

Baghawat Geeta, Class 14

Greetings All,

Gita, Chapter # 2, Samkhya Yoga:

Swamiji starts off by reminding us that Arjuna expresses his helplessness and surrenders to Sri Krishna and requests him to teach. Sri Krishna accepts Arjuna as a student and starts teaching him the Gita. The teaching begins from Shloka 11 of Chapter 2 and continues till Shloka 66 in chapter 18. Krishna is no more Parthasarthy. He has become Gita Acharya and Jagatguru.

Shloka # 11:

Sri Krishna says: You grieve for those who call for no grief; at the same time, you utter words of wisdom. The wise grieve neither for the dead nor for the living.

This verse expresses the essence of Gita. Briefly, Ignorance is the cause of all human problems and therefore Self Knowledge is the only solution for all human problems. It is Atma Agyanam versus Atma Gyanam that results in moksha. Brahma Vidya is Self-knowledge. Many topics are discussed in the Gita. They all, however, support Atma Vidya.

“Wise people do not grieve at all”, says Sri Krishna. A wise person is one who is an Atma Gyani. Arjuna is profusely grieving. Therefore, Arjuna is otherwise or ignorant. Through this shloka, Sri Krishna is informing the entire humanity that if you are grieving, then you are ignorant. If anybody is upset, without nimmadi (tamil for peace of mind), they are ignorant. The medicine for ignorance is Gyanam. If there is darkness in the room the only remedy is to bring in light. Can Karma or Action remove ignorance? No, says Swamiji. If that were the case abolish all colleges and just give work to all children. Meditation, Japa etc., also

cannot remove ignorance. "therefore Arjuna, become a wise person. Wise men do not grieve for living or for the dead ones." This goes for things as well. Giving an example, Swamiji says:

A man was travelling with his wife on train. She was very thirsty. She kept nagging him. Then, when a station came, he got her water. Later, She started nagging him again. Now she nagged him as to why she was thirsty to begin with.

Arjuna , you grieve for those who do not deserve grief such as Duryodhana (an adharmic person) at the same time you are speaking like a wise man about kulakshaya, kuladharma etc., and contradicting yourselves. You need Atmagyanam.

Shloka # 12:

Sri Krishna says: Never, at any time, have I been not; neither you nor these rulers of men. And never shall we all cease to be.

In the last verse Sri Krishna presented the condensed version of Gita Shastra. In this shloka now, he expands on it. Krishna's immediate problem is to have Arjuna stand up and fight. Here Arjuna faces an incidental problem. It is only a short-term problem. It is not a universal problem. The deeper problem, however is, attachment and sorrow. They are eternal and universal problems. Krishna has to solve both these problems of Arjuna.

Sri Krishna takes a three-pronged approach to this.

1. Philosophical: you have to fight;
2. Ethical: You have to fight;
3. Worldly/ materialistic: you have to fight.

From whichever angle you look, you have to fight.

Philosophical approach is primary while ethical approach is alsomimportant. The worldly approach is not that important.

Philosophical is important because Arjuna is a very learned person; he knows the dharma shastras. He knows ethics. His problem is his self-ignorance.

From verse 12-25 it is the philosophical approach describing the true nature of Arjuna, Bhishma and Drona or the Atma Tatvam. Then, Sri Krishna discusses the ethical approach. Here he convinces him that it is not ahimsa; it is more like giving capital punishment for a criminal. Lastly, he discusses the worldly approach exhorting Arjuna as to how to maintain his name and fame.

Swamiji now talking about Tatva Bodha, raises the question: Atma Kaha (Who is Atma?) Every individual is a conscious individual. Every living being is a conscious being, i.e., consciousness is in the body mind complex. It is not found outside the body. The Mike, table, fan etc. are insentient or inert objects. There is, however, sentience in the body. What is consciousness? What makes it sentient? Consciousness is a formless and separate entity. It is comparable to light. This consciousness is not part of body, not a property of body, nor a product of body. It is a separate entity that pervades and enlivens the body. We take the example of Light; light is not part of the body, light is not a property of the body; light is not even a product of the body. On the other hand, light pervades my body and makes this body visible. When you are seeing the hand, you are seeing the two things, one is the hand, another thing is the light. It is on the hand, but it is not a Property, a part or a product.

While the Light is not a part or product of body nevertheless it makes the body visible. This separate consciousness is not bound by limitations of the body. The body does not limit the light pervading the body. Consciousness survives death. The space and time aspects of the body do not bind it.

When the hand is removed the light is not removed. It

continues, however, it is invisible. As long as a body is alive consciousness is there, however, once the body dies, consciousness continues, only in an invisible form. Hence it is called Vyakta chaitanya, when it is visible, and Avyakta chaitanya when it is invisible. Thus, consciousness is always there.

Consciousness is called Atma while the body mind complex is called Anatma. Every individual is a mixture of Atma and Anatma. Now, I am able to read because here are two things, one is the book, and the other is the light pervading it. But generally, we take the light lightly. But remember not to take the light lightly because without light, you will not be able to see anything. Therefore, all of us are Atma plus Anatma.

Next lesson of Tatva Bodha is to shift our identification from the perishable Anatma to imperishable Atma. This method of thinking is called Drk Drsya Viveka. When I say I am the body, I accept mortality. How many people can accept mortality? With this acceptance also comes old age and mortality. The other approach is to shift my identity to Atma. I do not change the body. You can love the body as an instrument of transaction, rather than loving the body as myself. Even if the instrument goes away, the "I" still remains.

Asatho Maa Sadgamaya. Tamso Maa Jyotirgamaya. Mrtyo Ma Amṛtam Gamaya.

(God! lead me from ignorance to knowledge. Lead me from mortality to immortality.)

Atma is already immortal. Anatma is mortal. We are shifting our identity from mortal to immortal. Scriptures are giving us the some methods to perform this shifting. One of the most powerful methods is:

"Whatever I am experiencing, I am not it ". Why? Because, whatever I am experiencing is an object, while I am the

subject. Our Eye sees everything but it does not see itself. From that it is very clear, the eyes are ever the seer and never the seen. Therefore, the subject is always different from the object.

The world is an object of experience, arriving and departing. The body is something I experience only in waking state, not in sleep state and dream states. What about the mind? We experience it only in the waking state, and dream state but not in sleep state. There is no Raga or Dvesha in sleep state. "I" am the Experiencer of all the three states. This "I" is the Atma.

Features of the Atma:

1. "I " am ever the Subject (Experiencer) not the object of experiences (experienced). Example: a camera takes pictures but it is not in the picture. Do we need proof that a camera took the picture? No, without a camera there will be no picture. "I" am never in the picture but "I " am ever existent, and hence called Aprameya.
2. Atma is Nithyaha or it is eternal. It exists as a Vyaktha or Avyaktha.
3. Atma is Nirvikara. It is changeless. Even when the hand moves the light does not change. The light is all pervading. The light here is Prakasha, not the bulb.
4. Atma is Sarvagathaha. It is all pervading. It does not have spatial boundaries.
5. Atma is Akartha and Abhoktha. Atma does not perform any action nor does it reap any result. The hand may act; it can touch and in the act may get dirty. The light pervading the hand does not act nor is it affected. Example of hand touching a blade was given. If the hand touches a blade, it is karta, and for touching that, what is the phalam, the fingers are cut; thus hand is karta, hand is bhokta, but the light is neither karta, neither bhokta, it is karta and abhokta. Thus Aprameya; nityaha; nirvikara; sarvagata, akarta and abhokta are

Atma's

attributes. The Atma, like the light, is changeless, the all pervading and the experiencer.

