñāni, similar to what is happening in the dream does not affect the waker.

Birth is one of the six modifications and atma is anādi and does not have a birth. Atma does not have any modification or form change because it is not re-born; atma does not change attribute, because it is nirguna or attribute-less. A gold ornament goes through the change in form and attribute when it is converted into a bangle, but gold, the substance does not change. Even after waking up and knowing I am atma, I continue to be in the body, but atma remains akartha and aboktha. The body and sense organs have actions and results, but atma does not have karma or phalāḥṃ. This is the next benefit of self-knowledge, that I am aboktha.

Verse 33

Just as the all-pervading space is not affected due to its subtlety, so also, the self, which is present in everybody, is not affected.

Atma is involved in all activities, but not affected by any. To illustrate this idea, Lord Krishna gives two examples – space and sunlight. Common features between space and atma:

1. Both are only one
2. Both are all pervading
3. Both can't move from one place to another place
4. Both remain same and does not decay or change
5. Both do not have parts
6. Both can't be tainted or polluted, either by good or bad qualities.
7. Both can't be easily comprehended.
8. Both support everything.

Verse 34

Just as one sun illumines this entire world, so also does the kṣetrajña illumine the entire kṣetram, Oh Arjuna.

The second example is sunlight. Sunlight pervades the entire earth during the daytime. Common features between sunlight and atma are similar to the space example:

1. Both are only one
2. Both are all pervading
3. Both can't move from one place to another place
4. Both remain same and does not decay or change
5. Both do not have parts
6. Both can't be tainted or polluted, either by good or bad qualities.
7. Both can't be easily comprehended.
8. Both support everything.

Because of consciousness atma alone everything is known; similarly, without light nothing will be visible. Light itself is not comprehensible without a reflective medium.

Similarly, atma can be comprehended only through a reflective medium. I am like akasa; I am like Prakasa.

Verse 35

With the eye of knowledge those who know thus the distinction between kṣetrajña and kṣetram, as well as the absence of prakṛiti which is the cause of beings attain the supreme

Wise people recognize the difference between kṣetrajña and kṣetram which are:

- Cētanam – acētanam; sentient; and insentient.
- Nirgunam – sagunam; one is attribute less; the other is with attributes.
- Nirvikāram-Savikāram, Consciousness is changeless; matter is ever changing.
- Sathyam – Mithyam.

Krishna emphasizes the fourth difference: consciousness, the atma alone exists independently, matter can't exist independently. Consciousness has intrinsic existence, matter has only borrowed existence.

Bhagwat Geeta, Class 178 – Chapter 13 Verses 28 to 31

Up to the 24th verse, Lord Krishna dealt with all the six topics Arjuna wanted to know. From verse 25 to 27, Lord Krishna talked about the sadhanas required to gain this knowledge, the culmination of this knowledge should be knowledge. Problem of samsara is because of the error with

regard to the perception of ourself or self-error. Through the knowledge, self-delusion goes away, with that samsara also goes away. From 28 onwards, Lord Krishna talks about benefits of this knowledge.

First benefit is complete understanding of the world or sāma darshanam: Universe is a mixture of purusha and prakriti; every human being is also a mixture of purusha and prakriti; our vision will be right vision only if our vision is balanced with purusha and prakriti. The prakriti part is physically visible whereas the purusha part being nirguna nirvikāra sathya chethana tatvam, will not be visible for physical eyes and it has to be appreciated with our jñāna chakshu. Prakriti is useful in all our daily transactions but will not give poornatvam. Purusha alone can give poornatvam. Therefore, we need a balanced vision of purusha and prakriti. The first benefit of jñānam is sāma darshanam – proper vision – understanding that universe is a mixture of purusha and prakriti. Raga Dwesha weakens sāma darshanam

Verse 29

For, uniformly seeing the Lord who dwells everywhere alike, he does not ruin himself by himself. Thereby he attains the supreme goal.

Purusha is the supporter of prakriti. Just as without the support of screen, movie can't exist, prakriti can't exist without purusha. A wise person sees purusha all the time, but this jñāni does not destroy himself. This is the second benefit – immortality.

How does a person destroy himself? A person kills both lower nature and higher nature.

First, a person destroys himself by identifying himself with the body; once you identify yourself with body, you become a kartha or doer as a kartha I perform variety of actions earning pavam and punyam. These punyam and pavam are the

reasons for creating a body. Both the arrival and departure of body is the result of my karma. I alone am responsible for repeated birth and death. I destroy my own lower nature again and again.

Secondly, by identifying with the body, one also kills one's own higher nature – figuratively killing atma, by not being aware of higher nature, one disowns one's own higher nature. The benefits available by higher nature are lost and since I am not enjoying the benefits of higher nature, it is as though higher nature is absent. Since it is as though higher nature is absent, we have killed or destroyed the higher nature.

Every ajñāni destroys himself from the standpoint of body as well as Jñāni. A Jñāni does not destroy himself from either perspective.

Verse 30

He who sees all actions as being done by prakriti alone by all means, and likewise sees the self to be action less alone really sees.

The third benefit is akartatvam or understanding that I am not the doer. A kartha will be eternally associated with karma. Karma will get converted into favorable and unfavorable conditions. If I am a kartha, then I can't escape being a boktha and that is a choiceless, helpless situation.