Therefore Arjuna, You are not killing Bhishma, the Atma and Drona, the Atma. They are not killed. Why are you worried about their death? You are also not a killer. Arjuna, the Atma, is an Akartha. So, why are you in anguish? This is the philosophical argument.

Swamiji says every criminal can present this argument to a court. So, now, Sri Krishna presents the ethical angle. Normally, Himsa is not right. Here, however, you are fighting for Dharmasanthapanam. From this angle you can go ahead with the fight.

Atma is eternal. What does it mean?

Sri Krishna says the Eternal Atma was in the past, Atma is in the present and Atma will be in the future also. This is the essence of Shloka # 12.

With my good wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Prasna Upanishad, Class 11

Greetings All,

Swamiji continued his talks on Prasna Upanishad.

Third Question

Swamiji says in first chapter Srishti was discussed. The Krishna Gathi and Shukla Gathi were emphasized. Having

discussed these, the second and third chapters are dedicated to Prana (at Vyashti level) and Hiranyagarbha (at Samashti level).

For sake of Prana Upasana, glory of Prana was described in Chapter 2. Glorifying the deity is part of Mimasa Vada, before his or her Upasana.

Prana Sruthi was at the Vyashti and Samashthi levels. At Vyashti level via the story of the organs, Prana was glorified. At the macrocosmic level or Hiranya-garbha every Karanam has a Devata. Prana sustains all individual organs. Everything is born of Samashthi Prana or Hiranya garbha. Since Prana is such a powerful deity, now an Upasana starts.

After answering the questions by previous two students the third student, Kausalya Asvalyana now asks the third series of questions:

Oh Bhagavan Pippalada:

1. From where does this Prana (Vyashti and Samashthi) come from?
2. What is the origin of Hiranyagarbha or of Brahma?
3. How does Prana enter this physical body?
4. How does that one Prana divide itself into the five fold functions and support this body?
5. Through which part does the Prana go out of this body at death?
6. How does this Prana (Samasthi) sustain the external universe?
7. How does the Prana, as Vyashti, sustain the individual or the 19 sense organs?

Shakthi always belongs to Maya, says Swamiji. Thus, we have Kundalini, Kriya, Ichha, Para, Jnana, and Mantrika Shakthi's. Why is no power or Shakthi attributed to Brahman? Power can change. Power can also be inter-convertible such as Solar to

Electric. However, Brahman cannot change, hence no power attributed to Brahman.

The entire chapter 3 is an answer to all these questions. The Prana Upasana comes only briefly at the end of the chapter. Why introduce this topic here, when the goal is Upasana, asks Swamiji? Answering, he says, in previous section we said Prana is the basis for everything. It clearly resembles the glorification of Brahman. The Teacher has to glorify Prana, so that it shows it is only a relative support, and not the Supreme support. The Pancha Bhutas are Prithvi, Jala (water), Agni (fire), Vayu (air), and Akasha (ether) and all originate from Prana. Prana's greatness, however, is only relative. Thus, Prana itself originates from some other source. That source is the Absolute. We discuss its relative power because we are performing Prana's Upasana.

Shloka # 2: Pippalada responds: Your questions are going beyond limits. Up to Prana, it is describable. Beyond that it is more mysterious as it is all Maya. Even Brahman cannot be intellectually conceived.

You are a great Brahma Yogi. You have been a Saguna Brahma Upasaka. (Per Shankara: You are a Brahma Gyani or you will become one). Therefore, I shall answer these very subtle questions.

Shloka # 3:

1. Here the first question is answered. From where does this Prana (Vyashti and Samashthi) come from?
2. What is the origin of Hiranyagarbha or of Brahma? The second question is also answered

Prana is born from Atma. Atma becomes the Karanam, yet it is only an "apparent" cause. In reality nothing is born out of Atma. Atma is not the real Karanam. If Atma is not the real Karanam, then Srishti is also a Mithya. (As Per Advaita it an apparent cause. As per Visishtadvaita-It is really born).

Here, however, Prasna Upanishad says, it only an apparent cause, just as in a person there is a shadow nearby. The shadow comes without any effort. It comes automatically. So also the Brahman does not plan the shadow. Shadow does not have a reality independent of the Brahman, Because of the presence of Atman, Hiranyagarbha or Prana is born or thrown out. Thus, Prana is born out of Atman, apparently as a shadow. Because of the number of shadows my weight is not decreased. Let any number of shadows come; I am still the complete Brahman.

Question # 3: How does Prana come to this body?

It is because of Karma says Pippalada. In the word Manokritena, Manaha is Karma.

Thus Manaha (Mind)> Sankalpa (Plan)>Kama (Desire)>Karma (Action)

Because of Karma, Prana enters the body and due to force of Karma it continues. Once Prarabdha Karma is completed, this body also goes or Prana leaves.

Question # 4: How does Prana divide itself?

Swamiji says an Emperor has infinite powers. He delegates them to his ministers. Power, however, remains with the Emperor. Similarly, Prana has total power. He delegates powers to Apana, Udana, Samana and Vyana. He also keeps some powers to himself such as the power of respiration

With best wishes,
Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawat Geeta, Class 13

Greetings All,

Gita, Chapter # 2, Samkhya Yoga:

Swamiji starts off by reminding us that Vyasa now presents Arjuna as a seeker of moksha. The fundamental human problem characterized by Raga (Likes), Dvesha (Dislikes) and Moha (delusion) is also called Samsara. Due to attachment, when we lose a person or an object, it causes us Shoka. In this state of Shoka our mind loses its discriminating faculty and is called Moha. This is the situation faced by Arjuna in battlefield. While we try making adjustments to the external world to solve such an internal problem, it only acts as a palliative or a first aid rather than as a remedy. In such a situation the aggrieved person should discuss his helplessness in solving the problem, and this state of helplessness is called Karpanya bhava or Dainya bhava. While Arjuna has discovered his problem he has not yet arrived at the helpless stage, the second stage of problem solving.

Shloka #5:

Arjuna says: If I fight and kill my two Gurus, I will only remember how they struggled and died in battle. Every moment I will remember how I killed Bhishma and Drona. My other option is not to fight and retire to the forest, where I will have to live on alms.

Swamiji says Arjuna has to decide which course of action to take. He chooses Adharma. He feels he will be better off living in forest, on alms. For a Kshatriya and Grihastha, Bhiksha is not allowed. Giving up one's Sva-Dharma is also a sin. Here Arjuna is giving up his Kshatriya Dharma, by not fighting. Furthermore, by planning to retire to the forest and begging for alms, he is taking up somebody else's dharma, which is yet another papam. Swamiji says, Sri Krishna is

still quiet, as Arjuna has not yet asked him for help.

Shloka # 6:

Arjuna says: I am in a big conflict because my own cousins are arraigned against me. By killing these people, we will not like to live in this world, as they are both kith and kin. We are not even sure if they will defeat us or we will defeat them. I am not objective enough to analyze the situation. So, I need your help. We do not know what to do? Victory over them or their victory over us, which to accept? In this, if I fight, it is dharma, a plus, however, Guru Vadham, is a minus point. Also, having to live in the forest and on alms is another minus point.

Shloka # 7:

Swamiji says human being is born ignorant. Ignorance is not a sin. We are "Self" ignorant as well. Perpetuation of ignorance is, however, a sin.

Arjuna says: My mind and intellect are incapacitated. It is not able to function. My intellect cannot discriminate. My intellect is afflicted by my misery. My confusion is with respect to dharma and adharma. Himsa is adharma. Killing one's own people is adharma. Killing one's Guru is certainly adharma. On the other side, Kauravas are the embodiment of Adharma and we need to fight them. What is my dharma, Sri Krishna? Tell me what is good for me. I am your disciple. I come with an open mind. I am surrendering at your feet.

Swamiji says a wise person does not give advice unless the other person requests for it. So, here also, Sri Krishna was waiting for Arjuna to ask for his help. The word Prapanna means surrender. Falling at the feet, Sharanagathi, is one way of surrendering. In this process the other person becomes the Guru. If I have to become a teacher, I need at least one person to ask me to teach him or her. So, here Arjuna has become a disciple and Krishna the Guru. After surrendering

also there are expectations. Mantra Upadesha cannot remove ignorance. In such instances, a teaching that distinguishes between the right versus wrong is required.

Swamiji say advice does not help. Advice is a short-term direction and person keeps coming back for advice every time he faces a problem. Teaching, however, is for the long term and teaches how to make decisions. Advice makes one dependent while teaching makes one independent. Swamiji gave example of giving a person a fish versus teaching him how to fish.

Shloka # 8:

Arjuna says: My grief is so intense that it dries up all my organs. My thinking faculty does not function. Can I do something to escape from this sorrow? I do not see any method to remove this sorrow other than your teaching. I may choose to fight, I may win, I may become a king and get an unrivalled kingdom, but I cannot remove my grief. (Swamiji says, money may buy food but it does not remove hunger.) Even If I became Indira, it will not solve my problem. Worldly accomplishments cannot solve my problem. So, he asks Sri Krishna to help. Swamiji says, at this stage, Arjuna has to go for a spiritual goal and hence he needs a guru.

Shloka # 9:

Sanjaya now says: In this manner Arjuna surrendered to Sri Krishna saying, I am not going to fight nor am I going to run away from battle. I want to hear from you (Sri Krishna) and then decide.

Swamiji gave some definitions:

- Paramtapa: Destroyer of enemies.
- Gudakesha: means master of Tamoguna or Satva Guna Pradhana. Human mind swings from Rajasic (very active) to Tamasic (dullness), while the Satvic mind is in the

middle as a non-extrovert, but wakeful mind.

- Govinda: Protector of the world, is the Shastric meaning. Another meaning is, Go means scriptures, and Vinda means one who has grasped the scriptures. To this Govinda Arjuna surrenders. Ha: Means everything has become quiet.

Shloka # 10:

Sanjaya continues:

Oh Dhrithirashtra, Lord Krishna accepted the offer of Arjuna and taught him the Gita Shastra sitting between the two armies. The Gita Shastra begins from Shloka 11 of Chapter 2 and continues till Shloka 66 in chapter 18.

With my good wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Prasna Upanishads, Class 10

Greetings All,

Swamiji continued his talks on Prasna Upanishad.

Second Question, Shloka # 7:

Swamiji says all mantras from #5 to # 13 are all Prana Devata Sruthi or praise. Glorification is done at both Subjective (Adhyathmika) level as well as Objective (Adhi Daivika) level. Prana is the Shakthi animating the ten gyanendriyas such as Shravnam, Darshanam etc at the Adhyathmika level. At the Adhi-Daivika level all these Shakthis are manifestations of Prana. Prana as Hiranyagarbha is manifesting as Prithvi, Varuna, Surya etc. At both micro and macro cosmic levels it is the one Prana Shakthi appearing as many.

Shloka # 11: "O Prana, you are Vratyaha and the Eka Rishi fire as well. You are the eater of everything as the Eka Rishi fire. You are the One who goes to the Antahriksha (space). As the Mathrikshva, you are the father of Vayu."

Explaining this glorification Swamiji says:

Vratyaha: Here a Ninda Shruthi is used. A Ninda Shruthi is one that criticizes. Vratyaha is a Brahmin or Dvijaha who has not gone through the Samskaras. All Dvijahas go through an Upanayanam ceremony at which point their second phase of life begins. Up to Upanayanam ones life is led as per his own raga and dvesha. After Upanayanam all his activities must be according to Shastras or as per three Vedas. The age for Upanayam for Brahmin is 5; Kshatriya is 11 and for Vaishya is 12.

A person born as a Dvigaha but has not had Upanyanam at appropriate age is called a Vratyaha or unpurified one. It is a term used only from a spiritual point of view. Here, however, Prana is praised as a Vratyaha in a ninda sruthi. As per Shankacharya, Prana is part of Sukshma Shariram and Samashthi Prana is considered Hiranyagarbha. Hiranyagarbha is considered a Vratyaha as he was the first person born in the cosmos and did not have anybody to perform his Samskara.

Brahman+ Maya>Hiranyagarbha.

Samskara is necessary only for the impure. Hirayagarbha being ever pure, no purification rite is necessary.

Eka Rishihi: Eka Rishi is the fire used by Atharvana Vedis. For each ritual, shastras prescribe a specific fire. Thus, a grihasta is required to maintain a fire called Garbhapatya agni daily. There are different methods of kindling fire prescribed by shastras. There are also different forms of Homa Kunda (shapes) prescribed. Each fire has a name, as well, based upon the ritual and type of homa kunda used. Eka Rishihi is also a manifestation of Prana. Eka

Rishihi belongs to the Athravana Veda as also Prasna Upanishad.

Attha: You are the eater of everything as the Eka Rishi fire.

Aadhyam: The offering or oblation. All Devatas are offering to Hiranyagarbha. At individual level also we are offering oblations by touch, sight, hearing etc to Prana Devata.

Matrikshva: One who goes to the antahriksha (space) or Vayu or Prana. As the mathrikshva you are the father of Vayu.

Shloka # 12: Prana Shakthi is present in every Indriya. Thus, it is present as the power of speech, power of hearing, power of sight and power of thinking. As death arrives Prana starts to leave and indriyas become weak. Indriyas now ask Lord Prana to become peaceful and not leave.

1. Shloka # 13: This is upasamhara or conclusion of the chapter on Prana Sruthi. Indriyas now ask Prana "May you protect us like a mother protects a child. May you bless us with the wisdom that we do not repeat this mistake again."

All these things in front of you are under the control of Prana. Whatever is there in other worlds is also under control of Prana.

This concludes the Prana Shruthi.

Swamiji summarized the three questions and their respective answers:

1. What are the powers of the individual? All 19 indriyas and the panca (5) pranas are the powers of the individual.
2. Who glorify themselves? All 19 indriyas glorify themselves.
3. Who is most powerful? Prana alone is most powerful of all.

4. How to prove superiority of Prana? All 19 organs function due to Prana. At time of death, as Prana leaves, all organs also start failing.

With best wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawat Geeta, Class 12

Greetings All,

Gita, Chapter # 2, Samkhya Yoga:

Before getting into details of Chapter 2, Swamiji refreshed our memory on the key concepts presented in chapter 1. He says the disease called Samsara plagues mankind. It is an internal and psychological disease. Raga (Likes), Dvesha (Dislikes) and Moha (delusion) characterize this Samsara disease. Often, not understanding the true problem we look to external factors as the root cause (s). Thus, a poor man thinks his poverty is the cause of his problem.

In another example, an unmarried person thinking of marriage to solve his problems sees that his friends with wives all still seem to have problems.

Giving yet another example of a man who while riding a bus heard a noise and thought it was a tire problem. When he asked others in the bus they said they did not hear a noise. He was not convinced. He asked the driver to stop the bus and check the tires. They found the tires were fine. Later the man went to an Ear Doctor and learned that he had a hearing problem that caused him to hear noises.