All actions are done by prakriti – body/mind complex or śarīram. It is impossible to escape the cycle of arrival and departure of karma, the only way is to stay away from the cycle. Prakrithi can't be stopped; the only way is to transcend from prakriti is by identifying with higher nature.

Vedanta should not be used for promoting adharma; a person should not use this verse to do adharmic activities, claiming all the activities are not done by "me" only by my lower

nature, the body/mind complex.

Verse 31

When one sees the diversity of beings to be based on the oneself and their origination to be from that Self alone, then one becomes Brahman

Understanding atma must be done in many steps. We take the example of space and a hall.

- In a hall, there is hall and space inside the hall. So, there is space and a hall.
- Then, we see that there are many halls, and there is space in all those halls.
- Then we see that the space within them is not many but one and the same. Halls are different, but the space is not different.
- Then we see that the space is not only within the hall, but there is also space outside the hall.
- But really speaking, space is not inside or outside the hall, but there is only one space, and all halls are resting in it.
- Finally, we realize, space is not only supporter of all halls, but all the things are born out of space.

This example should be extended to atma. Space should be equated to consciousness and the hall should be equated to body:

1. There is a body and consciousness. The consciousness is within the body
2. Then we see there are many bodies and consciousness is within all other bodies also.
3. But the consciousness within our body as well as everyone else's body is the same.
4. Consciousness is outside all the bodies also.

5. But really speaking, consciousness is not inside or outside, but consciousness is everywhere, and all the bodies are residing in consciousness.
 6. Really speaking everything arises out of consciousness.
 7. That consciousness is I am.
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Bhagwat Geeta, Class 177 – Chapter 13 Verses 25 to 27

Krishna points out that this knowledge is a liberating knowledge. A person who knows that body mind complex is prakriti and that I am purusha. Body is prakriti and mind is prakriti; the association of mind and body is birth and dis-association of mind and body is death; they are all happening at the level of prakriti. There is no question of one birth, then where is the question of rebirth. A Jñāni who realizes this and knows that he is anādi purusha, does not have rebirth and gets moksha.

Verse 25

Some seekers see the Self in the mind with the mind through meditation. Some others see through Gyana yoga. Still others see Karma Yoga.

In verse 25 to 35 Krishna discusses the preparations needed for self-knowledge and what are the benefits of self-knowledge.

The ultimate goal of all spiritual sadhanas is self-knowledge only. There should not be any doubt regarding this goal. We should discover atma within ourselves, using our own buddhi. Buddhi is the only instrument to get knowledge. But this

buddhi should be a refined buddhi supported by guru sastra upadesa.

Preparatory stages for reaching self-recognition through the mind within oneself, five stage preparation helping in removing one obstacle in each stage:

1. Karma yoga stage, where mental impurities are removed. Impurities like raga, dwesha, kama, moha etc. Karma yoga removes impurities and refines the mind.
2. Upasana or meditation upon saguna Eeswara; Removing the obstacle of restlessness of mind and extrovertedness; helping mind to focus.
3. Vedanta Sravanam: Systematic and consistent study of Vedantic scriptures under the guidance of a competent guru, removing ajñānam or ignorance.
4. Mananam: Asking myself if I am convinced of the teaching of the scriptures and guru. Converting knowledge into conviction; removing intellectual obstacles.
5. Nidhithyasanam: Deliberate invocation of Vedanta to get rid of disturbing reactions of life.

These five stages are compulsory for all. If one does not complete all five stages in one life, the remaining stages are completed in the next life. The one who passes through the four stages and in the next life goes through nidhithyasanam, resulting in spiritual prodigy.

Verse 26

Not knowing thus, some others pursue self-knowledge by hearing from others. Being committed to listening, they also definitely cross over mortality.

Vedanta does not require any particular scripture but insists upon the vedantic teachings. Vedanta does not refer to

language, but only the teachings and the contents. If a person who doesn't know the Upanishad but has assimilated the teachings, he is liberated. However, if one goes through all the upanishad, but does not assimilate the teachings, he is not liberated.

Verse 27

Whatever being, moving or stationary, is born – know that to be out of the union of shethragya and kṣetram – oh Arjuna!

For preparation and purification of mind, there are many sadhanas, but for mokṣa there is only Jñānam. Samsara is caused by ignorance and error. We are ignorant of the fact that we are purusha or atma. Identifying ourselves with the body or prakriti or anatma is error. Self-ignorance leads to body identification. I, the consciousness take ourselves to be the body. I, the immortal purusha mistake myself to moral body. Apūrṇathvam leads to kāma; Kāma leads to karma, karma leads to punya pāpam, punya pāpa leads to sukha duḥkam, and later to punar janma. In fact, entire cycle of birth and death is dēha abhimāna. All beings go through re-birth because of this error and the cause of the error ignorance. To remove the error, we need to remove the cause, and the cause is ignorance.

Verse 28

He who sees the supreme Lord who dwells alike in all being and who is imperishable among perishables (alone really) sees.

From this verse onwards, Lord Krishna enumerates Jñāna phalāḥ. The first one mentioned is to be aware of changeless atma which is in and through all anatma. Just as there are numerous waves, there are innumerable anatma, which are different from each other. Among these innumerable bodies, there is on imperishable sat chit atma or paramatma. Wise person is the one who does not lose sight of this fact during day-to-day transactions. If I am aware of the permanent one,

I will handle the impermanent one but will not depend on the impermanent one.