Similarly, all our problems are noises of Samsara (Kama, Krodha and Moha) and they are all internal as well. Performing an external adjustment will not work, says Swamiji.

Only a mature person, who has experienced the world, comes to know that the problem is within him. He, however, does not know how to solve it. This is known as Dainya Avastha or the helpless stage. Once he becomes aware of his helplessness he then goes to Sharanagathi or going to an external power to solve the problem. At this stage, Shranagathi, one has to accept and be humble enough to surrender to someone. After Sharnagathi comes the stage of giving the solution and pursuit of spiritual knowledge. This is the Bhagavat Gita stage. So, the four stages of ones evolution are:

1. Discovery of the true problem of Samsara,
2. Reaching a state of helplessness in solving the problem,
3. Seeking the help and advice of some one, Sharanagathi and
4. The Solution to the Samsara problem

Of these four stages, while Arjuna has discovered his problem he has not yet arrived at the helpless stage. He, however, has doubts about his decision. Swamiji says a doubt is better than a wrong decision. At least here there is the possibility of help and a solution. In Chapter #1 Arjuna made a wrong decision. Now he progresses to the doubt stage.

Swamiji says it like progressing from: Tamas>Rajas> Satva.

Shloka # 1:

Arjuna has thrown down his bow and arrow. He has not yet asked Lord Krishna for help. Arjuna's attachment led to his blurred eyes that further obstructed his vision. This was the poignant condition of Arjuna, the Samsari, that Sri Krishna saw.

Kripa in this Shloka means attachment and not compassion. Also, Avishtam means overpowered. A man of compassion is also

called a Swami while a man of attachment is called Kami.

Recognizing Arjuna's condition Sri Krishna decides to break the ice. He criticizes Arjuna with strong words so that he could motivate him to get up and fight.

Sri Krishna says, " From where did such a low thought (Kashamalam) come into you. You are known for courage. You have fought many battles before. You have defeated Shiva. How come you are crying in this battlefield at such a critical time of battle? Such dejection can never come to an Arya (noble person). If you are a noble person, do your duty. If you do not do your duty it will give you papam in the next life. In this life, as well, you will live with ill-fame."

Some Clarification:

Arya: Discussing the meaning of the word Arya used in this shloka, Swamiji says, it does not mean people who migrated to Iran to India, nor does it mean fair complexioned people. The Shastric meaning of Arya

includes:

- It is the character that makes a person an Arya, not his birth.
- One who does what has to be done, pleasant or unpleasant. Duty is duty.
- One who is without likes or dislikes.
- One who will not do anything that should not be done.
- One who leads a life of discipline.

Shloka # 3:

Sri Krishna continues: " Hey Arjuna, Kleivya (unmanliness) does not suit you. You are known for your courage. How can you be frightened? Get away from this weak-heartedness that makes you a disgrace and get up."

Param tapa means scorcher of enemies.

Here Sri Krishna does not teach Arjuna the Gita Gyanam yet.

The reason is, Arjuna has not yet surrendered himself to Sri Krishna and as such is not yet ready to listen or receive his teaching. Hence, says Swamiji, it is foolish to give him advice. Sri Krishna knows Arjuna has not yet exhausted his emotions.

Here Swamiji counsels that one should only advise a person who wants it, values it and asks for it. Without asking no advise should be given.

Shloka # 3:

Now Arjuna says: "Oh Madhsudhana, how can I fight Bhishma and Drona who really deserve worship? They are my Gurus."

Shloka # 4:

If Arjuna decides not to fight he will have to go to the forest and live on bhiksha. This is considered a papam. As per Shastras, a Grihasta cannot live on Bhiksha. Only a Brahmachari or Vanaprastha can live on Bhiksha. A Grihasta has to give Bhiksha and not ask for it. Per Arjuna, killing Bhishma is also a papam. Thus, Arjuna has to choose between two papams. Both are bad choices. Here, normally, we humans, try to avoid making a decision. Arjuna, however, chooses to live on bhiksha.

Arjuna says: " If I fight and kill my two Gurus, I may get the kingdom, but Sri Krishna, will I be able to enjoy the pleasures of victory? I will only remember how they struggled and died in battle. Neither in this world or next will I enjoy life after seeing that. Therefore, I am not in favor of this war.

Suggested take away from this class:

Swamiji counsels that one should only advise a person who wants it, values it and asks for it. Without asking no advise should be given.

With my good wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Prasna Upanishad, Class 9

Greetings All,

Swamiji continued his talks on Prasna Upanishad.

Second Question, Shloka # 6:, Swamiji said all mantras from #5 to # 13 are Prana Devata Sruthi or praise. Refreshing our memory on Shloka 6, he says all 10 Gyanendriyas are able to function because of Prana Shakthi. At Samashti (cosmic) level each Gyanendriya is also a Devata. Thus Hiranyagarbha Devata represents Prana. All Devatas are able to perform due to Prana Shakthi. At our individual level also we are able to perform due to the Prana Shakthi.

All powers in creation (rain, planetary motion, gravity, atomic etc.) perform because of one basic power called Prana Shakthi. When we worship Prana Shakti it is not the material aspect of the Shakti we worship, rather we are worshipping the intelligence behind the Prana Shakti. Although we are aware of the solar energy, the Shakti, the one we worship is Surya Devata, the intelligence behind it.

Upasana is always performed of an Utkrishta Vastu (A superior force). When we worship Chetana it is spiritual worship rather than worship of a material or inert substance. Swamiji says we should worship Shakti with Shiva. Shakti is the energy while Shiva is the intelligence principle behind Shakti.

Mantra # 6: Discussing this mantra, Swamiji says, the spokes are the many powers while the hub is the Prana where they get

their power. Swamiji says rituals or Yagnas are performed in Rig, Yajur and Sama mantras. Yagnas have meaning when there is somebody to perform them. Thus:

Kshatram: means Kshatriya who performs the Yagna of protecting the Yaga and the Brahmana who performs it.

Brahman: Is the one who performs the Yagnas.

Prana Shakti supports all of them.

Mantra # 7:

Continuing praise of Prana Shakti, He says, Prana is the lord of Brahma, Rudra and Vishnu. They are divisions of Prana Shakti. This power is available in every being i.e., power of reproduction and propagation. It is divided into male and female. Every male and female has the creative power. Only when a male and female join a child is born. You alone are later born in the form of parents. Thus, all Beings are giving oblation to you alone. Each sense organ gives oblation to the Prana Shakti. When this offering or Oblation is stopped, death occurs.

Swamiji says each indriya has a Shakti such as Shravanam, Darshanam etc. They are all manifestation of the Prana Shakti.

Mantra # 8:

You are the greatest carrier of Oblations. You are Agni, the carrier of oblations. You are the first oblation given to forefathers.

Before any puja, one has to perform Naandi Shradha, a worship of ancestors. This great Karma is performed for Kula-Parampara and Kula-Dharma. This offering is known as Shradha. The offering of Annam is also Prana Shakti.

The way of life of Rishis is the truthful way. Hence we remember them. Atharva and Angirasa are mentioned as Rishis.

Shankaracharya gives a different interpretation: He says Rishis are sense organs. Sense organs know color smell etc. Atharva is another name for sense organs. Angirsa is also another name for sense organs. Their functions nourish the individual Prana Shakti.

Mantra # 9: Hey Paraná, by your power you are none other than Indra or Rudra, the protector. You are moving in the sky as the Sun or as Vayu in the Anthariksa.

Every cause has an effect. Thus Brahman>Maya>Akasha>Vayu>Prithvi are examples of cause and effect. Prana is the cause of everything, says Swamiji.

Manta # 10: Here Prana is praised as rain. Hey Prana, You alone are poring as rain. All people become full of Ananda because sufficient food will now be available. Swamiji says our very living depends on rain.

Baghawat Geeta, Class 11

Lecture 11 Notes : Bhagavad Gita Chapter 1 Summary 1/09/16

Swamiji gives a Summary of Chapter 1 and an Introduction to Chapter 2.

Summary of Chapter 1

To live a healthy life – consider these 2 factors:

1. The surroundings should be hygienic so that it doesn't cause diseases. This is an external factor; objective factor (the environment)
2. A person's body must have sufficient resistance to face the external world; build up immunity in your body. Subjective factor (immunity)

In addition to having a sterilized environment for surgery, the patient also needs to resistance. All vitals conditions are checked in order to proceed with the surgery. A physically healthy life depends on objective and subjective factors. The environment alone is not responsible for giving you the disease. You also have low immunity to catch it.

This same principle can be extended for mental health as well. Mental health means a mind free from all psychological diseases in the form of fear, anxiety, stress, strain, worry, jealousy, anger, inferiority complex (Kama, krodha, lobha, moha, madha, maatsarya are all psychological diseases). We have a tendency to blame the external factors ie. the world is responsible for my worry, my spouse is responsible for my tension, etc. Scriptures point out that we need to consider two factors for mental health. The external world is not totally responsible for my psychological problem. The weakness of the mind is also responsible for our psychological problem.

For a healthy life the environment and sufficient resistance are needed. For a healthy mental life (a secure, relaxed, happy life), you need to consider the environment and having sufficient mental strength to face the situation.

There are three benefits of having a strong mind. The number of psychological problems:

- frequency is less (thus family is saved)
- intensity of anger, frustration is less.
- duration of these are also less

The frequency, intensity and duration of these mental diseases are less in a healthy mind. The after effect is also less. So, a psychologically healthy, happy life requires taking care of

1. adjusting the external conditions
2. improving one's own resistance

We usually only look into the external conditions. Vedanta

talks about the subjective factor – your own inner strength. This freedom from mental diseases caused by external factors, is called mokshaH.

Swamiji recites from Chapter 2, Verse 56:

ममकायैकमयः सर्वथा त्यक्त्युपैव हि नमः ॥

ममकायैकमयः सर्वथा त्यक्त्युपैव हि नमः ॥ 2.56 ॥

Lord Krishna says a jnani, a free person, also faces adversities but his resistance is very healthy and thus he is not shattered to handle this problem.

The subject matter of Gita is to strengthen the inner resistance (not change the external world) to obtain freedom from psychological disturbance. This is called mokshaH. Gita is also called “Moksha shaastram”. Gita is meant for people who recognize that they have to improve their resistance (being aware of their psychological weakness, their susceptibility to raga, dvesha, kama, krodha, etc and being aware of its affects on other people too).

Chapter 1 of Gita gives an introduction with Arjuna discovering that he has an inner weakness. And before he can change the world, he needs to strengthen himself. Arjuna discovers his weakness, and becomes a spiritual seeker, surrendering to Lord Krishna. Lord Krishna then gives him self knowledge. .

The first chapter can be divided into five parts:

1. Part 1: Vyasa presents the context, in which Arjuna feels the disease of samsaara; Verses 1-20

The context is the MB battlefield. In Kurukshetra, the Pandavas and Kauravas have gathered to settle their issue. Arjuna is very clear about the battle, he does not have any conflict or guilt because this war was the last resort after unsuccessful non-violent methods. Lord Krishna also goes as a

messenger and tries to settle peacefully. But Duryodana tries to kill Lord Krishna even though he is just a messenger. Therefore, Arjuna, has come to the battlefield without any regrets. Duryodana enumerates the Pandavas' army and his won army to Drona. And he betrays his diffidence that the Pandava army is stronger. This is caused by adharma. In reality, Duryodana's army is stronger but the support of Dharma is not there. Seeing this, Bhishma enthruses Duryodana by blowing his conch. Then both sides blow the conches signaling the beginning of the MB battle.

1. Part 2: Arjuna goes near the Kaurava army to see them at closer range. Verse 21-25

Arjuna feels somehow that he should closely see whom he has to fight. This decision was a blessing in disguise even though it seemed it was not a good decision to delay the start of the battle. If this hadn't occurred, we would not have the Bhagavad Gita.

Swamiji recites Verse 20 and the first line of Verse 21:

॥ अर्जुन उवाच ॥ द्रुपद उवाच ॥ द्रुपद उवाच ॥ द्रुपद उवाच ॥

॥ द्रुपद उवाच ॥ द्रुपद उवाच ॥ द्रुपद उवाच ॥ द्रुपद उवाच ॥ 1.20 ॥

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॥ द्रुपद उवाच ॥ द्रुपद उवाच ॥ द्रुपद उवाच ॥ द्रुपद उवाच ॥ 1.21 ॥

Arjuna requests Lord Krishna to place the chariot in between the two armies so that he can see his opposition. At this time, Arjuna is the master (not a student) and Lord Krishna is the humble charioteer (not the Guru). Lord Krishna obeys Arjuna and places the chariot in front of the people towards whom Arjuna has a strong attachment.

1. Part 3: Arjuna's discovery of his weakness and the consequent problem of RagaH. Verses 26 – 28

The first weakness presented is the problem of attachment or psychological dependence on external factors. This is called a weakness because psychological dependence for your happiness is no longer in your own hands but it is connected to external factors. Since the external factors are not under your control, depending upon an unpredictable, external factor is risky for your happiness. You should not allow an external factor to determine your state of happiness. For example, the disobedience of your child causing you sorrow is due to the fact that you are depending on your child being obedient for your happiness(external factor). This displays your lack of resistance. Vedanta says that you should not depend upon a certain condition to be happy. This psychological need or dependence is called the problem of ragaH. Arjuna has this problem because he expected these people to be around him all the time and could not imagine even a hypothetical separation. Arjuna imagined a life without Bhishma, Drona etc. and broke down.

संसारं साक्षात्कृत्य संसारं संसारं संसारं – Verse 28, discovery of RagaH (basic samsaara), psychological leaning. Physically, we depend on the world for food, clothing and shelter. Vedanta does not talk about physical independence but talks about emotional/psychological dependence, which is not required at all.

Gita's ultimate lesson is: आत्मा एव आत्मा आत्मा "atma, alone, by yourself, pleased" I am happy with myself, in spite of external factors being favorable or unfavorable. (Sounds so much sweeter in Samskritam). With any addiction, you imagine that you cannot do without it. This is not true. This is your intellect justifying your addiction. Don't have a crutch.

1. Part 4: ShokaH (consequence of RagaH) or VishadaH Verses 28 – 35

The title of the first chapter is Arjuna Vishada YogaH. Grief or sorrow is an inevitable consequence of dependence (leaning

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1. Part 5: MohaH(consequence of RagaH and ShokaH);
conflict, confusion, indecisionVerse 36-47

Confusion 1: Arjuna sees Dharma Yuddham as adharmā now. The greatest irony is in Verse 36 line 2 where Arjuna says: **॥३६॥ ॥२॥** **॥३६॥ ॥२॥** **॥३६॥ ॥२॥** “By killing these criminals, we will incur sin”. This confusion is similar to a judge saying he cannot render punishment to a criminal, as it is a sin. Imprisoning a criminal is a duty of the court. Arjuna as a Kshatriya has to protect dharma, even if it resorts to war.

The 2nd type of sin is Sin of commission. Note – A common thread in all religions:

Sin of Omission – failure to do some ritualist act

If Arjuna runs away , this action is paapam for him but he sees this as the best decision. धर्मो रक्षति रक्षितः “dharma adharma avivekaH” – utter delusion where he cannot distinguish between dharmaic and adharmaic actions. Arjuna’s delusion is complete and it has overflowed into his intellect. The intellect will not be able to fight the weakened mind and so the intellect will justify the weakness.

Confusion 3: Arjuna’s intellect tries to justify his delusion by telling Lord Krishna:

सर्वज्ञो भूयः संजय उवाच
अर्जुन कुरुक्षेत्रे समवेता भयतः
समाम्नाः पाण्डवो हमाणाः ॥१.४०॥

In his argument, Arjuna points out that family is very important for maintaining culture. This is a true statement. A society in which family life is not respected, culture will breakdown after one generation. The eternal dharma will be destroyed, pitr will be affected, people will lose faith in karma, rituals, dharma, religion, God, etc.

Due to his confusion, Arjuna quotes these true facts incorrectly to support his stand. RagaH, ShokaH and MohaH (attachment, sorrow, delusion) are called samsaaraH. A samsaari is one who suffers from these three problems. If a person handles these three samsaaraH, he is a liberated person मुक्तः (muktaH). Throughout Gita, Lord Krishna emphasize, married or unmarried, being internally free is what matters.

Even though Arjuna has discovered the problem of samsaara, Lord Krishna has not started giving the solution yet. Discovery of the problem alone is not enough for the solution. Some more steps are required.

1. Diagnosis of having the problem(know that you have a problem); Discovery of problem. But when we discover the problem, we try self medication first. Only when you realize that you cannot solve it yourself, do you go to the next stage of feeling....

2. Discovery of helplessness (know that you cannot solve the problem) I have a problem don't know how to get out of it; I require help from another firm person Vedanta Shastra **दैन्या भवः** "Dainya bhavaH" affliction, state of being; or **कार्पण्यं** "kaarpanyam" pitiful circumstances.

We will be studying this in Chapter 2:

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1. Surrender to someone who will give me a hand. Called शरणागति sharanaagati
2. Solution is given, Medication Arjuna has only gone thorough the first stage – discovering the problem of samsaraH. Arjuna has to go through stages 2 and 3 before Lord Krishna gives his advice. Therefore Lord Krishna observes silently. Since Lord Krishna has not spoken, Arjuna thinks his conclusion is right and so throws down his bow/arrow and sits down in the chariot.

So, Vyasa completes the first chapter by saying that Arjuna sat down, afflicted by shokaH (ragaH shokaH mohaH):

[illegible]

Introduction of Chapter 2

Chapter 2 gives a comprehensive picture of the whole “treatment” (for the disease) as given by the Gita. This chapter is the essence of the entire Gita and it can be divided into 4 portions. Swamiji gives a high level overview.

Portion 1: Arjuna surrenders to Lord Krishna; शरणागति शरणागति
Arjuna sharanaagati Arjuna going through the other stages(he
discovers the helplessness). Arjuna decides to quit the
battlefield but his inner conscience feels that this is not a

good decision. The decision to go to war was made after years and years of adharmic actions done by the Kauravas. This was a sudden decision to quit the battle. He realizes that he is confused and not able to make the correct decision. He knows he cannot solve the present problem.

Swamiji recites Chapter 2, Verse 6, Line 1:

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Hey Lord Krishna, I thought I had made the right decision but now my mind is wavering and I am not able to determine if my decision is right or wrong. On one hand, the war is for a dhaarmic cause; but my emotional mind is unable to come to terms with knowing the casualties of war (my guru and other relations). Arjuna realizes his wavering and accepts his helplessness by saying(Ch 2, Verse 7, line 1):

[illegible]

Once he discovers his helplessness, he needs to surrender to some one. Voilà, he has the Jagadguru himself (universal guru). Arjuna surrenders and says (Ch2, Verse 7, line 2):

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I am your disciple. The 3rd stage is surrendering (1st is discovery of the problem; 2nd is feeling helpless). The 4th stage is where Lord Krishna accepts the disciple Arjuna and gives the solution.

Gita Shaastram: ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ; ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय

Worldly illusion, warding off, medicine; state of being,
disease, remedy The spiritual pursuit is two-fold:

1. Karma YogaH – to become a Jnana Yogyaata

2. Jnana YogaH – to gain Jnanam

Portion 2: Krishna briefs Arjuna about Jnana YogaH; self-knowledge given to a Jnana Yogyata praptiH Jnana YogaH is self knowledge. Krishna will explain “self-knowledge” briefly . But in order to gain Jnana YogaH, one needs to be eligible to receive Jnanam(already be a yogyata praptiH).

Adi Shankara said Brahma Jnana is aushadam. The medicine is Jnana yogaH(disease removal). A Jnana yogyata(worthiness to get Jnanam) is required; medicine will be given only for a yogyata praptiH(one who has acquired the eligibility).

Portion 3: Krishna talks about Karma YogaH: Actions taken to become a Jnana Yogyata praptiH Krishna explains how to become a Jnana Yogyata praptiH “Yogyata praptiH” (one who has acquired the eligibility to learn). Karma YogaH are the actions to be taken without being attached to the results of one’s deeds. The benefit of Karma YogaH is Jnana yogaH yogyata.

Portion 4: Jeevan MuktiH: Inner Freedom, Salvation: Explore the life of a psychologically healthy person, who has developed inner resistance, and who has solved raga, shoka, moha.

Nandati nandati nandatyeva” Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice! A psychologically healthy person enjoys life thoroughly.

Prasna Upanishad, Class 8

Questions:

1. What are the principles sustaining the body:

Gyanendriyam, karmandhriyam panca boodha and andhagraganam (intellect.). 19 principles and 24 including panca pranas. But pranas are excluded as they will be introduced as the most superior.

2. Who all glorify themselves. All 19 principles (except panca prana) glorify themselves.
3. Among all the sustaining principles which is most powerful – varishtaha.

The first two questions are answered in verse 2. To answer the third question, a story is told, personifying all tatvas or principles.

Verse 3

One day prana called all 19 principles. Don't get deluded regarding the glory of who sustains the body, because I the prana alone divide into five, prana (respiratory), apana (excretory) , vyana (circulatory), samana (digestive) and udhana (reversing), and sustain the whole individual. However, the 19 principles did not believe because of their vanity.

Verse 4

To prove the point, Prana pretended to go out. As prana started to leave other principles also followed prana because their very existences dependent on Prana. And prana came back and all the 19 principles came back. This is the direct proof that all principles are dependent on prana sakthi. The 19 principles were pleased as the Prana did not go away permanently. Swamiji gave the example of Queen Bee, where the entire beehive follows the Queen Bee without any question. Similarly, the 19 principles followed Prana without any question. With this the 19 principles understood the glory of prana.

The rest of the section is prana sthuthi by the 19 principles.

Verse 5

In this verse, prana is glorified at micro and macro levels.

Glorification at individual level – prana sakthi gives power to eyes, ears etc. At the cosmic or macro level, hiranyagarba alone appears as burning power of agni, appears as light energy in sun. Similarly, Indira, Vayu, Earth, Moon are all powered by Prana sakthi. Prana sakthi broken down is all Murtha (formed) and amurtha (formless) vasthu (objects).

Verse 6

All the vedas, yagyas, warriors, brahmanas, the whole creation is based on prana. Without prana nothing can survive. In a wheel, the outer rim appears to be supported by spokes, but in reality, the spokes are supported by the hub. The whole wheel supported by the hub. Similarly all principles are supported by prana sakthi. In this example, each spoke can be taken as different principle; the wheel as the whole creation and prana as the hub.

Bagawat Geeta, Class 10

Arjuna shows the close connection between the institution of family and a dharmic way of life. These are intertwined so closely that when one is affected, the other has an impact and then it spirals into a vicious cycle. If family is destroyed, then dharma is destroyed, and with dharma destroyed, the next generation of the family is destroyed as well.

Vedic teachings have 3 aspects of Dharma:

1. Values of life: like truthfulness, generosity, non-

violence, love, concern for others

2. Attitude or basic reverence: towards things and beings ie earth, sun, moon; parents, teachers, and others in the society.
3. Rituals: this is a very important aspect and one that is not appreciated much anymore. A ritual is a concrete expression of the abstract values and is required for communication.

The Vedic religion considers rituals as one of the most important aspects of Dharma because:

- a. Since the first two aspects of Dharma(Values and Attitude) are abstract
- b. Rituals is one of the methods to keep a group together. Every member of a (belonging to the mind) they cannot be communicated or expressed. Hence “rituals” need to be physicalized/verbalized, making it easier to teach babies/toddlers. To communicate the concept of “respect” to a child, you will have to physicalize it...by symbolizing respect in the form of namaskara.

Friendship/love is also conveyed by verbalization or physical embrace, shaking hands, etc. Psychologist point out that physicalization or verbalization is very important for any relationship. Family takes part in a group ritual. Eat together, pray before a meal etc.

The psychological and sociological benefits of Rituals:

1. Give concrete form to an abstract value
2. Way to communicate the abstract value to the children
3. Maintain the togetherness of a group

Whenever there is reference to “dharma”, these three aspects are of importance: values, attitudes and rituals. The communication of values via rituals vary between religions and even between communities of the same religion. Krishna says that once the ritual part of religion is ignored, then there

will be varna sankaraha. The values are universal to all religions. Religions differ only from the stand point of rituals. Varna sankaraha is the immediate consequence of sacrificing rituals. This can occur even in a family where rituals are accepted, a person wants to maintain religion, gets married within the same community, etc. If the rituals diminish in importance and leads to the questioning of the cohesiveness of religion and of community, the consequence of this is varna sankaraha.

No particular religion is needed to follow the attitudes and values – any religion is okay. The religion becomes important only when you value a particular way of performing the ritual. But once rituals are given lesser importance, the next consequence is that the separation of religions and the segregation of community will go away and this is varna sankaraha. There is another worse consequence of varna sankaraha.... disappearance of the family institution. A family institution was required for

1. Vedic Rituals to be followed; a family is not required for Values and Attitudes. A Brahmachari, a vanaprahsta, a sanyasi cannot perform the ritual of giving dakshina nor annadaanam. Only a grihasta can.
2. Fulfillment of artha – wealth, security
3. Fulfillment of kama – enjoyment, pleasures

Once the rituals are not respected, a family institution remains for artha and kama; but with changes in a society, artha and kama will become available without families. The government provides the security and if one has money, all artha and kama can be bought. Values and attitudes don't need a family life. And if artha and kama can be obtained without a family, why is family is needed? A family was required to maintain religion expressed in the form of Vaidika karma. All these are relevant because of karma. Once karma goes away family will be disintegrated. Without a stable

family, there will be no karma nor values and attitudes. Who will teach values and attitudes to the next generation? No one will preserve Brahmana dharma – studying of scriptures and propagating it.

Chapter 1 Sloka 42

संभ्रमो भवेत्सर्वेषां धर्मस्य संभ्रमः ॥

संभ्रमो भवेत्सर्वेषां धर्मस्य संभ्रमः ॥ 1.42 ॥

संभ्रमो confusion of castes भवेत् for the hell भवेत् also भवेत् of the slayers of the family भवेत् of the family भवेत् and भवेत् fall भवेत् the forefathers भवेत् verily भवेत् their भवेत् deprived of the offerings of riceball and water. Once the varnasankara(intermingling of 4 groups) takes place, even भवेत् भवेत् mathasankara(religious confusion). the attitude and value of dharma may remain but ritual part of dharma will not remain. Ritual part of religion will have to be given up with varnasankaraha. Rituals are the method of communicating our feeling.

संभ्रमो भवेत्सर्वेषां धर्मस्य संभ्रमः – because of the confusion, this will lead to naraka because all karmas are sacrificed. संभ्रमो भवेत्सर्वेषां धर्मस्य संभ्रमः – naraka for both the victor of the war and for the vanquished, because they will lose all the values for religious practices; not only they fall spiritually but भवेत् भवेत् भवेत् भवेत् Vedic religion prescribes five fold compulsory rituals for every भवेत् or भवेत् Pancha maha yagna: Brahma or Rishi Yajna; Deva Yajna; Pitri Yajna; Bhuta Yajna; Manushya Yajna

pitr yagna – respect to our forefathers; blessing of our forefathers are needed for our material or spiritual growth. All rituals in family is started with Naandi sradha – invocation of the grace of the forefathers. Once dharma goes away – all these rituals will be sacrificed. भवेत् भवेत् भवेत् भवेत् Forefathers will be deprived of भवेत् भवेत् pinda kriya- sradham, भवेत् भवेत् udaka kriya-

tarpana; लुप्ता लुप्ता deprived of. Forefathers will be deprived of this karma. These days people replace pitr yagna with manushya yagna but it can only be a supplement not a substitution.

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If there are no rituals, varnashrama dharma has no meaning..Morals and attitudes can be practiced with out varnashrama dharma. Varnashrama dharma is important only from the perspective of rituals.

Chapter 1 Sloka 43

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destroyed by evil deeds (by) these destroyers of the family
destroyers causing intermingling of castes
are destroyed religious rites of the
caste family religious rites and eternal.
because of these defects in which
the ritualistic part of dharma is degraded, responsible
for the intermingling of various communities,
religion, caste etc casualty is
certain practices purely based on varna. According to
Veda –certain rites can be done only by some varnas only.
Rajasuya yaga can be done only by a raja a brahmana can assist
the raja. Vedic rites will have to be given up. Within
one varna itself, the vedic practices differ from gothram to
gothram a child of mixed varna cannot choose any
vedic dharma; Rituals are gone. dharmas from a long
time ago, destruction takes one generation

Chapter 1 Sloka 44

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1.44

whose family religious practices are destroyed of the men 0 Janardana in hell for unknown period dwelling is thus we have heard. Without rituals, the religion can continue with values and attitudes. But for these a family is not required and so after 2 to 3 generations, when it is realized that with money one can obtain artha and kama, the question arises if a family is needed at all. The negative side to not having a family is that you lose the people that you can call your own, those that you can trust and those that give you unconditional love. The psychological anchor or psychological security will be lost. This leads to sociological disaster when people without the family anchor exist in a society(crimes increase, etc).

even when alive and after death, w/o family, w/o love and trust, it is like hell; when svadharma is not done(sradha, tarpana), according to vedic rules it is pratyavaya paapam; will lead to narakam. Arjuna says we have heard this repeated in the vedic mantra(not that he has seen).

Chapter 1 Sloka 45

1.45

alas great sin to do prepared we that by the greed of pleasure of kingdom to kill kinsmen prepared.

Arjuna's monologue continues as he thinks of the current and future repercussions of the MB battle. alas, a great tragedy indeed; we are about to cause perform a great sinful act; killing all these people

which will lead to varna sankaraha, jaathi (family) sankaraha, dharma nashaha, (ruin) dharma nashaha, patanam (downfall) pitrnam patanam because of our short-sightedness; we were interested in royal pleasures; due to our misplaced greed for the pleasures

Arjuna has forgotten that this is a fight between dharma and adharma and says we are prepared to kill these people.

Chapter 1 Sloka 46

1.46

if me unresisting unarmed with weapons in hand the sons of Dhritarashtra in the battle should slay that of me better would be. Arjuna says I have decided not to contribute to this tragedy but the beginning of the war has been signaled by conches. Therefore Duryodana may start the war but I will not retaliate. I am prepared to die but will not contribute to the pending chaos of the society. the kauravas may choose to kill us we, who have decided not to resist; we are with out weapons I consider sacrificing my life for the sake of dharma; I consider this a good fortune for me to have realized this in the nick of time.

Having said all these, Arjuna has shown raga, shoka, moha. Krishna maintains silence. Therefore Sanjaya says...

Chapter 1 Sloka 47

1.47

Arjuna thus having said Arjuna in the battle on the seat of the chariot sat down having cast away with arrow bow with a mind distressed with sorrow.

Sanjaya gives a picture of Arjuna – who symbolizes a maha samsaari. Arjuna's mind is totally grief stricken – indicating the problem of raga and shoka; completely overpowered by attachment and intense grief he has thrown away the bow and arrow; For a kshatriya, the bow and arrow represent fighting for/establishing dharma, his duty. The physical action of throwing his bow and arrow represents Arjuna giving up his duty. "Sva dharma tyagaha" – indicating conflict or mohaha; wants to run away from the battle, wants to do tapas(dharma of a sanyasi); a grihasta has to do his family duty first; this is called mohaha: paradharma grahanam(taking the duties of another caste), svadharma parithyagaha(deserting your own duties) having uttered all these words to Krishna, Arjuna did this he sat down on the chariot seat

At this crucial juncture, Vyasacharya says:

This portion comes at the end of every chapter.

Om tat sat – all 3 words are names of the Lord. Said at the end of every chapter to thank the Lord for the successful completion. There are various meanings in different context. Swamiji gives the simplest meaning for these:

Om – ओम् अवति इति ओम्; Avati is the protector; protected us from all obstacles

Tat – one who is beyond sense perception; तत्परा and अक्षर Para (beyond) and Aksha (eye); अक्षरपरा beyond the cognizance of the senses

Sat – eternal (past, present, future); From Tatva Bodha: सदाशिव ओम् तत्परा The eternal protector who is beyond our sense perception.

श्रीगुरुभ्यो नमः – oh Lord, by your grace, we have completed the 1st chapter called

अर्जुनस्य शोकः – the grief of Arjuna. The main theme is vishada – raga, shoka and moha.

संवादः – presented as a dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna

Samdavaha – most healthy form of communication, is a dialogues between a guru and a shishya – attitude of guru is love and compassion towards the disciple and the attitude of shisya is faith and reverence towards the guru; Name of this dialogues is called गीता The full name of Gita – upanishad means knowledge which liberates the person from sorrow. Wisdom which is taught by, revealed by, Srimad Bhagavaan. Meaning of Bhagavan – one who has Bhaga – 6 fold virtues.

The original upanishad, part of Veda, was in existence even before Krishna was born. Krishna's teaching is the essence of upanishad. Swamiji recites Dhyana Sloka #4:

सर्वोपनिषदो गवो दग्धा गोपालानन्दानाः पार्थवत्साः
सुधैर्भक्ष्यतां दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत्

sarvopanishado gavo dogdha gopalanandana: parthovatsa:
sudheerbhoktha dugdham gitamrutam mahat

There are only two topics in the entire Gita(theme of the entire dialogue):

Religion + Philosophy = Gita; Total contentment is the benefit.

1. Religion (योगशास्त्र yoga shastra): Veda poorva bhaga(first part of Veda); karma kanda – which relates to ceremonial acts and sacrificial rites. This is a way of life which prepares you to be competent for philosophy; gives fitness for knowledge; makes you a eligible jnana योग्या (eligibility). First part of life get fit, then gain knowledge
2. Philosophy (ब्रह्मविद्या brahma vidya): Veda antha bhaga(latter part of Veda); jnana kanda – which relates to knowledge of the one Spirit Philosophical part – gives jnanam (knowledge)

Tolerance: Swamiji Talk for New Year 2016

Namaste:

This are my notes from New Year talk given by Swamiji on January 1, 2016:

You can listen to this talk here.

The topic of this talk was six principles of tolerance.

Swamiji started the talk by pointing out that the topic of tolerance is in the news now a days and that both Tatva Bodha and Bagawat Geeta point out the need for tolerance. Tatva Bodha says one need thithiksha (mental shock absorbers) to withstand the ups and downs of life. Lord Krishna says in

Chapter 2 of Bagawat Geeta that one need shama to withstand the up and downs of life.

Six principles of tolerance:

1. Non empowerment: Scriptures says the creation is full of pairs of opposites as per laws of karma. The creation is full of events like loss and gain and up and down. Swamiji says we classify all events as welcome and unwelcome. The first principle of tolerance is not to label any situation. By labeling an event we empower the world to hurt. Let all the pairs of worldly experiences happen, but do not label them as welcome or unwelcome. Be prepared to go through the results of karma without attaching a label of unwelcome. If one must attach a label, use the label "welcome" and accept all situations and experiences.
2. Empowering ourselves: Strengthening ourselves to withstand and move forward from any event. Worldly events are not the creation of Bahawan, but the results of karma. While creation includes both pavam and puniyam, the resources to handle the situation are also created within ourselves. Learn to rely on internal resources and not on external outside resources.
 - Arm ourselves with the ability to be strong
 - Understand and accept that there are resources within ourselves to withstand the ups and downs of life
 - Build up faith in ourselves with the realization that Lord resides in ourselves.
3. Non Magnification: Avoid dwelling upon unwelcome experiences and let it occupy our minds completely. Whenever there is an "unwelcome" situation, our tendency is to dwell on and magnify that situation. This results in worry, anxiety and fear. Dwell upon the solution and do not to dwell upon and magnify the situation. Apply the first two principles above and assimilate the

thought that all difficult experiences are not given out by Bagawan but are the results of karma and the world is only a medium. This does not mean that we don't take any action, but take any action, including deliberate inaction, but do not contaminate the action with hatred and vengeance. Cultivate tolerance at both "kartha" (doer) and 'boktha" (experiencer) level.

4. Self Restraint: Avoidance of impulsive responses. Boktha becomes a kartha by following the first three principles. Impulsive actions prevents us from developing a long term solution. Boktha (the experiencer) gives the message; Kartha should filter the messages and take careful actions.
5. Objectivity: Avoid judgment based on incomplete data. Never judge a person in a hurry. No one should become a victim of prejudicial actions. Prejudicial actions and judgment only will result in accumulating more pavam. Before taking any action at others, stand in the position of others and determine if the proposed action is one that you would accept yourself.
6. Postpone violent measures: Whenever we face difficult situations, we face two options: one is aggressive and the other is peaceful. When we are faced with difficult situation, we prefer aggressive measures as they may appear to bring immediate results. Scriptures say that the peaceful measures must be tried first. Always remember ahimsa is an important virtue. Only after exhausting all ahimsa measures, more aggressive measures should be pursued.

Swamiji concluded that if we follow these six principles, then we will be able to handle and move on after any difficult experience.